

First Evangelical Lutheran Church
1200 4th Avenue
Worthington, MN 56187
(507) 376-6148
Fax: (507) 376-6149
Email: felcwgtn@gmail.com
Website: felcwgtn.org

OFFICE HOURS: Monday—Thursday
8:00 am—12:00 pm
1:00—4:30 pm
Friday
8:00 am—12:00 pm

Church will be locked over the noon hour.

WORSHIP: 6:00 pm—Wednesday
9:30 am—Sunday

COMMUNION: Wednesday
First & Third Sunday

SUNDAY SCHOOL: 8:45 am (Sept–May)

MISSION STATEMENT

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH, WORTHINGTON, MN

*God has called us, the baptized
members of First Evangelical
Lutheran Church, Worthington,
Minnesota, to proclaim the Gospel
and make disciples of all people.*

Living out our Mission

*In obedience, we commit ourselves
to the Lord's ministry rooted in a
fertile agricultural prairie of God's
creation. Relying on the promise of
the Holy Spirit, and through Word
and Sacraments, we will grow
toward wholeness through worship,
learning, service, witness, support,
and fellowship.*

Adopted 5-31-87

December

2025

Evangel



CONGREGATION OFFICERS

PRESIDENT – Matt Russell
(507) 360-5835
VICE PRESIDENT – Lonnie Myrom
(507) 329-3849
SECRETARY – Carrie Adams
(507) 329-5625

CHURCH STAFF

Jeanette McCormick—Pastor
Natalie Zinnel—Administrative Secretary/
Co-Treasurer
Brenda Richards—Youth & Family Director
Todd Poppema—Custodian
Eric Parrish —Choir Director/Worship Planner
Lori Nienkerk—Choir Accompanist/
Organist/Pianist
Arlene Lowe—Co-Treasurer
Debbie Koob—Financial Secretary
Jim & Paula Laffrenzen—Parish Visitors

PASTOR JEANETTE'S ARTICLE

Dear First Lutheran and Grace Lutheran,

Every year I love fall daylight savings time. It means an extra hour of sleep, and as a mom of a child who doesn't like getting up in the morning, it makes that week after daylight's savings time a lot easier. However, about the same time, it starts getting darker and darker, earlier and earlier outside. Very quickly, the appeal of the end of daylight savings time wears off as I find myself driving to school and work in the dark and coming home in the dark. The reality that it is going to be cold for the next five months also sets in. It's a good thing there is also much joy during this Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas time to help compensate for the bleakness of the increased darkness and cold.

I imagine that many of you also feel similarly. This long stretch of darkness and cold can be hard for many folks. For people who are struggling with health problems, the realities of cold and flu season make this time period very challenging. Many are forced to stay isolated in order to simply survive. For other neighbors, the holidays are challenging because of who has passed or who they are estranged from. With rising costs this year, many folks are worried about how they will make this year feel special for their loved ones. I am grateful that for some of our community members, this season truly is the "most wonderful time of the year." But I also know that for many people it is quite the opposite. Prayers for anyone who is struggling during this month. Please reach out to me if there is any way I can support you—if only with a conversation and a listening ear.

Isaiah 9 says, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (vv. 2-3a, 6). We often read this passage on Christmas, and this year, it was one of our November preaching texts. Isaiah lived in a world of immense darkness. Life was short. Illnesses abounded. A bad harvest year could mean death. Assyria was a looming political power that was threatening to take over the region and Israel and Syria were fighting Judah, as well. The world was not peaceful or calm during this time.

Amid all of this poverty, deadly conflict, and general upheaval, Isaiah speaks a word of promise. In the middle of this broken, dark, bleak reality, Isaiah promises God's people that there is still hope. Isaiah promises that one day a ruler will make all of this right.

During this season, we as Christians believe that Jesus is truly the "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father [and] Prince of Peace" that the world had long waited for. While we do not experience Jesus' kingdom in full perfection now, we trust that Jesus has entered into our darkness and struggles and is working to bring us hope, life, and light each day. One day, we will experience Jesus' perfect kingdom as He comes again to earth and eternally in heaven.

In the meantime, in the darkness, we keep pointing each other towards the light of Christ that has come into this world. We hold and shine the light that Christ has given each one of us to share with each other. Many prayers and hopes for Advent and Christmas blessings for you all. May you feel the joy that Isaiah promises.

In Christ,
Rev. Jeanette McCormick



Lessons and Themes for the Sundays in December 2025:

12/7/25: Valley of Dry Bones (Advent 2)

Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 143
John 11:25-26

12/14/25: Word Accomplishes God's Purpose (Advent 3)

Isaiah 55:1-15
Psalm 126
John 4:13-14

12/21/2025: Word Made Flesh (Advent 4)

Malachi 3:1-20
Psalm 130:5-8
John 1:1-18

12/24/2025: Birth of Jesus (Christmas Eve)

Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-20

12/28/2025: Lessons & Carols

Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19
Genesis 22:15-18
Isaiah 9:2, 6-7
Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9
Luke 1:26-35, 38
Luke 2:1, 3-7
Luke 2:8-16
Matthew 2:1-12
John 1:1-14

Praise the Lord

The following is the financial report for First Lutheran as of October, 2025:

General Fund:

Bal. 9/30/25:	(\$22,354.39)
Inc., October	\$54,558.43
Exp., October	\$50,167.19
Bal. 10/31/25:	(\$17,963.15)

(The amount shows behind budget.)
Grace Lutheran Reimbursement—
\$31,657.20

Building Fund:

Bal. 9/30/25:	\$19,292.43
Inc., October	\$545.00
Exp., October	\$960.00
Bal. 10/31/25:	\$18,877.43



Card Ministry meets the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm. Come join the fun. No experience necessary!

Check out our display in Centennial Hall to purchase a card for **\$2 (NEW PRICE)**. Funds will be designated to different groups as needed.



Poinsettias will be used at our Christmas services. If you would like to order one in memory or in honor of a loved one, contact the church office at 376-6148. Please indicate if you will be picking them up after the Christmas Services. Please leave the name of the person or persons you are giving one for. The cost of a poinsettia will be **\$11**. **The deadline to have your order in is Friday, December 5 at noon.** Thank you!

**The office will be closed
Wednesday, December 24,
Thursday, December 25 & Friday,
December 26 for
the Christmas Holiday.**

Servants

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If for any reason you are unable to serve at the time indicated, please trade with someone else on the list or find a replacement and contact the church office so that the names can be listed correctly in the church bulletin. This is a temporary schedule for the month so it may change. Thank you.

Computer Assistant (Contact Person: Church Office, 376-6148)

12/7	9:30	Pam Fleming
12/14	9:30	Glenda Lais
12/21	9:30	Glenda Lais
12/24	4:00PM	Ryan McGaughey
	8:00PM	Pam Fleming
12/28	9:30	Kathy Summers

Livestream (Contact Person: Church Office, 376-6148)

12/7	9:30	Debbie Koob
12/14	9:30	Ethan Nixon
12/21	9:30	Becca McGaughey
12/24	4:00PM	Carrie Adams
12/28	9:30	Erin Makela

Assisting Minister & Lector (Contact Person: Church Office, 376-6148)

12/7	9:30	Erin Makela
12/14	9:30	Cooper Scripture/Youth
12/21	9:30	Morgan Vosburgh
12/24	4:00PM	Lonnie Myrom
	8:00PM	Ryan McGaughey
12/28	9:30	Matt Russell

Greeters (Contact Person: Church Office, 376-6148)

12/7	9:30	Clinton & Alison Nixon Family
12/14	9:30	John Kramer
12/21	9:30	Adam & Morgan Vosburgh
12/24	4:00PM	Doug & Julie Christensen
	8:00PM	Dusty & Tiffany Neugebauer Family
12/28	9:30	Lonnie & Nancy Myrom

Van Driver: (Van will be picking up members for the Sunday service only)

12/7	9:30	Larry Woodbury (360-2689)
12/14	9:30	Matt Russell (360-5835)
12/21	9:30	Daren Bauman (360-9275)
12/28	9:30	Midg White (360-3215)

Acolytes (Contact Person: Church Office, 376-6148)

12/7	9:30	Dyson Neugebauer
12/14	9:30	Lexi Kleve
12/21	9:30	Olivia Gerdes
12/24	4:00PM	Cooper Scripture
		Braelynn Schroeder
	8:00PM	Kinsley Neugebauer
12/28	9:30	Parker Kleve

Sound (Contact Person: Church Office, 376-6148)

12/7	9:30	Paul Summers
12/14	9:30	Pat Demuth
12/21	9:30	Kevin Fleming
12/24	4:00PM	Paul Summers
	8:00PM	Kevin Fleming
12/28	9:30	Pat Demuth

Coffee Servers (Contact Person: Church Office, 376-6148)

12/7	9:30	John & Nora Leinen & Doug & Julie Christensen
12/14	9:30	Brenda Hurlbut, Diana White & Diane Sletten
12/21	9:30	Todd & Darcy Poppema & John Kramer
12/28	9:30	Larry & Norma Woodbury & Bob & Bonnie Bents

There will be a Christmas Eve walk-through on Wednesday, December 17 at 5:30 pm for all those who will be ushering, Assisting Minister/Lector, acolytes, and sound.



Radio Broadcast: You can sponsor the broadcast in memory or in honor of a family member or an event in your life. The cost to sponsor a broadcast is \$75.00. Please sign up on the sheet in Centennial Hall. Thank you.



First Lutheran Benefits from your Grocery Purchases. When you buy groceries at Fareway, with the Fareway Gift Card, First Lutheran receives 5% from the sale of the gift card. Get yours today!

The cards are available in the church office. We have \$25, \$50 or \$100 gift cards to sell. You pay the full price for the card and the church receives 5%. As of October 31, 2025, a total of **\$6,583.74** has been put into the general fund.

Gift Cards are available on communion Sunday mornings in Centennial Hall and in the office during the week.



The family of Terry Neugebauer wants to extend their gratitude for

the support he received during his illness and passing. We are forever grateful for your continued prayers and thoughtfulness. His enduring faith in God and love of his church family meant so much.



First Lutheran Benefits from your Grocery Purchases. When you buy groceries at Hy-Vee, with the Hy-Vee Gift Card, First Lutheran receives 5% from the sale of the gift card. Get yours today!

The cards are available in the church office. We have \$25, \$50 or \$100 gift cards to sell. You pay the full price for the card and the church receives 5%. **The card can also be used when you purchase gas.** As of October 31, 2025, a total of **\$59,906.50** has been put into the general fund.

Christmas Services
Wednesday, December 24



4:00 PM—Traditional candlelight communion service with Christmas hymns.

8:00 PM—Candlelight communion service with Christmas hymns.

REMINDER: There will be no Christmas Day Service due to low attendance the last few years.



Annual Reports are due in to the church office by Wednesday, December 31.

December Birthdays



1	Kathy Summers	11	Skyla Rautenkranz	30	Justin Thiner
2	Patrick Boe	13	Daniel Anderson	30	Adam Vosburgh
2	Linda Neugebauer	14	Katherine Gavin	31	Kyle Fleming
2	Ethan Nixon	15	Margaret Tambi		
2	Bob Vos	18	Alisa Russell		
3	Jackson Wajer	20	Marjorie Warborg		
5	Isaac Kruse	20	Jonathon Onnen		
5	Carter Poppema	21	Connie Kuehl		
5	Matthew Schroeder	21	Grace McGaughey		
6	Dorothy Bauman	21	Todd Poppema		
6	Kaden Larson	23	Shelly Gieselman		
9	Nicholas Demuth	24	Cody Livingston		
9	Sylvia Jacobson	26	Scott Langland		
10	Jennifer Livingston	27	Bailee Peil		
10	Midg White	29	Brandon Kempema		
11	Mark Broich	29	Joan Mahlberg		
11	Nate Van Note	29	Carmen Schuld		



“The Spirit Comes Upon Mary”

Mary conceived Jesus in her womb.

Jews connected the Spirit with two important functions: the creation and the re-creation of the world.

An example of the Spirit’s function in creation is Job’s words when he says, “The spirit of God has made me.” *Job 33:4*

Re-creation refers to God’s reconstruction of the world, which sin has de-created or destroyed.

An example of the Spirit’s role in re-creation is the vision of the dry bones. (Ezekiel 37:1-14) When Ezekiel prophesied over the dead bones, the “spirit” breathed life into them.

With the Spirit’s coming upon Mary, the re-creation of the world took a giant leap forward. The re-creating power of the Spirit conceived Jesus in Mary’s womb.

What role does the Spirit play in our lives?

Lord, send down your Spirit and re-create us.

Illustrated Daily Homilies by Mark Lick, SJ

Reminder of Winter Weather Protocol—If the schools are closed; the office will be closed. If there is an early out for the schools, there will be no after school programs and the office will also close. Notices will be posted through email, Facebook and the local radio stations. Thank you!




**The office will be closed
on Thursday, January 1, 2026
for the New Year's holiday.**



**There will be
no Wednesday
night service
on December
31.**

2025 Offering – The last day to get your offering in for 2025 will be Monday, December 29. Please drop it off during office hours. All offering received through the mail will need to be in before Christmas. This allows us to get it deposited for this year.

Thank you!



*Our Deepest
Sympathy*

DEATH & SYMPATHY: Terry Lynn Neugebauer died November 6, 2025 at the age of 68 years. His funeral service was held here at First Lutheran Church on November 10, 2025.

We extend our Christian sympathy to his family.

DEATH & SYMPATHY: Pearl Marjorie Aaker died November 12, 2025 at the age of 102 years. Her funeral service was held at Dingman Funeral Home on November 21, 2025. We extend our Christian sympathy to her family.

At the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, new revisions to the model constitution were approved. They can be found online (google "2025 Amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations") or at church on the bulletin board off of Centennial Hall (please ask for assistance if you can not find them). We will be voting in regard to adopting these changes at our annual meeting in January, 2026. Please feel free to talk with Pr. Jeanette with any questions about the proposed changes.

A COUNTRY CHRISTMAS GOSPEL SPECIAL
WITH Paul Summers and Tom Gilmore

Paul Summers will once again carry on the Holiday concert tradition at First Lutheran Church in Worthington. This year's concert will be held on **Saturday, December 20 at 2:00 pm**. The performance is free to the public with a free will offering. The theme of this year's concert will be **A Country Christmas Gospel Special** with special guests Tom Gilmore, Paul's band friend from the early days, and others to be announced. Mark your calendar and join us for an afternoon of Holiday classics, country style, gospel favorites and a surprise or two from Paul's personal journey of reunion and discovery. All are welcome to celebrate the joy of the season.

Merry Christmas



Debbie Koob

Natalie Zinnel

Brenda Richards

Pastor Jeanette McCormick

Dr. Martin Lucin

Jim & Paula Laffrenzen

Todd & Darcy Poppema

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.” [Luke 2:11](#)

Lori Nienkerk

Arlene Lowe

Eric Parrish

Midg White



DECEMBER YOUTH NEWS

507

Who: 6th-12th graders
Where: American Reformed Church
When: December 3rd from 6:30-8:00
What: pizza, devotional and a service project
This month we will be decorating cookies to deliver to our first responders.

We had 12 youth attend the Confirmation Retreat on November 7-8 at Shetek Lutheran Bible Camp. We were the only church there for the retreat, but had to share the space (swapping times to eat our meals and use the gym) with another group renting the space. The kids were really excited about having the retreat all to themselves. We learned about the apostles' creed and the ten commandments while building relationships with one another and the camp staff. It was a really great weekend.

*****PLEASE NOTE for December 10 & 17***** Advent services @ Grace instead of class
7:00pm service (6:00 pm meal) NO CLASS but encouraged to attend the service
Also December 10 & 17 @ First 6:00pm (meal 5:15) NO CLASS but encouraged to attend the service

★ NO CLASSES on DECEMBER 24 & 31 ★ MERRY CHRISTMAS! ★ & Happy New Year

Thanks to all who helped participate in our Operation Christmas Child packing party in November.

★ PLEASE JOIN US! Children's Christmas Program on Sunday December 14th at 9:30 am ★
The kids have been working hard and can't wait to share with you the story of the miracle in the manger!

Our trunk or treat afternoon was a huge hit! We had nine trunks decorated and had over 300 kids come through. We gave away Bibles, candy, prizes and pumpkins. Check out the pictures on the youth bulletin board in Centennial Hall for pictures from this event and all of the other happenings going on around here.

SAVE THE DATE: We are partnering with Shetek through the Rhythms of Faith project and doing a "family faith formation event" here on Sunday January 11th. The fun will start at 4:00 pm and supper will be served at 5:15 pm. All ages welcome. Let's gather together as a church family for some fun! More information is coming soon!

KFC: The kids have been having lots of fun this year. The preschool and kindergarten students stay in the nursery the whole time while the older kids start with music and the Bible story and then rotate between games and crafts. Keep a look out for pictures on the youth bulletin board and on the back wall in Centennial Hall for all the crafts and pictures of the fun.

We are still looking for some individuals to help out on occasion by being a rover and making sure kids get back to where they need to be after using the bathroom, getting a drink, etc. Can you come once or twice a month? Talk to Brenda with any questions.

If anyone can help out with crafts - everything is prepared and ready to go... Or if you would like to help prep some crafts it would involve cutting out pieces and making a sample mostly (which could be done anytime and not when all the kids are here on Wednesday) - just let Brenda know! We are short help most weeks starting at 4:30 so if you can't come until 4:30 we could still use you! Having many volunteers for KFC really does make a difference. We really could use an extra hand or two! 4:00-5:15 pm

If anyone is available to help with cleaning up after the meal on Wednesday night - or even serving the meal - washing dishes, wiping tables, taking out trash, or vacuuming. We would really appreciate it. We have all the meals covered for the end of 2025 but will need people to help cook/prep starting in January. Talk with Brenda R with any questions. The apple tree is back: if you are interested, pick an apple and bring the item back. THANKS!

GRACIAS! THANK YOU! THANKS FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE! WE APPRECIATE YOU! MANY THANKS! MUCHAS GRACIAS!

December 2025



14 Keeley Island Drive
Slayton, MN 56172
507-763-3567
camp@shetek.org
www.shetek.org

Shetek Lutheran Ministries Where Christ Renews and Empowers



New Chapel Roof!



Merry Christmas!

Wish List

- Adding Machine
- Office Supplies – Dry Erase Markers, Paper
- Spark Bibles
- Board Games
- Extension cords and Power Strips
- Arts and Crafts Supplies
- Volunteers

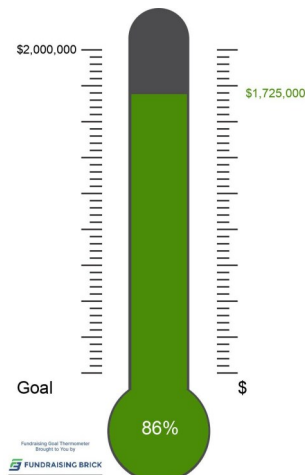
Upcoming Events

- Annual Meeting December 7**
- Scandinavian Dinner December 7**
- Hiking Club December 14**
- Campfire Christmas December 21**
- Hiking Club January 11**

**Register online at Shetek.org or
Call 507-763-3567**

We met our Phase 1 goal! Over \$1,725,000 in gifts and pledges! Our challenge goal is \$2,000,000 and with increased costs, our budget has changed for our different phases. More info on our website.

<https://shetek.org/sl-m-master-plan/>



Help send kids to Camp...Become a Pelican Club or Timber Society member today. Pelican Club members support the ministry with a gift of \$100 - \$499 a year and Timber Society members give \$500 or more a year. Thanks for your support!