

First Things

DECEMBER 2022

The Newsletter of First Evangelical Lutheran Church
561 Chestnut Street | Taylors Falls, MN 55084-1110



For many years in my previous life I was part of the Lutheran Youth Organizational (LYO) board for the Northeast MN Synod. As part of that group, I was responsible for helping to lead the youth on the board to plan and put on Middle School Youth Gathering. Over the years it had grown into quite a production. Over the course of the two nights we held two identical events, the first night with usually 400+ middle school youth and their adult leaders and the second night with just under 500. I also helped organize the band that led the singing during the large group sessions and worship. It was a blast! Especially if the youth got into the songs we did – which was usually the case.

One of the challenges was to come up with new music. A lot of the new songs that popular Christian bands do is really hard to sing along with and to get people involved. In 2013 however, my daughter Becca suggested a song that she heard at a concert. The song was “Build Your Kingdom Here” by a group called Rend Collective Experiment (interesting name). It’s actually a song I’ve taught you the last couple of months.

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Several things strike me about that song. First the tune is fun, upbeat, and very sing-able. The words are also theologically to my liking and fit well with what it means to be church in today's world. What was fun that year was that what we hoped would happen, happened – the youth got it and they sang out and enjoyed it. And I must say, you've all done a great job singing it with gusto as well!

Here are the words to the chorus:

Build Your kingdom here, let the darkness fear
Show Your mighty hand, heal our streets and land
Set Your church on fire, let your grace inspire.
Change the atmosphere, build Your kingdom here, we pray.

What is really cool is there's this sort of Pre-Chorus after each verse – almost a chant that has a certain punch to it. I remember the first time we did it, 400-500 youth and adults singing in an almost shouting like voice these words:

We are Your Church, we need Your power, in us!
We are Your Church, we pray revive, this earth!
We are Your Church, we are the hope, on earth!

I have to say I got a little choked up each time I heard all those voices sing these lines. I still do in the times we've sung it together.

This song is on my mind not only because we just sang it a couple of weeks ago, but aren't these words what Christmas is all about? I know we don't think of Christmas this way, but isn't the reason Jesus entered our lives was to establish His Kingdom here and that we would live as servant people just as he was our Servant-King?

Now I enjoy the fluff of Christmas as much as anyone, but when we really unwrap the gift of Christmas – Jesus – it hopefully doesn't take long to realize he's the gift that keeps on giving. And that giving happens through his church, yes you and me. As we've seen and heard many times this year, it's God's Work, Our Hands.

May hope, joy, and peace be yours this Christmas Season.

Pastor Dwight Rudquist

New Members **Welcome!**

If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact the office at 651-465-5265.

SUNDAYWORSHIP

Worship every Sunday at 9:00am.
Recorded services from Sunday morning worship are available Sunday afternoons on our website www.tflutheran.org and can also be found on our YouTube Channel: First Evangelical Lutheran Church of TF.

LIBRARYHOURS

Sunday 8:00am-10:30am

COUNCILMEETING

Council will meet December 11, 2022 at 10:15am.

QUILTINGGROUP

First and third Thursday mornings at 9:30am.

BIBLESTUDY

Bible Study will meet downstairs on Sunday mornings following fellowship.



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

12/03 Mary Anne Mattson
12/05 Dalton Langer
12/05 Makayla Langer
12/06 Whitney Loen
12/11 Gayle Langer
12/12 Isaac Moberg
12/16 Joan Boleman
12/19 Jerry Rhoads
12/19 Geri Swenson
12/21 Carol Nelson
12/29 Luke Valez
12/31 Suntina Hackmann



Please contact the church office if there are any errors or omissions. Thank you.

MONTHLYGIVING REPORT

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. —2 Cor. 9:7 (NIV)

Budgeted Weekly Expenses: \$2771.60

10/23 Giving:	\$1,489.00
10/30 Giving:	\$0,813.78
11/06 Giving:	\$3,265.00
11/13 Giving:	\$2,512.00
11/20 Giving:	\$2,535.00

Thank you for your faithful giving. Please contact FELC Treasurer, Becky Hulden with any questions or concerns at: 651-465-3631 or rhulden@gmail.com.

What's Happening in Our Church!



Bible Study: Sunday mornings
Bring your Bible and we'll dive into
next week's readings. Printed
materials will be available.

Dates: To be announced in
upcoming bulletins.



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10TH
9:00AM TO 12:00PM
JOIN US TO MAKE LEFSE!

NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED!
OPEN TO EVERYONE!
TAKE LEFSE HOME WITH YOU
AND SAMPLING IS ALWAYS
AN OPTION!

Quilting Group



First and Third Thursday
mornings at 9:30am
No experience needed!

Church Choir



Tuesday evenings at 7pm in the
sanctuary! No experience
needed! We'd love for you to
join us!!!



Each year, our generous congregation purchases gift cards for families who struggle at Christmas. These families are blessed with gift cards towards gas, food and presents. If you'd like to donate toward this wonderful cause, you can put your donation in the offering plate on Sunday morning or mail your donation to the church, marking "Giving Tree" on the envelope.

First Evangelical Lutheran Church
Attn: Giving Tree
561 Chestnut Street
Taylors Falls, MN 55084

Thank you for opening your
heart this upcoming
Christmas season and
blessing others!

Poinsettias & Greenery



We have
ordered ten
single & two
triple poinsettias
for church decorations this year!
If you are interested in purchasing
one or giving a donation towards
the cost of the poinsettias in
memory or honor of someone,
complete a form on Sunday
mornings!

Estimated Cost:

\$15.00 Single ~ \$35.00 Triple

The poinsettias can be picked up
after Christmas, first come, first
serve, until gone! Thank you!

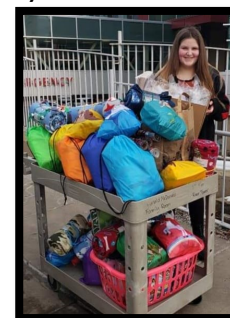
Hi Church Family!

I've been MIA in church lately, we
have a new puppy and I'm on puppy
duty when Mom's at church! I'm
excited to start bulking up on my
toys, crafts and blankets that I will be
donating to the Children's Hospital
again this year! I also am donating
hygiene products to the Women &
Children's Shelter in Miltown, WI!

Similar to previous years, I am selling
Christmas cards again! My Mom will
bring them to church on Sunday's if
you are interested! If you could

please keep me in
your prayers as I
work toward my
goals, it would
mean a lot to me!
Thank you!

Love,
Carli Linngren





Pancake Breakfast & Advent Wreath Event

Saturday, November 26th



What's happening IN OUR COMMUNITY



MIRACLE AT BIG ROCK ST CROIX FALLS, WI

NOVEMBER 25TH - JANUARY 1ST

FIREWORKS, SHOPPING VENDORS,
FOOD TRUCKS, COOKIES WITH SANTA,
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT & MORE!
DRIVE THRU: MON & TUES 5-9PM
WALK THRU NIGHTS: WED - SUN
MORE INFO CAN BE FOUND AT
WWW.MIRACLEATBIGROCK.COM



Campfire Christmas December 10, 2022

4pm-5pm Campfire, Caroling, Crafts

5:30pm-6pm Dinner

6pm-6:30pm Christmas Story

6:30pm-7pm Christmas S'mores

Each meal is \$7 if purchased
ahead of time (\$8 at the
door) Family maximum of
\$28. We will be serving a
Honey Glazed Ham Supper.

For questions please contact the camp office:
715-689-2347. If you wish to register and pay via
cash or check please contact the camp office.



Rivertown Holiday

DOWNTOWN ST. CROIX FALLS SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3

Lots of events all over town!!!!

MORE INFO: facebook.com/RivertownHoliday

WINTER FARMERS MARKET

SUN. DEC. 4 & 18

12PM - 3PM

SHOP FOR LOCAL
PRODUCE, MEATS, JAM,
HONEY, GIFTS & MORE...
Stay for coffee, treats &
live music.

Abrahamson's Nursery on
Hwy 35, St Croix Falls

Center City Fire Dept.
Auxiliary presents...

SMALL TOWN CHRISTMAS

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2
6:00-7:30 PM
CENTER CITY FIRE HALL
DECORATE A COOKIES, MEET
SANTA, HOT CHOCOLATE,
POPCORN & HOLIDAY MOVIE
WEAR YOUR CHRISTMAS PAJAMAS!

HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
CENTER CITY FIRE HALL
HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE, BAKE SALE, &
VENDOR EVENT

St. Croix Valley Orchestra
2022 WINTER CONCERTS

Sunday, Nov. 27, 3:00pm

United Methodist Church, Taylors Falls, MN

Saturday, Dec. 3, 7:00pm

Unity School Auditorium, Balsam Lake, WI

Sunday, Dec. 4, 3:00pm

Trinity Lutheran Church, Lindstrom, MN

ADMISSION BY FREE WILL OFFERING
 Check our website: www.scvorchestra.org



Visit their website for more information
 and to purchase tickets online:

<https://www.ucchorale.org/>



UNEXPECTED COMPANY CHORALE

WINTER'S Song

Friday, December 2 • 7:30pm
 ELIM LUTHERAN CHURCH
 Scandia, MN

Sunday, December 4 • 3:30pm
 ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
 Chisago City, MN

TICKETS
 \$10



'Tis the Season...Come join our family
 for some holiday fun during

Santa Paw Days

at FAWN-DOE-ROSA

Sat. Dec. 10th & Sun. Dec. 11th
 This is a free event!

GIFTSHOP OPEN ONLY 11:00am-3:00pm

Many items in the store will be 20% off (does not include FDR
 Gift Cert, trees and items from local vendors)

Visit with Santa ~ Enjoy a Horse Drawn Wagon Ride from 12-3
 Face Paintings ~ Balsam Fir Trees for sale while supplies last
 Hot Apple Cider

Bring your camera for pictures with Santa - pets are welcome at
 this event!!! The animal park is closed, however, a small Critter
 Corral with some furry friends to feed, see and pet!



Live Nativity on Saturday, December 17th

Four Shows: 6:00pm ~ 6:30pm ~ 7:00pm ~ 7:30pm

Shows last about 15 minutes.

Outdoor activity, live
 animals, fun for the whole
 family! Bundle up & enjoy
 the story of CHRISTmas
 like never before. Cookies
 and cocoa served!

Methodist Church
 30828 Irene Ave
 Lindstrom, MN





Council Meeting Minutes

Church Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

November 13, 2022, 10:15am- 11:15am

Next meeting: December 11, 2022

“To worship God as an intergenerational praying community, learning God’s Word, and building lasting relationships as we grow in God’s love and grace.”

Members Present: Wendy Szczepanski, Rose Anderson, Miriam Flysjo, Becky Hulden, Kathy Carlsted, Pastor Dwight Rudquist. **Members Absent:** Craig Loen

A. Opening Devotions - Miriam

December - Pastor Dwight

B. Sharing Story- Kathy, Wendy

C. Pastor’s Report - Pastor Dwight

The Vision group meeting is December 1 at 7:00. Justin and Rolf from the Synod are hoping to connect with the group.

We sent \$3600 to the synod for the Planting Hope campaign.

Pastor was exposed to Covid a couple of different times so he didn’t do as many visits as he has been doing.

We discussed what to do if Pastor Dwight tests positive for Covid on Saturday or Sunday morning so there is no time to secure a supply pastor. We could get someone from the congregation to read his sermon. Pastor could be on Zoom if his symptoms are mild. There may be a time that we have to cancel the service.

Pastor Dwight will be gone 1/1/23. Will do a service of Lessons and Carols.

Pastor Dwight didn’t wear his alb and stole for the service because he was directing the choir. Does it matter? Council told him he can use his own discretion to determine when to wear the alb and stole.

We will decorate for Christmas after the service on November 27.

Pastor Dwight will do a service at The Lodge the 4th Wednesday of the month from 1:30-2:00. The next service is November 23.

The Lodge would like the choir to come in to sing carols sometime in December. Pastor Dwight will set the date.

Services will be Christmas Eve- 4:00 and 10:00. Christmas Day is on Sunday so it will be a regular service.

D. Treasurer’s Report - Becky

Our income for October was \$8,702.78, which is less than adequate for our budget. We should take in \$10,000 a month to meet our budget. Becky will check with Jerry to make sure the amount is accurate since October had 5 Sundays so it seems there should have been more money.

We are a third of the way through our fiscal year so we should be at 33% of our budget. Income is 34% and spending at 33%.

Last month it was reported that we spent \$347.47 from our Samaritan Account, which turns out to be a mistake. The \$347 was added back into the Samaritan account.

All the memorials for Geri Swenson have been added to the kitchen fund.

The Kitchen fund has \$4200. It has been noted that some of the chairs have deteriorated. At least 12 chairs need to be replaced so we have enough chairs for funerals. If we were to replace all the chairs, we would need 80 chairs. It was decided to ask people during coffee hour for volunteers to work on a chair replacement committee.

E. Pancake Breakfast - November 26, 9-11

There is a sign up for volunteers. There are two shifts: 8:00-10 and 10:00-12:00.

Rose is in charge. Jerry and Don making pancakes. Kathy and Bruce will decorate the tables. If there is enough money from the Thrivent grant we will buy a griddle.

Wendy will be leading the Advent log making activity.

F. Lefse making - December 10, 9-12

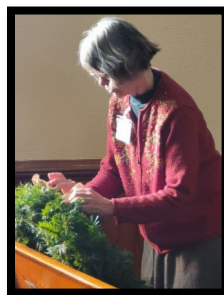
Kathy is in charge and will check with Craig about potatoes and Angie about advertising on our website and on the sign at church.

G. Motion to adjourn Kathy. Second Miriam

Faithfully submitted

Miriam Flysjo,

council secretary



Decorating the church for
Christmas ~ Thank you to all
who helped on Sunday,
November 27th!!!!



Church Office
651-465-5265
www.tflutheran.org

Pastor Dwight Rudquist
c: 651-829-4884
pastorrudquist@gmail.com

Angie Linngren
Ministry Coordinator,
parishc@tflutheran.org

2022-2023

Council/Officers:

Wendy Szczepanski—President

Craig Loen—Vice President

Becky Hulden—Treasurer

Miriam Flysjo —Secretary

Kathy Carlsted

Financial Secretary
Jerry Rhoads

Please hold the ministers and council members in your prayers that God would give them the wisdom, strength, courage, patience and perseverance to serve this community of faith as they lead us in our mission for the sake of the world and the glory of God.

Next council meeting will be on December 11, 2022 at 10:15am.

Mission Statement

The mission of FELC is to worship God as an intergenerational praying community, to learn God's Word, and to build lasting relationships as we grow in God's love and grace.

(Mission Statement approved 2017)

"Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations." Psalm 90:1

Please send submissions to: parishc@tflutheran.org
Articles due the 10th of each month.