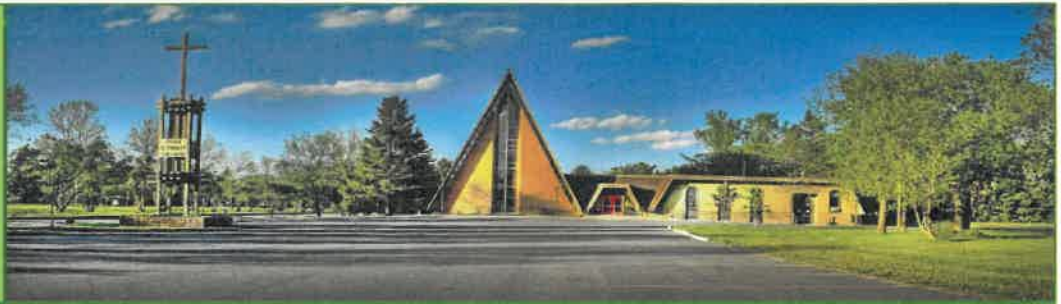


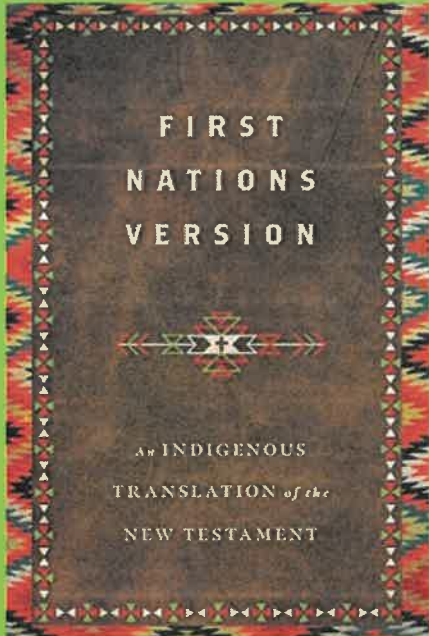
# The Voice

September 2022



A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

*A Congregation of the  
Northeastern  
Minnesota Synod, ELCA*



**Book recommendation  
page 9.**



**Putting together  
kits for LWR,  
page 5.**


## Zion hosted successful VBS week



**Arts and crafts are always a popular part of any successful vacation Bible school. This year Zion's and First's joint effort was hosted by Zion. See more on page 8.**

**Polish up your skills for Rally Sunday fun, September 11, after worship. Hot dogs, chips, and more will be served.**





## From the Synod

The sixteenth Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA met August 8-12, 2022, in Columbus, Ohio. The Northeastern Minnesota Synod had thirteen voting members and three support members who attended. We gathered under the theme "Embody the Word." We were called into better discernment on what it means to Embody the Word and how that translates into living out our call as the body of Christ – to Embody the Word in our daily lives. We joined 889 fellow voting members while participating in powerful worship in a variety of styles, learning about the vast ministries we do together as a denomination, voting on major memorials and constitutional provisions which will shape the future of this church, voting for a new Vice President of the ELCA, voting on members for the Church Council, committees and boards of this church, and experiencing the emotional apology and admission that we are complicit in our actions of welcoming and treating all people with the love of Christ.

Dr. Anthony Bateza, professor at St. Olaf College, shared a bible study emphasizing embodying Christ and creating trust in Christ's body. He described that at this moment in time, it can be really hard to be church together in our congregations and in our world. He explained that trust among Christ's body depends on competence (our abilities used among situations and context) and commitment (to do what we say we'll do). We can have competence without commitment, and we can have commitment without competence. This can lead to too much trust in our church and too little trust in our church depending on to whom our church is serving and to whom our church is listening. This can lead, and has led, to our church body loving one another *and* hurting and harming one another – *by things we have done and by things we have left undone* - by things we say, but do not live out.

The Churchwide Assembly was an awakening and a call for our church to do what we say we do. We passed a memorial for a Renewed Lutheran Church to consider revising our constitutional documents. We voted to revise our social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*. We apologized for our injustices to Iglesia Santa Maria Peregrina for harm experienced from actions taken by the Sierra Pacific Synod and this church, and we were called into better relationship in our Declaration to American Indian and Alaska Native people with a corresponding amended land return and reparations resolution.

We were also called to truly get to work for the healing and wholeness of the Body of Christ. All of us are called to practice competence and to commit to loving and seeking justice for our neighbors who have been hurt, harmed, and marginalized. This harm, harms all of us. Thus, what would it be like for our Body of Christ to feel whole? How would this impact God's world? Bishop Patricia Davenport of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod preached a powerful sermon on Friday that seeks these questions and calls us to Embody Christ so fully that together we deconstruct injustices and "isms" (watch her sermon: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFX5DwHv8bc>). Seriously, watch and listen!

Dr. Bateza ended his bible study on Wednesday by sharing that to build trust, we must put Christ at the center and position ourselves and our churches on Christ, stating, "We must trust our God, who has embodied us, as we try as best as we can to embody Christ." Bishop Tracie Bartholomew of the New Jersey Synod and Chair of the Conference of Bishops stated, "We become what we love and who we love shapes what we become...May we love Jesus so much that the people we encounter, encounter the living body of Christ."

—Compiled by Rachel Berry and Bishop Amy Odgren

## FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES July, 2022

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

**Absent:** President Kathi Henrickson, Vice-President Hoa Sobczynski

**Devotion** – “The Lord’s Prayer.” Ask with confidence.

**Pastor’s Report:** Care Corps Team – Set up for service to those in need through prayer, contact or other ways to show caring. Next meeting will be Tuesday, August 16. There were over 200 people attending the Dwayne Mannausau funeral. Pastor thanked the kitchen staff and all who helped. Octavia Sjoblom was baptized. Sue Hewitt is back, and music planned through September. Pastor will meet with Bethany on Monday to coordinate music. Bishop Tom Aitkin attended services here on Sunday. Remaining offering envelopes will be delivered. Bethany Lutheran will have their annual picnic this coming Sunday so Pastor will leave directly after our service to attend and do a service with them. Christmas in July is July 26<sup>th</sup>. There will be a memorial open house for Harry Nash on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Nancy will take the July 31<sup>st</sup> service as Pastor will be gone.

**Minutes and Financial Reports** from last month’s meeting were reviewed. Two corrections to minutes.

**Motion: to accept the minutes of the last council meeting (June 16, 2022) as amended.**

**Motion by:** Linda Martin

**Second by:** Brenda Bertilson

**Carried**

**Treasurer’s Report:** Half of payroll protection money for which we applied was awarded.

**Motion: to accept financial reports of the month of June 2022.**

**Motion by Nancy McBride**

**Seconded by: Betty Henrickson**

**Carried**

**President Report:** Absent. No report.

**Vice-President Report:** Absent. No report.

**Service/ Outreach:** There is a regular core of 7 volunteers at Community Café. Meals served are less about 140 per night. 11 cards sent out. In the Fall church roster to be updated to reflect changes for offering envelopes.

**Discipleship:** VBS Week of. August 7. Would like a meeting of parents to see what type of educational instruction they would like to see

**Fellowship:** Things still on hold due to flooding and cleanup. Suggestion by Nancy that interested members could volunteer to help with cleanup doing things like raking up debris. Names of those in need and helpers could be coordinated through church office. Information will be added to the bulletin this week.

**Building and Grounds:** Lloyd reported that Steve will put in the new door in August. Plants (flowers) are done. Tires on trailer will be pumped up. Stickers to be added. Lloyd ran the elevator for the Mannausau funeral and will do so on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Finance:** Brad reported that a visitor made a donation of \$25, asking it to be used for flood relief.

**Motion: that the donation of \$25 be given to the Red Cross**

**Made by: Nancy McBride**

**Seconded by: Linda Martin**

**Carried**

**(Continued on page 4)**

**Interim Pastor:**

**Paul J. Erdal**

**Office Hours:**

**Monday—Thursday**

**10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

**Friday—10 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

**218-283-2208**

**[www.firstlutheranifalls.org](http://www.firstlutheranifalls.org)**

**[firstlutheranifalls@gmail.com](mailto:firstlutheranifalls@gmail.com)**

## Council (from page 3)

**Worship and Music:** Music for upcoming services all arranged, As previously stated, Nancy will take service on July 31<sup>st</sup>. Suggestion by Nancy that the altar guild resume its normal routine of meeting and making of volunteer roster.

**Smart Team:** Continue to monitor cases. No added restrictions at present and cases seem to be going down.

### Old Business:

\***Call Committee:** Profile has been posted. No responses yet

\***Articles of Incorporation:** Steve Shermoen will do any paperwork necessary.

\***Phone/Internet bundling:** Laurie still doing research,

### New Business:

**Office Hours:** Discussion of reducing church office hours on Fridays from 9-12. Fridays are usually slow days. Question raised; Would this be a problem during funerals? Suggestion that hours of reduction only be for summer months with a re-evaluation in the fall.

**Motion: To reduce church office hours on Fridays to 9-12 for the remainder of the summer.**

**Motion by: Nancy McBride**

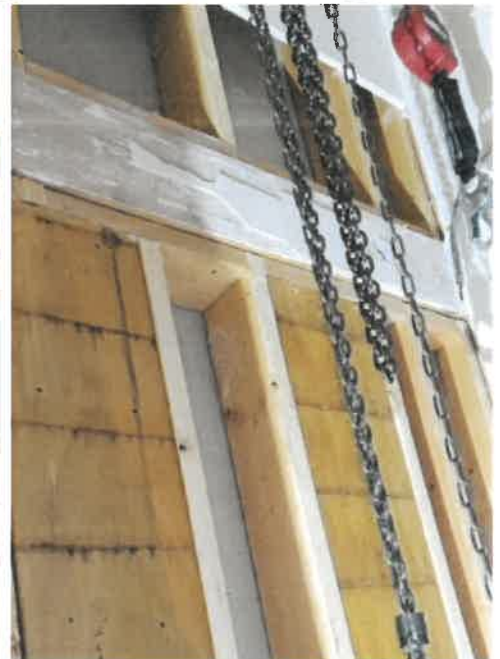
**Seconded by: Brenda Bertilson**

**Carried**

**Next Executive Committee Meeting: August 16, 2022, at 5:00 PM**

**Next Council Meeting: August 18, 2022, at 5:00 PM**

## Elevator fundraising campaign has begun



Work has begun on the elevator replacement. The demolition of the existing elevator is done and the new support structure is complete for the new one. The new elevator is scheduled to arrive in October. The total cost for the project is \$43,772. As of July 31st, we have raised \$9,528 toward the needed payment. Thank you for your generosity. A working elevator is vital for the safety of our members.

# Women of the ELCA

## Shop for LWR kit needs

The FLW will be preparing kits again this year for Lutheran World Relief.

Supplies needed for school kits are 70-count notebooks, 24-count crayons, blue or black pens, pencil sharpeners, and blunt or semi-blunt edged scissors. When shopping, please consider picking up a few extras for these kits.

Below find lists and information for personal care kits and baby care kits.

Thank you in advance.



INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN EACH PERSONAL CARE KIT ONE light-weight bath-size towel (between 20" x 40" and 52" x 27"), dark color recommended TWO or three bath-size bars of soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping ONE adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging\* ONE sturdy comb, remove packaging ONE metal nail clippers (attached file optional), remove packaging \* Toothbrush multi-packs may be used by sealing an individual toothbrush in a business-size envelope; no plastic bags or wrap HOW TO PACK YOUR PROJECT PROMISE KITS • Fold the towel in half. Place the rest of the items in the towel, fold and roll so nothing falls out, and secure with yarn, ribbon, string or rubber bands



INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN EACH BABY CARE KIT TWO light-weight cotton t-shirts (no Onesies ®) TWO long- or short-sleeved gowns or sleepers (without feet) TWO receiving blankets, medium-weight cotton or flannel, or crocheted or knitted with lightweight yarn, between 36" and 52" square FOUR cloth diapers, flat fold preferred ONE jacket, sweater or sweatshirt with a hood, or include a baby cap TWO pairs of socks ONE hand towel, dark color recommended TWO or three bath-size bars of gentle soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping; no mini or hotel size bars TWO diaper pins or large safety pins. Wrap items in one of the receiving blankets and secure with diaper pins.

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## Bits from Bethany

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**Ruby Olson and some friends went to Canoe Camp at Vermilion. This was the camp closing. They canoed to Center Island and said the Camp Cheer — 'It's Great to be Alive in God's Great Northwoods!' for the residents of the island. They also did an overnight camp out at the primitive sites at camp.**



## *Announcements*

### **Community Café**

If you are able to volunteer one evening a month at the Backus Community Cafe, 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.

### **Release Time and Confirmation classes**

Release Time and confirmation classes for this fall are in the planning stages. Be ready to help if you can. We will need snack prep, teachers, and helpers again this year. Vacation Bible School was a great time, and we look to have a similar success with this fall's programming.

### **Rally Sunday is September 11th**

Sunday, September 11th, is Rally Sunday! Following the 10:30 worship, we will gather to enjoy hot dogs, "untidy Joes", chips, beans, and weather permitting, some fun and games!

**The Current First Lutheran Office Hours**  
**Monday - Thursdays 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.**  
**Fridays: 10 a.m. - Noon**  
**Please call the office with questions or concerns.**  
**218-283-2208**  
**Watch worship live at 10:30 a.m. or later**  
**on our Facebook page or our website.**  
**It can also be found on YouTube.**

## First Lutheran Youth: What's Up?



### August's VBS was successful

The week was attended by 20-30 young people from first through fifth grade taking part in music, Bible study, arts and crafts, and games designed to help them learn more about the boundless love of God.

Many thanks to all those who made this week possible.

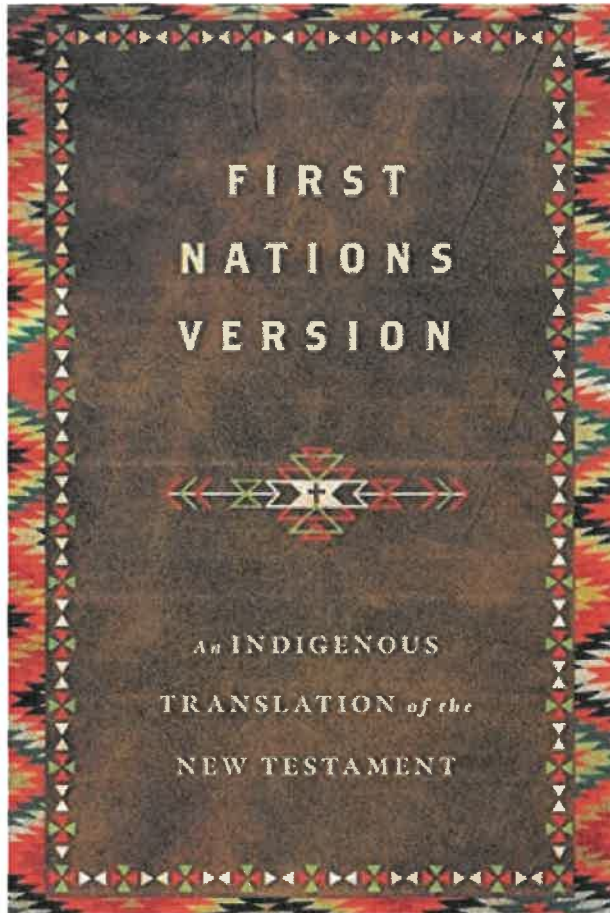
Camp Onomia counselors led the VBS participants in closing worship at Zion. (Below)



**Release Time and Confirmation for 2022-23  
are in the planning stages!  
Watch for more information here and at church!**



## Book recommendation



If you are looking for an interesting translation of the New Testament, here's an option for you.

“The FNV is a dynamic equivalence translation that captures the simplicity, clarity, and beauty of Native storytellers in English, while remaining faithful to the original language of the New Testament. Whether you are Native or not, you will experience the Scriptures in a fresh and new way.”

—Amazon

"The Great Spirit loves this world of human beings so deeply he gave us his Son—the only Son who fully represents him. All who trust in him and his way will not come to a bad end, but will have the life of the world to come that never fades—full of beauty and harmony. Creator did not send his Son to decide against the people of this world, but to set them free from the worthless ways of the world." John 3:16-17

This book is available in Kindle or paperback format.

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**THRIVENT  
FINANCIAL®**

**Did you know...** If you are a Thrivent member, you can contribute to First 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**

**RALLY SUNDAY SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 11!!**

Worship at 10:30 a.m. followed by food and fun!

Plan to attend with your family!!



Thank you to August’s Community Café volunteers: Carol Bass, Barb Bergh, Brenda Bertilson, Colbie Johnson, Nancy Johnson, Rachel Johnson, Sue Matthews, and Cynthia Warren.

To those who helped with worship, including: Kathi Henrickson, Don Nuthak, Brenda Sullivan, Pat Ettestad, Brenda Bertilson, Kitty Sandstrom.

To those who helped with fellowship, including: Theresa and Daryl Waller, Ardel and BettyJeanne Henrickson.

To those who helped with music: Joe Belanger, Sue Hewitt, Brad Ettestad, and Kathy Thureen.

## 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. People will be on the list for one week only, unless you ask that they remain on the list. In that case, please call back when they can be removed.

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

**Good Samaritan:** Dutch Olson

**Littlefork Nursing Home:** Marlene Erickson, Betty Steinbach

<b>General Fund Financial Information</b> As of July 31, 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	13,704	18,428	(4,724)		111,945	128,995	(17,049)
Operating Expense	20,800	18,428	(2,372)		115,968	128,995	13,027
Operating Income Less Expense	(7,096)		(7,096)		(4,022)		(4,022)

# September Birthdays

9/1	Wyatt Amdahl Joshua Sobkowicz	9/15	Paul Bergstrom	Chanin Smith William Wagner	
9/3	Bill Bergstrom Tony Jackson Braeson Porter	9/16	Germaine Lindquist Maynard Nickelson Gail Rasmussen Charles Swanson	9/28	Morgan Rasmussen John Slatinski IV Hoa Sobczynski
9/4	Wade Kennedy	9/17	Mya Gilbertson	9/29	Burke Bolstad Zachary Wichner
9/5	Linda Martin	9/18	Adalyn Zub	9/30	Jonathan Froemke Kelly Golnick
9/6	Macey Marcotte	9/19	Kristine Jackson		
9/7	Wendy Ness	9/20	Kyra Hasbargen Ariel Smith Kurt Sobczynski		
9/8	Tamara Sjoblom Ryan Zub	9/21	Tammie Treat		
9/9	Michelle Boelk	9/22	Tenneyson Amdahl Quinn McCarthy Austin Valentine		
9/10	Ron Gilbertson Luke Valentine	9/23	Riley Larson		
9/11	Owen Amundsen Kalsie Briggs Jakob Eide	9/24	Tami Geving		
9/12	Sophie Fredrickson	9/25	Tara Tomczak		
9/13	Isaac Johnson Glen Marcotte Kellie Swanson	9/26	Tom Kaasa Diane Raboin		
		9/27	Brian Briggs		



**If anyone asks you about the ELCA,  
this is what you can tell them.**

**This is Christ's church.  
There is a place for you here.**

**We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace.**

**Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person--  
questions, complexities and all.**

**Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.**

**— [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)**

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

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US POSTAGE  
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PERMIT NO. 52

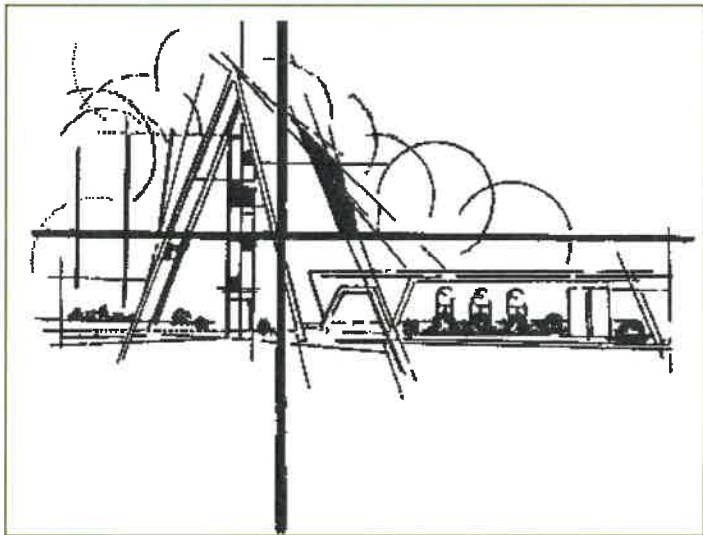
September 2022  
NEWSLETTER

(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 on our website  
Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

**OFFICE HOURS**  
Mon. through Fri., 9 a.m. to noon  
Office: 218-283-2208

**Check out our Website!**  
[www.firstlutheranifalls.org](http://www.firstlutheranifalls.org)

**Look for us on Instagram and Facebook.**