



first Lutheran

Findlay, OH



Christmas Eve Worship

Family Candlelight
Worship 8:00 pm
(Prelude to begin at 7:30)

Christmas Day & New Years' Day Worship
9:30 am

Love and Memory Tree

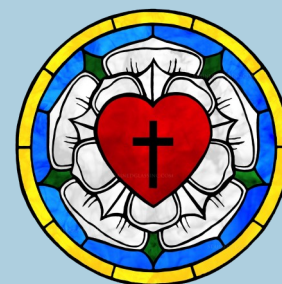
We have a great tradition of donating to our *Love and Memory Tree* in lieu of buying poinsettias. It is out of your grace that we are able to donate more than \$1,000 each season to our local Lutheran Social Services. LSS uses this donation to offer counseling to Hancock County residents and to fill the gaps in their local food pantry. What a great gift from our congregation to others in need.

Given by: (PRINT) _____

In loving memory of: _____

In honor of: _____

You may attach this form to your check and drop it in the offering plate or mail it to the church office.



*Now,
grace was
a gift to
treasure.*

From Pastor Bob

I grew up in this church in the time of Pastors Ed Bary and Sandy Mitchell. Children were to be seldom seen and never heard, worship was formal and always serious, and the only way to get down a pew aisle was to scuttle down it sideways in what I liked to call the "First Lutheran Shuffle."



Things were very different with Pastor Paul and me. He was the only person I've ever met who had a laugh as distinctive and loud as my own. The only mention of grace in the pulpit that I can remember growing up was in the sense of "You were so terrible that Jesus had to die for your sins. Doesn't that make you feel awful?" Now, grace was a gift to treasure.

But what I most treasured when I came back to First were those saints I remembered from my youth: my Sunday School teachers and the parents of my school friends. I returned to an older congregation, and the blessing of that was that I was a link to their past; my family was here in the "good old days." I remember Walter Bradley, the pastor who built the worship space we love so much.





But I was also blessed with wonderful young families. The young people at First that I have had the honor to work with have been remarkable. They are the smartest, sweetest, funniest, and most respectful young men and women I have ever encountered. They put up with old pastor Bob and even seemed to enjoy him at times! I know that my life has been greatly enriched by getting to know them through the years.

Finally, I'd have never survived without my gifted and dedicated staff. I've had 2 secretaries, 1 building manager, 2 financial secretaries, 1 treasurer, 4

organists, 1 choir director, and 2 youth directors. They have all cared deeply about performing their duties to the best of their abilities to the glory of God.

And it is on God's glory that I will end this.

Every Sunday for 15 years I've read Martin Luther's words that hang in the sacristy: "Use me as thy instrument in thy service. Only do not forsake me, for if I am left to myself, I will certainly bring it all to destruction."



God's constant care, and the support and love of a congregation that I adore, have made the last fifteen years the best years of my life. What amazing Church Councils I have been blessed with! What gifted and dedicated volunteers and committee chairs/members served beside me! What talented, inspired musicians and assistants I've shared worship leadership with! What friends I've made in the congregation! How heartbreaking and hard it is to leave. I will never forget your many kindnesses, the love you've all given to Pam and me, or the way you brought us "one step closer to God" every day.

Love, Pr. Bob



*We will
strive in
everything
we do to
help the
people of
our
community
and the
world move
one step
closer to
God.*

Library News

Welcome to the Christmas Season. Snow, fires blazing in the fireplace, holiday music, Advent Church services. And the list grows of our favorite things this time of year.

On the library cart and throughout the library, I have placed our collection, old and new, of Christmas readings. Books on celebrating holidays throughout the world, fiction and non-fiction, art. Select something to read through the holidays. It will ramp up your thoughts and feelings on the holiday and provide how-to's and how-not-to celebrate in your own home and with others.

I include more suggestions below... some of these titles may be on your bookshelves at home. Read them. 🤖

Have you ever read The Christmas Carol or Cricket on the Hearth by Charles Dickens? Why not? You say you saw it on TV with Patrick Stewart? I will bet you a nickel that Stewart read the original! :-)

How about the short novel (or long short story) by Henry Van Dyke, The Other Wise Man? Published in 1895, it is a beautiful story for young and old that captures the true spirit of Christmas.

Try the children's story, The Polar Express by Chris Van Allsburg, J.R.R. Tolkien's Letters from Father Christmas.

I haven't read it but I am going to look for Mr. Dickens and His Carol by Samantha Silva. With writer's block, Dickens walks through London looking for inspiration for his Christmas story. He finds that inspiration along the way.

In the mood for a mystery? The Usual Santas, a collection of short stories all centering around Kris Kringle.

Kristin Hannah, who has written so many inspiring novels such as The Nightingale, The Great Alone, and Firefly Lane, wrote comfort and joy, described as a modern-day fairy tale.

Hans Christian Anderson's The Snow Queen helped form the story behind Queen Elsa of Arendelle.

I remember teaching the short story by O'Henry, "The Gift of the Magi." My only complaint with O'Henry: once you've read the story the ending is no longer a surprise.

Dylan Thomas' A Child's Christmas in Wales is a recollection of Thomas' Christmas' past in poetry. The composition was made to be heard...perhaps look for the audible version.

Richard Paul Evans has written many Christmas stories – A Christmas Memory, The Thirteenth Gift, The Light of Christmas, Christmas Jars, The Christmas Box. Many of his will be found in our library

And, yes, this year, watch the Christmas movies again and again. Listen to the holiday music again and again. You know that Christmas is NOT about the tree, the presents, the harried running to get things done, the commercials that began a month ago. This year, remind yourself that this baby born in Bethlehem holds the promise of Redemption from all out sins.

And, when you say "Merry Christmas" this year, mean it.

Love and hugs from Me.
Kathy



Farewell and God's Blessings

You are invited to

Join Us

To celebrate the retirement of

Rev. Robert C. Cochran

1:00 Dinner, Sunday, December 18, 2022

The Elks Lodge
900 W. Melrose Ave.
Findlay OH 5840

RSVP by December 11th
To cbrenfitz@aol.com or 419-348-0410



Altar Flowers

The Altar Flower Chart is up in the hallway, across from the church office. Please consider signing up for flowers that honor or remember special people or events in your life. Not only are you sharing God's beauty of nature on Sunday, but also brighten your home or the home of a shut-in the following week. Please consider this ministry as a way to share God's love for His people.

Send A Card To Our At Home Members

**Pauline Streickher, Beulah Bishop,
Ken Otte, Nancy Mullahy,
Phil Bash, Sally Rice, Muke Meyer,
Beth Hardesty, Nancy Meek,
Bev Yammine, Debby Baker.**

**Addresses are available in the
church office and on the
hall bulletin board.**

WELCA is again sponsoring the Reverse Advent Food Collection starting December 1. All families are invited to donate a box of food. Donations will be taken to the Lutheran Social Services Food Pantry.

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

EACH DAY ADD AN ITEM TO A BOX.
ON CHRISTMAS EVE DONATE THE CONTENTS TO A
FOOD BANK.

December 1 - box of cereal
December 2 - peanut butter
December 3 - stuffing mix
December 4 - boxed potatoes
December 5 - macaroni and cheese
December 6 - canned fruit
December 7 - canned tomatoes
December 8 - canned tuna
December 9 - dessert mix
December 10 - jar of applesauce
December 11 - canned sweet potatoes
December 12 - cranberry sauce
December 13 - canned beans
December 14 - box of crackers
December 15 - package of rice
December 16 - package of oatmeal
December 17 - package pasta
December 18 - spaghetti sauce
December 19 - chicken noodle soup
December 20 - tomato soup
December 21 - can corn
December 22 - can mixed vegetables
December 23 - can carrots
December 24 - can green beans

PASSIONATEPENNYPINCHER.COM

Pray Like Hannah!

The fourth Biblical woman on the cover of our booklet is Pray Like Hannah! You can read Hannah's story in 1 Samuel 1-2. She prayed so hard an onlooker thought she was drunk! Hannah prayed for a son and bargained with God that she would give her son to the Lord if she was granted one. God listened and Hannah bore Samuel, who was given to the Lord as soon as he was weaned. Samuel grows to be the last judge and military leader. Hannah was blessed with other children, but it was through her son Samuel that she showed herself to be a faith-filled woman that kept her promises

A big thank you to all who participated and planned the Thankoffering Service. Thank you to all who shared their blessings to further help the needs of others.

Women of the ELCA

WELCA Calendar of
Events for
December 2022

Martha Circle is in-service
for **December**.

December 1
Start Reverse Advent
Food Collection

December 7
WELCA Board Meeting,
10:00 a.m. Planning for
Snowflake Social

December 13
Christmas Brunch, 10:00
a.m. in Fellowship Hall.
Martha and Rachel Circles
are inviting all the ladies
of the church. Please
bring a taxable item, such
as laundry soap, shampoo
or cleaning supplies.
These will be donated to
either the Caring
Cupboard at CCH or LSS.

December 14
Hannah Circle – 7:00 pm
Christmas Party at Maria
Schell's home. Please
bring a donation for the
Community dinner and a
pair of socks for a sock gift
exchange!

Newsletter



**Monday
Dec. 19**

Food Cart Requests

Laundry Soap,
cleaning
supplies,
potato mixes



All donations
benefit *Lutheran
Social Services*.

The cart is in the coat room.

Snow Emergencies

Level 1—Worship &
meetings will be held as
scheduled.

Level 2—Worship will be
held—use your discretion;
check with your
chairperson to see if your
meeting has been
canceled. Please be safe.

Level 3— All worship &
events are canceled.



Merry Christmas from the Social Ministry Committee!!

We are so thankful to be a part of First Lutheran's benevolence. You, the congregation, are amazing!

This Christmas will be brighter for 75 children because of your generosity. This is the third year in a row First has participated in Operation Christmas Child shoebox gift program and this year, the program really caught fire. We increased the number of boxes by a whopping 316%. Thank you!

Whether you packed a box or not, please pray for children receiving the boxes.

Military Ministry to Be Started Again

Anyone who may wish to be a part of a ministry to the military personnel and their families on our prayer list in the bulletin please let Beverly Horn know. Her phone numbers are Home...567-250-9560 or Cell...567-305-0378. We will plan to meet when it is convenient for those who wish to work on this together. Whether or not you may wish to work as a committee please consider taking part in this valuable ministry.

This ministry will involve first of all, praying for the young men and women who are in the military and most of all who are actively deployed in areas around the world. Secondly, we want to be sure to include the other family members who are left at home. They go through many types of emotions and fears. Younger brothers and sisters go through a multitude of extremely difficult emotional and physical issues while siblings are deployed. Beverly knows this first hand from when her oldest God Son was deployed and her youngest God Son developed a serious disease caused by anxiety. Many do not know where their loved ones are nor what they may be doing.

Ministry activities may include writing to the military members and families, or phoning the family members. Sunday school students and other young people may wish to send drawings and/or letters of their own. Often it can be fun to plan and pack goodie boxes to send off.

Finally, to families who have given us names of military please continue to try to get parents names , addresses, and phone numbers. Beverly still needs to get military addresses for all military. In addition she would like to have an up to date military photo of your brave soldier or sailor. Thank You.
Beverly Horn



Age	Boy	Girl
2-4	6	11
5-9	10	18
10-12	11	19



MILITARY MINISTRY.

*Pray for our
young men and
women serving
in the
military!*

**Stewardship
is HEART work!**



*Heartwarming stories of ministry in Ohio,
supported by your stewardship.*

When I was in seminary, I was surprised and pleased to receive a gift from a member of my home congregation that paid for an entire semester for me at the then Lutheran Theological Seminary in Columbus. My tuition was only \$200 but a few years before there was no cost. I am so grateful for this woman whom I never met who desired to train pastors in our church. Since that day, the cost of college and seminary have gone up so high that many would-be seminarians cannot afford to go to seminary and become pastors. Hence, we have a shortage of candidates. I was pleased to read this at Luther Seminary's website: "Thanks to our generous donors, we're able to offer all newly admitted M.A. and M.Div. students a scholarship covering 100% of tuition. When you graduate from seminary, you shouldn't be constrained in the kind of roles you can take on because you carry a mountain of debt. You should be free to focus your time and full attention on ministry in whatever context you are called to serve." As I told you recently, the Fund for Leaders of the ELCA, totals \$81,764,456 and is currently providing scholarships for 154 seminary students. Thank you for your support! - *Pastor Chris*

Oesterlen Services for Youth in Springfield, Ohio

Oesterlen Services For Youth, Inc., was established in 1903 by Mrs. Amelia Oesterlen in cooperation with the Wittenberg Synod, precursor to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In 1903 Oesterlen was originally a home for orphaned children but has since transitioned to a mental health treatment and social services agency that works with approximately 1,000 children, youth, and members of their families each year who have mental health, emotional, and behavioral needs. Oesterlen's full range of services includes Residential Mental Health Treatment, Life Skills Development, Treatment Foster Care, Outpatient Counseling, Service Coordination, Respite Care, Community-Based Services, and Adult Programming.

Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. ... For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.—2 Corinthians 4: 5-6

OESTERLEN

Four-year-old Nathan came into care when investigators discovered Nathan had been kept in a crib and only given milk his entire life. At the age of four, Nathan could not walk, talk, or feed himself.



One of Oesterlen's Treatment Foster Care families, the Williams, was eager to get involved and quickly got him connected with the services he needed. The Williams worked with Nathan every day and under their care, he blossomed and reached the milestone of walking. It was clear that Nathan had found a loving home however the Williams were getting older and did not feel they were at the right time in their life to consider adoption.

Fortunately, the Oesterlen Treatment Foster Care team had the perfect family in mind that was currently going

through Pre-Service training. The Duncan family was interested and met with the Williams family and it seemed like a perfect match!! Nathan transitioned to a placement at the Duncan's home where he continued to grow and thrive! Nathan continued meeting milestones and was able to enjoy eating his first food, a biscuit!

In November of 2021, the Duncans celebrated a very special milestone for their family, Nathan's adoption! There was not a dry eye in the courtroom that day. All the case managers during the tenure of Nathan's case attended.

Today Nathan is constantly on the go and does not stop moving. Nathan communicates with a tablet and is doing well in school. Nathan is still close to the Williams family who have become like grandparents to him! We are excited to watch as Nathan continues to thrive with the love and support of his forever family.



-Holly Brennan, Director Development at Oesterlen Services for Youth, Inc.

Heartwarming stories of ministry through
your generous stewardship!

December Volunteers

Newsletter Deadline
December 19
Bulletin Deadline
Wednesdays by noon

LECTORS

Dec. 4
8:15— Marilyn Dunn
10:45— Julie Buck

Dec. 11
8:15— Kathy or Paul Brooks
10:45— Falkyn Roth

Dec. 18
8:15— Elaine Timbrook
10:45— Barb Larick

Dec. 24
8:00 pm - Elaine Timbrook

Dec. 25
9:30— Nina Dukes

SOUND ROOM

Dec. 4
8:15— Tim Roth
10:45— Falkyn Roth

Dec. 11
8:15— Tim Roth
10:45— Jerry Bryant

Dec. 18
8:15— Tim Roth
10:45— Steve Roth

Dec. 24
8:00 pm — Tim Roth

Dec. 25
9:30— Tim Roth

ALTAR GUILD

Tom & Cindy Fitzpatrick
Carol Meyer, Cheryl Everitt

ASSISTANTS

Dec. 4— Daryl Rotman
Dec. 11— Pastor Chris
Dec. 18— Kylee Timbrook
Dec. 24— Tim Cochran
Dec. 25— Pastor Chris

COUNTERS

Jerry Luth, Cyndy Rotman

FLOWER DELIVERY

Marilynn Dunn

LSS DELIVERY

Carolyn Wilde

COMMUNION BREAD

Dec. 4— Cindy Fitzpatrick
Dec. 11— Devra Hall
Dec. 18— Julie Dittmar
Dec. 24/25— Cyndy Rotman

COOKIE SUNDAY

Dec. 4— Community Dinner
Dec. 11— Church Council
Dec. 18— Social Ministry
Dec. 25— 9:30
Merry Christmas

DRIVERS

Dec. 4— Jerry Bryant
Dec. 11— Mike Zawisza
Dec. 18— Aaron Ried
Dec. 24—

DEACONS

8:15
4— P Brooks, M Dunn
11— S DeMoss, M Dunn
Dec. 18— P Brooks, R Needles
Dec. 24— D Rotman, S Roth,
E. Pitt
Dec. 25— 9:30 D Rotman,
K Ebersole

DEACONS

10:45
4— E Pitt, J Kipker
11— D Rotman, S Roth
18— B Schriener, D Rotman
25— D Rotman, K Ebersole

ALTAR FLOWERS

Dec. 4— Toni Poling
Dec. 11— Pat Needles
Dec. 18— Cindy & Todd
Thompson
Dec. 24/25— Jon & Sandy
Burnside

Forms for your bulletin
announcement are available
on the bulletin board and at
1stLutheranChurch.org.
Flowers need to be delivered to the
church by noon on Friday.

Hark the Herald
Angels Sing



Birthdays

Joy Mills	12/21	Stanley Wise	12/1
Ryan Buck	12/22	Amy Tabler	12/5
Nikki Needles	12/22	Jack Taylor	12/6
Kurt Ebersole	12/23	Nick Thomas	12/8
Carol Peters	12/23	Samuel Fruchey	12/11
Merrill Maurer	12/24	Gemma Cox	12/12
Cynthia Habegger	12/25	Jax Cox	12/13
Michael Meyer	12/25	Sally Hartzell	12/13
Jeff Wobser	12/25	Carolyn Howe	12/13
Nathan Adler	12/27	Thomas Fitzpatrick	12/16
Miriam Gibson	12/27	Elizabeth Kutschbach	12/16
Robert Bower	12/28	Pamela Basinger	12/18
David Otte	12/29	Rob Leipheimer	12/18
Chris Dudics	12/31	Ann Fifolt	12/19
Joseph Spoon	12/31	Brandon Maas	12/21



Anniversaries

Larry & Virginia Borger	12/28/1968	54
Ted & Joanne Stombaugh	12/28/1958	64
Aaron & Linda Ried	12/30/1994	28

December Celebrations

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

January 23rd at noon
Lunch provided

Agenda:
Approve 2022 Annual
Report
Approve 2023 Budget
Elect Nominating
Committee
Other

Recently Elected to
Church Council for 2023

Casey Cox
Maria Schell
Arlene Schriner
Cindy Thompson



First Lutheran Church
109 E. Lincoln Street
Findlay, OH 45840

Current Resident or:

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
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This newsletter was
mailed:
December 7th



Sunday Worship 8:15 & 10:45am; Sunday School 9:30am



Family Service of Candlelight at 8:00 pm

Prelude music to begin at 7:30 pm