

First Out Loud: Our Faith in Action

*"Let your light shine before others, so that
they may see your good works."*

Matthew 5:16

First Lutheran Church
March 1, 2021
Newsletter Edition 3



Pastor's Message: Signs of Dedication and Renewal

In this month's pastoral message, I want to give special attention to four important signs of dedication and renewal from the people of First Lutheran. First, I offer a heartfelt thanks to all those members who participated in the small group meetings and to all those who sent in responses in writing to the five critical questions concerning the strengths and needs of the congregation. Valuable feedback and thoughtful ideas have emerged from these discussions and written responses. You will receive a summary of this collective wisdom in the coming weeks. Second, I am thankful for all the members who have been contacting our more senior members in nursing homes, retirement communities and family dwellings, especially during these times when many are isolated due to the health protection concerns of Covid-19. As pastor, I have been able to reach many of these members as much as possible, but so many have expressed to me their gratitude from hearing from fellow members. We can all be part of this critical "pastoral care" function of the congregation. Third, I am encouraged by all the dedicated members of our various committees who are coming together to discuss, plan, and then take action to serve the needs of both our own members and, very importantly, the needs of people in our larger community. Finally, I wish to applaud the decisions of the Staff Support Committee and the Church Council for changing the title of Calleigh Carlson's position to "Director of Youth and Family Ministry" and creating a new contract to extend the time of her service to our church. These changes are visible signs that we realize that a revitalized, strong, active youth and family ministry is vital to the future of First Lutheran Church. Thanks to all, and God's blessings to all!

Pastor Bill

FLC's Council President Message

At its February meeting, the Church Council directed president, Bill Kautt, and treasurer, Harry Hunt, to look into the technological needs of the church staff. They will be meeting with a number of individuals and will make recommendations to the Council concerning the church's technology needs. The Church Council approved the recommendation of the staff support committee to replace the "Temporary Ministry Associate" staff position with a new staff position titled "Director of Youth and Family Ministry." The Council is also pleased to announce that it has retained current staff member, Calleigh Carlson, in this position through January 31, 2022. This action was taken to place an emphasis on serving the youth and families in our congregation. Finally, the Council decided to divide the budgeted missionary sponsorship funds between the same two organizations (the Mennonite Central Committee representatives James Dontje and Laura Lindell in Rwanda/Burundi and to ELCA missionary in the Republic of South Africa) that we had supported last year. As always, feel free to contact me or any other member of the Council if you have questions or concerns about what is happening at First Lutheran Church.

Bill Kautt, Council President

From the Cantor: Out Loud through Music

Last month, I introduced our sermon series for the Season of Lent, which we are well into at this time. You may have noticed less music during worship, and this has been intentional. Using the Rev. Dr. Karoline Lewis's notes from her conference, I did some digging for hymns that reflected the Geist of her talk as well as the gospel she was uplifting.

Each hymn following the Lenten sermon tries to capture that essence. While there is just the one hymn, it is meant to be a response to the gospel, sermon, and overall theme for the entire worship service. May the words of each hymn offer you a way to sing/pray your way through Lent. You are invited to reflect on what the text - and what Jesus - invites us to do in response to our faith. How will you live your faith out loud this month?

Communion Kits - We had a wonderful response to our Communion Kit initiative! These will be available for pickup at the church from 10:00 a.m. to noon on **Saturday, March 27**. If you elected to have yours delivered, you will receive your kit that afternoon. Each kit will also include a few palm branches for you to wave around or decorate your home for Palm Sunday the following day!

Many thanks go to our cup makers: Joel Moline and Kim Bovee; our bread makers: Michelle Doose, Shanon Nowell, Elaine Deschaine, Judy Fienen, Kim Bovee, and Cheryl Kautt; and our quilters: Nancy Timm, Sharon Malm, and Mary Long, Onie Isenberg, Jan Holte, Gretchen Bray, Nancy Helgeson, and Kayla Marie Thompson; and to the youth and staff who agreed to help with deliveries. Thank you all for using your time and talents in this special way!

Easter Choir & Brass - While the deadline for completed videos is fast approaching on **Wednesday, March 17**, there is still time to sign up to sing in the virtual Easter Choir or participate in the Brass Ensemble! Contact Emily at musicflcstp@gmail.com if you would like to join in the music making!

Emily Bruflat, Cantor

Youth and Family Faith - Out Loud:

Even amidst a global pandemic, our youth and families have been busy acting out their faith and serving their community. Here are a few of the important projects from last month, February: Lent-in-a-Bag deliveries to Sunday Schoolers, Bob Ross in a Box - Family Paint Night, SPFS Donation Day, and the February Friday Forum hosted by the Social Justice Committee.

Here's what's going on in March:

Let's Game - Youth Party at First Lutheran!

Board games, card games, video games galore! Mask up and join us at the church for a socially distanced game day on Saturday, March 27th from 1pm - 3pm!

FLC Youth Program - Donation Drive

Looking to get rid of games, books, craft materials, toys or furniture? Throughout the month of March, FLC will be accepting any and all donations, with the goals of upgrading the furniture in our youth rooms, adding to our collection of indoor/outdoor games, books and Sunday School craft materials, and upgrading our Nursery toys! Email Calleigh (cc.flcstp@gmail.com) to donate!

MN Foodshare March Campaign

You'll find more information about this within this newsletter! Make sure to tune into our Facebook page and weekly FLC Heartbeat emails for additional information on this event as well!

Shetek Lutheran Ministries: Summer Camp for 7-9th Grade

Early Bird Registration deadline is April 1st! You can register your child online at www.shetek.org. Use our Group Code (code is: Firststp) to access our groups' registration and our FLC discount. Reach out to Calleigh (cc.flcstp@gmail.com) with any questions!

Calleigh Carlson, Director of Youth and Family Ministry

Altar Easter Flowers

This year there will be a modified Easter garden of flowers to be distributed to the homebound. As in the past there will be a donor list in the Easter program including the names of those special people in their lives whom the donors wish to remember, honor or express gratitude to. The Altar Guild will select the flowers and will arrange for distribution. Donors can drop-off or send a check/cash for \$10 to First Lutheran Church designated for the Easter garden. On a separate piece of paper donors should write their own name(s) and the name(s) of those persons they are remembering, honoring or thanking. This information needs to reach the church office by March 12th.

Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee is grateful for the generous contributions and pledges that have been received. Giving is one of the most important ways that we practice our devotion to Christ. We know that God will bless both the gifts and the givers.

Thrivent members, please remember that you can designate your Thrivent Dollars for First Lutheran Church. This should be done before the end of March. The dollars are lost if you do not designate a recipient! We are grateful to those who have done this already. If you have questions, call the St. Peter (or another) Thrivent office. Thank you!

Garrett Paul, Stewardship Committee

Update: FLC's Building Funds

This is an update from the conversation we had at our annual meeting pertaining to our Building Renovation Funds. This project started in 2011 with the addition of the social room, chapel and additional office space. The loan for this project was \$2,180,215. The original loan was with MIF Mortgage company. In 2017 we refinanced our loan with Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. The terms of the loan was \$1,664,550 for 20 years, 12/15/2037, with an interest rate of 3.99%. Our monthly payments are \$10,079. (\$10,079 X 12 months=\$120,948 annual). Over the years, since we opened our loan, we have paid down on the loan. These were extra payments and additional gifts in the amount of \$380,943. With these payments, we have reduced our loan term by three years, 12/12/2034.

At our annual meeting in January, we showed a balance of \$91,712. The question was presented, should we be taking some of these funds and pay down on our loan? I made a commitment at that meeting to furnish everyone with an explanation of keeping these funds in reserve.

We are currently starting the second year in our three commitments to our loan. At the beginning of 2020 we had 85 pledges for a total of \$300,638. Our payment for three years is \$362,844. As of January 31, 2021, we have \$151,823 of unpaid pledges and we feel these funds will be coming in over the next two years. Some people have prepaid their commitment as one of the reasons for the excess balance. As of January 31, 2021, we have 23 payments left for our three-year commitment which is \$231,817. If we take the unpaid pledges, \$151,823, plus the excess balance of \$91,712, this equals \$243,535. With 23 payments of \$10,079, or \$231,817 for the 23 months, we only have \$11,718 in excess at the end of 2022. So, because of the prepayments, we will need these funds in order to make our monthly payments. Sorry for all the numbers. The bottom line is, we cannot pay down on our loan as we could come up short and then that amount would have to be included in our annual budget. It's our hope that 100% of pledges will be honored. Hopefully, this answers your questions or concerns about our Building Renovation Fund.

Harry Hunt, Treasurer

From Worship and Arts: Worship Out Loud!

We are thrilled that the number of people who have been attending/viewing our worship services has been at such a large number each week! This has been exciting to see!

Though in-person worship hasn't been possible for quite some time, we've made plans to engage people via Zoom services. We hope that you were able to attend our live Zoom Ash Wednesday service on February 17! If you missed it, you can find it on Facebook or our website. Our next live Zoom service will be on Maundy Thursday, April 1. We are also

hoping that many families will participate in Communion with us for that service. Communion kits are being prepared for this special day. We hope you signed up!

The repairs have begun for our piano in the sanctuary! The repairs will take about six to eight weeks to complete. We are hoping to have it back in time for Easter.

A question was raised about the future of worship services at First Lutheran Church once the pandemic is over. Will there still be online services available? Pastor Bill has encouraged anyone who hasn't yet responded to the "future needs" survey for First Lutheran Church to do so. We want to hear from you!

Michelle Doose, Worship and Arts

Events and Happenings:

LC Virtual Hymn Festival: Hope Lives! Join the National Lutheran Choir and guest artists, the Keith Hampton Singers, for a FREE virtual program blending spoken reflections, songs and familiar hymns of joy and hope with new music that speaks to our present time, inviting all people of faith to sing in joy *together!*

Sunday, March 14 @ 4pm (Central Daylight Time) @ [NLCA.com](https://nlca.com). This online presentation is **FREE for all.**

Minnesota Foodshare March Campaign: The St. Peter Area Foodshelf (SPAF) is once again participating in the MN Foodshare March campaign. Donations during the month of March earn SPAF purchasing credits at Second Harvest in St. Paul which can be used throughout the year. Please support the food shelf with your donations of food or money. Click on this link [St. Peter Food Shelf](#) to see what items are needed. There is also a yellow donate button on the website for financial contributions .

Sunday Mornings! Don't forget to join us for our fellowship hour via Zoom. We begin each Sunday morning at 11:00 AM on Zoom. If you want to attend, click on the link [Zoom Coffee Hour](#) or email flcstpoffice@gmail.com for the information. We look forward to seeing you all there!

First Lutheran On-line Directory; For those that have not yet signed up for our online directory, please take the time to register, enter your information and load a photo. Register at <https://flcstp.ctrn.co/directory/index.php>

*"For just as the body without the spirit is dead,
so faith without works is also dead."*