



Sharing the Light



The mission of First Lutheran Church is to grow together in Christ through prayer, worship, and education and to spread the love of Christ to our community.

January 2026

Publication of First Lutheran Church, Temple City, CA



From the Pastor's Desk

As 2026 begins and we say goodbye to 2025, we look to the many blessings that we can be thankful for: Friends, family, and our God. Looking forward, we used to do something called New Year's resolutions: What resolutions can we make for the New Year and how long can we keep them? May the light of God continue to shine in all our hearts.

Pastor Frank Matthews

Epiphany Must Go On!

by Dr. Lewis W. Spitz Sr., *The Lutheran Witness Magazine*

Epiphany—a beautiful word! Beautiful because it designates the Lord's appearing among men and the manifestation of His glory. Today we primarily commemorate the manifestation of God to the Magi, or Wise Men from the east, in the person of the Christ Child. Some Christians have celebrated the Savior's birth on Epiphany, Jan. 6. Others have remembered His Baptism on that day.

On the Sundays after Epiphany, we see Jesus in the temple at Jerusalem about His Father's business. We see Him at the wedding of Cana, where He turned water into wine and manifested forth His glory. We see Him by a mere word healing the servant of the centurion. We see Him still the raging tempest on the sea. "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!" Indeed, He is manifesting His divine glory.

What great joy for those of us who are not descendants of Abraham but are numbered among those whom the Bible calls Gentiles! Jesus was born to save not only the offspring of Abraham, the Children of Israel, but also all other members of the human race.

Jesus said: "This Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations, and then will the end come." Then all the tribes of the earth will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.



JANUARY

Events

Load the Van to Friends in Deed
Volunteers at Friends in Deed in Pasadena
Monthly Soup & Sandwich Luncheon
Board of Directors' Meeting
Mission Development Team Meeting
Voters Assembly Meeting

Volunteers at Friends in Deed in Pasadena
Red Cross Blood Drive

January 2, Friday, at 8:00 a.m.
January 3, Saturday, at 8:00 a.m.
January 7, Wednesday, at noon
January 18, Sunday, at 11:00 a.m.
January 20, Tuesday, at 10:30 a.m.
January 26, Sunday, at 11:00 a.m. with lunch
and vote on budget for the year
January 31, Saturday, at 8:00 a.m.
January 31, Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

News from the Mission Development Team

Need Help with Your Technology?

Have you ever had a question about how to get your cell phone, iPad, Chrome Book, Laptop, etc. to do something? Bring your questions and your device to the Fellowship Room on Fridays beginning January 9 at 2:30 p.m. Foothill Preparatory School will be volunteering to help members and community with technology issues weekly on Fridays from 2:30-4:00. Let Pat Grabowski know if you plan to participate. (626) 285-2943.

Soup & Sandwich Luncheons - First Wednesday of the Month

January 7: Join us as we celebrate Epiphany, the coming of the Wise Men, with a presentation both informative and meaningful.

February 4: Black History Month, honoring Rosa Young, who in 1916 turned her school's management over to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, which helped provide the resources to maintain and expand. Rosa Young's efforts led to the founding of 30 elementary schools and 35 Lutheran congregations in Alabama's Black Belt.

March 4: Celebrating World Wildlife Day, we will welcome a return visit of naturalists and animals from Whittier Narrows Nature Center.

More Events from the Mission Development Team

- A Red Cross Blood Drive will take place on January 31. (See below.)
- Our Chinese New Year Celebration will happen in February, inviting neighbors and community to participate in celebrating the Year of the Horse.
- Our annual Easter Egg Hunt will engage neighbors and friends on March 28.



January 31: Save a Life! Donate Blood!

On Saturday, January 31, the Mission Development Team will host a Blood Drive in the Parish Hall from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Appointments are preferred, walks-ins are welcomed. Schedule by visiting www.redcrossblood.org and enter sponsor code flctc or call 1-800-REDCROSS.



Community Prayer Box Update

By Jo Tschopp

January is a time to make resolutions. This is what my computer came up with when I entered “New Year’s Resolutions for Prayer Life.”

Establish Consistency: Start small by adding one or two specific times for prayer, such as morning, lunchtime, or before bed, rather than aiming for unrealistic long daily sessions.

Utilize a Prayer Journal: Dedicate a notebook to write down prayers, gratitude lists and scripture verses to track how prayers are answered.

Use Scripture in Prayer: Focus on praying through specific books of the Bible, such as the Gospel of John or Psalms, to guide your conversations with God.

Engage in Focused Prayer: Dedicate specific days to pray for certain causes such as: on Monday pray for the homeless, on Tuesday pray for your extended family, on Wednesday pray for current events happening, etc.

Create Physical Prompts: Use daily routines, like your commute or washing dishes, as triggers to pause and pray throughout the day.

Focus on Relationship: View prayer as connecting with God, not just a task to be checked off.

New Selections in Our Little Free Library



We still have a collection of Louis L’Amour Western novels, they make a relaxing read on a cold winter day. Different titles are continually being added. If you received books as a gift on Christmas, please consider donating some of your previously read books to our Little Free Library. Personally, I, Jo, have discovered how easy it is to read or listen to books using my phone.

The children’s shelf has some Beverly Clearly books that have been childhood favorites for decades. Why not make a New Year’s Resolution to reread one of your all-time favorite books from your younger years? It is said that each time you reread a favorite book the better it gets.

Please Include These People in Your Prayers

From our Community Prayer Box comes a prayer request from **Adriana** who left home and is living with a friend. She writes that her parents rejected her, she left God, and feels alone and lost.

Please pray that Adriana would seek God and His peace and comfort. Pray that she would receive support from family and friends and be able to return home and grow in her faith and commitment to God.

Life is especially stressful during the holidays, pray that she will examine her life and know that she is valuable in the sight of God, that He loves her and desires the best for her.

Zephaniah 3:17 *The Lord your God is with you, a Powerful One Who wins the battle. He will have much joy over you. With His love He will give you new life. He will have joy over you with loud singing.*

Pray for **Judy Gunther** who is recovering from hip replacement surgery in a skilled nursing facility in El Monte. Pray that she is able to tolerate the physical therapy and be able to return home very soon. Pray for her family and friends as they reach out to her. Pray for guidance and wisdom for the medical team as they minister to her.

Psalms 22:24 *For He has not turned away from the suffering of the one in pain or trouble. He has not hidden His face from him. But He has heard his cry for help.*

A Note of Thanks from Our Missionaries in Papua New Guinea

Through our tithe and prayers, our congregation supports missionaries Matt and Emily Terhune's work in Papua New Guinea with Wycliffe Bible Translators.

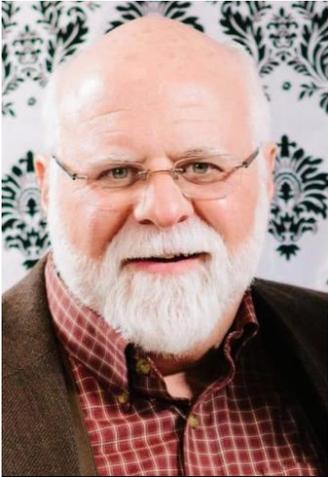
Thank you for praying about the December 1 meeting for local pastors from neighboring villages to learn about the Bible workshops we run - it went SO well! At least 80 people came, and so many of the local pastors expressed support for the ministry we're doing. It was a really happy occasion, we got to eat and fellowship together, and we gave "thank you" gifts to honor the pastors.

For prayer requests: Please pray that the dedication of the Onobasulu New Testament translation would come together smoothly and that the people there would use their translated Scriptures well and be transformed by them. Please also pray for us for safety on the road as we take a short family trip to Lae, a city three hours away, for a few days after Christmas. Thank you!!



Pastors from surrounding villages learn about Bible workshops that the Wycliffe missionary team offers.

In Memoriam: Pastor Scott Ganas



Scott Gana was the vacancy pastor at First Lutheran Church of Temple City from 2020 to April 2024

Scott Ganas entered the world on his earthly father's birthday, February 22, 1954, and went home to be with his Heavenly Father on November 23, 2025. He was a long-time and much-loved pastor, husband, father, grandfather, brother, and friend—someone whose joy, warmth, and kindness made every room brighter.

Scott was born in Ohio and moved to the Bay Area in California in the late 50s, which was the same time his beloved Giants moved from New York to San Francisco. He grew up with his two precious siblings, Roger and Christy. In high school, his love for sports continued to thrive as he played baseball and served as the quarterback for his football team. However, his happiest moment was when he became a Christian on May 1, 1975, and a self-proclaimed Jesus Freak.

From there, Scott stayed in Northern California, completing a degree in Criminal Justice from Sacramento State University and eventually taking steps to join the Police Academy. However, in 1980, he met the person who would become his inspiration, confidant, and life-partner for the next 45 years, a comic writer and actor, Monica Ganas. Their love grew fast and strong, and when Scott proposed to Monica, she said she would only marry him if he had a job where he didn't have a gun. They were married on August 23rd of the same year, and Scott kept his promise by pursuing a Master of Divinity at Asbury Seminary.

While both Monica and Scott pursued graduate school and new careers in the 80s, they also welcomed Erin Gaw (born 1981) and Nick Ganas (born 1983) into their homes. As a father, Scott was compassionate, charming, kind, and humorous, and he was much loved by his children in return. It is then no surprise that he eventually decided to expand his parental horizons by becoming an ordained minister in 1991.

From then on, Scott poured his heart into serving congregations and students alike. He taught Christian Ministries and Public Speaking at Azusa Pacific and Biola Universities and served as the lead pastor at Good Shepherd in Menifee and First Lutheran in Temple City. Whether from the pulpit, in a classroom, or simply sitting in his Azusa living room, Scott did what he loved most: sharing joy, love, and truth.

Outside of this, some of his proudest moments were with his family. He found joy walking his daughter Erin, down the aisle on August 7, 1999 to marry Dave Gaw, a partner in Scott's humor and joy, and was ecstatic to eventually enter the world of grandparenthood with the birth of Lizzy Gaw in 2013. He also loved sharing his enthusiasm for music with his son, Nick Ganas, seeing him perform live on stage or jamming with him on their outdoor patio. And nothing could have made him happier than seeing his life partner, Monica, thrive as a theater professor and director at Azusa Pacific University. He was always there supporting her and her students, from being an enthusiastic audience member at each show to getting in on the action as an actor in short films and community performances through their family-formed nonprofit, Azusa Renaissance Theater.

It is not an exaggeration to say that Scott Ganas never knew a stranger, only friends. From the wait staff at his local dinner date spots to the mechanics that serviced his convertibles, everyone who encountered him got the privilege of forming a special connection with the winsome, sparkling personality that he was. His memory lives on in the countless hearts of those he loved and in the actions of those who seek to carry on his legacy of joy, hope and love.

Scott Ganas Memorial Fund

You can support the Ganas family by contributing to the memorial fund being created to establish a Scott Ganas Memorial Stage / Performance Space in the city of Azusa—continuing Scott’s lifelong passion for the arts, community, and storytelling. Further details about how to contribute will appear in the February issue of *Sharing the Light* newsletter.

View the Life of Jesus in a New Mural in Temple City

A beautiful mural has just been completed on the campus of St. Luke’s Catholic Church, one half mile east of First Lutheran. It features 26 scenes from the life of Jesus in vivid color, each evoking the emotion and spirit of Christ’s ministry on earth and the people he reached.



The artist, Carlos Chavez, is a member of St. Luke’s and attends each week with his mother. He is also an acquaintance of Christine Geltz through the Monrovia Association of Fine Arts. The mural came into being through a suggestion from his mom to create a painting of a scene from a favorite scripture reading of hers. They showed it to another parishioner who then showed it to Father Edwin Duyshart, the pastor of the congregation. Fr. Edwin immediately thought of several favorite scenes of Christ’s life that he wanted to see as a mural on a large blank wall between two campus buildings.

In a conversation with the pastoral ministry office, Christine learned that members of First Lutheran would be welcome to come and view the mural during open campus hours on Sunday mornings until noon. Directions: Just head east on Broadway to the first entrance to their campus you see on the left and turn north (left), just past the green house with the St. Luke’s Catholic Church sign out front. Find a parking space in the lot on the right, but then continue walking north between the first two buildings you see, and the wall on the right is beautifully decorated with this amazing art.

Not Receiving Email Special Announcements and/or Prayer Requests?

Email Newsletter: If you would like to receive the newsletter and prayer requests by email, please share your email address with Christine Geltz, Newsletter Editor, at cgeltz@firstlutherantc.org. You may also send her news and story ideas at that address.

Printed Newsletter: If you prefer to have a newsletter hard copy mailed to you, please call (626) 287-0968 and leave a message for Elizabeth Yu, Pastor’s Assistant.

Pastoral Care: Please contact Pastor Frank Matthews at (213) 247-8838 or no1redder@gmail.com.



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
9123 Broadway
Temple City, CA 91780

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
DATED MATERIAL**
January 2026

[]

[]

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
9123 Broadway
Temple City, CA 91780
Office Phone: (626) 287-0968

E-Mail: admin@firstlutherantc.org
Website: <https://firstlutherantc.org>

8:30 a.m. TRADITIONAL WORSHIP
Holy Communion every first & third Sunday
9:45 a.m. SUNDAY SCHOOL / BIBLE STUDY
Every Sunday