

News & Views

First Lutheran Church

May, 2021



In May, we begin a new chapter in First's history, opening our doors again after getting through what we all hope is the worst of the pandemic. As we closed out this era, the quilters (now vaccinated) welcomed a special guest, LaVerne Williams, in their midst.

LaVerne's membership at First Lutheran is longer than anyone else's. My first conversation with LaVerne came last year at this time for her 92nd birthday. The time talking with her reminded me of the fullness of life and the rich history of this congregation. It filled me with joy and peace in the midst of the strange situation I had found myself in during my first month of the call. I remember sitting in my old apartment, where I was working from while the church was closed, and smiling broadly as I heard LaVerne cheerful voice share her views and wisdom about church, faith and the world we were in. I appreciated her tone and grace and it really lifted me out of the doldrums of the early exile experience of this pandemic.

LaVerne is now leaving the area to live near relatives in Weston, WI, and I know she will be missed by all of our members. She's already found a church that she wants to join there, but she promises to stay in touch and visit and we are grateful for that. I told her that as the Mission Team looks at First's church history we would be giving her a call for sure!

I went downstairs and turned on the lights in the sanctuary so LaVerne could walk through the sanctuary again and went back up to let her know. This led to all of us talking about the stained glass windows and the prayer walk we'd done for Holy Week and how the Sunday School had once done something similar—using the windows to teach about Jesus. Then LaVerne told me how the Good Shepherd window in the stairway to the quilting room was moved from the previous church. It was a memorial from the parents of a child who

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***Sunday, May 2,
at 10:00 a.m.***

*Covid protocols will be followed, including masks and social distancing.
We look forward to seeing you!*

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died. Now not many people see it unless they go up to the quilters room, but it is a very beautiful tribute and reminder that Jesus is our shepherd in this life and the life to come.

I started asking questions about the church building and what LaVerne remembered from the time First decided to move from the old building to this one, and she talked about what it was like at the old church, when it got so crowded that the pastor challenged the congregation to get ready for a move. They didn't think they had the money to do it, but the mortgage was paid in eight years. We talked about why this church building was built the way that it was and how it was used. And the other quilters chimed in with their memories from the old building and this one. It was really a beautiful time that helped us honor all the years that LaVerne has had at First and celebrate how at 93 she was ready to go to a new place and meet new friends at a new church. I know she will. What a treasure!



The experience felt like a foretaste of what is to come in a post-pandemic world when we can talk with each other again without worry about getting each other sick the way we have for over a year. To be able to simply enjoy other peoples' company again will truly be a joy after so much isolation. I hope we do soak up those connections and do what we can to prepare to enter into those interactions safely. When the quilters first asked to start quilting again, I was very nervous about that prospect because I didn't want these elder stateswomen of our community to be put at risk. They are too valuable to us! But their ministry is also valuable to us and we found a way to do it safely. Thank God we have all made it to this point safely.



Please get vaccinated if you haven't already and encourage others to take this step toward all of us being able to talk and share wisdom and fellowship together. I am grateful for this respite from a snowy day in April to talk with LaVerne in person and to remember the gift of community and the treasure chest of memories that people like LaVerne and our quilters gather together. A congregation is like a quilt with every person bringing a piece of fabric. People like LaVerne remind me of the thread that holds us all together in this Body of Christ. *Pastor Josh*



JOB OPENING!

Substitute quilter needed for May & June. NO SEWING, just the assembling of quilts -pinning & tying – for Lutheran World Relief. Wednesday mornings 9-12 @ First Lutheran. Mask required, social distancing practiced. Questions-contact Jackie Bayer or the church office.

Christian Life

SUNDAY SCHOOL HAPPENINGS



In April we continued learning about angels with the Angel at Jesus' tomb. Our craft was about who we pray for. After our lesson, we helped the church by picking up the church yard, and then having a snack as good Lutherans do!

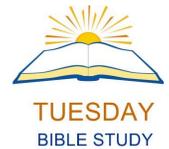


In May the Sunday School will be preparing for Mother's Day and will have an end-of-the year celebration on May 22nd.

PRAYER FOR PROTECTION

*The Light of god surrounds me
The Love of God enfolds me
The Power of God protects me
The Presence of God watches over me
The Mind of God guides me
The Life of God flows through me
The Laws of God direct me
The Power of God abides within me.
The Joy of God uplifts me
The strength of God renews me
The Beauty of God inspires me
Wherever I am, God is!
Amen*

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY



We're using the book "BIBLE WOMEN All Their Words and Why They Matter"

Looking toward summer, plan to enjoy a variety of Biblical discussions, check out some different books, watch a movie or two and entertain some visiting speakers.

If you have any suggestions for topics, be sure to let Pastor Josh know.

New members are always welcome to join us on Tuesdays at 10 a.m. Contact the church office if you're interested.



CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

On April 21 the Executive Committee of First Lutheran Church met to consider how to open to in-person worship in the sanctuary. The committee recommended to the council, who approved, that beginning the first weekend in May we worship in the sanctuary at 10:00 a.m. with Covid protocols in place and pre-recorded organ music. We look forward to seeing everyone!



We had a great response to our survey on re-opening the church. Thanks to all who participated. It's been a big help in making this important decision.

May Happenings.....



Incarnation Lutheran on 15th & Keefe will resume their "Mini Concert" series in May. These will be 30 min. organ concerts on the 1st Tues. of each month at 11:30 a.m.

Enjoy the concert in person at 1510 W. Keefe or on Zoom. The Zoom address can be found at the Incarnation website at:

www.incarnationlutheranchurch.org.



ANOTHER JOB OPENING!

We need a gardener to do some of the outdoor landscaping at church. There are a variety of jobs to be done each spring and summer - most involving trimming and weed pulling. This would be a great family activity. No need to commit to doing everything - volunteer for just one job. Marie LePage, who has been doing a lot of the landscaping for many years, needs to retire. We certainly appreciate all of her work! She's made a map of our gardens and written out everything that needs to be done from Spring through Fall. Call the church office if you're available!!



We give thanks for the staff and members of Luther Memorial Church for their hospitality during the period we were closed down. The generous use of their parking lot made it possible for us to stay connected and worship together through the winter. This has been a wonderful example of being partners in Christ. Thank you!

MAY IS OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

The theme for 2021 is "Communities of Strength."

Through the pandemic, our communities have shown resilience and strength during challenging times. With the help of our many volunteers,

Eras has been able to help older adults in Milwaukee County and Waukesha County keep some normalcy through consistent rides to medical appointments, grocery deliveries, snow removal, and friendly phone calls. There are many opportunities available for volunteers including help with summer yard clean-up and making cards for seniors. For more information and to volunteer, please contact Becca Snow at:

Becca.Snow@Eras.org or (262) 522-2409.



On May 9, remember to thank the women who've had an impact on your life



Thanks for the Donations!

We appreciate the generous donations of food from St. Luke's Lutheran in Greendale, Divine Shepherd Lutheran in Muskego and the West Allis Women's Club. We also have other faithful donors who drop off food regularly at church, or bring it to the Sunday worship services at Luther Memorial. Thank you!



Celebrating Easter and Spring!

Lavone and her grandkids colored eggs and visited the Easter bunny. Barb's grandson also colored eggs. Joy sent the beautiful gardenia blooming in Florida. And of course, our beautiful daffodils!

Changing Seasons - Easter to Pentecost



A Shared Experience

What comes to mind when you hear the word *Pentecost*? Many people think of a mighty wind, tongues of fire and multiple languages. But Acts 2 begins with another detail that's just as key: Jesus' disciples "were all together in one place." Because they were together physically and spiritually, the early believers didn't miss the life-changing, world-changing birth of the Church.

The pandemic, while changing our definition of gathering, also highlighted our need for interaction. If Jesus' first followers hadn't been assembled on Pentecost, they would've missed the outpouring of God's power and the indescribable joy God had for them. Think about what believers today might miss if we neglect to worship with other friends of Christ. Who would want to miss God's blessings, promises and joy?

GERANIUM ORDERS

We're taking orders again for geraniums to decorate the church for Pentecost, May 23, when the color of the day is red. The cost of the small geraniums are \$2 each or 6/\$10. Large ones are \$8 each. Contact the office or fill out a form in the narthex if you'd like to place an order. Deadline to order is May17th.



Catching Up...

Dear Family,

I have been the Interim Pastor at Faith Lutheran in Cuba City, WI, a great community eight miles south of where we live. On March 14th they called me to be their 1/2 time permanent Pastor. I have also been assisting at First English in Platteville where we record for zoom/radio this gives both churches options. The pastors I record with are below. Steve has been busy as we welcomed 19 new sheep this winter. Last Saturday I visited and brought communion to Deacon John In Oconomowoc. He is in good spirits.



Pastor Gus Barnes



Pastor Peterson and Lois are now officially Arizona residents. They purchased a mobile home (below) in a 55+ community. Pastor Peterson is serving as an interim pastor at a Lutheran church there. They're enjoying the area with its parks, and nice winter climate. They're only 4 hrs. from their son in CA, but haven't been able to see them yet due to Covid.



This 'n That Around Here



May Birthdays

5/1 - Judy Keene
5/3 - Jaqueline Bayer
5/4 - Daniel Sopa
5/12 - Justin Kocan
5/12 - Megan Rowe
5/13 - Heidi Leiser
5/14 - Jill Bayer
5/14 - Shirley Cogan
5/14 - Lori Marquez
5/15 - Amy Guthrie
5/16 - Jennifer Caras
5/20 - Jan Salek-Anderson
5/22 - William Hansen
5/25 - Stephen Andrade
5/26 - Jamie Schoberg
5/27 - Robert Gardner
5/30 - Patricia Zuback

Since we're going to be worshipping in church now, we're again taking orders for altar flowers. If you'd like to have flowers placed on the altar in honor or in memory of someone, contact the church office.



Find us on
Facebook

Be sure to "Like" First Lutheran on **Facebook** and share with your friends!

*Friendly
Reminder*

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.

May Anniversaries

5/2	Mike & Greta Plicka	33 yrs.
5/4	Dale & Sharon Phillippo	57 yrs.
5/6	Mike & Megan Rowe	3 yrs.
5/11	Earl & Jean Casto	52 yrs.
5/27	Terry & Joyce Favre	42 yrs.



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

Craig Bayer, Joan Hirschinger, Dawn Lychwick, Jessica Martin, Billie Tripi and Becky.



Acts 1:1 (NIV) reads: "In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach." What "former book" did the author write to Theophilus?

- A. Matthew
- B. Mark
- C. Luke
- D. John



Answer: See Luke 1:1-4

Don't even think about it!



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

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Dated Material
Please deliver by 04-29-21



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)

7400 W. Lapham St.
West Allis, WI

E-mail: firstlutheranelca@att.net
Phone: 414-476-4664

Worship With Us:

In Person on Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

With masks and social distancing

Online at:

www.firstlutheranelca.org

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



If you no longer wish to continue receiving this newsletter, please contact the church office.