

## ADVENT OF GRATITUDE

**December 1- December 24 | West Entry**

The focus of the FLC Advent of Gratitude Project this year is ELCA World Good Gifts, which supports the ministry of ELCA World Hunger by providing critical support to sustainable development programs. We invite you to participate by following these easy steps:

- 1) Locate the Good Gifts tree located in the West Entry.
- 2) Take an ornament from the tree with the item and dollar amount of your choosing!
- 3) Fill out the envelope to return with your donation and take the ornament with you!
- 4) Drop off your donation in the barn located next to the Christmas tree by Christmas Eve.

## MEN'S BREAKFAST

**Thurs, Dec 13 | 6:30-7:30am | Fellowship Hall**

## CAROLS & CANDLES

**Sat, Dec 15 | 5:00pm Worship | Sanctuary**

Join us for this special worship service that includes carols, scripture readings and candles.

## POINSETTIAS

Grab a form at the Welcome Center to sign up for a Christmas Poinsetta. Cost is \$20 and can be returned with payment to the church office during business hours by Sunday, December 16.

## MAY OUR WORD BE MADE FLESH: WRITING AS DOWN TO EARTH SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

**Mondays, January 7-21 | 9:00-11:00am | Family Room**

During this workshop led by Mara Faulkner, OSB, from the College of St. Benedict, we will "listen with the ears of our hearts," to the voices inside and outside our lives that are begging for honest expression. Provocative readings, shared silence, the company of others, and our own courage may lead us to discover new insights into our lives and the life of our world. Writers of all levels and of all kinds are welcome, as are people who don't even consider themselves writers.

## SANTA FOR SENIORS

**Dec 12 or 13 | 4:00-8:00pm | Lake Community Church**

Santa for Seniors' mission is to reach out to folks 65+ in our community during the time of giving. Your family is invited to take part by picking up one or more baskets to deliver.

## LINKING OUR PAST WITH OUR FUTURE

**Sunday, February 24 | 2:00pm | Sanctuary**

Each First Lutheran household is invited to share ONE photo of a special memory from a baptism, confirmation, wedding or another event held here at our present location over the years. Drop your photo off at the Welcome Center or office no later than January 13. Fill out the provided information card to accompany the photo (photos will be returned). The photos will be displayed this upcoming service to mark this historic time in our congregation.

## WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE

Welcome to First Lutheran Church, where faith and life meet!

## OUR MISSION

First Lutheran is a vibrant Christian community committed to connecting faith and life for people of all ages through worship, learning, and serving in Jesus' name.

## MORE INFORMATION

Volunteers and staff are available before and after worship services to assist you. Children's bulletins and Worship Bags are available for use at the back of the Sanctuary. Our Lil' Kingdom Kids/Nursery is open and staffed during the 8:30am, 9:45am and 6:15pm worship. It is open for use but unstaffed at the 11:00am worship service. It is located on the preschool level of the building in the Rainbow Room.

## LEARN MORE AT

FIRSTLUTHERANALEXANDRIA.COM/EVENTS  
or stop by the Welcome Center for our Weekly or Monthly Calendar.

## PRAYER REQUESTS | HOSPITAL VISITS

If you have a prayer request or if you or a loved one are hospitalized and would like a visit, please call or email the church office at 320-762-2196 or [admin@firstlutheranalexandria.com](mailto:admin@firstlutheranalexandria.com).

## GIVING

Offering envelopes are located in each pew. You can also give by texting 320.500.6014 or by visiting us online at [firstlutheranalexandria.com/your-gift](http://firstlutheranalexandria.com/your-gift).

## OUR WORSHIP LEADERS

Greg Billberg, Lead Pastor  
Kari van Wakeren, Associate Pastor  
Ben Jacobson, Associate Pastor  
Randy Morken, Director of Music and Liturgy



822 Douglas Street  
Alexandria, MN 56308  
320.762.2196

Emergency After Hours Phone Number: 320.219.5492

For more information, visit us online at [firstlutheranalexandria.com](http://firstlutheranalexandria.com).

# ADVENT

— 2018 —

## A LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS



**SATURDAY | 12.8.18**  
**SUNDAY | 12.9.18**

**WELCOME AND GREETINGS****CALL TO WORSHIP**

P: *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;*

C: Those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.

P: *Come, let us worship God*

C: Whose light brings hope to a weary world. Amen.

**GATHERING SONG**

*He Came Down* #253

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P: *In the name of the Father, † the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*

C: Amen.

*At this time we take a moment to be still, confess our sins, and receive God's forgiveness. Silence for reflection.*

P: *Lord God,*

C: Too often we walk in the darkness and miss the light of our Savior, who you sent to be among us and live in us. Forgive us for not opening our eyes to Jesus and prepare us for His return. Help us rejoice in the light so that your grace can illuminate our hearts. Amen.

P: *Hear this Good News...a Savior is coming! Thanks be to God.*

C: Amen.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

C: O Lord, even in her uncertainty and fear, Esther acted and brought life to her people. Even when we are uncertain about your presence in our lives, remind us to act and bring life to others, as you have acted and brought us life in Jesus, whose birth we wait to celebrate. Amen.

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

(5:00) Roger Riley

(8:30/9:45) "O Come, Redeemer of the Earth".....Hanson Chancel Choir

**CHILDREN'S TIME**

(8:30/9:45) Congregation sings *This Little Light of Mine* as children come forward.

**SCRIPTURE READING** See insert.

First Reading: Esther 4:1-17

*Word of God. Word of Life.*

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading: John 1:1-5 (read responsively)

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

C: Thanks be to God.

**SERMON**

Pastor Kari van Wakeren

**SERMON SONG**

*Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ* #674

**BAPTISM** (5:00/8:30)

Pages 228-231

**BAPTISM SONG** (5:00/8:30)

Lyrics on Screen

**CONFESSION OF FAITH** WE CONFESS OUR SHARED FAITH.

(9:45) Apostles' Creed: on back cover of ELW hymnal.

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION****OFFERING** WE RETURN TO GOD A PORTION OF OUR BLESSINGS.**OFFERING PRAYER**

P: *God of abundance,*

C: we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION** (5:00)**LORD'S PRAYER**

See back cover of ELW

**DISTRIBUTION** (5:00)

*All are welcome. Gluten free wafers and white grape juice are available upon request.*

**COMMUNION SONG** (5:00)

*Lamb of God*, p. 112

**COMMUNION BLESSING** (5:00)

P: *The body and blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.*

C: Amen.

**BENEDICTION** GOD'S BLESSING IS SPOKEN OVER US.

P: May God direct your ways in peace...Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS****DISMISSAL** WE DEPART TO SERVE CHRIST IN THE WORLD.

P: *Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.*

C: Thanks be to God.

P: *And all God's children said,*

C: Amen!

**SENDING SONG**

*Soon and Very Soon* #439

**PRAYERS**

BAPTISM: (5:00) Crew Kenneth Koep son of Chris and Kendall Koep;  
(8:30) Rayna Lucinda Woller daughter of Zachary and Chelsea Woller

HOSPITALIZATIONS: Janis Aitchison, Carrie Kallsbeck, Glenn Bearson, Sr., Jim Bjerknes

SYMPATHY TO: Family of Stan Max

**RADIO BROADCAST**

This week's radio broadcast is given by Dianna Anderson and family in memory of Jere Anderson.

**CHRISTMAS STORE...NEW!!!**

**Sunday, December 9 | 8:00am-1:00pm | Fellowship Hall**

Kids Shop 8:00-10:30am and EVERYONE shops 10:30am-1:00pm! All items are \$1 and after 10:30am, you can fill a bag for \$5!

We need to liquidate our inventory as we do NOT want to move it to the new church building! All money raised goes to families in need of a helping hand at Christmas.

**BUILDING TRANSITION UPDATE**

**Sunday, December 9 | 9:45-10:30am | The Den**

Please join us for this opportunity to hear updates and see pictures of our new construction in progress. There will also be a chance to discuss and ask questions regarding our transition from our present building to the new location.

**CHRISTMAS GIFT**

As you make your plan for year-end giving, would you consider making a special Christmas gift to First Lutheran Church? All gifts received are tax deductible before 4:00 pm on Monday, December 31, 2018 will be credited to your 2018 giving record for tax purposes. Special Christmas envelopes were mailed to you, or you can pick one up at the Welcome Center. Thank You.

**FAMILY CHRISTMAS MUSIC CLASSES**

**December 14 | 8:45-9:30am | Fellowship Hall**

This free music class is for children ages 18mos-4yrs and a parent. Celebrate the reason for the season with your little ones. Christmas songs, movement, rhythm instruments and treats. Please bring a music-inspired donation (toy instrument, CD, musical books, etc. ) for the United Way Toy Shelf. No registration necessary. Come to one or both classes.

**CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION**

**Monday, December 24**

10:30am | Children's Worship

2:00pm | Festival Worship

4:00pm | Festival Worship

6:00pm | Candlelight Worship

9:00pm | Candlelight Worship