

The *First* Word

Volume 23, Issue 9

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL — HELENA, MONTANA

August 2022

Seek FIRST His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33

Special August Dates

Women's Event.....Aug. 13
Vacation Bible School.....Aug. 15-19
Secret Sister Reveal Party.....Aug. 23

Mission & Ministry Council 2022-2023

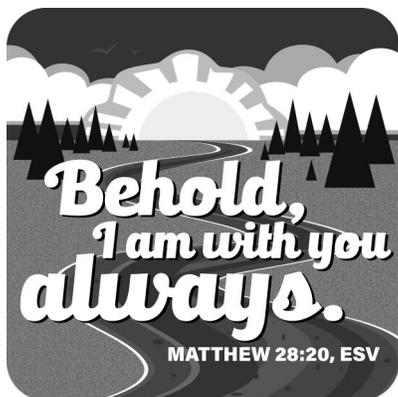
Officers

President.....Jason Mercer
Secretary.....Linda Fromm
Treasurer.....Wally Smith

At-Large Members

David Goodson
Janice Larison
Lori Northrup
Pastor Larry Miller

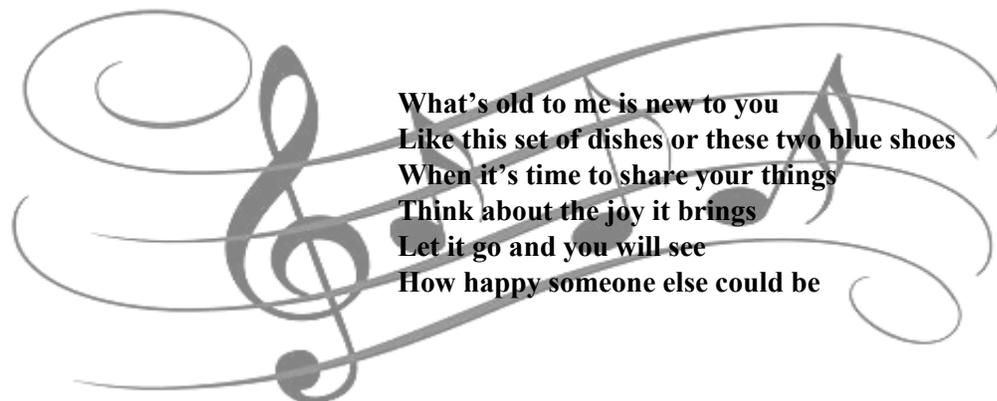
The MMC is looking to appoint people to fill one vacant at-large position for a one-year term, and one vacant at-large position for a two-year term. The vacancy in the vice president's position (a 2-year term) must be filled by a male member of the church, who must be elected by the congregation. Please prayerfully consider serving the congregation in one of these open positions, and contact MMC President Jason Mercer if you would like further information.



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Everything old is new again!



What's old to me is new to you
Like this set of dishes or these two blue shoes
When it's time to share your things
Think about the joy it brings
Let it go and you will see
How happy someone else could be

Hopefully, the perspective illustrated by the words from the song above will help those of you who, like me, have sentimental attachments to items and, therefore, have separation anxiety when trying to cull the collection.

This year's Human Care Garage Sale on Saturday, September 17 – thanks to your generous donations of all/any clean and in good condition items – will **help us to continue to support these community programs**: Christmas gifts for individuals with developmental disabilities, God's Love, Options Clinic, Family Promise, and Good Samaritan. We also have gift cards available for Pastor to give when he is made aware of members of our congregation who have various needs.

Items can be dropped off at church after mid-week service on Wednesday, Sept. 14, and from 8:30 am – 6 pm on Thursday and Friday, September 15 and 16. The sale hours on Saturday, September 17, are 8 am – 1 pm.

A new concept at this year's sale will feature 'generous giving.' Customers will be reminded of the goal of the sale (the bold/underlined phrase above) as they contemplate what to pay for the items they select. Not only will this concept help to reduce the hours of work required for pricing all items, but with God's help, we hope to reap greater financial benefits

for the extra giving we are prepared to do considering the financial challenges many people are facing in our country's current economic state.

Please keep the Garage Sale in your prayers! Pray that we meet people who attend who will be drawn to learn more about our awesome Lord and Savior! Ask that First Lutheran members and the friends/neighbors they share this information with will be anxious to help us with their generous donations of no longer loved or needed items. Also pray that First Lutheran members will gladly help in sorting and arranging items for the sale, and when the sale is over, that they will help pack remaining items and organize, load and clean up at church.

Is this coincidence? Garage Sale...by Grace you have been Saved...God gave His Son...God is our only source for Salvation...No, there is no coincidence with God.

Watch for the worker sign-up sheet on Sunday, August 21, and have a blessed remainder of the summer!

First Lutheran Board of Human Care
Tammy Anderson
Pippa Davis
Julie Eklund
Laurie Stelter



Happenings at First Lutheran School



Director
Sue Taylor

Pre-Kindergarten Teacher
Lori Radtke

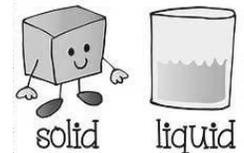
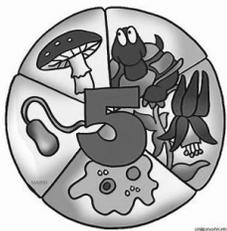
Pastor
Larry A. Miller

First Lutheran School has expanded to provide learning and growth in God’s Word through the offering of summer camps. These summer camps, designed for children ages 4-8, are offered for 10 weeks during the months of June, July and August. We have been blessed with an average of 12 students per week.

Some of the topics that have been taught in our summer

camps, utilizing Concordia curriculum, are: Kinds of Living Things, Magnets, Plants and Habitats, Light and Color, Dinosaurs, and Solids and Liquids.

Sue and Lori are blessed to have the opportunity to spend our days with these wonderful children as we watch them grow and learn. Our smiling faces tell the story of how much joy we all find at our school.



A LOOK At Our Budget

A report from your Board of Finance

	<u>June, 2022</u>	<u>FY 2022 Y-T-D</u>
Income (church & school)	\$31,180.78	\$477,508.98
Expense (church & school)	\$36,074.04	\$422,485.45
Gain/Loss	(\$ 4,893.26)	\$ 55,023.53

Note: June 30, 2022, was the end of the church’s fiscal year.

The First Word

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(406)442-5367



Rev. Larry A. Miller.....Pastor
Linda Fromm.....Editor
Susan Boyer.....Calendar/Servant Schedule
Volunteer Staff.....Printing/Collation

Deadline for the September First Word is Wednesday, August 24. Place articles in the First Word box in the church office or e-mail them to: lindafromm@mac.com



Thoughts from Pastor Miller:

"Keep your eye on the ball!"

It didn't matter if we were playing **baseball, golf, or ping-pong**, that was my father's universal sporting advice. A good game results from keeping our eyes and our focus on the one thing that matters: the ball. Taking your eyes off could mean a dropped ball, a missed pass or some other "error."



So it is with the Christian faith! There is one thing that matters: Jesus Christ crucified. We are given by the Holy Spirit a faith that keeps our eyes on Jesus. When our eyes are kept on Jesus we are rejoicing in God's gifts, all the gifts that Jesus gives: the forgiveness of our sins, eternal life, salvation, heaven, His kingdom, etc.

The devil wants nothing more than to divert our eyes from Jesus, to steal our joy. The devil tempts us to look at ourselves, at our own sin. The devil wants us to see how bad we are, saying, "Could God really love a wretched sinner like you?" Taking our eyes off of Jesus and looking at ourselves can only lead to **hopelessness and despair.**



The devil also tempts us to take our eyes off of Jesus and **look at the sins of others.** "Look at how bad so-and-so is. You should be glad that you're not a sinner like them." Taking our eyes off of Jesus and looking at the sins of others only leads to **pride**, the feeling that we are better than others.

In the Bible account of St. Peter walking on the water? When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water they were afraid, thinking they saw a ghost. Jesus comforts them, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid" (Matthew 14:27). Peter answers, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." Jesus says, "Come," and Peter does, walking on the water with Jesus. But then Peter 'takes his eye off the ball.' The text says that "when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out" (14:30). Peter was distracted with the wind and the waves, and **taking his eyes off of Jesus, he began to sink.**

But **Peter's cry was a cry for help, "Lord, save me!"** And Jesus answered his prayer "immediately" stretching out his hand and catching him. The same Lord Jesus is faithful to answer our prayers. As our focus is distracted and our eyes drawn away for the gifts of God in Christ Jesus, we, too, cry out, "Lord, help us!" **Jesus is quick to save, to draw our eyes back to Him and the gifts He desires to give us.**



So let's ask the Lord to help us "keep our eye on the ball", that is, **to keep our attention and focus, not on ourselves or the sins of others, but on Jesus Christ crucified.** Then we can all rejoice together in the full forgiveness of all of our sins.



Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:2

Pastor Miller

Shhh

IT'S A SECRET

Whoops! It won't be a secret anymore!

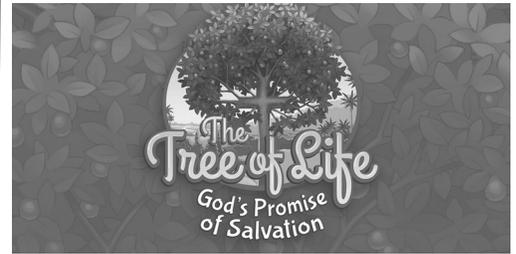
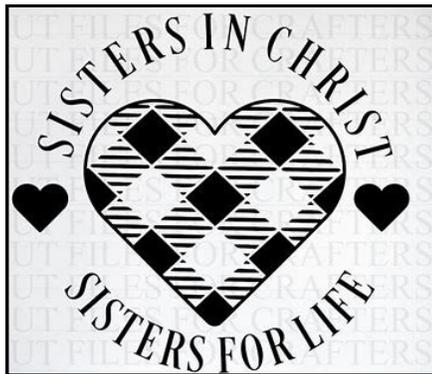
Please join us for the Secret Sister Revealing Party, and be ready to celebrate your Sister in Christ! The party is set for 6 p.m. on Tuesday, August 23, at 6 p.m. at the church.

Discover who your Secret Sister was! Be ready to "guess" who your Sister is! If you wish to do so, bring

a last gift for your Sister.

We'll enjoy light snacks and desserts during the party, so mark you calendar now and plan to attend.

Please call Susan at (406)449-9961 if you have questions, or to let her know you will not be able to attend. You may also email her at yellow_moose@msn.com.



First's Vacation Bible School registration is now open! Go online to: firstlutheranhelena.org and help your child(ren) "put down roots and grow" in God's Word, beginning on Monday, August 15, and running through Friday, August 19, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon each day.

VBS organizers are asking you to check your calendar to see if you are available to volunteer to help with this important outreach to our community. If so, please contact Darcy Goodson (406.581.5768), Hannah Hollatz (406.461.7824), or Sue Taylor (406.461.0272), or you may sign up to volunteer at the same time you register your child(ren) online!

This year's "Tree of Life: God's Promise of Salvation" theme uses 10 key stories in God's salvation plan broken down into three areas: Creation (tree of life/tree of knowledge of good and evil), Cross (which is sometimes pictured as a tree of life and we know brings us eternal life), and New Creation (referencing the Book of Revelation, where we see the perfect life we will have forever with Jesus).

HIS Kids



If you are in first (1st) to eighth (8th) grade, YOU are invited to be a member of HIS Kids! We have a LOT of fun and practice to sing in church about one Sunday a month.

Our first HIS Kids! rehearsal is **Wednesday, September 14**, promptly at 5:15 p.m. We only have a short time to learn our songs, so please plan accordingly.

It will be an exciting year as HIS First Lutheran Kids join their voices in praise to our awesome God! YOU are invited to become part of HIS Kids! Contact me with questions.

Shari Miller, Director

Just for KIDS!

Superior BANANA SPLIT

Fruit and yogurt combine for this healthy take on a sweet treat.



What you need:

- Bananas
- Plain Greek yogurt
- Assorted berries and fruit
- Granola
- Honey

What you do:

1. Using a butter knife, split the banana in half lengthwise. Lay the halves open in a bowl.
2. Add several dollops of yogurt atop the banana halves.
3. Arrange other fruit, such as berries and grapes.
4. Top the banana split with a sprinkle of granola and a drizzle of honey. Enjoy!

PUZZLE



Fruit or false



Spotting true fruits can be tricky. Thankfully, it's much easier to spot the fruit of the Spirit.



Directions: Determine whether each item is a fruit or vegetable and circle the correct letter. Then insert the letters in order below to complete the verses.



	Fruit	Vegetable		Fruit	Vegetable
Apple	V	P		Pepper	O U
Carrot	E	O		Spinach	R S
Tomato	Y	R		Watermelon	H P
Grape	C	F		Broccoli	G N
Eggplant	T	D		Pumpkin	T Y
Celery	I	N		Pear	F C
Banana	K	M		Asparagus	L R
Cucumber	N	W			

But the fruit of the Spirit is lo_e, j_ _ , pea_e,
 pa_ie_ce, _ind_ess, go_dne_s,
 fait_ _ful_ _ess, gen_ _leness, sel_ _-cont_ol.

GALATIANS 5:22-23, ESV

Answer: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control

God's ultimate gift of redemption — from your Board of Stewardship

"But now thus says the Lord, He who created you, O Jacob, He who formed you, O Israel: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine'" (Isaiah 43:1).

Let's start with a question: Of what will you be more likely to take greater care? Something you own? Or something that isn't yours?

This might be a slippery slope question for a devotion during a stewardship series based on God's simple gifts. However, as one hears the words of our Lord through the prophet Isaiah, it is a question that does bring a great deal of comfort.

As God plainly states through Isaiah, stewards that have been created and are being sustained by God have no reason to fear. Why? Because they belong to God! They are owned fully by Him. With His mighty power the Lord created them. By His amazing grace, He has redeemed them in the

innocent suffering and death of His beloved Son, Jesus! You, my friend in Christ, are doubly owned!

God, as the Owner of all things by virtue of creation, sees you as a treasured possession. He promises never to hold out on you. He may not make you stupendously wealthy, incredibly intelligent or dashingly beautiful, but you do have the sure and certain promise that God IS with you. In Word and Sacrament, our Lord dwells with you, giving you His gifts of life and salvation!

As one contemplates the simple gifts our Lord gives and how we might be called to share them with the Church for the Gospel and our neighbors for God's glory, we need not fear. We have His promise that He will be with us. For this reason, we can indeed be extravagantly generous! We have the Lord's promise! He will not abandon us.

The faithful stewardship and generosity to which we are called is to be a confession of our trust in His promise. It isn't always easy. But this is the stewardship to which we have been called. But it isn't about us. It is all about the One who owns us! In Him we believe. In Him we trust. In Him we have no reason to fear. Because of Him we are free to be faithful stewards of all He has. It is for His glory and our neighbor's benefit!

Prayer

Lord God, Creator and Redeemer of all things, there isn't anything that our life in this world can throw at us that is bigger than You. Grant us Your grace to trust You in all things, including our financial stewardship for the sake of the Gospel. Drive away fear and grant us steadfast faith to trust You boldly in how we live and how we give! Amen.

— This article is taken from Simple Gifts, a series of LCMS Stewardship Ministry Devotions. Used by permission.

August Birthdays at First

August 1
Emilee DeKam
Gloria Mayer
Stan Sternberg

August 2
Cole Koenig

August 3
Susan McCormack

August 4
Curtis Mohs

August 6
Richard Jorgensen

August 7
Camden Ballard

August 8
Tammy Anderson
Brad Kraft
Isaak Mohs

August 9
Taylor Boucher
Matt Elvbakken

August 10
Debbie Bjerke
Catherine Carson
Ruth Verley

August 11
Darcy Goodson
Jan Leitzke
Matt Westerbuhr

August 12
George Maier

August 13
Rebecca Blair
Ken Burgett
Danyeil Wagner

August 15
Andrew Carson
Todd Jones
Alice Lawson
Maggie Pentecost

August 16
Greg Criswell
Jeannie Hubbard
Trish Pentecost
Tami Ross

August 17
Carla Adair
Crystal Cislo

August 19
Alan Giulio

August 21
Andrew Berg
Leah Ellwein
Leighanna Miner

August 22
Mary Ann Gregory
Jayden Miller
Theo Woehl

August 23
Erica Blair
Delrene Rasmussen

August 24
Teaghan Gozelanski
Olivia Johnson

August 25
Becky Lawson
Petra Meek

August 26
Nicole Sparks

August 27
Holly Bjerke
James Johnson
Isaiah LaForge
Jill McIntosh

August 28
Susan Bartels

August 30
Briella Ballard
Linda Greaves
Joyce Nachtsheim

Happy Birthday!

CARDS 4 KIDS a smart choice

We all want to beat inflation, so why not consider purchasing several birthday/all-assortment greeting cards for 50 cents each for the next few weeks in Ziegler Hall? Cards will be available until Sunday, August 14.

CARDS 4 KIDS has been busy making cards to support the F.L.Y. (First Lutheran Youth) program here at our church, and I want to thank all of you who have donated cardstock, cards, and envelopes toward this important ministry.

—Janice Larison



*Images shown are for illustrative purposes only.
They are not actual card designs.*



Can you hear the choir singing? We are starting up Chancel Choir beginning in September after summer break. What does this mean? It means that beginning **September 14**, we will meet on Wednesdays following our church services (about 7:15 p.m.) and sing for our church services during the months of September through May. Wednesday schedules will be flexible as the music is learned.

Are you a “shower singer”? Are you interested in joining us this year? Our choir just might appeal to you. We’ll have exciting music and really hope that you will join us. Please contact Shari Miller if you are interested. Please share your musical gifts with us!

God among the rubble

The nonprofit World Central Kitchen provides fresh meals for communities in need following natural disasters or during humanitarian crises. After Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, WCK fed millions of people in the country and refugees at border crossings.

When I feel discouraged by tragic news and ask where God is, I’m reminded that God shows up precisely in people such as the WCK teams. They are God’s hands serving healthy food to people fleeing home. They are God’s heart and arms welcoming those in need to be nourished.

Often in the Bible God shows up around meals: Sarah and Abraham host the Lord in the form of three visitors; God rains manna from heaven for the Israelites; an angel provides food for exhausted Elijah; Jesus eats with “tax collectors and sinners” and feeds crowds with a few loaves and fish. Supremely, Jesus gives to all the meal of Holy Communion, the bread and wine that are His very body and blood.

In our broken world, God is among the rubble, among the helpers, among us.

— Heidi Hyland Mann
The Newsletter Newsletter

Safe and secure

The Resurrection is an exploding flare announcing to all sincere seekers that it is safe to believe. Safe to believe in ultimate justice. Safe to believe in eternal bodies. Safe to believe in heaven as our estate and the earth as its porch. Safe to believe in a time where questions won’t keep us awake and pain won’t keep us down. Safe to believe in open graves and endless days and genuine praise. ...

Because of the Resurrection, everything changes. Death changes. It used to be the end; now it is the beginning.

— Max Lucado, *When Christ Comes*
The Newsletter Newsletter

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FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH is a Congregation of
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

THE MISSION of First Lutheran Church is
“Sharing God’s Word with Everyone, Everywhere!”

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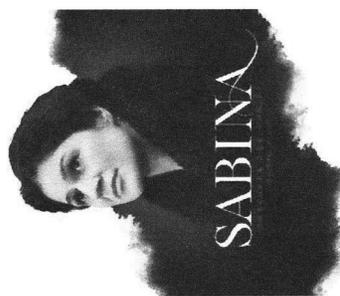
Tune in to **“The Lutheran Hour”**—Sundays at 8 a.m. on the Christian Satellite Network 91.1-FM
or listen on **“Family Talk”** on Sirius XM 131
“Woman to Woman”—Sundays at 9:30 p.m. on KMTX 105.3-FM

FLC Women's Event

Strong and Courageous

SATURDAY,
AUGUST 13, 2022

First Lutheran Church
8:30 a.m. to 12 noon



EVENT ACTIVITIES

- Fellowship
- Bible Study:
Strong and Courageous
- View: *Sabina*
- Gifts
- Breakfast Snacks
- Bring your Bible and a
donation for missions.

“Sabina: Tortured for Christ, the Nazi Years,” tells the powerful true story of Sabina (Oster) Wurmbrand and her husband, Richard. They are the co-founders of the nonprofit The Voice of the Martyrs — an interdenominational mission organization that serves persecuted Christians around the world. Set during World War II and spanning the years between 1938 to 1944, the film takes viewers on a journey through Romania to discover why Sabina, a Jewish Christian, would risk her life to offer a kind hand to German soldiers — enemies who killed her entire family.

ALL WOMEN are encouraged to join us.
Please call 442-5367 by August 10 to sign up.

*Please join us as we explore the realities of
religious persecution, the cost of following Christ, and
how we can be strong and courageous in Jesus.*