



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

Matthew 5:16

First Lutheran Church
July 2021
Newsletter Edition 7

Pastor's Message

Be an Active Part of an Active Faith Community

As your Interim Pastor, I have learned that First Lutheran Church is blessed with many active members who connect with our worship opportunities and our various ways to serve through the work of committees, calling of other members, caring for the church grounds, and reaching out to help others in our community and world.

Yet, I am concerned about the need to encourage and inspire even more of our members to become active parts of our faith community. And my concern is not just for First Lutheran as an ongoing, functioning congregation, but most importantly for every individual and every family connected with our part of God's kingdom. We are called by our Lord to encourage one another in faith, hope, and love. Why? The following reasons compel us to do so.

- 1) Community is essential to the Christian faith. Jesus was critical of the "organized religion" of his day, especially when it was too much for show, often hypocritical, and exclusionary. Yet, Jesus continually taught and preached the importance of a loving, caring, and supportive community of believers.
- 2) It is a myth that a person can be a true Christian apart from the community. Faith must be continually strengthened by worshipping with sisters and brothers in Christ, hearing the Word read and preached, and sharing one's faith with family, friends, and others.
- 3) Parents promise at the baptism services for their children to see that they are taught the beliefs and practices of the faith. They do so not just in words but most importantly by their examples of being active in worship, service, and financial support of the church.
- 4) Caring for the needy, the homeless, and those harmed by disasters is best done through being active in an organized community, not by sitting on the sidelines.

- 5) When people face difficult times of illness, sadness, or grief, they need a caring community, joined together in common prayer and loving support.
- 6) More than ever, we need to feel a sense of unity, of being “united in Christ.” This experience is only possible when more and more of our members become active parts of our special faith community.

With the gradual change in pandemic restrictions, new opportunities for renewal of community are arriving. Connect with our worship via TV or Facebook if these methods still work best for you. But you can now come to worship in church on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. or Monday evenings at 7:00 p.m. throughout the summer. Join the fellowship of believers and sing, listen, commune, and praise God together. Join a Bible study, volunteer for a committee or a project, ride or walk with First Lutheran brothers and sisters as part of our entry in the 4th of July parade, pray for each other, encourage those who have been absent for a time to come and witness the power and importance of worshipping together.

Let us all be an active part of an active faith community!

Pastor Bill

Fourth of July Parade

First Lutheran Church will have an important visible entry in this year’s St. Peter 4th of July Parade. We have secured a large trailer (pulled by a pickup truck) that we will decorate with First Lutheran banners, posters, and other signs. Several people can ride on our “float” and many others will be able to walk and hand out First Lutheran items and treats. All participants will be given a free “God’s Work, Our Hands” t-shirt with the First Lutheran Church sign on the back. We will be spreading the Gospel and the message that First Lutheran is an active part of the St. Peter community with so much to offer.

We need lots of people to participate by helping to decorate our entry and to walk or ride in the parade on the 4th. Decorating will occur in the church parking lot on Saturday, July 3, at 9:00 a.m. We will have our entry in the parade line ready to go by 9:00 a.m. or earlier on July 4, and participants should show up by our unit by 9:30 a.m. Please call (507-934-3060) or email (flcstpoffice@gmail.com) the church office to sign up to help decorate or participate in the parade, or both! Or, youth and families can sign up with Calleigh, as noted later in this newsletter. Let’s spread the Good News!

FLC’s Council President Message

At its June meeting, the Church Council received reports from the Technology Task Force, the Call Committee, the Health Advisory Team, and the Synod Assembly. The Staff Support Committee also reported the latest revisions to the Staff Handbook and recommended the hiring of Angela Giedd to fill the vacant office coordinator position. The Council also approved restarting the Kwik Trip Card program and the reopening of the church for use by outside groups. Finally, Pastor Bill informed the Council of plans for First Lutheran to participate in the Fourth of July parade and potential participation in other events to promote the church.

Bill Kautt, Council President

Worshipping Out Loud this Summer!

In July, there will be lots of different ways to be engaged through First Lutheran. Here are some highlights:

- Fourth of July participation in Saint Peter's Old Fashioned Parade
- Outdoor Worship on July 18 with Holy Communion
- Season of Creation begins July 18 with Earth Sunday
- Monday Evening worship continues through July at 7:00 p.m. with communion on July 19

As we have done the past two summers, you are invited to a special Season of Creation beginning July 18 and culminating on August 15 with an outdoor Pet Blessing! Our congregation gives special attention to the environment and sustainability practices through our Green Committee, Buildings and Grounds, youth tree planting, involvement with MN Interfaith Power and Light, and many others who are committed to taking care of our planet. The Season of Creation is one way we can live into our values as a congregation and learn more about the importance of taking care of the Earth and all that is in it!

Coming in August, there is a very special event that you will NOT want to miss. It has been a few years, and it is high time for **FLC's Got Talent** to make a return! Mark your calendars for **August 15th at 7:00 p.m.** for an evening of entertainment!

Now, perhaps you are thinking: "I'm not talented." "I'm not a musician." "I don't think my gifts fit into this event." I am here to tell you that we are looking for anything and everything! Certainly musical solos and groups are just fine, but readers, comedians, dancers, actors, members of speech teams, magicians, and even cup stackers and the like are encouraged to join in the fun! All ages and ability levels are welcome! We will also include a special display of visual arts, crafts, coloring pages, pottery, quilts, etc. that will decorate the Dining Hall. (For example, bring over your entries from the County Fair!) Perhaps your gift is in baking, cooking, and/or growing food. We will also welcome a variety of healthy snacks and some treats for everyone to enjoy during the show!

It has been quite some time since our community gathered just for FUN. Let's make it an unforgettable evening. No ticket purchase necessary, but there will be a freewill donation collected for a project to be determined. Contact Emily at musicflcstp@gmail.com or by phone at 651-472-1700 to sign up!

Emily Bruflat, Director of Music

Summertime AGO Organ Recitals

The Sioux Trails Chapter of the American Guild of Organists continues its Summer Noontime Organ Recitals LIVE at 12:10 pm on Tuesdays in Mankato. In July, the series begins at Organist at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 222 Pfau Street, Mankato, with performances by David Mertesdorf (7/6), Grace Kunkel (7/13) and Sean Connolly (7/20). The series moves to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 720 S. 2 nd Street for a performance by Wayne Wagner and Craig Hirschmann on 7/27. Each recital is free. For more info, visit www.agosioustrails.org.

This activity is made possible in part by a grant from the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council from funds appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature from its general fund.

Youth and Family Faith - Out Loud!

Here's what's happening in July:

Fourth of July Parade

- First Lutheran will have a "float" in the parade this summer! We need walkers, riders, and banner carriers! Interested in participating!? Email Calleigh at cc.flcstp@gmail.com.

Summer Opportunities for Sunday School

- Shetek's Lutheran Ministries - Day Camp at First Lutheran Church: Dwell Faithfully
 - ★ When: July 26th-29th
 - ★ Where: First Lutheran Church in St. Peter
 - ★ Cost: \$25 per child
 - ★ Ages: Entering Grade 1 through entering Grade 6
 - ★ Registration link: www.shetek.org
 - Use Group Code: FIRSTDAY

Summer Opportunities for Confirmation Students

- Shetek Lutheran Ministries - Overnight Confirmation Camp: Dwell Faithfully
 - ★ When: July 7th-9th
 - ★ Where: Shetek Lutheran Ministries Site
 - ★ Cost: \$140
 - ★ Ages: Entering 7th-9th Grade
 - ★ Registration link: www.shetek.org
 - Use Group Code: Firststp

Summer Opportunities for Middle/High School

- Week of Mission: a week of service designed to connect our youth with their community through intentional service based on the needs of the community.
 - ★ When: July 5th-9th
 - ★ Where: Trinity Lutheran Church
 - ★ Cost: \$20 per child
 - ★ Ages: Entering Grade 7 through Entering Grade 12
 - ★ Contact Trinity Lutheran Church at 507-934-4786

Please note that funding is available to help families with the costs for all of our summer programming. You can reach out to Calleigh for more information on this (507-779-6866 or cc.flcstp@gmail.com).

Social Justice Committee Update

The Social Justice Committee wrapped up the last of the Embracing Diversity webinar series with Ashlei Cramer from ReconcilingWorks. Ashlei highlighted why it is important to continue our Reconciling in Christ (RIC) mission and how congregations are expanding their missions to include racial equity.

Thanks to all of you who attended the Embracing Diversity discussions. Our committee sees this as just the beginning of ways we can grow our diversity, inclusion, and equity efforts. Other work we have done is to purchase a CSA food share for the St. Peter Area Food Shelf and we are exploring the possibility of a way to make food even more accessible for the community through a refrigerator program.

Save the date of **September 17** for First Lutheran volunteer day for the St. Peter Food Access Network food distribution.

Amy Ronkvist, Social Justice Committee

Buildings and Grounds Update

The committee has been busy with the courtyard improvement project for most of the last quarter. Stop and view the changes if you have an opportunity. We would like to thank Nicollet County Master Gardeners Margie Nelsen and LaVonne Smasal for their advice and assistance with this project. Committee members Patricia Duenwald, Steve Erickson, Dave Kennedy, and Bill Kautt, along with volunteers Pat Duenwald and Cheryl Kautt provided the labor for the project. The committee would also like to thank Mary Ann Scharf for providing funding for this project. The project is not quite finished yet and we could use some more volunteers to assist with weeding and watering in the future.

The other major project this spring was assisting the confirmation in planting 80 trees in the vacant lot to the east of the church. Please contact Calleigh Carlson if you are willing to help with watering these trees throughout the summer and fall.

Some concerns that need to be addressed are leveling the paver walkways in the Bell Garden and determining why the sidewalk to the north door of the basement has risen creating a hazardous difference between two of the concrete slabs of the sidewalk.

Finally, we can always use more members on our committee and/or volunteers to assist with the upkeep of the building and grounds. Please contact any member of the committee if you are to help: Bill Kautt, Patricia Duenwald, Steve Erickson, Paul Haukoos, Dave Kennedy, Bob Moline, and Dave Pehrson

The Buildings and Grounds Committee

Resurrection Cemetery Update

Resurrection Cemetery - owned by First Lutheran Church - is located on Hwy 99 west of Saint Peter. It is a non-denominational cemetery.

Members of the FLC Cemetery Committee, volunteers, and hired help maintain the cemetery. At the present time, the main project is the removal and trimming of trees and the planting of over 40 trees along the west side of the property. A new project is the erection of an informational sign located after entering the cemetery. The sign will be divided into two parts: first, a map outlining the cemetery into alphabetical sections, and second, ownership and contact information with the website "Find a Grave." A brochure with history, rules and regulations, and costs per grave site will be attached to the side of the sign.

Please visit and feel the warmth of this final resting place. **The Resurrection Cemetery Committee**



NEWSLETTER

First Lutheran Church



*First Lutheran Church
1114 Traverse Rd.
Saint Peter, MN 56082*

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U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #3
Saint Peter, MN 56082

Address Service Requested
Phone: 507-934-3060
Email: flcstpoffice@gmail.com
Website: www.flcstp.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/FLCSTP