

# MAY MESSENGER

First Lutheran Church—Fergus Falls, MN

## A NOTE FROM PASTOR SAUL STENSVAAG

### **A** N ALTAR IN THE WORLD

Most of you recognize the name Barbara Brown Taylor as one of my favorite preachers – someone I often quote in sermons. I just finished her book, *An Altar in the World*, and would like to share some insights. She talks about the story of Jacob, who wrestles with a figure as he is fleeing from his brother, and when he awakes, he says, “Surely the Lord is in the place, and I did not know it!” and he makes an altar to commemorate it.

Taylor says that the Lord is always present in our world, if only our eyes will be open to sense his presence. She writes,

*“If there is a switch to flip, I have never found it. As with Jacob, most of my visions of the divine have happened while I was busy doing something else. I did nothing to make them happen. They happened to*

*me the same way a thunderstorm happens to me, or a bad cold, or the sudden awareness that I am desperately in love. I play no apparent part in their happening.*

*“My only part is to decide how I will respond. There is plenty I can do to make them go away or explain them away. Or I can set a little altar, in the world or in my heart. I can stop what I am doing long enough to see where I am, who I am there with, and how awesome this place is. ...I can see it for once, instead of walking right past it, maybe even setting a stone or saying a blessing before I move on to wherever I am due next.”*

Taylor thinks that our world is filled with God’s presence in so many ways, it’s amazing that we aren’t constantly aware of it.

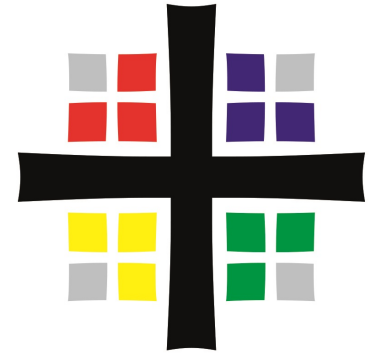
*“Human beings may separate things into as many piles as we wish; separating spirit from flesh, sacred from secular, church from world. But we shouldn’t be surprised when God doesn’t recognize the distinctions we make between the two. Earth is so thick with divine possibility that it is a wonder we can walk anywhere without cracking our shins on altars.”*

In this season, when new life is popping out on trees and in gardens and in our yards, may the Holy Spirit open our eyes to really see the loving presence of the creator in our midst.

In His Name,

*Pastor Saul*

Saul Stensvaag



### Inside this issue:

Worship Themes	2
Service Units	2
Sunday School News	3
FLY News	4
Day Camp	5
Vacation Bible School	5
WELCA	6
Easter Services—Thank you!	6
Outreach	6
Congratulations Graduates!	7
Library Committee	7
Coffee Servers Needed	7
Cemetery Spring Clean-Up	7



## WORSHIP THEMES

### May 1 ***“The Peace of the Lord”***

Text: John 14:23-29

Jesus offers us his peace today. The peace of Christ is a gift, promised to all who believe in Him. How does this peace change our lives? How do we share it with others?

### May 8 ***“At Home in God”***

Text: John 14:1-14

When Jesus promises that He is preparing a place for those who believe in Him, it's not just about what happens after we die. Jesus has prepared a place within the family of God where, right here and now, we can truly home in the presence of God's love.

### May 15 ***“Children of God”***

Text: Romans 8:14-17

Paul tells us in Romans that we have all been adopted into God's family. We are truly children of God. As we hear from our confirmation students' faith papers we see how they understand what it means to be God's children.

### May 22

#### ***“Speaking the Truth in Love”***

Text: John 16:12-15

Sometimes it can be challenging to hear the truth – the truth about ourselves and our sinful nature, or the truth about others. It can be even harder to speak the truth to a brother or sister when we know it

will hurt or offend. Sometimes this tension causes us to become silent. How does the Gospel help us to move into being truth tellers? And how do we share the true, good news of God's love with others?

### May 29 (ONE SERVICE @9:30 am)

#### ***“Holding onto the Gospel”***

Text: Galatians 1:1-12

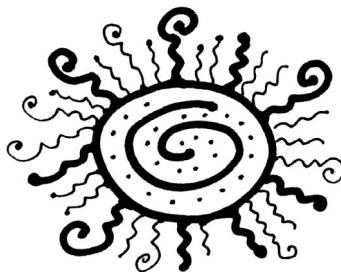
Paul scolds the Christians in Galatia for turning away from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As we send our High School Graduates out into a world filled with many false gospels, we pray that they will hold onto the Gospel of salvation by grace through faith which they have learned here at First Lutheran.

### **Summer Office Hours**

**Beginning Tues. May 31st**

**8 a.m.—3:30 p.m.**

**Monday—Thursday**



### **Summer Worship**

**Sundays at 9:30 am**

**(starting May 29th)**

**Thursdays at 5:30 pm**

## MAY SERVICE UNITS

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

- Dana Anderson
- Donn Baker
- Virginia Bjorgum
- Ronald/Linda Carey
- David Carlson
- Mary Beth Dinius
- Gary Eckley
- Dennis & Audrey Emmen
- Bob & Jana Erickson
- Brian & Mindy Fuder
- Jerome & Jay Ann Grant

- Katie Haugrud
- Gregg & Mindy Kollman
- Ann Larsen
- Bob & Vicki Long
- Roger & Audrey Neuleib
- RoyNell Norby
- Tedd & Patti Norby-Steenbock
- Shirley Peterson
- Asko & Teresa Rajaniemi
- Bill & Arlyss Sampson
- Bill & Ronda Roberts

- Richard & Jennifer Smestad
- Pr. Saul & Mary Kay Stensvaag
- David & Debbie Stock
- Zelda Sund
- Mary Lou Thompson
- Eric & Marie Toso
- Dale & Claudia Trosvig
- Adam & Kari Vaughn
- Rick & Linda West
- Mike & Lori Wood

First Lutheran Church

# SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

MAY 2016

CINDY LARSON

## SHINE 2016

We have had another successful year of building faith and learning. Sunday School took on a new look with the adoption of a new curriculum. The kids experienced Bible stories through cooking, science, drama, Bible reading, games and videos.

We hope that the stories were retold to your families around the dinner table. Our goal was to help kids remember the stories by using their senses and movement, Sunday School will be visiting **PioneerCare** residents on May 1 to connect with the residents who are

in the Short Stay Wing. Preschoolers are encouraged to come on the bus **with** a parent, or in their parents' vehicles to meet us there. The rest of the students may ride the school bus to PioneerCare, A permission must be signed by parents.



### VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

#### ♦ "Butterflies"

June 13-16 (infants-age 6 with an adult)

#### ♦ Luther Crest Day Camp

June 13-16 (ages K-4th)

♦ **Register now by calling 739-3348!**

### Last Day of Sunday School is May 22

May 22 is our **last day of Sunday School**. The Sunday school students will be celebrating another successful year of learning.

**Workshop Leaders and Shepherds, Confirmation and FLY leaders** will be recognized at the 8:30

worship service.

#### "Butterflies"

#### Vacation Bible

#### School is coming

up June 12-14

from 9:00-10:30

a.m. for children

age 0-6 with a car-

ing adult! The infor-

mation is in the

narthex. We need

donated snacks, and

helpers.

#### Day Camp is

offered to kids who have finished Kin-

dergarten-4th grade.

The LutherCrest

counselors hold

camp at an outdoor

park for the week.

A health form must

be filled out before

attendance. Sign up

in the Narthex!



### MAY HAPPENINGS

<i>PioneerCare visit</i>	1
<i>Butterflies 0-3 &amp; parents</i>	8
<i>9th grade Confirmation</i>	15
<i>Sunday School sings in worship</i>	22
<i>Last Day of Sunday School</i>	22
<i>Teacher Recognition</i>	22





# FLY News

FIRST LUTHERAN YOUTH

MAY 2016

## CALENDAR:

- **Sunday May 8**  
Confirmation  
Dessert and Rehearsal, 7 PM
- **Sunday May 15—**  
Confirmation  
Sunday  
(Congratulations , 9 th graders! )
- **Sunday May 15—**  
5:30 PM - Senior  
Recognition Dessert
- **Friday, May 20—**  
Nadia Bolz Weber at Concordia  
College in Moorhead
- **Sunday May 29**  
Senior Recognition Sunday

**No Fly groups**  
**meet during the**  
**month of May.**

**Watch your mail**  
**for your copy of**  
**the Summer**  
**Schedule. Get**  
**ready for some**  
**fun!**

## Choices, choices!

Democrat or Republican?  
Liberal or Conservative?  
Pro-life or Pro-choice?  
Rich or Poor?  
Coke or Pepsi?  
Chevy or Ford?

There are millions of choices or categories that divide people. Some are incredibly important. Some are more polarizing than others. Some are kinda dumb. Many people are just sick & tired of all the division and disagreement that exists in the world. Why can't we just all get along? There ought to

be some way for people of different backgrounds, classes, and customs to all get along.

There is. It's called the church.

God's will for the church is that it be the one place—the one *body*, actually, where people aren't divided along lines of race, nationality, gender, class, etc. God wants you and me and all Christians everywhere to be one with each other, just as the Father is one with the Son, and the Son is one with the Spirit, and the Spirit is one with the Father.

Does it always work this way? No. Sometimes it feels like in the church we have more fights and disagreements than we do out of the church. But the more we can work on this idea of "unity," the more we can show the world how we—as Christians—can walk the walk and talk the talk. It's something to aspire to and work on.

So what are some ways that we can work on being "one" with our sisters and brothers in Christ from other

*Pastor Jennifer*

## NBW Coming to Moorhead!

Nadia Bolz-Weber, funky and fun ELCA pastor is coming to Moorhead on May 20! Look her up on Youtube. She's a wonderful speaker, solidly Lutheran, and has a way of being



very authentic when she speaks. ! Grades 7-12 will meet at 4 PM at First Lutheran to load the church van

and go and see her. Cost is \$10 (for your supper.) Sign up at church by May 1. Hope you can join us for a wonderful evening of laughs and fun!



## "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**

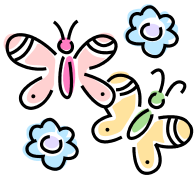
**Day Camp Dates:** June 13-16 for kids who have completed Kindergarten all the way through 5th Grade age.

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.

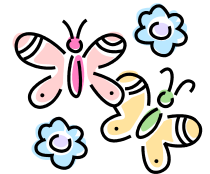
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## "Butterflies" Vacation Bible School

June 13-16th, 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:

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Current Age \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Current Age \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Current Age \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*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



## WOMEN OF FIRST LUTHERAN—OPPORTUNITIES TO GATHER

**The WELCA Board**  
**Meets on May 10th at 10:00 am**  
**in the Kairos Room at First Lutheran**

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

**CIRCLES**  
**Wednesday, May 25th**

**Sarah at 9:30 am**  
**Pioneer Pointe**

**Hannah at 1:00 pm**  
**First Lutheran Church**

## BEAUTIFUL EASTER SERVICES—THANK YOU!

Thank you to Pastor Saul Stensvaag, Pastor Jennifer Rose, and the Lenten/Easter Task Force for all the work they did in planning for our four days of Celebration for “Resurrection of Our Lord”. Every evening and Sunday morning our church was filled with worshippers. Our theme this year for Lent was “Discovering the Treasure”. What a delight each week to see all the treas-

ure chests (beautiful old trunks) filled with all of God’s treasures and promises. Our choirs were all marvelous with the Hosanna Handbell, Adult Choir, Children’s Choir and Worship Team all singing to praise our Lord. Also, our choir directors, Erik Vigesaa, Linda Mellon, Mary Kay Stensvaag, Keith Melberg and Hannah Carlson we thank you so much. Our opening service on Easter

Sunday had candle light and our cross was all decorated with strings of light bulbs...oh so beautiful! Our ending song was the Hallelujah Chorus and Hosanna Handbells! IN-DEED CHRIST IS ALIVE and I hope ALL will continue to come and worship each Sunday at First Lutheran Church.

With Peace, Hope and Joy,

*Audrey Jackson*



## OUTREACH—MEALS BY WHEELS SCHEDULE

First Lutheran is scheduled to drive for Meals by Wheels on May 16th-20th and May 23rd-27th. Contact Rick West at 218-205-6963 if you are interested in driving, even for just one day, or have any questions about Meals by Wheels. Thank you in advance for your continued support!

We are also scheduled to drive the weeks of:

- August 22-26
- August 29-Sept 2
- November 28-Dec. 2
- Dec. 5-9.



First Lutheran Church  
402 South Court Street  
Fergus Falls, MN 56537

Phone: 218-739-3348

Fax: 218-739-0916

E-mail: firstlc@live.com

## *Come Share the Spirit*



### **Congratulations to this year's Graduation Class of 2016**

**From everyone here at First Lutheran Church!**

Camden Andrews, Quinn Eckley, Kaleb Freitag,  
Lynnzee Johnson, Nicholas Johnson, Emily Knudson,  
Sophia Kuehl, Dalton Mouritsen, Sam Vogl, CJ Ward,  
Jake Western and Donovan Wood.

### **LIBRARY COMMITTEE REMINDER**

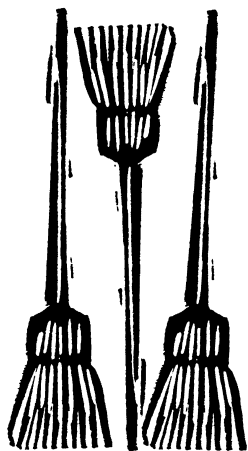
The First Lutheran Church Library Committee asks for your help in maintaining the library. Please look around your home and return books or DVDs your children checked out before Sunday School ends in May. Many thanks as this helps us have a full selection for children to check out next year.



### **SUMMER COFFEE SERVERS NEEDED!**

Do you enjoy your cup of coffee and treat after Sunday morning worship? If you are willing to serve during the summer months of June, July & August, please contact Terry Gervais at 952-250-0432. We need YOUR help

to have coffee on Sunday mornings. Also, if you are interested in being involved on the Fellowship Committee, please let Terry know!



### **CEMETERY SPRING CLEAN-UP!**

It's that time again and your help is needed! Please meet at the North Cemetery (take Highway 59 North approximately 1 mile from town .. take a right on the gravel road to the cemetery) on **Monday, May 16** at **5:30 p.m.** Rakes, shovels, and "elbow grease" are needed to do the job!

ALSO ... we are asking families to remove any OLD ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS / ORNAMENTS from their family gravesites prior to clean-up day on May 20 or they will be thrown away.