



# FIRST GLANCE

A look at what's happening at  
First Lutheran Church

December 15-22, 2024

## WELCOME TO FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH!

Welcome to worship at First Lutheran! We're so happy you're here! If you've worshipped with us before, welcome back! If this is your first time, a big welcome to you! We hope you feel God's love, grace and mercy as you worship with us today!

## STEP INTO THE CHRISTMAS STORY WITH CLARENCE THE ANGEL!

This morning at 9:30 AM, the Sanctuary will come alive with a heartfelt retelling of the Christmas story you won't want to miss. This year, our beloved pageant introduces "Clarence the Angel," whose whimsical attempt at managing life on Earth takes an unexpected turn. Through his heavenly misadventures, Clarence learns just how resilient and capable humans truly are. But here's the twist - our story unfolds in a way that brings a fresh perspective on discovering the newborn King and the boundless joy that comes with it. It's a celebration of Christmas with laughter, meaning and a few surprises along the way. After the pageant, head over to the Activity Center for delicious cookies and hot chocolate. It's the perfect time to relax, warm up and connect with other families and church members. Come and be inspired by Clarence's divine adventure - all part of this special Christmas celebration!

## GIFTS OF HOPE RAISES ALMOST \$22,000

A big thank you to First Lutheran Church! Last weekend's 2024 Gifts of Hope event raised nearly \$22,000 to support 11 amazing nonprofit partners locally, regionally, and internationally. The event included an in-person market with educational displays, connections with organizations, and handmade gifts. Online shoppers had even more ways to contribute through a digital catalog. The funds will support programs like food backpacks, scholarships, housing assistance, and LGBTQ+ advocacy. Thank you to everyone who made a difference! Stay tuned for more ways to support these partners year-round!

## GATHER, PRAY AND PREPARE: CLOSING ADVENT TOGETHER

Advent invites us to pause, pray, and prepare our hearts for the coming of the Lord. It's a season rich with meaningful stories, soul-stirring songs, and moments that remind us of God's ongoing work in our lives - encouraging us to trust in His timing and grace. During Advent, we gather on midweek for meals, conversation, music and prayer. Join us for our last Holden Evening Prayer service this Wednesday, December 18 at noon and 6:30 PM, with a livestream option available. Stay after the noon service for soup and conversation or come at 5:30 PM before the evening service for a meal and fellowship. Let's close this Advent season together with prayer, gratitude and hope as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

## LONGEST NIGHT: FINDING HOPE IN THE DARKNESS

On Saturday, December 21, we will hold *Longest Night: A Service for Those Hurting during the Holidays*. In the northern hemisphere, December 21 is the longest night of the year, with nearly twice as much darkness as light. For many, the holidays can feel just as dark and far from joyful. By December 22, the days slowly begin to grow brighter. This service will acknowledge the struggles of living in a world with suffering and grief, while trusting in the Light of God's love to bring courage. Light will always overcome darkness. Join us for this special service at 5:30 PM. All are welcome - feel free to invite friends or neighbors who may need hope this season.

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## KIDS & YOUTH OFFER A MUSICAL CHRISTMAS EVE

FaithTrek kids (ages 3-5th grade) and middle/high school youth will perform during the Christmas Eve service at 3:30 PM. They'll present "Ding, Dong, Merrily on High" as an Orff ensemble and sing "Rise Up, Shepherds, and Follow!" Rehearsals are today at 10:20-10:40 AM and December 22 10:00-10:30 AM in the Sanctuary. Come, all ye faithful, young musicians and singers!

## CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH A FESTIVE FEAST!

Come for a Christmas Day feast at 11:30 AM! We're serving up turkey, dressing and mashed potatoes with gravy. Bring your appetite and your favorite sides - families should bring two and singles one. Make sure to sign up online by TODAY at [https://bit.ly/flc\\_christmas\\_lunch](https://bit.ly/flc_christmas_lunch) so we can be ready for you!

## WRAPPED IN LOVE: A MINI VBS FOR ALL AGES

Join us for "Wrapped in Love," a Mini VBS from December 29-31! Come every day or drop in when you can - everyone's welcome! Over three days, we'll make plastic bag mats and cold weather kits for the homeless. Older youth and adults will also have the opportunity to serve at the Center for People, helping with the People's Pantry. Plus, enjoy crafts, stories and a New Year's Eve pizza party at noon on December 31. Let's wrap up 2023 with love, service and joy! Register in the Gathering Area or sign up on Realm at [https://bit.ly/flc\\_mini\\_vbs](https://bit.ly/flc_mini_vbs). Donations of plastic bags, toilet paper rolls, gloves, hats, handwarmers, lip balm and tissues are needed. Contact Sharon Hardel for details. We can't wait to see you there!

## CHRISTMAS AT FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Celebrate Christmas at First Lutheran with services for everyone! Join the family-friendly Christmas Eve worship at 1:30 PM, designed especially for kids, featuring carols, a children's message and a re-telling of Jesus' birth. Traditional Candlelight services with Communion will be held at 3:30 PM (livestream available), 5:30 PM and 7:30 PM, and Christmas Day worship at 10:00 AM includes carols and communion. Don't miss the festive photo drop to capture a fun holiday photo with family and friends, along with delicious treats! All are welcome - come celebrate with us!

## WHAT'S YOUR TOUCHSTONE VERSE FOR THE WEEK?

It could be from a hymn, reading or something in the sermon! Write it below. Read, pray and discuss it this week to help you connect with it!

## THIS WEEK AT FIRST

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15

8:15 AM - Worship & Livestream  
9:30 AM - Christmas Pageant  
10:45 AM - Worship  
11:45 AM - Strings Rehearsal  
Noon - Nuer Worship  
6:00 PM - Youth Christmas Party

### MONDAY, DECEMBER 16

9:00 AM - Cook for Matt Talbot  
9:30 AM - Fitness Class  
1:30 PM - Coffee Talk

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17

11:00 AM - Serve Lunch at Matt Talbot  
12:30 PM - Staff Meeting  
5:45 PM - Bible Study  
6:30 PM - Social Ministry  
6:30 PM - Exodus Group

### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18

9:30 AM - Martha Circle  
Noon - Holden Evening Prayer Service  
12:30 PM - Soup Lunch  
5:30 PM - Soup Dinner  
5:45 PM - Orff Rehearsal  
6:30 PM - Holden Evening Prayer Service  
7:10 PM - Adult Choir Christmas Party

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19

9:30 AM - Fitness Class  
10:00 AM - Esther Circle  
2:00 PM - Gifts of Hope Market Debrief  
6:30 PM - Spirit Ringers

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20

3:00 PM - Backpack Distribution

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

5:30 PM - Longest Night Worship Service

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22

8:15 AM - Worship & Livestream  
9:30 AM - Adult Forum  
10:45 AM - Worship  
Noon - Nuer Worship