

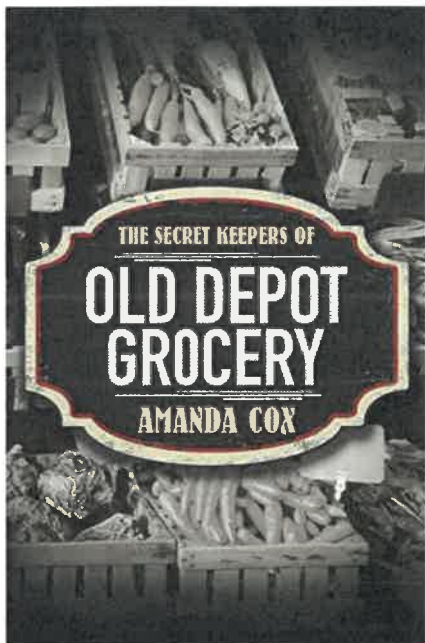
The Voice

January 2023



A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

*A Congregation of the
Northeastern
Minnesota Synod, ELCA*



Reading recommendations
See page 9.



Youth activities
See page 8.



Madison Marie Osse was baptized on December 11, 2022. Left to right: Ginger Freden, Heather Osse, David Osse, Joseph LaPointe. Front row: Big brothers, Anthony, Hunter, then Madison. Welcome to the family!



Helping hands at the Elks' Christmas Dinner, where about 300 take-out meals and 275 in-house meals were provided. Left to right: Darlene Fittje, Ardel Henrickson, Carol Bass, Terry Thompson, Mike Williams, Mary Williams, Kathi Henrickson, Neil Fittje.

From the Pastor's Desk

"The Annual Meeting: A Christian Family Meeting"

Whenever I consider an annual meeting in a church, I usually think about the "Family Meetings" that we would have as the Erdal family. Mom or Dad would call us together and we would gather around the kitchen table.

These family meetings happened usually monthly or when needed. It was a time to discuss things as a family. There were unspoken rules in the Erdal family: always apologize, always forgive, always be respectful, and always tell the truth. There were some other minor ones, too, but those were the basics.

Usually these "Family Meetings" were necessary because there was an issue needing attention, or we were taking a trip or a vacation and the parents wanted input from me and my younger sister, Kristi.

As I reflect back on these "Family Meetings," I realize they helped to shape who I am today. They were character-building experiences. I had to learn to apologize to the person I had offended or wronged. I had to learn to say "I forgive you" when someone apologized to me. I had to learn to be civil when discussing with others. I had to learn to listen to other's opinions and thoughts, even though I might disagree with them. I had to learn that each person's opinion is important. Most of all, I learned that each individual is valued no matter what, simply because I understood that he or she was a child of God.

I am excited for our Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 29 at 11:30 a.m. It will be interesting to me to observe and learn what the important things are to this congregation. Why are we gathering? What are we discussing?

In ministry together,
Paul J. Erdal, *Interim Pastor*



Pastor Paul Erdal

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

November 17, 2022

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

Devotion – John 11:17-19. The passing of Lazarus and those giving comfort to his sisters.

Minutes and Financial Reports from last month's meeting were reviewed.

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

Motion by: Brenda Bertilson

Second by: Nancy McBride

Carried

Treasurer's Report: In October we gained a bit.

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

Motion by Nancy McBride

Seconded by: Carol Bass

Carried

Financial: Treasurer's Report by account for November was distributed.

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

Motion by Nancy McBride

Seconded by: Lloyd Skogstad

Carried

Pastor's Report: Less than half of those young people who are eligible for confirmation are enrolled in classes. Parents should be reminded of the importance of the promises made in Baptism.

Giving letter was sent out. Pastoral visits continue to Nursing Homes and Ranier Roost, as well as homebound members of congregation. Bulletins are distributed and Communion given. Pastor attended the Laurentian Conference via Zoom. Marlene Erickson funeral went well.

President Report: Reminder of the special meeting on November 21 st with representatives from synod to be held at Backus at 6:30.

Service/ Outreach: 28 Thanksgiving cards ready to go out. 1 soup and 2 cards were given out. Updating membership rosters and getting ready for Tour of Trees.

Discipleship: Nancy reported for Betty. Work continues on float for Lights parade. Made "stained glass" windows and will have Advent candles on sides. Theme is "Let Your Light Shine." Youth gathering at Craguns Resort this weekend.

Fellowship: Linda was absent but had submitted report. Potluck for 22nd or 29th . Will have further info soon. People have mentioned how much they miss choir. Would Council like to bring hors d'oeuvres for December meeting? Some issues with the mics at services. Check to make sure they are on and can be turned off during Communion.

Building and Grounds: Lloyd reported that the elevator will be completed by tomorrow. We need to have it inspected and load tested before it can be used. Will need phone in elevator. The back door has been installed by Steve Lindberg. It has a window which brightens up that area. Henry Carey installed Plexiglass over stained glass windows in pastor's and secretary's office. Still looking for those willing to serve on this committee.

Lots of activity during holidays and opportunities to help out. Always in need of someone to do small carpentry jobs.

Finance: Brad distributed copies of the proposed 2023 budget.

Worship and Music: Discussion about schedule for Christmas services. Pastor has been asked about a daytime service and Bethany wants a 9 PM. General agreement that 4:00 service works best for attendance especially since Christmas Day is Sunday. Will have 4:00 service here and 9 PM at Bethany.

Old Business:

* Call Committee: No activity.

*Phone and Internet: Proposals/Prices distributed. Pastor reports issues with his phone. New phones would come with package. Discussion on which package to purchase.

(Council 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

Motion: to accept proposal from Midco for phone and internet services.

Motion by Nancy McBride

Seconded by: Lloyd Skogstad

Carried

New Business:

ELCA Leaders Meeting: At Backus on Nov. 21 at 6:30 at Backus. Synod representatives here to discuss working together with other local congregations to solve mutual problems. All interested people are invited.

Christmas Gifts: These would be for staff and Pastor. Brad will look up what was given in the past.

Annual Meeting Date: Choice between 22 nd and 29 th . Discussion including whether all reports could be finished 2 weeks prior the meeting. Decided the 29 th would be best.

Nominating Committee: Hoa would like to see list of

term limits for council to see who is coming up for election. A nominating committee is currently active and working to fill positions.

Pastor Paul's Covenant: Pastor left the meeting at this point as council considered his new covenant. Pastor has requested a 3-month covenant with a 60-day notice of termination which may be given by either party. He has also requested health insurance be provided. Brad has done research on insurance costs both within synod plans and open market and shared this info with council. He will meet with Pastor and present the council proposal and council will meet again on Tuesday Nov. 22 at 5 PM just to discuss this item.

Next Executive Committee Meeting: December 13, 2022, at 5:00 PM

Next Council Meeting: December 15, 2022, at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted by
Carol Bass, Secretary



January

2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Mark your calendar! The FELC annual meeting is scheduled for January 29, 2023. We will be discussing some business and voting on new council members.

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.



Thank you in advance!



Women of the ELCA



FELW Minutes, December 6, 2022

Several women enjoyed an evening of fellowship with a potluck and singing. Thank you Kris Jackson for playing the piano.

A short business meeting was conducted to decide where Tour of Trees profits would go. The following were voted to receive monies:

FELC general fund	\$1000
Elevator fund	1000
ELCA Good Gifts	290
(goat, chicks, gardening supplies, and honeybees)	
Salvation Army	200
(food baskets)	
Community Café	300
Aging Options	200
Materials for health kits	200
Gas cards for cancer	200
Total	3,390

A huge thank you to everyone who helped make the bazaar such a success: monetary donations, baked goods, crafts, raffle items, and many hours of volunteer labor put into the event.

There will be no FELW meeting during January and February.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandy Harju, secretary



Megan Boe happily holds the snowshoes she won in the Tour of Trees raffle. Other winners were: Terry Lucachick and Laurie Lindberg. Thanks to everyone who helped make Tour of Trees a success this year.



Best wishes from the angels at Bethany



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 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.

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.

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

Another "Ministry in the Borderland" conversation has been scheduled for January 9th from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at Backus Community Center. You are cordially invited to attend.

God loves us and through Christ has shown us how to love each other. God's invitation is to do likewise. What is hindering us from serving the world? What is preventing us from meeting the needs of our community?



Celebrating the beginning of the new year of the church on the first Sunday in Advent, left to right are Hoa Sobczynski, Linda and Denny Martin, and Kathy Thureen.

First Lutheran Youth: What's Up?

Ninth grade confirmation students assist with float



Landon and Lauren Basaraba, and Emmitt Olson stand near the Lights Before Christmas float prior to walking in the parade.

What began as a BettyJeanne brainstorm became a reality with the help of the ninth grade confirmation students and a few adults.

Henry Carey constructed the A-frame model of First complete with end windows, which were covered to resemble stained glass, while lights were strung on the roof of the little church by ninth graders Lauren and Landon Basaraba, Emmitt Olson, Andrew Eide, Zach Youso, Lachlan Reiners, and Landon Zub.

Lloyd Skogstad, Steve Lindberg, Neil Fittje, Nancy McBride, and BettyJeanne Henrickson applied the finishing touches, and the float was pulled in the parade by Chopper McBride.

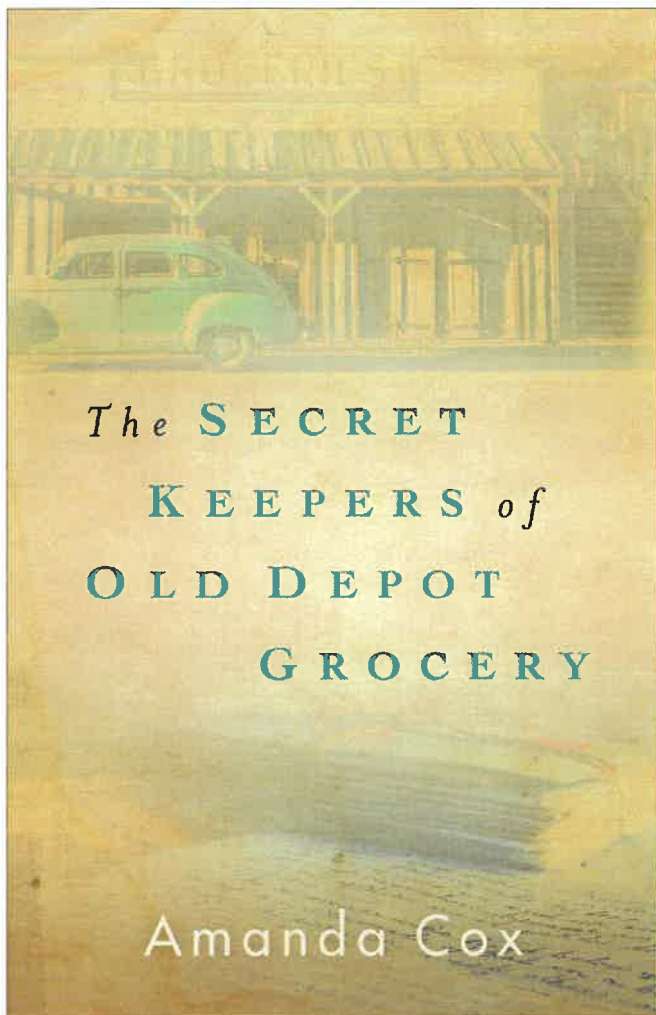
A big thank you to everyone who helped to make this happen!



At left: Emmitt and Andrew clown inside the float structure. At right: Landon, Lauren, Lachlan, and BettyJeanne create the "stained glass" windows for the ends of the float.



Book recommendations



2022 novel wins Christy Award Book of the Year

***The Secret Keepers of Old Depot Grocery* by Amanda Cox**

After tragedy plunges her into grief and unresolved anger, Sarah Ashby returns to her childhood home determined to finally follow her long-denied dream of running Old Depot Grocery alongside her mother and grandmother. But when she arrives, her mother, Rosemary, announces to her that the store is closing. Sarah and her grandmother, Glory Ann, make a pact to save the store, but Rosemary has worked her entire life to make sure her daughter never follows in her footsteps. She has her reasons—but she'll certainly never reveal the real one.

This dual-timeline story from Amanda Cox deftly explores the complexity of a mother-daughter dynamic, the way the secrets we keep shape our lives and the lives of others, and the healing power of telling the truth.

"Readers will fall in love with Old Depot Grocery and its women as Cox explores themes of loneliness and isolation and highlights mother daughter relationships and the strength of the female spirit. Cox is a writer to turn to for emotionally rich and redemptive fiction."--*Booklist* starred review



**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**



Thank you to our worship assistants: Don Nuthak, Braeson Porter, Huntz Wagner, Ardel Henrickson, Kathi Henrickson, Linda and Denny Martin, Megan Boe, Leah Boe, Emmitt Olson, Nick Schultz, Liz Blight, Ashley Golnick, Maureen and Jim Jackson, Brenda Sullivan, Barb Bergh. Thank you to those who helped with fellowship: Kathi and Ardel Henrickson, BettyJeanne Henrickson, Linda Martin.

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

Thank you to Brad Ettestad, and to Lloyd and Ryan Skogstad for pitching in on 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	16,870	18,428	(1,558)		168,115	202,706	(34,591)
Operating Expense	14,946	18,428	3,482		174,808	202,706	27,898
Operating Income Less Expense	1,923		1,923		(6,693)		(6,693)

January Birthdays

1/1 Brooks Besch	1/21 Dylan Streiff
Nina Cole-Smith	1/22 Shawn Shofner
Harvey Steinbach	1/23 Keith Boelk
1/3 Rick Anderson	1/24 Kelly Blair
1/5 Edward Bernath	1/25 Dean Boerger
Dale Roketa	Laurie Lindberg
1/7 William Bright	Shailynn Shipley
Audrey Forrest	1/26 Max Marcotte
Marc Glowack	1/27 Mary Ojala
Merritt Meyer	Daryl Waller
Kailey Shipley	1/28 Julie Schumacher
1/8 Larry Mannausau	1/29 Lars Lindquist
1/9 Dave Amundsen	1/31 Sydney Anderson
Alexander Sobkowicz	
1/10 Dorothy Carey	
Alissa Jensen	
1/13 Garret Froemke	
1/14 Emerson Mannausau	
Nancy McBride	
1/17 Diane McCarthy	
Joyce Rasmussen	
1/18 Steven Landmark	
Sharleen Mitchell	
1/20 Sharon Hedlund	

Happy
Birthday

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 graciously accepted.

Thank you to December's volunteers:

Penny Wakeley, Carol Bass, Barb Bergh, Brenda Bertilson, Nancy Johnson, and Laurie Lindberg. Cafe usage continues to be high.

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

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
INTL FALLS, MN
PERMIT NO. 52

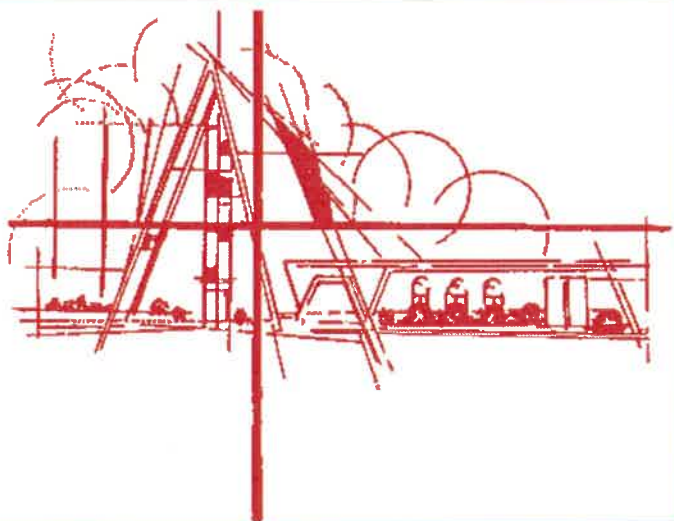
January 2023
NEWSLETTER

(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 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.