

# First Lutheran Church April 2020



Worship Sun. 9:30 am  
Listen on the radio 1020am or FM 97.7  
[www.channel977.com](http://www.channel977.com)  
Livestream on You Tube, link found on website

402 South Court Street  
Fergus Falls, MN 56537  
Phone: 218-739-3348  
[www.firstlutheranchurchff.org](http://www.firstlutheranchurchff.org)  
[office@flcff.org](mailto:office@flcff.org)

**Mission Statement: "As faithful disciples, we serve God and welcome all people with open hearts".**

One of my fondest memories of attending Catholic schools while growing up was singing the familiar hymn, "Be Not Afraid," by Father Bob Dufford. I do not recall necessarily *feeling* afraid in my younger years, but the familiarity of the hymn was a means to calm any unconscious fears or anxieties. The song is as follows: (You may want to google it, and sing along)

*You shall cross the barren desert, but you shall not die of thirst. You shall wander far in safety, though you do not know the way. You shall speak your words in foreign lands, and all will understand, you shall see the face of God and live.*

*Be not afraid, I go before you always, come follow me, and I shall give you rest.*

*If you pass through raging waters in the sea, you shall not drown. If you walk amidst the burning flames, you shall not be harmed. If you stand before the pow'r of hell and death is at your side, know that I am with you, through it all.*

*Be not afraid, I go before you always, come follow me, and I shall give you rest.*

*Blessed are your poor, for the kingdom shall be theirs. Blest are you that weep and mourn, for one day you shall laugh. And if wicked men insult and hate you, all because of me, blessed, blessed are you!*

*Be not afraid, I go before you always, come follow me, and I shall give you rest.*

I encourage you to pray or sing this hymn as a means of hope during this time of what I will refer to as 'transition,' from life as we knew it to a new normal." Father Dufford is quoted as saying, "For me, it was a song of transition". "There was a fear, but it was a fear of going from one place to another, ending one thing and starting another. I didn't know what was going to come, and I had this sense of the promise of God: 'I go before you always.'"

My hope and prayer for each of us is to remain calm and faithful in spite of the changes which the Covid-19 present in our lives. To see this time simply as a transition to something better and new as we journey to the cross of Christ. Remember that God is a faithful God who is unchanging, even in the most turbulent of times.

Sharing Christ's Service,  
Pastor Gretchen

**COME**  
to Me, all  
YOU WHO LABOR <sup>and are</sup>  
heavy laden,  
AND I WILL GIVE YOU  
**REST**

## Worship With Us on the Radio & YouTube!

The ELCA churches of Fergus Falls have joined together to provide worship opportunities on Sunday mornings. Worship services are closed to the public, but will be live-streamed on YouTube and on-air on KJJK AM 1020 or Channel 977 FM97.7 at 9:30am on Sundays.  
(FLC, Augustana & Hope)

Bethlehem and Zion will be airing their Sunday worship service on KBRF AM 1250 at 8:30 a.m.



The Maundy Thursday (April 9 at 7:00 p.m.) and Good Friday (April 10 at 7:00 p.m.) services will be live-streamed on YouTube.

Palm Sunday (April 5) Easter Sunday (April 12) will air at 9:30 a.m. on KJJK AM 1020 & FM 97.7 and livestreamed on YouTube.

To access YouTube go to the First Lutheran website: [www.firstlutheranchurchff.org](http://www.firstlutheranchurchff.org)  
You can livestream or watch later.



*God's Work. Our Hands.*  
*Love Never Fails*  
*-1Corinthians 13:8*



## *Jesus is Always With You*

Over the last weeks, our lives have changed a lot. We have had to be flexible, take on new roles, be brave, and try to make good choices for our families while often feeling isolated. During this Easter season, we have so many reminders of Jesus and his love and sacrifice, but not being able to go in to the church and be with our church family, it is easy to forget and it is easy to feel alone. That is why I am reminding you that Jesus is always with you. As I have been searching for ways to help us feel connected in a time of distance, I came across this reminder of Jesus always being with us. So here is the plan for you and your child(ren):

1. Print off Flat Jesus (next page)
2. Decorate Jesus
3. Take Jesus with you as you hang out in your homes, or go for outings in your neighborhood.
4. Take a pic of Flat Jesus and you
5. Email the picture to [Kristy@flcff.org](mailto:Kristy@flcff.org)

I will be posting the pictures on our website and Facebook as a reminder to everyone that Jesus is always with you!

God Loves You,

Kristy Wicklund

Director of Children's Ministries

[Kristy@flcff.org](mailto:Kristy@flcff.org) (218) 531-9544



## *Postponements and Cancellations*

- All Sunday School classes, First Communion classes, and FLY K-6 are postponed until further notice. Weekly family lessons will be sent out by email to encourage your family to grow together in faith.
- The Palm Sunday Festival has been cancelled.



## *Spreading Love & Kindness*

Right now our community could use a little love and kindness. Here are some ideas for children to help spread love and kindness.

- Write messages and draw pictures with chalk on the sidewalk
- Put artwork up in the windows
- Send letters, pictures, cards, and jokes to neighbors, nursing homes, or assisted living
- Send a Flat Jesus to a friend
- Wave at the neighbors when outside playing
- Send thank you cards to workers at the grocery stores, pharmacy, hospital, post office and other essential business.

**VBS with Luther Crest will be  
JULY 6-9**

**8:45 a.m.-3:00 p.m.**



### **VBS Day Camp with Luther Crest**

"Go Make Disciples" July 6-9 at Hope Lutheran Church from 8:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for ages 4 years old through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Sponsored by Augustana, First, Hope and Zion Lutheran Churches. If you would like to contribute toward scholarships to VBS Day Camp you can mail your contribution to the church, noting Luther Crest Day Camp scholarships. Thank you!

**VBS Butterflies "Noah's Ark" July 6-9** at First Lutheran Church 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. for ages birth through 5 years old. All are welcomed.

# Flat Jesus



email pic to [Kristy@fleff.org](mailto:Kristy@fleff.org)



I can do all this through him who gives me strength.  
(Philippians 4:13)

Hello FLY 7-12!

I am missing and thinking of you all! I am hoping we can plan some fun activities soon! I am really looking forward to getting out of the house, and I am sure you are all thinking the same thing! If any of you want to zoom, facetime, text, or call me please do so! I am always here for you even though I can't see you right now. If you don't have my number, it is 218-321-0970, or email [calie@flcff.org](mailto:calie@flcff.org). I am looking forward to seeing you soon!

Take care and God Bless, *Calie*

**Luther Crest Bible Camp 2020 - Info for all ages!!**

Dear First Lutheran Youth,

The First Lutheran Foundation has agreed to provide matching dollars to attend Luther Crest. This is an incredible opportunity to attend camp at a very low price!

The following is what the foundation will pay for Luther Crest Camps:

On Site Day Camp	\$60	Explorers	\$70
Seekers	\$200	Leapers	\$300
Critters	\$300	Any other Luther Crest Camps for other grades:	\$300



You will need to pay the deposit when you register. Registration information can be found on the Luther Crest website at [www.luthercrest.org](http://www.luthercrest.org), or you can call the office (739-3348) and we can mail the information to you.

**Important: To get these dollars applied to your camp registration, you need to notify the church office before 4/25 and give the church office proof of your registration. This can be as simple as emailing the office a copy of your registration to [office@flcff.org](mailto:office@flcff.org).**

Thank you to the First Lutheran Foundation for this awesome gift toward attending camp. They, like I, believe that attending Bible camp is simply one of the best things you can do in the summer. Please see me if you have any questions!

Thank you! *Calie Anderson*

## Rare sighting of OWLS at AC4TA



For those who purchased a spring plant to decorate the church at Easter—we will still be using the plants to decorate our Sanctuary for the YouTube broadcast.

Change in Plans: Due to restrictions with access to the church building, we don't know when the plants can be picked up. We will be in touch with those who purchased plants regarding a future pick-up date.

*Thank You!*



## Lifetouch Directory



**Craft & Chili Fundraiser** will be hosted by the

Fellowship committee this Fall (date to be determined). This is just an early reminder to start working on your favorite craft if you are interested in donating items to the event this fall.



**Attendees at the Council Retreat on Saturday, March 7  
Facilitated by Pastor Blair Anderson**



Watch for info on when all of the WELCA activities will resume!



All women are encouraged to join our Love Days and/or Circles!!!



## Blood Drive First Lutheran Church

402 South Court Street - Fergus Falls

Tuesday, April 28, 2020  
1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

### The Red Cross is in need of blood donations

#### Extra precautions are being taken:

- All donors have their temperature taken before being permitted into the blood drive
- If a donor has a temperature greater than 99.5°F they will be asked to donate another time instead

#### Disinfecting

- Hand sanitizer will be available at check-in, health history and refreshment areas
- Blood donors will be asked to use hand sanitizer before and during the donation process
- Donor beds will be sanitized between each and every donor

#### Social Distancing

- We're taking extra measures to allow medically-recommended space between donors wherever possible

#### Staff Wellness and Protection

- All staff are asked to check their temperature before presenting to work, and are asked not to report for work if they are feeling sick or test above 99.5°F
- Staff will wear gloves throughout entire blood drive, changing gloves between every donor

To schedule call 1-800-RED CROSS (733-2767) or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) enter Sponsor Code: Fergus First Lutheran



### The Worship Corner by the Worship & Music Committee

We adorn our homes with color. Color can make us happy and warm or help us express peace and serenity. So it is that we adorn our church in color. The seasons of our church year are each associated with color.

Blue is associated with Advent, suggesting hope. The Christmas season is white, reminding us of the purity of Christ and our light and joy in him. We use white through the season of Epiphany and the Baptism of our Lord.

The time after Epiphany is green. Green symbolizes our growth in Christ. We return to white for the Transfiguration of our Lord.

Ash Wednesday and the forty days of Lent are purple, suggesting repentance and solemnity. Maundy Thursday, when we celebrate the institution of the Lord's Supper, is white. Following the stripping of the altar on Maundy Thursday, no paraments are used on Good Friday.

White and/or gold are used on Easter Sunday, suggesting the joy of the resurrection. White continues as the color for the Sundays following Easter. Red is used for Pentecost, the day we remember the tongues of fire descending. Holy Trinity Sunday suggests white, an expression of the joy and mystery of the triune God.

The season of Pentecost which follows, is green, indicating our growth in faith as we follow the teachings of Christ.

Christ the King Sunday, the final Sunday in the church year, uses white suggesting light, joy and the celebration of our Lord.

## Church Council First Lutheran

### Term ending 2021

Abbey Kwapinski  
Harriet Wicklund  
Sara Koch  
JoAn Whitlock

### Term ending 2022

Suzanne Demuth  
Jennifer Frank  
Debbie Opatz  
Jennifer Woore  
Ron Spangler  
Michael Wicklund  
Missy Mattson  
Leslie Flugstad

### Executive Committee

Steve Guttormson, President  
George Mathison, VP  
Debbie Opatz, Secretary  
Suzanne Demuth, Treasurer



## ***Christ in Our Home Devotional Books for April, May and June***

have arrived. As the church will be locked for the first part of April, we placed copies in our outdoor Little Lending Library.

**Please help yourself.**

*(note: we also left copies at Pioneer Care & Pioneer Pointe)*

NOTICE: In accordance with the decision of the MN State Governor, the church building will remain locked from March 27 through April 10. We will not be able to accommodate public meetings during this time. If you have an emergency, please contact Pastor Gretchen at 218-321-0995.

Please continue to call (leave a message) and email the church office with any questions or concerns. Phone 218 739-3348 and email [office@flcff.org](mailto:office@flcff.org).

**Thank You**

## *Who takes care of YOU when you are busy taking care of others?*

**Powerful Tools for Caregivers** is an educational program designed to provide you with the tools you need to take care of yourself. Whether you provide care for your family member or friend in your home or at a distance, this class can help you!

**You will learn to:** Reduce stress, Improve self-confidence, better communicate your feelings, balance your life, increase your ability to make tough decisions, locate helpful resources.



**Classes consist of 90 minute sessions** *Minimum Fee's May Apply*

**When:** April 13, 20, 27                      May 4, 11, 18

**Time:** 9:00-10:30am

**Where:** Virtually online using Microsoft Teams



## **Pre-Registration Necessary**

**Alicia Truax (LSS) 218-640-7737 Email: [Alicia.truax@lssmn.org](mailto:Alicia.truax@lssmn.org)**  
**Mary Smith (LSS) 218-203-7312 Email: [Mary.smith@lssmn.org](mailto:Mary.smith@lssmn.org)**

*Sponsored by Lutheran Social Service of MN  
Caregiver Support & Respite Program funded under contract with the Central MN Council on Aging as part of the Older Americans Act Program.*



**Thank You!**

Thank You to Katrina Johnson for her faithful servant leadership of the business affairs and operations of our congregation for the past 5 years.

We weren't able to have the congregational God speed send-off we planned, but we did have a small celebration in the office. God's Blessings to Katrina!





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

Dear Congregations of the Northwestern Minnesota Synod,

You are a compassionate and generous people. Thanks be to God for you and the many ways you faithfully respond to the needs of others. As your synod staff, we give daily thanks for the gift of being church together for the sake of the world.

As followers of Jesus led by the Holy Spirit, we share in the heritage of the faithful who responded to complex times with wisdom, trust and commitment. We pray that our descendants will look back at this moment in time and honor our courage, too. Please know that our Bishop and my synod staff teammates are holding your congregation and all the people of our synod in prayer as we collectively navigate this new reality, and grace and love abound.

As people of faith, what might it mean to practice generosity during a pandemic? Your synod leadership is aware and cares about the likelihood that the capacity to give financially to your congregation will be impacted. We also know the ministries in our synod will need to carry on and require our continued support.

During this unprecedented time filled with challenges and uncertainties, we are experiencing an abundance of God's grace and love as we navigate this new reality together. Monetary giving is one of many ways to practice generosity that extends and expresses God's grace and love.

The Gospel is being proclaimed in many ways during this pandemic, and your sharing of resources supports that work. We encourage you to pray about what forms of generosity might look like in your life in the days, weeks and months ahead. Seek the Holy Spirit's guidance through prayer and noticing how God is at work and Jesus is with you now and always. Be of good courage and be exceedingly gentle with one another. We have never navigated anything like this before. As we journey together, we can do the best we can with the tools and resources we have. Let us be graceful with one another and with all the expressions of our dear church. May the Holy Spirit grant us wisdom and courage to be generous, even in uncertainty.

Your Servant in Christ,

Pastor Keith Zeh

Northwestern Minnesota Synod, Director for Evangelical Mission & Stewardship

218-790-1764 [zeh@cord.edu](mailto:zeh@cord.edu)

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**Frequently Asked Questions About In-Home Communion and Baptism**  
**By Rev. Bill Tesch, Bishop of the Northwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA**

How is it possible to celebrate the Sacraments without an Ordained Pastor or Synodically Authorized Minister?

- Many of the churches of the Lutheran Reformation have provided for administration of the sacraments in the home during extraordinary times. This is such a time. Christ is truly present in this home celebration of the meal granting life, salvation and the forgiveness of sins. Luther, in his Small and Large Catechisms, teaches that the home is the first church where we are formed for the Christian life through instruction in God's word and holy living.

Why is this not possible all the time?

- Pastors are set apart by the church at their ordination in order to preach and provide for good order at the celebration of the sacraments so that the church may preserve its unique witness to the Gospel down through the generations. The church has existed for 2000 years; we take the long view of things! The use of the means of grace in extraordinary emergencies, such as we are living through now, is just that: extra-ordinary. Once this crisis has passed we will resume the practice that best ensures the faithful transmission of our witness to the gospel which is that only those who are duly called and ordained may preside.

What about celebrating the sacrament remotely through Zoom or some other technology?

- St. Paul addressed the problem of abuses in the Lord's supper in I Corinthians 11:17ff. He does not argue then (nor do I now) that the sacrament was not a real sacrament. Paul's concern, and mine in this case, is that the way they were doing it was creating divisions in the body: including the privileged while excluding others, creating "haves" and "have nots," turning a "communion" into a "division." I see at least five ways in which the body is divided using live-streaming as a way of celebrating communion:

- o Some people do not have access to high speed internet in their area.
- o Some could get it, but can't afford it.
- o Some have access to the internet, but do not have, can not afford or do not know how to use any one of the many live-streaming platforms.
- o What about people who suffer an internet outage at the time that the live or recorded stream is being offered? Etc.
- o From an experiential point of view – having participated in some "virtual" family meals while on military deployments, the experience can leave one feeling that it was nice, but not the real thing, thus, creating a division among those who can fully embrace the practice and those who cannot.

What about using the practice of providing communion to those in special circumstances using elements reserved from a previous celebration of the sacrament at their congregation? I can imagine creative ways that congregations could have done this (and several have) during the previous order by the Governor, but the shelter-in-place order seems to exclude this possibility. I'm open to ideas, however.