



## **First Hearts   December 2021**

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### **From the Pastor**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

The Ten Commandments place our life in connection to the life of others and before God. The Creed gives the gifts of the Triune God. Now, the Lord's Prayer gives us Christians the words of prayer and hope.

The Small Catechism lays out for us a new theology of prayer — one of Gospel, not Law. Gospel is the language God understands. It is His language. The Lord's Prayer teaches the language, grammar, and syntax of Gospel faith to us.

Luther writes in *An Exposition of the Lord's Prayer for Simple Laymen in 1519* "Since our Lord is the author of this prayer, it is without a doubt the most sublime, the loftiest, and the most excellent. If he, the good and faithful Teacher, had known a better one, he would surely have taught us that too. . . . For every absolution, all needs, all blessings, and all men's requirements for body and soul, for life here and beyond, are abundantly contained in that prayer. It would be better for you to pray one Lord's Prayer with a devout heart and with thought given to the words, resulting in a better life, than for you to acquire absolution through reciting all other prayers." [LW 42: Devotional Writings p 21 22]

Compare that to what most books of prayers, patterns of prayers, and rules for how and when to pray to teach. Now I'm not saying that all books of prayers are bad. Some prayer books like Starck's Prayer Book, the Lutheran Prayer Companion, and the section in the hymnal are good and right to use. I don't think anything needs to be said about the value of the Psalms and praying them daily.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer argued that one could arrange the entire Psalter into the Lord's Prayer. That's because both the Lord's Prayer and the Psalter teach us to remember that Baptism gives us access to the Father, how faith and life are made new in God's name, why trusting in God's will is good, what true thanksgiving looks like, how to confess our sins and absolve others, what to do in the face of temptation, how to have confidence in the face death, and that it is Christ who says, "Amen" for us in every promise of God.

So what makes some prayer books good and others bad? Well, it comes down to what Scripture and the Small Catechism teach us about prayer. Most books view prayer as a father and son playing catch. We (son) throw the ball (prayer) to the Father who throws it back with His answer. Or, prayer puts God as a deity vending machine. Just pop in quarter and press B7 and you'll get whatever you requested in that coil.

But the opposite is true. Prayer begins with God's Word to us. God speaks. We repeat. God listens to our repeating. We are praying in the name of Jesus. He is listening to us because He listens to His Son. Through Him, we offer our prayers to God. So, we begin with Jesus' Words and His prayer.

Until next time, Happy Advent

Pastor Maanum

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**Weekly Events**

Sunday - Divine Service 9:30 am; Sunday School & Bible Study following  
 Wednesday - Advent Services 3:45pm and 6:30pm and Soup and Sandwich dinner at 5pm

## Board Happenings

11/14 - School Board 6:00pm  
 11/14 - Board of Elders 7:00pm  
 11/21 - Planning Council 6:30pm

## Other Church Activities

12/4 - Men's Bible Study 8:00am  
 12/5 - Advent by Candlelight 5:30pm  
 12/12 - Children's Christmas Program 10:45am  
 12/12 - Soup & Sing Carols - Time TBA  
 12/13 - Ladies' Bible Study 7:00pm  
 12/18 - Men's Bible Study 8:00 am

## School Activities

12/10 - Christmas Program 6:00pm  
 12/20 - 12/31 - Closed for Christmas Break

<b>ADVENT</b>	Nov. 28 <b>2021</b>	First S. in Advent	Jer. 33:14-16	Psalms 25:1-10	1 Thess. 3:9-13	Luke 19:28-40 or Luke 21:25-36
	Dec. 5	Second S. in Advent	Mal. 3:1-7b	Psalms 66:1-12	Phil. 1:2-11	Luke 3:1-14 (15-20)
	Dec. 12	Third S. in Advent	Zeph. 3:14-20	Psalms 85	Phil. 4:4-7	Luke 7:18-28 (29-35)
	Dec. 19	Fourth S. in Advent	Micah 5:2-5a	Psalms 80:1-7	Heb. 10:5-10	Luke 1:39-45 (46-56)
<b>CHRISTMAS</b>	Dec. 24 Eve	The Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas Eve)	Is. 7:10-14	Psalms 110:1-4	1 John 4:7-16	Matt. 1:18-25
	Dec. 25 Midnight	The Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas Midnight)	Is. 9:2-7	Psalms 96	Titus 2:11-14	Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)
	Dec. 25 Dawn	The Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas Dawn)	Is. 62:10-12	Psalms 98	Titus 3:4-7	Luke 2:(1-14) 15-20
	Dec. 25 Day	The Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas Day)	Is. 52:7-10	Psalms 2	Heb. 1:1-6 (7-12)	John 1:1-14 (15-18)
	Dec. 26	First S. a. Christmas	Ex. 13:1-3a, 11-15	Psalms 111	Col. 3:12-17	Luke 2:22-40
	or	St. Stephen, Martyr	2 Chron. 24:17- 22	Psalms 119:137- 144	Acts 6:8-7:2a, 51-60	Matt. 23:34-39
	Dec. 31	Eve of the Circ. and Name of Jesus (New Year's Eve)	Is. 30:(8-14) 15-17	Psalms 90:1-12	Rom. 8:31b-39	Luke 12:35-40

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## **In Other News**

### **Stewardship**

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the great physician of both body and soul, healed a man with dropsy by His Word on the Sabbath (Luke 14:1–6). Dropsy is a paradoxical ailment, with an unquenchable craving for drink even though the body is over inflated with fluid, a craving that, when indulged, served not to ease but to feed the disease.

And so, if a man drinks a great deal but is never filled, he sees a doctor to inquire about what ails him, what is wrong with his body, and how to remedy it.

But if the owner of five couches goes looking for 10, or the owner of 10 tables buys up as many again, and even though he has plenty of land and money, he remains unsatisfied and desires yet more, losing sleep and always in discontent, does he not also require a physician to diagnose the cause of this distress?

This is why our Lord instructs us to not to be consumed by money. “No one can serve two masters ... You cannot serve God and money” (Matt. 6:24; Luke 16:13). Our desire for money, like the disease dropsy, is never satisfied. We always desire more. We think, “If I just had this much then I would be happy.”

To overcome this, we need a physician’s diagnosis and a physician’s remedy. And our Lord Jesus Christ, our great physician of both body and soul, applies His Word to us as He did to the man healed of dropsy. He shows us how we have put our fear, love, and trust in our money and not feared, loved, and trusted in Him above all things.

So we no longer hoard money and possessions. We give to those around us, as God in Christ has given to us. We press our money and possessions into service for those who need it: our family, our society and our church. For money is God’s gift to us to serve us and others. Not the other way around. It serves us because it is a gift from our Father in heaven.

**Sunday School** - Just a reminder that we have Sunday School available from Pre-School through High School. Pre-School-1st grade meets in the Library, 2nd-6th grade meets in Ms. Jessie's room, and 7th grade-High school meets in Mrs. Hofman's room. Please join us. We'd love to have you!

**Ushers** - Are you looking for a way to help out around church? We need volunteers to help out with usher duties and to lead the usher teams on Sunday mornings. Please speak to Greg Buckner if you would like to volunteer.

**Youth!** Mark your calendars, join in fun and fellowship after Sunday School on the third

Sunday of every month.

**Nuts** - the Youth will be selling nuts again this year. Pricing and ordering information below.

## *It's PECAN Time at First Lutheran Church!*

Youth Group is selling Atwell PECANS, Cashews and Pistachios to help fund their trips. Assorted nuts will be here in time for your Thanksgiving and Christmas desserts!

Please see or call Shellia Byrd (865-300-8350) if you would like to order.

High Quality Cashews and Atwell PECANS and the YOUTH  
REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT!

Mammoth Atwell Pecan Halves (1 lb)	\$ 12.00 per bag
Atwell Medium Pecan Pieces (1 lb)	\$ 12.00 per bag
Roasted & Salted Cashews (1 lb)	\$ 10.00 per bag
Roasted & Salted Pistachios in Shell (1 lb)	\$10.00 per bag



**Online Services:** Please visit the church website [www.firstknoxville.org](http://www.firstknoxville.org) to view our worship services and to participate in worship at your home. There are also links for Bible study and other resources.

**Facebook Page:** Follow First Lutheran on Facebook for all the latest updates:  
<https://www.facebook.com/KnoxFirstLutheran/>

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## **News from First Lutheran School**

It is a seasonal cliché. Ornaments and decorations plastered with words like “JOY,” “HOPE,” “LOVE,” or “PEACE.” However, hanging a sign with a word written in pretty script does not through some Christmas magic bring that sentiment into your life or home.

True joy, hope, love, and peace can only come from one source: an awesome God who cares for us so much he sent his perfect son to be born in a lowly stable for our salvation.

The gift of His son is the ultimate gift. It is the gift that keeps on giving long after those pretty, little ornaments are put away. Jesus brings us joy, hope, love, and peace all year round and for our whole lives.

When a child attends First Lutheran, they learn about this ultimate gift. They hear daily about the love of Christ. They have hope for eternal life in heaven. They have the joy, joy, joy down in their heart, and it can be heard in the songs of praise emanating from the classrooms or sanctuary. In a world filled with chaos, they have the peace that passes understanding which comes with relationships grounded in the love of Christ.

During this month, the gift can be seen as school families work through the Advent calendar organized by our PTL. This celebration involves praying for our school families, reading a devotion, and completing an activity. It is a great way to grow in faith and as a community. Extra copies of the devotion book and schedule are available in the office or in the back of the church.

Additionally, our students put together trees for the Fantasy of Trees which is a fundraiser for Children’s hospital. They are also making cards for those who might need a little extra joy this season. Finally, on the 10th at 6:00pm we will be having our school Christmas concert. If you can’t attend in person, it will be streamed online.

Though it is always a great time at First Lutheran, this time of year is truly the most wonderful.

Hope and blessings,  
Jessie Irwin, Principal

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**Birthdays:**

Dec. 3: Jeannie Brown; Vicki Broyles  
Dec. 4: Diane Baum; Mary Jones; Cathy Price  
Dec. 5: Abby Wheat  
Dec. 6: Rebecca Keyes  
Dec. 8: Zachary Blais  
Dec. 9: Branson Holton; Joe LaDue  
Dec. 12: Jered Keiser; Linda Perrine; Pastor Schulz; Justin Turner  
Dec. 17: Robert Boatman  
Dec. 18: Joshua Rodenbeck  
Dec. 19: Howard Rash  
Dec. 20: Samuel Witt  
Dec. 24: Stephanie Johnson  
Dec. 25: Kara Sircy  
Dec. 26: Doc Sternberg; Marissa Whitehead  
Dec. 28: Louisa Nutter; Gloria Schulz  
Dec. 29: Lillie LaDue  
Dec. 30: Rose Broyles; Margaret Ortstadt  
Dec. 31: Carlyle Roth

**Anniversaries:**

Dec. 16: Chuck & Diane Baum  
Dec. 27: Ed & JoAnn Niedens