



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

Special March Dates

Dorcas Circle Quilters.....	Mar. 1
First Edition Book Club.....	Mar. 4
Home of Tammy Anderson	
Second Sunday in Lent.....	Mar. 5
Third Sunday in Lent.....	Mar. 12
Daylight Saving Time begins	
WOW Bible Study.....	Mar. 14
Lifelight: Haggai/Zechariah/Malachi	
Dorcas Circle Quilters.....	Mar. 15
OWLS.....	Mar. 16
St. Patrick's Day.....	Mar. 17
Fourth Sunday in Lent.....	Mar. 19
Fifth Sunday in Lent.....	Mar. 26
WOW Bible Study.....	Mar. 28
Lifelight: Haggai/Zechariah/Malachi	
Dorcas Circle Quilters.....	Mar. 29



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Prove it!

In *Jesus Christ, Superstar*, King Herod mocks the bound prisoner who's brought to his courtyard. "So, you are the Christ. You're the great Jesus Christ!" he sings. "Prove to me that you're no fool: Walk across my swimming pool!"

Likewise, the Pharisees demand evidence that Jesus is speaking for God (see Matthew 12:38). It's easy to poke fun at them, but have you ever faced a tough decision and thought, "If only God would give me a sign"?

Jesus tells the religious teachers about

the "sign of Jonah," a metaphor for His upcoming death and resurrection. Though it's meant to be a sign for all, not everyone accepts it as truth. Luke 16:31 notes that if the rich man's brothers weren't predisposed to listen to Moses and the prophets, then "they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead" (NIV). Signs are useful only to people who accept their messages and act accordingly.

— adapted from *The Wired Word*

A God with scars

If anyone has ever asked you why a loving God allows suffering, you've probably developed a theodicy. That's a fancy word for defending belief in divine goodness despite evil's existence. Theologians who tackle this profound mystery note that God himself wasn't spared from pain. Despite His sinlessness as true God, Jesus endured crucifixion as true man. As proof of

that sacrifice, His body was scarred.

Those marks feature in a poem by English pastor Edward Shillito. Seeing wounded combatants return from World War I, he wondered how the Gospel could seem like good news to them. When Shillito realized that Christianity alone features a God who suffered, he wrote "Jesus of the Scars" to offer comfort and hope. The poem concludes:

The other gods were strong; but Thou wast weak;
They rode, but Thou didst stumble to a throne;
But to our wounds only God's wounds speak;
And not a god has wounds, but Thou alone.

— *The Newsletter Newsletter*

Pray without ceasing

First's Board of Elders is offering congregational members the opportunity to participate in a prayer vigil on Saturday, April 1, the day before Palm Sunday.

Members are encouraged to watch for a sign-up form to be posted in March, and to sign up for a time slot.

Prayer request slips are available at the church, and will be gathered by the Elders and made available at the vigil.

This quiet time spent with our Lord in praying for the concerns members have

expressed on the prayer request slips is very meaningful.

If you have never participated in a prayer vigil, please consider setting aside a half-hour, or an hour, to take the concerns of your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to God. You will be blessed.



SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, March 26
following late worship service

**Meet the babies...
... and their moms!**
in the Fellowship Hall

Women of First Lutheran! Here's your chance to
OOOOOOH and AAAAAAH to your heart's desire!

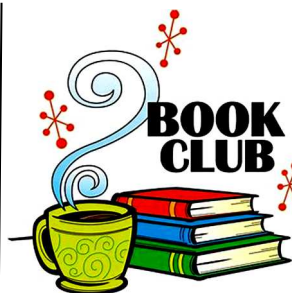
WHY? God has added four new children to His
Kingdom through Holy Baptism and they are all
in our First Lutheran-Helena family!

WHAT? Enjoy lunch with your First Lutheran friends
while meeting these babies and their moms!

Guests of honor:

*Darcy and Gideon Goodson
Kate and Beatrice Johnson
Alex and Aurelia Klapmeier
Laurel and Clara Schmeltzer*

Please RSVP no later than Wednesday, March 22,
by calling/texting 406-439-7075; or by signing up
on the sheet posted in the Fellowship Hall.



First Edition Book Club ladies
will meet for luncheon and
discussion at 12:15 p.m. on
Saturday, March 4, at the home of
Tammy Anderson. Members
are currently reading *The Four
Winds* by Kristin Hannah.
Please RSVP to Tammy by
Wednesday, March 1, by calling
406-459-8762.

The April luncheon and discussion is scheduled for 12:15
p.m. on Saturday, April 1, at the home of Linda Fromm.
For the April meeting, the group will read *A Cup of Tears:
Escape from Siberia to a Life of Triumph in America* by
Florence Smith and Bonnie Kay Worley.

Please RSVP to Linda by Wednesday, March 29, by
calling or texting 406-459-3584.



TRINITY LUTHERAN CAMP

2023 Summer Camp Dates

June 19-21.....3rd/4th Grade Day Camp
June 21-23.....3rd/4th Grade Overnight Camp
June 25-30.....5th/6th Grade Camp
July 2-7.....7th/8th Grade Camp
July 9-14.....Servant Event Week
July 16-21.....5th-9th Grade Basketball Camp
July 23-28...9th-12th Grade High School Week

Registration Opens April 1!

For detailed information and to register:

www.trinitylutherancamp.org

Choose *Summer Camps 2023* on the menu

Camperships available!

Contact Mel Reiner: mel@trinitykalispell.org

A LOOK At Our Budget

A report from your Board of Finance

	January 2023	FY 2023 Y-T-D
Income (Church & School)	\$ 46,683.74	\$320,551.79
Expense (Church & School)	\$ 37,504.70	\$293,650.37
Net Income/Loss	\$ 11,179.04	\$ 26,901.42

The First Word

Remember: Set your clocks AHEAD
one hour before retiring
on Saturday, March 11!

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

Deadline for the April issue of the *First Word* is
Wednesday, Mar. 22. Place articles in the *First
Word* box in the church office or e-mail to:
lindafromm@mac.com



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The late, great theologian **Erma Bombeck once wrote**, "In church the other Sunday I was intent on a small child who was turning around smiling at everyone. He wasn't gurgling, spitting, humming, kicking, tearing the hymnals, or rummaging through his mother's handbag. He was just smiling. Finally, his mother jerked him about and in a stage whisper that could be heard in a little theater off Broadway said, 'Stop grinning! You're in church' And with that she gave him a belt on his hindside and as the tears rolled down his cheeks added, 'that's better,' and returned to her prayers." She goes on to say "I wanted to grab this child with the tear-stained face and hold him close to me and tell him about my God. The God of joy. The smiling God. The God who had to have the sense of humor to have created the likes of us."

I suspect that many may wonder just **how much pleasure and joy is appropriate for Christians**. Confession, repentance, self-sacrifice are indeed dominate themes of the faith. Yet, the call to 'rejoice' is also repeated throughout the Bible. Still, we have taken this whole business of pleasure and joy out of God's hands. Which may well account for why we are such a "pleasure-seeking" people and yet such a joyless people as well.



Why do we seek God's answers in the pits of suffering yet not think of God for guidance and wisdom when it comes to our pleasure? In many ways we have reversed the dilemma of Job. Job knew that all good came from God and was puzzled why he was getting bad. **We seem to say that all bad comes from God and look to ourselves and to the world for pleasure and joy.**

When we divorce our search for pleasure and joy from the will of God, **we inevitably look for pleasure in unfaithful ways**. The Bible is filled with examples of people who try to find pleasure apart from God only to be disappointed if not ruined. The clearest example may be that of Solomon. He could be called, "The Pleasure King." Solomon tells his own sad story saying, "I thought in my heart, 'Come now, I will test [myself] with pleasure to find out what is good... I refused my heart no pleasure. But in the end, "everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.'"

Solomon was searching for joy under the sun rather than in the Son. The futility of his experience is repeated as many pursue what promises pleasure apart from God only to find that it brings disappointment, meaninglessness, even despair. Never before has there been so much available for the purpose of providing pleasure. And never before has there been so much despair among so many. So much of the pleasure that this world offers displays a sign that reads, "Free Admission." It costs nothing to get in, but a great deal to get out: A ruined character; a guilty conscience; a broken relationship.

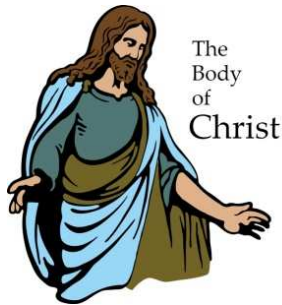
Compare Solomon to his father, David. **David's search for pleasure is in the Lord**. David writes, "You are my Lord, apart from you I have no good thing." David understood that **all goodness including that which gives pleasure comes from God**. He writes, "You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand." (Psalm 16:1,11). The testimony of David is that life is filled with joy when it is lived in the Lord. Unending and satisfying pleasure comes from the Lord. In Him we can satisfy our desire for pleasure and our hunger for true joy.

The angels announce "joy to the world, the Lord has come." Jesus offers us "complete joy." He says, "As the Father has loved me so I have loved you. Now remain in my love. **I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.**"



The Christian faith is not a theology of sorrow and sadness. It is a theology of joy! Real joy is to be found in a faith relationship with the One who has established true joy through His death and resurrection. I pray that we will each experience that joy during the Lenten and Easter seasons. **Only in our crucified and risen Savior will our joy and pleasure ever be "complete!"**

Joy-Fully Yours in Christ,
Pastor Miller



The Body of Christ

Wednesdays at 12:10 and 6:30 p.m.

In this series of Lenten Worship and Messages, God's people, who are the Body of Christ in God's world, are invited to meditate thoughtfully on the human body of Christ with which our Lord first brought God's saving love to the world.

- + *The Feet of Christ* + to lead the way +
- + *The Hands of Christ* + to help and heal +
- + *The Mouth of Christ* + to speak God's Word +
- + *The Ears of Christ* + to hear our prayers +
- + *The Eyes of Christ* + to see our needs +
- + *The Heart of Christ* + beating with love +

Amazing Grace – How Sweet the Sound!

Sundays at 8:15 and 11 a.m.



On this 250th anniversary year of the writing of "Amazing Grace"

We tie the words of this beloved song to our lives today as Christ's disciples.

Those in the Bible who experienced the amazing grace of God

Help us to realize that though we once were lost in sin, we have been found by Jesus, and though we once were blind to God's mercy, we now can see His love at work in us through our Savior's death and resurrection.

We'll find comfort that **king David** confessed his sins to God and received **amazing grace** in God's forgiveness through Jesus, the Savior.

We'll see God's **amazing grace** at work in the life of **the prophet Isaiah**, who proclaimed to God's people the salvation to come through the Suffering Servant.

We'll hear of the great love of a father who lavished **amazing grace** on his **Prodigal Son**, a picture of our Heavenly Father's lavish compassion toward us.

We'll witness Jesus bringing sight to **a man born blind**,
Giving the man the added spiritual vision
to see the **amazing grace** of God
found in Jesus, who heals us all.

We'll listen to Jesus teach **a woman at a well**
all about His **amazing grace** poured out for us abundantly,
which satisfies our thirsty souls for all eternity.



SPRINGTIME SNACKS



Whip up a plate of these cute, healthy treats!

What you need:

- Celery sticks
- Cherry tomatoes
- Cucumber circles
- Olives
- Cream cheese spread
- Fresh basil leaves (optional)
- Adult help

What you do:


1. Have an adult help you wash and cut the veggies.
2. Spread cream cheese inside the celery rods.
3. Place a cucumber circle upright in the cream cheese to make a bug body.
4. Add the tomato as a head.
5. Arrange basil leaves on a plate and place the veggie bugs on them.
6. Making different-shaped bugs with your favorite veggies. Enjoy!




A seasonal reminder


Signs of spring remind us of God's promises.


Directions: Use the picture code and clues to complete Isaiah 61:11, NIV.


 plants grow here

 to coil and jump
(also a season of the year)

 to expand and get bigger

 seeds are planted in this

 when watered, these make plants

 another word for seedling


For as the _____ makes the _____

_____ come up and a _____ causes

_____ to _____, so the

Sovereign LORD will make righteousness

and praise _____ up before all nations.


ISAIAH 61:11, NIV

Answer: soil, sprout, garden, seeds, grow, spring

Try these Irish riddles with your family on St. Patrick's Day!

What do you call a leprechaun's vacation home? *A lepre-condo.*

Who can catch a bad leprechaun? *An under-clover cop.*

Why do leprechauns recycle? *They like to go "green."*

Why did the leprechaun go outside? *To sit on his paddy-o.*



The gift of joy

— from your Board of Stewardship

“And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy” (Matt. 2:9b-10).

Did you know that stewardship can lead you to know true joy? For those who have been in the Church for any length of time, this might sound really surprising. But the Wise Men show us this joy.

The Wise Men did not know joy because of what they had done. They knew the joy of receiving the gift of God! The creation, through the star, had caused them to set out on a journey. It brought them to an unwitting and unwilling Herod. But what finally pointed them to their ultimate goal, the King of the Jews? It was the Word.

The Word of God that the scribes had quoted to Herod proved to be true. They had found the palace of the king!

But it was no palace. It was a place. It was a simple home. The Lord had come to dwell among His people in the simplest of ways. Through stewardship of creation and Word, they were led to find this place. Pointed to the truth by the management of Word and world, the Wise Men found joy. This joy is more than a feeling. It is a person. The joy comes from meeting Jesus.

Your stewardship of God's simple gifts is used by Him to guide others to Jesus. Most times, that is your faithful

financial support of our work together in the Church. Other times, it is found in the simple acts of generosity that show the people around you that you have the joy of knowing Jesus. This takes money, time, and a willingness to be in the Word and at the Lord's Table. You can only steward the joy of God's presence when you are present with Him. That is where you find the joy the Wise Men know. It is that joy, as steward, that you are called to give to others!

Yes, you too can be a steward of the Wise Men's joy. The simple gift of God's Word will show this to you. This year, make it a priority to be in God's house and at His Table weekly. Then you will know the contagious joy of being a steward of God's simple gifts!



Prayer

Lord God, you led the Wise Men by a star, first to Jerusalem and then to Jesus. You have also led us to Jesus through the leading of faithful stewards of the Gospel and Your creation. This gives us the same joy that the Wise Men knew so long ago in Bethlehem. Grant us Your grace to be radically generous with the joy You have given us in Jesus so that we might give that joy away as well! Amen.

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

March Birthdays

March 1

Leland Anderson
Jennifer Rickman
Rick Sparks

March 2

Ivy Brott
Laura Laposky

March 5

Sandra Isaak
Karlynn Miner

March 6

Jan Davis
Walli Johnson
Dean Wollan

March 7

Kendra Houtari

March 8

Adam Bartels
Rebecca Baumann
Brian Johnson

March 10

Chris Matthews

March 11

Becky Bacon
Ron Stefanik

March 12

David Torgerson

March 13

Heather McIntosh

March 14

Kim Stueve

March 15

Anita Elvbakken
Trudy Sullivan

March 16

Nolan Carson
Jacob Meek

March 17

Eve Sieber

March 18

Liam McIntosh

March 19

Allen Keim

March 21

Karen Antonick
Traci Buck
Sean Frank

March 22

Lisa Tullis

March 25

Martin Baumann
Cassandra Cable
Tanner Hyypa
Bridget Michel

March 27

Theresa Heggset

March 29

Mike Hoxi

March 30

Julianne Jones

March 31

Karen Bjornson
Connie Onstad





Happenings at First Lutheran School



Director
Sue Taylor

Get, Set Teacher
Hanna Hollatz

Pre-Kindergarten Teacher
Lori Radtke

After School Care
Julia Hollatz/Pam Worthy/Jessie Belcourt

Pastor
Larry A. Miller

Our PreK students love ... love. Their love comes from Jesus and His love for them allows them to share it with others in their lives.

This is how they share their love.

HOW DO YOU SHOW YOUR LOVE FOR OTHERS?

Archie: So, I just give them a hug and do nice stuff.

Kamilah: I love them in my heart. I take care of them.

Averie: I love others because they love me.

Kylie: To hug them and love them. If they were sick, I would help heal them.

Brayden: By caring and sharing and being nice.

Kyson: I act nice. And one last thing . . . I love my mom and dad.

Charlotte: Hugging, and I will say, “I love you!”

Emery: If they get hurt, I pick them back up and give them a hug.

Sierra: I love to hug my mom and dad and even my sister. I share my cookies.

Westyn: I give my mom hugs—just hugs. And I do kind things.



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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!"

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

Join Dorcas Circle in celebrating quilting



The third Saturday in March is National Quilting Day. Dorcas Circle will observe this day by highlighting quilting techniques used to make the quilts donated to Lutheran World Relief, a non-governmental relief organization that has been distributing quilts since 1945.

Come by the quilt table in Ziegler Hall before Bible Study or Sunday School on Sunday, March 19. See how two layers of fabric are layered around batting, which is generously supplied through Thrivent Action Grants. Tie a few knots to help complete a quilt. Chat with some of the dozen women who quilt. Check the poster to see where quilts were distributed in 2022. Thank God for the many willing hands at churches in Helena and throughout the world that

make, pack, transport, and distribute quilts to people in need.

Dorcas Circle members thank First Lutheran for providing a place in which to work, to store supplies and quilts, and for donations of fabric, batting, sewing supplies and machines, and monetary donations. Our sentiment is like Paul's in Ephesians 1:16: *"I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers."*

thrivent[®]



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF