

FIRST OUT LOUD!

NEWSLETTER
MARCH 2023

Pastor Chris

Siblings in Christ,

After moving to St. Peter last year, one of the annual events that I was first exposed to was the Saint Patrick's Day parade. Having grown up in Denver, I was used to seeing large St. Patty's Day parades in town. To be honest, I expected a rather small, subdued gathering when I showed up at our parade here in town. Wow was I wrong! There were people lined up four and five deep on 3rd Avenue all along the parade route. There was a drone flying overhead. The Govenaires Drum and Bugle Corps marched past and played lively tunes. Several Irish families processed by proudly marching together and displaying banners that featured their clan's name on them. People of all ages were gathered for this fun and memorable parade. Well done, St. Peter, I look forward to this year's Saint Patrick's Day celebration!

In March this year, the church is immersed entirely in the Season of Lent. We are gathering on Wednesday evenings for soup suppers, Confirmation and Faith Formation Classes and Worship. Our Wednesday and Sunday services will center around the theme from A Sanctified Art entitled "Seeking: Honest Questions for Deeper Faith." This is a wonderful theme for the Season of Lent. In Lent, we dive into our faith and closely examine our faith walk with the Lord. This year we will be asking those honest questions that can lead us to a deeper, stronger faith. Some of those questions might include: How are things with your soul these days? What are you looking for from God? What things might God be looking for from you? What questions do you have stirring up in your heart and mind? Lent is the perfect time to explore those honest questions that can help us develop a deeper faith. Don't sell yourself short this month! Don't show up to Lent the way I did to the St. Patrick's Day parade last year. Enter Lent this year with an open heart and with a willingness to explore those honest questions of faith! God bless you all this Lenten Season!

In Christ,

Pastor Chris



NEW MEMBER SUNDAY
MARCH 5

PLEASE JOIN IN WELCOMING THESE SISTERS & BROTHERS IN CHRIST TO THE FLC FAMILY!

JANUARY 30
Financial Report

Income \$64,666
Expense \$39013
Net income \$25654

Council President – Identifying Church Priorities & Core Values

In addition to being the congregational president, I am involved in the strategic planning process that our congregation has begun. This is an exciting and promising activity for our congregation, and I want to share where we are at in that process. A core team of 14 people (9 women and 5 men from various age groups) gathered on Sunday, February 5th to review the Strategic Priorities Report and identify Needs (must haves)/Opportunities (possibilities) and Strengths(prouds) of our congregation.

The Strategic Priorities Report was generated based on data collected from the FLC Member Survey completed in December 2022, Church Council’s “I Like, I Wish, I Wonder” activity in December of 2022 and input from FLC members gathered between 2020-2021 that included small group discussions, interviews, and written responses.

The core team identified several interesting results of the 2022-member survey including that over half of the respondents were 65 and older and over half had been involved with FLC for 20 years or more. It was noted that even though most of the respondents were older, key areas of focus from the survey were Youth Ministry and programs for young families in addition to pastoral care.

Our discussions also identified quality sermon preaching and music are some of our “must haves” or needs and more community involvement and ways to increase revenue as opportunities to improve FLC. To end on a positive note, we listed our strengths or and things we are proud of, some of which included our welcoming atmosphere, inclusivity (RIC congregation), and strong lay leadership. The next core team meeting is February 26 and our consultant, Jeff Olson, will present us with the strategic priorities we identified from our discussions based on the collected data. We will also delve into Mission, Vision, and Belief statements. Stay tuned.

Submitted by Mary Spear

Director of Music - Sabbatical Adventures



Emily’s Interview with Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller, November 29, 2022

Miranda served as First Lutheran’s Pastoral Intern from August 2019 - August 2020. She brought with her a spark for social justice, which was very apparent in her preaching and in her actions. I got to know her particularly well as we navigated the pandemic, which started during her time with us. We have stayed in touch, and I was thrilled to be able to visit Miranda and Jenni in Hood River for a couple of days after my stay at Holden Village. They have one of the coziest, welcoming homes I have ever visited! Here is our conversation about Pastor Miranda and her ministry.

How long have you been in Hood River and how is it going?

We have been in Hood River for 16 months [as of Dec]. I was ordained August 21, 2021. Being in Hood

River is an absolute dream. It's like we found our little Saint Peter out here in Oregon. There is vibrancy and culture and art here, and people are centered around growing, nature, and the earth.

What is one ministry that is special to you as a first-call pastor?

Season of Creation - that is something I was excited about from the beginning of the year knowing that creation care is intrinsic to the values of this congregation. They have a community garden that fuels the food bank on our property and make a

lot of their decisions with care for creation at the heart of that ministry. So, I was excited for the opportunity for that passion to show up in worship in a variety of ways. They are very aware of the climate crisis and how impending that is, and it is a reality, especially out here where we see droughts and forest fires and struggling farmers, and and and... Because of that, we were able to incorporate that and our need to listen and respond to that. We did a burning bush interactive prayer piece, which was a large tree branch at the front of the sanctuary throughout the season, and we had red, orange, and yellow strips of cloth for people to write prayers on and tie to the branches. As the season went on, the branch filled up with "burning prayers" to serve as a piece of liturgical art and a visual reminder of our prayers and the physical form they can take.

Do you have a fun anecdote to share?

On Easter, we had the unburying of the Alleluia. I made a block letter Alleluia that could be filled in by the kids with markers - a creativity project during worship. After worship, when they were showing me what they had done, one of the kids wanted to know where it was going to go in the Sanctuary. I had her come into the Sanctuary and figure out a good place for it. So here I was on Easter, following this eight-year-old around as she tried to find the best place for this art. She had ideas for other ways we could do this again with different words. There was joy in watching creativity beget more creativity.

What do you see as the biggest challenges for the church at large?

The need to let go of that which we have clung to and allowed to define us in the past in order to follow the Living Word that is Christ into creating a world that can cultivate the kingdom of God on earth. The less polite version of this: you're going to need to let a lot of things die in order to make room for new growth and possibly.

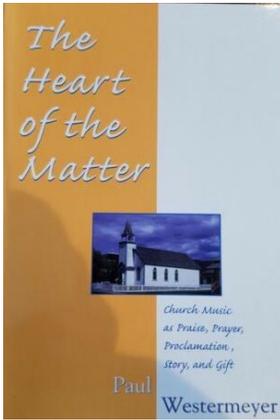
What advice do you have to accomplish this?

Get comfortable with being uncomfortable. Learn how to be in relationship with people who have been harmed by the church, for the sake of relationship and to heal the harm the church has done, and NOT for the sake of bringing them back to the church. Spend time learning what true reconciliation is, means, and asks of us. Seek out theologians from marginalized and oppressed communities because that is how we will see what the true and whole Image of God is in this world.

Any last pieces of info you would like to share with FLC?

Jenni and I have found a home here in Oregon, which is something we have been looking for for a long time and were hoping to find through the call process. More than that, our families have found a home out here, too. My mom lives an hour away in Beaverton, one of Jenni's siblings is in Portland, and Jenni's mom is up in Washington. It's been very fulfilling watching both of our families start a new chapter here together because we're all so connected.

Books Read/Academic Study: Emily's Essay Continued



The Heart of the Matter:

Church Music as Praise, Prayer, Proclamation, Story, and Gift

by Rev. Dr. Paul Westermeyer

Part 2: Church Music as Prayer

Westermeyer writes, “As our praise can be anguished, so our prayer can be jubilant. Our liturgies themselves are prayer, or, more accurately, in them praise and prayer come together in curious and wondrous multi-valent combination.” If you take nothing else from this section, remember that prayer is many things: thanksgiving, lament, intercession for the needs of others, *and* rooted in music. He starts with a great example. We use the Kyrie during a time of lament to say “Lord, have mercy.” However, the early church would have understood this phrase to mean more closely, “Lord, you are the one who has mercy.” In this

context, it can become a means of both prayer and praise.

He continues exploring this idea: “Though the emphasis may differ, almost all traditions treat music as prayer or in some way related to prayer. This should not surprise us any more than music’s relation to praise should surprise us. Human beings both laugh and weep. Laughter is the incipient form of sung praise, as weeping is the incipient form of sung prayer.” Music in our worship and in our living encompasses all human emotion. When it comes to praise and prayer, often our worship and music are both/and, not either/or.

Even a spoken response to our prayers in worship has rhythm, breath, cadence, and unity; therefore, it is musical at its core. “Any communal vocal sounds the congregation makes are inherently musical. . . [W]hat is not obviously musical is itself, at the very least, incipiently musical and that the congregation’s prayer is imbedded in a grows out of this primal music. No assembly at prayer can avoid this reality.” This idea has been explored for hundreds of years.

Finally, Westermeyer stresses a passage from 1 Timothy (2:1): “I exhort therefore that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all people.” We are instructed to make intercessions for the needs of others, the praise of all creation, that those in authority serve the common good, and that all may live in harmony. Westermeyer says, “[Worship] is not an ingrown activity where we stare at our own needs. Our doors are open to the world, and we pray for the needs of all. We intercede for others.” The acknowledgement of the joys and sorrows of the world and our commitment to serving and striving for peace and harmony is central to our vocation as Christians.

There are “musical implications” to this. Says Westermeyer, “Our music and its harmony—that is, our singing together as the body of Christ in prayer at worship in what we broadly call ‘harmony’...is a sign of our societal harmony.” And to conclude this idea, he continues, “Singing together in our assemblies of worship is no small matter. Church music grows out of our prayer and has enormous implications for our life together.” This kind of harmony signals an active push toward justice for the whole world.

-Emily Bruflat, Director of Music

Youth & Family - Out Loud!

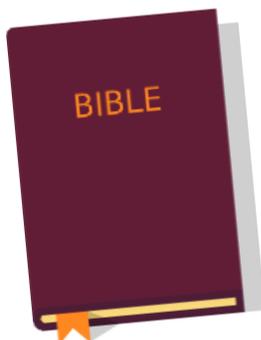
Hi First Lutheran Youth and Families! Calleigh here! We're approaching the end of our academic school year - how is that possible?! You'll find our class schedules and events for this month laid out in this section of the newsletter. We especially hope you choose to join us for the Bob Ross Painting Challenge (be sure to RSVP)! ALSO... We have quite a few fun opportunities for this upcoming summer! We encourage you to cut them out and keep them as a reminder!

We'd love to be part of your summer plans!

-Calleigh Carlson, Director of Youth & Family Education

Sunday School Schedule:

Sunday, March 5th 9:15am-9:55am	Sunday School Class! (1st-2nd Grade First Communion Class #2 @ 6:30pm-7:30pm)
Sunday, March 12th 9:15am-9:55am	Game/Craft Day!
Sunday, March 19th 9:15am-9:55am	Sunday School Class! (1st-2nd Grade First Communion Class #3 @ 6:30pm-7:30pm)
Sunday, March 26th	NO CLASS!

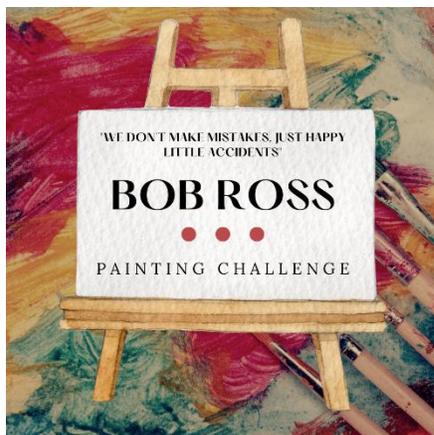


Wednesday, March 1st	6:30PM-7:30PM at FLC
Wednesday, March 8th	6:30PM-7:30PM at FLC
Wednesday, March 15th	6:30PM-7:30PM at FLC
Wednesday, March 22nd	NO CLASS!
Wednesday, March 29th	6:30PM-7:30PM at FLC

Formation/Confirmation Schedule:

High School Youth Group Activity:

Wednesday, March 1st 7:30pm-8:30pm	Our combined High School Youth Group will be gathering for food, fun, and games at First Lutheran Church this month!		Church
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Bob Ross Painting Challenge

March 12th at FLC from 4:30pm-5:30pm

ALL AGES WELCOME!

First Holy Communion



CLASS SCHEDULE:

- SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH AT 6:30PM
- SUNDAY, MARCH 5TH AT 6:30PM
- SUNDAY, MARCH 19TH AT 6:30PM

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE:

- SUNDAY, MAY 14TH AT 10AM



UPCOMING

this summer

JUN 12 KICKBALL & TREATS
6:30PM AT FLC

JUL 10 BINGO & TREATS
6:30PM AT FLC

JUL 24 CHRISTMAS IN JULY
6:30PM AT FLC

AUG 14 FIRE, S'MORES, SONGS
6:30PM AT FLC

We want to be part of your plans this summer! Here are the opportunities that await you! Put the following events on your fridge and don't forget to register!

Monday Fundays!

Summer Family Nights
at First Lutheran Church

BRING A FRIEND!
ALL AGES WELCOME!

WEEK OF JUNE 25TH

2023

SUMMER TRIP

BOUNDARY WATERS CANOE AREA WILDERNESS

MARKSZYBNSKI@GMAIL.COM

CURRENT 8TH-9TH GRADE BOYS AND GIRLS

COST \$150-\$200

2023 Summer Camp Schedule

WEEK	2 - 4 GRADE	4 - 6 GRADE	7 - 9 GRADE	10 - 12 GRADE	SPECIALTY	CROSS-GENERATIONAL	OFFSITE OPPORTUNITIES
1 June 11 - 16		4th - 6th Grade Camp	Confirmation Camp 7th - 9th Grade Camp	CIT Training		ABC Camp June 11 - 12 GPGC June 14 - 16	
2 June 18 - 23				See Offsite Opportunities for another camp experience!			10th-12th Flambeau River Ramble with Camp Amnicon
3 June 25 - 30	3rd - 4th Mini June 25 - 27	4th - 6th Grade Camp	7 - 9th Grade Camp			GPGC June 28 - 30	
4 July 5 - 7	2nd - 3rd Mini July 5 - 7	4th - 6th Mini July 5 - 7	7th - 9th Mini July 5 - 7			GPGC July 5 - 7	
5 July 9 - 14				Agape - Ages 14 + July 9 - 14	SOS Camp July 10 - 14		
6 July 16 - 21		4th - 6th Grade Camp	7 - 9th Grade Camp			ABC Camp July 16 - 17 Family Camp July 21 - 23	
7 July 23 - 28 <i>Christmas in July</i>	3rd - 4th Mini July 23 - 25	4th - 6th Grade Camp	7 - 9th Grade Camp			GPGC July 26 - 28	
8 July 30 - Aug 4	3rd - 4th Mini July 30 - Aug 1	4th - 6th Grade Camp	Confirmation Camp 7th - 9th Grade Camp			GPGC August 2 - 4	
9 August 6 - 11		4th - 6th Grade Camp			Explorer Camp (5th - 8th Grade)	ABC Camp Aug 6 - 7 GPGC Aug 9 - 11	

www.shetek.org



2023 Summer Camp Schedule

Registration for summer camp opens **November 1!** Register by our Early bird deadline, **February 14**, to be supported by our Annual Fund. Weeklong programming will run from **Sundays-Fridays**. Additional weekend programming will be available this summer for **all ages**.
See you soon!

	ELEMENTARY	JR/SR HIGH	INTERGEN
JUNE 18-23		Keeper Training (10-12gr) *Application Required	
JUNE 25-30	OnSite Day Camp (K-5gr) Leapers (3-6gr)	Witnesses (6-9gr) Blazers (9-12gr)	Women's Week
JULY 14-16 WEEKEND			Family & All People Camp
JULY 16-21	Explorers (K-2gr) Seekers (2-4gr) Leapers (3-6gr)	Witnesses (6-9gr) Blazers (9-12gr)	Magi
JULY 23-28	OnSite Day Camp (K-5gr) Explorers (K-2gr) Seekers (2-4gr) Leapers (3-6gr)	Witnesses (6-9gr) Blazers (9-12gr)	Magi
JULY 28-30 WEEKEND			Family & All People Camp
JULY 30-AUG 4	Leapers (3-6gr)	Witnesses (6-9gr) Blazers (9-12gr)	Magi Family & All People Camp
AUGUST 6-11	OnSite Day Camp (K-5gr) Leapers (3-6gr)	Witnesses (6-9gr) Blazers (9-12gr)	Magi Family & All People Camp

Minnesota FoodShare - March Campaign Food Drive

During the month of March, Minnesota Food Share is having their annual campaign throughout the state. Churches (including First Lutheran), businesses, and individuals are asked to contribute to their local food shelves. The campaign runs Sunday, March 5, through Sunday, April 2. There will be a grocery cart and/or a specially marked donation box in the gathering space waiting to receive your donations. On Sunday, March 26, we will have our annual “**Pack the Pews**” event when we will fill the back pews with our donations.

The importance of donating during March is that, during that month, all items and money that are donated are matched with an allotment from Second Harvest in St. Paul. **This will essentially double** your donation. In the past First Lutheran members have contributed generously to this cause, which has directly benefitted the St. Peter Area Food Shelf (SPAF). The food shelves have remained stocked so that our neighbors can be served.

The Food Shelf welcomes most kinds of shelf-stable food items as well as some common household and personal care items. You will find a list of preferred items on the FLC website: <https://www.flcstp.org/social-justice.html> or on one of the tables in the gathering area at church. Monetary gifts are equally valued. Money is typically used to buy fresh fruits and vegetables or shelf-stable items that may be in short supply at SPAF.

If you prefer to give a monetary donation, you can leave a check in the offering plate or bring it to the office. Write “*SPAF*” in the memo line if you are making it to FLC. We will also accept checks made directly to SPAF. **All checks received must be dated by March 31 in order to be doubled in value.**

Many members of First Lutheran are involved in assisting the St. Peter Area Food Shelf throughout the year by giving donations of goods, time or money. Thank you all for continuing to be generous in helping to provide food for those in our community who are food insecure.

Submitted by Jan Jensen on behalf of the Social Justice Committee



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Saint Peter, MN 56082

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FIRST FORUMS

getting the discussion going!

**MARCH 5: HOLLY SCHOETTLER & SONDRER HERMAN
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY PRESENTS:
AGING IN PLACE PROGRAM**

**MARCH 12: NANCY NELSON
VISIO DIVINA - PRAYING WITH ART**

