

First Lutheran Church  
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Northwood, IA 50459

First Lutheran Church  
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## FIRST LUTHERAN FOCUS

August 2020



August is a month of new beginnings for First Lutheran. We have said goodbye to our wonderful interim pastors, Pr. Everist and Pr. Melinda. Our church was blessed to have their leadership and guidance during this challenging time. We will miss them very much and hope to celebrate their time with us when we can all gather together once again. We welcome Pastor Becky as she begins her call at First Lutheran on August 1st.

The Office Manager position has been filled by Christa Larson-Trenhaile, who begins her new role on August 3rd. We are excited to have Christa join our team of amazing FLC staff. We thank DeAnn for her years of service and wish her the best of luck as she pursues her new opportunity.



The council at First Lutheran continues to try to navigate the global health crisis. We are working very hard to keep the congregation safe, informed, and engaged. We will get through this! We are looking forward to getting to know Pr. Becky and to working with her.

We are accepting donations for the fence project at the parsonage. If you would like to give to this specific project, please send donations to the church office by the end of August.

Please pray for and welcome Pr. Becky and Christa as they begin their new roles with us!

# INTERIM PASTOR'S PAGE

2.

It has been a privilege to have served as your interims during the pandemic time, when so much that was normally done in the congregation could not be done-and yet-we found ways to be the church and move forward and to conclude this interim time. God has blessed and sustained us all.

We are delighted that First Lutheran has received Pastor Sogge to lead and serve together with you. During our time serving you we became aware of your faithful commitment to minister to each other and to serve the needs of Northwood as well as your collaboration with the Synod and the ELCA. As with every congregation there are differences of opinion about decisions the congregation makes, but you have displayed patience and respect for each other. Your call committee worked together prayerfully and wisely with the Synod and successfully found a pastor fit for the needs of your ministry. You have been well served by those elected to lead in the council, both in 2019 and 2020. We are confident that you and Pastor Sogge will grow together and well serve one another, your community, and, together with the Synod and the ELCA.

--Pastor Jack Gannett and Pastor Burton Everist

*So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all,  
and especially for those of the family of faith.*  
Galatians 6:10 (NRSV)

Greetings! Remember the saying, "Time flies when you're having fun?" I would rephrase that, "Time flies when you are doing good ministry." Three months have flown by and now my ministry at FLC comes to a close. Ministry has been different in the midst of Covid-19, but nevertheless good ministry in this time we have spent together.

We have learned to be the church in new and various ways. Worship online allowed us to join together to giving God thanks and praise. It was exciting to join together for in-person worship in the parking lot and in the shade of the sanctuary. The continuation of online worship allows those who do not yet feel comfortable going out in public, to worship as part of the First Lutheran community. We continue to learn and develop best practices for celebrating the sacraments, baptism and holy communion, in the midst of community.

FLC has a phased plan to reopen the building safely using the guidelines of our insurance company (Church Mutual), the CDC, Iowa Public Health, and the greater church. This plan may change over time as knowledge of the virus and the numbers of those infected rise and fall. Pastor Sogge will work with you all to continue to offer ministry in these challenging times. This plan is a starting point for future conversations about how to live out Jesus' message to care for the least of these and love our neighbor in the months ahead.

You all have given me so much these last few months; affirmation of my call to ministry in these challenging times. You are my new sisters and brothers in Christ; you have shared your faith stories and journeys which I will take with me to my next call. Many of us all have learned how to participate in Zoom meetings. In person will always be better but Zoom allowed me to meet you by hearing your voice and seeing your faces.

Good-byes remind me of a story. Friends were packing up their belongings to leave seminary and move to their first call. My friend approached me crying with a question, "How do you do this? Moving and saying good bye?" She knew I had been a pastor's wife for twenty years and moved many times. My answer, it never gets any easier. It will always be difficult to say goodbye. I look back at all the moves I've made and ask which friendships, which experiences I would give up. The answer, I would not give any of them up. Each time I move I give thanks for the people I have met and memories made in that place.

So I leave FLC with new memories, new brothers and sisters in Christ. I leave knowing that you will be sharing your faith stories and living as the body of Christ and sharing the good news with a new leader. As Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 13, "And that's about it, friends. Be cheerful. Keep things in good repair. Keep your spirits up. Think in harmony. Be agreeable. Do all that, and the God of love and peace will be with you for sure. Greet one another with a holy embrace."

Blessings, Pastor Melinda

# YOUTH NEWS



With not many options for doing Day Camp this year, Pastor Melinda found a very good online version made by Lutheran Church of Hope from Des Moines. We hope that the younger kids had fun watching the daily productions, as well as arts and crafts projects that we were able to provide to many families in town. We will hopefully be back to normal next summer and are very tentatively planning an early June date.

With so much of our normal schedule completely changed this summer, we finally got around to repainting the youth room. Last year it was neon yellow, and this year the students went with a color called "spicy" which is a very dark red.

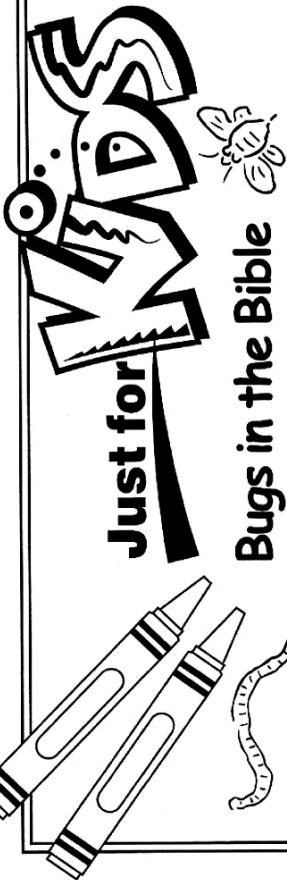
Our trip to Lifest Music Festival was cancelled this summer because of Covid, so all of our tickets and camping will transfer over to next year's festival. The dates for next summer will be July 7 – 11.



Hello FLC Members,

You should be proud of yourselves for the work you put in to preserve First Lutheran Church, and especially for your generosity during these past few months as everyone deals with the issues surrounding Covid-19. Although we were not able to be together in person during the end of March-May, it should be noted that E-giving has taken a significant increase. The dollar amount received in E-giving from March-April and again from April-May each took a 13% increase. Your generous gifts have helped First Lutheran Church to continue God's work in wonderful ways, with guidance from three excellent Interim Pastors, each with unique gifts. Now we look forward to new ways to learn, and apply our talents, to strengthen the ministry of First Lutheran with the guidance of Pastor Rebecca Sogge.

Sincerely,  
Nikkole Koenig  
FLC Council Secretary  
Simply Giving Task Force



## Bugs in the Bible

Whether at a picnic, on the beach or playing outdoors, it seems like we're always joined by uninvited guests – bugs! Bugs and other little creatures are mentioned in the Bible.

Fill in the blanks with the little creatures mentioned in each verse.  
Circle them in the puzzle below.

- Proverbs 6:6 \_\_\_\_\_ Exodus 16:20 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalms 78:45 \_\_\_\_\_ 1 Sam. 24:14 \_\_\_\_\_
- Matt. 23:24 \_\_\_\_\_ Isaiah 50:9 \_\_\_\_\_
- Judges 14:8 \_\_\_\_\_ Isaiah 59:5 \_\_\_\_\_
- Acts 12:23 \_\_\_\_\_ Leviticus 11:22 \_\_\_\_\_
- Leviticus 11:22 \_\_\_\_\_ Leviticus 11:22 \_\_\_\_\_
- Leviticus 11:22 \_\_\_\_\_
- Deuteronomy 7:20 \_\_\_\_\_



M	O	T	H	S	G	N	A	T	B	H
A	N	T	A	L	L	C	H	P	E	O
G	R	A	S	S	H	O	P	P	E	R
G	F	C	R	I	C	K	E	T	S	N
O	L	S	P	I	D	E	R	S	B	E
T	E	C	L	O	C	U	S	T	D	T
S	A	E	F	K	A	T	Y	D	I	D
G	F	L	I	E	S	W	O	R	M	S

Answer: ant, flies, gnat, bees, worms, locust, grasshopper, hornet, maggots, flea, moths, spider, katydid, cricket

# First Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2020

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## We Assemble in God's Name

Members Present: Pastor Melinda, Pastor Everist, Shana Brunsvold, Nikkole Koenig, Janelle Johnson, MaryJo Senne, Heather Rheingans, Tim Knutson, Deb Athey  
Opening Prayer: Shana Brunsvold

## We Celebrate our Past

Presidential Correspondence - Thank you received

### Secretary's Report

Amendment to May 10 minutes Treasurer's Report--\*Currently using PPP to cover payroll and utilities so that regular funds are saved for future expenses.\*

### Treasurer's Report

Online giving has increased since member have been encouraged to use the E-giving options during this time.

### Profit & Loss Question

The sound system down payment of \$11,000 was made on a LOC from NSB. Once system is complete, the total amount due will show, and FLC will be reimbursed by receipt of WCDA grant money.

Budget use should be at around 42% by this point in the year. Finances are on-track, but appear skewed because of the \$11,000.

Clarification that YTD income shows funds received only during 2020, and does not include carryover balance from previous year.

**MMSP to approve Secretary's and Treasurer's reports with items amended as noted. (Janelle Johnson, MaryJo Senne). Motion passed**

### Pastor's Report

Council of churches is working on a plan for delivering safe communion. Pastor Melinda will present an update on that plan at the next council meeting.

Pastor Everist will complete his time here when FLC returns to indoor service.

Date on contract is currently July 31.

Council may amend the contract if/when we return to in-person service.

**MMSP to approve Pastors' Reports (MaryJo Senne, Janelle Johnson) Motion Passed**

## We Present Our Offering

### Stewardship--Mary Jo

Emails, letters, Focus messages, and posters have been sent out, per the Stewardship plan set for by Vanco.

Nikkole K will write a monthly Focus article on how the gifts are being used

The intent of this program is to increase online giving by 6-7%

May meeting was not held.

Facebook testimonials are yet to be released.

Next meeting is not yet scheduled

## Worship

First outdoor service June 14, went well.

Worship committee meeting was held Monday June 1

Committee had previously been led by Pastor Judy. Since that time, there has been no chairperson

Committee nominated Loraine Mix as chairperson

Regular ushers will be suspended for now as Worship Committee members will usher during this transition back to in-person service.

June 21 outdoor service. Will cancel if rain, use FM transmitter and members can listen from cars possibly.

Look into purchase of FM transmitter, as the one currently being used is borrowed from another church.

**MMSP to purchase FM transmitter at approximate cost of \$300 with Worship Committee budget. (Tim Knutson, Janelle Johnson) Motion passed.**

## Youth--Heather

Youth has begun meeting outside, with masks, with 10 or less.

Mark has gotten waivers for participants

Discussion on requests from Mark and students who wish to not wear masks outside.

Council recommends Mark create a waiver for parents to sign, granting permission to forego wearing masks while meeting outdoors, with social distancing enforced, and still limiting the gathering to 10. If they go inside the building, they will all need to wear masks, per the FLC Return to Worship Phased Plan

Heather will communicate this with Mark.

*Continued on next page*

Education

VBS has been pushed to possibly August, considering a 3 day virtual event  
Other options to consider  
Trinity in Mason City has done “VBS in a Bag”  
and Hope Church in Des Moines has a free online VBS.  
Pastor Melinda will communicate with Mark about these options

Finance

Committee has not recently met yet. Will meet again closer to annual budget time.

Property

Sound system installation has begin. Scheduled to be completed by July 1.  
If the new Pastor is called, then the next project will be fence construction at the parsonage.

Social Ministry

Name change to Mission Ministry will need to be done by congregational vote.  
Quilter’s Guild wants to know when they can meet again.  
Council recommends that they may meet in the building, with masks, and social distancing  
enforced, not more than 10 at a time. Quilters should notify the office when they will be  
meeting so that cleaning measures may be taken care of.  
Janelle will communicate plans with this group.

Fellowship

Shepherds continue to make contact, mail cards, phone calls, etc with the 1-4 members each who wish  
to have remain on the shepherd list.  
Many shepherds have received positive feedback.  
No meeting scheduled at this time

Concerns for the Present

Thank you received from Ross DeArmoun for council card/gift, Quilt from Quilter’s guild, and Lindflott  
Scholarship.

Phased Reopening Plan

So far, we are entering Phase 2  
A few communications have been received regarding opinions on the phased plan  
FLC Pastors and council will keep watching national, state, county and synod guidance to determine  
any changes to the plan.

Office Manager Resignation

Need to develop an advertising/recruiting plan  
Determine timeline, and whether employee can retain position until new Pastor is called.  
Discussion of the hours, pay rate, and benefits to determine alignment with current trends in other  
churches.  
**MMSP to accept the resignation of DeAnn Read, with regret. FLC Council are thankful for her  
service to the church during her time in this position. (Heather Rheingans, MaryJo Senne)  
motion passed**  
Suggest scheduling an exit interview. Shana will set this up.

Employee Handbook

Reviewed 2nd draft of proposed FLC Employee Handbook review and update  
Office staff has meeting on Tuesday and may review handbook and update (add-to or delete) items on  
the Job Descriptions.  
Job descriptions for each office position were last updated in 2014.

Call Committee

Letter has been sent to congregation, informing them of the committee’s recommendation for a Special  
Meeting to vote on the call of Pastor Sogge.  
Russ Knudson, chairperson, will be present for Special Meeting.  
Shana Brunsvold and Deb Athey will answer any questions about the contract and benefits package.  
Read Letter of concern from a community member regarding potential of changes to the parsonage in  
the way of pets and fencing. The council takes consideration of this concern.  
Special meeting was announced at June 14 service and will be announced at June 21 service.  
Special meeting with vote to be held June 28, with rain makeup date of July 12.

Organ Meetings

Will discuss at July council meeting, with rescheduled dates TBD pending call of a new Pastor.  
Discussion on how salaries should be broken down and reported in the Focus.  
Discussion for need of better system for tracking and recording of contracts and salary changes for Pastors and  
Office Staff in the future.  
Suggest using Zoom for next regular meeting.

We Go out in God’s Name

**MMSP to Adjourn (MaryJo Senne, Tim Knutson)**

Lord’s Prayer

**Next Council Meeting: July 12**

# August Volunteers

**Acolytes, Lay Readers, Assisting Ministers, Fellowship Time, and Greeters**

We will contact you when routine is back to normal.

**Ushers,**

August 2nd—Sawyer & Michelle Schulz, Mitch & Jess Hanson, James & Steph Eskildsen and families

August 9th—Jerry & Jan Hopperstad, Larry Foley, Doug Fallgatter

August 16th—Dan Hendrikson, Dennis Johnson, Mike & DeAnn Read

August 23rd—David & Sharron Petznick, Kevin and Maeghan Petznick

August 30th—Jake Urbatsch, Dan Reeder, Dennis Reeder, Hal Johnson

**Altar Guild & Share Shoppe**

Rebecca Circle

**Offering Collectors/Counters**

August 2nd—Lee & Becky Okerlund

August 9th—Gloria Fallgatter and Nancy Amundson

August 16th—David & Sharron Petznick

August 23rd—Russ & Delores Knudson

August 30th—Mike & Judy Stevens

**Outdoor worship is being held at 9:00 am in the church's parking lot. If you wish to stay in your car, tune to 88.7 FM to pick up the service.**

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**The worship services and daily devotions are on First Lutheran's website ([www.flcnorthwood.org](http://www.flcnorthwood.org)) and First Lutheran Church and Sunday School Facebook page.**

**First Lutheran Missions**

January 1– December 31, 2020

Bremwood	\$ 75.00
Operation Christmas Child	\$ 281.86
Youth Fund (Bibles & Catechisms)	\$ 300.00
Caring Tree	\$ 342.86
Meals on Wheels	\$ 181.48
Manna	\$ 1,673.47
Heifer International	\$ 707.79
Lutheran World Relief (Trust Fund)	\$ 7,000.00
Riverside Bible Camp	\$ 139.95
Camperships	\$ 45.00
Good Samaritan Fund	\$ 1058.55
Lutheran Services	\$ 143.32
Day Springs	\$ 200.00
Northern Lights Shelter	\$ 50.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 12,249.28</b>

**JUNE GENERAL BUDGET EXPENSES**

PAYROLL:	\$ 13,952.04
ELECTRONIC GIVING EXPENSE	\$ 45.86
CHURCH MAINTENANCE	\$ 425.21
UTILITES	\$ 537.47
TELEPHONE	\$ 133.21
OFFICE EXPENSE	\$ 1,239.56
CHURCH INSURANCE	\$ 2,673.00
NE IA SYNOD	\$ 1,125.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 20,131.35</b>
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 15,096.41</b>
<b>NET</b>	<b>\$ (5,034.94)</b>

**First Lutheran Financial Update**

**June 2020**

Income	\$21,095.00
Electronic Income	\$3,177.47
Expense	\$26,122.20
End of Month	(\$1849.73)
<b><u>January 1-May 31</u></b>	
Income	\$88,539.00
Electronic Income	\$9,994.42
Expense	\$96,976.77
End of Month	\$1,556.65



**Mission Project for August**  
**First Lutheran Youth Fund**

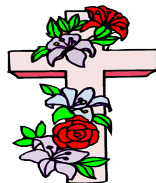
Support of youth activities, 3rd grade Bibles and 1st grade Catechisms.

**MEMORIALS**

Darlene Toft  
\$20.00—Youth Fund

**DONATIONS**

No donations in July





### **Back to School Month**

School is right around the corner! This year's back-to-school time feels a little different than usual for all of us, but imagine what it would be like to be a child or teen with an emotional or behavioral disorder. For the last several months, their routine has been turned upside-down and they've learned to adjust to a new way of life. Moving back into a school year structure can be particularly stressful and it can be difficult to concentrate and cope.

Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) provides mental health services to children and families across the state. It's our job to relate to children who might feel alone or misunderstood. Our therapists provide virtual telehealth therapy sessions with children while our Behavioral Health Intervention Services team collaborates with families virtually or in a community setting to help them develop skills like anger management and healthy decision-making. LSI also provides 24-hour mental health care at the Bremwood and Beloit Residential Treatment Centers in Waverly and Ames to empower Iowa's most vulnerable children and teens.

We thank you for your support of LSI's mission as we respond together to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service! We know there are more Iowa children in need of this critical care. If you would like to learn more about how you can give a gift to support these crucial services, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI director of philanthropy and church relations, at 563-676-2065 or [Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org](mailto:Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org).

*Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at [www.LSIowa.org](http://www.LSIowa.org) and [www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa](https://www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa).*

### **We are Still Here: LSI's Therapy Services**

When LSI's workforce began working remote as a COVID-19 precaution, therapist Andrea knew she would need to adjust to a new way of providing therapy to the clients she serves.

In particular, one individual she met with struggled with anxiety on a daily basis. With the pandemic, however, her anxiety deepened and she spiraled to levels she hadn't encountered in years. And she was afraid she would no longer be able to see Andrea and receive the weekly therapy she'd relied on.

But that wasn't stopping Andrea. She set up a home office where she could provide telehealth virtual therapy sessions to all her clients in need of the same consistent care they were used to. Andrea used this time to work with her client on self-care strategies, coping skills, and mindfulness to help her client stay grounded when she felt anxious.

Andrea's client now has the tools she needs to handle the difficult days through this crisis, and Andrea is able to continue providing life-changing serves to Iowa children, adults, and families in her community.

Since the church building is closed to social gatherings until further notice, the August calendar has been omitted.

# August

1. Sharon Anderson
2. Alex Eilertson, Ian Husske, Kayla Senne
3. Bethany Gentz
4. Scott Anderson, Ashlyn Schaefer, Jenna Schaefer, Karl Kittleson
5. Bonnie Olson, Ronald Shupe, Mary Toresdahl
6. Bob Harris
- 7.
8. Peggy Hodson, Carol Liljedahl, Shayne Olson, Greg Reyerson
9. Luane Butler, Aubrey Johnson, Ronan Penfold, Kally Reindl, Brady Tufte, Wendy Weisert
10. Richard Butler, Robert Butler, Kennedy Christianson, Tanner Haberman, Vivienne Vandell, Rusty Wahl
11. Larry Klitzke, Naomi LaRue, Becky Okerlund, Kam Reindl
12. Laura Mattern, Richie Reeder
13. Charlotte Berry, Ruth Hanson, Bryan Koster, Veda Waller
14. Sasha Holstad, Landon Perkins, Emily Werner, Beatrix Koenig-Fierova
15. Lexie Breitsprecher, Kelsey Katcher
16. Marliss Bachtle, Dean Cowell
17. Nicholas Kunz, Melissa Meyer, Jennifer Reyerson, Jaidyn Thompson
18. Heather VanRyswyk
19. Sue Braun, Jace Gentz, Sherry Olson
20. Matthew Borcharding, Carolyn Goeders, Lindsey Moore
21. Courtney Athey, Tina Kuennen, Thomas Midtgaard
22. Katie Chodur, LaVaughn Govig, Sharyl Lunde
23. Russell Julseth, Raven Flatness
- 24.
25. Kevin Braun
26. Kristin Craig, Boden Braun, Sue Loken, Suzanne Reyerson, Marilyn Severson, Anneke Urbatsch
27. Ron Brockman, Kathleen Gentz (Ron), Myra Harris
28. Shirley Olson, Hayley Maher
29. Carol Lukes
30. Scott Hengesteg
31. James Iverson, Trent Midtgaard

