

# FIRST OUT LOUD!



NEWSLETTER  
AUGUST, 2023

## Pastor Chris – Trying to Get Up that Great Big Hill of Hope!

What's going on in your part of God's creation?

In the beginning of the Bible, we hear these two verses: "Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it." (Genesis 2: 7, 15) Thus, from the very beginning, God has given humanity a job to do. God put us on this good earth to work the land and care for it. Earlier in Genesis, we read how God gave humanity "dominion" over every living thing that moves upon the earth. My professors at seminary were quick to point out that the Hebrew word for dominion here actually means to exercise good "stewardship" over the earth and all of life.

So again, I'll ask, how are things going in your part of God's creation? How are we doing at caring for the earth and the life we find around us? Are we being good stewards of the land, the air, the water, and the animals we find ourselves surrounded by? How are things going in the place where God has blessed us to live? Join us for worship throughout August as we prayerfully consider how we care for God's good creation.

Also, in August, we have two special events to share. We will welcome a fiddle group from Sweden to join us for worship and a concert on August 6th. Vacation Bible School will be offered free of charge for First members from Aug. 6-10. Read inside for more details. God bless you. God guide your care for this good earth which the Lord created and entrusted into our hands!

*In Christ,*

*Pastor Chris*



## Council President – Reflections on Summer Meetings & Activities

I attended the **Southwest Minnesota Synod Assembly** in June at Gustavus. For the first time in four years, the assembly was held in person! Judging by the buzz in Lund Arena, being together again, face to face, was the highlight.

Speaking of celebrations, for the third year in a row, our congregation participated in St. Peter's 4th of July parade. I have had the pleasure of marching along with other First Lutheran members these past three years and it delights me that we have a presence in this community celebration.

Also, I have been busy with the **action planning team** for the strategic priority "Engaging and Collaborating with The Community". In the June newsletter, I shared that our team (Emily Bruflat, Randy Frey-Hawkins, Kristy Larson, Shanon Nowell, Amy Ronnkvist, Keith Stelter and Mike Stewart) is investigating the feasibility of using the underutilized land east of the church for affordable housing.

I want to reiterate that we are **exploring** the possibility of affordable housing and doing due diligence by gathering the necessary information. We have also heard from a few members about other possibilities for this land including community gardens and wild, natural spaces. We are also looking into how we can incorporate these ideas into the site. Once we have the necessary information and some sample site designs, we will present this to the congregation for your feedback.

The best way to get your ideas into the mix is to be a part of the action planning team. Please contact me if you want to be involved ([majspear@gmail.com](mailto:majspear@gmail.com)). This is an exciting project full of promise. It is a wonderful opportunity to do God's work with our hands to serve our community.

## Southern Minnesota Pride Parade - September 9

FLC will be participating in the Pride Parade in downtown Mankato as part of the Southern Minnesota Pridefest. Please join us for the festive occasion and show your support of the LGBTQIA+ community. We will be handing out FLC pens, business cards and candy! We will meet at 10:30 a.m. in the Bridge Street Plaza parking lot (next to the downtown Mankato Public Library). The parade route is short and we should be done by 12:00. Wear your "God's Work. Our Hands." T-shirts or other colorful attire!



## Live Nativity Returning – The Time to Prepare is NOW!

CCM is excited about the return of Live Nativity. Live Nativity happens over several days during advent in the FLC parking lot. This is a church-wide event and involves as many committees and people as possible.

*Please contact the church office if you would like to be involved in the return of this lovely Christmastime tradition!*

## Outdoor Worship August 27 – Worship on the Lawn with Us!

FLC will hold worship outside on the west side of the building. Chairs will be set up, but you can also feel free to bring your own chair as well. This will be the conclusion of the Season of Creation

## FLC's Got Talent! Sign Up Now!

We are starting to recruit "acts" for our third-annual FLC's Got Talent event coming up on Sunday, September 17, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.!

Children, youth, parents, grandparents, friends, neighbors - anyone is welcome and encouraged to sign up! Music, dance, readings, art are just a few of the many types of talent we are looking for. Sign up [online](#) , and contact Emily at [musicflcstp@gmail.com](mailto:musicflcstp@gmail.com) with any questions!!

## Musical Outreach to Benedictine & Ecumen - More Details Coming Soon!



## Psalms for Youth – The Season of Creation Continues

Brenda McHugh will lead a short lesson for children of all ages during worship on the following Sundays. Join us for a special children's time! Sing a Psalm with Brenda and friends.

Aug 6 - Paraphrase of Psalm 96, "We Are Your Creation"

Aug 13 - Paraphrase of Psalm 104, "Your Works Are Amazing!"

Aug 20 - Paraphrase of Psalm 18, "I Cry Out to You"

Aug 27 (outdoor) - Paraphrase of Psalm 147, "All of Creation"

## Fiddle Choir - Vikarbyn Lilla Spelmanslag - Coming August 6!

Vikarbyn Lilla Spelmanslag, directed by Margaretha Mattson, comes from the Dalarna region of Sweden. They have been doing cultural exchange here in Minnesota since 2007. The group has toured around the region as well as in Japan, Ireland, and Iceland. They play Swedish, Norwegian, American, and Irish folk music.

Join us on August 6! This group of ten young adults will play during our 10:00 a.m. worship service, a brief "teaser" during our Fellowship time in the

Gathering Space while we enjoy Welcome Waffles, and a concert at 2:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Please invite your friends and neighbors to this special event!



## Picture Day! - A New Church Directory!

First Lutheran will be producing a new pictorial directory with Universal Church Directories. Our photo dates are:

September 26-29 at 2:00-8:30 p.m.  
September 30 at 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

All photography will take place here at FLC on the dates above. You will receive a complimentary 8x10 portrait and directory for participating.

If you would like to bring in a personal item such as sporting equipment, an instrument, a medal, jewelry, a Bible or pet, that is encouraged and will be incorporated into your portrait session.

Coming Soon!  
OUR NEW  
**Directory!**

Sign up Online  
or  
at Church

*It's time for a new church pictorial directory. It won't be our directory without you, so sign-up today for family photography!*

Universal Church Directories

If you know anyone that has or would like to attend our church, every family is welcome to invite others at this special time and they too will receive the benefits of the portrait session.

### Sign up in 3 easy ways:

- (Online <https://ucdir.com/schedule/login.php> Church Code: mn348 - Password: photos) registration is open now!
- At church on the sign up after service starting Sunday, July 30
- Contact Universal Church Directories at 419-522-5011 for scheduling or assistance.

Remember our directory won't be complete without YOU! If you cannot attend one of our sessions, alternate sessions will be available off-site. Please call 414-522-5011 to arrange a session nearby as early as August 3.

## “The Kitchen” - Planning for 2024

Thank you to the folks who have signed up to prepare and serve a meal at The Kitchen on January 30th. We will be serving chili, bread, raw vegetables and fruit. First Lutheran Church will have more opportunities for service at The Kitchen on February 27th, March 27th, and April 24th. A signup sheet will be on the table in the gathering space for each of these dates. You can also email The Kitchen planning committee for more information at: [servingtheneed56082@gmail.com](mailto:servingtheneed56082@gmail.com).

Committee Members:

Sandi Francis - Trinity Lutheran

Church of St. Peter - Dean Peterson

Union Presbyterian - Jen Baxa

First Lutheran Church - Marilyn Kochsiek

If you are unable to volunteer on the nights First Lutheran is responsible for the meal, you can request access to Sign Up Genius to volunteer any Monday night.

We also have set up a Facebook page. Page name: The Kitchen at Trinity Lutheran Church. During the month of February, we are sponsoring a "Share the Love" fundraiser. We are looking for families that would like to make a financial contribution to sponsoring a Monday night meal.

## GWOH Sunday – September 10

This year marks the 10th anniversary of “**God’s Work. Our Hands.**” Sunday. Scheduled for Sept. 10, this annual day of service is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) — one church, freed in Christ to love and serve our neighbor. The Social Justice, Lifelong Learning and Greens committee of First Lutheran are coordinating this year’s GWOH Sunday. These service projects will take place right after worship and include:

- **Union Place Shelter:** Yard work and other outdoor clean-up projects
- **Indoor Activities:** Lifelong learning and Greens committees will have projects that will take place inside the church building that won’t require as much physical activity. We will keep you posted once there are specifics on the indoor activities.



Extend this invitation to others to widen the welcome and engage with our neighbors! Remember to dress in your yellow “God’s Work. Our Hands.” T-shirts. We have a limited supply on hand if you need one.

# Youth & Family – End of Summer, it’s Time to Get Registered for Fall

## Summer Opportunities:

August 6-10 @ Trinity Lutheran	<i>FLC &amp; TLC Summer Vacation Bible School</i>
Monday, August 14 6:30pm @ FLC	<i>MONDAY FUNDAY: SUMMER FAMILY NIGHTS AT FIRST Fire, S’mores, &amp; Songs</i>



## 2023-24 Youth Programming - Important Dates & Deadlines!

<b>Pre-K- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<p><b><i>Deadline to Register for SUNDAY SCHOOL: Sept. 17 2023-24 Rally Day: Oct. 1 First Day of Class: Oct. 8</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Registration is officially OPEN! Register Today!</i></b>  <a href="https://forms.gle/U5hKjbBJFfNtSS4DA">https://forms.gle/U5hKjbBJFfNtSS4DA</a></p>
<b>5<sup>th</sup> &amp; 6<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<p><b><i>Deadline to Register for FAITH FORMATION: Sept. 15 2023-24 Orientation Day: Sept. 20 at 6:30pm First Day of Class: Sept. 27 at 6:30pm</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Registration is officially OPEN! Register Today!</i></b>  <a href="https://forms.gle/tjVeq4XZDLdP3U9P8">https://forms.gle/tjVeq4XZDLdP3U9P8</a></p>
<b>Grades 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup></b>	<p><b><i>Deadline to Register for CONFIRMATION: Sept. 15 2023-24 Orientation Day: Sept. 20 at 6:30pm First Day of Class: Sept. 27 at 6:30pm</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Registration is officially OPEN! Register Today!</i></b>  <a href="https://forms.gle/T4BmyFXcKjrS3gs19">https://forms.gle/T4BmyFXcKjrS3gs19</a></p>
<b>FLC Trinity Union</b>	<p><b><i>Combined HS Youth Group Kick-off: November 1 Bring a friend!</i></b></p>

-Calleigh Carlson, Director of Youth and Family Ministries

## Reflections on Stewardship –Wisdom from the Very Young

Gerhard Frost was a professor at Luther Seminary, also a writer, a poet who had a profound ability to see profound truths in ordinary things. His reflections recognized God present in common events of life. Many years ago, he was a confirmation classmate of my father-in-law. Recently I rediscovered his autographed works in David's library. His reflection on a conversation between two granddaughters gives us a perspective on stewardship.

### WE HAVE

Little sisters, four and six;  
today the mail brought  
what they liked and looked for;  
a catalogue, replete with  
many colored pictures.

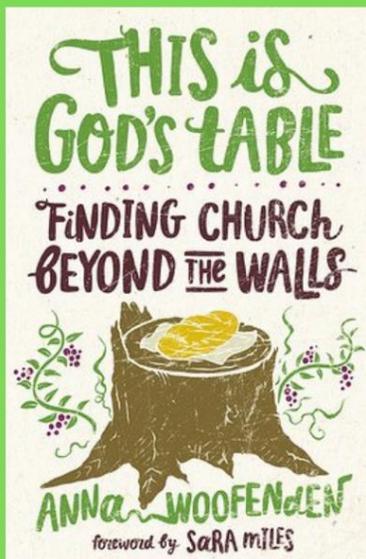
The first to page it  
was the six year old;  
she turned each page possessively,  
saying wherever she found what pleased her;  
“I want this! And I want this . . .and this!”

The ceremony of selfishness ended;  
it was the moment of the four year old.  
She who didn't know the why of catalogues;  
turned pages, pointing too,  
but now the words were new:  
“We got this! And we got this . . .and this!”

“I want!” “We have!” What difference  
it would make in this our global village,  
if four-year-old love and wisdom ruled the day!



*-Submitted by Becky Otterness*



## PREPARE FOR OUR AUGUST BOOK STUDY!

Emily will lead a book discussion  
during First Forum after worship  
on August 13 and 20 during  
our Season of Creation!

Anyone can participate whether or not they read the book!

## THIS IS GOD'S TABLE

by Anna Woofenden

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