

Firs* Things

Living the unconditional Grace & Love of Jesus Christ in the World

January 2026

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

100 Peace Ridge
Lake City, MN 55041

651-345-5003
info@firstlc.org
www.firstlc.org

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday 8am-4pm

Regular Worship Schedule

Sunday at 9am
Wednesday at 6:30pm

Watch online at firstlc.org or LIVE on YouTube on Sundays.

STAFF

Paul Miller, *Pastor*
paul.miller@firstlc.org

Kary Jonas
Associate Pastor
kary.jonas@firstlc.org

Sara Thompson
Coord. of Children's Ministry
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Kerstin Suby
Music Administrator & Organist
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Jennifer White
Congregational Administrator
jennifer.white@firstlc.org

Loren Prigge, *Custodian*



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



CHRISTMAS CLEAN-UP After worship on Sunday, January 4, all are invited to take down and store Christmas décor for another year.

BELL & CHOIR PRACTICE WILL RESUME ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2025 - Bells will practice at 5:15pm and Choir at 7:00pm.

Baptism Remembrance - January 11

On Sunday, January, 11, 2026, as we recognize the baptism of Jesus, it is a wonderful opportunity for all of us to remember our baptism and its meaning as we begin a new year. We invite all those baptized in 2025 and their families to this special worship service to remember the gifts of baptism from God: grace, forgiveness of sins and life everlasting.

Blakelee Mae Haviland

Lola Lou Dick

Sylvia June Leafblad

Emmett Fritz Logsdon

Gabriel Bo Grimley

Meta Ruby Lee Rigelman

Noah Lee Atkinson

Kohen David Blim

Letti Ann Blim

Kennedy Jean Webb

Jameson Iver Lee Carroll



Finding Hope “In the Bleak Midwinter”

Perhaps one can say it is because of my dour Eastern European DNA or maybe because I love watching tragic movies that make me weep, but one of my favorite Christmas carols is “In the Bleak Midwinter.” The title kind of says it all, combining “bleak” with “midwinter.” Not a lot of “Joy” to the world or “I am so glad each Christmas Eve.”

“In the Bleak Midwinter” is a strange and unrealistic carol. Jesus, after all, was born in the middle East and not in Minnesota. No snow was falling, snow on snow. No frosty winds made known and earth standing hard as iron. But despite the highly imaginative setting for Jesus’ birth, it is the last verse that gets me every time.

*What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would give a lamb.
If I were a wise man, I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him, give my heart.*

I think about the words of the last verse as we enter the new year. What can I give this new year of 2026 and what can I give to this world? As we begin a new year, to me, the world looks quite fragile. We have no idea what the new year will bring. What can I give?

Well, as followers of this child in the manger, we can offer this year hearts full of hope (as opposed to pessimism, bitterness, negativity, etc.) After all the change and all bad news this past year has brought, I know this is difficult. So, I also know, I cannot summon hopefulness with my own will. Hope will be a gift I will need from God. But, with hope, we can enter this new year. We can dream of light coming from all the darkness. We can hope for love leading the way for us rather than our anxieties and fear. Entering this year with hearts of hope is only possible because we worship this child in a manger.

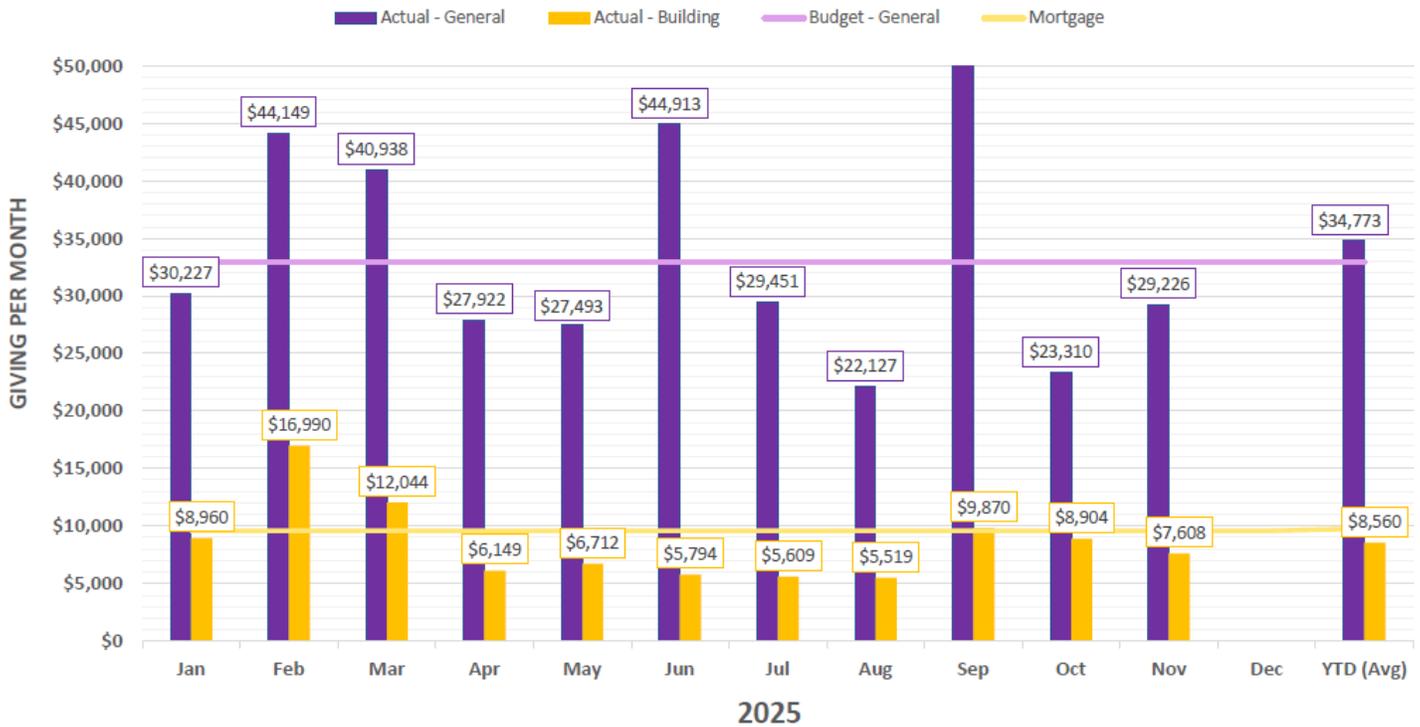
Blessings to you all as we enter this new year. May all our hearts be filled with the God-given gift of hope.



Pastor Kary



2025 Giving - First Lutheran Church



Annual Meeting Important Dates

In preparation for First Lutheran Church’s Annual Meeting, here are some key dates:

Jan. 15 - Reports due to Jen White (jennifer.white@firstlc.org)

Week of Jan. 25 - First draft ready for congregation review

Feb. 1 - Annual Report Presentation - This is an opportunity for discussion of the annual report and 2026 proposed budget and allow time for questions and answers.

Feb 8 - Annual Meeting @ 10am in the Sanctuary.

Find Peace with Your Money

First Lutheran is hosting a **Financial Peace University** class starting on **Jan. 13 at 6pm**. Over nine weeks, we’ll walk step by step through the biblical principles of handling money so you can experience real peace with your finances. With a cost of \$79 for the entire personal-finance series, you’ll learn:

- **How to budget (and stick to it)**
- **How to pay off debt**
- **How to invest for the future**

Financial Peace University is a safe, judgment-free place where we learn to become better stewards of our money. So wherever you are with your finances, this is for you! First Lutheran Member, Shef Massey is a trained coach and will be leading these classes. Get more information and sign-up here or at the Kiosk at church.



ELCA World Hunger Good Gifts Sent

First Lutheran members are sending **\$4,800** worth of aid to the ELCA World Hunger Good Gifts Project. You gave...



- 2 chicks
- 1 rooster
- 4 goats
- 1 piglet
- 9 groups of honeybees
- 2 water filters
- 1 share of a safe water project
- 2 latrines
- 2 school fees and uniform for a girl
- 5 school supplies for a child
- 4 clinic visits for a child
- 1 week of feeding a refugee family
- 1 bible

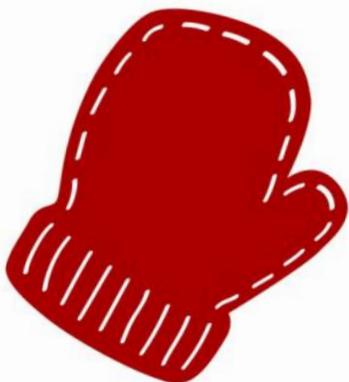
Plus \$3,300 to use as needed!

Mitten Tree Project

First Lutheran members purchased gifts of clothing and shoes for

29 children from **nine families** in need

this Christmas through the Kiwanis Toy Project.

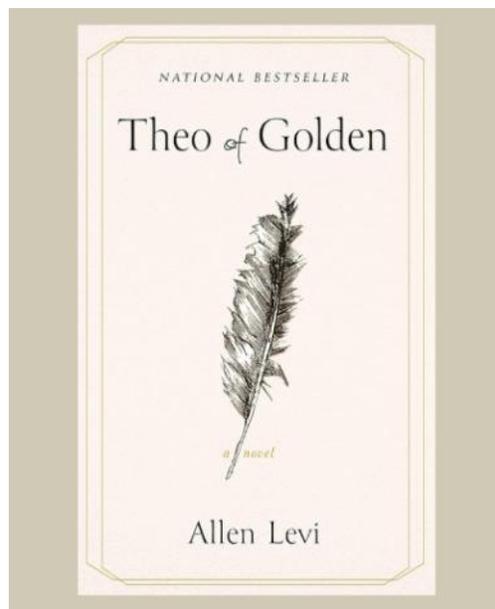


Thank you for supporting this year's Community Thanksgiving Dinner. The support we have received from this community in financial and physical assistance is certainly a reflection of their willingness to serve others.

Hebrews 13:16 tells us, *"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God."*

This year we served **398 meals** and were blessed with the assistance of **88 volunteers** who worked during set up, packing and delivering meals, serving and doing clean up. On December 16th we will **present a check to the Lake City Food Shelf for \$4,466.**

~ Thanksgiving Dinner Committee



Book Group

Fireside Room
Monday, Jan. 5, 2026 9am

Book Group will be meeting on Jan. 5 at 9am in the Fireside Room. We will be discussing "Theo of Golden" by Allen Levi.

We invite everyone to locate your own copy of the book. Treats will be provided. Bring your morning beverage of choice. The group will select a new book for the February Book Group.

Bible Study: Gospel of Matthew

Fireside Room
11am Wednesday Mornings
Feb. 18-Mar. 25



During the season of Lent, Pastor Kary will be leading a weekly study on the gospel of Matthew on Wednesdays at 11:00 am in the Fireside Room. The study will begin Wednesday, February 18 and run through March 25.

During this year, we will be hearing a lot from Matthew in our worship services. It was originally written for a predominately Jewish audience, but this text continues to guide and shape all of us as Jesus' followers today.

Please sign up for the study by using the link below or watching for the link in First Lutheran Connections weekly email. Cost for the learner's guide is \$12 and can be paid to the church office or Pastor Kary. Sign up by January 25, 2026. [Sign-up here.](#)

Adult Forum: One Gospel, Four Witnesses

Getting to know Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John
Fireside Room
Sunday, Jan. 11, 2026 10am

Many times we have heard, "The Holy Gospel according to..." but does it matter which name comes next? Pastor Paul will share thoughts about what is the same about the four Gospels, what makes each one's perspective unique, and how the Holy Spirit uses the four together to introduce each new generation to Jesus Christ.



Jan. 4 - Sunday School Resumes

Jan. 7 - KFC Resumes

Jan. 7 - Confirmation Parent Meeting (7th & 8th grade: 7-7:30pm / 9th grade: 7:30-8pm)

Jan. 7 - No Confirmation for Students

Jan. 14 - Confirmation Resumes

Jan. 14, 21, 28 - 6th Grade Prayer Retreat with Pastors (more info to follow)

Jan. 25 - Family Event - Private Viewing of the movie, *David*

(2:30 @ Marcus Theaters in Rochester)



First Lutheran Private Screening of *David*

First Lutheran families have the opportunity for a private screening of the newly released movie, *David*, on **January 25, 2026 at 2:30pm** at the **Marcus Theaters in Rochester**.

Tickets and concessions are available at a discounted price. Watch for more information to sign-up for this unique opportunity!

David, is a new, feature-length animated musical adventure from Angel Studios that reimagines the biblical story of the shepherd boy who defeats the giant Goliath and becomes king of Israel.

The film follows David's journey from a humble shepherd boy to an anointed king, exploring themes of faith, courage, and humility.

Watch the trailer [here](#). Sign-up [here](#) by Jan. 11!

Children's Christmas Program Photos



Jan. 1: Taylor Groth, Cody Mortenson, Larry Wigern

Jan. 2: Maren Holst, Ashley Logsdon

Jan. 3: Graeson Gerken, Ellie Gerken, Bennett Kohrs, Megan McCarthy, Mason White

Jan. 4: Kit Busch, Nikki Eggenberger, Elliot Grimley, Judy McEwen, Sarah Nutt, Ben Roberson

Jan. 5: Julia Atkinson, Quinn Kittelson, Andrew Krehbiel, Damon Schmiegl

Jan. 6: William Atkinson

Jan. 7: Brooke Bee, Evan Huettl, Jessica Narum, Eve Sievers

Jan. 8: Kenneth Cady, Arnold Clare, Eric Swiggum, Rylee Thieren

Jan. 9: Everett Dinsmore, Olivia Gates, Carole Halpaus

Jan. 10: Lynette Benitt, Scott Breuer, Jeff Erickson, Thomas Frank, Charlotte Grimley, Emma Kopp, Dwain Lambert

Jan. 11: Miley Jonas, Landon Olsen, John Plote

Jan. 12: Emma Berge, Mary Meincke, Marcus Oeklers, Jaxon Porisch

Jan. 13: Juliane Dennis, Carl Kozlowski, David Roach

Jan. 14: Katelyn Jonas

Jan. 15: Janet Chestnut, Barbara Groth, Audry Plote

Jan. 16: Seth Heitman

Jan. 17: Luther Berkeland, Brent Blattner, Logan Janka, Brad Krehbiel, Cory Wurst

Jason & Katie Bee

Jan. 18: Esther Gullixson, Amanda Johnson, Alexa Pflaum

Jan. 19: Sharon Eggenberger

Jan. 20: Robert Carlson, Zachary Griebenow, Russell Johnson, Wyatt Kennedy, Miranda Koehler, Gage Kranz, Sydney Ringeisen

Jan. 21: Carole Helgerson

Jan. 22: Kyle Johnson, Wanda Wiebusch

Jan. 23: Josh Brown, Kathy Tesch, Molly Thieren

Jan. 24: Heidi Berge, Nolan Bruske, Kathie Majerus

Jan. 25: Ben Meyer, Shon Thieren

Jeremy & Kerri Reese

Jan. 26: Bobbi Craig, Sherry Earle, Marissa Gunhus, Lonnie West

Jan. 27: Sarah Krage, Lisa Stevenson, Eleanora Wise

Troy & Jill Ziebell

Jan. 28: Sonda Featherstone, Conner Ferguson, Barbara Johnson, Shef Massey, Bruce Wallerich

Jan. 29: Amy Alkire, Sandy Bendickson, Audrey Breuer, Kim Vetter

Joe & Jenna Kells

Jan. 30: Ashlynn Dudley, Grace Dunn

Jan. 31: Rachel Fick, Carrie Griebenow, Steven Knudsen, Kyle Pavlak, Joseph Sievers

Keep in prayer: LeAnn Fuchs (niece of Arlene Johnson), Carl Kozlowski, Wayne & Monica Schmidt (cousin of Dale Nibbe), Cheryl Goudy (Sue Benson's sister), Kathy Walstrom (daughter of Eloise Blattner), Patricia A. McMahan (cousin of Dale Nibbe), Lucy Youngren (great-niece of Mavis Hawkins), Gary Sawyer (Dana Sawyer's husband).

Would you like your name or a loved one added to FLC's prayer list? Please contact the FLC Prayer Connection at firstlutheranprayerconnection@gmail.com or the FLC office, 651-345-5003.

Worship Role Volunteers

Date \ Role	Jan. 4	Jan. 11	Jan. 18	Jan. 25
LECTOR	Craig Kohrs	Carter Keim	Confirmation Student	Confirmation Student
GREETERS	Addie Thieren & Family	Brody Meyer & Family	Trace Meyer & Family	Brody Otterson & Family
ACOLYTE	Maggie Thieren	Hayden Talbert	Ramsey Meyer	Allie Langhans
COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	Alexis McCoy Ariana Talbert	Brody Fick Confirmation Student	Reid Meyer Ariana Talbert	Confirmation Student Confirmation Student
USHERS	Lily & Marie Miller	Ariana Talbert Confirmation Student	Carter Keim Miranda Koehler	Brody Fick Confirmation Student
ALTAR GUILD	Kathie Majerus Marcia Holst	Kathie Majerus Marcia Holst		
COFFEE FELLOWSHIP	needed	needed	needed	needed
AUDIO VISUAL STUDENT ASSISTANT	Claire Gnotke	needed	Mason Eggenberger	Savannah Klein

Thank you to those who share their time and talents! Your service is a gift to our congregation!

You'll notice that many of our Confirmation students are assisting with Worship Roles during the school year. Please offer encouragement as they try new roles in our worship.

We will need assistance with Coffee Fellowship. Please see the sign up sheet on the kiosk.

Lenten Worship Services - Confirmation students will be signing up for worship roles the first week of February. If additional help is needed, we will post any openings on the Kiosk or ask via the Connections email.

January 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 NEW YEAR'S DAY OFFICE CLOSED	2 OFFICE CLOSED	3 Iglesia Rehearsal 3-5pm
4 Worship 9am Sunday School, 10am Christmas Clean-Up, 10am	5 9am - Book Group Cub Scouts 6:30-7:30pm Troop 94 7-8:30pm	6 Scouts Committee Mtg 6:30pm	7 FLC Bible Study 8:30am Staff 1:30pm KFC 3-5pm Confirmation Parent Meetings 7th & 8th Grade, 7pm 9th Grade, 7:30pm No Worship No Confirmation	8 Fellowship Potluck 5:30pm	9	10 Iglesia Rehearsal 3-5pm
11 BAPTISM OF OUR LORD Worship/Celebration of those Baptized 9am Sunday School 10am Adult Forum 10am	12 Crafters 9:30, Fireside Rm Cub Scouts 6:30-7:30pm Troop 94 7-8:30pm	13 FLC Quilters 8:30am Hispanic Inclusion 6pm	14 FLC Bible Study 8:30am Staff 1:30pm KFC 3-5pm 6th Grade Prayer Retreat 3:15-5pm Confirmation 6-8pm Worship 6:30pm	15 ANNUAL REPORTS DUE Church Council 6:30pm	16	17 Iglesia Rehearsal 3-5pm
18 Worship 9am Sunday School 10am	19 No Scouts (MLK Day)	20	21 FLC Bible Study 8:30am Care Center Service 10am Staff 1:30pm KFC 3-5pm 6th Grade Prayer Retreat 3:15-5pm Bells 5:15pm Confirmation 6-8pm Worship 6:30pm Senior Choir 7pm	22 Feb First Things Articles Due	23	24 Iglesia Rehearsal 3-5pm
25 Worship 9am Sunday School 10am Annual Report available this week	26 Cub Scouts 6:30-7:30pm Troop 94 7-8:30pm	27 FLC Quilters 8:30am	28 FLC Bible Study 8:30am Staff 1:30pm KFC 3-5pm 6th Grade Prayer Retreat 3:15-5pm Bells 5:15pm Confirmation 6-8pm Worship 6:30pm Senior Choir 7pm	29 Send Feb First Things	30	31 Iglesia Rehearsal 3-5pm
Winter Family Event: Private Screening of <i>David</i> , 2:30 at Marcus Theaters in Rochester						