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TAYLORS FALLS, MN  
PERMIT NO. 5

*First Evangelical*  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

561 Chestnut Street, Taylors Falls, MN 55084-1110



## JANUARY 2022

The Newsletter of  
First Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
561 Chestnut Street  
Taylors Falls, MN  
55084-1110  
651-465-5265  
[www.tflutheran.org](http://www.tflutheran.org)

### **SUNDAY**WORSHIP

Worship 9:00am  
Masks Required.

Online Worship  
available every  
Sunday, please  
check out our  
website:  
[www.tflutheran.org](http://www.tflutheran.org)  
or our YouTube  
Channel:  
First Evangelical  
Lutheran  
Church of TF.

### **OFFICE HOURS**

Monday  
8:30am—1:30pm  
Tuesday  
8:30am—12:30pm  
Thursday  
8:30am—11:30am

Hours may vary - please  
visit the website for  
updates.



Many times in the past month we've sung these words: "Joy to the world, the Lord is come!" Three thoughts come to mind as I reflect on just the first four words of this beautiful hymn.

Joy to the world – really? I don't mean to be Debby Downer here, but I've heard too much lately that makes me wonder. Are we really a world that is experiencing joy? And if so, at what cost? The contrasting light and darkness images that fill the Christmas story seem quite real for us today. Unfortunately that means there is still darkness that confronts us. I've recently witnessed the darkness of loss, broken relationships, poverty, greed, hatred, selfishness, fear, and more. It would be easy and somewhat understandable to let this reality get you down, to lump it altogether into a hopeless ball of frustration and leave it at the doorstep of a world that seems it's gone to... (well you know where) and there's nothing we can do about it.

Thankfully, that isn't the last word; the last word is that joy **has** come to this world. Jesus, Emmanuel (God with us) **is** the last word. The Lord is come! God comes to us – not once, but over and over and

over again – day by day, nanosecond by nanosecond. Now that’s not to say everything is magically okay, that the darkness is gone, that the pain and struggle of life is over – hardly. But somehow it is bearable. Even in the face of this darkness, we see light, hope, and yes, even joy.

Finally, God empowers us, fills us with God’s Spirit to meet head on the challenging realities of life. Yes, we are to be the joy of and for the world. In Christ we are not only recipients of God’s love but participants in sharing and living it out. But this call to bring “Joy to the World” is both exciting and frightening. It’s exciting to witness the truth that light always overcomes darkness. We may not all shine in the same way. As Mary Schramm wrote in her book *Gifts of Grace*, “Stars and candles – there is room for both. Both give joy. Both are beautiful. Both give light in dark places.” You, using your gifts, small or large, make a difference. A phone call, a note, a check, a day or week of volunteering, it all changes people’s lives, it bring light to the world, it brings joy to the world.

But it’s also frightening at times to be bears of this joy, to be Christ’s light to the world. Like for Jesus, it costs us something to bring joy to the world. It takes our time, our energy, our resources, and possibly more. And yet, our sacrifices, unlike Jesus’, don’t save us, but they do bring hope and light and truth and joy to the world!

My prayer for this New Year is that you and I may be even more bold in our willingness to share this joy, to be open to enter the darkness in full faith that the light of Christ always prevails. May God give us insight and courage as we live out God’s love to the world! “Joy to the world, the Lord is come!”

Pastor Dwight Rudquist

**“Stars and candles – there is room for both. Both give joy. Both are beautiful. Both give light in dark places.”**

**Mary Schramm**



## *New Members* **Welcome!**

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

## **SUNDAY**WORSHIP

Indoor Worship every Sunday at 9:00am. We ask that you please wear a mask! If you forget your mask, we do have extras!

## **LIBRARY**HOURS

Monday 8:30am-1:30pm  
Tuesday 8:30am-12:30pm  
Thursday 8:30am-11:30am

## **COUNCIL**MEETING

Council will meet January 9, 2022 at 10:15am.

## **MONTHLY**GIVING 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

11/28 Giving:	\$1,660.00
12/05 Giving:	\$4,210.00
12/12 Giving:	\$3,256.00
12/19 Giving:	\$1,910.00

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.



## **JANUARY** BIRTHDAYS

Sydney Paredes	01/02
Krissy Hackmann	01/02
Peter Vitalis	01/04
Marlys Luehmann	01/08
Isabella Langer	01/12
Coby Halstrom	01/14
Patty Vodenka-Reed	01/15
Tasha Johnson	01/16
Cody Larson	01/17
Brynna Peterson	01/18
Attley Loen	01/18
Tim Nelson	01/19
Dylan Magnuson	01/19
Brian Kelley	01/21
Rylin McDonald	01/21
Terri Larson	01/25
Marilyn Olson	01/28
Freya McDonald	01/28
Carli Linngren	01/31

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

## CHRISTMAS CLEAN-UP

Sunday, January 9th following worship

Join us as we pack away Christmas and  
prepare our church for 2022!

MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK.



**Confirmation Class  
via Zoom**

**Wednesday, January 19th  
Time: 5:30pm**

**Please call the office if you  
would like more information!**

Bible Study will take place  
downstairs after worship on  
Sunday mornings, social distanced.  
Bring your Bible and we'll dive into  
next week's readings. Printed  
materials will be available.

Dates: January 17, 24, & 30

### **A FEW THINGS TO THINK ABOUT**

If you are interested in any of these, call the church office.

Epiphany Home  
Blessings in  
February.

North Conference  
Assembly  
Feb. 12 at 10am  
via Zoom

Want to learn how  
to use the sound  
system during  
worship?

St. Paul Synod  
Toolkit, Feb. 26  
8:30-12:15  
Talk with a council  
member if you are  
interested in attending!

Would you like  
to be an Altar  
Guild member?

*Thank you for your generous  
purchase of a poinsettia to  
decorate our worship space  
throughout Christmas.*



*Given by*

*Memory of or In Honor of*

Rose Anderson

*In Memory of The Mallery's*

Roger & Joan Boleman

*In Memory of LeMoyne & Lucille  
Boleman*

Eleanore Collins

*In Memory of Larry Collins*

Miriam Flysjo

*In Memory of Oke & Grace Flysjo*

Don & Verna Grover

*In Memory of Daniel Gray*

Arne & Miriam Lagus

*In Memory of Loved Ones*

Craig & Janna Loen

*In Memory of Barb & Arden Loen*

Craig & Janna Loen

*In Honor of Mary Anne & Joe  
Mattson and Whitney & Attley Loen*

Leo & Carol Nelson

*In Honor of Our Children &  
Grandchildren*

Chieko Rogers

*In Memory of Timothy Rogers*

*Please pick up your poinsettia by January 9th!*





The event included  
take home Advent  
Wreaths & Calendars,  
a Nativity Photo Booth,  
& Cider & Cookies.



## Decorating the church!

Many hands make light work!  
Thank you to all who stayed after  
worship to help decorate the church!



Thank you to everyone who baked & bought goodies at our bake sale! We raised a total of \$546 from the sale. With other donations collected, a total of \$1,006 was raised for God's Global Barnyard.



On Sunday, December 12th, we told the story of Jesus' birth with young children, teenagers and adults! Thank you to all who helped in making this day special.





## Council Meeting Minutes

Church Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

Sunday, December 12, 2021 10:00-11:00AM at church

Next meeting January 9, 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, Craig Loen, Becky Hulden (via phone), Kathy Carlsted, Pastor Dwight Rudquist  
**Members Absent:** none

### A. Opening Devotions - Miriam

January - Craig

### B. Sharing Story- Pastor Dwight, Wendy

### C. Pastor’s Report - Pastor Dwight

Pastor Dwight had some visits with people in person and on the phone. He also attended several meetings. He is currently meeting with 3 confirmation students via Zoom.

The Reopening Task force recommended continuing with the current Covid protocol into the new year. They also decided to allow some choir members to sing harmony for the early Christmas Eve service and have established a plan to follow the Covid protocol.

Pastor Dwight’s vacation plans have changed so he will only miss the January 2 service.

December 26 will be a service of Lessons and Carols.

Pastor Dwight discussed encouraging members to attend the workshop: *Tools for the Church in an Uncertain Time*. The workshop meets in person at Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church in St. Paul on January 8 from 9:00-12:00. Pastor Dwight thinks the workshop would offer insight on how to make decisions about the future of our church.

Pastor Dwight brought up sending gift cards to our high school and college students. He offered to use his maple syrup money to buy the gift cards.

### D. Treasurer’s Report - Becky

Our offering income for November was right at our budget. Five months into the fiscal year, we should be at 42% of our budget. We are at 48% for income and 38% for expenses. Currently we have about \$45,000 available for property projects. Becky is working on getting the PPP loan of \$15,000 forgiven.

### E. Basement Water

Pastor Dwight is meeting with Don, Bruce and Tim on Tuesday to put together a proposal about how to prevent water from coming into the basement. They will make suggestions about what the complete job looks like and how it could be done in different phases. They will report to the council in January and make a presentation to the congregation before spring.

### F. Upcoming events

- **January 9**, Last year Epiphany home blessings were done by volunteers who visited our shut-ins. After discussion, the council decided to do the visit in the middle of February to help break up the long winter and have more time to determine what the visit will look like.

-**February 12, North Conference Assembly at 10am via Zoom** We need to get 2 people to attend the North Conference Assembly in February and to be voting members for the Synod Assembly in May.

-**February 26, Toolkit for church leaders, 8:30-12:15, in person meeting at Prince of Peace, Burnsville** We would like to encourage people not on the council to attend since there are many interesting sessions that would benefit anyone.

### G. Other Business

Wendy will check with the city and county about placing a directional sign indicating the location of the church.

### H. Motion to adjourn, second

Rose motioned to adjourn and Kathy seconded it.



## Fellowship Resources at First

- ✚ Nursery (rocking chair, changing table, busy bags)
- ✚ Youth room (games, books, music)
- ✚ Lending library
- ✚ Outdoor playground, sports lawn, yard games lawn, basketball hoop
- ✚ Prayer chain, visitation, mobility equipment loaners

## Faith Resources at First

- ✚ Weekly Worship
- ✚ Faith Stepping Stones
  - \* Baptism
  - \* First Communion
  - \* Confirmation
  - \* Ministry Leadership Training
  - \* Marriage
  - \* Parenting Resources
  - \* Care Ministry
- ✚ Summer Programs
  - \* Bible camp – Together with Friends, Luther Point
  - \* Summer Reading Program



**Church Office**  
**651-465-5265**  
[www.tflutheran.org](http://www.tflutheran.org)

**Pastor Dwight Rudquist**  
c: 651-829-4884  
[pastorrudquist@gmail.com](mailto:pastorrudquist@gmail.com)

**Angie Linngren**  
Ministry Coordinator,  
[parishc@tflutheran.org](mailto:parishc@tflutheran.org)

**2021-2022**

### Council/Officers:

**Wendy Szczepanski**—President

**Craig Loen**—Vice President

**Becky Hulden**—Treasurer

**Miriam Flysjo** —Secretary

**Rose Anderson**

**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 January 9, 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](mailto:parishc@tflutheran.org)  
Articles due the 10th of each month.