



# First Edition

The Newsletter of First Lutheran Church

February 2024

Issue Number: 238 Issued: Monthly

## February Worship

**Sunday, February 4**

**Annual Meeting & Holy Communion**

8:30 am - Spirited Traditional

9:20 am - Annual Meeting

10:15 am - Celebration

**Sunday, February 11**

**The Transfiguration of Our Lord**

**Council Installation**

**Souper Bowl Sunday**

8:30 am - Spirited Traditional

10:00 am - Celebration

**Wednesday, February 14 ~ Lent**

**Ash Wednesday / Holy Communion**

5:30 pm - Lenten Supper

7:00 pm - Imposition of Ashes

**Sunday, February 18**

**Holy Communion**

8:30 am - Spirited Traditional

10:00 am - Celebration

**Wednesday, February 21 ~ Lent**

5:30 pm - Lenten Supper

7:00 pm - Holden Evening Prayer

**Sunday, February 25**

8:30 am - Spirited Traditional

10:00 am - Celebration

**Wednesday, February 28 ~ Lent**

5:30 pm - Lenten Supper

7:00 pm - Holden Evening Prayer

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**GOD  
IS  
LOVE**



Whoever lives in love, lives in  
God, and God in them.



## FLC Photos



Christmas Caroling

Choir Festival



Phoebe Circle



Stewart and some music fans



## A Word from the Pastor

What a fun season the Packers had this year! It has been fun to watch the young team grow and develop. I have been walking around singing "All ya need is Love, Love...Love is all ya need." Yay Jordan Love! If only it were that simple. We all know one person does not a team make. It is much more complicated than that!



This month we celebrate Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday on the same day! It is rather appropriate isn't it? The best Valentine we ever got was Jesus. God loved us so much that he sent His Son to die for us. John 3:16. It is as simple as that, right? Or not.

God's love is really all you need. But what does that mean? It is nice to know you are loved, but how does that information, that God loves me, make a difference in my life?

Lent is a great time to think about the depth of God's love. It is a chance to take time to look beyond the superficial and think about God's impact on the way we view the world.

During the 40 days of Lent you will have a chance to:

- ✧ **Do personal devotions.** Pick a topic that is of interest to you to study or meditate on. Ponder the ways God uses the word love in the Bible. Pick up a Christ in Our Home and do devotions together. Add a new spiritual discipline.
- ✧ **Spend time with other Christians.** There are many Small Group and Fellowship Events at FLC. During Lent don't pass up the opportunity to eat before worship on Wednesday night starting at 5:30. It is a time to fill your belly and talk to people about their life and faith. If you can take a turn helping in the kitchen, serving is a great way to better understand God's love too!
- ✧ **Come to Worship.** On Sunday we will follow the lectionary which takes us from the Temptation through the Crucifixion. Then we have special Lenten worship with Holden Evening Prayer. The theme this year is *Not Perfect, Just Forgiveness*. Come and reflect, spend an hour with God and think about how God's love is reflected in forgiveness.

All ya need is Love - God's Love. Explore what that means for you this Lent at FLC.

**Pastor Sara**

## Council Highlights

At its January meeting, FLC's Council:

- ✧ Expressed **appreciation** for FLC's strong worship attendance in December and generous giving to the General Fund .
- ✧ Approved an adjusted **2024 budget** for the congregation's consideration at the annual meeting.
- ✧ **Nominated candidates** for election at the annual meeting to serve on several committees: Audit, Endowment, First Lutheran Fund and the Church Council.
- ✧ Learned that...
  - New Lighting** was installed in the library and kitchen, and that installation to the hallways was delayed due to a supplier error.
  - 55 Nativity Sets** were given to FLC families with children aged 4 through 6th grade.
  - Bids for the **kitchen update** funded by the Caring Hearts and Hands appeal would soon be evaluated.
  - Jason Ehle and his family did a wonderful job of **clearing the snow** off of FLC's parking lots, sidewalks and landings during several snowstorms.
  - The organ's failed **electric control system and auxiliary units** were transported to the Peterson Company in Illinois. Technicians will replace that system and conduct several tests to insure that everything is in working order. Then, the new system will be installed in the organ.

FOR GOD  
SO LOVED THE WORLD  
THAT HE GAVE HIS  
ONLY  
BEGOTTEN  
SON, SO  
THAT WHOEVER  
BELIEVES IN HIM  
SHALL NOT PERISH  
BUT HAVE ETERNAL  
LIFE.

JOHN 3:16



## Sharing and Caring



### Our Condolences to the family & friends of...

Dora Kelty (aunt of Anne Kman)  
Jean Ristau

### Special Prayers for...

Judy Casey  
Doug Goodman  
Gene Heise  
Lani Kohrt  
Elwood Knutson (father of Lori Moll)  
Joyce Koskelin  
Paul Krueger  
Bob Leonard (father of Gaye Lehman)  
Peggy Maveus  
Jean Peterson  
Ron Pieper  
Ted Sehmer (father of Mark Sehmer)  
Jack Schaffer  
Scott Smith  
Don Steele (brother of Ron Steele)  
Ron Steele  
Scott Steele (son of Ron Steele)  
Tom Thorpe  
Vera Thorpe  
Judy Zillmer (mother of Kendra Eppler)

Do you have a prayer request or would like your loved one to be listed in this section of the newsletter? Please contact the church office or one of the pastors.

## MEETING

### Annual Meeting

FLC's Annual Meeting will be held in the sanctuary on **Sunday, February 4**, at **9:20 am** between the first and second services.

At this meeting the congregation will have an opportunity to approve the 2024 budget and approve candidates for the Church Council, Audit Committee, First Lutheran Fund Committee and Endowment Committee. The meeting will also include reports of all of our ministries that were conducted at FLC in the prior year.

We hope to see you there!  
Thank you for participating in the work of our Lord's church!

### Phoebe Circle

Tuesday, February 13, 7:00 pm  
at Jeanne Gilbertson's

If you are interested contact  
Jeanne Gilbertson  
at 608-692-3452.



### Serving God, Saving the Planet

Last session on  
**Tuesday, February 6**  
**at 6:00 pm**  
Fireside Room

Look for a new study  
starting in April!

Contact Kendra Eppler at (608-219-5525)  
for more information!

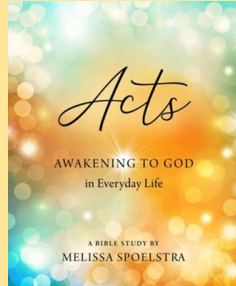


## Small Group Ministries

### Soul Sisters

Soul Sisters will meet on **Monday, February 5 from 10:00-11:45 am** in the Fireside Room.

We welcome guests and new members to join us in the study of Acts: *Awakening to God's Grace.*



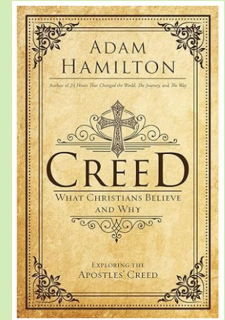
### Men's Breakfast and Bibles

**2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of the month:**  
**February 14 and 28**

**Breakfast:**  
7:30 am at The Pancake Café

**Bible Study:**  
9:00 am at the church

**Information:**  
Contact **Rich Albright**  
albrightclannn@gmail.com  
(608) 215-6027.



### Selah Book Club

The **Selah Book Club** will be meeting on Thursday, **February 15 at 10:00 am** in the Church Library.

The book for this month is ***The First Ladies*** by Marie Benedict.

If you have questions about this book club or would like to join please contact Marcia Seybold at (608) 333-7326.

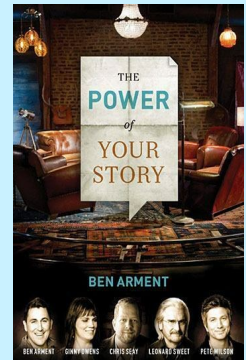


### Monday Zoom Faith Conversations

Join the Faith Conversations group! It meets **Mondays on Zoom at 6pm.**

This group is using a study called *The Power of Your Story* by Ben Arment.

What is your story? We all have stories. Some are funny, some are painful - all contribute to who we are.



What we don't always see is that God is weaving an overarching story that started before time, extends through history, and will reach far beyond our lifetimes. God extends an invitation to each of us to step into His story and experience the ongoing narrative of His Word in our lives.

Get the link for the video & a study guide from Pastor Sara at [pastor.sara@flcstoughton.com](mailto:pastor.sara@flcstoughton.com) or 608-873-7761.

### Bibles and Brews

**Location:** John and Darlene Arneson's  
2056 Skaalen Road, Stoughton

**What to bring:** Yourself and a snack and beverages to share

Contact John or Darlene Arneson for questions:  
[arnesonfamily5@gmail.com](mailto:arnesonfamily5@gmail.com) or 608-873-7209

This group is using the Andy Stanley series, **Under the Circumstances: Holding On to God.**

When life doesn't turn out the way we hope, it can cause us to doubt God's goodness. But many times, it's in the midst of our circumstances that we better understand God's presence. Videos can be watched ahead on YouTube.

**Thursdays, February 8 and 22, at 7:00 pm**  
Under the Circumstances, Parts 3 and 4



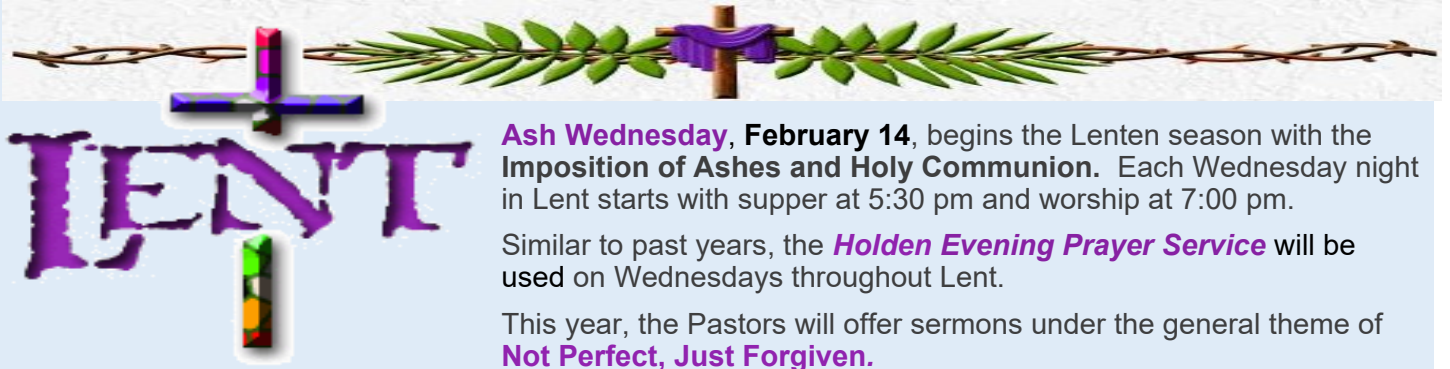
### Circle 3 Meeting

**Tuesday**  
**February 13**  
**11:00 am**  
at Deak's!

If you are interested contact  
Jeanne Gilbertson at  
608-692-3452.



# Lent



**Ash Wednesday, February 14**, begins the Lenten season with the **Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion**. Each Wednesday night in Lent starts with supper at 5:30 pm and worship at 7:00 pm.

Similar to past years, the **Holden Evening Prayer Service** will be used on Wednesdays throughout Lent.

This year, the Pastors will offer sermons under the general theme of **Not Perfect, Just Forgiven**.

The Lenten season runs through **Wednesday, March 20**. A meal will be served each of the six Wednesday evenings prior to Holy Week from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Menu</u>	<u>Leaders/Servers</u>	<u>Music Groups</u>	<u>Sermon ~ Lent</u>
Feb. 14	Pulled Pork Sandwiches, Chips, Veggies, Dip, Dessert	Ann Olson Sue Deneen Confirmation Group 1	FLC Choir	<b><i>What Forgiveness Is Not</i></b> <i>Matthew 18:15-22</i>
Feb. 21	Walking Tacos Dessert	Erlene Bishop Killeen Confirmation Group 2	Special Music	<b><i>Grace and Mercy in Forgiveness</i></b> <i>Psalms 23</i>
Feb. 28	Chicken Nuggets Macaroni and Cheese Dessert	Olstad/Seybold Families Confirmation Group 3	Alleluia Bells	<b><i>Repentance &amp; Forgiveness</i></b> <i>Psalms 51:1-12</i>
Mar. 6	Chicken Soup Subs Dessert	TBD Confirmation Group 4	First Kids	<b><i>Forgiveness: Glue for Relationships</i></b> <i>Genesis 45:1-15</i>
Mar. 13	Lasagna, Salad, Garlic Bread Fruit, Dessert	The Stepp Family Confirmation Group 5	Special Music	<b><i>Patience to Forgive</i></b> <i>Ephesians 4: 1-5, 32-33</i>
Mar. 20	Grilled Brats & Hotdogs, Beans, Potato Salad, Ice Cream	Todd Fossum 9th Graders	Special Music	<b><i>The Wisdom of Forgiveness</i></b> <i>Psalms 103:8-18</i>

**Volunteer to help with a Lenten supper!** It is an opportunity for folks of all ages to serve and also connect with others! Duties involve some light food preparation, serving the meal and smiling! Arrive in the Fellowship Hall at 4:45 pm. The meals are served from 5:30 to 6:30 pm.

**Make Cookies or bars!** If you would like to make cookies or bars for dessert please sign up in the Information Center.

**Confirmation students** in 7th, 8th and 9th Grade are asked to help serve a Lenten Supper (see schedule above). 9th Graders have the option to sign up in the Information Center to serve on any Wednesday as a service project in addition to serving on March 20.

**Adults** may sign up in the Information Center or contact Pastor Sara.

## Social Ministry and Fellowship

### Join the Quilters!

Come and join this group of industrious women to create quilts that are then donated to organizations serving those in need.



Quilting will be meeting at FLC each **Monday in February from 8:30 am - 12 noon** and continues **each Monday until Easter.**

The group is looking for new people to participate. Talk to LouAnn Ellingson for more information.

### Chili & Game Night

**Sunday, February 25**  
**in the FLC Fellowship Hall**  
**4:00 - 7:00 pm**

Here's another opportunity to get out of the house and meet new people!

Bring favorite games and either chili, fixins'/sides or a dessert to share. Play Euchre, board games, see if you can be the next Twister champion, or just eat chili and laugh.

Come and join the fun!



### Movie Night

**FLC Fellowship Hall**  
**on March 17, 2024**

Movies TBA

Fun for all ages!. Come to church and watch a great movie. Pizza, soda, popcorn and treats will be provided.

Sign up in the Information Center.



## Baby Basket and Mitten Tree Thank You!!!!

Thank you so much to everyone who donated items for the baby baskets over Christmas! Between the manger, the Soul Sisters shower, the Advent Event gifts, beautiful quilts and other generous gifts, the Baby Basket ministry received so many beautiful items.

Thank you to everyone who gives a little bit at Christmas and throughout the year. Your generosity enables FLC to donate almost 90 baskets a year. That means that families who are starting out with very little get access to the basics and to some help they need! Thank you for your generosity!



## THANK YOU

*First Lutheran Church*

When community members spend more than half their income on housing, they have little, if any money to spend on other basic needs, such as coats, hats, and mittens.

Your generosity will make a huge IMPACT to our neighbors in need.





## Caring for Creation and Self Discipline

By: Kendra Eppler

In mid-January, we resumed our creation care Bible study. One discussion question that particularly stood out to me from our first session of the new year is as follows:

*Jesus teaches that the way we spend our resources serves as a reflection of our heart. God sees out true motivations. He knows that if our hearts are focused on storing treasures in heaven, we won't worry about the things we "want" on this earth. When we properly use the resources God has given us, we'll be more concerned with loving Him, loving His creation, and loving our neighbors instead of our own comfort on earth – and we'll lead both spiritual and environmentally sustainable lives. Right now, today, you are an investor. Where are you investing? How do your spending habits reveal the priorities of your heart? (Excerpt from Serving God, Saving the Planet Guidebook by J. Matthew Sleeth, M.D.)*

The season of Lent will soon begin, and it is often a period when we intentionally choose to give something up (or add something additional) to practice self-discipline and help us remember/focus on Jesus' sacrifice. As you reflect on the questions from the Bible study excerpt and the upcoming Lenten season, I challenge you to also consider how your care for creation may be improved. You may even find a new, more environmentally friendly habit is formed in the process!

A few examples to get you thinking about possible things to give up: plastic wrap (use re-usable containers), take-out containers (bring your own), disposable cups (only purchase from places that allow bring your own), plastic water bottles (refill a reusable one), "fast" food (think of all the trash saved). As for me, I plan to give up take-out containers, which are often not reusable, recyclable, or readily compostable. I know this will be a personal challenge that will require self-discipline.

## First Kids and Impact 456ers



### **Preparation for First Communion** **Saturday, March 16, 9:00 am to 12:30 pm**

Students in fourth grade learn all about Holy Communion, examining the elements of bread and wine as well as the Communion ware.

**If you have an older child who has not received instruction, please contact Pastor Sara at 873-7761.**

### **Sledding!**

**Sunday, February 18**  
**12:00 noon - 3:00 pm**

Come sledding and bring your friends. We will meet at the church, head off for some sledding, and then come back for some hot chocolate and popcorn. There is no cost for this event. **Friends and family of all ages and stages** are welcome! The event will be rescheduled if there is no snow.





## First Kids and IMPACT 456ers

### First Kids and IMPACT 456 are continuing in February!

This is a great time to invite neighbors and friends to join in the learning program!

**First Kids** will be learning that Jesus is our Friend Forever.



- February 4: God wants us to learn about him.
- February 11: God wants us to honor him.
- February 18: God has special things for us to do.
- February 25: We can use God's Word when we need help.

*During Lent families are invited to pick a discipline to do together. You can choose daily devotions, reading daily Bible Stories, serving together as a family—pick something to do for 40 days.*

**4th - 6th Graders or IMPACT 456** will be learning about the New Testament.



- February 4: Last Trip to Galilee
- February 11: Trouble in Jerusalem
- February 18: Sharp Rebukes and Loving Encouragement
- February 25: Jesus the Good Shepherd

### A Great Christmas for First Kids!

- ✧ 55 Nativity sets given away
- ✧ Kids sang on Christmas Eve and dressed up in costume
- ✧ Kids sang and helped with the message on December 31st

Thank you parents and teachers for helping to make disciples of Jesus.  
Thank you kids for sharing Jesus' love with the congregation.  
Thank you Congregation for your prayers and encouragement!





## Youth and Family Ministries



Confirmation Christmas Party



### Youth Rummage Sale Saturday, April 20

It's the New Year! Time to clean out the attic, garage, basement and closets! The annual Youth Rummage Sale is scheduled for **April 20** (Some might need that much time.☺)

Please start bringing your items to the Fellowship Hall starting February 21.

This event is a huge fundraiser for the youth. Thank you in advance for your donations!



### Lutherdale Camp

Registration forms and brochures for all ages of campers grades 1-12 will be coming soon. Plan on making a week at Lutherdale a part of your summer this year

Confirmation Camp will be June 17-22. Please sign up for camp as soon as possible on the Lutherdale website.

*Scholarships are available. We do two fundraisers for camp in the Spring as well. There is no financial reason for a child not to go to camp. If you have questions about Lutherdale please contact Pastor Sara.*





# First Edition

*The Newsletter of First Lutheran Church*

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**February 2024**



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