



THE VOICE

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

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH / MARCH 2021



Our first in-person worship services on Ash Wednesday since the beginning of the pandemic brought together 119 members.

Lent and Holy Week Worship Plans

INFO: PASTORSTEVE@FLCLINCOLN.ORG

Throughout Lent we are focusing on the sayings of Jesus from the cross – the “Seven Last Words.” Each week we explore some aspect of one of the sayings and include it in our in-person Holden Evening Prayer services at Noon and 6:30 pm. The noon service is livestreamed to our Facebook page. At present we are limiting in-person attendance and ask that you pre-register on our website to help us plan. Registration for each week opens on Sunday.

We anticipate beginning to offer Sunday morning services in person sometime in March. We will publish www.flclincoln.org

more information in *First Things First*, as well as on our website and Facebook.

We are also tentatively planning for in-person worship services during Holy Week and for Easter Sunday. We are holding these plans loosely and they may change if rates of spread of COVID-19 and other factors call for more caution.

March 28, Palm Sunday - 8:15 am* & 10:45 am

April 1, Maundy Thursday - Noon* & 6:30 pm

April 2, Good Friday - Noon* & 6:30 pm

April 3, Holy Saturday - 5:30 pm

April 4, Easter Sunday - 6:00 am (Easter Vigil), 8:00 am*, 9:30 am & 11:00 am

**Livestream worship service*

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Cold Weather Means More Time Inside for Children

BY MICHELLE ZIMMER
[DIMENSIONS EDUCATION PROGRAM](#)

Dimensions believes it is important to get children outside in winter weather and February brought many opportunities for fun in the snow! Along with the snow, it also brought extreme cold which meant more time inside than usual. We hope March brings some warmer weather.

Our enrollment process for the 2020 summer and 2021-22 school year are well under way. If you know anyone who might be interested, please have them visit us at www.dimensionsed.org.

This month, I would like to introduce you to our First Lutheran preschool teacher, Hayley Raatz...

I am Hayley Raatz and I was born and raised in Lincoln. I have been a part of the heart-centered Dimensions program for five years



I was an infant teacher the first two years and the last three years I have taught preschool age. Nothing fills my cup more than teaching sweet little minds about the wonder of the world in nature and how to always treat others with kindness! When I am not working with children, I am pursuing my passion for beauty through my freelance makeup business 'hayley.j.artistry'. An interesting fact about me is that my mom is an artist and from a young age I always enjoyed creating. I got into pottery in high school and print-making in college!

A Walk Through Holy Week

SUNDAY, MARCH 28; 9:30 AM; RSVP BY MARCH 21
 INFO: SHARON@FLCLINCOLN.ORG

We invite FaithTrek, middle school and high school families who are comfortable meeting in person to join us on Palm Sunday in the Activity Center for a walk through Holy Week using Resurrection Eggs (to be provided). Each family unit will sit together at a round table for the activity. Please RSVP so we can set up the proper number of tables. Instructions for the activity will be provided for those not comfortable meeting in person.

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Adult Forum

Info: connie.kisling@gmail.com
 Recordings at www.vimeo.com/flclincoln

March 7 – Nebraska Strong Recovery Project – MaKayla Muthersbaugh; Region V Systems. Learn about an outreach program that provides counseling and identifies needs during the current pandemic.

March 14 – Family Communication within Interfaith Families - Dr. Jordan Soliz, Department of Communication Studies, UNL-Lincoln. We will discuss how interfaith families and those with religious differences navigate in a constructive and affirming way.

March 21 – Child Abuse – Katie Edwards, Leon Leader Charge and Lee Paiva.

March 28 – Video: The Arc of the Universe, by Allen Hilton. How ought we be church and join God in his redemptive ways in our world when it comes to our political world and our relationships?

Bible Studies - Tuesdays 5:45 pm and Wednesdays 10:45 am
 Info: pastorsteve@flclincoln.org
 Tuesday's group is studying Colossians and 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Wednesday's group is studying Matthew.

Saturday with the Guys - 2nd Saturday; 8:00 am (Reading *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis)
 Info: jim.kisling@gmail.com

Coffee Talk - Mondays; 1:30 pm
 Info: sharon@flclincoln.org

Faith to Go! - 2nd & 4th Wednesdays; 6:30 am
 Info: tlbeermann@hotmail.com

A Few Good Men Bible Study - Tuesdays; 7:00 am
 Info: rockwell@windstream.net

Gather and Gab - Thursdays; 8:00 pm
 Info: sharon@flclincoln.org

Women's Circles - Varying dates and times
 Info: cyndi@flclincoln.org

FaithTrek Word of the Month is Forgiveness

SUNDAY, MARCH 21; 9:30 AM

INFO: LINDSEY@FLCLINCOLN.ORG

FaithTrek will focus on the word “forgiveness” this month. We will explore examples from the Bible where people were forgiven and we will learn about forgiving each other.

FaithTrek will meet in-person on Sunday, March 21, at 9:30 am. We will meet in the Upper Room as one group and spread out accordingly depending on how many families join us. Our group needs to be twelve or fewer and everyone will be required to wear masks. There will also be a family activity on Sunday, March 28, in the Activity Center. Families will be seated together and tables will be spread out so social distancing guidelines can be followed.

“Be kind and
compassionate
to one another,
forgiving each
other, just as in
Christ, God
forgave you.”

Ephesians 4:31

Middle & High School Learning

INFO: SHARON@FLCLINCOLN.ORG

Middle and high school learning will begin to meet in person now that small groups are able to gather at the church. We will combine youth group and learning together so that we will only meet one time, not twice, on Sundays. Please note the youth group schedule (*page 4*) for our March gatherings. We will continue to send lessons via e-mail for families to use at home and for those that are not yet comfortable meeting in person.

Dinner+Learning

MARCH 3 & 17; 6:30-7:30 PM

INFO: SHARON@FLCLINCOLN.ORG

Our topic in March is "The Cross and Salvation." Families may attend the Lenten worship services in person on the Wednesdays we are scheduled to meet or watch with the group on Zoom. The Lenten theme focuses on Jesus' seven last words from the cross so it fits perfectly with this month's topic. The Lenten worship speakers' stories will provide a wonderful opportunity for Confirmation families to see where the cross shows up in their daily lives.

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Save the Date: VBS

JULY 5-9

INFO: SHARON@FLCLINCOLN.ORG

Save the week of July 5 – July 9 for Vacation Bible School! As we move towards having more in-person events we will determine the format and time frame for the week. Look for more information coming soon!

Sign Up for Summer Camp

INFO: SHARON@FLCLINCOLN.ORG

[HTTPS://WWW.CAROLJOYHOLLING.ORG](https://www.caroljoyholling.org)

Camp Carol Joy Holling is planning a regular summer season of camp opportunities. Children that have completed 1st – 12th grade are eligible for week long programs and children completing Kindergarten and higher are eligible for two family style opportunities. Scholarships are available for families who would like to have their children participate. Contact Sharon for more information.



Lenten Noisy Offering to Purchase Pigs

INFO: SHARON@FLCLINCOLN.ORG



Did you know that \$30 to ELCA Good Gifts can provide a piglet to a family in need? When this little piggy grows up she will give birth to as many as 16 piglets each year. Pigs help fertilize fields, provide food to eat and can be sold at market for much-needed income. What a BIG difference a pig can make! If you came to our Souper Bowl of Caring Drive Through you received a pig bank as part of the Lenten Devotional kit. For those of you who did not receive one, we have more! Just stop by the church regular office hours to pick one up. We suggest you drop your noisy offering into the bank through Lent and return the bank by Easter Sunday. You do not have to collect \$30 - whatever you are able to contribute will be put to good use. If you would like your contribution recorded on your giving statement, please put your name on your bank before handing it in. Thanks!

Souper Bowl of Caring

Our Souper Bowl of Caring campaign collected a total of 1,444 food items and raised \$296 in monetary donations! Our \$250 Thrivent Action Team Card purchased an additional 216 items the Food Pantry requested. Thank you for your generosity in helping to feed the hungry.

Our Food Match Challenge Results

Canned Veggies 219 vs. Canned Fruit 79

Pancake Mix 40 vs. Oatmeal 59

Pasta 235 vs. Rice 52

Chili 102 vs. Pork and Beans 56

Sign Up for Blood Drive

SUNDAY, APRIL 11; 10:00 AM-4:00 PM

INFO: SHARON@FLCLINCOLN.ORG

[CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP](#)

First Lutheran is hosting another Red Cross Blood Drive in the parking lot. Show love to your neighbors by giving the gift of life. Sign up now!

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High School & Middle School Youth Group

INFO: SHARON@FLCLINCOLN.ORG

March 7: Zentangle workshop, led by Denise Mainquist, at 4:00 pm. We will gather in the Activity Center, but a Zoom link will be provided for those that would rather join from home. Kits will be provided.

March 14: Game Night at 4:00 pm on Zoom for all ages. We will play Farkle. Dice will be provided for those who need them.

March 21: Community building and summer trip planning from 6:00-8:00 pm. We will also have conversation about our learning word of the month - Forgiveness.

March 28: Movie Night – “The End of The Spear”, followed by a conversation about how we often misunderstand those “not like us” and how difficult forgiveness and reconciliation really can be. We will gather from 6:00 – 8:00 pm.

Remember or Honor Someone With Your Donation

DEADLINE: SUNDAY, MARCH 28
INFO: CYNDI@FLCLINCOLN.ORG

We welcome your contribution for purchasing seasonal decorations or flowers to be used in our new worship space. Please send your \$10.00 donation to the church office by Sunday, March 28, indicating who your dedication is for and if it is in celebration, in memory or in honor of someone.

Thrivent Choice Dollars

Did you know that as a Thrivent member you accumulate charitable outreach funds (Thrivent Choice Dollars) based on insurance premiums, contract values and Thrivent volunteer leadership? First Lutheran has been the recipient of over \$35,000 in Choice Dollars through member designations. It's easy to direct your dollars. Log on to www.thrivent.com and log in to your account or create one. Go to "My Thrivent" and "Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars" to see how much you have accumulated. You are then able to direct those dollars to a non-profit organization. First Lutheran is already listed. Dollars must be directed yearly by March 31.

Game Night Keeps Growing

SUNDAY, MARCH 14; 4:00 PM; RSVP MARCH 12
INFO: SHARON@FLCLINCOLN.ORG



Zoom Game Night has grown since we began in January! We are now up to three break out groups with four families in each group having fun together. Our March game will be Farkle. All you need is six dice of any color and someone to keep score. Dice will be delivered to those who need them. Please RSVP so you can get the Zoom link to join in.

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Request a Personalized Egg Hunt



MARCH 27, MARCH 28 AND APRIL 3
INFO: SHARON@FLCLINCOLN.ORG

The Fellowship Committee is unable to hold the annual Easter Egg Hunt this year due to the pandemic so our middle and high school youth will bring the Egg Hunt to you! Families with children from birth to 5th grade may request a personalized egg hunt in their own yard. Youth will hide eggs filled with candy and Easter surprises for the kids to find. If you would like to request an egg hunt, please contact Sharon Hardel to arrange a time on one of the following days: Saturday, March 27, Sunday, March 28, or Saturday, April 3.

Music Rehearsal Schedule

INFO: MUSIC@FLCLINCOLN.ORG

Cherub Choir - Rehearsal on Zoom 5:00-5:15 pm; Wednesdays

Chorister Choir - Rehearsal on Zoom and in-person 5:30-6:00 pm; Wednesdays

Adult Choir - Devotion and Rehearsal on Zoom 7:10-7:40 pm; Wednesdays

Spirit Ringers - Rehearsal in-person 6:30-7:00 pm; Thursdays

Member Happenings

Our sympathies to the family of Jan Norris who passed away February 3. Her memorial service was held at First Lutheran on February 8.

The Practice of the Present Moment

INFO: CAROL OLSON; CAROLINROMA@YAHOO.COM

Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don't get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow. God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes. ~Matthew 6:34

The liturgical season of Lent can seem like a depressing time. It begins during the winter season - a dark, cold and monotonous time. It begins with Ash Wednesday where we are reminded that we will die and leads up to Jesus' crucifixion on the cross. We want to skip all of this and jump to the happiness and Alleluias of Easter Sunday! However, Lent is also an invitation to be with what is real - right here, right now. In this time of our life, everyone has experienced negative impacts of the pandemic. We want to skip ahead to when life will be 'normal', but we now know we have to be patient for a longer time than we thought or wanted. The Practice of the Present Moment is a very simple, helpful practice. Stop what you are doing and take an inventory of what you notice in the environment around you, using all your senses. In addition, take an inventory of what you notice inside your body, including sensations, feelings and emotions. Notice what is real for you right now without being anxious about what might or could be happening in the future or wanting to go back into the past. Each day during Lent, set a timer, and take 2 minutes to participate in this practice. Journal about what you noticed and how you feel about it. May your Lent be a blessed time of wonder!

Transportation Available for COVID-19 Vaccinations

INFO: LINDA MAACK; LINDASMAACK@GMAIL.COM

Receiving a COVID-19 vaccination when you are eligible is one way you can protect yourself and those around you from the virus. You can register for the vaccination at <https://vaccinate.ne.gov/en-US>. If you need help registering online, please contact our office. If you need transportation assistance to your vaccination appointment, please reach out to our Transportation Ministry team. They are ready to assist you.

Prayer Team

INFO: CYNDI@FLCLINCOLN.ORG

For HIPPA privacy reasons, we can not publish our prayer list online. Rather, our prayer list is shared weekly via email with members who expressed interest in serving on our prayer team. As a member of the prayer team, you commit to praying for the individuals listed. If you would like to serve on the prayer team, please contact Cyndi.

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First Annual Meeting Held Virtually

First Lutheran Church held its 151st annual congregational meeting on January 31 with 129+ members present on Zoom. Along with approving the 2021 budget, leaders were elected for the coming year. Thank you to all the faithful members who ran for a leadership role. The results of the election are as follows: Congregational Church Council - Fred Ohles, Zach Schafer, Rebecca Pfabe, Amy Tipton and Lyle Petersen; Nominating Committee - Jim Sandman, Barb Johnson Frank and Eunice Fischer; Delegates to Synod Assembly - Gordon Youngquist, Patrick Hayden-Roy, Bob Michl, Michelle Michl and Susan Myren; Endowment Board - Tyler Mainquist and Karen Peppmuller. The Executive Committee of the Church Council will be voted on at the March 9 Council meeting.

Adjusting to a New Normal of Calm, Quiet and Isolation

BY AMY PINKALL, FIRST LUTHERAN MEMBER

COVID-19 has brought so much change to our lives. As a pediatric hospitalist (a pediatrician caring for babies, kids and teens in the hospital), I have a very different perspective on this disease and how it has impacted my world.

The news tells stories of record high patient census, critically ill patients and shortages of staff. Upon learning that I am a physician in a hospital, one might think I am experiencing overwhelm and exhaustion. Quite the opposite has been true. My once bustling day has quickly become one of calm, quiet and even isolation.

As you know, older ages are more greatly impacted by COVID. We have had pediatric COVID cases from birth to teens, but very little overall.

Our community has done a good job socially distancing, masking and staying home. Because of this, our rate of other common illnesses are at record lows. We usually have a winter filled with influenza, RSV bronchiolitis and other respiratory illnesses. But, this year we are just not seeing these illnesses.

So, our units are quiet, nurses float to the busy COVID units and we are left quiet and alone. When we do have patients, the doors are closed and visitors are limited. We don't have the hustle and bustle we are used to, and although this was initially somewhat refreshing, it's become tiresome. We want to work, help families and use our skills and knowledge. Additionally, having a new disease, with new symptoms and treatments, has proven a challenge. We second guess our ability to practice medicine without doing multiple tests. We feel incapable and anxious that we might be doing it wrong.

We, like everyone, are adjusting to the new normal.



Welcoming New Members

MARCH 21, MARCH 28 AND APRIL 11

INFO: PASTORBILL@FLCLINCOLN.ORG

"Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." ~Romans 15:7

We are approaching spring and it is one of the times of the year when we formally welcome new members to First Lutheran Church. It may come as a surprise to you that even in the midst of this past year and all that has happened because of the pandemic we have individuals who are seeking a church family to be a part of. Our livestream worship services, along with our commitment to being a welcoming congregation, has reached individuals who are looking for a faith community like First Lutheran. New member classes will be held on Sundays, March 21 and March 28, with new members being welcomed on Sunday, April 11, during worship. If you know of people who have expressed interest or are looking for a church home, please have them contact Pastor Bill or other staff members so we can reach out to them.

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Prospective Candidates Being Interviewed for Lead Pastor

INFO: STEVE EICHER; CALL COMMITTEE CHAIR; EICHERSTEVE@GMAIL.COM

FOLLOW THE CALL PROCESS AT WWW.FLCLINCOLN.ORG/CALLPROCESS

The Call Committee is excited about the upcoming prospect of finding a new Lead Pastor and continue to make progress in our search. We have received a slate of pastoral candidates from the Nebraska Synod and are in the process of conducting initial interviews. Following the completion of the first round of interviews we will take time for a prayerful discernment of the candidates before beginning second interviews. We are also in the process of developing a "Welcome to First Lutheran" video to share with prospective candidates. The video will highlight the welcoming and accessibility enhancements that were made to our church during the recently completed building project. The Call Committee is doing all we can to keep the call process moving forward for this extremely important event in the life of First Lutheran Church. We ask for your continued prayers and support.



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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