

First Edition



Thoughts From Pastor Matt!

“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” -2 Corinthians 3:17

250 years ago a nation was born. One that built its foundation on Christian values even though its citizens were free to choose which religion to believe in. I do believe, however, that our nation was blessed and prospered over those years because it valued the teachings written in Scripture.

Nowadays, we still cling to this idea of freedom in our country, but it’s sad to say that most people are not free. They are slaves to their own sin and own ways of determining what they believe is right and wrong. Do what makes you feel good. Follow your heart. Discover your own truth. These are the commandments this world lives by, yet it’s the most depressed and medicated generation ever.

So where did things go wrong? The simple answer to that is this country is turning away from God, the truth of Jesus, and the power of the Spirit. It’s lacking in the true freedom Paul writes about to the church in Corinth. This world is removing God from government, from schools, and even from neighborhoods. Places are getting reprimanded for displaying a nativity scene outside their home or business. You can’t say Merry Christmas anymore. And if someone sneezes, you better not say “God bless you.” You just don’t know who you might offend.

Maybe our country needs to be offended. Jesus sure wasn’t afraid to offend people with the truth. He was brought before kings and governors, religious leaders and teachers of the law, yet He would not back down on preaching what was true. I think we need to live like Jesus and don’t worry about being politically correct.
“Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” -John 8:32

Jesus promises this to those who follow His teachings. This world will try to convince you that following Jesus’s teachings doesn’t make you free. Why follow a bunch of rules when you can do whatever you want? If that’s your mindset, give it a try then give Jesus a try and see what one works out better for you.

Let’s all stick to the teachings of Jesus. Let’s live life in the Spirit and experience this freedom that no one can take away. Let’s pray for a revival of this country and invite the Spirit back into our daily lives. By the grace of God, this country has flourished for 250 years, but it’s going to take the work of the Spirit to keep it up. So let me ask, what part of your life do you need to invite the Spirit into? Your marriage? Your job? Your alone time? If you want to be free, the Spirit of the Lord needs to be present in your life.

May the Holy Spirit bless all those who are reading this and may God bless America. Let’s see if we can make it another 250 years...God willing.

Blessings,
Pastor Matthew

THOSE WHO ARE ILL OR IN THE HOSPITAL

Roxann Kaiser
JoAnn Artmann (Karen Fundine's daughter)
Brenda Hoppe
Dale Lyon (Sherry Holm's cousin)
Mara Dokukin (Karen Fundine's granddaughter)
Eric Lee (Avis Lee's grandson)
Curt Thering (Wendy Jacobson's dad)
Julie and Neal Hofius' son
Karen Fundine

UPDATING

Please contact Connie Vieths at 218-839-3767 or cvieths1@gmail.com if there are any changes or additions to your personal data such as address, phone, or email address. Also if someone needs to be added to the Ill or in Hospital listing, Assisted Living/Nursing Home listing or Military listing, please let Connie know! Thank you!

Check out our Website at firstlutheranpillager.net

We also have a Facebook page to check out!!!! Please free to post anything or post comments!!! Facebook page search type in First Lutheran Pillager and this should take you to the page. Also check our Website for the Newsletter, Sermons and the Calendar will be updated as the schedule changes! All of this is under Resources on the Webpage.

Church Council

President: Griff Eisel (952) 239-0878
Vice President: Chris Warren (320) 749-2031
Secretary: Dan Jacobson (218) 746-4167
Bob Harmson
Don Osowski (763) 286-5405
Don Tichy
Glen Welters

If you need a person to talk to about challenges in your life, someone to pray with, or just a visit, please contact Pastor Matt. He would be more than willing to help you or visit you. If you are in the hospital or know of someone in the hospital, please contact him. There are times he has not received word that someone is dying or in the hospital recovering. You can contact Pastor at (320) 260 9100.

Pastor's Schedule

Sunday: Worship Service
Monday: Off
Tuesday: Office Hours 9-3
Wednesday: Midweek Service/Bible Study
Thursday & Friday: Office hours/Visitation
Saturday: Off

****Office hours will typically be from 9 am until 3 pm unless I am out making visits.**

First Lutheran Church Pillager Minutes
May 12, 2025

Call to Order: 6:30 p.m. by President Griff Eisel

Present: Griff Eisel, Matthew Sundquist, Glen Welters, Dan Jacobson, Don Tichy, Don Osowski, Chris Warren, Lynn Bushinger

Absent: Bob Harmsen

I. Opening Prayer: Pastor Matt

II. Treasurer's Report: Anella Rush, who is currently the Scandia Valley Township Treasurer, has agreed to take the position of church Financial Secretary. Lynn has met with her and showed her our current system. Dan made a motion to hire Anella for training in June at the rate of \$250 and a full-time position at \$500 per month starting July 1. Chris seconded motion the motion. Motion approved by acclamation. Lynn reported that the total cash position at the end of April was down slightly from March at \$81,416. Envelope offerings in April were \$9,862, outpacing the year previous by \$3100. Lynn asked about options for virus software for the laptop computer. Our membership with Geek Squad at Best Buy has lapsed and Dan said he would look into other options. Don O made a motion to accept the financial report, which was seconded by Chris. Approved by acclamation.

III. Pastor's Report: Pastor shared "thank you" cards from MNATC, Eagles Nest and the food shelf for our donations from the coffee fund. He mentioned that Julie Warren brought up the idea of doing a seder meal next year during Passover for the first communion students. He will look into a company that provides the materials for the event. Codee Pollack will be contacted to get an estimate to fix the retaining wall on the east side of the parsonage. Three high school graduates will get quilts at the May 24th service.

IV. Secretary's Report: Chris made a motion to wave the reading of the minutes, which was seconded by Don O. Chris made a motion to accept the minutes as written and Don T seconded the motion. Motion acclamation.

V. Committee Updates:

1. Worship/Music: Kathe Matthews will be filling in on June 7 and pastor has provided her with the necessary background.
2. Congregation and Community Outreach: (Marliss) – No updates
3. Hospitality: Grace Swedberg, who was a former member, passed away and family will be using the church at 2 p.m. on May 25 for a memorial service. We are going to supply necessary support.
4. Sanctuary: Nothing reported
5. Facilities / Building: Exterior pest control completed the first spraying around the building on April 24.

6. Staffing: (under new business) A job review was completed for pastor. Glen said it was a productive review that covered current duties and ideas for more outreach with youth through the school programs. The council will look into a cost of living increase for Pastor in June. Griff and Dan will plan to schedule a review with Connie in June. Review for the financial secretary position, as it is in transition, will be delayed.

Old Business: Chris is looking at options for completing a second Sunday School room and what the best option is between placing permanent walls or dividers in the downstairs area. Possible idea to build storage space adjacent to the current storage room.

New Business: (Included in discussions of facilities and staffing.)

Adjourn & Closing: Chris made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Glen seconded the Motion.

Meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer

First Lutheran Church Pillager Minutes June 16, 2026

Call to Order: 6:30 p.m. by Vice President Chris Warren

Present: Matthew Sundquist, Bob Harmson, Don Tichy, Don Osowski, Chris Warren, Lynn Bushinger, Anella Rush, Julie Warren

Absent: Griff Eisel, Glen Welters, Dan Jacobson

I. Opening Prayer: Pastor Matt

II. Treasurer's Report: Training has been taking place with Anella Rush and is going well. They will be working on quarterly reports for the second quarter. A discussion was held regarding the use of old envelopes with numbers changed being recorded incorrectly (due to legibility issues); Lynn is familiar with names and numbers but Anella will not be. Bob said he would work with the ushers and recording. Discussed adding Anella Rush to the bank signature card with the bank. Bob Harmson made a motion approving Anella Rush being added to the Pine River State bank signature card, removing Lynelle Bushinger, and retaining Griff Eisel and Dan Jacobson as officers on the card. Motion was seconded by Don Osowski. Motion carried. Lynn reported that the total cash position at the end of May is up slightly from April at \$82,264. Envelope offerings in May were \$9,738, compared to \$7,449 in May of last year. Lynn will be giving her keys to Anella at the end of June. Lynn thanked the council for the time she has had working with them; she enjoyed it very much. The council expressed their appreciation for Lynn and thanked her for the excellent job she did.

II. Pastor's Report: Pastor shared information about the joint summer service on July 12 at the CTC Center. Three churches have confirmed participation (Casino Assembly of God, Eden Ministry Center and our church). The time of the service will be at 10:00 a.m. Council discussed options for our congregation's service as the times overlap. After discussion, council consensus was to notify the congregation we would be having our Sunday service at the CTC Center on July 12th . A notice will be placed in the bulletin and placed on the sign out in front of the church. Pastor received an estimate from Codee Pollack regarding the fixing the retaining wall along the garage at the parsonage totaling approximately \$2,300. Just sloping the area without a retaining wall would be approximately \$1,300. A quote for putting rock in front of the house was quoted at \$1,500. Matt said they would wait with the rocks in front of the house. Council thought members from the congregation could do the rocks in the front of the house. Don Tichy made a motion to have Codee fix the retaining wall and to bring rocks. Don Osowski seconded the motion. Motion carried. Council discussed people wanting to rent tables, chairs, etc. from the church. Council would like a written request from non-members requesting tables and chairs.

Secretary's Report: Bob Harmson made a motion to wave the reading of the minutes. Approved by council. Don Osowski made a motion to accept the minutes as written and Don Tichy seconded the motion. Motion carried.

IV. Committee Updates:

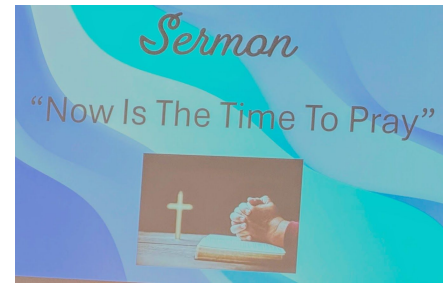
1. Worship/Music: No report.
2. Congregation and Community Outreach: (Marliss) – No report.
3. Hospitality: No report.
4. Sanctuary: No report.
5. Facilities / Building: No report.
6. Staffing: Cost of living increase for Pastor is tabled until July as so many on council were absent. Whatever increase is voted on will be retroactive to June.

Old Business: Bob Harmson presented a new insurance proposal from American Church Group. Bob had it reviewed by an insurance claims adjuster for a second opinion. The annual premium for this policy is \$10,694. The policy has a scaled loss free deductible based on claims. Don Osowski made a motion to accept the proposal, seconded by Don Tichy. Motion carried. Bob will be in touch with Lynn to determine when the current policy is due to determine start date for the new policy.

New Business: No new business.

Adjourn & Closing: Don Tichy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 p.m., seconded by Bob Harmson. Motion carried. Meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted by Julie Warren



Thank you to Kathe Matthews for leading our worship and sharing her sermon called: "Now is the time to pray."



Chelsea, Hannah, and Riley would like to thank the quilting ladies for their quilts!



Graduate Quilt Presentation and Blessing

Hannah Vieths and Chelsea Vieths graduating from Pillager High School and an Associate of Arts degree from Alexandria Tech. Will be attending University of Minnesota Duluth.

Riley Scherping, valedictorian, graduating from Little Falls High School and the future Air Force Academy Cadet (Class of 2030).



Quilt Donations

In June the quilters donated 28 quilts to those in need, including the 20 pictured here at the men's program of Minnesota Adult & Teen Challenge in Brainerd; six to the area women's shelter; one to a new resident at Riverside Assisted Living in Pillager; and another to the Pillager Lions for a charity benefit. The quilters meet a couple hours on most Tuesdays starting at noon in the fellowship area. The group will not quilt on Tuesday, July 7th due to the BIG SALE setup.



Church Basement & Outdoor Sale

The church's annual BIG SALE will run 7 a.m. - 6 p.m., Thursday and Friday, July 9th-10th. Mark your calendar. Bring your wallet. Find your new treasures! Some items will be priced. Most items are part of this FREEWILL OFFERING fundraiser.

Set up will run 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on both Tuesday, July 7th, and Wednesday, July 8th. The church will accept donations of gently-used items, beginning Sunday, July 5th and running through Wednesday, July 8th. We request: NO adult clothing. NO adult shoes. And NO particle-board furniture. We will take baby clothing and children's clothing. Thank you for helping with this ministry!

CHURCH GARAGE SALE

July 2026 FIRST LUTHERAN PILLAGER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
					Independence Day (observed)	Independence Day
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9:30 am Communion Service 10:30 am Fellowship		9- 5 Setup for Garage Sale 8:00 pm AA Mtg	9- 5 Setup for Garage Sale	7 am – 6 pm Garage Sale	7 am – 6 pm Garage Sale	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9:30 am Service 10:30 am Fellowship		12 pm Quilters 6:30 pm Council Mtg 8:00 pm AA Mtg				
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9:30 am Communion Service 10:30 am Fellowship		12 pm Quilters 8:00 pm AA Mtg				
26 9:30 am Service 10:30 am Fellowship	27	28 12 pm Quilters 8:00 pm AA Mtg	29	30	31	1

August 2026 FIRST LUTHERAN PILLAGER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9:30 am Communion Service 10:30 am Fellowship		12 pm Quilters 8:00 pm AA Mtg				
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
9:30 am Service 10:30 am Fellowship		12 pm Quilters 6:30 pm Council Mtg 8:00 pm AA Mtg		Tea at Riverside 1:30 – 3:00pm		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
9:30 am Communion Service 10:30 am Fellowship		12 pm Quilters 8:00 pm AA Mtg				
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
9:30 am Service 10:30 am Fellowship		12 pm Quilters 8:00 pm AA Mtg				
30	31	1	2	3	4	5