

First Lutheran Church
309 Ninth Street North
Northwood, IA 50459

Office hours

Monday-Wednesday, 9am – 3:30pm
Thursday, 9am- 12pm, Fridays, closed
www.flcnorthwood.org

Office Phone: 641-324-2984
E-mail: flc@flcnorthwood.org

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First Lutheran Focus

February 2021

Address Service Requested

YOUTH NEWS

We've had a couple of pretty quiet months were Youth are concerned. In December we started back up after a six week Covid break. One thing I learned after having to stop our groups twice is that it takes a LONG time for things to get back to where they were before. That being said, it's been enjoyable to focus on a smaller number of students as we work our way through this.

With the Lenten season fast approaching, we're adapting Youth to fit into our social norms. Usually Lent means a church service upstairs and lot of fun and games downstairs, but we can't play very many of our normal games. This year Senior High students will still be attending the church services on Wednesday evenings, but afterwards will be normal youth downstairs in the Fellowship Hall. Junior High youth during Lent will go on as normal.

As of right now, Lifest festival in Oshkosh, WI. Is still going on as planned for July. We currently have around 35 students signed up to go this summer, and if any plans needs to be changed I will let people know here in the Focus as well as online.



The Senior High Youth Group were able to get out and make a snowman late in January

PASTOR'S PAGE

Woohoo! By this point in the calendar year I have always been happy and somewhat relieved to be 'this far through winter'. The snow has not been too bad and the cold has been manageable. The minutes of daylight continue to increase. And Ash Wednesday is just around the corner. Our journey through Lent, Holy Week and celebration on Easter morning are connected to the spring equinox and full moon. And, spring makes me happy.

Many people like to give up something for Lent. But last year as the Covid-19 pandemic hit we were all forced to give up in-person worship and hunker down with a new way of life. Physical distancing, wearing masks, washing hands, and using hand sanitizer more frequently. It became the Lent-iest Lent we have journeyed through and it continued well past Easter Sunday. But what a good time to begin once again safely worshipping in-person as well as Facebook Live.

Lent is an important time in the church year of hearing and living into our connection to the whole story of faith. The forty days of Lent connect us to the **forty days** Noah and his family spent in the Ark with all those animals. It is but a small amount of time compared to the **forty years** that the Hebrews wandered in the wilderness. It also connects us to the **forty days** Jesus spent fasting and praying in the wilderness before he began his public ministry.

I invite you to spend an extra **forty minutes** in worship each week during Lent. Worship on Wednesdays won't be quite 40 minutes but will help give focus and be more intentional in our life of faith. This reminds me of a brief video that I watched as I 'was earning points' as part of my health insurance wellness program. The video pointed out the many, many benefits of thirty minutes of exercise each day and how that leaves another 231/2 hours to do everything else. If you are looking at the big picture, thirty minutes is very do-able. That daily 30 minutes and weekly extra 40 minutes in worship are a small piece of all the minutes of our week.

The forty days of Lent and forty extra minutes of worship are very do-able for us as it strengthens faith, builds community, and gives voice to our life as God's people. This fits well with the invitation and/or challenge to give up something for Lent or take on a new task. Whichever is challenging and life-giving is a great place to begin. To be honest I am glad the call is not to hang out in an Ark with a bunch of animals or a call to wander in the wilderness. Our call is faithfully journey with Jesus to the cross and resurrection.

-Pastor Becky



January 18, 2021

First Lutheran Congregation,

I'd like to give you some insight into what has happened regarding our church sound system. As you may already know, we've had some glitches with Sunday morning services. These upsets are not due to human error, but rather cord connection related. It has now been discovered that the cord that runs into the sound system computer is highly "touchy". If the cord or computer is moved or touched a teeny tiny bit, the filming shuts down and can't be recovered.

The good thing is, after much examination, Mark has deciphered the issue and contacted the company that installed the system. To solve this issue, an adaptor is needed that would plug into the computer so there would be a solid physical connection. As of January 24, Pastor Sogge will be on site at the church in case the service needs to be shown through her cell phone. This is the backup plan so services can proceed. Your patience is greatly appreciated and just remember "This too shall pass".

**"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of convenience and comfort,
but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."**

-Martin Luther King

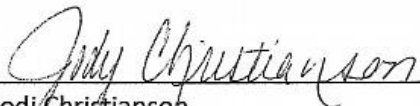
Peace, Hope, and Joy,

Janelle Johnson

Church Council

MONDAY JANUARY 19, 2021

Jodi Christianson and Lauren Severson and Kimberly Anderson have completed a general audit of First Lutheran Church for the months of January thru December 2020. No discrepancies were found.



Jodi Christianson



Lauren Severson



Kimberly Anderson

Church Reopening for February 1st

For the sake of all... Being church together.... Wanting to reclaim some normalcy... Caring for those who need our understanding....

These are a few of the reasons First Lutheran Church Staff and Council set these practices in place as we once again, move into the next phase of our response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The basic everyday preventive actions that are always recommended to combat the spread of respiratory viruses:

- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible. Stay home if you are sick.
- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol.
- If you or your family members are in a group that is at high risk for severe complication from Covid-19, including those over the age of 65, please consider worshipping with us online.

For all worship and activities taking place at First Lutheran everyone must wear a mask.

In-Person Worship

- ❖ To avoid physical contact we will not shake hands during passing of the peace.
- ❖ Greeters will not be used at this time.
- ❖ The offering plate or coin bucket will be at the back of the sanctuary.
- ❖ The West entrance door will be propped open to limit the need from the congregation to touch them.
- ❖ Hand sanitizer will be available for use upon entrance to the church.
- ❖ Ushers should dismiss people from the pews after church.
- ❖ Bulletins will be available and picked up by individuals. The screens will be in use in the sanctuary. Hymnals and other pew resources will not be in place.
- ❖ Communion will continue to be made available through the prefilled cup/wafers.
- ❖ Everyone is asked to keep masks on during worship especially while singing.

The 9:00am service will continue to be streamed to Facebook live.

A Lay readers will be in used during worship



First Lutheran Church and Sunday School

First Lutheran Church Council

Regular Meeting

12-13-20 zoom

We Assemble in God's Name

- Members Present: Shana Brunsvold, Nikkole Koenig, Heather Rheingans, Tim Knutson, Janelle Johnson, MaryJo Senne, Pastor Becky, Jan Thompson, Kris Kenison, Mariah Ballantyne, Megan Ott, Doug Fallgatter

We Celebrate our Past

- Presidential Correspondence
 - --no new correspondence
- Secretary's Report
 - No changes
- Treasurer's Report
 - Positive balance to end the year
- Pastor's Report
 - Working with Bishop on logistics for communion at home
 - Christmas Eve service in church
 - Also planning an outdoor service in cars with FM transmitter
 - Christmas Day church service on facebook
 - Pastor's salary and contract agreement
 - ☑ For documentation purposes-- 600/mon will be designated to furnishings allowance, 3% monthly to pre-tax retirement, \$100 monthly to Health FSA
- **MMSP to approve all reports (Janelle Johnson, Doug Fallgatter)**

We Present Our Offering

- Stewardship
 - No new meetings since November
 - Pledges are submitted to a private file as they come in (33 turned in)
 - This serves as our baseline for measuring growth in stewardship going forward
- Worship
 - Music planning for weekly online church services
 - Working on a virtual choir presentation for sometime during the Christmas season
 - Synod position on virtual communion--'extending the table' to homes during this time
 - ☑ Will do communion next week, Sunday Dec 20
 - ☑ Will do communion at outdoor service on Christmas Eve
 - ☑ Can pick up communion elements at church ahead of time, or can use bread and wine/juice at home
- Youth
 - Mark is working on ideas for Youth Representative to council
 - Would like to return to in-person youth in fellowship hall, socially distanced, with masks, do not come if having any symptoms
 - **MMSP to allow youth to meet again following these guidelines (Tim Knutson, Doug Fallgatter)**
- Education
 - Lauren and Sunday School teachers are working on compiling a video for next Sunday, December 20 featuring readings of Christmas story, singing, and past performances of Sunday school singers.
 - Sunday School activity packs will be placed in entryway for pickup to keep kids engaged at home
 - Working with confirmation students ongoing with zoom.

- May consider resuming in-person confirmation in January
- Finance
 - Nothing new to report. Budget was approved on December 6, 2020.
 - Fiscal year will end on December 31.
 - Audit committee will need to conduct an audit due to budget and fiscal year not aligning.
- Property
 - Troy has been doing some painting in the sanctuary
 - There was a leak in the upstairs bathroom into the lower laundry room at the parsonage which has been resolved.
- Social Ministry
 - Christmas dinner is on hold for now
 - There is an annual Christmas Dinner free-will offering in church basement.
 - Possibly serving to-go-only meals this year.
 - Heather will explore possibilities with Rhonda about preparing a sponsored holiday meal.
 - Thrivent dollars may be used to pay for meals
 - Possibly having a sign-up ahead of time to determine how many meals would be needed
- Fellowship
- **MMSP to approve all reports (Heather Rheingans, MaryJo Senne)**

Concerns for the Present

- Nominations of incoming council representation
 - **MMSP--Nomination for Council President Janelle Johnson (Tim Knutson, Doug Fallgatter) (abstaining Heather, Shana)**
 - **MMSP--Nomination for Vice President Doug Fallgatter (MaryJo Senne, Tim Knutson) (abstaining Heather, Shana)**
 - **MMSP--Nomination for Nikkole Koenig-- Secretary (MaryJo Senne, Tim Knutson)**
 - **Treasurer-Matt Johnson**
- Audit committee will be contacted by incoming President to conduct an audit in January.
- Notification will need to be made that an audit was conducted
- Organ meetings will need to be rescheduled in 2021.
- Covid Rates & Guidance
 - Hovering at 13% currently
 - Goal is if community rate is 10-15%, then monitor weekly
 - Current plan to be consistent through holiday season and possible surge after holiday gatherings is to keep church online until 3rd week of January
 - Christmas eve and Day services online and Christmas eve outdoor
 - **MMSP to continue plans to hold services online (or outdoor on Christmas Eve) through December, re-evaluate after holidays. (Nikkole Koenig, Kris Kenison).**
 - ☒ Staff will discuss and determine locations for outdoor service and logistics
 - Pastor will take vacation Dec 26-Jan 2
 - ☒ Linda Griffith will lead worship on Sunday, December 27
 - **MMSP to approve (Heather Rheingans, Doug Fallgatter) new church membership for Annika Sogge.**
 - Thank you from outgoing President Shana Brunsvold to the 2020 council.
 - Thank you to all outgoing members (Mitch, Heather, Shana) for your dedication and service during 2020.

We Go out in God's Name

- Lord's Prayer

Next Council Meeting: Sunday, January 10, 2021

Donations & Memorials

Donations:

Meals on Wheels	\$305.43
Riverside Camp	\$25.00
Sound System	\$500
Manna	\$1,238.94
Good Samaritan	\$1,238.94

First Lutheran Financial Update

December 2020

Income	-	\$27,466.19
Electronic Income		\$2,889.07
Expense		(\$20,839.55)
End of Month		(\$9,515.71)

YTD as of Dec. 31

Income		\$170,837.13
Electronic Income		\$29,939.45
Other Income		80,782.42
Expense		-\$266,200.69
End of Month		\$15,358.31

First Lutheran Mission

January 1– December 31, 2020

Bremwood	\$	150.00
Operation Christmas Child	\$	546.86
Youth Fund (Bibles & Catechisms)	\$	2,390.00
Caring Tree	\$	1,072.86
Meals on Wheels	\$	511.91
Manna	\$	3,267.83
Heifer International	\$	757.79
Lutheran World Relief (Trust Fund)	\$	7,000.00
Riverside Bible Camp	\$	164.95
Camperships	\$	45.00
Good Samaritan Fund	\$	2,297.49
Lutheran Services	\$	143.32
Lutheran Disaster Relief –Iowa Storm	\$	200.00
Day Springs	\$	230.00
Northern Lights Shelter	\$	100.00
TOTAL	\$	18,878.01

October General Budget Expenses

PAYROLL:	\$	15,023.65
E-GIVING EXPENSE	\$	65.81
CHURCH MAINTENANCE	\$	312.29
UTILITIES	\$	1,760.18
TELEPHONE	\$	213.29
OFFICE EXPENSE	\$	2,190.38
PASTOR PROF. EXP	\$	131.69
MISC. EXPENSE	\$	17.26
N.E. SYNOD	\$	<u>1,125.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$	20,839.55
INCOME	\$	30,355.26
NET	\$	9,515.71

February Share Shoppe

JULIA Circle on February 6th

Staff Phone Numbers

Pastor Sogge	612-718-9151
Mark Willand	641-390-1032
Troy Bachtle	641-430-8305
Jan Thompson	641-390-0883
Christa Larson-Trenhaile	641-390-0484

Announcements

*Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted.
The troubles of my heart are enlarged; bring me out of my distresses.
Psalm 25:16-17*

Sympathy to the family of Glenn Van Sabben. May God comfort all those who mourn his loss.

Thank you First Lutheran Women and Congregation, for your gift of money to Manna of Worth County.
–Manna

Thank you for your gift of money which is used to help support families in need. –Lutheran World Relief

Thank you for the gift of money that will be used to serve the children. –Samaritan's Purse

Thank you to all women of First Lutheran who participated in offerings of Thanksgiving. We were close to doubling our gift to Manna and Good Samaritan Fund this year!

Sunday School

Sunday school will be held the 1st and 3rd Sundays of month, starting February 7th. We will meet in the basement from 10:00-10:45am and of course, masks required. 😊

To All Thrivent Members

Remember to call Thrivent and direct your choice dollars for 2021.

You may call Thrivent at 1-800-4836

Have your policy number available and say "Thrivent Choice" when prompted.

-Your Thrivent Advocates



- 1) Tyler Trenhaile
- 2) Courtney Jorgensen, Christine Hulsing
- 3) Mary Dodd, Emily Toresdahl
- 4) Lucus Hoffman, Ohin Shackleton, Ryan Tufte
- 5) JoAnn Julson
- 6) Elaine Butler, Anne Marie Kinnin, Amanda Maricle
- 7) Monte DeArmoun, Leland Swenson
- 8) Nancy Hengesteg, Zach Nelson, Kinley Thompson
- 9) Allyson Carlson, Mary Kalvig, Kenlyn Reindl
- 10) Clare Hengesteg, Caroline Hengesteg, Matthew Johnson, Jaden Lafferty
- 11) Lon Christianson, Debra Rustad, Roger Rustad
- 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
- 17) Kristoffer Kenison
- 18) Dexter Duvall, Larry Kenison, Avery LaRue, Belle Magritz
- 19) Jeri Severson
- 20) Alison Gores, Nicole Husske, Jordan Kenison, Dawson VanRyswyk, Betsy Wright
- 21) Wanda Hoffman, Robert Reeder, Tyson Werner
- 22) Henry Houg, Helen Ringham
- 23) Diane Myli
- 24) Daniel Bestul, 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, Irene Stricker
- 27) Jody Christianson, Keith Julson, Conni Kenison, Annika Schreiber
- 28) Nicholas Shackleton, Ellen Van Sabben, Brian Waller, John Weitzel, Betty Goodrich, Clayton Ogea
- 29) Shirley Ausenhus, John Berg

FEBRUARY 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1 10am: Staff Mtg. 6pm: Worship Comm. Mtg.	2 7:30pm: AA- Al-Anon	3 5:45pm: 7 th -8 th Grade Confirmation	4 8:30am: Quilting 9:00am: Prayer Group	5 	6
7 <u>Epiphany 5</u> 9:00am- Service with Holy Communion 10:00am- Sunday School 10:15am- 9 th Grade Confirmation	8 10am: Staff Mtg.	9 7:30pm: AA- Al-Anon 	10 5:45pm: 7 th -8 th Grade Confirmation	11 8:30am: Quilting 9:00am: Prayer Group	12	13 
14 <u>Transfiguration</u> 9:00am- Service 10:00am- Council Mtg. Conference Assembly via Zoom. Happy Valentine's Day 	15 10am: Staff Mtg.	16 7:30pm: AA- Al-Anon	17 7pm: Ash Wednesday with Holy Communion 5:45pm: 7 th -8 th Grade Confirmation	18 8:30am: Quilting 9:00am: Prayer Group	19 	20
21 <u>Lent 1</u> 9:00am- Service with Holy Communion 10:00am- Sunday School	22 10am: Staff Mtg.	23 7:30pm: AA- Al-Anon	24 7pm: Lenten Service 5:45pm: 7 th -8 th Grade Confirmation	25 8:30am: Quilting 9:00am: Prayer Group	26	27 
28 <u>Lent 2</u> 9:00am- Service	1	2 	3	4 	5	6