First Things

AUGUST 2026

The Newsletter of First Evangelical Lutheran Church
561 Chestnut Street | Taylors Falls, MN 55084-1110
651-465-5265 www.tflutheran.org

It is hard to believe that August is already here. Summer always seems to move quickly, and there is still plenty happening in the life of First Lutheran. We continue to gather for worship, care for one another, prepare for the beginning of fall programming, and look for new ways to welcome children, families, neighbors, and visitors into the life of the church.

We are also beginning to think ahead to Sunday School, confirmation, youth activities, and all the ministries that begin to find their rhythm again as summer comes to an end. There is much to do, but there is also much for which we can be grateful. So many people continue to give their time, energy, ideas, and faithfulness to the ministry we share.

As we look back on the summer, I am especially thankful for our game nights and dinners. These gatherings may seem simple, but they create space for conversation, laughter, friendship, and community. They remind us that the life of the church is not only found in meetings or programs, but also around tables and in the relationships we build with one another.

Together with Friends has also been an inspiring example of what can happen when community churches work together. By joining our gifts and resources, we have been able to offer our young people something truly meaningful. The volunteers who make this ministry possible are amazing. Their commitment, creativity, and care are God-inspired, and I am grateful for the ways they continue to bless our youth and the wider community.

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This summer, we also said goodbye to Momoh and celebrated with him as he began a new chapter in his life. We are grateful for the music, energy, and joy he shared with First Lutheran and for the ways he blessed our worship and congregation. While goodbyes are never easy, it was meaningful to gather, give thanks, and send him forward with our prayers and blessings.

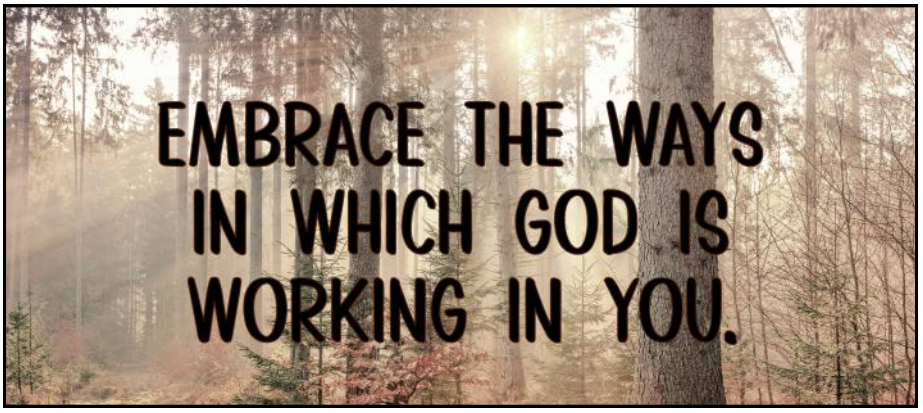
Our annual meeting also gave us an opportunity to look toward the future. We heard new ideas for our building and for the ministries that will take place within it. More importantly, we recommitted ourselves to the mission of First Lutheran—not only in Taylors Falls, but beyond our walls and throughout the communities we serve. Buildings are important, but they exist to support ministry. They provide a place where people can worship, learn, gather, serve, and experience the love of Christ.

There is still a little summer left, and the Almelund Threshing Show will soon be here. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the show, and I look forward to worshiping with the community and enjoying this wonderful celebration of history, faith, music, and fellowship.

As we enjoy these remaining weeks of summer and prepare for the fall, may we continue to notice the ways God is already at work among us. May we give thanks for those who serve, remain open to new ideas, and continue welcoming others into the life and mission of First Lutheran.

Blessings,

Pastor Justin



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

08/05 Dylan Lynch
08/11 Riley Linngren
08/16 Arne Lagus
08/19 Kathy Carlsted
08/19 Sue Nelson
08/20 Dan Curry
08/25 Jon Luschen
08/26 Justin Fenger
08/26 Mike Moberg
08/26 Julie Valez

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

New Members Welcome!

If you are interested in becoming a member, please talk with Pr. Justin or contact the office at 651-465-5265.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

10am Fellowship Hour
11am Worship Service

Services are recorded and can be found on our website: www.tflutheran.org

COUNCIL MEETING

Council will meet on Thursday, August 20th at 6:00pm in the FELC Library

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

06/28 Giving:	$1,670.96
07/05 Giving:	$4,557.00
07/12 Giving:	$2,226.00
07/19 Giving:	$2,915.00
07/26 Giving:	$2,076.00

Thank you for your faithful giving. Please contact FELC Treasurer, Craig Loen with any questions or concerns at: 715-553-0519 or cloen@federatedcoops.com

July Noisy Offering
to Luther Point Bible Camp
$53.75

Shared Ministry

First Lutheran Evangelical Church

Taylors Falls, MN
Fellowship at 10am
followed by Worship at 11am

SundaySCHOOL

Taking a break for the summer. Watch for updates in September!

WISDOM SEEKERS

Will take a break June - August. Watch for the September newsletter for start up date!

Thursday, August 20th
4:30pm - 6:30pm

Come enjoy supper, good music & have fun playing board games!!
First Evang. Lutheran

CRAFTING

CRAFTING ON SATURDAYS

WE WILL NOT MEET IN AUGUST

Quilting

No quilting for the summer.

A big shout out goes to Rose Anderson, Joy Buchholtz, & Wendy Szczepanski for taking on the BIG task of cleaning the kitchen!!!!

Better Together

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Almelund, MN
Worship at 9am
followed by Fellowship at 10am

Fri., Aug 14, 4:30-6:30pm

Community Dinner

Free!
Everyone Welcome!
Great Fellowship!
Meet your friends & neighbors!

Immanuel Lutheran Church
Almelund
Come & Bring a Friend!
2nd Friday Each Month 4:30—6:30 pm

Tune in our Daily Texts with Pastor Justin

Monday - Saturday:
Immanuel Lutheran Church
of Almelund Facebook Page.
A daily devotional time.

Vacation Bible School
"What's Cooking"
3 years old – 5th
August 10-13th 5:30-8:00pm
Want info? See Angie

Faith Conversations
Widening Circles

EVENT DETAILS

Wild Mountain Winery
4th Thursday of the Month
6:30 PM
April–October 2026

4th Thursday • 6:30 PM

April — iNDiViDUALiSM: Me, Myself, & I Alone
May — Law & Gospel: Captured & Free
June — The Myth(?) of Christian Self-Help
July — My Story. Your Story. God's Story
August — Mental Health (It's NOT just you...)
September — Listening 101: Listening as the First Act of Love
October — Figuring Out Forgiveness

August 27th

All are welcome

Good conversation • good community

AUGUST

FELC - First Evangelical Lutheran Church

ILC - Immanuel Lutheran Church

Sun	Mon	Tue
2 9am Worship at ILC 10am Fellowship at ILC 10am Fellowship at FELC 11am Worship at FELC	3 8:30am Counters Meet at FELC	4 9am Joint Worship Team Meeting at ILC
9 9am Worship at ILC 10am Fellowship at ILC 10am Fellowship at FELC 11am Worship at FELC	10 8:30am Counters Meet at FELC 5pm VBS at ILC	11 9am Joint Worship Team Meeting at ILC 5pm VBS at ILC
16 9am Worship at ILC 10am Fellowship at ILC 10am Fellowship at FELC 11am Worship at FELC	17 8:30am Counters Meet at FELC Newsletter Submissions Due	18 9am Joint Worship Team Meeting at ILC
23 9am Worship at ILC 10am Fellowship at ILC 10am Fellowship at FELC 11am Worship at FELC	24 8:30am Counters Meet at FELC	25 9am Joint Worship Team Meeting at ILC
30 9am Worship at ILC 10am Fellowship at ILC 10am Fellowship at FELC 11am Healing Worship at FELC	31 8:30am Counters Meet at FELC	

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1
5	6 2:30pm Community Coffee at The Lodge	7	8
12 10am Book Study at The Lodge 5pm VBS at ILC	13 2:30pm Community Coffee at The Lodge 5pm VBS at ILC	14 4:30pm Community Meal at ILC	15
19 1:30pm Worship at The Lodge	20 2:30pm Community Coffee at The Lodge 4:30pm Supper & Game Night at FELC 6pm Council Meeting	21	22
26 10am Book Study at The Lodge	27 2:30pm Community Coffee at The Lodge 6:30pm Holy Smokes at Wild Mtn Winery	28	29

Happy Birthday, Pr. Justin!!

WHAT'S HAPPENING

IN OUR COMMUNITY

FARMER'S MARKET

St. Croix Falls Public Library Plaza
Saturdays, May-October
10am to 1pm
Local vendors offering fresh produce, sustainably raised meats and cheese, preserves, honey, flowers, & more!

Parking Lot of St. Bridget's in Lindstrom, MN
Wednesday 3 pm to 6 pm
Saturday 8 am to 12 pm
Local vendors offering vegetables, flowers, home canned goods, soap, eggs, baked goods & more.

Almelund Farmer's Market at Rod's Country Corner
Friday Afternoons | 3pm to 6pm
Flowers & plants, fresh produce, eggs, maple syrup, honey, baked goods, canned foods & more!

Taylors Falls Farmers Market
Located in vacant parking lot across from The Drive-In
Sunday, July 12th & 26th
11am to 3pm
Local vendors offering fresh produce, flowers, baked goods, handmade crafts & more!

OUTDOOR MUSIC

Wednesday Nights at 6:30pm
Lions Park Band Shell,
Lindstrom
Events start at 6:30pm
ALL Concerts FREE to the Public!

St Croix Falls, WI
Severson Memorial Overlook Park
June - August
Friday evenings at 6:30pm

FREE Friday Summer Concerts at the overlook. Bring a lawn chair.
FREE ADMISSION!

Sunday, Aug. 2nd | 10am-2pm
Local farmers and artists come together at Franconia Sculpture Park to provide a variety of fresh produce and handmade crafts. Farmers market is rain or shine!

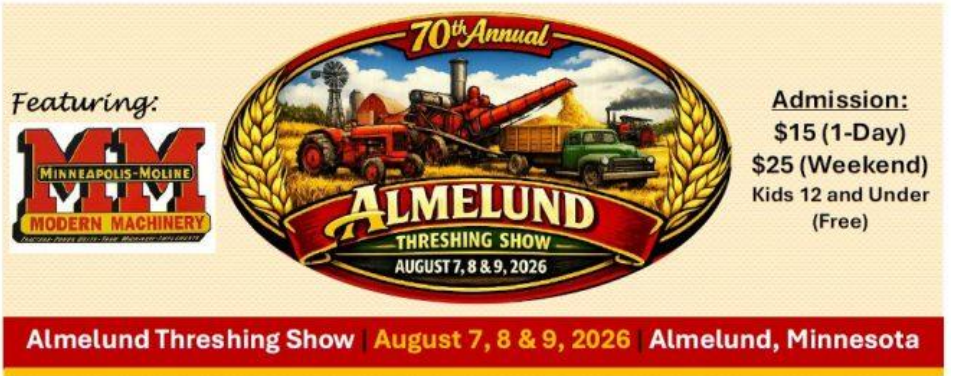
THE LODGE OF TAYLORS FALLS

Join the residents at The Lodge in Taylors Falls!

Every Thurs at 2:30pm for their free Community Coffee Hour!

Book Study
August 12th & 26th at 10am

Worship at The Lodge
August 19th at 1:30pm



CHISAGO LAKES
COMMUNITY MEAL

Monday Evenings
4pm - 6pm
Zion Lutheran Church in Chisago City.
All are welcome!

Sunday, August 16th
2:00pm - 3:00pm
Amador Heritage Museum
invited you to

Music in Almelund

The museum will feature local music by the Interstate Band. Bring a lawn chair or blanket!

Spelmansstämma

Sat, August 15th | 10am-4pm

Gammelgarden's, Scandia MN

Come to Gammelgården Museum for a free family-friendly event featuring Swedish/Nordic and Mexican folk music, dance, and visual arts. There also will be arts and crafts for children and adults; historic building tours; an arts, crafts, and vendors fair; and artist demonstrations. Both Swedish and Mexican food and beverages will be available for purchase.

Chisago City Ki-Chi-Saga Days

August 20th-23rd

Join our community to celebrate Ki-Chi-Saga Days! Enjoy one of the biggest craft/food/display shows and many activities including a grand parade on Sunday. Don't miss this wonderful community celebration in Chisago City!

American Cancer Society RELAY FOR LIFE

Friday, August 21 at 5:00 PM

Cancer research is making great strides extending lives and improving the quality of those lives. Come support this uplifting event.

Chisago Lake Lutheran
1 Summit Ave
Center City, MN

Chisago County Food Shelf is asking for our help. They are collecting backpacks and school supplies for school children in the Chisago School District for the 2026-2027 school year. If you are interested in bringing backpacks and/or school supplies, we will collect through August 10th! Items needed are listed below.

- 24 pkg. crayons
- Red, Blue and Black Pens
- 10 pkg. wide tip washable markers
- Notebooks (wide & college)
- Scissors
- Bottles of white glue
- Rulers
- Glue sticks
- Yellow Highlighters
- Pencils
- Erasers
- Boxes of Kleenex
- Boxes of Kleenex
- Colored Pencils
- File Folders
- Sanitizing wipes
- Back Packs (New)

Church Council Minutes of First Evangelical Lutheran Church
Sunday, June 14,2026, 12:15 PM
Next meeting: Thursday, July 16, 2026, 5:30 PM

Council Members in Attendance: Rose Anderson, Kathy Carlsted, Angie Dahlstrom, Becky Hulden, Julie Valez, Pastor Justin Fenger

Absent: Don Hansen, Riley Linngren, Craig Loen.

GATHERING

A. Opening Devotions – Becky Hulden (final meeting)
July- Angela Dahlstrom

B. Sharing Stories of God's Love in our Lives –

BUSINESS

C. Pastor Justin's Report –

1. Discussion of the make-up of the FELC Church Council going forward. Rose, Kathy, and Becky have all completed 2–3-year terms and will be leaving the council at the annual meeting next week. Craig – treasurer, Don – secretary, Julie, Angela, and Riley will remain. According to our constitution, we could have up to six more people join the council. Becky will contact and work with Miriam Flysjo (the nominating committee) to find candidates for the council for the annual meeting.
2. Pastor Justin reported on the Youth Service Trip to Louisville, KY that happened this past week.

D. Personnel Hiring Report – Pastor Justin reported

1. Financial Secretary – Jennica Beck has been hired for 3 hours per week for FELC. She will relieve Jerry Rhoads of his Monday morning Financial Secretary role. The other four volunteers will continue to assist Jennica with the money counting on Monday mornings. They are Eleanor, Rose, Kathy C. and Marlys.
2. Choir Director – we have a candidate, Tyler Olson and are working out some details with him.
3. Accompanist
4. Organist for Immanuel – interviewing on 6/15 for this position.

E. Treasurer's Report – Craig provided us with a written report.

1. Income for May was $11,007.96, which is $855 above our budget need. Income for the 11th month out of 12 is 94% of our budget.
2. Our Program Expenses for the 11th month are at 125% of our budget, because the pastor's salary and Joint Ministry payments to Immanuel were not in the budget.
3. Our checking accounts and savings total $244,494.19 at the end of May.
4. Luther Point invoice for 2/2027 -will be paid from the Nelson Outreach Fund
5. Kathy motioned, Rose seconded and the motion carried to accept the treasurer's report.

F. Building and Grounds Committee Projects – Don

1. Technology installation by Matt Mitchell
2. Bathroom remodeling almost done – painting started, controversy
3. Security system and cameras – Don needs to establish an account for FELC, so that we are not monitoring his yard.
4. Yard and garden report – Joe and Wendy are mowing. Angie has planted and is caring for the two flower beds (front, south corner and brick planter). Carol and Becky are managing the 2 pots in the back and 2 pots in the front.

PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL

G. Music and worship

1. Pastor Justin report – see the personnel hiring report
2. Music and Worship Coordination – Becky is attending weekly meetings with Immanuel staff. Becky and Mark W. supply Angie with bulletin info. Toni will be providing hymn input before the Tuesday morning meetings.
3. Sunday School – on recess until
4. Sunday Morning - Council Person on Duty (CPOD)
5. Security and emergency Plan – Angie D. – has asked for people to help with this ongoing need. Two have volunteered for now.

SERVE OUR NEIGHBORS

H. Library Report – Julie

1. Plaque mounted on Free Library – pictures and article for newspaper. Set up a commissioning time.

I. Vision Group - new leadership is needed beginning in the fall.

J. Shared Ministry – Better Together with Immanuel

1. Joint Council for Shared Ministry has met twice in March. The Shared Ministry Agreement was accepted at both churches on Sunday, May 17th.

K. Caring Ministry

a. Dan Peterson - Communion was delivered to Dan at the Wyoming hospital and Dan was encouraged to use the social service support system available to him. He can expect friendly visits and communion visits from the church.

b. Verna Grover continues to recover from her fall and fractured ribs and is being cared for at Parmly. She received a communion visit in May.

c. Cynthia Holmberg received a communion visit in May and is stable and cared for by her daughter, Kim Delaney.

L. Report on Events

a. Game Night – intimate gathering with lots of fun interactions.

b. Synod Assembly – May 15-16, Roger and Joan Boleman attended as voting members and reported back to us on Sunday morning, May 17th.

June Minutes Continued on page 14

c. Wisdom Seekers, Sunday School, Craft Saturday, Quilting, and Joint Choir are all on break for the summer.

M. Upcoming Events: - leadership?

a. June 23rd – Final Joint Choir Rehearsal at 5 PM at Immanuel, followed by Pizza Party. Members are asked to bring salad or dessert to share.

b. June 28th – Momoh's final Sunday and Goo-bye Celebration. 10 AM Worship at Immanuel followed by a potluck lunch. Miriam F. is collecting monetary gifts from choir members and getting a card signed.

c. Together with Friends – will be held at FELC on Wednesday and Thursday, June 17 – 18. Wendy is our leader and has volunteers helping with snacks.

N. Motion to Adjourn – Kathy Motioned, Julie 2nd and we adjoined.

Church Council Minutes of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

Thursday, July 16, 2026 at 5:30pm
Next meeting: Thursday, August 20, 2026 at 6pm

Council Members Present: Angie Dahlstrom, Don Hansen, Craig Loen, Julie Valez, Pastor Justin Fenger, Rita Johnson, Krissy Linnerooth, Joe Sczcepanski.
Council Members Absent: Riley Linngren

GATHERING

A. Opening Devotions – by Angie
August devotions-Joe

B. Sharing Stories of God's Love in our Lives –

C. Election of officers

1. Chair- Angie volunteered to be Chair
2. Vice Chair-Joe volunteered to be Vice chair
3. Secretary- Don will continue the Secretary role
4. Treasurer-Craig will continue the Treasurer role
5. Don made a motion to accept list of volunteers, Joe seconded it. Motion carried

D. Pastor Justin's Report
Personnel

1. Jeneka Beck- is the new financial recorder for First Lutheran
2. Tyler Olsen – was hired as joint choir director.
3. Accompanists for Joint Choir-Dadu Reeves- was hired as the accompanists for the joint choir
4. Annual Meeting Date Scheduling
   Agenda item for August meeting is the scheduling of the annual meeting.
5. Blessing of Quilts July 19

E. Treasurer's Report – Craig

- Year end summary shows:
- Annual income was 4900 above budget
- Annual Expenses were $16,628 above budget
- Savings account was used to cover additional expenses
- Savings account balance- 249,875.23
- Checking account balance $3421.30
- Angie made a motion to approve treasures report. Julie Seconded Motion carried

Motion by Craig to add Angie Dahlstrom as an authorized signer on Church's primary checking account and to remove Becky Hulden as an authorized signer
Don seconded the motion. Motion carried

PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL

F. Music and worship

1. Pastor Justin report-see Pastors report

SERVE OUR NEIGHBORS

G. Library Report – Julie-No Report

H. Property Report-Don-No Report

I. Vision Group -> Mission and Outreach Committee

1. Miriam Flysjo, Roger Boleman, Rita Johnson, Wendy Sczcepanski, Joan Boleman, schedule a meeting for involvement in 2026-27 community events

Motion by Krissy to officially form the Mission and Outreach Committee with the above prospective nominees
Angie seconded. Motion carried

J. Shared Ministry – Better Together with Immanuel

Set the date for the next quarterly meeting at August meeting

K. Report on Events

Wannigan days events-Summary by Krissy, Angie and Don

L. New Business-

Refreshment of our website included a new "business card" for FELC. The council, by consensus, approved the card

M. Motion to Adjourn- Julie Valez and Rita seconded the motion to adjourn

Jerry Rhoads has been our faithful Financial Secretary for 17 years. We are incredibly grateful for his dedication, time, knowledge and attentiveness to this role. Thank you, Jerry!!

We are excited for you to meet some new faces! First Evangelical Lutheran and Immanuel Lutheran have jointly hired a new Financial Secretary, Jenica Beck. She will be in on Monday mornings to count with our volunteers, stop in and say hi!

Joint Choir will have new leadership with our new director, Tyler Olsen. Immanuel hired Dadu Reeves as their new organist and he will accompany the joint choir.

So many exciting changes to celebrate!

NEW Church COUNCIL

We extend a warm welcome to the members of our newly elected Church Council. We thank them for their commitment to serving our congregation and pray that God will guide and strengthen them as they begin their term.

Angela Dahlstrom – Council President

Joe Szczepanski – Council Vice President

Don Hansen – Council Secretary

Craig Loen – Council Treasurer

Rita Johnson, Khrissy Linnerooth, Riley Linngren & Julie Valez

Two New Committee's

We are so grateful to our two new committee's!

♥ Our Mission and Outreach Committee lead by Khrissy Linnerooth. With other members, this group will help facilitate church and community events, establish a greater presence within our committee and help live out our mission.

♥ Our Building & Grounds Committee has already met and cleaned the kitchen! Members dedicated to this group are council member Julie Valez, Joy Buchholtz, Julie Magnuson, and Wendy Szczepanski.

Just a Few Fun things From July...

Game Night

NATIONAL
ICE CREAM
DAY

Carli & Levi surprised church members with ice cream!

Thirteen quilts were donated to Safe Haven Foster Shoppe

Blessings of the Quilts

First Evangelical
LUTHERAN CHURCH of TAYLORS FALLS

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

Pastor Justin Fenger
c: 651-308-7717
pastor@immanuelalmelund.com

Angie Linngren
Ministry Coordinator
felctf@gmail.com

Jenica Beck
Financial Secretary

2026-2027 Council/Officers:

Angela Dahlstrom
Council President

Joe Szczepanski
Council Vice-Present

Don Hansen
Council Secretary

Craig Loen
Council Treasurer

Rita Johnson

Khrissy Linnerooth

Riley Linngren

Julie Valez

Next council meeting will be held on Thursday, August 20th at 6:00pm

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.

Mission Statement

Proclaim the Gospel and Serve our Neighbors.

(Mission Statement approved 2023)

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

Please send submissions to: felctf@gmail.com
Submissions must be made by August 17th

First Evangelical
LUTHERAN CHURCH

561 Chestnut Street, Taylors Falls, MN 55084-1110

NOT FOR PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US
POSTAGE PAID
TAYLORS FALLS, MN
PERMIT NO. 5