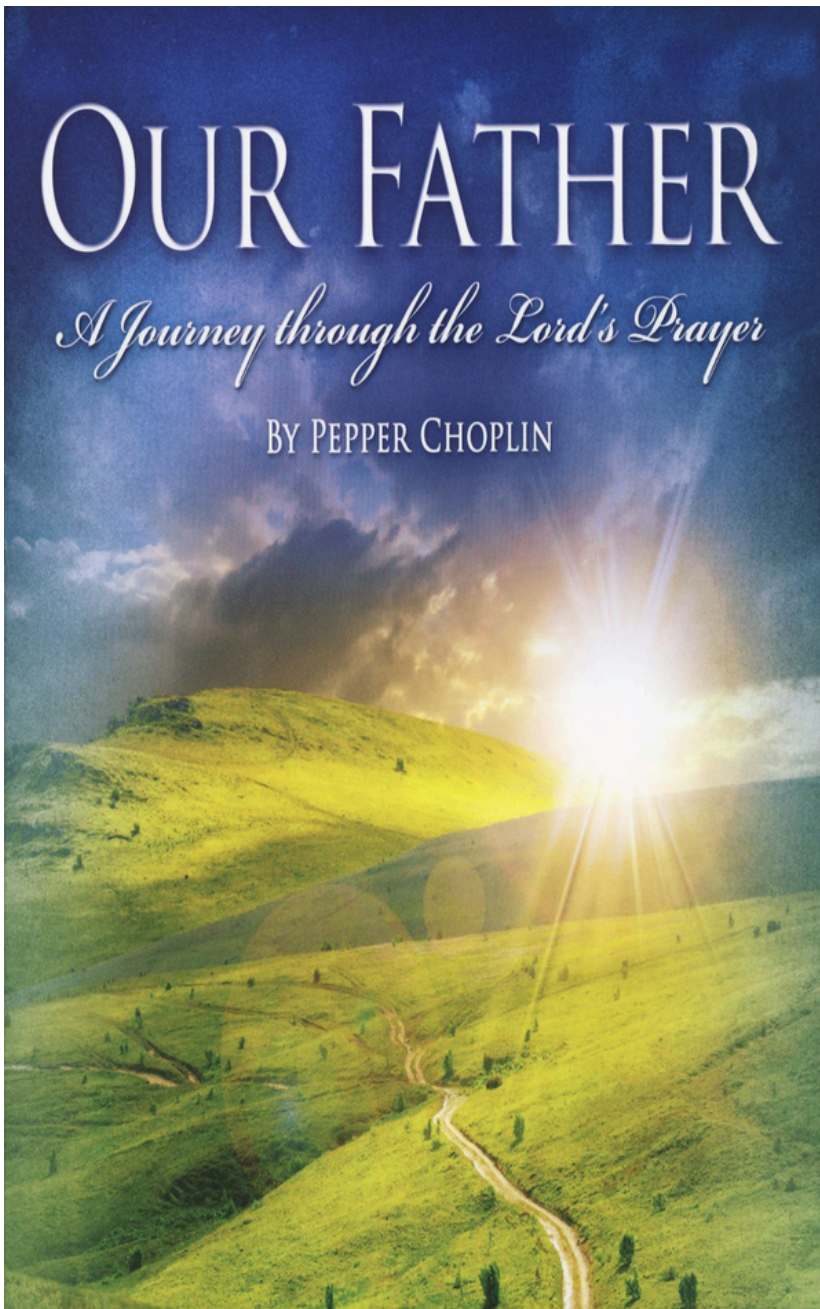


THE APRIL MESSENGER

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

Chancel Choir Cantata
April 25/26, 2026
6:00 pm service
11:00 am Unity service



These are such powerful words, encompassing so much of the faith experience. Each phrase of the prayer is presented in a dramatic setting meant to connect the listener with the concept in a personal way.

The Lord's Prayer forms the foundation of this creative worship experience. With highly original music and thoughtful narration, the composer turns a musical presentation into a teachable moment for the choir and congregation alike.

This cantata delivers both artistry and ministry.

Plan to attend. You won't be disappointed!

TABLE OF CONTENTS AND RESOURCES

Inside this issue:

SPRING CANTATA 1
 TABLE OF CONTENTS,
 RESOURCES & PRAYERS 2
 MISSION OUTREACH 3-6
 WOMEN'S ELCA 7
 EVENTS - 8-9
 STEWARDSHIP - 10
 VOLUNTEER INFO - 11
 COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT - 12-13
 CHILDREN'S MINISTRY 14
 FLY YOUTH MINISTRY 15
 MUSIC MINISTRY 16
 COUNCIL 17
 PRESCHOOL 18-19
 WORSHIP THEMES 20
 FINANCES 21
 CALENDAR 22
 LEADERSHIP 23

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
 800-638-3522**

**Nebraska Synod: www.nebraskasynod.org
 402-896-5311**

**Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministry:
www.nelcm.com 402-391-1144**

**Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries:
www.nlom.org 402-944-2544**

**Lutheran World Relief: www.lwr.org
 800-597-5972**

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



Prayers of Comfort and Peace for...

- Todd & Susan Athy and family on the death of Todd's uncle, Doug Bliss.
- The family and friends of Marvel Heuke.
- David & Julie Bohm on the death of Julie's mother, Betty Bowman.

**Easter Services were highlighted in the March Messenger.
 Here's a reminder in case you missed it.**

Holy Week Schedule of Services

- Palm/Passion Sunday, March 28/29 6pm, 8:45am and 11am
- Maundy Thursday, April 2 - 6:30pm
- Good Friday, April 3 - 6:30pm
- Holy Saturday, April 4 - 6pm
- Easter Sunday, April 5 - 7am, 8:45am, 11am

Easter Services

**Sunday, April 5
 7:00am Sunrise Service
 North Parking Lot
 8:45am and 11:00am**



MISSION OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES:

S.A.F.E. Center Donations for April:



Adult and Children's Coloring Books, Colored Pencils and Crayons

**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

Remember To Check In On People Who:



Have been quiet lately



Are going through a life transition



Never ask for help



You haven't heard from recently



Come across as strong



Are always there for everyone else



Say they're fine



Seem to have it all "figured out"

MISSION OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES:

The Mission Outreach Team encourages the congregation to reach out beyond ourselves to spread God's love locally and globally. By planning and coordinating service projects in Kearney and throughout all corners of the world, the team helps the congregation to fulfill Jesus' command to love, serve, and care for our brothers and sisters everywhere.

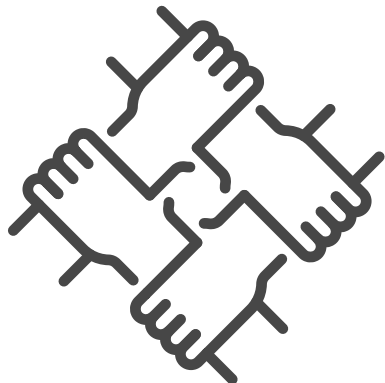
The definitions of "mission" include:

- An important assignment given to a person or group of people, typically involving travel abroad.
- Vocation or calling of a religious organization, especially a Christian one, to go out into the world and spread its faith.
- A strongly felt aim, ambition, or calling.

Uh-oh, what if I'm not exactly a "live in a tent in Africa" kind of gal? How can I do a "mission"?

You can do mission work every day in your own church and community too. What if your mission looks like:

- Washing dishes in the church kitchen?
- Teaching Sunday School?
- Doing LiveStream or Power Point for a church service?
- Setting up coffee on Sundays?
- Providing items for the Safe Center or grocery cart?
- Singing in the choir?
- Playing bells?
- Serving as an usher or greeter?
- Assembling school kits or quilts?
- Serving on a committee?



*Here I am, Lord
Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you
calling in the night
I will go Lord, if You
lead me
I will hold Your people
in my heart.*

*Here I Am Lord, by Dan
Schutte*

MISSION OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES:

Those are within our church walls. **What if your mission looks like:**

- Delivering communion to those unable to attend church?
- Setting a good example for others around you at work & in the grocery store?
- Granting mercy to the driver that cut you off?
- Contributing to causes that help others?
- Helping build houses for Habitat for Humanity?
- Helping sort items at the Jubilee Center?
- Providing a meal to someone overwhelmed or ill?
- Volunteering at a camp for children in foster care?

Well, I really don't get out much, so there's not much I can do as a mission. What if your mission is:

- To mail notes of encouragement to someone that really needs that?
- Praying for others?
- Contributing to causes that help others?
- Continuing to learn more about God's love and strengthening your faith.

There are so many ways to volunteer and to give back. We plan to provide more information about these opportunities in upcoming newsletters.

The amazing thing about these opportunities is that in helping others, we often help ourselves.



MISSION OUTREACH



There are moments that remind you why the work matters. Our Kearney Area Habitat for Humanity Annual Meeting was one of those moments.

It was humbling to gather together and reflect on how God continues to move through this mission through every nail driven, every prayer lifted, and every family welcomed home. We are constantly reminded that this work is bigger than houses.

It is about hope, dignity, and faith in action.

As we reflected, these words felt especially fitting:

“Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth...”

This is what we strive to live out each day. With every simple, decent home built, we are doing our small part to bring His will to life right here in our community.

To every volunteer, donor, partner, and prayer warrior, thank you. Your hands build homes, find and feed the volunteers, capture photos of the generosity and hard work, but your hearts build the Kingdom. May the impact of this work echo for generations to come.

-Written by Brook Pierce at Scorr Marketing for Habitat for Humanity



WOMEN'S ELCA



EASTER BLESSING FROM Women of the ELCA FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH (FLC)!

The Women of the ELCA Board Meeting March 19, 2026, resulted in changes to the Calendar of events:

Women of the ELCA First Lutheran Church Board voted on a time change to meet: the Third Thursday of the month at 5:15 p.m. in Fellowship Hall to allow more working members to attend.

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR HANDBOOK with the new meeting dates/times.

Women of the ELCA SPRING CELEBRATION BRUNCH Saturday, April 18, 10:00 am. (Note changes- time AND Centennial Hall!) Sign up on WELCA Bulletin Board or call Kandy Bacon at FLC 308-237-5544 to RSVP.

PLEASE SIGN UP FOR BRUNCH ITEMS ON THE WELCA BULLETIN BOARD.

Theme – God's Blessings of Marriages Past & Present!

The set up of display of wedding dresses and Mother (or Grandmother) of the bride will start at 9:45am to 10:00am.

Fashion show - if you would like to be part of the show, a sign-up sheet is attached to the Women of the ELCA Bulletin Board in the hallway next to the cafe.

If you **display only**, bring your dress and a picture of the wedding day with a wedding invitation or note on who and where the wedding took place.

Special Surprise from **Hello Beautiful** may be in store!

A fun morning featuring: **Speaker** FLC Wedding Coordinator – Bridget Von Seggern speaking on her experiences and position at FLC. How can Bridget help you/

Music - Provided by "Cabriolet" Barbershop Quartet

Updates from Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization Board:

The Spring Gatherings - Southern Prairie Conference is May 2, 2026, in Minden at Bethany Lutheran. The theme is "Together in Christ" based on Thessalonians 5:11 - "Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing". Registration sheets posted on Women of the ELCA Bulletin Board.

SAVE TO SERVE - Midland University, Fremont, NE was chosen as the next Save to Serve location on **August 14-16, 2026**. Sign-up sheets are available -tinyurl.com/nebraskawelca - Or Women of the ELCA bulletin board.

UPCOMING EVENTS RECAP -

APRIL 18, 2026 - FLC - Women of the ELCA SPRING CELEBRATION - CENTENNIAL HALL 10 AM - Sign up sheets for attendees, brunch items, casseroles, fruit, pastries etc.
MAY 2, 2026 - Southern Prairie meeting - Bethany Lutheran/Minden - Register by April 26

JULY 16-19, 2026 - TRIENNIAL National event in Des Moines, IA

If any questions, call or text Judy Workman at 970-215-5577.



First Lutheran Church Wedding Coordinator: Bridget Von Seggern will speak at the Spring Celebration Lunch.

EVENTS

Women's ELCA Spring Celebration Brunch

"God's Blessings of Marriages Past & Present!"



- Saturday, April 18
- 10:00am
- Centennial Hall

Please join us for a wonderful brunch and connect with others. RSVP on the Women's ELCA Bulletin Board outside the office, or by calling the church office. Bring a friend!

Join us for a beautiful ensemble of musicians from First Lutheran Church, UNK and the Kearney Area.

NATALIE & FRIENDS IN CONCERT

SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 2026

3:00 PM

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH



No charge but freewill offering to support the handbell program

Participants:
Natalie Radcliffe-flute
Chancel Bells, Praisers Bells
UNK Flute Choir, and Friends

OUR FATHER

A Journey through the Lord's Prayer
BY PEPPER CHOPLIN



Chancel Choir Cantata

April 25/26, 2026

6:00 pm service

11:00 am Unity service

The Chancel Cantata will be at both services!
Saturday 6pm and
Sunday 11am

The VBS Theme reveal is always a fun announcement to hear.
Any guesses for this year?

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL THEME REVEAL & REGISTRATION OPENS

SUNDAY, APRIL 26

During Sunday School
& All Church Services



Saturday, 6:00pm and
Sunday, 11:00am Church Services

Spring Together in Joy

Unity Service Sunday | April 26

9:45 am Sunday School

11:00 am Worship with Spring Cantata

12:15 pm Potluck Luncheon

Last names A-L bring a main dish
Last names M-Z bring a salad, side or dessert

UNITY SUNDAY!

One service on Sunday,
11:00am. (Traditional)

Stay after service and gather with us for a potluck! It's a wonderful chance to connect, share a meal, and enjoy time together.

EVENTS



Join us for **FUN** and **FAITH** with your **FAMILY** at **FROG!**

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

F.R.O.G.

END OF YEAR CELEBRATION!

All past, present, and future FROG families and volunteers are welcome

April 29th from 6:15pm-7:45pm

in Centennial Hall

Music and More!

Crafts and Games!

ALL past, present, and future F.R.O.G. Families and Volunteers are welcome to join us at the Year End Celebration!

8th Grade Confirmands: Please plan to join us on May 3rd!

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM



Sunday, May 3
during 8:45am worship

Reception in Centennial Hall
9:45am | all are welcome

8th grade Confirmands meet at 8:00am in Fellowship Hall for robes and photos



SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SATURDAYS - 6:00PM

SUNDAYS - 9:45AM

schedule begins May 23

The NEW WORSHIP times begin May 23rd.

Saturday 6pm Service

ONE SUNDAY service, 9:45am

STEWARDSHIP

Hello First Lutheran Family,

Our Stewardship Committee has enjoyed looking through the feedback we have received from our surveys. We are overjoyed to continue sharing with you answers to the following questions:

1. Where do you see God's light shining in our congregation?

- It is great to see our Preschool helping with a huge need in the community for childcare. I am so happy to see it grow and provide all day care.
- I love the care our members take for children as they move, play, and are a part of worship. Kids have several friends and smiles in the pews.

2. Is there a current ministry/outreach that speaks to you, or that you find important to identify?

- We have so many talented musicians that make our worship services really special. I love seeing all the ways they add to the service!
- Our Advent Fair is such a special event for families. Every year there are amazing crafts and opportunities for families.

3. Where do you hope to see the church in the next year?

- I hope we continue to be a flexible church in our service and worship.
- I am excited to see new members become more connected to our groups, and I hope to see more connections between our members.



EMBRACING
the LIGHT

Stewardship Committee;

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

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

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

April Volunteer of the Month:

Michelle Johannesen



Michelle serves in many ways both at First Lutheran and outside of First Lutheran.

Places you can see her serve are:

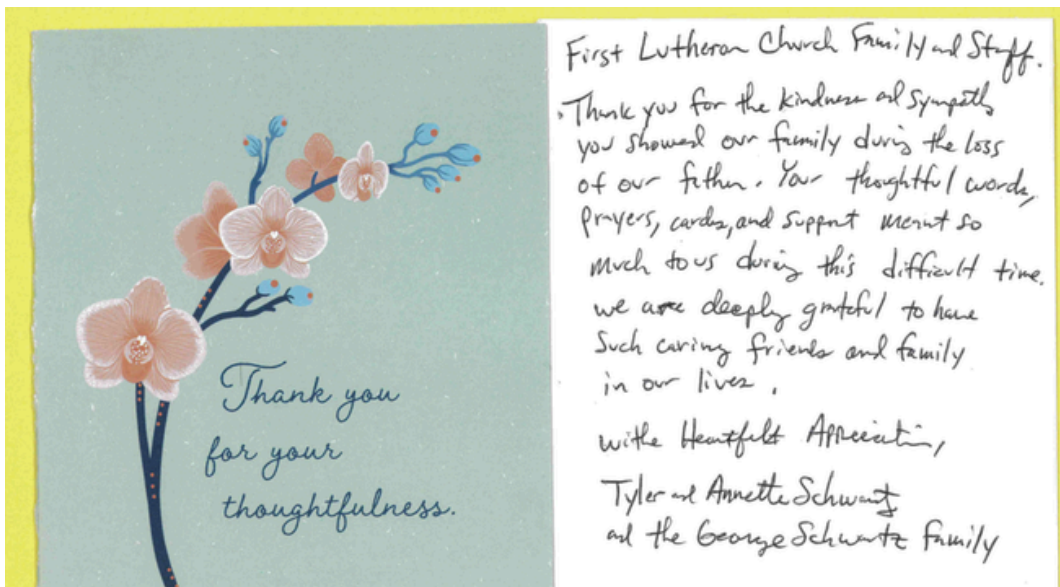
- Habitat for Humanity
- Chair of Worship Life
- Serves on the Mission Outreach Team
- Serves as an Usher
- Served on the North Carolina Mission Trip
- Helps at the Witness & Members Events
- Helps with First Communion and Confirmation Receptions
- This is her sixth year helping with Feeding the Flock.

Thank you, Michelle, for serving in so many areas!

Thank You

Thank you to the First Lutheran Church family for the prayers, meals, cards, and meaningful conversations following my shoulder surgery on December 19. I am so grateful for the love and care you shared during my recovery. A special thank-you as well for the continued prayers for my mom, Midge Zimmer of Hartington, who fell on the ice in her hometown at the end of January. She is healing and doing well, and we truly appreciate the support. -Dave Zimmer

Hi First Lutheran Families, Erin and I want to extend our thanks for your support for our family as we are caring for Holden. Taelyn and Wilson adore him, and he is very healthy! His brother and sister play with him whenever they can, and are ready to teach him everything they know (all the good things for sure). We were moved by all of the donated food, and the kids have appreciated all of the fruit and meals ready to go! We feel very blessed, and it has helped our family as we are adjusting to a new normal. We are looking forward to introducing you all to Holden, and are excited that our children get to be part of this wonderful church family. - Pastor Logan, Erin, Taelyn, Wilson, and Holden



COMMITTEE TEAM SPOTLIGHT

Can you list all the Ministry Teams at First Lutheran, or do you know what each team does?

Care and Growth, Imaging and Technology, Mission Outreach, Property & Management, Stewardship, Witness and Members, Worship Life, Congregational Council, Personnel Team, Memorials Committee, Preschool Board, Mutual Ministry Team, Caring and Sharing Team, Nominating Committee, and Endowment Committee.

Each month we'll spotlight two teams, so you can get to know what they do. If you're interested in joining a team, please reach out to the church office or the chair of that team.

Care and Growth Team

Bridget Von Seggern - Chair

The Care and Growth team meets the 1st Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm. This team seeks to provide opportunities for Christian Education at First Lutheran for all ages. Our youth programs include Sunday School, F.R.O.G. (Fully Rely on God), Confirmation, FLY (First Lutheran Youth high school), and Vacation Bible School.

We also work to provide opportunities/resources for adult education, some led by our pastors and others led by congregation members. You may not know that two annual events that fall under this team are Trunk or Treat and Advent Fair!



Property and Management

Todd Athy - Chair

The Property and Management Team meets the 1st Monday of the month at 7 pm. This team oversees maintenance and care for the church property including property insurance and long-term plans. Our team consists of both men and women. You don't need to have a construction background to serve on this team. Everyone's input is greatly appreciated!

Together much can be accomplished.
What team would you like to be involved with?

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know.....we have volunteers who make “Prayer Shawls” and Prayer Squares”? These are distributed to members of the church who might need an extra gesture of kindness and support.



Did you know.....we have a “Memorial Rose and Stone” Garden? Members purchase a Rose Plant or Stone in memory of a loved one. Please contact the church office or Shirley Smalley for more information.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

First Communion



- Maundy Thursday, April 2nd
- 5:45 pm Pictures
- 6:30 pm Service
- Reception following service in Centennial Hall

We believe that Christ is “truly present in, with and under” the bread and the wine. While the bread still remains bread, and the wine still remains wine, Christ is present in the earthly elements.

Communion is where the promise of forgiveness of sins is proclaimed, given and internalized in a real and tangible way (Matthew 26:28).

We can't wait to see you again!

Wednesday Night Activities

- F.R.O.G. will resume Wednesday, April 8th
- Confirmation Class will have bowling night, Wednesday, April 8th and resume classes Wednesday, April 15th.



The last meeting night before Summer Break will be April 29th

A vibrant poster for the F.R.O.G. End of Year Celebration. The background is dark blue with a pattern of small white dots and larger, colorful starburst shapes in pink and green. The text is centered and reads: "Join us for FUN and FAITH with your FAMILY at FROG! FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH F.R.O.G. END OF YEAR CELEBRATION! All past, present, and future FROG families and volunteers are welcome April 29th from 6:15pm-7:45pm in Centennial Hall". There are two green frog icons flanking the "F.R.O.G." text. On the left, it says "Music and More!" and on the right, "Crafts and Games!".

Join us for **FUN** and **FAITH** with your **FAMILY** at **FROG!**
FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
F.R.O.G.
END OF YEAR CELEBRATION!
All past, present, and future FROG families and volunteers are welcome
April 29th from 6:15pm-7:45pm
in Centennial Hall

Music and More!

Crafts and Games!

ALL past, present, and future F.R.O.G. Families and Volunteers are welcome to join us at the Year End Celebration!

YOUTH MINISTRY - FLY



FLY has had a very interesting month!

Erin and Pastor Logan welcomed Holden Jay into the world on March 7th.

We helped serve a Jubilee Meal at our church with Campus Lutheran, and we also assisted the Jubilee Center at its Thrift Store.

We learned about trust through some great activities and reflections in the basement.

Next month looks to be equally exciting as we plan to meet with Holy Cross's Youth Group. We also plan to take a trip to Yanney Park assuming the weather continues to be fair.

There will also be some meetings for reflection. We are continuing to prepare for our Lock-in at the end of May, and we are extending invitations near and far!

We plan to have a time for service in the community, and a time of worship with our 11:00am service music team!

Our basement project is close to completion as well, with several items leaving the basement and our scouting troops providing help to wrap up some finishing touches. We can't wait to show it off!

-Pastor Logan



2026 Graduates

We want to recognize you!

Please provide your

- Senior Picture
- School you'll graduate from
- Future Plans

to the Church Office by e-mail at Office@FirstLutheranKearney.org



MUSIC MINISTRY

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 F.R.O.G.
All children are welcome.
Amanda Lewis - Director

Spring Children's Choir Dates

- April 19th @ the 11am service.
 - May 10th @ the 8:45am service – Please arrive at 8:30am to Classroom 9 for a quick practice.
- Questions? Call or text Amanda Lewis at 308-240-0872. Thanks!

FROM THE COUNCIL

Greetings First Lutheran Congregation!

Here is an update from your Church Council:

The Council approved two requests from the Mission Outreach Team. The first request approved was in the amount of \$2500 in support of the Lexington Food Pantry. The second request was in the amount of \$500 in support of the Court Appointed Special Advocate Program (CASA).

The Annual Meeting time was set at 11:00am on Sunday, June 28th.

The closing on the sale of the rental house took place on March 3rd. Following is a summary of the closing statement.

Bid accepted by the Church Council	\$178,000.00
Add: Commission paid by buyer	17,800.00
Sales price per closing statement	\$195,800.00
Less: closing costs (First Lutheran's Responsibility)	16,389.55
Net to First Lutheran	\$179,410.45

We would like to thank Rusty Rhynalds and his team for all of their work.

Important Dates:

April 2 Maundy Thursday Service at 6:30pm with First Communion

April 3 Good Friday Service at 6:30pm

April 4 Holy Saturday Service at 6:00pm

April 5 Easter Services at 7:00am, 8:45am and 11:00am

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*

Happy Spring from the 3 and 4-year-old class!!

We are so happy that spring is finally here after the weird winter we've been having! At the end of February, we talked about Poison Safety and learned to call 1-800-222-1222 if we ever need help.

We also had the UNK Dental Hygiene program come visit and teach us how to brush our teeth properly. We made toothbrushes out of popsicle sticks and toothpaste using cotton balls for a fun project during dental week.

March was such a fun and exciting month! We started it off with Dinosaurs (our favorite topic). We read about dinosaurs, danced like them, and even hatched dinosaur eggs! Then we moved on to Community Helpers, where we learned about what different people in our community do, like firefighters, police officers, doctors, nurses, and of course, teachers! We made police cars, created X-rays using Q-tips, and played a really fun memory game where we had to match the person to their job.

Then we celebrated St. Patrick's Day, where we made pots of gold, created rainbows using markers and water, and even had a Leprechaun visit our classroom and steal our pot of gold!

We ended the month talking about the Easter holiday, the meaning behind it, and we made some really cute Easter crafts like designing our own Easter eggs and making bunnies and chicks out of cotton balls. Mrs. Shawna even came and read some amazing books!

We are also so excited to announce that we are writing a book! It will be a hardcover book that contains drawings from the 3 & 4-year-old class as well as the 4 & 5-year-old class. This is the second time we have done this, so we are very excited to create this special keepsake for our classes!

God's Blessings,
Ms. Marissa



Pre-K

Hello First Lutheran!

Spring is Here! Hurray!

We Have been learning about how to take care of our teeth. We also began to explore that there are poisons we don't touch, smell or taste.

Before spring break we had some St. Patrick's Day fun. We had a wee leprechaun play tricks in our classroom. He (or she) left small green footprints in our room. They took our gold, but left it outside so the kids had fun picking up all the gold. We have so much fun here!

The following week we will talk a lot about being blessed instead of being lucky, since so many of March books talk about luck. We made a beautiful shamrock and they wrote that they are blessed. They also made a Leprechaun head using a paper plate and their hand prints for a beard. The students painted the face and learned to make pink. You need a lot of white paint and just a small dot of red.

By the time you read this, we will have learned more about Jesus and what Easter is all about. We will learn how he died for us so that we may have eternal life. We will make a special picture of Jesus and the cross to remember what he did for us. They will also get an Easter egg hunt and color a couple eggs. Happy Easter to all!

Tuesday, April 14th is the National Week of the Young Child Event in Kearney from 5-7pm at the Kearney Sportscomplex. It is a week that the nation focuses attention on the needs of young children and their families. We will be there promoting our school and having a fun obstacle course there for families.

April 20th, we are having our 3rd Annual Family Fun Night at the Pizza Ranch from 5-8pm. Come have some yummy food and see all the wonderful families we have! We are continuing to raise money to go towards our scholarship fund! Helping young families afford preschool is so important to us!!! You can donate directly or a portion of your meal will go towards the preschool!

April 30th will be our second Parent/Teacher Conferences! We are going to have a blast showing all the growth these kiddos have made! They are all such blessings!

Have a wonderful April!

Mrs. Amanda & Mrs. Sonya



WORSHIP THEMES

APRIL 5, 2026 RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD EASTER DAY

**ACTS 10:34-43 OR JEREMIAH 31:1-6;
PSALM 118:1-2, 14-24; COLOSSIANS
3:1-4; ACTS 10:34-43, MATTHEW 28:1-
10 OR JOHN 20:1-18**

This is the day the Lord has made! Christ is risen, and through him all creation is made new! Indeed, “God shows no partiality” (Acts 10:34): Christ’s resurrection truly brings life to everyone. We sing hymns of praise, gather around sacred words, and proclaim God’s faithfulness, power, and love in the feast of holy communion. With the women at the tomb, we are astonished, elated, and grateful. We depart with joy to proclaim the good news of God’s endless love.

APRIL 12, 2026 SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

**ACTS 2:14a, 22-32; PSALM 16; 1 PETER
1:3-9; JOHN 20:19-31**

In today’s gospel the risen Christ appears to the disciples and offers them the gift of peace. Even amid doubts and questions, we experience the resurrection in our Sunday gather around word and meal and in our everyday lives. Throughout the coming Sundays of Easter, the first two readings will be from the Acts of the Apostles and the first letter of Peter. Even as the early Christians proclaimed the resurrection, we rejoice in the new birth and living hope we receive in baptism.

APRIL 19, 2026 THIRD SUNDAY IN EASTER

**ACTS 2:14a, 36-41; PSALM 116:1-4,
12-19; 1 PETER 1:17-23; LUKE 24:13-
35**

Today’s gospel begins with two disciples walking to Emmaus, overcome with sadness, loss, and disappointment. They had hoped Jesus, who was crucified, would be the one to redeem Israel! Yet the risen Christ walks with them and then opens their eyes in the breaking of the bread. Each Sunday our hearts burn within us as the scriptures are proclaimed and Christ appears to us as bread is broken and wine is poured. The story of Emmaus becomes the pattern of our worship each Lord’s day.

APRIL 26, 2026 FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

**ACTS 2:42-47; PSALM 23; 1 PETER
2:19-25; JOHN 10:1-10**

Today is sometimes called “Good Shepherd Sunday.” Jesus is called the “gate” of the sheep in today’s gospel. The risen Christ opens the way to abundant life. He anoints our heads with oil and guides us beside the still waters of our baptism. Each Sunday he spreads a feast before us amid the world’s violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God’s tender care to all creation.

FINANCIALS:

FEBRUARY FINANCE REPORT			
Ministry Budget:	Feb 2025	YTD '25-'26	YTD '24-'25
Budget Supporting Revenue	\$ 74,507	\$ 539,927	\$534,892
Budget Related Expenditures	\$ (98,170)	\$(598,842)	\$ (563,733)
Total 2025-2026 Ministry Budget: \$790,816			
Facilities Budget:	Feb 2025	YTD '25-'26	YTD '24-'25
Revenue	\$ 5,435	\$ 45,474	\$45,813
Expenditures	\$ (1,977)	\$ (26,127)	\$ (19,658)
Total 2025-2026 Facilities Budget: \$28,100			



ELECTRONIC GIVING:

Please consider using VANCO Mobile Faith, as you give and donate to help us lower expenses. You can select a one-time or recurring donation.

- Online: Visit FirstLutheranKearney.org.
- Click on the “Resources” tab, then “Make a Donation”.
- Or download the Vanco Mobile Faith app on an iPhone or Android.

Search for “First Lutheran Church” at 3315 Ave G, Kearney. Create a profile.

OFFERING ENVELOPES:

If you contribute by check, please put it inside an offering envelope. If you contribute by check without using an envelope, please write your offering envelope number on your check. This will enable us to record your contributions accurately. Any loose checks 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. Thank you for your help! If you would like a giving number instead of paper envelopes, please contact the church office.

If you have any questions or need assistance using the electronic giving options or need offering envelopes, please contact Stacy Seim in the church office: (308)237-5544 or SSeim@FirstLutheranKearney.org

Thank you so much for your faithful generosity to First Lutheran Church’s ministry!



DATES TO REMEMBER

Please review the calendar at FirstLutheranKearney.org for updates.
Laying on of Hands will occur on the third weekend in April.

April Events

- Thur/Apr 2 5:45 pm - First Communion Pictures
6:30 pm Service - Maundy Thursday Service
with First Communion
Reception to follow service in Centennial Hall for everyone.
- Fri/Apr 3 6:30 pm Service - Good Friday Service
- Sat/Apr 4 6:00 pm Service - Holy Saturday Service
- Sun/Apr 5 7:00 am, 8:45 am, 11:00 am - Easter Services
- Wed/Apr 8 Wednesday evening Activities Resume
Confirmation Youth Bowling Night
- Sat/Sun Apr 11/12 Worship Sat. 6 pm | Sun. 8:45 am and 11:00 am
Sun 2:00 pm Brookestone Gardens Worship Service
- Sat/Sun Apr 18/19 Worship Sat. 6 pm | Sun. 8:45 am and 11:00 am
Sat/Apr 18 10:00 am - Women of ELCA Spring Fling - Centennial Hall
Sun/Apr 19 11:00am Service - Children's Choir sings
3:00 pm Natalie & Friends Concert
- Sat/Sun, Apr 25/26 Worship at 6 p.m. and 11:00am
Sun Spring Cantata during all services,
UNITY SUNDAY: ONE SERVICE ON SUNDAY
Spring Together in Joy Potluck Luncheon/After 11am Service
- Wed/Apr 29 Last night of Wednesday Evening Youth Activities
F.R.O.G. End of Year Celebration 6:15pm - 7:45pm

May Events

- Sat/Sun May 2/3 Worship Sat. 6 pm | Sun. 8:45 am and 11:00 am
Sat Sat Women's ELCA Southern Prairie Gathering at Bethany
Lutheran in Minden
- Sun 8:45am - Affirmation of Baptism - reception to follow/Centennial
Sun 2:00 pm Brookestone Gardens Worship Service
- Sat/Sun May 9/10 Worship Sat. 6 pm | Sun. 8:45 am and 11:00 am
Sun 8:45am Service - Children's Choir sings
- Sat/Sun May 16/17 Worship Sat. 6 pm | Sun. 8:45 am and 11:00 am
Sun 8:45am - Graduates Recognized
- Sat/Sun May 23/24 Worship Sat. 6 pm | Sun. 9:45 am
NEW SUMMER WORSHIP TIME: ONE SERVICE SUNDAY
- May 29/30 NE Synod Assembly at Younes Conference Center
Sat. May 30 FLY Lock-In
Sat/Sun May 30/31 Worship Sat. 6 pm | Sun. 9:45 am

Church Office office@firstlutheran Kearney.org 308.237.5544

PASTORS:

Pastor Rick Carlson

Co-Lead Pastor

Pastor Michelle Holley Carlson

Co-Lead Pastor

STAFF:

Kandy Bacon

Administrative Assistant

Amy Behrhorst

Administrative Assistant

Kathy Benne

Director of Communications and Events

Pastor Logan Ellis

Director of Engagement: Youth, Congregation and Community

Amanda Lewis

Preschool Director

Jen Puls

Records Management

Natalie Radcliffe

Music Coordinator

Sarah Schweitzer

Volunteer Ministry Coordinator

Stacy Seim

Bookkeeper

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

President

PJ Bartels

Vice President

Scott Darveau

Treasurer

Lisa Parish

Secretary

Deb Schauer

Council Members:

Christine Fisher

Jay Kuecker

Tyler Schwartz

Shirley Smalley

Terry Volker

Pastor Michelle

Pastor Rick

Women ^{of the} ELCA 
2025-2026 OFFICERS

President: Judy Workman

President Elect: Sherryl Wilke

Secretary: Stacy Darveau

Treasurer: Jo Smallcomb

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

LIVE Radio Broadcast Sundays at 8:45am | KXPN 1460AM

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

Office Hours: 8:30am - 4:00pm Monday - Friday

- If your email address has changed recently, please contact the church office.
- To save the church postage costs by picking up a hard copy of "The Messenger" from the welcome station, instead of it being mailed, please call or email the church office. *Mailings generally take up to two weeks for delivery.*