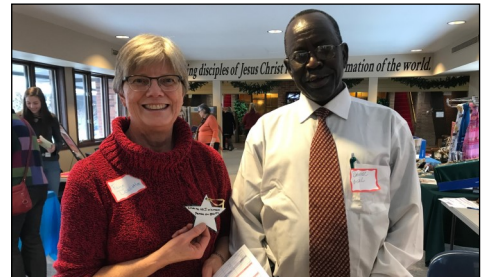


GIFTS OF HOPE BRINGS HOPE AROUND THE WORLD

Gifts of Hope means putting food on the table, a fair price for your coffee, access to medical services, an opportunity to go to school, a blanket to shut out the cold, a chance to stand on your own two feet by selling your products at the local market and support for organizations that faithfully accompany others on the road of life. Thank you to all that participated in the 2018 *Gifts of Hope* weekend. We were able to raise \$8200 that will keep on giving. Truly your support of *Gifts of Hope* is a gift of hope! Check out the recap video at <https://vimeo.com/304492829>.



ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AND PRE-MEETING SESSIONS

On Sunday, January 27, we will gather as a congregation to adopt a spending plan, elect new leaders and evaluate and celebrate our ministry of the previous year at the annual meeting.

Come for a spaghetti feed in the Activity Center, hosted by the high school youth, following the 10:45 am worship. All proceeds will support their 2019 summer accompaniment trip to Puerto Rico. At 12:30 pm we will meet in the Sanctuary where we will prayerfully conduct our business. Plan to join us on this important day.

There will be two question and answer sessions on Sunday, January 13, and Sunday, January 20, at 9:30 am in the Activity Center to address any concerns or questions you may have prior to the meeting. The annual report will be available on January 13.

Worship Services

Saturday Evening 5:30 pm / Sunday Worship 8:15 & 10:45 am / Sunday Nuer Worship 12:00 pm

ADULT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

ADULT FORUM

Sundays at 9:30-10:25 am in the Chapel

January 6 - The book, *The Omaha Language and the Omaha Way*; Aubrey Streit Krug, First Lutheran member, and Loren Frerichs. Loren and several co-authors from UNL collaborated with elder speakers to create a way of teaching the Omaha tribe language through Omaha culture so the language is not lost.

January 13 - Annual Meeting Preview - No Adult Forum.

January 20 - Annual Meeting Preview - No Adult Forum.

January 27 - *My Year of Internship*; Vicar Jason Davis. Vicar Jason, from the UNL Lutheran Center, will share what he is doing and hopes to accomplish during his year at the Lutheran Center.

BIBLE STUDIES

Tuesdays 5:45 pm and Wednesdays 10:45 am

The Tuesday and Wednesday study groups continue with the book of Isaiah. Even if you haven't joined us yet, you can come anytime. We recap where we've been and where we're at in the story. You are always welcome!

OTHER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Info: sunni@flclincoln.org

Saturday with the Guys - 2nd Saturday; 8:00 am. Currently discussing Richard Rohr's book, *Falling Upward, A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*.

A Few Good Men - Tuesdays; 6:30 am

Harbor Coffee Talk - Mondays; 1:30-2:30 pm

Faith to Go! - 2nd & 4th Wednesdays; 6:30 am

Women's Bible Study - 3rd Thursday; 10:30 am

Women's Circles - Monthly; dates and times vary

See our online calendar for more information.

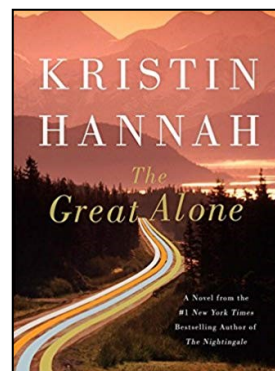
DISCIPLES LEARN...

JANUARY BOOK DISCUSSION

Monday, January 14; 6:00-7:30 pm

Info: sunni@flclincoln.org

The November snow storm cancelled the discussion on Kristin Hannah's book, *The Great Alone*. It's too good to skip so we are coming back to it in January. The book is available at the public library. *The Great Alone* is described as a daring, beautiful, stay-up-all-night story about love and loss, the fight for survival and the wildness that lives in both man and nature.



EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION FOR CAMP

Info: sharon@flclincoln.org



Registration for 2019 summer camp at Carol Joy Holling is now live! Register before January 1 and get \$50 off, plus a CJH Camp drawstring bag. Check out the schedule and sign up today by going to www.caroljoyholling.org!

WHAT IS STEPHEN MINISTRY?

Info: Faye Doolittle; fdoolittle@windstream.net



Stephen Ministers are trained listeners that visit weekly with those in need, in a confidential setting. Whether it's after a great loss or during a great crisis, it can be hard to find the consistent presence of someone who is just willing to listen and provide encouragement. Listen to a Stephen Minister describe their training and purpose (from www.stephenministries.org): "I've learned what to say, how to listen and what to do during a crisis. It's a great feeling to provide people with the spiritual care and support they need."

If you think you, or a loved one, might be in need of a confidential listener, please contact one of our pastors. The pastors can arrange for a meeting.

FAITH TREK EXPLORES EPIPHANY

Sundays; 9:30-10:30 am

Info: sunni@flclincoln.org

They made it to Bethlehem. The baby Jesus arrived. The shepherds went to the stable. The Wisemen followed the star. Mary and Joseph journeyed to Nazareth with Jesus. And, it is now the season of Epiphany! Epiphany – a time of discovery, surprise, revelation and insights. Our Epiphany journey, begins January 6 with a skit with First Lutheran member, Judy Bailey, has created. During the month of January, FaithTrek kids will be challenged to see and be the light of Christ in the world. The family resource for January will highlight family serve projects.



MIDDLE SCHOOL LEARNING

Sundays; 9:30-10:30 am

Info: pastorjustin@flclincoln.org



The middle school youth will look at how we relate to ourselves and our families. The facilitators this month will be Sharon Hardel, Courtney Anderson,

Megahn Schafer and Carin Sandman.

PRESCHOOL & ELEMENTARY GROUP

Sunday, January 6; 4:30-6:00 pm (potluck dinner follows)

Info: sharon@flclincoln.org

Meet in the Activity Center to delve deeper into the FaithTrek word of the month, “Epiphany”. We will follow the star like the Wisemen and learn about the Light that has come into the world. We will decorate cookies and practice candle prayers. Children should bring the candle they receive Christmas Eve (we will have extras in case you don’t have one). During this same time, parents, grandparents and adult sponsors are encouraged to gather for community building activities and Bible study. A potluck dinner will be held at 6:00 pm.

The next gathering will be Sunday, February 3, when we explore the word, “Participate.”

HIGH SCHOOL LEARNING

Sundays; 9:30-10:30 am

Info: pastorjustin@flclincoln.org

The high schoolers will tackle the following topics in January: Separation between Church and State with Patrick Hayden-Roy, Current Events and Racism with Pastor Justin, Free Will with Slate Mathes, and Climate Change and End of World Scenarios with Dave Schmitter. We will also go on a field trip to FoodNet on Sunday, January 13. This will be an all morning and afternoon trip to sort food, serve a meal and assist with the shopping process.

CONFIRMATION: DINNER + LEARNING #6

Wednesday, January 23; 6:00-8:00 pm

Info: pastorjustin@flclincoln.org

Students and parents will talk about confession and forgiveness. Luther wavered on if this should be a sacrament since Jesus actually forgave. And while it is

not, confession and forgiveness, often referred to as the Office of the Keys, remains an authority Christ gave to the church to forgive sins. We will look at it through middle school lenses and see how it really works in daily life.



DISCIPLES SERVE...

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING...ARE YOU READY FOR SOME FOOTBALL?

January 5-February 1

Info: sharon@flclincoln.org

We don't know which teams will be playing, but we can still get ready for the big day and help with another big challenge many of our neighbors face every day...hunger. You can help by donating the following nonperishable foods for the Lutheran Food Pantry. Other nonperishable food will be accepted also! Bring your donated food to the display in the Commons. Donations will be counted each week to see which food is the champion.



WEEK ONE (Jan 5 - Jan 11)

Cereal vs. Oatmeal (instant packets or containers)

WEEK TWO (Jan 12 - Jan 18)

Peanut Butter vs. Jelly

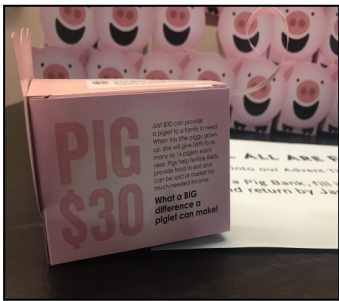
WEEK THREE (Jan 19-Jan 25)

Spaghetti and Meatballs vs. Pork and Beans

WEEK FOUR (Jan 26-Feb 1)

Chunky Soups vs. Canned Tuna

Voting for the Super Bowl winning football team will be with monetary donations and will take place as the Noisy Offering in worship on February 2 and 3!



NOISY OFFERING TO BUY PIGS

Sunday, January 6; During worship

The January Noisy Offering will be added to our Piggy Bank gifts. Let's see how many pigs we can provide for a farmer somewhere in the world. Just \$30, through the ELCA World Hunger program, buys a piglet that can quickly grow to 200 pounds and provide a family money for medical expenses or cover a failed crop. Remember to bring your Advent Piggy Bank to church on Sunday, January 6. December's Noisy

Offering raised \$109.63 for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

BUY COFFEE THAT IS FAIRLY TRADED

Sunday, January 6; 9:15-10:45 am

Info: Faye Doolittle; fdoolittle@windstream.net

In the new year, consider a resolution to purchase more products, including coffee, that are fairly traded. Much coffee for sale in stores passed through a long supply chain between the producer and the buyer. Consequently, the farmer who grew the coffee does not receive much income for his or her labor. This is not the case with Equal Exchange coffee, which you can purchase through First Lutheran every month. Equal Exchange buys directly from small farmer-owned co-ops and sets a guaranteed minimum price so farmers are not subject to fluctuations in the market. Equal Exchange coffee is also certified organic and shade-grown which protects the environment. Find both whole-bean and ground, regular and decaf coffee at the Fair Trade table.

CREATION CARE TIP OF THE MONTH

It is estimated by the year 2050 there will be more plastic in the oceans than fish. A huge contributor to this is plastic straws which can not be recycled. Please try to stop using them, or use fewer. Paper and metal straws are available as alternatives.



QUILTING TO RESUME IN JANUARY

Thursday, January 24; 9:00 am

Info: Phyllis Frickel; 402-466-3017

The First Lutheran quilters sent 70 quilts, plus two fleece quilts, to Lutheran World Relief in November. One quilt was given locally. We are very grateful for the Endowment Board's gift to purchase batting which adds warmth to our quilts. We extend thanks to Martha Circle for tying quilts at their October Circle meeting and to the women who also tied quilts on "God's Work Our Hands" day. We are also thankful to the people who take home quilt block kits and sew tops for our quilts and to all those who have given us donations of materials, sheets, etc.



Quilting is the fourth Thursday of the month and will resume again in January. New people are always welcome.

MUSIC MINISTRY NEWS

Info: music@flclincoln.org

January 6	Noisy Offering / Band
January 13	Nebraska Wesleyan Choir
January 21	8:15 am Adult Choir
January 28	8:15 am Adult Choir / 10:45 am Chorister Choir



Children's choirs and Adult Choir will resume rehearsals on January 9. (No rehearsals on January 2). No Spirit Ringers rehearsal in January.

All level String Ensemble rehearsals begins! The beginner's (less than 2 years of experience) rehearsal begins on January 13. Rehearsal for all string players will be held on January 20 and 27. All rehearsals will be after the 10:45 am worship service. The group plans to share their music during the prelude on February 10 for both worship services.

We will take down the Advent greenery and Christmas decorations on Sunday, January 6, following 10:45 am worship. Lend your hand!

SAVE THE DATE FOR PROM 2019

Saturday, February 9; 6:30 pm

Info: sharon@flclincoln.org

Dress up in your finest and join us for an evening of dinner and dancing! Tickets sales start Sunday, January 13, and will benefit the summer accompaniment trips.

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

Sunday, January 6; 6:00-8:00 pm

Info: sharon@flclincoln.org

We will begin the evening with a potluck dinner, followed by exploring Epiphany and Prayer Stations.

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

Sundays; 6:00-8:00 pm unless otherwise noted

Info: sharon@flclincoln.org

January 4: Serve *First Friday Jazz* lunch as a fundraiser for summer accompaniment trip.

January 6: Serving salad bar and providing special music at Matt Talbot Outreach Kitchen. We will gather at Matt Talbot at 5:00 pm.

January 13: Field trip to FoodNet as part of Sunday morning learning. Meet at church at 9:30 am for an introduction of the day before heading to FoodNet. We will serve until about 3:30 pm so we will not meet in the evening.

January 20: Accompaniment trip preparation and lock-in.

January 27: Spaghetti lunch fundraiser at a n n u a l congregational meeting at noon; no evening program.



DISCIPLES WORSHIP AND PRAY...

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO IN WORSHIP: PROCESSION

As we gather as a congregation, there is a procession of worship assistants robed in white, as a symbol of our baptism and the communion of saints. The procession is led by the large processional cross as the central symbol of our faith in Jesus Christ. Beginning worship with a procession, began in the third century, when the church was undergoing a transformation from being the primitive domestic church that congregated in houses to being the imperial church of the Roman Empire that began to meet in designated building for worship. During the reign of Emperor Constantine, Christian worship changed to reflect imperial gestures and postures, including the use of incense, vestments, bowing/genuflecting (typically a sign of respect before the emperor), development of choirs and beginning worship with a procession!

NEBRASKA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY TO SHARE MUSICAL TALENT

Sunday, January 13; 8:15 am and 10:45 am worship services

Info: Masako Bacon; music@flclincoln.org

The Nebraska Wesleyan University Choir a select ensemble will be sharing their musical talent during our worship services on Sunday, January 13. The choir has a long history of performances throughout the world and performs extensively in the United States. Annual domestic tours, as well as regular foreign concert tours, are part of the Wesleyan Choir experience. Major



performances with a professional symphony are part of each year with the choir having performed with orchestras in New York, Omaha, Lincoln, Madison and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Performing concerts rich in global diversity, the Wesleyan Choir has received critical acclaim in the major cultural centers of England, Scotland, Ireland, western Europe, China, Korea, Japan, Russia, Estonia, Sweden, Romania and throughout the United States.

If you like to welcome the choir to First Lutheran by bringing breakfast type food/drink, contact Masako Bacon. They will have a breakfast between services.

MEMBER HAPPENINGS

Sympathies to: Sharon Seagren and Tracy and Dean Way family in the passing of Al Seagren; Jane Zatechka and family in the passing of her husband, Doug; Lorna Johnson on the death of her brother; and Beverly DeGeorge on the passing of her husband, Alan Foral.

MONDAY VOLUNTEERS

As a cost-saving measure we intend to staff our office on Mondays with a cadre of volunteers. Volunteers would answer phones, offer hospitality to visitors and perform various other duties. Training will be provided. If you would like to be a Monday office volunteer, please contact Pastor Dan.

ADULT CO-ED VOLLEYBALL

Sundays; starting January 13

Info: Tera Beermann; tbeerman@hotmail.com or 402-730-9522

Adult co-ed volleyball sign up is here! First Lutheran plays with other Lutheran churches in Lincoln. The games are played on Sunday afternoons starting on January 13 for six weeks, plus a tournament. The cost is approximately \$25 per person. Male and females of high school age and up are invited to be a part of the team. Please sign up on the kiosk in the Commons.



DISCIPLES TELL THEIR STORIES...

100 DAYS ON THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER

by Clara Higgins; First Member and Student at Augsburg University

This past semester, I spent 100 days on the Mississippi River as a part of the Augsburg University River Semester with 15 other students, 2 professors and 2 expedition guides. The original plan for this semester was to canoe from Minneapolis to Memphis. We paddled in four 24-foot handmade wooden Voyageur canoes and loaded all of our gear into these canoes, which included ten days' worth of food for nineteen people, safety gear, science equipment, camp gear, personal gear, forty 10-liter dromedary sacks of drinking water and solar panels. We paddled between 25-30 miles per day 4-5 days a week, we set up tents and a makeshift kitchen, cooked all of our food and were also enrolled in a full course load. Most of our classes focused on environmental studies, but I also was able to do an independent study in Civil War history for my history major. We used our solar panels to charge lithium batteries to charge Chromebooks in order to do our coursework.



Our plans to paddle to Memphis quickly changed after inclement weather began and continued, and continued. On our fifth day on the river, we lost the majority of gear due to a tornado, but our outfitter, Wilderness Inquiry, replaced our gear. About a week later, our canoe was damaged after hitting a rock. We slept through severe thunderstorms and slept in soaking wet sleeping bags. We paddled in the snow and experienced major flooding. Due to this flooding, we were forced to shuttle from Davenport, Iowa, to St. Louis, where we stayed for a few weeks. After our stay in St. Louis, we paddled to the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers at Cairo, Illinois. At this point, air and water temperatures were too cold to continue to safely paddle with what gear we had. Because of one of our guides' connections in Carbondale, Illinois, we decided to finish out our final 15 days there, at a state park, to get out of the cold and work on final projects.

Throughout our eventful semester, though, we witnessed so much kindness on the river. We called anyone who helped us, a "river angel." Some of these river angels were pastors who let us stay in their churches to escape inclement weather or the cold. When we needed a warm and dry place to sleep, our guides would call churches, without any connection to the church and ask if we could stay there. When I think back to the generosity of these churches, I think about Matthew 25:35, which reads, "I was a stranger and you invited me in." Throughout this semester, I saw so many people show God's love by helping us, the stranger. Although it was often that we came from very different backgrounds than our river angels, we were able to find common ground over something which we considered home (either permanently or temporarily), the Mississippi River. We saw its importance. The Mississippi River is a glorious wonder of God's creation which we have the vocation to protect.

BUILDING PROJECT UPDATE

The building project continues to move forward. Hampton received the subcontractor bids, and based on those bids, the guaranteed maximum price for the project will be within our established budget. This is great news! By publication time, we expect to have our building permit. The project will be done in two phases: The first will be the courtyard infill, which will include the restrooms and nursery, the kitchen remodel and the classrooms. The second phase will include the Sanctuary, entry and offices. We will likely have Easter 2019 in the current Sanctuary before moving to our temporary worship location in the Activity Center. The total construction time is expected to be approximately 14 months from the time it starts. We also expect work on the northwest entry by the Chapel to begin very soon.

Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.



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GROUP SAX TO PERFORM AT FIRST FRIDAY JAZZ

Friday, January 4; 11:30 am-1:00 pm

Info: Lee Rockwell; lrockwell@windstream.net

Four of Nebraska's most accomplished saxophone players have joined their individual talents into Group Sax and will be featured at the January *First Friday Jazz* concert. The members have performed individually and collectively throughout the world with many great musicians and groups. Paul Haar is featured on tenor and C melody sax, Mark Benson plays alto and tenor sax as well as clarinet, Ed Love plays tenor and C melody sax and Scott Vicroy plays baritone and bass sax.

Group Sax will play an eclectic set of original jazz compositions and arrangements of jazz standards. This is jazz chamber music at its best that is both clever and witty.



First Lutheran
Church-Lincoln



@flclincoln

Each person is a unique creation of God and, through grace, is a child of God. The people of First Lutheran Church welcome all because God welcomes all, without regard for race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity or relationship status, physical or mental challenges, imprisonment, addictions, socio-economic circumstances, or anything else that too often divides us. First Lutheran Church is a spiritual community that celebrates the gifts of God that can empower us to engage in the struggles of life, to care for each other, and to serve Christ where we work and live. Our unity is in Christ.

The Voice is a monthly publication of First Lutheran Church - 1551 S. 70th Street - Lincoln, NE 68506 - 402.488.0919 - www.flclincoln.org