

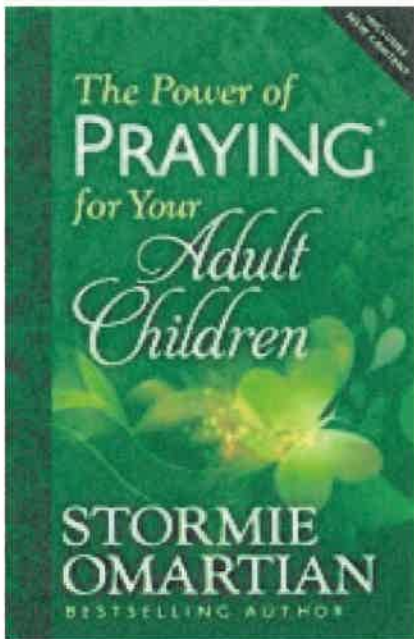
The Voice

February 2023



A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

*A Congregation of the
Northeastern
Minnesota Synod, ELCA*



Ash Wednesday is Feb. 22

**Reading
recommendations
See page 9.**



**Youth activities
See page 8.**



Worship helpers: Amy Basaraba, Geoff Shuff, Lauren and Landon Basaraba, and Zach Youso. We thank you for serving as ushers and acolytes. Please consider signing up to help with worship during Lent.

From the Pastor's Desk

"Lint? Why do we call it that?"

February – March usually reminds me of the Lenten Season. I recall when I was in my first congregations in Billings, Montana, a person there said, "Lint? Why do we call it that?"

They had not grown up in the church and couldn't understand why we were naming a season in the church year after the fuzzy stuff in our pants pockets! I got a great kick out of that.

Lent also brings fond memories of childhood. I learned to love food growing up in the Erdal Family. I call it my favorite recreational hobby ... Eating! During the Lenten season, we would go down to St. Mary's Catholic Church. They had a delicious fish fry. Everything was home made: hand battered and deep fried cod fillets, home made french fries, coleslaw, and home made pies for dessert.

The 40 days of Lent (not counting the Sundays) begins this year with Ash Wednesday on February 22nd. The worship service will be a traditional evening service with the Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion.

A midweek Lenten worship/education time will be in Memorial Hall with a soup luncheon from 11:30 to 12:15, and the worship from 12:15 p.m. to 12:45 p.m. These Midweek Midday Lenten Services begin on March 1st and end on March 29th. We hope to accommodate the lunch crowd and those who prefer to drive during daylight hours.

This five-week Lenten series will focus on the book of Jonah, more commonly known as the story of Jonah and the Whale (large fish). Come and join us as we dig into this wonderful story of Jonah trying to evade God's call and being swallowed by a large fish.

In ministry together,
Paul J. Erdal, Interim Pastor



Pastor Paul Erdal

Join us on a Lenten journey

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

December 15, 2022

Present: Pastor Paul Erdal, Treasurer Brad Ettestad, Secretary Carol Bass, Service/ Outreach Brenda Bertilson, President Hoa Sobczynski, Worship & Music Nancy McBride, Building & Grounds Lloyd Skogstad, Fellowship Linda Martin
 Absent: Discipleship Betty Henrickson,
 Guest: Representative of Call Committee: Dennis Martin

Meeting called to order at 5:00 p.m.
 Devotion – Pastor asked each person to share their highs and lows for the week, the year, or whatever they wished. This was followed by the reading of Psalm 100, which Pastor said is his favorite and a prayer.
 Minutes and Financial Reports from last month's meeting were reviewed.
 Motion: to accept the minutes of the last council meeting (November 17th, 2022).

Motion by: Nancy McBride
 Second by: Brenda Bertilson
 Carried

Motion: to accept treasurer reports of the month of November 2022.

Motion by: Brad Ettestad
 Seconded by: Nancy McBride
 Carried

Pastor's Report: Pastor attended Christmas events at Loman and the Black River Mennonite Church. He enjoyed the Christmas Lights Parade.

One baptism performed: Madison Marie Osse. Koochiching County Collaborative meeting was held Tuesday. Pastor distributed a packet of information on what has been covered. Specifics will be coming in future meetings about how to solve some church problems. Pastor Andy of Littlefork and Pastor Paul will be taking a more active role in directing future meetings. The next meeting will be Jan. 9th at 5:30 at Backus and will end by 7 p.m. Blue Christmas will be held at Faith United Church on Dec, 20th for those who have suffered losses during the year. Pastor is considering forming a new ministry team in the new year. It would be Environ-

mental Arts involving how to make the church environment more welcoming.

Pastor reported that he has been assisting the Nomination Committee in finding candidates for expiring terms and they have found several people.

Committee Reports:

President Report: Will report on items later in the meeting.

Service/ Outreach: Christmas cards sent out. Community Café continues well. Would like to have the Soup and Chili Challenge again in February.

The Tour of Trees was well attended and much of the food and crafts went.

Total for crafts and food was \$3,400. This money will be donated to several local and synod charities. Raffle tickets are still being sold and that total has not yet been added in. Poinsettias can be purchased until next Sunday.

Discipleship: Report given in Betty's absence. The 9th graders are wrapping gifts for Best Christmas ever. Making and having the float for the Christmas Lights parade was fun.

Fellowship: Potluck planned for after the Annual Meeting of the 29th of January.

Building and Grounds: Lloyd reported that the elevator has been used successfully. There is an emergency phone within the elevator that connects with Sheriff's Department. There is only one button to push to operate elevator.

(Council minutes continued on page 4)

Interim Pastor:

Paul J. Erdal

Office Hours:

Monday—Thursday

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Friday—9 a.m. to noon

218-283-2208

www.firstlutheranifalls.org

firstlutheranifalls@gmail.com

Council minutes (continued from page 3)

The new back door has a separate key. Bulletin boards could use oversight. Any ideas on how to do this are welcome. The sign company has had difficulty getting replacement parts for our sign to allow us to post time/temp. Ryan Skogstad removed incorrect posting and helped develop a method to post messages. Let the secretaries know if you have items to list. Still looking for interested people to serve on this committee. Always in need of someone to do small carpentry jobs. Also pertaining to elevator: There was an extra expense of \$1,600 for electrical work. There were also some communication issues with the company. Ho suggested that we hold back 5 to 10% of payment for 90 days in case there are some problems with operations.

Motion: To withhold 10% of payment for a period of 90 days to cover any operational issues with elevator. (till March 20th)

Motion by Brad Ettestad
Seconded by: Linda Martin
Carried

Finance: Waiting on final budget pending the outcome of some current items.

Worship and Music: The Christmas Eve

(candlelight) service will be 4:00 p.m. Nancy hopes to have the choir going again for Easter. Will meet soon to discuss Lenten schedule.

Old Business:

Call Committee: Has met six times since July. Interest shown in our profile.

Pastor Paul's Covenant: Asked to have the present covenant to continue unchanged until the end of February.

Motion: To extend Pastor Paul's present covenant to the end of February.

Motion by Carol Bass

Seconded by: Brenda Bertilson
Carried

New Business:

Candidates for upcoming vacancies on council: The nominating committee has a slate of candidates.

Next Executive Committee Meeting: January 17, 2023, at 5 p.m.

Next Council Meeting: January 19, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Carol Bass, Secretary

Check out the Donate button on the First Lutheran website. It makes it easy to support the church when you are not able to attend in person.

Donate



Thank you in advance!

Our 2023 Offering Envelopes order has been delayed due to printing press failures and supply chain issues. The printing company has not been able to commit to a delivery date. First Evangelical Lutheran Church will announce when the offering envelopes are available for pick up.

Please ensure that your offering is clearly marked with your name and if it is intended for or to be directed to anything other than a regular offering. Thank you for your continued support and patience!

Women of the ELCA



The FELW have not scheduled a regular business meeting for February, but we are encouraged to continue supporting the Falls Hunger Coalition and gathering necessary materials for school kits, sewing kits, health kits, and layette kits.



The next FELW meeting is set for March 14th at 5 p.m. in Memorial Hall. Everyone is very welcome to attend.



- Journal for 10 minutes
- Make a list of people you're praying for
- Practice a random act of kindness
- Give grace to someone who needs it (hint: that's everyone!)
- Appreciate the beauty of God's creation around you
- Start your day by listening to a favorite hymn or song
- Reach out to a mentor in the faith and thank them
- Breath prayer: inhale (fill me), exhale (send me)

Lenten worship opportunities abound in Borderland

You have a number of possibilities for worship experiences during Lent this year.

Ash Wednesday at First will be February 22nd at 7 p.m. and a Lenten Luncheon is planned for each Wednesday noon at First Lutheran with soup and a short study/service.

An ecumenical worship will be offered at Zion Lutheran with participation by Holy Trinity Episcopal, Faith United, and Zion Lutheran Churches with soup supper at 6 p.m. and a service at 7 p.m.

Watch for a special Holy Week opportunity, as well!

The Voice staff regrets the omission of the identification of the beautiful angels from Bethany in January's edition. They are Gavin, Abigail, and Amelia Olson, Evie and Tanner Nelson, and Harlyn Klemetsen.

Announcements

Good News!!

The elevator has been installed and inspected! Please let anyone who needs the elevator to attend service or other events that they can return to church safely.

The total replacement cost is \$45,113.95. As of December 11th, donations have been received to bring the fundraising up to \$13,906.00 leaving a balance of \$31,207.95 yet to raise.



Community Café Volunteers

The Backus Community Café is 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 the Backus office at 285-7225 by 4 p.m. on Cafe day. Meals can be picked up between 5 and 6 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays from the kitchen window. Please use the east door on the avenue.

Bible Study

You are invited to Bible Study, Sunday mornings at 9:30 in Memorial Hall. Bring your favorite Bible and an open heart. Good things are happening!

Building and Grounds

The Building and Grounds committee is looking for people willing and able to help with building and grounds issues. These volunteers need not join the committee, but we are always in need of someone to do a few small carpentry jobs from time to time.

Ministry in the Borderland

The Holy Spirit is at work in our community, including Littlefork Lutheran, Bethany, Zion, and First. Watch for activities of a collaborative nature to be planned for the very near future, and plan to take part. This is exciting stuff!

Offering envelopes

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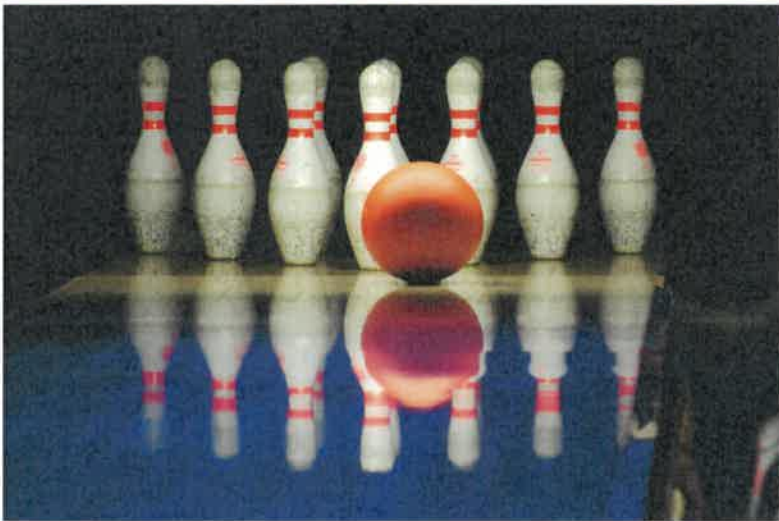
First Lutheran Youth: What's Up?



Activities will culminate in affirmation of baptism

Broomball in February, bowling in March, and a bog walk in April will tie up a year of activities for the FELC ninth grade confirmands.

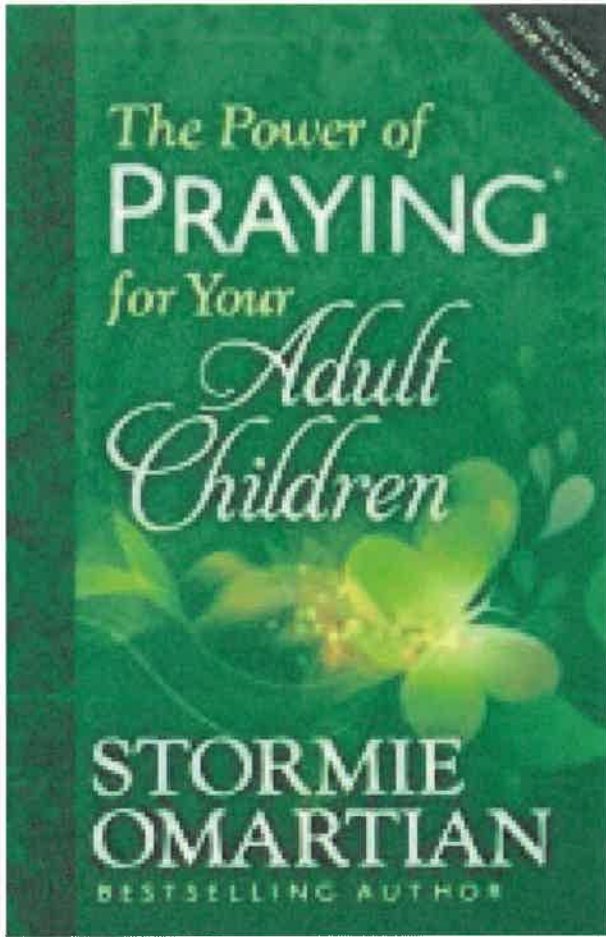
The Affirmation of Baptism, commonly referred to as "confirmation" is scheduled for May 7th during worship. Watch for more details.



Dreaming of the summertime? Sign up for Camp Hiawatha or Camp Vermilion today. It's never too early to think about fun and sun!



Book recommendations



The Power of Praying for your Adult Children by Stormie Omartian.

In this book, a follow-up to *The Power of a Praying Parent*, Omartian addresses areas of concern you may have for your grown children and shares how to lift them up to God. With stories from other parents and insight gleaned from personal experience, Stormie helps you pray with the power of God's Word over your adult children and their career choices and sense of purpose, marriages and other vital relationships, parenting skills and leadership, struggles, addictions, or emotional trials, faith commitment and prayer life.

Perhaps you are watching your grown children step out into the world and wishing you could do more to support them while giving them the freedom they crave. You can. It doesn't matter how young or old they are, you can rest in the power of God working through your prayers.

—Amazon

This book was recommended by Kris Jackson. If you have book recommendations, please contact the church office.



**THRIVENT
FINANCIAL®**

Did you know... If you are a Thrivent member, you can contribute to First Evangelical Lutheran Church through Thrivent Choice Dollars and Thrivent Actions Teams.

Log into your Thrivent account online, call 1-800-847-4836 or speak with your personal Thrivent representative for more information.

let's be friends



@FIRSTLUTHERANC



**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
ELCA**

Can we help? If you know of someone going through a tough time, who may be in need of a quick and easy meal, consider reaching out to "Helping Hands". A ready-to-heat meal can be delivered to them. Please contact the church office with information.



Thank you to our worship assistants: Donna Olsen, Megan Boe, McKenna Whelchel, Leah Boe, Ashley Golnick, Elizabeth Blight, BettyJeanne Henrickson, Hoa Sobczynski, Summer Froemke, Jon Froemke, Garret Froemke, Gracie Froemke, Huntz Wagner, Don Nuthak.

Thank you to those who helped with fellowship: Maureen Jackson, BettyJeanne Henrickson, Julie Jaksa, Terry Luchachick, Brenda Bertilson, Sandy Harju, Kitty Sandstrom, Ardel Henrickson, and Kris Jackson.

Thank you to the musicians: Sue Hewitt, Kathy Thureen, Joe Belanger.

Thank you to Brad Ettestad, and to Lloyd and Ryan Skogstad for helping with technology.

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: Margie Roeder, Dutch Olson

Littlefork Care Center: Betty Steinbach

General Fund Financial Information							
As of November 30, 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	24,523	18,428	6,095		192,957	202,134	(28,177)
Operating Expense	20,494	18,428	(2,067)		195,303	221,134	25,831
Operating Income Less Expense	4,029		4,029		(2,346)		(2,346)

February Birthdays

2/3	Kaitlyn Droba Trevor Plasky	2/18	Kim Rasmussen
2/5	Gage Bergstrom Madilyn Lorensen Linda Pelland	2/19	Simon Palm
2/8	Duayne Johnson Parker Rousseau	2/21	Evan Holenko
2/9	Don Hale Erika Rautio Breana Shofner	2/22	Jeraldine Streiff
2/10	Stella Sandager Olivia Trask	2/23	Alyce Mannausau
2/11	David Mannausau	2/24	Floyd Christianson Mary Jane Haanen
2/12	Michele McDonald	2/25	Melissa Marcotte
2/13	Tyler Fentem Regan Hanson Emmitt Olson GeorgieAnne Slatinski	2/26	Brady Hasbargen Eldon Voigt
2/14	Hailey Fentem Garrett MacKay	2/27	Allison Bergstrom Bette Simon
2/15	Rachel Amdahl Howard Bixby	2/28	Jaxon Germain
2/16	Barb Owen-Boerger		
2/17	Ashley Germain Pat Nash		



COMMUNITY CAFE SERVES FREE, HOT MEALS. TO EVERYONE.

- Serving a free, hot, nutritious dinner from 5:00 to 6:00 pm.
- Meals are pick-up only; there is no in-house dining at this time. Come to the east door of Backus (the door that faces St. Thomas Church). It's door #3. We'll have dinner ready to go!
- EVERYONE is welcome.
- There is no charge for meals, but donations are gratefully accepted.

Thank you to January's volunteers: Kim Atchley, Carol Bass, Sandy Harju, Duayne Johnson, Nancy Johnson, and Laurie Lindberg.

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

February 2023
NEWSLETTER

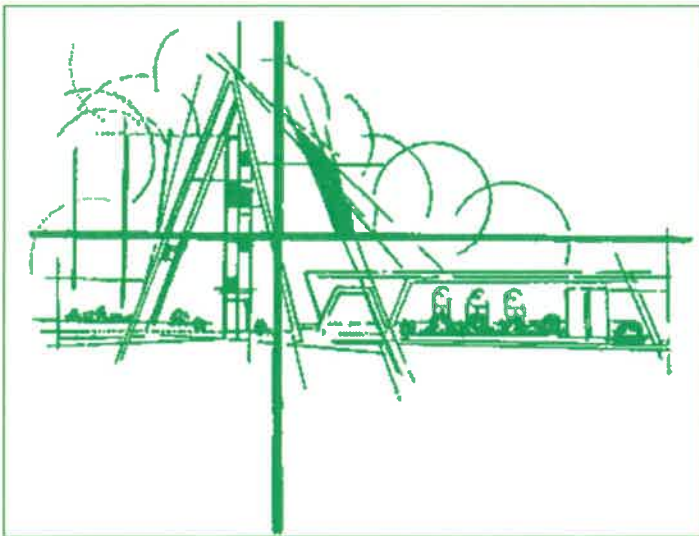
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First Lutheran Church, ELCA

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 on our website, YouTube, and Facebook
Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

OFFICE HOURS

Mon. through Thurs., 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Office: 218-283-2208

Check out our Website!

www.firstlutheranifalls.org

Look for us on Instagram and Facebook.

February 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7 pm Confirmation Classes	2 5 pm Community Cafe	3	4
5 8:30 am Worship – Bethany 9:30 am Bible Study at First 10:30 am Worship – FELC New Council members installed	6	7 11 am Prayer Shawl Ministry – Bette Simon’s home 11 am Staff Meeting 5 pm Community Cafe	8 10 am-1 pm Clothes Closet drop off 5 pm Finance Mtg 7 pm Confirmation Classes	9 10 am-1 pm Clothes Closet shopping day 5 pm Community Café 5:15 pm Outreach/Service Mtg	10	11
12 8:30 am Worship – Bethany 9:30 am Bible Study at First 10:30 am Worship - FELC	13 5:30 pm-7 pm Mtg at Littlefork Lutheran Church re:Easter Passion, Choir, Holy Week	14 10:30 am Bldg & Grounds Mtg 11 am FLW Bible Study – Bette Simon’s home 5 pm Community Cafe 5 pm Executive Mtg	15 <i>Voice info due in office!</i> 7 pm Confirmation Classes	16 5 pm Community Café 5 pm Council Mtg	17	18
19 8:30 am Worship – Bethany 9:30 am Bible Study at First 10:30 am Worship - FELC	20 2 pm Northern Lights Quilters Meeting	21 11 am Prayer Shawl Ministry – Bette Simon’s home 11 am Staff Meeting 2 pm Care Core Mtg 5 pm Community Cafe	22 ASH WEDNESDAY 10 am-1 pm Clothes Closet drop off 7 pm service FELC 7 pm Confirmation Classes	23 10 am-1 pm Clothes Closet shopping day 5 pm Community Cafe	24	25
26 8:30 am Worship - Bethany 9:30 am Bible Study at First 10:30 am Worship - FELC	27	28				