

DECEMBER 2025

First Things

First Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Chosen by Christ. Empowered to Serve.

Holden Evening Prayer

Midweek Advent Worship at FIRST
*Come and find stillness in the midst of the seasons busyness,
as we prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus.*

Wednesdays, December 3rd, 10th and 17th at 6:00pm
Soup Supper served from 5:00 - 5:45pm



Christmas Eve



Wednesday, December 24:
Candlelight Service: 4:00pm at FEDERATED | 7:00pm at FIRST
Lessons & Carols: 9:00pm at FIRST (*lay led service*)

Hello, First Family,

Many times, we view December as an ending. The year is almost over, and a new one is right around the corner. But December is also a beginning. The year 2025 is ending, but a new church-year begins with the season of Advent.

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.

As with a new calendar year, a new church-year can bring self-reflection. Where have you let your light shine and been a disciple in the last year? Where have you fallen short? For what do you need forgiveness? Whom do you need to forgive? What can you do to follow Jesus’ example of servanthood in the new year?

The preparation we do during Advent is different, of course, than that which we do for the holidays. It’s not about decorating or shopping or baking; it’s about preparing ourselves—taking stock of our lives. How might you prepare? Prayer? A devotional? An Advent calendar? The lighting of candles on an Advent wreath? What might you do to slow down and prepare, as we wait once again for Christmas?

So as a new church-year begins this Advent, let us take time to reflect, time to wait and time to prepare our whole selves, for the coming of our Savior, the Word made flesh, Jesus.

Advent blessings,
Pastor Matt

Pastor Matt's Office Hours and Contact Info

Cell Phone: 715-379-9002 **Email:** morrisfederatedpastor@gmail.com
Wednesdays: 10:00am - 12:00pm at COMMON CUP; 2:00 - 4:00pm at FIRST LUTHERAN
Fridays: 2:00 - 4:00pm at FEDERATED CHURCH
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.



Midweek Advent at FIRST 5:00-5:45pm Soup Supper
Wed., DECEMBER 3, 10 & 17 6:00pm Worship (Holden Evening Prayer)

Sunday, DECEMBER 7 8:30am Sunday school
FEDERATED CHURCH 9:30am Worship with Holy Communion

Sunday, DECEMBER 14 8:30am Sunday school
FIRST LUTHERAN 9:30am Sunday school Christmas Program

Sunday, DECEMBER 21 8:30am Sunday school
FEDERATED CHURCH 9:30am Worship

Wednesday, DECEMBER 24 4:00pm Candlelight Service at Federated
7:00pm Candlelight Service at First
9:00pm Lessons & Carols at First (lay led)

Sunday, DECEMBER 28 no Sunday school
FIRST LUTHERAN 9:30am Worship with Holy Communion

Sunday, JANUARY 4 8:30am Sunday school
FEDERATED CHURCH 9:30am Worship with Holy Communion

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.



*The Sunday school students
will present their Christmas Program on
Sunday, December 14 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 14th**. 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 4th will be disposed of.

SENIORS ON THE MOVE

CHRISTMAS CANTATA at the BARRETT THEATRE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7



Join us as on our next outing to the Barrett Theatre as they present "Christmas Cantata: One Small Child" that brings together some of the most beloved contemporary worship songs with favorite carols for an unforgettable Christmas celebration!

We will leave the church parking lot at 1:00pm to attend the matinee on Sunday, December 7th and return around 4:30pm. Cost is \$25 which includes the cost of the ticket. Sign up sheet is in the Narthex, or contact Jo Solvie.

CHRISTMAS TOY SHOPPE AND WISH TREE DONATIONS



In the spirit of the season, the Mission & Evangelism Committee invites you to donate to the 2025 Christmas Toy Shoppe and Wish Tree Collections. 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 and should be sent directly to MN Women of Today Foundation, PO Box 82, Morris MN 56267, and put "Christmas Toy Shoppe" in the memo line.

Deadline to donate is Sunday, December 14.

FRIENDSHIP MINISTRIES

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Sunday, December 7 at 1:00pm
at Faith Lutheran Church

All are welcome to the Christmas Program presented by DAC music class. A lunch donated and served by the Swan Lake 4-H club will follow the program.

CHRISTMAS MUSIC

WITH JOSH FISCHER

Sunday, December 7 at 5:00pm
at Zion Lutheran Church

All are welcome to an evening of Christmas music with Josh Fischer and other guests, including the UMN Morris Community Choir. Come celebrate Christmas with music, worship and fellowship! Christmas treats and refreshments will be served.

HOLIDAY GIVING IDEAS

- Lutheran World Relief: Donations sent by Dec 25 will double with matchings funds (PO Box 17061 Baltimore MD 21298-9832) or online (lwr.org/SaveFamilies25)
- Lutheran Disaster Response (*envelopes on narthex table*)
- ELCA World Hunger (*envelopes on narthex table*)
- Bread for the World. Learn more at bread.org



The Federated Church WF
Cordially invites you to our
Holiday Christmas Tea

Wednesday December 10, 2025

2 pm to 4 pm

Federated Church, Morris, MN

Holiday Bake Sale included

Friends welcome!

Free will donations taken
for local mission work!

MISSION & EVANGELISM

Thank you to the volunteers who joined the Storehouse Ministry Kick-Off event last month. Remember, this is an ongoing opportunity to make a difference for hunger regionally and internationally. Located at 25 Atlantic Avenue in Hancock, at 6:30pm, weekly on Tuesdays, edible bean two pound bags are made for shipping. The November shipment is scheduled to go to Jamaica. Future sign-ups are done on a weekly basis through an email. To receive the email, you may call 320-491-6765, or contact a committee member. You can make it as often or as little as your schedule permits, as a family event or as a group of friends together. Please keep this and other opportunities presented in future newsletter in mind, as First Lutheran seeks to make Church Without Walls opportunities happen all throughout the year.

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.

SUPPORT MISSIONARY for the DAY

- | | |
|--------|---|
| Nov 1 | In memory of Warren Hickey from Emilie Brustuen |
| Nov 2 | In honor of our worship servants for all they do |
| Nov 3 | In memory of Shelby Brustuen from Emilie Brustuen |
| Nov 4 | In memory of Paetyn Harpstead from Jo Solvie |
| Nov 5 | In memory of Mark Gunderson from Jo Solvie |
| Nov 6 | In memory of Gayle Hoffman from Jo Solvie |
| Nov 7 | In memory of Bob & Geri Felstul from Jo Solvie |
| Nov 8 | In memory of Jim Gillespie from Jo Solvie |
| Nov 10 | In memory of George Burnett from Doug & Sharon Ehlers |
| Nov 14 | In honor of our veterans |
| Nov 16 | In loving memory of Brian Van Horn from his mother LaVonne Watson |
| Nov 16 | In memory of Randy Syverson from his family |
| Nov 17 | In memory of Marian Ehrenberg |
| Nov 18 | In memory of Greg Arnold |
| Nov 19 | In memory of Darlene Loose |
| Nov 25 | In memory of Dale Crow's birthday from his family |
| Nov 26 | In honor of Isaac Nelson's birthday from grandma and grandpa Ehlers |

You can sponsor the missionaries of the ELCA for \$15 per day. You may give this in memory, or in honor of someone. Contact the church office for more information, or to sponsor at date.

- | | |
|--------|--|
| Nov 30 | ELCA Lutheran Worship radio broadcast given in memory of Janet Staples from her family |
|--------|--|

\$25 THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS DURING YOUR BIRTHDAY MONTH!

Thrivent is giving members an additional \$25 in their Choice Dollars account during their birthday month. These funds must be designated to an eligible non-profit by the end of your birthday month, or they will expire. Log in to your Thrivent account to direct the funds to an organization of your choice. You can search for First Lutheran Church if you choose, and direct the \$25 to the church. If you've directed the funds to First Lutheran, please let the office know what you would like the \$25 to go towards: Youth, Worship & Music, Property, Mission & Evangelism, or call the church office and ask about other possibilities. Undesignated funds will go in the General Fund.

What is Fusion? (grades 9-12)

Fusion is a youth group for students in grade 9th-12th and is also a part of the collaboration between the five churches. Fusion is a place where youth are welcomed and known. A place where they can learn and grow in faith, connect with leaders and other youth and participate in adventure and service all in the name of Jesus Christ.

EVENT SCHEDULE

December

Decorate at West Wind Village
6:30-8:00pm
Meet at Facility

Bible Study & Christmas Activity
6:30-8:00pm
At Faith Lutheran

Christmas Party!
6:30-8:00pm
At Faith Lutheran

Bible and Breakfast
Morris at Faith - 12/5, 12/12 & 12/19
Hancock at Alberts - 12/5 & 12/12

WEDNESDAY
DEC 3RD

WEDNESDAY
DEC 10TH

WEDNESDAY
DEC 17TH

FRIDAYS

Element Schedule

December 2025

January 2026

Element

3rd

Element 6:30-8:00pm
Service Project Planning - Confirmation Promises
#4 Serve All People, Following the Example of Jesus

7th

No Element
Rest & Reset Night!

14th

Element 6:30-8:00pm
The New Testament
#1 New Testament Overview

21st

Element 6:30-8:00pm
The New Testament
#10 The Bible and My Life

28th

Element 6:30-8:00pm
The Life of Jesus
#1 Gospel Overview

WINTER RETREAT

January 23rd-24th

Luther Crest Bible Camp
Alexandria, MN
Friday @ 4pm - Saturday @ 4pm
Weather permitting

7th

Element Christmas Party
3pm - 5pm
Crystal Lanes Bowling Alley

10th

Element 6:30-8:00pm
Service Project Night
Start at First Lutheran

17th

No Element
Rest & Reset Night!

24th

No Element
Merry Christmas!!

31st

No Element
Happy New Year!!

What is Element? (grades 6-8)

Element is a joining of Confirmation and Jr High Fusion Youth: the best of both worlds. Learning the elements of their faith in a fun and engaging space! Element is a collaboration between the pastors of Faith Lutheran, First Lutheran, Trinity Lutheran, Federated and St. Johns/Kongsvinger of Donnelly, and with the blessing of the various church councils. Our goal is teach the 6th-8th graders to learn and experience elements of a Christian life. To believe, know and experience God, connect with others, serve others in love, and live out their faith daily.

Please check out Fusion's updated website for more information at www.fusion-ministry.com Join us on social media Facebook@fusion56267 and Instagram@fusion56267 Email: fusionministry.connect@gmail.com

DECEMBER WORSHIP SERVANTS




MIDWEEK ADVENT WED., DEC 3 5:00pm Soup Supper 6:00pm Worship	MIDWEEK ADVENT WED., DEC 10 5:00pm Soup Supper 6:00pm Worship	MIDWEEK ADVENT WED., DEC 17 5:00pm Soup Supper 6:00pm Worship
Ushers: Dick Smith Burnett Family (ushers light candles)	Ushers: Bob Heck Nesvig Family (ushers light candles)	Ushers: Al Harris Steve & Michelle Just (ushers light candles)
Video: Tony Feuchtenberger	Video: Dave Jungst	Video: Mike Odello
Accompanist: Suzanne Smith	Accompanist: Suzanne Smith	Accompanist: Deb Mahoney

HAPPY
Birthday

- Dec 1: Erin (Harris) Holmes
Dec 2: Mary Jo McCormack
Dec 3: Jared House
Dec 4: Britney House, Steve Wagner
Dec 5: Noreen Grunig, Owen Nesvig, Becky Tullos
Dec 7: Emilie Brustuen, Jon Wiese
Dec 8: Jackson Boever
Dec 14: Owen Hentges, John Schultz
Dec 15: Adam Lair
Dec 16: Tayton Flower
Dec 17: Ryan Lussenden, Peter Boever
Dec 18: Arnie Sharstrom
Dec 19: Doyle Anderson, Jeri Anderson
Dec 21: Beth (Holland) Erickson, Sherry Wagner
Dec 23: Giana Feuchtenberger
Dec 25: Austin Hills
Dec 27: Sarah Dougherty, Mick Rose
Dec 28: Muriel Lindback, Randy Lussenden,
Mike Odello, Joan Smith
- Dec 30: Millie Tschetter
Dec 31: Mark Mattheis
Nov 29: Skip Maanum, Alyssa Wagner

SUNDAY, DEC 14 8:30am Sunday school 9:30am Sunday school Christmas Program	CHRISTMAS EVE Wed., Dec 24 7:00pm Worship HC	SUNDAY, DEC 28 No Sunday school 9:30am Worship HC
Ushers: Dick Smith Michael Bjorklund Fynboh Family	Ushers: Bob Heck Ward Voorhees Dennis Feuchtenberger	Ushers: Steve Just Brian Erdahl Doug Ehlers
Acolytes: Jamis Burnett Wes Odello	Lector: Sharon Ehlers	Lector: Sharon Ehlers
Video: Tony Feuchtenberger	Acolytes: Zach Huebner Breaden Huebner	Acolytes: Kenzie Just Lucy Feuchtenberger
TV slides: Aaden Schultz	Communion Prep: (silver tray/wafers) Laurie Feuchtenberger	Communion Prep: (silver tray/wafers) Liz Harris
Nursery: Vicki Dalager	Communion Servers: Ward Voorhees	Communion Servers: Emilie Brustuen
Accompanist: Jennie Odello	Video: Dave Jungst	Video: Tony Feuchtenberger
	TV slides: Abigail Anderson	TV slides: Sawyer Fynboh
	Nursery: Lindy Ekola	Nursery: Jone Anderson
	Accompanist: Suzanne Smith	Accompanist: Lois Strei

HAPPY
Anniversary!
Dec 2: Justin & Lori Anderson
Dec 27: Allen & Julie Monroe

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 11am Pastors' Text Study 2pm Worship & Music Mtg	3 11:30am Lunch Bunch at DeToy's 5pm Soup Supper 6pm Midweek Advent Worship 6:30-8:00pm *Element at FAITH *Fusion at WWW 7pm Joint Choir at Federated	4	5 7:15-8:00am Fusion Breakfast (Morris & Hancock)	6 8am Men's Bible Study at Faith Lutheran
7 8:30am Sunday school at Federated 9:30am Worship at FEDERATED with Fellowship following 1pm Sr on the Move: Christmas Cantana 3pm-5pm Element Christmas Party at Crystal Lanes Bowling Alley	8	9 11am Pastors' Text Study 12pm Gatherings for at Old #1 7pm Council Meeting	10 5pm Soup Supper 6pm Midweek Advent Worship 6:30-8:00pm *Element at FIRST *Fusion at FAITH 7pm Joint Choir at Federated	11 9am-12pm Share & Care (quilting)	12 7:15-8:00am Fusion Breakfast (Morris & Hancock)	13 8am Men's Bible Study at Faith Lutheran
14 8:30am Sunday school at First 9:30am Sunday school Christmas Program at FIRST with Fellowship following Deadline for Christmas Toy Shoppe & Poinsettia orders	15	16 11am Pastors' Text Study	17 5pm Soup Supper 6pm Midweek Advent Worship 6:30-8:00pm *No Element *Fusion at FAITH 7pm Joint Choir at Federated	18 12pm Newsletter Articles Due 2pm Zipporah Bible Study in fellowship hall	19 7:15-8:00am Fusion Breakfast (Morris)	20 8am Men's Bible Study at Faith Lutheran
21 8:30am Sunday school at Federated 9:30am Worship at FEDERATED with Fellowship following	22	23 11am Pastors' Text Study	24 Christmas Eve Services 4pm at FEDERATED 7pm at FIRST 9pm at FIRST 	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS! 12pm Free Community Christmas Meal at First	26	27 8am Men's Bible Study at Faith Lutheran
28 No Sunday school 9:30am Worship at FIRST fellowship following	29	30	31			

*All worship services at FIRST are streamed live via Facebook (Morris-First Lutheran Church)
Services are also 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 and is in church office on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.
In the event of an emergency, she can be reached by phone call or text (320-287-2384) any day of the week.*

Coffee Hour is served in the fellowship hall following the worship service on Sunday mornings. The **KINDNESS Service Group** is on the schedule to serve coffee hour during the month of December. Those in the Kindness Service Group are: Ryan & Laura Anderson, Kyle & Amy Dougherty, Sheila & Leroy Fahje, Jay & Joleen Hanson, Allan & Elizabeth Harris, Bruce & Laura McCormack, Allen & Julie Monroe, Jon & Shana Ulrich and Ward & Carol Voorhees. Please sign up on the bulletin board across from the church office.

Lunch Bunch meets on Wednesday, December 3rd at 11:30am at DeToy's. Order off the menu; pay your own way. All are welcome to join us for food and fellowship!

Free! Complete table-top Nativity Scene with stable, animals, manager and important people. Contact Cheryl at 314-570-0700 if interested.

Newsletter Deadline for the January newsletter is noon on Thursday, December 18.

Zipporah Bible Study meets on Thursday, December 18 at 2:00pm in the church fellowship hall.

Blue Christmas Thursday, December 18 at 6:30pm at Federated Church. Please join us for 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.

Endowment the First Lutheran Endowment Committee met and distributed the final quarter for 2025. Funds totaling \$3,502.70 for the following: Olivewood Project, Someplace Safe, West Central Community Action Heating Assistance, Salvation Army, Foster Closet of Stevens County, and Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation.

Thank you to all the co-chairs and volunteers that worked to make our Fall Dinner a success! This dinner couldn't happen without these volunteers and the donations given. Proceeds from the dinner will be split between the Stevens County Food Shelf, ELCA World Hunger and the Salvation Army. The Silent Auction proceeds will be donated to the Fusion Youth Group.

Stevens County Food Shelf supplies a 5-day emergency or supplemental food package to residents of Stevens County. There is no fee for this service, but clients must provide proof of residency. The food shelf welcomes people's donations of food to support our community. Monetary donations are also very helpful in purchasing food supplies. The Food Shelf is located on the corner of 7th Street and Iowa Ave., in Morris. Hours are: Mondays: 2:30pm - 3:30pm; Tuesdays and Thursdays: 5:30pm - 6:30pm; Wednesdays and Fridays: 10:30am - 11:30 am. You can reach the food shelf at 320.589.7436.

Follow us on Facebook at "Morris-First Lutheran Church."

CHUCH COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS: NOV 11, 2025

Committee Reports:

- Property: boiler has been started and a new garage door was installed

Communications:

- City of Morris paid a 40% cost share for the Dutch Elm treatment
- a request to hold a 9:00pm Christmas Eve service that would be lay led was brought to the council. There were no objections and it will be passed to the Worship & Music Committee for planning

Old Business:

- Approved salary contract for Pastor Matt with a review of guideline salary recommendations at a later time.
- Employee reviews to take place before year end.
- Pastor Matt will give a stewardship sermon

New Business:

- discussed percent of tax First will need to pay for the Minnesota Family Leave program.

Treasurer's Report:

- Printed financial reports were given to all council members.

Next month's council meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, at 7:00pm. Devotions by Matt H.

OCTOBER'S GIVING and EXPENSE

\$16,640.75 October giving

\$16,393.90 October expenses

\$170,374.31 Year-to-Date Giving

\$179,122.27 Year-to-Date Expenses

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

EMAIL

morrisfederatedpastor@gmail.com
office@flcmorris.org

CHURCH COUNCIL

Allen Monroe, President
J. Mark Nesvig, Vice President
Naomi Fynboh, Treasurer
Matt Hilbrands, Secretary
Bob Dalager
Elizabeth Harris
Bob Heck

