



## First Hearts   January 2022

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### **From the Pastor**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In the Small Catechism, Martin Luther teaches that 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.

The Lord's Prayer gives us  
Christians the words of prayer and hope.

Before the Reformation, children had a longer list of the sacraments because they were important in a life where the preached Word was rare. Penance, not Baptism, became the primary Sacrament — the primary means by which God comes to us.

Luther comes along and turns this upside down from the way it was, which is to say, he put it right. Luther reminds us that God has come to destroy our false idols by creating faith and trust in who God is what He does for us. He makes us His own and strengthens us for this life.

God does this strengthening by using His Sacraments. It's all about what God is doing for us in Jesus. Jesus is the One who speaks. So the Sacraments are His Words, His Gospel, His speaking in Word and Water in Baptism. The Word, the speaking of Jesus, makes the Sacrament a means of forgiveness.

Like a good father, Martin Luther anticipates potential questions from his children. In the catechism, he answers the questions in turn.

What is it? It's water and God's Word that takes away our sins.

Isn't it just plain water? Nope. It has God's Word added to it. The Sacrament of Baptism, then, is like a jewel set in a ring. Both are needed. Water and Word, see Matthew 28.

What is Baptism good for? Baptism is how God forgives us, rescues us, and gives us a new identity in Jesus. Read Mark 16

How is this all possible? Remember, it is not water alone, but water with the Word. Both are needed. The Word of Jesus and the water. Look at Titus 2.

Finally, what's the point of all of this water and Word stuff anyways? It's how we live now as repentant and forgiven sinners now, and in eternity as clean children. Read Romans 6.

That's enough for today. Happy Season of the Epiphany.

Pastor Maanum

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## **Weekly Events**

Sunday - Divine Service 9:30 am; Sunday School & Bible Study following

## **Board Happenings**

1/11 - School Board 6:00pm

1/11 - Board of Elders 7:00pm  
1/18 - Planning Council 6:30pm

### Other Church Activities

1/10 - Ladies' Bible Study 7:00 pm  
1/15 - Men's Bible Study 8:00 am  
1/23 - Youth 12:00 pm  
1/24 - Ladies' Bible Study 7:00 pm  
1/30 - Potluck Luncheon to welcome new members (following Sunday School)

### School Activities

1/17 - Martin Luther King Day - Holiday - No School  
1/27 - Open House 5:30pm - 7:30pm

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	Jan. 1 <b>2022</b>	Circumcision and Name of Jesus	Num. 6:22-27	Psalms 8	Gal. 3:23-29	Luke 2:21
	Jan. 2	Second S. a. Christmas	1 Kings 3:4-15	Psalms 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	Psalms 72: 1-11 (12-15)	Eph. 3:1-12	Matt. 2:1-12
	Jan. 9	The Baptism of Our Lord / First S. a. the Epiphany	Is. 43:1-7	Psalms 29	Rom. 6:1-11	Luke 3:15-22
	Jan. 16	Second S. a. the Epiphany	Is. 62:1-5	Psalms 128	1 Cor. 12:1-11	John 2:1-11
	Jan. 23	Third S. a. the Epiphany	Neh. 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10	Psalms 19:(1-6) 7-14	1 Cor. 12:12-31a	Luke 4:16-30
	Jan. 30	Fourth S. a. the Epiphany	Jer. 1:4-10 (17-19)	Psalms 71:1-6 (7-11)	1 Cor. 12:31b- 13:13	Luke 4:31-44

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### In Other News

#### Stewardship

'Tis More Blessed to Give Than to Receive

"In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" (Acts 20:35)

And indeed, it is. Does this not strike a chord that resonates in us all? Which of us can't recall the look of surprise and thanks for the Christmas gifts that we labored to give to those whom we love? And the joy written on their face when that gift is received with thanksgiving means more than all the gifts we have received. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Our Lord knew this because He practiced it. He gave of Himself – sparing not even His life in death – in order to give us back to our Father in heaven. He knew that in giving you get more because joy is multiplied in giving. The one who receives and the one who gives both rejoice in what is given and received. And, what is more, the one who receives only wants to give back to the one who gave so generously in thanksgiving.

So it is with our tithes and offerings in church. We want to give because we have received from God all that we are and all that we have. Our giving does not originate in what we must do to earn God's favor. We have God's favor because of His gift of His Son, given through Word and Sacrament. Thus, we are made free from the compulsion of giving so that our tithes and offering are freely given in thanksgiving for what God has so generously given to us.

Why then does the church struggle to make budgets? Why does the church always seem stretched so thin when it is the place where God continually gives us His forgiveness of sins? Why does the church struggle when God, out of love for us, generously pours out His grace and mercy?

It is because we are sinners. Our fallen nature makes us selfish and miserly. It leads us to believe that we can have our cake and eat it, too. Because of sin, we want God's grace and mercy; we want His blessings of body and soul. But we don't want to share it with those around us. We want to remain comfortable in our own self-contained, neat, and tidy lives – without the headaches of loving those around us by helping them in their time of need.

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” Remember that God has placed you in a church, not only to receive His grace and mercy, but to press His eternal and temporal blessings into service to your neighbor.

Your tithes and offerings ensure that those around you have a pastor to preach the life-saving and life-giving Word of God. They ensure that the lights, heat, and air-conditioning are working. They ensure there is water for Holy Baptism as well as bread and wine for Holy Communion. They even ensure that your pastor has food and clothing and presents for his own family. The gifts of God are immeasurable. They multiply and redound to everyone's good as the fish and loaves in the feeding of the five thousand.

So, remember the words of the Lord Jesus: “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” And remember the joy that attended the gifts you gave at Christmas. This same joy attends your gifts to the church.

**Potluck Luncheon** – There will be a potluck luncheon following Sunday School/Bible Study on Sunday, Jan 30<sup>th</sup> to welcome our new members. Please bring a dish or two and help us welcome our new members.

**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. **\*In January, the Youth will meet on the 4th Sunday (January 23rd).**

**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/>

#### **Budget through December 31, 2021**

Church Income	\$172,875
School Income	\$491,600
Total Income	\$664,475
Church Expenses	\$142,486
School Expenses	\$481,000
Total Expenses	\$623,486
Net Profit	\$40,989



#### **News from First Lutheran School**

The holidays are over. You may have already packed away the Christmas decorations and even lapsed on your New Year resolutions. The year 2021 may not have been what we expected. However, it was filled with blessings, and according to the academic calendar we are just in the middle of things.

At First Lutheran, we finished up our second quarter with an amazing Christmas program, plenty of smiles and good cheer all around. Our students are continuing to learn explaining their mind and their understanding of God's world and the people he created.

Our Basketball and cheer teams demonstrate that a true athlete doesn't just have physical skills, but also can demonstrate true sportsmanship to their teammates, opponents and to others.

The 4th and 5th grade class decided they wanted to raise \$150 to purchase an alpaca for a family through the charity, Heifer International; instead, they baked their hearts out, and their tasty treats were bought up quickly bringing the total raised to over \$400. Their hard work allowed them to purchase 2 alpacas, a beehive, chickens and rabbits all of which go to help families in need who can use these animals to support their households. To further demonstrate the generosity of our students, our chapel offerings, which totaled over \$800, went to CASA of East Tennessee which works to support children in juvenile abuse and neglect court cases.

Ultimately, we were shown time and time again that what makes First Lutheran special is how Christ's love and grace can be seen in everything we do.

Looking ahead to the rest of the month, we have our Open House on Thursday, Jan. 27th from 5:30pm - 7:30pm. This is when we kick off our enrollment for the 2022-2023 school year for students from 1 year old through 8th grade. Current and prospective families are welcome to attend, meet the teachers, see the classrooms, and enjoy our soup and salad dinner. Don't hesitate to invite your friends and neighbors to come and learn more about joining the First Lutheran family. We look forward to seeing everyone there!

Hope and blessings,  
Jessie Irwin, Principal

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**Birthdays:**

Jan. 6: Natalie Brown; Julie Killian

Jan. 7: Don Yeatts

Jan. 9: Jana Hotaling

Jan. 10: Anna Broyles

Jan. 12: Natalie Hotaling  
Jan. 13: William Wade  
Jan. 14: Sarah Appleton; Megan Varner  
Jan. 15: Steve Byrd; Amelia Hamilton  
Jan. 17: Ellie Chrapliwy  
Jan. 18: Josh Blomenberg  
Jan. 19: Clinton Gross; Shirley Watson  
Jan. 20: Ariej' Robbins  
Jan. 21: Hannah Keyes  
Jan. 25: Nathaniel Davis; Rosie Rosen; Karen Spaid  
Jan. 26: Liam Bales  
Jan. 27: Bob Eisold; Doug Slifka  
Jan. 30: Adam Breeden; Shirley Eimmerman; Roger Wright (Sr.)  
Jan. 31: Sean Bales

**Anniversaries:**

Jan. 3: Jim & Linda Perrine  
Jan. 6: Bob & Kara Sircy  
Jan. 13: Don & Carolyn Weaver  
Jan. 14: Jeff & Stephanie McKenzie  
Jan. 25: Gary & Christina Boatman

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