



# Moment of Contact

First Lutheran Church  
3939 Cheyenne Blvd.  
Sioux City, IA 51104  
(712-239-3942)



December 2020 Contact      Volume 49, Issue 7

November 25, 2020

## Pastor's Message

For God so loved the world....

In these challenging days where up seems down, where moving forward seems like going in reverse, where life takes effort and simple pleasures are complicated, we wait in the gathering darkness for a flicker of light.

It is no surprise that God uses light to teach us about life. The light of the world, shattered the darkness. Let there be light, God spoke creation into being. Shining a light in a dark place gives perspective, enhances our sight and eliminates the confusion. If we have eyes to see!

What do we see in these dark days? Closures, restrictions, chaos. Or opportunity, reflection, possibility. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whoever believes in God will have eternal life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. (John 3:16,17)

Do we want to be saved? Do we feel condemned to a world where we are hanging on for dear life rather than living life to its fullest? God is continually saving us from sin. Each and every day. Even in coronavirus pandemic challenging days.

What can we take away this advent season as we wait for dawning light? Wait for a vaccine. Wait for daylight. Wait for dear ones we cannot see except through a computer screen. Wait for this to end. Wait for newness to begin. Waiting is hard, but it does not have to be without hope.

This week our adult Bible Study read Psalm 40. The first words out of the psalmist mouth were....I waited patiently for the Lord (NRSV), or it could also be translated, I hope intensely for the Lord. Hoping intensely is what advent is all about. As we await the coming of Jesus, the light of the world, we also await a life which will return to normal. Even though we do not know what will be normal in the future, only that it will be different. How do we navigate a new normal?

We remember John's words to us which most of us learned in childhood and for good reason...God so loved the world that God gave us Jesus. If this is not intense hope, I don't know what is!

May we wait with intense hope for Christ our light this season.

*Pastor Kristine*

## Request for Nativity Scene Photos

As we await the coming of Jesus we find our favorite recipes, set up the tree, turn on the Christmas music and enter into the season. As part of our Christmas Eve video, we would like to invite you to submit a picture of your nativity scene or a crèche. Send by December 15th to ([firstlutheransecretary3939@gmail.com](mailto:firstlutheransecretary3939@gmail.com)). Thank you!

## Life Passages

*You belong to Christ*  
Sally James Keller,  
November 29, 2020



## Inside this issue:

**Worship in the Time of Pandemic**

**Worship & Music**

**Communication Mtg. Info**

**Council Summary**

**December Calendar/Food Pantry Drive & Volunteer Info**

**Faith Formation Info**

**First Lutheran Church**  
**3939 Cheyenne Blvd**  
**Sioux City, IA 51104**

Office Phone: 712-239-3942

Website: <https://www.firstlutheransc.org>

**First Lutheran Staff**

Pastor Kristine Stedje

flcpastor3939@gmail.com

612-408-6692

Carla Flores, Office Mgr.

firstlutheransecretary3939@gmail.com

Jim Larson, Custodian

**First Lutheran Church Council**

Alison Hertenstein, President

alison.hertenstein@hintonschool.com

712-223-1364

Lori McClaren, Vice President

lori@northeast.edu

712-253-2322

Enola Peters, Secretary

epeters@cableone.net

712-258-5210

Jen Snyder, Treasurer

jsnyder0025@yahoo.com

712-899-4429

Chris Taylor, Worship and Music

rrtaylorview@aol.com

712-574-9111

Lee Knop, Operations

leesroofing1@hotmail.com

712-560-6265

Julie Thiele, Faith Formation

teesfive@gmail.com

712-898-0190

Jennifer Denne, Youth and Recreation

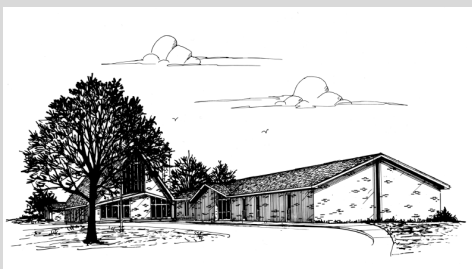
jenndenne@yahoo.com

712-239-4935, 712-251-3069

Candy Johnson, Mission

jgary706@aol.com

712-251-9411



**Worship in the Time of Pandemic**

After thoughtful consideration the congregation council unanimously voted to **suspend in-person worship** and programming activities until further notice. Based on the governor's proclamation on November 16<sup>th</sup>, and the recommendations of the CDC, activities of more than fifteen persons will not be held in the church building. All in-person activities will be subject to council approval on a case by case basis.

Sunday morning worship continues each week by way of radio and Facebook livestream. **Mid-week Advent** worship will be held by way of Zoom Conference Call. We will Watch, Wait, Wonder and Worship on **Wednesday evenings at 7 pm**. A zoom link will be provided to those who wish to participate. This thirty-minute reflection time will feature a theme for the evening with group breakout conversations with other participants, prayer and song. Contact the office for Zoom link information.

**Christmas Eve worship will not be held in-person**, a video will be made available on our website by noon on Christmas Eve for families to view in their homes. The video will include Christmas readings and carols, Pastor Kristine's Christmas message and Silent Night with candles and prayer. To fully participate in this service, you may stop by the office to pick up Christmas Eve candles and holders for use in your home as you view the service.

This Advent and Christmas season will be different. Perhaps we will make new traditions. Perhaps we will seek to give gifts in new ways. What will not change is our ability to reflect on God's gift to us in the form of an infant born for you this season. What will continue is our ability to gather as the people of God to worship, pray and reflect on God's abundance in times of challenge and change.

**Worship and Music**

As we return to a limited group of individuals who will serve each Sunday to bring you a radio broadcast and Facebook livestream, there are still opportunities to serve as a worship leader. If you would like to be a reader, assist with the prayers of intercession, or give voice to a quiet song please contact Pastor Kristine. Your gifts are wanted and needed during this time.

**Daily Advent Devotions**

During the Advent Season the staff of the Western Iowa Synod will be posting daily devotions. Check out these offerings on their website, beginning **Sunday, November 29<sup>th</sup>** at [wisynod.org](http://wisynod.org).

### Communication Meeting, December 13 following worship

Join First Lutheran Congregation Council members as they provide an update on what has been happening at First and plans for the future of the congregation. Following worship on **Sunday, December 13th**, we will broadcast a Facebook livestream and Zoom Conference Call. A readout on our Stewardship focus during the month of November will be provided. More information on how to access the meeting will be provided during the worship service. We hope you will plan to join us for this informative meeting.

### FLC Finance Update

Needed weekly per budget \$5,442.31 / for the month of November \$27,211.55. As of 11/23 income is \$18,628.00.



### First Lutheran Church Council Report, November 17, 2020

President:	Alison Hertenstein	Vice President:	Lori McClaren
Secretary:	Enola Peters	Treasurer:	Jen Snyder
Worship & Music:	Chris Taylor	Faith Formation:	Julie Thiele
Youth:	Jenny Denne	Mission:	Candy Johnson
Operations:	Lee Knop	Pastor Kristine	

The Council of First Lutheran Church met **Tuesday, November 17, 2020**. The highlights of the meeting were as follows:

- ♦ We received a letter from the Synod to thank us for financially supporting their work.
- ♦ The PPP loan was forgiven effective October 30, 2020.
- ♦ Due to the increase in COVID statistics and cases, we will return to Facebook and radio broadcasts of our Worship services effective November 22nd. A Baptism is scheduled for November 29th, and that will still be held with a limited number of persons in attendance.
- ♦ No community partner activities will be allowed in the building. For groups that are meeting in the building, the maximum attendance is ten persons.
- ♦ Wednesday night activities are discontinued immediately.
- ♦ The Wednesday evening Advent services will be available by Zoom Conference call.
- ♦ Extra precautions are being taken to protect the health and safety of our Food Pantry volunteers.
- ♦ All Faith Formation activities are discontinued for the time being.
- ♦ At the Communication Meeting on December 13th, there will be a discussion regarding the Congregation Council possibly extending their service for an additional six months. The status of having an Annual Meeting is definitely unknown at this time.
- ♦ The newly written Employee Handbook was approved by the Council.
- ♦ A Christmas video is being worked on which will be available through either Facebook or on the website. The video will be ready by noon on December 24th and can be watched in your homes at your convenience with your families.
- ♦ The Caring Callers are continuing their work. If you know of someone who could use some extra TLC, please contact the church office.
- ♦ The Mission Group is planning a "Pack the Pantry" to restock our Food Pantry. Details will be in the Contact.
- ♦ Somewhat scaled down decorating of the church will be done on December 5th by the Worship and Music Committee.
- ♦ Poinsettias are needed. Please contact the office if you are able to donate for this.
- ♦ Jim, the new janitor, is working about six hours a week, and is working out very well. Welcome, Jim!



# December 2020



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1  5:00 First Responder Support Mtg. in CR	2 9-11:30 Food Pantry  7:00 Mid-week Advent via Zoom	3 11:00 Bible Study via Zoom  6:30 Worship & Music Mtg. in FR	4	5 10:00 Worship and Music Advent Prep
6 10:00 Worship -FB Live/Radio	7 Pastor's Day Off	8  6:30 Exec in FR	9 9-11:30 Food Pantry  7:00 Mid-week Advent via Zoom	10 11:00 Bible Study via Zoom	11	12
13 10:00 Worship -FB Live/Radio	14 Pastor's Day Off	15  6:30 Council Mtg. in FH	16 9-11:30 Food Pantry  7:00 Mid-week Advent via Zoom	17 11:00 Bible Study via Zoom	18	19
20 10:00 Worship/FB Live/Radio	21 Pastor's Day Off	22	23 9-11:30 Food Pantry  7:00 Mid-week Advent via Zoom	24 12:00 Christmas Eve Video Available on Website  	25 Christmas Day - Office Closed	26
27 10:00 Worship/FB Live/Radio	28 Pastor's Day Off Carla vacation all week Office Closed Today	29	30	31  		<u>Key</u> FH = Fellowship Hall FR = Fireside Room YR = Youth Room SS = Sunday School Room CR = Comm. Rm

### "Pack the Pantry"

The Mission Committee invites you to be a part of our drive to help feed Siouxland families. You can participate in two ways:

- 1) Write a check to the Siouxland Food Bank where your dollar can purchase 13 pounds of food. **Or** donate directly to our First Lutheran Food Pantry.
- 2) Donate food to our own First Lutheran Food Pantry.

Randy Burnight works tirelessly for this endeavor with the help of several volunteers. The items most commonly desired but not often available at the Food Bank to purchase are: small plastic jars of jelly and peanut butter, 15 oz. cans of soup and small containers of pancake syrup. Any boxed or canned food would be appreciated. Note: glass containers are somewhat dangerous due to bags getting ripped or dropped. Below are drop off dates and times:

Donations can be dropped off at church Monday-Friday between 9 and 1pm.

Volunteers will be at FLC to accept your donations outside of normal work hours:

**Saturday, December 5, 10 – 11am, Wednesday, December 9, 5:30 – 6:30 pm & Thursday, December 17, 5:30 – 6:30 pm**

Jesus said, Come you that are blessed by my Father...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

We are blessed when we give, because our gift returns to us. When we do it for the least among us, we do it for the one who was born as a refugee. One who lived among us in human flesh, who was hungry, thirsty and a stranger. We are blessed to be a blessing. Thank you for your gift to those in need this giving season.

#### Advent Wreath Family Kit

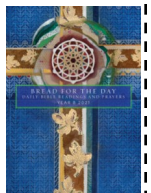
The Faith Formation Team is putting together an advent wreath kit for families with young children. The kit includes all you need to make your own advent wreath, including candles, greenery, activities for Advent preparation and more. Kits will be dropped off at your house and left on your door knob. We hope you will take time this Advent season to teach, learn and prepare as a family for the coming of Christ in your home.



Poinsettias are needed for Christmas. Please call the office to order and designate an in honor or in memory designation. The poinsettias will decorate the chancel during Advent, you may pick up your poinsettia and take home after **Sunday, December 20**. The price is \$13.

#### 2021 Bread for the Day Devotions

Devotional books for 2021 are available in the office for \$10. These devotional books provide a biblical reading and prayer for each day of the year. If you are so inclined there is also a hymn to sing for each reading. Pick up your copy before they are gone!



## HELPING IN THE HOLY FAMILY FOOD PANTRY

**December 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29**

Casandra & Catrina Tounjian preparing bags for Wednesday distribution.

December 2	December 9	December 16	December 23	December 30
Dorothy Chauncey Nadine Holst August Schenzel	Mary McCoy Chris Taylor August Schenzel	Pam Richards Ann Doellinger August Schenzel	Katherine Henshaw Nadine Holst August Schenzel	LaVonne Lundgren August Schenzel TBD





**First Lutheran Church**  
**3939 Cheyenne Blvd.**  
**Sioux City, IA 51104**  
**Return Service Requested**

### **Update from the Faith Formation Committee**

The fall session of LLC/Confirmation concluded on November 11, and the fall session of Sunday School concluded on November 15. Families with children should have received an Advent kit to use at home during the Advent season. We hope that your family finds the kit helpful as you prepare for the celebration of the birth of Jesus at home. If you did not receive a kit, please contact the church office or Julie Thiele.

Confirmation will resume on January 6. Pastor Kristine will teach this 6 week session by Zoom. Confirmation families will receive more details about the time for the sessions and how to access the Zoom sessions later in December.



Due to the increase in Covid 19 cases in our community, we are carefully evaluating the safety and interest of our families to make decisions about resuming Sunday School and Wednesday LLC programs after Christmas. Our committee will meet early in January to discuss the best options for our families with children, and we will communicate our plan for continued Faith Formation programs at that time.

### **ADULT BIBLE STUDY**

This weekly offering continues at **11 am every Thursday morning on December 2, 9 and 16**. We gather on Zoom to discuss a variety of Psalms. If you are interested in being part of the conversation, please let Pastor Kristine know, she will provide you with the zoom link. Come once or every week. All are welcome!