

First Fruits

Worship Ministry

December 2024
Volume 28, Number 12



HANGING OF THE GREENS at First Lutheran Church will be on Wednesday, December 4th starting at 1 PM. All Sunday school students are invited to come after school that day to help decorate the church along with anyone else who would like to join in some decorating fellowship fun. Contact Patti Bisgard or Lana Kuball for more information or with questions.

NO ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN DECEMBER. AT FIRST LUTHERAN. Adult bible study will resume on Wednesday, January 8.



5 PM—First Lutheran
7 PM—Corydon

MID-WEEK ADVENT SERVICES—We will have mid-week Advent services at First Lutheran on Wednesday evenings, December 4, 11, and 18 at 7 PM.

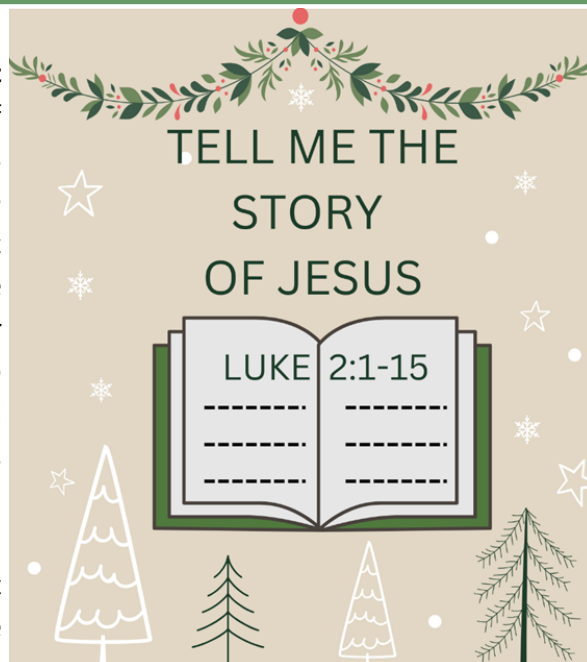


YEAR-END OFFERINGS

should be in the office by 10 AM on Sunday, December 29 to be recorded in 2024.



"Tell Me the Story of Jesus" will be presented on **December 15 at the 9:00 service.** Most of our youth have witnessed this great story for the very first time and are so excited to share it with the congregation. Please support them as they build their faith in Jesus Christ and learn to love Him as we all do! We will have some "special effects" this year in addition to our infamous camel! In case you didn't know, the camel's costume was a gift from Larry and Virgene Rasmussen and was their comforter for their bed! It is famous! This costume continues to live on in our congregation as the "most asked for" actor in the program! Enjoy our program on December 15 at 9:00 a.m. at First Lutheran Church.



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Discipleship Ministry

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:

December 1: Del & Karen Kray in honor of December birthdays and anniversaries

December 8: John & Arta Harman in honor of their anniversary on December 19

December 15: Dave & Lana Kuball in honor of their wedding anniversary

December 22: Rod & Gayle Bortz in honor of Rod's birthday

December 29: Pastor Dick & Carolyn Hutton

WE ARE NOW FILLING DATES FOR 2025!! With two members in care facilities, the broadcast brings our worship to those, plus we have listeners all across southern Iowa. If you would like to sponsor one of these broadcasts, ***please call the church office. Sponsorships are \$35. 641-774-4875 Thank you!***

Stewardship Ministry

A Thought Going into 2025

There is the old adage: "Growing old is not for sissies." This is very true. As you age, your health deteriorates, and it seems like you have a doctor's appointment every week. There are, however, advantages to being 70 years of age and older. We don't have to worry about Social Security running out of money or the national debt, or the stock market crashing. We feel for our grandchildren. But we have the luxury of putting our feet up and enjoying our family, church community, and golfing buddies.

Before becoming too self-absorbed, let us recognize that we owe our good fortune to those who came before us. We recognize that there are those in our community who struggle and our good fortune obligates us to help where we can. We can't do much to help those who suffer in Gaza or Ukraine or North Carolina, but the God within us says: We can help those in need in our church community, in our neighborhood.

I love verse 34 of Luke, chapter 12: "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Luke's words were direct. He did not say where your heart is there will be your treasure. No, he said show me your checkbook, your receipts, your Visa statement, and that will tell me where your heart is. It's the old adage: put your money where your mouth is. This Bible verse applies to much more than money. What we do with our time, energy, and affection also betrays where our heart is. If we invest in only ourselves, then we care only for ourselves.

(Continued on page 3)

Stewardship Ministry (Continued)

Don't tell me that at my age, I've done my bit, or let the younger ones do it. Most of you have a little bit of juice left in the battery. I would pray that we look at our blessings of money, time, and talent and say to ourselves: I want First Lutheran/Christ the Servant Lutheran to prosper, to take care of those who worship with us, to reach out to our neighbors, to, yes, even make a difference in Gaza or Sudan.

Let us pray:

May our possessions reflect where our hearts are.

May we minister to our neighbors with open hands.

May we find joy in helping others, for we are truly blessed. Amen.

CHRIST THE SERVANT completed 6 quilts, 75 personal care kits, and 115 school bags this year that were donated to Lutheran World Relief. Thank you to all who helped in any way with these projects.



ON THE VINE



CTS TASK FORCE will meet on Sunday, December 1 at after worship.

CTS WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE will meet on Monday, December 2 at 11 AM.

FLC WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE will meet on Tuesday, December 3 at 10 AM.

PRAYER SHAWL GROUP will meet at 1:30 PM on Wednesday, December 4.

MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICE AT FLC will be held on Wednesday, December 4, 11, and 18 at 7 PM.

LAPLANDERS QUILT GUILD AT CTS will meet on Monday, December 9 beginning at 2 PM.

CHURCH COUNCIL will meet on Monday, December 9 at 6:30 PM at FLC.

BREAKFAST GALS will meet at 8 AM on Tuesday, December 10 at Hardees.

"SHARING THE WEIGHT" BLANKET MAKING will take place on Tuesday, December 10 from 9 AM-3 PM at CTS.

LUTHERAN ADULT FELLOWSHIP will meet on Sunday, December 15, from 5-7 PM for a Christmas gathering. Ernie's bingo will be played. Please bring a white elephant gift and treats to share. Earl & Linda Comstock will host.



SALVATION ARMY

BELL RINGING OPPORTUNITY

First Lutheran will be ringing the Salvation Army Bell on Friday, December 6, at Bomgaars. The signup sheet is on the table in the Fireside Room with a few time slots still open. If that day doesn't work for you, there are plenty of more opportunities for ringing. Please contact Patti Bisgard if you are interested in helping with this ministry. Thank you!

NOISY OFFERINGS!!



Please consider bringing your loose change to church and "noisily" depositing it in the pot!! Offerings

December through March at First Lutheran will go to Salvation Army-Heating Assistance. Offerings December through August at Christ the Servant will go to Wayne School needs.

Pastoral Pondering

Pastoral Pondering

*“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28*

The past couple of weeks as I drive from Urbandale to Chariton and Corydon, I have been able to notice the changes in the landscape - trees are turning red, yellow, and orange. It's been beautiful to observe the change.

The fields that I looked at all summer are no longer green. The soybeans and corn have turned tan and brown - ready for harvest. Now, I watch combines, grain wagons and semis move across the fields, gathering the harvest into their bins, a blessing from the Lord and the fruition of their labor.

The harvest is what the farmers have been working towards since they first tilled the soil and planted the seeds this spring. All the work, all the prayers for rain and sunshine are done and now they have the joy of the harvest.

Now, some of those fields have been tilled, getting ready for next year. Soon the land will be put to rest.

Gardeners have already taken in their harvest. But now, the gardens have been prepared for the winter's nap as the remnant of the plants that were planted were pulled out, the rows are gone and the earth lays dark black, resting until the warm springs wake it up ready to receive new seeds once again.

Though some of us love winter and some not so much, we know it is coming. The days are getting shorter and the nights longer. The average temperatures are dropping from the sixties to the fifties and soon into the forties.

There was a time when most of us were connected to the rhythms of the seasons, the time of planting, the time of growing, the time of harvest, and the time to rest. But today, most of us don't drive tractors anymore; some of us still garden. But, we enjoy watching the earth being turned and seeds being planted, the growth of crops, and the harvest of all the crops.

However, we have enough disconnect with the earth and the seasons that our bodies and minds miss the rhythm of the seasons, especially the season of rest. Since most of us are not living on the farm anymore, our seasons, other than enjoying the wonderful creation of our Lord, seem to go from busy to busy.

Our schedules change some. Instead of attending football games, cross country meets, volleyball games, and marching band contests, we find our way to different bleachers to watch basketball games, wrestling meets, and symphony and jazz concerts. Then it will switch to track meets, golf matches, and baseball.

Work itself doesn't change much with the seasons, it seems to flow from busy to busy or sometimes busier to "whoa, I need it to slow down." All our technology is mostly helping with our work. But since technology helps us do some tasks faster, we just add more tasks to our schedules and we go, go, go, Monday through Friday. To get a break from the hectic schedules, we figure how to play harder on the weekends. In the summer its camping, fishing, biking, maybe some tennis or pickle ball. In the fall, it can be hiking or driving to see the colors, hunting or going to college or professional football games or watch parties. In the winter, there is skating, hockey, snowmobiling, ice fishing, and more.

We are in the rhythm of work, work, work, and go, go, go.

To this fast moving pace in which we find ourselves, Jesus offers us rest. Jesus calls us to rest in him. Jesus is present in the morning as we begin our day. Jesus is present as we rush from one task to the next. Jesus is present during the evening as our day begins to wind down. Jesus is present to watch over us when we sleep. Jesus offers us rest, to rest in his love and his faithfulness.

Jesus defines us as the beloved of the Lord, precious children of the Heavenly Father, inheritors of the very kingdom of God. Jesus calls us to rest in him, to rest in his peace in the midst of the chaos that can surround us.

As we await the snowflakes beginning to fall, let us listen to our Lord's call, and rest in him. Blessings to all!

Pastor Dick

Re:Newed

December Baptismal Anniversaries



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

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 12/4 Alex Kuball | 12/16 Angelynne Coleman |
| 12/5 Joanne Fletcher | 12/16 Callen Coleman |
| 12/6 Arta Harman | 12/18 Christine Atwell |
| 12/6 Monte Brown | 12/22 Devon Brown |
| 12/9 Rob Johansen | 12/23 Kim Francisco |
| 12/16 Marissa Coleman | 12/25 Deb Clark |
| 12/16 Wesley Coleman | |

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!)

Thank You

My gift to this congregation has always been to ignite the faith in our youth

and have them share their love of the Lord. Through their presence every Sunday, they are gaining the ability to speak and sing amongst the congregation. I give thanks to all the parents for bringing them to church and allowing them to participate. I especially appreciate the time they give me with their children to present a great Christmas program. Without them, the adults would have to put on the camel's costume!

Thank you from the bottom of my heart! Gayle Bortz



DECEMBER IS DENTAL HEALTH MONTH at the Ministries Center. Examples would be toothpaste, toothbrushes, mouthwash, dental floss, etc. **Please consider helping with this ministry!**

The Ministry Center also needs volunteers!

Ministry Center hours:

Open M/W/F 9:30-11:30 am

410 S. 7th St.—774-8146

Salvation Army Assistance available during open hours. Don't forget the blessing boxes found around town can use donations, too!!

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

CORYDON

- 12/8 Bill Miller
- 12/10 Wendy Foster
- 12/11 Becky Allen



CHARITON

- 12/1 Mark White
- 12/3 Devon Brown
- 12/5 Alena Umbenhower
- 12/7 Jaxson Mehlert
- 12/11 Rhonda White
- 12/12 Zachary Fisher
- 12/14 Del Kray
- 12/15 Tim McGee
- 12/16 Christina Umbenhower
- 12/17 Amanda Buckalew
- 12/19 Rod Bortz
- 12/21 Tanner Duey
- 12/23 Hannah Fuhs
- 12/27 Bob Prather
- 12/28 Chris Kuball
- 12/31 Nicki Brown

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

CORYDON

- 12/19 John & Arta Harman
- 12/31 Jean & Shorty Wilson



CHARITON

- 12/10 Kent & Cameron Storm
- 12/14 Del & Karen Kray
- 12/28 Dave & Lana Kuball

IF YOU WISH TO PROVIDE ALTAR FLOWERS, let the office know. We will no longer have a flower chart hanging in the hallway.



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.