To “Do” Nothing

I am a born worrier. I make lists upon lists upon lists in an effort to keep my worries at bay. I have an agenda filled to the brim with the things to do that day. Different colors highlight importance. Screaming yellow, blooming fuschia streaks, and neon blue highlighter scatter my agenda pages, marking importance in varying degrees.

I e-mail people and use the red exclamation point for “read as important” constantly. I am the annoying person who says, “Did you get my e-mail?” when you’re sitting right next to me and I can see that you did.

As some of you may know by now, I have accepted a position as a Coordinator of Youth Programs and International Internships/Fellowships for an American NGO in Nablus, West Bank, Palestine. Maybe you’ve heard of the West Bank before in one scary news report or another. Maybe you know little about the area except that there is dispute over the land. Palestinians against Israelis. There isn’t enough space in this Messenger article to get into the politics of it all, but it is clear I am moving to the West Bank, Palestine. What’s going on? What can I expect? What should I pack?

I was fortunate enough last Friday evening to be invited by a co-worker to attend a benefit for a Palestinian NGO called, “Bright Stars of Bethlehem.” The speaker and special guest was the Dr. Rev. Mitri Rehab, a world-renowned peace activist and founder of an arts school in Bethlehem, Palestine. I was able to meet him one-on-one as I was the only guest at the event on my way to Palestine in a few short weeks. He was incredibly gracious and hospitable, giving me his business card and urging me to e-mail him if I ever needed anything, “even a place to relax for the weekend.”

At the “Bright Stars of Bethlehem” event, Rev. Rehab spoke about the university he founded in 1995 and how much it has grown in 20 short years. But he also spoke about the destruction of living in the midst of Israeli occupation and how once, over 11 short hours, the Israeli forces destroyed what it had taken him and his colleagues 10 years to build. During the question and answer portion, one of the guests at the event asked, “You are so courageous and I am just in awe of your work and of your strength and bravery in the face of this violence. How do you ‘do’ it?”

Rev. Rehab thought for a moment before responding. “Do it? I don’t really “do” it. God’s grace is what “does” it.” Now, some of you may know my father is an “audible” listener, lots of ‘mhmms’ and ‘ahas’ while someone is speaking or presenting. Being my father’s daughter, you better believe I was “mmhmming” all over the place during Rev. Rehab’s speech. I almost shouted “Amen!” after this particular response. And yet, so much of what we learn from one another is truly easier said than done. In the midst of worry or terror, it is easy to repeat to ourselves, “God’s grace. God’s grace. God’s grace.” But that doesn’t necessarily still the shaking hands, dry the sweaty palms, or calm the swiftly beating heart.

So, how do I “do” nothing? How do I trust in God enough to know He will guide me through anything and everything?

And yet, this question is asking me to “DO” something! What do I “do” to “do nothing?” What a paradox.

I believe that the first thing to do is to recognize that there is absolutely nothing I can do to guarantee anything in my life.

One thing (out of the many hundreds of things) I learned from my refugee participants in the two and a half years I worked at Heartland’s Refugee and Immigrant Community Services was the true courage and trust each of my participants must have had when they boarded the plane to the United States. Most come with no money, one suitcase for a family, little English, and no idea of what to do or where to start. They arrive in Chicago’s O’Hare airport, are picked up by someone from Heartland’s office, and often dropped off at their set-up apartment with a good-bye and a good luck and a we’ll see you tomorrow at the office for all of our paperwork.

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June Worship Themes

June 7
Sermon: “A Family Story”
Text: Genesis 3:8–15
Every family has its stories – how grandma and grandpa met. How they squeaked through on little or nothing while He was going to grad school. Or, maybe how mom and dad worked together to grow a business from scratch. The first story from the book of Genesis is one of those ancient family stories that tell us something about ourselves and about where we come from.

June 14
Sermon: “Kingdom Specs”
Text: Mark 4:26–34
The mustard seed is a good example of how the Kingdom of God works – we see the small picture, the small thing, the small possibility, where God sees the larger picture, the large thing, and the large possibility. For today, we will try on some “kingdom specs” and try to see the world with a better, broader landscape view.

June 21
Sermon: “Sleepy Jesus”
Text: Mark 4:35–41
Is anyone out there? Is God real? Does God hear our prayers? These are things we probably all wonder from time to time. Today Jesus appears to be asleep in a boat, while the disciples are afraid for their lives. With just a word, Jesus calms the disciples, and does the same for us.

June 28
Sermon: “Breathing in and Breathing Out”
Text: Mark 5:21–34
The woman who has suffered bleeding for 12 years somehow knows that if only she can touch Jesus, his healing power will flow out to her. We cannot touch the flesh and blood Jesus. But He offers us something just as good: his very body and blood. In the bread and wine of Communion, Jesus gives himself to us in a way we can touch and taste. His healing power flows into us today so we can leave here ready to share that healing with the world.

June 18th—The Hunger Ride is stopping in Fergus Falls!
Join us for “God’s Creation Feeds the World” at 4:00 p.m. at Bluebird Gardens. Tour of Bluebird Gardens CSA, Speakers: Mark Boen (Bluebird Gardens) and Ellen Sundberg (Sundberg Apiaries) Cost: Free.
Closing worship with Hunger Riders is at 5:30 p.m. in The Magic Woods. (This worship will take the place of our Thursday evening worship.) Their farm is located just a few miles Northeast of Fergus Falls on County Highway 18. Worship will be followed by a light supper (provided) An offering will be received to benefit ELCA World Hunger and the Fergus Falls Food Shelf.

July Worship Themes

July 5
Sermon: “We are Weak but He is Strong”
Text: 2 Corinthians 12:2–10
Paul, the great witness to the gospel, doesn’t have a pain-free life because he’s a believer. He prays repeatedly for God to remove his “thorn in the flesh.” But God gives Paul a different answer: “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.” It’s like we learned back in Sunday School: “He is weak but we are strong.”

July 12
Sermon: “Rise Up”
Text: Amos 7:7–15
Today we send the 2015 National Youth Gathering team to Detroit. We each are called to rise up – to see ourselves as witnesses to God’s story in the world, through our baptismal promises to: Live among God’s faithful people, Hear the word of God and share in the Lord’s supper, Proclaim the good news of God in Christ through words and deed, Serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and Strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

July 19
Sermon: “Rest for Body and Soul”
Text: Mark 6:30–44
Jesus knew how tired the disciples were after their missionary journey. He invites them, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.” Jesus sends the disciples (and us) into the world to minister to those in need. But he also has compassion on us and ministers to us in our weariness and need. He gives us rest and renewal.

July 26
Sermon: “The Pot Luck that Never Ends”
Text: John 6:1–21
How did Jesus do it? He fed all of those people with 5 loaves and two fish? And they had leftovers? It is an amazing miracle story, and yet it helps us to think of the bread of life that Jesus offers us each day and the ways in which Jesus feeds us. Today we gather to receive the Word of God and the Bread of Life and we are sent to share that blessing with the world.
2015 New Members joined First Lutheran Church on May 17th

New Members not pictured:

Jacob Ecker & Christine Cooper, Madison Puttbrese, and Maegan Ecker
218-770-7193

Zach Rogers (Susie Ouren)
218-731-1331

Charles & Kristy, Adeline, Lucas Wicklund
218-205-6976

Wade & Michelle, Summer, Samuel, Corbin, and Jack Vogl
218-531-1411
**RELAY FOR LIFE**

June 19 at the MSTSC in Fergus Falls from 4-12 p.m. Please come and support our First Lutheran Walkers or come and walk with them.

Everyone is welcome and Luminaries will be lit at dusk!

Summer Coffee donations in the month of June will go to the First Lutheran Relay for Life Team

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**O. W. L. S  
OLDER WISER LUTHERANS**

**SAVE THE DATE:** Wednesday, August 26 “Greatest Musical Show in the Northwoods”

We'll travel by Coach to the Woodtick Musical Theater at Akeley, MN to enjoy an afternoon of all kinds of music.

We attended last year and enjoyed every minute of it, and we think the OWLS will enjoy it this year too.

In July, check Kiosk and Sunday Bulletins for details.

There will be a Sign-up sheet on Info Counter and you can also check the Web! www.woodticktheater.net

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How many of you would be interested in a visit to Bluebird Gardens?

Mark Boen would be happy to have us come some day from 5 to 7 p.m.

If interested, sign up at Info Counter and I will arrange it.

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How many of you would be interested in visiting The Prospect House in Battle Lake (Civil War Museum)?

Sign up at the Info counter if you’re interested and it can be arranged.

If you have questions, call Margaret Kratzke or e-mail mkratzke@ptel.com

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**O.P.P.O.R.T.U.N.I.T.E.S FOR WOMEN OF FIRST LUTHERAN**

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**Love Days QUILTERS**

Meets in Quilters Room every Monday (9-3) throughout the summer. Come help & enjoy the fellowship!

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**WELCA Board meeting**

No board meetings in June, July or August

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**Women’s Week at Luther Crest Bible Camp**

Monday – Friday, June 22-26, 2015

Theme for 2015: “A Love That Never Ends”

**Keynote Speaker:** Rev. Matthew Marohl, College Pastor at St. Olaf College

There will be daily speakers and presentations as well as nightly entertainment with musicians and entertainers. Excellent meals, goodies and treats will be provided. Join in a week of rest, relaxation, and rejuvenation. Separate programming is offered for children and grandchildren of all ages. What a great way to spend a week with a friend!

First Lutheran Women will do a “day trip” on **Tuesday, June 23** for those wanting to go for just one day. Pastor Jennifer will be driving the van so it will be fun for 12 of us to ride together. Sign-up sheet on Info Counter. Watch Sunday Bulletins and Information on Kiosk for more information. Contact Donna Quam or Margaret Kratzke with questions.

The van will leave First Lutheran Parking Lot (lower level) **8:00 a.m. on June 23**—$40 per person or $100 per carload. We pay when we get to Camp. Day program and lunch included.

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**O.P.P.O.R.T.U.N.I.T.E.S FOR WOMEN OF FIRST LUTHERAN**

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**Circles; Wednesday, June 24th**

Sarah – does not meet in June, July, or August.

Hannah – 1:00 pm at Church

Hosted by Jane Willett

(No meetings in July or August)
FIRST LUTHERAN

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Butterflies VBS for birth-5 year olds and an adult is Mon-Thurs. June 15-18 from 9:00-10:30 a.m.
- Day Camp for K-4th grade is Mon.-Thurs. June 15-18
- Sign up for helping with V.B.S.!

“Butterflies” V.B.S. June 15-18

Our “Butterflies” VBS for birth-5 year olds has become a treasured tradition at First Lutheran. The sessions are designed to be an exciting time for parents and Grandparents to spend quality moments learning and sharing God’s love with their children. The kids explore the Bible stories through singing, playing, and active storytelling. The adults use this time to connect with their children, pass on their faith, and build friendships with other young families. Some of our Grandmas have made it a family tradition to host the grandchildren for the VBS week. What a memory maker this has become! We love our program are happy when you invite friends to join you. Register for the fun at the “tool station” in the Narthex.

One favorite teacher, Linda Mellon will lead singing, and we have a new special guest this summer! Pastor Matthew Rose will be one of our teachers at “Butterflies” V.B.S.!

If you attend, you are sure to feel blessed!

K-4 Day Camp in the Park!

Day Camp is a Vacation Bible School program offered to kids who have finished Kindergarten-fifth grade. Our kids will be paired with Bethlehem Church kids. The students spend much of their day outdoors at N.P. Park. Counselors from Luther Crest conduct the Day Camp. An exciting trip on Thursday culminates the week at Luther Crest camp in Alexandria at Lake Carlos.

Friends are encouraged and invited to join in! Details can be found on the registration form in the Narthex.

HAVE A FUN, SAFE SUMMER!
FLY News
FIRST LUTHERAN YOUTH  June and July 2015

Summer Adventures

What do you have planned for your summer? Do you plan to take a road trip? Or do you like to stay home and relax in the summer?

When I was a kid, my family couldn’t really afford to take vacations. My dad had 2 weeks of vacation time per year, and we used that time, every year, visiting my grandparents.

One year though, when I was in 8th grade, my family did take a vacation. We went to the Black Hills in South Dakota. It was a great trip—it was fun to see things that I’d never seen before, visit Mount Rushmore, and take in the sights. I’d show you a picture, but I think you’d probably rather not see that. :) On the one hand, I thought it was SO annoying to hang out with my brother and sister. Because, I was so much cooler than them! And on the other hand, it actually was really fun to spend time with my family.

It’s like that sometimes with our church family. Once we get there, we realize that it just is good to spend time together.

What better opportunity is there for you than to participate in some of our fun events and activities this summer? There is truly something offered for everyone. If you’re a roller coaster fan, we’ve got that. Or if you like lock-ins, we have that too. And if you are still reading this and are between 5th and 12th grades, send me a text or give me a call and I will take you out for an ice cream cone (my treat).

See you in church!

Valleyfair! Tuesday, July 7

Our summer trip to Valleyfair will be Tuesday, July 7th. We will be taking a school bus and going with Bethlehem Lutheran, Hope Lutheran, and Augustana Lutheran, all of Fergus Falls. Your cost for this adventure is $35 and includes an all-you-can-drink soda wristband that is valid for the whole day. Sign up at church for this fun adventure! And keep watching your mail for other summer events and opportunities!
Meals by Wheels
Put it on your calendar!
First Lutheran drives for Meals by Wheels July 20-24 and 27-31. We are looking for drivers to donate one hour of their day to this great program. The time commitment is approximately 10:50 am to noon. You can sign up for one day or multiple days - you choose! Many volunteers sign up with a partner, so grab a friend!

Thank you to the volunteers for driving for Meals by Wheels in April! Your dedication to the program is greatly appreciated!

Charitable Donations
If you would like to support our outreach program but don't have the time or accessibility, please consider giving financially. Our goal, as a congregation, is give $50,000 in charitable donations in 2015. To donate to our benevolences (charitable donations), you can go online, mail in, or drop off your offering in the church office. Simply write the name of the benevolence on your check or on an offering envelope. If you would like a list of our benevolences, please contact Leslie in the church office or Rick West.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities, please contact Rick at 205-6963. Thank you!

Does the hustle and bustle of summer keep you from attending church? Do you want to keep your commitment to giving, even though you are not able to attend church services? Well, you are in luck—we have you covered! First Lutheran provides many convenient ways for you to give your offering!

- SIMPLY GIVING—Have your offering deducted from your bank account. Contact Leslie in the office to get set up.
- ONLINE GIVING—Visit the church website at www.firstlcffmn.com and click on the Electronic Giving tab. This option allows you to make a one time donation or set-up recurring donation from your bank account and/or credit card.
- ELECTRONIC GIVING WITH THE QR CODE—Scan the QR code (below) and you will conveniently be directed to the online giving page on the church website.

You can also mail in or drop off your offering to the church during church office hours.

Check out these Summer Outreach Opportunities!

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Continued from cover...

They trust that the Lord (or Allah in many cases) will provide. They come with their one suitcase and trust that everything else will be provided. What incredible faith! Jesus once requested this incredible leap of faith from his followers,

“And he said to all, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.”
Luke 9:23

Trusting God and leaning on Him to guide us and protect us is a constant battle with our inner doubters, worriers, and list-makers.

But, maybe it’s the day-to-day attempt to deny ourselves (through fighting the temptation to worry and lean on our own understanding) and take up His cross. To daily give up the control so that we can reach out our hands to Him to hold.

In the stillness of the night as I lay in my bed with my mind running through all of the potential problems I might face: my lack of Arabic, Nablus having little to no internet or mail access, my worries that the refugee kids and families won’t love me like my refugee kids and families here do...it is in the stillness of the night through the darkness of my worries that I turn to my Bible, my devotional, my journal. And turn on the music that soothes me now as I remember to “follow him.”

To give up myself and take His cross. To KNOW that He is doing everything so that I don’t have to.

This is how I “do nothing.”

I ask that my faith family at First Lutheran to please pray for me.

For more information regarding Tomorrow’s Youth Organization (the American NGO I will be working for), visit www.tomorrowsyouth.org

Emma Stensvaag
First off, the children of Tanzania seem genuinely happy even with what some people would call lack of possessions, but what I like to call lack of excess. Yes, they have less than us, but it made me think that they might have less physically, but emotionally and mentally they have more.

“They have a huge faith in Christ, which is more valuable than anything we could physically own.”

They are so content with playing in the streets and in all that dirt. One little boy had even made his own toy out of what looked like a broom stick with the top of a plastic bucket nailed into the bottom of the stick, so he could roll that end on the ground. It was such a simple toy but he was having so much fun with it.

What I miss the most about the Tanzanian children was their extreme friendliness and their immense excitement towards us. No matter where we went there were always little kids chasing our cars and screaming Hello at us.

Another phrase we heard everywhere we went was, ‘Good Morning’. We could tell that most of the kids didn’t actually know what they were saying, since we would hear that all day long, even if it was seven p.m. However, it didn’t matter what they said, it was more about how they said it, with enormous smiles and huge thrills in their voices. It is one of the best feelings to feel so special to a complete stranger. The children don’t care who we are or what we look like they are just so thrilled to be able to say hi and have us say it back.

“It was such a small notion but a huge sign to us that Christ was, and is, there.”

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**Summer Coffee Servers Needed!!!**

Do you enjoy your cup of coffee and treat after Sunday morning worship? If so we need the congregation’s help. Please take a minute to sign-up at the info counter for a Sunday that you can serve. We need YOUR help to have coffee on Sunday mornings.

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**Open House for Christopher T. Richards**

June 6th

1:00- 3:00pm

First Lutheran Church, Morris

Chris has completed his Masters of Divinity at Luther Seminary. The honor of your presence is requested at an open house graduation celebration.

Those that wish to congratulate Chris but cannot attend are welcome to send cards to:

Chris Richards
316 West 9th Street
Morris, MN 56267
June Service Units
The following are the people in this Unit

Please say “YES” when you are called to help!

LeRoy & Joan Anderson  
Mike & Heather Andrews  
Samantha Batzlaff  
Bev Bernard  
Tom & Robin Brimhall  
Collette Cox  
Darlene Dimke  
Paul & Julie Dimke  
Janice Gangl  

Doug & Judi Hansen  
Emily Hermes  
Ramona Jacobs  
Mary (Bjorgum) Johnson  
Cary & Kari Knudson  
Gary & Diane Korbey  
Daryl & Megan Kugler  
Nadine Leabch  

Missy Mattson  
Keith Melberg  
Tom & Barb Morstad  
Ralph & Renee Pedersen  
Anthony & Joyce Perez  
Greg & Joanne Peterson  
Robert & Cheryl Sefkow  
Judy Stringer  
Selmer & Pat Trosvig

July Service Units
The following are the people in this Unit

Please say “YES” when you are called to help!

Glenn Anderson  
Jeff & Kristy Love-Anderson  
Darlene Berge  
Cathleen Colling  
Mark & Marcia Dufty  
Nancy Ebersviller  
John & Leigh Gervais  
Leonard Hatzenbuhler &  
Karen Lundstrom  
Carmon & Audrey Jackson  

Brad Johnson  
Agnes Jorgenson  
Justin & Deborah Knutson  
John Kragness  
Troy & Kris Kuehl  
Wendy Mahler  
Logan & Jasmine Sonmor  
Tedd Muchow  
Sarah Froslee  
Paul & Cathy Neuman  

Alice Peterson  
Josh & Stephanie Rieck  
Ellen Sehm  
Todd & Teresa Smedstad  
Sandra Thompson  
Randy & Barb Vangrud  
Brian Vatnsdal  
John & Karma Wagner  
Dustin & Dawn Walls  
Connor & Dani West

Congratulations to our 2015 Confirmation Students!

Levi Danielson  
Riley Hinsverk  
DeAnna Hurley  
Jared Kuehl  
Cole Mahler  
William Pajari  
Ellie Swenson  
Casey Thom  
Logan Wentworth  
Ryan Wilson  
Max Wolfe

Congratulations to our 2015 High School Graduates

Kyra Anderson  
Emma Clark  
Ean Goos  
Kaylee Grant  
Brittany Kollman  
Keanna Overland  
Sarah Overton  
Katie Peterson  
Annah Pajari  
Eli Samuelson  
Katie Shelstad  
Olivia Stumbo  
Sarah Taylor  
Lexi Wentworth  
 Diedre Yanske