

# First Things

FEBRUARY 2023

The Newsletter of First Evangelical Lutheran Church  
561 Chestnut Street | Taylors Falls, MN 55084-1110  
651-465-5265 [www.tflutheran.org](http://www.tflutheran.org)

Far too often I'm reminded of the vast divisions we have at every level throughout our world. Those divisions lead us to put people into categories that aren't often helpful or true. It made me think back to one of Dr. Rev. David Lose's devotionals on Matthew 4:18-22 (this is a portion of the text we just had on January 22<sup>nd</sup>). Here's David's reflections on this text:

*As Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.*  
Matthew 4:18-22

One of the things that strikes me each time I read this familiar story is Jesus' invitation to fish for people. We typically think about the kingdom of God in grand and glorious ways. And on one level that's appropriate. We're talking, after all, about the in-breaking of God into the world to inaugurate a reign of justice and peace. At the same time, however, we're also talking about people. That all of this in-breaking and inaugurating is about people.



People like James and John and Peter and Andrew and their families and neighbors. Just people – ordinary, run of the mill people. People, that is, like us.

Jesus' invitation to the disciples is to enter into their everyday relationships with a sense that it is here – in the mundane, ordinary relationships that make up our life – that God's in-breaking realm takes shape.

What does that do to the way we look at the people we work with, play with, study with, talk with, and run into day in and day out? It means, at the very least, that in our relationships with them – and I mean the ups and downs and nitty-gritty that is part and parcel of all human relationships – God is present, calling them and us into God's kingdom of mercy, grace and peace.

So as you buy a cup of coffee, or wave to a neighbor, or greet a friend, or send your children off to school, or stand in line to renew your driver's license, or any of the other million things that constitute our everyday life, think on this: God has called us to see and treat these persons as members of God's family, persons deserving of our love and respect. For in our relationships with them, God in Jesus is still at work. For just as those first disciples were called to fish for people, so also are we, imagining that through our everyday relationships God continues to draw people out of the world of dog-eat-dog and what-have-you-done-for-me-lately and into a world of love, mercy, and respect.

*Prayer: Dear God, grant us eyes to see the people around us as your beloved children, our relationships as arenas of grace, and our everyday encounters as opportunities to invite people into your embrace of love by extending our own. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Amen to that? 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

Worship every Sunday at 9:00am. Recorded services from Sunday morning worship are available Sunday afternoons on our website [www.tflutheran.org](http://www.tflutheran.org) and can also be found on our YouTube Channel: First Evangelical Lutheran Church of TF.

## **LIBRARY**HOURS

Sunday 8:00am-10:30am

## **COUNCIL**MEETING

Council will meet February 12, 2023 at 11:00am.

## **QUILTING**GROUP

First and third Thursday mornings at 9:30am.

## **BIBLE**STUDY

Bible Study will meet downstairs on Sunday mornings following fellowship.



## **FEBRUARY** BIRTHDAYS

02/03 Miriam Flysjo  
02/03 Gail Gustafson  
02/07 Edna Curry  
02/07 Wendy Parks  
02/12 Orval Curry  
02/21 Cheryl Moberg  
02/21 Shawn Valez  
02/24 Leo Nelson  
02/24 Marilyn Tangen  
02/26 Michelle Lynch  
02/27 Cullen Luschen  
02/27 Irv Stolp  
02/28 Randy Valez



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

## **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

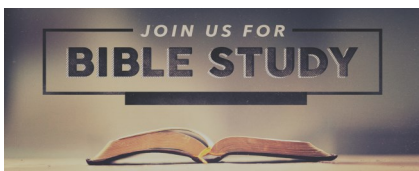
01/01 Giving:	\$1,039.00
01/08 Giving:	\$1,867.00
01/15 Giving:	\$2,203.00
01/22 Giving:	\$2,987.00

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).



## What's Happening in Our Church!

Every Sunday: Worship at 9am followed by Fellowship at 10am. We are always in need of volunteers to usher, lector, assist with communion, and host fellowship hour. If you are interested, please sign up at the usher stand!! We have a month of dates to pick from!!!!



Bible Study: Sunday mornings  
Bring your Bible and we'll dive into next week's readings. Printed materials will be available.  
Dates: To be announced in upcoming bulletins.



First and Third Thursday  
mornings at 9:30am  
No experience needed!



Tuesday evenings at 7pm in the sanctuary! No experience needed!

We'd love for you to join us!!!



Saturday, February 11th

9:00am - 2:00pm

Join us for a day of crafting & good company! Come for the entire time or for a little bit! Bring a dish or snack to share! Coffee & water will be available!



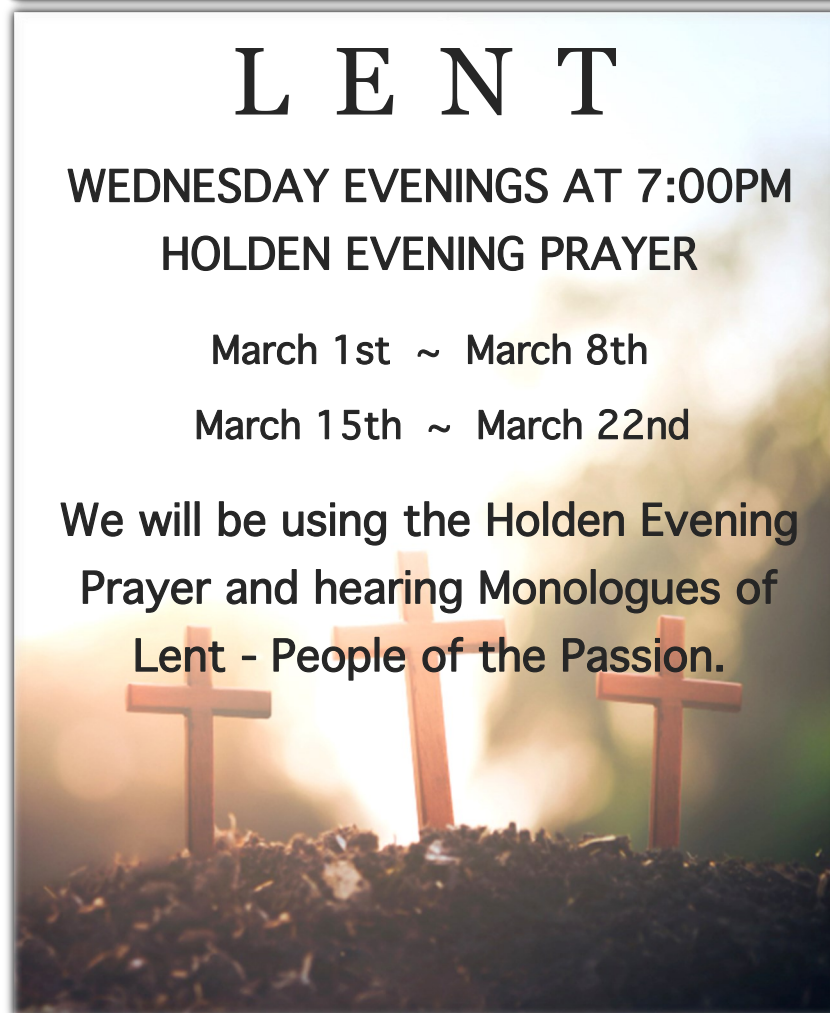
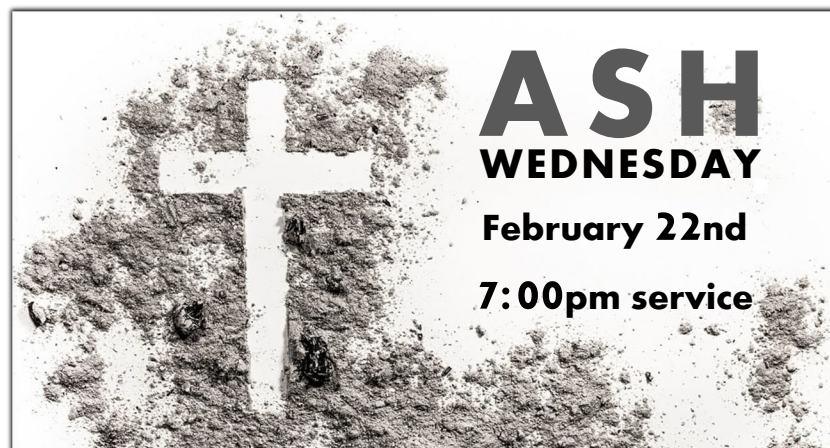
**What's Next??** That's the question a group of us have been starting to wrestle with. We are faced with the reality that Pastor Rudquist's contract with us ends in August and that his call with us has been a welcome, but temporary solution to our long-term needs.



To continue moving forward a Task Group has been formed to help us work through the process of determining "What's Next." That Task Group's initial tasks will be to:

- Meet with local community leaders to discover how FELC might best serve the community which will help further solidify our identity as a congregation;
- Begin to develop a new Mission Statement that clearly expresses our vision of who we are;
- With the synods assistance, connect with potential congregations that we might share ministry with;
- Stay in good communication with the congregation.

**If you are interested in joining this Task Group,  
our first meeting will be  
Tuesday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.**



*The Season of Lent*

# What's happening IN OUR COMMUNITY

## TAYLORS FALLS COMMUNITY WINTER POTLUCK SUPPER

Saturday, February 4th, 6:00pm

will be held at the First Baptist Church in Taylors Falls  
(across the street from the TF Elementary School)

All Taylors Falls area residents are invited to attend.

Please bring a dish to share & enjoy a bounty of good eats!

Sponsored by the Taylors Falls Crime Watch Group



*Sleeves Up.  
Hearts Open.  
All In.*

# BLOOD DRIVE

**Wednesday, February 8th  
9:00am - 3:00pm**

Taylors Falls Community Center  
312 Government St  
Taylors Falls  
Call 1-800-733-2767 or  
visit [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org) and enter: Taylors  
Falls to schedule an appointment.

### Why Should You Give Blood?

One in four people will need a blood transfusion sometime in their  
lifetime | Only 37% of the population is eligible to give blood |  
Every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood



*Chisago Lakes Chamber*  
**CELEBRATION OF THE LAKES**

Come  
out and  
celebrate  
winter  
throughout  
the  
Chisago  
Lakes  
area!

Thursday, February 9th through Sunday, February 12th

Dogsledding ~ Movie Night ~ Polka Party ~ Pond Hockey  
Ice Carousel ~ Food ~ Cribbage Tournament ~ Ice Car Racing  
More info on Facebook & Chisago Chamber of Commerce Website

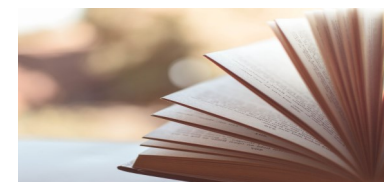


## VALENTINE'S CANDLELIGHT NIGHT

**February 11, 2023  
5:00pm - 8:00pm**

Interstate State Park  
St Croix Falls

Experience a winter evening by  
candlelight as hundreds of candles  
are lit to guide skiers, snowshoers  
and hikers on separate trails.  
(Snowshoes available for ages six  
and up.) There are warming fires  
at the trailheads, and food &  
refreshments available at the Ice  
Age Center.



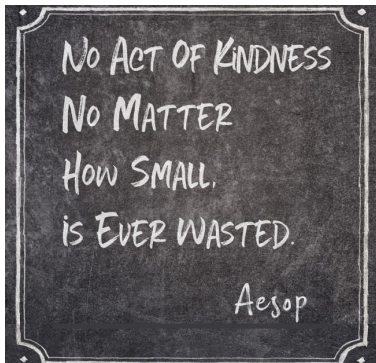
## Chisago Lakes Book Club

Thurs, February 16th  
5:00 - 6:15pm

Join us for the Chisago Lakes  
book club, held on the third  
Thursday of each month at 5pm.  
We meet monthly in the  
Community Room at the Chisago  
Lakes Library. Books for our  
upcoming book club are  
distributed at our meetings or are  
available for pickup at the  
circulation desk at the library. No  
registration is necessary.

Questions? Contact Ann via e-  
mail at [adoble@ecrlib.org](mailto:adoble@ecrlib.org) or give  
us a call at 651-257-2817.





## Random Acts of Kindness Day February 17

Make a note to do nice things throughout the day! Need some ideas to share kindness but remain safe?

Here are a few to get you started:

- ♥ Pay for the order of the car behind you at your favorite fast food restaurant!
- ♥ Drop off a load of groceries at the local food pantry.
- ♥ Mail a "thinking of you" card to someone.
- ♥ Donate old blankets and towels to an animal shelter.
- ♥ Send a thank you card to a teacher or nurse!
- ♥ Bake cookies for your neighbor!
- ♥ Just smile!

"How do we change the world?  
One random act of kindness at a time."

~Morgan Freeman



Saturday, February 25, 2023 | 10am - 4pm

Sunday, February 26, 2023 | 11am - 3pm

At the Chisago Lakes Wildcat  
Community Center

Looking for fresh ideas for home improvement, saving energy, building, remodeling, landscaping health and finance? This event helps people gather a multitude

of ideas at one location. Make a connection with area businesses, share ideas and get ready to take the next step. Enjoy seminars and entertainment. Find it all under one roof.



## Luther Point Bible Camp Summer 2023

### Walking with Jesus

"And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you will be my people."

-Leviticus 26:12

It's time to get excited for Summer 2023! Our theme this summer is Walking with Jesus, one of the amazing things about Jesus is that he once walked among us on earth. When we read stories about Jesus from the bible there is often a place named: Galilee, Jerusalem, and Nazareth to name a few. These are places Jesus was during his time on earth and they are places that still exist today. Join us as we Walk with Jesus to the places of his life through Bible study, crafts, games, and summer fun!

Registration is open and we are ready for you to join us for our best summer yet at Luther Point Bible Camp! First Evangelical Lutheran Church is a member of Luther Point which means YOU get a \$55 discount. Visit [www.lutherpoint.org](http://www.lutherpoint.org) for more information and to

### LUTHER POINT BIBLE CAMP

### SUMMER 2023 ~ VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We need help with:

Arts & Crafts, Swim Time,  
Boat Beach, Rec Room,  
Camp Connect, Kitchen  
Help, Camp Breakaway,  
Camp Nurses

Free lodging available for those who wish to volunteer multiple days in a row!

Interested In Joining Us?

More Info & to Sign Up Online:

[www.lutherpoint.org](http://www.lutherpoint.org)

Call us at: 715-689-2347

Email: [info@LutherPoint.org](mailto:info@LutherPoint.org)

Looking forward to your help!





## Council Meeting Minutes

Church Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

January 8 (Sunday), 2023, 10:30am at church

Next meeting: February 12, 2023

“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, Miriam Flysjo, Craig Loen, Kathy Carlsted, Pastor Dwight Rudquist, Becky Hulden (via phone) **Members Absent:** None

A. Opening Devotions - Craig  
February- Kathy

B. Sharing Story- Wendy, Craig

C. Pastor’s Report- Pastor Dwight

In addition to the regular services, Pastor led the service at the Lodge on Dec 16.

Pastor Dwight did not have as many visits with people because of Covid. Christmas services went well.

The Vision task group will have a Soup supper meeting on January 17th at 5pm. Anyone who is interested in helping determine our Shared Ministry path is encouraged to attend. A representative from the Synod will be there to guide us through our next steps.

Ash Wednesday is Feb 22. Pastor Dwight will take care of the style of service and ask if people want to move the service to an earlier time. There won’t be a Soup Supper.

Pastor will be gone March 8.

The North Conference Pastor meeting is a monthly meeting for pastors in Chisago County plus Forest Lake. Each meeting has a program or discussion and a time for fellowship. It is a good way for the pastors to find out what is happening in the area churches.

D. Treasurer’s Report – Becky

Our income in December (\$9,971) is a little less than adequate for our budget.

We are at 50% of our fiscal year. Our income (51%) and Expenses (46%) are right on according to our budget.

We have \$6,152.87 more in our accounts than last month.

We are being charged \$5 a month for a paper statement on the Samaritan fund. Becky will check into this.

Jerry Rhodes and Becky will be working on year end giving reports on January 16th

E. Property committee projects

Pastor will schedule a property committee meeting at the end of January or beginning of February. The Property Committee will determine the priority of proposed projects.

F. Events group- Fundraising, service, fun

The council is looking for a group of people willing to set up an events group to plan fundraising, service and fun events.

G. Motion to adjourn, second

Miriam. Craig

Coming up: Vision group, January 17, 5:00. Soup and idea sandwiches

Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) Mobile Pack at Hosanna Lutheran, Forest Lake April 19-22- anyone interested in helping is encouraged to attend.

The April council meeting will be April 16 because of Easter.

Becky is planning a Healthy heart/valentine’s celebration in February. Details to follow.

Faithfully submitted,

Miriam Flysjo, council secretary

## Fellowship Resources at First

- ✝ Nursery (rocking chair, changing table, busy bags)
- ✝ Youth room (games, books, music)
- ✝ Lending library
- ✝ Outdoor playground, sports lawn, yard games lawn, basketball hoop
- ✝ Prayer chain, visitation, mobility equipment loaners

## Faith Resources at First

- ✝ Weekly Worship
- ✝ Faith Stepping Stones
  - \* Baptism
  - \* First Communion
  - \* Confirmation
  - \* Ministry Leadership Training
  - \* Marriage
  - \* Parenting Resources
  - \* Care Ministry
- ✝ Summer Programs
  - \* Bible camp – Together with Friends, Luther Point



**Church Office**  
**651-465-5265**  
www.tflutheran.org

**Pastor Dwight Rudquist**  
c: 651-829-4884  
pastorrudquist@gmail.com

**Angie Linngren**  
Ministry Coordinator,  
parishc@tflutheran.org

**2022-2023**

### Council/Officers:

**Wendy Szczepanski**—President

**Craig Loen**—Vice President

**Becky Hulden**—Treasurer

**Miriam Flysjo**—Secretary

**Kathy Carlsted**

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 February 12, 2023 at 11:00am.**

### *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  
Articles due the 10th of each month.