

First Lutheran Church

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Gladstone, MI 49837
906-428-4565

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office@firstlutheran-gladstone.org
or check us out on [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com)

~ **August 2018** ~

Worship – Sunday – 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM

Office Hours – Monday-Thursday – 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM and
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Friday – 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Tom W. Otis, Pastor

pastor@firstlutheran-gladstone.org

August 2018

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Our Mission Statement ...

First Lutheran Church is God's people inviting, involving equipping and empowering to serve, that all may know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.



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

HOPE FOR A CHANGING WORLD

... What I am learning about our community

I have gotten involved in a couple of organizations in the community. My interest is, "How can we be the safest, healthiest and best possible community for our young people growing up." There are many advantages to being far away from the problems of large metropolitan areas, but the fact is we are not immune to things like the opioid epidemic sweeping the country. In fact, alcohol and marijuana use among youth and young adults are far above national averages. When we dig a little deeper, we find that there are deeper issues that are behind this. I don't wish to get stuck in the details of these deeper issues here. Suffice it to say, we need to be helping our young people to see themselves as valuable and up to the challenge of envisioning a future for themselves. The tools they need to do this only come from having a positive relationship with adults who have navigated this complex world ahead of them and succeeded. Hope for their unseen future can be helped by seeing a life that has already overcome the challenges. Your faith can inspire their faith. What I wish to speak to below is the need for you to be involved as a mentor and friend.



... Youth Gathering: A Spark

Remember the old camp song "It only takes a spark". Not many of us have used flint and steel to create a spark or blown gently on the smoking tinder wool to create that first flame. The fact remains. In truth, it only takes a spark to get a fire going. Momentum for a better future for our youth and our community can begin with something small and you can be a part.

As I watched our five youth disembark the plane from Houston, I saw excitement, inspiration and desire to keep it going. It is a spark. Sparks like this change lives every time. Ask around and you will discover adult members of our congregation whose faith was inspired

to new levels of service at their high school youth gathering. If you are at a Synod assembly, ask and you will find more adults who were inspired to service at a National Youth Gathering. Where a camp experience at Fortune Lake can be the beginning of faith, the Gathering can be the next step.

... How precious is that Spark?

That spark is our future. Do we take it seriously? Do we value it? Did we even notice? How many of you stopped to see the video slide show the boys put together for July 8th? Just talking to them. Telling them that it is wonderful that they went. Listening to their stories (there are always lots of stories). Attending to their words, treating them as a valued member of the community and not "just a kid" can create a relationship breakthrough that turns from spark to smoke to flame.

... That Spark needs to happen even earlier

The trends we see begin young. As early as 6th grade our studies show the beginnings of disillusionment. We need more than just the pastor or a paid youth worker. We need a broader community taking time to engage. They need to know that they are actually seen by you as a fellow Christian on the journey of life. Not only the future of the church but a real and important part of it now.

... Mentors to gently fan the flames

Engage. Sit across from a child at coffee or at another fellowship event. I completely understand the difficulties of bending to be at their level or being able to hear or understand when they talk. All the same, I encourage you to make the effort. Let their imagination capture yours for a moment. Let their idealism that Jesus can change the world become yours again.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Otis

... When do I challenge and When do I Welcome them home

In a study of denominational trends, we need to face some hard facts. The era of the Main Line Protestant Church is over. The Boomers, aged 56-75, were the cultural revolution of the 60s and the vast majority feel they can be spiritual without Church (even though, for the most part, they don't practice anything). The Generation now ages 35 to 55 were raised in the era of the Evangelical Mega-Church. The effect on the Main Line church has been that most of the parents in that age group have gone over. I am so glad for the 35 to 55 year-olds and their families who attend First Lutheran. I believe that they are a treasure to us and that we can be a people of grace to them.

ELCA Sunday school is 1/5th the size it was in the previous generation. Within 20 years, as the older generations die off, we will only need one or two ELCA churches in Delta County. The Evangelical Mega-Churches will also begin to shrink as the churches from which they drew their members disappear.

I had a conversation with a friend recently who grew up in a Lutheran church in the area. She is one of those spiritual but not religious, her children enjoy the activities at one of the big churches in the area. "Do you believe the world was created in six 24-hour days", I asked. "No," she said. "Do you believe that women should not be pastors?" "No." "Then why do you send your children to a church that does?"

Many I have spoken with will say, "I like it because it is easy. My friends are there. I like the music. I don't have to believe what they teach." I wonder, should I challenge them? Or, should I say, "Well if you ever want to worship at a church that actually teaches the Good News of Jesus in the way you understand it, we would welcome you home." I continue to believe that we have real Good News to share, the challenge is how to get it out there.

In the name of our risen Lord,
Pastor Otis

Upcoming Scripture Readings

August 5 – 11th Sunday of Pentecost

2 Samuel 11:26 – 12:13a; Psalm 51:1-12, John 6:24-35

August 12 – 12th Sunday of Pentecost

2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33; Psalm 130; John 6:35, 41-51

August 19 – 13th Sunday of Pentecost

1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14; Psalm 111, John 6:51-58

August 26 – 14th Sunday of Pentecost

1 Kings 8:1, 6, 10-11, 22-30, 41-43; Psalm 84, John 6:56-69

Salvation Army Luncheon

First Lutheran Church will serve a luncheon to guests at the Salvation Army on Saturday, August 18th at noon. Please check the bulletin board in the narthex for ways to help.

- ✦ Food prep on Friday, August 17th at 10:00 am
- ✦ Monetary donations
- ✦ Workers on Saturday, August 18th from 11:00 am until about 1:30 pm



Since this is Fair Week, any ideas for 'Fair Food' would be welcomed. Please speak to Nora Smith (786-5231). Thank you.

First Lutheran Church Picnic

Sunday, August 12th

Please join us for our annual

Worship & Picnic

held at

Van Cleve Park in the East End Pavilion.

(near the State Police Post)

Worship – 10:30 a.m.

Picnic – 11:45 a.m.

Bring your lawn chair and join us for worship, food,
fellowship and fun!

PLEASE!!!! sign-up on the bulletin board near the office
to bring a dish to share and to help set-up, serve or clean-up.

Invite your friends & neighbors!

Everyone is welcome!



Coming August 6th – 10th
9 a.m. – Noon
For all kids, Kindergarten thru 5th grade

Fortune Lake Day Camp!!!



A crew from Fortune Lake will be leading VBS this year
but we need volunteers for ...

- > dinners for three Fortune Lake staff <
- > helping with registration <
- > serving and cleaning up after snack time <

Please contact Reyna at 280-7274 or reynar12@yahoo.com
or call the church office if you are able to help out.

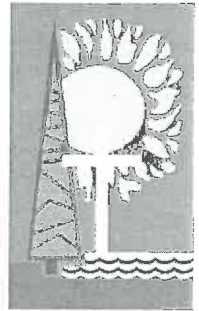
Children are asked to **bring a snack** at the beginning of the week
that will be shared sometime during the week.

Pick up a registration form from the church office or call the
office (428-4565) to register your child.

Fortune Lake News

Upcoming Events:

Oct 6: **Fall Fest Quilt & Fine Art Auction**, 9:00 am
Quilt and fine art auction, brunch, country market, country store and kids' activities. If you would like to donate a quilt for the auction you can call 906-214-2267 for more information or pick up a submission form from the church office.



Oct 12-13: **Upper Elementary Retreat** for grades 4-6
A perfect chance to come to camp for the first time or come back to camp for more fun. Games, singing, campfires and new friends make a great combination for faith and fun!

Nov 2-3: **Junior High Retreat** for grades 7-8
Senior High Retreat for grades 9-12
Fun, faith and friends! This retreat is a great way to get the year off to a great start! Expect games, singing, Bible studies, and lots more!

Nov 2-4: **Unfinished Object (UFO) Craft Retreat**
Join us for an opportunity to work on those crafts you haven't had time to finish and get to know other great people in the process.

For more information on Fortune Lake see the bulletin board in the fellowship hall, go to www.fortunelake.org or check out Fortune Lake on Facebook.

First Lutheran will once again be helping out with the Delta Conference booth at the UP State Fair this year. We will be staffing the booth on **Tuesday, August 14th from 10:30 AM to 10:30 PM**. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board outside the office (admission is free for volunteers).

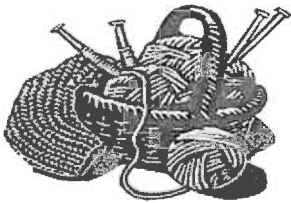


School Kits

Can you believe it? School supplies are already on sale! For each Lutheran World Relief backpack we need ...

- 5 - Pencils (unsharpened #2)
- 1 - Pencil sharpener
- 4 - Notebooks (lined, 70-80 sheets)
- 5 - Blue or black ball point pens (no gel ink)
- 1 - 30 cm ruler
- 1 - Crayons (box of 16 or 24)
- 1 - Eraser (2½ inch size)
- 1 - Blunt tip scissors

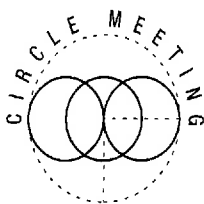
LWR requests no religious or patriotic symbols or camouflage colors. Please drop your donation in the box labeled school supplies in the narthex. Monetary donations will also be accepted. Thank you!



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Prayer Shawls are available upon request to members and non-members who have a special need or have reached a special life milestone. This could be an illness; physical, emotional or spiritual pain; a trial or difficult situation. Shawls may also be given for milestone events such as birthdays, graduations, and anniversaries.

A prayer shawl is knitted or crocheted, in a shape something like a stole. The person making the shawl, as each link is created, lifts up a prayer for the person who will receive the shawl. As the shawl is held or worn, the recipient, when feeling the links, will be reminded that prayers have been lifted up on his or her behalf.



Grace Circle

Grace Circle will meet at Fairview Manor on August 9th at 2:00 pm. Nora Smith will lead the Bible study from Colossians 2:11 - 23 by Max Lucado (titled "Phoolish" Philosophies!) beginning at 2 pm and Pastor Tom will join us for music, a message and Holy Communion about 3 pm. Bernice Marshall will serve as hostess. Guests are always welcomed.

Women's Summer Bible Study

The Women's Summer Bible Study concludes on Thursday, August 16th at 7:00 pm. The study is on PRAYER. The group usually meets in the kitchen. All women are welcome, even if you didn't attend the first sessions.

Ushers Needed!!!

Ushers are needed for our 10:30 AM worship service. You can serve for a week at a time (or for an entire month!). Please sign-up on the bulletin board or call the office if you are able to help. Thank you!

Walking Together

Coming in the Fall of 2018!!!

You are invited to a mini-Festival of Congregational Renewal at **Immanuel Lutheran, Escanaba**. This Northern Great Lakes Synod event will include leadership training, address current concerns, equip you for the future and offer the blessing of being church with other congregations in your area. Our Conference 6 meeting will take place on **Thursday, October 11 from 5:30-8:00 pm**.

We can send nine more people to this event. Please call the church office (428-4565) if you would like to attend.

Chicken or the Egg?

This is a familiar question. Not that the future of our civilization, as we know it, depends upon the answer, but it is an interesting brain twister.



Let's segue from this question to stewardship and tease our brains a little more. For the sake of discussion and using the chicken and the egg example, we could ask, "which comes first, giving or receiving?" Much like the chicken and the egg, does it really matter?

Paul, in Acts 20:35, doesn't answer this giving or receiving question, but says, ..."it's better to give than to receive". This doesn't speak to priority, but is pretty emphatic about which is better. Case closed!

I'd like to suggest, with all due respect to Paul, that, in spite of giving being better, receiving comes first and the order DOES matter. We receive ALL that we have from God first and then, as good stewards, we give in response to those gifts. We don't receive these gifts by giving. We first receive grace, love, mercy and forgiveness THEN we respond by loving God back, loving ourselves and loving our neighbors.

We can see that response, in a concrete way, when we observe or hear about acts of stewardship that happen all around us. These are seldom "mountaintop" experiences, but usually the subtle stuff of ordinary interaction. The good people of First Lutheran are very unselfish when it comes to giving. They seem to realize how much they have received and respond generously by sharing their time, talent, energy and money.

For those who have read this far, bless you! What follows is an early warning about our upcoming financial commitment time of year. The money part of our bigger stewardship umbrella takes on greater import as we head into September. Traditionally, we have asked you to consider making an "estimate of giving" and that emphasis time is just

around the corner. Bottom line – it's not too soon to start to think (and pray) about your financial commitment for 2019. But more about that in the Fall ...

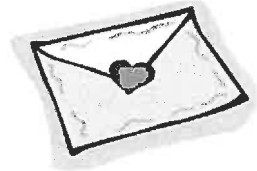
You've heard this before ... ALL that we have we have received from God. We don't deserve what God entrusts to us, but God gives all those blessings to us anyway. Giving back is one of those blessings. God is at work here and has much work for us to do. God has given us all we need to do that work.

Yes, we have first received, and thanks be to God for those first gifts. Thanks to all of you who continue to witness through your responses so others can hear the good news of Jesus Christ!

Blessings and In Christ,
Dirk Manson, Stewardship Chair

Special Giving Envelope

On Sunday June 17, Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula was devastated by 6 – 8 inches of rain in a short amount of time, causing at least 60 sinkholes, numerous washed out roads, and one home that collapsed on a twelve-year-old boy. Hundreds of businesses and homes are affected in Houghton and the surrounding area. Residents will need immediate supplies for survival and long-term recovery. All funds collected in this month's special giving envelope will be used for direct support of affected residents.



Where Does My Offering Go?

ELCA members in more than 9,300 congregations in the United States and Caribbean give approximately \$1.75 billion in regular offering to support ELCA ministries in their local communities and worldwide. When members give through their congregations, a percentage of that money is then shared with the local synod and the national churchwide organization.

This unrestricted giving, called Mission Support, gives us both the foundation and the fuel to do God's work in the world. A portion of the gifts circle back to support the ministries in your synods and local congregations. Of these unrestricted gifts, the churchwide organization receives around 2.6 percent. This represents the largest portion of the ELCA churchwide organization's operating budget.

Your Mission Support helps fund the following churchwide ministries ...

Growing the ELCA in the United States -

25%
of giving

will plant and support 357 new congregations.

- **Enable congregations to renew their ministries** and reach out to their surrounding communities.
- **Work together** with our African Descent, American Indian and Alaska Native, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Latino/Latina members to develop networks and resources for ministry.
- **Develop** and share resources for faith, discipleship, prayer and worship.

Continued next month ... watch for it!

Seminarian Support

"For freedom Christ has set us free, stand fast therefore..."
Galatians 5:1

Paul Tillich, a famous theologian, wrote and preached a sermon entitled "You Are Accepted." It became famous. It was about God's grace and our worth in God's eyes. On the corner of the manuscript it is said he wrote "For myself!" Apparently even this highly respected writer, preacher and teacher, who knew the theology of grace inside and out, was not easily "acceptable."

Tillich's comment "For myself" should also be assuring and comforting to all of us. We also need assurance that we are set free in Christ and therefore acceptable to Him and our Heavenly Father. This is particularly true when we consider answering God's call to ordained ministry; God calls us not to be perfect but to be faithful.

A friend and pastoral colleague once shared with me that he had struggled with a low self-esteem. He attended a retreat where before anyone spoke they said their name and the spiritual director led the group in applause. When the person finished speaking hands clapped again. Over and over the affirmation was repeated.

The retreat was a life changing experience for the young man who later became a very faithful and competent ordained pastor. The applause, letting everyone know they were acceptable before they even said a word was a moment of supreme grace. It softened hearts, made smiles and convinced the participants of their worthiness.

The best acceptance comes from God. The message of grace from our creator is the good word. "You are acceptable." That's the Good News of Easter. It's the message of spring and overcomes the darkness of winter. "You are accepted."

If you are contemplating ordained ministry, please know that God does not call perfect people to be pastors. He calls people to be faithful, knowing that God's grace is sufficient for all, ordained or not.

Is God calling you?

Dale Skogman on behalf of the Seminarian Support Committee



... to those who helped with the June-July Messenger; Mary Bjorkquist, Carol Ebbesen, Avis Fairchild, Judy Haulotte, and Carole Wedell. Thank you all, so very much!

~

Many thanks to Anne Movalson for once again providing the lovely flowers in our planter boxes and pots this summer and to Connie Salmi, Rob Salmi, Sherri Makowski and Carolyn Nelson for planting them.

~

Dear Members of First Lutheran,

The All Saints Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul thanks you for your generous donation of 363 pounds of food during your recent Blue Bag Project. Not only did you fill all of our bags, but you added more bags besides! God bless you for your generosity. Thanks to you our shelves are well stocked right now.

We appreciate your support of our efforts to help the less fortunate in our community.

Sincerely,
Mary Knoch, Secretary
All Saints Conference

Dear First Lutheran,

On behalf of the NGLS World Hunger Committee, thank you very much for your participation in our hunger quilt project and your contribution of \$2,321.24 for the hunger offering at the Synod Assembly. All 80 congregations worked on the quilt together. We raised \$41,748.52 for ELCA World Hunger. We truly are "ALL IN FOR WORLD HUNGER"!

God's Blessings,
NGLS World Hunger Committee

~

To the Congregation,

Alex, Danny, Thade and myself had a tremendous time Houston but this could not have happened if we did not have your support!

WE THANK YOU ALL!

From Danny, Thade, Alex and Will

~

Thank you for the graduation breakfast for me and my family and for the quilt from the Sewing Circle. Your kindness is greatly appreciated.

Thanks,
Bryce Dykes

~

On behalf of the Gladstone Class of 2018, thank you for your generosity and support of the Senior All-Night Party. This event was very successful due to our many community sponsors and volunteers. Thank you ...

~

A big thank you goes out to Jan Gustafson for cleaning and repairing many of our worship banners. Thank you, Jan!

Dear First Lutheran,

Thank you so much for your ongoing financial support of our Gladstone/Rapid River Backpack Program.

Your financial support helps us provide more nourishing weekend food to those school kids in real need.

Sincerely yours,
Larry Kirschner
... Backpack Coordinator

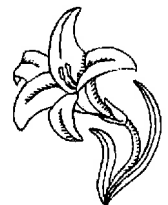
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Thank You & "Where Have All the Young Men Gone?"

On Saturday, May 12th a competent and dedicated group of persons gathered to prepare our church grounds for the summer after a long and dreary winter. Much work was accomplished by the following persons to whom we extend a big THANK YOU!: Ruth Botbyl, Dale Schlemmer, Rob Salmi, Joe Durbin, Dewayne Ide, Dave Ottensman, Andy Nelson, Tom Pairolero, Raino Maki, Ray Chouinard, Chuck Strom, Dewey Fairchild, Howard Haulotte, Ron Ball, Charlie George, Cindy Sjoquist, Dale and Jo Skogman. It was Rob Salmi's birthday and Charlie George's wedding anniversary, so we give them double thanks for joining us on their special days! We thank Connie Salmi for providing a delicious lunch for the hard workers. The average age of the group was 72!!! which causes us to ask, "Where have all the young men gone?"

Gifts to our congregation have been given ...

In loving memory of **Norm Lund**
for Seminarian Support by ...
Connie and Rob Salmi
Jo and Dale Skogman
Mary and Lloyd Tuskan



Happy Birthday to ...

8/1	Chuck Thomas	8/14	Gary Bjorkquist
8/2	Jo Skogman		Mercedes Koski
8/4	Emily Strom	8/15	Trudy Brandt
8/5	Trevor Thorbahn		Margie Movalson
8/6	Ron Ball		Oscar Skellenger
	Dave Strom	8/16	Allie Roman
8/7	Stacy Smith	8/18	Gordon Zuehlke
8/8	Amy Dyer	8/20	Harvey Setter
8/9	Carolyn Nelson	8/21	David Soderman
	Lori Seawright	8/23	Carter Roman
8/10	Irv Bostwick	8/24	Carol Ebbesen
	Kathy Gobert	8/27	Cheryl Dykes
8/12	Sam Olsick		Andy Nelson
8/13	Steve Bolek	8/30	Danny Knapp
	Dennis Filizetti		

Happy Anniversary to ...

8/1	Dotti and Tom Ford
8/3	Lisa and John Thomas
8/5	Julie and Gary Olson
	Lynn and Chuck Thomas
8/6	Erica and Joseph Skellenger
8/7	Ruthann and John Skellenger
8/11	Bonnie and Pete DeMay
8/13	Dani Lyn and Matt Berg
8/19	Katie and Matt Smith
8/22	Margie and Bruce Movalson
8/23	Kathy and Tom Gobert
	Tiffany and Jim Olsick
8/27	Dolly and Al Salmi
	Ann and Dennis Severinsen
8/28	Wanda & John Kloet
	Jennifer & Ed Walker



(If we've missed your birthday or anniversary please let us know)

From the Bishop



"Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁷And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸Then one of them, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" ¹⁹He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who

was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,²⁰and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel."

~ Luke 24: 16-21

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Jesus walks alongside Cleopas and his unnamed companion on the road to Emmaus and listens to them. And as they talk and try to make sense of recent events, they share their disappointed hopes, that this man Jesus was the one on whom they had placed some substantial expectation, no less than the redemption of Israel as they hoped Jesus would free the country from oppressive Roman rule, and more than that, hopes for the unmistakable presence and action of God in the world. "We had hoped he was the one to redeem Israel," they say. We had hoped.

I dare say, we know that feeling of heartbreaking disappointment. You can hear that feeling in the words, we had hoped the tumor would be benign. We had hoped the treatment would work. We had hoped the job would pan out. We had hoped... Or perhaps more to the point of who we are as the church... We had hoped that the decline would abate. We had hoped the Sunday school would grow, we had hoped to see a turn around by now, that my church would stay open long enough to see me buried there, that we'd be able to pay the bills. We had hoped that things would get better.

To Cleopas and his companion, Jesus exclaims, "Oh how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe!" Jesus has heard their disappointed hopes, and yet, in this exclamation we hear of the disconnect, the lack of alignment between their hopes and what Jesus knows that God is up to. Cleopas and his companion may have hoped for the defeat of Rome and the restoration of Israel, but Jesus lets them know that God's hopes are oh so much bigger than that. That there is so much more going on than just their small and limited perspective of what salvation means and how this first Easter afternoon moment is about so much more than their present pain and grief, no matter how acute and heartbreaking it is.

I do believe we are in a similar moment, although for us, the moment is spanning years, decades even. Like Cleopas and his friend, in our moment, we cannot see the bigger picture of what God is up to. You know, and I know, that the church is different than it was 500 years ago, and it's different from what it was 50 years ago. Even 30 years ago. In the everyday work of ministry, things are continuing. Communities are being served. Christ is proclaimed in word and deed. Faith is being formed. But of course, if we look at the trends of the last 30-50 years, we see a marked and steady decline. There are more empty pews, less young people, whole demographics that are missing. Our average age is, well, older. More and more of our congregations will close. Beautiful and beloved buildings will be sold or repurposed. It's already happening.

We had hoped.

But consider, for what had we hoped? That things would stay the same? And what would that have looked like? When I was growing up in the church, I don't remember ever hearing the exhortation to invite my neighbor to church. Probably because my pastor, and everyone else, simply assumed that my neighbor and everyone else's neighbor, was already going to church. They were already saved. The only people who needed saving were the godless heathen that lived across some ocean. And so the church faithfully and generously attended to that by placing an offering for mission in the offering plate. The

Mission Field was over there, way over there. And our job here was to do church well, and for the most part that meant attending to the education of members, baptisms, weddings, funerals, and the care and comfort of those who claimed the church as their church.

Now, thirty to fifty years later, the mission field has changed. And it is no longer so easily attended to as putting an offering in the offering plate. Suddenly, we have to work at it. It takes effort, conversation. It takes building relationships until there's a level of trust in which you have the courage to extend an invitation to worship or you finally find the words to describe why Jesus matters to you. Such things have not been the focus of our tradition.

We have not been taught how to do this. How to consider the mission that sits across your dinner table or next to you at the café. We have not been trained in how to talk about Jesus with the co-worker in the cubicle next to you, or the classmate whose locker is next to yours. This is not your fault. And it's not your pastor's fault. And it's not your Bishop's fault. The world has shifted, and no one told us to put it on the calendar. But this is our walk to Emmaus moment. This is the moment where we realize that there is more going on than our present grief and pain, no matter how acute or heartbreaking.

Our hopes that our current congregations would maintain the status quo is perhaps not the hope that is in God's mind. It might well be that God has something bigger, something that is so much more than the longevity of any single beloved congregation. God is up to something. The Holy Spirit is on the move. And we would be blessed to see this present moment, our time in history, as opportunity.

This is where we get to learn something new. This is where our hearts will burn with the unmistakable presence of God in Christ Jesus who breaks open the kingdom of God and asks us to consider more than just our present pain and anxiety. It's not just about keeping the doors open. It's not just about paying the bills. It's not about keeping things the way they are, or getting back to the way they were, as if we ever could. It's about Jesus. It is, and always has been, always and forever,

about Jesus. How then, are we to be faithful to this moment, our moment, that is only a part of the decades it will take for the fulcrum of history to turn? How are we to be faithful as our Easter afternoon journey with Jesus continues?

It is not an easy thing, to see past the grief and pain of the present moment and trust that God has a bigger plan in mind. Anxiety runs high. We feel the threat of loss. And the present circumstances demand that we be church in a way where we have yet to learn the skill set that is necessary. And it is difficult to align our hopes with God's plans when we have no idea what that plan is. We may not see it in our lifetime. Yet, as we move around this corner of time, we are being shaken out of our stupor of disappointed hopes to see and understand that the road is before us, our time in history is now, our Emmaus moment is now, and the journey, while it has taken a turn, continues.

But you do not walk this road alone. Jesus is with you. Jesus walks alongside you. And you know him. Your hearts burn with a desire to serve him, and they burn with deeper knowledge than this world can provide. You are the church. You are the body of Christ in the world, nourished at his table, fortified in the scriptures, blessed with the presence of Christ in each other. And you are sent, to come alongside those who are in grief and pain, and listen to their disappointed hopes, hear what they have to say, and let them know that you heard them. And then, be the presence of Christ to them. Let them see in you, the one who died and rose. The one in whom our hope rises. Let them hear your story, and hear from you, why it is that Jesus matters. Amen.

In Support of a Robust Farm Bill

At the recent Northern Great Lakes Synod Assembly, the Farm Bill before the United States congress was addressed by voting members and pastors. Every five years the Farm Bill needs to be renewed. However this year, there are some legislators who are proposing to cut substantial funding from assistance programs that support the most vulnerable in our country. In the past, the Farm Bill has been a bipartisan effort to see that millions of children, veterans, disabled and unemployed receive nutrition through the SNAP program (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). Although this bill covers many programs, 80% of the funding is allocated for nutrition. All of us know that when a paper mill shuts down, or a mine closes, many of our neighbors need to turn to social programs for some help.



The ELCA supports a farm bill that promotes a robust and resilient food supply chain and provides good nutrition through domestic and international programs.

A central question at the core of Christian identity is "How do we love our neighbor?" Christ, when asked what is the greatest commandment states: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Advocacy for policies like the Farm Bill provides a means to express that love by shaping policy that will contribute to the well-being of God's people and creation.

The Synod Assembly passed a resolution to advocate for a strong Farm Bill. For further information, you can check online at www.elca.org/hunger or www.elca.org/advocacy.

If you would like to offer your support, you are encouraged to contact your legislators:

The Honorable Gary Peters,
724 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
731 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510

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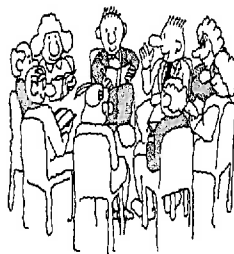
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Council Highlights

The Congregation Council met on June 14th and July 21st with Vice-President Jeff Gudwer and President Marshall Seawright presiding. At these meetings the council ...

Made plans for the Church Picnic on August 12th ...

Planned to attend "Walking Together", a synod leadership event taking place at Immanuel Lutheran on October 11th in place of the October council meeting ...



Decided to call a Special Congregational Meeting for September to discuss the Welcome Statement that has been under development in small group meetings ...

Heard that Lisa Zuehlke will be retiring at the end of August ...

The next regularly scheduled Council meeting will be on Thursday, August 9th at 7:00 pm.

Contact Us:

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Musicians: Kris McDonald, Olivia Wery, Lori Anderson

Christian Ed Coordinators: Reyna Rose, Amelia Seawright

Custodian: Dave Strom

Congregation Council:

Marshall Seawright, President
Jeff Gudwer, Vice President
Doris Sundstrom, Secretary
Bill Ehrhardt, Treasurer
George Botbyl
Dotti Ford
Kathy Gobert
Judy Haulotte
Amber Hess-Soderman
Cooper Koski
Dirk Manson
Karleen Thorbahn

A congregation of the Northern Great Lakes Synod
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Serving Us in August

Date	Time	Greeters	Readers	Acolytes	Communion
Aug 5	8:00	TBD	Nora Smith	Sam O	Dotti Ford
	10:30	TBD	Jacob Siedlecki	Trevor T	Lynn Thomas
Aug 12	8:00	TBD	Dale Schlemmer	John R	Judy Hammond
	10:30 (At the Park)	TBD	Jolane Nelson	Picnic – No acolyte	Jane Coyne-Smith
Aug 19	8:00	TBD	Wayne Marshall	Alison R	Cooper Koski
	10:30	TBD	Dolly Salmi	Austin B	Kathy Gudwer
Aug 26	8:00	TBD	Doris Sundstrom	Gus S	Carol Knauf
	10:30	TBD	Jamie Siedlecki	Braden S	Carol Kocsis

Ushers 8:00: Don Seeley, Dennis Hanson

Altar Guild: Pam Durbin, Marty Nelsen

10:30: Volunteers needed, please!!!

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