

# FIRST

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
*Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

Ministers: All God's People at FLC

Hank French, Pastor



2100 Riverview Drive  
Little Falls, MN 56345  
(320) 632-6667  
(320) 632-1050 Fax  
[firstserv@flclittlefalls.org](mailto:firstserv@flclittlefalls.org)  
[www.flclittlefalls.org](http://www.flclittlefalls.org)

*“Servants of All”*

April 2016, Newsletter

April 14, 2016



## Coming up: 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Congregational Pictorial Directory

In celebration of First Lutheran's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, we will produce a new congregational photo directory. Pictorial directories help to create a stronger sense of community among us, help to tell about God's ministries here, and celebrate our life together. The Lifetouch Photography sessions are scheduled for early May. There is no cost to the church and no sitting fee for your family. You will receive a complimentary 8x10 portrait and a directory for participating. In just one trip, you will be photographed, choose your photo, and have the opportunity to purchase studio quality portraits and greeting cards. Please plan to participate; the directory won't be complete without you! Beginning in April you may sign up for a photo session on-line, go to First's website at [flclittlefalls.org](http://flclittlefalls.org) and click on the link found on the home page or on the 'coming up' page, you will be guided through the signup process. Photography dates are scheduled for Thursday-Saturday, May 5-7, and Tuesday-Thursday, May 10-12. Watch for more information and plan to be a part of this directory!

**Pastor Hank's Article**  
*see page 2-3*

**NE MN Synod  
Assembly**  
*see page 4*

**Mission News**  
*see page 5*

**Earth Day**  
*see page 5*

**Adult Opportunities**  
*see page 7*

**“Children First”  
Christian Preschool**  
*see page 8*

**Education News!**  
*see page 9*

## *Notes from Pastor Hank*

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What an absolutely wonderful/meaningful/powerful Lent, Holy Week, and Easter celebration at First Lutheran this year as we wrapped ourselves in the great mystery of God's love. Throughout Lent we sang Holden Evening Prayer each Wednesday and we thought together about the things that make for peace; on Holy Thursday, thirteen 2<sup>nd</sup> graders received their First Communion and had their feet washed as a symbol of the loving service Jesus asks of us all; on Good Friday we followed Jesus to the cross and pondered the infinite love of God—a love from which we can run, but from which we cannot hide. And then on Easter, the joyful words “He is Risen! He is risen indeed!” echoed throughout the sanctuary and we left the sanctuary knowing that the Way of Jesus, the Way of Easter, the Way of Love is our way, both individually and as a community of faith.

Let me express my profound thanks to everyone who made Lent and Easter a powerful expression of the faith that we share. I won't mention everyone by name but you know who you are and I hope you know that what you do is both noticed and appreciated.

- Musicians—instrumentalists and vocalists
- Worship assistants—cantors, readers, ushers, greeters, Communion preparers, Communion servers, and those who changed the paraments from Epiphany to Lent to Easter
- All who made soups for the soup suppers and all who setup, served and cleaned up, with a special shout out to Wendy Valentine for coordinating it all
- Those who decorated our sanctuary with symbols of the season
- Those who placed books appropriate to Lent and Easter in the Library
- All those who worked to make the “Eggstravaganza” such a great time for kids and families
- The youth and adults who prepared and served the Easter Breakfast and cleaned up afterwards
- The staff—Sue, Becky, Barb, Jay, Tracy, Gail, Gloria, Rachel, Kenny and Peg—who work tirelessly both behind the scenes and “up front” to make it all happen

It is absolutely amazing how many people work together to make First Lutheran the thriving community of faith that it is. A heartfelt thanks to you all.

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During worship on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, we will welcome 18 new members into this community of faith—12 adults and 6 children: Jim and Chris Abelt, Al and Sally Hansen, Brad and Joanna Koenen, Bryan Kosek and Kim Bzdok and Hazel and Griffen Kosek, Shawn and Jennifer Neu, Austin, Alayna, Connor and Ethan, and Tom and Angie Stromberg. In the words of that great hymn we often sing: “All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.” We are blessed to have these folks joining us in worship, community and service at First Lutheran.

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Thanks to the hard work and faithfulness of the Call Committee, Pastor Jake Dyrhaug and his wife, Stephani, will be arriving on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Pastor Jake's first Sunday in the pulpit will be May 8<sup>th</sup>, as he will be attending the Synod Assembly on May 1<sup>st</sup>. These are exciting times for First Lutheran as we continue our ministries and mission with new pastoral leadership and celebrate 125 years of faithfulness in ministry and mission. They are also exciting times for Pastor Jake and Stephani. Please keep them in your prayers as they make the transition from First Lutheran Battle Lake to First Lutheran Little Falls.

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With Pastor Jake and Stephani arriving, it is time for Bobbi and I to leave. With your incredible support and cooperation, we are now able to do what we came for—which is to leave! There has been healing from past hurts and disappointments; the encounter with God in worship has continued; the vital ministries of the congregation have continued; pastoral care has been provided; and preparation for receiving a new pastor and moving forward in faithfulness has been accomplished—all thanks to the grace of God.

We have come to love you and we will miss you. Thank you for receiving us so warmly, for supporting us, working with us, and caring for us. *Our last Sunday with you will be April 24<sup>th</sup>.* As they say, “See you in church!” And may you all remain in the peace of Christ as you continue to live in and for Christ.

*Pastor Hank*

## News of the Family

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Norman H. Nelson died on March 19. His funeral service was March 24 at First Lutheran. May God grant peace and comfort to his family and friends.

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Received the following new members on April 3: Jim and Chris Abelt, Al and Sally Hansen, Brad and Joanna Koenen, Bryan Kosek and Kim Bzdok and Hazel and Griffen Kosek, Shawn and Jennifer Neu, Austin, Alayna, Connor and Ethan, and Tom and Angie Stromberg. Welcome to all!

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## **125 YEARS OF FAITHFULNESS CONTINUING THE LEGACY**

As you know, we are in the midst of our 2016 General Fund Stewardship Campaign to provide the financial resources we need to keep on keeping on in the life-changing ministries that make First Lutheran a vital, thriving community of faith.

With the calling of a new pastor, we have taken on additional financial responsibilities. If we are going to continue doing what we are presently doing and meet the challenges that lie ahead, everyone must do their part. If you are presently contributing to the support of First Lutheran, I ask you to prayerfully consider an increase in your giving. If you are not currently contributing, I ask you to begin giving at whatever level works for you.

*First Lutheran is here for all of us—  
we all need to be here for First Lutheran and for each other.*

Thank you, Pastor Hank



**2016 NE MN Synod Assembly**  
**“The Power of Forgiveness” April 29-May 1, Breezy Point Resort**

First Lutheran Church voting members Cindi Habas, Les Hittesdorf, and Ruth Jeremiason-Jensen along with Pastor Jake Dyrhaug will attend the Northeast Minnesota Synod Assembly Friday-Sunday, April 29-May 1. This year’s theme is “Living Forgiveness.” Who among us is done receiving forgiveness, or granting forgiveness? We will focus on how forgiveness heals the past, present and future.

Keynote speaker is Dr. Anna Madsen, Dr. Madsen is an ordained Lutheran pastor with a Ph.D. in systematic theology from the University of Regensburg, Germany. Directly before her return to the States, an accident killed her husband and inflicted a traumatic brain injury on her small son. This event reshaped not only her family, her vocation, and the trajectory of her life, but also her theology.

First Lutheran’s quilters are donating a quilt to the silent auction, you can place a bid on this quilt, before it is sent to the assembly, watch for the display in the gathering space. Available again this year is The Marketplace, a Silent Auction of new items and services, if you have an item or service to donate, please contact the church office. All proceeds from both auctions will benefit ELCA World Hunger Appeal.



**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

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**Thank you Gathering for  
Pastor Hank and Bobbi French  
Sunday, April 24  
1:00-3:00 p.m. at Great River Arts**

All are welcome to an informal gathering as we say farewell and thank you to Pastor Hank and Bobbi for walking with us during the past 20 months of ministry here at First Lutheran. Pastor Hank’s last Sunday as interim pastor here is Sunday, April 24. We will gather for open house from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at Great River Arts, downtown Little Falls. Come and share appreciation and fellowship!



**Thank you to all who faithfully support Christ’s mission at First Lutheran Church with their mail-in offerings!** Giving statements will be mailed to each giving unit/household following the end of the second quarter, sometime in July. Should you wish to receive a statement sooner than that, we can provide that for you. Please contact Sue or Gloria in the church office for this information.

You are encouraged to consider providing your giving to First Lutheran through the Simply Giving® program. Simply Giving is an automated giving plan that allows the giver to choose their gift amount and frequency of that gift. Automated giving ensures that your worshipping community receives your gift on a regular basis. For more information, contact the church office.  
**Thank you for your faithful giving!**

### **Fair Trade**

Thank you for your ongoing support of the fair trade products in use at First (coffee) and purchased for your own home use (coffee, tea, chocolate, cocoa). Products available for purchase in the church office provide needed income to those who labor to produce them. Thank you!

### **Baskets of Promise for Lutheran World Relief**

During Lent we participated in Lutheran World Relief's Baskets of Promise appeal. We collected items to assemble Personal Care Kits that give people around the world tools to stay healthy in life's most challenging situations. We are assembling more than 60 Personal Care Kits. Here are the items for collection:

Bars of soap, 4-5 ounce, any brand in original wrapping; Bath towels, lightweight, 52"X27" max, dark color is best; Toothbrushes, adult size, in original packaging; Combs; Nail clippers, metal, attached file optional

You can still contribute items. Lutheran World Relief will distribute the assembled kits to people around the world who lack even the most basic needs. Thank you for providing a means to preserve dignity and give hope.

### **Lenten Soup Suppers**

Thanks to all who participated in any way with the midweek Lenten soup suppers. Whether you provided soup or other supplies, worked to prepare, serve and clean up the meal or came to enjoy fellowship and a simple meal of soup and bread, all is appreciated! Proceeds from the meals were \$1,059.00 and will be shared with Habitat for Humanity of Morrison County and Oasis Central Minnesota. Thank you for your ongoing support of these local partners in ministry!

### **46th Anniversary of Earth Day: "Trees for the Earth"**

**Earth Day**, officially April 22, is celebrated globally by thousands of communities as a collective expression of our hopes and dreams for a better world. Climate change



can seem like a remote problem for our leaders, but the fact is that it's already impacting real people, animals, and beloved places. These Faces of Climate Change are multiplying every day. Fortunately, other Faces of Climate Change are multiplying too: those stepping up to do something about it.

Over the next five years, as Earth Day moves closer to its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, you are encouraged to help achieve an ambitious goal—planting 7.8 billion trees.

Why Trees? Trees help combat climate change. They absorb excess and harmful CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere. Trees help us breathe clean air. They absorb odors and pollutant gases and filter particulates out of the air. Trees help communities achieve long-term economic and environmental sustainability and provide food, energy and income. Plant a tree!

Earth Day is a day to reflect on how we all can be effective stewards of God's creation and what role we as individuals and as a spiritual group can play in addressing this worldwide problem.

Go to [www.earthday.org](http://www.earthday.org) for more information.

## Adult Opportunities

### Men's Bible Study Breakfast

All are welcome to come for breakfast and Bible study! We meet the first and third Wednesday of each month at 6:15 a.m. April dates are the 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Come when you can, leave when you must! Pastor Hank leads this study. For more information, speak to him.

### Book Discussion Club

All adult readers are welcome to read with this group. The group meets in the church library on Tuesday, April 26 at 7:00 p.m. to discuss Wonderland Creek by Lynn Austin. The May selection is Enrique's Journey—the Story of a Boy's Dangerous Odyssey to Reunite with his Mother by Sonia Nazario. Readers, please secure your own copy of the books. For more information contact Tifanii Dahl, 632-8207.

### Lutheran Social Service Rummage Sale Wednesday-Friday, May 11-13

Mark your calendars for the spring Lutheran Social Service (LSS) rummage sale co-sponsored by Bethel and First Lutheran Church women held at Bethel Lutheran, at 901 West Broadway, on:

Wednesday, May 11, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 12, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Friday, May 13, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Proceeds from the sale are used to benefit residents at the Lutheran Social Services group homes in this area. Set up days are Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning, clean up begins at noon on Friday. Volunteers are much appreciated, there is lots of 'stuff' to organize – come when you can! The sale is a wonderful recycling opportunity for good, usable, clean clothing, books, linens, small appliances, toys, etc. Clean grocery bags, paper or plastic, are also needed. Please, no televisions, computers or computer parts. Sale items can be brought to Bethel in the morning, beginning Monday, May 2, or on the set-up days. For more information, contact Karen Haaland, at 632-8828.

### Martha Circle

**Monday, April 11, 9:30 a.m.**

Martha Circle meets Monday, April 11, at 9:30 a.m. for Bible Study and conversation. Hostess is Betty Bengtson.

### Adult Bible Study

**Thursdays at 11:30 a.m.**

Bring a friend and your Bible and come for spirit-filled discussion around the lectionary texts for the coming Sunday. This is a good opportunity for in-depth conversation and learning about the assigned texts and an added dimension to weekly worship. Pastor Hank leads this study at 11:30 a.m. We meet for about an hour. See you there!

### Roadside Cleanup

**Saturday, April 23**

We are gathering names of those willing to assist with cleanup of First Lutheran's section of Highway 238 (mile marker 32/34). Saturday, April 23 is the day after Earth Day—let's meet at 9:00 a.m. at church and do our part to care for creation. Dress appropriately (sturdy shoes, long pants – remember, it is tick season) and bring work gloves! For safety purposes, MNDot specifies that volunteers be at least 12 years old. For more information, call church office, 632-6667. Come and help with this creation care project.

### Day of Caring

**Wednesday, May 4**

Little Falls Community High School students and staff will provide community service time to seniors, disabled and homebound individuals by offering assistance with spring cleanup. If you or someone you know could use help with a project, fill out a registration form (on the gathering space table or call the church office to receive a form by mail) by **Wednesday, April 13**. For more information, contact the church office.

First Lutheran provides child care for the youngest among us at all worship services and congregational events. We welcome the opportunity to play with and pray with your child. We do respectfully request that you not bring your child to the nursery when he/she:

- has a fever (children must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine before coming to the nursery )
- has vomited in the past 24 hours
- has had diarrhea in the past 24 hours
- has nasal drainage that is not clear
- is excessively coughing/hacking or sneezing
- has an infection and has been on an antibiotic for less than 24 hours
- has a rash or skin infection
- is lethargic and not feeling well, or seems to be coming down with something.

You may be called on to pick up your child if the nursery staff feels your child is sick. Thanks for helping us keep our youngest healthy!

### **Free Foot Screenings**

Schuler Shoes in St. Cloud offers free foot screenings by a certified Pedorthist on Mondays from 9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and Fridays from 10:00 a.m.-6:00 .pm. No appointment is necessary.

A Pedorthist is a professional who has specialized training to modify footwear and employ supportive devices to address conditions which affect the feet and lower limbs. They are trained in the assessment of lower limb anatomy and biomechanics, and the appropriate use of corrective footwear – including shoes, shoe modifications and other pedorthic devices.

If this would be of use to you or someone you know, consider having a free screening.

### **Music and Worship Article:**

**submitted by Paula Monahan**

“He is not here, but is risen!” *Luke 24:6*

“What can exhausted pastors do to relax on Sunday nights after a hard day’s work? Baptist preacher Robert Lowry went home to his wife and three sons, and wrote hymns.” According to a friend, Dr. Lowry would be sharing the gospel through his hymns long after his sermons are forgotten. His body was weak and exhausted, but “his mind refused to rest.”

William Bradbury was a gospel song editor and when he died in 1868, Dr. Lowry was chosen to replace him to publish Sunday School music. However, Dr. Lowry’s best known gospel songs include “Nothing But the Blood,” “Shall We Gather At the River,” and “I Need Thee Every Hour.”

He wrote the hymn, “Christ Arose!” one evening during the Easter season in 1874. He was engaged in his devotions and became deeply impressed with Luke 24:6-8. He was especially moved by the words of the angel at the tomb of Jesus: “Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen!”

How lucky we are that Dr. Lowry’s hymns are remembered and loved to this day!

“Low in the grave he lay, Jesus, my savior!  
Waiting the coming day, Jesus, my Lord!

Up from the grave He arose,  
with a mighty triumph o’er His foes;  
He arose a victor from the dark domain,  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign;  
He arose! He arose!  
Hallelujah! Christ arose!”

Happy Easter! He is risen!

*Adapted from “Then Sings My Soul” by Robert J. Morgan*

## "Children First" Christian Preschool Update

Greetings from the "Children First" Christian Preschool!

March was full of learning fun: opposites, weather, Holy Week and Easter were the themes. April themes explore signs of spring, space/planets, recycling, Earth Day, and bugs.

We are again selling Dutch Mill Flower Bulbs as a fundraiser. To order, you may see the catalog in the church office. Payment is required when ordering. We will order on April 11 and expect to receive the bulbs before Mother's Day.

2016/17 enrollment is underway for current families and First Lutheran families. Community enrollment begins April 1.

Class offerings are:

- ☺ Noah's Animals (33 mos-3 year olds) Monday and Wednesday, or Tuesday and Thursday.
- ☺ Jesus' Gems (4-5 year olds) meets Monday and Wednesday, or Tuesday and Thursday.
- ☺ Friday Friends (33 mos-5 year olds) meets Friday, for those families wanting a three-day experience for their preschooler.
- ☺ Registration fee is \$60.00 and is non-refundable. Monthly tuition is \$85.00 per month. Friday Friends class is an additional \$35.00 per month. Brochures and registration forms are available in the First Lutheran

Church office, gathering space, at [www.flittlefalls.org](http://www.flittlefalls.org) or by contacting Gail.

- ☺ "Come and See" Day, Monday, April 11, 6:00-7:30 p.m. An open house time to visit the classroom, meet the staff, ask questions and enjoy a snack.
- ☺ Families with children age birth through PreK are invited to a community celebration on Thursday, May 5 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. at Lincoln Elementary School. This event is sponsored by TCC, ECFE (Early Childhood Family Education) and "Children First" Christian Preschool. Families will enjoy activities, supper, and musical entertainment at no cost. There will be information about early childhood activities available in the community. For more information, contact Gail.

Thank you to all who keep us in prayer and support us in so many ways. Your on-going encouragement is so much appreciated! God's blessings to you all.

Yours in Christ's Service,

Gail Hittesdorf, Preschool Director

email: [childrenfirst@flittlefalls.org](mailto:childrenfirst@flittlefalls.org)

web: [www.flittlefalls.org/preschool](http://www.flittlefalls.org/preschool)

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### Sunday School News

- ☺ The Commission for Education is thankful to all who have faithfully participated in Sunday School this year. We are able to offer quality Sunday School education through the generous offering of time and talent by many of you. Together we build the community of faith. Thank you!
- ☺ We begin our next TREK rotation for grades K-5 on Sunday, April 10. "Breakfast on the Beach." Thank you to all who have volunteered to lead a station!
- ☺ The last day of Sunday School until fall is Sunday, May 15.





# First Lutheran Church

*Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

2100 Riverview Drive  
Little Falls, Minnesota 56345-4402

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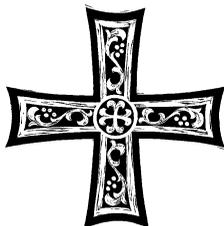
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## Sunday Worship Schedule

- 8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship using a variety of liturgical settings
- 9:35 a.m. Sunday School Hour
- 10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship led by a Praise Band

Holy Communion is served at all services.

**Come and See!**



## Save the date!

### 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

**Who:** First Lutheran Church family – all of us!

**What:** Faith—Fun—Family Fellowship

**When:** Sunday, September 25, 2016

**Where:** First Lutheran Church

Items for the May NEWSLETTER are due on  
**April 20, 2016!**