

# The *First* Word

Volume 24, Issue 4

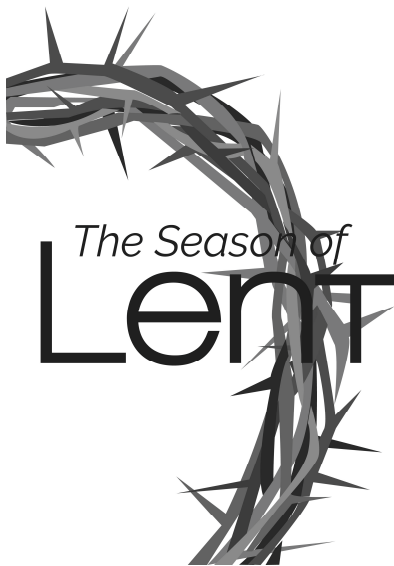
FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL — HELENA, MONTANA

February 2023

Seek FIRST His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33

## Special February Dates

Dorcas Circle Quilters.....	Feb. 1
First Edition Book Club.....	Feb. 4
Home of Pam Tudor	
W.O.W. Bible Study.....	///Feb. 14
Lifelight: Haggai/Zechariah/Malachi	
Valentine's Day.....	Feb. 14
Dorcas Circle Quilters.....	Feb. 15
O.W.L.S. ....	Feb. 16
Transfiguration of Our Lord.....	Feb. 19
Presidents Day.....	Feb. 20
Ash Wednesday.....	Feb. 22
First Sunday in Lent.....	Feb. 26
W.O.W. Bible Study.....	Feb. 28
Lifelight: Haggai/Zechariah/Malachi	



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## “Fire Guys” share safety tips with OWLS

Four members of the Helena Fire Department treated First's OWLS group to a most informative presentation at its monthly gathering on January 19. We were surprised to learn that the department consists of only eight firemen, and one of those presenting has competed in the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society Firefighter Stairclimb competition in Seattle, where firemen in full gear climb the 69 stories in the Columbia Center, Seattle's tallest building (the second tallest building west of the Mississippi River). This year marks the 32nd year of the competition, which has raised over \$24 million dollars for LLS.

The presentation covered everything from how to purchase—and where to install—smoke alarms in the home, to how to interpret the “chirps” coming from a smoke alarm. Also covered was how to purchase—and where to place—carbon monoxide detectors in the home.

Members of the department are happy to assist people with installation of smoke detectors and/or carbon monoxide detectors, or to help if you are having trouble understanding why a device is giving off signals that don't seem appropriate. There is no charge for them to come to a home to determine the problem.

The firemen discussed the different types of fire extinguishers, the use of

space heaters, and power strips. They also noted the danger of fire from decorative candles if not watched closely.

OWLS members learned that department members go on calls not related to fires, including assisting folks who have fallen (indoors or outdoors).

The men offered safety tips for helping to prevent these falls, which generally happen to the elderly and are the leading cause of injury in older people. For those living alone, they stressed the importance of having either a cell phone or “Life Alert” type device on one's person at all times. Those living alone were advised to have a neighbor or friend check in on a regular basis—and to keep a key in a hidden location outside the home if door are kept locked. There is no charge for the fire department to lend a helping hand in the case of a fall, so people should not hesitate to call.

The department's members also go out when automobile accidents occur, and generally arrive before an ambulance. All firemen are certified EMTs, and if medical assistance is needed, can assist those involved prior to the ambulance's arrival.

Though the presentation was of a serious nature, there was fun involved when Everett Hollatz was honored with the privilege of sitting in the driver's seat of the fire truck! Might we, perhaps, have a future fireman in our midst?



## Ideas for serving your neighbor that cost very little . . . or nothing at all!

Inflation starting to take a “bite” out of your wallet? The Bible teaches us to be good stewards of our money and also to serve others in need. Here are some “frugal” ways to achieve both of these goals. Try to select a few as your New Year’s resolutions!

- Have your teenagers shovel snow for an elderly neighbor, bring in the mail, and walk the dog a few times a week during the winter months.
- Donate blood to the Red Cross one— or two times a year (you must weigh 110 pounds or more).
- Clean out children’s clothing and toys every six months and have them help you deliver them to a thrift store (June/December).
- Call a single elderly neighbor, friend, or church member once daily to check on him/her and keep him/her safe.
- Buy eight food/personal hygiene items at the Dollar Tree (\$10 worth) once a month and donate to Food Share.
- Actively invite your children’s friends to church and/or activities.
- Pray for three people per day.
- Donate old towels/blankets to the animal shelter...shop at Good Sam’s!
- When cooking dinner for your family, make an “extra” meal for an elderly or sick neighbor.
- Assist a caregiver by “elder-sitting” for a person with dementia/injury once a week.

### “FUN AND FRUGAL” VALENTINE’S DAY CELEBRATION

Serve a “Red Dinner” . . . Spaghetti, bread, and red Jello with Cool Whip. Hide paper valentines around the house and have your children look for them.



*Larry and Janice Larison*

*Shhhh*  
IT'S A SECRET

**Six Month Secret Sister** ~ Join fellow “Sisters in Christ” by encouraging one specific lady, chosen randomly for you, to pray for, send notes to, celebrate life, or just say, “Hi...I’m thinking of you.”

Open to all daughters in Christ who are young or young-at-heart— and willing to commit to having a Secret Sister.

Interested? Complete the survey sheet available in the back of the church and **return to Susan Buhr by Monday, February 6.** Questions? Call Susan at 406-449-9961 or email: [yellow\\_moose@msn.com](mailto:yellow_moose@msn.com)

## Marked by love

Through the centuries [people] have displayed many different symbols to show that they are Christians. They have worn crosses in the lapels of their coats, hung chains about their necks, even had special haircuts. Of course, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with any of this, if one feels it is [one’s] calling. But there is a much better sign, a universal mark that is to last through all the ages of the church until Jesus comes back. . . .

Love — and the unity it attests to — is the mark Christ gave Christians to wear before the world. Only with this mark may the world know that Christians are indeed Christians and that Jesus was sent by the Father.

*- Francis Schaeffer*



A report from your Board of Finance

	December 2022	FY 2023 Y-T-D
Income (Church & School)	\$ 47,659.16	\$271,868.05
Expense (Church & School)	\$ 39,738.55	\$256,145.67
Net Income/Loss	\$ 7,920.61	\$ 15,722.38

### The First Word

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Rev. Larry A. Miller.....Pastor  
Linda Fromm.....Editor  
Shari Miller.....Calendar/Servant Schedule  
Volunteer Staff.....Printing/Collation

**Deadline for the March issue of the First Word is Wednesday, Feb. 15. Place articles in the First Word box in the church office or e-mail to:**  
[lindafromm@mac.com](mailto:lindafromm@mac.com)

# Pastor's *Potpourri* . . .

a mixture of comments concerning our life together in Christ!

Our Current **A**dult **B**ible **C**lass ...



## + Proverbs +

Meets each **Sunday**  
at **9:30 a.m.**  
in the **Fellowship Centre!**

Please join us  
as we study these  
lessons for life!

Our "Love-Month"

## O.W.L.S.\* Event

will be

**Thursday,**

**February 16!**

Watch upcoming Bulletins  
and your email box  
for the *intimate* details!



\***O**lder **W**iser **L**oving **S**aints are 55+ish



for the cards,  
greetings, gifts  
and the gift  
from the  
congregation  
this Christmas!

**Your love and support  
has touched our hearts and lives  
and is so encouraging!**

*Pastor and Shari*

## Ash Wednesday

(the beginning of Lent)

is **February 22**



Marjorie Scholtz, a Bostonian, experienced two major tragedies. Her physician husband died of cancer, and their four-year-old daughter died a few years later. After working through her grief, Marjorie was convinced that Christians shouldn't waste their tragedies. She chose to volunteer in two children's hospitals, one of which was a psychiatric facility.

It was in the latter that she met "little Annie," who was believed to be hopelessly insane and was confined to a cage at the end of a hospital corridor. Annie was aggressively hostile, and she had not spoken a word since coming to the facility.

Little Annie didn't respond to Marjorie's stories or loving words. On a hunch, Marjorie decided to make brownies for the child. No response. But the following day, the brownies were gone, and as Marjorie walked down the hall, she heard a tiny voice call out, "Thank You." It was the breakthrough that led to little Annie's healing. Today we know her as Anne Sullivan, who taught Helen Keller and blessed us all in the process.

**What is the lesson of this story?** The power of brownies? Perhaps. We are Christians under construction? Possibly. *"He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ"* (Philippians 1:6)? Probably!

**What good work does God have to complete in us (or through us) for others because we believe in Jesus, who has done the very best work FOR us ... on the cross?**



What if we do more  
than just think about it?

*Blessings,*

*Pastor Miller*



# Children of the LIGHT

This craft celebrates that now we are light in the Lord (see Ephesians 5:8).

### What you need:

- A gallon zip-top plastic bag
- Permanent markers (dark colors)
- Black construction paper
- White cardstock
- Scissors

### What you do:

1. Draw a self-portrait on the outside of the bag. Add details.
2. Insert the black paper and set the bag flat on a table. It should be tough to see your picture now.
3. On the white cardstock, draw a picture of a flashlight with a long beam of light coming out. Color the flashlight but leave the beam white.
4. Cut out the flashlight and light beam. Place them in the bag, over the black paper. When the white beam covers the black background under your picture, you can see your self-portrait clearly.

# The gift of Christ is our light

— from your Board of Stewardship

*"When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel'" (Matt. 2:3-6).*

**Earlier in this journey** of *Simple Gifts*, we reflected on light. Today we spend a moment reflecting on the potential negative of light. What could be bad about light? Well, when the light comes on, that which you do wrong can no longer be hidden. When the light comes on you can't hide the fact that you are sneaking a midnight snack, snatching some loot or cheating on your spouse! The light reveals things. Sometimes what we see isn't always pleasant.

As the light shone on Jerusalem all those centuries ago, it brought to light two very clear and disturbing realities. First, the evil King Herod was not a godly man. Second, the very people who should have seen the same star that the Magi saw, missed it! The light of Christ reveals evil and ignorance.

The light of the Lord that shines on our stewardship can be just as damning to us. As we reflect on God's generosity

toward us, it shines a light on our response. What does it show? Often, it reveals our stinginess in support of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the fact that we miss out on just how significant the role we have as stewards of resources plays in the sharing of the light of the Gospel.

As this light continues to shine on us today, may the Lord Who calls us to faith and service, grant us His grace to reflect honestly and respond generously to His call to be stewards. Repentance is the answer to evil and ignorance. Jesus is the light we need!



## Prayer

*Light of the world, Jesus the Christ, shine on us. Show us where we have fallen short as stewards of the simple gifts You give for us to show Your glory to our neighbors and the world. Overcome the evil in us and enlighten our ignorance that we may serve You and that others see the light of life in us! Amen.*

— This article is taken from *Simple Gifts*, a series of LCMS Stewardship Ministry devotions. Used by permission.

## First Lutheran School offerings and opportunities

**1. Registration is open for the 2023-24 school year.** We are accepting applications for children who will be 3 years old by September 1 through prekindergarten age. You can pick up a registration form from Sue Taylor or on the church's website: [www.firstlutheranhelena.org](http://www.firstlutheranhelena.org)

**2. Summer Camps will be available for 10 weeks this summer.** We are accepting application for children between the ages of 5-8. It will be an educational, fun-filled, spiritual experience for all the children.

**3. Next year, our school will offer after care to our enrolled students from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.** We currently have three days covered with a care provider. If you are interested in assisting with after care, we could use your assistance for 2 hours, 2 days a week. It is a fun, engaging time spent with a handful of children who are waiting for mom or dad to pick them up. The time is spent having a snack, going out to recess, and engaging in fun activities.

**4. We are looking for a teacher for our Get Set class for next school year.** If you are interested in teaching a class of 3 to 5-year-old children about God's Word and how to be good listeners, good friends, and good citizens, we would love to talk with you about this opportunity.

**5. We always welcome volunteers in our classrooms.** If you have some free time or a special talent that you would like to share with our students, we would love to have you join us.

**6. We, the staff of First Lutheran School, are very blessed to be given the honor and opportunity to serve our congregation and students.** Thank you for your generosity and kindness in everything related to the school, and specifically for our Christmas gifts.



## Love aces the test

Author Adele Calhoun describes life as "our 'open-book' test on love." How can we ace it? In *Invitations From God*, she points out that daily decisions are the make-or-break factors: "Day in and day out as we plan, work, produce, commute and relate, we make life-altering choices to either love or neglect others."

For another study guide, reflect on St. Augustine's timeless words: "What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of [people]. That is what love looks like."

— The Newsletter Newsletter

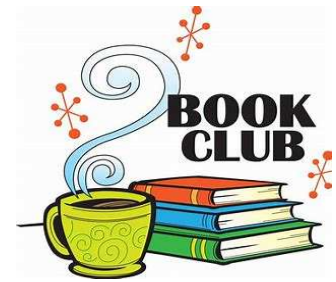
## CARDS 4 KIDS ministry continues to be a great blessing for First Lutheran Youth

Janice Larison, who established the CARDS 4 KIDS ministry at First, and who shares her God-given artistic talents and time creating beautiful greeting cards, thanks all those who purchased Christmas cards to support our F.L.Y. (First Lutheran Youth) here at church!

She reports that a total of \$230 was raised (which included sales of Fall cards).

Valentine cards will be on sale (8 cards per pack) in Ziegler Hall through Sunday, February 5.

Janice is accepting recycled Christmas cards (no writing on the picture side, please), and cards from other holidays, as well.



First Edition Book Club members will meet for luncheon and discussion at 12:15 p.m. on Saturday, February 4, at the home of Pam Tudor. Members are reading—and will discuss—*The Rosie Project* by Graeme Simseon.

Please RSVP to Pam by Wednesday, February 1, by calling 406-439-9719.

The March luncheon and discussion is scheduled for 12:15 p.m. on Saturday, March 4, at the home of Tammy Anderson. For the March meeting, the group will read—and discuss—*The Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah.

Please RSVP to Tammy by Wednesday, March 1, by calling 406-459-8762.

## February Birthdays

**February 1**  
Doris Sparks  
Jeff Stefanik

**February 2**  
Elise Stelter

**February 3**  
Peder Cannon  
Sam Morgenroth

**February 4**  
Mashayla O'Malley

**February 6**  
Kylie Balcerzak  
Caleb Hoxie  
Kate Johnson

**February 7**  
Jakob Criswell  
Miles McCarthy

**February 8**  
Kim Hoxie  
Ken Olson

**February 10**  
Jacque Heida  
Ruth Stelter

**February 11**  
Brian Buhr

**February 12**  
Dylan Veach

**February 13**  
Loretta Schultz

**February 15**  
Larry Laposky

**February 16**  
Tucker Deppmeier  
Benjamin LaForge  
Dave Tudor

**February 17**  
Haidyn Boucher  
Dureen Lanter

**February 20**  
Sophie Stockburger

**February 22**  
Eric Leitzke  
Charlette Morgan  
Marie Ringle

**February 23**  
Bob Antonick

**February 24**  
Shelly Clinch  
Lindsey Houska

**February 25**  
Christopher Shields

**February 26**  
Tami Cook  
Beth Schmeltzer  
Pam Tudor

**February 27**  
Jared Northrup

**February 28**  
Angela Ewing-Hyyppa  
Aleksa Hyyppa  
Lori Northrup  
Carla Staffedlt

**February 29**  
Abbie Ebert



"I believe in loyalty. When a woman reaches an age she likes, she should stick with it."—Eva Gabor

"Youth is a wonderful thing. What a crime to waste it on children."—George Bernard Shaw

"We are only young once. That is all society can stand."—Bob Bowen

"The first sign of maturity is the discovery that the volume knob also turns to the left."—Jerry M. Wright

"A diplomat is a man who always remembers a woman's birthday but never remembers her age."—Robert Frost





# Happenings at First Lutheran School



Director  
Sue Taylor

Get, Set Teacher  
Hanna Hollatz

Pre-Kindergarten Teacher  
Lori Radtke

After School Care  
Julia Hollatz/Pam Worthy/Jessie Belcourt

Pastor  
Larry A. Miller

## First Lutheran School Pre-K Goals for 2023!

*Our First Lutheran Prekindergarten students are excited for a new year and spent time discussing what it means to set goals. We talked about learning something new and increasing our skills. Here are our goals for the "NEW YEAR 2023!"*



**Archie:** I need to do football better. My dad makes a touchdown, and I try to tackle him. Once he even tried to jump over me!



**Kamilah:** I want to get better at swimming in a swimming pool. Under water and on top of the water.

**Averie:** I want to get better at doing homework. (What kind?) The unicorn kind!



**Kylie:** I want to learn how to ride a bicycle and learn how to do the jump rope.



**Brayden:** My goal is to get better at kicking footballs into the field goals. And to do spiral rolls!



**Kyson:** I want to get better at doing front flips, back flips, and cartwheels.

**Charlotte:** I want to get better at doing flips—the jumping kind. And beating my sister at Connect 4.



**Sierra:** I want to learn about unicorns. They are my favorite!



**Emery:** I want to do magic, so I can turn into a mermaid when I grow up.



**Westyn:** I wish I could get better at kicking footballs. I want to get gooder at kicking footballs at recess.



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FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH is a Congregation of  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

THE MISSION of First Lutheran Church is  
“Sharing God’s Word with Everyone, Everywhere!”

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Tune in to “*The Lutheran Hour*”—Sundays at 8 a.m. on the Christian Satellite Network 91.1-FM  
or listen on “*Family Talk*” on Sirius XM 131  
“*Woman to Woman*”—Sundays at 9:30 p.m. on KMTX 105.3-FM



Options Pregnancy Care Clinic began its “Change for Life” baby bottle campaign on January 22. You are encouraged to pick up a baby bottle in Ziegler Hall and fill it with cash, a check, or change. Our partnership with the clinic helps further its mission of “offering hope and building families.” The free services offered include ultrasound imaging, testing, education, KidSmart parenting classes, clothing, and supplies, as well as low-cost STD testing and treatment.

**Please return your filled baby bottle to the church by February 15.** Completing the form with your name and address will give the clinic an opportunity to thank you and provide a tax-deductible receipt.

Please see Ruth Stelter for more details about the bottle campaign. You may also wish to assist by donating diapers, Onesies, baby wipes, receiving blankets and other baby items and clothing (up to age six) by placing them in the tub located in Ziegler Hall.

Thank you!



## Don't lose the key

In *Walking on Water*, Madeleine L'Engle writes: “We have to be braver than we think we can be, because God is constantly calling us to be more than we are, to see through plastic sham to living, breathing reality, and to break down our defenses of self-protection in order to be free to receive and give love.” That sounds inspiring, but the moment I stumble, exhausted or overwhelmed, these words no longer encourage. Instead, they read like the work is mine *alone*, and I’m not up for that.

Knowing some of L'Engle's writings on faith, I researched that quote. Turns out it had been chopped off at the knees. Her next words are the key: “With God, even a rich man can enter the narrow gate to heaven.” *With God*.

I can't respond to God's call to be more than I am, grow in faith, serve my neighbor or “enter the narrow gate to heaven” on my own. But “with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26), and whatever Jesus calls me to do, *He* will equip me to do, walking with me all the way.

—Heidi Hyland Mann  
*The Newsletter Newsletter*