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# FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

MISSOURI SYNOD ▪ KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE



**First Hearts January 2020**

**1207 North Broadway Knoxville, TN 37917**

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FROM THE PASTOR

## **Yonder Star - Unfolding Beauty**

God's star leads to beauty. Beauty is not what the Wise Men primarily brought with them. To be sure, they were dressed in their finest, and their gifts had surely been gift wrapped by artisans. Far more beautiful than what they brought is what they found.

In the lap of the young mother, Mary, the Wise Men found a Child, Mary's Son, the Lord. They found the Child in the house. They saw the Child. That is why they made the journey. This beauty was more than the magic in an orchid or a sunset.

The beauty at the end of the journey was the bloom—the bright and morning star. This was not a synthetic beauty, painted beauty, pretended beauty; not even a Michelangelo or portrait of mother and child. They saw the Child. They found beauty young, fresh, alive. The Child. The beauty was with bud and bloom and wonder.

Be willing to be overwhelmed with simple beauty. See a child. Find the beauty.

People of God look for beauty and holiness in common places also. We find the Christ in a neighbor, the oppressed, a prisoner, rejected, hungry, poor, a thief. People in Scripture have seen holy signs of beauty in sands of the sea, stars, clouds, donkeys, lambs, turtle doves, a burning bush, a broken reed, a tree stump. We must look slowly and long for beauty. Wait for the bud, the fuller bloom, the full bloom.

Some of us have not opened up yet. We are still half shut. Petals tight. Wait. We will be more beautiful. Wait. Expect the beauty. It is here. If it has not shown itself, wait. It will.

The Magi looked up to follow the star. The star led them to look down and behold— behold God in the Child. What is the price of this great picture? Where will it be auctioned? Who will buy it for their gallery? The Child—this is priceless beauty—not be bought. A Child, a beauty to be found in any home, castle, hovel or palace.

Stay a while with something until it is beautiful A Child. Allow your spirit to respond to sheer beauty. God's people are expectant people. They expect to behold great beauty in the journey.

Behold.

Pastor Rockemann

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Beloved in the Lord,

The Call Committee comes to you with great joy as we recommend Rev. Todd Peperkorn to be called to serve as the next Pastor at First Lutheran Church. From the list of Pastors that we received, we were guided by the Holy Spirit to him. In our interview, he spoke with joy of teaching our rich liturgy to 2 year olds and then reciting it the same day with 100 year olds. He practices closed communion. At his church in California, he started a Wednesday noon service once a month. This has allowed homebound members to have their caretakers bring them. They are able to receive the Word and Sacraments and have a fellowship luncheon after. He sees opportunities for growth, but is also able to accept when something is not working and to try something different. He has worked with Lutheran Schools most of his time as a pastor and his current church has a preschool. He is currently working on his doctorate in ministry. He is married with four children, 11, 13, 15 and 18. His wife is a professional singer and music teacher. Pastor Peperkorn will be a wonderful shepherd to our congregation.

Other pastors we considered were:

Leonard Astrowski

Joel Brondos

Braun Campbell

Jonathan Crawford

Jon Dickmader

Jason Galler

Edward Maanum

William Parsons

We will have a voters meeting on Sunday, January 12, 2020 to extend a call.

In Christ,

The Call Committee

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## Upcoming Events

Sunday School 9:15 am

Divine Service 10:30 am

## Board Happenings

1/14 Elders Meeting 6:30 pm

1/14 School Board 6:00 pm

1/21 Planning Council 6:30 pm

1/18 Trustee Workday 9:00 am

## Monthly Readings:

	Jan. 1 <b>2020</b>	Circumcision and Name of Jesus	Num. 6:22-27	Psalm 8	Gal. 3:23-29	Luke 2:21
	Jan. 5	Second S. after Christmas	1 Kings 3:4-15	Psalm 119:97- 104	Eph. 1:3-14	Luke 2:40-52
<b>EPIPHANY</b>	Jan. 6	The Epiphany of Our Lord	Is. 60:1-6	Psalm 72:1-11 (12-15)	Eph. 3:1-12	Matt. 2:1-12
	Jan. 12	The Baptism of Our Lord / First S. a. the Epiphany	Is. 42:1-9	Psalm 29	Rom. 6:1-11	Matt. 3:13-17
	Jan. 19	Second S. a. the Epiphany	Is. 49:1-7	Psalm 40:1-11	1 Cor. 1:1-9	John 1:29-42a
	Jan. 26	Third S. a. the Epiphany	Is. 9:1-4	Psalm 27:1-9 (10-14)	1 Cor. 1:10-18	Matt. 4:12-25

## In Other News

### Stewardship

Our God is a God who works through means. He can and has worked immediately without agency, as the Bible testifies, but primarily, on the whole and for the most part, our God works through means. He does this not only for all of our earthly needs but also for all of our spiritual needs. And He does this for our benefit.

He provides for all our needs of this body and life through means. He gives us fathers and mothers to care for us when we are young. Through them, God provides house and home, food and clothing, education and training in the arts and work of this world.

He gives us good government to protect us from harm and danger; He gives us faithful neighbors and good friends to help in times of need and lack. He gives us employers who trade our work for income so that we may acquire the needs of the body. He gives us brains and brawn so that we will have something to trade with those employers for that needed income. This work, which we are able to do only because of what God has provided to us, redounds to the benefit of others. And so, the cycle of God giving through means continues.

He provides for all our needs of our souls. He sent His Son into the flesh to be our Savior. In that body, our Lord Jesus Christ lived the life that God demands of us all – a life we have failed to live because of our sins – and, in that body, He made payment for those sins on the cross, once and for all.

God delivers this forgiveness through the means of His Word and Sacraments. He calls pastors to proclaim, in His stead and by His command, that our sins are forgiven for Jesus' sake. Through these same pastors, God Himself claims us as His own in Holy Baptism, placing His own name on us in water and Word, igniting faith by the gift of the Holy Spirit. And He gives us His life-giving body and blood to nourish us in this same faith until the end. Our God is a God who works through means.

This is true also of stewardship. This is what St. Paul wrote in Philippians:

"I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:18–19).

The gift St. Paul received from the Philippian church is a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. They gave to God. God provided for St. Paul through the Philippians. And the God who loves both Paul and the Philippians will supply their every need according to the riches in Christ Jesus. Our God is a God who works through means.

## **55 Alive**

On Thursday, January 16th, at 12:00 noon, we will have a delectable luncheon. Cost is \$7.00 per person. Our speaker will be the new arrival, associate pastor at Grace Lutheran Church, Pastor Danny Anderson, native of Houston, Texas. He is married to Sarah and they have 3 children. Pastor Danny graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in 2008. He was pastor of 3 LCMS churches in Texas before relocating in Knoxville. He will have a special presentation. Hope to see you there!

**Help Needed:** The Board of Trustees is looking for 2 – 4 volunteers to clean the church every week (Fri or Sat). What needs to be done is vacuuming the church carpeting, sacristy, pastor's office and narthex. Volunteers would also empty waste baskets in offices, restrooms, cry room, and choir loft, and straighten up the hymnals. Otherwise, the cost for this service is \$5,000 annually. The current volunteers have been doing this for the last 5 years and need a break.

Let the Trustees know if you can help. Call 865-806-9587

Board of Trustees

## **New Year's Goals:**

Are you making resolutions for the New Year? I try every year, and some years are more successful than others. This year my goals involve growing in faith and getting organized, but I also have goals for First Lutheran. I look forward to building a relationship with our new Pastor, whoever he may be, creating more connections with the other Lutheran churches in the area, and helping our school grow and reach more families in the community.

As you are making your own goals, consider making First Lutheran part of your resolutions.

If your goal is to pray more: As part of your regular prayers, remember to bring before God First Lutheran School. Pray for our mission; teachers; staff; and students; past, present, and future. The teachers and students have been spending more time in prayer, and God continues to answer those prayers sometimes in unexpected ways.

If your goal is to give more: First Lutheran School is the primary mission of First Lutheran Church and a portion of your tithe goes to supporting this mission. Or you can give of you time. It takes great deal of effort to keep up with the needs of more than 100 students, and any support is much appreciated. Offer to volunteer in classrooms or with the Board of Trustees.

If you goal is to strengthen relationships: First Lutheran Church and School is a family. These are relationships that last a lifetime and longer as a community of Christian believers looking ahead to an eternity in Heaven. Share with your friends and neighbors about the quality Christian Education at First Lutheran School and encourage them to send their children. Invite them to church. Provide them with promotional materials and invite them to schedule a tour or visit our Open House. You can also follow us on Facebook or Instagram and share posts.

## **A Favor to Ask:**

Something small you can do to help First Lutheran is to take a moment and write a Google review and/or rate First Lutheran School on Facebook. It would help a great deal because the more reviews we receive, the more we appear in search results.

## **Open House and National Lutheran Schools Week:**

January 27<sup>th</sup> -31<sup>st</sup> we will be celebrating National Lutheran School's week. Every morning we will have chapel and each day do activities celebrating our school and building relationships. On January 30<sup>th</sup> we will be hosting our Open House from 5:30-7:30. Everyone is welcome to attend, and be sure to tell your friends and family who might be looking for schooling options.

Jessie Irwin, Principal



## **Anniversaries:**

4: Jim and Linda Perrine

13: Don and Carolyn Weaver

7: John and Beth Crockett

14: Jeff and Stephanie McKenzie

17: Jim and Rosa Beck

25: Gary and Christina Boatman

## Birthdays:

5: Daryl Veenstra

6: Natalie Brown and Julie Killian

7: Don Yeatts

9: Jana Hotaling

10: Anna Broyles and Lynne Ware

12: Natalie Hotaling

13: Camden Smolter and Lillian Tower

14: Sarah Appleton and Megan Varner

15: Steve Byrd and Amelia Hamilton

18: Josh Blomenberg

19: Shirley Watson

20: Ariej' Robbins

21: Hannah Keyes

25: Nathaniel Davis and Rosie Rosen

27: Doug Slifka

30: Adam Breeden and Roger Wright Sr.

30: Shirley Eimmerman

31: Sean Bales

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