

# First Things

MARCH 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)



A man came home from work late again, tired and irritated, to find his 5 year old son waiting for him at the door. “Daddy, may I ask you a question?” “Yeah, sure, what is it?” replied the man. “Daddy, how much money do you make an hour?” “That’s

none of your business, young man. What makes you ask such a silly question?” the man said rather angrily. “I just wanted to know,” said the boy, “please tell me, how much do you make an hour?” “If you must know, I make \$40 an hour.” “Oh,” the little boy replied, head bowed. Looking up, he said, “Daddy, may I borrow \$9 please?” The father was furious. “If the only reason you wanted to know how much money I make is just so you can borrow some to buy a silly toy or some other nonsense, then you march yourself straight to your room and go to bed. Think about why you’re being so selfish. I work long, hard hours everyday and don’t have time for such childish games.”

The little boy quietly went to his room and shut the door. The man sat down and started to get even madder about his son’s questioning. How dare he ask such questions only to get some money? After an hour or so, the man calmed down, and started to think he may have been a little hard on his son. Maybe there was something he really needed to buy with that \$9 and he really didn’t ask for money very often.

The man went to the door of the little boy’s room and opened the door. “Are you asleep son?” he asked. “No daddy, I’m awake,” replied the boy.

Continued on page two

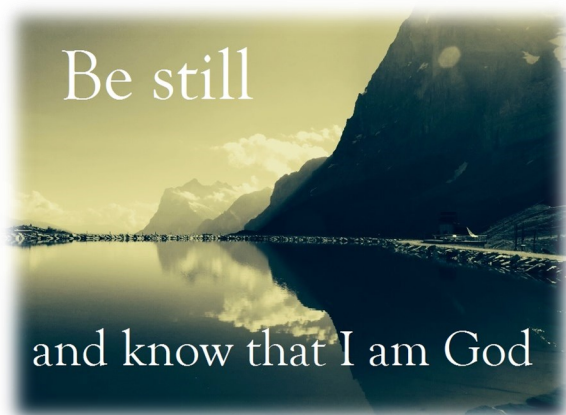
"I've been thinking, maybe I was too hard on you earlier," said the father. "It's been a long day and I took my aggravations out on you. Here's that \$9 you asked for." The little boy sat straight up, beaming. "Oh, thank you daddy!" Then, reaching under his pillow, the boy pulled out some more crumpled up bills. The man, seeing that the boy already had money, started to get angry again.

The little boy slowly counted out his money, then looked up at his father. "Why did you want more money if you already had some?" the father grumbled. "Because I didn't have enough, but now I do," the little boy replied. "Daddy, I have \$40 now. Can I buy an hour of your time?"

Emotional dagger time, right? It's amazing what we take for granted, isn't it? This story not only reminds me of times when I failed to give my full attention to my girls or others, but it also makes me wonder how God must feel as we take our time with God for granted.

Lent is a great time to slow down, to reconnect, to spend time in prayer and listening to God. It's a powerful time to reflect on the depth of God's love for us as we stand before the cross. It's also a mysterious time to see beyond the grave and to hear God's voice leading and guiding us a long life's way. "Be still, and know that I am God!" (Psalm 46:10)

Pastor Dwight Rudquist



There are cards available on the bulletin board with Psalm 26:10 printed for you to take. Hang it on your bathroom mirror, fridge, lay it out on your dresser..... wherever you need it during the Lent season!

## *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**

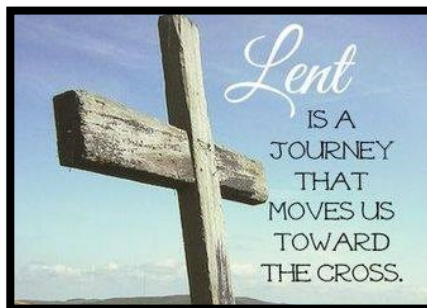
Council will meet March 12, 2023 at 10:30am.

## **QUILTING GROUP**

First and third Thursday mornings at 9:30am.

## **BIBLE STUDY**

Bible Study will meet downstairs on Sunday mornings following fellowship.



## **MARCH BIRTHDAYS**

03/01 Wendy Szczepanski  
03/06 Ben Landgreen  
03/07 Craig Loen  
03/16 Verna Grover  
03/17 Abby Loen  
03/23 Brenna French  
03/25 Chase Lundholm  
03/30 Levi Linngren  
03/31 Natalie Landgreen



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

01/29 Giving:	\$1,770.75
02/05 Giving:	\$1,506.00
02/12 Giving:	\$3,018.00
02/19 Giving:	\$2,269.00

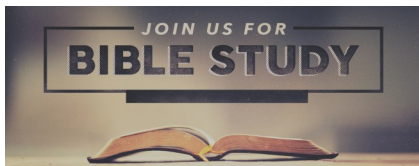
Thank you for your faithful giving. Please contact FELC Treasurer, Becky Hulden with any questions or concerns at: 651-465-3631 or [rhulden@gmail.com](mailto:rhulden@gmail.com).





## 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 following fellowship. Dates: To be announced in upcoming bulletins.



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

## Church Choir



**Tuesday evenings at 7pm in the sanctuary! No experience needed! We'd love for you to join us!!!**

Did you know we have a nursery snack jar? We invite children to grab one snack if they'd like before or after worship to enjoy!!! Angie has been filling it weekly from her snack bin from home, but would love to share this fun task each week! If you would like to bring a few snacks to share, please drop them in the office or simply in the snack jar in the nurseyy!! Thank you!



**Saturday, March 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!

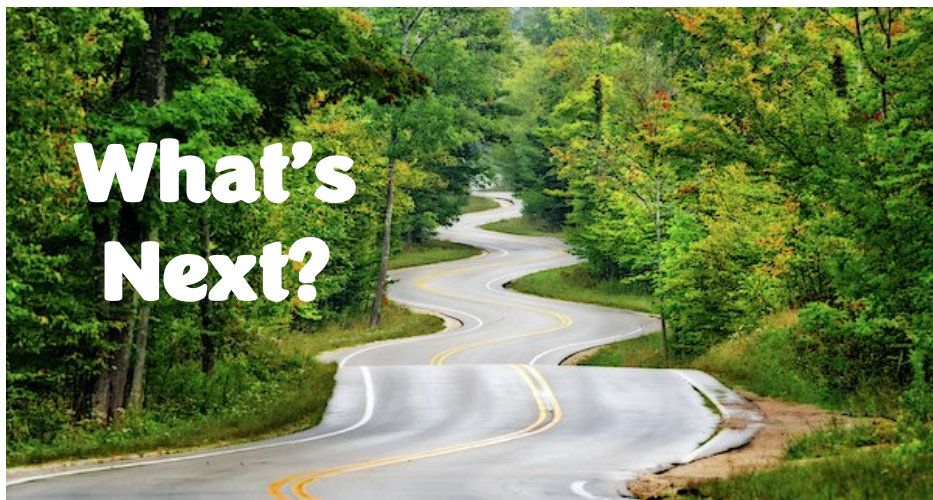
Coffee & water will be available!



Pictures from the  
Feb. 11th Craft Day!



**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.

**Our next meeting will be:  
To be announced**

# LENT

**WEDNESDAY EVENINGS AT 5:00PM  
HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER**

March 1st ~ March 8th  
March 15th ~ March 22nd ~ March 29th

**We will be using the Holden Evening  
Prayer and hearing Monologues of  
Lent - People of the Passion.**

**Palm Sunday Worship  
April 2nd at 9:00am**

**Maundy Thursday  
April 6th at 7:00pm**

**Good Friday  
April 7th at 7:00pm**

**Easter Sunday  
April 9th at 9:00am**

*The Season of Lent*



## Summer 2023

Welcome to Summer 2023,  
"Walking With Jesus"

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!

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

-Leviticus 26:12

### Member Church Discounts

This discount applies if you are a member of one of Luther Point's 75 member congregations and your congregation contributed their full per-baptized member assessment in 2021.

Full Week Camps: \$55 off | Half Week Camps: \$22.50 off  
Overnight Camps: \$13.75 off

### **LUTHER POINT BIBLE CAMP - 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!



## What's happening IN OUR COMMUNITY



**POLAR WINE PARTY**  
**DANCING DRAGONFLY WINERY**  
**SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 2023**  
**1PM-7PM**

Celebrate the final moments of winter while dancing to live music and sipping warm wine-based drinks outside on our enclosed, heated patio. If it gets too cold for you, come inside and enjoy your wine in our Event Center. Our wine, delicious food, and special drinks are available for purchase. This event is free to the public. Sleigh rides will be available for \$10 per person. Live music featuring The Soul Shack from 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

North Branch Area Chamber of Commerce

**2023 Home and Garden Expo**

**March 25, 2023 | 9am - 3pm**

Education, Home Décor, Interior Design,  
Landscaping and so much more!

North Branch High School  
38175 Grand Ave, North Branch





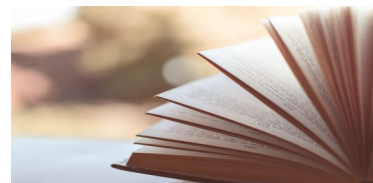
Items First Evangelical Lutheran will be collecting all March:

- Canned Fruit & Vegetables
- Cooking Items: vegetable oil, flour, sugar, spices
- Pasta & Rice Baking
- Canned Meats
- Canned Soups & Stews
- Peanut Butter & Jelly Personal
- Hygiene Products
- Household Cleaning Products



Food Collection Bin next to the usher stand!

More information about Family Pathways on last page of this newsletter!



## Chisago Lakes Book Club

Thurs, March 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.

## SAVE THE DATE



April 19 - 22, 2023

Specific date and time to be determined! Stay tuned for more specific details.

Join Pr Dwight at Hosanna Lutheran Church in Forest Lake & pack meals for families in need! Lent offerings will be designated to Feed My Starving Children



**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

**Monday Evenings**  
**4:00pm - 6:00pm**

**Zion Lutheran Church**  
**in Chisago City**



Dear TF Lutheran Church ,

Thank you for your continued support through your generous donations this past Christmas. Your generosity has brightened the lives of our kids, and provided parents with a sign of relief at what can be a stressful time of the year.

Thank you for your continued support of our families and your investment in the TF Community!

Sincerely, Principle Jason Riebe  
TF Elementary School



## Council Meeting Minutes

Church Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

February 12, 2023, 10:30am - 12:05pm

Next meeting: March 12

“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, Becky Hulden, Kathy Carlsted, Pastor Dwight Rudquist **Members Absent:** None

### A. Opening Devotions - Kathy

March - Wendy

### B. Sharing Story- Becky, Kathy, Wendy, Pastor Dwight

### C. Pastor’s Report - Pastor Dwight

Pastor Dwight had many in person visits with people. He led worship at the Lodge on January 25. He participated in the Vision Task Force and Building Task Force. He led choir rehearsals.

Pastor signed us up for Feed my Starving Children so he will get notification when the time slots are open.

Pastor Dwight will be out of town March 8-11. Becky will lead the music for the Lenten service.

Pastor Dwight will lead an Ash Wednesday service at The Lodge on February 22 at 1:30.

### D. Treasurer’s Report - Becky

Our income in January (\$9942.75) is a little less than adequate for our budget. Our income (59%) and expenses (54%) are right on according to our budget. We have \$1679.64 more in our accounts than last month.

The council would like the auditing committee to meet quarterly. Pastor Dwight will set up a meeting to go over the tasks the committee needs to perform.

Kathy motioned, Becky seconded, that Lent offering be designated for Feed my Starving Children. Motion passed.

Wendy made a motion, Craig seconded, that we donate \$25 to the Baptist church for expenses related to the TF teacher’s luncheon held on February 3. The money will come out of line item 6435. Motion passed.

### E. Property committee projects

The council reviewed the property projects proposed by the Property Committee.

Finishing up the landscaping was already approved by the congregation so it will be completed this spring or summer.

The council determined that replacing the boiler for the Sunday School area is the most important project. The council directs the property committee to get 3 bids on a new boiler. Once the bids are completed we will have a congregational meeting.

Craig motioned, second by Becky, that we remodel the bathrooms on the east end of fellowship hall and replace the two exterior doors on the north side of the church door in the kitchen and the door on the NE corner) approving up to \$2500 to come out of line 3040 (property projects). Motion passed.

The council also directs the Property Committee to secure a second bid on repaving the parking lot.

### F. Vision Group -

The group met last week. Steve and Jeanie Jensen were here to share about their church’s shared ministry journey. The Vision Task Force plans to connect with local pastors and community leaders to find out how First is viewed by the community. The Vision Task Force will meet every two weeks so we continue to move forward on our Shared Ministry journey. The next meeting is February 21 from 5:00-7:00. Pastor Dwight and Don Hansen will attend Peace Lutheran’s council meeting (Dresser church) on Thursday to begin the conversation with them about shared ministry.

### G. New business

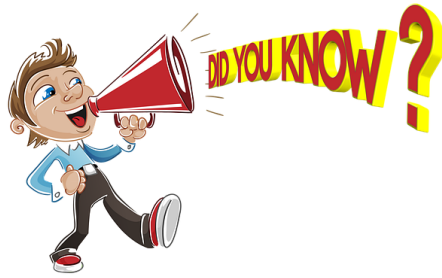
Festival Theatre asked to rent space for rehearsal during the last 3 weeks in July from noon to 9 PM. Wendy will connect with them about using the fellowship hall. We will ask that they be flexible in case we need to have a funeral.

### H. Motion to adjourn by Craig, second Becky

### Coming up:

Toolkit, Shepherd of the Valley, Apple Valley, February 25 from 9:00-2:45  
FMSC Mobile Pack at Hosanna Lutheran, Forest Lake April 19-22  
Synod Assembly, St. Andrews Lutheran, Mahtomedi, May 12,13

Faithfully submitted,  
Miriam Flysjo, council secretary



March is MNFood Share month. This is a yearly food and fund-raising drive. In 2022, we served between 130-170 families each month here in the Chisago Lakes community. That includes between 300-400 people monthly. We have family sizes that range from a household of 1 to

a household of 11. We served 157 new families in 2022 alone. Overall the need for food shelves has gone up by 51% in the last decade. We are expecting another large rise in families needing support in the upcoming months due to the ending Covid-19 SNAP benefits in March.

We distributed 153,000 pounds of food throughout 2022. Community donations totaled 133,474 pounds! That means that the majority of the food we distribute comes from local food drives and the support of local churches and businesses. Other items we get come from Second Harvest Heartland. Our budget for purchasing comes from local financial donations. All of the money donated to the Family Pathways Chisago Lakes Food Shelf stays at our facility. Did you know we can turn \$1 into \$7 worth of food and \$10 can feed a family of 4 for one week?

We also run the local backpack programs, serving all 5 of our schools in the Chisago Lakes School District. We have volunteers that pack over 50 bags of food and deliver them to the various schools. These bags of food ensure that those students have something to eat over the weekend. They contain 3-5 pounds of food each and include breakfast, lunch and dinner items. All families that qualify for free/reduced lunches also qualify for this program and the sign ups can be found in the weekly principal emails. The backpack program bags include items like chicken noodle soup, peanut butter, individual cereals, single serve oatmeal packages, cans of fruit and vegetables, canned tuna or chicken and snacks.

Some of the items that the food shelf is always in need of are: peanut butter, egg noodles, baked beans, chunky soups, Ramen noodles, flavored crackers, spaghetti sauce, butter, sliced cheese, laundry and dishwasher soaps, cleaning products and personal hygiene items.



**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)

**Angie Linngren**  
Ministry Coordinator,  
[parishc@tflutheran.org](mailto: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 March 12, 2023 at 10:30am.**

### *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.