



Crosswalk

Newsletter of First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Idaho Falls, Idaho



**“Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest,
and let all that you have given us
in Your mercy be blessed.”**

This simple table prayer has been with me for as long as I can remember. I learned it as a child from my parents. I prayed it as a parent with my children gathered around the table - and now I realize as a I share that prayer with my wife Debbie...those children are no longer children at all, but adults gathering around their own tables in faraway places. Where *has* all the time gone?

That realization of how time marches on, along with the turning of the calendar page to a new year, got me thinking about how powerful it is to hand down good traditions. These simple prayers, practices, and rhythms of faith shape us over the years in ways we often don't notice until we pause and look back. Staying true to the good things in life - especially those rooted in faith - grounds us when everything else seems to change so rapidly and fade so quickly.

Change is a constant and as an “idea kind of guy” I’ve usually been excited by it. Yet, with each new year I find my excitement for change dims a little bit. That doesn’t mean I’m no longer open to adventure. It’s just that I’m not always chasing it the way I once did. More often now, I find that adventures have a way of finding me! And I’m learning that slowing down isn’t nearly as bad as our culture sometimes makes it out to be. In fact, slowing down helps us notice what we already have - what’s right in front of us - and recognize what we do have is good, and that those good things come from God’s gracious hand.

That simple time-worn prayer before meals “Come, Lord Jesus...” reminds us of a deeper truth: everything we have is a gift. It teaches us to pray not only for provision, but for grateful hearts and clear eyes - eyes that can see and recognize God’s blessings, and hearts that are ready to manage them wisely, enjoy them fully, and share them generously.

My prayer for you this year is this... may you hold fast to the good traditions that shape your faith, remain open to the new adventures God places in your path, and always be able to see - and share - the many blessings God has placed in your life.

In Christ,

Pastor Mike



P.S. Our family would like to express our gratitude to all the members of FELC for another vibrant year of ministry and especially for the many thoughtful gifts and fine food we’ve received this Christmas.

Appreciatively, Pastor Mike & Debbie.

Missions

Penny Power

Our kids making a difference here and around the world!

A heartfelt thank you to Penny Power for the generous gift that purchased food for the Community Food Basket. Your kindness and support are truly appreciated and make a real difference for families in our community.



In December, kids provided Gideons with Bibles.



The Penny Power focus for January is our Missionaries -Pastor Jeff and Mim Nellermoe. They support, teach and preach to Chinese Christians and provide Hong Kong refugee camps for children in California, Hawaii and England.

We enjoyed a wonderful and festive holiday season at First Lutheran!

Thank you to the many members and friends of the congregation who helped make the Advent and Christmas season memorable.

A big thank you goes to the Sheldons and Sahrs who once again organized volunteers to "Deck the Halls" of our sanctuary. Wasn't our new tree beautiful?!

Thank you to the Ministry Teams that hosted midweek soup suppers, and the many folks who provided soup and bread...delicious!

Thank you to the families, couples, and individuals who provided the readings for each service's Lighting of the Advent Wreath candles; you helped us prepare our hearts for the "Reason for the Season."

Thank you to our dedicated Altar Guild members who worked together to make light work of the December work load of extra services, more candles to light and fill, Christmas Eve setup and take down, and much more.

A special thank you to our music groups for the many hours of rehearsal that went in to the offering of special seasonal music in our Sunday services and the presentation of our Christmas Celebration. A big thank you to our Music Director, Michelle Hanson, who pulled it all together.

Lastly, thank you to all who contributed to our Giving Tree and to our Advent offerings that were designated to support the Idaho Falls Community Food Basket. Your offerings totaled **\$21,439.**

Missions



Our church is blessed to partner with FISH, a local organization dedicated to helping individuals and families in need through food assistance, emergency aid, and compassionate support. As community needs continue to grow, FISH is seeking volunteers to help with organization, distribution, and general assistance.

Volunteering with FISH is a meaningful way to live out our call to serve others. No special experience is required—just a willing heart and a desire to help. Tasks may include assisting clients or providing behind-the-scenes support that keeps the ministry running smoothly.

Volunteers usually only work one week a month; you can make a real difference in the lives of our neighbors. This is a wonderful opportunity to serve and connect with others. If you are interested in volunteering or would like more information, please contact Kären Bateman or call the church office. Thank you for prayerfully considering this opportunity to serve through FISH.

Light the World / Giving Machine

A heartfelt thank you to our amazing volunteers who served at the Light the World Giving Machine. Your efforts truly helped light the world!



Our Youth Volunteered at the Giving Machine Experience at the mall. They joined our Missions team in representing FISH at the event. It was a heartwarming experience to see all the people lined up to support our local charities. Thank you to the youth that participated as well as those who stopped by the mall to show your support.



Worship and Music

**You are cordially invited to sing praises to our God,
the Giver of the Song**

Our vocal choirs could use more singers, and our handbell choir could use more ringers. Will you consider joining? If you enjoy singing in the shower or in your car, you might also like singing in the choir! It's a wonderful way to participate in our worship services and perhaps make some new friends!



Grace Note Choir is open to men and women. Rehearsals resume on Sunday, January 4th, at 9:00 a.m. If you enjoy singing, perhaps you would be interested in joining for the Lent and Easter season. Everyone is welcome!

For His Glory Ringers bell choir will resume rehearsals on Tuesday, January 6th, at 6:30 p.m. Additional ringers are welcomed. No prior experience necessary. We'll gladly help you learn. If you are interested in joining, please contact Michelle Hanson or Paul Bayless.

The King's Men choir will resume rehearsals on Sunday, January 4th, at 11:30. Additional male voices are welcomed.

Praise Band rehearses on Wednesday evenings at 5:00. Contact our Praise Band Director, Steve Galbraith or Music Director, Michelle Hanson if you are interested in participating.

***Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Serve the Lord with gladness!
Come into his presence with singing! Psalm 1***



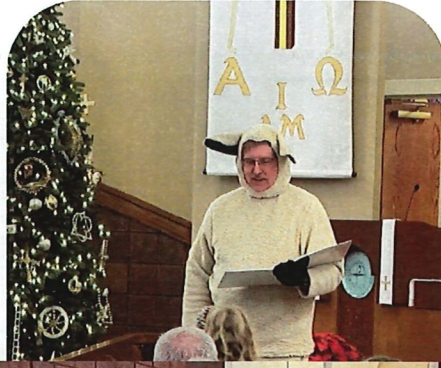
Worship Assistant Schedule

Date	COMMUNION ASSISTANTS # = Gluten-free server	LITURGISTS/ READERS	GREETERS	USHERS # = Coordinator	COUNTERS	STREAMING	ALTAR GUILD
4-Jan	Cathy Abreu#, Cathi Bean, Elaine Bengston, DiAnn Brown, Debra Hogg	Liturgist: Sheryl Schaffer	Diana Murphy Lewis Murphy	Dave Sheldon# Phil Forbord, Paul Worth	Phil & Tessa Forbord	Paul Bayless	Diana Murphy Cheryl Swenson
11-Jan	Linda Lerum#, Kim Bermensolo, Carole Mason, Debra Holst, Ginny Conricode	Liturgist: Steve Galbraith	Jan Galbraith Mary Hanek	Jim Sahr# Lisa Swenson, Cal Miller	Lisa Swenson Janice McBride	Paul Lerum	Diana Murphy Cheryl Swenson
18-Jan	Natalie Meyer#, Shawn Cleverly, Diane Sheldon, Cathi Bean, Beth Nicholas	Liturgist: Deb Nowatzki	Michelle Cleverly Mary Pilkington	Richard Magnuson# Geri Magnuson, Tom Pilkington	Paul Bayless Lisa Swenson	Paul Bayless	Diana Murphy Cheryl Swenson
25-Jan	Cathy Abreu#, Elaine Bengston, DiAnn Brown, Ginny Conricode, Debra Hogg, Deb Nowatzki	Reader: Brad Kirkwood	Anne Mitchell Sheryl Schaffer	Ryan Dixon# Scott Berger, Greg Stultz	Greg & Kathy Katainen	Paul Lerum	Diana Murphy Cheryl Swenson

Christmas Eve



Special Music
Piano Solo: Emily Dahlberg
Oh Little Town of Bethlehem



Youth

A huge thank you to all the Sunday School Volunteers! Week after week they are dedicated to teaching the message of Jesus' love and planting the seeds of faith in our children. We are always looking for those who would like to serve in our youth ministry. Specifically, for somebody willing to volunteer to be a second or assistant to Heather Catanese in the confirmation classes. She will do all the planning and Instructional time and needs someone willing to contribute to the open discussion as well as being a second person in keeping with the FELC "Two Deep" policy.



Confirmation classes are starting back up on January 4th. We will be focusing on the Apostle's Creed.

Christmas Pageant

King Herod: Owen Dahlberg
 Soldiers: Rudy & Afton Meng
 Mary: Sarah Dean
 Angels: Adie Dahlberg
 Lennie McNamara, Annabelle
 Core, Evelina Valentine



The Wiseman's Christmas Pageant was a Success!

Thank you to everyone who participated and volunteered their time and talents to make this a memorable experience. It truly took the efforts of many to make this happen. Our youth actors, narrators and backstage crew all worked so hard to deliver the message of Hope through the story of Jesus' birth. Special thanks to the parents and church members who dedicated their time to facilitate all the big and small details necessary to make our Pageant happen.

Happy New Year!

Keep a lookout for all the exciting events planned for our Youth and Family Ministry in 2026.



Narrators: Lauren & Aslynn Meyer
 King 1: Max Dean
 King 2: Emily Dahlberg
 King 3: Lily Dean



Christmas Pageant

Joseph: Owen Dahlberg

Camels : Theo Bassette
Samantha Reinwald

Sheep: Lucy Valentine

Farmer: Wyatt Sullivan

Backstage Crew: Mazie Sullivan
Ian Dahlberg



Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry is based on the idea presented in Acts 6. The apostles gathered all disciples together and said, "choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom" to care for the widows. Stephen was among those chosen to provide caring ministry to those in need. Stephen Ministry is God's Ministry. It is a ministry that belongs to the whole church.

Our mission statement at FELC is **"Praising our God . . . Loving God's people!"**

When you support Stephen Ministry you are supporting God's ministry and FELC's mission statement.

Thank you for the prayers and thoughtful nominations you have presented this Fall. You have helped us identify eleven individuals "known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom" to participate in Stephen Ministry training beginning January 15, 2026. These individuals are committing themselves to participate in 50 hours of training to learn more about providing emotional and spiritual care to someone who is experiencing a crisis or difficult time.

Because Stephen Ministry is a ministry of the entire congregation, it needs the prayers of the entire congregation to succeed. And, we know that sometimes when we are following God's lead "things that can possibly discourage us" happen. Please continue to keep the Stephen leaders, Stephen Ministers, and the Stephen Ministry trainees in your prayers. In addition, please pray for those that are receiving care.



Announcements

Ladies: Start the New Year Right by Opening Your Bible

Bible study makes for a terrific new year's resolution. Beginning January 7, the Ladies' Book Club will tackle the book of Acts. Join us as we study how the Holy Spirit worked through the Apostles to spread the Gospel through the known world. There are lots of great stories to enjoy as we follow Peter and then Paul in their leadership roles. We will meet Rhoda and Lydia, and be shipwrecked with Paul. You won't want to miss it!

We meet Wednesdays from 2 to 3 PM. As always, there is no outside reading or study, and no extra book to buy. Just bring your Bible – and maybe a friend. If you forget your Bible or don't have one, the church owns many for your use. (So – no excuses!)

See you in 2026.



New Members / Inquirer's Class

We are looking for those interested in finding out more about what a "Lutheran Christian" is. You don't need to commit to joining FELC to be part of the study, but it is required if you do want to become a member. The class is designed to cover at a glance some of the basic foundational parts of Christianity. Please contact Pastor Mike or the church office if you're interested in attending.

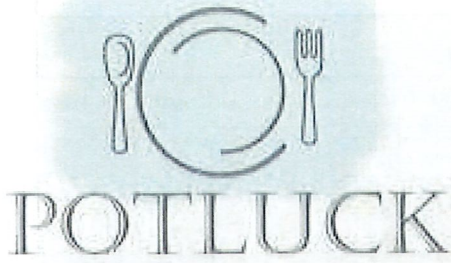


Thank you to our Finance Team, Missions Team, and Christian Ed/ Family Team for their help with this year's advent soup suppers.

We had great fellowship and yummy soup!



Announcements



Sunday, January 11, 2026

IF YOUR LAST NAME BEGINS WITH:

F, N, P, R	Green / Fruit Salad
B, M, S, W, Y	Pasta or Potatoes
D, G, H, J, K	Hot Dish/ Casserole or Meat
A, C, T, Z	Dessert
I, L	Setup, Clean up & Kitchen Duties

This list is a suggestion. If your last name is not on the list, bring anything you like OR plan to help us with kitchen duties.

A Note from Council:

We'd like to highlight a few changes and our upcoming team meeting schedule. The church is planning a potluck for January 11th. Please refer to the chart above for what type of dish to bring. We'll use this time together to let Liisa Mills know how much we appreciate all she has done over the last several years, and to wish her the best in her well-deserved retirement. We are collecting cards and gifts for Liisa that we will present to her at our potluck lunch. If you'd like, you can drop a card/gift in the basket at the welcome window. With Liisa retiring, we were lucky enough to hire Julie Sagnimeni. Julie has been training with Liisa over the last several weeks and we want to welcome her to the FELC Staff! If you are in the church during office hours, stop in and say hello!

After the potluck on January 11th, we will be having the all-team meeting. Most teams, as well as council, will be able to meet and work with each other that afternoon. It is a great opportunity to work together and get "face time" with many team members.



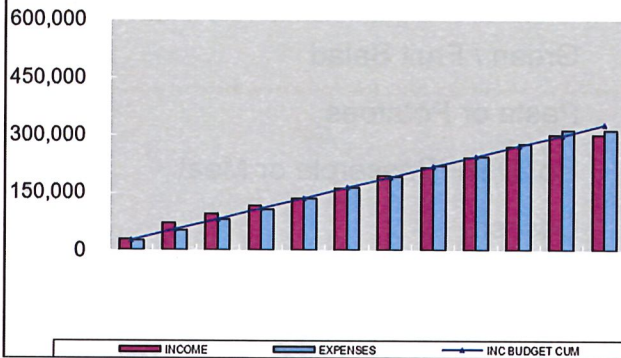
Quilts for our Upcoming High School Graduates

The Happy Stitchers would like to design and complete a queen-size quilt for any eligible graduating high school senior. To be eligible, you must be graduating from high school in 2026, and you, your parent, guardian or grandparents must be a voting member of FELC. If you are interested, please submit your name to the office administrator as soon as possible. A letter from the Happy Stitchers will be mailed to you on January 1, 2026 asking for information regarding your favorite colors and Bible verse. Please return this letter by February 1, 2026. The Happy Stitchers cannot accept a request after February 1, 2026 due to time required to make a quilt. The quilts will be presented during worship service the first Sunday of May 2026.

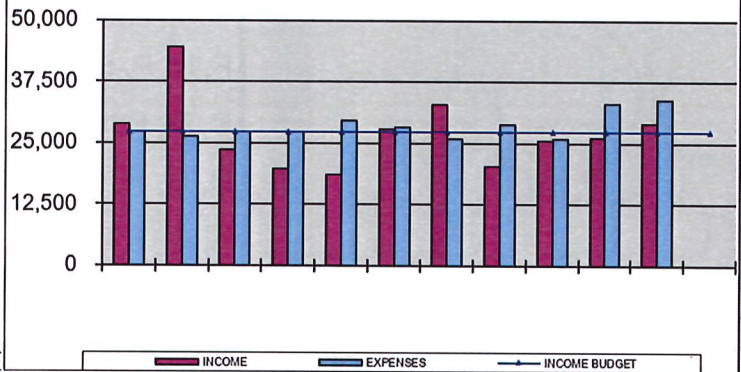


Finance

General Fund Cumulative Summary - 2025



General Fund Monthly Summary - 2025



Current Month:	November	
Current Month Income		29,082.04
Current Month Expenses		33,892.76
Difference		(4,810.72)

Budget Comparison 2025:		
Year to Date Actual Income		300,571.75
Year to Date Budget Income		299,750.00
Difference		821.75

Year to Date Income		300,571.75
*Year to Date Expenses		312,558.71
Difference		(11,986.96)

Year to Date Actual Expenses		312,558.71
Year to Date Budget Expenses		340,604.83
Difference		(28,046.12)

HOW CAN WE PRAY FOR YOU?

If you have a prayer request, please fill out a purple prayer request card and drop it in the offering plate or you can email office@firstlc.com. All requests remain confidential - only with permission are individual names placed on the written prayer list below.

OUR CHRISTIAN SYMPATHIES TO:

Friends and family of Bill Lockman. Reba Lockman passed away on December 13th.
Friends and family of Dick Carr. He passed away on December 8th.



PRAYERS FOR THOSE WHO ARE ILL, RECOVERING, OR GOING THROUGH A DIFFICULT TIME:

Cathy Abreu; Donna Amundson; Sharon Bauman; Ray Bauer; Tina Bean; Betty Benjamin (Lisa Mullinix's mother); Andrew Bessette; Dean & Carla Benson; Peggy Buhr; Kevin Call; Dale Clements; Tracy Coburn; Wendy Cudmore; Dayna Dabauras; Joan Douglas; Bobbie Eddie (Barbara Carlson's father); Bernadette Farrington (Annick Dixon's mother); Josephine Fife (Julie Reinwald's mother); Sharon Gilbert; Scottie Grace; Al Glissendorf; Diane Hackman; Steve Hammond; Bill Hayes; Jack Heier; Sue Hindman; Mark Holland (Cara Dahlberg's father); Beverly Hudman (Larry Hudman's mother); Larry Hudman; Ann Hurley; Jeff Hustad; Mackenzie & Zane Igor; Vickie John; Lynn Parshall Kinghorn (Alecia Coburn's former mother-in-law); Mary Krippner; Steven Krippner; Andy Kruckeberg; Bud Langerak; Bill Lockman; Allan Magnuson; Mike Martin; Rochelle Mason; Pat Matthews; Adara McClure (Jeannie Campbell's daughter); Tim Metcalf; Dick Mitchell; Wendy Morgan (Larry Hudman's sister); Josh Neis; Don Newman (Richard Magnuson's cousin); Heidi Peoples; Carol Miller Pisher (Cal Miller's daughter); Priscilla Rainey; Bob Scarr; Laura Schoonmaker; Julie Sundberg; Scot Swenson (Vernal & Jackie Swenson's son); Kathy Tauscher; Deborah Vavra; Marie Warwick; Chris Weaver; Daniel & Sarah Young.

PRAYERS FOR FRIENDS AND FAMILY SERVING IN THE MILITARY:

Craig Bukowski; Adam Craig; Keith Evans; Eric Gratzke; Alton Helm; Jack Hogan; Syllas Jackson; TJ Litteer; Garrett Marchington; Andrew Mitchell; Mike Monroe; Mike Stultz; Brianna Townsend; Jody Townsend.

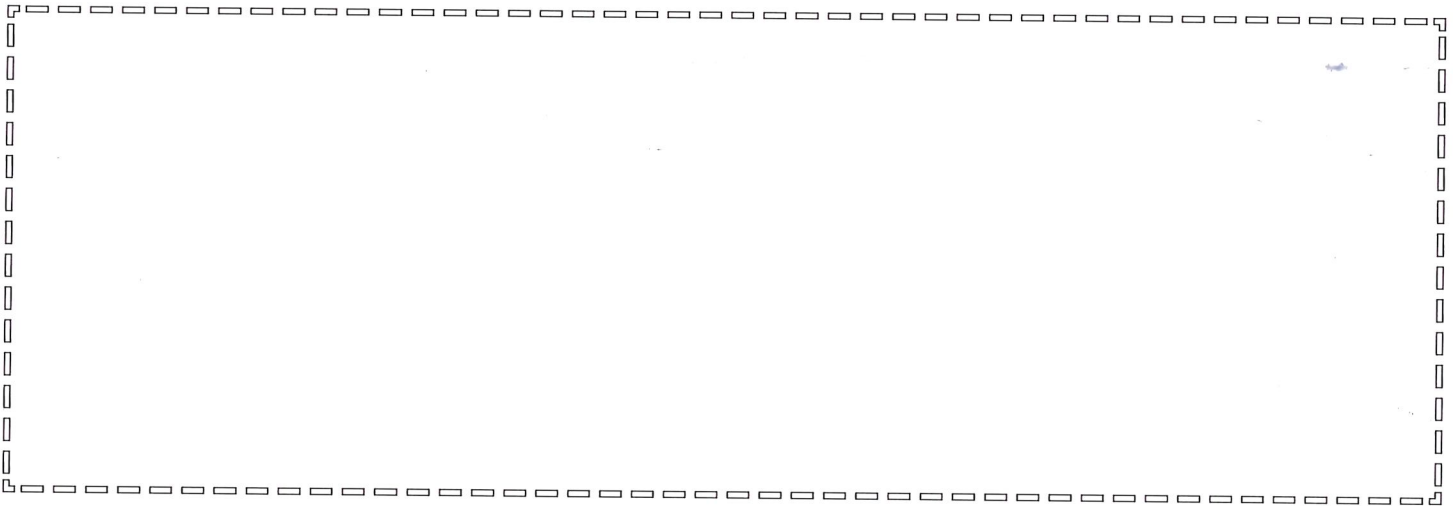
Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat.
				1 New Year's Day Office Closed 	2 10:00am <u>Friends in</u> <u>Stitches/</u> <u>Fellowship</u> <u>Hall</u>	3
4 9:00am Adult Forum/Library 9:00am Choir Rehearsal 9:00am Confirmation Class 9:00am Sunday School 10:15am Worship with Holy Communion 11:30am Fellowship Hour/Fellowship Hall 11:30am King's Men Rehearsal 12:00pm Emergency Response Team (ERT) and Shofar Meeting 4:00pm Round About Brass Practice	5 10:00am <u>Staff Meeting/Library</u>	6 9:00am Happy Stitches 9:00am Preschool 12:00pm Happy Stitches' Bible Study 1:00pm Preschool 6:00pm Girl Scout Troop #930 6:30pm Handbell Rehearsal	7 9:00am Preschool 1:00pm Preschool 2:00pm Ladies Book Club - Library 5:00pm Praise Band	8 9:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Preschool 10:00am Kaffeeklatsch 1:00pm Preschool 5:00pm Finance Team Meeting	9 10:00am <u>Friends in</u> <u>Stitches/</u> <u>Fellowship</u> <u>Hall</u>	10
11 9:00am Adult Forum/Library 9:00am Choir Rehearsal 9:00am Confirmation Class 9:00am Sunday School 10:15am Worship with Holy Communion 11:30am Fellowship Hour/Fellowship Hall 11:30am King's Men Rehearsal 12:00pm Common Ministry Team Meeting 4:00pm Round About Brass Practice 	12 Happy Stitches Stay-In Retreat  10:00am <u>Staff Meeting/Library</u> 7:00pm Worship & Music Team Meeting	13 Happy Stitches Stay-In Retreat  9:00am Preschool 12:00pm Care & Concern Meeting 1:00pm Preschool 6:00pm Girl Scout Troop #930 6:30pm Handbell Rehearsal	14 Happy Stitches Stay-In Retreat  9:00am Preschool 1:00pm Preschool 2:00pm Ladies Book Club - Library 5:00pm Praise Band	15 Happy Stitches Stay-In Retreat  9:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Preschool 10:00am Kaffeeklatsch 1:00pm Preschool 7:00pm Stephen Ministry Team Meeting	16 Happy Stitches Stay-In Retreat 	17
18 9:00am Adult Forum/Library 9:00am Choir Rehearsal 9:00am Confirmation Class 9:00am Sunday School 10:15am Worship with Holy Communion 11:30am Fellowship Hour/Fellowship Hall 11:30am King's Men Rehearsal 4:00pm Round About Brass Practice	19 10:00am <u>Staff Meeting/Library</u> 1:00pm PEO Meeting/Fellowship Hall 7:00pm Council Meeting/Classroom #2	20 9:00am Happy Stitches 9:00am Preschool 10:00am RCCM Meeting 12:00pm Happy Stitches' Bible Study 1:00pm Preschool 6:00pm Girl Scout Troop #930 6:30pm Handbell Rehearsal	21 9:00am Preschool 1:00pm Preschool 2:00pm Ladies Book Club - Library 5:00pm Praise Band	22 Red Cross Blood Drive/Fellowship Hall 9:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Preschool 10:00am Kaffeeklatsch 1:00pm Preschool	23 10:00am <u>Friends in</u> <u>Stitches/</u> <u>Fellowship</u> <u>Hall</u>	24 9:00am <u>Men's</u> <u>Breakfast/</u> <u>Fellowship</u> <u>Hall</u>
25 9:00am Adult Forum/Library 9:00am Choir Rehearsal 9:00am Confirmation Class 9:00am Sunday School 10:15am Worship with Holy Communion 11:30am Fellowship Hour/Fellowship Hall 11:30am King's Men Rehearsal 4:00pm Round About Brass Practice	26 10:00am <u>Staff Meeting/Library</u>	27 9:00am Happy Stitches 9:00am Preschool 1:00pm Preschool 6:00pm Girl Scout Troop #930 6:30pm Handbell Rehearsal	28 9:00am Preschool 1:00pm Preschool 2:00pm Ladies Book Club - Library 5:00pm Praise Band	29 9:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Preschool 10:00am Kaffeeklatsch 1:00pm Preschool	30 10:00am <u>Friends in</u> <u>Stitches/</u> <u>Fellowship</u> <u>Hall</u>	31 

Crosswalk is a publication of
First Evangelical Lutheran Church
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 Idaho Falls, Idaho 83402

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 Website: www.firstlc.com



Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Friday Closed

Pastor	Mike Knauff
Music Director	Michelle Hanson
Youth & Family Minister	Heather Catanese
Church Administrator	Julie Sagnimeni
Bookkeeper	Greg Stultz
Financial Secretary	Wendy Schoonmaker
Director of Christian Preschool	Barbara Carlson

Bring items for the Crosswalk to the church office

OR

e-mail items to: office@firstlc.com

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:00 am Adult Forum

**10:15 am In-Church Worship &
 Church Live @[firstlc.com](mailto:office@firstlc.com)**



SUNDAY SCRIPTURE LESSONS		First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel	Festival
	4 - Jan	Jeremiah 31:7-14	Psalm 147:12-20	Ephesians 1:3-14	John 1:[1-9] 10-18	2nd Sunday of Christmas
	11 - Jan	Isaiah 42:1-9	Psalm 29	Acts 10:34-43	Matthew 3:13-17	Baptism of Our Lord
	18 - Jan	Isaiah 49:1-7	Psalm 40:1-11	1 Corinthians 1:1-9	John 1:29-42	2nd Sunday after Epiphany
	25 - Jan	Isaiah 9:1-4	Psalm 27:1, 4-9	1 Corinthians 1:10-18	Matthew 4:12-23	3rd Sunday after Epiphany