A NOTE FROM PASTOR STAN SATRE

Winnie said, “Christopher Robin; will you kindly shake your umbrella and say, ‘tut-tut, it looks like rain.’”

I love Winnie-the-Pooh; reading about him to my children and grandchildren. It’s April, the month of showers that bring May flowers. It’s a fresh, beautiful and hopeful time. It begins with a joke; April Fool’s Day, and then rolls delightfully forward into what lies ahead.

We need rain and we’ll welcome it to moisten the soil and fill the lakes and rivers. Winnie once said, “the river knows this; there is no hurry. We shall get there someday.” One of our pastors mentioned in a recent sermon that several years ago the First Lutheran Lenten theme was “Rivers in the Desert; From Desert to Garden.” And, behold, a river ran through the chancel on Easter Sunday.

One thing a river does is to draw our attention downstream to what lies ahead. What’s next? In April we’re looking forward to new life. In Ecclesiastes 3 we read, “For everything there is a season; a time to plant and a time to harvest.” It’s planting time. What’s next for First Lutheran?

In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:45) Jesus says, “Because you are children of the Father pray for those who persecute you. You know that your Father sends rain on both the righteous and the unrighteous.” It means that he loves everyone equally, shows no partiality and neither should we.

A couple of weeks ago, during the Week of Christian Unity, as Pope Francis met with leaders of the Eastern Orthodox Church, he prayed for mercy on divided Christians and apologized for times when Catholics may have hurt members of other denominations. He appealed for forgiveness for un-Gospel like behavior of Catholics. Our pastors at First Lutheran responded by accepting the appeal for forgiveness, acknowledging that Lutherans have also been guilty of un-Gospel like behavior and by pledging to walk and work together with our Catholic brothers and sisters at Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church here in Fergus Falls. Last week Father Alan Weilinski and the council of OLV sent a letter thanking our pastors and council for their friendly action and welcoming the opportunity to walk together.

Pope Francis put it this way; “. . . as each person draws closer to Christ we find each other there.”

That’s one of the exciting things that’s next for First Lutheran. April is fresh and beautiful. “Tut-tut. It looks like rain.” “I walk down the lane, with a happy refrain, just singin’, singin’ in the rain.”

Pastor Stan
TASTE OF SPRING
ANNUAL SALAD LUNCHEON
& BAKE SALE

THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2016
11 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall
Tickets $7.00

First Lutheran Church
402 South Court Street
Fergus Falls, MN

Start checking out your favorite salad and bar recipes that you plan to donate for the Luncheon and/or baked goods for the sale. Sign-up sheets for salad, bars and volunteers to help that day will be available in the Narthex on April 3rd through April 17th. Please sign-up early! Plan to attend and taste all these wonderful salads and bars, and pick up your homemade bakery items. THANK YOU!
**WORSHIP THEMES**

April 3—"Easter Joy"
Text: John 20:19-31

How many Lutherans does it take to screw in a light bulb? None. Lutherans don’t believe in change. The ancient church celebrated "Bright Sunday" on this Sunday after Easter - a day to celebrate the joy of the resurrection. Today we celebrate Holy Humor Sunday and gather to celebrate the joy that we find in the risen Christ.

April 10—“Christ Have Mercy
Text: John 21:1-19

Peter was no doubt filled with shame and remorse after he had denied Jesus 3 times, even though he had pledged to follow him no matter what. And yet, after Easter, when Peter met Jesus on the beach, Jesus didn’t rebuke him; he offered him breakfast, and another chance.

April 17—"Hearing the Shepherd's Voice"
Text: John 10:22-30 and Psalm 23

Christ is the shepherd who leads his faithful sheep to springs of the water of life. We, Christ’s sheep, follow the shepherd’s voice and celebrate the gift of new life, eternal life, which is the gift of the risen Christ. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

April 24—“Loving One Another”
Text: John 13:31-35

Today, we hear again the words Jesus spoke to the disciples at the Last Supper: “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” Wow! How can we hope to love others as Jesus loved us?

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**APRIL SERVICE UNITS**
THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE ARE IN THIS UNIT
PLEASE SAY “YES” WHEN YOU ARE CALLED TO HELP

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Memorials December 2015-February 2016</th>
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<tr>
<td>In memory of Alva Stoa</td>
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<td>Good Samaritan $50.00</td>
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<td>In Memory of Hazel Kronemann</td>
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<td>In Memory of Eric Thompson</td>
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<td>In Memory of Ivan &amp; Helen Stigen</td>
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<td>Good Samaritan $50.00</td>
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<td>Good Samaritan $185.00</td>
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| Bruce & Wendy Anderson              |
| Dan & Michelle Lembcke              |
| David & Jeannie Anderson            |
| John & Darlene Mandelke             |
| Gary & Judy Boushley                |
| George & Ann Mathison               |
| Dane & Hannah Carlson               |
| Perry Mertz                         |
| Donna Christianson                  |
| Richard & Monica Miller             |
| Josh & Amanda Duenow                |
| Steve & Branda Mouritsen            |
| Doug Elliot                         |
| Mark & Megan Neubauer               |
| Marjean Hanson                      |
| Jacqueline Ness-Ludwig              |
| Gerald & Ruby Hanson                |
| Brenda Piekarski                    |
| Donna Harlow                        |
| Jamie & Stephanie Swenson           |
| David & Lorri Holt                  |
| Pete & Jody Thom                    |
| Steve & June Janssen                |
| Scott & Kim Ward                    |
| Lorraine Kantrud                    |
| Kristi Wentworth                    |
| Lee Kittelson                       |
| Tom & Lisa Wolfe                    |
| Walter & Mary Laney                 |
Our Goal for 2016 is to raise $48,000.00 to support local, national, and worldwide organizations—our benevolences. If you would like to give to a specific benevolence, please identify the organization on the memo line of your check (payable to First Lutheran Church) or on the outside of an offering envelope. Let’s come together as a congregation and reach our $48,000.00 goal! Our hands, God’s work.

Local & National
- A Place to Belong
- Boy Scouts
- Fergus Falls Food Shelf
- Good Samaritan Fund
- Habitat for Humanity
- Hospice
- Jail Ministry
- Luther Crest Bible Camp
- Luther Seminary
- Lutheran Campus Ministry
- Meals by Wheels
- Rural Internship
- Salvation Army
- Someplace Safe
- Sustaining Rural Ministry Fund

Worldwide
- ELCA
- ELCA Disaster Relief Fund
- ELCA World Hunger Appeal
- Global Health Ministries
- Mama Naomi Clinic
- Selian/Mama Naomi Hospital

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE
The Outreach Committee can’t say Thank you enough for each one of the wonderful volunteers that take time to help at the Red Cross Blood Drive. We had another very successful drive at the end of March. 43 units of blood were collected, which means we can help up to 129 patients! Your volunteer hours have not gone unnoticed!! THANK YOU!!

FERGUS FALLS COMMUNITY FOOD SHELF

2015 STATISTICS

A NOTE ABOUT OUR LOCAL FOOD SHELF

“Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world.
   Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”
Margaret Mead 1901-1978 World famous Anthropologist

In 2015, our volunteers logged 5,652 hours, with the main supply of volunteers being from area churches. We have several other groups that come from organizations, businesses and schools.

   Every amount of effort makes an impact on 350+ children that come to us for help each month.
   Every dollar donated buys food for up to 1100 people every thirty days in our own community.
   Please consider a donation to the Food Shelf.

Fergus Falls Community Food Shelf
PO Box 136
Fergus Falls MN 58538-0136
WOMEN OF FIRST LUTHERAN—OPPORTUNITIES TO GATHER

The WELCA Board does not meet in April

Love Days Quilters meets every Monday from 9 a.m.—3 p.m. All are welcome!

CIRCLES
Wednesday, April 27th

Sarah at 9:30 am Pioneer Pointe

Hannah at 1:00 pm First Lutheran Church

ATTENTION OWL’S (OLDER WISER LUTHERANS)

Put on your “thinking caps” and come up with some ideas for activities you think would be fun to do in 2016. Margaret Kratzke and Pastor Saul would like your input! We have some money budgeted for OWLs Activities, so don’t be afraid to think big.

CHURCH SOFTBALL!

If you are between the ages of 14-100 sign-up today to play Monday nights on First Lutheran’s softball team this year! Both male & female players are welcome! Sign-up sheets are out on the Info Counter at church… The cost is $40 to play plus $10 for a t-shirt. If under the age of 18, you will need a parents signature. Let’s have fun and get some exercise at the same time!

THANK YOU SO MUCH!!

The Relay for Life Team would like to give a big THANK YOU to First Lutheran Members for their support to our fundraisers, whether it be buying coupon books, bringing in baked goods or buying baked goods. We raised $275 in the community days coupon books and we raised $507.10 at the Bake Sale. These funds will purchase luminaries in the Relay for Life Walk in June, “in honor of or in memory of First Lutheran Church members.”

NEW MEMBER COMMUNITY

Pastor Saul, Pastor Jennifer & the Membership Committee will be forming a New Member Community beginning Sunday, April 10th from 4-6 p.m. If you or someone you know is interested in exploring membership at First Lutheran – PLEASE COME. Childcare is available.

All interested persons are asked to come on April 10th, April 24th, and May 1st. This friendly, informal atmosphere offers an opportunity for everyone to get to know one another and take a look at our Lutheran teachings. Attending the sessions doesn’t commit you to join.

New members will be received on May 15th (at the 8:30 a.m. service).
What did Jesus look like?

Have you ever wondered about that? We don’t really know the answer to that question, but many Americans and Europeans picture Jesus of Nazareth with brown hair, brown eyes, handsome—and white. Caucasian. Suntanned, maybe, but definitely white. The kind of “white” you might meet in Minneapolis, or even Fergus Falls. But that’s a myth. In all probability, Jesus was much darker in complexion than the average white American. He was born a Jew, he lived as a Jew, and he remained a Jew throughout his life. More importantly, even though he entered the stage of humanity at a specific place and time and possessed specific racial characteristics, in a larger sense Jesus transcends the barriers of race and color. The society that Jesus entered when he became a man drew three primary distinctions among people: race (Jew or Gentile), class (slave or free), and sex (male or female). The good news that Jesus brought presented a radical departure from those distinctions, however. Paul summarized it well “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). As followers of Jesus, let’s work together to love and live in harmony with all people, regardless of what makes us different from one another. I give thanks for you being just the way you are! In Christ,

Summer is coming!

Before you know it, we’ll be enjoying the summer sunshine! I’m starting to plan some summer activities and would like your input! Would you like to go watch a redhawks game? Go to the zoo? Catch a movie? Go for a boat ride? Go swimming? I’m curious for your feedback. Send me a text at 218-770-8603 or find me at church and let me know what you are most interested in! The summer calendar will be coming out soon! :) Watch for some fun soon to come!
Sunday School News

Holy Cow! Challenge to SHINE!

Is it easy to shine God’s love through us? As members of the Education Committee at First Lutheran, we are looking for ways to help our students answer God’s call to love and serve our neighbor. By raising money for Lutheran World Relief, we can purchase hens, pigs, goats, sheep and cows,... maybe a whole farmyard! This month, our students will be learning about people living in poverty around the world. We will be challenging the congregation to help in our drive. Please consider giving a monetary gift. We will intentionally shine God’s love!

Memorization Challenges

Hats off to our students for taking the ball and running with it! When we have given them a memorization verse, a good number of our kids are ready to recite it by the next week. The last challenge not only required memorization, but also a request to find a favorite picture of Jesus on the internet, print it, cut it out, show me, then place it in their Bible. I’d heard of an older person who still has the picture in her Bible from childhood!
WOW (Women of the Word) EVENT

“Coffee With Friends”

Our speaker, Jan Smith, shares her purse collection to tell Biblical stories!

SUNDAY, APRIL 24
2:00 p.m.

SIGN UP IN THE NARTHEX
“Living Out Love!”

Join us as we partner with Luther Crest Bible Camp!

Together, we will walk with Christ to learn how we can forgive and serve our neighbor, how we can show love to all, and how we can pray as Jesus taught!

Each day we’ll enjoy games, worship, art & crafts, Bible Dive, snacks, meeting new friends, lots of laughter, and much more!

Our summer theme verse is:

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us.”

Ephesians 5:1-2

Sign ups will start soon! Cost is $30

Day Camp Dates: June 12-16 for kids who have completed Kindergarten all the way through 5th Grade age.

Contact Pastor Jennifer with any questions at the church office 218-739-3348

If you would like to volunteer, please call the church office and ask for Pastor Jennifer.

“Butterflies” Vacation Bible School

June 12-16th, Monday—Thursday

Sign up for a fun week of Vacation Bible school for preschool children (birth to 5 years old) and their parent, grandparent, or other “favorite” adult! The children will explore Bible parables through singing songs, listening to stories, creating art projects, playing, and being in fellowship with other young families.

Monday—Thursday: 9:00—10:30 a.m. Butterflies VBS

Registration for preschool children who will attend Butterflies VBS:

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****Please include notes about allergies, special needs, and considerations, etc.****

Parent’s names and phone number(s)

Fee: $5.00 registration per Butterflies family ________paid