



First Word

The newsletter of First Lutheran Church • Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Welcome, Pr. Tom!



Pastor Tom Stadem, Associate Pastor of Youth and Family

What a joy it has been to board this gospel proclamation-driven train called First Lutheran

Church! Thank you

all for your kind and sincere welcomes to me and my wife Judy that began from the moment we entered your doors. It is quite impressive to step in and view all of the events, studies, meetings, gatherings, and worship services that occur all in just one week's time. Pastor Jason and all of the staff at First Lutheran are wonderfully equipped for the work and mission ahead of us, and it is an honor to serve our Lord alongside them and you.

My passion for Youth and Family ministry

and desire for 'passing on the faith' grew out of my own blessed years with my dear grandmother, Bergit Wilhelmina Holbeck Stadem. As a kid, I had no idea just how God was forming me through all of the people in my life, and most especially through my relationship with Grandma. I was impacted to my core by those times that I stepped into her house and heard and witnessed her praying for her loved ones. She modeled a beautiful, intimate, and precious relationship with her Lord, a faith in God's promised presence to be with her always. It is one thing to hear it, and it was a very special blessing to see it lived out before my young eyes and ears.

My experience bore out what research attests: faith is formed through personal trusted relationships most often in our homes. And now as I adjust to the momentum of the programs and relationships in this new and exciting call,

I look forward to celebrating with you the blessing of our children. Our mission together is to remind our children early and often of what Jesus Christ has done for them in their baptism into his death and resurrection, God's great big promise. And then, join with you in keeping all of the supporting promises that you've made at the font with the child's sponsors and the whole church.

The last lines in our baptismal service give us an important sending word: "join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world." These final words in the service give us the language of what we do with a promise from our Lord—we live it into all of our relationships, first at home and then with whomever God sends into our lives. I look forward to living out this mission with you.

In Christ, Pastor Tom Stadem

Happy Birthday, Jesus!

Fourteen tables in the Gathering Room were filled with First Lutheran Church women on December 2 when they gathered to celebrate the Advent of our King, Jesus.

All were dressed in fine raiment, and delicious brunch treats were served while happy conversation overflowed in the room. Addyson Elton helped "ring in" the day with a handbell solo followed by a candle-lighting service of the Lord's Prayer.

Following the meal, a First

Lutheran handbell quartet including Jacinda Cerwinske, Bella Tooley, Tracie



Osthus, and Jill Connelly, accompanied by Mary Ryrholm, entertained the women with melodic Christmas music that was enjoyed by all.

Singing Christmas carols completed the joyful celebration, a treasured holiday tradition for the women of FLC. Please watch for future articles about FLCW/WELCA in 2024 and consider joining us for Bible study, circle, and WELCA general meetings. You will find it is an opportunity to make life-long friends.

Around the Church

God's Work Will Not Fail You: Bible Study on the Gospel of Mark



*Pr. Jason Burggraff,
Senior Pastor*

People of First Lutheran—you are held in a perfect promise: the promise of Jesus' forgiveness of your sins and the resurrection of your own body. And while the grass withers and the flower fades, this Word of God will endure forever (Isaiah 40). It is true, everything else in this world will come and go, yet the Word of God, made flesh in Jesus Christ, will remain forever—and you too—held in the faith of this very promise. As we begin a new calendar year, with great thanks for Pastor Tom Stadem joining the team of talented staff and passionate volunteers here at FLC, know that God's Word will not fail you—in fact it is our hope for salvation. Let us hear this Word together!

“The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” That's how the gospel of Mark begins—right to the point. We are enjoying the 12 days of Christmas and will be moving quickly into the season of Epiphany. As we live in the glow of Christmas lights still up, we may recall with fondness the nativity stories of Luke and Matthew or even the Word made flesh in John...but Mark jumps right in with barely a prologue. All within the first chapter of Mark, John the Baptist preaches in the wilderness, Jesus is baptized, tempted by Satan, begins his ministry, calls his disciples, and heals the sick. It all happens very quickly with Mark right up until the passion—where the story slows considerably, as if to emphasize what Jesus' whole life was leading up to.

If you're interested in the three-year lectionary cycle (scripture readings) of the Church, you know that it is year B. That

means we have been (since November) and will continue to hear from Mark quite a bit. Mark's telling of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection is the centerpiece for this year, and we'll have ample opportunity this winter and spring to hear this Word, not only in worship, but in Bible studies as well.

Starting Thursday, January 11, we'll gather for a ten-week Bible study on the Gospel of Mark, with a break in the middle for Lent. There will be three opportunities each week to jump into this scripture together: Thursdays over the lunch hour at 12 p.m., Thursday evenings at 6:30 (parents of Choristers are invited to join!), or Sunday mornings between the 9 and 11 a.m. worship services.

Come and join the hearing of God's Word and lots of great conversation about what God is accomplishing today through this Word in Mark.

Directory Photo Reminders

*Deb Nelson,
Welcome and Community Board*

As I write this, it will be 20 days before this will be published, and I expect many of you will have already submitted photos for our new directory. But, I wanted to tell you what I'm seeing members submit in case you need some ideas.

While some formal poses are being submitted, most are casual pictures that have been taken in the last 2-3 years (they don't need to be brand new). What I'm seeing are people:

- On vacation

- In their yards
- In their homes
- At the church

During December, I expect to see photos submitted that are being taken while families are together at Christmas. My advice is to relax and have fun...and then submit a photo for the directory.

Instructions can be found on the website at flcsf.org/directory.

Once you have the picture taken, you can submit to us as follows:

- Email: media@flcsf.org
- Text: 605-368-1358

- Church Center app—go to your profile on your home page and you can add a photo

If you need to get the Church Center app, instructions are on the website at flcsf.org/apps.

I am hoping we can offer assistance in early 2024 to help members gain access to Church Center if they are having trouble with it.

A paper directory will be printed and made available to you after the next pastor is hired, which is (hopefully!) in 2024. We will notify in advance.

Sad Isn't Bad, a free grief counseling and support group for children and their families, begins a four-week winter session on Tuesdays, January 23. The sessions are from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Our Savior's beginning with an evening meal. Registration is required at the Sad Isn't Bad website. For more information, contact John Hegg, facilitator and board member, at johnhegg@sio.midco.net or 605-376-2895.

November FLC Council Highlights



By Michael Kedik,
Council President

Financial

Net income continues to be better than budget primarily due to personnel budget being lower with delayed hires. Total revenue is down \$36k (but would be up \$119k if not for the capital campaign misallocations). Bottom line financials are coming in good for 2023. Michael asked those boards who have not yet spent their full budget to spend only as needed and not simply to spend for the sake of spending. Any money not spent will roll into next year's general budget.

Pr. Jason

The call committee continues to work as they search for a third pastor. This time of year gets busy worship-wise, but it's a "fun busy." The Advent theme for this year is "The Clothing of the King," with midweek services on December 6, 13, and 20. We are adapting a devotional that will be primarily online, with paper copies available upon request. The Y&F staff is also working on an Advent calendar. The Bible study on the book of Romans has been fun for Pr. Jason and those who have attended. The ten-week study will conclude in December.

Executive Committee

We don't have an estimate yet on the insurance coverage for 2024, hoping for quotes early December. The insurance industry has told us we may have had a good deal previously. Pr. Tom is expected to start December 1.

Budget congress

We are currently working on a first, rough draft. We designated April 1 for expenses related to a new pastor. Funds are allocated not knowing who that person will be or when they will begin. We have a general idea on what we might get from the foundation, but we don't know specifics at this time. We are still waiting for pledge cards to come in, and revenue

projections will be updated throughout the end of the year. Randy added that we'd like boards to keep budgets flat, as increased expenses with a full pastoral staff will add approximately \$200k to 2024 expenses. The more we stay under budget this year, the more we are able to carry into 2024.

Care and health

This budget will decrease for 2024. Some areas did not have spending, and the board did not feel that needed to be carried. The Delta Dental bus did go up slightly. Only small amounts will be spent through the end of the year. Randy added that boards should look to restricted accounts for additional spending money.

Education and discipleship

Michael shared that Ryan Hoffman has resigned as chair. Jodi entered their budget for 2024 as flat compared to this year. Michael will follow up with more info once he speaks with Ryan further.

Evangelism and outreach

Val Peters was unable to attend the meeting. Notes were sent earlier in the week via email. The proposed 2024 budget will be flat to 2023. The training materials account was not used this year, but the board would like to keep the budget the same for 2024 as they look to increase engagement within and outside of the FLC congregation. Both the community engagement and children's outreach budgets will remain the same even though they weren't used entirely in 2023. The hope is to bring back some of the events (e.g. block party, trunk or treat, neighborhood VBS) that were not done this year due to staffing limitations.

Finance, property, admin

At this point, we have not yet been billed for the annual audit, so the budgeted amount of \$14k is assuming an increase for 2024. The tax budget is up with an increase in property taxes. The bank fees budget has gone down significantly with the shift from Vanco to Stripe for automated giving. The computer hardware budget is down with fewer

computers needed. Service contracts is up considerably over previous years with the outsourcing of the church's bookkeeping (Ness Tax) and cleaning (Hunt Cleaning). This account also includes things such as armored car deposit pickup, offsite records/archive storage, and alarm system monitoring. The only increase in the campus operation/maintenance section is in grounds maintenance with the planned resealing of all parking lots in 2024. This could also be paid for out of the property reserve account. It was recommended to increase snow removal to \$25k. Chris Nelson shared that it is generally recommended to plan for 3% of capital each year on maintenance. For FLC, that would be \$450k/year.

Stewardship and giving

This budget stays mostly flat for 2024. Discussion was had around whether benevolence should change. General consensus is to keep it flat for 2024.

Welcome and community

This budget also stays mostly flat. Food costs continue to rise, and restricted accounts will likely be used in 2023 to cover expenses. The board currently has approximately \$9k in restricted accounts. The directories will use a fair amount of money early in 2024, but some of that will be recouped later in the year as directories are sold. Printing for 2023 will still have expenses coming due to printing of directory postcards. Jaci asked for more detail on the restricted accounts. The biggest amount, approx. \$6k, is in Katie's Commons. Lola asked about the idea of raising prices for Wednesday night meals. Cost currently is about \$7.50/meal. The cost charged is \$5/person. Michael noted that the intention of Wednesday night meals was never to make money; the goal was to recoup a portion of the cost (at \$5/person), knowing it will cost more than that.

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Council Updates

Discussion was had around how and when to use restricted accounts. Boards, when expense accounts are low, should pull from restricted accounts rather than leaving that money to sit.

Worship and music

They would like to increase guest instrumentalists to \$12k to provide for more reasonable rates for musicians. Choir School is up slightly with more kids involved. Total increase from 2023, then, would be \$6k. Michael asked Mary for a

rough estimate of a surplus for 2023.

Youth and family

This budget is about \$5k less than 2023. Some accounts have been combined for clarity.

January Special Offering: Seminary Students

By Valerie Peters,
Evangelism & Outreach Board, and
Valerie Pherson,
Y&F Ministry Team Lead

We are blessed that we have individuals who have been called to religious education in various ways. First Lutheran has a history of supporting those who have been chosen to enter pastoral or diaconal ministry.



We want to take this opportunity to introduce and update you on our current seminary student, Valerie Pherson.

Hello! I am Valerie Pherson, the Youth & Family Ministry Team Lead at First Lutheran Church. I have the privilege of teaching children, youth, and young adults about Jesus. A few of my favorite duties are taking youth to Bible camp in the summer, leading Bible studies, teaching confirmation, planning VBS, and assisting Pastor Jason in Sunday worship. I also give children's sermons, plan milestones, and organize events. I am surrounded by a wonderful staff and group of volunteers who make these ministries a success! I enjoy this job most when I am creating lesson plans, sharing the Gospel, and interacting with children and youth.

I am currently in my third year of seminary with the Luther House of Study, pursuing my Masters in Divinity. Juggling

class and work is not always easy, but it is great to apply everything I am learning about Lutheran theology in class directly to the ministries at First. It is so important to me to make it fun for children and youth to learn about God while also laying the foundation of Biblical truth.

Thank you for your prayers and support as I continue my seminary education. It is wonderful to be a part of a congregation that is so loving and encouraging!

Please keep Valerie in your prayers and prayerfully consider financially supporting our seminary student by designating a gift to: "FLC seminary students." Special offering envelopes are included with your regular envelopes. You may also bring your donation to the church, or visit flcsf.org/give to donate online.

Someone You Should Know: Colleen Kokenge

Grounded in faith and giving with freedom

When we talk about being grounded in faith and giving with freedom, it is no surprise that one of the First Lutheran members who "first" comes to mind is Colleen Kokenge. Her serving hands and compassionate heart have remained connected to the missions of First Lutheran's Evangelism and Outreach team.

Evangelism and Outreach, as a board, provides "feet to the street and hands to serve" for many local missions, not only providing financial support but also active support that requires coordination of many tasks, dates, volunteers, and

community connections. Colleen is key to many of these. She gives selflessly of herself, her time, and her talents. Below are just a few of the ways Colleen actively demonstrates being grounded in faith and giving with freedom:

- Colleen prepares meals that are served for Nightwatch so they are ready to go on our designated serving night.
- Her talents in preparing a meal for many also means we reach out to her for other mission event meals such as Laundry with Love!
- Colleen efficiently and effectively gathers materials for Necessities

for Neighbors and organizes the volunteers who distribute at First Lutheran Church.

- She keeps strong connections with the organizations that help FLC support the missions such as Feeding South Dakota, Thrivent, Charis Ministries, and FLCW.

Colleen can often be found supporting additional activities within the wall of First Lutheran Church, and many of us can share stories of her support.

The Evangelism and Outreach Board of First Lutheran Church appreciates Colleen and believes she is someone you should know!

November Gifts and Memorials

FLC Foundation

In memory of Dorothy Grevlos

Daughters of Herb and Dorothy Mikkelson, Suzanne Knudson

In honor of Eunice Mansfield's 100th

Birthday

Russell and Carol Greenfield

Media Ministry

In memory of Donna Schiager

FLCW

In memory of Dorothy Grevlos

Cheryl Satterlee, FLCW

In memory of Bonnie Nelson

FLCW

In memory of John Peckham

John and Eileen Quello

In memory of Lee Halstenson

Sherry Goldhammer

In memory of Steve Bushard

Cheryl Satterlee

Music Ministry

In memory of Dorothy Grevlos

John Hegg

In memory of John Pekham

Peter and Marilyn Hegg

In honor of Eunice Mansfield 100th

Birthday

The daughters of Herb and Dorothy Mikkelson

Thank You, November Media Sponsors!

November 5, 2023

- The broadcast on KELO-FM was sponsored in memory of Chuck Osthus, who would have celebrated his birthday November 5, by his wife, Tracie; and family, Scott, Tezra, Arlen and Linden, David & Lynne.

November 12, 2023

- The broadcast on KELO-FM was sponsored in memory of Drs. Arthur Huseboe & Doris Eggers Huseboe and their parents, Delbert & Erna Eggers and Carl & Lillian Huseboe.

Funds have been made available through a gift to the First Lutheran Church Foundation.

November 19, 2023

- The closed captioning on KSFY and broadcast on KELO-FM were sponsored in memory of Mark Doescher by his sisters—Robin, LeAnne, and Sarah—and their families.
- The telecast on KSFY was sponsored in memory of Mark Doescher by his father—Bob Doescher; and sisters—Robin, LeAnne, and Sarah.

November 23, 2023

- The telecast on KSFY was sponsored in thankfulness for and in memory of Bonnie Merrill, Carl Wilkins, Maudie Wilkins, Bessie Thompsen, Dorothy Peterson, Mabel Jasper, and Agnes Welch. It was given by nieces and nephews.

November 26, 2023

- The telecast on KSFY was sponsored by earnings of a gift to the First Lutheran Church Foundation in memory of Hilmer and Susie Lillebo.

Capital Campaign Update

*By Jean Hoff,
Capital Campaign Coordinator*

There is GOOD news to share regarding the sound system. The contract with Mid-States is in place, and the ordering of equipment is taking place as I write this article. The plan is to have the project ready for testing the first full week in March and for the new system to be used at worship on March 10, 2024.

It has been a long process. The committee thanks all of you for your patience as we worked through the process when the sound designer had a heart attack that created so many delays. You will be kept informed when the work begins in the sanctuary and chapel.

The church is getting closer to receiving information from a company in Wisconsin that has expressed a great deal

of interest in working on the bell tower and steeple. The company is so interested that Journey Construction did some 3D imaging, and the company is reviewing it currently. Again, the church will keep you informed when we receive further communication on the project.

Late spring, we had drone pictures taken of the outside of the church. This was done to help us with roofing issues, but it also brought to light an issue with the outside wood and window assemblies along with the stained glass windows.

A while ago, Conrad Schmidt Company, the maker of our stained glass windows in the sanctuary, was here to ascertain if anything needed to happen with the stained glass. The good news received was that our stained glass is in good condition. However, the wood and

outside window assemblies need to be redone, and of course, this impacts the stained glass. Currently, I am working with Journey Construction and Viking Glass to determine a plan. We know the upper windows on the north and south side will need to be done first. The plan will lay out the cost of those windows and determine the order of the remaining windows as well as the time frame and cost of the other windows. As I receive information, we will share that with the congregation.

If you would like to contribute to any of these projects, please make your check payable to FLC and in the memo line indicate what project your check is to be used to support. The church is grateful to those members who have supported completed projects. Thanks be to God!

Youth and Family

This year the Children's Christmas Program told the story of God's greatest gift! The kids practiced hard to learn the songs, actions, acting parts, and narrating. The opening song, "Promised Son," summarized the story, highlighting Mary, the Shepherds, and the Wise Men. These kids did an AWESOME job getting into character for the story and songs!

A BIG thank you to the staff and volunteers who gave of their time and talents to help make this program fun for the kids!





Life Transitions

First Lutheran Church
327 S Dakota Ave
Sioux Falls SD 57104

Baptisms

November 11

Royce Wayne Ashes
Son of LaShawn DeNoyer
and Ryan Ashes

Deaths

November 17

Robert Dean Lommen

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Below are members of our congregation who turn 90+ this month. If you see them around church, wish them a great day!

January 2–Natalie Stroschein

January 4–Lore Niles

January 5–Phyllis Day

January 9–Lois Johnsrud

January 18–Jean Sneen,
Majorie Oolman

January 19–Willis Hanson



JANUARY EVENTS

1 – FLC Offices CLOSED

6 – Grieving with Grace, 10a, Friendship Room

7 – Anniversary of Baptism, 10am Atrium

9 – New member class, 7pm, Friendship Room

14 – New member dinner, 5pm, Gathering Room

13 – Midweek Advent worship, 6:30p, Sanctuary

20– Dementia/Alzheimer's support group, 9a, Friendship Room

20-21– New member installation, all services

23 – Foot Clinic, 9am-3pm

Senior Luncheon, 11:30am in Gathering Room

A Goodbye from the Editor

As some of you know, I have stepped down from my position at FLC as the Media & Communication Coordinator. With the new year came a new and exciting opportunity to continue growing in my field: marketing. This month I begin my work career as the new Marketing Coordinator for Avel eCare, a telemedicine company based in Sioux Falls, that is a national company. As I told the staff when I broke the news, if you knew me, you'd know I've always wanted to transition into a marketing-based career, and now I have the chance to do it!

I want to take this time (and space) to thank the congregation of First Lutheran for their kindness in my time spent in the offices upstairs. The years I was here I felt I fine-tuned many skills, learned to be a better communicator, and made some friends along the way. My husband and I were also married here, so FLC will always hold a special place in our hearts. While I'm sad to say goodbye to my staff and congregation friends, I know it isn't forever, and I hope to see you around on a Sunday. Prayers and blessings to all.

