



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH + SAINT PETER

FIRST OUT LOUD!

NEWSLETTER
JUNE/JULY, 2022

Hospitality: In Service & Spirit

The importance of genuine hospitality cannot be understated. When Pastor Heather and I served two congregations together up North, we were blessed to have a talented and efficient church secretary. Kathy was competent, friendly, and dependable. She was an even better human being. She, her husband Les, and their five sons used to live in the far northwestern part of North Dakota. Blizzards would routinely shut down the highway that ran in front of their farm. In response, Kathy and Les went out and bought several sleeping bags and they stocked up on frozen pizzas. This way, when the blizzards came, they could welcome the stranded motorists from the highway into their home, feed them, and keep them safe and warm. Kathy and Les' hospitality literally meant the difference between life and death.

In Holy Baptism, God welcomes us into his gracious and eternal reign. God washes away our sins. We receive the gift of the Holy Spirit to be our lifelong companion and guide. We are named beloved children of God and promised a place in God's household forever. Truly, God shows us the greatest amount of hospitality of all by welcoming us into his family of faith. In response, we are called upon to "proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace." (Holy Baptism, ELW pg. 228)

I suggest that one way we can do this is by showing genuine Christian hospitality to others. Has someone recently moved into a home near where you live? Do you have a new person who has joined your team at work? Are there visitors who have come to First who might be looking for a new church home? Welcome that new person to your neighborhood, your place of employment and to our church. The importance of genuine hospitality cannot be understated. And who knows. You just might gain a new friend, a new colleague, and a new sibling in Christ by welcoming and being supportive of others.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Pastor Christopher Culuris

Up Next! First Forums

Meet Our Missionary Philip Knutson
(South Africa)

July 9 (Saturday) in the Sanctuary
6:00 PM

Presidents Report

Your council has been quite busy and will get busier with additional agenda items that we will be considering. We are discussing plans to rehabilitate and staff the nursery as a way of being more welcoming to families with young children.

The visit of Officer Hughes this past Wednesday was well attended, and we learned a great deal of valuable information. His presentation raised several issues that we need to consider, chiefly a plan for an emergency involving an actual or potential shooter, ways of alerting the congregation if such a situation develops, plans for evacuation, and familiarizing all our members with all exits and relatively safe places in the church.

We have received a request from our Muslim neighbors, who have outgrown their mosque, to either use our facilities or to build a mosque on our property.

We are continuing to work on strategic planning. We are in the initial stages of putting together a task force for strategic planning (similar to the BOLD task force of several years ago). The charge for this task force is still being formulated, but in general it will deal with ways we can better put our mission into action. We are in the process of evaluating whether we want to employ a consultant. If you are interested in serving on the task force, please email me at gpaul@gac.edu. We may not be able to honor all requests but are interested in having a wide range of representation in terms of age, length of time of membership, and families with young children.

As you can see, our plate is full. Please remember us in your prayers.

-Dr. Garrett Paul

From the Cantor: Summer - Season of Creation!

One of my personal favorite traditions that First Lutheran started observing in the summer of 2019 is the Season of Creation. As it turns out, there are lots of churches around the world - including support from the Lutheran World Federation - taking time every year to turn toward this or a similar lectionary. Many of our resources these past few years have come from an organization in Australia. This year's focus is on our changing climate.

This initiative reminds us that one of our core callings as Christians is to be custodians of the Earth and every living thing that resides here. I like to think of plants, animals, and biomes as some of the "neighbors" I am called by Christ to love, respect, and for which to care. Two spiritual practices I have adopted and developed in my personal life over many years: planting and nurturing native plants without use of chemicals in my yard, and predominantly practicing vegetarianism because I view animal life as on par with human life. What are some ways you care for the Earth as a spiritual practice?

One question I expect: *Why aren't the scripture readings printed in the bulletin?* You are invited to try this green friendly practice to keep our bulletins a little shorter: either listen to the readings or bring your own bible from home and follow along!

There will also be a Green Worship Supplement that will be reused each week for further paper saving, so please leave that one behind after worship.

With that introduction, here is a synopsis of each of our six Sundays in the Season of Creation:

- *June 19: Animal Sunday (outdoor)* - This year, we will kick off the series by celebrating all of God's creatures, great and small, and the intricate part that biodiversity plays in a thriving and healthy planet. This will include a pet blessing during worship. Your well-behaved and leashed/confined pet is welcome to attend for a blessing! If you would rather not bring your pet, you can bring a photo instead.
- *June 26: Climate Sunday* - We listen, pray, and sing about the wonders, joys, and sorrows of our climate, including the negative impact of our changing climate patterns.



- *July 3: Water Sunday* - Our oceans, rivers, lakes, and streams provide habitat for countless creatures. What can be done to stop overfishing and pollution? Water is one of our most basic needs for sustaining all life.
- *July 10: Storm Sunday (outdoor)* - Saint Peter knows very well the reality of major storms and the damage they can cause. We reflect on the growing severity of our weather patterns and pledge to help those in crisis.
- *July 17: Solar Sunday* - We celebrate the life-giving sun. We acknowledge both the harm that too much sun can cause as our planet warms as well as the ability that we have to harness the sun's energy into power.
- *July 24: Rainbow Sunday (outdoor)* - Finally, we observe a special conclusion, which includes a "Rainbow Covenant" - seven promises that we can make as a church community to grow in our understanding of climate change and actions we can take in service to all of God's Creation.



Other Worship Highlights Coming Up:

- *June 5:* Pentecost Sunday with Holy Communion - Happy Birthday, Church!
- *June 12:* Holy Trinity Sunday with Holy Communion
- *August 28:* Hymn Festival - more information in the next newsletter!

Sabbatical: Part 2

Last month, I talked about one of my passion projects: writing texts and tunes for hymns and self-publishing music resources. This month, I'll highlight that I will include some personal study - both applied and academic - throughout my leave.

This fall, I will attend a one-on-one Master Class with organist Mark Sedio from Central Lutheran in Minneapolis. I have asked him to give me a crash course in organ improvisation. Following that, I have scheduled the month of October as time to meet with David Cherwien (Cantor at Mount Olive in South Minneapolis) for further study in organ improvisation.

On the academic side, I have a long list of books, journals, and articles I have collected since moving to Saint Peter, most of which are theological in nature and many of which talk about music and worship in some capacity. That list has grown even more since I put together my sabbatical proposal!

My hope is to read a minimum of four academic books. From my list, I am gravitating toward reading books that talk about various kinds of activism through the church and how our worship can motivate our actions. How can we be the church out in Saint Peter, Minnesota? How can our worship influence that? I plan to study up and bring back several weeks' worth of seminars and book reviews as well as ideas for living our faith out loud in 2023!

-Emily Bruflat, Director of Music

Fourth of July Parade!

Get on the Float

FLC has secured an entry in the St. Peter Fourth of July Parade. This is a big event for the whole city and we had great participation from our members last year. Please save the date to get involved and stay tuned for how each of our committees will be involved!

Questions? Contact Betsy Paul (CCM Committee).

Church Financial Reporting

Ending April 30, 2022

Income	146,182
Expense	<u>146,337</u>
Net Loss	(155)

Youth & Family Faith OUT LOUD!

Here's what's happening this summer:

Summer Opportunities for Sunday School:

Vacation Bible School at Trinity Lutheran:

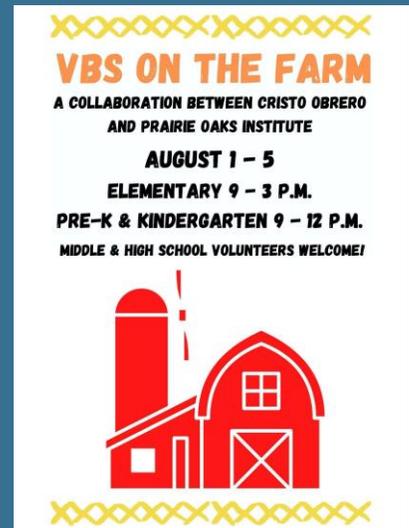
- When: June 12-16; 5:30pm-8:00pm
- Where: Trinity Lutheran Church in St. Peter

Cost: \$10 per child (kids of volunteers attend for free!)

- Ages: Entering Kindergarten through entering Grade 5
 - Note: ages 3-4 accepted with a cap of 10 preschoolers h(must be potty trained)
- Registration through Trinity!

• VBS on the Farm: A Collaboration Between Cristo Obrero & Prairie Oaks Institute:

- When: August 1-5
 - Elementary Aged Youth: 9am-3pm
 - Pre-K-Kindergarten Youth: 9am-12pm
- Where: Prairie Oaks Institute (1200 W South St. in Belle Plaine)
- Ages: Pre-K-Grade 6
- Registration/Information Link:
<https://form.jotform.com/220616326455150>



Summer Opportunities for Middle/High School:

Shetek Lutheran Ministries - Overnight Confirmation Camp

- When: July 6-8
- Where: Shetek Lutheran Ministries Site
- Cost: \$130 (includes meals, lodging, programming, and tshirt)
- Ages: Entering Grades 7-9
- Registration link: www.shetek.org
- Use Group Code: Firststp

Check out our Church Calendar for additional opportunities!



Afghan Refugee Family Update

We have teamed with Trinity and Union to sponsor an Afghan Refugee Family. Together we have donated \$8,500 to help a newly arrived Afghan family with rent for 6 months. The family has settled in the Twin City area to be near Lutheran Social Services caseworkers and other refugee families.

There are three members of the family located in Minneapolis. The teenaged son has started school and is enjoying time with friends. He loves playing soccer and has made friends at their apartment complex. He is hoping to join a summer soccer club. The mother was severely injured in a bombing attack in Kabul. She had surgery in Washington D.C. before traveling to Minnesota. She is in a care facility. Due to the severity of her injuries Lutheran Social Services (LSS) is looking for a long-term care home for her.

The daughter (a young adult) has gotten to know other Afghans and has enjoyed being connected to other community members. The family recently celebrated Eid, the end of Ramadan, with a group dinner. The daughter is enrolled in ESL and is eager to learn and practice English. She also is eager to start working and would like to go to college. LSS is working at getting her work so she can support her family and save for college. The son and daughter visit their mother frequently and are very involved in the decision-making process.

This family has other young adult siblings that are still in Afghanistan. We are hoping to have some interaction with this family as they become more fluent in English.

-Submitted by Ellen Conover

Livestream Update

First Lutheran Church has been livestreaming worship services to Facebook since November 2021. Each week a notification is posted to the church Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/FLCSTP>) that First Lutheran Church of Saint Peter "plans to go live." The post includes a brief description of the upcoming service with options to get a reminder, like, comment, or share. All interactions with this post will increase the reach and visibility of the post throughout Facebook! Even if you miss the notification, all live videos are available via the "Live" tab on Facebook or at https://www.facebook.com/FLCSTP/live_videos.

During Holy Week, we also started a test drive of a service that allows us to livestream not only to Facebook but also to YouTube! This option may be preferable for viewers who would like to view worship services on their smart TV or streaming devices like Roku or Chromecast. Just search for "First Lutheran Church of Saint Peter" on YouTube or go to https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqsbWK3H_Q8gKl-7_k-bT3g. While you're there, be sure to click "Subscribe"!

-Submitted by Bradley Chambers

Places For Children at FLC

At First Lutheran Church there are places designed with children in mind.

- At the front right side of the sanctuary near the baptismal font is a round multi-colored rug where there are toys stored under the pew nearby.
- At the back of the sanctuary, on the same side, is a stand that holds book bags and rocking chair.
- The Library is down the south hallway where there is a nice selection of children's books.
- Along the north hallway, a few doors from the sacristy is the Nursery.

Take time and check out these places.

-Submitted by Mary Long

Meals On Wheels

Meals On Wheels is managed by Lutheran Social Service. In St Peter it is based out of Parkview Manor (sometimes known as the High Rise) on 1010 S. 4th Street.

This organization needs volunteer drivers to deliver noon meals to people in St. Peter. It is a way to meet new people. It is a way to make a positive difference in the lives of older adults. Meals are delivered Monday through Friday, not on weekends or holidays. Drivers usually do it for a week at a time once a month. This is a temporary commitment depending on the time you have to devote to this opportunity.

Meals to be delivered are picked up at 10:30 AM at the Senior Dining Center in Parkview Manor. It takes about an hour to complete the delivery.

It is possible to be reimbursed for your mileage. Call Cliff at 507-934-8850 between 8AM and 12 Noon for further information and to volunteer. Before you do your first delivery route ask Cliff to help you plan to ride with an experienced driver so that you can learn the routine.

-Submitted by Mary Long

Excerpt from First Forum: Sunday, March 13, 2022

“Forty Plus Years Tending to Resurrection Cemetery”

.... The Cemetery dates back to the 1860s--a history described in our current Cemetery brochure. Access to the cemetery used to be from the north, off what was then highway 99 (currently Jefferson Ave.) The cemetery property was adjacent to St. Peter State Hospital property. In 1952 highway 99 was moved to its present location, cutting through state owned property. This presented the cemetery with some unresolved issues. The highway construction leveling moved some earth to a creek bed running through the cemetery, making drainage a problem. Further, it left the old state hospital cemetery adjacent to our own cemetery property but separated from the state hospital by the highway. It also meant a new driveway needed to be built to come into the cemetery from the south off the new highway....

.... With the new highway separating the state hospital cemetery and grazing land from the state hospital itself, Representative Carl Johnson, local farmer elected to the Minnesota Legislature, negotiated the sale of state lands north of the highway and adjacent to the cemetery, to Resurrection Cemetery for \$100, in return for which Resurrection Cemetery would maintain and care for the state hospital cemetery. Area farmers continue to mow and bale the grazing land included in this transfer to Resurrection Cemetery. (Notes for the complete talk may be found on the FLC website: www.flcstp.org under “Resurrection Cemetery,” then “First Forum Talk...”)

-Submitted by Gordon Long

Stewardship Committee: Perspectives from a New Member!

My wife, Mary Kay, and I joined First Lutheran last fall. We are delighted to be part of the congregation. A few weeks ago, Pr. Culuris invited me to join the Stewardship Ministry Committee. I decided, “I can do that.” Then at the May Stewardship meeting I attended, Chair Bob Stenson asked for a volunteer to share a few words in the summer edition of First Out Loud. Again, I thought, “I can do that.” Others are helping with publicity, planning activities, food, securing a tent to put up on the church grounds on **Sept. 18 - our BIG DAY**, and Pr. Culuris will be contacting a few members to invite them to make “leadership gifts.” It is amazing what good things can happen when people working together all put forth some effort and do something for the good of the whole! Now let me share a few words, actually, a story....

A boy sat on the steps of a building with a hat by his feet. He had a sign which read: “I am blind. Please help!” There were only a few coins in the hat. Soon a woman came walking by, she took a \$20 bill from her purse and placed it into the boy’s hat. Then she took the sign, turned it around and added some words on the back. She placed the sign back where it was so that everyone walking by could see the new words.

Soon the boy's hat began to fill up. A lot more people were giving money to the blind boy. That afternoon the woman who had changed the words on the sign came to see how things were going. The boy recognized the sound of her footsteps and asked, "Were you the one who changed my sign this morning? What did you write?" The woman replied, "I only wrote the truth. I said what you said, but in a different way... I wrote: 'Today is a beautiful day, but I cannot see it.'"

Both signs told passersby the same thing... that the boy was blind. But the first sign simply said that the boy was blind. The second sign told people they were extremely fortunate that they were not blind and that they were able to see the beauty of the day. Should we be surprised that the second sign was more effective?

Springtime in Minnesota is incredibly beautiful. I am so thankful I have eyes to see it. The moral of the story above might be "Be thankful for what you have." From another perspective, it could help us remember to be creative or innovative; to think differently and positively. Bottom line is this: "We are blessed in so many ways!"

My mother had glaucoma and was blind the last few years of her life. Yet she always remained positive, thankful for life, including the things she could no longer see, including her own grandchildren. I have my eye pressure tested on a regular basis. I am thankful for my eyesight. If you have not seen evidence of God's presence and blessings, maybe you are not looking?

First Fruits is the theme of the Stewardship campaign being planned for this fall. Your generous contributions support the ministries here at First Lutheran. Our fall campaign will be two-fold; first, members will be asked to make an Estimate of Giving to support the 2023 budget. Additionally, you will be encouraged to make a three-year pledge (2023-24-25) to help pay off the mortgage on our building.

More details on the fall stewardship campaign are coming. For now, mark your calendar for Sunday, September 18 when we will celebrate what God is doing by sharing our First Fruits. Oh, and keep your eyes open to see the wonder of God's work in the world around us!

-Submitted by Carl Bruihler

Worship & Arts Committee: Communion, a Hymn Festival, & a Show!

Over the course of the last few months, so many of us have been thrilled to be returning to some of those things we've missed, such as a lessening of the mask mandate, and a return to communion (with bread!)

Lent was a busy and memorable season with so many events, musicians, and beautiful music! With summer on the horizon, we're hoping to offer a few more outdoor services than we've had in the past. Outdoor worship will resume on June 19. We will also have communion with our outdoor worship on July 10 and 24, and August 21. The communion kits will be used for these Sundays because of outdoor dynamics.

As long as the pandemic cooperates, we'll plan to return to weekly communion beginning in September. The plan is to use bread as often as possible, both regular and gluten free. We'll definitely be keeping our bread bakers busy!

Later this summer, Emily is hoping to coordinate a hymn festival, planned for August 28. More information will be coming soon!

The "FLC Has Got Talent" show will return this fall! Dust off those tap shoes, start getting your vocal "chops" into shape, or learn a new talent for this fun event. There is no doubt that the folks at FLC have a wealth of talent in which to entertain us all! More details about this will be coming soon!

-Submitted by Michelle Doose

Building & Grounds Committee: Repairs Completed/Repairs Deferred

The past few months the committee has addressed some problems that have appeared in the building. We spent approximately \$1,100 dollars taking care of a roof leak in office area. With the assistance from members of the technology committee, we addressed the comment from the elevator inspector that the phone inside the elevator was not operational. This has been corrected. Finally, we accepted an offer from a consultant to inspect our stained-glass windows. The good news was that the windows currently have no major issues. Two minor defects were identified by the consultant. These two items do not require any repairs but require continued monitoring. The consultant did comment that the existing protective covering on the outside of the windows is becoming “cloudy,” and, if we wanted brighter windows, should be replaced with an improved protective covering system. We asked for an estimate on what the cost would be to complete this work. Unfortunately, the estimate to do all four sides of the church was \$140,913. At the writing of this article, the committee has decided the cost is prohibitive and will inquire whether all the steps outlined in the bid were necessary when replacing the protective cover or could some be eliminated reducing the cost. We still need to address the problem with the sidewalk to the east side entrance to the basement, upkeep of the pews, and the removal of branches overhanging the roof of the church.

With spring weather finally appearing, our attention has turned to the grounds. We will continue to remove the dying pine trees on the north and west sides of the church and begin grooming (weeding, mulching, replacing dead shrubs, and planting new annual flowers) the landscape gardens. Any help from members with the upkeep of these areas throughout the summer would be greatly appreciated by the committee.

-Submitted by Bill Kautt

Green Committee: Planting Time at Last!

Spring has sprung! Dave got the bean poles up, the Greens got the dirt prepared and fortified, and Barb Wilkinson, Diane Stewart, Nancy Helgeson, Julie Johnson and Sue Jackson managed to get the seeds and plants in the warm dirt between rains. The garden is ready to go. One bed was planted with corn, pole beans and squash like the 3 Sisters in the book Braiding Sweetgrass. Sweet Peppers, tomato plants, carrots, beets, pumpkin, and bush beans were also planted. For the past years, this garden food has been harvested and given to the St Peter Area Food Shelf for seasonal fresh vegetables. In the past around a hundred pounds of produce have been donated.

Here is a fun activity, we invite anyone who is interested in working in the garden to sign up and work a week with a buddy already scheduled. A list will be available in the Gathering Space where you can pick a week to work with one of the scheduled people to help with the watering, weeding if necessary, and harvesting later in the summer. The Buddy System will help any new gardeners, so you are not alone; besides, it's always more fun with a buddy. The water is easily accessed with a hose.

Along with the garden planting, the workshop for Planning a Pocket Prairie with Genevieve Brand was a great success with over 70 people in attendance, many who were from the local and surrounding communities.

We hope you will all look forward to the 4 outdoor services this summer starting on June 19th with the Blessing of Animals. July 10th, July 24th, and August 21 are the other scheduled outdoor services (weather permitting of course)



-Submitted by Judy Fienen

The Bell Garden: Summer Color

A special thank you to Karen's Flowers for donating the flowers for our Bell Garden space. Pat Duenwald and Mary Long did a wonderful job planting them on a windy May afternoon!

Special Summer Bible Study: Drive Thru History: Holy Land

Pastor Chris will offer a DVD based Bible study called "Drive Thru History: Holy Land" from 6:00-7:00pm on the following Wednesdays this Summer: June 8 & 22; July 6 & 27; August 3 & 17. We will meet for Bible study in the Dining Hall from 6:00-7:00pm. Following Bible study, we will gather in the chapel for a brief worship service starting at 7:00pm. You may attend Bible study or worship or both any week that you so choose. Please join us for these learning and worship opportunities this Summer!"



June & July Funeral Service List: Helping Grieving Families

As we continue to re-open our doors to activities, we are again publishing the monthly service lists for families to be ready to serve at funerals and provide baked goods or pickles. The service coordinator for June is Diane Samuelson & Mary Thompson (327-9772). Coordinator for July is Dawn Wenner (612-849-9444). If you have questions about service lists, please contact Karen Smithers ksmithers@flcstp.org

June

Marcia Bunge
Sue Burum
Gayle Derner
Patrick & Patricia Duenwald
Larry & Denise Greenig
Nick & Amanda Greenig
John & Jan Holte
Joanne Johnson
Josh & Mallory Kutil
Doug & Marilyn Miller
Joan Miller
Kent Narum & Elisabeth Cherland
Peter & Cassandra Nelson
Dave & Jodi Nixon
Garrett & Betsy Paul
Stacey Paul
Deanna Staples
Bethany & Tommy Valentini
Dee Waldron
Beth Winterfeldt

July

Paul & Rebecca Carpenter
Charles & Rosemary Christensen
Dan & Elaine Deschaine
Bruce & Sue Gray
William & Elizabeth Hanson
Karen Jewison
Steve & Lynn Kidder
Margaretha Kramer & Jos Hajos
Kari Leonard
Joel & Carol Moline
Jeff & Judy Olson
April Pehrson
Denise Pehrson
Brett & Linda Petersen
Brian & Tracey Peymann
William & Linda Riebesell
Robert & Rosamie Schave
Doug & Mary Schuldt
Geraldine Simmons
Mark & Rachel Szybinski
Chris & Kristine Voeltz

May Events:

Confirmation

1st Communion

Graduate Blessing

