

First Lutheran Church
309 Ninth Street North
Northwood, IA 50459

Office hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9am – 2:00pm
Wednesday, 9am- 12pm, Fridays, closed.

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First Lutheran Focus

February 2025

Address Service Requested

<u>Week</u>	<u>Counter</u>	<u>Lay Reader</u>	<u>Usher</u>	<u>Greeter</u>	<u>Acolyte</u>
February 2	Randy & Laure Buehrer	Dani Gentz		Varner family	Lily Varner
February 9	David & Sharron Petznick	Leila Gangstad		TBD	TBD
February 16	Russ & Delores Knudson	6 th graders		Gentz family	Casey Gentz Kenly Solberg
February 23	Mike & Judy Stevens	Tim Knutson		Reyerson family	Jaxon Reyerson Makayla Reyerson

Communion Set up: Pat Nelson & Christa Trenhaile

Altar Candles: Pat Nelson & Christa Trenhaile

Share Shoppe
Saturday, February 1st

PASTOR'S PAGE

“To make bread or love, to dig in the earth, to feed an animal or cook for a stranger – these activities require no extensive commentary, no lucid theology. All they require is someone willing to bend, reach, chop, stir. Most of these tasks are so full of pleasure that there is no need to complicate things by calling them holy. And yet these are the same activities that change lives, sometimes all at once and sometimes more slowly, the way dripping water changes stone.” She goes on to say, “In a world where faith is often construed as a way of thinking, bodily practices remind the willing that faith is a way of life.” *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor



We have made it a month into 2025 and most new year resolutions have fallen by the wayside but I'm wondering how you are doing in deepening your life of faith. Remember, it doesn't require you to come and be at church each day and meditate (confirmation youth have wondered if that is what I do). That's my connection to what Barbara Brown Taylor is saying above. Faith is a way of life, and the Bible offers many promises, directives as well as warnings about how to live out our faith. Are we letting our light shine before others? (Matthew 5:16) Are you doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God? (Micah 6:8) Are you rejoicing each day that God gives you? (Psalm 118:24) How about Paul's words in Philippians 4:9 "Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and head and seen in me, and the God peace will be with you."

If you follow me on Facebook, you saw my post about my Aunt Dolores who died on January 25th. Aunt Dolores was my godmother, and she was a person who lived out her faith daily in whatever she did. Baking bread or sweet rolls. Serving as a Stephen Minister or many other activities at her church. She was the tech guru for her apartment building and friend circle way ahead of anyone else knowing how to turn on their computers, etc. She was also the person who would sit with me in my tears as we mourned the death of my mom, dad, older brother, and other difficult life transitions. I'm grateful that I was able to see her a few weeks ago and remember stories together.

I'm including my suggestions for deepening your life of faith from last months newsletter. I truly hope that you understand faith as a way of life and not limited to what you do when you are in the church building so that when you come on Sunday or Wednesday evening to worship you can give praise and be renewed in our common journey as a community of faith.

*Strengthen your private devotional life. * Take time to read the Bible and pray each day because it is as important as eating right and exercising daily.
* Prayer is a wonderful time to pray for the needs of others. And prayer is a good place to ask for God's direction in life.

* What are the gifts that God has given you? * What new and exciting focus is God calling you to? * Where will you proclaim God's presence and witness to Jesus Christ in your life? * Where will you be the hands and feet of Christ this year? * How will you give thanks for all God has done for you?



Grateful for privilege it is to be your pastor. –Pastor Becky

YOUTH NEWS

We ended 2024 with a Senior High Lock-In where around 30 students 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! With most of the senior high kids already being here all night the night before, we scheduled a movie night for the first Wednesday night of the new year.

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 our lessons revolved around sharing our story with others. Learning how to trust others and sharing what has happened in our lives. We again went back to Jeremiah 29:11 as the core of that lesson.

Bible study on Monday nights has been going well. Most weeks we have around 10 showing up and the kids are really stepping up to lead these. It's been awesome seeing them step up to lead things and has been nice for me to be able to participate and learn alongside them.

Towards the end of the month, I was able to attend the ELCA Youth Directors Extravaganza in Louisville, KY. It's always a blessing to hang out with other Youth Leaders and “talk shop” in ways that most people don't understand! We got to hear from many great speakers, and my personal favorite was Prairie Rose Seminole who is an advocate for Native people with the ELCA. The seminars that I was able to attend were great as well!



NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Altar flowers on Sunday, February 2nd are in honor of Lavon Lindflott's 100th birthday.

We extend our sympathy and prayers to Pastor Becky and her family at the death of her aunt/godmother, Dolores Sogge on January 25th. Her funeral will be held in St. Anthony, MN on February 17th.

Thank you to David and Sharron Petznick for taking the time to water and care for the Poinsettias this year.

Thank you to Nikkole Koenig for leading worship on Sunday, January 5th.

A special thank you, to Pastor Matt Larson for leading us in worship on Sunday, January 19th.

A speaker from Riverside Bible Camp will be in worship on Sunday, February 9th.

The Sunday School children will be singing in church on Sunday, February 16th.

The 1st grade class will receive their Catechisms on Sunday, February 23rd.

Please take advantage of calling Thrivent throughout the year or your Choice Dollars are lost. Call by February 27th of each year and direct the dollars to First Lutheran Thrivent Fund.

Directions: Call 1-800-847-4836 and when prompted say "Thrivent Choice". Have your policy number available. A representative will work with you to direct your choice dollars.

Please bring your spare change for Noisy Offering on Sunday, February 9th and 23rd. This offering goes to the mission of the month which is the Good Samaritan Fund which is distributed through the Worth County Sheriff's office for those in need.

If you have a child that would like to attend Riverside Bible camp this year,
you may register before February 15th to receive the Early Bird discount (\$15).

When registering your child please use the **code: 25FL** if attending a full week of camp and **code: 25FLA** if attending a half week of camp. This will ensure that your child gets put on the First Lutheran Church's account and we will be billed for the remaining amount owed for camp. First Lutheran will pay \$360 for a full week of camp and \$90 for a half week and you are responsible for the remaining balance.



We are accepting applications/resumes for the position of Building Manager. This is a part-time position that will begin March 17th with a two-week overlap with the current Building Manager. Job description is available in the church office.

**Regular Council Meeting
December 17, 2024
First Lutheran Church - Northwood**

Devotion - Kimberly Anderson - Through the busy, crazy time, find a moment to calm our hearts and be present.

We Assemble in God's Name

In Attendance: Kris, Nikkole, Kim, Judy, Matt, Rev. Becky, Gina, Mariah, Megan

We Celebrate our Past

Presidential Correspondence - Nikkole K. - Nothing new to mention.

Secretary's Report - Megan O. Last meeting's minutes were taken by Gina. No Corrections.
Treasurer's Report- Matt J. - Presented Treasurer's Report

Pastor's Report - Pastor Becky - JoAnn Lower reached out asking to do Children's sermons. It is something she has done in the past in Minnesota. Nominations Committee will need to be started. Vacation is coming up, Dec. 26-Jan 11. Readings and carols to be held during service, then January 5th service can be led by anyone. A trip to Reno to see Pastor's sister. Rev. Matt Larson will be with us Jan. 19, preaching and touching base with councils at Deer Creek following their services that Sunday. Our Annual meeting will be held January 26, 2025 - reports are due January 3, and will be available to the congregation January 12. Trust fund grants are due tomorrow. Clergy Renewal grant proposal in process.

Motion was made to accept the reports by Kris, seconded by Kim - Approved.

We present our Offering

FINANCE - Matt J. - Changes include dialing in on some of the numbers, including employee benefits and wages. "Total Payroll Expenses" and above were honed in and assessed. A 2% increase was given to the staff, and our budget is still currently LESS than the budgeted amount from 2024.

Motion was made to approve the proposed budget by Mariah, seconded by Gina. Approved.

Matt announced his wish to step down from the finance committee, effective January 31, 2025. The council accepts with

<u>First Lutheran Financial Update</u>	
<u>December 2024</u>	
Income	\$36,729.37
Electronic	\$3,384.26
Income	
Expense	\$20,532.58
End of Month	\$19,581.05
<u>YTD as of</u>	
<u>December</u>	
Income	\$191,696.66
Electronic	\$39,513.68
Income	
Inspire	\$295.17
Other Income	\$1,888.04
Use of Church	\$1,240.00
Expense	\$235,510.47
End of Month	(\$876.92)

<u>December General Budget</u>	
<u>Expenses</u>	
Payroll:	\$ 15,478.47
Pastor's Mileage	\$ 481.66
E-Giving Expense	\$ 44.53
Church Maintenance	\$ 201.04
Parsonage Maintenance	\$ 721.96
Utilities	\$ 1,591.17
Telephone	\$ 216.25
Office Expense	\$ 1,422.50
N. Iowa Synod	\$ 375.00
Total Expenses	\$ 20,532.58
Income	\$ 40,113.63
Net	\$ 19,581.05

Motion was made by Mariah to accept, with regret, Matt's resignation as of January 31, 2025. Seconded by Kim - Approved.

WORSHIP- Kimberly A. - Met in November. The Polka service was great fun! The next meeting will be January 7th. Great turn out on Sunday (12/15)! New families are coming in!

INSPIRE- Kevin M. - Consistently practicing on Sunday evenings. This Wednesday is all Christmas music. Then the next Inspire is January 15th.

STEWARDSHIP - Connie K. -

YOUTH-Weston W. - SR High youth numbers have been AMAZING. Bible study, then a meal has been held each week. Life fest is getting great sign up numbers, 75 (or so). No Youth Christmas or New Years day. In Jan, -6th graders are going to be invited to JR H Youth.

EDUCATION - Mariah B. - Sunday school Christmas program was GREAT! Very well received. On break till Jan 12. Then, reaching out to parents to sign up for the months. Asking people has had a much better result than volunteer sign up. Extra hands from some of the Youth during Sunday School have been very helpful! Planning for 2025, beginning to sing Christmas music in November will leave more time to practice and prepare for Christmas.

PROPERTY - Kris K. - A WCDA grant is being applied for. This would include a nice lighted sign for the front of the church and security cameras. A discussion was also had about additional changing tables for mothers as a future project. Our BiAnnual generator maintenance agreement has come up. The total is \$1267.95 from Floyd and Leonard Auto.

Mariah made a motion to approve the Generator Maintenance Agreement for \$1267.95, seconded by Kris. - Approved.

The property committee is planning to approach the Altar Guild about the functionality and reliability of the flower fridge.

MISSION- Gina S. - A few grants are being proposed. Foster Care, Foster Closet, Meals on Wheels (Elderbridge has decreased their support - and the locals are in need of funds), and starting a Feed My Starving Children Pact here locally.

FELLOWSHIP-Judy S. - Next big event is Christmas. We stopped having people donate food. A meal is planned after the 10:30 service on Christmas. A big reminder flyer will be going up and on Facebook. All food will come from HyVee, everything is prepared and efficient.

Ideas for the future:

Rededication ceremony to be moved to fall.
4th of July parade to do popcorn outside.
Ham balls to come back. Potentially twice a year.
Working to get the kids involved.

An event for Founders Day.

On Feb. 16 we are planning on a Baked Potato Bar with dessert. Hopefully becoming an annual community meal.

A small deep freeze will be replaced with a small upright to help with accessibility.

The choir took a trip to the Lutheran Retirement home and Northwood Pines carolling. Residents were very excited to see us!

Concerns for the Present

Staff transition - No new updates on Troy's position. Word to go out in the paper, online, etc. Potential to be hired here, AND filling the position at the United Methodist Church (which combined would offer more hours). Staff is making plans to honor Troy and send him off.

The nominating committee needs to begin working on our next Council members. Nikkole will join them on the committee. Kevin, Dennis and Tim are currently on the committee.

First Lutheran Missions	
<u>November 2024</u>	
Riverside Bible Camp	\$ 17.21
Good Samaritan Fund	\$ 171.51
Lutheran World Relief & World Hunger	\$ 149.59
Bremwood - LSI	\$ 326.39
Operation Christmas Child	\$
Education Fund	\$ 200.00
Youth Fund	\$ 156.99
Sunday School Fund	\$
Caring Tree	\$ 107.52
Meals on Wheels	\$
Manna	\$
Heifer International	\$
Campers Fund	\$
Dayspring Children's Village	\$ 42.44
Northern Lights Shelter	\$ 69.94
LRH Auxiliary	\$ 119.12
TOTAL	\$ 1,437.41

December Donations

Riverside Bible Camp - \$17.21

New Members/Baptisms/Funerals
New Members - no
Funerals - no
Weddings: Toni & Tucker Barrickman
Baptisms: -no

Communion Servers:

December 24 - Weston, Kris, Nikkole

December 25 - Megan

January 12 - Mariah, Gina, Kimberly

Bread - The body of Christ given for you.' Wine -

"The blood of Christ shed for you.'

What to say to children....(hand on head).... "Jesus

Loves You!" #1

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

A Motion was made to Adjourn by Kim, seconded
by Kris.

Approved.

Lord's Prayer

Next Meeting: January **19**, Following the Deer

Creek

Valley Meeting.

Devotions: Gina Solberg

Upcoming Dates

February 9 – Speaker from Riverside

February 16 – Sunday School Children Sing

February 23 – 1st Grade Catechisms

Mission Project for February

Good Samaritan Fund

Annual Meeting Results:

Church Council: Hayley Maher and Mike Stevens. Mariah Ballantyne has agreed to stay on the council.

Nominating Committee: Kevin McClure, Dennis Johnson, Tim Knutson

Audit Committee: Jody Christianson, Kim Hengesteg, Sarah Stevens

Trust Fund: Tom Watts, Ray Hoffman, Jake Urbatsch

Representative to LRH Annual Meeting: Sonay Dahle, Lois Hogan, Janice Hopperstad, Shirleen Julson

Voting Member for Synod Assembly: Russ and Delores Knudson

Thank you to Nikkole Koenig for serving on the council for two terms, including the past two years as council president.

Thank you to Matt Johnson for serving as treasurer for the past four years.

Thank you to Judy Stevens for serving on council this past year and now serving as the treasurer for the church.



DAYSPRING

CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

Our academic year concludes in December, so we held our Annual Awards Day on November 30th. The children showcased their God-given gifts/talents through praise songs, dance, and scripture recitations. It is a highlight of the year, and by the end of the day, Dayspring empties like water rushing from a broken dam as the children head home with their parent/caregivers.

For maintenance, this is a busy time of cleaning, painting, and repairs to prepare for the new school year in January. It is not much of a holiday for us but it is easier and much quieter without 101 children around!

Sadly, this year we have faced three 'minor' (but still costly) break-ins since October. They have taken the hostel TV and laptop (still unreplaced), cut the fence, broke a staff window, and recently cut cables powering our wells/boreholes, disrupting water supply. These incidents occur during Eskom (our national electricity grid) outages, leaving our security compromised. It has been years since we have had any kind of break-in; we hear it is a couple of youth in our community. We have also had powerful lightning strikes torch 3 of our energizers (unit used to power our electric fence) which has cost us tremendously. We pray for protection and trust God for sponsorship for solar power to keep our security systems running regardless of the grid.

Our 3 boreholes are producing strong water despite the nationwide drought and for the first time ever, we always had enough water. Even when our national grid causes us to go 24 – 48+ hours without electricity (like the past 3 days), we can hook up the generator to the newest well/borehole pump for water. This has relieved years of water stress, and we are so grateful to God!

Last year, we hosted the Global Rotary grant representative along with Rotarians from Yea, Australia, and Rustenburg Kloof. They visited to see how we used their funds for the new toilet blocks, sewerage system, and our latest classroom block. They were impressed by the quality of the buildings, the upkeep, and our responsible financial stewardship. Their positive feedback made all the challenges—municipal hurdles, prayers for intervention (especially building the toilet blocks during COVID lockdown), and countless hours spent on logistics—feel entirely worth it!

While the building process is hectic, we are excited about new hostels, a kitchen/dining hall, and offices in God's timing. Once the current hostels are freed up, they will be renovated into improved accommodations for our hardworking staff.

What a great season to remember the price Jesus paid to reconcile God to man and open up a new living way to commune with God the Father. May this reminder of who Jesus is and what He came to do fill you with all peace and joy in the Kingdom of God as you look forward to 2025.




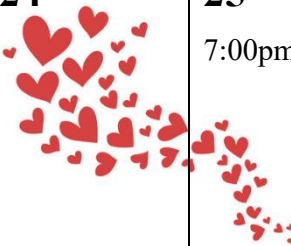
Blessings from Elijah, Kim and the family at Dayspring

(Copies of the complete letter are available in the Narthex)



- 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, Leland Swenson
- 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

FEBRUARY 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 <u>Epiphany 4</u> 9:00am: Service with H.C. 10:10am: Sunday School 10:30am: DCV with H.C. 6:30pm: JH. Youth	3	4 Manna Truck 11:00am: Staff Mtng 7:00pm: AA–Al-Anon	5 4:00pm: Confirmation 6:15pm: Inspire 7:00pm: Choir 7:00pm: SH Youth	6 8:30am: Quilting 9:00am: Prayer Gr. 6:30pm: Taekwondo	7	8
9 <u>Epiphany 5</u> 9:00am: Service with N.O. and Riverside speaker 10:10am: Sunday School 10:30am: DCV 6:30pm: JH. Youth	10	11 7:00pm: AA–Al-Anon	12 4:00pm: Confirmation 6:15pm: Inspire 7:00pm: Choir 7:00pm: SH Youth	13 8:30am: Quilting 9:00am: Prayer Gr. 6:30pm: Taekwondo 7:00pm: Pub Theology	14 	15
16 <u>Epiphany 6</u> 9:00am: Service with H.C. with S.S. singing 10:10am: Sunday School 10:30am: DCV with H.C. 3:00pm: LRH 6:30pm: JH. Youth	17	18 Manna Truck 11:00am: Staff Mtng 4:00pm: Trust Fund Mtng. 6:00pm: Council Mtng. 7:00pm: AA–Al-Anon	19 2:00pm: M. Court Chapel 4:00pm: Confirmation 6:15pm: Inspire 7:00pm: Choir 7:00pm: SH Youth	20 8:30am: Quilting 9:00am: Prayer Gr. 6:30pm: Taekwondo	21	22
23 <u>Epiphany 7</u> 9:00am: Service with N.O. with 1 st Grade Catechisms 10:10am: Sunday School 10:30am: DCV 6:30pm: JH. Youth	24 	25 7:00pm: AA–Al-Anon	26 4:00pm: Confirmation 6:15pm: Inspire 7:00pm: Choir 7:00pm: SH Youth	27 8:30am: Quilting 9:00am: Prayer Gr. 6:30pm: Taekwondo 7:00pm: Pub Theology	28	

