

# The *First* Word

Volume 24, Issue 7

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL — HELENA, MONTANA

May 2023

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

## Special May Dates

Church Worker Appreciation Week.....	May 1-7
Dorcas Circle Quilters.....	May 3
W.O.W. Bible Study.....	May 9
<i>Lifelight: Haggai/Zechariah/Malachi</i>	
First Edition Book Club.....	May 13
Home of Terry Wareham	
Mother's Day.....	May 14
The Ascension of Our Lord.....	May 18
OWLS	
Annual Art Show presented by.....	May 22
Sharon Hultin's art students	
The Day of Pentecost.....	May 28
Memorial Day.....	May 29
<b>NO CLASSES AT FLS CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</b>	

"I will pour out my Spirit  
on all people."

Joel 2:28, NIV



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## Second call for nominations for open positions on Mission & Ministry Council

In preparation for the annual Voters' Assembly meeting, which will be held in June 2023, MMC President Jason Mercer has issued a second call for nominations for officers and MMC at-large members to be elected at that meeting. The list of nominees will be closed at the time the meeting agenda and slate of candidates is distributed prior to the meeting.

Nominations are still open for the office of Vice President (for a 1-year term); Secretary (for a 2-year term); Treasurer (for a 2-year term); and four at-large members (two for a 1-year term, and two for a 2-year term). All terms will begin on July 1, 2023.

The office of Vice-President may be occupied only by a male voting member of the congregation (a voting member is a confirmed member, 18 year of age or older.) Basic duties of the Vice-President include presiding at all meetings of the MMC and/or the congregation when the President is absent, or when requested by the President to do so; initiating counsel with the President should a violation of policy occur; and leading the nominating committee for the election of officers and members of the MMC. The Vice-President does not automatically

move into the office of President.

Basic duties of the Secretary include maintaining minutes of all MMC and congregational meetings and documentation of MMC decisions; ensuring that all such minutes are kept on file in the church for future reference; conducting all correspondence of the MMC and congregational meetings; and being familiar with the Constitution and Bylaws.

Basic duties of the Treasurer are overseeing the financial records of the church; suggesting solutions for financial decisions regarding the church budget; preparing and presenting an annual church budget (spending plan) to be presented to the congregation at the annual voters' meeting; and being familiar with the Constitution and Bylaws.

Members of the MMC may not serve on other boards or committees of the church.

The MMC generally meets one evening each month, for approximately two hours.

If you feel that God is calling you to share your gifts by serving in one of these positions, please contact Jason. He may be reached by phone at (406)438-1182 or by email to: [jmercerc@m-m.net](mailto:jmercerc@m-m.net).



## Church Worker Appreciation Week

The Lutheran Church Extension Fund will celebrate the second annual Church Worker Appreciation Week May 1-7, and invites you to join LCEF in recognizing and celebrating the faithful church professionals of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, including pastors, DCEs, deaconesses, church musicians, teachers and new graduates who are fulfilling their calling to serve His Kingdom.

Page 5 of this issue includes an article titled *Church Worker Appreciation in the Bible*, written by Rev. Andrew R. Jones, who serves as pastor of First Lutheran Church and Preschool in Concord, California, an LCMS congregation.



All members and friends of First Lutheran Church and School are cordially invited to attend the annual showing of unique and amazing art works done by students in Sharon Hultin's art classes. The show is scheduled to run from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Monday, May 22, in the Fellowship Center at First, so mark your calendar and prepare to be amazed at art these students have created!

Sharon has been teaching art classes at First Lutheran since the early 1980s, when Pastor Tom van der Bloemen served as pastor. Her classes originally were located in Ziegler Hall and are now conducted in the Fellowship Center. Classes are held on Mondays and Tuesdays after regular school hours, and three classes are held on each of those days.

Sharon feels that teaching art is God's calling, and though she has been instructing art students at First for forty years, she still feels joy

watching her students, who range from six years old to high school age, and says the students feel comfortable in her classes.

She appreciates the way that First's members have welcomed her from the very beginning, and says she feels like part of our church family. She has been known to attend OWLS events and has even conducted art classes with OWLS members a couple times!

Beginning as a young girl, she liked to draw, and over the years took several classes to perfect her artistic skills. She graduated from Carroll College with a degree in elementary education, and early on substituted quite a bit in the Helena school system, mainly as an art teacher. She also taught for several years at the Trinity School in Canyon Creek, and at our own First Lutheran School once a month when we were able to offer upper (first through fifth) grades.



If your family includes a high school, alternative high school or college senior scheduled to graduate this year, *First Word* Editor Linda Fromm needs your help.

She would like to publish a list of 2023 graduates, their parents' names and the high school or college from which they will graduate.

If your student wishes to do so, it would also be great to list his or her plans for life after high school or college (work, college, travel, etc.).

Please e-mail your information to Linda at: [lindafromm@mac.com](mailto:lindafromm@mac.com) or put a copy in the *First Word* box in the church office or in Linda's mailbox in Ziegler Hall by Wednesday, May 17.

Congratulations to all First Lutheran graduates. May our gracious God go with you as you begin your next big adventure!



A report from your Board of Finance

	<u>March, 2023</u>	<u>FY 2023 Y-T-D</u>
Income (Church & School)	\$38,669.92	\$395,299.15
Expense (Church & School)	<u>\$27,703.99</u>	<u>\$361,518.77</u>
Gain/Loss	\$ 10,965.93	\$ 33,780.38

#### The First Word

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2231 Broadway  
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Rev. Larry A. Miller.....Pastor  
Linda Fromm.....Editor  
Shari Miller.....Calendar/Servant Schedule  
Volunteer Staff.....Printing/Collation

Deadline for the June *First Word* is Wednesday, May 17. Place articles in the *First Word* box in the church office or e-mail them to: [lindafromm@mac.com](mailto:lindafromm@mac.com)

# Pastor's *Potpourri* . . .

a mixture of comments concerning our life together in Christ!



to our **Lenten Characters**  
for our 2023 Midweek  
and Holy Week Services

David - Brian Buhr  
Robert Summerer - Isaiah  
Prodigal Son - Arthur Worthy  
Chuck Ballard  
Jason Mercer - Man Born Blind  
Woman at the Well - Shari Miller  
Rick Northrup - Peter  
John - Marty Baumann  
Brian Buhr - Penitent Thief  
Brian Stueve  
Mary - Joyce Nachtsheim  
Darcy Goodson  
Jerry Michel - Paul

and to our musicians,  
**the Adult Choir, His Kids! and Shari Miller**

Your service was  
a blessing to us  
as we rejoiced in  
**God's Amazing Grace**  
in Jesus Christ,  
our Lord!



+ *The Worship  
Service* +

Receive the booklet:

**"A Simple Explanation  
of the Church Service"**

**Sundays, May 7 and 14** (Mother's Day)

and work through the parts of the service,  
hearing about each part  
as we worship our loving and saving God!

## Older Wiser Loving Saints

(55+ ish)



### **Celebrating Christian Education**

(and lunching with  
our First Lutheran  
School students)

**Thursday, May 21  
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

Watch for all the details!

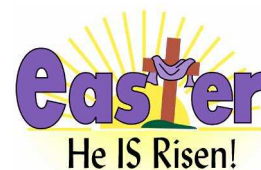
What a difference **Easter**  
*makes* in our hearts and lives!

"Pastor, why do we respond '**He IS risen**' instead of 'He HAS risen'?" a member of our congregation asked. "Isn't it a fact that Jesus HAS risen from the dead?"

Indeed, that is THE Easter fact: that after dying for our sins, paying our price on Calvary, Jesus has risen!

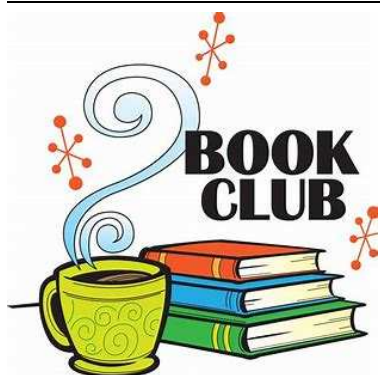
But the fact of Jesus suffering and dying and rising again has **an even greater, longer-lasting, (eternity-lasting) meaning**, which lives on beyond the mere actions He, our living God, performed on the cross and through the open tomb! **He IS living** after dying for us and rising again! **He IS risen** for now and for eternity! And His Word assures us that because He IS risen and living, **we too, if we believe in Him, shall rise and live with Him and the other believers forever!**

Jesus didn't just rise,  
He IS risen, and alive, and  
our celebration of Easter  
continues on, eternally!  
Blessings!



*Pastor Miller*





First Edition Book Club members will meet at 12:15 p.m. on Saturday, May 13, at the home of Terry Wareham. The group is currently reading—and will discuss—*A Noble Calling* by Rhona Weaver. Ladies who wish to carpool will meet at the home of

Joyce Nachtsheim at 11:30 a.m. that morning. **Please RSVP to Terry by Wednesday, May 10, by calling or texting 406-697-6612**

Members will meet at 12:15 p.m. on Saturday, June 3, at the home of Nancy Bowe. For the June meeting, members will read—and discuss—*Let the Great World Spin* by Colum McCann. **Please RSVP to Nancy by Wednesday, May 31, by calling 406-449-4042.**

## Quilters call it quits

First's Dorcas Circle quilters, who have been busy since last September crafting more than 50 quilts for Lutheran World Relief, plus many presented as gifts to infants and toddlers baptized in our own congregation, are wrapping up for the year. The group's final meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 3. Quilts will be boxed and LWR will pick up the boxes on May 12. The quilts will be distributed wherever they are needed in our big world.

We thank those who sew quilts and school kits (25 this year), cut squares, and donate fabric.

Quilting will resume on Wednesday, September 6, 2023, and all are welcome to join us!



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF



## BIRTHDAYS

### May 1

Shaimera Best  
Chelsey Gochis  
Julie Johnson  
Zachariah LaForge

### May 2

Dennis Brown  
Levi Hollatz  
William McIntosh IV

### May 3

Beverly Blokzyl  
Avery Hollatz

### May 4

Richard Morgan

### May 5

Mel Kuehne  
Lynn Wagner

### May 6

Marvin Dye  
Miranda Lawson  
Tom Mayer

### May 7

Levi Brown  
Marylin Smith

### May 8

Wylie Rucker

### May 9

Skyler McIntosh  
Derick Mohs

### May 11

Mark Meek

### May 12

Kelly Koenig

### May 13

Linda Fromm  
Zyrus Hartford  
Trenton Sobeck

### May 14

Kelly Blackford  
Roman Glenn Jr.  
Russ Warren

### May 15

Rebecca Bjerke

### May 16

Thea McCarthy  
Ellie Mercer  
Cheryl Sobeck

### May 18

Randy Sobeck

### May 19

Travis Hyypa

### May 20

Nicholas Hill

### May 21

Thom Warsinski

### May 23

Oliver Sieber  
Jennifer Woehl

### May 26

Kolton Hyypa

### May 27

Thelma Gossett  
Everett Hollatz

### May 28

Melissa Miner  
Shirleen Pape

### May 29

Todd Boucher  
Robert Fox  
Robert Janes

### May 30

Jeanette Talley

### May 31

Matthew Ellwein



## Come just as you are

As a young pastor, Stan Purdum de-husked black walnuts one Saturday, not realizing his hands would be badly stained. They looked filthy, he recalls, and the marks would not wash off; they'd have to wear off. Then Purdum realized he'd be serving Holy Communion the next day.

Before distributing the elements, the pastor apologized to congregants, explaining that his hands were washed but just stained. Years later, Purdum reflected: "Now that I have a fuller grasp of theology under my belt, I think a better thing

for me to say would have been, 'Nobody comes to Communion with clean hands.'"

We're all unworthy to receive Jesus' body and blood, but that's exactly why He offers it. Thanks be to God for redeeming and forgiving us — wiping away the stain of our sins!

—adapted from *The Wired Word*  
*The Newsletter Newsletter*

## Church Worker Appreciation in the Bible

— by Rev. Andrew R. Jones

In an article posted on the Internet on October 27, 2021, Pastor Jones, in writing about Church Worker Appreciation Month (October 2021), noted: “I thought it would be

worthwhile to look at a few examples in the Scriptures where God’s prophets and apostles, and Jesus Himself, receive appreciation—or a lack of

appreciation. Perhaps as we follow them in service to God and neighbor, we can learn something from these examples.”

### — MOSES —

Moses has plenty of struggles with being appreciated by those God called him to lead. When Moses returns to Egypt in Exodus 4, he gathers the elders of Israel together. Aaron proclaims what the Lord has spoken, and Moses performs miraculous signs before the people. This is the response: “*And the people believed; and when they heard that the LORD had visited the people of Israel and that He had seen their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshiped*” (Exodus 4:31). Moses’ ministry begins with some appreciation. But in the next chapter, the lack of appreciation comes through.

Pharaoh refuses to let the people of Israel go and burdens the Israelites by forcing them to continue making

bricks. But now Pharaoh will not provide straw—one necessary material to make bricks. The people say to Moses, “*The LORD look on you and judge, because you have made us stink in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us*” (Exodus 5:21). Moses’ response is to turn to the Lord and ask, “*O Lord, why have You done evil to this people? Why did You ever send me?*” (Exodus 5:22).

One of the things that delight church workers is when God’s people believe God’s Word and worship Him. One of the things that hurt church workers is when they believe their actions have caused God’s people pain.

Moses has a long tenure leading God’s people. There is a lot of

grumbling from the people of Israel about food and water and many other things. And there is a lot of grumbling from Moses, often about the people he is leading. But there is also a lot of joy between Moses and Israel. The Israelites give so generously to the construction of the tabernacle that they have to be “restrained” from giving (Exodus 36:1–7). And when Moses dies in Moab without entering the Promised Land, the people weep for thirty days (Deuteronomy 34:1–8).

Through the struggle between Moses and the people, we see that there is great love between them, even when there is great struggle and grumbling. This persevering love often exists between church workers and congregations.

### — PAUL —

The way that Paul begins and ends his letters tends to reveal his relationship with the congregation. Consider the difference between Galatians and Philippians. After a brief introduction noting who the letter is from and to, Paul says this to the Galatians: “*I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel*” (Galatians 1:6).

Whereas Paul says this to the Philippian church: “*It is right for me to*

*feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment*” (Philippians 1:7-9).

Paul is devastated when the Galatian churches he and Barnabas planted in

Acts 13–14 desert the Gospel. However, Paul is warmed with affection for the Philippian Church, which has become partners with him in sharing the Gospel.

Church workers feel the same way when their people desert the Gospel. They are devastated, heartbroken. And church workers feel the same way when their people partner with them in the Gospel. They are overjoyed. Both emotions come from a sense of love and care for God and His people.

### — JESUS —

One of many people’s favorite stories about Jesus is when people are bringing children to Jesus so that He might pray for them. The disciples rebuke the people, but Jesus says, “*Let the little children come to Me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven*” (Matthew 19:14).

Consider how this might apply in today’s world with church workers and their congregations. The disciples seem to be acting out of respect for Jesus. It’s almost like they’re saying “Don’t

bother Jesus! He’s got more important things to do!”

Church workers are often the last to hear about an illness, injury, surgery, or crisis in a congregation. The frequent refrain behind this is, “I know you are busy. I didn’t want to bother you.” Church workers do tend to be busy. But if their busyness leads people to think they cannot approach them, that is not a good thing. Jesus does not want anyone to think they are not able to come to Him. He seeks to minister to the

overlooked and the marginalized so frequently.

Church workers are not perfect like Jesus is. They can show emotions of frustration, and may feel unnecessarily bothered by many situations. But some of the most endearing ways to show appreciation to a church worker is to bother them, share who you are and how you are with honesty, and entrust them to care for you in life’s joys and challenges.



# 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

## Why send your child to a Lutheran school?

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's School Ministry assists, equips and uplifts school educators, district staff, and especially education executives and congregational leaders so that through them children may be equipped as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Here is why you should send your child to a Lutheran elementary school. Lutheran schools:

- Are **driven by a commitment to the Gospel** and focused on a mission of bringing hope and healing to students and families.
- Are **governed by board members who clearly understand their roles** and focus on the vision and board policies that effectively govern the operation of the school.
- **Meet or exceed state and national academic standards** at all grade levels.
- Have **educators who model visionary leadership**. They practice stewardship of resources, build up others and empathize with others.
- Have **educators who model servant leadership**.
- Have **educators who model spiritual leadership**. They study God's Word, share their personal faith story, apply Law and Gospel appropriately, exhibit a passion for ministry, act courageously, equip God's people for service, care for others, demonstrate integrity, and pray.



## Lutheran Early Childhood Centers and Elementary Schools

More than 1,200 early childhood centers and preschools are operated by congregations and Christian day schools within the LCMS. More than 87,000 children, ranging in ages from infant/toddler to 5 years of age, are involved in these programs.

Additionally, our congregations operate 880 elementary

schools which serve approximately 113,000 students. More than 650 early childhood centers and elementary schools are accredited under the National Lutheran School Accreditation program.

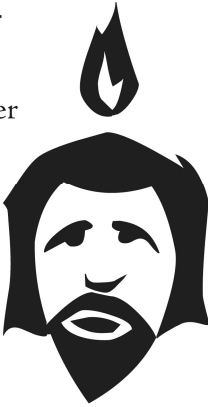
Source: <https://www.lcms.org/school-ministry>

# Spirit SPINNER

For Pentecost, make a thaumatrope, a spinning toy that creates an optical illusion of motion.

## What you need:

- White paper
- Cup
- Scissors
- Pencil and markers
- Plastic drinking straw
- Glue



## What you do:

1. Using the cup's circular shape, trace two identical circles on the paper. Carefully cut them out.
2. In pencil, draw a person's head on one circle. Then place the blank circle on top and use the image beneath to guide you in drawing a flame above the head.
3. Color the two images with markers.
4. Apply glue to the backs of the circles and sandwich the top of the straw between them so it looks like a lollipop. Let dry.
5. Roll the straw quickly between your hands to view a mini motion picture.

# PUZZLE



## Wind, fire & spirit

Acts 2 describes the amazing events of Pentecost, when the apostles received the Holy Spirit.

**Directions:** The last letter(s) of each word is the beginning letter of the next. Fill in the missing words to complete Acts 2:1-4, NIV.

1. HEAV
2. ABLE
3. AY OF PENTECOS
4. ONGUE
5. PIRI
6. OGETHE
7. ES
8. ONGUE
9. A
10. IND



"When the \_\_\_\_\_ came, they were all \_\_\_\_\_ in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent \_\_\_\_\_ came from \_\_\_\_\_ and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They \_\_\_\_\_ what seemed to be \_\_\_\_\_ of fire that separated and came to \_\_\_\_\_ on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy \_\_\_\_\_ and began to speak in other \_\_\_\_\_ as the Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ them."

**ACTS 2:1-4, NIV**

Answer: 1. heaven, 2. enabled, 3. day of Pentecost, 4. tongues, 5. Spirit, 6. together, 7. rest, 8. tongues, 9. saw, 10. wind

## Jokes only a mother could love

Why is a computer so smart?  
*It listens to its motherboard.*

Why do mother kangaroos hate rainy days?  
*Because their kids have to play inside!*

Why did you chop the joke book in half?  
*Mom said to cut the comedy.*

What did the mother rope say to her child?  
*"Don't be knotty."*



First Lutheran Church & School  
2231 Broadway  
Helena, MT 59601

Phone: (406)442-5367  
Fax: (406)442-5285  
School Phone: (406)442-6913  
Website: [www.firstlutheranhelena.org](http://www.firstlutheranhelena.org)  
E-mail: [churchoffice@firstlutheranhelena.org](mailto:churchoffice@firstlutheranhelena.org)



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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

# The gift of Jesus

*“For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch” (Isaiah 62:1).*

**For too long** stewardship has been a quiet thing, often thought of as something only between “me and Jesus.” Silent stewardship is less than faithful. In a desire to not want to seem “holier than thou” or that we are trying to make ourselves look better than we really are, we miss out on a powerful component of stewardship of the Gospel. Silent stewardship isn’t as contagious as visible stewardship.

Silent stewardship flies in the face of our call to make disciples of all nations. If someone had a cure for cancer but kept it to themselves, this selfishness would be viewed as criminal. To know how to end suffering and death and doing nothing to share it would be the height of irresponsibility.

In the same way, the steward can’t keep silent! Now, this is not a call to make stewardship about us. Faithful stewardship is always about Jesus. But to hid the stewardship of the light of the Gospel under the bushel basket of false humility is not good either. As faithful stewards today, we visibly live out our stewardship in such a way that it points to Jesus.

The message of Jesus and the righteousness He has won for us is a torch that burns brightly in our sin-darkened

## — from your Board of Stewardship

world. While not talking about amounts and effort in stewardship, it is about pointing to the sufficiency of Jesus and His stewardship of His life, death and resurrection for us. As we live as faithful stewards of creation and joyfully crediting it all to the Lord, others see it. In this, they too will see Jesus and His righteousness for them! We can’t keep this quiet!

### Prayer

Lord of creation, Your voice thundered into chaos and created everything we have. Your Word became flesh and we beheld glory. By Your grace, do not allow us to remain silent in proclaiming the Gospel. Lead us to be faithful and generous stewards. In this, keep us from being silent as You lead us to point others to Jesus so that they know the joy that has been freely given to us. Amen.

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

**Stewardship**—it’s not just about giving money.  
It’s about giving **everything**.

And serve each other according to the gift each person has received, as good managers of God’s diverse gifts. —1 Peter 4:10, CEB

