



First Lutheran Church *august* 2020

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

402 South Court Street
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
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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".

is my
ROCK
and my
FORTRESS
and my
THE DELIVERER

A REFLECTION REGARDING GRATITUDE

I invite you to take a moment to consider what you are grateful for? When I asked the Monday night book study participants this exact question last week; one person responded with saying they were grateful for 'COVID'. She went on to explain that this period of isolation has made it possible for her family to spend more quality time together. Her response captured my attention in that, even in the midst of a pandemic she was able to see the silver lining.

In considering gratitude I am drawn to the Psalms. For today, I invite each of us to consider Psalm 18: *"I love you, Lord; you are my strength. The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my savior; my God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the power that saves me, and my place of safety. I called on the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and he saved me from my enemies."*

My hope is for each of us to see how it is we are living out faithfully in response to the Psalm. How is it that we are expressing our love toward God and His creation? Do we lean into Jesus for strength and courage as we might otherwise feel compromised. How do we trust in the protection that God promises, even in the throes of a pandemic? When do we call upon God for assurance believing that no matter what God is with us?

We are in unknown waters regarding how to do our part to limit the spread of COVID; social distancing, wearing masks, and isolating, to name a few of the new behaviors we have had to adjust to. All the while there is no guarantee that we will not succumb to the virus. Herein lies the opportunity to love our neighbors in a new way, care for ourselves the best we can, and to see God's work in spite of fear that may seek to compromise our faith. All this is to say we are called to grow our faith during this tumultuous season.

I encourage each of us to begin a written daily inventory recording that which we are grateful for, as a means to grow in faith while cultivating the spiritual discipline of connecting with God through pen and paper.

May we have willing hearts to bring into consciousness that which we are grateful for, so that we may practice trusting God evermore.

Thy will be done,
Pastor Gretchen



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 September 6, 2020.** The Smart Team is working on a plan for return to worship and church activities—we will provide updates as they are available. 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
1 Corinthians 13:8



Kristy, Pastor Gretchen, and the Education Committee are working on a plan for Sunday School and FLY K-6 for this coming school year. Stay tuned!

Sunday School & FLY K-6



FLY K-6

Be on the lookout for details about an August event.

Kristy is working hard to finalize the details.



These students will be receiving First Communion at an outdoor service with their families on Sunday, August 16, 2020. Please keep them in your prayers.



John Abrahams, Riley Anderson, Gabe Carlson, Tally Clark, Nolan Felstul, Noah Frank, Ty Jyrkas, Zane Kollman, Brody Krein, Dylan Kuhn, Jaden Kwapinsi, Aiden Neubauer, Anja Rajaniemi, Sullivan Rufer, Anna Sem, William Vaughn, Kaelyn Walls



2020

God Bless
all of our
Confirmands!

Confirmation will be celebrated in outdoor ceremonies in August for confirmands and their families. Please remember them in prayer.

8th Graders—Sunday, August 9 at 11:00 a.m.

Marissa Kragness Rylenn Krein Ellie Bergren
Stella Oland Hailey Haarstad Griffin Babolian
Abraham Pederson Nolan Korby Annika Jyrkas Jacob Kettner
Luke Anderson Malayna Kragness Isabella Abrahams
Vanessa Vaughn Amelia Trosvig

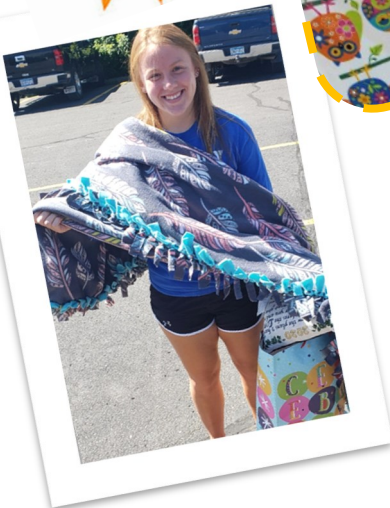
9th Graders—Sunday, August 23 at 11:00 a.m.

Aaron Gothier Charlie Fuder Kaden Haarstad Jack Kuhn
William Ness-Ludwig Maria Myhre Caroline Stumbo Ava Werner
Solvie Smestad Katie Anderson Yana Prishmann Kelsy Larson
Cyntreya Lockett Sloanne Peterson Miah Schmidt
Reagan Cheshire Emma Stans Annie Trosvig Randi Walls



Here are a few more of the bright and warm fleece blankets made by the women at First Lutheran to surround our graduating Seniors with the love, thoughts, hopes, and prayers of the congregation.

Calie has been delivering the blankets to our Seniors!!!



Seniors 2020



THANK YOU from recipients of
benevolences recently sent.

Thank You, First Lutheran members,
for your support that makes it
possible for us to provide these gifts!

Dear Friend,

500-

On behalf of the Fergus Falls Community Food Shelf,
we thank you for your recent donation.

The continuing success of this work depends entirely
on volunteer contributions and volunteer workers.

Dear First Lutheran Church,

On behalf of all the men, women and children you enable us to care for, thank you for your recent gift to The
Salvation Army.

Because our income generally reaches its lowest point during the summer months, your gift at this time is vital
to our ability to provide food, clothing and other emergency services to our neighbors in need. We are grateful for
friends like you who remember those in need year-round with your generosity.



First Lutheran
Church -
I just wanted to
write you a quick note to
say thank you and provide
you with updates on
recent Someplace Safe
accomplishments.

Your support allows us to
create safer communities
for victims, survivors and
families. Enclosed you will
find a Someplace Safe window
decal, as a token of
appreciation to you - one
of our most loyal supporters.



Dear Friends In Christ,

The gift from First Lutheran Church brightened my day! Please know how grateful I am for
the \$375.00 contribution to the LDA.

Remembering the LDA with this gift means that you understand the impact deaconesses
and deacons have as they serve God's people from Hong Kong to Tanzania to Costa Rica
to British Columbia to your neighborhood.

And, they reach out in Christian love as nurses, teachers, social workers, parish staff, and
just about any other vocation you can think of, to those who need a helping hand. The
contribution from First Lutheran Church inspires each deaconess and deacon to serve
from morning to night and in all aspects of their lives.



Thank you for the recent gift of \$375.00 to Luther Seminary, which we received from First
Lutheran Church. Through the support of donors like you, over the past year,



- 129 students graduated and we welcomed an incoming class of 153 students
- All incoming M.A. and M.Div. students received the 100% tuition Jubilee Scholarship
- More than 3,000 pastors received continuing education through Faith+Lead
- We've added several new faculty positions and continue to attract top-tier scholars

Hello First Lutheran Ladies,

I so miss having a connection with you all, and with COVID, our return to worship remains uncertain. I have been wanting to be a part of a **Women's Bible Study** at First Lutheran for a long time, and I think it's time to organize one to start this Fall! I have been talking with Pastor Gretchen about this, and it looks like we could meet on Mondays at 6:00 p.m. or Wednesdays at 7:00 a.m., socially distanced at the church. We thought these time choices would give an opportunity for all women that are interested in joining.

We will start with one of the books of the New Testament. Pastor Gretchen will find a good study guide and she will be leading the bible study to start with. Who knows, maybe one of us will be bold enough to lead sometimes as well! If you are interested in joining, please let the office know (739-3348 or office@flcff.org) and indicate which time you would prefer. I am looking forward to seeing where we can go with growing our faith through this Women's Bible Study.



God Bless, Lorri Holt

Church Council First Lutheran

Executive Committee

Steve Guttormson, President

George Mathison, VP

Debbie Opatz, Secretary

Suzanne Demuth, Treasurer

Term ending 2021

Abbey Kwapinski

Harriet Wicklund

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Term ending 2022

Suzanne Demuth

Jennifer Frank

Debbie Opatz

Jennifer Woore

Ron Spangler

Michael Wicklund

Missy Mattson

Leslie Flugstad



Craft & Chili Fundraiser

will be hosted by the Fellowship committee some time in the future

(date to be determined). This is just a reminder to keep working on your favorite craft if you are interested in donating items to the event.

Keep on CRAFTING!



Meals by Wheels September 8—11

(note: no delivery September 7)

Since we cannot utilize our traditional means of sign up, please contact me by text or phone call (701-238-0276) or via email

(77jennifer@msn.com) to let me know of your willingness to help/preferred routes/dates of availability. Please know that this request does not supersede any current recommendations--please use your best judgement in volunteering.

Thank you!!!



Thank you to all of you who have sent emails and photos to Mom for her upcoming birthday. I have been printing them out as they come in and reading them to her. It is the most exciting part of each day for her - laughter, giggles, crying, "Isn't God so good". If I don't get them printed early enough, she will keep giving me little reminders (not very subtle). She sends her love to each of you. We are still hibernating at the beach and the rest of the family will start driving down from Arusha for the party on Saturday. Thank you for remembering her in prayer. Hope you are all healthy and happy.

Love, Naomi

(Eunie & her late husband David were missionaries in Tanzania, and founders of Operation Bootstrap Africa.)



The Worship Corner
by the
Worship & Music
Committee

When it comes to worship, what is long-cherished by one person might be brand new to someone else. Balancing newness and tradition is one of the joys and challenges of planning worship. Worship is a community event, incorporating us all. The words spoken, the prayers shared, the lyrics and tunes of hymns all reflect experiences and perspectives. We may not embrace a more contemporary style of worship; we may not relate to a traditional worship style. There is room for a variety of styles in the church. God is present in our worship — in this work of the His people. His grace is abundant. All are welcome!



A Vicar's Thoughts...

Summer! Oh, how fun it is to be outside and enjoying the multitude of activities that our beautiful area provides. Sitting on my dock, I thought about summer trips of my past. I thought about where I had been and what I had learned. Here is one such story.....

Wandering through the retail play land of IKEA with two adult friends and my “girls” (daughter Kat and her friend) made us hungry. In the IKEA cafeteria my adult friends got a table and let us know where they were. As I scooted into the pay line, I noticed a woman trying to hold two trays and push a wheelchair with a fidgety woman in it. I handed my tray to the girls (with some money). They knew immediately what was going on. I have harped on the kids that *even if you are on vacation you can help others*. I turned to the woman and simply stated: “I can help you push the wheelchair to the table.” The look of surprise on her face told me she was not expecting help, and she appreciated it.

But helping others is not the point to this story. I was living my faith, but my adult friends panicked. What happened? Was I being kidnapped? Had I suddenly taken ill? Those two women were *strangers*. They wanted to rescue me from whatever had befallen me – after all, the world is filled with bad stuff.

When I said I was just helping someone, my adult friends looked at me with blank faces. They were surprised. They had not noticed the woman with the two trays and a wheelchair. I knew them well enough to know their fear of strangers kept them focused on themselves. Their fears kept them from helping someone. It may have prevented them from seeing a person in need.

As you enjoy summer, take a few minutes to ponder-- what fears may keep you from living your faith?

Gratefully Serving Christ, *Vicar Lynn Melchior*



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



Love Day Quilters, WELCA Board, Hannah Circle—we hope to begin again in September. Stay tuned!



A Special Request



Our NWMN Synodical Women's Organization continues their work for women's programs, conferences, LWR updates, etc. during this time of the Coronavirus. Because we are not meeting, our offerings are not collected. We have no funds to send on to the Synod office in Moorhead to support them.

Please prayerfully consider making a financial donation to them. Your checks will be forwarded to the Synod office.

Your check should be made out to First Lutheran WELCA, and mailed to the church (402 South Court Street). Our WELCA treasurer will collect them and send to the Synod office.

With grateful hearts,
WELCA Co-Presidents Gayle Fitz and Donna Quam

