

# News & Views

First Lutheran Church

February, 2023



## **MISSION, VISION...ACTION IN 2023!**

It was such a blessing to participate in Rejoice Sunday and conduct interviews with congregation members about what they most value about this church and where they hope God will take us in the future. As the congregation reflects on my role and votes on my continuing call with First in February, I am grateful that with the Mission Team's work we have recently had a chance to do some of this important work.

When I was an interim in my last call, I was excited about where the congregation the plans we made for its future mission but couldn't be a part of it. When I first came to First, I shared a vision for how we might move forward together and a process for the congregation to prepare for action. At the onset of my time here I said that my presence and position here would be dependent on people showing up and participating...and then we got a pandemic where we told people not to show up and participation became a challenge for many people. But we adapted and our ability to adapt and change directions has become a valuable characteristic of the congregation and leadership.

At First, while we've faced challenges and twists and turns in our transition work, I am excited about where we are and where we are going. In this next phase, we get to launch into more action and the "doing" phase of our mission work. What we do is so much more powerful when we do it together and when we have more clarity about why we are doing what we are doing!

Three years in, I can look back on my time with pride in what we have already accomplished and what we have to build on and cultivate. While we have not had the participation that I hoped for in many aspects of our ministry, we have shown many promising signs of life and renewed potential when we do show up and participate. I hope in the coming months with greater direction, purpose and action more of our community members will be motivated to gather around this work and support it wherever they are. Because we believe in our mission and want to share in it...not as a task or responsibility that feels like a burden, but as an opportunity to be together and do things that connect us with Jesus and his life-giving kingdom!

See Page 2... for exciting new invitations to participate in the life-giving activity!

**PASTOR JOSH**

## *What's Happening Here*

### ***First Lutheran Gather and Go Opportunities!***

In 2023, we will have many opportunities to gather in greater numbers and invite the community, including people that may be looking for a church home, into our church and congregational life. Many seeds have already been planted and now the harvest begins. The workers may still be few as we begin this work, but when we show up with energy and purpose we continue to fish for people and be a light in this community.

This Spring we will be hosting an **Easter Egg hunt** for neighborhood kids (a legacy of our work with Saint John's Lutheran) on April 1<sup>st</sup> at 10:30 and an intergenerational **Trivia night** with teams from area churches on Sunday April 30<sup>th</sup>.

One of the first things we can gather around is an activity that we heard loud and clear as a priority our Mission Team interviews on Rejoice Sunday: Gathering around food!

On **Wednesdays during Lent** (starting in March) we will be having a simple meal together with a short service and message. This will take place in Hammerling Hall from 5-6pm. Please make a plan to come at least once and contact the office if you can host one of the meals!

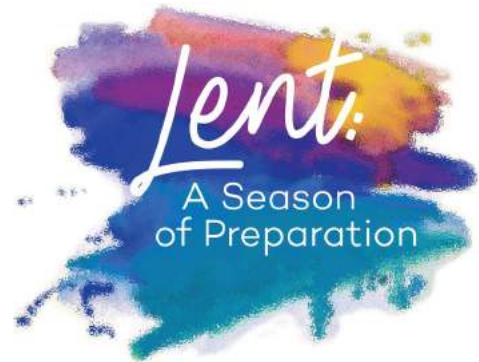
Another call we heard loud and clear in our community interviews was that partnering and sharing mission would be part of First's future and we have taken steps to live into those possibilities in the coming year. We have been asked to host a community **Pet Blessing** this Fall and a **Good Friday service** with our Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Myanmar Christian Church neighbors. This summer a pulpit exchange with our church neighbors will help us partner more and grow in mission with these neighboring churches.

Whether it is growing our impact through partnering or sharing invitations and connecting with the community around us in First's own unique way, we will be growing in our faith and growing the love we share with the world around us and that is a mission I hope we all can feel connected with.

Pastor Josh



**ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP  
FEBRUARY 22, 2022  
6:00 P.M.**



**Wednesday evenings  
beginning March 1  
5:00 - 6:00 p.m.  
Hammerling Hall**

Join us for a light meal  
and a simple worship service.  
Please sign up in the narthex  
if you're able to provide a meal.



## JOIN US ON FEB. 1ST

Our evening worship services are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. The services rotate between Healing Services and using the Holden Evening Prayer service.

### What Is A Healing Service?

Prayer is central to our congregation's life and experiencing healing in worship helps us bring healing to our relationships and communities. Every other month, First Lutheran takes time to gather in a worship that includes lighting prayer candles at the cross and having an opportunity to receive a blessing and prayer of healing from the pastor with special oil from the Holy Land. Please make a plan to come and share in this unique worship experience.

### Holden Evening Prayer

Holden Evening Prayer was written in 1985-86 by Marty Haugen during a musical residency at Holden Village. Holden Evening Prayer is a simple Lutheran vespers service that follows traditional form while using contemporary and inclusive language.

## WHY SHOULD WE OBSERVE LENT?



This 40-day season of repentance and reflection that begins on Ash Wednesday has three important purposes. Lent helps us STOP, LOOK and LISTEN. We observe Lent because it tells us to STOP and rest awhile — and to stop sinning. Lent tells us to LOOK inward for an honest self-examination, to look upward to see the cross of Jesus with healing and love, and to look forward to the hope of the Resurrection. And we observe Lent because it tells us to LISTEN — to the voice of God, the words of Christ and the movement of the Holy Spirit. STOP, LOOK and LISTEN! These commands that are so crucial for travel safety are also important for our journey through Lent.

## TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY



We've begun Season 3 of The Chosen. You know the story of Jesus and his disciples, so you can join us without feeling like you missed anything. New members are always welcome! Join us in the Fireside Room at 10 a.m. each week. If you can't join us in person, you can join us via Zoom. Contact Pastor Josh or the church office for more information.

*Need a Ride?*



### WE WANT TO HELP YOU COME TO CHURCH!

*Do you or someone you know need transportation to church for worship and other events? The Council and the Memorial Fund have set up a trial transportation fund to help get people to church! If you would like a ride to church please contact the office and we will be able to call a car or someone to help give you a ride. If you are interested in helping to give people rides to church please contact First Lutheran.*

### LENTEN PRAYER SCRATCH-OFFS

In February we'll have available scratch-off sheets for Lenten prayers. These are a great way to teach our children, as well as to remind adults, that we should pray daily. Look for them mid February!

*"To love another person is to help them love God."*

*—Søren Kierkegaard*

## Council News & More!

### FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

We have come to the end of another church year and I sense a feeling of optimism and encouragement among the members I talk to.

We will be electing a new church council to follow what has been a hard working, well functioning council, working closely with Pastor Josh who is demonstrating a far reaching vision for our church.

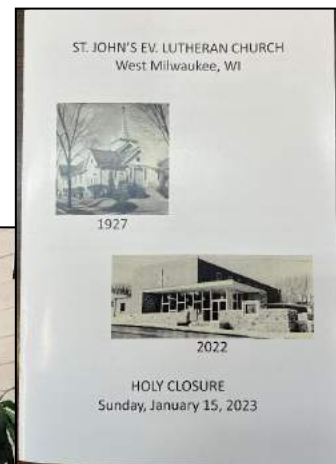
Some of us attended the Holy Closure at St. John's Church (right). Let's go out of our way to welcome any people from St. John's who may visit our church. They showed a real Christian commitment by donating \$15,000.00 of their existing endowment to further the ministry at First Lutheran Church.

Let's work together to make this next year a memorable time in the life of our church.

Werner Bayer, Church Council President



Pastor Josh attended the South Central Conference of the Greater Milwaukee Synod on Jan. 19th. It was an opportunity to connect with pastors from area churches. Pastor Brian Hooper hosted and led worship in the sanctuary of St. Stephen the Martyr in Greendale. In front of the pulpit is a cross made from broken pieces of ceramic made and broken by its members as part of a spiritual practice on the reality and beauty of brokenness.



### Our Mission Team At Work

Building on the momentum from the successful Rejoice Sunday celebration, the Mission Team met to review responses about the values and mission of First Lutheran, as well as a vision for its future. Dr. Sarah Carter, Pastor's wife, led a mini-retreat to create a design for our church's future (below right). The Team is considering another whole church event to gain more valuable insights from the congregation. A report will be presented at the Annual Meeting.

Pastor Josh also met with pastors of First Methodist, First Baptist and Apostle Presbyterian to plan for shared events and pulpit exchanges.





## What We've Been Doing....



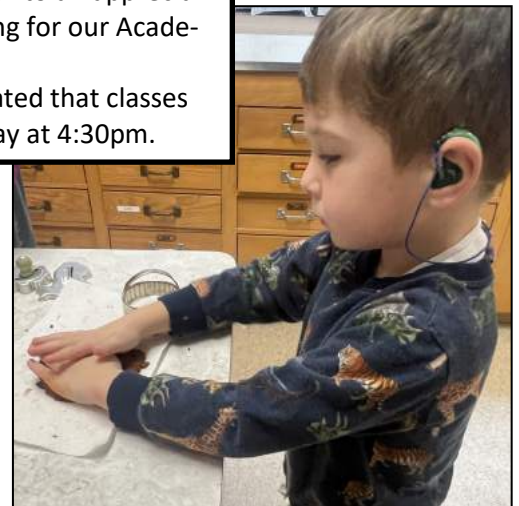
### SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATE....

A holiday party took place on Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup> with evening class resuming on Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup>. The message for class on the 12<sup>th</sup> was "Finding Light in the Darkness". Seems fitting since holiday time has wrapped up and "blah" January is here.

The Christmas program, a Paper Bag Christmas, played on the 18th to an appreciative audience. We are waiting for our Academy award nomination.

At this time it is anticipated that classes will take every other Thursday at 4:30pm.

Above and right: Sunday School holiday party.  
Below: The Sunday School "bag heads" were trying to draw without the light of the world.



Karlie's class was studying the economy and how it works. They participated in a program at "JA Bizztown". The class had to interview for jobs in a simulated city and Karlie was hired as the Public Relations Assistant to the mayor. (Below)

Below: Werner and Jackie's grand and great-grandkids got together to make valentine gingerbread houses.



## How Can You Contribute....



### It's not Super Bowl Sunday, it's SOUPER BOWL Sunday!

Why not buy an extra can or two of soup each week? Bring them in for our food pantry and see if we can have a tower of soup in front of the altar by Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 12th!

There are SO many ways you can contribute here at First Lutheran. You can sign up to help at the events listed on this page, or donate some of the items that are listed here. Or.... you can sign up in the narthex to bring soup on a Wednesday during Lent, sponsor Coffee And... after worship one Sunday, donate altar flowers, sponsor the eternal light, read lessons during worship, or usher. We can use more worship assistants, too. Talk to Pastor Josh or contact the church office if you're interested.

# Sign-up



### OPERATION CHRISTMAS STOCKING

Please keep shopping all year long for the following items:

*Deodorant*  
*Toothpaste/tooth brushes*  
*Dental floss*  
*Women's cloth slippers*  
*Men's & women's winter gloves*  
*Bar soap, razors*  
*Christmas mugs*  
*Colored pencils*  
*Adult coloring books*

Volunteers are the  
**HEART**  
of our church



The Boy Scouts annual food drive will be held on Saturday, March 18th. We're fortunate to be able to again receive food from this event. It's a great help to our food pantry. Would you be willing to help unload or sort food that day? Mark your calendars - more information next month!

Thank You!  
THANK YOU!



Thank you to everyone who helped to celebrate Don Moncher's 90th birthday after our Christmas Day worship service!

I Just want to thank all my friends at First Lutheran for the birthday card and gifts I received. It made my day. Even though I am bed-ridden my eyes are still good and I can read a little and watch TV which breaks up the long days. Barney and Opie and Judge Judy are near the top of the list of shows I watch, besides sports, but Wheel Of Fortune with Vanna White is my favorite. I miss coming to church and all my friends especially the choir members. I also would like to thank the Pastor for his visits... even though he is a Minnesota Vikings fan.

Until next time, Your friend, John T. Isaacson, AKA **THE BIG I**

## *This 'n That Around Here*

# ANNUAL MEETING

## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Our Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Feb. 5th immediately following the worship service. **Save the date!**

## COFFEE AND...



Sundays at  
11:00 a.m. in the  
Fireside room.  
Come enjoy  
coffee, treats &  
lots of fellowship!



### ***Birthdays***

2/1 - Shirley Armato  
2/14 - Kent Nicolet  
2/16 - Kale Schoberg  
2/21 - Paul Carter  
2/23 - Jennifer Wudtke  
2/25 - Lavone Reis



As a community we pray for those with immediate needs of healing and strength:

*Dale Bennethum, Marissa Guijo, Nancy Krizan, Carol Leonard, Samantha Logston, John Oakland, Roger and Tina Ritz, Hannah, Vince, Becky, Steve and Margie*

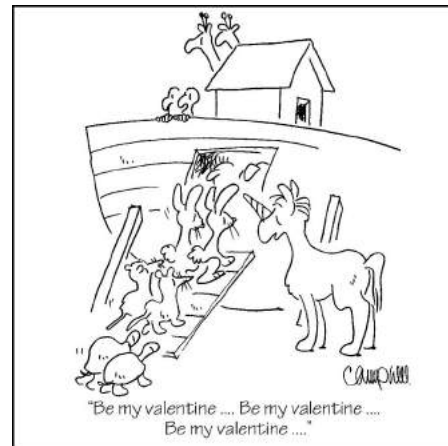


Fill in the blanks for three qualities Paul, in 1 Corinthians 13, attributes to love: "Love is \_\_\_\_\_; love is \_\_\_\_\_ ... it keeps no record of \_\_\_\_\_."

- A. challenging, important, the past
- B. childlike, innocent, injustice
- C. self-sacrificing, generous, finances
- D. patient, kind, wrongs



Answer: See 1 Corinthians 13:4-5



**Don't Forget** to notify the church office of any address, phone or email changes!

### ***Need pastoral care?***

Please remember to notify the church office if you are ill or hospitalized so that we can offer prayer and support directly to you. If you have a pastoral emergency during non-office hours (death in the family, hospitalization, etc.) contact Pastor Josh at (414)476-4664, ext. 2.



First Lutheran Church  
7400 W. Lapham St.  
West Allis, WI 53214

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid

Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
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Electronic Service Requested

Dated Material  
Please deliver by 1/28/23



**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)**

7400 W. Lapham St.  
West Allis, WI

E-mail: [firstlutheranelca@att.net](mailto:firstlutheranelca@att.net)

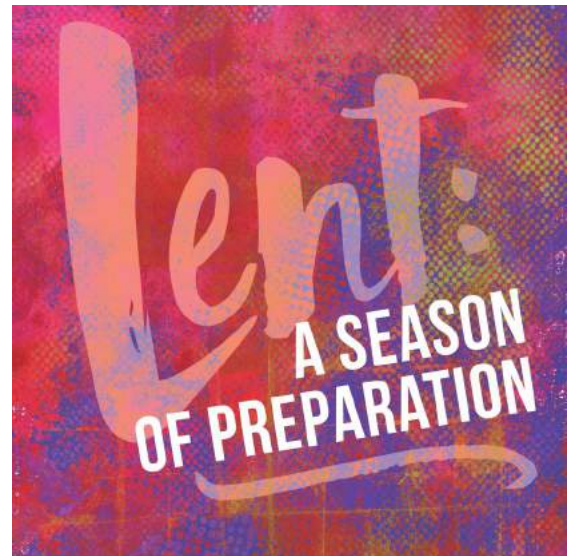
Phone: 414-476-4664

***Worship With Us:***

***Sundays at 10:00 a.m.***

***Feb 1 at 6:00 p.m.***

Office Hours: Monday thru Friday 9am to 12pm  
Office located at 7400 W. Lapham, West Allis  
(414)476-4664



**WORSHIP WITH US ON  
ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND  
AT 6:00 P.M.**

If you no longer wish to continue receiving this newsletter, please contact the church office.