



First Lutheran Church



Joy found in Giving!

Did you know that giving to God is not meant to be a burden, but a joy? The Bible teaches us that generosity is a fruit of the Spirit at work in our lives. It comes from an attitude of gratitude. Our giving is always meant to be in response to what God has already done for us in Jesus Christ. Giving then becomes not something we *have* to do, but something we *want* to do. Mark Allen Powell a Bible scholar and Lutheran theologian wrote a bestselling book called *Giving to God: The Bible's Good News About Living a Generous Life* and in it he offers three principles of stewardship.

First, he says, faithful stewardship involves giving to God as an act of worship. We give out of glad and generous hearts as an expression of love and devotion to a God who is so good to us. Second, faithful stewardship involves giving to God as an expression of our faith. When we give generously and without compulsion, we confess that all we are and everything we have belongs to God, and we put this faith into action when we offer ourselves and our possessions to God to be used as God sees fit. Finally, faithful stewardship involves giving to God as a discipline for spiritual growth. Whenever we practice a degree of self-denial, we are stretching our faith muscles, in recognition of the Biblical truth that “where our treasure is, there will our hearts be also.”

There is a story of a poor Chinese man who brought the last of his rice as an offering. A neighbor told him, “You must not do that. You have to live.” His answer was, “More importantly, I have to worship.” We discover that giving is one way of participating in a relationship with the God who loves and cares for us, of enjoying a deep and satisfying relationship with the God to whom we belong.

These days as we stay at home in order to keep ourselves and others safe, sadly we aren't able to place our offerings in an offering plate at church. Thankfully we can still tithe through online giving and/or by sending a check in the mail. And we should do this not necessarily because the church needs our money (which realistically it does), but because we should want and need to give it! Through our offerings, we are able to express the love and devotion we have for God.

Of course, we may falsely think that we are the owners of what we have and that we deserve every bit of it. After all we've worked hard for what we have, so haven't we earned the right to do what we want with all that we believe is ours? By the rest of the world's standards, we build nice homes, purchase decent cars, buy our kids good clothes, and even put aside money into college funds and/or a 401Ks. The problem is that we have come to believe that it is all ours to do with as we wish. Again, the Bible reminds us that God is the owner, and we are but the managers of all that we have been given. For it is by God's grace that we have anything at all.

A missionary was pleased when a native boy arrived at the village church with a fish in hand. The boy told the pastor that he was bringing to God his tithe of 10%. When the missionary asked where the other nine fish were, the boy smiled and replied: “I'm just now going back to the river to catch them.” May we too know such joy in giving. Amen.

Called to proclaim and celebrate the Gospel of Jesus Christ...

First Lutheran

Our church council met March 31st via zoom, and made the decision to extend the closure of FELC to all activities through the end of April. The council will meet via zoom again on April 21st to consider health department recommendations and reassess. In the meantime please join us as we proclaim and celebrate the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as a worshipping body, via our Website. <https://firstlutheranmv.org/worship/>

Lent 2020



*Online Holy Week
Special Services*

Please visit the worship page on our website to access our worship services.

Palm/Passion Sunday- April 5

Maundy Thursday- April 9

Good Friday- April 10

Easter Sunday - April 12

Please email Pastor Ryan at Pastorryan@firstlutheranmv.org if you would like to serve in worship. There are many opportunities for people of all ages to serve during this time of social distancing.



Bible Study via Zoom

Pastor Ryan invites you to join in an online Bible study each Wednesday morning at 8am. If you haven't done so already, he recommend you download the zoom program to your computer: <https://zoom.us/download> or search for Zoom on the App store on your Iphone or the Google Play store on your android phone. There should be no cost to use the program or app. Once you have the app try playing around with it. Watch for an email send prior to the Wednesday study which will include the Bible study link. If you have not been receiving emails about our online studies, please email Holly in the church office at firstlutheranmv.org



Confirmation

Watch your email box for information from Pastor Ryan regarding online confirmation classes.

Staying Connected with the FELC Website

Hello everyone, I hope you are all doing well during these interesting times we are faced with. We are hoping to open the Church back up for Worship and other in-person use soon, but until then, we'll continue to use different forms of communication to stay connected as a community until then. I'd like to highlight our website and some things we have added during the closure to help with those connections at <https://firstlutheranmv.org>

The current website was designed and launched in 2018 in partnership with Steam Hosting, a local website company that has been donating our hosting cost. But before we could expand our use beyond the basic information, the Pastor Transition started and the website took a backseat. The closure due to COVID was the motivation we needed to look at how we could better connect with you online. We have now added two new tools to our website, Worship videos/transcripts, and online giving.

We have moved to virtual online Worship during the closure, and the website is where you will find all current and previous online Worship video recordings. The most recent Worship videos will be available directly on the Worship page, and then you can click a link to view any of the previous videos. You don't need an account to watch the videos, just click and enjoy! Also available for each video is a transcript of the Sermon for that day, so if you'd like to read the message along with or instead of watching the video, that is also available in PDF format which most computer and devices should be able to access. We plan to continue adding audio and/or video recordings of Worship after we are able to Worship in-person.

Online giving is the second additional tool we have added to make it easier for you to tithe during the closure. We are using Tithe.ly, through a partnership with the ELCA, which allows to use the system at a discounted cost and ensures that it has been vetted at the national level. It's simple to use like any online payment/donation system, you enter the amount of the gift, the fund you want it to go into (regular offering, special offerings such as Lent/Easter, etc.) and then your account information.

I want to share a couple tips for using the online giving:

Cover the fees - there is an option to cover the fees, and when you use this option you will pay a little extra to allow FELC to receive the full amount of your gift:

If you give \$100, and the fee is \$2, FELC will only receive \$98;

If you use cover the fees, your gift will be \$102, and FELC receives the full \$100;

The full amount of your gift including the fee is tax deductible.

Credit/Debit vs Bank Account – There is an option at the very bottom of the giving form to switch between using a debit/credit card for your gift, or using a bank account transfer. The fees are much lower for the Bank Account option, so I would recommend using it, if possible:

Debit/Credit cards are 2.5% + .25 per transaction (3.5% for American Express)

Bank accounts are only 0.5% + .25 per transaction

While the percentage difference may seem small, it really adds up over time!

We hope these new tools are useful to you while you are safely sheltered at home, and we look forward to seeing you again in-person as soon as we are able!

Benjy St.Germain

We are nurtured, prepared...

Do you 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 & lift the recipient up in prayer. If you are interested in being a part of this Ministry please email Holly, in the church office office@firstlutheranmv.org or leave a message on our church voicemail 360 424-6832.



Almighty and merciful God, you are the only source of health and healing; you alone can bring calmness and peace. Grant to us, your children, an awareness of your presence and a strong confidence in you. In our pain, our weariness, and our anxiety, surround us with your care, protect us by your loving might, and permit us once more to enjoy health and strength and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

ELW Prayer

First Lutheran Preschool

Our Teachers have created an outreach from staff to the children via our First Lutheran Preschool Facebook site. The first episode involved Mrs. Olsen greeting the children, saying we miss them and hope they are busy. Next, instructions for making a Pop-Up greeting card that can be sent to friend who could enjoy a note full of Love. You might want to check it out by following the underlined link above. As a board, we feel very blessed to have such dear ladies sharing Gods Love with our children and the community.

Please visit the preschool facebook page for updated information regarding our preschool. Enrollment has begun for 2020-2021 school year.

First Lutheran Preschool Contact Info:
Phone- 306-941-4187, Facebook-
[firstlutheranpreschoolmv](https://www.facebook.com/firstlutheranpreschoolmv)
E- Mail preschool@firstlutheranmv.org

Neighbors in Need

During this time Neighbors in Need Food Bank is not accepting private food donations. If you would like to make a monetary donation without ever needing to leave your house, you may head on over to www.svneighborsinneed.com/donate or mail a donation to PO Box 394, Mount Vernon WA 98273.

Sent to be the light of Christ in our world.



Our current book discussion book is...
"Where the Crawdads Sing" By Delia Owens

Pick up a copy and join us for discussion when we are able to gather in community again.

*Following Where the crawdads sing, we will be reading: *"Same Kind of Different As Me: A Modern Day Slave, an International Art Dealer, and the Unlikely Woman who Bound Them Together" By Ron Hall, Denver Moore, & Lynn Vincent*

**There are a few copies of the book available just outside of the front door of the church. There are also a few more copies in the narthex. The envelope inside the book can be a reminder to reimburse the church via mail or in person, at a later date.*

You are created uniquely by God and you are welcome here.

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

Worship Services

Sunday Worship 10:00 am

Church Office Monday-Friday 8:30am – 3:30pm

Website w/calendar www.firstlutheranmv.org

Phone: 360 424-6832 - For Pastoral Emergencies, please listen to voicemail message for phone number of on call pastor.

First Lutheran

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.

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

Jesse Floyd,

Choir Director- choir@firstlutheranmv.org

Janna Beecher,

Parish Assistant-parishassistant@firstlutheranmv.org

Preschool Administrators-Lori Flores & Chelsey Olsen–

preschool@firstlutheranmv.org Preschool Phone-360-941-4187

Our Congregational Leaders

President– Benjamin St. Germain

Vice President– Brad Pickett

Secretary– Sharon Lauch

Treasurer– Jeanette St. Germain

Trustees

Blaine Wollan, Brad Pickett, Donn Hollenbeck

Deacons

Gary Wiegand, Bob Ramborger, Doug Carter

Parish Activities

Frances Wraspir,

Karmen St. Germain, David Jones