



Our Church—This week
for the week of
January 4, 2021

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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FIRST LUTHERAN MONN MOUTH
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Our Staff

Pastor Jamie Gallagher

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Secretary

Angela Bradley-Volz

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M, T, Th, F (8 am to noon)

Custodian

Chris Algren

Musicians

Janice Algren

Jamie Reynolds

Preschool and Day Care Director

Bobbie Nees

(309) 734-5350

Congregation Council

President: Rose Sandstrom

Vice President: Doug Cruce

Secretary: Diane Carlson

Warren Dobry

Steve Erlandson

Ted Hanson

Jim Johnson

Linda McGuire

Evelyn Volz

Dear Friends and Family,

Welcome to 2021. I hope you enjoyed holiday time with family and friends as best as possible. My family enjoyed a wonderful week with brief visits to our families, an extended weather-hampered overnight stay at my mom's, and the joy of finishing a part of a house remodeling project. We watched movies, played games, completed puzzles, and toasted in the new year with sparkling grape juice and fun noise makers. I feel very refreshed after my holiday time.

I want to say thank you to everyone who sent me a Christmas card and shared a gift with my family. I appreciated the very tasty goodies. I am thankful for those who braved the cold and came out of our first ever Christmas Eve Outdoor Carol Service.

I look forward now to all that January has to offer for us.

A Thank You from Kurt Volz

Dear Fellow Members of First Lutheran Church,

You have done it again. You have reached down into your hearts and spirits and pulled out love for the individuals and families of Warren and Henderson Counties – showing how much you care for those who are in pain and wanting to give them resources when in need. You have done it again. You have shown that you continue - in spite of your own financial and other difficulties – will give of whatever you have been blessed with for those who are in need.

You have done it again. You have communicated your faith in God and your belief that we are to give to others as we have been given to.

Thank you so very much, members of First Lutheran Church for giving to the people of your community who are in need so that they can see that there is a reason to keep on going because others do care about them and love them. You have shown them Christ here on earth – shown them how Christ comes in many ways year round – in deed through His believers – including His coming at Christmas time.

Kurt Volz

On behalf of Out of Darkness Walk, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

Our Stewardship Ministry

Your gifts make a difference in our community and our world. As the Magi brought their gifts to the newborn Jesus, we bring our gifts to celebrate the fullness of Jesus the Christ.



2021 Envelopes will be available soon. If you have the opportunity to come by the church office during the week to pick yours up, please call Angela to arrange a time. Otherwise we can mail the envelopes to you.

Nativity Sets in our Homes

Throughout Advent, Pastor Jamie included in worship our sanctuary nativity set. Each week new figurines were added and explained. Pastor Jamie invited members to submit pictures of nativity sets from home, and these pictures were received. Thank you to all who sent in their pictures to be shared.



Lutheran Day Care and Preschool

A ministry of First Lutheran Church

Bobbi Nees, director



Our preschool and day care will resume its ministry on Tuesday, January 5th. Thank you to all who brought in gifts for our center. The students will be very excited to open these this week and celebrate Christmas just a little longer.



Celebrations for the week of January 1 to 15



- Jan 3 Elizabeth Hippen, Ellen Shrader
Jan 4 Kay Bailey
Jan 5 Neal Heerwagen, Mike Jurgens,
Dennis Terpening
Jan 7 Jeremy Anderson, Dylan Esbaum,
Nancy Hanson
Jan 8 Steve Erlandson
Jan 9 Sue Hanson
Jan 10 Terri Hippen
Jan 11 Kathy Tate
Jan 14 Kathi Cruce



- Jan 5 Mike and Bren Tooley

Please let the church office know any updates that are needed for our celebrations list.

The Twelve Days of Christmas

The classic Christmas carol singing of partridges in pear trees, golden rings, leaping lords and maids milking cows and so on is based on the liturgical season of Christmas which officially begins on December 25th and ends 12 days later on January 5th. January 6th is the Day of Epiphany, the day we celebrate the arrival of the Magi to visit the infant Jesus bearing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

The Season after Epiphany then begins and continues until Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. Epiphany varies in length depending on the start of Lent, which is based on when Easter is according to the lunar cycle and the spring equinox.

The word epiphany can mean the manifestation of a divine being, as in Jesus being the Word of God made flesh—or it can mean a sudden realization, as in the Magi suddenly realizing who Jesus is.



Bradley Anderson, Josie Blake, Bev Coulter, Nancy Dowell, John Ellison, Linda Ellison, Dave Erlandson, Jim Erlandson, Brad and Jodie Haist, Cassie Jern & Family, Delores Johnson, Graham Johnson, Bob Kerschke, Ila Roseberry, Norman Worthington, Evelyn Volz, Darrell Thirtyacre, Donna Larson, Beckie Bean, Joy Johnson, Pat Root, Diane Bradley, Anna Lovdahl, Kim Anderson, Matthew Council, Rose Youngquist, Kathi Cruce

Please let the church office know any updates that are needed to our prayer list.

What's Happening in January at First Lutheran?

After the very busy season of Advent and Christmas, it feels like there is not much on the calendar in January. But there are a few things to be reminded of:

Worship remains online through at-least January 17th. Updates will be made through our future Our Church-This Week newsletters.

The Church Council meets on January 12th. The Council will have on its agenda when we will resume in-person worship.

Pastor Jamie will be out of the office from January 14th to January 22nd. He will be assisting his daughter return to college and attending a continuing education retreat.

The Council has scheduled the Annual meeting for January 31st. At the January 12th meeting, the Council will discuss appropriate ways to have this meeting. It may be digital. More information will come out after that meeting.

The mid-week Bible study will resume on January 13th, will skip January 20th, and continue again on January 27th.

And just for fun, mark your calendars for **Ash Wednesday, February 17th**. We do not yet know how we will celebrate Ash Wednesday or Lent. Those plans are still being worked out. But it is approaching quickly.

Sunday in Worship

Sunday, January 10th is the day we celebrate the Baptism of Jesus. In Mark's Gospel, this story begins the Good News of Jesus the Christ.

This is a day we often remember our own baptisms as our entrance to the church and a life of shared ministry with the entire Body of Christ around the world.

Pastor Jamie will include a remembrance of baptism with this week's worship service. You will want to prepare by having an empty bowl and a small glass of water to pour into the bowl during that moment in worship.

For those yearning to connect with the sacrament of communion, please call Pastor Jamie. There are still kits available for families to have communion at home. Supplies are provided once a month and the kit comes with a brief prayer service for you to read at home as you share with your family.

Curious about our Ministries?

We have several committees that are continuing to work even during this time of pandemic. For information on how to join a committee, please call the office.

Active Committees

Finance/Stewardship .. Chair Gary Martin

Building and Grounds .. Chair Steve Erlandson

Worship and Music ... Council Rep Jim Johnson

Specific Elected Committees

Endowment

Memorial

Personnel

Preschool and Day Care Board

Committee being revitalized

Christian Education and Youth — Youth Happens at First

Weekly Devotional



On the eleventh day of Christmas my true love gave to me, eleven pipers piping ...

The Twelve Days of Christmas ... have fun with this song stuck in your mind today.

The classic Christmas carol "The Twelve Days of Christmas" has origins in the late 1700s. The earliest publication dates to 1780, though the song is probably older than that. It may have French or English origins. The song is well known for its repeated lines as you increase the days of Christmas, though there are some alternate lines we don't often come across today but which have been used throughout history. Some alternates sing that it is "my mother" who gave the gifts, others change out lines to include "bears-a-baiting" or "ships-a-calling" or "colly birds" instead of calling birds. The word "Colly" is an old English word meaning "coal black" and may be where the name of the Collie dog breed came from.

The song is about 12 days which does connect the song to the liturgical season, but the story of it being secret code with meanings connected to the Christian faith are false. For kicks, here is the list and the supposed connections: 1st day: Jesus Christ; 2nd—Old and New Testament; 3rd—Faith, Hope, and Charity; 4th—4 Gospels; 5th—the first 5 books of the Bible; 6th—days of creation; 7 Roman Catholic Sacraments (we Lutherans only have 2 sacraments); 8 beatitudes; 9 fruits of the Spirit; 10 Commandments; 11 faithful disciples; 12 points of doctrine in the Apostles' Creed.

This sounds fun and yet this is the stuff of internet legend. There is no suggestion at the time of publication this song was anything more than a fun memory game song. First, the items in the song have no connection to their theological counterparts. Second, the notion that Christianity would need a secret code in the late 1700s in England or France is absurd.

The song is still quite fun to sing. The 364 gifts in the song would be valued at \$170,298.03 as of 2019 (the most recent data I found). What is your favorite holiday song that is not a hymn we sing in worship? Are you still singing your Christmas music this week? If you are ... you are in good company, the season of Christmas doesn't end until January 5th. So, keep on sharing gifts and keep on singing all your holiday favorites.

In Peace, Pastor Jamie