First Things

JULY 2025

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

During my recent Annual Training with the Army National Guard, I found something unexpected: a rhythm. That might sound simple, but in military life—especially during training—consistency is gold. I had a routine: shower at 0500, morning run as the sun crested over the armory, a moment of quiet with coffee in hand, even a peaceful restroom break (which some of you know is a rare and sacred thing in the military!). The armory became familiar, almost like a personal sanctuary amid the chaos of training. And then—midway through the rotation—another unit arrived.

More people. More noise. More movement in the space I had grown accustomed to. My quiet rhythm was gone, and honestly, I didn't handle it with the grace I would have hoped for. I felt annoyed, anxious, even territorial. I saw them as a disruption to *my* peace.

Isn't that something?

We humans are funny that way. We often treat shared spaces like they are ours alone. It doesn't have to be a military armory. It could be a favorite table at the coffee shop, the checkout line at the grocery store, the walking path at the state park—When someone new enters our space, we feel the tension.

Let's be honest: if you've ever walked into church and seen someone sitting in your pew, you've probably felt that moment of panic. "Where am I supposed to sit now?" It feels awkward to shuffle to another spot, and part of that is because your pew is *your pew*. Not because your name is on it, but because it's where you've shown up week after week. It's where you belong, and that other person is disrupting my peace.

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And that's actually something beautiful. Because having a "pew" means you *belong* to a community of faith. It means you're showing up. It means you're part of the Body of Christ and find peace.

But if we're not careful, that tension speaks louder than our welcome. It tells them: *you don't belong here.*

But what if we reframed those disruptions not as intrusions but as *invitations*?

Isaiah 56:8 reminds us that "the Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares, 'I will gather still others to them besides those already gathered.'" And in Matthew 24:14, Jesus speaks of the good news going to *all nations*, not just to the people who were already there first. The Gospel is expansive. God's mission is invitational. And we, as the Body of Christ, are called not just to gather but to *gather in the other.*

This summer, our communities will swell with visitors—on the roads, at the lakes, at the parks, and even in the sanctuary. And while the influx can be noisy and inconvenient at times, we're given an opportunity to show the world something different. Instead of guarding our routines, we can extend grace. Instead of sighing when a new person sits in our seat, we can greet them with a smile. Instead of treating public space like personal property, we can treat it like a gift meant to be shared.

So here is my hope for us this summer

- That we let go of the urge to "claim space" and instead choose to create space for others.

- That we model in our community—from the church pew to the ballfield—what it means to be a people who welcome, include, and serve.

Because if we can be that kind of people, even in the smallest, quietest disruptions of summer, then we live out the Gospel not just in word, but in practice.

And yes you can still have your pew but as mother would say, "wouldn't hurt to share every once in awhile"

Blessings,
Pastor Justin

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

Worship every Sunday at 11:00am. Recorded services from Sunday morning worship are available Sunday afternoons on our website www.tflutheran.org and can also be found on our YouTube Channel: First Evangelical Lutheran Church of TF - 2nd.

COUNCIL MEETING

Council meeting date and time to be announced at a later date.

Please send submissions to:
felctf@gmail.com
Articles due the 12th of each month.

JULY BIRTHDAYS

07/06 Jesse Loen
07/07 Jason Linngren
07/10 Deb Rhoads
07/12 Ryan Rogers
07/16 Cynthia Homberg
07/26 Janet Shepardson
07/28 Dustin Valez
07/29 Joe Mattson
07/30 Angie Linngren

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

06/01 Giving:	$1,045.00
06/08 Giving:	$1,645.00
06/15 Giving:	$2,782.00
06/22 Giving:	$2,030.00

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

What's Happening in Our Church!

Fellowship at 10am
followed by Worship at 11am

SundaySCHOOL

Monthly Sunday school class for children ages 3-6. Meets the second Sunday of the month right after the children's message.

Church Choir

No experience needed! Watch for more details! We'd love for you to join us!!!

Quilting

Quilting will be taking a break over the summer!

Prayer Shawl Ministry

If you'd like to be part of this new ministry or have any questions, please talk with Becky Hulden.

THANK YOU so much

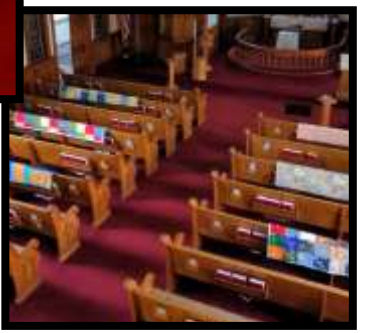
To our FELC Friends:

While there is still healing and recovering happening, we wanted to express our most sincere gratitude. Thank you for all the prayers, donations, visits and support you've shown Angie. We are so blessed to have her here with us and the love you've shown her has been wonderful. Thank you to each one of you that has shown our Mom, daughter, sister and my wife unconditional support.

From Jason and the Linngren, Peterson & Tverberg families

Sunday, June 1st

We celebrated Jonah Landgreen, Carli Linngren and JonTae Hackmann graduating from high school! Best of luck in your future! The quilting ladies did a beautiful job on the quilts displayed!



Thank you for nice celebration for our graduations! We appreciate all the support and the nice quilts made for us.

Jonah & Carli

Do you have something special you'd like to share with the congregation? Email felctf@gmail.com or talk to Angie!

"For I know the PLANS I have for you" declares the LORD "plans to PROSPER you and not to harm you, plans to give you HOPE and a FUTURE."
Jeremiah 29:11

TOGETHER WITH FRIENDS DAY CAMP

Learning
Bible Verses &
Enjoying Snacks

Singing

Playing Paper
Rock Scissors

Crafts

Skits

Dodgeball

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY

St. Croix Falls Public
Library Plaza
Saturdays, May-October
10am to 1pm
We are looking forward to another great season of abundant fresh produce, sustainably raised meats and cheese, preserves, honey, flowers, body care, and more!

Parking Lot of St. Bridget's in Lindstrom, MN
Wednesday 3 pm to 6 pm
Saturday 8 am to 12 pm

Local vendors offer seasonal vegetables, flowers, home canned goods, soap, eggs, baked goods & more.

Franconia Art & Farmers Market
Sunday, July 6th | 10am-2pm
The first Sunday of each month, May-October from 10am-2pm, local farmers and artists come together to provide a variety of fresh produce and handmade crafts.

Monday Evenings
4pm - 6pm
Zion Lutheran Church
in Chisago City

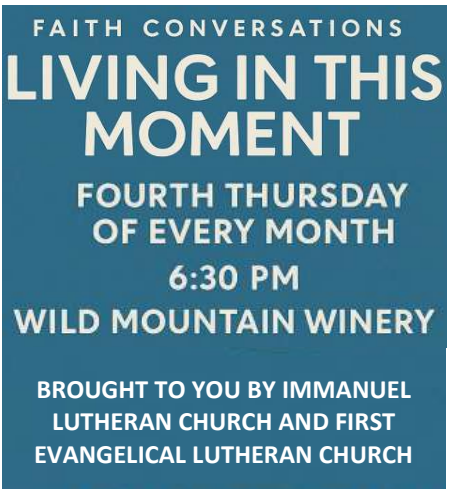
If you are interested in applying to be a vendor, please contact Khrissy Linnerooth via call or text at 763-447-7540.

St Croix Fall,s, WI -
Serverson Memorial
Overlook Park
June - August
Friday evenings at 6:30pm
FREE Friday Summer Concerts at the overlook. Bring a lawn chair. FREE ADMISSION!

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

Karl Oscar Days
KOD '25
Lindström. MN
July 9-13

Many activities throughout Lindstrom!



Coffee TIme

Join the residents at The Lodge in Taylors Falls every Thursday at 2:30pm for their free Community Coffee Hour!

July 18-20, 2025 | Many events throughout Taylors Falls & St Croix Falls! Check out the website: www.wannigandays.com for more information!

POLK COUNTY FAIR
ST.CROIX FALLS, WIS
Polk County Fair Society, Inc.

Thurs. July 24th - Sun. July 27th

First Evangelical
LUTHERAN CHURCH of TAYLORS FALLS

Shared Ministry
Better Together

IMMANUEL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Together is Better!

Joint Worship with
Sunrise River Trio

First Evangelical Lutheran & Immanuel Lutheran

July 13th at 11:00am at Wild Mountain Winery

Potluck to follow worship and all are welcome. This service will be rain or shine, they have an indoor seating place but if not raining we will be outside.

16906 Wild Mountain Rd, Taylors Falls, MN

Church Council meeting minutes of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

Sunday, June 8, 2025, 12:15 PM
Next meeting: July 13, 2025, 12:15 PM

Council Members present: , Kathy Carlsted, Don Hansen, Becky Hulden, Craig Loen, Julie Valez

A. Opening Devotions – Julie
July - Don

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

C. Pastor Justin's Report – No Report-at Guard Duty

D. Treasurer's Report – Craig-Budget Highlights

We are on budget for giving in May and at 86 percent of budget expenses at the end of May with June being the end of the fiscal year. Checking balance is $7,112.00

Samaritan Fund balance is $ 1,152.00, and there is $183,129.56 in the special savings account; $2,130 per month is paid to Immanuel Lutheran Church for shared pastoral ministry; Items to be added to next years budget includes:

- Library funding under account number 6320,-$500
- Choir director under account 5120-$1000, 10 hours per week.
- Cost of living Allowance for employees-2025/2026 set at 5%

Kathy moved to approve treasures reports, Julie seconded
Motion carried

E. Building and Grounds Committee Projects – Don

1. Rekeying after 5/18 – brainstorm list of key holders-Don will check with locksmith for similar outside keys, and office door. This is scheduled for Friday the 13th of June
2. Need to recruit additional people to attend to interior projects?
   Clean inside windows-cleaning day for inside church-Kathy with coordinate with Wendy Szczepanski
3. Schedule for bathroom remodeling-Becky will check Dennis and Joy Bucholz to coordinate and get bids with contractor to do this work.

F. Library Report – Julie

G. Sunday School –no report

H. Vision Group

1. Update on interior and exterior signage-
2. Need leadership for this group in Dwight's absence

I. Shared Ministry – Better Together with Immanuel

1. A combined council made up of a few members from each congregation will meet quarterly to monitor the ongoing relationship. Don, Craig, Becky and Kathy. Begin in July
2. Each congregation will offer 1-2 people to serve on a Mutual Ministry Committee with and for Pastor Justin.

J. Annual Meeting – June 22nd at noon

1. Reports to Angie by__Thursday June 12_____
2. Nominating committee-Wendy, Don, Rita and Rose
3. Council terms-Craig will renew term
4. Budget-Craig and Becky to meet to prepare budget 6/10 at 10:00am

K. Support for Angie's Recovery

1. Bulletins & newsletters – Angie is doing
2. Videos – Pay Carli – continues to do this
3. Angie's PTO – Yes, add PTO up to 34 hours PPP
4. Tech proposal – total for Angie's needs $706 for at home work

L. Sunday Morning - Council Person on Duty (CPOD)

1. Duties-Open church on Sundays-Becky will make weekly schedule for the council members

M. Mission Statement

1. Mission moments – Rose – Cards and letters Mission
2. Julie – Library Mission – completed in January
3. More ideas

N. Report on events:

O. Upcoming Events:

1. Together with Friends
2. Annual Meeting – June 22, 2025, 12 noon in the sanctuary

P. Motion to Adjourn - Kathy and Julie

Make a dessert with fresh berries

Write your name with a sparkler

Try a new ice cream flavor

Have an outdoor game night

Have a campfire with friends

Bake star shaped cookies

Wear red, white, and blue

July BUCKET LIST

by brooklyn swenson

Display an American flag outside

Make homemade popsicles

Decorate with red, white, and blue

Make homemade lemonade

Have a summer movie night

Watch a firework show

Go to a parade

Take an evening walk

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

First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Taylors Falls

2025-2026 Council/Officers:

Becky Hulden—President
Kathy Carlsted—Vice President
Craig Loen—Treasurer
Don Hansen—Secretary
Julie Valez
Rose Anderson
Angela Dahlstrom
Riley Linngren

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 determined at a later date.

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
Articles due the 12th of each month.

First Evangelical
LUTHERAN CHURCH

561 Chestnut Street, Taylors Falls, MN 55084-1110

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