

First Word *September 2009*

First Lutheran Church

116 Inner Drive, Le Sueur, MN 56058

507.665.2615

**Re-Gathering Sunday-
Coming September 13th
One Service at 9:00 a.m.**

**Jesus was a carpenter...
Carpenter's have tools...
We're going to worship
with Carpenter's Tools...**

**Come and hear how God is using
a dynamic group of young people
to spread the Good News of the Gospel...**

CTI Music Ministries (originally known as *Carpenter's Tools*) has been sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the gifts of music, drama, and personal testimonies for over 30 years all over the world.

Currently, here in the United States, two teams are traveling to churches, schools, colleges, prisons, and other locations sharing these gifts and their stories of overseas ministry. During the musicians one-year commitment, they also raise support and recruit other young musicians to join our short-term music teams that minister during the summer with established Christian ministries worldwide.

CTI brings the joy of worship and the excitement of missions together in a concert of modern music and relevant testimonies of the work God is doing here and abroad. One pastor observed, "What an amazing mirror of Christ's love that was shining in our midst."

At CTI, we are mobilizing musicians passionate about sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**At 10:00 a.m., the Good News Hour
(FLC's Sunday School program)
will hold an open house
so student's can meet their teachers
and find their classrooms.**



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

**What if you wrapped up
a big present for your kids?**

**When they opened the present
it contained the very best...**

- Godparents
- Grandparents and other relatives
- Neighbors
- Family friends
- Community members
- Congregational friends
- Mentors, coaches, teachers, program leaders

Your children would receive a full circle of available, authentic, and affirming adults ensuring faithful caring and growth.

***The Youth & Family Institute* will be at our
church to lead us in this opportunity.
Full Circle: Triple-A Training
September 27th 12:30 – 6:00 p.m.**

Triple-A Training invites parents to partner with their congregation bringing together a circle of trusted adults to learn specific skills in being *Available*, *Authentic*, and *Affirming* for their child's faith. Possibly the most important gift a parent could give!

Parents will be asked to select a group of adults who you trust and who care about the faith and life of your child. Make a list of those people. Ask your child who they consider to be the most important adults in their life. This may include people from several generations. Invite early so people can arrange their schedule. People are often willing to travel for this experience. It's your kid! Why wouldn't they make every effort!

The discussions and activities are inclusive and appropriate for all protestant and Catholic traditions. Membership here at FLC is not assumed or required. We want those you invite to feel welcome and comfortable.

This event is open to all, even if a parent doesn't invite you. If there's a child in your sphere of influence that you would like to nurture, come and get some quality training to help you have a positive impact on their life.

Does it take a community to raise a child???

Notice to Congregation:

We're saving postage by including this "letter"

in your newsletter,
so please note the following information.

Make It Simple

This year our congregation will be participating in a new stewardship program entitled "*MAKE IT SIMPLE*." The make it simple theme will be the focus for our worship services on Sunday, September 20th through Sunday, October 11th. The concluding worship will include an opportunity for each household to bring forward to the altar their Commitment Card indicating their financial support intent to the ministry of our congregation for the coming year. A meal will follow the 10:30 a.m. worship service on October 11th.

The theme for *MAKE IT SIMPLE* provides important opportunities for reflection about the choice we make in our daily lives in these times. We invite and encourage you and your family to participate in the *MAKE IT SIMPLE* stewardship campaign.

Le Sueur Food Shelf

In August, the Le Sueur Food Shelf extended the hours the Food Shelf will be open from 2:00 until 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. First Lutheran Church will provide the volunteers again in October. At least four people are needed for each shift. If you were unable to help at the former location, you may be interested in helping out now that there are no stairs involved. Contact our coordinator LaRayne Jensen at 665-2624 to find out where you might be able to help.

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

This past Sunday, August 23, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly concluded in Minneapolis. Held every two years, the assembly is a gathering of clergy and lay people from all 65 synods of the ELCA. Each assembly has a number of issues on the agenda, some of which are quite controversial. This year's assembly was no exception, as matters of human sexuality were discussed and voted on, but this was not the only business.

Bishop Mark Hanson has written a message (see next page) detailing actions of the assembly. Our own Coly Wentzlaff attended as an at-large young adult voting member from our SE MN Synod. A date has not yet been set, but we will provide an opportunity for Coly to share her experiences here with our congregation and respond to questions about the assembly. I too will share some of my thoughts with you and help us all to understand how the actions of the assembly will impact our congregation.

September is always an exciting time here at First Lutheran as we swing into the fall cycle of programs, etc. Sunday, Sept. 13 will be our annual Re-Gathering Sunday. It is a time for us all to come together for one worship service and "kick-off" the fall programs. Plan to come for the Carpenter's Tools presentation during the 9 a.m. worship. This group was here some years ago, but it will be my first time to see them. I understand they have a wonderful message about the son of a carpenter from Nazareth, Jesus the Christ.

This year our sixth and seventh grade classes will both be starting their GIGG (Growing In God's Grace) confirmation instruction together on Sept. 16. Pray for these young people as they begin this important part of their faith journey. The Thursday morning Bible study will resume on Sept. 17 at 9:45 a.m. All are welcome to join in. Bring a Bible, no experience necessary.

On September 20 we return to our school year schedule with two services at 8 and 10:30, with Good News Hour (Sunday School) in between the services.

In the midst of the changes of the world, the church of Christ continues to proclaim the unchanging love of God. Jesus, before leaving his disciples declared, "*Lo I am with you always, even to the close of the age.*" That is good news for you and me! In the midst of the transitions of life, Christ is with us, we are never alone.

If you have been absent or intermittent in your worship life over the course of summer, make fall a time to transition back to active involvement again. In October I will be offering a new member orientation class. If you are already involved and active, think about a person or two that you could invite to church with you, and invite them. It just might be a wonderful new beginning for them and for you!

See you at worship... Pastor Carl

A letter from ELCA Presiding Bishop, Mark Hanson:

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. -- Colossians 3:14-15.

I write to you from the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis with official information about the actions of this assembly related to human sexuality. I am grateful for the manner in which this church has engaged in this conversation. The way this assembly has discussed these questions is a continuation of the way this church has deliberated: with deep and heartfelt respect for each other, engaging with Scripture, listening to the faith stories and experiences of one another, and through worship and prayer seeking the discernment of the Spirit.

In my response to the voting members on Friday, August 21, I made this request: we need one another. We need time. We need the voices of those who lament and those who rejoice over these actions, for together we have been called to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and engage in God's mission for the life of the world.

The assembly adopted 676-338 -- precisely two-thirds of those voting -- "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," the ELCA's 10th social statement, with minor editorial amendments. It also adopted a series of implementing resolutions with amendments. This theological and teaching document builds on the key Lutheran principles of justification by grace and Christian freedom to serve the neighbor. It emphasizes that central to our vocation, in relation to human sexuality, is the building and protection of trust in relationships. It therefore affirms that we are called to be trustworthy in our human sexuality and to build social institutions and practices where trust and trustworthy relationships can thrive. The social statement addresses marriage, same-gender relationships, families, protecting children, friendships, commitment, social responsibility and moral discernment. Regarding same-gender committed relationships, the social statement says that this church is not in agreement and recognizes the different perspectives which are present among us.

Our assembly also adopted resolutions proposed by the Church Council based on those contained in a "Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies." The actions direct that changes be made to churchwide policy documents to make it possible for those in committed same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders in the ELCA. There were amendments to two of the proposals.

The assembly adopted the resolutions in the following order, beginning with a strong statement about how we will live together in the face of our disagreements:

Resolution 3: "RESOLVED, that in the implementation of any resolutions on ministry policies, the ELCA commit itself to bear one another's burdens, love the neighbor, and respect the bound consciences of all." (Adopted 771-230 as amended)

Resolution 1: "RESOLVED, that the ELCA commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support and hold publicly accountable life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships." (Adopted 619-402)

Resolution 2: "RESOLVED, that the ELCA commit itself to finding a way for people in such publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church." (Adopted 559-451)

Resolution 4: This resolution called upon members to respect the bound consciences of those with whom they disagree; declared intent to allow structured flexibility in decision-making about candidacy and the call process; eliminated the prohibition of rostered service by members in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships; recognized and committed to respect the conviction of members who believe that the ELCA should not call or roster people in committed same-gender relationships; called for development of accountability guidelines; directed that amendments to ministry policy documents be drafted and approved; and stated that this church continue to trust congregations, bishops, synods and others responsible for determining who should be called into public ministry. (Adopted 667-307 as amended)

I invite you into important, thoughtful, prayerful conversation about what all of this means for our life in mission together. What is absolutely important for me is that we have this conversation together.

We meet one another finally -- not in our agreements or our disagreements -- but at the foot of the cross, where God is faithful, where Christ is present with us, and where, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we are one in Christ.

In Christ,
The Rev. Mark S. Hanson
ELCA Presiding Bishop

Looking for a good book to read?

Augsburg Fortress is pleased to announce the publication of the new *Lutheran Study Bible*. This exciting new Bible features the NRSV translation as well as introductions, notes, and articles written by over sixty Lutheran pastors and teaching theologians. This resource is designed to invite readers to experience the Bible and its message through solid background material, unique Lutheran insights, and opportunities for faith reflection. Reader-friendly, inviting, and engaging, this is the perfect study Bible for both youth and adults who want to encounter Scripture in a fresh and new way!



Study notes are grouped into 4 categories:

- ✦ *The World of the Bible* explores the historical, cultural, and geographic background of a particular passage.
- ✦ *Biblical Concepts* explain key words or themes in the context of other parts of Scripture.
- ✦ *Lutheran Perspectives* highlight Lutheran theological insights and catechetical connections drawn from particular passages.
- ✦ *Faith Reflections* provide commentary and questions that encourage life application.

Ten copies of the *Lutheran Study Bible* have been ordered from Augsburg Fortress and will be available in the church office on a first come basis for \$28. Checks should be made payable to First Lutheran Church.



INVITATION TO WOMEN

Are you seeking a small group connection to First Lutheran? Does a Bible study written for women appeal to you? If you are busy during the day, the Women's Evening Bible Study may be right for you. We meet once a month for no more than 1 ½ hours. Our study comes from the *Lutheran Woman Today* magazine (only \$12 for one year subscription). The 2009-2010 study begins in September and is titled "To God's Beloved: Paul's Letter to the Romans". Come explore the letter Martin Luther called the most important piece in the New Testament.

First Session
Wednesday, September 16
7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Music Room at First Lutheran

For more information, contact Rita Patrias 665-4198 or patriita@tcq.net. For a preview of the study and information on ordering the magazine, visit the *Lutheran Women Today* website at www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Women-of-the-ELCA/Lutheran-Woman-Today.aspx

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**MARY UNIT** will resume meeting on the third Tuesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. on September 15<sup>th</sup>. They will meet at the home of Dora Slack. The 2009-2010 study is titled "To God's Beloved: Paul's Letter to the Romans".

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Thursday morning Bible Study will begin on September 17th at 9:45 a.m. This group is open to any one who can get away for a couple hours on Thursday morning.

God's work. Our hands.

Art Contest

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod office invites members from throughout the synod to submit artwork representing "God's work. Our hands." Entries should display everyday things in the shape of the cross, demonstrating how God's work is carried out. Any one-dimensional format that is able to be scanned is acceptable - painting, drawing, etching, textiles, etc. Top entries will be used for synod Christmas cards, the synod website, and possibly other uses.

To download an entry form, go to the website: <http://www.semnsynod.org/artcontests/mission.pdf>
Entries must be in the synod office by Wednesday, September 9, 2009.

Book of Faith Fall Festival
Saturday, October 3, 2009
St. John Lutheran in Owatonna

Keynote Speaker - Dr. Diane Jacobson,
Director of the Book of Faith Initiative

Discover:

- How to implement Book of Faith in your congregation effectively
 - New, creative, and joyful ways to open Scripture and join in conversation
 - Confidence, inspiration, and tools for leaders of Bible conversations
- Each registered guest will receive a complimentary *Lutheran Study Bible*.

Children, Youth & Family Ministries

Good News Hour

We would like to invite all children, 3 years old through 5th grade, to participate in our Sunday school program, Good News Hour. Good News Hour will kick off with an open house on Re-gathering Sunday, September 13th. Students and parents will be able to meet their teachers and take a look at their classrooms. Classes will start the following Sunday, September 20th. Letters containing registrations and information for the school year have been mailed out to families. Additional registrations are available on the table in the narthex.

Needed: GNH Teachers & Helpers

We are in the process of finding teachers and helpers for Good News Hour. We are still in need of teachers for the majority of our classrooms. Team-teaching is an option for those finding it difficult to commit to every Sunday. Please consider this opportunity. It is a great experience for our children and teachers alike. Interested people can contact the church office.

Important Dates for Confirmands

October 3: Confirmation Retreat at Gustavus
Meet at church @ 8:15 a.m.

October 24: Confirmation Brunch at FLC
9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Includes rehearsal and photos

October 25: Confirmation @ 10:30 a.m. Worship
Please note that 10th graders are in the rotation for serving as Acolytes in September. New GIGG students will not receive training until the first part of October, so we appreciate your lending your expertise one last time.

GIGG Schedule

Sept. 9, GIGG Guides Orientation @ 7 p.m.

Sept. 16, GIGG Kick-Off @ 7 p.m.

Bring your calendars to sign up for meals and Acolyte schedule

Sept. 23, GIGG Meal @ 6 p.m.

GIGG Lesson @ 6:30 p.m.

Sept. 30 GIGG Service Project @ 6:30 p.m.

Adopt-a-Highway Clean-up

THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH!!! I would like to thank you for helping me get to a youth leadership event this summer. I could not have done it without the financial aid I got from the congregation. I would also like to thank those who helped prepare me mentally for the trip. I had a great time learning and making friends while I was at WYLS (Wartburg [Seminary] Youth Leadership School). WYLS is a great and diverse environment. I had fellow students from multiple states from Washington State to California to Arizona, even some close to home in neighboring states such as Michigan, Wisconsin, and Illinois. Every year they hold this school at Wartburg. This year was one of the years that the WYLS group went to the ELCA Nation Youth Gathering. I had a blast while in Dubuque and while in New Orleans or Naw'lins as the locals call it. So I would like once again to give a HUGE THANK YOU to the congregation, as WYLS has been one of the best experiences of my life.

~Aaron Bruihler

Dear First Lutheran Church,

I would like to thank you for the scholarship that was awarded to me this summer. I am looking forward to starting my classes at South Central College in Mankato this week. I have always felt supported by my church community and would like to thank you again.

~Laura Alinder

Dear Congregation of First Lutheran,
Thank you all very much for the scholarship which will help me pay for my education at Gustavus Adolphus College this fall. It really does help a lot with the financial aspect of college. So thanks again, I appreciate your confidence in me.

~Jacob Bruihler

Christian Music Opportunities:

Sept. 3 MN State Fair: *Castling Crowns*

Sept. 21 *The Promise Remains Tour*

Building 429, Todd Agnew, Kimber Rising
Crossview Covenant Church, Mankato

Hey Kids! Got ideas? Let me know what you think!

Email me gailw@firstlutheranlesueur.org

or you can contact me on facebook!

FIRST LUTHERAN QUILTERS meet the 4th Tuesday of each month at 9:00 a.m. to assemble and tie quilts. If you can tie a knot, please come and join us. We close out the morning with lunch and fellowship. If you are willing to sew a quilt top, or if you have questions, please call the church office at 665-2615.

**BINGO
AT GARDENVIEW**

Monday, **September 14**,
6:30 p.m.

B	I	N	G	O
9	27	41	59	68
14	26	43	57	70
5	23	35	55	66
7	30	36	56	67
6	29	42	58	64

Hospitality Team #1 in charge.
(Kristi G. & Pat P., Co-leaders)

Immanuel St. Joseph's Hospice

Children: Experiencing Loss & Grief

Understanding Children's Grief

Thursday, September 17, 2009 6- 7:30 p.m.
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
720 South 2nd Street
Mankato

There is no charge for this seminar, but pre-registration is required. For more information or to register, please call Kate Cox at 1-800-327-3721, ext. 2989.

Augustana Lutheran Worship

Sunday, September 20, 2009 2:30 p.m.

Join us for the Fourteenth Annual Historic Hymn Sing and Service with Holy Communion with Liturgy of the former Augustana Lutheran Church.

Preacher: The Rev. John E. Dragelin
Presiding Ministers: The Rev. David Spong
and the Rev. Shawn Mai

Organist: Dr. John O. Swanson
Refreshments and fellowship following worship.
All are welcome. Bring your friends.

Normandale Lutheran Church
6100 Normandale Road, Edina, MN 952-929-1697



125th Anniversary Cookbooks are still available at the church office. They make wonderful birthday, shower or wedding gifts. 667 recipes for only \$15.00!

LE SUEUR TRANSIT will provide **bus service** on the 1st and 3rd Sundays for the 10:30 worship service. Passengers (within the city limits) should call 665-6211 by noon on the Friday prior to the first and third Sunday of each month.

2009 Welsh Hymn Festival of Choirs

The 2009 Welsh Hymn Festival of Choirs will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 27, at First Presbyterian Church, Hickory and Broad, Mankato. The event is open to all who enjoy music. It will provide the opportunity for all in the congregation to sing and hear traditional Welsh hymns in 4-part harmony. The Conductor will be Mary Morris Mergenthal, St. Paul. The Performing Choir will be the St. Peter Choral Society under the direction of Sara Hayden McKay, St. Peter. There is no admission charge.

Prayer at the Fair:

Mark Your Calendars

Sunday September 6, 9:15 – 9:45 am.
State Fairgrounds, Bandshell

Each year, during the last 10 days of August, Minnesota celebrates itself at the Great Minnesota Get-Together: the Minnesota State Fair.

Prayer at the Fair is designed as a celebration of God's creation, and time to rejoice in the abundance of life in Minnesota. The casual service contains the familiar form of church including hymns, prayers and a sermon, but gets into the fun spirit of the fair. We even use our traditional 'bulletins on a stick.

First Lutheran Church Ministry Teams - Frequently Asked Questions

In the June/July newsletter, the Ministry Teams idea was introduced. A number of questions have been asked about Ministry Teams. This brief article addresses some of the questions or concerns.

Question: What are Ministry Teams?

Answer: Ministry Teams is the name of a system to organize and engage worship service volunteers on a monthly schedule. Using this system, rotating teams of volunteers assist with the variety of worship service activities, i.e. greet, usher, read, assist with communion, fellowship, etc. This provides opportunities for more volunteers to participate and share in the variety of worship service activities.

Question: Where did this idea come from?

Answer: The idea of Ministry Teams was presented during the 2008 Long Range Planning process. In 2009, the Church Council selected the Ministry Teams idea as a goal to increase church membership involvement.

Question: Who are on these Ministry Teams?

Answer: Every member of First Lutheran Church.

Question: Do Ministry Teams replace the standing committees?

Answer: No. The standing committees (Worship and Music, Outreach, Finance, Property, Stewardship, Hospitality, Christian Education, etc.) continue their functions.

Question: Do Ministry Teams replace the Hospitality work groups?

Answer: No. The Hospitality work groups, which assist with the hospitality needs and events of the congregation, i.e. dinners, funerals, etc., continue to exist and operate.

Question: Do Ministry Teams modify current worship service practices?

Answer: No. Ministry Teams is a way of scheduling and coordinating volunteers for the variety of worship service activities.

Question: I have been a greeter (or usher, reader, etc.) in the past. Can I still do this under the Ministry Teams system?

Answer: Yes. The intention of Ministry Teams is to expand the pool of volunteers who greet (and usher, read, etc) while encouraging participation from those who have volunteered in the past.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about Ministry Teams please contact any church council member including Jan Rhode or Bob Patrias.

Newsletter Deadline: Please have any information you want included in the October newsletter to the church office by September 20th. To save a stamp or your gas, you may email the info to: info@firstlutheranlesueur.org.

Your Church Staff:

Pastor Carl Bruhler cell: (507)649-1231
Email: carlb@flcls.org
Gail Wentzlaff, Children, Youth & Family Ministries
Email: gailw@flcls.org
Marge Maetzold, Administrative Assistant
Email: margem@flcls.org
Wayne Brogger, Custodian

Your 2009 Church Council

Steven Alinder	665-2645
*Kay King	665-2256
Steven Olson	665-6598
*Robert Patrias	665-4198
Robert Podhradsky	665-6763
William Radloff	665-4291
Jan Rhode	665-6380
*Craig Schwarz, Vice President	665-4020
*Jamison Vanden Einde, President	665-6620
Molly King, Youth Rep.	665-2256
Jacob Laux, Youth Rep.	665-2987
*Pastor Carl Bruhler	(507)931-5738
*Executive Committee	