First Lutheran Church

First News

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Dates to remember:

- Pastor's Monday Bible Class Jan 6th 10 AM
- Mary Marth Circle Monday Jan 6 1 PM
- Ruth's Circle Monday Jan 6th 6:30 PM
- Stephen Ministry Every Wed 5:30 PM
- Youth Bible Study Wed. 6:30 –8 PM
- LWML Jan 9th 7 PM
- Senior Breakfast Monday Jan 20th 8 AM
- Quilt Tying 1 PM the 2nd and 3rd Monday
- Men's Bible Study Every Wed 6 AM

Hope for the hopeless in the new year

The Rev. Matthew V. Moss is Senior Pastor at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church & School.

Call me cynical, or just call me a Lutheran of Germanic descent, but beneath all the confetti, binge drinking and wild parties of our culture's New Year's celebrations I sense something depressing lurking. No, I'm not talking about those half-mournful, half-celebratory tributes to all the celebrities we've "lost" in the past twelve months, though those can be quite useful reminders that we are *all* mortal, even the best and brightest stars among us.

Alas, I am talking about the sheer hopelessness that drives many of our resolutions — and the pessimistic joking about how long it will take for us to fail at them. While all the bands are playing and every news outlet has their team on the scene covering the greatest parties in town, one theme repeats — hoping for the best in the new year. Who doesn't want that? Raise your champagne and — "Cheers!"

This is not just a general spirit of wishful thinking, however. Our New Year's parties, whether they're the big ones being televised or more local and familial ones, are filled with real, living, breathing human beings who are rather hopelessly hoping for things to change, and not just change, but *improve.* Dissatisfaction and even deep sorrow over life under gird our New Year's festivities and the whole discussion of resolutions.

One man resolves to start a new and exciting career. So now, with the party ongoing, he repeatedly checks his email on his unaffordable iPhone, *hoping* against hope that even though it's New Year's Eve and no one is at work, maybe — just maybe — an HR rep from one of the myriad companies to which he has applied will have responded with an offer of an interview or even a job. Truth be told, it's not a *new* resolution. Nor is this new behavior. Checking his email in hopes of a new job offer is a ritual act he performs no less than six times a day and has for the last six months of working the poor-paying job he hates.

With no news, he waits and hopes. He'll check again in an hour. What's different tonight is not the fancy suit and plastic 20-18 sunglasses, but rather the "hope" for a fresh start that comes with a new calendar year. But is there really any reason for hope in flipping the page from December to January? No. Not in the slightest. How hopeless. How depressing are these paltry, desperate resolutions and the hopelessness society has when its only hope is found in closing out one twelve-month cycle to open another.

What's more, our New Year's resolutions often fail to address the things that are really wrong in our lives. A resolution to exercise can temporarily hide (but not fix) the marriage problems that you and your spouse are feeling. A dietary resolution can only distract you from your children's behavioral issues

(Continued on page 2)

Stewardship

The 2020 offering envelopes are unfortunately on back order. The envelopes were printed but did not pass quality checks. The company is hoping to have the envelopes re-printed and shipped by the end of December. Shoul d the envelopes not ship, Stewardship is asking congregants to use any left over 2019 envelopes you may have or use a pew envelope.

— issues that, for all the hours of searching your heart and the Internet, you are powerless to change. Giving up one addiction — whether harmful or benign — may help you achieve the illusion of self-control in one area, but it leaves untouched countless others. If all we have to hope in is the fact that December 31, 2017, becomes January 1, 2018, then our hope is pretty frail. The clock ticks over, the ball drops and nothing really changes.

The world may press on in this dismal manner, but the Church is not so destitute in Her hope. Our hope is not in the simple grinding of the gears on the universal clock that takes us from year into new year. Our hope is in the one, true God who is very much active in the daily life of this world. He can and does open His hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing (Ps. 145:16) — a job for the jobless, a home for the homeless, food for the hungry and most of all, hope for the hopeless. When we lack the needs of the body we turn to His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, by which He bestows what is needed. So we pray, "Our Father who art in heaven … give us this day our daily bread," finding our hope in a tender Father rather than a mere New Year.

And yet … how do we know that this God the Father is any more trustworthy than "Father Time"? We grieve our broken relationships, our ailing bodies and our diminishing bank accounts. We recognize our bad habits. In a moment of truth we may admit that no amount of human resolve can really fix these things. More than that, the passing of Father Time has done nothing to help us with these problems, and there's not much hope he will next year either. So how is our heavenly Father any different, a cause for *more* hope?

This Father in heaven, unlike Father Time, actually *demonstrates* His love in the person of His Son. In the person and work of Jesus Christ, our Father has dealt with our biggest problem, one that no amount of human resolve or will power could ever remedy. That is our sin and the human mortality that comes as the punishment for sin. Through the death and resurrection of God's Son, we have the certain hope of redemption. We even have daily renewal in the Word and Sacraments of Christ's Church.

You don't need to wait until the next New Year's Eve for such fulfillment. That is a cause for yet more hope! We do not *lose* hope if the Father waits to provide our wants or even our needs, not even if He does not provide them at all. After all, whatever He gives or does not is according to His will and timing. We do not lose hope on account of what He may withhold, because our hope is *fixed* on what He has already given and continues to give without fail — His Son.

When your earthly problems are not simply weight loss or joblessness but the very real evils of sin and guilt, you know that time alone cannot address them. And yet God does not leave you in hopelessness. He grants daily and rich forgiveness brought to you by His Holy Spirit through His Word. This is what God, our Father who art in heaven, has done for us purely out of love. It is in this light, the light of what He has already done, that we may have more hope in His providence than we have in Father Time or our New Year's

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH Missouri Synod

Circuit Conference Pastor Winkling

January 21st @ Bethany in Overland Park

February 18th @ Christ in Overland Park

March 147th @ Christ Our Savior in Louisburg

April 21st @ First Lutheran in Paola

May 19th @ Hope in Shawnee

Lutheran Women's Missionary league

By Lindsay Sinclair

Many Thanks to all who donated and hand crafted mittens, scarves, hats, and gloves for our Mission for the months of November and December.

These will be delivered to My Father's House and Lakemary Center, and are greatly needed and appreciated.

The annual Advent by Candlelight was held on Thursday, December 12th, with warm fellowship of members and guests. It was a beautiful evening of treats, gifts, songs, and a beautiful story.

For those women who cannot attend meetings or events, you can join our Facebook group "FLC LWML". This page has been created to keep everyone up to date on activities and to share what we do as Lutheran Women in Mission.

Upcoming Events:

January 9th:

Regular LWML Meeting 7:00PM

LWML
Lutheran Women *in Mission*

Christmastide

A very *MERRY* Thank You! goes out to the many musicians, singers, and bell ringers who made our Christmastide event such a success!!
Our evening of music and worship was made possible by some fifty volunteers who made up our vocal choir, brass players, a pianist and organist, a cellist, a percussionist, and a choir of both handbells and handchimes. These volunteers—*adults and children!*—have been practicing over the last three months to bless our congregation and community with their love and gifts of music!
Finally, the greatest thank you goes to Janet Bucher whose vision, planning, and directing made Christmastide a reality. Not only was this performance her idea, but she played or directed on every piece! How blessed we are to have such gifted musicians serving the Lord in our congregation.

Bravo, musicians! And, Bravo, Janet!

Our President

By Justin Diehm

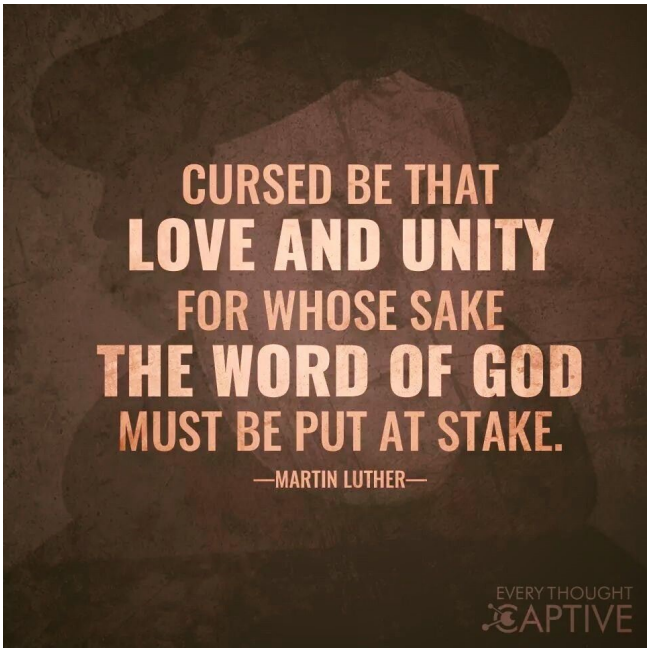
Greetings and Happy New Year fellow members of First!

I'd like to start by thanking Brian and the rest of the Board Chair's going off council this year. I came in as Vice President two years ago extremely green to Church leadership. The team was very welcoming and did their best to bring everyone up to speed quickly. Brian's council worked extremely hard to provide transparency and accomplish the goals that were established through The Foundations Initiative. Kudos to Brian and that team on a job well done!

Everyone knows that as we turn that calendar over each year we're excited about bold new opportunities. These can be as simple as the "fitness craze" resolutions or as challenging as a career change. Coming into the New Year I'm extremely excited for the future of First Lutheran. I would like to challenge you to add a line to your Resolution list this year. Make room to share your time and talents with your church! I look at this challenge Pastor presented to us just a short time ago through the Parable of Talents, and I think of how rewarding it's been not only to multiply that initial gift but also to spread joy throughout the Holidays with PIE! You see, I made MANY pies in my youth through 4-H for County fair each year. I never considered this a talent as we all bake for our families, but nearly 30 pies later I can assure you this is a talent worth sharing with others. Perhaps the most rewarding part of this challenge for my family were the unexpected gifts from people that bought pie for people in need. We made 3 pies to take to My Father's House over Thanksgiving that I'm sure brightened their spirits. I tell you this story because I realize it is easier to stay in our comfort zone, but in order to experience BIG growth I've found that you must get uncomfortable and seize opportunities that you'd otherwise pass on easily. If nothing else, at least consider how you can get involved and engage with your church family. We're building something great here and we want you to claim ownership in that with us.

Finally, thank you for your trust in this leadership team. I promise that the congregation's best interest is always front of mind. We have exciting new opportunities coming for 2020. We look forward to working alongside you for the betterment of First Lutheran and the surrounding community.

-Justin



Family Ministry

By Mary Kettler

Blessings for the New Year from Family Ministry!

First a HUGE thank you to Janet Bucher and all involved with the Christmastide event held on a very snowy evening on December 15th ! The performances were outstanding by young and old alike, members and some non-members, too! It definitely touched many hearts and helped to prepare us for the celebration of the birth of our savior. In spite of the weather, there was a great attendance and we very much look forward to what you have in store for next year as this should definitely become an annual event that will fill the church to capacity!

We enjoyed our time together celebrating the birth of our savior with fun, fellowship, BINGO, caroling and good food at the Annual Family & Friends Christmas workshop the Sunday before Christmas. Thank you to all that joined us and/or brought your favorite Christmas snack for brunch! A Thrivent Card was donated by Mark & Mary Kettler to fund this event.

Family Ministry would like to thank Lindsay Berggren for serving faithfully on our board for the last 4 years while also juggling their 2 precious little ones. She is taking a much deserved break but will be missed! We welcome Jason DeCaire and Nikki Chilson to the board! Other members staying on the board are Matt Brandt, Sheresa Law, Angela Prothe and Mary Kettler. If you are interested in getting involved in big ways or small, just let one of us know.

As we start off the new year facing a significant budget shortfall, we'll be relying even more on Thrivent cards to fund any special events we have planned. In fact at this point, until we see a change in offerings, we'll only host events that CAN be covered by a Thrivent Card. Educational expenses will have to be scrutinized carefully as well. If you are interested in donating a Thrivent Card please let one of us know. We'd like to explore new ideas of small group fellowship so please share with us if you have input in that area.

We hope to host the 2nd Annual Valentine's Spaghetti dinner fundraiser for the youth activity fund on February 8th. Stay tuned for more details and sign up info in upcoming weeks.

- Mary Kettler

Consider This…

It has been said,

> *"A church that is alive needs the generous, sacrificial support of those who love it. Only a dead church demands no sacrifice. Have you ever heard anyone say, 'My church is always asking for money. I wish I could belong to a church that never needed any money.'*
> *"Surely they don't mean that. Any church that is alive needs money. Only dead churches do not call on their members for support. If anyone should accuse your church of always needing and calling for money, regard it as a compliment. Invite this person to rejoice with you that you both belong to something that is living and productive for Jesus Christ rather than a dead, stagnant organization from which the glory of Christ has departed."*

What consolation does this story bring to you during this season of life?

With whom might you share this story?

#3:02 PM

As we walk together in prayer it is my deepest hope that our time of corporate prayer has worn a groove into your life — I know it has for me! Everyday I am reminded: *First Lutheran is not my church. It's not your church. It's our Lord's church.*
As we continue this practice of prayer I would encourage you to focus your prayers around asking the Lord to lead us to be beacons of His presence in our time, treasure, talents, and relationships as He blesses our approaching Multiplying Your Talents in-gathering on January 26th.

**On March 2, 1921, our congregation was founded on Jesus Christ. Over these last days of September we have paused to stand on that heritage — a powerful step toward unity. At 3:02PM the invitation still stands for you to join us as we pause for prayer and seek the Lord's Will for our congregation. for you to join us as we pause for prayer and seek the Lord's Will for our congregation.*

Prayers

Our Members	Mel Brown; Alvin & Martha Brunkhardt; Rodney Brandt; Kathy Courtney; Jane Chronister; Jane Drugg; LeRoy Elliott; Ruth Evans; Virginia Glaze, Irene Hodge; Matt Klawonn; Bob Medlin; Norman Minden; Kate Oberg; Ron & Brenda Prothe; Gail Sawyer; Laura Stehman; Marjorie Smith; Anita Ward; Helen Webster; Dale Windler;
Expecting Parents	Justin and Casey Kelley
Family & Friends	Angela; Paul Argeropoulos; Stella Beard; Casey Brown; Diana Brown; Milton & Janice Capps; Heather Cardin; Donald Davis; Bill Dempsay; Grace Donham; Jim Donner; Aspen Espey and family; Jerrie Frizzel; Larry Gary; Mary Ginkel; Grant Haley; Nikki Harrison; Rob, Suzy & Slater Hedrick; Lisa Hunter; Win Jordan; Landon Kletke; Samantha Kriesel; Jacob Larsen; Richard Larson; Martin Lohaus; Keith Lovan; Robby Manthei; Peggy McVey; Bill and Linda Mobley; Betty Morris; Massilon Nelson; Chrissy Newcom; Joe Peterson; Tony Reese; Chris Rodendauth; Heather Ryan; Dottie Salchow; Stender Family; Doris Surbaugh; Ellie Teagarden; Val Tribble; Valentena Upton; Joyce Wassmer; John Weaver; Mary Windisch; Ruth Youngblood
Missionaries	Herron family; Rev. Matthew & Kali Wood and family
Military Service	James Bernard; Dalton Hawks; Caleb Lofing; Matthew Lofing; Seth Lofing; Adam Merrill; Graham Mosley; Garrett Scott; DJ Weaver; Darin Schweer; Ethan Stahl; All Military Families

VisionPath

At our December 8th Voters' Meeting our VisionPath team presented their findings after several months of diligently working with and hearing from our congregation in order to better clarify the vision God has called our congregation to live out. Now, behold, First Lutheran Church's vision statement that will, Lord-willing, lead us into further Ministry Clarity in the coming months!

"We are First a family of God providing a foundation for all to thrive and grow"

In the coming months, as pastor, I will explore the many parts of this Vision Statement and begin to unpack more fully its meaning. We will look more deeply at the identity of our congregation expressed by you—her members, and speak to the future purpose of our work and ministry as individuals, families, and a congregation as a whole.

Stay tuned!

Multiply Your Talents

In November $1,375 was provided by a loving donor and was placed into the hands and homes of our congregation. By receiving the generous gifts of others and putting those gifts and talents to use ourselves we are not being told *what* is to be done… but, instead, drawn in to *actively accomplishing* ministry ourselves — we are becoming the hands and feet of Jesus! All the while our community, family, and friends witness us owning of the ministry God has given to First Lutheran to be a foundation upon which our congregation and community may thrive and grow!

Some Stories…
This month I shared two stories of how members were taking full advantage of Multiplying *their* Talents following the November disbursement:

An elderly man on a fixed income, feared he was too limited by his mobility to participate. Therefore, he made a personal sacrifice and began setting aside a small amount of money every few weeks to give toward the campaign.
A sweet little girl used her ten-dollar-bill to make and sell moulded crayons. Her efforts have generated an astounding $54.51!!

I'm sure there are many more stories out there and we would love to share them with our congregation. I've heard of pie sales, baked goods, ornaments, stained crosses, running, welding, and several crafting projects. Please take the opportunity to write them down on one of the *Share Your Story* half-sheets and turn them in to the office, myself, an Elder or Council-member, or even the offering plate so we can share in the goodness of our God together!

***For additional information concerning our four initiatives please take time to review the extended documents provided for each on the bureau in the narthex.*

Church Planting Event — January 18th

Curious about church planting possibilities in Kansas?
If so, we encourage you to attend the Church Planting Exploratory Meeting Saturday, January 18, 2020, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Shawnee from 9–11 a.m. The meeting, hosted by the Kansas District Church Planting Committee, will highlight goals, models, and funding resources for church planting and will include stories from those who have been part of a church plant.

There is no fee for this event, but an RSVP would be appreciated. If you plan to attend, please contact Pastor Mark.

Birthdays

Charlie Schrotberger	January 02, 2013
Louis Chilson	January 03, 1953
Jim Fuchs	January 03, 1941
Delaney Armbruster	January 04, 2001
Evan Reitinger	January 04, 2007
Jace Reitinger	January 04, 2007
Melody Garrison	January 05, 1966
Monica Way	January 05, 1989
Cale Reitinger	January 06, 2010
Jean Kaiser	January 07, 1950
Annabell Worrell	January 08, 2002
Emily Decaire	January 11, 1992
Paul Noll	January 11, 1961
Henry Schrotberger	January 11, 2011
Nicole Lofing	January 12, 1975
Sandi Armbruster	January 13, 1969
Norman Minden	January 14, 1924
Shelly Moore	January 14, 1968
Aneta Ohlmeier	January 14, 1962
Amanda Pitzer	January 15, 2008
Alexander Forsberg	January 16, 2007
Gary Schroeder	January 17, 1957
Ted Moore	January 18, 1943
Braden Thoden	January 19, 2009
Diane Lacy	January 21, 1940
Dale Koontz	January 23, 1937
Jace Lofing	January 23, 2002
Zechariah Lyons	January 23, 1991
Kloe Mead	January 25, 2014
John Hewitt	January 26, 1956
Cindy Lovekamp	January 26, 1955
Michael Thoden	January 26, 1990
Amelia Ward	January 26, 1989
Melvin Brown	January 28, 1941
Dean Lovig	January 28, 1946
Xzavier Herrara-Hinrichs	January 30, 2005

Anniversaries

Medlin, Michael & Jordan	January 04, 2010

Church Assistants January 2020

		January 5	January 12	January 19	January 26
	8:00 AM	Teresa Damron JoAnn Russell	Joe and Vicki Teagarden	Kevin, Jessica, and Donna Erwin	Mary Lou Helm Lois Moore
	10:30 AM	Norlene Medlin	Jean Kaiser	Norlene Medlin	Jean Kaiser
	8:00 AM	Dean Lovig Dennis Rentz	David Wehmeier Jeff Menefee	Dennis Rentz David Wehmeier	Virgil Lyons Jeff Menefee
	10:30 AM	Bob Gardner Don Polson	Alex Kamprath Jacob Hinman	Jason DeCaire Randy Fast	Don Polson Jason DeCaire
	8:00 AM	Evan Reitinger Cale Reitinger Brody Latto	Logan Page Xazier Herrera	Anna Kane Elizabeth Schrotberger Wyatt Mock	Brody Latto NeCelia Herrera
	10:30 AM	Anna Kane Bailey Chilson Amanda Pitzer	Keira McIntire Brielle Garcia	Maddie Pitzer Amanda Pitzer Braden Thoden	Alex Forsberg Bailey Chilson
		Jody Brown	Dean Lovig	Christie Schroeder	Helen Tagler
ion	8:00 AM	Daryl Benedict Virgil Lyons Joe Teagarden		Brian Mead Daryl Benedict Dean Lovig	
	10:30 AM	Ron Moore Mark Kettler Brian Mead		Jonathan Kamprath Alex Kamprath Terry Drugg	
	8AM	Kim Rentz	Mark Fuchs	Kim Rentz	Matthew Brandt
	10:30AM	Melinda Pitzer	Julie Kamprath	Emily DeCeair	Christopher Lohaus-Fast
Helper		Camille Benedict Pam Meyer	Cindy Forsberg Karla Lohaus-Fast	Jean Kaiser Betty Hewitt	Karla Lohaus-Fast Cindy Forsberg
		Janet Bucher	Janet Bucher	Janet Bucher	Janet Bucher
chool 'Helpers	9:15AM	Jody Brown	Sandi Armbruster	Suzy Karigan	Karla Lohaus-Fast
try Helpers	10:30AM Service	Jody Brown Karla Lohaus-Fast	Jody Brown Jennifer Garcia	Suzy Karigan Mary Kettler	Karla Lohaus-Fast Sarah Schrotberger
les	10:30AM Service	Amanda and Haleigh West	Lindsay and preston Berggren	Amanda and Haleigh West	Jody Brown

January 2020

December '19

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

February '20

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	1 New Years Day Office Closed	2	3	4
5 Epiphany	6 Bible Class 10 AM Mary Martha (B) 1 PM Elders (MH) 6 PM Family Ministry 6 PM Ruth's Circle 6:30 PM	7 Trustees 6:00 PM	8 Mens Bible Study 6:00 AM Stephen Ministry 5:30 (MH) Youth Bible Study F.L.Y. 6:30 pm to 8 pm	9 LWML (B) 7:00 PM	10	11
12	13 Quilt Tying (B) 1:00 PM	14 Council Meeting (MH) 6:00 PM	15 Mens Bible Study (MH) 6:00 AM Stephen Ministry 5:30 (MH) Youth Bible Study F.L.Y. 6:30 pm to 8 pm	16 Braille 8:30 AM	17	18
19	20 Senior Breakfast Whistle Stop Café 8:00 AM	21	22 Mens Bible Study (B) 6:00 AM Stephen Ministry 5:30 (MH) Youth Bible Study F.L.Y. 6:30 pm to 8 pm	23	24	25
26 Devotions at NorthPoint 1:30 Medicalodge 2:15	27 Quilt Tying (B) 1:00 PM	28	29 Mens Bible Study (MH) 6:00 AM Stephen Ministry 5:30 (MH) Youth Bible Study F.L.Y. 6:30 to 8 pm	30	31	1
2	3	Notes * B = Basement * MH = Mission House * F.L.Y. = First Lutheran Youth * AB = Applebees				

Calendar Templates by Vertex42
https://www.vertex42.com/calendars/

First Lutheran Church

President: Justin Diehm
Vice President: Virgil Lyons
Secretary: Don Bucher (seeking a 1 yr term)
Financial Secretary: Loli Surbaugh**

Elders
Terry Drugg**
Eric Forsberg
Mark Kettler*
Gregg Lewis*
Ron Moore**
Richie Sinclair

Evangelism
Cindy Mead
Pam Meyer***
Becky Patton*
Joe Patton*
Amanda West**

Family Ministry
Matthew Brandt**
Nikki Chilson
Jason DeCaire
Mary Kettler (current Ch.)*
Sheresa Law***
Angela Prothe*

Preschool
Becky Long
Patricia Lyons
Emily Mead***
Anita Ward***
Helen Webster

Stewardship
Camille Benedict***
Cindy Forsberg (current Ch.)***
Jean Kaiser
Karla Lohaus-Fast
Lindsay Sinclair***

Trustees
Matthew Chilson*
Brandon Livingston*
Russell Pope
Pat Tagler (current Ch.**)****
David Wehmeier

First Lutheran Church

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Firstlutheran-paola.org

First News

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First Lutheran Paola KS

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