

The *First* Word

Volume 26, Issue 2

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL — HELENA, MONTANA

November 2024

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

Special November Dates

All Saints Day.....	Nov. 1
First Edition Book Club.....	Nov. 2
Home of Pam Tudor	
Daylight Saving Time ends	Nov. 3
All Saints Day (observed)	
ELECTION DAY	Nov. 5
Dorcas Circle Quilters meet.....	Nov. 6
Veterans Day.....	Nov. 11
WOW! Bible Study.....	Nov. 12
Milestones of Faith	
Joy Vibe Harvest Party Carnival.....	Nov. 15
Dorcas Circle Quilters meet.....	Nov. 20
OWLS.....	Nov. 21
Christ the King Sunday.....	Nov. 24
WOW! Bible Study.....	Nov. 26
Shh! Peace. Be Still.	
FLS Thanksgiving Break.....	Nov. 27-29
Thanksgiving Day.....	Nov. 28

Help us warm heads, hands ... and hearts!

Dear Friends of First Lutheran,

We are planning our annual Christmas dinner for the developmentally disabled group homes and independent living residents on Thursday, December 19, at 5:30 p.m. If you would like to help serve, let me know or watch for the sign up sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

The Human Care group will be decorating the “undecorating” Christmas tree in the Narthex again this year, and the gift will be winter hats, mittens or gloves, and scarves. For detailed information, please look for the “ads” scattered throughout this issue of *The First Word*.

We are providing information early so you can prepare to share your time by helping to set up the “undecorating” tree, purchasing a gift, or serving at the dinner. Thanks be to God for those who serve the Lord!



God’s Blessings,

Lowell Bartels

Why are the doors locked?

If you have been wondering why the main doors at the church are locked after the worship service begins, it is because we want to ensure the safety of all members and friends of the church in the uncertain times in which we live.

If a person arrives after the worship service begins, he or she can ring the buzzer located near the main entrance doors, and an Elder will come to the door. If the Elder is unfamiliar with the person(s) wishing to enter, he is to use his best judgment in deciding whether to allow that person(s) to come in. We will be posting a small sign near the buzzer to explain this procedure.

For the same reason, the main doors, the church office door, and the First Lutheran School doors are also locked at all times during the day. Administrative Assistant Shari Miller has the ability to unlock the office door from her desk when someone approaches, and she makes the decision as to whether or not to allow that person to enter.

It is unfortunate that we have had to take this step, but the safety of our members, friends of the church, our staff members, and our school students and teachers is of utmost importance.

Thank you.

— Mission and Ministry Council



REMEMBER . . .
Set your clocks BACK
one hour when retiring on
Saturday night,
November 2!

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Life is on the Ballot in Montana

November 5 is election day. If you have been unable to attend worship services in the past few weeks, you may not have seen the flyer addressing Constitutional Initiative No. 128 (CI-128), which would enshrine abortion in Montana's Constitution. If you are concerned about this initiative, and would like to view the flyer prepared by the LCMS Montana District's Stewardship & Human Care Committee, please go online to: mtdistlcms.org/district-committees and click on the Stewardship and Human Care link, then choose either the full color or black/white version.

Give thanks with a grateful heart — from your Board of Stewardship

Our Father in heaven has claimed us as His own. By the shedding of His Son's blood, by His death for our sins and His resurrection for our justification, God the Father has received us back into His family. By water combined with His Word, promise and name, the Holy Spirit has taken up residence in us. We belong to Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is in us, and we are in Him. And being in Him, all things are ours. In Him, we are richly and abundantly blessed.

Our true treasure and wealth is that we belong to the most holy Trinity and everything that is His belongs also to us: righteousness, peace, eternal life. Even our temporal treasures are gifts from His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy.

We receive our treasures from Him, and thus, as good stewards of His varied grace, we manage them in such a way that they may be returned to Him. We bring them to Him, hallowed through prayers of thanksgiving and God's Holy Word, as a sacrifice. Thus all our possessions, as gifts from God, are also sacrifices to Him, from which we eat to nourish our bodies and share with our family,



neighbors and fellow Christians, with the poor and even our enemies, as holy things given by our holy God. His temporal gifts are blessings to and for us, and bring blessing upon us even as they are pressed into His service for His kingdom and the souls that receive them.

Thus we place all that we have into God's hands. He never fails to remember us and pours out the fullness of His promises upon us. We give thanks for all that He has done, is doing and will continue to do. We give thanks by not taking for ourselves, but giving to all even as our heavenly Father has given to us.

As we prepare for Thanksgiving celebrations, may we all give thanks continually for all that we are and all that we have because of God's providential care. And may we be all the more diligent in bringing everything that we have received from God to Him, so that He may bless it and employ it for the good of all — even for us. For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance.

— LCMS Stewardship Resources

Simple, but lifesaving

In early 2024, Beatrice Johnson became deathly ill in hours. An upset stomach became dangerously low blood pressure; it turned out flesh-eating bacteria had attacked her entire body. When Johnson's kidneys started failing, she was put on life support. In a last-ditch effort, doctors added sodium bicarbonate — baking soda — to her IV.

Within hours Johnson was noticeably improved, and she left the hospital a month later. "I never thought something so simple would save my life," she said.

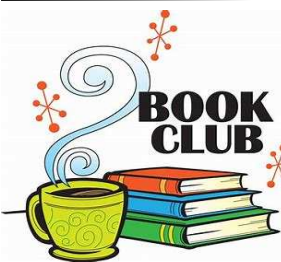
Another lifesaver many people find too simple is God's grace. We quip, "If something seems too good to be true, it probably is," and "Nothing in life is free." We're used to payments or paybacks. We balk if a friend offers to buy our

lunch. When a neighbor brings us homemade cookies, we don't dare return the plate empty.

So how can something as huge and *holy* as salvation be a free gift from God? Don't we need to *do* something to earn it: follow the 10 Commandments? go to church? live a "godly" life?

All those things are good to do, but the key is to do them as *thanks* for God's gift of salvation, not to earn it. Jesus loves you and assures you of eternal life. Just accept the gift! If that seems simple, it's because it is — but it will also save your life.

— Heidi Hyland Mann
The Newsletter Newsletter



First Edition Book Club members will meet for lunch at 12:15 p.m. on Saturday, November 2, at the home of Pam Tudor. Members are currently reading — and will discuss — *The Cold Millions* by Jess Walter.

Those who wish to carpool to Pam's house should meet at the Jo-Ann Fabrics parking lot at 11:50 a.m. on that date.

If you have not already RSVP'd to Pam, please do so immediately at 406-439-9719.

The December luncheon and discussion will be held at 12:15 p.m. on Saturday, December 7, at the home of Bridget Michel. For the December meeting, the group will read — and discuss — *The Last Green Valley* by Mark Sullivan.

The First Word

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First Lutheran Church
2231 Broadway
Helena, MT 59601
(406)442-5367



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

Deadline for the December First Word is Wednesday, Nov. 20. Place articles in The First Word box in the church office or email to: lindafromm@mac.com



Pastor's Potpourri . . .

a mixture of comments concerning our life together in Christ!

Worship Opportunities

this November include
these special days and services



† **Sunday, November 3**

All Saints Sunday
(Time Change!)

† **Sundays, November 10, 17, 24**

Stewardship Emphasis

† **Sunday, November 24**

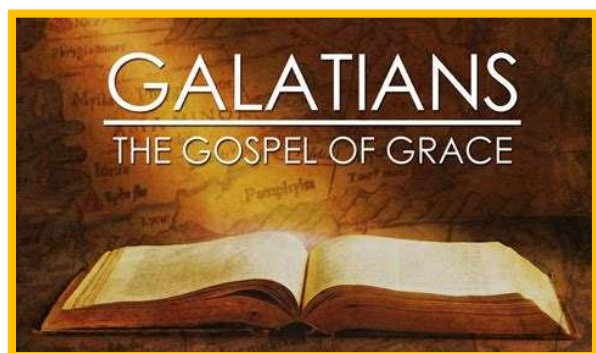
Christ the King Celebration

† **Wednesday, November 27**

Thanksgiving Eve
(12:10 and 6:30 p.m.)

† **Sunday, December 1**

Advent Begins



Galatians Bible Study

Sundays 9:30 a.m.
in the Fellowship Centre



Older Wiser Loving Saints

(55ish+ older)

are invited to our next gathering

Thursday, November 21,
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Thanksgiving Lasagne???
("That's just not right!")



Watch for ALL the details!



Really, St. Paul, really?
In **ALL** things? In 2024 A.D.?
With Elections?
Economic super-challenges?
Record snows and cold expected?
Personal cares? Worries?
Concerns? And???

Especially in these times,
let's give thanks to our God,
Who is ever with us,
Who will never leave or forsake us,
Who is always awesome and great!

Blessings this thanks-giving-time
and always, in Jesus Christ,

Pas+or Miller

Fall season celebrated with food, fellowship, and lots of fun

The FALL FESTIVAL on Saturday afternoon, October 26, was a great success, with lots of people in attendance for an afternoon of games and activities celebrating this lovely time of year!

Many thanks to all those who contributed soups, chili, and desserts for

a wonderful dinner to share with our fellow church members and friends.

We enjoyed an informative presentation and movie about Christianity and Halloween led by Pastor Miller.

— *The Fellowship Committee*



HELP WANTED

Ten able-bodied people with spirit-filled hearts to serve meals for the Christmas Service and dinner for adults from our congregation and the Helena community with developmental disabilities.

Date: Thursday, December 19

Time: 5 p.m.

Location: 1710 National Avenue (formerly the Gateway Center)

Sign up in the Fellowship Hall!



We salute our veterans

After fighting in World War II, Luther Bergeland wasn't done serving his country — or his God. The Minnesota farm boy, who "came back to faith" during combat, later served for decades as a military chaplain. For his actions in the field in Korea, Bergeland was awarded the Bronze Star. Then during Vietnam, he served in the Army Reserves in Colorado, tasked with informing family members about soldiers' deaths.

Despite the challenges, Bergeland embraces the special role he was able to play for four decades, sharing Jesus and His love with countless people. "That's what we did, preaching and reaching out to people," he told a reporter. "I always liked the military very much because it just did a lot for me, and I hope I did a lot for it."

On Veterans Day, we salute Bergeland and all the men and women who selflessly serve.

— *The Newsletter Newsletter*

What your heart clamors to do

We often speak of pastors as having a divine "calling." God gives them a strong sense of purpose for a specific holy role, like how Old Testament prophets were called to bring messages to God's people. But what about the rest of us? Is teaching, practicing medicine, being a plumber, writing or another non-church job also a "call"?

Martin Luther and others have said we should seek work that benefits others and for which God has given us talent. We should also treat any good work we do as a calling — be it cleaning a house or school, mending a broken leg or torn garment, or (as Luther mentioned a *father* doing — in the 1500s!) changing a baby's diaper.

Dorothy Sayers wrote that "work is not primarily a thing one does to live, but the thing one lives to do," and that "we should clamor to be engaged in work that [is] worth doing, and in which we [can] take pride." What work does your heart clamor to do? In other words, what is *your* call?

— *The Newsletter Newsletter*

On the lighter side of politics and religion

Because we are in the thick of politic campaigning, *First Word* Editor Linda Fromm thought you might all enjoy a bit of humor on the subject.

In their book titled *Holy Humor: Inspirational Wit and Cartoons*, Cal and Rose Samra included the following story:

FMC member Evelyn A. Briscoe of Okmulgee, OK, writes that she was on a boat in the middle of the Sea of Galilee in Israel and a Baptist told her this story.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and President George Bush scheduled a meeting. Shamir arrive late, and Bush let him know in no uncertain terms that he did not

like to be kept waiting.

Shamir replied, "I'm sorry, Mr. President. I was meeting with someone more important than you are."

"Who is more important than the President of the United States?" Bush asked.

Shamir replied, "I was meeting with Moses."

"You know Moses!?" Bush exclaimed. "Get him on the phone. I want to talk to him."

Shamir picked up the phone, dialed, listened, and then hung up. "He doesn't want to talk to you," he told Bush. "He said the last time he talked to a bush it cost him 40 years in the wilderness."

Thanksgiving: the religious freedom holiday



As we think of the Pilgrims who established the first Thanksgiving Day, we need to recall the reason they left the land

of their birth and came to the New World. The Puritan separatists were not allowed to worship freely in England according to the dictates of their hearts and minds. In August of 1620, they boarded two small ships, the Speedwell and the Mayflower, in search of religious freedom in undeveloped America.

The Speedwell soon sprung leaks and most of the crew and passengers transferred to the Mayflower before the Speedwell turned back. There were 102 Pilgrims who suffered the 67 days of rough sailing before they finally landed in Plymouth Bay in November, 1620.

Their troubles were just beginning. No housing awaited them. No reception group. No physicians or medical facilities. There were no stores. A cold winter lay ahead with sickness for most of them. At one point, only six people were well enough to help the sick and the dying.

By March 1621, not even a year after arriving, only 51 of the original 102 remained alive. It would be another two years before a ship arrived carrying supplies to help them. They were compelled to live off the land in whatever way they could.

Fortunately, some Native Americans taught the Pilgrims how to plant corn, how to fish the waters, how to find game, how to live without the comforts of England or Holland.

The newcomers built houses. They farmed. They fished. They filled a storehouse with corn and other foods.

At the end of the first harvest, they decided to hold a feast of celebration and have a time of thanksgiving to God for their freedom to worship as

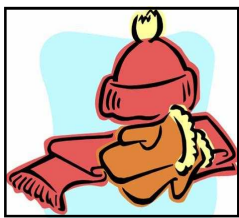
their hearts desired. They invited their Native American friends to enjoy the occasion with them. Ninety came and stayed for three days. They must have enjoyed the worship, feasting and merrymaking.

The main point to remember is that the Puritans were willing to pay an enormous price for the privilege of freedom of worship. They were profoundly grateful to God! Here, in America, no established church harassed them, no government agency restricted them, and no one ridiculed them. They were free to worship in the manner they chose. And they did just that!

On Thanksgiving Day we will be grateful for our abundance, thankful for our manifold blessings. Let us also be profoundly appreciative of our freedom to worship according to our hearts and minds.

— The Newsletter Newsletter

LIMITED TIME OFFER



Purchase a hat/cap, mittens, and scarf (or whatever combination you choose) and gift wrap.

After Thanksgiving, go to the Christmas tree in the Narthex, choose an ornament, and place it on your gift-wrapped Christmas box/bag.

Place your gift under the Narthex tree BY SUNDAY, December 15.

The smiles and joy these gifts bring help share God's love with our developmentally disabled brothers and sisters in Christ! We need 175 gift sets, and with your help we'll reach that goal!

The story of two pots

An elderly woman had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole which she carried across her neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water. At the end of the long walks from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full.

For two full years, this went on daily, with the woman bringing home only one and a half pots of water. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, but the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it could only do half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be bitter failure, it spoke to the woman one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself, because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house."

The old woman smiled. "Did you notice that there are flowers on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, so I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you water them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."

Moral of the story: Each of us has our own unique flaw. But it's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding. You've just got to take people for what they are, and look for the good in them.

— Posted to the Internet



Supporting our youth

Starting Sunday, December 1, packages of 15 Christmas cards will be available for \$5. Assortments contain both Christian and secular themes. Sending cards is becoming an “old tradition,” but what a lovely way to remind people in your life that you care for them. Many thanks to all of you who support this ministry for our youth at the church!

— Janice Larison
CARDS 4 KIDS



Cards shown are for illustrative purposes only. They are not actual card designs.

BLACK FRIDAY DEAL

NEEDED

Six hands (or three bodies with arms and hands attached) able to give two hours to help set up the Christmas tree in the Narthex.

Contact Laurie Stelter
(406)439-7075

or

Tammy Anderson
(406)459-8762
for specific information.



November 1
Harmony Letang

November 2
Caylee Hultin

November 3
Joseph D. Jurenka
Roger Schultz
Brynn Walker
Wanda Warsinski

November 4
Caleb Blokzyl
Nicholas Gochis
Katya Peterson

November 7
Claudia Cook
Kieran Ellwein
Toni Wollan

November 9
Ron Bjornson
Ethan Elvbakken
Rachelle Sparks

November 10
Shauna Eccleston
Laureli Herrera
Deborah Knudsen

November 11
Kathleen Blokzyl
Violet Erdman
Shawn Peterson

November 12
Katharine Antonick
Joshua Miller

November 13
Casey Jones
Dylan Klapmeier
Richard Veach

November 14
Wyatt Deppmeier
Diane Seiler

November 15
Lainee Hill
Joseph K. Jurenka

November 16
Elizabeth Fletcher
Olivia Mercer
David Stockburger

November 17
Devon Lawson
Tyler Northrup
John Stelter
Ellie Stueve

November 18
Eileen Burns
Karen Cable
Danny Hartford

November 20
Cleo Anderson
Lisa Large
Jeff Tamblyn

November 21
Alexandria Klapmeier

November 22
Roger Anderson
Janice Larison
Paula Lavender
Aleigha Spatzierath

November 23
Tyler Eccleston

November 24
David Hill
Mark Walker

November 25
Jacob Schmeltzer
Ben Wareham

November 26
John Everson

November 27
Debbie Williams

November 28
Cory Gunderson

November 30
Joan Fabricious





Happenings at First Lutheran School



Director
Sue Taylor

Get Set Teacher
Shannon Champagne

Pre-Kindergarten Teacher
Lori Radtke

After Care Providers
Melanie Middlebrook/Emily DuPre
Lillian Buhr

Lunch Assistant
Jeannie Hubbard

Pastor
Larry A. Miller

You have fixed all the boundaries of the earth; You have made summer and winter. Psalm 74:17

FLS students love the seasons that God created. This is what they appreciate the most about fall.

Pre-K Class

Ainsley: I like jumping in leaves. They are all fluffy and stacked.

Daisy: Jumping and hiding in the SNOW! I say peek-a-boo to my sister.

Isaac: I like going skiing and snowboarding and jumping in the puddles.

Jacie: When people throw leaves, it is pretty fun. When the leaves get “blowed” off the tree and covered with snow. Snow is not good to eat. Animals slobber on it.

Lochlan: Jumping in the leaves because it blows everything.

Raiden: I like going “snowing.” I like to make snowballs and throw over the fences.

Ryker: Jumping in leaves and falling down. Some people want other people to jump in the leaves.

Titus: Rake the leaves. Then jump in them. It makes a big hole. The leaves get all smushy.

Trey: Hunting for “elks.” When you shoot them you bring it back to Helena and eat it.

Wyatt: I love to rake the leaves and jump in them the whole time.

GET SET Class

Avram: I like the foods, apples and oranges and candy.

Colten: Picking pumpkins, yeah.

Colter: Getting fall food (Thanksgiving).

Dean: I see rabbits. They have cute faces.

Eli: It starts getting colder.

Evan: I like fall! Snow!

Isla: Playing in snow, trick or treating.

Lily: I like when the trees change colors.

Maelynn: I like looking out the windows, to the outside.

Roland: I like pumpkins (jack-o-lanterns).



DAD'S LITTLE
HUNTING
BUDDY

First Lutheran Church & School
2231 Broadway
Helena, MT 59601

Phone: (406)442-5367
Fax: (406)442-5285
School Phone: (406)442-6913
Website: www.firstlutheranhelena.org
Email: churchoffice@firstlutheranhelena.org

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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!”

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

Joy Vibe Youth Ministry

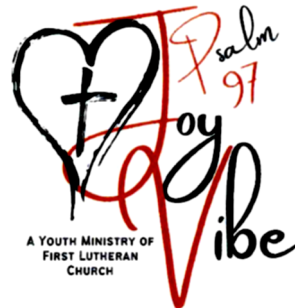
Youth Leader: Hanna Hollatz

Ages: All Ages

Place: First Lutheran Fellowship Hall

Time: TBD 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. or 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Date: TBD Two Friday evenings per month



First Activity
Friday, November 15
6:30 p.m.
Harvest Party Carnival
All Youth Join Us!

Joy Vibe Youth Ministry Outreach Overview:

The overall idea for the Joy Vibe Youth Ministry is to gather and grow together in faith through fellowship, praise, prayer, and Bible study. These will be accomplished in all sorts of ways.

- Bible studies that are presented in a different fashion than Sunday School or VBS. These would be topical studies that really dig deep into the Bible and last approximately 30-60 minutes, depending on group discussion.
- Fellowship with games, team building activities, movies, praise music, festival parties, snacks, etc.

Utilization of materials through LCMS, Concordia, Answers in Genesis, and other excellent websites, as well as the use of YouTube or other online video services, may be incorporated as appropriate.

Friday evenings will be an all-ages group. Stemming from that will be age-appropriate activities such as sledding, lock-ins, concerts. Parental discretion and approval with permission slip may be used for their child to attend.

Personal Invitations to church members will be handed out regularly and open invitations for non-church friends to attend will be encouraged.

General church volunteers will be requested for anyone willing to come have fun and hang out with a bunch of youth. Parents are welcome to stay or leave for a little free time.