

# First Impressions

First Lutheran Church

February 2022

**Rev. Sean Esterline**

**Pastor**

**Phone 812-431-1923 or 517-543-4360 ext. 222**

**[sesterline@msn.com](mailto:sesterline@msn.com)**

**Mark Gawura**

**Specific Ministries Pastor for Care Ministry**

**Phone 517-667-6853**

**[mgawura@gmail.com](mailto:mgawura@gmail.com)**

**Daniel Longden**

**Specific Ministry Pastor for**

**Youth & Family Ministry**

**Phone 517-543-4360 ext. 229**

**[daniellongden@gmail.com](mailto:daniellongden@gmail.com)**

**Rebekah Simmons**

**Preschool/Daycare Director**

**517-543-3828**

**[flpddirector@gmail.com](mailto:flpddirector@gmail.com)**

## **First Lutheran Church**

**550 E. Shepherd St., Charlotte, MI 48813**

**Phone 517-543-4360**

**Email: [flcchurchoffice@gmail.com](mailto:flcchurchoffice@gmail.com)**

**web: [firstlutherancharlotte.org](http://firstlutherancharlotte.org)**

**Amy Garnsay, Office Manager**

**517-543-4360 ext. 221**

**Home Office Phone 517-663-6439**

**[flcchurchoffice@gmail.com](mailto:flcchurchoffice@gmail.com)**

## **Worship Times**

**Sundays 8:30 & 11:15 a.m.**

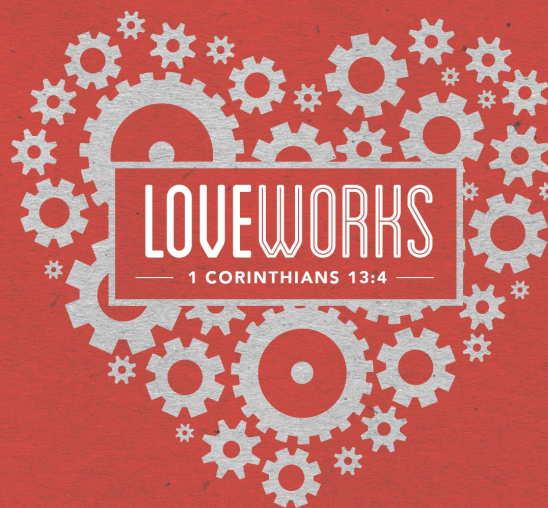
**Contemporary Worship 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays @**

**11:15 a.m. with live worship team**

**Communion 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, & 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays**

**Mid-week Worship**

**Wednesdays 6:30 p.m. during Advent & Lent**



LOVE IS PATIENT, LOVE IS KIND. IT DOES NOT  
ENVY, IT DOES NOT BOAST, IT IS NOT PROUD.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4

“That which we have seen  
and heard concerning the Word  
of Life, we proclaim to you.”



## FLC Statistics for JANUARY 2022

Confirmed Membership.....	253
Baptized Membership.....	315
Child Baptisms .....	(0)
Adult Baptisms .....	(0)
Jr. Confirmands .....	(0)
New Confirmed Members ....	(4) Rev. Sean Esterline, Ben Stoline, Tracy Stoline, Jenni Stoline
New Baptized Members .....	(3) Lila Esterline, Emma Esterline, Sky Esterline
Transfers Out (Confirmed) .....	(0)
Transfers Out (Baptized) .....	(0)
Releases (Confirmed) .....	(0)
Releases (Baptized) .....	(0)
Deaths.....	(0)
Weddings .....	(0)

## *Wedding Anniversaries*

No anniversaries for February.

### **Office Deadlines**

- Bulletin announcements are due no later than Thursdays at 8:30 a.m. unless otherwise advertised
- Newsletter articles and information are due no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month.



Diane Johncock .....	Feb 6
James Danke .....	Feb 7
Jamin Wing .....	Feb 7
Wendy Jorgensen.....	Feb 8
Matthew Packowski.....	Feb 8
Louann Gawura .....	Feb 9
Mark Gawura.....	Feb 11
Lisa Hamilton .....	Feb 12
Alana Vedder-Lord .....	Feb 13
John Murray.....	Feb 16
Kayla Knickerbocker.....	Feb 17
Dennis Sergent.....	Feb 18
Sally Bower .....	Feb 19
Christopher Mitchell .....	Feb 19
Sherry Allen.....	Feb 22
James Beal .....	Feb 27
(Joey Youngs .....	Feb 29)

**If you have a birthday or anniversary this month and you do not see your name listed, please let the church office know so we can update our records.  
Church office: 517-543-4360 ext. 221**



## **EMERGENCIES!**

If you have a pastoral emergency such as a hospitalization, death in the family, or are in need of urgent Christian counsel, please call Pastor, Sean Esterline (812) 431-1923 OR Specific Ministry Pastor for Care Ministries, Mark Gawura at (517) 667-6853 OR Specific Ministry Pastor for Youth and Family Ministry, Daniel Longden at (248) 802-2392.

### **First Lutheran Phone Number is 517-543-4360:**

**Church Office (Amy) - extension 221**

**Pastor Esterline - extension 222**

**Pastor Daniel Longden - extension 229**

**Kitchen - extension 224**

*\*If you call the church and do not get an answer, please leave a message- we may be in the office but unable to answer the phone at the moment.*

*Please do not leave emergency messages on these extensions as we may not access them in a timely manner - please use the emergency numbers listed above instead. Thank you.*

## WORSHIP WITH US

**Weekly Sunday Worship at 8:30 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.**

**Traditional worship with communion  
on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays at both 8:30 & 11:15 a.m.**

**Traditional non-communion worship at 8:30 a.m. on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays.  
Contemporary Worship with Live Band at 11:15 a.m. on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays.**  
You may wear a mask if you so desire. Hand sanitizer will be available.

## STREAMING AND ONLINE WORSHIP

If you are immune compromised and cannot attend in-person worship,  
or if you are unable to attend for another reason,  
please join us for worship online by going to <https://www.facebook.com/flcharlotte/live>  
The worship services will be livestreamed at both 8:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.  
The worship services will be available for viewing after the livestream has ended.



## ELECTRONIC GIVING AVAILABLE

First Lutheran has an electronic giving option called Kindrid.  
To utilize this option simply go to our website at [www.firstlutherancharlotte.org](http://www.firstlutherancharlotte.org) look for the  
Kindrid smart giving logo below where the sermons are on our homepage and click on it.  
Or you may go to the drop down menu (the three lines together)  
at the top of our website homepage and click on “give.”  
Thank you for your continued support to your church ♥



## BIBLE STUDIES AT FIRST

- † Sunday Morning Bible Studies at 10:00 a.m. for Adults and Teens.  
(Pastor Esterline will holding a chat in the Pastor Olson Room on Sunday, February 6, 10 a.m.  
to discuss possible future Bible study topics. Everyone welcome to join the chat.)
- † Monday Morning Men’s Bible Study 7:00 a.m. at the Eaton Place Restaurant.
- † Thursday Morning Ladies Bible Study 9:30 a.m. in the FLC Library



## DONATIONS FOR FIRST LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL/DAYCARE

Our preschool/daycare is in need of donations of hats, mittens, snow pants, etc.  
(the greatest need is mittens). For snow pants, sizes 3t, 4t, and 5t are needed.  
For mittens sizes 2t - 4t, or size small, are needed. You may leave donations of these items  
in the church office and Amy will see the preschool gets them. Thank you ♥



**Ash Wednesday - March 2, 6:30 p.m.**  
(no dinner on Ash Wednesday)

**Mid-Week Lenten Worship - Wednesday, March 9, 16, 23, 30, and April 6**  
(Mid-Week Lenten Dinners will be served at 5:45 p.m. on these days)

***PLEASE SIGN-UP TO PREPARE/SERVE MID-WEEK DINNERS***

We are having soup and sandwich mid-week dinners this year.  
We are looking for volunteers/groups to provide and serve soup and sandwiches  
at 5:45 p.m. every Wednesday in Lent.  
A sign-up sheet is located on the church bulletin board. Thank you.



**PLEASE HELP WELCOME OUR NEW FAMILIES ♥**

**The Esterline Family -**  
Pastor Sean Esterline  
and daughters, Lila, Emma, and Sky

**The Stoline Family -**  
Ben and Tracy  
and daughter Jenni



**FLC VOTERS MEETING**

First Lutheran Voters Meeting - Sunday, February 27, 12:30 p.m.  
Tentative agenda: Opening Prayer, Secretary's Minutes, Pastors' Reports, Board Reports,  
Old Business, New Business, Walk-in Items, Closing Prayer, Adjourn.



## TRUE LOVE LEADS TO TRUE PASSION

An article by Pastor Esterline

During the month of February our thoughts obviously turn to St. Valentine's Day and all that the holiday implies. The world (and especially Hallmark) want you to believe that *True Love* Leads to *True Passion*... specifically the obsessive passion of buying romantic greeting cards and lots of chocolate for the loved ones in your life. Instead of chocolates, many health- or weight-conscious folks will often get a bouquet of flowers or a live plant for the one they love this year. Frivolity aside (and no matter what Hallmark might say), according to the Bible *True Love* is the willingness, the *Passion*, to give up everything for the object of your love—even when your beloved is unworthy of your love.

This is the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, because this is exactly what Christ did. ***“While we were still sinners, Christ died for the ungodly”***—while we were unworthy of His love, He came down from heaven, lived on this ball of dirt for over thirty years, and then He suffered and died a painful, horrible death... and He did it **all for you**, and for me. Scripture proclaims this Truth to us, if we have ears to listen. Godly love, *True Love*, is described for us in First Corinthians 13:

***If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.*** Reflecting the love of God, however poorly, is the hallmark of Christian faith. It is a gift, not a merely a work. If you have the Holy Spirit, which all believers have, this love will be there, somehow, somewhere.

***Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant.*** This love is not natural or reflexive to a human being. Patience and kindness are hard, but worth the effort for the one who loves. Because this love is a gift and not the product of our sinful selves, we know that whatever good you see in us is God at work, and therefore something we must give God thanks for not something we can take credit for.

***[Love] does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered.*** It is hard to avoid the reality that such love is focused outward, and not focused in on one's self. It is about doing for the other, not having them do for me.

***[Love] does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth.*** This is so utterly other than human nature! We tend to rejoice when what we want is accomplished and grieve when our desires are thwarted or unfulfilled, but love goes another direction. Some of us can be like this some of the time, but even those who succeed can tell you it is not easy, it is not fun and it is not always comfortable.

***[Love] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*** Such love is patient, and finds its power in God and faith in God.

***Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.*** This is why such a love cannot be fallen out of. It is a love of will and intellect as much or more than it is of feeling. Feeling will often accompany this love, but feelings come and go. Love does not. It never fails. God never fails us.

***When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things.*** That selfish love of the flesh will happen to everyone, even true Christians. They simply are not content in it. They know more in the love of God, and they want to do and have more themselves. A fleshly love that cannot be replaced with an agape type is a love that a Christian should walk away from because it is not who they are called to. It is simply the flesh.

*(Continued on next page . . .)*

(*True Love Leads to True Passion* p. 2)

***For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known.*** Clearly, Paul has been writing here about how Christ loves us, not so much how we will love. This is just a picture for us of our Lord's love, so we have a pattern to follow. When we finally get there, meaning heaven, we will understand, and be able to love completely like this. In the meantime, we have a pattern and we have a Savior from sin and death and weakness.

***But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*** Today the world wants *True Love* to lead to wonderful, romantic acts of passion. But the world refuses to accept that *True Love*, and *True Passion*, often involve hard work, sacrifice, and suffering. We Christians know differently. We know the truth. We know and remember that the *True Love* of God is what lead to Christ's Passion (His suffering and death) for us—and all this based solely on His love and mercy, not on anything we did, and certainly not on who we are. The truth of the matter is that Jesus Christ is the best example of *True Love* and *True Passion* we have on this earth.

So, when the world tells you that cards, chocolate, or gifts of jewelry are the way to win someone's heart, remember that their heart has already been won—bought and paid for—by Jesus of Nazareth. He alone is the source of *True Love* and *True Passion*, in this world and the next.

God's blessings!

-Pastor Esterline



### ELISABETH GUILD

Everyone is invited to join the Elisabeth Guild  
on Thursday, February 3, 1:00 p.m., First Lutheran Church Library.  
Please let Marj Huva know by Tuesday, January 4th if you plan to go (517) 543-1615.



### FLC COMMUNITY DINNER

Our next Community Dinner will be held on Monday, February 21, 6:00 p.m.  
This dinner is free to anyone in our community or congregation regardless of need and will be dine-in.  
Helpers are needed please. If you would like to help, please contact George Hatter at 517-213-1939.



### FIRST LUTHERAN YOUTH MIDNIGHT MADNESS

Friday, February 25, 7:00 p.m. - Midnight.  
Pizza, snacks, and games, in a Christian environment.  
Friends are welcome.  
Adults to help supervise are needed please.  
Questions? Please text Daniel Longden at 248-802-2392 or call 517-543-4360 ext. 229.



## COFFEE HOUR

**Coffee hour is held every Sunday at 9:45 a.m. in the FLC Fellowship Hall.**

Hosts and Hostesses are needed to serve coffee and refreshments every Sunday.

The church provides coffee, other beverages. Volunteers make and serve the coffee and beverages.

The volunteers provide and serve the snacks (cookies, bagels, fruit, etc.)

**Please wear gloves and observe good sanitation while serving at Coffee Hour.**

**Please be sure to clean up following Coffee Hour and turn the coffee pot off.**

**Thank you to all who serve ♥**



## FLC ALTAR GUILD

The Altar Guild is looking for ladies who would like to serve on the guild.

If you would be willing to serve on the Altar Guild

or if you have questions, please contact Wendy Jorgensen 517-420-7062.



## ALTAR FLOWERS

Please consider signing up to provide flowers to beautify our Sunday altar.

Cost is currently \$20 per bouquet..

Please make checks payable to FLC Elisabeth Guild and place in Shirley Lea's mailbox.

You may take your flowers home with you following the 2<sup>nd</sup> worship service.

A sign-up sheet is located in the office hallway. When you sign up you may state a reason for your flowers (this will appear in the Sunday announcements) such as celebrating a birthday or anniversary, in loving memory of someone, in thanksgiving for blessings, etc. Thank you for helping make our altar beautiful.



## USE OF FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH BUILDING

The First Lutheran Church fellowship hall, kitchen, and Pastor Olson Memorial Room, are available for use by members and outside groups for their private events, meetings, etc.

To make a reservation please contact the church office 517-543-4360 ext. 221.

Please do not make plans to use the facilities without making a reservation through the church office as someone may already have the space reserved.

A member of FLC must be present for the duration of any event/meeting held at First by an outside group.

FLC is not available for for-profit events (Tupperware, Candlelight, craft sale, etc.).

A deposit of \$150 is required for any use of the FLC facilities other than for non-profit or church events.

A list of facility use rules and a cleaning check list can be obtained through the church office.

Please be sure to clean up and secure the building after your event. Thank you.

## TABLES AND CHAIRS

First Lutheran loans tables and chairs to members of First Lutheran.

Only tables and chairs located in the FLC garage are available for use off-site by members. Tables and chairs from inside the church building are not available for use outside of the church.

To use tables and chairs please sign up through the church office.

Please do not take tables and chairs without a reservation  
as someone else may already have them reserved.

Please be sure to bring tables and chairs back promptly at the end of your reservation. Thank you.



## HOW YOU CAN HELP THOSE IN NEED

**Here is a list of ways you can help those in need in our community and congregation:**

### ☪ **FLC Esther Fund.**

This fund helps provide emergency housing to the homeless in our community.

If you would like to contribute to this fund, please write “Esther Fund” and the amount you wish to contribute on your offering envelope.

### ☪ **FLC Good Samaritan Fund.**

This fund helps members of First Lutheran who have a financial need.

If you are a member struggling with a financial need, please contact the church office to apply for help. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please write “Good Samaritan Fund” and the amount you wish to contribute on your offering envelope.

### ☪ **Helping Hands Food Bank.**

Please make donations directly to the food bank:

621 Jefferson St., Charlotte. For questions please call the food bank at 517-543-8737.

### ☪ **SIREN Eaton Shelter.**

Please make donations directly to the shelter:

520 Robinson St., Charlotte, MI. For questions please call the shelter at 517-543-0748.



## DONATIONS FOR FIRST LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL/DAYCARE

Our preschool/daycare is in need of donations of hats, mittens, snow pants, etc.  
(the greatest need is mittens). For snow pants, sizes 3t, 4t, and 5t are needed.

For mittens sizes 2t - 4t, or size small, are needed. You may leave donations of these items in the church office and Amy will see the preschool gets them. Thank you ❤️



**The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod**  
**LCMS Stewardship Ministry – Newsletter Article – FEBRUARY 2022**

The season of Epiphany focuses on how God was made manifest in the flesh of Jesus. The church spends time hearing of the miracles, signs, and wonders of Jesus in the world. And this made plain to all that Jesus really is who He said He was. He is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the only begotten Son of the Father, in the flesh. For “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14).

It is revealed for all the world to see that Jesus is God in the flesh. It is made manifest by His words and His work, by what He said and by what He did. And these belong together, for “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” Jesus is the Word and will of God in the flesh, that is, He is the walking, talking enactment of God’s Word.

It is no different for us. We are called not just to believe in God in hearts but also to trust in God in word and deed. As James wrote: “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (James 1:22), and again, “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? ... So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. ... Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ... For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead” (James 2:14, 17–18, 26).

Our faith is lived out in works for our neighbor. Our trust in the Word and will of God is lived out not in word only but also in deed and in truth. In other words, the Epiphany of the Lord creates in us an epiphany of our faith in our works of obedience to God who commanded them. By this, our faith is made manifest to the world. It is, as Luther wrote of faith:

Faith is a divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God (John 1). It kills the old Adam and makes altogether different people, in heart and spirit and mind and powers, and it brings with it the Holy Spirit.

Oh, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. And so it is impossible for it not to do good works incessantly. It does not ask whether there are good works to do, but before the question rises, it has already done them, and is always at the doing of them.

He who does not these works is a faithless man. He gropes and looks about after faith and good works and knows neither what faith is nor what good works are, though he talks and talks, with many words about faith and good works.

Faith is a living, daring confidence in God’s grace, so sure and certain that a man would stake his life on it a thousand times. This confidence in God’s grace and knowledge of it makes men glad and bold and happy in dealing with God and all His creatures. And this is the work of the Holy Spirit in faith. Hence a man is ready and glad, without compulsion, to do good to everyone, to serve everyone, to suffer everything, in love and praise to God, who has shown him this grace.

And thus it is impossible to separate works from faith, quite as impossible as to separate burning and shining from fire. Beware, therefore, of your own false notions and of the idle talkers, who would be wise enough to make decisions about faith and good works, and yet are the greatest fools. (*Preface to the Book of Romans*)

So, then, let our faith be active by God’s power in the Word through the Holy Spirit. And let then our faith be made manifest to the world by what this faith does: serving our neighbor – in church, in the family, and society – with the works of faith in time, talents, and treasures.



## WHAT WE BELIEVE

### ***Scripture Alone***

We believe that the Holy Scriptures in their entirety are the inspired and infallible Word of God and that they alone are the only source and norm of faith and life for the Christian. We believe that the Bible is complete and requires no additions from any other source and that it clearly reveals God's plan of salvation for mankind.

### ***Faith Alone***

We believe that man was originally created holy by God but later rebelled against God and is now, by his nature, spiritually dead and blind. Only when man is brought to faith by the Holy Spirit working through the Word of God is it possible for man to be saved. Faith is God's work - not man's work - and comes only by hearing the Word of God. Man is justified before God by faith alone and not by good deeds.

### ***Grace Alone***

We believe that we are saved by grace alone and that man cannot earn his way into God's favor. Grace is the undeserved love of God who sent His Son Jesus into the world to take our place under God's law and to suffer and die to pay the penalty for our sins. Whoever trusts in that redemptive act of Jesus Christ will not perish but have everlasting life.