

FIRST

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Ministers: All God's People at FLC

Jake Dyrhaug, Pastor



2100 Riverview Drive
Little Falls, MN 56345
(320) 632-6667
(320) 632-1050 Fax
firstserv@flclittlefalls.org
www.flclittlefalls.org

“Servants of All”

April 2017, Newsletter

April 11, 2017

Holy Week and Easter Worship and Activities

April 9—Palm Sunday

Hosanna!

8:30 a.m. Worship and Holy Communion

9:35 a.m. Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Worship and Holy Communion

April 13—Maundy Thursday

The service of Christ: footwashing and meal

7:00 p.m. – Holy Communion with
footwashing and second grade
students receive communion

April 14—Good Friday

The passion and death of Christ

1:00 p.m. – Good Friday Tenebrae Worship

7:00 p.m. – Good Friday Tenebrae Worship

April 15—Saturday

9:30-11:30 a.m. – Easter Eggstravaganza!

*special event for youth age 3 thru second grade
see page 9 for more information*

April 16—The Resurrection of our Lord

The resurrection of Jesus is announced

7:30 a.m. – Sunrise Holy Communion

8:30-10:00 a.m. – Easter Breakfast

10:30 a.m. – Festival Holy Communion



Pastor Jake's Article
see page 2

NE MN Synod
Assembly
see page 4

Mission News
see page 5

Earth Day
see page 5

Adult Opportunities
see page 6

“Children First”
Christian Preschool
see page 8

Education News!
see page 9

“Many peoples and the inhabitants of many cities will yet come, and the inhabitants of one city will go to another and say, ‘Let us go at once to entreat the LORD and seek the LORD Almighty...And many peoples and powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to seek the LORD Almighty...”

Zechariah 8:20-22

Our group sat somewhere looking over the city of Jerusalem, and one Baptist pastor from Texas stood up to read (we were pastors and spouses from several denominational backgrounds), and he read these verses. “And...many nations will come to Jerusalem.” And I thought to myself, you know, it’s true. I’m not a big fan of all the current books on prophecy and how they seem to miss the point of God’s Word so often. But words like these from the books of the prophets really cause me to sit up and say, whoa, it’s come true. Zechariah, who likely witnessed the first return of the exiles from Babylon in the 6th Century B.C., was probably walking back into the ruins of Jerusalem, thinking, it doesn’t look like much now, but God still is going to do something big here.

As you walk around the streets of the city of Jerusalem today you literally see people from “many peoples and powerful nations.” I talked with people (some with sign language) who were from Israel, the West Bank (Palestinian), Russia, France, Germany, Korea, Japan, inner city Chicago (an African American guy just strolling the streets of Jerusalem singing gospel quietly and thinking about it all), Spain, Mexico, and probably others who I didn’t get to ask where they were from. It struck me as amazing. The city itself, at least the old city, is really not that big. You could fit Minnesota small towns easily within its old walls—walls that have been built up by inhabitant after inhabitant, from the Canaanites to the Israelites to the Romans to the Crusaders and later Muslim armies, then later European powers and later the returning Jewish people after World War II—walls have been built up and pulled down and put up again many times. Beautiful churches of every kind and it seems from every nation have

been built there, including the beautiful “Church of All Nations,” built after WWI. What is it about this rather dry and arid place in the hills of a relatively small nation that continues to draw millions of travelers and worshipers who remember it wherever they are each year? Jerusalem is place of origin for three major world religions—Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. That’s one reason. There’s really nothing more “holy” about that piece of real estate than any other on the planet—Jesus could have come to any place, as God so loved the WORLD. All God’s creation is sacred. And the power of the gospel to change the world is out here with all the people in every corner of the globe—that’s where God is moving in exponential ways. But still it is with reverence and respect that all nations keep that place in their hearts, because what has happened there is sacred. For us, it’s the place where Jesus, the Savior, “set his face like flint” towards Jerusalem to face the cross for us. To go from beautiful, green Galilee with all the water, pines and flowers to head down to that city where constant conflict raged over power, knowing it would get him killed, it makes me think of all that God’s Son sacrificed for us. All nations seek the LORD there in Jerusalem today, it’s true. And God is still transforming the world today in powerful ways through the events that have taken place there.

We continue to journey toward Jerusalem with Jesus in our Lenten worship services this year with Holden Evening Prayer and the theme, “You Are...” Holy Week services begin with Palm Sunday worship, April 9 at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m., and Maundy Thursday service at 7:00 p.m., and Good Friday services at 1:00 and 7:00 p.m., and Easter Sunday worship, April 16, at 7:30 and 10:30 a.m. with an Easter Breakfast served by the youth between services. God bless you as we walk with Jesus to Jerusalem.

In Christ,

Pastor Jake Dyrhaug

The Three Days— Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil

written by Becky Nelson, Director of Music

Every Sunday we bring our joys, sorrows, anxieties and unanswered questions to worship. God gathers us, speaks to us, feeds us and sends us forth to do God's work. But once a year we take time to concentrate our worship on remembering the sacrifice that God, through Christ, made for us. Christ's death and resurrection mark the center, the root, the anchor and the heart of our faith and life. The worship services of the week preceding Easter Sunday, "the three days," are a yearly gift that help us focus and reorient to our "magnetic north" – the cross and the empty tomb – from which we set our life course.

Maundy Thursday is a deeply moving service with a really funny name. The word "Maundy" is derived from the Latin word "mandatum" which means "commandment." The Maundy Thursday gospel reading is from John 13 in which Jesus says to his disciples, "A new commandment I give to you: Love one another as I have loved you. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." This remarkable gospel reading tells how Jesus performs the duty of a slave and washes the dirty feet of his disciples, then urges them to do the same for each other. At this service we will wash the feet of our second grade confirmation students. The second graders will also receive first communion at this service. The Maundy Thursday service ends with stripping the altar while Psalm 22, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me" is sung.

The Good Friday Tenebrae Service is another beautiful service with an unusual name. The word Tenebrae means "darkness." The Tenebrae Service, practiced by the church since medieval times, is a meditation on Christ's suffering. Jesus, the Light of the World for us through the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany and Lent, is now represented by seven candles lit at the front of the church. The candles are extinguished as we read, sing, and ponder the depth of Christ's suffering

and death. This service ends in silence and darkness.

Then, beginning in darkness and silence, the Easter Vigil service is celebrated on the evening before Easter Sunday, late enough to allow for a dark worship space. (The Easter Vigil can be celebrated at any time throughout that night, in some places at midnight, but also as late as dawn on Easter Day. The Easter Vigil at dawn is the origin of the Easter Sunrise service.) As the Christ candle is brought into the worship space, we light our small candles from it and soon the space is filled with light—the light of Jesus, the Light of the World. The service continues with joyful songs and stories that tell over and over again how God has saved us time after time, and has now saved us once and for all. The Easter Vigil is often followed by a feast of some sort, rich desserts if evening or a full breakfast if at dawn.

From the season of Advent to the celebration of Easter, and in our lives each day—the Light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it. *John 1:5*

It's Coming— Consecration Sunday, May 7

In April, we begin a stewardship drive for the ministry of First Lutheran Church. Our theme is "More than Bricks...Servants to All." We will hear stories of faith during Sunday worship and come together for one service of worship at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, May 7. At this special service we will make commitments of giving for the coming year as a part of worship. The guest leader, Rev. Amy Odgren, Northeastern Minnesota Synod Assistant to the Bishop, brings the message that day. A special catered Celebration Luncheon follows the service. Mark your calendars!

2017 NE MN Synod Assembly
“500th Anniversary of the Reformation: What Does It Mean?”
April 28-30, Cragun’s Resort, Baxter

First Lutheran Church voting members Daniel Ditmanson and Sue Salvog along with Pastor Jake Dyrhaug will attend the Northeast Minnesota Synod Assembly Friday-Sunday, April 28-30. This year’s theme is “500th Anniversary of the Reformation: What Does It Mean?”

Keynote speaker is The Rev. Dr. Richard Carlson, Professor of New Testament at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

Pastor Jake has been involved in the planning for a special Service of Commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation to be held on Saturday, April 29, at 7:30 p.m. at Cragun’s. All are welcome to attend this service.

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.

Easter Flowers

Share in the Spirit of Easter by sharing your Easter flowers (for example: lilies, tulips, etc.) with your First Lutheran family. The flowers may be given in remembrance of a loved one or in celebration of a special event or person. Flowers may be dropped off in the Library on Holy Saturday. Please label your flowers. If you would like a remembrance noted in the bulletin regarding your flowers, please call the church office by Monday, April 10.



Easter Breakfast

Come and enjoy the fellowship of Easter Breakfast on Sunday, April 16, from 8:30-10:00 a.m. A free-will offering will be received. We are serving a hot breakfast of pancakes, sausage, eggs, fruit, juice, milk and coffee. Thanks for your support! Thank you to the Youth Ministry Team for coordinating this year’s breakfast. For more information or to offer your assistance, contact Daniel Ditmanson, in the church office.

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 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!

Eco-Palms for Palm Sunday Worship – April 9

One small way that First Lutheran practices stewardship is through the purchase of Eco-Palms. Traditional harvesting of palms in Mexico and Guatemala has contributed to destruction of the forest and harm to the indigenous communities. Eco-Palms are harvested in a way that preserves the trees and also gives the workers a fair wage. May God bless the hands that do this work.

Baskets of Promise for Lutheran World Relief

During Lent we participate in Lutheran World Relief's Baskets of Promise appeal. We collect items to assemble Personal Care Kits that give people around the world tools to stay healthy in life's most challenging situations. We hope to assemble 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 are participating in any way with the midweek Lenten soup suppers. Whether you provide soup or other supplies, work to prepare, serve and clean up the meal or come to enjoy fellowship and a simple meal of soup and bread, all is appreciated! Proceeds from the meals will be shared with the Flyer Pride Weekend Backpack Food Program and Oasis Central Minnesota. Thank you for your ongoing support of these local partners in ministry!

47th 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.

Over the next years, as Earth Day moves closer to its 50th 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 CO₂ 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 for more information.



Adult Opportunities

Men's Bible Study Breakfast

All are welcome to come for breakfast and Bible study! We meet the first (April 5) and third (April 19) Wednesday of each month at 7:00 a.m. Come when you can, leave when you must! Pastor Jake 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 25 at 7:00 p.m. to discuss We Die Alone: A WWII Epic of Escape & Endurance by David Howarth. The May selection is The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah. Readers, please secure your own copy of the books. For more information contact Tifanii Dahl, 632-8207.

Lutheran Social Service Rummage Sale Wednesday-Thursday, May 10-11

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 10, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 11, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Note: the sale hours are shortened by one day, on Thursday you can fill a bag of clothing for \$1.00!

Proceeds from the sale are used to benefit residents at the Lutheran Social Services group homes in this area. Set up day is Tuesday and Wednesday morning, clean up begins at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday. 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 1, or on the set-up days. For more information, contact Karen Haaland, at 632-8828.

Martha Circle

Monday, April 10, 9:30 a.m.

Martha Circle meets Monday, April 10, at 9:30 a.m. for Bible Study and conversation. Hostess is Betty Bengtson.

Roadside Cleanup Saturday, April 22

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 22 is 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.

After Worship Run/Walk Sunday, April 30, 11:45 a.m.

The Health Ministry Team will gather anyone interested after worship on Sunday, April 30 to enjoy the spring weather and some time together on foot. Weather permitting we will walk or run the one mile loop around Riverview Drive, maybe even more than once! We will end back at church for a quick bite to eat to go! Contact Parish Nurse Tracy Moe for more information.

Day of Caring Wednesday, May 3

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 12**. For more information, contact the church office.

Recently, during a visit with an elderly friend about the recent loss of her spouse and some of the funny stories they had together, she shared some personal moments in her husband's last few weeks, days and hours, and I couldn't help but laugh and cry a little with her. It was so good to be able to share in this experience.

The following is an excerpt from the book, 'Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart, How to Relate to Those Who Are Suffering,' by Kenneth C. Haugk, Ph.D., regarding crying. "You can play a significant part in another's life if you accept that it is perfectly all right for that individual to cry – even better, if you accept that crying is part of healing. Caregivers sometimes worry that if a suffering person breaks into tears, it must mean that the caregiver has done something wrong. In truth, most of the time it means just the opposite – you've done something right, very right. People cry in front of those they feel safe with, those they trust. If a hurting person cries in your presence, you are trusted."

"Tears are cleansing. Tears relax tension and gets painful feelings out in the open."

The Bible speaks: "he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new!" *Revelation 21:4-5a*

So the next time you are in a painful situation and feel the need to cry, do it! We all know the saying, "it's okay to cry." By your effective caring and relating, hurting people will experience the warmth of being cared for, and their hearts may even be lightened.



Congregational Life Team Article:

submitted by Cassie Neumann

Greetings and Happy Spring to you all from your Congregational Life Ministry Team! Spring is a season of new things. It is the perfect time to do something new, something bold, something beautiful. We want to let you know that changes are coming! One of the big goals that our ministry team has set for this year is to update our church's website calendar. With an updated calendar, we can ensure that our members, guests and community can see all of the wonderful things First Lutheran Church is doing. This is going to be a process but our church council is in full support of our goal and we are determined to make this happen. Thank you all in advance for your help and support! Our plan is to update the calendar at our monthly meetings so if there is something that you would like included you can let one of our five team members (Heidi Sassen, Mary Pfohl, Ted Pfohl, Jerry Neumann, and Cassie Neumann) know and we will be happy to get your event on the calendar.

Our mission is to encourage fellowship, celebration, and engagement between members and guests of our church and extend Christian care and love for those experiencing significant life events. If you have ideas to help us carry out our mission we would love to hear from you or have you join us for a meeting. Our team meets the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m., all are welcome!

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Matthew 18:20

Submitted joyfully in His service,
Cassie Neumann

"Children First" Christian Preschool

Greetings from the "Children First" Christian Preschool!

2017/18 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.
- ☺ New this year: we are offering afternoon sessions for the Jesus' Gems (4-5 year olds). Families can choose the afternoon session only or add the afternoon session to make an all-day class.
- ☺ Registration fee is \$60.00 and is non-refundable. Monthly tuition is \$85.00 per month per class. Families choosing the all-day

option for Jesus' Gems class add an additional \$95.00 per month or \$180.00 total 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, online at www.flclittlefalls.org or by contacting Gail. All class offerings are based on enrollment. Your early enrollment assists us in planning.

- ☺ 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@flclittlefalls.org
web: www.flclittlefalls.org/preschool

Sunday School News

- ☺ The Education Ministry Team 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!
- ☺ Our current TREK rotation for grades K-5 is "Journey to the Cross." The last rotation for the year "Easter Go and Tell" begins April 23 for three weeks. Thank you to all who have volunteered to lead a station!
- ☺ There is no regular Sunday School on Easter Sunday—come for Easter Breakfast! The last day of Sunday School until fall is Sunday, May 14. Watch for a fun celebration!



Vacation Bible School
August 7-11, 9:00-12:00 noon



Graduating Seniors

Mark Sunday, May 21 on your calendar. We'd like to honor you and your parents at a special service of worship (10:30 a.m.) and brunch (11:45 a.m.). Watch your mail for more information and an invitation.

“Maker Fun Factory” Created by God Built for a Purpose

Now is the time to begin thinking about sharing your gifts with the more than 150 children who will attend VBS this summer. Do you love cooking? Making fun snacks? Games and physical activity? Working on creative crafts? Staying behind the scenes? Or perhaps you just like to spend time with children! For five fun-filled mornings we will help each other learn that God made us for a purpose! Please prayerfully consider how God is calling you into this ministry. If you wish to be part of the planning, or want to assist with a particular area, or have any questions contact Daniel Ditmanson in the church office.

Easter Eggstravaganza! Saturday, April 15 Between 9:30 and 11:30 a.m.

All kids up to 3rd grade are invited and welcome to the Easter Eggstravaganza. This family event includes, an egg hunt, face painting, egg dyeing, snack, obstacle course, egg toss and more! We ask that kids enjoy this fun time with an adult. For more information please call the church office at (320) 632-6667.

Confirmation Ministries

Second Grade: students learned about the sacrament of Holy Communion on Sundays, March 19 and 26. Second graders will have their feet washed and receive Holy Communion together at Maundy Thursday worship, April 13.

Seventh/Eighth Grade and Ninth/Tenth Grade: These confirmation classes will resume after Easter for two sessions on Wednesdays, April 19 and 26 at 7:00 p.m. Students and mentors please continue to work on your mentor activities. Perhaps you could attend worship together?

Can Care Collection

Keep saving those aluminum cans! Place your cans next to the garage in a securely tied bag.
Save a can – Save the earth –
Save our youth budget! Keep those cans coming! Thank you!

**See the Holy Week and Easter
Schedule on the Cover!**



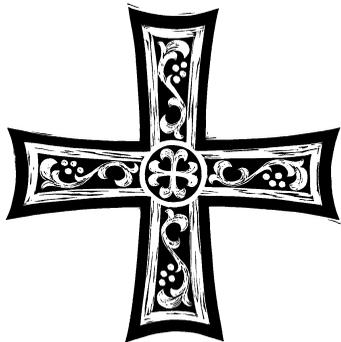
✦
Christ is Risen!
Christ is Risen, indeed!
✦

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!



Items for the May NEWSLETTER are due on
April 20, 2017!