



First Lutheran Newsletter

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Mt. Carroll, IL

sharing Christ's love through
worship, study, and service

September 2022

Pastor's Ponderings

The Summer is coming to an end. Labor Day Weekend is upon us and Rally Sunday will mark the start of our Sunday School. It's a time for us to reunite as the Body of Christ, here at First Lutheran.

Covid was a shock to the system. It affected our schools, our workplaces, our vacations and even going out to eat. In-person worship was affected, as well. We saw numbers of in-person worship decline significantly even as the pandemic eased, and many of us are still watching worship services from our living rooms instead of coming together in the sanctuary. For others, different weekend activities have taken the place of worship. And for still others, understandably, age or infirmity prevents them from coming to live worship.

Yet worship is ultimately a communal activity. It always has been. While alone time is often important for prayer, reflection and Bible reading, we were built by God to be in regular fellowship with one another and worship the Almighty alongside one another. Together is better!

Jesus's disciples changed the world together. The same is true for us when we take time each week for worship. We come together to get blessed. And, wonderfully, we end up being the blessing. "Get the blessing! Be the blessing!"

We will be kicking things off on Sunday, September 11th, with a big Rally Day. We'll worship at 9:00am, featuring the blessing of our wonderful teachers and the blessing of students and their families.

Did you know that in-person worship offers us rare opportunities to directly experience God and his incredible love? Through prayer, sermon, music and being alongside of others who believe in the life-saving message of Jesus, we experience the Divine. Let me rephrase that: In worship we encounter God. That's the way he intends it. No wonder some of you tell me that our worship services are the high point of your week.

Come and be a part of Worship that day and show your support for our next generation and their families. So please consider joining us for Worship in person if you are



able, especially if you haven't been to live worship in a while. Reach out to those that might live near you and offer them a ride to Church as transportation can be a barrier for some. This will be a great Worship service to invite family, friends and neighbors too.

Plan to stay after service to enjoy a Rally Sunday Brunch in Fellowship Hall, down stairs. This is the perfect opportunity to reconnect with our community – your First Lutheran community – as together we . . . "Get the Blessing and Be the Blessing!"

Blessings for the journey, Pastor Bob

Five Minutes of Fame

Mark your calendars, September 20th at 6:00pm. The music and other entertainment continues at First Lutheran Church. Don't miss out on some great food and entertainment. Dinner is served Downstairs in Fellowship Hall at 6:00pm. Music and entertainment starts at 6:45pm in our Sanctuary. Got a talent? Come and share it! We always have an interesting mix of talents.



Men's Coffee and Bible Study

Men's Bible Study meets the first and third Wednesdays of the month in the church fellowship area or on Zoom if you prefer, at 8:00 am. Last month we had 4 men gathered and we hope that more will join in **Wednesday, September 7th, 2022**. We will explore **Exodus 32:7-14** While Moses is on Mount Sinai, the people grow restless and make a golden calf

to worship. Today's reading shows Moses as the mediator between an angry God and a sinful people. Moses reminds God that the Israelites are God's own people, and boldly asks for mercy for them. Our gospel reading **Luke 12:32-40** Jesus encourages disciples to invest their hearts and live fully into God's reign. Instead of facing life with fear, those who know God's generosity are always ready to receive from God and to give to others.

Wednesday, September 21th, we will study **Amos 6:1a, 4-7** The prophet Amos announces that Israel's great wealth is a cause not for rejoicing but rather sorrow, because God's people have forgotten how to share their wealth with the poor. The wealthy will be the first to go into exile when judgment comes. Our gospel reading **Luke 16:19-31** Jesus tells a parable in which the poor one is "lifted up" and the rich one is "sent away empty." Jesus makes it clear that this ethic of merciful reversal is not new but is as old as Moses and the prophets.

Please plan to attend and invite someone else along. The discussion is always fascinating as the Holy Spirit guides our thoughts and understanding.

Pastor's Report for July 2022

Worship Services, visitations, committee meetings, community commitments were attended as well as MCMA and GRO Board meetings via Zoom or in person. In July, I presided over 5 Sunday worship services, and 4 Wednesday night Worship & Praise Services all with Zoom and Live Streamed on Facebook. There was an additional Sunday worship service at Allure Nursing Home. On Sunday, we continue to communion at the front of the Church. Our Video/Media technicians continue to do a superb job of handling all the extra online traffic particularly with the added mid-week Worship & Praise service. They also covered our remote service at Timber Lake. Praise God that our musicians and technicians are stepping up to cover the extra load.

This month we had a Celebration of Life and Memorial service for Greg Bazilewich in which everyone pitched in to make this a memorable moment for friends and family. Greg will be greatly missed within our congregation and in the community at large. We attended a diakonia Graduation and Thanksgiving Service in Rockford, for four of our folks from First Lutheran: Liz Rath, Jo Lyn Kruse, Bonnie Schroeder and Karen Davis. They were presented with Graduation Certificates and a diakonia cross.

Five Minutes of Fame is back underway on the third Tuesday of the month. We had a beautiful day for our Christmas in July Service and Weapon of Prayer did a fantastic job with Christmas music for that service. Great River Outreach provided a delicious hot lunch. We had 40 people attend and everyone stayed for lunch. Body & Soul, supper and a Bible study met for the fourth time since the beginning of Covid at the Church on July 31st and it was hosted by Pat Erdmann and her dear friend Nancy. This monthly event will be held at different homes each month. It attracted 16 people for a wonderful dinner and interesting look at the upcoming Gospel reading. Next month's will be hosted by Barb and Pastor Bob.

Our work with GRO on Main Street is not going unnoticed within Carroll County thanks to your ongoing support. This month there were several outreach opportunities including Open Mic at Bridges and GRO's Radio-a-Thon which raised \$15,650 to help us in this important mission. I was pleased to see so many of our members volunteering, dropping by and calling in their pledge of support that Saturday morning.

The Cottage Bakers and the Farmers Market continue to reach into the community with the God's love and spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ. I thank God everyday for the volunteers that help us reach those in need, our neighbors.



Secret Symbol Search Winner?

While reading First Lutheran's Monthly Newsletter has always been exciting, we now have two new reasons to look forward to getting your copy. There are three hidden symbols nestled amongst the rest of the text. Be one of the first two readers to locate and report your findings and win a \$20 gift certificate from a local business. No one claimed last month's Secret Symbol Search. This month's symbol is an "s" that appears surreptitiously hidden within a word. Report all three words containing the symbols and on what page each is located. Be one of the first two to accurately report your findings, and a gift certificate is yours! Happy Hunting!



Body & Soul Gathering

You are invited to Dinner and a Bible Study, Sunday September 25th at 5:00pm. At the time of this printing we are not sure who will be hosting and providing the main course, nor where it will be held. Please mark your calendar to reserve this date and watch for further announcements. Bring along a side dish from the list below: Appetizer, Breads, Potato or Rice dish, Vegetable dish, or Salad. Please RSVP by e-mail or on the bulletin board, with your side dish selection and who is coming. All are welcomed!



Wednesday Night Gathering

We invite you to take a break in your busy week to recharge your spiritual batteries and spend some time with family, friends and neighbors in God's presence. We look forward to joining together, regardless of where you are on your journey to lift our voices toward our creator in praise and thanksgiving. Will we see you this Wednesday, September 7th, at 7:00pm?

Drop Off Your Weekly Offerings

Every little bit helps us get through this difficult period. Our expenses haven't gone away. New envelopes are in the Fellowship area, so drop by and pick up yours. You can mail in or drop off your offering envelopes in the mail slot at the back-door by the bottom of the ramp.

Open Mic at Bridges Tuesday, September 6th at 6:00pm

Come and enjoy brats, sauerkraut and potato salad at The Table. Then move over to Bridges for a great night of local entertainment. But get there early so you get a good seat and some fresh brewed hot coffee. It's one of the best evenings in Carroll County. Don't come alone, bring a friend. They be glad you did.



VOLUNTEERS MAKE THE WORLD GO ROUND!



They also make the mission of our church possible. Our Ice Cream Social is a perfect example. Through your efforts the community and others are cared for. Evangelism projects and programs are successful because members and friends of First Lutheran freely offer their time, talents, and financial resources. Contrary to what you might think, the financial requirements for our events are not nearly as great of a hurdle to cross as the need for volunteers.

While we routinely have plenty of volunteers to get the job done, if you look carefully, you'll notice that it's mostly the same people doing the majority of the volunteering. So, rather than risk a severe bout of volunteer burnout, we need to recruit some new talent.

You don't have to look too deep down inside yourself to find some talent that you could share for the benefit of our church's mission. You don't have to sign up for a committee (That often seems like a life-time commitment!), but maybe just for a single event. Who knows, you might enjoy it and

decide to come back and do it again on a more regular basis. You'll likely come away with a good feeling deep inside knowing that you did some good and furthered our mission.

So, if the Holy Spirit has been prodding you to get more involved, even just a little, chat with a committee member or with Pastor Bob, and we'll help you find your niche. You'll be glad you did.

Alan Schroeder, Evangelism chair

Your Council Members:

Brian Brinkmeier
President
Finance
815-631-4894

Alan Schroeder
Vice - President
Evangelism
815-238-8598

Dennis Yochem
Recording Secretary
Property
815-244-1074

Jo Lyn Kruse
Worship & Music
815-213-0330

Brett Yochem
Stewardship
815-244-4004

Ron Kaufman
Memorial, Assistant
Treasurer
309-887-4390

Pat Erdmann
815-493-8057

JoAnn Palmer
Social Ministry
& WELCA
815-244-2343

Karen Holm
815-499-8361

September 2022

Birthdays				Anniversaries	
		** Special			
Brook Yochem	2	Allan Palmer**	18	John & Pam Albrecht	8
Randy Holm	6	Ross Ballard	19	Al & Dolores Fredericks	14
Pat Buckwalter	7	Hunter Holm	22	Travis & Kalah Alvey	20
Autumn Jacobs	12	Chloe Neis	27	Bob & Barbara Stark	28
Rita Ballard	15	Chris Neis	27		
BJ Olson	15	Madison Olson	27		
Jackson Carstens	18	Brian Brinkmeier	30		

August Council Highlights (unapproved awaiting acceptance vote)

The August 9th First Lutheran Church council meeting was called to order by Brian Brinkmeier. Jo Lyn Kruse moved to approve the agenda presented to the council. Alan Schroeder seconded the motion and the motion passed. Alan moved to accept the July 12th minutes with the following corrections- Alan moved that \$500.00 from the Community Benevolence Fund be given to promote GRO with Ron K. seconding the motion and the motion passing. Also Alan moved the Timber Lake musicians to be paid \$150.00. Ron K. seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Dennis Yochem moved to accept the Treasurer's, Financial Secretary's, and Memorial Treasurer's reports. Pat Erdmann seconded the motion and the motion passed. Brian moved that the treasurer pay the church bills presented to the Finance Committee this past month. Jo Lyn seconded the motion and the motion passed.

It was suggested that permission be granted before the church kitchen is used for personal purposes. A committee of volunteers will look at church accessibility and usefulness. Brett Yochem, Dennis Yochem, Pastor Bob, and Alan Schroeder volunteered to serve on the committee. A committee will be formed to deal with Vision and Focus for First Lutheran. JoAnn Palmer and Pastor Bob volunteered to serve on the committee and will ask other congregational members to serve as well.

Jo Lyn moved we adjourn, and Alan seconded the motion. We closed with the Lord's Prayer. Secretary, Dennis Yochem



Food Pantry Donations Needed

Food Pantry Items Needed

The following items are needed at the Food Pantry in Savanna:

- Cereal
- Toilet Paper
- Crackers
- Cream of Chicken Soup
- Noddles
- Cream of Celery Soup

Cash Works Also! That way they can buy the items they need the most. Please make sure that the expiration date is current, as the pantry can not accept expired items.

In Our Prayers

This Month:

Nico Neely
Haley McColley
Sandy Shaw
Jo Lyn Kruse
Dolores & Al Fredericks
Nicole Merboth
Darlene Streicher
Sandy Haas
Ron Messenger
Peggy Mader
Richard Kehl
Kenneth
Kingery Nancy
Schroeder Earl
Gilliland Ashton
Miller Dawn
Rittmeyer

In Assisted Living:

Lyle Hartman
John Hovorka
Earl Gilliland

In Military Service here and abroad:

Aaron Hartman
John Kaufman
Benjamin Rath
Logan Rittmeyer

September 2022 Lectionary Readings

Sun. Sep. 4 — Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Psalm 1, Philemon 1-21, Luke 14:25-33
Sun. Sep. 11 — Exodus 32:7-14, Psalm 51:1-10, 1 Timothy 1:12-17, Luke 15:1-10
Sun. Sep. 18 — Amos 8:4-7, Psalm 113, 1 Timothy 2:1-7, Luke 16:1-13
Sun. Sep. 25 — Amos 6:1a, 4-7, Psalm 146, 1 Timothy 6:6-19, Luke 16:19-3

Current Fund Report for July 2022

Current Income	\$7,115
Current Expense	(\$8,613)
Difference	(\$1,498)
Farmer's Market,	
Open Mic	\$3,465



September 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	1 9:00a MC Ministerial Assoc. 10:30a Meals on Wheels 4:00p Deborah Circle 5:30p Choir Practice Resumes	2 Pastors Sabbath 8-Noon Cottage Bakers	3 8:00a Breakfast at Mount Carroll Café 8-12 Farmed Market
4 8:15a Sunday School 9:00a Worship Service Live, on Zoom and Facebook Live Stream	5 Labor Day	6 6:00p Open Mic @ Bridges	7 8:00a Mens Bible Study 3:30a Shepherding 4:30p Social Ministry 7:00p Wednesday Night Gathering	8 10:30a Meals on Wheels 5:30p Choir Practice	9 Pastors Sabbath 8-Noon Cottage Bakers	10 8-12 Farmed Market
11 8:15a Sunday School 9:00a Worship Service Live, on Zoom and Facebook Live Stream	12	13 5:30p Evangelism 6:00p Finance 6:30p Council Meeting	14 7:00p Wednesday Night Gathering	15 10:30a Meals on Wheels 5:30p Choir Practice	16 Pastors Sabbath 8-Noon Cottage Bakers	17 8-12 Farmed Market
18 8:15a Sunday School 9:00a Worship Service Live, on Zoom and Facebook Live Stream	19	20 6:00-8:30p Dinner and Five Minutes of Fame @ First	21 8:00a Mens Bible Study 7:00p Wednesday Night Gathering	22 10:30a Meals on Wheels 5:30p Choir Practice	23 Pastors Sabbath 8-Noon Cottage Bakers	24 8-12 Farmed Market
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
8:15a Sunday School 9:00a Worship Service Live, on Zoom and Facebook Live Stream 5:00p Body & Soul <i>Noisy Offering</i> to Carroll County Mental Health Fund	October Newsletter Deadline	6:30p	7:00p Wednesday Night Gathering	10:30a Meals on Wheels 5:30p Choir Practice	Pastors Sabbath	