



THE MESSENGER

Red Cross
Blood Drive
January 12
7:30-noon

Weather Related
Closings: see
details inside

Camp
Sunday
January 12

Gone are the days of asking for directions. We just Google an address and our phone will give us turn-by-turn directions to anywhere you want to go. It used to be we had to follow a paper map or memorize the route. Sometimes we actually had to ask someone how to get to wherever we were going. "Take a left on main." "Head south on the old highway." "When you come to the fork in the road, where the old oak tree stood until the blizzard of '76 knocked it over, take it past where old man Wilson used to live, go a couple more miles and it'll be on the right. If you get to the creek, you've gone too far." That reminds me of my trip to San Jose, Costa Rica, where their streets have no names.

How good are you at giving directions? Are they clear? The problem with asking you these questions is that you have a mental image of the landmarks and road signs so, of course, it all makes sense to you. Perhaps the better question is: How well do others understand your directions? That's a completely different question, isn't it?

I think it can sometimes be difficult explain things to other people, especially when you can't quite articulate a feeling or experience. Sometimes in our fuddled attempts at an explanation we just make matters worse. Sometimes is just easier to give up and say, "I guess you had to be there."

After Philip met Jesus, he went off to tell Nathaneal about this promised messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. Nathaneal famously replies, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

If you were Philip, how would you answer that question? After all, Philip just met Jesus and didn't know that much about him. And do you really think any explanation would satisfy Nathaneal? He seems to have some sort of attitude going on.

Philip gives a great answer. He simply says, "Come and see." The answer to Nathaneal's question no longer relies on Philip's ability to put into words who Jesus is. Nathaneal can answer his own question through his own observations and interactions. Genius!

If somebody asked you what it's like at First Lutheran now, how would you answer? "Come and see?"

If someone asked why they should come to First Lutheran, how would you answer? "Come and see?"

Inviting someone to come and see is a lot less intimidating than trying to explain what's happening here or why you come here. And we're going to make it even less intimidating.

In early January, we will have a special little postcard in the seat-backs, at the Welcome Center, and at the front desk. These little cards will be a special invitation to "come and see" what makes First Lutheran so special. We have set Sunday, February 2, as our "Come and See" Sunday. All we ask of you is to hand deliver these invitations to someone you'd like to see join us on a Sunday morning. Maybe it's a neighbor or a family member. Perhaps it's a co-worker or a friend. The card will have all the information they need to know. We'll take care of rest.

So let's learn a little from Philip. We don't have to have all the answers. We don't have to be able to explain everything. Let's just invite people to come and see for themselves.

Pastor Greg

Worship

Sunday Worship each week at 8:45 & 10:45 am

Holy Communion served during both worship services each week.

We hope to see you in person at worship. However, we know there are times that won't work. FLC livestreams the Sunday 8:45 service. Watch it live or whenever you have time from our Facebook page or go to our website www.flcfremont.org and click on the *Worship with Us* button for more viewing options.

Wednesday "Pray-lude" Worship at 6:15 pm

Join us for a mid-week worship service; including a devotion and prayer prompts based on a current contemporary worship song, the hearing of the upcoming Sunday's scripture, a short meditation, a few songs, and the Celebration of Holy Communion each week.

Sunday Morning Hospitality Volunteers

FLC has created a church home for people to feel welcomed. We can reach people with smiles and handshakes. Join your church family in greeting, ushering or serving as a welcome center host or a communion server. You can sign up on the [FLC website](http://www.flcfremont.org) or by calling the office.

Sponsor Altar Flowers or Sunday Morning Gathering

Fellowship is an important part of Sunday mornings. Sharing our faith stories over coffee and donuts helps us grow as the FLC family. Altar flowers brighten the worship space and are delivered each week to someone needing a little cheer or celebrating a special event. If you'd like to sponsor the Sunday morning gathering or Altar Flowers, please sign up [on-line](#) under the Ministry Opportunities section.

Worship Volunteers

If you'd like to help with the Children's Messages, reading the scripture, or providing special music for any worship service, please contact Amy at amys@flcfremont.org.

Sunday Snow Touchups

We know it will eventually happen... snow will fall on a Sunday morning. We are in need of volunteers to help with keeping the entrances cleared of snow during services on Sunday mornings. It would involve keeping the entrances cleared and salted after the snow removal company does their initial sweep. You can pick your own dates and sign up for a part or the whole morning! Sign up in the weekly e-news or on our [website](#).



Weather Related Closings

The closing of the church would be a last resort but we want to protect the safety of our members and employees. If the occasion arises where we need to close the church and cancel services for weather or other events:

- Sunday worship services and any event(s) at FLC will be held at the discretion of FLC Leadership.
- The Early Learning Center will close or open late at the discretion of the Early Learning Center Director.

The decision to close the office, open late, or cancel service will be made no later than 7 am or 2 hours prior to scheduled events. The notification will be posted on the FLC social media pages and announced on KHUB, KETV, KMTV, and WOWT as able.

Remembering in Prayer

Remember to let the church office know if you are facing a health concern or will be in the hospital so someone can be in contact with you. If you request, the prayer chain will also be activated. It is also helpful to our FirstCare ministry if you let us know about someone who could use a caring call.

Prayers of healing for Judy Ellis, Butch Scott, Dean and Janie Baugh, Joy Horn, Virginia Gard, Dennis Knudsen, Duane McKenzie, Jerry McPherran, Steve Hall, Lyman Niebaum, Shawn Brown, and Maureen (Mo) Carpenter, and Andrew Olsen's friend, John.

Prayers of peace for the family and friends of Joe Kubr.

December Pastoral Acts:

12-8-24 Rosalynn Hilgenkamp baptism

12-26-24 Joe Kubr funeral



Discipleship

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

SATURDAYS | 8:30 AM

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Heritage Room



Currently studying:
The Gospel of Luke

Men's Bible Study will continue studying the Gospel of Luke. They will meet every Saturday in January at 8:30am in the Heritage Room. The group invites all men to join this study.

TLC (Together Living with Cancer) Support Group meets Tuesdays, January 14 and 28 at 6:30pm in the Youth Room.

Rix Study Group meets Sunday mornings at 9:45am in the Conference Room. Everyone is welcome to join in the discussion of Max Lucado's book, *Unshakable Hope*.

Sunday Study with Kris Lindgren meets at 9:45am in the Heritage Room. All are welcome to join in our discussions.

FLC Women of the ELCA

Chick Flicks will meet on Tuesday, January 7 at 6:00pm in the Youth Room.

Faith Study Group will meet on Thursday, January 9, in the Conference Room. Wendy Olson will lead the lesson, using the November (Session 3) lesson of the Gather magazine.

FLC First Monday Bible Study will meet at the home of Judy Jorgensen, 1320 Ruth Avenue, Monday, January 6, at 10:00am. The women will study Chapter 5 of *Just Like Jesus* by Max Lucado. Mary Ann Thomas will serve as co-hostess.

WOW (Women of the Word) Bible Study will meet on Wednesday, January 8 at 9:30am in the Heritage Room. Evelyn Eldridge will lead the study on Chapter 4 of Max Lucado's book, *Anxious for Nothing*. All are welcome to join!

FLC Quilters will meet on Wednesday, January 15 at 1:00pm to tie quilts. You do not need to know how to sew to be part of this group. We need people who can cut, organize, thrift shop, tie knots, and much more. Talk to Gina DeBoer if you are interested in helping FLC's quilting ministry continue.

Women of the ELCA Synodical Winter Retreat will be held from 9:30am-3:00pm Saturday, January 18, 2025 at St Paul's Lutheran Church in Grand Island. Registration with \$20 fee is due Wednesday, January 8. Contact Eileen Thornburg for further information bthornburg@neb.rr.com.

The Spring Gathering is on March 8, 2025 in Lincoln. Registration is \$20. FLC Women of the ELCA are in the Midlands Conference and invited to this gathering. More details coming



PICKLEBALL 101

FLC MISSION CENTER
3200 E MILITARY AVE

JAN 23 6:30 PM ALL AGES

BEAT THE WITNER BLUES - COME LEARN THE BASICS OF PICKLEBALL IN A SAFE, SUPPORTIVE, FUN ENVIRONMENT

NO EXPERIENCE OR EQUIPMENT NEEDED



O.W.L.S.
Card Party

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8
1:00-3:00PM

Bring a friend - there will be a variety of card games to choose from

January Ministry

Partner: CJH

It may be wintery outside, but it's never too early to start talking about Summer Camp. This month our ministry partner will be Camp Carol Joy Holling with Lutheran Outdoor Ministries. January 12 is going to be CAMP SUNDAY at FLC. We are excited to share a gift with the camp from our endowment board. Representatives from camp will join us at both worship services to receive the gift and to share plans for the 2025 camp schedule. We will also have camp-themed fun available in Fellowship Hall between services.

Early Bird Registration is already open and we are encouraging campers of all ages to sign up now. First Lutheran will sponsor HALF of the cost for those active at FLC to attend camp in the summer. (Families must fill out a camp voucher and return it to the church office by the Early Bird Deadline - January, 31).

In addition, the congregation will have the opportunity to help support a Summer Camp Counselor at Camp Carol Joy. We have had several counselors from our church...(Nate Grimm, Rachel DeBoer, Levi DeBoer, Evan DeBoer) who can share how important this experience has been to their faith formation. Scan the QR code, go to our website www.flcfremont.org/events and click the button, or write a check to give.



Mobile Banquet:



The FLC mobile banquet will serve 200+ meals to Regency Mobile Park, LifeHouse, and Aspire on Thursday, January 9 from 5:30-6:30pm. Please consider helping make this possible with your donations of food items, money or time. It's easy, sign up [on-line](#) or call the office to offer your help!

Holiday Food Drive
for LifeHouse
November - December 20

We **REACHED** our goal of **\$6,500** toward RetirePath Drive.

Total as of 12/23 - \$ 6,764

Total as of 12/9 - \$ 4,264

Total as of 12/9 - \$ 3,714

Total as of 12/3 - \$ 3,259

Total as of 11/25 - \$ 3,144

Total as of 11/18 - \$ 2,378

Total as of 11/11 - \$ 1,086

Many thanks to all who donated to the Care Corps/ LifeHouse food drive. We reached and surpassed our goal of \$6500. In total, FLC donated over 1300 pounds of food to the pantry, \$6764 to the Retire-Path drive, and \$295 to LifeHouse from our Thanksgiving offering. What great support to a much needed community ministry partner.



FLC Mobile Banquet Winter Coat Drive

Donations of coats, hats, gloves, and mittens can be dropped off at the FLC Office October-December. These items will be distributed with the Mobile Banquet meals the 2nd Thursday of each month. **Children's sizes are the most desired**, but all sizes are needed.

Children and Youth

**8TH GRADE
CONFIRMATION
RETREAT**

MONDAY, JANUARY 20
9:00AM-3:30PM

Bring your Bible

Lunch Provided

Agenda:

- Approve project ideas
- Choose confirmation verse
- Church membership review
- Fellowship & games

First Lutheran Church
Youth Room

A graphic for an 8th Grade Confirmation Retreat. It features a dark blue background with orange and white wavy patterns. The text is in white and orange. It lists the date and time, a list of agenda items, and notes that participants should bring their Bibles and that lunch is provided. The location is the First Lutheran Church Youth Room.

Sunday School News

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Family Christmas Program. It was a quick, and successful, event. Through events like these, we fulfill the promises we make in Baptism; “to live with them among God’s faithful people, bring them to the word of God and nurture them in faith.” Together we are the church. Sunday School will resume on Sunday, January 12 at 9:45am. We hope to see you all there!

Middle School News

- **Wednesday, January 8**—7th Grade only
- **Wednesday, January 22**, 7-8:30pm- Meet in MS Youth Room
- Sign up for MS Remind by texting @flcms2024 to the number 81010

High School News

- **Wednesday, January 8**, 7:00-9:00pm- Meet in FLY room
- **Wednesday, January 15**, 7:00-9:00pm- Meet in FLY room
- **Friday, January 17– Sunday, January 19**—HS FLY Retreat at CJH
- **Wednesday, January 22**, 7:00-9:00pm- Meet in FLY room
- **Wednesday, January 29**, 7:00-9:00pm- Meet in FLY room
- Sign up for the HS Remind by texting @2024flchs to the number 81010

Confirmation News

- **Wednesday, January 8, Mandatory 8th grade meeting**—Students and parents will meet to learn about the Confirmation project and Affirmation of Baptism service details.
- **Wednesday, January 15**, 7:00-8:30pm-Class
- **Monday, January 20**, 9:00-3:30pm-8th Grade Retreat @ church
- **Wednesday, January 29**, 7:00-8:30pm-Class
- Sign up for Confirmation Remind by texting @flccon2024 to the number 81010



Carol Joy Holling Camp



Sign up now for 2025 Summer Camps
Brochures available at the Welcome Center

New for 2025!

All active FLC youth are eligible to receive HALF of the cost of camp paid for by FLC. Register on-line for camp AND submit your FLC campership form to the office by January 31st to receive this campership.

Questions?

Contact Gina DeBoer @ ginad@flcfremont.org

Early Learning Center



Time flies when you are having fun! It's hard to believe that it is January already, but we are looking forward to what 2025 has in store for us!

As we look back on the past year, our hearts are full of gratitude for the many blessings that have touched our childcare community. From the laughter of the children to the support of our dedicated staff and families, we have truly been surrounded by love, joy, and growth. We are so grateful for: The incredible children who bring so much joy and energy to our center. The loving families who trust us with their little ones and continue to support us every step of the way. Our amazing team, whose passion and care create a nurturing environment every single day. The new programs, improvements, and moments of connection that have strengthened our community. We are blessed in countless ways and look forward to another year of making memories, learning, and growing together.



**Now Enrolling:
3 & 4-Year-Old
Spots Available!**

**Spots are limited,
so don't wait!**

Join our childcare family today
and watch your child's journey of
learning and discovery unfold.

Call us at
402-721-2959
or email our Director,
Mindy Olson at
mindyo@flcfremont.org
to get started.

Safe, nurturing space
Qualified and caring staff
Age-appropriate learning activities
Fun-filled days with plenty of play
and exploration

REGISTER NOW



First Lutheran Church Early Learning Center

WE NEED YOU!

Job Position: Full time Preschool Teacher ✨

Send your resume to Mindy Olson, Director
mindyo@flcfremont.org

402.721.2959



Join Our Childcare Team! ✨

Are you passionate about working with children and making a positive impact on their lives? We want YOU to be part of our childcare team!

We are looking for caring, dedicated, and enthusiastic individuals who are eager to nurture and guide the next generation. If you have a love for teaching, a kind heart, and a commitment to helping children thrive, we would love to hear from you!

What We Offer:

- A supportive and collaborative team environment
- Opportunities for growth and professional development
- A chance to make a difference in a child's life every day!

If you're ready to bring your energy and passion to our childcare family, apply today!

Council Highlights - December

December FLC Council Highlights

- Congregation attendance on December 8th at the late service was the highest attendance at a late service in two years
- Call committee is being organized as FLC begins a call for an associate pastor
- ATV has been purchased! Let's pray it won't need to be used to push snow too much this winter!
- The call committee to call an Associate Pastor has been formed. Members are: Dick Norenberg– chair, Morgan Engelbart, Brock Ellis, Matt Ridder, Maureen Carpenter, and Jill Miller.

Respectfully Submitted by Derek Fey, FLC Council Secretary

**Full minutes are available upon request

Monthly Financial Report

Monthly Financial Report - Fiscal Year

	General Fund Pledged Receipts				Building Fund Receipts	
	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Budget	2021-2022	2023-2024
September	56,618.16	57,598.66	64,655.05	60,000.00	19,342.67	1,681.67
October	66,857.58	54,139.16	84,815.96	60,000.00	9,673.67	2,125.00
November	55,537.27	70,432.85	64,167.33	70,000.00	7,688.91	3,511.00
December	68,548.33	158,925.82		115,000.00	22,228.32	4,930.00
January	70,876.76	62,715.59		60,000.00	6,506.67	7,570.00
February	63,993.33	65,969.89		60,000.00	5,714.44	5,745.00

Although pledged giving was slightly under for November, the bottom line for the month AND YTD remains ahead of budget and last year. Thanksgiving offering was lower than prior years and will go toward the LifeHouse Food Drive. As always, the congregation has been very generous with the special mission offering collections. We are working through some insurance claims from the summer storms and unbudgeted expenses items but have been blessed with some wonderful donors to offset these costs. We were able to purchase the ATV with donor and Endowment contributions. The monthly ELC cost share is suspended through February to support the ELC until their next rate increase. As we discussed at the annual meeting, this will be a year of transition with so many wonderful changes and additions happening. Happy New Year ~ Wendy Grosse, Administrator

Targeted Giving... (as of 11/30/24) We want to give people of FLC the opportunity to give in a *targeted* way around their particular interests and passion, as well as the needs of our mission and ministry. The following categories have primarily existed in our Memorial and Special Gift Account, but we want you to be aware of these different funds on an on-going basis. Your financial support in these *targeted* areas will bring critical support to the ministry of our congregation! Thank you for the many ways that you give!



Worship/Music	\$8,966.65	Bible Camp Scholarship	\$5,496.63	Children's WAM	\$604.09
Technology	\$3,332.41	Good Samaritan	\$0	Spoudazo	\$5,793.87
Church Home	\$7,546.93	Radio Broadcast	\$4,451.00	Zoe!	\$2,993.07
Building Maint.	\$51,331.28	Prayer Shawl	\$1,571.97	ELC Tuition	
Sunday School	\$2,933.58	Quilt Ministry	\$4,997.94	Assistance	\$801.05
First Lutheran Youth	\$4,183.20			Banquet Mobile Meal	\$7364.23



Poinsettias and Christmas Decorations

Many thanks to all who sponsored our poinsettias and Christmas decorations this year!

Laura Judkins & Bob Pojar in honor of family and friends

Arlene Brewer in memory of Roy Brewer

Lon & Carol Bohling in memory of our parents

Brian & Pam Brodd

Russ & Sandy Callaway in honor of our "blessed family"

Ron & Melody Chvatal in memory of Richard & Martha Chvatal and Mike & Helen Stauffer

Barbara & Richard Coke in memory of our parents

Alice Day in memory of Carson Day

Pastor Greg & Gina DeBoer in memory of Gina's dad, Jack

Mike & Kathy Divis

Sherie Ebers in memory of Jim Ebers

Evelyn Eldridge in memory of Edwin Eldridge

Dustin & Shelly Everitt in memory of our Maddie and Shelly's mom & dad

Kim Falk

Ron & Julie Fechner in memory of our parents

Shirley Flanagan

Cherry Gocken in memory of Bruce Gocken

Dave & Julie Grimm in honor of our children and grandchildren

Nick & Carrie Hansen

Kirk Hillrichs, Angela & Annabelle Bang in memory of Donna Hillrichs

Sharon Hinds

Lyn House in memory of Jim House

Dwayne & Niki Jesse in memory of our dads, spending their 1st Christmas in heaven

JoAnne Jessen in memory of Al Jessen

Christie Johnson

Beth Kindler

Dwayne & Lucy Klocke in memory of our parents

Keith Lallman

Lyle & Jan Larsen

Eric & Kris Lindgren

Cheryl Lindgren in memory of Lawrence & Norma Lindgren

Jenny Maener in memory of Ann Lallman

Duane & Judi McKenzie

Dave & Leatta Millie in honor of FLC staff

Norma Moxness

Rob & Carol Nielsen and Bob & Cheryl Larsen in memory of Bill, Marge, & Larry Stratbucker

Rob & Carol Nielsen in memory of Don Nielsen

Dick & Jill Norenberg in memory of our parents: Harry, Jane, Bill, Iona

Lee Paden in memory of Bernie Paden

Leslie Parr in memory of Charlie Parr

Evelyn Perry

Dave & Kathy Pinkall

Marv & Janet Porter

Allen & Joan Sawtelle

Slykhuus Family in memory of Diane Hasemann

Tom & Trudy Tamke

Lavern & Karen White

Sheri & Ed Wilberding

Susan Wilt in memory of Bill Wilt

Jan Wolfe

Ron & Charlotte Young in memory of Beulah Larsen

Anonymous in memory of Joseph & Viola Pignotti

Anonymous in memory of John & Luella Hansen

Attention: Thrivent Members

If you are a Thrivent member, we need you!

Every Thrivent member has the benefit of applying for an Action Team to impact a cause of your choice. These funds can be used to start or support a ministry at FLC. We are encouraging all Thrivent Members to use their Action Teams so these funds don't go unused. If you need ideas of how to use your Action Teams, please talk to a FLC staff member. We'd be happy to help you through the process.

thrivent[®]

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

@ First Lutheran Church

JANUARY 12, 2025

Sign up at redcrossblood.org
or call Niki at 402-720-1825