The *First* Word

Volume 28, Issue 2 FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL — HELENA, MONTANA **November 2026**

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
Daylight Saving Time ends

Election Day.....Nov. 3

Dorcas Quilters meet….....Nov. 4

First Edition Book Club.....Nov. 7
Home of Joyce Burgett

24th Sunday after Pentecost.....Nov. 8

WOW! Bible Study (9:30 a.m.)....Nov. 10
Lifelight*: John Part 2*

Human Care Ministry..... Nov. 11
dinner for Garage Sale volunteers
Veterans Day

25th Sunday after Pentecost.....Nov. 15

Dorcas Quilters meet….....Nov. 18
Chef Roger's Thanksgiving Dinner

OWLS (5 p.m.).....Nov. 18

Last Sunday of the Church Year.....Nov. 22
Christ the King Sunday

WOW! Bible Study (9:30 a.m.)....Nov. 24
Lifelight: *John, Part 2*

Thanksgiving Worship.....Nov. 25
12:10 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

FLS Thanksgiving Break.....Nov. 25-27

Thanksgiving Day……..Nov. 26

First Sunday in Advent……..Nov. 29
Christmas CARDS 4 KIDS go on sale
"Undecorate" Christmas tree for DD



In This Issue

Give thanks with a grateful heart.....2
The Pastor's Page…….....3
Theology and Philosophy of Lutheran Ed.....4
Just for KIDS!.....5
Let's Celebrate November Birthdays!…….....6
Happenings at Our School……..7

Let's "undecorate" the Christmas tree!



Dear Friends of First Lutheran,

Over the years, you have supported the developmentally disabled with church, Christmas dinners, and Christmas gifts. Your kindness has allowed them to grow within First Lutheran as partners in knowing and loving Jesus.

This year, our Christmas Dinner will be held on Thursday, December 17, at 5:30 p.m. at Mount Helena Christian Church, 1710 National Avenue. Many volunteers are needed to make this night special. If you would like to volunteer, please call or text me at (406) 437-1972. Volunteers should be there at 5 p.m.

The gift we will give our developmentally disabled friends this year is a beverage tumbler with a handle, any color or size, for hot or cold beverages, and which is dishwasher safe. We need 250 tumblers, and are asking you to help us provide those by "undecorating" the Christmas tree in the narthex of the church after Thanksgiving. Choose an ornament and have fun purchasing your tumbler! Wrap — or place it in a gift bag — and **be sure to attach the ornament to the gift**. (You may wish to take more than one ornament from the tree!)

Please bring your gift(s) to the church **by Sunday, December 13.**

Thank you for your continued support,

Lowell Bartels

Garage Sale volunteers to be treated to special dinner on November 11







The Human Care Ministry Garage Sale was a HUGE success! A total of $3,816 was raised, and will benefit Good Samaritan, Options Clinic, Florence Crittenton Home, and God's Love, as well as needs for human care that arise in our congregation.

To show our utmost appreciation for all who volunteered in any way, we will be providing dinner on Wednesday, November 11, at 5:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. All volunteers who worked on the Garage Sale will be our honored guests.

If you were not a volunteer, no worries! Please join the volunteers and enjoy a dinner of taco soup, cornbread, and pie, and fellowship with this extraordinary church family we have at First Lutheran!

— *The Human Care Ministry Team*

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."
— John F. Kennedy

Give thanks with a grateful heart

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.org
Stewardship Ministry

The Journey of the Church Year

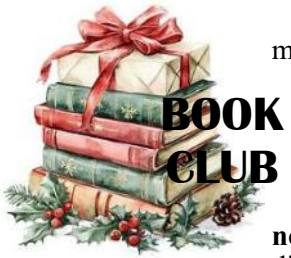
Advent begins on Sunday, November 29, in 2026. In many Christian traditions, Advent also marks the beginning of the church year. Rather than starting with a new calendar, the church begins by preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

Advent leads to Christmas, followed by Epiphany, traditionally observed on January 6, 2027, to remember the revelation of Christ to the nations and the visit of the wise men. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 10, and guides believers toward Holy Week and Easter Sunday, March 28.

Forty days after Easter, Christians observe Ascension Day on May 6, remembering how Jesus "was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9, ESV). Pentecost follows on May 16, 50 days after Easter. On that day, the Holy Spirit empowered Christ's followers and united them for the church's mission.

The season after Pentecost continues until Advent arrives once more, inviting the church to begin the sacred journey again.

— The Newsletter Newsletter



The First Edition Book Club members will meet for morning treats and beverages at **10 a.m.** on Saturday, November 7, at the home of Joyce Burgett, followed by discussion of *The Whistling* Season, by Ivan Doig.

If you have not already done so, please RSVP immediately to Joyce at 406-439-2707.

Members will meet on Saturday, December 5, at **12 noon** at the home of Bridget Michel, followed by discussion of *The Correspondent* by Virginia Evans.

For the December meeting this year, members are asked not to bring a gift for each book club member, but to bring a 'white elephant' gift (something odd, impractical or delightfully tacky) to exchange.

Please RSVP to Bridget by Wednesday, December 2, at 406-438-6214.

The *First* Word

Published monthly by:

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. 18. Place articles in The *First* Word box in the church office or email to: *lindafromm@mac.com*

Pastor's Potpourri . . .



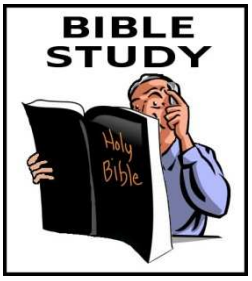
a mixture of comments concerning our life together in Christ!

Our Current
Adult **B**ible **C**lass

"Faith Works!"

A Study of the Epistle of James

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



Please join us as we study
God's Motivating Word!

Our Thanksgiving-Month



O.W.L.S.* Event

will be
Wednesday,
November 18 at 5 p.m.!

"With a Grateful Heart!"

Watch upcoming Bulletins
and your email box
for the *Thank-full* details!

*Older Wiser Loving Saints are 55+ish



Membership Classes for Adults**

Sundays at 4 p.m.!

For further information,
or to express your interest in participating
please contact Pastor Miller or Sydney
in the church office (442-5367).

(** Those preparing for membership
and those who are already members.)

Worship with Us ...



Christ the King Sunday

November 22 ~ 8:15 / 11 a.m.

Thanksgiving Eve

November 25 ~ 12:10 / 6:30 p.m.

Our Advent Midweek Series

begins November 29 ~ 12:10 / 6:30 p.m.

"Give Thanks ~ *to the Lord, for He is good,*
for His steadfast love endures forever."
- Psalm 136:1 -

What great reasons
we have to give God thanks!

He has gifted us with His creation,
everything He has made,
that we might live in it
and care for it, and enjoy it!

He laid down His life, and died,
so that we can live, really live,
and so that we can love Him
and one another!



He has called us to faith,
and made us members of His family,
and gathered us together as His church,
and will keep us as His own,
until He takes us home!

This thanks-giving and living month, let's do it!



for the cards, greetings, prayers,
gifts, words of care
for
Pastor's Appreciation Month!

Your love and support
is precious and **so encouraging!**

Pastor Miller

Theology and Philosophy of Lutheran Education

Have you ever wondered what drives the teaching at First Lutheran School? Do you know that our school mission aligns directly with the doctrine of our church? We are blessed to have the opportunity to share God's Word with the children at our school every day. Please read on to understand what drives the education at our school as confessed in the Theology and Philosophy of Lutheran Education.

Our school believes in the truth of the inerrant Word of God and follow God's command to make disciples of all nations. The truth of Holy Scripture is the guiding principle in the education that First Lutheran school provides. At the center of the Word of God is Jesus Christ and the forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus is the reason for the work that is done at First Lutheran School and He is the focus of our education.

On a practical level and in keeping Christ as the center of God's Word in our education, we consider three different spheres. These spheres or domains correspond to our Christian creeds. Therefore, the teaching of First Lutheran School focuses on the gifts of creation, the redemption from sin, and our Christian life or sanctification.

First Lutheran School teaches that God has created every person and given us the gift of human reason. Our teaching reflects the clear biblical teachings of Scripture related to faith and morality. Related to arts, literature, music, and other fine arts, we teach using our God-given "eyes, ears, and all our members" to create and appreciate these gifts of God's creation. Thereby, our teaching is rooted in God's Word. Through *speaking the truth in love* (Ephesians 4:15) our educators remain faithful to God's Word and bring it to our students.



The understanding of sin impacts our education. We believe that Jesus alone offers the forgiveness of sins to those who believe His Gospel. Therefore, we are obligated to correct mistaken theories and views that deny God's creation. Secondly, we must instruct our students about the nature of sin and the need for repentance of those sins. As such, we must offer our students grace for their sins by sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This also means that we do not withhold disciplinary action as a consequence and use these valuable opportunities to teach repentance and offer forgiveness. Providing instruction in the Christian faith is the central part of our education.

The Gospel, the promise of the forgiveness of sins on account of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection, which we receive by faith alone is unreservedly proclaimed. Only the teaching of the Gospel, by the power of the Holy Spirit, will lead to changed hearts, renewed lives, and eternal salvation. A central part of our education in the Christian faith is ensuring that our students hear the Gospel of what Christ has done for them, thus helping them to grow to have the *mind of Christ* (1 Corinthians 2:16).

Our school seeks to abide by all civil laws and regulations, including those that govern education. At the same time, our school ultimately serves the ministry of God's Word. We are called to proclaim the Gospel and teach the Scripture. Thereby, in the case of civil government trespassing on faith, morality, and the like, our school will maintain our right to the constitutional right to religious freedom and will obey God, not man (Acts 5:29).

Lutheran teachers function as an extension of parental authority in the lives of the children they teach; they work alongside parents. Our teachers are considered "ministers" of the church. As servants of the church's school ministry, teachers assist in teaching the Word to the students in their care. Everything the teacher does brings the Word of God to bear upon the life of the school and the students. All teachers in our school serve the Lutheran Church and shall teach in accordance with the faith of the Lutheran Church.

The theology and philosophy of Lutheran Education is derived from Holy Scripture and the doctrines that we believe, teach, and confess. Theology impacts the education we offer as we daily follow God's Word.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect (Romans 12:2).

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod supports our school as we undertake the work of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins.

Thank you for your continued support of our school.

— Information adapted by First Lutheran School Director Sue Taylor from LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations document.

"I am much afraid that the schools will prove the very gates of hell, unless they diligently labour in explaining the Holy Scriptures, and engraving them in the hearts of youth. I advise no one to place his child where the Scriptures do not reign paramount. Every institution in which means are not unceasingly occupied with the Word of God must be corrupt."

— Martin Luther

Just for KIDS!

Bread Painting



When you eat this fun snack, be thankful for Jesus, who is our Bread of Life.

What you need:

- Small cups
- Milk
- Food coloring
- Clean, food-safe brush
- Slice of bread
- Toaster or toaster oven
- Butter, optional



What you do:

1. Set out one small cup for each color you want to use.
2. Pour 1 to 2 tablespoons of milk into each cup.
3. Add a few drops of food coloring to each cup and stir until the color is bright.
4. Using a clean, food-safe brush, gently paint a picture or design on the bread. Be careful not to soak the bread.
5. When you're finished painting, toast the bread. Add a little butter, if desired, and enjoy!



Reminder: Ask an adult for help when using a toaster or toaster oven.

"I am the bread of life."
John 6:35, NIV

PUZZLE



Counting Our Blessings

Thanksgiving is a great opportunity to "count our blessings." God blesses each of us daily in so many ways. Solve the following math problems. Then write the words on the numbered lines below to complete Ephesians 1:3, NIV.

14 - 7 = ____ Father	10 + 15 = ____ in
10 + 9 = ____ heavenly	6 - 3 = ____ to
10 + 5 = ____ blessed	12 - 6 = ____ and
2 - 1 = ____ Praise	6 + 6 = ____ Christ
7 + 7 = ____ has	18 - 9 = ____ our
11 + 11 = ____ every	22 - 11 = ____ Jesus
12 + 12 = ____ blessing	1 + 1 = ____ be
10 + 10 = ____ realms	7 + 6 = ____ who
13 + 13 = ____ Christ	2 + 2 = ____ the
8 + 8 = ____ us	10 - 5 = ____ God
8 + 9 = ____ in	4 + 4 = ____ of
5 + 5 = ____ Lord	9 + 9 = ____ the
10 + 11 = ____ with	10 + 13 = ____ spiritual

" ____(1) ____(2) ____(3) ____(4) ____(5) ____(6)

____(7) ____(8) ____(9) ____(10) ____(11) ____(12),

____(13) ____(14) ____(15) ____(16) ____(17) ____(18)

____(19) ____(20) ____(21) ____(22)

____(23) ____(24) ____(25) ____(26)."

Ephesians 1:3, NIV

Answer: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."

Christmas is coming!

Christmas card packages of 15 cards will be available for sale starting November 29 in Ziegler Hall. Packages include a variety of themes suitable for friends and family.

Card packages are $5 each, and proceeds from the sale of cards goes entirely to our youth here at the church. I hope you will drop by for a look!

Many thanks to everyone who has donated envelopes, cards, and stickers to help me with this ministry.

— Janice Larison
CARDS 4 KIDS





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



Stones are "growing" in First's Stepping Stone Garden



Charlie Mueller reports that the Stepping Stone Garden he and his wife, Rexetta, started several months ago is coming along beautifully, and they would like to thank all who have purchased a stone.



A touch of autumn is still in the air, and it is a great time to "plant" a stone! If you are interested in doing so, please contact Charlie at (406) 461-7837.



November Birthdays!

November 1
Harmony Letang

November 2
Aries Hindman
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 8
Jessica Meyer

November 9
Roy Bjornson
Ethan Elvbakken

November 10
Shauna Eccleston
Deborah Knudsen
Payton Mongoven

November 11
Shawn Peterson

November 12
Katharine Antonick
Joshua Miller

November 13
Casey Jones
Dylan Klapmeier
Donna Torgerson
Richard Veach

November 14
Wyatt Deppmeier
Diane Seiler

November 15
Lainee Hill
Joseph K. Jurenka

November 16
Jeffrey Allen
Olivia Mercer
Belle Schmeltzer
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

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 Fabricius

Happenings at First Lutheran School

Director	Get Set Teacher	Pre-Kindergarten Teacher	After Care Provider	Pastor
Sue Taylor	Shannon Champagne	Lori Radtke	Lillian Buhr	Larry A. Miller

Because Thanksgiving Day comes at the end of November, we asked our students what they were thankful for, and this is what they told us.

Get Set Students



AVA: Toys, all kinds to play with.



BEATRICE: Snow and my mom and dad.



COLE: Food and Nanna and Grampa.



EMMETT: My family and animals.



ETHAN: For being at school and for spiders and lady bugs. I like them.



GIDEON: Marine forklifts and excavators, and stuff like that, and boats and regular forklifts.



HAISLEY: My mommy and my bed.

PreK Students



ARI: Food! I like food. I am so hungry.



CHARLI: I love my mommy and daddy. That my mom helps me when I don't feel good.



ELI: For hugs. And thankful for getting to do Minecraft.



JEREMY: My family. I love them. I love their hearts.



LOLA: My momma! I love her. And I love Daddy. He gets stuff for me.



GRAYSEN: For God. He made me. I love going to school.



Happy Thanksgiving!

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*##

**NON-PROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
HELENA, MT
PERMIT NO.
127**

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

A prayer before Thanksgiving dinner

Almighty God, our Creator, Redeemer and eternal Companion, we come before You overwhelmed by the boundless goodness You bestow upon us.

On this special day, we remember how You blessed those who came to this land seeking the freedom to worship without restraint or hindrance.

We are immeasurably grateful for our heritage. We pray that our faith may be as fervent as the faith of those who left everything familiar to journey to a strange land, where they themselves were strangers.

We gather as grateful beneficiaries of Your faithful servants who paid a costly price to glorify You and serve You. Mindful of the first Thanksgiving meal shared by newcomers and Native peoples, we now gather around our own tables with family and friends.

We come before You with love and deep appreciation for Your constant grace and abundant gifts. The beautiful food before us is a visible reminder of Your generous provision.

Ever-giving and ever-loving God, we humbly thank You for all Your blessings. We ask for one gift more: the honor of Your presence. Be our Guest, so that we may enjoy fellowship with You and with one another.

We pray in the name of Your greatest gift to us, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

— The Newsletter Newsletter

