First Things

MAY 2026

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

Spring is here.
Easter has come.
New life has begun.

The snow is gone, the grass is waking up, the birds are back, and yes—even the dog turds in the yard have reappeared. Spring has a way of revealing everything. It brings beauty, growth, and new life, but it also uncovers what has been hidden all winter long. In some ways, that is not a bad image for the Easter season.

Because Easter is not just about pretty flowers, bright sunshine, and nice songs. Easter is about the risen Christ meeting real people in the middle of real life. Mary stood at the tomb weeping and did not recognize Jesus at first. The disciples hid behind locked doors in fear. Thomas wrestled with doubt. The disciples on the road to Emmaus walked with Jesus and still could not see him for who he was. Easter does not skip over grief, confusion, fear, or uncertainty. Jesus enters right into the middle of it all and brings peace, hope, and life.

That is what makes Easter such good news for us. Christ is risen not only when life feels clean and beautiful, but also when life feels messy, exposed, and unfinished. Sometimes spring reveals flowers. Sometimes it reveals dog turds in the yard. Either way, it is still the season of resurrection. God is still at work bringing life out of what has been buried.

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I think that same hope has been present in this season of shared ministry with Immanuel Lutheran Church in Almelund. Over these past months, we have seen blessings emerge through shared worship, shared meals, and shared life together. Community dinners and Lenten suppers brought people around the table. The joint choir has lifted our voices together in praise. Game nights have built laughter and connection. Shared prayer and shared ministry have reminded us that the church is bigger than one building and stronger when we walk together.

As we look ahead to the congregational vote regarding a one-year shared ministry, I invite you to keep this season in prayer. This is about more than structure or schedules. It is about discerning where God is leading us. It is about recognizing the gifts already growing among us. It is about trusting that new life can come when communities are willing to share burdens, joys, and ministry together. Shared ministry does not mean losing our identity. It may very well be one of the ways God helps us live more fully into who we are called to be.

May will be a full month in the life of the church. We look forward to the Immanuel Lutheran youth going to Kentucky on their Youth Mission Trip in June and the opportunity for our young people to serve and grow in faith. We will recognize our graduating seniors and give thanks for this important milestone. We will welcome Together with Friends day campers in June. We will celebrate the blessing of quilts and prayer shawls, giving thanks for those ministries of comfort and care. We will rejoice in First Communion on Mother's Day. We will gather for the congregational vote. We will keep the Synod Assembly in prayer as voting takes place for a new bishop. And as Memorial Day approaches, we will remember with gratitude those who gave their lives in service.

Sometimes new life begins with beauty blooming everywhere. Sometimes it begins with discovering what the snow has been covering up. Either way, God is not discouraged. The risen Christ still comes among us, still speaks peace, still feeds us, still calls us forward, and still brings life where we need it most.

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 11am. 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 on May 10th.

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
05/22 Pete Lindgren
05/25 Rita Johnson
05/26 Tom Enebak
05/27 Jacob Loen
05/31 Tim Nelson, Jr

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

03/27 Giving:	$1,825.00
04/05 Giving:	$3,045.96
04/12 Giving:	$1,097.00
04/19 Giving:	$4,789.00

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

Shared Ministry

First Lutheran Evangelical Church

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

SundaySCHOOL

Monthly Sunday school class for children elementary age right after children's message during worship.

Next Date: May 17th

Quilting

9:30am - 11:00am
First and Third Wednesdays of the month. No experience needed! New quilters welcome!

CHOIR

No experience needed! If you are interested in joining, talk with one of our awesome choir members!

May Schedule
5/5 Practice at 5pm - ILC
5/10 Joint Choir Sings

WISDOM SEEKERS

THURSDAYS AT 9:00AM

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Youth Room, 1st floor

CRAFTING

CRAFTING ON SATURDAYS

SATURDAY, MAY 9TH | 9AM - 2PM
BRING YOUR CRAFTS, A SNACK TO SHARE & BE READY FOR SOME GREAT CONVERSATIONS !!

Better Together

Immanuel Lutheran Church

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

May 8th

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.

Faith Conversations
Widening Circles

Starting with I/Me, and widening outward, — relationships, church and community

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

All are welcome

Good conversation • good community

the more you know

at First Evangelical Lutheran!!

Tues, May 19th
4:30pm - 6:30pm
First Evang. Lutheran

Come enjoy a delicious supper and have some fun playing games out of the cold winter!! Bring your favorite or play what is available at the church!

Items needed!

Mulch for the Playground and Gift Cards for Flowers

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Angie is starting the process of updating our church directory!

Watch for more information soon!!

spring cleanup

There is a sign up sheet at the church for tasks that need to be completed for our Spring Clean Up!!! Put your name next to what you are able to accomplish, pick a day that works for you and tackle it! We appreciate everyone helping with the upkeep of our church!!!!!

Christ in Our Home

We have a quarterly devotional for anyone to take!! There is a basket next to the library containing *Christ in Our Home* devotionals, both pocket size and large print! Each reflective reading is accompanied by a daily scripture reference and prayer for the day.

A Year of Ministry Together — and the Road Ahead

Special Congregational Meeting
Sunday, May 17th
Following Worship

What began as a bold step of faith has become something beautiful.

One year ago, we entered into a Shared Ministry Covenant with Immanuel Lutheran Church of Almelund — a partnership rooted in a relationship that stretches back over 137 years. Together, we set out to share staff, share resources, and share the work of the Gospel in our communities. And together, we have seen what God can do when two congregations say *yes* to something bigger than themselves.

Now, we have the opportunity to say yes again.

On Sunday, May 17th, immediately following worship, FELC will hold a Special Congregational Meeting to vote on continuing our One-Year Shared Ministry Covenant with ILC. This renewed covenant expands our shared staffing model, strengthens our ministry capacity, and positions both congregations to do more — more outreach, more community care, more worship, more life together.

Before the vote, we invite you to join us for an Informational Meeting and Celebration on Thursday May 14th at 5:00pm at FELC. Come hear about what this past year has meant, what the renewed covenant includes, and where we believe God is leading us. There will be time to ask questions, share reflections, and celebrate one year of ministry together.

The proposed Shared Ministry Covenant document will be available for your review beginning Sunday, May 10th. We encourage every member to read it and come prepared to participate in this important decision.

This is more than a business decision — it is a declaration that we are better together. We hope to see you on May 14th and May 17th as we take the next faithful step forward.

Questions? Reach out to Pastor Justin or any member of the Shared Ministry Committee.

A group pack food for Feed My Starving Children on April 17th

FAMILY PATHWAYS

We collected quite a bit for the month of April, let's keep it going for May!!! Family Pathways is still collecting cleaning products and hygiene products. For the month of May, let's fill that bin (in the room across from the office)!!!

Here a list of items that Family Pathways is in need of:

Cleaning Products

- Laundry Soap
- Laundry Stain Spray
- Glass Cleaner
- Toilet Cleaner
- Floor Cleaner
- All Purpose Cleaner
- Dish Soap & Sponges
- Dusting Rags
- Disinfecting Wipes

Personal Hygiene Products

- Shampoo & Conditioner
- Men's 3-in-1 Wash
- Children's Shampoo
- Children's Body Wash
- Body Wash
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes
- Dental Floss
- Mouthwash
- Deodorant

THE PURPOSE OF HUMAN LIFE IS TO SERVE,
AND TO SHOW COMPASSION AND THE WILL TO HELP OTHERS.

ALBERT SCHWEITZER

MAY

Sun	Mon	Tue
	FELC First Evangelical Lutheran Church ILC Immanuel Lutheran Church	
3 9am Worship at ILC 10am Fellowship at FELC 11am Worship at FELC	4 8:30am Counters Meet	5 5:30pm Choir Practice-ILC
10 Mother's Day Joint Choir Sings 9am Worship at ILC 10am Fellowship at FELC 11am Worship at FELC 12:15pm Council Meeting	11 8:30am Counters Meet	12
17 9am Worship at ILC 10am Fellowship at FELC 11am Worship at FELC w/ Sunday School 12:15pm FELC Special Congregational Meeting	18 8:30am Counters Meet	19 4:30pm Supper & Game Night @ FELC
24 9am Worship at ILC 10am Fellowship at FELC 11am Worship at FELC	25 Memorial Day 11:30am Ceremony of Remembrance - ILC Cemetery with dinner to follow at ILC	26 8:30am Counters Meet
31 9am Worship at ILC 10am Fellowship at FELC 11am Worship at FELC Healing Service		

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2
6 9:30am Quilting - FELC	7 9am Wisdom Seekers FELC 2:30pm Community Coffee at The Lodge	8 4:30pm Community Meal at ILC	9 9am Crafting Saturday at FELC
13 10am Book Study at The Lodge	14 9am Wisdom Seekers FELC 2:30pm Community Coffee at The Lodge 5pm Informational Meeting at FELC	15	16
20 9:30am Quilting - FELC 1:30pm Worship at The Lodge	21 9am Wisdom Seekers FELC 2:30pm Community Coffee at The Lodge	22	23
27 10am Book Study at The Lodge	28 9am Wisdom Seekers FELC 2:30pm Community Coffee at The Lodge 6:30pm Holy Smokes at Wild Mtn Winery	29	30

Take extra time this month to wish ALL women
a very Happy Mother's Day!
Never forget that each of us help to
nurture others and are all Moms
in one way or another!

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, & 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 (starting May 22) 3pm to 6pm
Flowers & plants, fresh produce, eggs, maple syrup, honey, baked goods, canned foods & more!

CHISAGO LAKES COMMUNITY MEAL

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

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
May 13th & May 27th at 10am

Worship at The Lodge
May 20th at 1:30pm

Unexpected Company Chorale

Friday, May 1st at 7:30 PM
Faith Lutheran Church in Forest Lake

Sunday, May 3rd at 3:00 PM
Chisago Lakes High School Performing Arts Center in Lindstrom

Tickets are $15 - Purchase at door or online: https://www.ucchorale.org/

Taylors Falls Fire Dept's 81st Annuel Smelt Fry

May 2nd | 4pm - 7:30pm

Smelt, Beans, French Fries, Hot Dogs, Coleslaw, Rolls, Pickles, & Beverages

Adults $20, Children (7-12 yrs) $5
6 & under - free

Chisago County's only annual Smelt Fry

TF Fire Hall, 637 1st St, Taylors Falls

Sunday, May 3rd
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!

Spring Storytime
St. Croix Falls Library

Wednesday
May 6th, 13th & 20th
10:15am - 11:00am

Join us for stories, movement and fun!

DANCING DRAGONFLY WINERY

Mother's Day Mini Market

Saturday, May 9th 11am-5pm

Last minute shoppers rejoice!

Find a perfect Mothers' Day gift from local vendors and if you are into wine, grab a glass while you shop!!!

2013 120th Ave
St. Croix Falls

Knit & Crochet Group
Monday, May 11th
6:00pm - 8:00pm

Come and stitch with us! Bring your project or start a new one. Don't know how to knit or crochet? We would be happy to teach new crafters! Bring some yarn and needles (size 6, 7 or 8, preferably wood) or a hook (size G, H or I) and a sense of adventure!

St Croix Falls Library

Summer 2026

Each day we will be focusing on a different way we can "wear love" through: Kindness, Humbleness, Calmness, Steadfastness and Forgiveness! Join us for another great summer at Luther Point Bible Camp!

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 2025. $55 Member Discount

More information about programs offered is located on the bulletin board near the syrup cart!!

Luther Point Bible Camp NEEDS OUR SUPPORT!!!!

As most of us know, in order to run a house, a church, a business, or a wonderful Bible Camp - there are expenses, more some years than others! LPBC has a goal of raising $100,000 to sustain the camp and a new executive director's position this year. If you would like to donate to a wonderful place where young people grow in their faith, check out the bulletin board near the syrup cart to learn how! Or ask Pr. Justin or Angie for info!

Minutes of the Church Council of
First Evangelical Lutheran Church
Sunday, April 12, 2026, 12:15pm
Next meeting: May 10th or another day? 12:15pm

Council Members Present: Rose Anderson, Kathy Carlsted, Angie Dahlstrom, Becky Hulden, Craig Loen, Julie Valez, Pastor Justin Fenger

GATHERING

A. Opening Devotions – Kathy
May-Rose

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

BUSINESS

C. Pastor Justin's Report –

1. Joint Council - report from January 15th meeting. Next meeting?
2. Staff meetings at FELC - Momoh has submitted his resignation effective June 28th. One service is planned by ILC on June 28th at ILC with Potluck following service.
   Motion by Don to have FELC service at 10:00am at ILC on June 28th to celebrate Momoh's last Sunday serving both Churches. Rose Seconded. Motion carried.

D. Personnel

1. New staff positions are being proposed in the Draft of the Shared Ministry agreement. These positions will serve both congregations, streamline our worship planning and preparation process, and save both congregations money.

E. Treasurer's Report - Craig

Lenten offerings designations

1. Pastor Justin - Lenten offerings suggested to Luther Point. Motion by Angie, seconded by Craig to donate $963.00 from Lent offerings to Luther Point
2. Noisy Money- Kathy made a motion Craig seconded for the designation of noisy money to Together with Friends. Motion carried
3. Julie moved and Kathy seconded accepting the financial report

F. Building and Grounds Committee Projects - Don

1. Security system and cameras installation - Don explained new camera's for building and security - Motion by Angie and seconded by Kathy to purchase an additional $200 hard drive to upgrade Home base recording storage of the cameras, motion carried.

G. Annuel Meeting

Scheduled for June 21, 2026 at Noon at FELC sanctuary.
Nominating committee: Becky Hulden

PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL

H. Music and Worship

1. **Pastor Justin report**-Lenten season and, holy week schedule went well.
2. **Music and Worship Coordination** – Becky is attending weekly meetings with Immanuel staff. Becky and Mark Westlander supply Angie with bulletin info. Toni will be providing hymn input before the Tuesday morning meetings.
3. **Sunday School** – no report
4. **Personnel** – during Lent, Toni became employed full time outside the church. This meant that she could not play piano or organ for Lenten services. Momoh filled in and was paid $100 each day for 4 Wednesdays for Lent. Don will make a correction to minutes of previous council meeting showing that minutes reflect that current position descriptions of both churches will be updated and new positions will be proposed.
5. **Sunday Morning - Council Person on Duty (CPOD)**
    1. Security and emergency Plan – Angie D.

SERVE OUR NEIGHBORS

I. Library Report – Julie

1. Plaque mounted on Free Library - pictures and article for newspaper.

J. Vision Group->Mission and Outreach Committee

1. Leadership will be Rita and Wendy.

K. Shared Ministry - Better Together with Immanuel

1. Joint Council for Shared Ministry has met twice in March. A Draft of the Shared Ministry Agreement is being worked out and will be voted on at both congregations on Sunday, May 17 th .The Draft was discussed and reviewed as the needs of both congregations are considered

L. Caring Ministry

1. ELW Pastoral Care booklets are here and available for communion visits.
2. Communion visits are placed on the altar during Communion Sundays.

M. Report on Events

1. Holy Week review

N. Upcoming Events: - leadership?

1. Feed my Starving Children - 4/17 - sign up sheet is full. Wendy S. has taken leadership

O. Motion to Adjourn

Kathy and Rose

Monday, May 25th - Memorial Day

11:30am Ceremony of Remembrance at Immanuel Cemetery in Almelund with a Ham Dinner to follow served in the Fellowship Hall. (Cost will be determined - Veterans eat free!)
Watch for more details!

Watch the bulletin board for more information or additional Memorial Day Ceremonies.

First Evangelical
LUTHERAN CHURCH of TAYLORS FALLS

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

Pastor Justin Fenger
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pastor@immanuelalmelund.com

Angie Linngren
Ministry Coordinator
felctf@gmail.com

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 held on May 10th.

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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ORGANIZATION
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