



DECEMBER

*THE FRIENDLY VISITOR*

2025

417 E. Broadway, Lou, KY, 40202 • thewelcomeplace.com • (502) 584-4926 • fstluth@bellsouth.net

WELCOME TO

## ***FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH***



Whether you're new to the area or seeking a spiritual home, we're glad you're here. Nestled in a beautiful historic building in downtown Louisville, we are a vibrant community committed to worship, service, and growth in faith.

At First Lutheran, we strive to create a welcoming environment where love, grace, and peace guide our shared journey. Our mission is to help all people connect with God, grow in faith, and contribute to the work of Christ.

As a Reconciling In Christ congregation, we celebrate and affirm the dignity of all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

We look forward to serving you and walking together in faith.

### In this newsletter:

Latest news, projects, workshops, and more. Keep Reading!

### Add to your calendar:

12/14: 9:30 AM Pre-Service Breakfast  
 12/21: 12:00 PM Church Council Meeting  
 12/24: 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Music  
 12:24: 7:30 PM Christmas Eve Service  
 01/25: 11:30 AM Annual Congregational Meeting

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## Updates from the Office Manager

"We are excited to share that after many months and man hours, we have fully executed the Department of Homeland Security grant. We may now begin work on projects that were approved at the time of our initial application!

Weekday morning parkers, please see me for your First Lutheran Parking Permit (free of course).

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas!"

- Tim H.



## Nativity Scene

PLEASE BRING SETS!

Melody Sterling is calling for all who are able to bring in your nativity sets for display at the communion railing. Please have them here by 12/21 before service.



## Music Ministry

"December brings the season of Advent, the season of celebration anticipating Christ's coming. We are anxiously watching and waiting for the coming of the Savior. Our worship reflects this time and you may notice that the liturgy changes to reflect the seasonal emphasis of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. We add the lighting of the Advent Wreath to the liturgy, one of the most visible signs that we are in the beginning of the Christian Year. The color of the paraments and worship banners changes to blue, the color for Advent, which suggests hope. For the Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany seasons we change to Liturgy Setting 9, which has an air of mystery and expectation quite appropriate for the season. The Preface and the Thanksgiving at the Table also change for Advent. As we sing familiar Advent hymns of hope and expectancy, we look forward to Christ's arrival. On our journey through this Holy season let us remember the words of hymn #238, *People Look East*, "People look east, and sing today – Love, the Guest, is on the way."

- David McNease,  
Minister of Music and Organist

## Arts & Crafts

"Some nice clothing weight material has been donated. It is located on the craft room table. Free to anyone!" - Melody Sterling



## Social Ministries

### Q3 GIVING SUMMARY

Social Ministries has finalized its Q3 giving, supporting the following organizations:

- Hope Village
- Green St Baptist Church
- Salvation Army
- First Lutheran Food Pantry





# Alter Guild

“Ancient peoples huddled in darkness waiting for the return of light and life to a bleak world. Today, we see Advent as a season of waiting and watching together, anticipating signs of life returning to not only a dark, dormant land, but also to our lives; waiting for the One who brings forth light and life to a broken world. During the Advent season the sanctuary and the flowers on the altar will reflect this. A dark, dormant arrangement becomes greener and more alive each week until the light of the world returns with the birth of the Christ child. It is a gift to teach ourselves the ability to wait. Christmas is coming, it's just not here yet.

During the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, we will be celebrating communion with a different wine for the holidays. Our communion wine will be Camelot Mead Honey Wine from Oliver Winery, located in Bloomington, Indiana. This continues our goal of supporting local wineries. Oliver Winery has been producing their Camelot Mead since 1972, but the tradition of honey wine goes back to at least 7000 BC. It is even mentioned often in the Bible. For communion we will also continue using naan, a kind of flatbread that resembles pita bread. So as we experience something different this winter, let us do so with the knowledge that we are following in the footsteps of our forebears in faith.

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting amid growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. The unbroken circle of greens is clearly an image of ever-lasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself.



DISPLAY OF POINSETTIAS AT ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL (FL)

“Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent and the growth of light. Sometimes the wreath is embellished with natural dried flowers or fruit. Its evergreen branches lead the household and the congregation to the evergreen Christmas tree. In many homes, the family gathers for prayers around the wreath.

At Christmas we will decorate the sanctuary with beautiful poinsettias. The cost is \$15.00 each. The deadline to place orders is Wednesday, December 10. Please place your check marked appropriately or cash for your poinsettias in the offering plate or send it to the office by December 10. Order forms are at the back of the bulletin and at the back of the sanctuary.”

**Larry Askins**  
Chair, Altar Guild

# Updates from the Council President

"Dear friends at First Lutheran Church:

David Patton, our custodian came by to see us. He has been out due to a shoulder replacement. The first replacement developed an infection and also slipped out of joint so on Oct. 31st, he had a second operation. The current shoulder replacement only offers limited mobility but he is doing much better. He dropped by in the second week of November to visit/tease our pantry volunteers and took the time to dust mop the downstairs hall. He is hoping to be back to us in the new year. In the meantime, Levelle Carter, who has been cleaning in the evenings, has taken on extra time for that. Glenn Peavey is doing some basic maintenance as well. If you see something that needs attention, he is the one to inform.

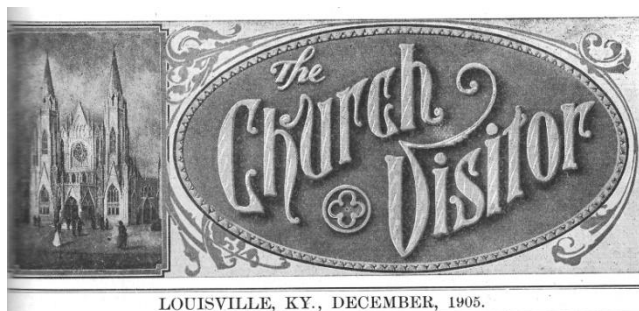
So much has been in the news about cuts to SNAP benefits and rulings on SNAP benefits. I can only hope that order has been restored by the time you are reading this. The pantry made an appeal for donations of canned fruit and vegetables and several members have made donations. In addition, two members of the public have made very large donations of toilet paper, canned vegetables and canned meat.

The food pantry has seen an increase in neighbors coming in for basic foods. Dare to Care has managed to keep our supply of food steady, but they are using their funds to purchase items the USDA is not providing at the moment."



**Sharon Lillie**  
Council President

I am your church mouse and I come from a long line of church mice who have lived in your basement since 1905. My 120<sup>th</sup> great grandfather moved in shortly after this building was dedicated. He was appointed to be "Protector of the Church Newsletters" and we, his many offspring, have all taken that position quite seriously. For your reading pleasure I have copied a few bits of First Lutheran's activities from 120 years ago, taken from their December 1905 issue. I and my family hope you will enjoy them. There will be more to come.



#### INSTRUCTION CLASSES.

A class of adults preparing for confirmation meets on Monday at 4 p. m. The other classes meet Friday at 3 and 7:30 p. m. Several have decided to join one or the other of these classes January 1<sup>st</sup>. We should be glad to have still others do so.

#### OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL.

The best work we can do for our church is to bring young people to our Sunday School. It is like planting young trees in an orchard. It means fruit in the future.

Our school is doing splendid work in paying the cost of recent repairs on our rooms, which was over \$1,000. The collection of one Sunday in the month is devoted to this purpose. The birthday box helps. Let all church people help swell the fund at the Christmas celebration Tuesday evening, the 26th.

Our school begins a great attendance campaign on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Every member of the school will belong to one or another of two grand divisions under the direction of a brave leader already chosen.

**We are going to increase the attendance by at least one hundred.** Like a brave and loyal soldier in a noble army, be ready to take your place in the ranks of the workers when, on the last day of 1905, the order is given to "go forward."

#### THE PASTOR'S BAND.

The boys and girls of our band will enjoy their own Christmas more because they helped to make the children of our Lutheran Orphanage at Springfield, Ohio, happy. That barrel of nice canned fruit they sent them will help make Christmas in the home last for weeks after it has passed.

All our boys and girls not yet old enough to unite with the Luther Union or King's Daughters are urged to join the Pastor's Band. They have nice meetings on Sunday afternoon every two weeks.

## Angels in Advent and Christmas

By: Nola Lillie

This Bible study can be done all at once or by reading and pondering one passage each week during the month of December. Angels play a huge part in the Bible readings leading up to Jesus' coming to earth to interpret and to live out God's love for us. The first three readings are found in the Gospel according to Luke. The fourth passage is from Matthew. [To the right], we see a work of art depicting the angel Gabriel appearing to Mary, but five months earlier Gabriel had made a visit to Zacharias, a priest who was married to Mary's relative, Elizabeth. Luke tells us that they were righteous before God, but that does not mean that they were perfect or that they had earned their salvation. Rather, it meant that they followed God's teachings in the Torah.

**READ Luke 1:5-25** Read this chapter slowly. Take a close look at the various people who are involved in the account and put yourself in each of their positions. Of course there is Zacharias taking his turn at serving God in the temple. Note his immediate response to the sudden appearance of such a majestic being. He was terrified. Also note Gabriel's response to Zacharias' fears. "Do not be afraid." According to biblical scholars, the people waiting outside the temple were hoping that the holiness within the temple would radiate out to them, out to the city of Jerusalem and ultimately out to the whole world. They wanted to hear what Zacharias had to say about his experience of being close to God in the Holy of Holies.



Take time to imagine what it was like for Zacharias and Elizabeth to learn the promising news of the late-in-life birth of a son. Would you have automatically believed what you heard from the mouth of one of God's high ranking angels? What questions might you have asked Gabriel? What might Elizabeth have been thinking? Do you suppose she had a few questions about her own ability to cope with such a pregnancy, health-wise and energy-wise? The baby's name was chosen for them. John's name means "The Lord is gracious."

**READ Luke 1:26-38** In this account there is just one person to respond to Gabriel's amazing message. If you had been the young woman, Mary, would you have needed to hear "Do not be afraid"? Would those words have immediately calmed you? Think of all the complications in everyday life looming ahead for Mary. Yet, she said "Let it happen to me". Mary and Joseph, to whom she was betrothed, both lived in Nazareth a small town in the province of Galilee. Jesus carried on most of his ministry in Galilee. His name means "The Lord lives."

READ Matthew 1:18-25 The angel who appears to Joseph is not named, nor does the angel appear in person, but in a dream. Note that the message “Don’t be afraid...” continues with the words ...”to take Mary as your wife” because she has not been unfaithful to you., but is carrying out the will of God. This account according to Matthew stresses the fact that Joseph descends from the line of King David. Look at Matthew 1:1-17 where the genealogy and line of descent goes back to Abraham all the way to Joseph and Jesus. By means of adoption, Jesus is named the son of Joseph. Joseph’s guidance via dreams hearkens back to another Joseph who was called a dreamer and was able to interpret Pharaoh’s dreams. Both Josephs listened and both Josephs obeyed. Mary’s husband followed the direction given by the angel. “Don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife.” Note: Later, after Jesus is born and after the visit from the magi, Joseph is visited by another angel of the Lord who tells him to escape to Egypt with the infant Jesus and his mother in order to save him from the clutches of King Herod. Again, Joseph obeys.

READ Luke 2:1-20 Which words in this joyful announcement are a repetition of what you have read in the previous accounts of angel visitations? Imagine that it’s a quiet night out there in the field and that you are one of the shepherds taking advantage of the calm and hoping to get a good night’s sleep. Suddenly everything breaks loose and it might take a few seconds to realize that a sky full of celestial beings is not part of a dream. The message from the Lord’s angel (was it a loud trumpet sort of voice or was it soft and gentle?) is followed by a heavenly host (v. 13) shouting God’s praises.

The response of the shepherds to hurry to Bethlehem seems to be a foregone conclusion to us. We’ve heard this story every Christmas season, but I wonder how they really managed it. Who would stay to watch the sheep? Which shepherds raced ahead to find the right place? We don’t know any of their names but we do know that they told everyone they met what the angels had told them about this child. Did some of them ever connect the traveling rabbi known as Jesus with the newborn baby celebrated by a multitude of heavenly host?





## December 2025

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



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