



SALT SHAKER

DECEMBER 2024

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MEN'S MINISTRY

We meet at 7 pm on December 10 at The Next-Door Bar and Grill for Bible -n- Beverage. We also meet at 7:30 am on December 14 for Bible -n- Breakfast here at FLC We look forward to sharing out thoughts around the topic of, "Reimagining Christmas"



Truth be told, God was never into busy or behavior modification. In fact, Christmas isn't at all about a God who is "watching you." And God never intended for the arrival of God's Son to lead to Christmas stress for all eternity.

This year, we're going to **"Reimagine Christmas."**

- **December 1 "God is with Us"**
- **December 8 "Peace on Earth"**
- **December 15 "Light of your World"**
- **December 22 "For All People"**

Special Services for the Season

December 15: 11:30 am Blue Christmas Service

December 22: 10:30 am Christmas Program

December 24: 4 pm and 6 pm Christmas Eve Worship

December 25 9 am PJ Christmas Worship Online Only

December 29: 9:00 am Lessons, and Carols



UPCOMING HOLIDAY EVENTS

HANGING OF THE GREENS IS WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4



4:30PM ~ we will start to decorate...come when you can!
Everyone is invited. Come meet old friends & new friends.
Confirmation students ~ come to decorate, visit & share a meal with your mentor. Invite your mentor to join you.

6:00PM Meal and Dinner Church... Menu: Turkey on buns, cheesy potatoes, coleslaw, pickles, bars, & beverages. Sign-up to help set up or clean up or bring bars or pickles.

YOU ARE INVITED TO A BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE BEGINNING WITH A SOUP AND BREAD LUNCH.



This is a special service for those who are struggling with grief, loss, and life changes during the holiday season. This service is totally different than the Sunday morning service. If you are aware of someone who is having a hard time; please invite them to this service. Better yet, offer to pick them up and be with them. (This is the perfect time

to invite someone to come to church. This is not a long service. You will still have plenty of time to do other stuff.) To help us plan (so we have enough food) please sign up on the Rejoice Board or call the church office to let us know that you will be joining us. Talk with pastor Becky or Janell Hoffman if you have questions or if you would like to be a reader or song leader. This is a beautiful service. Hope you can join us.

MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS



Welcome to our new members
Ryan Mikkelson,
and Candace, Zoey,
Ella, and Emmitt



PASTOR MIKE CARLSON



As the song goes, "It's the most wonderful time of the year!" But before we start to celebrate the peppermint latte's, holiday lights, and the 24 hour a day of the Hallmark channel, I want us to step back, and take a hard look at how we approach this time of year.

The message that many grew up, and are growing up on, Santa Clause is keeping a list, and he knows who is naughty and who is nice! Which list are you on? 'Because who wants a lump of coal in their stocking? As a kid, you spent the holidays terrified that you weren't going to get anything from Santa.

We use all kinds of tricks this time of year to modify our children's behavior, i.e. Elf on a Shelf! Parents, we use Christmas as behavior modification. We have to be in line for Black Friday, and take the morning off for Cyber Monday! I read that the majority of these purchases, aren't gifts, but items we purchase for ourselves! What was once the season of giving, as become a season of "What Did I Get?!" That's not how it started, and it isn't how God wants us to think of this time of the year. In our series last month, I shared how we "Get To" be generous, and how Biblical Generosity begins with us thinking about others first. You may wonder, where did Pastor Mike come up with that idea? Well honestly, it started with a familiar passage often read during this time of year:

For **to us** a child is born, **to us** a son is **given**, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Friends, the Creator of All, thought only of US when he sent the greatest gift of all! This gift came with only one expectation, that WE believe. This gift was sent to not a perfect world, but a broken one, out of love! God isn't checking a list twice to find out who is naughty or nice. God loves us in our naughtiness, so that his love will transform us into our nice!

I know we are coming out of a time where finding the "nice" has been hard, but let's come together this season and prepare ourselves to receive the greatest gift of all, even when we are at our worst, God still chooses to give! Knowing this truth, then yes, it is the most wonderful time of the year!

Blessings this Advent and Christmas,
Pastor Mike Carlson

PASTOR BECKY THOMAS



Dear friends,

Thank you to everyone who helped in anyway with the HURRICANE RELIEF collection for the North and South Carolina area. Thank you also to everyone who gave financially to the ELCA HURRICANE RELIEF FUND. You all helped to make a big difference. If you still want to give a financial gift it is not too late. There still is a great need.

If you are looking for ways to help others this Advent season, FLC has several projects you may tap into such as:

Grab a tag off the Sharing Tree (in the Gathering Space) to buy and wrap gifts for children whose parents need a helping hand this Christmas.

Help a young person keep warm by donating mittens, gloves, scarves, hats, snow boots, warm socks, jacket & snow pants for the Mitten Tree. It is a good thing. Make small plates of goodies and cards to bring to homebound members.

Here is a little of this & that going on at FLC in December:

We are welcoming new members on the first Sunday of each month. If you are interested in joining FLC on December 1 or if you would like to know more about FLC, talk with one of the pastors or the church office and we will help you figure out your NEXT STEP.

1st Thursday at First 50+ Coffee Hour is December 5 at 9 AM. If you are able bring a dozen Christmas cookies or treats of any sort to share. (If you can't do this that is OK ...just come! There will be plenty!) If you are over 50 ~ come check it out!

Bereaved Friends Forever ~ Men and Women ~ you are invited to our Advent "BFF" Potluck on Tuesday, December 10 at 11:30AM in the CLC at FLC. Bring a salad, main dish or dessert to share or \$5. We also invite you to bring a small wrapped Christmas gift that will be used for an exchange game. (The gift can be new, old, used, homemade, or white elephant, however if you buy something the price limit is \$5!) If you know of someone who has experienced any kind of loss please invite them to join us. Please help us plan by signing up on the Rejoice Board

There will be no Wine, Women & the Word in December. Mark your calendars for January 20, 2025.

May you have a blessed Advent season as you prepare for the birth of Jesus.

Pastor Becky Thomas

FAITH COMMUNITY CARE MINISTRY



Tis the Season . . . Football, shopping, celebrations, baking, turkey, family gathering, scheduling, all squeezed between Sundays. During this Advent Season I encourage you to keep Sunday with you to get through your week. I recently was able to participate in a thirty minute "Sit Meditation". It helped me to take a step back and know the peace of God's love. The guided experience first acknowledged where I am in my concerns with the way of the world. A poem was shared, and then the facilitator explained that we would sit, focus on breath, focus on God's love, allow the spirit of God to flow through. I invite you to do this on your own.

Start by saying slowly,

'Be still and know that I am God. (breathe)

Be still and know that I am. (breathe)

Be still and know. (breathe)

Be still. (breathe)

Be."

NOW sit for 20 minutes, undisturbed. (Use a timer to avoid watching the clock) Breathe, listen, focus on God's love, get bored, lament if you must, allow God to guide you. If you begin to think about all the "to dos", STOP & focus on your breathing. This is an exercise in leaving your cares and allowing God in.

When your time is up read a lesson from the Bible &/ or start writing a prayer. Keep writing to let God guide you to come to your realization of what God is telling you.

Some lesson suggestions:

Story of Simeon Luke 2:25-32 The Beatitudes Matthew 5:3-12

Good Samaritan Luke 10:25-37 Love Hymn 1 Corinthians

Birth of Jesus Luke 2 :1-20 Vine & the Branches John 15:1-17

God's Peace & Love to you this Advent Season

Janell Hoffman,

Faith Community Nurse

NEXT GENERATION MINISTRIES

KEEP ME IN THE MOMENT

One important lesson the COVID-19 shutdown taught youth ministers across the country is the significance of being actively involved in the life of the community. During the shutdown, some churches experimented with "Zoom Youth Group"—exactly what it sounds like: youth group meetings held over Zoom. While innovative, it lacked the personal connection that is so essential to ministry. Youth ministry is far more than a 9-to-5 job where you clock in, sit at a desk, and then go home. It's a calling to be present in the lives of young people and their families. Whenever a young person invites me to an event—whether it's a sports game, a fall musical, a graduation, or any other milestone—I see it as my obligation to show up. If a family asks me to celebrate with them, I celebrate. If they need someone to mourn alongside them, I mourn. Wherever I am asked to go, I view it as a call from God.



6 of our young students were in the Sauk Centre School's musical "The Little Mermaid", Logan Schad not pictured was in Melrose Area School's Musical "Elf", and Nadia Brown not pictured was in Albany Area School's "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat"



A SUMMER OF SERVICE AWAITS

We are thrilled to announce that our teams for the 2025 summer mission trips are coming together! These two weeks of service promise to be transformative as we witness all that God will do in and through us. The first trip will take our high school students to Denver, CO, where they will partner with various organizations and ministries to serve the local community. The second trip will head to Rapid City, SD, where our team will work with ministries supporting the Rapid City community and nearby Native American reservations. Both mission trips are designed to push our young people out of their comfort zones, ignite their passions, and deepen their faith. Our goal is for them to grow in confidence, embrace their faith proudly, and experience the love of the God they serve. We look forward to 2025 and the incredible impact these trips will have.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Dec 4, 2024	Mentor Event: Hanging of the Greens
Dec 11, 2024	All Youth Advent Extravaganza
Dec 18, 2024	All Youth Advent Extravaganza
Dec. 25, 2024	Christmas Break
Jan 1, 2025	Christmas Break

FORWARD YOUTH MINISTRY

Sunday December 15 PM

All are welcome to join us on December 15 for our Youth Ministry Christmas party.

All Youth In Grades 6 - 12 Are welcome to come celebrate with us. Wear Your Favorite Christmas Sweater or outfit.

6:30 PM - 8:30 PM!



CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL WILL BE PERFORMING THEIR CHRISTMAS PROGRAM ON DECEMBER 14 AT THE 10:30 AM SERVICE! ALL ARE WELCOME TO COME AND SUPPORT OUR KIDS!

COOKIE AND LEFSE SALE!

THE YOUTH MINSITRY WILL BE HOSTING OUR ANNUAL COOKIE AND LEFSE SALE ON SUNDAY DECEMBER 8TH IN BETWEEN BOTH SERVICES! ALL PROCEEDS GO TOWARD OUR YOUTH MISSION TRIPS TO DENVER AND RAPID CITY!

Looking for information about our Kids and Youth Ministry?

**Sunday School, and Kids Ministry: flcsauk.com/kids
Youth Ministry: flcsauk.com/youth**



MEET OUR MEMBERS

Karen and George Heideman

Karen: I was born in Sauk Centre 7-25-68 and baptized at First Lutheran 8-25-68. My dad, John, was born in 1931 and was baptized at the Church that is now a house down the street towards the lake. Later on, when the Church bought the lot where First Lutheran sits now there was a house on the corner. The Church couldn't afford to build a Church right away, but the house was used as Luther League for the kids. My mom, Audrey, was born in 1933 in Minneota, MN. After college she got a job for Kranz Oil when it was downtown. She started going to First Lutheran. My dad used to tell the story that he saw her one time 2 pews in front of him in church and told his brother Arnold that some day he was going to marry her. They got engaged February 14, 1960, and married November 22, 1960. The story dad use to tell was that he had a bulge in his pocket, and they were taking pictures. And the minister said we have to take whatever is in your pocket out. And dad said no. They were tickets for Diamond Point and the minister was against dances. I have 3 older brothers: Paul who is in North Carolina with his wife Shannon and 2 daughters and family. Mark who is by West Union with his wife Nancy. Donald who is in Nerstrand with his wife Doreen and their children all live in Northfield with their families. George and I got married July 13 this year at First Lutheran. We had the help of Pastor Mike for decorating because it was the first wedding after the remodel. Thank you. George had never been to the Pacific Ocean. So, for our honeymoon we spent 2 weeks of driving to Seattle, WA down to Seaside, OR and back home. It was so amazing to finally get to see Idaho and Oregon. I have 3 states left to visit. I have been on the FLC board as Secretary, teaching SLA, Great River Conference WELCA Nominating Committee and Treasure which my term will be up in April, started February SW MN Synod WELCA Treasurer, and my resent accomplishment. I have finished my classes to be a S.A.M. (Synodical Authorized Minister). I am looking to help a church somewhere. I have had the opportunity to preach at Upsala and Benson. What amazing churches. George: Well, hello, some things people at first don't know about me. I was baptized at Serman Park Lutheran in Milwaukee and Confirmed at Christ the King in Brookfield Wis. hence, I am a Packer fan. Mom (Bev) and dad (Hank) met in Milwaukee, got married just down the street at United Church of Christ in SC. in 1964. How did I end up in Sauk Centre? Mom was class of '48 Streeter. I would visit Grandma Yager on Fairy Lake ever summer. My parents retired here in the 90s. Kurt and I went to Alexandria Tech. Fast forward to today. God has blessed me having gotten married here at 1st in July. Am working as Mainstreeter as a Para. I have been a S.A.M for 3 years. I served 2 years at 2 different churches. Now waiting to see what God has next. A few Favorite hymns are "I Was There to hear your Borning Cry" and "Onward Christian Soldiers" Our favorite verses in the bible are "Matthew 5", and "John 3:16,17"

STEWARDSHIP & GENEROSITY!

"Because of You" has been our theme during the month we call Thanksgiving. It is our hope that this series has made you stop and think about what Biblical Generosity really means, and how we are not only stewards of today's church, but also stewards and shapers of the future church. Our church fiscal year ends on January 21, 2025. We will be coming forward to ask how you are able to share your generosity, and also share where our immediate and future needs are. We invite you to pray, and reflect on how you can lean into biblical generosity and the stewarding of not only our church of today, but also of tomorrow.



SPECIAL THANKS TO MARK AND JENETTE ANDERSON!



A special thank you to Mark and Jeanette Anderson for generously donating a quilt rack to the First Lutheran Quilters. On display downstairs is a quilt sewn by Evelyn Oftedahl, with squares made by men at the St. Cloud prison as part of the "Whole Heart" program, which encourages participants to use their hands and hearts for others. The men, ranging in age from 16 to 70, contributed to the quilt, with the blocks donated by Karol Bruggemann, who worked with the program.

TRIBE INFORMATION

REUBEN TRIBE - DECEMBER

Linda Besse	320-761-3225
Mike/Trish Bushard	320-429-0837
Pr. Mike/Sara Carlson	320-894-5514
Aaron/Diane Duncan	320-493-2876
Rich/Barb Fischer	320-291-4821
Garry/Candy Freeman	320-256-3684
Diane/Rick Haskamp	320-352-3583
Donna Hensel	507-828-7053
Dan/Janell Hoffman	320-291-6875
Jason/Koni Messer	320-333-5791
Vicki Pfeffer	320-267-8736
Carol/Jerry Prijatel	320-429-1412
Karen Quistorff	320-282-6368
Brian/Stef Riley	320-429-1412
Pat/Ava Shields	320-352-6684
Eldon/Linda Sparby	218-686-6146
Wayne/JoAnn Thorson	320-493-2159
Laura Watson-Martin	320-429-1238

SIMEON TRIBE - JANUARY

Lisa Brown	320-282-2687
Sarah/Alex Arnold Coltv	320-250-7595
Holly Fogarty	320-444-6170
Greg/Kellie Funk	320-293-5510
Connie Hellermann	320-293-2518
Eric/Michelle Hellermann	320-260-5911
Sheila Karasch	320-248-9694
Mike/Katie Leslie	218-232-5249
Dianna Nelson/L.Sanders	320-766-7412
Chuck/Kelli Noll	320-429-0162
Cara/Dave Norling	320-250-0868
Roger Ojakangas	320-339-2792
Katrina/Nathan Sand	269-857-4604
Lynnette & Ron Schmitz	320-352-3678
Greg Seawell	320-333-3528
Tom/Joyce Sedgeman	320-429-0627
Pat/Cathy Westby	218-770-1058

DECEMBER ANIVERSARIES



DECEMBER ANIVERSARIES

Dec. 4 – Pam and John Jensen

Dec. 5 – Sheila and Don Karasch

Dec. 17 – Keith and Deb Johnson

Dec. 22 – Dean and Elaine Jensen

Dec. 23 – Dan and Diane Knutson

Dec. 29- David and Ginene Theisen

Dec. 31 – Wayne and Aimee Hegg

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS



December 1 – LaRayne Betlach

December 2 – Kiera Bjork
Savannah Johnson
Sharon Schroeder
Heather Thiesen

December 3 – Sara Carlson
Krew Lieser

December 4 – Todd Anderson
Elizabeth Beissel
Greta Hass

December 5 – Collin Claussen
Graham Radjenovich
Elijah Schlichting
Jackson Schlichting
Jaida Weber

December 6 – Brenda Greenwaldt
Sara Thompson

December 7 – Hunter Wolbeck

December 8 – Neal Stadsvold

December 12 – Pat Armstrong
Jamie Jennissen

December 13 – Frederick Hiltner
Aubrey Hinnenkamp
Zander Kuhlman

December 14 – Candy Freeman
Joan Kroshus

December 15 – Jan Altmann
Abigail Welberg
Caroline Porttiin

December 17– Callie Rodenbiker
Barbara Rykken
Jon Stein

December 18 – Mike Bushard Jr.
Joe Filener

December 19 – Elizabeth Amelung
Pam Jensen
Logan Schad

December 20– Jes Schlichting
Anessa Redepenning

December 22 – Eric Hellermann
Finnley Korhonen
Austin Nelson
Gabrial Ritter
Andrew Volkmann
Adyson West
Nancy Weyer

December 23 – Matthew Bjork

December 24 –Carol Ladwig

December 25 –Jerry Moffitt

December 26 – Holly Mackedanz

December 27 – Kristin Broich
Adam Wilwerding

December 28 – Kim Schneider

December 29 – Gracie Schad
Bev Soule
Dylan Wiechmann

December 30 – Jamie Hiltner
Laura Hintzen

December 31 – Holly Fogarty
Joseph Hoeschen



DECEMBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 8:30am/10:30am: Worship 9:30am Coffee Fellowship, Sunday School	2 9am: FLC Quilting	3	4 10am: Pericope 4:30pm: Kids Ministry 5:00pm: Hanging of the Greens 6:30pm: Worship 7:15pm: Choir, SLA	5 5pm: Chair Mvmt 6:30pm: Holy Yoga	6 5:30pm: Cookie and Lefse Baking and Assembly.	7 8:30pm: Cookie and Lefse Baking and Assembly.
8 8:30am/10:30am: Worship 9:30am: Cookie and Lefse Sale. 9:30am: Coffee Fellowship, Sunday School	9 9am: FLC Quilting	10	11 10am: Pericope 4:30pm: Kids Ministry 6:30pm: Worship 7:15pm: Choir, SLA	12 5pm: Chair Mvmt 6:30pm: Holy Yoga	13	14
15 8:30am/10:30am: Worship 9:30am: Coffee Fellowship, Sunday School 6:30pm: FORWARD Christmas Party.	16 9am: FLC Quilting	17	18 10am: Pericope 4:30pm: Kids Ministry 6:30pm: Worship 7:15pm: Choir, SLA	19 5pm: Chair Mvmt 6:30pm: Holy Yoga	20	21
22 8:30am/10:30am: Worship 9:30am: Coffee Fellowship, Sunday School	23 9am: FLC Quilting	24 4pm: Christmas Eve Worship at FLC 4:30pm: Christmas Eve Worship at GLC 6pm: Christmas Eve Worship at FLC	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26	27	28
29 9am: Lessons and Carols	30 9am: FLC Quilting	31 NEW YEARS EVE				

WORSHIP MINISTRY CALENDAR

DECEMBER	1	8	15	22
Acolytes	8:30: Norah Sebek, Ellie Sunderman 10:30: Jax Guggisberg, Luke Theisen Wed Dec 4, 6:30 PM: Reagan Bass	8:30: RJ Reiffenberger, Kaylee Messer 10:30: Jackson Messer, Jack Wanquist Wed Dec 11, 6:30 PM: Lauren Sebek	8:30: Hunter Leslie, Bentley Leslie 10:30: Miley Broich & Alyssa Riley Wed Dec 18, 6:30 PM: Livja Sebek	8:30: Elijah, and Jackson Schlichting 10:30: Megan, and Grace Hass
Communion Setup	8:30: Vicki Pfeffer 10:30: Brianna Cooper	8:30: Candy Freeman 10:30: Open	8:30: Donna Hensel 10:30: Christmas Program	Pastor Mike & Sara Carlson
Greeters	8:30: Vicki Pfeffer 10:30: Wayne & JoAnn Thorson	8:30: Donna Hensel 10:30: Stef Riley	8:30: Donna Hensel 10:30: Christmas Program	8:30: Open 10:30: Open
Ushers	8:30: Jerry Prijatel, Dan Hoffman 10:30: Open	8:30: Jerry Pijatel & Dan Hoffman 10:30: Brian Riley, Eldon Sparby	8:30: Open 10:30: Open	8:30: Open 10:30: Open
Readers	8:30: Candy Freeman 10:30: JoAnn Thorson	8:30: Donna Hensel 10:30: Eldon Sparby	8:30: Donna Hensel 10:30: Sara Carlson	8:30: Open 10:30: JoAnn Thorson
Coffee Fellowship	Prijatel's, Freeman's, Hoffman's	Steff Riley, Linda Sparby	The Sebeks and Sundermans	Open

SPECIAL SERVICES SCHEDULE

SPECIAL SERVICES	CHRISTMAS EVE	LESSONS AND CAROLS
Acolytes	4:00 PM: Ethin Harren, Jenna Messer 6:00 PM: Hazel Thompson, Graham Radjenovich	9:00 AM: Hunter Wolbek, Blake Beissel
Communion Setup	Pastor Mike & Sara Carlson	Pastor Mike & Sara Carlson
Greeters	4:00 PM: Koni, & Kaylee Messer 6:00 PM: Open	Open
Ushers	4:00 PM: Jason & Koni Messer 6:00 PM: Open	Open
Readers	4:00 PM: Open 6:00 PM: Open	Open
Coffee Fellowship	NO COFFEE FELLOWSHIP	Open



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

To contact FLC, please call 320-352-3623 | brandon@flcsauk.com | flcsauk.com

The staff of First Lutheran Church wish you and your family a blessed Christmas and a very happy New Year! It is our blessing and privilege to serve the Lord along with you, and we look forward to a 2025 full of adventures and growth, led by God's Spirit.

We pray all of God's richest blessings upon each one of you,

**Pastor Mike, Pastor Becky, Vicar Diana, Joe Filener,
Brandon Reller, Janell Hoffman, John Lahr and Nicole
Pryor**