

The Friendly Visitor

First Lutheran Church

August-September 2024



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The Pastor's Message

"Now is the time!" We are about to launch into a strategic planning process as a congregation. Are you ready? It's time.

The strategic planning process requires everyone's participation. Why? Because church is more than just a place to show up on Sunday mornings. The church serves a deeper, fundamental purpose for our lives. It brings us together with others who share this common purpose and mission. One of the challenges of bringing people together is how to address the differences that may emerge. Our society is not handling differences very well at the moment.

The world is in a deep regression, which is evidenced by the level of polarization and the overall tension around the globe. This tension can creep into churches and make it challenging, but not impossible, for congregations to dream about their future together. It is important for individuals to be aware of their automatic tendencies to respond to differences through avoiding, ignoring, blaming or arguing. But we *can* live with the difference if we are willing to be open to each other and abide by the commandment to love one another. In addition to being open and loving, one thing that disrupts tension is focusing on our collective purpose or mission.

During the discernment process, the narratives and stories we share are like music for dancing. They guide us in our coming together. The stories, insights and questions we share provide the tempo and score for our work together. Strategic planning is about learning to dance together again.

As I write this article, the words to the Shaker song, Simple Gifts, come to mind:

'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free
'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be,
And when we find ourselves in the place just right,
'Twill be in the valley of love and delight.
When true simplicity is gained,
To bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed,
To turn, turn will be our delight,
Till by turning, turning we come 'round right.

The image is one of a circle dance, with participants holding hands, turning to the left, turning to the right moving as one body. It speaks of a simple act of learning and turning where in the end, we find ourselves in the place just right; the place we ought to be.

This is the image of discernment and strategic planning I carry with me. The process of discernment helps us recapture the dance and learn to turn together until we find our collective way forward. But we cannot dance, and we cannot discern if people aren't willing to enter the dance.

So, can I have this dance? Can we have this dance? Can we join hands together and learn to discern so that we can discover and celebrate our shared purpose and mission? There is information in this newsletter about the strategic planning process. Please read it and mark your calendars with the dates listed.

Blessings!
John

Church News

The Dare to Care Food Pantry will be participating in a single day event called “Food Fight” on September 6 during the day. The pantry is trying to move towards giving more choices to the patrons, so our volunteers will be rearranging our workroom spaces. We’re grateful for this opportunity!

Drew Wartschlager and Pastor Bell met with the Community Foundation of Louisville. For the past four years we have received a grant from the Foundation without knowing why it comes to us! The fund was set up in the memory of Karl J. Daubert. There is no family remaining, so the blessing of this grant was willed to First Lutheran Church. The amount was used this year to cover a good portion of our annual insurance on the building. If you or a family member would like information on setting up a fund for the benefit of the church, or any organization you would like to support, the Community Foundation of Louisville can help. The ELCA also has resources.

We are having a few events to get us started on creating a stronger future for the church as we enter into a new call process. On August 14 there was a lunch and a talk about the history of First Lutheran Church and its accomplishments. A timeline of our memories was created. On August 28, the pastor hosted an online discussion allowing congregants to talk one-on-one about their own ideas and expectations. On September 8, the same type of discussion will happen after church in a more traditional setting. We want to have as many people involved in these discussions as possible. Afterwards, what is learned will be shared at a strategic planning event on October 12 from 1 to 5 pm that everyone in the congregation is encouraged to attend. Also, the results of the strategic planning event will be used by the Council to update the Ministry Profile, which is the first step in the call process.

Pastor John

Through the generosity of a bequest from Clifford and Nancy Ball, the IK Synod was able to hand out grants for church service projects such as our food pantry. The pantry has received \$1500 to use toward the purchase of supplies. I thank Nancy Nyland and all the other folks who forwarded her email to me.

Sharon Lillie

More Financial News

On September 1, the congregation approved funds to repair the roof of the education wing and recaulk and glaze the windows on the second story, east side of the building. Thank you to everyone who attended the meeting.

I was asked to report on our overall finances for the first half of the year.

The chart below shows ALL INCOME – from offering, investments, Rott withdrawals and rent; GENERAL EXPENSES – utilities, salaries, benevolence, etc. BUILDING EXPENSES – We have spent \$17,375 from endowment checking + \$26,459 for the new HVAC system, for a total of \$43,374. The HVAC was mostly covered by the Schaffrick Foundation Grant from 2023. This averaged \$7,301.

All amounts shown are rounded to the nearest dollar.

	All Income	General Expenses	Building (Averaged)
January	\$25,426	\$13,449	\$7,301
February	\$17,929	\$18,727	\$7,301
March	\$23,126	\$26,206	\$7,301
April	\$17,727	\$16,339	\$7,301
May	\$20,694	\$17,661	\$7,301
June	\$29,608	\$16,330	\$7,301
Total	\$134,510	\$108,712	\$43,806

Total Expenses: \$152,508

Total Income: \$134,510

Difference: -\$18,000 or -\$3,000 a month.

We have withdrawn \$43,000 from Rott, for an average of \$7,160.

We have a new income – \$3,500 per month rent from Catholic Charities. Other groups donate.

The Food Pantry has spent over \$1200 this year. All expenses have been covered by donations from the congregation and the public.

Sharon Lillie, Council Treasurer, Office Bookkeeper and Food Pantry Manager



Vicky Frank organized a group from First Lutheran to attend a Louisville Bats game on July 21st. The Bats didn't win against Cincinnati, but the group won a good time!

Pastor John



“A Quick Trip through the Bible”

Sunday Morning Bible Study starting September 1 at 9:30 in Luther Hall

Are you hungry and thirsty for building up your knowledge and understanding of God's Word, even though we hear it every single Sunday and maybe read a small portion of it every day? I am excited to begin leading a Bible study for adults that will bring new insights and meaning to our relationship with God.

The first set of six classes will be an introduction to the books of the Bible, beginning with a discussion of the general timeline of events and people found in the Bible stories we may already know. Who came first, Jacob or Peter? We will go on to explore the various types of books that

make up our Bible. There are stories of the beginnings of belief and religious traditions, histories, poetry, wisdom, prophecy, gospels, letters and “more,” as they say in the ads.

For those who are in choir and those who serve on the alter guild, as greeters, worship assistants, acolytes, ushers, etc. and wish to attend the class, there will be no problem. You may leave and return as needed for your Sunday duties. Children may also join the class along with their elders.

Nola Lillie



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.

Exodus 16: 2-4, 9-15

The **whole** congregation of the **Israelites** complained against Moses and **Aaron** in the wilderness. The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of **Egypt**, when we sat by the **pots** of meat and ate our fill of bread, for you have **brought** us out into this **wilderness** to kill this whole **assembly** with **hunger**."

Then the LORD said to **Moses**, "I am going to **rain** bread from heaven for you, and each day the **people** shall go out and gather **enough** for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my **instruction** or not.

Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole **congregation** of the Israelites: '**Draw** near to the LORD, for he has heard your **complaining**.'" And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked **toward** the wilderness, and the **glory** of the LORD **appeared** in the **cloud**. The LORD spoke to Moses, "I have **heard** the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, 'At **twilight** you shall eat meat, and in the **morning** you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall **know** that I am the LORD your God.'" "

In the evening **quails** came up and **covered** the camp, and in the morning there was a **layer** of dew around the **camp**. When the layer of dew lifted, there on the **surface** of the wilderness was a fine **flaky** substance, as fine as **frost** on the **ground**. When the Israelites saw it, they said to one **another**, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the **bread** that the LORD has **given** you to eat.

C W C Y W I L D E R N E S S M A T C
N A O S L I A U Q N A E M A A R O N
L A M N Y B M H P O T S O R F N W A
A G P P K O M F V I E B U E G E A N
Y R L T R H E E L T G L O R Y C R W
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F E C L O U D A P H B R E A D I D S

By Puzzlemaster Jay R. Lillie

September 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:30am Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	2 Food Pantry closed 8:30am Catholic Charities 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	3 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 7:30pm NA	4 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 4:30pm LYG Staff Meeting 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial	5 8:30am Catholic Charities 4:00pm Food Pantry	6 Food Pantry closed 9:00am Catholic Charities 6:00pm LYG	7 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
8 9:30am Bible Study 9:30am Breakfast 10:30am Worship Service 12:00pm Potluck luncheon and Strategic Planning One-on-One Session	9 Food Pantry closed 8:30am Catholic Charities 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	10 Food Pantry closed 8:30am Catholic Charities	11 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 6:30pm LYG	12 8:30am Catholic Charities 12:00pm Craft Day 4:00pm Food Pantry	13 Food Pantry closed 9:00am Catholic Charities 6:00pm LYG	14 9:45am NAMI meeting 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
15 9:30am Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service 12:00pm Council Meeting	16 Food Pantry closed 8:30am Catholic Charities 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	17 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 7:30pm NA	18 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 4:30pm LYG 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial	19 8:30am Catholic Charities 4:00pm Food Pantry 7:00pm Worship and Music Committee Meeting	20 Food Pantry closed NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 9:00am Catholic Charities 6:00pm LYG	21 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
22 9:30am Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	23 Food Pantry closed 8:30am Catholic Charities 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	24 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry	25 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 6:30pm LYG	26 8:30am Catholic Charities 4:00pm Food Pantry	27 Food Pantry closed 9:00am Catholic Charities 6:00pm LYG	28 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
29 9:30am Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service 12:00pm Jennifer Twyman, Vocal-KY	30 Food Pantry closed 8:30am Catholic Charities 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	1 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 7:30pm NA	2 8:30am Catholic Charities 10:00am Food Pantry 4:30pm LYG Staff Meeting 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial	3 8:30am Catholic Charities 4:00pm Food Pantry	4 Food Pantry closed 9:00am Catholic Charities 6:00pm LYG	5 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire