



THE MESSENGER

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WEST SEATTLE
(206) 935-6530

www.flcws.org

February 2026

Pastor's Page — Lent

When I was a kid we were given large cardboard folders to use during Lent. The discipline consisted in putting a quarter into a slot each day as a special Lenten offering. When it was time to offer up the money, the formerly slim folders were bulky and heavy. I think this particular practice has disappeared but I look back upon it as a worthwhile spiritual discipline. It was my first training in stewardship. This little practice of a Lenten tithe taught me that the Christian life includes habits of giving money away. It's a way to renounce treating money as an idol. I remember feeling its liberating effect.

This is what the ancient spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting, and works of love are meant to do. They are ways to turn away from unhealthy practices by practicing something different, bringing us into a deeper awareness of God. Such Lenten faith practices hold the promise of bringing freedom and liberation. Should you choose to feed hungry neighbors, chances are you will see the face of Christ in their face. If you want to go deeper with your prayer life or in reflecting upon scripture, you may find yourself engaging God's love with both your head and heart. If you shut off social media or give up something else that is addictive you may discover new and freeing ways to spend your time. Practices of renunciation becomes new venues of freedom.

In recent years, I have come to view Lent through the lens of liturgical renewal. There is now more of an emphasis upon taking Lent as a time to form new Christians and assist them in their preparation for

baptism at the Easter Vigil. It is based on early Christian practice. Having practiced this process called the Catechumenate, I've seen how such intentional formation involves members of the entire church community. This has enriched my understanding of Lent as a time to engage in practices that are intentionally related to the common life of the church. We are formed in community. Perhaps you will choose a discipline of praying with or for members of First Lutheran or consider becoming involved in choir or another congregational ministry. Perhaps you will choose a practice to be shared with another member of the church.

More and more, I find that such expressions of Christian community serve as a witness to the current culture of intense individualism where we see the interests of some taking precedence over the common good.

The Eucharistic preface for Lent prays it well: "You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace."

I pray God will renew us both as individuals and as a church community together, so that as we prepare with joy for the great Easter Feast we will experience the gifts of freedom and liberation that replace hearts turned in on themselves.

Peace,
Pastor Hansen

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to our new council members. We are excited to see your talents and skills enrich our congregation's traditions and future. Some of you may be completely brand new to the council. I encourage you to please ask lots of questions and do not hesitate to get involved beyond just your committees. As our First Lutheran Church of West Seattle's Statement of Mission states:

"In our congregation we: Believe that church membership is not easy, but a high calling to live a life of sacrifice in our witness to Christ's Cross, by giving of our money to the church, by giving of our time to further the work of the church, and by being ever ready to witness anywhere to God's truth, justice, and righteous purity."

As we welcome our new council members, I want to express my sincere gratitude to our outgoing members: Mariann Petersen, Tyler Schorn, and Dale Korsmo. Mariann, I thank you for your kindness and your invaluable knowledge of the council and FLCWS history. Tyler, I appreciate your eagerness to jump into action to get tasks done. Dale, thank you especially for all the facility repairs, tech support, deep institutional knowledge, and background support that have kept the council flowing smoothly. Thank you for devoting your time and energy to council these past years.

I would like to acknowledge the FLCWS staff. Thank you to Casey Blake for your gentle reminders and patience with me as I did not always make my deadlines. Finally, a big thank you to Pastor Hansen for your encouragement and guidance. I hope that I was helpful to you during your initial start with our congregation as pastor.

It was my goal to serve the congregation with humility, grace, and reverence. I made mistakes during my presidency. Please accept my apologies for any unintentional missteps or offenses. May we continue to move forward and look towards our bright future.

1 Corinthians 15:58

"Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."

Steve Liang
Outgoing President,
Church Council

Next Council Meeting and links:

Tuesday, February 10, 2026: In-Person/Hybrid

Video link:

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

Or dial:

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

FEBRUARY ANNOUNCEMENTS

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP: Join us in the lounge every Sunday after the service. This is a wonderful time to visit with one another and to welcome visitors and guests.

ADULT FORMATION— THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW: February 1, 8 and 15, following Coffee Fellowship. Join Jeremy Keizur as we explore the Gospel of Matthew.

CHAPEL SERVICE:. Every Sunday at 8:00 a.m. in the Chapel there is a spoken Holy Communion service. On festival Sundays the chapel service does not occur and those who attend are encouraged to join the rest of the congregation at the 10:30 service. The next festival is the Transfiguration of Our Lord, February 15.

FOOD BANK COLLECTION: The West Seattle Food Bank box and all collections are in room C. Suggestions for February are canned goods. Any non-perishable foods, personal products, or grocery gift cards are welcome. Your much needed donations go to the West Seattle Food Bank, Compass Housing Alliance, Mary's Place, and Westside Neighbors (American Legion Hall Shelter).

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

WEEKLY FLCWS EMAIL: FLCWS began sending out a weekly email in December. All members and friends of First with email addresses on file will receive the weekly news on Fridays. In addition to news, the email includes scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday, and Pastor's reflections. If you're not sure if we have your current email, or you would like a friend or family member to be included, send it in, or write it down on the *Count Me In* form.

DINNER TEAMS NEEDED! Churches in West Seattle are preparing meals for our homeless friends in partnership with Westside Neighbors Shelter. FLCWS is participating by helping to provide meals at least monthly as a dinner team. Our next dinner will be in February. If you are interested in this ministry, please check the appropriate box on the *Count Me In* form.

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.

AVAILABLE ON THE COUNTER:

- 2026 Pledge Envelopes
- 2025 Annual Reports
- Revised & Updated FLCWS Constitution (also available in digital format—email Casey)

CONGRATULATIONS TO THOSE ELECTED TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING ON JANUARY 25

Officers:

Kathrine Young, President
David King, Vice President
Sonja Clemente, Secretary

Council At-Large Positions:

William Croghan
Brandon Greenwood
Jeremy Keizur

Those Remaining on the Council:

Gina Allen
Peter Douglass, Treasurer
Steve Jeske
David Juhl

The 2026 Church Council

***Will Be Invested On Sunday, February 1st
At the 10:30 Service***

Special Thanks To Our Outgoing Council Members:

Matthew Kahn
Dale Korsmo
Mariann Petersen
Tyler Schorn

STEWARDSHIP

In one of our most recent Council meetings Pastor Hansen asked us all to state what we are grateful for at First Lutheran Church, just as a way to check in with others, and to start the meeting on a theme of being grateful. I am always grateful for the music that First Lutheran has to offer in worship, but someone mentioned that before it was my turn, so I started to wonder, what will my answer be. When I was called on I did not even have to think, I could clearly answer that I am grateful for the generosity of the members of this church.

This year during Advent we had a 'giving tree' for the residents of Hospitality House. I am happy to say that it was a rousing success. Unfortunately I did not keep a list of every donation, but I think it was partially because I was so excited and overwhelmed to see the response. Not only did people purchase the suggested items, but they often purchased more than was asked for. An ornament asking for one gift card was often returned with several, or for a dollar value of more than was asked for. Donations were wrapped in festive paper and bows, presented in bright gift bags, or even decorated by hand. I took the donated gifts to Hospitality House and they were very grateful and excited to see the gifts as well. There was also a wonderful monetary donation that will help buy much needed supplies. Hos-

pitality House provides for residents while there, but they also try to purchase items for residents once they leave to set up their new home - basic kitchen items such as a coffee pot, toaster oven, or even dishes are needed. Thank you to everyone for your support of Hospitality House.

I urge you, and myself, to try and continue this generosity past the usual 'giving season', and into your daily practice. It can be as simple as buying one extra perishable item for the food bank on a weekly shopping trip, extending a greeting to a new person you meet, or even spending your time to help others with a task that might be easy for you, but difficult for them.

Helping others through our time and talents is a great way to use the gifts that God has given us. As we pray every week "Merciful Father we offer with joy what you have first given us - our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love".

Kathrine Young
-Church Council

Dear First Lutheran Church of WS,

We at Hospitality House Women's Shelter want to wish you all a very Happy New Year and to say a big Thank You for your generous donation of various gift cards for our residents. We are so grateful for friends who cover us in such meaningful ways. It is because of you that our residents can find home, health and hope during their time in our program.

Thank you for choosing to support the women of our community who need us most. We could not do this work without you! May 2026 bring lots of goodness to you this year!

Sincerely,

Hospitality House
Program Staff

Briana, Sarah, Rachel, Keilah & Sahara

First Lutheran Church
of West Seattle is
grateful to be a recipient of Thrivent Choice

thrivent

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

✠ 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, and Michael Thompson.

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 Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry, Synod Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee, our pastor Bryon Hansen, our sacristan Dean Hard, our organist and choirmaster 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: Kathrine Young, David King, Peter Douglass, Sonja Clemente, Gina Allen, William Croghan, Brandon Greenwood, Steve Jeske, David Juhl, and Jeremy Keizur, 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 we will abandon bullying tactics and steward a just and merciful immigration policy.

Pray for our leaders, that they may govern with wisdom, justice, mercy, and compassion.

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, Palestine, Afghanistan, Morocco, Syria, Lebanon, Sudan and Nigeria. All immigrants and asylum seekers, and all who live in fear.

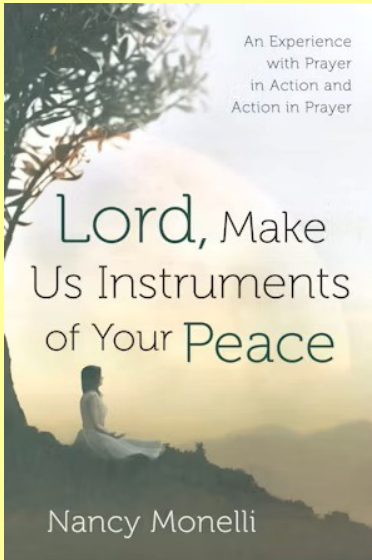
Pray that God will bless us through the lives of the saints: Valentine, Martyr (270); Martin Luther, Renewer of the Church (1546); Rasmus Jensen, First North American Lutheran Pastor (1620); St. Matthias, Apostle; Elizabeth Fedde, Deaconess (1921).

Merciful God, the fountain of living water, you quench our thirst and wash away our sin. Give us this water always. Bring us to drink from the well that flows with the beauty of Jesus.

-from Prayer of the Day 4 Lent

Lenten Adult Formation

Following Coffee Fellowship
Each Sunday in Lent



Living In And Out of God's Shalom -Led by Nancy Monelli

This experience, based on Nancy's book, *Lord, Make Us Instruments of Your Peace*, will help provide an experience of prayer and action.

If you wish to acquire a book, they are available on the counter near the lounge. Donations are welcome.

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