

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Pastor: Beth Pottratz

Ministers:

All God's People at First Lutheran

FIRST



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Little Falls, MN 56345
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www.flclittlefalls.org

“Servants of All”

September 2021, Newsletter

September 1, 2021

Rally Sunday

September 19

Rally Sunday is September 19. The schedule is as follows: 8:30-9:30 a.m. traditional worship using a variety of liturgical settings, 9:35-10:20 a.m. Sunday School, 9:30-10:30 a.m. coffee fellowship, 10:30-11:30 a.m. contemporary praise worship accompanied by a praise band. We experience a great sense of community for all worshippers with this schedule which allows families and all worshippers to attend the service of their choice as well as Sunday School. Consider inviting a friend to worship on this or any Sunday!

We continue to offer Holy Communion at all Sunday worship services. This practice affirms that Holy Communion is a powerful way that God speaks to and nourishes the human spirit and ensures that more worshippers have regular access to the Sacrament.

8:30 a.m. Traditional Liturgical Worship

9:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship

9:35-10:20 a.m. Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Contemporary Praise Worship

Holy Communion at all services

Thank you for keeping the congregation and all those who come through the doors of this facility in your prayers as we continue to be

First... Servants of all.



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“The other day when driving to church, we started to notice a couple of the first trees starting to show their fall colors and talked about how the change in seasons from summer to fall is coming up soon! In my family we are getting ready for the new school year coming up soon with the final days of summer programs, finding out which teachers my kids will have, buying school supplies, planning for bus pick-up and drop-off, starting fall sports, and starting to get back into school year routines.

In the church office, we are doing the same! Getting ready for the next school year! At VBS we collected school supplies to give as donations to kids who need them. We are getting our schedules and plans together for all of the fall Sunday School, Confirmation classes, and Bible Studies. Both planning for the new school year, and getting ready to finish up what was missed due to Covid. We have shipments coming in, letters going out, planning sessions in the works, and lots of excitement coming up!

We do all of this because we believe that what we do as a church is part of our call as Christians and as First Lutheran Church: To trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace. As written as part of the promises made in each baptism. As a congregation we promise to support and raise up our children to trust God and follow Christ.

Raising up our children to be followers of Christ and passing on faith from one generation to the next happens when faith-filled adults surround children and youth with faith-filled conversation, time, and love. Passing on faith is about having relationships with children and youth, encouraging their relationship with God through attending worship, and sharing in faith conversations at home.

We offer confirmation classes, Sunday School, youth group, VBS, among many other opportunities to learn and grow in faith at First Lutheran Church. All of these programs are tools that can help our children and youth learn more about God and grow in their faith. But ultimately, these are only helpful tools. The top two key ways that faith is passed on is through Faith in the Home, and regular Worship Attendance.

The foundation of faith comes from what happens at home and regular worship attendance. Everything else are blocks used to build upon that foundation. At First Lutheran we have a wonderful community of faith-filled adults, youth and children who are committed to a walk of faith throughout their whole lives, continuing to grow in their faith. What a wonderful community for our children and youth to be raised in and be in relationship with faith-filled adults!

Through our programs, we hope that they encourage and support parents to include faith in the home as much as they can. When parents feel confident in having faith conversations, children and youth know more and deepen their faith too.

I am looking forward to starting the school year filled with the buzzing of children and youth in all corners of the church! Learning to trust God and showing Christ's love in word and deed!

~ Pastor Beth Pottratz





Pastor Parish Relations Committee

The Pastor Parish Relations Committee is a small group that provides support for the Pastor and provides a communication conduit between the congregation and the Pastor. The committee supports and maintains an open relationship between the Pastor and members of the congregation. Its mission is to serve the Congregation and the Pastor as an efficient and confidential communication conduit between the Congregation and Pastor, and as an aid to the Pastor in any personal or professional needs the Pastor chooses to present. Meetings are scheduled quarterly or as needed. Current members of the Committee are: Debra Yliniemi-Ahlin, Matt Dahl, Darrell Larsen, Liz Rydeen, and Linda Weiss. They are available to you if you have any celebrations or concerns.

Worship Serving Opportunities

Each Sunday, many worshipers come to worship at First Lutheran Church, every week someone is here for the first time. **Your servant hands** are an integral part of providing hospitality to all who enter here. Stop at the table in the Gathering Space or call or email the church office to offer your gifts in service to Christ’s body at First Lutheran. Serving areas are greeters, ushers, scripture readers, communion ministry, and coffee hospitality. You can sign up for a time that fits your schedule. **Sign up now for September and October.** Training for each serving ministry is available—please ask! For more information, contact the church office.

Masks and Coffee Fellowship

Wearing of masks at First Lutheran Church is optional in the building and during worship services. We have resumed coffee fellowship on Sunday mornings (following current CDC guidelines). If you have any questions, please contact the church office, 632-6667.

Council Highlights

- ✦ Heard that one four-unit window has been ordered for replacement in Pastor Beth’s office. This purchase was made possible with the special Pentecost Celebration offering. Thank you!
- ✦ Heard that approximately 128 students and 27 volunteers attended Vacation Bible School. The Council is very appreciative of all who helped make VBS an amazing week. Thank you to the co-chairs, Gail Hittesdorf and Darla Plevell, and the many other volunteers that helped!
- ✦ Appointed Doug Anderson and Les Hittesdorf to serve on the 2022 Nominating Committee along with those elected at annual meeting, Gail Hittesdorf, Arlene Larsen, and Claudette Moran. The Nominating Committee asks members to give prayerful consideration to serving in leadership positions in the coming year.
- ✦ Heard that the Youth Minister position has had minimal to no applicants at this time. Looking at other alternatives for listing the Youth Minister job description.
- ✦ Save the date: Rally Sunday, September 19!



Worship services air on the following sites each Tuesday. You can access as you are able.
Webpage: www.flclittlefalls.org
Facebook: First Lutheran Church, Little Falls MN
Public access television Charter/Spectrum Channel #180 Sundays at 1:00 p.m., Mondays at 1:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Music Ministry Opportunities



Grace Notes Choir loves having new singers! We resume rehearsals this fall on Wednesday, September 22 at 7:00 p.m. to prepare for the fall concert on October 15.

Followers of Jesus Children's Choir all kids in Kindergarten through Grade 5 are welcome to sing with the children's choir. The first rehearsal is Wednesday, September 22 from 3:30 – 4:15 p.m. and continue to December 15. Transportation from Lincoln and Lindbergh Elementary schools to First Lutheran Church will be provided by school bus. Parents are asked to register for this singing opportunity. Registration forms are available in the gathering space.

Praise Team we are always looking for new singers. We will continue to rehearse from 9:30 – 10:20 a.m. every Sunday until further notice. For ages high school and up.

Coming Soon watch for information in our new **Chime Choir** for middle school students and **Chime Quartet** for adults!

Do you love to sing praises? Do you have instrumental gifts? Consider sharing your gifts in a variety of ways at First Lutheran. For more information, contact Director of Music Ministry, Becky Nelson at 320-360-0209, or rpnelson@brainerd.net

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.

Adult Opportunities

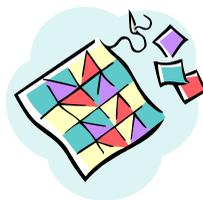


Caregiver Support Group

The caregiver support group will meet Thursday, September 2 at Sprout Market from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (noon) for the "Soul Food-Cooking with Caregivers" class. These sessions are sponsored by Horizon Health. The class is offered for anyone for \$5.00 per person and includes all ingredients and containers for a dinner for two. Please contact Tracy Moe at 320-282-5928 if you plan to attend or for more info.

Men's Wednesday Morning Bible Study

All men of the congregation and friends are invited to Men's Bible Study which resumes in October. Watch for dates. The study includes breakfast. Come when you are able, leave when you must. For more info, call the church office at 632-6667.



Quilters Group

The Thursday morning Quilters Group resumes meeting on Thursday, September 16 at 9:00 a.m. The group welcomes anyone (women or men) who would like to use their hands in service to others. You do not need to be skilled at sewing! We iron, cut, pattern, sew, tie, and fold. Some of the members sew at home. There are a variety of ways to serve and we are open to new ideas. The group meets until 11:30 a.m. We share stories over coffee and treats and have a great time. We accept cotton sheets and cotton material in good condition. For more information, contact Pat Moller, 320-630-4880.



We at First Lutheran have many different ministry leadership opportunities for you to partake in. Ministry teams always welcome new members and your ideas! Teams meet on the second Tuesday of every month from 6:15 – 7:00 p.m.

Worship and Music Ministry Team

A team of four to eight people who love music and worship and will work with the pastor and Music Director to plan meaningful and inspiring regular and special worship services that are “user-friendly” and welcoming and faithful to the Gospel. All things music and worship-related come under the leadership of this team.

Education Ministry Team

A team of four to eight people who care deeply about Christian education for children, youth and adults who will work with the pastor and Education Coordinator to plan and implement creative, fun and inspirational educational activities, such as Sunday School, VBS and confirmation and adult classes that encourage participants to grow in faith and faithfulness.

Youth Ministry Team

A team of four to eight people who love youth and value their contribution to our community of faith. Their ministry is to plan educational, social and service opportunities for our youth that are both fun and engaging and get them excited about living their Christian faith.

Mission Ministry Team

A team of seven to nine people who care deeply about the needs of the less-advantaged in our community, nation and world, and who will take on the ministry of engaging the congregation in providing help to those who need help as a witness to God’s justice and love.

Congregational Life Ministry Team

A team of four to eight people who love promoting relationships and fellowship and will plan events that help the members and friends of First connect with each other spiritually and socially, and who will find creative and innovative ways to invite and welcome folks from the larger Little Falls community to congregational functions.

Health Ministry Team

A team of four to eight people who care about the physical, emotional/psychological and spiritual health of our members who will work with the pastor and the Parish Nurse to provide educational materials/opportunities and to develop programs that holistically address the health-related needs of our members of all ages—children through senior citizens.

Join in the fun and help faith grow stronger in the ministry and mission God calls us to. Pray about which Team does ministry that you care about and sign up.

The ministries of our community of faith will only work if people of FIRST get on board and make it work!

If you are interested in signing up for one of the ministry teams or have questions, please contact the church office, (320) 632-6667.

Family Hayride in October

Watch for a date in October for this fun annual event at Darrell and Arlene Larsen’s farm!

Can Care Collection

Keep saving those aluminum cans! Place your cans next to the garage in a securely tied bag.

Save a can – Save the earth –
Save our youth budget! Keep those cans coming! Thank you!

Sunday Morning Education Ministry Begins on Rally Sunday, September 19 9:35-10:20 a.m.

The Sunday morning schedule is intended to allow families to worship together at the service of their choice and conveniently attend Sunday School. Children and Youth, ages 3 through 5th grade meet with their teachers in a classroom setting. Middle Schoolers are invited to assist in the classroom. High Schoolers are invited to assist and teach classes. If you or someone you know has a passion for teaching and youth, there are many levels of involvement and something for each one's gift! For more information, contact the church office, 632-6667.



Welcome Three-Year-Olds!

Each year we help prepare our three-year-olds for Sunday School by inviting them and their parents to participate in an orientation gathering. This year's gathering is scheduled for Wednesday, September 22, at 6:30 p.m. Children and their parents/guardians will visit their classroom, have a treat, and meet new friends! Three-year olds will receive the gift of a story Bible at worship on Rally Sunday, September 19 at both services. Please enroll your child to ensure they receive a Bible. If you have questions, please call the church office, 632-6667.

Youth Servant Opportunity

Resident on the west-side of Little Falls looking for help with running errands, doing laundry, and light housework duties. Resident will pay cash. For more info, contact Tracy Moe, 320-282-5928.

Confirmation Ministries

Parents/Guardians: Please register your children for confirmation and youth ministry activities now. Forms have been mailed to families or are available in the church office. High School students, please register in order to participate in youth activities.

Third Grade: This three-week class will help youth explore their newly gifted Bibles and practice different devotional styles. Youth entering third grade will receive their bibles at worship on Rally Sunday, September 19. Class begins on Wednesday, September 22 at 7:00 p.m. Letters have been mailed. If you did not receive a letter or if you have questions, please contact the church office, 632-6667.

Seventh and Eighth Grade: These classes will meet together with Pastor Beth to continue their study. Classes begin on Wednesday, September 22 at 7:00 p.m. Students and parents/guardians should have received a letter about the class and the class schedule. If you did not receive a letter or if you have questions, please contact the church office, 632-6667.

Ninth and Tenth Grade: Mentor/Mentee Gathering, Wednesday, September 22 from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. for Ninth Graders and Mentors, and 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. for Tenth Graders and Mentors. Confirmation Service planning meeting for students, parents, and mentors on Wednesday, September 29 at 6:00 p.m. Letters have been mailed. Confirmation Sunday is on Reformation Sunday, October 31.



Blessing of Backpacks Sunday, September 5

Most students and teachers are heading back to school. We offer a special backpack blessing for all ages at worship on Sunday, September 5. You are welcome to bring your backpack!



Mentor/Mentee Gathering

Ninth and Tenth grades will meet on Wednesday, September 22. 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. for Ninth Graders and Mentors. 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. for Tenth Graders and Mentors. Blessing Bags will be assembled for the homeless. The fall and winter seasons will be coming so let's prepare others who may be in need. We will assemble Blessing Bags with essential items for those that may be in need this winter. Donating Items are also encouraged and can be dropped off at church. Items such as combs, case of water, granola bars, toothbrush and paste, handkerchief, tissues, hand cleaner, gallon ziplock bags and granola bars are great items. Come for a time of connecting with your mentor and help those in need too! Contact Tracy Moe for further details, 320-282-5928.



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.

Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who helped with Vacation Bible School – "Treasured!" this year! Over 130 children and youth had a great experience learning that God Knows You - You Are Treasured! The Vacation Bible School Mission Project, Operation Backpack provided over 34 backpacks filled with school supplies to area schools! Due to your generosity we were able to also contribute boxes of extra supplies to the schools. Thank you to everyone who donated supplies, backpacks, sorted, counted, packed, and delivered the backpacks! You have assisted many children with learning needs. Thanks for being Jesus' hands and feet in this part of the kingdom.

Thank you!

Thank you to all who have designated their Thrivent Choice dollars to First Lutheran Church and to "Children First" Christian Preschool. We have seen an increase in the number of Thrivent members who are eligible to donate these funds, and an increase in the amount. Please call the church office if you need assistance with this or have questions. Thank you for putting your Thrivent Choice dollars to work in mission and ministry at First Lutheran!

Thank you!

Thank you for your helping hands during the month of August:

- ✎ All who assisted in any way or attended Vacation Bible School.
- ✎ Those who assist with care center worship services.
- ✎ Those who provide care for the church gardens and landscaping.
- ✎ Those who attended and helped with the quilt auction at Camp Knutson.
- ✎ All who served in any worship opportunity.
- ✎ All who quietly provided a helping hand to another person in need.

"Children First" Christian Preschool Update

Greetings from "Children First" Christian Preschool!

Welcome new and returning families! We are excited to begin a new year!

We begin the year with Parent/Guardian Orientation on Wednesday, September 4, at 6:00 p.m. This is a time for Parents/Guardians to become familiar with our programming, Parent Handbook, and State of Minnesota mandated information. The information shared during this time will not be "child-friendly" so we ask that children not attend this orientation. The first day of class is Monday, September 9 for all preschoolers. This session will meet from 8:30-10:00 a.m. Students and parents will experience the classroom together for one-half hour, and then the parents/guardians will attend a special session while the children have fun! Please bring a photo of your preschooler along with two photos of something they enjoy doing and a family photo. Regular classroom time begins Tuesday, September 10 and Wednesday, September 11 from 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

"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 woven into each day. Each child in 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 as a family to ensure that preschoolers are ready for their future Kindergarten experiences.

Our class structure is flexible to meet the needs of families. Class choices include: Monday-Friday, Monday-Thursday, Monday/Wednesday, Tuesday/Thursday or add a Friday to create a 3-day Preschool Week. All 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 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 come for a visit, please contact me.

"Children First" will again host a booth at the Little Falls Arts and Crafts Fair on Saturday and Sunday, September 7 and 8, 2019. 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.

Dutch Mill is offering a Fall Flower Bulb order opportunity. You may order online at <https://groups.dutchmillbulbs.com/shop/?affiliates=childrenfirstchristianpreschool>. There are a variety of tulips, crocus, narcissus and other bulbs. Online orders will be delivered to your home. Or contact Gail at church to order. Thank you!

Thank you again to those who are choosing to sponsor tuition for a Preschool student. You remain anonymous but the Preschool families pass along a humble thank you! Also thank you to those who contribute through Thrivent Giving or other financial gifts, for the gift of time and talents, and to all who continue to keep the Preschool in their prayers. You are appreciated!

In Christ's Service,

Gail Hittesdorf
Director





See You at the Pole

Wednesday, September 22, 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. Students in grades 6-12 can gather around the middle school flagpole for a time of prayer with other students. Students all around the world will be praying on this day.

NE MN Synod Middle School Gathering "The Lord's Prayer" Cragun's Resort, Brainerd Friday-Saturday, November 19-20

This fun gathering of youth in grades 6-9 is a great time to grow in faith, build friendships, and dig into confirmation teaching in a unique way! This year's theme is the Lord's Prayer. We will focus on connecting with God and each other, building community and strengthening faith through relationships.

Speaker Lyle Griner is the National Director for Peer Ministry Leadership. Lyle is a writer, trainer, speaker, and a connoisseur of "Aha" moments as soulfully curious youth wrestle with the nuances of faith and life. He has spent his ministry career equipping youth and adults with skills to share their faith through caring, welcoming and affirming relationships. Lyle often shares the motto that "Kids are either leading or leaving the church" and wants every congregation's youth ministry to be known for producing faith leaders.

Watch for upcoming information about this event. Early bird registration of \$80.00 is due to First Lutheran by October 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. Please watch for more information on this event. Registrations and initial deposits of \$250.00 will be due to First Lutheran by October 13.

News of the Family



Winston Allen Herman, son of Travis and Kimmie Herman was baptized on August 1.

Landon Dale Lilga and Sophia Elizabeth Lilga, children of Kory and Laurin Lilga were baptized on August 8.

Zeke Arthur Onnen, son of Krystal Lilga-Onnen and Jordan Onnen was baptized on August 8.

Welcome to the family of God!

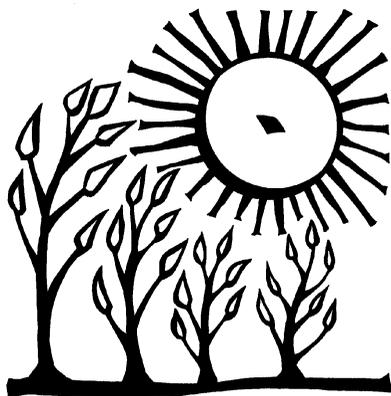


Worship Schedule

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. All are welcome!

Items for the **October NEWSLETTER** are due on **September 17, 2021!**



First...
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Church**
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