



First Lutheran Church May 2020

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

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

Good day to you church family!

In the midst of the pandemic, church leadership has been hard at work. Some of the things we have been working on are securing a part-time bookkeeper, and considering the opportunity to welcome a Luther Seminary part-time intern to the church staff for the next 2 years. Prayers have been answered for both positions. A special 'shout out' of gratitude to the FLC Personnel Committee for working diligently throughout interviews and such. In the coming month, I will introduce both of these talented staff people to you via the Messenger and the church website.



I woke up this morning wondering what are the lessons we will learn from this time of pandemic and social distancing? Learning is different for each of us, but for me, sitting in the discomfort, praying for acceptance and simply doing the next 'right thing' are essential.

My hope for each of us is to be open to new learning and mindful of the promptings of the Holy Spirit encouraging us to grow in faith. Please know you are in my daily prayers for safety and security, trusting always that God is with us.

On a personal note, Kirby & I will be married in a private ceremony on May 23. We ask for your prayers as we start our life together. We look forward to the day we can gather together and celebrate our marriage with the people of First Lutheran!

Sharing Christ's Service,
Pastor Gretchen

O Great Love, thank you for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings. Help us become a community that vulnerably shares each other's burdens and the weight of glory. Listen to our hearts' longings for the healing of our world.

[Please add your own intentions.] . . . Knowing you are hearing us better than we are speaking, we offer these prayers in all the holy names of God, Amen.

Prayer written by Richard Rohr

Worship With Us on the Radio, YouTube and PEG Access

The ELCA churches of Fergus Falls have joined together to provide worship opportunities on Sunday mornings. **We will continue with the services closed to the public through the month of May.** Services 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)

To access YouTube go to the First Lutheran website: www.firstlutheranchurchff.org
You can livestream or watch later.

Our worship services are being aired on PEG Access Channel 8. The schedule does change, so be sure to check the website at <http://pegaccess.com/channel8programming.html> for current times.



God's Work. Our Hands.

Love Never Fails

-1Corinthians 13:8



Virtual Sunday School

It has been so wonderful to see how many people have been tuning into our Virtual Sunday School lessons! It is amazing to still be able to meet together to share the stories from the Bible, share God's love, and have a little fun doing it. With that I still miss all of you and that video camera is no substitute for the real interactions that we use to have on Sunday mornings. I know the Sunday School teachers miss your child(ren) too, and I wish we could say that we will be getting back to normal soon. Unfortunately, we will not be getting back to our Sunday School classes this school year. I will, however; keep making virtual Sunday school lessons for the rest of May and I hope that you and your child(ren) keep viewing them. Also, please feel free to email and text me with pictures of Flat Jesus, or just what you have been doing to share God's love and spread kindness.

God loves you!

Kristy Wicklund

Director of Children's Ministries

Kristy@flcfl.org (218) 531-9544



Check out our virtual Sunday School lessons on our YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCa01-F1dI7gKmtccvVucMXA>

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.

Spreading Love & Kindness

Our FLY K-6 group has met a couple of times through Zoom, but we have been keeping in touch and still finding ways to share God's love and spread kindness. Last month we sent cards to the residents at Mill Street, planted wildflower seeds for the bees, and picked up garbage in our neighborhoods. This month we will look forward to finding more ways to spread the love and bring people together even as we spend time apart.



COMING SUMMER OF 2020

VBS TO-GO



Ages Toddler-6th Grade

Due to COVID-19, Day Camp and Butterflies has been cancelled for July. Augustana, First, Hope and Zion Churches will instead be offering a Vacation Bible School To-Go full of fun activities and links to songs and stories with a possibility of a one day VBS get together in August. More information will be available as Summer gets closer.



MAY 2020

FLY 7-9 & 10-12

First Lutheran Youth News!



Plans are in the works for when we will have our Confirmation service for 2020.

We will advise you of the date as soon as we know.

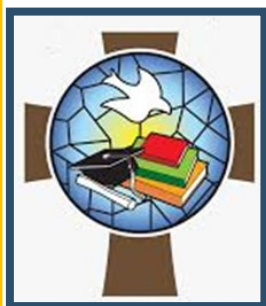


7th -9th Graders—Let's ZOOM with Calie & Pastor Gretchen!

Wednesday, May 6 let's get together on Zoom to talk! Here is the schedule:

- 7th Graders from 4 to 5 pm
- 8th Graders from 5 to 6 pm
- 9th Graders from 6 to 7 pm

Calie will send Zoom information in an email closer to the date. Look forward to taking with you!!



BACCALAUREATE SERVICE

Join the ELCA Congregations of Fergus Falls for a Baccalaureate Service to honor our high school graduates on Wednesday, May 27, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. The service will be broadcast on our Facebook page. The video will remain on the Facebook page for those who are unable to make the scheduled time.



To the Class of 2020!

Sydney Batzlaff	Olivia Becker
Sara Hansen	Tucker Henkes
Brandon Hinsverk	Alison Koch
Andreyia Lockett	Ethan Menge
Isaac Pederson	Jacob Spangler

We will celebrate our Seniors when we can gather together at worship!

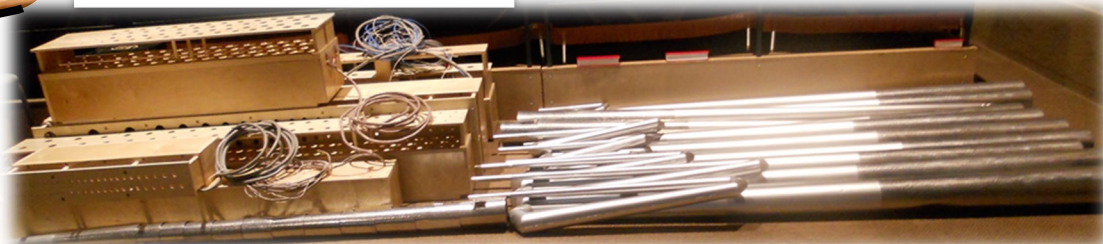
2020

Let us *consider*
our callings,
let us *reflect*
on our responsibilities, and
let us *follow*
Jesus Christ

Thomas S. Monson



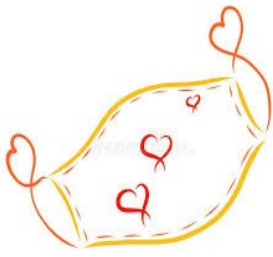
**Arrival of the pipes for the
expansion of the organ!**



**Easter Sunday
2020**



Safe way to show you care!



Thank You from PioneerCare...

To all who donated supplies and sewn masks these past days, we offer our sincerest gratitude.

By wearing masks at all times, we're practicing source control, protecting residents and coworkers from potential infection. By using home-sewn masks at this time, when there is no known infection within PioneerCare Center, Pioneer Cottages, or Pioneer Pointe, we're conserving our limited supply of medical grade protective gear.

Residents also are asked to wear masks or cover their mouth and nose while receiving direct care.

While we have enough masks for now, we may be asking for help from the community again in the weeks ahead.

Again, from all of us, thank you.

Pastor Gretchen would like to have a supply of homemade masks on hand for the day we do return to worship in person! Our goal is 300 masks. We can use both adult size and children's size. If you are able to help by sewing masks, please do! There are many patterns available on-line, or if you need a pattern, please contact the church office.

If you have masks ready to deliver to church, please give us a call at 739-3348 and we will make arrangements for dropping them off at church. If you have any questions, contact Pastor Gretchen at 218 321-0995. Thanks SO much!



- to LeAnne Jaenisch for getting the camera to work for the YouTube broadcasts!
- to LeAnne Jaenisch and Paul Dimke for running the camera and sound board on Sundays and during Holy Week!
- to Jennifer Woore from Membership Committee for doing a deep clean and update of our Children's Worship Bags.
- to our worship leaders on Sunday mornings for making our virtual worship so meaningful, for all who provided a plant for Easter Sunday and those who helped decorate the Sanctuary.
- to our Church Council, Pastor Gretchen and leadership for making quick and important decisions regarding this time of COVID-19.
- to our custodian Steve Hosch for doing a deep clean at church during these quiet days. The floors are so shiny you can see yourself!
- for the congregation's continued support of our church, radio broadcasts, Salvation Army, each other, and all of the staff.

God Bless you All!



The National Day of Prayer is observed annually on the first Thursday in May (May 7th this year). This day of observance, designated by the United States Congress, asks people "to turn to God in prayer and meditation." The modern law formalizing the annual National Day of Prayer observance was enacted in 1952 and each year since, the President of the United States has signed a proclamation, encouraging all Americans to pray on this day.

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.

It's a great time to craft!





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



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



The Worship Corner
by the
Worship & Music Committee

When we sing hymns, we are the active worshipping assembly engaged in the worship of God. The activity of hymn singing allows us to recognize our assembly as believers and members of a community of faith. Studies show that in communal singing, hearts begin to beat as one, and chemicals are released in our bodies for immunity and health that are not released anywhere else. Performance is not our goal. Meeting God in our midst and being Christ in the world are our goals.

During these days of isolated worship, may we recall the transcendence of the song of our assembly and when we come back together, remember that God gave you your voice. Give it back to Him fully in song!

THANK YOU

Thank you for welcoming me as a staff member, church member and friend. Thank you for allowing me to do fulfilling work. Thank you for taking interest in me and caring about me. Thank you for the gifts in my departure. And thank you for your kind words in cards and emails. I miss you already!

Katrina

Dear Family and Friends worldwide, He Is Risen!! He Is Risen Indeed. A Blessed Easter to all of you from the shores of the Indian Ocean. It seems like Emayani Beach Lodge has become our haven from the virus. Not a bad way to hibernate.

We pray that this letter finds you and yours safe, wherever you have chosen to self quarantine. It is easy to lose touch with the outside world from this unpopulated beach but we do check the stats once or twice a day to see what is going on with the virus in other countries around the world. Our hearts ache for all of those who have lost loved ones – especially losing their nanas and papas, grandmas and grandpas. So many are old people – we are doing everything possible to keep our mama safe. She is her normal smiling self - radiating love for everyone. Slowing down a bit as her energy depletes but she is determined to make it to 90 years old this July. We are constantly reminding her that we are praying for another 10 years. Uff dah!

It has been so long since we have communicated with any one – so sorry. Back at the beginning of March, Mom was hospitalized for about 6 days. After releasing her, we went out to Tarangire, where I completed her IVs. Such a wonderful place to recoup and rebuild strength. Mom did have some socializing with guests for awhile but then it was like the tap of tourism was cut off. The virus started, no planes coming into or out of Kilimanjaro Int'l Airport. Tourists who had booked 2 or 3 nights at Tarangire Safari Lodge just stayed one night and rushed to get 'the last plane out'. Everything started shutting down and many started self quarantining. The loss of business for everyone all the way down to those selling trinkets to tourists on the streets. I do not know how people are keeping their families fed without any income. It is tough but others have it tougher.

We are so blessed to have places of safety to go to, food to eat, family and friends who love and care for us. Never take anything for granted. Mom sends her love and thanks to all of you, as do I. We pray that you are happy and healthy Pole sana (condolences) to those who have lost loved ones. God bless you.

Love, Naomi (this is an excerpt from an email from Naomi, the daughter of the late David Simonson and his wife Eunice, whom she refers to in this message as Mama/Mom. They are from Fergus Falls, and were Lutheran missionaries in Tanzania, and founders of Operation Bootstrap Africa).