

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Jake Dyrhaug, Pastor

FIRST



“Servants of All”

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August 2019, Newsletter

November 19, 2019



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“Trust in the Lord with all your heart...and he will direct your paths.”

Proverbs 3:5-6

Life leads us down many roads, and we need God’s guidance as we go, trusting in the Lord to direct our paths in all we do. Many of you have heard the news that Diana Kempenich, our Youth Associate with Luther Crest Bible Camp, has accepted a position in youth ministry at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Moorhead, Minnesota. She begins there August 19, and her last Sunday with us will be August 18. We wish Diana and her fiancé, Tyler, the best as they venture off to this next chapter in their lives. We have been so blessed to have Diana here with us these two years as she has helped lead our children’s and youth ministries—Sunday School, VBS, FLY, synod retreats, the National ELCA Youth Gathering to Houston and much more. Her continually positive attitude, hard work and depth of faith have been so awesome as she has journeyed with us in telling about Jesus. And her “contagious enthusiasm”, as I would call it, has breathed a lot of life into those around her as God has given her that gift.

I’m just remembering Diana as “bus captain” on the Houston trip with the NE MN Synod group, and I’ve seriously never seen someone so able to lead the cranking up of energy like her when the time came! At FLY each week, that same energy flowed. Although we are sad to see her go, we can feel a sense of purpose as she has learned so much here and gotten to know us. We wish she might have stayed longer, but we acknowledge that First Lutheran has been a “teaching congregation” for several interns and youth directors in the past, and it’s part of our mission also. There’ve been a lot of

tears already, and we’ll want her to keep in touch. We also know that as she goes to lead the children’s and youth ministry at Good Shepherd, with almost 3,000 members, she will be drawing on her knowledge and depth of experience gained from her time here at First Lutheran, Little Falls. Diana previously served an internship in children’s and youth and family ministry at Good Shepherd, and this kind of came out of the blue. We are thankful for the time Diana spent here with us, and we send her forward to Moorhead with our encouragement, hearts and prayers!

In this time “in between”, as the First Lutheran Council meets to begin the process of a search for the next Youth and Family Minister, at a meeting of Council, children’s and youth leaders on July 23, the consensus was to find an interim youth and family staff person, as the process will take some time to proceed. We’ll need all hands on deck with the staff and volunteers to make sure things are going strong this fall as we continue to make good progress. Stay tuned for more details as we “trust in the Lord” on the path ahead.

In Christ,

Pastor Jake Dyrhaug

Council Highlights

Congregation council did not meet in July.

Fellowship Opportunities



Green Fair Folk Festival at St. Francis Convent

Wednesday, August 7, 4:00-8:00 p.m.

This outdoor event sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls is an evening of ecological awareness with music, food, exhibits, storytelling, other activities, and much more. Many local businesses and educational groups will be present. From 6-8 p.m., St. Francis Music Center will present musical acts. And other local musicians will celebrate music as a universal language that crosses all borders. Young people from First will make balloon (biodegradable!) animals—they're always a big hit! Come gather to enjoy, learn and see many local favorites and use these wonderful opportunities to enhance our care for the planet and make our world a better place for all.

ELCA 2019 Churchwide Assembly

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will gather in Churchwide Assembly in Milwaukee, Wisconsin from **August 5-10, 2019**. There will be many important discussions and decisions made during this time. Voting members will participate in the election of the Secretary of the ELCA, the election and/or re-election of the Presiding Bishop, decisions regarding language for the Rite of Deacons, constitutional revisions and additions, and voting on the Recommended Proposed Social Statement "*Faith, Sexism and Justice: A Lutheran Call to Action*" and more. You can follow along with the churchwide assembly by checking out the ELCA's website and Facebook page. Many of the deliberations will be live-streamed. The NEMN Synod's Voting Members and/or Bishop Tom will be attending the assembly. Congregations are asked to uphold the Churchwide Assembly in their regular prayers.

Oasis Central Minnesota Fundraiser



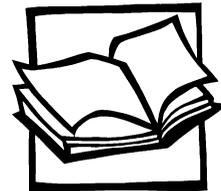
"Church Ladies Hit the Road Again" Dinner Theater At Falls Ballroom

Wednesday-Thursday, August 21 and 22

Bring a friend and come for this evening of food, song, and laughter and support the outreach of Oasis Central Minnesota, the host organization of the weekly Share A Meal held each Thursday at First Lutheran.

Social hour at 5:00 p.m., dinner and show begins at 6:00 p.m. The church ladies (some you will recognize!) and Little Falls' hilarious native son, Jason Schommer will entertain you!

Tickets are \$30.00 each and available until August 15. No tickets will be sold at the door. Call Oasis, 632-9140 for tickets or more information.



Book Club

Tuesday, August 27, 7:00 p.m.

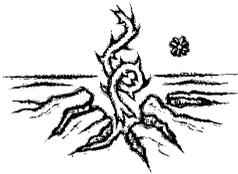
All are welcome to read with this group. The August selection is [The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid: A Memoir](#) by Bill Bryson. Readers, please secure your own copy of the book. We meet in the church library for discussion on the last Tuesday of the month. For more info contact Tifanii Dahl, 632-8207.

Creation Care Tips

You may have heard of the environmental idea of trying to live while producing no or very little waste. The idea of going Zero Waste can be overwhelming, but here are three things you can do to reduce the amount of waste you contribute and to begin moving in the direction of zero waste:

- 1) Carry a refillable water bottle or cup – you will save money, be more hydrated and it will make a real impact.
- 2) Recycle plastic film – expand your recycling habits by hanging a bag to collect plastic film such as shopping bags and overwrap on things like paper towels, etc. Most grocery stores have bins for accepting these items, which must be clean and dry to be recycled.
- 3) Compost food waste – food waste releases methane gas as it decomposes, and even a head of lettuce can take decades to decompose from lack of oxygen in traditional garbage facilities. If you can't compost at home, check to see if your community offers curbside composting, or drop-off sites and free composting bags for you to collect waste in. Store the bags in your freezer to eliminate smells, and when full take them to the compost drop. Check with your county to learn more about options in your area, and if none exist, you can be an advocate for instigating action in the community.

Your assistance with recycling in our church home is also appreciated. We recycle paper, newspaper, plastic, plastic bags and film, cardboard, batteries, glass, cans, aluminum cans, and anything else that we can avoid sending to the landfill. Thank you!



Interim Youth Minister

In the coming months, First Lutheran will prepare to bring on a new Youth and Family Minister, as Diana Kempenich has accepted a position at Good Shepherd Lutheran in Moorhead—we have been blessed to have Diana with us these two years, and we pray for God’s continued blessing on Diana and her fiancé, Tyler, as they transition to this next chapter! In the meantime, we still need help in planning things as we’re gearing up for fall. We are searching for someone who would consider an interim Youth and Family staff position to help coordinate:

Sunday School – oversee weekly lessons, activities and volunteers (Be at First Lutheran Sunday mornings).

Monthly Youth Events—plan and coordinate an event once a month for 7th-12th graders, with possible meal served as part of the event, and plan an occasional “Gospel Gang” event for 3rd-5th grades youth. (Be present at events).

Camp Registrations—advertise and encourage camp opportunities for youth to attend at Luther Crest Bible Camp.

Youth Gathering Registrations—Coordinate, publicize for and register groups to attend the local Middle School Synod Youth Gathering, also begin planning for Middle School and Sr. High Mission Trips for the summer of 2020.

The interim Youth and Family Minister will work in partnership with the pastor, Education Ministry Team and Youth Ministry Teams.

This position will be part-time, 15-20 hours/week. If you or someone you know is interested, please call the church office at 632-6667, or email Office Manager, Sue Gustner, sgustner@flclittlefalls.org.

In the Garden

1. I come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses,
And the voice I hear falling on my ear
The Son of God discloses.

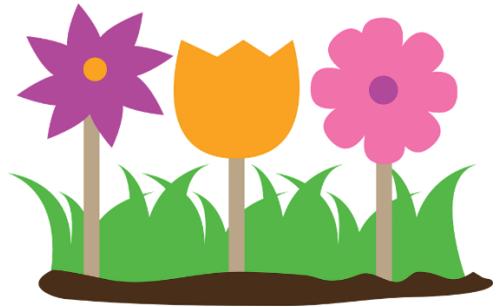
Refrain:

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own;
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.

2. He speaks, and the sound of His voice
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing,
And the melody that He gave to me
Within my heart is ringing.
3. I'd stay in the garden with Him,
Though the night around me be falling,
But He bids me go; through the voice of woe
His voice to me is calling.

written by Charles A. Miles, 1913

“In the Garden” is an old hymn that we often sing at the nursing home services. The residents at the care centers always enjoy this classic and don’t need the hymnal to know the words and sing along. It is a peaceful song that when I hear it, I often ponder being in a garden and Jesus being right there with me. We often need this reminder that He is always with us no matter where we may be in our lives. Gardening can be a very spiritual and healthy experience. There is occasionally a weed that gets pulled or uprooted but we are reminded that Jesus continues to be there for us even when we are led astray or don’t feel like we belong. As you tend to your gardens and flowers this month, think of these lyrics and know you are not alone.



5 Secret Health Benefits of Gardening

1. Exposure to vitamin D. Vitamin D increases calcium which benefits your bones and immune system.
2. Decreased dementia risk. Physical activity reduces the incidence of dementia.
3. Mood-boosting benefits. Gardening fights stress and improves mood.
4. Enjoyable aerobic exercise. It works muscles in your body and increases strength, stamina and flexibility.
5. Helps combat loneliness. Try a community garden or share your produce!

For more information see AARP
(<https://www.aarp.org>)

Mission Life



Oasis Share A Meal

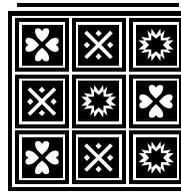
Oasis Central Minnesota provides for a weekly meal at no cost each Thursday at 6:00 p.m. First Lutheran serves as the host site for the meal each week (for over 25 years now!) First Lutheran will schedule a date to provide and serve the meal soon. You can assist with this service to the community by providing food contributions, financial donations or volunteer to prepare and serve the meal. Watch for the sign-up board in the gathering space at church or contact the church office. God's work. Our hands.

Lutheran Social Service Therapeutic Foster Care

Foster Hope – Become a Foster Parent. Foster care parents work together with Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota (LSS) to ensure a positive and healthy environment for youth. LSS is a leading organization for foster care and adoption in Minnesota and a ministry of the ELCA. Foster parents are urgently needed in the state, recent estimates say that about 10,000 children are currently in foster care in the state. LSS Foster Care Coordinators are located in several areas of the state and assist foster parents with licensing, training, respite, and other needs. For more info, call 218-529-2295.

Thank you!

Thank you to those who have devoted time from their schedule to help with keeping the church grounds looking great. Many hands work behind the scenes to pull weeds, mow, plant, spread dirt and keep plants watered and fed. Your willingness to do these necessary summertime chores is very much appreciated!



Camp Knutson 31st Annual Quilt Auction Saturday, August 10

Camp Knutson, at Crosslake nurtures the well-being of persons with special needs in a setting which celebrates God's love for community and creation. In 2010, over 1,000 campers with heart disease, HIV or AIDS, Down syndrome, severe skin diseases, autism or other diseases were served. A quilt from the First Lutheran quilters along with many others will be auctioned. First Lutheran provides assistance on the day of the sale. Your support of the auction is greatly appreciated. If you would like to attend and share a ride, contact Marlene Williams, 632-4290.

Luther Crest Scramble A Fun(d) Raising Golf Tournament Monday, August 5 Camp Changes Lives!

Why not gather a foursome for this fun(d) raising "Best Ball" tournament on the course at Lake Miltona Golf Course, Alexandria. Registration begins at 11:30 a.m.; sack lunch at 12:30 p.m., "shotgun start" tee time is at 1:00 p.m. Supper will be served at Lake Miltona at 5:00 p.m. The fee is \$100.00 per person covers green fees, cart rental, and meal. You are encouraged to give a gift in support of Luther Crest at this event. Past tournaments have made a significant impact on the camp's ministry. To register, call the church office, 632-6667.

Welcome Three-Year-Olds!

Each year we help to prepare our three-year-olds for Sunday School by inviting them and their parents/guardians to participate in a welcome gathering. This year's gathering is scheduled for Wednesday, September 11, at 6:30 p.m. Children and their parents/guardians will visit their classroom, meet their teacher, share a treat, and get acquainted with one another. Any child who is three years old by September 1 is welcome. Three-year olds will receive the gift of a story Bible at worship on Sunday, September 15. Please enroll your child to ensure they receive a Bible. If you have questions, please call the church office, 632-6667.

Confirmation Ministries

Third Grade: Parents and youth entering third grade are invited to attend a Bible overview meeting on Wednesday, August 21 at 6:30 p.m. We will discuss the course on Family Devotions on the Gospel of Mark which begins in September. Youth will receive the gift of a Bible during worship on Sunday, August 25.

Fifth Grade: Three week class on Stewardship begins on Wednesday, September 11. Watch for a letter with details about this class.

Sixth Grade: During the week of Vacation Bible School (August 5-9), youth entering seventh grade in the fall study Prayer with Pastor Jake. Letters have been mailed to families.

Seventh and Eighth Grade: watch for more information about class time to study with Pastor Jake. A letter will be mailed about this class.

Ninth Grade: Mark your calendar for Sunday, September 22, time to be determined, for confirmand, parent, mentor gathering. Students and mentors—please continue your relationship building activities! Confirmation Day on Reformation Sunday, October 27 will be here soon!

Sunday School: Fall 2019 Rally Sunday, September 15, 9:30 a.m.

We are getting ready to kick-off another year of Education ministry at First Lutheran Church. Parents and children ages 3 through grade 12 will gather in Stoltz Hall for an opening and introduction to Sunday School on Sunday, September 15. We will review and introduce Sunday School leaders and Education Ministry Team members. There will be a special treat for all!

Education Ministry Team members and volunteers are recruiting teachers, leaders and helpers for the upcoming Sunday Morning ministries. If you are interested in sharing your faith through cooking, storytelling, song, music, games, arts and crafts, etc., please contact any Education team member or the church office at 632-6667.

Registration for Sunday Morning Ministry, age 3-grade 12 Confirmation, grades 2-11 Youth Groups, grades 3-12

Parents/guardians of children ages 3 years – 12th grade: Watch your mailbox for a mailing on Education and Youth Ministry for the coming year. Registration and health forms for kids, and list of opportunities for adults to work with youth, and a schedule for confirmation is included. Please note that registration is required each year for participation in Education and Youth Activities. Additional forms will be available in the church office or on the church web-site at www.flittlefalls.org. Forms should be returned to First Lutheran as soon as possible. See the mailing for more details!

"Children First" Christian Preschool Update

Greetings from "Children First" Christian Preschool,

We are excited to begin a new Preschool year! Please mark your calendars for upcoming dates: Preschool Open House "I CAN!" will be Wednesday, August 28, from 6:00-7:30 p.m. This will be a family visit opportunity for all new, returning and interested families. We will offer an opportunity to play and explore the classroom, enjoy a light snack and meet the Preschool staff. Come and go as your schedule allows!

Parent/Guardian Orientation will be on Wednesday, Sept. 4, from 6:00-7:00 p.m. This is a time for Parents/Guardians to become familiar with our Programming, Parent Handbook and State Mandated information. The information shared during this time will not be "child-friendly" so we ask that children not attend this orientation.

Parent/Guardian and Child First Day of Class (Short Day). The first day of class for ALL preschoolers is Monday, September 9. This session will meet from 8:30-10:00 a.m. Students and parents will experience the classroom together for ½ hour, and then the parents/guardians will attend a special session while the children have fun! Please bring a photo of your preschooler, two photos of something they enjoy doing, and a family photo.

Regular Preschool Begins Tuesday, September 10, and Wednesday September 11, 8:30-11:30 a.m. Be sure your child brings their backpacks with an extra set of clothes, any coats/sweatshirts or sweaters, and wears clothing that is "Dress for Mess!"

"Children First" Christian Preschool is in its 19th year. "Children First" offers children in our care, an opportunity to grow and develop daily through play, literacy, math, science, technology, and creative arts. Christian faith and learning is weaved into each day. Each child within our program benefits from one-on-one teacher time, small group learning catering to the groups' development level along with combined large group experiences. We communicate with our parents throughout the

preschool year working to ensure that preschoolers are ready for their future Kindergarten experiences.

Our class structure is flexible to meet the needs of families. Choices include: Monday-Friday, Monday-Thursday, Monday/Wednesday, Tuesday/Thursday, or add a Friday to create a 3-day Preschool Week.

All current classes meet from 8:30-11:30 a.m. Registration/Enrollment forms are located in the Gathering Space at First Lutheran Church or on the "Children First" Christian Preschool website or First Lutheran Church website. There is a \$50.00 non-refundable registration fee. Monthly/yearly tuition fees are listed on the yellow registration form. "Children First" registers students throughout the Preschool year whenever parents feel children are developmentally ready for a Preschool opportunity. All ages 33-months through Pre-Kindergarten are welcome! If you would like to discuss Preschool or visit, please contact Gail.

Come visit us at the Green Fair Folk Festival on Wednesday, August 7, from 4:00-8:00 p.m! We will have a Stuffed Animal Clinic and Adoption Center. Bring your well-loved, stuffed animal and we will make any necessary repairs or add some stuffing. We will also be adopting out new/gently used stuffed animals.

"Children First" will host a booth at the Little Falls Arts and Crafts Fair on Saturday and Sunday, September 7 and 8. Our booth will be located on the corner of Broadway and Second Street (courthouse corner). We will be serving hot chocolate, coffee, pop and water. We look forward seeing you at our booth and at the Fair! If you wish to volunteer your time at our booth, contact Gail or sign up on the Volunteer Sheet located on the Gathering Space.

Thank you for keeping "Children First" families, staff and children in your prayers!

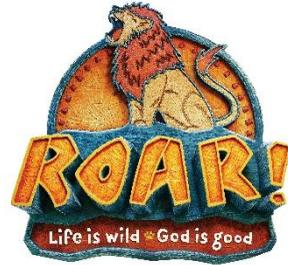
In Christ's Service,

Gail Hittesdorf, Director, (320) 632-6667

childrenfirst@flclittlefalls.org

VBS Mission Project

We are supporting “Operation Backpack” once again. We are collecting backpacks (new or gently used) and the school supplies needed to fill them. Backpacks will be distributed to nine local schools for area kids in need. Last year over 90 backpacks filled with supplies were donated to local schools! Supply lists are available on the gathering space bulletin board. Donations of supplies may be brought to the collection box in the gathering space.



Vacation Bible School “ROAR”

Life is Wild—God is Good!
August 5-9

Vacation Bible School is here!! Youth and adults will explore the Bible and learn along with gamekeeper Irving Carter, that even when life is unfair, when life is scary, when life changes, when life is sad, and when life is good...God is Good! We will start the day at *Sing and Play Roar*, then kids will have fun with Stampede sports, enjoy a movie at *KidVid Cinema*, have a *Wild Bible Adventure*, make a project at the *Imagination Station*, and have a snack at *Hungry Herd Café*. Everyone is welcome to come and wrap up the day at the *Safari Celebration!*

This year’s VBS is a joint effort of First Lutheran and First United Churches. To register, your child must be 3 years old (by September 1, 2018) through 6th grade. Registration is free and is underway now. You are encouraged to register your child even if they may not attend every day. If you are unable to register online, you can pick up a registration form at church. To register a child, children, or yourself as a volunteer, go online to

<https://vbspro.events/p/events/3fb5c6>.

There are many fun ways for you to get involved. Thanks to all who have volunteered to date. For more information, contact the church office.



Watch for it:
“If...”

See You at the Pole
Wednesday, September 25, 7:00 a.m.

See you at the Pole™ is all about prayer. It’s about you coming together and laying aside all the labels and groups for one day, to simply connect with God in prayer and connect with fellow Christians in unity around the flag pole. Come and pray for your school, friends, families and the world.

Can Care Collection

Recycling is one way to save the earth. Bring your empty cans to the church secured in a plastic bag—you can leave them next to the garage door. This on-going fundraiser provides money for youth activities. If you can assist with taking cans to be recycled, please contact the church office. Keep saving those aluminum cans! Thanks!

News of the Family



Miles Warren Walkoviak, son of Ashley and Brent Walkoviak was baptized on July 14.

Clara Mary Monnier, daughter of Sean Monnier and Shauna Maurer was baptized on July 28.

Welcome to the family of God.

Let your light shine!



Earl R. Koester died on July 17. His funeral service was held July 21 at First Lutheran.

May God grant peace to his family and friends.



Items for the **September NEWSLETTER** are due on **August 20, 2019!**



Worship Schedule

Sunday Worship at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.

Worship at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. continues throughout the year. Stay after the 8:30 a.m. service, or come early for the 10:30 service, for coffee (leaded and unleaded!), treats and fellowship in the Gathering Space. Everyone is welcome!