

The Messenger

Volume 29 Issue 4 Office 996-7706 e-mail: luther@mitchellfirstlutheran.org Fax 996-7727 April 2026

APRIL FOCUS.....

A graphic for Easter Sunday featuring a large black cross centered against a background of a sunset or sunrise with orange and red hues. The text "Christ Is Risen!" is written in a white, cursive font at the top, and "Alleluia!" is written in a white, cursive font at the bottom. On the left side, there is a vertical red banner with the text "EASTER SUNDAY" in large white letters and "APRIL 5TH @ 8 A.M. & 10 A.M." in smaller white letters below it.

HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

-  **Palm Sunday**
Sunday, March 29th @ 9:30 a.m.
Featuring the choral event, **Shadow of the Cross** sung by the First Lutheran Choir
Children's palm processional.
-  **Maundy Thursday**
Thursday, April 2nd @ 6:45 p.m.
with Holy Communion
and first communion for 5th graders
-  **Good Friday**
Friday, April 3rd @ 6:45 p.m.
reading of the Passion story
and the veiling of the cross
-  **Easter Sunday**
Sunday, April 5th
Worship @ 8 a.m. & 10 a.m.

First Lutheran Members

please mark your calendar for a

Special Congregational Meeting

on Sunday, March 29th

There will be a special congregational meeting at 10:30 a.m. (after our 9:30 a.m. worship service) for the purpose of voting on whether to move forward with a capital campaign for facility repairs and upgrades as discussed at recent informational meetings.

**Please join us for conversation
and the vote!**

PROJECTS
UNDER
CONSIDERATION

Sanctuary
"Refresh"

• • •

Parking Lot
Resurfacing

• • •

Bell Tower
Repairs

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

COUNCIL MINUTES — March 17, 2026

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:

- ◆ Employee reviews March 24
- ◆ Brackett Madness party March 27
- ◆ Church's Congregational meeting March 29
- ◆ Speaking at DWU class on March 18 on Theology and Spiritual Practices of Lutherans
- ◆ Conducted 2 baptisms, 3 funerals and 2 upcoming weddings in May

Deacon's Report:

- ◆ Prairie Rivers Rostered Ministers met March 10 in Storla. The next meeting will be held May 12 at Lyman County Parish
- ◆ Lydia Circle meets April 1 and Sarah Circle meets April 2.
- ◆ WELCA Conference Gather is Saturday, April 18 at Salem Lutheran Church in Parkston
- ◆ Officiated a funeral on March 6

Ministry Reports:

- ◆ Worship: Midweek Lent Worship continues around the then "Tell Me Something Good". Music is led by the Holden Evening Prayer musicians. Thank you to all for helping with the special music. 7th and 8th grade confirmation students are helping with the worship each Wednesday night. Chancel Choir is rehearsing the Palm Sunday Choral Event March 29. Bell Choir has been rehearsing and will play in April.
- ◆ Fellowship and Caring: March/April worship schedule at care centers: March 25-Edgewood South, April 9-Firesteel, April 14-Wesley Acres, April 21-Brady, April 22-Edgewood South. Thank you to all that provide hospitality with the care center worship. All are welcome to attend. The next Prayer and Caring meeting is May 12.
- ◆ Faith Formation: 5th graders have been meeting Wednesdays for their learning about Holy Communion. The celebration meal with families is April 2, with First Communion milestone celebration during the Maundy Thursday worship service. New driver milestone during the April 26 and 29 worship services. Sisters in Faith concluded their Lenten study, "He Chose the Nails". Lutheran Outdoors camp registration is open. Jill Munger has volunteered to assist with devotions and events for High School youth.
- ◆ Stewardship: 91 pledges have been received with an estimate of \$325,000 pledged.
- ◆ Property: The daycare had a bathroom stool overflow causing some damage to an electrical panel in the store room below. Repairs are being made.
- ◆ Evangelism: New member classes are being offered with new members being received on April 19. Postcards for an invitation to Easter and upcoming services are being mailed out.

DOLLAR\$&CENTS

FEBRUARY ATTENDANCE & OFFERINGS:

| | | |
|----------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| February 1..... | 170/OL: 132..... | \$7,953.92 |
| February 4..... | 24 | \$370.00 |
| February 8..... | 158/OL: 144..... | \$4,463.85 |
| February 15..... | 101/OL: 76..... | \$34,105.88 |
| February 18..... | 187/OL: 77..... | \$1,578.00 |
| February 22..... | 165/OL: 134..... | \$8,148.70 |
| February 25..... | 100/OL: 18..... | \$904.00 |
| February 2026 | Offering | \$57,524.35 |

\$34,347.00 is needed per month to meet monthly budget.

Reception of the Treasurer's Report: Income \$57,934.28; expenses \$38,763.90; Net Ordinary Income for February was \$19,170.38. Year to Date Net Ordinary Income \$100,524.51; Total expenses \$93,355.21; leaving a Net Ordinary Income for the year of \$7,169.30. Steve made a motion to receive the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Amanda Schutz. Motion carried.



You can support the ministries of First Lutheran through

venmo





April Prayer and Care Worship



Each month First Lutheran leads worship at Mitchell retirement and care centers. All are welcome to attend.
 *2:00 p.m. April 9 at Firesteel
 *7:00 p.m. April 14 at Wesley Acres (DIFFERENT DATE!)
 *2:00 p.m. April 21 at Brady
 *11:00 a.m. April 22 at Edgewood South

Lois Hilton passed away Friday, February 27, 2026. Funeral services were Friday, March 6, 2026 at Will Funeral Chapel with burial at Graceland Cemetery, Mitchell.



Bill Surken passed away March 6, 2026. Funeral services were Friday, March 13, 2026 at First Lutheran Church with burial at a later date.

April's Noisy Offering is being collected for the Mitchell Regional Habitat for Humanity which is dedicated to eliminating substandard housing locally and worldwide through constructing, rehabilitating and preserving homes; by advocating for fair and just housing policies; and by providing training and access to resources to help families improve their shelter conditions.



Noah Robert Foreman and Ziva Lynn Foreman were baptized Sunday, March 15. Cody and Kayla are Noah & Ziva's parents and Kayla & Travis Stevens and Lori White are their sponsors.



Faith Milestone: New Drivers (8th and 9th grade)

All new drivers and families (8th and 9th graders, including those in Driver's Ed or planning to be in Driver's Ed this summer) are invited to come to 9:30 a.m. worship Sunday, April 26 or 7:00 p.m. worship Wednesday, April 29 for a "Blessing for New Drivers". New drivers will receive a blessing marking the milestone of driving and a gift to take with them on the journey.



Join our team at . . .
First Lutheran Child Learning Center
 We are currently looking for a FT or PT
PRESCHOOL TEACHER OR TEACHER'S AIDE
 Contact us at 605-996-9742 for an application or for additional information.

Faith Milestone of First Communion

First Lutheran Church fifth graders and their families will participate in the Milestone of First Communion at the 6:45 p.m. Maundy Thursday worship on April 2. Fifth graders have painted pottery cups (chalices) to use at their first communion. The students and their family will also enjoy a celebration supper prior to worship.



Retirement Announcement from Deacon Kris

Dear Church- after 45 years of professional ministry with the Lutheran Church, including 17 years as an ordained, rostered minister, it is time for me to retire. I turn 65 on April 3. My last day at First Lutheran will be Sunday, May 31. My first day of retirement will be Monday, June 1. I will be moving back to Sioux Falls. What a delight and honor- to serve alongside all of you- as your called deacon! I am so very grateful for all the ways we are church together...following Jesus, connecting faith with everyday life, and loving and caring for each other and our neighbors in need. There is much for me to reflect on as I give thanks for a lifetime of parish ministry, guided by the seasonal flow of the church year. What a gift it has been to experience cycling the fullness of each season for the last time with this amazing, vibrant, compassionate community of faith. I will be keeping First Lutheran in my prayers as you begin pondering future staffing and ministry opportunities. Until May 31- we have 2 months to keep on journeying together... including holy week, and Easter- and then the VERY FULLNESS of the month of May and all of its milestones. I look forward to celebrating what comes next- for me and for you. *Deacon Kris*

HAPPY Retirement

In April book club will be reading *Love Thy Neighbor* by Ayaz Virji and Alan Eisenstock. If you would like to join they will meet on April 23rd at 9:00 a.m. in the Church Library.



UPCOMING RUMMAGE SALE!

First Lutheran will be hosting another rummage sale June 4-6. Please begin saving items to donate. Judy Thiesse will be the coordinator.



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.



2026 Prairie Rivers Conference Women's Spring Gathering will be held at Salem Lutheran Church in Parkston on Saturday, April 18 at 9:00 a.m. The registration of \$10 includes lunch.

Events will include: Singspiration, Devotions with Pastor Beth Parks and Colleen Brasch from All About U Adoptions will be the featured speaker. Items for All About U will be collected for the Love Offering (bathroom tissue, paper towels, dish & laundry soap, dryer sheets, sanitizing wipes, body wash, shampoo/conditioner, razors, deodorant, wash/dish clothes, kitchen and bath towels, pillows, sheets & comforters/blankets). Monetary offerings will go to SD Synodical (1/2), Katie's Fund (1/4), and All About U (1/4)



12th Grade Milestone: Graduation

The milestone blessing for high school graduates will be held on Sunday, May 3. Seniors: bring your graduation robe and gather in the Family Life Center at 9:15 a.m. During the service you will receive a blessing and a quilt made by the Piecemakers at First Lutheran Church. Following the worship service a brunch will be held for the graduates and families in the Family Life Center.



GATHER STUDY GROUP DATES & TIMES



- ◆ **Tuesday, March 31**
 - ◇ 12:00 p.m. WELCA/FLCW
April Board Meeting, First Lutheran Library
- ◆ **Wednesday, April 1**
 - ◇ 9:30 a.m. Lydia Group, Countryside Game Room
- ◆ **Thursday, April 2**
 - ◇ 9:30 a.m. Sarah Group, Family Life Center

Thrivent members are reminded to direct their Choice Dollars before March 31. Contact your agent if you have questions. The process can be done online. If directing them to First Lutheran, and you wish for them to go to a specific cause, be sure to let Jodi in the office know.



THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS

2026 SD Synodical, June 17-19, Watertown

Grace Lutheran in Watertown will host the SD Synodical Convention June 17-19. Early bird registration is \$50 if paid by May 31 and \$65 if paid by June 1 or later. The Quality Inn in Watertown has a block of rooms reserved under WELCA, at \$107/night. Convention information and the registration form will be available on the counter in the Glass Lobby.



2026 Triennial will be held in Des Moines, Iowa

The Triennial, held every three years, will be in Des Moines, Iowa from July 16 to 19. A bus will leave from Sioux Falls on July 16 and will return July 19. Darla Toben is the event coordinator and can be contacted at 605 880-3506 or dgtohen@itctel.com. Kathy Otterby from First Lutheran will be attending.



Easter Brunch will be served on Sunday, April 5 from 8:30-10:00 a.m. Egg bake, muffins, fruit and drinks will be served.

2026 Valentine Project

Thank you to the many people who helped make the project a success and helped raise a record \$6,778 which went into the scholarship fund. Over 689 hours were put in to create over 2,990 items. Gary Mayer brought in \$1,231 in preorders. A big thank-you to the sellers and customers – it took a team of many people to make this successful. People were very generous with tips and donations. On February 14 an outreach project was carried out and items were given to the library, Abbott House, and the fire station. A box of assorted cookies was also sent to the synod office in Sioux Falls.

Bakers/Makers include:

Barb Vandever

Jerlyn Dean-Dubro

Marilyn Forst

Janet Heckenlaible

Nancy Kogel

Pam Moke

Deb Rice

Joan Anderson

Luke Atnip

Mardi Deinert

Kathie Freeman

Sheila Hoffman

Brenda Mayer

Jill Munger

Lori Schmidt

Laura Weisz

Deb Buck

Julie Doorn

Janis Gerlach

Mary Johnson

Dale Moke

June Pranger

Phyllis Titze

Michelle White



Students who helped include: Angel Love, Parker Nath, Emma Plamp, Luke Atnip, Ben Johnson, Owen Johnson, Kambly Wede, and Katie Gukeisen.



April is National Volunteer Month. First Lutheran is blessed to have many wonderful volunteers to carry out the many missions of the church. Here are some pictures of the many people who make First Lutheran what it is!



Wednesday, March 11 Lenten Worship and Meal



Wednesday, March 22, 2026 Lenten Meal and Youth Activities



5th Grade First Communion Instruction



Journey with Jesus Youth