



First Lutheran
relationships that transform



December 2021 Newsletter

From the Mind of Pastor Jeff

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas... (Luke 3:1-2a)

Another year has past. Every year, whether you feel years are going by quickly or slowly, we reflect on the events of the past year. Much as is the case in the scriptural story, we mark the passage of time in our lives by the events that have taken place or the situations in which we find ourselves. In the year that has past, what are the things that you would use to mark the passage of time? What are things that have happened to you during this year that are memories of significance for 2021?



Perhaps you or a loved one got married. Maybe there was new grandchild. You may have moved to a new house. Maybe a spouse, child, or close friend died. Or maybe the social and political unrest has made an impact on you. Or maybe the ongoing effects of the pandemic have taken their toll. Whatever they are, there are certainly things that have defined this past year for you, good or bad.

The scripture passage above introduces the ministry of John the Baptist and all that he does to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. John is introducing the most significant thing that will ever happen in the world. He is introducing the thing that will change everything about the world and the relationship between the people of the world and God. And that significant thing happened in the midst of all of the other things that were happening in the world.

As we near the end of 2021 (and every year, actually), we have the opportunity to once again hear the story of this One of significance who comes into our lives to change everything. As we celebrate Christmas together this year, I want you to think about the events of your life from the year. How have these events defined your year? How have they left you feeling?

Wherever you are at with these situations, know that God comes close to you in the birth of Jesus. God comes to you in the place where you are to bring peace, hope and love. God comes to you, to change everything about you and the life that you live. This is the gift of Christmas and the event that marks the passage of time in our lives and the life of the world.

May you be blessed in this Advent/Christmas season.

Pastor Jeff

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

December 5, 2021 6:00 pm

First United Methodist 400 N. Fredonia St.

Blue Christmas services are designed for those who struggle during the holiday season, often due to the death of a loved one, a job loss, transitions in life, or many other things.

POINSETTIAS FOR THE SANCTUARY



**\$15 SUGGESTED DONATION
SIGN UP SHEET IN
NARTHEX**

**Memorial service for
Aundrea Greene
December 4, 2021
3:00 pm
First Lutheran Church**



Worship Schedule for the Holiday Season

Sunday December 5, 12 & 19

8:15 am & 10:45 am

Christmas Eve Worship

4:00 pm & 6:00 pm

December 26 & January 2

9:30 am only

Success Center Happenings



TUTOR OF THE MONTH

Every one of the tutors at the Success Center are wonderful, amazing, and valued beyond words! This month we want to shine a light on Jackie Rausch! Jackie is a volunteer who is not a member of this congregation, but she caught the vision of what is being done here and graciously volunteered to tutor! She is a retired 2nd grade teacher who is filled with love and patience for students. This is her first school year with us, she joined us only a few months ago and has made huge waves! She had a student who she bonded with instantly. When he had to move away, he bought her a present he handpicked and gave it to her on his last day! A child willingly reaching out to their tutor like that is a win! She is so flexible and willing to help in any way we ask. She has developed a system with stickers to motivate one of her other students and even provides prizes out of her own pocket! These are things we do not ask of our tutors that they all do out of their own kindness and that is beautiful to watch. Thank you, Jackie for the huge difference you have made!

A special thank you to all our tutors who are showing up every day to help these children grow!

Let's Celebrate Together



Children are invited to join in the fun at our Penguin Party! Come Saturday, December 11th, from 1-4pm for a fun time of meeting Santa, playing games, singing, crafting and laughing together. Children will even come home with a wrapped Christmas present for the person of their choosing. Ambitious little ones may even come with two or three! Contact John Parsons at youth@firstlutheran.us for more information.

CELEBRATE THE
HOLIDAY SEASON WITH US!

Secret Prayer Partner Brunch

*Saturday, December 4th
9:30 am - 11:30 am*

BRING A DISH AND JOIN US!

A vertical arrangement of Christmas ornaments on the right side of the card, including a red one with white stripes, a green one, and another red one with white stripes, interspersed with small gold starburst decorations.

Angel Tree 2021



We are once again providing Christmas gifts for families served by the Longview Child Development Center, our old neighbors, and Family Promise of Longview. Please help

to make this Christmas bright for these families by choosing an Angel or two from the tree, giving your contact information next to the name you chose on the list, and buying the items indicated. Gifts should be returned to the Church by **December 15**, wrapped and tagged with the Angel you chose. We will then sort and deliver them on December 17. If you have any questions or would like to help with sorting or delivery please contact me at 903-295-1368(H) or 903-736-8546(C). Thank you again for showing the love of Christ in this very special way!

Renee Slegier

Save the Date

Dec. 04 9:30 AM Prayer Partner Brunch
 Dec. 04 3:00 PM Aundrea Greene Memorial
 Dec. 07 9:00 AM Friendship Circle
 Dec. 11 10:00 AM Children's Party
 Dec. 13 6:00 PM Dorcas Circle
 Dec. 14 11:30 AM Stew Pot
 Dec. 18 6:00 PM Council/Staff Christmas
 Dec. 20 6:00 PM 3 B's for Men
 Dec. 20 6:00 AM Bunco
 Dec. 20 Newsletter deadline
 Dec. 21 9:00 AM Friendship Circle
 Dec. 21 6:30 PM Book Club
 Dec. 24 4:00 pm Christmas Eve Service
 Dec. 24 6:00 pm Christmas Eve Service
 Dec. 26 9:30 am Worship only
 Dec. 27 Church office closed—Holiday
 Jan. 02 9:30 am Worship only

Church Staff

Jeffrey Borgwardt	Pastor
Lou Bass	Dir. Of Music
John Parsons	Dir. Of Youth & Family
Tina Sewell	Secretary
Karen Smith	Bookkeeper
Mary Stuart	Success Center Coordinator
Gayle Poland	Success Center Coordinator
Taylor Jirik	Success Center

Like us on Social Media



Volunteer Schedule

	Lector 8:15	Lector 10:45	Servers 8:15	Servers 10:45
05	Bill Anderson	Kim Cook	Communion servers each Sunday will be the assigned lector and another volunteer Thank you!	
12	Dee Stirling	Teresa DeShazer		
19	Carolyn Ramirez	Betty Kirkindoll		
26	9:30 am Service	Belinda Walenta		
	Set up:	Altar Guild	Clean Up:	
05	Carolyn Ramirez		Lucy Maxwell	
12	Betty & Virgil Brown		Teresa DeShazer	
19	Gloria & Robert Bero		Leslie Jenkins	
26	Doris & Ed Bero		Eva Touchstone	