



# FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH CHIMES

*Sharing Christ's Love*

January 2026  
Volume 65, 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.

## *Congregation Forum*

Sunday ~ January 18, 2026  
10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Please join the Church Council for a Congregation Forum on Sunday, January 18 at 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. We will present a First Reading of the 2026 Budget and answer your questions about the Annual Report, so that we are prepared for the Annual Meeting on January 25.

## *Annual Congregation Meeting*

Sunday ~ January 25, 2026  
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 26, 2025  
Special Congregation Meeting Minutes from August 3, 2025  
Special Congregation Meeting Minutes from October 19, 2025
- IV. Reports of the Pastors, Program Staff, Preschool
- V. Reports of all Ministries, Committees and Organizations
- VI. Treasurer's Report and Reading of the 2026 Proposed Budget
- VII. Adoption of 2026 Budget
- VIII. Report of the Nominating Committee
- IX. Elections
- X. Ratification of Constitution Amendments
- XI. Election Results
- XII. Closing Prayer and Adjournment



# Happy Colorful New Year!

Four weeks ago, we started a new year on November 30<sup>th</sup>. This isn't the typical calendar new year, but rather one that came with new worship paraments and liturgy. It can be hard to notice the subtle ways that the worship season changes, especially when we are doing fun, one-off things like Lessons and Carols and the intergenerational Christmas program. However, the new year has crept up on us, a season of Advent and waiting that transforms into Christmas and excitement, and then Epiphany and light!

The cycle of the liturgical year is marked by colors, most significantly the paraments or the worship banners and decorations that we use in worship. Here is a quick summary of the liturgical seasons, their corresponding colors, and what they mean:

**Blue** = Advent: Blue is the color of hope and royalty as we wait for the newborn king. Some churches use purple, but we follow the Scandinavian custom of using blue in Advent because purple dye was too expensive for churches to use.

**White** = Christmas/Epiphany/Baptism of Our Lord/Transfiguration/Easter/Christ the King: White and gold symbolize light and joy. These days are the most special and joyful times that we celebrate together!

**Purple** = Lent: Purple suggests repentance and solemnity.

**Red** = Pentecost/Reformation: Red, the color of fire, is used for Pentecost when we remember the tongues of fire that descended on the crowd in Jerusalem. Red is also used for Reformation and for ordinations when we celebrate the Holy Spirit descending on a new pastor or deacon.

**Green** = Time after Epiphany/Time after Pentecost: Green is used as a "neutral" color in the church to symbolize ordinary time. It represents our growth in Christ. It is especially fitting throughout the summer as the earth is also in a green, growing season.

If you visit other congregations that follow our pattern of marking time through the liturgical year, such as Catholics, Episcopalians, and Methodists, you will see similar colors, though each congregation may have their own traditions relating to color.

As you walk into the sanctuary this year, I invite you to be mindful of the space you see around you. How can the colors, shapes, and sounds lead you into a worshipful mindset? Celebrating God's colorful creation,

—*Vicar Madelyn*

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### January 3 & 4, 2026

#### **Christmas 2**

This weekend's text include Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14 and John 1:[1-9] 10-18.

### January 10 & 11, 2026

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

This weekend's texts include Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29; Acts 10:34-43 and Matthew 3:13-17.

### January 17 & 18, 2026

#### **Epiphany 2**

This weekend's texts include Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 and John 1:29-42.

### January 24 & 25, 2026

#### **Epiphany 3**

This weekend's texts include Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27:1, 4-9; 1 Corinthians 1:10-18 and Matthew 4:12-23.

### January 31 & February 1, 2026

#### **Epiphany 4**

This weekend's texts include Micah 6:1-8, Psalm 15, 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 and Matthew 5:1-12.

## **FIRST WORSHIP & MUSIC**

### **Worship at Liberty Village**

Pastor Laura and Inger Oswald will lead worship at Liberty Village on Sunday, January 25 at 1 p.m. Volunteers are needed to help lead singing, and all are welcome to worship with our members and friends!

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*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, Christopher Unrath, Law Enforcement Officers and First Responders.

**Church:** For our bishops: Rev. Yehiel Curry 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 pastor, parish staff, Preschool staff and Church Council (names listed on pg. 8).

**Health and Wellbeing:** HHH Long-Term Care and their families, Elisa \_\_\_\_\_ (*Kathie DeJaeger's friend*), Ann Behrendt (*Phil Wildermuth's sister*), Courtney Benke (*Mindy Brown and Melissa McCarty's friend*), Carol Boyd, Mazie Calderon, Kathie DeJaeger, John Elden, Paul Flynn (*Maurie Nelson's friend*), Gretchen Jones (*Maurie Nelson's friend*), Christine Korth (*Kim Sefton's aunt*), Neo Wilder Lampe (*Mike & Ethel Pries's great grandson*), Karen Myhre, Alan Novak (*Melissa McCarty's father*), Marlene Prestegaard (*Kim Sefton's cousin*), Mike Pries, Peggy Schram (*Doris Swanson's daughter*), Barbara Sigwalt (*Kathi Fluck's friend*), Charlotte Sperfslage (*Mel Becker's great-granddaughter*), Tracy Taber (*Barb Burghgrave's niece*) and Steve Weber.

#### **Joys:**

#### **Thanksgiving:**

**P.L.E.A. (Praying to the Lord Expecting Answers):** For our next Director of Youth & Family Ministry. O God, you invite us to come before you persistently in prayer, asking for all that we need. Ministry with children, youth, and families is a vital part of our congregation's mission. Send us the right candidate for this ministry – a faithful disciple who will be ready to teach, equip, and serve. Continue to strengthen each staff member and volunteer through this interim period, as we teach and lead our children and youth. Prepare this congregation to receive our next leader with welcome, ready to work together for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*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 Laura at 703-505-8710.*

## **FIRST PRAYER**

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## FIRST MINISTRIES



### Faithtime Kids (Wednesdays Afterschool)

#### All children Grades K-5

January 7	<i>Epiphany</i>
January 14	<i>Holy Baptism</i>
January 21	<i>Parable of the Good Shepherd</i>
January 28	<i>Good Samaritan</i>

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

We continue our journey through the Bible this month, meeting each Wednesday, 5:45-7 p.m. with our classmates from Augustana Lutheran Church, Andover. Our class schedule is:

**January 7** – Matthew & Mark

**January 14** – John

**January 21** – Luke & Acts

**January 28** – Paul's Theology

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### Milestones Ministry

#### *Celebration of Baptism*

Join us on Sunday, January 11 on the Baptism of our Lord as we celebrate all who were baptized in the past year. This milestone is an opportunity to remind everyone that living our baptism is a lifelong journey.

#### *Pray and Play*

Preschool aged children and their families learn about the gift of prayer. They practice talking to God, listening to God, and asking for God's guidance in daily life.

**Event:** Saturday, January 24 ~ 10 a.m.

**Blessing:** Sunday, January 25

### First Book Club

First Book Club *will not* meet in January. During January and February be sure to curl up in a warm spot and read *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver. Be sure to mark your calendar and join us for discussion on Thursday, February 19 at 2 p.m. in Grace Place.

Set in the mountains of southern Appalachia, *Demon Copperhead* is the story of a boy born to a teenaged single mother in a single-wide trailer, with no assets beyond his dead father's good looks and copper-colored hair, a caustic wit, and a fierce talent for survival. Relayed in his own unsparing voice, *Demon* braves the modern perils of foster care, child labor, derelict schools, athletic success, addiction, disastrous loves, and crushing losses. Through all of it, he reckons with his own invisibility in a popular culture where even the superheroes have abandoned rural people in favor of cities. Many generations ago, Charles Dickens wrote *David Copperfield* from his experience as a survivor of institutional poverty and its damages to children in his society. Those problems have yet to be solved in ours. Dickens is not a prerequisite for readers of this novel, but he provided its inspiration. In transposing a Victorian epic novel to the contemporary American South, Barbara Kingsolver enlists Dickens' anger and compassion, and above all, his faith in the transformative powers of a good story. *Demon Copperhead* speaks for a new generation of lost boys, and all those born into beautiful, cursed places they can't imagine leaving behind.

## Healing Hearts

Healing Hearts meets monthly for lunch and conversation. All widows at First Lutheran are invited to join us at State Street Café on Wednesday, January 7 at 11 a.m. Please RSVP to Kathy Rogers, coordinator of the group, at (309) 945-5132 or call the church office. *(Reservations necessary)*

## HHH Health Series

### Upcoming Women's Topic: "Balance and Vertigo"

Women's Health Program will be held at the Geneseo Community Center Activity Room on Thursday, January 22 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 [hfhfound@hammondhenry.com](mailto:hfhfound@hammondhenry.com).

## High School Youth Group

We meet on the first and third Sundays of the month at 5 p.m. for dinner, fellowship, and Bible study. This month, we meet on January 4 and 18. Friends are always welcome!

## FIRST MINISTRIES

### First Friends

Come warm up with First Friends ... Fellowship, Comfort Food and Conversation! We will gather in the Fellowship Room at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 8 for a meal of chicken casserole, sides and dessert. Cost will now be \$8 *(still the best bargain in town!)* Please be sure to sign up at the Welcome Center, on the App or by calling the church office.

### Mission Endowment

As of December 15, a total of \$68,002.08 has been received toward our Mission Endowment Fund Campaign: *Celebrating a Proud Past, Preparing for a Faithful Future* goal of \$170,000. Give a gift anytime in the offering plate at Worship, mailed to the church, or submitted online at [www.firstgeneseo.org/giving](http://www.firstgeneseo.org/giving).



## Welcome Pastor Lisa Parker!

The Mission Endowment Committee is pleased to welcome Pastor Lisa & Rod Parker on the weekend of January 31 & February 1. Pastor Lisa will be our guest preacher, as part of our campaign "Celebrating a Proud Past, Preparing for a Faithful Future."

Pastor Lisa Parker, who served First Lutheran as a pastoral intern from August of 2005 to August of 2006, is currently in her sixth year serving as pastor at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Indianola, Iowa. Prior to accepting the call at Redeemer, she served as pastor at Resurrection Lutheran in Ankeny, Iowa. Her husband Rod, after almost 30 years as an engineer with the University of Iowa School of Music, is now working full-time as a freelance audio engineer, mostly in central Iowa. In their spare time, they like to travel by train, particularly to visit family members, including their siblings and their 34 nieces and nephews. We hope you can join us on the weekend of January 31 & February 1 to welcome Pastor Lisa and Rod back to Geneseo.

## FIRST MINISTRIES

### First Lutheran Preschool

Preschool Resumes Monday, January 5, 2026. 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 19 - Martin Luther King Jr Day

### 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 Wednesdays, January 7, 14, 21 and 28 in Grace Place. All are welcome!

### Bible Study

We will gather on Wednesday, January 28 at 1:30 p.m. in Conference Room A. We will be using the Lutheran magazine, "Gather" for our study guide. Everyone is welcome!

### Coming in 2026! ~ Messiah returns to Augustana

*February 22, 2026 • 3 p.m.*

Directed by Dr. Jon Hurty, the 200-member Augustana Oratorio Society will perform Handel's masterwork "Messiah" at 3 p.m. Sunday, February 22, in Centennial Hall. "Messiah," the beloved baroque masterpiece that has moved audiences for nearly three centuries with its soaring choruses and profound musical storytelling of hope and redemption, has been performed by the Augustana Oratorio Society since 1881. Musicians of the Augustana Oratorio Society include community members, Augustana students, members of the Augustana Choir and the Augustana Choral Artists.

### Council Highlights for December 15, 2025

- Had an update from Swanson Task Force, reviewing what we can do with Fellowship Room, we have one estimate and will reach out for another estimate.
- Approved new Sexual Harassment and Sexual Abuse policy.
- Mileage rate to be the same as IRS for 2026.
- Approved funding for Inger Oswald to attend Association of Lutheran Church Musicians Conference in Minnesota.
- Accepted Jim Carter and Inger Oswald as voting members of the congregation.
- Approved new housing allowance for Pastor Laura Kamprath for 2026.
- Reviewed budget for 2026, will be finalized in January.

#### November Financial Report

##### General Fund Offering:

November actual	\$46,506
November budget	\$37,308
YTD actual	\$446,585
YTD budget	\$458,292

##### Net Income Over Expenses:

November actual	\$2,407 surplus
November budget	\$4,667 deficit
YTD actual	\$17,291 deficit
YTD budget	\$41,223 deficit

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## Thank You

Warm thanks to all the volunteers and to those providing dump trailers on storage cleanup day at church on Saturday morning, November 22. Your help made a real difference, *"thank you!"*

—Maurie Nelson & Jeff Boyer

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Thank you to everyone who chose an angel and purchased gifts for the residents of Allure and Hillcrest Home! It is appreciated so much! Thank you for sharing Christ's Love!

—Social Ministry

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Thanks for the Christmas tree - wish I had been here when you delivered it. It's just the perfect size for my table. Also thank you for the calendar.

—Connie Carlson

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Thank you for the Christmas tree and calendar. I truly appreciate your thoughtful gift. Often the nights are very long, and the gifts make my day a little brighter.

Sincerely,  
—Patricia Holman

## Food Pantry Collection

The Geneseo-Atkinson Food Pantry is collecting *spaghetti sauce, sweet potatoes, stuffing, baking ingredients including flour, sugar, vanilla, chocolate chips, juices, water, toilet paper, paper towels, men's body wash, toothpaste, toothbrush, cleaning supplies, baby wipes, diapers, shampoo, conditioner and deodorant* to share with those in our community. Donations may be left in the basket by the church office.

**Another opportunity ...** The clothing room is especially in need of: warm gloves, winter boots, snow pants, underwear (all sizes) bath towels and washcloths.

- **Please Note:** The Food Pantry will be closed January 1 & 2. Happy New Year!

## A Special Note of Thanks!

My heartfelt thanks to the dear members of First Lutheran for the beautiful Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) Foster Care Christmas Gifts. Everything was beautifully bagged to bless 40 Angels in the LSSI Foster Care System. Thank you to everyone who helped coordinate this project and load all the gifts into my car on a very cold night.

Thank you for sharing Christ's Love and have a Blessed Christmas,

—Kathy Nelson

LSSI Cornerstone Foundation  
Lifetime Member

## FIRST

## MINISTRIES



## Thank You

Thank you for thinking of us this holiday season with the Christmas trees. They are very beautiful. You brightened up our room and our hearts. Happy New Year!

Blessings of Jesus all year long,  
—Kathy Dennison & Marj Neuman





## 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 3 & 4 to benefit the Building Fund. Bring your nickels and dimes!

#### STAFF DIRECTORY

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

**Vicar Madelyn Knutson**  
*Intern*  
vicar@firstgeneseo.org

**Inger Oswald**  
*Director of Worship & Music*  
worship@firstgeneseo.org

**Mary Jo Brummet**  
*Parish Administrator*  
mjbrummet@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*

**Heidi Fleming**  
*Interim Faithtime Director*  
youth@firstgeneseo.org

#### PRESCHOOL STAFF

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

#### 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.

#### 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:

Special Council Meeting

**Monday, January 12**

Ministries — **Monday, January 12**

Council — **Monday, January 19**

**NEXT CHIMES DEADLINE:  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 8**