DECEMBER 2026

First Things

First Lutheran Church (ELCA)

Chosen by Christ. Empowered to Serve.

Hello, First Family,

December is here, and with it comes all the excitement and activity of the Christmas season. Homes are decorated, shopping lists grow longer and calendars quickly fill with gatherings and celebrations. There is certainly a lot to look forward to during this time of year. Yet, in the midst of all the activity, December also brings us the season of Advent.

Advent is a season of waiting and preparation. The word Advent means “coming” or “arrival.” The focus of the season of Advent is waiting and preparing for the celebration of the birth of Jesus in his First Advent, as well as the uncertain waiting for the return of Christ in his Second Advent. Advent invites us to slow down and remember that Christmas is about more than all of the things we do to celebrate; it is about God's love coming into the world in the person of Jesus Christ.

Of course, slowing down isn't always easy this time of year. There are gifts to buy, meals to prepare, places to go and people to see. But perhaps Advent gives us an opportunity to find small moments of quiet in the middle of our busy days. A moment to pray, a few minutes to read Scripture or time spent with someone we love.

As we make our way through December, may we remember that we are not simply counting down the days until Christmas. We are reminded once again of the wonderful promise that God has come to be with us. And that is something worth celebrating—not just on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, but throughout the whole year.

This Advent season, may the hope, peace, joy and love of Christ be with you as we celebrate the birth of our Savior.

Advent blessings,
Pastor Matt

Pastor Matt’s Office Hours and Contact Info

Cell Phone: 715-379-9002 **Email:** morrisfederatedpastor@gmail.com

Tuesdays: 2:00pm – 4:00pm at FEDERATED

Thursdays: 11:00am – 1:00pm at COMMON CUP

Fridays: 2:00 – 4:00pm at FIRST LUTHERAN

Pastor Matt will generally be in one of the church offices most afternoons, and is also available by appointment. Mondays are Pastor Matt’s day off.

The magic of the season is here....

join us this December as we celebrate the birth of our Savior

Midweek Advent – Weds., December 2, 9 & 16

5:00-5:45pm Soup Supper | 6:00pm Worship at FIRST

Sunday school Christmas Program – Sunday, December 13

9:30am during the worship service at FIRST | Hot Cocoa bar and treats following

Blue Christmas – Monday, December 21

6:30pm at FEDERATED *(details on page 5)*

Christmas Eve – Thursday, December 24

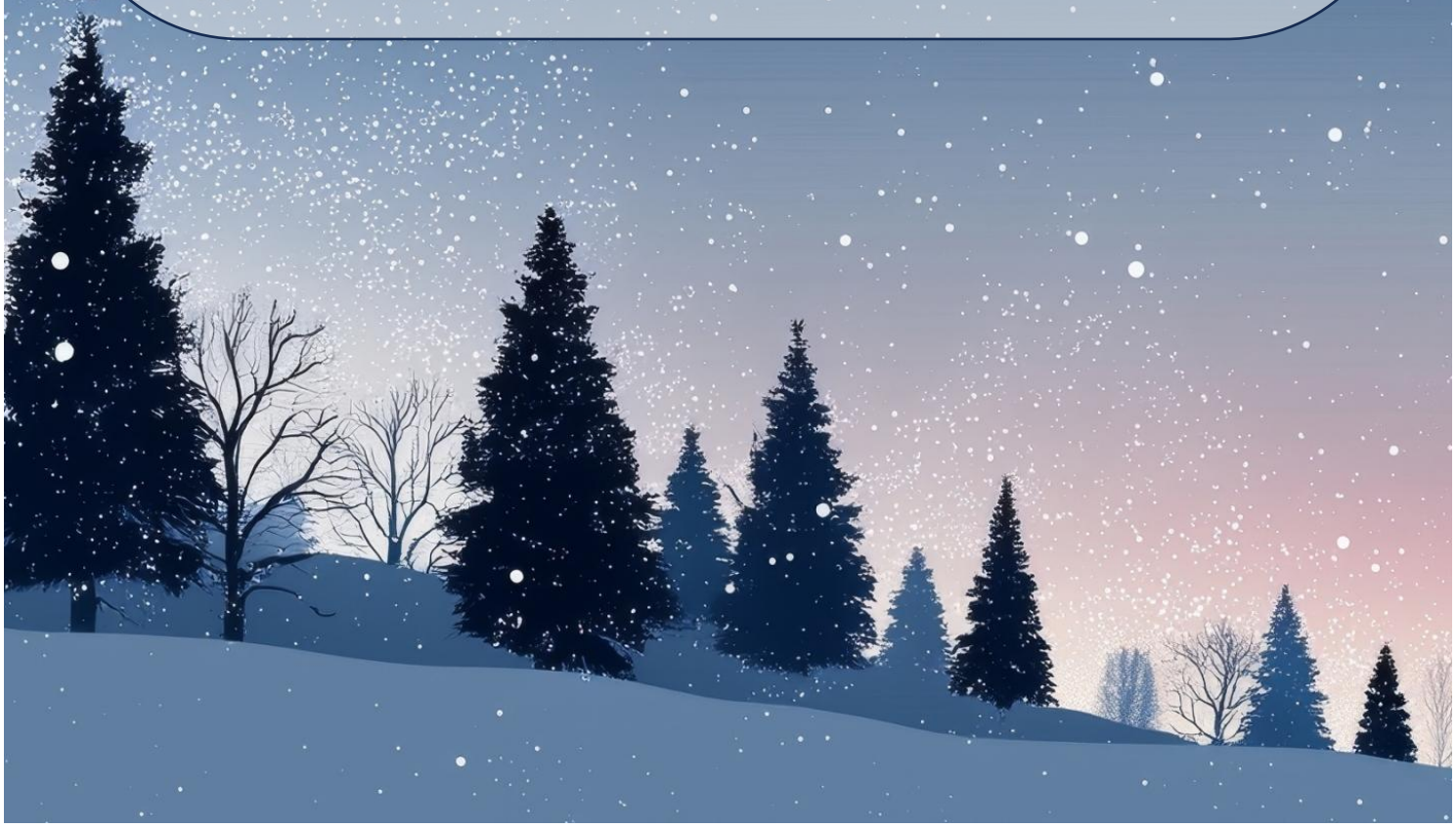
4:00pm Candlelight Service with Holy Communion at FIRST
7:00pm Candlelight Service at FEDERATED

Community Christmas Dinner – Friday, December 25

FREE Community Christmas meal with serving starting at noon at FIRST

Lessons & Carols Service – Sunday, December 27

9:30am service at FIRST | 10:30am fellowship with coffee/treats



Christmas DINNER



First Lutheran Church, 200 E. 5th St, Morris

FREE COMMUNITY MEAL

DINE IN OR DELIVERY

Delivery to Morris residents (shut-ins only)

Christmas Day, December 25
serving begins at Noon

Volunteers and donations of hams and cookies are needed. Contact Pam at 320-287-2134 to help out.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

The Sunday school students will present their Christmas Program on ***Sunday, December 13 at 9:30am at First Lutheran.*** *Refreshments will be served following the program.*



Once again we will be having a Poinsettia Garden around our altar to decorate for Christmas. If you would like to order a plant to contribute to this garden, please fill out this form and return it to the church office by ***Sunday, December 13th****. Your poinsettia may be in memory of or in honor of a loved one. The plants will decorate the sanctuary during the Christmas season and may be picked up after the Christmas Eve service on December 24th.*

Poinsettia Plant ($15.00) _____ (Quantity)

Given by: _____

In loving memory of: _____

Or… In honor of: _____

Please note: if you wish to keep your poinsettia plant, it can be picked up after the Christmas Eve Service. Any plants left at the church after January 3th will be disposed of.

COFFEE HOUR SERVERS Hope Service Group is in charge of the coffee hours during the month of December. Those in the Hope Service Group are: Cathy & Eugene Anderson, Greg & Naomi Fynboh, Glen & Kahla Gillespie, Mark & Mary Huebner, Lindy Ekola & Dave Jungst, Diane Nelson, Mike & Denise Odello, John & Jean Schultz, Sarah & Colby Schultz, Cathy & Jo Solvie, Scott Staples, Neil & Pam Wiese.

TECHNOLOGY FAIR at Morris Public Library on Friday, December 4 from 9:15-10:15am for a Technology fair with UMN Morris students to help with identifying and using AI responsibly, smart uses for smart phones, scanning photos and documents, and using social media safely. Take home handouts and instructional videos will be available.

ADVENT LUNCHEON at Our Redeemer's Church in Benson (800 10th Street S.) on Wednesday, December 2nd from 11:30am to 1:30pm. All are welcome with free will offering proceeds to the Swift County Food Shelf.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE for the January newsletter is noon on Thursday, December 17.

ZIPPORAH BIBLE STUDY will not meet in December. Starting in January they will begin meeting on Fridays.

LUNCH BUNCH meets Wednesday, December 2 at 11:30am at Pizza Hut in Morris. Order off the menu…pay your own way. All are welcome to join us for fellowship!

FALL DINNER We want to thank everyone who participated in any way with our Annual Fall Dinner. Whether you helped by chairing a portion of it, volunteering in the many different areas of preparation, donated to the cause, worked the night of, or attended our dinner that evening….WE APPRECIATE IT!. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. -Nadine, Jone & Laurie

OLIVEWOOD CARVINGS FOR SALE Payment options are: Venmo@FirstLutheranChurch-MorrisMN, cash, or a check payable to The Olivewood Project. Carvings are available throughout the year by calling the church office or contacting a committee member. Items located in the glass case of the Gathering Room (upper level) are available. If you are interested in donating to purchase Olivewood carvings as gifts for Sunday School Children, a fundraiser is being supported by a Thrivent Grant. Your donations towards this effort would be appreciated greatly. Please contact the office or a committee member.

HOLIDAY GIFT GIVING IDEAS: Lutheran World Relief: PO Box 17061, Baltimore MD 21298-9832) or online lwr.org | Lutheran Disaster Response (envelopes on narthextable)| ELCA World Hunger (envelopes on narthex table)| Bread for the World. Learn more at bread.org

BIBLE CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE Luther Crest Bible Camp Early Bird registration for the 2027 camping year begins on November 1st. First Lutheran has a scholarship fund which is available to youth and families from our congregation who would like to attend Bible Camp. We will provide up to $250 for each individual youth who would like to go to camp. If you are interested, please let Rita know at the church office or contact a member of church council.

PROVIDERS NEEDED FOR LCM SUNDAY NIGHT MEAL Each Sunday at 6pm the LCM at Morris hosts The Sunday Table, a dinner and dialogue program for students. While the number varies from week to week and is unknown as we are just starting the semester, we ask you to prepare for 12-18 students and include a vegetarian option if possible. Each semester we attempt to get a list of food allergies and needs and then create a set of quick options if you need extra help coming up with a meal. https://signup.com/go/JWbJPBJor contact "A" Williams at A@ummlcm.org with questions!

PASTORAL VISITS If you or a family member are hospitalized and would like a pastoral visit, please contact the church office and a pastor will be contacted to visit you. Even though you may be asked your religious affiliation during check-in, the hospital staff cannot share that information without you specifically requesting they contact your church.

CHRISTMAS TOY SHOPPE & WISH TREE COLLECTIONS



In the spirit of the season, the Mission & Evangelism Committee invites you to donate to the 2026Christmas Toy Shoppe and Wish Tree Collections. Morris Area Women of Today sponsor this project and last year served 156 families, including 426 children, birth to age 18. In addition to a nice gift, each child receives stocking stuffers, hats and mittens. Each family also receives a game to promote family night and at least one quilt or blanket. A collection of new toys or games (in its original package) along with all sizes of hats, mittens, or scarves are appreciated. We do ask that all items are new. If the game/toy requires batteries, please include them with the gift. You can place your donations next to the collection tree in the lower Narthex. Monetary donations are also appreciated with checks made payable to: Morris Unity Fund and mailed to Women of Today, POBox 82, Morris MN 56267. Please put "Christmas Toy Shoppe" in the memo line. ***Sunday, December 13 is the deadline for donations to be dropped off at church.***





The Federated Church Women's Fellowship cordially invites you to our Holiday Christmas Tea

Wednesday December 9, 2026
2 pm to 4 pm
Federated Church, Morris, MN

Holiday Bake Sale included
Friends welcome!

Free will donations taken for local mission work!

BLUE CHRISTMAS

A SERVICE OF HOPE AND COMFORT

This service of scripture, song and meditation is meant for anyone who is experiencing grief or is discouraged in any way this holiday season

MONDAY, DECEMBER 21 | 6:30 PM
AT FEDERATED CHURCH



Wishing you the comfort of His love,
the joy of His salvation,
and the peace of His presence.

SHARING TIME and TALENTS

In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul writes, "Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, and there are varieties of services but the same Lord, and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good (1 Cor. 12:4-7).

There are many spiritual gifts, but they are all given to us by the same Spirit, who works in us and through us. Our gifts, Paul writes, are for the common good: building up the Church, growing the kingdom and glorifying God. The Spirit calls us to do the work of Jesus in the world.

Each of you has your own gifts, and you are called by God to use them for the common good. Some of you have gifts that are seen and heard. Others of you have gifts that are shared behind the scenes. There are many opportunities to share those gifts at church—whether they are gifts that are in the spotlight or gifts that are behind the scenes. You can share by being a lector, setting up communion, helping with fellowship, singing in the choir, being on a committee and so many other opportunities.

Sharing your spiritual gifts plays an integral role in the functioning of First Lutheran. As the new year approaches, you will have the opportunity to complete an updated Time and Talent Form. Prayerfully consider in what ways God is calling you to use your spiritual gifts at church for the common good. How will you share your time and talent in the new year in new and unexpected ways?

Pastor Matt

SENIORS ON THE MOVE

We had a busy fall! Annie at Chanhassen was enjoyed by all that travelled with us. We also enjoyed the time spent volunteering with the UMM students in their Elder Visit Program. What a joy to see the generation gap bridged as all "sipped and painted."

Now we head into the Christmas Season! One of the highlights will be attending the Holiday Tea at FEDERATED on Wednesday, December 9th from 2:00-4:00pm



Looking forward to the many opportunities of fellowship this December. Check the newsletter and calendar for all the opportunities for good Christian fellowship. Wishing all a blessed Christmas as we celebrate Jesus' birthday.

DECEMBER SCHEDULE and WORSHIP SERVANTS

MIDWEEK ADVENT (FIRST)
Wednesdays: Dec 2, 9, 16
5:00-5:34pm Soup Supper
6:00pm Worship

SUNDAY, DEC 6 (FEDERATED)
9:30am Worship
Sunday school during service
with fellowship following

SUNDAY, DEC 13 (FIRST)
8:30am Sunday school
9:30am Sunday school
Christmas Program
with fellowship following

SUNDAY, DEC 20 (FEDERATED)
9:30am Worship
Sunday school during service
with fellowship following

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE
6:30pm at FEDERATED

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP
Thursday, December 24
4:00pm at FIRST
7:00pm at FEDERATED

SUNDAY, DEC 27 (FIRST)
No Sunday school
9:30am Lessons & Carols

SUNDAY, DEC 13
8:30am Sunday school
9:30am Worship HC
fellowship following

USHERS:
Steve Just, Judy Buro,
Michael Bjorkllund

ACOLYTES:
Mya Krosch
Kenzie Just

VIDEO:
Mike Odello

TV SLIDES:
Wes Odello

NURSERY:
Vicki Dalager

ACCOMPANIST:
Deb Mahoney

CHRISTMAS EVE
December 24 - 4:00pm

USHERS:
Dick Smith
Dennis Feuchtenberger
Al & Julie Monroe

LECTOR:
Ward Voorhees

ACOLYTES:
Jacoby & Jamis Burnett

COMMUNION PREP:
Laurie Feuchtenberger

COMMUNION SERVER:
Millie Tschetter

VIDEO:
Tony Feuchtenberger

TV SLIDES:
Brayden Carlson

NURSERY:
Pam Wiese

ACCOMPANIST:
Suzanne Smith

SUNDAY, DEC 27
No Sunday school
9:30am Lessons &
Carols service

USHERS:
Bob Heck,
Doug & Sharon Ehlers

ACOLYTES:
Mason Williamson
Gage Schultz

VIDEO:
Dave Jungst

TV SLIDES:
Wyatt Schultz

NURSERY:
Jone Anderson

ACCOMPANIST:
Suzanne Smith

MIDWEEK ADVENT: *5:00-5:45pm Soup Supper | 6:00pm Worship*

Wed., Dec 2: *Ushers: Dick Smith, Tony Feuchtenberger family; Acolytes: Maela Suess & Ashlyn Williamson; Video: Mike Odello; Nursery: Pam Wiese*
Wed., Dec 9: *Ushers: Steve Just, Burnett family; Acolytes: Jayce Plattner & Zoe Krosch; Video: Dave Jungst; Nursery: Michelle Just*
Wed., Dec 16: *Ushers: Bob Heck, Nesvig family; Acolytes: Estelle & Lucy Feucthenberger; Video: Tony Feuchtenberger; Nursery: Bobbi Siegel*



Dec 3: Jared House
Dec 4: Britney House, Steve Wagner
Dec 5: Noreen Grunig, Owen Nesvig
Dec 7: Emilie Brustuen, Jon Wiese
Dec 8: Jackson Boever
Dec 12: Claudette Erholtz
Dec 14: Owen Hentges, John Schultz
Dec 15: Adam Lair
Dec 17: Peter Boever, Ryan Lussenden
Dec 18: Arnie Sharstrom
Dec 19: Doyle Anderson
Dec 21: Sherry Anderson
Dec 23: Giana Feuchtenberger
Dec 27: Sarah Dougherty, Mick Rose
Dec 28: Randy Lussenden, Mike Odello, Joan Smith
Dec 30: Millie Tschetter
Dec 31: Mark Mattheis



Dec 2: Justin & Lori Anderson
Dec 27: Allen & Julie Monroe

December 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 **11am** Pastors' Text Study	2 **11am** Lunch Bunch at Pizza Hut **5:00-5:45pm** Soup Supper **6:00pm** Midweek Advent at FIRST **6:30pm** Element at FIRST Fusion at FAITH	3	4 **7:15am** Fusion Breakfast at LCM House	5 **8am** (at FAITH) Men's Bible Study
6 **8:30am** SS Program practice at FIRST **9:30am** Worship at FEDERATED with fellowship following; Sunday school during worship	7	8 **11am** Pastors' Text Study	9 **5:00-5:45pm** Soup Supper **6:00pm** Midweek Advent at FIRST **6:30pm** Element and Fusion at FAITH	10	11	12 **8am** (at FAITH) Men's Bible Study
13 **8:30am** Sunday school **9:30am** Sunday school Christmas Program at FIRST with fellowship following **10:30am** Council Meeting *Poinsettia orders due*	14	15 **11am** Pastors' Text Study	16 **5:00-5:45pm** Soup Supper **6:00pm** Midweek Advent at FIRST **6:30pm** Element Leader Meeting at FIRST (No Element or Fusion)	17 **12pm** Newsletter Articles Due	18	19 **8am** (at FAITH) Men's Bible Study
20 **9:30am** Worship at FEDERATED with fellowship following – Sunday school during worship	21 **6:30pm** Blue Christmas service at FEDERATED	22 **11am** Pastors' Text Study	23	24 **Christmas Eve** **4pm** Worship at FIRST **7pm** Worship at FEDERATED	25 **Christmas Day** **12pm** FREE Community Christmas Dinner *Church office closed*	26
27 **No Sunday school** **9:30am** Lessons & Carols Service at FIRST	28	29 **11am** Pastors' Text Study	30	31		

Staff vacation dates: Pastor Matt (Christmas Day-Jan 2); Rita (Christmas Eve-Jan 4); Wyatt (Dec 19-26)

Services are streamed live on YouTube at both FIRST or FEDERATED depending on where the service is held.
(First Lutheran Church - Morris MN) and (Federated Church of Morris)

Recorded services available on FIRST'S website at www.flcmorris.org and on FEDERATED'S website at morrisfederated.org

Rita is available Monday through Thursday from 8am to 4pm by phone call, text messaging, or email and is in church office on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings from 9:00am to 12:00pm

MISSIONARY FOR THE DAY

Oct 1 In memory of Richard "Dick" Sand from Emilie Brustuen
Oct 2 In memory of Darlene Haak from Emilie Brustuen
Oct 3 In memory of Dennis Feuchtenberger's sister Holly from Doug & Sharon Ehlers
Oct 4 In memory of Cheryl Higgin's sister from Emilie Brustuen
Oct 5 In memory of Dennis Feuchtenberger's sister Holly Ann Bradle from Emilie Brustuen
Oct 6 In memory of Jerry Koosman from Emilie Brustuen

You can sponsor a Missionary for the Day for $15 per day. You may give this in memory, or in honor of someone. Please contact the church office for more information, or to sponsor a date.

COUNCIL MINUTE HIGHLIGHTS: NOV 10, 2026

PASTOR'S REPORT Pastor Matt's report included: Brown Bag Bible study, participation in the MN Conference UCC Quarterly Community of Ministry, and Thanksgiving vacation time.

OLD BUSINESS

- hearing amplification (Bluetooth) has been installed with training session to be held
- fall dinner update: 177 meals served, with plans made for 150. Proceeds will be donated to Stevens County Food Shelf, World Hunger and Salvation Army.
- shared church directory: Haley and Rita are working on this

NEW BUSINESS

- Head Start visited at the beginning of the meeting and gave the council an update
- Ballot worksheet was distributed to work on filling open positions
- Staff evaluations will be conducted in November
- Service Groups need to be updated. Committee of Sharon, Nadine, Dick and Pastor Matt will work on this.
- Discussion held on tech person and greeters for funerals
- Staff vacations: Pastor Matt (Christmas Day-Jan 2); Rita (Christmas Eve-Jan 4); Wyatt (Dec 19-26)
- Next council meeting to be held on Sunday, December 13 at 10:30am

OCTOBER'S GIVING and EXPENSE

$20,716.00	Oct Giving	$171,319.00	YTD Giving
$16,661.30	Oct General Expense	$197,239.11	YTD General Expense
$53,035.00	Oct Building Expense	$ 72,415.39	YTD Building Expense



First Lutheran Church
200 East 5th St
Morris, MN 56267
Address Service Requested

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit #83
Morris, MN

First Lutheran Church, ELCA

200 East 5th Street
Morris, MN 56267
Phone: 320-589-3242
website: www.flcmorris.org
email: office@flcmorris.org
Facebook: Morris-First Lutheran Church

Worship Schedule

SEE SCHEDULE ON CALENDAR
Broadcasted live via Facebook and YouTube; recorded services available on our website.

Televised Services:

Tuesdays at 1:30pm
MediaCom: Channel 8 or 117-2 *(digital)*

STAFF

Matt Orendorff, Pastor
Rita Bye, Office Manager
Wyatt Vavra, Custodian
Deb Mahoney, Accompanist
Suzanne Smith, Accompanist

EMAIL

morrisfederatedpastor@gmail.com
office@flcmorris.org

CHURCH COUNCIL

Sharon Ehlers, President
Dick Smith, Vice President
Naomi Fynboh, Treasurer
J. Mark Nesvig, Secretary
Elizabeth Harris
Nadine Heck
Allen Monroe

FUSION& ELEMENT YOUTH MINISTRY DIRECTOR

"A" Williams
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Email: A@UMMLCM.org