



***“Servants of All”***

September, 2012, Newsletter

September 14, 2012



**First...Moving Forward:  
Worship Space Enhancement**  
Still “First...Servants of All”  
**Sunday, September 23**  
**12:00 noon**

The Worship Space Enhancement team has spent the past year in prayer, discernment, and discussion about enhancing the worship space here at First. Now you have the exciting opportunity to hear about the results of their work on Sunday, September 23. Following the third service of worship at about 12:00 noon, we will share lunch and hear the plans for this space.

We will officially unveil what the Worship Space Enhancement team recommends for the worship space. This space has served so many so well for the last 50 years and the goal of the team is to have it continue to be an inviting place of welcome, worship and service for the next 50 years.

At the annual meeting in January 2012 the congregation voted to explore this possibility. Now that a recommendation is in place, the Church Council has set Sunday, November 18 as the date for a congregational meeting to vote on the enhancement project before we move forward.

Excitement is building for this project! You are welcome to speak with any of the team members or with Pastor David about the plans. Members of the team will be available between worship services on Sundays prior to September 23 to answer questions you may have. The team is excited about this project and would be happy to share some of the thoughts and hear your thoughts regarding this opportunity. Please continue to keep the Worship Space Enhancement team and the congregation in your prayers so that we continue to move forward in being *First... Servants of all*.

Worship Space Enhancement team members are:

Stephanie Adams, Dave Buker, LaVerne Hempeck, Bob and Sonya Just, Darrell Larsen, Bruce Moller, Paula Monahan, Becky Nelson, Mary Pfohl, Nancy Ratzloff, Tammy Zwilling and Pastor David Sperstad

**Pastor Dave’s Article**  
*see page 2*

**Pastor Tony’s Article**  
*see page 4*

**Adult Opportunities**  
*see page 5*

**Music Ministry**  
*see page 6*

**Home Brewed Faith**  
*see page 7*

**Education News**  
*see page 8*

**“Children First”  
Preschool News**  
*see page 9*

**Note:** At the conclusion of the 2012 ELCA National Youth Gathering in New Orleans on July 22, Pastor David and First member/steward, Ron Makela, began the 'Ride for Rice' – a bicycle journey back to Minnesota – a trip of 1,500 miles following the Mississippi River. Along the way they were raising awareness and funds for Food for Kidz, a non-profit organization which provides nutritious meals for children around the world.

Many people have asked me, "How was the trip?" many people have said, "What an accomplishment!", "Congratulations!" The best was when I was in the bike shop this past week buying a new set of cycling gloves... the clerk almost fell over when I responded to his question of "Do much riding this summer?"

My response most often about the trip is: "The trip was AWESOME! You should do it sometime!" While I cannot speak for Ron Makela, my riding partner for 18 days, I do say that it doesn't really feel like I actually accomplished anything – All we did was pedal, each and every day we pedaled. I think anyone who has ridden a bike before could have accomplished the same journey we did.

On our journey while all we did physically was pedal, we had time to converse, time to experience God, and time to just enjoy His creation. At times I saw creation in the countryside we rode through, (while I am not sure God was present on some of those hills!). At times I felt God in the dew that fell on us in the midst of the early morning fog. At times I felt God even in the head wind that seemed to be pushing us backwards. And at times I heard the voice of God speak to me in the heavy southern accent.

It was on the third or fourth day that I really settled into the ride and simply made the decision to "enjoy the journey." I still fought the wind, tolerated the heat, and went slowly up the hills, but somehow my attitude changed. My desire to just get home changed, my worries about home changed, just went away so I could enjoy where I was, what I was doing. It was then that the trip truly became awesome! I enjoyed every moment of the ride. (Well, there may be that one mishap on

the hill 80 miles south of St Louis where I discovered the law of Physics on a bike – *that* I could have done without!) But even that taught me to enjoy the journey. It taught me that I was and would continue to be cared for, that God would take care of me. I need not worry.

Each day we had an adventure and each day we heard the voice of God say these words from Judges 19:9: "*Spend the night here and enjoy yourself. Tomorrow you can get up early in the morning for your journey, and go home.*" Each day we knew and we trusted that God who is faithful and just would take care of us, and take care of us he did! Each day we arose early and each day we had a place to sleep, each day we had enough food to eat, enough water to drink, and enough shoulder to ride on. Each day God did care for us and he led us on our journey home. That is His promise – *I go to prepare a place for you and if I go to prepare a place for you I will come and take you there to be there with me.* He did prepare a place for us each day. He has led us home. While it was an AWESOME experience to be on the journey from New Orleans – it is just as wonderful to be home in the place that He has prepared for me. That place is here at First Lutheran Church with all of you! Thank you for allowing me to enjoy this journey! I thank God for each of you! Amen!!

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



**Reminder: Fall Worship Schedule begins Sunday September 9 at 8:00, 9:30 and 10:45 a.m.**

## Sunday Morning Worship Schedule for Fall 2012

**Begins Sunday, September 9**

**8:00 a.m. – Traditional liturgical Worship**

**9:30 a.m. – Contemporary/Praise Worship**

**10:30 a.m. – Sunday Morning Education Ministry Time**

**10:45 a.m. – Traditional liturgical Worship**

### New Steward/Member Group

First Lutheran Church fall New Steward/Member Group begins in October. This group is meant to help joining members to find their place in the mission of the congregation, get to know other members, and discuss the foundations of the faith we share. Current members are encouraged to attend and get to know joining members. New steward/members will be received in worship on All Saints Sunday, November 4.

Watch for more information and for the meeting dates; to sign up for the class, please call the church office at 632-6667.

### Are you a Facebook™ fan?

Many First Lutheran members and friends use this social networking site to stay in touch, share, and communicate in a and fun way. First Lutheran has a Facebook page!

Search for us under the name '1<sup>st</sup> Lutheran Little Falls, MN' (be sure to use a number 1) and 'like' our page—you'll be able to view and upload pictures, get current event updates and give feedback, or maybe find a little bit of inspiration for your day.

We have friends all over the country. Thanks for being our Facebook friend. ☺



### Council Highlights

- ✠ Heard that the week of Vacation Bible School was an amazing week with over 225 youth stewards from near and far in attendance! Thank you to all of the kids, families, and volunteers for making it a special time to learn to trust God no matter what!
- ✠ Gave thanks for Pastor David Sperstad's return from his bike ride from New Orleans on the Ride for Rice. Heard that \$1,800 had been received in donations for Food for Kidz in support of the ride.
- ✠ Heard reports on the ELCA National Youth Gathering/Synod Journey trip.
- ✠ Received an update on the Worship Space Enhancement project.



Last year, First Lutheran Church began a new lay visitation ministry: *Caring Companions*. My initial goal was to have six people giving of their time and talent to the ministry. My goals were exceeded as we have 12 people who gave of their time last year and as of writing this article another two people have become *Caring Companions*. On top of having lots of support, we have had lots of ministry opportunities. In the last year we have helped with over 58 ministry needs; that includes visits of all kinds (hospital visits, “shut-in” visits, post surgery visits, visits after a death, “checking-in” visits...etc.), meals cooked for a variety of reasons (death of a loved one, post-surgery, birth of a child...etc.) and a few other ministry needs that popped up like: mowing the lawn, cleaning, and raking leaves.

I am blown away by all the support from the people who give of their time to this ministry and by the warm reception we have had. I am also deeply touched by the ways God has used this ministry to help others encounter his love. Someone who has been involved with the ministry said: *“It shows everyone that the love of God can be everywhere, every day, shared by ordinary people...in small ways. It builds the confidence of the people doing the visiting and strengthens their faith. It shows the folks being visited that they are loved, cared about and not forgotten.”* This was echoed by someone who both received care and gave care: *“It makes us more like a family that cares for its members. I've been on both the giving and receiving ends of it and both gave me a very positive, loving feel for my church home and family!”* God has truly worked in and through this ministry!

This year along with having people who do visits and or cook meals, we will have a group of people who are able to give of their talent in other ways. We will be collecting a list of people who would be willing to do odd jobs when they come up such as: mowing the lawn, shoveling (or plowing the snow), raking leaves, cleaning house, light handyman work, musical needs, and many other jobs. If you would like to be included on this list, if you have a talent, skill, or ability you would like to share please let me know. This is not a commitment to do anything it is simply letting me know you might be available if a need arises. If there is a need, I would call and see if it works with your schedule. If you are willing, I think you could expect a call 1-2 times a year...that's it.

In a few weeks, on Sunday, September 16 (after the last service) we will have an Enriching Event for all active *Caring Companions* and anyone who would like to learn more about the ministry. At this Enriching Event, we will thank all who gave their time to the ministry over the last year. We will spend some time talking about our encounters with God as we served, how we can be more aware of the “thin places” in the future, and we will be learning a new skill to help all *Caring Companions*.

If you currently are serving as a *Caring Companion*, please sign up for the Enriching Event, and watch your mailbox for more information. If you are interested in discovering what the *Caring Companions* are about, I encourage you to sign up and come for the Enriching Event on Sunday, September 16 after the 10:45 a.m. service.

Pastor Tony



## Adult Opportunities

### Martha Circle

Martha Circle meets Monday, September 17, at 1:30 p.m. at the church. Hostess is Tulla Enerson.

### Women's Bible Study

Watch for more information about this study to begin on Wednesday, September 12, at 6:30 p.m. For more information, contact: Stephanie Adams, 632-3058.

### Quilters Group

The Thursday morning Quilters Group resumes meeting on Thursday, September 6 at 9:00 a.m. You do not need to be skilled at sewing to help out! There are a variety of ways to serve. And hey, there's always food! For more information, call Marlene Williams, 632-4290 or Marlys Plante, 632-8055.



### Cornerstones (Seniors age 55 and better ☺)

Are you interested in participating in senior fellowship? Bring a friend and a food item to share and come for potluck lunch. We gather on the third Wednesday of each month, Mark your calendar for Wednesday, September 19, at 11:30 a.m. We'll meet in Stoltz Hall to share food, conversation and laughter! If you like to sing, consider staying for Senior Choir rehearsal at 1:00 p.m.

### Men's Morning Bible Study Wednesday, September 5 6:15 a.m.

All men of the congregation and friends are invited to Men's Bible Study. We meet on the first and third week of each month on Wednesday morning at the church.

The 6:15 a.m. study includes breakfast. The study will be completed by 7:40 a.m. to allow time to get to work. Come when you are able, leave when you must. For more information, call the church office at 632-6667.

### Servant Opportunity Meals on Wheels

First Lutheran participates in delivering Meals on Wheels to home-bound individuals in the community. Our next dates to deliver meals are Monday-Friday, September 10-14. Meet at the Buckman building at 10:00 a.m., you'll be done between 11:00-11:30 a.m. If you can assist with this important service ministry, please contact the church office. Thank you to First Lutheran's coordinator, Kim Liebel.

### Child Care Volunteers

First Lutheran is blessed with the gift of many children. As a church family, we want to provide safe, quality care for these precious little ones in the Child Care Space on Sunday mornings and at other events. We have a staff Child Care Attendant, Stephanie Kiel, to coordinate care in the child care room. From time to time, assistance is welcome with child care. If you or someone you know is interested in serving in this way, please contact the church office or Stephanie Kiel.



## Music Ministry Opportunities:

### **The Followers of Christ Children's Choir Rehearsals begin: Wednesday, September 12**

All kids in Kindergarten through Grade 5 are welcome to sing with the children's choir. The first rehearsal is Wednesday, September 12 from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Transportation from Lincoln and Lindbergh Elementary schools to First Lutheran Church will be provided by school bus. Parents are asked to register for this singing opportunity. Registration forms are available in the gathering space or on the church website at [www.flclittlefalls.org](http://www.flclittlefalls.org). For more information, contact Becky Nelson at 749-2336 or [rpnelson@brainerd.net](mailto:rpnelson@brainerd.net).

### **Adult Choir Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. Beginning September 5**

We resume rehearsals this fall on Wednesday, September 5 at a **new time**. We will gather at 1:00 p.m. and rehearse for one hour. The choir will sing at the 8:00 and 10:45 a.m. services about three times per month. If you or someone you know loves to sing please come and use your voice to praise God! New singers are welcome! Schedules are available in the church office. For more information, contact Kathy Pederson, choir director, at 468-2324 or Becky Nelson, Director of Music Ministry, at 749-2336.

### **Music Ministry Opportunities**

Praising the Lord with music is an integral part of worship at First Lutheran. All are welcome to share their musical gifts and participate in music ministry. Vocalists can serve as cantor for worship services, sing in ensemble groups or choir, or provide a gift of music. Instrumental musicians may play with the praise band, provide gifts of music at worship or special events. For more information, contact Becky Nelson, Director of Music, at 749-2336, or 320-360-0209 or via email at [rpnelson@flclittlefalls.org](mailto:rpnelson@flclittlefalls.org).

---

### **Lutheran College Fair Sunday, October 7, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 4310 County Road 137, St. Cloud**

High School students and parents won't want to miss this event close to home. College fairs and workshops are designed to give you insight into the unique aspects of Lutheran higher education and a chance to meet representatives from some of our excellent member colleges and universities. There is no charge for this event and no need to pre-register. Lutheran colleges and universities are

committed to enrolling students regardless of their families' financial circumstances and you are encouraged to ask admissions representatives about scholarships and financial aid.

Registration begins at 6:30 p.m., financial aid seminar is at 6:45 p.m., and the college fair continues until 8:30 p.m. Come and learn about quality higher education at Lutheran schools.

## Welcome to Home-Brewed Faith!

- Did you know that only 4 of 10 people who attend church on any given Sunday discuss their faith or God outside the walls of a church?
- Did you know that the single biggest influence on a person's faith is a faithful friend?
- Did you know that even if you do not consider yourself as having a 'typical' family at home you are still influential in the larger family of God?

The words that open the Baptismal liturgy are "as we live with God and His people we grow in faith, love and obedience to the will of God."

Home Brewed Faith is an exciting opportunity to experience living with God and his people in a safe environment so that you can confidently be one of the 4 of 10 who openly discuss your faith outside the walls of church.

On Sunday, October 7, we begin something exciting at First Lutheran Church: Home Brewed Faith (HBF). This is an opportunity to continue to develop and enhance your faith – this is for everyone – whoever you are, whatever your home

looks like, whether you live alone or whether you live with multiple generations in your household Home Brewed Faith is for you. We hope to assist you to continue the brewing of your faith as you daily walk with God and others and grow in faith, love and obedience to the will of God for your life.

Plan to be here on Sunday, October 7 as we are led by Andrea Fieldhouse, a graduate of Moorhead State with degrees in psychology, sociology, and human development. Andrea has served as a youth minister for 12 years, has worked with Faith Inkubators, Vibrant Faith, and currently works with Everyday-Everywhere. Everyday-Everywhere is an organization that wants to give a new twist to the way we think of ministry; their mission is to help congregations think of ministry as more than something to be organized, to understanding that ministry is what equips people to live for *Every Day, Everywhere and in Every Relationship*. The emphasis is on the relationship with one another in the world.

Plan on attending Home Brewed Faith so that you can let your light shine before others so that they may see God's light shining through you!

## The Ministry of "Being Here"

It is a genuine ministry for you to be present at church. It is a ministry, first of all to yourself. You need worship, Bible study and other activities because your Christian life needs constant attention, nurture and support.

It is a genuine ministry for you to be present at church...for the rest of us who attend. When you are here, you strengthen my resolve to follow Christ in every way. I enjoy it when you sing with me. I am enriched when you share with me what God is doing in your life. I am called to prayer when you share with me your burdens. You allow me to share my gifts with you.

It is critical ministry for you to be here for the lost and for the ones searching for a church home.

When you are here, they sense that God is real and necessary. When you are absent, God does not seem as important. When you are here, they see a very different testimony.

Think about this the next time you are tempted to say, "I won't go today. No one will miss me," or "What difference does it make whether I'm at church or not?" Remember, just being here is a ministry!

*Author Unknown*

### **Thank you!**

Thank you to all who came with brush in hand and served as members of First Lutheran's annual Paint-A-Thon team on Saturday, August 4. Thanks to Jerome and Karen Haaland for coordinating this year's team.

### **Thank you!**

The Vacation Bible School Mission Project, Operation Backpack provided over 64 backpacks filled with school supplies to area schools! Due to your generosity we were able to also contribute three large boxes of extra supplies to the schools. Thank you to everyone who donated supplies, backpacks, sorted, counted, packed, and delivered the backpacks! You have assisted many children with learning needs. Thanks for being Jesus' hands and feet in this part of the kingdom.

### **Thank You Thrivent Members!**

**Thrivent Choice:** Thank you to all who have designated their Thrivent Choice dollars to First Lutheran Church and to "Children First" Christian Preschool. This year we have seen an increase in the number of Thrivent members who are eligible to donate these funds, and an increase in the amount. Thank you for putting your Thrivent Choice dollars to work in mission and ministry at First Lutheran! If you have questions about this program or would like assistance in designating your Thrivent Choice dollars, please contact the church office.

### **Camp Knutson Quilt Auction Thank you**

The 26<sup>th</sup> annual Camp Knutson quilt auction raised close to \$53,000 in support of campers with special needs. Thank you to the LSS Auxiliary for their work on this event. Women from First Lutheran and Bethel Lutheran served at the concession area. First member, Barb Larsen, made and donated a beautiful quilt that sold at auction for \$725. Thanks be to God for the wonderful financial support for Camp Knutson.

### **Sunday Morning Education Ministry Begins on Rally Sunday, September 16 at 10:30 a.m.**

Children and parents/guardians gather in Stoltz Hall at 10:30 on Sunday, September 16 to begin a new year of education. There are many ways for you to be involved!

Youth and Education registration forms were sent by mail, additional forms are available at the church. Please complete these forms and return to the church office as soon as possible.

For more information, contact Gail Hittesdorf, 632-6667.



### **Welcome Three-Year-Olds!**

Each year we help prepare our three-year-olds for Sunday School by inviting them and their parents to participate in an orientation gathering. This year's gathering is scheduled for Wednesday, September 12, at 6:30 p.m. Youth and their parents will visit their classroom, meet their teacher, and get acquainted with one another. Any child who is three years old by September 1 is welcome. Three-year olds will receive the gift of a story Bible at worship on Rally Sunday, September 16, at the 9:30 a.m. service. Please enroll your child to ensure they receive a Bible. If you have questions, please call Gail Hittesdorf at church, 632-6667, or at home, 632-2218.

## "Children First" Christian Preschool Update

Greetings from "Children First" Christian Preschool!

Parent orientation is Thursday, September 6, at 7:00 p.m. The first days of class are Monday and Tuesday, September 10 and 11. These sessions will meet for one and one-half hours. The morning sessions will meet from 9:00-10:30 a.m. Students and parents will experience the classroom together for 1/2 hour, and then the parents will attend a special session while the children have fun. Wednesday and Thursday, September 12 and 13 will be regular classroom days. Openings remain in the following classes:

- ☺ *Noah's Animals* is a two-day class for children 33 months to three years old, meeting Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00-11:30 a.m.
- ☺ *Jesus' Gems* is a two-day class for children four and five years old, meeting in two sessions, either Monday and Wednesday, or Tuesday and Thursday, from 9:00-11:30 a.m.
- ☺ *Friday Friends* the additional of this class gives children a three-day classroom experience. Children must be enrolled in one of the other class times.

The preschool hosts a booth at the Little Falls Arts and Crafts Fair on Saturday-Sunday, September 8-9. We're on the corner of Broadway and Second Street (courthouse corner). If you can help with the booth, please contact Gail.

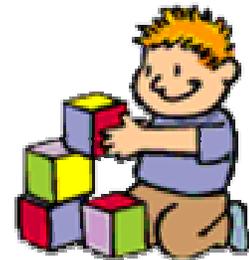
'Give Us a Hand!' Come to Morrison County Kids' Day on Saturday, September 22 at the Morrison County Fairgrounds. We will make a quilt for Habitat for Humanity. Come and place your hand print on our quilt top!

Thank you for your continuing support! Please include "Children First" in your prayers as we begin an exciting new school year.

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." *Matthew 19:14*

In Christ's Service,

Gail Hittesdorf  
Director



## Confirmation Ministries

**Parents:** Please register your children for confirmation and youth ministry activities now. Forms are available in the church office. Eleventh and Twelfth grade students please register in order to participate in youth activities.

**Third Grade:** Youth entering third grade have received their Bibles. Parents and youth will share Family Devotions in September. Each youth will receive a home visit in October.

**Fifth Grade:** class on Stewardship meets in September. Youth will practice stewardship by making communion bread together on Wednesday, September 12, class continues on September 19, and 26, at 7:00 p.m.

**Ninth Grade:** New Testament class begins on Wednesday, September 12, at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Dave will teach this class.

**Eleventh Grade:** Confirmation Reception on Sunday, September 30, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. for students, parents, and mentors. Students will share mentor activities. Confirmation Sunday is October 28 at 10:45 a.m. worship.



## News of the Family

+

Katie Faufau and Nick Wippler were united in marriage on August 18.

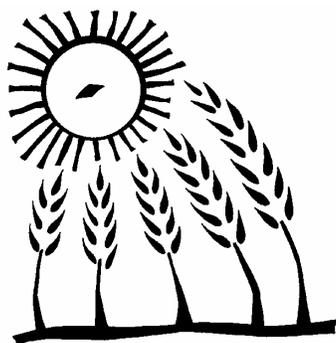
Lisa Kobliska and Jeremy Culbertson were united in marriage on August 25.

+

Merced Christopherson died on August 24. Her memorial service was held at First Lutheran on August 30. May God grant peace to her family and friends.

**Sunshine Chairperson** is Mary Larson. Please call 632-8203 if you know of someone who is ill, hospitalized, etc., so that she may send them a card.

Items for the **October NEWSLETTER** are due on **September 20, 2012!**



**Reminder: Fall Worship schedule begins Sunday, September 9. Worship at 8:00, 9:30 and 10:45 a.m.**