



From Pastor Bill

A new year brings new goals for us as individuals and corporate bodies. While I agree with Nadia Bolz-Weber that we would probably do well to aim low with our goals for the new year (perhaps then we will rejoice in the small gains and joys), I do think it is important to create goals. We seldom change without some intention. With this letter, I want to discuss our congregation's goals for 2024.

Our first goal reads: "In 2024 we will begin a process of long-term planning, particularly in relationship to our building and our staffing." We have a large property and two large facilities (the church and the parsonage). They are both aging and will require some attention in the years to come. Our council wants to see if we can anticipate some of that attention and plan for it, so that expenses for the changes don't all come at once.

Frankly, some of our staffing is also aging!! It is probably time for us to think about what that means for us. I am not going to retire soon, but retirement is on my horizon. The congregational council and I think it is worth our while to reflect on what that means for our common life and for our staffing in particular.

Our second goal is this: "Aware of the grief, violence, and deep pain of the world, we will in 2024 and beyond, endeavor to be a community of lament, love, and reconciliation, focusing on calling our members into deeper connections with one another and the ministry of the church."

These are tough days to be alive and to do church. Our world is full of violence. A presidential election this year is going to reveal again great divisions within our own culture. We as church can't run from reality. We need to tell the truth and welcome the lament that most of us know, and the Bible gives witness to. Life is hard, we need to say honestly. One of the great gifts that a church like ours can provide to the culture is our ability to lament. Too much of Christianity is created in the image of people like Joel Osteen, for whom life and faith are always happy and clear. While we welcome lament, we also want to model a community that can live lovingly in the midst of disagreement.

Our final goal for this year is this: "In 2024 we will continue to emphasize physical health and physical movement as integral to the journey of discipleship." Too many people understand the Christian faith as a spiritual matter that has little to do with physicality. That is not in keeping with what Christians call "incarnation," the reality that God meets us in ordinary physical life.

You and I live in a very unhealthy culture. We want to do our part to make it healthier. So, don't be

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From Pastoral Assistant Paula

One year ago, almost to the date, I was preparing for my second pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I was eager to revisit the land and learn from the people I met on my initial visit. In fact, halfway through the first visit I sensed an overwhelming pull into the stories and places I only dreamt about during my childhood. The stories which took place in Nazareth, Jerusalem, Galilee, the Judean desert and of course, Bethlehem. The stories that would impact me in different ways each time I read them, taught them to children, discussed them in small groups and ultimately, preached on them. Stories of healing and new life; stories of joy and abundance; stories of suffering and death. Stories of love...and lament.



Last year I was in Bethlehem for Ash Wednesday. I felt the love of the Palestinian people I worshiped with and I felt their lament. This year, Ash Wednesday falls on Valentine's Day. A Hallmark holiday and Christ on a cross. But love and lament *is* what Lent is all about. Love and lament are two actions of the heart that go together. Oh, I know, the loving words exchanged with a spouse, significant other or family member and the roses and candy hearts are nice ways to say, "I love you." But this year, I'm wondering, at least for myself, if taking a deeper look at the connection between love and lament in relationship to the "big story" of God's love might be worth my while.

You see, lament as a noun reflects a form of grief; expressed as a verb, lament becomes an action of expressing sorrow, mourning or regret. *Kyrie Eleison, Lord have mercy*, is what we often sing as we gather to worship. Lament is how we process grief in God's presence. Lament for some people can be jarring, especially if they view faith as a happy life on the way to heaven. But in actuality, the word mercy in English is the translation of the Greek word *eleos*. This word has the same ultimate root as the old Greek word for oil, or more precisely, olive oil; a substance that was used extensively as a soothing agent for bruises and minor wounds. The oil was poured into the wound and gently massaged in, thus soothing, comforting, and making whole the injured part.

My heart aches for the Palestinian Christians living in the Holy Land and for the people in Gaza who are merely trying to survive. My heart aches for the Israeli families who live with the terror of October 7th and for all families whose loved ones are still in captivity. My heart aches for all nations at war, people who have lost loved ones due to gun violence and to the multitude of families at the borders who seek a better way of life. And so I cry out, "*Kyrie Eleison, Lord have mercy*, that is to say 'Lord, soothe (them) me, comfort (them) me, take away (their) my pain, show (them) me your steadfast love.'"

My pilgrimage to the Holy Land in March has been rescheduled. I will not



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From Shar Music Director

Children's Music

Greetings! I am taking this opportunity to remind you all that **MUSIC** class is offered almost every Wednesday evening from 6:00 – 7:00 pm. At this time of year we begin our work on our presentation for Mother's Day, on May 12 this year. Class is generally geared towards students between the ages of 4 and 12, but ALL are welcome to attend. If you are of Middle or High School age and you are interested in honing a musical skill like playing an instrument (guitar, ukulele, etc.) or singing, there is a place for you!

Our focus this year will be on reinforcement of things we have learned during Faith Formation – Bible stories of the New Testament. Our meeting dates will include every Wednesday until May 12, the day of our presentation, EXCEPT March 27 (Holy Week) and April 3 (Spring Break.)

Music is a great resource to use for reinforcement of important material. I hope your children can join me in creating a presentation that will be enjoyable for all. If I am able to create a sing-along recording for practice, I will keep you posted via email.

Musically yours,
Shar Bourdon, Director of Music

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surprised this year that we are encouraging you toward better health practices. Paying attention to nutrition and upping our physical movement are simple ways for us to get healthier.

Please join me this year in helping us to fulfill our goals. Living into them will help us in our witness to the world and in making our internal life more robust, vibrant, and healthy.

Official Acts



Deaths

Shirley DeVries
Born: 08/25/1937
Died: 12/26/2023

| <i>Sunday</i> | <i>Weekly Scripture Readings</i> |
|---------------|---|
| 2/4 | Isa 40:21-31, Ps 147:1-11, 20c 1 Cor 9:16-23, Mark 1:29-39 |
| 2/11 | 2 Kings 2:1-12, Ps 50:1-6 2 Cor 4:3-6, Mark 9:2-9 |
| 2/18 | Gen 9:8-17, Ps 25:1-10 1 Peter 3:18-22, Mark 1:9-15 |
| 2/25 | Gen 17:1-7, 15-16, Ps 22:23-31 Rom 4:13-25, Mark 8:31-38 |

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be walking in the footsteps of Jesus this year nor will I experience the heartfelt stories from the people who inhabit that land. Stories of love and lament. Stories of suffering and death. So this year for Lent, I will live into the story about God's infinite loving-kindness and his compassion for his suffering children. I hope you will join me as we journey through Lent crying out, "Kyrie Eleison." Love and Lament...together.

Salam Alikum
(Peace be upon you.)
Paula



Confirmation

Final year confirmation students are now meeting with their sponsors as they get ready to be confirmed on May 5, 2024. Please keep them in your prayers as they build relationships and learn more about their faith. I am so grateful for the multi-generational engagement of First Lutheran. Truly, you are living into your baptism when you help a child grow in the grace and knowledge of their faith. Amen.

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH EVENTS



New Orleans Parents and Youth Meeting
February 11
7:00 p.m.



Youth Event
February 18
More details to come



Youth Hosted Wednesday Night Dinner
February 21

PRE- K TO MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH EVENTS



Valentine's Party

Join us for a Valentine's Party for **Pre-K-1st grade kids** from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. on February 11. We will have lunch and Valentine's themed games. RSVP to Emma Johnston via text (712-395-0502) or email (emma@firstlutheranmuskegon.org).

Snowshoeing

Kids in 2nd - 5th grades are invited to Muskegon Luge Adventure Sports Park for snowshoeing on February 10 from 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. Church will cover the cost of day pass. Equipment rental is \$8 per person. RSVP to Emma Johnston via text (712-395-0502) or email (emma@firstlutheranmuskegon.org).



Cosmic Bowling

Middle School students will be going to Northway Lanes for Cosmic Bowling on Saturday, February 17 from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. RSVP to Emma Johnston via text (712-395-0502) or email (emma@firstlutheranmuskegon.org).

PARENTS NIGHT OUT FUNDRAISER

**TO BENEFIT YOUTH GROUP TRIP TO
NATIONAL GATHERING IN NEW ORLEANS**

Saturday, February 10th, 2024

6pm-9pm

First Lutheran Church 1206 Whitehall Rd.

Muskegon, MI

Register now at bit.ly/firstlc

**Registration form must be completed
by February 7th**

**\$20 PER CHILD INCLUDES
PIZZA | GAMES | CRAFTS | MOVIE**

AGES 4-12



**QUESTIONS
TEXT/CALL
616.638.2406**

Ski Club Information for 2024 Season

Please contact Amy Badley to register

Email: abadley40@gmail.com

Call: 231.730.4149

Location: Caberfae Peaks in Cadillac



Ski Club Event Dates:

- ★ Friday, February 2nd - 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. (close)
- ★ Friday, February 16th - 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. (close)
- ★ Friday, March 1st - 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. (close)

We will be meeting in the SKYVIEW LODGE (at the top of the bunny hill!). Crock-pots, other food, and drinks are allowed here.

IMPORTANT!!!!

- ✓ Amy MUST know who will be skiing and if rental equipment is needed **NO LATER THAN NOON on the TUESDAY prior to the scheduled Friday ski date. Monday would be preferred!**
- ✓ **NEW IN 2024! - ELECTRONIC LIABILITY FORMS MUST BE COMPLETED FOR ALL THOSE SKIING!** Please contact Amy Badley to receive the link. (This must be submitted prior to skiing.)
- ✓ ALL rental equipment **MUST BE PRE-SET** prior to your arrival. NO EXCEPTIONS!
- ✓ If you plan to join us after the Tuesday (at noon) cutoff, you will pay FULL PRICE.

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Ski Club Information for 2024 Season (cont.)

Please contact Amy Badley to register

Email: abadley40@gmail.com

Call: 231.730.4149

Location: Caberfae Peaks in Cadillac

INFORMATION NEEDED IN ORDER TO JOIN SKI CLUB

(Info needed NO LATER THAN ... the Tuesday (at noon!) prior to the Friday ski date)

- Name of person skiing **CLUB PRICING ... SEE BELOW!**
- Rental equipment needed: Yes OR No

If RENTAL equipment is required, the following is needed ...

- Gender
- Shoe size
- Age
- Weight
- Height (feet & inches)
- Rental equipment needs ...
 - Skis or
 - Snowboard - please indicate foot placement - Left or Right
 - Helmet - yes or no

Amy MUST have this information by Tuesday at Noon!

Amy will pay Caberfae one total amount.

All those who are skiing and paying for rental equipment will **check in with Amy** once they arrive at the resort. **Meet Amy in the SkyView Lodge to receive your ticket & rental slip.**

EXACT PAYMENT IS NEEDED - Cash or checks only (made out to First Lutheran Church).

CLUB PRICING

LIFT TICKET - \$10 *Lift ticket plus rentals - \$20 / skier

SKIS - \$10 *Lift ticket ONLY - \$10

SNOWBOARD - \$10

HELMET - if needed, complimentary of First Lutheran

Lenten Worship Schedule

Love and Lament is the theme for this Lenten season and services will be held at 7:00 p.m. each Wednesday.

Our Lenten worship schedule will begin with the Ash Wednesday service on February 14 at 7:00 p.m. This service will include Holy Communion and the imposition of ashes

Please note: *There will be **no** Thursday worship service the week of Ash Wednesday.*

St. Patrick's Day Wednesday Night Dinner

Wednesday, March 13 5:15 p.m.

Menu

Corn Beef and Cabbage
Beef Stew
Salad Bar
Rolls
Desserts

Entertainment

Mona Shores Fiddlers
Stephs Steps - Lumbertown Cloggers

Wear your Irish duds and come for fun, food, fellowship and Irish music

Sponsored by the Fellowship Board
For more info, call Deb Roest at 231-744-1936



Thanks to Dave and Theresa Buchan who assembled the January Chimes.



Thank you from the Will Family for all the prayers, words of comfort and hugs this past year.

A special thanks to Pastor Bill and Paula for the comfort in Lottie's last days.

In God's love,
Josh, Haile, Andrew and Mary Will



**American
Red Cross**

The next blood drive is scheduled for Monday, February 19, from 11:30 A.M to 5:15 P.M. You can make an appointment online at: www.redcrossblood.org or by calling Kim Westerholm, First's blood drive coordinator at 712 539-8536.

Calling First Lutheran Members!

In celebration of First Lutheran's 160th celebration, we need interviews from our members to play in our church services from January to August 2024. We need you to record your interview on your phone and send it to Lisa Ziemelis at lisa@firstlutheranmuskegon.org as soon as possible. We are asking you to answer 2 questions.

What brought you to First Lutheran?
What do you enjoy about First Lutheran?

The interview should be 1-2 minutes.

We need all ages of members to be involved with this event. If you do not know how to record on your phone, Carl Luther or another person will be at the church to do this in the Fellowship Hall on the first Sunday of the month, starting in January. If you can not do this after church, please call Carl Luther at 231-750-6737 to set up a specific time you could meet.

Please join us in honoring our memories here at First Lutheran with your videos. If you have any questions, please call Deb Roest at 231-744-1936. Thank you.



Pressure Point Touch Therapy Training Workshop

February 10

10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (approx.)

Calling any couples or Yoga teachers! Now is the Gift of Giving healing touch with Pressure Point Touch Therapy Workshop Training! What is PPTT you ask? It is "touch massage" therapy done in gentle yoga poses considered restorative such as Child's, and supine lying positions. This is designed to traction the primary line, spine or given limb to help the Receiver both physically and mentally center with intention.

Join Sandy Hutchins in this training which includes hands-on practice to each partner with demonstration and take-home materials for further reference and practice. You'll also go home feeling better, with more teacher tools for your toolbox and the gift of giving whenever your loved ones need it. You will also receive a Certificate of Completion.

This is **NOT** Massage Therapist Training!

Secure your spot with a non-refundable \$100 deposit for materials by mailing a check made out to Sandy Hutchins to 2308 Beattie Rd, Twin Lake, MI 49457 or VENMO @Sandy-Hutchins-1 (pic of Sandy standing next to Sandra Bullock). Balance is due by February 7, 2024

What's provided: notebook of materials and educational references, blankets and mats for your use, tea and healthy snacks. Please feel free to bring your own snack, beverage, small pillow or mat. Your Investment per couple: Jan. 1-31 \$300, Feb. 1-7 price increases to \$350. Just think- you often pay anywhere from \$80-\$100 for a massage alone! Imagine the money you will save by using your own talents! Yoga Teachers, think of what a treat you can offer your students/clients!

Contact Sandy today at 231-903-5227 by text or email at sandy.lynn.hutchins@gmail.com with any questions.

Weekly Offerings

Week ending 12/3/24

General Fund: \$8,527.87
Building Enhancement Fund: \$205.00
Dollar-A-Day (for new sign): \$473.30
Building Rent: \$286.00

Week ending 12/10/24

General Fund: \$6,892.23
Building Enhancement: \$285.00
Building Rent: \$1,196.43
Dollar-A-Day (for new sign): \$90.85
Noisy Offering (Helping Hand Fund): \$322.29

Week ending 12/17/24

General Fund: \$11,067.27
Building Enhancement: \$240.00
Building Rent: \$229.00
Noisy Offering (Helping Hand Fund): \$148.31

Week ending 12/24/24

General Fund: \$21,004.56
Building Enhancement: \$285.00
Building Rent: \$188.00
Noisy Offering (Helping Hand Fund): \$266.43

Week ending 12/31/24

General Fund: \$5,605.55
Building Enhancement: \$155.00
Building Rent: \$1,497.00
Noisy Offering (Helping Hand Fund): \$154.46



February Birthdays!

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1 Karley Plekes Caroline Pendell | 12 Owen Rop Laura Lucht Nate Johnston | 25 Billie Bramer Emily Cihos Pam Nelson |
| 2 Robin Policka Sandra Rodriguez Jean Boxer Lisa Ferski Ava Smith Linda Lamoreaux Ruthanne Tietzsort | 13 Linda Long | 28 Heather Murphey Lance Schlager |
| 3 Trisha Lowry | 14 Larry Rop Ellen Cutting-Schoepf | |
| 4 Stacie Mead Michael Zizak Jenny Lindell | 16 Anna Alderman Toni Mackay | |
| 5 Collin Smith | 18 Kara Camp Rhonda Smith | |
| 7 Adam Badley Barbara Elliott | 19 Autumn David | |
| 8 Mark Thogerson | 20 Bonnie Nolan | |
| 11 Eva Backus | 21 Joanne Johnson | |
| | 22 Kaela Carrier Madison Ball JT Wei Theresa Buchan | |



Keepers

Gerald and Betty Crenno
1740 Village Dr Apt 318
Village at the Oaks
Muskegon, MI 49442-4288

Nancy Hazekamp
1350 W Hackley Apt. 215
Muskegon, MI 49441

David Kleis
Overon House—Room 48
9160 W 64th Ave
Arvada, CO 80004

Pat Mullinnex
Mailing Address:
2284 Riverwood Drive
Twin Lake, MI 49457
Home Address:
Sanctuary at McAuley
1380 Sherman Blvd
Muskegon, MI 49444

Warren Robinson
1845 Moulton Ave
Muskegon, MI 49444-3127

Keith Stapel
1228 Lawrence St
Muskegon, MI 49442

Dave Walborn
18552 W Spring Lake Rd
Spring Lake, MI 49456

Mary Warden
1740 Village Dr. Apt 222
Muskegon, MI 49442-4283

First Lutheran Church

February 2024

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|---|
| Dollar-A-Day Weekend 9:30AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person Worship 10:30AM-Online Worship 12:00PM-Bells 7:00PM-AA Meeting | 12:00PM-Quilters' Group 3:00PM-Sons of Norway Board Meeting 5:00PM-P.E.O. Meeting 5:45PM-Chair Yoga 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming Class 7:15PM-Gentle Soul Yoga | Bulletin Deadline 9:00AM-Pickleball 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 11:00AM-Adult Education Class 3:00PM-Burnished Brass Rehearsal 6:30PM-Choir 7:30PM-Band 9:00PM-Compline | 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting 5:30PM-Wed Night Dinner 6:00PM-Kid's Music 6:05PM-Bible Study 7:00PM-Confirmation | 12:00PM-Lectonary Bible Study 6:00PM-In-Person Worship 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming Class | 5:00PM-Ski Club 7:00PM-AA Meeting | 8:30AM-Stephen Ministry 11:30AM-Memorial Service - Lottie Will |
| 4 9:30AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person Worship 10:30AM-Online Worship 12:00PM-Bells 12:00PM-Pre-K - 1st Grade Valentine Party 7:00PM-AA Meeting | 12:00PM-Quilters' Group 5:45PM-Chair Yoga 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming Class 7:15PM-Gentle Soul Yoga | Bulletin Deadline 9:00AM-Pickleball 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 9:30AM-1st on 2nd Quilt Bee 11:00AM-Adult Education Class 3:00PM-Burnished Brass Rehearsal 4:00PM-Muskegon Rotary Club Chili Cook-Off 6:30PM-Choir 7:30PM-Band 9:00PM-Compline | ** Ash Wednesday ** ** Valentine's Day ** 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting 5:30PM-Wed Night Dinner 6:00PM-Kid's Music 6:05PM-Bible Study 7:00PM-Ash Wednesday Worship Service 7:00PM-Confirmation | Chimes Deadline 9:00AM-Lions Club Officer's Meeting 12:00PM-Lectonary Bible Study 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming Class | 5:00PM-Ski Club 6:00PM-Crafty Group 6:00PM-Baton Class 7:00PM-AA Meeting | 17 2:00PM-Middle School Youth Cosmic Bowling |
| 18 9:30AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person Worship 10:30AM-Online Worship 12:00PM-Bells 7:00PM-AA Meeting | 11:30PM-Red Cross Blood Drive 12:00PM-Quilters' Group 5:45PM-Chair Yoga 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming Class 7:15PM-Gentle Soul Yoga | Bulletin Deadline 9:00AM-Pickleball 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 11:30AM-Muskegon County Garden Club 3:00PM-Burnished Brass Rehearsal 6:00PM-Lions Club 6:30PM-Choir 7:30PM-Band 9:00PM-Compline | 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting 5:30PM-Wed Night Dinner 6:00PM-Kid's Music 6:05PM-Bible Study 7:00PM-Lenten Service 7:00PM-Confirmation | 12:00PM-Lectonary Bible Study 6:00PM-Rental 6:00PM-Restorative Yoga 6:00PM-Worship 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming Class | 6:00PM-Baton Class 7:00PM-AA Meeting | 24 |
| 25 9:30AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person Worship 10:30AM-Online Worship 7:00PM-AA Meeting | 12:00PM-Quilter's Group 5:45PM-Chair Yoga 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming Class 7:15PM-Gentle Soul Yoga | Bulletin Deadline 9:00AM-Pickleball 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 3:00PM-Burnished Brass Rehearsal 6:00PM-Choir 7:30PM-Band 9:00PM-Compline | 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting 5:30PM-Wed Night Dinner 6:00PM-Kid's Music 6:05PM-Bible Study 7:00PM-Confirmation | 12:00PM-Lectonary Bible Study 6:00PM-Worship 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming Class | | |