



# FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH CHIMES

*Sharing Christ's Love*

January 2025  
Volume 64, Issue 1  
[www.firstgeneseo.org](http://www.firstgeneseo.org)

**WORSHIP WITH US THIS WEEKEND!**

Worship Saturday 5:30 p.m.  
Worship & Livestream Sunday 9:30 a.m.

## *Annual Congregational Meeting*

Sunday ~ January 26, 2025  
10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

### **Congregational Meeting Agenda:**

- I. Attendance and Establishment of a Quorum
- II. Opening Prayer
- III. Approval of Annual Meeting Minutes from January 28, 2024
- IV. Reports of the Pastors, Program Staff, Preschool
- V. Reports of all Ministries, Committees and Organizations
- VI. Treasurer's Report and Reading of the 2025 Proposed Budget
- VII. Adoption of 2025 Budget
- VIII. Report of the Nominating Committee
- IX. Elections
- X. Election Results
- XI. Closing Prayer and Adjournment



### **FIRST NOTES:**

- Noisy Offering and Cinnamon Roll Sunday the weekend of January 4 & 5!
- First Friends on Thursday, January 9 at 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Room.
- First Book Club on Thursday, January 16 at 2 p.m. in Grace Place.
- Bible Study on Wednesday, January 22 at 1:30 p.m. in Conference Room A.
- Worship at Liberty Village on Sunday, January 26 at 1 p.m.
- Sacred Spaces: Healing opportunities at 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. on Tuesday, January 28.

# Youth & Family Ministry News

Ministry is always changing, always growing, always adapting. This is especially true for ministry with children, youth, and families.

Abbey Cathelyn, our Director of Youth & Family Ministry, began her ministry in this position in early 2020, just before our whole world shifted in significant ways. In the last almost 5 years, she has been re-imagining ministry in many ways, including introducing a new-to-us curriculum for Faithtime Kids (Godly Play) and re-introducing Milestone Ministries.

In 2024, we gathered a team to review the scope of ministry for the Director of Youth & Family Ministry, which is a part-time (30-hour per week) position. This team included myself, Abbey, Lendol Calder (Congregation President), Jodi Barnhart (Personnel Committee), Kathy Heller (Council), and Megan Wildemuth. We met throughout the summer and fall months, with a goal of revising Abbey's position description, which included responsibilities for ministry with all children and youth in the congregation, birth through high school. We reviewed the goals for various age groups within our congregation. For all age groups, our goals include:

- Nurturing the spiritual growth of our child members
- Providing them with a safe, welcoming, and loving environment for worship, learning, service, and play through the stories of the Bible and the traditions of the church
- Supporting parents as the primary faith formation influencers in their children's lives
- Supporting the congregation in fulfilling the promises we make to children when they are baptized
- Fostering relationships and community among families and across generations

For children in middle school and high school, our goals are expanded to include:

- Assisting youth with discernment of their future
- Introducing youth to leadership opportunities and the work of the larger Church

In order to help us achieve these goals as a congregation, the task force recommended adjustments to the position description for the Director of Youth & Family Ministry. Personnel Committee reviewed the changes and recommended the revised position description to the Council for approval, which happened at our November meeting. The position remains a part-time (30-hour per week) position, now responsible for ministry with children ages birth through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. In addition to Faithtime Kids, Vacation Bible School, and Confirmation programming, Abbey's role now includes:

- developing activities for Preschool Chapel time,
- eleven Milestone Ministry event/blessing opportunities throughout the year, and
- the development of Worshipping Together, which involves an integrated message time for worshippers of all ages, age-appropriate worship activities for children, and inter-generational events throughout the year.

The Personnel Committee and Council also approved a recommendation from the task force to create a new position, Director of High School Ministry, which is a part-time (10-hour per week) position, focusing on the needs of our 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.

As I write, I am hopeful that funding for this new position will be included in the 2025 proposed budget. The reality of that will depend on our anticipated income, which is based on the commitments we've received for 2025. For those who have already committed

*—continued on the next page*

to supporting the ministry of First Lutheran Church in 2025, THANK YOU! If you haven't committed yet, it's not too late. You can still turn in your commitment card or fill out the form online using the QR code.



When parents bring their children for Holy Baptism, and again when our high school students affirm their baptismal promises in the Rite of Confirmation, we promise, as a congregation, to support these children in their life in Christ. I encourage each of you: continue to pray for our ministry with children and youth. Volunteer, as you're able, to help nurture their faith in Jesus Christ. And give generously, knowing that your tithes and offerings are supporting this holy work.

—Pastor Laura

#### January 4 & 5, 2025

##### **Christmas 2**

This weekend's texts include Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14 and John 1:1-18.

#### January 11 & 12, 2025

##### **Baptism of Our Lord**

This weekend's texts include Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17 and Luke 3:15-17, 21-22.

#### January 18 & 19, 2025

##### **Epiphany 2**

This weekend's texts include Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 and John 2:1-11.

#### January 25 & 26, 2025

##### **Epiphany 3**

This weekend's texts include Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a and Luke 4:14-21.

## **FIRST WORSHIP & MUSIC**

### **Worship at Liberty Village**

Pastor Matt and Melinda will lead worship at Liberty Village on January 26 at 1 p.m. Volunteers are needed to help lead singing, and all are welcome to worship with our members and friends!

*Please keep the following Lifelines petitions in your prayers:*

**World and Community:** For the people of Ukraine, Israel, and Gaza. For our leaders: President Joe Biden and Governor J.B. Pritzker. For health care workers. For all who work for peace and justice. For those serving our country in the military, especially Brian Hanshaw (*Jan & Steve Weber's son-in-law*), Jacob Hartman, Brandon Sandoval, Christopher Unrath, Law Enforcement Officers and First Responders.

**Church:** For our bishops: Rev. Elizabeth Eaton and Rev. Stacie Fidler. For our partners in ministry: Pastor Emmanuel Gideon Mollel and the people of Osupuko Parish in Tanzania, Rev. Dr. Peter Paul Thomas, Bishop of the Arcot Lutheran Synod, India. For missionaries who share the Gospel around the world. For Lutheran Social Services of Illinois and Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center. For our pastors, parish staff, Preschool staff and Church Council (names listed on pg. 8).

**Health and Wellbeing:** Carol Boyd, Hudson Goose (*Jill Laingen's family friend*), Joey Eaker (*Jeff & Patti Boyer's grandson*), Gretchen Jones (*Maurie Nelson's friend*), Nola Klemmer (*Diane Lowe's cousin*), Alan Novak (*Melissa McCarty's father*), Peggy Schram (*Doris Swanson's daughter*), Barbara Sigwalt (*Kathi Fluck's friend*), Janice Stojek and Al Wolf (*Becca Hutchinson's father*).

**Joys:** On the birth of Graham Stanley Helseth, grandson of Tami & Pete Eckberg.

**Thanksgiving:**

**Sorrows:** On the deaths of Gail Hutchinson, member; and Linda Buyck, friend of Linda Mullin and Char Daniels.

*If you wish to submit a prayer request, please visit [www.firstgeneseo.org](http://www.firstgeneseo.org) and use the password First! to access the prayer request form in the Member Access Section. If you or a member of your family have a medical procedure planned or are admitted to the hospital, please call the church office. In the event of an after-hours emergency please contact Pastor Matt at 703-505-9517.*

## **FIRST PRAYER**

## FIRST MINISTRIES



### Sacred Spaces: Healing

“Sacred Spaces” is an opportunity for 1-on-1 pastoral care with Pastor Laura. The sacred space is set up in Grace Place, and our time together will focus on healing, including anointing. Two windows of time are offered – feel free to arrive anytime during those hours and leave after you are finished visiting and praying with Pastor Laura (*you won’t need to spend the whole hour at the church*).

#### Sacred Spaces: Healing

Tuesday, January 28  
1-2 p.m. or 6-7 p.m.

### Creation Care Book Study | Northern Illinois Synod

Join the Creation Care Subcommittee as we read and discuss the book *Coming Home to Earth* by Pastor Mark Brocker this January and February. This book helps us to ground our need to care for the earth in our faith in God and our theology of heaven. When we believe that we experience eternal life here on earth, we realize that we must sustain the earth for all eternity. Zoom studies are held on Sunday evenings January 12 – February 16 at 6 p.m.

### Take a Pillow, Leave a Donation

On the weekends of January 18 & 19 and 25 & 26, you will find a display of handmade throw pillows in the Fellowship Room. These pillow tops were stitched by Nancy Gustafson, and her family is now making them available to any in the congregation who would like one (or five). You are welcome to choose the pillow(s) you want, and leave a donation in the box for ELCA World Hunger.

### Geneseo Breast Cancer Support Group

We would like to welcome anyone who is currently in their breast cancer journey or is a breast cancer survivor to attend our Breast Cancer Support Group (BCSG) dinner meeting on January 20 at 5 p.m. in the Fellowship Room. Please contact one of us if you have interest in attending. Thank you!

Pam Martens: 309-507-1201

Chris Ward: 563-529-4515

Dee Menendez: 309-945-2555

### First Book Club

Come and join us for discussion on the content of the book *The Personal Librarian* and faith response to the author Marie Benedict on Thursday, January 16 at 2 p.m. in Grace Place.

In her twenties, Belle da Costa Greene is hired by J. P. Morgan to curate a collection of rare manuscripts, books, and artwork for his newly built Pierpont Morgan Library. Belle becomes a fixture in New York City society and one of the most powerful people in the art and book world, known for her impeccable taste and shrewd negotiating for critical works as she helps create a world-class collection. But Belle has a secret, one she must protect at all costs. She was born not Belle da Costa Greene but Belle Marion Greener. She is the daughter of Richard Greener, the first Black graduate of Harvard and a well-known advocate for equality. Belle’s complexion isn’t dark because of her alleged Portuguese heritage that lets her pass as white—her complexion is dark because she is African American. Be sure to pick up a copy and read this remarkable novel!

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## Faithtime Kids (*Wednesdays Afterschool*)

Faithtime resumes on Wednesday, January 8!

### All children Grades K-5

January 8	<i>Epiphany</i>
January 15	<i>Holy Baptism</i>
January 22	<i>Parable of the Good Shepherd</i>
January 29	<i>The Light</i>



## FIRST MINISTRIES

### Confirmation (*7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders*)

We continue to explore Luther's Small Catechism this month, meeting each Wednesday, 5:45-7:00 p.m. Our class schedule is:

January 1 — No Class ( <i>Christmas Break</i> )	January 22 — <i>Holy Communion</i>
January 8 — <i>The Lord's Prayer</i>	January 29 — <i>The Cross</i>
January 15 — <i>Holy Baptism</i>	

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## Milestones Ministry

### *Anniversary of Baptism - A "Walking Wet" Milestone*

Join us on Sunday, January 8 on the Baptism of our Lord as we celebrate all who were baptized in the past year.

The Anniversary of Baptism is an opportunity to remind everyone that living our baptism is a lifelong journey- and one needs to be prepared to live and walk wet! Those who were baptized in the past year should have received a letter in the mail with details regarding the event.

### *Pray and Play*

Three and four-year-old children and their families learn about the gift of prayer, God's love; and how that love helps us navigate life.

**Event:** January 25 ~ 10-10:45 a.m.

**Blessing:** January 26



## Spark Bible Reading Guides

Each month, families with children in grades K-2 will receive a Spark Bible Reading guide in their email! This guide accompanies the Spark Story Bible your child already has at home. Each month features four Bible stories to read and discuss with your children! If you do not have a Spark Story Bible and would like a copy, contact Abbey Cathelyn, Director of Youth & Family Ministry at [youth@firstgeneseo.org](mailto:youth@firstgeneseo.org).

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## FIRST MINISTRIES

### First Lutheran Preschool

Preschool resumes Monday, January 6, 2025. Winter weather, ice and snow will be a focus for all classes in January. Both classes will have indoor snow days, bringing the snow in for experiments and art. The 3-year-olds will go on a scavenger hunt around the church in search of a gingerbread man who has run away with their cookie dough! They will also use snowmen to learn about size and ordering. The 4-year-olds will learn about owls, read the book "Owl Moon" and go owling. We will also visit the Cover Girls quilting group for the letter Q. Our families will work together at home to complete a snowflake project to share with the class.

- **No School** on Monday, January 20 – Martin Luther King Jr Day

### Women's Ministry

#### Cover Girls Quilting

Cover Girls is starting another year of quilting and you're invited! Come and join us tying quilts made of donated fabrics on Wednesday, January 8, 15 & 22 in Grace Place. All are welcome!

#### Bible Study

We will gather on Wednesday, January 22 at 1:30 p.m. in Conference Room A. We will be using the Lutheran magazine, "Gather" for our study guide. Everyone is welcome!

### First Friends

Kick-off the New Year with a plan to join us at First Friends lunch on Thursday, January 9 at 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Room. Menu includes Lemon Chicken & rice. Cost is \$7. Please sign up at the Welcome Center or call the church office to let us know you will be joining us. New faces are ALWAYS welcome!

### HHH Health Series

#### Upcoming Women's Topic: "Chair Yoga"

Women's Health Program will be held at the Geneseo Community Center Activity Room on Thursday, January 23 from noon – 1 p.m. Cost of the luncheon is \$12. Reservations may be made by calling Hammond-Henry Hospital at 944-9112 or emailing a response to [hhh-found@hammondhenry.com](mailto:hhh-found@hammondhenry.com).

### Online Giving Options

Our church depends on consistent giving from our members in order to offer in-person and online Worship services, ministries for adults, youth and families, as well as special projects and events. For convenience, we offer a safe and easy online giving option.

It allows you to give once or set up automatic recurring contributions.

Visit [www.firstgeneseo.org/giving](http://www.firstgeneseo.org/giving) and click on "Make A Secure Online Gift Today" or scan this QR code.

#### Did you know?

This QR code is on the back side of the attendance cards in the bulletin each week. So if you forget your giving envelope or wallet or want to make a special donation, just scan the QR code on the back of the attendance card and follow the prompts from there. Thank you for your continued generosity.



## Food Pantry Collection

The Geneseo-Atkinson Food Pantry is collecting *flour, sugar, brown sugar, baking soda, salt, toilet paper, dish soap, paper towels, Kleenex and body wash* to share with those in our community. Donations may be left in the basket by the church office.



## FIRST MINISTRIES

### Here's an easy way to make a difference for those in need!

The Food Pantry has a charity wish list of items currently needed on Amazon. You can even choose to have the item(s) shipped directly to the Geneseo-Atkinson Food Pantry, 620 W Main Street, Geneseo, IL 61254. Thank you for your support! [Amazon Charity list.](#)

## Thank You

With much appreciation from the heart.  
The little Christmas tree was quite a surprise. Thank you

—Connie Carlson

### A Special Note of Thanks!

Thank you so much for the mini Christmas trees. They are just beautiful and have such great detail to them! We know they will brighten and bring Christmas cheer to our residents.

We truly appreciate you and a Merry Christmas to you all!

Sincerely,  
—Hillcrest Home

## Council Highlights for December 16, 2024

### Council approved the following measures:

- A motion from the Social Ministry to approve \$600 for Sol's Legacy, a local horse therapy ministry.
- A motion from the Building & Property to approve up to \$1,500 for fire extinguisher coverage and signage by Tri-State Fire Control.
- Motions from the Personnel Committee to set the pastor housing allowance in 2025 at \$37,713 and the staff mileage reimbursement to be set at the IRS rate for 2025.
- A motion to approve going over budget in calendar year 2024 in line item "Spirituality"

### Other matters discussed included:

- First Lutheran's insurance contract with Church Mutual is up in February and will not be renewed (*an increasingly common problem for churches everywhere*). The search is on for a new company to insure us, and Dan Brudos is working on getting quotes.

- The Synod's request that we do a full Constitution review before they approve our suggested changes to First's Constitution.
- The 2025 Preliminary Budget
- Annual Congregation Meeting, scheduled for January 26<sup>th</sup>. In a departure from previous practice, this year there will be no congregational forum held the week before the Annual Meeting. Reflecting on recent forums, the Council deemed such a meeting unnecessary.

### November Financial Report

#### General Fund Offering:

November actual	\$37,919
November budget	\$36,508
YTD actual	\$450,949
YTD budget	\$441,992

#### Net Income Over Expenses:

November actual	\$1,760 deficit
November budget	\$4,027 deficit
YTD actual	\$1,722 deficit
YTD budget	\$26,166 deficit



## FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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*A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

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### ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

#### Noisy Offering

A *Noisy Offering* will be collected the weekend of January 4 & 5 to benefit Homes of Humility. Bring your nickels and dimes!

#### STAFF DIRECTORY

**Rev. Laura Kamprath**  
lkamprath@firstgeneseo.org

**Rev. Matt Kamprath**  
mkamprath@firstgeneseo.org

**Melinda Wildermuth**  
*Director of Worship & Music*  
worship@firstgeneseo.org

**Mary Jo Brummet**  
*Parish Administrator*  
mjbrummet@firstgeneseo.org

**Abbey Cathelyn**  
*Director of Youth & Family Ministry*  
youth@firstgeneseo.org

**Linda Bloomberg, Receptionist**  
receptionist@firstgeneseo.org

**Erin Vorac, Communications Specialist**  
communications@firstgeneseo.org

**Chasidy Gonnella, Parish Accountant**  
accountant@firstgeneseo.org

**Patsy Andress, Financial Secretary**  
financials@firstgeneseo.org

**Charlene Daniels, Custodian**  
cdaniels@firstgeneseo.org

**Larry Lord, Livestream Technician**  
**Hilary Anselmi, Nursery Coordinator**

#### COUNCIL

Lendol Calder—*President*

Jeff Boyer—*Vice-President*

Kathy Heller—*Secretary*

Mike Ficken—*Treasurer*

Cindy Groene, Jamian Haser,  
Julie Kunkel, Lorrie Lord,  
Sam Marshall, Linda Sheley,  
Matt Simosky

#### Meeting Schedule:

Cabinet — No Meeting in January  
Ministries — No Meeting in January  
Council — Monday, January 13

#### PRESCHOOL STAFF

Misty Slaymaker, *Director*  
Margi Ficken  
preschool@firstgeneseo.org

**NEXT CHIMES DEADLINE:**  
**THURSDAY, JANUARY 9**

#### OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Tuesday-Thursday

8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Wednesday

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Friday

Office Closed

Closed for Lunch ~ Noon-1 p.m.

#### STAFF SCHEDULE

**Rev. Laura Kamprath**  
Monday-Thursday

**Rev. Matt Kamprath**  
Monday & Wednesday

**Melinda Wildermuth**  
Monday-Thursday

**Mary Jo Brummet**  
Monday-Thursday

**Abbey Cathelyn**  
Monday-Thursday

**Linda Bloomberg**  
Monday-Thursday, select hours