

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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“Servants of All”

April, 2009, Newsletter

May 5, 2009



Pentecost

*Alleluia!
Come, Holy Spirit,
Fill the hearts of your faithful,
and kindle in us
the fire of your love.
Alleluia!*

The festival of Pentecost derives its name from the Jewish festival of Pentecost, observed fifty days after Passover. On the fiftieth day of Easter (May 31, 2009) we celebrate the Holy Spirit, as the power of God among us that heals, forgives, inspires, and unites. The Spirit through whom and in whom the people of God are created and re-created. Pentecost is sometimes called the church's birthday, but might more appropriately be called its baptism day, since the gift of the Spirit is the fullness of baptism. In the one Spirit we were baptized into one body, and at the Lord's table the Spirit unites us for witness in the world. Come, Holy Spirit!

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Pastor Dave's Article:

You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; you provide the people with grain, for so you have prepared it. You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges, softening it with showers, and blessing its growth. Psalm 65:9-10

Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. I (Paul) planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building. 1 Corinthians 3:5-9

What was the name of the servant of God who planted a seed of faith in you? Who watered it? Who did some of the cultivating in your faith life? Who transplanted? Someone did it. Someone shared the Gospel, the Word with you. Romans 10 tells us that faith comes from what is heard and what is heard comes from the Word of Christ.

We, as fellow Christians, have the opportunity to share the faith we have with many people. No, I'm not talking about standing on the street corner and shouting "REPENT" and waving the Bible at cars as they drive by. I am talking about being a servant right here in the church, just as Jesus was a servant to his disciples when he washed their feet. We, too, can wash one another's feet. Not literally, but symbolically by being a volunteer. By giving of ourselves – just as Jesus did when he stooped down and washed those dirty, dusty, callused feet.

There are many ways to help someone hear the Word of Christ. We can stand up and preach, we can offer to lead a Bible Study, or form a small group study. We can sing in the choir, a small ensemble, or play a musical instrument as a gift of music during worship.

YOU can be faithful to the congregational promise made to youth at baptism. We have PROMISED to pray, to help each child grow up in the faith, and to

April Showers Bring May Flowers...

trust in Jesus Christ. YOU can assist with Sunday School, (the Rotation SS model is very teacher and leader friendly), YOU could be a guide or a shepherd, or a Mentor for one (or more) youth. YOU can encourage them, pray for them, offer your time to them, or support them financially with a designated gift each week.

YOU can share and show your faith without saying a word out loud in public or giving anything but your time. YOU can volunteer to be a servant during worship as an usher, a communion server, or communion assistant, a scripture reader, or learn to operate the media, or video camera.

Along the way as YOU serve others you'll find your faith growing too. YOU are called by The One who has given YOU all the faith you need. He has promised to be with us even when we don't know what to say. He has promised to give us the words and the wisdom. You won't have to do it alone – not only is the Holy Spirit with you, but others will be with you as well. Fellow members will welcome and encourage you. They will not dump and run, but will walk alongside you.

So, I encourage YOU to step a little bit out of your comfort zone and "wash some feet". Answer the call of Jesus "to love one another as he loved us," He wasn't here to be served, he served.

The question is: What will YOU do?

He established a decree in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach to their children; that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and rise up and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, Psalm 78:5-7

For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right.

2 Thessalonians 3:11-13

Pastor Dave Sperstad

Council Highlights

- Heard that spring church clean-up is scheduled for Monday, May 4, beginning at 3:30 p.m. *see back page*

Worship Serving Opportunities

Each Sunday, 375-400 worshipers come to worship at FLC. Your servant hands are an integral part of providing hospitality to all who enter here. You are asked to offer your gifts in service to Christ's body at First Lutheran. Serving areas are greeters, ushers, scripture readers, communion ministry, child care, coffee hospitality. Choose a time that fits your schedule. Sign-ups are now available for May and June; sign-ups for future months will be posted at church at a later date. Check the back side of the calendar page in this newsletter for opportunities to serve in May. Training for each serving ministry is available—please ask! For more information, contact the church office, 632-6667, or the May/June coordinator, Mary Larson, 632-8203.



Intercessory Prayer

Prayer is the greatest gift we can give! We are all called to intercede (pray) for others and for ourselves. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, our prayers will be heard and people will be blessed. Each Monday morning at 7:30 a.m. prayers are offered in the FLC Prayer Chapel. All are welcome to come as you are able and lift up prayer concerns. May the Holy Spirit lead you to a blessed start to each week. For more information, contact Sheri Bengtson, 632-9335, or Naomi Engel, 632-3167.

Pentecost Sunday Celebration Offering Sunday, May 31

On Pentecost Sunday, June 11, 2000, First Lutheran celebrated the dedication of our "Building to Serve" project. In February of 2001 we closed on a twenty-year mortgage with a principal of \$475,000 and interest rate of 7.25%. Presently our mortgage is \$191,175 with an interest rate of 5.3%. The payoff date for the mortgage is November 2015. Each Pentecost Sunday has been set aside as an opportunity to reduce the principal on our mortgage. The reasoning behind this is simple: we pay down our loan more quickly, pay thousands of dollars less in interest and free up dollars for mission. It's simply a matter of good stewardship. An envelope is available on the greeters' table for this cause. Please give as you are able on Pentecost Sunday, May 31. Thank you for your faithful giving!

Financial Update

2009 Mission Plan Budget
January—April 30: \$ 136,905

Actual received
January—April 30: \$ 124,949

First quarter giving statements have been mailed. Thank you for checking over your statement. Please call the church office if there is any discrepancy.

You are welcome to participate in an electronic funds transfer giving plan, Simply Giving. Please see Sue or Gloria in the church office to enroll.

Thank you to all who faithfully contribute to our shared ministry at FLC.

Adult Opportunities

May Women's Circles
"The Hidden Hand of God"
Unexpected Heroes:
Esther: Reversal of Fortune
Esther 9:1b

Martha Circle

The Martha Circle will meet Monday, May 18, at 11:30 a.m., for a salad luncheon at the church.

Ruth Circle

The Ruth Circle will meet Wednesday, May 20, at 2:00 p.m. at the church.

Mission Circle of Joy

The Mission Circle of Joy will meet Tuesday, May 26, at 9:00 a.m. at the church

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Adult Studies and Events

Sunday Morning Adult Study

We meet weekly at 9:15 a.m. Sunday morning in the library. Bring a friend and your coffee and come for spiritual growth!

Cornerstones Potluck (Seniors age 55 and better)

If you enjoy a good meal and fellowship, bring a friend and a food item to share and come for potluck lunch on Tuesday, May 19, at 11:30 a.m. We gather in Stoltz Hall for food, conversation and fun.

Men's Bible Study Breakfast

All are welcome to come for breakfast and Bible study! We meet the first and third Wednesday of each month at 6:15 a.m. Come when you can, leave when you must! Pastor Dave leads this study. Contact him for more information.

**Small Group Discussion on
Paul's letter to the Galatians
Begins Monday, May 4
7:00-8:00 p.m.**

Do you ever feel like a novice when it comes to Bible study? You are not alone! We are all novices when it comes to knowing and understanding God. Join other novices and the lead novice, Pastor Dave, for a six-week study of the book of Galatians. We'll read one chapter at a time to broaden and enlighten our understanding of the 'Freedom of a Christian.'

Galatians has been called the *Magna Carta* for Christian liberty, and was well-loved by Martin Luther. One question we will consider is: if the Galatians were captive to circumcision, and the people of Luther's day were captive to guilt, how are we captive to sin; and if we are free, in what aspects of our lives is this freedom hard to believe?

The Book of Galatians is a letter the Apostle Paul wrote to the churches he started in Galatia. He sent the letter sometime between late 40's and late 50's A.D. This letter appears at least five to ten years before any of the gospels were written. His writing shows his intense passion about the condition of the church and his concern that the Galatians were leaving the gospel he preached for another gospel, which ultimately is no gospel at all.

Questions? Contact Pastor Dave at church, 632-6667, or dsperstad@flelittelfalls.org.

Library Corner

Thank you to all who have made donations of books and video material to the library. Upper elementary and middle school readers will enjoy: Left Behind-The Kids, Holly Heart series, Lily series. Come and check out a good read today!



Thank you for supporting the Morrison County Food Shelf!

During most months, expenses at the Food Shelf far exceed donations, this is the reason the March Campaign is so important. So far this year in Morrison County we have served an average of about 350 families, or over 1,000 individuals, per month. This amounts to over 12,000 meals or 24,000 pounds of food per month. We have seen an increase in usage over the past year, but fortunately we have a very generous community that graciously supports our Food Shelf.

The March Campaign for 2009 raised almost \$68,000. and 15,500 lbs of food. First Lutheran contributed \$1,250 and 330 lbs of food. These numbers do not include groups and individuals from First Lutheran who contributed directly to the Food Shelf.

Volunteers are always welcome, if you are interested in volunteering at the Food Shelf, please call Director Gloria Thomes, 320-632-8304.

Pastor Nate Bjorge
Morrison County Food Shelf Board member

**Lutheran Social Service Rummage Sale
Wednesday-Friday, May 13-15**

The spring Lutheran Social Service (LSS) rummage sale co-sponsored by Bethel and First Lutheran Church women will be held at Bethel Lutheran, at 901 West Broadway, on:

Wednesday, May 13, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 14, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Friday, May 15, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

☞ Dollar Bag Sale Day

Proceeds from the sale are used to benefit residents at the Lutheran Social Services group homes in this area. Set up days are Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning, clean up begins at noon on Friday. Volunteers are much appreciated, there is lots of 'stuff' to organize – come when you can! The sale is a wonderful recycling opportunity for good, usable, clean clothing, books, linens, small appliances, toys, etc. Clean grocery bags, paper or plastic, are also needed. Please, no televisions, computers or computer parts. Sale items can be brought to Bethel in the morning, beginning Monday, May 4, or on the set-up days. For more information, contact Karen Haaland, at 632-8828.

**Relay for Life
Friday-Saturday, July 17-18
Flyer Field**

Youth and adults are invited to sign up to be on the FLC team and walk in the Relay for Life. FLC will pay the registration fee for the team; each team member is asked to raise \$100 in donations. This annual event support the American Cancer Society. All proceeds remain in the local area to assist residents who are facing treatment for cancer. Watch for the sale of luminary bags in the Gathering Space at church. Luminaries will line the track at Flyer Field during the relay. FLC members Ted and Mary Pfohl are the community coordinators of this year's relay. FLC team captains are Wendy Henagin, 320-277-3037, and Shawn Larsen, 632-3097. If you would like to walk with the team contact Wendy or Shawn.

ELCA World Hunger 2008 Highlights

Mission Dollars at Work in the World

In 2008 ELCA members (including First Lutheran Church) gave \$21 million to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal and helped support vital hunger-fighting projects in over 50 countries.

ELCA World Hunger awarded 329 domestic hunger grants for anti-hunger ministries in the U.S.

Advocacy efforts helped increase children's access to health care, funding to create affordable housing, and funding for the Food Stamp Program. Advocacy efforts also helped secure \$48 billion to fight AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis.

The ELCA pledged \$1 million to provide emergency assistance to four hospitals of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe and seeds and fertilizer to rural communities facing food shortages.



Annual Community Paint-A-Thon Oasis/Share A Meal Saturday, August 1

The Paint-A-Thon committee is recruiting teams to paint a home in Morrison County on August 1. Over the past 16 years, over 150 homeowners have benefited from this program. It takes 10-12 people, 4-5 hours each, to make a big difference in someone's life!

First Lutheran will again sponsor a painting team. Would you be willing to coordinate this year's team or be a painter? Contact the church office to sign up. Thank you for making a difference in the community we share!

Common Hope Update

We are pleased to learn that Little Falls residents Steve and Marilyn Brown, working for several months in Guatemala with Common Hope, were able to arrange a visit with Francisco, the child sponsored by FLC through Common Hope.

Steve and Marilyn visited with Francisco, a brother, and two of his sisters on March 26, 2009. The family's home in San Pedro las Huertas abuts the walls of Rising Villages, a new Common Hope project begun by Dave and Bina Huebsch of Little Falls. Francisco's parents were not able to meet with the Browns' as they work long hours to support the family of six children.

Francisco is now 12 years old and is in the seventh grade. He is described as being very personable. He is also very bright and graduated as the number one student in his class during all six years of primary school. In Guatemala, the student who is first in their class wears a large sash on graduation day and has the honor of addressing their classmates. Francisco has a bright future if he is able to stay in school. With continued sponsorship through Common Hope we pray that Francisco can attain this goal.

Watch the bulletin board at church for photos and information of Francisco and his family. For more information about Common Hope, to make a donation, or to sponsor a child, visit www.commonhope.org or ask in the church office.

Luther Crest Bible Camp Memorial Servant Weekend Saturday, May 23

Here is a great way to support your camp as an individual, family or group. Come for the day and help the camp get ready for summer 2009! There will be projects of varying difficulty and skill level such as cabin and facility cleaning, gardening, painting, and basic maintenance. We will work from 9:00 a.m. and finish with supper and a sending worship service. You can come early and stay Friday night, there is *no charge* for this event. Please call the church office to register by Tuesday, May 12.



Summer Walking Devotions

All are welcome to come for an early morning fitness walk and devotion time. Walkers will meet each Tuesday and Wednesday beginning June 9-10 from 7:00-8:00 a.m. Tuesday mornings we will meet at Lindbergh State Park in the main parking lot. Wednesday mornings we will meet at First Lutheran parking lot. In the case of rain, both groups will meet at church for an indoor walk. Come for one or both walks as you are able. Child care is available at the church as requested. For more information or to sign up, contact Gail Hittesdorf, at the church, 632-6667, or by email at ghittesdorf@charterinternet.com.

Congratulations!

We have recently received notification from Pacific Lutheran University that FLC member, Anna Pfohl, has been named a 2009 PLU President's Scholar. Anna was selected from over 600 qualified applicants, and was chosen based on scholarship, school and community service and leadership. Congratulations, Anna!

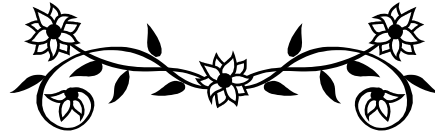
Pastor Parish Relations Committee

Six members of the congregation are selected by the leadership team of First Lutheran to serve on the Pastor Parish Relations Committee. This committee serves the congregation and the pastors as a 'sounding board,' and has a communications role between the congregation and its pastors. Newly selected members are: Merlin Bruns, Tifanii Dahl, Doug Dahlberg, Stephanie Doty, Jim Nelson and Ted Pfohl. If you have feedback about our ministry together, please contact one of the committee members.

Upcoming Christian Music Events

Several Christian music events are scheduled not far from home in the coming months. Why not bring a friend and enjoy some uplifting music?

- ♪ Phillips, Craig and Dean, Thursday, May 21, 7:00 p.m. at Calvary Church in St. Cloud. Tickets: \$22.00. Sponsored by radio station, Spirit 92.9.
- ♪ SonShine Christian Music Festival, Wednesday-Saturday, July 15-18, in Willmar. Thousands of campers and hundreds of performers! Some are: The Newsboys, Reliant K, Hawk Nelson, Toby Mac, Switchfoot, David Crowder Band, and many more. Group rate ticket for three days - \$68.00, one-day ticket - \$45.00. If you are interested in attending, or if you are an adult interested in coordinating and chaperoning, please contact Pastor Dave at 632-6667 (church) or 632-5930 (home).
- ♪ Fifth Annual Higher Ground Music Festival, Friday-Saturday, August 14-15, in Winsted. Camping and Christian music by Third Day, Jeremy Camp, Mark Schultz, Kutless, and more. Advance weekend tickets - \$55.00, one-day ticket - \$30.00, \$5.00 more at the gate. More information, see www.hgmusicfest.com.



Lutheran Care Center Bake, Plant and Craft Sale Thursday, May 21 8:00 a.m. to noon

Come to the sale; all proceeds benefit the residents of the Lutheran Care Center. Your donation of plants, craft items or baked goods are welcome. There will also be silent auction items to bid on. For more information, contact Pat Madsen, 218-828-4727, or Jean Petersen, 632-8151.

"Children First" Christian Preschool Update

Greetings from the "Children First" Christian Preschool!

May is here! The last class days for Preschool are Wednesday and Thursday, May 21 and 22. We will spend our final three weeks talking about butterflies, "fishing for summer fun," and we'll celebrate the end of the year with a walking field trip to Dairy Queen!!

Butterflies are one of the symbols we recognize during the Easter season. The butterfly reminds us of new life. A caterpillar hibernates, lying inside a cocoon. After a while the cocoon breaks open and a butterfly emerges. The caterpillar has become a new creature. We are watching this transformation of new life in our classroom as we watch over 50 butterflies in our butterfly sanctuary. Thank you to Mary Hansen and Lindbergh Elementary for this wonderful gift.

Thank you to all who participated in our Flower Bulb Fundraiser. We raised \$976.00!

Preschool enrollment for the 2009/2010 year continues throughout the summer. The morning Jesus' Gems class is almost full, so turn in registration forms soon. Please contact the church office, or Gail if you have questions or are interested in visiting the classroom.

All are welcome to the Preschool Year-End Program and Ice Cream Social on Sunday, May 17, at 2:00 p.m. at First Lutheran Church.

We had a fun and event-filled year. God has blessed us with wonderful children, caring families, many volunteers, and great friends. We watched the preschoolers grow in God's love and learning. It is a bittersweet time for staff as we see children move on to Kindergarten in the fall. We look forward to another year of learning with returning children and are anxious to meet new students and families.

God's Blessings to all!

Yours in Christ's Service,
Gail Hittesdorf, Director

Sunday School News

The final TREK session for the year, "Easter, Go and Tell" is underway. Students are learning about Easter symbols, such as butterflies and how they remind us of new life in Christ. At the science station each child builds a butterfly house and then paints it with Easter symbols at the art station. Resurrection Cookies are baking in the kitchen, and story-tellers are making a video newscast to spread the news about Jesus!

☺ Sunday, May 17, Last Day of Sunday School for all classes – don't miss the celebration!

The next few weeks are the perfect time to talk with the Sunday morning staff about their teaching experience and prayerfully consider joining our Sunday School Staff for the coming year.

Confirmation Ministries

Sixth Grade: Students completing sixth grade this spring will continue their confirmation journey with a course on Prayer during VBS week, Monday-Friday, August 3-7, 9:00 a.m. to noon.

Seventh Grade: The seventh grade class on the Apostles' Creed is scheduled at Luther Crest Bible Camp during the week of June 21-26. Pastor Dave leads this class. Watch your mail for final details.

Tenth Grade: Tenth grade students and their mentors are reminded to stay in touch with one another through conversation and prayer.



**Vacation Bible School
August 3-7**

**Crocodile Dock: Where Fearless Kids
Shine God's Light!**

Mark your calendars for VBS week, Monday, August 3 through Friday, August 7, from 9:00 a.m. to noon and come on down to the bayou where fearless kids shine God's light. VBS is for kids age 3 (by September 2008) through sixth grade. Registration begins Sunday, May 3. Pick up a form at church or download it from the FLC website, www.flclittlefalls.org. Early registration makes planning easier. Volunteer sign up begins soon; please consider ways in which you can be involved and kids that you can invite.

**Gospel Gang (Grades 3-5)
Family Potluck Picnic
Sunday, May 17, noon-4:00 p.m.
Belle Prairie Park**

Gather up the family and come for an old-fashioned family picnic! You remember the tubs filled with pop in ice water that made your arm numb when you reached in to grab your choice? How about those little plastic ice cream cups with vanilla ice cream and wooden spoons that stuck to your tongue? We will have kites to fly, eggs to toss, and three-legged races. Yup, you'll find all this and more when you come to the Picnic! Bring a lawn chair, a potluck dish to pass, a kite if you have one (some will be available) and come for a great afternoon! For more information, contact Pat Moller, at 632-8443.



**Graduating
Seniors**

**FLC Baccalaureate Sunday, May 17
10:45 a.m. Worship Service
11:45 a.m. Brunch**

We will honor the graduating seniors at the 10:45 a.m. service on May 17. Following worship, brunch is served to the students and their parents. Coordinators are the junior class parents. Please keep the graduates in your prayers.

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|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Ashley Adams</i> | <i>Allison Kluver</i> |
| <i>Nick Andringa</i> | <i>Luke LeBlanc</i> |
| <i>Courtney Antolik</i> | <i>Katarina Lenz</i> |
| <i>Molly Binger</i> | <i>Kory Lilga</i> |
| <i>Logan Boody</i> | <i>Kyle Makela</i> |
| <i>Jordan Gosiak</i> | <i>Samuel Marcus</i> |
| <i>Amber Hansen</i> | <i>Noah Peterschick</i> |
| <i>Katherine Harms</i> | <i>Anna Pfohl</i> |
| <i>Chris Hortness</i> | <i>Joe Rydeen</i> |
| <i>Kaari Jensen</i> | <i>Christopher Sylvester</i> |
| <i>Megan John</i> | <i>Aaron Trutwin</i> |
| <i>Aaron Johnson</i> | |

Teen Girls Book Club

Girls in middle school and up: Let's meet together to build friendships and do some reading through the summer. We'll meet beginning Monday, May 4 at 6:00 p.m. at church. The first book we'll read is [A Tree Grows in Brooklyn](#). No need to buy a book, we have reserved them from the Carnegie library. Shilo Hillyer will facilitate the group time. For more information or to register, call Shilo at 320-232-3813 or the church office, 632-6667.

News of the Family
Funerals

Lorraine A. Kalahar died April 18. Her funeral service was April 22 at First Lutheran. May God grant peace and comfort to her family and friends.

Items for the **June NEWSLETTER** are due on **May 20, 2009!**



Spring Clean up Day
Monday, May 4

The spring clean-up day at church is Monday, May 4. Come at 3:30 p.m. (or when you can). We will wash the exterior windows and take care of other clean-up needs. Bring rakes, gloves and a willing attitude to make our church home sparkle. This is a wonderful service project for mentors and mentees. Keep in mind the old saying: "Many hands make light work." See you at church!