



THE MESSENGER

APRIL 2025



First Lutheran Church

Office Hours:
Monday—Thursday
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Friday
7:30 a.m. to 12 noon

107 2nd Street Southeast
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There is a story of a young boy who was starting to understand what communion was. In his church, children remained in their seats as the adults went forward to receive the bread and wine. This boy had reached the age when he was increasingly curious about this whole business and watched the adults, particularly his mother, very closely. When his mother returned to their pew, she knelt for a moment in solemn prayer. Then she sat back next to her son. He smelled something sweet and wonderful. He asked his mother, "What is that smell?" She turned and said, "What smell, son?" When she spoke, he realized it was on her breath. "What is inside you?" She knew she could not explain it all, so she simply said, "Oh son, that's Jesus. You smell Jesus." This answer was enough for him, and the smell was so good that he learned into his mother and knew that just being next to her meant that he had Jesus too.

When I talk with First Communion students about receiving the bread and wine, I ask them what people look like when they take communion. Over the years, most of the responses are that people look very serious, sometimes sad. One student thought that some even looked mad.

What do we receive with communion? And what is our response to such gifts? Martin Luther tells us in the Small Catechism that we receive the gifts of forgiveness, life and salvation. Big words for the children of God to understand at any age. For sure, the little boy in the story was on to something – Jesus is ever nearer to us as we receive the bread and wine or a blessing at the Lord's table. The young boy's response to this revelation was to lean into his mother and delight in having Jesus so close to him that he could smell him.

Most of us grew up being told that communion is serious business. We need to reflect on our sins and our unworthiness before God. We need to remember that Jesus chose to die so that we could be forgiven, and he gave us the gift of this meal so that we might taste and see how good the Lord is to us. And this is all exactly true. We come to the altar by God's grace, because we could never earn a place at God's table.

But after we have been invited, after we have come forward, after we have received God's gifts for us – how do we respond? The old song says that we "Thank the Lord and sing his praise. Tell everyone what he has done." There is joy in having received Jesus and all his love. We do sing and invite one another to join us in thanking and praising God. After all, it is God who has done the gracious giving in Communion. And the gift is so great – we as receivers are grateful, and we experience again how good and great our God is to us.

Perhaps our hearts have not caught up with the gift by the time we return to our seats. But we thank the Lord and sing his praise with shouts of joy anyway. We lean into the promise, as the young boy learned into his mother. We sing, because we know, as he did, that we are ever nearer to Jesus. And by the grace of God, we will grow to understand and rejoice in this good and wonderful gift.

May God inspire our songs and lead us into the joy of his presence and the joy of telling about his grace for all.

See you all in church.

Pastor Reggie



Sensory Changes of Aging

Aging is a continuous process beginning at birth and ending with death. Age related sensory changes occur gradually and vary between persons. After age 62, aging interferes with bodily functions. We have five senses that provide a means of learning, security and safety, mobility, communication, and enjoyment.

1. Vision helps with learning, safety, and mobility.
2. Hearing enables us to communicate and interact socially, learn, and protect ourselves.
3. Taste lets us enjoy eating and choose foods according to body needs and preferences.
4. Smell provides a means for safety, emotional life, digestion, memories, and pleasure.
5. Touch provides a means for safety, emotional life, and pleasure.

Persons with sensory deprivation find it difficult to concentrate, may become bored, have a short attention span, or may become confused. Stronger stimuli are needed in all five senses as we age. Greater contrasts facilitate use of our five senses. Processing of senses takes longer. Compensating with other senses helps if one sense is lost. Changes can lead to social isolation and depression. The environment influences the person's ability to cope. A detailed handout is available near the nurses' office.

God gave us amazing bodies to use and take care of.

Humor Sunday is coming Apr 27 (the week after Easter). The Minneapolis Star Tribune asked school age children ages 6 to 17 to submit essays on aging. Here are a few excerpts (unknown year published).

If you are lucky, you'll be able to feel the weather in your bones.

When you grow old you go back to the stage where nobody listens to you.

It is nice that some people live to be over 90 years old. Those are the people whom I consider to be the smartest people on earth.

It will be fun to grow old. You could get Social Security money and a buy nice car like a Cadillac.

When I grow up I will tell my kids to not put me in a nursing home. Then I will probably live longer.

I love to listen to stories my great grandma tells me, even though she doesn't know who I am.

Some of the advantages would be retirement funds, people waiting on you, and government cheese.

A wrinkle here and there doesn't mean you can't do fun things.

The good part is you'll see Jesus soon. The bad part is you have to die first.

When people are old, we laugh at them and make jokes about them, but the main reason we do it is because we don't want to think of ourselves as being old, in a wheelchair, or at a nursing home.

When I am old I'm going to buy a big screen VCR and watch PG 13 movies.

I'm going to live with a grandma because I'll be a grandpa.

It is not difficult to understand where young people get their ideas about old people. You can almost tell from the above what kind of parents and grandparents these kids have lived around. Our every action is making an impression about all older people on our youngsters.

Submitted by Rebecca May, RN



Rejoice in the Lord



Reach out to those in need



Jesus said: "Your attitude must be like my own for I did not come to be served but to serve." Matt: 20:28 LWB

**WOMEN OF THE ELCA
HEARTLAND CONFERENCE SPRING
GATHERING, Saturday, April 5, 2025
Lutheran Church of the Cross
9am-12 Noon**

**(\$10 Registration includes
morning coffee and lunch)**

**All are Welcome to attend
any or all of the day's events!
(see schedule)**



Keynote Speaker: Marila Kharytonova
She is a talented writer, musician and artist who shares her stories of Ukraine through word, music, and art.

WELCA

**Heartland Conference
2025 Spring Gathering Schedule
Lutheran Church of the Cross, Nisswa**

- 8:30 to 9:00 am Registration and Coffee (Celebration Center)
- 8:55am Welcome (Celebration Center)
- 9:00 to 9:15 am Brief Business Meeting (Celebration Center)
- 9:15 to 9:30 am Break
- 9:30 to 10:00 am Worship with Communion
LCC Pastor Michelle Ruen (Sanctuary)
- 10:00 to 10:45 am Keynote Speaker, Mariia Kharytonova (Sanctuary)
- 10:45 to 11:00 am Global Health Newborn Kit Initiative Overview (Sanctuary)
Kim Dickey, Global Health Ministry, and NE MN Synod Pollinator Project –LCC Creation Care Tea (Sanctuary)
- 11:00 to 12:00pm Breakout Sessions:
Ukraine - Marila Kharytonova
NE MN Synod Pollinator Project -LCC Creation Care Team-Paula West
GH Newborn Kit Initiative- Kim Dickey
Women of the ELCA Display
- 12:00 – 1:00 pm Lunch (Celebration Center)

Offering Opportunities

Gathering Offering: ½ to Ukraine through "Impact World Change", ½ to Churchwide Women of the ELCA.

Penny Offering to-Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen & Princeton Community Dinner.

Love Offering to NE MN Synod Women of the ELCA.

Make checks payable to Women of the ELCA



In my first parish, a man from Detroit Lakes bought a farm on a lake from two bachelor brothers. He stipulated that they could continue living on the farm while he built a house and garage on the lake. The new owner asked the brothers if they had made any arrangements for their estates when they died. No, they hadn't and despite the owner's encouragement, the two brothers refused to make any plans.

Their estates went to the State of Minnesota. That is not a bad thing but at the same time, they could have planned to create some lasting effects of their lives. They could have become "heroic donors" so to speak, by taking time to consider what was important to them and helping fund that into the future. Maybe that was the state of Minnesota. Or maybe it was just not taking time to think more deeply about what was important to them and their faith.

In 2018, the five people on the Mission Endowment Fund Committee took a bold step and decided to invest the principle of the fund in Thrivent Charitable. They could have invested in other funds, that is not the issue; but they decided that their responsibility to those who had donated to the fund required they look for more aggressive or money-earning opportunities. The result would then generate more money for use as grants. That has happened.

What do you want to do with your financial estate? What is important to you and do you want to help fund that into the future? The Mission Endowment Fund Committee has resources that you can look over and decide if they will help you be a donor into the future, touching lives with your life's resources.

Annual Appeal – An advisory board is being recruited to meet for two times to think about our Annual Appeal. The goal is to get a range of ages and backgrounds representing the congregation as we move forward to the fall campaign or program.

If you are interested in being a part of this advisory committee, talk to David Meyer or Pastor Doug Larson.

Reverse Offering or Ten Talents – either way you look at it, it reminds us that God has given us talents or gifts to use for God's Kingdom. We had a variety of talents used last spring and summer. Let us continue to value our talents and think of ways, maybe new ways, to go out into God's creation and touch the world.

Pastor Doug Larson
Stewardship Ministry Chair

WEDNESDAY EVENING LENT SERVICES

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

All services begin at 6 pm

April 2

April 9

All services will feature the Holden Evening Prayer Service and Pastor Reggie will be leading the service each week. Come and join in our special prayer stations.

Service is open for all members and visitors
Please join us in our lenten journey



80-Plus Birthdays in April

Arlene Freeman	April 3
Carol Trick	April 12
Maurice Freeman	April 17
Sylvia Wilmo	April 22
Eileen Westward	April 24
Shirley Hakes	April 25

90-Plus Birthdays in April

Robert Kolodji	April 23
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APRIL'S EXTRA MILE MISSION FOCUS

NE MN SYNOD ECOFAITH MINISTRY

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



NEW ADULT BIBLE STUDY



“THE CROSS”



Beginning in April. Everyone is welcome!

Tuesday mornings at 11:00 am in the Library.



Mud on my Boots on Ash Wednesday

Cleaning the mud off my boots after a recent flood response, I noticed the grittiness of it.

It reminded me of preparing the ashes for Ash Wednesday. Burning last year's celebratory palms, sieving them fine, mixing them with oil.

I see the impermanence of things, of even life itself, in the mud and ashes.

Ash Wednesday, a day when we acknowledge our mortality and our own return to dust.

Mucking out after a flood, removing what was once treasure that has now become trash.

Too often we overlook the physicality of the Christian faith in our anticipation of Heaven. We focus on the promise of our spiritual future, and, yes, that will be a wonderful thing. No more tears and reunions of all sorts. Wholeness that we can only wonder and dream about.

And yet, though we worship and celebrate God With Us, a peculiar God that took on the stuff of their own creation to be with their creation, we sometimes forget that there is more to the promise than "pie in the sky, by and by".

The Kingdom of God is now, in the wine and bread, in the water and ashes, in our call to serve and love our neighbor.

The Kingdom of God is even found in flood mud.

No, really.

When we are more like Christ, do we become more human or less?

I believe we become more human, specifically, we become the humanity that God hoped we would be. Loving, caring, invested in one another's well-being. Trusting in the abundance of God.

Watch what happens after a flood. Neighbors take each other in and make sure everyone is accounted for. Strangers show up to clean out houses, to offer hugs and listening hearts. Food is shared. Help is accepted and reciprocated. Communities mourn their losses as communities.

To quote a recent Welch, WV flood survivor: "We become human again."

When we take on the ashes of Ash Wednesday or the mud from another flood, we become human again. We recognize our place in the Kingdom; we accept the invitation to participate in it.

Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return. Now, go out there and get muddy.

Reverend Deacon Mary Sanders and serves as a minister of word and service in West Virginia and western Maryland. Prior to seminary, she served as an environmental inspector for the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection. Her sense of call is to serve the people and environment of Appalachia. She lives on her great grandma's farm with two dogs and two cats and is surreptitiously planting a food forest around her cabin.



GET REGISTERED TODAY!

2025

SUMMER CAMP

VLMCAMPS.ORG

--CAMPERSHIPS--

NEW 5TH GRADERS FREE
(MINUS DEPOSIT)

EVERYONE ELSE 50%



VLM HIRING SUMMER STAFF

JOIN OUR SUMMER TEAM

NOW HIRING

GROW WORKING AT CAMP

-  LEADERSHIP SKILLS
-  VOCATIONAL CLARITY
-  LIFELONG FRIENDSHIPS
-  WILDERNESS SKILLS



VLM is hiring summer staff eager to grow in confidence, learn in community, and build lasting friendships. There are a variety of positions that are suitable for young adults with diverse skills and interests. Apply today or encourage a young adult you know to apply!



Learn more at vlmcamps.org

APRIL SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Sunday Mornings 10:15 - 11:00 am

April 6: Sunday School

April 13: Sunday School

April 20: No Sunday School -
Happy Easter

April 27: Sunday School

Children's Choir Performs at
9:00 am Worship Service

Easter Blessings

Easter Blessings



April Wednesday Night Faith Schedule

Coffeehouse: 3:30 - 5:30 pm

WNE Class: 4:30 - 5:30 pm

April 2: Class

April 9: Class

April 16: Holy Week

No Class

April 23: Class

April 30: Class



APRIL 7th & 8th GRADE WEDNESDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE

Meal 5:15-6:00 pm, Worship 6:00-6:30 pm

Class: 6:30-8:00 pm

April 2: Class

April 9: Class

April 16: Holy Week

No Class

April 23: Class

April 27: Highway Pickup

Please arrive by 4:30 pm

Happy Easter

EASTER
He is Risen
+

Happy Easter

9TH GRADE AFFIRMATION SCHEDULE FOR APRIL

Coffeehouse 3:30 - 5:30 pm, Dinner 5:15 - 6:00 pm

Class 6:30 - 8:00 pm



April 2: Youth/Mentor Night

Invite your mentor!

April 9: Final Night!



Save the Dates!

First Holy Communion

Class— Sunday, April 13th — 1pm-3pm

Class is for youth and at least one parent.

First Holy Communion:

Maundy Thursday, April 17th at 7pm

All friends and family, especially baptismal sponsors, are welcome to join us during this worship.

Holy Week Schedule 2025

First Lutheran Church



Palm/Passion Sunday,

Worship—Sunday April 13th, 9:00 am only
(Also available via livestream on YouTube at 9am
and Radio broadcast on KKIN 94.3FM **at 10am**)

Wednesday April 16th — No Worship or evening activities

Maundy Thursday,

Worship—Thursday April 17th, 12:00 noon & 7:00 pm
3rd grade+ — First Holy Communion 7:00 pm
5th graders, families & guests—Seder Meal 5:00 pm

Good Friday

Office closed

Worship—Friday April 18th, 12:00 pm
Community Worship @ St. John's of Cedarbrook—6:30 pm

Easter Sunday

Sunday April 20th

8:00 am—Worship Service
No Coffee Fellowship

10:00am—Worship Service

(Also available via livestream on YouTube
and Radio broadcast on KKIN 94.3FM)



Finance Committee

Financial Summary through January 31, 2025

	2024	2025
General Operating Income - YTD	24,056	29,446
Actual Expenditures - YTD	33,225	30,338
Percentage of dollars received for period to dollars pledged	64%	88%
Unpledged Dollars Rec'd – YTD (Regular Offering)	7,600	10,935
Building Fund Income - YTD	2,450	2,625
Building Fund Expenditure - YTD	2,927	2,927
Campership Balance	9,704	10,337

In comparing General Fund income with actual expenses, you will see a shortfall of \$892.

In using the straight line method of calculating the budget, general fund income was about \$5,082 under budget.

Regular offering was \$4,251 under budget expectations through January, and greater than 2024 by \$4,996.

Sunday Worship Services in April

April 6 & 27

9:00 & 10:30 am

April 13

9:00 am only

April 20

8:00 & 10 am



ATTENDANCE

Week of	3/2	3/9	3/16
Sunday	96	121	89
9:00 a.m.	(In-person)		
	8	11	9
10:30 a.m.	(In-person)		
Wednesday	noon: 29		
6:00 pm	40	75	70
9:00 a.m.	(YouTube)		
	52	57	51



ALL YOUTUBE ATTENDANCE IS BASED ON YOU TUBE VIEWS AS OF March 30. A VIEW MAY BE MORE THAN ONE PERSON PER VIEW. WEDNESDAY NIGHT IS ALL IN PERSON ATTENDANCE.

In Memory

Our sympathy and prayers go out to the
friends & family of:

Larry "Buzz" Lindbo, who passed away
March 4, 2025, especially to his wife, Judi, daughter and
son-in-law Lara & Tom Parkin and grandsons, Seth &
Reed.

Marion Gilmer, who passed away
March 7, 2025.

John "Jack" Fossen, who passed away
March 9, 2025.

BAPTISM ANNIVERSARIES

First Lutheran is going to remember and celebrate your Baptism with a special event in worship . You and others will be invited to gather around the Baptismal font and hear what God did and continues to do for you through your Holy Baptism. You can affirm your desire to continue living as God's new creation.

Please remember and celebrate your Baptism on Sunday the 27th of April at 9 am.

Even if you don't know when you were baptized, a good rough estimate is to pick a date 6 weeks after your birthday. You can join the Baptism Anniversary that month!



First Lutheran Church Worship and Music Committee

April Baptism Anniversaries

Bruss, Matthew

Buisman, Ruth
Ann

Drewelow,
Kyler

Gale,
Roger

Gray,
Alan

Gray,
Beverly

Hakes,
Carla

Hommel,
Linda

Jacobson,
Will

Johnson,
Sonja

Jones,
Hannah

Kellerman,
Paul

Klemstein,
David

Klitzke,
Milan

Kukowski,
Alexander

Kullhem,
Gary

Landborg,
Merlyn

Lehrer,
Britton

Little,
Sawyer

McMillan,
Dori

McMillan,
Elisabeth

McMillan,
Sarah

Moore,
Pauline

Moss,
Zeke

Muscattello,
Marge

Novotny,
Dan

Nyberg,
Noah

Oaks,
Joann

Packer,
Sebastian

Parkin,
Reed

Paulson,
Craig

Pearson,
David

Perrine,
Stephanie

Proctor,
Tara

Ratz,
Jim

Sadlowsky,
Jill

Wasserzieher,
Harlow

Wasserzieher,
Henry

Watters,
David

CREATION CARE



**REDUCE
REUSE
RECYCLE**

Green Tips (factual information about environmental problems and causes) can now be viewed at the Synod's EcoFaith Network website, under the "Green Blades Rising Newsletters" or "Green Tips" links. (www.nemnsynod.org/ecofaith.html).

PLEASE AVOID USING STYROFOAM WHEN WORKING IN THE CHURCH KITCHEN. THANKS!



**EARTH'S
CRIES,
EARTH'S
CALL**

**BECOMING MIDWIVES OF HOPE
FOR THE HEALING OF CREATION**

**ECOFAITH SUMMIT
OF THE UPPER MIDWEST**

**LEAD SPEAKER:
DR. CYNTHIA MOE-LOBEDA**

**FEATURED PRESENTER:
DR. KELLY SHERMAN-CONROY**

APRIL 5, 2025

8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH, DULUTH, MN

FOR MORE INFO OR
TO REGISTER:



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: Pastor Reggie (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) Pete Lowe (218-831-4210)

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 Reggie Denton

(Senior Pastor)

reggie@flc-aitkin.com

Jill Jameson

(Office Manager)

office@flc-aitkin.com

Colleen Kent Chute

(Ministry & Media Coordinator)

colleen@flc-aitkin.com

Barb Bendson (Accountant)

barb@flc-aitkin.com

Justine Nordick

(Sunday School Coordinator)

justinenordick@gmail.com

Mike Purdy (Custodian)

Rebecca May (Organist)

Michele Plagman (web site)

mplagman@usa.net

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.

WORSHIP TIMES

**Sundays
In April
April 6 & 27
9:00 am & 10:30 am
Palm Sunday
April 13
9:00 am
Easter Sunday
April 20
8:00 am & 10:00 am**

**Wednesdays
6:00 pm
No Wednesday service
April 16**

**Maundy Thursday
April 17
12:00 Noon & 7:00 pm
Good Friday
April 18
Tenebrae Service
12:00 Noon**

**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 April 2025



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
107 2ND ST SE
AITKIN MN 56431

