

Living Connected... To GOD & EACH OTHER

May-July 2025

Last Supper Drama
Cast & Crew—April 2025

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Sunday Worship:

8:30 & 10 AM

YouTube & Facebook Live
(All Age Worship)

Pastoral Staff:

Scott Jakel
Interim Senior Pastor
Jill Bergman
Associate Pastor
(Last Sunday 4.27.2025)

The Caller Newsletter is
Published by First
Lutheran Church.
Editor: Joyce Weaver,
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Dear Friends in Christ,

As we continue to “live connected: to God and each other,” we’ve got some exciting “newness” coming our way. We’ll continue to do the work God’s called us to do. We’ll just be forming new connections with new people (as well as some who are well known to us!!) as we proceed by faith.

First - our sadness and our gratitude for a pastor leaving. Pastor Jill Bergman has received and accepted a call to serve at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Burnsville. That congregation reached out through the St. Paul Area Synod late last year to indicate their interest in having Pastor Jill serve as their full-time family ministry associate pastor. In letting her go, we’re so very thankful for the work she’s done here and for the relationship she formed with you. So, it’s a sad time - but a happy time as we send her on her way.

Worth noting: Things were going just fine for Pastor Jill here at First Lutheran. She had served here quite capably for more than 11 years!! No one wanted her to go. Things were good - even quite comfortable for her here.

So... having her leave now, beginning her call in June in Burnsville - and previously having Pastor Bonnie Wilcox leaving for medical reasons last September are NOT signs that things are going badly at our church! We’re thrilled that the Holy Spirit is actively at work in our world.

It’s our sense that the Spirit is helping Pastor Bonnie to experience a time of rest and renewal these days. We’re also aware that the Spirit called Pastor Jill to a new series of challenges: working in family ministry, working full-time, at a huge church - and moving to a new home to live in!

Now.... back to those new connections I spoke of earlier, as we proceed by faith in exciting times. This involves many of you reading this article.

We’ll be needing people to “step up” to take some leadership roles as volunteers in this church - to cover some of the things Pastor Jill had been taking care of in her 25 hours of work each week.

We’ll continue to lean on other programming staff - including me along with Rachel and Nathan. But our staff can only absorb the loss of these hours to a certain extent.

And... we’ll also be waiting for new leadership to arrive.

The Call Committee has done nearly all the preparation work required in the process of calling a minister to be the new Senior Pastor here. It’s exciting! They are awaiting a list of names of people whom they will interview in the coming weeks. It’s an amazing time of anticipation to see how the Holy Spirit will work through our Bishop, our call committee, and other leaders at our church - to make provisions for the eventual calling of this new Senior Pastor.

For me, as your interim pastor, I’m committed to be here until this new Senior Pastor arrives. It’s been a really great experience for me. I’m enjoying the challenge of “zigging and zagging” with all these holy, yet graceful disruptions at our church. God is so good to provide all these opportunities for us to trust in God’s guiding of this church and providing for us in many ways.

Thanks be to God!!

Pastor Scott

Email: scott@flcch.org
Office: 763-788-9653 Ext. 101
(if out of office, voice messages will forward to his email)
Cell: 507-276-0323
(urgent matters)

SUMMER WORSHIP



The theme for our worship services beginning April 27 through June 1 will be “We Walk by Faith.”

Please plan to attend in person as many of these services. If you miss even one “in person,” log on to the YouTube channel and catch up with us by being virtually present after the fact.

On April 27, we’ll look at how two sad and disheartened companions walking along a road to the town of Emmaus were eventually able - by faith - to recognize that Jesus was indeed walking with them the whole time that they struggled with their challenges in life. He walks with you, too!

We’ll witness God’s empowering faithfulness that allows us to walk with each other amidst church and cultural conflict - even when false witnesses seek to steer the narrative - on May 4. The central focus that day will be on the walk of faith by Stephen to be able to witness to Christ by presence of the Holy Spirit in his life.

SUMMER SERIES: June/July

Our worship theme, “Faith in the Valley” starts on **June 8 - Pentecost Sunday** so be sure to **wear the color RED** (the hue of the Holy Spirit)! We’ll celebrate God sending a fresh anointing of the Spirit to sustain our faith - especially when we’re in life’s valleys (tough times).

June 15 we’ll see how God summons us to respond to God’s call. We look at Jeremiah’s call as a prophet. Even in valley (difficult) experiences of life, God calls us to listen and respond.

June 22 we’ll glimpse God’s workshop as God shapes us to be vessels of good use for God’s glory - even if some (all?) of us are “cracked pots.” It’s in the challenging parts of living (valleys) that God sustains us with faith.

June 29, we see that God sustains our faith by God’s word and it’s not to be edited, redacted, or burnt in a fire! We give thanks for the faith of God that comes to us in good times and the bad (mountain tops and valleys).

July 6 we look at Jeremiah 29:11. God’s “holy scheming” to bless us will be readily evident. We’ll see how the valleys of

On May 11 we’ll focus on a “welcoming faith.” The key story will be how Philip was just walking along a road, and he’s suddenly snatched up by the Spirit and sent to witness to an Ethiopian man who has this very important welcoming faith that allows him to trust God - and he’s miraculously baptized in the middle of a desert!!

On May 18 we’ll untangle a story where a variety of faiths gets woven together. This topic covers how we walk by faith together with people from different cultures and faith traditions. There’s a weaving of Jewish People following Christ and there are Christians who weren’t Jews - both coming into a new community of believers. We’ll learn how the leaders of this new group - called Christians - sorted things out, together.

On May 25 we’ll see how we walk by faith even as there is some wrangling among the faithful. The wrangling (disagreement/conflict) happens as Peter is opposed by Paul. This comes about when Paul holds Peter accountable for Peter’s “situational ethics” re: eating with Gentiles when Jewish leaders were absent but then refraining to eat with Gentiles when other Jews were present.

Finally, on June 1, as we finish walking by faith in this Spring 2025 sermon series we’ll focus on a “working faith.” We’ll learn how we do the things we do because we’ve received the Spirit - not so that the spirit will then come to us. We all belong to Christ, and we all are called to serve God in response to grace. This allows us to be able to.... You guessed it... we can walk by faith together - in Jesus’ name.



life, when we face obstacles, are key moments of growth in faith.

July 13 we’ll see God securing a good future for us. God’s always planting and nurturing our growing faith and the ministry God’s doing through us to impact the world. Remember, we go through the valley of the shadow of death - we don’t remain there forever.

Finally, July 20 we emphasize God’s saving love. God makes of us; covenant people and God promises to be our messiah/ savior of all time. He gives us faith to guide us in the valleys of life.

Sunday, May 4, 3 PM – Jeffrey Patry will present a piano and organ recital entitled *Music She Wrote*. This will feature music of women composers and will be an afternoon of delightful music. Come and hear music from some well-known and not so well known composers. All are welcome. Bring your friends, neighbors and enemies for a wonderful afternoon!



Summer Worship

The summer worship option of an early service is going to be a reality! Starting Memorial Day weekend - May 25 - we'll have an 8:30 AM worship service each Sunday through Labor Day!!

We're aware that many of our Autumn, Winter and Spring 8:45 worship attendees are grateful for this change. Some of them were missing out on going to worship for over a quarter of the year.

We're hoping that some of those who normally worship on Sundays at 10 AM - but occasionally miss out on worship because of late morning or early afternoon summer plans will now join us for worship early on and then get on with their day.

Thanks for letting us know of your interest in this option of an early summer worship service. As previously mentioned, our worship format will be scaled back a bit - perhaps some Sundays with no instrumental accompaniment. Yet, it will be a very meaningful time to praise God and hear from God's Worship hopeful, encouraging messages for our lives!!

Sunday, May 18, 10 AM - Join the musicians of First Lutheran in a service celebrating music!

The Sanctuary Choir, Family Choir, Campanile Handbell Ensemble and instrumentalists will join in special music for this service. Let's show our many music volunteers appreciation for their wonderful work this year!



Saturday, June 14, 4 PM – The Partners in Praise Choir is celebrating their 30th season and will have a celebratory concert at First Lutheran. This choir is comprised of passionate, dedicated and diverse women from the greater Minneapolis and St. Paul communities. Partners in Praise was formed in 1994 specifically for the Broadway production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* starring Donny Osmond. The choir is under the direction of Julia Fahey. Come and celebrate with Partners in Praise and enjoy an afternoon of spectacular music!



Sunday, June 22, 3 PM – Join the Synod Senior Band in a concert at FLC! The Synod Senior Band is a community band made up of seniors. Formed in 2005, the band started with 19 members and now has over 100 members. The band is conducted by Nick VanDuzee. This will be a wonderful concert centering around their 2025 theme of *The Promise of Living*. See you at this free concert!

Hola Amigos Continued!

In the last Caller we wrote about how there is a growing number of individuals and families who are participating in our ministry programs and in our worship services who primarily speak Spanish. Just over 100 years ago our church was situated in the midst of Norwegian speaking people, so the church reached out in that language. Now that we have an abundance of Spanish speaking neighbors, our leaders and staff feel called to reach out to them in various ways.

Related to our intentions, we had an exciting experience on Sunday, April 6 as a guest named Rev. Dr. Ruben Duran came to be with us in worship and for our adult forum. Pastor Ruben is a great resource for us on how we can reach out to these neighbors and new friends.

We look forward to more opportunities to help English speaking and Spanish speaking people to come to know God's love and to be supported in their daily lives. Watch for chances that you can join us in these efforts. We're especially looking for those who already speak Spanish and English who can help us to communicate better in these outreach efforts.

Vamos, Amigos, Vamos! —Pastor Scott

MINISTRY NEWS

RECAP OF AN IMPORTANT GATHERING WITH OUR BISHOP

There were about 120 members and friends of First Lutheran Church (FLC) gathered in the fellowship hall of our building on Sunday March 30, 2025. They spent an hour together with Bishop Jen Nagel from the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

The purpose of this gathering was to review the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) of FLC. The Call Committee has been working to create this document with input from the congregation and specifically the finance board, the church council, and staff.

This MSP resource indicates to potential senior pastor candidates who FLC is; FLC's vision for mission; the leadership needs of the congregation; and some additional key information that the call committee considers helpful as part of the call process.

Bishop Jen asked the people present two questions. Why would a pastor want to come to this congregation to serve? What are the challenges that this church is aware of that this pastor would face? In answering both questions honestly and with courage, the energy in the space was almost palpable. It was very exciting and uplifting for many who were there.

People responded equally well to both questions. Those who spoke of why a pastor would want to come to FLC were eager to talk about the strengths and resiliency of this church. Those who spoke of realistic difficulties facing FLC in the future were calm and direct in stating these challenges and opportunities for this congregation and its incoming senior pastor to address together, by faith.

The timeline now is for the call committee to await candidate names to interview as the bishop and her staff



continue to review the MSP. A list of candidates is being prepared by the bishop's staff and conversations will be held with the call committee about subsequent interviews.

Candidate's names come from three sources. Members of FLC can forward candidate names to the church office. Candidates, once they notice the MSP for the congregation on the ELCA website, can self-nominate. The bishop and her staff will be in contact with candidates whom they think would be interested and who would be a good match for FLC.

Additional updates on the call process will be made as the weeks and months go by. The journey of the church to secure a new senior pastor has elements that are very confidential, yet general information and progress reports can always be given, and these will be shared in various ways with the congregation to keep people updated.

We are pleased with the work being done with our elected Call Committee: Drew Stolba, Larry Bugbee, Meagan Ferrise, Ruth Dodson, Jan McFall & Bob Nelson. *(Please take a minute to review page 5 for their bios).*

Pastor Scott

The "Living Connected" Project—gathering and confirming contact info.

It's been so wonderful to start to see some of our volunteers making contact with our members and with friends from our church regarding phone numbers, email and home addresses, and other pertinent contact information. We're just beginning this work of updating these things.

As a tangible way of living connected, we need to be able to reach out to people through mailings and e-mailings. We want to be able to text people or call them on the phone. We want to be able to call them by the right name!!

We're NOT doing a membership directory at this point in time. Yet, we are gathering information that is usually found in a directory.

We want to find out what prayer concerns people have when we get ahold of you. We want to give people important information about ministry updates. We want to be able to invite you to get involved in the exciting work we're doing. Frankly, we need your help - knowing that you can step forward with your gifts (including financial) and talents. Our ministry leaders on our boards and committees need access to this contact info so that they can give you opportunities to be involved in the work that we're doing that's truly changing people's lives.

You can contact us at the church at joyce@flech.org if you want to give us updates on how to reach you. We'll handle your personal information in a very discreet way. Thank you for your help! Together we live connected to the glory of God!!

Adult Confirmation Class

This spring, members and friends of First Lutheran Church were invited to participate in an adult Christian Education Confirmation class. Upon completion of the class, we were delighted to celebrate adult members of our church by affirming their baptism during our 10 AM Easter worship service!

Congratulations Adult Confirmation Class, Spring of 2025!

Dana Robotnik, Sarah Robotnik, Rachel Page, Bob Belland, Meghan Cyr, Lois Feirer, Madonna Wagner, Robin Chamberlain and Ladonna Fox.

It's so wonderful to be a part of a group of life-long learners eager to grow in their faith! Look for another class to be offered again this fall.



MEET OUR CALL COMMITTEE (CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION 2025)



Ruth Dodson has been a member of FLC since her baptism by Pastor Peterson (with the exception of four years at college and two years as a youth director at a Lutheran church in S. Minneapolis). During the pandemic she accepted an early retirement package from the University of MN, where she worked as a System Analyst in the Office of Information Technology. At First she enjoys participating in Choir and Handbells, being a member of the Board of Worship, and coordinating the annual Lutefisk and Meatball Dinner.



Bob Nelson and his wife, Rose Ann, have been members of FLC since 1965. He has served on many boards and on the council for numerous years. He currently serves as secretary for the Memorial & Endowment Committee. He enjoyed being the coordinator of many garage sales over the years, many of which helped FLC raise funds for the minibus. As a member of the call committee, he looks forward to interviewing candidates for our Senior Pastor position. This is his second experience as a call committee member.



Jan McFall started attending First Lutheran in late 2021 and became a member soon after. At FLC, she serves as vice chair of the board of worship and represents that board on the memorial and endowment committee. As the vice chair, she is also on church council with the chair of the board of worship. Typically, Jan attends the 8:45 service with her mom. Prior to being at First Lutheran, Jan served alongside her husband, Stan in his senior pastor roles before his retirement. Professionally, Jan retired as an academic dean from the MN State College and University System and currently teaches courses as needed.



Larry Bugbee is a 40+ year member of FLC and has enjoyed being part of youth ministry, serving on boards & council, helping to maintain our building, and volunteering with the After School program. He feels fortunate to have served on two previous call committees. Larry enjoyed a great career in medical imaging, retiring in 2012. He enjoys volunteering, photography, bike trips with his lovely wife Jane, and spending time with his grandson Loring (pictured). Larry looks forward to working with our great Call Committee as we seek a new senior pastor.



Drew Stolba serves as First Lutheran's Handbell Director and A/V Coordinator while currently producing the weekly online services. He has a B.A. in music with a Minor in Jazz Studies from the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, IA and an A.A.S. in Audio Production and Engineering from IPR in Minneapolis, MN.

Outside of church Drew enjoys spending time with his wonderful wife Becca and their two daughters Eleanor and Evelyn. You can often find him grilling or smoking meat while the girls run circles around him in their backyard.



Meagan Ferrise grew up attending FLC and was confirmed here. She married her husband DJ, at this church and they now attend with their two boys, Milo and Charlie. Meagan enjoys being part of the music ministry of our church, including being part of the Sanctuary Choir and other small groups.

Last Supper Drama held on April 17 & 18

Again, this year, we are so grateful to have had an amazing cast and crew for our Last Supper Drama. This dramatic retelling followed Mary Magdalene and the first female followers. It highlighted the presence of these women in Jesus' ministry, at his crucifixion, and his empty tomb on Easter Sunday and how it helped change the world. All audience participants were invited

to participate in Holy Communion. We wanted to offer this focus on women as a celebration of the unique contributions of women in leadership both in the early church, and in the contemporary Church. The ELCA Lutheran Church has been ordaining women for over 50 years! The church has been blessed by the unique contributions of women in a variety of ways over the last 2000 years. And it all started with a handful of women 2000 years ago, who said "Yes!" to following Jesus the Christ.



Holy Land Luncheon Honoring Pastor Jill

On April 22, First Lutheran staff members were invited to share a delightful meal and our fondest memories of ministry and friendships with Jill Bergman over the years. **Godspeed, Pastor Jill!**

Thank you to our amazing volunteers for another memorable season of Lent Worship & Holy Week!



Last Day Bonfire FLY Youth Group - June 11 in the Courtyard

Thank you for a wonderful year of youth group! Our teens joined together for food, fellowship, faith-filled Bible study & fun. For our celebration, we'll have a bonfire with s'mores, games and prayer.

Camp Wapo

Our children and youth will be attending Bible camp in August. There is still room to register if you are interested! We ask the congregation for prayers for our kids at camp this summer. *Campers Blessing in Worship on Sunday, Aug. 3*

Family Choir

All ages are invited to join us for the Family Choir! Sing to the Lord with us. We rehearse on Sundays, 11 - 11:15 AM. Rehearsals: May 4 & May 11. Sing in Worship on May 18.

Last Day Party Sunday, May 18

11 AM - 12 PM in the Courtyard.

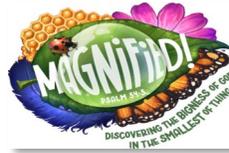
Join us to celebrate a wonderful year of Sunday School, Confirmation and Community Meals.

We'll have a grill-out, sno-cones, face painting and a bouncy House.



Magnified: Vacation Bible School June 16-20

We will be doing a morning VBS at church, with early drop off and lunch provided. Youth and Adult leaders are needed. Kids and volunteers can register at <https://flcch.org/grow-in-faith/children-youth/vacation-bible-school/>



On Sunday, June 22 We'll Sing a VBS Song in Worship!

VBS Decorate and Set-up Days - June 12 & 13, 10 AM - 4 PM each day

Youth & Adults - you are invited to join us as we decorate for VBS, paint windows and have fun together. We'll celebrate with a lunch out on Friday and an afternoon at Jim Lupient Waterpark.



Play & Pray Dates- 11 AM Sundays (June 1-Aug. 24, no event on 7/6).

Kids and Parents: Join us after worship in the Courtyard for a moment of prayer, singing & learning together. Stay for a playdate on the playground! You are welcome to bring a picnic lunch. In case of rain, playdates will move to the gym.

Service Learning Trip to Chicago

We are excited to bring a team of 14 youth and adults on a Service Learning Trip in Chicago, July 19-24!

We'll serve with feeding programs, senior centers, immigrant communities & neighborhood children. Our team will also explore the culture and vibrancy of Chicago! Please help us reach our fundraising goal by purchasing stock in our youth and participating in our envelope fundraiser. *Thank you for your prayers and support!*

Katie Luther Circle, Moms Group.

This group is part of WELCA (Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). Join them at 11:15 AM on the 1st Sunday of the month for fellowship and advocacy at church or plan to gather for a prescheduled outing. Contact: Rachel, rachel@flcch.org

Congratulations to our 2025 High School Graduates!

Blessing during worship service on June 1, including a gift from our congregation.



Fundraiser Lunch

Chicago Dogs!

Sunday, June 1. You are invited to join us for a fundraiser for our Youth Service Learning Trip to Chicago. Chef Kevin will be grilling up some Chicago Dogs and all the fixings. \$5/person.



Palm Sunday Brunch Fundraiser

Thank you to everyone who donated and volunteered at the Palm Sunday egg-bake, cinnamon rolls & fresh fruit brunch fundraiser. Our congregation raised over \$3,000 for our summer youth programs!

Communion Celebration!

This spring, five First Lutheran youth completed their Communion Orientation Classes with Pastor Jill.

During our April 17 Last Supper Drama, they were invited to join the congregation at the Lord's Table for their First Communion! *We rejoice in celebrating this milestone for Roland Alvarez, Clare Alvey, Milo Ferrise, Evelyn Stolba, Krista Arely Rodriguez-Varela and each of their families!*





Community Lunch—a big success

Every Sunday the dining hall is filled with children's laughter, conversations, and the smell of delicious food! We are so grateful to have an amazing team of volunteers to help cook, serve, clean, and donate to support this amazing ministry. We serve between 100 - 140 lunches each week. This is such an important way that we welcome our neighbors and our members into a deeper connection. Each week we hear how delicious the food is and how much it means to have a warm and nutritious meal that is available at church. *Thank you to all our volunteers and especially our cooks Rock & Kari Hauser, Jane Bugbee, and Kevin & Jill Kaliher. We are grateful to volunteers: Judie Opheim, Wendy Ramirez, Brian Schweiger, Pam Hartel, Jaime & Emily Alvarez, Chris Dansby, Jenn Shull, Troy Wagner, Bob Nelson, Jan Meyen & Larry Bugbee.*



After School is growing and changing lives!

Our After School program continues to serve 30 - 40 students per week. We heard so many wonderful comments from families about how much this program means to their families. Particularly single moms and families

who are new to our community. About half of our students use Spanish as their first language. *We are so grateful to our volunteers Karen Peterson, Karen Mattison, Tammy Schmitz, Julienne Wyckoff, Tom Charbonneau and our bilingual staff Angela Gallo for doing their best to include every student.* We also heard wonderful stories about students who have used the open gym time to practice soccer. We even had six students make the Columbia Heights High School soccer team after being mentored by Nathan Roberts (former Wayzata H.S. Soccer Player) & Coach Paul Babekuhl.



Community Garden Update:

HeightsNEXT. We are so grateful to have a community garden at our church! On the hill alongside Tyler Street. For over a decade Dan Fishbeck and an amazing team of FLC volunteers have expanded the garden and provided food for our neighbors. This year Dan is stepping down. We are so grateful for his leadership. The church council has approved the transition of 2025 summer garden to a new partnership with HeightsNEXT Community Non-Profit.



This group currently manages the Blooming Sunshine Food Forest by Lomianki Park in Columbia Heights (learn more at heightsnxt.org/food-forest). A group of HeightsNEXT volunteers will be coordinating the

garden usage and allowing neighbors to use the garden beds. Nathan Roberts will be the point person for the Garden this summer. Please reach out to Nathan (nathanr@flcch.org) if you would like to use a garden bed or learn more.



New Fence and Playground woodchips!

Each week we have over 300 kids play on our church playground. Neighborhood families, church members, and charter school students all share this beautiful playground. Last November, we had a fence installed around our playground. This fence prevents balls from rolling into the street and helps keep all our kids safe. Each year we have new chips delivered to freshen up our playground area! The upkeep of the playground is funded by our income from our charter school tenants and with volunteers who donate their time!



First Lutheran Camera Club

The In-Focus Camera Club is a group of photo enthusiasts that meet to hear guest speakers and share photos. Photographers with all level of skills are encouraged to attend. The group meets the first Saturday of the month, September through May from 9-11 AM. Please contact Larry Bugbee with any questions. lbugbee@msn.com

MINISTRY NEWS

Anoka County Non-Profit Leaders and Elected Leaders

In March, First Lutheran leaders Interim Pastor Scott Jakel, Nathan Roberts and Rachel James were honored to help facilitate an important meeting between Anoka County non-profit leaders and elected officials. We had a very productive discussion and learned that many of the funds were unfrozen! There are still delays in getting the funds out due to layoffs in the federal government. Thank you to everyone who attended and for the amazing work these leaders do to support our community. *Thank you to SACA Food Shelf, Metro Meals on Wheels, RISE, Hope 4 Youth, Alexandra House, Missions Inc, Crestview Senior Homes and more for joining us.*



The New Church Commons Furniture Arrived!

We are so blessed to have a warm and welcoming commons area at our church. The couch colors were chosen to match the blue green and red in the stained glass windows. The 8 year old faded blue furniture was donated to our partner charter school Bultum Academy and offered to church members. Our new furniture was purchased with funds from the Memorial and Endowment. We hope you enjoy sitting in them.

Thank you to Memorial and Endowment and Hospitality and Outreach board, Jane Bugbee and Dorothy Markowitz for making this possible!

Nathan Roberts at State Capitol

On Wednesday, Feb. 19, Nathan Roberts was invited to pray at the Minnesota State Capitol. His prayer opened the day's legislative session for the Representatives from across the state. His prayer focused on working together to make Minnesota a great state for everyone to live in. He also prayed for the Timberwolves (because he is a superfan). The picture shows Nathan at the Capitol with his son Frankie. His prayer is available to view on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBVtXitUFVY>



Mission Jamacia 2026



We are excited about returning to serve in Jamaica 2026. First Lutheran has reserved Jan. 25-31 and Feb. 1-7. Registration is scheduled to open on May 1, 2025. We would love to have you join us! Please contact Larry or Jane Bugbee with questions. lbugbee@msn.com



Thank you to our amazing Buy Nothing Team for a great event on April 12. We had around 300 people shopping and gifting. We are looking at another Buy Nothing Event in the fall!

Dads of Small Kids. Join this group in support and laughter as they get real about the joys and challenges of raising kids. Meetings are the 2nd Sunday of the month at 11:15 AM, along with a monthly scheduled outing. Contact Nathan, nathan@flcch.org

New Members to be received May 4!



The timing of welcoming new members and being able to include them in this edition of the Caller is just not quite right. We'll let you know about the members received on May 4 and our fall New Member option in the upcoming Sunday bulletins and the next Caller.

We've seen a resurgence of some new young families attending. It's an exciting time for us to be seeing ministry growth in this rather tangible way.

A lot of what we do in ministry outreach cannot be measured in "countable" ways. For these new friends who will have committed to be

our siblings in Christ and members of this church- we give thanks that we'll be able to "count" on them, too.

Incidentally, the last two groups of new members classes previously to this one have provided a big number of leaders at our church. As people come on board as members, we've been able to plug them in to various ministry opportunities.

Can you think of anyone that you might be able to invite to join us in these ventures? Can you / will you invite them to a concert, a free meal, to join you for worship, or just take them out for a cup of coffee or an ice cream cone and talk a bit about your faith and what God's doing in this place?

WE WALK PHOTO GALLERY

FIRST LUTHERAN IS EXCITED TO PARTNER WITH THE CAMERA CLUB. WE WILL DISPLAY THEIR PHOTOS SUNDAYS IN MAY.



Walk by Faith Photography Gallery

First Lutheran is excited to partner with the Camera Club that meets in our building each month. We will be displaying photos in the Commons on Sundays in May. These photos were taken during walks and encourage us to be mindful, spiritually grounded, and meditative as we walk.



*Young at Heart bus trip to Wabasha & Winona, MN
Stained Glass Workshop Factory—2019*



Phil also serves communion & volunteers at Crestview

55 + and Young At Heart to Strategize Together

Both the 55 + group and the Young At Heart friends are willing to sit down together this Spring to see if there is some collaboration that they can do at First Lutheran. Though their activities sometimes differ in scope, the age of their participants is shared and there's a hope that past activities of both groups can be strengthened as our congregations' members and friends continue to participate in programs that are appealing to them. Stay tuned as we find out more about the future of these two important groups and their future activities. We give thanks for all that each group has done even as we look forward to seeing what the future holds.



Impact Services/Meals on Wheels is looking for volunteer drivers to deliver meals Monday through Friday. There are several routes in the Southern Anoka County area, most can be delivered within an hour. Meals & route directions are picked up at Allina

Hospital-Unity Campus, Fridley at 10:45 AM. Please contact Anita Dillenburg, 763-755-7839.

The Wednesday Bible discussion group meets from 6-7 PM. They are using a study guide entitled "Hope." They meet in the staff conference room. Any and all are welcome. Questions to Phil, 763-571-1806, mattisonpk@comcast.net



Pictured is Mona Wold (a main contributor of past Baptismal blankets/shawls), finishing up a blanket while working at the front desk a few years ago.

Baptismal Shawls

Do you like to knit or crochet? We are need of baptismal shawls or christening blankets for baptizing young infants and small children. If you have this skill and can spare some time over the summer, please contact Joyce in the church office! We'll happily provide the yarn and supplies you might need.



First Lutheran Book Club

If you have a love for reading, consider connecting with other like-minds. Join them for coffee and treats at 1 PM on the third Wednesday of the month. Contact: Char, 763-572-1220, chararich@gmail.com



*55+ Singles Group summer picnics at Sullivan Park.
With fond remembrance of Donna Akenson.*

MINISTRY NEWS

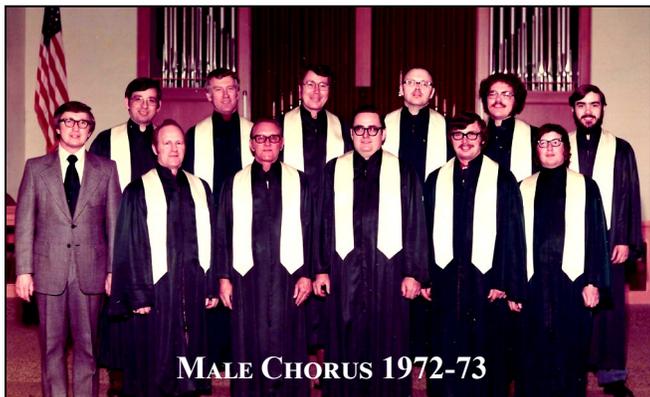


Celebrate Paul Christensen, May 18

Paul has been a mainstay of our congregation for decades! He's done so much in the music area of our church that we want to honor him on a day where music is highlighted specifically. The main timing of celebrating all that Paul's done is the announcement of his retirement from **20 years** of outstanding leadership with the Young at Heart group.

Please plan to join us for worship on May 18 at 10 AM for this celebration - and to say "thank you" to Paul!

In the meantime, see if you can find yourself or someone you know, pictured in a Young at Heart service project or in a Choir Group directed by Paul Christensen!



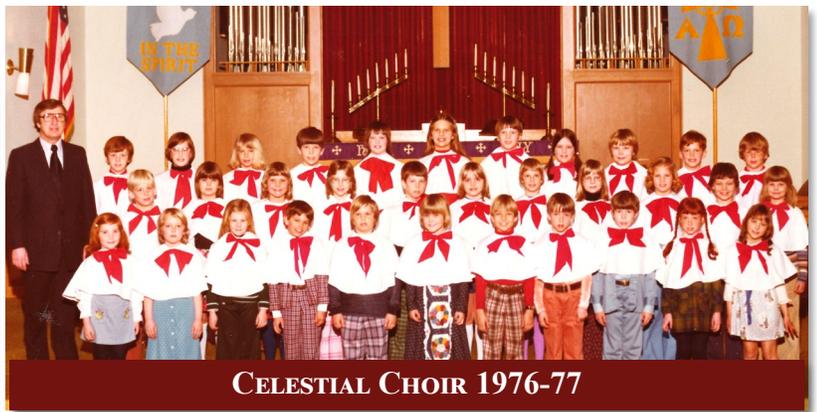
MALE CHORUS 1972-73

Row 1: Arnie Aasen, Ray Aasen, Glen Krahl, Gary Schillinger, Don Ostlund. **Row 2:** Clive Schuelein, Bob Ostlund, Lloyd Jackson, Phil Mattison, Bill Hill, Duane Johnson.



AUGSBURG CENTENNIAL SINGERS CONCERT

Singers and guests were masked due to Covid!



CELESTIAL CHOIR 1976-77

Row 1: Jill Beeksma, Heidi Anderson, Kelly Ausk, John Olander, Tim Larson, Shawn Klinsing, Brett Stenberg, Brian Hillestad, David Reisetter, Betsy Hoium, Lynnette Miller. **Row 2:** Jeff Nielsen, Suzy Olson, Amy Bystedt, Shelly Swenson, Todd Stinson, Kathy Mattison, Lisa Hopson, Susan Hults, Tracy Ekberg, John Rickenbach, Nancy Hults. **Row 3:** Paul Christensen, Monte Green, Julie Peterson, Denise Martinson, Mark Christensen, Elizabeth Pearson, Juanita Boehland, Eric Olson, Kathy Nordgren, Tena Hagfors, Dean Blosberg, Dan Solon.



1980-81 SENIOR CHOIR

Row 1 (1-r): Connie Peterson, Lauretta Nelson, Kris Saltvick, Trish Niesche, Debbie Peterson, Barb Rosell, Kay Ausk, Lyla Jackson. **Row 2:** Blanche Wahl, Wendy Watson, Kathy Trier, Linda Nelson, Gloria Christensen, Delores Forland, Marilyn Lueth, Pam Jacobson, Judy Eddy. **Row 3:** Jean Ellestad, Jan Moen, Anita Dillenburg, Shirley Reinhart, Bennie Papillon, Donna Akenson, Jeanine Kwitachak, Dianne Schillinger, Gloria Johnson, Rita Skone. **Row 4:** Paul Christensen, Gayle Gass, Kathy Bystedt, Adele Kunde, Mary Pearson, Debbie Svensk, Vi Lilienthal, Theresa Mewhorter, Shirley Franklin, Julie Johnson. **Row 5:** Don Ostlund, Warren Watson, Glen Krahl, Carl Swanson, Clive Schulein, Armond Grage, Russ Peterson, Bob Tyler, Warren Persons, Arne Aasen. **Row 6:** Warren Paulson, Bob Burton, Bob Johnson, Dick Berg, Jim Ertzgard, Lloyd Jackson, Phil Mattison, Bob Ostlund, Bennet Johnson, Jon Lueth, Doug Lilienthal.



YAH GLOBAL HEALTH MINISTRY



YAH SPRING GARDENING

Director of Finance and Operations Report

As always it has been a busy quarter at First Lutheran Church. Our primary focus has been on completing a new lease addendum with Bultum for the school year of 2025/26. As they continue to grow, they are adding the use of the Martin Luther Hall for lunch, which in turn adds additional rental income for FLCCH. We also started negotiations for the 2026/27 school year as we want to ensure that Bultum will continue their lease with us in the future.

We are continuing to obtain bids for a new Sanctuary AC unit which needs replacement and are securing the funds for such a project. In addition, we are getting bids for installing a new building control system which will save energy and has been included in the FY2025 maintenance budget. We will be looking into rebates and energy savings incentives to help finance these energy efficient projects.

The new Finance Committee, with the lead of John Peterson, as Treasurer and Jay Craft, Chair, has been working on establishing four new goals for the fiscal year. Among them is to set funds aside to help with cash flow needs, if Bultum outgrows our building capacity, and to address the upcoming mortgage refinancing.

In the coming months we will also research how to beautify and maintain the water garden that was initially established by Earth Wizard but needs additional work. If you have ideas or landscape experience, please let us know.

Joyce Weaver and Marilyn Lueth are helping us move to an upgraded online version of our membership and financial database.

The first three months were financially sound as we received a few generous

General Checking	\$ 109,819
Mortgage & Maintenance	\$ 18,194
Perpetual Reserve Balance	\$ 107,871
Special Projects Balance	\$ 449,453
Memorial Fund Balance	\$ 57,999
Endowment Savings Balance	\$ 36,847
Endowment Investments	\$ 1,241,862
Total Current Assets	\$ 2,103,408
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 2,713,449
Total Liabilities (incl mortgage)	\$ 1,130,846
Total Equity without net revenue	\$ 3,629,684
Net Revenue as of 03/31/2025	\$ 56,327

donations. We closed with a net revenue for January and February and anticipate the same for March. A Financial Snapshot for the Period ending March 31, 2025, is included above for your review.

Please look for your next Giving statements to go out in mid-May.

Thanks to all of you, FLCCH keeps being a financially healthy and viable community.

Blessings—Jana Dietering

PASTOR SCOTT'S STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET

We're so grateful for your financial support in the important work we're doing here at the church.

But - believe it or not, some of our members only contribute to this vital ministry when they're physically present in our church building.

In what I'm sharing with you here - we invite people to be open to the idea of giving in a more regular pattern - since the days of people attending worship every single Sunday sadly seems to be a thing of the past.

Sometimes people enjoy giving electronically. It's all set up and you

can just "forget about it!" Some like to send in a check on Sundays that they "miss church" for even one week. Those who use offering envelopes have them available as a reminder. Some like to stop into the church building during the week. We always like to see your smiling face, but please call ahead since our summer office hours of being open do vary from week to week!

Think of it this way - if we give money to church only when we're physically present, it can seem like we're "paying for admission" - just like if you buy a ticket when you go to a movie. But we know that our financial offerings are

quite different from this kind of thing. Consider why we give.

We give out of gratitude for God's grace and because we are committed to support God's work in the world through our church. Since we're grateful each week and since the donations are needed each week - it's so great when people - if they're willing and able to do so - can set up these kinds of patterns of weekly giving as suggested above.

Words for the wise - submitted for your consideration.



First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights (FLCCH) 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:

- 1) Place your **Check or Cash** in the offering plate during the service. Please use an offering envelope so we can give you credit for your gift.
- 2) **Electronic Funds Transfer** from our website, flcch.org (upper right hand corner). You can set up a one-time or recurring donation.
- 3) **Bill Pay**. Follow the directions of your bank or credit union to create

- First Lutheran as a Payee at 1555 40th Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55421, and choose to make a regular weekly or monthly offering.
- 4) **Stock Transfer to the Church.**
 - 5) For more information, contact Jana Dietering, Finance & Operations Manager, 763-788-9653, ext. 104 or jana@flcch.org



First Lutheran Church
1555 40th Avenue NE / Columbia Heights, MN 55421-3195
WEB: flch.org / PH: 763-788-9653

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SUNDAY WORSHIP
8:30 & 10 AM

10 AM WORSHIP
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ONLINE- LIVE
STREAMED VIA
YOUTUBE &
FACEBOOK LIVE

SUNDAY MEAL
11 AM - 12:30 PM
*Last meal before
summer break is on
May 18*
*Meals will resume on
September 7, 2025*

SUMMER
Hours

The church office
will be closed on
Fridays during the
summer months.

RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED

Don't miss Family Worship, Creative Arts, Music & Fun at First!

