

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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May 2017, Newsletter

April 26, 2017

Consecration Celebration Sunday
Sunday, May 7

One service of worship at 10:00 a.m.

Our congregation's council has selected the *New Consecration Sunday Stewardship Program* as a way to teach the biblical and spiritual principles of generous giving in our stewardship education emphasis this year.

New Consecration Sunday is based on the biblical philosophy of the need of the giver to give for his or her own spiritual development, rather than on the need of the church to receive. Instead of treating people like members of a social club who should pay dues, we will treat people like followers of Jesus Christ who want to give unselfishly as an act of discipleship. *New Consecration Sunday* encourages people toward proportionate and systematic giving in response to the question, "What percentage of my income is God calling me to give?"

During morning worship on Consecration Sunday, we are asking our attendees and members to make their financial commitments to our church's missionary, benevolent, and educational ministries in this community and around the world.

Every attendee and member who completes an *Estimate of Giving Card* does so voluntarily by attending morning worship on Consecration Sunday. We urge people to attend who feel strongly opposed to completing a card. The procedure is done in such a way that no one feels personal embarrassment if he or she chooses not to fill out a card.

During morning worship our guest leader, Rev. Amy Odgren, will conduct a brief period of instruction and inspiration, climaxed by members making their commitments as a confidential act of worship. Thanks in advance for your enthusiastic participation in Consecration Sunday events!



Pastor Jake's Article
see *page 2*

Adult Opportunities
see *page 3*

Parish Nurse News
see *page 5*

Mission News
see *page 6*

"Children First"
Christian Preschool
see *page 8*

Congrats to our
Grads!
see *page 9*

Notes from Pastor Jake

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on a rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock.”
Matthew 7:24-25

I once found a saying about “house or home” which was thought-provoking...

“A **house** is built of logs and stones,
Of tiles and posts and tiers;
A **home** is built of loving deeds
That stand a thousand years.”

If you’ve ever seen a house being built, it is an exciting thing to watch, as it must have been to see First Lutheran’s house of worship being built in several stages throughout the years. When I was five years old, my parents decided to build a house, and it was fun to watch the foundation being laid, then the frame, then the walls and roof. In one city where we lived, they were building them by the hundreds at the edge of the suburbs. We’ve all seen homes being built somewhere from year to year, and it’s something to see the beams lifted into place and windows set and the finishing touches, all works of art in themselves, these houses. Some houses are just built yesterday, and some 150 years ago.

How many are homes? It’s one thing to have a place to live, but the kind of home “built of loving deeds that stand a thousand years”—how is that built? As someone said, “If your house is merely a place to eat and sleep, it ceases to be home.” What makes a house a home is love, whether it is a house of worship, or the house where you grow up, or grandma and grandpa’s house, or the cabin. Whereas in our day many houses have become merely filling stations where everyone just stops in, passes through and goes back to the grind, hopefully

many have become true homes. If you think about key historical figures who have had a major impact on the world, for good or ill, it’s quite certain that much of their character was shaped at home. The way one loves and cares for people under the same roof could be passed down for a thousand years. It’s been said that a home where Christ’s love is demonstrated gives a glimpse of earth’s best picture of heaven. Make your houses homes.

Consecration Sunday, May 7, “More than Bricks: Servants to All”

On Sunday, May 7 we will come together at First Lutheran’s house of worship for one service at 10:00 a.m. As part of the worship service we will each be invited to make commitments of giving for the coming year and to “take one step up” for Christ and his Church. No one is calling for pledges, and no one should feel pressured in any way, for we live in the freedom of the gospel. This is a way for us to support the ministry and amazing outreach of First Lutheran, where we are called to be “First... Servants of All”, and to all. After the worship service we are invited to a special Celebration Luncheon in Stoltz Hall.

Your Servant in Christ,

Pastor Jake Dyrhaug



50 DAYS FOR OUR DELIGHT FOR CHRIST IS RISEN AS ALL THINGS TELL . GOOD CHRISTIAN, SEE YE RISE AS WELL .



Council Highlights

- Heard that \$1,000 proceeds received at Lenten Soup Suppers will be shared with Flyer Pride Backpack Food Program and Oasis Central Minnesota.
- It's Coming, May 7, 2017!



Baskets of Promise for Lutheran World Relief

Care Kit Assembly: Sunday, May 14

During Lent we participated in Lutheran World Relief's Baskets of Promise appeal. We collected items to assemble Personal Care Kits that give people around the world tools to stay healthy in life's most challenging situations. We hope to assemble more than 60 Personal Care Kits. Here are the items for collection:

Bars of soap, 4-5 ounce, any brand in original wrapping; Bath towels, lightweight, 52"X27" max, dark color is best; Toothbrushes, adult size, in original packaging; Combs; Nail clippers, metal, attached file optional

You can still contribute items. We will assemble the kits on Sunday, May 14 during the Sunday School hour, beginning at 9:35 a.m. 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.

Adult Opportunities

May Martha Circle

The Martha Circle will meet Monday, May 8, at 9:30 a.m. at the church. Hostess is Tulla Enerson.



Adult Studies and Events

Men's Bible Study Breakfast

All are welcome to come for breakfast and Bible study! This month we will meet Wednesday, May 3 at 7:00 a.m. at the church. Then we meet Friday, May 19 at 7:00 a.m. at the Royal Café for breakfast. We will take a break over the summer months. Come when you can, leave when you must!

Book Discussion Group

All adult readers are welcome to read with this group. The May selection is The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah. Readers, please secure your own copy of the book. The group meets Tuesday, May 30 at 7:00 p.m. for discussion. For more info, contact Tifanii Dahl, at 632-8207.



Church Clean Up Monday, May 1

All are invited to the church at 4:30 p.m. (or earlier if you are able) to help with outdoor cleanup and window washing. We will do the windows in the church inside and out. This is a good service project for youth (and everyone!). Your hands to make our church home look its best are needed. Please contact Doug Anderson at 632-8112 or the church office at 632-6667 for more information.

2017 marks the 500th anniversary of what came to be known as the Protestant Reformation, a movement of immense importance in the reshaping of Western religious, political, economic and social life. October 31st, 1517, is commonly recognized as the beginning of the Reformation. On that day, Martin Luther—an Augustinian monk and professor of biblical theology—posted 95 Theses (points for debate) on the door of Wittenberg Cathedral, arguing against what he considered to be the Church’s corrupt and unbiblical practice of selling indulgences. His intention was not to start a new church, it was to reform the Church—a task that all churches should always be about.

An indulgence was a “purchased” promise that past, present and future sins would be forgiven and, therefore, purgatory could be avoided by oneself or by one’s loved ones who had died but on whose behalf an indulgence was purchased. As Johann Tetzel, a priest and seller of indulgences was often heard to say in his sales pitch, “As soon as a coin in the coffer rings, a soul from purgatory springs.”

Luther’s study of the Bible led him to believe that forgiveness of sins and salvation could not be sold by the church and bought by ordinary Christians. Rather, he insisted that forgiveness of sins and salvation were the gift of God’s grace received through faith and not by so-called works of righteousness (Ephesians 2:8). Indeed, two of the so-called “five pillars” of the Reformation were the insistence on “*grace alone*” and “*faith alone*.”

Luther argued that the *only* authority for Christian faith and life was the Bible—especially the revelation of the life and teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus—and not either Church tradition or the Church’s clerical hierarchy. Hence, two more of the “five pillars” of the Reformation were the insistence upon “*scripture alone*” and “*Christ alone*.” These four pillars of the Reformation lead directly to the fifth: *Glory to God alone*.

Because of Luther’s strong belief in the sole authority of scripture for Christian life and faith, he strongly believed that the Bible needed to be available to ordinary Christians so that it might actually function as the ground of their lives and faith. Ordinary Christians did not understand Latin and were, therefore, dependent upon the clergy for their knowledge of what the Bible taught. Luther believed this gave far too much power to the clergy over the laity and so he translated the Bible into vernacular German. It was one of his greatest gifts to the Church.

Another gift to the emerging Protestant Church was the doctrine of the “priesthood of all believers,” the belief that every Christian has *direct access* to God through scripture, prayer and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit *without* the mediation of the clergy or church institutions. Therefore, *every believer* has the God-given responsibility of sharing in the ministry of Christ by proclaiming the Gospel to others and by engaging in acts of love and service to others—a very Franciscan theme.

Luther insisted that true Christian faith is not just about believing; it is about how we live as well. Faith *and* love are the two poles of Christian life. In a decidedly Franciscan tone, he wrote:

“We conclude, therefore, that a Christian lives not in him or herself, but in Christ and in the neighbor. *We live in Christ through faith and in our neighbors through love*. By faith we are caught up beyond ourselves into God. By love we descend beneath ourselves into our neighbors.”

Good words to ponder as together we trust that God—through God’s people—is continually reforming the Church.

* This article first appeared in the Spring 2017 issue of *Our Journey*, a publication of the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, Minnesota. Reprinted with permission.

Confirmation student opportunity:

Do you have a gift of gab? Enjoy crafting? Playing an instrument? Cooking? Reading? Perhaps you can share your time and talents with a homebound or senior church member. Examples of giving of your gifts this summer could be coloring with a fellow church friend, baking a few cookies and delivering them to a senior and saying hello, or playing an instrument for residents at the care centers. Twice a month, we have services at the Little Falls Care Center and St. Otto's Care Center. Youth can assist with finding pages in the songbooks, assist with communion, and visit with the residents. The residents enjoy seeing other faces from our church community.

My children began helping out last summer with a few visits and nursing home services. They were a bit reluctant, but now they talk about some of our senior friends and some who have passed. At our home we now have a wild apple tree named after a person we visited. At times they grumbled about coming with me, but they always enjoyed it when they got to help out. As the saying goes, "it is better to give than to receive," and we have received so much! Your greatness is not what you have but what you give. If you or someone you know is interested in these opportunities, please contact Tracy or the church office.

**Depression in the Elderly**

Clinical depression in the elderly is common. That doesn't mean it's normal. Late-life depression affects about 6 million Americans ages 65 and older. But only 10% receive treatment for depression. The likely reason is that the elderly often display symptoms of depression differently. Depression in the elderly is also frequently confused with the effects of multiple illnesses and the medicines used to treat them.

Depression impacts older people differently than younger people. In the elderly, depression often occurs with other medical illnesses and disabilities and lasts longer.

Depression in the elderly often increases their risk of cardiac diseases. Depression is associated with an increased risk of cardiac diseases and an increased risk of death from illness. At the same time, depression reduces an elderly person's ability to rehabilitate. Studies of nursing home patients with physical illnesses have shown that the presence of depression substantially increases the likelihood of death from those illnesses. Depression also has been associated with increased risk of death following a heart attack. For that reason, it is important to make sure that an elderly person you are concerned about is evaluated and treated, even if the depression is mild.

Some of the risk factors of depression are: being female, being single, unmarried, divorced, or widowed, lack of a supportive social network, stressful life events, certain medicines or combination of medicines, damage to body image (from amputation, cancer surgery, or heart attack), family history of major depressive disorder, fear of death, living alone, social isolation, other illnesses, past suicide attempt(s), presence of chronic or severe pain, previous history of depression, recent loss of a loved one, and substance abuse.

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**Lutheran Social Service Rummage Sale
Wednesday-Thursday, May 10-11**

The spring Lutheran Social Service (LSS) rummage sale co-sponsored by Bethel and First Lutheran Church women will be held at Bethel Lutheran, at 901 West Broadway, on:

Wednesday, May 10, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 11, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

☞ Dollar Bag Sale Day

*Note that the sale hours are shortened but we hope to accommodate all shoppers.

Proceeds from the sale are used to benefit residents at the Lutheran Social Services group homes in this area. Set up days are Tuesday and Wednesday morning, clean up begins at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday. Volunteers are much appreciated, there is lots of ‘stuff’ to organize – come when you can! The sale is a wonderful recycling opportunity for good, usable, clean clothing, books, linens, small appliances, toys, etc. Clean grocery bags, paper or plastic, are also needed. Please, no televisions, computers or computer parts, or non-working electronics. Sale items can be brought to Bethel in the morning, beginning Monday, May 1, or on the set-up days. For more information, contact Karen Haaland, at 632-8828.



**Annual Community Paint-A-Thon
Oasis/Share A Meal
Saturday, August 5**

The Paint-A-Thon committee is recruiting teams to paint a home in Morrison County on August 5. Over the past 21 years, over 175 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. Would you be willing to be a painter? Contact the church office to sign up. Thank you for making a difference in the community we share!



**Little Falls Care Center
Bake, Plant and Craft Sale
Thursday, May 25
8:00 a.m. to noon**

Come to the sale; all proceeds directly benefit the residents of the Little Falls Care Center. Your donation of plants, craft items or baked goods are welcome. If you would like to donate a Silent Auction Basket with the theme of spring, flowers, garden items or other, please bring to the Care Center by Thursday, May 18. Donated plants can be brought to the Care Center on Wednesday, May 24, Baked goods can be delivered early on the day of the sale. For more information, contact the church office.



**God’s work.
Our hands.**

**Servant Opportunity:
Home Delivered Meals**

Monday-Friday, June 19-23

First Lutheran participates in delivering meals in the community. Our next dates to deliver meals are Monday-Friday, June 19-23. Meet at the Buckman building at 9:45 a.m., you’ll be done between 11:00-11:30 a.m. Contact the church office at 632-6667 to sign up or for more information, or watch for sign-up when you are at worship. Thank you!



Sunday School News

Thank you to all the children, parents, teachers, station leaders, classroom helpers, opening leaders, and all who have participated and supported the Sunday School sessions in any way – you are all appreciated! Special thanks to those who committed to being present most every Sunday, they are: Debra Yliniemi-Ahlin, Michelle Dahlberg, Daniel Ditmanson, Jasmyne Habas, Camilla Larson, Trisha Laubach, Lindsey Nagorski, Robine Mayer, Tracy Moe, Becky Nelson, Heather Olsen, Jennifer Schott, Amber Sobiech, and Annalee VanDenheuvel. Your time and gifts are so appreciated!

Because of the Consecration Sunday schedule for May 7—one service of worship at 10:00 a.m. and a catered celebration lunch—we will not have Sunday School that day. Sunday, May 14 is our last session of Sunday School until fall. There will be special end-of-year fun on that day, don't miss it!

The Commission for Education is seeking adults to become a part of the Sunday School experience for fall 2017-spring 2018. Please prayerfully consider how you might share and develop relationships with all God's children at First Lutheran. For more information, contact the church office.

Confirmation News

- Thank you to all who made confirmation class time a priority this year, students, parents/guardians, classroom teachers and helpers, faith is strengthened through your efforts! Thank you!
- Eighth/Ninth/Tenth Grade: Students and mentors please continue your mentor activities throughout the summer. Mark your calendars for Confirmation service to be held on Reformation Sunday, October 29 one special service at 2:00 p.m.



Thank you to all who faithfully support Christ's mission at First Lutheran Church with their mail-in offerings! Giving statements will be mailed to each giving unit/household following the end of the second quarter, sometime in July. Should you wish to receive a statement sooner than that, we can provide that for you. Please contact Sue in the church office for this information.

You are encouraged to consider providing your giving to First Lutheran through the Simply Giving@ program. Simply Giving is an automated giving plan that allows the giver to choose their gift amount and frequency of that gift. Automated giving ensures that your worshipping community receives your gift on a regular basis. For more information, contact the church office. **Thank you for your faithful giving!**

"Children First" Christian Preschool Update

Greetings from the "Children First" Christian Preschool!

Another Preschool year has come and gone quickly! April was filled with Holy Week/Easter activities, discussions about spring and recycle it, reuse it! May themes include bugs, bike day and our "Wild" End-of-the-year program.

We are excited to see new families, returning families and Preschoolers registering for Fall 2017-2018 classes. This year class offerings include an All-Day opportunity.

2017-2018 Class offerings are:

- Noah's Animals (33 mos-3 year olds)
Monday/Wednesday Morning
or Tuesday/Thursday Morning
- Jesus' Gems Mornings (4-Prekindergarten)
Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday
- Jesus' Gems Afternoons (4-Prekindergarten)
Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday
- Jesus' Gems All Day (4-Prekindergarten)
Tuesday/Thursday Families provide your child's lunch. Lunch time is supervised by Preschool Staff.
- Friday Friends (33 mos-Prekindergarten)
Friday Friends is an added class day for those families wanting a 3-day Preschool experience.



Registration fee is \$60.00 and is nonrefundable. Monthly tuition for the 2-day class is \$85.00 per month. Monthly tuition for All Day, 2 days per week, is \$170. Monthly tuition for Friday Friends class is an additional \$35.00 per month. All morning classes will meet from 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. All afternoon classes will meet from 12:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m. Brochures and registration forms are available in the First Lutheran Church office, on the Welcome counter in the Gathering Space or on our website. If you have questions or would like to visit please contact Gail.

All are welcome to attend our, "It's Been a WILD Year!" End-of-the-Year Preschool program on Thursday, May 18, 2017 from 10:45 a.m.-11:30 a.m. at First Lutheran Church/Children First Christian Preschool. We will celebrate our year with various stories, songs, activities and surprises! This day will mark the last day of preschool for the 2016-2017 year.

It is a bittersweet time for us as we say goodbye to Preschoolers headed to Kindergarten. We have enjoyed our time together and pray they continue to grow in God's love. Thank you to all who keep "Children First" in prayer and support us in so many ways. Thank you to all who have volunteered and visited our classrooms this past year. We appreciate you all. Thank you for another awesome Preschool year!

God's blessings. Happy Summer!

Yours in Christ's Service,
Gail Hittesdorf, Director
320-632-6667

Summer Bible Camp

It's not too late to register for an awesome week at summer Bible camp! First Lutheran supports the ministry of Luther Crest Bible Camp in Alexandria with mission plan dollars and with time and prayer. Children of all ages (adults too!) will learn how God chooses us, provides for us, forgives all, and sends us out to love as we explore the summer theme. If you or someone you know is interested in Bible Camp, please ask in the church office.



Vacation Bible School August 7-11, 9:00-noon "Maker Fun Factory"

Created by God: Built for a Purpose

Maker Fun Factory will help us discover that God made you for a reason and God will always love you! Please prayerfully consider how you can be a part of this great week of ministry with young people. Are you unsure, or new to Vacation Bible School? There are experienced individuals wanting to work with you. Registration forms are available now in the gathering space at church or go to fllittlefalls.org click on 'Education' and 'Vacation Bible School' for the link to the registration form. Watch for an organizational meeting to be scheduled in early June. We will be recruiting Bible School volunteers and donations requested for the week. For more information, contact Gail Hittesdorf, 632-6667.



Graduating Seniors FLC Baccalaureate Sunday, May 21 10:30 a.m. Worship Service 11:30 a.m. Brunch

We will honor the graduating seniors at the 10:30 a.m. service on May 21. Following worship, brunch is served to the students and their parents. Coordinators are the junior class parents. Please keep the graduates in your prayers.

*Devon Butkowski
Jacob Butkowski
Lillian Guck
Alexandra Kludt
Hannah Moller
Terra Motschke
Phillip Sassen
Chase Scherping
Cassie Smieja
Page Taylor
Ebbaney Thompson
Kylie Toso
Aidan VanHercke
Austin Weisz*

Congratulations! Go with God!

News of the Family



Khloe Rain Nelson, daughter of Nakota Patrick and Beau Nelson-Rivetts, was baptized on April 23. Welcome to the family of God!

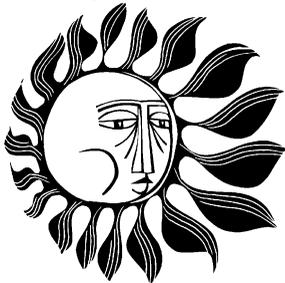


Sunday Worship Schedule

- 8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship using a variety of liturgical settings
- 9:35 a.m. Sunday School Hour-thru 5/14
- 10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship led by a Praise Band

Holy Communion is served at all services.

Come and See!



Items for the **June NEWSLETTER** are due on **May 19, 2017!**