



# First Things

April 2020

The Newsletter of  
First Evangelical Lutheran Church

561 Chestnut Street,

Taylors Falls, MN 55084-1110

651-465-5265 ♦ [www.tflutheran.com](http://www.tflutheran.com)

*The peace of God,  
which transcends  
all understanding,  
will guard your  
hearts and minds.*

-Philippians 4:7



Here I sit to write a new article for this month's newsletter. In just the matter of a week, what I sent to Angie just doesn't fit. What a whirlwind of information, change, and decision making we've had to deal with in the past week and it seems it's compounded by the day if not by the hour. I've talked with many people (keeping my social distance and mostly by phone), some who are dealing with the called for responses to COVID-19 in stride, and some who are finding everything a bit overwhelming. I know the extroverted

members of my family are bouncing off the walls, creatively finding ways to connect by phone or email. One was caught dancing his sillies out in the privacy of his own living room. I, and my fellow introverts, have been pretty content reading, taking walks, and becoming every comfortable in my easy chair. I am extremely thankful for video chats with my granddaughter. She doesn't say much at 4+ months, but it's just fun watching her stuff everything and anything (including her toes) into her mouth.

My hope is that you are all finding ways for you to survive in these crazy circumstances. I have to believe that what we are being told to do is really for the best. I was just listening to a program that described how some people are questioning if all this social distancing is helping or necessary. They say we're not seeing the results. And that's exactly the point. This is one of those situations where not seeing anything happen is the best result. I don't know if I explained that as well as I could, but hopefully you get the idea. We don't want people spreading this coronavirus, so we need to heed the recommendations given to us. So please bear with it and as so many have said, we'll get through this together. Sure we've witnessed some unfortunate behavior from a few who are acting out of fear. But there are even more examples of courage and selflessness that are emerging! I was asked to move my appointment to give platelets to next week to make room for the number of volunteers who were just showing up at the blood bank. I'm convinced we'll see even more of that in the days and weeks to come.

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In my devotions this morning, two very appropriate verses were set before me. I often connect with what are called “Daily Text” out of The Moravian Church. Here’s the website if you would like to check it out ([www.moravian.org/daily\\_texts](http://www.moravian.org/daily_texts)). It’s just two verses and a prayer, but they are a good base to meditate on and maybe journal about. The two verses this morning were:

**Leviticus 26:6**

The Lord said, “I will grant peace in the land,  
and you shall lie down, and no one shall make you afraid.”

**Philippians 4:7**

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,  
will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

I contemplated a while on what it meant for the peace of God to guard my heart and mind. Part of my journal conversation with God was that God not only guard my heart and mind, but that God would guide my heart and mind. I don’t often listen as well as I’d like.

I hope you can find ways to let God speak to you. It might be through using a devotional tool like this or the ones available at the church. We can mail one out to you if need. Maybe this would be a good time to just take a book of the Bible and read a small portion at a time. We’re in the year of Matthew so that would be one suggestion. The Gospel of John has been our focus the last few weeks and John is always a good read. Or maybe start with Philippians or one of the other shorter letters of Paul’s. And maybe music is what will connect with you and bring you the peace and comfort needed.

As this time of separation continues, please do what is necessary to take care of yourself! Connect with one another and keep each other in your prayers. We are planning to continue to provide worship videos and bulletins for you to participate with (check out our website at [www.tflutheran.org](http://www.tflutheran.org)). I plan to also periodically connect with you via video chats.

Let me leave you with the prayer from the devotional I mentioned earlier: *Prince of peace, fill our hearts and souls with your heavenly peace. May it lead to comfort, healing, and reconciliation as your peace permeates our lives, our relationships, and our communities. Amen.*

Pastor Dwight Rudquist

## *New Members* **Welcome!**

If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact the office at 651-465-5265.

## **SUNDAY WORSHIP**

Please view our website at [www.tflutheran.org](http://www.tflutheran.org) for more details for online worshiping.

## **OFFICE HOURS@FELC**

Monday 8:30am—1:30pm  
Tuesday 8:30am—12:30pm  
Thursday 8:30am—11:30am

## **COUNCIL MEETING**

Council will meet on **Sunday, April 19th at 10:30am** in the library for a meeting.

**Sarah Circle and Quilters** will not meet for the month of April. Please see the May newsletter for updates.

## **MONTHLY GIVING REPORT**

*Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. —2 Cor. 9:7 (NIV)*

### Budgeted Weekly Expenses: \$2771.60

02/23 Giving:	\$1,337.73
03/01 Giving:	\$1,321.00
03/08 Giving:	\$1,925.00
03/15 Giving:	\$1,280.00
03/22 Giving:	\$3,115.00

Thank you for your faithful giving. Please contact FELC Treasurer, Becky Hulden with any questions or concerns at: 651-465-3631 or [rhulden@gmail.com](mailto:rhulden@gmail.com).

## *Adult* **CHOIR** SCHEDULE



## **Choir for the month of April**

We will not be practicing for the month of April. Please see the May newsletter for updated information.



## **MARCH BIRTHDAYS**

Rod Olson	04/01
Miranda Tverberg	04/07
Gunner Hasselquist	04/08
Molly Moberg	04/11
Carol Vitalis	04/14
Amelia Tverberg	04/16
Vince Tverberg	04/16
Dustin Vodenka-Reed	04/18
Joy Buchholtz	04/25
Jeanne Fick	04/26
Loretta Stolp	04/28
Carver Lundholm	04/30

Please contact the church office if there are any errors or omissions. Thank you.

# First Lutheran Youth

YOUTH, GRADES 6-12 WELCOME!

**CONNECT**  
to a Christian Community;  
**INVITE**  
into the life and love of God;  
**EQUIP**  
to make God-honoring choices in their  
lives and to put their faith into practice.

## FIRST LUTHERAN YOUTH SCHEDULE

April will look a little different this year. Please check with Michelle for Wednesday night connections. All youth “in person” activities have been suspended until further notice.

Stay tuned for further information regarding the Youth Retreat to Luther Point May 8-10. Michelle is in contact with the camp director regarding their policies during these changing times around the health concerns we are currently facing.

Our cooker is busy this season especially with a record collection of 4,400 gallons of sap on March 18th!



We went GREEN this year with all plastic food safe buckets! 2,500 in all. And the sap is running well this spring.

**Thank you to ALL who are coming out to help!**

## Maple Bucks

We are happy to introduce a new program: Maple Bucks! This program has been used by Peace Lutheran who we partner with in our Maple Syrup Ministry and is very successful! These Maple Bucks can be designated and used for any mission (Mission Trip, Youth Retreat, Youth Gathering, Bible Camp) or used “outside the walls of the church” (Feed my Starving Children, Together with Friends, etc). This does not apply to only youth member; this program is for ALL church members that participate in the syrup ministry. Examples of participation: Selling syrup downtown, stacking wood, getting permission to tap, labeling bottles and collecting sap. Here’s how it works: when you and/or your family participate, you earn maple bucks for your account.

1. Each time you collect sap, you earn \$25. If you have Mom and Dad come with you, that’s an additional \$50 added to your account—\$75 TOTAL!!
2. Each time you work the maple syrup booth to sell syrup at an event or during the fall, you earn \$25 in Maple Bucks.
3. Each time you sell a bottle of syrup, 30% of the sale will be credited to your Maple Bucks account.



How can you use your Maple Bucks? Say you’d like to go on the Youth Winter Retreat; the Maple Bucks in your account would then be applied to the balance towards that trip. Another great option to use your Maple Bucks for: the ELCA 2021 Youth Gathering—start earning your way now during sapping season! Remember to sign in each time you sap to get your credit for that day. If you have questions, please ask Michelle Lynch or Don Hansen.





# Intergenerational Sunday School

## April Schedule

April 12  
Easter Sunday Worship

April 19  
ELCA day

April 26  
Intergenerational  
Sunday School

### PLEASE NOTE:

These are tentatively  
scheduled days. Check out  
the website to keep informed.

**ELCA Day:** Global refreshments will be served for Coffee Hour, during a short global presentation by a *guest* speaker.

**Intergenerational Sunday School:** a 45 minute worship service, followed by a half hour of learning together. We'll share our highs & lows, a fun lectionary based lesson, and the Lord's Prayer.



In cooperation with Family Pathways, we help supply Taylors Falls elementary school kids in need of weekend food: 2 breakfast, 2 lunches, a vegetable, a fruit and 2 snacks. The cost is only \$2.50 per week and is ongoing throughout the school year. You can donate money or time; if you are interested in helping, please **Contact Deb Rhoads at 651-257-1658.**



**Monday Community Meals**  
hosted by Zion Lutheran  
Church in Chisago City will be  
on hold through May 4th.  
Please watch for updates in  
the May newsletter.



The confirmation class has met  
and is reading a new book.

Class will meet again  
(tentatively)

Sunday, April 26th at 10:15am.

Please bring your Bible.

If you need copies of the  
materials, please call the office  
at 651-465-5265.



We encourage you to check out  
the library! There are so many  
good books to check out!!  
There are books on many  
subjects: prayer, daily living,  
poetry, fiction, children's books,  
teen books, bible stories, DVD's  
and VHS tapes.

### Library Hours:

Monday 8:30am-1:30pm

Tuesday 8:30am-12:30pm

Thursday 8:30am-11:30am

Sunday 8:30am-11:00am



### 2020 Camp Information is out!

### Brochures available at the church!

FELC is offered a \$55 Member Church Discount as well!! Our church offers a New Creation Award for each child in the amount of \$50 that can be earned for their camp stay!!!!

For more info and to register, visit:  
[WWW.LUTHERPOINT.ORG](http://WWW.LUTHERPOINT.ORG)

Luther Point Bible Camp information  
for the summer 2020 programs are  
available in the current brochure. We  
encourage you to take one from the  
youth bulletin board!





## Council Meeting Minutes Church Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

March 8, 2020, 10:30am-1:00pm

“To worship God as an intergenerational praying community,  
learning God’s Word, and building lasting relationships as we grow in  
God’s love and grace.”

**Members Present:** Wendy Szczepanski, Rose Anderson, Miriam Flysjo,  
Craig Loen, Becky Hulden, Pastor Dwight Rudquist **Members Absent:** none

**A. Opening Devotions**– Rose next month Pastor Dwight

**B. Sharing story**– Rose

**C. Pastor’s Report**- Pastor Dwight

Pastor Dwight reported that there is nothing new really. He wishes there was more time to organize things like, the stewardship task group, visitation volunteers, and other things that might help us now and into the future.

He is okay with the present contract until May but would like to discuss changes before it is renewed.

A motion (by Rose/seconded by Craig) was made to allow for more hours (as needed) for Pastor Dwight and to pay \$50 per service for the extra services during Lent. Any additional hours will be paid \$25 per hour. Motion carried.

**D. Treasurer’s Report – Becky**

Our income for January and February is less than our budgeted needs. However, we never adjusted the budget after Pastor Mary Kay left , so we have money to meet our current expenses. Steeple fund as of February \$39,284.84

**E. Steeple bids**

All of the bids received are higher than the original bid from 2 years ago.

One bid was \$80,000 but the company couldn’t do the work. They recommended Central Roofing.

Central Roofing’s bid came in at \$55,500 for steel and \$62,800 copper. The original bid was from Central Roofing.

The council is looking into how we can pay. We will have a congregational meeting to discuss only the steeple repair on April 19, right after the service. More information will be provided at that meeting.

**F. WiPoLu transitional meeting 2/27/2020- handout from synod**

We are looking at forming a partnership with another congregation. Do we want to yoke with the WI churches or with a MN congregation? Right now the MiChiLu congregations have not expressed an interest in sharing a pastor. There are more rural churches in WI so they have a history of sharing pastors.

The council decided to continue to meet with WiPoLu as it has been informative to find out what other churches in our area are doing.

We will reach out to the MiChiLu congregations to see if any are interested in partnering with First at some point.

### Upcoming Events

Palm Sunday breakfast April 5-

Maundy Thursday Service April 9, Good Friday April 10

Easter Sunday April 12

Motion to Adjourn by Rose seconded by Craig

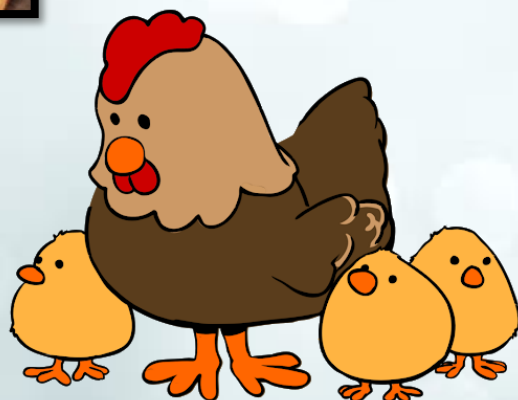
Next council meeting April 19

Respectfully submitted by Miriam Flysjo, secretary

# Intergenerational Sunday School



The chicks that visited  
the church on March 8th  
have grown quite a bit!



**Church Office**  
**651-465-5265**  
[www.tflutheran.org](http://www.tflutheran.org)



**Pastor Dwight Rudquist**  
c: 651-829-4884  
[pastorrudquist@gmail.com](mailto:pastorrudquist@gmail.com)  
**Michelle Lynch**  
Youth Minister/Choir Director  
c: 715-220-2782  
[felcyouthminister@gmail.com](mailto:felcyouthminister@gmail.com)

**Angie Linngren**  
Ministry Coordinator,  
[parishc@tflutheran.org](mailto:parishc@tflutheran.org)

**2019-2020**

## Council/Officers:

**Wendy Szczepanski**—President  
**Craig Loen**—Vice President  
**Becky Hulden**—Treasurer  
**Miriam Flysjo**—Secretary  
**Rose Anderson**  
Financial Secretary  
**Jerry Rhoads**

Please hold the ministers and council members in your prayers that God would give them the wisdom, strength, courage, patience and perseverance to serve this community of faith as they lead us in our mission for the sake of the world and the glory of God.

**Next council meeting will be on April 19th at 10:30am in the Library.**

## *Mission Statement*

*The mission of FELC is to worship God as an intergenerational praying community, to learn God's Word, and to build lasting relationships as we grow in God's love and grace.*

(Mission Statement approved 2017)

*"Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations." Psalm 90:1*

Please send submissions to: [parishc@tflutheran.org](mailto:parishc@tflutheran.org)  
Articles due the 10th of each month.