

The *First* Word

Volume 24, Issue 8

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL — HELENA, MONTANA

June 2023

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

Special June—July Dates

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| First Edition Book Club..... | June 3 |
| Home of Nancy Bowe | |
| Trinity Sunday..... | June 4 |
| FLS end-of-year performance..... | June 9 |
| Field Day, and last day of classes | |
| Flag Day..... | June 14 |
| OWLS..... | June 15 |
| Last day for FLS staff..... | June 16 |
| Father's Day..... | June 18 |
| First Day of Summer..... | June 21 |
| Presentation of Augsburg..... | June 25 |
| Confession | |
| Independence Day..... | July 4 |

Watch Announcements for all info on Annual Voters' Assembly meeting

Because the church's Bylaws require that the date of the Annual Voters' Assembly meeting, including the complete agenda for the meeting, and the slate of candidates to be elected to positions on the Mission and Ministry Council and the Board of Elders be published at the same time, final details for that meeting were not finalized until the May 23 MMC meeting and so could not be included in this edition of The *First* Word.

important information. The MMC thanks you for your understanding.



Please watch the Announcements beginning on Sunday, May 28, for this

a godly Father is:



Faithful, to God and Family.
Able, to discern God's will in trying times and good times.
Thankful, for all the joys and trials of life.
Happy, no matter what the life brings.
Enthusiastic, about a life lived with purpose.
Righteous, rock-solid in heart and mind, from a growing relationship with Jesus.

For these things and so many more we praise God for our Fathers, this Father's Day and always.

Our Helena community is Price-Less

Reduce, Recycle, Refresh, Rejuvenate! All these things can be accomplished when you plan **NOW** to contribute to the Board of Human Care **GARAGE SALE**, set for **Saturday, September 9, 2023.**

Your no longer needed or wanted items will become someone else's treasures, and they really are **TREASURES** because we will again use a **PRICE-LESS** strategy to earn funds to share with community organizations, including God's Love, Good Samaritan, Florence Crittenton Home, Options Clinic, Family Promise,

and with individuals with developmental disabilities and members of First Lutheran Church. Help spread the word about this event to your family and friends—it's a great way for them to learn what we do to practice our faith!



In addition to donating items, please watch for other ways you can help. Remember—this will be a **PRICE-LESS** opportunity for you to get involved and meet your First Lutheran family. The bonds of faith we share in our Lord, Jesus Christ, are **PRICE-LESS** because **HE GAVE HIS LIFE** to pay for our **SALVATION!**

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The Nachtsheim family would be blessed to have you help Bruce (Butch) celebrate his 80th birthday on Sunday, July 23, at the Nachtsheim home at 2306 Country Club Avenue, between 4 and 7 p.m. Come when you can, and stay as long as you can. We will be barbecuing, playing cornhole, and enjoying great fellowship.

No gifts, please, but cards would be fun. The greatest gift would be your company!

To RSVP, please call 406-459-9002, by Wednesday, July 19. We look forward to hearing from you and having you join us on July 23!



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

Because of God's love for us, we can love one another. Our First Lutheran students share some of their favorite thoughts related to their love for their moms.

Archie: I appreciate that she plays with me. We play super fun games.

Avery: My mom does a lot of work, and I just want to help her. She tries her best to do a lot.

Brayden: My mom cares about me, and she is kind. And nice. Kind heart. She cooks really well.

Charlotte: She hugs me! And she loves me. She plays beautiful music.

Emery: My mom is awesome. She helps me with stuff. She helps me clean my room.

Kamilah: Mom is sweet. I like it when I start a new school, and she helps me meet my teacher.

Kylie: She helps me. Yesterday she just cleaned my room. Well, it wasn't that dirty!

Kyson: I like my mom because she helps me clean up my room. She is nice to me very much.

Sierra: What I appreciate for my mom is the birds. The birds look so beautiful in my office. They are in a cage.

Westin: Mom is helpful for me. She likes playing with me sometimes.

Beckham: She loves me. She helps me to not hurt others.



The students in the Get Set class share some of the activities they enjoy with their moms: Playing board games, playing Legos together, playing paw patrol, picking flowers, playing Barbies, cooking cupcakes together, playing outside, and running around and playing soccer ball. These kids know how to help make mom happy with flowers, hugs, sunshine, pictures, roses, and kisses.



A report from your Board of Finance

| | <u>April, 2023</u> | <u>FY 2023 Y-T-D</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Income (Church & School) | \$51,220.05 | \$444,094.20 |
| Expense (Church & School) | <u>47,160.10</u> | <u>408,678.87</u> |
| Gain/Loss | \$ 4,059.95 | \$ 35,415.33 |

The First Word

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

There will be NO First Word in July.
Deadline for the August issue is
Wednesday, July 19. Place articles in TheFirst
Word box in the church office or e-mail them to:
lindafromm@mac.com



just soaking in the sun and God's creation, you could drive for a while.

And then BAM!!!! You're jarred from the dream of smooth country roads by a massive pothole! You continue to drive along, praying the tire sensor light on your dash doesn't come on, and BAM!!! Another pothole! Paying more attention now, you might realize that in order to miss all the potholes, you'd have to swerve back and forth, from side to side.



Isn't this how life feels sometimes? You're going along and BAM!!!! A heart attack, cancer, a stroke, a broken bone. You're going along and BAM!!! A close friend or family member dies. You're going along and BAM!!! A car accident. You're going along and BAM!!! The roof needs replacing, siding has been blown off your house, a tree falls over and hits a building. BAM!!! BAM!!! BAM!!!

I envision Moses and Joshua feeling this way as they led the Israelites in the wilderness and around the Promised Land. God freed the Israelites from the Egyptians through the Red Sea and BAM!!! The Israelites are soon complaining and grumbling to God about how life was so much better for them in Egypt because they had food to eat. God provided manna and quail and things were good for a while. And then BAM!!! More grumbling, more complaining, more whining about how pitiful things were for them.



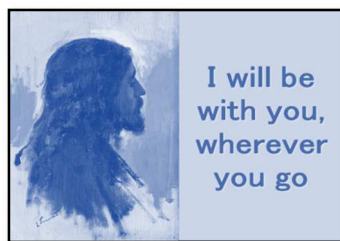
It's no wonder Joshua had some anxiety in being the next leader of the Israelites after Moses died. Not only was he in charge of leading millions of people into the Promised Land, he also knew how the people were, how they didn't always listen and trust in God's Word and command.

Pothole after pothole after pothole, Moses got frustrated with the Israelites and didn't follow God's command, and so he was not able to enter into the Promised Land. Pothole after pothole after pothole, Joshua was just as frustrated with the people and their lack of trust and dedication to God.

Toward the end of his life, in Joshua 24, he basically tells them, *"Listen! You've got two choices: You can follow the gods of your forefathers which they worshiped while back in Egypt or ... you can serve God. It's up to you, **but for me and my household, we will serve the LORD**"* (Joshua 24:14-15 - paraphrased).

Joshua is told three times before Moses dies and three times before he leads the Israelites into the Promised Land to **"be strong and courageous"**. This journey for Joshua was not going to be easy.

Our Christian life isn't always easy either. The writer of Psalm 55 says, ***Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved*** (55:22). Peter says ***cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you*** (1 Peter 5:7). Paul says, ***Bear one another's burdens*** (Galatians 6:2). Matthew records Jesus saying, ***"Come to me, all who labor and are heavily laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light"*** (11:28-30).



The road to paradise with Christ can be rough, have hills and curves, isn't easy, and have potholes. But as we travel this road, we have One who walks along with us. With the

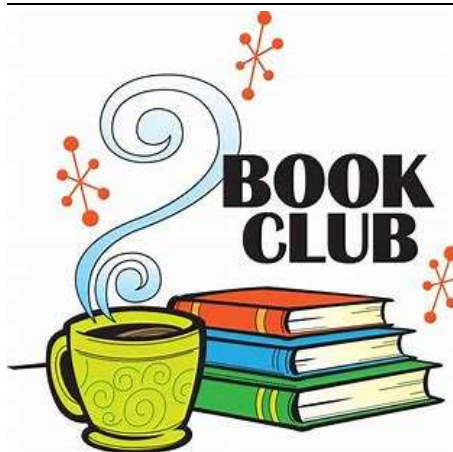
Holy Spirit living and dwelling in the hearts of Christians, Christ walks along with us on this road and leads and guides us to a time and place where the streets will be smooth. In the new creation to come when Christ returns, John writes in Revelation 21 that ***the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass*** (21:21).

As we live and move and have our being in Christ, **let's remember we are not alone**, for God goes with us! Let's rejoice in knowing that we can call on Him at any time along our life journey. With our living Savior with us, there is no need to be anxious about when we hit the next pothole, **for He will help us through**, all the way to eternity!



**Traveling with you,
with our living Savior,
and His Word,**

Pastor Miller



First Edition Book Club members will meet at 12:15 p.m. on Saturday, June 3, at the home of Nancy Bowe.

Members are reading—and will discuss—*Let the Great World Spin* by Colum McCann.

This will be the last regular meeting for the year. Ladies are asked to be

thinking about books they would like to suggest for consideration for next year's reading list.

Please RSVP to Nancy by Wednesday, May 31, at 406-449-4042.



We Give Thanks to God
for our **Choir Members**
HIS Kids! | Chancel Choir

Cards 4 Kids offers new line of cards celebrating Fourth of July and summer

Are you saddened by the state of the country? Do you wish to reaffirm the importance of God in our culture?

This year I have created a new line of greeting cards celebrating the Fourth of July and also the joys of summer. All cards have a Scripture verse inside and are uplifting, giving encouragement to the receiver. These are suitable for friends, veterans, grandchildren, etc.

Price is 50 cents per card, and the new cards will be available beginning on Sunday, June 11, and on sale through Sunday, July 2. Proceeds from all sales go to the First Lutheran Youth here at church.

I hope you will consider witnessing your faith through a simple greeting this summer.

Janice Larison



Images shown are for illustrative purposes only.

Just like Dad

At the beginning of his ministry career, Jerry Steen supplemented his income by mixing animal feed. When his two young boys greeted him at home, they laughed at his dusty appearance before he headed to the shower.

"I didn't think too much of this until I was washing my car and saw my older son doing something very strange," Steen recalls. "He was picking up the gravel and stones in our drive and rubbing them into his pants." Curious, the father asked what the boy was doing. "I want to be dusty like you, Dad!" his son replied.

For Steen, that was an eye-opener. "I realized that if a child would look up to his father for being dusty and want to copy his father," he says, "a child could look up to his father and follow him for anything." What traits and qualities are you modeling and passing on — to your own kids and to anyone else who looks up to you?

— The Newsletter Newsletter



Summer is no excuse

Don't use summer as an excuse to skip church! By gathering in corporate worship, we obey God's command, become equipped for Christian living, and minister to our fellow pilgrims. Consider these tips for engaging in corporate worship.

First, show up — in person if you can. Examine your heart and your motivation for attending church. Lift up your eyes from earthly matters to focus on God.

Come prepared. Do you need to confess anything or remove any hindrance? As you worship, consider how each part of the service displays the gospel: greeting, singing, confessing, reading Scripture, hearing Bible-based teaching, praying, giving and communing.

Be careful not to compartmentalize corporate worship as separate from the rest of life. Instead, consider how you'll carry the experience into the coming week. Come ready to receive; then let that overflow fuel you for the days ahead. Come prepared to participate, knowing that worshipping together is a rehearsal for heaven. But most importantly? Just come.

—Monica L. Wilkinson
The Newsletter Newsletter



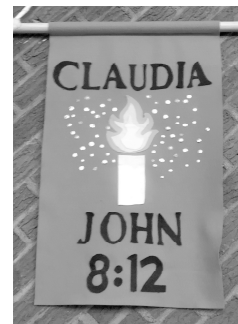
On Sunday, May 21, 2023, after much preparation and study, Claudia Lea Cook, daughter of Tom and Tami Cook, and Asher Gregory Hollatz, son of Aaron and Hanna Hollatz, were confirmed by Reverend Larry A. Miller.

We thank our gracious God for those who have served faithfully this year as Confirmation teachers: Bridget Michel, Shari Miller, Pastor Miller, Kathy Winslow (Pre-Confirmation teacher), and Sue Taylor (Youth Class leader).

Claudia Lea Cook

John 8:12

Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."



Asher Gregory Hollatz

Proverbs 30:5

Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.



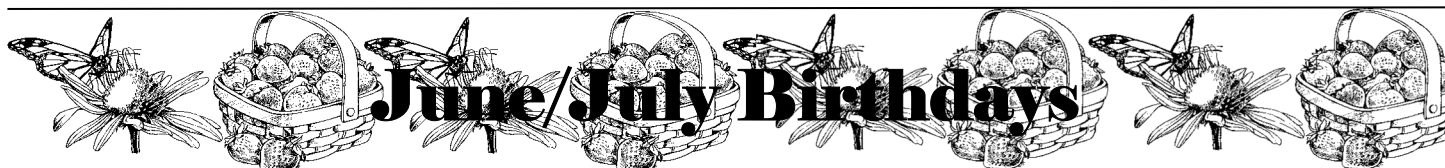
May our gracious God go with you, Claudia and Asher, as you go forth in your journey of faith.

Dual citizenship

For Christianity and democracy to work, both need responsible citizens. Consider what happens to a republic when its citizens won't run for public office, won't vote, won't work for the common good, duck paying taxes and mistreat others. Now consider what happens when Christians won't volunteer at the church, won't give, won't practice their faith, won't love their neighbors. Both our country and our faith need sincere practitioners. Nationally, we need a citizenry committed to making the ideals of liberty the practices of life in America. Christianity needs followers of Jesus committed to making the ideals of God's kingdom the practices of daily life.

This is not an either-or situation. Christians everywhere are citizens of two countries, one on earth and one in eternity. The kingdom of God is not yet fully come, but it's already in effect. Our two citizenships can neither be fully united nor fully separated. We cannot withdraw from the world and pretend we are somehow dwelling only in the kingdom of God now; nor can we simply embrace the world and assume earthly governments fulfill God's will. Those are extremes, and they are unbiblical.

—from a sermon by Stan Purdum
The Newsletter Newsletter



June 1

Aaron Hollatz

June 3

Pam Dye

June 4

Kelli Maxwell

June 5

Thomas Basinger

Nancy Westerbuhr

June 7

Camille Botteron

Dan O'Malley

June 8

Seth Brott

Randy Middlebrook

Elly Schmeltzer

Cliff Ulmer

June 11

Abbey Barnhart

Tammy Little Hicks

Nathan Nachtsheim

Randy Williams

June 13

Jayce Volpe

June 14

John Adair

Shirley Clearman

Melanie Maier

Skip Nicholls

June 17

Wanda Person

Daniel Warsinski

June 19

Ezekiel Hollatz

Theodore LaForge

June 20

Michael Bridegroom

Jeannie Glenn

Janet Tompkins

June 21

Mark Bartels

Rick Northrup

June 22

Ava Ellwein

Nora Keim

Jessie Pate

Kathy Rucker

Dale Wagner

June 23

Jenna Blair

June 24

Jim Talley

June 25

Louisa LaForge

June 26

Ela Shields

June 27

Pat Hartman

June 28

Barbara McNeil

June 29

Vickie Stefanik

June 30

Mykel O'Malley

Alexander Rose



July 1

Duane Westerbuhr

July 4

Asher Hollatz

Nancy Jenkins

July 5

Mary Casey

Crystal Nachtsheim

Kelley Shields

Susan Taylor

July 6

Sam Schmeltzer

July 7

CoraLee Kuehne

Samuel Yager

July 8

Robert Johnson

July 9

Garett Bacon

Spirit Hartford

July 10

Joleigh Mandera

July 11

Marge Bouldin

July 12

LeAnn Ferron

July 13

Lorrie Bridegroom

Ryan Clinch

James Hicks

July 14

Dorothy Goodson

Jon Spranget

July 15

Dean Belcourt

Traeton Duty

July 16

Betty Brewer

Elainah Veach

Emma Veach

July 18

Bryon Elvbakken

Laurie Hanson

July 19

Samantha Taylor

July 21

Lowell Bartels

Dagny Cannon

Elliott Cole

Dennis Giulio

Beatrice Johnson

Cheryl Summerer

July 22

Tiffani Eccleston

July 23

Jerry Michel

Emma Taylor

July 24

Dez Brown

Bruce Nachtsheim

July 26

Laurie Stelter

Debbie Sternberg

July 27

Pam Worthy

July 28

Thomas Leitzke

July 29

Amber Boucher

July 31

Joseph Warsinski



Class of 2023



Claire Cook

Claire will graduate from Capital High School on June 3, and will be attending Montana Tech to study nursing. Claire is the daughter of Tom and Tami Cook.



Gus Hanson

Gus graduated with honors on May 6 from the University of Montana/Western with a business administration degree and minors in accounting and outdoor industries. Gus is the son of Ryan and Laurie Hanson and the grandson of Larry Hanson.



Quinn Hanson

Quinn will graduate from Capital High School on June 3, and will be attending the University of Montana/Western to study business and play football. Quinn is the son of Ryan and Laurie Hanson and the grandson of Larry Hanson.



Lauren Hoxie

Lauren will graduate from Capital High School on June 3, Valedictorian, and will be attending Montana State University this fall to study Kinesiology to become a physical therapist. Lauren is the daughter of Mike and Kim Hoxie.

**GO WITH GOD, GRADUATES,
AS YOU START A NEW
CHAPTER IN YOUR LIVES!**

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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

No greater gift than love

— from your Board of Stewardship

“But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way”
(1 Corinthians 12:31).

Higher gifts. More excellent way. These sound like comparatives. They are, if you are talking about us. But these words that the Holy Spirit gives to Paul are not about us. They are only and always about what He desires us to have!

The Lord wants you to know that your simple gifts are in no way simplistic. They are glory! But not your glory. They are His glory. If you read the entire chapter of 1 Corinthians 12, you see some fantastic gifts being called lower gifts. Healing. Tongues. Interpretation. These are all fantastic if you were to have them. It is hard to see any way in which these are lesser gifts.

That is until you read what the Lord desires as a higher gift. 1 Corinthians 13 talks about it. The higher gift is love! There is no greater gift than love. Jesus talks about that in John 15:13 when He says that “*greater love has no*

one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friend.” This is the kind of love that we have been given. God loved the world so much that He gave us Jesus. Jesus loved us so much that He died and rose. These is no greater



gift of love. Jesus says so!

And this greater love that God has given us in Jesus is an active love! It is given so that we can give it away. That is what our stewardship is all about. Giving freely of the greater love that we have been given!

The financial gifts we render are

indeed lesser gifts. It doesn’t mean that they aren’t important or valuable. But they are lesser if they are not connected to love. The love they are connected to by the Holy Spirit is a love that comes from the Lord, through us, to others. We become a conduit of love that flows out to those who need it. This involves service. This involves activity. It also involves financial resources. When taken together, packaged in love, these simple gifts do amazing things! Let’s see together what the Lord will do with these simple gifts!

Prayer

Blessed Lord, we give You but Your own in all these gifts we bring to You this day and throughout the year. Fill our heart with a love of the Lord, a love of the Gospel and a love for our neighbors that will lead us to give of all of ourselves so that they may know the extravagant, radical love of God that comes in Jesus Christ! Amen.

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