

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Pastor: Beth Pottratz

Ministers:

All God's People at First Lutheran

FIRST



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“Servants of All”

October 2021

September 30, 2021



**First...Moving Forward:
Roof Membrane Replacement
Still “First...Servants of All”
Congregational Meeting
Sunday, October 17
11:30 a.m.**

The Church Council has set Sunday, October 17 as the date for a special congregational meeting. Due to the cost of the repairs, the church council is calling a special meeting to seek authorization from the voting members to replace the roof membrane.

The agenda for the special meeting is:

- ☞ Approval of the recommendation, by the Facilities and Property Team and the Church Council, to approve the project to replace the rubber roof membrane on the east side of the church with an approximate project cost of \$86,000.

The rubber roof membrane on the east side of the church needs to be replaced. Specifically, it is the portion of the flat roof over the bathrooms, child-care room, church offices, portion of the gathering space, library, and the northern most Sunday School rooms. It does not include Stoltz Hall or the A Frame over the Sanctuary. It has leaked for several years, and the council had the roof assessed recently. This is the portion of the roof that was not part of the “Building to Serve” project completed in 2001. The estimated age of this part of the roof is over 35 years. The replacement cost is approximately \$86,000.00, and an expenditure of that amount requires congregational approval.

Members of the Facilities and Property Team will be available at church services to answer questions about the project. Project displays will be available on a poster board in the gathering space. The membrane replacement would be a Firestone membrane with a 20-year warranty to be installed by Herzog Roofing. Herzog Roofing did the roofing for the “Building to Serve” project and has serviced our church roof for many years, including inspection of and patching leaks in the portion of roof that now needs replacement.

~ First Lutheran Church Council

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Coming around to the beginning of October means that we are about to mark the one-year anniversary of me being your pastor and us working together in our work as disciples.

One of the things at First Lutheran Church that we value is having a healthy church family system, so healthy communication and behavior. Not only do we value this because we want to be able to work well with each other as a church community, but we also value this because it's rooted in Biblical teachings about how we treat one another and be the Body of Christ together.

From 1 Corinthians 12:24-26, "God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it."

God's desire for us as the Body of Christ is that we may all have the same care for one another, that together we are honored and if one suffers, we all suffer together. God's desire is that we be in sync with one another and working together to share God's word.

As we work to share God's love with the world, we strive to do so with integrity and trustworthiness towards the larger community. Without integrity and trust in us as a church, others will fail to seek us out as a place and people they can come to seeking hope, comfort, and love.

Proverbs 11:13 says, "A gossip goes about telling secrets, but one who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a confidence." And James 1:26 says, "If anyone thinks that he is religious but does not restrain his tongue, he is deceiving himself, and his religion is worthless."

Over the last year there have been reports to me of a couple different rumors going on around town about me. While these rumors don't bother me, they do affect our ministry. Our guidance from Proverbs and James points out that gossip seeks to tear down our trustworthiness and integrity of our discipleship walk to our whole church community. The rumors that have come back to me have been rumors that seek to tear down and destroy the ministry that we are trying to do together.

Healthy churches who do healthy ministry seek to stop the spread of rumors by finding the truth and going straight to talk to the person the rumor is about. Healthy churches who do healthy ministry encourage each other and practice healthy communication patterns, which means not avoiding difficult conversations, speaking with honesty and from a place of loving kindness, avoiding triangulation by going directly to the person you need to talk to instead of going through a third party person, and committing to remaining in relationship together despite differences of opinions.

Most of the time, we at First Lutheran Church do a great job at being a healthy church and doing healthy ministry. From the start of my time with First, I have lifted up how much healthy church and healthy ministry. And sometimes we need to pause and do some self-reflection to see where we need to do better.

For the rumors going around, and for the trustworthiness and integrity of ourselves and our ministry we pray the words of Psalm 141:3, "Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips." Amen.

~ Pastor Beth Pottratz



Greetings from your First Lutheran Church Council

I wanted to bring you up to speed on some items we have been working on.

First and most urgently, the flat roof over the “old” part of the church needs repair. It has been leaking for some time now and you may have noticed some leakage near the bathrooms and in the gathering space. The staff and roofing contractors have been trying to stay ahead of it with patches. We are at a point now where the roof needs replacing. In order to gain approval to authorize the amount of money the roof costs, the church council is calling a special congregational meeting which will occur on Sunday, October 17th at 11:30 a.m. You may be asking why we couldn’t have waited for the annual meeting? Good question! Due to the rising price of roofing materials, we couldn’t wait until January. Look for more information on the issues with the roof in the next few weeks at church.

We are finally back to some sense of normalcy with a very successful Rally Sunday. A huge Thank You to all who volunteered to help with Sunday School in any way. I hope we can have a great full year of Sunday School and Confirmation classes.

The council continues to monitor the COVID-19 trends, and we do discuss this at every council meeting. At this time no changes to our protocols are planned, but that could change.

If you recall the Pentecost Offering was designated for window replacement. The offering amount collected was \$3,070.00. This was enough to purchase one full window which has been ordered and is scheduled to be replaced later this fall. The window that will be replaced is in Pastor Beth’s office and is broken. Thank you.

Please continue to keep Pastor Beth, Maddie, Mya, and most importantly her husband, Jeremie in your thoughts and prayers, while he is deployed overseas. Each month at council she provides an update on his status and it is good to know he is safe.

They are anticipating a return sometime in the first quarter of 2022 (hopefully). If you would like to help Pastor Beth and her daughters, we are still providing their family with a meal each Wednesday. If you are interested in providing a meal for Pastor Beth and her family, please contact Lola Faufau at 320-431-9454.

The council continues to search for a Youth and Family Minister for our church. This is a full-time position and was approved by the council in June. Recently we sent letters to area Christian colleges and Bible Camps looking for candidates. If you know of an individual who may be interested, please let us know.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your council president.

Sincerely,
Carl Rydeen
320-630-9842

Can Care Collection

First Lutheran Church continues to gather and bring Aluminum Cans to the recycling center. The congregation uses the proceeds from aluminum can recycling to fund youth activities. Your help collecting and saving cans for recycling saves the earth and helps the kids!

You can bring your aluminum cans to church, place them next to the garage; please be sure bags are securely closed. Recently the proceeds from about 4 months of recycling were \$88.00.

Please remember we only take aluminum cans. We do not take tin cans or glass bottles. If these are intermixed with the aluminum cans a fee is deducted. Thank you!



Caregiver Group
Thursday, October 7
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (noon)
At Sprout

Come and enjoy some time in the kitchen with friends and make a take home meal for two! No shopping, some cooking, and no dishes! \$5.00 per person, includes all ingredients and containers. Please RSVP to Horizon Health, 468-2788 or Tracy Moe, 320-282-5928 to claim your space. These sessions are sponsored by Horizon Health.



The Health Ministry Team is looking for a few volunteers to add to our group. Our mission is to maintain a healthy wholistic lifestyle by supporting our physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual needs of others. We meet the second Tuesday of every month from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. We all want to live a healthy life here at FLC, come help make that happen and support it! Contact Tracy Moe for more information, 320-282.5928.



Find and Seek: Do you know that the church has an AED? Do you know what it does? An AED is an automated external defibrillator (AED) and is a device that checks a person's heart and delivers an electric shock if the heart has stopped beating normally. We challenge you to find the AED in our church.

Have you ever needed a band aid? We also have a first aid kit at the church. Where is the first aid kit located? Occasionally we check those first aid kit supplies, if you see something running low, please let the church office know.

Text your answers to 320-282-5928. Prizes awarded to the first 5 who answer these questions correctly. Happy Hunting!

Home Visitor Needed

Do you have the gift of gab, 30 minutes to spare a week, or a good listening ear? The health ministry team has seen an increase in depression in our seniors since the pandemic and we are stretched for volunteer visitors. No experience needed. Benefits include relationship building, learning about different generations, gaining knowledge of history, and maybe sharing a cup of coffee. This also would be a great opportunity for confirmation mentors and mentees or two teens that want to go together. If you are feeling a little reserved as to what to talk about, cue cards with helpful conversation starters will be provided. For more information, contact Tracy Moe, 320-282-5928.

Prayer List

Please notify the church office if you or someone you know would like to be added to the prayer list. Due to privacy rules, we do not always know when one may be hospitalized, please call the church office if you would like us to know. Also, please let the church office know when you would like to be removed from the prayer list. Thank you!

Confirmation Mentor/Mentee Opportunity

Looking for a mini mission project to do together? There are opportunities within and outside our church walls. We have home visitation, cleaning the nursery, sharpening church pencils, and doing some light errands for the homebound. Please contact the church office, 632-6667 or Tracy Moe, 282-5928 for assistance.

Matthew 5:16 'In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give them glory to your Father in heaven.'

Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, October 3, at 12:00 p.m. (noon)

Meet at Washington Park, 113 NE 4th Street, Little Falls. First Lutheran and the Franciscan Sisters invite all to this tradition in honor of St. Francis of Assisi. Come with (or without) a pet to celebrate one of God's gifts to humankind. For more info, call 632-0668.



Monday, October 4

The United Nations General Assembly has declared the first Monday in October to be World Habitat Day. This is a time to recognize the basic need for adequate shelter in a world where it is lacking for so many. Habitat for Humanity Morrison County urges your prayers on World Habitat Day for the ministry of Habitat and for ways that you might become involved in Habitat's mission to end poverty housing. You can make a difference right here at home by providing financial support, volunteering to help build the current home or on other projects. For more information, call the local Habitat office at 616-2084.



**Fall Fling Celebration Concert
Friday, October 15, 7:00 p.m.**

The Worship/Music Ministry Team and the Congregational Life Ministry Team invite you to save the date for this fun fall concert featuring "local talent". The concert will be followed by dessert social time including a live auction of selected desserts and a silent auction. Proceeds from the auctions will be used for First Lutheran's music ministry. Donations of desserts (pies, bars, cookies) for the dessert auction and items for the silent auction are welcome! Contact Jane Knott, 320-493-8770, or Becky Nelson, 320-360-0209, for more information.



**Advent Craft Sale
Saturday, December 4
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

In just two short months the Advent Craft Sale and Luncheon will be here. We trust you are making plans to attend!

As in past years, we welcome your donations of crafts, bake sale items, and assistance with the sale. There will be a delicious soup luncheon, musical entertainment and lots of treats and gift items to buy! As in past years, the sale will benefit youth programs at First Lutheran. Your support is greatly appreciated.

"Children First" Christian Preschool Update

Greetings,

It is a new year of Preschool! We have finished our first month and are excited to welcome new and returning Preschoolers along with their families. Please visit the Preschool Gallery to view fun projects throughout the preschool year! As our year progresses, please keep our families, children and staff in your prayers for a year filled with health, purpose, service, and an abundance of God's love.

Our classroom themes for September were Manners, Friends and "We are Special". October will be a busy month with community helpers visiting our classroom. We will be learning about fire safety, community helpers, transportation, Fall and pumpkins! We have planned visits with Firefighters from Little Falls Fire Department, Highway Patrolman Jason, and Bus Driver, Kelcea. If you would like to share your community helper job and how you are using your God given gifts and talents to help others, please schedule your visit with the Preschool Staff.

"Children First" Christian Preschool will continue to participate in Coborn's/Cashwise Food Club Points. This program brings money into our classroom. Please register online with Coborns.com "More Rewards". Once you access and create your "More Rewards" account, indicate "Children First" Christian Preschool as your point donation. If you need assistance setting up your account, please contact Gail.

Registration at "Children First" is open to all who are 33 months of age through Pre-Kindergarten. We accept registrations ALL YEAR! We have a mixed class meeting Monday-Thursday from 8:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m. with students attending 2 days, 3 days, and 4 days. Class is held September through May. Children who are ready for a Preschool setting may register and attend at any time throughout the Preschool year. If you have questions, please contact myself or the First Lutheran Church office.

Thrivent Financial offers opportunities for you to support "Children First" Christian Preschool. Individuals who have product with Thrivent Financial may participate in such programs such as Thrivent Choice which allows you to allocate money to "Children First" and through Thrivent Action Teams, you can assist Preschool by supporting a Preschool project with a \$250.00 gift card. Please contact Gail for more information.

Thank you to everyone who visited the "Children First" booth at the Little Falls Arts & Crafts Festival. It was a great success. Thank you to those who are giving generously of their time and talents as well everyone who provides financial support to our Preschoolers through tuition assistance, Gifting Campaign, and general contributions. "Children First" appreciates all of you! God's Blessings!

Yours in Christ's Service,
Gail Hittesdorf, Director



**Daylight Savings Time Ends
Remember to set your clocks *back* one
hour on Saturday, November 6!**



2022 ELCA National Youth Gathering The NE MN Synod Journey July 21 - July 28, 2022

I want you to know all about Christ's love, although it is too wonderful to be measured. Then your lives will be filled with all that God is.

(Ephesians 3:19 CEV)

This ELCA event for high school age youth takes place every three years and gathers over 30,000 youth and their adult leaders to grow in faith, experience new things, have fun and be challenged in an intentional Christian community. This journey is more than a trip – it is a time of growing relationships and developing faith. We will travel by coach bus with the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Journey group of 400-450 youth and leaders from our synod. Together we will experience a servant event in Duluth/Superior and then travel on to five days at the gathering in Minneapolis, MN. This journey requires a big commitment from the youth participants, families, adult leaders, and the congregation. We will be getting to know one another, preparing, praying, planning, fundraising, and having fun together leading up to the trip.

Families are encouraged to talk about this once in a lifetime journey with their youth who will be in 8th – 12th grades during the 2021-2022 school year. This event will have an impact on the life of your student for years to come.

Stop by the youth table in the gathering space to sign up! Registration and initial deposit of \$250.00 is due to First Lutheran by Wednesday, October 13. If you would like more information, please contact the church office, 632-6667.



NE MN Synod Middle School Gathering Update

After much prayer and consideration, the NE MN Synod has decided to cancel the Middle School Gathering in November. This was not an easy decision for them to make and they know how much our youth have missed gathering, especially for this beloved event. The Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) who plans this event met on Sunday, September 19 and are working on an alternative in-person event for Middle School youth to be planned after the new year. The theme for the Middle School Gathering this year is “ALWAYS”. The LYO chose this theme to remind youth that God is ALWAYS with us. God is *always* listening, *always* forgiving, *always* under standing, *always* loving...even on those hard and dark days when we might not feel God's presence. Watch for upcoming information about this event!



Family Hayride at Larsen's Farm Sunday, October 10, 1:30-5:00 p.m.

Dress for the fall weather and bring the family and friends to enjoy God's creation. We'll carpool to Darrell and Arlene Larsen's farm near Bowlus for a hayride. Thank you to the Larsen's' for hosting! All are welcome to this fun afternoon. Please call the church office for directions if you would like to meet at the farm. We'll be back at church around 5:30 p.m.

Confirmation Ministries

Parents: If you have not yet registered your children for confirmation and youth ministry activities, please do so now. Forms are available in the gathering space.

Third Grade: Youth entering third grade have received their Bibles. Class meets Wednesdays, through October 6, at 7:00 p.m. We are learning about Devotions and the Bible. Donalee Butler teaches this class.

Fifth Grade: Three-week class on Stewardship begins on Wednesday, October 27, at 7:00 p.m. Watch for a letter with details about this class.

Sixth Grade: Families, please watch for a letter regarding upcoming sessions, “Created in God’s Image” on Wednesdays, November 3, 10 and 17 at 7:00 p.m. Students and parents/guardians will learn, share and explore what it means to live in God’s image.

Seventh/Eighth Grade: Fall session with Pastor Beth continues through November 17. Wednesday, October 13 we will attend the Fields of Faith event at Little Falls High School auditorium. No class on Wednesday, October 20. Mentor/Mentee Gathering on Wednesday, November 3 at 7:00 p.m.

Ninth Grade: Mentor/Mentee Gatherings, Wednesdays, October 6, 13, and 27 at 7:00 p.m., and Saturday, October 30 at 10:00 a.m. Practice for Confirmation Sunday is Saturday, October 30 at 9:00 a.m. Youth will affirm their faith on Reformation Sunday, October 31.

Tenth Grade: Mentor/Mentee Gatherings, Wednesday, October 13 at 7:00 p.m. and Saturday, October 30 at 10:00 a.m. Practice for Confirmation Sunday is Saturday, October 30 at 11:00 a.m. youth will affirm their faith on Reformation Sunday, October 31.

“FLC Soul Squad” (for 6th – 12th Grades)

Come for a time of fun, games, fellowship, and be in God’s presence with friends on Sunday, October 10 at 9:35 a.m.! We will meet in the Youth Room. Drinks and treats will be served. Watch for monthly gatherings throughout the year.

Are you someone who cares deeply about Christian education for child, youth, and adults? The Education Ministry Team is looking for a few volunteers to add to their team. We plan and implement creative, fun, and inspirational educational activities, such as Sunday School, VBS and confirmation as well as adult classes that encourage participants to grow in faith and faithfulness. For more info, please contact the church office, 320-632-6667.

Sunday Morning Education Ministry

Sunday School is underway, and we are excited to share with all of the young people in the congregation the love of our Lord. Families are encouraged to worship together at either the 8:30 or 10:30 a.m. service. Sunday School meets between the services at 9:35 a.m.

All youth meet in a classroom setting. We are using a new format that follows the church lectionary. Preschoolers meet in the Ruth/Naomi classroom. Kindergarten and First grade will meet in Sarah Room. Second and Third graders will meet in Saul/Paul Room, and Fourth and Fifth grades will meet in Abraham Room.

Thank you to all who make Sunday School a priority for children! There are many ways to assist with Sunday School if you would like to help in anyway, please contact the church office.

Coming up: Children’s Christmas Program

Do you have interest or excitement for the Christmas season? Planning will soon get underway for the children’s Christmas program. Contact the church office if you can assist with coordinating any part of the program. Thank you!

Confirmation Sunday, October 31

Congratulations to the 9th and 10th grade youth who will affirm their Christian faith and become adult disciples (members) of First Lutheran on October 31.

Please keep these young people in your prayers as they affirm their faith on Reformation Sunday, October 31. May they continue to walk in God’s love and grace.

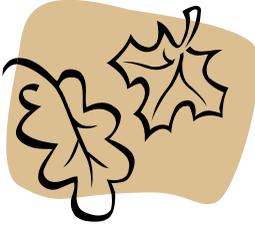
News of the Family



Willa Louise Himley, daughter of Celka Buss and Nikolas Himley was baptized on September 5.

Tayva Theresa Andres, daughter of Tony and Saralyn Andres was baptized on September 12.

Welcome to the family of God!



Items for the **November NEWSLETTER** are due on **October 15, 2021!**

Daylight Savings Time Ends
Remember to set your clocks *back* one hour on **Saturday, November 6!**



“A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.”

Martin Luther,
The Freedom of a Christian (1520)

**First...
Servants of All!**

**First Lutheran
Church**

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