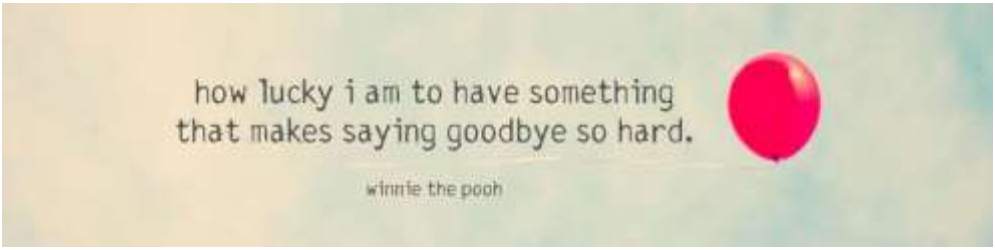
First Things

MAY 2025

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



How did Shakespeare say it, "Parting is such sweet sorrow?" Lawrence Sterne says it even more dramatically, "Each goodbye is a rehearsal for death."

I've never been very good at saying goodbye. I have usually attributed it to my pragmatic view of life, but I'm starting to wonder. Maybe I just don't want to feel the heartache, the sorrow, or the grief that saying goodbye can bring. My hope in the weeks to come is to learn with you to say goodbye in a way that honors what God has accomplished in our ministry together and to pave the way for both our futures.

My mind is drawn to two exits in the Bible. First, before Elijah is taken up by a chariot of fire, he asks what he might do for his trainee Elisha. Elisha's request is to inherit Elijah's spirit, a double helping in fact. I have certainly received multiple helpings of your generous spirit. I am deeply grateful for the love and support you have showered upon me and Lisa. You have made me a better pastor and a better person. Your mantle has been passed on. I hope the converse is also true, that I have been able to share glimpses of the great love God has for you.

The second scene is where Jesus ascends in Acts, a text I've referred to many times. Just before leaving he tells the disciples two important things: you have the power to carry on, it's the gift of the Holy Spirit; and two, move on, get back to work, the world needs you. It's nice to

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know that God is filling us with what we need to say goodbye and go through these transitions. It's also good to be reminded that God is out ahead of us, beckoning us to continue the journey of life and faith we are on.

I am very thankful that we have been able work through the process of shared ministry with Immanuel. You are in good hands with Pastor Justin! And the continuation of this relationship with the folks from Immanuel I believe will blossom and flourish as time goes on. There is great hope for First's future. As challenging as it is at times to be the church today, it is also an exciting time. God's Spirit is alive and active. Be open to the Spirit's work in you and through you. Continue to find ways to fulfill our mission to: Proclaim the Gospel and Serve Our Neighbors!

God's Blessings and Peace as you live into your future!

Pastor Dwight Rudquist

What a morning Easter was. The joint choir lifted up the Alleluias and it was like you could *feel* resurrection in the room. The harmony, the brass, the joy—it didn't just fill the sanctuary, it filled the spirit. I don't know about you, but I walked out of worship that day standing a little taller, breathing a little deeper, and holding tighter to the promise that life and light still break forth from the tomb.

There is an energy here—can you feel it too?

This partnership with Pastor Dwight continues to be something I'm deeply thankful for. There's a sense that God is stirring up something good among us. Conversations after worship, ideas popping up at fellowship, people wondering, *What if we tried this? What if we brought that back? What if we started something new?*

From potlucks to prayer groups, from book discussions to brainstorming outreach ideas for the Taylors Falls community—you are dreaming together. And I want you to know how much that energizes me. You are not a congregation just holding on. You are leaning forward into what's next.

So thank you. Thank you for your warm welcome, your faithful worship, your creative spirit, and your heart for something more. I'm excited for the season ahead—because I believe God is at work here in a way that matters, and I can't wait to see how resurrection continues to unfold in our life together.

In hope and joy,

Pastor Justin

What's Happening in Our Church!

Fellowship at 10am
followed by Worship at 9am

Bible Study: Sunday mornings. Grab a cup of coffee & join us for Bible Study.

Church Choir

No experience needed! Check out the schedule in fellowship room. We'd love for you to join us!!!

Quilting

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

SundaySCHOOL

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

Next SS Date: May 11th

Prayer Shawl Ministry

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

CRAFTING all day

CRAFTING ON SATURDAYS

SAT, MAY 10TH | 9:00AM - 2:00PM

BRING YOUR CRAFTS, A SNACK TO SHARE & BE READY FOR SOME GREAT CONVERSATIONS!! INVITE A FRIEND!

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 TF - 2nd.

COUNCIL MEETING

Council will meet May 11, 2025 at 12:00pm.

MAY BIRTHDAYS

05/04 Don Hansen
05/06 Eleanore Collins
05/06 Gail Johnson
05/06 Julie Magnuson
05/07 Chieko Rogers
05/10 Spencer Langer
05/18 Lisa Rudquist
05/22 Pete Lindgren
05/25 Rita Johnson
05/26 Tom Enebak
05/27 Jacob Loen
05/31 Tim Nelson

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

03/30 Giving:	$1,086.00
04/06 Giving:	$3,770.01
04/13 Giving:	$1,514.00
04/20 Giving:	$3,221.00
04/27 Giving:	$7,671.01

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

Thank you for everyone who helped out during sap season!

Church members joined Pr. Dwight to fill bags of food for families in need.

Back Row: Khrissy Linnerooth, Pr. Dwight Rudquist, Lisa Rudquist, Grason Linnerooth, Joe Szczepanski

Front Row: Megan Lappe, Wendy Szczepanski, Rose Anderson, Eleanore Collins

Thank you to those who helped with the pancake breakfast!

PALM SUNDAY

A special thank you for the following parishioners for their generous donation of Easter Lilies & Mums:

Rose Anderson in Memory of Agnes, William, & Joe Mallery

Roger & Joan Boleman in Memory of Lee Boleman

Eleanore Collin in Memory of Larry Collins

Miriam Flysjo in Memory of Parents Oke & Grace Flysjo

Verna Grover in Memory of Don Grover & Daniel Gray

Inez Heggerston in Memory of Ed Heggerstron

Becky Hulden in Memory of Leo Nelson
& In Honor of Carol Nelson

Arne & Miriam Lagus in Honor & Memory of Loved Ones

H. Peter Lindgren in Memory of Donna Lindgren

Pr. Dwight & Lisa Rudquist in Memory of
Elmer & Evelyn Rudquist and Don & Renee Ostalder

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Farewell Potluck

Sunday, May 18th

Please join us after worship to say goodbye to Pr. Dwight.

Pulled pork, buns, drinks & condiments will be provided! Bring a dish to share!

We will celebrate Lisa's 65th birthday, too!!

CHISAGO LAKES COMMUNITY MEAL

Chisago Lakes Community Meal

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.

FAITH CONVERSATIONS

LIVING IN THIS MOMENT

THE AFTERLIFE
The mysteries surrounding the afterlife and why it matters

WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH YOUR LIFE?
Finding purpose and discerning Goo's will

FAITH IN THE DAWN OF A.I.
Technology and the challenges of the age to come

GENETIC ENGINEERING AND WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMAN
Modern science and human flourishing

END OF TIMES?
Theology, hope, and the meaning of the Apocalypse

EVOLUTION, THEOLOGY, SCIENCE, CANCER AND GOD'S TOOLS FOR CREATION
Understanding God's working in vorld

CREATION AND EARTH CARE
Faith and its expression toward the natural world

FOURTH THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH

6:30 PM

WILD MOUNTAIN WINERY

BROUGHT TO YOU BY IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN ALMELUND AND FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN TAYLORS FALLS

Summer 2025

As a ministry within the ELCA, Luther Point Bible Camp is called to live into the wonder of God's creation. We strive to create a safe and nurturing environment for all people to come and have an experience with the Holy Trinity: God the Creator, Jesus the Redeemer and the Spirit who sustains us.

We believe that Jesus meets us where we are, who we are and loves us as we are. As a camp we strive to live out Jesus' command to love one another.

One of the many ways that we provide a safe and loving space for our campers and staff is to allow all people to identify as they are.

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 2024. $55 Member Discount

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Luther Point
BIBLE CAMP

Applications are OPEN for

Summer 2025 Staff

Looking for:

- Junior Counselors
- Senior Counselors
- Camp Connect Counselors
- Team Leaders
- Support Staff
- Medic & Waterfront Team Leader

Luther Point
BIBLE CAMP

Council Meeting Minutes

Church Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church
Sunday, April 13, 2025, 12:15 PM
Next meeting: Monday May 12, 2025, 3 PM

"Proclaim the Gospel and Serve our neighbors."

Council Members: Rose Anderson, Kathy Carlsted, Don Hansen, Becky Hulden, Craig Loen, Pastor Dwight Rudquist, Pastor Justin Fenger, Julie Valez

A. **Opening Devotions –** Kathy
May - Pastor Dwight

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

C. Pastor Dwight's Report-

D. Pastor Justin's Report

E. Sunday School-Palm Sunday –Sunday school had many children, fun to see a larger group

F. Treasurer's Report – Craig
Offering was above budget in March. All bills paid and up to date. $182K in special savings, $3900 in general checking. Kathy and Rose moved and seconded to approve financial report.

G. Grounds Committee Projects- Don and Bruce will clean out shed.

H. Library Report-Julie

I. Vision Group

1. Season of Renewal –final gathering was held on 3/29 at Gustavus Adolphus LC in St. Paul. We presented our final report.
2. FELC - What's Next Group wanted to keep working and met again on April 1st to create the next 90 day plan which will focus on interior and exterior signage.

J. 90-day Pilot with Immanuel

1. The second evaluation meeting was held on 3/26 at 9 AM here at FELC.
2. The third evaluation meeting was held on 4/7 at 9 AM at Immanuel. The group crafted a Proposed One-Year Shared Ministry Agreement
3. The draft will be reviewed by this council today.
4. The draft will be reviewed by the Immanuel council tomorrow evening.
5. Motion and second by Craig and Julie will hold special meetings on April 27th at noon to vote on the proposal.Motion approved
6. Motion and second by Julie and Kathy to approve the covenant for the meeting on April 27th .

K. Coverage for Angie's Absence

1. Bulletins - Angie is doing this
2. Newsletters - Angie is doing this
3. Videos – Pay Carli- completed a W9
4. Angie's PTO and computer requirements for work from home.
   Motion and second by Craig and Rose, to add as many as 32 hours per pay period to Angie's time sheets and to extend PTO for Angie through June 15. Motion carried.
   Motion and Second by Julie and Rose to purchase new church laptop for as much as $1,000.00. Motion carried.
5. Worship
   1. Music - Emily playing, several choir members
   2. Dwight preaching
   3. Special guest - Emily, Alex, Becca, Sam & Zeke
6. Fellowship-Potluck Lunch & Lisa's 65th Birthday

L. Mission Statement

1. Mission moments - Rose - Cards and letters Mission
2. Julie - Library Mission - completed in January

M. Upcoming Events

1. Maundy Thursday Service at 6pm at Immanuel
2. Good Friday Service at 3pm at FELC
3. Easter Service 11am at FELC
4. FELC and ILC combined calendar in the works

N. Motion to Adjourn-Rose and Kathy moved and seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor Dwight's Report on page 14

Pastor Rudquist's Council Report – April 13, 2025

Participated in Worship:

- March 23, 2025
- March 26, 2026 – Lenten Service
- March 30, 2025
- April 2, 2025 – Lenten Service
- April 6, 2025
- April 9, 2025 – Lenten Service

Visits:

- In person visit with:
  - ◊ Janet Shepherdson
  - ◊ Cynthia Holmberg

Phone visits with:

Funerals:

- Funeral Prep with Lee Boleman Family
- Funeral Prep with Darlene Mueller Family

Other:

- Church Council - 3/23/2025
- Pilot Evaluation Meetings 3/26 & 4/7
- Choir Practices 3/26, 4/1, 4/9
  - ◊ Choir Sang on 3/23, 4/6
- Newsletter Article for April
- Bulletin Prep for Palm Sunday, Good Friday, & Easter
- Service at The Lodge – March 26th
- What's Next Task Group Meetings - 3/29 & 4/1
- Several Maple Sap Collections and Related Projects
- MICHILU Meeting 4/10-Hymn sing on April 27 at uncommon loon

Thoughts/Reflections:

- Feed My Starving Children – Funds -April 25th Palm Sunday Pancake breakfast money placed in Feed my Starving Children. Kathy and Craig moved and seconded, approved.
- The Final Countdown
  - ◊ Service
  - ◊ Lunch

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

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

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

Angie Linngren
Ministry Coordinator,
felctf@gmail.com

First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Taylors Falls

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 May 11, 2025 at 12:00pm.

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 10th of each month.

First Evangelical
LUTHERAN CHURCH

561 Chestnut Street, Taylors Falls, MN 55084-1110

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