



*First Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Missouri Synod  
Grand Rapids, Mn*



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



## *Pastors Corner*

The past several months has been filled with a great deal of uncertainty, loneliness and anxiety due to everything associated with the Covid virus which has been plaguing us. Satan's way, is a way of pessimism, doom and gloom, yet God's way is filled with promises and blessings along with overwhelming optimism!

Loneliness is not simply being alone, but I believe it is a fear of love. The best way to combat loneliness is to take the risk of reaching out to someone that we trust. God is the true source of real unconditional love as well as a friend that will always remain with us and to be available for conversation 24/7. Imagine that no matter what you or I do, God will remain constantly at our side.

As many of you know when I am faced with uncertainty or when things don't turn out the way I had hoped or planned, I rely on the wisdom of God as He tells us in Romans 8:28

*"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."*

Those aren't idle words, but it is a true promise from God. I find confidence in the knowledge that if I allow God to handle the situation it will turn out for good. However, keep in mind, God determines what is "good" and what isn't "good". In our sinful flesh we become too self-centered and think we have all the answers rather than letting God be God to answer and work things out. In addition, you and I have a God who cares for us and our welfare, as He tells us in Romans 8:26

*"Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words."*

This means that the Holy Spirit is telling and asking God the Father for what we need BEFORE we even know what we need. Isn't that amazing? So too these promises in Romans apply to us here as His Family at First Lutheran Church.

As changes are taking place at First Lutheran Church be careful to work together as partners not as a small circle of people. Ministry here at First Lutheran is a partnership

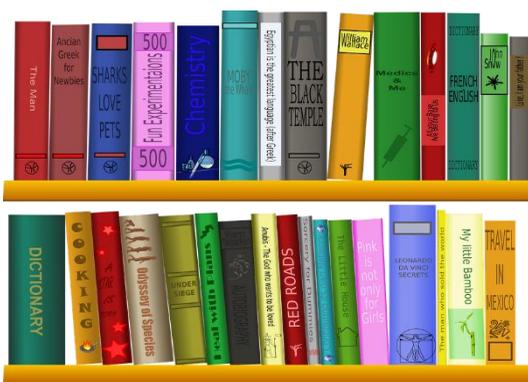
and not merely one person, namely the Pastor doing it all. Ask yourself this question, “am I working together with the entire congregation to meet the congregation’s challenges”? “Or am I part of the problem”?

Under the guidance of the Lord as we work together we will overcome these challenges with a bright optimistic future for First Lutheran Church! At the right time God through the power of the Holy Spirit will provide and amazing Shepherd and not a Sherriff for First Lutheran!

Remember First Lutheran Church isn’t just a Pastor’s congregation but it is YOUR CONGREGATION under the guidance of the Lord!

To God Be the Glory!

**Pastor Steve Breitbarth**



## **LIBRARY CORNER FOR AUGUST, 2020**

**DAUGHTER OF ROME** by Tessa Afshar, 813.6 Afs. “Afshar imagines the multi-textured lives of Priscilla and Aquila, coworkers of the apostle Paul, as they are stretched and shaped through their losses and love. What emerges is a compelling story about their faith and faithfulness – story that invites our response of faith and faithfulness as well.” Please note that our library has another book by this author –

**THIEF OF CORINTH**, 813.6 Afs.  
**CROSS MY HEART** by Robin Lee Hatcher, 813.54 Hat. “In this seamless time slip novel, Hatcher provides inspiration in each character’s growing relationship with the Lord, and prompts readers to reflect on their own journey. This story of loss and redemption is sure to win the hearts of contemporary and historic romance fans alike.”

**A TIME TO STAND** by Robert Whitlow, 813.54 Whi. “In a small Georgia town where racial tensions run high and lives are at stake, can one lawyer stand up for justice against the tide of prejudice on every side? This highly relevant and gripping novel challenges us to ask what it means to forgive while seeking justice and to pursue reconciliation while loving others as ourselves.”

**WHEN TO WALK AWAY – Finding freedom from toxic people** by Gary Thomas, 248.4 Tho. “Have you ever counted how many times Jesus walked away from toxic people or let toxic

people walk away from Him? The answer may surprise you. The author draws from biblical and modern stories to equip you with practical insights to overcome the opposition of toxic people in your life and live true to your God-given purpose. Your life’s calling is too important to let toxic people take it away.” You’ll also discover how to “learn the difference between toxic people and “difficult” people” and to “keep a tender heart even in unhealthy relationships”.

**CHOSEN PEOPLE** by Robert Whitlow, 813.54 Whi. “My verdict: compelling, realistic, and inspiring. Robert combines the intensity of a legal battle against terrorists with a poignant depiction of Israel, with all its tensions and grandeur. As a lawyer who handles cases for terrorism victims, I loved the realism of the novel and felt deeply the joys, disappoints and triumphs of its characters. But the matters of the law were eclipsed by matters of the heart – faith, love and hope in the midst of despair – this is where Whitlow truly shines.” – Randy Singer.

**PROMISED LAND** by Robert Whitlow, 813.54 Whi. “Bestselling author Robert Whitlow explores the meaning of family and home – and how faith forms the identity of both – in this breathtaking sequel to **CHOSEN PEOPLE**.”

To fans of Karen Kingsbury novels, the following have been added to our shelves at 813.54Kin: Bailey Flanigan series – book 2 **LEAVING**, book 3 **LONGING** and book 4 **LOVING**; and to the Baxter Family series – book 3 **TO THE MOON AND BACK**. **THE BERENSTAIN BEARS DO THE RIGHT THING, THE BERENSTAIN BEARS KEEP THE FAITH**, and **THE BERENSTAIN BEARS SAY THEIR PRAYERS**. They can be found in the children’s section.

**MANGA MESSIAH** “The greatest story ever told, about the most controversial man who ever lived, presented in the most popular graphic novel format on earth.” This book can be found in the youth section.

**EL DEAF0** by Cece Bell, found in the youth section. This is a Newberry Award-winning graphic novel about being different and finding a true friend. It’s both humorous and poignant. Aimed at middle schoolers, the book is loosely based on the author’s own experience as a deaf child attending a “normal school.”

**THE MOST LOVING PLACE IN TOWN: A MODERN DAY PARABLE FOR THE CHURCH** by Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, 253 Bla. “How many churches have you entered as a stranger and unmistakably felt loved? Sadly, it’s not uncommon for churches to focus on such things as appearance, doctrinal purity, and

activities, yet neglect the most important characteristic Jesus exemplified and taught his followers: love... In the story, a church leader and his pastor independently become aware of the missing element of love in their church, and together they endeavor to reform leaders and laity into a truly loving community.”

Your church librarians are happy they are able to get back to work in the library and have been busy processing books. Thank you to LWML for the donation to the library for purchasing books in memory of our members who died in 2019. Also many thanks go to our AngelZ for their continued donations to our library during this Covid-19 time. There will be more reviews/blurbs coming in future newsletters. – Janie Carlson, Darlene Baltus and Shela Cline  
*“Never put off till tomorrow the book you can read today.” – Holbrook Jackson*



## **The Lutheran Church— Missouri Synod LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter article – August 2020**

Winston Churchill reportedly said, “we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” According to Churchill then, our lives are defined less by what we have gotten and more by what we give away.

Our Lord’s life is defined in this way. He gave completely of Himself for us. He became man for us. He taught the truth of God’s Word. He healed those with many and various diseases. He died the death that we deserve because of sin. He gave of Himself in order to save us from sin, death, and hell. So it is that by giving completely of Himself, He got us for Himself, making us citizens of His eternal kingdom by grace.

As it was for Jesus, so it is also for us. We get more from giving than we do from simply getting. Giving softens our hearts and frees us from the worries of this world and making a living. For when we are singularly focused on making a living, we are singularly focused on what we get.

That mindset begins to bleed into all areas of our lives – our relationships with friends and family, with neighbors and coworkers, and with the Lord. It shifts our focus from asking “How can I be a friend, family member, neighbor, and servant to others?” to “What have

they done for me lately?" We become more selfish instead of selfless.

But, when we give, we do not have less, and we do not become less. We have more and become more. Because when we give, we join in the bond of friendship and family, the bond of service to those around us out of love for them. And love is the fulfillment of the Law. It is the nature of God Himself, for God is Love. Thus, we are participating in the divine nature. As Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).



**VBS Picnic: I will be planning the VBS Picnic this year. We will serve hotdogs, hamburgers, potato salad, baked beans, potato chips (individual bags), pickles, and Rice Krispy bars. Would anyone be willing to make potato salad, baked beans and the Rice Krispy bars.**

**In order to comply with the Covid-19 restrictions we will need help serving, as we cannot have the buffet style serving. We will need to ask each child what his or her preferences are, and serve it in the clamshell to-go containers, close the lid and hand it to the child.**

**We have individual packaged plasticware, along with the clamshell to-go boxes, ketchup, and mustard packets. Jessica will give us a more accurate count on how many children there will be when she has that information available. Thank you in advance for your help  
Shirley Mattfield**



## NEVER GIVE UP ON SOMEONE

Never give up on anyone no matter what they have been through. So far this summer I have had the privilege of getting to know children and adults that either have or had a tough life. Let me explain what I mean by a tough life.

Over twenty years ago my aunt and uncle decided to adopt five children. They adopted siblings from two different families. The first family they adopted two sisters. These sisters grew up with a mom that was addicted to drugs and alcohol. The girls lived out of a car for a time and had to fend for themselves. The oldest, took care of her siblings (there were others beside the two, just not sure how many). The oldest from the time she was 14 wanted to have kids of her own, she wanted to feel loved. She mostly wanted her birth mothers love. She did well with my aunt and uncle until she was about 18. Then she went back to her birth mom and ended up living that life. She currently has five children. The oldest is 13 and the youngest is 4.

The children don't get showers, they have to find their own food, they don't get birthday parties, they don't get much at all. They are verbally abused, the oldest has been physically abused. The oldest has to take care of the other four siblings. Because he has a loving grandma and grandpa they have taught him how to wash clothes, cook and be the positive they need. They would love to take the kids from their mom, but they are scared to do so. She has threatened that nobody will take the kids away from her.

In June, my aunt called my mom to see if she could bring the children over to the lake for some positive influence and a fun time. My mom called me up and asked if we would be there with our children, ABSOLUTELY! We spent the whole weekend with them. The kids are so wonderful, they have so much life. The oldest no matter what he has gone through, is the kindest person. There are some things that shined through with the kids, but we were able to look past that and just show them kindness and love.

Those kids right now are jumping from house to house. Their dad filed for divorce and full custody, but now has a new girlfriend and doesn't want the children. Last I heard, the Mom was in jail. The children are jumping between with all three grandparents.

My uncle made a statement the other day that it may be too late for these kids. Not that he is going to give up on them, but he doesn't know how to save them. Which leads into my next story.

While we were down in Joplin, MO in July I met a grown women who has grown children of her own and she told me the struggles she went through when she was little. Her mom died when she was 2, her Dad remarried and physically abused her stepmom which in turn physically abused her. She was locked in her room and she was only allowed to eat dog food for two years.

Eventually her Dad had enough of her and told her to grab all her things. She had a garbage bag of belongings, that was it. He then dropped her off at her

birth mom's sisters house when she was twelve. Her aunt wasn't home and her Dad just took off. There she sat twelve years old and nowhere to go. So she prayed for God to save her. A couple minutes later her aunt showed up and gave her a loving life. Her dad has since been married 14 times and still struggles with drugs and alcohol.

They recently visited him and said what a struggle and mess it was. He hasn't changed. I asked her if it was time to give up on him and let him go. She said you never give up on anyone, no matter their past. She is living proof that she has had a terrible childhood and yet she has a faith in God like no other. She and her husband own three successful businesses and they are happy and healthy.

Luke 5:30-32 And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

No matter what sinful life we or others live, Jesus will never give up on us. He paid the ultimate price for our sins. Are we following his example or are we giving up on people because it is too difficult to love them?

Jessica Pellinen  
FMPD

## Family Camp Registration is Open!

Join us this year for Family Camp out at beautiful Camp Fire Minnesota Camp Bluewater on August 9<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>. There are limited spots, so get your registration in early!

Check-in for 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> graders will be on Sunday August 9<sup>th</sup> at 4:00.

Check-in for everyone else will be either Tuesday evening at 5:00 or Wednesday morning before VBC.

While we want to be flexible on the number of nights your child is staying, we do ask that anyone checking in on Sunday stay until Wednesday evening, through VBC. If you are interested in coming only during the day, we can make that work too! We will work with each family to accommodate requests and concerns.

The youth will have the opportunity to be junior counselors Wednesday, August 12<sup>th</sup>. There will be a rain date of August 13<sup>th</sup>.

We will be following First Lutheran's COVID-19 preparedness plan. We are looking forward to having Jesus Lead The Way!

There is no cost this year for family camp! We are thankful we got a youth discounted rate at Camp Bluewater. Thank you to the Weibe grant and the generous anonymous donation we received several years ago to go towards Family Camp! We couldn't do this without your support!



## Vacation Bible Camp Registration is Open! Rainforest Explorers Jesus Leads the Way

This year we are taking VBC to Camp Bluewater! This will be a one-day event on August 12<sup>th</sup> with a rain date of August 13<sup>th</sup>. For ages 4-12 from 9-5. We will close the evening with our annual picnic at 5:00 (with precautions in place).

Please register at [www.flcgr.org/vbs](http://www.flcgr.org/vbs)

VBC will also be following a COVID-19 Preparedness plan.

We are in need of pod leaders and junior counselors. If you are interested in being a light to others, please register on the website above to volunteer. If you are unsure about the safety precautions we have in place, please reach out to Jessica Pellinen, FMPD.

Toilet paper rolls needed! We are going to use them for a craft at Vacation Bible Camp on August 12th. Thank you!

Monetary donations are needed for food at Family Camp. In the past we have had groups make and donate breakfast, lunch and dinner. This year with COVID-19 we want to ensure that we have a limited number of people in the kitchen handling the food. We would appreciate any monetary donation to go towards the food. This will keep the camp free to our families. Any money left over will go towards our mission for Vacation Bible Camp. Please see Jessica for more information. Thank you!

## Youth Garage Sale August 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>

Youth are encouraged to work Thursday evening for set up from 4-8 and Friday and Saturday from -5. Please sign up by going to [www.flcgr.org/youth](http://www.flcgr.org/youth)

Donations are now being accepted for the third annual garage sale! Thank you for your donations!



## Confirmation will be held on Sunday August 30th

### Confirmands are as follows:



Daimon Gabriel Hill  
Ella Josephine Karkela  
Annika Eileen Spangler  
Lainee Jo Spangler  
Kate Linnea Clairmont

## FIRST LUTHERAN WORSHIP SERVICES FOR AUGUST

August 2: 9:00a.m. Family Worship

August 9: 9:00a.m. Family Worship with Communion

August 16: 9:00a.m. Traditional Worship

August 23: 9:00a.m. Traditional with Communion

August 30: 9:00a.m. Family Worship

### Pastor Breitbarth Hours

#### TUESDAY'S

August 11: 10:00a-2:00p

August 25: 10:00a-2:00p

#### WEDNESDAY'S

August 5: 9:00- 4:00

August 12: 9:00-4:00

August 19: 9:00-4:00

August 26: 9:00-4:00





## Church Service Update



Hello members of First Lutheran!

Yesterday Governor Walz issued Executive Order 20-81 that mandates face coverings in all public indoor places starting Friday, July 24, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

What does this mean for our church service?

Starting this Sunday, July 25th we will be requiring all congregants to wear a face covering during service and when entering the building during regular business hours. If you do not have one, we have a few on hand located at the entrance.

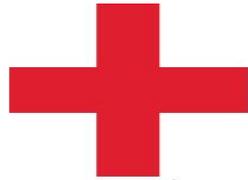
Please note that there are a few exceptions:

Anyone under the age of 5 is not permitted to wear one. Individuals with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that makes it unreasonable for the individual to maintain a face covering. This includes, but is not limited to, individuals who have a medical condition that compromises their ability to breathe, and individuals who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance. These individuals should consider using alternatives to face coverings, including clear face shields, and staying at home as much as possible.

Please remember that there are people that will not be able to wear a face covering, so please be kind to them.

*Colossians 3:12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,*

**In Christ,  
Jessica Pellinen  
Family Ministry Program Director**



# American Red Cross

**Thursday, September 3, 2020 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM**

## **First Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**735 NE 1st Ave, Grand Rapids, MN 55744**

**Room Name: Fellowship Hall**

**Go to the website**

**[RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org)**

**To schedule a time to donate blood.**

**Or call the Office**

**At 999-4101**

**To schedule a time**

**To save time, you also can go to the website, click [Donate Blood](#)  
then under [Manage Donations](#) click [Start Rapid Pass](#) to fill out  
the questionnaire.**

**Hosted by**

**Shirley Mattfield**

**27 Units of blood were collected at the last  
drive.**



# CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES - UNAPPROVED

July 14, 2020

Present: Tom Lattimore, Gary Rosin, Greg Taylor, Greg Robertson, Debbie Robertson, Les Flem, Jennifer Flem, Doug Carlson, Dwight Kessler, Linda Urevig

Call to order – Dwight K. called the meeting to order at 5:30PM.

Opening devotion and prayer – Dwight K. led the opening prayer.

## Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes

\*\*\*Motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the Consent Agenda with the addition of Bank Resolution to New Business and to accept the Minutes as written.

## Oral Reports of Boards and Committees

1. Boards of Christian Education & Youth: Greg R. Report in Packet.  
Greg stated that there are 6 youth signed up for VBS. He also stated that the Imani Milele Children's Choir scheduled for August has been cancelled.
2. Board of Elders: Les F. Report in Packet
3. Boards of Human Care & Missions: No Meeting
4. Board of Stewardship: Doug C. Report in Packet
5. Board of Trustees: Gary R. Report in Packet
6. Revolving Trust Fund Committee: Greg T. stated that funds for the third organ repair payment in the amount of \$20,000.00 came from

organ donation funds (\$8,000.00), undesignated memorials (\$3,500.00) and the remainder from the major maintenance account in the Building Fund.

7. Wiebe Grant Committee: Greg T. Payment was requested by the youth for half of the camp cost in the amount of \$609.37.
8. Direction and Planning Committee: Greg T. No meeting as yet. Greg stated that with all of the government offices closed and staff working from home, he has been unable to get licensing information.

Family Ministry Program Director's Report: Report in Packet  
Pastor's Report: No Report  
Financial Secretary's Report: Debbie R. Report in Packet  
YTD income 2020: \$140,447.18  
YTD income 2019: \$156,677.09  
Treasurer's Report: Jennifer F. Report in Packet

As of: June 30, 2020

General Fund Chkg: \$39,634.49

Building Fund Chkg: \$59,269.63

Mortgage loan balance: \$76,956.92

Revolving trust fund Chkg: \$105,318.01

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

## Correspondence - None Unfinished Business

1. Call Committee Update – Matt P. sent an email to Dwight K. stating that after word was received that Pastor Brian Lee declined our call, the committee met to discuss our next steps. After good discussion, it was decided that we will ask President Fondow for another list of candidates to consider for our pastor. This does not exclude the candidates from the previous vote, but allows us to gather additional candidates that will match what the congregation is looking for. This is a very important call and the committee does not want to rush through the process. Please continue to pray for the Call Committee and the candidates that the Holy Spirit guides us to present to the congregation.
2. AV Committee Update – Tom L. The committee with be looking for additional AV volunteers.
3. Weather Cancellation of Church Services – September Completion Date – No update
4. Archival Fire Proof Cabinets Update – August Completion Date – No update
5. Organ Repair Update – No update
6. Organ Repair Funding Update

\*\*\*Motion was made, seconded and approved to pay the \$20,000.00 payment with monies from the organ donation fund, undesignated gifts and the remainder from the major maintenance account in the Building Fund.

\*\*\*Motion was made, seconded and approved to pay the remaining balance of the organ repairs from the organ donation fund balance and then the remainder from the major maintenance account in the Building Fund.

### New Business

#### 1. Bank Resolution

\*\*\*Motion was made, seconded and approved to add Dwight Kessler to the list of signers on the church's Grand Rapids State Bank accounts as of July 14, 2020. The signers are Tom Lattimore, Jennifer Flem, and Dwight Kessler.

#### 2. Itasca Utilities

\*\*\*Motion was made, seconded and approved to pay Itasca Utilities \$1,200.00 for sewer repair with the money coming from the major maintenance account in the Building Fund.

### Caring and Sharing

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50PM  
We closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted, Linda Urevig,  
Recording Secretary

COMING EVENTS

August 4th – Board Meetings 6:30PM or as decided by each Board

August 11th – Council Meeting 5:30PM Meeting 5:30PM



***Please Have September Newsletter  
Articles to Shirley  
By August 15<sup>th</sup>.***