

First Lutheran NEWSLETTER



February
2026

Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. 1 John 4:7

February.

It's a short month but a powerful one.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday – Feb 18th this year. Lent is a 40-day season of preparing for Easter by reflecting on Jesus's sacrifice and resurrection, echoing his 40 days in the desert. It is a time of spiritual renewal.

It is fitting that Lent starts the same month we celebrate love. For years now, I have chosen to celebrate ALL love on Valentine's Day – rather than just romantic love. Without love, our world would degrade into a pit of despair, depression, and disuse.

God knows how important love is, as love comes from God. The author of 1 John encourages us to continue to love one another. And when you love, you glorify God. So open those floodgates of love – the world needs it.

Jesus' actions on earth demonstrate His love for us. It is my prayer that we too can demonstrate our love – not only in February but in all the months to come.

Serving Jesus alongside you, Pastor Lynn

Babysitting class	Feb 7
Weaving Class	Feb 7
Valentines dinner	Feb 11
Ash Wednesday	Feb 18
Game Day	Feb 21
FLY to Andes	Feb 21
Plastic People	Feb 26
Movie Night	March 1
Blood Drive	March 3
Daylight Savings	March 8
FLY Escape room	March 20
Danish Bread (AOL)	April 23

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30 Second Scripture Study

1 John 4:16-19

*“God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.
17 And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be
afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence
because we live like Jesus here in this world.*

*18 Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are
afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not
fully experienced his perfect love. 19 We love each other^[b] because he
loved us first.”*

What stands out to you when you read these verses?

What did you learn about God by reading these scriptures?

What questions do you have about this scripture?



New stuff Alert!

1. **Living Hope Camp** - Being a caregiver is hard. One need of our community is a respite from caregiving. Time to go to Drs' apts, run errands, or even nap and recharge. Living Hope Camp is designed to provide respite care for approx 5 hours a day on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Our Parish Nurse, Jeri Wilmore, will direct and provide 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 if you are interested in signing up for this service.

2. **The City of Battle Lake is celebrating 135 years in 2026** - How should we as a church celebrate our beloved community? Please help us brainstorm!

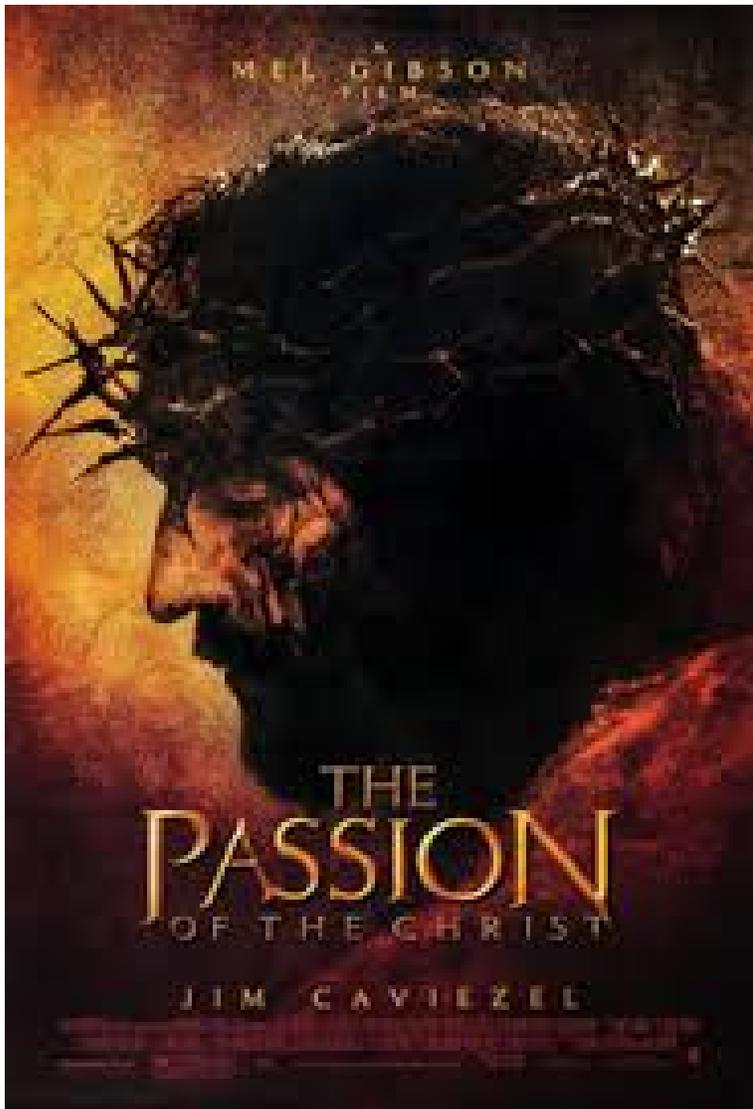
By the time you read this, I will have had my lumbar spinal fusion surgery. (It was moved up to February 2nd.) I covet your healing prayers. Prayers for patience are appreciated, too, since I do not “idle” well. 😊

We are blessed to have so many capable and willing leaders in our congregation helping out while I am recovering. Don't hesitate to thank them - and provide grace as they serve God.

I appreciate your understanding and patience! Pastor Lynn

*Pleasant words are like a honeycomb,
sweetness to the soul and health to the body.*

Proverbs 16:4



Lenten Services

Wednesdays 2/25, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18
and 3/25.

Soup Suppers: 5:30 pm
Movie Starts at 6:15 pm
with discussion at 6:45 pm

After the Soup Supper, we will remain in the Fellowship Hall. Each week, we will watch approx. 30 minutes of the movie "The Passion of Christ". A brief discussion will follow. NOTE: This is a violent, 'realistic' depiction of Jesus' arrest, trial, and crucifixion. It may not be for everyone. An alternative movie will be offered.



Peoples Church

824 America Ave, Bemidji, MN | PO Box 2050, Bemidji MN 56619
peopleschurchbemidji@gmail.com | (218) 214-9066 | www.peopleschurch-elca.org

Dear First Lutheran Church,

Miigwech! Thank you for your gift of \$250 in the year 2025.

Our records indicate that you gave:

11/25 \$250 (Pulpit Supply)

Your generosity means so much to us and to every person that comes through our doors. This year we have seen an increased need in both shelter and food and your gifts are what make it possible for us to serve even more people in need. Please take a moment to look at the enclosed end-of-year newsletter for more information about what Peoples Church has been up to in the last year and some things we are looking forward to!

UPCOMING EVENTS



The annual WAFL Valentine's Dinner will be **Wednesday, February 11th** at 5:30pm. A free Valentine's meal is provided for WAFL families and served by the WAFL kids.



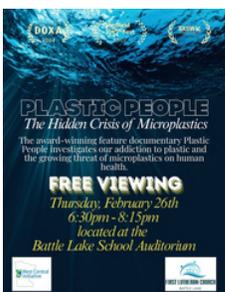
Saturday, February 21st we will be having a casual game day for anyone that is interested from 9a-3p. Bring your favorite card, dice or board game and a potluck item to share.



There are two community events also happening on **Saturday, February 21st**. There is a character breakfast from 9a-12p at Our Lady of the Lake. There is a \$10 admission fee that will go to the Battle Lake Childcare Center. Also, from 12p-3p there is an ice fishing derby on the east side of West Battle Lake. There will be a kids fishing tournament from 11a-1p. Hosted by the Battle Lake Area Sporting Club.



Saturday, February 21st we will take any students in 5th grade and up to Andes Towers Hill to go skiing or snowboarding. FLC will provide transportation, students should provide money for their own lift ticket. Lift tickets are \$25 for students 11yrs old or younger & \$30 for students 12yrs old & up. We will meet at church at 6p and arrive back at 12a. Please RSVP to Missi by 2/18.



Thursday, February 26th there will be a free viewing of the documentary Plastic People: The Hidden Crisis of Microplastics. This event is being put on by the Creation Stewardship committee and the viewing will take place at the Battle Lake School Auditorium from 6:30p-8:15p. Come see this award winning documentary that investigates our addiction to plastic and the growing threat of microplastics on human health.



Friday, March 20th we will be taking a group of students to Oak & Iron in Fergus Falls. We will do an escape room and have pizza. Meet at church at 5p and we will be back by 8:30p. Students in 5th grade and up are invited to attend with a max of 8 students for the escape room. RSVP to Missi by 3/16. Please provide \$25 for entry to escape room.



FLCamp will be returning this summer for our 3rd year! Camp will run from May 26th - Aug 27th Monday-Thursday from 7:30a-5:30p.



First Lutheran Church is partnering with Art of the Lakes to bring you some amazing event opportunities. All events are hosted by Art of the Lakes and held at First Lutheran Church. See below for all of the upcoming events.

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

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 mix and knead your own dough, learn how to incorporate butter for flakiness, create delicious fillings, and shape a stunning braid that looks impressive.

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, warm from the oven, extra dough to take home so you can make another one the next day, and the confidence to recreate this "fancy-looking" yet totally achievable pastry anytime you like.



Holy Faith

The WAFL students have been busy weekly with playing, lessons, and service projects. When the students returned to WAFL after the Christmas break we celebrated how well they did on the Christmas program and enjoyed some really nice weather with a snow day. We spent the entire WAFL day sledding, building forts and painting the snow. It was great to get outside and enjoy the nice weather and play.

The following week we completed the God's Global Barnyard service project. The congregation raised \$475 in noisy offering to put towards the purchase of animals and products for families in need. The animals and products purchased for families is intended to feed families but also provide a source of income or an ongoing source of food. The kids purchased the following:

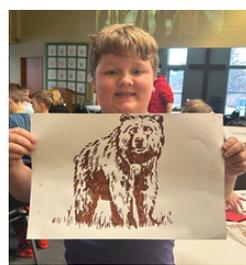
- 40 Chicks
- 1 Goat
- 2 Honeybee colonies
- 2 shares of a Fish farm
- 2 Roosters
- 2 Piglets
- 1 share of a Cow
- 3 fruit tree saplings
- 2 Water Filtration systems

Thank you to everyone that donated to noisy offering in December.

This past week the students spent time making Valentines Day cards and placements for the residents at the Good Shephard nursing home and assisted living.

The older confirmation and youth group students enjoyed a Christmas themed lock in at the beginning of January. We had a whole night of activities including: gingerbread house making, hat decorating, sledding, indoor volleyball, gift exchange, hide n seek, and movies. Everyone managed to stay awake the entire night.

Finally, we held our very first Snow Daze Festival. We had snow painting, sledding, campfire with smores, ice block excavation, mini golf, ice fishing, indoor snowball fight, hot chocolate bar and a cake walk. We also had Otter Cove here with some additional kids activities, Lakes Lockerroom was here making tshirts and Lakes Country on Main was here with some tea samples. Considering the weather was -20 some degrees we had a pretty decent turn out of 18-20 kids attend. This is an event we hope to continue into the future.



Battle Lake School is holding a career fair on Feb 26, 2026. They need help with mock job interviews, career cluster panels, and an employability skills panel. If you can help, please get in touch with the school at 218-864-5215.



12/26/2025

First Lutheran Church
505 Holdt St. W.
Battle Lake, MN 56515

Dear First Lutheran Church,

We are so grateful for your generous gift of \$132.39 in support of Barbara's House, a program of Welcome House. Because of your support, lives will be changed through safe housing, vital resources, caring relationships, and restoration through God's grace and compassion. "I am grateful for a safe refuge to lay my head at night surrounded by people that care about me and believe in me." Barbara's House resident.
THANK YOU for this life changing gift!

Because we are a registered 501(c)3 organization, your donation is completely tax deductible. No goods or services were exchanged for this gift. Please keep this for your tax records to claim your deduction. Again, we thank you for your generous support.

Warm regards,

Julie Scott, Barbara's House Director
recovery@welcomehouseff.org
218-671-3709

Welcome House - PO Box 932 - Fergus Falls, MN. 56538



Good Samaritan Foundation
PO Box 5039
Sioux Falls, SD 57117-5039

November 7, 2025

First Lutheran Church
Friends of Good Samaritan
505 Holdt St W
Battle Lake, MN 56515

Dear Friends,

Behind every senior on a Good Samaritan campus, there is an army of people dedicated to his or her well-being of body, mind and spirit.

And because of your recent donation, you are among our most generous partners. Thank you so very much!

Supporters like you make it possible to purchase needed equipment, provide training for employees, beautify and build up the places residents call home and more. **As always, 100% of your gift will help share God's love in the local community you care about most.**

Thank you for caring for those who rely on Good Samaritan for health, healing and comfort. To learn more, visit good-sam.com/foundation.

With gratitude,



Ali Hefar



December 31, 2025

Matthew House
PO Box 91
Fergus Falls, MN 56538

First Lutheran Church
505 Holdt St. W
Battle Lake, MN 56515

Dear First Lutheran Church,

We are so grateful! Thank you for your very generous gift of \$264.79 in support of the Matthew House. Because of you, our men who dream of a life free from addiction will have a supportive home where they can heal, restore and create a productive and healthy future. Your support strengthens our mission, offering hope, healing, and life-changing love and support to those we serve.

Because we are a registered 501(c)3 organization, your donation is completely tax deductible. Please keep this for your tax records to claim your deduction. Again, we thank you for your continued prayers and support.

With Gratitude,


Todd Hylden, Executive Director
218-205-0545
matthewhouseff@gmail.com

MatthewHouseff.org

Worship and Music



Welcome all Tenors and Basses!!

Join us in the month of January and February to learn one song for worship on either February 15th or 22nd. 45 minute practices on Wednesdays starting January 28th at 6:15 pm. and 9 am on Sundays starting February 1st. Sound files for vocal parts will be texted and/or emailed to you. Contact Cindy Peterson 701-840-0708. Copies of the songs will be available in your church office and at the First Lutheran Church Office in Battle Lake. Invite other men that you know that enjoy singing from the community. It is understood you will not be at every practice. We will be singing at multiple churches on the Sunday you chose."



Wishing you a
CHRISTMAS SEASON
filled with peace & joy!

Thank you for all you do for us.

Jimmy
Carol Sam
Jelene
Sumner

Billie Smith

Virginia Halne

Merry Christmas
Daphne Benak

Canole
Janelle

Genevieve
Genevieve

Alan Hodgson

John D. Oakes

MERRY CHRISTMAS!
Ruthie

Raymond

Thank you
Special
People
Fate

Thank you for all of your help!
Merry Christmas
Kathleen

Thank you
Jim Brey

Christmas!!
Merry
Cicely Johnson

John Humphreys

We appreciate you!
Mary Rubink

Merry Christmas
Lory & Bob Johnson

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, January 8, 2026 at the Shoreline with 9 members in attendance. It was decided to award Wyatt Severson and Sam Jossart an additional \$500 each from our scholarship fund. We distributed 53 Christmas cards with \$75 Larry's gift cards in December. We have collect \$76 in cash donations and 406 pounds of food for the food shelf. Our next meeting will be Thursday, February 5, 2026 at the Shoreline.

Women ^{of the} **ELCA** 

WELCA Board – February 2nd @ 1 pm
Naomi Circle – February 10th @ 10:00 am
Lydia Circle – February 10th @ 9:30 am
Mary Circle – February 11th @ 9:30 am
Evening Circle – February 15th @ 6:30 pm

Women of the

ELCA



10 Meaningful Questions to Ask the Older People You Love

By Angela Haupt HAUPT IS A HEALTH AND WELLNESS EDITOR AT TIME.

Asking the older people in your life questions isn't just about recording a birth location, marriage date, or occupation to flesh out a family tree. It's far more revealing—and rewarding—to probe the wisdom that lives in their hearts or in the deepest chambers of their memory, rather than on any certificate.

Where should you start? We asked experts to share their favorite questions to spark those deeper conversations.

“What are some of your earliest memories?”

“Can you tell me about the house you grew up in?”

“How did you get to school?”

“What smells, sounds, and images trigger nostalgia for you?”

“What do most people not know about you?”

“Did you have a relative whose face ‘froze’ in a grumpy position because they didn't smile enough?”

“What did you wear when you were a kid?”

“What was dating like?”

“What is something you've always loved to do?”

“When you look at yourself in the mirror, what do you see?”



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.

February 6th will be our next Meet & Eat!

Jeri Wilmore



You're Invited!

February 26 | 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
**Battle Lake Public
Schools Auditorium**

Free Event | Snacks Provided



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
BATTLE LAKE

Plastic People Movie - Stewardship Creation team is working with West Central Initiative to present a live showing of the award-winning documentary Plastic People at the Battle Lake School auditorium on Thursday, February 26th. Cedar Walters will be leading a discussion after the showing.

Plastic People investigates our addiction to plastic and the growing threat of microplastics to human health.

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.

Each week in 2026, we will be adding a spiritual practice to our bulletins. It may surprise you how easy it is to practice spirituality!

Summary January 2026 unapproved minutes

As no meeting in December the council met on the 11th and on the 13th to cover all business for both months.

The financial report was approved. Finance is working on putting together the budget for 2026 to be ready for February 1st special congregational meeting. Finance put together budget concerns as expenses exceeded anticipated revenue. Need more information to pay bills up front to let the congregation be aware of financial concerns.

Sharing of the peace to be done with the peace sign to each other during this flu season.

Pastor Lynn out February 2nd for 6 weeks for her spinal fusion surgery. Calendar is filled with who will be taking care of services and Missi will lead the Lenten services.

Paid leave went into effect on January 1st, 2026.

Living Hope Camp will be used to start with one day a week for respite care and will be run by Jeri Wilmore. All licensing and insurance concerns have been taken care of. In need of recliners (lift chairs possibly). Volunteers could include school kids as well as others. Suggested \$25 per day was discussed, will finalize amounts when all set up. Motion to go forward with this plan.

We are in serious need of an industrial style vacuum cleaner. Will be getting pricing.

Exit sign and some fixtures need to be replaced or repaired.

Thanksgiving day meal was a huge hit and we will do this again. All monies moved, pertaining to food, in a food account so it can be utilized for multiple purposed food expenses. (Example--SNAP funds will go under this designated account)

Looking at updating our building use policies as getting more people wanting to use our facilities. (Weddings, Funerals, outside groups, etc.)

Our next meeting will be February 10th, 2026.



Financial Updates

December 2025 Finances: YTD Budget Tracking:

Income \$ 41,512 Budget \$377,225/ 96.88%

Credit Line -0

Expenses \$ 32,257 Budget \$377,225/88.53%

Net \$ 8,607

**Haven't filled out a pledge card to support our 153rd year of ministry?
No worries - you can still pledge toward 2026.**

153rd Year of Faithful Ministry Estimate of Giving Card

"This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

I/We support First Lutheran's Pastor, Staff, Building, and Ministries and intend to give: \$_____per Week Month Year

I/We understand that this is a faith commitment and the amount above can be changed due to changing circumstances many change the amount.

Name_____ Date_____

February 2026

First Lutheran Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>9 am Men's Practice 10 am Worship/Communion 11 am Budget approval mtg. 11 am Fellowship</p>	<p>2</p> <p>9 am Quilters 12 pm OE 1 PM WELCA Bd.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p> <p>3:15 pm WAFL 5:30 pm Confirmation 7-9 pm Youth 7:30 pm NA @ Sr. Ctr.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>8 am TOPS 8:30 am Men's Fellowship</p>	<p>6</p> <p>7 pm AA & Al-Anon</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Babysitting Class in FF 9-2 Weaving Class (AOL)</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9 am Sunday School 9 am Men's practice 10 am Worship/M. Olson 11 am Fellowship</p>	<p>9</p> <p>9 am Quilters 12 pm OE 2:30 pm Finance</p>	<p>10</p> <p>9:30 am Lydia Circle 10 am Naomi Circle 5:30 pm Faith Formation 6:30 pm Council</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9:30 am Mary Circle 3:15 pm WAFL 5:30 pm Confirmation 5:30 pm Valentine Dinner 6:15 Men's Practice 7-9 pm Youth 7:30 pm NA @ Sr. Ctr.</p>	<p>12</p> <p>8 am TOPS</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7 pm AA & Al-Anon</p>	<p>Valentine's Day 14</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9 am Men's practice 10 am Worship 11 am Fellowship Evening Circle</p>	<p>16</p> <p>9 am Quilters 10:30 Staff ?? 12 pm OE Newsletter articles due</p>	<p>17</p> <p>4:30 pm Creation Stewardship ?</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Ash Wednesday 3:15 pm WAFL 5:30 confirmation 6:30 pm Lenten Service/Communion 7-9 youth 7:30 pm NA @ Sr. Ctr.</p>	<p>19</p> <p>8 am TOPS</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7 pm AA & Al-Anon</p>	<p>21</p> <p>10 am Lake Ave apt. Communion 9-3 Game Day 6-12 Andes</p>
<p>22</p> <p>10 am Worship/Communion 11 am Fellowship/ Potluck</p>	<p>23</p> <p>9 am Quilters 12 pm OE</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <p>10 am Good Sam 3:15 pm WAFL 5:30 p Confirmation 5:30 soup supper 6:30 Lenten Service 7-9 Youth 7:30 pm NA @ Sr. Ctr.</p>	<p>26</p> <p>8 am TOPS 6:30 Plastic People video @ School</p>	<p>27</p> <p>7 pm AA & Al-Anon</p>	<p>28</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

Faith Formation: Missi Abfalter: waf1@blfirstlutheran.org

Website: www.blfirstlutheran.org