



Keep awake

MARK 13:37

Called by the Spirit, we serve Christ, sharing God's love with all.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

WEBSITE: firstlutherantopeka.org

1234 SW Fairlawn Road, Topeka, KS 66604

Church office: (785) 272-5302 CDO office: (785) 272-5999

Ministers

Pastor

Children's Day Out (CDO) Director

Caring for Kids 1st Director

Organist

Director of Music

Director of Handbell Choir

Secretary

Assistant Secretary

Bookkeeper

Missionaries in Russia

Missionaries for Ripe For Harvest World Outreach

All Members of First

Pastor Jenny Jackson

Julie Lamott

Bryleigh Willis

Jerry Anderson

Mark Fuller

Linda Anderson

LaDonna J. Little

Jill Loomans

Cindy Crawford

Rev. Bradn & Natasha Buerkle

Jim & Dawn Anderson

WE WELCOME all who worship with us today! We extend a special greeting to our visitors and invite you to worship with us again soon. Please make yourselves known to our pastor and people.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION: Lutheran Christians believe that in the sacrament of Holy Communion, by the power of God's Word and Holy Spirit, we receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ, along with the bread and wine, for our forgiveness and salvation. If you share in this belief, you are welcome to participate with us. Non-communing children and adults may come forward to receive a blessing. White grape juice is available, as well as gluten free wafers. If you desire to receive communion at your pew, please alert an usher during the prelude. Communion is done by intinction.

GREETINGS PARENTS: **Sunday School for children Pre-K through 5th grade** takes place during our worship service. Children will be invited up for a children's sermon with the pastor, after which any who would like are invited to attend Sunday school. This will include a Bible reading, story, craft, and more. The teachers will bring the students back to worship in time for communion with your family. Should you prefer your child to remain in the sanctuary during worship, we have Children's Bibles in the pews and worship activity bags just outside the sanctuary. Faith Formation for our middle school and high school students will take place during the week at our youth group times.

BRIEF WORD ABOUT OFFERING: Offering plates are available at the back of the worship space, on the bulletin table. To give online, please go to FirstLutheranTopeka.org and click on 'contribute'.
Please place attendance form in the offering plate.

WHEELCHAIR available in the north entranceway or in the church office.
EARPHONES for the hearing impaired and **LARGE PRINT BULLETINS.**



THE CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP AT FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH AN ADVENT EUCHARIST

5:00 P.M. & 10:00 A.M.

DECEMBER 2 & 3, 2023

Before worship, talk to God. During worship, let God talk to you. After worship, talk to your fellow worshipper.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE “Nun komm’, der Heiden Heiland” BWV₆₅₉
“Come Saviour of the Gentiles”

(J. S. Bach, 1685-1750)

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

CHIMES

CALL TO WORSHIP

A: Blessed be God, the eternal † One-in-Three, who was, and is, and is to come.

C: Blessed be God forever and ever.

A: During a season of busyness and a culture that demands immediate response

C: we pause and wait for your appearing.

A: In the midst of anxiety, chaos, and fear,

C: we pause and trust that your hand is leading us.

A: Uncertain about the future and weighed down with worries in the present,

C: we pause and know your presence fully.

A: Come, O Christ, and set us free.

C: Come, Emmanuel, bring in your reign of justice and peace.

257 GATHERING SONG “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” Stanzas 1-4 & 8

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

C: Amen.

P: God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Everlasting God,

C: you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation’s bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.

P: Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all.

C: Amen.

PRAYER AND BLESSING OF ADVENT WREATH

P: Lord our God, we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ. He is Emmanuel, the hope of all peoples; he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us; he is the Savior of every nation.

C: O God, let your blessing come upon our community gathered here before you.

P: Bless us † and our Advent wreath.

May the light that shines forth illumine our way as we journey towards Christmas; may the light that shines forth illumine our lives as we wait in hope for the birth of the Christ-child.

We ask this through Christ who is the Light of the World.

C: Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

A: As we begin our Advent pilgrimage, grant us the courage to hope. Hope for your presence, Hope for your promise, Hope for your peace.

C: Jesus you are the hope for the world, the hope for our lives. (*The first candle on the wreath is lit.*)

ADVENT HYMN "*Light the Candle*"

Stanza 4 HOPE

See Bulletin Page 11

A: We light this candle as a symbol of our hope found in Emmanuel.

C: Long ago, people's hearts were sustained by hope as they waited for a savior.

P: Praise to you, O God, our salvation who is near. You hold us in our waiting and keep us awake to the world. You show up in our lives at unexpected times. Bless us as we light this candle to keep vigil for your arrival. We trust that even though we do not know the day or the hour, you hurry to gather all people to your peace.

C: Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Congregation shall sit.

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORD

God speaks to us in scriptures read, sung, and preached.

NOISY OFFERING and CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

FIRST READING: Isaiah 64:1-9

This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.

¹O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—²as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. ⁴From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.

⁵You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. ⁶We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. ⁷There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. ⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 80:1-7, 17-19

Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. (Psalm 80:7)

Let your face shine up - on us and
we shall be saved, and we shall be saved.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of text, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are written below the notes.

¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph | like a flock; * shine forth, you that are enthroned up- | on the cherubim.

²In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, | and Manasseh, * stir up your strength and | come to help us.

³Restore | us, O God; * let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.

⁴O LORD | God of hosts, * how long will your anger fume when your | people pray? R

⁵You have fed them with the | bread of tears; * you have given them bowls of | tears to drink.

⁶You have made us the derision | of our neighbors, * and our enemies laugh | us to scorn.

⁷Restore us, O | God of hosts; * let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.

¹⁷Let your hand be upon the one at | your right hand, * the one you have made so strong | for yourself. R

¹⁸And so will we never turn a- | way from you; * give us life, that we may call up- | on your name.

¹⁹Restore us, O LORD | God of hosts; * let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved. R

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

As the Christians in Corinth await the advent of Jesus, Paul reminds them how the Lord has already enriched them through spiritual gifts and will continue to strengthen them until the coming day of the Lord.

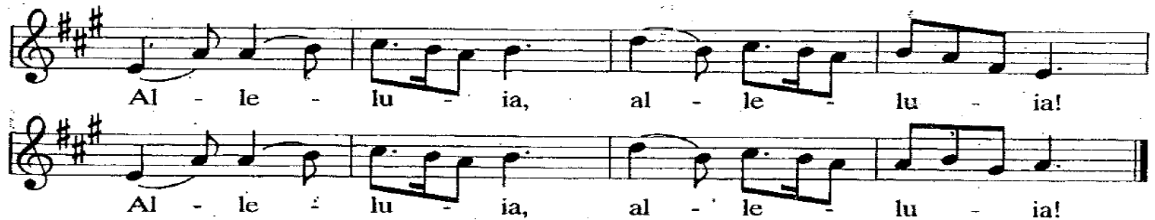
³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

CELTIC ALLELUIA



P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Mark, the 13th chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: Mark 13:24-37

Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.

[Jesus said:] ²⁴In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

²⁸From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place.

³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³²But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

³³Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Congregation shall sit.

SERMON

436 HYMN OF THE DAY “*Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying*”

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

On the third day he rose again;

**he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,

**the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God’s day of restoration.

A brief silence.

A: Call your church into holy fellowship as we await the restoration of all things. Reenergize your faithful people to live with hope and compassion, especially those who serve as missionaries near and far. Center us on your promise to come among us and make all things new. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: All creation signals your presence, O God: the vastness of the cosmos, the turn of the seasons, and living things that both rest and flourish. Rekindle our commitment to care for the earth. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Let the nations tremble at your holy presence, that justice and liberation prevail in all corners of the earth. Restore peace to nations in conflict, teach righteousness to corrupt leaders and systems, and bring stability to areas facing uncertain futures. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Enrich the spirits of all who feel hopeless, fearful, or despairing. Stay close to those who await healing or relief especially Jeanie, Donna, Shirley, and Rob as well as our homebound members, all unable to worship this weekend, and all family, friends and even enemies we name now, either out loud or in the silence of our hearts (pause). Surround them with your unwavering presence. Deliver all in any need. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Be with those who keep awake at night: nurses working overnight shifts, caregivers of newborns and aging adults, stargazers, those who are anxious, or those who are traveling. Reveal to all that the dark can be a place of calm and comfort filled with your presence. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You have sent out your angels and gathered your faithful people from every time and place, calling them into one fellowship of saints. Bless the witness of those who dwell in your eternal presence. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

P: Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

C: Amen.

PEACE P: The peace of the Lord be with you always. **C: And also with you.**

The ministers and congregation may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Peace be with you.

R: Peace be with you.

Congregation shall sit.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

CHOIR ANTHEM “Advent Message”

(M. How, 1931-2022)

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: God of our waiting and watching,

C: we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives to the service of all your people. Prepare the way before us as we meet you in this simple meal, through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace. Amen.

ADVENT DIALOGUE AND PREFACE

Spoken Responsively

P: God is with us,

C: in this place and in our lives.

P: Let us give thanks to God,

C: in memory and in hope.

P: Illuminating God, source of creation, our Salvation, Hope and Peace. We praise you for your creative labor, bearing expectations for life and love. You spoke to us through unexpected prophets: Isaiah envisioned a blossoming desert; Mary proclaimed a world turned upside down, John the Baptist cried out for repentance. At this expectant hour, your Son Jesus came to bring us extraordinary love and to heal our suffering world. And so, with the shepherds in the fields, with the angels and all the heavenly hosts, we praise your name and join their unending song.

SANCTUS

(tune: “Angels, from the Realms of Glory”)

Sung by Congregation

Lo, the Heav’nly host rejoices: “Holy, Holy, Holy Lord!”

Lo, God’s people join their voices: “God of hosts, by all adored,

Heav’n and earth proclaim Your glory, Sing Your praise with one accord!”

Blest is He who now draws near us in the name of God the King!

Blest is He who comes to cheer us - Let our welcome joyful ring:

“Hail! Hosanna! Hallelujah!” Highest praises echoing.

THE CONSECRATION

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

P: In this meal, righteousness and peace join together. Come, take your place at the table.

Congregation shall sit.

AGNUS DEI

(tune: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel")

Sung by Congregation

**O Lamb of God, You take away
The sin of all. Have mercy, Lord, we pray!
O Lamb of God, You take away
The sin of all. Have mercy, Lord, we pray!
O Lamb of God, our faith increase,
And grant us now Your gift of peace!**

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

COMMUNION VOLUNTARY "*Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying*"

(arr. P Manz, 1919-2009)

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

C: Amen.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

P: The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit † remain upon you now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

260 SENDING SONG “*The King Shall Come*”

DISMISSAL

A: Called by the spirit,

C: **We serve Christ, sharing God’s love with all.**

A: Go in peace. Christ is HOPE.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE “*Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying*”

(arr. R. Hobby, b. 1962)

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ALTAR FLOWERS *are given by Carren Reed in memory of her husband, Paul and to the Glory of God.*

THE ETERNAL CANDLE FOR DECEMBER *is given by Jerry & Marsha Serk in thanks and appreciation to the Music Staff and to all members of our various choirs.*

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH ARE REQUESTED FOR THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE:

Jeanie Schuler (home), Donna Kruger (Kansas Rehab Hospital), Shirley Perry (home), Rob Peterson (home), Carren Reed (home), Allyn Lockner (Brewster Health Care), Dean Johnson (home), Kathy Cheatham (home), Vera Pearce (home), Verla Buch (Presbyterian Manor), Blake Hopper (home), Frank Phillips (Bonnie’s son), Barbara Aubert (friend of Nancy Vaughn), Janine Wagner (Donna Kruger’s sister), David McGinnis (Board Member of TLHA), Manny Ramos (Shirley Perry’s nephew), Leuita Meyer (Verla Buch’s sister-in-law), Don Kaphingst (Margaret Stewart’s brother), Heidi Mark (Bill & Joyce’s daughter), Sam Pierson (Sherrie Petersen’s nephew-in-law), Loren Johannes (friend of Erv & Ann Sanders), Sydney Genees (Karen Papp’s son), Jayne Cool (friend of the Lubers), Anita Freeman (neighbor friend of Nancy & Ken Sherbert), Robert Jones (friend of Sylvia Levings), June Fisher (friend of Marvin Wingert), Gloria & Dennis Lyon (Barb Collins’ aunt & uncle), Charline Matheny (friend of Patti Klein), Cheryl Koch (Kathy’s sister-in-law), Linda Falchek (friend of Wendy Sanders), Linda Meyer (Verla Buch’s sister-in-law), Drew Hartz (Steve & Kathy Couch’s son-in-law), Dan Fraleigh (Sherrie Petersen’s brother-in-law), Velda Jacobs (Eileen Caspers’ aunt), Lenette Kottas (Eileen Caspers’ mother), John Browne (Penny & Marvin Boleski’s brother-in-law), Katelynn Herring (Jeanie Schuler’s great-niece).

LIGHT THE CANDLE



Light the can-dle of LOVE to-day, the Giv-er of love is
 Light the can-dle of PEACE to-day, the Giv-er of peace is
 Light the can-dle of JOY to-day, the Giv-er of joy is
 Light the can-dle of HOPE to-day, the Giv-er of hope will



here! Wel-come the love we live and die for, but
 here! Wel-come the peace we fight and cry for, but
 here! Wel-come the joy we crave and pray for, but
 come! Wel-come the hope we long and wait for, but



on - ly Christ can give. Flick-er and flame and
 on - ly Christ can give. Flick-er and flame and
 on - ly Christ can give. Flick-er and flame and
 on - ly Christ can give. Flick-er and flame and



glow with love, light up the world a -
 glow with peace, light up the world a -
 glow with joy, light up the world a -
 glow with hope, light up the world a -



round you. Flick-er and flame and glow with love,
 round you. Flick-er and flame and glow with peace,
 round you. Flick-er and flame and glow with joy,
 round you. Flick-er and flame and glow with hope,



light up the world a - round you.
 light up the world a - round you.
 light up the world a - round you.
 light up the world a - round you.

RETURN TO BULLETIN PAGE 4

✠ IN THE FIRST PLACE THIS WEEK ✠

Children's Day Out Preschool (CDO) schedule: M, T, W & T 9am-3pm Friday 9-11:30 am

Sunday, December 3

FIRST ADVENT

- 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 10:10 a.m. – Pre-K thru 5th Grade Sunday School
- 11:29 a.m. – DTLN Training (PH)
- 11:30 a.m. – Children, Youth & Family Ministry (L)
- 6:00 p.m. – Pastor Jenny at Arbor Court Worship

Monday, December 4

- 1:00 p.m. – Staff Meeting
- 5:45 p.m. – Property Committee (NL)
- 6:00 p.m. – Altar Guild – Tree setup & decorating
- 6:30 p.m. – Finance Committee (202)
- 7:00 p.m. – Boy Scout Troop 175 (PH)

Tuesday, December 5

- 6:30 p.m. – Cub Scout Pack 175 (PH)

Wednesday, December 6

- 9:00 a.m. – What-Sew-Ever
- 6:00 p.m. – Advent Midweek Worship Service
- 6:30 p.m. – Music Staff Meeting (Z)
- 7:00 p.m. – Worship Committee (Z)
- 7:00 p.m. – DTLN Steering Committee (202)

Thursday, December 7

- 12:00-5:00 p.m. – Fall Cleanup Outside
- 6:00 p.m. – Executive Committee
- 6:15 p.m. – Bell Choir Rehearsal
- 6:30 p.m. – Blue Christmas Service at Mt. Hope
- 7:00 p.m. – Vocal Choir Rehearsal

Friday, December 8

- Pastor Jenny's Day Off
- 10:00 a.m. – Coffee & Lectionary (202)

Saturday, December 9

- 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. – DTLN and WTLN Set-up
- 5:00 p.m. – Worship Service (Chapel)

Sunday, December 10

SECOND ADVENT

SAINT LUCIA

- 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 10:10 a.m. – Pre-K thru 5th Grade Sunday School

5:00-7:00 p.m.

DRIVE THRU LIVING NATIVITY

LESSONS DECEMBER 9 & 10

Isaiah 40:1-11 Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

2 Peter 3:8-15a Mark 1:1-8

LAY MINISTERS 12/3	FIRST ADVENT	10:00 a.m.
Assisting Minister		Jenn Betz
Lector		Diane Dukat
Acolyte		Abram Crawford
Advent Candelighters		Stephen Ministers
Communion Assistants		Kathy Couch, Jeff Montague
Greeters		Dana Nelsen, Ann Sanders
Ushers		Kevin Eaton, Eincks
Council Member		Laura Garner
Sunday School Leaders		Barb Collins, Karon Gambrill
Coffee Host		Bill & Phyllis Buch
Bus Driver & Host/Hostess		Randy Debenham, Barb Collins
Saturday Lector		Sherrie Petersen
Altar Guild Setup/Clean up	Kathy Couch, Barb Collins, Karen Wollin, Nancy Besta, Karon Gambrill	
Tech Team	John Hanna, Stephen Blank	
Stephen Minister on Call	Dana Nelsen	

LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT WEEK

LAY MINISTERS 12/10	ST. LUCIA & DTLN	10:00 a.m.
Assisting Minister		John Hanna
Lector		Kathy Koch
Acolyte		Lucas Jackson
Advent Candlelighters		Stephen Ministers
Communion Assistants		Diane Dukat, Joyce Koenig
Greeters		Kathy Koch
Ushers		Lea Welch, Bob Wollin
Council Member		LaVerne Engelhardt, Nancy Johnson
Sunday School Leaders		Lydia Peterson, Bob Wollin
Coffee Host		SAINT LUCIA
Bus Driver & Host/Hostess		Marvin & Penny Boleski
Saturday Lector		Karen Wollin
Altar Guild Setup/Clean up	Pat Drake, Nancy Vaughn, Karen Wollin, Nancy Besta, Karon Gambrell	
Tech Team	Austin Jackson, John Hanna	
Stephen Minister on Call	Diane Dukat	

PARISH NOTICES

MIDWEEK ADVENT WORSHIP EACH WEDNESDAY AT 6:00 P.M.

Gather for scripture, song, prayer, and wassail!

LOOKING AHEAD: December 6 - Peace: This week we will reflect on God's gift of peace. We will be collecting items that bring peace at night, PJs, slippers, towels, washcloths, toiletries, underwear, etc.

BIRTHDAY CHEERS FOR VERLA BUCH



Let's stuff her mailbox with birthday greetings and bring smiles to her face for her **95th birthday on Friday, December 8th.**

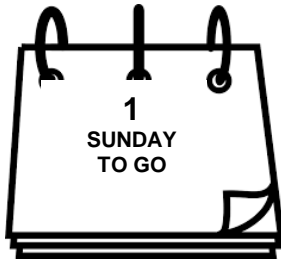
Her address: Verla Buch #212, 4712 SW 6th Avenue, Topeka, KS 66606

Back in the day, Verla was active at First Lutheran in Bible Study, 50 Plus Group, Altar Guild, Book Club, and Dinner for Eight. She led Bible Study at Thornton Place for many years. Verla lives at Presbyterian Manor.



SINCE THE DAYS when the Vikings were Christianized, *Saint Lucia* has been a favorite Christmas tradition among the Swedish people. She was a Sicilian saint, but the Swedes eagerly adopted her. According to legend, *Lucia* was a medieval saint who carried food and drink to hungry folk during a period of famine. Early in the morning, the modern Lucia, traditionally the oldest daughter of the family carries a tray of special buns and cookies to each one in the family as she sings the lovely old melody, "*Santa Lucia*." *Lucia* wears a white robe with a crimson sash. On her head, she wears a crown of lighted candles, which dispels the blackness of the season of long nights. **First Lutheran will be visited by *Saint Lucia* during the worship service on December 10th. Plan to stay for coffee and cookies afterward and visit with *Saint Lucia*.**

PLEASE BRING NON-PERISHIBLE ITEMS FOR DOORSTEP DURING DECEMBER.



One week 'til showtime! Clipboards for food sign-up. **Today' is training day** for all participants; kitchen crew not needed (**11:29 a.m. after Sunday service**). **Questions?** Contact Jeff Montague (785-249-4024, jjmickey@hotmail.com) or Dana Nelsen (661-972-4100, duanan@verizon.net).



LADIES OF THE CHURCH, please come join **WOMEN OF THE ELCA** on **December 13th** at **Perkins Restaurant** at **12:30 p.m.** for a **TREAT YOURSELF HOLIDAY CELEBRATION!** Please contact Carolyn Olson to reserve a place at our table. **EITHER CALL 785-633-3786 OR EMAIL ME AT COLSON3958@YAHOO.COM BY SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10th.**



ALL MEMBERS of First Lutheran are invited to go **CHRISTMAS CAROLING** to our **HOMEBOUND MEMBERS** on **Thursday, December 14th**. We will meet in the Parish Hall at **5:30 PM** for **pizza**. We will divide into teams and from **6:00-8:00 PM** we will spread Christmas cheer to our shut-in members. **Please RSVP to Marsha Serk at jermar812@aol.com by December 11th** if you plan to attend and the number in your family so that we have enough pizza for everyone to enjoy. We hope you will join us. The smiles on our Homebound Members faces are well worth our time and we have fun as well.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

It has been the custom at First Lutheran to provide a monetary gift to First's staff at Christmas. If you would like to make a contribution for the **STAFF CHRISTMAS GIFT**, please either mail in or drop off checks payable to "First Lutheran Church" and indicate "staff gift" in the memo line. You can also go to our website www.firstlutherantopeka.org and use the contribute tab.

Please have all contributions in by December 17th. Stephen Couch, Council President

WANTED: COFFEE HOSTS



If you're enjoying coffee after the Sunday service, please consider being a host. If we want to keep this hospitality going, we're going to need volunteers. It's very simple, pick up a "jug" of OJ, arrive at the church a tad before the 10:00 a.m. service and get the coffee brewing. Set out the creamer, sugar, and stir sticks. Duck out of service a tad before the end and start to fill a few cups of coffee and juice. All supplies provided, except the OJ (you can be reimbursed for that). Please sign up on the clipboard lying on the coffee service table. **Contact Parish Life Chair Jeff Montague** (in church directory) with any questions or for more detailed instructions. One person can certainly handle the duties, but two is more fun, so recruit a helper.



ANNUAL REPORTS DUE WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27th

ALL Committees and Organizations may submit their annual reports to the church office by Wednesday, December 27th, so that the annual booklet of reports can be printed and collated for availability to the congregation by Sunday, January 21st. Please email reports to the Church Secretary, LaDonna at 1stlutherantopeka@sbcglobal.net or mail a typed copy to the church office. Thank you!



ETERNAL CANDLES can be found in both the main Worship Center and our beautiful Chapel. In 2024 you may **DONATE** both candles in remembrance or in honor of someone for the entire month. Please contact LaDonna, in the church office, (785) 272-5302 or email her at 1stlutherantopeka@sbcglobal.net to sign-up for a month and give information that will be included in the bulletin. **The cost will be \$20 for the month. Available months are: April, May, and August.**

ALTAR FLOWERS FOR 2024

Fresh flowers on our altar are a special way to enrich our worship space and to honor and memorialize special people in our lives. Please join in this beautiful practice by reserving your dates for 2024 now.

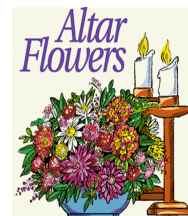
There is a chart of reserved dates and forms to complete in the hallway by the offices. You may complete the questionnaire and leave it there. You may also contact either LaDonna at the church office 785-272-5302 or Jeanie Schuler 785-845-7964 and we will gladly take your information over the phone.

The form includes a place for an email address or cell phone to which our florist may send your invoice in order to reduce costs. Should you require a paper invoice be mailed, he will accommodate your request. The florist, Mark Lamantia, also invites you to call him with a credit card payment if that is your preference.

For those with annual orders, the chart has been completed and we will call/email you to confirm your order information. **The altar flowers cost \$25 per vase plus tax.** Reservations may be made for one (\$25) or two vases (\$50). Pulpit flowers are also an option to recognize a special occasion for \$50 plus tax.

OPEN 2024 DATES FOR BOTH VASES (unless indicated otherwise) ARE:

1/7, 3/31, 4/14 (one vase), 4/21 (one vase), 4/28, 5/26, 6/30, 7/7, 7/14, 7/28, 8/18, 8/25, 9/22, 11/17 (one vase), 11/24, 12/8, 12/29.



Winds of Grace

Have you ever experienced a powerful storm in which the sky grew increasingly dark and winds swirled the clouds or broke branches off trees? Our modern technology often allows us to prepare for storms like blizzards and hurricanes that develop slowly as they move toward us. Perhaps you've taken part in hastily boarding up windows, securing pets or farm animals, and gathering groceries and supplies in anticipation of being shut in or without power for a time.

The coming of the Son of Man will apparently not include advance warnings like those of meteorologists and weather apps, for Jesus says, "About that day or hour no one knows." It may be more like a tornado or thunderstorm, where we see that the conditions are right but can't be sure precisely when or where it will materialize. Our preparations for that type of storm are different, primarily focused on where and how we'll take shelter should lightning or a funnel cloud be spotted nearby. Many of us practiced tornado drills in school as kids; such practices, as well as storm watches and warnings, keep us aware of how to respond and alert about when to do so.

It is easy to hear Jesus' words and sound an alert for the end times. We might even spend time and energy worrying about the end and what it means for us. At the same time, the urgency of this proclamation is focused on the present, on what we can do here and now to be open to God's rule in our lives. This is a different kind of preparation, focused on loving God and loving our neighbors as ourselves.

In the sacraments of baptism and communion we are invited into regular practices of anticipating the presence of God with us. In Advent we bring a particular focus to this expectation. We are invited to think about the ways the winds of grace gather us in, and then send us out for the sake of the world.

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20231203-1ADV Tracks 1 and 2 ELCA-L



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24th

- 10:00 a.m. – FOURTH ADVENT WORSHIP**
- 3:00 p.m. – Special Christmas Prelude Music**
- 3:30 p.m. - CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS COMMUNION**
- 7:00 p.m. - Special Christmas Prelude Music**
- 7:30 p.m. - CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS COMMUNION**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30th

- 5:00 p.m. - CHRISTMAS CAROL COMMUNION AND HEALING SERVICE**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31st FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

- 10:00 a.m. – CHRISTMAS CAROL COMMUNION AND HEALING SERVICE**

HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

- Monday, December 25th – OFFICE CLOSED**
- Tuesday, December 26th – OFFICE CLOSED**
- Friday, December 29th – OFFICE CLOSSES AT NOON**
- Monday, January 1st – OFFICE CLOSED**

BUILDING ALARM WILL BE SET WHEN OFFICE IS CLOSED





Red poinsettias may be ordered now for the Chancel area for the Christmas Eve, December 24th worship services. Plants are **\$7.75** each and come in a 6½ inch pot with 5 to 6 blooms.

The *deadline to order* is **Sunday, December 10th**.

Poinsettias may be picked up after the 7:30 p.m. Christmas Eve service.

Person donating poinsettia is responsible for picking it up.

Tear off and return to the church office or place in the offering plate.

Name _____

Number of poinsettias _____

Amount Enclosed _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

