

Reverend's Reverie

The season of Advent is upon us. The season of already, now, and not yet; or as one theologian put it, a time of history, mystery, and majesty. I love this season, partially, because it is a time of deep reflection. A time of reflection, not only about what God has done for us, but also what God is doing right now, through us, as well as what God is going to do in the fullness of God's plan. Perhaps, most importantly Advent is a season of hope. Considering Advent as a season of hope, I would like to share a modern parable and something of a true story.

The kingdom of God is at hand. This kingdom is like a clowder of cats whom live on a farm. On this farm, they work, they play, and go about serving the role the lord of the farm entrusts them to do. The work the master asks them to do is tiring, and so on a regular basis they return to the sanctuary of their barn for respite and to be fed through the loving kindness of their master. This receiving of grace from the lord of the farm grants them the fortitude to carry on serving their role in joy. One day, a stranger joins them in their midst. This strange new cat does not look like them. This oddly hunched animal coated in black fur with an unusual white stripe of fur running down its back joins the clowder at the makeshift hay bale of a table where they receive the grace of the master's bounty. Even though this new arrival looks quite different from them and is a little smelly, they do not view him as a skunk in their midst taking their food. To this clowder of cats, he is merely someone else in need of the lord of the farm's grace. Gathered, they join in the feast. When the master sees how the cats react to the skunk, and how they welcome him to the feast, the lord of the farm smiles and says, "well done." So also, it is in the kingdom. Let all who have ears to hear, listen.

As we sit at the beginning of this season of hope, this season of Advent, how do we react when someone who looks different from us or may not smell quite so pleasant joins us in our sanctuary. We are charged with carrying a message of hope to those who need it. We have recently chosen, for security reasons, to begin locking the doors of the church during worship. I understand the need for security, but I'm troubled by the message someone in desperate need of hope might hear in the clink of the door that refuses to open; while others; on the inside have locked the door out of fear of what a skunk just might do.



Rev. R. Avery Carr

CHURCH COUNCIL



First Lutheran Council met on November 19th with a quorum. A few items of importance were addressed.

Pastor Avery will set aside Tuesday afternoons for visitations with members and non-members in the community wishing to meet with him. Please consider joining Pastor on these calls as a part of the evangelical mission of our church. Let Pastor know if you would like to join him. Also send him names of individuals who would enjoy a conversation with him.

The credit card limit was raised on the Treasurer card to meet the needs of expenses.

The church window which was broken has been repaired by St. George Glass. An insurance claim has been filed.

The door alarm has been installed on the SW sanctuary entrance.

The church boiler needed repair to pass state inspection. Westphal Plumbing and Heating has made the appropriate changes.

We are seeking members to be on the financial audit and nominating committees. Please let Pastor, Curt Poulos, or the secretary know if you are interested.

Sarah McCord, church administrative assistant, has resigned. We will be reevaluating the position in the coming weeks. Jill Poulos has volunteered to take the role through the holiday season. Please offer your support during this transition. Thank you Jill!

Stewardship

Income exceeded expenses for the month of October by \$5,077 despite a workman's compensation bill of \$2,402. The increase in income was due to our blessed PASTY SALE which exceeded all expectations for both income and fellowship. Thanks to all the great volunteers and for Tom and Lynn's leadership.

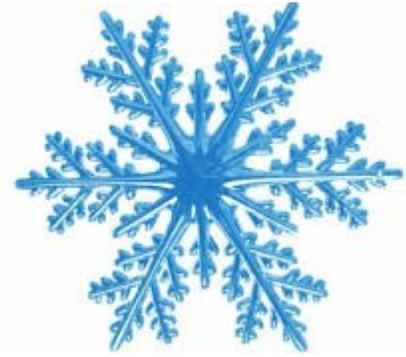
During this time of Advent and Christmas take the time to reflect on the blessings that God has provided and consider giving a portion back. ... *Remembering the words of the Lord Jesus himself, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."* Acts 20:35

May you have a joyous, and healthy Christmas season and may God bless you as you have blessed us.

Curt,

President, FLC Council

	Income Actual	Expenses Actual	Variance
October	\$18,111	\$13,034	\$5,077



Happy Birthday

December 1	Lynn Karvala
December 2	Ethlyn Melchiori
December 5	Steven Skrivanie
December 5	Scott Starkey
December 8	Callista Bortolameolli
December 8	Katarina Hemeleski
December 14	Bertha Pangrazzi
December 14	James Quayle
December 15	Sheila Holm
December 18	Breanna Kemppainen
December 20	Thomas Karvala
December 25	Sheila Hotvedt
December 26	Ashlee Scalcucci
December 27	Blake Pietila
December 28	Karen Behling
December 26	Elizabeth Carr
December 29	Joan Basting
December 30	Madelynn Anderson

Anniversaries

December 12	Kurt and Brenda Markkola
December 15	Ed and Myrna Cook
December 21	Keith and Jana Aho
December 27	Cheney and Sandy Carlson

Congratulations

Christina and Mike Hammill on the baptism of Chase, Hadley and Macsen Hammill. Christina is the daughter of Jody and Penny Bruce Hanold and the Granddaughter of Myrna and Edward Cook.

Ericka Richards and David Froland on the baptism of Oliver Lee Froland. Godparents are Brandon Butterfield, Karalynn Anderson, and Madelynn Anderson.

Condolences

Our sincere condolences to the family of Bob Hooper.



WELCA

WELCA met on Monday, November 11th. Plans were firmed up for the Holiday dinner on December 8th following our Sunday service. Please plan to attend...bring a friend!

Our service project for December is to help the Mission Bible Training Center. Several members from the Training Center will assist with the dinner by preparing and serving the Holiday meal. There will also be a basket in the Narthex during Advent to collect items needed at the Center. Some basics include: flour, sugar, non-perishable food items including: pie filling, peanut butter, vegetables, toilet paper, toothpaste, dry laundry soap, dish soap.

New this year, we would like to create a "Keepsake" tree. A tree will be put up in the Luther Room and for the decorations, we are asking the Congregation to participate by bringing in an ornament...put your name and 2019 on the back (label or marker) and place on the tree. You only need to bring in one ornament one time. They will be kept and placed on the tree each year.

Again this year we will be preparing cookie packages for our homebound members and those in care centers. We are coordinating this with the Ensemble group who plan to visit our shut ins on December 15th, after church. **If you would like to make cookies for this event please sign-up on the sheet in the Luther Room and have them to Church by Saturday, December 14th at 9:00am.** Thank you.

The next WELCA meeting will be at 11:00am on Monday, December 2nd.

Happy Holidays to Everyone...Hope to see you at the dinner.

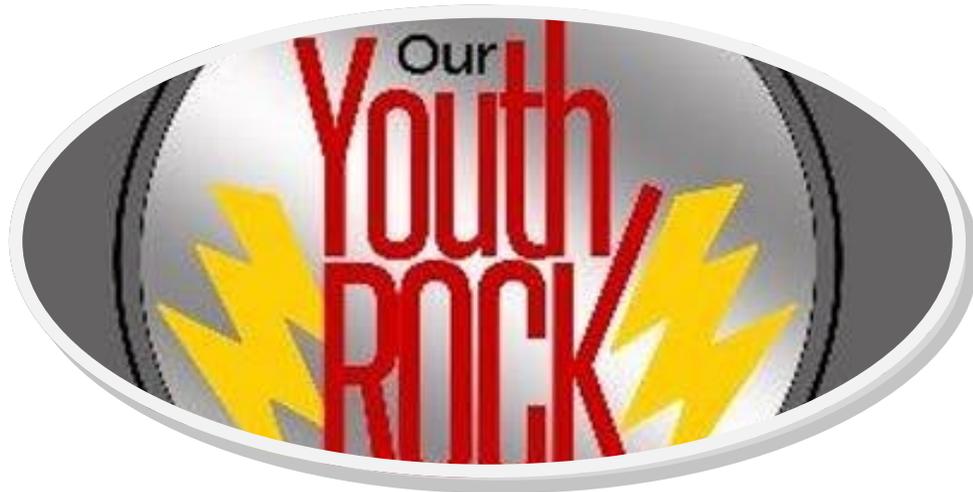
December schedule of Services

Wednesday Advent Service	6:00
Movies, caroling, and scripture	
Saturday, SOS Contemporary	4:30
Praise band with songs	
Sunday, worship service	10:00



Our newsletter is always available to view online at:

www.firstlutheranironriver.com



Our youth have been making headlines!

High school sports and activities—you can find them there!

Brayden Nelson, football

Kat Hemeleski - tennis and Freshman Homecoming court

Callista Bortolameolli— tennis

Blaze Rybicki—High School Quiz Bowl

Livea Mazurek—tennis and National Honors Society

Blake Pietila—football

Kyle Carlson—football

Robbie Quayle—football



CREW is back! Wednesdays
from 3:30-5:00

Congratulations

All U.P. Football Team

Upper Peninsula Sportswriters
and Sportscasters Association's
all- UP Football teams were se-
lected on November 1. From the
Small Schools First Team, honors
went to **Brayden Nelson, DE WIC.**
Way to go Brayden!





A Dicken's Christmas

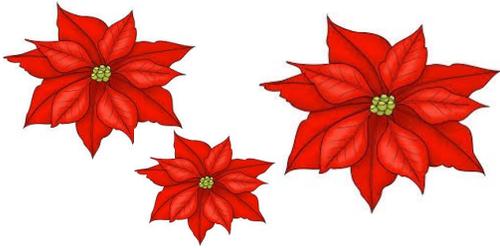
Please join us on Wednesdays, at 6:00 p.m. during Advent to celebrate the season with scripture, caroling, and a movie. Services will be in the Fellowship Hall.



**Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
December 24th, 7:00 p.m.**



CREW will be presenting *The ABC's of Christmas* during our Sunday Service December 15th.



Poinsettias for our Candlelight Service, December 24th.

6 inch pots are \$15.00

Name _____

In Memory/Honor of _____

Last day to order is Dec 9th.

If you are bringing your own poinsettia, please have them here by Saturday, Dec. 21st.
Please send names to the office to be included in the bulletin.

Calling all Men of First Lutheran...

We are beginning a men's group. Our first get together will be on Monday, December 9th at 8:00 at the Main Street Café. Come with ideas for a name of our group.

Some ideas so far for the group:

1. CIA (Christians in Action)
2. Empowered Men
3. GMBMR (Give Me Back My Rib)
4. ALTARed
5. J-Walkers (Jesus walkers)
6. MAN-UP
7. Ironman
8. Band of Brothers





Sounds of the Season

Our Ensemble will be caroling on December 15th, right after the 10:00 service. We will be visiting our members who are not able to attend our services. Please consider joining us and spreading cheer to those who are housebound. All are welcome!



Thank You!
Thanks to all who came by and helped prepare our church for Christmas. Many hands made the evening go quickly and the church looks beautiful.



Volunteers Needed!

Volunteers are needed to serve as ushers, communion assistants, acolytes and readers. Please consider one of these opportunities to give back to your church.



DECEMBER

1 9:00 Coffee & Fellowship 10:00 Sunday Service	2 10:00 Bible Study 11:00 WELCA	3 6:00 Pub Theology	4 3:30 CREW 6:00 Advent Service	5 6:00 Ensemble Rehearsal	6 	7 4:30 SOS Service Contemporary 6:00 Parade of Lights
8 9:00 Coffee & Fellowship 10:00 Sunday Service	9 8:00 Men's Break- fast @ Main Street Cafe 10:00 Bible Study	10 9:00 Quilters 6:00 Council	11 3:30 CREW 6:00 Advent Service	12 6:00 Ensemble Rehearsal	13 	14 4:30 SOS Service Contemporary
15 9:00 Coffee & Fellowship 10:00 Sunday Ser- vice, CREW program Noisy Offering	16 10:00 Bible Study	17 9:00 Quilters	18 3:30 CREW 6:00 Advent Service	19 6:00 Ensemble Rehearsal	20 	21 4:30 SOS Service Contemporary
22 9:00 Coffee & Fellowship 10:00 Sunday Service	23 10:00 Bible Study	24  7:00 Candlelight Service	25  Christmas	26 	27 	28 4:30 NO SOS Service
29 9:00 Coffee & Fellowship 10:00 Sunday Service	30 	31 9:00 Quilters				

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
235 E GENESEE STREET
IRON RIVER MI 49935

First Lutheran Church
Sowing seeds of grace; growing faith in Christ



Come join us!

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