

# First Edition

Where the News is Good!

**Published by First Lutheran Church**

**December 2020**

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**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

Do you have Questions? Or Feedback? A Suggestion?  
Contact a Congregation Council Member listed below.

**Eugene Comber, Brenda Ecklund, Gail Espinoza, Sharon Hamilton, Terry Horner, Brenda Johnson,  
Michael Laurin, Karen Linn, Pam Marchincin, Martha Paulson, Jim Wahlberg, and Jane Young**

### **First Lutheran Staff**

**Daniel S. Rumfelt**, Pastoral Leader in Transition  
**Brian A. Bogey**, Minister of Music  
**Kimberly King**, Worship Leader and Coordinator  
of Contemporary Worship  
**Elizabeth Lobb**, Office Manager





The angel said to them, *“Do not be afraid: behold, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.”*

Do you wonder, when you have a cough, whether you may have COVID-19? I have, even though I know the cough is a normal symptom of my GERD. It lasts long enough to worry me, but after a bit it is done and gone. After all, I’ve had that cough for years. *Do not be afraid.*

As an “essential worker” at Lutheran I am routinely tested every week. I find it reassuring. Week after week: always negative. I’ve had that cough for years. *Do not be afraid.*

But last March I never imagined we’d be in this place today. When the first infection numbers were climbing in Dunkirk, the Jamestown area had only 3 cases. Just three. At this writing Jamestown has 366. Sometimes I wonder if I’ll be number 367 regardless of how diligently I practice infection control at work, home, church and the very limited trips to the store. *Do not be afraid.*

For the most part, maybe we’ve adapted to a “new normal,” with vigilant, though sometimes tiring protocols. I accept a personal responsibility to protect myself from COVID-19, not for my own sake, but in order to protect residents, family, church members and strangers, too. But will it be enough? There is a weight to such a sense of responsibility. I feel the stress grow in my back.

So the angel said, *“Do not be afraid.”* The angel spoke to calm shepherds terrified by the sudden appearance of a choir of angels in the middle of the night watch. And, I believe, the angel spoke to tell us all, *don’t be afraid of the world:*” it’s dangers, it’s struggles, it’s COVID-19s. Because...

Because that night there was born into this world one who is greater than the world. One who is *“good news of great joy”* in a world that has always had its COVID-19s in one form or another.

The shepherds lived in a world with its own illnesses and griefs. All eras of human kind have done so. As we do today. The one who was born that night knows. Jesus knows full well our plight upon this earth. Jesus was born to live it; to bear through it at our side. He does so this very moment in our history and in our lives. The One who is *good news, great joy* for us always and in all things.

Even as we accept responsibility to protect one another through this virus, though sometimes it weighs heavily upon us, *“do not be afraid.”* Because... Jesus accepted and bore the weight of responsibility for us all. COVID-19 will not have the final word, no matter how it plays out. Jesus is God’s final Word, the *“good news”* that lifts us into *“great joy”* long after this world has had its say.

Peace, Pastor Dan

### **The Nativity of Our Lord Christmas Eve Services**

Thursday, December 24, 4:00 PM –  
Contemporary Service at in the Parlors

Thursday, December 24, 10:00 PM –  
Traditional Service at in the Nave with Special  
Music beginning at 9:40 PM.

*\* Please note the Christmas Eve Services will  
be non-communion and no individual candle  
lighting observed.*

Sunday, December 27, 10:00 AM –  
Only one service will be held in the Nave.



December 2020

**FAMILY LIBRARY NEWS  
NEED HELP FINDING A  
MEANINGFUL CHRISTMAS GIFT  
FOR FRIENDS AND FAMILY THIS  
YEAR?**

Tired of giving money or gift cards to people who don't need anything? Or searching high and low for the perfect gift only to find out that your loved one returned the item or already has one just like it? Shop **ELCA Good Gifts** this Christmas and select gifts that will make a difference in the world, grow the church, fight hunger and transform lives. With 50 giving options – from 10 little chicks to help a family escape poverty to a scholarship to help a young leader attend an ELCA seminary – there's something meaningful to choose for everyone on your list. Acknowledgement cards may be sent to let your loved ones know that you have made a special gift in their honor. Good Gifts catalogs are available in the pamphlet rack outside the family library or you can go to [ELCA.org/goodgifts](http://ELCA.org/goodgifts) to shop

online. Also available in the pamphlet rack are God's Global Barnyard coin boxes that are a great way to teach children about the joy of giving globally, coloring books and stickers.

*Feel good about your giving especially during this challenging year. Make a difference. Good Gifts purchases won't be returned.*



November, 2020

- Council met in the Parlors on November 16, using Covid-safety guidelines.
- Karen Linn gave devotions, focusing on Thanksgiving and our gratitude to God.
- Worship services will continue at 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. thru December, with postings online continuing. Masks are required, and use of hand sanitizer and social distancing being maintained.

- Christmas Eve services are being planned, for 4 p.m. and 10 p.m. In-person worship could change at any time, if Covid cases continue to rise. One service planned for Sunday after Christmas at 10 a.m.
- Pastor Rumfelt continues to hold office hours Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and is available for pastoral care. Confirmation classes started Nov. 8 online.
- The Pastoral Call Committee and Council are continuing to review the draft of the Ministry Site Profile.
- Property Committee is continuing to maintain building and grounds with much volunteer help, and organizing tools and maintenance manuals. Position of sexton not yet filled.
- Work to finalize plans for the Drive-thru is continuing, not yet at the point of final site approval by the city. Jim Wahlberg is working very hard on this, and we thank him!
- The Personnel Committee is continuing to interview candidates for the sexton position.
- Terry Horner gave the Treasurer's report and noted the budget process for 2021 is underway. Balance sheet and Income and Expense Reports were reviewed, with positive findings. Annual Pledge information will be coming through in an abbreviated Stewardship process.
- The Community Outreach Store is open 3 days per week, receiving donations, and serving the community.
- Annual meeting is set for Jan. 31, discussed possibility of having one service in Nave and meeting to follow.
- 2020 Nominating committee is seeking candidates for Council, Audit Committee, and Nominating Committee for next year.



### Poinsettia Memorials

It's that time of year again! Advent begins Sunday, November 29<sup>th</sup>, and is the time we begin to think about memorial poinsettia gifts. Gifts may be given in any amount of money that you wish, but we ask that they be at least \$7.50. Poinsettias for decorating our worship area will be purchased and paid for from the money collected. Why not take the opportunity to memorialize a loved one while at the same time beautifying our lovely worship area for Christmas?

As in years past, a list of loved ones for whom memorials are given will be published in the Christmas bulletin.

### THANKS SO MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

Your name

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Amount of Contribution

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of

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## **NOTES FROM THE LOFT**

**December 2020**

**Brian A. Bogey, Minister of Music  
and Organist**

Welcome to December 2020 with our Advent Season followed by our festive Christmas Season. We will be having a select First Lutheran Choral Ensemble sing at our Traditional Christmas Eve Worship Service on Thursday, December 24<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 p.m. in the church nave. **Our First Lutheran Choral Ensemble will rehearse on Sundays December 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> at 11 a.m. in the choir room following the two morning worship services.**

PLEASE NOTE that the earlier Christmas Eve Worship hour and both the observance of communion and the candle lighting ceremony will not take place this year due to Covid 19. Special music will also be offered during a 20-minute Prelude beginning at 9:40 p.m. featuring pianists Gail Espinoza and Julie Livengood; our Good News Ringers Select Bell Choir Ensemble, directed by Karen Linn; and vocal soloists Julie Costantini and Marika Koch. **“O COME LET US ADORE HIM!”**

I have decided not to include the Part V of the “Musical History of First Lutheran Church” in our “First Edition” publication this month so that we may reflect on the significance of our different celebrations during the month of December. This year we will be celebrating Saint Lucia Day on Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup>. It is rare that we celebrate this festive Swedish Holiday on a Sunday!

Unfortunately, we will not be able to have our in-person festive Christmas Dinner and 68<sup>th</sup> Annual Lucia Pageant due to Covid 19. For that reason, I would like to highlight some interesting information on our Lucia Festivals here at First Lutheran! I would like to feature the first five Lucia Brides including 1953 – Kathryn Johnson Bly; 1954 – Janet Christianson Samuelson; 1955 – Marcia Adams Rupp; 1956 – Jeanne Rinaldo Ecklund; and 1957 – Elaine Oberg Mattson. Truly a “blast from the past!” Also Jane Young sent me a photo of past Lucia Brides all gathered as our beloved Gretta Ahlgren was crowned as the special Lucia Bride in 1990 on her 91<sup>st</sup> birthday. Gretta was born in Smaland, Sweden on St. Lucia’s Day, December 13<sup>th</sup> in 1899! What a wonderful occasion that was! We have many fond memories of Lucia Pageants both past and present and we hope that this tradition will be kept alive for many years to come.



**Photo of Gretta Ahlgren and her Lucia Court 1990**

Remember when we used to have a Daily Advent Reading Booklet that was published each year featuring inspirational thoughts and readings by the members of the First Lutheran Church? Well, I found one such article written by my wife, Sandi, that was for Lucia Day, December 13, 2002 that I would like to share with you.

First the backdrop of the article was based on the Gospel lesson for Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup> found in John 1:6-8, 19-28, which is the gospel lesson for Advent 3 that is on December 13<sup>th</sup> this year. Both Advent 2 & Advent 3 talk about John the Baptist who was the messenger sent ahead of Jesus, preparing the way of the Lord.

**Daily Advent Reading – December 13, 2002**  
**By Sandra Kae Bogey**

Just as John the Baptist was a witness of God’s power and love, so too was Lucia a witness to God’s love and power as expressed to us through Jesus Christ. Today, December 13<sup>th</sup>, we of Swedish-Lutheran heritage remember a young Christian girl who lived in Rome long ago. She refused to marry a pagan and gave her dowry to the poor. For this, she was burned at the stake. The message of her Christian commitment and faith was carried northward to Scandinavia by missionaries. The Swedes adopted Lucia as their saint. She became a symbol of LIGHT during December’s prolonged darkness.

On this Santa Lucia Day, may we each take time to be thankful for our heritage, our church, our country, our community, and the many dedicated Christians who enrich our lives. May we be ever willing to share our faith and love with others.

**Prayer:** Our heavenly father, fill us with your love and strengthen our faith that our LIGHTS may shine and reflect your glory to those around us. Amen.

*Wishing you and your loved ones  
the blessings of this holy season!  
“God Jul a Gott Nytt Ar”  
(Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!)  
Love,  
Brian & Sandi Bogey*





**December 2020  
First Lutheran Church  
Contemporary Worship**

**Kimberly King  
Worship Leader & Coordinator of Contemporary Worship  
Sacred Fire – Praise Team**

Hello Everyone,

Our “in person” Contemporary Worship Services continue in December on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> **at 9:00am** in our Worship Center in the lower level of the church (Parlor area) and lasts about 30 minutes.

**We will have a Contemporary Christmas Eve service at 4:00pm in our Worship Center.**

**NOTE: Sunday, December 27, 2020 there will be NO Contemporary service at 9:00am, but ONE Service at 10:00am upstairs in the Nave.**

Advent and Christmas will be very different this year due to the Pandemic. But if we focus on what Advent and Christmas truly means, we find Hope, Love, Joy and Peace and the Birth of our Savior, Jesus!! Take each day in Advent and do something special like following an Advent Calendar, Advent scriptures, and songs. Take each day in Advent to really focus on “watching”, “waiting” and “anticipating”, building the excitement to the day of Jesus’s birth. If we can focus on Jesus’s birth, maybe this will help ease our daily thoughts about COVID and how it is affecting everyone. Focus on Hope, Love, Joy and Peace our Gift from God!!

**REMEMBER:** Masks are required and temperatures taken at the door. Please keep 6 feet distance from others and use social distancing inside the church and entrance areas. If not feeling well, please remain at home.

Sacred Fire members share music and scripture each week, we have digital inspirations, along with a special message from Pastor Rumfelt. The service is planned with safety and health precautions for you and your family, while keeping a relaxed and friendly environment. Seating is spread out with variations for singles, couples and families.

We WILL continue to video tape the services each week and post on Facebook, Vimeo and on our new church website, for those who would like to remain at home. So, everyone can have options to worship at their own comfort level during the Pandemic.

**Remember you have access to our Past Contemporary Services** on both our church's website and Facebook page, Sacred Fire's page and on Vimeo.com. On Vimeo, search First Lutheran Contemporary Service and Sunday's date. For example, First Lutheran Contemporary Service 11.15.20. **Don't forget to share these services with your friends and family!! A GREAT Outreach Ministry!!**

**You can continue to listen** to contemporary music and inspiring messages everyday on FM radio channel 90.9 Family Life Network Or online at **fln.org**. Also, on **Sirius XM radio**, "The Message" on channel 63.

If you are looking for a devotional type inspiration, check out [www.youversion.com](http://www.youversion.com) Great site! They have an "App" too.

**As God continues to shine Love and Blessings on you! .... Remember to share God's Love with others!!**

**Take Care and Be Safe!! Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Blessed New Year!!**





**Income & Expenses through October 31, 2020**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expense</b>	<b>Total</b>
January	*71,954	28,220	43,734
February	14,125	35,149	-21,024
March	16,082	29,856	-13,774
April	*56,975	16,208	40,767
May	19,295	30,186	-10,891
June	15,241	15,845	-604
July	*53,600	22,710	30,890
August	19,055	16,292	2,763
September	13,846	38,962	-25,116
October	*52,445	11,190	41,255
<b>Total</b>	<b>332,618</b>	<b>244,618</b>	<b>88,000</b>

**Mailing Address:**

Jeffrey Clauson  
125 Loop Road  
Unit #1778  
Hurlburt Field, FL 32544

LCDR Andy "SMEDIUM" Carlson  
VFA 211, Unit 200204, Box 4  
FPO AE 09502

MASR Scott D. Johnson  
12440 Chickadee Ln., NW  
Apt. 102  
Silverdale, WA 98383

CAPT Eric Spitzer  
850 Ticonderoga St., Ste. 100  
JBPHH, HI 96860-5102

**\* 40,000 from Endowment**

**Thank you to all who are mailing their offering!**

**Attendance for November**

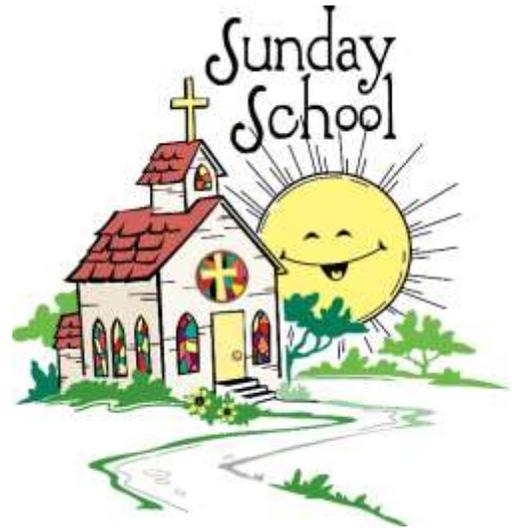
November	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday
2019	156	137
2020	89	76
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday
2019	136	122
2020	69	69
	5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	
2019	N/A	
2020	N/A	

**PARISH RECORD**

**Baptism:**

John Anthony Peterson Ploss baptized on November 22, 2020. Son of Janice and Eugene Ploss. Born on July 30, 2020.

Nicholas Joseph Peterson Ploss baptized on November 22, 2020. Son of Janice and Eugene Ploss. Born on July 30, 2020.



*We extend a sincere thank you to the following people:*

**Memorial Fund – Organ Fund**

**In Honor of Pastor Dan Nagle “With Many Thanks” by:**

Barbara Keefe

**Memorial Fund – Drive Thru**

**In Memory of Violet Johnson by:**

Joanne Puder

**In Honor of Pastor Dan Nagle by:**

Marilyn and Ron Wilcox

**In Honor of Pastor Dan Nagle by:**

Joanne Puder

**Sunday School News**

We are continuing with Remote Sunday School with videos being posted weekly to the First Lutheran Sunday School Jamestown, NY page. We are posting videos for Preschool/Kindergarteners, Grades 1-3 and then Grades 4-6. All the students were given leaflets that go with the lessons. The children and their parents can send pictures on Messenger to Tracy Grey or post to the Sunday School page of completed pages. If your child didn't receive the leaflets, please contact the Church office of Tracy Grey 485-3754. Thank you to all the parents and kids who are working so hard this year!!

Thank You!

Tracy Grey

**Confirmation Class Schedule for December via Zoom**

Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup>

Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup>





## **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

First Lutheran Church has a job opening for a Sexton (Maintenance and building management).

This is a full-time position that requires weekday, Sunday, and holiday availability. A full job description is available at the church office.

**Applicants for the Sexton position must have a background in maintenance with skills in electrical and plumbing repair very helpful.**

If you are interested in this position, please send your resume or letter of intent to:

Personnel Committee  
First Lutheran Church  
PO Box 183  
Jamestown, NY 14702

If you have questions, please ask a member of the personnel committee or Pastor Dan. The members are: Beth Johnson, Ellen Ditonto, Fred Larson, Mike Laurin, Shelly Wendt.

# NewsLetter DEADLINE

The deadline for articles for the January 2021, *First Edition* newsletter is Monday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. Please have all information into the church office by that date. Thank you.

## **Community Outreach Store**

The Community Outreach Store is now opened. The store will be open M - W - F, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. We are also accepting donations during that same time frame. Face Masks are required.

## **PASTORAL CALL COMMITTEE**

The Church Council would like to thank the following individuals who have accepted the Council's invitation to be on the Call Committee for a new pastor:

Hannah Dearman  
Brenda Ecklund  
Gail Espinoza  
Sandy Forsberg  
Julie Gable  
Tracy Grey  
Gregg Guichard  
Peter Larson (Chairperson)  
Lee Lindeman  
Emily Ryberg  
Glen Utter

(Jeanine & Mike Dearman – Non-Voting Members)





## Baptismal Anniversaries

### SCRIPTURE READINGS IN DECEMBER

#### Second Sunday of Advent

**December 6<sup>th</sup>**

Isaiah 40:1-11  
 Psalm 85:1-2,8-13  
 2 Peter 3:8-15a  
 Mark 1:1-8

#### Third Sunday of Advent

**December 13<sup>th</sup>**

Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11  
 Psalm 126  
 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24  
 John 1:6-8,19-28

#### Fourth Sunday of Advent

**December 20<sup>th</sup>**

2 Samuel 7:1-11,16  
 Luke 1:46b-55  
 Romans 16:25-27  
 Luke 1:26-38

#### Nativity of Our Lord

**December 24<sup>th</sup>**

Isaiah 9:2-7  
 Psalm 96  
 Titus 2:11-14  
 Luke 2:1-14

#### First Sunday of Christmas

**December 27<sup>th</sup>**

Isaiah 61:10-62:3  
 Psalm 148  
 Galatians 4:4-7  
 Luke 2:22-40

We celebrate with you!

\*indicates birthday when baptism is not known

#### **December Baptisms:**

01	Kathryn Bogey Danielle Johnson William Michalski Alexis Peterson
03	Britta Livengood
04	Randall Olson Sandra Webster
05	Thomas Nagle Timothy Nyman
06*	Janet Wahlberg
07	Suzann McGraw
07*	Daniel Johnson
08	Sandra Forsberg
09	Crystal Todd
10*	Harold Sodeur
11*	Eric Livengood
12	Suzanne Keppel Lindsay Mericli
14*	Kathy Raymond
17	Daniel Forsberg
18	Dori Harshaw
20	Martha Paulson Cooper Shelters
21	Jeremy Hatfield
22	Colette Livengood
23	David Johnson Dianne Kervin Jill Napierala Sally Walsh
24	Jonathan Bogey
28	Barbara Braley
29	Killian Seekings Mickey Sorenson
31	Lee Lindeman Hannah Sorenson

## Synod Mission Message



### **CORONAVIRUS AID AROUND THE WORLD**

When India locked down, Rekha, a factory worker in Kolkata, lost wages and couldn't buy food. ELCA Lutheran Disaster Relief (LDR) funds gave her and 79 other residents at a homeless shelter daily meals and hygiene kits during the shutdown. "They met all my needs. Staff are helpful and stand beside me and all of us at the shelter," Rekha said.

Today, over 53 million people worldwide have contracted the Coronavirus, and more than 1.3 million have died. In the US, over 10 million have fallen ill, and 244,000 have died. (These numbers will be woefully obsolete by the time you read this.) Since the outbreak began, the ELCA, through LDR, has financially supported 49 responses led by companion churches and organizations in 35 countries. The church has also funded five international pandemic responses carried out by the LWF (Lutheran World Federation), ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together), and Church World Service. These responses target the most vulnerable populations by:

- Supplying hospitals and communities with preventative materials.
- Giving food to those unable to leave their homes to shop, or who were financially impacted.
- Disseminating educational materials.
- Offering support and counseling to manage anxiety and isolation.
- Providing financial assistance to those who have lost livelihoods.

Given the numbers, some might argue that the ELCA should only fund the US response. But, as theologian Emil Brunner is quoted as saying, "The Church exists by mission, just as fire exists by burning. Where there is no mission, there is no Church; and where there is neither Church nor mission, there is no faith." Stories like Rekha's come from all over the world: Egypt, Bangladesh, Jerusalem, Gambia, Kenya, Indonesia, China, Central America. Now, more than ever, we are church together for the sake of the world. **Thank you** for your mission support.

God's Work. Our Hands.



### **Prayer Ventures December 2020**

**1 World AIDS Day** Pray for compassion, understanding and healing for individuals, families and communities worldwide that are living with or affected by HIV and AIDS. Give thanks for the dedicated service and skill of doctors, pastors, public officials, health care educators, care providers and researchers who treat the infected, bring hope to the discouraged and weary, and respond to the disease's spiritual, physical, emotional and social impacts.

**2 The Spirit** is at work in times of anticipation and yearning, reminding us of God's promises and activity, helping us stay calm and patient, and redirecting our attention from ourselves to our neighbors in need — nearby and around the world.

**3** Give thanks for the new ELCA social message “Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy.” Pray that it will help us understand how government is a gift from God but can also be abused and misused. Ask the Spirit to guide us as we prayerfully reflect on how we can view civic engagement as Lutherans.

**4** What do you anticipate and watch for during this season of Advent? Pray for what you yearn and hope for, and give thanks that God is faithful to God’s promises, especially through the gift of life to the world through Jesus Christ.

**5** As we are immersed in the joy, festivities and busyness of Advent and Christmas, pause to pray for our global neighbors who have suffered through devastating natural disasters and need our support, generosity and assistance. Pray particularly for the many nations that have experienced drought and for those impacted by the earthquake in Turkey and Greece, Typhoon Goni hitting the Philippines and multiple hurricanes impacting Mexico, the Caribbean region and the United States.

**6** Pray that the Spirit will give us a measure of John the Baptist’s boldness, commitment, humility and resolve as we share the good news of Jesus Christ and the promise of God’s love and mercy with everyone we encounter or approach throughout our baptismal journey.

**7** Give thanks for caregivers, staff and nurses in senior communities, nursing homes, rehabilitation hospitals, and memory-care and assisted-living facilities. Ask God to grant them strength, wisdom, skill and a spirit of hope and joy as they go about their difficult and often tiring work.

**8** Pray for patience, caution and concern for our neighbor during the continuing COVID-19 pandemic; pray that the Spirit and our siblings in Christ will help us cope with and adjust to the implications of the pandemic for this season in which we are accustomed to gathering in person for meals, celebrations, worship, family gatherings and community events.

**9** Pray that God will help us lead lives of holiness, godliness, peace and active engagement with the

world as disciples of Christ who wait patiently for the day of the Lord.

**10** This has been, and continues to be, a very difficult year of coping with and recovering from natural disasters across our country and around the world. Pray that the presence and hope of God will be evident where there is despair, grief and uncertainty over how to begin rebuilding and healing. Pray that neighbors, communities and nations will work together to provide assistance, resources and relief workers where the needs are most critical.

**11** Ask for God’s forgiveness and take to heart God’s word of love, peace, healing and guidance that restores our faith and spirit as children of God.

**12** Give thanks for the church traditions that remind us of God’s actions throughout history and inspire our faith, generosity and commitment to serve our neighbors in need. Pray that we will carry these meaningful traditions forward and create new rites and traditions that inspire and strengthen all generations in today’s changing contexts.

**13** Pray that we might passionately witness to the light of Jesus Christ and boldly invite others to believe and to be baptized into the body of Christ and the community of all believers.

**14** ELCA Good Gifts provide an opportunity for you to support the ministries and programs — domestic and global — that mean the most to you and the people you love. Give thanks that our church believes God is calling us into the world together and that, through our generosity and love, we can make a difference.

**15** What do our gifts mean, and what impact do they have? Pray for thoughtfulness when we buy gifts, for awareness of who we include and exclude, and for mindfulness of how the money we spend during this time of thanksgiving might fulfill God’s loving, merciful and generous promises.

**16** *Los Posadas* This traditional celebration, popular in Mexico and observed by some ELCA congregations, uses lighted paths and processions to follow Mary and Joseph’s journey through

Bethlehem in search of lodging. Pray that our recollection of Mary and Joseph's experience might prompt us to welcome strangers, immigrants and neighbors in need.

**17** "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." Pray that we will support and encourage each other in these good works and disciplines that keep our spirits, minds and bodies healthy and whole.

**18** Pray that, in anticipation of Christmas, we will invite others into the joy of our meals, celebrations, community events and faith. Pray that the Spirit will move us to reach out with acts of love, hope, inclusion and good news to people who are alone, incarcerated or homeless.

**19** "The Lord has done great things for us." Rejoice, laugh and shout with joy!

**20** Pray that we will be receptive to angels and divine beings sent by God to guide us and bring us good news, as the angel Gabriel did to Mary and Elizabeth. Pray that we will hear God's assurance that "nothing will be impossible with God" and that our response will echo Mary's: "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."

**21** *Winter solstice* On this day with the least amount of daylight, observed as the beginning of winter, pray that we will be drawn to the eternal light of Christ born into the world — a gift for all people and all generations that illuminates God's redemptive love for us and God's desire and intent for how we might live together.

**22** Remember in prayer the approximately 26 million refugees, immigrants and asylum-seekers around the world and at our borders, awaiting entry into safe, welcoming countries and communities so that they can rebuild their lives without threats of conflict, persecution, violence or economic crisis. Pray for their safety, that their spiritual, physical and emotional needs will be met, that they will find caring advocates, and that their faith and hope will be strengthened and sustained by siblings in Christ and our faith communities.

**23** With prayerful sighs of relief and expressions of gratitude, give thanks for God's covenant to grant humankind love, forgiveness, new life and redemption through the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ.

**24** Remember and give thanks for the people in your life who taught you the nativity story and recounted the promise God made to us and fulfilled through Jesus Christ.

**25** *Christmas Day* Give praise and thanks for God's boundless love, mercy and grace, revealed to the world and all humanity through the light of Jesus Christ — son of God, son of humanity; our source of truth, salvation, new life and wholeness.

**26** *Beginning of Kwanzaa* Kwanzaa is a weeklong celebration of African culture and traditions that stresses family, community and shared principles. Give thanks for the rich and meaningful traditions, celebrations and practices of our African American siblings and the global African community.

**27** Pray for the Spirit to help us understand and have faith in Jesus as the son of God, born to walk among us, live through our daily struggles and needs, teach us God's ways and word, and restore our relationships with God, one another and creation.

**28** Pray that we will carry forward the story and significance of Jesus and their implications for our daily actions, relationships and decisions as loved and reclaimed children of God. Ask the Spirit to guide us in responding to God's call to proclaim the gospel, make peace, work for justice, propagate hope and serve our neighbors in need — without partiality, foot-dragging, embarrassment or expectation of reward or credit.

**29** Let our prayers, creation and all living things give glory and honor to God, our creator, sustainer, guiding light and redeemer.

**30** Pray that the light, celebration and blessings of community we experience as followers of Christ will continue far beyond the Christmas holidays and

permeate our daily lives as we participate in God's life-giving work and witness in the world.

**31** *New Year's Eve* A new year can offer hope and enthusiasm for starting anew, or it can bring fear and despair stirred by our human weaknesses and failures. Ask God to help us achieve our new endeavors and resolutions and reground ourselves in

God's grace, forgiveness and newness when we fall short of our expectations and goals. Ask the Spirit to help us encourage, assist and surround with grace people who stumble or whose confidence is unsteady.



**CHRIST IN OUR HOME**

Devotional Booklets

October, November, December

Now Available in the **"Little Library"** (*in box on stand between Center St. & Chapel*)

Call ahead to the church office to make sure a copy is available.

716-664-4601

Advent Word Search

S	T	N	J	L	C	H	X	C	R
L	Z	N	O	E	P	S	H	C	J
E	I	V	E	E	S	R	K	Y	A
G	E	C	S	V	I	U	I	V	U
N	R	O	C	S	D	H	S	K	C
A	J	H	T	E	R	A	Z	A	N
M	N	M	P	R	A	Y	E	R	S
Q	A	A	G	A	X	D	O	D	T
S	A	G	Y	R	A	M	O	N	A
S	F	S	B	Q	E	E	C	G	R

ADVENT
ANGELS
CHRISTMAS
GOD
JESUS
JOSEPH
LOVE
MARY
NAZARETH
PRAYER
STAR



# **WORSHIP AT FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**9:00 am Contemporary Worship Service  
Contemporary Worship Center**

**10:00 am Traditional Worship Service  
Main Sanctuary**

What's new?

- If you are ill, we ask that you remain at home out of concern for the health and wellbeing of others
- We will wear masks – Bring yours from home
- Temperatures will be taken when entering the building
- Hand sanitizer stations will be in place at entrances to the church and worship areas
- Everyone will be asked to fill out attendance cards
  - These cards will be used to contact individuals if someone tests positive for COVID19 at a later date
  - Please place the cards on the chair/pew where you are seated
- Social distancing will be practiced
  - Chairs will be spaced six feet apart
  - Two of every three pews will be blocked
- Offerings will be placed in a box at the entrance to the worship area
- The liturgy will be spoken, music will be sung by musicians
- We will not celebrate Holy Communion at this time
- We will video record both worship services and post the recordings online through: Vimeo, YouTube, Facebook and the First Lutheran website: [flcjny.org](http://flcjny.org)
- Worship services will be approximately 30 minutes in length

We will adjust our practices as health concerns evolve.

We will celebrate Jesus Christ, risen from the grave!

We understand that some of our church family will refrain from attending worship due to health concerns. This is a personal choice and we support all our family in this decision-making process.

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
PO Box 183  
Jamestown, NY 14702

*ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED*

If you would like your name removed from our mailing list, please contact the church office at 664-4601 or by e-mailing us at:  
firstlutheran@flcjny.org

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# First Edition

*Living the Good News at First Lutheran Church*