



# February 2018

**First Lutheran Church  
Fergus Falls, MN**

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## **Lent, Spring and Getting Ready for God to do Something Wonderful**

The word “lent” (in old English, Dutch and German) is related to the word “spring” and refers to the lengthening of days as the world moves from the winter solstice toward the spring equinox. Historically, Lent has been a time of preparation for Baptism at Easter. It was a time to get ready because God is about to do something wonderful in you and through the death and resurrection of Christ at Baptism.

I grew up on a farm where spring was a time of longing and preparation. It was a time filled with anticipation and hope. It was a time of planning for the coming growing season. Melting snow and thawing earth gave way to the promise of seeds planted, new birth, glorious warmth, cleansing rain, showers, and sunshine.

I know that spring gives way to new life, a new routine and a new way of living. I also know that Lent is a season of getting ready for God to do something wonderful.

The texts for the Sundays in Lent are stories and words of promise, blessing and transformation.

These all prepare us to fully experience and celebrate the promises of God fulfilled in Christ and given in Baptism. We begin this springtime Lenten season with worship on Ash Wednesday (7 pm, February 14) where the sign of the cross in ashes reminds us of our sin and death. But more importantly, we are reminded that in Christ we have a new beginning that leads us into springtime where we find the cleansing waters of Baptism, the thawing of hardened hearts, the glorious warmth of the community of faith, the joy of new life, and the hope that God will do something wonderful.

I am looking forward to sharing this springtime with you in worship on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings as we anticipate and celebrate the wonderful things God is doing in Christ.

I'll see you in worship and at coffee hour,

Pastor Martha

(Quotes: Sundays and Seasons, Augsburg Fortress 2018)

## **Pipe organ to get upgrade**

“Oh come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!” (Psalm 95:1). Beautiful music is central to the worship experience at First Lutheran Church. And it's about to get even more beautiful when the pipe organ gets an upgrade.

In 2012, the church completed the first step in a larger plan to upgrade the organ. With dedicated funds still remaining in that account, a proposal to complete the rest of the project was approved by the Church Council, with additional funding coming from memorial monies, a gift from the First Lutheran Foundation, and fundraising efforts.

The project will enhance the capabilities of the instrument by adding eight additional ranks, or sounds, to the organ. Moe Pipe Organ Company of Wadena will complete the work in spring 2020.

**WELCA Board Meeting:**

**No Feb. meeting**

**Love Days Quilters meets every Monday from**

**9 a.m.—3 p.m. except Feb. 19  
All are welcome!**

**CIRCLES**

**Wed, Feb. 28**

**Sarah: 9:30 am at Pioneer Pointe  
Hannah: 1:00 pm at Church**

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday Worship February 14th at 7pm.

Beginning Wednesday, Feb. 21:

10:30 a.m. Senior Bible Study

12:10 p.m. Worship followed by soup lunch

3:45-5:15 pm Children's Choir & FLY K7

5:30 p.m. Hosanna Bell rehearsal

7:00 p.m. Holden Prayer Service

7:30-8:15 p.m. Senior FLY

7:30 p.m. Adult Choir Rehearsal

**DEADLINE FOR THE  
MARCH MESSENGER IS  
Feb. 15th**

January 9, 2018

To Pastor Martha Halls, Pastor Marcus Kunz, Members of Council and Congregation,

I am informing you of my decision to resign from my position as Superintendent of Sunday School beginning February 1, 2018.

Earlier in the year, I spoke to the Pastors about my desire to resign to be more available to my elderly parents and also our grandchildren, especially on weekends. But, I so enjoyed working with our new Interim Pastors and felt like we worked so well together, so I happily continued.

Unfortunately, I was diagnosed with breast cancer recently, so now I must focus on my health without distractions.

I am so grateful that I had the opportunity to serve the children and their families throughout the years. It's been so rewarding to watch the Youth grow in faith and see them develop into wonderful students, parents, and leader in our church and community. I have grown close to and love our Sunday School families, teachers and committee members who have worked together to provide meaningful experiences for the students, and for me! I thank them all for the work they do at First Lutheran.

I thank you sincerely for the opportunity to serve our church and I will continue to be involved when I am able.

With gratitude, Cindy Larson

**Join us in welcoming Kristy Wicklund as our Interim Sunday School Superintendent**



Kristy Wicklund grew up on a beef and grain farm just north of Fergus Falls. She went to school in Fergus Falls and attended a small church where she spent every Sunday morning. Her mom was both Superintendent of the Sunday School and one of the Sunday School teachers. When Kristy was confirmed, she took her place as a Sunday School teacher and taught for five years where she found her love for teaching, children, and sharing God's word. Kristy attended Moorhead State University and received a B.A. in Early Childhood Education. She taught at a private Montessori school with toddlers through 8th grade in Moorhead for ten years. Kristy and her family moved back to their hometown in 2014. They joined First Lutheran Church, her husband's home church and the church they were married in, and she has been involved in the Sunday School ever since. Kristy is married to Charles and together they have three active children: Adeline, Lucas, and Amelia.



What is the ELCA Youth Gathering? “A monumental experience that just belongs on your faith journey,” explained Meredith Massey from Christ the King Lutheran Church in Houston.

Every three years, 30,000 high school youth and adult leaders from across the ELCA gather for a week of faith formation – the ELCA Youth Gathering. Through interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, the hope is that every young person grows in faith and is challenged and inspired to live their faith in daily life. For most, this goal comes to life back home, in their congregations and in the world.

**A time of discovery and inspiration** For some, the Gathering helps reveal something new about themselves. “The Gathering sparked something inside me I didn’t know I had; it made me feel

part of something bigger. The Gathering enabled me to grow in my faith, leadership and service, along with providing me with the ways to do so,” said Zoe Clark from Tree of Life Lutheran Church in Harrisburg, Pa.

For others, it reconnects them to their faith. Jake Putala from Mission United Lutheran Church in Pelkie, Mich., said, “Being in a sports stadium with 30,000 other Lutherans was quite possibly the most incredible experience of my life. Singing hymns, listening to inspiring speakers and seeing how energetic the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America could be created a whole new appreciation for my faith and, more importantly, for Jesus Christ.”

As young people desire and struggle to find someone to become, somewhere to belong and something to do, the Gathering

seeks to be a ministry that helps define some of that or at least open pathways of discovery. Ultimately, the ELCA Youth Gathering wants youth to understand the fierce love God has for them – just as they are – and that by grace, through faith, they have been saved. When young people, or people of any age, claim this reality, it changes everything.

So, why have a Gathering? Allison Tice of Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Hickory, N.C., replied with clarity and enthusiasm, “To simply be: Be the church, be the light in the world and be like Jesus with and among God’s people.”

For information and resources for the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston June 27-July 1, go to [ELCA.org/Gathering](http://ELCA.org/Gathering).

Reprinted from **Seeds for the Parish**.

## These kids are headed to Houston in June!

Morgan West  
Matthew Pajari  
Karley Kugler  
Svea Smestad  
Grace Opatz

Jacob Opatz  
Luke Opatz  
Emilie Koch  
Alison Koch  
Olivia Becker

Madisen Hinsverk  
Brandon Hinsverk  
Riley Hinsverk

Parents please talk with your 5-9th grade student about scheduling a time to acolyte at worship. This is a special ministry that we want all youth to participate in. We are not assigning youth to dates because we know you have busy schedules. Please take the time to check your schedule and sign up. Call or email the office, or sign up on the info counter.

## A Great Big THANK YOU

to all the people who supported the donuts fundraiser for the National Youth Gathering! Your generosity raised \$1006. That is a wonderful show of support for the Youth and adults who will be attending the gathering. Fundraising efforts will continue with TAKE STOCK in our YOUTH scheduled for late February and early March. In the mean time please pray for our Youth ministry at FLC.

# First Lutheran Church

## February 2018



Cindy Larson  
Sunday School  
Superintendent

### February

### Happenings

## Spreading joy, sharing love and kindness

Don't you just love Valentine's Day? I always have. The little fun cards and promise of sweet treats attached to them are anticipated with excitement. This month we are going to help kids think of February as our Random Act of Kindness month. As young students are studying the story of Noah's Ark and Jonah, we will see if we can increase our caring and kindness for others at

Sunday school and away from Sunday School. Watch for many hearts that appear in our hallways that celebrate the many ways our students have been caring and loving to others.

Express love everyday



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1st Grade Milestone  
Class with Parents

**February 4**

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“Butterflies” 0-3  
yr. olds and parents

**February 11**

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1st Grade Milestone  
Blessing in worship

**February 11**

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Regular Sunday  
school

**February 18 & 25**

As you know I am resigning at the beginning of this month. It has been such a blessing to work with our First Lutheran children and families through the years. I will treasure these times and hold you all close to my heart always. We trust that God has a plan to continue to bless our Sunday School through the leadership of new people with new ideas!

