

# Firs\* Things



June 2020

## First Lutheran Church

100 Peace Ridge

Lake City, Minnesota 55041

Phone: 651-345-5003

Pastor Tim Ehling: 320-226-7074

tim.ehling@firstlc.org

Pastor Duane Holst: 651-448-0506

wingriders70@gmail.com

Kerstin Suby: 651-345-5003

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Melissa Ackermann: 651-345-5003

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Heidi Berge: 651-345-5003

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Karyn Moechnig: 651-345-5003

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Loren Prigge, Custodian

First Lutheran Website: [www.firstlc.org](http://www.firstlc.org)

### Regular Worship Schedule

5:30 pm Saturday

9:00 am Sunday

*Living the unconditional Grace & Love of Jesus Christ*

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**Oh the places you'll go,  
Today is your day!  
Your mountain is waiting.  
So ...get on your way!**

**--Dr. Seuss**

## Congratulations 2020 Graduates

**Jackson Berge  
Ashlynn Dudley  
Elijah Ender  
Thomas Frank  
Reid Gastner  
Andrew Green  
McCabe Heise  
Alex Holmgren  
Ben Johnson  
Charlie Johnson  
Julia Koplin  
Autumn Kranz  
Caron Lichtblau  
Carol Rol  
Ava Wallerich  
Elsie Weinrich  
Mason West  
Morgan West  
Mason White**



*Living in God's amazing grace*

## A story to catch your attention:

A lake, a boat, a net, but NO fish...the perfect ingredients for a whale of a tail of a story. You know those stories that all true fisherpersons tell, about the big one that got away. So.... the story is told from Luke the 5 chapter....

Jesus was standing on the shore of Lake Gennesaret, teaching the people as they crowded around him to hear God's message. <sup>2</sup>Near the shore he saw two boats left there by some fishermen who had gone to wash their nets. <sup>3</sup>Jesus got into the boat that belonged to Simon and asked him to row it out a little way from the shore. Then Jesus sat down in the boat to teach the crowd.

<sup>4</sup>When Jesus had finished speaking, he told Simon, "Row the boat out into the deep water and let your nets down to catch some fish."

<sup>5</sup>"Master," Simon answered, "we have worked hard all night long and have not caught a thing. But if you tell me to, I will let the nets down." <sup>6</sup>They did it and caught so many fish that their nets began ripping apart. <sup>7</sup>Then they signaled for their partners in the other boat to come and help them. The men came, and together they filled the two boats so full that they both began to sink.

This story has always sounded a little fishy...don't you think? I mean we don't even hear what Jesus was talking to the crowds about. The point of the story is what happened after the sermon. They had been out fishing all night long...right...but caught nothing...not a single fish. They knew what they were doing. This wasn't their first time...it was their job. And they were good at it. They knew the best spots, how deep to lower their nets, just the right speed to pull them up. They even knew when to call it quits...for it was a hopeless night. Along comes this teacher and tells them to try again...and they do.

Like the fishermen, the crowd of people closing in on Jesus, were also fishing for something. They hungered for their lives to be made well. Everywhere they tried casting their nets of wholeness and peace for themselves... they came up empty. They heard that Jesus was near, so they came hoping that he could change things in their lives. And he must have. For we are told they were so eager to get close to him that he had to get into the water. The more they heard from Jesus the closer they wanted to be. To hear every word he said and not miss anything. So full of hope were they.

...so Jesus told the professional fishermen...go out and try it again. "BUT Jesus...we were just out there. The fish aren't biting today. But if that is what you want us to do, we will." Maybe they too had some hope after hearing Jesus. Hope not yet realized. They went out and pulled in so many fish that their nets begin to break and their boats begin to sink. It was the catch of a life time. What a fish story to tell their children.

That day the crowd received more than they had ever expected. They were not only healed, but they were filled with a Word of hope from heaven.

That day the disciples received more than they had ever expected. Despite the magnitude of all the fish it was not the catch of the day...what they caught was a glimpse of the power of God among them, and the possibility that Jesus could change things in their lives as well. Hope had begun. And they would not be disappointed.

A lake, a boat, a net, but NO fish...the perfect ingredients for a whale of a tail of a story....A story of God's presence in our lives....A Story of the everyday, ordinary ways that God enters our lives...opens our eyes... gives us something to hope in, and we are changed. You know... those stories that all true followers of Jesus tell, about the big, and the small ways God is at work in your life. Tell your stories beloved people of God. Tell your tails for the world to hear.

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

Pastor Tim

May 10, 2020

Greetings First Lutheran Congregation,

While the world around us is constantly changing, it usually occurs at a pace that allows us to gradually become accustomed to these changes. Sometimes changes jump out at us so quickly we are caught by surprise. At the FLC annual meeting in March there was some surprise and questions about potential changes to pastoral duties at First Lutheran. There should have been. The church council has wrestled with staffing concerns for over two years, and gradually changed our thoughts on the best direction for our church. Unfortunately our decisions have not been communicated to the rest of you throughout the process which made for a rather "sudden" change in your eyes. Let's fix that.

First Lutheran's mission statement reads: "Living the unconditional Grace & Love of Jesus Christ". What a powerful statement and a worthy goal, but how exactly does this translate into the day to day operations of our church? Or more specifically in this case, how does this define the role of a pastor or their duties in the church?

As a council the first premise we all agreed on was the focus of our staffing decisions needed to emphasize "growth". As so many business gurus have stated in the past "if you aren't growing, you are dying". In other words, we did not want to maintain status quo and become stagnant. The upside of status quo is the comfort we all have with continuing on as is. The downside is it rarely leads to growth of any kind.

The second thing the council did was compile a list of knowns in no particular order.

- The church is changing.
- The idea of a pastor being able to spread the Word on Sundays is no longer effective.
- Attendance at Sunday services is declining especially among "young" families.
- First Lutheran has had an arrangement since Pastor Duane has been here that he would lead service one weekend a month.
- Pastor Tim was chosen by the call committee in part because of his forward thinking.
- Pastor Tim's salary is dictated by the synod and is based on years of experience.
- Leading the services on the weekends is merely the tip of the iceberg for pastors. The investment of time for a service is approximately a 20:1 ratio.
- Saturday and Sunday services each have their own twist which increases the time needed to prepare for both services.
- Our current financial emphasis is to pay down the mortgage as quickly as we can.
- We have enough members at First Lutheran to easily warrant two full time pastors in addition to Pastor Duane.
- Pastor Tim has an active role in teaching confirmation classes.
- We are getting an unbelievable deal on Pastor Duane's services.

The third portion of this journey involved brainstorming ideas which would allow First Lutheran's ministry to continue to grow in our community while remaining fiscally responsible. This led us to the concept of changing Pastor Tim's duties so he could provide a larger variety of ministry to our congregation. By changing his assignment to actively leading two services a month and participating in a third, the church will benefit in two major ways. First, on the weekend Pastor Tim participates in the service with the rest of us he will be much more approachable by those members at church. In addition, the time normally spent preparing his sermon during the week can now be used to reach out to those people in our community who cannot be reached through the traditional weekend services offered at First Lutheran. The only economically feasible way to accomplish this plan is to hire a guest pastor once a month.

We are blessed at First Lutheran to have a wonderful congregation and two positive and hopeful leaders in Pastor Tim and Pastor Duane. The message we convey to others about the grace and love of Jesus is a source of comfort to many in an uncertain world. We are told again and again in the Bible to share our blessings and strengths with others. It is important we practice this by finding ways to share ourselves, our message, and our two incredible ambassadors, Pastor Tim and Pastor Duane, with those in need whether they are already part of our church, currently looking for a church, or unaware of their need for a church.

God Bless,  
The Church Council

Members of the First Lutheran Church of Lake City, Minnesota  
From: Reaching Out Committee  
Date: May 5, 2020

We need your help. As our church community continues to adapt to our unusual circumstances related to the COVID 19 Pandemic with social distancing and the cancellation of in-person church services and other group activities, we have realized again that some members of our congregation cannot access our current online video-streaming of Sunday Church Services, Morning Matins and Evening Vespers. As part of our mission we need to remain a source of support and religious community for these important members. The Reach Out Committee has been calling members but want to do more and you can help.

Our current video and computer equipment is not capable of producing appropriate audio and visual digital information required to produce televised church services and other events. We are asking for your help if you are interested and knowledgeable about helping us find new equipment and methods of creating regular televised and video-streaming events and services.

We need one or more volunteers to help the Reaching Out Committee so that our members without internet capabilities can enjoy our weekly activities on local television. Currently, those members are feeling left out of our church life even more than others who are able to link to our current video-streaming services. We would like to get this committee up and running in June to brainstorm a direction and action plan. If you have an interest or knowledge about linking audio-visual equipment suitable for use in televising events or a desire to aid in running this equipment at services, please contact Rob Nutt at [rnutt@lake-city.k12.mn.us](mailto:rnutt@lake-city.k12.mn.us) or 651-448-0419.

Thank you.  
Reaching Out Committee

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**MORTGAGE UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS TO MEET THE TARGET!**

Our mortgage as of May is \$1,307,605.

We have a goal to reduce the principal to \$1,000,000 by June 2022.

The plan?

We have a generous bequest for matching funds.

We are asking for a member committee to work With the Finance and Stewardship Boards on a "Pay Down the Principal" campaign.

If you are interested please contact the church office at 651-345-5003.

# 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, 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, Roger Helgerson, Wendell Olson, Violet Stinson, Mary Hallenberger, Corrine Johnson, Marv Nelson

**Couples getting Married...**Natalie Schlaghaft & Anthony Armellino

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## BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

**June 1:** Emily Banks, Timothy Ehling, Hudson Moechnig, Jax Rolbiecki

*Dale & Kim Adler, David & Kay Harms*

**June 2:** Colin Fowler, William Roberson, Lucas Roberson, Audrey Rol, Dylan Speltz

*Ben & Jill Dinsmore, Cody & Holly Howard, Jason & Ashley Meyer*

**June 3:** Jared Morgan

*Russ & Nancy Malcomson*

**June 4:** Jason Featherstone, Nick Hartzell

**June 5:** Joanne Flugstad, Mary Gravenish, Deb Hanson, Will Heise, Tonia Swiggum, Ashley Thieren

**June 6:** Noah Bailey, Macie Carlson, Cole Lundell, Gretchen McCarthy

*Duane & Marcia Holst*

**June 7:** Joel Eichelberger, Lucille Grothe, Thomas Huettl

*Galen & Kim Vetter*

**June 8:** Beth Breuer, Jennifer Cobb, Cora Fitterer, Mitchell Kuchinka

*Dave & Tami Ender, Brent & Jane Urbach*

**June 9:** Mark Fick, Mark Grimley, Ethan Wurst

*Roger & Carole Helgerson, Nick & Jamie Oeltjen*

**June 10:** Ben Nutt, Sean Roach, Sheri Sommer

*Greg & Diane Keyport, Jeff & Jill Steffen*

**June 11:** John Albright, Steve Heitman, Madyson Skifton, Emily Vander Laan, Zach VanLoan

*Joel & Deb Dose, Roger & Kathy Hollman*

**June 12:** Tom & Karen Heise, Ben & Elizabeth Meyer

**June 13:** Sophia Oelkers

**June 14:** Erin Berlin, Adolph Zanto

**June 15:** Adam Holden, Carter Keim, Adela Steffen, Rick Sward

**June 16:** Heather Jungclaus-Sell, Dinah Marking, Brandon Meixner, Jerry Narveson, Lauryn Stolzenberg

*Scott & Beth Breuer*

**June 17:** Josh Stoltz

*Deb Tiedeman & Greg Gilman, Ken & Edith Hoffman, Sam & Reeva Lodermeier, Rick & Cindy Martin, Heath & Tricia Oeltjen*

**June 18:** Joe Hinck, Steve Johnson

*Nick & Angie Wallerich*

**June 19:** Alex Lundell, Marilyn Mathison, Mary Jane Rasmussen

*Ross & Sandy Bendickson*

**June 20:** Joan Abraham, Fred Canfield, Tom Kuchinka, Josh Moechnig, Sara Peterson, Carol Warneke

*Kari & Dan Dietrich, Bernie & Jessica Dudley*

**June 21:** Emily Berkeland, Mike Griebenow, Parker Hoops, Holly Howard, Tyler Johnson, Ryan Langhans, Trevor Narum, Anne Pflaum, Reece Smith

**June 22:** Nick Dudley, Mary Foss, Andrew Green, Ken Hoffman, Logan Meincke

*Rob & Sarah Nutt, Jeff & Amy Rogness*

**June 23:** Terri Erickson, Jim Gates, Tricia Meyers, Carter Wallerich

**June 24:** Grant Gilman, Cheryl Oelkers, Charles Wintheiser

*Jeff & Mary Mund, Bob & Dianna Nafe, Peter & Kerstin Suby*

**June 25:** Brayden Burgeson, Mike Johnson, Lise Papenfuss, Michael Pfeilsticker, Rhett Suckow

*Ryan & Kayla Langhans*

**June 26:** Liz Alitz, Madi Green, David Kohutko, Caron Lichtblau, Jesse Oliver, LaDonna Severson

*Floyd & Loa Olson*

**June 27:** Abriell Krier

**June 28:** Brad Nelson, Shelby Skifton, Ryan Steffenhagen

*Jer & Austra Hultstrand, Boyd & Jan Olson*

**June 29:** Tanner Frank, Leah Ratz, Jake Schumacher

*Randy & Janee Klipfel*

**June 30:** Tarri Gnotke, Alan Harteneck, Brandyn Oliver, Maverick Rolbiecki, Jacquie Stoltz

*Joel & Kaylee Eichelberger, Orville & Joyce Hegseth*

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# Children's Ministry News

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**August 3-7, 2020**

**With GOOD EARTH VILLAGE is  
cancelled due to Covid-19.**

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As new guidelines come out, I will be trying to plan some fun family gatherings for all of our members. Watch Facebook, the website, and email for updates.

Stay strong, stay healthy, and stay positive!  
We can get through this!

If you need anything, please reach out.

Blessings,

Heidi