

The Friendly Visitor
First Lutheran Church
May 2025



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The Pastor's Message

This will be my last newsletter article as your pastor. My last Sunday will be June 1st. Our time together is much shorter than I anticipated. Whenever I'm faced with the unexpected, I try to remember all that is constant in my life.

The people who love us. Yes, it's true that our time with loved ones is limited and often shorter than we want. But there is something loving about the custodial link of family and friends who continue to hold and care for us over time. I have a green stole that was quilted together as a graduation gift from seminary. It is made up of green squares, each representing a person who was a part of my life at the time. One hundred and twenty-five families and individuals contributed a square of fabric to the stole. Hundreds and hundreds of individuals could be added to it today. So many people, over time, had a hand in the person and pastor I have become.

A few years ago, I had a deeply moving spiritual experience serving communion. A 90-year-old member of the congregation came forward to receive communion. It was like any other communion Sunday. But this time, as I placed the bread in her hands, I thought about all the pastors before me who stood in my place. And then I thought about all the pastors who will follow me. I am one in a long succession of pastors who had and will minister and care for her. What an honor!

God loves us. Revelation 1:8 says, "'I am the Alpha and the Omega', says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." God is always with us and promises never to abandon us. What a comfort to know that it is the same God who called to us from our mother's womb, who was in the waters of our baptism, who celebrated our accomplishments, who visited us with friends and family in times of grief and pain and who will hold us as we pass from glory to glory. God is faithful through it all.

Hope is a constant throughout our lives. Without hope we would surely perish and wallow in despair. Hope gets us out of bed in the morning. Hope is what allows us to rest at night. Hope calls us to take risks and to imagine a better world. We all have difficult days, days when we doubt and have little hope. But the love of God and the church calls us to never give up. To keep going!

And so I have faith that no matter how unsettling the world is, no matter how unpredictable life can be, no matter how uncertain the future looks God will get us through. It has been a blessing to minister to each of you and to be ministered to by you. Your commitment to First Lutheran Church encourages me every day. And your care and concern for one another strengthens my faith.

I believe it is important to say a proper good-bye. I will be intentional about saying goodbye to each of you. I welcome opportunities to gather for food or activities or simply to exchange goodbyes after worship. And while I can't come back to minister with you, I will be taking the

memories of our time together with me as I move to Hinsdale United Methodist Church, in Hinsdale, IL.

Blessings to you! For you have been a blessing to me!

John

The President's Message

Dear Friends,

I know you are reading this after Derby Day so just let me say that I hope you picked the winner!! I also hope that I did.

The Call Committee moved their candidate to the Council and after an online interview the Council has decided to move the candidate on to the Congregation. We do much more studying to hire a pastor than we do to pick a Derby contender - at least I do, usually my Derby pick is Cute name + Jockey I Have Heard of - but I also hope that we will pick a winner.

As we enter once again into the process of considering a Pastoral candidate, please remember to keep your hearts and minds open to the words of the candidate, your fellow congregants and most of all, Jesus Christ.

With hope.

Sharon Lillie

President, Church Council

Church is Hiring

First Lutheran Church is hiring! We are seeking a part-time office manager. Click on the link for more information: <http://thewelcomeplace.com/job-opportunity>.

Supporting Homeless Shelter Changes

The Louisville Metro Government is looking for people from churches to support their homeless shelter initiative, specifically those changes that would allow for religious buildings to provide accessory overnight shelter and day sheltering. There will be a public hearing on May 15th. It is

time for support from our religious leaders to lift up these changes. If you are interested in supporting this initiative, please contact Pastor John before May 15th.

Pastor

January-March Food Pantry Report

Due to the closing of the Dosker Manor Housing Complex, we are expecting a drop in customers coming to our food pantry. We did not see that in January and February, but there was a significant decrease in March. We have discontinued giving eggs due to their rising cost and being told that we can no longer subdivide a package and give 6 per customer. We have been purchasing packages of margarine instead, when funds are available.

Everyone continues to have a good time and enjoy the camaraderie behind the scenes at the pantry. It is very gratifying to be showing God's love with our labors.

The Food Pantry currently has about \$600.00 We average 209 customers per month.

We appreciate all donations and especially your clean, used grocery bags.

Sharon and all the volunteers.

Pope Francis

The mainstream media hasn't mentioned it so I will! Of the many historic accomplishments of Pope Francis, one that was very significant was the Pontiff's attendance and participation in the kick-off of the 500th anniversary year of the Reformation worship service in Sweden in 2016, alongside the General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation! The Pope also met with ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) national Bishop Elizabeth Eaton on at least two occasions. Pope Francis was definitely a friend of the Lutheran Church. Both he and his leadership will certainly be missed! Rest in Peace Holy Father! 🙏





Craft group making palm crosses



Palm Sunday



Palm Sunday



Easter



Easter



Brightside Cleanup Day, April 19



Jacob Hack and Amelia Lillie (and Hoyt) helping out at the School for the Blind's Audio Easter Egg Hunt



At First Lutheran Church we believe that God delights in the diversity of all creation. As a Reconciling in Christ community, we welcome all into fellowship; recognizing the dignity of every human being regardless of gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability, economic status, race, or any other identifier. You are accepted and welcome here, no matter where you are on your spiritual journey.

If you need to contact one of the church's committee chairs, here is a list of all the committees and their chairs. Please let them know if you have any problems, suggestions for improvements, or compliments.

Building Users	Vicky Frank
Christian Education	Lori Caron
Endowment Funds Subcommittee	Harley Butler
Finance	Drew Wartschlager
Food Pantry	Sharon Lillie
Membership	Vicky Frank
Property	Paul Nellis
Social Ministry	Stephanie McCoy
Vision and Outreach	Paul Nellis
Worship and Music	Nancy Brian

THE FRIENDLY PUZZLER

Find the underlined words amongst the letter grid at the bottom.

The remaining letters will reveal a hidden message.

Acts 11: 1-18

Now the apostles and the brothers and sisters who were in Judea heard that the gentiles had also accepted the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?" Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners, and it came close to me. As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.' But I replied, 'By no means, Lord, for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' But a second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane.' This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.' And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?" When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, "Then God has given even to the gentiles the repentance that leads to life."

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By Puzzlemaster Jay R. Lillie

May 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 10:30am Worship Service	28 8:30am Catholic Charities Food Pantry closed 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	29 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 6:00pm Zoom Study Group	30 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 7:00pm Chancel Choir rehearsal	1 8:30am Catholic Charities 4:00pm Food Pantry	2 9:00am Catholic Charities Food Pantry closed 6:00pm LYG	3 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
4 10:30am Worship Service	5 8:30am Catholic Charities Food Pantry closed 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	6 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 6:00pm Zoom Study Group 7:30pm NA	7 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 12:00pm Midweek Concern Series 4:30pm LYG Staff Meeting 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 7:00pm Chancel Choir rehearsal	8 8:30am Catholic Charities 12:00pm Craft Day 4:00pm Food Pantry 7:00pm Worship and Music Committee Meeting	9 9:00am Catholic Charities Food Pantry closed 6:00pm LYG	10 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
11 9:30am Breakfast 10:30am Worship Service	12 8:30am Catholic Charities Food Pantry closed 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	13 8:30am Catholic Charities Food Pantry closed 10:00am Food Pantry 6:00pm Zoom Study Group	14 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 12:00pm Midweek Concern Series 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 6:30pm LYG 7:00pm Chancel Choir rehearsal	15 8:30am Catholic Charities 4:00pm Food Pantry	16 9:00am Catholic Charities Food Pantry closed 6:00pm LYG	17 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
18 10:30am Worship Service 12:00pm Council Meeting	19 8:30am Catholic Charities Food Pantry closed 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	20 8:30am Catholic Charities NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 10:00am Food Pantry 6:00pm Zoom Study Group 7:30pm NA	21 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 12:00pm Midweek Concern Series 4:30pm LYG 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 7:00pm Chancel Choir rehearsal	22 8:30am Catholic Charities 4:00pm Food Pantry	23 9:00am Catholic Charities Food Pantry closed 6:00pm LYG	24 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
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