The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing. (Psalm 145:15-16, ESV)

As I write this article, it is late in the month of October and I am looking out of my office window. The temperature is cooler, but the sun is shining. The leaves on some of the trees have changed color. Many of them are already on the ground. Fall is nearing its midpoint and winter is on the way. In the farm fields around Princeton, the crops are being harvested. It looks like it could be a good year. But I'm no expert. I'll wait for the reports from those who are.

As I think about the changing seasons and the produce of the earth, I am reminded of a prayer that we used to say when I was a student at a Lutheran grade school in Wisconsin. Before we went to lunch, we would say the familiar table prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, and let these gifts to us be blessed. Amen." We would eat quickly so that we could get outside and enjoy a little bit of recess time. Eventually, we would hear the school bell (which always seemed to ring too soon), and we would make our way back to the classroom. Then, when everyone was seated, we would say another prayer.

The prayer ***after*** lunch was a prayer of thanks from Psalm 145. We would bow our heads and the teacher would begin with, "Heavenly Father." Then we would join in and recite the two verses above: "The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing." It was a good reminder that everything we had just enjoyed, the food that filled our stomachs in the lunchroom and the air that filled our lungs on the playground, was a wonderful and gracious gift from God.

The very fact that we are alive is a gift. It may not feel that way sometimes, because life in this world can often be difficult. But we begin to see the gift more clearly when we realize that our time on this earth is not all there is to our lives. This is only the brief beginning. The greatest gift from God is yet to come. It is the promise of eternal life in Heaven for all who believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

In Romans 6:23, Paul reminds us that, because of our sin, our time on this earth is very short. He says, "The wages of sin is death." But then he tells us about the gift. He says, "But the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Jesus gave us the greatest gift of all when he died on the cross. He gave us hope.

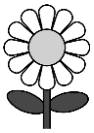
So now we can live our lives in this world with confidence and joy, even when we are struggling. We can see beauty in the cold wind and we can find joy in the anticipation of the warm holidays which are coming. We can draw strength from our family members and our friends. And we can also feel the love and support of our ***church*** family as we all walk this road of faith together. And we can give thanks.

We can thank God for creating us. We can thank him for giving us the food and clothing and shelter that we need to survive. We can thank him for the people in our lives who make us happy. And most of all, we can thank him for giving us Jesus, who died for our sins and rose again to give us eternal life. And then, when we have given thanks with our words, we can live thankful lives by serving others who are in need.

God has opened his hand to give us the things that ***we*** need. Let us now open our hearts to share the love of Christ with others, in our words and in our actions. And may you all have a blessed Thanksgiving celebration this year. Amen and Amen.

Pastor Shields

Special announcements for the bulletin, or the screen, need to be to the office ***by Thursday morning.*** *Call, leave a message, email, or drop off a note.* **Newsletter deadline will be the 20th day of November for the December Newsletter.**



Altar Flowers
Open dates for flowers:
Nov. 1, 8 & 29
& Dec. 6, 13, 20, 27

Office Hours: 9-12 & 1-4 Mon. – Thurs.
Website: www.flcprinceton.org
Check us on Facebook.
Phone: 1-815-875-1685
Email: office.flcprinceton@gmail.com

ALTAR GUILD
November – June Ohlson, Cindy Pierson, Laurie Anderson
December – Marilynne Kloster, JoAnne Kloepping
January – Mary Ann Smith, Lynn Holland

Council Summary – October 2026
September minutes and financial reports were approved.
Pastor's report – regular monthly activities, Bible Studies, Confirmation started, Princeton Ministerial Assn. meeting here, Rally Day, Quilt & Prayer Shawl Dedication Sunday, finished lectures for S. Africa trip. Officiated at Gary Swanson's private funeral service Oct. 15, leave for S. Africa Oct. 16, Pastor Norm Femrite preaching Oct. 18, All Saints' Sunday Nov. 1, Celebration of Life for Gary Swanson Nov. 1 from noon to 6:00pm at the Fairgrounds.
Administrator's report – September attendance 95 and 70 views. We have been notified that Xerox may no longer support our copier because of its age. It's still working well. We will cancel our service contract in April & order supplies from Amazon.
Property - A leak has been discovered in the roof over the South Narthex, we are getting a bid for that. We will make another payment to Boss roofing for $25,000. Waiting for a final settlement from Country Companies. A light in the elevator has been fixed, the Kewanee Boiler has been checked, floodlight on the lawn was repaired, we have some leads for snow plowing this winter. A bubble in the sanctuary carpet will be fixed by Johnson's Carpet. Smoke & fire alarm sensors were checked & passed inspection. North wall of old building above kitchenette needs tuck pointed, we'll get a price and add it to 2027 list of projects. Exterior light fixtures are being repaired. A bid for the roof over the South Narthex was received from Boss for $2981. Council approved.
Service & Mission – October benevolence: Buddy Bags $500, LWR $1500, September Mobile Food Pantry served 149 families and 362 individuals. Next Mobile Food Pantry on December 3rd.
Outreach & Fellowship - Rally Day had good turnout and very little chicken left over.
Youth & Education – Searching for a Christmas Program.
Worship & Music – Attempting to schedule "The Cotton Patch Gospel" to host here again, checking on poinsettia prices through new florists, Christmas tree will be set up Sat., Nov. 28 and decorated the 29th. Julia will decorate for Thanksgiving Eve. Kathy Allen plays on the 5th Sunday and we will hold Hymn Sings.
Finance – A temple talk will be given on Oct. 18th, Stewardship packets available the first weekend of November to be returned by the end of November.

PRAYER SHAWL GROUP
10:00am – Tuesday, Nov. 10 & 24

QUILTERS
No Quilters until January

Our Sympathy to the family of
Gary Swanson
Gary passed away on October 9th.
Pastor Shields presided at his funeral service on Oct. 15th.
A Celebration of Life will be held on Sunday, November 1st
at the Bureau Co. Fairgrounds
from 12 noon until 6:00pm.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday, November 3rd
10:30am – Worship Committee
1:00pm – Library Committee
7:00pm – Property, Youth, Service & Mission, Finance

COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, November 10th
3:30PM – COUNCIL MTG.

Confirmation
Wednesdays at 6:00pm
****No Confirmation Class on November 25th***

Pastor's Bible Study
Wednesdays at 11:00am
Thursdays at 6:00pm
****No Bible Study Classes on November 25th & 26th***

Anniversaries
November

Ken & Cyndy Schoof 11/16

November

Carol Ploch 11/2
Mary Ann Smith 11/3
Jackie Pilcher 11/4
Becky Delany 11/8
Tom Anderson 11/9
Jennifer Mills 11/12
Mary Lee Twidell 11/16
Kim Brenneman 11/17
Jessica Mendlovitz 11/17
Laurie Anderson 11/18
Angie Pierson 11/19
Tracy Brenneman 11/22
Colin Pierson 11/23
Theo Bonucci 11/24
Elena Ramirez 11/24
Lani Swinford 11/29

CIRCLE MEETINGS
Tuesday, November 17
9:30am - Rebekah Circle
3:00pm Lydia Circle

2026 Stewardship Packets

Included in the packets are 2027 pledge cards, Opportunities to Serve & other information. ***Please return by November 29th.***

It's also important that you fill out a new "Opportunities to Serve" sheet or "Time & Talent" as it's sometimes referred to. We need to know in what areas you are still willing to serve or if anything has changed.

2026 Saints

Since last November All Saints Sunday, we have lost:

Lorraine Schmitt 11/3/25
Sandi Smith 11/20/25
Evelyn Irene Nordstrom 1/3/26
Keith Leo Cain 4/3/26
Carolyn Marie Mahon 5/20/26
Rich Still 6/3/26
Deborah Lindberg 6/25/26
Gerald Carver 6/30/26
Ross John Weber 7/20/26
Gary Eugene Swanson 10/9/26

Sunday School News

Practices for the Christmas Program will begin in November. The Program is scheduled for Sunday, December 13th during worship. If your child will not be here that day, please let their teacher know. We will be assigning parts soon. --Thank you, June

Congratulations to
Nyla Thompson & Logan Bopes
Married on Sept. 26, 2026
Nyla is the daughter of
Melissa & Michael Verucchi
& granddaughter of Joann Sheldon

THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE
Wed., Nov. 25th
7:00pm
Pie Fellowship to follow.
Think about sharing a pie or dessert.

Endowment Meeting
Monday, November 16th

The Endowment Committee looking for worthy organizations to support in 2026. Funds are given to the following categories: Missions, Scholarships, and Community Outreach.

Request forms are found on the bulletin board outside the main office please get your requests or recommendations to the office before that date, or talk to Don, T.J., Tony, Julia or John.

Free Thanksgiving Dinner Assistance

ECC has asked if we might partner with them and St. Louis Catholic Church this year to help them put on their annual free Thanksgiving Dinner. If you are able to help in any way that day, please call Tad Smith 815-878-5473.

They are also looking for food donations which they will need to have at the church by Sunday, November 22nd. There will be sign-up sheets with the types of food they need. Please check them out and you can bring it here and we can deliver it to them on the 22nd.

As the years went by, I gradually discovered that ninety-nine percent of the things I worried about never happened, --Dale Carnegie

Continued prayers for:

Cancer patients: Barb Amrein *(friend of Mary Lee Twidell- Lymphoma),* **Tina Nutter** *(stepmom to Gage & Dash Nutter-cancer),* **Michael Frandsen** *(brother of Lani Swinford),* **Rob Dunn, Dave Caldwell** *(friend of Mike Birdsley).*

Others: Dawn Dabler *(family of Mary Lee Twidell & Nancy Hartz- tumors on liver non-cancerous),* **Kim Bazant** *(daughter of Jackie Pilcher, on kidney transplant list),* **Lynne Swanson** *(diverticulitis, recovering at home),* **Sue Weber** *(back pain),* **Linda Bacon** *back paid),* **Sue Eggers** *(back pain),* **Chad Errio** *(recovering from heart surgery & stroke),* **Val Blythe** *(heart issues),* **Ray Schoff** *(health issues),* **Sarah Smith** *(friend of Judy Carlsen, health issues),* **Nick Smith** *(health issues),*

December Mobile Food Pantry
Thursday, Dec. 3rd
9:00am
B.C. Fairgrounds
Volunteers arrive at 8:30
Bring any wagons available.

Our Sympathy to Linda Bacon whose brother-in-law passed away recently.

COMING SOON !
ADVENT WORSHIP & SOUP SUPPERS
Wednesdays: Dec. 2, 9 & 16
5:30pm – Soup Suppers
7:00pm – Worship Service

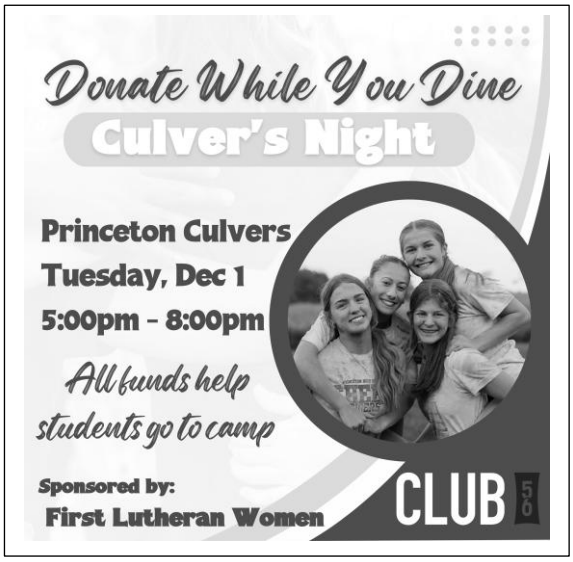
Manners, there's something to be said for today's casual laid-back lifestyle, which lacks a lot of formality. But being polite and treating others with respect never goes out of style.

Decorating for Christmas

Sunday, November 29th is the 1st Sunday in Advent. The tree and other decorations will be up to be decorated after worship that day. If you can help, please stick around after worship.

LWR Quilts & Kits

Thanks to the generous donations here at First Lutheran, we were able to send 87 quilts, 53 personal care kits and 57 school kits to Lutheran World Relief this year. Thank you to the ladies who came to help pack the quilts and kits. There were delivered to St. John's in Bloomington on Saturday, Oct. 31st.



LCW Christmas Gift Bags

The LCW is putting together items for a Christmas Gift bag for some of our shut-ins. If you would like to contribute anything toward this gift bags, please bring it to church. Items we can use are: individually wrapped mints or chocolates, ChapStick, small pkgs of Kleenex, hand sanitizers, tea bags, hot chocolate, small ornaments, small had lotion tubes, devotional booklets. This is just an example, if you have another idea, see Lisa Shields.

2026 POINSETTIA PLANT ORDER FORM

Poinsettias may be ordered through the church at $18 per plant.

_____ Red

My plant/s is a memorial to: _____

My plant/s is in honor of: _____

Order form with payment should be turned in by **December 13th.** Checks made out to: "First Lutheran Church". Plants will be displayed on Christmas Eve and may be picked up after the 7:00pm worship service.

Signed_____

2027 Altar Flower Reservation

I/we would like to donate Altar Flowers on or near _____, 2027.

☐ I will donate $20 to the church flower fund for silk arrangements.

☐ I will donate fresh flower arrangements from a local florist.

Signed _____

Reservations are first come, first served. You are responsible for ordering flowers and you may use the florist of your choosing. **Please pay the florist directly.** Garden flowers are welcome. (The Garden of Eden flower shop is offering a price of $60 for 2 vases and will deliver to the church.)

To the Glory of God / Other occasion:

_____

_____