



December 2021

OUR MISSION:

To grow a loving community of active followers of Jesus,
equipped to take the message to our world.

Dear Church Family,

It doesn't take much. The little light on the wall-mounted door opener across a pitch-black garage. The faint glimmer of moonlight through a window down an unlit hallway. It's just enough to get you oriented, to provide a sense of direction, to give you the courage needed to move forward, even if only one step at a time. It is even enough to help you contend with most of the hazards on the path before you, as long as you stay focused on the light and attentive to the perspective it gives you.

This is what the season of Advent is about: looking for, looking toward, the Light. "In him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it," we read in John 1, and the words invite us to open our eyes and our hearts to the hope that comes to us through Jesus Christ our Lord. The light of Christ can orient us and give us perspective; the Light of Christ can give us life in the midst of the darkness, dangers, and death pervading our world.

It brings to mind a verse that I've been thinking about as we head into the hope-centered season of Advent. "We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope." (1 Thessalonians 4:13). The Apostle Paul admits that grief is real. It is not to be avoided or dismissed as some ancient writers, and some still today, would suggest. We are to grieve, he says, but we are to do so as people who always remember the eternal hope we've been given through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The hope we are given through Christ changes everything. This is a wonderful word for those wrestling with the painful reality of death. But, it is also an essential word for all as we face every change and challenge in life. *We do not grieve as others do who have no hope.* Nor do we go through anything else as others do who have no hope. We have an enduring hope grounded in Jesus Christ. Whether it is an economic downturn or a layoff, health difficulties or relational troubles, storms in the world around or tempests of the soul within, we go through *all* of life as people who have been given a living hope through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This firm hope is the foundation upon which the Apostle Paul announces in Romans 8:38-39 that neither death, nor life, nor anything else in all creation can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This firm hope in the faithfulness of Christ is what enables Paul to be content in the midst of the staggering ups and downs of his life as he writes in Philippians 4:13. He knows, "I can do all things through him who strengthens me."

Each Advent, and in this one in particular, the theme of our worship at Living Life is on the hope we have through Christ in the midst of the changes and challenges of life. It is a season to remember our hope, proclaim our hope, rejoice in our hope, and rest in our hope. Grief is still real—but a steady light pierces its darkness. Pain is still real—but a steady light pierces its darkness. Heartbreak, hardship, and suffering are still real—but a steady light pierces their darkness. "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." Thanks be to God!

Live in the certain hope of Christ this Advent season,

Mark

Sunday Volunteers

Worship Greeters: Doyle, Cary, Rick
Deacons: Jeff, Chad, Glen, Dave

November 28:

1st Sunday of Advent

Coffee: DeAnn & Kendall Weber

Power Point: Beth Olson

Sound Tech: Keith TenHulzen

Church Lock-Up: Andy Johnson

December 5:

2nd Sunday of Advent

Coffee: Peg & Gary Hartgerink

Power Point: Avyn Olson

Sound Tech: Taylor TeKolste

Church Lock-Up: Luke Sieck

December 12:

3rd Sunday of Advent

Coffee: Diane & Bill Wieskamp

Power Point: Beth Olson

Sound Tech: Robbie Morrison

Church Lock-Up: Dave Oltman

December 19:

4th Sunday of Advent

Coffee: Nikki & Brandon Oltman

Power Point: Tammy Goering

Sound Tech: Randy Sieck

Church Lock-Up: Chad Bryant

December 26:

Coffee: Mel & Karen Harms

Power Point: Jenn Childers

Sound Tech: Keith TenHulzen

Church Lock-Up: Andy Johnson

Thank you for your Service!!!

Double Your Gift!

-For the rest of 2021, your generosity in paying for the Family Life Center will be doubled! An anonymous donor has promised to match any gift given to the Church Building Fund until the end of the year, up to \$50,000!

-Please designate your gift as going to the "Building Fund" and then know that it will be matched!

-If you are giving online, please let Kendall Weber know that it should be applied to the building fund.

-Thank you for your generosity and vision for this great facility and how it can be used by the community and in the ministry of our church!

Holiday Youth Schedule for December

Wednesday, December 15-- God's Kids Club Christmas Program at 7:00pm.

4JC & The Fire will resume on Wednesday, January 5, 2022!
Family Meals & GKC will resume on January 12, 2022!

Mary & Martha Circle

Wed, Dec 8,
12:00pm
Christmas Party!
Lunch at LLRC

Birthdays

- 2 Monica Starr
- 5 Colson Hestermann
- 7 Marge Helmink
- 10 Terran Goering
- 11 Izabella Hays
- 12 Samantha Henderson
- 13 Doyle Petersen
- 14 Hunter DeBoer
- 15 Ilene Doctor

Anniversaries

- 1 Glen & Lynn Gana (43)
- 17 Mark & Monica Starr (28)
- 29 Rick & Janelle DeBoer (31)
- 31 Jiggs & Mel Maendele (27)

- 17 Chester Maendale
- 19 Heath Skeels
- 21 Charlotte Mulder
- 23 Patti Wieskamp
- 24 Larry Hafer
- 25 Jesus☺
- 26 Jaelyn Cejka
- 29 Megan Auman
- 30 Jayci Osborn
Thelma Schroeder

Noel

Church Event Cancellations

The decision to cancel **Sunday Worship** will be made by 7:00am Sunday and will be noted and email announcement will be sent out.

Wednesday Evening activities or any other church events or meetings will be canceled if Norris Schools close or dismiss early.

We will try to notify you by email, but if you are unsure of the status of an event, please contact the church (402-791-5800).

4JC & The Fire

4JC and The Fire will continue to meet on Wednesday, Dec. 1st, and Wednesday, Dec. 8th at their regular times. 4JC and The Fire will NOT meet Dec. 15th (GKC Christmas Program), 22nd, and 29th. We'll plan to meet again on Wednesday, January 5th, 2022. 4JC will continue to meet at 6:30pm in the Family Life Center youth room. The Fire will continue to meet at 8:08, don't be late ;) in the Family Life Center youth room. For future updates, events, and scheduled activities, please check LLRC's [Facebook](#) page for announcements.

Power Connection 2022 for Middle Schoolers!

Attention middle school parents! Our youth have an incredible opportunity for the Holy Spirit to transform their beliefs into a lifestyle of faith in Jesus through a weekend conference in St. Paul, MN July 29th-31st! Don't let your youth miss this chance to attend Power Connection 2022! Power Connection is an event for middle school students currently in grades 6th-8th and their adult leaders. It is organized by the Synod of the Heartland Youth Ministries. Registration opens in January. For more information about Power Connection 2022 and to register, please visit www.powerconnectioninfo.com or contact Pastor Robbie Morrison.

Immerse Summer Mission Project

Immerse is a 6-day ministry experience in Lincoln for high school and middle school youth groups through F Street Church. Participants serve families, churches, and organizations in need throughout the Lincoln area. The goal is to inspire youth to be passionate about Christ and compassionate toward people. There are only 3 open weeks left for this mission opportunity. June 28th-July 3rd, July 5th-10th, and July 26th-31st. The group minimum is 5 in addition to the adult leaders. These spots are filling up fast, so please let Pastor Robbie Morrison know what week you're available for this awesome opportunity! For more information, please visit immerselincoln.org.

Mentoring Class

Pastor Robbie Morrison is looking for youth Interested in confessing their faith through a Christian mentoring course. This course will help youths understand the core doctrine beliefs here at Living Life Reformed Church by navigating through scriptures in the Bible, better understanding creation, discussions about sin, the Holy Trinity, worship, and much more! This journey will also allow youths to explore their faith, grow in relationship with Jesus, and develop a life-long relationship with a Christian mentor. If you have a 7th to 12th grader at home who has not completed the mentoring class, this class is for them! Please reach out to Pastor Robbie Morrison if you or your youth is at all interested or if you have any questions! This course will start in January 2022, so please let him know as soon as possible.

202 Annual Congregational Meeting Journal – November 14th, 2021

Roll Call and Appointment of Tellers:

- Deacons Glen Gana and Luke Sieck were appointed as vote counters
- Elder Dean Hestermann and LLRC Member Mike Brown confirmed the vote count
- A Quorum was established – 65 members
- Congregation voted to suspend current bylaw regarding absentee voting. **MSC**

Opening Prayer by Pastor Mark

Election of Officers:

- **Elders:** Ken Weber & Gary Hartgerink
- **Deacons:** Shawn Gouldin & Brandon Cramer
- **Thank you** to the Elders finishing their term this year: Tammy Goering and Rick DeBoer
- **Thank you** to Deacons finishing their term this year: Chad Bryant and Glen Gana

LLRC Vision:

- Pastor Mark discussed the Mission Statement and the purpose of shortening it
- Pastor Mark illustrated examples of LLRC working towards our Vision
- Discussed Strategic Leadership Teams and their long-term goals and current developments

Update on the Family Life Center Fundraiser: (Deacon Taylor TeKolste)

- Talked about the current mortgage
- Talked about current income and matching donations
- Working towards getting the Family Life Center paid off sooner than anticipated

2021 Financial Report/Presentation and Approval of the Budget for 2022: (Deacon Taylor TeKolste)

- Highlighted areas of the 2021 Finances
- Reported on the 2022 budget and explained the reasons for increases in various areas
- Provided and estimated annual giving per family to ensure we meet budget needs
- Taylor explained to the congregation that the 2021 budget is at 112% due to hiring our full time youth pastor; however, we are very close to where we should be.
- **MSC** to approve 2022 budget

Approval of 2020 congregational meeting minutes - MSC

MSC to adjourn

Closing Prayer by Pastor Mark

Consistory Notes – November 08, 2021

Notes: October minutes and the Nov/Dec Calendar items were approved via email prior to November's consistory meeting.

Consistory Meeting

1. (Pastor Mark) Meeting opened with Devotions: **Genesis 17:1, Genesis 6:5, 8-9.** 1) Like Noah, we want to find grace or favor or acceptance in the eyes of God. What made Noah different than the people of the world in his day? 2) Does being blameless mean being sinless? 3) Is being righteous different than being blameless? 4) As you read the passage, what would you guess is at the source or at the heart of being righteous or blameless? 5) Anything else from these verses that you found to be significant?
2. Prayer by Pastor Mark.
3. Mission Statement: Members shared our mission statement, "**To grow a loving community, equipped to take the message of Jesus to our world**". Discipleship Pathway: **Worship – Grow – Serve - Share**
4. Any Quick Strategic Leadership Team Project Updates? Worship God: Continuing to evaluate the different aspects of our first-time guests. Grow in Community: Two new growth groups objective is on schedule and on the horizon. Share with our World: A survey is being shared with residents of Firth after the holidays. Serve the Body: Working on job descriptions for all the various jobs at the church.
5. Youth and Media Update (Robbie): Finishing up a 4-week series "The Comeback". Talking about the pandemic and how it relates to how God provides and cares for us. After Thanksgiving, will be exploring traditions of Advent. Power Connection was announced to 4JC for 2022. It will be held the last week of July in St. Paul, MN. 4JC and The Fire will be looking at a summer program called Immerse, where the focus will be completing a mission project in Lincoln.
6. Team Updates
Congregational Care – Rick DeBoer and Doug Wieskamp
Discipleship/Education – Dean Hestermann and Ron DeBoer: Sending out a volunteer list for Sunday morning help with children's ministries.
Worship – Chad TerMaat and Taylor TeKolste:
Building/Grounds – Chad Bryant and Luke Sieck: Water heater installed in the parsonage. Retaining wall will be delayed until the spring.
Hospitality/Outreach – Andy Johnson and Dave Oltman:
Great Commission Team – Tammy Goering and Glen Gana:
7. Pray and think about your team participation in the coming year (we want to "equip" people to use their gifts and passions – what are your preferences? Let Mark know.) Also, think and pray about the Clerk and VP roles for the coming year. (Handout for Elders on VP role)
8. Epic Vocal Ensemble Christmas Concert – Sunday evening, Dec. 5th at 7 pm – opportunity to draw more people to our church. Chad TerMaat will be heading this event.

Continued Consistory Minutes: November 8th, 2021

9. Treasurer's Report – (September) Taylor TeKolste

General Fund	\$53,323.27
Building Fund	\$39,376.32
Memorial Fund	\$12,182.61
Branson Fund	\$1,835.55
The Fire Account	\$10,090.51
4JC Account	\$3,015.00
Script Fund	\$439.01
White Earth Mission	\$3,483.00
Kitchen Fund	\$771.00

MSC October treasurer's report

10. Budget discussion/approval – Taylor discussed changes to the 2022 budget. **MSC** Present budget to congregation on 11-14-2021.

11. Other business?

12. Congregational Meeting Plan: Pastor Mark presented an agenda for 11-14-2021 to the consistory.

13. Next consistory meeting is Monday, Dec. 14th with new consistory members. Outgoing members should be prepared to share words of wisdom or counsel for incoming members. All Elders and Deacons should think about how they can assist the incoming members to make a successful transition for them and for the church.

14. Snack – December (Dean Hestermann)

15. Motion to adjourn. **MSC**

16. Prayer requests and Circle of Prayer:

Elder's Meeting

- Approved a request for baptism from Taylor and Leah TeKolste (Teddy) for Nov. 21st
- Reviewed the spiritual life of the congregation and those who may be in need of special care.

Deacons Meeting

New Business

- Went over the budget a second time. No questions or concerns among Deacons
- Checking on obtaining credit cards for Robbie and Beth

Wednesday Family Meals

December 1: Meat loaf, Mashed potatoes/gravy, green beans, Salad, Rolls, Dessert

December 8: Pizza, Garlic Rolls, Salad, Dessert

Family Meals will be back on Wednesday, January 12, 2022! Hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - December

Tuesdays	6:30pm	Prayer Gathering
Fridays	6:00am	Men's Group at LLRC
Saturday, Dec 4	4:30 pm	Firth Old Fashioned Christmas
Wednesday, Dec 8	12:00pm	M&M Circle Lunch and Meeting
	5:30pm	Family Meal, GKC, 4JC, The Fire
Sunday, Dec 12	7:00pm	Afterglow Bible Study
Monday, Dec 13	1:00pm	"IF" Meeting (Ilene Docter)
	7:00pm	Consistory Meeting
Wednesday, Dec 15	7:00pm	GKC Christmas Program
Wednesday, Dec 22-Jan 4		NO SCHOOL NORRIS
		Christmas Break
Friday, Dec 24	5:00pm	Christmas Eve Service
Friday, Dec 25		Merry Christmas!!

**Epic Vocal
Ensemble Presents**

A Night of Wonderous Joy

Where:
Living Life Reformed
Church

When:
Sunday, December
5th at 7pm

God's Kids Club

God's blessings are abundant as we have continued to welcome new and previously attending children to GKC throughout the fall.

The kids have been working hard on learning memory verses, songs, and parts for the GKC Christmas Program. We would love to see our church family on December 15 at 7 p.m. as the children present, "A Baby in Bethlehem." Please bring a dozen cookies or bars to share for a time of fellowship after the program.

We hope you enjoy the Christmas season with your family and friends! GKC will resume on January 12, 2022.

Remember to get your Scrip Cards!

For those of you not familiar with the Scrip program, everyone here has the opportunity to purchase gift cards from a huge variety of organizations at their face value and Living Life Reformed Church will get a percentage (which varies by the retailer) of that price which we put towards various missions. We typically have cards for Hy-Vee, Super Saver and Wal-Mart/Sam's Club but check the Scrip Card table in the Fellowship Hall or <https://shop.shopwithscrip.com/shop/product/browse> for a list of over 600 available merchants! Get those orders in for cards that make great gifts by December 5th, 2021, to receive them by Christmas! Members from the Great Commission Team will be at a table in the Fellowship Hall before and after Sunday morning worship with cards for purchase. All proceeds from November & December go to the Norris Area Food Pantry.

Living Life Reformed Church
603 Russell, Box 295
Firth, NE 68358



Wednesday Night

5:30-6:30pm:

Fellowship Meal

6:30-7:30pm:

4JC (Middle School)

6:30-7:30pm:

God's Kids Club

6:30-7:30pm:

Women's Bible Study

8:00-9:00pm:

The Fire (High School)

Sunday Morning

9:30-10:30am:

Worship Service &

Livestream on YouTube

To Contact Us:

Church Office Hours:

9:00am-12:00pm

Mark Starr:

320-262-9952

mark@livinglifereformed.org

Robbie Morrison:

402-440-8399

Robbie.morrison@livinglifereformed.org

Holiday Events

**Christmas Eve
Service**

**December 24
5:00 pm**

