First Out Loud

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

MAY2026 NEWSLETTER

Siblings in Christ,

Deacon Brenda, several FLC members, a cute donkey named "Lucy," and I participated in the "Walking the Palm Sunday Path" march through downtown Mankato on March 29. There were about 350 Christians from several different denominations across the St. Peter-Mankato area who participated in this act of public witness. We made seven stops along our route as we prayed, sang, read scripture, listened to testimonials, and discussed how to welcome the stranger, care for the sick, and tend to the needs of all God's children. This march was a living embodiment of Matthew, Chapter 25. It was powerful and I am proud that FLC was part of that public witness of our Christian faith.

As of the time this goes to print, we have not yet had the "Vigil to Heal the Sick – St. Peter." This is scheduled to take place at the Rivers Edge Hospital on April 30. Again, I and several of us from FLC are planning to go to this event to highlight the plight of healthcare here in Minnesota. With HCMC possibly closing their doors and several hospitals and clinics struggling to stay open across greater Minnesota – now is the time to act. We all need reliable health care. This connects with Matthew 25:36, "I was sick and you took care of me." Please consider contacting your elected representatives and ask them to keep our hospitals and clinics open.

Please join us in worship this month as we celebrate Confirmation (May 3), first Holy Communion (May 10), and the Blessing of Graduates (May 17). These are important milestones in the life of our youth and their families. Please be present to pray for and support them as, again, another public witness of our Christian faith.

God bless and keep you all!

Pastor Christopher Culuris

2 Council President Report

Welcome to the busy month of May! Have you noticed how green everything seems these past few days? I have hyacinths blooming and tulips coming. The tree buds and birds singing remind us of new beginnings, spiritual renewal, and times of growth.

Before looking ahead, I want to take a minute to recognize Pastor Chris, Deacon Breanda, church staff, committees, readers, musicians, youth, the technology team, and other volunteers who made the week of Easter services and activities meaningful experiences. Easter services are a profound time of celebration, gratitude, and reflection. This was a wonderful time to highlight our faith and our church.

May is full of celebrations and special traditions at First Lutheran Church:

- Confirmation will be held on Sunday, May 3rd. We have six young men who have grown in their faith and will take ownership of the faith promises made on their behalf by parents and sponsors at baptism.

- First Communion and Mother's Day will be celebrated on Sunday, May 10th. Join us in honoring mothers, maternal bonds, and mentors who nurture us, and in celebrating two young boys as they strengthen their faith through Holy Communion.

- The Senior Blessing with Prayer Shawls will take place on Sunday, May 17th. As we celebrate our young adults graduating high school this spring, the handmade Prayer Shawls wrap our students in FLC's love and care.

One of the things I have loved at FLC is the tangible objects students make or are given in connection with these special events in their lives. The clay Communion cups made during First Communion with Joel Moline help students personalize the elements and symbols of Communion. Students create meaningful Confirmation Stoles with Pastor Chris during Confirmation. The stoles represent elements of the students' faith along with their unique personalities. Those tangible traditions are powerful ways to make abstract faith feel real and personal for young people.

With my oldest child graduating this year, the Senior Blessing is taking on new meaning for me. Prayer Shawls are intended to provide comfort, warmth, and a tangible sense of God's presence, love, or spiritual covering during prayer or meditation. I am struck by the symbolism of this beautiful, handmade gift—as our young adults embark on new adventures in life, the experiences and relationships they have built at FLC will be carried with them. Your genuine care, questions about their activities, and curiosity about their next steps make a difference in our young people's lives!

With gratitude,

Kaari

Social Justice Committee Updates

March Foodshelf Donations

536 pounds of food and $2,582 to the St. Peter Area Food Shelf for the March food drive! Thank you!

Trans Day of Visibility, Tuesday, March 31

This year's Trans Day of Visibility was a collaboration of Prism Organizing, First Lutheran, The St. Peter Good Neighbor Diversity Council, community members, friends and allies. A resource fair was held at the Community Center in the afternoon followed by dinner, music and a speaker at First Lutheran.

Community Choir: Save the date! The Saint Peter Community Choir is performing Thursday, May 7 at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday, May 10 at 2:00 p.m. at Bjorling Recital Hall at Gustavus. All are invited to attend!

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Request for Summer Coffee Hour Contributions

The Fellowship Committee is seeking assistance from the congregation to help provide treats for the coffee hour following worship during the summer months. Contributions can include homemade treats, fruit, cheese, crackers, store-bought goodies, or something special from a favorite bakery. Your participation will help make these gatherings enjoyable for everyone.

Members of the Fellowship Committee will handle making coffee and lemonade, serving the treats, and cleaning up after the event.

If you are willing to contribute, please contact Jean Hayer at 507.317.6972. Alternatively, a signup sheet will be available on the gathering space counter for your convenience.

Please consider helping out, as your support is greatly appreciated. If you decide to bake cookies, you may be asked to share the recipe—especially if they are a family favorite, such as your grandma's cookies.

Building and Grounds Report

As you may or may not know our custodian recently had a twelve-week leave of absence. The committee (Patricia Duenwald, Steve Erickson, Paul Haukoos, Bill Kautt, Dave Kennedy, Larry Kiewel, and Pat Pehrson) along with the Church Council liaison, Jim Neubauer and members of the church staff, especially Karen Smithers, stepped in to temporarily complete the many requirements of his position. We would also like to thank the church members (Ellen and Mark Conover, Patrick Duenwald, Harry Hunt, John Nadeau, Randall Stuckey, and Grace Timm) who helped us with these tasks. I apologize if I left anyone out.

Major projects completed: We hired GroPro Cleaning to deep clean the kitchen and clean the carpet in the Pioneer Parlor. We have reset the pavers by the handicapped parking area and have begun replacing mulch around the grounds. As the weather turns nice, we will have many small landscaping projects to complete. If you are willing to help with these please contact a member of the committee or give your name to the church office. Any help will be greatly appreciated.

Bill Kautt Co-Chair

To the staff & congregation:

Thank you for your support and prayers during my medical leave for hip replacement surgery. I've recovered nicely and am back at work. I appreciated knowing things were taken care of while I was gone.

Thank you & blessings

Dave'Pehrson

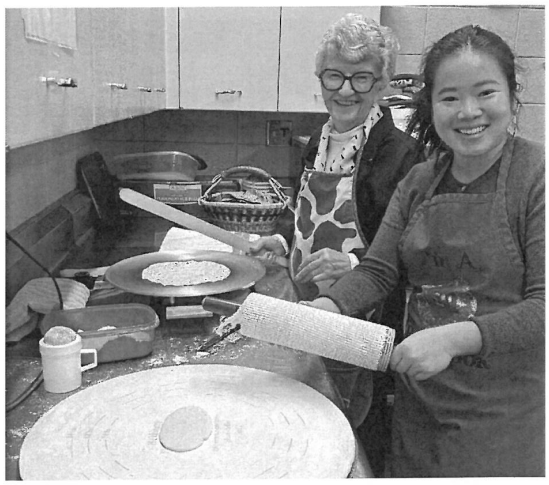
Custodian

From the Desk of Deacon Brenda:

2025-26 - A year of Community building in the Kitchen.

We are winding down the programming year and celebrating all of the ways we have been together. FLC has followed the spirit's lead to new and old places, projects, collaborations and ways of praising and serving God together - **often in the kitchen.**

Faith Night at First - February: Grace's 5th and 6th grade class learned together in the kitchen, outside in the courtyard, in the Sanctuary and in the classroom. They had fun this year.



Scandinavian Baking Day - December

Onie and Anja were just 2 of 20 people who came to FLC to bake or taste the krumkake, lefse, French chocolate Yule log, sandbakkels and hear the story of Santa Lucia.

Confirmation Students in the kitchen: cooking something new- Vegetarian Chili

Feeding hungry students from University of South Dakota Chamber singers.

Martin Luther wrote about the importance of kitchen faith - gathering around the table , sharing stories and seeing how God acts in daily tasks like the kindness of hospitality. It has been a good year! Thank you all for your presence and faithfulness. +God's peace, Brenda.

Eating together with St Peter neighbors from Trinity and Union Presbyterian before caravaning to Mankato for the Palm Sunday Pathway.

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

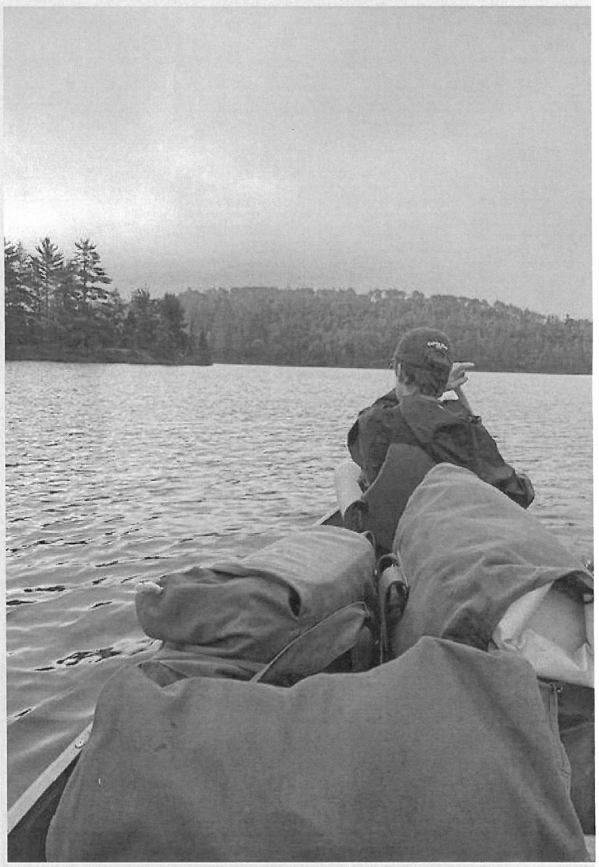
Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
St. Peter, MN 56082
Permit #3

2026 BWCA Trip

FLC ADULTS

June 28-July 2, 2026
Entry near Tofte

We have the permits and at least 5 travellers for 1 night in beautiful Grand Marais/Tofte and 3 nights in the wilderness!

If you are an interested adult, please contact Mark Szybnski at 507.380.9180 or at markszybnski@gmail.com

Please inquire for more details!