



# First Word

The monthly newspaper of First Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls SD

## T R A N S I T I O N S

### Transitions

By Pastor Lars Olson and Martin Oyos

*“Do not fear, for I am with you. Do not be afraid, for I am your God” - Isaiah 41:10*

The well-known axiom “the only thing constant is change” is intended to give comfort in the midst of transitions by reminding everyone that changes are always happening. The constant, predictable, never-ending gentle flowing stream is an illusion. It means to say: “So buck-up and realize that you’re better at handling change than you think.” However, that doesn’t actually offer much comfort or take away anxieties and fears that come with change.

On the other hand, throughout the Bible, God speaks actual words of assurance, as seen in Isaiah 41. This comfort comes with a promise: God is with you. It’s instructive to notice that these words come at a transition time for Israel when God is preparing to bring his people out of exile, out of the land they have called home for over a generation to come back to the land of Israel that had been conquered and decimated years ago. The promise isn’t that it will be easy, nor what my parents told me when something looked too hard, “You can do hard things.”

God actually speaks words of comfort, gives the assurance that things will be all right so that fear will not run our lives. For God is with you. God is for you. God will see First Lutheran through this time of transition though there will be bumps in the road and growing pains along the way. It is faith that trusts in God’s faithfulness to the promise that gives us hope to move forward with confidence through the next year. For God is with us, so that even if we cannot see every step needed at this point, we know that God is not just leading, but with us and for us at every step.

Since God is for us, there is nothing to fear, and we are therefore free to do the work congregations need to do in pastor transitions. First there is the grieving, which includes both giving thanks for what has been as well acknowledging loss and the need for change. The second part is taking steps to prepare for new pastoral leadership, which includes setting direction for the future, allowing a call committee to find the right pastor—all the while trusting in God’s promise for peace and calm.

#### What Happens Next?

The time between when a pastor leaves and a new pastor is called is known as a time of interim ministry. So, what happens during an interim? That varies from congregation to congregation. At First Lutheran, this interim period will be a time to prepare for a new pastoral team. It also gives time for the interim senior pastor to assess the staff and congregation and to make

recommendations for consideration by the church council.

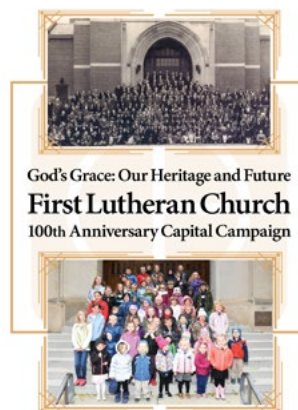
Some of the work has already been done to prepare for the future. For example, the church council has been working on a ministry plan with the pastors. Congregational statistics were reviewed, and the results showed that First Lutheran remains a financially stable congregation, but two warning indicators were evident: First, worship attendance had steadily dropped in the five years before COVID-19. Second, the number of youths enrolled in Sunday School and Confirmation has been on a downward trajectory for several years. Given this reality, the Church Council already knows the ministry areas that need attention, and that will influence who will be called as our next pastors.

One of the questions frequently asked is when a call committee will be formed. Interim senior pastor David Zellmer will help guide us in determining when the time is appropriate to form a call committee. In general, six to twelve months is suggested as an interim period before calling a new pastor. Given the work that has already been done by the church council, it seems more likely that a call committee will be formed and approved sooner rather than later.

A second question that is commonly asked is whether an interim associate pastor will be employed since Pastor Lars has accepted a new position at Luther House of Study as of January 1. The answer to that question will become clearer after January 1, 2022. Pastor Lars will continue to teach and minister at First Lutheran on a limited part-time basis. This new arrangement will be assessed by the church council and by interim senior pastor David Zellmer. If the need exists for additional pastoral support, church leadership will strive to hire an interim associate pastor.

Finally, the question has been asked regarding when a full-time pastor will be called to fill the position being vacated by Pastor Lars. This will occur after the congregation has called a new senior pastor. It is important for a senior pastor to have input on the pastors and staff who work with him or her.

The leaving and calling of pastors are part of every congregation’s life. First Lutheran has an over one-hundred-year history of remarkable ministry, and during these years, the congregation has been blessed with many compassionate and faithful pastors. During this time of transition, we remain united by our faith and our commitment to minister to each other and to be disciples to the entire world. Please pray for our pastors, staff, and this congregation as we trust in God’s continued faithfulness. While updates on the transition will be published in First Word, please also check the church website for the most current updates.



God’s Grace: Our Heritage and Future  
First Lutheran Church  
100th Anniversary Capital Campaign

### Come Hear the Latest News!

Sundays, January 2, 9, 16, or 23; 10 a.m.

By Jean Hoff, Campaign Coordinator



This month we will hold forums to discuss the Capital Campaign projects the Church Council has deemed necessary and where we are financially to meet those needs. Please join us on any of the following Sundays: January 2, 9, 16, or 23, at 10 a.m. in the Gathering

Room. You can pick up a cup of coffee and a treat before the meeting begins at 10:15. Our hope is many in our FLC congregation will attend the forums to hear about the immediate needs: the sanctuary ceiling, tuck pointing, the sound system, and more.

Let’s give a big hip hip hooray for the HVAC loan balance of \$0!

Thank you to the congregation for helping us get our debt for the HVAC paid. The church is blessed by your generosity. The paid-off loan is especially exciting as now we can concentrate on the integrity and safety issues of the building.

**HIP-HIP HOORAY!**

### Christmas Giving Benefits Lowell and COTS



Lowell Elementary teachers show the many gifts donated through this year’s Christmas Giving program.

What a blessing you all are. Thank you!

Youth and Family Ministry’s annual Christmas Giving was extremely successful this year! Sixteen Church on the Street families were sponsored with beautifully wrapped gifts. We pray that those gifts helped them to feel God’s love surrounding them. The ornaments on the trees gave donations to both Lowell Elementary and the ministry of Church on the Street (COTS): gift cards, sweatpants, underwear, coffee, laundry detergent, books, and so much more! Join us in praying for these two amazing places and the work they do. May they be blessed over and over in 2022!

**A N N U A L  
M E E T I N G**

**Congregation Annual Meeting**  
Sunday, January 30 • Noon • Sanctuary

So you can prepare for the meeting, the 2021 Annual Report and Foundation Annual Report will be available at the church Sunday, January 23, and on our website at flcsf.org.

**2021**

**Happy New Year**  
The church will be closed  
Monday, January 3.

# Baptism of our Lord

By Marnie Dahle Backer, Youth and Family Director



In January, we celebrate the baptism of Jesus, and we take a moment to look back at all the baptisms that happened in 2021—35 baptisms were held! Baptisms are exciting! Welcoming children into the family of God!

Not all baptisms are babies, but when babies are being baptized, we tell parents not to worry about how your child reacts during the service—if they cry, sleep, gurgle, grab for the pastor's book, it doesn't matter. We will think they are adorable! Children in worship is something to be celebrated indeed! In baptism, we, the congregation, make promises to pray for them and help to raise them in the faith. So please, take a few minutes now to read these names and say a prayer for each of these amazing children of God.



Haisley Bertrand



Sienna Cavanaugh



Henry Heinert



Chloe Moen



George Jensen



Jameson Hoffman



Christian Carney



Hudson Feterl



Laine Mullin



Caroline Swanson



Guy & Claire Hebner



Ruxtyl Haight



Sloane MacRandall



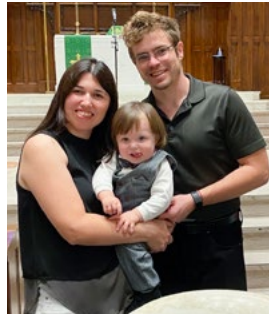
Gracelyn Goldstine



Owen Mueller



Teddy O'Toole



Luciano Utte



Otto Skoglund



Caden Deibert



Ruby Rae Naasz



June Wynia



Hudson Bertsch



Arlo Hesla



Teddy Haigh



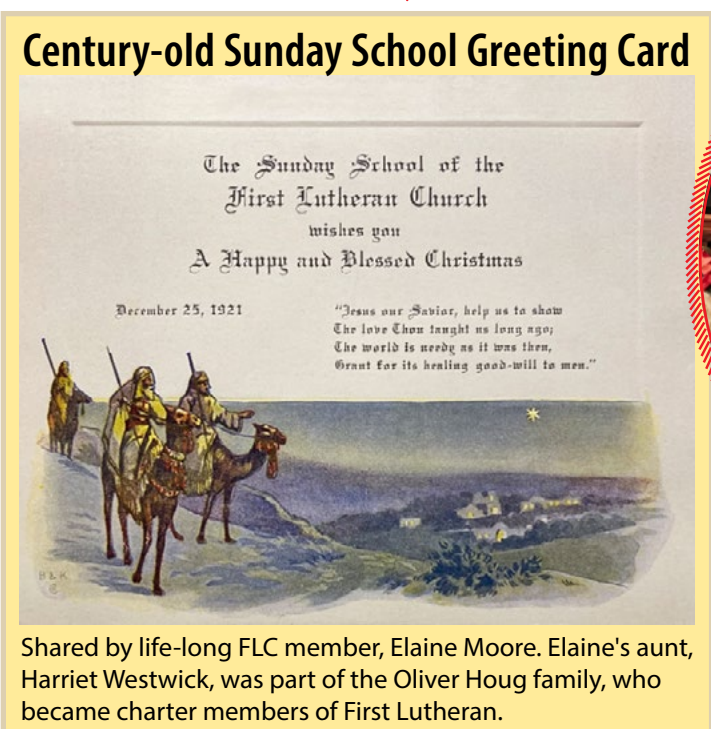
Connor Johnson



Nolan Puthoff



Dakota & Matthew Olson





**Weddings:**  
 Nov. 13 Kiri Jacobsen & Sam Haugen  
 Nov. 27 Owen Jon Mueller son of Derek & Sandra Mueller

**Baptisms:**  
 Nov. 20 Claire Elizabeth Hebner daughter of Ryan & Leah Hebner  
 Nov. 20 Guy Ryan Hebner son of Ryan & Leah Hebner  
 Nov. 23 Caroline Christine Swanson daughter of David & Katie Swanson

**Deaths:**  
 Nov. 28 Teddy Ray Haigh son of Tyler & Jena Haigh  
 Nov. 9 Enid Johnson  
 Nov. 11 Robert Sample  
 Nov. 12 Robert Johnson  
 Nov. 13 Janet Everetts  
 Nov. 18 Ron Mathison  
 Nov. 21 Donald "Chris" Christenson

## November Gifts and Memorials

**Gifts to the FLC Foundation in memory of:**  
 Ron Holien 80th Birthday: Donald & Joyce Helberg

**Gifts to Media Ministry in memory of:**  
 Marvin Bymers: Larry Anderson  
 Gene DenHerder: Paul & Jean Colon  
 Jan Everetts: Darrell & Janet Barron, Shirley Drobny, Mary Eich, Paul & Barbara Halstenson, Don & Joyce Helberg, Karen Hohman, Nancy Johnson, Marilyn Moseson, Cheryl Satterlee, Coletta Venske  
 Enid Johnson: Margaret Mansfield  
 Ronald Mathison: Jim Carlson, Paul & Barbara Halstenson  
 Myrtle Odde: Jeff & Edna Husman  
 Bill Westerdahl: Larry Anderson, Rick Archer, Bradley Archer, Robert & Georgia Bender, Lillian Carlson, Pr. Jims & Dorothy Christophersonq, Jim & Deann Clark, Keith & Julie Dykstra, Lyle & Jean Eidsness, Jedd & Diane Hagen, Allan & Ruth Hammer, Phyllis Hanisch, Joan Hansen, Roger Haugo, Tim & Rebecca Heinemann, Mary Hohman, Johanna Iken, Stephen Johnson, Lois Johnsrud, Gary & Karen Kratochvil, Bonnie Lindgren, Michelle McDowell, Marily McLeod, Darlene Michael, Midwest Periodontics, Milt Mutch, Tom & Martha Nelson, Nancy Nervig, Ruth Olsen, Rosaaen Olson, Tracie Osthus, Lou Ann Paulson, Mike & Veronica Paulson, Pr. Franklin Pudas, Greg & Carol Puerkel, Merna Salmonson, Ron & Virginia Staebell, Hugh & Ruthann Venrick, James Waring, Donna Willadsen

**Gifts to Music Ministry in memory of:**  
 Jackie Hansen: Randal & Glenda Bang, John Hegg, Sandy Holleman, Stephen Johnson, Doug & Diana Kaufman, Mrienne Larsen, Jerry & Christine Moench, Stuart & Erika Rorer, Cheryl Satterlee, David & Judy Van Veldhuizen  
 Karin Hartje: Ruth Werner

## Council Highlights: November 18, 2021

If FLC members wish to add items to an upcoming Council meeting agenda, please contact Jodi Hoyt, [jhoyt@flcsf.org](mailto:jhoyt@flcsf.org). Meetings are held the fourth Thursday of each month. Church members are welcome to visit meetings.

- YTD budget is up overall about \$27k. The HVAC loan is at \$120k.
- An offer has been to an Office Manager candidate; if accepted, she will begin December 13.
- As of January 1, Pr. Lars will teach at Luther House full-time; he will continue on a part-time basis as needed to assist the interim senior pastor.
- The executive committee has come to an agreement with an interim senior pastor candidate, David Zellmer. He will begin December 13; the contract dates will go through December 31, 2022.
- 311 pledges totaling approx. \$950k have been received for 2022.
- A structural engineer identified four tuck pointing spots to address—one of which should be addressed next year. The bell tower tuck pointing will be done this spring; a contract has been signed.
- The hope is to continue to the stewardship campaign—Joyfully, We Give—through Lent.

## Financial Update as of November 30, 2021

<b>Total Revenue, year-to-date</b>	
2021 Budget	\$2,008,767
2021 Actual	\$1,841,357
2020 Actual	\$1,904,465
<b>Total Expenses, year-to-date</b>	
2021 Budget	\$1,996,767
2021 Actual	\$1,770,807
2020 Actual	\$1,893,285
<b>YTD Net Profit/Loss</b>	<b>\$70,550</b>
<b>Contract For Deed, Ideal</b>	<b>\$72,334</b>
<b>HVAC System</b>	<b>\$59,168</b>
<b>Worship Attendance</b>	<b>1,808</b>

## First Word

First Word is the monthly newspaper of First Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, SD for members of the congregation and others upon request. Opinions expressed in First Word are those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by the FLC congregation or staff. The editors reserve the right to edit submissions.

**Newsletter submissions are due the first business day of the month for publication the next month.** Please submit articles or questions regarding First Word to Communications Director, Jodi Hoyt, at [jhoyt@flcsf.org](mailto:jhoyt@flcsf.org). Reader feedback is welcome.

First Word mobile version and PDF download are available at [flcsf.org/firstword](http://flcsf.org/firstword).

**WORSHIP SERVICES**

Sat. 5 PM Traditional, Sanctuary  
 Sun. 8 AM Radio - rebroadcast of previous week on KELO-FM (101.9)  
 Sun. 9 AM Traditional, Sanctuary  
 Watch live at [youtube.com/flcsf](https://youtube.com/flcsf)  
 Sun. 11 AM Contemporary, Sanctuary  
 Watch live on YouTube  
 Sun. 11 AM Traditional broadcast on KSFY Sioux Falls, KPRY Pierre, KABY Aberdeen

## Mobilize your giving Donate through our app or "Text to Give"

Download our Church Center app today (for Apple and Android) and donate one time or setup recurring donations.

Visit [flcsf.org/give](http://flcsf.org/give)

## Become a Media Ministry Sponsor

Thank you for your generous support throughout 2021. The continuing pandemic has shown how critical our Media Ministry is to our extended congregation outside the walls of the First Lutheran Church.

We have heard from many of our viewers and listeners who have been able to stay connected and worship with the family of First Lutheran. Providing a weekly worship experience for those unable to attend worship in person has been part of FLC ministry for decades.

You can sponsor a radio broadcast, television broadcast, closed captioning, or YouTube live stream in honor of or in memory of a loved one, to celebrate a special life event, or to the glory of God.

## 2022 Sponsorships Available Now

To learn about sponsoring, please visit [flcsf.org/media-ministry](http://flcsf.org/media-ministry) or call the church at (605) 336-3734. Sponsor opportunities include weekly worship:

- KSFY telecast
- Closed captioning
- KELO-FM radio
- YouTube live stream

Additional opportunities include church holiday worship and special events. General Media Ministry donations are always welcome.

## Thank You November Sponsors

Nov. 7: Television was sponsored by Kathy Stelzer in honor and memory of all servicemen and women, especially that of Kathy's late husband, a purple heart Marine. Radio 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; and David and Lynne. Closed captioning was sponsored in memory of Gus Okland by his wife, Nancy Okland. Today would have been Gus' 90th birthday.

Nov. 14: Television, closed captioning, and the live stream were sponsored in memory of Marilym (Burke) Marustad by Eunice Mansfield and her family—Meg Mansfield, David & Lisa, and Paul & Kyle Mansfield. Radio was sponsored in memory of Drs. Arthur Huseboe and Doris Eggers Huseboe and their parents, Delbert and Erna Eggers and Carl and Lillian Huseboe. Funds have been made available through a gift to the First Lutheran Church Foundation.

Nov. 21: Television was sponsored in memory of Mark Doescher by his father, Bob Doescher; and sisters—Robin, LeAnne, and Sarah; and their families. Radio and closed captioning were sponsored in loving memory of Mark Doescher by his sisters, Robin, LeAnne and Sarah and their families.

Nov. 25: Television was sponsored in memory of Bill Westerdahl by Keith & Julie Dykstra and Dave & Lynn Westerdahl and families. Closed captioning was sponsored in thankfulness for and in memory of Bonnie Merrill, Carl Wilkins, Maudie Wilkins, Bessie Thompson, Dorothy Peterson, Mabel Jasper, and Agnes Welch. It is given by nieces and nephews.

Nov. 28: Television was sponsored by earnings of a gift to the First Lutheran Church Foundation in memory of Hilmer and Susie Lillebo.

# January Special Offering: Seminary Students

By Pr. Jeff Backer, Associate Pastor for Evangelism and Outreach

We give thanks that through the Holy Spirit, we have those among us who have been called to seek vocational theological education in various ways. First Lutheran has a long history, and significant recent history, in supporting those who enter a discernment in pastoral or diaconal ministry, and so we want to recognize and bless our seminary and diaconal ministry students as they begin their fall studies. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with our students:



Adam Guthmiller

The last year has been unparalleled in many ways, and yet the witness of the Church has endured: *"...the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel (Mk. 1:15)."* My wife, Allison, moved back to Sioux Falls in the summer of 2020, and I followed her back after I had completed my Clinical Pastoral Education unit in Omaha, NE. I was one of the fortunate students

whose program found it necessary for students to do the work of a chaplain in person—and so I was privileged to serve Bergan Mercy hospital during the strange summer (2020) of COVID. I then moved back to Sioux Falls and served at West Nidaros Lutheran Church as a student pastor until I was officially installed as their intern pastor on June 1, 2021. I will serve here in this role for a year. I plan to complete all of my courses and outcomes by spring of 2022 and hope to then be approved for ordination.

This last year, Allison and I were blessed to welcome our first child, Anna Marie, into the world. She was born on November 23, 2020, and she was baptized at First Lutheran on December 13. Dr. Steve Paulson had a touching word for her, and for each of us: *"...there is nothing certain about tomorrow, but this promise from Christ is certain."* I am thankful for the continued financial support and prayers from First Lutheran for my pastoral formation and for my family. The uncertainty of the world creates unrest, but in the midst of this the witness of the Church becomes clarified—not to cling to the things of the world, but to proclaim and know *"nothing except Jesus Christ and him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2)."*

Hey! I'm Elias Johnson-Youngquist, FLC's Youth Minister for the past four years and also a seminarian. I'm in my final year at Sioux Falls Seminary with Luther House of Studies. With equal parts sadness and excitement, I'll be leaving FLC to be an intern pastor at St. John American



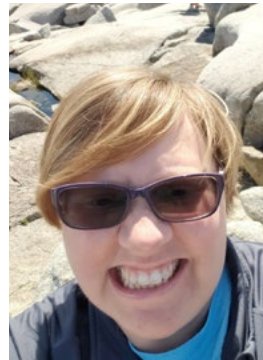
Elias Johnson-Youngquist

Lutheran in Sioux Falls. I'm currently looking at a 2022 graduation date.

My wife, Abby, and I live downtown in an apartment with our daughter, Clara, who is 14 months old. I couldn't have imagined what a fantastic congregation I had stumbled upon when I started at FLC in 2016. I can't wait to put to use the skills and experience

that FLC has given me in a new congregational setting this coming year. Thank you so much for your continued support and prayers.

Greetings! I am Erin Kaiser. I grew up here in Sioux Falls. I am a graduate of USF and Luther House of Study at Sioux Falls Seminary. I graduated with my Master's in Christian Leadership. I am a recent member of FLC (I joined in January 2019). I work as a lead teacher assistant at LifeScape. While I am not at work or church, I crochet blankets and I love to travel!



Erin Kaiser

Throughout my discernment, I have felt called to diaconal ministry. A diaconal minister is called to Word and Service ministry, often working in a chaplaincy function. This spring, I was accepted into the Lutheran Diaconal Association (LDA).

The LDA is a pan-Lutheran organization. Through formation, study, and community, we live out our baptismal call to serve our neighbors. In June, I participated in a student seminar, where students gathered in community to learn and to further discern where God is leading us, and in July, I participated in the annual meeting of LDA. I also started my field work at Avera McKennan Hospital, where I rock babies and work the front desk. This fall, I will be taking a course on the theology of diaconal ministry through Valparaiso University.



Valerie Pherson

Hello, I am Valerie Pherson, the Children's Minister at First Lutheran Church. Some of you have seen me during worship giving the children's message, handing out activity bags, leading Scripture First, being a 7th grade confirmation shepherd, or helping run the larger events at FLC this past year. As the Children's Minister, I focus on Scripture

First, Day Camp, and VBS, and help with Milestones Ministries, youth events, and worship.

I recently decided to start seminary this fall to pursue my Masters in Divinity. When preparing a message or creating a curriculum, my first priority is having accurate theology that is closely followed by making sure it is fun for kids to learn. Working with Youth & Family this past year, I have learned a lot about FLC and how to connect with children both in person and virtually and via care package deliveries.

The community at First Lutheran has been so welcoming and supportive of my stepping into this ministry role. It is so great to be a part of a team that has the same goals in mind. I am fortunate to have this opportunity to work for such a wonderful congregation. Thank you for your prayers and support as I begin seminary!

Please pray for our seminarians and prayerfully consider financially supporting them by designating a gift to: "FLC seminary students." Unless specifically designated, all donations will be equally divided. *Special offering envelopes are included with your regular offering envelopes. If you do not have one, please use the yellow envelope in the pew, bring your donation to the Information Desk at church, or visit [flcsf.org/give](https://flcsf.org/give) to donate online.*

## FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

# Mini Bazaar

## Thankful, Grateful, Blessed

By Jean Hoff, WELCA President



We are deeply thankful and grateful to all the individuals who helped make the 2021 Mini Bazaar a huge success. Whether you crafted, baked, made rosettes, worked, or shopped, you contributed to the success. We also can't

forget all the community members who shopped the six garage sales or the women who worked to put them together.

The Bazaar Distribution Committee is happy to share with all of you those missions that applied for and received funding. The total distribution to the below missions is \$28,850. Thank you again for being a blessing to others.

### Bazaar Distribution 2021

Center of Hope .....	\$1,000
Church on the Street.....	\$2,500
Colombia – Emmaus Road Foundation .....	\$2,000
Destiny Healthcare .....	\$1,000
Empire Mental Health.....	\$1,000
Family Visitation Center.....	\$2,000
First Lutheran African Ministries .....	\$2,500
Helping Hands for Haiti.....	\$500
Helpline Center .....	\$500
LSS – Center for New Americans .....	\$1,600
Luther House of Study – Podcasts .....	\$1,200
Lutheran World Relief – World Hunger .....	\$2,000
Meals from the Heart.....	\$1,000
Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center .....	\$1,000
Project CAR.....	\$1,000
Pueblo de Dios.....	\$2,000
Sad Isn't Bad .....	\$500
Union Gospel Mission – Love Gift .....	\$1,200
Union Gospel Mission – Art Project.....	\$750
University Center – SDSU Campus.....	\$1,000
Christmas and Mother's Day broadcasts .....	\$2,600

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# Welcome

## New Member Class and Dinner Sunday, January 16 5–6:30 p.m., Gathering Room

If you or someone you know is interested in membership at First Lutheran, join us for our next new member dinner on Sunday, January 16. We'll come together for a time of fellowship and food, as Pastor Jeff Backer tells us what it means to be First Lutheran members. Attendees will meet members of the church staff and leadership.

The following weekend, new members can attend their preferred worship service—Saturday at 5 p.m. or Sunday at 9 or 11 a.m. New members are installed and welcomed into the congregation at all services.