

# First Edition



## Thoughts From Pastor Matt!

I don't know what it is about this time of year, but it always seems to sneak up on us. One minute you're recovering from a broken toe and hernia surgery, the next minute you're winterizing the boat and putting the golf clubs away for the season. Okay, maybe your summer was not as "eventful" as mine, but hopefully it was a lot less painful. It's just a reminder that there is a season for everything under heaven. Sometimes we can't wait to get out of the season, or we wish this season would never end. I was reminded multiple times during my recovery that this, too, shall pass. And it did. But isn't that true for when things are going really well? This too shall pass.

Whether we had a good or bad summer season, we can always look forward with hope and excitement towards the next season of life. The fall season at the church tends to be the busiest time, yet it is also the most rewarding time. There is kickoff to Sunday School and pancake breakfasts, Wednesday Night Bible studies, Adult and Teen Challenge worship service, LCMC Annual Conference, Fall Supper, and Halloween Outreach just to name a few. So a lot is happening in the next two months to keep us all busy, but also many opportunities to share Christ's love, fellowship with one another, and also see how God is moving in other people's lives. Those opportunities can be very rewarding!

With so many things happening at First Lutheran in the next couple months, it also reveals the hearts behind those who call this church their home. Their hearts are set on loving God and loving others. That is what it is all about. Those are the two greatest commandments. All the Law and Prophets depend on these two commands. Whatever event takes place within the church walls, it needs to be centered on those two commands. That is why we do the things we do.

I hope many of you are able to come check out one of the many events that are planned in the near future. Or maybe you want to get involved and become one of the volunteers to put on these events. I can guarantee you it will be rewarding. If not in this life, there will be a reward waiting for you in heaven. So if you're reading this, I pray a blessing over your life and I look forward to seeing you at church. Let's see what God has in store to build His kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven.

Blessings,  
Pastor Matthew

## THOSE WHO ARE ILL OR IN THE HOSPITAL

Roxann Kaiser  
JoAnn Artmann (Karen Fundine's daughter)  
Rex Manchesian (Rita Peterson's brother)  
Ryhley Mattison  
Brenda Hoppe  
Izzy Arnold  
Dana Robinson (Rita Peterson's daughter-in-law)  
Julie Hofius  
Rosie Harmsen  
Dale Lyon (Sherry Holm's cousin)

### 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

### ASSISTING LIVING/NURSING HOME

**Good Samaritan** Ken Kelling,  
**Riverside: Edith Pietz**

### MILITARY

**Joseph DeLude**—Army, Grandson of Don DeLude

**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

### 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.

### Church Council

**President: Bob Harmsen** (218) 575-3068

**Vice President: Griff Eisel** (952) 239-0878

**Secretary: Dan Jacobson** (218) 746-4167

Don Osowski (763) 286-5405

Shirley Smith (218) 838-1483

Diane Wright (218) 851-8964

Chris Warren (320) 749-2031

### 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.**

**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.**

# **First Lutheran Church Pillager Minutes**

## **June 10, 2025**

**Call to Order:** 6:30 p.m. by President Bob Harmsen

**Present:**, Dan Jacobson, Chris Warren, Bob Harmsen, Don Oslowski, Diane Wright,  
**Absent:** Griff Eisel, Shirley Smith

**I. Opening Prayer:** Pastor Matt

**II. Treasurer's Report:** Lynn added a year-over-year revenue report to compare monthly giving in the financial report. Through the end of May expenses are at 41 percent of budget and total revenue at budget. Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report made by Don and seconded by Diane. Motion carried

**III. Pastor's Report:** Meetings and visitation for the first 10 days of June were reported. Matt announced he is having surgery on June 11. Pastor asked for clarification on some points on the annual compensation agreement and response from council to his input on the process.

**IV. Secretary's Report:** Motion to wave the reading of the minutes made by Chris and seconded by Diane. Motion carried. A motion to accept the minutes of the meeting was made by Don and Seconded by Diane.

**V. Committee Updates:**

**Worship/Music:** Dan discussed that the idea to bring back a few of the liturgical pieces from the blue hymnal (such as the Glory to God) have been delayed due to more musical preparation and planning needed. Wendy reported that she has received 48 song Requests from the congregation that are being implemented in future services.

**Congregation and Community Outreach: (Marliss)** – During the June 3 missions meeting, committee members made paper flower bouquets for Riverside residents. Also, Bob reported that four new families are thinking about joining the congregation.

**Hospitality:** No update.

**Sanctuary:** No update.

**Facilities/Building:** Bob spoke with Gary's painting about water beading our siding and then priming and painting it as an alternative to purchasing new siding. If done correctly, the process as proven to work. Will need to confirm how many years the guarantee.

**Staffing:** Pastor's compensation package was changed to a unilateral agreement. Bob noted that pastor is still owed a paternity leave Sunday that can he can use this year at his discretion.

**Old Business:** Bob shared what the new premium for the church and parsonage insurance. It increased by 27 percent year over year and now stands at \$14,706. Worker's compensation insurance was \$746. Council is considering forming a committee to investigate comparative policies and request quotes to see if this amount can be reduced.

**New Business:**

**Adjourn and Closing:** Chris made a motion to adjourn, which was second by Don and approved by acclamation.

Meeting was closed with the Lord's

# **First Lutheran Church Pillager Minutes**

## **July 8, 2025**

Call to Order: 6:30 p.m. by President Bob Harmsen

Present:, Dan Jacobson, Chris Warren, Bob Harmsen, Don Osowski, Diane Wright, Shirley Smith, Griff Eisel

Absent: Lynn

### **I. Opening Prayer:** Pastor Matt

**II. Treasurer's Report:** Council discussed causes of an apparent deficit in the General Fund since the beginning of the year. Church income is approximately \$5,000 more than expenses through June, but the general fund is decreasing. Motion made by Griff to table the Treasurer's Report until we have a chance to talk to Lynn about allocation of money across the various church funds, Chris seconded the motion which was approved by acclamation.

**III. Pastor's Report:** Pastor presented an outline on how we can approach church growth issues. The outline focused on changes to worship, discipleship, prayer and missions. Most of the discussion focused on how to retain the children and families from Sunday school through confirmation. Pastor proposed we take a more active approach in involving young people as regular parts of the Sunday Service. New member classes are being held on July 20<sup>th</sup> , with a new member Sunday on July 27<sup>th</sup> .

**IV. Secretary's Report:** Motion to wave the reading of the minutes made by Diane and seconded by Shirley. Motion made to approve the minutes by Griff and seconded by Diane and approved by acclamation.

### **V. Committee Updates:**

**Worship/Music:** We are in the process of transitioning to a new bulletin layout with the order of service and music listed. Pastor is looking into whether we need a new software program for the bulletin and newsletter because Microsoft is discontinuing Publisher.

**Congregation and Community Outreach:** (Marliss) – Wendy and others delivered the flowers made by the committee to residents at Riverside. The garage sale is all set up for July 10-12. The church will use Bob's boat as the float in the Pillager parade on July 19<sup>th</sup> . 24<sup>th</sup> tea at Riverside.

**Hospitality:** Garage sale setup received help from eight members.

**Sanctuary:** Don found the holes the wasps used to enter the sanctuary last fall on the south side of the church.

**Facilities/Building:** Griff and others fixed the handicap parking sign in the parking lot that had been knocked down. Still haven't received a bid back from Horizon on the new furnace and AC unit for the parsonage. Griff will follow up with them. Bob presented a bid from Gary's painting for water blasting and repainting the church siding in lieu of replacing the siding. The quote was \$28,300, about \$20,000 to \$35,000 less than the siding would cost. Bob has had this process done on garage doors and the paint has held up well. Shirley made a motion, seconded by Diane, that we accept the bid from Gary's painting for up to \$30,000 to paint the church. Motion carried by acclamation.

**Staffing:** Bob said he would like to retire as head of the pancake breakfast committee. He is looking to get a new lead to head it up going into next year.

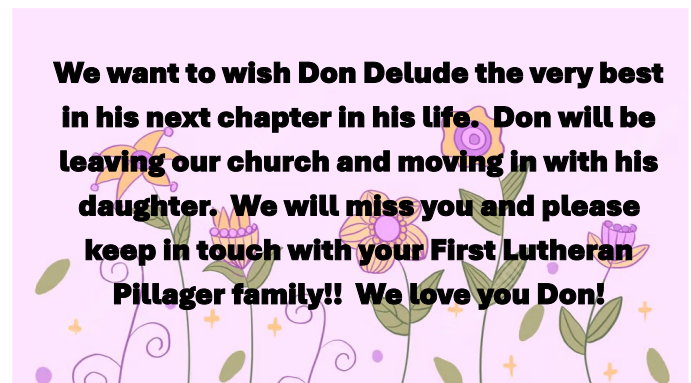
**Old Business:** Bob mentioned that we need to respond to a survey from the insurance company about the building's electrical systems.

**New Business:** Bob mentioned the church has received notice that it is listed as a beneficiary in a will of a former member for a bequest of \$15,000. More updates will be provided as they are received.

**Adjourn & Closing:** Diane made a motion to adjourn, which was second by Shirley and approved by acclamation.

Meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer

August 10<sup>th</sup> marked one year since Julie Hofius suffered a brain aneurysm. During worship on Sunday, August 10, 2025, she testified how God not only spared her life but miraculously restored her health without any lasting effects. Julie praised God and gave thanks for the countless family members, friends and other prayer warriors who offered unceasing prayers that contributed to her survival, recovery and healing!



**Sending off our longtime member with a quilt and a blessing as he begins a new chapter in his faith journey.**





## Assisted-Living Visitation Ministry



Enjoy tea, treats and talk? Consider sharing your gift of gab with residents at Pillager's Riverside Assisted Living. Join our ministry team there in the dining hall from 1:30-2:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. For updates, call Wendy at 218-746-4167 or talk to Rosie.



Mn Adult & Teen Challenge

**September 21,  
2025**

The MN Adult and Teen Challenge Choir will be performing for us followed by a potluck. Please sign up in the back to bring something to share and bless these singers as bless us with their stories and music.

*Thanks to all of you for  
the prayers and cards. It  
meant a lot in helping me  
heal! Rosie Harmsen*

*Thank  
You*



## A BIG WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!!

Regina & Donald Tichy. Theresa and Glen Welters, Riley Scherping (holding the cake with the big smile!!!). Dean and Joan Holmberg. Welcome to your new First Lutheran Pillager Family!!

## GARAGE SALE THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who help set up, donate items, who worked the garage sale, and help pack the items after the garage sale!

**Thank you to all of you who  
donated school items to the  
Operation Christmas Child  
this year!!!**

**Please join us in assembling the  
boxes on Monday, September 29,  
at 6 pm. Would love the help for  
this worthy cause!!!**



**FAMILY  
Fun Night**

Thanks to everyone who helped plan, set up, participated, and help to clean up!!!!



Float for the Pillager Fair Parade day! Thanks for decorating the float and participating in the parade!!



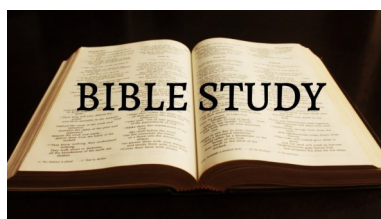
President Bob Harmsen could give you details about how these funds will go toward the work to remove the old paint, prime the siding, and paint the church in a fresh coat of light gray color. The work should be complete before August's end.

### LOOKING AHEAD!!

Oct 15 Meatball Dinner  
Oct 31 Trunk or Treat  
???Pillager School Fun Night

11/22 Lefsa/Bake Sale  
Cookie Deliveries  
Pillager School Mission Tree

December  
Salvation Army Bell Ringing  
12/10 Family Holiday Workshop



Please join us for Bible Study this fall. It will start on Wednesday evening, September 17, 2025, starting at 6:30 pm.

Sunday School begins on Sunday, September 14. Classes will be held during church services on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. All children ages 3+ are welcome to attend. We are so excited to start this new school year!

**PLEASE NOTE:** Due to communion schedule changes in September, Sunday School will be held on September 14 and September 21 instead of September 14 and September 28.





## Fall Quilt Sale

10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

**Saturday, September 20th**  
downtown during the Pillager Fest  
(Visit the quilters' tent near the post office)

Come to stock up on gifts of king, queen, full and twin-size quilts. Youth and baby quilts will also be available.

Proceeds help the quilters replenish their supplies so that they can donate quilts to folks in need at care centers, women's shelters, veterans' hospitals, rehabilitation centers and more.



## Fall Quilting starts September 2nd



Join us Tuesdays from noon to 3 p.m. in the church fellowship area. No knowledge needed. Bring a sense of fun. Learn to lay out fabric blocks, assemble and tie layers, pin bindings. Bonus points for those with sewing machine skills! Coffee and treats round out our sessions.



Please note that the first Pancake Breakfast will be the first Sunday in September!

**It is that time again to think about the Pancake Breakfast every month!!! The sign-up sheets are in the back of the church for donations to help sponsor the breakfast and for men to sign up to work for the breakfast!!!!!!!**

## GOLF ON SUNDAY!

A pastor decided to blow off his Sunday service and go golfing.

"See that?" St Peter said to God, pointing down at the preacher teeing up at the first hole."

"Yup," said God, smiling, "I'll fix him."

With that God waved his arm as the preacher teed off. The ball hit a tree, flew straight up in the air, where it was caught by a seagull, which flew hundred yards with it before dropping it on the #1 green, about a yard from the hole. A large toad emerged from the hole, hopped over to the ball and nudged it into the hole. Hole in one!

"I thought you were going to punish him?" said St. Peter.

"I just did," said God. "Who is ever going to believe him!!!!"

## 2025 Schedule of Events

### Pillager Fest

### Saturday, September 20th

- Vendors: 11am - 5pm
- Petting Zoo: 11am - 7pm
- Games & Activities: 11am - 11pm
- Food & Drinks: 11am - 11pm
- Car & Bike Show: Noon - 4pm
  - Registration begins at 11am
- Bingo: Noon (Community Center)
- Pillager History Center: Noon - 4pm
- Pickleball Tournament: 2pm
  - Registration begins at 1pm
- Tail Gunners (Band): 2pm - 6pm
- Bags Tournament: 5pm
  - Registration begins at 4pm
- Hillbilly Rock Show: 7pm - 11pm
- After Party at KC's: 11pm - 1am



# Eileen Spilman

April 7, 1945 — August 10, 2025

Eileen (Fornshell) Spilman, 80, of Pillager, passed away on August 10, 2025, at Lakewood Care Center in Staples. Eileen was born April 7, 1945, in Brainerd, MN, to Curtis and Jeanette (Ackerson) Fornshell and grew up in Pillager, graduating from Pillager High School in 1963.



She went to work in St. Cloud at Fingerhut and later at JC Penney's until she married the love of her life, Douglas Spilman, on November 25, 1967, in Pillager. They lived in Minneapolis, where she worked at Prudential Life Insurance until they bought two 4-plexes and a duplex, which kept her busy while Doug worked at a machine shop. Their first child, Chad Douglas, was born on September 4, 1971, and three years later, their second son, Kevin Curtis, was born on October 17, 1974. They moved to Champlin, MN, for two years before returning to Pillager in 1978 to a hobby farm, where they remained.

On November 10, 1979, Chad and Kevin died in a semi/car crash in which Eileen was injured. Her faith in God and strength carried her through as she endured the pain. She worked for Avon Corporation for three years before deciding to have another child. Son Kelly James was born on December 20, 1982, their Christmas baby.

Doug and Eileen opened and operated Spilman Sawmill in Pillager from 1980 to the present, sawing and planning lumber for family and clients.

In 2020, she held three rummage sales to benefit Pillager businesses, churches, schools, coats and meals for kids, the Pillager Family Center with Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets, and provided aid for medical hardships due to COVID-19.

Eileen was a member of the Brainerd Senior Center for 50 years and the Brainerd Eagles Club for 16 years. She became a member of Pillager First Lutheran Church in 1978, and one highlight of her membership was overseeing the building's new addition in 2002. She was also in the choir, Labors of Love (helping many families with funeral lunches), on the church's board for six years, Sunday School for many years, Ladies Aid, and worked on the church's newsletter. She loved playing bingo, reading Inspired Books of Love and Suspense, watching "Days of Our Lives" for 57 years, enjoying the family camper on the Crow Wing River, and spending time with her family and close friends. In 1993, she was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes, and over the years endured three back surgeries, shoulder, knee and hip replacements, and glaucoma. This last year she broke her hip and femur which she never recovered.

Surviving are her loving family: husband Doug of 57 years; son Kelly (Kris Olson); grandson Brandon Olson; sisters Wanda (Gary) Beimert of Pillager, Penny (Brian) Stumvoll of Nisswa; nephews Larry (Lisa) and Brent (Tasha Cestnik) Beimert of Pillager; godsons Rori (Katie) Stumvoll of Nisswa, and Aron (Samantha) Stumvoll of Lima, Peru; and extended family, including many nieces, nephews, and cousins. She was preceded in death by her sons Chad and Kevin, her parents Curtis and Jeanette Fornshell, her father- and mother-in-law Ben and Mable Spilman, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, best friend Alice Nyberg, and many other family members. Funeral Services will be held on Saturday August 16, 2025 at 4:00pm at Motley Free Methodist Church in Motley, MN. Lunch will be served following the service at the church. There will be a visitation held on Friday August 15, 2025 from 5:00pm to 7:00pm at the Brenny Family Funeral Chapel in Baxter, MN, and also one hour prior to the start of the service at the church on Saturday. Burial will be at Wildwood Cemetery in Pillager.

# September 2025 FIRST LUTHERAN PILLAGER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1 <b>Labor Day</b>	2 12 pm Quilters 8:00 pm AA Mtg	3	4	5	
7 9:30 am Communion Service 10:30 am Fellowship	8	9 12 pm Quilters 6:30 pm Council Mtg 8:00 pm AA Mtg	10	11 Riverside Assisted Living Tea	12	
14 9:30 am Service <b>SUNDAY SCHOOL</b> 10:30 am Pancake Breakfast	15	16 12 pm Quilters 8:00 pm AA Mtg	17 6:30 pm Bible Study	18	19	
21 9:30 am MN Teen Adult Challenge <b>SUNDAY SCHOOL</b> 10:30 am Potluck	22	23 12 pm Quilters 8:00 pm AA Mtg	24 6:30 pm Bible Study	25	26	
28 9:30 am Communion Service 10:30 am Fellowship	29 6:00 pm OCC Shoebox Assembly & Missions	30 12 pm Quilters 8:00 pm AA Mtg	1 6:30 pm Bible Study	2	3	

# October 2025 FIRST LUTHERAN PILLAGER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	1	2	3	
			6:30 pm Bible Study			
5	6	7	8	9	10	
9:30 am Communion Service 10:30 am Fellowship	LCMC Gathering Lakeville MN	12 pm Quilters 8:00 pm AA Mtg	6:30 pm Bible Study  LCMC Gathering Lakeville MN	Riverside Assisted Living Tea		
12	13	14	15	16	17	
9:30 am Service SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 am Fellowship	Columbus Day	12 pm Quilters 6:30 pm Council Mtg 8:00 pm AA Mtg	6:30 pm Bible Study			
19	20	21	22	23	24	
9:30 am Communion Service 10:30 am Fellowship		12 pm Quilters 8:00 pm AA Mtg	6:30 pm Bible Study		Pillager School Fun Night	
26	27	28	29	30	31	
9:30 am Service SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 am Fellowship		12 pm Quilters 8:00 pm AA Mtg	6:30 pm Bible Study		5:30 – 7 pm Trunk or Treat	