

TEMPLE CHIMES

Volumes XII - No 12.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE REFORMATION

December 2021

Dear Friends in Christ,



Through the years, I have often shared a family story from my first Advent season in CT in 1987. My son Karl was only a year and eight months during that Advent time. As was normal for us at the time, we would decorate the house for Christmas. One part of that was setting up the family creche. One thing continued to happen almost daily. Someone (Karl) would hide the baby Jesus. I'd find him under a chair or under a couch; all over the house. Every day we would lose sight of the baby Jesus.



On our first Christmas Eve service in the middle of the cafeteria of the grade school in Tolland, I used the story as I do now. I asked, as I ask now, have you ever lost the baby Jesus? Of course, you really can't. He will never loose you; you know his presence can not fade.

Christmas is always that time when we are reminded of His gift to us. His love and presence.

Worship is one way to seek Him. Seek here at First Lutheran Church of the Reformation. 4:00pm Christmas Eve, we will gather, as we continue to go through the hardest time in our lifetime. But, you are strong!

We have been separated from each other, but we gather safely.

We will sing carols and remember His love. (yes, there will be candles).

Blessings and peace to you.

Pastor Joe.



Church Council Meeting - 10/19/21 Minutes

The Meeting was called to order by President Alan Robertson at 7 PM. Also present were Pr. Joe Ekeberg, Robert Buchholz, Jim Rinas, Marianne Farr, Eric Nilsson, Cindy Pavano, Tom Abucewicz, Craig DiAngelo and John Peterson. Nancy Gentry and Gail Bates had an excused absence. John Peterson led us in devotions. A motion to approve the September minutes was approved (with one revision striking the words “the Zoom kits”).

PASTOR’S REPORT – The Pastor reported that he will be undergoing a medical procedure in the near future, but Pr. Baumgartner will cover one Sunday and also the John Glaser funeral. Pastor reported on an internship opportunity we have to sponsor an intern in conjunction with St. Andrews in Charlestown RI and Emmanuel in Hartford. The intern would spend some time here over a six month period being mentored by Pastor, and given the opportunity to preach. The cost would be \$5000. A motion was carried to accept the proposal with the funds coming from our Scholarship Fund.

Prior to the committee reports, Alan mentioned that Section 13.06.01 of our constitution requires annual election of Committee chairs. Alan requested that all committees abide by this rule at their next meetings.

MISSION/OUTREACH- The Clothing rack is seeking donations of winter coats, tents and sleeping bags. Both the Wednesday Grab & Go and the Monday Mingle programs are doing well. In addition 3 people were given Covid shots during Grab & Go.

PROPERTY- Eric reported that signs have gone up in the parking lot notifying neighbors that unauthorized vehicles will be towed. Also, Eric has spoken with some of the neighbors and most vehicles have been removed. Eric reported that the snow plowing contract will increase by 40% this year due to labor shortages. Eric is working on both sidewalk repair and parking lot repair, but reports difficulty in getting a contractor for the work. Work on the Sacristy leak will have to wait until spring.

FINANCE- We observed a paper loss in our investments this month, but we are still ahead for the year by more than \$100,000. It was suggested that our Endowment Committee have a meeting with our investment firm, Future Benefits, to monitor the mix of investments. Accounts were reviewed as submitted by the committee.

STEWARDSHIP- There was no meeting this month. The Stewardship committee needs a chairperson. Pastor will work with the Executive Committee on a plan for Stewardship Sunday.

WORSHIP AND ARTS- no meeting this month

TRANSITION/CALL- The committee is meeting to discuss results of the History Event. The next phase will be “Why” (i.e., what is our reason for being, and our goals?). It is anticipated that the call process will start early next year guided by the analysis of the transition events. It is anticipated we will have more than one candidate this time.

OTHER – Corbin addressed the Council with several issues. He hopes to build a Music Series, with 4-5 groups who would like to perform at First. The committee will review what is involved and report. Corbin also discussed our pianos. They all are old and many are not needed. The piano in the sanctuary should be replaced, if it cannot be restored. The council asked Corbin to have the committee do an assessment and come up with a plan to be considered at a later meeting.

The Warming Center status was discussed, and our involvement will hinge on whether the Friendship Center and Salvation Army can handle the need or will ask us to handle the overflow. We should know by mid-November.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alan Robertson



Financial Report

Thank you to everyone who has supported the church financially during 2021. It is still not too late to contribute for the year. All contributions for 2021 **must** be received in the church office by December 30 to be deposited and counted for the year.

Through the month of November, we have done well with our investments. Although the market took a hit in November and we had a loss in our accounts for the month, we are still ahead for the year in the amount of \$124,176. This most likely will change in a positive direction during the month of December.

To date we withdrew a total of \$144,985 from our endowments this year. This included an initial withdrawal of \$30,000 and 5% from four of our endowments as approved in the budget. So, to have withdrawn this amount and still be ahead by \$124,176 is great.

Going forward everyone needs to remember that we will be calling a new pastor in 2022 and our expenses will increase significantly. We will also need to spend a large amount on property repairs. Both of these will have a definite effect on our ability to keep our annual budget deficit at a manageable level.

We need everyone's participation and contributions.

Gail Bates,
Financial Secretary

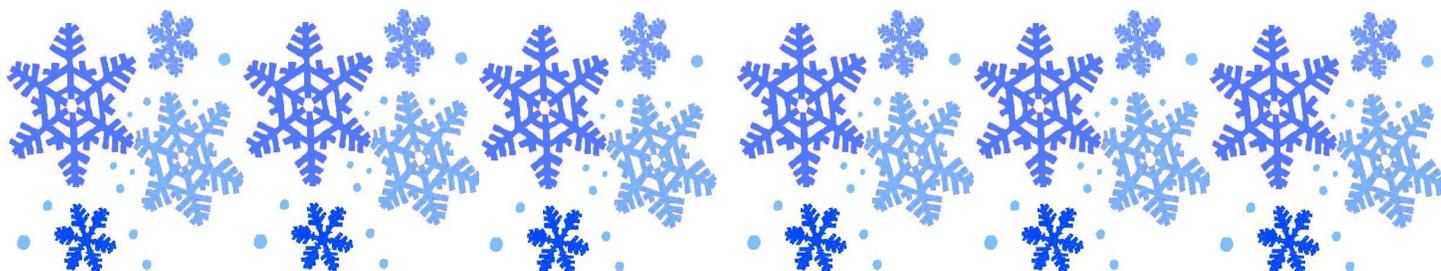


CHRISTMAS EVE

**On Friday, Dec. 24th, we will be having a
Candlelight/Holy Communion Christmas Eve
service at 4:00pm. We hope to see you there!
Pass it on to others!**

December 26, 2021

**On Sunday the 26th, we will be having a
service of lessons and carols.
We hope to see you there!
Pass it on to others!**



News of Worship and the Arts December 2021

First Lutheran continues to offer Facebook and YouTube as an alternate worship resource and as an aid for prayer in the home.

Fall Brings changes in the leaves on the trees as well as Liturgical colors.

Beginning the last Sunday in November we enter into Advent and a new church year. As we move through Advent toward Christmas we reflect on what the four candles of the Advent wreath represent.

The first candle, "**The Prophecy Candle**" symbolizes hope and God's forgiveness toward man. It also can symbolize the expectation of the coming of the Messiah.

The second candle, "The Bethlehem Candle", reminds us of about the experience of Joseph and Mary in the city of Bethlehem. **The third candle, "The Shepherd's Candle"**, is pink or rose, represents Gaudette Sunday and the joy that the birth of Christ brought to the world.

The fourth candle, "The Angel's Candle" and represents the peace and justice that the angels and Christ brings to the world. It also can represent purity.

The fifth candle, "The Christ Candle" the white candle in the middle of the wreath is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day and represents Christ and purity. The Christ Candle is lit every night until the Feast of the Epiphany.

Christmas Eve December 24th

We will celebrate the Eucharist at 4pm with a candlelight service. **There won't be a "Midnight" service this year.** We will have our regular Sunday service at 9am, December 26th which will include a special hymn sing.

The Worship and Arts Committee met Dec. 14th and we elected a new Chair Person. We welcome Barbara Pond as our new committee chair.

In the next year, She and Corbin will be in search of performance grand piano for the



sanctuary. If anyone has a lead on an instrument direct information to Barbara and Corbin.

We continue to use the prefilled communion cups but we'd like to have communion assistants to step up and be responsible for the communion setup each week.

Altar Guild continues it's quest for new volunteers, especially around the holidays for plant delivery.

The Choir and Band continue to play and sing and are always hopeful for new members. We look forward to a new year.

Respectfully Submitted

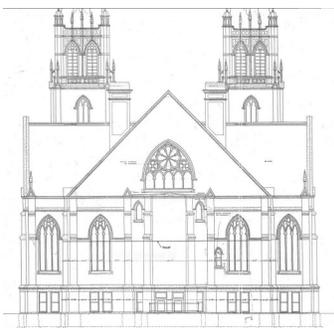
Eric Nilsson
Interim Chair

Sunday June 27th Following Worship We will hold the Annual Meeting (Postponed from January)

We will be voting on our operating budget and new council members. If anyone would like to serve on council contact Gail, Nancy G, Jim, or myself to add your name to the ballots.

Altar Guild, Band, the Choir, worship assistants and readers are looking for new members. If you are interested or know someone who is please contact Nancy P.

God's' Peace
Eric Nilsson
Interim committee chair



December 2021

Property Report

In the past three months we have completed our bid process for masonry repairs on the rear or west elevation of the 1906 building. Our project will begin in the spring of 2022. This year we were not asked to be a part of the the City of New Britain, The Friendship Center and The Salvation Army to be part of the warming center program. We always look forward to future ventures and opportunities to serve the community. We have brought back the cleaning contractor to clean the Fellowship Hall floor and plan to in the spring after a harsh winter with a lot of salt traffic on the floor. We have renewed our contract for plowing and will see a 40% increase due to the current labor and materials increases.

Respectfully Submitted

Eric Nilsson

Property Chair



Thanks to
Worship Assistant
Susan Bisaccia

Reader
Gail Bates

and

Videographer
Eric Nilsson

for volunteering
to be a part of the service

People Power **12/24/20201** **12/26/2021**

Worship Assistant - Robert Buchholz - Nancy Peterson

Reader - Gail Buchholz - Walter Carlson

There is one Christmas Carol that has always baffled me. Have you ever wondered about THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS? What in the world do leaping lords, French hens, swimming swans, and especially the partridge who won't come out of the pear tree have to do with Christmas?

Today, I found out.

From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics. It has two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of their church. Each element in the carol has a code word for a Catholic reality, which the children could remember.

The partridge in a pear tree was Jesus Christ.

Two turtle doves were the Old and New Testaments.

Three French hens stood for faith, hope, and love.

The four calling birds were the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

The five golden rings recalled the Torah or law, the five books of the Old Testament.

The six geese a-laying stood for the six days of creation.

Seven swans a-swimming represented the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit: Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership, and Mercy.

The eight maids a-milking were the eight beatitudes.

Nine ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self Control.

The ten lords a-leaping were the Ten Commandments.

The eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful disciples.

The twelve drummers drumming symbolized the twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed.

I now know how that strange song became a Christmas Carol...

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Nancy Lucia - 1	Cheryl Sak - 15	Melissa Gill - 28
Vivian Rasemus - 2	Kent Carlson - 17	Mathew Johnson - 30
Courtney Galotti - 3	Anna Newberg - 17	Carmen Sierra - 30
Edward Crespan - 3	Edward Walsh - 18	Cindy Pavano - 30
David Carlson - 7	Judith Christensen - 19	Jeffrey Scheyd - 31
Geoffrey Anderson - 12	Kris Fletcher - 21	
Eleanor Blankenburg 13	Diane Wolf -Silsby - 25	
John Peterson - 13	Laura Swain - 26	



DECEMBER FUN FACTS - Did you know on:

December 1

Theodore Roosevelt was the first American to win the Nobel Peace Prize, 1906

December 2

The first successful artificial heart transplant was completed at the University of Utah Medical Center. The recipient was Barney C. Clark, age 61, 1982

December 3

The first American flag was raised aboard the "USS *Alfred*," 1775

December 5

President Grant, apologized before Congress, ascribing his errors while president to inexperience, saying further that his failures were "errors in judgment, not intent," 1876

December 6

Construction of Washington Monument was completed, 1884

December 8

A huge submarine net made of steel, that was placed underwater across the Narrows in New York harbor at the beginning of the war, was removed, 1919

December 9

The first Red Cross Christmas seals were sold for a campaign against tuberculosis, raising \$135,000, 1907

December 10

The first college basketball game was held, 1896

December 16

The first patent for a process of shaping brass into bowls was issued to Hiram Hayden of Waterbury, Connecticut. Dishes of brass, fastened to spinning dies, were pressed to the shape of the die, 1852

December 17

The first one-way street was created in New York City, 1791

December 18

The first celestial photograph was taken, 1839

December 19

Benjamin Franklin first published his "*Poor Richard's Almanac*" 1732

December 23

"*A Visit From St. Nicholas*" (The Night Before Christmas) by Clement C. Moore, was published in New York, 1823

December 24

Henry Ford completed his first successful gasoline engine, 1894

December 25

The first recorded Christmas was celebrated in Rome, A.D. 336

"*Silent Night*" was performed for the first time at the Church of St. Nikolaus, Oberndorff, Austria, 1818





First Lutheran Church of the Reformation

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www.1stlutherannb.org

Welcome Statement: *We warmly welcome people of any race, nationality, sexual orientation, age, ability, possessions, or education. A community of believers, we are empowered by faith in Jesus Christ to make the Gospel open to all and visible to all whose lives we touch.—Adopted June 28, 2003*

First Lutheran Staff

Rev. Joe Ekeberg, Pastor
Rev. Willard Baumgartner, Visitation Pastor
Corbin Beisner, Minister of Music
Nancy Peterson, Office Manager
Holly Erickson, Sexton

Sunday Worship Service

Service 9 a.m.
In the Sanctuary with Holy Communion

Wednesday Worship Service

Come-As-You-Are Service 5:15 p.m.
In fellowship hall.

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