

First Lutheran Church
1100 East Superior Street
Duluth, MN 55802



May—June 2023

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Duluth, Minnesota

The Mustard Seed



Vacation Bible School (VBS)!

July 17 thru July 21

9 am – 12 noon

Register by June 15th

Kids who have completed grades K-4 are invited grow in faith as they play, learn, sing, and work to be menders of God's creation. Registration forms available online or at church. Register by June 15th, in first news, on our website. Fee: \$10

SUNDAY School

May 7 and 21st, 9:45am



What a fun year of Sunday School it has been!
The final session will be on May 21, with each class having a closing celebration lesson. Sunday School kids will also be helping, reading, and singing at the worship services on May 21—all ages can have a role in worship! On May 21st we will also celebrate communion with the young people who completed, *A Place at the Table*.

GRADUATION



If you have a high school or college graduate in your family, please send us a photo, where they are graduating from, and what their plans are for next year. Parents please write a prayer for your young person. High Schoolers, what your current favorite song is? College students what will you miss the most about college?

Middle School & Confirmation will meet:

**Each Sunday, 6:00-7:30pm
through May 21st.**

Confirmation Celebration

Penetecost Sunday, May 28, 10AM

Victoria Goehring, Bennett Linval,
Nina Thorson and Zach Warner
will affirm their faith.

Have you checked out the new **Sparkhouse Family YouTube channel**? Sparkhouse is the creator of the curriculum and Bibles that we use at FLC—and they have a wide range of engaging videos for all ages on YouTube: *Whirl and Holy Moly* for children, *Connect* videos for preteens, *Reform: Ancestors* videos for teenagers and *Animate* videos for adults. Just Google Sparkhouse Family for access to these great resources!

Bible Study

Sunday, May 7th & 21st, between services.

**Friday morning Bible Study, 9:30-11:00 am
will go through May 26th.**

Biblical Texts and Human Sexuality in the Modern Era

Sunday, May 21, Noon, Parish Hall

Presentation and conversation on Biblical texts that have informed the Church's understanding of human sexuality, presented by Dr. Erik Heen, John H.P. Reumann Professor Emeritus in Biblical Studies, The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

A light lunch will be provided, child care is available if needed.

Please sign-up at the You are Loved Table.

Gloria Dei is celebrating its 25th Anniversary of becoming a RIC congregation.



To celebrate its 25th anniversary of becoming a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation this year, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Duluth MN is thrilled to welcome the Rev. Dr. Barbara Lundblad as a guest preacher and presenter on Sunday, May 7, 2023. She is Professor Emerita of Preaching at Union Theological Seminary in New York City, lives in Minneapolis, and continues to be a commentator and presenter in preaching circles.

Prof. Lundblad will be preaching at the 10:00 a.m. worship service and also giving a presentation in the afternoon beginning at 1:30 p.m. on the importance of being a welcoming congregation today. A freewill offering will support Reconciling Works, <https://www.reconcilingworks.org>. The afternoon will also include opportunities to network with others, hear from Pr. Ellen Taube about Reconciling Works and the process of becoming a Reconciling in Christ congregation, and hear from Pr. Jeff Davis about the work of the synod's Welcome and Reconciliation Team. An information flyer is attached. All are welcome.

Banana Bread Baking Bonanza

Saturday, May 20th, 9:30 am, in the FLC Kitchen!

Come and bake banana bread to have as welcome gifts for our guests.

Contact: Susanna Ojakangas at skmojak@gmail.com if you'd like more information.



Note Worthy

The Mustard Seed

**DEADLINE FOR THE JULY/AUGUST
ISSUE OF THE MUSTARD SEED IS
MONDAY, JUNE 12**

Please send all submissions to
office@fcduluth.org

Pastoral Associate Ann Beck will be gone from May 1—June 14, on a sabbatical/pilgrimage hike in Spain — the Camino de Santiago.

**Please Keep her in your prayers
on this journey!**



Welcome New Members



Laura Bechard moved here during the pandemic and found FLC through a friend. Laura sincerely appreciates the outreach she saw here at FLC. She participated in the Lefse run, and has joined the choir.

Savannah and Jacob Brooks were seeking a church home where there was a sense of community and connection. They literally found FLC via google. They enjoy the contemporary feel and look forward to building a relationship with God as adults. They enjoy the connection they found here with the FLC family, along with the music and numerous events going on.



Cheryl Glass-Schell found FLC during Covid. Cheryl enjoys understanding the Bible, its messages and the connection of the Old Testament to the New Testament. Cheryl found FLC to be a vibrant church community and thought that the altar flowers given in honor of people listening livestream was wonderful! She is very thankful to be living and growing in faith through FLC.

Dave Holte is drawn to worship at First Lutheran to hear our pastor and the worship band. They are all very good people! Dave found FLC because it is close to his home. Dave was also very pleased when the church opened up after Covid so he could attend live services.



Walter Karlson and Molly Burgstahler find a sense of tradition, community and belonging at FLC. They found FLC while enjoying a walk on the Lake Walk and checked it out! They found everyone at FLC to be so welcoming and there was a good combination of tradition and openness.

Katie and Mark Kaufman seek and find a sense of community and spiritual nourishment here. They have been involved at FLC for 20 years. Retirement gave them time to become members. They support FLC's mission and hope for a full bounce back of the church during these post-pandemic times.



Joy and Kevin Michalcek were moved to find a sense of worship and community. They enjoy mission and WELCA work. Kevin is interested in participating in worship opportunities and Joy in singing and handbells. They look forward to continuing studies of the scripture.

Let's Encourage Runners on June 17th Grandma's Marathon Saturday!!

Once again First Lutheran will provide support and encouragement to Grandma's Marathon runners from 7:30am to 1pm on Marathon Saturday, June 17 in the front of church. A sign up sheet will be available in early June at the Welcome Desk. A t-shirt and many perks are given to all volunteers. We also want to know members who are running in the Marathon and Half Marathon so we can cheer you on! Please consider joining our Marathon team!!



Stewardship

50 Days of Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts



What are your spiritual gifts? What are your gifts that reveal Christ to others? The Gift of Leadership, The Gift of Healing, The Gift of Mercy, The Gift of Service, The Gift of Discernment. These are just a few of the spiritual gifts you will explore when you take a quick assessment on the ELCA website. During the 50 days between Easter and Pentecost, the Stewardship Ministry Team invites everyone in the congregation to take the assessment and discover what your spiritual gifts are. During that time, we will provide a handout that lists and describes each of the spiritual gifts. We will celebrate what we learned on Pentecost Sunday, May 28 – the day we celebrate the coming of the Spirit! The link is available on our FLC website for your convenience. Click on Community and then Stewardship.

Once you finish the assessment you will have the option to print out your results. You can do so immediately and then close it. If you want to save it on your computer, you can choose a PDF file instead of your printer during the printing process and then save it on your computer. You can then later print the saved file.

At the *You Are Loved table*, you can pick up the definitions of spiritual gifts. Please note that this list of spiritual gifts is a bit different from the 20 spiritual gifts included in the ELCA's self-assessment tool. This list is based solely on Scriptural references, the ELCA includes spirit-filled gifts such as music, writing, and prayer (called intercession). The Stewardship Team is excited about offering this assessment tool to you and to help you discover the spiritual gifts you are blessed with. Have fun in your discoveries!

Time for Renewal — Retiring our Debt

Financial support for retiring this loan has been mixed for the first quarter of 2023. As a reminder, monthly contributions of \$2,400 are needed along with our synod monthly rent in order to retire our debt in 4 years. Please continue to be generous in your offerings so we can be free of this financial burden. Alleluia!
—Finance Committee



Jacob Warren's Eagle Scout Project — Park Bench

Hi, my name is Jacob Warren, and I am a scout with Troop 9 in Duluth. I have been scouting since kindergarten when I started as a cub scout, and now I am a junior in high school, working on my Eagle Project. I need your help! I am partnering with First Lutheran Church to provide a bench for the new pollinator garden. I will collect 500 pounds of soft plastic, save it from the trash, and recycle it into an environmentally-friendly bench through NexTrex. Five hundred pounds of soft plastic is equivalent to around 40,500 plastic grocery bags, so I truly need your help collecting the plastic.

Soft plastic includes shopping bags, bubble wrap, Amazon and FedEx envelopes (minus any labels), bread bags, cereal liners, etc. Bring your soft plastic to First Lutheran and place the plastic in the collection bin on your way into the sanctuary.

If you have any questions or know any businesses that could contribute additional soft plastic, don't hesitate to contact me at Mlnejake1@gmail.com



First Lutheran Softball

Spring is finally upon us and the itch to get outside to enjoy a favorite leisure activity becomes hard to resist. It's time to loosen up, stretch, add a few extra blocks on a walk. Challenging yourself to try something new with a group that will support you no matter where you're starting from. Taking care of our physical wellbeing is as important as our spiritual wellbeing. First Lutheran has a team that competes in the Duluth YMCA Community Softball League. The league is open to anyone wishing to play softball, have fun, and make new friends. It welcomes all teams and skill levels. It is a family friendly softball league that fosters healthy living and community development. The season consists of a 10-game schedule, May-August.

So, pull out your cleats and dust off those mitts because the First Lutheran Flyers softball team is looking for you! If you want to join a team that has been a contender in the league for many years, you're in luck, we are that team. We welcome you whether you've played before or not. We meet one evening a week with others from our congregation and community for an evening of softball enjoyment. If you're not a player, we'd love to have you come and cheer us on.

Please contact me via email at victor3rd@gmail.com or text me at 218-341-5472. ~Vic Krause



FLC Caring Ministry Blessing on Sun., May 7th

FLC has an energized group of caring people who are connecting with those who are no longer able to attend worship or participate in church life. During the worship services on May 7, all those who offer visits and phone calls, write cards, make prayer shawls, or bring communion to the homebound will be invited to come forward for a blessing of their ministry. If you would like to be involved in FLC Caring Ministry, please contact Pastor Dianne.

God's Work – Our (Dirty) Hands!

Pollinator and Community Garden Info:

Interested in learning more about the Pollinator and Community Gardens? Sign up for timely updates at the Creation Care Table by the information desk.

Pollinator Garden Information: Contact: Johnslppola2@gmail.com. Community Garden Info POC: stevesamuelson11@gmail.com



Local and Global

News from the El Salvador Action Team

On March 28th, the El Salvador Action team met with the Los Ranchos community over zoom to commemorate Archbishop Oscar Romero, a martyr for the faith. Previously, our two groups had watched a movie about Oscar Romero's life and formulated questions to encourage thoughtful discussion. Oscar Romero served as Archbishop of San Salvador in the late 1970's till his death in 1980. He spoke out against social injustice and violence perpetrated by the military government of El Salvador. On March 24, 1980, he was assassinated while celebrating Mass. During our call, Jalmie from Los Ranchos shared further information about Oscar Romero with the group and what was happening in El Salvador at the time.

One of the discussion questions asked was, "What have you learned from his story and how could you apply those learnings to your own life?" For Brenda, she learned that at first, Oscar Romero was reluctant to "rock the boat" and tried to preach compromise and peace until his good friend (Rutilio Grande) was assassinated for speaking out against the treatment of the military government. Even though his nature was more scholarly and introspective, he found the courage to speak out against the injustices around him. His faith in God allowed him to have the courage to do what was right. For Brenda, it reminded her that she needs to rely on God to help her find the courage to speak out when she sees injustice and to work on behalf of those who do not have a voice.

To view the movie, Romero, follow this link: [Romero movie](#). You can view (unedited) video of the call with this link: [Romero zoom discussion](#). To learn more about Sister Parish, the organization connecting our church with San Antonio los Ranchos, follow this link: [a look at Sister Parish virtual events in 2022](#).

For more information on our connection, please contact one of the following committee members: Brenda at bsjohnsonsp@gmail.com, Joanne at jdjokela@gmail.com, or Dory at dstinkrain@aol.com.

Migrant Justice Support Team News

First Lutheran and Gloria Del Lutheran churches are now official Welcoming Lutheran Congregations to refugees and asylum seekers who enter the US through the ELCA AMMPARO program. AMMPARO program stands for Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (which is for all asylum seekers now) and is part of the ELCA. As a part of that connection, we agree to four commitments regarding migrants and are invited to participate in AMMPARO gatherings for trainings and updates.

Welcoming Congregations:

- 1) welcome and minister to migrants
- 2) physically accompany migrants as they make new lives in our communities;
- 3) pray for justice for migrants;
- 4) advocate for public policy that will positively impact the current immigration crisis.

Our team is excited about this development in our support of asylum seekers. Contact Beth Holst (bethie.holst@gmail.com) for more information or to join the Migrant Justice Support Team.

DAMIANO SOUP KITCHEN

FLC has been a long-time partner in this soup kitchen ministry, and we are happy to once again be helping Damiano staff prepare and serve the meal on the 1st Wednesday of each month from 8 – 1. We are open to more volunteers. If you'd like to be part of this team, contact Dale Stahl at dale.stahl1@gmail.com for more information!



Free Community Meal

LAST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH
12:00-1:30PM
FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH



1100 EAST SUPERIOR STREET

April 30th & May 25th



Meals for CHUM'S Steve O'Neil (SONA) & St. Francis Apartments (SFA)

FLC continues to provide meals for both of the housing facilities. Each month we receive a call letting us know what their needs are for the month. FLC folks make meals from time to time so we have frozen meals ready to go. In April we provided 20 meals to SFA and 8 meals to SONA.

April 14, we received a request because a resident living at SONA is having some serious health issues. Providing meals to this family means Mom can get the required rest while still feeding her family! We were invited to provide 7 meals for a family of 4.

Interested in being involved in this project or leading a cooking day? Contact Mary: maryschmitz754@gmail.com or call 218-591-6331.

Update about Nadia and Pastor Alexei Krongolm and our Friendship Lutheran Congregation in Russia

The Russia-Ukraine war continues to take an emotional/financial toll on Nadia and Pastor Alexei Krongolm and their family and on their congregation in Petrozavodsk. Their coming and going between Finland and Petrozavodsk is dependent, in part, on 1) their "Vocational School" schedule in Finland (their "Student" Visas allow them to be safely in Finland and to carry support funds back to the congregation, but does involve being in their respective classes or internships in Finland), 2) Nadia's health (she has to be in Petrozavodsk periodically to secure available treatment drugs), and 3) their first priority and love: ongoing ministry with the congregation and in the larger church body (ELCIR). Over the past three weeks we know they were able to spend time in Petrozavodsk for a 3-day Youth and Family Camp (retreat), Palm Sunday, and much of Easter week, despite the risk of military conscription.

Here is some good news: A major difficulty for the Vision Petrozavodsk ministry has been transferring contributed funds to the congregation. Two individuals from Saint James Lutheran Church in West Saint Paul, a partnering Vision Petrozavodsk congregation, are departing April 23, for Helsinki to meet with Pastor Alexei and Nadia for an encouraging visit and to deliver \$20,000 for support of the congregation, especially for their humanitarian aid program for Ukraine refugees.

Teen Closet Update

Thank you for such generous and quality new and used clothing donations, hangers, and shopping bags!



Workdays in May/June:

- Mon, May 8, 11-1
- Weds, May 17, 2:30-4*
- Sat, May 27, noon-2
- Mon, June 12, 11-1
- Weds, June 24, 2:30-4*
- Sat, June 24, noon-2



***Note: Contact Caylee Belden of group text to confirm**

Volunteers are always needed.

Special Volunteer Needs for May/June:

1. Transportation for exports to Damiano or Chum
2. Creative people to decorate for May/June

Current Need for Donations:

- Plastic or Wood Hangers
- Display shelving or shallow dressers
- Large Metal Shelving unit (to hold large sorting bins)



For more information, contact FLC member Laura Stahl at 269.5598, Laura.MorganStahl@gmail.com



Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota

'Save the Date'

Betty Preus and Dana Varland, LSS Ambassadors for First Lutheran, invite you to join us at the annual Benefit for Youth on May 23, at Clyde Iron Works. This is a great opportunity to learn about and to support the work of LSS in our community. Registration and buffet dinner begin at 5:30 and the program is from 6:30-7:00. Buffet will be available both before and after the program. RSVP by May 11th at lssmn.org/DuluthYouth23. If you would like to join one of our tables, write in one of our names when you see this optional item on the checkout page: "I was invited to register by _____."

Dinner cost is \$25. You will also have the opportunity to make a gift or pledge to LSS at the event.



For more information or to let us know you have registered, contact:
Betty at bettypreus@gmail.com
or Dana at dvarland@gmail.com

Teen Closet Shopping!!!

Free and gently used clothing for youth, ages 13-21

Schedule:

- May 4, 4-6 pm
- May 9, 4-6 pm
- May 20, 9-11 am
- May 23, 4-6 pm
- June 1, 4-6 pm
- June 6, 4-6 pm
- June 17, 9-11 am
- June 21, 4-6 pm
- June 29, 4-6 pm



Entrance to the Teen closet is on the west side of the building off of the parking lot on London Road.

Questions: Please call Caylee at the Center for Changing Lives at 218-451-6290



WORSHIP SERVICE, JUNE 4th

50 Years of Ministry and Service

Place: United Methodist (Coppertop Church)

Time: To be announced

17th Annual Rhubarb Festival, June 24



**10am-3pm, Stella Maris Academy,
Holy Rosary Campus**



FLC is baking! We will make 400 crusts, June 6-9. We will be making 200 pies, 150 crisps, Rhubarb Juice (for rhubarb lemonade booth), Rhubarb Sauce for the Rhubarb Brats, Rhubarb Salsa and preparing for the Rhubarb Burrito Booth the week of June 18-23. At the festival on June 24th we will host the Rhubarb Burrito Booth and Rhubarb Leaf Painting booth! A ton of fun and FLC community in preparation and at the Rhubarb Festival. *Mark your calendars now! Watch your rhubarb too. We will need all the rhubarb you can donate!* Watch for more info in First News.

**Questions/volunteers, contact Mary at
maryschmitz754@gmail.com**



You are Invited to The Blanket Service

Mark your calendars and please join us,

Sunday, May 7th, 6:00-7:45pm in the Parish Hall

The NE MN Synod's Together Here Ministries, with facilitator Colleen Bernu, our synod minister for diversity, equity and inclusion, has created a space for our church's confirmation youth and their parents, and other older youth and adults to attend an interactive workshop experience for us all to engage in learning, listening, reflecting and growing to build deeper relationships with our native brothers and sisters. Based on real life experiences, the Blanket Exercise is designed to help participants to literally walk through 300 years of US history and their relationships with Indigenous people in 1 hour, with discussion and reflection following. Blankets arranged on the floor represent land and participants are invited to step into the roles of First Nations peoples as the story unfolds. To Love our neighbor is to honor the journey of our neighbor, and to walk together towards respect, healing and repair.

—Sponsored by the FLC Racial Justice Action Team

**Questions? Please contact Beth Holst
at 218-391-2230**

CHUM March Food Share Drive and FLC

Thank you for your gifts during March for the CHUM Food Shelf. We donated 190# of tomato products, a bunch of reusable bags, and 25 frozen meals for the St. Francis Apts. Financial contributions came at \$1275. If you donated directly to CHUM, we thank you also! Thank you for helping feed the hungry families in our community! FLC is the CHUM Food Shelf's **Tomato Church**. We collect and donate tomato products throughout the year!



Administration



VISION COUNCIL UPDATES



Greetings from the Vision Council! With the season of spring in our sights (somewhere it is out there) we have been working diligently on the goals set before us for the church year 2022-2023. One of which I have been pondering lately is "building relationships with new people God sends our way". This could be interpreted as people who are visiting our church or those who have recently joined First Lutheran Church. However, it could also include the person who sits on the opposite side of the sanctuary from you each Sunday. Many times I've found myself saying –"I recognize their face but I don't know their name." How can I get to know you better? Perhaps this should be an "ongoing goal" for FLC. Our conversations in the Vision Council meetings have revolved around hospitality. As a group we have been reading the book *The Come Back Effect* by Jason Young and Jonathan Malm. In the book they provide suggestions on how we can make each other feel more welcome, comfortable and understood. For me, several words come to mind when I think of hospitality; dynamic, engaging and intentional. How can we be all of these things?

As I prepare to step down from my tenure as Treasurer, I will cherish all of the support I've received from the members of First Lutheran Church. I will remember how generous the people of FLC have been and continue to be, spiritually and financially. I will attempt to use all I have learned from being on the Vision Council every day. I will make that, "ongoing goal" to get to know you better. Many thanks for all of your support! Alleluia!

—Mary Dontje

Legacy Moment



Recap of the Legacy of Love— Making End-of-Life Choices Workshop

The FLC Foundation sponsored this educational event on March 26, 2023, after the second service. This workshop assisted participants with the making plans and understanding the options available for end-of-life choices. Pastor Dianne Loufman and Dr. Mark Boyce led the event.

Attendees received two workbooks to assist them with this planning journey. One was the Funeral Planning Guide, and the other was the Healthcare Directive Planning Toolkit.

- The Funeral Planning Guide assists the user by walking through the many choices to make at the time of death. Facing some of those choices now will make the process less demanding for your loved ones later.
- The Healthcare Directive Planning Toolkit assists the user by making sure family and healthcare providers know what their healthcare wishes are in the form of written instructions.

If you could not attend the workshop and would like an electronic copy of either the Funeral Planning Guide or the Healthcare Directive Planning Toolkit, please send a request to foundation@flcduluth.org or call Jim Zastrow at 218.390.5065.

-Congregational Meeting Date-

Sunday, June 11th

9:00 AM



Come for a light breakfast together,
vote for next year's leaders,
receive updates on staffing
and more!

—There's No Time Like the Present—

As we leave behind the season of Lent, Holy Week, & Easter Sunday, please share any photos you took or anything you found particularly meaningful to flcannualstories@flcduluth.org. These will be the stories & pictures that make up next year's annual report to tell the story of how God worked through us this year to touch lives with faith, love and community.



Worship and Music

Sunday Worship

8:30am Traditional Service and 11:00am Contemporary Service

8:30am indoors, radio and livestream

11:00am indoors and livestream

May 7 Celebration of Spring—Angler blessing

May 14 Sixth Sunday of Easter (Mother's Day)

May 21 Ascension Sunday



We move to one service May 28-June 25, 10:00 AM

(Indoors, radio and livestream)

May 28 Pentecost Sunday — Confirmation (Memorial Day Weekend)

June 4 Holy Trinity Sunday — Blessing of high school/college graduates

June 11 Second Sunday after Pentecost

June 18 Commemoration of the Emanuel 9 and Clayton, Jackson and McGhie

June 25 Pride Service

We move back to two services July 2nd-August 27th

8:30am indoors, radio and livestream

10:00am Leif Erikson Park

The Fort Bend Boys Choir

Wednesday, June 7th, 7:00 pm

The Fort Bend Boys Choir from Texas will sing in concert at First Lutheran Church on Wednesday, June 7th at 7:00 p.m. They performed here in 2016 during their last Minnesota tour. Founded in 1982, they now have nearly 200 singers in 5 ensembles. — **More information will be announced closer to the date.**



~ Flukes First Lutheran Ukuleles (FLUKES) ~



FLUKES is a ukulele strumming group open to anyone interested in a fun afternoon of ukulele strumming and singing. We meet at FLC on the 1st and 3rd Sundays from 3:30-4:45 pm year around. There is no requirement to know how to play the ukulele, we are happy to teach a few introductory chords to get you started.

