

# THE JANUARY MESSENGER

*The monthly newsletter of First Lutheran Church, a congregation of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

## HYGGE UNITY SUNDAY

**JANUARY 25**

**11:00 am WORSHIP (NO 8:45 am SERVICE)**

**NOON POTLUCK**

What is “hygge”? (pronounced “Hoo-Ga”)

The Danish word translation is “coziness.” It is a time of warm candles, supersoft blankets, and oversized scarves. It is all things cozy.

Hygge is one way the Danes combat the long, dark winters. After Christmas is over, the long periods of dark can be a struggle, so “Hygge” helps alleviate the seasonal blues.

On Sunday, January 25th, we invite you to come to worship in your cozy comfortable clothes, or even pajamas, if that works for you.

You can even bring a blanket or a pillow to soften up your pew.

We will provide the warm worship and candles.

Then we will join in a potluck following worship.

We encourage attendees with last names

A-L to bring their favorite salad, side dish or dessert and

M-Z folks to bring their favorite cozy main dish.



### Pronounced “Hoo-Ga” **Hygge Sunday**



a slow, cozy, and intentional day dedicated to  
simple comforts, relaxation, and togetherness.

**January 25th**

**Wear Comfy Clothes - PJ's, sweat pants, etc.**

**9:50am Sunday School**

**ONE Service on Sunday 11:00am**

**Blankets / Pillows are WELCOME**

**12noon Potluck Luncheon**

Members w/last names A-L, please bring a salad, side or dessert.

Members w/last names M-Z, please bring a main dish.

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## **Prayer Ventures for this month can be found:**

<https://www.elca.org/Resources/Prayer-Ventures>  
These petitions are offered as guides to prayer for the global, social and outreach ministries of the ELCA, as well as for the needs and circumstances of our neighbors, communities and world.

## **RESOURCES**

**ELCA:** [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)  
800-638-3522

**Nebraska Synod:** [www.nebraskasynod.org](http://www.nebraskasynod.org)  
402-896-5311

**Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministry:**  
[www.nelcm.com](http://www.nelcm.com) 402-391-1144

**Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries:**  
[www.nlom.org](http://www.nlom.org) 402-944-2544

**Lutheran World Relief:** [www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org)  
800-597-5972

**Lutheran Disaster Response:**  
[www.elca.org/our-work/relief-and-development/lutheran-disaster-response](http://www.elca.org/our-work/relief-and-development/lutheran-disaster-response)  
800-638-3522

## **Prayers of Comfort and Peace for...**



- Jane David on the death of her sister-in-law, Bonita Sturgis.
- Gary and Pat Anderson on the death of Pat's brother, Robert Karle.
- Family and friends of Terry Eirich, on his death.
- Becky and Rod Bredenkamp, Monie, Wayne, and Dana Karschner, and Paula Peterson on the death of their cousin, Paul Carlson.
- Brad and Tara Stolcpart and family on the death of Brad's grandmother, Judy Boerger.
- Krista and Randy Fritson on the death of Krista's uncle, Samuel Corder.
- Betty Heggemeyer and family on the death of Betty's Aunt, Helen Englert.
- Dave & Angie Wright and family on the death of Angie's grandmother, Mary Jane Buschelman.

## **Prayers of Praise and Thanksgiving for:**

- Jimmy and Courtney Riley on the birth of their son, James, born December 3.
- Jerry and Carrie Stithem on the birth of their granddaughter, Rae Lynne Mallett, born December 28th.
- Brandon and Jessica Gebel on the birth of their baby boy, Matthew Gary Gebel, born January 5<sup>th</sup>.

## MISSION OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES:

### S.A.F.E. Center Donations for January:

#### Ziplock bags and Plastic storage containers



Please set items on the sharing shelf in the narthex.



The S.A.F.E. Center's mission is to provide free and confidential services for those affected by dating violence, domestic violence, human trafficking, sexual assault, and stalking while bringing awareness and prevention efforts to all individuals across South Central Nebraska.

Counties served: Buffalo, Franklin, Harlan, Kearney, Phelps.

Hours: Monday-Thursday 9am - 5pm Address: 620 E. 25th Street Suite 14  
Kearney, NE 68847 308-237-2599/Crisis line: 877-237-2513

### What's Your Purse-onality?

Calling all fashionistas, trendsetters, music lovers, and big-hearted friends! Our 22nd Annual Purses for a Purpose Auction hits the stage April 11, and we're now accepting purses and item donations.

This year's theme is The Rhythm of Hope, and we're turning up the volume: Name your purse or donation after a song, lyric, artist, or musical vibe!

Bold and bright? Classic and timeless? Edgy? Glam?

If your purse had a soundtrack, what would it be?

How to join the challenge:

Find your Purse-onality and its soundtrack

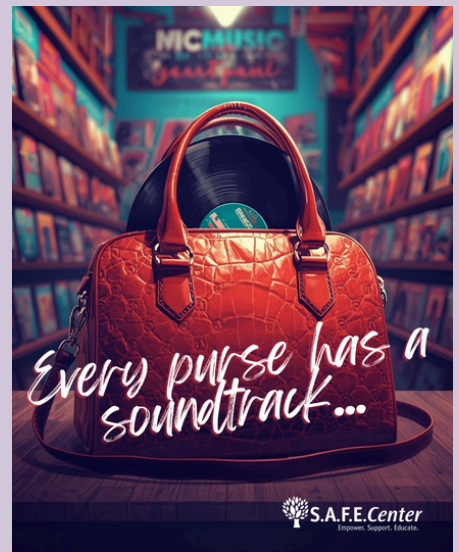
Choose a purse (or item) that matches your style or your business's vibe

Give it a song title, lyric, or artist name

Drop it off at The S.A.F.E. Center.

Businesses: This is your chance to put your brand in the spotlight. Donate a purse, fill it with gift cards, products, or experiences unique to you — then give it a name that steals the show.

Every donation adds a new note to the song of safety, healing, and hope for survivors in our community.





## MISSION OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES:



We received donations of \$3,925 toward the ELCA Good Gifts feeding ministries grant. With the \$3,000 matching Endowment Funds, the total is \$6,925!



Thank you for supporting the Jubilee Food Pantry. In December, we donated over 465 food items to the Jubilee Center! Thank you, Todd Athy, for transporting the food items to the Jubilee Center!

Confirmation Students will help serve the Jubilee Meals. Please check your emails for updates!

**Jubilee Meals for January - March**  
**January 22<sup>nd</sup> First Lutheran will supply food.**

February 12, 26, March 12 & 26 First Lutheran will host the meals. Other establishments will supply the meals.

**Please sign up in the Narthex to bring food or help.**





## MISSION OUTREACH

Habitat for Humanity article by Brook Pierce



We are deeply grateful for the generosity shown this year by the congregation and community, through both your time, prayers and your financial support. Your willingness to serve, give, and stand alongside us has truly been a blessing, and we are thankful for each of you.

Because of your support, we have been able to move important work forward, even as we prepare for what's next. While the infrastructure on the newly donated land is not yet ready, we have pushed forward and got quite a bit done. We dedicated one home this past month and we are planning to dedicate five homes in 2026 and are excited for what lies ahead.

Thank you for being part of this mission and for walking with us every step of the way. We have been blessed all year, and we look forward with hope and anticipation to the new year to come.

Kearney Area Habitat for Humanity  
Dedicates our 102nd house  
on Friday, January 16 at 6:30 pm.

Please come help us celebrate the Haylee Chadrick family  
as they receive the keys to their beautiful house at 1604 Avenue P



**What's the secret  
ingredient in KAHFH  
Recipe for Success?**

♥ You!

## WOMEN'S ELCA

Christmas Coffee - Angels Among Us - December 13, 2025  
HAPPY NEW YEAR 2026 - Women of ELCA & PRAYER GROUPS  
RING IN THE NEW YEAR WITH JOY AND THANKS

A huge thank you to Pastor Michelle for giving the opening prayer and program sharing needs of the Safe Center since the fire at the home that sheltered those in need. The Christmas Coffee donations raised amounted to \$900. In addition, the attendees donated items of food, gloves and hats. Thank you to all who gave so generously to help the Safe Center rebuild. Your prayers are needed to comfort those from abusive situations, Human Traffic and are homeless as a result. The theme was "Angels Among Us" and we certainly experienced the angels of giving.

Charlotte Endorf, Author and Lecturer and husband Kevin presented a program supported by Humanities Nebraska. The couple won the 2025 Founder's Award from the National Orphan Train Complex in Concordia Kansas for the two decades of keeping history alive. The audience enjoyed the history and voices of the Orphan Train rider experiences in the program "Excess Baggage" RIDING THE ORPHAN TRAIN. We had some attendees recognize the people featured in the stories. Charlotte has written 16 books about Nebraska history, and we all enjoyed the program and had a lively question and answer.

Many could not make it due to the slick roads and icy conditions. We still had a great turnout with members from First Lutheran Church and the public attending. We had plenty of biscuits and gravy, fruit cups, muffins, various breads, hot fruit compote, and egg casserole. Thanks to all who prepared food and donated food. Also, those that helped serve and members that set up, cleaned up and reset the tables for FLY breakfast. The First Lutheran Church is blessed to have caring Pastors and an active congregation in a beautiful building. Thanks to all who made the event a success. Thank God for helping get attendees home safely.

UPCOMING EVENTS - WELCA Board located in hallway next to FLC coffee bar has sign ups

JANUARY 15- WELCA Board meeting - 1:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

JANUARY 17 - St. Paul's Lutheran/Grand Island theme "Joy in the Journey"

MAY 6 - Southern Prairie - Bethany Lutheran/Minden

HAVE A GREAT 2026 from WELCA Board

Judy Workman, President; Sherryl Wilke, President Elect;  
Stacy Darveau, Secretary; and Jo Smallcomb, Treasurer.

## WOMEN'S ELCA

Christmas Coffee - Angels Among Us - December 13, 2025



PRAYER BY PASTOR MICHELLE AND  
BRUNCH SERVED TO ALL - YUM!



KEVIN & CHARLOTTE ENDORF - EXCESS BAGGAGE "THE ORPHAN TRAIN"





## STEWARDSHIP



EMBRACING  
*the* LIGHT

Hello First Lutheran Family,

The Stewardship Committee is looking forward to conversations and reflections with our committees in the next couple of months. We see this as an extension of highlighting the many people that come together to make our worship and services to the community happen.

Expect to hear back from the committees in the Spring to learn more about their insights, and the amazing work our church does in the background.

We hope that you enjoy this new year with family, and we look forward to where God is calling us to embrace the Holy Spirit's guiding light!

Stewardship Committee;

Pastor Logan Ellis, Randy Hinrichs, Scott Darveau, CJ Sabah, Annette Schwartz, Sharon Liljehorn, Mark Kottmeyer, Pastor Rick Carlson



### These can be found on the Welcome Station?

**Devotional Booklets**



**Calendars**



**Living Lutheran Magazine**



## VOLUNTEERS OF THE MONTH

**A special “THANK YOU” to our  
Volunteer of the Month!**

**Our January Volunteer of the Month is:  
Bridget Von Seggern**



**Thank you, Bridget, for all you do with the Advent  
Fair, F.R.O.G., Sunday School, VBS, and more!**

## UPDATES

**The 2026  
flower sign-up sheet is on  
the board in the Narthex.  
Thank you for signing up  
for Altar Flowers!**

Flowers can be taken home after the 11am service,  
or stop in the office Monday to pick them up.

Are you curious how the flower  
chart works?

If you'd like to provide altar  
flowers, write your name down  
on a date on the flower chart.  
Someone will call you prior to  
that date to ask if you want any  
special colors, or if you'd like to  
specify what the flowers are for.

(special anniversary, in celebration of someone's birthday,  
in memory of a loved one)

Then, after the Sunday 11am service, you're welcome to take the  
flowers home and enjoy them! Or you can stop by the office Monday –  
Friday between 8:30am – 4pm and pick them up.

If you're unable to take the flowers home, please let us know.

We love to share them with our volunteers!



# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

## Wednesday Night F.R.O.G. Leaders Needed!

### It's EASY as PIE!

- We have all the curriculum
  - No prep needed!
- Short & Sweet commitment
  - Just show up and love on our youth!
- Make a difference in a child's life
  - and have fun doing it!
- Wednesdays 6:15 pm - 7:45 pm



Please email [Volunteers@FirstLutheranKearney.org](mailto:Volunteers@FirstLutheranKearney.org)

Would you like to serve in a church service by reading the prayers of the people?



More volunteers are needed to be assisting ministers one time a month or once every other month

For more information email: [volunteers@firstlutherankearney.org](mailto:volunteers@firstlutherankearney.org)

## Assisting Ministers are needed!



You can serve once a month, or be a substitute.

Please contact Sarah Schweitzer

Email: [Volunteers@FirstLutheranKearney.org](mailto:Volunteers@FirstLutheranKearney.org)

## Chancel Choir is Looking for Singers for the New Season

Join us to Become Part of an Interesting and Fun Group!



Experience A Way To Worship And Praise Within Our Church Family.

We sing at the 8:45am service, but you don't need to sing every Sunday.

Contact CJ Sabah for details

## Calling All Donut Lovers and Coffee Pourers!



We're looking for friendly faces to help host our Coffee, Donuts, and Fellowship time between services!

Questions? Reach out to Christine Fisher at (308) 224-1161 or [76fisher@gmail.com](mailto:76fisher@gmail.com).

Let's make sweet fellowship even sweeter!

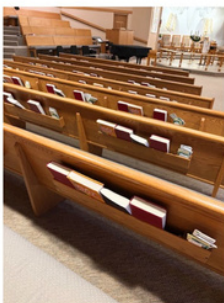
You can sign up from the link located in the weekly newsletter, on the FLC website, or call or email Christine.



## Communion Assistants Needed

We need to fill a few Communion Assistant positions. Volunteers are asked to serve once a month and training is provided.

Please contact the Church Office if you can help!  
[office@firstlutherankearney.org](mailto:office@firstlutherankearney.org) 308-237-5544



## It takes some effort to keep our pew racks clean and organized.

We're so thankful for the amazing volunteer who faithfully does this, but he could really use a helping hand!

If you have a few minutes to spare now and then, please reach out to the church office.

## Volunteer Opportunities:

Help is needed in the areas listed below. If you can help, please contact the church office for more information.

- Lector
- Assisting Minister
- Communion Assistants
- Sound Booth / Projector
- Wednesday night F.R.O.G. Leader
- Chancel Choir
- Coffee Hosts
- Meals on Wheels



## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

### Wednesday Night Activities


- 5:15 pm - Praiser Bells
- 5:30 pm - Feeding the Flock
- 6:15 pm - Heavenly Treble Makers
- 6:15 pm - 7:45 pm F.R.O.G.
- 6:30 pm - Chancel Choir
- 6:50 pm - 7:55 pm Confirmation Class
- 6:30 pm - FLY\*



\*check emails for updates



Youth Programs  
have resumed!




REGISTER HERE

### Youth Programs Start Back Soon!

**FROG begins Jan. 7 (Wed. nights)**  
Meet in North Hall at 6:15pm

**Sunday School begins Jan. 11**  
Meet in North Hall at 9:50am



**FIRST LUTHERAN**  
Church of Renewal  
Grow in God's Grace,  
Reflect Christ's Love,  
and Live in the Spirit



### 4th and 5th Grade First Communion Classes

- Wednesdays
- 5:45 pm - 6:20 pm
- February 25, March 4, 11, 18 & 25<sup>th</sup>
- Fellowship Hall
- Please register by February 11<sup>th</sup>

Registration forms are on the Welcome Stations.  
Please contact the office if you didn't receive the  
email to pre-register.

Parents of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>  
Graders should've received  
an email from Jen Puls with  
the registration form for  
First Communion Class.  
If you didn't receive the  
email, please reach out to  
the office at:  
308-237-5544



### F.R.O.G. • FLY • Sunday School What's the difference?

- **F.R.O.G. *Fully Rely On God*** | Pre-K - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade. Meets Wednesday evenings providing a fun look into God's Word through games, crafts, music and lessons.
- **Middle School** | 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade. Meets Wednesday evenings attending Confirmation Class.
- **FLY *First Lutheran Youth*** | 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Grade. Meets Wednesday evenings learning God's Word, meeting community leaders, or having a fun activity. Periodically meets off-site for games or serving in the community.
- **Sunday School** - Ages Pre-K - 12<sup>th</sup> Grade. Meets Sunday mornings receiving a structured lesson into God's Word.  
Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade will also have music Sunday Mornings.

## YOUTH MINISTRY - FLY



FLY has had an eventful year! We have had many great guests at our CrossRoad Conversations ranging from our own Bishop to the local Orthodox priest, Father Christopher. During these conversations, we discussed many deep topics such as baptism, angels, gender, hell, and the separation of church and state.

We learned so much from our fellow Christians, and it was a great opportunity! We have a couple more conversations lined up for the upcoming year, and we hope to continue learning through thought provoking conversations and interactions with others.

FLY has been active in our community of Kearney! We have worked with the Jubilee Center, and the Safe Center. We have assisted F.R.O.G. a couple of times, and we look forward to continuing serving all the amazing community support groups that empower Kearney! We look forward to learning more about how a community like Kearney operates, and we hope to strike up new conversations and experiences with local leaders such as the school board, city council, and others who have a unique perspective to the everyday operations of Kearney!

FLY has appreciated your support in the events we have sponsored. We are thankful for your presence during our Holiday Brunch and Chili Cook-Off: both events were very well attended and have become great times for our church family to connect and share. It has been amazing to witness the love you have for the youth. We are honored to represent our church in the community, and cherish our connection with you as family.

Pastor Logan





## MUSIC MINISTRY

The Children's Christmas Program "The Best Christmas Present Ever" was enjoyed by all! You can view the recording on our website. Click "watch live" and then select "View Past Services". Search for the the 8:45am December 21st Worship Service.



### Organist/Choir Accompanist Paid Positions Available

#### First Lutheran Church

3315 G Avenue  
Kearney NE 68845  
Contact Natalie Radcliffe  
308-237-5544  
natalieradcliffe@firstlutherankearney.org

Organist: weekly  
Choir Accompanist:  
Wednesday evening rehearsals and one service weekly,  
September thru May

Do you play the organ and have a couple of hours to work each week? Or do you know someone? This is a part-time, paid position. Please reach out to Natalie.

### Praising God through music!

The choirs practice weekly and all are welcome to join!

Chancel Choir rehearses on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8:00 PM.

High School through adults are welcome  
CJ Sabah--director

Chancel Bells rehearses on Tuesdays from 5:30 to 6:30 PM.

Choir is open to high schoolers through adults  
Natalie Radcliffe--director

Sound Offering Praise Band rehearses on Thursdays from 5:30 to 7:00 PM

If interested contact Stacy Bean  
Stacy Bean--director

Praiser Bells rehearses on Wednesdays from 5:15 to 5:45 PM

This choir is for 3rd grade through 8th grade  
Angela Wright--director

Heavenly Treble Makers rehearses on Wednesdays from 6:15 to 6:45 PM

This is a vocal choir for middle schoolers  
Angela Wright--director

Children's Choir rehearses on Sunday mornings during Sunday School and  
Wednesday evenings during FROG.

All children are welcome.  
Amanda Lewis - Director



## Three & Four Year Old Class

Hello from the 3-4-year-old Preschool Classroom!

Although we only had two weeks of school in December we learned a lot! It was wonderful to finally show our families all the hard work we did to to prepare for our Christmas Program. Everyone always enjoys watching and listening to our preschoolers perform during the holidays.

We learned that giving gifts to others can be better than receiving them. We mailed letters to our loved ones and learned about all the steps the letter goes through to get from our classroom mailbox to our family's mailboxes.

We spent time writing the letter G and finding words that make the G sound. We also practiced counting to 15.

The birth of Jesus was our main focus this month. We learned about the Nativity and who came to witness His birth in Bethlehem. We made some beautiful Nativities of our own.

We had a great time at our classroom Christmas Party where we had a book exchange, played games, watched a movie, and ate popcorn! In January our class will be learning about hibernation, winter, snow, polar animals, and we will even spend a week dreaming of warmer weather as we celebrate Aloha Week!

We will practice writing and recognizing the letters W, S, B and R. We will continue to recognize numbers 17, 18, 19 and 20.

On **Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>**, our preschoolers will be singing at the 8:45am church service. Our Fundraiser Brunch will follow the service in Centennial Hall. I hope you all can join us!

Blessings to All!  
Ms. Marissa



## PreSchool

Happy New Year First Lutheran Congregation!

As soon as we came back from Thanksgiving break, we decorated our classroom for Christmas! The kids helped decorate the tree and made ornaments too! We talked and talked about the true meaning of Christmas. They can tell you who Jesus's mother and father is, and what a manger is normally used for. They can also tell you where Mary and Joseph travelled to and who came to visit baby Jesus. These students are very smart!

For the letter M, we reviewed who the mother of baby Jesus is, practiced a lot for our Christmas program and made lots of ornaments. We also made a Christmas placemat with the picture of Joseph, Mary, and Jesus in the stable with the star shining down.

Our Christmas pajama party was a blast and we very busy! The students listened to "The Polar Express" being read to them. They made cute picture frames for their parents. They also helped wrap the present and wrote their name on a label! Those ornaments turned out so cool! We played a math game with skittles and they had fun filling their tree with candy and then eating them. At the end of our party, we had a book exchange and they loved receiving their very own new book. Our last game was musical chairs! The teachers gave them each two new books, candy canes, a pencil, and playdough. We hope they have fun talking about that first Christmas night and enjoy our gifts!

We are getting ready for next year's registration for the 2026/2027 school year. January 9<sup>th</sup> is when current preschool families can register. Jan. 16<sup>th</sup> is when church families can register that don't currently have a child in our preschool and Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup> is when it is open to the public! In this "Messenger" you'll find updates planned for next year's preschool. We will have additional school days and start at 8am.

On **January 18<sup>th</sup>**, we will sing a few songs at the 8:45am service and then we will see you at our Preschool Breakfast for food and fellowship! Help us reach our scholarship goal of \$4,500. We thank you for your continued support of this program!

We hope this new year brings you many joys! These children bring us joy every single day! We are so blessed!

God's blessings to you and your loved ones.  
Mrs. Amanda and Mrs. Sonya

**PRESCHOOL BRUNCH**  
Sunday, January 18  
9:30am - 11:00am  
*Everyone is welcome!*  
Stop in to see the student's projects.



All free will donations will support our goal of \$4,500 for scholarships.



## EVENTS

### The Auction for the 3206 H Ave Property ends January 14th!



Click this QR Code or visit:  
[RhynaldsAuction.com](https://RhynaldsAuction.com)



If you've been following First Lutheran's Facebook and weekly newsletters, you've seen the advertising of the sale of the church property. Follow the [RhynaldsAuction.com](https://RhynaldsAuction.com) for updates!

Preschool Registration opens  
January 16<sup>th</sup> to all First Lutheran  
Church Members.

### PRESCHOOL BRUNCH

Sunday, January 18  
9:30am - 11:00am

**Everyone is welcome!**

Stop in to see the student's  
projects.



All free will donations  
will support our goal of  
\$4,500 for scholarships.



### GREAT NEWS!



FLC Preschool schedule will run closer to  
the KPS schedule for the 2026/2027 year!

- NEW 8:00 am daily start time for all classes
- 11:45 am end time for 3 & 4 year old class. (M-TH)
- 3:00 pm end time for PreK Class (M-F)
- Preschool Semesters will end two days before KPS in December and one day before KPS in May.



Registration for current families  
opens January 9th!

Check out our website for details!

[firstlutheranearney.org/first-lutheran-preschool](https://firstlutheranearney.org/first-lutheran-preschool)



Please join us for the Preschool  
Brunch! All free will donations will  
support our goal of \$4,500 for  
scholarships.

The students are excited to show off  
their projects and will be singing at  
the 8:45am service on January 18th.



The Church Office  
will be closed  
January 19<sup>th</sup> in  
honor of  
Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Day.





## EVENTS

Are you looking for a church to call home or know of someone looking?

One where everyone knows each other?

First Lutheran is the perfect fit!

Our new member's class begins Sunday, February 1

at 10:00 am in Fellowship Hall.

New members will be received at all services February 21 & 22 with a  
Brunch Reception on February 22 between the Sunday services.

Are you interested in becoming a member  
or learning more about what it means to  
belong to First Lutheran?



New Member Classes meet:  
February 1, 8, 15 with Installation and a  
Welcome Reception February 22.

*Contact the church office for details.*

### Adult Forum

Please join us February 1<sup>st</sup> at  
9:50am in Centennial Hall.

We will discuss our Summer  
Worship Schedule and we want  
your feedback!

Please join us for an  
Adult Forum Sunday,  
February 1st

February is Scout Sunday. Let's support them!

### Scout Troop Breakfast Fundraiser

Freewill Donation



Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup>  
Between Services  
9:30-11:30am

First Lutheran Church  
3315 G Ave  
Kearney

### Scout Sunday is February 8th

JOIN US FOR  
SCOUT SUNDAY!

FAITH. COMMUNITY.  
CELEBRATION!



Scouts and Scout Leaders: Please wear your uniform to  
worship service that day, so we can celebrate you.

## EVENTS

Join us for Ash Wednesday service! On Ash Wednesday, we mark Jesus' entrance into the wilderness for 40 days before Easter. We turn our attention to Jesus and enter a time of self-examination and repentance.



**F.R.O.G. and Feeding the Flock will NOT occur on Ash Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>.**

- **FLY** - Please check your emails for updates

Please join us for 12noon service or 6:30pm service

Feeding the Flock will resume Wednesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>  
F.R.O.G. will resume Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>



**4th and 5th Grade First Communion Classes**

- Wednesdays
- 5:45 pm - 6:20 pm
- February 25, March 4, 11, 18 & 25<sup>th</sup>
- Fellowship Hall
- Please register by February 11th

Registration forms are on the Welcome Stations.  
Please contact the office if you didn't receive the email to pre-register.

**Lenten Services**  
**February 25, March 4, 11, 18 & 25**



What if the opposite of being bound is being whole?  
Our world is filled with things that hold us captive. These things that bind us prevent us from living the whole, abundant life that God has promised us. Through the stories of regular people encountering Jesus, and being drawn to the wholeness that Jesus provides, we can learn about our own longings and be drawn into wholeness.

## WORSHIP THEMES

### **JANUARY 4, 2026 SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS**

JEREMIAH 31:7-14; SIRACH 24:1-12;  
PSALM 147:12-20; WISDOM 10:15-21;  
EPHESIANS 1:3-14; JOHN 1:[1-9] 10-18

Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

### **JANUARY 11, 2026 BAPTISM OF OUR LORD FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**

ISAIAH 42:1-9; PSALM 29; ACTS 10:34-43; MATTHEW 3:13-17

In the waters of the Jordan, Jesus is revealed as the beloved Son of God. Through this great epiphany, Jesus fulfills all righteousness and becomes the servant of God who will bring forth justice and be a light to the nations. In the waters of baptism we too are washed by the Word, anointed by the Spirit, and named God's beloved children. Our baptismal mission is to proclaim good news to all who are oppressed or in need of God's healing.

### **JANUARY 18, 2026 SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**

ISAIAH 49:1-7; PSALM 40:1-11; 1  
CORINTHIANS 1:1-9; JOHN 1:29-42

Today's gospel opens with further reflection on Jesus' baptism. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the skin of the world and the one anointed by the Spirit. In the liturgy we come and see Christ revealed among us in word and meal. We go forth to invite others to come and worship the Holy One and to receive the gifts of grace and peace made known among us.

### **JANUARY 25, 2026 THIRD SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY**

ISAIAH 9:1-4; PSALM 27:1, 4-9; 1  
CORINTHIANS 1:1-18; MATTHEW  
4:12-23

Jesus begins his public ministry by calling fishers to leave their nets and follow him. In Jesus the kingdom of God has come near. We who have walked in darkness have seen a great light. We see this light most profoundly in the cross – as God suffers with us and all who are oppressed by sickness, sin, or evil. Light dawns for us as we gather around the word, the font, and the holy table. We are then sent to share the good news that others may be “caught” in the net of God's grace and mercy.



## FROM THE COUNCIL

Greetings First Lutheran Congregation from your Church Council:

The 3206 H Avenue property online auction is continuing, with the bid process concluding on January 14, 2026. You are able to track the bid progress at [rhynaldsauctions.com](http://rhynaldsauctions.com).

An update regarding the Capital Campaign Pledges: Of the \$1,029,114 pledges received, \$983,805 has been received, with \$45,309 remaining to be received.

Let us continue our focus on the baby Jesus as we enter the Epiphany season and the New Year.

Yours in Christ,

P. J. Bartels  
Council President

On behalf of Scott Darveau (VP), Deb Schauer (Secretary), Lisa Parish (Treasurer), Christine Fisher, Jay Kuecker, Shirley Smalley, Tyler Schwartz, Terry Volker, Pastor Rick Carlson and Pastor Michelle Carlson

### **From the Capital Campaign Committee:**

It feels like yesterday that we completed the new Office and HVAC Remodeling Project. It has been a wonderful accomplishment for our church and has given us more space for our ministries and more opportunities to meet with our community partners.

Our Capital Campaign Committee thanks all who have completed their pledge towards this project, and we look forward to the completion of the project. We want to encourage our church family for their faithfulness and trust in God's vision for our church. What seemed like a dream has become reality, so let us rejoice in the blessings that God has given us this year, and future years to come!

-Capital Campaign Committee



## FINANCIALS:

NOVEMBER FINANCE REPORT			
<b>Ministry Budget:</b>	Nov 2025	YTD '25-'26	YTD '24-'25
Budget Supporting Revenue	\$ 51,105	\$ 316,765	\$ 286,104
Budget Related Expenditures	\$ (65,195)	\$(385,008)	\$(358,233)
Total 2025-2026 Ministry Budget: \$790,816			
<b>Facilities Budget:</b>	Nov 2025	YTD '25-'26	YTD '24-'25
Revenue	\$ 4,879	\$ 29,939	\$ 30,352
Expenditures	\$ (3,710)	\$ (19,531)	\$ (4,292)
Total 2025-2026 Facilities Budget: \$28,100			

### USE OF OFFERING ENVELOPES

Thank you to all those who regularly make use of the weekly offering envelopes. It may not be possible to keep an accurate recording of your contributions if you do not use your envelopes. If you choose to contribute by check without using the envelopes, please write your offering envelope number on your check. This will enable us to record your contributions accurately. Any loose checks that are received without an envelope number noted may not be reflected on your contribution statement.

Contributions to the Ministry Budget and Facilities Budget can be combined in one check.

If you are not receiving offering envelopes and would like some, please contact Stacy in the church office. Thank you for your help!



## DATES TO REMEMBER

**Please review the calendar at [FirstLutheranKearney.org](http://FirstLutheranKearney.org) for updates.  
Laying on of Hands will occur on the First and Third weekends**

### January Events

Sat/Sun, January 3/4 Sunday	Worship Sat. 6 pm   Sun. 8:45 am and 11:00 am 2:00 pm - Brookestone Gardens Worship Service
Thurs/January 8	5:00 pm - Jubilee Meal
Sat/Sun, January 10/11	Worship Sat. 6 pm   Sun. 8:45 am and 11:00 am 9:50 am Sunday School   FLY meet
Fri/January 16	Preschool Registration open to First Lutheran Church Families
Sat/Sun, January 17/18 Sunday	Worship Sat. 6 pm   Sun. 8:45 am and 11:00 am 9:50 am Sunday School   FLY meet Preschool Brunch between services Centennial Hall
Mon/January 19	Church Office Closed - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Thurs/January 22	5:00 pm - Jubilee Meal
Sat/Sun, January 24/25 Hygee Sunday	Worship Sat. 6 pm   Sun. 11:00 am 9:50 am Sunday School   FLY meet Potluck luncheon in Centennial Hall following 11:00am service

### February Events

Sat/Sun, Jan. 31/Feb. 1 Sunday	Worship Sat. 6 pm   Sun. 8:45 am and 11:00 am 9:50 am Sunday School   FLY meet 9:50 am - Adult Forum - Centennial Hall 10:00 am   New Member's Class   Fellowship Hall 2:00 pm - Brookestone Gardens Worship Service
Sat/Sun, February 7/8 Scout Sunday Brunch Sunday	Worship Sat. 6 pm   Sun. 8:45 am and 11:00 am 9:30 am - 11:30 am - Brunch served between services 9:50 am Sunday School   FLY meet 10:00 am   New Member's Class   Fellowship Hall
Thurs./February 12	5:00 pm - Jubilee Meal
Sat/Sun, February 14/15 Sunday	Worship Sat. 6 pm   Sun. 8:45 am and 11:00 am 9:50 am Sunday School   FLY meet 10:00 am   New Member's Class   Fellowship Hall
Wed/February 18	12noon and 6:30 pm - Ash Wednesday Services
Sat/Sun, February 21/22	Worship Sat. 6 pm   Sun. 8:45 am and 11:00 am Sunday 9:50 am Sunday School   FLY meet 10:00 am   New Member's Reception   Centennial Hall
Wed/February 25	5:30 pm - Feeding the Flock 6:30 pm - Lenten Service 5:45 pm - First Communion Class
Thurs/February 26	5:00 pm - Jubilee Meal



**Church Office** [office@firstlutheranearney.org](mailto:office@firstlutheranearney.org)

**PASTORS:**

**Pastor Rick Carlson**

Co-Lead Pastor

[rcarlson@firstlutheranearney.org](mailto:rcarlson@firstlutheranearney.org)

**Pastor Michelle Holley Carlson**

Co-Lead Pastor

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**STAFF:**

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Administrative Assistant

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Director of Communications and Events

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**Pastor Logan Ellis**

Director of Engagement: Youth, Congregation and Community

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**CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

President

PJ Bartels

Vice President

Scott Darveau

Treasurer

Lisa Parish

Secretary

Deb Schauer

Members:

Christine Fisher

Jay Kuecker

Tyler Schwartz

Shirley Smalley

Terry Volker

Pastor Michelle

Pastor Rick



**2025-2026 OFFICERS**

President:

Judy Workman 308-237-2781

President Elect:

Sherryl Wilke 308-390-1346

Secretary:

Stacy Darveau 308-627-5546

Treasurer:

Jo Smallcomb 308-234-3053

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA  
3315 G AVENUE  
KEARNEY, NEBRASKA 68847-3699

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH  
3315 G AVENUE - KEARNEY, NEBRASKA 68847



The church calendar, weekly bulletins, prayer lists, and LIVE Webstream Broadcasts on  
Sunday mornings can be found on our website:

<https://firstlutherankearney.org>

Find us on Facebook: "First Lutheran Church-Kearney"

Sign Up for Weekly Email Updates: [office@firstlutherankearney.org](mailto:office@firstlutherankearney.org)

LIVE Radio Broadcast Sundays at 8:45 a.m. | KXPN 1460AM

PHONE: 308-237-5544 WEB: <https://firstlutherankearney.org>

Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Monday – Friday

**To save the church postage costs and receive "The Messenger" by picking up a  
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please call or email the church office.**