



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

FIRST HAND

Sharing God's Grace through prayer, witness and service.



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OUR WELCOME STATEMENT

At First Lutheran, all means all, and the gifts of god are free. We welcome, love, affirm, and include everyone in our faith community regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Here in this place, you will find a warm, loving Christian family which strives to faithfully proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to all of God's children. We renounce racism, discrimination, and persecution in any form, in faithfulness to the gospel, and to the best of our ability, we promise to provide ministries and pastoral care to all who seek God in this place.

GOD WELCOMES ALL, AND SO DO WE.

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The church office will be closed on Monday, September 4th

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Without a doubt, autumn is my favorite season. It has the best weather: cool nights and changing leaves. It has the best sports; college football, NFL football, and the World Series in baseball. And in church, it is typically a time of new beginnings. In many congregations, Rally Day celebrations kick off a new wave of programs and activities. But while we naturally focus on our own congregation, it is important to remember that in addition to congregations, Lutheran polity has two other levels: the synods, and the Churchwide organization in Chicago.

I wanted to update you about three major events going on at the Churchwide level of the ELCA. The first is one that hasn't happened since 2018 because of COVID-The ELCA National Gathering. In July of 2024, there will be another National Gathering for Youth who have completed 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade in the 2023-2024 school year. **At a pizza party on Saturday, September 9 at 12 noon in the church lounge, we will have our first meeting to begin planning Bible Studies and fund-raising events leading up to the gathering, which will be July 15-21, 2024 in New Orleans. (The actual event is July 16-20, but we are adding a day each way for travel). If you cannot make it on Saturday, there will be a second meeting with the same information on Sunday, September 10, immediately after the church service.** In addition, if anyone is between the ages of 18 and 29, there is also a young adult gathering at the same time! If you could have gone to the gathering events that were cancelled by COVID in 2021 and 2022, and now you already graduated from high school, you can still be a part of the excitement with other young adults! If you have children or grandchildren in the age groups eligible to go, please invite them to attend one of the meetings.

My children both attended the Youth Gathering in high school and they can attest how life changing it was for them! I have now led groups twice, in 2015 and 2018, and it is one of the most uplifting experiences I have ever had as a pastor. I am reaching out to other congregations to discuss sharing a bus to New Orleans and rooming together.

A second major event is discussions concerning a new social statement: Civil Life and Faith. The statement will discuss the importance of religious liberty, the proper role of the church in relation to the government, and many other critical topics. After my first Bible class of the year is completed, (Luther 101), I will be leading a six-part study on this new social statement. The topics will be:

- How is God's invitation to discipleship lived out in a democracy?
- How do Christians address controversial civic issues?
- What are Lutheran's views on Civic Life?
- What are the objectives of Democracy in the United States?
- What does Faith Based living have to do with civic life?
- How do we go in peace to love and serve the Lord in civic life?

In our increasingly polarized world, it is vital to learn how to address civil issues from a Christian perspective, and especially to learn how to engage with one another in love. I hope you will be able to join me in studying this fascinating topic.

The third project has the potential to be the most life-changing in the lives of congregations: a Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church. Following the request for such a commission at the 2022 Churchwide assembly, 36 members from across the country began meeting in July, 2023

to develop a plan to renew the ELCA. The reason for this proposal was the great drop in the number of ELCA members and congregations (5.2 million members and 11,133 congregations in 1988, now down to 3.3 million members and 8972 congregations). I honestly have no idea what this commission is planning, but they need our prayers. More than simply growing our numbers, the goal of this commission should be to examine the ways in which the ELCA can live out its mission-to make Jesus known in the world, and to fully live into the kingdom of God. I pledge to keep you updated on this commission's important work.

Autumn truly is an exciting time. I love the hymn we just sang last Sunday:

Classrooms and labs, loud boiling test tubes, sing to the Lord a new song.

Athlete and band, loud cheering people, sing to the Lord a new song!

God has done marvelous things.

I too shall praise God with a new song!

In the abiding hope of the empty tomb,

Pastor Larry



'Jesus – The Gift From The Heart Of God'

(John 3:14-17; NRSV)

14And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. 16"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. 17"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Please remember that Calvary represents God's love from the depths of His heart; Jesus is the sacrificial gift of God for us. Hence, let us reciprocate with sacrificial giving and living from our hearts.



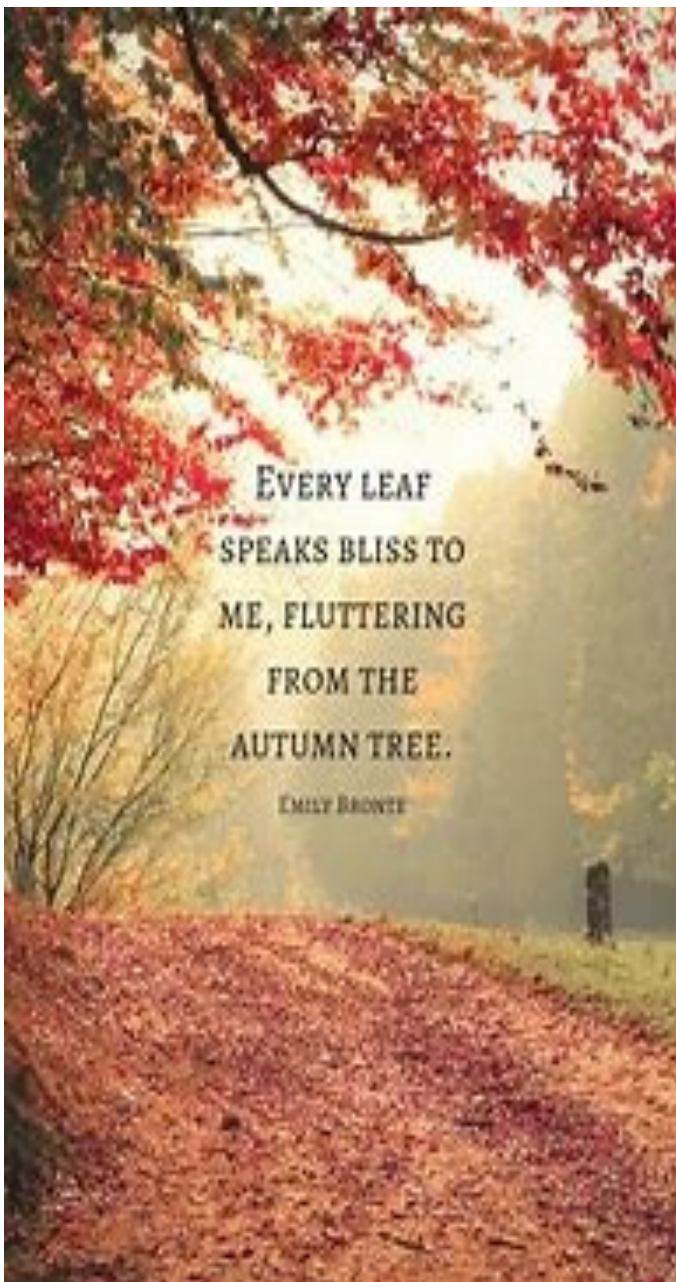
Director of Music

Chancel Choir is starting up again this month. The kickoff is Thursday, September 7, 2023, at 5:30 PM. It will be at Mary Rutan shelter house #2 at the top of the hill. This will be an old-fashioned picnic. Bring a dish to share, your own beverage, and your own table service. Join us for fellowship and fun.

One good
thing
about
music,
when it
hits you,
you feel
no pain.

Bob Marley

Hopefully the Autumn
leaves won't hurt
either.



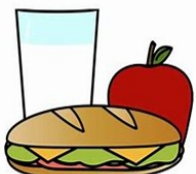


THANKS to EVERYONE who made the Backpack Sunday a Great Success! We packed and distributed 60 backpacks to children in the neighborhood. We also gave away 60 lunch bags to church members and neighbors.



THANKS to all who donated backpacks. THANKS to the men who cleaned & "manned" the grill making hotdogs and hamburgers. And, THANKS to the many who stayed after and helped with clean up, collecting trash, folding up tables and chairs and returning them to the garage....that was a BIG HELP! Clean up went surprisingly quickly, thanks for all the help!

In Your Service, Christian Service & Mission Team



**LUNCH +
LAWN CHAIR =**



Tuesdays in the Park

1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month.

September 5th & 19th will be the next lunches. Bring your lunch, lawn chair, and a friend. Any member of FLC and their guests are welcome to join in. We will enjoy the outdoors being able to sit over in Oakland Square Park, weather permitting

Come and join us for fellowship & fun.

(Meet in courtyard if inclement weather)

Park Clean-up @ Oakland Square Park



The team members would like to ask the congregation to help them with various jobs such as raking, mowing, and other cleaning jobs. The last date that is scheduled for this year's clean-up is **Saturday, September, 9th @ 11:00 am.**

Won't you help us take care of Oakland Square Park and enjoy pizza for lunch after the clean up.

Property Committee will be meeting on Saturday, September 9th @ 9:00 am . We would invite anyone who is interested in being involved in the maintenance of the church.



Our last Worship Service in the park will be on September 10th. Fellowship Time will be at 9:00 am with the Worship Service following at 10:00 am. Come and enjoy the weather and fellowship as we end up our summer services in the park.

DAILY BREAD

Thanks to ALL who help at Our Daily Bread. The next evening we will be serving is Monday, September 18th. If you can't help to serve, but would like to help, you could provide a hand held dessert, such as, cookies, cupcakes and brownies. If you haven't had the chance to help at Our Daily Bread, please consider doing so. Volunteers are asked to arrive at Our Daily Bread about 4:15 pm prior to the serving time of 4:30 pm. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the church office.

Faith Circle will hold their first meeting of the 2023/2024 season on Tuesday, September 19th at noon in conjunction with the Tuesday Lunch. A general offering will be collected as will pennies for haitat and change for the Home of Peace Orphanage.

Come, be a part of Women of the ELCA and Faith Circle.

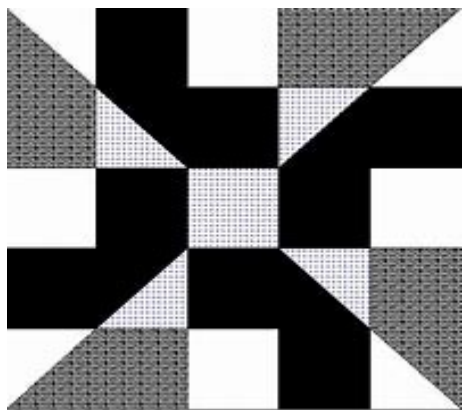
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**Triennial Convention &
Gathering
Phoenix, AZ
September 19-24, 2023**

Three women of First Lutheran will be traveling to Phoenix, AZ the week of September 18th for the National Convention and Gathering of the Women of the ELCA. This has been a long-anticipated event, as this Gathering was postponed in 2020 due to COVID. Cheri Comstock, Susan Wyckoff and Cindy Weikart, who is also serving as a voting delegate to the convention, will be participating in the convention and gathering by attending worship events, workshops, hearing inspirational speakers, learning of the local culture and just catching up & making new friendships with women from all across the country and even other parts of the world.

Please hold these women and Women of the ELCA in your prayers for safe travels and a productive and inspiring time together.



On Sunday, September 24th, quilts again will adorn the pews at First Lutheran. This is the 11th year for the mission. We're not sure of an exact number yet, but it's been a very productive year. When we began in 2012, the batting cost about \$4.00 for each quilt. Now it costs about \$6.00 which is still a bargain, We also have made a donation of \$2.25 for each quilt sent to Lutheran World Relief for their costs to ship them to those in need. Any offerings made to the quilt fund would be used help with those expenses. Thanks in advance for your generosity.

We continue to be blessed with donations of fabric, sheets and crochet cotton and are so very thankful for the support of the congregation and the community. We meet every Tuesday morning and would welcome new people to join us.

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The Stewardship Ministry Team is planning events for October, including a dinner.

Please watch for details in October.

ATTENTION ALL STUDENTS CURRENTLY IN GRADES 8
THROUGH 12-

**THE ELCA NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING IS
RETURNING IN 2024**

JULY 15-21, 2024 IN NEW ORLEANS

**IN ADDITION-THERE IS AT THE SAME TIME A YOUNG
ADULT GATHERING FOR THOSE AGE 18-25 WHO
WERE UNABLE TO GO TO THE CANCELLED
GATHERINGS IN 2021 AND 2022**

**TWO INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS-
(SAME INFORMATION AT EACH MEETING)**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 AT 12 NOON IN THE
CHURCH LOUNGE-PIZZA PROVIDED**

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10-AFTER WORSHIP, IN THE
LOUNGE-PIZZA PROVIDED!**

September Meeting Dates:

9/9	9:00 am	Property Meeting
9/19	7:00 pm	FLIRT Meeting
9/25	7:00 pm	Worship Committee



Ministry Team Highlights

Faith Circle

- Discussing future projects & events .

Faith Formation Ministry Team

- Successful VBS

Christian Service & Mission Ministry Team and Fellowship Ministry Team

- Backpack Sunday
- Park Cleanup
- Fall Fest

Finance Ministry Team

- Monitoring of church finances

FLIRT

- Security cameras

Outreach Ministry Team

- “Homecoming” Event

Property Ministry Team

- Continue maintenance of building and grounds

Worship Ministry Team

- Special music
- Weekly Communion

Copies of reports from the monthly meetings of each ministry team is available for you to view in the Partners In Ministry Book located in the upper narthex.

2023 Church Council

President- Chris Hildreth Blair

Vice-President- John Bodin

Secretary- Carolyn Novak

Treasurer – John Belser

Financial Secretary – Judy Vassar

Members: Ray Kramer, Judy Lunz, Brittanny Porter, Liz Rose, Kris Shannon, Brenda Shively, Ray Swisher



Sunday Attendance for July

	On Site	Online
July 2	61	44
July 9	44	36
July 16	65	41
July 23	61	38
July 30	59	35
Average	58	39



During the past month we have remembered many in prayer. We remember in prayer all who are in need of God's presence and care ... especially:

Health Issues

Jordan Banks

Gloria Kipker

Ed Hildreth

Dick Griffith

Kaylene Ford

Gene Barger

Surgery

Lindsay Hogan

Entered the Church Triumphant

Ralph Shively

Larry Novak

BIRTHDAYS

9/01	Deb Pulfer
9/05	Loren Kipker
9/07	Beth Harman
9/08	Bob Taylor
9/08	Judy Vassar
9/10	Georgia Voorhies
9/10	John Bodin
9/14	Larry Wright
9/14	Tina Keckler
9/16	Margie Bixler
9/16	Tod Johnson
9/17	Brett Belser
9/19	Scott Sebring
9/20	Susie Shields
9/21	Jennifer McKenrick
9/22	Barbara Krueger
9/22	Ashley Hoy
9/22	Olivia Reasor
9/23	Carol Simpson
9/23	Jean Wright
9/23	Amber Weikart
9/26	Connie Regula
9/26	Rebecca Carman
9/27	Jacob McKenrick
9/28	Kevin Boone
9/29	Jordan Keith
9/30	Brittanny Porter
9/30	Megan Keckler



ANNIVERSARIES

9/05/1981	Rodney & Susan Allen
9/15/1984	Dave & Cheri Comstock
9/24/1955	Andrew & Barb Detrick
9/14/2002	Lori & Michael Horn
9/07/1974	Dennis & Elaine Latimer
9/22/1990	Kevin & Robyn Miller
9/05/1982	Pastor Larry & Carolyn Novak
9/01/2012	Josh & Brittanny Porter

**Articles for the October
Newsletter are due on
September 24th**

Worship Assistant:

September 3 Kris Swisher
September 10 Kris Shannon (Park Service)
September 17 Beth Harman
September 24 Winnie Bodin

Communion Assistant:

September 3 Jinny Fergus
September 17 Jean Wright
September 24 Jim Donnelly

Usher:

September 3 Loren Kipker
September 10 Gail Keck (Park Service)
September 17 Dave O'Brien
September 24 Dave Vassar

Reader:

September 3 Dave Vassar
September 10 Chris Tillman (Park Service)
September 17 John Gensemer
September 24 Chris Hildreth Blair

Greeter(s):

September 3 Jinny Fergus/Gary Heath
September 10 Dave/Cheri Comstock
(Park Service)
September 17 Marge MacGillivray
September 24 Max/Margie Bixler

Acolyte:

September 3 Misty Kipker
September 10 Winnie Bodin
September 24 Lottie Bodin

Altar Guild:

Kathy Fultz &
Cindy Weikart

Communion Bread: Rita Iiams

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>27</p> <p>6th Grade Bible Presentation 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service 11:30am Constitution Meeting</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Pastor - vacation 12:00pm AA (RH) 7:00pm Worship Ministry Team Meeting</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Pastor - vacation 9:00am Quilters</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Pastor - vacation 3:00pm NA (RH)</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Pastor - vacation 3:00pm NA (RH)</p>	<p>1</p> <p>Pastor - vacation</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Pastor - vacation 10:00am Extending the Branch Meeting</p>
<p>3</p> <p>Guest Pastor David Buchenroth Pastor - vacation 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service</p>	<p>4</p> <p>LABOR DAY - Office Closed Pastor - vacation 12:00pm AA (RH) 6:30pm Dulcimers</p>	<p>5</p> <p>9:00am Quilters 10:00am Staff Meeting 11:00am Chaplain (MRH) 12:00pm Lunch in the Park</p>	<p>6</p> <p>9:30am Cluster Meeting 11:00am Chaplain (MRH) 3:00pm NA (RH)</p>	<p>7</p> <p>11:00am Chaplain (MRH) 3:00pm NA (RH) 6:00pm Choir Picnic</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Office Closed 11:00am Chaplain (MRH)</p>	<p>9</p> <p>9:00am Property Meeting [Lounge] 10:00am Extending the Branch Meeting 11:00am Park Cleanup 11:30am Extending the Branch Meeting</p>
<p>10</p> <p>9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Park Service 4:00pm Extending the Branch Meeting</p>	<p>11</p> <p>10:00am Staff Meeting 12:00pm AA (RH) 1:30pm Bible Study</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9:00am Quilters</p>	<p>13</p> <p>3:00pm NA (RH) 7:00pm New Life Charitable Foundation Meeting</p>	<p>14</p> <p>3:00pm NA (RH) 7:00pm Choir Practice</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Office Closed</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Office Closed 6:30pm Dulcimers</p>
<p>17</p> <p>9:00am Confirmation Class 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service 2:30pm Green Hills Service</p>	<p>18</p> <p>12:00pm AA (RH) 4:15pm Our Daily Bread</p>	<p>19</p> <p>9:00am Quilters 10:00am Staff Meeting 1:30pm Bible Study 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting 7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm FLIRT Meeting [Lounge]</p>	<p>20</p> <p>3:00pm NA (RH)</p>	<p>21</p> <p>3:00pm NA (RH) 7:00pm Choir Practice 8:00pm Bell Practice</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Office Closed</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Office Closed</p>
<p>24</p> <p>Quilt Dedication Sunday 9:00am Confirmation Class 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service</p>	<p>25</p> <p>10:00am Staff Meeting 12:00pm AA (RH) 1:30pm Bible Study 7:00pm Worship Ministry Team Meeting</p>	<p>26</p> <p>9:00am Quilters 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting 7:00pm Bible Study</p>	<p>27</p> <p>3:00pm NA (RH)</p>	<p>28</p> <p>3:00pm NA (RH) 7:00pm Choir Practice 8:00pm Bell Practice</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Office Closed</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Office Closed 1:00pm Extending the Branch Meeting</p>