First Lutheran Church



November 2026

NEWSLETTER

A visitor recently left a review for one of our services. It was very complimentary. But it got me thinking about church. Reviews are great for visibility in today's informational age.

BUT...A church is not a product to be consumed. A church is a group of believers who worship God together and follow Jesus in word and deed. 1 Corinthians 12:27 says: "All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it." A body that acts survives. A body is meant to be in motion – doing things. Kinda like the adage "use it or lose it" when talking about joints. Being part of the Body of Christ, we do Jesus-inspired things....Like love and serve others.

So, when you are in worship, you are not sitting in the audience watching church. You are part of worship. People often tell me they enjoyed the service or it was good. I wonder what was enjoyable and how it was good...did they like the songs? The sermon? Fellowship?

Then I realized I was thinking like a customer when we are called to be witnesses of the gospel.

A recent Facebook post caught my attention with this:
Because you can attend church every week and still think like a customer.
Customers ask: "What did I get?"
Witnesses ask: "What did I bring?"

November 3rd Election day
November 9th Rural Edge
November 13th Fly @ Arcade
November 14th All Circles @ Good Sam
November 18th AOTL Lefse
November 25th meal prep
November 26th Thanksgiving meal
November 29th Movie night
November 19th Advent Season start

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Customers ask, “did they sing the songs I like?”
Witnesses ask, “did I worship?”

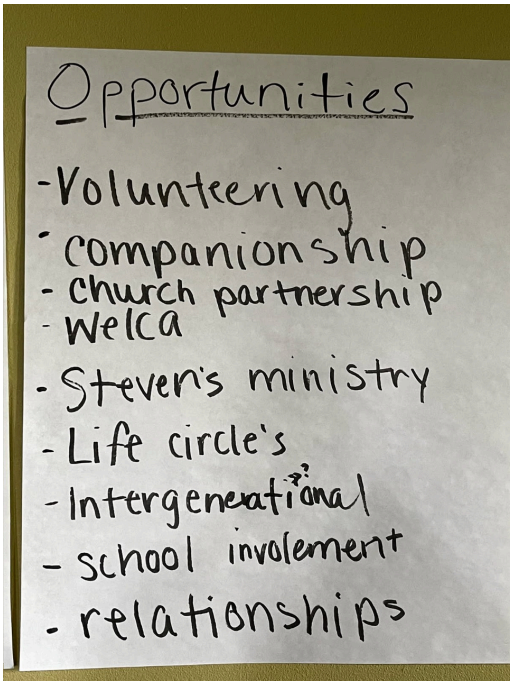
Customers ask, “did the pastor preach something for me?”
Witnesses s ask “what am I going to do with what God said?”

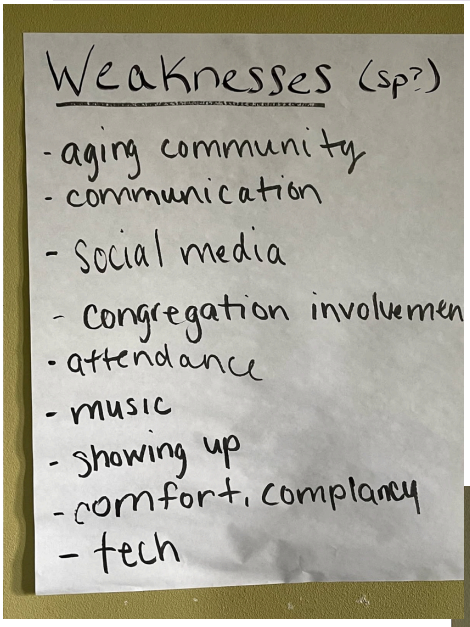
Customers ask “did anyone talk to me?”
Witnesses ask “who did I make feel seen?”
… But your Sunday experience cannot be entirely everybody else’s responsibility. Next time you are worshiping, honestly ask yourself if you are a customer or a witness…..and adjust accordingly. You may be surprised how much of a customer we all are.
Serving Christ Alongside YOU, Pastor Lynn

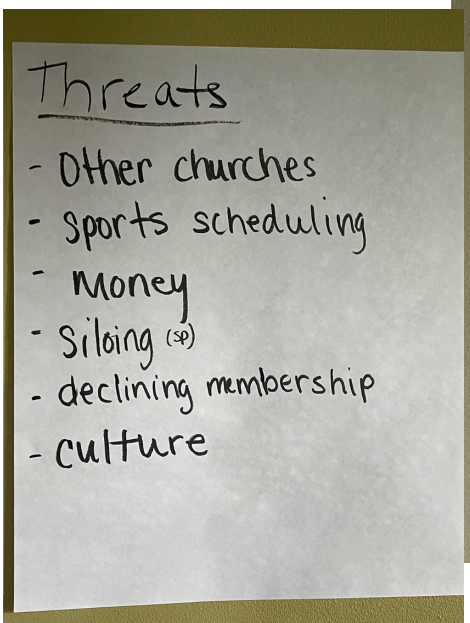
SWOT Analysis

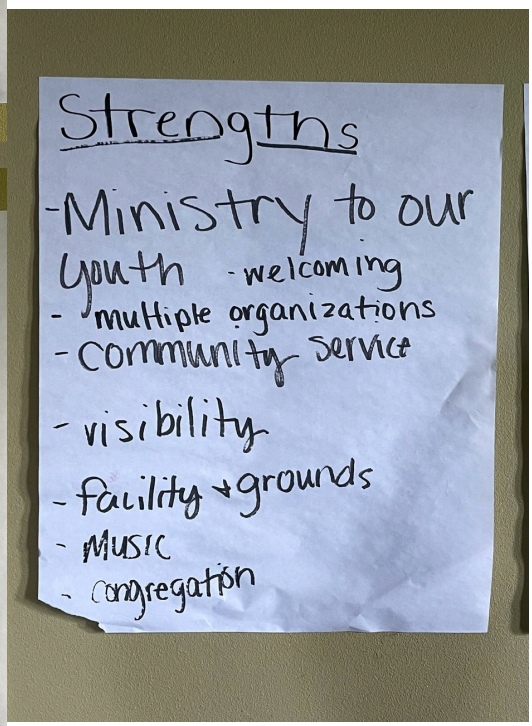
Oct 4th during fellowhip

***BURNOUT**









***Pastor Lynn**
***Missi Abfalter**

Upcoming Events



Wrist band night at Grandpa's Arcade Friday, November 13th. Unlimited play of 50 arcade games. $10 per person. Pizza will be provided. Bring additional money for extra snacks. All youth in grades 6th and up are invited to attend. Meet in the First Lutheran Church parking lot at 5pm.



First Lutheran Church will be hosting a community Thanksgiving Dinner on Thursday, November 26th from 12p-2p. Join us for a free traditional Thanksgiving dinner, football and games. We are thankful for many things but mostly we are thankful for you!
Volunteer sign up sheets and donation requests will be posted in the Narthax in the next couple weeks.



Sunday, November 29th kids ages 4 and up are invited to movie night at First Lutheran Church from 4p-6:30p. We will be watching Space Jam a New Legacy. Snacks will be provided.



Thursday, December 10th Love Inc will be holding a winter clothing distribution event at First Lutheran Church from 3p-7p. Hats, Gloves, Coats, Boots, and Snow pants will be available at no cost. Battle Lake area families are encouraged to come and ensure your kids are covered for the winter. Volunteers are needed for set up, assisting families and take down.



Sunday, December 20th will be kids movie night from 4p-6:30p. Kids ages 4 and up are invited to watch the movie The Grinch. Snacks will be provided and we will play some Grinch themed games with prizes afterwards. Free will donations are greatly appreciated.



Saturday, December 19th kids in 7th grade and up are invited to spend the day in Fargo. We will leave at 8a and return by 8p. We will go see the new Avengers Doomsday movie, spend some time Christmas shopping, have dinner and see some Christmas lights. Bring money for the movie, food and shopping please.

HOLY FAITH

The WAFL students have been busy with their service projects. They delivered Thank You card to the staff of Good Sam, as well as, presented the Battle Lake First Responders with Thank You cards. They are currently in the process of collecting goods and raising money for the Humane Society and will begin making gifts for Matthew and Barbra's House soon. We are trying to teach the students that small easy gestures of kindness can make a big impact and that service projects don't need to be expensive or grand to have meaning.
We continue to add WAFL students and are up to 49 students in total. If you have been considering helping out with the WAFL program please speak with Missi.

The carnival at the Fall Festival was well attended and brought in quite a few new faces from the community. If you are feeling creative and wish to make a carnival game to donate to our collection for next year it would be greatly appreciated.

Finally, as a reminder, we have the community Thanksgiving dinner coming up in a few weeks. Volunteers the day of, the day before and food donations are all needed to make this event successful. There is a sign up sheet outside of the sanctuary with what is needed. Please take a look at it the next time you are at the church.

"Many hands make light work"

SOUP & BREAD EVENT

BREAKING BREAD, RESTORING HOPE ONE LIFE AT A TIME

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2026

BETHEL CHURCH • 702 W. Alcott Avenue, Fergus Falls

ALL PROCEEDS RAISED WILL BE SHARED WITH:

Barbara's House (a program of Welcome House) • JAIL, INC. • Matthew House

JAIL, INC

BARBARA'S HOUSE ESTD 2023 HOME. HOPE. HEALING

Matthew House
Facing the Giants One Pebble at a Time

Our Men's Fellowship Christmas Food Ministry will be assisting families experiencing hardship. In our outreach, we are partnering with the Battle Lake and Ashby schools and providing grocery gift cards for their local grocery store. We hope to assist 50 or more families.

To support this project please mail your check to
First Lutheran Church
505 W. Holdt St.
Battle Lake MN 56515
Please add in the memo line "Christmas Food Basket"

We wish all a safe , healthy, and blessed Christmas

Red White Jingle Bells Marble Iced Crystal



Our choices for poinsettias this year are the Red, White, Jingle Bell, Marble, and Iced Crystal.
Our costs this year will be $16.00.
All orders need to be in by November 28th to be able to get the choices we want.

Red White Jingle Bell Marble Iced Crystal

In Memory of_____

In Honor of_____

Given by_____

Total Paid_____Cash/Check

Creation Stewardship

Psalm 24:1 The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.

Please join us at our next meeting on November 17th at 6:00pm. Any questions just ask us.

Native Plants

We have been working these last two months collecting native plant seeds. We would like to share these free seeds with you. Planting native plants is important because they naturally support local wildlife, conserve water, and keep regional ecosystems healthy. Just think if everyone planted even just one square foot. You could be adding to a food corridor for migrators or habitat for hibernating insects. It is not too late to plant this fall or for next spring. So sign up in the narthex for free seeds! Or contact Nancy Quam, Beth Harvieux, or Cindy Harms to sign up or ask any questions.

Our own church garden on the west side of the church building is growing and many plants flowered this year. We plan to add a bit more next year.

Plantings of native plants by individuals across the US and Mexico is showing a positive impact on the corridor for butterflies. The Monarch population rose again this year. I was able to help tag some monarchs at Prairie Wetlands in Fergus Falls in August. I would definitely recommend this family-friendly activity. I also heard there was some tagging done at Glendalough.

Reduce Plastics

We hope you are remembering to bring a reusable bag when shopping. It is one of the easiest ways to reduce plastic use.

Health issues are being connected to microplastics in our food and environment. So reduce plastics for your health and the health of generations that come after you.

Terminology

Some terms that can be confusing.

Recyclable materials are waste products that can be collected, processed, and remanufactured into new products rather than being sent to a landfill. (Plastic is not easily recycled and eventually ends up in a landfill. It does not break down into harmless elements)

Compostable are materials that break down completely into natuaral non toxic elements within a timeframe. Usually 90 to 180 days. It requires a controlled environment with heat, moisture, oxygen, and microorganisms. It Is regulated by BPI (Biodegradable Products Institute)

Biodegradable is any substance that can be naturally broken down into basic, harmless components by microorganisms and fungi. There is no timeline. It can be weeks, decades or hundreds of years.

So when you are purchasing compostable items look for, BPI on the item. (Examples would be compostable drinking cups, plates, silverware.)

Worship and Music



Quoted from Zach Stanton from Grace Community Church in Iowa.

As a lover of music, I may be hypersensitive to the power of music, but it's safe to say that almost everyone has an emotional response to music at some level. All art–whether performing arts like music and theatre or fine arts like photography or sculpting–can elicit powerful emotion. But music has unique qualities that move us in ways other arts do not. This is one of the reasons music is combined with other forms, commonly in theatre and film, to create a more profound experience. Try watching a movie with the musical score removed. It will be awkward, and perhaps even confusing. The music guides your emotions and helps interpret what is happening in the story.

The reality that music has this kind of influence is essential to consider when considering the role of music in worship. People often say things like, "Every time I hear that song, I can feel the Holy Spirit." Or, "The Spirit showed up during worship." Of course, we can experience Spirit during worship in uniquely powerful ways. But the reality is that the Spirit is always present with us, including when we worship, so his presence isn't dependent on the music or our response. Music can trick us into thinking the Spirit has 'shown up' when what we experienced was that our emotions were stirred up from the beauty of what we've heard.

But, do not hear me saying that every time we feel emotions in corporate worship, it's only a trick of brain chemistry and endorphins. We might be genuinely moved by the power of the truths we're singing, supported by the beauty of the music. That's the purpose of the music, after all. It helps us feel the truths that we sing. God gave us beautiful music, voices, and he designed for us to respond emotionally to music.



A small church was raising funds for a new piano. On Sunday the pastor said "Whoever gives the most money today for the offering can pick out 3 hymns."
So they passed the offering plate around and the pastor sees a $100 bill in the plate. He said "Looks like we have a winner! Whoever gave the $100 bill can come to the front and select 3 hymns."
An 80 year old lady slowly got up, walked to the front, and pointed her finger into the pews...
"I'll take him, him, and him!"

SHARE AND CARE GROUPS:

Group One: December, January, February

December	January	February
Missi Abfalter & Remi	Missi Abfalter & Remi	Jane Dixon
Jessica Granby	Jessica Granby	James & Carol Sagerhorn
Deb & Al Lundquist	Allison & Aaron Buehler	Jeff & Shelly Sagerhorn
Jane Dixon	James & Carol Sagerhorn	Arlene Pieske
Wayne & Marilyn Horgen	Jeff & Shelly Sagerhorn	Jon Tamke
Doug & Doreen Stave	Arlene Pieske	Beth & Lou Davis
Nancy Senyk	Jon Tamke	Cindy & Jeff Harms
Linda & Gary Morical	Beth & Lou Davis	Bonnie Pfeffer
Scot & Cathy Englin	Jeff & Cindy Harms	Norm Stolle
Jack & Betsy Everts	Tom & Ann Rasmussen	Warren & Carol Boese
Inez Flores	Mike Youngblood	Jenna Kavanagh
Doug & DeeAnn Trosdahl	Dennis & Nancy Quam	Roberta Skibness
Mike & Ruth Cathey	Doug & DeeAnn Trosdahl	Larry & Kim Charest



First Lutheran Men's Fellowship

First Lutheran Men's Fellowship met Thursday, October 1, 2026 at the Shoreline with 13 members in attendance. The 2026-2027 budget was approved. Jim A. and Scot E. will co-chair the Christmas Basket Program. We assisted at the WELCA Fall Festival on Saturday. October 10. We sponsored the Confirmation Dinner on Monday, October 19. We welcomed Scott Andreassen as a new member. Following our meeting, we walked ditches. Our next meeting will be Thursday, November 5, 2026.

Women of the ELCA

WELCA Board –November 2nd @ 1 pm
All Circles – November 14th at Good Sam.-- 10:00 a.m.
Naomi Circle – November 10th – 10:00 a.m.



GREETINGS FROM YOUR PARISH NURSE

I want to talk about volunteering and what that means. A volunteer is a person who freely offers to do a job or service for other people, a community, or an organization without being forced or paid money. This means that a person, at times, is not an expert in areas of interest. Our church would not be able to accomplish much without its volunteers. We should value all who give of their time and talents. If one volunteers to serve on a committee of interest, but has no training in that area, grace should be granted to that individual for volunteering to serve. We should not expect perfection but instead be happy that the committee exists and its volunteers are doing the best they can. In Christian theology, grace is God's free unearned gift of love, mercy, and spiritual power extended to humanity. It contrasts with mercy; mercy withholds a punishment you deserve, while grace gives a blessing you did not earn. Grace is a controlled, polite, and pleasant way of behaving. If all of us could remember to grant all volunteers GRACE, maybe we could grow the volunteer pool. I would like to say a huge thank you to all who volunteer and give them grace when they don't respond the way you expect them to. God's blessings to all. (The definitions come from the Merriam-Webster dictionary).

1 Peter 4:10

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

Happy Fall, Y'all,

Jeri

Reminder: Meet & Eat is scheduled for November 13th at 11 am. All are welcome. Bring a favorite dish and join us for stories and conversation.

Financial Updates

September 2026 Finances		YTD Budget Tracking:
Income	$ 14,635	Budget $319,552/ 83.44%
Credit Line	-10,000	
Expenses	$ 24,935	Budget $319,552/76.05%
Net	$ -10,300	

Summary: Oct 2026 Unapproved Council Minutes

Approval of the Minutes: Council Meeting for 10-13-26. MSA. Annual Meeting on 9-27-26: MSA. Election of council officers: MSA.

Financial Report and Recommendations: Poor giving in Sept., so used the Credit line to meet operational needs. Credit Line: $34,005.00. Report MSA.

Faith Formation / Building Bridges: Include the purpose of the Building Bridges Committee in the Newsletter/bulletin so people understand the new team. Thanksgiving meal prep and food lists to be updated.

OLD BUSINESS: 1. New Council Member Welcome
*Thank you and length of service – 1-year term for new members with the option to opt out if this isn't for them. Everyone opted to stay. Thirteen members in council.
*Flowchart, Behavior Agreement, and Financial Structure reviewed.
*Constitution and Bylaws – Pastor Lynn went over council's responsibilities. New constitution template will be available in 2027. First Lutheran will update ours after the new template is rolled out.
2. SWOT Results – Great turnout with a lot of great responses. Two more added: Pastor Lynn as a strength and burnout as a weakness.

NEW BUSINESS:
1. Council Installation date: November 8th.
2. Portico (health insurance) choice: Selected the same as last year: HDHP. MSA. 3% raise for employees. MSA.
3. Jeremiah 29 Program: This is a community involvement program. Pastor Lynn applied and was accepted. Cost is $400 for the church.

Next Meeting: 11/10/26
MSA = Motion, Seconded and Approved,

Did You Know?

.....that Faith Formation Committee has transformed to the **Building Bridges Team?** Building Bridges amongst generations, community and congregation members is an area of focus that can provide a high return in doing God's will. It is about developing relationships, identifying needs and reaching out. Interested in learning more? Come to one of our meetings – 2nd Tuesdays at 5:30 pm each month.

November 2026 First Lutheran Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
All Saints Day 1 9:15 am Scripture Study 10 am Worship/Communion 11 am Fellowship	2 9 an Quilters 1 pm WELCA Bd. 6 pm Rural Edge	**Election Day** 3 1 pm WELCA Study 2 pm Worship & Music 4 pm Bells	4 3:15 pm WAFL 5:15 Confirmation 7 pm Youth group 7:30 pm NA@ Sr. Ctr.	5 8 am TOPS 8:30 am Men's Fellowship	6 7 pm AA & Al-Anon @ Sr. Ctr.	7
8 9:15 am Scripture Study 10 am Worship/Install Council 11 am Fellowship 11 am Group 1 Share and Care	9 9 am Quilters 2:30 pm Finance 6 pm Rural Edge	10 10 am Naomi Circle 4 pm Bells 5:30 pm Bldg. Bridges 6:30 pm Council	**Veterans Day** 11 3:15 pm WAFL 5:15 pm Confirmation 7 pm Youth group 7:30 pm NA@Sr. Ctr.	12 8 am TOPS 9 am Sons of Norway	13 11 am Meet & Eat 5 pm Fly @ Grandpa's Arcade 7 pm AA & Al-Anon @ Sr. Ctr.	14 10 am All Circles @ Good Sam
15 10 am Worship 11 am Fellowship 6:30 pm Evening Circle	16 9 am Quilters	17 4 pm Bells 6 pm Creation stewardship	18 10:30 am AOTL Lefse 3:15 pm WAFL 5:15 pm Confirmation 7:00 pm Youth Group 7:30 pm NA@ Sr. Ctr.	19 8 am TOPS	20 7 pm AA & Al-Anon @ Sr. Ctr.	21 10 am Lake Ave. Apt. communion
22 10 am Worship/Communion 11 am Fellowship	23 9 am Quilters	24 4 pm Bells	25 10 am Good Sam No WAFL, Youth or confirmation 9 am Meal Prep for Thanksgiving 7:30 pm NA@Sr. Ctr.	**Thanksgiving** 26 Noon to 2 pm Thanksgiving meal	27 Office closed	28
29 10 am Worship 11 am Fellowship/potluck 4 pm Movie Night Start of Advent Season	30 9 am Quilters					

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Battle Lake MN 56515
218-864-5686
www.blfirstlutheran.org

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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: wafl@blfirstlutheran.org

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