

First Things

March 2020
The Newsletter of
First Evangelical Lutheran Church
561 Chestnut Street,
Taylors Falls, MN 55084-1110
651-465-5265 ♦ www.tflutheran.com

~ Breathe ~



I'm about as good at breathing as I am at drinking. My guess is that's true for you as well. Let me explain. There's a statistic that says that 75% of Americans are "Chronically Dehydrated." I find that fascinating given the abundance of water at our disposal. Unlike many places in the world, we can turn on a faucet and drink what comes out. It may not

taste as good in various places, but it's still safe to drink and serves its purpose – to hydrate our bodies. So how is it that so many of us are so thirsty and we don't know it? Or similarly, why is it so many of us breathe in and out between 12-18 times each minute and still we aren't oxygenated like we should be? Part of the problem is we just don't breathe deeply enough, just like we don't drink enough water. Sometimes we breathe and drink the wrong things, polluted/stale air or beverages that actually serve to further dehydrate us. So what's the solution? Breathe deeply and drink responsibly! I think that's a great prescription for Lent as well. Lent is a wonderful time to examine what we are taking in to fill and nurture our bodies and souls. Are you thirsty for God? Are you breathing deeply of God's Spirit, who at your birth breathed life into you and is present in each and every breath you take?

I love the images of thirst in the Psalms.

As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. (Psalm 42:1-2)

O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. (Psalm 63:1)

I stretch out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land. (Psalm 143:6)

My hope is that our thirst for Jesus' life giving water and our desire to breathe in the Spirit of life might be renewed in the weeks to come. I encourage you to put off the "I have to" thinking, and instead adopt an "I get to" image. I "get to" connect with God/Jesus/Spirit at worship or through prayer or reflecting on a Bible verse. You might take one verse or even just the first two words of the Lord's Prayer, and for a minute or two each day ponder what it means for God to be "Our Father." If you need other ideas or resources, ask me. I encourage you to be thirsty and to breathe deeply this Lenten season. One of my favorite songs/prayers that I come back to frequently is by Edwin Hatch from 1878:

Breathe on me, Breath of God, Fill me with life anew, that I may love what Thou dost love, And do what Thou wouldst do.

Sing or say that a few times each day, and let it take your breath away and then let it breathe new life into you. Sounds a little like Lent to Easter, don't you think? Amazing!

Pastor Dwight Rudquist

New Members **Welcome!**

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

SUNDAYWORSHIP

9:00am—Worship
10:15am—Fellowship Hour
10:15am—Education Hour

OFFICE HOURS@FELC

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

COUNCILMEETING

Council will meet on **Sunday, March 8th at 10:30am** in the library for a meeting.

SARAHCIRCLE

Sarah Circle will not be meeting in March.

QUILTERS



Quilting meets each 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 9:30am. No experience needed to join this enjoyable group!

Adult **CHOIR**SCHEDULE



Rehearsal Schedule

Tuesday Evenings

7:00pm – 8:30pm

See Michelle for March dates.

New singers are
ALWAYS WELCOME!



MARCHBIRTHDAYS

Wendy Szczepanski	3/01
Michael Halstrom	3/03
Ben Landgreen	3/06
Craig Loen	3/07
Kathleen Carlson	3/09
Verna Grover	3/16
Abby Loen	3/17
Brenna French	3/23
Ted Goranson	3/23
Darrin Berthiaume	3/24
Honey Vodenka-Reed	3/25
Chase Lundholm	3/25
Marinda Carlson	3/30
Levi Linngren	3/30
Natalie Landgreen	3/31

MONTHLYGIVING 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

01/19 Giving:	\$2,375.75
01/26 Giving:	\$1,257.00
02/02 Giving:	\$2,807.00
02/09 Giving:	\$1,994.30
02/16 Giving:	\$2,881.00

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.

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.



Sapping Season Is Here!

Mid March-Mid April is our very important season where we go out and collect sap as a youth group to help sustain the maple syrup ministry = which supports all of your youth activities! Your help and your family's help is VERY IMPORTANT. We continue to partner with Peace Lutheran Youth which will give you a chance to get to know their youth group more.

Make sure your cell phone number is updated with Michelle Lynch! This is VERY important for staying in touch with the entire group for collection days/times.

Collection takes place after school at 4pm at 3 different sites in St. Croix Falls and one site in Taylors Falls. You will need to dress appropriately: BOOTS, GLOVES, water bottle, and bring your own snacks if needed.

This is an awesome time to be with friends and be outside doing something very worthwhile together!

EVERYONE'S HELP IS IMPORTANT!



FIRST LUTHERAN YOUTH SCHEDULE



March 4th, 11th, 18th & 25th

You are invited to special Wednesday evening Lenten Worship.

5:30pm Soup & Supper

6:30pm Lenten Worship

7:00pm Youth Group

Families are welcome to join us! Invite a friend!



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

Class will meet again on Sunday, March 15th at 10:15am

Please bring your Bible.

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



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



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!



Intergenerational Sunday School

Kick Off Sunday: March 1st

9:00AM Worship

10:15AM Special Coffee Hour



The goal is mutual learning, growing closer to Christ, and deepening faith. In Intergenerational Faith Formation, people of all ages make this journey together. The format is simple: sharing, scripture reading or devotions, and praying for one another. Come and share coffee, juice, and treats together, participate in a time of faith growth, and form intergenerational relationships.

Who is invited: All members and friends of First Lutheran are invited. And needed!

Where do we meet: We will meet in the fellowship hall

When do we meet: We will meet after worship on Sunday mornings, during our Coffee Hour, from March 1st to May 3rd (but not Palm Sunday or Easter).

Will offering be collected: We will collect *coins* in two jars that will be located in the fellowship hall - - one jar for the mission of First Evangelical Lutheran Church (FELC), and one jar for the mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

Will we take attendance: Please record your presence each week on the attendance sheet located in the fellowship hall.

What will we be doing?

Library Day: Following worship, check-out one of the great books in our library, and then enjoy books and refreshments during Coffee Hour.

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.

FELC Day: Connect with your prayer partner at Coffee Hour. Send bulletins to our shut ins. Work on community projects.



Relationships Across Generations



Cultivating Connections through Prayer Partners

This program is for all members and friends of First Lutheran – children, youth, young adults, families, and elders encouraging caring for others and discipleship. The first initial commitment is only March 1st - May 3rd.

How do I become a prayer partner ?

- 1) Ask someone
- 2) Come up with a communication plan - it doesn't have to be every single day, but decide how you will connect
- 3) Pray for your prayer partner
- 4) Record your names on the prayer partners list posted on the entry bulletin board, or on the sign up sheet at the Intergenerational Sunday School kick-off event on Sun, March 1st

How do I know who to ask to be my prayer partner ?

- 1) First, pray about this opportunity. Would you like to pray with one of our children, youth, young adults, or families? Would you like to pray with one of our elders?
- 2) Ask someone you see at worship or other church gatherings if they would like to be your prayer partner. Or peruse the list of members (posted on the entry bulletin board). Or sign up at the Intergenerational Sunday School kick-off event on Sun, March 1st.
- 3) If you would like any help with the process, Julie Magnuson is available to assist you.



Spring 2020 Schedule

March 1 – Kick-off event: Sign up for prayer partners during a special Coffee Hour	April 5 – Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast
March 8 - Library day	April 12 – Easter Sunday Worship
March 15 – ELCA day	April 19 – ELCA day
March 22 – Intergenerational Sunday School	April 26 – Intergenerational Sunday School
March 29 – FELC day	May 3 – Wrap-up event

What's Happening?

Book study at the Lodge
will not meet through March—it will resume after Easter.

Lent Worship Schedule

February 26th at 7pm
Ash Wednesday Service



March 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th
and April 1st

At the Lodge
9:30am Coffee
10:00am Lenten Worship

At First Evangelical Lutheran
5:30pm Soup Supper
6:30pm Lenten Worship
7:00pm Youth Group

Thrivent Financial "Choice Dollars"

Thrivent Members can give Thrivent Choice dollars to a large number of organizations, including FELC. Thrivent sets aside money every quarter, and you can send it to a different place every quarter OR you can send it NOW to an organization of your choice by March 31 (Zeroed out each 3/31, and begun again.) Grab a "How to direct Thrivent Choice Dollars" from Angie in the office. Can be done online or over the phone.



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

Paint ♦ Snack ♦ Sip

Saturday, March 7th

1:00—3:00pm

First Evangelical Lutheran Church
561 Chestnut Street, Taylors Falls, MN

Cost: \$25.00—Covers all supplies, beverages & snacks! Ages 13 & up.

The pain class will be led by Nikki Schmidtbauer.

There will be coffee, punch & yummy treats!

Please call 651-465-5265 to register before Wednesday, March 4th to we know how many supplies to purchase.



March 8, 2020



River Valley Christian Womens Connection invites you to

"Walk Info Health and Happiness"

Monday, March 16th

11:30am Luncheon

Church of St. Joseph
255 10th Ave, Osceola, WI

\$12 Ticket—Payable at the door.

Reservation dead line is Tues, March 10 by calling Shirley 715-483-1216 or text 715-338-1473

Check out the flyer on the bulletin board for more information.



Location: Chisago Lakes
High School

Ideas for home improvement, saving energy, building, remodeling, landscaping health and finance. Enjoy seminars and entertainment. Find it all under one roof!



Meeting Agenda

Church Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

February 9, 2020, 10:30am-12:15pm

“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– Miriam. Next month Rose

B. Sharing story– Rose, Becky

C. Pastor’s report - Pastor Dwight

Pastor Dwight led worship five times including once at the Lodge. He had 3 phone visits and a hospital visit. He also attended various meetings at First. He thinks things are going well and is learning more about First every month.

The Gideons contacted Pastor Dwight and asked if they could make a presentation to the congregation. After discussing the pros and cons, the Council decided not to invite the Gideons to come citing financial reasons and lack of inclusivity.

We will continue to use Hidden In Christ for our vesper services during Lent. We discussed adding a short message to the service but decided to continue with the contemplative service as written.

Pastor Dwight asked if people like the way the readings are laid out in the bulletin. Yes, it is nice to have it all together. Printing out the reading from Psalms makes it very clear what the congregation is supposed to say. We are glad the absolution has been brought back. Pastor is thinking about changing the liturgy to a different setting after Easter.

D. Treasurer’s Report - Becky

Our income in January is about \$10,000 less than in December. We often have an increase in December and a dip in January. Becky will add the \$9000 from the fall gift to the Klinke fund.

Our income is about what we expected. We are about on track for our budget. We have more money in our checking account because we aren’t paying benefits for the pastor.

We got a statement from the synod. For the year 2019 we paid \$3300. We pay every 2 months so by the end of our fiscal year we will have paid \$3400. Next year we should look at raising our percentage giving from 2% to 3% of our budget.

E. Steeple bids

We have received one updated steeple bid and unfortunately, it is significantly higher than our fundraising goal. We are seeking two additional bids from two more roofing companies. When those bids come in, the council and the property committee will assess our options. We may need to do some additional fundraising. Please stay tuned for more information. We will share it when we have it. Thanks to everyone who worked so diligently over the past year to raise this significant amount of money!

F. Coffee with Council (Stewardship) feedback and next steps

We met in two small groups and the people were supportive.

After much discussion the council decided we need to form a task group to determine how to proceed with our Stewardship plan. We want the focus to be on each person making a prayerful decision about the ways they can support our mission at First.

We talked about various ways to get people to commit including: private commitment cards, having a commitment ceremony, having a narrative budget which tells how our money is used in programs and time and talent cards. The task force will decide how to move forward.

If God is calling you to help on this task from the spring to June, please contact Pastor Dwight.

G. Sunday School

We decided to give Julie M. permission to move forward with the intergenerational Sunday School during coffee hour every week. We suggested she find other people to help assist. Pastor Dwight will work with her. If necessary we could shorten the service on the fourth Sunday of the month service so she can have some additional time for the activities.

H. Upcoming events

Synod Toolkit, Gloria Dei Lutheran, St.Paul, February 22, 8-2:30- Pastor Dwight will have Angie register Craig, Wendy and himself.

MiChiLu Mardi Gras February 25, Chisago Lakes Lutheran 5-7. Pancake party. Last year was a lot of fun so we hope more people can participate.

Ash Wednesday, services, February 26, 10 am at The Lodge and 7 pm at church.

WiPoLu meeting, February 27, 6:30 here (Balsam Lake and other congregations to discuss how to move forward with our smaller congregations.) Pastor Erin and Krista Lind will be there to help facilitate the meeting.

Are we having the Pancake breakfast on Palm Sunday? Are there any youth to help?

Rose brought up the Events section in the Leader. She will get our Lenten services listed without charge. We have money in our budget for advertising so we could put an ad in the paper about our Lent services.. Rose will talk to Angie.

Motion to adjourn. Miriam

Our April meeting will be changed to April 19 to avoid Easter.



As the abundance of donations from the holidays dwindle, the need in our community continues. The largest grassroots food and fund drive in the state, the **Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign** brings together community

organizations, businesses, and faith communities to help restock food shelves statewide. The more we raise, Minnesota FoodShare provides a financial incentive.

Most Needed Items



- ♦ Fresh, frozen, or canned fruit
apples, oranges, mixed fruit
- ♦ Fresh, frozen, or canned
vegetables green beans, corn,
mixed vegetables
- ♦ Bags of potatoes, carrots, or
onions
- ♦ Whole grain pasta, rice
- ♦ Baking and cooking items
Vegt. oil, flour, sugar, spices
- ♦ Canned meats
tuna, chicken, salmon
- ♦ Hearty soups
chunky soups, stews, cream of
mushroom soup
- ♦ Peanut Butter
- ♦ Personal hygiene and
household cleaning products

Want to give financially?
\$10 feeds a family of 4
for one week!



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



Pastor Dwight Rudquist
c: 651-829-4884
pastorrudquist@gmail.com
Michelle Lynch
Youth Minister/Choir Director
c: 715-220-2782
felcyouthminister@gmail.com
Angie Linngren
Ministry Coordinator,
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 March 8th 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
Articles due the 10th of each month.