



# THE MESSENGER

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WEST SEATTLE  
(206) 935-6530 [www.flcws.org](http://www.flcws.org) November 2025

## *Pastor's Page — Thanksgiving*

Sarah Josepha Hale had a dream. Hale was a writer, poet and editor of the popular *American Ladies Magazine*. She penned the children's nursery rhyme, "Mary had a little lamb." Her dream was for the nation to enjoy a national thanksgiving holiday not unlike the ones she was accustomed to in her native New England. She lobbied hard for federal officials to make this happen believing that such a holiday would serve a unifying purpose to "help heal the wounds of the nation." She wrote letters to four U.S. Presidents. They did not respond. Finally, she wrote to a fifth president who took her advice. In 1863, President Lincoln declared the first ever American Thanksgiving holiday.

Lincoln was inspired by Sarah Hale's dream and believed that such a special day might ease tensions in a divided nation. He declared Thanksgiving an annual holiday to take place on the third Thursday of November. This declaration took effect during a bloody civil war.

I don't think the holiday ever had the unifying effect intended for the nation but maybe it has served that purpose for any number of families or communities. Still, people drawn together around a full dinner table at harvest time can be healing balm. Though our hearts are not inclined to such things in the midst of a civil war or strife, giving thanks directs our hearts to the one

who still provides and is with us in our strife.

As Christians, we know this to be true. We know it is right to give thanks, as we pray each Sunday "at all times and in all places." Gratitude is in our faith DNA. So, each week we set our thanksgiving table with bread and wine trusting that at the Eucharist, Jesus draws us to himself and makes us one.

November is a good month to engage more deeply into the practice of giving thanks. Consider what you are grateful for and ask God to give you the vision to live in gratitude.

Gail Ramshaw writes that thanksgiving draws us not only to a shared meal but "in two other directions as well. One is to the triune God, the Bread who is God, the first fruit who is the resurrection of Christ, the fields of mown grain that is the Spirit in community. The second direction is toward all who suffer from lack of harvest we tend to take for granted. We do well to add a couplet to the traditional table prayer:

*Come, Lord Jesus,  
be our guest,  
and let these gifts to us be blest.  
Blest be God, who is our Bread.  
May all the world be clothed and fed.*

Peace,  
Pastor Hansen

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Cup of Blessing Dinner was yet again another great event this year. Thank you to all who attended and generously donated to the West Seattle Food Bank. It was nice to spend an evening with everyone. The trivia was an excellent addition to the event. I learned a great deal about West Seattle's history while also reminiscing about the West Seattle of my own youth. Thank you to all who were involved in putting on the event.

The month of November ushers in the start of the holiday season. Fall is in full swing. The Thanksgiving holiday is a time to spend with family and friends, the Thanksgiving meal being a main focal point (especially to me) of the holiday. Some may disagree and instead state that bargain shopping is really the main focal point. Over the years, the duties of the opening prayer have fallen upon my shoulders, as I may be the only church-attending member present. I often hesitate at first about what to pray, but I reliably fall back on our weekly prayer, which follows "The Great Thanksgiving."

Merciful Father, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of Him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

But have we all given joyously and thankfully? Our prayer is simple, yet difficult to follow. God has given us everything out of

love. We acknowledge receiving these gifts and then ultimately recognize the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. I choose to fall back on this prayer during the holidays to allow the words to resonate among my family and friends. Perhaps it may one day provoke comments and/or questions.

Therefore, let us offer our tithe with joy and thanksgiving!

Proverbs 11:25 A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

2 Corinthians 9:7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

As you review your giving for the year, I encourage you, if possible, to consider an additional contribution. This will ensure we can continue to care for our facilities and maintain the quality of worship we all cherish. Your support is vital to sustaining our church's mission and the future of our community. Thank you for being part of this journey.

-Steve Liang

President, Church Council

## Council Meeting Calendar Dates and links:

Tuesday, November 11, 2025: In-Person/Hybrid

Tuesday, December 9, 2025: In-Person/Hybrid

Tuesday, January 13, 2026: In-Person/Hybrid

Video link: <https://meet.google.com/ffb-rdss-xqm>

Or dial: (US) +1 502-622-8042 PIN: 222 331 072#

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**COFFEE FELLOWSHIP:** Join us in the lounge every Sunday after the service.

**CHOIR REHEARSAL** Thursday, 7:00 pm. All are welcome. If you are interested in joining *Deo Gloria Cantores*, please contact Dana Robinson: dmrobsn@gmail.com

**WEST SEATTLE THRIFTWAY** gives back 1% of sales from receipts turned in to the WS Food Bank! Drop your receipts in the envelope on the Extended Ministry bulletin board outside Room C. Every receipt makes a difference to those in need.

**FOOD BANK COLLECTION:** The West Seattle Food Bank box and all collections are in room C. Suggested donations for November & December are non-perishable holiday foods: potatoes, gravy, turkey, vegetables, baking ingredients, etc.. Any non-perishable foods, personal products, or grocery store gift cards are welcome. Your much needed donations are taken to the West Seattle Food Bank, Compass Housing Alliance, Mary's Place, and Westside Neighbors (American Legion Hall Shelter).

**RIVERTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH** is still in need of help with housing the hundreds of immigrants that keep arriving. If you can help, go to: <https://rivertonparkumc.com/donate>.

**OUR WEBSITE**, <https://flcws.org> has events, recent homilies, and issues of the Messenger. (The old site's home-page, with archived materials, can be found at: <http://old.flcws.org>)

**ADULT FORMATION:** Last Sunday, **Adult Formation** began a series on the *Nicene Creed*. This year is the 1,700th Anniversary of the Creed. The series focuses on why it is important and how it has been a force for both unity and disunity. The forum follows Coffee Fellowship in the lounge.



# STEWARDSHIP

I always tried to pray for the spiritual, or the “important” stuff. I prayed for the oppressed, the sick, my family, my soul, and especially for forgiveness, things like that. Never in my life would I have thought that I would be seeking the Lord’s guidance in writing a stewardship article. I worried that with my poor words alone, I would not be able to communicate to the congregation a message about the importance of stewardship of the church. Each week, as a congregation, we pray for the continued success of our parish. We pray with joy and thanksgiving for the gifts of God; everything that He created, including ourselves, our time, and our possessions. In this process, I was guided to Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians and was soothed by the realization that this challenge I was having was nothing new. Read 2 Corinthians 8 and 9. Paul discusses with the church in Corinth, one which he founded, stewardship in the early Church. The chapters are not glamorous; they are oddly technical, and Paul is both stern and uses flattery. The chapters end with the more famous part about God loving a generous giver. However, taken together, both chapters made my experience relatable. Stewardship is needed for the Church to function, to spread the Word, and to help the needy...and Paul himself had to write a stewardship arti-

cle. I am thankful for the task of writing this because the Spirit drew me once again to the Word.

As Pentecost winds down and the Church readies itself to begin a new year, it is also time to evaluate our own individual stewardship. The pledge cards are available and I encourage you to fill them out and turn them in. This simple act makes the budgeting process for next year go smoother. Over the past couple of years, the number of members who turn in a card has greatly diminished. In order to set a budget for the operation of our parish, we need to have the cards turned in.

Might I suggest three simple tasks for continued stewardship for this month for your peace of mind and for the continued success of our small church on a hill? First; please thank the Lord for His blessings and for our parish’s achievements. Secondly, turn in your pledge cards so we can plan and be good stewards of the church’s finances. Finally: say a prayer for the continued growth and well-being of the First Lutheran Church of West Seattle so that we may continue to live and act though our Lord and God.

Thank you,  
Matthew Kahn  
Church Council

The Thrivent logo, featuring the word "thrivent" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The "t" is stylized with a red dot above it. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located to the upper right of the "t".

**First Lutheran Church of West Seattle is grateful to be a recipient of Thrivent Choice Dollars Grant Funds. If you are a Thrivent member, you can designate your Thrivent Choice Dollars to First Lutheran Church of West Seattle.**

# COMMUNITY MESSIAH SING-ALONG

## *St John the Baptist Episcopal Church*

Singers and instrumentalists from around Seattle, please join us for this performance of Messiah!

Written by George Frideric Handel in 1741, Messiah — and especially the Hallelujah Chorus — has become one of Western music's most widely performed and recognized pieces. St John the Baptist Episcopal Church is a welcoming and affirming community in West Seattle—and you are most certainly welcome here for this performance of choruses, solos, and instrumental music from Part I: The Birth of Jesus (+ a couple of additional numbers).

- Date: Friday, November 21, 2025
- Time: 7:00-8:30 PM
- Location: St. John the Baptist, 3050 California Ave SW, Seattle WA
- Details: <https://sjbwestseattle.org/pages/sing-along-messiah>

# 2025 CUP OF BLESSING REPORT

First, we want to say “Thank you, thank you, thank you!”

Thank you to everyone who attended, helped set up, served the food, worked in the kitchen and stayed to clean up — you all made this a memorable evening.

We hope you enjoyed the catered dinner from Ivar’s, the Raffle, the Dessert Dash, the West Seattle Trivia, and most of all, the fellowship!

As of October 28, 2025, the dinner has raised a preliminary total of \$17,655 — the largest amount that has been raised to date! This will make a real difference in feeding our neighbors in need this holiday season.

Thank you again for your generosity and spirit of service.

In Christ, we can do all things!  
*Scott & Valerie Schorn*



## GROWING IN GIVING—ANNUAL PLEDGE DRIVE

The Pledge Drive for 2026 has been tallied. Twenty-eight pledges have been made for next year, up from 24 last year. Our pledged total for 2026 has exceeded our pledged amount for 2025, by about \$85 per week, up from last year's pledge report, and 4 new pledges (24 last year).



### Pledge Drive for 2026

Cards Returned: 29

Pledges made: 28

Weekly Pledges total: \$ 3,387.31

Total Pledge for 2026: \$ 176,140.00

# ✠ PARISH PRAYERS ✠

*Remember in prayer before God those whom He has made your brothers and sisters through baptism.*

Pray for members and friends of our congregation that God will bless and strengthen them in these days: Shirley Graham, Don Minter and children, Michael Thompson and Jeanine Lingle.

Pray for the homebound that the light of Christ may give them joy: Joan Olson, Jeanine Lingle, Robert Schorn, CJ Christian, Melanie Johnson, Peter Morrison and Nora Vanhala.

Pray for newly elected Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry our pastor Bryon Hansen, our sacristan Dean Hard, our organist and choir-master Dana Robinson, and all who faithfully assist with worship. May they be strengthened in faith, love and the holy office to which they have been called. Pray for our church council: Steve Liang, Peter Douglass, Kathrine Young, Gina Allen, Dale Korsmo, Marianne Petersen, Tyler Schorn, David Juhl, and Steve Jeske, that God will guide and strengthen them in their work.

Pray that God would give us hearts to find joy in service and faithful stewardship. Pray that God would work within us to become a good steward of our time, talents, and finances. Pray to strengthen our commitment to stewardship in our congregation.

Pray in gratitude for the lives of those who have passed, and pray for those who grieve.

Pray for the hungry, ignored, abused, unemployed, addicted, homeless, and unbelievers. Pray God will show mercy to these people, and for all in Christ's church to see and help those who are in distress.

Pray for our country, that our collective actions may honor God and be a blessing in the world.

Pray for our leaders, that they may govern

with wisdom, justice, and mercy.

Pray for people around the world who suffer from the effects of war, terrorism, natural disasters, disease, poverty, and abuse, especially the people of Ukraine, Israel, the Palestinian people, Afghanistan, Morocco, Syria, Lebanon, Sudan, all immigrants and asylum seekers, and all who live in fear.

Pray that God will bless us through the lives of the saints: Martin de Porres, renewer of society, 1639; John Christian Frederick Heyer, 1873, Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, 1719, Ludwig Ingwer Nommensen, 1918, missionaries; Martin of Tours, Bishop, 397; Søren Kierkegaard, teacher, 1855; Elizabeth of Hungary, renewer of society, 1231; Miguel Agustin Pro, priest & martyr, 1927; Justus Falckner, 1723; Jehu Jones, 1852, William Passavant, 1894, North American pastors; Isaac Watts, hymnwriter, 1748; Andrew, Apostle.

*Almighty God, you have knit your people together in one communion in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment, and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who love you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*

*Amen.*

# DO YOU WANT TO HELP LEAD WORSHIP?

Here are some worship roles you may be interested in as ways to use your gifts. If one or more of these are of interest to you, **please mark the appropriate box on the Sunday morning “Count Me In!” form** and place in the offering plate. We will follow up with a training for each role. We will be promoting these roles throughout the month of November.

## **Acolyte**

The word acolyte literally means “follower.” He or she follows or assists the Presider. An acolyte lights candles and assists with various worship duties including carrying the processional cross and torches on feast days, and helping at the time of communion distribution. Very occasionally the acolyte will serve as a thurifer, assisting with the thurible carrying incense.

## **Assisting Minister**

The assisting minister helps the presiding minister and serves the community at worship. He or she leads the intercessory prayers, the prayers before and after communion, and says the dismissal (Go in peace). On occasion, the assisting minister sings the Kyrie or the introductory lines for the Hymn of Praise. However, it is important to note that you need not be a singer to serve in this role. Those responsibilities may be sung by a cantor in the choir. The current role of Assisting Minister, introduced with the publication of the *Lutheran Book of Worship* in 1978, hearkens back to the traditional role of the Deacon, a conduit between the church and the world in need. The Assisting Minister is intentionally carried out by a person who is not an ordained pastor. Assisting Ministers represent the whole people of God gathered at worship to engage in prayer around God’s Word and the Table.

## **Lector**

A lector reads the scripture on Sunday. Currently, the lector reads both the Old Testament and New Testament reading and leads the psalm. The Gospel is normally read by the Presiding Minister and at times the Deacon. The task of a lector is to read the scripture publicly as a proclamation of God’s Word.

## **Choir**

The choir is always looking for new members. The choir’s primary role is to assist and support the gathered assembly in singing. The choir also sings anthems appropriate to the liturgical day and provides assistance with particular liturgical songs.

## **Ushers**

The ushers greet people as they arrive for worship, hand them a worship bulletin, answer questions and assist visitors. In addition, ushers pass the offering plates and present the gifts at the offertory. They also guide people to the altar for communion. This is a ministry of hospitality.

## **The Office of Verger**

The verger’s roots are in the medieval monasteries of Europe, sharing similarities with the Minor Orders of Porter and Acolyte. They were responsible for the order and upkeep of the house of worship, including the church building, furnishings and sacred relics, preparations for liturgies, conduct of the laity and burial of the dead. This eventually spread beyond the monasteries and into the churches and cathedrals of Europe. In America, vergers are used in Episcopal Churches and Cathedrals. In other denominations, the work of the verger has been dispersed among a variety of service groups, i.e., acolytes, altar guilds, ushers and maintenance staff. At FLCWS, the Vergers’ role is to assist at the worship services. Their function is to support and augment the Acolyte Guild whenever needed as acolyte, crucifer, torchbearer, bookbearer, bannerbearer, and assisting at Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, particularly at major festivals and other liturgical celebrations when a larger number of assistants are needed. FLCWS has a long tradition of honoring the historical liturgies, upholding the apostolic faith, practice, and seasons of the liturgical year. The Office of Verger enables us to continue in that long tradition of honoring the solemnity of our praise of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

## FESTIVALS IN NOVEMBER

**All Saints Day** will be celebrated November 2. The seeds for this celebration were sown in the second century when martyrs were com-

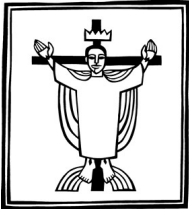


memorated on the anniversary of their death. In the fourth century, a single day was established to commemorate all the saints. Today, the church commemorates all deceased Christians, both the famous and forgotten, and celebrates the unity of the church on earth and the church in heaven. We will especially remember with thanksgiving these saints of First Lutheran Church of West Seattle who died in 2025: Mona Ayer

Lou Landino

In addition, if you want to have the names of family or friends who died this past year, please put their names on the *Count Me In!* form or let Pastor Bryon or Casey.

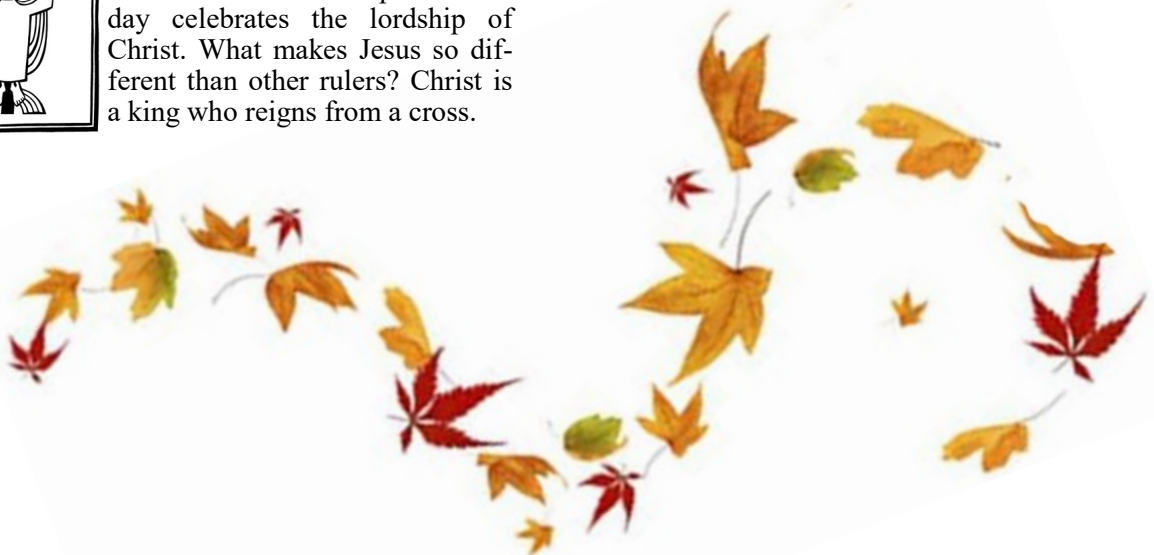
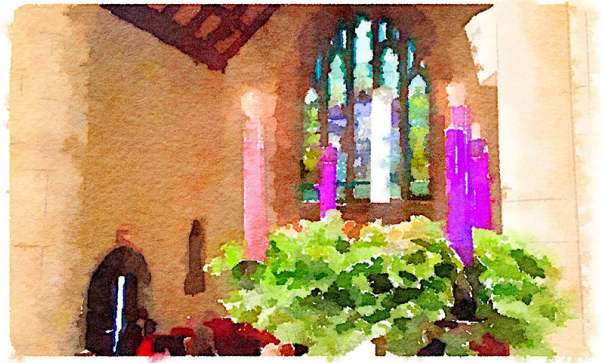
**Christ the King Sunday** will take place on November 23. This official closing out of the liturgical year is a relatively new festival. Pope Pius XI



instituted this feast in 1925 as a response to the growth of secular and non-Christian empires. This day celebrates the lordship of Christ. What makes Jesus so different than other rulers? Christ is a king who reigns from a cross.

## ADVENT

**Advent** begins on November 30<sup>th</sup>. The season of Advent and a new liturgical year begins the last day of November. The Gospel for year A is Matthew. Contrasted to Mark and Luke, Jesus in Matthew's Gospel is a teacher of a "higher righteousness" exceeding that of the Pharisees. In Matthew, Jesus is the wise sage who instructs his followers how to be a church together, blesses those whom the world discards, and commands us to make disciples and to teach them all that Jesus has taught us about life in the Kingdom of God. Advent begins, as usual, with a focus on the second coming of Christ, turning our focus on the promised day when the fullness of God's love will be all-in-all.



# INTRODUCING LWR FAIR TRADE COFFEE TO OUR COFFEE FELLOWSHIP



LWR Farmers Market Coffee builds on Lutheran World Relief's work to improve the lives of farmers around the world. Enjoy a delicious cup knowing that you've changed farmers' lives for the better.



[lwrfarmersmarket.org](http://lwrfarmersmarket.org) | 877.LWR.MRKT

#SIPBOLDLY



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF



## MUSIC NORTHWEST: MUSIC FOR THE HOPEFUL SOUL

**Sunday, November 16, 2025 3:00pm – 5:00pm**  
**First Lutheran Church of West Seattle**  
 \$20 (\$18 senior, \$10 students; students age 25 & under free when requested in advance)  
<https://musicnorthwest.org/>

Megan Renae Parker, soprano  
 Darrell J. Jordan, baritone  
 Mara Finkelstein, cello  
 Jane Harty, piano

Solo vocal, duets, and instrumental music explore the expressions of human hope in existentially difficult times, from J.S. Bach to the world premiere of Paul Salerni's *Homage to Soren Kierkegaard*, with text by poet laureate Dana Gioia. The new work is written for soprano, baritone, cello, and piano, and is a window into the great Danish Christian existentialist Soren Kierkegaard. The program also offers expressions of hope through the world of nature, romantic love, and religious faith in a better life to come.

*Johann Sebastian Bach* — Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn, BWV 152 (No. 6: (Duet) Wie soll ich dich, Liebster der Seelen, umfassen?)

*Peter Cornelius* — 3 Zweistimmige Lieder, Op. 6 (No. 1: Liebesprobe)

*Ludwig van Beethoven* — Cello Sonata No. 4 in C major, Op. 102, No. 1

*Richard Strauss* — Morgen!, Op. 27, No. 4

*Samuel Barber* — The Monk and His Cat, Op. 29, No. 8

*Aaron Copland* — "I Bought Me a Cat" from Old American Songs

Jake Heggie — The Faces of Love (4 songs TBA)

*Morten Lauridsen* — Sure on This Shining Night

*Paul Salerni* — *Homage to Soren Kierkegaard* (world premiere)

First Lutheran Church of West Seattle  
4105 California Avenue S.W.  
Seattle, WA 98116-4101



# THE MESSENGER

November 2025

## WESTSIDE NEIGHBORS

Seattle's only shelter at  
the American Legion  
Hall on Alaska;



Fundraiser for Westside Neighbors Shelter - Boeing Employee Choir Performance

Saturday Nov 8, 2025 4 pm  
St John the Baptist Episcopal Church  
3050 California Ave. SW

