

Firs|Things

September 2026

Living the unconditional Grace & Love of Jesus Christ in the World

Firs|Lutheran Church

100 Peace Ridge
Lake City, MN 55041

651-345-5003
info@firstlc.org
www.firstlc.org

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday 8am-4pm

Regular Worship Schedule

Sunday at 9am

Watch online LIVE at on
[YouTube](#) on Sundays.

STAFF

Paul Miller

Pastor

paul.miller@firstlc.org

Kary Jonas

Associate Pastor

kary.jonas@firstlc.org

Sue Megrund

Interim Youth Director

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Sara Thompson

Coord. of Children's Ministry

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Kerstin Suby

Music Administrator & Organist

kerstin.suby@firstlc.org

Jennifer White

Congregational Administrator

jennifer.white@firstlc.org

Loren Prigge, *Custodian*

Congregational Discovery Event

Sunday, September 27
10:00am after worship



Have you ever wondered what young people wrestle with these days and how they see the world? The church is an incredible place for youth to grow in their faith, but it takes a culture, not just a program or ministry. That is why this event is for the **ENTIRE CONGREGATION!**

We'll have food, education, and good conversation as we discover together how First Lutheran engages in ministry with our young people.

You will not be recruited to lead an event. We want your opinions, impressions, and creativity as we dream together about how this congregation carries out the promises made to a child at their baptism. What does it mean when we say that we welcome them into our mission at FLC? How can this church walk with them in their daily life and faith? The answers might surprise you. Please come and learn more!

Autumnal Equinox at the Labyrinth



The autumnal equinox arrives on **Tuesday, September 22** at 7:05 pm. If weather is good plans are to have the Labyrinth lit with candles from **7:00 to 8:30pm** for anyone come out to walk the Labyrinth. Join us in celebrating the first day of fall, honoring the balance of light and dark, giving thanks for the harvest, preparing for the cooler months ahead, or anything else that moves you to spend time in reflection. All are welcome. Any updates will be announced in First Lutheran Connections.



Questioning Assumptions as a Path to Discovery

We all use shortcuts in our thinking. Often it saves us time and energy. Sometimes, though, it is worth noticing the shortcuts and considering if they are the best path for us to take, and if they are getting us where we need to go.

In the church, there are several shortcuts that most of us tend to take when thinking about ministry with children and youth. We could also just call them assumptions, and I am certain I struggle with them as much as anybody. Here are some of them:

- Ministry to children and youth happens through **programs**.
- Those programs are **for** children of certain ages and their families and put on **by** the children's parents and/or pastors and church staff.

I would like you to examine those shortcuts. Are they true? Is there anything they are leaving out? Are these shortcuts getting us where we need to go? Does this describe how you were shaped as a disciple of Jesus, or is there more to the story?

And, I suppose, if we are going to evaluate our shortcuts, we would need to know where we are trying to get to! How about this: children with age-appropriate faith, including a profound sense that they are both known and loved by God and by this community. Youth with a safe space to raise questions, to practice following Jesus, and to find the habits and activities that sustain and express their faith.

Programs have their place, but only if they help us get where we are trying to go. We know about the things that really end up shaping faith and growing disciples: faith practices in the home, prayer, worship, engaging with the Bible, formative experiences of service to others and of unconditional love and inclusion, and mentorship in the life of faith. Perhaps you could add to this list.

I have enjoyed the "Discovery Process" that began over the summer. You may remember hearing about it in the spring – led by Interim Youth Director Sue Megrund and her colleague, Pete Erickson, we are looking at where we want to go with Youth Ministry. In my thinking, this has been a useful time to notice where I've been "putting the cart before the horse:" instead of jumping to programs and staff configurations, first asking where we are trying to go and where God is leading us.

To do that, you have slow down. You have to tell some stories and dream a little. Often we realize where God is leading us through the passions and giftedness that God has placed in our hearts and in our fellow members, and through the resources and opportunities that we've already been given but just need to notice and use.

Dreaming – discernment – clarity. I invite you all to join in this Discovery Process in the congregation-wide event after worship on September 27th.



Pastor Paul

July Financials

A note from our treasurer, Andrew Ahrens.

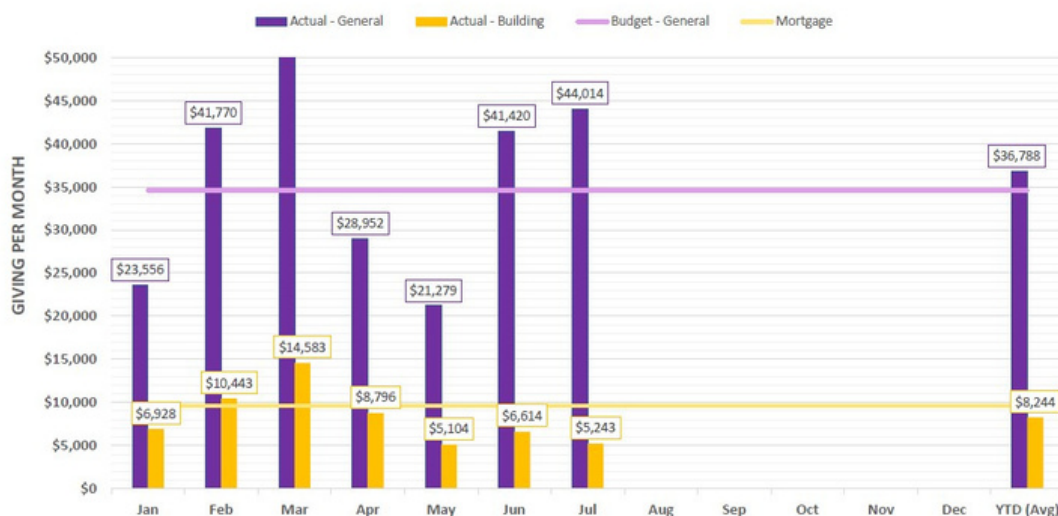
July was a month where we remained in good position going forward. Our cash balance remained similar to the previous month. This was helped by a week where giving exceeded the usual weekly amount.

Giving for the full year is back on pace to exceed budget for the General Giving. As expected, Building Giving has slowed down over the summer, but is just below budget and expect it to increase once fall begins.

The upcoming payment for parking lot resurfacing will

affect our cash balance, but we currently are in a position to pay it without having to move funds into checking from the money market account. However, I will ensure this once the payment is processed.

2026 Giving - First Lutheran Church



	July	Year-to-date as of 7/31/2026
Income:	54,196.65	333,280.24
- Expense:	36,491.93	294,691.78
Net Income:	\$ 17,704.72	\$ 38,588.46

Price Increases for Graves & Niches



The Cemetery Board met in June and recommended an increase in the price of a grave in Oakwood Cemetery and in the price of a niche in our Columbarium. The price increase was approved at the August Council Meeting and will go into effect on November 1, 2026.

Price increases are as follows:
 Grave: \$800 increase to \$1,000*
 Niche: \$2,000 increase to \$2,500**



*There are additional opening fees for caskets and cremations for the grave. A grave site accommodates one casket and one urn, or two urns.
 **The niche price includes two urns and engraving of the marble front plate. A niche accommodates two urns.

Contact the church office for more information, 651-345-5003 or email jennifer.white@firstlc.org.

Volunteers Needed

Our church cemetery, Oakwood, is maintained by volunteers. The crew could use one more mower and two more trimmers. All equipment is provided and the time required averages 1-2 hours per week. If you are interested, contact John Mortenson (651) 347-9268 or the church office. (651) 345-5003.



Thank You Notes from Pastor Duane & Pastor Paul

Our First Lutheran congregation celebrated Pastor Duane Holst and Pastor Paul Miller on August 16 as they reflected on their years serving as pastors. It is unique to have two pastors celebrate ordination milestones in the same year - Pastor Duane (50th on August 15) and Pastor Paul (20th on June 18). Both were thankful of all the well wishes they have received.



A big Thank You to the congregation for celebrating the 50th anniversary of my ordination. I also appreciate receiving cards with kind words from many of you. I have been blessed to serve First Lutheran and other congregations over the years. Thank you all!

~ Pastor Duane

Thanks for celebrating my ordination anniversary with me! It was nice to share what would otherwise be just a private reminder. You are very thoughtful people!

~ Pastor Paul

Labyrinth Re-dedication



On August 23, members gathered around our Labyrinth at the end of worship for a re-dedication program in honor of the 5th Anniversary since its completion.

The Labyrinth is a gift to the congregation and the community as a place for prayer, meditation, and connection to God's forgiveness, love and peace. See related article on the front page regarding candle lighting the Labyrinth for the Autumnal Equinox.

Quilters Donate Over 40 Quilts to Area Groups

Our quilting team donating 42 quilts in total to the Ronald McDonald House, Hope Coalition (women's shelter in Red Wing), and the Lake City Care Center.

The Hope Coalition valued their quilt donation at \$900. The women and children are able to take the quilts with them when they leave the shelter. They are a much appreciated gift.



**Ronald
McDonald
House®**



First Lutheran Church,

Thank you for donating
quilts to HOPE Coalition!
We appreciate your generosity
and providing warmth and
comfort to those we serve.

From all of us at HOPE



Fall Bible Study: Reclaiming Revelation

Join Pastor Kary for a six-week exploration of one of the most misunderstood books of the Bible, Revelation. The study group will meet on **Wednesdays Oct. 7 -Nov. 11 at 11 am in the Fireside room.**

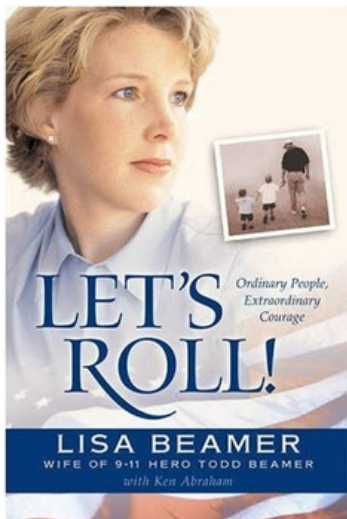
We will study some of these questions:

- Is the Book of Revelation meant to be used as a roadmap to the future that outlines an imminent doom?
- What to make of the concept of “the rapture?”
- Can we take verses of the Revelation and compare them to events in modern history?
- What was happening historically at the time of Revelation’s writing?
- Is there another message within this book that can provide that provides hope here and now?

Study materials will become available in mid-September and will be free of charge. Sign up at the Kiosk at First Lutheran or by using [this link](#).



Book Group Resumes in September



She reveals what really happened on the ill-fated United Flight 93, and shares poignant glimpses of a genuine American hero. She talks candidly about her life with Todd and the devastating day her children learned their daddy had died, the mix of grief and joy when she gave birth to the daughter she was pregnant with at the time, and how she found the confidence to go on in the face of such tragedy and loss.

Sign-up here and find discussion questions.

The Book Group will resume meeting on **Sept. 14 at 8:30am**. They will be discussing “*Let’s Roll! (Ordinary People, Extraordinary Courage)*” by Lisa Beamer, wife of September 11 hero Todd Beamer.

Fellowship Potluck

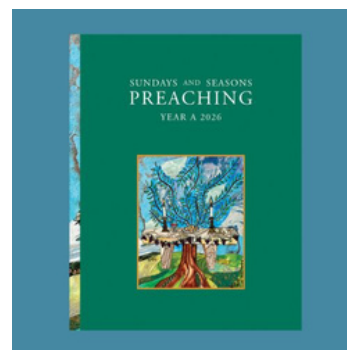
Join us for a monthly Fellowship Potluck on Thursday, Sept. 10th at 5:30pm. Bring a dish to pass and enjoy conversation at a good old-fashioned Lutheran potluck.



Wednesday Morning Bible Study

Each Wednesday morning at 8:30am several members and guests gather in the Fireside

Room where Pastor Paul or Pastor Kary lead a bible study with focus on the gospel and lessons for the upcoming week. Following the lectionary each week creates thoughtful discussion and insight for the upcoming sermon during Sunday worship. This year is following the Year A Lectionary. No sign-up up necessary.



September At A Glance

Sept. 10 - Sunday School Teacher Orientation & Training, 6:30pm

Sept. 13 - Rally Sunday!

- Bible Blessing: 3-year-olds, new students & 3rd graders receive their Bibles during the 9am service
- Sunday School Teacher & Confirmation Leader Installation
- Sunday School families find your classroom & meet your teacher after worship
- Enjoy lemonade & treats

Sept. 20 - Sunday School Classes Begin, 10-11am
3rd Grade Bible Intro at 10am (Parents & Students)

Sept. 23 - KFC (Kids for Christ) Begins, 3-5pm

VBS Fun!

We had an amazing week at First Lutheran Vacation Bible School August 3-6. Rainforest Falls taught the kids that God is everywhere! Wow God! Below are just a few highlights.

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped make this week possible!



September At A Glance

Sept. 2 - Confirmation Parent Meeting
(6:30: 7th grade / 7pm: 7th & 8th grade / 7:30: 9th grade)

Sept. 9 - First Day of Confirmation, 6-8pm

Sept. 23 - Senior High Summer Trips Meeting, 8pm
(9th-12th grades)

Sept. 30 - Senior High Youth Group, 8pm

Senior High Youth Group

Wed. Sept. 30 | 8pm

FLC Youth Room

This will be our first gathering of the school year! Come reconnect with old and new friends! We will have some games, sharing, late-night snacks, prayer, and a chance to learn more about what is happening in the coming months!

Senior High Summer 2027 Trips Meeting

Yes, summer 2026 just wrapped up, and we're already talking about summer 2027! That's because the good stuff takes planning, and it all kicks off this fall. Join us on **Sept 23rd at 8pm** for an informational meeting where we'll walk through this year's opportunities and start planning and preparing together. Here are some of the opportunities:

ELCA Youth Gathering

Open to youth in grades 9-12 completed

Every three years, thousands of Senior High Youth from across the ELCA gather for a week unlike any other, and this time, it's practically in our backyard, up in Minneapolis! Through inspiring speakers, hands-on learning, and powerful nightly worship, the Gathering gives young people a chance to ask big questions, grow in their faith, and experience "church" in bold new ways. It's a week of connection and community you won't want to miss!



Mystery Trip

We've got something in the works, but we just can't share it yet. Come to the meeting to learn more (assuming it doesn't leak first)!



Rainbow Trail Lutheran Bible Camp - Colorado



Tucked into the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of the San Isabel National Forest in Colorado, Rainbow Trail is where Senior High youth trade screens for summits. Hiking, archery, high ropes, zip lines, and white-water rafting are all on the menu. Campers stay on-site, build new friendships, take on leadership roles, and ground it all in worship and Bible study. It might just be the best week of your summer. We'll share more details at the meeting!

Sept. 1: Troy Emerson, Anna Foss, Cory Porisch

Sept. 2: Kathleen Gunhus, Vivian Krier, Joshua Rodewald

Sept. 3: Ryan Gunhus, Amy Henderson
Mark & Jill Braaten Bailey, Randy & Linda Pavlak

Sept. 4: Jake Atkinson, Kayson Hartzell, Randi Morgan, Audrey Watson

Sept. 5: Brett Langfritz, Kirsten Langworthy, LuAnn Moechnig, Brady Nelson

Sept. 6: Tanner Meincke, Ava Wallerich, Charlie White
Randy & Lori Meincke

Sept. 7: Allie Langhans, Sharon Wadleigh

Sept. 8: Blakelee Haviland, Shirley Mickow, Jack Narum

John & Nancy Albright, Kevin & Kathy Tesch

Sept. 9: *Jim & Johanna Gates, Jesse & Katelyn Jonas*

Sept. 10: Judy Bremer, Joseph Morgan
Philip & Dana Gartner, Rod & Arlene Johnson

Sept. 11: Nancy Rigelman
Rick & Val Janka

Sept. 12: Margaret Rol
Travis & Jacelyn Dunn, Joshua & LuAnn Moechnig, Ryan & Megan Sullivan

Sept. 13: Duane & Kimberly Boos

Sept. 14: Jan Johnson

Sept. 15: Maddie Breuer, Jennifer Talbert
William & Shelia Johnson, Rick & Edie Sward

Sept. 16: Cole Dierick, Heidi Hartzell, Edith Hoffman, Randi Kirchner, Debbie Mickelson
Ryan & Amy Olson

Sept. 17: Faith Bonde, Alexis Eggenberger, Jim Menting, Evan Olson
Megan & Andrew Ahrens

Sept. 18: Christopher Ahrens

Chris & Kari Weinrich

Sept. 19: Zach Dudley, Derek Sogla, Jeremy Tesch
Jim & Christine Anderson, David & Kelly Pribyl

Sept. 20: Mike Kohrs, Randy Pavlak, Heidi Schwer
Mike & Kim Bobb, Colin & Amanda Jackson, Tom & Valerie Kuchinka, Steve & Sandy Swan

Sept. 21: Mark Matanich, Cheryl Mohn, Linda Sexton

Sept. 22: Ava Jolie Brunn, Patty Svien, Addie Thieren
Nathan & Michelle Larson

Sept. 23: Reese Anderson, Carston Dammann, Aaron Nelson, Lori Swiggum, Skylar VanLoan
Tyler & Erika Blim, Michael & Barbara Johnson, Dale & Carol Nibbe, Larry & Kathy Wigern

Sept. 24: Joshua Matanich, Dennis Schumacher
Jeff & Terri Erickson

Sept. 25: Jerry Benson, Rick Janka, Alex Ratz
Rand & Bonnie Conway, Lisa & Jose Koehler, Shon & Molly Thieren

Sept. 26: Kelly Pribyl, Marin Rodewald
Wally & Susan Dailey, Stephanie & Michael Eggenberger, Dustin & Kimberly Meyer, Tim & Jenny Schlagenhaft

Sept. 27: Lisa Alitz, Shelby Glander, Mary Kregel

Sept. 28: Greg Berge, Cam Ender, Megan Langworthy, Alison Wallerich

Nicholas & Amber Fulton, Amy & Mark Matanich

Sept. 29: Thoren Mangold, Virginia Plote, Tom Rasmussen, Cheryl Sprick Bremer, Galen Vetter, Debbie West

John & Audry Plote

Sept. 30: Megan Kramer, Bradley Rigelman
Jordan & Oliva Dick

Keep in prayer: Wayne & Monica Schmidt (cousin of Dale Nibbe), Cheryl Goudy (Sue Benson's sister), Patricia A. McMahon (cousin of Dale Nibbe), Lucy Youngren (great-niece of Mavis Hawkins), Tom Gerken, Rand & Bonnie Conway, Hazel Jonas (granddaughter of Shef & Deb Massey), Anna Wood (Wally Dailey's sister), Wally Dailey, Barb Novek (sister of Diane Keyport), River (grandson of Mary Santelman).

Would you like your name or a loved one added to FLC's prayer list? Please contact the FLC Prayer

Connection at firstlutheranprayerconnection@gmail.com or the FLC office, 651-345-5003.

Date Role	Sept. 6	Sept. 13	Sept. 20	Sept. 27
LECTOR	Randi Kirchner	Sandy Bendickson	Cheryl Luettinger	Randi Kirchner
GREETERS	Needed	Plaza Ladies	Needed	Needed
COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	Randi Kirchner Duane Holst Needed	Needed Needed	Cheryl Luettinger Claudia Howard	Randi Kirchner Needed
USHERS	Needed Needed	Ross & Peg Mattke	Needed Needed	Needed Needed
ALTAR GUILD	Marcia Holst Esther Gullixson	Sandy Bendickson Karen Heise	Sandy Bendickson Karen Heise	Marlys Johnson Karyn Moechig
COFFEE FELLOWSHIP	Needed	Karen & Tom Heise Judy & Chuck Bremer	Tami & Dave Ender	Needed

Thank you to those who share their time and talents assisting with Worship Roles! Your service is a gift to our congregation! If you'd like to try one of these roles, we have created a "job description" for each worship role. Please contact Jen White in the church office to receive a copy of any of the roles. Thank you for considering!

Sign up by...

- Clicking [Sign-up Genius here.](#)
- Calling the office (651-345-5003)
- Sending an email to Jen White (jennifer.white@firstlc.org)
- Signing up at the Kiosk at church

September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Bible Study 8:30am Staff 1:30pm Senior Choir, 7pm Confirmation Parent Meetings 6:30pm-7 th grade 7pm - 7 th & 8 th grade 7:30pm - 9 th grade	3	4	5 Iglesia Rehearsal 3pm
6 Worship 9am	7 LABOR DAY OFFICE CLOSED	8 Quilters 8:30am	9 Bible Study 8:30am Staff 1:30pm Bells 5:15pm Confirmation 6-8pm (first) Worship 6:30pm Senior Choir 7pm	10 Cannon River Conference, 9am-noon (at First Lutheran) Fellowship Potluck 5:30pm SS Teacher Orientation & Child Safety Training 6:30pm	11	12 Iglesia Rehearsal 3pm
13 Worship 9am Bibles - First Year & 3 rd Grade RALLY Sunday - Meet Teacher	14 Book Group, 8:30am Crafters 9:30am	15	16 Bible Study 8:30am Care Center Service 10am Staff 1:30pm Bells 5:15pm Confirmation 6-8pm Worship 6:30pm Senior Choir 7pm	17 Council Meeting 6:30pm	18	19 Iglesia Rehearsal 3pm
	Cub Scouts 6:30pm Troop 94 7pm					
20 Worship 9am Ella Kay Jackson Baptism Sunday School 10am 3rd Grade Bible Intro 10am (Parents & Students)	21 First Things Articles Due	22 Quilters 8:30am	23 Bible Study 8:30am Pepin Plaza Service 10am Staff 1:30pm KFC 3pm (first day) Bells 5:15pm Confirmation 6-8pm Worship 6:30pm Senior Choir 7pm Senior High Summer Trips, 8pm (9th-12 th grades)	24	25	26 Iglesia Rehearsal 3pm
	Cub Scouts 6:30pm Troop 94 7pm					
27 Worship 9am Sunday School 10am Youth Ministry Discovery Congregational Event, 10am	28 Send Oct. First Things	29	30 Bible Study 8:30am Staff 1:30pm KFC 3pm Bells 5:15pm Confirmation 6-8pm Worship 6:30pm Senior Choir 7pm HS Youth Group, 8pm			
	Cub Scouts 6:30pm Troop 94 7pm					