

# Alpha & Omega

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Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first shall be last and the last shall be first. Years ago organizers of the congregation determined the first Norwegian immigrants congregation in the Sioux City area would be called First. The first congregation to speak the language of their new country. Scripture reminds us the first shall be last, and the last shall be first. What does that mean for us now?

I would be interested in your thoughts!

As we begin another program year in the life of this congregation we continue what was started long ago. To be a welcoming congregation who worships and serves the God we love. These three words: **Welcome. Worship. Service.** Were chosen by the congregation council as our vision.

As we gather for worship and serve our congregation and community we welcome all. We welcome all to worship and opportunities to serve. We serve as we worship God through our spiritual gifts. **Welcome, worship, service,** is a part of our First Lutheran DNA.

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**Worship** is an integral part of our lives. The rituals in our liturgical worship provide a structure for our active participation in gathering with the community, hearing the Word of God read and interpreted. A meal provides nourishment with Jesus body and blood, and once fed for the journey ahead, we are sent out to share the good news we have received with others.

**Serving** is an integral part of our lives. Disciples of Jesus learned from their teacher the importance and joy of caring for others. From distributing loaves of bread to the multiples to caring for those who were poor in body, mind or spirit, from washing his disciples feet to healing the blind, the lame, the crippled, Jesus demonstrated a life of service.

We incorporate service into the ministry areas of First Lutheran where volunteers serve in multiple areas of congregational life. The council members gather to administer the work of the congregation. The food pantry volunteers welcome and share what many have given

through financial or extra garden produce. The choir rehearses and sing a joyful song. The gardeners provide beauty to our property for the enjoyment of all who drive by. The list goes, the needs for caring for and serving in this congregation are varied and many.

**Welcoming** all to gather for worship and serve is an integral part of our lives. Newer members, as well as visitors, voice their appreciation of being warmly and genuinely greeted. As Jesus welcomed a diverse and intergenerational cast of characters, we gather and welcome those who seek to worship and serve the God who loves us and whom we love.

**Welcoming. Worship. Service.**  
An integral part of our lives.

*Pastor Kristine*