

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

*Evangelical Lutheran Church in
America*

Ministers: All God's People at FLC
Beth Pottratz, Pastor



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firstserv@flclittlefalls.org
www.flclittlefalls.org

July 2024, Newsletter

July 1, 2024

"American Voices" Sunday Worship Service July 7th at 9:30 am with Coffee Fellowship

On the weekend that many of us celebrate the independence of our nation and formation of the United States, we also gathered in worship on Sunday morning to worship our God, who is God of all nations and the Savior of the whole world, Jesus Christ. In this unique service, we will have reading of God's word, reading of voices that make up our nation, and sing the songs of faith. The voices highlighted include the voices of Native Americans, Youth, Veterans, and Immigrants.

*"There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."
Galatians 3:28*



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Our Sunday Gospel reading from June 16 included two of Jesus parables about the kingdom of God. Two parables describing the kingdom of God! One as a garden where we plant seeds, and the Holy Spirit does the tending and growing. One where the kingdom is a place of shelter and safety.

Mark 4:26-30

Jesus also said, “The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle because the harvest has come.”

As I read this parable, I look for where I might be in this story as a disciple of Christ. Where do I relate best in this story? I also ask myself, what is God up to in this story? And what’s God’s message for me?

Each of us probably come up with slightly different answers to these questions as we each read this parable. For each of us, our answers likely change over time as well.

As I read this parable, I also ask myself “Where might First Lutheran Church in Little Falls fit into this parable?”

In this parable, I see God, through the Holy Spirit, doing the work of tending the garden, making it grow, causing it to thrive and become a full and rich harvest.

As for First Lutheran, I see the church and us as the ones who are scattering the seeds, unsure how the plants grow, and harvesting when the time is ready. The seeds we plant in the kingdom of God here in earth are seeds of faith, seeds of hope, seeds of abundant grace, seeds of

forgiveness, and seeds of abundant love.

I see First Lutheran and each person part of our church community planting kingdom seeds at church and in each of our daily lives. Each time we share love, grace, forgiveness, or faith, we are planting seeds of God’s kingdom on earth. We may not know how those seeds will grow, or when they might grow, but that’s what God is up to in our lives!

The Holy Spirit takes those seeds and causes them to grow. Spreading and producing fruits of the kingdom all over this world.

This spring as the school year wrapped up and summer began, I saw fruits of the harvest abounding and more seeds planted. I saw harvest of seeds previously planted coming through our Act Local team and the community members that they served alongside as they shared of their time, energy, and love to serve our community. I saw it in the Sunday School teachers and kids as they finished the school year. I see seeds planted as new minor projects become brainstormed and new ideas coming for this summer and next year for ways to share hope, grace, and love in abounding and abundant ways.

Thank you for the ways in which you plant seeds of God’s kingdom in your ways and in your life! Each of us planting seeds, when joined together, become a huge and bountiful harvest of God’s kingdom!

Peace, Pastor Beth

First Lutheran Community Announcements

Building and Office Closed – July 4th & 5th

Note: the building and the church office will be closed on July 4th & 5th in observance of the Independence Day Holiday.

Sunday Summer Worship Service

The council at First Lutheran has voted to have Sunday worship at 9:30 a.m. with Holy Communion, and follow with coffee fellowship at 10:30 a.m. This time will continue through Labor Day.

Green Fair Folk Festival Wednesday, August 7 2024 4:00-8:00 p.m.

The Green Fair Folk Festival is a free family-friendly event that promotes a healthy and sustainable lifestyle. In 2023, we hosted over 50 exhibitors featuring organic foods, renewable energy, green building, recycled/green art, fashion, eco-gifts, earth-friendly products, holistic health and much more!



Advent Craft Sale and Luncheon Saturday, December 7

We know it's only mid summer, but the time will fly so now's the time to work on items for the Craft Sale – so be creative! Be sure you have this date on your calendar. If you or someone you know is interested in assisting with this annual event, please contact the church office.

Luther Crest Summer Fest & Auction July 13, 2024, 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Luther Crest is excited to be hosting our first Summer Fest and Auction July 13, 2024! This year, we are going bigger than ever with an online auction, a bake sale, a family festival, and a silent auction. We are also excited to be bringing back an in-person live auction all happening at Luther Crest in July 2024! See the schedule of events in the maroon box for details of when and where things are happening. We look forward to seeing all your donated quilts, crafts, events, and services as part of this great fundraising event this year!

Suggestions to help Luther Crest raise the most money for camper scholarships, programming, and building needs:

- This year, we are collecting donations of our traditional quilts and crafted gifts but are also seeking donations of services and experiences. For ideas on what would sell well, please see the backside of your Donated Item Information Form included in this envelope.
- Please only donate new items for this online and in-person auction. Already used or re-purposed items often do not sell well.
- If you are donating a quilt, choose a theme for your quilt, such as The North Woods or Barbi. Actual Twin (60x86), Full (76x86), Queen (82x92) & King (98x100) sizes often sell better than quilts that do not fit on a normal mattress size. Color choices that would fit in any home or décor often sell better than overly bright colors.
- Does your donation have a fun, historic, or funny story to accompany it? Items with personal stories about where it came from, who made it, or what happened while it was being made or collected tend to have increased bidder value.

Please send any questions you may have about donations or this event to Maureen Wieland (maureenw@luthercrest.org).



Parish Nurse Ministry Job

First Lutheran is seeking to hire a Parish Nurse. A Parish nurse is a registered nurse who seeks care for the health and wellbeing of others integrating faith and spirituality. This position is 8-12 hours per week position with pay starting at \$20-22/hour. A parish nurse must be a licensed RN in the state of MN. For a complete job description please contact the church office. To apply, please submit a resume and cover letter to Pr Beth at pastorbeth@flclittlefalls.org or by leaving a copy in the church office. Deadline to apply is July 22, 2024.



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 via email or cellphone.

First Lutheran Staff

Pastor: Beth Pottratz

pastorbeth@flclittlefalls.org

Youth and Family Minister: Kylie Stewart

kstewart@flclittlefalls.org

Office Manager : Ashleigh Wappler

awappler@flclittlefalls.org

Financial Clerk : Jen Schott

financialclerk@flclittlefalls.org

Music Director: Becky Nelson

rpnelson813@gmail.com

Custodian: Ken Bergren

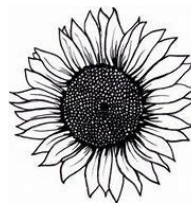
Housekeeper : Peg Bellamy

Preschool – Director : Gail Hittesdorf

childrenfirst@flclittlefalls.org

Preschool – Teacher : Jessica Gustafson

Preschool – Teacher’s Aide: Jodi Stumpf



Connect Virtually for Worship at:

Worship services air on the following sites each Sunday. You can access as you are able. Sunday worship videos posts on Tuesday on the church website: flclittlefalls.org and the church Facebook page: “First Lutheran Church, Little Falls MN”. Video also airs on Spectrum/Charter cable channel 180 on the following Sunday at 1:00 p.m., and the following Monday at 1:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. You may connect to current or previous video worship services at any time on our YouTube channel: First Lutheran Church Little Falls MN.

Take-Home Communion available in the church office for anyone who needs it.

Adult Ministry Opportunities

Men's Bible Study Breakfast

Men's Bible Study is on hiatus for this summer, we will see you this fall!

Quilting Group

The Quilters will not meet again until Thursday, September 14. Once quilting commences again, we will be meeting mornings from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Please continue to save cotton fabric and sheets in good condition. We love thread, too! Call the church office to contact Pat Moller or Monica Makela. These are some dates of quilt auctions to recharge your quilter imaginations over the summer!

- July 26-27: The Green Lake Bible Camp Quilt Review & Auction, Spicer, MN, Friday 3-8 pm, Saturday 9-5 pm
- August 10: Camp Knutsen Quilt Auction, Crosslake, MN, Saturday 10-4 pm
- September 21: Camp Onamia, Onamia MN, Saturday 11-2 pm

Prayer Shawl Group

Do you enjoy knitting or crocheting? Come for fun and fellowship—bring a friend and your helping hands! We are making prayer shawls and baptismal shawls. We meet on the second Monday of the month. Our next time is Monday, July 8, at 1:00 p.m. If someone you know could use the comforting hug of a prayer shawl, please contact the church office.

Book Club

Book Club continues. All adult readers are welcome to read with this group. The July pick is "The Girl Who Wrote in Silk" by Kelly Estes. Readers, please secure your own copy of the book. We will meet for discussion at First Lutheran Church on the last Tuesday of the month, July 30 at 7:00 p.m. For more information contact Tifanii Dahl, 320-632-8207

Tuesday Morning Adult Bible Study

Bible Study with Pastor Beth will continue on Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. Anyone who is interested is welcome to join us! Join us on occasion or every week, whatever works in your schedule. Bring your own Bible, or use one of ours. We meet in the library.



When to contact the church office:

Pastor Beth and the staff ministry team are available to assist you and walk alongside you and your family in all circumstances. You may call (632-6667), email (firstserv@flclittlefalls.org), stop in, or send a note as needed, or for any reason, and especially for any of the following reasons:

- When you or a loved one is hospitalized or will be hospitalized
- When there is a birth or death in the family
- When there is a crisis
- When you change your address or phone number, or discontinue your land line
- When a neighbor or friend is looking for a church home
- When you have good news to share
- When you have a suggestion, comment or idea to share
- If you are a member at another congregation or do not wish to receive our newsletter
- If you are a snowbird and have an alternate address to share
- When your post-high school age children have a different address or wish to transfer their membership

A Note from Kylie

Happy July! We have officially hit the middle of the summer. All things youth ministry are going swimmingly as well as exciting plans for this falls programming. While we are taking a break from meeting weekly, we have had several things this summer to keep us plugged into one another. My favorite thing to say about the youth we have here is that if I plan something they show up, and it still continues to surprise me.

We had two really great June highlights, one of which was the Linden Hill service project. We did this one last year, and did such a great job they requested we come back. I along with, Deb, and Camilla lead a group of youth who served as dinner servers for Linden Hill's annual "Midsummer soiree" event. We had a great time interacting with the guests and helping with clean up. This has become a wonderful and looked forward to service project for many of the youth here at First.

Our second highlight of June was the Milwaukee mission trip with Youthworks. Katie Smith and I had a blast taking our small group of 4 youth to work in downtown Milwaukee on several service sites. We shared many laughs, late night silly conversation, and rocked what I like to call "mission trip eyes" as we worked through our gradually building tiredness each day. We met many other youth from all over the country that joined us on our sites and helped us with the different projects we got to help with. We tried to take as many silly pictures and play all the car games we could think of. All in all, we had a fantastic week getting closer to God and serving the Milwaukee community.

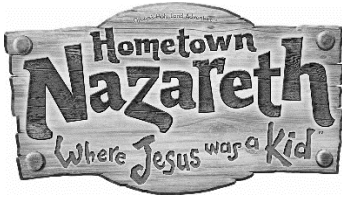
This month we are looking forward to our "staycation mission trip" around Morrison County. This trip is inspired by an idea that

Pastor Beth brought with her from a previous call. This trip will be broken down into three pieces with several different service projects around the Little Falls area. We will also get some fun hang out time with a couple of different "just for fun" activities I have planned. We are also ending the "trip" with a lock-in or sleepover at our church building. We plan to share our trip with the congregation Sunday July 16th so that is a don't miss Sunday if you'd like to hear about how this event went for us!

Looking forward to VBS, there are still plenty of ways to get involved and help. Registration forms can be found on the church website, or the VBS table that is set up right outside the sanctuary doors. Walk in registrations are also welcome the week of VBS! We will have a registration table at the entrance of the gathering space ready to sort kids into crews! The donation board went live the beginning of this month with a list of things we will need for the week. If you cannot commit to helping physically, donations are a great way to support this ministry. Vacation Bible School is one of our favorite events and one that can't happen without help from the congregation. We are so excited to have a "stellar" week with our kids this August! Thank you for all you do in supporting fun-filled learning weeks like this one!

After VBS we will be on the lookout for Sunday school teachers, confirmation teachers, and adults who would like to hang out with our kids & youth for this upcoming school year. If you are interested in continuing to teach or would like to volunteer, please let me of the office know.

Love, Kylie



**"Hometown Nazareth:
When Jesus Was a Kid"
Vacation Bible School
August 5th-9th**

A planning team is being formed to organize an amazing week of faith-filled fun! All 3 year-olds through 5th graders are welcomed participants! 6th graders (Fall 2024 7th graders) are invited to VBS with our own special Confirmation Class focused on Prayer. The 7th (Fall 8th graders)-12th graders are invited to be small group guides. Adults are invited to be station leaders, kitchen helpers, musicians, etc. Anyone interested should contact the church office at 320-632-6667. Please prayerfully consider how God is calling you into this ministry. If you wish to be part of the planning, or want to assist with a particular area, or have any questions contact the church office.



VBS Crew Leader

Current 7-12th graders! Do you love helping out with younger kids?! VBS is a wonderful opportunity and we are looking for those who would like to volunteer to lead crews. This year with our theme "Hometown Nazareth" we will be sorted into the tribes of Judah. These groups will have a mix of Elementary grades or will be only preschool. If you are interested, sign up with Kylie, and let her know your group preference!"

VBS Stations

We are still looking for volunteers to fill the needed stations for VBS in August! This year's theme is Hometown Nazareth, where we will go back in time and learn about what it was like for Jesus as a kid. We need help with leading the story-time station called "Mary's house", a few more helping hands in the market place kitchen, and a "hometown huddle" leader who will lead us in a rotating history lesson and related craft item each day. All the resources and scripts will be provided!

**Children's Ministry Summer Break
Learning Materials**

Continue the learning and growing in God throughout the year with Sparks Family children's magazine on the resource table in the Gathering Space. Each Sunday children's bulletins are available on the music stand as you enter the sanctuary.

Luther Crest 21st Annual Golf Scramble

On Monday, August 5, the Luther Crest 21st Annual Golf Scramble will be held at the Miltona Golf Club. Get a 'foursome' together and help raise funds for Luther Crest Bible Camp Event fee is \$125. per golfer and includes golfing, cart fee, sack lunch, dinner and donation. Register your team online at luthercrest.org/golf-scramble.

**National Youth Gathering
Blessing & Send Off**

A group of 9 youth and 3 adults are headed this month to the National Youth Gathering hosted in New Orleans, LA. This group will leave after the service on Sunday July 14th. Join us as we bless and pray for them that morning at our 9:30am worship service. As a congregation, we wish to send them off with a blessing and prayer for safe travels, a wonderful time, and growth in their faith.

Journaling Benefits

One of the ways to deal with any overwhelming emotion is to find a healthy way to express yourself. This makes a journal a helpful tool in managing your mental health. Journaling can help you:

- Manage anxiety
- Reduce stress
- Cope with depression
- Journaling helps control your symptoms and improve your mood by:
- Helping you prioritize problems, fears, and concerns
- Tracking any symptoms day-to-day so that you can recognize triggers and learn ways to better control them
- Providing an opportunity for positive self-talk and identifying negative thoughts and behaviors

When you have a problem and you're stressed, keeping a journal can help you identify what's causing that stress or anxiety. Once you've identified your stressors, you can work on a plan to resolve the problems and reduce your stress.

University of Rochester Medical Center



Caregiver Support Group

This support group is for those who are providing primary caregiving for a family member. This gives caregivers a safe and supportive environment to share thoughts, ideas, tears, and laughter. The next meet is Wednesday, July 24,

10:00-11:15 a.m. at the church. For more info, contact Tracy Moe, 320-282-5928.

Care Center Worship

One of First Lutheran's ministries is providing a protestant worship and Holy Communion opportunity twice a month; FLC provides this to the Little Falls Care Center and Saint Otto's Care Center. Volunteers coordinate the service volunteer musicians, lead hymns and special music, while Pastor Beth leads worship.

A Recipe to Try this Summer! Avocado Salsa

- 2 Roma tomatoes, seeded, finely chopped
- 2 1/2 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 2 avocados, pitted, finely chopped
- 1 ear corn, shucked, kernels removed (about 2/3 c.)
- 1 jalapeño, stemmed, finely chopped
- 1/2 medium red onion, chopped (about 1/2 c.)
- 1/2 c. chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/4 c. fresh lime juice
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1/2 tsp. ground cumin

Step 1- Place tomatoes in a strainer or colander set over a large bowl. Toss with 1 teaspoon salt and let sit 5 minutes.

Step 2- Transfer tomatoes to a large bowl. Add avocados, corn, jalapeño, onion, cilantro, lime juice, garlic, and cumin; season with remaining 1 1/2 teaspoons salt and toss to combine.

Step 3- Make Ahead: Salsa can be made 3 days ahead. Store in an airtight container and refrigerate.

“Children First” Christian Preschool Update

Greetings,

“Children First” Christian Preschool is registering children for the 2024-2025 Preschool year! Class will be held Monday-Thursday from 8:30-am-11:30am. This class is available for ages 33 Months – Pre Kindergarten. Registration fee is \$50.00 and is nonrefundable. “Children First” will offer a Friday class if there is enough interest. We also offer limited childcare before and after the class for an additional cost. . Please inquire! Brochures and registration forms are available on the counter in the First Lutheran Church Gathering Space or on the First Lutheran Church website at www.flclittlefalls.org or see QR code below. If you have questions or would like to visit please contact First Lutheran Church office at 320-632-6667 or Gail Hittesdorf, Director at 320-291-4698.

Families who have already registered will receive a packet of enrollment forms the first week of July. These forms will be required as we start Preschool in the Fall. We encourage you to fill these forms out early as there is a physician’s signature required and the possibility of a physician well-child check. Families who are currently registering will receive the complete packet when you turn in your registration. A full preschool year schedule will follow along with the forms.

Watch for a Come-and-Go visit opportunity for later in August along with the Preschool start dates!

The Green Fair Folk Festival hosted by the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls is scheduled for Wednesday, August 7, 2024 from 4:00pm-8:00pm at St. Francis Campus. This is a fun, family friendly fair with lots to see and do! Come see us at the Fair! We will be adopting out new and gently used stuffed animals as well as offering veterinarian services to repair your stuffed animal at our booth. Booth volunteers are welcomed! We look forward to seeing you at the Green Fair!

Thank you to all who provide support financially or through service or prayer. Thank you to all who participate in our fundraisers! We appreciate you! Word-of-mouth is our best advertising so please continue to share this great opportunity to attend preschool with everyone you know!

Yours in Christ's Service,

Gail Hittesdorf, Director



News of the Family

Donald “Don” Hirsch passed away on May 26, 2024. His funeral service was on Saturday, June 1 at First Lutheran Church.

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Carroll “Kelly” Stumpf passed away on June 12, 2024. His memorial service will be held on August 16, 2024 at Shelley Funeral Chapel in Little Falls.

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Melissa Gerads passed away June 11, 2024. Her funeral was held on June 20, 2024 at Our Lady of Lordes Catholic Church.

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May God grant peace to their family and friends.

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First...
Servants of All!

First Lutheran Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
2100 Riverview Drive
Little Falls, Minnesota 56345-4402

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Summer Worship Schedule
Sunday Summer Worship
9:00 a.m. Coffee Fellowship
9:30 a.m. Worship with Contemporary and Traditional styles
10:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship
Come and See!

Please submit all materials for the **August Newsletter** to the Church Office by **Monday, July 15, 2024!**

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