

Living Connected...

TO GOD & EACH OTHER

August-December 2026

Mission Jamaica 2026

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Sunday Worship

(All Age Worship)

Hours:

8:30 AM Chapel

10 AM Sanctuary

10 AM Online

(Facebook, YouTube,
FLCCH.ORG)

Pastoral Staff:

Susan Debner

Senior Pastor

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joycew@flcch.org

The Elevator Pitch An Invitation To Help Fund Our Values

An "elevator pitch" is a brief way of introducing yourself and offering a few key ideas in a clever way, to spark interest and open doors for future conversation. What you say should be short enough to be delivered during an elevator ride.



Our Elevator Pitch: First Lutheran Church is raising \$150,000 to repair the elevator because having a barrier-free building is an important expression of who we are as an accessible faith community. \$75,000 has already been pledged, so every dollar raised from here on has already been matched! Gifts and pledges will be collected throughout the month of September. Your invitation to *pitch in* will arrive in email soon. Printed invitations will also be available at FLC.

Elevator Pitches will be a regular (but very brief) part of worship in September. We hope you'll be there to pitch in for this serious need, as we raise the money to fix our elevator in a light-hearted, joyful way.

On **Sunday, August 30**, we welcome **Pastor Betsy Hoiium** back to FLC, where she grew up, to preach on the 40th anniversary of "**Expanding Our Welcome: The Big Move.**" If you were here for that joyous day, you won't want to miss this! If you don't know what "The Big Move" was, come to find out.

On **Sunday, September 6**, we'll tackle "**The Ever-Expanding Pitch**" as a worship theme, and consider how our welcome still has room to grow.

September 13 is **First Sunday**—launching all the fall programs and blessing the backpacks and work bags for the start of a new year. Our worship theme is **Expanding Our Welcome and Pitching In!**

Growing Connected: Growing Generosity

Beloveds,

Our year-round theme for stewardship at FLC is *Growing Connected*. This newsletter overflows with ways FLC connects with each other and God's amazing work around our congregation, community and world. **WOW!**

I cannot wait for the launch of all the fall programs and ministries on September 13. The thing that impresses me most, and inspires me every day about First Lutheran Church is the deep investment in community: starting with the community of worshippers/members/volunteers who are here on a regular basis, and extending beyond our walls to the community of neighbors, neighborhoods, and organizations all around us. In an economy of relationships, First Lutheran Church is flush!

Last May, we started our year of *Growing Connected* with a *novena*—nine days of prayer, opening ourselves to the Holy Spirit's dreams for us. Many folks used a prayer journal for this, and the staff received great feedback about that.

Across the summer months, we moved into the second phase: paying attention to where God is *already* doing

things around us. What did you see? What has God been up to lately? Share a conversation, email, or text with me about where you see God working in our neighborhood—because that's an important part of what comes next.

Our third phase of *Growing Connected* begins in October. You will be mailed an invitation to "Grow Our Generosity." God is showing up in exciting and challenging ways around FLC. Meeting the needs of our ministries and our neighbors will require a **robust budget in 2027**. Please start praying now for how you can be part of Growing our Generosity with pledges this fall.

These are hopeful and exciting times in the life of our church, especially as we follow the trajectory God is already on.

“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.” Jeremiah 29:11

Joining you joining God,
Pastor Susan

Do you want to join First Lutheran?

We would love to welcome you into membership with us! Please talk to Pastor Susan, any staff member, or let the church office know if you'd like to be part of a new member group on **October 25**. We will receive our new members during our 10 AM worship followed by a brief orientation at 11:15 AM and lunch together at noon.

We strive to be a comfortable community for everyone, wherever you are in your faith-life. If you're not sure what membership means, or if it's the right fit for you—ask Pastor Susan or any member of the staff about it. We'd love to answer all questions.

If you're already connected and engaged at FLC, help us by inviting and warmly welcoming folks who are newer! Ask them if you can share their names with the staff, if they'd like to be included as new members.



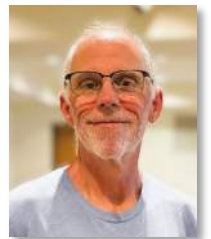
Welcome New Staff at FLC

In June, two new people joined the staff of FLC, but neither is new to us! Join us in welcoming FLC members, Teresa Varela Barraza and Tom Charbonneau, to our staff!

Teresa Varela Barraza was born in Mexico City. She followed her sister to MN, arriving at age 18. Eventually, all her 8 sisters and brothers would come to call MN home! Before Teresa moved to Minneapolis, she studied to be a bilingual legal secretary; however, the first job she found was in housekeeping. "Cleaning is part of my habit," she says that it is something she has always enjoyed. Teresa became a manager while employed for 15 years with the Marsden Company. Now, Teresa is at FLC part-time, covering the cleaning and related projects inside our building. She feels peaceful when she works in the worship spaces and considers it a special privilege to clean God's House. Greet and welcome Teresa when you see her around the building!



Tom Charbonneau has lived in NE Minneapolis most of his life, and he's been around FLC for over 25 of those years! He retired last year from a career in wholesale and manufacturing support, but Tom is not one for sitting still. He started volunteering regularly with the After School program two years ago, and eventually one of the FLC staff asked Tom if he'd consider working here? Now Tom manages the care and maintenance of the outdoor parts of FLC, including lawn mowing and shoveling. Tom will also help with Sunday morning chores, as Roger retires at the end of August. :) Greet and welcome Tom when you see him around the building!





"No Perfect Families, Meet the Cast" Worship Series

Join us Sunday mornings, September 27 through November 8, as we revisit the Bible stories behind Abraham and Sarah's imperfect family. Who are these characters from the cast of the fall drama, and what kind of baggage do they bring to the family tree? Join us in uncovering the drama behind the drama!

Sept. 27: Sarah, No Perfect Life Partner
Oct. 4: Hagar and Ishmael, No Perfect Solution

Oct. 11: Lot, No Perfect Business Partner
Oct. 18: Abraham, No Perfect Partnership with God

Oct. 25: Reformation Sunday: No Perfect Institutions

Nov. 1: All Saints Sunday: No Perfect Saints

Nov. 8: No Perfect Families



Don't miss First Lutheran Fall Drama: No Perfect Families!

Performances Friday Nov. 6 at 7 PM and Sunday Nov. 8 at 10 AM Worship
(see article on page 6 for details)

Advent Starts on November 15. Wait. What?!

There's an experiment happening around the season of Advent that involves stretching it from 4 weeks to 6 or 7. This is called, "Extended Advent," which won't win any prizes for clever names, but it might score points for accuracy. This means we will have 6 Sundays of Advent this year.

Why have an extended Advent observance?

Two reasons: (1) the lectionary, and (2) secular culture.

(1) The lectionary is the set of readings from the Bible that are assigned to each Sunday. At FLC, we often follow these assigned readings, but not always. While December seems to point toward baby Jesus, the lectionary Bible readings make clear that we remember the *first* coming of Jesus *in order to* prepare ourselves for his *second coming*. In other words, Advent is a time for training ourselves to recognize the places where Christ is already appearing in our world. The readings assigned by the lectionary begin this training early in November, no matter what the church season is called.

(2) Secular culture immerses us in Christmas starting...*now*, right? It's earlier every year! It's an uphill battle to hold back Christmas carols until December 24.

Extended Advent can help our worship connect better to our lives by unfolding ancient themes and Advent practices alongside the concerts, beautiful decorations and unreasonable consumer pressures of the season.

This next section is for the really eager lovers of church trivia:

Where does the idea of an extended Advent observance come from?

The North American Academy of Liturgy began promoting an expanded Advent observance around 2009 via The Advent Project seminar, reminding their community that a longer season historically predates the tradition of a four-week Advent observance.

In the early centuries of church history, the length of Advent varied; sometimes it was three weeks, sometimes six or seven, sometimes forty days. The forty-day tradition intentionally positioned Advent as a corollary of the Lenten season. The longer Advent was sometimes called St. Martin's Lent because it began with St. Martin's feast day on November 11, forty-five days before Christmas.

You might also enjoy this article from an NPR broadcast in 2023: <https://www.npr.org/2023/11/20/1213555198/longer-advent-helps-christians-prepare-more-than-christmas>

Sunday & Wednesday Fall Bible Studies

Sunday Morning Bible Study

Sunday Bible study resumes this fall, starting Sept. 20 (the week after First Day) and will run through February. We will begin our study of the book of Matthew, focusing on themes of Old Testament prophecy fulfillment, basic instruction in Christian living and encouragement for times of persecution.

Please join us most Sundays (watch the bulletin for specifics or changes) at 8:30 or 11:15 AM in Katie Luther.

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

You're invited to join the weekly Wednesday Bible study from 6 -7 PM. We will be starting a new 11-week study guide, called "Meeting Jesus." It focuses on the many characteristics of Jesus - the storyteller, servant leader, puzzling king, prophet, sacrifice, and more.

Guys and gals are welcome to join our mixed group. Questions? Call Phil Mattison at 763-443-5965.



Sanctuary Choir

Have you ever thought about singing in choir but have been reluctant to try it? Come and try us out! You'll find that we are loving people that enjoy making music and laughing together. Rehearsals are on Wednesdays from **7:15-8:45 PM** in the choir room and we sing about 2-3 times a month. **Our first rehearsal will be on Wednesday, Sept. 9 and we sing in worship for the first time on Sunday, Sept. 13.** We are always looking for new singers! Come join us! For more information or to sign up contact Jeffrey, jeffrey@flcch.org. or 763-788-9653, ext. 109.



Campanile Handbell Ensemble

The Campanile Handbell will be back from their summer hiatus beginning in September. They are always looking for new ringers. If you can count to 4, you can play handbells! **Rehearsals are on Wednesday evenings in the Sanctuary from 6-7 PM and they play about once a month.** Please reach out to Drew Stolba, drewstolba@gmail.com.

Family Choir

Family Choir is an opportunity for children, youth and parents to sing together and share in our worship service. Everyone is welcome to join & raise your voice in song! Contact Director, Becca Stolba.



Augsburg Centennial Singers

First Lutheran welcomes back the Augsburg Centennial Singers in a concert on **Sunday, Nov. 8 at 3 PM.** The Centennial Singers grew out of the tradition of gospel quartet summer tours starting in 1885 on behalf of Augsburg College. During the 1992 Augsburg Homecoming, a group of former quartet singers got together and decided to form a chorus. The chorus has been together ever since. Everyone is invited to this free concert as they fill FLC's Sanctuary with beautiful music! See you there!



Singers in Accord

Singers in Accord will be presenting their Fall concerts at First Lutheran on **Saturday, Nov. 14 at 7 PM and Sunday, Nov. 15 at 4 PM.** Singers in Accord is a choral ensemble, created in 2009. It has a unique rotating Artistic Director model and is dedicated to enriching lives and building community through the power of music. The group collaborates with a new conductor, performing artist, or artistic ensemble in each concert to create distinctive concert experiences for its singers and audience members. Come and join us for this unique concert experience! Ticket information can be found at www.singersinaccord.org.

MUSIC / CONCERTS



Lake Wobegon Brass Band

The Lake Wobegon Brass Band has become an annual tradition at First Lutheran in December. They will be presenting their Holiday concert on **Saturday, Dec. 5 at 7 PM** and you are all invited! The Lake Wobegon Brass Band was originated by three founding members in early 1992. The band is comprised of educators (music and otherwise), professional musicians, and several who have vocations outside the musical world and conducted by Matthew George & Donald Krubsack. \$10 Tickets at the door. Students 18 and under are free. More information found at www.lwbb.org.

Mississippi Valley Orchestra

Bring your dancing shoes and let MVO whisk you away in a whirlwind of winter cheer on **Sunday, Dec. 6 at 3 PM**.

A pre-concert talk will be at 2:15 PM. Featuring music of composers Florence Price, Leroy Anderson, and Minnesota's own Libby Larsen, you will bask in the wonderful sounds of the season. The Mississippi Valley Orchestra is conducted by Kornel Thomas. This is a free concert, and you are all welcome to come! More information can be found at www.mississippivalleyorchestra.com.



Sound Mind Project

The Sound Mind Project, founded in 2022, is a community choir that seeks to raise awareness and funds to support causes that directly work with youth in need of mental health support. Through their music and the donations received at concerts, they seek to raise support and be a voice for the mental health needs of youth. Join us for their free winter concert on **Saturday, Dec. 12 at 7 PM** right here at FLC. More information can be found at www.smpchoir.com

Advent Lessons and Carols

Join the Sanctuary Choir and Campanile Handbell Ensemble in their annual Advent Lessons and Carols Service on **Sunday, Dec. 13 at 10 AM**. This service will feature Advent readings along with seasonal Advent music preparing us to welcome the Christ child. See you there!



MVO Chamber Players

The MVO Players return this season with a journey into the chamber music of Florence Price and Antonín Dvořák. Join them for a free concert here at FLC on **Sunday, Dec. 13 at 2 PM**. More Information can be found at www.mississippivalleyorchestra.com



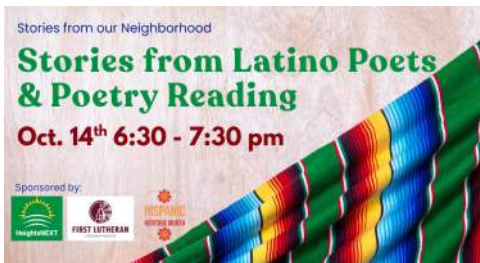
Christmas at First

Join us for the merry music of Christmas featuring the many musicians of First Lutheran on **Friday, Dec. 18 at 7 PM**. Come and hear the Campanile Handbell Ensemble, the Sanctuary Choir, instrumentalists and vocalists in festive music of the season. A freewill offering will be taken to support the music program at First Lutheran. Come and support our wonderful musicians!



Magnum Chorum

Recognized for expressive singing and inspired programs, Magnum Chorum brings transforming artistry and spirit to choral a cappella music. Now in its 35th season, Magnum Chorum is under the direction of Dr. Dwight Jilek. Join us for their winter concert on **Saturday, Dec. 19 at 7:30 PM**. You will be transported into another dimension through their music. Ticket information can be found at www.magnumchorum.org



Latino Poetry from Col. Heights Poets for Hispanic Heritage Month

Wednesday, Oct. 14, 6:30 - 7:30 PM

Come hear stories and poems from Latino Poets Reuben and Anita Rivera, as well as poetry from Latino youth in our community at First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights.

Bird Watching in Silverwood Park

Wednesday, Sept. 23, 6:30 - 7:30 PM

Take the Bus (or meet at) Silverwood Park. Create a Bingo card for birds in Silverwood. Hear a brief talk about where to look for birds and then do a bird walk and finish with ice cream!



After School Program

Tuesdays/Thursdays starting Sept. 15

After School Program will be coming back this fall. We have a great group of 30 students who are excited to be here to play games, make crafts, and eat dinner. We need 2 additional volunteers this fall to help in the craft room or gymnasium. You'll always be with another leader, and you get dinner from Mama Jane Bugbee! Thank you to everyone who supports this ministry to our neighborhood families, particularly the Latinos in our community. Your support allows us to provide a safe place for our neighborhood kids to play, learn, grow, and enjoy a delicious home-cooked meal! Contact Nathan to help nathanr@flcch.org



Sunday Lunches resume Sept. 13 11 AM - 12:30 PM.

Do you like to cook or have a special meal you like to share with guests? We are looking for people who are willing to cook one Sunday lunch meal for 110 people this fall. If you need help planning the meal and cooking in our kitchen Sunday mornings, our Chef Kevin Kaliher is happy to help you. We have experienced volunteers to help serve and do dishes too! Contact Nathan if you are interested.



Trick or Treat at First Lutheran Thursday, Oct. 29, 4:30 - 6 PM

Dress up and come trick or treat around the church and bouncy house! Volunteers needed to help hand out candy at the exterior doors of the church. If you are able to donate candy, we are collecting Halloween Candy during the month of October to hand out! Contact Nathan to help. nathanr@flcch.org

Summer Projects

We are grateful to all those who helped to beautify FLC this summer! We had a painting team (a family from our church After School program!) who painted the upper windows of the Sanctuary. In addition, a team of First Lutheran volunteers painting the Commons wall and the Gym. Workers also installed new flooring in Katie Luther Room (since the pink linoleum flooring was at least 40 years old!)



After School Summer Activities

We received a grant through the ELCA Welcome fund to help bring our After School children and youth to water parks and Como Zoo this summer! Each event was well attended by over 30 students! Thank you to Jane, Larry, and Paul for lunches, thank you to Tom, Rachel, and Nathan for driving!



First Lutheran Fall Drama: 'No Perfect Families'

Performances Friday Nov. 6 at 7 PM and Sunday Nov. 8 at 10 AM Worship

Our Fall Play will be a modern retelling of the Bible Story of Abraham, Sarah, Ishmael and Hagar from Genesis.

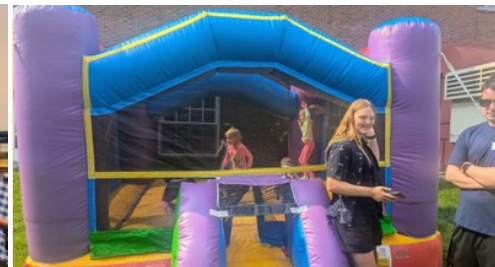
Abraham is a sheep farmer who is always looking for a little peace and quiet. But things on the farm are getting complicated. His ex-girlfriend Hagar and their son Ishmael live in a small house on the west side of his farm and harvest maple syrup on Abraham's farm.

On the East Side of the farm, Abraham lives with his wife Sarah, who is a wool crafter and desperate to get pregnant. Tensions flare when Sarah finally gets pregnant and wants Abraham's ex-girlfriend Hagar and his son Ishmael to leave the farm. Can this complicated family in crisis find a way to still be a family?

If you are interested in being a part of the drama ministry in cast or crew contact Nathan, nathanr@flcch.org

Play & Pray& Family Fun Days

Kids have been meeting with a leader in the courtyard after worship for a Bible story, activity and snack every Sunday this summer. We've done 2 Family Fun Days so far - Sundaes on Sunday and Slip-n-Slide. In August, we are planning a competition of yard games Kids vs Parents. We love to play together and pray together!



First Day! Sunday, Sept. 13

- * Backpack Blessing in Worship for all students and educators
- * Meet your teachers for Sunday School
- * Picnic in the courtyard
- * Bouncy House

Sunday School and Confirmation Begin Sept. 13!

- * Sunday mornings at 11 AM
- * Classes for kids and youth ages preschool through middle school
- * Register online today at www.flcch.org
- * Paper forms available

Every Sunday, we have **Sunday School** for kids in our Preschool class (ages 3 - PreK), Kindergarten - 2nd grade class and 3rd-5th grade class. 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 on the website.

Confirmation class meets every Sunday at 11 AM for students in 6-8th grade or any interested youth. We'll have a Bible discussion & faith formation time each Sunday, along with service projects, Confirmation Retreats and mentorship opportunities throughout the year.

Please take 5 minutes to help us get prepared to start the year at church!

Register for Sunday School!
Preschool (3 yrs) - 5th grade
<https://flcch.org/grow-in-faith/children-youth/sunday-school/>
Register for Confirmation (6-8th grade or any interested youth)
<https://flcch.org/grow-in-faith/children-youth/confirmation/>



Youth Mission Jamaica Trip

Our A team of 13 youth, young adults and leaders from First Lutheran attended Mission Jamaica this July. We stayed at YWAM Montego Bay and served at Westhaven Home for Children. Our time together was fruitful and meaningful. Not only did we complete necessary hurricane recovery projects for Westhaven, but our team also connected deeply with the Jamaican children and adults. Devotionals every evening were led by members of our team, and every youth attending took a turn leading us through reflection, bible study and prayer. We thank God everyone was safe and we had smooth travels. We are grateful for the funding and support of our church, including the Memorial and Endowment fund, to make this trip a success. (see group picture on page 7)

Youth Leadership Dinner Wednesday, Sept. 2

For all youth entering 6th-12th grades interested in leadership at church in youth group, as a high school leader or as a Sunday School teacher. Please let Rachel know if you plan to attend to be sure there's enough of this special dinner, 6-8 PM at church in Martin Luther Hall.

Food Truck Party! Vacation Bible School

We had a great year at VBS this June. 35 kids were registered, including children from our Sunday School and After School program, neighborhood children and a group from local daycare. We also had 16 youth serving as volunteers and 12 adult volunteers, along with all the church staff participating for a total of 68 participants. Our theme this year was learning about how we can count on God to "Give us this day our daily bread."

I am so grateful for being able to connect with children and youth leaders in joy and learning about the Bible - Rachel James.



Bible Camp

24 Campers attended Bible Camp at Lake Wapogasset Bible Camps this August. We were excited to have

first graders attending Wapo One Day, a group for family camp, 11 attending youth camp and 6 high schoolers attending Roots Camp at the Ox Lake site. The theme for this year was "Wonder: With God All Things Are Possible." We enjoyed driving the kids to camp in our new church bus. Thank you to everyone who donated to camperships and to the support provided by Camp Wapo.

Youth Group

Wednesday, Sept. 9

Youth group begins with a bonfire fun night! We'll kick off the year with hotdogs and s'mores on the fire, yard games and a Bible study. All youth who are entering 6th-12th grades are invited to join us each Wednesday for food, fellowship and fun from 6-8 PM.





Fall After School Internship

We have fall Internship openings to work with our After School program Tuesdays and Thursdays 4 - 6 PM. This is a great way for someone 18 - 25 to get real life work experience with diverse youth in a school or childcare setting. Nathan Roberts will provide a letter of recommendation after the intern completes 30 hours of supervised after school volunteering. Dinner included! Contact Nathan, nathanr@flech.org



Buy Nothing Project Giveaway Event Saturday, Oct. 24, 10 AM - Noon

Re-home your kids stuff, clothes, household goods, and meet your neighbors. Great for all ages event with the gym open for kids to play in. If you want to reserve a table to give away your things contact Nathan Roberts (This event does fill up!) nathanr@flech.org

Prayer Walk around the Parking Lot

We invited our neighborhood to join in our Rhythm of Prayer series in July and August. We placed yard signs around the streets outside of the parking lot. We hope you took a few minutes this month to do the Prayer Walk.



Bultum Academy Charter School Tenant Update

We have enjoyed a good relationship with Bultum Academy Charter School for the last 4 years, and are glad they will continue to be our tenants through the 2027/28 school year. Their rent of around \$300,000, will help to bring financial stability to our congregation. Bultum Academy primarily serves Ethiopian families from the Oromo community. Minnesota has the largest Oromo population in the United States.

Bultum Academy has over 250 students from Pre-K to Grade 8 leasing the upstairs classrooms and using the dining hall and kitchen during the day. Contact Joyce Weaver, joyce@flech.org to schedule daytime and evening events in the Kitchen and Martin Luther Hall.

Please be aware that Bultum Academy will use the parking lot throughout the school day for additional recess, pick-ups and drop-offs. Please continue to drive carefully when you come to church during the school day!

Bultum Academics

At Bultum Academy, our Pre-K to Grade 8 classrooms are designed as small learning communities that provide welcoming, safe, and nurturing environments. Our academic program offers a well-rounded education that nurtures each student's potential through core subjects like English, Math, Science, and Social Studies, alongside special subjects including Art, Oromo, and Arabic language classes.

Our STEM program emphasizes critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation, equipping students with the skills they need for the future. By integrating core and specialized subjects, we foster a dynamic learning atmosphere that celebrates cultural diversity and promotes academic excellence.

Visit Bultum's website to learn about the school and watch the Welcome Video to see the students in action. <https://www.bultumacademy.org/>





Service Projects

Sat. Oct. 3, 9-11 AM—Street Clean up

Wed. Oct. 7, 7-8:45 PM—Feed My Starving Children



SpudFest Youth Fundraiser!

Join us on October 11 for our annual baked potato feast. Serving from 11 AM - 12:30 PM, \$5/person and \$20/family. We need parents & youth who are available to help volunteer. RSVP to Rachel, rachelj@flcch.org

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, 11:15 AM—noon. Rachel James, rachel@flcch.org

Seeking Sunday School teachers for fall! This year, you get the chance to be a superhero to kids in our church and community! Share the Bible stories, pray with our kids, and lead them in discussions of faith as you volunteer as a Sunday School teacher. Team-teach with another adult or teen volunteer. Interested? Email Rachel at rachelj@flcch.org.

Youth Sunday / Affirmation of Baptism—October 25

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



Pastor Appreciation Month is observed every **October**, with **Pastor Appreciation Day** (Clergy Appreciation Day) falling on the second Sunday of the month, which is **October 11, 2026**. It is a dedicated time for congregations to honor pastors, priests, and church staff for their hard work, spiritual guidance, and community leadership.

LUTEFISK 2027

Our next Lutefisk and Meatball Dinner will be held on Saturday, Jan. 16, 2027 with seating times at 12, 2, 4 & 6 PM. Tickets go on sale starting at the all Holiday Market on Saturday, Nov. 14, 2026. Tickets can be purchased online at <https://www.flcch.org/lutefisk-meatball-dinner>.

This dinner helps us raise important funds for First Lutheran's ministry projects and provides opportunities for our youth to earn summer camp credits, with matching credits if a parent works as well.



If you'd like to help, make sure the date is on your calendar and watch for the sign-up board in early December!

First Lutheran Book Club

The FLC Book Club meets monthly on the 3rd Wednesday at 1 PM. Join them for a book discussion, fellowship & refreshments. For the book of the month and other details, contact Madonna, 763-204-1755 or Troyandmadonna@gmail.com

After many years of leading the FLC Book Club, Char Zarich happily *passed the leadership torch* to others with a passion for reading. During the Summer, Char was fondly recognized by her peers with a bibliophilia (the love of books and reading) trophy for her years of service. She now has plans to *enjoy participating* with the group!



Saturday, Nov. 14

Nothing says, **Welcome Fall** like colorful foliage, fresh homemade lefsa and the excitement of friends preparing for FLC's Annual Holiday Market fundraiser! *Watch for craft & baking opportunities to be announced in Sunday Bulletins.*

Young At Heart

Our Young at Heart group for senior citizens and retirees has a long tradition of scheduling meetings for fellowship and service. Our first fall meeting will be on **Tuesday, October 13 at 10 AM** in the Commons. Another project for Global Health Ministries is in the works! GHM is located in Fridley, and its long standing mission is recycling medical discards for re-use in impoverished mission fields. We sit at tables and sort, fold, count and pack-- while conversation flows freely. We work for 90 minutes and then dine together at lunch for which we ask a \$6 donation. Please sign up on our bulletin board.



Mission Jamacia Rebuild—2026

There is still time to register for the Jan. 30-Feb. 6 Mission Jamaica trip!

We will be helping to build a new home, and working at West Haven Orphanage.

A \$150 refundable airline seat deposit is due asap. The last day to sign up will be on October 8.

Questions to Larry or Jane Bugbee.

lbugbee@msn.com



Supply requests will be posted later this fall. Checks for cash donations can be made out to FLC with Mission Jamaica in the memo section. *Thank you for your continued generous support!*

Thank you from
Pastor Susan and Paige

We are so grateful for the prayers, kind words, notes, cards, emails, gifts, and texts you offered when my dad, Bill Debner, passed away at the start of the summer. Your thoughtfulness carried us through difficult decisions and sad days.

A beautiful bouquet of yellow roses from FLC was at the funeral—it was the perfect tribute for my rose-bush-grower-father. Thank you!



The Musical 'Frozen'

Saturday, October 31, 2:30 PM

The Musical 'Frozen' is being presented at NW University in Roseville. Cost: \$20. The Broadway musical ran successfully after the 2013 Disney movie. UNW musicals have proven to be excellent! Follow sign-up/ payment deadlines on our bulletin board.



15th Annual Christmas Dinner! Tuesday, Dec. 15, at 12 noon

This, our 15th annual festive dinner, will again be prepared by Rock and Kari Hauser. \$20 Tickets are sold in advance. (Watch for updates to be listed in Sunday bulletins and our bulletin board in the Commons).



Hello from the desk of the Interim Director of Operations

Thank you for your faithful support of our congregation and our shared mission. The work we do collectively makes a difference in our neighborhood and in the world.

Although donations are traditionally slower in the summer months, we are experiencing a much larger decline in contributions in the last three months than was expected. Your generosity enables FLCCH to not just run the operations successfully but to also give back to the community. These include quarterly benevolence payments, being able to run the After School program during the summer months, sending the FLCCH youth to Lake WAPO camp and on their youth trip and translating signs and bulletins for our Spanish speaking community members. The inflation we are all personally experiencing is also happening in our church operations.



Leaders are already preparing for this year's stewardship campaign. The new ELEVATOR PROJECT is moving along. We have received pledges for half of the \$150,000 project and still need to RAISE the remaining \$75,000. We hope you help RAISE the elevator funds.

The decision to outsource the accounting to Clergy Financial Resources is progressing as we turn over more of the bill paying function. They are in process of helping our finance committee create reports for our leaders.

The tenant task force has successfully renewed a new lease with Bultum Academy through the 27/28 school year. This guarantees that the budget for Fiscal Year 2027 can rely on a steady lease income.

The new Sanctuary AC unit is installed and working. Roger and volunteers have worked hard on getting the class rooms upstairs ready for the new school year, doing minor repairs and tackling the weeds in the garden beds around the campus.

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

*Blessings,
Joyce Weaver
& Finance*

Financial Snapshot: Period ending June 30, 2026

FLC Summary Financials		
June 30 2026		
General Fund Checking		138,611
General Fund Reserve		30,071
General Fund Perpetual Reserve		8,275
Mortgage and Maintenance		22,191
Special Project Savings		24,739
Young At Heart		6,618
M&E Checking		6,533
Endowment Savings		71,012
Memorial Savings		61,262
ELCA Foundation		834,353
Mission Investment		28,676
Thrivent		412,429
		1,644,770



GIVING

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 worship or Community Meal. 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, Columbia Heights, MN 55421, and choose regular weekly/monthly offering.
- 4) **Stock Transfer to the Church**.
- 5) **Include FLCCH in Your Estate Plans**.
- 6) For more information, please contact the Church Business Office, 763-788-9653.



First Lutheran Church
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WEB: flcch.org / PH: 763-788-9653

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WORSHIP

COMMUNITY MEAL
11 AM-12:30 PM
(RESUMES SEPT. 13)

Daylight Savings Ends
Sunday, Nov. 1, 2026

RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED

First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights

