



First Lutheran Church November 2020



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

402 South Court Street
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
Phone: 218-739-3348
www.firstlutheranchurchff.org
office@flcff.org

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



5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. Romans 8:5

In times like this, I encourage each of us to dig deep within our hearts and minds to secure the willingness to trust God no matter what. Willingness is the key ingredient in this faith building exercise. Recently I began a cross fit class, which has tested my willingness to learn new skills and moves. It is not always comfortable, and never easy, but as long as I am motivated by the willingness to not give up, I may learn a thing or two.

I wonder how God is working in your life, providing you new opportunities to push through old ways of thinking and reacting to make space for new patterns and actions? In the coming days, I encourage you to carve out time to have a conversation with God. Some may call it prayer or meditation. Make time to invite the Holy Spirit into your heart and minds in a new way, so that you may be able to live according to the Spirit as you put your mind on things of the Spirit.

Living in a pandemic can be stressful, especially due to the unknown future. For today, I invite you to stay focused on living in accordance with God's will for your life. Set fear aside and trust that no matter what, God is by your side directing your everything.

Sharing Christ's Service,

Pastor Gretchen

Worship With Us on the Radio, YouTube and PEG Access

First Lutheran, along with Augustana Lutheran will begin in-person worship November 1, following guidelines set out by the Worship Committee and SMART team. Pre-registration is required, and attendance will be limited to 50.

A letter has been sent to all members regarding those guidelines. If you didn't receive a copy, please contact the office. Services will continue to be live-streamed on YouTube and on-air on KJJK AM 1020 or Channel 977 FM 97.7 at 9:30 am on Sundays. 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.



Be the Light

Matthew 5:14

Jesus Feeds 5,000

November seems to bring around thoughts of gratitude for the food we eat, our families, our friends, etc. It also brings with it thoughts of turkey dinners and pumpkin pies.



In our Bible story this month, there were no turkey dinners, but there was a very big miracle involving two fish and five loaves of bread. Those that received the miracle gave thanks to God. This month, we dive deeper into this story and find the themes of gratitude, sharing, and hope. I hope that you and your child take the time to reflect on what you are thankful for and what you can share to help those around you.

Sunday School kits can be picked up in the Narthex during office and worship hours. If you can't make it, I would be happy to deliver one to your child. Just call the church office or text me.

Also, remember to check out the Sunday School November 2020 playlist on the First Lutheran YouTube Channel for stories and songs to go with the month's theme.

Kristy Wicklund

Director of Children's Ministry

Kristy@flcfl.org (218) 531-9544



First Lutheran Church Sunday School

Remind App: Sunday School-@flcfl18

Be the Light

We currently have some opportunities at the church to help shine light on some others in need:

- The Riverside Lions collect eyeglasses for reuse.
- Mitten Ministry – we are collecting new mittens, hats & scarves (purchased or homemade) to help those in need of winter wear.
- Change to Make a Change – There is a large plastic bottle in the Narthex and we invite you to put your spare change in the bottle. The money collected will go to help feed the hungry – 75% locally and 25% worldwide.



FLY K-6 Sledding at Roosevelt Park

We will continue to hold FLY K-6 in Roosevelt Park weather permitting. Please remind your children to wear their snow pants, winter coats, hats, and gloves as we will be enjoying God's creation and want everyone to be comfortable.

Last month, we started to correspond with some residents at Pioneer Care. Some of our students have received their first mail from their pen pals. They were very excited. We will continue our correspondence and hope that we bring a little light to their lives as they have to ours with their last mailings.

F.L.Y.
First Lutheran Youth
K-6th



Remind App
@flyk6

Sunday, November 1
FLY 7-12 Bonfire, S'mores & Charades

Upper Parking Lot from 6-7 pm

Join us for some socially distanced fun!!!!

F.L.Y. 7-12
First Lutheran Youth



LET'S PLAY CHARADES

FLYK-6 pen pal postcards to Pioneer Care



FLY 7-12
Contact Calie at
Calie@flcfff.org or use
Remind App by texting
@fly79 or **@fly10-12** to
81010 or call or text cell
218 321-0970.



שמי ליין

My name is Lynn.

I have a confession to make. I am struggling to learn the Hebrew language. This is a requirement in seminary –understanding of the Bible in its original form is insightful and deepens my connection with the Word. But I'm struggling. So much memorization each week! And memorization has never been my strong point. So I wrestle with how much energy I put into learning it. I was taught to always do my best & keep my word. If you say you're going to do something, do it.

But then I think.....am I hiding behind this old mantra? Is it like putting on my Sunday clothes and Sunday smiles but once I'm out of church I revert to my old clothes and grumpiness? Holidays are often like wearing church clothes and Sunday smiles. It's November and the holidays are coming.

Lets be real here. The holidays are hard enough with out the stress of COVID. Do we get together or not? How do we celebrate safely? Do we travel or not? How can we make plans when the future is unknown? Even more confusing is that for each person, the answer is different.

But the future is known. Here are the facts: the holidays will happen. You have loved ones. You are enough. You do not have to hide behind old mantras.

You have permission to do the holidays differently this year. Be creative. Try something different. Perhaps it is less formality or a focus on what is truly important. Maybe it is time to just simply 'be'.



More irrefutable facts: God walks alongside you every day. The Holy Spirit grants you peace. Christ loved you so much He died for you. Amongst the hub bub of the holidays, it is easy to overlook these facts. We need to wear these facts like we wear our skin: an inseparable part of us.

In the coming month, let's be grateful. Our future is known in God. If you want to chat more about old mantras, gratitude, or something totally different, let me know. You can call/text me at 218-321-0967 or email me at Lynn@flcff.org.

Very gratefully,

Vicar Lynn





Starting Sunday, Nov 1st, First Lutheran is offering Zoom Fellowship from 11:00 to 11:30 am. The purpose is twofold: to connect with people and to talk about a fun topic.

If we have more than 10 people, we will break out into smaller groups.

Dates:

- Nov 1 What loved one do you remember fondly? (All Saints Sunday)
- Nov 8 What are you thankful for?
- Nov 15 Tips for Pastor Gretchen as she gets a new puppy!
- Nov 22 Bring your best joke!
- Nov 29 What was your worst Christmas gift?

Office Zoom link is: www.flcff.org/zoom-fellowship



Please remember to have your gifts into the church office by December 28 to be recorded in 2020. Questions? Email the Office. Thank you!

If you requested offering envelopes for 2021, they are in the Narthex in alphabetical order. Please pick yours up during office hours, Monday—Thursday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

An update from bookkeeper Paul: Very shortly, I will be reaching the sixth-month milestone in my work as our church's bookkeeper, and every day it has been a joy to serve you alongside my coworkers, doing what I love. While most of my day consists of typical office tasks -- entering bills, posting journal entries, and unjamming the printer -- my favorite part of the job is sharing our blessings with the many local organizations we support. To date, we have put \$13,486 into the hands of people, organizations, and programs that need it the most. We have helped support the Fergus Falls Community Food Shelf, Habitat for Humanity, Hospice of the Red River Valley, Luther Seminary, Meals by Wheels, Salvation Army, and the Pioneer Care Foundation, to name a few. Thank you, FLC Members, for your continued support and generosity during the COVID-19 pandemic.





Meals by Wheels November 23-27

(note: no delivery November 26)

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!!!



Almighty and ever-living God, we give you thanks for the men and women who have served and defended our country and the values of freedom and justice we hold so dear. Help us be mindful of the sacrifices they made and the hardship endured by their families and friends, so that we never take for granted the privileges they have secured for us. Hear us, we pray, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship:
Prayer Book for the Armed Forces.*

Blood Drive at First Lutheran Tuesday, November 10, 2020 1:00 to 7:00 pm

Each Red Cross blood drive and donation center follows the highest standards of safety and infection control. To ensure the health of staff and donors, precautions include:

- Checking temperatures of staff and donors *before* entering a drive to make sure they are healthy. Scheduled appointments only—NO walk-ins.
- Providing hand sanitizer for use before the drive, as well as throughout the donation process.
- Following social distancing between donors including entry, donation and refreshment areas.
- Ensuring face masks or coverings are worn by both staff and donors.
- Routinely disinfecting surfaces, equipment and donor-touched areas.
- Wearing gloves, and changing gloves often.



Help needed at Nov. 10 Blood Drive
We are looking for volunteers to cover 2 shifts--1-4 pm and 4-7 pm, with 2 volunteers per shift. Involves registration and monitoring the snack table. Please contact Jennifer at 701 238-0276 if you are able to help.
Thank you.



A member of the staff had a great idea for an **FLC at Home** section in the Messenger as a way to "stay in touch" when we can't be together!

Examples? Send us photos of where you worship at home, how you set up your Communion, or photos of the beautiful fall images you see from your window. Other ideas would be short stories or photos of projects you are working on at home —quilts, cards, woodwork, etc., or how you have been staying in touch with friends and family during this time of COVID-19. This is another way to stay in touch with each other at First Lutheran during these days of being far apart. Photos or brief descriptions of your projects can be sent to laurie@flcff.org.

Thank YOU!



Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;
His love endures forever.

— Psalm 107:1



Ways to Help while Social Distancing

Drop Off Spots in the Narthex

Open Monday to Thursday 8 am to 4:30 pm



The Riverside Lions collect eyeglasses for reuse. There is a collection box in the Narthex for your convenience.

thank you!

Mitten Ministry—we are collecting new mittens, hats & scarves (purchased or homemade) to help those in need of winter wear. Please leave your donation in the basket in the Narthex.



thanks!



Change to Make a Change – There is a large plastic bottle in the Narthex and we invite you to put your spare change in the bottle. The money collected will go to help feed the hungry – 75% locally and 25% worldwide.
Many THANKS!!

Sponsorship Sheets for 2021 Radio Broadcasts and Altar Flowers

are on the kiosk in the Narthex. You are welcome to stop by to select a Sunday you would like to sponsor, or you can call the office at 739-3348 to check on availability.

Radio broadcast cost is \$100.00, and flowers run approximately \$45.00.



Thank you



Financial Contributions for the Giving Trees

Checks (payable to First Lutheran Church) can be sent to or dropped off at the church office with a note specifying the funds are for the Giving Trees.

For more info, please see Jennifer's article on Giving Trees.

Thank YOU!



The Worship Corner
by the
Worship & Music
Committee

Number 8 on our Top Ten Hymn List is “Great is Thy Faithfulness”. Many hymns were inspired by the storms of life, in the throes of danger or the mountain tops of exultation. This one by Thomas Chisholm (1866-1960) was written in 1923. The text refers to the book of Lamentations 3:22-23. Thomas Chisholm was an ordinary man, writing in ordinary circumstances. He was a pastor for one year, but spent most of his career as an insurance agent. Because he suffered from ill health, he worked hard to make ends meet. He said, “I must not fail to record here the unfailing faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God and that He has given me many wonderful gifts of his providing care, for which I am filled with astonishing gratefulness.” This is a hymn for ordinary Christians about an extraordinary God. You can find it in the ELW on page 733.



Due to the Coronavirus, most of you do not feel comfortable in groups settings. We will postpone all Fall gatherings through December. We will evaluate again in January 2021.

“Thank You” First Lutheran women for your offerings, support of our WELCA projects; locally, Conference 7 and NW Synod. Remember, we won’t be gathering until 2021, so your offerings are still needed and appreciated!!!!

Quilters – no one has been in touch to return to quilting, so we will put it on hold for a couple of months. We will check back after the New Year.

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



Lutheran Women have given thanks to God and dollars to mission through Thankofferings for way over 100 years. Last year, Thankofferings totaled nearly a million dollars to support women of the ELCA church-wide ministries, with offerings coming from over 2,450 congregations. First Lutheran sent very close to \$1,000 last year—let’s try again for being able to send \$1,000 in 2020!

Thankofferings are sent in full to the church-wide women’s organization and help do mission and address concerns of women and children in crisis related to poverty, health/AIDS and domestic violence. The need is greater every year.

Please place your Thankoffering for 2020 in an envelope, mark it “Thankoffering” and mail it or bring it to the church office before December 1st. Many of you will remember the “blue Thankoffering envelopes” we sent out in the Messenger. We are not using them this year. In spite of not gathering for services, I hope you will respond to this very important mission project that First Lutheran has been a part of for many years.

If you have questions, call Margaret Kratzke at 736-3697.



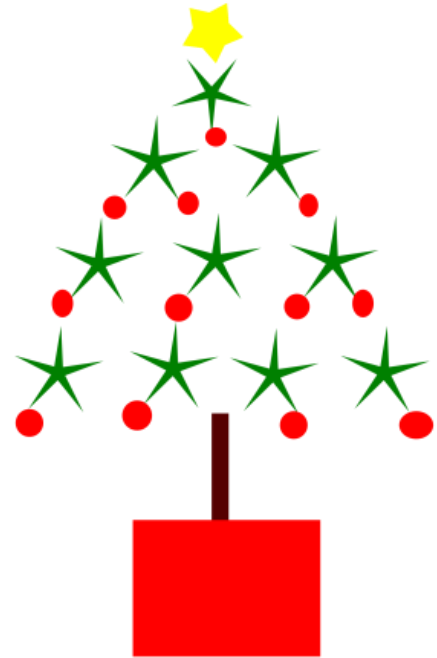
GIVING TREES

Dear Friends in Christ,

With the Christmas season soon approaching and limited traffic in the church, I am altering our approach to the Giving Trees to give everyone an opportunity to safely support these very important blessings in our community. We know the effects of COVID-19 extend well beyond physical health, and that it has negative impacts for many in terms of their financial security and mental wellbeing. The two main organizations we give gifts to—A Place to Belong and Someplace Safe—continue to address the needs of many vulnerable people in our community.

To make the greatest impact, I will use your financial support to shop for gifts this year. Checks (payable to First Lutheran Church, and due by December 1) can be sent to or dropped off at the church office with a note specifying the funds are for the Giving Trees. I will shop locally as much as possible for the gift items. Any excess funds will be used in support of a local charity. I believe this to be the best approach to safely ensure these needs are met. We are exploring the possibility of an online platform for monetary contributions, but that will require more time and research to develop.

I have been overwhelmed the past two years by your tremendous support of these organizations by way of the Giving Trees. I am hopeful this departure from our traditional collection will be temporary, but the impact of these gifts is lasting. Please feel free to contact me at (701) 238-0276 with any questions or concerns. -Jennifer Frank, Outreach Chair



LUTHER
CREST

17th Annual Luther Crest
Christmas Bake Sale is open for
orders! You can place an order
by calling 320-846-2431 or by
completing an online order form

at www.luthercrest.org. Orders must be placed by December 4th.
Pickup dates are either Friday, December 11 from 3 to 6 pm or
Saturday, December 12 from 8 am to 12 noon. Fergus Falls is one
of the locations they will deliver to, make arrangements by calling
Jody at 320-846-2431.

Order forms are available on the Information Counter in the
church Narthex. Thank you.

God's Peace to all! *Luther Crest Kitchen Staff*

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
Sara Koch
JoAn Whitlock

Term ending 2022

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



We Love Them Dearly

Picture this. A person listening on the phone as someone says a Bible verse and sings an old, familiar hymn.

It's been more than sixty years since I became a Pastor of the Christian church, the Body of Christ in the world. When I was baptized it was the Norwegian Lutheran Church. Then it was the ELC, ALC, and now, the ELCA. It's been an adventure and I truly enjoyed it. I could hardly have known that I would still have a good, caring ministry to do in my late 80's. My thanks go to First Lutheran Fergus Falls. I am your Visitation Pastor.

I get to do things for each of you who are members that you would find it hard to do yourselves. I reach out to, and share your love and concern with more than 50 people who are homebound or ill, many in care centers, but also many in their own homes.

That contact; that touching, is a vital part of the church. Luther called it *The Conversation and Consolation of the Saints*. It's just as important a way of being kept in God's grace as the more well known word and sacraments.

I usually visit in person. These days I do it by phone and letter. I constantly remind our friends as I write, every letter personally, that I have that particular person in mind and heart right at that moment. It is not as good as being there, but close.

I'm so glad to make conversation and consolation as real word and sacrament. From you, to them. Thanks again, First Lutheran. *Pastor Stan*



Worship on October 25, Reformation Sunday
Kristy doing Time with the Children.
Welcome back Hosanna Handbells!!

