



# First Word

The newsletter of First Lutheran Church • Sioux Falls, South Dakota

## True Freedom



*Pr. Jason Burggraff  
Senior Pastor*

As summer moves into July, we who live in the United States of America are reminded of independence with our grand celebrations of American

independence on July 4. Family get-togethers, barbeques, concerts, and fireworks mark the occasion almost 250 years after independence was won. Politically speaking, we enjoy freedoms that many in the history of the world could only have dreamed of. We give thanks for our imperfect but best-to-date form of government. Yet theologically, in a world still full of sin, we know that the bondage of our own sin and that of our neighbors' sin is real.

Even in the land of the free and the home of the brave, we are tempted to trust all sorts of false promises of freedom. (I for one am waiting patiently for the Kwik Trip pontoon sweepstakes to deliver a new pontoon to my doorstep this August—what are the chances!?) Well, when the false promises fail to bring us the peace we had hoped for, and they will all fail eventually, we are left wondering what or who we can trust. Thanks be to God that Jesus Christ comes to you with the promise of forgiveness and new life, every day!

The Apostle Paul knew what a gift the Galatians had been given in the Gospel, and he wrote powerfully to them about it. He also knew that they had been seduced to falsely believe that in order to be Christians, they must follow certain parts

of the law, like circumcision, and he wrote powerfully against this false teaching. He showed them that their righteousness did not depend on the law or what they did, but only on the forgiveness of Jesus Christ. The same is true for you, people of First Lutheran.

Paul also recognized that when you receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the devil likes to move in and share all sorts of half-truths and lies to misplace your faith from Jesus to other things. The antidote to this is to hear the Word all the more—which is why in his Small Catechism, Martin Luther teaches the third commandment this way: “We are to fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching or God’s word, but instead keep that word holy and gladly hear and learn it.”

*“For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” -Galatians 5:1*

That is indeed why we have been gathered together by the Holy Spirit as the Church to begin with: because we need to receive God’s promise through Christ regularly. To that end, I want to share with you some updates: Our call committee continues to interview candidates for our pastoral openings. We are thankful for having received the names of some very good candidates and ask for your prayers as we continue these valuable conversations. We also continue to work to hire needed and complementary positions in our youth and family staff. As of this summer, Valerie Pherson will be shifting roles from

Children's Minister to Youth & Family Ministry Lead. As a result, we are working to hire two positions in Youth & Family Ministry: Children's and Youth Minister, and Youth & Family Office Coordinator (details on our website). In the midst of this transition, we give thanks for the dedicated work that Valerie has provided with invaluable help from interim office coordinators Katie Zeeb and Jon Martin. We are also pleased to have youth and family interns Mollie Brown and Lauren Williams helping out this summer. With their help, and that of many talented volunteers, a lively session of VBS was offered to 42 kids of the congregation and friends the first week of June. The theme programs, “Jesus did WHAT?” was created by our own Valerie. Camps will fill much of our July, along with confirmation interviews. This fall, we are looking forward to a full program of Sunday/Wednesday School, with a brief worship service each Wednesday, and 6th and 7th/8th grade Confirmation classes, along with a slate of Bible Study and music-making opportunities. All so that we can regularly encounter that unique forgiveness and freedom that only Christ can bring

And so this July, I want to remind you of your true freedom: that Christ has come to you in your baptism, as you hear his Word preached, and as you receive the Lord’s Supper. In all these ways, Christ comes to you in order that daily you are repented of your false idols. And instead, Jesus gives to you the true righteousness and peace of God through the Holy Spirit. For freedom, Christ has set you free!

# Committee Updates

## July Special Offering: THRIVE



*Valerie Peters,  
Evangelism &  
Outreach Board*

A strong and vibrant community is dependent on all of its community members, of all ages, to take care of each other.

Sioux Falls THRIVE's commitment to the development of all children in our community provides the leadership and support to ensure that all children can succeed.

Sioux Falls THRIVE was developed in our community in 2017, with a focus on four critical needs for school-age children: Kid Link, Affordable Housing, Out-of-

School Enrichment, and Food Security. Sioux Falls THRIVE is not the provider of services in these areas. The organization's Action Teams bring community leaders, community members, current providers, and volunteers together to bring forward unique and creative ideas to solve the challenges in the four focus areas.

These Action Team create solutions by:

- Identifying obstacles to student success
- Conducting a comprehensive study of each obstacle through Augustana University Research Institute
- Convening cross-sector action teams charged with eliminating or significantly, permanently reducing the impact of that obstacle on student success
- Igniting strategies that make the most

of existing community resources that support children and families in need

As a strong and engaged congregation, we can continue our ministry and community leadership by supporting Sioux Falls THRIVE and its mission to support all children and families in our community to build a stronger community.

As you keep this mission in your prayers, please consider financial support by using the special offering envelopes included with your regular offering envelopes or in the worship pew. You may also write "Special Offering" in the memo line of your check or donate at [flcsf.org/give](http://flcsf.org/give).

To learn more about Sioux Falls THRIVE and how you can become involved, visit their website at [siouxfallsthive.org](http://siouxfallsthive.org).

## School Days, School Days!



*Marcia Huffman,  
WELCA Co-President*

Remember the good old days when your parents took you shopping for school supplies?! There was the excitement of colored notebooks and folders, colored

pens and pencils, and rulers and scissors. And yet we all know that not all of God's children are blessed to be able to start school with all the needed supplies. Many of us donate to the call for help for our local school children, and all in need are able to go to the Banquet to pick out a backpack full of their respective list of classroom supplies. But there is also a need beyond our borders for children in war-torn and underdeveloped countries where these supplies are not always available.

Jamie Lennon with Lutheran World Relief has reported to the church women that

sometimes young children stay home from school simply because they do not have the needed equipment to get a proper education. So we are prayerfully asking that you make an extra effort this year and join the members of First Lutheran Church Women/WELCA to collect supplies for children around the world. We will be collecting these items during the months of July, August, and September, just in time for the back-to-school sales.

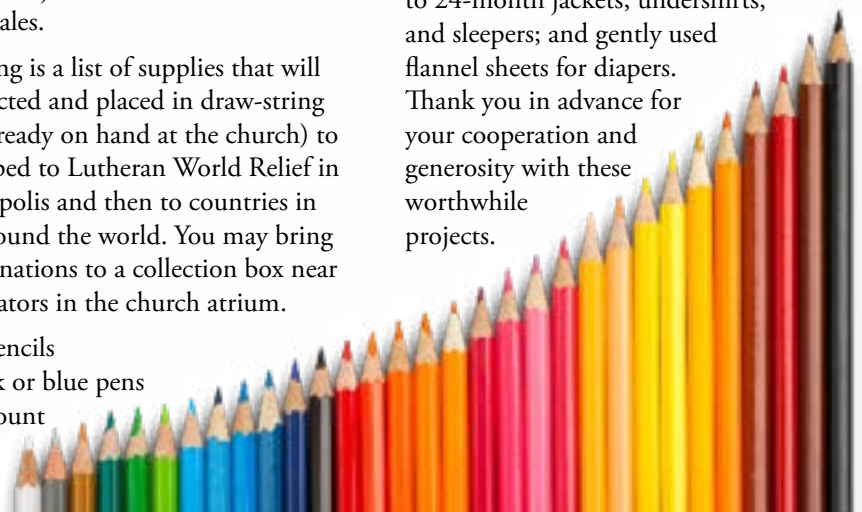
Following is a list of supplies that will be collected and placed in draw-string bags (already on hand at the church) to be shipped to Lutheran World Relief in Minneapolis and then to countries in need around the world. You may bring your donations to a collection box near the elevators in the church atrium.

- #2 pencils
- Black or blue pens
- 70-count wide-rule

spiral notebooks

- 2-1/2" erasers
- 12-inch rulers
- Blunt scissors
- Boxes of 24 crayons
- Pencil sharpeners

If you have not already donated for our baby care kits, we are also still in need of new or gently used dark-colored hand towels; new or gently used 6-month to 24-month jackets, undershirts, and sleepers; and gently used flannel sheets for diapers. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and generosity with these worthwhile projects.



# Holy Land Pilgrimage



*Jean Eidness,  
Care & Health Board*

“I want to walk where Jesus walked” was the overwhelming response when travelers were asked why they wanted to go on a Holy Land

pilgrimage led by Pastor Zellmer.

Originally the trip was capped at 48 mostly First Lutheran members and friends, but intense interest extended the trip to another 23. With that, 71 travelers left Sioux Falls for the “trip of a lifetime” arriving in Tel Aviv April 15. Our home for four days was a hotel in the Jewish city of Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee with stunning sunrises over the sea.

We traveled north along the Mediterranean Sea to Caesarea in the Golan Heights where the Gentiles first heard the Good News from Peter, and many were baptized. There the ancient Roman amphitheater still stands surrounded by ruins of Herod’s palace and the arena where chariot races were held. Views of Mt. Carmel and a visit to the Basilica of the Annunciation where the angel Gabriel announced

to Mary that she would give birth to the Messiah, and to Cana where Jesus performed his first miracle of water into wine concluded our first full day.

Caesarea Philippi brought us to the beautiful source of the Jordan River where we sat under the trees while Pastor Zellmer read the story of Peter’s confession of Jesus as Messiah from Matthew 16. Later we walked the “Jesus Trail,” an ancient trail that Jesus likely walked from Nazareth to Capernaum,

“the town of Jesus” on the Sea of Galilee.

A morning wading in and sailing on the Sea of Galilee was unforgettable along with visiting the Church of Multiplication near where Jesus took the five loaves and two fish and fed the 5,000 and where Jesus called to Simon Peter and said to him, “I will make you fishers of men” -Matthew 4. Having communion on the Mount of Beatitudes, the scene of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount overlooking the Sea, topped this day.

On to four days in Jerusalem, first arriving at Bethlehem in Palestinian territory and experiencing the Greek Orthodox and Armenian Church of the Nativity with the cave where Jesus was thought to be born, the Shepherd’s Field where angels announced the birth of Jesus to the lowly shepherds. We all sang “Silent Night” in the church there and visited the cave where shepherds and sheep spent the nights safe from predators.



A special highlight was our visit to the Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem operated by Lutheran World Relief and specializing in cancer, pediatrics, diabetes, and kidney care for Palestinians since 1950. It is the second largest hospital in East Jerusalem located on the Mt. of Olives and serving some 7,000 patients yearly. The hospital desperately needs our support since the Palestinian Authority has cut back support due to the ever-present political conflict between

Israel and Palestine and U.S. aid to the Palestinian government has been cut off. Currently only a fraction of chemo patients (70 to 90 daily) needing care are being served.

The Garden of Gethsemane where a 2000-year-old olive tree from Jesus’ time is still producing olives remains a beautiful memory. We left Jerusalem, the Old City, Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Via Dolorosa (stations of the cross), Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in the Christian Quarter where we had a service and communion, and the Wailing Wall.

Our drive through the Judean wilderness was poignant realizing it was here in this bleak and desolate desert where Jesus fasted for 40 days and nights tempted by the devil. It was here we met the Bedouins—nomadic Arab desert dwellers, friendly folks subsisting mainly on what they can sell to tourists!

That day led us to Jericho, the oldest and lowest city on earth, and the Dead Sea where some of us floated in the salty, muddy sea. Some folks left the tour at that point, but many of us took the three-day excursion to Jordan where we visited Mt. Nebo where Moses overlooked the Promised Land before he died.

We had a full day at Petra, the site of a 2,000+-year-old city, walking through massive, narrow passageways to the Treasury—the massive royal tomb carved out of the rock and highlighted in the *Indian Jones* movies. A special memory here was the chance to ride a camel, which many of us did. After our stay in Amman, we boarded a 1:15 a.m. flight for the 12-hour flight to Washington Dulles—exhausted, overloaded with information and memories, but grateful for this lifetime experience!



# May Council Highlights

By Michael Kedik  
Council President

## Call Process Update

- Pr. Jason—MSP approved two months ago; Synod has provided 0 names. Bishop and Pr. Jason met on May 24; at which time she indicated a couple of candidates were potentially a good fit. Those names will be forthcoming.
- Pr. Jason indicated that the committee is formulating its own list of candidates, but none of those names on the list has yielded any interviews.
- Lori W. asked if it is the Y&F restriction that is limiting the candidate pool. It seems that could be the case, per Pr. Jason and the synod office. It has been communicated to candidates and the synod that we are open to talking to candidates for a non-Y&F position as well.
- It is possible that FLC would call a non-Y&F associate.

## Capital Campaign—Miscoding campaign dollars

- Michael K. addressed that it came to our attention that capital campaign dollars were inadvertently coded in the wrong account during the period of 2020-2022 (they were placed in the general operating fund instead of into the capital campaign account).
- There was a significant amount of turnover in staffing in this area over this period, as well as a change in systems from ACS to the Planning Center.
- This investigation is ongoing (through L's alphabetically). To date, \$148,000 has been identified.
- This will require this amount to be reallocated to the capital campaign and will result in significant budgetary issues this year.
- Once the investigation is complete, exact numbers will be presented to the council.
- Currently, staff has created a spreadsheet so that when current receipts of

capital campaign funds are received, it will be moved to the general capital campaign account and then if it is a designated gift, it will be moved into the appropriate designated account. Previously, corrections were made in Planning Center, but not reallocated to the proper accounts.

- Mary O. asked about the plan to communicate with donors. Michael K. stated that donors are being communicated in real-time as the errors are being discovered.
- Additional guidance is being sought from the auditors.
- Boards do not need to change planning or any other spending at this time.
- Lyle E. pointed out that on a positive note if FLC's overall finances continue to be strong and improving, that will help offset this situation.
- Colin B. asked if, had the audit component of his board been meeting, would this have been caught. Randy O. answered that no, it would not have been, because even the independent auditors did not catch this.

## Council Retreat—Call to Action

- Michael K. expressed his thanks to all who were able to participate in the retreat in early May. He left the retreat energized and excited about the possibilities at FLC.
- Michael K. also wants to make sure the enthusiasm from the retreat does not dissipate. He is looking for volunteers to sit on a committee on some of the items discussed.
- If interested, reach out to Michael K. to express your willingness and area of interest. It will be discussed again at next month's council meeting.
- Michael also asked for feedback. Lola C. said she thought the retreat went well and appreciated the new ideas.

## Financial Oversight Committee Update

- This committee has met (they meet quarterly) and just provided minutes to

Exec. Comm.

- These minutes will be reviewed by Exec in June and presented at the June Council Meeting
- Motion by Lori W., second by Deb N. to approve Ben Kyte to chair the Financial Oversight Committee for one year to complete the term he is filling. Approved unanimously.

## Executive Committee Report

- Most made into agenda (Capital Campaign Funds, Bylaws, etc.)
- FLC is going to summer hours starting this weekend (Memorial Day to Labor Day) closing at 1 p.m. on Fridays
- Michael K. has met with members on the following:
  - Member asked about VBS and grandkids wanting to enroll and if there was a way to transport them to/from. Before and after care is available. Val Peters talked about the huge expense and regulation of the transportation of kids. The council discussed some publicly available resources, including Boomerang Rides.
  - Member commented that we should open a K-4 school.

- Val Peters presented Saturday, September 9 (Sioux Falls Sidewalk Arts), to put on calendars. E&O applied for a booth (9-5). They are looking for ideas and volunteers for shifts. Considering back-to-school bags, crafts, music, etc. She will present again in June. What does it mean for FLC to be a downtown church?
- Lutheran Men In Mission will likely park cars—Michael Kedik asked if the council or some other board could be considered.
- Likely man the parking lots 6-11 a.m. (end time depends on how busy it stays or if it fills up without much traffic). Lyle asked who oversees leasing East lot to vendors (needs to be confirmed).

## Vacation Bible School: Jesus did WHAT?



*Valerie Pherson,  
Youth & Family  
Team Lead*

This year, our theme for VBS was “Jesus did WHAT?” We spent three days exploring three different miracles

in the gospels.

Day 1 we heard how Jesus used His words to calm the storm. Day 2 we saw Jesus feed over 5,000 people with just five loaves of bread and two fish. Day 3 we learned that Jesus healed two blind

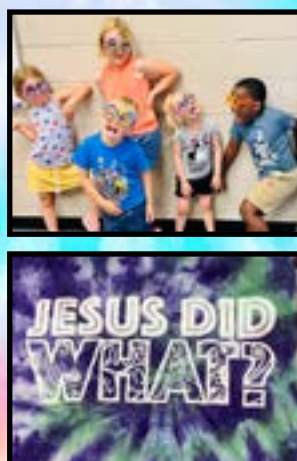
men because they had faith in Him.

The kids had action packed days of crafts, songs, games, indoor and outdoor activities, and classroom conversations supporting each day's lesson and the overall theme. We taught that Jesus is the Son of God and has power over all because He created all!

Highlights from the week were the large group games, water balloons, tie dying, blind man obstacle course, the skits in worship, singing the Hippo song, and of course lunch time! The kids also enjoyed the original song Matt Tylutki composed and we co-wrote, “Jesus, you know Jesus.”

We wanted the kids to explore these Bible stories but also learn that the same God who did these amazing things is active in their lives today. He protects them, provides for them, and promises He loves them always.

We are so blessed with wonderful volunteers who came together with our staff to make this week happen. The love and passion they have for sharing the gospel with our children is beautiful to witness. Thank you to everyone who made this VBS a huge success for our families! What a gift it is to have this program bring children together to learn Bible stories and build friendships rooted in Christ!





# May Gifts and Memorials

## Media Ministry

In memory of Garret VanDen Top  
Larry and Betty Olson

In memory of Ruth Werner  
Allan and Phyllis Knutson, Betty  
Fideler, FLCW, Howard and Arlene  
Bich, Irene Rezac, Kathleen Stelzer,  
Michael and Gloria Simpson, Michael  
and Janet Nystrom, Ronald and  
Cynthia Moegenburg, Siegfried and  
Charlotte Miller, friends and family of  
Ruth Werner

## FLC Quilters

In memory of Ruth Werner  
Carlyle and Janet Naessig, Chris and  
Ben Kyte, Jane King, Don and Arlene  
Hoek, Janis Outka, Marilyn Haddorf,  
Shirley Thom, friends and family of  
Ruth Werner

## Music Ministry

In memory of Cathy Christopherson  
Chris and Ben Kyte

In memory of Ruth Werner  
DeAnn and Jim Clark

## Project CAR

In memory of Andrew Carlson  
Orrin and Karen Anderson

In memory of Ruth Werner  
Janet and Denis Andersen

# Thank You, May Media Sponsors!

May 7, 2023

- The telecast on KSFY was sponsored in memory of Jake & Amelia Fritz and their son, Leonard Fritz, by family.

May 14, 2023

- The telecast on KSFY was sponsored in memory and honor of all mothers by the First Lutheran Church Women.
- The broadcast on KELO-FM was sponsored in memory of Harry and Lena Dooyema by their family.

May 28, 2023

- The telecast on KSFY was sponsored in memory of Mary Quam Hatlestad, who was parish secretary at First Lutheran Church 1956-1964, by her husband Sam. They were married at FLC May 30, 1964. Mary passed away on December 7, 2019.
- The broadcast on KELO-FM was sponsored in memory of Erling and Clara Haugo, who would have celebrated their wedding anniversary on May 29. It was made possible by earnings of a gift to the First Lutheran Church Foundation.



# Capital Campaign Update



Jean Hoff,  
Capital Campaign  
Coordinator

## Roofs

We have received all of the information on the roofs that still need to be replaced and repaired this summer, and the total is \$30,405. By the time you read this, the roofs will have been repaired or replaced. Keep in mind the church will need to be planning on the replacement of the Atrium roof in the next 3-4 years. A restricted account for roof repairs is set up to receive contributions if you wish to do so.

## Doors

We know the Tower entrance doors and the wooden doors that lead up to the Welcome Center and down to the Quilt Center need to be replaced. The doors cannot be refinished any longer. The Finance, Property, and Administration Board has a price of \$25,000 for these doors. The old hardware will need to be used as new hardware would require an additional \$25,000.

The Dakota Avenue entrance doors are seeing a lot of wear. These doors will need to be replaced, but we are hoping to be able to refinish them this summer. It is a concern that the Board will need to look at in the near future.

There is a door on the north side of the church that is being replaced. The door has been ordered, and we are thankful to the family that helped pay for this door.

After our garage on the south side of the parking lot was broken into, a new door was installed to help prevent further break-ins to the garage.

A restricted account for door repairs and replacement is set up to receive contributions if you wish to do so.

## Bell Tower and Steeple

On June 8, I met with Journey Construction (formally Sioux Falls Construction) about the needs of the church. The Bell Tower and Steeple are two areas identified by the capital campaign back in 2018 when discussion was beginning on the needs of the church. The wooden windows on both of these areas are rotting and need to be replaced. Journey Construction is looking at the work that would be involved and developing a plan and cost estimate. It would be our hope that this could be accomplished prior to winter. The money for this project will come from the God's Grace: Our Heritage and Future Capital Campaign. If you are currently giving money to the campaign, the church thanks you. If you would like to contribute to this project, your gift can be sent to the church with "Bell Tower/ Steeple" in the memo line.

## Windows

The church and the education building are full of windows. This will provide you with a breakdown of what windows are in need at this time:

- The stained glass windows on the church building are seeing a great deal of rotting wood on the upper windows. Journey Construction is looking at this project and will develop a plan and cost estimate. The stained glass is a concern as well as the glass panes on the outside portion of the church building.
- The windows on the south side of the education building are of concern and were part of the capital campaign. This includes the windows on the 2nd-floor Sunday School rooms, the windows in

the Gathering Room, and the windows in the Friendship Room. The windows will have cost of \$35,000.

- The outside window panes that cover the stained glass in the Chapel have broken seals and some broken panes. Viking Glass is coming to take a look at what this project might cost. The stained glass windows throughout the church and chapel are priceless, and our congregation has a deep love for the stained glass.

## Atrium Canopy

The Atrium canopy has a crumbling piece of concrete. Since Journey was the contractor when the Atrium and Reformation Hall were built and thus has the necessary information, they are determining who produced the canopy pieces so that we can get that replaced.

## Grass Areas

The grass was seeded at the end of May in hopes of getting our lawn looking beautiful again.

Every day the staff is working on the property to assure it is kept in the best shape, identifying what things need to be addressed, and seeking help from the appropriate companies.

Thank you to the members of the congregation committed to providing gifts to the church to maintain this beautiful property. A huge Thank You to the congregation for your prayers for the staff, the capital campaign, our church—these prayers are uplifting and provide guidance from our Triune God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is only through His guidance that the church is able to make the best decisions for First Lutheran.

*Below are members of our congregation who turn 90+ this month. If you see them around church, wish them a great day!*

## Happy 90+ Birthday!

July 2—Elaine Wiese  
July 18—Donna Faller  
July 23—Verne Carlson  
July 28—Bonnie Oldre



# Life Transitions

## Marriages:

May 6:

Melanie Weigandt & Daniel  
Tlustos

First Lutheran Church  
327 S Dakota Ave  
Sioux Falls SD 57104

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## QUILTING NEWS

Just a brief note to let everyone know that since January 1, the quilters have distributed approximately 200 quilts to the Union Gospel Mission, Volunteers of America, Glory House, Furniture Mission, Lutheran World Relief, and the graduating high school seniors. Our mission is so successful because of contributions from the First Lutheran congregation and the community, so, thank you, thank you, and God Bless!

## 2023 BAZAAR MEETING

When: July 10 at 4pm

Where: Gathering Room

Everyone interested in more information are welcome!

## July Events

July 1—Grieving with Grace, 9:30am, Friendship Room

July 4—Fourth of July, FLC Offices CLOSED

July 7—First Fridays Book Club, 5pm, R Wine Bar

July 15—Dementia Support Group, 9am, Friendship Room

July 16—Worship in the Park, 11am, McKennan Park

July 18-19—Delta Dental Bus, 8am, FLC parking lot

July 18—Necessities for Neighbors, 6pm, Atrium

July 25—Foot Clinic, 9am, Parish Meeting Room

July 25—Senior Luncheon, 11:30am, Gathering Room