# First Out Loud

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

**SEPTEMBER- 2025 NEWSLETTER**

Siblings in Christ,

As summer draws to a close, I hope you have been able to take some time to rest and recharge your batteries. I hope you have gotten out to enjoy God's beautiful creation. I hope you have had the chance to reconnect with old friends and neighbors. I hope you have been able to travel and had fun. What have you done to steward your life and well-being? How is it these days with your soul? Keep praying. Keep exploring God's Holy Word. Join us for worship and use these verses below as part of your reflection time with the Lord.

I shared these verses recently with a member who was going into surgery to remind them of the fact they are known and loved by God – always and everywhere. I wanted them to know that God remains steadfastly by their side no matter what we may go through in life. So, please reflect upon these powerful words from the prophet Isaiah. God knows you, loves you, protects you, and accompanies you throughout your life. God blesses you – always and everywhere.

*"But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior…you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you."* (Isaiah 43:1-4a)

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Pastor Christopher Culuris

I hope everyone is having a great time at summer camps or the lake (or the BWCA!), are recovering from all the bug bites, and are ready to start another great school year!

It's been a relatively quiet time for the church council. We did not meet in July as is customary. Our next meeting will be August 19 when we'll likely discuss items such as next year's stewardship campaign, prioritizing repairs, the Live Nativity and preliminary discussions of the Fall Festival, as well as ongoing discussions on the use of the land. We will continue to have a council member on duty before and after Sunday services, so be sure to share your ideas or concerns. These all get brought up at the council meetings.

Have a great rest of your summer!

Sincerely,

Mark Roemhildt

Max & Loic at 4th of July Watch Party.

4th of July Watch Party

Let's celebrate! First Lutheran is a generous congregation, and we want to celebrate together! As we reach the milestone of having our building mortgage under $1 million, it's an important time to recognize the commitments and gifts that have allowed us to get to this stage. Acknowledging how our church conducts multiple ministries in our community and the world, we give thanks to the way our congregation contributes our talents, time, and finances toward these ministries to build God's kingdom. For all these reasons, and many more, you are invited to a Celebration and Appreciation Gala! On Friday, October 10 our congregation will celebrate our generosity! Adults 21 and over are invited to a formal gala hosted at Gustavus Adolphus College from 6:00-9:00pm. We will provide a seated supper as well as information about our church's ministries and finances, opportunities to share fellowship, and musical entertainment. Donations will be accepted directly for the Members Endowment or the Building Fund but are not expected or required. During this time, childcare will be provided at First Lutheran from 5:30-9:30pm, with fun activities and a pizza dinner. If you would like to help with childcare, please reach out to Deacon Brenda. Whether you're new to First Lutheran or have been a member for many years, we want to celebrate together in community! You can RSVP for this wonderful event using the QR code in this newsletter or by calling or emailing the church office. Thank you for your past and future generosity enabling us to share God's love with each other and our world.

-Finance and Stewardship Committees.

# YOU Are Invited

## Wednesdays @ First Lutheran

STARTS SEPT. 10

5:15-6:15 Dinner

5:45-6:15

- Pre-K - 1 Education
- Gr. 2-6 Children's Choir

6:15-6:45 Worship

6:45-7:30 Gr. 2-9 & Adult Education

**MENU**

9/11 Pizza

9/18 TBD

9/25 Lasagna

FLC welcomes everyone to join in the excitement of our jam packed Wednesday nights.

Register Your Child Here

Members and friends of First Lutheran Church…

Last week Karen Smithers, Financial Secretary in our church office, sent members of the Council, Stewardship and Finance Committees a summary of the church financials through the first half of the year 2025. It was quite pleasing to see that things look pretty good; income is above what was anticipated and expenses are less than anticipated. Also, with respect to the mortgage, it is below $950K which is also wonderful! YOU, the members of FLC are responsible for this; and the Stewardship Committee says THANK YOU for your GENEROSITY!!!

The theme for our Stewardship Campaign last year was ***"Ripples of Generosity."*** You took that message to heart, which is wonderful. **THANK YOU!**

The theme for this fall's Stewardship Campaign is ***"You have heard it said…"*** In Matthew's gospel, after Jesus preaches the Sermon on the Mount he shares a series of teachings; each begin with the words… ***"You have heard it said…"*** Jesus has some important lessons there for us on things such as anger, adultery, divorce, retaliation, worry, judging others, almsgiving, and prayer. Finally, he says ***"Do not store up for yourselves treasure on earth where moth and rust consume and thieves break in and steal; rather store up for yourselves treasure in heaven… For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."***

In September we'll be hearing more on the theme… ***"You have heard it said…"*** Then shortly after Labor Day you will get a USPS mailing with a message and an "Ask." The message will focus on God's faithfulness and our Passion as a congregation; the "Ask" will be an invitation to continue in the ways of faithful living and Generosity. There will be a 2026 Estimate of Giving commitment card and an invitation to Celebrate!!! For now, we invite you to block out 6-9 p.m. on your calendar for Friday, October 10. Stay tuned for more information and a detailed invitation, and remember: **Generosity begets generosity!** God's peace…

FLC Stewardship Committee

A Prayer for Our Earth

By Pope Francis, from the encyclical, “Laudati Si, On Care of Our Common Home”

All powerful God,

you are presA Prayer for Our Earth
By Pope Francis, from the encyclical,
“Laudati Si, On Care of Our Common Home”

All powerful God,
you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned
and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty,
not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey toward your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.

Working together to clean up the compost bins.

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

# FROM THE DESK OF DEACON BRENDA| 7

"Being Community"

"What makes you feel like you are part of a community?" I had a professor in seminary ask our class that question one time. Everyone in our class had different thoughts but at the end of our discussion we had distilled our ideas into two words - being together. We are parts of many different iterations of communities - family, friend groups, sports groups, school or class groups and church communities. Church communities are special because they remind me that I am not alone in my faith journey, in my questioning and wondering. I can join lots of different groups based on what I love to do - singing, hiking, book discussions, etc. but it is in a church community where I find that I am loved without having to do or be something to belong. I can just be me. It is in the church community I hear the stories of how God keeps promises and brings hope, love, forgiveness and life for us. It is here I find belonging.

This summer we have had some great opportunities to experience community and find that sense of belonging - on a bike ride, at the new ice cream shop, on a canoe trip, sitting beside people at the 4th of July parade, visiting with others after a Sunday worship service or even tearing down old compost bins - being together helps us remember who we are, and keeps us growing stronger in our faith.

KITCHEN
DELICIOUS

First Lutheran Volunteers will be cooking and serving a meal at "The Kitchen". A volunteer signup is on the table in the foyer. It is always a fun way to spend a Monday afternoon and evening, and is much appreciated by the people we serve. Upcoming dates are: August 25th, September 22nd, October 27th, and November 24th . Thank you to everyone who helps with this service to our community! If you are unable to serve but want to provide financial support for this ministry, just place a check in the offering with "The Kitchen" written on the memo line. If you have questions about this ministry please contact Marilyn Kochsiek (612-695-6270).

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

Non-Profit Organization
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PAID
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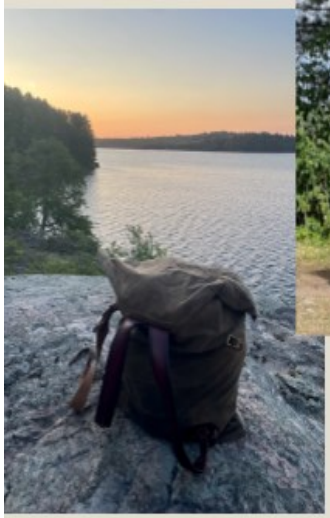
Permit #3

# 2025 BWCA Youth Trip

**July 7-11, 2025**



*"I enjoyed ___ in the Boundary Waters."*

*relaxing in the hammocks, hearing the birds, and looking off the cliff onto the water*
-Wes C.

*the serenity*
-Paul S.

*being with friends and getting to know the others at my campsite*
-Kolby N.

*being out in nature with all the beautiful scenery and catching fish with my dad*
-Laird B.

*hearing the loons at night*
-Timmy C.

*being with my dad, my friends, and being in nature*
-Graham M.

*hanging out at the campsite with everyone*
-Colton L.

*the scenery, food, and new experience*
-Colton J.

*Thank you* for your support as a congregation, and to the chaperones; Stephen Menning, Galen Bly, and Brad Chambers. *Mark Szybnski*