



“Servants of All”

June 2013, Newsletter

June 10, 2013

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 3. *See page 5.*
- 🌍 Deliver Meals on Wheels during the week of July 8-13. *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 19 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 5-9, 9:00 a.m. to noon.
- 🌍 Volunteer to assist with food distribution for Ruby’s Pantry. *See article on page 5.*
- 🌍 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 (and other items!) for recycling. Save the earth!
- 🌍 Provide prayer or financial support to First Lutheran youth participating in summer trips or camps: high school youth traveling to Grand Rapids, Michigan, or youth attending a Bible Camp.

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

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Report from Northeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly

The Northeastern Minnesota ELCA Synod Assembly was held May 3-5, 2013. First Lutheran Church voting members included Pastor David Sperstad, Craig Ahlin, Les Hittesdorf and Ruth Jeremiason-Jensen.

The Synod Assembly was held in the Grand Rapids area with assembly proceedings held at Zion Lutheran Church. The 335 voting members and several visitors enjoyed a weekend of spiritual renewal, theological education, and missional work.

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/ 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 supported several projects, that included: \$1,815 raised thru a 5K Run/Walk for the Camps, \$27,838 for World Hunger from quilt auction, marketplace and quarter gathering, and \$8,342 from offerings to support synod seminarians.

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

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.



Council Highlights

- ✚ Thank you to all who were present in body or spirit for celebration worship on Sunday, May 5, the 50th anniversary to the day of worship in the sanctuary. It was a joyous day!
- ✚ Heard updates and prayed for Pastor David Sperstad as he departs on sabbatical May 15.
- ✚ Discussed the part-time associate pastor position.
- ✚ Rejoiced over increase in worship attendance.

Worship Space Enhancement Project

Renovation work in the sanctuary began on Monday, May 6. We appreciate the many volunteer helpers who worked to remove pews, woodwork, and to empty the sanctuary and gathering space of all items so that the contractors could proceed. Many changes have already taken place: the new closet is in place, upgrades to allow for a smoother work-flow in the kitchen are nearly complete, the existing sanctuary floor has been carefully removed, new walls are under construction at the front of the nave, new windows are installed. A great variety of expertise and skill is needed to accomplish a project of this scope. Please share your appreciation for the work of the contractors when you see them.

Worship continues each Sunday at 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. in Stoltz Hall. Although this temporary worship space is not what we're used to, we have received many favorable comments about the space. If you are able to assist with setup for worship, takedown following worship, or minor cleanup prior to Sundays, please let the church office know.

Thank you for your continued patience, and attention to safety issues as work proceeds. We look forward to the beautiful finished space!



Advent Craft Sale and Luncheon Saturday, December 7

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.

Building on Blessings Campaign Report

On Sunday, May 5, Over 300 people were present in worship to celebrate 50 years to the day of praising God in the sanctuary. What a joyous day it was! As a part of celebration worship we made commitments to the "Building on Blessings" campaign of financial support for the worship space enhancement project. To date 116 pledges for a total of \$294,643 have been received for this project. This is wonderful affirmation of the mission and ministry God has called us to do and is a good start toward the goal of \$500,000. We ask all stewards of First Lutheran to be a part of this effort. One-time gifts given during the construction period will reduce the amount of mortgage required. All gifts are appreciated! If you have not yet made a pledge, you may request a card from the church office. Giving to Building on Blessings begins now. Please note your gift on your offering envelope or in the memo line of your check. Thank you for your gracious and generous support of God's mission in this place! **You** are a blessing!

Library News

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a Lutheran pastor and theologian in Germany. In 1933, he became a leading spokesman for the resistance movement against the Nazi regime. He was arrested in 1943 after being linked to a failed attempt on Hitler's life. He was sent to Buchenwald and then Schonberg prison. On April 9, 1945, Bonhoeffer was hanged. At a worship service in prison, the day before his death he said, "this is the end, but for me the beginning of life."

New books written by Bonhoeffer and a biography are available in the library. They are: Life Together, The Cost of Discipleship, and Letters and Papers from Prison, all by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy, by Eric Metaxas. Check them out to learn about this brave, faithful man.

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 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.

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 2

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.



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 church office.
- 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 or the church office.

Ruby's Pantry Food Distribution

Oasis Central Minnesota continues to bring Ruby's Pantry Food Distribution 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 is 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.

- Aluminum cans for the First Lutheran youth program. You can leave bags of cans by the church garage. Please close bags securely.
- Building materials, new and used, and other items may be donated to the Habitat for Humanity ReStore. The ReStore generally accepts: building materials, furniture, cabinets, appliances, plumbing, electrical and much more! If you have an item to donate call the ReStore to see if it's something they can accept at 218-828-8517.
- 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 or spring LSS Rummage Sales, a cooperative event of Bethel and First Lutheran is one place to donate. Your donation provides funds for Lutheran Social Service homes in the area.



Annual Community Paint-A-Thon

Oasis/Share A Meal Saturday, August 3

The Paint-A-Thon committee is recruiting teams to paint a home in Morrison County on August 3. Over the past 15 years, over 145 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!

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 the most ever: \$3,900. 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 2013! 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 \$12,310.00 for World Hunger. Many thanks from your Synod leaders and the Hunger Team. Gratefully, Northeast Minnesota Hunger Team

World Malaria Day You Did It!

Wow! Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of ELCA members, gifts totaling more than \$300,000 have been received for the ELCA Malaria Campaign to expand work in Uganda. An additional \$130,000 were received in matching funds! Because of these gifts, the ELCA will partner with the Lutheran World Federation and the people of Uganda to offer education, treatment, mosquito nets and more. Because of your gifts – lives will be saved. Thank you for your prayers, your partnership and your gifts in support of the malaria campaign.



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 15-19
3-year-olds

Session 2: Monday-Friday, July 22-26
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.flittlefalls.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 2013/14 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. 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. You are a blessing! The God-given gifts of all are greatly appreciated!

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:

- Discover North Dakota – Wednesday-Friday, July 24-26, Travel by coach bus and enjoy Lewis and Clark riverboat, Medora musical, Theodore Roosevelt National Park and much more.
- Minneapolis Get-Away – Wednesday-Thursday, August 28-29. A tour of the Swedish Museum, the production of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat at the Chanhassen dinner theater and watch the MN Twins take on the Kansas City Royals.
- Mighty Mississippi – Fall Foliage and Wine Tasting Adventure: Monday-Friday, September 30-October 4. 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.
- Christmas in Branson – Tuesday-Sunday, December 3-8. The holiday will come alive as the group enjoys stage shows, holiday displays and music, food and fellowship. The event ends with the Concordia College Choir Christmas Concert.



Confirmation Ministry

Sixth Grade: Looking ahead – Class on Prayer during VBS week, August 5-9. 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!

Luther Crest Bible Camp Quilts for Camp Extravaganza held at Carlos Creek Winery Saturday, October 19

New this year! 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!

12th Annual Golf Scramble to benefit the ministry at Luther Crest Bible Camp Monday, June 24 at Alexandria Golf Club and Monday, August 12 at Miltona Golf Club

Why not get a foursome together and spend a fun day playing this "Best Ball" tournament on the course. Registration begins at 10:00 a.m.; "shotgun start" tee time is at noon. Supper will be served at 5:00 p.m. You can play one scramble for \$100 per golfer or both for \$175 per golfer. The fee per golfer 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

Vacation Bible School
August 5-9
Kingdom Rock – Where Kids Stand Strong for God



Youth and adults will explore the Bible and learn that: God's love helps us stand strong; Family and friends help us stand strong; Prayer helps us stand strong; trusting God helps us stand strong; the Bible helps us stand strong. Vacation Bible School is Monday, August 5 through Friday, August 9, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. VBS is for youth age 3 (by September 1, 2012) through fifth grade. Kids will have fun with *Tournament Games*, enjoy a movie at *Chadder's Royal Theater and Missions*, have a *Epic Bible Adventure*, make a project at the *Imagination Station* and have a snack at the *King's Kitchen*. Registration is underway. Pick up a form at church, or download it from First's website, www.flclittlefalls.org. Early registration makes planning easier. VBS is a collaboration of First Lutheran and First United congregations.

Sir Wally wants you to know that seventh grade through adult volunteer participation is encouraged. You can find the signup board in the Gathering Space to be part of the kingdom crew. You can signup to become a station leader, 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, Michele Miller, 630-1722, or the church office.

**VBS – 'Kingdom Rock' Kickoff Party
Monday, June 3, 6:30 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 Kingdom Rock 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!

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 2013-2014 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 2013/2014 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. A \$60.00 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 15, 11:00 a.m.

The Green Day Folk Festival at St. Francis Campus – Wednesday, August 7

Little Falls Arts and Craft Fair – Saturday-Sunday, September 7-8

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

News of the Family



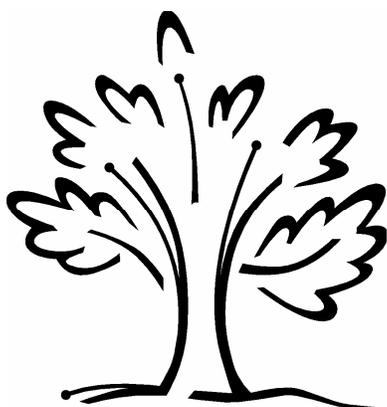
Callie Lillian Gangelhoff, daughter of Tyler and Jennifer Gangelhoff, was baptized on April 28.

Brooke Sophia Georges, daughter of Amber Hansen and Joshua Georges, was baptized on April 28.

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



Lee Liebel died on May 18. Memorial service for Lee was held on May 25. May God grant peace and comfort to his family and friends.



Congratulations! On June 1 First Lutheran celebrates 24 years of being smoke-free.

Items for the **July NEWSLETTER** are due on **June 20, 2013!**