

FIRST

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Ministers: All God's People at FLC

Jake Dyrhaug, Pastor



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“Servants of All”

April 2018, Newsletter

March 26, 2018

Eastertime:

Easter is not one day, but fifty!



First, we kept the forty days, with praying, fasting and works of love. Then we celebrated the three days of Christ's passion, dying and rising. Now we delight in the fifty days of Easter, with rejoicing, feasting and giving witness! The season of Easter is fifty days long. It is a time of unbridled joy, of exuberant rejoicing.

Why is Eastertime fifty days?

The ancient cultures that gave us the Bible had great respect for numbers. They believed that numbers contained hints about God and the meaning of life. The number seven was thought to contain fullness: There are seven days in the week, according to God's original way of ordering time, creating all that there is and resting. And so if you multiply 7 times 7, you have "fullness times fullness."

But wait! 7 times 7 is 49! And with God, there is always more—more than we can ever imagine. So our season of Easter is even more than "fullness times fullness." It's "fullness times fullness" and then some: 7 times 7 plus 1. That's what love is like: more than we can ever imagine. That's what heaven, life with God, is like: more than we can ever imagine.

The fifty days of Easter are days for looking for the risen Lord among us, for hearing in each other's stories of rising from the big and small deaths, days when we experience something of Christ's triumphs. That's why we look to the newly baptized: at Easter, they died and rose with Christ! Now they take their places with us. Together, like the apostles who were so full of the Spirit that people thought they were drunk, we rush about with good and giddy news: Death is not the last word! Life and love are forever!

And slowly, painstakingly, we work together, along side the risen Christ, to change this world into the world to come. Sing Alleluia!

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50 DAYS FOR OUR DELIGHT: FOR CHRIST IS RISEN AS ALL THINGS TELL. GOOD CHRISTIAN, SEE YE RISE AS WELL.

Easter Thanksgivings

Thank you to all the many people who make our Lent, Holy Week and Easter celebrations so meaningful and wonderful:

- † Communion ministers and visitation ministers
- † Musicians: instrumentalists, cantors, praise team, vocalists, and choir
- † Scripture readers and worship participants
- † Greeters and Ushers and Hospitality ministers
- † Housecleaners, maintenance helpers, and custodian
- † Art teams, banner makers, drape makers and handlers
- † Ministry team and Worship team
- † Bakers, soup makers, and breakfast preparers
- † Sacristans and altar guild
- † Child care providers
- † Teachers and educators
- † Worshippers of all ages and walks of life

“First...Servants of All” Worship Serving Opportunities

Each Sunday, many worshippers come to worship at First, and each week someone is here for the very first time. Your servant hands are an integral part of providing hospitality to all who enter here. Serving areas are greeters, ushers, scripture readers, communion ministry, child care, coffee hospitality. Choose a time that fits your schedule. Stop at the welcome center in the Gathering Space or call the church office—your volunteering saves many staff hours of phone calling—to offer your gifts in service to Christ’s body at First Lutheran. Sign-ups are now available for April. Training for each serving ministry is available—please ask! For more information, contact the church office, 632-6667.

News of the Family



Lucas James Gustner, son of Dan and Holly Gustner, was baptized on March 11.

Krew Steven Lieser, son of Brent and Tera Lieser, was baptized on March 18.

Welcome to the family of God. Let your light shine!



Second grade students receiving Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday are: Adella Ambuehl, Imagine Hines, Stella Holig, Brandon Laubach, McKayla Meyer, Caley Rakow, Peyton Rakow, Elijah Ramos, Khloe Reese, Khloe Schlagel, Evan VanDenheuvel, Noah Vaverek, and Jonah Wischmann.

Council Highlights

- Heard about the Auction and Lunch fundraiser on Sunday, April 8 for youth attending the ELCA National Youth Gathering this summer.
- Heard that a representative from Oasis Central Minnesota will speak at worship on Sunday, April 15 about the initiative to address homelessness in Morrison County. A special offering will be received that day.
- Heard that New Member orientation and supper is scheduled for Tuesday, April 17. New members will be received in worship on Sunday, April 22.
- Heard that plans are underway for a display to showcase our Christian ‘calling.’
- Heard that the new website is anticipated to be completed in April.

After the final snowstorms of March in Minnesota, I'm so ready to see life spring up from the ground—the sooner, the better! It all goes well with Easter. Spring and new life sounds really good. I remember my dad planting daffodils around an oak tree up the driveway where we'd wait for the bus in the morning. They were the first things to bring bright color to the world at the close of winter. Early in the spring, these golden yellow flowers begin to come into bloom. Because the bulbs were planted in the ground in the fall they are now ready to break out of their prison of earth with dazzling beauty. Faith is like that. If we are to have beauty for the coming spring of resurrection morn, a true faith must be planted now in Christ our Savior in the soil of our hearts. The transient passes away, so many things of this life, but the eternal goes on forever. There are many ways faith is planted, and here are just a few for First Lutheran in the coming weeks.

Vision/Long-Range Planning Retreat:

In February sixteen First Lutheran leaders met at Luther Crest Bible Camp for an overnight retreat. The purpose was to continue the vision/long-range planning the Church Council has been focusing in recent years. The three goals we set at this retreat, to be completed over the next three years are: ***Generous Giving, to Infuse the Vibrant Sense of Calling through Space Enhancement, and to build up Discipleship/Relational Groups.*** Already things are happening regarding to these goals—we will have Pastor Amy Odgren with us this fall to lead us through another stewardship event, there is an art/quilt display in Stolz Hall (it will be changing regularly so stay tuned) and the new church website is almost ready to launch. These are exciting developments as we seek to have our paddles in the water in a unified direction as a result of this “vision seeking”!

Lunch and Auction Youth Fundraiser for ELCA National Youth Gathering Trip to Houston/Galveston: On Sunday, April 8, don't miss the awesome Lunch and Auction Youth Fundraiser at Stolz Hall, beginning at 11:45 a.m.! This is both a silent auction and live auction. Many items for the auction have been donated, and on this day we will have a professional auctioneer to help us rally support for our youth headed to the youth gathering this summer.

New Member Orientation: If you or anyone you know would like to become a member of First Lutheran Church, there will be a New Members' Supper and Orientation on Tuesday, April 17 at 6:30 p.m. We will receive new members in worship on Sunday, April 22 at both services. Quite a few are planning to join, and we are very excited to welcome them into the life of our congregation.

Crossways Bible Study Mondays, May 7, 14 and 21: We will finish the Crossways Bible class, “See Through the Scriptures” on Monday nights, May 7, 14 and 21 at 7:00 p.m. For these classes we will cover the Gospels, Acts, Epistles and Revelation. If you began the class last fall, just bring your books. If you'd like to join us for just these New Testament classes, please do!

May your faith continue to grow through what is planted this spring and throughout the year!

Joy and Peace!

Pastor Jake Dyrhaug



2018 NE MN Synod Assembly
“Living in God’s Kingdom Changes Everything”
May 4-6, Cragun’s Resort, Baxter

First Lutheran Church voting members Dave Buker and Sue Salvog along with Pastor Jake Dyrhaug will attend the Northeast Minnesota Synod Assembly Friday-Sunday, May 4-6. This year’s theme is “Living in God’s Kingdom Changes Everything”

Keynote speaker is The Rev. Mark Tranvik, Professor of Religion and CCV Senior Fellow at Augsburg University, Minneapolis.

First Lutheran’s quilters are donating a quilt to the silent auction, you can place a bid on this quilt, before it is sent to the assembly, watch for the display in the gathering space. Available again this year is The Marketplace, a Silent Auction of new

items and services, if you have an item or service to donate, please contact the church office. All proceeds from both auctions will benefit ELCA World Hunger Appeal.



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God’s work. Our hands.

Easter Flowers

Share in the Spirit of Easter by sharing your Easter flowers (for example: lilies, tulips, etc.) with your First Lutheran family. The flowers may be given in remembrance of a loved one or in celebration of a special event or person. Flowers may be dropped off in the Library on Holy Saturday, March 31. Please label your flowers. Thank you!



Easter Breakfast

Come and enjoy the fellowship of Easter Breakfast on Sunday, April 1, from 8:30-10:00 a.m. A free-will offering will be received. We are serving a hot breakfast of pancakes, sausage, eggs, fruit, juice, milk and coffee. Thanks for your support! Thank you to the Congregational Life Ministry Team for coordinating this year’s breakfast.

Thank you to all who faithfully support Christ’s mission at First Lutheran Church with their mail-in offerings! Giving statements will be mailed to each giving unit/household following the end of the second quarter, sometime in July. Should you wish to receive a statement sooner than that, we can provide that for you. Please contact Sue in the church office for this information.

You are encouraged to consider providing your giving to First Lutheran through the Simply Giving® program. Simply Giving is an automated giving plan that allows the giver to choose their gift amount and frequency of that gift. Automated giving ensures that your worshipping community receives your gift on a regular basis. For more information, contact the church office.

Thank you for your faithful giving!

Baskets of Promise for Lutheran World Relief

During Lent we participate in Lutheran World Relief's Baskets of Promise appeal. We collect items to assemble Personal Care Kits that give people around the world tools to stay healthy in life's most challenging situations. We hope to assemble more than 60 Personal Care Kits. Here are the items for collection:

Bars of soap, 4-5 ounce, any brand in original wrapping; Bath towels, lightweight, 52"X27" max, dark color is best; Toothbrushes, adult size, in original packaging; Combs; Nail clippers, metal, attached file optional

You can still contribute items. Lutheran World Relief will distribute the assembled kits to people around the world who lack even the most basic needs. Thank you for providing a means to preserve dignity and give hope.

Lenten Soup Suppers

Thanks to all who are participating in any way with the midweek Lenten soup suppers. Whether you provided soup or other supplies, worked to prepare, serve and clean up the meal or came to enjoy fellowship and a simple meal of soup and bread, all is appreciated! Proceeds from the meals will be shared with Oasis Central Minnesota and the youth traveling to the ELCA National Youth Gathering in Houston this summer. Thank you!



48th Anniversary of Earth Day: "End Plastic Pollution"

Earth Day, officially April 22, is celebrated globally by thousands of communities as a collective expression of our hopes and dreams for a better world. The Earth Day theme for 2018 is End Plastic Pollution. Plastic pollution is clogging our waterways, killing and injuring wildlife, and endangering our health and safety. By 2050, it is estimated that there will be more plastic in the world's oceans than fish. Every human being on earth depends on the oceans. We have the responsibility to protect the oceans and their inhabitants so they remain for future generations.



Human beings create plastic waste at an astounding rate, as of 2015 the total was estimated to be around 6300 million metric tons. Of that, a staggering 79% accumulates in landfills and the environment. The plastic makes its way to the ocean where it traps and is eaten by marine animals. In the ocean the plastic continually breaks into smaller and smaller pieces until it can enter the blood stream of fish and other organisms, bringing along the toxins it has absorbed.

You are encouraged to minimize your use of plastics and to recycle what you do use. Here at First Lutheran we recently located a source for biodegradable, compostable communion cups that are produced using corn. While we will pay a bit more for these cups, we are very encouraged that this product is being made available.

Earth Day is a day to reflect on how we all can be effective stewards of God's creation and what role we as individuals and as a spiritual group can play in addressing this worldwide problem.

Go to www.earthday.org for more information.

Adult Opportunities

Men's Bible Study Breakfast

All are welcome to come for breakfast and Bible study! We meet Wednesdays April 11 and 25 at 7:00 a.m. Come when you can, leave when you must! Pastor Jake leads this study. For more information, speak to him.

Book Discussion Club

All adult readers are welcome to read with this group. The group meets in the church library on Tuesday, April 24 at 7:00 p.m. to discuss Everything I Never Told You by Celeste Ng. The May selection is Before We Were Yours by Lisa Wingate. Readers, please secure your own copy of the books. For more information contact Tifanii Dahl, 632-8207.

Lutheran Social Service Rummage Sale Wednesday-Thursday, May 9-10

Mark your calendars for the spring Lutheran Social Service (LSS) rummage sale co-sponsored by Bethel and First Lutheran Church women held at Bethel Lutheran, at 901 West Broadway, on:

Wednesday, May 9, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 10, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

Thursday you can fill a bag of clothing for \$2.00!

Proceeds from the sale are used to benefit residents at the Lutheran Social Services group homes in this area. Set up day is Tuesday and Wednesday morning, clean up begins at 12:00 noon on Thursday. Volunteers are much appreciated, there is lots of 'stuff' to organize – come when you can! Additional volunteers for cleanup are needed to assist with putting the space at Bethel back in good condition. The sale is a wonderful recycling opportunity for good, usable, clean clothing, books, linens, small appliances, toys, etc. Clean grocery bags, paper or plastic, are also needed. Please, no televisions, computers or computer parts. Sale items can be brought to Bethel in the morning, beginning Monday, April 23, or on the set-up days. For more information, contact Karen Haaland, at 632-8828.

Martha Circle

Monday, April 9, 9:30 a.m.

Martha Circle meets Monday, April 9, at 9:30 a.m. for Bible Study and conversation.

After Worship Run/Walk Sunday, April 29, 12:00 noon

The Health Ministry Team will gather anyone interested after worship on Sunday, April 29 to lace up our shoes and walk! We will start with a devotion about our earth, hunt for things out in nature with a scavenger hunt while enjoying the fresh spring air. If you have a smart phone or digital camera you can bring along we can take pictures of our findings and share. Water and trail mix provided. We will walk at Belle Prairie Park north of the church on Haven Road. Contact Parish Nurse Tracy Moe for more information.

Day of Caring Wednesday, May 2

Little Falls Community High School students and staff and other community teams will provide community service time to seniors, disabled and homebound individuals by offering assistance with spring cleanup. If you or someone you know could use help with a project, fill out a registration form (on the gathering space table or call the church office to receive a form by mail) by **Wednesday, April 11**. For more information, contact the church office.

Health Ministry Team Tuesday, April 10, 6:00 p.m.

The Health Ministry Team is one of seven teams that work together in the congregation to accomplish the various mission and ministry activities that we are called to do. Current team members and any others interested are invited to gather on Tuesday, April 10 at 6:00 p.m. at church. We will plan healthy summer activities and brainstorm ways to attend to our physical, mental and spiritual health together. For more information, contact Parish Nurse, Tracy Moe at 320-749-2310.

As people age and have increasing difficulty with living independently, the topic of moving to a nursing home or assisted living often comes up. Assisted living or care facilities are a good choice for a person who needs assistance with day-to-day living. However, moving to such a facility is often a complex process for the person and their family and friends.

Moving to an assisted living community can be emotionally challenging. Talking things over can help reduce the stress that comes with the process. Conversation may include the following topics:

- What style of facility would the person most like? Independent apartment, self-contained room?
- Would they like someone to assist them with chores such as cleaning, cooking, or laundry?
- Is there a need for assistance with personal cares?
- Are there potential safety concerns that should be addressed?
- Is it possible to continue with the person's current physician?
- What are the financial concerns or would consultation with a financial planner be helpful?
- Can you assist with these or other contacts?

The fear of isolation is a common reason for reluctance to move to a senior living facility. Visits from family members and friends are essential. Phone calls or other means of regular and predictable communication are important. Family and friends may have meals together and attend social gatherings and activities with residents in the facility.

Focus on the positive things that won't change such as your relationship with the person, the ability to prepare snacks or meals, socializing with friends in the facility, church services held in the facility.

With some forethought and care transitioning to a new living arrangement can be a positive experience for all.

Adapted from www.senior.one

Youth Fundraiser Spring Auction and Lunch

Sunday, April 8



Save the Date:
Luncheon and Live Auction
@ First Lutheran Church
Sunday April 8th
Lunch served @11:30am (free will offering)
Auction starts at 12:30pm
2100 Riverview Dr. Little Falls, MN
320.632.6667

All proceeds benefit FLC Youth attending the ELCA National Youth Gathering and Mission Trip

“Children First” Christian Preschool

Greetings from the “Children First” Christian Preschool!

2018/19 enrollment is underway for current families and First Lutheran families. Community enrollment begins April 1.

Class offerings are:

- ☺ Noah’s Animals (33 mos-3 year olds) Monday and Wednesday, or Tuesday and Thursday
- ☺ Noah’s Animals (33 mos-3 year olds) 4-day morning class, Monday Thursday
- ☺ Jesus’ Gems (4-5 year olds) Monday and Wednesday, or Tuesday and Thursday
- ☺ Jesus’ Gems (4-5 year olds) 4-day morning class, Monday-Thursday
- ☺ Jesus’ Gems (4-5 year olds) 5-day morning class, Monday Friday
- ☺ Jesus’ Gems (4-5 year olds) 5-day All Day Monday-Friday
- ☺ Friday Friends (33 mos-5 year olds) meets Friday, for those families wanting a three-day experience for their preschooler.

- ☺ Morning classes meet 8:30-11:30 a.m., All day class meets 8:30-3:30 p.m. Please ask for information about childcare before/after school hours.
- ☺ Registration fee is \$50.00 and is non-refundable. Brochures and registration forms are available in the First Lutheran Church office, gathering space, online at www.flclittlefalls.org or by contacting Gail. All class offerings are based on enrollment. Your early enrollment assists us in planning.
- ☺ We will again take orders for Dutch Mill Flower Bulbs. Payment is required when ordering. We will place the order April 17 with delivery expected for Mother’s Day.
- ☺ Thank you to all who keep us in prayer and support us in so many ways. Your on-going encouragement is so much appreciated! God’s blessings to you all.

Yours in Christ’s Service,
Gail Hittesdorf, Preschool Director
email: childrenfirst@flclittlefalls.org
web: www.flclittlefalls.org/preschool

Sunday School News

- ☺ The Education Ministry Team is thankful to all who have faithfully participated in Sunday School this year. We are able to offer quality Sunday School education through the generous offering of time and talent by many of you. Together we build the community of faith. Thank you!
- ☺ We begin TREK rotation for grades K-5 “Mary Magdalene’s Story” on April 8 for three weeks. The last rotation for the year “Lost and Found—Parables of the Lost Sheep, Coin, and Son” begins April 29 for three weeks. Thank you to all who have volunteered to lead a station!

- ☺ There is no regular Sunday School on Easter Sunday—come for Easter Breakfast! The last day of Sunday School until fall is Sunday, May 13. Watch for a fun celebration!



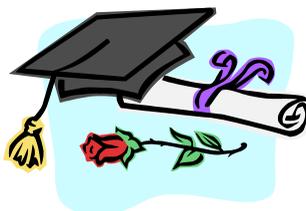


Vacation Bible School
August 6-10, 9:00-12:00 noon
“Shipwrecked”
Rescued by Jesus

Now is the time to begin thinking about sharing your gifts with the more than 150 children who will attend VBS this summer. Do you love cooking? Making fun snacks? Games and physical activity? Working on creative crafts? Staying behind the scenes? Or perhaps you just like to spend time with children! For five fun-filled mornings we will help each other learn along with all the other castaways that Jesus Rescues! Please prayerfully consider how God is calling you into this ministry. If you wish to be part of the planning, or want to assist with a particular area, or have any questions contact the church office.

Easter Eggstravaganza!
Saturday, March 31
Between 9:30 and 11:30 a.m.

All kids up to 3rd grade are invited and welcome to the Easter Eggstravaganza. This family event includes, an egg hunt, face painting, egg dyeing, snack, obstacle course, egg toss and more! We ask that kids enjoy this fun time with an adult. For more information please call the church office at (320) 632-6667.



Graduating Seniors

Mark Sunday, May 20 on your calendar. We'd like to honor you and your parents at a special service of worship (10:30 a.m.) and brunch (11:45 a.m.). Watch your mail for more information and an invitation.

Confirmation Ministries

Second Grade: students learned about the sacrament of Holy Communion on Sundays, February 25 and March 4. Second graders will have their feet washed and receive Holy Communion together at Maundy Thursday worship, March 29.

Seventh/Eighth Grade: These confirmation classes will resume after Easter on Wednesday, April 4 at 7:00 p.m. Eighth grade students and mentors meet for supper and orientation to the mentor program and 6:00 p.m. on April 4.

Can Care Collection

Keep saving those aluminum cans! Place your cans next to the garage in a securely tied bag.
Save a can – Save the earth –
Save our youth budget! Keep those cans coming! Thank you!

Items for the May NEWSLETTER are due on **April 20, 2018!**

Holy Week and Easter Schedule

March 29—Maundy Thursday

7:00 p.m. – Holy Communion and second grade students receive communion

March 30—Good Friday

1:00 p.m. – Good Friday Tenebrae Worship

7:00 p.m. – Good Friday Tenebrae Worship

March 31—Saturday

9:30-11:30 a.m. – Easter Eggstravaganza!

*special event for youth age 3 thru third grade
see page 9 for more information*

April 1—The Resurrection of our Lord

7:30 a.m. – Sunrise Holy Communion

8:30-10:00 a.m. – Easter Breakfast

10:30 a.m. – Festival Holy Communion



+

Christ is Risen!
Christ is Risen, indeed!

+

Sunday Worship Schedule

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship using a variety of liturgical settings

9:35 a.m. Sunday School Hour

10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship led by a Praise Band

Holy Communion is served at all services.

Come and See!