First Out Loud

God's Work. Our Hands. To Serve ALL People.

MAY- 2025 NEWSLETTER

Hello

MAY

Siblings in Christ,

On May 11, please wish a Happy Mother's Day to all the moms you know. Thank them for all their love, support, guidance, and tender care over the years. To all our moms - you are a treasure and very appreciated!

Thank You to everyone who made our program year such a success! Our Wednesdays at First were enjoyable and well attended. Thank you to everyone who made all those tasty meals, served them, and cleaned up afterwards. Thank you to Sarah Chambers for working with our Youth Choir in the chapel and for all the times they sang in worship. Thank you to all our youth who helped to lead our services and to the Tech Committee for livestreaming our services during Advent and Lent. Thank you to the Lifelong Learning Committee and Deacon Brenda for teaching Sunday School and Confirmation classes. Thank you to Dave Kennedy, Annalise Rivas, Ted Kunze, Steve Kidder, and everyone who taught Adult Ed classes in the Pioneer Parlor. You are all a gift from God.

Please attend worship this month and pray for our youth and their families as they experience important milestones in their journeys of faith. Your presence and encouragement mean more than can be expressed in words. Join us on May 4 for Confirmation Sunday; May 11 for first Holy Communion Sunday, and May 18 as we ask God to bless our High School graduates. May the Holy Spirit bless and guide you throughout the course of your lives!

Have a blessed Spring,

Pastor Christopher Culuris

Hello First Lutheran members -

I'd like to extend my appreciation to all those who attended the special congregational meeting on April 6th. This was the meeting where we voted to continue the conversation about the vacant lot east of the church. We certainly haven't committed to anything, but we know we have the concurrence of the congregation to continue the research. Much more to follow on this.

There's so much activity happening right now! Along with the change of seasons within the church, there are many new beginnings around us: New Member Sunday on April 27, along with Confirmation, First Communion, and the Senior Blessing all happening in May. When was the last time you looked through the confirmation pictures hanging in the Dining Hall? I am always amazed at all the incredible history I see whenever I look through those pictures. If you look closely, you will see a familiar face from the class of 1984! I also love the celebration of the Senior Blessing when we send the graduating seniors into the world with their prayer shawls. I know this was something my oldest daughter looked forward to for years prior to her graduation.

Looking a little bit more into the future, information about the Live Nativity will be coming over the summer months. In addition to being a meaningful way to celebrate Christmas, it's also a unique way to serve our community by bringing the scene to life. I hope you and your family participate!
Have a great month!

Sincerely,
Mark Roemhildt

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

The Social Justice helped to coordinate the **MARCH FOOD DRIVE** in support of the St. Peter Area Food Shelf (SPAF). Our efforts culminated in Pack the Pews Sunday on March 30, when all of the items collected during the month were displayed in the back pews of the church and then transported to SPAF. First Lutheran members donated 500 pounds of food and household items and more than $2000 in monetary donations! That is an amazing display of generosity. Thanks to all who contributed in any way in making our efforts on behalf of the local food shelf such a success. This is an important way in which we can show love and concern for our neighbors. In case you are interested, the total amount donated to SPAF from all collection sites in St. Peter during this year's March Drive was 6011 pounds of food and other items and $53,273, amounts that surpass what was donated last year.

On March 31 about 40 people gathered at 7pm in First Lutheran's dining room to hear the dynamic guest speaker Ellie Krug in honor of **Transgender Visibility Day.**

Titled **GLEANING AUTHENTICITY FROM A MOMENT OF TRUTH,** *Ellie Krug shared her life story as a writer, lawyer, and human who, while serving as a civil trial attorney in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and later in Minnesota, transitioned from male to female. She is one of a few attorneys nationally to try jury cases in separate genders.*

In a moving presentation, Ellie shared her own epiphany on 9/11, feeling drawn to be truthful with herself and summoning up courage to be more vulnerable and authentic with her spouse. She shared the painful conversations with loved ones, and the necessary steps she took for change in her personal and professional life. She works very hard to find compassion for herself and live more authentically.

As Ellie shared her own trans person experience, and how it spurred on surprising new growth. One such surprise was realizing her skill as a writer; Ellie is a freelance writer, author and podcaster. She also lives a life of service as an advocate for others and the human condition. She actively does acts of service and was elected a member of the Eastern Carver County School Board and broadcasts "Ellie 2.0 Radio" on AM 950 in the Twin Cities.

If you, or someone you care about would like a free consultation, Ellie offered a 1 hour consult with anyone. Her email is elliejkrug@gmail.com

Ellie prompted us to remember a key question: ***Am I doing my best?*** *Authenticity and advocacy aren't for everyone, but how our world would change if we all worked toward being our authentic selves and advocated for others!*

Ellie offered a timely question for us: Can transgender persons who transition teach others about constructive societal change? Ellie's answer was "Stay tuned." For those of us in attendance that night, we witnessed change in perspective, growth of understanding and a pride for FLC to host such a powerful speaker and human advocate. Her book "Getting to Ellen: A Memoir About Love, Honesty and Gender Change" is in the FLC Library.

- **UNION STREET PLACE SPRING CLEANUP - MAY 18 AFTER WORSHIP**

We will be power washing buildings, cleaning gutters, raking, and picking up trash.

Items needed for the clean up are:

Power washer, rakes, rags, shovels, gloves, trash bags, ladders

Call Ellen Conover at 507-317-0358 or email me at markellenconover@gmail.com if you can donate any of these items to use and/or can help out with the clean up project on the 18th.

CONFIRMATION CLASS OF 2025

Caitlyn Marie Krueger

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
SAINT + PETER

Baptized: January 19, 2025
Mother: Chakra Dauffenbach
Godparents/Sponsors: Christina Krueger
Confirmation Mentor: Mary Spear
Bible Verse: Isaiah 43:4 “Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you, I will give people in exchange for you, nations in exchange for your life.”

Ella Marie Twaddle

Baptized: December 06, 2009
Parents:Brianne and Jessie Twaddle
Godparents/Sponsors: Nick Wasson and Brycie Wasson
Confirmation Mentor: Grace Timm
Bible Verse: Matthew 6:34 “So don't be anxious about tomorrow. God will take care of your tomorrow too. Live one day at a time.”

Ivy Elizabeth McHugh

Baptized: June 20, 2010
Parents: Brenda and Tom McHugh
Godparents/Sponsors: Joe Matheis, Ben Geer, Debbie Eng
Confirmation Mentor: Rachel Ribar
Bible Verse: Isaiah 40:8 “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.”

Jacob James Little

Baptized: January 28, 2010
Mother: Sara Emich
Godparents/Sponsors: Gretchen and Jose Bolivar
Confirmation Mentor: Nancy Timm
Bible Verse: Mark 5:36 “Don’t be afraid, just believe”.

Joshua Wesley Chambers

Baptized: August 14, 2011
Parents: Brad and Sarah Chambers
Godparents/Sponsors: Kyle Chambers and Lisa Octigan
Confirmation Mentor: Kim Beecher
Bible Verse: 2 Corinthians 12:9 But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

CONFIRMATION CLASS OF 2025

Laird Hansing Dommer Bly
Baptized: October 10, 2010
Parents: Kaari and Galen Bly
Godparents: Stacy and Travis Bly, Annika Dommer
Confirmation Mentor: Dave Kennedy
Memorized Verse: Matthew 28:20 “And remember that I am always with you until the end of time.”

Maren Leighonna Swenson
Baptized: March 8, 2010
Parents: Brielle and Dustin Swenson
Godparents/Sponsors: Christian and Lindsay Mondick
Confirmation Mentor: Mary Spear
Bible Verse: Matthew 19:26, “ But with God all things are possible”

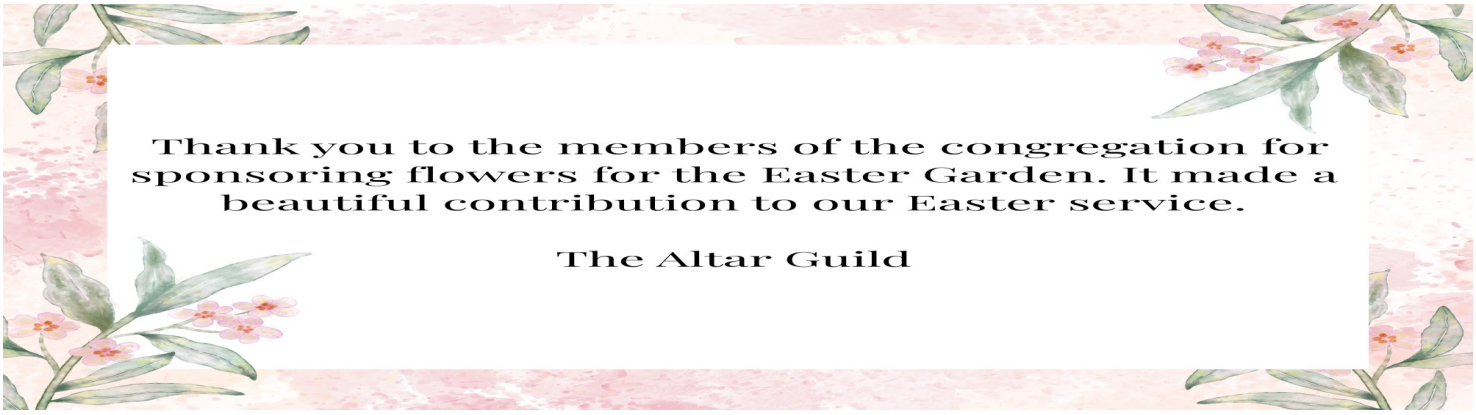
Natalie Lynn Twait
Baptized: January 9, 2011
Parents: Michelle and Tyson Twait
Godparents/Sponsors: Amy & Travis Lachinski, Valarie Anderson, Matt & Kristina Anderson
Confirmation Mentor: Rachel Ribar
Bible Verse: Exodus 14:14 "The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still."

Paul Douglas Szybnski
Baptized: July 3, 2011
Parents: Mark and Rachel Szybnski
Godparents: Christopher and Jennifer Kiewel
Confirmation Mentor: Brenda McHugh
Bible Verse: Proverbs 22:17 "Pay attention and turn your ear to the sayings of the wise; apply your heart to what I teach."

Timothy Scott Culuris
Baptized:April 11, 2010
Parents:Heather and Christopher Culuris
Godparents/Sponsors: Elisa and William Osman
Confirmation Mentor: Nancy Timm
Bible Verse: 1 Timothy 1:12 “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service.

Thank YOU from the CCM committee!

April has been a busy month and we thank the FLC members that have helped with our projects this month! During this month we hosted a table at the Senior Expo, delivered 31 Easter Flowers and cards to our home-bound members, and welcomed 9 new members into our church family. In addition, FLC members have provided rides to church services, donated stamps and other items to our collection for wounded veterans, donated flowers for our Easter deliveries, and have made several prayer partner calls and visits. Thank you for being a vital part of our ministry and mission at FLC and in the community!



FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

A heartfelt "Thank You" to Betty Thompson who served as Chair of the Fellowship Committee. When asked what stands out about her years of service to First, she, along with Carol Solberg and Karen Smithers were instrumental in establishing the Funeral Service Groups, for which we are most thankful. We will still be seeing Betty serving goodies and coffee in the Gathering Space on some Sundays.

The new co-chairs are Jean and Gary Hayer, they will continue to carry out organizing Sunday coffee hour after worship services, utilizing the various First Lutheran Church Committees, students and parents of the confirmation classes along with the Fellowship Committee members.

The Fellowship Committee welcomes new members to join our group, meetings are on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 5:30 pm.
We encourage First members to host the Coffee Hour to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries or just because you feel like sharing.

Gary and Jean can be reached at grhjch@verizon.net or Gary, 507-317-6971 or Jean, 507-317-6972.

From the desk of Deacon Brenda:
Living our life back to God

Do you have a favorite thinker/general smart person that you like to hear from or read? I do. One of my favorites is theologian and Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann. At age 92 he is still writing weekly blogs and posts that I can apply to my everyday life and remind me that God has been speaking into people's lives for centuries; often those people were living through "unprecedented times" just like we are these days.

Our kids in Wednesday night Education classes at FLC planted seeds to give to the Green committee for the Community garden (photos below), so when I read Dr Brueggemann's recent post I was reminded that the success of gardens everywhere is due to God's ongoing care. Once our plants sprout, and the wise hands from the Green Committee place them in our community garden, the plants will flourish and grow because of the rain, warmth and sunshine - not because of anything we have thought of but because of the nature of a giving God. Dr Brueggemann says this:

Our generous God gives life. We are God's creatures so part of being created in the image of God is to receive life gladly and gratefully; it remains our calling to ***live our lives back to God****, in solidarity with all other creatures, in obedience that is our perfect freedom, in generosity that reflects God's own self-giving, and in sharing that imitates the way in which God shares life with us. Thanks be to God!*

KEEP DONATING PLASTICS TO THE
NEXTREK BENCH PROJECT.
COLLECTION BIN IN THE ENTRANCE

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
1114 Traverse Rd.
St. Peter, MN 56082

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
St. Peter, MN 56082
Permit #3

2025 BWCA Trip

FLC Youth (grades 8-9)

July 7-11, 2025
ELY, MN; Fall Lake Entry

Eight youth are signed up for this summer's adventure!
WE NEED YOUR HELP!
If you have any of the following you could lend, please let me know.

-Duluth Packs, large backpacks
-2-3 person tents

We are still looking for 2+ chaperones.

If you have any questions, please contact Mark Szybnski at 507.380.9180 or at markszybnski@gmail.com