

# FIRST OUT LOUD

DECEMBER 2021

## **Pastor's Message: *Get Ready. The Days Are Coming!***

With recent, important happenings at First Lutheran Church, I can now feel confident in saying that this message for our First Out Loud monthly newsletter will be my last one as your Interim Pastor! (A similar statement in the August newsletter did not prove to be the case!)

The theme for our Advent season this year is "Get Ready: The Days Are Coming." It is based on the words of Jeremiah 33:14, "The days are surely coming, says the Lord." In answer to the question, what days? we focus on days of anticipation, love, joy, and the call to tell the story of the Good News of the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

At the same time, the people of First Lutheran can rejoice in knowing that the days are coming for a new, promising, and exciting chapter in the life of this congregation. The people of First Lutheran have called, I believe, a terrific new pastor to shepherd this forward-looking family of Christians in the years ahead. I have personally been impressed in my meetings and discussions with Pastor Chris. He is energetic, thoughtful, caring, and well trained in theology, pastoral ministry, and parish leadership. Pastor Chris and I have already begun to get together, so I can share as much information with him as possible that will be helpful to him as he begins his ministry at First Lutheran on January 1, 2022.

Once again, Margie and I want to express our great appreciation to the leaders, staff, and all the members of First Lutheran for giving us the opportunity to serve the friendly, supportive, and responsive people of this special congregation over the past almost fifteen months. It has been an honor and privilege, with lots of help from the Holy Spirit, to do so. May God continue to bless the people and the future of First Lutheran!

*-Pastor Bill*

## **Council President Message: *Congregational Meeting December 5***

At its November meeting, the Church Council approved issuing the "Letter of Call" and negotiated compensation package, which was based on Synod guidelines, to Pastor Chris Culuris. In other action the Council authorized President Bill Kautt to sign the charters with Boy Scout Troop 58 and Cub Scout Pack 58 for 2022. In new business, the Council approved a request from the Congregation and Community Ministry Committee to change the description of its charge in the Bylaws; created an ad hoc committee to research fundraising activities; approved the appointment of Terry Hoehn to the Audit Committee; and, authorized treasurer, Harry Hunt, to present a preliminary budget to the congregation at its meeting on December 5, 2021. The Council also heard reports from the pastor, president, treasurer, Health Advisory Team, and the Technology Committee.

Finally, Lutheran Social Services (LSS) will be providing an informational meeting via "Zoom" at 6:30 p.m. on December 6th. The meeting will address how churches and other organizations can assist LSS in hosting Afghan refugees. Other area churches and organizations have been invited to join the meeting.

If you have any questions concerning this report, feel free to contact me (507-382-8256 or [wjk11@hickorytech.net](mailto:wjk11@hickorytech.net)).

*-Bill Kautt, Council President*

## Special Groups: *Mission Quilters*

How do you feel when you hear about natural disasters or wars and see what a devastating affect it has on families? Have you wished there was a way in which you could help them? Making Lutheran World Relief Mission Quilts is a way in which you can help. The quilts are used as warm bedding, simple tents, or floor coverings. Each quilt reflects our love to those in need.

The first quilts were distributed in 1945 to families in war-torn Europe after the Second World War. Within a decade the ministry was reaching around the world.

The Mission Quilters of First Lutheran Church invite you to join the group to help share this much-needed relief to those in need around the world. If you can sew a straight line, OR tie a knot, OR cut fabric, you are "qualified". Come and join us in carrying out this much-needed mission.

*If you have any questions or would like your name added to our e-mail list, please call Sharon Malm (507-383-2865) or Mary Long (507-340-5934). Group meets on the 4th Saturday of each month at 9 a.m. in the church dining hall.*



## A Note from the Cantor: *Jesus Brings Peace; A Countercultural Message*

How often do you take a day off? Do you plan on one or two days every month? Do you save vacation days for the summer and take a big trip? How many non-workdays do you have in a given week?

I've just returned from taking seven of my PTO days. Including two weekends, it was the most amount of time off I had taken since the summer of 2019. It was rejuvenating and restoring, and I spent my time on house projects, fun hobbies, and recovering from the COVID booster shot. Perhaps many of you also experience lots of telemarketing phone calls and texts, so it may be of no surprise that I ignored my phone for many days as well! For the most part, it was very peaceful.

Rest and rejuvenation are built into God's Commonwealth. There is such a tendency to "go go go" in our society that it is very *countercultural* to take intentional time off to connect with friends and family, set work aside, and look at life from a different perspective.

A new Advent hymn in the *All Creation Sings* hymnal includes this phrase six times: "We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace." During this season - when the world around us is rushing, buying, cleaning, cooking, and perpetually moving - may we all take some time to stop, rest, and realize the peace that Jesus brings.

*-Emily Bruflat, Director of Worship & Music*

A graphic titled "December Worship Calendar" with a light beige background. It features several decorative elements: a dark blue banner with a gold ribbon icon for "Dec. 5: Ted Kunze"; a white banner with a gold ribbon icon for "Dec. 12: Pr. Bill" and "Welcoming New Members"; a circular graphic with a white flower icon for "Dec. 19: Garrett Paul"; a green banner with a gold ribbon icon for "Youth Led Wednesdays During Advent 6:30pm"; a gold banner with a green ribbon icon for "Christmas Eve/Communion Pr. Bill"; a red banner with a white ribbon icon for "Christmas Eve Services Please RSVP 4PM, 7PM, &amp; 10PM"; and a circular graphic with a white flower icon for "Dec. 26 Pr. Bill".

## Youth & Family Faith OUT LOUD! Service Projects

We are filled with gratitude as we close the chapter that was November! We kicked off our Combined High School Youth Group with Union and Trinity, traveled to Willmar, MN for the SWMN ELCA Jr. High Youth Gathering, delivered pies/flowers to members for Thanksgiving, and finalized our group for the National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, MN this summer!

**Here's what's going on in December:**

### **Downtown Christmas Shoppe:** *Saturday, December 11*

We've begun fundraising for the 2022 ELCA National Youth Gathering! Come down to First Lutheran's Christmas Shoppe, run by FLC's youth, and buy your last-minute Christmas gifts! All proceeds will go towards our trip this summer! Find more information in our weekly Heartbeat!



### **Twelve Days of First Lutheran Families:** *Deadline to submit is December 12*

Does your family have a special Christmas tradition? We want to hear about it! Send in a picture or video and description of your tradition and we'll feature you on our Facebook page throughout the 12 days leading up to Christmas! All submissions can be sent to Calleigh (cc.flcstp@gmail.com)

### December Sunday School Schedule:

December 5 9:15am-9:55am	1st-2nd Grade First Communion Cup (Session #1); Christmas Program Practice!
December 12 9:15am-9:55am	Christmas Program Practice; Advent Education Crafts!
December 19 9:00am-9:55am	Children's Christmas Program - No Stress, No Fuss Program!
December 24 4pm Service	Sunday Schoolers perform at our 4pm Christmas Eve Service!
December 26	NO CLASS!

### Wednesday Faith Formation/Confirmation Schedule:

December 1	Advent Worship Service led by 5th-6th grade, followed by class!
December 8	Advent Worship Service led by 7th-8th graders, followed by class!
December 15	Advent Worship Service led by 9th graders, followed by class!
December 22	NO CLASS!
December 29	NO CLASS!

### High School Youth Group:

Wednesday, December 1 7:30pm-8:30pm	 <p>Our combined High School Youth Group will be gathering at First Lutheran Church this month! Join us for games, s'mores, devos and more! Be sure to wear your Christmas sweater!</p>
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## Worship & Arts Committee: *Repairs and Planning for Advent*

We've been fortunate to have some repairs done (and in progress) on some of our instruments over the past few months. We are happy to report that the handbells have been completely refurbished! Now, they look and sound even better than before! The bell choir was so excited to have this work completed on them. Patrick Fischer returned to resume some repairs on the organ at the end of November. Already, Emily reports that playing this instrument is so much more enjoyable than before, minus some of the quirks that have been fixed!

With Advent just beginning, we're hoping to have as many people attend worship as would be interested in doing so. We are planning to offer three Christmas Eve services: 4:00 pm, 7:00 pm, and 10:00 pm. We are hoping to be able to live stream these services for those who are unable to attend in person or who prefer to attend remotely. We will not have a Christmas Day service this year. The Sunday service will go on as scheduled for December 26.

The Worship and Arts Committee wants YOU! We're looking for new members. If you're interested, please reach out to one of us on the committee. We'd love to have you join us!

*Michelle Doose, Chairperson of Worship and Arts Committee*

## Green Committee Update: *Staying Engaged*

Wildlife populations are in decline due to climate change but also because native plants on which different species depend are disappearing. Non-native plants introduced for decorative purposes and typical suburban monoculture lawns have in many cases decimated native plant communities on which local food webs depend. Wildlife habitats have become fragmented and isolated. This affects insects, birds, animals and ultimately people.

Our Every Member Reads choice for this year is *Nature's Best Hope* by Douglas W. Tallamy. It is a practical guide for what you can do in your own yard to help create a "conservation corridor" that will promote a healthy environment where wildlife can thrive. The book offers easy, practical, and effective solutions to help preserve and protect our wildlife and our planet.

For those interested in reading and discussing this interesting and informative book, *Nature's Best Hope* can be purchased at the Gustavus Bookmark with a 20% discount. St. Peter Library will have one copy, and First Lutheran Church Library will have 3 copies for check out. Member discussions of the book will occur in February. Dates and times to be determined.

## Food Shelf Garden Update:

Our Food Shelf Garden produced a whopping 125 lbs. of produce for the St. Peter Food Shelf this summer through the fall. It was a good year!

## Eco-Tip:

For icy steps, sidewalks, and driveways, consider using small stones or cracked rocks which can be readily purchased in prepared bags at hardware stores. This provides good traction and can be easily swept up and used again, with no pollutants going into storm drains and the river.

**No Stress Christmas Program!**

**Dec 19 @ 9:15**

**First Lutheran's Dining Hall**

Please arrive around 9:00am to find your seats and allow time for our Sunday Schoolers to get ready. We also ask that you to RSVP if you plan to attend.



Darrell Jodock & William Nelsen

# Embracing DIVERSITY

Faith, Vocation,  
and the  
Promise of America



## Book by Pastor Bill & Darrell Jodock Published

Over the past two years, Dr. Darrell Jodock, Professor Emeritus at Gustavus Adolphus College, and Pastor Bill have worked on a book to address the growing racial and religious diversity in our nation. Entitled *Embracing Diversity: Faith, Vocation, and the Promise of America*, the book is aimed at people in congregations, local communities, and students, encouraging us all to celebrate—and not fear—our growing diversity, and to take seriously the call of the gospel to love our neighbors—without exception! Published by Fortress Press, the book is also available from Amazon, Barnes & Noble and a variety of Christian booksellers. You can also check this book out at our own FLC Library as well as the St. Peter Public Library.

## FLC Shout OUTS! First Lutheran Members Participate in the School Play & Gratitude for Volunteers

+ Congratulations to all the cast and crew that played a role in St. Peter High School's fall play, *Mamma Mia!* We are especially proud of the First Lutheran cast and crew members, which included: Raina Roemhildt, Eleanor Winterfeldt, Ryenne Pettis, David Marlow, Vera Berglund, Sam Buffington, and Eleanor Kennedy.

+ Special thanks to Brad Chambers, Shanon Nowell & Leif Hammer all their efforts with our live stream and recording of worship services. They are doing a fantastic job. If you see them, please say a big thank you!

## ADULT FORUMS ARE BACK

Look for more Forum Announcements for 2022!

### WHAT:

EVERY MEMBER READS FORUM

*NATURE'S BEST HOPE*

BOOK BY DOUGLAS W. TALLANY

### WHO IS INVITED:

EVERY FIRST LUTHERAN MEMBER & GUESTS TOO, LED BY GREEN COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### WHEN:

FEB 13 & FEB 20, 2022.

YOU CAN START READING NOW AND BE READY TO DISCUSS!

## Holiday & End of Year Giving!

*Many Options*

### Task Force Established:

#### *Increasing Income for First Lutheran*

First Lutheran members have received a special mailing from the Stewardship Committee encouraging all our individuals and families to be active in regular giving to enable the church to carry out its vital mission. At the same time, given our financial needs, the Church Council is prepared to seek out additional new ideas for increasing income for our congregation, including through special fundraising events, galas, live and silent auctions, passive income we earn from purchasing programs (like those we currently have with Family Fresh and Kwik Trip), and other ideas.

To this end, the Church Council at its meeting on Nov. 16, voted to establish a Task Force to explore new ideas that we could begin to test out and implement in the coming year. Several Council members (Nancy Timm, Michelle Doose, Mary Spear, Pastor Bill) responded quickly to help with this important effort. We look for others who can bring additional experiences and ideas to the Task Force. Contact Pastor Bill or Angela if you are interested and willing to assist. It will be a fun and interesting task!

### Holiday Vouchers!

The St. Peter Area Food shelf and the St. Peter Area Ministerial Association provides grocery vouchers to needy families. FLC is still accepting donations through 12/31 for this program.

### Church Finance Summary as of

10/31/21

305,942 Income

322,587 Expense

<16,645>

### End-of-Year Contributions

Please have your regular offerings and end-of-year contributions in by Friday, December 31 to see them reflected on your **2021 Contribution Statement**.

### Are You at Least 70 ½ Years Old?

Don't forget about the IRA Charitable Rollover. You can donate up to \$100,000 to charitable organizations **directly from your IRA** without that donation being counted as taxable income when it is withdrawn. Talk about a tax break! *Check with your financial advisor on how to make this type of donation.*

### Become a member of the First Lutheran Legacy Society

There are many options to provide estate gifts to First Lutheran Church. The simplest means of supporting the ongoing work of First Lutheran Church in your estate plans is by including the church in your will. However, there are a variety of other means of doing so including:



- *Charitable Gift Annuities*
- *Charitable Remainder Trusts*
- *Naming First Lutheran Church as a beneficiary of your retirement plan life insurance policy, bank or brokerage account, donor advised fund, or other financial asset plans.*

Contact the church office for more information on becoming a member of the Legacy Society and find out how gifts can be earmarked.

# Looking Back on 2021



with gratitude

# GIVING TREE 2021

*The Altar Guild invites you to contribute to the Giving Tree.*

**This money will be directed to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. This is a congregational fund that supports people in need. The Giving Tree has donation cards hung and is located in the Gathering Space during Advent. On this card you may designate the gift in memory or honor of someone.**

***Place a star on the tree to indicate your donation.***

*Thank you for your generosity.*

