



First Lutheran Church - ELCA

January 2026

# The Voice

of the First Lutheran Congregation

First Lutheran Church  
401 7th Av SW Pipestone MN  
56164  
Phone: 507-825-5837

## The Season of Christmas



Christ has been born. The angels have sung. The shepherds and wise men have visited Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. Christmas is over. Sort of! The Season of Christmas actually begins December 25, and lasts for 12 days, ending on January 5, the day before Epiphany, January 6.

Epiphany is the day the Wise Men / Magi brought gifts to the Christ child – the first Christmas gifts! In the Middle Ages, there were only religious holidays, so people tried to make them last as long as possible. In wealthy households, a gift was often given each of the 12 days. The carol of “The 12 Days of Christmas” probably comes from the 1500s, when “counting” songs were popular.

A partridge in a pear tree  
Two turtle doves  
Three French hens  
Four calling birds  
Five golden rings  
Six geese a-laying

Seven swans a-swimming  
Eight maids a-milking  
Nine ladies dancing  
Ten lords a-leaping  
Eleven pipers piping  
Twelve drummers drumming

In 2025, buying the gift of the day each of the 12 days would cost \$51,476.12, up 4.5% over 2024. If the gifts accumulated to bring the total to 364 gifts (12 partridges in pear trees, 22 turtle doves, 30 French hens, etc), it would cost \$218,542.98, up 4.4% over 2024. (according to the PNC Christmas Price Index, <https://www.pnc.com/en/about-pnc/topics/pnc-christmas-price-index.html#gifts>).

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(continued...)

Don't rush Christmas to be over December 26th! Enjoy the delight of the season, eating cookies, drinking hot chocolate or warm apple cider, spending time with family and friends, amid the twinkle of lights and the glow of candles. Spend some time pondering the mystery of Christ's birth, his ministry, his death, and his resurrection. Especially as school children have 2 full weeks of vacation this year, make the most of the precious time with family.

After the Season of Christmas comes the Season of Epiphany. Epiphany lasts from January 6 through Mardi Gras, or Fat Tuesday, which this year is February 17. Ash Wednesday is February 18, which is the start of Lent. During Epiphany, we look at the start of Jesus's ministry, the calling of the disciples, and the Sermon on the Mount.

*Pastor Ann*

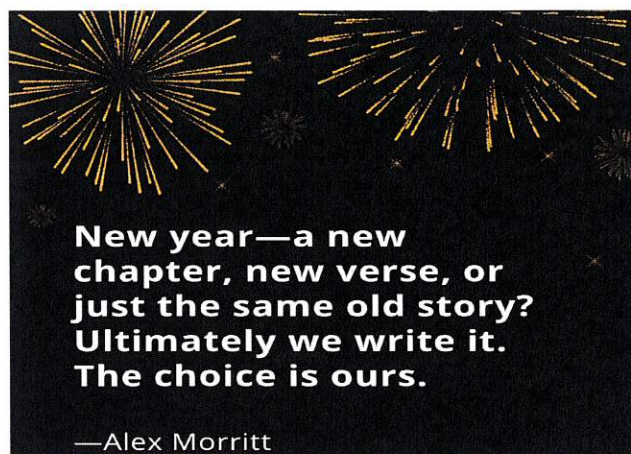


## New Year, New Goals, New Challenges, Renewed Faith in Yourself

The New Year...it is a time for reflection, renewal and setting new goals. Here are some inspirational quotes to guide you through challenges and remind you of your purpose as you start a fresh new journey in 2026:

- ♦ Every sunrise brings a new chance; seize it with open arms.
- ♦ This year, let your dreams be your compass.
- ♦ Small steps lead to big transformations; start today.
- ♦ Embrace change; it's the only constant in the journey of life.
- ♦ Your potential to be great is limitless; dare to explore it!

These quotes can serve as a daily reminder to stay focused, motivated, and committed to your goals. Remember, every setback is a setup for a



comeback and with even more resilience, you can turn every challenge into an opportunity for growth. To step out and do things you never thought you could do.

This year, may God bless you with a renewed passion for your dreams, opening doors to opportunities and granting you the courage to chase them with unwavering faith.

**Keep the Faith - God has your back!!!**



## Council Highlights from December 12th, 2025

- ♦ MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Pastor Ann Zastrow, Kristy Henriksen, Sarah Meyer, Thad Reinert, Robert Baerenwald. Nicole Weber, Al Hollingsworth, Danielle Ossefoort, Cristy Appel & Marit Sterud  
Absent: Karen Boehm
- ♦ TREASURER'S REPORT: motion to pay Progress out of the Building Fund, table the cumulative payment to the SW Synod. All other bills to be paid as listed. Discussion on the depleted general fund - money from Youth and LIFT accounts were given to the general fund to help cover costs.
- ♦ PASTOR'S REPORT: requested to take Dec. 25 to the 29th off for vacation to be with family. The yearly housing allowance of \$1000 was also approved.
- ♦ PRESIDENT'S REPORT: will try to notate line items on the 2026 budget that are NOT paid by parishioners but from the endowment or other funds.
- ♦ Unfinished Business notes: Planned giving is January 11th, 2025, more information will be posted later. Lefse making went well with many attending. Nominating committee for committee spots has many spots to fill for 2026.
- ♦ New Business: Annual meeting is set for Jan. 25, 2026 following worship, reports are due to Lori by Dec. 15th. 2026 Council orientation will be on Feb. 1st, 2026 following worship.
- ♦ Congregational Life: searching for committee replacements. Upcoming Stampede hockey game with Youth leading the activity.
- ♦ Property Management: discussed the possibility of brick and masonry issues causing the leaking issues and not the actual roof. Will get a masonry consult before the roof repair. Energy audit was done - waiting on final report. Snowblower is not running consistently, will do a further assessment. Spring of 2026 will need a replacement of missing shingles.
- ♦ LIFT & Youth: Nights with LIFT & the contemporary service are being addressed. Many kids are being dropped off and unattended by parents during the service. Toys were purchased for the toy drive and given to Kiwanis for distribution. Stampede game in the works.
- ♦ Adult Education: Continuation of current video series.
- ♦ Future Business: Cost-saving suggestions after energy audit & updates on drinking fountains

Meeting Adjourned

Next meeting: Wednesday, January 14th, 2026 @7:30pm



**Noisy Offering for November & December was being collected for:**

**Youth Project - Toy Drive**

The total amount collected was: **\$174.64**

Noisy Offering for January will go to the SW Crisis Center  
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THESE IMPORTANT OUTREACH NEEDS.

**December 2025 Offerings**

Monthly Offering needed:	\$21,150.00
Weekly Offering – week 1	
Weekly Offering – week 2	
Weekly Offering – week 3	
Christmas Eve offering	
Weekly Offering – week 5	
MONTH-END TOTAL:	

**Needed / week:**

4-week month = \$5,288/week

5-week month = \$4,230/week

There are now THREE METHODS to use Simply Giving:

- 1) Your church offerings can be made weekly, every other week (bi-weekly) or monthly automatically through electronic funds transferred from your checking or savings accounts or by using your credit card.
- 2) To the right (>) is a Quick Response (QR) code. When you scan the QR code image with a smartphone's QR decoder, it will instantly connect you to the mobile version of the church's Vanco/Simply Giving offering site. Just follow the directions on your screen.
- 3) Be watching for other options as they become available.
- 4) Good ol' offering envelopes - they are tried and true still today!!



**Current Bell Tower fund balance (12/31/2025):** \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU to all who have donated!!!**

# Year-End Giving Statements

Year-end giving statements will be available within the next week or two. They will be available for pick up in the Narthex for 2 Sundays. Any remaining statements will be mailed out. **PLEASE NOTE:** the office will also be including an information sheet of what we currently have on file for you or members of your family.

## **PLEASE MAKE A POINT TO UPDATE THIS INFORMATION!!**

We are trying to improve our communications with our members but if our information is incorrect, it doesn't work so well. We use this contact information in our online church directory also. Please indicate if you prefer to OPT OUT of including certain information in the directory. (NOTE: This directory is ONLY accessible by members of First Lutheran). The forms can either be returned to the church by putting in the offering plate on a Sunday, sending via email to the church office OR via 'snail mail'.

THANK YOU for all of your help with this task – it is appreciated so very much!!!!

Lori

# 2026 Radio Sponsorships



Radio Sponsorships for 2026 are posted on the bulletin board by the office. If you have a recurring yearly sponsorship, please let the office know if you would like to change the date as listed on the schedule. There are **10 open slots (listed below)** so if you would like to get signed up for one, please add your name to one of the open slots on the sheet. If you would like to check your recurring sponsorship, OR signup online, scan the QR code below.

**THANK YOU** all who give to the radio sponsorship – it is a GREAT way to share the ministry here at First Lutheran!!

### **Available Dates:**

January 11th

April 26th

May 10th

June 28th

August 30th

September 13th & 20th

October 11th & 18th

December 13th



# Church News, Events & Happenin's

## VISITATIONS

If someone is ill or in need of a Pastoral visit, please call Pastor Ann or contact the Church office @ 825-5837. Please remember the following First Lutheran Church members in your prayers, send them a card, or stop to visit them.



Joyce Kunz	Good Samaritan Communities, Pipestone
Darrell Foss	Good Samaritan, Sioux Falls
Kay Dubbelde	The Lodge Assisted Living - Mankato, MN <i>Send any letters or cards to: Kay Dubbelde</i> <i>Mankato Lodge Senior Living</i> <i>1360 Adams St Rm 410 - Mankato, MN 56001</i>

Our thoughts and prayers to the families of Gavin & Lauren Smidt and Cody & Brittney Heidebrink on the passing of their grandmother, Gloria Smidt.

May you find peace and comfort during this most difficult time.



**THANK YOU** from the Banquet in Sioux Falls for the following gifts:

- \* \$200 for the Food Fund (Youth)
- \* \$65.34 for the Food Fund (Noisy Offering)
- \* \$484.66 for the Food Fund (FLCW)





THANK YOU to all who brought in goodies for our annual Kaffi-Ti! We had a great selection of items to sell and a pretty good turnout considering the weather was a little 'iffy'! We just needed a few more people to help work the shifts, but we made it through.

Join us on  
Sunday, January 11th, 2026  
following worship  
for a visit with our ELCA Gift  
Planner. You can make a dif-  
ference in the lives of your  
loved ones as well as the minis-  
try done here at First Lutheran!



#### Faithful Stewards. Lasting Impact.

Your passion...  
Your plan ...  
Your gift for those you love, and for  
God's work in the world!

You are invited to explore how you can  
make a difference in the lives of your loved  
ones and to ministry, both now and in the  
future.

On January 11th, Tharan Leopold with the  
ELCA Foundation will be here to share a  
forum on legacy gifts. This information will get  
you thinking about the gifts you've received  
from God throughout your lifetime, and how  
your family and ministry, such as our  
congregation, can benefit from these gifts to  
make a lasting and meaningful impact in this  
world.

Please join us on January 11th for this  
thoughtful coffee and conversation!

The ELCA Foundation has professional gift  
planning staff throughout the nation and  
gift planning tools for every situation.

All gift planning services are made  
available to individuals and congregations  
without obligation or cost. It is our ministry to  
be of service.

[www.foundation.elca.org](http://www.foundation.elca.org)



**ELCA Foundation**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.



**Tharan Leopold**

ELCA Foundation  
Gift Planner

**Cell: 507-838-1980**

[tharan.leopold@elca.org](mailto:tharan.leopold@elca.org)



# *First Lutheran's*

## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM



The Children's 2025 Christmas Program was presented on Wednesday, December 17th here at First Lutheran. The kids did a great job presenting the story of Jesus' birth! Great job to the kids and our LIFT teachers who worked so hard to put this all together. We hope you all had a wonderful Christmas with family and the New Year is filled with many blessings!



# **F.L.C.W News & Activities**



## **REMINDERS:**

- ⇒ Quilting resumes on Thursday, January 8th @9:30am
- ⇒ Group Circle will be on Tuesday, January 20th @2pm

**The 2026 FIRST LUTHERAN ANNUAL MEETING IS SET FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 25TH immediately following worship. Help make a difference here at First Lutheran by volunteering on one of our many committees or sit on our church council.**

**We have so many great people here with many talents and gifts to share. We would love for you to be a part of helping us build our future.**

# Shetek Happenings

*January 2026*



14 Keeley Island Drive  
Slayton, MN 56172  
507-763-3567  
camp@shetek.org  
www.shetek.org

## Shetek Lutheran Ministries Where Christ Renews and Empowers



### Progress On New Cabin!



*Join Us for a Winter Event*

### Wish List

- Adding Machine
- Office Supplies – Dry Erase Markers, Paper
- Spark Bibles
- Board Games
- Extension cords and Power Strips
- Arts and Crafts Supplies
- Volunteers

### Upcoming Events

[Hiking Club January 11](#)

[Quilt and Craft Retreat January 14-18](#)

[Hiking Club February 15](#)

[Register online at Shetek.org or](#)

[Call 507-763-3567](#)



**Help send kids to Camp...Become a Pelican Club or Timber Society member today. Pelican Club members support the ministry with a gift of \$100 - \$499 a year and Timber Society members give \$500 or more a year. Thanks for your support!**





# Remind

The REMIND app is used here at  
First Lutheran for our Youth activities!

To join, send a text to 81010 with the message:  
@8728964

OR

Visit: <https://www.remind.com/join/8728964>

It's a GREAT way to see opportunities for First Lutheran Youth in grades 6-12! Both students & parents are welcome to join!



## Happy New Year—2026!

- \* Wednesday, January 7th: 6:15-7:15pm LIFT/Confirmation resume
- \* Wednesday, January 14th: 6:15pm Contemporary Service, 6:45-7:15pm LIFT/Confirmation
- \* Monday, January 19th: NO SCHOOL - Martin Luther King Day
  - \* Wednesday, January 21st: 6:15-7:15 LIFT/Confirmation
  - \* Wednesday, January 21st: 6:15-7:15 LIFT/Confirmation

Stay tuned as we are working on attending a Stampede game in Sioux Falls!!

# Kidz Korner



Every Child is designed  
by God to be a  
leader!!

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## JESUS GIVES GOOD GIFTS



### Alpha-Code

= A	= T	= M
= E	= N	= F
= I	= V	= D
= O	= S	= G
= B	= H	= R
= Y	= W	= K
= C	= L	

Calvary





Date	Worship Time	Reader	Acolytes	Communion Assistant(s)	Ushers *(captain)	Sound
<b>1-4-2026</b> *Holy Communion	9:30 a.m.	Scott Barduson			*Scott Barduson (cpt) ~Wade Smith ~Edison Dengler family ~Dan Wagner family	Neil Johnson
<b>1-11-2026</b> *Holy Communion	9:30 a.m.	Scott Barduson			*Scott Barduson (cpt) ~Wade Smith ~Edison Dengler family ~Dan Wagner family	Mark Zinnel
<b>1-18-2026</b>	9:30 a.m.			_____	*Scott Barduson (cpt) ~Wade Smith ~Edison Dengler family ~Dan Wagner family	Ryan Wielenberg
<b>1-25-2026</b>	9:30 a.m.	Lori Ilse		_____	*Scott Barduson (cpt) ~Wade Smith ~Edison Dengler family ~Dan Wagner family	Jason Weber

## Communion Assistants, Lesson Readers and Acolytes are needed!!!

If you are able to help us out, please sign up on the clipboard in the Narthex OR you can sign up online by using the QR code to the right >>>.



PS - DID YOU KNOW that you can also check to see when you are signed up by just scanning the code!!

May God's love continue to shine  
upon your marriage, filling your  
hearts with joy and peace!



*January 14th*  
Bill & Diane Leslie

# Born in January

January 2	Oakley Houselog	Tishawnna Rohlk	January 21	Bob Hubner	Mavis Pierson
January 3	Scott Sterud		January 22	Connor Thode	
January 4	Kaden Mastbergen	JoAn VanderPol	January 23	Jocelyn Burnett	Ben Lee Alex Willey
January 7	Harper Royer		January 24	Barb Benz	
January 9	Samantha Davis		January 26	Reece Houselog	
January 10	Cristy Appel	Nicole Weber	January 27	Ainslee Wade	
January 13	Gavin Smidt		January 28	Karen Boehm	
January 14	Bob Douty		January 29	Rose Anderson	Kristen Lee Caleb Velde
January 16	Mark Christensen		January 30	Mieko Douty	
January 18	Tami Taubert		January 31	Tamryn Chaulsett	Nelson VanderPol Eli Stevens
January 20	Kayli Borman				

On your special day, you are wished all the very best, all the  
joy you can ever have and may you also be blessed abundantly  
today, tomorrow and the days to come!



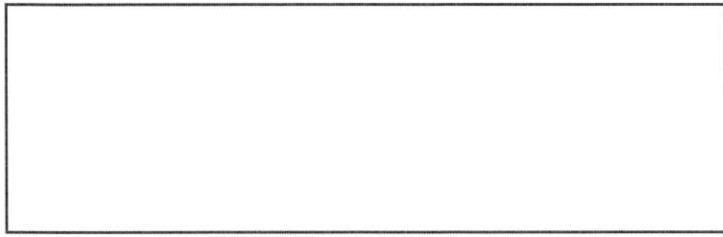
# January 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
						
4 ~9:30am - Worship w/ Communion	5	6 ~Epiphany begins	7 ~8:15am Pastor's Prayer ~6:15pm LIFT / Confirmation ~7:00pm - church committee mtgs ~7:30pm Council budget meeting	8 ~9:30am - Quilting ~5:30pm - Executive mtg	9	10
Pastor Ann gone - Moses Project						
11 ~9:30am - Worship w/ Communion ~10:30am - Planned Giving presentation	12	13 ~8:30am— Ministerial	14 ~8:15am Pastor's Prayer ~6:15pm - Con- temporary Ser- vice 6:45pm - LIFT/ Confirmation ~7:30pm - Council mtg	15 ~AM - Pastor out of office - Conf. mtg	16	17
18 ~9:30am - Worship	19 NO School 	20 ~2:00pm - Group Circle	21 ~8:15am - Pastor's Prayer ~6:15-7:15pm - LIFT/ Confirmation	22 ~9:30am - Quilting	23	24
25 ~9:30am - Worship ~Annual meeting following worship	26	27	28 ~8:15am - Pastor's Prayer ~6:15-7:15pm - LIFT/ Confirmation	29 ~PM - Pastor Ann out of the office for appt	30	31



First Lutheran Church - ELCA

401 7th Av SW - Pipestone MN 56164



Phone: 507-825-5837

Email: [office@firstlutheranpipestone.org](mailto:office@firstlutheranpipestone.org)

The VOICE is produced monthly by First Lutheran Church - ELCA

*We are all one body, one spirit,  
compelled by Christ to share His  
Word and the promise of salvation.  
~Matthew 28*

**Worship schedule:**

- ♦ 9:30am Sundays at Church & live-streamed on Facebook
- ♦ Radio Worship Broadcast: 10:30am Sundays on KLOH 1050AM
- ♦ TV Public Access: Wednesdays @12pm & 5pm on Channel 3

**Our Church Staff**

**Ministers**

Members of First Lutheran

**Pastor** Rev. Ann Zastrow

Email: [pastor@firstlutheranpipestone.org](mailto:pastor@firstlutheranpipestone.org)

**Admin. Asst/Office Mgr**

Lori Ilse Office: 825-5837

Email: [office@firstlutheranpipestone.org](mailto:office@firstlutheranpipestone.org)

**Custodians:** Mark Zinnel Cell :820-2676  
Home 825-2953  
Melissa Burnett Cell: 215-0166

**Church Office** Phone: (507) 825-5837

**Website:** [www.firstlutheranpipestone.org](http://www.firstlutheranpipestone.org)

**Facebook:**

Google First Lutheran Church - Pipestone  
FB & hit the FB link on the webpage

**Congregational Contacts:**

**\*\*President**

Kristy Henriksen Ph: 507-825-3122

**\*Vice President**

Sarah Meyer Ph: 507-215-7401

**Secretary**

Karen Boehm

**Treasurer Liaison**

Thad Reinert

**Financial Secretary**

Kaitlyn Ilse

**First Lutheran Church Women:**

**Coordinator** Nancy Johnson 507-227-5335

**Treasurer** Patti Peterson

**Secretary** Darlene Muller

**First Lutheran Church Council meets on the  
second Wednesday of each month  
@ 7:30 p.m.**