

JANUARY 2025



“And so it begins...” Words spoken by Theoden, King of Rohan, at the beginning of the Battle for Helm’s Deep in *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*. These words often come to me at the start of new things in my life—whether it’s the tip off to a Timberwolves’ game, the first meeting of a group or organization, and even the start of a new call! Although the context of this phrase is ominous, I find it helpful when entering into a time of uncertainty: when life is a relative blank slate and we don’t know exactly what may happen in the future.

This past year has seen much change for all of us, and we are now moving together with some stability—that is for certain. We have shared in ministry together for a few months, and I look forward to discovering where God might lead us in 2025—through Christ’s love and by the power of the Holy Spirit. We, the people of First Lutheran Church, have undertaken many journeys during our 134 year history, some enjoyable and some challenging. We have already come this far by God’s grace, and we are in a position to reflect God’s love in the year to come—a year that is filled with conflicting emotions for so many people.

This work of walking with our friends, family, loved ones, and neighbors will not always come easy. There will be disagreements, doubts, and misunderstandings, and there will also be times of laughter, gratitude, and hope. This is all part of being human. And the remarkable reality about all of this is that God knows what all of this means. God, through Jesus Christ, has experienced humankind firsthand—by living, breathing, laughing, crying, and walking miles in our shoes. God is with us when we mess up to pick us up and get us back on the path towards loving and caring for our neighbors and all creation. God is with us when we celebrate, as we give thanks for all we have been blessed with and wonder how we might share our blessings with others.

And, God is with us as we enter the great unknown that is 2025. Whatever may come—broken relationships and grief, political discord, unexpected joys, or answered prayers—we can turn to God to guide us in community as we discern how we might best respond with love, grace, and kindness. Sometimes that means calling a neighbor to check in. Sometimes that means repenting and seeking forgiveness for when we mess up. Sometimes that means writing a letter to our elected officials to advocate for more just and loving policies. Sometimes that means sitting with the lonely, the outcast, the person often ignored and making them feel cared for. Sometimes that means simply listening to another person and seeking to understand their perspective.

King Theoden’s lines ring true for me today, and they also ground me in a profound hope of what is to come – the time when our Savior will appear at the break of dawn and make the world whole again. This year, I invite you to look for those moments when you get a glimpse of this hope. Write them down or share them with a loved one. Remember them on the hard days, and give thanks for them on the good ones. This month, come and share in this hope with our congregation.



With Hope and Expectation, Pastor D.J.

First Ev Lutheran Church Council Minutes – December 18, 2024 @ 7:00 PM

Welcome and Call to Order: President Chris Cordes @ 7:00 pm.

Devotions: Tammy Fletcher, 2 Corinthians, 4:4-6, The light of the Gospel, Christs light shines in the darkness.

Present: Pastor D.J. Chatelaine, Chris Cordes, Candy Herrlich, Carmen Nesseth, Brad Nesseth, Eric Hoversten, Tammy Fletcher.

Approve Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda Carmen/Candy/pass.

Consent Agenda Items:

Secretary's Report: Reviewed as printed in the November Church Newsletter.

Treasurer's Report: Current giving was down at the time of council but hoping end of the year giving will turn that around. Two notable large year-end expenses were Property Liability/WC Insurance, totaling \$13,216. Thanks to a generous donor we have met the balance of our benevolence obligation of \$8,000 for the year. Organ repair fundraising continues. Tammy presented the proposed budget for 2025. Motion to approve the proposed budget pending adjustments to salary and payroll tax without further vote Eric//Brad/pass.

Pastor's Report: Home visits ongoing and have made follow-up visits to most folks on the list. Held second open prayer time on 12/3 with 2 participants. First hosted the Kenyon Area Thanksgiving service on 11/26. Led the prayer before the tree lighting ceremony during Christmas in Kenyon on 12/14. After that attended movie night at church; thank you to Bryana, Erica, Heidi and her granddaughters, Peyton, Hunter and Boe. Attended the premier of Holden Vespers Band arrangement at the Dec. 9 Band/Choir Concert at KWHS. Cheers to band director Claire, all the band kids involved, their parents for supporting the wonderful concert and Elsie for her solo. Confirmation acolytes begin on Dec. 1. Students participated in Wed. Night Advent worship. Attended Cannon River Conference meeting at Trinity in Wanamingo on Dec. 12. First Lutheran will be hosting the Cannon River Conference Assembly on Sunday Feb. 16 from 2-4. Council as leaders is at Trinity in Owatonna on Sat. March 8 from 9-3. Mel Kirchhoff funeral was Nov. 22. Nordis Luebke memorial service is Sat. Dec. 21 at 11. Met with Mary Skundberg family to plan a 1 pm Jan. 4 service. Wed. Advent services have had good participation with an average of 17. Did an adult forum on Dec. 1. I will be participating in "First Call" Continuing Education. My wife has a new call to serve at St. Paul's Lutheran Church German Lake (30 minutes from Faribault). She starts Jan. 15. Gol Lutheran Pastor, Joe Jorgensen, will be on call Pastor when I am on vacation 1/1-1/3. Mileage & other expense from 11/21-12/18= \$126.78. Motion to approve the consent agenda including mileage and other expense reimbursements. Carmen/Tammy/pass.

President's Report: Chris attended the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) meeting in November. If anyone is interested in attending in January please contact him. Reminder that end of year reports are due and you need to send to Tammy in a Word format.

Ongoing Items:

1. Website & Facebook: Pastor D.J. continues to add to and edit the website and Facebook page. Anyone wanting to add stories, happenings, or pictures please send them to Pastor D.J.
2. Organ Repairs Fundraising: Members of the Organ Repair Fundraising committee are Chair-Tanya Short, Chris Cordes, Eric Hoversten, Susan Hoversten, Carmen Nesseth, and Heidi Haugen. Watch for Fundraising events starting Jan. 19 with Community Hymn Sing and Dinner. More information will be forthcoming.

Youth Rep. Report: No report.

Committee Reports:

FLCW-Thank Offering money to be sent to Synod WELCA -\$780.00. Lefse made on Nov. 15, profit \$460.00. Mitten Tree in the Narthex, donations accepted. Discussed annual disbursements of FLCW Funds. List will be in the annual report. We are still looking for new board members for 2025. Prayerfully consider volunteering.

Gifts were purchased by volunteers and wrapped for the family First Lutheran had for the Goodhue County Christmas Project. Love Day dates: Thursday, Jan. 9 and Thursday, Jan. 23.

Worship/Evangelism-Pastor DJ shared a Advent bulletin on" The Weary World Rejoices". Pastor DJ will provide music, a short reflection with a ritual. Service starts at 6 pm lasts 30 minutes, Confirmation kids have been asked to be worship assistants. Cookies donation completed. Expected time of 30-40 minutes starting at 6:00 pm in the sanctuary. Christmas Eve 4 pm candle light service, nativity set up. Discussed options for new committee members, Sherry volunteered to stay on. Barb stated she would if people are needed. January 5 will include Christmas hymns, January 6 is Epiphany, January 12 is Baptism of Jesus/ Epiphany, January 19 bell choir and January 26 will check with Tom Ersland about playing guitar and annual meeting following. Blended service discussion- Tanya shared that we are already doing parts of a "blended" service, and discussed what a blended service means. Pastor DJ said he has tried a few different approaches in regard to robe wearing (or not), pulpit vs floor preaching, etc. Discussed option of taking one of the coffee hour times after church to discuss with members what a blended service means.

Property and Management- no report.

Stewardship-Working with Organ Repair Committee to help raise funds. Stewardship Challenge envelopes still coming in. A few items were dropped off at the Kenyon Area Food Shelf. Thank you to the generous anonymous donor who donates \$200 each month to the All Seasons Food Shelf.

Youth and Education- Simmer pots kits were a HUGE success raising close to \$1,100.00! This will most likely become our annual FALL fundraiser for our SS/youth programs. Our annual Christmas shopping was fantastic, and we had lots of youth volunteers which was so great to see. Christmas in Kenyon movie night- the turn out was so-so, I think the weather played a big part in attendance. January 18th Family Fun snow tubing under the lights at Steeplechase in Mazeppa 6-8pm paid for by FLC youth. We are in need of new committee members to join our team! Please contact Bryana or the church office for information. Youth email address: flcyouth45@gmail.com.

KAIC- No report.

Long Range Planning/Personnel/Endowment/Committees- did not meet

Next Meeting: January 15th, 6 pm **Devotions:** Carmen

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn Carmen/Tammy/pass Time: 8:50 pm

Closing with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted, Carmen Nesseth, Secretary Pro-Tem

JANUARY - SAVE THE DATE

SUN JAN 26, 10:15 am CONGREGATION ANNUAL MEETING

FEBRUARY - SAVE THE DATE

SUN FEB 16, 2-4 pm Hosting Cannon River Conference Assembly

LIVING LUTHERAN PRINT PUBLICATION TO RESUME

Dear readers:

There are few instances where we can recall people publicly admitting they were wrong, though as humans we should be saying that more often. However, this is one of those moments.

Last year *Living Lutheran* ceased as a print publication and continued as a digital-only service because of financial constraints. Running a monthly publication grew too expensive during a time of consolidated resources and shrinking readership. Since then, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and staff have heard from many of you who have shared concerns about members who don't have access to computers or don't read content online for various reasons. As a result, people have felt disconnected from the ELCA.

We heard you—and listened. At the request of Bishop Eaton, we have found a way to bring back the magazine's print publication. Beginning in 2025, *Living Lutheran* will again appear in your mailboxes with four issues a year (spring, summer, winter and fall). The cost for one year will be \$19.95 for an individual subscription and \$17 per year for a congregation group subscription.

To start receiving your print magazine, you can:

Call 800-328-4648 (use this method for congregation group subscriptions).

Sign up at www.livinglutheran.org/subscribe.

Fill out the form below and mail it to Augsburg Fortress, P.O. Box 1553, Minneapolis, MN 55440-8730.

Please note: You will be invoiced in spring 2025 for your subscription. If your subscription didn't lapse at the end of 2023, you will receive a renewal notice when it expires. Rostered ministers don't need to sign up—we already have your addresses.

Thank you for your support in the past—and in the future. We look forward to again sharing in print our church's stories of God's people living their faith.

Blessings,

Jayne Shinko

Director, Content Strategy

Andrea Pohlmann Kulik

Manager, Editorial Services/*Living Lutheran*

Living Lutheran

Yes, I want to subscribe to Living Lutheran!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Mail this form to: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, P.O. Box 1553, Minneapolis, MN 55440-8730.



2025 January



Seasons: CHRISTMAS - EPIPHANY - **AFTER EPIPHANY**

			1	2	3	4
				7 AA		
5 <i>Christmas 2</i> 9 Worship 10 Sun School 10 Coffee	6 <i>Epiphany</i>	7 12-1 Open Prayer Time- <i>In Sanctuary</i>	8 5-30-7 Confirmation	9 1 LOVE DAY 7 AA	10	11
12 <i>Baptism of Jesus</i> 9 Worship 10 Sun School 10 Coffee	13	14	15 5-30-7 Confirmation 6 COUNCIL	16 7 AA	17	18 6-8 pm Family Snow Tubing at Steeplechase Mazeppa.
19 <i>After Epiphany 2</i> <i>Bell Choir</i> 9 Worship 10 Sun School 10 Coffee 4 – 7	20	21	22 5-30-7 Confirmation	23 1 LOVE DAY 7 AA	24	25
Hymn Sing & Supper/Organ Fundraiser						
26 <i>After Epiphany 3</i> 9 Worship S/S sings 10:15 ANNUAL MTG 10 Sun School 10 Coffee	27	28 7 pm KAIC	29 5-30-7 Confirmation	30 7 AA	31	



Benjamin Franklin said, ***"Lost time is never found again."***

Uhm – do I need to worry about losing it or Can I forget about it ?

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
309 FOREST STREET, KENYON, MN 55946
PHONE: 507-789-5261
E-MAIL: firstlutherankenyon@gmail.com
WEBSITE: flckenyon.org

JANUARY

NEWSLETTER



A NEW YEAR POEM FROM INTERN YVONNE

Beloved,
If you're looking to lose something this year
consider losing the weight of others' expectations.
Maybe think about quitting smoking
and no longer beating yourself up for those mistakes we all make.
I pray you forgive yourself as God does.
I hope you look yourself in the eye
and see the image of God,
breathing in the peace of Christ.
As we move into a new year,
hold yourself gently, like a newborn.
Wipe the tears from your face, like a child,
reach out to someone to help you up when your knees are scraped.
And show yourself grace.
-Vicar Yvonne