



February 2024

THE MESSENGER

Ash Wednesday

Worship at
Noon and 6:15 pm

Wednesday Lenten Meals

Served 5:15-6:00 pm

Meal changes each
week

Cross+Generational LOVE Event

February 11
9:45 am

Members and Friends of First Lutheran Church,

First, I want you to know how happy I am for you that you have extended a call to a new lead pastor, and that your candidate has accepted the call. The first Sunday for Pastor Greg DeBoer will be April 21.

At the time of this writing, we are in conversation about my own transition away from First Lutheran to Rejoice! In Omaha. On a date yet to be determined, I will be leaving First to serve Rejoice! as Transitional Pastor on a full-time basis. When that assignment is concluded, I will retire from active ministry.

In the meantime, we are preparing for the season of Lent. Lent is that season where we prepare our hearts for the celebration of Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday! Our theme for Lent at First Lutheran is *Altered by the Spirit*. We will consider how our lives are changed in various circumstances by the power of the Holy Spirit. The messages on Wednesday evening will be based on the book of Acts, and the messages on Sundays will be based on the Lectionary. All messages will consider how our gracious God in Christ brings change to our lives.

It so happens that Ash Wednesday falls on Valentine's Day this year, so we are having a service with imposition of ashes (but not communion) at noon on February 14. Our evening Ash Wednesday service will have both imposition of ashes and communion!

The next several months will be a busy time at First! We will have the usual busyness of Lent and Easter, followed by the excitement that comes with welcoming a new Lead Pastor. The spirit of Christ is at work in all of this, as First Lutheran moves into a new chapter of its mission and ministry here in Fremont.

Pastor Duane Miller

Worship

Sunday Worship 8:45 & 10:45 am

Holy Communion served on the first and third Sundays

Might you be willing to help with Hospitality on Sunday mornings? If you are available to help greet, usher, serve communion or learn more, please contact Tami Hall or sign up from the Ministry Opportunities button on our website.

Lent 2024 *Altered by the Spirit*

Ash Wednesday

Valentine Prayer Stations available in the Heritage Room all day. Come as your schedule allows.

Worship at Noon - shorter service with imposition of ashes.

Worship at 6:15 pm - worship with imposition of ashes and Holy Communion.

Wednesday Lenten Worship February 21, 28, March 6, 13, and 20

6:15 pm - Holden Evening Prayer

Lenten Wednesday Meals

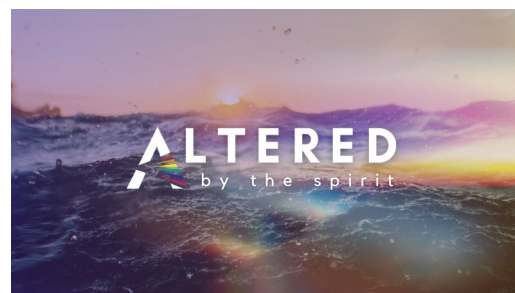
Served each week 5:15 - 6:00 pm

Menu changes each week:

February 14 - sloppy joes

February 21 - soup

February 28 - pizza



Help may be needed each week to setup, serve, cleanup and bring treats. The signup is available from the Ministry Opportunities button on our website or you can contact Tami in the church office and she will tell you what kind of help is still needed.



Our Lenten offering and the proceeds from the Wednesday meals will go to The Bridge. The mission of The Bridge is to end domestic violence and sexual assault, and to provide the resources, education and community needed for healing and prevention.

Discipleship



WOW (Women of the Word) - The WOW (Women of the Word) Bible Study will meet at church on Wednesday, February 14, at 9:30 am in the Youth Room. Sherie Ebers will lead the lesson on Chapter 9 of *Bad Girls of the Bible*.

Faith Study Group - Faith Study Group will meet at 7:00 pm on Thursday, February 8, in the conference room. Trudy Tamke will lead the lesson.

Chick Flicks: All women are invited to the Youth Room for a movie and fellowship on Tuesday, February 6, at 6:00 pm.

Men's Study Group: Bring your own coffee and join this group on Saturday mornings at 8:30 am in the Heritage Room. The group is studying the book of Jonah.

Sunday Morning Study: Kris Lindgren is leading a new study on Sunday mornings at 9:45 in the Heritage Room. NOOMA is a series of short films that explore our world from a perspective of Jesus. Jesus encouraged his listeners to search, to question, to wrestle with the implication of what he was saying and doing. Nooma is an invitation to search, question and join the discussion. Come as your schedule allows.

Discipleship

“Come away and rest...”

Lenten Retreat hosted by Seeking the Spirit Within
March 1 3:00 pm – March 2 7:00 pm
Carol Joy Holling Camp, Ashland NE

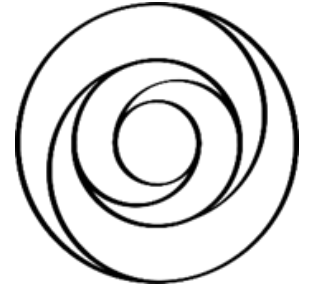
The time of Lent invites us all to experience the simplicity and sincerity of God and one another. During these complex times, the heart of Jesus calls into a space of rest, recollection, and allowing his holy Spirit to tend to each of us (Mk. 6:31). Our Teacher models to us all that we must *‘come away and rest...’* We invite you to come and receive soul care during your Lenten journey. StSW is hosting this event for those who are seeking a time of respite, silence, and practicing contemplative spirituality. The retreat is open for ages 25 and up.

Retreat leaders: StSW Director David Pinkston and Pastor Brad Meyer

Costs:

\$165 onsite (meals and lodging provided – space is limited)
\$75 for commuters (includes meals)

Register at www.nebraskasynod.org. Use the EVENTS tab.



Mission and Outreach

See the many gifts God has given through His people.

Mobile Banquet: The next meal for the Mobile Banquet will be served on February 8. Help is needed to donate food items, help pack meals, drive the bus, help serve meals, and clean the kitchen. Items needed on February 8 are: 2 lb bags of baby carrots, celery stalks, clementines, apples, frozen breadsticks, and individually wrapped cookies/bars. Sign up online or contact the church office to see where help is needed. The next meal will be March 14.



Snow Touchups: Thanks to those who have helped already with keeping the entrances clear for Sunday worship. We have a couple months left where snow is most likely. Please consider being a Sunday morning snow touchup volunteer. These volunteers help with keeping the entrances cleared of snow during services on Sunday mornings. It involves keeping the entrances cleared and salted after the snow removal company does their initial sweep. Shifts are 7:00-9:30 and 9:30-noon. You can pick your own dates and sign up for a part or the whole morning! Sign up on our website or fill out a yellow card at worship.



The Quilters: A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who took time during the holidays to sew quilt tops or finished hemming them. The Quilters now have a good supply of tops ready to be assembled. To do that, more bed sheets of all sizes, big cotton curtains, light weight blankets, etc. are needed. They are used inside the quilt in place of batting. If you have any just bring them to church.

Wednesday, February 21, will be the next work day. Come at 1:00 to help tie quilts and socialize. We hope many hands will be here as there will be many quilts to tie.

Mission Collection: The January collection has been extended until February 11. If you have not had a chance yet to donate household cleaning supplies for Lutheran Family services, you still have time. Consider donating: **brooms, mops & buckets, sponges, all-purpose cleaning spray, toilet brushes, toilet bowl cleaner, dish soap, laundry detergent, disinfectant wipes, trash bags, paper towels, hand soap, and cleaning towels.** Amazon wish list is posted on our website for your shopping convenience or to get ideas for what you might want to give.



Keep the Lights On: Thank you to all who donated to the December collection for utilities assistance. We are working with the Fremont Area United Way to disperse the \$1593 given.

Children and Youth

Important Youth Programming Dates:

Please note: There will be no youth programming on Ash Wednesday, February 14.

WAM Kids (Worship Arts Ministry for Kids)

Wednesdays 4:30-6:00 pm

Confirmation

Wednesdays

February 7 – 6:30-7:30 pm

February 21 – New time begins 7-8 pm

First Lutheran Youth (FLYs) - 7:30-9:00 pm

February 7 – Destination Unknown

KidsFirst

Sundays 9:45-10:40am

KidsFirst and Early Learning Center kids provide special music at the 10:45 service on February 11.



FLC LOVE EVENT

CROSS + GENERATIONAL EVENT

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11

9:45-10:30 - FLC MISSION CENTER

ENJOY A SWEET BREAKFAST

HEAR A SHORT LESSON ABOUT GOD'S LOVE

VISIT VALENTINE PRAYER STATIONS



Early Learning Center Fundraiser

Tuesday, February 6

Dine In or Carry Out
at Fremont's Applebee's (11 am—11 pm)

Order off this special menu and 50% will go to the ELC for new rocking chairs and iPads! You do not have to mention the ELC, just order any of these items.

Choose

- THREE-CHEESE CHICKEN PENNE
- FIESTA LIME CHICKEN
- CLASSIC CHEESEBURGER
- CHICKEN TENDERS PLATTER
- GRILLED CHICKEN CAESAR SALAD



Sunday, February 18
5:00 pm

Plan to attend the Spaghetti Dinner and Variety Show to help First Lutheran Youth raise funds for their summer trip to Benton Harbor, MI. The variety show will feature performances by FHS Chorale, Pathfinder Chorus, FHS Dance Team and more.

Tickets \$10/adult, \$5/child.

Raffle tickets are 1/\$5 or 5/\$20. Raffle items include Husker volleyball tickets and more. Silent auction bidding begins Sunday morning, February 18. Need not be present to win the raffle or auction.

Get your tickets beginning February 4

- on Sunday mornings
- www.flcfremont.org/events

Contact Deacon Kristin with any questions.

Council Highlights - January

With Ash Wednesday being on February 14th, there will be a service planned for noon as well as a 6:15 pm service.

With the call of a new pastor, discussions will begin to take place on Pastor Duane's transition as well as how to keep Pastor Greg connected with the congregation during this time of transition.

The Lenten theme will be Altered in the Spirit. It was proposed that proceeds from Lenten meals go to The Bridge.

Respectfully Submitted by Derek Fey, Secretary of FLC Council

** Full minutes are available upon request

Council Members: Jeree Menning (President), Grant Prenzlowl (Vice President), Derek Fey (Secretary), Michelle Beran (Treasurer), Lon Bohling, Dustin Everitt, Cheryl Henderson, Dawn Koehlmoos, Eric Lindgren, Diane Paseka, Matt Ridder, and Alison Zuch.

Monthly Financial Report

| | Dec Actual | Dec Budget | YTD Budget | YTD Actual | Prior YTD |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Pledged Giving | \$ 158,925.82 | \$ 115,000.00 | \$ 305,000.00 | \$ 341,096.49 | \$ 247,561.34 |
| General Income | \$ 167,657.15 | \$ 124,971.74 | \$ 323,361.72 | \$ 372,275.87 | \$ 266,370.56 |
| Mission Income | \$ 12,089.44 | \$ 4,004.24 | \$ 19,516.72 | \$ 41,274.17 | \$ 20,870.07 |
| Expenses | \$ 76,335.97 | \$ 85,918.50 | \$ 324,449.00 | \$ 304,120.99 | \$ 298,154.51 |
| Net Profit/(Loss) | \$ 103,410.62 | \$ 43,057.48 | \$ 18,429.44 | \$ 109,429.05 | \$ (10,913.88) |
| Building Fund Contributions | \$ 4,930.00 | | | \$ 12,247.67 | \$ 58,933.57 |
| Build Fund Balance | 10,927.28 | | | | |

Pledged giving was \$44k over budget in December with record high RMD contributions. Expenses were slightly under budget for December, so the month ended with a profit of \$103k. Bottom line YTD is \$91K better than budget! God is good! This will help as contributions tend to level off after the holidays. A deficit is still projected but should be less than \$100K. Building Fund contributions continue to come in to help offset costs of unexpected repairs that continue to occur as the building ages. Thanks to everyone for their continued commitment to FLC and it's many missions. May the year bring new beginnings and new blessings as Pastor DeBoer arrives.
~ Wendy Grosse, Administrator



Targeted Giving... (as of 12/31/2023) We want to give people of FLC the opportunity to give in a *targeted* way around their particular interests and passion, as well as the needs of our mission and ministry. The following categories have primarily existed in our Memorial and Special Gift Account, but we want you to be aware of these different funds on an on-going basis. Your financial support in these *targeted* areas will bring critical support to the ministry of our congregation! Thank you for the many ways that you give!

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|------------------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| Worship/Music | \$8,119.61 | First Lutheran Youth | \$8,809.54 | Prayer Shawl | \$1,214.47 |
| Technology | \$3,332.41 | Bible Camp Scholarship | \$6,084.21 | Quilt Ministry | \$3,067.26 |
| Church Home | \$7,258.32 | Good Samaritan | \$2,790.46 | Children's WAM | \$604.09 |
| Building Maint. | \$10,927.28 | Radio Broadcast | \$4,451.00 | Spoudazo | \$4,558.16 |
| KidsFirst | \$2,933.58 | | | Zoe! | \$3,293.07 |

More First Lutheran News

Altar Flowers and Radio Broadcast:

We have openings for the Radio Broadcast on February 11 and 25 along with many openings in March for radio and flowers. Radio broadcast sponsors are \$160 each week and Altar Flower sponsors are \$50 each week. Sign up online from our website or call the church office.

Weather-Related Closings:

The closing of the church would be a last resort but we want to protect the safety of our members and employees. If the occasion arises where we need to close the church and cancel service for weather or other events:

- Sunday worship services and any event(s) at FLC will be held at the discretion of FLC Leadership.
- The Early Learning Center will close or open late at the discretion of the Early Learning Center Director.



The decision to close the office, open late, or cancel service will be made no later than 7 am or 2 hours prior to scheduled events. The notification will be posted on the FLC social media pages and announced on KHUB, KETV, KMTV, and WOWT as able.

Attention: Thrivent Members

If you are a Thrivent member, we need you!

Thrivent Action Cards are a way you can give to FLC ministries.

We are encouraging Thrivent members to apply for an action card for an FLC event.

These funds supplement ministries where FLC is working to impact our community.

Members' cards can be used to benefit the FLYs, the Mobile Banquet or any of our upcoming events. These ministries are meant to encourage people in our community and beyond. Please call Tami Hall at the church office for more information on ways you can help make a difference.



Thank you to everyone who presented and donated blood at the Red Cross Blood Drive hosted at First Lutheran on Sunday, January 7. Thank you to the volunteers who helped.

Forty-six units were collected, exceeding the goal by 8.

Thank you again for giving the Gift of Life for others. The next scheduled drive at First Lutheran is June 2.

Remembering in Prayer

Remember to let the church office know if you are facing a health concern or will be in the hospital so someone can be in contact with you. If you request, the prayer chain will also be activated. It is also helpful to our FirstCare ministry if you let us know about someone who could use a caring call.

Prayers of healing for Ed Wilberding.

Prayers of peace for:

- family and friends of Ardyce Row.
- family and friends of Dawn Barnes. Dawn is the mother of Jamey Semrad and sister to Rick Strong.
- Matt & Kim Sacco on the loss of his brother, Michael Sacco.
- Faith Perry and family on the loss of her stepson, Robert Perry, Jr.

Baptisms:

January 7 - **Alexis Nagel** Parents: AJ Faurot, Shatawna Leithoff

January 21 - **Bennett Stephen Engelbart** Parents: Nick & Morgan Engelbart

