



# THE FIRST PERSPECTIVE

November 2023  
First Lutheran Church, Stephen, MN

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***Dear First Lutheran faith family,***

Happy November! Fall is withdrawing quickly and the long winter is fast approaching. Thankfully, we have God's constant presence with us through the Holy Spirit to warm our hearts as we prepare!

We have a couple special services to make note of in November:

- **November 5th: All Saints Sunday**

All Saints Sunday is a Christian celebration going back to at least the 4th century. On this Sunday, we'll remember those in our congregation who have passed in the last year, and remember Jesus promise to us: "Because I live, you will live also" (John 14:19).

Fun fact: it was originally named "All Hallows Day" in English, which means the day before was "All Hallows Eve," or as we know it today, Halloween! Halloween was, and always has been, a tradition of making light of death's hold on us. And after having a little good fun, the promise of resurrection and eternal life is then celebrated either on November 1 or the first Sunday after Halloween.

- **November 26th: Thanksgiving Sunday**

Because of a much-needed vacation for me, we will not have an ecumenical Thanksgiving service leading up to Thanksgiving Day. However, we will have a special "Thanksgiving Sunday" for our congregation on the 26th, which is the Sunday after Thanksgiving. I hope you'll join us, either in-person or online!

I will be on vacation November 16-24, and I appreciate your prayers as Caitlin and I travel to Washington to see her birth family and to Montana to see my family. Pr. Amber Kalina from Our Savior's & Melo Lutheran Churches in Warren will be on call for me during this time.

***A quick word about Thanksgiving –***

For us as Christians, thanksgiving is a way of life. Everything we have – life, health, clothing, food, shelter, family, friends, work, hobbies – is a gift from God, which we should be thankful for every day. Martin Luther writes in his explanation of the Creed that God gives us all this "out of a pure, parental, and divine goodness and mercy." Our response, as Christians, is "to thank and praise, serve and obey God," Luther says. So, be thankful! God has, and continues to, give you all good things.

As we give thanks this month, may God bless us with peace and everything good!

Your pastor,  
Brother Jeff



# WEDNESDAY SCHOOL STUDENTS TO SING

The Wednesday school kids will sing on Sunday, November 19 at the beginning of service.

## QUILTING DAY CHANGE NOTICE

Starting in November, the Quilting Ladies will meet on the second and fourth Mondays of each month. All are welcome to join them!

## NOVEMBER FOOD SHELF NEEDS

November Food Shelf needs will be Autumn themed. Canned Pumpkin, Canned Cranberries. Think about things you find on the table during the Holidays. Contact Jane Smidt, FLC Coordinator, at 218-478-2456 with questions. Remember, personal care and household items are always needed. Baskets are located by the back door and in the Fellowship Hall.



## ANNUAL CHRISTMAS FOOD BASKET/SHARING TREE PROJECT

Dear Community Members and Businesses:

With fall in the air, it is time to start planning the annual Christmas Food Basket and Sharing Tree Projects, here at Marshall County Social Services. As we have in past years, we plan to distribute Christmas Food Baskets to elderly and disabled individuals in Marshall County; the Sharing Tree Project will be distributing toys, quilts, and gloves to children in our county who are in need. For years, these projects have been possible, because of generous donations from local businesses and community members. We hope to continue with these projects, helping to spread some Christmas joy.

Once again, we are asking for monetary donations to help support these projects. Donations are used for the purchase of food and other grocery items to make up the food baskets and to buy gloves, toys, and other gift items to use towards the Sharing Tree Project.

Along with monetary donations towards these projects, we also appreciate donations of new items of toys and winter gloves. We are also incredibly grateful for any donations of handmade quilts. All donated quilts are given to families who have indicated a need for this. All these items are used for gifts for the children on the Sharing Tree list, last year 226 children received gifts.

Community contributions received last year made it possible to distribute 136 food baskets. The food items for the food baskets are purchased locally and once the baskets are made up, they will be delivered to the needy and elderly by staff and volunteers.

If you would like to contribute to these projects, we would appreciate any of the mentioned donations. Checks can be written out to Marshall County Social Services and mailed to the Marshall County Social Services, 208 East Colvin Avenue, Suite 14, Warren, MN 56762. If you have questions, please contact me. We appreciate your generosity and thank you for your support of these Christmas projects!

Stacey Urbaniak  
Marshall County Social Services  
218-745-5124  
stacey.urbaniak@co.marshall.mn.us





# CHURCH NEWS

**THE MARTHA/RUTH CIRCLE** will meet for Bible study on Monday, November 13th at the church. Kris Ann Pietruszewski is the hostess.

**LOOSE CHANGE:** Loose Change Sunday is the 3rd Sunday of each month. November Loose Change: **Marshall County Sharing Tree**

**BULLETIN SPONSORS:** If you would like to honor or remember a family member, you can sponsor a bulletin. Sponsorships are \$20. Please contact the office with your request.

**ALTAR COMMITTEE:** Reminder to change the paraments and fill the candles. Communion is served the 1st & 3rd Sundays. Committee members prepare the altar.

**LAY READERS:** Please consider signing up to read during services. If you haven't been a lay reader before, contact the church office to find out more. Thank you Betsy Jensen, Melanie McGlynn, Jane Smidt, Kris Ann Pietruszewski, and Ava Weisenberger for reading this past month.

**THRIVENT MEMBERS,** are you throwing away \$500 a year? You have the opportunity to use this money to help causes of your choice. Contact Sharon Kotts for assistance.

### Do You Have News To Share?

Send announcements and events you would like to share in the newsletter to [firstl@wikel.com](mailto:firstl@wikel.com) by the 20th of each month.

## COFFEE SERVERS FOR NOVEMBER

11/5	Aase & Bruce Hamness; Shawna & John Peterson
11/12	Geoff & Deanna Swendseid
11/19	Kelsey & Erin Anderson; Kim & Mark Anderson
11/26	Tara & Tyson Jarshaw; Tamara & Travor Benitt

## USHER LIST

*Please note the dates that you are scheduled to usher for Sunday Worship. If you are not able to serve that Sunday, please find a substitute. Then, notify the church the the bulletin can be printed correctly.*

11/5	Brian & Jean Hendricks, Tim & Darlene Bates
11/12	Jenn Thompson Family; Reece & Jenny Setterholm
11/19	Alan & Ellen Anton; Mike & Sarah Berg
11/26	David & Alana McGlynn Family

## A CALL TO CHURCH STEWARDSHIP

Every month the church council receives a report of the monetary donations to First Lutheran Church. We don't discuss or calculate the non monetary donations to First Lutheran, and those volunteer hours add up quickly.

There are so many ways to volunteer at First Lutheran. This is not a complete list, but something to get you thinking about how to best serve your church family.

- Lawn Mowing
- Snow Shoveling
- Lay Reader
- Stream on Facebook
- Ushering 2 to 3 times a year
- Serving coffee twice a year
- Deep cleaning once a year
- Special music
- Altar committee
- Quilting
- Substitute teacher for Wednesday school
- Decorate (and undecorate) for Christmas
- Summer flowers
- Clavinova- just pushing buttons, not actually playing so yes you can do it!
- Head Usher(s) - we would love to have a few people serve as head ushers for special events

There are jobs for families, retirees, college students, elementary students, everyone who is a member of our First Lutheran family. If you have a project you would like to add to our list, please talk to Betsy or Whitney.

We hope you remember First Lutheran with your monetary donations but we also need all hands on deck for the little jobs that make our church family run smoothly. If you have questions about volunteering, your Stewardship Committee, Betsy and Whitney can point you in the right direction.



**Dear First Lutheran Ladies,**

Thank you for the delicious lunch you served after the funeral of Mavis Petersen. We appreciated all involved in the preparation and serving. May the Lord bless each one of you!

Janet Spooner & Petersen Family

### **Prayer for the Dignity of Human Life**

Lord and giver of all life, help us to value each person, created in love by You. In Your mercy, guide and assist our efforts to promote dignity and value of all human life, born and unborn. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

As we continue to celebrate 20 Years in Service of Life here at Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Materity Home, we are thankful for your goodness and generosity to us! May God bless you for your commitment to life.

Thank you all for your goodness - we are so grateful for your help!

Susan, Saint Gianna's

### **School Kits and Personal Care Kits**

Thank you to all that helped collect the items for the School Kits and Personal Care Kits. Seventy-seven school kits and 72 personal care kits were delivered to the Grand Forks location for Lutheran World Relief pick up. Thank you for the Thrivent Action Team money from our local congregation. Thank you to Ellie Klamar for assembling the kits. Thank you to Sarah, Rylan, Ellie and Al for helping me deliver the boxes.

Ellen Anton

## **FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH FUND OPTIONS**

The church council has decided to create a new fund, The **Schendel Family Fund** in honor and memory of Pastor Mike and Karen Schendel, who gave so much to our congregation and community. The goal is to create an endowment fund, where the interest can be spent on church and community projects. We have been fundraising for the outdoor sign fund in honor of Pastor Mike, and this would be a continuation of those efforts.

Our **Education Fund** is also open and receiving funds. If you stop by the church on a Wednesday night and see the rooms filled with K-9 students, you can appreciate how much time, love and materials go into our program.

The **Altar Fund** is also open for donations. The Altar is such a warm, welcoming sight for in person and online worshippers.

Thank you for remembering First Lutheran as you consider your monetary donations. We want to make investments in our youth, congregation, buildings and community.

## **MEMORIALS**

### **In Memory: Mavis Peterson**

Robert & Dianne Dammann - Altar Fund  
Cliff & Jean Nyland - Quilters

### **In Memory: Lila Grandstrand**

Nancy Gajeski - Parsonage Repair

### **In Memory: David Safranski**

Geoff & Deanna Swendseid - Outdoor Sign

### **In Memory: James Brinkman**

Geoff & Deanna Swendseid - Outdoor Sign  
Ellen Anton - Outdoor Sign  
Tim & Jody Paulson - Schendel Family Fund  
Mark & Beth Kroulik - Outdoor Sign  
John & Shawna Peterson - Altar Fund  
Mark & Kim Anderson - Undesignated  
Larry & Eileen Opp - Outdoor Sign

### **In Memory: Tylor Johnson**

Curtis & Lavonne Lundeen - Undesignated  
Vernon Dagoberg - Undesignated  
Bruce & Aase Hamness - Undesignated  
Robert & Dianne Dammann - Altar Fund  
Ingrid Bazey - Undesignated

### **In Memory: Marie Erlandson**

Ellen Anton - Undesignated

### **In Memory: Gary Hultgren**

Gale Frei - Undesignated

### **In Memory: Rosemary Schiller**

Steve & Melanie McGlynn - Undesignated



## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 11/03..... Rylan Klamar
- 11/04.....Shawna Peterson
- 11/04..... Deanna Swendseid
- 11/05.....Maynard Peterson
- 11/08..... Roberta McGlynn
- 11/09..... Steve Weberg
- 11/13.....Hazel Douglas
- 11/15.....Geoff Swendseid
- 11/16.....Brian Hendricks
- 11/17..... Earl Anderson
- 11/17..... Jean Hendricks
- 11/17..... Tom Woinarowicz
- 11/18.....Adley Grandstrand
- 11/20..... Brynn Benitt
- 11/20..... David Jensen
- 11/21.....Easton Anderson
- 11/25..... Jan Anderson
- 11/27 ..... Carly Peterson-Black
- 11/28..... William Halfmann
- 11/28..... Mark Kroulik
- 11/29.....Muriel Bring



## NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 11/08 .....Mark & Kim Anderson
- 11/25 ..... Pat & Larry Grabowska



**A Note From Connie:** After finishing this month’s newsletter, I had this space available for something. I had put something about Thanksgiving here. But after I was finished, I kept “hearing” God speak to me, saying, “That’s not what goes there. Put ‘it’ there.” In my heart, I knew what He was referring to. So, below is something I wrote many years ago. I rarely shared it because I had a fear that if someone didn’t like it, that would be distressing, because of all the things I have ever written, this is my favorite. I hope you enjoy it.

## *Sheds of Blessings*

*I dreamt I had a glimpse of Heaven, and through it, I walked with God.  
He promised to prepare a place for us, and said He loves us all.  
I wandered in awe at the beauty of what He has prepared.  
Then I noticed that within each place, a shed stood in the rear.  
Some had doors that were wide open, while others were locked up tight.*

*I asked God about them. He gently smiled and invited me to sit.  
He pointed to all those sheds, and softly explained to me,  
“Those are sheds of blessings and I have filled them to the brim.  
They are there for each of you. You just have to tell Me when.”*

*And then I said to Him,  
“But God, some have blessings overflowing, but the doors seem locked up tight.  
While other sheds, they look so bare. Look, I can see the sun through there.”  
I had to ask, “If You love us all the same, how come some have more?”*

*He answered me with love,  
“My child, it’s not the empty ones that are lacking My direction.  
It’s those with sheds still closed up tight, that are trying it on their own.”  
He said, “The sheds are full of blessings, and I want to share them all.”*

*I nodded my head and said, “God, I think I understand.  
In each shed, You have stored the blessings of our lives.  
You wait for us to come to You, And to trust Your love for us.”*

*I think you’ve got it now, My child. You understand My Wish; To see each door fly open and to empty every shed.”*

*I knew this dream soon would end, and this is what He said, “I built your shed with eternal love. The blessings belong to you.” Then He stood up and whispered, “Let Me open your shed for you.”*



# First Lutheran Church Council Minutes

October 4, 2023

Members Present: Kris Ann Pietruszewski, Melanie McGlynn, Jess Rogus, Krissy McMahon, Betsy Jensen, Whitney Weisenberger, Pat Heggen, and Brian Hendricks.

Also in attendance: Darlene Bates and Pastor Jeff.

Vice-President Kris Ann called the meeting to order.

Krissy gave devotions.

Secretary's report: Motion by Krissy to accept the September minutes, seconded by Brian. All in favor, motion carried.

Treasurer's report: Darlene presented September's offerings. Betsy made a motion to accept the minutes. Melanie seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

## Offerings for September

September 3rd.....	\$4,730.00	Harvest Festival.....	\$2,788.00
September 10th.....	\$3,064.00	September Loose Change ..	\$71.21
September 17th.....	\$1,375.00	(Northland Rescue Mission)	
September 24th.....	\$1,931.13		

Membership changes: None

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Deacons:

- Brother Jeff will officially be gone November 16th-24th.

### Trustees:

- The church looks like a new building after the power washing of the outside!
- The payment was made for the new gutters, and we are waiting to see when they will be coming. It should be done by winter.
- We have investments donated from the Roger Benson family that have come due. Betsy made a motion to use a portion of the investments to pay for some outside maintenance of the church. The remainder of the money will be reinvested. Jess seconded. All were in favor, motion carried. Thank you for the Roger Benson family for paying for the gutter installation and church power washing!

### Parish Education:

- Wednesday School has been off to a great start!
- Confirmation is going really well.
- October 8th we will give 2nd & 3rd graders the story Bibles, have a backpack blessing, and this will be the 1st time the Wednesday School classes will sing in church.

### Stewardship:

- Harvest Festival notes and bills were passed around. We took in \$2,788.00. Bills were \$718.71. Ham & ham bones were sold at the next church service. Ideas were talked about for what needed to be put in the notes for next year. A motion was made by Melanie for the proceeds will go to the Schendel Family Fund. Pat seconded it. All were in favor, motion passed.
- The toddler musical flowers for Harmony Park are in. Tamarac Landscaping can pour the cement, but not until November. If the ground is frozen by then, we will be on their list for spring.

### Pastor's Report:

- October 1st was our first pet blessing. There were dogs, cats, and 1 fish.

- On October 15th Pastor Birgitte Simpson from People's Church in Bemidji will be at the church to preach and allow people to meet her. They are our sister church, so it would be very beneficial for people to get to know her. Our loose change that Sunday will go to People's Church.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- Mission Statement Forms were handed out last month. Once compiled we will distribute them to the congregation at the annual meeting.
- **Parsonage update:** The day of cleaning at the parsonage went wonderfully! The outdoor landscaping and shrubbery outside have all been spruced up. The entire top floor has been cleaned. Appliances are all installed. Toilets & sinks have all been installed. These are the projects left.

1. Power wash the deck
2. Remove outdoor shed on back side of garage.
3. Remove the chimney in the garage.
4. Clean the garage.
5. Install more smoke detectors.
6. Paint the downstairs.
7. Install window well covers.
8. Put sealant on 2 remodeled doors in entry/pantry area.

Items that need to be purchased are a mirror for bathroom, doorstops for doors, new door between garage and house, and shower curtain rod.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- Sanctuary lighting is quite dim compared to the fellowship hall. We will look into options to improve the lighting in there.
- A discussion on Brother Jeff's health insurance policy. He needs to get things figured out with Caitlin. Betsy made a motion to approve anything from Gold+ on down. Whitney seconded it. All in favor, motion approved.
- It has been awesome seeing Brother Jeff and his wife Caitlin at so many community events! Betsy & Melanie brought up the idea of purchasing a Storm Athletics season pass for both of them. Krissy made a motion to approve this. Jess seconded it. All were in favor, motion passed.

Whitney made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Jess. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

The next meeting will be November 1st at 7:45 PM.

Melanie McGlynn  
Church Council Secretary




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#### **BROTHER JEFF'S CONTACT INFORMATION AND OFFICE HOURS**

Brother Jeff Brown | Email: flcpastor@wiktel.com | Phone 218-230-6583 | Office Hours: Sunday -Thursday (Friday off)

#### **CHURCH OFFICE INFORMATION:**

Secretary: Darlene Bates | Email: firstl@wiktel.com | Phone 218-478-3895 | Office Hours: Tues-Wed-Thurs 9am - 12 pm

THE FIRST PERSPECTIVE  
 FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH  
 PO BOX 72  
 STEPHEN, MN 56757

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 US POSTAGE PAID  
 STEPHEN, MN 56757  
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# NOVEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
All Sunday Services are celebrated in-person or on Facebook Live			<b>1</b> 6 pm - Wed. School 6:30 - Confirmation 7:45 pm - Council	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Pastor's Day Off	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> 9 am Worship with Communion 10 am - Fellowship	<b>6</b> 6:30 pm Martha Ruth Circle	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 6 pm - Wed. School 6:30 - Confirmation	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Pastor's Day Off	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> 9 am - Worship 10 am - Fellowship	<b>13</b> 9:30 am Quilting	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 6 pm - Wed. School 6:30 - Confirmation	<b>16</b> Give to the Max Day	<b>17</b> Pastor's Day Off	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> 9 am Worship with Communion 10 am - Fellowship	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> Thanksgiving - Church Office Closed	<b>24</b> Pastor's Day Off	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> 9 am - Worship 10 am - Fellowship	<b>27</b> 9:30 am Quilting	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 6 pm - Wed. School 6:30 - Confirmation	<b>30</b>		

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