



FIRST NEWS

A monthly publication for the members and friends of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

DECEMBER 2020

December 2020

Time with Tom

We don't often think of December as a time of lament, we are looking forward to the celebration of Christmas. We think of gifts under a tree or tables filled with our favorite foods. We long for the gathering of family and friends. We want to catch up on the news of good cheer and prosperity from those we love most. It is that longing that makes December fill us with hope. That is the same as the lament of Advent. The longing for the redeemer, the hope of a messiah sent from God to save us from the tyranny of this world. The oppression of government and the need of salvation become the thing we have in common with Israel of 2000 years ago. God told the people of Israel to wait for the messiah and hold true to the covenant of God. God promised the people he would send them help and the people said, from where will my help come? The prophets called out to the people with words of both hope and condemnation. Condemnation, if we turn from the God of all creation, but hope to those who turn back to God and remain faithful to the word. Isaiah cries, David writes poems, and all the prophets gave us Gods word; but the people could not hear.

God continues to tell us today to hold on to his word. The scriptures have been telling the people about the Christ child, and in the first chapter of John's gospel, John tells us: *¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.* John the Baptist was witness to the word coming to us in the flesh: chapter 1: *¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.*

This December, as we long for the coming celebration, remember, Christ brings us satisfaction and hope. Christ brings us salvation from the cross. It is the baby born of a virgin woman who gives us life. The greatest gift of all came 2000 years ago and continues this December to give us all we need. Merry Christmas, celebrate life in Christ, Amen.

Live in Peace and the God of Love and Peace will be with you! 2nd Cor. 13:11.
Pastor Tom Evenson

Our mission: First Evangelical Lutheran Church exists to **welcome** people to faith in Jesus Christ; **equip** persons with a faith that works in real life; and **send** us in service into the world in Jesus' name.

Instructions for Christmas Eve
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FIND THE CHURCH CALENDAR
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CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
Mon. - Thur. 8 AM - 4:30 PM
Fri. 8 AM - 12 PM
***Wearing a mask is required**
Office hours subject to change
320-693-2487
 Email: firstoffice@hutchtel.net
 WEBSITE:
www.firstlitchfield.org

Council Highlights

**“GOD’S WORK.
OUR HANDS.”**

First Evangelical Lutheran Church
Council Minutes
Tuesday, November 17, 2020 7:00 p.m.

**First Evangelical Lutheran
Church Council
2020**

PRESIDENT:

Corey Cervin

VICE PRESIDENT:

Karla Kadelbach

SECRETARY:

Dawn Doty

TREASURER:

Karla Hyberger

TEAM

REPRESENTATIVES:

**Christian Education/
Youth & Family:**

Tanna Stucky

Stewardship & Finance:

Betty Allen

Karla Hyberger

**Social Ministry/
Evangelism:**

Dawn Doty

Meredith Elj

Betty Allen

Endowment/Memorial:

Dennis Gartner

Corey Cervin

Tanna Stucky

Beth Fruetel

Property:

Andy Hoffman

Dennis Gartner

Worship & Music:

Meredith Elj

Beth Fruetel

Personnel:

Corey Cervin

Our Mission:

“FLC exists to WELCOME people to faith in Jesus Christ; EQUIP persons with a faith that works in real life; and SEND us in service into the world in Jesus’ name.”

Council Membership:

2022: Dawn Doty, Meredith Elj, Dennis Gartner, Tanna Stucky

2022: Andrew Hoffman, Beth Fruetel, Karla Hyberger, Corey Cervin

2023: Betty Allen, Karla Kadelbach, Amy Nelson, Abby Hemmingway

Devotions: Tanna Stucky

Secretary Report: Motion made by Dennis Gartner and seconded by Andy Hoffman to accept report
Treasure Report: Motion made to accept by Andy Hoffman seconded by Dennis Gartner

Agenda: concerns about the Costa Rica trip and many questions about traveling and Pastor Tom going due to COVID
Pastors Report: Pastors group will continue. We are working on the sound issues. Met with the school and Ecumen. Working hard to get back into Ecumen for services but with COVID it will be a little while. Schools are struggling a bit.

Team Reports:

Evangelism/Social Ministry: did not meet

Christian Ed: did not meet

Church Property: did not meet

Personnel: did not meet

Endowment: did not meet

Stewardship and Finance : Did not meet

Worship and Music: concerns on how holiday services will be.

Old Business:

150th Anniversary, the team has a list of ideas and is moving forward with planning
Worship services.

In person services will continue and will be evaluated on a week by week basis
Ministry in the midst of COVID is challenging but we will continue to deal with things the best we know how
In house, in person meetings are going well with the groups that are meeting and everyone is following the guidelines. Most groups are not meeting right now. Meetings will be very minimal through possibly January
Disaster relief for Iowa: going well
Sunday school seems to be going well.

Christmas memorials: flagging memorials for general fund and green lake ministry or leaving them open.

New Business:

Electric candles for Christmas: ordered for services . Cub Scouts: is looking to disband or take a break.

.....Continued on pg. 3

General Fund:

Year to Date:

Total Income for the month of October 2020:	\$26,371	Income as of Oct 2020:	\$286,954
Expenses for the month of Oct. 2020:	\$33,623	Expenses as of Oct 2020:	\$329,234

As Advent begins, we start the journey of preparation for the Christ Child. What an amazing gift! What excitement this brings to my life, knowing that God gave his only son, to be with us on earth, to experience our joys and sorrows, to teach us to be faithful, to show us how to be believers and to be followers of the word. I am truly thankful.

We continue to be restricted for the next weeks, but we have so many things to be grateful for. We don't live in a war zone during this time of isolation, we have comforts that exceed our needs to get through this... we have food, warmth, shelter, clean water, free religion, the ability to reach out safely through the internet, the freedom to pray, TV and radio to entertain us, take out!... the list keeps going and I am happy I have these comforts in a time of uncertainty.

We have a church. I know, not one we can cherish as much as we would like but it is here and standing and waiting in the wings for us. We can still hold services and worship together.

With all our comforts... What if we could be known as the most generous people. What if First Lutheran was known as the most generous church. What would it look like if every believer gave? Think about the difference we could make in the world. Think about the example we could set for others.

Happy Advent Season and Merry Christmas,
Celebrate safely and with love in your hearts.
Karla Hyberger
Treasurer

Council Continued...

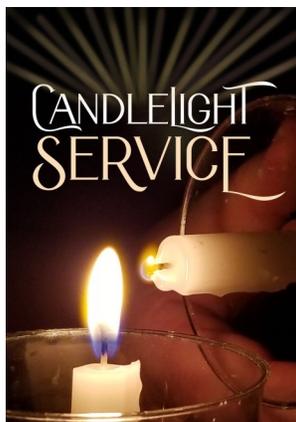
Boy Scouts: claim filed at the direction of the synod to cover our basis due to liability.
MNDOT sidewalk update: paid us 500 for a small piece of property and will fix the sidewalk in the near future.
Nominating committee for 2021 council members: we will reach out to them to get things started.
2021 congregational letters: more involvement from team members and council members to reach out through letters.
2021 budget: thinking of needs

Dates to Remember

Indoor services to continue Sundays at 10am Collaborative services to continue virtually Sunday's at 8:30 Confirmation services October 25th 2020 at 11a Team meetings December 1 2020 7pm Executive meeting December 1 at 6:30p Council meeting December 15 at 7pm December 23rd 6:30 virtual service

Prayer Requests,
Closing Prayer,
Adjourn

Respectfully Submitted
Dawn Doty, Secretary



Due to limited seating and Covid restrictions - Please call the church office to reserve your seating for the 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service.
320-693-2487
(Leave a message with your name, phone number and total # attending).

Thank you!

Stewardship

BEING A PRAYERFUL CHURCH

The practice of prayer reaches the far distant past and touches many religions. Christian prayer begins and is based on the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament, with roots in Jewish prayer practices. Prayer is meant to be practiced daily to include both fixed prayers (like the Lord's Prayer) and private prayers that are free speaking. Prayer is communicating with God by opening your heart. There are also communal prayers that are used in worship to enhance the church experience and inspire members to continue daily praying.

Praying at all times. First Thessalonians 5:17 says, "constantly pray" or it can be translated "pray without ceasing."

Set aside time to pray. Ezekiel 22:30-31 references, Prayer should be the priority in worship services and our individual lives. When it is not, God's will does not get done.

What We Can Learn from Jesus' Prayers

One of the great blessings of being a follower of Jesus is to know that right now He is interceding for His people before the Father. While we do not know exactly what Jesus says to the Father, we do have examples of many of Jesus' prayers from the Bible. For example, in John 17, First, Jesus prays that the Father would protect His church. He not only prays for physical protection, but even more He prays for spiritual protection—that the church's faith would stay strong after Jesus left them to return to His Father (17:11). Second, Jesus prays for His church to be sanctified...that they would be made holy; that they would know the truth of God and reflect the glory of God on earth (17:17,19). Third, Jesus prays for those who will believe through the message of the disciples (17:20). Jesus prays that his church will grow.

Jesus' three prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane:

Jesus' prayer for God to be glorified (John 17:1-5)

Jesus prays for His disciples (John 17:6-19)

Jesus prays for all believers (John 17:20-26)

Jesus' three prayers on the Cross:

"Father forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34)

"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt 27:46, Mark 15:34)

"Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46)

Jesus' prayer of thanks

"I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will" (Matthew 11:25-26 ESV)

Jesus' prayer before the raising of Lazarus (John 11:41-42)

"Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

Jesus' prayer after entering Jerusalem

"Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!" (John 12:27-28)

When Jesus teaches us how to pray – The Lord's Prayer

"Our Father in Heaven. . . (Matt 6:9-13) But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him."

Bible Stuff:

There are 650 prayers listed in the Bible.

There are approximately 450 recorded answers to prayer in the Bible.

The first time prayer is mentioned in the Bible is Genesis 4:26 (earlier dialogues where initiated directly by God, e.g., Genesis 3:8-13, Genesis 4:9).

The Bible records Jesus praying 25 different times during his earthly ministry.

In the Bible, Paul mentions prayer (prayers, prayer reports, prayer requests, exhortations to pray), 41 times.

Although prayer can (and should) be done from any bodily position, the Bible lists five specific postures: Sitting (2 Sam 7:18), standing (Mark 11:25), kneeling (Chronicles 6:13; Daniel 6:10; Luke 22:41; Acts 7:60, 9:40, 20:36, 21:5; Ephesians 3:14), with one's face to the ground (Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:35), and with hands lifted up (1 Timothy 2:8).

Continued on page 5

In Jesus model for how his disciples should pray (Luke 11:1-4), he provides five areas of focus: That God’s name be honored – the focus on his everlasting glory (“Father, hallowed be your name”); that God’s kingdom come – the focus on his eternal will (“your kingdom come”); that God’s provision is given – the focus on our present (“Give us each day our daily bread.”); that God’s forgiveness is granted – the focus on our past (Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.); that God’s deliverance will be provided – the focus on our future. The Bible lists at least nine main types of prayer: prayer of faith (James 5:15), prayer of agreement (Acts 2:42), prayer of request (Philippians 4:6), prayer of thanksgiving (Psalms 95:2-3), prayer of worship (Acts 13:2-3), prayer of dedication (Matthew 26:39), prayer of intercession (1 Timothy 2:1), prayer of imprecation (Psalms 69), and praying in the Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:14-15).

The word “Amen” (which means “let it be, “so be it,” “verily,” “truly”) makes its first appearance in the Bible in Numbers 5:22. In that passage God commands it to be said by a person who is yielding to his examination.

The Lord’s Prayer: This prayer takes a mere 15-20 seconds to say but wow! it is filled with deep meaning. This prayer perfectly summarizes our faith and what is expressed in the Gospels. On his reflection on this prayer, St. Cyprian of Carthage, a third century bishop wrote, “My dear friends, the Lord’s Prayer contains many great mysteries of our faith. In these few words there is great spiritual meaning, for this summary of divine teaching contains all of our prayers and petitions.” It’s important to remind ourselves to stop and reflect on the words we are actually saying.

Advent Prayer

Lord Jesus, Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas. We who have so much to do and seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day. We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us. Amen



Memorials can be mailed to: First Evangelical Lutheran Church, 703 South Sibley Ave., Litchfield, MN 55355

Christmas Memorials 2020

Given by: _____

In memory and/or in honor of:

General Fund \$ _____

Green Lake Lutheran Ministries \$ _____

MST- Costa Rica \$ _____

Undesignated Memorial Fund \$ _____

**Please return your memorial and this form to the church office no later than:
Thursday, December 17, 2020. Thank you!**



NUBIA GROUP
Touch your Heart



Christmas Prayer

I said a Christmas prayer for you
Because the season's near
I didn't ask for riches
But for gifts so much more dear.

I asked for joyful gatherings
With your family all around
And for carols to inspire you
With their old familiar sound.

I asked for quiet moments
In your heart on Christmas morn
For a special time to celebrate
The Savior who was born.

I asked for friends to send their best
That you might know they care
I asked for peace and love and hope
And I know God heard my prayer.

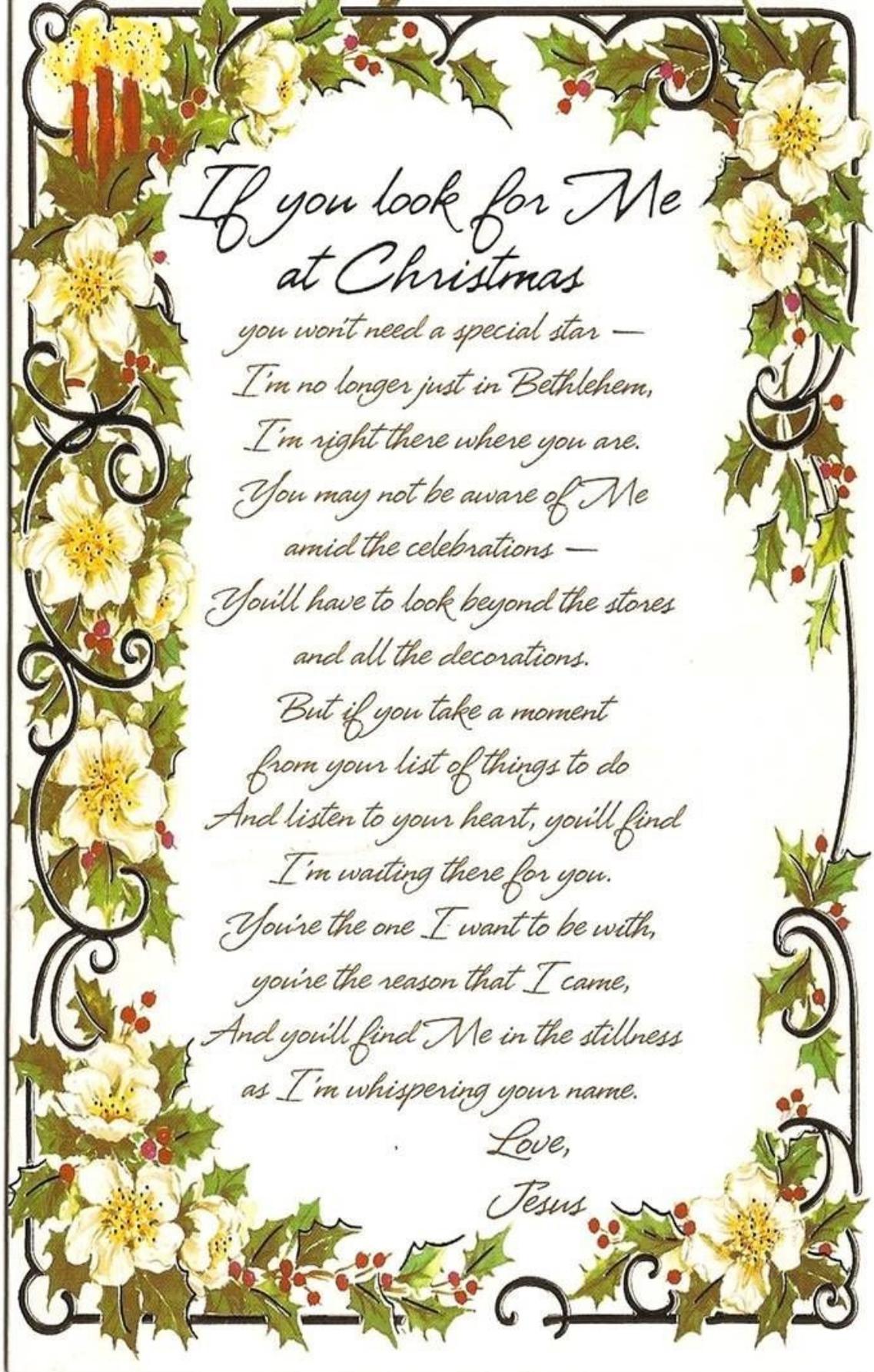
~ Nancy Brummett ~

*With every good
Wish... FOR THE
Christmas Season*



<http://Nubiagroup.blogspot.com/>





*If you look for Me
at Christmas*

you won't need a special star —

I'm no longer just in Bethlehem,

I'm right there where you are.

You may not be aware of Me

amid the celebrations —

You'll have to look beyond the stores

and all the decorations.

But if you take a moment

from your list of things to do

And listen to your heart, you'll find

I'm waiting there for you.

You're the one I want to be with,

you're the reason that I came,

And you'll find Me in the stillness

as I'm whispering your name.

Love,

Jesus



*Loving
Father,*

help us remember

the **birth of Jesus**,

that we may share in

the *song of the angels,*

the gladness of the shepherds,

and the *worship of the wise men.*

Close the door of hate and

open the door of love all over the

world. Let kindness come with every gift and

good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from

evil by the *blessing which Christ brings,* and teach us

to *be merry with clear hearts.* May the Christmas morning

make us happy to be *Thy children,* and the Christmas

evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts,

forgiving and forgiven,

for Jesus' sake.

Amen.

MST COSTA RICA 2021 UPDATE:

As with most 2020 pandemic upsets, changes, way-lays, cancellations, and delays, **WE ARE RE-IMAGINING OUR 2021 TRIP. OUR GOAL IS TO SERVE THE CHILDREN/FAMILIES OF THE ROBLEALTO ORGANIZATION IN COSTA RICA, AS WE HAVE DONE SINCE OUR FIRST TRIP IN 2007.**

Due to lots of unknowns and concerns for traveling abroad with COVID, we have decided to cancel our 2021 trip in hopes we can physically go in 2022 or 2023. For the week of February that we were supposed to be on-site, we are exploring the option of a virtual pizza party (a huge highlight for the kids, staff, and volunteers) and providing a mommy craft with virtual prayer and words of encouragement for the foster mothers. More importantly, our team feels a calling to provide a sizeable financial donation that would have been used to fund our service project. We agree that maintenance and work will still need to be done and we can support the Heredia community where Roblealto is located by continuing to give this donation.

We invite you to support our mission work, now more than ever, as we hold up an organization, country, and children that our church and mission has come to love dearly. If you feel so called, you can make any size donation to the “MST Costa Rica” account during the month of December in the church office. All donations will be sent to Roblealto in place of our 2021 trip!

Consider reaching out to any of the current and past team members about their favorite memories of Roblealto and what they look forward too, this is a difficult change in plans. Most importantly we ask for prayers for all our communities, countries, and world as they all feel the effects of this pandemic and struggle to meet basic needs.

With many thanks –

Tim, Evan, Isaiah, Alex Matheson, Bonnie Kerstein, Sara Rick, Katie & Greta Hulterstrum, Pastor Tom, Terek Stucky, Mason St. Pierre, Kris Cervin



MST - Costa Rica

Update from Roblealto (Pam) October 2020:

It has been quite a journey the past couple of months. As the Executive Director, I was able to experience a more administrative side of Roblealto and I must confess, I am even more honored to work in an organization where the main focus is serving God and His children, paying close attention to even the most minuscule administrative detail. In order to offer you a Roblealto update, I must first explain how the country is doing. Costa Rica's poverty rate is sadly at 34% now, the worst since 1992. Therefore, the number of people soliciting our services has increased considerably in the last few months; and the families that we have recently welcomed have shown noticeable emotional/psychological issues such as signs of depression, suicidal thoughts, anxiety, lack of motivation and more. The children, on the other hand, soon after entering our programs gain weight, learn to address their emotions and acquire study habits.

The school system has faced many challenges; the number of children who have dropped out is heartbreaking, especially for children living in poverty since they have no access to virtual classes. This is why we could not be more grateful to God for having licensed teachers in our centers who are carrying out this year's school curriculum entirely.

Financially, Roblealto has struggled. Because of the closing of borders we were not able to receive checks nor send correspondence to our sponsors via snail mail; this limited the communication with our donors and their possibility to send donations. Nationwide, some donors lost their jobs and companies that used to sponsor Roblealto had to let people go and cut the financial aid they were providing to social causes such as ours. To make matters worse, the Roblealto Farm also struggled to distribute their products as usual, reducing their support to the children's programs by 34%.

Having said that, my heart is full of praise because even with the difficult scenario I just explained, we have been able to keep our four centers, Bible Home and adolescent program operating. We have had to make a few cuts in our budgets too and some things such as maintenance in the buildings have not been done this year.... (mission teams will have much to do next year when they come)

A few weeks ago, it was again suggested to Roblealto to consider not sending the children home to their families every other weekend in order to avoid having them being exposed to COVID-19. However, once again, we defended the children's right to see their families because not doing so would have a negative impact on our overall mission: restoring the families so the children can return home to them. We make sure to provide to the families food baskets and hygiene kits so they and their children have enough to cover their basic needs and have a clean home.

This last time that the children returned to the Bible Home, we made sure to make their arrival a celebration! We wanted to make it clear to them that having them with us fills our hearts with much joy! We held games in the field and had lunch in "family bubbles."



This season has even brought us more to our knees as we want to honor God and His mission in Roblealto in every area. I thank God for you, your prayers and support. In the midst of everything that is happening around the world, we are confident that our "help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth" Psalm 121: 2

We love you!



Property Team Update:
on the south side of the building,
rocks were replaced and the area cleaned up.



In order for us to stay open as a place of Worship, the following requirements must be met:



Masks are not required for those with disabilities or special health needs.

MASK UP, MINNESOTA

STAY SAFE MN **m** MINNESOTA staysafe.mn.gov

- * Stay home if you are sick
- * Wash hands often or use hand sanitizer
- * Keep your mask on while indoors
- * Stay 6 feet apart
- * Only sit with members of your household or family
- * Avoid touching items in high traffic areas

- * **Music**
- * **Must wear a mask during the entire service**
- * **even when singing or chanting**
- * **Stay 6 feet apart**
- * **Household groups and family members together**
- * **Soloist/Performers stay at least 12 feet apart**

- * **Food and Drink**
- * **Limit to small groups**
- * **Limit tables to 3 - 4 persons, or 6 if same family**
- * **Social distance of at least 6 feet apart**
- * **Wear mask when not eating or drinking**
- * **Best practice would be to serve pre-packaged food**

Memorials, Gifts and Thanks

Gifts were given to the general fund in memory of Wayne Baumgartner by Gary Smith, Cory and Kris Cervin, Dan and Brenda Johnson, Ron and Barb Piepenburg, Mark & Julie Bredeson, Karl and Darlene Lundin, Winton and Kris Nelson, Aaron and Lisa Bonds, Peter and Karla Myers, Chuck and Sue Fenton, David and Darlene Meidal, Bob and Sharon Johnson, Gary and Kathy Cervin, Mark and Judy Hulterstrum, Duane and Darlene Henkelman, DeWayne and Iona Albright, Joan Bachenko, Valda Thomas, Stanley and Sylvia Kittleson, Jim and Barb Alsleben, John and Shirley Lekander, Rand and Dianne Thorp, Einar Lundin, Jim and Elaine Lenhard, Charlie and Jo Ann Lindstrom, Florence Roeszler, Vern and Lil Madson, Kirk and Dorothy Lundin, David and Myra Johnson, Paul and Sue Lemmer, Steve and Jackie Kraushaar, Don and Mary Hokanson, Ann Hill, Mike and Gaylene Thomas, and Richard and Betty Allen.

Gifts were given to the general fund in memory of Lenore Olson, Merry Schmidt's Mother, by Winton and Kris Nelson, Ron and Barb Piepenburg, Dan and Brenda Johnson, Paul and Sue Lemmer. Winton and Kris Nelson, Ron and Barb Piepenburg, Jerry and Lana Johnson, Merry Schmidt, and Steve and Jackie Kraushaar.

A Gift was given to the general fund in memory of Shirley Erickson by Mark and Julie Bredeson.

A Gift was given to the general fund in memory of Ardella Voight, Laurie Boll's Mom, by Steve and Jackie Kraushaar.

A Gift was given to the general fund by John and Shirley Lekander in honor of their 60th Wedding Anniversary on October 22, 2020.

A Gift was given to the general fund in memory of Audrey Erickson, Karen Eberhard's Mom, by Steve and Jackie Kraushaar.

SPECIAL THANKS

Thank You Card: Perhaps you sent a lovely card, or sat quietly on a chair. Perhaps you sent a funeral spray, if so we saw it there. Perhaps you spoke the kindest words, that anyone could say. Perhaps you were not there at all, just thought of us that day. Whatever you did to console our hearts, We Thank You so much whatever part. First Lutheran Church - Thanks for your support during this sad time. The Baumgartner Family

Dear Ministry of 1st Ev. Lutheran Church, We would like to thank you ever so much for gifts that Larry received from your congregation. The prayer shawl, wooden cross, and book of prayers are so overwhelming. It is going to battle for awhile - treatments starting soon and possibly surgery. We are strong and keep positive thoughts, and most of all Faith and Family. It's so overwhelming your congregation doesn't personally know us but have been so kind. Keep the prayers coming. Parents of Tonia Beaver, In God's Love, Larry and Cindy Bell.

Thank you to this wonderful church family for the cards, phone calls and memorials given in Memory of my Mother, Lenore Olson. With Gratefulness, Merry Schmidt

Dear First Lutheran Church, Thank you so much for the quilt. I appreciate all the great memories I have had throughout the year. I am attending SMSU in Marshall for Agriculture Education. With all the cold wind down there, I won't be cold anymore! Thanks again, Ruby Radunz

Thank you to those who gave their gift of time to decorate the church for Christmas. Your help was so appreciated. Jerry and Lana Johnson

Let's get to know our MST-USA students and chaperones...



Cassy, 12th grade

"I will be going on MST 2021 to work through God's hands by uplifting the people in the communities around us in need, and to learn new things about myself and the Lord"



Alix, 9th grade

"I want to do God's work with my own hands. To give me a better sense of self, and to know I've put a little bit of goodness in a world that can be dark."

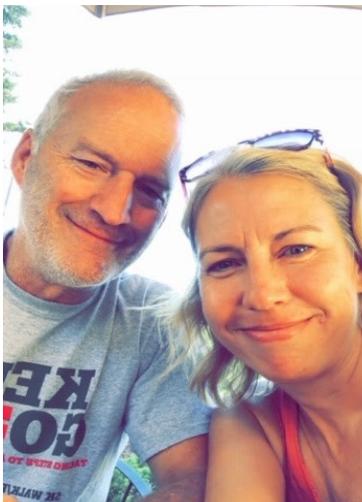


Olivia, 9th grade

"I am going to the mountains because I want to help the people there by doing what I can."

"I'm going on MST USA 2021 to the Adirondack Mountains because I enjoyed the 2019 MST trip and I think it will be fun to see the mountains and a different part of New York."

Taylor, 11th grade



Jon and Martha, chaperones

"This will be the 5th MST USA trip I've chaperoned and the 4th for Jon. Each trip has been unique and created so many memories. We truly feel blessed to serve alongside a diverse and dedicated team of young people from First Lutheran. Our congregation can be proud of our youth and the mission that MST USA continues to provide! Thank you for this opportunity."



Aidan, 10th grade

"I joined because when I went on the last MST trip I enjoyed helping out in all the service work we did and it made me happy to see how happy all those people were to see us helping."



MERRY
and
BRIGHT

*join us for Sunday School on Wednesday's!
W.O.W. is Worship On Wednesday's
Each Wednesday from 6-6:30pm*

*Log in, grab your Bible, chair, and supper.
Let's sit down eat and
grow in our faith together!*

DECEMBER 2020

DECEMBER 2020 Calendar

<p>First Evangelical Lutheran Church 703 South Sibley Ave. Litchfield, MN 320-693-2487</p>		<p>1 7:00 a.m. BREW - Chilstrom 8:00 a.m. BREW – FB Live 6:30 p.m. NA - Chapel 6:30 p.m. Executive Meeting 7:00 p.m. Team Meetings</p>	<p>2 9:00 a.m. Staff Mtg. 5:30 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal 6:00 p.m. WOW 6:30 p.m. Worship on KLFD Radio/FB live/YouTube 7:00 p.m. Confirmation 8:00 p.m. Worship on cable TV</p>	<p>3 7:55 a.m. "Open Gate" on KLFD Radio 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study FACEBOOK LIVE</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>6 2nd Sunday of Advent 8:30 a.m. worship on KLFD Radio Facebook Live, & Youtube 10:00 a.m. Worship with Communion in the Sanctuary 11:00 a.m. on cable access TV</p>	<p>7 10:30 a.m. Repeat of Sunday Worship on cable access TV</p>	<p>8 7:00 a.m. BREW - Chilstrom 8:00 a.m. BREW – FB Live 6:30 p.m. NA - Chapel</p>	<p>9 9:00 a.m. Staff Mtg. 5:30 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal 6:00 p.m. WOW 6:30 p.m. Worship on KLFD Radio/FB live/YouTube 7:00 p.m. Confirmation 8:00 p.m. Worship on cable TV</p>	<p>10 7:55 a.m. "Open Gate" on KLFD Radio 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study FACEBOOK LIVE</p>	<p>11 9:00 a.m. Christian Women's Meeting</p>	<p>12</p>
<p>13 3rd Sunday of Advent 8:30 a.m. worship on KLFD Radio Facebook Live, & Youtube 10:00 a.m. Worship with Communion in the Sanctuary 11:00 a.m. on cable access TV</p>	<p>14 10:30 a.m. Repeat of Sunday Worship on cable access TV</p>	<p>15 7:00 a.m. BREW - Chilstrom 8:00 a.m. BREW – FB Live 6:30 p.m. NA - Chapel 7:00 p.m. Church Council</p>	<p>16 9:00 a.m. Staff Mtg. 5:30 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal 6:00 p.m. WOW 6:30 p.m. Worship on KLFD Radio/FB live/YouTube 7:00 p.m. Confirmation 8:00 p.m. Worship on cable TV</p>	<p>17 7:55 a.m. "Open Gate" on KLFD Radio 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study FACEBOOK LIVE</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20 4th Sunday of Advent 8:30 a.m. worship on KLFD Radio Facebook Live, & Youtube 10:00 a.m. Worship with Communion in the Sanctuary 11:00 a.m. on cable access TV</p>	<p>21 10:30 a.m. Repeat of Sunday Worship on cable access TV</p>	<p>22 7:00 a.m. BREW - Chilstrom 8:00 a.m. BREW – FB Live 6:30 p.m. NA - Chapel</p>	<p>23 9:00 a.m. Staff Mtg. 6:30 p.m. Worship on KLFD Radio/FB live/YouTube 8:00 p.m. Worship on cable TV</p>	<p>24 Christmas Eve. 4:00 p.m. Candle Light Service 10:00 p.m. Candle Light Service</p>	<p>25 Christmas Day Church Office Closed</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27 Healing Worship 8:30 a.m. worship on KLFD Radio Facebook Live, & Youtube 10:00 a.m. Worship with Communion in the Sanctuary 11:00 a.m. on cable access TV</p>	<p>28 10:30 a.m. Repeat of Sunday Worship on cable access TV</p>	<p>29 7:00 a.m. BREW - Chilstrom 8:00 a.m. BREW – FB Live 6:30 p.m. NA - Chapel</p>	<p>30 9:00 a.m. Staff Mtg. 6:30 p.m. Worship on KLFD Radio/FB live/YouTube 8:00 p.m. Worship on cable TV</p>	<p>31 New Year's Eve</p>	<p>Services are Live on: KLFD radio, Facebook Live, YouTube (First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Litchfield MN) and rebroadcast on local cable access TV</p>	

DECEMBER 2020 SERVING INFO

Chairs:			Rick Schutz & Janell Haiwick	320-234-3595
Richard & Betty Allen		320-693-8997	Dave & Irene Schwartz	320-693-7506
	B	320-221-0477	Ross & Holly Seifert	320-234-9686
Rand & Dianne Thorp		320-593-6297	Ken & Carol Shoutz	320-593-6336
	D	612-703-6297		K 320-221-0445
Dale & Roxanne Rueckert				C 320-221-1399
Carol Rowell		320-693-9557	Jon & Penny Silverberg	320-693-8522
Ila Rueckert		320-221-2214	Sherri Sipe	952-470-6533
Joanne Rust		320-693-2084	Gary Smith	320-693-8530
Robert & Sabrina Sackett		320-857-2803	Marie Solem	
Rick Sandry		320-221-1235	Marcella Solmonson	320-593-3692
Stacy Sandstrom		320-221-3926	James Sommerfeld	320-693-3031
Lola Schlenner		320-593-7608	Joan Sommerfeld	320-693-8478
	L	320-247-0908	John & Julie Spanos	320-693-7724
Margaret Schlisner		320-693-4213		J 320-310-1716
Merry Schmidt		763-772-2706	Curtis & Sommer Stafford	651-329-2821
Russell & Darcy Schmitz		320-593-3462	Mary Steenrod	320-593-8607
			Lisa Steichen	320-693-3706
				c 320-221-3373
			Delos & Susan Steinhaus	320-593-6765
			Randy & Teresa Stille	320-593-2828
			Scott & Kristy Quast	320-693-4262



DECEMBER USHERS
 Bob Gilberts *C
 Jim Cottington
 Jim Sommerfeld
 Jason Stucky
 Chuck Fenton *C
 Don Hokanson
 Joel Ramthun



DECEMBER Birthdays

DEC 2020 ALTER GUILD
 Karen Eberhard 693-7190

DECEMBER 1
 Adam Steichen
DECEMBER 2
 Mason Rose
 Zionna Schrader
DECEMBER 3
 Alex Matheson
 Carson Rose
 Terek Stucky
DECEMBER 4
 Cecile Hoyer
 Jami Kraushaar
 Tyler Larson
 Ela Provencher
DECEMBER 5
DECEMBER 6
 Benjamin Driver
 Jason Langmo
 Janet Wagoner
DECEMBER 7
 Brityn Miller
 Daniel Prah
DECEMBER 8
 Chad Beavers
DECEMBER 9
 Kristine Keller
DECEMBER 10
 Jennifer Blomberg
 Ryan Holmgren
 Carly Rose
 Derek Schreiber

DECEMBER 11
 Kyla Mahlow
 Rick Nelson
 Joan Sommerfeld
DECEMBER 12
 Cheryl Linder
 Samantha Oslund
 Chad Zeppelin
DECEMBER 13
 Jerry Biermann
 William Dolan III
 Ryan Nelson
 Irene Schwartz
 Marcella Solmonson
DECEMBER 14
 Alan Boll
 Freya Kleinschmidt
 Michael Langmo
DECEMBER 15
 Anna Fluck
 Lisa Provencher
DECEMBER 16
 Lucille Blomberg
 Gordon Johnson
 Douglas Lee
 Addison Lokken
 Jerry Urdahl

DECEMBER 17
 Hannah Cox
 Kaisyn Miller
 Raigan Miller
 Michael Oslund
 Pamela Radunz
 Carson Rose
DECEMBER 18
 Kayden DeWolf
 Haydon Grotto
 Sara Prochaska
DECEMBER 19
 Carson Cervin
 Elliot Fluck
 Reuben Hoyer
 Todd Kuechle
 Eric Steenrod
 Terry Steenrod
DECEMBER 20
 April Anderson
 Doris Curtis
 Liam Kraushaar
 Taylor Lease
 Ruby Radunz
DECEMBER 21
 Carrie Asmus
 Ashley Lease
 Warren Wieland

DECEMBER 22
 Crystal Bailey
 Douglas Fisher
 Brent Hannan
 Alyssa Thompson
 Emma Ziehl-
 Kleinschmidt
DECEMBER 23
 Nathaniel Nelson
DECEMBER 24
 George Baldwin
 Willard Maahs
DECEMBER 25
 Christine Larson
 Julleen Roush
DECEMBER 26
 Anika J. Bredeson
 Sherry Burdick
 Jacqueline Laidlaw
 Alice Harding
 Gary Smith
DECEMBER 27
 Austin Carlson
 Holly Cottington
 Scott Quast
 Glenn Rueckert
 Mark Sparboe

DECEMBER 28
 Kyndra Beavers
 Todd Gabrielson
 Jessica Konietzko
 Jeremy Lewerenz
 Sara Groskreutz
 Matthew Paulson
DECEMBER 29
 Tracy Gabrielson
 Kim Holmes
 Venita McCormick
 Bryanna St. Pierre
 Delos Steinhaus
DECEMBER 30
 Corey Cervin
 Kole Kraushaar
DECEMBER 31
 Stefany Butler
 Rev. Gary Cumings
 Matthew Draeger
 Karly Nelson
 Charles Lindstrom

Mission

Dear friends,

We had planned to gather in May 2020 in Johannesburg for an ELCA Southern Africa Companion Church Consultation but the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to postpone the gathering.

Companion synods relating to Lutheran churches in Namibia then asked: "What can we do to keep in touch, to support each other and to strengthen our companionship as we respond to COVID-19, racism, poverty, inequality and climate disaster?"



The publication by the ELCA of a study guide on Martin Luther's 1520 treatise *Freedom of a Christian* provided an opening. (The Treatise and Study Guide are available for free download at <https://www.elca500.org/>)

500 years ago Martin Luther wrote: "The Christian [person] is a completely free lord of all, subject to none. The Christian [person] is a completely dutiful servant of all, subject to all. ... Christian[s] ... do not live in themselves but in Christ and their neighbor, or else they are not Christian. They live in Christ through faith and in the neighbor through love."

While one can ask what Luther meant when he wrote this, the key question is, "What does this freedom mean for us today?" What are we freed from and what are we freed for?

We decided to use the internet to bring us together. Eight presenters, representing the three Lutheran churches in Namibia, four ELCA synods, Wartburg Seminary and ULTS Seminary Paulinum, were asked to reflect on four topics relating to Christian freedom.

Participants were invited to read and listen, and then in breakaway groups, to reflect and to share their unique stories, experiences and insights from Namibia and the USA.

Time and the number of participants were limited but we are finding new ways to be together. Presenter Prof. Paul Isaak said: "It was really good that sisters and brothers could come together, sit and talk together to paraphrase Psalm 133."

We hope to develop similar learning and sharing platforms in future as we walk together as companions in God's mission.

Thank you for your prayers and support and your participation in God's mission locally and globally.

Yours faithfully,
Rev. Dr. Philip Knutson
ELCA Global Mission Regional Representative - Southern Africa
Johannesburg, June 25, 2020

My blog page address is: <https://southernafricanconnections.wordpress.com/> Please note the link to my online giving page on www.elca.org: community.elca.org/SouthAfrica

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR MEN AND WOMEN IN THE MILITARY:



*Our members known to be in the military are:

Cmdr. Joseph Vandelac, Foreign Engagement at the Pentagon, son-in-law of Janice and Cecil Fawcett;
Staff Sgt. US Army, Zachary Olimb, Fort Hood, TX, grandson of Edna and Martin Oldenburg, Vern and Lil Madson;
Staff Sgt. Austin Kleinschmidt, Great Falls, MT, son of Kipp and Lynette Kleinschmidt;
Staff Sgt. Matthew Wiechmann, stationed at Fort Drum, NY; son of Virgil and Jamie Wiechmann,
Major Troy Thomas, Severance, CO, nephew of Valda Thomas and Mike and Gaylene Thomas
Eric Kammermeier, active duty United States Navy, son-in-law of Mike and Beth Boyle;

Welcome Home! to those of you who now have returned to the States. Thank you all for your service

*Please let the office know if titles, locations, and/or addresses have changed for any of the above.

GLOBAL MISSIONS OFFERING: DECEMBER 2020: SW MN ELCA Synod Ministries

Start your holiday shopping for Emmaus gifts at our “Pop-up Shop” in the Chamber office in downtown Litchfield.

Hours are: Thursdays and Fridays in December, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Saturdays in December until the 19th, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Unique gifts at special prices. Please respect others by wearing a mask.

Thank you for your support.



Skol Pa Fisken!! A Very Merry-Covid Christmas! FROM GREEN LAKE LUTHERAN MINISTRIES..... 2020 VIRTUAL Dinner Theater - December 12, 2020



Due to the pandemic, we won't be able to join us as we check in on our friends in Woodtick Landing - *the ice fishing capital of Minnesota!* From the comfort of your home, visit your favorite characters from last year's show and meet some new friends and enjoy holiday music from local musicians through an

online prerecorded performance, written by Dave Eliason and Brian Pearson.

Access to this performance will be available for \$20. The link will be sent to you via email on December 12 so you can enjoy the Dinner Theater from home whenever you are ready to watch it! And it's not a GLLM Dinner Theater without the delicious food! Order a takeout Meatball Dinner featuring your Dinner Theater favorites!

Preorder for access to the performance and food options available now by phone at 320-796-2181 or on our website here!

Contact our office with questions by phone or by email at camp@gllm.org!

Please keep our shut-in members in your prayers:

Meeker Manor: Mary Klosner, Bethesda, Willmar: Richard Bohn

Emmaus Place: Arlene Poirier

Bethany Home: Stan Mortenson, Gloria Dei: Mae Wertz, Willard Maahs, Lois Rusch, Janet Lundin

Litchfield, in own home: Viola Lenhard, Jutta Goodrich, and Mae Brehmer



Family Fare Receipts: Please bring in your receipts to the **Sunday School Entrance**—there is a basket on the table. These receipts are added together and helps our education program earn \$1000 per \$150,000 worth of receipts. Please note we need the entire receipt.

Thank you for all the receipts that have been turned in!!

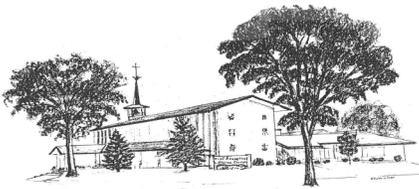
*receipts for prescriptions purchased are **not** eligible for the program.

Food Shelf Donations can be placed in the shopping cart in the Narthex. Please bring non-perishable donations (no expired items please). The needs are great within our community and our contributions are greatly appreciated. Thank you!!



FIRST NEWS is a monthly publication of First Evangelical Lutheran Church,
703 S. Sibley Ave. Litchfield, MN 55355

Please send submissions to: The Church Office by **December 15th**
For the NEXT ISSUE: January 2021



FIRST NEWS

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
703 South Sibley Avenue • Litchfield, MN 55355

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55355



Ministry Staff:

- Tom Evenson, Pastor
firstsr@hutchtel.net, Cell: 320-266-5366
- Sarah Jones, Christian Education Director, Assisting Minister
sarahcejones@hotmail.com, Cell: 320-221-0055
- Judy Berglund, Office Manager
firstoffice@hutchtel.net
- Tonia Beavers, Bookkeeper
firsttr@hutchtel.net
- Carol Heath, Financial Secretary
firsttr@hutchtel.net
- Bea Devereaux, Organist, Senior Choir, and Bell Choir Director
- Carol Dragt, Director of Music Non-Traditional Service
- Greta Hulterstrum, Pianist, Wednesday Evening Service
- Scott Nelson, Custodian
- Joel Ramthun, Custodian

First Lutheran Church Office: 320-693-2487

LIKE us on Facebook!



Worship with Us!!

SERVICES ARE BROADCAST LIVE ON
RADIO, FACEBOOK LIVE, YOUTUBE & CABLE ACCESS TV

Meeker area ELCA churches live on:

Sunday morning:

8:30 a.m. Worship on KLFM Radio 1410 AM and
95.9 FM, and Facebook Live and Youtube

**10:00 a.m. Worship with Communion
at First Lutheran Church**

11:00 a.m. on cable access TV

Monday morning:

10:30 a.m. Repeat of Sunday Worship on cable access TV

Wednesday night:

6:30 p.m. Worship on Radio and Facebook live, Youtube

8:00 p.m. on cable access TV

Please check our Facebook page,
Youtube (First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Litchfield MN)
or our website for
updates: www.firstlitchfield.org