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*The next
Property
meeting will be
December 4th
6:30 Pm.*



Seeking Truth of the future the greater truth the world alone cannot give.

In a world which falls short of the majesty human hearts desire, wise people still seek and find, the promised gifts of God. This is the witness of the three seekers from the east who came seeking to worship the new king, born for the people whose God alone has power to save and protect.

1) What were they looking to find?

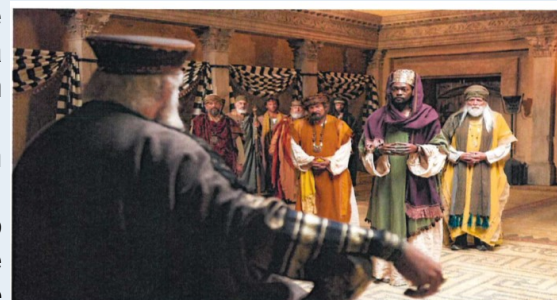
From bitter winds of human corruption, increasing darkness, disappointments, and our personal shortcomings we gather in the advent season. We gather in the light of Word and worship, song and prayer, seeking truth and power from God's promises to be true and reliable and redeeming for us and our loved ones, our community, nation, and the world.

Likewise, in their commitment find truth's greatest revelation, true wise men from the royal courts of the eastern kingdoms watched for the star they had learned about and trusted. They sought to know God through the wisdom and history of all peoples they had partnered with or conquered. This sign in the heavens marked the birth of Israel's great king. When it appeared they followed to where it led, seeking what all their knowledge lacked, something the world cannot give, to see and know the prophesied revelation of the one true God who had blessed and protected the lives of faithful Israelites, Daniel in particular. (see footnote)

2) Where did they look?

Though wise and thoughtful, it may have been beyond their imagination to look for a king in less humble accommodations than a palace. And that the One by whom all things came to be would take on human form to serve rather than be served. God's anointed would not be born into comfort and security. Rather the opposite is true, so that humanity might receive from our divine King comfort, peace and hope, no other can give.

The path of the star led them came close enough to Jerusalem that they went to the royal palace of the human king of Israel. There they only found intrigue. The One they sought would be a threat to the present monarch. Their counterparts, the scholars of Israel identified Bethlehem as the birthplace of the promised Messiah. I want to imagine the fear Herod secreted gave pause for the wisemen of the east to consider an alternate, more humble and holy place where God's own Son could be born. They resumed their journey with their eyes on the sign the Creator had given them, a star. Which did come to rest over Bethlehem.



3) What did they find, how were they changed?

They learned that God's ways subvert human ways. Into vulnerability and poverty, the child was born, there was need for the gifts they brought. Worshiping the living God, they received a peace only God could give them. A peace we ourselves know assures that God protects His own and opens for all who walk in faith to perceive the Kingdom of God has come for us.



From the first Sunday of advent through the Epiphany of our Lord we seek to know God in the humbling ways our Lord knows us. We seek to see and know the One who gives healing for loneliness, sadness, illness, affliction, and grief in the present, the One who in truth laid aside heaven's glory to be born in human flesh. Our Lord was born to reveal the true light which shines in the darkness, and gather us into the one eternal kingdom. God has given the Holy Spirit to guide us, and the Word in the Holy Scriptures to draw us near, that we may be one in and with Christ.

Pastor Paul

In the book of Daniel some corrupt wisemen acted to oppress and destroy Daniel and his Jewish colleagues. Yet the one true God revealed His supremacy leading their human ruler to declare: ^{6:26} "I decree that everyone throughout my kingdom should tremble with fear before the God of Daniel. For he is the living God, and he will endure forever. His kingdom will never be destroyed, and his rule will never end. ²⁷ He rescues and saves His people; He performs miraculous signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions." (Daniel 6; see also chapter 3 or enjoy the whole book.)

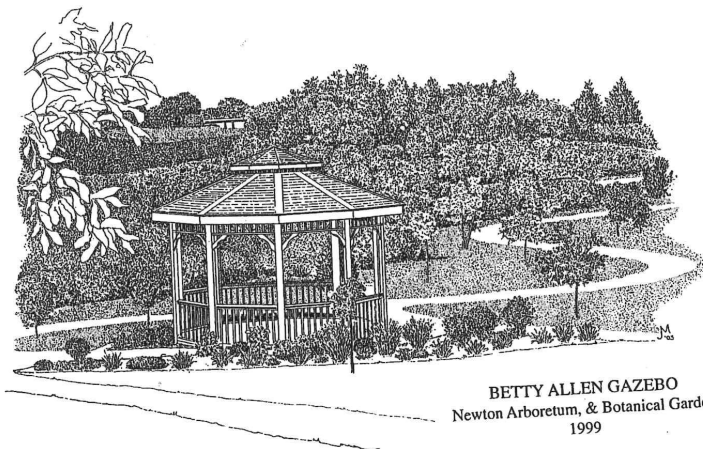
Food Pantry Donations

The Food Pantry would like us to emphasize a specific item each month. Remember, you may bring any item you wish, but spreading this among the contributing congregations keeps a steady supply of their most basic needs coming each month.

For the months December & January

Elbow Macaroni, Canned Green beans & Spaghetti Sauce are requested.

There is a basket located in the Narthex for you to place your donations in.



*You helped make our 2nd Annual Fall Festival successful!
Thank you for committing your time and creativity - your Scarecrow was amazing.
We hope you enjoyed the day as much as we did.
Thanks again!*

*Jessica & Ina
Projects & Events Committee Chairs*

Chihoni Calling!

The wheels of bureaucracy move slowly, perhaps nowhere more so than in developing countries. Tanzania is no exception, and missionaries and other expats who work there often refer to this as TT, or Tanzania Time.

Thus Selemani and his crew are still waiting for that final piece of paper that will enable the team to start construction on the Outpatient Department and the Hostel where volunteers will stay. But they are not wasting time: By now, they have made 35,170 concrete blocks that are ready to be put to use. Selemani hopes construction can start in January.

One reason for the delay is that a decision was made to apply for building permits for all 35 buildings up front. That way, construction for each building can start as soon as the previous building is complete, without having to wait for a permit every time.

At the same time, plans are underway for a mobile clinic which will bring much-needed medical services to those unable to get to the hospital. Head nurse Miriam Mugo is preparing a grant application to get this project off the ground.

Next week, the building outlines will be marked so that trees can be planted before the December rains, giving them a head start to grow and produce shade for the buildings and parking areas to come later.

Please pray for those bureaucratic wheels to turn a little faster!



November Choices in Mission

We rejoice in the generosity of our members! Your donations of \$2,805, combined with the Choices in Mission \$2,500 match, enables us to send God's Global Barnyard a check in the amount of \$5,305 to help purchase farm animals for people in other countries.

Thank you for supporting this important project with your prayers and gifts!



Christian symbol

ADVENT COLORS— One of the season's symbolic colors is blue, representing hope. During Advent, we wait in hope to celebrate again God's coming in human form. We also look forward in hope to Christ's coming in glory at the end of the age. Purple symbolizes the royalty of Jesus, the coming Prince of Peace, and the penitence with which we receive him. Some congregations also use pink or white candles in Advent wreaths, with pink symbolizing joy and white symbolizing the Christ Child.





First Lutheran has decorated a tree for the 2024 Tree-Mendous Christmas Experience! at the Jasper County Museum.

- Same venue, new look each year
 - - Over 200 decorated trees throughout the museum
 - Every Saturday and Sunday from Nov. 30 - Dec. 29
 - Saturday: 1pm-8pm
 - Sunday: 1pm - 4pm
 - Open Dec. 25 from 1pm - 4pm
 - For group visit options, call the museum
 - Free will donations accepted



On Christmas Eve, the sanctuary will again be filled with the bright red foliage of poinsettias. We need your help in providing these plants. To order a poinsettia, please complete the form below, enclose your check or cash (\$11.00) and either bring it to the church or mail it in.

Checks should be made out to First Lutheran for \$11.00

The deadline for ordering is noon on Monday, December 16th.

Poinsettias may be taken home after the 5:30pm Service on Christmas Eve.

Name _____

Phone _____

Poinsettia (s) **\$11.00/each** (Check payable to First Lutheran)

Given in honor of _____

Given in memory of _____

Save the Date!

December 8th, 2024 during worship service



Bible Quiz

Who was governor of Syria when Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem for a mandated registration, or census?

- A. Theophilus
- B. Herod Antipas
- C. Pontius Pilate
- D. Quirinius

Answer on pg. 2



The Incarnation

At the center of Christmas is Jesus, both fully God and fully man. "In Bethlehem, humility and glory in their extremes were joined," wrote pastor R.G. Lee (1886-1978). When Jesus came to earth, Lee explained, he descended:

- from the heights of glory to the depths of shame,
- from the wonders of heaven to the wickedness of earth,
- from exaltation to humiliation,
- from the throne to the tree,
- from dignity to debasement,
- from worship to wrath,
- from the halls of heaven to the nails of earth,
- from the coronation to the curse,
- from the glory place to the gory place!

"Born in a stable! Cradled in a cattle trough! Wrapped in swaddling clothes of poverty!" Lee wrote. "No room for him who made all rooms! [No] place for him who made and knows all places! Oh, deep humiliation of the Creator — born of the creature, woman! But in his descent was the dawn of mercy. Because we cannot ascend to him, he descends to us."



Special Dates

- **First Sunday of Advent,**
December 1, 2024
- **Second Sunday of Advent,**
December 8, 2024
- **Third Sunday of Advent,**
December 15, 2024
- **First day of winter,**
December 21, 2024
- **Fourth Sunday of Advent,**
December 22, 2024
- **Christmas Eve,**
December 24, 2024
- **Christmas Day,**
December 25, 2024
- **New Year's Eve ,**
December 31, 2024

Look upon love

Let us then meditate upon the Nativity just as we see it happening in our own babies. I would not have you contemplate the deity of Christ, the majesty of Christ, but rather his flesh. Look upon the baby Jesus. Divinity may terrify people. Inexpressible majesty will crush them. That is why God took on our human flesh and blood, that God should not terrify us but rather that with love and favor God would console and comfort us.

—Martin Luther



Ava Sumpter 12/01
 Suzanne Von Seggern 12/07
 Barbara Wilcox 12/08
 Jim McVey 12/14
 Lynette Marvelli 12/16
 Thomas Hayden 12/26
 Robert Sandquist 12/26
 Craig Peterson 12/27

Giving Made Easy

First Lutheran has generated a QR Code to make giving even easier.



On your iPhone or Android phone or tablet, open the built-in camera app. Point the camera at the QR code. Tap the banner that appears on your Android phone or tablet. Follow the instructions on the screen to finish.

All previous forms of giving are still available.

The heart of Christmas

Sound over all waters, reach out from all lands,
The chorus of voices, the clasp of hands;
Sing hymns that were sung by the stars of the morn,
Sing songs of the angels when Jesus was born!
With glad jubilations
Bring hope to the nations!
The dark night is ending and dawn has begun:
Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one! ...

Blow, bugles of battle, the marches of peace;
East, west, north, and south let the long quarrel cease.
Sing the song of great joy that the angels began,
Sing of glory to God and of good-will to man!
Hark! joining in chorus
The heavens bend o'er us!
The dark night is ending and dawn has begun;
Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!

—John Greenleaf Whittier



Coming Soon!



Bury the Altar

January 19th
through
March 5th

PUZZLE

CLUES ABOUT CHRISTMAS

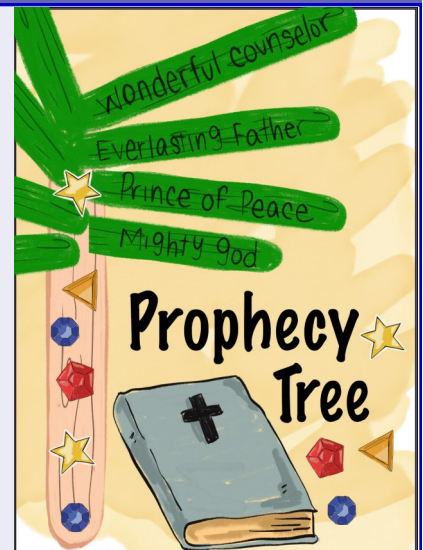
The Old Testament contains many details about Jesus' birth.
Can you uncover what Isaiah prophesied?

Directions: Use the code to write the letters and complete Isaiah 9:6-7, NIV.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	!	@	#	\$
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
%	^	&	*	()	-	?	>	<	:	;	{

For to us a 3 8 9 # 4 is 2 ^ (%, to us a) ^ %
is 7 9 > 5 %, and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called Wonderful 3 ^ 7 % (5 # ^ (
5 9 7 8 - ; God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the
greatness of his government and & 5 1 3 5 there will be no 5 % 4.
He will reign on David's - 8 (^ % 5 and over his @ 9 % 7 4 ^ 5,
establishing and upholding it with 1 7 (- 9 3 5 and righteousness
from that time on and 6 ^ (5 > 5 (Isaiah 9:6-7, NIV

Answers: child, born, son, given, Counselor, Mighty, peace, end, throne, kingdom, justice, forever



Make this Christmas
craft to display special
names for Jesus.

What you need:

- Large wooden craft stick
- Small green wooden craft sticks
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Bible
- Permanent marker
- Craft glue
- Optional: star stickers or craft jewels

What you do:

1. Place the large stick on a table vertically, like a tree trunk.
2. Cut the green sticks into pieces that measure 4", 3½", 3" and 2½".
3. On each green stick, write a name for Jesus from Isaiah 9:6 — Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Write small or ask an adult for help.)
4. Use a dot of glue to attach each green stick to the large stick, like tree branches.
5. Decorate your Christmas tree with stickers or jewels.

GOD
= Light =
Love



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Christmas Eve Candle Light Service December 24th, 2024 5:30 pm.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Worship Service 9:30 am	2	3	4 Joint Council 6:00 pm Property Meeting 6:30 pm	5 Dorcas 9:00 am	6	7
8 Worship Service Youth Program 9:30 am Budget Meeting following Service	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 Worship Service 9:30 am	16	17	18 Lois Cr. 9:30 Am Stephen Ministry Meeting 6:30pm	19 Council Meeting 7:00 pm	20	21
22 Worship Service 9:30 am	23	24 	25	26	27	28
29 Joint Worship Service W/UCC @ FLC Time TBD	30	31 New Years Eve 				

Office Hours
 Monday—Friday
 8:30 am—12:30 pm

Pastor Hoover's Hours:
 Monday & Tuesday
 9:00Am- - 12:00 pm

Meetings with Pastor Hoover by Appointment.

The Church office will be closed Dec. 24th & 25th in observance of the birth of OUR Lord and Savior.

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
309 EAST THIRD STREET
NORTH
NEWTON, IOWA 50208

**Watch Past and Live
services !**

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&
(on Facebook at)
First Lutheran Church-
Newton

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E-mail:
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Join us this Sunday!
9:30 A.M.

Christmas Eve
Candle Light Service
5:30 P.M.

