

# Living Connected... To GOD & EACH OTHER

October--December  
2023

Bible Presentation in Worship 2023

SENIOR PASTOR'S COLUMN

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Sunday Worship  
(All Age Worship)  
Hours:

8:45 Chapel  
10 AM Sanctuary  
10 AM Online

(Facebook, YouTube,  
FLCCH.ORG)

Pastoral Staff:  
Bonnie Wilcox  
*Senior Pastor*

Jill Bergman  
*Associate Pastor*

The Caller Newsletter is  
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[joycew@flcch.org](mailto:joycew@flcch.org)

## MAPPING OUR FAITH



I hope you have taken the MAP (Mission Assessment Profile) already! This is one of the most important ways you can share with our leaders your thoughts about the current ministry of First Lutheran Church, Columbia Heights.

With the input of 150 or more of our community members, you will help to influence the shape and future of our congregation!

Surveys didn't exist in the Bible, but there were times when people used stones to make a vote, or to cast lots to win a prize.

Other than the grand Judean temple in Jerusalem, there were no community groups who shared property in common for worship and fellowship and service. In the early church, homeowners offered their residence for "house churches."

This effort is part of the work of the F.A.M.I.L.Y. group (Warren Watson, Ruth Dodson, Grace Fishbeck, Becca Stolba, Jeff Beck and me, as well as our consultant Jeff Kjellberg). Pray for them and the work they do to receive input from the congregation, consult with trusted resources about options before us, and work toward a recommendation to our congregation about our long term future.

## A COMMITMENT TO GENEROSITY - November 2023

My nearly 3-year-old grandson touches my heart each time he says to me, "I love you so very much." This is usually accompanied by a tight hug. He's showing a generous spirit to me, unconditional love and commitment to our relationship.

We mark relationships with other human beings in many ways: Rings exchanged on a wedding day. Cards and personal notes exchanged. Commitment to a mortgage! A deck built. Handmade gifts created from new or repurposed materials. Acts of devotion and love.

How do we show our commitment to God? We mark this relationship as well – through our worship, our prayers, our acts of service and justice, as well as our generosity with Christ's Church. In this case, with First Lutheran Church.

Some of us live on very limited and fixed incomes. Some of us have investments, 401(k) accounts. Some of us are part of working families. Some of us are one-person households. God expects the same from each of us – a PORTION OF WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN. Not equal amounts, but equal sacrifice, in whatever amount that may be.

Together, our gifts added together do more than they could ever do alone. Your donations and offerings feed young people on a weekly basis, create beautiful worship services, and support missionaries on the other side of the world who accompany people with their hearts and souls.

What we give matters. It is a gift given freely, without guilt or shame, without a bill invoiced to us, without coercion.

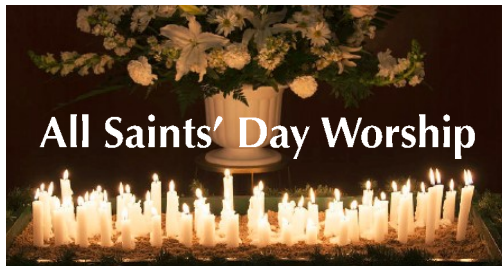
*Rev. Bonnie Wilcox  
Senior Pastor*

## SPECIAL FALL WORSHIP / ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

### Confirmation Worship led by our Young People

**Sunday, Oct. 29, 10 AM**

This fall, our confirmation students are studying the part of the worship liturgy we use at First Lutheran. We are excited that they will take this knowledge to inspire and lead the congregation in worship on this special day when one of our young people confirms his faith, and we mark the anniversary of the Reformation 500+ years ago.



**Sunday, Nov. 5 (8:45 & 10 AM)**

This day has been celebrated by the church for nearly 1300 years in November. On the Sunday closest to this day, we will read the names of those who have died from our community in the last twelve months, as well as invite everyone to light a candle during communion in memory of saints who have died.



### A Commitment to Generosity

**Sunday, Nov. 19 (8:45 & 10 AM)**

On or before this date, you are invited to make a formal monetary commitment to the church for mission support in 2024.

### Thanksgiving Eve Worship

**Wednesday, Nov. 22, 7 PM**

Thanksgiving Eve Worship, followed by PIE! (see info about this fundraiser for our Youth Gathering Trip to New Orleans next summer on page 5).



*The first Advent was about the arrival of God into a world of woe, and every Advent since invites us to grapple with what Jesus' coming means to our fraught landscapes now.*

~ Kelly Nikondeha, in "The First Advent in Palestine"

Join us this Advent season in this world waiting for a Savior! We retell the stories of hopeful people waiting for rescue, waiting for justice, waiting for freedom. *How does a weary world rejoice*, echoing the words of "O Holy Night?"

You can rejoice in this weary world this Advent season in many ways, both personal and communal.

#### PERSONAL:

- An Advent book study of "The First Advent in Palestine," a deep yet easy to read story about the world of Jesus' parents 2,000 years ago, and the struggles of the world in which they lived.
- Listen to our Advent podcast

#### COMMUNAL:

- Dec. 3 - Special Sunday services for Advent begin
- Dec. 10 - Children's Christmas Program (10 AM)
- Dec. 17 - Lessons and Carols

The 4th Sunday of Advent falls on December 24 (Christmas Eve). This year we're altering the schedule to allow worship *both* on Sunday morning and Sunday evening:

- **10 AM Advent/Christmas Eve Service** will include the lighting of the Advent Wreath & Box, and Holy Communion. Instead of candle lighting in the morning, we'll ring bells to celebrate the gift of Jesus' birth!
- **4 PM Candlelight Christmas Eve Service** with Holy Communion. Choir and/or bells at both services. Jeffrey Patry on the organ, the Senior Choir & Campanile Bells will lead our musical worship at both services!

### Advent Podcast / Book Study

This Advent, Pastor Jill and Rachel James, (our Children, Youth, and Family Director) invite you to read a book with us! We will be discussing it, chapter by chapter, on our FLC podcast beginning Dec. 3.



Find us on your favorite podcast platform as "First Lutheran Church Columbia Heights MN."

The book is The First Advent in Palestine: Reversals, Resistance, and the Ongoing Complexity of Hope by Kelley Nikondeha. "Bringing us the untold--often hidden--story of Advent, Kelley Nikondeha takes us back to the original landscapes. Then, as now, Palestine was the geographic, socioeconomic, and political backdrop of the Gospel narratives that wrestle with dark themes of violence, exploitive economics, and abuse to arrive at the hard-won hope of Jesus' birth."

If you would like to read along with us, a few copies of the book are available for \$15 through the church office. They can also be ordered through Amazon or [augsburgfortress.com](https://augsburgfortress.com), #9781506474793.





# MUSIC AT FIRST CONCERTS

## Halloween Spooktacular

Join the Halloween fun at First Lutheran on **Thursday, Oct. 26!** Trick or treating will be from **4-5:30 PM** with an organ/piano concert from **5:30-6 PM**. Included will be a "name that tune" and costume contest. Come in your favorite costume and join in the fun!



## Mississippi Valley Orchestra

**Sunday, Dec. 10, 3 PM**

**(pre-concert talk at 2:15 PM)**

First Lutheran welcomes back the Mississippi Valley Orchestra to our Sanctuary this December. This

performance will include music by Boyle, Mozart and Falla conducted by Ho-Yin Kwok. Sarah Grimes, violin and Lydia Grimes, viola, will be the featured soloists. More info can be found at [www.mississippivalleyorchestra.com](http://www.mississippivalleyorchestra.com)



## Lake Wobegon Brass Band

**Saturday, Dec. 2, 7 PM**

The Lake Wobegon Brass Band was originated by three founding members at the Anoka Coffee Shop in 1992. The band, directed by Michael Halstenson, follows the British style of brass bands.

Join us for this holiday concert of new and familiar favorites. Tickets can be purchased at the door for \$10. More info can be found at [www.lwbb.org](http://www.lwbb.org)



## Christmas at First

**Friday, Dec. 15, 7 PM**

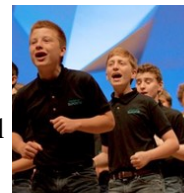
Join the musicians of First Lutheran in their annual *Christmas at First Concert*. The Campanile Handbell Ensemble, Sanctuary Choir, Family Choir, Instrumentalists and Soloists will be featured in this evening of Holiday music. All are welcome to this free concert!



## Minnesota Boychoir

**Sunday, Dec. 17, 4 PM**

Founded in 1962, the Minnesota Boychoir is the oldest boy choir in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area. The Boychoir's reputation for excellence has brought invitations from local and national music conventions as well as sporting events, local theater productions and touring Broadway companies. The Boychoir boasts over 150 singers ages 6-18 and is directed by Mark Johnson. This concert is free and open to the public. More info can be found at [www.boychoir.org](http://www.boychoir.org)



## Family Choir

First Lutheran has started a family choir that will sing for worship services and special events throughout the school year. Any parents with their children are welcome to sing. All are invited! Directed by Becca Stolba, rehearsals will follow worship in the Sanctuary. Contact: Jeffrey, [jeffrey@flcch.org](mailto:jeffrey@flcch.org)

**Sunday, Oct. 15 (rehearsal)**  
**Sunday, Oct. 22 (rehearsal)**  
**Sunday, Oct. 29 (sing for the 10 AM worship service)**  
**Sunday, Nov. 19 (rehearsal)**  
**Sunday, Nov. 26 (rehearsal)**  
**Sunday, Dec. 3 (rehearsal)**  
**Sunday, Dec. 10 (sing for 10 AM worship service)**  
**Friday, Dec. 15 (sing for 7 PM Christmas at First Concert)**

## Augsburg Centennial Singers

**Sunday, Nov. 5, 4 PM**

The Augsburg Centennial Singers is a senior men's 50-voice chorus founded in 1993 to celebrate the centennial of the first singing tour of Norway by an Augsburg College Gospel Quartet. This concert will feature gospel music, spirituals and patriotic songs and is directed by Richard Duncan and accompanied by Marilyn Lueth. Free concert, all are welcome!



## Singers in Accord

**Saturday, Nov. 11, 4 PM & Sunday, Nov. 12, 4 PM**

Singers in Accord welcomes renowned composer and conductor Dr. René Clausen for its fall concert *The Music of Living*. The performances will express the beauty of life's journey through music that illuminates the ideals of hope and thanksgiving, beauty and love, and the blessing of living through all of life's everyday moments. More info can be found at [www.singersinaccord.org](http://www.singersinaccord.org)

## Chorus Polaris

**Saturday, Dec. 9, 3 PM**

Chorus Polaris is a premiere community choral ensemble based in the Twin Cities. The 50-voice choir will present *Sounds of the Season* with the handbell ensemble, Bells of the Lakes. Both ensembles are under the direction of William Mathis. More info can be found at [www.choruspolaris.org](http://www.choruspolaris.org)





# MINISTRY NEWS



**Halloween Thursday, Oct. 26**  
**Trick or Treating 4 - 5:30 PM**  
**Spook-tacular Concert 5:30 - 6 PM**

All ages are welcome to dress up and join us for Trick or Treating at the doors around our building and a Spooktacular concert afterwards!

## STORIES FROM OUR PHYSICALLY DISABLED NEIGHBORS

Weds. October 18th, 6:30 - 7:30 pm  
 at First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights



**Stories from our Physically Disabled Neighbors**  
**Storytelling Event**  
**Wednesday, Oct. 18, 6:30 - 7:30 PM**

Join us for this panel discussion to help community members, families, and students better understand the insights and challenges that come from living with a physical disability. This is an all ages panel discussion featuring:  
*Joe Woods* - Retired Veteran  
*Dave Meyer* - First Lutheran Member  
*John Peterson* - Retired from U of M  
*Matt Palm* - First Lutheran Member  
*Shea Roberts Gyllen* - (they/them) is a white, queer non-binary person who lives with chronic pain and recently sustained their 5th documented concussion.

**Fall Drama**  
**Nov. 3 & 4, 7 PM**

The story of Jonah is an original Drama written by Nathan Roberts and performed by First Lutheran Actors. The main character Jonah is a former US Navy ship captain who lost his foot in the Bosnian Civil War. He returned home to Minnesota and now hosts a popular podcast called "Just Forgive Bro." But when Jonah's church asks him to help resettle a Bosnian refugee family...we find out Jonah may not have "Just Forgiven" the Bosnian people.



**Stories from Our Immigration System Story Telling Event**  
**Nov. 15, 6:30 - 7:30 PM**

Join our panelists for this discussion to help community members, families, and students better understand the experiences and challenges faced by people who immigrate to the US.  
*Rep. Sandra Feist* - Immigration Lawyer  
*Rebecca Dodson* - Immigration Lawyer  
*Angela Gallo* - Immigrant from Mexico and First Lutheran Youth Staff



**Lutefisk & Meatball Dinner**  
**Saturday, Jan. 20, 2024**

We are pleased to be offering the perennial favorite dinner fundraiser. Tickets are \$25 and will start going on sale at the Holiday Market on Saturday, Nov. 11. It has been said that many hands make light work, but in this case, many hands make for a lot of fun! It really is a fun time to get together with all of our First family and deliver what is widely recognized as the BEST Lutefisk dinner in town.

Volunteer sign-up sheets will be posted in the Commons early in December. Sign up early to get your favorite job. Babysitting will be provided for workers on the day of the dinner, but if you need a sitter you must sign up so we will know how many sitters to hire. As an added bonus, ALL volunteers qualify for half-price tickets to the dinner! Youth volunteers and their parents also get camp credits for helping out!

Contact Ruth Dodson if you have questions. [ruthdodson@msn.com](mailto:ruthdodson@msn.com)



**Katie Luther Room Make Over**

This summer, the Hospitality and Outreach Board set a goal of redesigning Katie Luther into a multi-use room for our church community. Larry Bugbee led several teams of volunteers to get the room ready for this fall! We especially thank the Finance Board, Youth, Paul Eddy, Roger Johnson & Jane Bugbee for working to make this redesign possible!

**SACA Giving Tree**

The local food shelf (SACA) has a Christmas give away and they have asked First Lutheran to donate \$10 - \$20 gift cards for parents to give to their teenage children. In November, please take a card off the tree in the Commons, purchase a gift card, and drop the envelope and card in the church office!



**Community Lunch**  
**Sundays, 11 AM - 12:30 PM**

Enjoy a delicious home cooked meal and a fresh salad bar. The neighborhood is all invited! Thank you to our amazing volunteers Rock and Kari Hauser, Brian Schweiger, Julianne Wyckoff, Wendy Ramirez, Judie Opheim, Jane Bugbee, Roy Weber, Jennifer Shull, and Betty Krahl.

**After School Program**  
**Tuesdays & Thursdays, 4:30 - 6 PM**

We continue to serve families in our community with a delicious home cooked meal, crafts, games, and mentoring. Thank you to our amazing volunteers Jane & Larry Bugbee, Linda Fowler, Karen Mattison, Stacy Ratliff, and to all who support this program.

## First Lutheran Sundays are FUNdays!

**Every Sunday**, we have Sunday School for kids in our Preschool class (Ages 3 – Pre-K), and classes for Grades K-2 and 3-5. We meet together for a fun game & lesson opener in the gym directly following the 10 AM worship service. Class runs from 11 AM - 12 PM. New families are always invited to visit and register to join us.

**Our Confirmation Class** meets every Sunday at 11 AM in the Youth Room for students in Grades 6-8 or any interested youth. This fall, we have a focus on learning about Worship with our pastors, youth & music directors. For Lutherans, worship stands at the center of our life of faith. Through God's word, water, bread and prayer we are nurtured in faith and sent out into the world.

**Family Choir** is our opportunity for children, youth and parents to sing together and share in our worship service. Our first rehearsal is on Oct. 15, 11 AM, followed by Oct. 22 and singing in worship on Oct. 29. Everyone is welcome to join & raise your voices in song!

**Katie Luther Circle** is a group for moms to encourage, pray and learn together. We like to go out for fun too! This fall, we are meeting on the first Sunday of each month from 11:15 AM – 12 PM in Room 101.

**FLY Youth Group** meets every Wednesday from 6 - 8 PM for youth in Grades 6-12 to have fellowship, food, fun and faith-filled conversations.

## Confirmation Retreat at Gustavus Adolphus College, Oct. 7-8

All youth in Confirmation class, as well as confirmed high school students are invited to a special retreat at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN. We will stay in the dorms, tour the campus, and eat in the cafeteria while we learn & pray together. Adult chaperones needed.

## Youth Sunday / Affirmation of Baptism - Sunday, Oct. 29

We will have a youth-led worship service & affirm the baptism of our confirmands.

## SpudFest - Sunday, Nov. 12

Join the youth as they serve up their renowned potato feast for lunch! 11 AM - 12:30 PM baked potato bar (with all the fixings) in support of their youth ministry fundraiser. \$5/person suggested donation.

## Pie Fundraiser for Youth Gathering

The youth will be sponsoring this year's pie social after the 7 PM Thanksgiving Eve worship service. Please consider donating 'uncut' pies (homemade or store bought) and whipped toppings to be dropped off 6 - 7 PM. Then, be sure to stop by after worship for a slice of your favorite pie! *Any unused pies may be purchased for your holiday gathering!*

## Kids Christmas Program, Dec. 10

The Kids Christmas Program will practice during Sunday School in November & December. There will be roles for all interested children. Details and parts will be emailed to you soon.



## ELCA Youth Gathering

Every three years, over 25,000 high school youth and their adult leaders from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gather for a week of faith formation known as the ELCA Youth Gathering. Through days spent in learning, worship, Bible study, service & fellowship, young people grow in faith and are inspired to live their faith in their daily lives. Our host city, New Orleans, has always been its true, authentic self. Our theme, "Created to Be," highlights the arts, music and soul of this vibrant & resilient city, built to represent a place where all God's children come together.

**New Orleans! Dates:** July 16-20, 2024 (with potential add a day before or after). For Youth Grades 8-12 in the fall of 2023

\* We will stay in a hotel in New Orleans. Our events take place at the Superdome and Convention Center. We'll do service in the New Orleans community, worship with our synod, learn & experience God together. Contact Rachel with questions.

## Business of the Congregation!

### Special Notice from Pastor Bonnie:

The Church Council has approved a 12-week sabbatical for me in 2024. I plan to take this time away after Easter next year. I appreciate this benefit available to pastors for rest, renewal, review and recommitment on a regular basis. More information will be presented at our Annual Meeting in January 2024.

### 2023 Contribution Statements

Will be mailed to your home mid-January. Please email Jana Dietering with any questions: [Jana@flcch.org](mailto:Jana@flcch.org)

### Town Hall Meeting (re: Budget)

Sunday, Jan. 14 at 11:15 AM (Sanctuary). We will review First Lutheran's 2023 financial results and the 2024 Budget. *Community Lunch to follow.*

### Annual Congregation Meeting

Sunday, Jan. 21, 2024, 11:15 AM  
To the yearly business of the church, we will approve a budget, elect leaders, pray and celebrate our ministry!

### Council Board Retreat

Saturday, Jan. 27, 9:30 AM - 1 PM  
This event is for members of all the Boards, Church Council, and standing committees. It is to get acquainted as a new group of leaders and work on goals for the year.

### Holiday Hours

The church office will be closed:

- \* Friday, Nov. 24
- \* Mondays Dec. 25 & Jan. 1

No Community Meal will be served

- \* Sundays, Dec. 24 & 31

## Please Welcome Jody Chandler

Jody has joined our FLC staff as the new Maintenance Manager.

Jody enjoys working with his hands and being a good steward of things. His biggest passion is cycling. Talking about bikes, fixing them, and of course riding them!

Jody has a fantastic wife, Sara and a delightful daughter, Lucille. Most of their free time is spent chasing young Lucille around!

You can reach Jody at [jody@flcch.org](mailto:jody@flcch.org)





# HOLIDAY MARKET

It's time to start thinking about the Holiday Market which will be held on **Saturday, Nov. 11 from 9 AM - 2 PM.** We can't have a Holiday Market unless we have items to sell so we need your help!! We need Christmas themed craft items, general craft items, fabric/sewn pieces, baked goods, cookies for cookie express – so many options! Please chat with any of us if you have questions. We are excited for this year's Holiday Market and appreciate everyone's efforts to make this a huge success!  
*Dorothy Markowitz, Cheryl Ballingrud and Lyn Larson*

## Young at Heart Events...

**Wednesday, Oct. 18, 9:30 AM**

The Young at Heart, FLC's group for senior citizen/retirees, will make a trip to the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul. The featured attraction will be 'The Life and Art of Charles Schulz.' I'm sure you recognize the name Schulz as the creator of 'Charlie Brown' and 'Peanuts.' Schulz was born in Mpls. in 1922 and later moved to St. Paul. We'll plan to spend 90 minutes there and then move on to lunch at a St. Paul restaurant. Other on-going features at the Center: *Our Home: Native Minnesota, Minnesota's Greatest Generation, Weather Permitting, Then Now Wow (the good old days!), Grainland.* Depart church by van at 9:30 AM, \$10 admission + \$5 van; lunch location/price (TBD). Sign up on our bulletin board.

## Global Health Ministries

**Tuesday, November 14, 10:30 AM**

During our work session for Global Health Ministries, we'll do some simple tasks that can be accomplished while sitting or standing. Reusable items that have been discarded by clinics and hospitals are sorted and packed for use on foreign mission fields. Lunch follows at noon. For all our events we ask you to sign up in advance on our bulletin board.

**Christmas Dinner** (Martin Luther Hall). **Tuesday, December 12, 12 PM**

## 55+ Singles

Singles, age 55+ gather to eat and socialize on Fridays at 5 PM. Emails are sent out weekly to invite interested Singles and advise you of any meeting changes. Contact Faith with questions or to be included in the group's email. 612-799-4245, [whitefa@comcast.net](mailto:whitefa@comcast.net)

## First Lutheran Book Club

The Book Club meets monthly on the 3rd Wednesday at 1 PM. Join them on Oct. 18 for a book discussion on Gone With The Wind, by Margaret Mitchell, fellowship & refreshments. Contact Char, [charzarich@gmail.com](mailto:charzarich@gmail.com) with questions or the book of the month.



## WELCA, Minneapolis Synod Women's Gathering

**Attention, women of all ages!**

At the "Just Love" Mpls Area women's gathering this year (**Nov. 4 at First Lutheran**), we're thrilled to announce a new addition this year: a kid's day camp right at the event venue!

Adults can have peace of mind and enjoy our empowering sessions with the knowledge that your children will be in for a treat with games, activities, lively music, and puppet shows that promise laughter and wonderment. Don't miss out on this fantastic experience! Secure your spot and ensure your kids have an unforgettable time, too. **REGISTER TODAY** to receive a FREE \$10 gift card for the global market at the gathering. **Kids registration \$1 until October 15!**

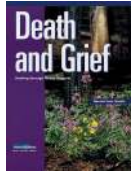
*With Joy & Gratitude...*

I would like to thank the staff & my many, many friends at First Lutheran Church for your care and concerns during my recent hospitalizations. You sent prayers, calls & beautiful cards. I never felt alone! God Bless all of you. ~ Jan Meyen



## New Grief + Healing Support Group

As we travel through the intersection of grief and moving forward, sometimes it's helpful to have companions with whom to share the journey. Starting this fall we will offer a six session grief support group that will discuss the experience of grief using the book Death and Grief by Harold Ivan Smith as a guide.



The first meeting will be on **Wednesday, Nov. 8 at 10:30 AM** at First Lutheran Church. It will continue to meet monthly. Contact Char, [charzarich@gmail.com](mailto:charzarich@gmail.com) or Pastor Jill for more details or to receive a book.

## The Gideons at FLC

The Gideons are 125 years old, and have been a part of First Lutheran for decades. We distribute Bibles and New Testaments locally and around the world to multiple countries in over 100 languages, including Hotels, Schools, Hospitals, First Responders and Prisons. Spreading the Word of God has been our major effort and First Lutheran's financial support has been immensely helpful.

Please consider joining our Gideon Camp for monthly gatherings. Contact either Bob Nelson or Mel Robinson for an application.



## Christmas Garden ...

*A wonderful way to remember or honor a loved one.*

Purchase poinsettias for worship on behalf of a loved one. Sign up at the welcome desk in the Commons to donate a plant, \$12 each (we will purchase the plants). Make checks payable to "FLC" by Dec. 17. Those who purchase a plant for the Sanctuary may take one home following worship on Dec. 24.



# FINANCIALS / GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

## Financial Update:

First Lutheran's major checking and savings accounts and balances as of August 2023 are represented below. For questions or more specific details, please contact Jana Dietering, 763-788-9653 x 104.

### Period ending August 2023

General Checking 08/31/2023	\$ 55,858
Mortgage & Maintenance 08/31/2023	\$ 104,805
Perpetual Reserve Balance 08/31/2023	\$ 107,599
Special Projects Balance 08/31/2023	\$ 650,567
Memorial Fund Balance 08/31/2023	\$ 51,523
Endowment MIF and Thrivent/ELCA Investments	\$ 1,185,583
 Total Current Assets	 \$ 2,234,220
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 2,710,149
 Total Liabilities (incl mortgage)	 \$ 1,274,771
Total Equity	\$ 3,171,541
 Net Revenue as of 08/31/2023	 \$ 498,057

*\*Endowment principal is held in perpetuity and cannot be spent*

*\*\* Only the investment earnings are available for use with the approval of the Endowment Committee*

## 2024 Offering Envelopes

Your 2024 Offering Envelopes are scheduled to arrive at the church in mid-December. Look for opportunities to pick them up before Christmas! *Please contact the church office to request that they be mailed.*

## GIVING

First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights is financed by the generous, direct monetary gifts of its members and friends.

There are several ways you can bless this mission of Jesus with your gifts:



- Drop off your **Check or Cash** during Sunday Worship or send a check thru the mail. Please use an offering envelope so we can give you credit for your gift.

- Stock Transfers to FLC**
- Electronic Funds Transfer** See our website, [flcch.org](http://flcch.org) (upper right hand corner) to set your donation frequency.
- Bill Pay.** Follow the directions of your bank or credit union to create First Lutheran as a Payee at 1555 40<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421. Choose weekly or monthly offerings.

For more information, contact Jana Dietering 763-788-9653, [jana@flcch.org](mailto:jana@flcch.org)

## Hello from the desk of the Finance & Operations Manager...

Our building is bursting with energy and activity! All three of our schools had a great start to the 2023/24 school year and our get together with the school's educators was informative and well received. Bultum Academy has added two extra classrooms to their lease that they will use for ESL and special ed classes. Therefore, SIXTEEN classrooms were readied – super cleaning, including hardwood floors, carpets and walls; painting; repairs; electrical upgrades for modern teaching. The things you can't plan for – wasp nests, mice, etc. And every fall, lots of cardboard to recycle as new books and equipment are received. There are about 270 school children in our facility every school day!

The Property Committee continues to address building repair needs. Katie Luther Room has been renovated and groups have been meeting there regularly. Our parking lot light poles have been refitted with LED fixtures to reduce energy costs and light pollution, and improved visibility at night. Soon the lights in the Sanctuary will be replaced. Larry Bugbee, Bruce Shellito, and Roger Johnson are correcting some bathroom/sink issues upstairs and are working on the downstairs bathroom's update. This team, along with Paul Eddy, has diligently worked on getting the classrooms ready upstairs for the new school year so if you see them please thank them for all their hard work.

First Lutheran has been fortunate to receive a generous special project donation to help with our building maintenance needs. The Finance Team has decided to also invest \$250,000 of those funds to receive a high interest return. Speaking of finances, please check your third quarter donation receipt that will be mailed out at the beginning of October and let me know if you have questions or see discrepancies. If you need to make a change to your online giving to match your pledge I can be of assistance.

The even more invisible work of the staff and Finance Board include: (a) Selection of a new property/casualty insurer. (b) A new service contract negotiated for maintenance and filter changes for HAVC, A/C, the boiler. (c) Searching for and hiring a part time maintenance person. After many months, Jody Chandler began working for us in mid-September.

If you haven't met me yet or have any financial questions/concerns, please don't hesitate to stop by my office or contact me by phone/email.

*Blessings, Jana Dietering*

**For End of Year Giving**, please consider the ease and security of giving electronically or dropping your gifts off at the church. If you are unable to do so, please mail any donations or payments to be postmarked on or before Sunday, Dec. 31 in order to be credited to your 2023 Year End Statement.





First Lutheran Church  
1555 40th Avenue NE / Columbia Heights, MN 55421-3195  
WEB: [flcch.org](http://flcch.org) / PH: 763-788-9653

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**SUNDAY WORSHIP**  
**8:45 & 10 AM**

YOUTUBE &  
FACEBOOK LIVE

**COMMUNITY MEAL**  
**11 AM-12 PM**

**RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED**

*Daylight  
Saving  
Time ends*



*on Sunday, Nov. 5, 2023  
at 2 AM. On Saturday  
night, clocks are set back  
one hour (i.e., gaining  
one hour) to "fall back."*

### *First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights*

