

the first messenger



OPENING DOORS TO LIFE IN CHRIST

May 2026 Calander

Watch for Friday email and bulletins for the latest updates. Full calendar on our website.

Worship together

Sundays 9:30am

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Begins May 24

Sunday @ 8:30am inside & 10:30am outside

May 3

Confirmation Sunday
New Member Welcome
Last Day of Kid's Fellowship

May 5

The Chosen Bible Study @ 1pm

May 6

Last night of Oasis
New Member Wednesday
Annual Finance Forum @ 6:30pm

May 9

Women's Spring Brunch @ 9am

May 12

Rebekah Circle @ 9am at Lincoln Park

May 14

HS FREE Lunch @ 11:30am
Ruth Circle @ 1:30pm

May 17

Annual Meeting @ 10:35am

May 25

Memorial Day | Office Closed

May 26

Vision Council @ 5:30pm

Weekly

Quilters | Tuesdays @ 8:30am

Men's Bible Study | Wed @ 6:30am
Worship Tm Rehearsal | Wed @ 5pm
Jubilate Choir practice |
Wed @ 7:15pm

Women's Bible Study | Thurs @ 8am

Family Meeting

by Tom Neuenfeldt, Vision Council President

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
(Hebrews 10:23-25)

It's time to have a family meeting. Some of us, when we hear those words automatically think of some calamity that has occurred that will change the family dynamics. However, in this case, our church family is coming together for our annual meeting to celebrate another year of ministry together and encourage one another for the coming year.

On Sunday, **May 17 at 10:30 AM** we will gather together to review this past year, celebrate successes, and make plans for the future.

At first glance, the agenda may seem not very exciting or worthy of our time, but below the surface of these agenda items are the bones and structure that supports our faith community.

The Approval of Minutes from our last meeting reminds us of where we were last time we met.

The Reports from our Pastors gives us a glimpse of the steadfast leadership we have enjoyed and how they see us growing in our faith.

The Treasurer's Report shows us how personal stewardship turned into corporate action and how we reached out beyond our walls to help others.

We celebrate the lay leadership we have enjoyed over the past year and invite (elect) new leaders to step forward to carry on the vision and mission of First Lutheran Church.

Just like in a family, when we review and approve a Mission Budget we state our priorities for where we want our ministry to grow and prosper.

At this meeting we will also discuss and direct how to modify or remodel our facility to meet our growing needs.

It is truly an exciting time in the life and ministry of First Lutheran Church. Let us consider how we can encourage one another to grow in faith and relationship. It is a pleasure to be part of this faith family.

Let's not give up the habit of meeting together!

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Summer is almost here and our worship service times will be changing on **May 24 to 8:30 am indoors and 10:30am outdoors** on the lawn. If you are joining us outside, please bring a lawn chair or blanket.



BIBLICAL WISDOM FOR US ALL

By Pastor Joe Skogmo

Happy May, everyone!

We've got all sorts of exciting and crucial ministry events this month. We've got the Rite of Confirmation on May 3rd, a baptism on Mother's Day, an exciting Dream Big alternative design and building investment to consider and vote upon at our Annual Meeting on May 17th, and have our first outdoor service on Memorial Day weekend! There are so many life-giving and exciting ministry events this month as we close out the programmatic year. So much to highlight, so much for which to be grateful here at First Lutheran.

On top of all that, I want to take a moment to honor FLC's graduating seniors. These seniors were among my first confirmation classes here at FLC. Many of them have helped us as teachers for our Wednesday children's ministry programs. Some of these seniors went on summer trips with us from Tulsa to New Orleans. And these seniors also helped me jumpstart our high school lunches. This is all to say, these graduates have been a joy.

On that note, I want to share the draft of my sermon for our Senior Recognition Sunday. Some of you were here in worship or attended online, so this will be old news! In it I attempted to impart some biblical wisdom for our young people's next stages of life, and really, it's biblical wisdom that all of us could use on any given day. Without further ado:

Now, I don't normally like self-help styles of advice. They're often too simplistic or too certain, or too sappy or too vague.

But...in honor of you seniors I'm going to risk offering four biblically informed, Lutheran-heavy bits of wisdom to take with you.

#1 You Can be Certain about Uncertainty

You will be unsure about a lot. You will feel pressure to make the exact, right decisions. And here's a biblical bit of wisdom: try to accept that you'll rarely have clarity.

The Apostle Paul reminds us in First Corinthians that we experience life through a dim and cloudy fog (13:12). Uncertainty is inescapable.

One of the hardest things to accept in life is that it has no linear progression: your life will get better in some ways, and then worse in others; it will get clearer and more joyful, and then confusion and pain will return; it will get easier over here, and harder over there, and

then back, forth, up, and down and up again. Your life will be full of messiness.

And this isn't meant to be a pessimistic view on life, but an honest and freeing one. You're not doing something entirely wrong just because you're uncertain or things are up and down. The Bible reminds us that there is something strangely freeing about admitting that life is messy, that certainty almost never arrives, and accepting that is better than fighting it.

As a pastor, one of the most common inquiries I get from young adults is *How will I know when it's the right choice, or the right time??* You'll spend a lot of energy trying to get clarity you'll never fully have. The Lutheran philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, spent a lot of thought on this topic. He famously wrote in one of his journals that *the problem with life is that it's lived forward but only understood backward.*

So, when you feel that 'paralysis by analysis' at multiple points in your life, remember the biblical and Lutheran wisdom that you'll never have total clarity and certainty anyway; prepare best you can, and take the step, trusting that God is with you in it and beyond it (cf. Mt 28:20).

#2 You're Already Free, Already Worthy

The world will tell you that your worth is out there somewhere, waiting for you to achieve it. Whereas, the gospel of Jesus Christ says that your life is already worthy; you are already claimed; you are already lovable and loved. The life and death and resurrection of Jesus have proved and sealed that. Lean into that gospel promise when life rattles you: the Apostle Paul also writes in his letter to the Romans that *nothing* will ever be able to separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:38-39)).

#3 Don't Only Seek Your Own Happiness

Jesus has a very important and profound line for our lives. He said we must *lose our life to find it* (Lk 9:23-25). This is strange but beautiful. Jesus is saying that the more tightly you hold your life, the smaller it becomes; yet the more you give it away in love, in service, in relationship, in generosity, in attention to others, the more alive you become. Joy comes in service to others with all the talents God has given you (cf. Eph 2:8-10). Do not only build your life around your own happiness but build it also around love for others and all God has created. And when life gets down, hard, anxious, confusing, or dark – try checking in on someone, try giving to something, try an act of compassion and kindness. Try *losing your life to find it.*

#4 You are Not Alone

I know this is said a lot and talk is cheap, and, still, I beg you to remember you are not alone.

There will be days when God feels absent, when faith feels thin, when you feel untethered. Those days do not tell the whole truth about reality. No matter the day, you are held in something deeper than your ability to feel it. You are connected to all that God has created and all that God is. Inseparably, you are a part of God and community (cf. Rom 8:38-39; Mt 28:20; 1 Cor 12:12-14).

God is with you in God's Word and in the Sacraments – from your baptism to the Holy Supper. God is with in the air you breathe and in the spirit of nature that surrounds you (Gen 1). God is with you in prayer (Mt 7:7-8). God is with you in suffering (Isa 43:1-2). God is *with* you, in the Holy Spirit and in the Kingdom of God (cf. Lk 17:21). As it is written in 2nd Timothy today, "I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you...⁷ for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather a spirit of power and of love..." (cf. 1:6-7).

And God is with you in community – in us. We, First Lutheran, will be right here. Rooting for you. Praying

for you. Ready to be there for you in ways that we can. We'll be here if you're staying around town, and we'll be here if you're headed across the country. We'll be right here. We'll be here when you're back for Thanksgiving, or Christmas, or Easter, or Summers, or whenever. That could be me. That could be Olivia. That could be Pastor Matt. That could be the family that sat by you at worship. That could be your former Wednesday or Sunday School teacher, or small group leader. That could simply be the sound of the music and the feel of your favorite pew. Our baptismal promise is that we will continue to be right here for you.

Congratulations on your incredible achievement. Remember:

Life will be full of uncertainty. And that's okay.

You are already free and worthy.

Lose your life to find it.

God is with you. We are with you.

Godspeed, and Amen.
-Pastor Joe

--from: <https://philarchive.org/archive/BACICA> (Søren Kierkegaard, *Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks*, vol. 2, *Journals EE-KK*, ed. Niels Jørgen Cappelørn et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 167 (JJ 167; SKS 18, 194).).

FOUNDATION SENIOR SCHLORSHIP AWARDS

This year, the First Lutheran Foundation is pleased to award 8 scholarships of \$1,000 each, to support students in their educational journeys.



Carter Ask



Brock Burhans



Alonna Moench



Kyleigh Okeson



Carter Whitworth



Peyton Malecka



Mya Omberg

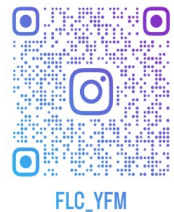


Emily Peterson

Youth & Family

Olivia Sauer, Youth & Family Ministry Director | 920-860-4655

email: olivia@firstlutheranchurch.com | Typically in office M-Th 8:30am-4pm



FLC_YFM

Wednesday Service Projects

Service Projects are held on select Wednesdays throughout the school year. Each grade level is given an opportunity to learn about a nonprofit organization in our community, given a biblical reflection, and learn ways to help those in need. Then they participate in a group project to benefit the featured organization.

Last month, we concluded our 2025-26 Elementary Service Projects with messy fun with our 1st graders!

They learned about caring for our planet with a special Earth Day service project. Sandy Gunderson, retired Becker County Environmental Services staff, taught the class all about the importance of reducing, reusing, and recycling, and led them through the process of creating their own recycled paper. Students even added small flower and lettuce seeds to their paper, making them plantable!



Confirmation Sunday Sunday, May 3

This service will take place May 3, in the sanctuary at 12pm, with photos and light refreshments to follow. Please consider attending this special service to congratulate our 2026 confirmands on the work and dedication they put into their faith journey.

High School FREE Lunch May 14 and 28 @ 11:30

FLC high school students who are able to leave campus during lunch are invited to join Pr. Joe and Pr. Matthew at **Pizza Ranch** for a free lunch!

Last day of YFM programming for 25/26 is
Sunday, May 3 and Wednesday, May 6.

High School Summer Trip | July 19-23

This summer, we will be taking current 9th-12th graders to Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center in Finland, MN. While there, we will explore how our environment and nature connect and intertwine with our faith. Cost is \$300
*Scholarships and/financial help are available; reach out to Olivia-YFM Dir.

"At Wolf Ridge, nearly all of our activities and classes take place outdoors, embracing an experiential learning model that engages participants through direct interaction with the natural world. We cover a wide range of subjects, including environmental science, cultural history, contemporary environmental issues, personal growth, team building, and outdoor recreation. Wolf Ridge is more than just a learning destination; it's a place where curiosity is sparked, and minds are opened to the joy and wonder of nature." (Wolf Ridge Website - <https://wolf-ridge.org/>)

First Lutheran Foundation

The First Lutheran Church Foundation of Detroit Lakes serves the mission of the church through financial giving exclusively for charitable, religious, literary, or educational purposes. Our April quarterly meeting approved funding requests for :

- **FLC Vacation Bible School,**
- a matching grant to complete **furnishing and equipping of the Library meeting room,**
- and **Teach Haiti.**
- Eight FLC graduating senior scholarships.

To learn more about the First Lutheran Foundation scan the QR code or contact a Foundation Member.



HIGH SCHOOL FREE LUNCHES

Free food, getting away from school for a few hours, and **amazing jokes by Pastor Matt.** Those are just a few things that await our High School students when they gather at Pizza Ranch each month. Only two more pizza lunches remain, May 14 & May 28. Have a great summer!

Annual Finance Forum

Come join our Director of Operations, Paul Haarstick, as he walks through the finances in the 2026 Annual Report.

Got a super niche question about church finance? Perfect

Only a vague idea of how our accounting works but kind of curious? Also perfect.

Proud of a very cool Excel spreadsheet and looking for an audience? This is absolutely your moment.

Come hang out, ask questions, and talk all things finance with Paul on **Wednesday, May 6 in the Fellowship Hall** or **Sunday, May 10 in the Library.**

See you there — Don't have FOMO.



ITEMS COLLECTED ALL YEAR

- We Care Receipts (*from Central Market*)
- Children's Christmas Store (*gifts, boxes, etc.*)
- Blessing Closet Supplies (*clothing, blankets, toiletries, etc.*)

Bring your donations to the church office. Thanks!



Meals for Many!

By Sara Peterson | Community Relations Director

Over the past few months our Agape ministry has seen a rise in requests for food/frozen meals. In Feb-April we have **distributed over 200 frozen meals** ~~ Yes, that is a lot of meals!

There is no way we could distribute this volume of meals without a dedicated team of people volunteering their time & talent on an ongoing basis with us; **Cathrine Weisenburger** & her team make meals as needed, our **Wednesday Oasis kitchen crew** pack up & freeze leftovers for us (if any!), **Lisa Webber** prepares meals & desserts, **Denise Gaard** makes up sandwiches to freeze (for our folks with no access to a kitchen/microwave), and last but not least our very own **Sonny Thomas** is always in the kitchen helping out!

Despite all of that food, in early April we still found ourselves short on meals. With 3 day lead time, Sonny planned an impromptu meal making day and to our amazement, **twelve people showed up** to help prep, cook & assemble over **50 frozen meals that day!** **Thank you to ALL of our faithful kitchen volunteers, our hearts are full and now, so is our freezer!**

If you are bummed because you missed the freezer making meal day, don't worry, we plan to do it again! Watch the bulletin for more information on the next event coming in mid-May.

*Speaking of food, I also want to make mention that the **Becker Co. Food Panty** and the **Detroit Lakes Lions Club** provides us with shelf stable food packs. Thank you to these amazing organizations who help us, help those who may be homeless and do not have access to kitchens or ways to prepare or reheat food.*



Thank You

I recently had the opportunity to speak at the Detroit Lakes Lions Club April Meeting. I was able to share with them about the Agape Ministry, the impact it has on our community, and how amazing our FLC congregation is in its support of this ministry. Thanks Lions Club for hosting me.



Skall to Theology on Tap!

The last gathering at Bucks Mill Brewing was on April 30 with another full house and another lively discussion about God, faith and life. We look forward to gathering again next winter. Watch for start date this fall.

MEMORIALS

Thank you to those who gave in honor or memory of their family and friends.

AGAPE

In memory of Mary Lou Prechel
given by Betty Fischer

In memory of Dick Dahlin
given by Adrienne Buboltz

In memory of Dolly Cleveland
given by Patti Dahlin

BROADCAST

In memory of Dolly Cleveland
Given by Cliff & Jan Adkins

In memory of Dick Dahlin
Given by Patti Cummins

DREAM BIG

In memory of Gene & Marge Prechel
Given by Ardys Horner

In memory of Dolly Cleveland
Given by Ardys Horner, Curtis & Audrey Listul

In memory of Susan Herfindahl
Given by Pat Zurn

FOUNDATION

In memory of Dick Dahlin
Given by the Family of Dick Dahlin, Curtis Cleveland, Daniel & Christy Althoff, Constance Carlson, Connie Cleveland, David & Margaret Schiller

GENERAL

In memory of Dolly Cleveland
Given by Katrina Stuart

KITCHEN

In memory of Gene & Marge Prechel
Given by Jean & Wayne Benson

In memory of Dolly Cleveland
Given by Gloria Dahlen

MUSIC

In memory of Don Johnson
Given by Dean & JoLeen Eklund

YFM ACTIVITIES

In memory of Dolly Cleveland
Given by Dean & Sue Berg

UNDESIGNATED

In memory of Dick Dahlin
given by Friends & Family of Dick Dahlin, Mark & DeVonna DeShaw, Dennis & Karen Cleveland

In memory of Dolly Cleveland

Given by : Jonathan & Julie DeKrey, The White & Manlove Families, Milo & Margaret LeTourneau, William & Judy Strickland, John & Ardu Cleveland, Mary Schreiner Kurth, Dennis & Karen Cleveland, Jon Kohler, Allan & Mary Stoen, Deborah Flatau, Russell Miller & Kathleen Johnson, Nancy Edwards, Terry & Joyce Weeks, Herbert Cleveland, Donna H McDowell

Reminder: when giving memorials to the FLC Foundation or FLC Quilters, please make separate checks.

Noisy Offering Totals

March | to the Becker Co Food Pantry \$820.89

April | went to Lakes Area YES! Network

May | goes to Lutheran World Relief

March Financial Snapshot

YTD Actual Revenue: \$526,284.79

YTD Budget Revenue: \$553,983.00

Favorable/(Unfavorable) (\$27,698.21)

* *Unaudited*

Annual Meeting Notice

ATTENTION: For those without transportation and have difficulty navigating technology, but would still like to still participate in our Annual Meeting remotely (May 17th), please call our office by May 11th to inquire about assisting you with said access.

We cannot guarantee assistance or successful access since this will be both volunteer and technology dependent, but we are here to try to help.

Thank you!

Worthy Women

Contact: Gretchen Henrikson, WFLC Coordinating Council President

The Women of FLC invite you to join them for food, friends & fellowship!

Rebecca Circle | meets the 2nd Tuesday at 9:00am
Ruth Circle | meets the 2nd Thursday at 1:30pm.
Circles study the lessons in the Gather Magazine, enjoy treats, and work on service projects

FLC Quilters | meets every Tuesday 8:30am in the recreation room. Newbies always welcome!

Women's Bible Study | Meets every Thursday at 8am in the church library

The 38th NWMN Synod Women's Convention | will be in Crookston on Sept. 18-19, 2026.

Our **National Triennial Convention** (every 3 years) | will be in Des Moines, IA July 16-17-18, 2026. The theme is **I AM Worthy!**



Spring Brunch

Sat, May 9 | 9:30am–12:30pm

All FLC women are invited ~ bring your kids ~ bring a friend! A freewill offering will be taken to benefit the Boys & Girls Club of DL. Bring an item for the hygiene kits.

Door prizes! Food! Fun!

Hostess

By Patti Cummings

What you decide on will be done, and light will shine on your ways; When people are brought low and you say, 'Lift them up!' then he will save the downcast. He will deliver even one who is not innocent, who will be delivered through the cleanness of your hands." Job 22:28-30

Oaklyn was reveling in helping host a couple we had invited to dinner. She loved setting the table and playing "restaurant" until the meal was ready for the table. Our guests loved the food, but she was quiet and ate slowly – informing me it was not one of her favorites.

We played games afterward, ending with four hands of Crazy Eights. The wife of the couple came in first, Oaklyn and I traded places with second and third and the husband came in last for the first three hands. On the last hand, the wife came in first, I came in second, Oaklyn and the husband battled it out for third and fourth. Oaklyn's competitive spirit flared and she became very intent on "winning." Finally, she did win, and the husband again took fourth.

I glanced at Oaklyn, expecting to see bright eyes declaring the thrill of victory. Instead, she looked totally bereft. After a few minutes staring at the cards, she picked up the husband's cards and announced, "I'm going to help you win too." She played out his hand by itself, each time expressing hope that she would be able to play all his cards, thereby "winning" for him. She was very deflated when she reached the end of the draw pile without clearing his hand

I love that even in her competitive mode, she wants others to do their best also. I also recognize when Grandma is on a losing stretch, Oaklyn, at times, also let me "win." God wants us to lift others up always. He wants us to do and be our best and encourage others in the same way.

"Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Matthew 20:26-28

In soccer, it elevates the whole team when we "lift up" others, even shaking hands with our competitors at the end, declaring "Good Game" whether we win or lose. In life, lifting others brings us closer to living in community as Jesus taught us.

Vacation Bible School

June 22nd-25th



MOUNTAIN MOVERS



Open to kids
completing
K-5th

Free to all
campers!

Please note:

The next edition of the
First Messenger will be
a June/July edition,
which will be mailed
out mid June.

Staff

Lead Pastor:

Pastor Joe Skogmo

Associate Pastor:

Pastor Matthew Rossler

Director of Operations:

Paul Haarstick

Community Relations Director:

Sara Peterson

Youth & Family Ministry

Director: Olivia Sauer

Office & Volunteer Coordinator:

Sonny Thomas

Worship Music Coordinator:

Karen Bimberg

Adult Choir Director:

Kathy Larson

Bell Choir Director:

Carla Hansen

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President-Elect: Kari Stattelman

Secretary: Beth Tinjum

Treasurer: Kevin Shipley

DeAnne Udby, Jon Freeman,
Catharine Weisenburger, Jeff
Sliper, Sue Quam, Ryan Bjorklund

Foundation Board

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President-Elect: Les Perry

Secretary: Patti Cummins

Treasurer: Susan Schaffer

Shar Arvig, Alex Hagedorn,
Pam Orth, LeAnn Mouw,
Chad Carlblom

Worship with us!

**KDLM-1340 AM and
93.1 FM radio
Sundays at 10:00 AM.**

On line:

firstlutheranchurch.com

**Saturdays at 9:00 AM
on Arvig Cable channel 14.**



First Lutheran Church

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OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday
8:30am — 4:00pm
Friday
8:30am — 12:00pm



First
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