

*First Evangelical Lutheran Church; Grand Rapids, MN
A member of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod*

AUGUST FIRST FRUITS





*Serving Christ by proclaiming Christ
crucified in the*

Notes from the Pastor's Desk



At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:1-4)

Despite the rising costs of everything, millions of Americans are hitting the highways this time of the year on their family vacations. Among the sea of vehicles flooding the roadways is my own. Equipped with our car top carrier loaded with everything we couldn't leave home without, our trunk bursting with luggage, and floorboard littered with snacks, we began our adventure. Before we could hit the county line the noise from the back seats was resurrecting the memory of the scenes from a Griswold summer vacation playing in my head. "How long is the drive today?"; "Where are we stopping?"; "What's for lunch?"; "It's too hot; it's too cold; turn the radio up; turn the radio down... I have to go potty." At times, the incessant asking was just too much for me to bear! After a solid day of driving, I settled in my bed, opened up my devotional book, and read the text above from Matthew. I laughed out loud! The greatest in the kingdom are those who are like children?! That must be a joke.

But it is not a joke. The joke is how we adults think we can do anything in this life to earn a place of honor in the Father's house. That our "good works" should be tallied up and a wage of prestige afforded us because of how great we can present ourselves to be. That night I was settling into bed with a feeling of accomplishment, patting myself on the back for how I patiently endured my children, how I sacrificed where I wanted to stop for lunch so they could have their nuggets, and how I never raised my voice except at that driver as we went through Chicago. Oh, I had built quite the case for myself on how and why I was a pretty great dad that day. If you're like me, it is easy to fool yourself into thinking you're so sacrificial, all the while, looking inward at how well you're doing it. All kidding aside, I was horrible at being sacrificial that day and that verse above stopped me in my tracks as I tried to fall asleep.

As I began to relive the day in my memory, I caught glimpses of my kids asking for things that my wife and I had already bought and packed because we knew they would need it. They

would simply express their needs, with the certainty that their parents would supply for them, such as meals and opportunity to use the bathroom. They never panicked, doubted, or felt desperate. Right down to our four-year-old, they all felt like they would be cared for; not because they earned it or proved to be the greatest. No, because they knew they were loved and trusted in that love. That night as I made these revelations, I thanked my Father in Heaven that my children could experience the kind of love he shows me through my flaws and mistakes.

As Jesus speaks these words anew into our hearts now, he does so, reminding us of what our Father sacrificed for us, that we might be called the Children of God. By supplying us what we need for this body and soul every day, even before we could ask for it, chiefly the sacrifice that would provide for our forgiveness and secure our eternal life: His own Son's blood on the cross. Simply reflecting trust and love back toward him as a child would toward their parents is all that matters and all that is necessary. We are simply asked to wait, believe, be still, and watch our Father be our Father. There is nothing in this life that we can accomplish that could be added to the title, "God's Child." So, humble yourself each day as the child you are!

Humble yourself and see God provide, and boy does he. Like as he supplies the patience I need to drive through Chicago and the love I need to offer to my kids. In addition to all of this, he gives me joy that even touched my heart that night as I laid awake in bed and thought about how He supplies everything I need to care for my kids, knowing that everything they have is from Him.

You might be struggling with some questions of self-worth. You might be wrestling with inventing new ways to prove yourself to those around you. You might even be wondering where you're going get the patience, endurance, or next meal you so desperately need. The answer to all of these life situations is found in this verse above. You are a child of the most-high God. He loves you; He makes you a member of his family through the death of his son. "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?" (Romans 8:32) The gift might not look like you want it at first, you might even miss it if you're not looking, like I missed the all-day the lesson my kids were teaching me in the car. But, at the end of the day, He will deliver because he has already delivered your soul. To God be the Glory!

In His Strength, (Philippians 4:13)

Rev. Dr. Patrick Lovejoy
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flcgr.org / 1-218-999-4101

Youth News



Jessica Pellinen
Family Ministry Program Director



Coming Soon: The Tree of Life Vacation Bible Camp

On **August 10th from 9-4**, First Lutheran will hold a special Vacation Bible Camp called The Tree of Life: God's Promise of Salvation out at Gunn Park. This VBS examines God's plan of salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Each session of this VBS explores Bible accounts that guide us through the epic story of salvation, from creation in the beginning of Genesis, to the cross of Christ in the beginning of the New Testament, and finally to Jesus' return on the Last Day in the Book of Revelation.

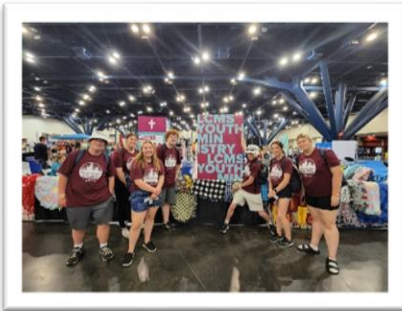
Be sure to join us for fun lessons, music, crafts, snacks, and activities to learn how Jesus' cross became the tree of life in which God forgives us and gives us everlasting life. A few of the fun crafts the children will be doing are coloring a kite, paint sun catchers, and create a prayer journal. They will even have the opportunity to go fishing on the dock! We are so excited for this opportunity to teach the children in our community all about Jesus and how He is our Savior! To register your child or sign up to be a volunteer please go to: www.flcgr.org/vbs

We are still in need of a few more volunteers during the day. This commitment is for one day only plus any prep work ahead of time. The areas that we are still in need of are guides and Jr. guides, Picnic helpers, registration, Games, and lunch. Please register online or call Jessica at 218-999-4102 if interested in volunteering.



Youth Gathering July 7th-14th

The Youth Gathering Participants want to thank the congregation for their generosity in supporting them to Houston in July. They are making pancakes for you on August 21st in between services starting at 9:00. They will also give a presentation on their experience. We hope you can make it!



Tall Timber Days Parade

Tall Timber Days Parade is on August 7th. Everyone is welcome to walk or ride the float in the parade with us. We received 2nd place in the most decorative float last year! We will walk together from the church after the second service up to the fairgrounds. The parade will leave at about 12:40. Bring a quick lunch to eat before we head up. All youth can be picked up at the church after the parade. We will need to dismantle the float and have an ice cream treat to cool us down.



Christian Youth Education

Starting September 14th Wednesday afterschool Christian Education Ministry will start. We are combining Sunday school, Religious Release Time and Youth Group into one program. Every week we will meet from 3:00 right after school until 5:30. The program will start off with group snack then branch off into their perspective rooms until 4:00 or 4:15. We will meet back up as a large group for youth group until it's time to leave. This is for ages Kindergarten to twelfth grade.

We are looking for adults to teach the children from 3 until 4:15 every Wednesday. We are also looking for substitute teachers that can fill in. Please sign up in the three-ring binder if you are interested in being a leader. The curriculum that will be used is Answers in Genesis.

On Sunday mornings from 9:30-10:15 will be our music programs for ages Kindergarten to Twelfth grade. Please sign up in the three-ring binder to show us your interest. Some of the areas we are looking into are youth-colored bells, regular bells, band instruments, singing, and praise team.

Toddler and Preschool will have Sunday school on Sunday mornings from 9:30-10:15. This is not changing.

Family Fun Day

On August 21st after the second service we will have a family fun day out at Gibbs Beach off of 169 North right after Scenic 7 on the right. The board of youth will provide lunch. They have a nice beach for swimming, a diving board on the deeper side of the pier and a pavilion. Grab your family, swimsuits, swimming equipment and join us for a beach day! Everyone is welcome!



Welcome to Our Church

Sunday, June 12th the Assimilation Committee held a picnic lunch at noon in honor of the “New Members” who have joined us over the past few months. We had over 100 people stay for lunch, and everyone seemed to enjoy the time for fellowship and the beautiful weather. When you see a new face in the congregation, please reach out and introduce yourself and get to know them. Over the next few months we will be highlighting some of them in the newsletter.

Roger and Sue Brown

Roger and Sue Brown live in Grand Rapids. They transferred their membership from Our Redeemer. Roger retired after 38 years from Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad.



Keith Seward

Keith Seward lives in Grand Rapids. Keith has been attending with Nira for the past few years. He would like everyone to know that he has always felt very welcomed and has made some very special friends here at First. We are all enjoying the insight that Keith brings to the Sunday morning Bible Class.

Bill and Sue Ziege

We feel blessed that they have decided to join our congregation. God had a plan for them and it all worked out. How convenient for them to live so close to the church. We wish them many years of retirement in their new home.





August Women's Night

August 18th, 2022

6pm – 8pm

All women of First Lutheran are invited for a fun evening of fellowship.

We will not be spending any money but please bring your purse.

Beverages will be provided.

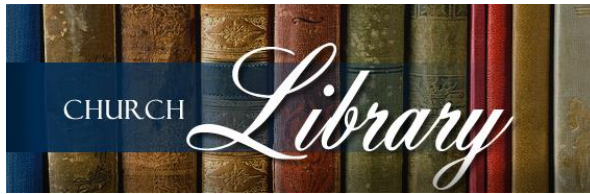
You may bring a snack to share if you would like to do so.

Contact Cheryl Finnvik with questions or comments (612) 201-1326

Watch for additional New Members to be highlighted in future Newsletters.



Ruby's Pantry distribution was on July 18th. The leadership team sold 300 shares to members in our community! Many volunteers showed up to help distribute the food to our community, thank you volunteers for your time and patience! Many people were happy with the food they received as it helps with their groceries for the month. Especially as prices continue to raise. If you are interested in volunteering, be sure to go to rubyspantry.org and fill out an application form or fill one out located on the door to the front office in the church. Donating snacks such as cookies or bars for the volunteers are also very much appreciated. To participate and purchase a share, the cost is \$25 per share, and you will line up on 2nd Avenue NE and enter the Grand Rapids Armory from the parking lot. No checks or credit cards will be accepted, only cash.



LIBRARY CORNER FOR AUGUST 2022

There is no such thing as too many books. However, there is such a thing as not enough room!

Greetings gentle First readers! Darlene reports that the number of books and DVDs checked out this year so far is: Jan – 30 books, no DVDs; Feb – 22 books, 1 DVD; Mar – 45 books, no DVDs; April – 24 books, no DVDs; May – 31 books, no DVDs; and June – 23 books, no DVDs. Total checked out: 175 with just 1 DVD to this point. We have many DVDs for grownups to choose from, so please take a look.

Janie finds that there's nothing much better on a sunny day than to curl up in the shade with a good book, (or even on a rainy day). We've been blessed with a fine library that has a wonderful assortment of books to choose from. In fact, you never have to experience *abibliophobia! You're encouraged to find a subject or author that can capture your imagination. – Your library volunteers Janie, Darlene and Shela.

****abibliophobia: uh-bib-li-uh-fo-bee-uh. The fear of running out of reading material.***

A TIME TO DANCE (book 1) and **A TIME TO EMBRACE** (book 2) by Karen Kingsbury, 813.54 Kin. These two books must be read in this order. You may have seen the TV movie based on book 1, but the book is far superior to the movie. A family strongly committed to God and each other struggles to maintain their faith as pressures of life drive them further and further apart from each other, from God, and even their community's support. This excellent Christian author has again crafted a realistic and poignant story of loss and restoration. – *Reviewed by Alice Hill.*

GRANDPA'S MUSIC: A story about Alzheimer's by Albert Whitman, found in Juvenile books. This book lovingly portrays the story of a family dealing with Alzheimer's disease. The colorful illustrations and large type make it an excellent choice for reading to groups of children. Grandpa comes to live with his family in their home. Each family member has responsibilities for his care. He loves singing and playing the piano which encourages his ability to communicate as his Alzheimer's disease

progresses. In the end he enters an elderly care facility. The book is written to increase understanding of Alzheimer's disease by young children ages 4 – 10. (Review taken from Libraries Alive.)

Books 1, 2 and 3 of the TALL TIMBER TRILOGY by Margo Hansen, 813.54 Han. This series titled **GREATLY BELOVED, ONLY BELOVED,** and **BROTHER BELOVED** is set in the logging industry of Grand Rapids, Minnesota from 1888 to 1908. Though we're all thoroughly familiar with this subject, the author has done much research on logging in that time frame. She has managed to craft a unique story of two separate families when a stunning revelation leaves them with an unsolvable problem. The story also contains much personal witnessing by family members to each other. A surprisingly interesting series. – *Reviewed by Alice Hill.*

NINE LIVES TO ETERNITY by Scott D. Gottschalk, 92 Got. This book is a true story of repeatedly cheating death; an inspirational and faith-driven human triumph, and has truly made an impact on readers around the world. This life-affirming book outlines each of the author's twenty-seven brushes with death. Scott believes in guardian angels, because he's personally been touched by angels. He was raised on a livestock and cropping farm in southeastern Minnesota near the small village of Byron. He and his wife now live in central Minnesota near the small village of Kimball. "From the very day of my most recent encounter with death, I've concluded that God's plan for me is somehow not yet finished. I passionately believe that the Lord has a mission for me, and until my job on earth is finished, I will not be called to my heavenly Creator no matter how dangerous my situation or how severe my injuries may be. For this reason, I'm completely convinced that my Lord and Savior has blessed me with a message that needs to be shared through the words of this book," Gottschalk shares. "Hopefully, the messages about my own personal witness to our Lord may in fact make an impact in your own life."

Read and Relax

The Ceremony of the Offertory

Have you ever noticed the subtle ceremony involved in receiving the offerings during the Divine Service? After all the offerings have been collected, they are brought forward and given to the pastor or one of his assistants. The pastor then turns toward the altar, and as he slightly bows his head, the collection plates with the offerings in them are raised slightly to the Lord and then placed either on the altar or a table for the offerings. Why do we do have this ceremony? And what does it teach us? For that is what ceremony does; it teaches, as the Augsburg Confession tells us, what we need to know about Christ (AC XXIV, 1–3).

Originally, this ceremony included more than simply bringing forward what was collected in the offering plates. The elements for the Holy Communion—the bread and the wine—were brought forward along with the offering plates. As the offering plates and the elements were lifted toward the Lord, and placed upon the altar, the elements would be put in the center and the altar, now made a table, would be set for the Lord’s Supper.

These gifts brought to the altar came from the sweat of the people’s brow. It is the bread and wine, the fruits of the peoples’ labor in this fallen world. After six days of labor and toil, the people would bring a generous proportion for the Lord’s work. It was set upon the altar and offered to the Lord for Him to take up and press into His service for His gracious work in and among them.

For what they offered to the Lord from the sweat of their brow, the bread of anxious toil, came back to them as the bread of life, the bread come down from heaven that whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup would receive life through the forgiveness of their sins.

This is not unlike what the Lord did for His people in the Old Testament:

You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year. And before the Lord your God, in the place that he will choose, to make his name dwell there, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always. And if the way is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, when the Lord your God blesses you, because the place is too far from you, which the Lord your God chooses, to set his name there, then you shall turn it into money and bind up the money in your hand and go to the place that the Lord your God chooses and spend the money for whatever

you desire—oxen or sheep or wine or strong drink, whatever your appetite craves. And you shall eat there before the Lord your God and rejoice, you and your household.

What a blessing! God provides for us in all things. He provides bread from the sweat of our brows, and He receives this from us in the first fruits offerings we give to Him in thanksgiving and praise. He receives and turns it into spiritual bread, heavenly bread, the bread of eternal life and gives it back to us so that we might have joy. So, the next time you are in the Divine Service, watch this ceremony in wonder, that the Lord gives back to us, what we have given to Him so that we may rejoice in the salvation He has won upon the cross and gives to us in His supper.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: [lcms.org/stewardship](https://www.lcms.org/stewardship)

First Lutheran New Church Pictorial Directory

Photographer's will be taking pictures on August 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Weekday appointments are from 2:00 until 8:00 and Saturday from 10:00 until 5:00. If you have not scheduled an appointment, you can call Pam Clairmont (218-259-4538) or Kathy Hohenstein (326-8856). We have had a very good response from our members and want to thank everyone for participating.

Everyone who has their picture taken for the directory will receive a free 8x10 and a copy of the church directory. Individuals not photographed can purchase a copy of the directory for \$15.00. There will be a signup sheet in the 3-ring notebook outside the church office for you to order a copy. Payment will be required at that time.

*Thank you,
Church Directory Committee*

“Sharing the Love of Jesus”

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES - UNAPPROVED

JULY 12, 2022

Present: Greg Taylor, Pam Clairmont, Molly Goplin, Les Flem, Jennifer Flem, Doug Carlson, Tom Lattimore, Linda Urevig

Call to order: Tom L. called the meeting to order at 5:35PM

Opening devotion and prayer: Tom L. gave the opening devotion (Distractions from God’s Word) and prayer.

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes

***Motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the Consent Agenda with additions to Unfinished Business (4. Education Wing Updates) and New Business (4. Board Directional Goals; 5. Organ Issues).

Oral Reports of Boards and Committees

1. Boards of Christian Education & Youth: Report in Packet/Pam C.
2. Board of Elders: Report in Packet/Les F.
3. Boards of Human Care & Missions: No Meeting/ Molly G. stated that there is a need for Board Members.
4. Board of Stewardship – No meeting in July/Doug C. stated that they need at least two counters and a Board Member
5. Board of Trustees – Greg T. – Linda U. stated the importance of communication between Brad and the Funeral Coordinator. If Brad is unavailable, Brian Johnson would be the second contact person.
6. AV Ministry Committee: No Meeting/ Tom L.
7. Revolving Trust Fund Committee: No Meeting/ Greg T.
8. Wiebe Grant Committee: No Requests/Greg T.
9. Direction and Planning Committee: No Meeting/Greg T.

Family Ministry Program Director’s Report: Report in Packet

Pastor’s Report: No Report

Financial Secretary’s Report: Report in Packet

YTD income 2022: \$169,505.43 YTD income 2021: \$143,361.84

Treasurer’s Report: Report in Packet/Jennifer F.

As of: June 30, 2022

General Fund Chkg: \$23,808.91

Building Fund Chkg: \$7,562.03

Mortgage loan balance: \$30,869.97

Revolving trust fund Chkg: \$110,515.71

***Motion was made, seconded and approved to accept oral and written Board and Committee Reports.

Correspondence - None

Unfinished Business

1. Picture Directory Update – Pam C. stated that 94 families have signed up for pictures and the call phase has started to those not signed up. Two days before the picture appointment you will receive a text, email or phone call reminder. Our shut-ins will submit their pictures. Council member pictures were also discussed.
2. Ruby’s Pantry Update – Molly G. stated that the first time went well. The people who purchased food boxes were very thankful for the workers who were pleasant and smiling despite the heat.
3. Daycare Update with Bids for Remodel – Committee did not meet. Next meeting will be July 21st.
4. Education Wing Updates – Greg T. had a bid from Holets Construction, Inc. for proposed work on the Education Wing. Among the items included in the bid were windows, one entry door, insulation, interior trim, exterior siding and trim, remodel basement men’s bathroom. The bid was in the amount of \$150,015.49. A copy of the bid will be put in the library with the minutes from the July meeting. Greg T. will be getting a bid for air conditioning in the Education Wing.

New Business

1. Loan Renewal – Jennifer F. stated that our mortgage loan expired on July 3rd and a 60-day extension was signed. Another extension is possible to make sure all issues are addressed and included in the loan
2. Beth Iliff – Bank Account Signer & Credit Card
***Motion was made, seconded and passed to put Beth Iliff (Administrative Assistant) as a signer on the church bank account and to have a church credit card in the amount of \$5,000.00. The other church credit cards will go back to their original limits.
3. Adjustment to Elders Budget – The elders are requesting a monthly increase to their budget in the amount of \$2,293.04 to cover family medical insurance for Jessica P. and her family starting the 1st of August.
***Motion was made, seconded and passed to increase the Elder Budget in the amount of \$2,293.04 monthly to cover family medical insurance for Jessica P.

A committee will be formed to look at future insurance options for employees.

4. Board Directional Goals – Boards should be looking at what their 2023 goals are and bring them back to the council. At the October Annual Meeting we should talk about what we have done well, how it has been positive and what else needs to be done.

5. Organ Issues – Greg T., Tom L., and Heather are looking into issues with the organ and will be getting bids for tuning. Heather was asked to reach out to Grandall & Engen regarding issues since the organ was repaired.

Caring and Sharing

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25PM

Les F. closed with prayer

Respectfully submitted, Linda Urevig, Recording Secretary

COMING EVENTS

August 2nd – Board Meetings 6:30PM or as decided by each Board

August 9th – Council Meeting 5:30PM

Upcoming August Events:

- August 3rd: VBC Training at Gunn Park 6:30 PM
- August 2nd - 6th: Directory Pictures Taken
- August 7th: Tall Timber Days Parade
- August 10th: Vacation Bible Camp @ Gunn Park 9-4
- August 21st: Family Fun Day @ Gibbs Beach. Lunch provided.

September Newsletter articles can be submitted to:

firstev@paulbunyan.net by August 19th.



new beginnings

pregnancy + family support

July 2022

June and July have been very busy around New Beginnings. We want to thank all our supporters who gave during the Baby Bottle Drive that we wrapped up in June (we accept bottles year-round), the churches who allowed us to share and those who came to eat or volunteered at the Brat Barn June 30th – July 2nd. Thank you so much for your support!!! We also enjoyed The Wild Rice Festival and being in the Parade in Deer River and very much appreciate getting the area around our building fixed by Jody Schussman. We look forward to the Tall Timber Days Parade Aug 7th, and the Itasca County Fair Mid Aug. Mark your calendars for Oct 3rd to attend our Fall Banquet. We always need volunteers for events, please call 218-326-0404 if you are interested in helping.

We do have several items needed at New Beginnings to meet our family's needs; diapers size 5, boys and girls pull-ups size 2T-3T, 3T-4T, and 4T-5T, we could also use baby wipes, small packs of toilet paper, Clorox wipes, paper towels, clothing new or gently used sizes 4T and 5T, adult shampoo and conditioner, and baby shampoo.

We have started prayer times at both Centers. If you are interested in joining, please email us at: contactus@newbeginningspregnancy.com or call us at 218-326-0404. Ask for Kathy.

In June, New Beginnings, was able to come along-side 52 different individuals and their families, 10 of which were new. We were able to provide 492 services, some of which included 382 Earn While You Learn through Bright Course classes, 1 ultrasound and 39 boutique visits. We are so grateful for all your support!!! We exist because you make it possible through your generous giving and we are so appreciative as we can help support life in our community. May God bless all who give and all who receive!

Please remember to use Amazon Smile when you shop online! Thank you so much!

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/03-0579091>

"His righteous acts will be told to those not yet born. They will hear about everything he has done."

Psalm 22:31 NLT

Amanda Jo Grovenburg and Trudy Hasbargen Grand Rapids - 218-326-0404 - Deer River - 218-246-2010
www.newbeginningspregnancy.com