



# THE FIRST FRUITS

Serving Christ by proclaiming Christ crucified in the  
Minnesota North District of the LCMS

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



*P*astor's Corner

“FAITH IS...FAITH IS NOT...”

The Bible gives us a classic definition of what faith is in Hebrews 11:1. “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Two things stand out in this explanation. The first is the great confidence that faith gives to us in our inner-most being. When faith takes root within us “we know that we know that we know” that God will do what He promises.

The second outstanding feature of faith is that it is not founded on prior observable date. We do not first see what we are to believe in. The very nature of faith is that we firmly trust what we cannot see.

There are two other working definitions I frequently use to round out our understanding of what faith is. The first sounds complex, but ponder it and the meaning will emerge: The issue of faith is not that we believe *in* God, but that we *believe* the God we believe in. “Believing in God” is a sentimental, popular “just in case” notion which covers the bases for many people in our country. The Bible teaches us that even demons believe in God – big deal! It’s much more significant when people believe God when He speaks, that they put their trust in His promises, that they learn how to lean on Him rather than their own natural understanding.

My second working definition is simple and straightforward: Faith is believing God so much you will actually *do* what He says. Talk is cheap. Action forges trust and verifies the heaven-born confidence which dwells within our spirit.

In today’s convenience-oriented society, we also need to be clear in talking about what faith is *not*. There is a popular misconception that faith is putting God on a trial basis to see if He will satisfy our whims and wishes. There is an attitude that it might be

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to our advantage to believe in God if He performs well and clears all the obstacles out of our path through life.

I honestly cannot imagine anyone actually saying that, but the thoughts must be there because the world is filled with people who have carried this notion, have put God on trial and given up on Him because He did not steer life in their chosen direction – namely away from pain, inconvenience, disappointment, and ultimately death.

How many times have you heard people ask, “If God is so good, why would He let \_\_\_\_\_ happened?” Fill in the blank with any number of situations we feel we should not have to go through.

Do you remember the advertising slogan which said, “Don’t get mad, get Glad” (storage bags). When the harsher side of circumstances bites us, don’t get mad at God because He let (or, worse yet, “made”) something bad happen to us. Instead be glad that you have the grace, the strength and the resources of heaven to support you and guide you through.

Faith is not so much for the free and easy times as it is for the not-so-great times. We do not trust because we see every step of the journey ahead or because we have been clued in to all the details. We trust because God is in control. We believe because we know that God – and only God – has the marvelous ability to work “all things together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28).

Believe the God you believe in and do what He said – that will give you the assurance and conviction of things you cannot see *yet*. That is what faith is all about.

#### **CONFIRMATION INSTRUCTION:**

It’s not too early to be gathering information for classes which begin in September. Our classes are offered for 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders. We do not want to miss anyone in these age groups. If you have a prospective student, please call the church office (326-5453) and make sure we are aware of them. We need to order books and materials soon. Thank you for responding. More information will be coming as we draw closer to our starting time.



**ADULT INSTRUCTION:** This fall we will also be offering a class for adults who would like to learn more about the foundational teachings of the Bible. Are there any spouses who are not yet confirmed, or perhaps young adults who missed confirmation training? We would also welcome anyone who would like a refresher course on our Christian faith. Please call the church office or contact Pastor directly. Where there is a will, there is a way.

**PASTOR ZEIGE**

## 2019-2021 National Offering:

Every Three years, Our Lutheran Church Missouri Synod meets in convention to determine mission and ministry priorities for the coming three years.

As part of the preparation for the Convention, LCMS households, and Congregations are invited and encouraged to participate in Synod wide gathering of special gifts called National Offering. The theme is “Joy To The World”.

Gifts to the national Offering- which can be made at anytime will empower the work God has given us to do in His Name to bring joy to the world, as we make known the Good News of Jesus Christ, that all might rejoice and give thanks to God, our Heavenly Father.

The 2019 National Offering will support the work that God has given His people to do, both nationally and internationally

The 2016 offering helped support the administration and student needs at our seminary in Dapaong, Togo.

The 2019 contributions will be deployed to help in urban areas, with new immigrants, on college campuses, with partner church missionaries and in church planting efforts, both here and abroad. A door offering will be collected until September 22 for the National Offering drive. Please make checks to:

### **2019 National Offering.**

Thank you for supporting this important ministry.

## LIBRARY CORNER FOR July, 2019



**BEN-HUR** A Tale of the Christ by Carol Wallace found at 813.54 WAL.

Many of you might remember the movie, Ben-Hur, with Charlton Heston. Betrayed by his childhood friend and falsely accused of attempting to murder the Roman governor Judah Ben-Hur, a Jewish nobleman, is sentenced to the galley ships and vows to seek revenge against the Romans and his former friend, Messala. The author, Carol Wallace, is the great-great-granddaughter of Lew Wallace who was the original author of Ben-Hur. Adapting the original novel for contemporary audiences was both an honor and a thrill for her. Reviewed by Darlene Baltus

**WHISPERS** by Robin Jones Gunn found at FIC Gun. Teri Moreno went to Maui hoping to start one special relationship. But romance takes a complicated twist when the Spanish teacher from Glenbrooke, Oregon, finds herself enjoying the attentions of three men. If you have been to Hawaii, the descriptions of the island will bring back pleasant memories as you enjoy the story. Reviewed by Darlene Baltus

**AN ACCIDENTAL LIFE** by Pamela Binnings Ewen found at 813.6 EWE. At nearly 6 months pregnant, 20-year-old Glory Lynn finally decided abortion was her only option. But when the procedure was over, she was horrified to hear a baby cry, suddenly desperate to see and keep her child. Finding that the doctor had forbidden the nurses to use life-saving measures, Glory Lynn filed a complaint with the District Attorney's office, and the doctor is charged with murder. This skilled author has crafted a very involved and gripping plot, half the book being a trial with an explosive ending. Be sure to read the notes at the end about the 2001 passage of the federal Born-Alive Infant Protection Act. Reviewed by Alice Hill.

**THE REASON FOR MY HOPE: SALVATION** by Billy Graham found at 234.25 GRA. Dr. Graham presents one overall question for the reader: "The Lord came to save us, so will you accept his offer of a pardon?" Using excellent storytelling and good use of anecdotes and clear analogies, he writes about how the act of being saved brings hope into an individual's life. Hope is having an active faith in God's greatness. Spiritual hope is something that speaks to each person's long-term and short-term needs. Graham supports his points with scriptural references from both the Old and New Testaments.

**ANYTHING: THE PRAYER THAT UNLOCKED MY GOD AND MY SOUL** by Jennie Allen found at 242.23 ALL- Allen tells of the consequences of her decision to allow God to "do whatever you want with whatever I have." This choice led her and her husband to Africa where they adopted a special-needs child from Rwanda. Allen shares how she allowed God to break down idols in her life and use His power to write several books. Her stories emphasize that, through prayer, God is able to do far more than we thought possible.

**THE BIG STORY: How the Bible Makes Sense Out of Life** by Justin Buzzard found at 230.041.

Pastor Buzzard wants believers to listen to their neighbors', coworkers', and family members' stories and then tell them a better story. He divided the Bible into five acts: God, creation, rebellion, rescue, and home. Storytelling is an effective way to communicate ideas. Jesus confirmed that with His use of parables.

**NEW BOOKS READY FOR CHECK-OUT!**

**A SPARROW IN TEREZIN** by Kristy Cambron located at 813.6 Cam. The book starts out in present day with Sera James and a new art gallery and then reviews incidents in 1942 with Kaja Makovsky in Nazi-occupied Prague. Connecting across a century through one little girl, a Holocaust survivor with a foot in each world, these two women discover a kinship.

**HOW THE LIGHT GETS IN** by Jolina Petersheim found at 813.6 Pet. When Ruth Neufeld's husband and father-in-law are killed in a bombing overseas, she travels to a Wisconsin Mennonite community with her daughter and mother-in-law to bury them, grieve, and piece together next steps. She reminisces about a marriage that was broken long before her husband died and makes an impossible decision: which path to choose if her husband isn't dead after all.

**THE HEARTS WE MEND** by Kathryn Springer found at 813.6 Spr. Thirteen years ago Evie's firefighter husband was killed in the line of duty, leaving her to raise their young son, Cody, alone. With her son's marriage, she now has an empty house. She is challenged to open her eyes to the problems outside the walls of her church. This book follows another Banister Falls Novel, The Dandelion Field.



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*“Sharing the Love of Jesus”*  
**CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES -  
UNAPPROVED  
JUNE 11, 2019**

Present: Tom Lattimore, Gary Rosin, Dwight Kessler, Ann Hauser, Molly Goplin, Doug Carlson, Mary Buech, Jennifer Flem, Les Flem, Jessica Pellinen, Linda Urevig

Call to order: Tom Lattimore called the meeting to order at 5:30PM.

Opening devotion and prayer: Les Flem opened the meeting with prayer.

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes: Under New Business in the May Minutes, the motion made in item #6 (Kitchen Air Conditioner) was amended to state that the funds would come from the General Fund Repairs & Maintenance. (A motion was made to approve the bid from ASAP Heating and Cooling for \$2,350 with the funds coming from the General Fund Repairs & Maintenance, seconded. Motion passed.)

\*\*\*Motion was made, seconded and passed to accept the Agenda with additions to New Business and to accept the May Minutes as amended.

Oral Reports of Boards and Committees

1. Boards of Christian Education & Youth: Report in Packet. Ann H.
2. Board of Elders: Report in Packet. Les F. In addition to the meeting minutes

a Door Offering for LWML was approved for June 16<sup>th</sup> and a Door Offering for Neil Grunke's Alaska Mission Trip was approved for June 30<sup>th</sup>. Brooke Thorson will be speaking about her Mission Trip to El Salvador between services on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

3. Boards of Human Care & Missions: No Meeting. Mary B./Molly G. \$402 was made at the Bake Sale with each charity (Grace House, New Beginnings, & Crisis Nursery) receiving \$134.
4. Board of Stewardship: Report in Packet. Doug C. Their next meeting will be in August.
5. Board of Trustees: Report in Packet. Gary R. There was a question as to when the exhaust fan in the kitchen would be in. Gary R. will check on this. There are still problems with the Lift. Brad has a call in. It should be fixed by VBS.
6. Revolving Trust Fund Committee: No Meeting
7. Wiebe Grant Committee: No Meeting
8. Direction and Planning Committee: No Meeting

Family Ministry Program Director's Report: Report in Packet. Jessica states this is a very busy time for her. A car has been rented to take the girls to the Youth Gathering in the Cities.  
Pastor's Report: Report in Packet

Financial Secretary's Report: Report in Packet

YTD income 2019: \$126,765.34

YTD income 2018: \$120,163.29

Treasurer's Report: Report in Packet.

Jennifer F.

As of: May 31, 2019

**General Fund Chkg:** \$29,704.26

**Building Fund Chkg:** \$47,597.57

**Mortgage loan balance:** \$22,353.64

**Revolving trust fund Chkg:** \$282,493.11

\*\*\*Motion was made, seconded and passed to accept the oral and written Board and Committee Reports.

Correspondence – None

### **Unfinished Business**

1. **New Media Update** – Tom L. stated that the contract has been updated and ready. The down payment will be \$95,545 and the final payment will be \$40,947. The install will be late July or early August. Greg T. has talked to Grand Rapids State Bank about increasing our mortgage by \$136,000.
2. **Capital Project Updates** – Summer of 2019 Completion Date – Gary R. stated that all replacement windows have been ordered. Cement will be poured June 12<sup>th</sup> in the new garage. We would need a 9-foot door if we were to have a van.
3. **Constitution Update** – Dwight K. – The church received a letter from the District Office stating that the Constitution has been approved with

a few minor updates. Carla T. will be doing the updates.

4. **Guidelines for Usage of Fellowship Hall Update** – Gary R. Shirley has the usage form. A copy will be attached with the minutes.
5. **Outside Building Cameras Update** – Gary R. - The cameras were addressed in the Trustees Minutes. There was a question about how they would be powered. Trustees would be getting more information.
6. **National Youth Gathering Transportation Update** – A car would be rented from Enterprise for \$290.54 for a week.

\*\*\*Motion was made, seconded and passed to pay for the rental car and any other expenses incurred at the National Youth Gathering from the Revolving Trust Youth Funds.

#### New Business

1. **Carpet in Classrooms** – Carpet in the PreK/Kindergarten room was addressed in an attachment to the Trustees Minutes for sound reduction.

\*\*\*Motion was made, seconded and passed to pay for painting, carpeting and installation from Dorholt's in the amount of \$3,138 from the Tina Hron Family Fund.

2. **Church Vehicle** – Discussion regarding the possibility of purchasing a vehicle for church use. It was decided that the Boards should have discussions

on how they could see a vehicle being used.

Caring and Sharing

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 7:20PM

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Linda Urevig,  
Recording Secretary

#### COMING EVENTS

June 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> – Miraculous Mission Vacation Bible School

June 23<sup>rd</sup> – VBS Children singing at the Second Service

July 10 – 15<sup>th</sup> – National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis

July 30 – August 2<sup>nd</sup> – Family Camp

August 1<sup>st</sup> – Family Camp Picnic

August 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> – Youth Garage Sale

July 2<sup>nd</sup> – Board Meetings 6:30 PM or as decided by each Board

July 9<sup>th</sup> – Council Meeting 5:30PM



August

**“FIRST FRUITS”  
ARTICLES**

August “First Fruits” items are  
**Due by July 15<sup>th</sup>.**

**To Submitting Articles  
For First Fruits**

E-mail them to Shirley  
firstev@paulbunyan.net

## UPCOMING YOUTH NEWS and EVENTS by Jessica Pellinen



**WE HAVE LOTS PLANNED THIS SUMMER** for youth and family activities. More activities will be added as they are planned at the youth board meeting. Please watch the bulletin, Facebook and the website for more information.

### THIS SUMMERS ACTIVITIES:



**Church Yard Sale** **AUGUST 16 & 17: YOUTH GARAGE SALE** in the new garage! Start saving up your items you are ready to get rid of. Youth interested in working let Raeanne Lattimore or Greg Robertson know.

**RALLY DAY** is scheduled for September 8<sup>th</sup>.

**TALL TIMBER DAYS FLOAT DECORATING** will take place in the garage at 12:00 on August 2nd. If interested in riding the float let Jessica know.



**A HUGE THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VBS VOLUNTEERS.** Pastor said last week it takes a village, and that is so true. We had a very busy and rewarding week. God always pours out his blessings as we do His work. I am so grateful to the youth of our church. They pitched in to decorate and served as class leaders and as helpers for the learning stations. Those stations are: Bible story, games, crafts, snacks, music, opening and closing and Bible Memory Verse. At each of the stations the Bible story, memory verse and take-home point for the day are taught and reinforced. 2 of them were helpers to the Nursery and Pre-Kindergarten teachers. Please thank the youth as you see them, as we could not have Vacation Bible School without their enthusiastic help. VBS would not have happened without Jessica Pellinen and Mary Buech. Please thank them as well.

Lois Bendix.

# Vacation Bible School

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

June 17-21<sup>st</sup> was our vacation Bible school Miraculous Mission at church. The children got to hear how God saved the world. The first lesson was how God made me, day two focused on how God keeps his Word, day three they learned how Jesus came for me, day 4 they learned how Jesus saves me, and the last day focused on how Jesus is coming for me. You can really see God's work in the church during this week.

We are so blessed to be able to minister to 34 children. Several of which are our own members. It is now over, and it is quiet, too quiet. I love to hear sounds of laughter, talk about Jesus, and little feet walking to their next stations. Wondering what the children went home to tell their mom, dad, grandma, grandpa about what they learned during the day. I don't know if the volunteers really know how much they are impacting the children this week. Giving them memories that will last a lifetime. Do you have memories of going to VBS?

We had a total of 34 students this year. 34 students who learned more about Jesus and heard God's Word. 34 students who

now can talk more openly about who Jesus is and what he means to them. 34 students who have made more friends and connected with adult leaders in the church. We also had 42 volunteers with 13 of them from our youth group. 42 volunteers who shared the love of Jesus with the children. 42 volunteers who made connections with the children. 42 volunteers who took the time out of their busy lives to be a lasting memory for the students.

Now that it is all over, the church is quiet, and I can sit and reflect on the week. All I can say is WOW, what an amazing experience it was! The children had a blast and I hope the volunteers had just as much fun. All volunteers were so prepared and ready for anything. They really put in a lot of effort.

As the week goes on, we get tired and worn out from the busyness, but it is so worth it. Seeing the smiles and hearing the laughter from them we can quickly forget how tired we are. Everyone looked they were able to relax during the picnic and enjoyed a delicious meal.

The children were out playing with their new friends they made during the week. God quickly reminded us that he is in charge by providing a small rain shower when there was a 0 percent chance of rain that morning. Despite the rain we were still able to hold it outside and let the children run and play.

Thank you is not enough for the 42 volunteers! Thank you to each and every one of you who had some part of VBS this

year! Whether you prayed, decorated, donated, and participated, thank you! I am excited to see what next year brings us.

A huge thank you goes to Lois Bendix for being the VBS director the past two years! She has put in so much of her time to make sure that everything runs smoothly we couldn't have done it without her! This was her last year as director. If you are ready to partner with me and put on a spectacular VBS next year let me know.

*2 Samuel 7:28 And now, O Lord God, You are God, and your words are true.*

Jessica Pellinen



## FAMILY CAMP

### FAMILY CAMP

July 30<sup>th</sup> is the first day of family camp at Camp Bluewater. Last year we had such a great time! It was amazing to see the difference between the children from the first day to the last day. Even to this day we can still see the friendships that were made during that week.

Camp Bluewater is located just 15 miles north of Grand Rapids on Bluewater Lake. We have the whole resort to ourselves which allows us to design the program and the Bible Studies. This year's theme is on Psalms. The National Youth Gatherings theme is also Psalm 46 and focuses on our Real. Present. God. We are taking that theme and bringing it to Family Camp.

The children will learn more about the Psalms, and how to use them in their day to day lives. We have the same adults going this year. Tom and RaeAnne Lattimore, Matt Pellinen, Greg Robertson and myself will be the primary leaders. With others coming and going throughout the day.



With activities on the water it takes more people to supervise the children. In order to provide that safety to the children we have asked the congregation and boards to provide the meals during our stay. This frees up our resources so we can more eyes on the children. We graciously loved it last year and are hoping to do the same this year. If interested in providing a meal, by yourself, with your family, a group of people, please sign up in the three-ring binder.

On August 1<sup>st</sup> at 5:00 we would like you to come and join us for a pot bless. The trustees have graciously agreed to provide the hotdog and hamburgers again this year, please bring a side dish or dessert to share.

They also would appreciate a headcount, sing up in the three-ring binder if you plan to attend.

Thank you to amazing people and their generosity we were able to pay for the camp with donations and grant funds again this year. The cost for each camper is \$25. Registration forms are on the bulletin board. We only have 34 beds available so get your registrations in early to save your spot. They need to be in no later than July 22<sup>nd</sup>.

*Psalm 37:4 Take delight in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.*

*Jessica Pellinen: Family Ministry Program Director, First Lutheran Church 218-244-5365 Call or text [firstevyouth@gmail.com](mailto:firstevyouth@gmail.com)*

Thank  
You!

A great big Thank You to all the Youth who helped this year during Vacation Bible School. You made VBS such a huge success with your all your help and enthusiasm. Lois Bendix



**NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING** starts on July 11<sup>th</sup> in Minneapolis. Please join us at 10:00 on July 10<sup>th</sup> for a sendoff for Tijanna and Abbie to the Gathering. Real.Present.God

*Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*



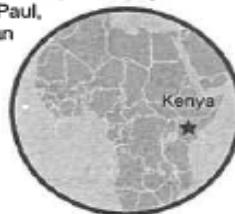
## Pray for

REV. DR. THOMAS AADLAND  
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATOR  
SERVING THE LORD IN KENYA



Rev. Dr. Thomas Aadland serves the Lord as a career missionary through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in Kenya. Thomas partners with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya (ELCK) and teaches at Matongo Lutheran Theological College, Kenya. In addition to teaching, he serves as the dean of the theological faculty, preaches in chapel and counsels students when requested. Thomas also preaches in local Kenyan congregations as needed.

Thomas was born in Minneapolis, Minn., and his home congregation is St. John Lutheran Church of Rich Valley, Rosemount, Minn. He graduated from Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill., with a bachelor's degree in philosophy. He received his Master of Divinity from Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn. Before serving in Africa, Thomas was a pastor at Christ Lutheran Church, Duluth, Minn., and, most recently, was a staff missionary for The Saint Timothy Society at Matongo Lutheran Theological College, Kenya. In his free time, he enjoys playing chess, fishing and listening to classical music.



Thomas' wife, Mary, was born in Minneapolis, Minn., and her home congregation also is St. John Lutheran Church of Rich Valley, Rosemount, Minn. She enjoys sewing, reading, gardening and scrapbooking in her free time.

Please pray for Thomas as he teaches at the theological seminary and serves in Kenya. Ask God to strengthen him as he teaches so that he remains faithful and focused on Christ and his students. Pray for God's provision of theological textbooks for the seminary students. Pray the hearts of people here in the United States are moved to pray for and to financially support Thomas so they can "go with" him as he serves. Let us give thanks to God that Thomas is serving His children in Kenya.

- BIRTHDAYS: Thomas – Dec. 24, Mary – Feb. 6
- ANNIVERSARY: June 27
- HOME DISTRICT: Minnesota South

- **Pray daily for Thomas** — and how you can support and tell others about his ministry. Visit [lcms.org/aadland](http://lcms.org/aadland)
- **Learn about LCMS international work** at [lcms.org/international](http://lcms.org/international)
- **Support and adopt an international worker.** Call 888-930-4438.

LEARN • PRAY • GIVE • TELL • SEND • GO • CELEBRATE

