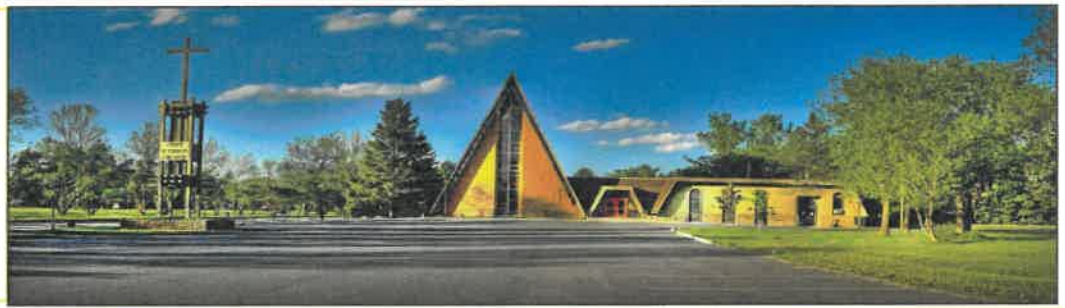


The Voice

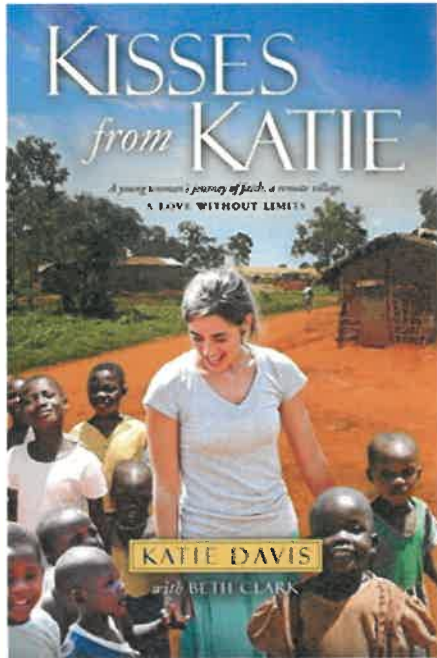
April 2022



A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

*A Congregation of the
Northeastern
Minnesota Synod, ELCA*

Good news from the Smart Team



**Book recommendation.
See page 9.**

The First Lutheran Smart Team, following preferred guidelines, has determined that wearing a mask in the church building will be optional.

If you are not vaccinated, or if you are ill, or if you are medically compromised in any way, it may still be a good idea to wear a mask, but at this time, the numbers are low enough that a mask is no longer mandatory. Please remain vigilant about social distancing.

As of April 3rd, members will

be returning to other conventional worship practices, including the passing of the offering plate and coming forward for communion.

Individual communion packets will still be available for those who may be uncomfortable or unable to come forward for communion.

Due to the changeable nature of this pandemic, the situation may shift again, but for now, we are hopeful and eager to move forward, especially for Holy Week and the Easter celebration.

Lift to be replaced, repaired

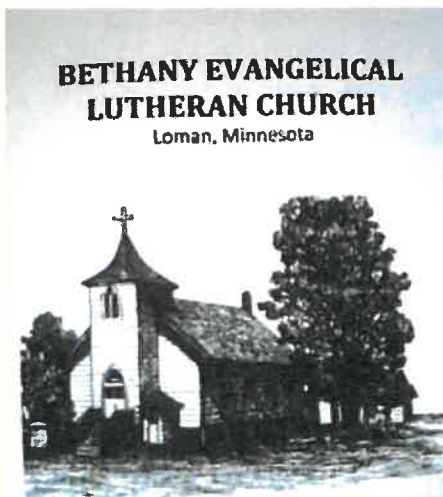
Many members of our congregation relied on the elevator to enable them to attend church functions. It has not been working quite right for a while. The church council has approved the replacement of certain aspects of the elevator.

Arrow Lift will replace the main elevator controller and travel cable. This includes removal of the current nonfunctional controls, installation of new main controller, travel cable, and selector system. They will replace the elevator cab and car operating panel, replace the motor/pump with a new hydraulic system. The new system will be hydraulic-rope driven.

What is reused? The hoistway doors and locking mechanisms. The hall call stations/calls replacement includes one-year limited labor warranty and 3 years limited parts warranty. The estimated lead time for materials is 8-12 weeks from date of approval. The estimated completion time is 8-16 weeks from date of approval.

The total cost to complete the project is \$40,180.00
Loyalty Customer Discount(-\$1,128.00)
New Grand Total:\$39,052.00

Please consider helping with the fundraising for this much-needed project.



**News from Bethany.
See page 6.**

From the Pastor's Desk

"To Be a Church Community"

When I consider the word "Church," automatically I am reminded of my childhood. It's a finger play I learned ...

"Here is the church, here is the steeple, open the doors and see all the people."



COVID-19 is still upon us. I am worried what this means for the Church. **Church has always been the people.** I am concerned how we are going to be a "Faith Community." We need to stay connected. We need active brothers and sisters in Christ living out their faith.

First Lutheran Church has a long history with excellent programs. However, we need to remember that programs are tools for ministry. Our goal in ministry has always been engaging people. **People are the most important!**

During this "Opening Up" of our congregation, I am asking you consider a few things:

1) I am asking you to STUDY. The Book of Acts is a marvelous place to begin. It tells of the early followers of Jesus Christ. It is the beginning stages of the early Christian Church.

2) I am asking for PRAYER. A faith community gathering for prayer, whether they are together or not, is a marvelous thing. No matter where you are, you can pray for our government, nation, COVID-19, health care workers, disasters, the afflicted, etc. There are many needs. A reminder that God's care and mercy through Jesus Christ is always helpful. When we pray the Lord's Prayer, what do we mean by "*Thy Kingdom Come*" and "*Thy Will Be Done*?" Do we trust that God will take care of His Kingdom? Do we trust in God's will being done in the world? Praying the Lord's Prayer is always appropriate.

3) I am asking for DISCERNMENT. Our mission statement can be said in summary: *Sharing God's Grace*. More than ever, at this particular time we need to be open to ideas. **We need to be a Christian Community in dialogue with one another.**

**Partner in Ministry,
Interim Pastor Paul J Erdal**



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

February 17, 2022

Present: Pastor Paul Erdal, Treasurer Brad Ettestad, Worship & Music Nancy McBride, Fellowship Linda Martin, Building & Grounds Lloyd Skogstad, Secretary Carol Bass

Absent: President Kathi Henrickson, Vice-President Hoa Sobczynski, Service/Outreach Brenda Bertilson and Discipleship Betty Henrickson

In the absence of President Henrickson, Treasurer Brad Ettestad conducted the meeting. Called to order at 5:00 PM.

Opening Devotional: "Getting Ready for Lent" Pastor referred to his handout and asked all to share Lenten memories. Devotional verse was Luke 4: 1 & 2. Pastor reviewed other items on handout including times of book study, and First Communion instruction. See Executive Council Meeting and handout for more detail.

Pastor's Report: The Smart Team needs to meet and perhaps consider new mask guidelines. Covid cases are dropping and decisions need to be made on protocols for upcoming Lenten and Holy Week services. Maundy Thursday is April 14th which will also be the day of "First Communion". For Ash Wednesday service, Pastor said depending on Covid counts he would either do the ashes as usual with marking of foreheads or can give individual packets to congregation for their use at home. Pastor has signed up for a required Continuing Education online course called "Power and Boundaries". A transition team handout listing duties and procedures for Transition Team was given.

Motion to accept the minutes of the last council meeting (Jan. 20, 2022).

Motion by: Carol Bass

Second by: Lloyd Skogstad

Carried

Motion to accept January Financial Statement:

Motion by Nancy McBride

Seconded by: Linda Martin

Carried

* Brad said January has been a low giving month so everyone should be aware of ways to cut costs. Nancy asked about a reimbursement item from Zion Lutheran. Brad said he believed it was for confirmation supplies but will check on it.

President's Report: Absent

Vice-President Report: Absent

Service/ Outreach: Brenda sent written report. There were six volunteers at Community Cafe in February. Meal numbers still high. One meal sent through Helping Hands. The Souper Sunday bin is overflowing! Thank you to all who contributed. Soup will be delivered to food shelf in March. Ashley Hall, executive director of the Falls Hunger Coalition will give a short talk about her program at the February 27th service. Valentines were prepped and mailed to shut-ins and also given out to worshippers after February 13th service. Next committee meeting will be Tuesday, March 1st at 5:15.

Discipleship: Nancy reported on behalf of discipleship. Ash Wednesday activity for after school kids will be bringing ashes to shut-ins. Need 3-4 adult volunteers to assist. Continue activity for Confirmation class to take communion to home bound

Fellowship: We would like to see more involvement with hosting coffee after church, If you are interested but feel you can't do it physically, give Linda a call. Arrangements can be made to pick up donuts, etc. and serve and you would still get credit for hosting. Linda is also currently organizing a pot-luck and getting a team together. Concerning soup suppers; thought was that 3 pots of soup would be enough. Nancy volunteered to make a pot on the 16th. Linda has someone to call who she thinks will provide bread. First soup supper is the Wednesday after Ash Wednesday.

Council (Continued on page 4)

Interim Pastor:
Rev. Paul J. Erdal

Office Hours:

Monday—Friday

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

218-283-2208

www.firstlutheranifalls.org
firstlutheranifalls@gmail.com

Council minutes continued from page 3

Building and Grounds: Lloyd reported his committee met but did not have quorum. His team will paint the doors and window frames. He is currently cleaning out the furnace room. The elevator is leaking fluid which has happened before. Looking for a quote for replacement. No company will repair the door because of age and unavailability of parts. Currently there is an out of order sign on elevator. It is working but concerns about door not opening. Someone who knows how to operate it should be on hand if it is used. There is a possibility of buying a short stair lift to help people to get up to the sanctuary floor.

Finance: No further report

Worship and Music: Conventional Lenten service used for Ash Wednesday with communion. Unsure at this time if communion at the rail will be offered. The following Wednesday services may be more informal perhaps with guitar for music. It is time to think of how we will conduct Holy Week and other upcoming services. Palms will be available for Palm Sunday and should be ordered.

Smart Team: Council felt team should meet weekly with the changing Covid situation. Currently has three members but would like several more. Nancy requested a replacement for her be found. Lloyd suggested a regular email from the team stating whether it is mask/no mask for that week would be helpful as council members are being asked about it. Brad suggested the team meet on Wednesdays to set protocol for following Sunday. He will call Kathi about this. Pastor would like input from council and smart team as to having communion at rail. Perhaps offered as option for those comfortable with it, taking precautions (gloved, hand sanitizers, mask). Those who are not comfortable can continue with packets. He would be willing to do this.

Old Business:

***Transition Team:** Suggestions were asked of names for Transition Team members. Team acts as a helper to the Call Committee. Several names were mentioned and will be asked.

* **Bethany Covenant:** Has been signed.

New Business:

***Synod assembly April 29th thru May1, 2022 at Craguns:** Pastor will be going and we can send two others. Suggestion of two candidates

* **Laurentian Conference March 13, 2022 in Cook.** Pastor will attend and suggested that the two who are going to the synod assembly could also go or participate on Zoom.

* **Council member terms:** Since the President is not here it will be tabled till next meeting.

* **Call Committee:** Waiting on the return of Brenda to set meeting date. Members do not need to be installed. Council should be at first meet which is to outline duties of committee.

* **Installation of new council members.** Will be during this Sunday's service after the sermon hymn. Members to come forward to be installed.

^ **Other Business:** Lloyd said he appreciated getting copies of the Executive Meeting as there is useful info there and would like it to continue.

Closing Devotion: All said the Lord's Prayer. Brad asked all to remember his mother in their thoughts and prayers as she faces surgery on Monday.

Next Executive Meeting: March 15, 2022 at 5:00 PM

Next Council Meeting: March 17, 2022 at 5:00 PM

Respectfully Submitted by: Carol Bass, Secretary

Greetings from FLC Council!

The positivity rate for COVID-19 infections is currently low. The church council agreed with recommendations from the smart team, so starting immediately, masks are optional in the church building. We continue to encourage practicing social distancing and, if you feel ill, please stay home. The smart team will continue to monitor trends with COVID-19.

More exciting news! Starting April 3rd, FLC will resume passing offering plates and providing communion either at the altar or by intinction. FLC choir will start exercising their vocal cords so the choir may sing on Easter Sunday!! Many of us are "squeaky" from not singing. Many positive changes going into spring. Thank you to every church member and guest for your support and understanding over the past two years.

God's peace, Kathi Henrickson

Women ^{of the} ELCA

FLW Minutes of March 8, 2022

Brenda called the meeting to order at 5 p.m. She read devotions based on Lamentations 3.

The Mission and Purpose statements were read.

Minutes of the November meeting were read and approved.

Correspondence was read and the treasurer's report was reviewed.

Items are still being collected for the refugee toiletry kits.

Frozen hot dishes and soups are in the Memorial Hall refrigerator for anyone who needs a helping hand with a hot meal.

The Spring Gathering is April 23rd at Zion

Lutheran in the Falls. Registration will be at 9:30 a.m. and lunch will be served. All women are welcome to attend.

The 2022 Summer Convention is June 6-8 at the Sugar Lake Lodge in Grand Rapids. A motion was made and seconded to pay for the full package for two women to attend. If interested, contact Brenda at 283-2144.

A motion was made and passed to give the church's general fund \$1,000.

The Christmas in July bazaar was discussed. More in-pu-t is needed before decisions can be made.

The next FLW meeting is April 12 at 5 p.m. Respectfully submitted,
Sandy Harju



Help the FLW compile refugee kits

Components include:
1 regular size bottle shampoo
1 regular size bottle conditioner
1 regular size bottle lotion
2 deodorants—men's or women's
1 regular size bar of soap
1 large pack of feminine

pads

Or

1 package of razors and regular can of shaving cream
1 regular size toothpaste and toothbrush
Comb
Please ensure these are not travel-sized, but regular-sized units.

Watch for it!!

A light lunch will be served following Palm Sunday worship. Please plan to attend!

Spring is here!!

A pie and perennial sale is in the works. Think of setting some things aside as you clean up your garden spaces.

Bits from Bethany

Quilters deliver a warm and welcome surprise



The Bethany Quilters surprised Bethany member Betty Steinbach and the residents of the Littlefork Care Center with new handmade quilts for their beds. Every resident at the care center received a new quilt that was sewn, and hand tied by the ladies.

The quilters have spent their Tuesdays in fellowship creating beautiful works of art to warm the hearts of those that receive them. If you are interested in quilting, are a seasoned quilter looking for something to do, or just want to take a beautiful drive on a Tuesday...the ladies are there from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.!

Arlysse Palm and Naomi Gingerich deliver quilts to the Littlefork Care Center.



Spring has sprung at Bethany

The Sunday School kids have been busy decorating our walkway into church with new artwork. Join us Sunday's at 8:30am to see what new art appears.



Upcoming Events at Bethany:

Maundy Wednesday Worship Service

~ April 13 @ 7p.m.

Easter Worship Service

~ April 17 @ 8:30 a.m.

Watch for an announcement regarding a Spring Quilt Show/Sale with a meal to be served!

Announcements

Community Café Volunteers

The Community Café is once again asking for volunteers. If you are able to volunteer one evening a month, please call the church office at 283-2208.

If you are in need of Community Cafe meals, call 285-7225 by 4 p.m. on Cafe day. Meals can be picked up between 5 and 6 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays at Backus Community Center.

Second Tuesday Bible Study

You are invited to a Bible study with Bette Simon at 11 a.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at her house. The Bible study is from the *Gather* magazine. If anyone wants to participate but doesn't have a subscription to *Gather*, there are a few extra copies at the church that people can pick up and use. For more information, please call the office at 283-2208.

Sunday Morning Bible Study

Sunday mornings at 9, join us for a casual Bible study in Memorial Hall. Bring your favorite Bible and take part in eye-opening discussions about some familiar, and not-so-familiar stories.

Holy Communion

Holy Communion available in a disposable container may be delivered by Interim Pastor Paul. Call the Church Office if you would like the disposable container containing the Bread and Wine delivered to your place of residence prior to Sunday worship services. Or if you have not participated in the Sacrament of Holy Communion in a while, please contact the church office or the Interim Pastor Paul. The pastor would be honored to bring and serve you Holy Communion.

Sunday Bulletins

Copies of Sunday Bulletins are available prior to Sunday Worship. These will always be available to you prior to our worship services. Especially with COVID-19 being a concern, we are willing to mail our bulletins to you. Call the church office before noon on Thursdays prior to Sunday's Worship Service.

Call Committee

The call committee will begin the process of looking for a pastor in the near future. At this time, the committee members are Jack Bartlett, Marc Glowack, Denny Martin, Laurie Lindberg, Dwayne Mannausau, and Harold Schumacher. There is a spot for an alternate on the committee to serve in the event that one of the initial members are unable to complete their time. If you are interested, please contact the church office.



First Lutheran Youth: What's Up?

Confirmation classes to resume at First following Easter

Confirmation students are asked to attend Lenten worship in lieu of classes through April 6th, prior to Palm Sunday.

Regular classes will resume following Easter. Only two classes are scheduled to finish out the spring, April 20 and 27. The participants are requested to continue attending worship and completing worship notes through August.

Confirmands are requested to participate in worship acting as aco-

lyte, crucifer, communion assistant, usher, or reader. This may be a family activity with parents and siblings taking part in the service, as well. If you have a particular Sunday during which you would like to participate, please contact the church office, or let your class instructor know.

Confirmation is important to help develop a meaningful faith life.

We are excited to be a part of this journey with our young people.



Gracie Froemke and Landon Basaraba serve as altar assistants. It's good to have the young people involved again.

Your gift will help people impacted by Ukrainian crisis

Lutheran Disaster Response is accompanying our partners in Ukraine, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia, as well as Lutheran World Federation and Church World Service, in humanitarian responses to the crisis in Eastern Europe. These partners provide refugees with immediate support and supplies such as food, blankets, water, and hygiene kits. Your gift will support people impacted by this crisis. Gifts designated to "Eastern Europe Crisis" will be used in full for direct response to assist those affected. Please visit the ELCA website for all the ways to give at www.elca.org.



Order an Easter plant in honor or memory of a loved one. \$16 will buy one Easter Lily, Kalanchoe, Cyclamen or Begonia. Please have your order in to the church office by April 8th.

Book recommendations

Kisses from Katie: A Story of Relentless Love and Redemption

Katie Davis Majors left over Christmas break of her senior year for a short mission trip to Uganda and her life was turned completely inside out. She found herself so moved by the people of Uganda and the needs she saw that she knew her calling was to return and care for them. Katie, a charismatic and articulate young woman, adopted thirteen children in Uganda and has established a ministry, Amazima, that feeds and sends hundreds more to school while teaching them the Word of Jesus Christ.

Kisses from Katie invites readers on a journey of radical love down the red dirt roads of Uganda. You'll laugh and cry with Katie as she follows Jesus into the impossible and finds joy and beauty beneath the dust. Katie and her children delight in saying yes to the people God places in front of them and challenge readers to do the same, changing the world one person at a time.

—Amazon



**We will have a choir for Holy Week!
Come to rehearsal
on Wednesday at 7 p.m.**



New Member Orientation is scheduled for Wednesday, May 4th. This is for anyone new to First Lutheran Church. If you are a member of an ELCA congregation, you will need to contact your previous congregation to let them know you are transferring your membership.



Thank you to our readers and ushers, including: Cynthia Warren, Huntz Wagner, Carol Bass, Brenda Bertilson, Linda Martin, Chris and Tara Tomczak, Harley and Aimee Droba, Amy Basaraba, Brad and Wendy Reiners. Thank you to those who helped with fellowship, including: Duayne and Nancy Johnson, Laurie and Steve Lindberg, Linda Martin, Brenda Bertilson, Barb Bergh, and Sandy Harju. Thank you to the musicians who shared their talents: Sue Hewitt, Summer Froemke, Kathy Thureen, Joe Belanger. Thank you for the generous donations of soup and bread for our Lenten suppers.

Prayer Chain

Please consider serving as a member of the Prayer Chain.

First Lutheran Church has four active prayer chains. If you have prayer requests for someone, or yourself, call either the church office at 283-2208, or Brenda Bertilson 283-2144; 240-4939. You must have permission to put someone on the chain, either from the person, or from a close relative. To put someone on the list for Sunday prayers, call the office at 283-2208. Please call back when they can be removed.

Remember in your prayers, those in need and those in care facilities.

Good Samaritan: Bunny Katrin

Littlefork Nursing Home: Marlene Erickson and Betty Steinbach

General Fund Financial Information							
As of February 28, 2022							
Thank you for supporting First Lutheran Church!							
	Current Month Actual	Current Month Budget	Variance		Year To Date Actual	Year To Date Budget	Variance
Operating Income	22,088	18,428	3,580		32,407	36,856	(4,449)
Operating Expense	18,268	18,428	160		32,029	36,856	4,827
Operating Income Less Expense	3,740		3,740		378		378

April Birthdays

4/1	Carol Bass Brenda Bertilson Dwayne Dougherty	4/13	Ben Glowack Marlene Erickson James Jackson Jodi Kapla McKenna Rasmussen	4/27	Cade MacKay Marty Wuollet
4/2	Jordyn Forsythe Janice Klow Jaime Sjoblom Jett Tomczak	4/15	Ryar Pelland	4/28	Benjamin Shofner
4/4	Don Nuthak	4/20	Karen Bergstrom Becky Olson Cohlton Schulz	4/29	Brien Christensen Aubrey Eide Robert Plasky
4/5	William Awe Gordon Routier Cameron Schulz	4/21	Beverly Beck Mason Meyer	4/30	Valerie Larsen
4/9	Wendy Dougherty	4/22	William Mason Martin Rasmussen		
4/10	JoAnna Lee	4/24	Kathi Henrickson Ian Rautio		
4/11	Tammy Cook Pahtynn Glennie	4/26	Bruce Bergstrom		
4/12	Erin Coutts				



BACKUS COMMUNITY CAFE SERVES FREE, HOT MEALS TO EVERYONE

Thank you to March's volunteers: Laurie Lindberg, Barb Bergh, Sandy Harju, Carol Bass, Sue Mathews, and Brenda Bertilson.

Holy Week Schedule

Sunday, April 10th at 10:30am, Palm Sunday: Jesus rides into Jerusalem for the last time for celebrate the Passover with his disciples.

6:30pm April 14th, Maundy Thursday: We will remember Jesus' Last Supper in the Upper Room with his disciples. Jesus also gives a "New Command" to love one another as He has loved us.

6:30pm April 15th, Good Friday: This will be a traditional **Tenebrae Service**, a Service of Shadows with Lessons and Songs. There will be **gradual darkness as we extinguish candles**. This is the symbolic death of Jesus on the cross.

Sunday, April 17th at 10:30am, Resurrection of Our Lord: Join us as we celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord! Alleluia, Christ Is Risen. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA
123 Wayside Lane
International Falls, MN 56649

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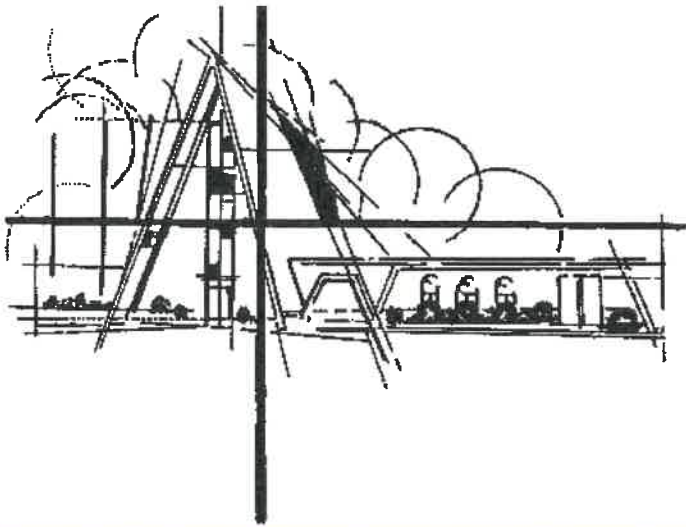
April 2022
NEWSLETTER

(CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED)



First Lutheran Church, ELCA

WHEREVER YOU ARE ON YOUR JOURNEY, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!



First Lutheran's Mission Statement *Sharing God's Grace*

First Lutheran's Vision Statement *First Lutheran Church will be a congregation that shares God's grace by:*

- + Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ with integrity.
- + Welcoming all to active involvement in ministry.
- + Offering a non-judgmental encounter with God through the celebration of liturgical worship with word and sacrament.
- + Responding faithfully to the Great Commission of Matthew 28 -- to grow.
- + Committing ourselves to serving the needs of our congregation and the community at large.

WORSHIP SERVICE

Available in person and on our website
Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

OFFICE HOURS

Mon. through Fri., 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Office: 218-283-2208

Check out our Website!

www.firstlutheranifalls.org

Look for us on Instagram and Facebook.