

First Things

JANUARY 2023

The Newsletter of First Evangelical Lutheran Church
561 Chestnut Street | Taylors Falls, MN 55084-1110
651-465-5265 www.tflutheran.org



But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

(Luke 2:19-20)

At various times throughout our Advent/Christmas services, two thoughts lingered and seemed to be a common theme in several of the readings. First, many characters, in the wake of Jesus' birth, were given pause to wonder, to "ponder," about what God's entering the world meant. And secondly, another common reaction was thankfulness. Those thoughts made me wonder if we ponder enough or if we respond by glorifying and praising God? Are we amazed by what God has done? What does it mean for Jesus to be Emmanuel – God with us?

It made me think of a YouTube clip from an interview with comedian Louis C.K. on the Conan O'Brien show that I once came across. The point of the bit was that everything is amazing, and yet, still no one seems happy. One example was being on an airplane and for the first time high-speed internet access was being made available to passengers. After an hour or so the captain apologized because they were having some technical difficulties and they were going to lose internet connection. The guy next to Louis grunted in disbelief at the inconvenience. It made Louis ponder... they were traveling at something like over 500 miles per hour, at an altitude of 30 some thousand feet, sitting in a lounge chair bolted to a massive hunk of metal, and this guy was displeased because the internet

Continued on page two



connection that was bouncing off a satellite even further out in space wasn't working at light speed. Come on!! And there were several other humorous illustrations that highlighted that indeed our world as we know it is amazing and yet we hardly notice and often aren't thankful or astonished by it.

I'm still trying to get my brain to wrap around the reality that it's 2023, the year I'll be 65 (I know to some of you I'm still just a young whippersnapper). There are a lot of questions I have about what the year ahead will look like. Maybe a better or more important way to think of that is, what will I, what will we, make it look like? Will we ponder what it means for Jesus to be in our midst? Will we not only be amazed but grateful as well? How will our thoughtfulness and our praise reflect the Word made flesh to the world? How will that look? What will we do?

There's a lot to ponder. There's a lot to do! Thankfully we do not do it alone. Jesus, the son of Mary, the Son of God, is with us still!! May God grant us a New Year filled with amazement at what can be done through us!

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 January 8, 2023 at 11:00am.

QUILTINGGROUP

First and third Thursday mornings at 9:30am.

BIBLESTUDY

Bible Study will meet downstairs on Sunday mornings following fellowship.

★ Hello
2023 ★



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

01/02 Krissy Hackmann
01/02 Sydney Paredes
01/08 Marlys Luehmann
01/12 Isabella Langer
01/15 Bill Davids
01/18 Attley Loen
01/19 Dylan Magnuson
01/19 Tim Nelson
01/28 Marilyn Olson
01/31 Carli Linngren



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)

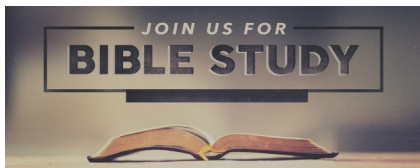
Budgeted Weekly Expenses: \$2771.60

11/27 Giving:	\$2,866.25
12/04 Giving:	\$2,530.00
12/11 Giving:	\$2,719.00
12/18 Giving:	\$1,745.00
12/24 Giving:	\$1,415.00
12/25 Giving:	\$2,345.00

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.



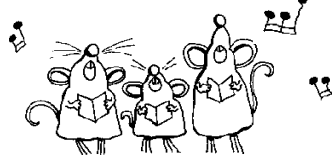
Giving Envelopes
are available at the
church to pick up. If
you would like yours
delivered or mailed
to you, please let us
know!

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!!!

Christmas Clean-Up



Sunday, January 8th
following worship
Join us as we pack away
Christmas and prepare
our church for 2023!

**Many hands make
light work!!!**

Thank you to
everyone who
donated to the
Taylors Falls
Elementary School
Giving Tree.



Additional funds
that were received after
December 12th will be
delivered to the school and
be used for families in need
throughout the remainder
of the school year.

Dear Members of First Lutheran,

Thank you for hosting the pancake
breakfast and advent wreath event.
Your hard work and willingness to open
your church to visitors is much
appreciated.



The Lighting Festival Committee

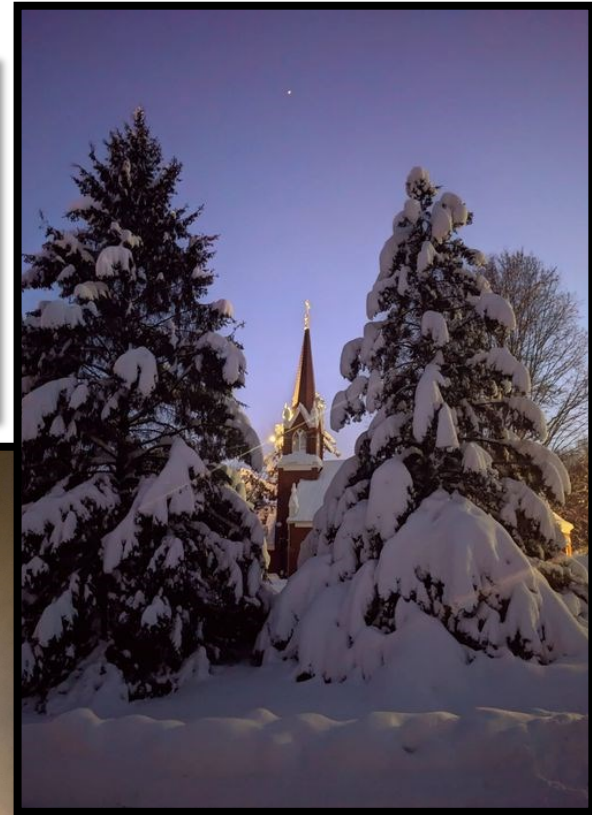
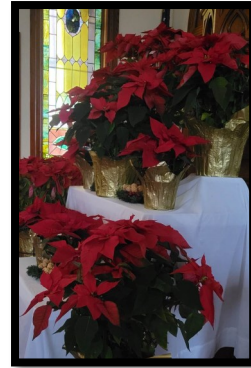
P.S. The Logging display was spot on.





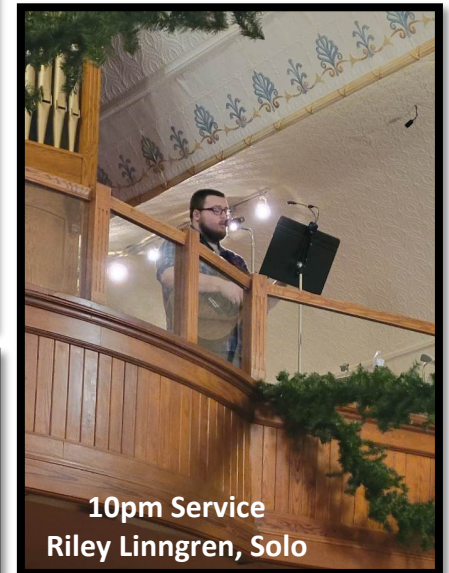
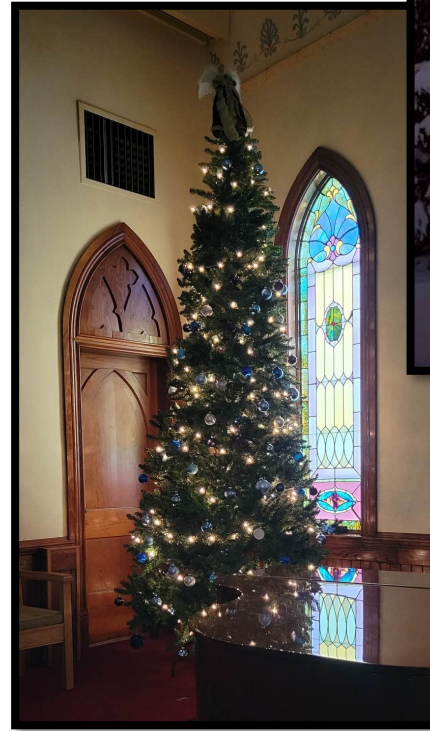
Christmas

season in our Church




**December 18th
Joseph's story**

(Go check it out on our
YouTube Channel - you will
not be disappointed!)

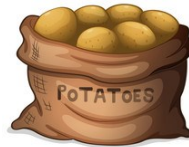
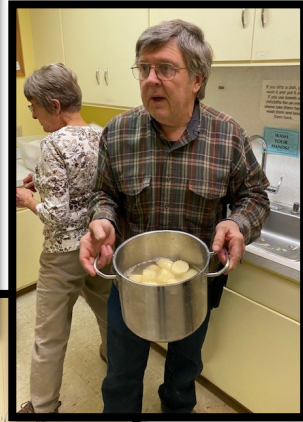


**10pm Service
Riley Linngren, Solo**



Mary, did you know that your baby boy
will give sight to a blind man?
Mary, did you know that your baby boy
will calm the storm with his hand?

Saturday
December 10th
Church &
Community
Members came
together to make
Lefse!



Lefse
Time



Happiness
is Cooking
Together



Krumkake was also made!!



what's happening

IN OUR COMMUNITY



INTERSTATE PARK FIRST DAY HIKE

Sunday, January 1, 2023 | 9am-11am

Warming fire & maps will be available at the Group Camp. Park Stickers will be available for purchase at the park office. Trails vary in length and difficulty. Some trails may have a packed surface. Dress appropriately for the weather. The event may be canceled due to inclement weather or dangerous wind chills.

SNOWSHOEING AT WILD RIVER STATE PARK

Sunday, January 1, 2023 | 9am-11am

Kick off the New Year at Wild River State Park! Join us for a snowshoe hike to the St. Croix River. We'll take in the beauty of the natural winter landscape.

Program and snowshoe use are free and limited to 30 people. Register by contacting Sean: sean.hoppes@state.mn.us or 651-583-2125 x 227. Include how many adults and the age of any kids in your group.

Canceled if wind chill is below -15. If snow isn't deep enough, this will become a winter hike without snowshoes.

There are other snowshoeing events at Wild River State Park - visit their website to learn more!



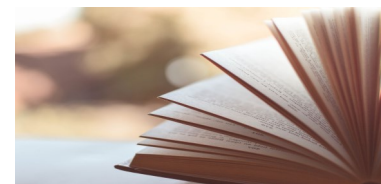
feel good film club

ELECTION (1999)



FRIDAY, JANUARY 6TH AT 7PM

SAINT CROIX FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY
230 S WASHINGTON STREET



Chisago Lakes Book Club

Thurs, January 19th
5:00 - 6:15pm

Join us for the Chisago Lakes book club, held on the third Thursday of each month at 5pm. We meet monthly in the Community Room at the Chisago Lakes Library. Books for our upcoming book club are distributed at our meetings or are available for pickup at the circulation desk at the library. No registration is necessary.

Questions? Contact Ann via e-mail at adoble@ecrlib.org or give us a call at 651-257-2817.

Got Bread?



Winter Camp

January 13-15, February 17-19, 2023
6th - 12th Grades

Got Bread? Jesus broke it, it rained from the heavens, and was a symbol of community and friendship in the bible. Join us to learn about the importance of bread in our journey with Jesus.

Register Online: www.LutherPoint.org

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world." - John 6:51

\$95 per person | Arrival time starts at 6pm Friday, and departure time is Sunday at 11:30am. All participants will be staying in the Retreat Center.





Council Meeting Minutes

Church Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

December 11, 2022, 10:15am- 11:15am

Next meeting: January 8, 2023

“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, Miriam Flysjo, Craig Loen, Becky Hulden, Kathy Carlsted, Pastor Dwight Rudquist. **Members Absent:** None

A. Opening Devotions - Dwight

January - Craig

B. Sharing Story- Miriam, Pastor Dwight, Becky

C. Pastor’s Report - Pastor Dwight

Pastor did some visits but was prevented from doing more visits because of possible exposure to Covid.

The Vision Task Force's next meeting is Jan 17 at 5:00. There will be a soup/chili supper. Justin and Rolf from the Synod will be here. Pastor Dwight shared some vision statements from other churches for the group to review as we prepare to revise our vision statement.

Pastor Dwight’s contract ends in August 2023. Will need to determine how to move forward.

Hosanna Lutheran in Forest Lake is sponsoring Feed My Starving Children April 19-22. They are having fundraisers to be able to pack more meals. We will do a special offering to raise money and can help pack meals.

People are looking for something to do at church every month. Some possibilities are: service projects, fundraisers, game time, making things for shut ins and crafts. If we had a calendar of events people could make plans to attend. We need some interested people to form a planning group. Tabled until January.

Pastor Dwight will be gone Jan 1. Wendy and Becky will organize the volunteers necessary to do the Service of Lessons and Carols.

D. Treasurer’s Report - Becky

Our income of \$11,149.23 in November was adequate for our budget. We should be at 41.6% of our budget. Our income is at 43% and Expenses are at 39%. We have about \$5,500 more money in our account than last month.

E. Pancake Breakfast and Lefse making

Both events went well. There were more community people at the breakfast than church members; however, many church members were working at the breakfast. We had lots of community participation at lefse making. Maybe next year we could make lefse using potato flakes.

F. Property committee projects

The property committee met in November. Pastor Dwight will set up the next meeting in January.

The property committee set the following priorities: Renovate the Sunday school bathrooms- new flooring, exhaust fans, toilets and sinks.

1. Bathrooms off the fellowship hall- Make them non-gendered and family friendly. Add a changing table to both rooms. Remove the interior stall wall so both are handicapped accessible.
2. North doors (door on stairway and door from kitchen to stairway). Need exterior doors
3. Parking lot- Don is going to get quotes. We possibly need new subsoil. We need to get rid of the dip by the door.
4. Shingles are 20 years old
5. South side of the sanctuary needs to be re-sloped to redirect water.
6. Kitchen remodel... look into code for commercial kitchen. Are we required to do a commercial kitchen if we remodel? Replace lower cabinets so they have backs.

Bruce is checking online for replaceable backs and seats on the fellowship hall chairs. Have looked into vinyl chairs. Need at least 80. Give to the property task group to complete.

G. Motion to adjourn, second

Motion to adjourn by Miriam, second by Kathy

Coming up: Christmas services. December 24. 4:00 and 10:00

Vision group, January 17, 5:00. Soup and sandwiches.

Faithfully submitted

Miriam Flysjo, council secretary



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

Given by	In Memory of or In Honor of
Rose Anderson	In Memory of Agnes, Bill, Joe Mallery
Toni Brekke	In Thanks for the Gift of Music
Joan & Roger Bolzman	In Memory of LeMone and Lucille Bolzman
Eleanor Collins	In Memory of Larry Collins
Bills Davids	In Memory of Brooklyn and Wendy
Miriam Flysjo	In Memory of Ole and Grace Flysjo
Diane Howlett	In Memory of Jams Howlett and Cheri Slattengren
Arne & Miriam Lagus	In Honor of Our Grandsons In Memory of Loved Ones
The Loen Family	In Memory of Loved Ones and In Honor of Family and Neighbors
Leo & Carol Nelson	In Honor of Children, Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren
Chizko Rogers	In Memory of All Loved Ones
Julie Valenz	In Memory of Emil and Elaine Naeck



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 January 8, 2023 at 11:00am.

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.