



**“Servants of All”**

June 2012, Newsletter

June 12, 2012

**Reaching Out in Mission**

Looking for a way to put your faith into action? Have some free time this summer? Here are some opportunities to consider:

- 🌍 Volunteer to paint a home with the Paint A Thon on Saturday, August 4. *See page 7.*
- 🌍 Deliver Meals on Wheels during the week of June 18-22. *Call the church office to volunteer.*
- 🌍 Volunteer or give a gift in support of outdoor ministry at Luther Crest Bible Camp.
- 🌍 Walk or support a walker in the Relay for Life, a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society, on Friday, July 13 at Flyer Field.
- 🌍 Give a donation to Food for Kidz, ELCA World Hunger, or Morrison County Food Shelf. People are hungry year-round.
- 🌍 Bring a friend and come to share fellowship over a nutritious meal at Share A Meal, served each Thursday at 6:00 p.m. at First Lutheran. First Lutheran will prepare and serve a meal in August.
- 🌍 Support one of the many ELCA missions with a financial gift or the gift of your time. *Contact the church office.*
- 🌍 Share your gifts with kids at VBS, August 6-10, 9:00 a.m. to noon.
- 🌍 Volunteer to assist with food distribution for Ruby’s Pantry. *See article on page 7.*
- 🌍 Visit with or read to a resident at a care center or a shut-in.
- 🌍 Knit or crochet a prayer shawl for someone who can use a comforting hug.
- 🌍 Save your aluminum cans for recycling. Save the earth!
- 🌍 Visit with Pastor Tony about being a *Caring Companion*.
- 🌍 Provide prayer or financial support to First Lutheran youth participating in summer trips or camps: middle school youth at ServeCamp, or high school youth traveling to New Orleans, or youth attending a Bible Camp.

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**Thank you** for all the ways that you show the love of Christ in our community and world!

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:... *Ecclesiastes 3:1*

Summertime—the sunshine, the time at the lake, the time with family, the time for vacations and family reunions—isn't it great that God has given us such a wonderful time as this!

As disciples and followers of Jesus Christ during this summer season and all year long, don't forget to thank God for the gift of life and time with one another. Remember that one of the Marks of Discipleship is regular worship.

As a part of your vacation planning, you may want to explore options and plan to visit another congregation when you are away from home. You can locate an ELCA congregation on the web at [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org), click on 'find a congregation,' you can search by city, state, zip code and congregation name. Or you may want to visit another denomination or faith community; these

can be great learning opportunities for adults and children alike.

When you visit another congregation, please bring me a bulletin—no, not so that I can check up on you, but to learn from you and from other congregations. I don't have a chance to visit them too often as I am kind of busy on Sunday mornings! ☺

Enjoy your time!  
Blessings and see you in church!

Pastor Dave Sperstad  
[dsperstad@flelittlefalls.org](mailto:dsperstad@flelittlefalls.org)



### Report from Northeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly

The Northeastern Minnesota ELCA Synod Assembly was held April 27-29, 2012. First Lutheran Church voting members included Pastor David Sperstad, Craig Ahlin, Ted Pfohl, and Mary Pfohl. As in earlier assemblies, the framework was contained within our Marks of Discipleship.

For the first time, the Synod Assembly was held in the Grand Rapids area with assembly proceedings held at Zion Lutheran Church. This afforded assembly attendees to participate in the opening and closing worship in the beauty of Zion's sanctuary. Joint worship helped to center us on God's wondrous grace and work in our lives.

The Assembly proceedings focused on the work of our Northeastern Minnesota church body. Members are strongly encouraged to visit the NE MN Synod webpage [www.nemnsynod.org/](http://www.nemnsynod.org/) and go to the *Post Assembly News Release* for a synopsis of the meeting. Printed copies are also available at church. In reviewing the news release, it may seem that some of the work is mundane; however much of the work is critical to the Synod's ongoing

service, discipleship, call, and mission as God's people. We heard about the work being completed throughout our synod, accepted the Synod's Mission Plan, acknowledged those who have served in our Synod, wrestled with proposed resolutions, elected leaders to guide and assist the Synod in its work, learned more about the Marks of Discipleship, and explored the depth of God and His mercy as we dwelt in the Word.

Outside of the Synod Assembly meeting times we experienced fellowship and could bid on quilts and other items. Proceeds from this sale benefit ELCA World Hunger.

First Lutheran Church stewards and friends are encouraged to contact Craig, Ted, or Mary with any questions related to the Synod Assembly activities or actions.

## Giving from the Heart

Each should give what they have decided in their heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. *2 Corinthians 9:7*

Jesus taught that how we handle our money is an indicator of our hearts, and Paul taught that we should give cheerfully and sacrificially in response to the love of God. Outreach, service to others and sharing what we have been given are central themes of the Bible and of First Lutheran.

On Pentecost Sunday, May 27, we receive an offering for mortgage principal reduction. Your gifts are welcome; envelopes are available on the greeters' table for this cause. Please write "Celebration Offering" in the memo line of your check. **Thank you for your faithful giving!**

You are welcome to participate in an electronic funds transfer giving plan, Simply Giving ®. Simply Giving is a program sponsored by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans which allows you to automate your giving. This benefits First by ensuring regular giving throughout the year and benefits the giver by saving time and knowing that your giving continues on a regular basis. There is no fee to the giver for using this program.

You can also visit the First Lutheran website at [www.flclittlefalls.org](http://www.flclittlefalls.org) and make a one-time or a regularly deducted contribution to First Lutheran. Online giving is recorded with your envelope number just as all other giving and will appear on your year-end statement. If you do not have an envelope number and would like envelopes, please ask in the church office.

For more information about automated giving or to enroll in Simply Giving ® please see Sue or Gloria in the church office.

Thank you for your continued support and loyalty to Christ's mission at First Lutheran Church, together we are a part of something God-ly!



### Council Highlights

- ✚ Thank you to all who came with work gloves, rakes, shovels and wheelbarrows to clean up the church grounds and wash windows. The grounds look great!
- ✚ Thank you to all who supported the recent youth fundraisers in any way!
- ✚ Heard that First Lutheran steward/member, Ted Pfohl was elected to the NE MN Synod council as the lay member from Heartland Conference.
- ✚ Appointed Carl Rydeen as a member of the Pastor Parish Relations team.
- ✚ Updated the Child Care Attendant ministry description and approved hiring Stephanie Kiel for this position.
- ✚ Heard that the Praise Team 'Jam Session' held at Camp Onomia was a successful event.

### Pastor Parish Relations Committee

Members of the congregation are selected by the leadership team of First Lutheran to serve on the Pastor Parish Relations Committee. This committee serves the congregation and the pastors as a 'sounding board,' and has a communications role between the congregation and its pastors. Members are: Merlin Bruns, Tifanii Dahl, Stephanie Doty, Ted Pfohl, and Carl Rydeen. If you have feedback about our ministry together, please contact one of the committee members.

### Cornerstones Potluck (Seniors age 55 and better) Tuesday, June 19

Come and enjoy a good meal and fellowship, bring a friend and a food item to share and come for potluck lunch on Tuesday, June 19, at 11:30 a.m. We gather in Stoltz Hall for food, conversation and fun.

Via de Cristo originated as Cursillo in the 1940's in Spain. Cursillo (kur-see-yo) is a Spanish word for "short course" and had its start in the Roman Catholic Church. This powerful movement spread quickly and has been adopted by many different denominations around the world today and is known by different names.

The Lutheran adaptation of the Cursillo ministry is called Via de Cristo, a Spanish term meaning "way of Christ." Via de Cristo is a lay ministry program that does not seek to change the doctrines of the church, but rather to create a community of individuals who are inspired, challenged, and equipped to live Christian lives in their homes and communities, and to renew the whole life of the church through THEIR faith in Jesus Christ. Via de Cristo is based on the fundamentals of Christianity, concentrating on the person and teachings of Jesus Christ, and has as its goal to bring those attending a Via de Cristo weekend to a new awareness of living in God's grace.

Via de Cristo is intended for people from every walk of life. It's for church leaders and lay people who live active lives for Christ, for those who seek a personal relationship with Christ, and for those

who seek to be renewed and strengthened in their relationship with Christ and people around them. Via de Cristo is open to married couples as well as single men and women.

First Lutheran has a small community of Via de Cristo members which invites you to prayerfully consider attending a three day Via de Cristo weekend to be held in Staples. The Men's weekend will be July 19-22 and the women's weekend will be July 26-29. All weekends begin Thursday evening and go through Sunday afternoon. Talk to any of the members of our local VDC community to get further information about a Via de Cristo weekend, or log on to the Minnesota via de Cristo website at [www.mnviadecristo.org](http://www.mnviadecristo.org).

Via de Cristo members from First Lutheran are: Dennis and Sheryl Bengtson, Jeff Bigalke, Merlin Bruns, Larry and Naomi Engel, Ty and Jennifer Gangelhoff, Mary Larson, Claudette Moran, David and Susan Sperstad, Ray and Barb Stumpf, and Althea Tenold.



**Ride a Bike to Church Day  
Sunday, June 3**

This will be a Day for the Heart – think of all the benefits: exercise for your physical and spiritual muscles, care for the planet, and worship for the heart of a Christian! Bring a friend and don't forget your helmet!

**Intercessory Prayer**

Prayer is the greatest gift we can give! We are all called to intercede (pray) for others and for ourselves. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, our prayers will be heard and people will be blessed. Each Monday morning at 7:30 a.m. prayers are offered in the First Lutheran Church Prayer Chapel. All are welcome to come as you are able and lift up prayer concerns. May the Holy Spirit lead you to a blessed start to each week. For more information, contact Sheri Bengtson, 632-9335, or Naomi Engel, 632-3167.



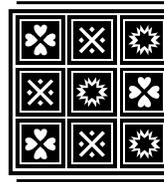
### Adult Ministry Travel Opportunities with Luther Quest

Luther Crest Bible Camp offers opportunities for adult travel. All the arrangements are made, you pack your suitcase and enjoy the trip and the company of others. For more information about the trips contact Paul Hanson at Luther Crest at 320-846-2431. Upcoming events are:

- Holden Village: August 16-28, 2012  
Travel by comfortable motor coach and enjoy the Medora Musical, Yellowstone National Park, and Coeur d'Alene on the way to Holden Village in the Cascade Mountains of Washington. While at Holden your days will be filled with worship, Bible study, weaving, pottery, mountain hiking and fellowship.
- Mighty Mississippi – Fall Foliage and Wine Tasting Adventure: October 1-5, 2012  
We will travel along the river from Red Wing to Winona and enjoy stops at many attractions and wineries. A visit to Lanesboro and the Spam Museum in Austin are also planned.
- The Reformation: September/October 2013  
Planning for a group trip to Germany is underway for fall of 2013. This will likely be a 12 day trip to see and hear the stories of Martin Luther. Contact Luther Crest for more information.

### VBS – SKY Kickoff Party Monday, June 11, 7:00 p.m.

All who are planning to volunteer during VBS week or who want to know more, are invited to this kick-off party. You'll hear an introduction to the SKY – Everything is Possible with God curriculum, hear and share ideas for decorating, food, crafts, and more. Not sure where you fit in to the week. Come and find your place in the Son! Need more information, contact Gail Hittesdorf in the church office. Everything is possible with God!



### Luther Crest Bible Camp 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Quilt Auction Saturday, July 7

Held in the *Air-conditioned Gymnasium*

☞ 10:00-12:30 p.m. – Quilt Review and  
Silent Auction

☞ 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. – Lunch served

☞ 12:30 p.m. – Auction Begins

Over 100 quilts of all sizes will be sold at the auction, including two made by First's quilters. There will be something for everyone, with prices ranging from \$50 on up. Many hands have worked very hard to sew the quilts. Proceeds bring affordability to camp and provides dollars for camp scholarships. Let's support the Bible Camp at this event!

### 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Scramble to benefit the ministry at Luther Crest Bible Camp Monday, August 13

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. Picnic supper will be served at Lake Miltona at 5:00 p.m. The fee of \$75.00 per golfer covers green fees, cart rental, and meal. Supper is available for spouses or other guests at \$10.00. 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.

**Thanks \* Thanks \* Thanks!**

**Lutheran Care Center**

**Thank you** to all who helped to make the spring sale at the care center a great success. Whether you donated baked goods, craft items, quilts, silent auction baskets, or plants, or came and shopped at the sale, it is all appreciated. All proceeds go to support the needs of the residents. Thanks again! Donna Hegstrom, and Jean Petersen, First Lutheran Church Representatives, Lutheran Care Center Volunteer Board.

**LSS Rummage Sale**

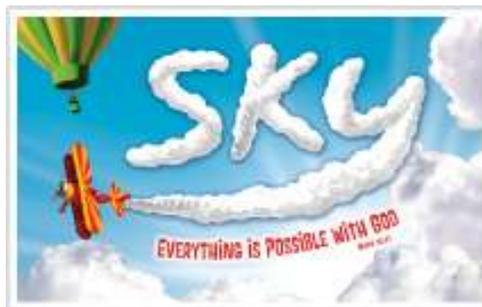
First Lutheran and Bethel Lutheran hosted another successful rummage sale! Sale proceeds were over \$1,500. The proceeds will be donated to Lutheran Social Service group homes in Little Falls. Thanks to all who donated items, worked or helped in any way. Start saving now for the next sale in October 2012! Thank you! Karen Haaland

**NE MN Synod Hunger Team**

You quilters amaze us! Every year your generosity and creativity transform our Synod Assembly. You inspire us with your dedication and commitment to World Hunger! Because of your endeavors we raised \$13,000.00 for World Hunger. Many thanks from your Synod leaders and the Hunger Team. Gratefully, Northeast Minnesota Hunger Team

**World Malaria Day**

This April, the ELCA challenged members to turn World Malaria Day into “World Malaria Week” and raise **\$200,000** between April 25 and May 1 to launch work in Liberia – where malaria accounts for 30 percent of all deaths seen in hospitals. **As of May 18, more than \$172,000 in donations have been counted.** It can take up to a month to count checks from individuals and congregations. We will keep you updated on the total. Thank you for your prayers, your partnership and your gifts in support of the malaria campaign.



**Vacation Bible School**

**August 6-10**

**Sky!**

**Everything is Possible with God!**

**Mark 10:27**

Youth and adults will explore the Bible and learn that: No matter who you are, how you feel, what people do, what happens, or where you are...trust God! Vacation Bible School is Monday, August 6 through Friday, August 10, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. VBS is for youth age 3 (by September 1, 2011) through fifth grade. Kids will have fun with *All Star Games*, enjoy a movie at *Chadder's Sky High Movie and Missions*, have a *Wild Blue Bible Adventure*, make a project at the *Imagination Station* and have a snack at the *Skydive Diner*. Registration is underway. Pick up a form at church, or download it from First's website, [www.flclittlefalls.org](http://www.flclittlefalls.org). Early registration makes planning easier. VBS is a collaboration of First Lutheran and First United congregations.

Flash Skyrunner wants you to know that seventh grade through adult volunteer participation is encouraged. You can find the sign-up board in the Gathering Space to be part of the flight crew. You can sign up to become a station leader, flight crew leader, preschool leader or a helper. Please prayerfully consider how you can share your time and talents during this fun week.

For more information, call Gail Hittesdorf, 632-2218, or the church office.



## Mission Opportunities



### What Should I Save?

There are many ways that you can be involved in mission right from your own home. We can all be good stewards of the earth and help others at the same time by saving a variety of things. Here is a list of ways that you can help. If you know of other projects, you may contact the church office with this information for future publication.

- Coborn's Food Club coupon points (given with your cash register receipt); Coborn's Videos for Learning stickers; UPC codes from Campbells, Pepperidge Farm, Swanson, Prego; V8 labels; Pace lids; inkjet cartridges, laser/toner cartridges, old cell phones, old laptop computers—"Children First" Christian Preschool receives cash or teaching materials from these items. Drop off in the Gathering Space on the wood cupboard.
- Cotton fabric (large enough for 7 inch squares) for the First Lutheran quilters. Bring to the church office.
- Cancelled stamps for Sons of Norway. Give to Marlene Williams.
- Aluminum cans for the First Lutheran youth program. You can leave bags of cans by the church garage. Please close bags securely.
- Recycle—at home and at church. Your assistance with recycling is appreciated. We can recycle office paper, newspaper, glass, plastic, cans, cardboard, and more. Thank you!

Re-use: save those items that you no longer need or use and donate them—the fall LSS Rummage Sale, a cooperative event of Bethel and First Lutheran is one place to donate. Your donation provides funds for Lutheran Social Service.

### Ruby's Pantry Food Distribution Coming to Little Falls in June

Oasis Central Minnesota is arranging for Ruby's Pantry Food Distribution to come to Little Falls. Ruby's Pantry is a community outreach of Home and Away Ministries a non-profit organization that provides surplus food to anyone interested, there is no income qualification. Recipients are asked to bring their own box and a cash donation of \$15.00. Food will be distributed at Bethel Lutheran Church, 901 Broadway Ave. West on the fourth Monday of each month from 4:30-6:00 p.m.

For more information or to volunteer to assist with food distribution, call Oasis Central Minnesota, at 632-9140.



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

The Paint-A-Thon committee is recruiting teams to paint a home in Morrison County on August 6. Over the past 14 years, over 138 homeowners have benefited from this program. It takes 10-12 people, 4-5 hours each, to make a big difference in someone's life!

First Lutheran will again sponsor a painting team. Jerome Haaland will coordinate this year's team. Thanks, Jerome! Can you spend a Saturday helping to paint a home for a local resident? This is a BYOB (Bring Your Own Brush!) event. Contact the church office to sign up. Thank you for making a difference in the community we share!

## Children's Education News



### “Children First” Christian Preschool Update

Greetings from “Children First” Christian Preschool,

“Children First” says goodbye to preschoolers going to Kindergarten in the fall and welcome to all children registered for the 2012-2013 Preschool year! We enjoy seeing the growth and changes in the children under our care and entrust them to their future in God’s hands. Planning for the fall is underway.

Preschool enrollment for the 2012/2013 school year continues throughout the summer. This fall “Children First” offers two classes for children ages 4 year-old-PreKindergarten and two class times for children age 33 months-3 years. We again offer the “Friday Friends” class to provide a three day a week experience for preschoolers. Registration forms are available in the gathering space at First Lutheran or on the website at [www.flclittlefalls.org](http://www.flclittlefalls.org). A \$50.00 non-refundable registration/activity fee is required at the time of registration. Please contact the church office or Gail if you have any questions or wish to view the classroom.

If you or someone you know has a little person of preschool age, consider enrolling them in this quality, Christian early childhood program.

*Watch for “Children First” over the summer at:*

Little Falls Dam Festival Parade – Saturday, June 16

Coborn’s Brat Stand – Friday-Saturday, July 27-28

The Green Day Folk Festival at St. Francis Campus – Wednesday, August 1

Little Falls Arts and Craft Fair – Saturday-Sunday, September 8-9

If you can assist with any of these activities, please call Gail.

This has been a fun and event filled year. God has blessed “Children First” with wonderful children, caring families, many volunteers and financial contributors, an awesome staff and advisory team as well as great friends. We have watched our Preschoolers grow in God’s love and learning. We are looking forward to next fall as we see returning faces and are rewarded with many new faces.

Have a great summer and God’s Blessings to all!

Yours in Christ’s Service,

Gail Hittesdorf, Director

### Confirmation Ministry

**Sixth Grade:** Looking ahead – Class on Prayer during VBS week, August 6-10. Watch your mailbox in June for a letter with more details.

**Tenth Grade:** Summer will fly by quickly, remember to keep working on mentor activities!



### Preschool Summer Day Camp

First Lutheran Church is offering two sessions of preschool summer camp for 3, 4, and 5-year-olds who have not yet experienced Kindergarten.

Session 1: Monday-Friday, July 16-20  
3-year-olds

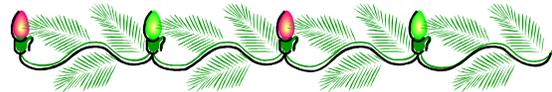
Session 2: Monday-Friday, July 23-27  
4-5-year-olds

Sessions will meet from 9:00-11:30 a.m. at First Lutheran. Children will read, sing, dance, play music and games, do arts and crafts and have outdoor fun. Children will experience the love of Jesus through Bible stories and songs. Your child will enhance their social, emotional, physical and educational skills in preparation for preschool and kindergarten. Cost is \$25.00 per week. Registration forms are available at church or on the church website at [www.flclittlefalls.org](http://www.flclittlefalls.org). For more information, contact Gail Hittesdorf, at 632-2218, or the church office.

### Sunday School News

Sunday School is taking a summer break. Planning is in the works for an exciting 2012/13 Sunday School year. If you or someone you know would like to be part of planning/organizing/leading a team of children and youth or a rotation station, please contact the church office or any of these members of the Commission for Education: Beth Cooper, Tifanii Dahl, Gail Hittesdorf, Tracy Moe, Amber Sobiech, or Annalee VanDenheuvel.

Thank you to all who shared their faith and developed relationships with children and youth over the past year. Thank you to those who committed to the full year of Sunday School ministry, they are: Tonie Dickmann, Jessica Gustafson, Les Hittesdorf, Jay Kiel, Stephanie Kiel, Curt Madsen, Sue Sperstad, Beth Storkamp, Simon Storkamp, Tanna Stucky, Annalee VanDenheuvel, and Carol Stumpf-Witucki. Special thanks to Beth and Simon Storkamp for your leadership and organizational gifts this year. The God-given gifts of all are greatly appreciated!



### Advent Craft Sale and Luncheon Saturday, December 1

We know it's barely summer, but the time will fly so now's the time to work on items for the Craft Sale – so be creative! Be sure you have this date on your calendar. If you or someone you know is interested in assisting with this annual event, please contact the church office.

## News of the Family



Lilly Elizabeth Saari, daughter of Kaley Johnson and Matt Saari, was baptized on May 13.



Maari Hanson and Jason Soules were united in marriage on May 12.

May God's blessings shine on these members of the family of God.

### Reminder:

Benefit for Robert 'JR' Samler is Saturday, June 2, 4:00-7:00 p.m. at Randall VFW. JR is the brother of First member, Robine Mayer and has faced complications from psoriatic arthritis. He is recuperating at a facility in Blaine. The Samler family appreciates your prayers and concern. Donations may be sent to JR Samler Benefit, c/o Randall State Bank, Randall MN 56475.



**Congratulations! On June 1 First Lutheran celebrates 23 years of being smoke-free.**

Items for the **July NEWSLETTER** are due on **June 20, 2012!**