

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

Jake Dyrhaug, Pastor

**FIRST**



*“Servants of All”*

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August 2017, Newsletter

August 2, 2017



## ELCA National Youth Gathering 2018

*“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.” Ephesians 2:8*

Youth entering grades 9 through 12 in September are invited to attend the ELCA National Youth Gathering in summer 2018! This event happens only once every three years. We will journey with about 450 others from our NE MN Synod and learn through service and experience “What does this mean?” in Galveston, Texas. Then we’ll gather with 30,000+ youth from around the country in Houston, immersed in service and deeper faith and find that “This Changes Everything!”

Registrations and detailed information has been mailed to age-eligible students. If you did not receive a letter or misplaced it, please ask! **Registration and first deposit of \$250 is due August 31.**

The journey will depart Minnesota on Saturday, June 23, 2018 and return Monday, July 2, 2018. This event will likely be a once-in-a-lifetime experience for most students. Participants will be called to consider questions of faith and life and wonder about the ways God is active in their lives. If you have questions, please speak to Pastor Jake or Sue Gustner in the church office.

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*“Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God...emptied himself, taking the form of a servant.”*

*—Philippians 2:5-7a*

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Each summer over the past many years, a group of our youth from First Lutheran have embarked on a “mission trip”—to St. Paul, to Chicago, to Duluth to Colorado—I’ve heard so many amazing stories from those who have gone. This summer I had the opportunity to travel with a group of our middle schoolers to St. Paul, where we stayed at Redeemer Lutheran Church in North St. Paul, and we daily went over to Bethlehem Lutheran to help out with “Open Hands” ministry, which serves meals and distributes food and clothing weekly to any in the area who’d like to come. First Lutheran can be proud (tempered with Christian humility, of course) of this group and all the others who have gone out in Jesus’ name to serve people as our Lord calls us to do. It’s a great time also to just enjoy each others’ company and build a youth group, too. What I’ve always liked most of all on mission trips is to see a “servant heart” growing in each person. Here’s why... As Dr. Martin L. Kretzmann, distinguished missionary leader, once wrote...

“Servants’ Entrance.” Those were the words on a simple piece of metal tacked to a door. But this door opened from the inside of an urban church directly to the sidewalks of the city. It was the last message the worshipers saw when they left the building. It would take a lifetime of reflection and study to fathom the meaning and purpose of those two words in that particular place. But just for starters... I am reminded that “the Son of Man came to serve, not to be served.” “Who would be great among you must be your servant.” “He took the form of a servant.” “It is enough for the servant to be like his master.” “Servants’ Entrance.” This is a starting point—no, the heart—of a theology of the church... Can an institution (like the Church) renounce self-preservation as a goal and diligently seek (the kind of servanthood

Christ sets forth)? ... When Christ’s body leaves the church by that exit, it affirms the reality of the world and His concern for everything that goes on there.

Through the years, First Lutheran in Little Falls has had a vision for our community of faith to be “First...Servants of All.” Let us keep going out as the hands and feet of Christ and keep in mind in all things the “Servant’s Entrance.”

**Youth Associate Update**—We have received at least 35 gifts of \$200 at this point in order to proceed with calling a Youth Associate to work with us in partnership with Luther Crest Bible Camp. This is great news! Thank you to all who have responded so generously. The Church Council and Youth and Family Minister search team have been in the process of interviewing. Watch for more developments to come!

Your Servant in Christ,

Pastor Jake Dyrhaug

### **Council Highlights**

- Committed to a partnership with Luther Crest Bible Camp for hiring a Youth Ministry Associate.
- Repair underway to overhang of east education wing exit door.
- Heard that the Quilting Group is thankful for the many donations of money and supplies throughout the year.

## Fellowship Opportunities



### **Green Fair Folk Festival at St. Francis Convent**

**Wednesday, August 2, 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 businesses and educational groups will be present. From 6-8 p.m., St. Francis Music Center will present musical acts. And 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 study for the fall. This group will meet on Wednesday evenings. Start date and sign up to be announced soon.

#### **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 7:00 a.m. The guys will resume meeting after Labor Day on Wednesday, September 20. Come when you can, leave when you must!

### **Luther Crest Bible Camp Quilts for Camp Extravaganza held at Carlos Creek Winery Saturday, October 21**

Luther Crest partners with Carlos Creek Winery's Fall Apple Fest event with over 5,000 participants. Apple Fest begins at 11:00 a.m. with fun events such as: pumpkin carving, pumpkin chucking with catapults and trebuchets, pie eating contest, live music, and more. Quilt viewing begins at noon in the barn. There will be silent auction, artisan crafts for sale, wine tasting, live quilt auction begins at 2:00 p.m. This event will be fun for the entire family all day long! Food and beverages will be available to purchase throughout the day. Carlos Creek Winery is located at 6693 County Rd 34 NW, Alexandria, near Luther Crest. Let's support the Bible Camp at this event!

### **Oasis Central Minnesota Fundraiser**



### **"Church Ladies Hoopla" Dinner Theater At Falls Ballroom**

**Wednesday-Thursday, August 9 and 10**

Bring a friend and come for this evening of food, song, and laughter and support the outreach of Oasis Central Minnesota, the host organization of the weekly Share A Meal held each Thursday at First Lutheran.

Social hour at 5:00 p.m., dinner and show begins at 6:00 p.m. The church ladies (some you will recognize!) and Little Falls' hilarious native son, Jason Schommer will entertain you!

Tickets are \$30.00 each. We understand that the shows are sold out. Call Oasis, 632-9140 for more information.



### **Top Ten Reasons to Make Music at First Lutheran Church:**

10. Rehearsals get you away from the stress of your busy life and are a great midweek spiritual boost.
9. You can be the hands and feet of Jesus by helping to lead the congregation in song.
8. You will set a good example for other reluctant singers and instrumentalists.
7. Music making takes more brain power than any other activity. Google it!
6. To practice your multi-tasking skills. Singers read words, read music, and turn pages while watching the director. Sometimes we even count while doing all those things!
5. No auditions or solos required. All are welcome!
4. People who are involved in music live longer and are healthier.
3. In the words of St. Augustine, "To sing is to pray twice!"
2. Every once in a while you can feel heavenly voices singing along.
1. Serve the Lord as a choir or praise team member, worship assistant or with a gift of music – the rewards are out of this world!

## **Music Ministry Opportunities**

**GRACE NOTES CHOIR:** for ages high school and up, will begin rehearsing on **Wednesday, September 20, from 7:00-8:00 p.m.** Barb Stumpf continues to direct the choir this year. The Grace Notes Choir sings two or three services per month.

**PRAISE TEAM:** for ages high school and up. The praise team commitment is one or two Sundays per month, and a rehearsal the Wednesday prior to those Sundays.

**FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHILDREN'S CHOIR:** for children Kindergarten through grade 5, will begin rehearsing **Wednesday, September 13.** Rehearsals are after school on Wednesdays. Your child may ride the school bus to church. Registration forms and bus permission slips will be available as of August 7.

For more information, or if you are interested in becoming a worship assistant or providing a gift of music either vocal or instrumental, please contact Director of Music Ministry Becky Nelson, 320-360-0209 or [rpnelson@brainerd.net](mailto:rpnelson@brainerd.net).



Every summer I spend time at our local pool watching my children at swim lessons. I myself enjoy the sport of swimming—triathlons, lake swims, and pool lap swimming. I enjoy the health benefits, the ability to swim as I age, and it always soothes my tired muscles after a day of running or biking. Swimming lessons are a requirement in our family. This past week led me to the following devotional related to swimming and how God won't let you sink. Enjoy the remainder of your summer around God's beautiful creation of water!

From Proverbs 31 Ministries:

*"But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. 'Save me, Lord!' he shouted." Matthew 14:30 (NLT)*

When I was a little girl my father decided it was time for me to learn to swim. He took me by an arm and leg and swung me high. I landed in the water with a splash, popping my small head up like a turtle, coughing and sputtering. Somehow I dog-paddled to the side.

It was the way his father taught him to swim, and the way he thought it best to teach me. Personally, I believe a pair of floaties would have been helpful.

Perhaps Peter felt the same way in Matthew 14. The waves were rocking from an impending storm, when suddenly Peter saw someone walking toward him on the water. The other men were terrified, but Peter leaned in closer.

It was Jesus!

"Don't be afraid," Jesus called out.

"If it's you, tell me to come to you," Peter replied.

"Come," Jesus said.

With a leap, Peter flew out of the boat. Within seconds reality hit. Peter couldn't walk on water, much less swim in the cascading waves. In terror he cried out, "Save me." Jesus reached out his hand and caught him, and together they made their way to safety.

Many times the focus on this story is on Peter's fear. But what about his faith? Peter wasn't certain of his own abilities. He wasn't sure how to overcome the waves. He simply jumped because Jesus bid him "come."

There are times in my own life that I have heard my Savior call, "Come!"

*Trust Me in this.*

*Don't look at the waves; look at Me.*

*I'm not going to let you sink.*

And I am afraid. I am aware of my limitations. I see the challenges, and experience the obstacles once I'm in the water. Yet the end result is less about my ability or whether I "walk on water" successfully, but how I respond to his call.

The difference between my earthly father (who I treasure in spite of throwing me in a lake), and my Heavenly Daddy, is that I am never left to dog-paddle alone to shore. Jesus is right there with me. To teach me. To help me through the rougher waves. To remind me of who to trust when I feel ill-equipped.

Perhaps you feel Jesus calling you to a swim lesson. To go deeper in your relationships. In your faith. In ministry. Perhaps to discover a new level of trust as you move out of the "boat."

Jump!

He's there, his arms open wide. He's your Savior, and he knows exactly what you can do with a swim lesson or two.

*Dear Lord, I feel you calling me to deeper waters. I've held back out of fear. Help me to take my eyes off the obstacles and place my focus on you. Thank you for swim lessons that allow me to reach for your strong arms and trust in you. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

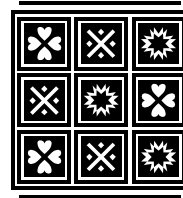
## Mission Life

### Oasis/Share A Meal Community Paint A Thon

Thank you to the First Lutheran Church team who have volunteered their time on Saturday, August 5 to give a fresh coat of paint to the home of a local resident. This is a great time to assist our brothers and sisters in Christ right here in our own community. Thank to Jerome and Karen Haaland for coordinating the team.

### Home Delivered Meals August 28-September 1

First Lutheran participates in the Home Delivered Meals program locally. Together with other groups in the community we share the delivery of meals a week at a time. Our next dates to deliver meals are Monday-Friday, August 28 to September 1. Volunteers meet at the Buckman building at 9:45 a.m., you will pick up the meals and deliver to the assigned route. You'll be done by 11:00 a.m. This is a valuable service that assists people to remain in their homes. If you or someone you know would consider being First Lutheran's coordinator for this servant opportunity, please call the church office at 632-6667. Thank you!



### Camp Knutson 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Quilt Auction Saturday, August 12

Camp Knutson, at Crosslake 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 7 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 \$100.00 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.

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## Welcome Three-Year-Olds!

Each year we help to prepare our three-year-olds for Sunday School by inviting them and their parents/guardians to participate in a welcome gathering. This year's gathering is scheduled for Wednesday, September 13, at 6:30 p.m. Children and their parents/guardians will visit their classroom, meet their teacher, share a treat, 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 Sunday, September 17. Please enroll your child to ensure they receive a Bible. If you have questions, please call the church office, 632-6667.

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## Confirmation Ministries

**Third Grade:** Parents and youth entering third grade are invited to attend a Bible overview meeting on Wednesday, August 16 at 6:30 p.m. We will discuss the course on Family Devotions on the Gospel of Mark which begins in September. Youth will receive the gift of a Bible during worship on Sunday, August 20.

**Fifth Grade:** Three week class on Stewardship begins on Wednesday, September 13. Watch for a letter with details about this class.

**Sixth Grade:** During the week of Vacation Bible School (August 7-11), youth entering seventh grade in the fall study the Lord's Prayer with Pastor Jake.

**Seventh and Eighth Grade:** as we transition into the new confirmation schedule, these two grades will meet together with Pastor Jake to study the Old Testament, beginning Wednesday, September 6 at 7:00 p.m. Watch for a letter about this class.

**Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh Grade:** Mark your calendar for Sunday, September 24, at 6:30 p.m. for confirmand, parent, mentor reception. Students and mentors—please continue your relationship building activities! Confirmation Day on Reformation Sunday, October 29 will be here soon!

## Sunday School: Fall 2017 Rally Sunday, September 17, 9:30 a.m.

We are getting ready to kick-off another year of Education ministry at First Lutheran Church. Parents and children ages 3 through grade 12 will gather in Stoltz Hall for an opening and introduction to Sunday School on Sunday, September 17. We will review and introduce Sunday School leaders and Education Ministry Team members. There will be a special treat for all!

Regular Sunday School sessions will begin on Sunday, September 24 at 9:30 a.m.

Education Ministry Team members and volunteers are 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 any Education team member or the church office 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 – 12<sup>th</sup> grade: Watch your mailbox for a mailing on Education and 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.flclittlefalls.org](http://www.flclittlefalls.org). Forms should be returned to First Lutheran as soon as possible. See the mailing for more details!



## "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, or Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30-11:30 a.m.
- ☺ *Jesus' Gems*—for four and five year olds, meeting Monday and Wednesday, or Tuesday and Thursday, 8:30-11:30 a.m.
- ☺ *Jesus' Gems*—for four and five year olds, meeting Monday and Wednesday, or Tuesday and Thursday, 12:30-3:00 p.m.
- ☺ *Jesus' Gems*—for four and five year olds, meeting Monday and Wednesday, or Tuesday and Thursday, 11:30-3:00 p.m. – This class is intended to create an all-day class.
- ☺ *Friday Friends*—for 33 months to PreK, this additional class creates a three-day week.
- ☺ Class offerings are based on enrollment numbers. 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](http://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 the teaching staff, Jessica Gustafson and Chrissi Gesme.

Upcoming dates for preschool families or those interested:

- ☞ Green Fair Folk Festival, Wednesday, August 2, 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. Children can adopt a Stuffed 'Pet' or bring your own stuffed 'Pet' for needed repairs and TLC.
- ☞ Preschool Open House, Monday, August 30, 5:30-7:00 p.m. Open House is for anyone interested in visiting or registering.
- ☞ Parent Orientation, Wednesday, September 6, 7:00 p.m. at the church. Parents only please, there is much information to cover!
- ☞ Arts and Crafts Fair Booth, Saturday-Sunday, September 9-10 (Broadway and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street). Volunteers welcome!
- ☞ Classes begin for students, Monday-Tuesday, September 11-12, class sessions on these days are 1½ hours with a parent/guardian attending.

Thank you to all who support "Children First" in any way, 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) 632-6667  
[childrenfirst@flclittlefalls.org](mailto:childrenfirst@flclittlefalls.org)



## VBS Mission Project

We are supporting “Operation Backpack” once again. We are collecting 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. Local schools are also in need of headphones which they prefer to purchase in bulk. Monetary donations will be used for this purpose. Donations of supplies may be brought to the collection box in the gathering space.



## Vacation Bible School “Maker Fun Factory” Created by God—Built for a Purpose! August 7-11

Vacation Bible School is here!! Youth and adults will explore the Bible and learn along with Ian Victor that: God made you, is for you, is always with you, will always love you and God made you for a reason...*Wow, God!* We will start the day at *Sound Wave Sing and Play*, then kids will have fun with *Game Makers*, enjoy a movie at *KidVid Cinema*, have a *Bible Discovery*, make a project at the *Imagination Station*, and have a snack at the *Snack Factory*. Everyone is welcome to come and wrap up the day at 11:30 a.m. at *Funshop Finale!*

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, 2016) through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. You may pick up a registration form at church or you can find the form on the church web-site, [www.flclittlefalls.org](http://www.flclittlefalls.org). Registration is free; you are encouraged to register your child even if they may not attend every day.

Thank you to all who participate and those who volunteer their time, energy, provide supplies, assist with setup/teardown, pray for this week, or help out with the week in any way.

For more information about Vacation Bible School contact the church office.

### Watch for it: “Fix Our Eyes”

**See You at the Pole  
Wednesday, September 27, 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.

### 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. If you can assist with taking cans to be recycled, please contact the church office. Keep saving those aluminum cans! Thanks!

## News of the Family



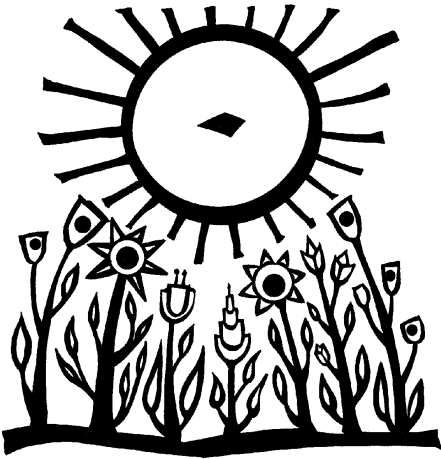
Naomi Hazel Engel died on July 1. Her memorial service was held at First Lutheran on July 15. May God grant peace and comfort to her family and friends.



Crystal Snyder and Nate Peterschick were united in marriage on July 29. God's blessings on their life together.



Items for the **September NEWSLETTER** are due on **August 21, 2017!**



## Worship Schedule

Sunday Worship at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.

Worship at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. continues throughout the year. Stay after the 8:30 a.m. service, or come early for the 10:30 service, for coffee (leaded and unleaded!), treats and fellowship in the Gathering Space. Everyone is welcome!