

News & Views

First Lutheran Church

June, 2023



FROM THE



PASTOR

Justice Journeys in June

Last fall the Mission Team and the FLC Council investigated several justice-oriented organizations and trainings in our area to study their approach to mission, vision, and values to help us shape our own. Our members researched **M.I.C.A.H.**, which stands for Milwaukee Inner-City Congregations Allied for Hope, our synod's **Reconciling in Christ (RIC)** organization, and participated in a **Deconstructing Racism** training recommended by the Greater Milwaukee Synod. These experiences also invited us into three different ways of imagining how our church community could grow through sincere engagement with the world around us.

MICAH

MICAH is a multi-racial, interfaith organization committed to issues of greatest importance to Milwaukee residents. It is an ecumenical group of 42 congregations that organize work to "empower people to work together in pursuit of justice". Justice can mean different things to different people, but the specific local issues are organized into the following taskforces: Civic Engagement, Coalition on Lead Emergency, Criminal Justice and Prison Reform, Education, Jobs and Economic Development, and Transportation. People from the 42 member congregations gather according to their own sense of call into these areas. Werner and Pastor Josh attended MICAH's Public Meeting and listened to reports from each of these task forces, the lead organizer, the president of MICAH and "Do What is Just" Award Recipient Chief Judge Mary Triggiano.

R.I.C. - Reconciling in Christ

Two of our members also participated in our synod's Reconciling in Christ group's Fall Gathering entitled "Welcome All". The Greater Milwaukee Synod has recently become an RIC Synod, though not all congregations in the synod express their inclusion through RIC membership (a list of RIC congregations is available here <https://milwaukeeesynd.org/about-us/partners/reconciling-in-christ/>). During all transitions in ministry between pastors, interim pastors are

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Mark Your Calendars!

June 25, 9:00 a.m.

Worship at
Luther Memorial
2840 S. 84th St.

August 20, 9:30 a.m.

Worship at
Mt. Hope
8633 W. Becher St.

There will be no worship services at First Lutheran on these Sundays.

Outreach for Hope Weekend



Pastor Chris Manke, (L) Director of Outreach for Hope, delivered the sermon on Sunday. We took up a noisy offering to benefit the program. Michael Falk (R-with Jerry and Gayle) was our emcee at Happy Hour Trivia that evening.



We had a lot of fun at our Trivia night, and enjoyed the fellowship with members of Martin Luther, Mt. Zion, All People's Gathering, Cross Lutheran and Mt. Hope.



More Events and Members



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asked to connect with the congregation on issues of inclusion and readiness to call LGBTIA+ clergy and become an RIC congregation. While my previous congregation Mount Zion was one of the first RIC churches in the synod, I did that assessment as part of my call as an interim pastor to Mount Zion. Their identity as an RIC church had not been prominent during the previous pastorate.

While some members were apprehensive about this assessment, this experience was a positive one for Mount Zion and for me. It gave members an opportunity to ask questions, share perspectives and experiences, learn more about relevant scripture and theology, cultural context and gender science, and, at a basic level, what the letters in LGBTQIA+ stand for and why they matter. It's important to remember that this is not just an issue to be discussed. At its core this justice issue is about how we listen to and welcome real people. Our neighbor church Mount Hope has just gone through the process of becoming an RIC congregation. If we chose to learn more about RIC, there are people nearby who can share their experiences with us.

Deconstructing Racism Training

The Greater Milwaukee Synod encourages all leaders of congregations in the synod to participate in a Deconstructing Racism Training led by Rev. Marilyn Miller and Dr. Joyce Caldwell. Five congregation members participated in the training last fall. This day-long training helped participants think about their own and others' experiences with racism in a way that encouraged active work in addressing racism in our society as individuals and in our communities. The more people that go through this training the better we are at welcoming diverse members to our community and understanding how race and bias affect our actions and opinions. While it is easy to say, "we don't see race," the world is full of difference and diversity that may be celebrated and valued as a source of strength and learning. As we do this, we live into the picture of the kingdom of God that Jesus and early church leaders like Peter and Paul described and defined as characteristics of the Christian community in any time or place. That includes us!

These organizations and these conversations help us to better understand our community and the ways we can live into justice work in many forms. More importantly these learning experiences help us find ways to offer a more genuine invitation to those around us so that everyone feels included and welcomed. While there is not a "one size fits all" approach to "welcome" that congregations can offer, I have come to understand that God loves diversity and people learning through differences and I think we should too.

Pastor Josh



Elise Hynek, great-niece of Elsie Boese, graduated from Wartburg Seminary on May 14th. She has been called to the Northern Great Lakes Synod of the ELCA (the Upper Peninsula of Michigan). We wish her congratulations and many blessings on her new journey.



NOVEMBER IS ONLY 5 MONTHS AWAY!!

If you would like to donate an item for our raffle table please label it as a Vendor/Craft Fair donation and leave it in the church office. Even if it is a small item, Colleen does a great job of creating beautiful raffle baskets that she will design with other items and gift cards.

Connect With Us

Thankful, Thoughtful Thursdays



Lori and Linda illustrated the Pentecost wind with a hair dryer, the flames on top of head with a flashlight and God's gift of Jesus with birthday horns.



Support Our Wedding Re-Sale Event Saturday, Aug. 5th 10am - 3pm

Newlyweds can sell their wedding or bridesmaid gowns, bouquets, candles, decorations, etc! Future brides can shop for needed items.

Take some flyers to local businesses and spread the word to family and friends!



Wednesday Evening Worship

Our Wednesday evening worship services on June 7, July 5 and August 2 will be held outdoors at 6:00 p.m. Mt. Hope and Luther Memorial are invited to join in worship with us. Bring a lawn chair if you can, and join us!



SAVE THE DATE! Vacation Bible School Saturday, July 22nd

Ages 4 - those entering 6th grade.

More information next month!



TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

We continue to watch and discuss The Chosen. You know the story of Jesus and his disciples, so you can join us without feeling like you missed anything. You can also catch up and watch online on your own schedule.

New attendees are always welcome! Join us in the Fireside Room at 10 a.m. each Tuesday. If you can't join us in person, you can join us via Zoom. Contact Pastor Josh or the church office for more information.

Council News and More

FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT:

We had a fun, eventful night of Trivia Happy Hour at First Lutheran with several neighboring churches participating. It was led by Michael Falk, son of Jerry and Gayle Falk, and sponsored by Outreach for Hope, led by Pastor Chris Manke. Approximately 65 people attended the event. Over \$600.00 was raised for Outreach for Hope.

On Mother's Day we celebrated First Communion for Karlie and Sam Marquez, daughter and son of Lori Marquez. They helped to celebrate by swishing water onto our heads to remind us of our own baptism. Congratulation Karlie and Sam.

We will be sending delegates to the Synod assembly on June 2nd and 3rd. It will be held at the Italian Community Center in Milwaukee. The Friday evening worship and dessert reception are open to all.

Sign your kids and grandkids up for VBS on Saturday, July 22nd from 10: AM until 2:00 PM.

We have had members who have attended gatherings of MICAH (Milwaukee Inner-City Congregations Allied for Hope), Deconstructing Racism Training and RIC (Reconciled in Christ). Our representatives will be sharing what they learned at our Coffee and... groups on June 4th and June 11th, and on a later date to be determined. Plan to attend and learn what these organizations are trying to accomplish.

Our scholarship fund is expanding to include tuition to summer camp. Inquire at the church office or scholarship committee if you have someone interested.

Sincerely, Werner Bayer, council president

COUNCIL ACTIONS



MAY 21ST MEETING

- Motion to accept invitation of other churches share joint services: On June 25 a service at Luther Memorial at 9:00 and on August 20 a service at Mt. Hope at 9:30. On these Sundays First Lutheran will cancel its own Sunday service. Motion passed.
- Motion to invite Mt. Hope and Luther Memorial congregations to attend our first Wednesday evening services in June, July and August, and to move these services outdoors. Motion passed.
- Motion to purchase or commission a cover for the mixer board currently stored in Pastor's office. Motion passed.



For Mother's Day, volunteers from the Food Pantry handed out chocolate treats to Food Pantry Clients and members of the First Lutheran Congregation.

Every Thursday Mike and Greta Plicka pick up bread, baked goods, deli items and vegetables donated to us from Festival Foods. To show how much we appreciate their efforts we gave chocolate treats to workers in the bakery, deli and vegetable departments. This is another example of how the Food Pantry reaches out to the community.

Pastor Josh Graber met with a representative from Feeding America. Every two years Feeding America does a site visit which includes a tour of the Food Pantry, updates on weekly attendance and how we distribute bags, bread and other food items.

We continue to be grateful for the support we receive from Festival Foods, Feeding America, Aggies Bakery and Cake Shop and donations in cash or food from area schools, churches and members of our congregation. We would not be able to operate without the help of our volunteers that pick up food, bread, and assist during our Friday operating hours. Members of the congregation are welcome to visit us on Friday mornings from 10:00-12:00.

The Food Pantry would appreciate donations of jelly.

Submitted by: Mike Plicka and John Hrovat

This 'n That Around Here



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

Marty Duke, Marissa Guijo, Jan Pleur, Manuel Silva, Vince and Margie



What does God compare to rain "watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater"?

- A. The justice of the nations
- B. The work of God's people
- C. The message of Isaiah the prophet
- D. God's word

Answer: See Isaiah 55:10-11



Birthdays

6/3 - John Hrovat
 6/3 - Wayne Wagner
 6/14 - Austin Cyrus
 6/15 - Jerry Falk
 6/17 - Warren Hirschinger
 6/18 - Carolyn Moncher
 6/29 - Randy Schwartz
 6/29 - Audrey Wiefelspuetz
 6/30 - Mason Schoberg

Anniversaries

6/7 - Robert & Joyce Gardner - 65 yrs.
 6/9 - Dave & Linda Grulke - 50 yrs.
 6/21 - Chris & Amy Guthrie - 15 yrs.
 6/23 - Don & Carolyn Moncher - 67 yrs.



As we enter our church, we pass the American flag. It is a reminder of those who have died for our country and the veterans who have served. We are grateful for the freedoms we have in the United States and when entering our house of worship, on Memorial Day and every day, we remember and honor those who have served and sacrificed.



"Rest is not idle, is not wasteful. Sometimes rest is the most productive thing you can do for body and soul."
 —Erica Layne



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

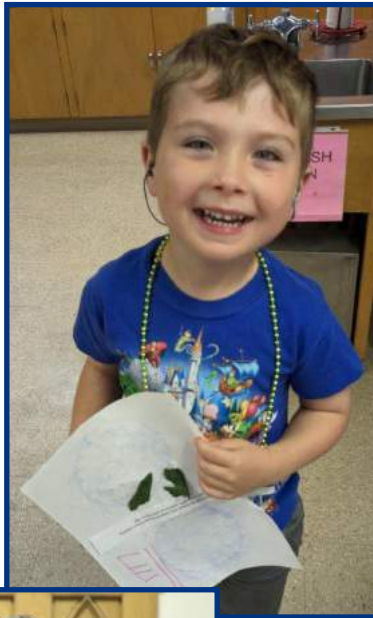
Need pastoral care?

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.

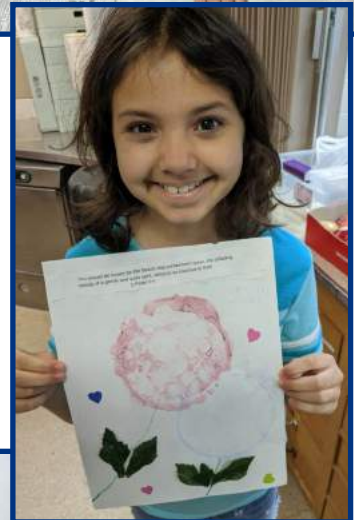
Save your ink!

Remember to save your printer ink cartridges when you're done with them and bring them to the office. We receive \$2 each toward purchases at Office Depot - up to \$20 per month.

What We've Been Doing



For Mother's Day, the Sunday School class made hydrangeas out of bubble paint (above and R). On May 14, Sam and Karlie had their first communion and received Bibles.



Matt and Amber are all decked out for Prom (L). Pastor Josh and Sarah in Denver with the state capitol in the background (above). The bags of chocolates (R) given to all of our women at church on Mother's Day.



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

Mailed on 5-24-23

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Dated Material
Please deliver by 5-27-23



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)

7400 W. Lapham St.
West Allis, WI
E-mail: firstlutheranelca@att.net
Phone: 414-476-4664

Worship With Us:

Sunday, June 4, 11 and 18 at 10 a.m.

June 7, outdoors in our courtyard, at 6 p.m.

Sunday, June 25, 9 a.m. at Luther Memorial

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.