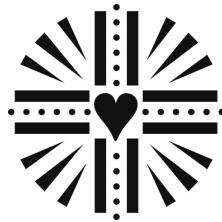




First Lutheran Church

Called to proclaim and celebrate the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we are nurtured, prepared, and sent to be the light of Christ in our world.



Walking in God's Love!

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you!"

John 15:12 NRSV

On the night before his death, Jesus commanded his disciples to love one another in the same way that he had loved them! And ever since that day, we followers of Christ have found ways to overcomplicate his marching orders. For example, we question who we should love, we wonder how we should love, we try to tell others how they are to demonstrate their love for God, and at times we even put certain limits or stipulations on our love. And yet, as we read about the earthly ministry of Jesus, we witness him exhibiting unconditional, inclusive, and sacrificial love as he ministered to the poor, the outcast, the downtrodden, the sinner, and eventually he even extended his love to all the nations of the world.

Ok, so why is it such a challenge for us to follow the command that Jesus gave his disciples? One argument I have discovered, in a devotional from Alvin Rogness, points to Adam and Eve's disobedience. "Before sin entered their lives the two of them were completely lost in the wonder of the world outside of themselves. Their lives were caught up in three foci. First, they were captured by the greatness and goodness of God. Second, they were fascinated by the beauties of the Garden. Third they were absorbed in each other.

In one tragic moment, however, they lost all three centers. They hid from God. They were driven out of the Garden to become fugitives in the world. They turned in upon themselves and lost each other, as evidenced in Cain's cynical retort to God when he murdered his brother Abel, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' God, the Garden, and the brother were all lost. Man turned in upon himself, as the one focus, and history is one long story of man's self-concern, self-defense, self-accusation, self-aggrandizement, and self-pity."

As we gather for Rally Day on Sunday September 10th, and as church activities and programs begin to ramp up at FELC, it is my hope that we can work together to rediscover the kind of love Jesus calls his followers to emulate. Let us seek to be more selfless and outward in our thinking. Let us get lost in the wonder and awesomeness of God's creation. And let us do all we can to deepen our relationship with God and one another, as we work on walking in God's love together!



Rally Day is happening on Sept. 10th!
Come together & celebrate as we kick off a new "school year"
at First Lutheran.

Why Are We Rallying Again?

On September 10th we will be celebrating the end of summer and the beginning of our Fall programs at First Lutheran. We will Rally together, as we observe Sunday school starting up again with Sundae Social in the Fellowship Hall after worship, as we begin to hear about the different opportunities for doing ministry within and beyond our church walls, as we celebrate the continuation of Confirmation, and as we gather to learn about the Bible Study based on Season 3 of the Chosen being offered this year (*typically it will be offered at 11:30am on Sunday mornings, but on **Rally Day** we will meet briefly at 12:00pm for an orientation*).

Blessing of School Backpacks

As we celebrate the beginning of Sunday School, we are aware that our young children and some of our adult members have recently returned to school. On Rally Day (September 10th), kids, teachers, and school workers are encouraged to bring their backpacks, briefcases, or lunch boxes, to church to be blessed during the worship service.

Pizza & Holden Evening Prayer

Sept. 11th & Oct. 9th

Do you find yourself missing church because you work on Sunday morning? Would you like to attend Holden Evening Prayer, but don't have the time to make it home for dinner and also make it to the worship service? Do you like sharing a meal with others? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you are invited to join us at First Lutheran on the second Monday of September & October at **6:30pm** for Pizza and Salad and for Holden Evening Prayer at 7:00pm. Please note that Pastor Ryan will preach a sermon during the worship service and communion will also be offered.



All Saints Service November 5th

During the service we will commemorate the Saints of our church who died this past year. You will have an opportunity to add a family member who has died in the last year to the list of names read. Watch for the sign up sheet in the narthex next to the podium. The congregation will also have an opportunity to light additional candles in memory of the Saints in their lives.

Faith Formation at First Lutheran and Beyond

This Fall, as we learn to walk in God's love, there will be all kinds of education opportunities to help you grow in your relationship with God and your relationship with other members of the body of Christ. From weekly **Bible studies** (one based on the Revised Common Lectionary, Wednesday mornings at 9am, and another based on the 3rd Season of the Chosen, Sunday mornings at 11:30am) to **Sunday School** (which will start on **Rally Day, September 10th at 9am**). Please keep in mind that the **Chosen Watch parties** will continue on Fridays at Noon beginning on September 8th with a pizza party! And finally, if you know of any kids entering into 7th grade, and/or if your child was in the program last year, there will be a **Confirmation** orientation on Wednesday, September 20th at 7pm.

DAY RETREAT

Unique Ways to Be the Church

There will also be other opportunities outside of our church walls for us to learn more about God and to work on building up our faith. For example, **Camp Lutherwood** will be hosting a special Synod event called, **Sacred Spaces Retreat, on Saturday, September 16th from 9am to 5:00pm**. According to a recent online article, "Join Facilitators and Practitioners of unique gatherings and organic forms of church, for a day of stories, experiences, and workshops to explore together how we can open God's holy invitation even wider. There are so many ways to gather as faithful communities, whether it's outdoors, creating art, at the pub, or just eating around one big table. Why shouldn't our gatherings reflect our uniqueness?" If you are interested in going, let Pastor Ryan or the Office know and perhaps we can try to coordinate rides. There will be no cost for individuals to attend but we will need to register together as a group so please contact Pastor Ryan or Holly in the church office.

Preliminary Budget Planning Mtg. Sept.13th at 6pm

Our budgeting process will begin with a preliminary budget meeting on Sept. 13th at 6.

Annual Budget Planning Mtg. Oct. 5 at 6pm

Our next budget meeting will be the annual budget planning meeting will be at 6:00 on October 5, 2023. **Please check your budget and meet with your council representative to discuss if any changes should be made.** At the October 5th meeting, we will go over the budget line by line to determine if or what amounts should be changed. Once this is completed and approved at the council meeting, we will then take the amended budget to the semi-annual meeting in November for the congregation to approve. Thank you all for your participation in this important process.

Stewardship REPORT

INCOME AND EXPENSE

JAN TO JULY 2023	
INCOME	\$118,081.00
BUDGET INCOME	\$142,569
EXPENSE	\$144,900.00

WE NEED YOU!

Do you enjoy working with others? Are you good at giving positive feedback?

Do you want FELC to thrive in 2023-24 and beyond?

Fall is the time of year we begin thinking of our church leadership and prepare a slate of nominations for our November congregational meeting.

This year we have the following positions which come before us for election:

Congregation Officers (President, Secretary, Treasurer)

Board of Deacons

Board of Trustees

Nominating Committee

Memorial Committee

Personnel /Staff Support Committee

Representatives to Josephine Caring Community

Representatives to Camp Lutherwood

Please take a look at the information posted in the Fellowship Hall. We have job descriptions and terms (*yes, there are terms- this is not a life time commitment!*) And if you have questions-please ask the Committee member or the current Council representative.

We are asking you to please share your *TALENTS* with FELC in areas where your expertise will shine and we will all benefit from your leadership.

Questions?

See Connie Wells, Frances Wraspir or Debbie Lisser

The Lunch/Brunch Bunch

One of the best ways for people to get to know one another is by sharing a meal together. It makes sense, considering that Jesus often broke bread with all kinds of different people. That being the case, please consider signing up to join Pastor Ryan for a meal on the last Sunday of each month at 1:00pm. Our first gathering will be at the Curious Chef in Burlington on September 24th.

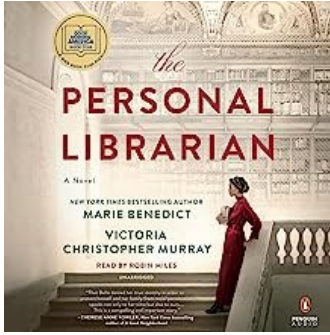
Outreach Committee

Before Jesus ascended into Heaven, he gave his disciples a very daunting task. He commanded them to, "go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. (Matthew 19 -20a, NRSV)." And with the gift of the Spirit, they went out into the world trusting that Jesus was with them as they spread the good news of the Gospel!

As modern-day disciples of Jesus we too are all called to share our faith with others and to do what we can to plant the seeds of God's Word through our words and actions! So, with that in mind, you are encouraged to prayerfully consider being a part of our Outreach Committee as we seek to find new and exciting ways to reach out with the love of Christ to our community. In fact, one of the ways we have tried to do this is by welcoming the kids and parents at Jefferson Elementary School back from summer vacation with fun signs and cold bottles of water.

Evangelism isn't necessarily about going door to door asking people if they believe in Jesus. Rather, it is about showing the people around us the difference that Christ has made in our lives and by helping them to experience God's love through the things we say and the things that we do. As a popular Christian quote declares, "Preach the Gospel at all times and if necessary, use words."

Now more than ever, our world needs the love, forgiveness, and presence of God and we need to work together to make it happen. Please see Pastor Ryan or David Johnson if you would like to be a part of this vital and life changing committee.



Our current book for discussion is...

“The Personal Librarian”

Join us for a book discussion on Sept. 21 at noon in the Chapel.

Information from the publisher:

A remarkable novel about J. P. Morgan’s personal librarian, Belle da Costa Greene, the Black American woman who was forced to hide her true identity and pass as white in order to leave a lasting legacy that enriched our nation, from *New York Times* bestselling authors Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray.

In her twenties, Belle da Costa Greene is hired by J. P. Morgan to curate a collection of rare manuscripts, books, and artwork for his newly built Pierpont Morgan Library. Belle becomes a fixture in New York City society and one of the most powerful people in the art and book world, known for her impeccable taste and shrewd negotiating for critical works as she helps create a world-class collection.

But Belle has a secret, one she must protect at all costs. She was born not Belle da Costa Greene but Belle Marion Greener. She is the daughter of Richard Greener, the first Black graduate of Harvard and a well-known advocate for equality. Belle’s complexion isn’t dark because of her alleged Portuguese heritage that lets her pass as white—her complexion is dark because she is African American.

Have a Prayer Request?

If you have a prayer request & would welcome prayer partners please send your requests to the church office office@firstlutheranmv.org. Members of the First Lutheran Prayer Ministry would be happy to join you in prayer.

Please make sure to have permission to share the prayer concern via the prayer chain before sending it in. We want to be sure to honor the privacy of all.

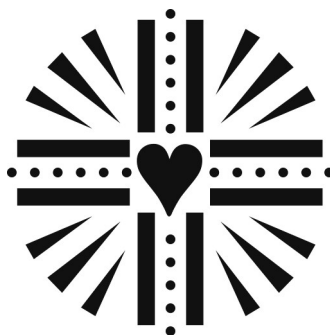
Thank you to all of our “Prayer Warriors.” It is pretty special to know that there is a group of brothers & sisters in Christ who are willing to join in prayer.

Would you like to join our Prayer Ministry? Prayer Chain Members receive emailed prayer requests & individually lift the recipient up in prayer. If you are interested in being a part of this Ministry please talk to Holly, in the church office 360 424-6832 or email office@firstlutheranmv.org.



Worship & Music Committee Mtg. Oct 17th at 1pm

If you are interested in helping plan worship, you are welcome to join us for our Advent, Christmas & Epiphany planning meeting on October 17th at 1pm. If you find you enjoy worship planning, consider formally joining the committee.



WELCOMING NEW NEIGHBORS
BEING GOOD NEIGHBORS

You may have noticed the home being built on the corner of Blackburn and La Venture. It is the first home of the 4 houses, known as Kendall Court, being constructed by Habitat.

Since we were not able to participate in the actual construction, other opportunities to help and support the new community are being planned by First Lutheran Social Ministry Committee in partnership with our local Habitat Organization.

The first owner, a mom and 2 children, will receive the keys to their new home in October 2023 and we would like to prepare and present a Welcome to the Neighborhood gift basket at their Key Ceremony.

Do you remember a moving day or week when everything you own is in boxes? Hearing comments like: where is the toilet paper?, I need a glass for a some water, or how can I dry my hands? Do we have some plates? How can I clean up this spill? The purpose of the gifts would be to welcome them with items that might be useful in the transition time of moving into a new home.

There will be an opportunity to provide simple items, or gift cards, chosen from the House Tags on the New Neighbor Board which will be in the Narthex or Fellowship Hall, in September.

Additionally: we will have an opportunity for the congregation to sign cards of welcome and congratulations to be delivered with the gifts; and a Habitat Staff member has been invited to come to church and give a brief presentation about this project; also with time and weather permitting, volunteers from First Lutheran will deliver treats to the workers during a specific week before the construction is completed.

A grant from Thrivent has been received to support: Being a Good Neighbor, Welcoming our NEW NEIGHBORS project.

These opportunities will support the first and second home owners (the second home will be done in about 4-6 months.) When the 3rd and 4th homes are in the process, we look forward to helping them as well.

Watch for information for collection dates and volunteer delivery and welcome home.

Sent to be the light of Christ in our world.



Dear First Lutheran congregation,

The Social Ministry team would like to thank you for all your donations of school supplies to the students of Jefferson Elementary. This year has been another difficult start to the school year for students. Parents and guardians have been struggling with the price of groceries, gas, and everything else, as prices keep increasing.

Starting the school year off with the necessary supplies is one piece of the puzzle to help keep kids motivated and engaged in school. Every donation, whether it's the purchase of one pack of crayons or one stick of glue, helps the next generation.

Thank you for thinking of the children at Jefferson!

Social Ministry

Friendship House Meal

First Lutheran has a consistent role in serving our homeless neighbors. Once per month, we gather supplies for a dinner to be served at both the *Friendship House Cafe* and now at *Skagit First Step* in Burlington. Thanks to your generosity!

Watch for a sign up sheet in the e news or on the refrigerator in the kitchen. We will be serving the evening meal at the Friendship House on Sept. 26, and again on Oct. 31.

Help us Welcome the students at Jefferson Elementary.

On August 30th, the children in our area will be starting school again and we would like to show them we are happy they are back! If you would like to help us pass out bottles of cold water, or if you would like to wave signs with words of encouragement, we will meet at the church on August 30th by 2:30pm.

Congregation Care Team

During the Fall, our focus at First Lutheran is Walking in God's Love. And one of the ways we can learn to walk in God's love is to look beyond ourselves to the needs of others. With that in mind, you are invited to consider the following question. Do you enjoy **visiting** with others and/or would you like to bring **Communion** to some of our homebound individuals from First Lutheran? Do you have a passion and a love for the members of our church that aren't able to make it to worship each week, but would still like to stay connected to our congregation?

If you answered yes to either of these questions, please consider joining the Congregation Care Team that Pastor Ryan is forming. Please let him know if you are interested and mark your calendars for Tuesday, September 19th at 6pm so that we can meet and discuss ideas for how we can care for the members and friends of FELC. Let us always try to remember the words of Jesus, "Everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:35 NRSV)."



Ice Cream Social

Sept 10th Following Worship

You are invited to bring your favorite topping to share.

Church Calendar

Remember that we have a calendar attached to our website www.firstlutheranmv.org

We do our best to keep it updated with all the church happenings & community building use. If you would like to add a meeting or event to the calendar, please email the church office at Office@firstlutheranmv.org Thank you for helping us keep the calendar up to date!

Skagit CROP Walk to End Hunger Sunday

Sept. 24th at 2pm Beginning at MV Christian School

Questions? Talk to David Johnson

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

2015 E. Blackburn Rd.
Mount Vernon WA 98274
Mailing: PO Box 777
Mount Vernon WA 98273

Worship Services

Sunday Worship 10:00 am

Church Office—office@firstlutheranmv.org

Website w/calendar www.firstlutheranmv.org

Join us on [Facebook](#)

Church Phone: 360 424-6832

Direct number for Pastor Ryan Rouse: 360 603-6379

To reach our Staff:

Pastor- Pastor Ryan Rouse

Pastorryan@firstlutheranmv.org

Holly Oliver,

Parish Administrator-office@firstlutheranmv.org

Pete Olson,

Worship Accompanist-peterdonne@yahoo.com

First Lutheran

All are created uniquely by God and all are welcome here.

Your Abilities· Age· Culture· Economic Status· Gender Expression/identity· Life Circumstances· Marital Status· Questions· Race· Sexual Orientation· are welcome here.

Our Congregational Leaders

President— Donn Hollenbeck

Vice President— Bob Ramborger

Secretary— Vyonne Carter, Sandy Simon

Treasurer— Brad Pickett

Trustees

Jeff May, Bob Ramborger, Brad Clifton

Deacons

Heather Romano, Bud Fish, Doug Carter

Parish Activities

Ann May, Sue Holmes, Jana Svendsen