First Things

MARCH 2025

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

I still remember traveling up to Taylors Falls as a child with my dad, ready for a weekend of camping along the St. Croix River. The sights of the river bluffs, those rugged rock formations, and the awe-inspiring view of the water flowing below made me marvel at the beauty of God's creation. Even now, I can close my eyes and picture the sun breaking over those rocks in the early morning, a reminder of how blessed we are to live in a world brimming with wonder.

Fast-forward to high school, and there I was again—this time with friends, leaping off those very cliffs that once filled me with such awe (and, yes, a little fear). Looking back, I might admit we were a tad reckless. But what stands out to me more is how laughter and joy were woven into each memory. (Of course, I can't recommend jumping off cliffs—but it's a testament to how these places we love become part of our story, shaping us into who we are.)

In college, I found myself heading downtown to sip coffee and chat with friends at what I still believe is "Coffee Talk," enjoying the bustle of the streets. Later, when life got busier, I'd bring my three children for a treat at Schoony's, a Chicago-style hot dog, and a few rounds on the pinball machines. Let me tell you—if there's a place on earth to watch a kid's eyes light up faster, I haven't found it yet! Schoony's has become one of my all-time favorite

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hangouts, showing once again that Taylors Falls has a way of making ordinary moments feel extraordinary.

I've marveled at Taylors Falls over the years, and now I'm beyond excited to be part of the community in a more formal capacity through our **90-Day Plan** in shared ministry with **Immanuel Lutheran Church**. It's an honor and a blessing to walk alongside this congregation and the greater community. I carry a deep love for the people of Taylors Falls—those who call it home and those just passing through.

As we journey forward together, I look forward to connecting with you—whether over a cup of coffee, a hot dog, or a moment of worship. May the same sense of awe and wonder that captured my imagination by the riverbanks continue to guide us as we serve, learn, and grow together in faith.

Blessings

Pastor Justin

As some of you experienced the last Sunday of February, our Fellowship time, which starts now at 10am, was in a radically different location. Amidst all the change we've been through lately, hopefully this didn't tip you off the edge. It's an experiment, one that we will continue through the month of March. We know the one room is small, but there is overflow in both the library and youth room. This fellowship time is a vital part of who we are. Enjoy the time and goodies, and at the end of the month share your pros and cons. Then we'll evaluate for the future.

New Members **Welcome!**

If you are interested in becoming a member, please talk with Pr. Dwight 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

LIBRARY HOURS

Sunday 8:00am-10:30am

COUNCIL MEETING

Council will meet March 23, 2025 at 12 noon.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

03/01 Wendy Szczepanski
03/06 Benjamin Landgreen
03/07 Craig Loen
03/16 Verna Grover
03/17 Abby Loen
03/21 Genevieve Belisle
03/23 Brenna French
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

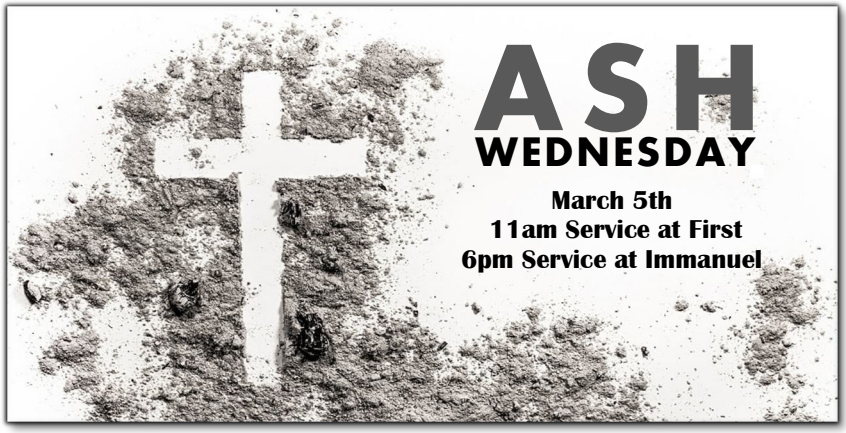
02/02 Giving:	$1,284.01
02/09 Giving:	$2,887.00
02/16 Giving:	$2,236.00
02/23 Giving:	$3,551.00

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

Fat Tuesday
Pancake Supper
March 4th
4pm - 6pm
Chisago Lake Lutheran
in Center City

You are invited to a Pancake Supper
Served with sausage & more.
Live music and Mardi Gras crafts for kids.
Fun for the whole family!
This event is hosted by MiChiLu which is
the Mid Chisago Lakes Lutheran Congregations.
The MiChiLu group is made up of these 5 local
ELCA Lutheran Congregations,
Chisago Lake, Center City, First Evangelical, Taylors Falls
Immanuel, Almelund, Trinity, Lindstrom, and
Zion, Chisago City,

Free Will Offering
Proceeds to Lutheran Social Services



The Season of Lent

Join us on Wednesday's during Lent for worship at 11am followed by a nice meal consisting of soup & bread & dessert that will be served at about 12 noon.

Council Meeting Minutes

Church Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

February 12, 2025, 3:30pm

Next meeting March 23 at 12 noon

"Proclaim the Gospel and Serve our neighbors."

Members Present: Rose Anderson, Kathy Carlsted, Don Hanson, Becky Hulden (via Zoom), Craig Loen, Julie Valez, Pastor Dwight Rudquist, Pastor Justin Fenger **Members Absent:** none

A. Opening Devotions – Becky
March – Don

B. Welcome to Pastor Justin Fenger-Becky

C. Sharing Stories of God's Love in our Lives –Becky shared regarding Angie's healing and recovery

D. **Pastor's Report- Pastor Dwight-see attached report**

Highlights- Edna Curry passed away, Pastor Dwight's transitioning to retirement over the next 3 months. Dwight will preach on his last Sunday. Synod involvement? Justin will be involved in pastoral visits over the next 90 days and Pastor Dwight and Justin will develop a visitation team. Choirs to be a gradual mix. Looking for volunteers to attend the Synod toolkit sessions. Wendy and Becky are willing to attend. Synod Assembly is scheduled for May 17th. Motion by Don to nominate Wendy and Becky for Synod assembly. Seconded by Rose, Motion carried.

E. Sunday School – Sunday was held on February 9th. Miriam began telling the Exodus from Egypt story and explored the first 5 plagues.

F. Treasurer's Report – Craig-detailed report is available in the church office for inspection

Highlights-Offering is 2800 below budget. Expenses for staff on target Expenses for program over spent however, the new roof accounted for that over expenditure, Insurance was underbudgeted by $400.00. Motion by Rose, seconded by Kathy to approve Treasurer report.

G. **Grounds Committee Projects**

1. Elevator - rusty ceiling / roof leaking on Education Wing- repaired
2. Bathrooms - next project deferred to 2025
3. Regrading, south side –spring, 2025
   Sign with new letters – Don is working to solve wind issues with letters.

H. **Vision Group**

1. Season of Renewal – FELC group met January 4 with coach Mary Francis – Recap-continue with "more welcoming theme" and schedule training for members on visitor welcoming
2. Workshop on how to be a more inviting/welcoming church- Saturday, March 22 at Trinity Lutheran in Stillwater- 9-2. Motion by Craig to approve 8 attendees. Rose seconded. Motion carried

I. 90-day Pilot with Immanuel

1. Outline of call process-Synod's response-other churches has been flexible, options ranged from an additional pilot, or continue not as a pilot, or continue with a longer time frame in mind.
2. Timeline for end of evaluation period -April 27th- We need the two weeks to present findings to the congregations.
3. Interim Evaluation meetings will be held March 3, 24, April 14 at 5:30pm meeting with Immanuel Lutheran council representatives
4. Lenten services-mid day FELC- 1100 am service, lunch at noon. Would need organist for FELC,

J. **Coverage for Angie's Absence**

1. Bulletins-Pastor Dwight
2. Newsletters-
3. Videos – Pay Carli
4. Angie's PTO – Continue February PTO motion by Don and seconded by Julie Motion carried

K. Mission Statement

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

L. Report on events:

1. Teachers Appreciation at TF School $25 and hams.

M. Upcoming Events:

1. Fat Tuesday Pancake supper March 4 -FELC will provide Syrup, Mix, Sausages

N. Motion to Adjourn Rose: Kathy seconded. Motion carried

Prayer Shawl Ministry Invite

Our Prayer Shawl Group at Immanuel in Almelund invites you to join us in this ministry that is now beginning its 20th year. We usually have 4-10 ladies attending who come whenever they can. It would be fun to get to know you, share ideas and further this ministry together!

Our shelves are overflowing with donations of yarn!! Bundles have been put together for future prayer shawls and are available for anyone to pick up and be creative. You are invited to come and check out the array of yarn and colors, pick some out and join us on the 1st & 3rd Wednesdays at 1:30 PM in the Fireside Room. We knit, crochet, have a short devotion, tea, a treat and enjoy fellowship while relaxing to music. If you haven't had the opportunity to learn how to knit or crochet, and would like to give it a try, we would be happy to help you get started. All supplies are available. Please call Joanne at 651-278-2686 with any questions.

We look forward to seeing you!!

Quilting

First & Third Wednesday mornings at 9:30am
No experience needed!
We welcome new quilters!!!

Crafting on Saturdays

Saturday, March 8th
9:00AM - 2:00PM
Bring your crafts, a snack to share & be ready for some great conversations !! Invite a friend!

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

First Evangelical
LUTHERAN CHURCH of TAYLORS FALLS

Pastor Dwight Rudquist
c: 651-829-4884
pastorrudquist@gmail.com

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

Angie Linngren
Ministry Coordinator,
parishc@tflutheran.org

2024-2025 Council/Officers:

Becky Hulden—President
Kathy Carlsted—Vice President
Craig Loen—Treasurer
Don Hansen—Secretary
Julie Valez
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 23, 2025 at 12 noon.

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: parishc@tflutheran.org
Articles due the 10th of each month.

First Evangelical
LUTHERAN CHURCH

561 Chestnut Street, Taylors Falls, MN 55084-1110

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