

First Edition



The season of Lent is upon us. It is a time when we remember our own mortality as we kick off with Ash Wednesday. From dust we were made and to dust we shall return. We fast just as Jesus fasted in the wilderness. We recognize our sinful nature and how much we need Jesus in this life. This season is meant to be a somber one.

But why does it have to be? Is it because we give up something for Lent like meat, chocolate, or some other distracting activity? If that is going to make you somber then I would rather have you not give anything up. Jesus commanded us to do this when we fast: "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you" (Matthew 6:16-18).

Lent should not be a somber time but rather a joyous time. Instead of saying "I *have to give up meat, or chocolate, or fill in the blank,*" exchange it with the phrase "I *get to give up something distracting me from God.*" *Why we only do this during Lent is beyond me because really the Christian life should be lived in this manner. What is distracting me from God that I can give up to focus more of my attention on Him? That should be an everyday question we ask ourselves.*

So this season of Lent might look a little different. There may be some somber moments that occur, but I want it to be a time where people cannot notice that we are fasting. Let your fasting be done in secret so your Father in heaven can reward you. And come each Sunday with your face washed and oil on your head, that is, not displaying that you are fasting.

We will be going through a sermon series called "So Will I" that will take us up to Easter Sunday. God's creation all points to the Creator. This universe is a display of God's artwork and it all points to Him. This Lent, will you join in creation to worship the Creator?

Let us journey together as we draw closer to God by fasting in secret, fellowshiping with each other, and worshipping Jesus together. May this season of Lent bring you closer to God and when you see glimpses of creation worshipping the Creator, you can stop and pause and say, "So will I." Be blessed.

Pastor Matthew

First Lutheran Church Pillager Meeting Minutes

Opening and Call to Order: 6:40 PM on February 20, 2023.

Present: Tammy Barnett, Connie Vieths, Lynda Converse, Diane Wright, Shirley Smith, Nicole Buersken, Dan Jacobson, Pastor Matthew Sundquist, and Kirstie Sundquist.

Absent: Julie Hofius, Mike Bellos.

Pastor's Report: Back from his and Kirstie's Hawaii vacation, Pastor Matt reported that they held the funeral for Dan Long. He also said that he talked to the LCMC about his ordination service and they said it's up to the church to decide on when to hold that service. After discussion the council is looking at May 7th —after Lent and Easter. Council will confirm the date at the March council meeting.

Treasurer's Report: The additional church keys were made for those who needed them. Dan suggested in the future that council look into installing a key lock box to address the keys not being returned. Tammy said that the credit card limit was increased from \$7,000 to \$12,500. After discussion council decided to not reduce the limit back down to \$7,000 but to keep an eye on the limit and look at putting a cap on it in the future if the limit is increased again. Tammy saw that there were a few charges on one of the credit cards that looked potentially fraudulent and she will be calling to review/dispute the charges. The motion to approve the report was made by Lynda and Shirley seconded.

Approval of Agenda and Secretary's Report: There was short discussion over the report and Shirley made the motion to approve and Diane seconded.

Committee Updates:

Worship/Music: The Holden Evening Service is being this year for the Lent services. Dan brought up that people in the congregation should be encouraged to volunteer to do special music for Sunday services.

Church Community Communication Committee: Lynda and Connie mailed out a nice note to congregation members about the Lent service schedule. Lynda designed some sample thank you cards through Vista Print. She priced them out at \$50/50 cards with envelopes included. After discussion it was decided that she should move forward with ordering the cards. She also looked into direct mail within a set radius and a specific age demographic. Council wants to move forward with direct mail to get the mailing list pricing down to about \$800/time (so looking at around the same radius but possibly narrowing down the age demographic), and then church could send out possibly a biannual mailer with the church schedule of events. Lynda is going to look into getting price quotes for color options, age demographic, and radius options from Bang Printing and Lakes Country Printing. Pastor Matt suggested that once the mailer is finalized, a note be put at the bottom of it to have the recipient bring in the mailer for a free gift, like a free church travel tumbler, to help track the effectiveness of the mailers.

Hospitality: Discussion was held about the church funeral meal option policy and being consistent to what is being offered to the families. The policy will be revised by Connie to remove the second option where the church provides the meal because that option has never been used. The two options that will remain will be the refreshments (desserts and beverages) provided by the church and that the family of the deceased will be able to bring in their own food. Connie will also put on the funeral meal policy that if the family chooses to bring in their own food for the funeral that the church has no liability for any illness caused from eating the food.

Sanctuary: Shirley wanted to address having a clean-up policy for groups using the church. She will work on creating that policy. Connie also brought up that some groups pay to use the church and that the council should consider charging all groups who use the church to be consistent. The council discussed \$40/month to use the church and will discuss this more at a future meeting.

Facilities/Building: Discussion was held about putting a garbage disposal in the dishwasher sink. Nicole will be reaching out to Mark Feist to look at a leak that was likely caused by the dishwasher overflowing and to schedule a time to install the sink sprayer. Nicole will also be getting a labor quote from a local construction company for the church roofing and siding, and will check with Steve Roberts about the quote for materials. Dan said that there is a lightbulb in the sanctuary that needs to be replaced but it is too high up to reach easily. Need to figure out a way to access it to change it.

Staffing: Dan reported that they had a successful pastor's review. One item that was brought up during the review was looking into receiving support from the church for childcare so Pastor Matt can do more visitations.

Missions: The next meeting will be February 6th at 6:30 PM.

Old Business: Nothing to report.

New Business: Connie brought up that some people in the congregation suggested getting rid of the church bulletin. Pastor Matt suggested a monthly bulletin on cardstock that lists a schedule of events rather than a weekly bulletin. After discussion it was decided to continue with the weekly bulletin but will consider changing it in the future.

Adjournment: Shirley made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Nicole.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Nicole Buersken, Secretary.

THOSE WHO ARE ILL OR IN THE HOSPITAL

Bonnie Anderson
Tim Litsheim (cancer) (Dan Long's nephre)
Dan Long's nephew
Rex and Ginger Manchesian
(Rita Peterson's brother and sister-in-law)
Lindsey Kennedy (cancer) Pat Long's granddaughter
JoAnn Artmann (Karen Fundine's daughter)
Joan Anderson

Sharon Doss (Leukemia)
Roxann Kaiser (cancer)
Amber Baerg
Chris & Julie Warren's Daughter)
Darlene Zabel
Gail Massie (Ken Kelings daughter)
Adam Long (grandson of Dan Long)

ASSISTING LIVING/NURSING HOME

Riverside: Ken Kelling,
Harmony House in Brainerd: Char Brattlund

MILITARY

Joseph DeLude—Army, Grandson of Don DeLude
Sonja Larson—Army, Granddaughter of Mel & Gwen Larson

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.
The Calendar will be updated as the schedule
changes!

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.**

UPDATING

If the military, those who are ill or in the hospital,
or people in nursing homes is not up to date or if
names need to be added or deleted, please
contact Sharon Gehrke so that these lists can be
updated. Thanks

PRAYER CHAIN

When you need prayer support, there is a group
at our church who will pray diligently for whatever
the need is. Please call Marlene Lindeman at
218-746-3541.

CHOIR PRACTICE

February 28
March 7
**March 14 5:45-6:15 p.m. before the council
meeting**
March 21
March 28
April 4

Church Council

President: Dan Jacobson
Vice President: Julie Hofius (218) 820-4259
Secretary: Nicole Buersken (320) 232-7439

Mike Bellos (218) 838-9804
Shirley Smith (218) 838-1483
Lynda Converse (218) 821-8016

SIGN-UP SHEETS

Please sign up for bringing sandwiches and soup for Lent. Signup sheet is on the table in the back of the church!

Please sign up for being a sponsor for the pancake breakfasts for next September through May 2024. Signup sheet is on the table in the back of the church

Bible Study: The Chosen

Bible Study will pause during Lent and resume after Easter. Having wrapped up the Book of James in February, we anticipate a new study focused on "The Chosen." Join us in watching the TV drama story of the life of Christ as seen through the eyes of his followers. Ponder its implications with us. Mark your calendar for the startup 6:30-8 p.m., Wednesdays, beginning April 12th in the church sanctuary.



Daniel Gary Long

Daniel Gary Long, 91, of Pillager, passed away Friday, February 10, 2023, at Essentia Health –St. Joseph's Medical Center in Brainerd.

Daniel's family will celebrate his life with a Memorial Service at 11:00 a.m., Monday, February 20, 2023, at First Lutheran Church in Pillager. Family and friends are invited to gather one hour prior to services and to stay for Military Honors and a luncheon to follow. Interment will take place at Wildwood Cemetery at a later date.

Daniel was born June 26, 1931, in Minneapolis, the son of Daniel and Eleanor (Partch) Long. After high school, Daniel enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and honorably served his country for more than 20 years before retiring as a Master Sergeant. When he settled in the Pillager area, he went to work for Potlatch and worked as a machine operator for 21 years. In addition, he also taught Firearm Safety for 12 years and spent countless hours volunteering at St. Joseph's Medical Center.

Daniel was a busy man, but he always made sure to make time for hobbies as well. He was outdoorsman who enjoyed hunting, fishing, and snowmobiling. He cheered on the Minnesota Vikings every Sunday and enjoyed visiting with his grandchildren. Daniel was well traveled and had been to all 50 states in addition to numerous international locations, including, Turkey, Greece, Korea, Ireland, Japan, Thailand, and areas in the Middle East. A proud veteran of both the Korean Conflict and Vietnam War, Daniel supported his local American Legions and was Past Commander of Post 100 in Pillager. He's been a member of First Lutheran Church of Pillager since 1947 and served many years on the Church Council. One of Daniel's most treasured pastimes was reading. He so enjoyed historical books and books on geography – and he wanted to pass his love of reading on to younger generations and donated many books his grandchildren and great-grandchildren and the Pillager School Library.

Daniel will be dearly missed by his family. He is survived by his second wife, Patricia (Jones); children, Gerry Frasier, Steven (Jane) Long, and Michael (Sonja) Long; daughter-in-law, Shelly Long; step-daughter, Bonnie (Tim) Arntson; 19 grandchildren, Emily Cooper, Josef (Kristina) Veihauser, Bess Veihauser, Larry Frasier, Tom Long, Tim Long, Shawn (Ellyssa) Long, Christopher (Alyssa) Long, Elizabeth Brown, Adam Long, Taylor Long, Levi Long, Adie Klaverkamp, Kierha Long, Carin Long, Tristan Long, Preston Long, Teresa Randell, Tasha Owen, Daniel (Jamie) Arntson, and Lindsey (Kyle) Kennedy; 38 great-grandchildren and five great-great-grandchildren; and sister, Lois (Ralph) Ness. He was preceded in death by his first wife and mother of his children, Arlean Helmerick; son, Phillip, and siblings, Tom and Dewey Litshiem.

A HOLE IN THE BOAT!!!!



A man was asked to paint a boat. He brought his paint and brushes and began to paint the boat a bright red, as the owner asked him. While painting, he noticed a small hole in the hull, and quietly repaired it. When he finished painting, he received his money and left. The next day, the owner of the boat came to the painter and presented him with a nice check, much higher than the payment for painting. The painter was surprised and said "You've already paid me for painting the boat Sir!" "But this is not for the paint job. It's for repairing the hole in the boat." "Ah! But it was such a small service... certainly it's not worth paying me such a high

amount for something so insignificant." "My dear friend, you do not understand. Let me tell you what happened: "When I asked you to paint the boat, I forgot to mention the hole. "When the boat dried, my kids took the boat and went on a fishing trip. "They did not know that there was a hole. I was not at home at that time. "When I returned and noticed they had taken the boat, I was desperate because I remembered that the boat had a hole. "Imagine my relief and joy when I saw them returning from fishing. "Then, I examined the boat and found that you had repaired the hole! "You see, now, what you did? You saved the life of my children! I do not have enough money to pay your 'small' good deed." So no matter who, when or how, continue to help, sustain, wipe tears, listen attentively, and carefully repair all the 'leaks' you find. You never know when one is in need of us, or when God holds a pleasant surprise for us to be helpful and important to someone. Along the way, you may have repaired numerous 'boat holes' for several people without realizing how many lives you save. Make a difference.....be the best you! Have a blessed day!

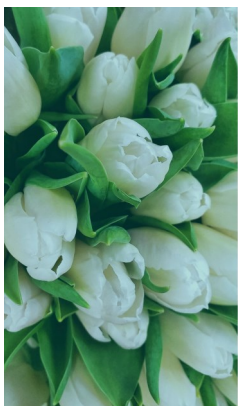
BRING THOSE CHILDREN TO CHURCH!!!!

Bring them to church. Saturate their lives with the Word of God. Even if they lay on the floor. Even if they need 437 goldfish and a sucker to be quiet. Even if you stand in the back swaying back and forth holding them. Even when it's hard. Even when when your row looks like a small hurricane just came through. Bring them to church. Let them see you worship. Let them see you pray. Let them see you running toward the Savior ... because if they don't see and learn these things from you, who are they going to learn them from?

The world will teach them it's not a priority. The world will teach them it's okay to lay out, not to pick up their Bibles. The world will direct them so far off course, confuse them, and misinform them that just being "good" is enough. The world won't teach them about Jesus. That's our job.

Bring them to church.

Matthew 18:5-6 And anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf is welcoming me. But if you cause one of these little ones who trusts in me to fall into sin, it would be better for you to have a large millstone tied around your neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea. Teaching kids is a huge responsibility. We must take it seriously and do it well. Prepare well, speak truth, and remember they are God's kids first.



So
Sorry
for
Your
Loss

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the Tom Kavanaugh family on the passing of Tom's brother.

Nov. 7, 1949 - Feb. 19, 2023

Gregory Kavanaugh, 73, Brainerd, Minn., died Sunday, Feb. 19, in Edgewood Vistas - Brainerd.

A service will be at a later date.



Quilting ladies are busy with filling activity bags for children to play with during church.

They are also busy making quilts!

Thank you ladies!!! You are awesome!



As discussed and suggested at the first 2023 council meeting the "Church and Community Communication Committee (CCCC) 2023", held it's first meeting January 26th with 4 people present!

We are excited to be part of this effort to reach members as well as non-members and members of the community of all ages. We would encourage others to join us as we develop our objectives and goals for the year. Your thoughts and talents are greatly appreciated.

Brainstorming is the objective in these early stages and we look forward to your input and participation. If you'd like more information please contact Lynda Converse, Julie Hofius, Wendy Jacobson, Connie Vieths or any council member.