

First Lutheran NEWSLETTER

April
2026

Holy Week. For many of us, it consists of Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. We go about our daily lives in between work, planning Easter meals, attending children's events, cooking, washing clothes – all the normal things in life.

But Holy Week is anything but normal. And it is more than two Sundays of the year. Jesus knew He was going to die a horrible, agonizing death. I can't imagine knowing the date of my death or how I would die in such pain. But Jesus did. So, what did Jesus do with His last days before His crucifixion? That, my friends, is Holy Week.

Here's how Jesus spent the last 7 days of His life:

- Palm Sunday: Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, greeted with palm branches.
- Holy Monday: Jesus cleanses the Temple and teaches.
- Holy Tuesday: Jesus' teachings on the Mount of Olives and challenges from leaders.
- Holy Wednesday: Judas Iscariot plots his betrayal.
- Maundy Thursday: The Last Supper, foot washing, and Jesus' arrest in Gethsemane.
- Good Friday: Jesus' crucifixion and death on the cross.
- Holy Saturday: Jesus' body in the tomb; a day of reflection before the resurrection.
- Easter Sunday: Jesus' resurrection from the dead, the central celebration.

When we celebrate only Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday, we miss so much of Christ's (and our) journey. We lose the sense of hardship that corresponds to our lives. Even if you can't attend midweek services, take a moment during Holy Week to absorb Jesus' journey each day. I promise it will make Jesus' resurrection much more fulfilling.

Serving Christ Alongside YOU, Pastor Lynn

Maundy Thursday	April 2
Good Friday Service	April 3
Easter egg hunt	April 4
Andrea Theatre	April 12
Murder Mystery dinner	April 17
Lions Fundraiser	April 18
Danish Bread (AOL)	April 23
Ducks Unlimited	April 24
Movie Night	April 25
End of school party	May 22nd

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A bit more about Holy Week:

Palm Sunday, the start of Holy Week, commemorates Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey (fulfilling Zechariah 9:9), welcomed by crowds shouting "Hosanna" and honoring him as the Messiah. Unlike a king on a warhorse, Jesus entered on a humble donkey, symbolizing peace, humility, and his role as a spiritual Savior rather than a political ruler.

Holy Monday commemorates Jesus cursing the fruitless fig tree and cleansing the Temple of money changers. Traditions focus on reflection, purification, and preparation for Easter.

Holy Tuesday commemorates Jesus' return to Jerusalem from Bethany, where He faced challenges to his authority from religious leaders, prompting him to deliver final parables and teachings on the Mount of Olives. Jesus praises the widow for giving her last coins, highlighting true sacrifice.

Maundy Thursday commemorates Jesus Christ's Last Supper with his Apostles, where Jesus shared bread and wine, representing his body and blood, initiating the sacrament of Holy Communion. Jesus washed his disciples' feet, demonstrating servant leadership. Churches often remove decorations, crucifixes, and candles to symbolize the abandonment and humiliation of Jesus and the beginning of his Passion.

Good Friday commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and his death at Calvary. We believe Jesus' death was the ultimate sacrifice to atone for the sins of humanity, offering forgiveness and a restored relationship with God. Why it's called "Good" Friday? it represents the ultimate act of God's love, where Jesus' voluntary death on the cross atoned for human sin and defeated death.

Holy Saturday commemorates the day Jesus Christ's body lay in the tomb. It is a day of profound waiting, prayer, and silence between Good Friday's death and Easter's resurrection. It represents a "space between," focusing on grief, honesty, and anticipation. An Easter Vigil can be held, typically beginning after nightfall. It also marks the final day of the 40-day Lenten season and the conclusion of Holy Week.

Easter Sunday celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ, marked by joyful liturgy, "Alleluias," and festive communion. It launches a 50-day season of celebration through Pentecost, emphasizing a disruption of the cycle of death, bringing new life to a wounded world through the baptismal promise of eternal life.

New stuff Alert!

1. **Living Hope Camp - Have you checked out the library lately?** It has been creatively revamped to better serve Living Hope Camp. Two power lift chairs, a sofa, and a 'fireplace' were donated to start the Camp. Campers have started using Camp, but we have more time slots available.

Our Parish Nurse, Jeri Wilmore, directs and provides the respite care with the assistance of volunteers. The camp is limited to 5 or fewer people per day and must be scheduled in advance. We are asking for a free-will donation of \$15 per hour to cover the costs of a Registered Nurse and supplies. Scholarships will be available.

Contact Jeri or the office if you are interested.

2. **Viking Library's Bookmobile will stop in our parking lot this summer!** Every other Tuesday, beginning June 9 through August 18, the stop would begin at 1:45 p.m. and conclude at 2:30 p.m. This is a community-wide stop - so get the word out.

Ole and Sven.....

Ole and Sven have been on a fishing trip for three days with no luck. The fourth day, they head out again to the other side of the lake, and this time the fish are biting like crazy.

"Sven," Ole says, "We outta mark this place somehow so we remember to come back here next time!"

Sven says oh jah, and he thinks for a minute, then paints a big X on the bottom of the boat.

When Ole sees this he laughs, then smacks Sven in the head. "Sven, you are not too smart. That's never gonna work.

"How d'ya know we'll get the same boat next time?"



CELEBRATING CHILDREN

TO THE PARENTS OF OUR YOUNG CHILDREN, MAY WE SUGGEST...

Relax! God put the wiggle in children; don't feel you have to suppress it in God's house. All are Welcome!

Sit toward the front where it is easier for your little ones to see and hear what's going on. (The children's table is a great thing.) They tire of seeing the backs of others' heads.

Quietly explain the parts of the service and actions of the pastor, ushers, choir, etc.

Sing the hymns, pray, and voice the responses. Children learn liturgical behavior by copying you.

If you have to leave the service with your child, feel free to do so, but please come back. As Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."

Remember that the way we welcome children in church directly affects the way they respond to the Church, to God, and to one another. Let them know that they are at home in this house of worship.

To the Members of our Church

The presence of children is a gift to the Church and they are a reminder that our congregation is growing.

Please welcome our children and give a smile of encouragement to their parents.

Quoted from Westminster Church

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, March 29th from 4p-6:30p there will be a movie night for kids in PreK and up. We will be watching the movie Rise of the Guardians. Snacks and beverages will be provided.

This year we will be partnering with Faith Haven for the annual Easter Egg Hunt. The egg hunt will be on **Saturday, April 4th** starting at 10am out at Faith Haven. There will be crafts, face painting and pictures with the Easter Bunny.

Friday, April 17th from 7p-10p there will be a Murder Mystery Dinner for students in 5th grade and up. We will play Murder At The Disco. RSVP in advance for your character profile and come dressed in character.

Sunday, April 26th from 4p-6:30p there will be a movie night for kids in PreK and up. We will be watching the movie Angels in the Outfield. Snacks and beverages will be provided.

Sunday, May 17th from 4p-6:30p there will be a movie night for kids in PreK and up. We will be watching the movie Hoppers. Snacks and beverages will be provided.

Friday, May 22nd from 6p-11p at the church there will be an End of the School Year Party for students going into 5th grade and up. There will be a BBQ, games, and prizes.





For additional information on cost and registration please visit artofthelakes.org

Andria Theater will be performing Who's Driving This Bus on **Sunday, April 12th** at 2pm. The play will take place at First Lutheran Church and tickets should be purchased from Art of the Lakes ahead of time.



Andria Theatre presents
a Seniors on Stage performance
Sunday, April 12, 2 pm
1st Lutheran Church,
Battle Lake

Thursday, April 23rd join Kate Mudge in a Danish Braid baking class from 5p-7:30p. You'll learn how to make a classic Danish braid from start to finish. You'll choose your own filling from two delicious options: Lemon curd & raspberry OR Lemon cream cheese & blueberry. Each person will leave with a freshly baked Danish braid and an extra dough to take home so you can make another one the next day.



Saturday, May 2nd will be a church cleaning day, as well as, playground assembly day. Grab your loved one, kids, uncle, nephew, aunt, sibling or neighbor and come help with spring cleaning and construction. We will do a pot luck lunch. More details to follow.



God's Work
Our Hands

Art of the Lakes will be hosting a Designer Purse & Cooler Bags Bingo Fundraising event on **Friday, May 8th** starting at 6pm. The event will be held at First Lutheran Church and will also include a raffle and meal. Tickets will include your bingo packet and meal. \$45 if you register prior to the event and \$50 at the door. Register at artofthelakes.org/events



Your support for FLCamp is always greatly appreciated. If you would like to purchase items from our camp wish list go to find a list or registry on Amazon. You can search using "Missi Abfalter" or "FLCamp"



Holy Faith

What have the WAFL students been up to?

First off the WAFL students have been diligently working on items for the WAFL Art Auction/Fundraiser. They have been painting, making paper, taking photos and more. The Art Auction will run the month of April. We will have items available for purchase, photos that can be ordered and items to bid on. All of the items are limited supply so don't hesitate to purchase something if you like it. This event is a great fundraiser for the WAFL program so please check out the art items starting April 1st.

On top of our weekly WAFL lessons the students have been doing some lent activities. We watched the movie Lion of Judah and students completed "A Way of Suffering" walk around the church. This was a 2,000ft walk taking turns carrying a 25lb bag of books. This was intended to mimic the hardship and journey Jesus experienced on his way to be crucified.

The WAFL students also sang House of the Lord with a mixed ensemble of men and women following a Lenten soup supper. Thank you to Cindy Peterson for coordinating. It was a wonderful performance.

Finally we held a special movie night for kids in PreK and up . We watched the new animated movie David and even had a concession stand. There were 22 kids in attendance for the movie. Going forward we will hold monthly movies for the younger kids until the summer.



What is the temperature of our church?

When you consider our church five months, five years, or five decades from now, what does the future look like?¹ I'm sure many of you remember the days when First Lutheran was bustling with young kids, families, and full pews.

It's no secret that the congregation and the church have changed over the past several years.

Often we have more people viewing worship service online than in the pews. The congregation is getting older with less younger families attending worship service and actively involved in the activities of the church. However, difficult days such as these are a wake up call - an opportunity for transformation.¹ First Lutheran identified this challenge and need for change a few years ago. We have made great strides in focusing on youth activities and programs. We are reaching out and serving the needs of our community locally and around the world. **However, a willingness to change is very different from actually changing.**¹ While the programs are changing we have to ask ourselves... is the culture changing?

In the book, Growing Young, one of the key strategies to engage younger generations is to fuel a warm community. We can't assume that programs alone are going to foster close relationships. Warmth is described as *welcoming, accepting, belonging, authentic, hospitable and caring*. It is the lifeblood of the church. In churches that are successful at growing young a culture of warmth often trumps programs.²

How would you rate the temperature of our church culture? How involved are you in youth programs, such as WAFL, Youth Group, Confirmation or FLCamp? How active are you in volunteering or planning youth related events and activities? Do your events include youth activities? When was the last time you stopped to chat with a young person or family after worship service, invited them to sit with you at fellowship or better yet, invited them to come over for dinner?

The warmth of a congregation is everything and church is more than worship service on Sunday and the walls of our building. Anyone can watch worship service online but the internet can't babysit your kids when you are feeling overwhelmed or cook you meals while you recover from an injury. Only a close community can do that.

When young people were asked what keeps them involved in church, the highest response was personal relationships.² First and foremost the feeling of belonging is crucial then comes the exploration of a deeper belief.

How can you create warmth?

Creation Stewardship



Home Energy Workshop will be held on **Saturday, April 10th** from 10am to 2pm at the Ottertail Community Center. 93 Lake Avenue, Ottertail, MN

During the workshop, we'll explore content from the Clean Energy Resource Teams Community Energy Ambassador Program, collaborate in small groups to brainstorm ways to make homes and communities more energy-efficient, and share practical steps you can take to lower energy costs at home.

This event is ideal for anyone interested in energy efficiency and clean energy, curious about careers in solar, HVAC, or construction management, or eager to connect with others who want to make a difference.



NOW ACCEPTING CAMPERS!

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Why Choose Us?

- ✔ Licensed RN caregiver
- ✔ Flexible Scheduling
- ✔ Free will offering
- ✔ Compassionate care

Contact Us

Call Number: **218-864-5686**

 jwilmore890@gmail.com

First Lutheran Church of Battle Lake



Thank you for allowing us to host our end of the season basketball pizza party for our 5th grade team. We had a great season! The church was a great way to end it!

Jenna Kavanagh
Team

Worship and Music



Key Aspects of Music in Worship:

Biblical Purpose: Music serves to praise God, prepare hearts for the Word, teach doctrine, and encourage fellow believers.

Heartfelt Expression: Worship is not just musical technicality, but singing "from the heart" with sincerity.

Instruments and Voice: While the New Testament emphasizes vocal music (singing), the Bible also mentions instruments—such as harps and lyres—used for worship in both Old and New Testaments.

Variety in Music: Scripture supports a range of musical expressions, including "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs".

Focus on God: Music should be Christ-centered and reflect the holiness of God, rather than focusing on entertainment or being a distraction.

Biblical Context: Examples include praise during times of celebration (Luke 15:25,32), as well as in times of suffering or trials.

Key Scriptures:

Colossians 3:16: Teaching and admonishing one another through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

Ephesians 5:19: Making music from the heart to the Lord.

Psalms 150: A command to praise God with various instruments.

2 Kings 3:15-16: Instrumental music helping to bring the hand of the LORD.

SHARE AND CARE GROUPS:

Group Two, March, April, & May

March

Gerald Holo
Jeri Wilmore
Sandy Schatschneider
Grace & Tom Stoebe
Nelda & David Eitreim
Robert & Karen Wasson
Ambrose Everts
Rezin Everts
Seversons
Jim & Julie Gronbeck
Jim & Julie Aamot
Warren & Carol Boese
Tim Underhill
David & Sharon Hanson
Sonja Peterson
Bonnie Pfeffer

April

Gordy & Marie Fuchs
Nancy Rodgers
Chelsey & Derek Tysdal
Gerald Holo
Jeri Wilmore
Sandy Schatschneider
Grace & Tom Stoebe
Nelda & David Eitreim
Robert & Karen Wasson
Ambrose Everts
Rezin Everts
Tom & Ann Rasmusson
Dennis & Nancy Quam
Nancy Senyk
Henry & Mary Jane Peterson
Vicki Hull

May

Gordy & Marie Fuchs
Nancy Rodgers
Chelsey & Derek Tysdal
Gerry & Barb Nelson
Leigh & Stacy Shebeck
Gail Nelson
Angie Abram Family
Hugh & Beth Warner
Dean & Mavis Nordstrom
Kim & Gary Peterson
Dennis & Cherryl Pederson
Peter & Carol Boyum
Dennis & Becky Jorud



MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

First Lutheran Men's Fellowship met Thursday, March 5, 2026 at the Shoreline with 11 members in attendance. We decided to host the Lent soup supper on March 11th. We will also host the Easter breakfast between services on Sunday, April 5th. We will be serving egg bake and muffins. We tabled our commitment to Ruby's Pantry until we have more information. Our next meeting will be Thursday, April 2, 2026 at the Shoreline.

Women ^{of the} **ELCA** 

WELCA Board – April 6th @ 1 pm
Naomi Circle – April 14th @ 10:00 am
Lydia Circle – March 14th @ 9:30 am
Mary Circle – April 8th @ 9:30 am
Evening Circle – April 19th @ 6:30 pm

Women of the



ELCA



Greetings from your Parish Nurse

Spring has sprung, the grass has riz, I wonder where the birdies is??? (I saw my first robin)

Spring is in the air, even with the wind and cold temps. Looking for the first buds on the lilacs. I have the fever, does anyone else?

Here are 10 healthy habits for your brain from the Alzheimer's association:

1. Put your brain to work and do something that is new or hard for you. Learn a new skill. Try something artistic. SUDOKU anyone?
2. Education reduces the risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Encourage the youth to stay in school and continue your own education by taking a class at the library. College, or online.
3. Engage in regular exercise. Find ways to build more movement into your day-walking, dancing, gardening, whatever works for you.
4. Help prevent an injury to your head. Wear a helmet for activities like biking and wear a seatbelt. Protect yourself while playing sports, and do what you can to prevent falls, especially for older adults.
5. Quitting smoking can lower the risk of cognitive decline back to levels similar to those that have not smoked. It's never too late to quit.
6. Control your blood pressure, and work with a healthcare provider to get medications if needed. Healthy eating and physical activity can help too.
7. Type II diabetes can be prevented or controlled by healthier eating, increasing physical activity and medication, if necessary.
8. Talk with your health care provider about a healthy weight for you. Other habits on this list-eating right, physical activity and sleep- can help maintain a healthy weight.
9. Eating healthier foods can help reduce your risk of cognitive decline. This includes more vegetables and leaner meats/proteins, along with foods that are less processed and lower in fat. Choose healthier meals and snacks that you enjoy and are available to you.
10. Quality sleep is important for brain health. Stay off the screens before bed and make your sleep space as comfortable as possible. Do all you can to minimize disruptions

Pickle ball anyone??

Happy Spring and God Bless,

Jeri

Summary March 2026 unapproved minutes

- Meeting held March 10th, 2026
- Minutes and the financial report were approved.
- Have gotten a quote for repair on the geo-thermal. Reviewed so all are aware.
- Got a higher water bill again. Repaired two toilets to see if that fixes it.
- As of this meeting we have gotten \$300 donated for the vacuum cleaner.
- Men's fellowship will continue mowing but will also have a safety training class for the Camp kids to help with the mowing.
- Discussion on have being a location for Ruby's Pantry. Will be talking to other churches and to Battle Lake groups in gaining partnerships or volunteers to assist.
- Living Hope Camp has started. Calls for information are coming in and people coming in to question and see what we have available.



Our Men's Fellowship is having an Easter
Breakfast between services.
A variety of Egg Bakes, Sausage Links, Muffins,
Fruit, Orange Juice and Coffee.
Free will offering



I am excited to host our newest get-together. I am hoping this will be an opportunity for us to get to know each other better. I ask that you bring a treat to share, but if that is a problem, then just bring yourself. If you have any ideas of how this group could spend the time, please let me know. We will do this on the first Friday of each month at 11 am. I look forward to visiting with you.

April 10th will be our next Meet & Eat!

Jeri Wilmore

Financial Updates

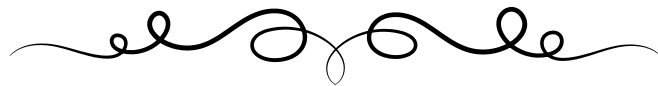
February 2026 Finances: YTD Budget Tracking:

Income \$ 24,179 Budget \$319,552/ 21.65%

Credit Line -0

Expenses \$ 28,694 Budget \$319,552/17.95%

Net \$ - 4,506



Spiritual Practices

Spiritual Practices cultivate a deeper connection with yourself, others, and the divine. It is one way to know God better - rather than just knowing facts about God.

So far, we have learned the Spiritual Practices of: Surrender, Willingness, Honesty, Discipline, Humility, Faith, Commitment, Kindness, Unconditional Love, Being Compassionate to Myself, and Optimism.

April 2026

First Lutheran Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>8 worship/communion 8:30 – 10 Breakfast 10 Worship/Communion</p> <p>EASTER SUNDAY 5</p>	<p>Office Closed 9 am Quilters 12 pm OEA 1 pm WELCA Bd.</p>	<p>1 pm WELCA Study 2 pm Worship/music 4 pm Bells</p>	<p>3:15 WAFI 5:15 Confirmation 7:30 pm NA @ Sr. Ctr.</p>	<p>8 am TOPS 8:30 am Mens Fellowship 6:30 pm Maundy Thurs.</p>	<p>2 pm Good Friday @ Eagle Lake 7 pm AA & Al-Anon @ Sr. Ctr.</p>	<p>10 am Easter egg hunt @ Faith Haven</p>
<p>10 am Worship 11 am Fellowship 2 pm <i>Andria Theatre performance (AOTL)</i></p>	<p>9 am Quilters 12 pm OEA 2:30 Finance</p>	<p>9:30 Lydia Circle 10:00 Naomi Circle 4 pm Bells 5:30 Faith Formation 6:30 Council</p>	<p>9:30 Mary Circle 3:15 WAFI 5:15 Confirmation 7-9 Youth 7:30 NA @ Sr. Ctr.</p>	<p>8 am TOPS</p>	<p>11 am Meet & Eat 7 PM AA & Al-Anon @ Sr. Ctr.</p>	<p>10 am Lakeview Apt. Communion <i>Lions host pancake feed fundraiser for BI choir trip</i></p>
<p>10 am Worship 11 am Fellowship 6:30 pm Evening Circle</p>	<p>Newsletter articles due 9 am Quilters 10:30 Staff 12 pm OEA</p>	<p>4 pm Bells</p>	<p>10 am Good Sam 3:15 pm WAFI 5:15 pm Confirmation 7-9 Youth 7:30 NA @ Sr. Ctr.</p>	<p>8 am TOPS 11 am Meet w/Liberty Business in Fergus 5 – 7:30 Danish Bread Pastry class (AOTL)</p>	<p>7 pm AA & Al-Anon @ Sr. Ctr. <i>Ducks Unlimited Banquet</i></p>	<p>25</p>
<p>10 am Worship/Communion 11 am Potluck</p>	<p>9 am Quilters 12 pm OEA</p>	<p>4 pm Bells</p>	<p>3:15 WAFI 5:15 Confirmation 7-9 Youth 7:30 NA @ Sr. Ctr.</p>	<p>30</p>		

First Lutheran Church
505 Holdt St. West
Battle Lake MN 56515
218-864-5686
www.blfirstlutheran.org



Address Service Requested
Newsletter

Sunday Worship 10 AM

Communion 1st & 4th Sundays

Coffee/Fellowship 11 AM following service

Online worship @ Youtube-First Lutheran Church Battle Lake and Facebook



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
BATTLE LAKE

First Lutheran Church Staff

Pastor: Pastor Lynn Melchior : pastorlynn@blfirstlutheran.org

Office Secretary: Laurie Hanson-Zelinsky: office@blfirstlutheran.org

Parish Nurse: Jeri Wilmore: parishnurse@blfirstlutheran.org

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