



First Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

April Handclasp Newsletter

From Pastor Sami



Last month the Church Council, as well as some who recently went off the Church Council, met to create a strategic plan for First Lutheran for 2023. Thank you so much to *all* Council Members who came and Sylvester Heeler. I think it says a lot about the Church Council's dedication to First Lutheran. That everyone came and participated in the retreat. Especially when it started at 8:00 a.m.! Thank you.

A strategic plan is a document that helps an organization understand their current state, desired future state and how to go from one to the other. It's comparable to a ship and its crew. If the entire crew does not know where they are going or how they are getting there, the ship will never go anywhere. Thus, the Church Council met to pray, discuss, and decide where we are going in 2023 and how we are going to get there. We spent much time in prayer and reflection. We were led by the Holy Spirit to the following:

Our 2023 goal is to grow our congregation by:

1. Focusing our advertising and social media towards families with youth (grades 6-12) and focusing on building and growing our youth ministry.
2. Sharing our faith outside the walls of the church and inviting others.

Ways we will do this are:

Youth Ministry

1. Supporting Pastor Sami and the Youth Leaders in whatever way they need to continue to build our youth ministry.

Sharing Our Faith

1. Educating and teaching people how to speak about and share their faith.
2. We want to challenge First Lutheran to take ownership of Imagine Eleven and support it with time, skills and money. This is an exceptional way to promote our church and help it to grow. We challenge everyone to

attend at least 4 concerts this summer and help with running the event.

3. Random Acts of Kindness cards: First Lutheran is encouraged to go out into the community and do random acts of kindness leaving a card to let people know someone from First Lutheran Church did this act of kindness.
4. Museum Hill Neighborhood Association. We belong to this but have not used it in the past to help promote our church and invite people to worship with us. There are many new members, so this is a great opportunity.
5. Create a welcoming statement so those looking for a new church know we are truly welcoming to all people. For example, LGBTQ+, Sudanese, etc.
6. Support Pastor Sami and other leadership as changes continue to be implemented to support this Strategic Plan.
7. Brainstorming and implementing “next steps” for people worshipping online to be active in the church.

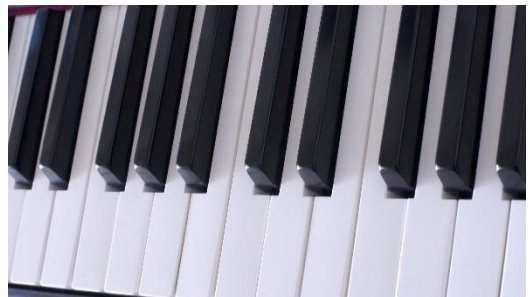
I will email to everyone in my semi-weekly updates a copy of the entire 2023 Strategic Plan which includes current trends in the Protestant denomination, the ELCA, and in First Lutheran Church. Based on those trends, our current mission and vision, the Church Council created the 2023 Strategic Plan. You can also pick up a copy in the church office or in the back of the sanctuary at worship. *Holy God, bless our Church Council and our strategic plan. Continue to send your Holy Spirit to guide us to be your church. Keep our attention always on you so we don't get distracted from the path you have put before us. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Worship and Music

Open Positions

Part-Time Accompanist

This is a salaried twelve-month position with salary paid monthly. Salary is commensurate with experience. Hours vary but are typically one hour for Praise Team rehearsal a week, Sunday mornings from 8:45-10:45 and randomly scheduled rehearsal time for any scheduled music offerings.



Worship Team

This Holy Week we will be partnering with First Christian Church. We will host Maundy Thursday (April 6, 7:00 p.m.) and First Christian will host Good Friday (April 7). Maundy Thursday is the worship experience when Jesus gives the Last Supper and washes the disciples feet. We will not do foot washing but will have a holy anointing. We will end the worship experience in silence with the stripping of the altar. Just as Jesus' life was stripped from him, we strip all ornaments from our altar leaving it lifeless.

We are excited to welcome Tenth Street Brass to our Easter worship. What a wonderful way to celebrate the resurrection!



Holy Week Schedule

Maundy Thursday:

First Lutheran, 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday:

First Christian, 7:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday

First Lutheran, 9:30 a.m.

Altar Guild

Just a reminder that there are no Altar Flowers during Lent.



Orders will be taken for Easter Lilies March 5, March 12, and March 19 before and after worship. The cost will be \$14/plant. No orders will be accepted after March 19.

In person orders and payment may be made through Nancy Lewis. Orders will also be taken online. Please be sure to mark all payments "Altar Flowers" so the payment will get to the Altar Guild which handles flower ordering. Be sure to put your dedication on the order form.

Spring Altar Flower donors are needed for April 30 and May 21, plus all of June.

Please sign on the Flower chart outside the sanctuary. If you have questions, contact Nancy Lewis or Janice Harmsen.

The \$50.00 charge for the two altar flower arrangements should be paid to Altar Guild Treasurer, Nancy Lewis.

If you have taken home flowers in vases provided by the church, be sure to return them when you are finished with them.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Game Night at First Lutheran

We played the card game “Poop” on your neighbor. We are supposed to love our neighbor, but not in this game! We also played our favorites, Sardines and Signs! We ended our night with antics.



March Youth Group Activity

March 19, 7:30 p.m.

Murder Mystery Dinner and Pizza Party!



Youth Mission Trip

July 9-15

We will be going to Camp Washington in Cincinnati, Ohio. Camp Washington and East Westwood are among the neighborhoods sharing the 45225 ZIP code. The data say the poverty rate in this area is nearly 59.4%, which makes it an area with one of the highest poverty rates in the country. In Camp Washington, there is no grocery store, rec center or health clinic. The area is 60% white with 60% industrial and 40% residential. This community is working to make progress. In 2021, Sidney Nation, executive director of Camp Washington Community Board said, "When you have poverty, it doesn't mean that there's gonna be crime and that it's a certain race. When people think poverty, they think negative, and we have just a lot of people that are in the workforce. We have community members that are getting involved, and they're actively engaging in community conversation with the city, with people running for office, and a lot of people in our community have positions where they can say things and do things and act as advocates for Camp Washington." One church who has been helping to bring progress and change to Camp Washington is Washington United Church of Christ. They have after-school tutoring, a free store, meals for kids and adults and a Summer Youth Program, which we will be involved. Monday

through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. we will be 'buddies' to the children for breakfast and lunch, daily worship, groups in creativity, Bible stories, and recreation. We will also go on field trips with the kids. In addition to working with children, we will help prepare and serve lunch open to all our neighbors, serve snacks and drinks at a homeless shelter, and do 'fix-up, clean-up' projects at the church and in the neighborhood. During our time, we will participate in a poverty education program to get a better understanding of those in need.

Friday we will have a "fun day" exploring Cincinnati. We will return home Saturday.

When I was a youth director in Saint Charles, MO, I took a group of 32 youth and adults on this mission trip. It is a wonderful mission and great opportunity to learn about poverty. I encourage all youth to attend, and friends are always welcome.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Youth Group Activities

April 16: Bowling

May ??: Retreat at God's Mountain

June: No Event

July 9-15: Mission Trip

Opportunities to Serve

Haven House: Fourth Tuesday

Sign up by contacting the church office
ficsj302@gmail.com or 816-232-8378.

3:00 p.m. Cooking

5:00 p.m. Serving

Council Updates

~Officers: Jim Pierce-President, Pam Farrell- Vice President, Cyndee Simpson-Treasurer, Brenda Bass-Secretary.

~A Parking Lot Committee will be created to give suggestions what to do about our parking lots.

~April 30 is a celebration of the ordained pastors in our congregation. There are FIVE!

~Brooke has asked for an increase in our advertising budget. She will submit a proposal and we will vote on it at our next meeting.

Christian Education Opportunities

Weekly:

Scripture Study with Pastor Sami meets Mondays from 1:00-2:00 p.m. in the upstairs classroom. We discuss the scriptures to be preached the upcoming Sunday.

Scripture Study with Pastor Sami also meets Wednesdays from 6:00-7:00 p.m. online only. **Zoom ID 845 6213 2526**

Thursday Morning Bible Study meets from 10:00-11:00 a.m. in the upstairs classroom.

Sunday Morning Bible Study meets from 10:30-11:30 a.m. in the Choir Room. We discuss the scriptures and sermon from worship.

Monthly:

Phoebe's Circle is a women's Bible study group that meets the third Thursday of the month from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the chapel.



Pictorial Directory

Pictorial Directories are ready! You can pick them up at church or we can email them out to you.

Monthly Activities

LINE DANCING CLASS

\$5 PER CLASS



MONDAYS 6:00-8:00 P.M.
IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

7:00 AM
THIRD
TUESDAY
AT LE PEEP

919 N
WOODBINE
RD



MONTHLY

POTLUCK

March 26, after worship

in the Fellowship Hall
Bring a dish to share



Online BIBLE STUDY

EVERY WED.
6:00-7:00 P.M.

Zoom Meeting ID
845 6213 2526





Anniversaries and Birthdays



Anniversaries

Toni and Robert Gunderson, 58 years, 03/07

Carol and Jim Roeber, 57 years, 03/19



Birthdays

Matthew Moth, 03/04

Molly Luthans, 03/05

Larry Reder, 03/05

Lori Amos, 03/06

Greg Bigham, 03/06

Janice Heier, 03/08

Brett Chladek, 03/12

Jennifer Bufkin, 03/13

Robby Offecker, 03/17

Todd Meier, 03/22

Kylie Officer, 03/22

Jack Pearl, 03/23

Nyadeng Moth, 03/25

Nancy Reder, 03/31

Bruce Taylor, 03/31



Prayers

Members:

Floreen Johnson Prayers for continued health and happiness.

Pamela Kirkpatrick-Norton and family, prayers for healing and continued strength to lean on God in difficult times.

Della Schiermeyer, prayers for healing and good health.

Dorothy Masteller, prayers of strength as she deals with her cancer.

Richard Palmer (husband of Debbie Ziph-Palmer and friend of Carol Wilson)

Verna Kirschner, prayers for comfort and peace.

Karen Young, healing after hip surgery.

Kay Howard, healing after issues from surgery.

Friends

Darin Hinnergardt (friend of Jeff Langdon),

Brenda Fanning (step-daughter of Dorothy Masteller),

Larry Kramer (Joy Winters' brother-in-

Robbi O'Connell & Randi DeRoin (Charlotte Chirila's granddaughters),

Rosa and Vivine Langdon

(granddaughters of Kris and Jeff Langdon),

Keira Wall (great-niece of Irene Wall)

Shawna Stucker (Howard and Janice Harmsen's niece)

Kevin and Becky Carlson (cousins to Kathy Wessler)

Friends continued:

Jason Starks (son of Ron Starks)

Loren Larkin (friend of Sharmyn Thompson),

Charles Frazer (Friend to Irene Wall)

Judy Black (friend of Laurel Goforth),

Janis Roorda (Jeff Langdon's friend),

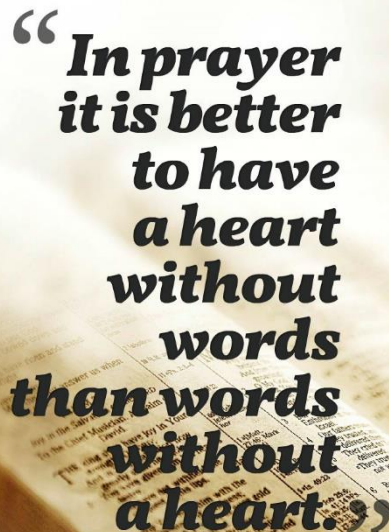
Victor Johnson (uncle of Kenny Ruff),

Kim Durbin (cousin of Kenny Ruff),

Nick Howard (Kay Howard's husband),

Richard Palmer (husband of Debbie

Ziph-Palmer and friend of Carol Wilson),



**“ In prayer
it is better
to have
a heart
without
words
than words
without
a heart.”**

Mahatma Gandhi

Date	Lector	Communion Assistant	Acolyte
March 5	Joyce Stroud	Kathy Wessler	Chase Olson
March 12	Brenda Bass	Jennifer Bufkin	Kendra Bufkin
March 19	Janice Harmsen	Donna Korell	Jordyn Jonas
March 26	Ann Newman	Marilyn Hunt	Stetson Rush

Ushers: Sylvester Heeler, Larry Reder, Ron Starks

Average Attendance	
In Person	69
Online	67
Offering Year-to-Date	
Income	\$34,767.19
Expense	\$35,436.22
Difference	-\$669.08



Date	Flower Schedule
March 5	Lent
March 12	Lent
March 19	Lent
March 26	Lent

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	1	2	3	4
			First Day of Women's 9:30am - Archive Team 6pm - Scripture Study	10am - Thursday Morning 1:30pm - Praise Team 6pm - Girl Scouts in	12pm - First Friday Lunch 4:30pm - Praise Team	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Worship is Live Streamed 9:30am - In Person 10:30am - Confirmation 10:45am - Bible Study 1pm - Sudanese Worship 7:30pm - Youth Group	1pm - Scripture Study 6pm - Line Dancing Group		9:30am - Archive Team 6pm - Scripture Study	10am - Altar Guild 10am - Thursday Morning 1:30pm - Praise Team 6pm - Girl Scouts in 6:30pm - Church Council	4:30pm - Praise Team	10am - Mean Girls Event
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Daylight Saving Time Worship is Live Streamed 9:30am - In Person 10:30am - Confirmation 10:45am - Bible Study 12pm - Girl Scout Sunday 1pm - Sudanese Worship 4pm - Girl Scouts 7:30pm - Youth Group	1pm - Scripture Study 6pm - Line Dancing Group		Articles Due 9:30am - Archive Team 6pm - Scripture Study	10am - Thursday Morning 1pm - Phoebe Circle 2:30pm - Praise Team 6pm - Girl Scouts in	St. Patrick's Day 4:30pm - Praise Team	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Worship is Live Streamed 9:30am - In Person 10:30am - Confirmation 10:45am - Bible Study 1pm - Sudanese Worship 7:30pm - Youth Group	1pm - Scripture Study 6pm - Line Dancing Group	7am - Men's Breakfast at	9:30am - Archive Team 6pm - Scripture Study	10am - Thursday Morning 1:30pm - Praise Team 6pm - Girl Scouts in	4:30pm - Praise Team	
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
Noisy Offering Worship is Live Streamed 9:30am - In Person 10:30am - Fellowship 1pm - Sudanese Worship 7:30pm - Youth Group	1pm - Scripture Study 6pm - Line Dancing Group	3pm - Haven House 5pm - Haven House	9:30am - Archive Team 6pm - Scripture Study	10am - Thursday Morning 1:30pm - Praise Team 6pm - Girl Scouts in	4:30pm - Praise Team	