

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Pastor: Hank French

Ministers:

All God's People at First Lutheran

FIRST



“Servants of All”

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September, 2015, Newsletter

August 27, 2015

Rally Sunday

September 20

Rally Sunday is September 20. The schedule is as follows: 8:30-9:30 a.m. traditional worship using a variety of liturgical settings—we plan to learn a new setting this fall, 9:35-10:20 a.m. Sunday School, 9:30-10:30 a.m. coffee fellowship, 10:30-11:30 a.m. contemporary praise worship accompanied by a praise band. We have experienced a greater sense of community for all worshippers with this schedule which allows families and all worshippers to attend the service of their choice as well as Sunday School. Consider bringing a friend to worship on this or any Sunday.

We continue to offer Holy Communion at all Sunday worship services. This practice affirms that Holy Communion is a powerful way that God speaks to and nourishes the human spirit and ensures that more worshippers have regular access to the Sacrament.

8:30 a.m. Traditional Liturgical Worship

9:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship

9:35-10:20 a.m. Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Contemporary Praise Worship

Holy Communion at all services

Thank you for keeping the congregation and all those who come through the doors of this facility in your prayers as we continue to beng

First... Servants of all.



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Notes from Pastor Hank

I am writing this on an airplane at the Minneapolis Saint Paul airport a few minutes from taking off. Bobbi and I are headed to Eugene, Oregon to visit my sister, Rosemary, whose husband passed away recently. Please pray for her and her family as they walk the road of loss and grief.

Many folks in our community of faith are walking the road of loss. In the last few weeks, I have officiated at funeral or memorial services for Kenneth Tenney, Barbara Radloff, Alvera Streich, Vicki Mandaville, Keith Thompson, and Gladys Hokanson. Please keep the families of these folks who have passed from this life into the next life in your prayers.

But it is not only grief; there is also happiness in our community of faith. In the last few weeks, I have officiated at the weddings of Dave and Cathy Hoadley, Hannah and Hank Virnig, and Kevin and Chantel Cash.

Add to that the baptisms of Kevin Cash, Lily and Brandon Laubach, Preston Meyer, and Layne Martinson and there are more reasons to celebrate. But that is not all. VBS saw 130 kids learning, singing, laughing and having fun growing in faith. 3rd graders had a Confirmation class about the Bible and then received new Bibles from their parents during worship.

And the staff has been gearing up for September and a new year of programming for everyone – young and old.

All of which is to say that your church is here for you at every stage of life's journey. I care for you; the staff cares for you; and as sisters and brothers in Christ, we care for each other. First Lutheran Church is a good place to be no matter where you are in life.

The Call Committee is working hard and faithfully on our behalf, seeking the right person to bring pastoral leadership to First Lutheran. Encourage them, thank them, and pray for them and the candidates they interview.

As summer winds down into autumn, I hope that the last three months have been full of joy for you and yours. As we move from cutting grass to raking leaves, may God continue with you.

Pastor Hank



Council Highlights

✠ Heard that the week of Vacation Bible School was an amazing week with many young people from near and far in attendance! Thank you to all of the kids, families, and volunteers for making it a special time to learn about God's power!

- ✠ The council expressed gratitude to the call committee and continues to pray for them and the call process.
- ✠ Heard that Rally Sunday and the start of Sunday School is September 20.
- ✠ Heard that First Lutheran provides the meal and serves Share A Meal on Thursday, August 27.

Worship Serving Opportunities

Each Sunday, many worshippers come to worship at First Lutheran Church, every week someone is here for the first time. Your servant hands are an integral part of providing hospitality to all who enter here. Stop at the table in the Gathering Space or call or email the church office to offer your gifts in service to Christ's body at First Lutheran. Serving areas are greeters, ushers, scripture readers, communion ministry, child care, coffee hospitality. You can sign up for a time that fits your schedule. **Sign up now for September and October.** Training for each serving ministry is available—please ask! For more information, contact the church office.

Financial Update

Thank you to all who faithfully contribute to our shared ministry at First Lutheran Church!

We want to give you an idea of the congregation's financial status so far this year. The following amounts are as of July 31. We have received as offering for the 2015 Mission Plan \$185,788 of the planned \$222,921 for this date. We have disbursed \$217,572 for expenses as of July 31. As you can see this is a deficit of \$31,784. Know that your ministry team staff and leadership works to keep expenses in line with the mission plan. We are aware that many of you are traveling or away from home during the summer months. We hope to see you in worship this fall and encourage you to give as you are able. Your mail-in offerings are appreciated when you are away.

Thank you to all who participate in the electronic funds transfer giving plan, Simply Giving. Simply Giving ® allows you to automate your giving. This benefits First Lutheran by ensuring regular giving throughout the year and benefits the giver with ease of use. First Lutheran covers the nominal fee per transaction. Please see Sue or Gloria in the church office to enroll. Thank you!



Rally Sunday Sunday, September 20

Plan to be present on Sunday, September 20 as the fall season gets underway and we celebrate the many ways that we are God's Hands and Feet here at First Lutheran. Between worship services on this Sunday the seven working commissions will showcase the activities that are done with servant hands and feet. Come and see what the commissions—Education, Facilities and Property, Health, Mission, Worship and Music, Congregational Life, and Youth—have been up to! There are countless ways for you to be involved and your new ideas are welcome too.

You may wish to pick up a "God's Work, Our Hands" bright yellow t-shirt in the gathering space at church (donations welcome) or wear your shirt from last year. Thank you for being "First...Servants of All."



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

Parish Nurse News:

CPR/First Aid Class

Learning the skills of basic life support and first aid can save lives. First Lutheran members have an opportunity to learn First Aid and CPR on September 12. First Aid will be from 8:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. and CPR from 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Each class is \$35. Class will be held at First Lutheran. This is a great opportunity for our church family to be skilled in responding to emergencies. Registration forms are available in the church office and are due by September 8. Call Jessica Nutz at 320-749-2557 for questions.

Fall Bike Ride

Sunday, September 27

Following worship on Sunday, September 27, weather permitting, we will gather at 1:00 p.m. for a bike ride on the Soo Line Trail. Meet at the trailhead on the east side of Hwy 10 just south of Little Falls. We will ride to Jordie's Café in Bowlus. Come and enjoy some fellowship on the trail.

Lay Visitors

Lay visitors provide an important ministry of care and support to those in the First Lutheran community who may be experiencing loneliness, health issues, chronic conditions, grief or loss, or are not able to get out regularly.

If you or someone you know would benefit from regular visits or desires a closer connection with their church family please let the church office know.

Visitors work alongside Pastor Hank and Parish Nurse Tracy Moe. Pastor Hank will provide a training session if you or someone you know is interested in serving in this way. Thank you to those who are already visiting with folks in the congregation/community. You do God's work with your hands!

Call Committee Report:

The Call Committee continues its work to obtain a pastor for our church family. We are patiently seeking God's guidance and ask for the prayers and support of the congregation as we seek a pastor for First Lutheran Church.

As the Chair of the Call Committee, I had the opportunity to speak with Brenda Tibbetts, Assistant to the Bishop. In this conversation I was able to clarify our needs, hopes, and desires for a pastor as well as extended an invitation to visit our congregation.

Over the last few weeks we have received three more Rostered Leader Profiles from the NE MN Synod. We are prayerfully seeking discernment and God's direction as we consider each of these pastoral candidates and their fit for our congregation.

Please contact any Call Committee member with any questions which you might have. The 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.

Submitted in Christ's Peace,

Mary Pfohl
Call Committee Chairperson

Potential Chair Yoga or Senior Fitness Class:

The Commission for Health is exploring the possibility of offering one or both of these classes during the day here at church. Sessions are helpful for tension relief and rejuvenation. Classes would be about 30 minutes long and cost about \$3.00 per session and would be open to all. If you or someone you know has interest, please indicate on today's worship opportunity sheet. For more information, contact Parish Nurse, Tracy Moe at 749-2310.

Adult Opportunities

Martha Circle

Martha Circle meets Monday, September 21, at 10:00 a.m. at the church. The group welcomes new members!



Quilters Group

The Thursday morning Quilters Group resumes meeting on Thursday, September 10 at 9:00 a.m. The group welcomes anyone who would like to use their hands in service to others. You do not need to be skilled at sewing! 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.

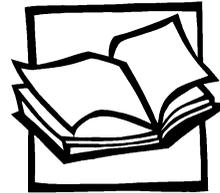
Men's Morning Bible Study Wednesday, September 16 7:00 a.m.

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 7:00 a.m. study includes breakfast. Come when you are able, leave when you must. For more information, call the church office at 632-6667.

Women's Bible Study

Watch for information about a new study for the fall. If you have questions, please contact Stephanie Adams, 632-3058.



New in the Library

American Girl books for youth:

Girls of Many Lands –

Cecile (France), Isabel (England), Leyla (Turkey), Minuk (Yupik Alaska), Saba (Ethiopia), Spring Pearl (China).

For children:

“Learning to help” “Learning to be Kind”

Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend Invest in the Success of your Marriage!

October 23-25

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Brooklyn Center

Married couples can apply online at GodLovesMarriage.org or contact Pete and Phyllis McMahon at 763-561-1575 or

mcmahonp@comcast.net for more information.

Pre-registration is required.

Book Club

All adult readers are welcome to read with this group. The selection for September is Catcher in the Rye, by J.D. Salinger. Readers, please secure your own copy of the book. The group will meet in the church library on Tuesday, September 29, at 7:00 p.m. to share and discuss the month's book. The October selection is Go Set a Watchman by Harper Lee. For more information, contact Tifanii Dahl, 632-8207.



Music Ministry Opportunities:

The Followers of Christ Children's Choir Wednesday, September 16

All kids in Kindergarten through Grade 5 are welcome to sing with the children's choir. The first rehearsal is Wednesday, September 16 from 3:30-4:15 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. For more information, contact Becky Nelson at 749-2336 or rpnelson@brainerd.net.

Grace Notes Adult Choir Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. Beginning September 16

We resume rehearsals this fall on Wednesday, September 16. We will gather at 7:00 p.m. and rehearse for one hour. The choir will sing at the 8:30 a.m. service two-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 will be available at the first rehearsal. For more information, contact Barb Stumpf, choir director, at 632-8372 or Becky Nelson, Director of Music Ministry, at 749-2336.

Worship Sing-through

This fall we will learn Worship Setting 6 from the ELW hymnal. Come for a "sing through" of the setting on Wednesday, September 2, at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. If you or someone you know is an experienced cantor, worship assistant, is interested in being a cantor/worship assistant, or would like to come and learn the music, please come. All are welcome. For more information, contact Becky Nelson.

Worship and Music Article

"One day, Mrs. Cecil Francis Alexander was working with one of her pupils in Sunday School, a little boy who happened to be her godson. He was struggling to understand the Apostles' Creed and portions of the catechism. Mrs. Alexander began to mull the possibilities of converting the Creed into songs for children, using simple hymns to explain the phrases and truths of the Christian faith to little ones. For the phrase 'Maker of heaven and earth...' she wrote this lovely song, "All Things Bright and Beautiful."

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.

Each little flow'r that opens,
Each little bird that sings,
He made their glowing colors,
He made their tiny wings.

The purple headed mountains,
The rivers running by,
The sunset and the morning,
That brightens up the sky.

The cold wind in the winter,
The pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden,
He made them ev'ry one.

He gave us eyes to see them,
And lips that we might tell
How great is God Almighty,
Who has made all things well.

Taken from "Then Sings My Soul" by Robert J Morgan

Mrs Alexander based this hymn on Genesis 1:31: "Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good." The music is a 17th century English melody. Whatever our age, little child all the way to elderly, this hymn is for all of us.

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. If your third grade student missed the class on August 19 or was unable to receive their Bible, please contact the church office to make other arrangements.

Fifth Grade: class on Stewardship meets in September. Youth will practice stewardship by making communion bread together on Wednesday, September 16, at 6:30 p.m. Communion bread will

be served at Holy Communion on Sunday, September 20. Class continues on September 23, and 30, at 7:00 p.m. Thank you to Pat Moller and Nancy Ratzloff for leading these sessions.

Eighth Grade: Pastor Hank teaches one session on the Apostles' Creed on Wednesday, September 9 at 7:00 p.m.

Ninth Grade: New Testament class begins on Wednesday, September 16, at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Hank will teach this class.

Eleventh Grade: Confirmation Reception on Sunday, September 27, at 6:30 p.m. for students, parents, and mentors. Students will share mentor activities. Confirmation Sunday is October 25 at 10:30 a.m. worship.

Luther Crest Bible Camp Quilts for Camp Extravaganza held at Carlos Creek Winery Saturday, October 17

Luther Crest is partnering with Carlos Creek Winery's Fall Apple Fest event with over 5,000 participants. Apple Fest begins at 11:00 a.m. with fun events such as: pumpkin carving, pumpkin chucking with catapults and trebuchets, pie eating contest, live music, and more. Quilt viewing will be in the barn. There will be silent auction, artisan crafts for sale, wine tasting, live quilt auction begins at 2:00 p.m. This event will be fun for the entire family all day long! Food and beverages will be available to purchase throughout the day. Carlos Creek Winery is located at 6693 County Rd 34 NW, Alexandria, near Luther Crest. Let's support the Bible Camp at this event!

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

Luther Crest Bible Camp Annual Meeting Saturday, October 10, 9:30 a.m.

First Lutheran is a member congregation of Luther Crest Bible Camp. This means that as a congregation we support the outdoor and camping ministry of this beautiful camp on Lake Carlos near Alexandria with our prayers and our dollars. You are welcome to attend the camp's annual meeting to see the great things that God is doing at camp! Contact the church office if you would like to attend with First's voting members.

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 1. Thanks to Jerome and Karen Haaland for coordinating this year's team.

Thank you!

The Vacation Bible School Mission Project, Operation Backpack provided over 80 backpacks filled with school supplies to area schools! Due to your generosity we were able to also contribute 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!

First Lutheran has provided a quilt and provided assistance for many years with the Camp Knutson quilt auction fundraiser. Camp Knutson provides a camp experience for persons with special needs such as those with heart disease, HIV or AIDS, Down syndrome, severe skin diseases, autism and other diseases. The auction is a main fundraiser for the camp. Thank you!

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 donated 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.

Sunday Morning Education Ministry Begins on Sunday, September 20 9:35-10:20 a.m.

The Sunday morning schedule is intended to allow families to worship together at the service of their choice and also conveniently attend Sunday School. Preschoolers meet with their teachers in a classroom setting. T.R.E.K. (Teaching, Reaching, Educating, Kids) rotational style education ministry is for children in Kindergarten through Fifth Grade. Youth participate by rotating through areas such as cooking, drama/storytelling, arts and crafts, games, and science/video as we explore a theme for a three to four week period. Middle School and High School youth meet separately. If you or someone you know has a passion for teaching and youth, there are many levels of involvement and something for each one's gift!

For more information, contact Amber Sobiech, 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 16, 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 20 at both services. Please enroll your child to ensure they receive a Bible. If you have questions, please call Amber Sobiech at church, 632-6667.

"Children First" Christian Preschool Update

Greetings from "Children First" Christian Preschool!

We welcome new and returning families and staff. Parent/guardian orientation is Wednesday, September 9, at 7:00 p.m. The first days of class are Monday and Tuesday, September 14 and 15. These 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. Please bring a photo of your preschooler, and a family photo. Wednesday and Thursday, September 16 and 17 will be regular classroom days.

We have openings 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 addition 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 12-13. 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 19 at the Morrison County Fairgrounds. We will make a quilt for a Habitat for Humanity family. Come and place your hand print on our quilt top!

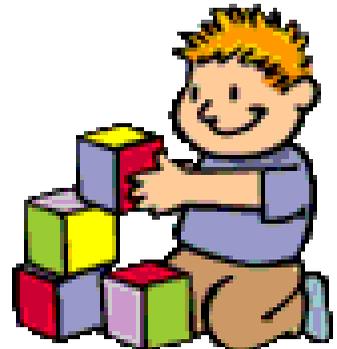
"Children First" continues to collect the following items: Coborn's/Cashwise Food Club points (found on your grocery receipt), Campbell's food points (on the labels) and used ink jet cartridges. You may deposit these items in the boxes in the church gathering space or in the education wing. The preschool receives money or products in exchange for these items. Thanks for saving them for us!

Thank you to those who sponsor tuition for preschool students. Please consider whether you or someone you know can contribute all or part of tuition for a family in need, this is a life-long gift to a child and the families are so grateful for your anonymous gift! Thank you for your continuing support through Thrivent Choice or any other means. 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



News of the Family



Hannah Groves and Hank Virnig were united in marriage on August 8.

Chantel Panek and Kevin Cash were united in marriage on August 15.

May God bless their lives together.



Lillian Rose and Brandon Raymond Laubach, children of Brandon and Trisha Laubach, were baptized on August 2.

Preston Martin Meyer, son of Mark and Therese Meyer, was baptized on August 23.

Layne Katherine Martinson, daughter of Karl and Lauren Martinson, was baptized on August 30.

Welcome to the family of God!



Barbara Radloff died on August 3. Her memorial service was August 7 at Shelley Funeral Chapel.

Vicki Mandaville died on July 11, 2015. Her memorial service was August 22 at First Lutheran.

Gladys Hokanson died on August 22. Her funeral service was August 29 at First Lutheran.

May God grant peace and comfort to the families and friends of these servants.

Items for the **October NEWSLETTER** are due on **September 21, 2015!**

