



THE MESSENGER



JUNE 2026

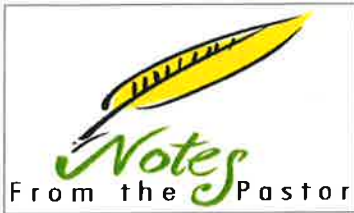
First Lutheran Church

Office Hours:
Monday—Thursday
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Fridays
Closed

107 2nd Street Southeast
Aitkin, MN 56431
Office: 218-927-2028
E-mail: office@flc-aitkin.com
<http://www.flc-aitkin.com>



facebook.com/flcaitkin



Dear Friends,

With June we head into full summer, and in the North Woods how fleeting summer is! How fondly I remember summer in the last church I worked in this far north (In Deerwood). It made up for the cold snowy winter that year.

Where I was staying for the month of April, on the Mississippi river north of town, there is an abundance of wildlife. I see swans, a beaver, teal, and literally flocks of Baltimore Orioles and hummingbirds at the birdfeeders. Not long ago I went for a walk in the woods there and heard grouse thrumming the whole time. You are blessed to be a part of this rich landscape.

I know it's summer and it's busy, but I still hope you and I can spend some time getting to know each other. You can call the office to reach me by phone, or stop by for a visit now that I'm fully moved into my office. Invite me over for coffee, or share a lunch with me at Smoky Jakes, Roadside, the 40 club or Rosallini's. I'd love to hear how each of you are doing and how you feel the church has been doing the last few years, and especially lately. That's important because I really can't serve you and help you with your church unless I get to know you

One of the tasks of interim ministry is to get a feel for the church and to understand a bit of its history. This is important to be able to help prepare the church for its next pastor and help it renew its mission for the future. I want us to use the time we have together

My first month in church we celebrated Pentecost and Trinity Sundays. To experience the Holy Spirit and see how the Christian church began is an important part of our heritage.

It is important to remember that even as we live in trying times, the church has always had challenges. Paul, Peter and so many other evangelists faced daunting challenges from changes in culture in the early years of the church. In fact, they brought about many of those changes themselves and transformed the world. If we follow God, Father, Son and Spirit with all our hearts, we can face whatever tasks lay before us in spreading the gospel and sharing Christ's love.

Happy hoeing and planting, both in your garden and in your church's work in Aitkin and beyond! We can make a difference.

**Blessings,
Pastor Glen**



Caring for the Whole Person: Body, Mind, and Spirit

As we welcome the month of June, we are reminded of the many blessings that come with longer days, sunshine, family gatherings, and opportunities to enjoy God's creation. June is also recognized as Men's Health Awareness Month, a time dedicated to encouraging men and boys to take charge of their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Men are often less likely to seek preventive medical care or discuss health concerns. This month is an important reminder for fathers, grandfathers, husbands, brothers, sons, and friends to schedule annual check-ups, monitor blood pressure, maintain healthy eating habits, stay active, and care for their mental health as well.

Simple healthy habits can make a lasting difference:

- Schedule routine wellness visits
- Stay hydrated during summer heat
- Get regular exercise through walking, biking, or outdoor activities
- Prioritize sleep and stress management
- Seek support when feeling overwhelmed or anxious
- Spend intentional time in prayer and Scripture

June also brings opportunities for outdoor fellowship and family activities. As temperatures rise, remember to protect yourself from excessive sun exposure, wear sunscreen, and check on elderly neighbors or loved ones during periods of extreme heat.

Most importantly, let us continue to encourage one another with compassion and grace. Sometimes the healthiest thing we can offer someone is a listening ear, a warm smile, or a prayer.

May this month be filled with renewed strength, joyful fellowship, and God's peace for you and your family.

"Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well."

— 3 John 1:2

Blessings,

Traci Moreland, RN, Parrish Nurse

NE MN Synod Assembly Report Apr 24-26, 2026 at Breezy Point

Our theme was “A New Creation is Everything” based on Galatians 6:15-16. Jonathon Rundman lead music. Bishop Amy Odgren is retiring this year. Her retirement party is June 13 in Grand Rapids. Rev Taryn Montgomery was elected as our new bishop. She asked us “what would it look like if ...”. This is what a new creation could be. Many churches are struggling with low attendance, financial concerns, and a need for volunteers. So what if we tried something new. We all need to be willing to serve.

Our synod values are welcome, connect, reform, and support. The ELCA church wide report was given by Secretary CeCee Mills. The ELCA vision is God’s grace and love make a difference. Congregations, synods, and church wide are all connected. The faith and civic life social statement was passed at the 2025 church wide assembly. ELCA World Hunger program served 58 countries. NE MN Synod donated \$234,000 in 2025 to world hunger. Lutheran Disaster Relief served 51 countries. NE MN Synod donated \$75,000 to LDR and \$399,700 to mission support.

ELCA Bishop Yehiel Curry presented a video message. Our goal is connection through strengthening relationships, listening, and dependence on each other. A future goal is sustainability through stewardship.

NE MN Synod offers many resources to congregations. These include lay leader program, Lutheran youth organization, reconciling in Christ for diversity, mental health and wellness, camps, and young adults in mission.

Four resolutions were passed. 1) establish a hunger grant fund of \$5000 to be put in 2028 synod budget, 2) establish ecological resilience during climate change by advocacy and civic engagement in the US with the Lutheran Advocacy and Ecofaith Network. 3) encourage youth under 18 years and young adult participation in synod assembly, and 4) participate in ecumenical decade of climate justice action.

The Emmaus Fund supports leadership development, youth and young adult engagement, and congregational outreach by providing micro grants for new ministry programs. The fund collected \$43,200 at this assembly through silent and live auctions.

Our new synod vice president is Karen Gabriel. The Holy Cow Award for world hunger went to Grace Lutheran in Sandstone for giving \$79.94 per baptized member. The Lutheran Social Service “servant of Christ” award went to Our Savior’s in Hibbing for social ministry program.

The budget of \$987,000 for 2027 passed. The compensation guidelines and synod council constitution changes passed. Bylaw 7.21.05 amendment change was made. Option to congregations to add one confirmed youth under 18 years as a voting member to synod assembly.

Music was great. We visited with many familiar faces and new people. We recommend this opportunity to serve at the annual synod assembly. Volunteer with the nominating committee at church. The next assembly is in Grand Rapids at Zion Lutheran April 30-May 2.

Rebecca May and Elizabeth Kabus

Pastor Glen is available to speak with you!

He would like to meet with folks over the phone or in-person, and is happy to come over or meet at the office.

If you are interested in setting up a meeting, please call him at 507-269-9079.

REMINDER

DUE DATE



College Scholarships



Attention college students - scholarship applications can be picked up at First Lutheran Church in the narthex or printed from the church website.

Apply Today!

Send or turn in completed application to First Lutheran Church office.

*Please directly hand in application or verify that submitted application was received.



DUE DATE: June 15th, 2026

June 80 Plus Birthdays

OTTO SOTNAK - 6/08

RUSS WALK - 6/11

BEVERLY RUEGER - 6/15

MILA SHASKEY - 6/17

BARBARA JONES - 6/18

MARTHA SWANSON - 6/20

MARY LIVINGSTON - 6/22



JUNE WORSHIP SCHEDULE

All Sunday's in June worship at
9:00am & 10:40am

Coffee fellowship immediately
following 9:00am service

JUNE EXTRA MILE MISSION: SALEM WEST

If you would like to donate, please go to
our website at www.flc-aitkin.com or
send a check to the church



GIRLS MATTER.PERIOD



Our FLC group
made and packed
200 kits
that will be
delivered
to girls in Africa.



Finance Committee

Financial Summary through April 2026

| | 2025 | 2026 |
|--|-----------|----------|
| General Operating Income - YTD | 119,175 | 111,386 |
| April Budget Expectations-YTD (Historical Average) | 133,332 | 137,036 |
| Variance to Budget Expectations - YTD | (14,157) | (25,650) |
| Actual Expenditures - YTD | 126,905 | 137,047 |
| Percentage of dollars received for period to dollars pledged | 84% | 86% |
| Unpledged Dollars Rec'd – YTD (Regular Offering) | 36,265 | 37,643 |
| Building Fund Income - YTD | 10,270 | 9,713 |
| Building Fund Expenditure - YTD | 16,708 | 11,708 |
| Campership Balance | 11,692 | 11,892 |

In comparing General Fund income with **actual** expenses, you will see a shortfall of \$25,661. This compares to last month when the shortfall was \$22,663.

In using the straight-line method of calculating the budget, general fund was about \$36,585 under budget.

Using the historical average method of calculating budget as shown above, you will see that the variance was a negative \$25,650.

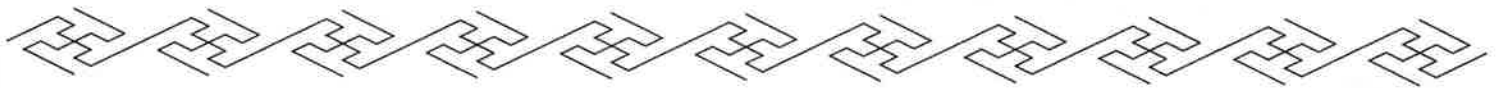
Regular offering was \$19,726 under budget expectations through April, and less than 2025 by \$7,047.

General Fund offering for April was \$28,968. Historically, April results in 8.03% of general fund giving. This amount would be \$35,646.

ATTENDANCE

| Week of | 5/03 | 5/10 | 5/17 | 5/24 |
|--------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Sunday 9:00 am (In-person) | 95 | 95 | 183 | 96 |
| Sunday 10:30 am (In-person) | 15 | 15 | 12 | 8 |
| YouTube | 82 | 64 | 64 | 43 |

All YouTube attendance is based on YouTube views as of May 26. A view may be more than one person per view. Wednesday night is all in person attendance.



AITKIN YOUTH CENTER

Any teen in grades 6-12

Open Thursday & Friday 3:30-7:30 pm

FREE! NO CHARGE!

Located at First Lutheran Church (door E2 SE)
Youth Center is renting a space, not a church or religious activity

No need to pre-register

No need to bring parent (will send letter home)

Full Meal

Snacks & Beverages

Full Gym, Ping Pong, Foosball and Lots of room to chill



MEN IN MISSION—A WONDERFUL & THRIVING FELLOWSHIP

Men in Mission or the Men's Bible Study meets each Wednesday in the Fellowship Hall to learn and share the words of Jesus. We begin with a full breakfast (8:00 A.M.) and at 8:30 Pastor Reggie leads us through our lesson which takes about one hour. This Bible group started small some 10 years ago and now attracts 18-26 attendees each Wednesday. The meals produce some profit and those funds are used in a variety of ways; meals are provided for church functions, visiting young people, special events etc. Costs and labor provided by members. We also built baptism boxes for new parents; donations to church funds, VLM, and recently purchased a replacement TV for the Youth Center.

A group of dedicated members collect and recycle aluminum cans weekly...drive to Brainerd for recycling and those fund are dedicated for the church youth. All men are invited and encouraged to attend, we also have a lot of fun. Other faiths are represented and all faiths are invited. Once you come you'll be hooked.



CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED ON FRIDAYS IN SUMMER

FROM MAY 22 - SEPTEMBER 4

SORRY
WE ARE
CLOSED
PLEASE COME BACK AGAIN



SPECIAL OFFERING TO SHIP QUILTS OVERSEAS

Our quilters have been working hard all year
making beautiful quilts.

Please help our quilters send these quilts to those
who need them most.

Thank you for your kindness.

Ministry opportunities at First Lutheran:

If you would like to participate in worship services, call any of the following people and volunteer.

Training provided.

Lector: Reading scriptures & the prayers of the Church):

Contact the office (218-927-2028)

Communion assistant: Contact the office (218-927-2028)

Usher: Contact the office (218-927-2028)

Children's sermon: Contact the office (218-927-2028)

Sound Technician: Contact the office (218-927-2028)

Power Point Technician: Contact the office (218-927-2028)

Video Technician: Dave Sadlowsky (952-221-3861)

Worship Committee: Rebecca May (927-3481)

Contemporary worship song leaders/musicians: Pat Perrine (218-428-1884)

Hymn selections: Linda Delaney (927-6237)

Altar Guild: Mary Peterson (927-6820)

WELCA: Mary Peterson (927-6820)

Dinner at your Door: Carla Hakes (320-333-1876)

Choir: Aaron Perrine ((651)428-9005)

Please call me back I'm one of those people who regularly calls for lectors, communion assistants, kitchen help, worship assistants, Sunday coffee hour help, etc. If you're not home, I leave a message on your answering machine. It would be most helpful if you would return my phone call with a yes or no—then I'll know you received my message and it will save me more phone calls. Thank you for making my volunteer job much easier!

New Option: We have a new scheduling program – Ministry Scheduling Pro. Very easy to use and to volunteer for many positions. Contact the office to get signed up.

Support Groups

1. **Rides for Health** (Aitkin Co CARE) 927-4077
2. **Memory Loss/Caregivers** (Aitkin Co CARE)- 1st Wed 1230 pm 927-1383
3. **Doughnuts with Dawn** (previously memory lane cafe) – Maryhill Manor every Wed 1000-1200 pm
4. **HOPE** (healing, opportunity, provided equally) (previously AADA)- domestic violence- Wed 800-900 am for women, Thurs 400-500 pm for teens
5. **Sexual Violence Resource Center/Support Within Reach**- 927-6226- Mon and Wed 800 am-500 pm
6. **Aitkin Co Child Abuse Prevention Council** 927-6226
7. **Diabetes Resources**- Riverwood Health Care Center 927-5152
8. **Suicide Prevention**- Aitkin Co Public Health – 927-7272
9. **Crisis Line** 1-800-462-5525

STAFF

Pastor Glen Bickford

(Interim Pastor)

glen@flc-aitkin.com

Jill Jameson

(Office Manager)

office@flc-aitkin.com

Nicole Cook

(Ministry & Media Coordinator)

mmc@flc-aitkin.com

Barb Bendson

(Accountant)

barb@flc-aitkin.com

Justine Nordick

(Sunday School Coordinator)

justinenordick@gmail.com

Mike Purdy (Custodian)

Rebecca May (Organist)

Sarah Grovogel

(Nursery Facilitator)

Aaron Perrine (Choir Director)

Mission Statement

With God's love we embrace one another, our neighbors, and all creation.

Vision Statement

Doing God's Work with Our Hands by Providing:

Spiritual Growth for All

Opportunities for Living Out Our Christian Faith

Support of our Mission and Ministries

Church Values

TRUST and LOVE in Jesus Christ

COMMIT to living God's Word

PRACTICE hospitality with welcoming and kindness

RESPECT and CARE for all people

SERVE our community

Live Stream/Recording of every 9:00 a.m. Sunday Service

Can't make it to church? Watch it live.
Missed last week? Catch up by watching the recording.
Want to see it again? Or pass it on....
Go to YouTube – enter First Lutheran Church in Aitkin
Scroll thru and search for the date you are looking for.
Click on play. It's that simple.

How do I turn on subtitles/closed captioning on YouTube?

Steps

1. Open a YouTube video.
2. Click the gear icon in the bottom-right corner of the video player to display the video player settings.
3. Expand the combo box next to Subtitles/CC.
4. Click the desired subtitle language to begin displaying subtitles.

You will have to do this each time with any video.

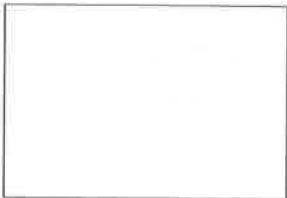
9:00 a.m. worship service is
Livestreamed on YouTube at First
Lutheran Church of Aitkin and broadcast
at 10:00 a.m. on KKIN 94.3 FM Aitkin

NEWSLETTER
ARTICLES
DUE ON THE 15TH OF
EVERY MONTH

PLEASE NOTE: The church is charged 75 cents for undeliverable mailings. If you do not want to continue receiving this mailing, please request that your name be removed from our list by returning the attached label to First Lutheran Church, 107 2nd St., SE, Aitkin MN 56431, or by emailing the church at office@flc-aitkin.com September 2025



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



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AITKIN MN 56431