

DECEMBER 2017

First Lutheran Church Fergus Falls, MN



Dear friends,

Early one summer morning, as I looked ahead to the coming fall and winter and my thinking roamed freely, I dreamed of the great Christmas festival and how to arrive at it with a joyful spirit and ready heart.

And I realized the path could be very simple. I had already traveled this path many times in my school years. Shortly after the school year started, we began readying our voices in church and school choirs to sing the Christmas story. Those rehearsals filled my daily life throughout the fall and early winter with the songs of "glad tidings of great joy for all people". When Christmas came, I was ready—a voice and mind ready to sing and, more importantly, a heart and spirit ready to live with joy and hope.

And then, as my thinking continued to roam that summer morning, I realized how much changed when I left school. I saw how other "songs" displaced the daily singing of hope and joy in Christ. I realized how

much our national culture has filled all our days with litanies of suspicion, resentment, and re- crimination, of anxiety, lament and dread. And, for some odd reason, an increasing num-

ber of churches have chosen to fill worship in the fall and winter with readings and songs that emphasize Christ's return as a stern judge. This year, at First Lutheran, during Advent we are getting ourselves ready for Christmas by singing in worship the familiar songs that tell of Jesus' birth and rejoice in the joy and love God brings. The reason is simple. Singing the Christmas songs will get us ready to hear their thrilling news and liberating hope in Christ. This is not an escape into a nostalgic past. It is a readying of our hearts and spirits to live in the place where God has chosen to make a home with us. Jesus Christ comes to make a home with you, and this life is filled with the songs of light and love, joy and hope.

We will be singing joy and hope this season, and in that song Jesus is making a home for you.

Pastor Marcus Kunz

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Inside this issue:

<i>Worship Plans</i>	2
<i>Advent Soup Lunches & Supper</i>	2
<i>With Hearts & Hands &</i>	3
<i>WELCA</i>	3
<i>FLC Foundation</i>	3
<i>FLY News</i>	4
<i>Harvest Dinner</i>	4
<i>Sunday School News</i>	5
<i>Christmas food baskets</i>	6
<i>Cookies</i>	6
<i>Prayers & Bibles</i>	6
<i>OWLS</i>	7
<i>Altar Flowers & Radio</i>	8
<i>Cemetery</i>	8
<i>Worship plans</i>	9

Deadline for the



**January Messenger
Is Tues., Dec.12th.**

WITH HEARTS & HANDS & VOICES YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN SOMEONE'S LIFE



The butcher, the baker the candlestick maker... actually we don't need butchers but we do need cookie bakers and help with our beautiful candles! See page 6 for more details on cookies. Call the office if you are interested in caring for our candles.

Driving Miss Daisy? Maybe not Daisy, but there are people looking for rides to worship. Call the office!

You light up my life! 5th— 9th graders are reminded to **sign up in the Narthex to acolyte.**

Move it, move it, move it. We will have Christmas food baskets to deliver on Saturday Dec. 16th. Please call the office if you can help! For more details see page 6.

We Love children! Get to know our kids Wednesdays after school. People who like fun and games needed. Contact Pastor Martha for more details.

Say Cheese!!! If you love to take photos we've got a job for you! We are looking for someone to capture images of our beautiful windows and sanctuary to use on our website and various places.

Welcome wagon. We don't have a wagon, but we do have worship. Stop in the Narthex to sign up for worship participation! All Ages are encouraged and welcome!

Soups on! Looking for a cleanup crew Wednesday evenings after our soup supper. Sign up in the Narthex.



**“Simply Giving”
is now
“GivePlus”!**

With a new name for electronic giving at First Lutheran, we also added some new options for making electronic contributions simply and easily.

- ♦ **GivePlus Church** is a free app for your phone. Download it for free from the App Store (Apple iPhone or iPad) or Google Play (Android device). Search for “GivePlus Church” and follow the directions.
- ♦ A giving kiosk with the **GivePlus Church** is now located in the narthex by the office entrance. You can follow easy prompts on a touch screen device to make a one-time contribution.

Additional information about the **GivePlus Church** app and about **GivePlus** and electronic giving is available by the giving kiosk or from the church office.

For more information about **GivePlus** and the **GivePlus Church** app go to

<http://connect.vancopayments.com/giveplus>

Love Days Quilters

Monday Dec. 4th & 11th
9:00-3:00
JOIN US!

WELCA Board

Executive Board
Kairos Room
Dec 5th 9:30 a.m.

CIRCLES

Sarah—No December
meeting

Hannah—No December
meeting

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH FOUNDATION REQUESTS FOR 2018:

Please submit your request to the Church Council for approval. Then submit the written request to Orrie Leabo, Foundation President, before **December 10th, 2017**. This will help the Foundation Board to prepare for the Foundation's Annual Meeting. If you have any questions or comments please contact the board members. They are as follows: Chad Felstul, Vicki Hanneman, Leonard Hatzenbuhler, Tim Johnson, Orrie Leabo, Missy Mattson and Linda Mellon.

PARENTS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS!

We would love to have your child's college mailing address. Please call the

church office at 218-739-3348, or email

firstlutheranchurchff@gmail.com with addresses or place their information in the offering plate.



Christmas Tea



Invitation

*All Women of First Lutheran Church are
invited to attend our annual Christmas Tea*

Tuesday, December 12, 2017

2:00-3:00pm

Pioneer Pointe Dining Room

*Come and share the spirit of Christmas
through devotions, music, refreshments and fel-
lowship.*



December 2017

FLY 8 -12 Schedule:

Meet Ashley in the Youth Room from 7:20-8:15 p.m.

December 6, 13 & 20

NO FLY Dec. 27



FLY K7 Schedule:

Meet Pastor Martha & Maddy in the Choir Room from 4:40-5:15 p.m.

December 6, 13 & 20

Choir Christmas Party

Dec. 13th

NO FLY Dec. 27

Resumes January 10th

TACO 'BOUT FAITH

@ Taco John's

FLY 10-12

Tuesday, Dec. 12th

&

FRIDAY, Dec. 22nd

FREE BREAKFAST!

FRIENDS ARE ALWAYS

WELCOME TO COME!

Txt or call Ashley with questions at 218-280-2608

FLY 10-12: ROCK'N'BOWL!

Saturday, December 9th at 10:00 p.m. Meet Ashley Shuck at the bowling alley!! Bring your DANCING moves for an evening filled with strikes, lights, turkeys and laughter at Northern Aire Lanes for ROCK'N'BOWL! Cost is \$11—but bring extra money for snacks or pop. (this includes the cost of renting shoes). Friends are welcome! Call or text Ashley at 218-280-2608 to let her know you'll be there. Must have a FLC Health Form on file at church—this includes friends!



HARVEST DINNER

Thanks to all the YOUTH of First Lutheran Church who assisted in any way with the Harvest Dinner! Your hard work, kindness and joyful presence was noticed by many of the people attending the dinner. Special thanks to the talented cooks - Mary Jo Marcus, Linda Mellon and Harriet Wicklund, all the people who purchased and donated food, served in the kitchen



before, during and after the dinner, the Youth Committee; Confirmation small group leaders and parents of youth. You are awesome!





Sunday School News

December 2017

Cindy Larson,
Sunday School Superintendent

First Lutheran Church

402 S. Court Street
Fergus Falls, MN

First Lutheran Sunday School Christmas Program

December Happenings

Service Project Day Bring a stuffed animal	Dec 3
Christmas Program practice during S.S.	Dec 3
"Butterflies" age 0-3 at 9:45 with parents	Dec 10
Christmas Program Dress Rehearsal during Sunday school	Dec. 10
Regular Sunday School and party	Dec 17
Christmas Program at 11:00 a.m. worship	Dec. 17
No Sunday School	Dec. 24

Our Sunday School students have a great chance to share the Christmas story of Jesus' birth in a Christmas Program on Sunday, December 17th at the 11:00 service. There are actors, solos and choirs that will help you smile as you reflect, recollect, and remember the story that has been passed through generations. Hopefully, you will think of Christmas programs you were involved in your childhood when you were filled with anticipation and jitters! Join us for smiles, children's voices, and fidgeting (for sure), and the telling of the greatest story ever told!

Sunday School resumes on January 7



Sunday School Christmas Giving Project:

In honor of Jesus' birthday, our Sunday School students will have an opportunity to share with others in need. It was brought to our attention that children in trauma situations might feel comforted with a small stuffed animal. We will collect cuddly stuffed animals and donate them to emergency personnel

to hand out when needed. Some of our church member Police Officers will be at Sunday School on Dec. 3 to explain how these gifts will be used. The students will be tying on a message of hope to each toy.

CHRISTMAS FOOD BASKETS

The First Lutheran church council will deliver Christmas Food Baskets to community members on Saturday, December 16th. Food items include a frozen turkey breast, bread, fruit cocktail, margarine, jello,

cranberries, potatoes, etc. If you or someone you know could benefit from a Christmas Food Basket, contact the church by Monday, December 4th. Please include name, number of children and ages (if ap-

plicable), phone number and address. If you are interested in helping deliver the food baskets on the morning of Saturday, December 16th, please contact the office.



CHRISTMAS GIVING TREES



Christmas Giving Trees are up and ready for you! Please take an ornament (or more!) from the trees; purchase the item listed on the ornament and return them

to church, unwrapped, by Sunday, December 17th. The organizations benefiting from the Giving Trees this year are A Place to Belong, Someplace Safe and Lake Region Recovery

Home. This is a simple way to make this Christmas season a little more "merry" for our neighbors.

CHRISTMAS COOKIES FOR SPECIAL FRIENDS - CALLING ALL COOKIE BAKERS!

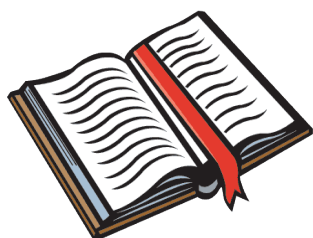
On Tuesday, December 12th, First Lutheran Church will be delivering plates of holiday cookies to shut-ins and members unable to bake anymore. We need help from those of you who enjoy baking. Let's spread Christmas joy in this delicious way. Deliver

cookies to the church kitchen On Sunday December 10th or by 9am Tuesday Dec 12th. Please label them "Cookie Plates for Special Friends". We are looking for additional drivers to help deliver the cookies later that morning Tuesday. Previous drivers have found it to be a

very rewarding experience. Please call Sandy Pearson 218-736-4320 if you can help in this way, or if you have questions. Together we can spread lots of Christmas love and cheer!



PRAYERS AND BIBLES



Lake Region Halfway house, a residential rehabilitation for chemically dependent adult men, houses 14 people for 3 month stays as they are making the transition from treatment centers into responsible behaviors and independent living skills without the use of alcohol and chemicals. The Director, Jeff Christenson,

LADC, recently visited with Pastor Martha about how First Lutheran might offer some spiritual support. An immediate opportunity for FLC members to connect is hanging on the Christmas Giving Tree. Among the ornaments you will find a request for Bibles (\$20) each. The residents will

begin a Bible Study soon. Jeff is hoping that every resident who wants a personal copy of the Bible will be able to receive one with a personal note of encouragement from someone at FLC. This is a wonderful way to put the life giving Word of God into the hands of someone who is struggling daily to overcome this debilitating disease.

DECEMBER 2017



FM Ballet's the Classic Nutcracker

December 16, 2017 - 2 PM performance. Cost is \$35 per person.

Be a part of the magic this holiday season and see the story of the Nutcracker come to life on stage. The FMBallet graces the NDSU Festival Concert Hall stage this December with a holiday tradition you don't want to miss. As the snow is falling travel with Clara through the enchanted lands. Weaving through the lands you will see the sky high Arabian performance by aerialist, Marina Petrano, the precision of China, the beauty and grace of the Sugar Plum Fairy and much more!

A production with original choreography by Matt Gasper and stunning costumes by Suzanne Spiese.

Live music by the professional musicians in the Wonderland Orchestra under the direction of Dr Christina Chen-Beyers.

We will be loading the coach at First Lutheran Lower Level at 12 noon.

Departing First Lutheran at 12:15

We will be stopping for dinner after the performance—still to be arranged.

Please pay by check to First Lutheran Church with OWLS in the memo line.

ALTAR FLOWERS AND RADIO BROADCAST

The Altar flower chart and radio broadcast sign-up sheets are up! They are located on the kiosk in the narthex.

Sign up early to get the dates that you want!!!

Please consider signing up for a radio broadcast if you haven't before...we have many shut-ins that utilize this gift that we provide. The radio broadcast cost is \$100.00. (We

do not bill you for this, checks are payable to First Lutheran Church with 'radio broadcast' in the memo line.) Altar flowers are ordered from The Flower Mill, and they send a bill to

the address we have on file for whomever signs



2017 DONATIONS

In order to claim a charitable contribution deduction for 2017, checks must be mailed to the church

by no later than December 31. Checks must be written, postmarked, and mailed in 2017 to qualify for a 2017 deduction. All other contributions will not qualify for this year, even if the check was actually written in 2017. Please keep this in mind when making your year-end donations. Thank you.



UNMARKED GRAVES IN NEED OF MARKERS

The First Lutheran cemeteries include 50+ graves with no markers. Per church records the people buried are known, but for various reasons a marker was never placed on the grave. The Cemetery Committee would like to

place a marker, like the one pictured here, on each grave.

These markers cost \$200 each and the committee is accepting donations. A check can be made out to First Lutheran Cemetery with "marker" in the memo line. If you would like to place a

marker on a specific person's grave, contact Leonard Hatzenbuehler, 218-731-0304.



WINTER WEATHER INFORMATION



If Fergus Falls schools close due to bad weather, the activities at the church that day will be cancelled and the church office will be closed. If a leader of an evening activity, such as the adult choir decides they WILL

HOLD THEIR EVENT, they will contact the members. Cancellation information will be on KJJK AM 1020.

**WEDNESDAYS - November 29 -
December 20**

**12:10 - Advent Worship and
lunch**

**5:15 - 6:30 p.m.— Soup Supper in
the Narthex**

7:00 p.m. - Advent Vespers



CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, December 24, Christmas Eve - No Sunday School

10:00 a.m. one service, Holy Communion,

3:00 p.m. Candlelight with Holy Communion

5:00 p.m. Candlelight with Holy Communion

Monday, December 25 Christmas Day -

10:00 a.m. Holy Communion, no Sunday School

Sunday, December 31, New Year's Day -

10:00 a.m. Holy Communion, no Sunday School

Come join us in the Narthex for a
Soup Lunch or Soup Supper
November 29, December 6, 13 and 20

Following the Noon Advent Worship and 5:15– 6:30 pm



JOIN US FOR

Christmas,

WE'LL

SING

ALL YOUR FAVORITES



Rather than hum along with the radio, come sing your favorite Christmas hymns with us. We are right in your neighborhood, and we have a place for you. Join us as we sing, worship and celebrate Christ's birth.

Sunday Dec. 24th Christmas Eve

10:00 a.m. one service, Holy Communion

3:00 p.m. Candlelight with Holy Communion

5:00 p.m. Candlelight with Holy Communion

Monday Dec. 25th Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. Holy Communion

This is Christ's church, and there is a place for you here.



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