

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

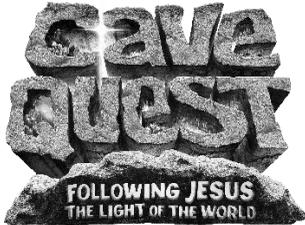
Jake Dyrhaug, Pastor



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

July 2016, Newsletter

June 28, 2016



Vacation Bible School
Cave Quest
“Following Jesus the Light of the World”
August 1-5, 2016
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Grab your flashlight, put on your headlamp and backpack because Vacation Bible School is coming!!

Youth and adults will explore the Bible and learn along with Clark Cavern, the bumbling spelunker, that: Jesus gives us hope, Jesus gives us courage, Jesus gives us direction, Jesus gives us love, and Jesus gives us his power...so *Follow Him!* We will start the day at the *Sing and Play Rock*, then kids will have fun with *Spelunker Sports and Games*, enjoy a movie at *KidVid Cinema*, have a *Deep Bible Quest*, make a project at the *Imagination Station*, and have a snack at the *Cavern Café*. Everyone is welcome to come and wrap up the day at *the Cave Quest Closing!*

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, 2015) 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.

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!

For more information about Vacation Bible School contact Jay Kiel at 616-581-4425. Come and Follow Him!

**Pastor Jake's
Article
see page 2**

**125th
Anniversary
see page 3**

**Mission News
see pages 5-6**

**Should you
attend worship?
see page 7**

**Youth News
see page 9**

High atop the United States Capital dome in Washington D.C. stands the statue of the stately “Freedom Lady”, almost 20 feet high. Her face is framed by a crest of stars, and a shield of stars and stripes is in her hands. She wears an eagle-feathered headdress with Greek and Roman clothing, integrating European and Native American imagery. She weighs 15,000 pounds, and her crest rises 288 feet above the eastern plaza of the Capitol. Thomas Crawford, the artist, was commissioned to design the statue in 1855 from his studio in Rome. In the spring of 1858, the sculpted Freedom Lady was brought from Rome during a fierce storm, and the captain ordered some cargo thrown overboard. The sailors, working quickly to lighten the vessel, wanted to include the heavy statue, but the captain refused, shouting above the wind, “No! Never! We’ll flounder before we throw ‘Freedom’ away!”

In July, the month in which we celebrate Independence Day in our country, we remember just how central this is. Whatever the heated debate on immigration today, people still come, and it’s freedom they seek. However a few mentally ill or extremist “bad apples” act out with violence, I seriously hope we can rise above fear and keep lifting up freedom.

With more refugees in the world right now than there have ever been since World War II, I was reminded of how precious this freedom is as I once sat down with a former teacher from Laos, who shared with me how very glad he is to be here, how important his family and friends take their own example of citizenship so that others will have continued opportunity to immigrate and find relief from the daily threat of war and discrimination. He and much of his family have become Christians, as he follows the One who said, “...you will know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” *John 8:32*

One year while attending an event at Augsburg College, originally established by Norwegian Lutherans in downtown Minneapolis, I had a sense of being right there in the true melting pot of every nationality under the sun living all in close

proximity. And the thought struck me, as it has for others, I bet—if we can show the world in a place like Minnesota in this day and age how to get along with every background imaginable living right next door to each other, that truly is a beacon of light to the world. It’s a kind of freedom to complement well the “Freedom Lady” at the top of the U.S. Capitol—with freedom of religion, freedom of speech and all the other blessings with which we are so blessed.

A little refugee boy from abroad once found his new home in America. One day his father took him by a store downtown, gave him \$10, and told him to go buy anything he wished. Picture this little guy as he walked down the aisles looking at the candy and gum, then all the toys and many things he had never seen before. His dad continued waiting outside wondering what he would choose. And before too long the boy came out of the door, just beaming—in his hand he proudly held an American flag, the symbol of his newly-found home.

The world continues to come to America to seek freedom. And in America we are still free to live and free to spread the message of Jesus Christ. Let’s do that!

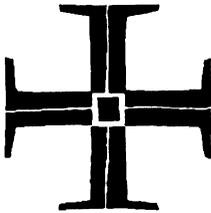
In Christ,

Pastor Jake Dyrhaug



Council Highlights

- Approved the recommendation from Education Ministry Team following the resignation of Jay Kiel, to begin a search for a Youth and Family Minister.
- Approved advertising for Child Care Attendant position.
- Farewell send-off reception for Jay and Stephanie Kiel and Raelynn is planned for Sunday, August 7.
- Approved revised continuing resolution for Emergency Needs – Charitable Giving to People in Need.



Financial Update

Thank you to all who faithfully contribute to our shared ministry at First Lutheran Church!

Summer finds many of us traveling and vacationing. Mission and ministry continue here at First Lutheran. We appreciate your mail-in offerings when you are unable to be in worship.

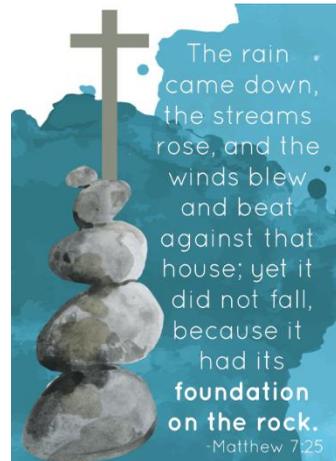
Watch your mailbox for your giving statement for the first six months of 2016. Please review your statement for accuracy and contact Sue or Gloria in the church office should you have questions.

You are welcome to participate in an electronic funds transfer giving plan, Simply Giving. Simply Giving® allows you to automate your giving. This benefits First Lutheran by ensuring regular giving throughout the year and benefits the giver with ease of use. First Lutheran covers the nominal fee per transaction. Thank you to the new enrollees! Please see Sue or Gloria in the church office to enroll.

125th Anniversary of First Lutheran Church

This year we mark 125 years of ministry and mission at First Lutheran Church. You are one of many who have gathered with this community of faith over the years, to receive and share the love of Christ, and we invite you to gather on this special occasion to mark this time in the life of the church. You are a part of this history!

A celebration will take place the weekend of September 24 and 25, 2016. The theme verse where we find our solid foundation is Matthew 7:25:



We Gather to:

- Honor the Past
- Celebrate the Present
- Discover God's Future

A 'family reunion' is planned for Saturday, September 24, at 7:00 p.m. There will be entertainment, dessert and refreshments, and a nod and good humor about the congregation's Norwegian heritage.

Celebration worship is planned for Sunday, September 25 at both 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. services.

Mark your calendars now and plan to celebrate this special time in the history and ministry of First Lutheran Church!

Book Club

All adult readers are welcome to read with this group. The selection for July is Rosemary-The Hidden Kennedy Daughter by Kate Clifford Larson. Readers, please secure your own copy of the book. The group will meet in the church library on Tuesday, July 26, at 7:00 p.m. to share and discuss the month's book. The August selection is The Wednesday Sisters by. For more information, contact Tifanii Dahl, 632-8207.

Center for Changing Lives Duluth

Lutheran Social Services held a groundbreaking for the Center for Changing Lives in Duluth on May 5. First Lutheran supported this project to assist youth experiencing homelessness in northeast Minnesota. The 27,000 square foot facility will house a variety of services under one roof to help youth to prepare for their future with confidence. NEMN Synod Bishop Tom Aitken, Duluth Indiginous Commission chair, Babette Sandman, and Red Lake Nation tribal elder Pat St. Germain gave a blessing of the land and its original stewards, the Ojibwe nation.

Thrivent Choice Program Bonus Offer

Thrivent Choice® is offering a \$20 Choice bonus for members who direct Thrivent Choice dollars between June 1 and July 31. Eligible Thrivent members can direct dollars at www.thrivent.com or call 800-847-4836. First Lutheran and "Children First" Christian Preschool are both registered to receive Choice dollars. Let's take advantage of this great opportunity! For more information, contact Thrivent rep Carlyle Olsen, 632-1655.

Welcoming others...

The first time you walked in the door at First Lutheran Church, did someone welcome you?

Did you receive a handshake and a "Good morning"? Did you enjoy a cup of coffee or a treat? Did someone give you information about worship, or help you find a seat? Did your children find a safe and welcoming place to play? Did you hear God's Good News spoken in a living way? Did you receive the Lord's Supper along with the rest of the community?

If the answer to any of these questions is "Yes," you are encouraged to pass that welcome on – by welcoming others to worship. And if the answer to any of these questions is "No," then it is *even more important* that you help to welcome others in Jesus' name.

What can you do? Through the signup system, *every worshiper at First* has the chance to greet, usher, read Scripture, set up coffee/refreshments, set up or serve Communion, or provide volunteer child care. By serving in an area where you are gifted, you can help every worshiper to feel welcome. And scheduling is easy – because you sign up for one Sunday at a time, you can be sure that you are available for the specific dates you will serve.

Signup sheets for the coming month are always posted on a table in the Gathering Space, and you are encouraged to sign up at any time. If you're not able to come to church to sign up, you may call the church office (632-6667) to volunteer. If you need more information or training, please mention it when you sign up and you will be contacted.

Thank you for the welcome you provide to others in the name of Christ.

Library Corner

Summer is a great time to read! There are several new additions to the library. Come and check out a book or video for learning and enjoyment. We appreciate your return of items when you have finished them. Thanks!

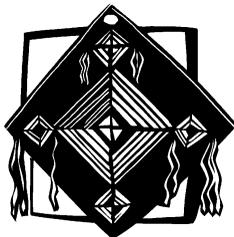
**Is your passion or your hobby quilting, running or golf?
Here are some ways to enjoy your pastime and benefit others at the same time:**

**Luther Crest Bible Camp
Quilts for Camp Extravaganza
held at Carlos Creek Winery
Saturday, October 22**

Once again Luther Crest is partnering 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 4:30 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!

**Camp Knutson
30th Annual Quilt Auction
11148 Manhattan Pt. Blvd, Crosslake
Saturday, August 13**

Quilt lovers—Unique quilts from throughout Minnesota including a quilt from the First's quilters will be auctioned to benefit children with heart disease, Down syndrome, severe skin diseases, autism, and HIV or AIDS. Quilt viewing and silent auction begins at 9:30 a.m. the live auction begins at 12 noon. The auction is sponsored by Lutheran Social Service and the LSS Paul Bunyan Regional Auxiliary.



**Luther Crest Bible Camp
Night Owl Glow Trail Run
Thursday, July 21 at Luther Crest**

Bring your family and friends and come to camp for this new fundraiser event! You can come at 7:30 for the weekly musical and stay for the run. Registration begins at 9:00 p.m. for the 5K or just for fun run. Registration is \$25.00 per person (discounts for 3 or more runners) and will support camper scholarships. There will be prizes and awards and the run will end with a bonfire, s'mores and music. Register online at www.luthercrest.org. For more information, call Jody Johnson at camp at 320-846-2431 or email Jody at jodyj@luthercrest.org.



**The Fifteenth Annual Golf Scramble
To benefit the ministry at
Luther Crest Bible Camp
Monday, August 8**

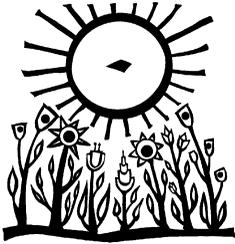
Why not get a foursome together and spend a fun day playing this "Best Ball" tournament on the course at Lake Miltona Golf Course, Alexandria. Registration begins at 10:00 a.m.; "shotgun start" tee time is at noon. Supper will be served at Lake Miltona at 5:00 p.m. The fee of \$100.00 per person covers 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, or register online at www.luthercrest.org.

Mission News

Morrison County Relay for Life 2016

Relay for Life is Friday, July 8, at Morrison County Fairgrounds. This annual event supports the American Cancer Society. Proceeds benefit cancer patients in the area. The event begins at 5:30 p.m. at the fairgrounds. Pastor Jake will share the opening prayer. Teams will walk until 3:00 a.m. You can support this event with your donations or purchase and decorate a luminary bag in honor or in memory of a loved one. First member Doug Rakow is co-chair of this event. Thanks, Doug!



Morrison County Food Shelf

Your contributions and food donations to the Morrison County Food Shelf are encouraged and needed year round. You can bring your non-perishable food items to church or to the Food Shelf, please do not contribute items that are past the 'use by' date.

Don't forget the Food Shelf when you have excess produce from your garden. Please make arrangements directly with the Food Shelf for these items. The Food Shelf is located near Bethel Lutheran Church at 912 First Avenue SW, Little Falls. Food Shelf hours are Tuesday and Wednesday, 10:00 a.m. to noon, Thursday 6:00-8:00 p.m. For more information call 632-8304.



Oasis/Share A Meal Community Paint A Thon Saturday, August 6

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.

Luther Crest Bible Camp

Mission Builder Volunteers

You are invited to work alongside ELCA Mission Builders to assist with construction of new cabins at Luther Crest. Work on the first cabin is progressing, some interior work and clean up remains. Work is beginning on cabin 2. Work projects include: insulating interior walls, sheetrock installation in bathrooms, rough-sawn pine walls, exterior siding, soffits and fascia. Construction is ongoing Tuesdays-Saturdays from 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Bring small tools, tool belt, tape measure and your excitement, skill, and desire to learn. Lunch and snacks are provided. Call Dave or Troy at 320-846-2431 for more information or to let them know you are coming. Thank you!

“How Can I Keep From Singing!”

This beautiful hymn has become one of my favorites. I’d never heard it until Pastor Steve Cook introduced it to our congregation when he was our pastor in the 1990’s. The hymn dates back to the 1800’s but there are many theories as to its origin. Some say it was written by Robert Lowry, as it appeared in a collection of his in 1869. Fast forward to 1956 when Pete Seeger, famous folk singer, discovered it and added it to his repertoire. The song was published in a folk music magazine by Seeger and Woodie Guthrie. No matter what I read, the history was interesting, yet confusing.

Nonetheless, it celebrates the joy of living, yet acknowledges the pain. The title of the hymn is not a question; it is both an explanation and an exclamation! One blogger commented, “This song celebrates the joy inherent in existing, even as it acknowledges the pain. The words are flexible enough to mean different things in different times. ‘When tyrants tremble, sick with fear’ brings to mind both literal tyrants, as well as the tyranny of [illness].”

My life flows on in endless song
above earth’s lamentation.
I hear the clear, though far off hymn
that hails a new creation.
No storm can shake my inmost calm
while to that Rock I’m clinging.
Since love is Lord of heaven and earth,
how can I keep from singing?”

When tyrants tremble in their fear
and hear their death knell ringing,
When friends rejoice both far and near,
how can I keep from singing?
The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,
a fountain ever springing:
All things are mine since I am His.
How can I keep from singing?

“Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands: sing
forth the honor of His name: make His praise
glorious.”
Psalm 66:1-2

Worship may help us live longer

Attending religious services may lower the risk for premature death according to a new study. Researchers used data from a long-term study of 75,534 women participating in Nurses’ Health Study. Over 16 years through 2012, their health and lifestyles were tracked, including attendance at religious services. The findings are reported in JAMA Internal Medicine on May 16, 2016.

After controlling for more than two dozen factors, researchers found that compared with those who had never gone to services, attendance more than once a week was associated with a 33 percent lower risk for death from any cause, once a week with a 26 percent lower risk, and less than once a week with a 13 percent lower risk.

Most of the women in the study were Protestant or Catholic. It is unclear whether a similar association would be found between attending religious services and longevity for people of other faiths.

The researchers statistically eliminated the possibility of reverse causation—that is, that healthy people went to services more often than unhealthy ones.

But no matter how they analyzed the data, the effect of attendance alone seemed to have benefits.

Senior author of the study, Tyler VanderWeele, professor of epidemiology at Harvard Chan School of Public Health states “Our results suggest that there may be something important about religious service attendance beyond solitary spirituality. Part of the benefit seems to be that attendance increases social support, discourages smoking, decreases depression, and helps people develop a more optimistic or hopeful outlook on life. This suggests that there is something powerful about the communal religious experience.”

Vacation Bible School

Mission Project

Each year as a part of VBS week, the youth, adults and congregations are invited to participate in an outreach mission project. This year we will once again collect items for 'Operation Backpack.' Donations of backpacks (new or gently used), school supplies, or money for supplies are welcome and encouraged. In prior years we have given 100+ filled backpacks to nine area schools for distribution to children in need. The summer months are a good time to purchase school supplies at reasonable prices. Your contributions to this project are appreciated. You can bring donations to the church office at any time. Thank you!



Welcoming the Stranger

I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me. *Matthew 25:35*

Who is the refugee? Someone who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail him/herself of the protection of that country.

51% of refugees are children below the age of 18.

Where are they from? Refugees by top three countries of origin by mid-2015:

Syria – 4.2 million

Afghanistan – 2.6 million

Somalia – 1.1 million

How can you welcome a stranger?

From: Church Health Reader/winter 2016



Green Fair Folk Festival at St. Francis Convent

Wednesday, August 3, 4:00-8:00 p.m.

This outdoor event sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls is a free family-friendly event that promotes a healthy and sustainable lifestyle. The evening will include exhibitors featuring organic foods, renewable energy, green building, recycled/green art, fashion, eco-gifts and earth friendly products plus music, food, activities for kids, and much more. The 2015 festival included over 60 exhibitors and more than 900 attendees. First Lutheran will again have a space at the fair— A few people (young and old) will make balloon animals—they're always a big hit! "Children First" preschool will sponsor a Stuffed Animal Clinic and Adoption Center. Bike or walk to the fair if you can and 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. For more information, check the web at www.fslf.org/pages/GreenFair.

Coborn's Cookout Fundraiser

Wednesday, July 20

10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Stop by Coborn's Cookout stand for a bite to eat on Wednesday, July 20, from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. This is a fundraiser for youth ministry programs at First Lutheran. We receive 50% of the proceeds from the cookout. Thanks, Coborn's! Sign up to work a shift on the youth table in the gathering space or contact Jay Kiel at 616-581-4425. Thank you for your support.

“Children First” Christian Preschool

Preschool enrollment continues for the 2016-2017 school year. There are limited openings available in all classes Please consider registering your child early. Registration forms are available in the gathering space at church or on the church website. A \$60.00 registration/activity fee is required at the time of registration. For more information, you may call Gail or the church office at 632-6667.

Watch for “Children First” at the Green Fair Folk Festival, at St. Francis Campus grounds on Wednesday, August 3, 4:00-8:00 p.m. “Children First” will host a Stuffed Animal Clinic and Adoption Center. You can bring a stuffed animal friend that may need repair or require a new bow or accessory. Or you can adopt a stuffed animal friend to take home or give to someone special in need. If you have a new or gently used stuffed animal that you would like to donate for the Green Fair booth, please bring to First Lutheran Church office before August 1. Thank you!

Enjoy the Summer and God’s Blessings!

Yours in Christ’s Service,
Gail Hittesdorf, Director

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!

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 mail this month 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, will be 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 .

Youth Ministry Confirmation Ministries

Third Grade: Watch for a letter about third grade confirmation. Youth entering third grade will receive a Bible in worship on Sunday, August 28. Students and parents will have only one class session, tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, August 24 at 7:00 p.m. Students and parents will learn about their Bibles and learn about sharing family devotions in September.

Sixth Grade: During the week of Vacation Bible School (August 1-5), youth entering seventh grade in the fall will be studying the Lord’s Prayer. Watch for a letter containing more info about this class.



News of the Family



Thomas Lee Chandler, Jr., son of Heidi Sassen and Tom Chandler, was baptized on June 19.

Hadley Jean Stromberg, daughter of Tom and Angie Stromberg, was baptized on June 26.

Welcome to the family of God!



Curtis E. Madsen died on May 31. His funeral service was held June 3 at Brenny Funeral Chapel, Baxter.

Adeline M. Stockman died on June 8. Her funeral service was held on June 13 at First Lutheran.



Summer Worship Schedule

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

Summer Worship at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. continues through July and August. Stay after the 8:30 a.m. service, or come early for the 10:30 service, for coffee (leaded and unleaded!), beverages, 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?

Items for the **August NEWSLETTER** are due on **July 20, 2016!**