

Firs* Things



April 2020

First Lutheran Church

100 Peace Ridge

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Loren Prigge, Custodian

First Lutheran Website: www.firstlc.org

Regular Worship Schedule

5:30 pm Saturday

9:00 am Sunday



Living in God's amazing grace

Living the unconditional Grace & Love of Jesus Christ

Beloved of God,

Well...it's not going to be the kind of Holy Week and Easter I had imagined it to be this year. Seriously, I was so excited about it. Midweek Lenten worship with the theme of "Where the Rubber Meets the Road...at the Intersection of Faith and Life" along with amazing pastors that were scheduled to come and lead us in God's holy word; not to mention the tasty meals that were scheduled, were all going to begin a phenomenal journey to the cross of Christ this year. It was going so well. The floor labyrinth we rented was going to help focus us not only on a great spiritual practice for Lent and Holy Week but excite us for the upcoming labyrinth build this Spring. We were even going to add another Easter morning sunrise worship service...**outside!** I found the perfect place. Now...it all seems more like a dream from the past, than something we had planned. How quickly everything changes.

BUT no matter what happens we do know the truth...that Christ died on a cross for us and 3 days later rose to life. Right now, perhaps that is all that matters. Fear, uncertainty, and even Death do not have the last word...God does. God's word is always life again.

I know it is a scary uncertain time, but God is faithful and always present. Do not forget that God has promised to be with us through it all. So...my friends do not lose heart even though it may not seem like it right now...all is well and will be well. Stay home for now and safe and we will be together soon.

"...be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Joshua 1: 9

Gods peace and strong presence be with you and your family now as always.

Pastor Tim



Christ is Risen

Beloved people of God,

Everything is changing so fast, isn't it? We just begin to adjust to a new way of being and something changes again...uffdah! BUT some things remain the same...in all of the uncertainty and craziness, remember beloved people of God, "Christ Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow." The truth that really matters. And it will never change.

An update for you of the happenings at First Lutheran. We are continuing to practice and promote daily spiritual practices in your lives. One of those practices is daily Matins and Vespers using the Celtic Prayers of Iona. If you would like to know more about the origin of this resource, you can read more in our April newsletter (which you are reading right now!). Daily Matins and Vespers is meant to develop a rhythm of spiritual practices in your life and to keep you connected to God, each other, and all of creation.

Tuesday and Thursday story time with Pastor Tim is open to everyone, but especially our youth. I love reading to you.

All of these, including our upcoming Sunday worship service, can be found on our Web page...firstlc.org

Friday Fireside Chats with Tim and Duane have been put on hold for now, due to the shelter in place executive order. Sorry about that. We both were looking forward to roasting marshmallows and chatting together.

Sunday School curriculum and activities have been developed by Heidi, our youth ministry coordinator. Thanks Heidi! We will continue with these tools that help parents with faith formation at home for the rest of the Sunday School year.

Sunday worship will be available on our website (firstlc.org). We pray God will bless our shared experience of worship and that it provides a connection to our faith community for you and your family.

We are in the process of developing a regular calling tree, through the help of our "Reaching Out Team", to connect with every member of our congregation. If you know of someone who does not have a church home and would like a call please contact Pastor Tim. If you haven't received a call, in the next couple of weeks, or just need someone to listen, Pastor Tim (320-226-7074) and Pastor Duane (651-448-0506) are always available. Give us a call.

We are hoping to have a regular bible study, teachings of spiritual practices, or other educational opportunities, including small group discussions, and team meetings up and running following Easter Sunday using the ZOOM communication tool. Something to look forward to!

Thanks so much to Becky Ehling and Mike Brower for getting us up and going with all the new technology. Their patience and expertise have been a great gift to me and our whole congregation.

If you need help or just need to vent, please call. I miss you. I love you. I really hope to see you soon dear church. For now, don't be brave and strong... But rather as the prophet Isaiah reminds us..."Be not afraid... for I have redeemed you, says the Lord. I have called you by name. You are mine...and I love you." So... stay home, be safe and corona free.

God's peace and strong presence be with you and your family now as always.

Pastor Tim
320-226-7074

Celtic Prayers of Iona Is the title of the resource we are using for Matins and Vespers. Christian spirituality is deep and rich in the Western Isles of Scotland. Most of the prayers, their daily rhythms and images, are drawn from and inspired by the work of Alexander Carmichael of Edinburgh. In his many visits to Scotland he transcribed the prayers and poems of the people from the sung Gaelic. These songs and prayers of the Gaels' had been forged by crofters and fishermen in the often wild and harsh conditions of the Western Isles and passed down in the oral tradition for hundreds of years. They were recited by both Roman Catholics and Protestants, for many of the prayers had their origins in the shared stream of spirituality that flowed from the Celtic Church of Ireland and Scotland before the eleventh century. In this deep and spiritual resource, **Christ** is seen as being with and for the poor; **healing** is regarded as a grace that releases the essential life and health of body and soul, and not in opposition to the natural process of death; the **goodness of creation** is celebrated while life is also regarded as pilgrimage. **Commitment** to the gospel is set within the context of an intimate relationship with a personal God; the **life of heaven and the life of earth** are seen as bound inextricably together; and the delights and demands of **welcome and hospitality**-expecting to meet Christ in the strangers' guise- are rightly portrayed. We are hoping for a short time the focus of these prayers and readings will be of some help in this time of uncertainty and wonder as our lives continue to stay rooted in the promises of Christ each day and each night.

Jesus' Journey For Us

He rode a donkey into Jerusalem.
He shared his last meal with his disciples in the Upper Room.
He knelt down and washed the feet of the disciples.
He agonized in prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane.
He was betrayed with a kiss by a friend.
He was arrested by soldiers.
He was condemned by the high priest Caiaphas.
He was denied by Peter and forsaken by all.
He was mocked and beaten and spit upon.
He was sentenced to death by the Roman governor Pilate.
He stumbled through the streets as he carried his cross.
He was nailed to the cross and a spear pierced his side.
He was buried in a borrowed tomb.
He rose from the dead so we might have eternal life.
He rules from his heavenly throne!

Prayer For Good Friday

Lord Jesus, you carried our sins to the cross and suffered in our place. We owe you a debt we can never repay. We humbly offer you our love and gratitude.

Jesus, in these days of health crises, economic uncertainty, and fears for our future, inspire us to look to you for support and guidance. Strengthen our faith and help us to keep our hearts focused on you, for you are our compassionate shepherd.

Amen.

He Is Risen!

When the women went to the tomb of Jesus on that first Easter morning, they were discouraged and grieving. As they approach the entry to the tomb they hear an angel announcing the great reversal, "Do not be afraid! I know you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen. Go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead and he is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him.'"

The resurrected Christ is always on the move; in our lives, in our church, and in our world. He is going ahead of us to make a way into the future in the fullness of God's grace.

Although we usually gather at our church on Easter with our family, friends, and neighbors to praise Jesus as our Risen Savior, we are unable to do that this year because of our special circumstances. Therefore, on Easter Sunday we invite you to read about Jesus' resurrection in Matthew 28:1-10. Then we ask you to read aloud together in your home the following:

Thanks be to God who gives us the victory over sin and death through Christ our Lord!
Christ lives!
He lives indeed!
Christ lives in us!
Let us live for Christ!

A Blessed Easter To All!

Bob Polk Scholarship

Bob Polk, a long time faithful member of First Lutheran Church who died in July 2015, has generously given money for a scholarship to support a student who is going into a medical or health related career. Applications for this scholarship are due by June 1, 2020.

In accordance with the wishes of Bob Polk and his family this \$1,200 scholarship is to be awarded to a deserving student who is a confirmed member of First Lutheran Church and who plans to enroll or is presently enrolled in an undergraduate 2 or 4 year college, university or technical school educational program in a medical or related health care program.

The application requirements include: High School or college GPA of 3.0, acceptance into a 2 or 4 year accredited college, university or technical school for preparation for a medical or health related field, completion of the application form, personal statement and release of student records form. Financial need will also be considered.

Candidates can reapply for up to 4 years during their undergraduate study. Scholarship applications can be obtained from the First Lutheran Church office. Completed applications can be returned to the First Lutheran Church office by June 1, 2020. The scholarship will be awarded by July 1, 2020. Questions, contact Patty Svien, svien65@hbc.com.

Finance Board

The duties of this board include budgeting, planning, and managing the resources and uses of funds related to the operation and missions of the Church. The Finance Board is comprised of no fewer than 6 members and holds regular monthly meetings.

The current Finance Board members are

Randi Kirchner, Chair

Craig Harteneck

Ernest Thompson

Chuck Bremer

James Kranz

Jon Gravenish

Luther Berkeland

Jerry Kari

Jeff Chestnut, Treasurer

MORTGAGE UPDATE:

After researching several banks, we will be modifying our mortgage with Lake City Federal. Our loan will be a 15-year fixed rate at 3.75%. This new loan will save almost \$200,000 in interest over the life of the loan.

This is great opportunity, but we are still committed to our goal of reducing the principal to \$1 million by spring 2022. More on that later!

MAKING EVERY DOLLAR COUNT:

Did you know that many of our members contribute electronically? We have three ways to do so:

1. Through Vanco (a fee is charged to our church for every transaction)
2. Through Lake City Federal Bank in Lake City (no fee charged to our church)
3. Through your own bank if you use bill pay (no fee charged to our church)

Each method has its pros and cons. But the church does pay a fee if members use Vanco.

If you are considering electronic contributions, you can ask any of the Finance Board for assistance. If you are considering switching from the Vanco (with fees) to the bank withdrawal for no fees, please work with our treasurer, Jeff Chestnut.

We will also no longer print contribution envelopes for those who have used electronic contributions. This will save our church money (and some trees as well).

A message from a member who switched from Vanco:

I recently switched our offering tithe from the church's Vanco product (which I learned charged the church a % fee) to an automatic withdrawal initiated by the church's bank, Lake City Federal (which costs next to nothing) and is pulled from our bank account. The church staff made the process quick and easy.

Greetings First Lutheran Members,

What a crazy and unsettling series of events we have experienced in the past month. It is hard to believe four weeks ago we were finishing up the annual meeting in what had been a rather uneventful year. God definitely provided all of us with an opportunity for some unconventional quiet time to reflect on whether our priorities were in a healthy place. It is amazing how easy it is to forget who truly is in control of our lives when everything is going great. That being said, the Bible is full of passages where God seeks to reassure us, he is not only in control of our lives but there to help us survive the trials and tribulations that life continually throws our way.

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” (Isaiah 41:10)

While God is great and all knowing, the reflection time he has granted us has put significant strain our traditional method for collecting funds. Though our standard weekend services have been temporarily suspended, the bills have not. The majority of the Church's giving occurs with the passing of the collection plate on Sundays. This letter is a friendly reminder to continue your Church support through alternative methods until after this extended quarantine is over.

There are a few alternative methods members can use. Those who have been using their envelopes can continue to do so by adding a stamp and mailing it rather than dropping in the collection plate. If you wish, there is also the option of changing from giving paper funds to giving electronically.

While we understand these times are not only emotionally, but also financially unstable for many in our congregation, we are still paying off a generous-sized mortgage. We have a great congregation, and we trust the Church will continue to pitch in to maintain our bright future. Thank you for your continued support.

Stay healthy and safe.
Rob Nutt and Tim Thompson Co-Presidents

First Lutheran currently has two methods of electronic giving.

1. Using Lake City Federal to withdraw your offering from your bank regardless of which bank it would be from. This can be set up by completing a paper form which is attached or available from the Church. This will require you to attach a void copy of your check for verification of the routing and account number. You should sign this and return it to the Church and we will get it to the bank for processing. You can designate the distribution of your offering on the form. This method is for contribution on a once monthly basis and has no cost associated for the church.
2. Using Vanco as the agent for the collection. This method is a direct withdrawal from your bank account or it will utilize a credit card. This method can be done at any interval that you would choose, monthly, weekly, or one time. There is a cost to this method to the church with a per transaction and a percentage of the gift fee. Vanco can be established through our church's web site.

If you have questions about any of these or are not prepared to do this on-line. Please contact:

Jeff Chestnut- Treasurer
treasurer@firstlc.org
507-323-5081

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Prayer Connection...Mary Nelson, firstlutheranprayerconnection@gmail.com or phone: 651-212-0144.

Friends and Family...Shirley Pierson, Sheila Johnson, Kris Chederquist, Paul & Barb Gifford, Maria & Lee Schultz, Diane Morris, Orville & Joyce Hegseth, Denny Richardson, Jerry Narveson, Dean Kirkland, Nancy Herron

All service men and women...Lt. Col. Spencer Rasmussen, Justin Fuchs, Nathan Fuchs, Peter Schliep, Matt Sikkink, Ethan Meyer, Chris Breuer, Monty Vikdal, Alyssa Zuehl

Peace Corp...Jeffrey Mund

Our Missionary in Chile...Karen Anderson

Nursing Home, Home Bound & Assisted Living...Linette Meincke, Dwight Pierson, Tom Gagnon, Roger Helgerson, Mary DeGroat, Edith Hammer, Wendell Olson, Violet Stinson, Mary Hallenberger, Corrine Johnson, Marv Nelson

Couples getting Married...Natalie Schlagenhaft & Anthony Armellino

A standard wheelchair with a cushion has been purchase for church use with funds from the Health and Wellness Ministry. The wheelchair will be stored near the church entrance near the Welcome Desk. Anyone who may have a problem with mobility can use it. There are cleaning wipes on the shelf above the coat rack. Please wipe down the wheelchair after using it. The Health and Wellness Ministry will be merged with the Outreach Ministry to continue to serve the congregation.

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Apr 1: Betty Bluem, Glenn Dwelle Jr, Nikki Wurst

Sara & Daniel Peterson

Apr 2: Steven Breyfogle, Jonathan Grothe, Linette Meincke, James Plote, Tim Plote

Apr 3: Josh Rolbiecki, Callie Soden

Apr 4: Lylleonna Boe, Tom Olsen, Natalie Schlagenhaft

Bruce & Jody Carlson

Apr 5: Hayden Durgin, Nancy Herron

Apr 6: Reid Meyer, Linda Rasch

Apr 7: Liz Carlstrom, Caden Cobb, Dylan Pfeilsticker

Apr 8: Megan Ahrens, Marian Dittfach, Kay Harms, Levi Harvey, Ashley Holmgren, Jerry Hultstrand, Ryan Pribyl, Patti Tackmann

Apr 9: Melinda Berkeland, Elijah Ender, Delbert Goeman, Greg Keyport, Lori Lichtblau

Apr 10: Barb Gifford, Douglas Pflaum, Allison Rigelman, Trissa Wallerich

Apr 11: Amber Eggenberger, Tayte Kiecker, Matthew Wooding

Apr 12: Nessa Hoops, Michelle Kriett, Michelle Larson, Ashley Meyer, Janice Shequen

Apr 13: Jessica Brunn, Tami Ender, Logan Thomas

Apr 14: Linda Cummings, Brad Johnson, Nolan Kohrs

Apr 15: Melissa Ackermann, Ella Kohrs, Janet Moe, Sam Nutt, Jeff Steffen, Steve Swan, Chris Weinrich

Al & Julie LeCaptain

Apr 16: Jalen Dudley

Apr 17: Breyker Gravenish, Nathan Haviland, Jill Ziebell

Apr 18: Claire Gnotke, Taylor Heitman, Michelle Knudsen, Jan Olson

Apr 19: Tyler Ruiz

Dale & Betty Bluem, John & Sheila Kirkwood

Apr 20: Colin Jackson, Lynette Matzke, Paul Moe

Apr 21: Mac Baird, Scott Bignell, Rick Boos, Ben Dinsmore, Rick Frickson, Carol Siewert

Apr 22:

Apr 23: Glenn Hartzell, Kaitlin McCarthy, Jacob Nibbe

Apr 24: Marilyn Schad

Apr 25:

Apr 26: Daniel Diepenbrock, Lori Fick, Kathi Hoops-Soden, Hailey Martin, Tiffany Nelson

Mary & Loren Prigge, Tom & Carol Proud

Apr 27: Carol Dollar, Mary Durst, Kaylin Hartzell, Erica Hoops, Al LeCaptain, Alaina Meyer, Nancy Spooner-Mueller, Daniel Tesch

Apr 28: Hannah Alitz

Apr 29: Jason Holst, Kristy Keim, Becki Schumacher, Lawrence Svien, Gordon Zanto

Jack & Brigette Rol

Apr 30: Mary Berg-Prigge

Barb & Paul Gifford, Tom & Liz Hallaway, Mal & Kris McCarthy, Jacob & Samantha Suckow

Children's Ministry News



Ages 3 years old—6th grade are WELCOME.
Please contact Heidi Berge if you are interested in having your child enroll.

Classes for Sunday School

Please watch your email for a weekly lesson from me! If you are not receiving it, please let me know. I hope we can be back together soon! ~Hugs—Heidi

Wednesdays during
the school year
3:00-5:00 PM

Look for my emails!
Please let me know if
you need anything!
Blessings~ Heidi

*Kindergartners—6th
Grades are WELCOME!*

