

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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“Servants of All”

September, 2011, Newsletter

September 1, 2011

Celebrating 120 years of Serving!
First Lutheran Church Anniversary Celebration



Saturday, September 24, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.
Concert featuring The Green Lake Bluegrass Band
Dessert and Coffee

Plan to bring friends and family to enjoy this celebration evening with The Green Lake Bluegrass Band. The band got its start playing at Green Lake Lutheran Bible Camp about 15 years ago. The band plays bluegrass tunes, gospel, folk and Irish music. You will hear familiar tunes that you can sing along to. The group includes five members: Dave Eliason – banjo and guitar, Bill Gossman – harmonica, jaw harp, and whistle, Brian Jensen – bass, Jerry Saetveit – fiddle and whistle, Bob Whitney – guitar and fiddle, and all five guys on vocals. A few of our famous First Lutheran Norskes will emcee the evening – you can meet Sven, Ole and Lena in person! Uff da!

Sunday, September 25, 2011
Traditional Worship at 8:00 a.m.
Celebration Continental Breakfast at 9:00 a.m.
Bluegrass Celebration Worship at 10:00 a.m.
with the Green Lake Bluegrass Band

Sunday morning, September 25, we will raise the roof in thankfulness and praise in worship to our faithful God! Our guest preacher is Rev. Sally (Smith) Ankerfelt. Sally grew up in this congregation, the daughter of Rev. Richard and Shirley Smith who served at First from 1973-1991. Please note the change in worship times for this celebration day and plan to be present to honor those faithful saints who have gone before, and to worship and serve God into the future as First...Servants of All!

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Pastor Dave's Article

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2

Summer is almost over! There's no mistaking that a change in seasons is upon us. The signs of change are all around, like back to school sales and the State Fair! For those of you who have been away much of the summer, welcome back.

We've been busy preparing for a new season of worship, education, outreach and growth in the faith for all ages.

Recently I read a church sign that said, "Renew your minds, not your subscriptions." Almost every week, I get a renewal notice for something. But that kind of renewal means very little in the big scheme of life. Instead, consider these words from Romans 12: "Do be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God." God's plan for us is to experience newness of life through the Holy Spirit. God offers us a new perspective and a new opportunity to discover peace and wholeness.

Here's a list of blessings and hopes as we open a new season:

- May our prayers this year be focused on connecting people to the love and grace of God through Jesus Christ.
- May Sunday mornings be warm, gospel-oriented, inviting and welcoming to all who enter.
- May our days be filled with purpose as we take seriously the call of Jesus.

- May we be looking for practical, hands-on ways to serve others in Christ's name as "First... Servants of All."
- May we be about the task of growing in our own faith so that we might better help others grow in their faith and connection to Christ.
- Pray for the work of the church and the future ministry of First Lutheran as we continue to move forward.

Much planning has been done specifically with you in mind at First Lutheran. I hope you will renew your life of faith through daily prayer, weekly worship, regular Bible study, faith-based friendships, service to others and generous giving. These are faith-forming opportunities that are known as the Marks of Discipleship. When we do these things, God gets our attention because our attention is focused on God. It is then that our lives are transformed and renewed. Then our faith grows and grows!

Blessings and Peace!
See you in church!

Pastor Dave Sperstad
dsperstad@flclittlefalls.org



Sunday Morning Worship Schedule for Fall 2011

8:00 a.m. – Traditional liturgical Worship

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

9:30 a.m. – Adult Study Time

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

10:45 a.m. – Traditional liturgical Worship

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 new and fun way. First Lutheran has a Facebook page!

Search for us under the name '1st 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. ☺



New Member Group

First Lutheran Church fall New Member Group begins in October. The group will meet on Sunday evenings 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.

For more information, or to sign up for the class, please call the church office at 632-6667.



Council Highlights

- ✦ Heard that the week of Vacation Bible School was an amazing week with over 180 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 discover that God loves us no matter what!
- ✦ Heard an update on plans for First Lutheran's 120th Anniversary Celebration on Saturday-Sunday, September 24-25. *See page one of this newsletter for more information.*
- ✦ Discussed forming a Worship Space Enhancement Planning Team to develop a comprehensive plan for improving and updating the worship space.
- ✦ Welcomed new steward/members on Sunday, August 7. They are: Jeremy and Emily Ewing, Sienna and Alina; Tony and Teresa Giese and Zoe; Mike and Tera Hurrle, Skyler and Reagan; Jay and Stephanie Kiel; and Althea Tenold.
- ✦ Heard that the congregation's response to the pictorial directory has been great. Photo session times are still available in September and October.



Worship Space Enhancement Planning Team

We are beginning a conversation about enhancing the worship space here at First. If you would like to be a part of this discussion, or would consider being a part of the planning team, please contact the church office or speak to Pastor Dave.

Reminder: Fall Worship Schedule begins Sunday September 11 at 8:00, 9:30 and 10:45 a.m.

Adult Opportunities

Martha Circle

Martha Circle meets Monday, September 19, at 11:30 a.m. at the church for luncheon and study. Hostess is Marlene Williams.

Women's Bible Study

Watch for more information about this study to begin on Wednesday, September 14, 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 8 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 Tuesday of each month, September through May. Mark your calendar for Tuesday, September 20, at 11:30 a.m. We'll meet in Stoltz Hall to share food, conversation and laughter!

Men's Morning Bible Study Wednesday, September 7 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.

Adult Bible Study "Different Gospels, Same Jesus?" Monday, September 12, 6:30 p.m.

Pastor Dave will lead a new conversation and study on the different accounts and stories of Jesus contained in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. We will also look at other Gospels (good news), such as Mary, Thomas, Timothy, Peanuts, and the Simpsons'. We meet at church for six sessions beginning Monday, September 12. Bring a friend and come for conversation and fellowship. See you there!

Adult Sunday Study Begins Sunday, September 18, 9:30 a.m.

This fall, we begin a time for adult study and conversation on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. David Hoadley will lead the group as we take a look at the lectionary readings for each Sunday, in the study "Light on the Lessons," from Lutheran Bible Ministries. Bring your tea or coffee and a friend and gather in the library for this study. You can still attend worship at 8:00 or 10:45 a.m.

News from Jay Kiel, Youth and Family Minister

I want thank everybody for the great support shown to Steph and I—we have gone through a lot of really big changes in our lives and thanks to God’s great love, and the support and love given to us from our brothers and sisters at First Lutheran, these changes have been going very smoothly. I am really excited to be here and start this new phase of my life, which is also a new phase in the life of First Lutheran. I am excited to be able do this together, hand in hand, for this is not my ministry, but God’s ministry. God has called me to be a part of this great church. I ask that we may do this together and share God’s love wherever we may be. I will be in the office Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9:00 a.m.-Noon and would love to be able to talk and meet with you. Thank you for this opportunity!

God Bless, Jay Kiel jkiel@flclittlefalls.org

What’s coming up for youth?

High School Youth:

- ☞ All high school students planning to attend the summer 2012 ELCA National Youth Gathering in New Orleans, “Citizens With the Saints,” must be signed up, first deposit made, and all forms filled out by September 9. Contact me, Pastor Dave, or Sue Gustner for more information or if you have questions.
- ☞ There will be a youth group meeting for anyone in grades 9-12 on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month starting on Sunday, September 11, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. We will continue to meet throughout the school year. This is a time to spend with each other, to get to know each other better, and most importantly a time to spend with God. We will talk about and discuss whatever is going on in our lives in a safe place. This is also a time for fun, filled with activities and just time to hang out and relax; and of course, there will be food!
- ☞ Here is a great opportunity to grow even more—every Monday morning that there is school, there will be F.O.C.U.S Bible Study at Subway. Come out to Subway at 7:00 a.m. for breakfast and see what it’s about.
- ☞ Wednesday evening FLY Night (First Lutheran Youth) will resume on Wednesday, September 14, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in the youth room. Krystal Lilga gathers with the youth during this time.

Middle School Youth:

- ☞ There are a lot of really awesome things that are happening this year! There will be youth group meeting on the third Sunday of each month starting on Sunday, September 18, from 5:00-7:00 p.m. We will meet throughout the school year. We will spend time with each other and with God, have fun times together and learn more about ourselves and our faith. Bring a friend!
- ☞ Coming up in November is the Middle School youth gathering at Cragun’s resort in Brainerd. *See more information on the youth page.*
- ☞ F.O.C.U.S. Bible Study meets at Subway at 7:00 a.m. on each Monday that there is school, Come for breakfast and a time to pray together at the beginning of each week.
- ☞ Wednesday evening FLY Night (First Lutheran Youth) will resume on Wednesday, September 14, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in the youth room. Krystal Lilga gathers with the youth during this time.

There will be lots of opportunities for you to get involved and deepen your faith and have fun this year! Come and bring a friend!



Music Ministry Opportunities:

The Followers of Christ Children's Choir Rehearsals begin: Wednesday, September 14

All kids in Kindergarten through Grade 5 are welcome to sing with the children's choir. The first rehearsal is Wednesday, September 14 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. For more information, contact Becky Nelson at 749-2336 or rpnelson@brainerd.net.

Adult Choir Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. Beginning September 14

Senior Choir resumes rehearsal on Wednesday, September 14, at 7:30 p.m. (following praise team rehearsal). If you enjoy singing God's praises, and are high-school age and up, come for singing and fellowship. We plan to sing two or three Sundays per month at the 8:00 or 10:45 a.m. services. For more information, contact Becky Nelson, at 749-2336, or Kathy Pederson, at 468-2324, or 630-3731.

Dakota Road in Concert Saturday, October 1, 6:30 p.m. First Lutheran Church, Aitkin 107 Second Street

Music lovers are invited to attend this concert by composers/musicians, Dakota Road. Some of their original songs you will know include: "Send Us Out," "All Are Welcome," and "Lord of Justice." A free-will offering will be received. The band invites anyone who loves to sing to be part of a mass choir, which will rehearse before the concert at 5:00 p.m. You are also invited to attend an afternoon workshop from 1:30-5:30 p.m. where a new liturgical setting will be introduced. Contact the church office to register.

Lutheran College Fair Sunday, October 2 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. In addition, students who attend will receive four application fee waivers for use when applying at Lutheran colleges and universities.

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 3:15 p.m., financial aid seminar is at 3:30 p.m., and the college fair continues from 4:00-5:30 p.m. Come and learn about quality higher education at Lutheran schools.

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. The team was rained out on Saturday, August 6 but finished the task on Monday, August 8! Thanks to Jerome and Karen Haaland for coordinating this year's team.

Thank you!

The Vacation Bible School Mission Project, Operation Backpack provided over 115 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 Camp Knutson quilt auction generated the second largest proceeds this year. 159 quilts were auctioned for \$42,750! Silent auction and food concessions brought an additional \$3,769. Special ask giving of \$7,372 will provide for specific facility needs at camp. Thanks be to God for the wonderful financial support for Camp Knutson.

Sunday Morning Education Ministry Begins on Rally Sunday, September 18 at 10:30 a.m.

This fall we are excited to offer Sunday morning discipleship learning to people of all ages. Plan to participate and grow into the disciple Jesus intends for you to be.

Children and parents/guardians gather in Stoltz Hall at 10:30 on Sunday, September 18. We will introduce this year's theme, "Practicing Your Faith" and we'll make a project for the congregation's 120th Anniversary Celebration!

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, or Beth or Simon Storkamp, 632-4747.



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 14, 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 18, 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 8, at 7:00 p.m. The first days of class are Monday and Tuesday, September 12 and 13. These sessions will meet for one and one-half hours. The morning sessions will meet from 9:00-10:30 a.m. and the afternoon session will meet from 12:30-2:00 p.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 14 and 15 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 10-11. We're on the corner of Broadway and Second Street (courthouse corner) serving chips and cheese and beverages. If you can help with the booth, please contact Gail.

'Give Us a Hand!' Come to Morrison County Kids' Day on Saturday, September 24 at the Morrison County Fairgrounds. We will make a quilt for Habitat for Humanity. Come and place your hand print on our quilt top!

There is power in prayer and we have been wonderfully blessed by your prayers for the mission to bring God into children's lives. Thank you for your support!

Please keep preschool students, families and staff in your prayers as we begin our new school year.

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. The class will practice stewardship by serving Share A Meal on Thursday, September 8. Youth will continue learning on Wednesdays, September 14 and 22, and October 5, at 7:00 p.m.

Ninth Grade: New Testament class begins on Wednesday, September 14, at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Dave will teach this class.

Tenth Grade: Six-week class on Lutheran Identity begins on Wednesday, October 5. Susan Gustner will teach this class.

Eleventh Grade: Confirmation Reception on Sunday, October 2, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. for students, parents, and mentors. Students will share mentor activities. Confirmation Sunday is October 30 at 10:45 a.m. worship.

**Gospel Gang
(Grades 3-5)**

**Kids' Day at Morrison County Fairgrounds
Saturday, September 24**

Kids! Plan to bring an adult to Kids' Day on Saturday morning, September 24. There will be booths with lots of fun activities for the kids (including "Children First" Christian Preschool!) and it's free!



**Friday Night Youth
and Family Bonfire**

Fridays from 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Kids! Bring a friend and the family and come to church for an evening bonfire. We'll gather around the new fire ring for s'mores, conversation and fun. A different family hosts each week. Can't come this week? We plan to meet each Friday, same time, same place! If you would like to start the fire and host a week, please call the church office, 632-6667.

Returning this fall!

F.O.C.U.S.

**✦ Fixed On Christ Until Sunday ✦
Youth Group**

Beginning Monday, September 12, at 6:50 a.m., we'll meet at Subway with breakfast and a FOCUS (Fixed On Christ Until Sunday) devotional – Walk With Jesus Daily. We will have an Every Day God Experience and we want you to have it as well. A life-changing experience awaits us as we pursue God every day. Come, and draw closer to him! Youth in 6th-12th grade are welcome. Questions? Need a ride? Call Pastor Dave at church, 632-6667, or at home, 632-5930, or via email at dsperstad@flclittlefalls.org.

**Wild and Crazy Saints
(Grades 6-8)**

**Middle School Youth Gathering
"Loving Rules"**



**Friday-Saturday, November 18-19
Cragun's Resort**

You don't want to miss this event! We travel to Cragun's Resort for the annual gathering with kids from all over the NE MN Synod. This year's focus is on the Ten Commandments. The commandments are more than just guidelines, they are "Loving Rules" that teach us to love each other and to love God. They are rules on how to love, because as Christians, love rules our life—and fulfills the law. Guest speaker is Jeremy Myers, professor of youth ministry at Augsburg College, Minneapolis. The worship band will be made up of high school and college youth from our synod with leadership by staff from Luther Crest Bible Camp.

Registration is \$60.00 per youth (early bird); your deposit of \$30.00 holds your spot, First Lutheran will cover the other \$30.00—what a deal! Bring your deposit to the church office by October 14.

**See You at the Pole
"Converge"**

Wednesday, September 28

SYATP connects believers together at the beginning of the school year, so you can stand strong together throughout the year. Bring your friends before school on Wednesday, September 28. We'll gather at the Middle School flagpole at 7:00 a.m. and start the day with youth-led prayer. Check out the gathering space bulletin board for more information.

News of the Family

Klay Robert Schlagel, son of Cory and Tara Schlagel, was baptized on August 28.

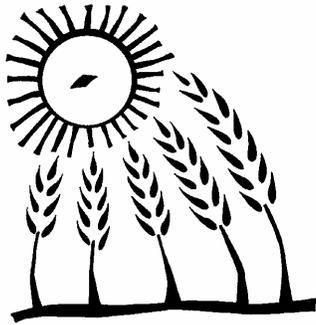
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Holly Philippi and Dan Gustner were united in marriage on August 20.

+

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, 2011!**



Can Care Collection

Keep saving those aluminum cans!

- ☺ Save a can
- ☺ Save the earth
- ☺ Save our youth budget!

Keep those cans coming! Thank you!

Reminder: Fall Worship schedule begins Sunday, September 11. Worship at 8:00, 9:30 and 10:45 a.m.