



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH CHIMES

Sharing Christ's Love

March 2025
Volume 64, Issue 3
www.firstgeneseo.org

WORSHIP WITH US THIS WEEKEND!

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

Turning Toward God's Abundance

LENTEN WORSHIP SERVICES

Ash Wednesday, March 5

Holy Communion & Imposition of Ashes

Services at Noon & 6:30 p.m. ~ Livestream at 6:30 p.m.

Soup & Salad Lunch—12:45 p.m.

Vegetable Beef & Spinach Soup



Wednesday, March 12

Midweek 1 ~ Faithfulness

Service at Noon

Soup & Salad Lunch—12:30 p.m.

Chili & Chicken and Wild Rice

Augustana Lutheran Church, Andover

Simple Meal at 6 p.m. followed by evening

Worship about 6:35 p.m. in Luther Hall

Wednesday, March 19

Midweek 2 ~ Mercy

Service at Noon

Soup & Salad Lunch—12:30 p.m.

Beef Lentil & Tomato Tortellini

Augustana Lutheran Church, Andover

Simple Meal at 6 p.m. followed by evening

Worship about 6:35 p.m. in Luther Hall

Wednesday, March 26

Midweek 3 ~ Compassion

Service at Noon

Soup & Salad Lunch—12:30 p.m.

Zuppa Toscana & Taco Soup

Augustana Lutheran Church, Andover

Simple Meal at 6 p.m. followed by evening

Worship about 6:35 p.m. in Luther Hall

Care Ministry Conversation

“Pastor, I have an idea for ministry...” is one of my favorite things to hear. It means you are listening to the Holy Spirit’s call on your life and responding faithfully.

At my field education congregation as a seminary student, my supervising pastor told me, “We strive to be a permission-giving congregation. When someone has an idea for ministry, we try to help them make it happen.” I hope that you all experience First Lutheran as a permission-giving congregation.

There are, of course, many logistical considerations to any ministry project or program. Scheduling, organization, leadership, communication, and budgeting, for instance. Who is in charge? How is it to be funded? Who is invited to participate, and how will they know?

Our congregation’s Constitution, Bylaws, & Continuing Resolutions include descriptions of ten ministry teams:

- Worship & Music Ministry
- Social Ministry
- Evangelism Ministry
- Stewardship Ministry
- Finance Ministry
- Property & Grounds Ministry
- Christian Education Ministry
- Youth Ministry
- Congregational Life Ministry
- Spirituality & Wellness Ministry

Of these 10 teams, 6 are currently “staffed” and active. Evangelism, Spirituality & Wellness, Christian Education, and Youth Ministry teams are not actively meeting, which means that the work of these teams is being coordinated by staff members.

In addition to the work of these teams, there are many other ministry programs happening in our congregation, including Christmas Tree Blessings, First Friends, First Book Club, Cover Girls Quilting, Funeral ministry, Helping Hands, Community Christmas Dinner, and FLC Garden. We

also have an Audit Committee, Investment Committee, Nominating Committee, Personnel Committee, Mission Endowment Committee, Scholarship Committee, and a Preschool Board of Directors.

In recent months, we have noticed as a staff that many of the programs of our congregation that seek to care for the members of our church family would benefit from being centrally organized. We have a rather large church family (almost 800 members and friends!), and we want to be able to provide Christian care to any who are in need – rides for those who don’t drive; meals for folks recovering from surgery; support after the death of a loved one; remembering our homebound members on birthdays and holidays; honoring those who are Veterans; regular communion visits to the homebound. Many of these things are being done by various groups within our congregation, including Social Ministry, Helping Hands, FLC Garden flower delivery crew, and Christmas Tree Blessings, and we wondered if the time was right to gather these groups under one “umbrella.”

You are invited to attend a conversation about creating a Care Ministry team, which would be responsible for coordinating care for those in our church family when they are sick, injured, homebound, grieving, or otherwise struggling. We will gather in Conference Room A on *Sunday, March 9 at 10:45 a.m.* Grab a cup of coffee and a treat and join the conversation. Bring your questions and ideas, and together we will consider many of the “how” questions. We know the “why” – we care for each other because we are *Sharing Christ’s Love*. We’ll work together to figure out how we can do this work most effectively.

—Pastor Laura

March 1 & 2, 2025

Transfiguration of Our Lord

This weekend's texts include Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99; 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2; and Luke 9:28-43a.

March 5, 2025

Ash Wednesday, Noon & 6:30 p.m.

Today's texts include Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10; and Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21.

March 8 & 9, 2025

Lent 1

This weekend's texts include Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Romans 10:8b-13; and Luke 4:1-13.

March 12, 2025 — Midweek 1, Noon

Today's focus is Faithfulness.

March 15 & 16, 2025

Lent 2

This weekend's texts include Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3:17-4:1; and Luke 13:31-35.

March 19, 2025 — Midweek 2, Noon

Today's focus is Mercy.

March 22 & 23, 2025

Lent 3

This weekend's texts include Isaiah 55:1-9; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; and Luke 13:1-9.

March 26, 2025 — Midweek 3, Noon

Today's focus is Compassion.

March 29 & 30, 2025

Lent 4

This weekend's texts include Joshua 5:9-12; Psalm 32; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; and Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32.

FIRST WORSHIP & MUSIC

Worship at Liberty Village

Pastor Laura and Melinda will lead worship at Liberty Village on March 30 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 Donald Trump 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 Ilkiding'a and Osupuko Parishes 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: Janet Anderson, Nancy Barnhart (*Chris Barnhart's mother*), Ann Behrendt (*Phil Wildermuth's sister*), Courtney Benke (*Mindy Brown and Melissa McCarty's friend*), Carol Boyd, Joey Eaker (*Jeff & Patti Boyer's grandson*), Jim Heller, Gretchen Jones (*Maurie Nelson's friend*), Sharon Matson (*Jodi Martin's co-worker and friend of Steve & Jodi Martin*), Alan Novak (*Melissa McCarty's father*), Joe Schellhase (*Jodi Barnhart's father*), Peggy Schram (*Doris Swanson's daughter*), Barbara Sigwalt (*Kathi Fluck's friend*) and Sheryl Smyth (*Linda Bloomberg's friend*).

Joys:

Thanksgiving: For a successful surgery for Jim Heller. Continued prayers for healing are welcomed. For the men and women serving on the team for the upcoming Living Water Via de Cristo March 20-23.

Sorrows: On the deaths of Betty J. Davis, sister of Doris Swanson; Lauretta Swanson-Drescher, sister-in-law of Doris Swanson; Glen D. Anderson, member; and Phyllis Wirt, sister of Mike Pries.

If you wish to submit a prayer request, please visit 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

“Sacred Spaces” during Lent includes an opportunity for individual confession & forgiveness. The “sacred space” will be set up in Grace Place. Each person will have an opportunity to meet one-on-one with Pastor Laura. You may plan to arrive anytime during the two-hour window, and you are welcome to leave after you are finished visiting and praying.

Sacred Spaces:

Individual Confession and Forgiveness

Tuesday, March 4 ~ 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Easter Garden

We invite you to help decorate the sanctuary with beautiful spring flowers for Easter! Easter lilies, hyacinths, daffodils, tulips, or mums may be ordered in memory or honor of a loved one. The cost is \$18 for any variety. These flowers may be ordered by completing the form located in the pew racks or by calling the church office at 944-3196. Please make checks payable to First Lutheran Church. Our deadline is April 1. Names will be recognized in the bulletin on Easter Sunday, April 20. You may take a plant of your choice home after the 10:30 a.m. Easter service.

2025 Men's Lenten Breakfasts

All men in the community are invited to come enjoy a delicious breakfast at 7 a.m. on the following Saturday mornings during Lent. A free-will donation is collected at each breakfast.

March 8	First Lutheran Church
March 15	Saint Malachy Church
March 22	Grace United Methodist Church
March 29	Geneseo First Methodist Church
April 5	Loraine Church

Worshipping Together

Our Worshipping Together kick-off for the season of Lent will be Sunday, March 9. For the first three weeks, we will use the book *Make Room: A Child's Guide to Lent and Easter*. We will explore how to create openings for God-windows where the Spirit can enter and transform us, and through us, the world.

Welcome Pastor Paul Olson!

The Mission Endowment Committee is pleased to welcome Pastor Paul Olson as our guest preacher on the weekend of March 15 & 16. Pastor Olson will be the first of several guest preachers during our multi-year campaign: *Celebrating a Proud Past, Preparing for a Faithful Future*.



Pastor Olson served as the Pastor of First Lutheran for 10 years, from 1988 to 1998. After his call here, he served St. John's Lutheran in Springfield, Illinois from 1998 until 2011. He retired from full-time parish ministry in 2011 after 40 years of being ordained. In retirement, he continued serving the church with Capital Campaign work for Lutheran Social Services of Illinois and interim pastor positions.

Currently, he and his wife Evelyn live in Glen Ellyn, Illinois. Pastor Olson leads a weekly Bible Study at their home congregation, Faith in Glen Ellyn, and occasionally helps with worship leadership and preaching. Much of his time now is spent working in their gardens and landscaping and trying to get a little white ball into a hole in the ground! (He reports that the success rate on that is yet to be determined!) He also enjoys bike riding, walking, and visiting family across the country.

We hope you are all able to join us on the weekend of March 15 & 16 to welcome Pastor Olson back to Geneseo, as together we continue to celebrate our proud past and prepare for a faithful future.

Faithtime Kids (*Wednesdays Afterschool*)

The Faces of Easter story and lessons help children to prepare for the Mystery of Easter. We move toward the Mystery by hearing the stories of Christ's journey toward the cross and resurrection.

FIRST MINISTRIES



All children Grades K-5

March 5	Ash Wednesday ~ Faithtime Kids will meet.
March 12	<i>Faces of Easter</i>
March 19	No Faithtime — <i>Spring Break</i>
March 26	<i>Faces of Easter</i>

Our QUEST: The Mysterious Meal

"This is Christ's body, given for you." "This is Christ's blood, shed for you."

How weird! We go to the Lord's table and consume our Savior? What?!

As we near the end of this year's QUEST for sixth graders, we're talking about the mysterious meal: HOLY COMMUNION. This segment of our program has two major highlights. First, we visit the sacristy. (*If you don't know what that is, ask a 6th grader!*) While there, we learn from Darla Anderson of the Altar Guild, who patiently shows and tells about all the special things that happen before and after the congregation gathers for communion. Second, the students get to bake communion bread in the church kitchen!

Next: LAST SUPPER (SORT OF)

The first week of March, we'll finish our QUEST with a shared meal. The students will each prepare a dish to share—a way of serving and honoring one another and celebrating just how much we've learned and grown by asking QUESTions.

On Sunday, March 9, the QUEST participants will be recognized in worship for reaching this milestone in their faith development. Please congratulate these young people and encourage them as they prepare to enter the Confirmation program next year:

Eli Curcuru, Savanna DeSplinter, Anna Kamprath,
Addison Kinnard, Simon Runty, and Brynn Wildemuth



Milestones Ministry: *Come to the Table*

March 30, April 6 & 13

Blessing: April 17 (*Maundy Thursday*)

We invite third graders to this milestone to delve deeper into this special gift for all. Although we typically offer our communion preparation to third grade, anyone is welcome to participate and receive their first communion.

According to an article by Rev. Dr. Shawn Strout, there are two things to look for when deciding if your child is ready:

- Does the child recognize on some level that what is happening here is different and special? (It is not just ordinary bread; it is special bread!)
- Does the child want to receive it? (Outstretched hands, bright expression)

Please ask Pastor Laura or Abbey if you have questions about whether your child is ready to come to the table.

FIRST MINISTRIES

First Lutheran Preschool

The three year old class will be sharing about themselves and their families. We'll share the book "The Roly-Poly Egg" and talk about how important we are to our families. The four year olds will enjoy game week with a focus on following rules, taking turns and problem solving. Both preschool classes will be welcoming in the spring season this month with crafts, songs and activities.

- **Spring Break** will be Monday, March 17 - Friday, March 21. School will resume on Monday, March 24.

Mission Endowment

As of February 18, we have received 26 commitments. A total of \$49,255.28 has been received toward our Mission Endowment Fund Campaign: *Celebrating a Proud Past, Preparing for a Faithful Future* goal of \$170,000. Commitments can be returned anytime in the offering plate at Worship, mailed to the church, or submitted online at www.firstgeneseo.org/giving.



First Book Club

Come and join us for discussion on the content of the book *Lasagna Means I Love You* (Geneseo Middle School On the Same Page Community-Read) and faith response to the author Kate O'Shaughnessy on Thursday, March 20 at 2 p.m. in Grace Place.

Mo's life is turned upside down when her Nan dies and she enters foster care. Nan advised her to get a hobby, and Mo throws herself into cooking and collecting other people's family recipes and the stories attached to them. During a year of bitter losses, sweet successes, and salty mishaps, this feisty New York City girl will discover that if she wants a family recipe—or a real family—of her own, she's going to have to make it up herself. Readers will laugh, cry, and embrace Mo completely! Read the book and join our discussion!

Council Highlights for February 17, 2025

- Welcomed new members of Council, Chris Ahlstrand, Chase Anselmi and Eli Palmer.
- Appointed Audit Committee member Judi Denys. Larry Lord has accepted a position with the Mission Endowment Committee.
- Reviewed Easter Sunday service times to be 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.
- Reviewed Holy Week services, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Saturday Easter Vigil all to at 6 p.m.
- Lenten Wednesday services to be at Noon followed by a soap and salad lunch in Geneseo. Wednesday evening services will be offered to us at the Andover church at 6 p.m.
- Discussed Saturday evening worship location arrangements, further discussion to follow.
- Approved \$475 and \$880 for Amplify Service Planning and Amplify Media (Website/Data).
- Approved \$1,000 for organ repair.
- Approved \$300 for ELCA Coaching sessions for Pastor Laura.
- Approved receiving new members Linda Carr and Mike & Connie Zerull. To be welcomed March 1 or 2, 2025.

January Financial Report

General Fund Offering:

January actual	\$88,851
January budget	\$78,808
YTD actual	\$88,851
YTD budget	\$78,808

Net Income Over Expenses:

January actual	\$47,670 surplus
January budget	\$29,523 surplus
YTD actual	\$47,668 surplus
YTD budget	\$29,523 surplus

Council approved the following measures:

- Approved request from World Relief Quad Cities for \$1,000.

Women's Ministry

Cover Girls Quilting

Come see what Cover Girls are all about! Join us for a time of fellowship and fun tying quilts for LWR on Wednesday, March 5, 12 & 19 in Grace Place. All are welcome!

Bible Study

We will gather on Wednesday, March 26 at 1:30 p.m. in Conference Room A. We will be using the Lutheran magazine, "Gather" for our study guide. Everyone is welcome!

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 March 17 at 5 p.m. in the Fellowship Room. Please contact one of us if you have an interest in attending. Thank you!

Pam Martens: 309-507-1201

Chris Ward: 563-529-4515

Dee Menendez: 309-945-2555

Thank You!

Several "Thank You" notes were received from the Valentine Gift bags recipients expressing their appreciation to everyone who wrote a note, signed a Valentine card, and shared delicious candy and snacks! It made for a very special Valentine's Day! Thank you again to Social Ministry and all those who participated — you're great!

FIRST MINISTRIES



HHH Community Health Series

Upcoming Men's Topic:

"Maintaining a Healthy Lifestyle"

Men's Health Program will be held at Hammond-Henry Hospital in the first floor conference room on Wednesday, March 5 from 7 to 8 a.m. Those attending may purchase breakfast in the hospital dining room.

Upcoming Women's Topic:

"Healthy Eating & Cooking"

Women's Health Program luncheon will be held at the Geneseo Community Center Activity Room on Thursday, March 27 from noon — 1 p.m. The cost of the luncheon is \$12. Reservations for either of these programs may be made by calling Hammond-Henry Hospital at 944-9112 or email hhhfound@hammondhenry.com.

Food Pantry Collection

The Geneseo-Atkinson Food Pantry is collecting *spaghetti sauce, vegetable oil, cereal, mayonnaise, canned pineapple, lotion, deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, body wash and toothpaste* to share with those in our community. Donations may be left in the basket by the church office.



Another opportunity ... Do you want to achieve significant life changes and receive help and support setting and reaching your goals? Then the **Five Loaves** program at Geneseo-Atkinson Food Pantry is for you! Call 309-944-3165 or visit geneseofoodpantry.org for more information.



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Noisy Offering

A *Noisy Offering* will be collected the weekend of March 1 & 2 to benefit the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center (LOMC). Bring your nickels and dimes!

STAFF DIRECTORY

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Larry Lord, Livestream Technician

Hilary Anselmi, Nursery Coordinator

COUNCIL

Jeff Boyer—*President*

Sam Marshall—*Vice-President*

Julie Kunkel—*Secretary*

Matt Simosky—*Treasurer*

Chris Ahlstrand, Chase Anselmi,

Cindy Groene, Jamian Haser,

Kathy Heller, Lorrie Lord,

Eli Palmer, Linda Sheley

Meeting Schedule:

Cabinet — Monday, March 10

Ministries — Monday, March 10

Council — Monday, March 24

PRESCHOOL STAFF

Misty Slaymaker, *Director*

Margi Ficken

preschool@firstgeneseo.org

**NEXT CHIMES DEADLINE:
TUESDAY, MARCH 11**

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