

## THE FIRST WORD – DECEMBER 2020



### Light Dawns On A Weary World

*In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; **rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.** And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death — even death on a cross! PHILIPPIANS 2:5*

Jesus being made in human likeness reminds me that Jesus knows our joys and our sorrows. Jesus walks beside us in this year, 2020. And every year we prepare our hearts, souls, and minds to welcome Jesus, a tiny baby, into our lives anew.

It has been a messy, chaotic, weary year and it isn't over yet. Think back to the night Jesus was born Mary and Joseph are traveling home when night comes and they need to find a place to rest their heads. It was chaotic to find a place to stay. A barn will do but barns are messy. Yet, there Mary gives birth to the Savior of the World.

We can do this people of God - we can adapt one year to Christmas in a way we have never done it before and thrive knowing that Jesus knows us and is with us. "Love grows in a weary world: the promised feast of plenty comes."

This year on Christmas Eve worship will be livestreamed at 4:00 pm. (the service will be on our church website and facebook) And Then...**suddenly a multitude of God's angels will gather in the church parking lot at 5:30 pm to hear and see the Christmas story live.** And there is more, please bring a candle, matches or a flashlight as we sing "Silent Night" together. We will social distance by vehicles.

~ Pastor Julie ~



*Advent Dreams & Merry Christmas  
from the staff at First Lutheran*



**OUR ADVENT SEASON BEGINS**  
**Sunday, November 29**  
*Those Who Dream*

- First Sunday in Advent** - *Those Who Dream...keep awake* (HOPE)
- Second Sunday in Advent** - *Those Who Dream...prepare the way* (PEACE)
- Third Sunday in Advent** - *Those Who Dream...sow joy* (JOY)
- Fourth Sunday in Advent** - *Those Who Dream...are not alone* (LOVE)

This theme is for the dreamers in all of us - those who dream of a deeper connection with God and those who dream of a better world. It's for those who dream of comfort and for those who have given up on their dreams. It's for those whose dreams have been crushed and for those who show us that dreams take time. Join us this Advent as we dream alongside prophets, angels, Mary and the Magi. Join us as we seek and sow God's dream for our world.



**Christmas Plants – Desired before Sunday, December 6**

Please purchase your own & arrange delivery to the church. If the plant is in Honor/Memory of a loved one, please let us know the Remembered Name(s) and Giver Name(s) so we can list them in the Christmas bulletin. You may use this form and include it with the plant, or drop it in mail to us, or you may call or e-mail the information to the church office.

IN HONOR/MEMORY OF.....

GIVEN BY.....

POINSETTIA SYMBOLISM: The Aztec Indians had special symbolism for the poinsettia. They too thought that it looked much like a star and named it, what translates to, star flower. They said that the poinsettia easily symbolized **purity, holiness, and wisdom or intelligence.**

FARIBAULT AREA HOSPICE FOUNDATION  
**OUTDOOR TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY  
 AND MEMORIAL SERVICE**  
**MONDAY, DECEMBER 7 AT 7 PM**  
 DISTRICT ONE HOSPITAL SURGERY CENTER



Your gift of \$5 will light up a bulb on the hospice memory tree in honor of your friend or loved one. Donation forms are available at First Lutheran Church office.

Names are displayed in the *Light Up A Life* memorial book displayed in the hospital lobby. Donations received by December 31 will be included in the memorial book. Proceeds will benefit Hospice patients and families in the area. Faribault Area Hospice Foundation was formed in 2014 to provide additional comfort therapies and financial support to area patients in hospice programs. For more Information: *call 866-506-7049 or Visit [faribaultareahospicefoundation.org](http://faribaultareahospicefoundation.org)*

## **STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**

### **CELEBRATING GENEROSITY AT FIRST LUTHERAN**

- \* GIFT CARD PROGRAM. To date, 6 area families have been recipients of the Gift Cards to use at the Kenyon Market. Cash Donation and Gift Cards will continue to be accepted. You may purchase them at Kenyon Market or donate money for a Gift Card. Donated Cards &/or Monetary Donations may be mailed or brought to the church office. Pastor Julie coordinates this program.
- \* REGULAR GIVING (of church offerings) continues, in spite of Covid
- \* KENYON AREA INTERN PROGRAM continues to be supported by First.
- \* PARKING LOT FUND Generous donations were received, which allowed this debt to be paid off.
- \* MISSIONARY SUPPORT. Our church continues to support these ELCA missionaries - Stephen & Marta Deal/Central America, Patrick & Jacqueline Bencke/Japan, & Karen Anderson/Chili.
- \* BENEVOLENCE GIVING - Staying current.

### **THE BENCKE FAMILY IN JAPAN – NOVEMBER 2020**

*On July 31, Patrick and I celebrated our 21st wedding anniversary. Patrick and I met in 1997 during our missionary training in Chicago. He was on his way to Japan with ELCA and I was on my way to Kenya with the Episcopal Church. When I found out that Patrick was going to Japan, I thought, Japan? How is it that missionaries are needed in Japan one of the economic powerhouses of the world? I had in my mind that missionaries only went to the economically impoverished places to serve. In the 23 years that have passed since that thought, I have had a chance to have seen the mission world evolve and encountered wise servants and to what God wants for the world.*

*Thank you, Lord, for sustaining us through this difficult time in human history. Lord continue to guide us through this valley and be our strength and courage through these tumultuous and unsteady times.*

*Jackie, [Jacqueline.bencke@gmail.com](mailto:Jacqueline.bencke@gmail.com)*



### **Stars and Promises Christmas Concert with Peter Meyer**

***The Concert will premiere on the ELCA Facebook page***

***December 7 at 7 PM central time***

The ELCA World Hunger presents an online Christmas benefit concert featuring Peter Mayer, a longtime Lutheran and guitarist for singer Jimmy Buffett. The concert is a gift to us in the Advent season, a way for us to gather as community as we prepare for the birth of our Savior. Donations to ELCA World Hunger through First Lutheran are encouraged and will support our church's work to respond to hunger and poverty in more than 60 countries. Register online to receive a free Peter Mayer Christmas album download too. See more detail in online monthly seeds of the ELCA.

## **FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES, NOVEMBER 18, 2020 @ 7:30 PM VIA ZOOM**

**Welcome and Call to Order:** Amy Lee

**Present:** Amy Lee, Harris Haugen, Don Herrlich, Pastor Julie Rogness, Bill Lewis, Jim Fountaine, Jackie Mortensen, Erica Aronson, Carrie Doehling and Sandy Doehling

**Devotions:** Bill encouraged us to "take a breath" reading scripture relevant to today's times.

**Adopt Agenda:** M/S Harris/Don, Approved

**Secretary's Report:** M/S Harris/Don, Approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** M/S Bill/Amy, Approved

10/31/20: Checking Account Balance **\$240** Memorial Account Balance **\$525**

**Pastor's Report:** Worship Services - Sunday mornings - 5 (live stream), Testing new Sling Studio, Drive by Communion on Sunday, Nov. 1, Working with FLCW, Annette and Pastor Emily Carson for Thank Offering Sunday, Planning for worship with Annette as we are able, Secured Tom Erslund to sing and help with worship on All Saints, Secure Assisting ministers, Welcomed Holly Aldorfer to the Tech Team - Jim, Bill, Steve, Dan - Committee Meetings - KAI internship, Worship, Stewardship, Gift Cards dispersed to those for whom they make a difference, Helped put together Operation Christmas Children boxes, Memorial/Funeral for Don Hegseth, Service/Burial for Bev Nesseth this month, Online Fall Theological, Making connections in as many ways as possible now, Clergy Coaching - 2 people, Helped an individual with \$200 for insurance, Round Table with Lucas, Confirmation with 9th graders and parents, Confirmation with 7th and 8th graders has moved to online. **Looking Forward:** Spring!, Pastor Emily Carson preaching for FLCW Sunday (11/22/2020) - celebration of 50 years of women's ordination, Baptism of William Samuelson - Saturday, December 5, Advent - Theme - Those Who Dream - Drive by Communion and offering of devotional on Sunday, Nov. 29.

### **Continuing Business:**

- 1) The church building remains closed with live stream services only. All committee meetings will be held via Zoom. AA group is permitted to meet in the building as are the Priscilla Club members to clean following their dissolution. Select members will be allowed access to change the altar for Advent.
- 2) Live streaming remains a successful work in progress. We welcome Holly Aldorfer who brings her time and talent to the tech team.

### **New Business:**

- 1) Christmas Services - Christmas Eve Service will be live streamed in the sanctuary at 4:00 pm followed by communion and Silent Night by candlelight in the church parking lot at 5:30 pm. There will be no Christmas Day Service.
- 2) 2021 Budget created by Don with assistance was reviewed and approved with subject to amend as needed. M/S Harris/Bill
- 3) 2021 Nominating Committee currently comprised of Amy, Bill and Harris agreed, due to the light work load during COVID-19 in 2020, committee members will continue their roles as slated.
- 4) Annual Meeting date and agenda will be addressed at the December council meeting.

### **Committee Reports:**

FLCW - Met 11/02/2020 at 7:00 pm to wrap up the year with the following minutes submitted by Cindy Lewis. Jackie called the meeting to order via Zoom due to current pandemic and read devotions. The secretary's report dated 3/2/2020 was read. The treasurer's report was presented with a current balance of \$3,524.78. Old Business: The FLCW booklet has been typed and sent out via email and paper copies are being distributed by hand. The cinnamon rolls ordered for Easter are at Randy's Foods and can remain there until needed. New Business: The Thank Offering Service is on 11/22/2020 and is celebrating the 50th anniversary of women's ordination. Pastor Emily Carson from the Synod office will speak. Special offering information will be placed in the weekly bulletin and/or emails to be sent out with a deadline date of 12/01/2020. Will also ask the Pastor to mention this in the weekly announcements. The last two years of annual money disbursements were reviewed. Changes were made for this year's disbursements to align with our current bank balance. The treasurers will take care of the checks to be sent out. M/S Tammy/Pat. Christmas gifts for the church staff discussed. In the past years we have given gift certificates and agreed to do this again this year for the Kenyon Market. Church staff members: Pastor Julie, Intern Lucas, Annette, Carmen and Betty Redfield. Fundraising discussed: We will not be doing the lefse making as the church kitchen is

closed. We discussed a bake less bake sale, but will revisit this in January upon assessing the church needs. There is currently no Sunday School so we will not be having the annual Christmas shopping with the students. FLCW in 2021, discussed to research what other area churches are doing in their Women's group. We will wait to see what the church needs are in 2021. Next meeting: Jan 2021. Adjourn with the Lord's Prayer

*Youth Representative* - Carrie reported on K-W Schools transitioning to Phase 5 wherein all students will participate in distance learning beginning Nov. 30th and will be reevaluated after Christmas break while all sports have been terminated due to COVID-19.

*Stewardship* - Met 11/12/2020 via Zoom with the following minutes submitted by Jim Fountaine. Generosity in COVID-19. 1. Food shelf, 2. Regular offerings to office, 3. Support rural intern, 4. Paid off parking lot, 5. Support 3-missionaries, 6. Keeping current on benevolence giving, 7. Gift cards program, 8. Time talent & prayers. Next meeting tentatively scheduled for December 10.

*Worship/Evangelism* - Did not meet.

*Property and Management* - Did not meet.

*Youth and Education* - Did not meet.

*Long Range Planning/Endowment/Personnel Committee/KAIC* - Looking for feedback on Intern Lucas's service to the church to date. You may obtain an evaluation form from Bill and submit your response to the church.

**Next Meeting:** December 16, 2020 at 7:30 pm via Zoom

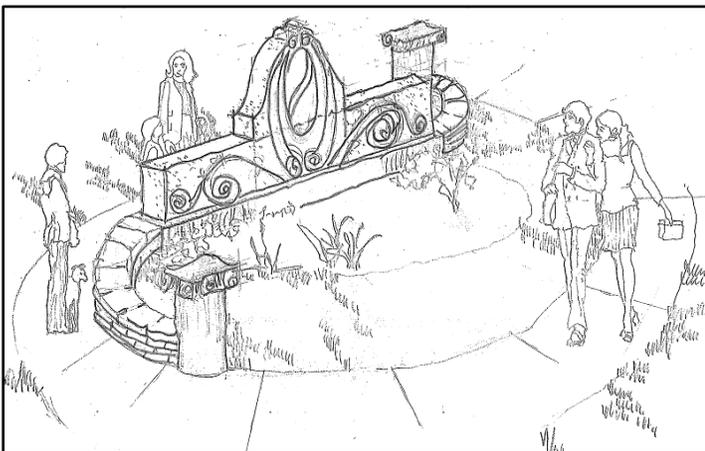
**Devotions:** Amy Lee

**Adjournment:** M/S Don/Bill, Approved

**Closing with the Lord's Prayer**

Respectfully Submitted, Sandy Doehling

## THE KENYON HIGH SCHOOL MONUMENT MEMORIAL



This view of the KHS Monument Memorial is what it will basically look like upon completion. The 'floor' on the front side will have pavers in memory or in honor of someone you would like remembered: a classmate, a teacher/coach/school worker, your class, club or a treasured friend. There will be benches to allow for time to think, share, reflect or just sit and relax. We hope this will be a place that enhances First Lutheran, as well as the memories of Kenyon High and Grade School. We see this as a place of honor, (sharing your memories with children or grandchildren) reflection (time to sit during funeral or quiet times), joy (weddings or graduation pictures), fun (story time for Sunday School kids) and many other good times. We thank you for your consideration of this project.

~ KHS MEMORIAL MONUMENT COMMITTEE: Cindy Trapp, Mary Danielson-Gates, Kevin & Mary Gail Anderson, Chuck Aase, Julie Praus, John & Lois Estrem, Terri Malloy, and Kim Portz, Architect. FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Kevin Anderson/507-789-6835 or Mary Danielson-Gates/507-838-6979

**FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**309 Forest Street, Kenyon, MN 55946**

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER



Stars keep the watch. When night is dim



one more light the bowl shall brim... Love, the Star, is on the way.



**FIRST LUTHERAN STAFF**

Pastor—Julie Rogness; KAI Intern Pastor—Lucas Shurson  
Admin.Asst—Annette Thunhorst; Accountant —Julie Dyrdaahl  
Custodian—Betty Redfield; Youth/Family—Carmen Nesseth  
Missionaries: Stephen Deal, Patrick & Jacqueline Bencke, & Karen Anderson  
Partner Cong.— Ilonger Lutheran/Tanzania.



**FIRST LUTHERAN CONNECTIONS**

(Website) [fickenyon.org](http://fickenyon.org) (Facebook) **First Evangelical Lutheran Kenyon MN**  
Pastor E-Mail: [firstpastorkenyon@gmail.com](mailto:firstpastorkenyon@gmail.com) Pastor Phone: 952-994-1201  
Church E-Mail: [firstlutherankenyon@gmail.com](mailto:firstlutherankenyon@gmail.com) Church Office Phone: 789-5261

**MISSION STATEMENT OF FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

*“Through God we are creating a vibrant, welcoming faith community, embracing all, providing harmony among generations, while lending compassion locally and globally.”*