

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH + SAINT PETER

FIRST OUT LOUD!

NEWSLETTER
SEPTEMBER, 2021



Pastor Bill's Message: *Making Way for New Possibilities*

For the August newsletter, I wrote what I thought would be my final pastor's message for my time at First Lutheran. Such was not to be the case! Changes have happened for your Interim Pastor and for this very special congregation.

With the help of the Holy Spirit, your Church Council and I have sought to turn a problem into new possibilities. The Call Committee needs time to work with the Synod to find new top-notch candidates excited about coming to serve at First Lutheran. Given the original plan to complete my service at First Lutheran at the end of August, major personal commitments had already been in the works for the coming months. Yet, the church needs stable pastoral leadership to keep moving this important part of God's kingdom forward.

The Church Council has voted on a meaningful, spirit-led plan as follows. Beginning in mid-September your Interim Pastor will continue serving the people of First Lutheran, but, by necessity, on a half-time basis. Yet, with the help of lots of people, your Interim Pastor will be committed to: maintain administrative leadership, through weekly staff meetings and oversight; preach and lead worship services twice per month and three times in October; make use of excellent retired pastors for supply preaching and leading services on other Sundays; be present and preach on special Sundays and festivals; teach Confirmation Class; provide pastoral care with appropriate help from the Prayer Partners Plus volunteers and others; officiate at funerals, memorials and committal services; attend committee meetings when my presence is needed, while encouraging committee "ownership."

This plan will continue through December 31, 2021 or sooner if a new pastor is called, accepts the call, and can arrive at an earlier date. We will, as Paul urges in Ephesians 5:16 "make the most of the time." We will make way for new possibilities with the help of a dedicated staff, caring church leadership, experienced pastoral members, and volunteers prepared to serve this congregation as it heads toward a vibrant future of serving our Lord.

-Pastor Bill

September 2021, Leading of Service & Preaching

Sept. 5		Ted Kunze
Sept. 12	God's Work Our Hands	Pr. Bill
Sept. 19	Stewardship Kick-Off	Bob Stenson
Sept. 26	Communion	Pr. Bill

Commissioning Lay Members to Deliver Communion

At the August 17 meeting, the Church Council accepted a proposal to allow your pastor to periodically commission lay members of First Lutheran to administer communion to our parishioners who are unable to come to church for communion Sundays. This practice is an important new step for First Lutheran. In earlier years First Lutheran had two or at least one pastor and one-half time pastors, plus the wonderful service of Paul Aasen, to provide communion to members who were home-bound or in nursing homes. Our situation has changed, with one pastor. Yet, we want to provide communion on a regular basis to all our members.

To prepare for this new service, Pastor Bill will conduct a full training session for all members interested in delivering communion to others. New communion kits are being purchased for these members to use. Volunteers will be commissioned for a specific period, usually for one month or several months, depending on availability. If you are interested in serving fellow members in this important way, contact Angela at the Church Office or speak with Pastor Bill. Commissioning will take place at the worship service on Sunday, September 26, with a training session to follow right after the service.

God's Work Our Hands Sunday

September 12 is God's Work Our Hands Sunday. On this day each year members in ELCA churches throughout the nation conduct service projects to benefit people in the local community and throughout the world. Special projects can also benefit the local parish as well. First Lutheran is planning several ways for volunteers to step forward this year. The Congregation and Community Ministry Committee is working jointly with the Social Ministry Committee on two projects: to prepare "Blizzard Meals". Blizzard Meals are for Meals on Wheels recipients when there is inclement weather and regular hot meals cannot be delivered. The Building and Grounds Committee will have one or more projects on the church grounds. Several members are planning to participate in the Pride Parade on Saturday, Sept. 11 in Mankato. Stay tuned for updates on other projects to be announced in the weekly Heartbeat. Extra "God's Work Our Hands" colorful t-shirts have been ordered. See Angela in the Church Office to obtain your free t-shirt and wear it to church on September 12. All members, of all ages, are invited to be a part of this special day of service.

Council President Message

Previously, at the meeting with the prospective candidate, the Council was able to amend the by-laws changing the name of the Outreach/In-reach Committee to the Congregation and Community Ministry Committee.

At its August meeting, the Church Council received reports from the Technology Task Force and the Health Advisory Team. After discussion, the draft report concerning Council members' duties and responsibilities was referred to a sub-committee consisting of Mary Spear and Nancy Timm for further revision. In other action, the Council approved the commissioning of lay people to deliver communion and help the pastor with visitation.

Finally, Garrett Paul reported the Call Committee has been in contact with the Synod and has requested some additional names for potential pastor candidates. If you are aware of an individual who might be interested in the position, you should give his/her name to the call committee. Following the report, the Council accepted a plan proposed by Pastor Bill to continue as our Interim Pastor through September 17, and, beginning September 18, serve as a part-time Interim Pastor through the end of the year. He will preach approximately every other Sunday, teach confirmation, provide pastoral care, and maintain administrative leadership with our staff. The Council has gratefully accepted his gracious offer to continue to assist our congregation in this time of transition.

-Bill Kautt

Welcome New Members: *The Banks Family*

We are pleased to announce that FLC added Aaron and Heather Banks, along with their two children Luke (14) and Jake (13) to the membership at the August 24 worship service. Please make time to meet them!

Youth & Family Faith OUT LOUD! *Education is Gearing Up*

FLC is gearing up to start the 2021-22 Youth Programming! Woohoo! Check out the different education opportunities we have to offer below:

What's new and different for Sunday School? The Sunday School schedule and model have been transformed. FLC will offer better flexibility to meet the needs of families and volunteers with busy schedules.

In-person learning will be offered again every Sunday at FLC. The new model includes a virtual option for families that prefer to participate in Sunday School at home. Families can choose a hybrid of both options as well.

In Person Sunday School Schedule*:

Classroom Education on 1st & 3rd Sundays. We know family schedules can be busy, which is why we want to structure a Sunday School experience that works for you! On the 1st & 3rd Sundays we will be meeting in person at First Lutheran! On these Sundays the classes will be split up by into the following groups:

- PreK & Kindergarten
- Grades: 1-2
- Grades: 3-4

Each registered family will receive a monthly binder, filled with all the Sunday School lessons and supplies for the month. Each Sunday School lesson will correspond with the Children's Time featured on our Facebook and website. At the end of each month, registered families will turn in their bind and receive a new one for the next month! October binders can be picked up on Rally Day!

Craft & Game Days - 2nd & 4th Sundays. These Sundays we will not have structured classes, Calleigh will lead a craft or game for all students who want to attend! All games and crafts will correspond with the Sunday School lesson for that Sunday! These games/crafts will be held during the regular Sunday School time and all ages will gather during this time.

Important Sunday School Dates:

Registration Deadline: August 31

Rally Day: September 19, 9:00am-9:55am

First Day of Sunday School: October 3 from 9:15am-9:55am

Planning to attend virtually? No problem! Use the binder and tune into our Children's Time message on Facebook. Missed a Sunday? You can now catch up on your own time!

Wednesday Night Programming:

- Faith Formation (5-6th Grade): After a year hiatus, FLC is ready to welcome back 5th-6th graders for Wednesday night education!
- Confirmation (7-9th Grade): It's time for another year of learning about God, each other, and ourselves in Confirmation class!
- High School Youth Group (9th-12th Grade): Youth Group is back and better than ever! Stay tuned for information on how to get involved!

– Calleigh Carlson, Director. of Youth & Family Ministry

*Schedules may vary with holidays

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Confirmation Mentors

A confirmation mentor is someone willing to befriend and guide a confirmation student in matters related to faith and life. Ideally, a mentor is an adult, non-family member, who is actively involved in worship and congregational life at First Lutheran Church.

Confirmation students will get together with their mentor at least twice each year.

Substitute Sunday School Teachers

Sign up to sub in for our Sunday School teachers on an as needed basis! No prior teaching experience required!

Tree Watering

We're looking for youth to help join in with the watering duties of the **100 trees** planted along Church Street this past spring.



Faith Formation Dates

August 31: Registration Deadline for Faith Formation & Confirmation

September 15: Orientation for Faith Formation & Confirmation 6:30pm-7:30pm

Contact Calleigh
cc.flcstp@gmail.com

Worship & Music OUT LOUD! *Worship in a Digital Age*

You may have noticed over the last year and a half that First Lutheran has used lots of different technology to keep things going. We have had virtual brass ensembles, choirs, and soloists; many individuals and families who signed up to send in videos of readings and prayers; and recorded sermons and hymns all stitched together to keep our worship going.

While it has been wonderful to continue this service throughout the summer, it is not a long-term solution for the staff and many volunteers. It also represents many hours of work per week. Ultimately, we think we can do better!

Starting in September, some of our tech savvy members will be experimenting with how we record and broadcast worship. It may get messy as we sort through a new system and work out the kinks. All of us involved ask for your grace and patience as we navigate this!

-Emily Bruflat, Director of Worship & Music

Worship & Arts: *Gifts of Time & Talent!*

Want to know how to help with worship services? Here are some reminders of what FLC has to offer and how YOU can be involved:

-Technology Helpers: Do you have an interest in technology? We are rethinking church in the digital age and are looking for volunteers to help with worship videos. Flexibility and comfort with learning technology are requirements. Junior High youth and up are eligible!

-Readers/Greeters: Do you like to read? Readers are scheduled four to six times per year to read the scriptures and lead the creed and prayers during worship, and they also serve as greeters to the people arriving at church. Middle school youth and up are eligible!

-Ushers: Perhaps you prefer a behind-the-scenes approach to helping during worship. The ushers hand out bulletins, take attendance, assist people in finding their way around our church building, and count the offerings after worship. Junior High youth (with adult supervision) and up are eligible!

-Communion: Would you have interest in preparing communion before worship and cleaning up afterwards? How about serving communion during worship? Baking bread? Junior high youth (with adult supervision) and up are eligible!

-Music Solos and Ensembles:

- Hand bell Choir - rehearsals on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. starting 9/22
- Bonse Aba - treble choir (high voices), flexible schedule, kids welcome!
- Solo and small group options for instruments and voices available!

*COVID vaccinations are required for participation in all musical groups at this time.

Spotlight on GAC Music Scholar: *Sophie Martinez*

Sophie Martinez is a junior at Gustavus majoring in Religion and Scandinavian Studies. She is from Phoenix, Arizona. Outside of her academics, she works in the Office of the Chaplains, as a Swedish tutor, and as an academic assistant to the Religion Department. Sophie studies organ and handbells with Chad Winterfeldt. She enjoys swimming laps, reading nonfiction, and travelling wherever she can in her free time. She has attended First Lutheran Church since her freshman year of college after being a guest of Helen and Paul Baumgartner and has enjoyed worshipping here since.

LOOKING FOR (NEW) OLD SMARTPHONES!

Do you have a recently retired Smartphone WITH a charger collecting dust in your house?

The Technology Committee would like to see if we could use it to help record worship.

Make sure all personal information is cleared off the phone; we just need it for the camera!

Drop off the phone and charger in the office during business hours or on a Sunday! One to two years old is best. Any that we can't use will be donated or recycled.



GAC Musical Collaboration: *Welcome, Lauren Russell!*

Lauren will be joining us regularly to offer her musical gifts during her senior year. Here's a bit more about her: Lauren is a senior at Gustavus studying viola performance. Originally from Alexandria, MN, she grew up playing and singing at her home-church and throughout the community. When not practicing, Lauren can be found running, swimming, reading, baking, and repeatedly throwing a ball for her dog Sullivan.



Stewardship Committee Update: *Fall Campaign*

“Faithful Worship-Generous Giving” is the theme for the fall stewardship campaign. The fall campaign kicks off on September 19 with **Member Packet Pick-up Day**. The campaign ends on October 24 when estimated 2022 giving cards will be collected. We ask that you pray about your giving keeping in mind the needs of the church this year.

Church Financial Information through
7/31/21:
Income \$228, 529
Expense \$220, 584
\$7,945

On September 19 there will be a chance for you to hopefully meet committee members and learn about volunteer opportunities at First Lutheran. We ask that you complete the Time and Talent survey online so that we can find what you want to participate in this year.

Generous giving of your time and talents along with your financial gifts is faithful worship. Stewardship is everything we do after we say, “I believe.” How is God calling you to serve First Lutheran, St. Peter, and the world in the coming year?

Green Committee News: *Green Opportunities for You!*

1.) ACTION OPPORTUNITY

Our Congressional leaders are working on important climate legislation, and they need to hear from people of faith. Minnesota Senator Tina Smith is taking the lead on a Federal Clean Electricity Standard. Let Sen. Smith, Senator Amy Klobuchar or your congressperson know that you support clean electricity. Write, send an email, or reach them by phone through the U.S. Congress switchboard: (202) 224-3121.

2.) COMMUNITY EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

- Living Sustainably: Simple Ways to Care for the Earth in Your Own Home and Yard Led by Sam Benson, Emily Bruffat, Ann Bruggeman. Learn easy ways to create less waste and help protect our environment. Thursday, September 23, 7-8 p.m., St. Peter High School Choir Room. Register by September 20, Community and Family Education, (507) 934-3048, Ext. 1. Fee, \$5 per household.
- How to Make Your Home More Energy Efficient and Save Money. Led by Briana Baker and Sam Benson. Briana Baker, energy specialist with Minnesota Valley Action Council, will share tips and answer questions about making your home more energy efficient and lowering your energy bills. Also included: How to sign up for the City of St. Peter Solar Garden Program. Thursday, October 21, 7-8 p.m., St. Peter Community Center, Room 219. Register by October 18, Community Ed, phone number above, \$5 per household.

Have you seen the Food Shelf Garden on the East side of our church? The Green Committee has been 'digging in' all summer long. After a lot of watering and weeding, we now see the 'fruit of our labor', as the beans, peppers, and tomatoes are being picked and delivered to the Food Shelf. Thus far we have collected and given to the St Peter Area Food Shelf 20.4 pounds of fresh produce. There are many more tomatoes and peppers on the vines close to ready. This year there is even a pumpkin or two.

If you would like to help us share God's gifts, we invite you to join the Green Committee, as a gardener and advocate for the earth, our home.

-The Green Committee: Kathryn Christenson, Barb Wilkinson, Sue Jackson, Julie Johnson, and Judy Fienen