



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.

Tradition and Familiarity Bring Comfort

A few weeks ago, I was extremely blessed to participate in a special service at First Lutheran that, from what I have come to learn, has been a beloved tradition for the members and friends of this congregation for quite some time. Of course, I am talking about Holden Evening Prayer and on Monday August 9th at 7pm I joined a number of people from our church as we gathered outside to worship together with the help of some beautiful music played on both a piano and guitar. Afterwards, we had a wonderful time of fellowship as we ate ice cream sundaes, among other treats, and as we stood around tables enjoying some good conversation.

As I walked home from that very uplifting and meaningful experience, I began to think that maybe our faith and love of God, along with our love for traditions and the familiar, can help bring us back together after such a long time apart during the pandemic. After all, in his epistles the Apostle Paul lifts up the importance of maintaining certain traditions. In his 1st letter to the Corinthians he writes, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions just as I handed them on to you." In other words, Paul encourages his fellow Christians to continue to observe the things he taught them that helped them stay connected to God through Jesus.

Similarly, like the Apostle we too appreciate certain traditions that bring us together and help us stay united to our incredible Triune God. In fact, we often find comfort and enjoyment in certain things and situations that are familiar. Perhaps this is why a good remake of a movie or tv show is often able to do as well or better than the original? Or maybe it is the reason we enjoy listening to a song we love over and over again, or what leads us back to reading the same book or watching the same classic television sitcom for the umpteenth time?

This being said, as I started thinking about the Holden Evening prayer service, and as I reflected on our first time being back in the Sanctuary for Worship on Pentecost Sunday, I began to wonder if there are other traditions the members and friends of First Lutheran might miss that we can try to bring back in a safe manner. For instance, currently we are working on changing the bulletin back to the classic folding format, which we hope might bring you all a bit of comfort and familiarity. We are also hoping to continue to offer Holden Evening Prayer and Ice cream Sundaes on the Second Monday of each month. I should also mention that the book study group has started meeting again every other month, and in the Fall we are hoping to bring back coffee hour (though we may start with having it outside so we can all gather together between the in-person and the drive-up services).

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

Continuing from pg. 1

Which begs the question, do any of you have any other traditions in mind, that you miss, that you would like to see us try to bring back if we are able to do so safely? Perhaps you remember something meaningful that happened during a special celebration of Pentecost or Reformation Day? Maybe you have a beloved memory of something that was done during an All Saints or Thanksgiving eve worship service? Please feel free to email us if you think of something you would like to share with us.

Hopefully you have some suggestions, but please keep in mind that while we reflect on the things that bring meaning and comfort to us, we want to try to do so in a positive manner without complaining about how things aren't the same anymore, and with an open mindset open to compromise and the possibility of trying new things as well. After all, traditions are important, but they shouldn't get in the way or prevent us from connecting with our awesome God. Don't forget Jesus warned the religious leaders of his day that they, "Abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition."

God Bless,
Pastor Ryan

Serving in Worship

Would you rather have someone schedule you, than sign yourself up?

Since the beginning of the pandemic we have been asking worshippers to sign up to serve in worship each week. Would you prefer to be assigned as a reader, usher or greeter rather than signing yourself up? If you would like to add your name to a list of volunteers who will be assigned dates to serve in worship, please call or email the church. When you contact us, please let us know what service you attend & how you would like to help. We will plug you in to the schedule. If on the other hand you would rather pick and choose your dates, you may still do so using the link to sign up genius. It is pretty user friendly but feel free to contact the church office if you would like help navigating the system.

Sign up to serve in the Sanctuary Service [here](#). (1st Service)

Sign up to serve at the drive up service [here](#). (2nd Service)



Summer Worship Times
will continue through
Labor Day Weekend

9:00 am
Sanctuary Service

10:30 am
Drive-up/Outdoor

Join us for Worship this Fall!



New Worship Times *Beginning Sept. 12th

Indoor Worship
(for those who have their COVID Vaccine)
Sunday Morning at *10:00 am

Drive-up worship (An outdoor service—open to all)
Sunday Morning at *11:30 am

Holden Evening Prayer (An outdoor service—open to all)
Sept 13th at 7pm

We are nurtured, prepared...



OFFICIAL CHOIR (OR NOT)

Let's Make a Joyful Noise!

With the always changing fluctuations of Covid variants, Pete, along with other staff and the Worship and Music Committee, is puzzled about what choices the church can or should make regarding additional music. The Worship and Music Committee did recommend not hiring a Choir Director at this time. Some suggestions we have are to encourage more "special" music (vocal solos, duets, trios, quartets); instrumental offerings (especially encouraging church youth); or a variation on what we formerly called a "summer choir." When we used this latter approach when the regular choir was on hiatus, we met with interested singers half an hour before church and rehearsed a song from one of the hymn books. This was always fun, sometimes unison, sometimes four-part harmony, no particular skills required other than enjoyment of music and a willingness to enrich our church services.

Please, if you have any interest or ideas contact Pete (360-391-0936, peterdonna@yahoo.com or the church office. Thinking "outside the box" is most definitely encouraged!

Confirmation News:

If you have a child entering the 7th grade this year, or if you had a 1st year student in Confirmation last year, or if you were a 1st year student, please note that we will be having a Confirmation orientation on Wednesday September 22nd at the church at 7pm. We will meet outside if the weather permits, or if not will meet over zoom. During our time together we will play some games, get to know one another, and discuss what the plans are for this year. Please note Pastor Ryan will be sending out registration forms with a letter inviting you to attend soon (you may even have received it by the time you read this article).



Bible Study

You are invited to join Pastor Ryan on Wednesday mornings at 9am for a weekly in-person Bible study (for those who are vaccinated), or anyone is welcome to join us online using a zoom link sent out each week via email. This year, rather than studying the weekly lectionary (which offers the same passages from scripture every 3 years), we will be exploring different books from the Bible. Beginning on September 15th we will begin a study of Genesis and afterwards we will alternate between Old Testament and New Testament books.



September 26th Rally Day

Currently plans are underway for Sunday school this year and we are going to need help with educating our little ones in their lives of faith. At the moment we have a team of passionate individuals who are working on getting things ready, so that the children of First Lutheran can grow in their understanding and love of God. At the moment we are hoping to provide a good, weekly, teaching resource for parents to use with their children at home. Pastor Ryan, and anyone willing to help, will be putting together short weekly videos featuring a children sermon or some kind of lesson that can be watched online through our church YouTube channel. And finally, if we are able to, once a month we are hoping to offer some type of activity, fellowship opportunity, service project, or Sunday school lesson at the church either outside (weather permitting) or under our covered walkway. Please note that Pastor Ryan will be making calls to parents of past Sunday school students to see what their needs are and to find out if they are willing to help out. Finally, Rally day will kick off on Sunday September 26th (celebrated at both services) with our first Coffee Hour fellowship at 11am featuring prepackaged treats, and with a possible activity (time to be determined) for the kids starting Sunday school. If you have teaching experience, or are passionate about helping our kids grow in their faith, please let us know if you are willing to volunteer to help us out.



YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIAL COMPARISONS REPORT			
FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH	July 2020 *Actual Amounts	July 2021	July 2021 Budget
Total Income	126,437.22	128,138.12	153,828.64
Total Expenses	138,245.72	137,973.36	167,709.01
Income compared to Expenses	(11,808.50)	(9,835.24)	

Thank you for all you give to FELC. As of July 2021, we received a total of \$128,138.12 and spent \$137,973.36 so the balance is negative -\$9,835.24. Through your generosity, we have been able to meet all obligations but are continuing in a negative balance. Anything you are able to give will be greatly appreciated so we can meet our monthly benevolences and expenses.

2022 Budget Time

It's almost that time again as the budget process begins in August. Please check your budget and meet with your council representative to discuss if any changes should be made. We will meet in late September/early October to finalize the 2022 budget.

Thank you,
Jeanette St. Germain
Treasurer



Book Discussion Group

Our next book discussion book is **"The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek"** Consider picking up a copy and joining us for discussion on **October 7** at noon at the church. A few copies are available in the church office. Amazon has also been having a sale on paperback copies.

Some information from the publisher:

The bestselling historical fiction from Kim Michele Richardson, this is a novel following Cussy Mary, a packhorse librarian and her quest to bring books to the Appalachian community she loves.

The hardscrabble folks of Troublesome Creek have to scrap for everything—everything except books, that is. Thanks to Roosevelt's Kentucky Pack Horse Library Project, Troublesome's got its very own traveling librarian, Cussy Mary Carter. Cussy's not only a book woman, however, she's also the last of her kind, her skin a shade of blue unlike most anyone else. Not everyone is keen on Cussy's family or the Library Project, and a Blue is often blamed for any whiff of trouble. If Cussy wants to bring the joy of books to the hill folks, she's going to have to confront prejudice as old as the Appalachias and suspicion as deep as the holler.

Inspired by the true blue-skinned people of Kentucky and the brave and dedicated Kentucky Pack Horse library service of the 1930s, *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* is a story of raw courage, fierce strength, and one woman's belief that books can carry us anywhere—even back home.



September 26 Coffee Hour

We hope to incorporate a Coffee hour fellowship outside (either in the covered walkway area, or just outside the Fellowship hall) once a month beginning in the fall. Please note we will need some volunteers to make it happen. If you have been missing our coffee hour and would like to help bring it back on a monthly basis please email us, or call the church office, and let us know you are willing to help host. It is really up to the congregation.

For this time of Fellowship (during COVID), we will be using disposable coffee cups and prepackaged Danishes/treats/gluten free options.

Mark your calendars for September 26th and plan to join us for a coffee hour between services. We look forward to seeing you.

Women's Gather Magazine Bible Study

We will resume our monthly Bible study, using the Bible Study in the monthly Gather Magazine.

DATE AND TIME: THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 16TH AT 1:30PM
in the Chapel/ Meeting room across the hall from the staff offices.

We will plan to meet the 3rd Thursday of each month.

Join the conversation built around these topics for fall;

The 3 part fall series is: The Gift of the Spirit, presented by Rev. Sara Olson-Smith

Session 1: Spirit of God: Revealer and resource

Session 2: Breath of God: Reviver and reformer

Session 3: Wind of God: Refiner and Re-router

If you haven't been a subscriber to the Gather Magazine now is the time to order as there is an introductory offer for new subscribers, for only \$9.95 for the year (10 issues). This is half price of the regular subscription.

This is a great opportunity to try out the magazine, not just for the Bible Studies, but each month contains a mix of articles, theological reflections, devotions, and stories of comfort and challenge that help readers grow in faith and engage in ministry and action.

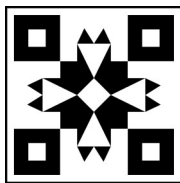
Visit: gathermagazine.org/subscribe to subscribe online or call 1- 844-409-0576.

Please get your order in soon so you will have the September issue for our study. The church will not be ordering as many church subscriptions available in the narthex as we have done in the past, but there will be copies of the first part for September if your magazine does not arrive in time.

Hope to see you Thursday, September 16th.

Any questions, please contact Connie Wells

Sent to be the light of Christ in our world.



FELC Quilting Ministry

Aug. 26, Sept 9 & 23

Our Quilting Ministry meets the second and the fourth Thursday mornings at 9:30 am. You are invited to join us in ministry. You do not need to have sewing skills to help. Throughout the morning we are tying knots in yarn to secure the quilts, ironing fabric, sewing quilt tops and enjoying each others company. Come and see!



A Note from Preschool...

The Board of First Lutheran Preschool has decided to cancel our program for the upcoming session 2021-2022.

Our goal is to offer a quality program of faith and readiness in a safe environment. We find that there are so many variables still affecting our decisions. Congregational policies as well as the unknown regulations of public school for masks, distancing, etc. make staffing and program planning difficult.

We are thankful for the continuous support of the congregation. As a Board, we hope to reflect your good will. We ask for your prayers, that we may follow God's Guidance to honor First Lutheran's mission of providing a quality Christian Preschool for the community.

Sincerely, Cindy Faber
Chairman, First Lutheran Preschool Board



Introducing.... Social Ministry!

The Social Ministry team at First Lutheran is dedicated to spreading the love of Christ to the greater community. We do so by filling needs in the community. Two examples of our annual projects include a summer school-supply drive for our neighborhood elementary schools, Jefferson and Little Mountain, and the Christmas Tree Fund, where we help fill the needs of local organizations, such as Community Action, Teen Oasis, and the First Lutheran Preschool.

We are always looking for fresh faces and fresh ideas to spread Christ's love. Please join us! In non-pandemic years we meet in person once a month to plan how to best help the community. We have recently restarted meeting in person (outside) and we would love to have you join our team.

Prayer Shawl Ministry Needs You!

(No Knitting Required)

Knitters and crocheters have been making prayer shawls during the pandemic. We have a closet full. The congregation will be blessing prayer shawls during both of our services on Sept 12th.

Shall we keep going? You are an important component of our Ministry. Will you offer them to fellow congregants and friends of FELC? We are happy to make them, but would be even happier to share them.

Do you know someone who may benefit from a prayer shawl? Please contact robertawindham1@gmail.com or the church office- office@firstlutheranmv.org and let us know.

Take care & please remember Covid precautions when visiting and gifting!



Friendship House Ministry News

THANK YOU! Many thanks to all of you who faithfully support our mission with the **Monthly Meal Club at Friendship House.**

You faithfully provide Sloppy Joe mix and all the trimmings for a wonderful meal the last Tuesday of each month. Thank you to the many “angels” who drop off the frozen Sloppy Joe mixture in our kitchen freezer and other “angles” who faithfully purchase and make the rest of the supplies for the yummy meal! Our meal is always a favorite when asked “*What’s for dinner, tonight?*”

An Update:

Friendship House is now the lead management support for **Skagit First Step** - so you are now helping feed an additional 25-30 people each month! That brings our current numbers up to about 75-80. So far, we have been able to provide the meal with supplies we get from you with our current donations. *Great job First Lutheran!*

Skagit First Step is a 24/7 emergency temporary homeless center which will include 45 individual Pallet Shelter Cabins and provide 24/7 onsite management and overnight security. **Friendship House** is overseeing the management and operations of the facility.

Along with safe, warm places to sleep, on-site services will be available:

- Mental health support
- Substance abuse support
- Employment services
- Medical visits
- Meal services
- Transportation Services

Skagit First Step is in Burlington and meals are transported to the facility each day. Additional information may be found on the church bulletin board.

If you would like to help us with this ministry, we are always looking for: more food & financial donations, help receiving the food at the church on the last Tuesday of each month and prepping it at the Friendship House kitchen.

You can sign up with the August meal on the [web site link provided here](#). Watch the e news for the Sept. sign up.

The “*time*” commitment is minimal but the “*treasures*” you will receive are great! If you would like to help with this very important service, join us by calling either Debbie Lisser 360-424-0408 or Barb Sneva 360-421-3463.



Dear First Lutheran,

Thank you very much for the nursery gift card and the special blessing at a Sunday's worship service. Serving as the Sunday school Superintendent has been a pleasure and a blessing!

Thank you, Katie Faber

Hi there! Just wanted to send a big thank you for the two checks we received. We had so much fun buying pajamas and clothes for two families that just took in 4 kids. The kids loved it.

We so appreciate the donations. 100% goes to foster children.

Jackie H'ebert, Office Manager
Community Family Services Foundation



Dear First Lutheran,

Thank you for helping fund the scholarship for Camp Lutherwood. Because of your generosity, Giovanni Romano attended the camp for their first-ever day camp. Each day he learned a little about God's love, he sang songs, swam, and he even tried archery. Every day I picked him up and he told me what a great time he had.

Thank you for supporting the scholarship fund for Camp Lutherwood!

Heather, Craig, and Giovanni Romano

The Spirit

The Spirit is a publication of the Northwest Washington Synod of the ELCA. It is intended for synod members, congregations & organizations.

They are encouraged to reproduce these articles in their own monthly organizational publications.

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September 2021



From the Bishop:

On August 1, 2021 I began my third year in the office of bishop for the Northwest Washington Synod. It is my pleasure and joy to serve God and to journey with you through this office. I am thankful for your partnership, your understanding, your forgiveness, your passion, and your faithfulness.

We are living in a time of great turmoil and great opportunity. We are living in (to use a much-overused word) unprecedented times. What does this mean for us as individuals? The Northwest Washington Synod? The ELCA? The Body of Christ?

Many of us feel grief. Grief at what once was but is no longer. Grief that the world keeps changing around us and we cannot figure out our place or our sense of call in the middle of so much shifting. It is difficult when the world feels rocky and unsteady. It is hard to understand that what we often took for granted is no longer. Recently I visited my hometown in eastern Washington. The town is half the size it was when I was growing up. As I walked through the downtown, businesses that have been there for decades are gone. Boarded up. Abandoned. My world felt rocked. And I grieved. What do you grieve?

Many of us feel anger or resentment. We divide ourselves into camps. We use the words, “us” and “them” and act as though “our” camp is always right and holy and just. We throw words around like weapons and we refuse to truly listen to the other – because we are “right” and they are “wrong.” And nothing will persuade us otherwise. In John 8 we hear Jesus tell the men who wanted to throw rocks at a woman accused of adultery, “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” When the men leave, Jesus says to the woman, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.” What would it mean for us to live into these words of Jesus?

Many of us feel exhausted. We are tired. We are weary. For a brief moment it felt as though we were moving beyond COVID-19 and then suddenly, with the Delta variant, we were pushed back into worry and concern (I am writing this in the middle of August – perhaps the numbers will be better before you read this in September!). Quite frankly, I am tired of changing things on the calendar – wondering if something should be in-person or online, wondering if I am doing something risky or if I am not taking the variables into enough consideration. It is wearisome. What makes you exhausted?

Many of us feel there is something more that we are missing. We ache for connection with God and with others. We feel lonely when we are alone, and we feel even more isolated when we are in a group. We long for meaning. We yearn to truly live, move, and have our being in the Spirit (Acts 17). How does the community of Christ answer the loneliness so many are feeling? What have we missed in the life of the church and participants? How do we sink even more deeply into the waters of life that God has called us to and given us in our baptisms?

Many of us are hopeful. Yes, I fully am living in the reality of all that I said above. I am not a Pollyanna. And yet, I trust that God is here, God is present, God is active – in this beautiful, flawed world of ours. Right now, in our congregations and in our neighborhoods, there are grief-stricken, angry, exhausted, aching-for-connection people. And right now, God has given us the opportunity to not only reach out to these people, but to listen and reflect, grow and learn together. What a calling! What an opportunity!

I encourage you to check out the LiVE Project where you can connect, learn, and grow deeper in faith together and with others. <https://lutheransnw.org/ministries/the-live-project>

You might also be interested in Living Legacy where congregations are encouraged to have deep conversations about their values, their dreams, and what God is calling them to do and to be into the future. <https://lutheransnw.org/programs/living-legacy>

The synod staff and I are here to journey, listen, and reflect with you. Thank you for these last two years. I look forward to this new year together in Christ.

+Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee
bishop@lutheransnw.org

First Lutheran

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and sent to be the light of Christ in our world.*



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.

This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here!

The ELCA is the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person—questions, complexities and all. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.



FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Website w/calendar www.firstlutheranmv.org

Join us on [Facebook](#)

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

To reach our Staff:

Pastor- Pastor Ryan Rouse

Pastorryan@firstlutheranmv.org

Holly Oliver,

Parish Administrator-office@firstlutheranmv.org

Pete Olson,

Worship Accompanist-peterdonna@yahoo.com

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.

Our Congregational Leaders

President— Bob Ramborger

Vice President— Donn Hollenbeck

Secretary— Mary Anne Ramborger

Treasurer— Jeanette St. Germain

Trustees

Donn Hollenbeck, Jeff May, Vacant Position

Deacons

Doug Carter, Bill Simon, Heather Romano

Parish Activities

Frances Wraspir, David Jones, Vacant position