

# The Friendly Visitor

First Lutheran Church

February 2025



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## Message from the Pastor

It's tax season. Most of you have already received your giving statements for 2024. If you do not receive your statement, please contact the office. I want to first say, "Thank you." Thank you for your generosity to First Lutheran Church. Because of you, we live out our mission. Now, more than ever, we need to be generous to our neighbors and especially those who are least, lost and last. Here are just a few things we were able to accomplish because of you.

In 2024 we entered a partnership with Catholic Charities to provide space for their education and orientation programs for refugees and immigrants. We continue to enjoy the partnership and the mutual benefit it provides our organizations.

We celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Joint Declaration of the Doctrine of Justification with our Catholic siblings in the fall. We were blessed to have the Vicar General, our Synod Bishop, along with others from our respective communities participate in the ceremony.

We participated in several community activities including the Pride Parade and Derby. We also hosted organizations like the Coalition for the Homeless and Vocal KY who made presentations to the congregation. We recently started a business group for our neighbors along Broadway. The food pantry continues to offer strong support to our neighbors with the addition of a choose pantry option.

Within the church we started two new studies this year, one this fall and one that began in December that is on zoom. We plan to start a men's breakfast group later this month.

The education wing has had a fresh coat of paint. There have been several projects around the building to fix and maintain the roof and HVAC systems. The food pantry received a grant to replace the flooring in the hallway.

And we continue to support the work of LYG whose presence in Louisville and Kentucky is invaluable to our LGBTQ+ children, youth and families.

We also like to have fun. We enjoyed several outings this year including but not limited to walking in the Kentucky Derby Marathon/Mini-marathon and watching the Bonhoeffer movie. We threw a party for our retiring Bishop Bill and welcomed at our new Bishop, Bishop Tim. We continue to appreciate our ELCA connection and the ministerium group that continues to meet monthly. I am the Dean of the conference.

I am truly blessed to be your pastor. Your efforts and contributions to the mission of the church inspire and remind me of God's grace. We serve an almighty God whose grace and mercy is sufficient. Thanks be to God for all the blessings we receive!

Thank you!

John

## Message from the Council President

Hello,

The Congregational meeting was held on February 2, 2025. At that meeting we approved a budget for 2025 and gave the Finance and Endowment committees permission to reinvest the Memorial and Kemnitz funds together, with the interest being split between local benevolence and our general expenses.

We did not add any new members to the council. Vicky Frank and I switched positions, with she becoming treasurer and I becoming president. We both still work in the office together, but one goal in 2025 is to replace us with a new employee. Paul Nellis will be Vice President and Nancy Brian is staying as secretary.

Our council could use some new members. We meet once a month after church and meetings typically last two hours. If anyone is interested in coming to a meeting just to check it out, you are more than welcome.

The coming year will bring us new challenges. We know we will be calling a new Pastor and saying goodbye to Pastor Bell. Our Ministry Site Profile is up on the ELCA webpage, so hopefully we will be interviewing candidates in the next few months.

I want to thank everyone for supporting the mission of First Lutheran Church and especially Vicky for her leadership this past year.

Sharon Lillie

### Church Council Currently Includes...

Sharon Lillie    President  
Paul Nellis    Vice President  
Nancy Brian    Secretary  
Vicky Frank    Treasurer  
Larry Askins  
Mike Frank  
Glenn Peavy



We had a surprise visitor on February 5<sup>th</sup>! Anthony, who used to sleep in our parking lot, came by to tell us that he is housed now and has kept clean for 6 months. We were very glad to see him and see him looking so well and happy. He said, “God is Good!” and we say “Amen!”

Sharon Lillie

Nadia Bolz-Weber, a Lutheran pastor and author of multiple books, including *Pastrix*, is coming to Louisville on March 6<sup>th</sup> for her Red State Revivals schedule. She’ll be appearing at Calvary Episcopal Church, 821 South Fourth Street, Louisville, 40203. Note: This is a ticketed event. Click here: <https://www.tixtree.com/e/an-evening-with-nadia-bolz-weber-in-louisville-cc43bed43630>. Choose the amount you’d like to pay per ticket, then choose how many tickets. Show up at 5:45 if you’d like to sing in the pop-up choir. The main event is from 7:00 – 8:30.

On Thursday, February 13 at 12:00 p.m. there will be a Craft Day/Bible Study. You do not have to be a crafter to attend. Please join us for Bible Study and Fellowship.

We’ve all heard about the terrible wildfires that broke out across Los Angeles County in California. Sparked by dry conditions, strong winds and a limited water supply, these fires have destroyed the homes and businesses of tens of thousands of people and have led to injuries and loss of life. Lutheran Disaster Response is coordinating with the Southwest California Synod, Pacifica Synod and other partners to assess the needs of people impacted by the wildfires. We will work with them to provide for immediate needs and recovery amid the widespread destruction. Lutheran Disaster Response is committed to accompanying recovering communities for months and years to come. Please pray for communities in California impacted by the fires. May God’s healing presence bring them peace and hope in their time of need and give strength to those working diligently to contain the fires and care for affected communities. Your gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response equip them to respond to communities affected by the fires and related disasters whenever and wherever they strike. 100% of gifts to “U.S. Wildfires” will be used to assist those affected by the wildfires until the response is complete. You can write a check, call 800-638-3522, or donate online.



At First Lutheran Church we believe that God delights in the diversity of all creation. As a Reconciling in Christ community, we welcome all into fellowship; recognizing the dignity of every human being regardless of gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability, economic status, race, or any other identifier. You are accepted and welcome here, no matter where you are on your spiritual journey.

If you need to contact one of the church's committee chairs, here is a list of all the committees and their chairs. Please let them know if you have any problems, suggestions for improvements, or compliments.

Building Users	Vicky Frank
Christian Education	Lori Caron
Endowment Funds Subcommittee	Harley Butler
Finance	Drew Wartschlager
Food Pantry	Sharon Lillie
Membership	Vicky Frank
Property	Paul Nellis
Social Ministry	Stephanie McCoy
Vision and Outreach	Paul Nellis
Worship and Music	Nancy Brian



## THE FRIENDLY PUZZLER

Find the underlined words amongst the letter grid at the bottom.

The remaining letters will reveal a hidden message.

Genesis 43: 1-11, 15

Now the famine was severe in the land. And when they had eaten up the grain that they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, "Go again; buy us a little more food." But Judah said to him, "The man solemnly warned us, saying, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.' If you will send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food, but if you will not send him, we will not go down, for the man said to us, 'You shall not see my face, unless your brother is with you.' " Israel said, "Why did you treat me so badly as to tell the man that you had another brother?" They replied, "The man questioned us carefully about ourselves and our kindred, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?' What we told him was in answer to these questions. Could we in any way know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'" Then Judah said to his father Israel, "Send the boy with me, and let us be on our way, so that we may live and not die—you and we and also our little ones. I myself will be surety for him; you can hold me accountable for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever. If we had not delayed, we would now have returned twice."

Then their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: take some of the choice fruits of the land in your bags, and carry them down as a present to the man: a little balm and a little honey, gum, resin, pistachio nuts, and almonds. So the men took the present, and they took double the money with them, as well as Benjamin. Then they went on their way down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

M K N O W J U K E M A L B D F A C E  
Y M A I E N I M A F H I R E H T A F  
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## February 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>26</b> 10:30am Worship Service	<b>27</b> Food Pantry closed 8:30am Catholic Charities 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	<b>28</b> 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry	<b>29</b> 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 7:00pm Chancel Choir rehearsal	<b>30</b> 8:30am Catholic Charities 1:00pm Luncheon/local businesses 4:00pm Food Pantry	<b>31</b> Food Pantry closed 9:00am Catholic Charities 6:00pm LYG	<b>1</b> 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
<b>2</b> 10:30am Worship Service	<b>3</b> Food Pantry closed 8:30am Catholic Charities 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	<b>4</b> 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 7:30pm NA	<b>5</b> 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 4:30pm LYG Staff Meeting 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 7:00pm Chancel Choir rehearsal	<b>6</b> 8:30am Catholic Charities 4:00pm Food Pantry	<b>7</b> Food Pantry closed 9:00am Catholic Charities 6:00pm LYG	<b>8</b> 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
<b>9</b> 9:30am Breakfast 10:30am Worship Service	<b>10</b> Food Pantry closed 8:30am Catholic Charities 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	<b>11</b> Food Pantry closed 8:30am Catholic Charities	<b>12</b> 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 6:30pm LYG 7:00pm Chancel Choir rehearsal	<b>13</b> 8:30am Catholic Charities 12:00pm Craft Day 4:00pm Food Pantry 7:00pm Worship and Music Committee Meeting	<b>14</b> Food Pantry closed 9:00am Catholic Charities 6:00pm LYG	<b>15</b> 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
<b>16</b> 10:30am Worship Service 12:00pm Council Meeting	<b>17</b> Food Pantry closed 8:30am Catholic Charities 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	<b>18</b> 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 7:30pm NA	<b>19</b> 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 4:30pm LYG 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 7:00pm Chancel Choir rehearsal	<b>20</b> NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 8:30am Catholic Charities 4:00pm Food Pantry	<b>21</b> Food Pantry closed 9:00am Catholic Charities 6:00pm LYG	<b>22</b> 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
<b>23</b> 10:30am Worship Service	<b>24</b> Food Pantry closed 8:30am Catholic Charities 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	<b>25</b> 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry	<b>26</b> 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 6:30pm LYG 7:00pm Chancel Choir rehearsal	<b>27</b> 8:30am Catholic Charities 4:00pm Food Pantry	<b>28</b> Food Pantry closed 9:00am Catholic Charities 6:00pm LYG	<b>1</b> 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire