



First Lutheran Church
1100 East Superior St
Duluth, MN 55802

July—August 2023

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Duluth, Minnesota

The Mustard Seed



VISION COUNCIL UPDATES



It is with a heart full of gratitude that I finish my year as President of Vision Council. First Lutheran is a nurturing place to be, and we are coming out of COVID with new dreams and challenges. We have a pastor with a heart for gathering in new people and welcoming back longer termers. Our new challenge is to intentionally welcome and bring them together, and the Vision Council took a first step in leading us to be an RIC (Reconciled in Christ) congregation. The Vision Council also identified a goal to increase opportunities for young families to connect together, and a task group is working this summer to support that. With the pending retirement of Ann Beck we are focusing on staff needs and have set up a call committee with an identified pastoral candidate to hopefully join us this year. Until then we need all volunteer hands on deck to support our pastor and continue to carry out our visions. I challenge each of you to find one new way in which you can become the hands of Christ in the world through FLC! (This includes assisting with worship Sunday mornings!)

You elected a wonderful Vision Council last year, and it has been a great blessing to work with them this year. We bring varieties of experiences and listen well and enjoy our time together. The Spirit is working among us and I have been privileged to be part of that. Thank you all for continuing this wonderful ministry of FLC in a new and changing world!

Beth Storaasli

The Mustard Seed

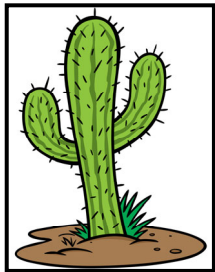
DEADLINE FOR THE SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER
ISSUE OF THE MUSTARD SEED IS
THURSDAY, AUGUST 17

Please send all submissions to
office@flcduluth.org

Showing God's Work through FLC

Your submissions for next year's Annual Report are so important to the publication! Anything you want to share, as simple as: Taking a photograph at an event, or an experience to share, a witnessing of God's work through FLC.

Email your photos and stories to
flcannualstories@flcduluth.org

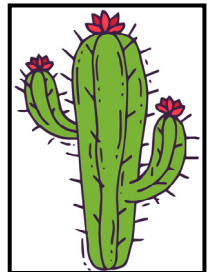


Help Make Our Cactus Bloom

Did you see the cactus that was made by the Finance Committee?
Curious about the scorpions and flowers?
Well look no further, it is time to retire our debt.

Remove a debt scorpion from the cactus, then send in a check, use text to give or scan the QR code to send in your selected donation. Then choose a flower from the basket, write your wish of what you would like to see our community do with the freed-up offerings once our debt is gone. Put your scorpion in the basket, we will hold on to the scorpions and burn them and hopefully our mortgage at the Easter Vigil in 2024.

Text **flcduluth** to 73256 and follow the instructions or scan the QR Code with your phone.



Welcome Statement

First Lutheran Church, dedicated to the mission of Jesus Christ, welcomes you into this community of faith, where we share life in its entirety, with all its joys and sorrows. We believe all people are created in the image of God and are offered God's love, grace, and forgiveness, regardless of: religious tradition, age, gender identity and expression, race, education, economic status, sexual orientation, family structure, mental or physical abilities. We acknowledge the indigenous culture of this land. We are committed to the work of racial justice. We extend a special welcome in Christ's love.



Legacy Moment

First Lutheran Church Foundation



Life is a precious gift from God, and as responsible stewards of that gift, you need to plan for the future. While it may not be pleasant to think about, considering the inevitable is a wise and compassionate act. This article explores the benefits of will & estate planning, funeral planning, and advance health care directives. These are all crucial elements in ensuring your affairs are in order and your wishes are respected.

Will & Estate Planning. A will is a legal document that expresses your wishes for the distribution of your assets after your death. It also names a guardian for your minor children. Without a will, your assets will be distributed according to state law, which may not be what you want.

Estate planning also includes things like setting up a trust, creating financial powers of attorney, and naming beneficiaries for your insurance policies and retirement accounts. These documents can help to ensure that your wishes are carried out after your death and that your loved ones are not burdened with the legal and financial challenges of probate. In addition, planning offers you an opportunity to leave a lasting impact on the organizations you hold dear. By including charitable donations in your estate plan, you can continue supporting the church and other philanthropic endeavors, even beyond your lifetime.

Funeral Planning. It may seem distressing to think about your funeral arrangements; however, planning can be a moving and meaningful process. Funeral planning relieves your loved ones from making difficult decisions during a time of grief. By specifying your preferences for burial or cremation and the funeral service, you can ease the emotional and financial burdens on those you leave behind.

Advance Health Care Directives. In life, unforeseen circumstances can arise where you may be unable to make decisions about your medical treatment. By establishing advance health care directives, you can ensure your medical wishes are respected. Directives, such as a living will or a durable power of attorney for health care, enable you to communicate your preferences regarding medical treatments, life support, and end-of-life care to your loved ones and health care providers. This ensures that your wishes are respected, enabling them to make informed decisions about your care and treatment when you cannot speak for yourself.

Will & estate planning, funeral planning, and advance health care directives are essential components of responsible stewardship. By taking the time to address these matters, you can protect your loved ones, honor your values, and ensure that your legacy aligns with your faith and beliefs.

If you have not already done so, consider consulting an attorney to discuss your estate planning needs. You can also find documents to assist you with will & estate planning, funeral planning, and advance health care directives for Minnesota and Wisconsin on the Foundation's webpage: flcduluth.org/giving/flc-foundation.

Stewardship



Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts

Do you know what your spiritual gifts are? Click on this new link in First News or on our website or scan the QR Code with your phone to find out. There is a drop down menu defining the different gifts that is fun to read. Print it out in color, sign it and add it to the Spiritual Gifts Wall.

Financial Education Survey

What would you like to know more about? Managing credit card debt or student loan debt, life insurance, retirement accounts, improving your credit score, paying for college... these are just a few of the things that the Stewardship Team is exploring as topics for the free financial education workshop. Enhancing financial management skills makes it more likely that a person will achieve his or her life goals. The survey can be found on our website and in First News or by scanning the QR Code.



News from the El Salvador Action Team

What we learned from our May meeting with our friends from San Antonio los Ranchos (via Zoom):

What our scholarship students are doing: Alfredo is studying engineering & plans to work in the Los Ranchos area after he graduates; Veronica is studying public accounting & Wilbur is majoring in nutrition.

What the effects of weather are on crops: The rain is good except, it brings more heat from the ground. He said farmers are waiting to prepare the ground for corn planting. It takes 3 months to prepare the land.

Loss: Veronica's aunt passed away and another 2 community members passed away recently.

Los Ranchos community news: Confirmation was in April with 14 young people from Los Ranchos and 10 from Guarjila. A young man was baptized and also confirmed the same night and the church was full!

News from US: Our team told about the Driver's License for All bill that was passed in the MN legislature & that a Sanctuary State bill was introduced, but not acted on yet. We told about the Earth Day fair held at FLC & that a pollinator garden will be planted outside the church this summer

Planning for 25th anniversary of our first delegation: Ideas include: pictures of various delegations & events in our churches, something special in August when Los Ranchos celebrates the return of people from refugee camps, having former delegates talk about their delegation & its meaning on their life, having info on the scholarship program, conversations about our memories & why this connection was started, including what we do now & visioning what we can do to bring our connection into the future.

Ending prayer:

We praise you and give you thanks for your blessings on all immigrants, on those who cross all the borders in the United States. Today we pray for a clear and direct pathway to citizenship for all our people! We pray that You guide the hearts of policy makers, to make the right decisions, and be on the right side of history. This is our prayer. Amen.

To learn more about our connection with our sister community, contact one of the following team members:

Brenda at bsjohnsonslp@gmail.com, Joanne at jdjokela@gmail.com, or Dory at dstinkrain@aol.com

Free Community Meal
THIS SUNDAY
12:00-1:30PM
FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

LAST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH



1100 EAST SUPERIOR STREET

Community Meal

Are you interested in helping cook, serve or greet members of our community? Speak with Teresa Zupancich or Jane Miller. You can also sign-up online using the links provided in First News and our Website.

Dates are: July 30 & August 27
from noon to 1:30pm

HOLY LAND TRIP

Did you know the Holy Land group is meeting on July 18th & August 8th to build community & excitement for our trip this fall.

We have 40 pilgrims preparing to grow in faith and understanding.

Migrant Justice Support Team

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Matthew 25:35

Our team met recently & found out that our supported asylum seeker, "AS" is doing well. He received his Employment Authorization Document (EAD) & will soon receive his Social Security card! He is working hard in his English classes & will soon be looking for a job.

Our team is learning from exciting new materials available from Episcopal Migration Ministries Rainbow Initiative which we are now a part of. There is a new Welcome Center being planned by a subcommittee of the Interfaith Committee for Migrant Justice, which will welcome newcomers (such as AS).

Our team is a part of ICMJ, which organized a showing of the Seeking Asylum film on World Refugee Day, followed by a panel discussion with local asylum seekers and sponsors.

To learn more about this team please contact, Dory (dstinkrain@aol.com)
Beth (bethie.holst@gmail.com) or Lezlie (lezlieoachs@gmail.com).

Thank you Gathering Group Women



A huge thank you to the women of the Ruth, Leah, and Mary & Martha Gathering Groups for their generous donations of time, supplies, and financial gifts toward Care Kits for LWR. The gifts & donations plus the funds from a Thrivent Grant combined to create 100 Care Kits. This project was a Thank offering in conjunction with the WELCA Spring Gathering in Grand Rapids. We want to thank the Gevings from Gloria Dei for transporting our boxes to the Gathering. For more information on the Gathering Groups visit FLC's website. We welcome your participation in our Bible studies.



Rhubarb Festival Thank You

How do we put into words our thanks for all the participation in the weeks leading up to and including the day of Rhubarb Fest? We asked and you delivered! From harvesting to chopping, to crusts, to pies, to crisps, to beans, to salsa, to jam, to burritos, to juice, to cleaning, to dishes, to leaf painting, to serving food, to eating food, to enjoying a day of community at the Rhubarb Festival at Stella Maris, the list goes on.

A large bouquet of rhubarb leaves goes to Mary Schmitz who handled all the FLC details (& there are many!). All Rhubarb Festival proceeds go straight to Chum programs. The need for Chum's services continues to grow. It takes \$1,000 to shelter 50 people each night. And most nights Chum has over 100 guests.

In 2022 Chum served 1,364 individuals:

- 935 of them report having a disability for a long time.
- 718 of them report having a serious mental illness.
- 515 of them were chronically homeless (people who are chronically homeless have experienced homelessness for at least a year, or repeatedly).

Chum is the biggest safety net in Duluth for people experiencing homelessness, hunger, and poverty.

When life throws people a curveball, Chum is there to help them get back on their feet.

Thank you for supporting the work of Chum. Many hands and hearts contributed to the success of the day.

We thank you for your generosity of your time and talents.

What's Going on in the Basement? Teen Closet, of course!

If you brave the basement passages, you just might see the busy Teen Closet Team at work, sorting, stocking, decorating, and generally preparing the store for teen shoppers. Lutheran Social Service of MN operates and staffs the Teen Closet to serve their teen participants (13-21-ish years) and teens from other programs across the area. School social workers and other teen advocates also refer teens to the store. Teen Closet has posted shopping hours which you can see in FLC publications and shoppers can make personal appointments with LSSMN staff. A few minutes or a few hours of your time will make a difference in the lives of local teens. Consider supporting this ministry in one of these ways:

- Check the Needs List regularly and contribute in-kind donations
- Bring new or gently used teen clothing items and shoes to the donation bins in the Gathering Space or behind the Youth Room
- Check the Clearance Racks when you shop with Teen Closet in mind
- Volunteer to help - a list of Workdays is in FLC publications - some tasks can be done independently like exporting unneeded items to other outreach groups
- Bring teen/ young adult books to stock the Little Library by the Canopy Entrance
- Spread the word. There are teens that aren't being reached and we want to support them too!
- Pray for new ways that FLC can serve this demographic.
- Join the Teen Closet Text Group to be notified about Workdays
- Invite local businesses to support this cause. Thank Maurices and Penney's staff for their regular donations.
- Contact Laura Stahl (218.269.5598, laura.morganstahl@gmail.com) for more information

Watch FLC e-news for information about the "July is for Jeans" Event.

Local Global

South Sudanese Leadership & Community Development (SSLCD)

It is striking that we often think of refugees as people who are merely recipients of our giving. And yet, South Sudanese refugees living in settlements in northern Uganda made the striking decision in March to go green. To further this end, they have begun an initiative to plant 2,000 trees in 2023. They hope to lessen their carbon footprint and to care for the land in the country that has been housing them. The majority of refugees are women and girls, and they are the ones responsible for the planting, watering, and overall care and nurturing of the trees.

This community development effort is supported by FLC to empower refugee women and girls to make a qualitative difference in the life of their settlements as they continue in exile, waiting for war to stop in their home country.

Submitted by Denise Scheer on behalf of The South Sudanese Leadership and Community Development Project

Lifelong Learning

Joyful Ministry

Do you light up when families with children attend worship? Do you smile when kids and families participate in church activities? Do you have a youthful spirit? Are you drawn to games and art activities? Do you like to dance and sing? Is your favorite part of worship the Young Disciples Time?

If you answer yes to any of these questions, you are the kind of adult or teen leader suited for ministry to kids and families. Consider the opportunities below for the coming year. You can choose how much time you want to share.

Sunday School - classes for 2 & 3 yr olds, preschool, kindergarten, 1-2nd grades and 3-5th grades

Regular classroom leaders and occasional auxiliary helpers are welcome.

On-Call Substitutes get extra stars in their crown!

Special Event Leaders - share your special skills with the next generation

Your skills will help the team plan special events to give extra spice to one time events.

Mission/Outreach Project Helpers - no prep needed! Just come and offer support with one-time outreach projects planned by others.

Contact Laura Stahl if you'd like to explore any of these leadership opportunities.

Women's Summer Bible Study

Please join us for a women's summer Bible study held at FLC. We welcome all who identify as women to come together in study on the difference Jesus makes in our lives, how we can be faithful ambassadors to Jesus' salvation, and as followers of Jesus, we are compelled to follow Jesus into the needs of our world.

Pass the word . . . bring a friend.

Session dates are Thursdays, July 20 (Tangible Salvation Now: Christians Bringing Wellness) & August 17 (Needed Salvation Now: A World Wanting Wellness) at 6:30 in the Gathering Space.

The sessions are not cumulative, so attend when you are able. You are welcome whether you feel you are a biblical scholar or haven't opened a Bible in quite some time. This is open to all ages as we study and learn from each other.

For more information contact Suzanne Rauvola (suzanne@hbrstudios.com).



Join us in discussing Emmy Kegler's *One Coin Found*. Kegler is a Lutheran pastor who identifies as queer. Her book is about finding the good news in Scripture for herself and the gay community. Conversation will take place at church on Tuesday, July 25 at 6pm.

Let Pastor Dianne know if you need a copy of the book.

Evangelism



Making it Official

We received our official verification Monday, June 12, that we are now a Reconciling in Christ Church! We are now a partner in a Holy ministry of welcoming, inclusion, celebration and advocacy.

Park Signs are now available, pick one up on Sunday at the Welcome Desk.

WORSHIP
IN LEIF ERIKSON PARK
Sundays at 10AM
in July & August
ALL are welcome!



Grandma's Marathon

Congratulations to all of the runners and thank you to those who came out to cheer them on.

Duluth-Superior Pride Weekend

Mark your calendars, Saturday, September 2, from 11:00am to 7:00pm for the Pride Festival at Bayfront Festival Park. Then join the Welcoming & Affirming Team for the Pride Parade at noon on Tower Ave in Superior.

The teams meet at 11:30am on Broadway between Ride or Die Pizzeria and Kari Toyota.



Flyers Softball

The Flyers season is in full swing. Come out and cheer them on as they finish out their season and head into playoffs. July 11 at 6:00pm at UMD Field #2 & July 18 at 6:00pm at UMD Field #2.



Playoff dates are July 25 and August 1. Check First News, the website & Sunday Announcements for times and field number.

Young Couples Gatherings

If you are interested in getting to know other young couples from church in a social setting, join us as we gather at different breweries for conversation.

Check out First News or ask Pastor Dianne for dates and times.



Tuesday, July 4 Fireworks

All are invited to watch the harbor fireworks from Pastor Dianne and Erik's house on West 3rd St. Bring blankets & chairs to sit on, snacks to share & B.Y.O.B. Come anytime after 8pm.

Worship and Music

MUSIC MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Fall Gathering and Potluck is planned for Wednesday August 30 at 6:00 pm, location TBA. Musicians & family members of all ages are welcome: singers, handbell ringers, instrumentalists, & anyone who has an interest in joining our music ministry. Contact Karen Sande at karen@flcduluth.org or Michael Fuchs at michael@flcduluth.org.

Soli Deo Gloria Choir practices Wednesdays beginning September 6, 7:15-8:15pm, sings most Sundays at 8:30am worship service. Contact michael@flcduluth.org.

Chamber Choir practices Wednesdays beginning September 6, 8:20-9:00pm, sings about once a month at 8:30am worship service. Contact michael@flcduluth.org.

Jubilation Ringers Handbell Choir practices Wednesdays beginning September 6, 5:45-6:55pm, plays once or twice a month at 8:30am worship service. Contact karen@flcduluth.org.

Youth Ringers Handbell Choir Grades 6 & up, practices Sundays 9:45-10:45am or other day/time as arranged, plays occasionally for worship services. Contact karen@flcduluth.org.

Instrumental Solos/Ensembles play occasionally for worship services: youth & adult string, wind, brass and percussion players welcome; practice as needed Sundays between services or other day/time as arranged. Contact karen@flcduluth.org.

Worship and Music

Sunday Worship

8:30am Traditional Service
In the Sanctuary, on KDAL & YouTube

10:00am Contemporary Service
In Leif Erikson Park

Weather and park conditions permitting
Check homepage of website (flcduluth.org) or Facebook after 8:30am

- July 2 Fifth Sunday After Pentecost, 10:00am Bike Blessing
Ride your bikes to the park for a blessing.
- July 9 Sixth Sunday After Pentecost
- July 16 Seventh Sunday After Pentecost, Lake Superior Sunday
8:30am Of the Land and Seasons Celebration of Summer
10:00am Baptisms in the Lake
- July 23 Eighth Sunday After Pentecost
- July 30 Ninth Sunday After Pentecost
- August 6 Tenth Sunday After Pentecost
- August 13 Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost,
8:30am Baptisms
10:00am Pet Blessing (bring your pets)
- August 20 Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost
- August 27 Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost
Last Sunday in the Park—BBQ, Welcome College Students
- September 3 One Service at 10:00am, Baptisms



BAPTISM IN THE LAKE

Lake Superior Sunday is July 16. If you would like to be baptized or have a child baptized, talk to Pastor Dianne.



Beginning Sunday, September 10: 8:30am in the Sanctuary on KDAL & YouTube
11:00am in the Peace Garden (weather permitting)



Worship in Leif Erikson Park Volunteers

Worship in the Park is here & we need volunteers to help with set-up & also a truck to use for hauling equipment to the park. If you are available to help or bring your truck please click the link in First News or our Website to sign-up for a specific day, scan the QR Code or sign-up at the You Are Loved Table.

Upcoming Weddings

August 26: Sophia Langr & Levi Greggs
September 3: Rachel Emery & Jack Anderson



Funerals

July 19: Kris Liljeblad at 1:00pm
September 9: Cecile Swenson at 11:00am



~ Flukes First Lutheran Ukuleles (FLUKES) ~

While away your Sunday summer afternoons with a ukulele strum session with the FLUKES. FLUKES is a group of ukulele strummers open to anyone interested in a fun afternoon of strumming and singing. We meet at FLC on the 1st and 3rd Sundays from 3:30 - 4:45pm year-round. There is no requirement to know how to play the ukulele, we are happy to teach a few introductory chords to get you started. We meet July 2 & 16, August 6 & 20, and September 3 & 17. For more information contact Suzanne Rauvola (suzanne@hbrstudios.com).