

First Evangelical Lutheran Church  
305 West 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
North Platte, Nebraska 69101

# The Visitor

january  2021



**Office Hours**  
Monday - Friday  
9:00 - 4:30  
Closed 1:00-2:00  
Daily

*Contact Us...*

Phone: 308-532-0250  
Fax: 308-532-5291  
Email:  
firstlutheran.np@gmail.com  
www.firstevlutheran-np.com



**CONTACT NUMBERS:**

**Pastor:**  
Pastor Patrick Sipes  
402-200-0446  
sgtmuddy@gmail.com

**Church Council, President:**  
Jim Falcon 308-520-1354  
**Office Manager:**

**Financial Secretary:**  
Claudette Nelson

**Music & Preschool Director:**  
Gail Jensen: 308-534-4290

**Confirmation:**  
Pastor Sipes

Greetings Members of First Evangelical Lutheran Church,

The beginning of Advent is always an interesting time to begin a new ministry. There is little time to catch one's breath before being cast headlong into the deep end of the traditions of a place that you are unfamiliar with. As I paddled to keep my head above water this last month, I thank you all for your hospitality in showing me the ropes, your grace in pointing me in the "correct" direction, and your adventurous spirit in trying some new things given our current world circumstances. I believe it made it a truly blessed Christmas celebration for all.

As Advent, and now Christmas, have come to an end, I've had time to settle in a little, begin to take stock, and now my work is beginning in earnest. I have explained this before verbally but I'd like to put it into writing in case you missed it and so you can refer back to it over the coming months. As you may have heard, my official title is that of "Transitional Minister." In that role, my job is to be more than a warm body in your pulpit and someone to prop things up until the "real" pastor gets here. Sadly though, this is what "interim" ministry has sometimes been over the years. By contrast, this very "real" pastor's mission is to work with you while you are between settled pastors to help you see better where God is calling you, help you explore different ministries that you might find appealing, determine what ministries might have run their natural course, recognize and correct systems and behaviors that might make achieving your goals difficult, walk with you through changes that can be difficult and stressful, and then help you prepare to find a leader with gifts that can lead you to excelling in a ministry path you can call your own.

To accomplish these tasks, you might find my leadership style to be a little different than many pastors. I am doing my best work when I am asking a lot of questions, rather than giving directions. I am known for listening and quietly observing rather than speaking. When I do speak, I try to reflect back what I'm hearing and seeing so you can more clearly see how you are perceived as a congregation by outsiders. My role is not to set a specific direction for you but to present a lot of options, even options I'm not all that thrilled about. I do this not because I don't have opinions, but because the discernment of various options gives you a chance to so say "Yes, that is us!" or "No, that's not really who we are." Finally, my role is not to carve out a place for myself in your midst, but to help you take the first steps in ministries you are excited about and ministries you are looking forward to continuing with your next pastor.

In my experience, this is a process that turns out best when it is given the time that it needs to unfold. I also know it to be a process that takes longer than anyone, myself included, would like it to take. That being the case, my urging for you is to have patience and my promise to you is that I will strive to provide not just transitional leadership, but good pastoral care as well. I will make providing meaningful worship a priority and we will explore a little bit about what types of worship you enjoy. To the best of my ability, I will visit your shut-ins, visit and connect with your sick and dying, remember your needs in prayer, and have an open heart to your life's circumstances.

In getting to know you better, and how you see yourselves as a church, I'd love to hear your responses to the following questions. You can answer them by text, email, or give me a call, [sgtmuddy@gmail.com](mailto:sgtmuddy@gmail.com) or 402-200-0446. If you text, please let me know your name so I can add you to my contacts. I would like to know what you believe sets you apart from other churches in the area? To that end, please offer your thoughts on the following questions: How would you complete this sentence? First Evangelical Lutheran Church is the Church in North Platte that...

What needs do you see in your community and how is First uniquely suited to meet them?

In Christ,  
Pr. Patrick

## WELCA BOARD MEETING DECEMBER 2, 2020

President Georgia Nelms called the meeting to order with devotions.

Attendance: Adah-1, Elizabeth-0, Eve-3, Miriam-0, Other-0

Acting Secretary Sharon Riley read the November minutes. Tammy Sanford moved and Liz Evans seconded to approve the minutes. Carried.

In the absence of our Treasurer, Jill Falcon, Georgia gave the treasurer report. Sharon moved and Tammy seconded to approve the report. Carried.

**Correspondence:** Georgia received a newsletter from the Women's Conference requesting our new officers. Tammy reported she has sent the updates to the Conference Board and ELCA World Hunger.

Other letters were read from the Salvation Army and ELCA World Hunger.

**Old Business:** Discussed revising the WELCA Policy for funeral dinners from the January 2, 2019 minutes. It was decided to leave the policy as suggested.

The Harvest Dinner was cancelled due to Covid-19. Several purchased the turkeys they had to bake for the dinner and one turkey was donated to Debra's Legacy along with some other food items. The Styrofoam containers were donated to the Episcopal Church for their food drive. The money was returned to those who had purchased dinner tickets.

The Red Basket Project was also put on hold due to Covid-19. Liz moved and Tammy seconded to assemble the red baskets at the Spring Gathering to be held at our Church next spring. Carried.

**New Business:** Tammy installed the new officers which are:

Georgia Nelms Chairman – 2020-2022

Liz Evans Vice Chairman – 2020-2021

Heidi Criddle Secretary – 2020-2022

Jill Falcon Treasurer – 2019-2021

Liz is completing the term for Georgia who will be the chairman.

The WELCA budget was tabled for discussion until the next meeting.

Sharon asked if we would want to change the board meeting time to earlier in the day. Sharon moved and Liz seconded to move the meetings to 1:00 PM on the first Wednesday of the month in the Church Library. Carried.

The next meeting will be January 6, 2021 at 1:00 PM.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Acting Secretary,  
Sharon Riley

## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

**We will hold our annual congregational meeting January 24 at 9:30a.m. Please plan to attend.**

**We will vote on new council members. Neil Criddle, Alee Stout, Claudette Nelson, Todd Jensen and Bob Hinrichs are running for council.**

**FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

305 West 5th Street \* North Platte, Nebraska

Church telephone: (308) 532-0250

Web: [www.firstevlutheran-np.com](http://www.firstevlutheran-np.com) \* Email: [firstlutheran.np@gmail.com](mailto:firstlutheran.np@gmail.com)

# January 2021

*Church Office Hours (unless noted on the calendar):  
Monday - Friday 9 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.*

SUNDAY	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 PM Quilts-SS Room 5 PM WELCA Meeting		1 1 PM Grace Food Pantry	2
3 10:30 AM In Person & Online Worship	4 7 PM Miriam Circle	5	6 1 PM Quilts-SS Room	7 1 PM Quilts (Tie) 6:30PM CCC Meeting	8 1 PM Grace Food Pantry	9
10 9:30 AM Property Mtg 10:30 AM In Person & Online Worship	11	12 9 AM Adah Circle	13 1 PM Quilts-SS Room	14 5 PM Christian Ed Mtg 7:15 PM Council Meeting  <i>Newsletter DEADLINE</i>	15 1 PM Grace Food Pantry	16
17 10:30 AM In Person & Online Worship	18	19	20 1 PM Quilts-SS Room	21	22 1 PM Grace Food Pantry	23 6 PM Focus (Singles Group)
24 10:30 AM In Person & Online Worship 9:30 AM Eve Circle	25	26	27 1 PM Quilts-SS Room	28 New Year's Eve	29	30
31 10:30 AM In Person & Online Worship						

**PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE  
IN YOUR PRAYERS!**

**Howard Anderson (brother of Betty Knepke-Hamit)**  
**Colleen Knepke**  
**Warren Criddle**  
**Rae Gullion**  
**Mary Sue Grabenstein**  
**Norm Grabenstein**  
**Dan Evans**  
**Doris Parrish**  
**Bruce Jensen**  
**Pat Glass**  
**Heidi Criddle**  
**Todd Aden**  
**Jeremy Stoll**  
 family and friends of:  
**Sherry Pruitt (sister of Tammie Sanford)**  
**Pat Ellis**  
**Jim Ellett**  
**Vince Razo**  
**Wesley Gadway**  
**Vinnie and Vicki Trevino**

*Please let the office (308-532-0250) know if you have anyone you would like to include in our prayers. We will continue to pray for four weeks. If more time is needed, please inform Pastor Sipes.*

If you would like to provide flowers for a "special occasion", "in honor of", "in memory of" or "to the Glory of God", please pick up a form in the office. The cost is \$35.00 for one pair of bouquets.

**2021 Available Sundays**

January					
February					
March					
April					
May					
June					

2021 Alter Flower Calendars need updated. If you would like to donate flowers please call the church office.

**MINISTRIES COMING BACK  
BAPTISM PREPARATION**

One-session gatherings are an opportunity to help you learn about the Sacrament of Baptism and to schedule a baptism. Please call the church office or Pastor Sipes at 402-200-0446 to set up a meeting time.

**NEW MEMBERS' INQUIRY**

Interested in knowing more about the community of Christ gathered at First Lutheran Church? We invite you to call Pastor Sipes at 402-200-0446 to set up a time.

**CIRCLES (WELCA)**

Check with your leaders for more information

**THESE EVENTS ON HOLD**

**BINGO**

Second Tuesday @ 2 PM: Centennial Park

**BELL CHOIR**

Thursday 5:30

**COMMUNITY COMMUNION**

Third Tuesday at Buffalo Bill @ 2 PM

Third Tuesday at Centennial Park @ 3 PM

**DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY MEAL**

Thank you for signing up to help prepare or serve the Downtown Community Meal at the Episcopal Church. Sign up on bulletin board in Narthex. Upwards of 100 people or more are served each Wednesday evening. Contact Shari Shore at 539-1715 if you wish to make donations of protein such as meat, sausage, or eggs.

**FOCAS GROUP (Singles Group)**

FOCAS singles group will gather in the west educational unit. Contact Vickie O'Neal 402-690-3329 or Elyse Bohling 308-539-2397 for more information.

**GRACE MINISTRIES FOOD PANTRY**

Friday from 1-3 PM

**QUILTS**

Tie Quilts: Second Thursday at 1 PM

Quilting: Every Wednesday at 1 PM

**BAPTISMAL STORY BIBLES**

Norman & Mary Sue Grabenstein have started a fund for story Bibles to be given to newly baptized children. Contact the church if you are interested in providing or using a memorial for the Bibles.



Sharon Kleckner	January 3
Mark David	January 5
Amanda Connick	January 6
Trisha Stout	January 6
Duane Dunbar	January 9
Tami Thompson	January 9
Bruce Jensen	January 13
Jack Mohr	January 14
Tatum Montelongo	January 14
Shawn Rossell	January 14
Alan Sullivan	January 14
Jody Lamberty	January 15
Angela Mohr	January 15
Aedan Siefford	January 17
Emily McCreery	January 19
Joshua Powell	January 19
Stephen Sanford	January 19
Loreen Covington	January 20
Breccan Jenik	January 20
Heather Jensen	January 21
Gary Schuster	January 21
Carol Mohr	January 22

Desiree Reutzel	January 22
Greah Falcon	January 24
Jarett Siefford	January 25
Sandi Jensen	January 26
Marv Rankin	January 26
Beth Dunbar	January 27
Steve Evans	January 27
Mary Sue Grabenstein	January 27
Gail Jensen	January 27
Mollee Lunkwitz-Harman	January 30
Jill Barnason	January 31
Rojean Einspahr	January 31
Don Sears	January 31
Bryan Siefford	January 31
Jerry Stoll	January 31



Larry & Georgia Nelms	January 3
Brent & Brenda Aufdenkamp	January 6
Eddie & Margaret Norton	January 11
Rick & Debra Sandoval	January 15
Roger & Ronda Stewart	January 23
Larry & Donna Small	January 24
David & Jeanne Baade	January 25
Steven & Tracy Johnson	January 26
Tom & Cindi Walz	January 27

Year 2020	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
<b>C&amp;B Income</b>	\$29,049	\$21,009	\$16,596	\$23,668	\$15,725	\$17,388	\$13,100	\$15,056	\$18,626	\$13,231	\$12,918		<b>\$198,157</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	\$20,684	\$18,327	\$16,178	\$19,013	\$18,627	\$18,361	\$23,282	\$16,043	\$28,180	\$41,103	\$1,334		<b>\$221,049</b>
<b>Surplus (Shortfall)</b>	<u>Surplus</u> \$8,365	<u>Surplus</u> \$2,682	<u>Surplus</u> \$418	<u>Surplus</u> \$4,655	<u>Shortfall</u> (\$2,902)	<u>Shortfall</u> (\$973)	<u>Shortfall</u> (\$10,182)	<u>Shortfall</u> (\$987)	<u>Shortfall</u> (\$9,554)	<u>Shortfall</u> (\$27,872)	<u>Surplus</u> \$11584		<b>Shortfall</b> (\$22,893)

## FINANCIAL REPORT

*Thank you for your gifts to God through  
First Evangelical Lutheran Church.*

### AMOUNTS ARE ACTUAL INCOME RECEIVED AND EXPENSES PAID.

- † Higher income levels around Easter/Christmas. Lower income levels typically received in the summer.
- † Income excludes any donations received for "designated gifts".
- † The expenses vary month to month, depending on the spending requests by the ministry leaders and committees.
- † Detailed financial reports are available in Narthex and office.

**HAPPY ★ NEW ★ YEAR**

**FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT:**  
*First Evangelical Lutheran Church is a member congregation of the ELCA.  
Our mission is "To make Christ known in our love for one another,  
by service to our neighbor, and in worship of God."*

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
305 WEST 5TH STREET  
NORTH PLATTE NE 69101-3830  
*Address Service Requested*

U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Non-Profit Organization  
North Platte, Nebraska  
PERMIT NO. 7



## **Home Communion**

**If you would like to receive communion at home or over the phone contact the church office (308) 532-0250**