

First Evangelical Lutheran Church
1200 4th Avenue
Worthington, MN 56187
(507) 376-6148
Fax: (507) 376-6149
Email: felcwgtn@gmail.com
Website: felcwgtn.org

April
2024

Evangel

OFFICE HOURS: 8:00 am—12:00 pm
1:00—4:30 pm
Monday—Friday

WORSHIP: 6:00 pm—Wednesday
9:30 am—Sunday

COMMUNION: Wednesday
First & Third Sunday

SUNDAY SCHOOL: 8:45 am (Sept–May)



MISSION STATEMENT

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH, WORTHINGTON, MN

God has called us, the baptized members of First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Worthington, Minnesota, to proclaim the Gospel and make disciples of all people.

Living out our Mission

In obedience, we commit ourselves to the Lord's ministry rooted in a fertile agricultural prairie of God's creation. Relying on the promise of the Holy Spirit, and through Word and Sacraments, we will grow toward wholeness through worship, learning, service, witness, support, and fellowship.

Adopted 5-31-87

CONGREGATION OFFICERS

PRESIDENT – Matt Russell
(507) 360-5835
VICE PRESIDENT – Lonnie Myrom
(507) 329-3849
SECRETARY – Erin Makela
(320) 223-3713

CHURCH STAFF

Jeanette McCormick—Pastor
Natalie Zinnel—Administrative Secretary/
Co-Treasurer
Brenda Richards—Youth & Family Director
Todd Poppema—Custodian
Eric Parrish —Choir Director/Worship Planner
Lori Nienkerk—Choir Accompanist/
Organist/Pianist
Cindy Anderson—Pianist
Nancy Hofstee—Organist
Arlene Lowe—Co-Treasurer
Debbie Koob—Financial Secretary
Jim & Paula Laffrenzen—Parish Visitors

PASTOR JEANNETTE'S ARTICLE

Dear First Lutheran,

I was sitting in the Fall Rostered Leaders Conference a while back and found myself looking around. I noticed I was younger than most people gathered. Later, I asked Pr. Heather Culuris, Assistant to the Bishop for Southwestern MN, "Am I one of about 40 people under the age of 40 who are pastors in the synod?" She noted, "You probably are not too far off on that estimation."

This moment got me really thinking about what the end of my career as a pastor might look like. Currently, there are around 40 pastoral vacancies in our synod. In the four rural synods of Minnesota, there are about 100 vacancies. We have been very fortunate to have had a good number of ordinations over the past few years. Many of those ordinations, though, have been people serving in second careers. Therefore, in order to continue to fill vacancies, exponentially more ordinations must take place in order to fill even most openings. (Many second career individuals serve 10 years as opposed to over 40 years.). I know that many of my colleagues are at or near retirement age. Several have served beyond retirement age in order to help our denomination continue to fill pastoral vacancies. I am very grateful for such individuals who have graciously served.

I am not writing this to "sound the alarm," but rather to help people understand the situation. I strongly believe that people cannot help solve problems if they are not made aware of such realities. Many other denominations are in similar positions. Often, I find that when I approach youth and their parents/grandparents and urge their youth to consider the ministry, people seem very hesitant. Often people note it seems like it would be a challenging career. I won't deny that it often is. However, I also know that your careers, likewise, often seem challenging. Furthermore, of course, there are many rewarding aspects of being a pastor. I am grateful for the support of colleagues, and I feel blessed to be in a career where we view each other as supporters instead of competitors. I am honored to be invited into some of people's most important moments of their lives. Every day is different, and I am almost never bored in my work. I am blessed by the support of you all, members of First Lutheran, and I enjoy the fun we have together. We have several young people who have a heart for service and a love of the Gospel. Please encourage them to consider the ministry. Our church needs such compassionate, intelligent and creative individuals.

Likewise, some of you might be reading this and thinking, "I might be open to serving in the ministry, but I surely am not a young person." If that is the case, please come talk to me, and I will connect you with synodical staff who can explore options. Nowadays, there are a myriad of ways people can pursue ordination. There are options that are mostly online, options that are designed to spread out coursework over a longer period of time, options that reduce the amount of coursework required, options that allow people to finish degrees quickly and more. Synod staff will work with you to explore possibilities.

Lastly, I should note my appreciation because you all have helped solve the problem of the current clergy shortage. Though it required accommodations, forming an internship committee and adjustments, First Lutheran and Grace Lutheran supported Jon Wendt in completing his pastoral education. Not only did this provide Grace Lutheran with a vicar, but it has helped our synod have one more pastor (and, therefore, one less opening). Likewise, you all agreed to support Adonis Albanes as a "remote" member while he was living in Spain. This individual had expressed an interest in pursuing ordination in the ELCA but needed to be a member of a congregation. With consultation from the synod, we were able to find ways to include Albanes in our congregation, even while he was living on another continent. Though Albanes had to step back from this journey forward due to health and family concerns, the conversation alone was valuable. Our work around this topic has helped the synod to think "out of the box" about how we can provide candidates for ethnic specific ministries. Some people might be reading this and thinking, "Why is this my concern?" The truth is, if we are going to solve the problem of increasing numbers of pastoral vacancies, we all need to work together to provide solutions. The situation might not seem to be affecting us right now, but the fewer pastors there are, the more our synod staff has to try to support congregations with no pastors. Likewise, this shortage also translates to remaining pastors serving in more capacities on committees, boards, and in positions of leadership. Thank you for your willingness to help us all find a path forward where our congregations are well served.

Please pray for synodical staff as they continue to work to raise up leaders. Please, likewise, prayerfully consider people in your lives who might be willing to serve in the ministry. We trust that, as we do this, God will provide for our churches as God has always provided for us.



Lessons and Themes for the Sundays in April, 2024:

4/7/24: You Shall Be My Witnesses

Acts 1:1-14

Psalm 111

Mark 6:7-13

4/14/24: Peter Heals in Jerusalem

Acts 3:1-10

Psalm 89:20-32

Mark 6:53-56

4/21/24: Church at Thessalonica

Acts 17:1-9

Psalm 112:1-9

Mark 13:9-11

4/28/24: Church at Corinth

Acts 18:1-4

Psalm 133

1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Mark 9:34-35

**The office will be closed
on Friday, March 29 and
Monday, April 1 for the
Easter Holiday.**



Praise the Lord

The following is the financial report for First Lutheran as of February, 2024:

General Fund:

Bal. 1/31/24: (\$16,156.56)

Inc., February \$20,408.20

Exp., February \$25,669.46

Bal. 2/29/24: (\$21,417.82)

(The amount shows behind budget.)

Grace Lutheran Reimbursement—\$5,840.76

Building Fund:

Bal. 1/31/24: \$42,033.75

Inc., February \$566.00

Exp., February \$5,758.00

Bal. 2/29/24: \$36,841.75



Card Ministry meets the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm. Come join the fun. No experience necessary! Check

out our display in Centennial Hall to purchase a card for \$1. Funds will be designated to different groups as needed.

*Awake, thou wintry earth
Fling off thy sadness!
Fair vernal flowers,
Laugh forth
Your ancient gladness!
Christ is risen.*

— Thomas Blackburn



Servants

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If for any reason you are unable to serve at the time indicated, please trade with someone else on the list or find a replacement and contact the church office so that the names can be listed correctly in the church bulletin. This is a temporary schedule for the month so it may change. Thank you.

Computer Assistant (Contact Person: Church Office, 376-6148)

4/7	9:30	Terry Morrison
4/14	9:30	Glenda Lais
4/21	9:30	Pam Fleming
4/28	9:30	Kathy Summers

Van Driver: (Van will be picking up members for the Sunday service only)

4/7	9:30	Matt Russell (360-5835)
4/14	9:30	Daren Bauman (360-9275)
4/21	9:30	Midg White (360-3215)
4/28	9:30	Larry Woodbury (360-2689)

Assisting Minister & Lector (Contact Person: Church Office, 376-6148)

4/7	9:30	Lonnie Myrom
4/14	9:30	Todd Hallstrom
4/21	9:30	Ryan McGaughey
4/28	9:30	Cooper Scripture

Greeters (Contact Person: Church Office, 376-6148)

4/7	9:30	Doug & Julie Christensen
4/14	9:30	John Kramer
4/21	9:30	John & Nora Leinen
4/28	9:30	Judy Selberg

Acolytes (Contact Person: Church Office, 376-6148)

4/7	9:30	Ethan Nixon
4/14	9:30	Trey Milbrath
4/21	9:30	Aaden Wagner
4/28	9:30	Ethan Nixon

Facebook Live (Contact Person: Church Office, 376-6148)

4/7	9:30	Debbie Koob
4/14	9:30	Terry Morrison
4/21	9:30	Becca McGaughey
4/28	9:30	Paul Summers

Coffee Servers (Contact Person: Church Office, 376-6148)

4/7	9:30	John & Nora Leinen & Daren & Julie Bauman
4/14	9:30	Todd & Darcy Poppema & Diane Sletten
4/21	9:30	Larry & Norma Woodbury & Ed Philipp
4/28	9:30	Doug & Julie Christensen & Bob & Bonnie Bents

Sound (Contact Person: Church Office, 376-6148)

4/7	9:30	Doug Frisch
4/14	9:30	Pat Demuth
4/21	9:30	Kevin Fleming
4/28	9:30	Doug Frisch

There will be no Wednesday night worship services from April 3—June 12.

Thank You

April Birthdays



1	Alan Olhausen	15	Alida Scripture	30	Christopher Black
2	Janice Berger	16	Jason Johnson		
2	Mike Johnson	17	Gregory Amundson		
3	Pearl Aaker	17	Kendra Frodermann		
3	Cindy Glorvigen	18	Stephanie Bauman		
4	Sydney Burns	18	Calvin Rehborg		
4	Debbie Koob	18	Paul Severance		
4	Norma Woodbury	19	Eryn Nixon		
5	Gayle Huehn	20	Jonathan Raley		
5	Megan Rukstales	21	Barbara Olson		
7	Jon Faragher	22	Daren Christensen		
7	Theresa Rotert	23	Dustin Hurlbut		
7	Jim Russell	23	Rebecca McGaughey		
9	Emily Anderson	25	Julie Christensen		
9	John Kramer	25	Hailey White		
9	Lindsey Potts	26	Shelby Faragher		
12	Arlene Zeiner	26	Kevin Lowe		
14	Allan De Roo	28	Richard Ricker		
14	Eric Milbrath	29	Lance Hellstrom		
15	Robert Schreiber	29	Joshua Wasmund		



Jesus Appears on the Seashore

The disciples caught 153 fish.

The catch of exactly 153 fish has always caught the eye of Bible readers. There's a wide agreement that the unusual figure is symbolic, but less agreement about its exact meaning. The simplest explanation is one St. Jerome gave 15 centuries ago.

Ancient zoologists listed the kinds of fish in the world at precisely 153. The number 153, therefore, might symbolize all the nations of the world. Jesus' Parable of the Net would support this. (Matthew 13:47-50)

John's comment that the net didn't tear might also be interpreted to support it: There's room in the kingdom for everyone. The kingdom was made to hold all peoples.

How do we help to work for the spread of God's kingdom to all nations?

“Our business is not to do something *for* the church, but to do something *with* it.” - Joseph F. Newton

Illustrated Daily Homilies by Mark Lick, SJ



Radio Broadcast: You can sponsor the broadcast in memory or in honor of a family member or an event in your life. The cost to sponsor a broadcast is \$75.00. Please sign up on the sheet in Centennial Hall. Thank you.



First Lutheran Benefits from your Grocery Purchases. When you buy groceries at Fareway, with the Fareway Gift Card, First Lutheran receives 5% from the sale of the gift card. Get yours today!

The cards are available in the church office. We have \$25, \$50 or \$100 gift cards to sell. You pay the full price for the card and the church receives 5%. As of February 29, 2024, a total of **\$6,327.49** has been put into the general fund.



First Lutheran Benefits from your Grocery Purchases. When you buy groceries at Hy-Vee, with

the Hy-Vee Gift Card, First Lutheran receives 5% from the sale of the gift card. Get yours today! The cards are available in the church office. We have \$25, \$50 or \$100 gift cards to sell. You pay the full price for the card and the church receives 5%. **The card can also be used when you purchase gas.** As of February 29, 2024, a total of **\$56,711.50** has been put into the general fund.

Gift Cards will be available on communion Sunday mornings in Centennial Hall and in the office during the week.

Blessing of the Seed



Spring is here. It's planting time again. Bring your seed to our service on Sunday, April 21 for a special blessing before planting.



From Dr. Martin Lucin

As I stepped out of my vehicle in the parking lot across from Murray County Central High School it was well before starting time for the girls section basketball game. I recognized the two referees walking toward me (I've known them for years) and smiled when they wanted to know what my connection was to the game that was to be played that night. They too smiled and nodded their affirmation as I said simply, "two sisters from Okabena are in the Confirmation class at the church I help out at."

Church connections have been crucially important in our church from the beginning, since the time of the Reformation. Founding documents of Lutheranism, in fact, define the church as the place where the Gospel is truly preached and the sacraments are rightly administered. Ah, yes, that is how each of us is connected to our church, by the "Means of Grace," which are the Word and the Sacraments. (The ways that God most clearly and most powerfully has decided to be with us and to stay connected to us, to bring us to faith and to keep us in faith.)

We talked about our connectedness in our most recent First Communion class. By means of the written Word (the Bible), the spoken Word (any sermon or study) and the living Word (Jesus) God whispers to us again and again and again, I started to love you even before you were born. Just trust me, I'll find a way to come to you and make you my very own (Holy Baptism) and I'll even figure out a way to feed you so you will stay standing in your connection to me (Holy Communion). If my friends, the two referees, want to know what your connection is, what will you tell them?

**Thank
You**

APRIL YOUTH NEWS

What a whirlwind this year has been so far! I am so grateful for all the support for ALL of the youth fundraisers we have had this year. Annual meeting fundraiser, a week later the Pizza Ranch fundraiser, a week after the pizzas were delivered we started the silent auction fundraiser, and a week after that we had our Lenten meal fundraiser, and less than a week after that we had our Sweetheart's Dinner fundraiser!!!! And then, about two weeks later we did our Easter Lefse Fundraiser and closed out the silent auction fundraiser. Whew! I'm tired just thinking about it. Tired and blessed and VERY HAPPY for all of the support.

Our Wednesday after school program has come to a close for this school year. We had over 40 kids coming to Kids For Christ (KFC) most every Wednesday this school year. Kids kept joining throughout the year, mostly due to the amazing coat ministry. We started by hanging out at Prairie Elementary and having a snack. After the bus picked up all the kids we divided into three groups at the church and participated in many hands-on activities while we learned the Bible Stories from the Old Testament to the New. All of the kids received a new Bible this year. So many people stepped up to help as the numbers grew of which we are truly grateful! So many people and committees stepped up to cook meals, which was very much appreciated. We could not have done it without you all! THANKS SO MUCH!

April 3 - Confirmation/Youth Group at First

April 7 - Sunday Fun Day! ALL CHURCH! ALL AGES! Join us for all sorts of fun in the Centennial Hall this afternoon from 2-4 pm. Bring a snack to share and if you would like, your favorite game.

April 10 - Youth @ Grace Lutheran

April 17 - Confirmation/Youth Group at First

April 19-20 Confirmation camp—register at www.shetek.org with group hold: **felc confirm**

April 24 - Youth @ Grace Lutheran

May 1 - 507 Night - MS/Confirmation

May 8 - Youth @ Grace

May 15 - End of Year Picnic

June 10-13 - Community Kid's Camp = VBS need LOTS of volunteers,. It will be at First Lutheran from 5:30 to 8:00 pm. Supper will begin at 5:30 pm. Sign up today with the QR code on the youth board.

June 23-28 - Summer camp. Cost goes up after April 1. Sign up today! www.shetek.org

July 16-20 - National Gathering.

SUNDAY SCHOOL—Sundays at 8:45 am

Garage Sale - middle of August - start saving your stuff!

GRACIAS! THANK YOU! WE APPRECIATE YOU! MANY THANKS!

April 2024



14 Keeley Island Drive
Slayton, MN 56172
507-763-3567
camp@shetek.org
www.shetek.org

Shetek Lutheran Ministries Where Christ Renews and Empowers



Apply to work at camp.
<https://shetek.org/work-at-shetek/>

Happy Spring!

Wish List

*Glue and Glue Sticks
Extension Cords
Mini Vans
Volunteers*

Mark your Calendar

April 19-20 Confirmation Retreat
April 22-25 Quilt & Craft Retreat
May 4 Spring Cleanup
May 11 Spring Cleanup
Register at shetek.org or
Call 507-763-3567 for more
information

We met our Phase 1 goal! \$1,627,000 in gifts and pledges! Our challenge goal is \$2,000,000 and with increased costs, our budget has changed for our different phases. More info on our website. <https://shetek.org/sl-m-master-plan/>

Goal \$2,000,000
\$1,627,000
81%
FUNDRAISING BRICK

Help send kids to Camp...Become a Pelican Club or Timber Society member today. Pelican Club members support the ministry with a gift of \$100 - \$499 a year and Timber Society members give \$500 or more a year. Thanks for your support!