

First Out Loud + February 2024

“God’s Work. Our Hands. To Serve ALL People.”

Siblings in Christ,

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven...” (Ecclesiastes 3:1) This is a season of transition at First Lutheran Church. Over the past few months, we have had transitions in our non-ordained staffing. Our leadership has been collaborating with our Staff Support Committee to update job descriptions and we have taken steps so that we can receive resumes as well as schedule and conduct job interviews. This work is ongoing. As we progress, we continually seek God’s guidance in the hopes of finding the right persons to serve FLC as our next Office Coordinator, Director of Youth and Family Ministries and Director of Music. Please pray for us that God will lead the right people to help us continue to carry out the mission statement of FLC: “God’s Work. Our Hands. To Serve ALL People.”

I want to thank all the many members of FLC who have stepped forward and volunteered their time and talents to ensure that the ministries of FLC continue during this time of transition. From leading music, to teaching Sunday School and Confirmation Class, to leading our Junior and Senior High School Youth Group, to serving on our Church Council- what you are doing matters, and you are very appreciated for helping at this time in the life of our congregation! I look forward to the coming months as we move forward together as a congregation in service to Christ.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Pastor Christopher Culuris

2023 Financial Report

Income: \$447,525

Expense: \$459,069

We finished the year with a deficit of \$11,544. Thank you for your faithful support of First Lutheran Church!

A reminder to all Thrivent members: please consider First Lutheran Church as a charity to designate to receive your Thrivent Choice Dollars. The deadline to make these designations is March 31st.

FLC Blood Drive: February 16th



Faithful Giving Allows for Generous Benevolence

On behalf of the Stewardship Committee, we want to **thank you** for your generosity in 2023. The following is a list of our benevolence giving for 2023. May these gifts be a blessing to both those who give and those who receive:

Southwestern Minnesota Synod & ELCA	\$4,000
Missionary Sponsorship	\$1,000
Habitat for Humanity	\$513
The Kitchen	\$750
World Hunger	\$778
St. Peter Area Food Shelf/Lenten offering	\$1,592.50
Holiday Baskets (vouchers)	\$770
Giving Tree/Pastor's Discretionary Fund	\$4,090
Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light	\$500
Total	\$13,994

Don't miss worship on February 4, Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Sunday!

Our guest preacher will be none other than Rev. Dr. Barbara Lundblad. She is an accomplished pastor, scholar, professor, leader, author, and speaker. We are thrilled that she has agreed to visit First Lutheran, worship with us, and deliver the sermon.

First Lutheran Church is proud to be an RIC congregation, meaning that we advocate for the full welcome, inclusion, and equality of LGBTQIA+ Lutherans in all aspects of the life of their church, congregation, and community.

A new year, many changes! – Godspeed, Emily Bruflat!

In December, the Worship and Arts Committee rolled out a new sign-up process for the volunteer worship roles. Along with LLL, CCM and the Stewardship Committees, on a month rotation, we will be recruiting volunteers for the various roles in worship. So far, this process seems to be going well. At the time of this writing, we have almost every role spoken for during the month of January! Thank you to those who have volunteered their time and effort into fulfilling these important roles at First! The weekly reminders from the office about worship roles like we've been accustomed to in the past will not be occurring. Please refer to the sign-up sheet on the table in the Gathering Space which lists the roles that people have committed to doing each week and mark your calendar carefully when you sign up to serve! At the most recent W & A committee meeting, I offered up the role of chairperson to whomever may take interest in doing so. Sarah Chambers graciously accepted this position, moving forward. Thank you, Sarah, for your willingness to serve FLC in this capacity! It has been my pleasure to serve as the chairperson for the past few years! Regretfully, I find it necessary to include in this newsletter the announcement of our Cantor and Director of Music's resignation. Emily's last day at FLC will be Sunday, February 4. Her commitment to the leadership at First for almost nine years has been superior. During her tenure, she has tirelessly strived to work collaboratively with her colleagues, worship assistants, musicians, and all stakeholders to ensure that the music ministries here were thriving – and they have! Emily's dedication to these leadership roles are responsibilities that she has taken very seriously, and with a seemingly boundless level of commitment. I still hear many congregants at FLC speaking in appreciation of Emily for being "the lifeline" during the pandemic. She took on the role of teaching herself how to set this up so that the church could offer its worship services online a number of times each week - a time when so many people felt isolated, with little or no connection to others. The demands of the role as the Director and Music have been many. Time and time again, she has willingly stepped up to gently encourage people to become involved with the music ministry at FLC, in supporting our church congregants and its staff members. Emily's passion is to make a difference in the lives of people - regardless of where her future will take her. Thank you, Emily, for facilitating so much joy through music, and everything that you've done during your tenure here! You are a blessing!

Michelle Doose - (Former) Chairperson, Worship and Arts Committee



*With
Hearts
& Hands
& Voices*

the church's song

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2024 • 4:00pm

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

1114 W. Traverse Rd • Saint Peter, MN

*Join in a rich celebration of music in the church
as we bid farewell to Cantor Emily Bruflat.*

Upcoming Youth Activities

Join us February 7 at 7:30pm in the gathering space at First for a **Valentine's party!** We will play games, have snacks, and make Valentines! Any young people who are part of confirmation classes and older (and their friends) are invited to attend!

BINGO PARTY! Join us March 6 at 7:30 in the Dining Hall at First for BINGO! Bring a favorite snack to share as we play bingo!! Any young people who are part of confirmation classes and older (and their friends) are invited to attend!

An Update from Stewardship Committee

Stewardship Committee Notes - January 15, 2024

- Thank you! – for all the gifts we received in 2023 and for the special “surprise” gifts in December.
- Many people have participated in the Generosity Project, a time for all generations to share what their hearts say about supporting the church in many ways. The next Generosity Project date is February 11.
- Gift envelopes are in all the pews for your convenience.
- A shout out to the Finance Committee for setting a balanced budget for 2024. The Stewardship Committee works closely with Finance for a healthy financial position.
- Please attend the Congregational Meeting on January 28 to formally approve the budget.
- Stay tuned for some exciting updates to our online giving opportunities!
- Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Stewardship Committee: Carl Bruihler, Bruce Gray, Brett Petersen, Annalise Rivas, Randall Stuckey

FLC YOUTH

JANUARY 2024



LIFE LONG LEARNING UPDATE:

FLC Families-

As the church searches for a replacement for our Director of Youth and Family, the Lifelong Learning Committee will be organizing volunteers to maintain our current programming. A huge thank you to those who have already volunteered to lead classes.

The established schedules will remain the same. The upcoming events are listed below (click on the heading for a link to the whole schedule). You will still receive weekly reminder emails about class schedules, lessons, and special events.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

PreK - Grade 4

1/14 - No Class

1/21 - Sunday School

1/28 - Sunday School &

Sing in Worship

2/4 - Sunday School

2/11 - Sunday School

FAITH FORMATION

Grades 5 & 6

1/17 - Game Day

1/24 - Jonah

1/31 - Teaching & Healing

2/7 - Service Project

2/14 - No Class

CONFIRMATION

Grade 7-8

1/17 - The Temple

1/24 - Prophets

1/31 - Exile

2/7 - Prophet Project

& Youth Group

2/14 - No Class

Don't Forget:

- Worship Assistants
- Sermon Notes
- Habits of the Heart

Grade 9: The Lord's Prayer, Sacraments, & Holy Baptism

CONTACT US: LLLEARN@FLGSTP.ORG

With any questions or concerns, please contact our team. We are looking for volunteers to help in many ways, please let us know how you can help!

Pictures of FLC Activities



