

# News & Views

*First Lutheran Church*

*August, 2020*



## **Council Update: Continuing First's Mission and Ministry in a Time of Covid-19**

In an effort to be transparent and keep the congregation informed of leadership decisions, Pastor Josh Graber and President Heidi Leiser have chosen to share a council report instead of writing other columns this month.

Over the last few months of adjusting to the ups and downs of the pandemic First's Council has needed to be nimble and make adjustments as new information and changes presented themselves. The Executive Council of First Lutheran has taken on the brunt of this work by communicating through email and scheduling extra zoom meetings to make decisions and form proposals that are then shared with the council and congregation. At our Council meeting at the end of July we reviewed those decisions and what we learned over the past months and addressed some of the concerns and proposals for how we move forward together in this new normal.

We chose to facilitate a check-in exercise about how to approach safety and continue to be faithful to our ministry in an effort to hear all the voices in the room. We reviewed a Covid-19 dashboard with information relevant to First, including that Covid cases were surging in many parts of the U.S. and in Wisconsin, and also that cases in West Allis and West Milwaukee had doubled in the previous week. The First Council decided that while we keep reviewing new information and case numbers, we are also committed to continue ministry as safely as possible in the next few months.

We do not believe there is anything that we can do to eliminate covid-19 from air the building or reduce the risk of transmission enough to proceed with gatherings indoors, but we will be able to continue ministry through use of the "Tent of Meeting" or "The West Allis Canvas Tabernacle" that has been raised in our courtyard through donations and planning from the Executive Council.

- We plan to hold weekly services under the canopy during the warmer weather months following safety precautions of not coming when sick or if exposed to the virus, wearing masks, social distancing, and reporting to the church or leaders have been infected with Covid-19.
- There is a need for volunteer readers, worship assistants, ushers and greeters for these services and Colleen Siarnacki volunteered to coordinate this use of time and talents.
- Bible Study and other member groups can meet under the canopy following the same precautions.
- Recovery and outside groups can meet as well, if they follow the same roles as worship and meetings.
- The only indoor access to groups will be the upstairs accessible bathroom. Anyone who uses the bathroom will be asked to sanitize after use and our cleaning service has agreed to do additional cleanings of the bathroom during the week, following meetings.
- All visitors to the building must wear a mask and practice social distancing, if they are making a brief visit to the office.
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# Christian Life



## WORSHIP "AL FRESCO"

Join us on Sundays at 10 a.m. for worship "in open air" and appreciate the day that the Lord has made. Come as you are and be sure to be safe and wear a mask. Please bring your own lawn chair. If the weather is an issue for you, catch us online to view a recording of the service at [firstlutheranelca@att.org](mailto:firstlutheranelca@att.org).



As a community we pray for those with immediate needs of healing and strength:

Diane Gallegos,  
Shannon Irvine, Aiden Kreblin,  
Carrie Pflugradt, Nicole Sevcik,  
Jan Stasiak and Rachel Tripi



This Summer, we're fortunate to be able to use the BUGS Summer Family Sunday School video series which was produced by St. John's Lutheran and the Waukesha County Creation Care Network. The WCCCN is designed to develop, support, mentor, and inspire Creation Care teams in Faith Communities through sharing resources, programs and ideas. Go to [www.waukeshacountygreenteam.org/creation-care-network](http://www.waukeshacountygreenteam.org/creation-care-network) for more information. In Milwaukee, the Groundwork Milwaukee (GWM) Green Team is a service-learning program that engages 14 to 17 year olds living in GWM's target communities.



## OUTDOOR WORSHIP

Now that we'll be worshipping outdoors for the foreseeable future, we're looking for volunteers to serve as ushers, greeters and readers. See the sign-up sheet on Sunday or contact Colleen Siarnicki if you can help.

## The 7 keys to life

*God first  
Love one another  
Never hate  
Give generously  
Live simply  
Forgive quickly  
Always be kind*

*From: Positivity in Life*



## TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

While we're all maintaining safe distances from one another, you're welcome to join our Tuesday morning Bible Study.

We're still using the book "Bible Women: All their Words and Why They Matter". We hope to be able to meet outside (weather permitting) soon, while finding a way to include members who can't attend in person. You can always join our studies online using Zoom. You don't need to have a computer - you can join us over the phone.

If you're interested, contact the church office and we'll get you on the Zoom invitation list and send you copies of the lessons. We'd love to have you!



# We're enjoying family



Megan (Plicka) Rowe's husband Mike and his K-9 officer Gandor.



Members enjoyed being able to see each other at the outdoor worship services (above & L). Laverne (R) relaxes with family at Pewaukee Lake.



Thanks to my FLC family who celebrated my birthday with me by parade, Facetime, card, and email. What a surprise. Matt Grulke (L)



Carolyn Moncherr's 3 yr. old orchid (R) finally bloomed! Joan Hirschinger (L) with her grandson's chicken Daisy.



Matt Grulke with his dog Abby Normal (below). Barb's dog Carmine (far R), and her son-in-law RJ with Otis (R).



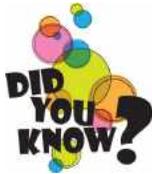
## pets, and nature



Phillippo's granddog Charlotte in VA, (above L), and their grandpuppy Coco (above R) enjoying refreshments. Plicka's dog Lexie (L)

Colleen's cat, Pauly (L) and her dog, Penny - who needs a bigger

Joy's grandbird Nipper, her son's cockatiel.



*Did you know....*In 2020 First Lutheran Church will celebrate 95 years in the city of West Allis. We are blessed to have been serving our neighbors here for so many years. We look forward to continuing our work for God's mission in the world. The church has been led by many pastors in our history, Henry Hammerling, Mark Syre, Robert Suhr and Maurice Felton, to name a few. These pastors gave direction and helped the church focus on its missions. One of the calls of the church is to care for one another, and while this means those outside our walls, it also means we care for each other. Throughout our history were leaders, pastors, and lay people, who have nurtured our congregation through their gifts of preaching, music, service and leadership. With their guidance and sustained by a common faith, First Lutheran has prevailed and flourished through good times and economic depression, peace and war, and all that these past 95 years has brought. Through all this, the hope that Jesus Christ brings into the world has been our strength, and our reason for existence. First Lutheran cordially invites you to worship and fellowship. See you soon!



### THE 2020 OUTREACH FOR HOPE RIDE/RUN/WALK IS GOING VIRTUAL!

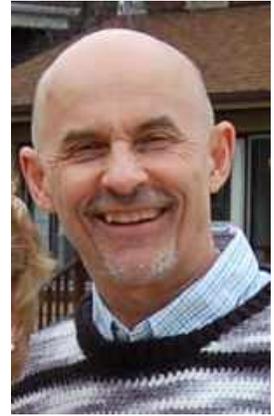
What does that mean, exactly? OFH is inviting bikers, runners and walkers to remotely participate in 25 fitness and fundraising challenges in honor of Outreach for Hope's 25th anniversary. You decide the time and place of each activity, as long as it's between now and September 30th.

Once you've registered online, OFH will mail your t-shirt(s). They've also created a blog with helpful resources, and a Facebook Group for participants to share their progress and photos--so that even though we're physically distanced, we're still connected as a community. For more information go to [www.outreachforhope.org](http://www.outreachforhope.org).

Outreach for Hope supports life-giving ministries that serve with the people of low income communities in the Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA. OFH just named their new Executive Director Chris Manke.

## Meet Our Members...

I was baptized and confirmed at First Lutheran Church and grew up going to Sunday school here. I had Wonderful parents and 3 wonderful brothers and we all attended First Lutheran. I have made many wonderful friends here throughout the years. I have fond memories of playing on the baseball and basketball teams that we had at First Lutheran. I have been very blessed to have been working in the field of transportation of the elderly and disabled individuals for the past 43 years and am currently doing this. I have met so many Wonderful, Wonderful Friends throughout the years. They all are such wonderful people and fantastic friends. I have one wonderful Son who lives in Chicago. I have always enjoyed hiking, swimming, biking, and still playing basketball. I thoroughly enjoy watching My Very Best Friend Janice, who plays the concertina and performs polka and country music with her band. It is such clean and happy music. I have had a Wonderful, Wonderful Life. I feel so very blessed and fortunate. Thanks be to God!! I would like to say Hi to all of my Wonderful, Wonderful Friends at First Lutheran. I have missed seeing all of you and look forward to seeing you soon....Bill



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- If people need indoor access for longer than that, they need to ask permission and get approved by the council. For instance, volunteers working on office renovation and preparations for mailings are approved.
- The Council has approved the Quilters to use the quilting room in groups of 2, every other week, while practicing social distancing and wearing masks.
- We have chosen not to host a wedding indoors in September, but will offer the outside tent for this event. And the Fall Bazaar has been postponed until next year.

In other non-pandemic related council news,

- Lori Marquez has decided to step down in her role as Secretary, and Joy Dowd was voted in as the new Secretary for the remainder of the year.
- Pastor Josh presented the By-laws and Constitution relating to the Council and executive position roles for review by the council. As well as an example of a job description for council and office holders that another congregation uses.
- The Children's Ministry team will be reviewing materials from the Synod to prepare a plan for this year.
- We will be formally installing the Council and Pastor Josh at a service in the near future.

And finally, while the renovation of the pastor's office also continues, the First Council also approved a list of five commitments that will be added to the Call Paperwork for Pastor Josh and sent on to the synod. We hope you will join us in supporting Pastor Josh in these and other ways.

### **Note: "WE" will represent the congregation of FLC**

- **We** promise Pastor Josh our prayerful support and ask God to bless his labors and the mission to whom we are all called.
- **We** welcome him as our Pastor and will give him the love, respect, good will, and cooperation due his life's call. We will be patient and open-minded to changes, provide honest, open and thoughtful feedback and ensure open and honest communication. We will work with him to form a mutual ministry team for confidential support, reflection and advice and provide quarterly/yearly reviews with the council and FLC.
- **We** will offer our time and talents to assist and support Pastor Josh and FLC in doing work done now and by being open to establishing new mission ventures and procedures for carrying out our ministries.
- **We** will assist, support and encourage Pastor Josh to socialize with others outside the FLC family with whom he can "step outside" the pastoral role to bring "those not here yet" and spread the good news of Jesus Christ.
- **We** will provide a key functional role in our West Allis community by providing a place of refuge, service and convening meetings by opening our doors, hearts and minds to a diverse population without discrimination

**President Heidi Leiser and Pastor Josh Graber**

## August Birthdays

8/2 Stephanie Andrade  
8/17 Harrison Rowe  
8/19 Anne Felton  
8/22 Susan Winter  
8/25 Chris Guthrie  
8/25 Earl Junck



## August Anniversaries

8/16 John & Odemaris Dixon III 14 yrs.  
8/16 Justin & Katelyn Kocan 2 yrs.  
8/27 Randall & Donna Schwartz 4 yrs.

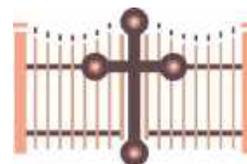
Thank you to our first responders working to keep us safe and the hero's working in our healthcare system. God is with them as they serve.

*When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.....Isaiah 43:2*



In John of Patmos' vision, what is special about the 12 gates of the New Jerusalem?

- A. They are made of gold and always closed.
- B. They are made of amethyst and onyx.
- C. They are closed by day and open by night.
- D. They are made of pearl and never closed.



Answer: See Revelation 21:21, 25



Thanks to everyone for the bounty of birthday cards I received this year. They made this birthday extra special. Bless you all, Barb



**DIGITAL DISCIPLESHIP  
AND EVANGELISM SERIES**  
August 4, 11, 18 and 25  
from 6:30-8 p.m.

The Greater Milwaukee Synod is thrilled to welcome Jamie Domm, author of the book "Digital Discipleship & Evangelism," for a four-session series about how to be the Church in a digital world. She will help empower us with practical tools for living out our mission in this new, digital landscape. This series will be held on four successive Tuesdays in August, from 6:30 to 8:00 pm, via Zoom. Register once, and you will have access to all four sessions. There is no cost for this event. If you have to miss a week, recordings of the sessions will be available to all registered participants. Contact the church office for registration information.



**Don't Forget** to notify the church office of any address, phone or email changes!

### Need pastoral care?

Please remember to notify the church office if you are ill or hospitalized so that we can offer prayer and support directly to you. If you have a pastoral emergency during non-office hours (death in the family, hospitalization, etc.) contact Pastor Josh at (414)476-4664, ext. 2.



First Lutheran Church  
7400 W. Lapham St.  
West Allis, WI 53214

Non-Profit Organization  
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Dated Material  
Please deliver by 6-29-2020



## **FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)**

7400 W. Lapham St.  
West Allis, WI  
[www.firstlutheranelca.org](http://www.firstlutheranelca.org)  
E-mail: [firstlutheranelca@att.net](mailto:firstlutheranelca@att.net)  
Phone: 414-476-4664

***Worship With Us:  
Sundays at 10:00 a.m.***

We ask that you wear a mask to  
worship outdoors, and bring a  
lawn chair or blanket.  
We look forward to you joining us.

Office Hours: Monday thru Friday 9am to 12pm  
Office located at 7400 W. Lapham, West Allis  
(414)476-4664

Outdoor  
Worship

