

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Ministers: All God's People at FLC

Jake Dyrhaug, Pastor



2100 Riverview Drive

Little Falls, MN 56345

(320) 632-6667

(320) 632-1050 Fax

firstserv@fclittlefalls.org

www.fclittlefalls.org

January, 2019 Newsletter

December 28, 2018

First Lutheran Church

Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 27, 2019

Following the 10:30 a.m. Service

Share a fellowship meal – child care will be provided

- Election of Council members, voting members, and other leadership positions
- Adoption of 2019 Mission Plan
- Annual Reports

The following leadership positions will be elected at the annual meeting. If you or someone you know would like to be considered for serving please contact the Nominating Committee or the church office.

Church Council:

Four individuals each to a 3-year term –

Carol Anderson, Steve Jones, Carl Rydeen, Sue Sylvester

Lay voting members to

Heartland Conference Gathering, Sunday, February 10, at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Baxter

NE Minnesota Synod Assembly, Friday-Sunday, May 3-5, 2019

at DECC Center, Duluth

Two voting members, and two alternates to be elected

Lay voting members to

Luther Crest Bible Camp Annual Meeting, Saturday, October 5, 2019:

Two voting members to be elected

2019 Nominating Committee: *three members to be elected*

Stumpf Memorial Scholarship:

One person to coordinate a group of five to select scholarship recipients

Please plan to attend this important meeting. Share in a fellowship lunch following the 10:30 a.m. service. Child care will be provided. Annual Reports will be available at the church for review before the Annual Meeting.

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With a new year comes all sorts of possibilities, and we like to look back on the past year while setting new resolutions for the coming one. For most of us, there are a few things we'd do differently. There are also things that we say went really well. In the year ahead, it can be overwhelming to think of where to begin with our own goals and expectations and our hopes for the world, but it is encouraging to know we will have help from God as we venture ahead, and we don't have to go it alone. Pastor Al Rogness, former president of Luther Seminary, writes about this phenomenon in his book of daily devotions, [The Word for Every Day](#).

Our faces must be to the future. We dare not simply revel in the past, nor be engulfed by the present. We have responsibilities for the tomorrows. But in our day it is especially difficult to have bracing hope for the future. Problems of immense dimensions loom before us. We lose both heart and courage.

It is the church's ministry to put us on the path of the morrows with confidence and calm. This it can do only as it turns us around to view the faithfulness of God in the past. It says, “Remember the mercies and loving-kindness of your Lord. He who has not failed you in the past, will he fail you in the future?”

Remember how he led the children of Israel out of Egypt. Remember how again and again he brought them out of exile. Remember, above all else, how he sent his only Son to die and rise again for the sins of the world. Remember how he caused a small, frightened band of followers to become apostles and missionaries the world over—until hundreds of millions of people embraced the faith and changed the course of history...

But the morrows will still hang heavy. Reason as we will, fears well up to rob us of mirth in the day and sleep at night... I pray...but even my prayers tend to be a reminder of the uncertain tomorrows.

As I look back and begin counting my blessings, and rest back in those arms that have cradled and carried me through the years (God's arms), I have the courage to look forward with calm and confidence.

As we journey into a New Year with 2019, may we look back and rest back into God's arms as we face the future with faith and confidence, knowing God's got this.

In Christ,

Pastor Jake Dyrhaug

Thank you!

Thank you to all who had any part in enriching the season of Advent and Christmas here at First Lutheran, and around the community and globe. Whether you provided gifts of service, music, arts, fellowship, wrote or read an Advent devotion, served behind the scenes, and/or were present in worship—all is appreciated.

Christmas and New Year's blessings to All!

WORSHIP LIFE



Worship Serving Opportunities Signup for 2019

Each Sunday, many worshipers come to worship at First Lutheran. Your servant hands are an integral part of providing hospitality to all who enter here. Stop at the table in the Gathering Space 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. You can sign up for a time that fits your schedule. Sign up now for January and February. You can also sign up for the serving areas that interest you. You will be called as needed. Training for each serving ministry is available—please ask in the church office!

We will devote space in the newsletter in the coming months with information about the various serving ministries. You may want to try something new!

Signup sheets are posted now. Thanks for being *First...Servants of All.*

Greeters

Where do we begin? Ministry begins at the front door as we enter and exit the house of God. Greeters serve as the first point of contact for first-time worshipers, and for others who may seek us out for ministry. Greeters help us to be a congregation that is a good host.

The goal of our "Ministry of Greeting" is to help God's people experience First Lutheran as a place of welcome and compassion. We want to grow disciples and provide a church home for those in search of one. Through this ministry, first-time worshipers who feel welcomed will often become active participants.

Thank you to all who serve in this important way.



Council Highlights

- Planning for the congregational Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 27.
- Proceeds from the Fall Fling in October were used to install a screen at the back of the sanctuary for projection to be visible to the worship leaders. Take a look!
- Programs for children and youth are flourishing at First Lutheran! Please help to keep these programs vibrant by volunteering your time and talents.
- Thanksgiving Eve offering of \$885 was gifted to the Oasis Central Minnesota homelessness project and to the Morrison County Food Shelf.
- Heard that the Martha Circle members gifted \$450 to the Oasis Central Minnesota homelessness project. Thank you!



Thrivent Choice®: Thank you to all who have designated their Thrivent Choice dollars to First Lutheran Church and to "Children First" Christian Preschool. This year we have seen an increase in the number of Thrivent members who are eligible to donate these funds. Thank you for putting your Thrivent Choice dollars to work in mission and ministry at First Lutheran!

Adult Opportunities

Men's Bible Study Breakfast

All men of the congregation and friends are invited to a Men's Bible Study Breakfast. This study meets for breakfast on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 a.m. at the church. We meet on January 9 and 23. All are welcome – come when you are able, leave when you must. For more info., contact Pastor Jake.

Book Club

All adult readers are welcome to read with this group. The next selection is Conan Doyle for the Defense: The true Story of a Sensational British Murder, a Quest for Justice, and the World's Most famous Detective Writer by Margalit Fox. Readers, please secure your own copy of this book. The group will meet in the church library at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 29, to share and discuss the book. The February selection is The Great Alone by Kristin Hannah. For more info contact Tifanii Dahl, 632-8207.

Women's Martha Circle:

The Martha Circle meets Monday, January 7, at 9:30 a.m. at the church. All are welcome!



Men in Mission Retreat

Saturday, February 23, 2019

8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

First Lutheran Church, Brainerd

Mark your calendars for this men's retreat in Brainerd. Keynote speaker on Saturday is Rev. Dr. Mark Tranvik, Professor of Religion at Augsburg University, Minneapolis. You may remember that Rev. Tranvik led this congregation's vision planning retreat last February at Luther Crest Bible Camp. Breakout sessions will include topics such as, lake stewardship and shoreline care, leadership, coaching and mentoring, and estate planning and legacy giving. Continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. Attenders may want to attend a pre-retreat hymnsing and pubfest on Friday, February 22, from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Watch for registration information and more details!

The Feast of Epiphany is traditionally celebrated on January 6. This is the Twelfth Day of Christmas and commemorates the visit of the Magi to the Christ Child, having been led by the Star of Bethlehem. But why is this feast called “Epiphany”? The word ‘Epiphany’ means “manifestation.” On this day we celebrate the revelation of Christ and his saving grace to the Gentiles—that is, to all nations. Some Christian traditions celebrate three great epiphanies on this day: the magi’s adoration of the Christ child, Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan River, and his first miracle, in which he changes water into wine. The word and sacraments are for us the great epiphany of God’s grace and mercy. We go forth to witness to the light that shines brightly in our midst. The essential meaning of the birth of the Baby Jesus is that God’s gift for everyone!

First Lutheran will celebrate the Feast of Epiphany on Sunday, January 6. We will worship on Sunday morning at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Then the “Burning of the Greens” evening starts at 5:30 p.m. We will share worship, supper, and gather around a bonfire of our church’s Christmas tree, as we celebrate Jesus Christ, the Light of the Nations. You may wish to bring your Christmas tree or a bough or branch to add to the fire. This evening is for the whole family, bring a friend as well. Dress for the weather as part of this evening we will be outdoors letting our light shine!

If you would like to help with the service, or can assist with a chili supper, please contact the church office.



Grace Notes Choir

All singers high school age and up are welcome to sing with this group. We rehearse on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary and sing two or three times per month at the 8:30 a.m. service. Come and use your voice to praise God! For more info, contact director, Barb Stumpf at 632-8372.



Music Opportunities

If you or someone you know would like to share musical gifts please contact Director of Music, Becky Nelson. Opportunities for worship leadership assistant/cantor, instrumental or vocal gifts of music, participation in praise band, and other opportunities are available. You can reach Becky at the church on Wednesday afternoons or at 749-2336.

✱✱✱✱✱✱✱✱✱ Mission Life ✱✱✱✱✱✱✱✱✱

Thank you!

- ♥ The Youth Ministry Team thanks everyone who participated in the Advent Craft Sale fundraiser for Youth Ministry. Over \$2,500. was received from sales and donations. Thanks to everyone who donated food, crafts, baked goods and their time in support of this event. Thanks to Thrivent ® for Action Team support. Your generosity is an inspiration!
- ♥ Thank you to all who use their time, talents and treasure to serve one another in ways both small and large. The smallest, quiet act of kindness may make the biggest difference in the life of another. Thank you for all you do daily in the love of our Lord.
- ♥ Thank you for your support of the Angel Tree Project. Because of your caring and commitment, over 100 Morrison County families know the peace of Christ. Thank you for making the difference in the life of a child. Sincerely, Annalee VanDenheuvel
- ♥ Thank you in advance to all who will assist in any way with the weekly Share A Meal that First Lutheran will host on Thursday, January 17. Watch for a food supply/worker sign-up.

*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God,
serve one another
with whatever gift each of you has received.
1 Peter 4:10*

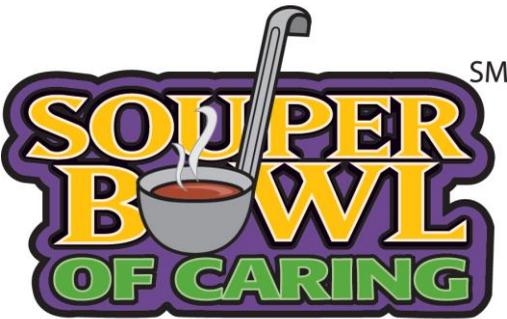
O Eternal God, the beginning and end, you who sustain all things, understand all things, who existed before all things, and who is without end, be with us, remain among us; strengthen our intentions, sanctify our souls and eradicate in us all that is evil. Enable us to make a good sacrifice and pour out your abundant blessings, and so enable us to enter into the holy of holies wherein dwells your presence.

Ethiopian liturgy

**Creation, Church, and You—
Earth-keeping Practically Speaking:**

**Saturday, March 30, 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Brainerd**

The NE MN Synod EcoFaith Network leadership team presents this workshop to assist congregations with integrating care of creation throughout all of the congregation’s activities. Rev. David Carlson will give the keynote presentation, there will be practical break-out sessions, and earth-honoring worship. First Lutheran would like to send a team to this event, if you have a passion for creation care and would like to attend please contact the church office.



tacklehunger.org
Souper Bowl of Caring
Sunday, February 3

Join with others around the nation in a simple act of caring. On Sunday, February 3, youth will hold large soup pots in the Gathering Space and ask worshippers for one-dollar (or greater!) donations to be used for local hunger needs. In 2018, 6,523 groups of young people including those at First Lutheran, received over \$8 million in donations which was donated 100% to thousands of local charities! Thanks for your support!

Welcome 2019! A new year brings many of us to begin a new diet, a new fitness routine. We want to eat healthier and work out more but what about our spiritual health? Here are some interesting facts about faith and health to ponder:

Researchers Confirm the Healing Power of Faith

A Harvard Study confirms research that has found beneficial health effects from faith.

- ☞ Duke University study found that religiously active people have lower blood pressure.
- ☞ People with religious faith have less mental illness, according to another Duke study.
- ☞ People who attend church once a week or more are less likely to be hospitalized, according to a study published in the Southern Medical Journal.
- ☞ Members of prayer groups have lower heart attack risk, a 2005 study found.

The key to health benefits associated with faith is to make sure you have people near you who care about you.

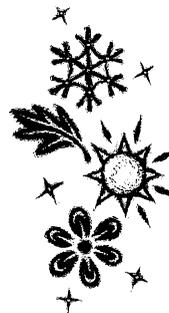
- ☞ Find a loving relationship and stick with it.
- ☞ Support those around you in times of need.
- ☞ Treat your body like a temple. Don't smoke, Drink in moderation if at all. Get plenty of sleep.
- ☞ Regularly give thanks for what you have.

Practicing healthful principles can be done by anyone. Here's to a healthy New Year!



Prayer Chain

For many years First Lutheran prayer chain participants have intentionally prayed for concerns and/or joys of those who request prayer. In the past, prayer concerns were shared via telephone, now most all participants receive requests via email. It is a powerful thing to know that one's requests are being prayed over by others. If you would like to serve and support others through prayer in this way, please contact the church office to be added to this group.



Reminder: The cold and flu season is a good time to do what we can to stay healthy and not spread illness to others. Worshippers share the peace of Christ with one another as a sign of the Christian community fellowship we share. For those who are experiencing respiratory or cold symptoms, please remember to sneeze into the crook of your elbow, wash your hands, and/or kindly consider refraining from handshaking. You are always welcome to use the hand sanitizer that you will find in locations around the church or consider carrying your own small bottle. Your prayers for others who are ill are appreciated. Thank you!

"Children First" Christian Preschool

Greetings,

January is here! December was a month of Christmas preparation and celebration. We enjoyed sharing our Preschool Christmas program with family and friends. We want to say thank you to Miss Jessica for leading our program and our support volunteer, Steven Weiss who assisted with our program's props, lighting and music.

January will be a busy month! Class will resume on Wednesday, January 2, 2019. The themes for the month include: Snow and Polar Animals, Dinosaurs, Ocean Fun along with Beach Day, and A,B,C's. Also, please remember our Library Days are on Thursdays! Our visit to Little Falls Health Services (across from Coborn's) will be on Thursday, January 10 at 10:00 a.m. Please encourage all residents that you know to come to the activities room for singing and socializing!

Parents, grandparents and guardians, please be sure to send those hats, warm coats, boots, snow pants and mittens. The preschoolers go outside on every nice day possible!

Recently "Children First" received a very positive endorsement from the State of Minnesota licensing inspector. Our staff received kudos and the inspector stated that the preschool's science area was the best she had seen! "Children First" Christian Preschool accepts registration of Preschoolers throughout the preschool year. A \$50.00 non-refundable registration fee is required along with registration and enrollment paperwork. Class tuition varies based on the number of days per week attending. There is a class that meets each day, Monday – Thursday from 8:30-11:30 a.m. You may choose a minimum 2 days up to maximum 4 days per week to attend. Please contact the church office, Jessica Gustafson, Teacher, or Gail Hittesdorf, Director, if you are interested attending or would like more information! All are welcome to experience the

fun, the educational activities and the spiritual growth in God's love.

You can follow the preschool activities on our Facebook page: Children First Christian Preschool. As always, we thank everyone who has participated in the "Gifting Campaign" thus far. We have a goal of raising \$2,000.00 for our classroom supplies along with support for our outreach ministry to Little Falls Health Services. Thank you to all who have blessed "Children First" Christian Preschool in 2018, with financial giving, giving of time and talents, tuition support and including the school in your prayers. We appreciate you! God's Blessings!

Happy New Year

Yours in Christ's Service,
Gail Hittesdorf, Director



Confirmation Ministries

Fourth Grade: Four-week class on Holy Baptism meets on Wednesdays, January 9 through January 30, at 7:00 p.m. Families should have received a letter about this class. Students will make a keepsake baptismal banner as a part of this class. A parent, grandparent or guardian is encouraged to help with this project. Thank you to Michelle Dahlberg for teaching this class.

Seventh/Eighth Grade: class for these grades resumes on Wednesday, January 2 with an adapted schedule. Letters with the class schedule have been sent to families; if you did not receive a letter or for more information, please contact the church office. Pastor Jake Dyrhaug teaches this class. Bring your Bible, Luther's Small Catechism and your great attitude!

Confirmation Mentor Program:

Students currently in eighth grade will soon be selecting a mentor to share in their life of faith. Adult members are asked to give prayerful consideration to serving as a mentor for a student. Students in eighth grade will be confirmed on Reformation Sunday, October 27, 2019. If you could serve in this important way, please contact the church office.

Can Care Collection

Save a can – Save the earth –
Save our youth budget!

Place your empty aluminum cans in a *securely tied* bag next to the church garage. Thank you!

Save the Earth

Did you know that each American produces 4.6 pounds of waste per day, the most in the industrialized world? That in the U.S. 80 percent of products are used once then thrown away? Thank you for your efforts to reduce, re-use, and recycle around your home, our church building, and in the community. Your help with recycling glass, paper, cardboard, plastic, aluminum or tin cans is very much appreciated. Thank you for your care for creation!

Sunday School News

Welcome back! Sunday School resumes on Sunday, January 6, at 9:35 a.m. in Stoltz hall for opening time.

Preschool/PreKindergarten children meet in their classroom along with teachers and helpers. Please remember to take your child to the restroom before class and sign in to the information book when you bring your child. Thank you!

Kindergarten-Fifth Grade begin a new rotation – “Water to Wine.” The dates for this section are January 6 and 13. “Simon Peter follows Jesus” begins on January 27. If you would like to share as a leader, please contact the church office. Thank you to all who lead rotations!

Thank you to all who assisted with the Christmas program. Whether you led the singing, helped with direction and rehearsal, had a speaking part, sang, arranged costumes, assisted with fellowship, helped in any way, and came to the program, you are all appreciated! Thank you!

Grades 6-8 meet in the Youth Room for lessons and activities.

Winter Youth Retreats

at Luther Crest Bible Camp:

“**God is the GOAT: Greatest Of All Things”**

Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure. Psalm 147:5

Come for a great weekend of winter fun with your friends and counselors at Luther Crest. There will be snow-shoeing, tubing, lodging in the new winterized cabins, skiing, games, great food, and great worship.

Grades 3-6 weekend is Friday-Sunday, February 8-10. Cost is \$110.00 (4 meals, 2 nights lodging, and program. Sign up by Wednesday, January 30.

Grades 6-9 weekend is Friday-Sunday, February 22-24. Cost is \$110.00 (4 meals, 2 nights lodging, and program. Sign up by Wednesday, February 13.

Your \$50 deposit (non-refundable) holds your spot. For more information, speak to Diana or the church office.

News of the Family

Blakely Marie Bonsack, daughter of Brittny Ziegler and Jacob Bonsack was baptized on December 2.

Maya Okhwa Nelson, daughter of Jon and Shantel Nelson was baptized on December 30.

Welcome to the kingdom!

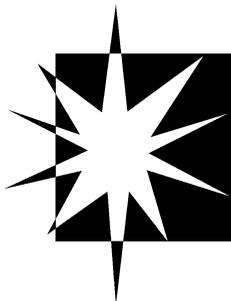
Sunday Worship Schedule



- 8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship using a variety of liturgical settings
- 9:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship Time
- 9:35 a.m. Sunday School Hour
- 10:30 a.m. Contemporary worship led by a Praise Band

Holy Communion is received at all services.

Come and worship!



Now we look inside, and what we see is that anyone united with the Messiah gets a fresh start, is created new. The old life is gone; a new life burgeons!

2 Corinthians 5:17 from The Message

Items for the **February NEWSLETTER** are due on **January 18, 2019**