

First Word

The monthly newspaper of First Lutheran Church



A Word of Comfort: 'Take and Read'

By John Christopherson, Senior Pastor



"God's Word is our great heritage and shall be ours forever; to spread its light from age to age shall be our chief endeavor; Through life it guides our way; in death it is our stay. Lord, grant while time shall last your church may hold it fast throughout all generations." ELW; Hymn #509

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Dear Family Members and Friends of First Lutheran Church:

The streets of Sioux Falls are slowly becoming quiet. Many of the windows of stores and restaurants are darkened. Schools and hospitals are on "lock-down." Loved ones in our retirement homes and various care centers are being asked to stay in their apartments. And there seemingly are as many differing reports – even among very fine medical experts – as there are responses to a pandemic that is slowly, confusingly, casting a dark pall across God's world: creating fear, anxiety and depression, loneliness, anger. You name it: The Coronavirus, COVID-19. But by any other name, we cannot "nail it down."

But there is "a name above every other name" (Philippians 2:9) ... a voice that says "Comfort, comfort, my people" (Isaiah 40:1) ... One who says "Peace be with you" (John 20:19b). Literally, virtually, in every book of the Bible, we hear God's voice saying: "Be not afraid, trust." For sin, death, and the power of the devil have been nailed-down ... by Christ and his cross, and by the victory of his resurrection celebrated at Easter that creates hope given in his promised return, ushering in God's saving kingdom (Acts 1:11; Hebrews 9:28; I Thessalonians 5:2; Revelation 21:1-6a). We have God's promised, comforting Word on it: he will not abandon his creation (Psalm 24:1; Isaiah 55:17; Romans 8:20; II Peter 3:10, 13).

Now, I pray the Holy Spirit will help you hear and see clearly, is not only the reassuring, comforting Word of God for us in Christ Jesus as he appears to us, as with the early disciples after his resurrection, huddled as they are in fear behind locked doors ... "Peace be with you" (John 20:19b). But I am also praying that the Holy Spirit will help your hear and see clearly, with God's promised presence given us by his Word and Sacrament (cf. Psalm 23:4; 46:1-7, 10-11; Matthew 26:26-28 cf. 25:34-40; 28:20b; John 14:18) a promised presence that creates comfort and confidence, as Jesus Christ breathes us out of ourselves and our fears by giving us a mission as a Christian community. Listen in, just two verses later, Jesus says: "Peace be with you. [And now ...] As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (John 20:21). So what is Jesus sending us to do, as his "ongoing body in the world" (Irenaeus), as his beloved church, in these defining times of faith?

- Use this time to spend together as a family, to pray and grow closer together in faith. I can only imagine for those of you with young children, how there will come a day when you'll look back on this time and say: "Remember years ago, when there was that scary virus thing, we did all kinds of cool stuff together. I loved it." Pastor Jeff shared some good humor with Pastor

Lars, Zachary Brockhoff, and me yesterday: "These are the days we should pity all the guys who've been putting off that 'Honey-Do-List' by saying, 'Honey, you'll just have to wait until I have more time.'" Visit flcsf.org/youth for a "Family Devotional for Life During Covid 19."

- Use this time to pray. (Read a rather now forgotten passage of Scripture that literally jumps-off-the-page with ol' King "Jumpin'" Jehoshaphat in II Chronicles 20:5-12 in speaking spot-on for our time.) I am beginning to work on how our pastoral staff can begin a new series of daily devotionals that will hopefully begin to be posted on our website, by Monday, April 6. Please pray especially for those medical personnel and researchers who are on the front lines in doing battle with this pandemic as well as those who feel isolated and lonely in the back lines. And pray with hearts of thanksgiving for the many blessings that God still provides us (I Thessalonians 5:16-21). We have a new "Phone Buddies" ministry at First Lutheran just waiting to visit with you. Visit flcsf.org/phonebuddies or contact Care & Health Coordinator Jordan Stone at jstone@flcsf.org or 339-1983 ext. 237.

- Use this time to stay connected and be strengthened in your Christian faith through a whole variety of Worship Services and Educational Opportunities that are being daily updated and posted on our First Lutheran Church website at flcsf.org.

And ... before one concluding thought ... I'd like to offer a hearty thanks to our Pastoral and Professional Staff, along with our Executive Committee and Church Council who have been steadfast and tirelessly at work, often "burning the midnight oil" seven days a week, in seeking to be "Wise as serpents, yet gentle as doves" (Matthew 10:16b) for the sake of our congregation and community of Sioux Falls. Thank you, all! And finally, ponder this carefully with me ...

Each of us confronts the world with all of its possibilities of gain and loss. Risk and anxiety attend our every move. Therefore, the crucial question facing all of us – in every moment – in every time and generation – is the matter of trust. What or who can we finally trust? What is our foundation for hope in the midst of this coronavirus pandemic? This is the question before every people, but especially those of us as a Christian family and community. It is this question that gives all of life its religious dimension. In the face of such risk and insecurity, we place our trust here and now there ... tempted to place our trust in the ways of our own human construction and the world – that ultimately turn to "ashes, ashes, we all fall down." And so, join me on your knees in this defining time of faith – joined together in lifting our prayers before God's throne of grace and mercy – yes, to our Lord and Savior 'who holds you, and all things together, in his saving pierced hands.' (Please read Colossians 1:15-20.)

In Christ,

j.r. christopherson
Senior Pastor



Easter is a New Creation

By Lars Olson, Executive Pastor



"If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see everything has become new!" - 2 Corinthians 5:17

Over the past weeks as our world scrambles to adjust to life with the COVID-19 pandemic, I've heard many people use a phrase like, "It's a new world now" or "this is our new normal." By our creaturely nature we seek equilibrium with our environment, and when there is a drastic change in situation and our balance is thrown off, we adjust and get our feet set firmly again. The coronavirus situation seems to change daily, and our rebalancing is occurring quickly, but we're almost certain that even though the world is changing rapidly, there will be a time when a new equilibrium will emerge and we can regain our balance in the "new normal."

One would think that nearly 2000 years after Jesus' resurrection from death that his people, the church that bears and clings to his name, would have gotten used to being thrown off balance. After all, the new life that comes to us in Christ's resurrection has been shattering expected patterns, upsetting our balance, and continuously calling us beyond the limits of our existence ever since the women found the empty tomb. To those women, the disciples to whom they told the news, and to countless Christians ever since, the Easter news has been a shock inducing deep fear, and unbelief. It's world changing. It's existence altering. It's unbelievable even to imagine that death could be defeated.

In this way, Easter itself is similar to any other world altering events. The shock produces fear, people freak out until they can find a new sure footing and balance the changes that have brought in a new world, and then we get back to life with some major adjustments. As things settle into the "new normal" fears are relieved with laments about how things used to be. I've seen it happen with September 11, a huge earthquake in California, when the space shuttle Challenger exploded, and when my kids were born. I've heard the world changed when President Kennedy was shot, with the nuclear bomb, and the Great Depression. Events beyond our control change our world and shape our lives.

I want to say more, however, about Easter. For while we celebrate Jesus' resurrection on Easter each year, it's not the same as any other world altering happening. The newness of that singular event doesn't just throw us off balance for the moment until we can get used to a changed existence. Rather, Easter is a new creation. Rather than a rebalancing of the old, where you have to find your new legs, with Jesus' resurrection comes an entirely new thing. Nothing of the old remains, because everything in the old was ruled, controlled, and limited by death. Death reigned as the final, ultimate, and last word. Even things like planets and stars have their end in this old creation, but Easter brings the promise that Jesus Christ has a Word of life that trespasses the limits of death and every power of the world.

And what is even more, is that the new creation is not just the stuff, matter, and things of the earth, but you yourself are new. For anyone in Christ Jesus is a "new creation, everything old has passed away; see everything has become new!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). God's Word of resurrection in Christ makes you new. You, not just the things around you. You are new because Jesus Christ has given you his resurrection. He died to end the old, and God raised him to make you a new creation. So it isn't the world around you that keeps changing and throwing you off balance, but you - Christians in the world, bearing and clinging to Christ's name and his Word - that throw the old world off balance!

It is so easy to fall back into adjusting our balance, to settle in and make do with whatever situation the world presents to us, but it is not our way. We bear the name of Christ who overcame death and the grave, who killed death by his amazing resurrection, and with this promise and the hope it gives us, we are constantly out of sync with our situation. For we are always new, never submitting to the ways of disease and fear, but with Jesus Christ before us we live as new creations, by his Word, standing in faith knowing that viruses and hardships affect us deeply, and yet they cannot remove our hope, our joy, or our life because we bear and cling to the resurrection of Christ our Lord - every day of our life, especially on Easter.

God's blessing, peace, and joy to you this off balance and strange Easter!

Pastor Lars



Virtual Church, Personal Staff

By Pastor Lars Olson

As coronavirus precautions have forced us into social distancing, electronic communication, and worship by television or internet video, the First Lutheran staff has made many difficult adjustments. We are used to communicating in person, sitting and singing together in the sanctuary, and meeting in so many groups each week that we've had to change gears quickly in order to reach out to people individually and provide resources to classes and groups. We have even begun moving our weekly staff meetings to remote conversations.

Through this crisis, our deepest desire is to continue to do ministry personally. In-person may be limited, but connecting by phone call, letter, or in a Zoom classroom to individuals is top priority. Even though we cannot all gather in the sanctuary, ministry takes longer because we have to seek out each person individually.



At the same time, our staff are reducing work hours and salary by 20%. The financial impact of COVID-19 is being felt throughout the community. Thankfully, generous offering gifts have been received each week, and people are learning about the various ways to give during this time—see flcsf.org/give—so we can continue the personal, virtual, and important ministries people need now perhaps more than ever.



Phone Buddies

By Pastor Katherine Olson

Phone Buddies is a ministry of First Lutheran Church connecting people to a caring friend. This ministry has been developed in response to the COVID-19 outbreak of 2020.

Phone Buddies meet three times a week by phone sharing conversation, concerns, devotion, and prayer together. Both Lead Buddies and Receiver Buddies will receive great benefit from these relationships rooted in a spirit of Christian care and faith.

Lead Buddies receive an email on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday throughout the program. The content of these emails is primarily written by Pastor Katherine, with guest contributors being identified as the program moves along.

To join this ministry visit flcsf.org/phonebuddies or contact Care & Health Coordinator Jordan Stone at jstone@flcsf.org or 339-1983 ext. 237 for more information.

Capital Campaign Hiatus

These are times filled with concern, worry and even fear, yet God assures us that He is beside us. "And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people" Leviticus 26:12 (NRSV). In these times of uncertainty, the Church Council Executive Committee made the decision to put the God's Grace: Our Heritage and Future capital campaign on hiatus. This was done so that you, the members of First Lutheran, can concentrate on taking care of your families and stay safe and healthy. I am reminded of the Bible verse from Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NRSV) "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." The campaign is important, has a wonderful purpose for this congregation but now is not the time for us to pursue calls and visits. Our most important work is to find ways for us to worship virtually, call our members to check on their well-being, to be a source of comfort to those in need, and to pray for God's help during this pandemic. When things about the coronavirus calm down, we will again pursue the campaign. Until that time, I pray that you will feel the care and concern that the First Lutheran Church staff has for the members of this congregation and that you will feel the peace and comfort only God, our Heavenly Father can provide.

Jean Hoff

Pastor Lars Going on Sabbatical

A sabbatical is a time set aside for rest, renewal, and learning. Pastors of First Lutheran Church are eligible and encouraged to take sabbatical every five years of service. Pastor Lars has served for 6½ years and the Executive Committee has granted him a sabbatical from May 15 to August 15. Please keep Pastor Lars in your prayers through this time of rest, as well as Pastor John, Pastor Jeff, and Pastor Katherine who have arranged their schedules to ensure pastoral coverage during this time.

Jonathan Van Patten to present "The Trial of Jesus"

By Andrea Van Essen, Education and Discipleship Board member



On Palm Sunday, First Lutheran will present a podcast/YouTube Video by Professor Emeritus Jonathan Van Patten from the University of South Dakota School of Law.

Setting the stage for Holy Week, Professor Van Patten will present his article, "The Trial of Jesus." The article is part of Van Patten's larger "Trial of..." series, which he is currently compiling as a book.

While Van Patten was still studying as an undergraduate, he attended a retreat at Holden Village, a Lutheran renewal center in the North Cascade mountains of Washington State. There, he attended a lecture from Dr. Luverne Rieke, a law professor at the University of Washington.

The presentation, which centered on the trial of Jesus from a legal perspective, made a strong impression on Van Patten, which he says ultimately steered him to law school. He grew up in southern California and attended UCLA for law school, and it wasn't until 1981 that he moved to South Dakota looking for a better place to raise his children.

He taught at the University of South Dakota School of Law for nearly 39 years, and as time went on, he kept returning to that presentation at Holden Village.

"It was preserved on an audio tape, but he [Rieke] never wrote it up," Van Patten said. "So, while it's not a new idea, it was something I was very impressed by, and it really helped to shape me. I thought it deserved a wider audience."

Van Patten has penned several "Trial of..." articles, including his most well-known, "The Trial of Tom Robinson," based on the fictional trial in Harper Lee's acclaimed novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Other famous trials he's written on include the trial within the book and film, *The Shawshank Redemption*, and the trial of Breaker Morant.

As he works to assemble the articles in book format, Van Patten is organizing them by fictional and non-fictional trials. However, he emphasizes that whether fictional or actual, the trials all teach real lessons.

"*To Kill a Mockingbird* only works if it's talking about something real," he said. "Even though it's a story, it's fiction, it's made up—it's still real. It's talking about what it was like to be a black defendant accused of rape in Alabama in 1936." He said, "What I'm trying to do is pick good stories, and whether they're actual or not doesn't seem to matter. What matters is that we can learn from these stories."

What can we learn from The Trial of Jesus?

Professor Van Patten will present the trial of Jesus from a legal standpoint, and he emphasizes that while it's a familiar story to most people, there are still puzzles begging to be solved.

In addition to presenting his article, Van Patten will provide examples of parallel texts—taking passages from the four Gospels to compare the way the story is presented in each. For example, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke describe the arrest of Jesus as being carried out by the temple police. The Gospel of John, however, includes the Roman soldiers.

Van Patten says that the parallel texts aren't meant to distract or confuse the audience, but simply to point out the differences and how they affect the narrative.

"There are all kinds of holes you can punch in the way that Jesus was convicted," said Pastor John Christopherson. "We can look at how unjustified it was that Jesus was put to death, but we'll see in Van Patten's forum how it paradoxically works for our justification."

Ultimately, the purpose of the article is to take a close look at the legal justifications (or lack thereof) within the trial of Jesus. Presented on Palm Sunday as we approach Holy Week, it offers a unique perspective on a story we think we know so well.

"There were more surprises in this trial than I had expected," Van Patten said. "It's a very familiar story, and yet, coming at it from the standpoint of a lawyer looking at it as a trial, there were quite a few things that surprised me."

Welcoming Professor Van Patten back to FLC

Professor Van Patten retired from USD in December 2019, and he now lives full-time in the Black Hills, where he and his wife run the Normarke Farm Bed and Breakfast. He is a long-time friend of Pastor John, and he attended First Lutheran while he lived in Sioux Falls. In fact, Pastor John's daughter, Sarah, worked as Van Patten's teaching assistant during her time at USD and even assisted with the research for "The Trial of Jesus." Additionally, Van Patten's wife, Diane, previously served as First Lutheran's handbell choir director.

Don't miss this Palm Sunday podcast/YouTube video welcoming the Van Pattens back to First Lutheran, even if only virtually but in spirit. We hope to have Jon with us again this fall for a face-to-face forum.

Bio (submitted by Professor Van Patten): Jonathan Van Patten is a Professor Emeritus at the University of South Dakota School of Law. He retired in December 2019, after teaching classes at USD for nearly 39 years. He is presently completing a book on famous trials.

The Lord's Supper

(in the face of the coronavirus pandemic)

By Dr. Steven Paulson



Every year around this time we live with increased flu and colds and have learned to take some precautions like washing hands and learning how to sneeze properly. Northern Plains dwellers are especially good at teaching proper hygiene to children and taking care

of the elderly sick (that's called being good at the law). But Christians are good at something else that the world knows nothing about: the gospel. Gospel is essential when, in addition to our routine maladies, a coronavirus spreads sickness and fear. A virus attacks the body; fear attacks the conscience. A fearful conscience needs more than medical care; it needs a cure for the soul. Where do we find that kind of cure? That is where the church comes in.

While there are many things God does that we do not know or understand, and we often feel his anger at our sins, nevertheless

our dear Lord has given us utter clarity regarding his promise of the Gospel: his Son was crucified for our sake so that though our sins are scarlet, his blood makes us white as snow (Isaiah 1). Indeed, our heavenly Father is "extravagantly rich in his grace" so that he not only gives his unwavering promise of forgiveness in one way, but in many ways: through sermons, baptism, the Lord's Supper, the power of the keys, and "the mutual conversation and consolation" of Christians at the dinner table or "wherever two or three are gathered..." (Matthew 18, and Luther's Smalcald Articles III.4).

The Lord's Supper was made especially for quelling fear. Its treatment uses earthly things of bread and wine, and operates through our bodies by eating and drinking (such are our normal human acts). Behold how far down into ourselves our Lord comes! Yet, in these bodily things, what the Lord's Supper delivers is a divine promise that comforts a fearful mind. Righteousness comes by faith alone. God's power to comfort the conscience is not found everywhere. It is given only where the Holy Spirit has set preachers to deliver his word in bread. We who have betrayed Christ cling to his promise amid our fears, and this alone stops anxiety. For this reason, it is always a joy for me to tell you what the Lord's Supper is and how it is



preached and distributed rightly. In fact, the main work of an ordained pastor is the pure preaching of the word and the right administration of the sacrament (from the Augsburg Confession Article VII) so that you can hear what Christ is saying to you when you are afraid.

However, the idea that churches across the state and country should take the occasion of an epidemic to reconsider their distribution of the Lord's Supper does not

help. There is no worse moment to assess communion distribution than when people fear for their earthly lives. In that state, fears overtake God's word, and the soul is then sick unto death. The devil always attacks the Gospel, especially the Lord's Supper, by trying to convince you that it is not Christ's promise of life in a bun, but rather an instrument of death. Historically this attack is called "enthusiasm" in which fanatics have attempted to empty the Lord's Supper of its promise—or even get rid of the thing altogether. Enthusiasts try to convince you that God is inside you, and you should not take something from the outside, like the Lord's Supper, in order to get

his promise. Yet that is why Christ said to his frightened disciples: "there is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him" (Mark 7:15).

Martin Luther was asked many times to address what Christians should do when they are in the middle of an epidemic or plague. He always gave the same advice: stay in your job, especially if you are a doctor, nurse, parent, merchant, or teacher. Use whatever tools medicine and health practices provide—including staying home if needed. But disease and fear do not change why and how we give communion—indeed it makes it all the more important to continue the right administration of the Lord's Supper. So here is a little primer on what we are getting in the Lord's Supper that overcomes fear:

- The Lord's Supper is what we call a "sacrament." This is a way that God gives his grace to us, freely and without a work of the law.
- Such a sacrament is not a prayer (where we talk to God), but is a proclamation (where Christ talks to us).
- The proclamation is a special word that Christ "institutes" or gives only to his chosen in the form of a promise. That promise is "for the forgiveness of sin."
- This promise/word is bestowed in a special way—through

an earthly, created "thing." In this case, the "thing" is bread and wine. From the time of Judas on, people have tried to improve on Christ's words of institution. Shouldn't we do something else that makes more sense than to eat and drink your body and blood? Enthusiasts do not like to have their God in a bun or wine cup. It seems too lowly, external, unreasonable, or dangerous. Yet, there is Christ insisting: "This is my body," and "This is my blood." We call this his "real presence."

- But it is more. Not only is Christ really there—in the bread and wine, with his body and blood—but he is speaking to you: "given for you."
- When his detractors say, "Do you mean this 'represents' or 'is like' or 'symbolizes' your body and blood?" He says: No. "Take and eat, take and drink." We call this doing what Christ "instituted" in his own words. Those "words of institution" begin with "In the night in which he was betrayed..." and end with "Do this for the remembrance of me." Do what? What "remembers, or memorializes, him?"—Taking and eating, taking and drinking. Nothing else that we might prefer.
- What is Christ doing here? Why all this lowly, earthly, physical eating and drinking, bread and wine? He is giving himself to us while we are sinners and making sure that you hear him speaking directly to you: "I forgive you by this word that I have put in this wine, and you drink." That is why Paul keeps saying: this is not a celebration or "happy meal," but "as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup in season or out, with coronavirus or without, Christ's words do as they say. You are his, without sin, and with eternal life. The words "as often as you do it" mean that no one is compelled to partake of the Supper; it is a free matter. It is there whenever you need it. If you can't get to church, that is why pastors make house calls, in times of virus and out.

The only thing in life better than this "as needed" promise is the first and final promise of baptism. That promise is Christ in water, who is given once and for always. If you want the Lord's Supper but don't have baptism, start there and take up the Supper later. Subsequently, when you are in trouble and fear, do not shy from the Lord's Supper. Gladly eat and drink to your eternal salvation. When you do, something else unexpected happens. Fear separates us from others, but Christ's body and blood unites us with him and with all his chosen of every time and place. This is how he makes a true, united church, and why we say that even those who have fallen asleep (the dead) are one body with us—nothing can tear us apart. The benefits of the Lord's Supper, Christ's body and blood, are more than you can know, but therein faith grasps its Lord, its life and heaven itself.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN



Katie Circle – Our Story

By Lola Coon

As a fairly "new" member of a circle, I found myself, as circle chair, interviewing original members of Katie Circle. Dorothy Grevlos and Lou Ann Paulson shared that they were, at one time, part of Elizabeth Circle. There were over 25 women of faith who met in each other's homes. By necessity, the circle members divided into various parts of the homes, but it was a challenge for everyone to have a voice in Bible study and even harder to get well acquainted with everyone. Several members decided to start a new circle to offer a more intimate setting. Lou Ann and Dorothy agreed leaving friends in Elizabeth Circle was very difficult because they all cared about each other, but lovingly separated to start Katie Circle.

They chose the name Katie in honor and recognition of Katharina von Bora Luther – wife of Martin Luther. Some of the original members were: Helen Gunderson, Ellen Fodness, Ardis Lillehaug, Shirley Larson as well as Dorothy and Lou Ann. Mary Simko, Nancy Okland, Dorothy Christopherson, Mitzi Dahle, Andrey Krueger, Donna Hanson and eventually myself – joined in the following years. The group participated in quilting, funerals, supported the library and choir, organized and protected the First Lutheran archives, served special events, helped with youth ministries, cleaned kitchens,



Above - left -right: Shirley Larson, Lou Ann Paulson, Lola Coon and Dorothy Christopherson

helped paint the mural in Reformation Hall and worked many areas of the Bazaar. They've watched new programs develop and enrich First Lutheran and, in general, helped keep the heart of our church beating strong.

This tight-knit group of "circle sisters" were especially proud to share in the "Salute to Veterans" in 2018. Hand-in-hand with members of Ruth Circle and "help-mates" doing the program, we honored 106 veterans, their spouses and WELCA participants.

Katie Circle even has an "honorary circle member" in Pastor Jim Christopherson, as he often shares his insight in



Above - left -right: Dorothy Grevlos and Lou Ann Paulson (Not pictured is Nancy Oakland)

our Bible study when Dorothy hosts the circle meeting.

Although time has taken its toll and we are down to six active members, we continue as circle-sisters, to serve and support the mission of First Lutheran Church and look forward to helping in the centennial celebrations throughout 2020.

If you don't mind "fairly early" mornings, join us on the third Tuesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. Meeting location is published each month in the News Notes calendar, or call me, Lola Coon, Circle Chair. We would love to have you join us.

Hosanna!

"Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" Mark 11:9 NRSV



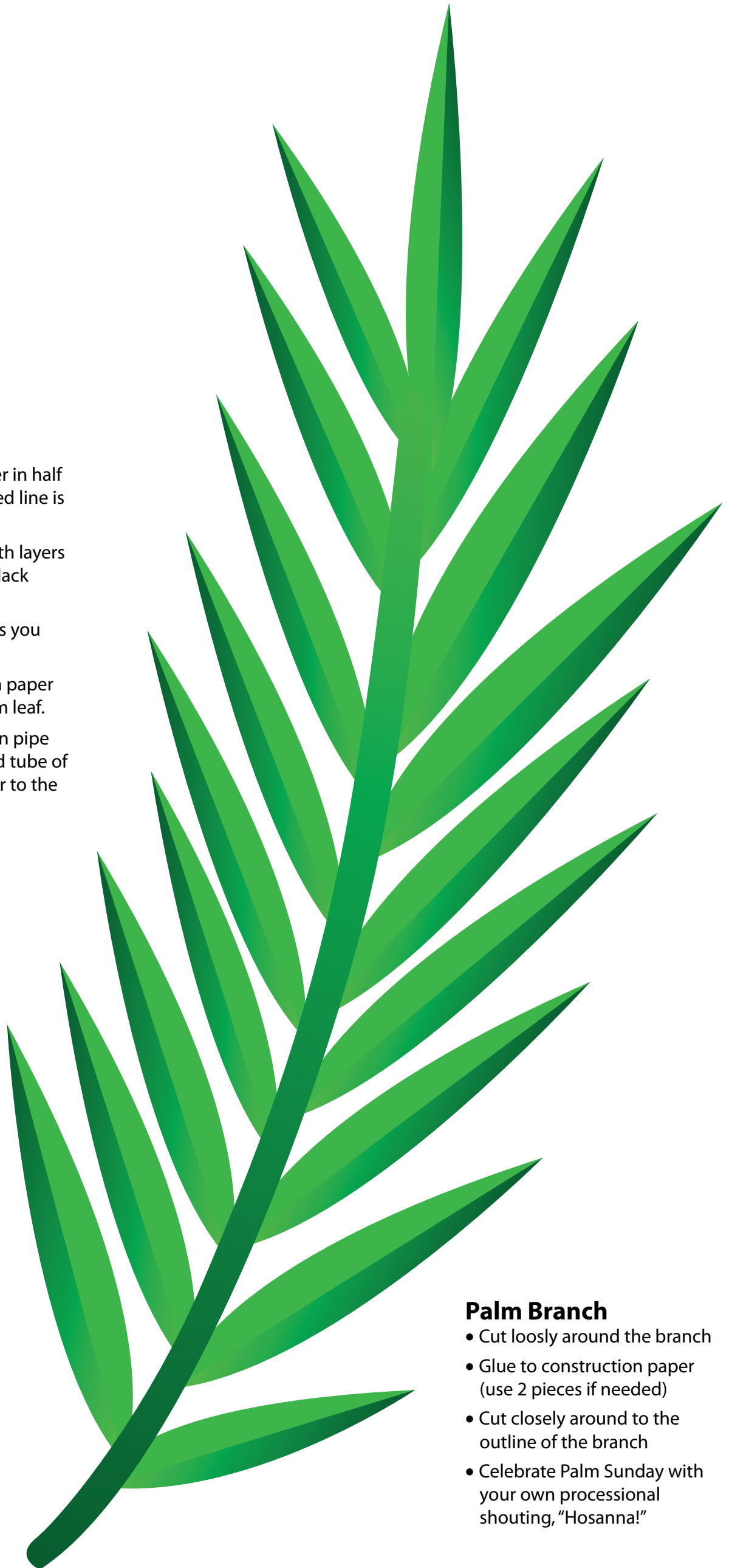
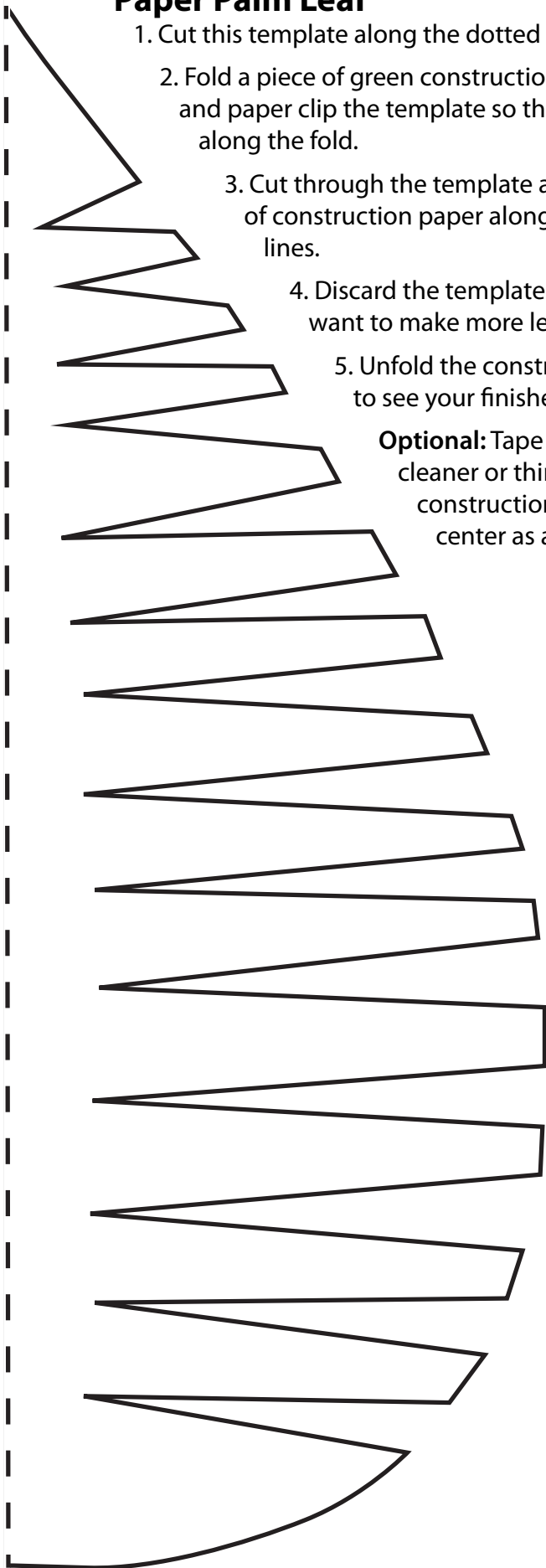
Hand Palms :)

Trace and cut out hand prints from green construction paper and glue to craft sticks.

Paper Palm Leaf

1. Cut this template along the dotted line.
2. Fold a piece of green construction paper in half and paper clip the template so the dotted line is along the fold.
3. Cut through the template and both layers of construction paper along the black lines.
4. Discard the template (unless you want to make more leaves).
5. Unfold the construction paper to see your finished palm leaf.

Optional: Tape a green pipe cleaner or thin rolled tube of construction paper to the center as a stem.



Palm Branch

- Cut loosely around the branch
- Glue to construction paper (use 2 pieces if needed)
- Cut closely around to the outline of the branch
- Celebrate Palm Sunday with your own processional shouting, "Hosanna!"

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY



Do You Know? The Youth & Family Ministry Board

By Marnie Dahle Backer, Director



A new year brings some change to our boards, council, and executive team. What a blessing these folks are to helping, guiding, and leading the ministry of the church! They are an enormous gift to the ministry and to God's people. And...

they're super cool. Here's a brief look as they answer two simple questions: What is one thing you love about Youth and Family Ministry? And, share a brief story about how God or your faith is at work in your life. Each board member took a "selfie" pic to go with their name. I mean...cool and hip AND children of God. WOW! We hope you'll seek them out and introduce yourself to them if you haven't met them.

Suzu Schramm

Youth & Family Ministry has an "energy" all its own—an energy that allows/forces people to sing, dance, jump around, be silly, ask for help, step outside their comfort zone, have difficult conversations, and have fun. It's unlike any other ministry in that, while honoring tradition, it is constantly changing with the times, with the kids, and with today's families.



Lately I have found that my faith keeps getting stronger; things I learned throughout my whole life or learned years ago are becoming clearer and more defined. The more I hear others share their stories, the more thoughtful sermons I hear, the more questions my sons ask, the stronger my own faith becomes. These added years and added life lessons also free me to talk with folks about my faith more openly. For the past ten years, the most common thing I share with others is that being a Christian, being baptized, means you are never alone. That is comforting to me. Also, knowing that I'm not great at evangelizing to others, these past few years especially, God has given me simple words and simple responses when friends ask me things like, "Why do you go to church?" "Why did you have your boys baptized?" "Isn't it enough if we're just a good person?" I'm getting there...

Corey Visscher

The thing I love most about FLC Youth & Family Ministry is the opportunity it allows kids to attend camps and participate in fun group gatherings. I think it is great that there is an effort to provide activities for the kids that are not in a "classroom" setting. This is something my church did not provide growing up.



I feel the biggest way God is at work in my life is just knowing that he is always there. When I hear that "voice" in my head when I encounter a difficult situation or just a quick "thank you," I know it comes from him or is directed to him. There is comfort in knowing God is always there for me.

Sandy Fink

I love Youth & Family Board because as a grandparent, it keeps me involved and informed with what opportunities there are for youth and families in our congregation. I also love



getting to know the fun members of our board who I probably would never know otherwise. We have fun laughing and working together, and it has been a good experience for me.

God and faith have always been an important part of my life. Our family has grown from kids and now grandkids and my mom and my extended family. We have faced a few health issues that only our faith can help us through. I honestly don't know what I would do without God in my life. He is always there for me no matter what!!

Eric Sather



One thing I enjoy about youth ministry... I feel so blessed to volunteer directly with the high school youth as an adult leader. I enjoy watching the youth grow up and mature. We have such fine young people at FLC.

Way God is at work... Though I don't have kids of my own, God has provided me with the high schoolers in youth group. I feel so blessed to be able to volunteer with them as an adult leader. They are all my kids. I enjoy being with them and spending time with them at youth group, on trips, etc.

Katie Bossman



Youth & Family Ministry is great because families are so important. Whether it be through blood or love, families help, learn, and grow with one another.

My faith has changed over the years. I see God most in our youth; they have faith in bucketfuls. They renew me and remind me to just believe.

Kristin Skogstad



One thing I love about the Youth & Family Ministry is that it provides me an opportunity to give back because FLC provided so many wonderful experiences for our children, and we want that for others.

God is working in my life on a daily basis in my job at Garfield Elementary School. Each day I have the opportunity to minister to the students and their families by showing God's love to them in a variety of ways.

Sarah Muller



One thing I love about Youth & Family is that every board member's unique gifts and perspectives are valued. It's awesome to be part of team that is eager to meet the needs of the people whom they serve!

God is working in my life right now as I learn to navigate a new teaching path. I am learning about his big, big world every day through the lenses of my English Language students.

Prayer for Families in all shapes and sizes...

Dear God...

Please bless our First Lutheran families and all families throughout the world as we maneuver through these incredible days. Help us to breathe... to slow our hearts and minds... to hear your voice so we might know how to live our lives in these different times. We pray especially for those that are especially vulnerable to sickness. And we pray for all the many milestones of faith and life that must look different. May we still find ways to celebrate one another, care for one another and show your love to the world. Thank you God for all you give to us. Amen.

Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday



Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday this year we will be celebrating from home – thankfully we can still watch worship on TV – it won't be exactly what we are used to, but we will hear God's word for us proclaimed! We invite you to have your own Palm Sunday processional in your home, a parade around your block or a drive down the street. Make some palm branches (or maybe use a plant/tree branch) – you could even wave a towel as we cheer "Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" Louder now – you can do it!

And when Easter arrives – as it always does, and we can unearth the Alleluias! Take some time to dress in your Easter outfits (even if they're from last year!), maybe make a photo booth at your house or snap a photo of your Easter celebrations (be on the lookout for more ideas coming soon). Any photos you take, we would love to have you send them to us so we can share what our community is doing. Simply text them to the FLC texting number: 970-00



Milestone Minute

Fifth Grade First Communion Milestone

First Communion Milestone is normally celebrated at the evening service on Maundy Thursday. This service commemorates the Last Supper when Jesus shared the Passover Meal with his disciples and fits beautifully for all of us, along with the fifth graders to receive communion. Fifth grade students have been working from home on their activities and completing their classes online via Zoom. The students will receive their first communion at a later date.



High School Senior Recognition tentatively scheduled for Sunday, May 3

Please join us at the 11 a.m. worship service as we celebrate the seniors' achievements and wish them well on the next part of their life journey. The soon-to-be graduates will each receive a beautiful quilt prayerfully and lovingly made by our First Lutheran Quilters. What a beautiful day this is as the women wrap up the seniors in these quilts and remind them that God's love is with them wherever they go.



First Grade Lord's Prayer

First Lutheran First Grade children led the congregation in the Lord's Prayer on Sunday, March 1, during the 11 a.m. service. The first graders and their families met for breakfast, a time of learning and practice, and a craft, then attended the service.

Mission

First Lutheran Church welcomes all people into the community of Jesus Christ, equipping and sending them forth to serve and witness in Jesus' name.

Guiding Principles

We are grounded in the great commandment of Jesus.
(Matthew 22:34-40)

We are grounded in the great commission of Jesus.
(Matthew 28:16-20)

We are committed to welcome and minister to all people.

We are committed to equipping people for ministry.

We are committed to service in our community and world.

We are committed to a ministry of relationship building.

We are committed to our heritage and identity as a reforming church.

We are committed to excellence in broadcast ministry.



Worship Services

Saturday (Chapel)

5 p.m. Vespers/Communion

Sunday (Sanctuary)

8 a.m. Traditional Worship with Communion

9:30 a.m. Traditional Worship

11 a.m. Contemporary Worship

Media Ministries Broadcasts

8 a.m. KELO-FM Radio (101.9)

11 a.m. KSFY (Sioux Falls), KPRY (Pierre) and KABY (Aberdeen)

youtube.com/flcsf

facebook.com/flcsf

@FirstLutheranSF

@firstlutheransf

First Word

First Word is the monthly newspaper of First Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, SD. It is distributed to members of the congregation and others upon request. Opinions expressed in First Word are those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by the First Lutheran Church congregation or staff. The editors of First Word reserve the right to edit submissions.

Newsletter submissions are due the first business day of the month. Please submit articles or questions regarding First Word to Communications Director, Jodi Hoyt, at jhoyt@flcsf.org. Reader feedback is always welcome.

First Word is available online to read or download at flcsf.org/firstword.

Births

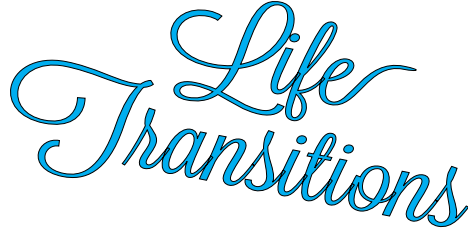
Feb. 22 **Henry Daniel Brockhoff**, son of Zachary and Jordan Brockhoff
Feb. 22 **Kindred June Streng**, daughter of Adam and Sanna Streng

Baptisms

Feb. 9 **Jack Douglas Jensen**, son of Alex and Nikki Jensen
Feb. 23 **Theodore "Teddy" Wilbur Budmayr**, son of Ryan and Molly Budmayr

Deaths

Feb. 11 **Rasma Bembers**
Feb. 14 **Gerald "Bud" Entringer**
Feb. 18 **Howard Hovland**
Feb. 27 **Kathrine Clark**



New Photo Directory Postponed

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Life Touch has postponed all of their photo shoots for new directories. They will notify us when they are able to set up a new schedule later in the year.

Council Highlights

If church members wish to add to an upcoming Council meeting agenda, please contact Marilyn McNeill, Business Administrator, at 339-1983 ext. 236 or mmcneill@flcsf.org. Meetings are held the fourth Thursday of each month. First Lutheran Church members are welcome to visit meetings.

February 28, 2020

- Ninety-eight Lowell Elementary families attended Shrove Tuesday. This is the most we have had at this event.
- Pastor John asked for prayers regarding members who are in hospice and their families.
- Thanks to the women of FLCW for hosting receptions for the guest pastors and directors/conductors for the 100 Year Anniversary.
- Capital Campaign visits are going well. \$1,914,935 in pledges.
- Marilyn's McNeill's job description has been updated; currently three candidates have shown interest.
- The First Lutheran Church Foundation is providing a special \$500,000 gift for the church's 100th anniversary. Approximately \$220,000 of the gift is subject to donor restrictions and will be distributed accordingly. Council voted to apply \$73,858 from the undesignated portion to bring the operating reserve to 10% of the current operating budget as a minimum recommended by our auditors and the remaining \$205,691 to the HVAC debt.
- The Council discussed and approved ordering new paraments. They should arrive by the 100th Anniversary on November 1. Money is available from designated gifts for the paraments.
- Everyone was encouraged to go online to sign up for photo directories.
- FLC can have eight attendees to the Conference Assembly March 15 at Trinity Lutheran and at Synod Assembly June 5-6.
- Deb Nelson reviewed the results from her board visits on hospitality. She challenged Council members to introduce themselves to someone they don't know each week.
- 100-Year Anniversary plans continue, and progress is being made.
- The City of Sioux Falls has been informed that we are not interested in a parking lot swap of our Main Avenue Lot and their Nordic Hall Lot at this time. The church is open to working with the city when temporary space is needed for removal and replacement of the parapet on the Washington Pavilion.
- Colleen Kokenge updated the Council on the Evangelism & Outreach Board focus, which has switched from an administration board that distributes money to a ministry opportunity focus board. They are planning a new children's ministry outreach to take a trailer with supplies on location.

CHURCH COUNCIL

Officers/Executive Committee

Martin Oyos President
Michael Paulson Vice President
Randy Eide Treasurer
Suzie Hernes Secretary
John Christopherson Senior Pastor
Michael Kedik Member-at-Large
Lenae Schwartz Member-at-Large

Council Representatives

Care & Health Barney Brandenburg
Education & Discipleship Lindsey Olson
Evangelism & Outreach Colleen Kokenge
Finance, Admin. & Property Lyle Eidsness
FLCW Kathy Stelzer
Foundation Somer Anderson
Stewardship & Giving Birgit Peterson
Welcome & Community Deb Nelson
Worship & Music James Moore
Youth & Family Suzy Schramm

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH STAFF DIRECTORY

Pastoral Staff

(203) Dr. John Christopherson . . . Senior Pastor
(210) Rev. Lars Olson Executive Pastor
(209) Rev. Jeff Backer Associate Pastor
(214) Rev. Katherine Olson* . . . Associate Pastor
(202) Rev. Bob Chell* Visitation
(202) Rev. David Houck* Visitation
(202) Rev. Roger Noer* Visitation
(202) Rev. Dennis Tranberg* Visitation
(202) Rev. Dave Johnson Emeritus

Administrative Staff

(236) Marilyn McNeill . Business Administrator
(211) Jody Bymers Finance Administrator
(202) Donna Jahr Secretary to the Pastors
(225) Kristy Zuraff* . . . Admin/PM Receptionist
(201) Cleo Sorensen* . . . Receptionist/Secretary

Care and Health Ministries

(237) Jordan Stone Caring Coordinator
(202) Cheryl Satterlee* . . . Wedding Coordinator

Media Ministry

(231) Jodi Hoyt Director
(213) Susan Bell . Communications Coordinator
Kathy Hein* Broadcast Director
Garrett Masters* Broadcast Director
David Palmer* Broadcast Director
Hons Oakland* Broadcast Director
Tanner Wangness* Broadcast Director

Facilities

(201) Dave Wilson Facility Manager
Rick East Custodian
Jeff Hartnett Custodian

Worship and Music Ministries

(260) Zachary Brockhoff . . . Director/Organist,
FLYGHY and Jubilant Singers Director
(261) Shirley Barlow* . . Administrative Assistant
Larry Olson* Contemporary Worship
Dr. Paul Nesheim* Adult Choir Director,
Women's Choir Director
Bonnie Lindgren* Carol Choir Director
Donna Hamilton* Accompanist
Sue Severson* Accompanist
Mary Ryrholm* Agape Ringers Director
Pam Sonnichsen* . . . Instrumental Coordinator
Marcia Kittelson* Organist Emerita

Youth and Family Ministries

(204) Marnie Dahle Backer Director
(235) Elias Johnson-Youngquist . Youth Minister
(228) Mark Nassen* Coordinator
(238) Heather Smith Children's Minister
Karina Hackworth* Nursery Attendant
Nancy Henrichsen* Nursery Attendant
Irma Rodriguez Leon* Nursery Attendant
Kris Stark* Nursery Attendant

() = Direct dial phone extensions. If no extension is listed, please call the Director of the ministry area.

* Part-time staff

Main phone (605) 336-3734
Direct dial to extensions (605) 339-1983
Toll-free (800) 425-9899
Fax (605) 336-8370
Pastoral emergency (605) 610-9431
Custodian cell (605) 351-8281
Project CAR (605) 332-2777

Hospitality at First Lutheran

By Deb Nelson, Welcome and Community Board Chair



"When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality."

Romans 12:13

The Welcome & Community board

has been studying hospitality and what it is and isn't at First Lutheran. I have been privileged to meet with each board to gather thoughts and ideas about hospitality. We do so many things right:

- Greeters at our doors
- Pastors greeting members after the service
- Members lingering after services to share in our community
- Well-attended community events

But we can do more! The most common concern I heard was related to

approaching someone who is unfamiliar and introducing ourselves. "How do I know they aren't a member already?" Or, "What if they have been a member for 30 years and I ask if they are a guest?"

What keeps you from approaching someone new? Fear that you will embarrass yourself? If you are honest, that answer is probably yes.

At this time of the spread of the COVID-19 virus, there is plenty of anxiety about interacting with people. That doesn't mean we shouldn't introduce ourselves to someone new. Maybe this is the most important time for us to introduce ourselves. Maybe the person you approach or call really needs someone to reach out.

I challenge you to talk to someone new each week or learn someone's name each week. That someone may need a friendly person like you.

FINANCIAL SERVICES



Center: Congregation president, Martin Oyos, receives a check from Foundation president, Somer Anderson.

Left to right, seated are: Marilyn McNeill, Suzy Schramm, Kathy Stelzer, Lindsey Olson, Colleen Kokenge, Suzie Hernes, Birgit Peterson, Deb Nelson

Standing are: Michael Kedik, Pastor Jeff Backer, Randy Eide, Martin and Somer, Michael Paulson, Pastor John Christopherson, Lyle Eidsness, and Pastor Lars Olson

Council Receives Gift from FLC Foundation

By Somer Anderson, Foundation President

The First Lutheran Church Foundation was honored to present a 100-year anniversary gift of \$500,000 to First Lutheran Church at the February Council meeting. Thank you to all members of the Legacy society who made this special gift possible.

If you are not yet a member of the Legacy Society and would like to learn more about adding the First Lutheran Church Foundation to your Estate Plan or as a beneficiary on a retirement account and/or other asset(s), please call Marilyn McNeill at First Lutheran at 605-339-1983 ext. 236, or email her at mmcneill@flcsf.org.

The Foundation will host a dinner to express our gratitude on September 24 at Minnehaha Country Club for all current Legacy Society members. You still have plenty of time to join the Legacy Society if you feel compelled to do so. Big or small, any gift or promise of a future gift from your estate will help ensure the continued gifts to First Lutheran Church from the Foundation.

MEDIA MINISTRY



Become a media Sponsor

Support First Lutheran in providing a weekly worship experience for people who are unable to attend worship in person. Sponsor a radio broadcast, television broadcast, or closed captioning in honor of, or in memory of a loved one, to celebrate a special life event, or to the glory of God. Contact First Lutheran at (605) 336-3734.

Thank You February Sponsors

First Lutheran Church's worship can be seen every Sunday at 11 a.m. on KSFY, KPRY, and KABY in South Dakota; southwest Minnesota; northwest Iowa; and northeast Nebraska. The Sunday 8 a.m. worship service is broadcast live on KELO-FM, 101.9.

February 2: Radio sponsored in loving memory of Helen Hay, whose birthday would have been February 2, and to celebrate her love of the Lord from her children, Kristi, Jeff, and Debby.

February 9: Radio sponsored in loving memory of Les Rollag, whose 87th birthday would have been on February 15, by his family.

Television sponsored in loving memory of Bill and Cheryl Grevlos, beloved parents and grandparents by Dann, Dave, Mike, Jill, and grandchildren.

February 16: Radio and closed captioning sponsored in honor of Mike and Gloria Simpson's anniversary on February 18 by Elaine Johnson, Mary Ellen Lantis, Richard Berdahl, and families.

February 23: Television was given in loving memory of Robert and Dorothy Davis by Pam and David Marburger, Eric, Amanda, and Ethan Schuette. Today would have been Dorothy's 93rd birthday.

February 26 - Ash Wednesday: Television and closed captioning sponsored by Judy Jasper for nursing home residents and homebound individuals. It is also in honor of the FLC pastors for their ministry in spreading the word of God. As we receive the cross of ashes this day, let us remember that we are members of the body of Christ and in this is the season of Lent we await the resurrections of our Lord and Savior on Easter.

Gifts to the First Lutheran Church Foundation in memory of:

Phyllis Berkland: Dorothy Grevlos, Judy Ryan, Ruth Werner

Bud Entringer: Don & Joyce Helberg

Harvey Nelson: Robert Christensen, Don & Florence Toft

Peggy Uthe: Dorothy Grevlos

Gifts to First Lutheran Quilters in memory of:

Phyllis Berkland: Clara Mae Ranschau

Gifts to Lankford Art Series in memory of:

Eileen Quanbeck: Gary & Shirley Barlow, Doris Bushard

Gifts to Meals from the Heart in memory of:

Phyllis Berkland: Frank & Joan Hansen
Peggy Uthe: Frank & Joan Hansen

Gifts to Media Ministry in honor and memory of:

Marvin & Doris Nelson: Glenn & Josephine Nelson

Gifts to Media Ministry in memory of:

Phyllis Berkland: Darlene Colwill
Vesta Case: Jeff & Edna Husman
Sandra Earl: Doug & Louise Peterson
Bud Entringer: Tim & Patricia Erickson, Emil & Carol Knapp, Karen Lidel
Gordon Erickson: Tim & Patricia Erickson
Cheryl Grevlos: Darlene Colwill, John & Muriel Kolbeck
Bob Larson: Martin & Mary Oyos, Valley Exchange Bank
Kaye Mulder: Jeff & Edna Husman

Marit Pudas: Howard & Arlene Bich, Jerry Drake

Eileen Quanbeck: Mary Eich, Mike & Gloria Simpson, Donna Van Houten

Doris Salem: Donald & Joyce Helberg
Peggy Uthe: Jerry Drake

Gifts to the Music Ministry in memory of:

Eileen Quanbeck: Emil & Carol Knapp, James & Dorothy Christopherson, Jean Edman, Friends & Family, Sandy Holleman, James & Mary Beth Johnson, Marilyn McLeod, Jack & Lona Miller, Carl & Janet Naessig, Lori Nelson, Tracie Osthus

Gifts to Project CAR in memory of:

Eileen Quanbeck: Lillian Carlson, Lucille Quanbeck, Donna Van Houten

Sponsorships available

Help us share the good news of Jesus Christ beyond our sanctuary into peoples' homes. Please consider sponsoring a radio broadcast (\$155), television broadcast (\$1300), or closed captioning (\$150). To learn how you can be a Media Ministry sponsor to honor or remember a loved one, or celebrate a special life event, please call the church at (605) 336-3734. Additional open dates may be available.

April

April 5: Closed captioning sponsor needed. Radio and television full.

April 12: Radio, television and closed captioning are fully sponsored.

April 19: Closed captioning sponsor needed. Radio and Television full.

April 26: Radio and closed captioning sponsors needed. Television fully sponsored.

May

May 3: Closed captioning sponsor needed. Radio and television full.

May 10: Closed captioning sponsor needed. Radio and television full.

May 17: Closed captioning sponsor needed. Radio and television full.

May 24: Television on KSFY and Closed captioning sponsor needed. Radio is sponsored.

May 31: Radio, Television and Closed captioning sponsors needed.

Financial Update as of February 2020

Total Revenue, year-to-date
2020 Budget \$317,411
2020 Actual \$316,655
2019 Actual \$293,428

Total Expenses, year-to-date
2020 Budget \$373,970
2020 Actual \$364,383
2019 Actual \$367,362

YTD Net Profit/Loss -\$47,729

Contract For Deed Ideal . . \$193,648

HVAC System \$801,082

Worship Attendance 2,362

EVANGELISM AND OUTREACH MINISTRY



“Love your neighbor as yourself”

By Jeff Backer,
Associate Pastor of Evangelism & Outreach



I recently heard someone say that to use the term “social distancing” in this time of needing to be isolated from groups of people sends an incorrect message. They suggested that we need to understand that what is being asked is “physical distancing,” but encouraging people to remain social, for the sake of well-

being for their neighbor.

We have had a wide spectrum of people offering to volunteer and help others through this time, and we have had an increase in requests for help in some way. We as a congregation are blessed with many resources and ways we can help others, but I have found that there exists much confusion in how and where to find help.

One of the ways we can help one another is to remain social, meaning, take time to reach out to others; to break the oppression of isolation. When the first decision was made to stop gathering, we recognized that we had over 300 members in our congregation that cannot receive electronic communication, which means primarily email. Our staff has worked diligently to reach out to these people directly to communicate what is happening. We also recognized that we have a large population of members that may need more intentional interaction. A Phone Buddy program has been started here at First Lutheran to connect people needing some conversational interaction with those willing to take time to make phone calls. We utilize Lead Buddies willing to commit to calling someone three times each week just to check in and see how things are going. Some guided conversations and devotionals are being sent out as well to help facilitate some conversation. If you are someone that would be willing to be a Lead Buddy to make phone calls to others, or if you find yourself in need of receiving phone calls, please contact our Care and Health Coordinator, Jordan Stone at (605) 339-1983 x 237 or at jstone@flcsf.org and she will coordinate a connection.

We have also partnered with nearly 50 other Sioux Falls congregations, the 211 Helpline, to form the coronahelpsf.com website to help alleviate the burden of obtaining some basic needs while we are fighting the coronavirus pandemic. This consortium has come

together to provide some basic needs; food, and necessities products (toilet paper, feminine hygiene products, diapers, laundry detergent). If you or someone you know is in need, you may call 2-1-1 or go to coronahelpsf.com and sign up to receive support. The items will be delivered to your home. There is also a need for volunteers to help both pack and deliver items. You can also call 2-1-1 to volunteer where hands are needed.

Fourteen of the Sioux Falls ELCA churches are equal ownership partners in Charis Ministries, a distribution ministry. Charis in the parent organization to the Food-



Recent Food To You distribution at Augustana Lutheran

To-You Mobile Food Pantry that is offered each Thursday evening at a predetermined site. Through this time of “physical distancing,” guests will receive a standardized sealed box of food. This is done by driving through a parking lot distribution 6-7 p.m. Locations of each week’s

distribution can be found at mobilefoodpantry.org. Charis is also the parent organization for Necessities for Neighbors. Distributions will continue in a limited capacity at two distribution sites. A distribution is hosted at Peace Lutheran Church (5509 W. 41st Street) on the first Sunday of the month from 3-4 p.m. First Lutheran will also continue our regular distribution in a limited capacity the third Tuesday of each month from 6-7 p.m. If you or someone you know is in need, please give the church a call and we will do what we can to help.

Through the scriptures, we are told to love one another as ourselves. A part of this is keeping yourself safe and healthy as well. The reality is that if the world just stopped in place for 14-16 days, this whole thing would be finished. But this is not in our nature. And so, I am encouraged by the words of St. Paul in 1 Thessalonians, chapter 5, “May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.” May we not only look out for one another in our physical distance, but may we also encourage one another in faith and hope. I miss seeing you all.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

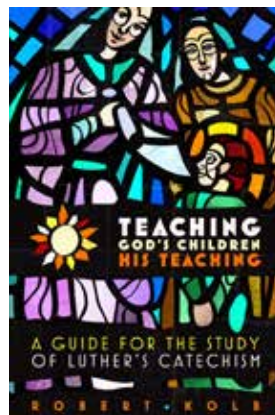
Thanks be to God. AMEN

Pr. Jeff

Basics and Beyond

Catechism class reviewing the basics of faith

- Were you raised in another denomination tradition and wondered what Lutheran’s believe?
- Do you have questions about what it means to worship Jesus Christ through the Lutheran lens?
- Maybe you just want a “tune up” since your catechism days?



Join Pastor Jeff for four Thursdays, April 23 through May 14, 6:30-8 p.m., as we discuss Luther’s Small Catechism and the elements of the Lutheran Confession. We will be using the book “Teaching God’s Children His Teaching” by Robert Kolb. This book and a Small Catechism are available for purchase through the church. The cost is \$20. Due to the access restriction at FLC, you may call the church with a credit card or mail a check and we will mail out your books.

Special Offering: St. Dysmas Ministry and Family Connections

By Jason Schramm, Evangelism & Outreach Board member

Greetings, my name is Jason Schramm, and together with my wife (Suzy) and boys (Elijah, 10th grade; and Benjamin, 6th grade), we’ve been members at First Lutheran Church for about five years. With boys active in confirmation from the start, we decided to jump in and get involved in the ministry of the church as well. My wife served for four years as a confirmation shepherd and has been on the Youth & Family Board for nearly two years. She was recently named the chair of Y&F. I have been serving on the Evangelism & Outreach Board for a bit under a year. Prior to joining the board, I had a passion for prison ministry and regularly worshiped with the men in our prison system. I was pleased to learn of FLC’s ministry at the penitentiary and am excited to tell you all about this month’s special offering envelope that will go to two local prison missions: St. Dysmas and Family Connections.

St. Dysmas

In 1989, in response to a need to provide worship, ministry, and fellowship to those in prison at the South Dakota State Penitentiary in



St. Dysmas
hope beyond bars

Sioux Falls and the Mike Durfee State Prison in Springfield, St. Dysmas was born. The name St. Dysmas comes from the name of the thief believed to be hung on the cross next to Jesus. This man asked Christ to be remembered. The St. Dysmas ministry strives to minister to those incarcerated who also feel lost, forgotten, or abandoned. Pastor Wayne Gallipo currently serves as pastor and development coordinator for this ministry. First Lutheran members regularly worship with the incarcerated men at the State Penitentiary. We will worship with St. Dysmas again on Thursday, May 7, and Thursday, September 10, 6-7:45 p.m. If you would like to attend either of these worship services with us, security paperwork must be submitted at least two weeks in advance. Paperwork packets are available on the St. Dysmas website (get the link at flcsf.org/outreach) and at the Information Desk here at FLC. To learn more about St. Dysmas, visit stdysmas.com. For questions about this ministry, please contact me at jsschramm@sio.midco.net or Pastor Jeff at jbacker@flcsf.org.

Family Connection

To help meet the needs of people visiting loved ones in prison, Family Connection was



established in 1996. Family Connection strives to strengthen the bond between family members separated by incarceration and provides support to those visiting the South Dakota Penitentiary. Family Connection provides housing and meals for these family members through their hospitality houses. Two hospitality houses currently function in Sioux Falls. In addition, Family Connection provides support to children of incarcerated parents and facilitates visitation between family members and their incarcerated loved ones. To learn more about Family Connection, visit sdfamilyconnection.org.

Please consider financial support of these important ministries by using your special offering envelope. You may also donate by using the yellow envelope found in the pew pockets. Please write “Prison Ministries” on the memo line of a check made out to First Lutheran Church, or visit flcsf.org/give to donate online. Unless otherwise indicated, your donation will be divided equally between St. Dysmas and Family Connection. Please keep the work done by St. Dysmas and Family Connection in your prayers, and thank you for your support!

Special offering envelopes are included with your regular offering envelopes. If you do not have one, please use the yellow envelope in the pew, bring your donation to the Information Desk at church, or visit flcsf.org/give to donate online.

Non Profit
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Madison, SD

First Word
First Lutheran Church
327 S Dakota Ave
Sioux Falls SD 57104

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED