



The Visitor

FEBRUARY 20 24

Dear Members of First Lutheran,

Over the last few months, I've been using this space to reflect on the proposed mission statement that has come before the congregation. By the time you receive this letter you will have made a decision with regards to it, and I can't say a week before the Annual Meeting what path you will decide to take. What I can share with you, regardless, is where it has taken me. Over the last 6 weeks or so what has really come to the surface for me from the proposed mission statement is the word "sustain."

We say in the proposed mission statement that the work we do as a congregation is meant to "sustain ourselves and our communities." Looking ahead, work toward this end is where I see myself putting a considerable amount of my energy in a three-fold way. The folds would be 1) sustaining ourselves as individuals, 2) sustaining our building and staff, and 3) sustaining our communities. Though presented and started in this order, I want to emphasize, there is a need to start the next step before completing the previous one, or we'll never get anywhere. You can feel free to read that, "We'll need to start the next step before we really feel ready to do so, or we'll just keep navel gazing."

With that caveat, I'd like to spend the rest of my time in this newsletter talking about sustaining ourselves. Keep in mind, that I say this as a work in progress myself, but if any of the following phrases resonate with you, "I'm tired of the run around, I'm tired physically, I hurt for no apparent reason, I'm too busy, I'm stressed, I'm lost, I'm lonely, I feel out of control, I feel like there has to be more to life than this," then there is something out of balance and unsustainable in the way you are living.

That's not judgement, that's simply a fact; a fact that if you're honest with yourself you know or feel already, it's just not fun to have it pointed out. What you might not have heard, though, because our world is so good at asking you to join its misery is this, "This is not God's intention for us, nor is it what Jesus means by having an abundant life." It's also a prime opportunity for us to witness to others that life can be different than the overstuffed rat race we've gotten used to.

I say this because, our faith tradition has filled and continues to add to its tool box, practices too numerous to be counted. These practices can help us sort out our priorities and work to live by them. They can help us see and learn how to let go of the things that are burdening us the most. They can help us regain and recover what we expend through our days, and help us get back to normal more quickly when a stressful week arises.

Now, if you are thinking this sounds like more than just a once a week on Sunday proposition, you are absolutely correct. Think about this for a moment though, our physical bodies would perish if we only ate one meal per week, yet we expect our spiritual bodies to flourish on such rations; this doesn't make sense. If we want our spiritual selves to flourish we must feed them regularly. To do that, we must proactively and deliberately feast through the week on those things that feed us instead of hoping they come on Sunday and if they don't going home with a hunger pang. What that looks like in practice is if Sunday's music doesn't hit you with all the right notes, you feed yourself through the week with music that lifts you up. If the visuals weren't inspiring, you take a walk around the PAC and feed your soul. If the sermon falls flat, you take a book from the church library and get some good theology to chew on.

With such practices, Sunday becomes dessert, the extra portion you don't really need but you're looking forward to and saving some room for, and it sure tastes good. Sunday isn't the only thing that changes though. As we work on sustaining ourselves, the model of church changes as a whole, it changes from the place that we look to feed us all we need in one big lump to a place of learning, experiencing, and reflecting with others, so we can eat more regularly in other places in our lives as we continue practicing what we have learned there.

In Christ,
Pr. Patrick

First Evangelical
Lutheran Church
305 West 5th Street
North Platte, Nebraska
69101

Office Hours
Mon - Fri
9:00 - 2:00
Sunday School
9:15am
Coffee & Donuts
Sundays 9:45am
Worship
Sundays 10:30



CONTACT NUMBERS:
Pastor:
Pastor Patrick Sipes
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Church Council, President:
Dr. Todd Jensen
Office Manager:
Ambur Petersen
Financial Secretary:
Claudette Nelson
Music Director:
Gail Jensen

Contact Us...
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FEBRUARY

SUNDAY	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
The calendar is always changing. If an event is changed/added after the newsletter is sent out there is a calendar on the Church website that will be more current. If you have questions, feel free to contact the office.				1 9am Pickleball 5:30 Bells	2 9am Pickleball	3
4 9:15 Salt Mine 9:45 Coffee/Donuts 10:30 Worship	5 9am Pickleball 7pm Miriam Circle-Basement	6 7 Boy Scouts	7 9am Pickleball 1 WELCA 1 Quilts 6:30 Confirmation	8 9am Pickleball 5:30 Bells 6:30 WELCA Potluck	9 9am Pickleball	10 8am Card Show
11 9:15 Salt Mine 9:45 Coffee/Donuts 10:30 Worship 11:45 W& M Meeting 5pm Youth Group	12 9am Pickleball	13 5:30 CCC 7 Boy Scouts	14 9am Pickleball 1 Quilts 7 Ash Wednesday Service @ Messiah	15 9am Pickleball 5:30 Bells Newsletter Deadline	16 9am Pickleball	17
18 9:15 Salt Mine 9:15 J.H.S.S 9:45 Coffee/Donuts 10:30 Worship	19 9am Pickleball 5:30 Council with A/V dem.	20 9:30 Adah Circle 7 Boy Scouts	21 9am Pickleball 1 Quilts 5:15 Meal 6:30 Lenten Service 7:15 Stitching	22 9am Pickleball 5:30 Bells	23 9am Pickleball 5pm Wedding Rehearsal	24 Wedding
25 9:15 Salt Mine 9:30 Eve Circle 9:45 Coffee/Donuts 10:30 Worship	26 9am Pickleball	27 7 Boy Scouts	28 9am Pickleball 1 Quilts 5:15 Meal 6:30 Lenten Service 7:15 Stitching	29 9am Pickleball 5:30 Bells		

First Communion Class

If you have a child that is in the 5th grade or older and has not taken a First Communion Class, please contact the church office (532-0250) to get the details.

February Sunday Volunteers

Date	Reader	Worship Leader	Online W.L.	Coffee/Donuts	Acolyte	Offering Usher	Comm Assist (2)	Comm Setup/Takedown	Fill Candles	Greeters
Feb 4		Betty H		Worship & Music	Landon		Jody L/Arta S		Pat O Kathy H	
Feb 11			Ruona		Jerry S	Cridle's	Kathy H			
Feb 18			Jacoby		Bob H		Pat O			
Feb 25			Lake		Greg L					

If you would like to volunteer on one of the empty Sundays, please contact the church office or sign up on the bulletin board at the back of the church.

Happy Birthday

Riley Aloï	Feb 1	Sandi Carland	Feb 10
Moraine Magnuson	Feb 1	Lake Sellers	Feb 10
Jody Hill	Feb 2	Brynn Dawson	Feb 11
Scott Peters	Feb 2	Brooklyn Stoll	Feb 20
Jackie Ryun	Feb 3	Jean Dowhower	Feb 22
John Rowland	Feb 5	Dee Luttrell	Feb 22
Carson Macias Lunzman	Feb 6	Shaylee White	Feb 22
Natalia Harvey-Toribio	Feb 7	Austin Kniep	Feb 24
Betty Haws	Feb 8	Braylee Petersen	Feb 25
Don Haws	Feb 9	Dr Dwight Larson	Feb 26
Jason Jensen	Feb 9	Heidi Criddle	Feb 28
Matt Pederson	Feb 9	Marty Johnson	Feb 28

Neal & Heidi Criddle	Feb 4
Larry & Georgia Nelms	Feb 4
Samuel & Angela Mohr	Feb 6
Gregory & Marcia Bland	Feb 11
Libby & Greg Lower	Feb 16
Ryan & Kari Grigg	Feb 24
Nick & Ambur Petersen	Feb 29

Happy Anniversary!

Please advise the church office of any errors/omissions on the Birthday & Anniversary Calendar.



Do You Know?

Twenty-four pastors have served First Evangelical Lutheran Church since its inception in 1880. There have also been several interim pastors. Rev. Pastor Nathan Wadewitz, D.Mins. served FELC for 18 years. To date, this is the longest any pastor has served the church.

Sponsored by Caring Christians Committee

Lent Services 2024

Date	Reader	Acolyte	Offering Ushers	Communion Assistants
Feb 21	Sarai S	Lake		N/A
Feb 28	Ruona S	Ruona		N/A
March 6		Landon		N/A
March 13	Ruona S	Ruona		N/A
March 20	Brooklyn S	Landon		N/A

Year 2023	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
Income	\$20,692	\$17,457	\$17,888	\$21,581	\$20,204	\$15,617	\$17,924	\$18,305	\$20,543	\$16,157	\$17,056	\$58,475	\$261,899
Expenses	\$22,216	\$19,514	\$28,166	\$18,486	\$23,977	\$29,790	\$17,164	\$24,617	\$30,081	\$22,364	\$24,743	\$28,733	\$289,851
Surplus (Shortfall)	Shortfall \$1,524	Shortfall \$2,057	Shortfall \$10,278	Surplus \$3,095	Shortfall \$3,773	Shortfall \$14,173	Surplus \$760	Shortfall \$6,312	Shortfall \$9,538	Shortfall \$6,207	Shortfall \$7,687	Surplus \$29,743	Shortfall \$27,952
Average Attendance	94/16	107/16	103/16	115/17	94/15	82/13	82/13	86/14	85/12	83/14	86/14	86/13	

FINANCIAL REPORT

Thank you for your gifts to God through First Evangelical Lutheran Church.

AMOUNTS ARE ACTUAL INCOME RECEIVED AND EXPENSES PAID.

- † Higher income levels around Easter/Christmas. Lower income levels typically received in the summer.
- † Income is considered any monetary gifts given to the Church but excludes any donations received for "designated gifts".
- † The expenses vary month to month, depending on the spending requests by the ministry leaders and committees.
- † Detailed financial reports are available in Narthex and office.

Meeting was called to order with devotions by President, Peggy Fisher

Attendance: Adah 3; Miriam 2; Eve 3; Pastor Sipes

Secretary's Report: Jill read the December meeting minutes. Tammy made motion to approve, Marlys seconded. All in favor

Treasurer's Report: Marlys presented treasurer's report with income for December totaling \$515.00 and expenses \$2,476.10, the balance as of 12/31/23 - \$2,216.63. Marlys reported that Miriam circle offering went directly to Grace food pantry for the month of December. With the correction on the donation amount to the boiler fund of \$500. Suggestion for next year's annual giving to add Woman's Resource Center to the list. Peggy made a motion to approve, Sharon seconded. All in favor.

Bills: Mr. Appliance came and fixed the oven door (property committee paid for the repairs). The repairman suggested having some fire extinguishers in place in the kitchen. Peggy will check with NE Safety and Fire to determine next steps in getting something in place.

Correspondence: numerous Thank You notes were received for the donations made in December

LWR Reports: Carla reporting that the Sunday morning ladies Bible Study that meets will be taking over the organization of the Care Kits for the next year.

Old Business:

*Kitchen oven clean up discussed a date is yet to be determined. Jill reached out to Ideal on the monthly rug replacements and is awaiting a rental agreement on 4-3x5 rugs. Once received and rugs are delivered two of the better rugs will be moved to the kitchen in the gym area.

*WELCA Christmas Luncheon took place on December 7th – hosted by Adah Circle.

New Business:

* Peggy read a note from Heidi on upcoming Lenten meals that the youth will be leading and if Circles would like to assist with food donations. It was decided that the Board would assist with the Ash Wednesday meal, Adah signed up for Feb 28th and Eve Mar 13th. Miriam will discuss at their next Circle meeting and Peggy will relay these dates to Heidi. Once Heidi has the menu laid out she will contact Circles to what is needed.

*WELCA Potluck is scheduled for Feb 8th, 2024 at 6:30pm – hosted by Eve Circle

*Peggy passed out a draft of the annual report to be reviewed before submitting. After review and final LWR numbers being added, the report will be turned into Ambur today for the annual meeting. Marlys and Jill will finish the numbers and also get to Ambur before leaving today.

Spring Gathering will be hosted by First Lutheran on 3/2. Carla is organizing the event and asked the following people to assist in the below duties, Marlys and Tammy – registration and Peggy – MC for the day. Ideas of food were discussed. Marcia Dorn will be leading the end service. Carla asked if Tammy could get a bio of each of the officers to have for the program and to get a list of attendees. With the "Open our Hearts" theme, valentines' decorations are being sought and Tangible offering ideas. Tammy asked that a write up on the event be completed and she will turn into the Expressions monthly newsletter.

Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next meeting Feb 7th ,2024 at 1:00pm

Jill Falcon, Secretary



Stitching Ourselves Together: a stitching and connecting group

Wednesday nights after worship during Lent

February 21, 28, March 6, 13, 20 in the Library

Let's spend Lent stitching ourselves together! This small group will share highs and lows and discuss what we are taking into our lives of faith from Wednesday worship as we work on stitching projects for charity or for ourselves. Bring your knitting, crocheting, cross stitch, embroidery, or mending projects and supplies.

Contact Breen Sipes at breenmarie@hotmail.com or 402-200-0664 for more information.

First Ev. Lutheran Youth

Sunday School News! Salt Mine and Faith Formation

February Theme: A Storm

Pre-K to 5th graders are welcome.
Opening starts at 9:15am in the Education Unit.

If you are interested in helping or have any questions, please contact the office or Pr. Sipes.

Happy New Year from your Youth Group!
We have A LOT coming up

Lenten Meals
5:15pm-6:15pm

February 21st Taco Night
February 28th Beef Stroganoff
March 6th Soup'n Sliders
March 13th Lasagna
March 20th Marry Me Chicken
March 31st Easter Breakfast 9:00am-10:00am
French Toast Bake, Sausage, Eggs, Fruit

Youth Group Activities

NEXT MEETING

FEBRUARY 11TH @ 5:30PM bring \$2 for pizza

Youth group activities are for all kids 6th-12th grade. If you are not already on the youth group email list and would like to be, please contact Heidi 530-3756 or email flipgotsick@yahoo.com

Picture to the right: We had 6 youth at our Christmas Skate Night
Emma, Ruona, Landon, Gil, Bria, Avery



Wendeborn Memorial Scholarship Trust

This scholarship is \$500 per semester up to four years
Must be an education major.

Applications and requirements are available at the church office or firstlutherannp.org

Please return by February 29, 2024



Call to Order: Dr. Todd Jensen called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Opening Prayer: Pastor Sipes

Approve Agenda: Motion made by Sharon and seconded by Alee to approve the agenda. Agenda approved.

Members Present: Dr. Todd Jensen, Keith Kempke, Alee Stout, Greg Lower, Sharon Riley, Linda Lehmann, Neal Criddle, Bob Hinrichs Pr. Sipes

Members Absent: Jody Hill (excused)

Minutes of previous meeting: Motion made by Alee and Second by Bob to approve the minutes for the November 20, 2023 meeting. Minutes approved.

Standing Committee Reports/Committee request and motions:

Finance/Foundation: Alee reported that Church gained \$13,667 and Foundation gained \$39,671.

Christian Ed/Youth & Family: Held a brief meeting on Christmas and the first of January.

Care Committee: Nine people went caroling to nine families. Jill Falcon made hot chocolate for the carolers. Sixty stamps were placed on envelopes for mailing Christmas Cards.

Mutual Ministry: No meeting

Property: The oven has been fixed. Cracks on basement walls will be fixed and painted. Looking into what may be needed for windows in furnace room.

Worship & Music: No meeting

Pastor's Report: Reviewed this report with Pastor.

Ongoing Items:

Cross and Preschool sign- Cross is down and being worked on.

Sound System -ECC to give a presentation in January.

Boiler Bid/HVAC-asbestos complete 9-8, Snell started 10-9.

Visioning- Linda made a motion for congregation to vote either/or on "Old Mission Statement" or "New Mission Statement" at Annual Congregational Meeting. Todd seconded this motion and it passed.

Approvals:

Membership Changes and Facilities request: Linda made a motion seconded by Alee to approve the following Membership Changes and Facilities requests.

*Ambur request off Feb 16, March 7 & 8, May 10 & 13.

*The pickleball group would like to use the gym Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri 9am-Noon during the winter months.

Adjournment: Moved by Neal and Second by Alee. Meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

Next Meetings: January 15th Annual Meeting January 28th

Minutes prepared by Linda and presented on behalf of the Congregational Church Council

January Council Meeting Highlights

- A demonstration for possible new A/V equipment will be held February 19th at 5:30pm. Everyone is welcome to join!
- The council has decided the Lenten offerings will go to The Foster Care Closet here is North Platte.
 - Gas bill went down about 50% from November to December.

Socky is Back!

Remember "Socky"? WELL, he is back! It is February and time again for a sock drive. Caring Christians Committee (CCC) invites you to participate in this outreach mission. During the month of February, a container will be in the narthex of the church to collect new socks to be distributed to local centers who assist people with clothing needs. Please join other members of FELC in supporting this outreach program. Let us fill the container!



PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS.

Dick Curry
 Dvonna Criddle
 Travis Schultz
 Kay Dancer
 George Barton
 Mark Grubbs-Jody Hill's friend
 Kraig Keeter-Heidi Criddle's cousin
 Dave Clark- Heidi Criddle's Cousin
 Taylor Fecht-Friend of Alee Stout
 Sharen Andre- Jody Hill's Aunt



Friend and Family of

Doris Parrish
 Patricia "Pat" Rosenquist
 Robert "Rob" Branting

Please let the office (308-532-0250) know if you have anyone you would like to include in our prayers. We will continue to pray for four weeks. If more time is needed, please inform Pastor Sipes (402)200-0446



Weather related
CANCELLATIONS
 will be broadcasted on
 KNOP TV and Facebook.

Altar Flowers

If you would like to provide flowers for a "special occasion", "Glory to God", "in honor of" "in memory of" please pick up a form in the office.
 The cost is **\$40.00** for one pair of bouquets.

2024 Available Sundays

Feb	4	11	18	25	
March	X	10	17	24	31
April	7	14	21	28	

January Flowers were given by:

Jan 14- In Loving Memory of Bruce Jensen.
 By: His Family

Ladies
Save the Date

Spring Gathering

March 2, 2024

First Lutheran Church
 North Platte, Nebraska
 5th and Sycamore
 8:30 am - 3:00 pm

Registration opening soon
 online or
 call (308) 532 - 0250

1 Peter 5: 6-7

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him; because he cares for you.

Open our Hearts
 Listen
 Be Kind
 Pray



FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

First Evangelical Lutheran Church is a member congregation of the ELCA.

Mission Statement: Under construction

Worship Services

Sundays: 10:30 AM

Both online and in person

Sunday School

Sundays: 9:15am

Wednesday Confirmation

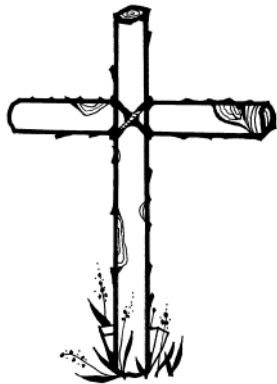
6:30-7th,8th,9th grades

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

305 WEST 5TH STREET

NORTH PLATTE NE 69101-3830

Address Service Requested



February 2024

Schedule for Lent Services

Ash Wednesday

February 14– 7pm Messiah Lutheran Church w/Rev. Meysing

Wednesday Lent Services

February 21 to March 20–6:30pm First Ev. Lutheran Church w/Pr. Sipes

Palm Sunday

March 24– 10:30am First Ev. Lutheran Church w/Pr. Sipes

Maundy Thursday

March 28–7pm First Ev. Lutheran Church w/Pr. Durboraw

Good Friday

March 29–7pm First Presbyterian Church w/Pr. Sipes

Easter Sunday

March 30–8:15am and 10:30am First Ev. Lutheran Church w/Pr. Sipes

Easter Breakfast (Youth Fundraiser) from 9:15am–10:15am

Please contact the office if you have any questions about any of these services.



Weekly Scripture	First Lesson	Psalm	Second Lesson	Gospel
Feb 4	Isaiah 40:21-31	147:1-11, 20c	1 Corinthians 9:16-23	Mark 1:29-39
Feb 11	2 Kings 2:1-12	50:1-6	2 Corinthians 4:3-6	Mark 9:2-9
Feb 18	Genesis 9:8-17	25:1-10	1 Peter 3:18-22	Mark 1:9-15
Feb 25	Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16	22:23-31	Romans 4:13-25	Mark 8:31-38