



**“Servants of All”**

June 2011, Newsletter

June 10, 2011

**Reaching Out in Mission**

Looking for a way to put your faith into action? Have some free time this summer? Here are some opportunities to consider:

- 🌍 Volunteer to paint a home with the Paint A Thon on Saturday, August 7. *See page 7.*
- 🌍 Deliver Meals on Wheels. *Contact the church office for dates.*
- 🌍 Volunteer or give a gift in support of outdoor ministry at Luther Crest Bible Camp.
- 🌍 Walk or support a walker in the Relay for Life, fundraiser for the American Cancer Society, on Friday, July 15 at Flyer Field.
- 🌍 Give a donation of food or money to the Morrison County Food Shelf. People are hungry year-round.
- 🌍 Bring a friend and come to share fellowship over a nutritious meal at Share A Meal, served each Thursday at 6:00 p.m. at First Lutheran. First provides the meal on Thursday, June 16. *See page 7.*
- 🌍 Support Honduras mission financially or with in-kind gifts. *Contact Susan Gustner in the church office.*
- 🌍 Share your gifts with kids at VBS, August 1-5, 9:00 a.m. to noon.
- 🌍 Visit with a resident at a care center or a shut-in.
- 🌍 Knit or crochet a prayer shawl for someone who can use a comforting hug.
- 🌍 Save your aluminum cans for recycling. Save the earth!
- 🌍 Attend a *Caring Companions* lunch and discussion on Sunday, June 12, following worship. *See Pastor Tony’s article on page 2.*
- 🌍 Provide prayer or financial support to First Lutheran youth participating in summer trips: middle school youth on a mission trip to Kansas City, or high school youth traveling to Philadelphia, or youth attending a Bible Camp.
- 🌍 Drop a card in the mail to a deployed soldier and their family. Some addresses are available in the church office.

**Pastor Tony’s Article**  
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**Thank you** for all the ways that you show the love of Christ in our community and world!

Two of my biggest passion in ministry are about to be combined. Those passions are: pastoral care and the equipping and empowering of others. As long as I can remember I have been passionate about pastoral care; in fact my first two ministry positions were as a Chaplain. I have always been drawn to helping others who are in need and feel God working in and through me when I meet someone in need.

Maybe my love of pastoral care comes from being a part of a big family. Maybe it comes from seeing how God can work in and through our struggles to show us his love and grace. Maybe it's because I have a counseling undergraduate degree. Whatever the reason, I feel pastoral care is the life blood in the body that is the church. Without strong pastoral care members feel disconnected from each other and the church. When people feel the church cares for them, whether it's during grief or a after a surgery or someone who feels isolated, the closer they feel to the church itself. In other words, with strong pastoral care members feel more a part of the church and a more close knit community is developed. This community is so vital to the life of any church.

The other area of ministry I am passionate about is equipping and empowering the saints for the work of ministry. The church I grew up in did not do this well for most of my time there. It was an environment where the pastor had to be a part of everything or give his blessing to everything that took place. If the pastor was not involved or if he did not give his blessing the idea went nowhere. Then when that pastor left, the church flailed for a bit; it was like a ship without a rudder or a sail. Little by little the interim pastor helped the congregation to own things. He taught, and I believe, that a pastor should be attempting to work themselves out of a job by teaching and empowering others to do the work of ministry. He was quick to point out that no pastor will truly work themselves out of a job, but it was more of an idea. The idea was that no one person was more important in the church than the next and this

included the pastor. The pastor was there just to empower and equip...to teach, train, lead, guide, encourage, and love; among many other roles.

From the very beginning Dave and I both agreed that one of my main tasks would be to work with congregation members and develop a pastoral care team. This group (*Caring Companions*) of people will help with some of the pastoral care. The *Caring Companions* will work with the pastors to help those in our church who are hurting, struggling with grief, need some light home repairs, cannot get out of the house to attend service, need a prayer, need a phone call, need a visitor...are in need of a companion. No matter where you feel your skills or your talents lay, please consider being a part of the first meeting when we will discuss what the group is and what we will do.

*Caring Companions* will be a coming together of pastoral care and the empowering and equipping of others. It will be a lay ministry group, made up of people with various gifts and skills. This group will help with pastoral care in a variety of forms.

I am excited about the new ministry opportunity! I think there is great pastoral care taking place in the church, but this will provide a way for us to make sure no one is being overlooked and will give some structure to the way we provide for our members.

On Sunday, June 12 (immediately following the second service) there will be a lunch and meeting in Stoltz Hall for anyone interested in learning more about *Caring Companions*. Please consider attending and finding out more about this great ministry opportunity!

In Christ,

Pastor Tony



**Pentecost Sunday  
June 12  
Celebration Offering**

In February of 2001 we closed on a twenty-year mortgage with a principal of \$475,000 and interest rate of 7.25%. Now our mortgage is less than \$140,000 with an interest rate of 5.25%. Each Pentecost Sunday has been set aside as an opportunity to reduce the principal amount on our mortgage. Over the years, your gifts have helped to reduce the principal by over \$230,000. As we reduce our mortgage debt, we free up dollars for mission. On Pentecost Sunday, June 12, we will receive an offering for mortgage principal reduction. Your gifts are welcome; envelopes are available on the greeters' table for this cause. Please write "Celebration Offering" in the memo line of your check. **Thank you for your faithful giving!**

You are also welcome to participate in an electronic funds transfer giving plan, Simply Giving ®. Simply Giving is a program sponsored by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans which allows you to automate your giving. This benefits First by ensuring regular giving throughout the year and benefits the giver by saving time and knowing that your giving continues on a regular basis. There is no fee to the giver for using this program. Please see Sue or Gloria in the church office to enroll.

Thank you to all who faithfully support Christ's mission at First Lutheran Church with their mail-in offerings!



**Council Highlights**

- ✚ Thank you to all who came with work gloves, rakes, shovels and wheelbarrows to clean up the church grounds and wash windows. The grounds look great!
- ✚ Thank you to all who supported the recent youth fundraisers in any way!
- ✚ Thank you to those who took time to clean up our stretch of Hwy. 238. Your care for creation is appreciated.
- ✚ Heard that Jonathan "Jay" Kiel has accepted the position of youth and family minister to begin in August.
- ✚ Approved a bid from Terrific Painting to paint the sanctuary.
- ✚ Approved the purchase of additional ELW hymnals for worship use.
- ✚ Thank you to those who have given an increased pledge for the First Moving Forward additional staffing plan. Pledges can be updated at any time during the year.
- ✚ Summer worship schedule begins Sunday, May 29 (Memorial Day weekend) through Sunday, September 4 (Labor Day weekend). Worship is at 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. with coffee fellowship between services.

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**2011 Congregational Pictorial Directory**

The Commission for Worship and Congregational Life and the Church Council has made a decision to produce a new congregational pictorial directory as a part of our celebration of 120 years in mission and ministry here at First Lutheran. The directory is a valuable means of getting to know one another and recording who we are as a church family at a particular time. Our church copy of the directory dated 1969 contains many familiar and well-loved faces—maybe just a few years younger ☺.

Please plan to have your photograph included and be a part of this fun project. The first organizational meeting with the representative from Lifetouch is Wednesday, June 1, at 6:30 p.m. Photography sessions will be during the months of July, September and October. Signup will begin in June. If you or someone you know is interested in assisting with this project, please contact Mary Larson, 632-8203, the church office, or come to the meeting.



## STEWARDSHIP...



What is the first thing that came into your mind when you read that word? If you are like most Americans, I am willing to bet, that it was money. It is unfortunate that the mention of stewardship has so often simply been relegated to a monetary figure needed to “meet the budget.” However, there is so much more to stewardship than simply a dollar amount put into the offering plate.

Let’s try to forget for a minute about money. When we read the word “stewardship,” Paul has told us that we are to think of ourselves as stewards—as servants of God’s mysteries. “Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God’s mysteries. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.” *1 Corinthians 4:1-2*

Let us together, as a community of believers, as a community of disciples, think about stewardship as it fits in our own lives. After all, at First Lutheran we are known by our tag line, and we are called to be “*First... Servants of All...*” What sort of a steward would you like to be known as? Generous or miserly? Charitable or stingy? Big-hearted or tight-fisted?

As we change the culture of our thinking about stewardship, we can increase our understanding and our calling as children of God: “And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” *Colossians 3:17* and “Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.” *James 1:17*



### **Ride a Bike to Church Day Sunday, June 5**

This will be a Day for the Heart – think of all the benefits: exercise for your physical and spiritual muscles, care for the planet, and worship for the heart of a Christian! Bring a friend and don’t forget your helmet!

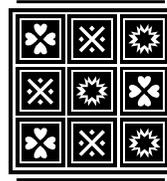
### **2012 ELCA National Youth Gathering “citizens with the saints” Ephesians 2:14-20**

Planning is underway for our participation with the NE MN Synod Journey – “Mission Possible” to the 2012 ELCA National Youth Gathering. If you or someone you know is completing grades 8-11 now, consider attending this life-changing event. Trip dates are Friday, July 13, 2012 through Monday, July 23, 2012. We will practice discipleship and prepare to live out our Christian faith. The journey will take 450 youth and adult leaders from our synod to the Gulf Coast and on to New Orleans for the gathering with 32,000 youth and adults. Registration is happening now, don’t delay! If you have questions or would like more information, contact Pastor Dave or Sue Gustner in the church office.



### Intercessory Prayer

Prayer is the greatest gift we can give! We are all called to intercede (pray) for others and for ourselves. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, our prayers will be heard and people will be blessed. Each Monday morning at 7:30 a.m. prayers are offered in the First Lutheran Church Prayer Chapel. All are welcome to come as you are able and lift up prayer concerns. May the Holy Spirit lead you to a blessed start to each week. For more information, contact Sheri Bengtson, 632-9335, or Naomi Engel, 632-3167.



### Luther Crest Bible Camp 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Quilt Auction Saturday, July 9

Held in the *Air-conditioned Gymnasium*

- ☞ 9:30-12:30 p.m. – Quilt Review and Silent Auction
- ☞ 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. – Lunch served
- ☞ 12:30 p.m. – Auction Begins

Over 100 quilts of all sizes will be sold at the auction, including several made by First's quilters. There will be something for everyone, with prices ranging from \$50 on up. Many hands have worked very hard to sew the quilts. Let's support the Bible Camp at this event!



### Summer Women's Study

Uppity Women of the Bible:  
Esther  
Wednesday, June 22

With lavish banquets, extreme beauty treatments and dangerous liaisons at every turn, can the beautiful and courageous Esther avert disaster for her people? All this occurs in a Biblical book where God is never mentioned. This video study written and presented by Dr. Lisa Wolfe, who has a PhD in Hebrew Bible, begins Wednesday, June 22. You can choose from two meeting times—9:30 a.m., or 6:30 p.m. Child care is available by request. Please call the church office to register and to request child care; for more information, contact Gail Hittesdorf, 632-2218.

### 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Scramble to benefit the ministry at Luther Crest Bible Camp Monday, August 15

Why not get a foursome together and spend a fun day playing this "Best Ball" tournament on the course at Lake Miltona Golf Course, Alexandria. Registration begins at 10:00 a.m.; "shotgun start" tee time is at noon. Supper will be served at Lake Miltona at 5:00 p.m. The fee of \$75.00 per person covers green fees, cart rental, and meal. Supper is available for spouses or other guests at \$10.00. You are encouraged to give a gift in support of Luther Crest at this event.

Past tournaments have made a significant impact on the camp's ministry. To register, call the church office, 632-6667.

**Thanks \* Thanks \* Thanks!**

**Lutheran Care Center**

**Thank you** to all who helped to make the spring sale at the care center a great success. Whether you donated baked goods, craft items, quilts, silent auction baskets, or plants, or came and shopped at the sale, it is all appreciated. All proceeds go to support the needs of the residents. Thanks again! Donna Hegstrom, and Jean Petersen, First Lutheran Church Representatives, Lutheran Care Center Volunteer Board.

**LSS Rummage Sale**

First Lutheran and Bethel Lutheran hosted another successful rummage sale! Sale proceeds were over \$2,000. The proceeds will be donated to Lutheran Social Service group homes in Little Falls. Thanks to all who donated items, worked or helped in any way. Start saving now for the next sale in October 2011! Thank you! Karen Haaland

**NE MN Synod Hunger Team**

You quilters amaze us! Every year your generosity and creativity transform our Synod Assembly. You inspire us with your dedication and commitment to World Hunger! Because of your endeavors we raised \$13,000.00 for World Hunger. Many thanks from your Synod leaders and the Hunger Team. Gratefully, Northeast Minnesota Hunger Team

**Youth Mission Trips – 2011**

During June and July youth ages middle school through high school, and adults from First Lutheran will participate in mission trips to Kansas City and to Philadelphia. You may be asked to serve as a prayer partner for one of these young people. Whether a young person asks you to be a prayer partner or not, please remember these kids and adults in your prayers. These are life-changing, God-filled experiences for all. Thank you for your on-going support!



**Vacation Bible School  
August 1-5  
Pandemia!**

**Where God is Wild About You!**

Kids and adults will explore Psalm 139 and experience God listening to them, watching over them, and loving them, no matter what! Thank you, God! Vacation Bible School is Monday, August 1 through Friday, August 5, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. VBS is for kids age 3 (by September 1, 2010) through fifth grade. Kids will have fun with *Bamboo Blast Games*, enjoy a movie at *Chadder's Movie Mania*, have a *Wild Bible Adventure*, make a project at *Crazy Crafts* and have a *Treetop Treat*. Registration is underway. Pick up a form at church, or download it from First's website, [www.flclittlefalls.org](http://www.flclittlefalls.org). Early registration makes planning easier. VBS is a collaboration of First Lutheran and First United congregations.

Pandemia Pete wants you to know that seventh grade through adult volunteer participation is encouraged. You can find the signup board in the Gathering Space to be part of the Bamboo Crew. You can signup to become a station leader, bamboo crew leader, preschool leader or a helper. Please prayerfully consider how you can share your time and talents during this fun week.

The following planning meetings are scheduled:

- ☺ Station Leader and Decorating Crew, Wednesday, June 15, at 7:00 p.m.
- ☺ Bamboo Crew Leader meeting, Wednesday, July 13, at 7:00 p.m.
- ☺ Preschool Group meeting, Wednesday, July 13, at 7:00 p.m.

For more information, call Gail Hittesdorf, 632-2218, or the church office.



## Mission Opportunities



### What Should I Save?

There are many ways that you can be involved in mission right from your own home. We can all be good stewards of the earth and help others at the same time by saving a variety of things. Here is a list of ways that you can help. If you know of other projects, you may contact the church office with this information for future publication.

- Coborn's Food Club coupon points (given with your cash register receipt); Coborn's Videos for Learning stickers; UPC codes from Campbells, Pepperidge Farm, Swanson, Prego; V8 labels; Pace lids; inkjet cartridges, laser/toner cartridges, old cell phones, old laptop computers—"Children First" Christian Preschool receives cash or teaching materials from these items. Drop off in the Gathering Space on the wood cupboard.
- Cotton fabric (large enough for 7 inch squares) for the First Lutheran quilters. Bring to the church office.
- Cancelled stamps for Sons of Norway. Give to Marlene Williams.
- Aluminum cans for the First Lutheran youth program. You can leave bags of cans by the church garage. Please close bags securely.
- Recycle—at home and at church. Your assistance with recycling is appreciated. We can recycle office paper, newspaper, glass, plastic, cans, cardboard, and more. Thank you!
- Re-use: save those items that you no longer need or use and donate them to the youth garage sale fundraiser (*see article on page 9*) or the fall LSS Rummage Sale, a cooperative event of Bethel and First Lutheran. Your donation provides funds for Lutheran Social Service.

### Share a Meal Thursday, June 16, 6:00 p.m.

Each Thursday, community groups provide a nutritious meal and fellowship in Stoltz Hall here at First for any interested person in the community. First Lutheran provides the meal on Thursday, June 16. Why not bring a friend and enjoy the meal? If you can assist with preparing, serving, and clean up or with providing food ingredients, please contact the church office or see the signup sheet in the gathering space at church.



### Annual Community Paint-A-Thon Oasis/Share A Meal Saturday, August 6

The Paint-A-Thon committee is recruiting teams to paint a home in Morrison County on August 6. Over the past 14 years, over 138 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. Jerome Haaland will coordinate this year's team. Thanks, Jerome! Can you spend a Saturday helping to paint a home for a local resident? This is a BYOB (Bring Your Own Brush!) event. Contact the church office to sign up. Thank you for making a difference in the community we share!

## Confirmation Ministries

**Sixth Grade:** Looking ahead – Class on Prayer during VBS week, August 1-5.

**Seventh Grade:** seventh grade students are registered for class on the Apostles' Creed at Luther Crest Bible Camp during the week of June 19-24. Pastor Dave will teach this class.

**Tenth Grade:** Summer will fly by quickly, remember to keep working on mentor activities!



## “Children First” Christian Preschool Update

Greetings from “Children First” Christian Preschool,

“Children First” says goodbye to preschoolers going to Kindergarten in the fall and welcome to all children registered for the 2011-2012 Preschool year!

Preschool enrollment for the 2011/2012 school year continues throughout the summer. This fall “Children First” offers two classes for children ages 4 year-old-PreKindergarten and two class times for children age 33 months-3 years. We again offer the “Friday Friends” class to provide a three day a week experience for preschoolers. Registration forms are available in the gathering space at First Lutheran or on the website at [www.flclittlefalls.org](http://www.flclittlefalls.org). A \$50.00 non-refundable registration/activity fee is required at the time of registration. Please contact the church office or Gail if you have any questions or wish to view the classroom.

If you or someone you know has a little person of preschool age, consider enrolling them in this quality, Christian early childhood program.

*Watch for “Children First” over the summer at:*

Little Falls Dam Festival Parade – Saturday, June 18

Coborn’s Brat Stand – Friday-Saturday, July 22-23

The Green Day Folk Festival at St. Francis Campus – Wednesday, August 3

Morrison County Fair – Thursday-Sunday, August 11-14

Little Falls Arts and Craft Fair – Saturday-Sunday, September 10-11

This has been a fun and event filled year. God has blessed “Children First” with wonderful children, caring families, many volunteers and financial contributors, an awesome staff and advisory team as well as great friends. We have watched our Preschoolers grow in God’s love and learning. We are looking forward to next fall as we see returning faces and are rewarded with many new faces.

Have a great summer and God’s Blessings to all!

Yours in Christ’s Service,

Gail Hittesdorf, Director



## News of the Family



Chloe Grace Olsen, daughter of Eric and Heather Olsen, was baptized on May 1.

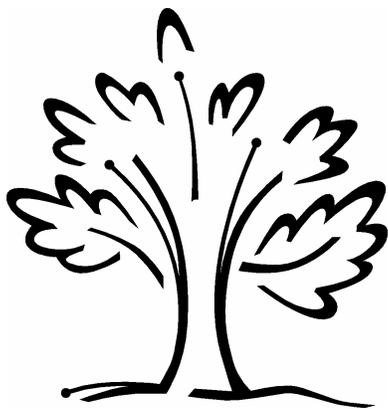
Hailey Lynne Roering, daughter of Stacy Roering and David Long, was baptized on May 15.

Anton Carlson Surma, son of Adam and Rose Surma, was baptized on May 29.



Don Olson died May 12. His funeral service was May 16 at First Lutheran Church. May God grant peace and comfort to his family and friends.

Kim Hansen died May 12. Her memorial service was May 21 at First Lutheran Church. May God grant peace and comfort to her family and friends.



**Congratulations! On June 1 First Lutheran celebrates 22 years of being smoke-free.**

Items for the **July NEWSLETTER** are due on **June 20, 2011!**