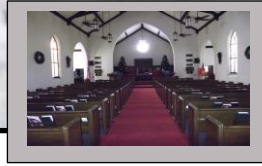


# FIRST FRUITS

WE GIVE OUR FIRST FRUITS

BECAUSE HE GAVE US HIS ONLY SON

December 2021



Volume 24 No. 12

*First Things First...*

## FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

***And who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?***

**Esther 4:14**

No, I am not confused—at least not regarding the date on the calendar. It is December and that means it is soon to be Christmas. So, why is the text for a Christmas column taken from Esther? Wouldn't it make more sense to choose the narrative of Matthew or the traditional report of Jesus' birth found in Luke? Isn't that what Christmas is all about: the Savior's Nativity? I cannot recall how many times I have written and spoken about keeping the true meaning of Christmas as **the** meaning and celebration of this season of festive gatherings. Although the story of Esther is a fascinating part of the Scriptures, how does it have anything to do with the celebration of Christ coming into the world?

About a month ago, I was visiting with a parishioner about the book of Ruth. I confused a fact that is true of the book of Esther with the book of Ruth. That fact is: the word "God" does not appear in Esther (the introduction to the book does not count!). The providence of the Almighty One is abundantly visible as the tale unfolds. Despite extremely dangerous threats and plots by her foe, Esther courageously stands up for her fellow Jews and the chosen people of God are delivered from annihilation. I offer the following to justify my choice of Esther 4:14 as the basis of this Christmastide article.

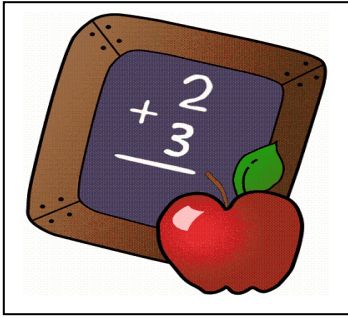
The most obvious correlation between Christ and the story of Esther resides in Christ standing up for every person who has ever lived and providing deliverance from annihilation. He entered humanity so He could die a sinless death that offers forgiveness of sin and the promise of eternal life to everyone who believes in Him. He chose to face the deceitful jealousy of the predominate leaders of the Jewish religious order, abandonment by His closest friends and best students and He stood alone before the greatest governmental authority of the world. He did it so He could face and defeat death.

Not only did Jesus stand up for all people of every age, but He stood alone. He was and is the only one worthy to satisfy the wrath of God. He alone could pay for sin. He could offer Himself because He was the only human to live a life without sin. The same was true of Esther. She was chosen to be the wife of the Persian, King Xerxes. She was chosen because of her beauty. Christ was chosen by the Father to become the atoning sacrifice for sinful mankind because of the beauty of His sinless perfection.

Finally, I offer the timeline similarity between Esther and the Savior. She came "to the kingdom (of Persia as queen) for such a time," and Jesus was born "in the fullness of time" (Galatians 4:4). Beginning as a baby, born in fulfillment of prophecy, He was and is Son of God and Son of Man to deliver us from the power of sin and death. So, we celebrate His birth through worship named the *Christ-Mass*. Christmas is a time to celebrate the coming of our Savior God, to remember why this time of year is so special.

Merry Christmas: today and always!

Pastor Grier



# First School And Day Care

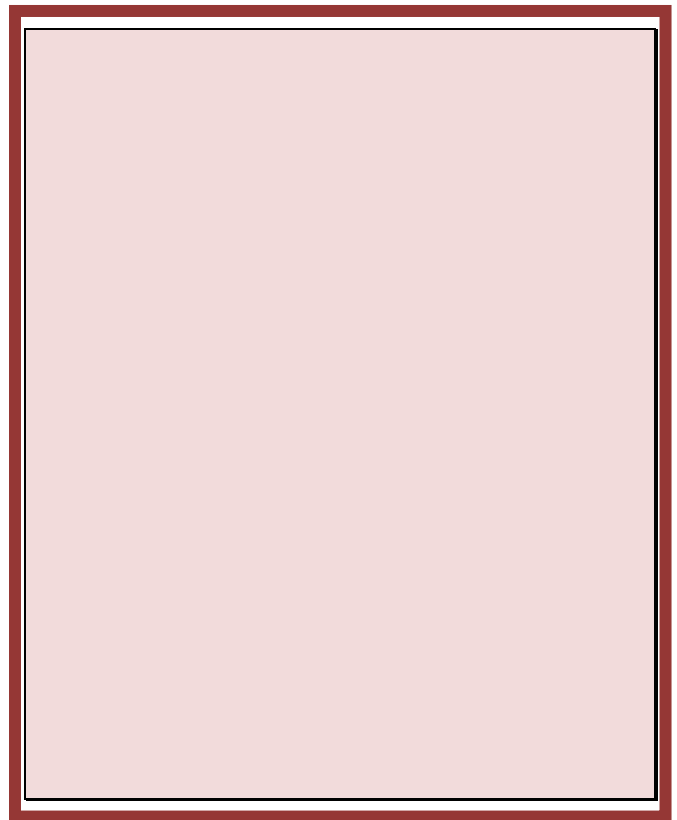


The First School currently has 115 children enrolled and we have a large wait list. We are excited about this Christmas season and all the fun festivities with the children and families. We would like to invite you to our Preschool Christmas Program, "Christmas in Our Jammies", on Thursday, December 16<sup>th</sup> starting at 6:30 pm in the church sanctuary. The children will tell the story of Christ's birth and we will rejoice and sing! We hope to see you there! Have a Merry Christmas!

Many Blessings,  
Bree Joines  
The First School Director

**First School Board Meeting  
Tuesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 p.m.**

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**FLCEC Manna Meals Team  
serves on Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup>!**

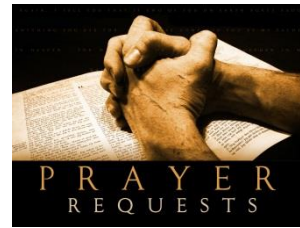


## DECEMBER READINGS

- 12/05 Psalm 42:7-11; Genesis 43:17-34, Romans 4:1-15, Matthew 27:32-44
- 12/12 Psalm 43:1-5; Genesis 44:1-13, Romans 4:16-25, Matthew 27:45-56
- 12/19 Psalm 44:1-3; Genesis 44:14-34, Romans 5:1-11, Matthew 27:57-66
- 12/26 Psalm 44:4-8; Genesis 45:1-15, Romans 5:12-21, Matthew 28:1-15

# happy birthday

- 12/08 Leroy Bram
- 12/08 James Stewart
- 12/09 Ed Campbell
- 12/13 Doug Mathews
- 12/13 Daniel Wilfert
- 12/15 Jake Herrington
- 12/15 Jacqueline Lundy
- 12/18 Pat Marek
- 12/19 Karen Kight
- 12/21 Kim Ledwig
- 12/25 Loretta Johnson
- 12/26 Cori Koudela
- 12/28 Emma Jo Barosh
- 12/31 Callie Dujka
- 12/31 Cash Dujka



### Our FLC Family

- Dorothy Atchetee
- Harlo & Rhonda Atchetee
- Charles Bard
- Ron Chambles
- Lynda Christenberry
- Nora Hollingsworth
- Helen Kight
- Marilyn Kight
- Kim & Larry Ledwig
- John Nelson
- Odis Newton
- Ruth Speckels

### Friends of FLC

- Joan Carter
- Gerald Ripple
- Daniel Kocurek
- Ellwood Hermansen
- Deborah McGoldrick



- 12/07 Michael Barosh
- 12/14 Lori Cykala
- 12/23 Becky Sample
- 12/23 Ted Schoenfield
- 12/24 Shirley Chatel
- 12/26 Daniel Wilfert



PRAY FOR  
ALL WHO  
SERVE IN  
THE US MILITARY

### WE'RE HERE WHEN YOU NEED US



OR



- 12/01 Kyle & Haley Orsak
- 12/11 Philip & Sheila Miller
- 12/22 David & Karen Kight

Office hours: Tues & Thurs: 8:00am - 4:30pm  
Wed: 8:00am – 12:00pm

Phone: 979-543-5847

Email: [office@firstlutheranec.com](mailto:office@firstlutheranec.com)



**COUNCIL MEETING**  
Thursday, December 16<sup>th</sup>  
6:00 p.m.

**Pastor Clyde Grier:**  
Phone: 979-541-6173

## Poinsettias

If you would like to place poinsettias in church, the cost is \$11.75.

Look for the order form in the Narthex.

## Flower Chart

The Flower Chart for the new year, 2022 is available in the Narthex. Please choose your special dates and sign up to provide flowers for our worship services.

## End of Year Giving

All donations must be in the church office by Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> in order to receive credit for 2021. All contributions received Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> or later will be credited to 2021, regardless of the date on the check.

## Looking Ahead . . .

*The Three Days of Prayer*

**January 5, 6, and 7, 2022**

## Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Holy Communion

**Friday, December 24<sup>th</sup>  
6:30 p.m.**

+ + + +

You are encouraged to pick up a Reverse Advent Calendar for food collection during this Advent season. (The calendars are located in the Narthex.)

## WOMEN OF THE WORD

**WOW Food Drive**  
Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup>

A = Always

S = Say

A = A

P = Prayer



### Please Note:

Beginning in December, Holy Communion will again be served on the first and third Sunday of the month.

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### Looking Ahead:

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 30, 2022.

# JOY

<sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup> to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

--- Luke 2:10-11 NRSV



# December 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 <i>Advent Midweek Service Noon</i>	2	3	4
5 <i>Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship Service 10:45 AM w/Communion</i>	6	7	8 <i>Advent Midweek Service Noon</i>	9	10	11
12 <i>Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship Service 10:45 AM</i>	13 <i>FLCEC Manna Meals Team serves</i>	14 <i>Board Meeting 5PM Newsletter Items Due</i>	15 <i>Advent Midweek Service Noon</i>	16 <i>Church Council Meeting 6PM First School Christmas Program 6:30</i>	17	18
19 <i>Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship Service 10:45 AM w/Communion</i>	20	21	22 <i>Advent Midweek Service Noon</i>	23	24 <i>Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Communion 6:30PM</i>	25 <i>Merry Christmas!</i>
26 <i>Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship Service 10:45 AM</i>	27	28	29	30	31	

## December Responsibilities

**ASSISTING MINISTER:** Calvin Borak

**SEXTON:** David Kight

**USHERS:** James Stewart, Kirk Marek

**ALTAR GUILD:** David & Karen Kight

### ACOLYTES

5<sup>th</sup>  
12<sup>th</sup>  
19<sup>th</sup>  
26<sup>th</sup>

### READER

Helen Johnson  
Ty Schoenfield  
Kirk Marek  
Ted Schoenfield

If you are unable to serve on your date, please find someone to take your place.



## DECEMBER FLOWER CALENDAR

5<sup>th</sup> Open  
12<sup>th</sup> Open  
19<sup>th</sup> Kirk & Pat Marek  
26<sup>th</sup> Poinsettias



**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH**

304 Oscar  
El Campo, TX 77437  
979-543-5847

Email: office@firstlutheranec.com

ESTABLISHED FEB 1893

*Worshipping Christ and Sharing  
the Word for over a century.*

**Clyde Grier, Pastor**  
**Helen Marie Kight, Organist**  
**Christine Richter, Office Manager**  
**Bree Joines, Director of First School**



Join us on **FACEBOOK** or check us out at  
[www.FIRSTLUTHERANEC.COM](http://www.FIRSTLUTHERANEC.COM)

**CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS:** Sheila Herrington, Milton Johnson, David Kight, Kirk Marek, Cindy Mathews,  
Jimmy Nielsen & Cathy Schoenfield



**OUR NEWSLETTER  
CAN BE FOUND ON  
OUR WEBSITE AT  
[WWW.FIRSTLUTHERANEC.COM](http://WWW.FIRSTLUTHERANEC.COM)**



**Join us for our Christmas Eve Service  
on Friday evening, December 24<sup>th</sup>!**

**Worship Service with Candlelight and  
Holy Communion – 6:30 p.m.**