

# News & Views

First Lutheran Church

September, 2020



## President's Monthly Note:

I had been contemplating what to write about as we all remain within the confines due to COVID. While I was in downtown Rosholt shopping I overheard several ladies discussing return to school issues one lady remarked, "Where's God in this mess. I think God is really angry with mankind and is letting us all suffer". As I got back into my car and drove back home, God answered my "what to write about".

I don't believe for a moment that our Heavenly Father has forgotten his children. As I sat on the front deck, I began to think about all the gifts and blessings in my life and the word "time" came out loud and strong. I had never thought of "time" as gift.

I have found myself with increasing anxiety with all the negative campaign ads, mudslinging rhetoric, continued pandemic numbers and adjusting to retirement--all a bit overwhelming!!!! God has given the gift of time to accomplish unfinished business, to-do list projects, maybe read a book, take walks, talk with family/friends and maybe spend time in the outdoors. God has given us time to enjoy all of his creation. God has given time to love our neighbors, minister to others and participate in Church Services. God always shows his love for us and we must show our love to others. Be a beacon of Christ's light to a world that's in need of hope and healing.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, use the gift of time. Find the joy in God's creation and the many gifts of His love for each of us.

God's Blessings,  
Heidi Leiser-O'Neil



**As we consider our labors as service to the Lord, let's see what the bible says about work:**

**Colossians 3:23-24** - *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

**The Good News:** No matter what you do, you are using the gifts that the Lord gave you. If you put your talents to use, you are proving to God that you love him and worship him.

**Proverbs 16:3** - *"Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.*

**The Good News:** Even if you're lost and don't know your way out through a difficult situation right now, give it all up to God. Make a promise with him that you will see it through the end and he will lay a path down for you.

**2Timothy 4:7** - *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."*

**The Good News:** Hard work, dedication, and staying true to your faith pays off in the end. Stick to it and you will be rewarded — God will make sure of it.

Woman's Day – Jackie Frere

# Christian Life



Outdoor  
Worship  
Service

## 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:

Mary Dana, Diane Gallegos, Shannon Irvine, Carrie Pflugrad, Nicole Sevcik, and Rachel Tripi

## CHURCH COUNCIL ACTIVITY

Discussions/actions held regarding:

- Need for volunteers at worship services
- Bible Study and other groups can meet outside under canopy
- Lori Marquez stepping down from Secretary position. Joy Dowd voted in to fill position
- Will work on plans for Sunday School, Confirmation and Christian Education by Aug. meeting

## TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY



You're invited to join our Bible Study on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 am. We are gathering outdoors under the canopies. Bring your lawn chair and mask and join the group.

We're still using the book "Bible Women: All their Words and Why They Matter". If you're interested, contact the office and we'll email the lessons to you ahead of time. If you're not able to meet with us 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. We're always happy to welcome new members!

## Meet Our Members...

Jerry and Gayle Falk were both born and raised in West Allis, and both attended West Allis Central. Then Jerry attended UW-Whitewater and became a teacher, and Gayle graduated from Mount Mary College. They met while working for the West Allis Recreation Department as part time college jobs, and married in 1975. Jerry taught middle school math for 42 years, his dream job. After getting a Masters Degree in Library Science, Gayle became children's librarian at Burlington Public Library, her dream job, and then library director. They both retired in 2016 after Gayle developed health problems. A stem cell transplant in 2017 temporarily wiped out her immune system, and her friends at the Saturday night service will remember her wearing a face mask long before they were fashionable. Jerry and Gayle love to travel, especially to historic sites, but for now they're spending time at home. Gayle loves to read and to work jigsaw puzzles. They love to spend time with the rest of their family: son Michael, his wife Courtney, and their two grandsons, Max (9) and Elliott (5). They also have a Norwegian Elkhound puppy named Wolfer, sometimes known as The Alien. (Jerry: "What happened to the TV remote?" Gayle: "It must have been chewed up by an alien.") They can't wait to get back to services and see their wonderful friends at First Lutheran.



# A BUSHEL OF BOOKS



Design a handy bag to tote your books this fall.

### What you need:

- Plain canvas bag
- Cardboard scrap
- Acrylic paints (2 colors)
- 2 small paper plates
- Apple
- Knife (and adult help)
- Foam brush
- Scrap paper

### What you do:

1. Lay the bag flat on a table, and place cardboard inside for protection.
2. Pour a paint dollop on each plate.
3. Slice the apple in half, keeping the core intact.
4. Brush a thin layer of paint on the cut side of an apple half. Practice making stamps on scrap paper. Use the other color on the other apple half.
5. Paint and stamp the bag with your final design. When dry, remove the cardboard.
6. Use the bag for school and Sunday school. Happy reading!



Linda and Lori had a brainstorming session on the deck about Virtual Sunday School. We identified our Virtual Sunday School purpose as: Virtual Sunday School, continuing the childrens' connection to the First Lutheran family. Until we can meet face to face, we will use Zoom as our venue. We are not planning a usual full conventional curriculum. Rather, we plan to emphasize relationships over content and quality over quantity. We will plan a flexible schedule month by month to meet the needs of our families. We hope to address God's comfort and love in these unusual times. We hope to make this a fun way to help parents live faith at home. We want to incorporate Bible stories, crafts, science, music and cooking, so each class will be different. We will start with two 30 minute sessions/month beginning the week of September 13, and we hope to tape each version for the FLC website. **WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU...** Ideas, Ideas, Ideas! Families, please tell us what you like, didn't like, need. This includes grandparents. Download Zoom on your computer because we will need "Guest Storytellers" to continue our kids' connection to First. And....be watching for a surprise at First on Aug. 30!

Linda Grulke and Lori Marquez

## PUZZLE

### WISDOM FROM THE WORD

God makes a special promise to people who study Scripture.

Directions: Arrange the word list in alphabetical order. Then write the circled letters in order below to complete Joshua 1:8, NIV.

	school	_____
	paper	_____
	wisdom	_____
	read	_____
	play	_____
	learn	_____
	grow	_____
	pencils	_____
	pray	_____
	art	_____
student	_____	
kids	_____	
apple	_____	

"... meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be \_\_\_\_\_ and successful."

JOSHUA 1:8, NIV



From a newsletter in Richmond, Virginia:

~~THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE~~  
**School Spelling Bee On Thursday**  
**Movie Night on Friday**

Will the students spell everything correctly on *Thursday*?

snoradsud tuopqs; tuoprs tuoprs  
 'pena 'read 'nrd 'spoud 'aded 'turoj 'spr 'tuob' 'ne 'tulle 'aduvty

# We're doing God's work



There are many ways of doing God's work. Matt Grulke plays with Eli, and Eli reads to his baby (L & R). Joy Dowd tends her beautiful hibiscus flowers (above)



Mike Plicka (left), along with John Hrovat and Dave Grulke, really did God's work in working to get Pastor Josh's office painted.



During his vacation time in August, Pastor Josh had a socially distant visit with two of his best friends Natalie and Brian Julin-McCleary (above). Brian is an ELCA pastor who just started a new call in Cedar Falls, Iowa. While Josh was there Brian was organizing trips to support and serve those who were affected by the storms around Cedar Rapids, IA.

## *in many different ways*



Sue Winter (far left) checks in food pantry clients on a Friday morning. Greta Plicka (L) sorts Operation Christmas Stocking items.



Quilters Jackie Bayer and Audrey Wiefelspuetz (R) are happy to be able to meet for quilting. The quilters meet in twos - one pair each week.



Outdoor worship has been working well. Marie receives a bulletin and her communion cup. (Above)



Greta and Mike Plicka enjoyed Shalom Wildlife Sanctuary with their daughter Megan and grandson Harrison (L)





Dear Members and Friends of First Lutheran:

I took some vacation in August and was able to visit my friend Brian who just started a new call in Cedar Falls, Iowa. I was grateful to connect with another pastor that was starting their ministry at a new church during this pandemic and also for being with someone I shared so much history and experience with. Our conversation fluctuated between reminiscences of our college days in Seattle and in Saint Paul for seminary, and notes about how we were approaching the current pandemic as pastors.

A week before I visited Brian's family, Iowa was hit by a windstorm called a *derecho* that was as fierce as a hurricane with record breaking winds of 140 mph, leaving widespread damage, especially in Northeast Iowa. As I travelled through this region, I listened to the radio and heard how neighbors were helping neighbors and using the radio to communicate about food, shelter, and supplies as well as give emotional and spiritual support. When I got to Cedar Falls, I learned that Brian's sister was among the 100,000 people in Cedar Rapids who had been living without electricity for a week. Brian had been busy coordinating family, friends and church members to go there to serve and cleanup.

As a pastor, during record breaking floods in Fargo-Moorhead and as the Vice President of an innovative disaster relief nonprofit called Renegaid, I try to pay attention to disasters and recoveries and learn from them. Much of Renegaid's work is educating and connecting leaders and organizations with new approaches to disaster relief that make sure those who have experienced the disaster are listened to as the primary stakeholders. We promote the leadership and innovation that emerges during recovery and want larger agencies to support not thwart those efforts.

Often the relief that comes is not what the people really need and what is expected often doesn't arrive until it is no longer what is most needed. Relief is often slowed by miscommunication, bureaucracy, and lack of coordination with those on the ground. The President visited while I was there, but the aid that was promised was a fraction of what was expected. Many people in disasters in the US and else fend for themselves and support each other for longer than expected and in ways they didn't predict. But like most disaster situations, instead of bringing out the worst in people when they are vulnerable, neighbors and strangers help each other through the recovery and their relationships and view of life and community is transformed in the process, sometimes in very positive and lasting ways.

We never know how we will respond to a disaster, or when we go through trauma and loss. At Renegaid, we talk about it like a birth experience where everything is new and the body, mind, and spirit needs to adapt to a new reality. In these situation, knowing that others have gone through similar situations reminds those in the midst of a disaster recovery that they too can survive, even if their world has changed dramatically. The mutual support we hope to promote is part of what we call the Disaster Gangway.

From a faith perspective, God does not send disasters to punish us or suffering to teach us a lesson, but we can be transformed by what we experience and what we learn during times when our world is turned upside down. At this time of covid we are all experiencing low-level trauma and life similar to that of a disaster experience. We have lost many of our norms. Some have lost jobs and experiences and services they count on. This is a disruption and its one that we need to help each other through but perhaps it can also help us see abundance and support in our community in a new way, by making small personal connections that really matter.

When I got back to First Lutheran I had a phone message from a man from Milwaukee, who grew up in Cedar Rapids, who wanted to deliver supplies to people there. And we immediately set up some food and supplies from our food pantry for him to take (R). He knew the people on the ground personally and the agencies that were helping them the most and that when he went back the following week their needs may change. We at First continue to listen to the stories and needs of others and support those who are experiencing loss and transformation, in our own families and neighborhoods and wherever God connects us. Not only can we help them, we also can learn from them.....*Pastor Josh*



## September Birthdays

9/3 Jeanette Zeinert  
9/12 Jesse Rofritz  
9/13 Nadia Bivens  
9/18 Sharan Kruschka  
9/22 Mary McNeal  
9/27 Dale Phillippo  
9/30 Werner Bayer  
9/30 Sharon Phillippo

## September Anniversaries

9/22 Colleen & Spencer Siarnicki 19 yrs.



Which of these was *not* one of the 10 plagues God brought against Egypt to persuade Pharaoh to let the Hebrew people go?

- A. an abundance of frogs
- B. the Nile River turned to blood
- C. the collapse of the pyramids
- D. thick darkness



Answer: See Exodus 7:14-12:32

# Thank You!

**Thank you** for your many donations of food to our pantry. It is a blessing to have partners like you.....*Pastor Lindsey & All Peoples Staff*

**Thank you** for your donation to Outreach for Hope. Your gift will be used in the 17 congregations funded by Outreach for Hope in the Greater Milwaukee Synod. Each provides a spiritual anchor in their communities and a place of meaningful support. Your dollars support children's programs, programs for senior, meal programs, tutoring, medical programs, and most important, worship and education programs that share the love of Christ and the assurance of being valued and being cared about.....*Phil Smith, Outreach for Hope*

**Thank you!** Your \$468 donation to the Faith Build will be matched by Thrivent and supports our Cost of Home campaign. The uncertainty that so many of us feel today has been felt by many families for a lifetime, if not for generations. Thanks to your support, Milwaukee Habitat is meeting the needs of families we serve at a time when access to safe, affordable shelter is more essential than ever before.....*Kristi Sebald, Habitat for Humanity Faith Relations and Development Director*

## Friendly Reminders

**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.

"Youth is the gift of nature, but age is a work of art."

—Stanislaw Jerzy Lec



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

Non-Profit Organization  
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Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
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Please deliver by 8-28-20



**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)**

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Phone: 414-476-4664

***Worship With Us Outdoors:  
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



*Join Us for Worship*