



Ride for Rice
a journey from New Orleans to Little Falls

Pastor David Sperstad and First Lutheran member, Ron Makela, are several days into their journey to put their faith into physical action. Pastor and Ron climbed on their bicycles in New Orleans on Sunday, July 22 and began an adventure to pedal 1,500 miles over 21 days (or so) following the Mississippi River route back to Little Falls.

The two will raise awareness for Food for Kidz, a national, non-profit organization which provides nutritious meals for children around the world. You may have helped to package the meals at First Lutheran, an ongoing ministry which the congregation supports.

Food for Kidz packages a special nutritionally sound mixture of rice, soy protein, dried vegetables, and seasoning into a package that will feed six people. Volunteers package and weigh the meals and seal the ingredients in special bags. Meals are boxed and prepared for shipment all over the world, wherever there are hungry children. Pastor David has set a goal of raising enough money to purchase and package 1,000,000—*one million*—meals!

Please prayerfully consider how you can help to reach this goal. Checks may be written to First Lutheran, with “Ride for Rice” in the memo line or you may donate online by clicking on the ‘donate now’ button here. Please keep Pastor David and Ron in your prayers and watch for updates on the church website, First Lutheran’s Facebook page – 1st Lutheran Little Falls, MN – and at weekly Sunday worship.

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About 35,000 ELCA youth, adults and volunteers build a community of love

From ELCA NEWS SERVICE



Dane Bakken wanted to know what it was like to haul a 25-pound jug of water on foot for 3.7 miles – the average for what a woman or girl in Africa will walk to bring clean water for her family. “You can read about (such statistics) as much as you want, but until you do it, that’s what makes you realize just how hard that is. Otherwise, it’s just numbers,” said Bakken, a participant at the 2012 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s (ELCA) Youth Gathering in New Orleans, July 18-22.

“Here (in the United States) most of us can go to the kitchen to get a glass of water. The same is not true for many around the world,” Bakken said. It was a tough journey. With beads of sweat streaming down his cheeks and momentary rest stops, Bakken was determined to complete his task. It took him more than one hour or 37 turns around a track. Organizers of the activity were asking youth to walk one-tenth of a mile. Bakken was cheered along the way, but no one beamed with more pride than his pastor, the Rev. Jeffrey D. Jacobs of Springdale Lutheran Church in Mount Horeb, Wis. “Dane just did it on his own initiative. He’s that kind of kid. He does thoughtful things very quietly, and I have been very proud of him,” Jacobs said.

The activity was part of the “100 Wells Challenge,” where a goal was to raise \$250,000 to support the water projects of ELCA World Hunger

around the world. That amount could mean building 100 wells, each one with the potential of bringing clean water to 500 families at a time. ELCA youth and their congregations delivered their offerings at the 100 Wells Challenge exhibit. Over \$406,000 has been collected as of July 24.

Thank You!

2012 ELCA National Youth Gathering “citizens with the saints” Ephesians 2:14-20

On July 13, 19 youth and four adults from First Lutheran boarded Bus #8 along with youth and adults from Baxter, Brainerd and Upsala for the trip to the Gulf Coast and New Orleans. The ten day journey was a life-changing experience for many of the 35,000 youth attending the gathering. Be encouraged for the future as these many fine, young people trust in God and get ready for their lives to make a difference in the world!

Thank you for the amazing ways you have shown support for this event. Whether you have provided a financial gift, assisted with a fundraising opportunity, encouraged us with your words of support and prayers, we appreciate each and every one. When you get a chance, ask the travelers what the trip meant to them. They are, youth: Tremayne Collins, Rachel Groves, Kirsten Henagin, Jordyn Himley, Nikolas Himley, Haylee Hittesdorf, Jason Jopp, Hannah Krupke, Emily Marlette, Justin Moe, Austin Motschke, Kali Neu, Haley Olson, Michael Orr, Cassidy Overn, Sam Rydeen, Kinbrae Sperstad, Alicia Storkamp, and Timothy Wilbur; and adults: Tonie Dickmann, Jay Kiel, Danielle Motschke, and Pastor David Sperstad. The 2015 Gathering will be held in Detroit! **Thanks again!**

Adult Opportunities



Green Fair Folk Festival at St. Francis Convent

Wednesday, August 1, 4:00-8:00 p.m.

This outdoor event sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls is an evening of ecological awareness with music, food, exhibits, storytelling, other activities, and much more. Many local and state businesses and educational groups will be present. From 6-8 p.m., St. Francis Music Center will present music from Sestri, a women's Slavic chorus, and a fiddle contest. Other local musicians will celebrate music as a universal language that crosses all borders. Young people from First will make balloon (biodegradable!) animals—they're always a big hit! Come gather to enjoy, learn and see many local favorites and use these wonderful opportunities to enhance our care for the planet and make our world a better place for all.

Bible Studies:

Women's Bible Study

Watch for more information on a new Beth Moore video study, 'John.' This group will meet on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. Start date and sign up to be announced soon.

Social Justice Concerns Study and Conversation

Begins Wednesday, August 15, 9:30 a.m.

All are welcome to open minds and hearts to learn and gain understanding about a variety of social justice issues affecting the world. Our first topic is Human Trafficking. Bring your Bible and a friend and come to discuss this and other important issues. Contact the church office for more info.

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. Our next meeting time is Wednesday, September 5. Come when you can, leave when you must! Pastor Dave leads this study. Contact him for more information.

Cornerstones

(Seniors age 55 and better ☺)

Are you interested in participating in senior fellowship? Bring a friend and a food item to share and come for potluck lunch. We gather on the third Tuesday of each month. Mark your calendar for Tuesday, August 21, at 11:30 a.m. We'll meet in Stoltz Hall to share food, conversation and laughter!

Zeb Pike Triathlon Saturday, August 25

Start training now or continue your training for the Zeb Pike Tri! We'll start at Lindbergh Park at 8:00 a.m. and pedal a 20 mile bike loop around Zebulon Pike Lake, a 2 mile paddle on the Mississippi River and a 3 mile run on Lindbergh Drive. Race it alone or gather up a team; your \$15.00 entry fee also provides you with a Zeb Pike t-shirt! Call organizers Scott or Amber Sobiech at 616-9626 for more information.

Note: First Lutheran Church Council and Commissions did not meet during July. Watch for information and updates next month.

Music Ministry Opportunities:



Praise Team Celebration Potluck Sunday, August 19, 5:30 p.m.

If you have provided worship leadership as a part of the praise team, or if you would like to become involved in this ministry in the coming year, you are invited to a Potluck at the home of Pastor Dave and Susan Sperstad on Sunday, August 19, at 5:30 p.m. Singers, instrumentalists, media/sound operators and families are invited. Please bring a food item to share. For more information, contact Becky Nelson at church or at home, 749-2336 or via email at rpnelson@brainerd.net.

The Followers of Christ Children's Choir Rehearsals begin: Wednesday, September 12

All kids in Kindergarten through Grade 5 are welcome to sing with the children's choir. The first rehearsal is Wednesday, September 14 from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Transportation from Lincoln and Lindbergh Elementary schools to First Lutheran Church will be provided by school bus. Parents are asked to register for this singing opportunity. Registration forms are available in the gathering space or on the church website at www.flclittlefalls.org. For more information, contact Becky Nelson at 749-2336 or rpnelson@brainerd.net.

Adult Choir Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. Beginning September 12

Senior Choir resumes rehearsal on Wednesday, September 12, at a *new time: 1:00 p.m.* We hope the new time will accommodate singers who prefer to come out during the daytime hours. If you enjoy singing God's praises, and are high-school age and up, come for singing and fellowship. We welcome new singers! We plan to sing three Sundays per month at the 8:00 or 10:45 a.m. services. For more information, contact Becky Nelson, at 749-2336, or Kathy Pederson, at 468-2324, or 630-3731.

Share Your Musical Gifts

Would you like to share your musical gifts with the congregation? There are many ways to participate in this important part of congregational life. If you or someone you know is interested in any of these opportunities, please contact Becky Nelson, Director of Music Ministry, at 749-2336, or the church office.

- ♪ Praise Team – the Praise Team leads worship weekly at 9:30/10:00 a.m. service. Vocalists, guitar, drums, flute are part of the team. The commitment is two Sundays a month.
- ♪ Cantor – the cantor leads various settings of the liturgical worship service. Commitment on an as needed basis.
- ♪ Solo or ensemble gift of music – share vocal or instrumental gifts of music during worship as available.
- ♪ Pianist for services at local care centers. Accompanist for worship services as you are available.

Mission Life

Oasis/Share A Meal Community Paint A Thon Saturday, August 4

Can you spend a Saturday morning helping to paint a home for a local resident? This annual event is a great time to assist our brothers and sisters in Christ right here in our own community. Confirmation students—perhaps you and your mentor will want to use this for your service project. This is a BYOB (Bring Your Own Brush!) event. For more information, call coordinators Jerome and Karen Haaland at 632-8828, or the church office, 632-6667.

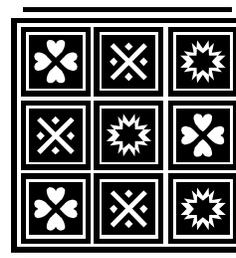
Ruby's Pantry Food Distribution

Oasis Central Minnesota hosts distribution of food from Ruby's Pantry on the fourth Monday of each month. Monday, August 27 will be the next distribution date. Surplus food is provided to anyone interested, there is no income qualification. Recipients are asked to bring their own box and a cash donation of \$15.00. Distribution takes place at Bethel Lutheran, 901 Broadway Avenue West from 4:30-6:00 p.m.

For more information, call Oasis Central Minnesota, at 632-9140.



See page one of this newsletter for one way you can help to feed hungry children around the world. Thank you!



Camp Knutson 26th Annual Quilt Auction Saturday, August 11, 2012

Camp Knutson, nurtures the well-being of persons with special needs in a setting which celebrates God's love for community and creation. In 2010, over 1,000 campers with heart disease, HIV or AIDS, Down syndrome, severe skin diseases, autism or other diseases were served. A quilt from the First Lutheran quilters along with many others will be auctioned. First Lutheran provides assistance on the day of the sale. Your support of the auction is greatly appreciated. If you would like to attend and share a ride, contact Marlene Williams, 632-4290.

Luther Crest Scramble A Fun(d) Raising Golf Tournament Monday, August 13 Camp Changes Lives!

Why not gather a foursome for this fun(d) raising "Best Ball" tournament on the course at Lake Miltona Golf Course, Alexandria. Registration begins at 10:00 a.m.; "shotgun start" tee time is at noon. Supper will be served at Lake Miltona at 5:00 p.m. The fee is \$75.00 per person covers green fees, cart rental, and meal. You are encouraged to give a gift in support of Luther Crest at this event. Past tournaments have made a significant impact on the camp's ministry. To register, call the church office, 632-6667.

Children's Choir

All kids in Kindergarten through Grade 5 are welcome to sing with the children's choir. The first rehearsal is Wednesday, September 14 from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Transportation from Lincoln and Lindbergh Elementary schools to First Lutheran Church will be provided. Parents are asked to register for this singing opportunity. For more information, contact Becky Nelson at 749-2336.

Welcome Three-Year-Olds!

Each year we help prepare our three-year-olds for Sunday School by inviting them and their parents to participate in an orientation gathering. This year's gathering is scheduled for Wednesday, September 12, at 6:30 p.m. Youth and their parents will visit their classroom, meet their teacher, and get acquainted with one another. Any child who is three years old by September 1 is welcome. Three-year olds will receive the gift of a story Bible at worship on Rally Sunday, September 16. Please enroll your child to ensure they receive a Bible. If you have questions, please call Gail Hittesdorf at church, 632-6667, or at home, 632-2218.

Sunday School: Fall 2012

Rally Sunday – Food, Fun and Games will kick-off the start of another year of Educational ministry at First Lutheran Church. Parents and children ages 3 through grade 12 will Rally in Stoltz Hall for an opening and introduction to the day's fun!

Education Commission members and volunteers have been recruiting teachers, leaders and helpers for the upcoming Sunday Morning ministries. If you are interested in sharing your faith through cooking, storytelling, song, music, games, arts and crafts, etc., please contact the church office, any Commission for Education member or Gail Hittesdorf, Education Coordinator at 632-6667.

Registration for Sunday Morning Ministry, age 3-grade 12 Confirmation, grades 2-11 Youth Groups, grades 3-12

Parents of children ages 3 years – 12th grade: Watch your mailbox for a mailing on Education & Youth Ministry for the coming year. Registration and health forms for kids, and list of opportunities for adults to work with youth, and a schedule for confirmation is included. Please note that registration is required each year for participation in Education and Youth Activities. Additional forms will be available in the church office or on the church web-site at www.flittlefalls.org. Forms should be returned to First Lutheran as soon as possible. See the mailing for more details!

Confirmation Ministries

Third Grade: Parents and youth entering third grade are invited to attend a Bible overview meeting on Wednesday, August 22 at 6:30 p.m. We will discuss the course on Family Devotions on the Gospel of Mark to begin in September. Youth will receive their Bibles during worship on Sunday, August 26.

Fifth Grade: Class on Stewardship begins on Wednesday, September 12. Watch for a letter with details about this class.

Sixth Grade: During the week of Vacation Bible School (August 6-10), youth entering seventh grade in the fall will be studying the Lord's Prayer with Jay Kiel. Watch for a letter containing more information about this class.

Ninth Grade: New Testament class begins Wednesday, September 12, at 7:00 p.m.

Tenth Grade: don't forget your mentor activities – the summer will fly by quickly!

"Children First" Christian Preschool Update

Greetings from the Preschool,

This fall we offer the following classes.

- ☺ *Noah's Animals*—for children 33 months to three years old, meeting Monday and Wednesday (this class is full), or Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00-11:30 a.m.
- ☺ *Jesus' Gems*—for four and five year olds, meeting Monday and Wednesday, or Tuesday and Thursday, 9:00-11:30 a.m.
- ☺ *Friday Friends*—for 33 months to PreK, this additional class creates a three-day week.
- ☺ Interested families are encouraged to inquire and register early to allow time for the necessary paperwork and/or medical appointments to be completed. Registration forms are available on the church website, www.flclittlefalls.org, or at church in the gathering space.

If you are able to financially assist a family with tuition expense scholarship, please let us know.

"Children First" Advisory team and staff welcome back Peggy Rekstad and Jessica Gustafson as classroom teachers. We are accepting resumés for teacher's aide positions. If you or someone you know would like to apply, please bring resumé to the church office. For more information, contact Gail Hittesdorf, Director, at 632-6667 or 320-291-4698.

Thank you!

Thank you to Peggy Rekstad, for leading two weeks of Summer Preschool Day Camp. 29 children ages 3-5 enjoyed learning about how God made them special, and about their five senses through stories, craft projects, puppets, songs and games. What a fun time. ☺

Upcoming dates for preschool families or those interested:

- ☞ Green Fair Folk Festival, Wednesday, August 1, 4:00-8:00 p.m. at St. Francis Campus, Little Falls. Visit the preschool booth at this free family-friendly event that promotes a healthy and sustainable lifestyle.
- ☞ Preschool Open House, Monday, August 27, 5:00-7:30 p.m. for Monday/Wednesday class or Tuesday, August 28, 5:00-7:30 p.m. for Tuesday/Thursday class. Open House is for anyone interested in visiting or registering.
- ☞ Parent Orientation, Thursday, September 6, 7:00 p.m. at the church.
- ☞ Arts and Crafts Fair Booth, Saturday-Sunday, September 8-9 (Broadway and 2nd Street). Volunteers welcome!
- ☞ Classes begin for students, Monday-Tuesday, September 10-11, class sessions on these days are 1½ hours with a parent/guardian attending.

Thank you to all who supported "Children First" at the Coborn's Brat Stand! "Chico Bags" lightweight, re-usable, washable bags are available in the church office for just \$5.00. Preschool operations are supported only by tuition, donations, fundraisers, volunteerism, and your many prayers. First Lutheran graciously provides the facility needs. Thank you for your continued support of this ministry to children and families!

In Christ's Service,
Gail Hittesdorf, Director, (320) 632-2218
childrenfirst@flclittlefalls.org



Gospel Gang (Grades 3-5)

Summer Fun at the Lake
Sunday, August 19
1:30-4:30 p.m.

We are invited to an afternoon of lakefront fun at the home of Chuck and Tammy Zwilling at Green Prairie Lake. Bring the family and come along to for an afternoon that includes swimming, boating, food and fun! Signup is underway now at church, or call the church office, 632-6667.

F.O.C.U.S. (Fixed on Christ Until Sunday)
Youth Bible Study
Monday morning at 7:00 a.m.
when school is in session

Youth in grades 6 through 12 are invited to meet each Monday for breakfast and bible study each week when school is in session. Watch for more information about this great way to start your week. For more information, talk to Pastor Dave.

Watch for it:
“Awaken”
See You at the Pole
Wednesday, September 26, 7:00 a.m.

See you at the Pole™ is all about prayer. It’s about you coming together and laying aside all the labels and groups for one day, to simply connect with God in prayer and connect with fellow Christians in unity around the flag pole. Come and pray for your school, friends, families and the world.



Friday Night Youth and Family Bonfire

Fridays from 7:00-9:00 p.m. (or so)

Beginning Friday, August 10

Bring a friend, the family, and a lawn chair and come to church for an evening bonfire. We’ll gather around the fire ring for s’mores, conversation and fun. If you would like to host a week, please contact Jay Kiel. We plan to meet each Friday during August and September, same time, same place!

Can Care Collection

Recycling is one way to save the earth. Bring your empty cans to the church secured in a plastic bag—you can leave them next to the garage door. This on-going fundraiser provides money for youth activities. Keep saving those aluminum cans! Thanks!





Vacation Bible School

“Fly!”

“Everything is Possible with God!”

August 6-10, 2012

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Fly on over to meet Flash Skyrunner and his friends. Consider bringing your friend or perhaps inviting a family without a church home. VBS is for kids ages 4 through 6th grade. At “Sky! Everything is Possible with God!” children will explore Bible stories and learn that no matter who you are, no matter how you feel, no matter what people do, no matter what happens, and no matter where you are—Trust God!

Sky! has a rotational style where kids fly around to different locations with their “flight crew.” Kids and staff will share their VBS experience in worship on Sunday, August 12.

This year’s VBS will be a joint effort of First Lutheran and First United Churches. To register, your child must be 3 years old (by September 1, 2011) through 6th grade. You may pick up a registration form at church or you can find the form on the church web-site, www.flclittlefalls.org. Registration is free; you are encouraged to register your child even if they may not attend every day. Your advance registration helps us have adequate supplies for each child.

Youth volunteers, youth preschool leaders, and all crew leaders are asked to be at church at 8:00 a.m. each day. Donuts and beverages will be served!

If you are interested in helping with VBS, there are many fun ways for you to get involved. You can participate for the full week or for part of the week. Thanks to all who have volunteered to date. See the sign up board in the gathering space or talk

to one of the coordinators. Check out the ‘supply board’ in the gathering space to assist with providing supplies for the week, there are many ways to be involved and all are important—thank you! Coordinators are, Gail Hittesdorf (First Lutheran), and Diane Spillum (First United). Come and learn that everything is possible with God! Trust God!

VBS Mission Projects

This year Vacation Bible School leaders decided to support two mission projects. We will support “Operation Backpack” once again. We will collect backpacks (new or gently used) and the school supplies needed to fill them. Backpacks will be distributed to nine local schools for area kids in need. Last year over 90 backpacks filled with supplies were donated to local schools! Supply lists are available on the gathering space bulletin board. Donations may be brought to the collection box in the gathering space.

We will also collect donations for the Ride for Rice – *see page one of this newsletter*. As Pastor David rides his bicycle home from New Orleans along the Mississippi River, he is raising awareness for Food for Kidz. The goal is to raise enough funds for ONE MILLION meals. You may bring your donation to the church office, or listen for details during VBS week. Thank you for your support!

News of the Family

Gibson David Lacina, son of Jake and Alisha Lacina, was baptized on July 15.

Arianna Louise Young, daughter of Roy and Kasey Young, was baptized on July 15.

✝

Jenna Johnson and Jonathan Czech were united in marriage on June 30.

✝

Items for the **September NEWSLETTER**
are due on **August 20, 2012!**



Summer Worship Schedule June through August

Sunday Worship at 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.

Summer Worship at 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. continues through September 4. Stay after the 8:00 a.m. service, or come early for the 10:00 service, for coffee (leaded and unleaded!), treats and fellowship in the Gathering Space. Everyone is welcome! Enjoy your vacation but don't take a vacation from church! Aren't you glad God doesn't take the summer off?