

# First Fruits

## Worship Ministry

January 2024  
Volume 28, Number 1



On Sunday, December 10, the youth at First Lutheran Church presented "The Greatest Story Ever Told" written and directed by Gayle Bortz. It was a great "show" which was enjoyed by the youth and the congregation! Thanks to Gayle for her continued creativity and support of our youth. Enjoy the pictures!!



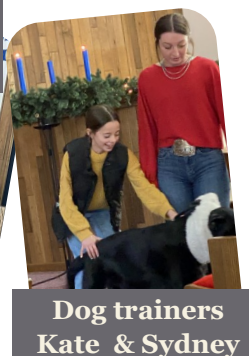
Ringmaster Ava



Jugglers Tray, Austin, and Connor



Tightrope Walker Morgan



Dog trainers Kate & Sydney



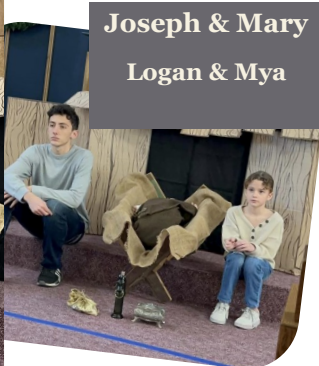
Concessionaire Jensen



Strong man Logan



Ballerina Mya



Joseph & Mary Logan & Mya



Jesus & Star Carson & Addie Mae

### YEAR-END OFFERINGS

should be in the FLC office by 10 AM on Sunday, December 31 and 12 PM at CTS to be recorded in 2023.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS — FIRST LUTHERAN

There will not be Sunday School December 24 or 31. Sunday School will resume January 7.



### CONFIRMATION CLASSES

#### CONFIRMATION CLASS

will be held on Wednesdays, at 2 pm starting January 10.

Mya Krutsinger received a bible from Pastor Hutton on Sunday, December 17.



# Discipleship Ministry



Circle of Freedom

Circle of Freedom is holding an Open House on Saturday, January 13 from 10 am to 2 pm to tour their finished building, including “House Grandmother” Apartments. Everyone is invited to join them in this celebration! See their latest newsletter on the bulletin board at First Lutheran.

RADIO

BROADCAST



## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THIS MINISTRY!!

The radio broadcast of Pastor Hutton’s sermons is an ongoing ministry of First Lutheran and Christ the Servant. Ways to listen at 10:30 AM each Sunday morning:

KIIC Radio—96.7 FM (Albia)

kiicradio.com—website  
(Click on “Listen Live”)

If you miss Sunday, catch it as a podcast on church’s website!

### **Broadcast Sponsors:**

**January 7:** Luann & Tom Mosbach in honor of Geneva Wilson’s 89th birthday

**January 14:** Susan Seufferer in honor of Gert Patterson and Morgan Peters birthdays

**January 21:** Dennis & Patti Bisgard in memory of Earl and Nila Bisgard’s wedding anniversary

**January 28:** Del & Karen Kray

***WE ARE NOW FILLING 2024 DATES! With two members now in care facilities, the broadcast brings our worship to those, plus we have listeners all across southern Iowa. If you would like to sponsor a broadcast for 2024, please call the church office. Sponsorships are \$35. 641-774-4875 Thank you!***

# Stewardship Ministry

## Annual Meetings and Potluck Dinners

**Christ the Servant  
Sunday, January 14, 2024**

Everyone is welcome to attend the annual meeting for ministry at Christ the Servant in Corydon. The meeting will begin about noon following regular Sunday worship. A potluck meal will be shared after the business portion of the meeting is concluded.

**First Lutheran  
Sunday, January 21, 2024**

On this day, Christ the Servant and First Lutheran will gather for joint worship at Chariton beginning at 9 AM. The business meeting will follow at around 10:15 AM. Following the business items of the day, we will join in the sharing of a potluck meal in the Fireside Room. Those who are able are invited and encouraged to bring a dish to share with others.

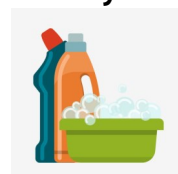
# Stewardship Ministry (Continued)

## CHRIST THE SERVANT TO CELEBRATE THEIR 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

On Sunday, April 7, 2024 Christ the Servant Lutheran Church will celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. As they do so, they would like to invite everyone to join them for this festive celebration of worship at 11:00 AM, and to be followed by a catered dinner at Ludlow's Steakhouse in Corydon. Please put the date on your calendar and await more details as we get closer to the celebration.



**JANUARY IS LAUNDRY SUPPLIES MONTH** for the Ministry Center. Examples would be detergent, fabric softener, dryer sheets, bleach, and stain remover. **Please consider helping with this ministry!**



## ON THE VINE



**FLC WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE** will meet on Tuesday, January 2 at 10 AM.

**PRAYER SHAWL/BABY AFGHAN GROUP** will gather in the FLC Library, beginning at 1:30 PM, on Wednesday, January 3.

**CTS WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE** will meet on Monday, January 8 at 11 AM.

**LAPLANDERS QUILT GUILD AT CTS** will meet on Monday, January 8 beginning at 2 PM.

**BREAKFAST GALS** will meet at 8 AM on Tuesday, January 9 at Hardees.

**“SHARING THE WEIGHT” BLANKET MAKING** will take place on Tuesday, January 9 from 9 AM-3 PM at CTS.

**THE WOMEN OF THE ELCA** will gather on Thursday, January 11, at 1:00 PM at First Lutheran.

**LUTHERAN ADULT FELLOWSHIP** will meet on Sunday, January 14, at 5 PM. Earl and Linda Comstock will host. Please bring an item to share.

**THE CTS WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY GROUP** will meet on Tuesday, January 16, at Christ the Servant beginning at 11:30 AM.

## “THE STORY” DISCUSSION GROUP

will be meeting on Wednesdays, at 10 AM at First Lutheran from January 10 through January 31. The discussion will be based on the previous Sunday's sermon.



## NOISY OFFERINGS WILL CONTINUE!

“Noisy Offerings” will continue to be taken on Sundays. Please consider bringing your loose change to church and “noisily” depositing it in the pot!!





# Pastoral Pondering . . . .

*"Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree."* ~Attributed to Martin Luther

Have you ever seen a new tree planted that has two supports added? I'm thinking of a young tree that stands between two poles to which are attached a tether, each pulling the tree in the opposite direction. Not only do these supports help guard against windstorms, but they ensure that the young tree grows up straight and true between the opposing tensions of being pulled in opposite directions.

So too, I imagine, do the opposing pulls of the Democrat and Republican parties do the same for our country. Blue and red need each other; right and left, conservative and liberal. We need the dichotomy, the tension of opposing forces, the disagreement, so that we can grow, straight and true somewhere in the middle.

I can only imagine what the tree feels as it is being pulled in two opposite directions, but I would guess it is something like what our country is feeling now. Never before has the country offered such clear and disturbing statistics for how many are pulling in opposing directions. We are polarized, standing in support on opposite sides of the tree, pulling with all we've got; and yet, if one side has too much influence, the tree will bend. There is value in having each side pull, so that our country can grow straight and true somewhere in the middle.

What then does this mean for ministry?

It is curious to me how 100% of our congregation members can agree that Jesus Christ is Lord, but we do not agree on what that means, how that impacts our vote, and how we embody that conviction in our ministry efforts. But then again, the church is not known for its level of agreement *except* for the conviction that Jesus Christ is Lord.

When political convictions run deep, when we feel the tension of being pulled in opposing directions, when we are grieved by the lack of agreement and the swirl of emotions and the resentment towards those who are pulling the opposing tether, I urge you to extend some grace.

Forgive others for not voting as you did. Forgive others for not championing the same convictions that you hold dear. And turn your efforts, your attention, your energy to push and pull the growth toward and into the work of Christ.

We are not going to agree as a country, and not even as congregation, but we can agree that we are invited to participate in the breaking in of the kingdom of God. We are called to bear the light of Christ. And our efforts in ministry are strengthened when we work together towards some goal, some embodiment of the presence of Christ in the world. Feed the hungry. Clothe the naked. Comfort the afflicted. There are blessings and life-giving growth as we concentrate on the nuts and bolts of our faith.

And more than that, Jesus Christ is Lord, our Lord and Savior. The rest is just...tension, albeit challenging, grieving, thick, and concerning tension, but through which we grow straight and true.

In the midst of this tension, God is at work. As we consider our own convictions with humility, and the convictions of our friends and neighbors with grace and forgiveness, we will find our way forward, as a country and as a congregation called to serve the work of Christ.

And whether or not you believe the world is going to pieces, I am pleased to suggest as Martin Luther did: *"Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree,"* that we consider planting an apple tree somewhere on the property of each congregation.

Because even if the world goes to pieces, Jesus Christ is Lord and you and I are invited, encouraged, indeed, we are called and equipped to be His presence in the world. And that, my dear friends, is no small thing.

Blessings to all in 2024,

*Pastor Dick*

# Re:Newed

## January Baptismal Anniversaries



During this month, we remember and give thanks for the baptisms of:

1/3	Karen Wilker	1/18	Rod Bortz
1/7	Del Kray	1/19	Sarah Peterson
1/9	Addison Peterson	1/21	Kenadee Peterson
1/13	Leanne Norton	1/21	Jackson Fisher
1/14	Lucas Harders	1/27	Karen Patterson
1/15	Becky Allen	1/30	Angie Wilson
1/17	Jaxson Mehlert		

Thanks be to Jesus for the saving waters of baptism!

*(In baptism, we all are made one in Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither male nor female, neither Chariton nor Corydon! Are we missing your baptismal anniversary? Let us know! Tell us the story of your baptism!)*

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

### CORYDON

1/7	Nathan Forbes
1/11	Grace Helbing
1/11	Josie Helbing
1/22	Jennifer Goben



### CHARITON

1/1	Ruby Hanson	1/17	Sarah Peterson
1/2	Jean Heston	1/17	Bob Schmitt
1/7	David Oxenreider	1/19	Carson Oxenreider
1/10	Geneva Wilson	1/20	Chad Mehlert
1/11	Brad Sobotta	1/23	Shari Farrell
1/12	Gert Patterson	1/23	Titan Reed
1/12	Morgan Peters	1/24	Kenadee Peterson
1/14	Katie Shore	1/25	Sarah Fuhs
1/17	Kim Cain		

## OUR HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES GO OUT TO THE FAMILY OF NELDA JOHANSEN.

Nelda passed away on  
Thursday, November 2.

Please continue to keep her  
family in your prayers.



## JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

### CORYDON

1/18	Lucas & Alyssa Harders
1/31	Mary Ann & Paul Evitt

### CHARITON

None

# Thank You

It's been shown time and again that gratitude is good for us—spiritually, mentally, and even physically.

Making a Thankoffering is gratitude in action. Women of the ELCA is grateful to you for taking that action on Sunday, November 19. Our total was \$182.80!

### Minutes and Reports

Copies of recent meeting minutes and financial reports are available on site at both First Lutheran and Christ the Servant. At FLC, please look on the bulletin board outside the church office. At CTS, check the table by the windows on the lower level.