

First Things

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

~ Invisible Gorilla/JESUS?? ~

Imagine you are asked to watch a short video in which six people, three in white shirts and three in black shirts, pass basketballs around. While you watch, you must keep a silent count of the number of passes made by the people in white shirts. At some point, a gorilla strolls into the middle of the action, faces the camera and thumps its chest, and then leaves, spending nine seconds on screen. Would you see the gorilla?

As you can imagine, almost everyone has the intuition that the answer is "yes, of course I would." How could something so obvious go completely unnoticed? But when this experiment was done at Harvard University several years ago, they found that **half of the people who watched the video and counted the passes missed the gorilla.** It was as though the gorilla was invisible.

That experiment reveals two things: that we are missing a lot of what goes on around us, and that we have no idea that we are missing so much.

Two times on the first Easter day Jesus was with people who would normally know who he was, but neither Mary (according to John's Gospel) nor Cleopas or the other disciple with him (Luke 24) recognized



him. Makes you think doesn't it? How often do we see Jesus as he's standing with us all the time? How much of all that Jesus has to show us and tell us are we missing?

Thankfully, Jesus doesn't just pass through beating his hands to his chest like the gorilla in the experiment. He stays with us, he speaks to us, calls us by name, breaks bread with us and does everything in his power to make himself

known to us. Yet, we will still miss him at times. But that doesn't mean he's not there. It just means we're distracted or we don't expect him to be there. But he is!!

As the day of Easter passes and as the days of the coronavirus continue on, may the wonder of Jesus' presence with us never pass away! May we not be so concerned about getting the answer right that we lose sight of what's really important. Take the time to literally and figuratively "smell the roses" (that is if the weather ever lets them grow or we get outside with a little more liberty). Contemplate what it means to be Christ's new creation, to have died with him and now be raised with him. What does it mean to be Easter People and that every morning is Easter morning where our past is over and gone? As you wrestle with those questions, I bet you'll see things you never imagined.

Pastor Dwight Rudquist

New Members **Welcome!**

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

SUNDAYWORSHIP

For online worship, please check out our website: www.tflutheran.org or our YouTube Channel: First Evangelical Lutheran Church of TF.

OFFICE HOURS@FELC

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

COUNCILMEETING

Council will meet on **Saturday, May 9th via Zoom.**

SARAHCIRCLE

Sarah Circle will not be meeting until further notice.

QUILTERS



Quilters will not be meeting in the month of May.

LIBRARYHOURS

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

Prayer Concerns

If you have a prayer concern and would like us to know, please email the office: parishc@tflutheran.org or call the office: 651-465-5265. Please specify if you'd like it to be only for Pastor Dwight, if you'd like your name added to the weekly bulletin's prayer list and/or sent out to the prayer chain.

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

03/29 Giving:	\$1,235.00
04/05 Giving:	\$1,780.00
04/12 Giving:	\$4,970.00
04/19 Giving:	\$2,135.00
04/26 Giving:	\$0,665.00

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.

We appreciate your financial support while we continue to provide online worship. Our staff is working hard to keep you feeling connected to your faith and church community.

Calling all singers and instrumentalists! As we record week to week for our Sunday worship services we are looking for people of talent to come forward and offer their talents to enhance our online worship



services. We would love to have a wide variety! Contact Michelle Lynch, Pastor Dwight, or Angie if you would like to help out or want to know more about this. We would love to work with you.

MAYBIRTHDAYS



Lisa Clasen	05/01
Ethan Lundsted	05/02
Sunshine Vodenka-Reed	05/03
Daytona Vodenka-Reed	05/03
Don Hansen	05/04
Eleanore Collins	05/06
Don Grover	05/06
Gail Johnson	05/06
Julie Magnuson	05/06
Cody Tverberg	05/09
Judy Peterson	05/21
Pete Lindgren	05/22
Rita Johnson	05/25
Tom Enebak	05/26
Jacob Loen	05/27
Poppy Vodenka-Reed	05/27
Anthony Vogt	05/30
Tim Nelson	05/31

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.

LET'S *LAUGH* TODAY
AND EVERY DAY !



"I'll go outside, but how do I know when I've had enough fresh air?"

FIRST LUTHERAN YOUTH SCHEDULE

Michelle has organized a Zoom Call to connect with youth on **Wednesdays at 7pm through to the end of May.** It has been

difficult at this time for her to launch that as she has been in Wausau taking care of her dad on hospice care in her mom and dad's home. As we progress into this "online" connection with one another please give Michelle room for grace as she is away from home for long periods of time caring for her father. As things settle down she will be improving on her connections with you. Just know **HOW MUCH YOU ARE LOVED AND MISSED SO DEARLY!!!** Your well being is very important to her and please know you can call or text her at 715-220-2782 at anytime. If she is unable to answer please be patient. Leave a message of how she can help and she will get back to you as soon as she is able.

YOUTH RETREAT CANCELED FOR MAY

It is with great sadness that we will be canceling this year's youth retreat to Luther Point Bible Camp May 8th-10th.

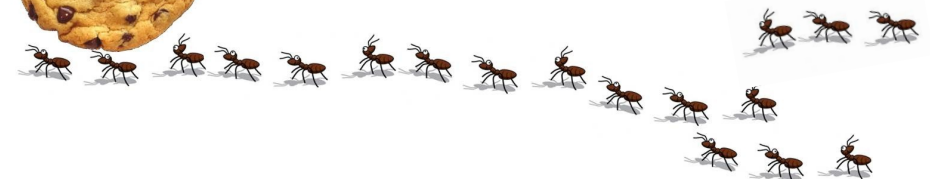
Originally it was set for February and I had a family emergency with my father so we postponed to May. Now with the COVID-19 Social Distancing Mandates in place and not to be lifted anytime soon, we will need to cancel altogether for the safety of all involved.

For those of you who already submitted your payment it will be mailed back to you.

I truly pray and hope that you will ALL consider coming back next year! This is THE highlight event of our year and we want to share the love of Jesus Christ with you and have you get to know our dear friends 100 White Flags = Jeromy, Beth, Paul and Zac. What a blessing it will be when we can all be together again!



On hold
until
further
notice.





2020
Sap
Season



2020 GREAT
BUCKET BRIGADE

Clean up went well, we practiced social distancing to the best of our ability, wore both masks and gloves, worked 3 shifts of 8 people. Thanks to all that participated today. Oh, 2500 green buckets, 200 blue collecting buckets cleaned in 8 hours. Still



need to clean out the 3x10 Intensofire evaporator and 900 gallon per hour CDL Reverse Osmosis unit. We ended the season making 705 gallons of syrup from 2500 taps.

Thank you
Don Hansen

♥♥♥ **Intergenerational Sunday School** ♥♥♥

Intergenerational Sunday School wraps up on Sunday, May 3rd. Thank you for joining in! If you'd like to see intergenerational learning activities return in the fall, let our church leaders know.



Money collected:
\$30.00
Equaling 3
Flocks of Chicks

Money
Collected for FELC's
General Fund:
\$24.00

"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." ~Matthew 28:20

Have you been taking Jesus with you on your walks? Maybe to your school spot at home? Or to work? We'd love to see pictures!!! You can forward your pictures to parishc@tflutheran.org



Don't have a printed out Jesus—visit our website at www.tflutheran.org and click on the Intergenerational Sunday School page.



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!!!!

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!

For more info and to register, visit:
WWW.LUTHERPOINT.ORG



Thank you all for the loving work you did for our Aunt Annie's heavenly send off.

Eleanore, Shawn &
Shannon Collins

Thank you, Bruce Carlsted, for all your work keeping our parking lot clean during the winter! We appreciate you snowplowing!

We want to express our immense appreciation to Julie Magnuson for everything she did for this new Sunday School program! We are so excited to see this hopefully continue and grow!

Thank you, Julie!!!

Thank you to Miriam and Arne Lagus for donating the beautiful outdoor winter planters and updating the planters with colorful Spring pansy's!





A little late on sharing these,
but we had fifteen that joined
in on the painting class in
March!

We plan to do another
class, hopefully over the
summer when things calm
down a bit. Stay tuned!



May 4, 2020

Council News

This spring the steeple fund reached \$41,000, thanks to all who gave money, time and effort during our Steeple Fundraisers that started in January 2019 as well as from funeral memorials. We are grateful to all who donated. After we reached our original goal of \$34,000, the property committee sought bids from five different roofing companies, of which two were able to bid on the job. After exhaustive research, the committee has recommended to the council that we go with Central Roofing of Minneapolis and chose the copper option for our steeple because of its longevity.

If we sign the contract with Central Roofing soon, they will be able to start the project in September. There has already been some damage inside the steeple from rain and birds and so we would like to get in the 2020 schedule. The full amount will be due when Central Roofing finishes the job (estimated for the end of September).

One problem is that the original bid was calculated incorrectly and the more accurate cost is \$62,765. The next step is for the congregation to vote on whether the council can sign a contract with Central Roofing and to allow the council to borrow money from our other accounts if we are unable to raise the full amount by the end of September 2020.

In lieu of a physical congregational meeting, you will be receiving a letter and ballot(s) to vote on whether you give your permission to the council to sign a contract with Central Roofing to install a copper roof on the steeple and to allow the council to borrow money from other accounts to make up any difference between what we can raise this summer and what is needed by the end of the repair project.

You may vote by one of these four options: mail in your ballot, drop off your ballot at the church during office hours, call the office during office hours and verbalize your ballot choice, or email the office your vote. A **yes** vote is in favor of signing the contract and in favor of borrowing the funds if necessary. A **no** vote is against signing the contract until all funds have been received

Watch for the letter and ballot in the mail! We appreciate your responses!

Thank you!

FELC Church Council



Copper Shingles



Council Meeting Minutes

Church Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

April 18, 2020, 3:00pm-4:40pm via Zoom

“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, Becky Hulten, Pastor Dwight Rudquist **Members Absent:** Craig Loen

Next Meeting: Saturday, May 9 via Zoom

A. Opening Devotions - Pastor Dwight

B. Sharing story - Everyone shared how our families are doing during this shelter in place period.

C. Pastor’s report - Pastor Dwight

Pastor Dwight has been very busy making videos of the Lent and Easter services. He is grateful for the help of all the people who have made the videos possible. Carli has been a big help in editing and putting together the videos. He has made some phone calls and intends to make some more calls in the near future. It’s hard to know how we should be proceeding with church business during the shelter in place period.

The current contract we have with Pastor Dwight expires at the beginning of May. After discussion the council and Pastor Dwight decided to continue with the current contract and renegotiate the terms of another contract when this shelter in place is over. Currently Pastor Dwight has recorded the hours he has worked and is being compensated accordingly.

D. Treasurer’s Report - Becky

We are still short of the \$12,000 a month we need to meet our budget but we are able to pay our bills because we aren’t paying for a .4 pastor. Direct deposits are standard month to month. The steeple repair fund is \$41,000. We received two \$1000 checks we thought were for the steeple fund but the donor informed the council that the money is meant for the general fund to ensure there was money to help pay salaries.

E. Payroll Protection Plan PPP update - Becky

We missed the window to apply for the small business loan for 2 ½ times our monthly payroll. Becky was at a virtual Zoom meeting last Monday night for church treasurers. She called our bank, left a message but by the time the loan officer returned her call there was no more money for a loan. Becky was told it is not likely there will be another federal loan program in the future but she was sent the paperwork so she could fill it out in case another loan program is approved.

A motion was made by Miriam, seconded by Becky, to complete the paperwork to

apply for a possible future loan. Motion passed.

F. Lenten Offerings - Wendy

The Lent offering was \$75 on 3-1-2020. In the past years offerings have gone to Family Pathways and/or Together with Friends After discussion it was decided to give the money to Family Pathways.

G. Proposed Duane Olson/Annie Lindgren Memorial - Wendy

\$800 was given by Julie M. for a new memorial fund to commemorate stepping stones in the lives of our young people. Currently, our congregation gives each H.S. graduate a quilt made by the quilting group. Parents of children who are baptized in our church are invited to apply for \$50 to be invested with the Mission Investment Fund from the Helen Lamb Baptism Fund.

The council would like some clarification about the fund Julie is proposing. Wendy will speak to Julie. It was decided to table it until we have more information.

H. Phone tree - Becky

During this time when we can’t see each other we need a way to keep in touch with people. The council discussed a few possible ways to contact the congregation. It was decided that Rose, Angie and Julie could work on setting up an organized way to call the congregation keeping prayer partners in mind.

I. Prayer concerns, prayer

Michelle and her family as her dad is very sick.

Julie M. as she works to do God’s work in this place.

Council members as we make decisions in this difficult time.

Pastor Dwight as he leads us through this uncertain time.

J. Other business

What about the youth retreat scheduled May 8-10? Seems like Luther Point will have to cancel it. Pastor will ask Michelle about connecting with Luther Point. In all likelihood groups won’t be able to gather.

Wendy did not ask Don about the steeple roof. Rose will call him.

Maybe suggest at the annual meeting that we have a couple of funds listed for memorials so the memorials don’t get so spread out.

K. Motion to adjourn

Rose motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Becky.

Memorial Committee: Darlene Mueller has been asked to lead the Memorial Committee and has accepted. An invitation to anyone who would like to know more about or interested in being part of this committee, please let the office know!

Intergenerational Sunday School

Pysanky Eggs

Julie Magnuson offered church members kits to create their own Pysanky eggs for Easter.

Ukrainian Easter Egg are part of an ancient tradition of decorating whole eggshells with elaborate geometric patterns and pictures.. The delicate nature of real eggs is what makes Pysanky eggs all the more unbelievable.

Pysanky are made by puncturing the shell in two places and carefully removing the liquid contents of the egg by blowing them out. Using the hot wax pen the artists writes a pattern, dips the pysanky into dyes, lets them dry and continues the process several times, producing colorful overlapping patterns on the shell of the Ukrainian eggs. Because the shells are so fragile, this part of the process is rather difficult. This produces beautiful, overlapping patterns on the eggs that are almost impossible to believe.



Julie & Sheldon Magnuson



Folk cultures around the world consider the pysanky a symbol of springtime and rebirth. They have a cherished history, and are often thought of as being a glorious symbol of the chick emerging from what may seem like a lifeless shell, as well as the grass growing and flowers blooming from the cold, hard winter ground.



Miriam Flysjo

Miriam Flysjo and Julie & Sheldon Magnuson decorated eggs of their own!

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 May 9th via Zoom.

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.