

**First Lutheran Church**  
**309 Ninth Street North**  
**Northwood, IA 50459**

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Permit No. 33

# **First Lutheran Focus February 2026**

Address Service Requested

<u><b>Week</b></u>	<u><b>Counter</b></u>	<u><b>Lay Reader</b></u>	<u><b>Greeter</b></u>	<u><b>Acolyte</b></u>
<b>February 1</b>	Russ & Delores Knudson	Laure Buehrer	Ruglands	Max Rugland Silas Waller
<b>February 8</b>	Mike & Judy Stevens	Leila Gangstad	Amundsons	Axel Flattum Ryker Amundson
<b>February 15</b>	Stu & Kim Anderson	Madelyn Midtgaard	Nelsons	Emelia Nelson Hadley Anderson
<b>February 22</b>	Randy & Laure Buehrer	Carolyn Reeder	Holstads	Graham Holstad

**Share Shoppe**  
**Saturday, February 7th**

# PASTOR'S PAGE

I am writing this from Dayspring Children's Village along the Magaliesburg Mountain Range in South Africa. This is located just northwest of Johannesburg. My watch tells me it is -11 in Northwood but it is 86 degrees here. I am so very grateful to be here and in awe of God's beautiful creation here and the gracious welcome I have received.

The verse that keeps running through my mind is Isaiah 52:7 "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns'". I don't spend much time looking at feet but am drawn into the beauty that surrounds Dayspring and the welcome that I have experienced.

Beyond the place and the messenger in this verse is the message that we are all called to live out and proclaim. The message of peace. The message of the good news we know in Jesus. The message that says our God reigns. These are turbulent days in so many ways. The chaos happening in Minneapolis, the fear and anguish of our neighbors who are being terrorized. The distrust and disbelief, misinformation and growing anger is scary. What can we do? Announce peace, speak the truth and engage in conversation even if it means talking to someone you know you won't agree with. We are called to be the messenger that proclaims God's message of hope, peace, grace and welcome.

My time here at Dayspring to join in the life of this school. To keep my eyes open to new things. To listen to the sounds all around me (except for the rooster that can't tell time!), To hear the sound of peace and to proclaim the same.

May we all be peacemakers, truth tellers and messengers of God's love for the whole world.

In Christ, Pastor Becky



Our sympathy and prayers go out to the family and friends of Leland B. Swenson, 90, of Northwood, who died on Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Service was held on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

# YOUTH NEWS

We started January with a combined Junior and Senior High Lock-In where around 50 students plus a few college chaperones showed up. Lock-Ins are always a fun time, and I'm so thankful to Pastor Becky for showing up around 5:00 AM so I can head home to sleep! Always a cool way to end one year and start another being together!

The first normal night of Youth for both groups had us building a large blanket fort in the Youth room and learning more about the foundation in faith that will carry us through our lifetimes (Jeremiah 29:11). The following week we were looking at some of the odd verses in the Bible – Psalm 137:9 is one that really sticks out! The lesson comes in trying to figure out how to we believe when the Bible does have some pretty odd stuff in it. In the end we finished up with John 20: 30 + 31 which lets us know that we may have life in His name. The third week of January was hit and miss as the cold temps had us cancel a few things here and there.

With Lent fast approaching us, I've been getting things ready for Senior High's Vets vs Noobs competition. Each year from Ash Wednesday to Easter, it becomes a time to really invite new students and get us looking forward to what's ahead. Junior High will also be doing a version of this on Sunday Nights.

We did get a good start on signing up teachers for Day Camp this summer. It's nice to think about warmer days ahead while in the middle of the winter. This year will be different for us as Pastor Becky will be on the second part of her sabbatical, and we'll be doing both Day Camp and Lifest without her. In times like these that become opportunities for everyone to step up and help, and I'm sure we'll get by just fine.



**Regular Council Meeting  
December 16th, 2025  
First Lutheran Church - Northwood**

Members Present: Kris, Pastor Becky, Hayley, Judy, Mike, Connie, Kimberly, Mariah, Megan

**We Assemble in God's Name**

**We Celebrate our Past**

**Presidential Correspondence – Kris**

- Christmas cards have been received and are hung around the church.

**Secretary's Report – Mariah**

- Mariah Ballantyne will take minutes for today's meeting.
- Reviewed previous month's minutes

**Treasurer's Report- Judy S.-**

- Council reviewed proposed budget.
  - No outstanding questions after previous review.
- **Motion to approve proposed budget (Mike/Mariah)**

**Pastor's Report - Pastor Becky –**

- Claire Davidson and Gary Nierlen lined up to cover during pastor sabbatical
- Pastor Linda Presthold-Johnson will provide pastoral coverage
- Pastor sabbatical January 20<sup>th</sup> – Feb 16<sup>th</sup>, 2026
- Feed My Starving Children – virtual meeting forthcoming
- **Motion/Vote to accept all reports (Connie/Gina). - Approved**

**We Present our Offering**

**FINANCE - Judy S.**

- Judy requested approval from the council to be added as an authorized signer on the checking account *1<sup>st</sup> Lutheran Women*. Once added, account will be closed and any future monies will be a special funds category.
- **Motion to approve (Connie/Hayley)**

**\*\*Due to Holiday Concert at the high school this evening no other report outs were reviewed\*\***

**WORSHIP**

**INSPIRE-**

**YOUTH -**

**EDUCATION -**

**PROPERTY -**

**MISSION**

**FELLOWSHIP**

<b>First Lutheran Missions</b>	
<u>December 2025</u>	
Riverside Bible Camp	\$ 142.21
Good Samaritan Fund	\$ 274.20
Lutheran World Relief & World Hunger	\$ 2,730.18
Bremwood - LSI	\$ 326.39
Operation Christmas Child	\$
Education Fund	\$ 511.97
Youth Fund	\$ 438.06
Sunday School Fund	\$
Caring Tree	\$ 150.20
Meals on Wheels	\$
Manna	\$
Heifer International	\$
Campers Fund	\$
Dayspring Children's Village	\$ 103.93
Northern Lights Shelter	\$ 151.73
LRH Auxiliary	\$ 228.75
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 4,934.32</b>

<u>Donations</u>	
General	\$50.00
Education	\$500.00
<u>Memorials</u>	
IMO Brian Bestul	\$25.00

**Concerns for the Present –**

- Christmas Dinner – Judy could use some volunteers to assist with serving community meal.
- Nominations Committee – Looking to fill 1 open council spot
- **Motion to approve youth to be confirmed (Connie/Hayley)**

**New Members/Baptisms/Funerals**

Transfers out: -

Funerals:

Baptisms -

**Communion Servers:**

- Dec 21<sup>st</sup> (Sunday School Program): Weston, Mike, Mariah
- Christmas Eve: Kris, Connie, Megan
- Christmas Day: Hayley and Megan
- Jan 4<sup>th</sup>: Mariah, Gina, Megan

**We Go Out in God's Name**

**Motion to Adjourn – (Connie/Hayley) - Approved**

**Lord's Prayer**

**Next Meeting January 13th, 2026 at 6:00 pm**

**Devotions:** Megan Ott

<b><u>First Lutheran Financial Update</u></b>	
<b><u>December 2025</u></b>	
Income	\$ 37,358.11
Electronic Income	\$ 3,527.00
Expense	\$20,189.55
End of Month	\$20,695.56
<b><u>YTD as of December 2025</u></b>	
Income	\$180,007.00
Electronic Income	\$37,595.69
Other Income	\$33,546.14
Use of Church	\$605.00
Expense	\$244,480.83
End of Month	7,273.00

<b><u>December General Budget</u></b>	
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>	
Payroll:	\$ 14,633.69
E-Giving Expense	\$ 43.71
Church Maintenance	\$ 348.34
Utilities	\$ 2,408.15
Telephone	\$ 274.65
Office Expense	\$ 786.35
Worship	\$ 185.00
Pastor Education	\$ 255.12
Fall Conference	\$ 151.89
Pastor Mileage	\$ 727.65
Insurance	\$ 0.00
N. Iowa Synod	\$ 375.00
Total Expenses	\$ 20,189.55
Income	\$ 40,885.11
Net	\$ 20,695.56

**New Addition to the Church Staff**

Hi everyone! My name is Sherrie Christianson. I've joined your wonderful church staff as the new Office Administrative Assistant. I moved to Northwood in Sept. 2024 from Apache Junction, AZ. Previous to my employment at FLC I worked as an assistant teacher at Child Time Daycare here in Northwood. I have a daughter living in WI, 4 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren living in the WI and MN areas. I'm involved with a cancer awareness charity group based in Mesa, AZ where we make and donate surgical and comfort items to numerous hospitals and treatment centers across the country. I'm very happy to be a part of First Lutheran Church's family and look forward to meeting you.



- 1) Tyler Trenhaile
- 2) Courtney Jorgensen, Christine Hulsing
- 3) Mary Dodd, Emily Toresdahl
- 4) Lucas Hoffman, Ohin Shackleton, Ryan Tufte
- 5)
- 6) Anne Marie Kinnin, Amanda Olson
- 7) Monte DeArmoun
- 8) Nancy Hengesteg, Zach Nelson, Kinley Thompson, Xander Gentz
- 9) Allyson Deboer, Mary Kalvig, Kenlyn Reindl
- 10) Clare Hengesteg, Caroline Hengesteg, Matthew Johnson, Jaden Lafferty
- 11) Lon Christianson, Debra Rustad, Roger Rustad, Josie Reindl
- 12) Nancy Amundson, Janice Hopperstad, John Janssen, Collin Jaspers, Delores Knudson, Sophie Rye
- 13) Wendy Davis, Deb Hanson
- 14) Abby LaRue
- 15) Callie Flattum, Kent Nitcher, Carol Paulson
- 16) David Capitani, Matt Thompson, Mark Willand, Jim Price
- 17) Kristoffer Kenison
- 18) Dexter Duvall, Larry Kenison, Avery LaRue, Belle Magritz, Keagan Brandt
- 19) Jeri Severson, Kenny Skellenger
- 20) Alison Gores, Nicole Husske, Jordan Smalley, Dawson VanRyswyk, Betsy Wright
- 21) Tyson Werner
- 22) Henry Houg
- 23) Diane Myli
- 24) Nathan Buehrer, Haddie Hanson
- 25) Michael Davey, Dori Kostka, Casson Moretz, Zachary Roppe, Scott Severson
- 26) Mary Bloomingdale, Susan Gaskill, Zachary Katcher, James Kostka, Tracey Severson, Cash Tolzmann
- 27) Jody Christianson, Connie Kenison, Annika Schreiber
- 28) Nicholas Shackleton, Ellen Van Sabben, Brian Waller, John Weitzel, Betty Goodrich, Clayton Ogea, Kennedy Schulz
- 29) Shirley Ausenhus, John Berg

## *News and Announcements*

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH – NORTHWOOD, IA – 309 9<sup>TH</sup> ST N



FEBRUARY 17, 2026 4:30pm – 6:30pm

### Job Opening Part-time Position

We are accepting applications/resumes for the position of Building Custodian.

This is a part-time position that consists of cleaning and maintaining the church building. Full job description can be found at the church office Monday through Thursday 9:00am to 12:00 noon.

In support of the children in the area who will be attending Vacation Bible School, there will be a PANCAKE FUNDRAISER held at Bethel UMC in Manly, IA. The date is Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 11:30 am to approx.. 1:00 pm. Please come enjoy a tasty meal while also supporting this worthy cause.

Please come join us in  
worship Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026 with  
Bishop Kevin Jones

# February 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1</b> 9:00am: Service/Communion 10:10am: Sunday School 10:30am: DCV 6:30pm: J.H Youth	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 7:00pm: AA–Al-Anon	<b>4</b> 4:00pm: Confirmation 6:15pm: Inspire 7:00pm: Choir 7:00pm: SH Youth	<b>5</b> 8:30: Quilting 9:00: Prayer Group 6:30: Cub Scouts	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> 9:00am: Service 10:10am: Sunday School 10:30am: DCV with H.C. 6:30pm: JH. Youth	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 7:00pm: AA–Al-Anon	<b>11</b> 4:00pm: Confirmation 6:15pm: Inspire 7:00pm: Choir 7:00pm: SH Youth	<b>12</b> 8:30: Quilting 9:00: Prayer Group 6:30: Cub Scouts	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 9:00am: Service 10:10am: Sunday School 10:30am: DCV 3:00pm: LRH 6:30pm: J.H Youth	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 1:00 pm: Staff Mtg. 4:30pm: Shrove Meal 6:00pm: Council Mtg 4:00pm: Trust Fund Mtg 7:00pm: AA–Al-Anon	<b>18 ASH WED</b> 12:00 noon: Service 2:00pm: Maple Crt worship 4:00pm: Confirmation 5:00 pm: Soup/Sandwiches 6:15pm: Lenten Service 7:00pm: Choir 7:00pm: SH Youth	<b>19</b> 8:30: Quilting 9:00: Prayer Group 6:30: Cub Scouts	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 9:00am: Service 10:10am: Sunday School 10:30am: DCV 6:30pm: J.H Youth	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 7:00pm: AA–Al-Anon	<b>25</b> 12:00 noon: Service (chapel) 4:00pm: Confirmation 6:15pm: Lenten Service 7:00pm: Choir 7:00pm: SH Youth	<b>26</b> 8:30: Quilting 9:00: Prayer Group 6:30: Cub Scouts	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>

First Lutheran Office hours are Monday through Thursday from 9:00am until Noon