

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Ministers: All God's People at FLC

Hank French, Pastor

FIRST



“Servants of All”

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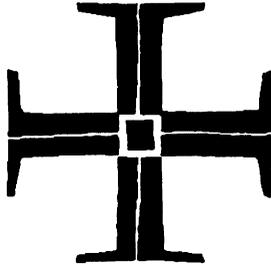
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March 2016, Newsletter

February 25, 2016

Special Congregational Meeting Sunday, February 28 11:30 a.m.



Voting Members of First Lutheran Church are notified of a special congregational meeting on Sunday, February 28 following 10:30 a.m. service of worship. The agenda items are:

1. Approval of the unanimous recommendation by our Call Committee, Staff Ministry Team, and church council to call Reverend Charles ‘Jake’ Dyrhaug to serve as Pastor of First Lutheran Church; and
2. Approval of the compensation package of Pastor Dyrhaug

The vote to extend a call to Pastor Dyrhaug requires a 2/3 majority vote of those present and voting to pass. If the vote to extend a call is passed, we will vote on the compensation package. The compensation package must be approved by a simple majority vote of those present and voting.

All voting members of First Lutheran are encouraged to attend. Please pray for the leading of God's Spirit as we vote on new pastoral leadership for this community of faith.

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Notes from Pastor Hank

As I write this, we are two days past the “Meet and Greet” with Pastor Jake and his wife, Stefani, and we are five days away from the congregational special meeting in which we will vote on whether to extend a call to Pastor Jake to provide pastoral leadership at First Lutheran. This is an important moment in the history of our congregation.

The Call Committee has done its work well; the Church Council has done its work well; and now the members of First Lutheran have the opportunity to consider and vote on extending a call to Pastor Jake. I encourage everyone who can to attend the meeting which will be held in the sanctuary at 11:30 a.m. (immediately following 10:30 a.m. worship) on February 28. We are a community of faith, a community of the faithful—we need to take these important steps together. See you Sunday!

2016 General Fund Stewardship Campaign

First Lutheran Church is a good church doing lots of good things. And all of those good things depend upon you—the good people of First Lutheran and your generosity in supporting what we do. As a community of faith, *we have no source of income to support our ministry and mission other than the gifts of our members and friends.*

It is that time of the year when you are asked to give generously so that First Lutheran can continue doing all that it does to:

- Provide worship that strengthens faith and connects us to God
- Provide a place for developing lasting relationships that enrich lives
- Ensure that our children grow in faith and learn the values that lead to a good life
- Provide Christian learning opportunities for people of all ages
- Accompany folks through life’s many changes such as:
 - ✓ Births, baptisms, and confirmation of faith
 - ✓ Weddings
 - ✓ Critical illness or injury
 - ✓ Times of tragedy and suffering
 - ✓ Times of loss and grief
 - ✓ The senior years
 - ✓ Times of joy and celebration

- Give help and hope to the poor, the hungry, the homeless
- Witness to the light of Christ in Morrison County

A lot of pastors don’t like asking the members and friends of their congregation for money. I am not that kind of pastor. I love the church and all the good that it does and I know that your giving makes it possible—and so I am honored to be able to ask for your financial support. First Lutheran will always be there for all of us as long as we are always there for each other—in our giving and in our serving.

During March and April, I will be asking you to give in support of First Lutheran—to begin giving if you are not now giving and to increase your giving if you are. We have a lot to do and it all depends on all of us.

Within a few weeks you will all receive a commitment card on which you can indicate how much you expect to be able to give to keep the doors open, the lights on, the copier running and the ministries humming at First Lutheran. Thank you in advance for helping to make it all happen.

Peace and every blessing to you all,

Pastor Hank



New Members

If you or someone you know would like to become a member of First Lutheran, we are preparing for the next new member group. We have set aside a time for the group to meet; we ask that you attend this session. The group will meet on Sunday evening; March 20 at 7:00 p.m. New members will be received in worship on Sunday, April 3. First's council and ministry team members host a fellowship reception between worship services.

The group session is meant to help new members to find their place in the mission of the congregation, get to know others in the congregation, and discuss the foundations of the faith we share. Current members are encouraged to attend and make a new friend.

If God is calling you to membership at First Lutheran, this session is for you. For more information, or to sign up for the group, please call the church office at 632-6667.

Council Highlights

- Welcomed new council members: Dave Buker, Katie Riitters, Sue Salvog and Marlene Williams each serving a three-year term; and Doug Dahlberg and Les Hittesdorf, each serving a one-year term.
- Council members read and signed the 2016 Group Covenant.
- Approved the proposed compensation package for Rev. Jake Dyrhaug, candidate of choice for First Lutheran Church.
- Called for a Special Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 28, following the 10:30 a.m. service for the purpose of voting to extend a letter of call to Rev. Charles 'Jake' Dyrhaug, and to approve a compensation package for Rev. Dyrhaug.
- Approved the designation of proceeds from Lenten Soup Suppers to Habitat for Humanity of Morrison County and Oasis Central Minnesota.

First Lutheran Church 125th Anniversary Celebration

Plans are underway for this milestone anniversary of the congregation. Please save the date of September 25, 2016 as we plan to observe this anniversary in a special way. The planning group welcomes your ideas and assistance, if you would like to be involved, the next planning meeting is Wednesday, March 2, at 5:45 p.m. (during Lenten soup supper). If you or someone you know would like to share their story of faith within the congregation, that would be most welcome. For more information, contact Debra Yliniemi-Ahlin at 320-360-4845.

World Day of Prayer

Friday, March 4, 2:00 p.m.

"Receive children. Receive me."

This year, First United Church, 1000 SE 1st Street, Little Falls hosts the World Day of Prayer service in Little Falls on Friday, March 4 at 2:00 p.m. All men and women in the community are welcome.

This year's service is prepared by the women of Cuba and based on Mark 10:13-16.

World Day of Prayer is a worldwide ecumenical movement of Christian women from many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year on the first Friday in March. World Day of Prayer services begin at sunrise in the Pacific and follow the sun across the globe on this day of celebration. Bring a friend or two and come for worship. For more information, contact the church office.



Eco-Palms for Palm Sunday Worship March 20

One small way that First Lutheran practices stewardship is through the purchase of Eco-Palms. Traditional harvesting of palms in Mexico and Guatemala has contributed to destruction of the forest and harm to the indigenous communities. Eco-Palms are harvested in a way that preserves the trees and also gives the workers a fair wage. May God bless the hands that do this work.

Easter Flowers

Share in the Spirit of Easter by sharing your Easter flowers (for example: lilies, tulips, etc.) with your First Lutheran family. The flowers may be given in remembrance of a loved one or in celebration of a special event or person. Flowers may be dropped off in the Library on Holy Saturday. Please label your flowers. If you would like a remembrance noted in the bulletin regarding your flowers, please call the church office by Monday, March 21.



Easter Breakfast

Come and enjoy the fellowship of Easter Breakfast on Sunday, March 27, from 8:30-10:00 a.m. A free-will offering will be received. We are serving a hot breakfast of pancakes, sausage, eggs, fruit, muffins, juice, milk and coffee. Thanks for your support! Thank you to the Youth Ministry Team for coordinating this year's breakfast. For more information or to offer your assistance, contact Jay Kiel, in the church office.

Lent 2016

For this year's mid-week worship services, through Wednesday, March 16, we gather for soup and worship using Holden Evening Prayer. Come between 5:30-6:45 p.m. to share fellowship over a simple bowl of soup and slice of bread, worship is at 7:00 p.m. Thank you to all who have already volunteered to provide soup or help with serving and cleanup. If you would like to lend a hand, please see the weekly board in the gathering space or contact Gail Hittesdorf, 320-291-4698, Wendy Valentine, 320-232-9649, or the church office.

Who is My Neighbor? Opportunity Baskets of Promise for Lutheran World Relief

This Lent we will participate in Lutheran World Relief's Baskets of Promise appeal. Each week, we'll collect a different item that we will use to assemble Personal Care Kits that give people around the world tools to stay healthy in life's most challenging situations. In 2015 we assembled 100+ Personal Care Kits during Lent. Let's increase that number this year! Here is the collection schedule:

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| February 14 | Bars of soap, 4-5 ounce,
any brand in original wrapping |
| February 21 | Bath towels, lightweight,
52"X27" max, dark color is best |
| February 28 | Toothbrushes, adult size, in
original packaging |
| March 6 | Combs |
| March 13 | Nail clippers, metal,
attached file optional |
| March 20 | Bars of soap, as above |

When you are at church you will see the contributions growing in the basket in the gathering space. Lutheran World Relief will distribute the assembled kits to people around the world who lack even the most basic needs. Thank you for providing a means to preserve dignity and give hope to others.

Adult Opportunities:

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. Come when you can, leave when you must!

Adult Bible Study Thursdays at 11:30 a.m.

Bring a friend and your Bible and come for spirit-filled discussion around the lectionary texts for the coming Sunday. This is a good opportunity for in-depth conversation and learning about the assigned texts and an added dimension to weekly worship. Pastor Hank leads this study at 11:30 a.m. We meet for about an hour. See you there!

Women's Bible Study "God's Story, Your Story" Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m.

We continue this six-session video study by author Max Lucado who gives you fresh perspective on how your daily life relates to God's grand story. The evening study meets at 5:30 p.m. in order to conclude in time for Lenten worship at 7:00 p.m. There is room for you!



Martha Circle

The Martha Circle will meet Monday, March 14, at 9:30 a.m. at the church. Hostess is Tulla Enerson.

Book Club

All adult readers are welcome to read with this group. The March selection is The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot. Readers, please secure your own copy of the book. The group meets on Tuesday, March 22 at 7:00 p.m. in the church library to discuss the book.



Volunteer Opportunities

First Lutheran is blessed with many young families and children—a gift from God! We are thankful for the presence of children and seek to provide a place of nurture, safety and caring for people of all ages and especially the little ones among us.

Our custodial and housekeeping staff do an excellent job of keeping the facility clean for the many activities that take place here. In addition to this, we would like to gather a small group of families or individuals who are willing to assist with maintaining the child care room and the contents of the room. If several folks are willing, a rotation could be setup for this purpose. If you can share a small amount of time to help with this please contact the church office or Parish Nurse Tracy Moe, 749-2310.

One of the ways we show hospitality to families is by providing activity bags for children to use during worship services. You will see the colorful bags hanging at the entrance to the worship space. Many families desire to attend worship as a family and the activity bags help to keep a young child's attention. As the bags are very well-used, some are showing wear. If you or someone you know could assist with sewing new bags and/or with maintaining the bags it would be appreciated. For more information about this project, please contact the church office.

Forest Found Faith at Lindbergh State Park

**Saturday, March 5
12:00 noon-3:00 p.m.**

The Health Ministry Team invites all ages to a fun afternoon at Lindbergh State Park. Bring your cross-country skis, sleds, snowshoes, and/or hiking boots, and a food item to share for potluck lunch. We will have access to the log cabin—there are picnic tables and electric hookups and a warm fire to stay cozy after fun and activity outdoors in the beauty of the park. For more information, contact Scott Sobiech, 616-9626 or Tracy Moe, 749-2310.



Worship and Music written by Paula Monahan

I have often wondered over the past months just what you, the reader, thinks about these articles, since they've all been on hymns of the past. Selfishly, I guess, I love the stories behind these old hymns. They live in my "sacred memory," taught to me by my Grandma Lindeman, my parents and my church. I hope that even if you aren't familiar with them, the words of the hymns will touch your heart like they do mine.

"It was Sunday morning at Monument Street Methodist Church in Baltimore. Rev. George Schrick was droning on in a lengthy prayer while, up in the choir loft, Elvina Hall's mind was wandering, she thumbed quietly through the hymnbook, then began doodling on the flyleaf. By and by, these words came to her, which she scribbled on the front flap of her hymnal:

I hear my Savior say,
'Thy strength indeed is small,
Thou hast naught My debt to pay,
Find in Me thy all in all.'

You, 'nothing good have I,
whereby Thy grace to claim,
I'll wash my garments white
in the blood of Calvary's Lamb.'

When from my dying bed,

my ransomed soul shall rise,
Jesus paid it all,
Shall rend the vaulted skies."

Elvina's poem fell into the hands of John T. Grape, a coal merchant and the church organist at her church. As it happened, the church was being renovated, and the small organ had been taken to Grape's house for safekeeping. There he composed the music to "Jesus Paid It All." Over the years, Elvina's words have been edited and altered, but it's great theme of redemption has remained untouched.

"Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

"Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption."
Hebrews 9:12

Adapted from "Then Sings My Soul" by Robert J. Morgan



March is Food Share Month

“Make us worthy, Lord, to serve those throughout the world who live and die in poverty or hunger. Give them, through our hands, this day their daily bread; and by our understanding love, give peace and joy. Amen.”
Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Hunger Facts:

- ✦ One in 10 Minnesotans or more than 500,000 state residents, experience food insecurity on a regular basis.
- ✦ More than 49 million Americans, including more than 16 million children, live in households that do not have consistent access to nutritious food. That is the equivalent of the populations of California and Ohio going hungry.
- ✦ In 2011, 900,000 veterans (not including homeless vets) relied on the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) to provide food for their families.
- ✦ Of the families with children suffering from food insecurity and hunger in the US in 2012, 68 percent contained at least one adult working full-time, 10 percent had at least one adult working part-time, 7 percent had an unemployed adult actively looking for work, and 7 percent were headed by an adult with a disability.
- ✦ There were more than 3 million visits to Minnesota food shelves in 2014.
- ✦ In 2014, 11% of all Minnesotans and almost 15% of Minnesota kids lived below the poverty level.
- ✦ During the 2013 Legislative session, a group of Minnesota lawmakers challenged one

another to try to eat for a week on the average SNAP budget of \$1.29 per meal. Not one of them could do it.

- ✦ Morrison County Food Shelf serves an average of 1160 individuals or 406 families each month.
- ✦ Morrison County Food Shelf hours are Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, 10:00-12:00 noon, and Thursdays, 6:00-8:00 p.m. The Food Shelf is located at 912 1st Ave SW.

Minnesota FoodShare is a program of the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches founded in 1982. This interfaith organization provides education and advocacy about hunger issues in Minnesota and coordinates the largest food drive in the state each March.

“Incentive allocation” funds received from Minnesota FoodShare are based on the amount raised locally. Food shelves receive a percentage of money from what is donated to Minnesota FoodShare during March. Your generosity at this time increases the buying power of dollars contributed. You may drop off food donations at First Lutheran Church, or Coborn’s. Your financial gift may be given through First Lutheran, please write “Food Shelf” on the memo line of your check. For more information about the Morrison County Food Shelf, call 632-8304.

“...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me”
Matthew 25:35

"Children First" Christian Preschool Update

Greetings from "Children First,"

It is already March and yes, Spring is right around the corner. February themes included: Dinosaurs, Valentines and Friends, America, and "I Love to Read." Check out Preschool artwork and excitement in the Education wing hallways. March themes include: Opposites, Weather, Jungle and Holy Week and Easter.

You may want to 'like' us on Facebook© — Children First Christian Preschool! We use Facebook as another opportunity to share and grow together as a Preschool family.

Preschoolers visit Bridgeway Estates on Monday, March 7 and St. Otto's Care Center on Thursday, March 10, both at 10:00 a.m. The children look forward to these visits so please remind your friends there of our upcoming field trips.

Registration for the 2016/17 Preschool year begins Sunday, March 13 for current preschool families and First Lutheran Church members. A \$60.00 non-refundable registration fee along with the yellow registration form is required to hold your place. You can find links to registration forms at the church website www.flclittlefalls.org on the preschool page or in the gathering space at church.

Class offerings are:

"Jesus' Gems" (4 year olds-PreKindergarten) meets mornings on either Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday.

"Noah's Animals" (33 months-3 year olds) meets mornings on either Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday.

"Friday Friends" (33 months-5 year olds) meets Friday morning. Children must be enrolled in one of the other classes to participate in the "Friday Friends." This provides families with a three-day per week preschool experience.

Monthly tuition is \$85.00 per month with additional \$35.00 per month for the "Friday

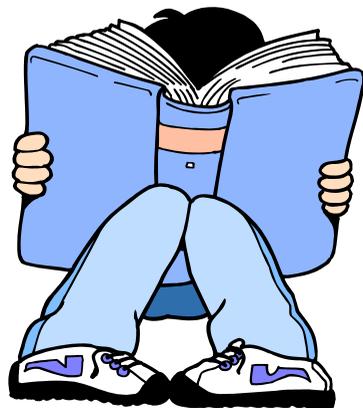
Friends" class. Registration forms will be available on Sunday, March 13, in the First Lutheran Church gathering space. Registration opens to the community on Friday, April 1.

"Children First" is ready to partner with families to build and strengthen academic, physical, social, emotional and spiritual growth of children. Drop-in classroom visits are always welcomed. Planned visits are appreciated in order to include your child in projects and activities.

Registration or visit questions may be directed to Gail Hittesdorf, Director, at 632-6667 or by email at childrenfirst@flclittlefalls.org.

Thank you to Tri-City Paving, First Lutheran Church members and friends, and preschool families for your generous donations to the Gifting Campaign. We appreciate all who share their time to volunteer both in and out of the classroom, your time is a wonderful gift! Thank you for your continued prayers for the continued success of the preschool education ministry. Thank you for the many ways you continue to support the preschool!

Gail Hittesdorf, Director



Confirmation Ministries

Second Grade: one session on Holy Communion, “The Welcome Table” is Sunday, March 6 from 3:00-5:00 p.m. This class is for second graders and their parents. Students who wish to receive communion as a class can plan to do this at Maundy Thursday worship on March 24 at 7:00 p.m. Letters have been mailed to students. If you do not receive a letter, please call.

Tenth Grade: Mark your calendars for Means of Grace session on Wednesday, April 13. Students and mentors will gather for this final class and share Holy Communion together. Students and mentors are encouraged to continue their mentor activities.

Vacation Bible School 2016

It’s time to begin planning for VBS! This year we will experience “Cave Quest—Following Jesus the Light of the World” Please give prayerful consideration to your call to this ministry opportunity. Many adult hands are necessary to have a fun-filled week of caring, sharing, and personal spiritual growth. To learn more, contact Jay in the church office.

Sunday School News

Preschool Sunday School (Ages 3-PreK) continues to meet in the Moses room (south ed wing) from 9:35-10:20 a.m. each Sunday. Thank you to all who assist with this class, you are appreciated!

TREK Rotation (Kindergarten-5th Grade) Students began a new rotation “Symbols of Holy Week” on Sunday, February 21. For more information about TREK Rotation, contact Jay Kiel.

Youth in Grades 6 through 12 meet each Sunday in the youth room for food, lessons, and fun!

If you have questions or would like to volunteer, contact 632-6667.

Home Delivered Meals

First Lutheran participates with other congregations and organizations in Little Falls to deliver meals to homebound people each weekday. The rotation has First delivering meals about five weeks each year. Our next scheduled week is Monday-Friday, March 28-April 1. If you or someone you know can give an hour or so to deliver meals, please contact the church office. Thank you!

Thank you

Dear First Lutheran Friends of Habitat,
Thank you for your support of the Habitat Program. You are making a difference and we appreciate your donation of \$500.00 to Habitat for Humanity of Morrison County.
Angie Peterson, Board of Directors

Dear First Lutheran Church,
Thank you so much for your recent donation of \$500.00. Thank you for being an advocate with us in supporting victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse and general crime. You are truly making a difference in the lives of others!
Michelle Christopher, Finance Coordinator

**“Spring Ahead”
Daylight Savings Time
begins on SUNDAY, MARCH 13**

Daylight Savings Time begins earlier than in the past. Remember to set your clocks *ahead* one hour on Saturday evening, March 12 – then you’ll be on time for church on Sunday, March 13! ☺

First Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Little Falls, Minnesota 56345-4402

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Sunday Worship Schedule

- 8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship using a variety of liturgical settings
- 9:35 a.m. Sunday School Hour
- 10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship led by a Praise Band

Holy Communion is served at all services.

Come and See!



Holy Week Worship Schedule:

Palm Sunday, March 20, 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.

Maundy Thursday, March 24, 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday, March 25, 1:00 and 7:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday, March 27:

7:30 a.m. – Sunrise Holy Communion

8:30-10:00 a.m. – Easter Breakfast

10:30 a.m. – Festival Holy Communion

Items for the **April NEWSLETTER** are
due on **March 21, 2016!**