

### NEWS FROM OUR PASTOR

*And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)*

Our theme for Advent this year, "Now in flesh appearing," is based on these words from John and comes in this particular expression from the words of the hymn O Come All You Faithful:

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
Born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be glory given!  
Word of the Father,  
Now in flesh appearing!

Hidden in this familiar carol are powerful words of comfort and promise and hope, words that are definitive of the season and especially powerful for our time.

The phrase "in the flesh" is, of course, pretty significant to our faith. Our belief in a God who would take our form and share our lives is unique among religions. Our attachment to God is more than just ideology or doctrine. Our faith is a relationship, a relationship to a God who will not remain in the distance but whose love compels him to be a part of us.

In a life that has become so dominated by loneliness, it is impossible to overstate the importance of the birth of God into our world. So often we feel that no one can understand us, no one can relate to our struggles, we are alone and unique and on our own. Jesus is the promise that as God has joined our existence so he fully knows us and our lives and our struggles and our needs. The promise of grace is powerful because it is more than an idea. It is an embodiment.

And it is now.

Too much religion is limited to a piety that turns our belief into a mere investment in a distant post-life future. But the promise of the gospel is always now, always about a Kingdom coming to life in amid our time and place. We live that promise by faith. That makes it no less real and no less important.

Brokenness blinds us to the greater truth of the Kingdom of God. We are prisoners of this world. We cling to it as if it was real. It weighs us down, binds us, holds us. Grace calls us to lift our eyes, our heads and our hearts and see light dawning in the darkness, possibilities rather than problems. To be transformed by grace, and to transform the world around us.

It is Now in Flesh Appearing.

The ancient church chose to celebrate Christmas during the winter solstice, when there is the least amount of daylight. It dramatizes the importance of learning to see in new ways. We believe darkness diminishes light, but in fact dark makes light visible. The struggles of this world, the challenges of our day, only clarify for us what it means to be children of hope. Injustice tells us what justice must be. Violence and war reveal the cost of our struggle and importance for peace. The need around us amplifies the abundance we have and empowers our giving.

**(Pastor Glen's Newsletter Article Continued on Page 2)**

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(Continued from Page 1)

His appearance in the flesh now is our promise and our calling.

And so we come once again to this season of beauty and light, praying that in the journey of faith we might come to Bethlehem and see him there. The amazing gift of Christmas is the discovery that we are already in Bethlehem, and he is already here.

-Pastor Glen

**End-of-the-Year Contributions**

In order for you to claim a deduction for contributions made to First Lutheran Church during 2025, the church office must receive your contribution by December 31, 2025. All contributions placed in the offering plates at any of the Christmas services will be recorded as 2025 contributions. If you are hand-delivering checks, please have them to the church office by Noon on Wednesday, December 31. All checks must be dated in 2025 and if mailed, must be postmarked no later than December 31. First Lutheran Church will be following these tax rules when posting receipts.

*The Christian Growth Board would like to remind members of FLC to consider including the Christian Growth Fund in your estate planning.*

*Christmas*  
BLESSINGS

**FLC Youth Cookie Bazaar**

**December 13th @ 4-7pm  
December 14th @ 9am-12pm**

All funds raised will support FLC Youth activities, events, and service projects



## NOTES ♦ DATES ♦ REMINDERS



**WE REMEMBER IN  
OUR PRAYERS-Please keep these  
people in your  
thoughts and prayers**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ✠Family of Gordon Soderberg   | ✠Elijah - healing   |
| ✠Randy Isaacson - prayers   | ✠Thomas Uhlman - diagnosed with lung cancer                                 |
| ✠Debra Harris   | ✠David Kaiser - healing   |
| ✠Chancey Schwedhelm   | ✠Helen Garnett (Jim Garnett's mom) - healing                                |
| ✠Mary Jean Rahlfs - healing   | ✠Randy Backman - healing  |
| ✠Alicia (Niece of Deb Katt and Mother of Georgia) - prayers   | ✠Deloris Matson - early stage lymphoma - healing & prayers                  |
| ✠Gavin James - prayers  | ✠Vivian Walvoord - healing & prayers  |
| ✠LaDean Untiedt (Mother of Teresa Preister) - treatment for breast cancer                                       | ✠Dana - healing   |
| ✠Greg Megrue (Son of Betty Megrue) - serious health problems  | ✠Betty Anderson   |
| ✠Paul Kempcke - healing   | ✠Irene Thorsen  |
| ✠Jennifer Novak-Haar - healing  | ✠Meredith Dickerson - Alpha Gal Syndrome                                    |
| ✠Mary Rasmussen - healing   | ✠Zach - cancer healing/treatment side effects                               |
| ✠Mary Connely   | ✠Misty - healing and pain relief  |
| ✠Schaapveld Family, Stirek Family, Gubbels Family, Warrick Family, and all others affected by the recent storms | ✠Marilyn Svendgard  |
| ✠Sana and Elley Smith   | ✠Sue Marsh - healing  |
| ✠Marcie Ellenberger - healing   | ✠Merriebeth Ferguson (sister-in-law of Merriellen Bourn) - cancer - healing |
| ✠Brooklyn Schroeter - healing   | ✠Chris Kesling - healing  |
| ✠Carla  | ✠Alex - surgery & healing   |
| ✠Kari Hernandez - healing   | ✠Mary LaScala   |
| ✠Clint Clausen - prayers  | ✠Martin Kuhr - prayers and healing  |
| ✠Ellie Mommsen  | ✠Riley  |
| ✠Greg Reed  | ✠Georgia (great niece of Debbie Katt) -prayers & healing                    |
| ✠Mary Frey (mother of Rhonda McMurtry) - prayers  | ✠Kyler Reed - healing   |
| ✠Wayne & Carolyn Behrend (Parents of Deb Henson) - prayers for healing  | ✠Scott & Katie Abrams - prayers & healing                                   |
| ✠Jo Royuk (mother of Anne Chrans) - healing   | ✠Kay Melby (Angela Ulven and Kari Hernandez's mother) - healing             |
| ✠Mick Jensen  | ✠Stacy Thompson Green (daughter of Marcy Bottorff) - prayers & healing      |
| ✠Marilyn Swanson—healing  | ✠Larry Kastrup – healing  |
| ✠Patrick McKinnis - healing   | ✠Leo Aguilar-Hicks – healing for Leukemia                                   |
| ✠Amie Clausen - prayers & healing   | ✠Lekura Parish  |
| ✠Sunni Wilson (mother of Melody Dubon)  | ✠Texas Flood Victims and all those we name in our hearts.                   |
| ✠Julia Maettes - cancer treatments - prayers & healing  |   |

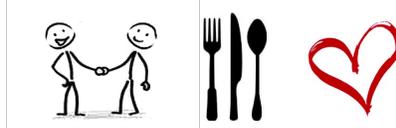
We are now  
livestreaming our  
worship services on  
Facebook Live.

Please join [www.facebook.com/flcblair](http://www.facebook.com/flcblair) to be alerted  
whenever a live video  
Begins. This is a  
real-time, virtual  
worship experience, and we invite you to join us if you can't be  
with us in person.  
Each live video will begin as the regularly  
scheduled worship time.

## NOTES ♦ DATES ♦ REMINDERS

### MWM

#### MID WEEK MEAL



We are now serving ~ 240 individuals EACH WEEK.

Please consider giving to this ministry in any of the following ways:

- Monetary donation to purchase supplies, ~ \$700/week
  - 3 dozen homemade cookies/bars, 21 dozen/week
  - Prepare/cook the meal, weekly on Wed @ 1-3:30pm
    - Deliver meal to 6-8 addresses
- ( ~ 42 residences & 6 apt complexes, up to 10 weekly routes)

Please contact Erika @ 402-533-0918 to serve your neighbor

## Advent Path of Light

Please join us as we begin the season of Advent  
experiencing HOPE, PEACE, JOY, LOVE, and CHRIST

Wednesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Anytime 6:45 - 7:45pm

Interactive activity stations for all ages  
Cookies & Hot Cocoa

First Lutheran Church, ELCA  
2146 Wright St Blair, NE

NOTES ♦ DATES ♦ REMINDERS



Candles  
 Scripture  
 Bulletins & Candles  
 Communion  
 Offering

**CHRISTMAS EVE  
 WORSHIP ASSISTANTS**

HELP US PROVIDE A BEAUTIFUL WORSHIP  
 EXPERIENCE @ THESE SERVICES:  
 4PM  
 6PM  
 10PM  
 CONTACT ERIKA TO BE AN ASSISTANT!!

**Craft Fair Thank You!**

The church women would like to thank all who supported the craft fair this year. Over 75 people volunteered to set up tables, bake, serve, and take down tables. It is our only fundraiser and we couldn't have done it without you. 49 vendors decorated 64 tables with a variety of goods: including Christmas decor, jewelry, jams, candles, cookies, wood crafts, 3-D printing, yarn and fabric crafts, flower art, and Pottery. Thanks, again, to all who participated this year.

Rhonda McMurtry and  
 Amy Mommsen

*Please note...* we will be preparing contribution envelopes for 2026 in December. If you do not currently have an envelope box and would like one, or if you would prefer not to use envelopes, please contact the church office no later than December 8th. Thank you.

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH  
 SENIOR CITIZEN  
 WORSHIP AND LUNCH  
 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2025  
 11 AM WORSHIP  
 with Holy Communion  
 LUNCH to Follow**

*Please RSVP by  
 December 12th by  
 calling  
 402-426-4073*



**Women's Bible Study**

Waking Christmas morning and knowing that the magic day has come. Running downstairs to discover what's under the tree. Opening a package and finding something special that was selected just for you. Christmas is a day of delights that we can always approach with fresh wonder. But the reality is that it is not always a happy season. Christmas can remind us of past losses, the family we wish we had or our economic stress.

The Friday morning Women's Bible study will begin an Advent study in preparation for Christmas. Come join us in the church library on Friday mornings from 9:15 to 10:45 A.M. as we study together "Advent of the Savior". Need more information? Email Susie Pinguoch at [spinguoch@gmail.com](mailto:spinguoch@gmail.com).



NOTES ♦ DATES ♦ REMINDERS

# Poinsettia Order Form

Poinsettias will be used to decorate our worship areas for the Christmas season. If you would like to honor a special person in your life, give a poinsettia in memory of a loved one, or just help out in this way to beautify the church, please complete the information requested below, and drop this slip in the offering plate or leave it in the church office. Your free-will monetary offering may be included with this form to help cover the costs of the poinsettias. As we are tax-exempt, we will not be publishing a set "cost" for the poinsettias and therefore view them as a gift to First Lutheran to help decorate our worship space and at the same time honor or memorialize our loved ones.

Check below if you wish to order a poinsettia. Checks should be made payable to First Lutheran Church.

**Orders must be received by December 17th.**

I would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettia(s)

All Poinsettias given to decorate our church will be delivered to a shut-in. If you know of someone who would benefit from receiving one of the poinsettias, please include their name(s) here:

\_\_\_\_\_

I am ordering \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettias in honor of:

\_\_\_\_\_

I am ordering \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettias in memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_

I will help deliver poinsettias

Your Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_



## ATTENTION FLC MEMBERS!!

FLC is now using a new database called Realm. This database is used to organize our membership records. This system also tracks all our financial giving, enables us to do scheduling, and Realm collects all kinds of information to help us be a better church.

The really unique thing about Realm is that YOU, the congregation, can update, edit, and control all of your own data in the system. You can change your address, add an email preference, tell us where you'd like to be more involved at FLC, see your giving information, and so much more.

**If you would like to do this from home please email Vince at [vkrysl@firstlutheranblair.org](mailto:vkrysl@firstlutheranblair.org) to request a login.**

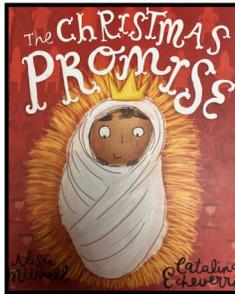
**We hope to have all our FLC members update their profiles and begin interacting on Realm by the end of 2025.**



## NOTES ♦ DATES ♦ REMINDERS

### FLC Kids' Christmas Program The Christmas Promise

December 14th @ 10:15am



Please join us to hear the story of Jesus' birth from our PreK—5th graders, and experience our closing Hallelujah Shadow Nativity

**Reminder: Pastor Glen will be preaching at Good Shepherd Home on Sunday, December 7th at 1:00pm. Please let your friends and family that are at Good Shepherd Home know. If you have any questions please call the church office at (402) 426-4073.**



### ***Rushed on Wednesdays? Let us do the cooking!***

**W.O.W. Meal has started back up. It is every Wednesday evening from 5:30pm-6:15pm.**

Join us for the W.O.W. Meal in the Fellowship Hall from 5:30 pm – 6:15 pm prior to Worship Lab.

**\*\* Free-will offering \*\***

*Come at 5:30 to fuel your body and then stay for Worship Lab at 6:15 to feed your soul.*

### **Flowers for Worship Services**

Would you like to provide flowers for worship services at First Lutheran in celebration of an important event in your life or to honor someone important? We would be grateful for your gift! Please follow these directions:

1. Sign up for an available weekend on the flower chart on the bulletin board outside the Sacristy door. Only one family per weekend please.
2. Mark your calendar or leave yourself a reminder! You will NOT receive a reminder notice from the church prior to the weekend you have chosen.
3. You are responsible to order and pay for a floral arrangement and provide for it to be delivered or brought to the church on the Friday afternoon prior to the weekend you would like it used. The church staff is NOT available to order or pick up flowers for you.
4. You may wish to consider the season of the church and choose suitable colors. Please bring LIVE flower arrangements only.
5. Information about the flowers and to whom they are dedicated must be provided to the church office (office@firstlutheranblair.org) by Thursday afternoon. It will be included in the weekly email blast.

# FLC KIDS NEWS



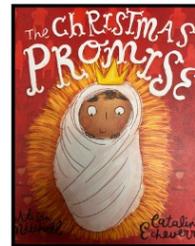
**DECEMBER 2025**

## A note from Erika:

Merry Christmas to all!!  
 We have reached another Advent and Christmas season, and I urge you to try to fit in all the FLC activities during this meaningful season.  
 Join us at the Advent Path of Light - a chance to remember what Advent is all about and share some cocoa, cookies and hugs  
 Join us at the Christmas Program - a beautiful opportunity to hear the story of Christ's birth  
 Join us at our Christmas Eve services at 4pm, 6pm, & 10pm - fantastic music, a beautiful message, and time with your family at FLC.

## Next BIG Event:

FLC Kids' Christmas Program  
 December 14th @ 10:15am



Please join us to hear the story of Jesus' birth from our PreK - 5th graders, and experience our Hallelujah Shadow Nativity

## Looking ahead:

<b>DEC 3<sup>RD</sup></b> <b>6:45PM</b>	<u>Advent Path of Light for ALL!</u> Following Worship 6:45-8pm Experience hope, peace, joy, love & Christ
<b>DEC 10<sup>TH</sup></b> <b>6:45PM</b>	<u>Christmas Program Dress Rehearsal</u> Please make every effort to be there!
<b>DEC 14<sup>TH</sup></b> <b>10:15AM</b>	<u>Christmas Program</u> Please bring kids to Sanctuary @ 9:30am
<b>DEC 17<sup>TH</sup></b>	<u>Family Christmas Cards &amp; Carols</u> Worship at 6:15pm, Activities at 6:45pm
<b>DEC 24<sup>TH</sup> / 31<sup>ST</sup></b>	NO CLASSES or WORSHIP LAB

## Dec Kids Offering:



The WA County Food Pantry provides food for those who are hungry and food insecure in WA County. The food is provided through donations, purchases, and the USDA. There is a more serious need for food assistance in WA County now. Please consider donating!!

**DECEMBER BIBLE VERSE:**  
 ...AND THEY WILL CALL HIM IMMANUEL.  
 (WHICH MEANS "GOD WITH US")  
 MATTHEW 1:23



# FLC YOUTH NEWS

## DECEMBER 2025

### Announcements

#### **Advent Path of Light!!**

**Wed, Dec 3rd @ 645-8pm**

Walk thru 5 stations of light to celebrate hope, peace, joy, love and Christ as we prepare for Jesus' birth on Christmas

#### **8th Annual Caroling!!**

**Sun, Dec 21<sup>st</sup> @ 4pm**

Join us to sing Christmas carols for people who need some holiday joy this season.

**Meet at Carter Place at 4pm**

We'll enjoy Vince's smorgasbord afterward in the Fellowship Hall.

#### **Christmas Eve at FLC!!**

##### **4pm Service**

Children's Message, brass quintet, bell choir, & praise band

##### **6pm Service**

Brass quintet, organ, & Christmas carols

##### **10pm Service**

Brass quintet, organ, Chancel Choir & Christmas carols

### Fundraiser

#### **FLC Youth Cookie Bazaar**

Sat, Dec 13th @ 4-7pm

Sun, Dec 14th @ 9-12pm



Please consider coming to help out AND shop!!

### 9 to 12 YG Plans

- Dec 13-14: Cookie Bazaar
- Dec 21: Christmas Caroling @ 4pm
- Dec 24: Services at 4, 6, & 10pm

Let me know if you'd like to go to a movie or play sardines or hang out over break!!

### Micah 6:8



Do justice  
love kindness  
walk humbly  
with your God.



**To Serve As Jesus Served...** *projects and events of the church, the community, and the world reported monthly by the FLC Social Concerns Committee.*

**FLC AMBASSADOR  
SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE  
December 2025**



**Oaks Indian Mission**

John Mark Nielsen, FLC's representative on the Board of Directors of the Oaks Indian Mission, returned from the October 25<sup>th</sup> Board meeting at Oaks, Oklahoma. The board passed the 2026-2028 Strategic Plan and began discussing a possible name change. This name change would likely involve dropping the word "Indian." The reason is that many contributors outside of Oklahoma mistakenly believe that using the word "Indian" means that the Mission receives money from the many casinos operated by different tribes throughout the country. This is not true. The Oaks Indian Mission receives no money from tribal nations, although the Mission's administrative staff is working to gain support from the Cherokee Nation when providing humanitarian care to its tribal members. This also underscores the staff's gratitude to our congregation for its generous support.

In addition to providing a safe, supportive environment for school aged boys, the Mission is also providing humanitarian care to native families and refugees approved by Homeland Security to enter the United States. Currently, one family from Honduras is at the Mission. Three native families are also living at the Mission.

One family in particular clearly exemplifies the need for this care. The family is made up of a young husband (a former Oaks' student), his wife and their one-year-old child. But their real need arises from the fact that the husband wanted to also provide a safe space for his four younger siblings, ages 9 to 15. Their parents were convicted of selling drugs and are serving terms in the Oklahoma State Penitentiary; their son, the young husband and father, needed a safe and supportive environment for his brothers and sisters, which the Mission is providing.

Another positive development is that the Oaks Mission School has begun a Future Farmers of America chapter, and the mission is providing the place for the chapter to raise animals. This has led to more positive interaction and friendships between the boys who are residents at the Mission and their peers in the public school, which they attend.

**Christmas Gift Alternative Giving Ideas to Consider.....**

For Christians, the Christmas season is about the wonder of the birth of Jesus. It is about the most perfect gift from God and the message of salvation in Christ. Of course, we focus on Jesus all year long but we can use this time of year as yet another special opportunity to do so.

Many can get hung up and stressed out trying to find "the perfect gift" missing out on the true meaning of Christmas -- JESUS! With that said -- what are some messages from Jesus & the bible about giving gifts.

- **Give generously and cheerfully:** Jesus and other biblical figures teach that giving should be a joy, not a burden. God "loves a cheerful giver".
- **Prioritize the needy:** Jesus' teachings emphasize giving to the poor and needy.
- **Give in secret:** To avoid seeking praise, Jesus taught to give in secret, promising that the Father who sees what is done in secret will reward the giver.

**(Social Concerns Committee Article Continued on Page 11)**

**To Serve As Jesus Served...** *projects and events of the church, the community, and the world reported monthly by the FLC Social Concerns Committee.*

**FLC AMBASSADOR  
SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE  
December 2025**

(Social Concerns Committee Article Continued from Page 10)

- **Be selfless:** Acts of giving should be motivated by love for God and others, not by a desire for public recognition or earthly reward.
- **Give what you have:** Jesus instructed his disciples, "What you have received as a gift, give as a gift!". This means giving of your time, talents, and resources as a response to the gifts you have received from God.
- **Give sacrificially:** Jesus' example of the poor widow who gave everything she had, even though it was a small amount, illustrates that the value of a gift is in the sacrifice and love behind it, not its size.

So, what does this mean ..... we don't have to stop giving that special toy to your grandson but we can look at other ways to honor the birth of Christ in the hustle and bustle of the season. Consider a donation to a favorite charity on behalf of a loved one, adopt a family in need for the holidays, spend time with someone who is lonely, provide a nice meal for an elderly homebound neighbor.

**Here at FLC, we have historically created a large display focusing on Alternative Gift Giving.** This year we are "keeping it simple". We encourage you to think about the opportunities that are close to your heart. **We do have a couple of options here at church in December that you may wish to consider:**

1. A **Winterwear Ingathering** (coats, hats, mittens, gloves, warm socks – new or gently used) will be collected and distributed where needed in the community.
2. We are joining in the Jeanette Hunt Blair Animal Shelter's **Christmas for Pets** effort by offering the opportunity to contribute dog & cat supplies to support our furry friends.
3. Your support of the **Washington County Food Pantry** is ALWAYS welcome!

You will find information in the narthex to consider each of these alternative gifts! Maybe your grandson would be happy to know that you gave a bag of dog food to a special puppy at the shelter in his honor – something even better than another toy to add to his collection.

Remember this Christmas season -- your gifts of time, talents & treasures in support of others can become the "perfect gifts" in Jesus's eyes!

**Equal Exchange/Fairly Traded**

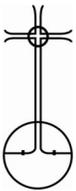
Finally, the Social Concerns Committee has determined to no longer provide Equal Exchange products (coffee, tea, nuts and chocolates) for sale at the church as they are readily available online. **The committee is grateful for FLC's support for this effort over the years.** Should you be interested, here are websites where you can purchase the product we've been offering: <https://shop.equalexchange.coop> or <https://thrivemarket.com> One can also order from Amazon by going to the Amazon site and typing in Equal Exchange products.





**Mark Your Calendars!**  
**Christmas and New Years Schedule**

Sunday, December 14th	<b>10:15am</b>
<b>Children's Christmas Program in LIFE Center</b>	
Wednesday, December 17th	<b>6:15pm</b>
<b>Advent Worship</b>	
<b>Confirmation Classes &amp; Family Activity</b>	
Thursday, December 18th	<b>11:00am</b>
<b>Senior Citizen Worship &amp; Lunch</b>	
Saturday, December 20th	<b>5pm</b>
Sunday, December 21st	<b>8:15am &amp; 10:15am</b>
Wednesday, December 24th	<b><u>4pm Service</u></b>
<b>Christmas Eve Worship</b>	
	<b>Children's Message, Brass quintet, Bell Choir, &amp; praise band</b>
	<b><u>6pm Service</u></b>
	<b>Children's Message, Brass quintet &amp; Christmas Carols</b>
	<b><u>10pm Service</u></b>
	<b>Children's Message, Organ, Chancel Choir, &amp; Christmas Carols</b>
<b>There will be No Christmas Day Worship Service this year.</b>	
Saturday, December 27th	<b>5pm</b>
Sunday, December 28th	<b>8:15am &amp; 10:15am</b>



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH  
 2146 WRIGHT STREET  
 BLAIR, NE 68008  
 December 2025