

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
*Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

Pastor: Hank French  
Ministers:  
All God's People at First Lutheran

**FIRST**



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***“Servants of All”***

October 2015

October 1, 2015



In this season of new beginnings and fresh starts, it is appropriate to look at ways to reinvigorate our faith life as we gather together as a community of believers here at First Lutheran. Take a moment to pray the prayer for Affirmation of Baptism below as we individually and collectively affirm the gift of faith in our lives. Then go out joyfully and be *First...Servants of All*.

We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in your people the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever. Amen.



**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

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## ***A Note from Pastor Hank***

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Autumn is upon us; the leaves are changing color and slowly, lazily falling to the ground, the nights are longer and the air growing colder—and in the beauty of autumn, we who live in Minnesota have good cause to thank God for the awesomeness, the sheer wonder of creation—even as we rake those leaves off our lawns! And as we thank God for the wonders of nature, we have good cause to reflect on our individual and communal responsibility to take care of this beautiful blue-green planet that God has given to us as our home.

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And as happens every autumn, First Lutheran has resumed its schedule of activities that took a break during the summer. Sunday School is back in business, as is Confirmation. The Children's Choir and the Adult Choir are singing again. The Men's Bible Study has started up again, meeting on the first and third Wednesdays of each month—breakfast first, then great conversation about the things of faith, all starting at 7:00 in the morning. The weekday Bible study from 11:30 to 12:30 is meeting again every Thursday—another great opportunity for great conversations about faith and a good way to get ready for Sunday as our topic of conversation is the gospel reading that I will be preaching on in just a few days. Think about joining one of these studies—you will be more than welcome.

The Commissions have begun planning activities, ministries, mission for the coming months. We have seven of them: the Commission for Music and Worship, the Commission for Congregational Life, the Commission for Education, the Commission for Youth, The Commission for Mission, the Commission for Health, and the Commission for Facilities and Property. There is room on all of these Commissions for new volunteers. If you have a passion for any of these areas of ministry, join us on the second Tuesday of each month. Commission meetings start at 6:00 and go until 7:00. If you have any questions about what the Commissions do and what it would mean

for you to a part of one of them, just give me a call or stop in to my office and I will be happy to talk with you.

What is true of many churches is also true of First Lutheran. It's called the 80/20 rule—20% of the church's members do 80% of the church's ministry and mission. It would be wonderful to have more people involved in what we do as a community of faith. Helping in the ministries of the church strengthens the church—and it strengthens the faith and joy of those who volunteer.

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No one likes to talk about money—including me—but sometimes we must.

The 80/20 rule also too often applies to a church's finances—20% of the members contribute 80% of the money needed to support the church's ministries and operational expenses. That's pretty much true of First Lutheran and this reality makes real growth in ministry difficult at best and impossible at worst.

So far this year we are considerably behind in our giving. From January to September 15<sup>th</sup>, we have received \$191,104 in pledged and regular envelope giving. To be where our budget expected us to be, we would need that number to be \$225,000. This means that, in pledged and regular giving, we are almost \$40,000 behind. Our Building on Blessings line in the budget expected that by September 15<sup>th</sup> we would have received \$51,000 to apply to the mortgage we assumed when we redid the sanctuary. We have only received \$29,500 of the \$51,000 needed—a deficit of \$21,500. All of which means that when you look at our actual pledged and regular income and our actual Building on Blessings income, as of September 15<sup>th</sup>, we are about \$61,500 behind in the amount of income we need to keep First Lutheran financially healthy and thus able to do what we believe God has called us to do.

The upshot is that, whether the Building on Blessings funds come in as expected or not, we have to pay the mortgage, and the only other source of income for that is the general fund. The result? We presently have less than \$20,000 in available cash reserves.

I don't want to be alarmist—we are not going bankrupt—but the situation is serious and needs to be addressed. If we cannot make up the difference between budgeted income and actual income we may have to start considering program cuts and staffing cuts—which I think no one wants to do.

Additionally, our Call Committee is looking for highly qualified pastoral leadership for First Lutheran and it is important that we demonstrate to potential candidates that we have the financial and

human resources to support the ministries we are calling him or her to lead.

*So, if you have fallen behind over the summer in your giving, I encourage you to catch up. And if it is possible for you, I encourage you to increase your regular giving and perhaps make a special extra gift to help us strengthen our financial position. And if you are not giving regularly now, I encourage you to begin.*

The church is here for everyone, everyone needs to be here for the church if we are to continue doing what we do on everyone's behalf.

Thanks,

Pastor Hank



### Council Highlights

- ✦ Approved resolutions for “Children First” Christian Preschool 2015-16, and “Children First” Advisory Team 2015-16.
- ✦ Heard that a representative from “Food for the Poor” will be with us and bring the message on Sunday, November 14.
- ✦ Agreed to make information about the “Prepare the Way” building campaign at Luther Crest Bible Camp available in the gathering space for those interested.
- ✦ Began to revisit First Lutheran's mission statement.
- ✦ Council members continued reading Twelve Keys to an Effective Church by Kennon Callahan. The book is a study of what makes congregations healthy.



### New Member Group

First Lutheran welcomes all into God's ministry in this congregation. All worshipers are welcome to participate in the opportunities that are offered here and we encourage you to actively grow in your discipleship walk by taking part in Bible study, serving and fellowship events, and regular worship. If you are a worshiper at First Lutheran Church who would like to become a member of the congregation, or a current member who wants to help welcome new folks, or if you have questions, please contact the church office, 632-6667. An orientation session for new members is scheduled for Sunday, October 18 at 7:00 p.m. New members will be received in worship on All Saints Sunday, November 1. Welcome!

### Thrivent Appreciation Dinner

Thrivent members will be treated to a dinner on Tuesday, October 14 at Falls Ballroom. Doors open at 5:15 p.m., a dinner of chicken kiev, ribs, and all the sides is served at 6:00 p.m. RSVP to Thrivent representative Carlyle Olsen at 632-1655. Non-members pay \$5.00 for the dinner.

## Worship and Music Article

written by Paula Monahan

In last month's newsletter, I told you about Mrs. Cecil Francis Alexander, who tried to find ways to explain the Apostles' Creed and certain parts of the catechism to young children through music.

This month we continue that story: The Apostles' Creed goes on to say about Jesus Christ "...who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary." That phrase inspired her writing of "Once In Royal David's City," a wonderful Christmas hymn. The next phrase "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried" became the basis for Mrs. Alexander's hymn, "There Is A Green Hill Far Away." Both of these hymns were published in 1848. (Note: some of you may not be very familiar with these hymns. But they surely will be remembered fondly by many of us who are a bit older.)

"There is a green hill far away,  
without a city wall,  
Where the dear Lord was crucified,  
who died to save us all.

"We may not know, we cannot tell  
what pains He had to bear,  
But we believe it was for us  
He hung and suffered there.

"There was no other good enough  
to pay the price of sin.  
He only could unlock the gate  
of heav'n and let us in.

"Oh dearly, dearly has He loved!  
And we must love Him, too.  
And trust in His redeeming blood,  
and try His works to do."

According to one account, the imagery Mrs. Alexander used for that hymn came about as she was driving into Derry, Ireland. Along the road near the old city walls was a little grass-covered hill. Somehow, this knoll helped her visualize Calvary; from that came the inspiration for the simple but beautiful hymn.

*Parts adapted from "Then Sings My Soul" by Robert J. Morgan*

## Parish Nurse News: Tracy Moe, RN

### Reverse Trick or Treating Friday, October 30, 5:00 p.m.

Come and gather with your little ones for Halloween fun with the senior residents at Bridgeway Estates and Little Falls Care Center. We will meet at the Care Center entrance (next to Burger King) dressed in costume (big people too!) at 5:00 p.m. We will share treats (provided) and God's love with the residents.

### Spiritual Exercises for a Healthier Lifestyle

Believe in God

Believe in and receive God's love

Believe God forgives you

Believe God's spirit lives in you

Have faith and trust in God

Love God

Love and Serve others

Obey God

Read and study the Bible

Pray and/or Meditate

Attend church and worship with others

Confess your sins

Cry out to God

Surrender to God/ Let go

Forgive

Think spiritual thoughts/renew your mind

Be in community with others

Abide in God's presence

### Library Book Review:

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks,

*by Rebecca Skloot*

Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor black woman whose cells—taken without her knowledge in 1951—became one of the most important tools in medicine, vital in developing polio vaccine, cloning, gene mapping, and much more. This is a fascinating story of the collision of ethics, race, and medicine told through the eyes of her family, some she never knew.





### **Lutheran Social Service Rummage Sale**

**Wednesday, October 14, noon to 6:00 p.m.**

**Thursday, October 15, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

**Friday, October 16, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon**

The Rummage Sale sponsored by the women of Bethel Lutheran and First Lutheran will be held at Bethel, 901 West Broadway. This is always a huge 'recycling' sale, and many hands are needed on set-up days (Monday and Tuesday) and for clean-up on Friday. The fellowship of working together to make this LSS mission a success is great! All proceeds benefit Little Falls area LSS group homes and other local LSS programs. Your donations of good used clothing, toys, books, linens, small appliances, etc. may be brought to Bethel during the mornings before the sale, between 9:00 a.m. and noon. To make other arrangements for drop-off, contact Bethel Lutheran at 632-2316. Please, no televisions, computers or computer parts.

For more information, please call Karen Haaland at 632-8828.

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### **Who Is My Neighbor? Opportunity**

Do you have an extra hour or two to provide care for residents of the Little Falls Care Center? You can help to bring residents from their rooms to the chapel for worship on Sunday, Wednesday, or Thursday, or play cards with the residents on Saturdays. The care center also welcomes pet visitors. Those with a heart for the residents may consider serving on the care center's volunteer board. If you can offer your time to provide this care for the residents, please contact Sharon at the LFCC, 632-9211.

### **World Habitat Day Monday, October 6**

The United Nations General Assembly has declared the first Monday in October to be World Habitat Day. This is a time to recognize the basic need for adequate shelter in a world where it is lacking for so many. Habitat for Humanity Morrison County urges your prayers on World Habitat Day for the ministry of Habitat and for ways that you might become involved in Habitat's mission to end poverty housing. You can make a difference right here at home by providing financial support, volunteering to help build the current home or on other projects. For more information, call the local Habitat office at 616-2084.



### **Annual Fall Craft and Bake Sale at Little Falls Care Center Saturday, October 24 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.**

Plan to attend this annual fundraiser at the Little Falls Care Center. The funds raised are used for a variety of resident needs. There will be baskets to bid on, delicious baked goods and craft items. Donations of filled silent auction baskets are welcome. For information about the craft sale, selling or donating craft items or bake sale items, or helping with the sale, please contact Donna Hegstrom at 632-3441 the church office, or Sharon at the LFCC, 632-9211.

### **Daylight Savings Time Ends Remember to set your clocks *back* one hour on Saturday, October 31!**

## "Children First" Christian Preschool Update

Greetings from "Children First" Christian Preschool!

Praise God! It is a new year of Preschool! We have already finished our first month and are excited to welcome new Preschoolers and returning Preschoolers and their families. Get to know the families attending by checking out the family scrapbook pages hanging along the gallery wall next to the kitchen.

We welcome returning staff: Jessica Gustafson, Anna Walker, and Chrissi Gesme. Please keep them along with our families and children in your prayers for a year filled with purpose, service and an abundance of God's love.

Classroom themes for September were Manners, Friends and "We are Special." Community helpers will visit our classroom in October. We will learn about fire safety, community helpers, transportation, and pumpkins! We have planned visits with Firefighter Lisa, Highway Patrolman Jason and Construction Worker Adam. If you would like share your community helper job and how you are using your God-given gifts and talents to help others, please schedule your visit with the Preschool Staff.

October 5th and 8th are the first field trip days to Bridgeway Estates and St. Otto's Care Center. Thank you to Andy's Charter for providing bussing service on our field trips. We look forward to seeing familiar friends and meeting new ones.

"Children First" Christian Preschool continues to participate in Coborn's/Cashwise Food Club Points; Labels for Learning and Ink Jet Collection programs. These programs are ways you can assist in bringing money, gift cards and preschool supplies to our classrooms. Save your Food Club points located at the bottom of your cash register receipts. Campbells, Swanson, Pace, Pepperidge Farms are some of the products that have "Labels for Learning" points located on their labels. Please

clip and save. Please place all points in the containers located in the Preschool/Education wing or in the red box located on the counter in the Gathering Space.

There is still room for more Preschoolers to attend! Registration is open to all who are 33 months of age through Pre-Kindergarten. We accept registrations all year pending class openings. The Noah's Animals (33 months-3 years), Monday/Wednesday class is full and we are beginning a waiting list for the Tuesday/Thursday class. Once we have six registered this class will begin. All classes are year-long, September through May. The Jesus' Gems (4-Prekindergarten) classes also have openings. Friday Friends class is an additional class intended to create a three-day preschool week. This class may be added at any time throughout the year. If you have questions please contact me or the First Lutheran Church office.

Thrivent Financial offers opportunities for you to support "Children First" Christian Preschool. Through their programs of Thrivent Choice you can direct "Choice" dollars to "Children First" and through Thrivent Action Teams you can assist Preschool by supporting a Preschool project. Please contact me for more information or if you would like to assist with a Preschool project.

Thank you to everyone who visited the "Children First" booth at the Little Falls Arts and Crafts Festival. It was a great success. Thank you to those who are giving generously of their time and talents as well everyone who provides financial support to Preschoolers through tuition assistance, the Gifting Campaign and general contributions. "Children First" appreciates all of you!

Yours in Christ's Service,  
Gail Hittesdorf, Director



## Sunday Morning Education Ministry

*“Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.” Proverbs 22:6*

Sunday School is getting started. The first section is “Friendship: God Loves Us.” One way each of us responds to God’s love is by being a faithful friend. Faithful friends enjoy good times together, but there is more to being a friend. A faithful friend is an encourager in difficult times, understands and respects boundaries, and forgives when a friend lets us down.

The next rotation begins on Sunday, October 25 and will focus on The Lord’s Prayer. Thank you to all those who serve as station leaders, classroom teachers, crew leaders, helpers, or worship leaders. And thank you to the families who make Sunday School a priority for their children.

There are many ways to assist with Sunday School and you don’t have to commit for the whole year. Why not team up with a friend to take part in a rotation? Cooking, art, games, and storytelling are a few of the stations.

Families are encouraged to worship together at either the 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. service. Sunday School meets between the services at 9:35 a.m. All ages meet in the sanctuary for opening prayer and song, along with a time to share our offering. Then

three-year-olds and prekindergarten children will meet in a classroom setting. The kids in grades K-5 will rotate from Cooking, Storytelling/Video, Art, or Games—experiencing one station during each of the four weeks.

Youth Sunday School for grades 6-8 and 9-12 gather each Sunday in the Youth room for food, fun, faith-filled learning and activities with Jay Kiel, and Les and Gail Hittesdorf.

If you would like to help in anyway with sharing your talents or gifts in leading a rotation or helping with Sunday School in any way, please contact Amber Sobiech in the church office 632-6667, or at home 616-9626.

### Coming up: Children’s Christmas Program

Do you have interest or excitement for the Christmas season?? Planning will soon get underway for the children’s Christmas program. Contact Amber if you would like to assist with coordinating any part of the program. Thank you!



### Family Hayride at Larsen’s Farm Sunday, October 11:30-5:30 p.m.

Dress for the fall weather and bring the family and friends to enjoy God’s creation. We’ll carpool to Darrell and Arlene Larsen’s farm near Bowlus for a hayride. All are welcome to this fun afternoon. Please call the church office for directions if you would like to meet at the farm. We’ll be back at church around 5:30 p.m.



### Advent Craft Sale Saturday, December 5 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

In just two short months the Advent Craft Sale and Luncheon will be here. We trust you are making plans to attend!

As in past years, we welcome your donations of crafts, bake sale items, and assistance with the sale. There will be a delicious soup luncheon, musical entertainment and lots of treats and gift items to buy! This year’s sale will benefit youth programs at First Lutheran. Your support is greatly appreciated.

## Confirmation Ministries

**Parents:** If you have not yet registered your children for confirmation and youth ministry activities, please do so now. Forms are available in the church office. Eleventh and Twelfth grade students must register in order to participate in youth activities.

**Third Grade:** Watch your mail for your updated copy of Family Devotions on the Gospel of Mark. Families share the devotions together and then call the church office to schedule a home visit.

**Fifth Grade:** Class on Stewardship ended on Wednesday, September 30. Thank you to Nancy Ratzloff for leading the class, and to the fifth graders, their parents, and Denise Dempsey and Pat Moller for helping to make the communion bread used in worship on Sunday, September 20.

**Ninth Grade:** New Testament class with Pastor Hank continues through October 14.

**Tenth Grade:** Lutheran Identity class begins on October 21 and meets on Wednesdays through November 18. Pastor Hank will teach this class.

**Eleventh Grade:** Practice for Confirmation Sunday is Saturday, October 24, at 8:30 a.m. We will have a light breakfast. Nine youth will affirm their faith on Reformation Sunday, October 25, at 10:30 a.m. worship

### Fellowship of Christian Athletes

**Fields of Faith**  
**Wednesday, October 7, 7:00 p.m.**  
**At Flyer Field**

### Can Care Collection

Keep saving those aluminum cans!  
Save a can – Save the earth –  
Save our youth budget!  
Keep those cans coming!



### Confirmation Sunday

**October 25, 2015, 10:30 a.m.**

Congratulations to the following youth who will affirm their Christian faith and become adult disciples (members) of First Lutheran:

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Lily Guck       | Cassie Smieja   |
| Alexandra Kludt | Kylie Toso      |
| Hannah Moller   | Aidan VanHercke |
| Terra Motschke  | Austin Weisz    |
| Phillip Sassen  |                 |

Please keep these young people in your prayers as they affirm their faith.

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### Call Committee Update

The Call Committee has reviewed four Rostered Leader Profiles since the beginning of September. Of these four, we found one candidate to potentially be a good “fit” for First Lutheran and are exploring the possibility of an interview with this pastoral candidate. With each profile, we individually and jointly seek discernment and God’s direction.

We are in regular communication with Brenda Tibbetts, Assistant to the Bishop of the NE MN Synod to obtain appropriate pastoral candidates for our consideration.

Please contact any Call Committee member with any questions you may have. Call Committee members are: Doug Anderson, Matt Dahl, Willard Doucette, Darrell Larsen, Camilla Larson, Monica Makela, Cassie Neumann, Mary Pfohl, Will Riitters, and Liz Rydeen. We ask for your prayers and support as we continue this process.

Submitted in Christ’s Peace,  
Mary Pfohl, Chair

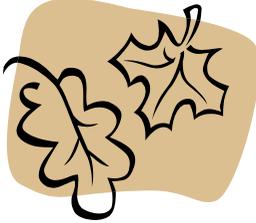
## News of the Family



Merlin Bruns and Julie Gaffaney were united in marriage on September 5. May God bless their lives together.



Joelle Elizabeth Zwilling, daughter of Chuck and Tammy Zwilling, was baptized on September 13. Welcome to the family of God!



Items for the **November NEWSLETTER** are due on **October 20, 2015!**

**Daylight Savings Time Ends  
Remember to set your clocks *back* one  
hour on Saturday, October 31!**



**“A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.”**

*The Freedom of a Christian (1520)*