

# The Messenger

Volume 29 Issue 1 Office 996-7706 e-mail: [luther@mitchellfirstlutheran.org](mailto:luther@mitchellfirstlutheran.org) Fax 996-7727 January 2026

## JANUARY FOCUS.....



### 2025 Children's Christmas Program, Sunday, December 14



# CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

## COUNCIL MINUTES — December 16, 2025

Please note: these minutes have been edited for the newsletter.  
The full minutes are posted on the bulletin board in the office hallway

### Pastor's Report:

- ◆ Confirmation will resume on January 14
- ◆ Employee reviews will be held in January
- ◆ Considering holding "round table" discussions in 2026 with a coffee hour after church services.
- ◆ Performed 4 baptisms and 1 funeral
- ◆ Attend SD Synod Prairie Rivers meeting in Scotland

### Deacon's Report:

- ◆ Attended Prairie Rivers Conference in Scotland
- ◆ First Lutheran Church served the Love Feast on December 4 with Mary Johnson leading the planning process.
- ◆ WELCA and Prayer and Care joined forces to deliver Thanksgiving plates to those needing some extra connection over the holidays.
- ◆ Led a prayer service and funeral
- ◆ A 5-Monday Women's Study lead by Deacon Kris and Jill Munger is being planned in Jan and Feb, "The Cup of Our Life"

### Ministry Reports:

- ◆ Worship: Thanksgiving Eve worship was held November 26 at 6:45 p.m. The season of Advent began on November 30 with lighting of the Advent candle and decorating of the church sanctuary. Three midweek worship services will be held on Wednesday evenings at 6:45 p.m. in the chapel. Journey with Jesus Children's Christmas Program was held on December 14 at the worship service. Christmas Eve worship services will be held at 4:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. The Chancel Choir performs on December 21; handbells will play on January 4.
- ◆ Fellowship and Caring: December worships at the care centers, Dec. 10 at Edgewood South, Dec. 11 at Firesteel, Dec. 16 at Brady and Dec. 23 at Wesley Acres. All are welcomed to join for worship and carols. If you know of anyone needing a visit, please contact the Prayer and Care Team. Next Prayer and Care meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m. on February 10.
- ◆ Faith Formation: Lutheran Outdoor camp registration is open. 2026 calendar will be available to hand out at the January 14 Journey with Jesus. There will be a Middle School Faith Fest at Augustana on February 7. High School youth group will resume meeting in January.
- ◆ Stewardship: Hoping to close out the year on a positive note.
- ◆ Property: Reviewed feedback from the Congregational Information meetings. Received a lot of good feedback and comments. Waiting on additional bids for the bell tower repairs. Will check into the timing and application process for a grant for historical churches on renovations for the church. Will seal the sanctuary floor after the first of the year. Checking on additional bids for painting, lighting and flooring in the church sanctuary. Will also get a new updated bid for resurfacing the parking lot. Doug Fuerst replaced 5 light bulbs on the Canopy Entrance to the church.
- ◆ Evangelism: Hand an ad in the newspaper for Thanksgiving Eve worship service. Printed a handout of upcoming activities for the FLCLC preschool students. Printed and mailed a postcard for Christmas worship events.

## DOLLAR\$&CENTS

**NOVEMBER ATTENDANCE & OFFERINGS:**

November 2	180/OL: 72	\$8,771.42
November 5	24	\$110.00
November 9	212/OL: 100	\$6,459.75
November 12	37	\$630.00
November 16	172/OL: 122	\$16,038.86
November 19	22	\$5.00
November 23	165/OL: 100	\$5,033.75
November 26	68	\$392.00
November 30	178/OL: 144	\$3,767.25

<b>November 2025</b>	<b>Offering</b>	<b>\$41,208.03</b>
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*\$34,347.00 is needed per month to meet monthly budget.*

**Reception of the Treasurer's Report:** November income \$45,831.36; expenses \$38,995.00; Net ordinary income for November was \$6,836.36. Year to date net ordinary income is \$427,995.50 and total expense was \$441,223.96 leaving a net ordinary income for the year -\$13,236.46. Eric made a motion to receive the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Pam. Motion carried.



You can support the ministries of First Lutheran through

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Thank you to everyone who donated every month to the 2025 Noisy Offerings. Below is a list of what was donated every month.



- \* January, Weekend Snack Pack Program: \$444.11
- \* February, FLC Scholarship: \$455.90
- \* March, Bible/Youth Camp: \$666.59
- \* April, Habitat for Humanity: \$607.71
- \* May, Heart & Sole Cancer Walk: \$465.32
- \* June, St. Dymas Prison Ministry: \$453.31
- \* July, Lutheran Outdoors of SD: \$400.35
- \* August, FLC Piecemakers: \$625.17
- \* September, Food Pantry: \$685.19
- \* October, LuMin: \$483.50
- \* November, Love Feast: \$847.02
- \* December, Safe Place of Eastern SD: \$547.71

January's Noisy Offering is being collected for the Mitchell Weekend Snack Pack Program.



Weekend Snack Pack Program

Facts:

- \* Feeds more than 400 Mitchell Elementary students every weekend
- \* Run completely by donations & volunteers
- \* 100% of donations goes to the purchase of sale-priced food
- \* Gives more than \$50,000 in food every year
- \* Given to students who qualify for free or reduced lunches at school

**Thank you to all the volunteers from First Lutheran who helped make this year's Love Feast a wonderful event! We had 34 people provide food, 28 people to make and serve the meal, 3 volunteers to organize a children's activity, many who donated money, and countless prayers for an amazing Love Feast meal. We served 556 meals, some of those were delivery and some were dine in. It was a lovely evening of food and fellowship with people in the community who we may not otherwise be able to visit with during the year. Thanks again to all the volunteers who helped with this worthwhile community service. Mary and Russ Johnson**

**grat-i-tude**

[grat i tood]

*noun*  
the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness

The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 25 after the worship service in the Family Life Center.



Pancakes will be served!

Reports will be available for the congregation to pick up on Sunday, January 18.

Thank you to all of these volunteers who delivered Meals on Wheels for First Lutheran Church (November 3-December 12): Jim & Joan Anderson, Keith & Gloria Thompson, Cliff & Janene Jager, Jacquelyn Johnson and sons, Steve & Kathy Otterby, Gail Mueller, Pat Adam, Kathie Freeman, Lynda Price, Bob & Laura Weisz, Larry Weisser and Joyce Berg, Jeff Clark, Ron Kogel, Joel & Lori Schmit, Larry & Roxy Jensen, Mary Ann Hetland, Judy Lofgren, Mardi Deinert, Marilyn Forst, Daryl & Janet Heckenlaible, Nancy Biggerstaff, Bill Oakley, Barb Selland and Mary Fristad.



**Un-Decorating**

All hands on deck! All those who can help un-decorate the sanctuary are welcome to stay after worship on January 11. Many hands will make quick work as we pack away the ornaments, decorations and Christmas trees for another year. Thanks to all the seasonal helpers!



**♥ THRIVENT ACTION TEAMS**

The Wednesday night meal program would appreciate a Thrivent Action Team Card for January. The Thrivent card is very helpful in locally purchasing fruits, vegetables, and milk for the meal. Around 100 are served each week.

**JANUARY PRAYER AND CARE WORSHIPS**

Each month First Lutheran leads worship at Mitchell retirement and care centers.

All are welcome to attend.

- \*2:00 p.m. January 8 at Firesteel
- \*2:00 p.m. January 20 at Brady
- \*7:00 p.m. January 27 at Wesley Acres
- \*11:00 a.m. January 28 at Edgewood South



HERE IS A LIST OF UPCOMING



TITLES FOR BOOK CLUB

- January 22: *Lady Tan's Circle of Women* by Lisa See
- February 26: *The Cost of Free Land* by Rebecca Clarren
- March 26: *A Witness: The Haiti Earthquake, a Song, Death and Resurrection* by Renee Spilchal Larson

Book Club meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month at 9:00 a.m. in the Church Library

**Gather Study Group Dates & Times**



- ◆ **Tuesday, January 6**
  - ◇ 12:00 p.m. WELCA/FLCW  
January Board Meeting, First Lutheran Library
- ◆ **Wednesday, January 7**
  - ◇ 9:30 a.m. Lydia Group, Countryside Game Room
- ◆ **Thursday, January 8**
  - ◇ 9:30 a.m. Sarah Group, Family Life Center

**PRAIRIE RIVERS SCHOLARSHIP**

The Prairie Rivers Scholarship is for students planning to attend or currently attending an ELCA college/university. The application is to be mailed to Joan Anderson, 1201 W Ash Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301 and must be postmarked by April 1.



Students who were 2025 First Lutheran Scholarship recipients are asked to get their required paperwork of proof of second semester enrollment to Jodi in the church office so she can issue the checks.



**First Lutheran Post-Secondary Scholarship**

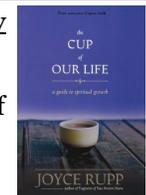
Scholarship forms have been mailed to First Lutheran high school seniors. College students may get an application from the church office. The applications must be returned to the church office by March 1.

Please repurpose any special containers from the holidays, the Valentine cookie project would appreciate them. An example is the container the Costco pot pie comes in. A container with a clear plastic cover. Containers may be dropped off in the church kitchen.



**Coming up: A Women's Winter Study**

All women are invited to join a 5-week winter study, led by Deacon Kris and Jill Munger, of Joyce Rupp's book, "The Cup of Our Life, A Guide for Spiritual Growth". Plan to meet at a **NEW TIME, 4:45-5:45pm**, Mondays January 12, 19, 26, and February 2 & 9. Come as often as works in your schedule. Order a book from your favorite book seller. Bring a cup (mug) from home to use as we study the Cup of Life, the Open Cup, the Chipped Cup, the Broken Cup, the Cup of Compassion, and the Blessing Cup. Sign up at the table in the Family Life Center.



Plans are being made for the 2026 Valentine Project which is the major fundraiser for the First Lutheran Post-Secondary Scholarships which will be awarded to graduating seniors and college students. There will be opportunities for First Lutheran members to contribute by making and donating their specialty items for sale and by helping with a variety of tasks including cutting bags and ribbons, frosting and decorating cookies, packaging cookies, and selling. Customers are also needed. Advance orders are appreciated and quantities can be ordered for the workplace or classroom. A sign-up sheet will eventually be available on the counter in the glass lobby.



Sisters in Faith will be doing a Lenten Study "He Chose the Nails" by Max Lucado, anyone is invited to join the group. Like his other studies there is a book and study guide, we watch a video and have discussion while you read and do the workbook at home. There are 5 studies, and we will meet February 23, March 2, 9, 16 & 23 in the conference room at 6:30 p.m.—8:00 p.m.



Michelle would like to order books and study guides at the end of January so they arrive on time, the cost of the book and study guide will be less than \$30. If you have questions, contact Michelle White, 605-999-3211 or mwhite@mitchelltelecom.net.

**Thank You!** On behalf of many recipients who expressed gratitude and blessing to the members of FLC, thank you to the volunteers, prayers and donors that contributed to a project that's been known as the "Thanksgiving Baskets". This year, a total of 13 families in need or crisis, in the community, were touched by your caring. In November, 10 families received bibles, reading materials, kids activities, three large boxes of food, one large cooler full of groceries each plus a turkey and roaster. Each family experienced in-person prayer upon pick up or delivery. Plus a printed copy of a prayer was included in their groceries. Some opted to visit, peruse and take devotional materials in the Family Life Center. Just before Christmas, three more families received bibles, a greeting card from FLC, a tote bag of wrapped gifts, an advent devotional card of verses, one large box of groceries and 2-3 coolers full of groceries each! And prayer with recipients on in-person delivery. 7 of the 13 recipients received the gifts and greetings right at their doorstep alleviating stress for them! Six families came to the church for pick up. Cash and food donations plus one Thrivent card provided much needed, extra special nourishment both for bodies and spirits! Church service schedules were included.

First Lutheran Church serving the Love Feast at the Methodist Church on December 4



Lighting of the Advent Candle



December 21 Worship Service



Fourth Sunday



*Charlette Kay Reinke & Lukas George Reinke* was baptized on Sunday, November 30. Devon & Jamie are the parents of Charlette & Lukas and sponsors are Celest Larson, William Casey & Rebecca & Zachary Majeres.  
*Raelynn Grace Darrington* was baptized on Sunday, November 30. Austin & Angelleah are the parents of Raelynn and sponsors are Kay Ewing-Dosch and Terry Dosch.



*Boden Beck Kalberg* was baptized on Sunday, December 7. Torin & Carolina Kalberg are the parents of Boden and sponsors are Eric & Jatelyn Beck.



# Christmas Eve Worship, Wednesday, December 24

