



First Lutheran Church

*402 South Court Street • Fergus Falls, Minnesota 56537
Telephone: (218) 739-3348*

NOTICE

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH SPECIAL MEETING

SUNDAY, APRIL 8, 2018 AT 9:30 A.M. IN THE SANCTUARY

The First Lutheran Church Council President, Darren W. Krein, hereby gives you notice of a special meeting to be held on Sunday, April 8, 2018 at 9:30 a.m. in the sanctuary of First Lutheran Church. The purpose of the special meeting is to vote on the recommendation to call Pastor Gretchen Enoch as Senior Pastor of First Lutheran Church. The vote will be by ballot and a 2/3 present majority is required to call Pastor Gretchen as our Senior Pastor.

The Call Committee unanimously recommends calling Pastor Gretchen as First Lutheran Church's senior pastor. Pastor Gretchen will bring energy to our church that will allow our church to better serve our current members while moving our congregation into the future. She has the ability to make a personal connection with every person she meets and has a heart for spiritual formation and investing in God's people as a means of stewardship. She also has a vision for assimilating new and long-time members in the life of the congregation. Pastor Gretchen has an adventurous spirit and can be found exploring new and life-giving means to deepen one's relationship with God.

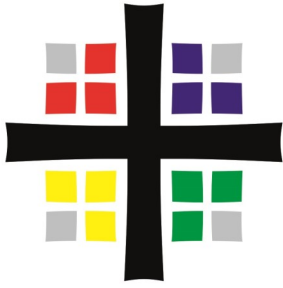


Pastor Gretchen Enoch

A little bit about Pastor Gretchen: She has always loved to "play church." She felt the call to Word and Sacrament around 6th grade through the active mentoring of a deaconess at her home congregation in Indianapolis. She followed her call and completed the spiritual formation process through the Lutheran Deaconess Association at Valparaiso University.

With time and experience, Pastor Gretchen felt God calling her to expand her understanding of theology and life, so she discerned it was time to consider the calling to ordained ministry. Pastor Enoch earned a Master's Degree from the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago in 2007 and was ordained in a small rural town in southern Indiana in 2009. Recently, Pastor Gretchen was an associate pastor at Mount Olivet Lutheran Church in Minneapolis.

Darren W. Krein
Council President



APRIL 2018

First Lutheran Church
Fergus Falls, MN

402 South Court Street

Fergus Falls, MN 56537

Phone: 218-739-3348

www.firstlutheranchurchff.org

firstlutheranchurchff@gmail.com

Good Morning First Lutheran Congregation!

After our last meeting, the Council decided that we need clarity and direction for our immediate needs here at FLC. Representatives from the Executive, Personnel, Stewardship, and Youth Committees met to put our concerns into clear language. Below is the statement that was developed. It has been approved unanimously by the Church Council.

In the next 6-9 months we are committed to meeting the needs of First Lutheran Church and the community by:

- **Developing and implementing a staffing plan**
- **Recruiting staff for youth and education ministry**
- **Encouraging greater personal and financial investment**

We are confident that these steps will address our immediate needs and position us for a productive partnership with our next senior pastor.

This plan came out of a 3 hour strategic planning meeting where we uncovered the assets/strengths of the congregation, and the Fergus Falls community. First Lutheran's Institutional Assets include a beautiful building to hold service, excellent music well known in the community, and beautiful stained glass windows. FLC also has valuable Relational Assets; our Sunday School, Bible Studies, Guardian Angel Program, and Confirmation small groups. Most importantly FLC has Spiritual Assets; our congregation, small groups, and the Holy Spirit's presence. We feel strongly that we are a congregation that is surviving, united, and we care about our youth!

We also discussed the challenges that FLC faces today. We have been experiencing constant change over the last 2 years, from retirements to pastors answering other calls. Change can be unsettling. At the present time, we are experiencing a shortfall in meeting our 2018 budget commitments. We realize that our members have many options and other obligations that interfere with regular worship attendance and participation. We don't want to ignore these changes and challenges. We want to plan and act boldly and creatively to address these realities.

We want you to join us in addressing these priorities. We would like to encourage you to join the conversation. We want your suggestions and ideas on how to accomplish these goals. Please reach out to Council Members or staff with your ideas.

Sincerely,
Darren W Krein
Council President



Welcome Laurie Whitehead!!

I am so pleased to start my position as part-time office assistant at First Lutheran! It feels like "coming home". Here is a brief run down of the route to this job. I grew up in Pelican Rapids, and my parents (Ken and Elenor Hanson) moved to Fergus Falls the year after I graduated high school. They became members of First Lutheran. I completed 2 years at the Community College, active in music and theatre. I finished my degree at the University of Minnesota with a Bachelor of Science in Education. I moved to the Fargo-Moorhead area and couldn't find a teaching job, so I took my civil service test. I spent 33 years working in administration at the Fargo VA Medical Center. It was an honor to serve Veterans, and a job I truly loved. I retired from the VA 6 years ago, and my husband Dale semi-retired, we decided to forge ahead with building the home we had been dreaming of, and that is how we landed in our quiet little spot in the woods! We joined First Lutheran,

and I became active in circle - the same circle my Mom belonged to, which was such a joy! I also volunteered in the church office with Katrina, which I enjoyed very much. We

have 2 grown children, our son Dane and his wife Emily live in the Twin Cities, and our daughter Katelyn is in Los Angeles. My retirement job after moving to Fergus Falls was at Target, and I was sad to see the store close, but SO very happy to have found this position at First Lutheran. I look forward to getting to know more people in the congregation, and doing my best to be an asset to the church. I feel SO very blessed!



Celebrating 45 years of Addiction Treatment in Fergus Falls.

Lake Region Recovery Home is pleased to announce our 45th anniversary of helping people recover from chemical dependency. Addiction is a disease that adversely affects a person physically, emotionally, spiritually and financially, as well as destroying family relationships.

Lake Region Recovery Home has been providing treatment and housing to men who are struggling from the effects of their illness. We provide counseling and education, weekly Bible study, as well as medical and employment assistance. These men come to us directly from in-patient treatment programs, prisons, and jails. Many of these men arrive with just the clothing on their backs and a few personal belongings. We have the capacity of 14 men and the average length of stay is 90 days.

Please keep these men and our facility in your prayers as we continue to provide the help they need to turn their lives in a positive direction.

If you have any questions about our program or would like more information please contact our Director, Jeff Christenson at 218.739.9084.

Women, Children and Guests Are Invited To "Styled To A Tea"



A Spring Tea Party And Style Show
Tea Time 1:30-2:30 pm, Sunday, April 29
First Lutheran's Fellowship Hall
Serving Tea And Goodies
Styles Courtesy Of THE BRIC
Models Courtesy Of First Lutheran Church
Sign Up At The Tea Table In The Narthex

New Member Events

If you are interested in joining First Lutheran Church you are invited to a New Member Pizza Supper on Sunday April 15 from 5 – 6:30 p.m. This will be a time to get to know each other, hear about the ministries of First Lutheran and talk with staff and congregational leaders. Childcare will be provided, however, we need to know each child's age and the number of children attending so that we can plan for child caregivers.

For those of you who don't have a Lutheran background or simply want a refresher on what we believe as Lutherans, there will be a Sunday morning Adult Study (10 am) later this spring.

We look forward to introducing you and celebrating New Member Sunday at worship on Sunday May 6. Please email firstlutherchurchff@gmail.com or call 218-739-3348 by Monday April 9 to let us know that you will be joining us for pizza and conversation and if you need childcare .



We want to stay in-touch with you!!! We have been utilizing a program called Constant Contact to send out information to large groups so we are less likely to land in someone's Spam folder. These mailings will include Messenger, weekly newsletters and other various informational emails. Ways to sign up:

- Visit our Facebook page, **First Lutheran Church, Fergus Falls, ELCA**, and hit the "sign up" button (While you're there, please like and share our page!)
- Visit our website www.firstluthernchurchff.org and fill out the contact form
- **Text 22828**

If you are already signed up, check your spam folder in case we are in there.



TASTE OF SPRING

ANNUAL SALAD

LUNCHEON

& BAKE SALE

THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2018

11 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Fellowship Hall

Tickets \$8.00

Save the date for

One in Spirit Hymn Festival

Sunday, May 20th at

First Lutheran Church 2:00 pm

WELCA Board Meeting:

No April meeting

**Love Days Quilters meet every Mon-
day from**

9 a.m.—3 p.m.

All are welcome!

CIRCLES

**Wed, April 25 Sarah: 9:30 am at
Pioneer Pointe**

We need your help! We hope you will get out your favorite recipes for salads and bars and bring something delicious to share for the fundraiser. Please bring your goodies to the church on Thursday morning, April 26, no later than 9:30 a.m. The west door, closest to the kitchen, will be open by 7:30 a.m. and someone will be in the kitchen to help you.

Signup sheets for bars, salads and working the day of the lunch, will be in the Narthex starting April 8th. The money raised from this event helps with supplies in the kitchen, local and International missions.

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that [God] who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:3-6



Northwestern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

expresses deep gratitude to

**First Lutheran Church
of Fergus Falls, MN**

for all the ways we are in partnership together,
serving God's mission of blessing and redeeming the world
in the name of Jesus Christ!

This partnership over the past year has included:

- + Prayers of God's people, offered both publically and privately
- + Mission support for ministries of the synod and the whole ELCA
- + Designated gifts for synod/ELCA ministries, including hunger, malaria, global sponsorship, synodical projects, etc.

Spaghetti Fund Raiser for the Youth attending the National Youth Gathering

Plan on bringing the whole family for a delicious spaghetti meal on Saturday April 21 from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Take-out meals will be available. Freewill offering.

Invite your friends and neighbors.



6th - 8th Grade Lock-In Saturday, April 7 - 8

Everyone in grades 6-8 are invited to this awesome event. Meet at First Lutheran at 8:00 p.m. and be ready for a night of games, movies, food, fun with friends and more. The event ends with everyone attending the 8:30 a.m. worship service on Sunday morning. There is no cost for this event, however, you do need to sign-up, have your parents fill out a permission form and a health release form. The sign-up sheet and the forms are on the counter near the door in the narthex. You won't want to miss this all night party.

This Changes Everything! National Youth Gathering, Houston, June 27 – July 1. What will our youth be doing?

Each night of the Gathering participants will come together in the NRG Stadium for a time of inspiring speakers, uplifting music and more. Speakers will share how God's call, God's love, God's grace and God's hope changed everything in their lives. The house band leads the 30,000 plus youth and adults in singing each night. Throughout the Gathering, special guest bands will be sharing their love of Christ and neighbor through song. On Sunday, July 1 everyone will gather one last time in the stadium for closing worship and the Eucharist. Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton will preach. Participants will celebrate and remember that Jesus Changes Everything! This is just the evening large group gatherings. Watch for more details next month about how participants will spend their days at the Gathering.



First Lutheran Church

SUNDAY SCHOOL

A Little Switching Up in the Future?

We rely on our Sunday school to share stories from the Bible and to teach God's love to our children. This is our mission for education at First Lutheran Church. However, Sunday school is and can be so much more. It is a time when children make friends, connect with adults, develop social behavior, and learn compassion. Sunday school brings families together for learning, fun, and worship. Sunday school brings the word of God to our congregation through the voices of our children.

Your observations and ideas are needed as we plan for the future. We want programs that serve your family and encourage and allow your participation. Our programs depend on parent participation and involvement. We want our education programs to be something that your

whole family looks forward to and participates in on a weekly basis.

Our hope is that every parent will make it a priority to attend one of the three parent meetings that are scheduled in April and May during the Sunday school hour (10:00 am) in the Kairos Room.

- **April 22**
- **April 29**
- **May 13**

Thank you for making these meetings a priority and honoring the promises you made at your child's baptism.

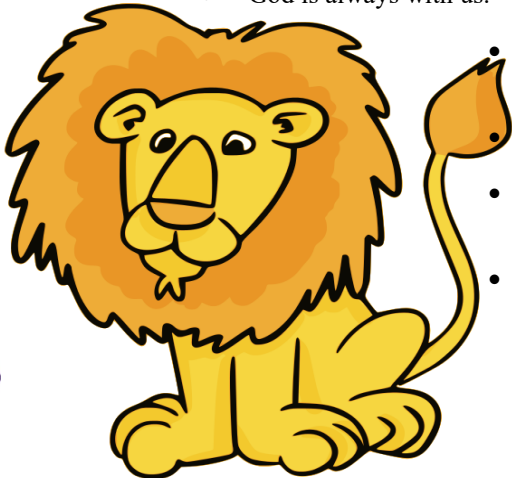
I look forward to hearing your ideas,

Kristy Wicklund
Interim Sunday School Superintendent

Daniel and the Lions

In the story of Daniel and the Lion, we hear of how Daniel was thrown in a den full of lions because of jealousy. God protected Daniel, and he was saved. This month through our exploration of this story, the children will learn:

- God helps us to be brave.
- God is always with us.



• Standing up for what you believe in.

• God's light shines on us.

• I can do good things for God.

• God helps me do difficult things.

April 1

Easter Egg Hunt between services 0 yrs—6th grade

No Sunday School

April 8

Butterflies

April 15

Volunteer Recognition

Sunday

April 22

10th Grade Milestone Class

Sunday School Parent meeting

April 29

10th Grade Milestone

Blessing

Sunday School Parent meeting

May 13

Sunday School Parent meeting

Volunteer Recognition Sunday

April 15

**THANK YOU WORKSHOP
LEADERS**

& SHEPHERDS!

SUNDAY SCHOOL CONTINUED...

COMING THIS SUMMER...

June 4-7

Butterflies Bible School
Ages birth through Preschool II
9-10:30 a.m.

July 16-19

Vacation Bible School
Luther Crest Day Camp at FLC
Ages Kindergarten through 6th Grade
9-3:30 p.m.



It is not too late to register for a week of summer camp at Luther Crest this summer. The First Lutheran Foundation is giving generous financial support to everyone who attends. Just make sure that you get your registration in to the camp and get a copy of that registration to Katrina in the office to receive this generous financial gift.

one hope
Re-Membering the Body of Christ

Lutherans & Catholics

Starting on April 26, you are invited to attend a 4-week adult study group to continue the dialogue started this fall with ***From Conflict to Communion: Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017***. This new study group will use the book ***One Hope: Re-Membering the Body of Christ*** as a discussion guide. The essays in ***One Hope*** are the product of an intense collaborative process by six gifted scholars and pastoral leaders, three Lutheran and three Catholic.

The study group will be on Thursdays from 12:00-1:00pm April 26-May 17, with locations rotating between Augustana Lutheran Church, 308 East Douglas in Fergus Falls and Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church, 207 North Vine St. in Fergus Falls.

Week 1 - April 26 Augustana Lutheran

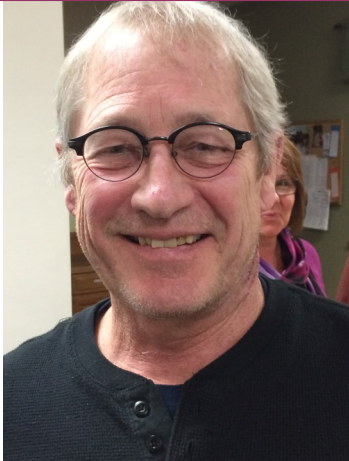
Week 2 - May 3 Our Lady of Victory

Week 3 - May 10 Augustana Lutheran

Week 4 - May 17 Our Lady of Victory

Sign up in your church office to get the book, each church will have several books available to purchase for the study, the cost is \$10. Plan to bring the book to the first session and come prepared having read chapters 1 and 2. If you have questions, you may call the parish offices of Our Lady of Victory (736-2429) or Augustana Lutheran (736-5308).

Meet Our Council



Mark Hermes Property Chair

Being Asked to be a part of the Lenten Task Force by Pastor Saul was my initial experience in participating in the workings of the church and becoming a true part of First Lutheran church family. My faith has continued to strengthen ever since.

Mark 218-517-0939 or marksusan.hermes@gmail.com

Kirsten Kragness Education Chair

I have a few moments that stick out to me of First Lutheran Church. The first, was when my twin girls were born at 30 weeks. They spent 6 weeks in the NICU, in Fargo, and during that time we received so many prayers and cards from people we thought were strangers, but were actually our church family. The words and messages were very heart warming. The second, just a few years ago, I was on bedrest with my son. My co-teacher, Lorri Holt, and class had all taken the time to make us cards and say prayers. Even kids so young have such a strong impact on people of any age. I truly believe in the power of prayers!

Kirsten shaneandkirsten@hotmail.com



Debbie Opatz Council Secretary

One of the most significant memories for me at First Lutheran Church is related to my mom passing away three years ago. After she had a stroke and was in the hospital, we were being asked to make the decision to remove life support. It was absolutely tearing me apart, to have to make this decision about losing my mom – my best friend (with my family, of course). I spoke to Pastor Saul about it, and told him I couldn't bear the thought of my mom missing my kids' graduations, or their weddings, or the births of their children. While Pastor Saul didn't go so far as to tell me my mom would be at these events, he did say there is much we don't know, but one thing is probably certain – God's time does not necessarily

match ours. It's possible these events can be seen in heaven right now, even though they have not happened yet here on earth. This conversation with Pastor Saul helped me let my mom go. We were lucky enough to have God make the decision that it was time for her to go. I will miss her for the rest of my life, but knowing she may know about all these important events makes me smile. I will feel her with me because of Pastor's Saul's comments.

Debbie

DOpatz@otpc.com