

#### Siblings in Christ,

We find ourselves about halfway through our 40-Day Lenten journey. April has arrived, and we are sitting in a bit of a grey area. The in-between, if you will. It's the "already but not yet" we confess each week when we gather together to worship our Saviour and share in the meal of Communion that reminds us of God's abundant Grace and Love for the world. Every time we share in Communion, we remember what Christ has done for us and what Christ will do for us when he returns to make everything right in the world. And when I step outside into Nature, I see reflections of this waiting everywhere I look.

The temperature fluctuates wildly during this time of year, as birds, animals, and plants come out and then go back into hiding on any given day. I've already witnessed irises beginning to peek out from the thawing soil, ready to sprout in the months to come and grow into their full magnificence. I've heard birds singing in the warming Sun—a sign that Spring is here—but then go silent as temperatures dip during the day or cold rain arrives. And, I've been doing the thing where I start the day with the heat on in my car and end it with putting on the AC or rolling down the windows to enjoy some fresh air. These signs in Nature remind me that warm, sunny days will come—but just not yet. And they remind me that it's okay, even good to sit in this place of waiting, especially in a society where waiting for anything is seen as a great inconvenience.

I think of the Disciples who spent the time waiting after they witnessed their Rabbi, their teacher, their dear friend be crucified by Rome and sealed up in a tomb. We know they waited in uncertainty and great fear of what might come—would they be next? Would the authorities track down any of Jesus' associates and punish them for following him and spreading his countercultural message of love, grace, and abundance for all people? They knew not what would come, yet—they were not alone. They had each other. And God was right there with them through it all. They had no other choice but to wait and see what would happen. If the joy they shared would return. If they could carry on following Jesus whatever that might look like. If the Son would rise again.

We all know what happened next, and we will celebrate Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday. In the meantime, I invite you to sit in this place of waiting. Don't rush to Easter. Take some time to be fully present and attuned to the world around you and wonder where and how Christ may be calling you to wait with another person, to reflect God's love, to lament, to think about the grey areas in life, to share in all that it means to be human. As Tom Petty says, "The waiting is the hardest part." The good news is, just like the Disciples on that first Holy Saturday, we never wait alone. God is with us, we are guided by the Holy Spirit, and we have each other. This month, join us as we wait together during this second half of Lent, eagerly anticipating the Joy that will come on Easter morning.

In Peace, Pastor D.J.

### **April Greeting**

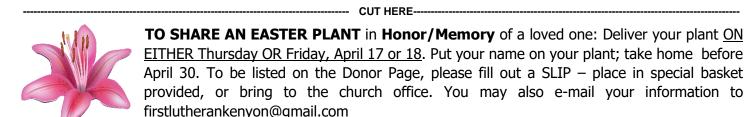
Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice!

Or, I guess, maybe wait until the 20th, when Easter dawns and we celebrate Jesus's resurrection. (If that was a spoiler, please poke your pastor next time you see him!) In some ways, after a March that brought more snow than the rest of my first winter back in the Midwest, it feels like spring and Easter can't come fast enough. And yet—isn't there something soothing about our Lenten practices?

Lent seems to be the one time of year when I can reliably fall into a daily spiritual practice. I don't know if it's the extra feeling of devotion I gain from a midweek service and fellowship time or just how readily available so many of my favorite authors make Lenten devotionals, but I've actually looked forward to this ancient season for the last several years. This year, I am joyfully reading a daily devotion from Rev. Lizzie Mcmanus-Dail's new book, *God Didn't Make Us to Hate Us*. A few years ago, Kate Bowler taught me via Instagram that Sundays are "little Easters" in Lent and to give up one's practice that day; strangely, I've found this gives me enough space that the practice doesn't become oppressive, but that I miss it during that day off!

I won't be able to be in all of our churches this month, but you're invited to join me for the first part of my internship project: an Easter Saturday service at Wanamingo Lutheran Church at 7 pm, Saturday, April 19. This will be fun and contemplative take on an Easter vigil. We will take time to remember the fear of the disciples during the time hope seemed lost—and remember stories of God's mercy and care for humanity. If you can't come in person, but would like to check it out, it will be streaming at https://www.youtube.com/@WanamingoTrinityLutheran

	Always remember,	, even in the darkest times,	God's light shines for you	ıVicar Yvonne
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Slip Deadline – <u>Sunday, April 13</u> - Palm Sunday

IN HONOR/MEMORY OF (circle one)						
GIVEN BY_						
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#### TO GIVE AN EASTER ORGAN FUND GIFT in Honor/Memory of a loved one:

1) Complete this slip, 2) <u>include</u> your check/or/cash, and 3) Place both slip & payment in an envelope (provided) marked Easter Organ Fund. Make checks payable to First Lutheran and write "Organ Repair Fund" in the memo line. Leave in the special basket provided or bring to the church office. A Donor Page w/b displayed & emailed.

Slip Deadline - Sunday, April 13 - Palm Sunday

IN HONOR/MEMORY OF <i>(circle one)</i>	
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GIVEN BY	

#### First Ev Lutheran Church Council Minutes – March 19, 2025 @ 7:19 PM

Welcome and Call to Order: President Erica Aronson

**Devotions:** Tammy Fletcher

**Present:** Erica Aronson, Pastor D.J. Chatelaine, Candy Herrlich, Carmen Nesseth, Brad Nesseth, Eric

Hoversten, Tammy Fletcher, Oliver Bauer, Luke Cordes

**Approve Agenda:** Motion to approve the agenda with additions Carmen/Eric/Pass

#### **Consent Agenda Items:**

**Secretary's Report:** Reviewed as printed in the February Church Newsletter with 2 additional changes due to 2 incorrect dates.

**Treasurer's Report**: Heating bill is starting to catch up. There was a recording error of \$200 that was recorded under other- this is getting moved over to food shelf. Attendance is up on average at about 9 people (in the last 8 weeks we have averaged 62 people). Our general giving is slightly down, due to organ giving? Organ fund balance in 6 months of fundraising is \$62,203.00. We are going to send thank you cards to the outside organizations that have donated to the organ fund (Moland and Kenyon Fireman's Relief).

Pastors Report: This month seems to have flown by—for me at least! I continue to appreciate the many ways you all show up to lead in our congregation—from hosting community meals and coffee hours to leading worship and gathering times together. It is a blessing to journey through Lent with each of you. Here are some updates from my ministry from the last council meeting: Continuing to make home visits. Ongoing prayers are appreciated for our homebound, especially for those facing new challenges with health/mental illness. **Kenyon Community Connections** No open prayer this month: I was home sick, KAIC Fundraiser is coming up on April 6. Chris and Harris have the full report from the KAIC meeting. Kudos to the organ committee for hosting the Pulled Pork Dinner prior to Copper Street Brass. It was a tasty meal, and the concert was fun to attend to support the music department. Working with Kim Helgeson at the city office to coordinate a service project for our middle/high school youth to take part in over the summer, as a part of the Summer Stretch program that will happen with Gol & Christ Lutheran (Faribault). Service of remembrance for the elementary school in Wanamingo is in the works. March Madness Watch Party happening tomorrow (Thursday) after school-6 pm. Thanks to EdYou committee for helping with this. FYI Vang-Dennison is in between pastors. Pr. Paul Graham's last Sunday was March 16. I am covering for them in emergency pastoral care situations this week as well as April 7-12. Good Friday moving to either Dale or Holden due to the Pastor leaving. **Confirmation** Acolytes ongoing. Students involved in leading Lenten Wednesday night services. The Mentorship program started last Wednesday. **Synod events** Council as Leaders on Saturday, March 8 from 9-3 at Trinity in Owatonna. Thanks to Amy and Erica for attending this event. Synod Assembly registration is open. 3 delegates plus 1 youth/young adult (under 30) Early registration deadline is April 19 (save \$50/person). Life Passages None since the last meeting. Other May 14 is Baccalaureate joint at Gol 7:30 we will do our own on May 18. Continued invitation for families to sign their kids up for summer camp. Bryana has more information on the options. Perhaps we highlight these opportunities during announcements one Sunday? Thanks to Luke Cordes and Elsie Braaten for presenting on their Youth Gathering experiences! And, thanks to Elsie for your leadership during the service tonight. Special thanks to Tom Ersland for helping with lead music on Wednesday nights during Lent. Thank you all for your discernment in cancelling Ash Wednesday, and for going with the flow of things doing the imposition of Ashes on Sunday, March 9. Thank you to Susan Hoversten and Christine Ersland for their leadership in preparing for and organizing the upcoming Garage Sale. February 20-March 19 Mileage (\$97.82) + other expenses (\$0) Total: \$97.82 I wanted to end with this: Watched theologian Kate Bowler who did an interview at Duke with Coach K, talked about leadership and showing love in good times and bad times. A good leader is three A's: Agile, Adaptable, Accountable and then Honorary A for Attitude.

**Presidents Report:** Since our last meeting I attended the pulled pork dinner and the Copper Street Brass band concert on Feb. 24 which were both fabulous! Thanks to all who put on the meal and got Claire and the band to come, that was neat to see. On March 8 I attended the Council as Leaders assembly in Owatonna. We had options for picking which topics to attend for the two different 1-hour workshops. Between Pastor DJ, Amy

and myself we decided it would be best to divide and conquer so we could get as much out of it as we could. For the first session I took "Making Meetings Meaningful" and I am going to apply a few things from that session into this week's council meeting. My second session was "Discerning Vocation for Congregational Mission and Vision." I was really dreading this day- mostly because it was an all-day event and it was super nice out, but it ended up being an excellent day that I took away a lot of meaning information from. Sunday March 9 I went to see the school play "Almost Maine", I just love the KW theatre- Elsie is a fantastic artist. So far in March I have filled in for Sunday school twice- March 2 and March 9.

Motion to approve the consent agenda including mileage and expenses: Tammy/Carmen/Pass

#### **Ongoing items:**

- 1. Council as Leaders: Pastor D.J. went to "Planned Giving" the presenter can come and talk to us at no cost, we all thought that was a good coffee hour idea. His second session he went to "Global Ministry," we are getting a new ministry South Sudan which makes up a few different tribal communities. The Pastor is YangTut, he will be ordained at Our Saviors in Owatonna on Psalm Sunday. Erica as noted in her report attended "Making Meetings Meaningful" and "Discerning Vocation for Congregational Mission and Vision." Amy Lee attended "Updating Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions" where she learned the ELCA updates their model constitution every 3 years and there are some items within that ELCA model that every church must include in their constitution and are required to uphold. The recommendation is that churches review and update, if needed, their constitution every 3 years as well. Our FLC constitution was last updated in 2018 (Thanks Tammy!) and, at that time, followed the model ELCA constitution. However, we were told that there were "many" updates to the last model released in 2022. Amy was thinking that it would be good to review our 2018 version and confirm that it is up to date with the 2022 "must have" changes this spring & summer. Then, after the ELCA releases the 2025 updates sometime in August, it will be guick work to update and conform to that model over the fall. Then, that will give us time to present any changes that we make to be voted on at the annual meeting in January. Amy's second session was "Building a Connected Church: Strengthening Council + Congregation Relationships".
- **2. Organ Repair:** Garage sale is moving along. Susan and Christine will start to set up after soup supper on Wednesday 3/26/25. There will also be a Breakfast Taco bar that morning when the sale starts. The ladies would appreciate everything submitted for the garage sale before Wednesday so they can have the sale as organized as possible. Remember to submit pictures of large items so it can be posted on a bulletin board. There hasn't been a meeting in a while- they will come together soon after the sale. They talked about doing a "makers table" at the farmers market this summer if you make onesie twosies or just want to donate your items- First will have a table at the farmers market with items for sale and the funds will go to the Organ Fund. Brad is going to reach out to Obermeier to see if they can come in and tell us what we can expect before they begin.
- **3. Colombia Trip:** Couple of interested people Next steps more in-depth meeting/presentation. This will be a multi congregation collaboration. This is all pending on world events. Pastor D.J.'s mom is there right now, so when she comes back everyone will get a fresh perspective.

#### **New items:**

- **1. FLC Care Fund:** Approved in the same amount as last child we helped (Tammy to investigate that). M/S Eric/Tammy.
- 2. Constitution review: On Going- Tammy Volunteered to help since she helped with the last one.
- **3. Michaelson's Funeral Home** came to Harris at a recent Commercial Club meeting. They let Harris know they had interest in purchasing land from First Lutheran to put in a new funeral home as their current location is a "money pit". We as a committee have said we would like to know what Michaelson's are interested in on paper in as much detail as they can give us right now so we don't have rumors floating around and we can present things formally to the congregation if there is anything to even present.

#### **Youth Co-Rep Reports:**

Four individual wrestlers made it to state. The wrestling tournament weekend of the 15 went well. Boys' basketball lost to Fillmore and Girls basketball lost to Houston. KW Band got the "Superior" award which is the highest award you can get. March 10 Spring sports started. April 7 is the first Baseball game in Blooming

Prairie. April 3 is the first Softball game at Bethlehem Academy. The one Act Play "Almost Maine" was March 8 and 9 and starred our very own Elsie Braaten. Track and Field has their first meet on March 22 in Mankato. The band Solo Ensemble is April 4 in Kenyon. Golf April 7 Cannon Falls. The prom is May 3 (both youths currently state they are not going). Wednesday May 7 High School Band and Choir concert. The basketball banquet is on Friday March 28. Ross Aldorfer and Oliver Bauer were named "All Area Honors" in Basketball. April 1 Fishing Club starts There will be three separate tournaments (there are currently 30 members).

#### **Committee Reports:**

**FLCW:** April 18 Psalm Sunday Brunch, Linda Cordes got a thriven gift card to help with this. Cannon River Conference Spring Event Saturday May 3, 8am – noon, signup sheets on the harvest table downstairs- cost is \$15.00, location this year is Vang in Dennison.

**Worship/Evangelism:** Small choir getting together a one-time performance on psalm Sunday-more men are needed, all ages welcome. Practices are every Sunday right after service- no longer than 10 minutes. Sunday March 30 during coffee hour input needed on what is a blended service. On the recent survey the number was up for this need, we just do not know what this means- we need to hear from you all on what this means to you. Provided ongoing discussion of increasing youth in church with ideas shared. Updated Holy Week planning including Maudy Thursday which will include first communion for youth, Palm Sunday with breakfast following, Good Friday service at Vang and Easter Sunday. Discussed Mother's Day and Senior Recognition Sunday. Also talked about the upcoming fundraiser for Dax Eggert and how church could provide support.

**Property and Management:** Epoxy will be going down on the steps a company from Rochester will be doing the installation they will look very nice and have a non-slip coating (texture feel to them). **Stewardship:** Did not meet, but they are encouraging everyone to help and attend the garage sale.

**Youth and Education:** ED You committee has not met yet this month. We volunteered to do the soup supper on Wednesday March 26. **Past events:** Bingo, youth presentation from their 2024 summer NYG. **Upcoming events:** Palm Sunday brunch, care packages for young adult members 18-22 years, possible Easter egg hunt on Easter Sunday and spring ditch clean up.

**KAIC:** Eric and Susan will be making the soup for the KAIC fundraiser on April 6. Next KAIC meeting is Tuesday March 25.

**Endowment/Long Range Planning/Personnel**: Did not meet

**Reflection:** Tammy asked if her financial/attendance charts were helpful. We all said they were helpful and showed a good picture. She is planning to update the congregation quarterly on financials as well.

#### **Upcoming Events:**

- Get Organ-ized Garage Sale March 29 with Taco Bar breakfast
- Adult Forum March 30
- Care Packages for College students (18-22), packing will take place April 6 (get your college students
  details to Pastor D.J. ASAP). We are looking for Donations: Snacks, gum, mini notebooks, pens, toys, etc.
  Contact Bryana with questions.
- KW Choir Waffle Feed April 12 @ First Lutheran
- Palm Sunday Brunch April 13
- Maundy Thursday First Communion April 17, 6:30
- Synod Assembly May 30 and 31 \*\*\*Still in need of a youth rep to attend.

**Next meeting** April 16 at 6pm

**Devotions** Brad

**Adjournment** Motion to adjourn Carmen/Tammy/Pass Time: 8:47pm

**Closing with the Lord's Prayer** 

Respectfully submitted, Erica Aronson, Council President



SEASONS:		1	2 W LENT 4	3	4	5
LENT		12-1 Open				
HOLY WEEK EASTER		Prayer Time-	5 Endowment 5:30 Soup	7 AA		
		In Sanctuary	6:30 Worship	Ed-Wing Stairwell Closed		
<b>6</b> LENT 5	7	8	9 W LENT 5	10	11	12
9 Worship 10 Coffee 10 Sun School: Packing care pkgs for our young adults. 11 First Communion Prep Meeting. 11:30-1:30 KAIC Fundraiser @ Gol	5 Worship/ Evangelism		5:30 Soup 6:30 Worship	1 LOVE DAY 7 AA		Waffle Feed Fundraiser At First
13 PALM SUN	14 PLANT & ORGA	15 N	16	17 MAUNDY THURSDAY	18 GOOD FRIDAY	19 Early registra-
9 Worship- Passion Rdg, Intern	SLIP DEADLINE		NO Confirmation 6 Council	6:30 Worship	7 Gd Fri Ser-	tion deadline
Yvonne, Singers			o Council	7 AA	vice @ Dale	for May Synod
10 Sun School 10 FLCW Brunch				22,110, 21	ANITO	Assembly
				BRING PL	ANTS	
20 EASTER	21	22	23	24	25	26
9 Worship Intern Yvonne, Bells & Brass NO Sun School 10 Coffee		7 pm KAIC	NO Confirmation	1 LOVE DAY 7 AA		Fundraiser for Dax Eggert @ Knyn Fire Dept
		•	PASTOR D.J. (	ONE	-	
27	28	29	30	Ц	appy Easte	10
9 Worship Intern Yvonne,			5:30-7	,	rabbl raseg	L
Noisy Offering			Confirmation			
10 Sun School 10 Coffee 2 SPRING DITCH CLEAN UP	PICK UP PLANTS				0 0	
May Things						

#### May Things

MAY 7 HS BAND & CHOIR CONCERT
MAY 14 BACCALAUREATE AT GOL
MAY 18 SENIOR SUNDAY AT FIRST
MAY 30-31 SYNOD ASSEMBLY – MANKATO



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# RPRIL Newsletter





Amid April's showers, find the courage to bloom like a resilient wildflower.

blogtobloom.com