



December 2024
#759

The Chimes

First Lutheran Church
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From Pastor Bill

Christmas is the favorite season of the year for many. But I suspect that our love for Christmas causes us to overlook the brilliance of the season of Advent.

Advent is the season of waiting, anticipating, and longing. It is a season that takes us to the dark and asks us to linger in the dark for a while. It is a season that recognizes that life isn't all that it could be or should be. But we as Americans don't like to linger in the dark. We don't like it when all the loose ends aren't tied together. We would rather not have to wait. We want what we want when we want it. We are miserably uncomfortable with longing.

Yet the truth is that food tastes much better when we are hungry, that light only makes sense when there is darkness, that waiting actually makes the arrival even more exciting.

I am convinced that we as a culture suffer deeply from our unwillingness to practice Advent. We suffer from our unwillingness to pause, to reflect, to go deeper. We have a shallow political culture these days in part because few people want to take the time to go deeper. We would rather throw around memes, tweets, cliches, ideas wrapped up in short sentences that seldom capture the complexity of life. Elections are often won and lost these days on the basis of simplistic, black and white thought, buoyed up by horrible commercials that ask us to put our brains on hold.

Advent begs us to move beyond the simplistic, beyond our tendency to create either/or universes, beyond a belief that life is lived best when we don't long, but we simply have.

Richard Rohr says that one of the great prayers of Advent is "Come, O Sapientia. Come, O wisdom." And for Rohr that is a matter of inviting us into a "bigger mind."

Can I invite you into the practice of Advent this year? Don't be in a hurry to move into Christmas. Pause. Meditate. Identify your longings, your grief, your awareness of your brokenness. Sit with them for a while. Welcome the bigger mind. The small mind often doesn't serve us well.



From Pastoral Assistant Paula

The month of December ushers in the season of Advent and marks the beginning of the Christian calendar. It's about 22-28 days - depending on the year. I was not raised in the Advent 'atmosphere' but my mom did an excellent job of making sure I knew the *reason for the season*. The busyness leading up to the birth of the Christchild generated wonder and excitement and before I knew it, I was singing Silent Night and Joy to the World. I am grateful for those memories. But today, as a Lutheran and leader in an ELCA church, the season of Advent weighs heavy on my heart, this year more than others. Advent, you see, calls us to live in the tension between the 'already' and the 'not yet.' It's that season where we hold on to the fragile hope that everything broken will be made whole, that every sorrow will find joy, and that every deep longing will be met with love. It's about sitting with the messiness of life while holding onto the promise of what's to come.

This year has had a lot of messiness and brokenness. War in Ukraine, Gaza and the Middle East as a whole, occupation in the West Bank, war in Sudan and Ukraine, a contentious political atmosphere and a divided nation, systemic poverty, injustice and racism - all stark reminders that the world is not right. But Advent gives us permission to tell the truth, to see the world as it really is *and* to envision a future where everything is made right - the restoration of all things; where everything broken will be made whole and everything empty and devoid of love will be filled. In other words, Advent is a season of waiting in the already-and-not-yet that we live in. Biblical prophets like Jeremiah, never shied away from hard truths. Jeremiah noticed the ways that the world was not as it would be, not as it *should* be. He saw the world through heartache and tears, yet he saw something beyond the pain, suffering and brokenness:

“Watch for this: The time is coming”—God’s Decree—‘when I will keep the promise I made to the families of Israel and Judah. When that time comes, I will make a fresh and true shoot sprout from the David-Tree. He will run this country honestly and fairly. He will set things right. That’s when Judah will be secure and Jerusalem live in safety. The motto for the city will be, “God Has Set Things Right for Us.”

Jeremiah 33:14-16 (MSG)

Living in the hope and promise of Jesus, who embodies the compassion, restoration and justice we so long for is not easy. I am not good at waiting. Kate Bowler says we begin Advent by waiting...*tired* waiting. That's how I feel today. Tired. Tired of watching children die before they even have a chance to live; tired of injustice and vindictive words; tired of watching creation buckle under the weight of irreverent stewardship. But that's the practice of Advent...waiting for the day when the world will be made right and embracing Advent and Christmas as they truly are—imperfect, beautiful and real. I invite you this year to *watch* with me, and *wait* with me and *weep* with me until we get a glimpse of the baby; until we get a glimpse of peace, healing, grace, goodness and mercy. A glimpse of a weary world on the verge of rejoicing.

Paula

Middle School and High School Students
(this includes all Confirmation Students)

Progressive Christmas Dinner

When: Sunday, December 8 from 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Meet at church at 4:45p.m.

Where: We will travel to three homes for the progressive dinner
(appetizer, main course, dessert)
Church bus will provide transportation

What to wear: Crazy, fun Christmas attire

What to bring: A non-gendered wrapped gift
(\$10 limit!) for a gift game exchange



DECEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



Note Date Change!

Men and Women's Breakfast groups
will meet on Saturday, December 14
from 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.



Staff Christmas Gift

We are grateful for our staff who work diligently to share the goodness of grace throughout the year. Please consider giving a gift of gratitude in honor of our staff: Pastor Bill, Paula, Lorey, Shar, Emma, Elise, Lisa, Karl, Tom,

Laura, Jeff, and Amber. You may place monetary gifts in the collection plate (in a separate envelope marked: "Staff Christmas Gift"), give to Ed Wosinski, or give them to Lorey in the office.

Please **do not** make checks out to First Lutheran. **If you are writing a check**, you may address it to **Ed Wosinski**, and Lorey will place all gifts in a separate envelope.



Advent by Candlelight - A Story for All Ages

Table hosts and guests will gather for an evening of reflection and preparation for the season of Advent. All women are welcome!

When: December 1 from 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.
Where: Fellowship Hall

If you have any questions, please contact Paula Dusseljee via email or phone

Sunday	Weekly Scripture Readings
12/1	Jer 33:14-16, Ps 25:1-10 1 Thess 3:9-13, Luke 21:25-36
12/8	Mal 3:1-4, Luke 1:68-79 Phil 1:3-11, Luke 3:1-6
12/15	Zeph 3:14-20, Isa 12:2-6 Phil 4:4-7, Luke 3:7-18
12/22	Micah 5:2-5a, Luke 1:46b-55 Heb 10:5-10, Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]
12/29	1 Sam 2:18-20, 26, Ps 148 Col 3:12-17, Luke 2:41-52

Official Acts



Baptisms

Anthony Allen McCleary

Date of Baptism: October 27, 2024

Date of Birth: 07-24-2024

Parents: Erika Ruud and T.J. McCleary

Sponsors: Kirstin Ruud and Brandon Mattson

Amory Joseph Hathaway

Date of Baptism: October 27, 2024

Date of Birth: 11-05-2012

Parents: Erika Ruud and Stephen Hathaway

Sponsors: Kirstin Ruud and Brandon Mattson

Aven Mae VanVelzen

Date of Baptism: November 24, 2024

Date of Birth: 03-22-2024

Parents: Dustin and Lauren VanVelzen

Sponsors: Emily Saccone and Kedrick VanVelzen

Deaths

Margaret M. Tyler

Date of Birth: 2-27-1936

Date of Death: 10-26-2024

Marjorie A. Visscher

Date of Birth: 1-17-1932

Date of Death: 11-03-2024

Stephen (Steve) C. Dix

Date of Birth: 1-23-1943

Date of Death: 10-31-2024



**THE FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MUSKEGON – YOUR HOME IN CHRIST
IF YOU HAVE NOT YET FILLED OUT AND RETURNED YOUR ANNUAL PLEDGE FOR 2025,
WE INVITE YOU TO DO SO BEFORE THE HOLIDAYS.
IT IS AVAILABLE BELOW:**

“ROOTED IN ABUNDANCE” Annual Giving Pledge for 2025

Dear First Lutheran Parishioners and Friends,

We are helping the Church Council develop a budget for 2025 by asking you to make your prayerful contemplated giving pledge now.

I (or we) plan on giving \$_____ Weekly Monthly Yearly (Circle one)

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Pastor Bill Uetricht & Stewardship Committee

Thank you for your past pledges, for your contributions this year, and for all your past support.

It is, of course, easier for the parish administration to plan the new budget when there is knowledge of anticipated contributions.

We are not lacking in places to give. If you are like me, you might receive five or even ten charitable requests in your mailbox on any given day. We are hoping that you will put your parish at the top of your giving list. The Pledge card is easy to fill out

If you need assistance with the method of making your contribution, please check our website, call or drop by the church office. You can mail your Pledge to the church, drop it in the collection or at the office. (Make a copy for yourself.) This exercise serves as a reminder to support and to be grateful to God and his people for our blessings. For we are, “Rooted in abundance.”

Your Stewardship Ministry



Chimes Assemblers

Thanks to Dave and Theresa Buchan who assembled the November Chimes.



Fellowship Ministry recently hosted the Halloween Wednesday night costume party. We would like to thank the many people that helped with that event. It was a huge success. We were able to raise over \$700.00 for the Lutheran Disaster Relief for the 2 hurricanes in Southern North Carolina and Florida. We are happy to help our neighbors and other communities here in the USA. We had so many people dress up and it was a pleasure to see everyone come out and support our event. Thanks for a great evening!

Thank yous go out to:

- Our cooks, Kaitlynn Sutton, Steve Ferski and Cameron Moore. Thank you so much for your help. We couldn't have done it without you.
- Dale Roest, Barb Pellerin, Carol Parker, Lisa Ferski and Diane Kroll for all the prep work in the kitchen the day before the event.
- Fellowship members Deb Roest, Diane Kroll, Lisa Ferski, Barb Pellerin and Carol Parker on setting up and keeping the food tables full.
- Barb Bonifield for her generous donations of all the paper products we used, plus setting up tables and decorations in the FLC. The decorations were great! Her helpers included: Kathleen Cobler, Karen Crummel, Jerry & Robbin Dibble, Anna Alderman, Anne Schalow, Joe Labiak and many others.
- Our face painter, Anna Frietsch. The kids really enjoyed that.
- Burnished Brass for entertaining us for the evening. What a treat!!!
- And to everyone who stayed to help clean up; especially Jim Sutton who washed all those dishes we managed to dirty up. So many hands make light work, and everyone really enjoyed the evening.

In God's blessing,
 Deb Roest and Diane Kroll
 Fellowship Co- Chairs



Weekly Offerings

Week ending 10-06-2024

General Fund: \$9,147.17
 Building Rent: \$1,165.00
 Building Enhancement: \$390.00
 Dollar A Day: \$551.40

Week ending 10-13-2024

General Fund: \$8,435.50
 Building Rent: \$146.00
 Building Enhancement: \$155.00
 Dollar A Day: \$82.00
 Noisy Offering (for Lutheran Disaster Relief): \$411.99

Week ending 10-20-2024

General Fund: \$13,645.82
 Building Rent: \$472.75
 Building Enhancement: \$235.00
 Noisy Offering (for LDRelief): \$264.84

Week ending 10-27-2024

General Fund: \$5,043.84
 Building Rent: \$174.50
 Building Enhancement: \$235.00
 Noisy Offering (Same): \$322.76



December Birthdays

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|----|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Connor Goodwin | 11 | Mary Rop
Joe Schmitt | 24 | Dominic Tyler
Merijo Dulyea |
| 2 | Elsie Klint | 12 | Kristine Anderson
David Cooke
Paula Dusseljee | 25 | Brittani Christensen
Dona Gilbert |
| 3 | Taela Plekes
Carol Anderson | 14 | Merle Hanson
Ann Metiva
Marsha Stewart | 27 | Michael Thomas |
| 4 | Keith Stapel | 15 | Stewart Veeck | 29 | Catherine Tolley |
| 5 | Helen Towne | 16 | Norma Kanaar
Steven Habina
Evie Hulka | 30 | David Aker
Diane Werling |
| 6 | Nadine Vanderstelt | 19 | Joe Labiak
Jane Redline | 31 | Sande Borushko
Megan Ball |
| 7 | Micah Uetricht | 21 | Marci Neel
Robert Frey | | |
| 8 | Iris Rodriguez | 22 | Mary Warden
Delaney Dahlstrom | | |
| 9 | John Jack
Elizabeth Lucht
Emily Lucht | | | | |
| 10 | Connie Pluger
Stanley Shank
Emily Schlager
Marilyn Fisk | | | | |



Keepers

Gerald and Betty Crenno
1740 Village Dr Apt 318
Village at the Oaks
Muskegon, MI 49442-4288

Theresa Hansen
Robbinswood-Northcrest Campus
2650 Ruddiman Dr
North Muskegon, MI 49445

Rosemary Loch
704 Miller Drive
North Muskegon, MI 49445

Pat Mullinex
Newaygo County Medical Care
Facility
4465 W. 48th St.
Fremont, MI 49412
Mailing Address:
2284 Riverwood Drive
Twin Lake, MI 49457

Warren Robinson
Poppen Hospice House
2065 East Mt Garfield Rd
Muskegon, MI 49444

Keith Stapel
1228 Lawrence St
Muskegon, MI 49442

Dave Walborn
18552 W Spring Lake Rd
Spring Lake, MI 49456

Mary Warden
1740 Village Dr. Apt 222
Muskegon, MI 49442-4283

First Lutheran Church

December 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Dollar-A-Day Weekend 9:15AM-Confirmation 9:30AM-Kids' Music 3-4 years 9:30AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person Worship 10:30AM-Online Worship 12:00PM-Bells 5:00PM-Advent by Candlelight 7:00PM-AA Meeting	2 12:00PM-Quilters' Group 5:45PM-Chair Yoga 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming 7:15PM-Gently Restore Yoga	3 Bulletin Deadline 9:00AM-Pickleball 11:30PM-MARSP Meeting 3:00PM-Burnished Brass 6:00PM-Lion's Club Christmas Party 6:30PM-Choir 9:30PM-Compline	4 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting 3:00PM-Clipper Preservation Auction 5:30PM-Wed. Night Dinner 6:00PM-Grief Share Group 6:15PM-Advent Worship Service	5 12:00PM-Lectioyary Bible Study 3:00PM-Clipper Preservation Group 4:00PM-Outreach Ministry 6:00PM-In-Person Worship 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	6 5:30PM-Baton Class 7:00PM-AA Meeting	7 8:30AM-Care Team Meeting 11:00AM-Rental
8 9:15AM-Confirmation 9:30AM-Kids' Music 3-4 years 9:30AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person Worship 10:30AM-Online Worship 11:30AM-Congregational Mtg 12:00PM-Bells 5:00PM-MS/HS Progressive Dinner 6:00PM-Listening for the Word 7:00PM-AA Meeting	9 12:00PM-Quilters' Group 3:00PM-Sons of Norway Board Meeting 5:45PM-Chair Yoga 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming 7:15PM-Soul Flow Yoga	10 Bulletin Deadline 9:00AM-Pickleball 9:30AM-1st on 2nd Quilt Bee 11:30AM-Muskegon County Garden Club 3:00PM-Burnished Brass 6:30PM-Choir 9:30PM-Compline	11 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting 4:00PM-Lion's Club Officer Meeting 5:30PM-Wed. Night Dinner 6:00PM-Grief Share Group 6:15PM-R-P School Choirs Concert	12 12:00PM-Lectioyary Bible Study 6:00PM-Private Group 6:00PM-In-Person Worship 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	13 5:00PM-Sons of Norway 5:30PM-Bunco 6:00PM-Baton Class 7:00PM-AA Meeting	14 8:30AM-Men's Breakfast 8:30AM-Women's Breakfast 11:00AM-Rental 6:00PM-Restore Your Soul Yoga Event
15 Chimes Deadline 9:15AM-Confirmation 9:30AM-Kids' Music 3-4 years 9:30AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person Worship 10:30AM-Online Worship 12:00PM-Elementary Christmas Party 12:30PM-Rental 7:00PM-AA Meeting	16 12:00PM-Quilters' Group 5:45PM-Chair Yoga 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming 7:15PM-Gently Restore Yoga	17 Bulletin Deadline 9:00AM-Pickleball 3:00PM-Burnished Brass 6:00PM-Lions Club 6:30PM-Choir 8:00PM-Lion's Club Board Mtg 9:30PM-Compline	18 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting 6:00PM-Grief Share Group 6:00PM-Christmas Caroling	19 12:00PM-Lectioyary Bible Study 6:00PM-In-Person Worship/Longest Night Service 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	20 6:00PM-Baton Class 6:00PM-Crafty Group 7:00PM-AA Meeting	21
22 9:15AM-Confirmation 9:30AM-Kids' Music 3-4 years 9:30AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person Worship/Children's Program 10:30AM-Online Worship 12:00PM-Bells 6:00PM-Listening for the Word 7:00PM-AA Meeting	23 12:00PM-Quilters' Group 5:45PM-Chair Yoga 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming 7:15PM-Soul Flow Yoga	24 ** Office Closed ** 6:00PM-Candlelight Worship Service 11:00PM-Candlelight Worship Service	25 ** Office Closed **	26 10:00AM-Rental 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	27 7:00PM-AA Meeting	28
29 9:30AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person Worship 10:30AM-Online Worship 7:00PM-AA Meeting	30 12:00PM-Quilters' Group 5:45PM-Chair Yoga 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	31 Bulletin Deadline 9:00AM-Pickleball				