



# First Word

75 Years of News for the First Lutheran Church Community

## Art Pressed into the Service of Christ's Church

By John Christopherson, Senior Pastor



At all worship services on the weekend of February 13-14, our family of First Lutheran Church celebrated the unveiling of one set of our beautiful new paraments and processional banners. The services also included a brief litany of consecration.

Some of you might still be wondering: "What are paraments?" Simply stated: paraments are the liturgical hangings on and around the altar, as well as the colored cloths that hang from the pulpit and lectern, including the ecclesiastical vestments/stoles worn by the pastors. Their various colors reflect the different Seasons of the Church Year.

It was quite serendipitous that the Gospel text assigned for that particular weekend was from Mark 9:2-9, referred to in our Christian tradition as "Transfiguration Sunday." That is, according to St. Mark's account, Jesus is transfigured on a mountain top as "his garments became glistening, intensely white, as no fuller on earth could bleach them" (Mark 9:3; *RSV*). This stunning imagery reflects the glory of God that is to be found in Jesus, "the beloved Son," to whom God calls Jesus' disciples and us to listen (Mark 9:7). And so it is, that the paraments and processional banner for Transfiguration Sunday are white in color. You may have noticed that on the following Sunday, as we've now moved into the Season of Lent, the paraments changed to the color purple—reflecting a spirit of contrition or repentance.

The world-class artisan work that has been sewn into these beautiful paraments is sign and symbol of the Church Year that keeps our Christian walk focused on the life and ministry of Jesus. Most of us were not around when the plate glass windows of First Lutheran's sanctuary were transformed by the present-day stained glass, which must have been amazing to behold. However, we are the blessed beneficiaries of our forebears' vision for ways in which to press art into the service of and glory to God in our life of worship. May it be so also among us, as we perhaps might hear—if we listen closely—to the stained glass windows applauding these new artisan partners, that also serve to lift our spirits in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.

"God's Word is present, not only when one speaks and understands [though this is certainly at the heart of our Lutheran Confessions]. For God's Word is also present when something in God's creation [participates in, but also points beyond itself, to God's glory] in effective symbols. Verbum [Word] is more than oratio [speech]. And sadly, Protestantism has forgotten that to a great degree. Verbum, as word of revelation can be in everything in which the Spirit of God expresses itself, even in the silent symbols of art." (Paul Tillich; *Kirche und Kultur, aus: Sammlung Gemeinverständlicher Vorträge, Tübingen 1924, Verlag S.C. B. Mohr. My translation with emphasis added.*)

j.r. christopherson  
Senior Pastor

## The Parament Story

By Cami Jacobsen, Diane Atchison, Cathy Christopherson, Marilyn Van Demark

The story of our new paraments began in a Worship and Music Board meeting in February 2018. The idea being discussed was whether First Lutheran should consider commissioning a new set of white paraments for the 100th Anniversary celebration coming up in two years. The beloved Hardanger white set was starting to show its age, with fraying and yellowing at the neckline of the stoles as well as snags, holes, and stains on the other pieces.

The Board formed a committee to investigate and make recommendations. This committee included Diane Atchison, Cathy Christopherson, Marilyn Van Demark, Shirley Barlow, and Cami Jacobsen. After looking over the white set and taking into consideration their historical value to the congregation, the committee recommended that we restore this beautiful, significant set. This meant we needed to disassemble, repair, clean, and reconstruct each piece. Restoration work began in the spring and continued into the summer and early fall. These were reintroduced back into use in October 2018. It soon became apparent that the careful restoration was not completely successful. The fabric of the paraments was simply breaking down thanks to their constant use over the decades.

In early 2019, the Board decided to again explore commissioning a special parament set for the 100th Anniversary. We decided to make the design timeless instead of specific to the anniversary.

After much consideration, we decided that Ecclesiastical Sewing in Baxter, Minnesota, had the talent, skill, and technical resources to create paraments that met the unique needs of our sanctuary.

During this time, the parament committee also looked over the condition of other parts of the chancel, including the needlepoint kneelers, chairs, and benches. We repaired and restored many of these historical pieces in our chancel.

After an inventory of all the banners and paraments used during worship throughout the church year, it was concluded that all the paraments needed replacing. Thanks to decades of use, many of the current paraments were faded, fraying, and unable to be restored. The former paraments that are still in good condition will be converted to use in the chapel.

Work soon began on the design of this new collection. The collection includes a set for each of the church seasons—blue for Advent; purple for Lent; green for the time after Epiphany and Pentecost; red for Reformation and Pentecost; and white for Christmas, Easter, Epiphany and other festivals and commemorations. The pastors spent numerous hours meeting with us, and after much thoughtful discussion, liturgical symbols were carefully chosen for each piece of the paraments. After many revisions, these liturgical designs were finally ready. Ecclesiastical Sewing breathed life into the beautiful designs and symbols we see today.

After years of planning and council approval, the sewing began in earnest in late 2020. Ecclesiastical Sewing began to order the components, fabrics, threads, etc. that were needed to start production.



Pictured left-right: Cami Jacobsen, Shirley Barlow, Carrie Roberts, Owner of Ecclesiastical Sewing; Diane Atchison, Cathy Christopherson, and Marilyn Van Demark.

When COVID hit in March 2020, everything came to a stop. The shutting down of businesses temporarily slowed down Ecclesiastical Sewing's ability to order and receive some of the fabrics and threads necessary to create the various banners and seasonal paraments. Eventually, they procured all the needed materials.

Throughout the spring, summer, and fall of last year, each piece of our collection was lovingly and skillfully stitched. Slowly and carefully, the artisans made each of the paraments, and the collection started to come together.

Because we wanted to be surprised, Ecclesiastical Sewing did not send pictures of the pieces as they were being made or when they were finished. Even though they have many gorgeous photos of their work online, they were careful to not include our paraments in these photos, lest the surprise be spoiled.

Meanwhile, down in our church's woodshop, our carpenters were hard at work building sturdy wooden racks to hold every piece of the parament collection in a way that would keep them safe and preserve them through the years. They soon skillfully completed the task of building nine racks that would soon hold the new paraments. We owe them a debt of gratitude for the many hours they put into building.

Finally, on sunny January 13, the paraments arrived at our church. Many members of the church staff, the Board of Worship and Music, and the parament committee all came to unwrap and receive the finished product. It can easily be said these paraments awed each person who saw them that day.



The pastors introduced and dedicated the white set to our congregation on Transfiguration Sunday, February 14. Future First Word articles will provide more of the details, symbolism, and history behind each piece. We hope and pray that First Lutheran Church will enjoy and cherish these paraments for decades to come.



# Joyful, Generous Giving

By Lars Olson, Executive Pastor



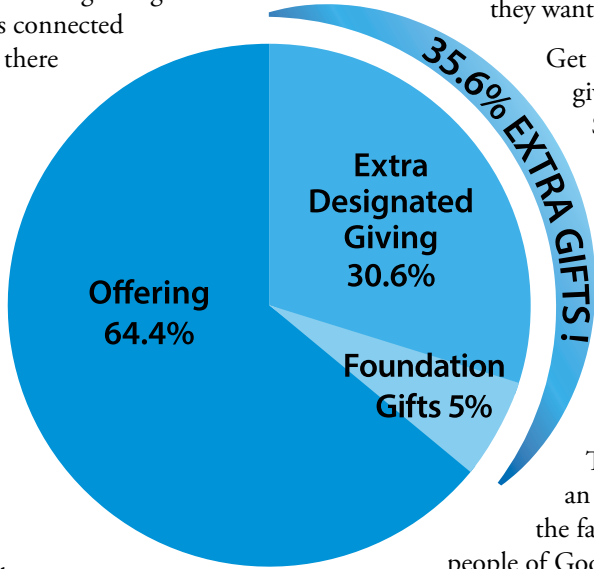
“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.” Galatians 5:22-23

Measuring generosity is like stealing a toy from a baby—it’s just not right. Generosity isn’t meant to be weighed and counted, but rather we know it is a gift of the Spirit. It’s a fruit of faith, something that grows naturally, organically like branches connected to the vine, Jesus Christ. And yet, there is a deep desire for people to keep track of how their giving to their congregation is being used for the missions and ministries that we have pledged to support with prayer and resources.

Last year was a difficult year in many respects, but the generous financial gifts through the people of First Lutheran kept the congregation in a very good position. At a couple points, there was real fear that we would have to make cuts to be financially responsible, but those fears never became reality. In addition, as we began to plan ministry for 2021, there was worry that our pledged income would take a hit, but again it didn’t! The faithful generosity of so many across our

congregation was clearly evident through one of the most uncertain times of our lives.

So, we can take a couple minutes to examine the generosity that has been shown with confidence that this fruit has been grown through faith, not under compulsion and not with a hint of fear mongering. Instead, take a look at the charts below, and notice the percentage of our total giving that went to things beyond normal operating. These are gifts that are beyond our yearly budget—that faithful, generous people gave specifically to ministries that they want to see thrive.



Get this—the total extra giving this year was \$750,471.75. That is amazing! And it doesn’t include gifts to the FLC Foundation of another \$121,207.09. My point is simply this: 35.6% of the gifts received were given beyond the yearly operating budget. That amazing number is an incredible testament to the faithful generosity of the people of God. There is no accurate way to measure generosity as it is a matter of faith and the heart, but it is important to tell the story of how the Holy Spirit is bearing fruit among us.

Thanks be to God for the joy of giving!

## Join us for Family Scripture First

Family Scripture First is continuing with In Person and Virtual Options. Each week Valerie Pherson and the teacher/pastor of the week record a video for the virtual class of what we will be learning in person. Families sign up for either option so we can deliver Scripture First Kits each month and be prepared for families that are ready to come to the church. Sign up available at [flcsf.org/youth](http://flcsf.org/youth)

Pictured below is Valerie recording a session of virtual Scripture First and some images from a recent in-person class with Youth Minister, Elias Johnson-Youngquist and Pastor John Christopherson leading the group.



# EASTER GARDEN 2021

### Order Deadline—Monday, March 15

The congregation is invited to help decorate the chancel on Easter Sunday, honoring and remembering loved ones, and giving to the Glory of God, while providing caring Christian ministry.

**Your donation of \$15 or more** will help fund the Garden of Lilies for Easter morning worship services. Proceeds received beyond the cost of the Easter Garden will go to Evangelism and Outreach Ministry support for children’s outreach.

**Order and pay online at [flcsf.org/lilies](http://flcsf.org/lilies)** or pick up a form at church and turn it in along with your check made payable to First Lutheran Church. Completed forms will not be accepted without payment enclosed. **Lily orders with payment received by Monday, March 15**, will be recognized in the Easter Sunday bulletins.

## Lowell Project Update Book Vending Machine Arrives!

On February 18, Pastor Jeff Backer headed to Lowell Elementary to attend the unveiling of the new Bookworm Vending Machine. Lowell fifth-grader and First Lutheran member, Garrett Kucker, demonstrated the how the vending machine works.



Thank you to all who supported the fundraising to make this engaging opportunity for the students at Lowell Elementary possible.

## FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN



### Church on the Street Easter

Every other year, Church on the Street (COTS) asks the women of First Lutheran to help with their Easter celebration. This year of course, the celebration is looking different due to COVID-19; COTS is planning to give an Easter basket in a bag. In order to fill all of the bags, we are asking the congregation to help supply the needed items.

We have enough plastic eggs but are looking for candy to fill the eggs. We also need grass to put on the bottom of the bags so it feels a little more like an Easter "basket." Needed items include:

- Applesauce cups
- Mandarin oranges cups
- Granola bars
- Capri Sun pouches
- Curling ribbon (to help decorate the bags)
- Candy
- Easter grass
- Small children's toys
- \$5 gift cards to McDonald's, Subway, or Hardee's

Purchased items may be dropped off at the church, or you may shop from the Amazon wish list, available at [flcsf.org/now](https://flcsf.org/now). Financial donations may also be dropped off at the church; please write COTS Easter in the memo line of your check. Let us rejoice and be joyful in helping the members of Church on the Street celebrate Easter.

## Lutheran World Relief Personal Care Kits

By Jean Hoff, FLCW President



Would you be willing to sacrifice something during Lent to help those in need?

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) needs the help of First

Lutheran members during Lent. LWR is looking for Personal Care Kits as their warehouses are empty. These kits provide the necessary hygiene products that help our brothers and sisters in the world to fight against COVID-19 and try to maintain their health.



LWR stated "When families flee for their safety, soap and towels rarely make the cut for what they can carry. Arriving in a refugee camp or other place of safety, they are scared, vulnerable, and dirty from the travel. The items in the Personal Care Kit provide much needed, self-care, critical germ-fighting, and the chance to regain dignity amidst situations of fear and uncertainty."

Each Personal Care Kit consists of:

- Bath towel (LWR suggests darker colors)
- Two full-size bars of soap (any brand - in its original package)
- Toenail clipper
- Comb (no picks or fine-toothed combs)
- Toothbrush (in its original packaging)

For me, Lent is a time to sacrifice, to give something up in gratitude for our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ, giving his life on the cross for each of us. This year, would it not be great to help others by sacrificing a cup of coffee to buy a towel...maybe give up something you enjoy and use that money to buy items for the Personal Care Kits.

**Purchase locally or shop our Amazon Wish List**

Purchased items can be dropped off at the church, or you may shop the Amazon wish list, available at [flcsf.org/now](https://flcsf.org/now). The kit items will be collected during Lent with the kits assembled after Easter.

Thank you for your participation and having a heart like Jesus, serving others.

## CARE AND HEALTH MINISTRY



### Grieving with Grace, March 6

In March, Grieving with Grace will focus on Chapter 3 of "Understanding Your Grief," by Dr. Alan Wolfelt, entitled "Embrace the Uniqueness of Your Grief." The group will meet in person in the Gathering Room beginning at 9:30 a.m. for coffee and conversation and begin our session at 10:00 a.m. For anyone who would prefer to attend the session via Zoom, that will be available as well. The group session will last from 10 to 11:15 a.m. Pastor John Christopherson will be facilitating our conversation/sharing/listening together.

If you do not have the book, please call Donna Jahr, at (605) 336-3734, to reserve a copy.

The Zoom meeting number is 881 5271 9453. No password is required.



### Grieving with Grace Group

#### Devotion February 6, 2021

By Rosaaen Olson



For our devotions today I will read from Paul's letter to the Roman's, chapter 8, verses 38 and 39.

"And I am convinced that nothing can separate us from

God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow, not even the power of hell can separate us from God's love." NLT

Well, here we are gathered in a focus group meeting called Grieving with Grace. None of us really wanted a membership in this group, but here we are.

I am grieving the death of my lifetime husband of 60 years, Gary. The intimacy of a long marriage is gone. The proverbial empty chair is obvious. I still do not like to eat alone at the kitchen table. The queen sized bed has only me in it. I have no one to laugh with, discuss events with, or decide where we should enjoy a meal out. In plain words, life is lonely. I am trying to work through my grief and not walk around it.

Gary and I both shared a love of music. Now I am hoping that this love of music will help me to heal. I listen to recordings of albums we used to enjoy. Listening to favorite albums has been made much easier these days. One of my newest gadgets is Spotify®, a gift from Lars and Chanda for Christmas. I had never heard of it, but now I can find any music I desire by simply typing it in. Unbelievable! "The Eddie Duchin Story" original movie soundtrack was a favorite of ours

and now I am able to listen and bring back wonderful memories. I could give countless examples, but each in their own way helps me a little. I also have found comfort in the words of hymns. For example, Gary and I were both active in our respective Luther



League meetings. The gospel hymn "Living For Jesus" was sung at almost every meeting if I remember correctly. The singing of the refrain brings out beautiful harmonizations. Maybe you remember the words: "Living for Jesus, a life that is true, striving to please Him in all that I do." Another hymn I find comfort in these days is "What a Friend We Have In Jesus." The words were written by Joseph Scriven to his mother back in Ireland while he was living in Canada. He never expected the words to be read by anyone except his mother. "What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear. What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer." Thank you Jesus that those words came to light for all of us to ponder. Then there is a Lenten hymn I love very much. It is "As the Sun with Longer Journey." I discovered it in the hymn book called "With One Voice" Gary bought for me. The words for it are written by Carl Schalk, prolific hymn writer who just passed away a month ago. The words are beautiful, but so is the lilting melody. Yet, another gem!

There has been research done regarding the benefits of music. A noted neurologist Dr. Oliver Sacks, says "Music brings back the feeling of life when nothing else can." He also said that "music imprints itself in the brain deeper than any other human experience."

There is an old Chinese proverb: "the man who removed mountains began by carrying away small stones." Now each of us have to start picking up the stones, the pieces of our lives, rebuild our lives and invest in life again. One stone at a time. One note at a time.

Let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for your tender loving care and promise that nothing can ever separate us from Your love. Help us to remember, as the hymns remind us, to "take it to the Lord in prayer" and to Live for Jesus a life that is true, striving to please Him in all that we do. And Finally, now as we approach the Lenten season we thank you Lord for the seasonal reality of the words "As the Sun with Longer Journey melts the winters snow and ice, may it bring our hearts to life."

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



## Lent 2021 Worship

### This We Believe: Reflections on The Apostles' Creed

— Visit [flcsf.org/lent](https://flcsf.org/lent) —

All services will be live streamed on our YouTube channel at [youtube.com/flcsf](https://youtube.com/flcsf).

Apostles' Creed study podcast episodes continue with new releases on March 7 and March 21.

Listen on the FLC website or wherever you listen to podcasts.

### Holy Week Services

#### March 28 – Palm Sunday

- Worship In-person and Livestream
- Saturday, 5 p.m.; Sunday, 9 and 11 a.m.
- Broadcast on KSFY at 11 a.m.

Preacher: Pastor Jeff Backer



#### April 1 – Maundy Thursday – 7 p.m.

- Worship with Communion In-person and Livestream
- Broadcast on KSFY at 3 p.m. (Fifth grade First Communion)

Preacher: Pastor Lars Olson

#### • Drive-thru Communion

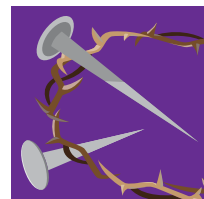
12:30-1:30 p.m. and 4:30-5:30 p.m.



#### April 2 – Good Friday – 7 p.m.

- In-person and Livestream
- Broadcast on KSFY at 3 p.m.

Preacher: Dr. John Christopherson



#### April 3 – Easter Vigil – 5 p.m.

- Worship with Communion In-person and Livestream

Preacher: Pastor Lars Olson



#### April 4 – Easter Sunday

- Worship at 7, 9, and 11 a.m.
- Broadcast on KSFY at 11 a.m.

Preacher: Bishop Constanze Hagmaier



### Midweek services continue on Wednesdays

#### March 3 – Worship 6:30 p.m.

Lent II: *I Believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord*

Preacher: Pastor Lars Olson

#### March 10 – Worship 6:30 p.m.

Lent III topic: *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*

Preacher: Pastor Dave Johnson

#### March 17 – Worship 6:30 p.m.

Lent IV: *I Believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints*

Preacher: Dr. Steven Paulson

#### March 24 – Worship 6:30 p.m.

Lent V: *I Believe in the Forgiveness of Sins, the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life Everlasting*

Preacher: Dr. John Christopherson

## Parament Dedication

By Pastor Lars Olson

The weekend of Transfiguration Sunday proved to be a wonderful day to dedicate the new First Lutheran paraments. The extreme cold weather did not dampen the beauty of the white and gold processional banner, wall banners, or altar scarves which displayed, in a small way, the bright brilliant white of Jesus on the mountain with Peter, James, and John as told in the gospel of Mark, chapter 9.



The dedication litany also picked up on the Transfiguration story. After the disciples encounter Moses and Elijah along with Jesus and attempt to build dwellings in order to stay there, the voice of God speaks from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, the beloved. Listen to him!" and suddenly they see only Jesus. The dedication made it clear that these beautiful paraments serve a similar purpose. As they mark the church year and decorate the sanctuary, they remind us to look beyond the majesty and glory of the fabric and careful craftsmanship in order to hear the word of only Jesus.

Left: Pastor Lars delivers the sermon. Above: Pastor John, Parament Committee member Cami Jacobsen, Worship Board member Mary Ryrholm, and Congregation President Martin Oyos, dedicate the new paraments during worship on February 14. Right: Christopher Bierstedt plays handbells during the service. Photos by Gene Smith

The parament design, creation, and delivery are all behind us now, but the ongoing work will continue. New procedures and teams are begin created to care for these paraments. There is plenty to learn to keep them in pristine condition for years to come. And as soon as Transfiguration Sunday was over, the team began the process of putting up the purple for Lent. Soon the red set will be used during Holy Week. This labor of love is a blessing to our worship and the entire First Lutheran Congregation.





## High School Youth Group

By Marnie Dahle Backer, Youth and Family Director



High School youth have been meeting in person for Youth Group for most of the last year. Thanks to some fantastic summer and fall weather, we were able to meet outside from June to October. Our parking lot was the youth room, worship spot, gym, bonfire pit, and more! And once the

weather shifted, we moved the group into the Gym/Reformation Hall—plenty of room to social distance but still be together. The youth have adapted well to wearing masks and keeping a respectful distance from each other. They even managed to don some gloves and help us prep the Halloween treat bags for our friends at Lowell Elementary School.

We asked some of the high school youth their thoughts on a few things, here are some of their responses:

What have you liked/appreciated about being able to meet in person?

- Socializing with my friends. –Jack Reilly
- Snacks and being with people.–Oskar Hein
- It's really nice to have one on one conversations with the youth leaders. –Lexi Hopp
- The ability to interact with friends in person. –Jan Smith
- Actually seeing my friends, snack time, doing bells, seeing Finn and Oskar's cars. –Isaac Williams



Stump the Pastor (the FLC pastors join us at Youth Group to attempt to answer all the hard questions of faith the youth have) is coming soon – what's a question about faith/religion you have?

- Why do we say we believe in a “holy catholic church”?
- If Jesus is the only Son of the Father, how are we all children of God?
- Is God above gender? People say that God is, but in the Bible it is typically referred to as “He”.
- What does God think about me?
- Why haven't we really seen God's work like Jesus after Jesus' death?

What's your favorite thing to do at Youth Group and why?

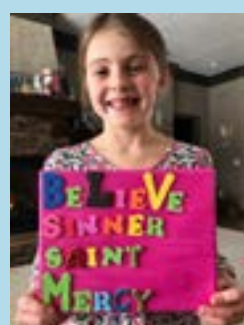
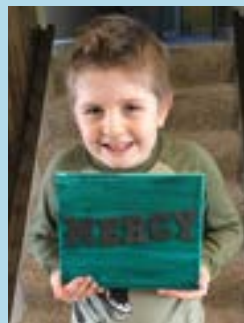
- Seeing my friends because I feel like I have a special connection with my church friends that I don't have with all my school friends. –Alice Masters
- Small group time because I love the discussions. I also love playing games and snacks. –Linnea Nesheim
- Seeing people because it makes me think people care. –Raigan Johnson
- Playing the games and small group talks, they are fun and interesting. –Ella Ready

## Milestone Minute



### Kindergarten Ten Commandments

Milestones happen In Person & Virtually, here Pastor Lars teaches some basics on the Ten Commandments. We decorated a bucket filled with sticks for each commandment, made a “cootie catcher” and blessed one another! Everyone in the family helped!



### 2nd Grade Confession & Forgiveness

Our 2nd graders learned about confessing our sins and receiving God's forgiveness. We are all simultaneously sinners and saints. Have mercy on us! Top to bottom pics are: Athena Callahan, Owen Zeeb, Devin Kruger and Peyton Beach.



## Capital Campaign Update

By Jean Hoff, Campaign Coordinator



Another \$20,103 has been paid on the HVAC loan, bringing our remaining debt to \$444,055. This is good news!

A beginning date for the campaign to start visits again has not yet been determined. As the conversations take place about the renewing of campaign visits, you will be notified via First Word and the website to that start date.

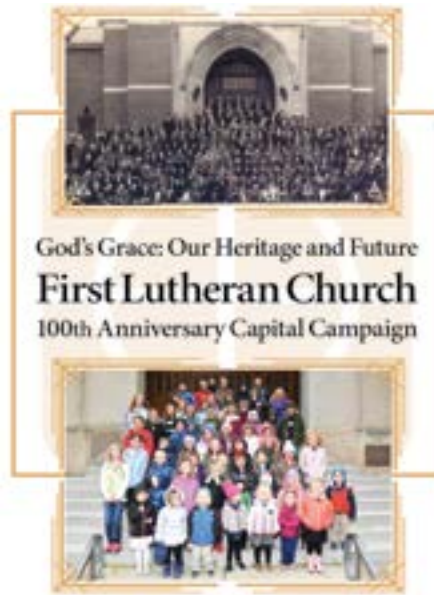
I thought this month would be a good time to remind the congregation of some projects that are still outstanding on the capital campaign. This month I am highlighting the needs in the Sanctuary and Christ the Victor Chapel. Next month, I will highlight the Atrium and Welcome Center as well as the building maintenance.

### Sanctuary Improvements—\$1,415,000

**Sound system**—The entire current sound systems (\$250,000) need to be replaced in the Sanctuary and Chapel. Our speakers and controls are outdated and obsolete. Due to dead spots inside the Sanctuary, sound echoes and is not heard evenly.

**Sanctuary ceiling**—The Sanctuary ceiling (\$650,000) needs to be replaced. The current ceiling tiles are degrading due to age and condensation between the ceiling and roof. This is a concern for safety, and it affects the Sanctuary sound quality.

**Sanctuary wall repair**—The Sanctuary walls (\$265,000) are cracking, and though some interior wall repairs have been done every few years, a longer-lasting repair is suggested. Artistic painting (\$250,000) is also included in the capital campaign.



## Council Highlights

January 21, 2021

If there is an item that you as a church member wish to add to an upcoming Council meeting agenda, please contact Ginger Miller, Director of Administration, at 339-1983 ext. 236, or gmiller@flcsf.org. Meetings are held the fourth Thursday of each month. First Lutheran Church members are welcome to visit meetings.

- President Oyos expressed gratitude to the outgoing Council members for their service: Colleen Kokenge, Michael Paulson, Birgit Peterson, Lenae Schwartz and Kathy Stelzer.
- Treasurer Eide reported the year finished strong and in the black and December pledges were above the five-year average. He expressed that FLC is blessed to have such a supportive congregation.
- The third payment to the Luther House of Study/ Paulson Account was made.
- The Foundation distribution in 2021 was \$424,581.
- Pastor John reported that the new paraments were received and will be unveiled in worship on Sunday, February 14.
- The Education & Discipleship Board has been working diligently on a Lenten devotional and podcasts. The theme for 2021 is the Apostles' Creed. Pastor John expressed thanks to Mike and Lindsey Olson Gray, Andrea Van Essen and Ryan Hoffman for their work on these projects for Lent.
- Pastor Lars reported that reopening has been difficult, however groups are beginning to meet in the building. He stated, we have been learning a lot about virtual ministry throughout this transition.
- Pastor Jeff reported that the pastors received their COVID vaccinations. He thanked Colleen Kokenge for serving on the E&O Board for over seven years.
- The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 31 and will be live streamed.



### Births:

December 23 Connor David Staats, son of Jesse Staats and Shannon Larson

### Deaths:

January 8 Don Linnemeyer  
 January 13 Karen Braaten  
 January 13 Gloria Schlechter  
 January 16 Paula Woods  
 January 26 Richard Wold

Please contact the church office, (605) 336-3734, if there is a change in address, phone number, or living situation for you or a family member.

## 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

*All worship services are in the Sanctuary*

**Sat. 5 PM** Traditional Service

**Sun. 8 AM** Radio - rebroadcast of the previous week's service on KELO-FM (101.9)

**Sun. 9 AM** Traditional Service  
Watch live [youtube.com/flcsf](https://www.youtube.com/flcsf)

**Sun. 11 AM** Contemporary Service  
Watch live on YouTube

**Sun. 11 AM** Traditional broadcast on KSFY Sioux Falls, KPRY Pierre, and KABY Aberdeen

### Find us on social media:

[youtube.com/flcsf](https://www.youtube.com/flcsf)

[facebook.com/flcsf](https://www.facebook.com/flcsf)

[@flcsf](https://www.instagram.com/flcsf)

## 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 First Lutheran editorial staff reserves the right to edit submissions.

**Newsletter submissions are due the first business day of each month.**

Please submit articles or questions regarding First Word to Communications Director, Jodi Hoyt, at [jhoyt@flcsf.org](mailto:jhoyt@flcsf.org). Reader feedback is always welcome.

First Word is available online to read or download by the first of every month at [flcsf.org/firstword](https://flcsf.org/firstword).

## FINANCIAL SERVICES



### Gifts and Memorials

#### Gifts to the First Lutheran Church Foundation in memory of:

**Severin (John) Drobny:** Dorothy Grevlos, Don & Joyce Helberg

#### Gifts to Care and Health Ministry in memory of:

**Karen Braaten:** Lyle & Jean Eidsness  
**Paula Wood:** Robert & Marilyn Van Demark Jr

#### Gifts to Church on the Street in honor of:

**Rebel Hurd's Ordination:** Stanley and Norma Schmidt

#### Gifts to Media Ministry in memory of:

**Dorothy Austad:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Marlys Balk:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Rhoda Benjamin:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Janyce Boetcher:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Lois Boyce:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Karen Braaten:** Ruth Dunicliff, Peter

& Marilyn Hegg, Jean Hoff, Mary Ann Hohman, Milton Mutch, Don & Florence Toft

**Kathrine Clark:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Darlene Colwill:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Severin (John) Drobny:** Joe & Janet Barron, James & Cynthia Buss, Shirley Drobny, Darla Roggow, Don & Florence Toft

**Sharon Eck:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Eleanor Emmel:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Barbara Entringer:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Gladys Halstenson:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Esther Hansen:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Jake Hofer:** Terry Olson

**Norma Hofer:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Madeline Houghton:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Janell James:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Betty Johnson:** First Lutheran Church Women, Arlene Hoek

**Leona Brose Johnson:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Evelyn Lorenz:** First Lutheran Church Women, Burdette & Cathy Posey

**Tommy Kay Mueller:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Ione Pereboom:** Joanna Comen, First Lutheran Church Women

**Donna Ross:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Arlene Schulenburg:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Julianne Simko:** First Lutheran Church Women

**Paula Wood:** Betty Gednalske, Kathy Stelzer

#### Gifts to Music Ministry in memory of:

**Karen Braaten:** John Hegg

#### Gifts to the Quilters in memory of:

**Betty Johnson:** Lou Ann Paulson

#### Gifts to Youth and Family Ministry in memory of:

**Karen Braaten:** Betty Pfeifle

### Financial Update as of January 2020

#### Total Revenue, year-to-date

2020 Budget ..... \$182,615  
 2020 Actual ..... \$195,468  
 2019 Actual ..... \$148,384

#### Total Expenses, year-to-date

2020 Budget ..... \$186,282  
 2020 Actual ..... \$157,482  
 2019 Actual ..... \$202,548

**YTD Net Profit/Loss** ..... \$37,986

**Contract For Deed, Ideal** ..... \$132,225

**HVAC System** ..... \$444,055

**Worship Attendance** ..... 809



### Thrivent Choice Dollars

Thrivent Choice Dollars are used for a variety of events at First Lutheran such as the 100 year anniversary as well as outreach ministries. Please remember to designate First Lutheran Church if you have Thrivent Choice Dollars. When designated to First Lutheran, these dollars support all ministries of the church. If you have dollars available, you must make an annual request for them to be distributed. The last date to apply for 2020 Thrivent Choice Dollars is March 31, 2021. Please contact Pr. Jeff Backer, [jbacker@flcsf.org](mailto:jbacker@flcsf.org) or Ginger Miller, [gmiller@flcsf.org](mailto:gmiller@flcsf.org), or call Ginger at (605) 339-1983 ext. 236.

## MEDIA MINISTRY



### 2021 Sponsors Needed

Media Ministry at First Lutheran relies on the generosity of sponsors. You can donate or learn about sponsoring a broadcast at [flcsf.org/media-ministry](http://flcsf.org/media-ministry) or call (605) 336-3734.

- KELO Radio broadcast (\$155)
- KSFY telecast (\$1350)
- Closed captioning (\$150)
- YouTube live stream (\$75)

**March 7:** Radio and YouTube sponsors are needed.

**March 14:** Closed captioning and YouTube sponsors are needed.

**March 21:** Television and YouTube sponsors are needed.

**March 28:** Television and YouTube sponsors are needed.

**April 4:** All sponsorships are fully funded.

**April 11:** YouTube sponsor needed.

**April 18:** Closed captioning and YouTube sponsors are needed.

**April 25:** Radio, closed captioning, and YouTube sponsors are needed.

*There are many sponsor opportunities open in the 2021 Media Ministry schedule. Call now to get the closest date for your memorial or event celebration.*

### Thank you January Media Sponsors

**Jan 3:** Radio was sponsored in memory of Dick Matson and Margaret and Martin Sommervold by their family. Closed captioning was sponsored by Barbara Matson for the blessing of Cliff and my children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

**Jan 10:** Radio was given in memory of Samantha Kramer, made possible by earnings from a gift by family and friends to the First Lutheran Church Foundation. Closed captioning on KSFY is sponsored in memory of William Bentzinger Sr., Harold Spitznagel, and Wallace Steele, through earnings of a gift to the First Lutheran Church Foundation, by Spitznagel, Inc. of Sioux Falls.

**Jan 17:** Radio was sponsored in memory of Betty Johnson by Nancy Okland, Ron and Pat Nearman, Rick and Pat Nearman, and Roger and Deb Nearman. Betty's birthday would have been January 11. Television was sponsored by Janet Lyso in

thanksgiving for her baptism, which was 96 years ago on January 11. Closed captioning was sponsored in memory of William Bentzinger Sr., Harold Spitznagel, and Wallace Steele, through earnings of a gift to the First Lutheran Church Foundation, by Spitznagel, Inc. of Sioux Falls. Live stream on YouTube was sponsored by Cameron and Mary Dyvig in honor of their parents.

**Jan. 24:** Radio, television, closed captioning and the YouTube live stream were sponsored in thanksgiving and praise from Peter and Marilyn Hegg, Kristen and Joe Zueger and family, and Paul and Ronnette Hegg and family.

**Jan. 31:** Radio was given in memory of Leo Roti, whose birthday would have been January 11, by Alta Roti. Television was given in memory of Jim Berg, who would have celebrated his birthday on January 31, by his wife, Elaine, and family.

## CHURCH COUNCIL

#### Officers/Executive Committee as nominated

Martin Oyos ..... President  
 Michael Kedik ..... Vice President  
 Randy Eide ..... Treasurer  
 Suzie Hernes ..... Secretary  
 John Christopherson ..... Senior Pastor  
 Jaci Aberson ..... Member-at-Large  
 Lori Wilbur ..... Member-at-Large

#### Council Representatives

Care & Health ..... Barney Brandenburg  
 Education & Discipleship ..... Lindsey Olson Gray  
 Evangelism & Outreach ..... Leslee Barness  
 Finance, Admin. & Property ..... Lyle Eidsness  
 FLC Women ..... Jean Hoff  
 Foundation ..... Somer Anderson  
 Stewardship & Giving ..... Mason Van Essen  
 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  
 (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

#### Administration

(236) Ginger Miller . . . . . Director  
 (211) Jody Bymers . . . . . Finance Administrator  
 (202) Donna Jahr . . . . . Secretary to the Pastors  
 (201) Kristy Zuraff . . . . . Receptionist  
 (252) Bev Bentzinger\* . . . . . Admin. Assistant

#### Care and Health Ministries

(202) Cheryl Satterlee\* . . . Wedding Coordinator

#### Media Ministry

(231) Jodi Hoyt . . . . . Director  
 (213) Susan Bell\* . . . . . Coordinator  
 Kathy Hein\* . . . . . Broadcast Director  
 Jon Martin\* . . . . . Broadcast Director  
 David Palmer\* . . . . . Broadcast Director  
 Hons Oakland\* . . . . . Broadcast Director  
 Tanner Wangsness\* . . . . . Broadcast Director

#### Facilities

(201) Kent Wilson . . . . . Facility Manager  
 Rick East . . . . . Custodian  
 Jeff Hartnett . . . . . Custodian

#### Worship and Music Ministries

(260) Zachary Brockhoff . . . Director/Organist,  
 FLYGHT 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  
 (238) Valerie Pherson . . . . . Children's Minister  
 (228) Mark Nassen\* . . . . . Coordinator  
 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

EVANGELISM AND OUTREACH MINISTRY

Go, therefore, and make disciples...

By Jeff Backer, Associate Pastor, Evangelism & Outreach



Over the last few years, the emphasis of the Evangelism & Outreach Board has been to move from primarily a financial partnership entity of First Lutheran Church to more of an engagement and involvement focus.

Nearly six years ago, the strategic initiatives that were laid out in the First and Foremost process as the congregational voice were to move in a direction of engagement and involvement. It has taken time to put some of those things in place, but looking back, I can appreciate where we are today versus then.

In the Evangelism & Outreach area, we took to task developing programmatic ministry that is congregation driven. The four areas identified are:

- Own the downtown
• Invest time and resources in specific downtown needs
• Outreach at First Lutheran
• Seeking the lost

We have looked to evaluate and re-purpose our intentions based on what we have seen come about over the last year especially. It shouldn't surprise you that looking back on 2020 gives us a picture that is entirely different...or is it?

Every ministry area had to take a good, hard look last year as to how to continue to function knowing that in-person attendance was not possible for the most part, or at least extremely limited. As a staff, we were challenged to make things as accessible as we could while maintaining a quality of work that exemplifies what FLC is known for.

Some things worked, and some are still quite challenging. I would say that the ministry partnerships we have formed in recent years showed the strength of FLC's collaborative spirit. Programmatic outreach like Food to You, Necessities for Neighbors, and Nightwatch changed, but were still an integral part of our ability to care for others

during the early stages of the pandemic. We shifted a little to partner with CoronaHelp Sioux Falls (85 congregations from Sioux Falls) to bring a collaborative single-stream approach to these ministry needs, and I would say it went marvelously. It showed the strength of our working together rather than in silos. I am convinced this would not have happened before First and Foremost.

As I have said before, our partnership with Lowell Elementary is a thriving partnership in many ways. With the involvement of many volunteers, we have established a strong presence in the Lowell community. Again, this school year has looked different. We have not been able to be so "hands-on," so we have looked for creative ways to stay engaged there. This year, we as a congregation sponsored classrooms so teachers were supported in many ways. This included the music teachers as well. I have been told MANY times the impact this has made on staff and in allowing children to have experiences in ways they did not previously see.

These are just a couple highlights. The reality is, we have built some amazing opportunities from the First and Foremost planning process, and there is still much work to do. But even more, we are called to spread the good news of Jesus Christ, and we are building relationships that allow us to do that. Each of us has a responsibility to that. It is not just the job of a pastor or the staff. Each of us has been called through the great commission (Matthew 28:19), which is to go out into the world and make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.



Children from the Multicultural Center delivered the scarves they have made to share with the community through Church on the Street.

The question is: In what ways is the Holy Spirit calling you to be involved or engaged?

March Special Offering: Emmaus Road Foundation

By Jason Schramm, Evangelism & Outreach Board Member



During the month of March, special offering gifts support Emmaus Road Foundation (formerly known as LIZWAN). This organization is a scholarship ministry started by Pastor Nate Lizarazo and Pastor Barbara Wangsness, who served at First Lutheran Church until 2014.

Emmaus Road Foundation operates with the mission that "education is the passport to a better life." Evangelism is also a big part of their mission with the goal of the National Ministry of Evangelism to share God's love through our evangelical witness, make visible the process of internal transformation caused by the Gospel in all human beings, and help others in becoming aware of the deep meaning and value of their lives in the eyes of Christ and his resurrection. They fulfill all of their missions by providing scholarships for students in Colombia, South America, to attend formal education ranging from elementary to the university level—including formal technical education.



July 2019 Colombia mission trip participants. Left to right: Pastor Nate Lizarazo, Lindsey Kokenge, Colleen Kokenge, Brooke Kokenge, Brenda Plimpton, Pastor Jeff, Karol Baer, Larry Olson, Jennifer Hoff, Liz Thiner, and Marcia Huffman

Additionally, Emmaus Road Foundation provides opportunities for Christian Leadership development and people-to-people mission relationships through Casa Emmaus (Hospitality House). At Casa Emmaus, national and international groups (including groups from First Lutheran Church) experience transforming hospitality, mutual mission reflection, and a shared mission commitment. All gifts and prayers have an incredible impact to this mission!

Please consider making a gift to support Emmaus Road Foundation by using a special offering envelope or by writing "Emmaus Road Foundation Support" on the memo line of a check made out to First Lutheran Church. Thank you for your support! Bring your donation to the Information Desk at church, or visit flcsf.org/give to make an online donation.

For more information about the Emmaus Road Foundation, please visit www.ielco.org/en and choose the Emmaus Road Foundation tab.

The students who have and are receiving scholarships through Emmaus Road Foundation are grateful for your gifts and prayers. You may read more from several students on the IELCO, Iglesia Evangélica Luterana de Colombia (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia) website. Thank you for your support!

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

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First Word
FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
327 S DAKOTA AVE
SIOUX FALLS SD 57104-6308
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED