



FIRST LUTHERAN C H U R C H

The Visitor is the monthly newsletter for the members and friends of First Lutheran Church

September 2023

Parish Staff

Pr. John Dietz, pastor
Rian Johnson, secretary
Melissa Peterson, custodian
Elaine Sweeney, musician

Parish Council

Lynn Schweiberger, president
Kay Dague, secretary
Barb Bautch
Connie Bryant
Pr. John Dietz
Gen Lervik
Mary Maki
Dave Peterson
Stephanie Skraba
Sheryl Tokarczyk
Nancy White

Office Hours

Monday-Friday
8:00 am- 2:00 pm
After 2:00 pm by appointment

Contact Us

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Follow us on Facebook at:
firsthibbing



YouTube Channel:
First Lutheran Church- Hibbing, MN

Join us!

Sundays

9:30 am Worship

Service of Holy Communion

10:30 am Fellowship

Conversation and refreshments

10:30 am Sunday School & Confirmation

Age 3 - Grades 6+ Faith Formation

Baptisms Weddings & Pastoral Care

Please contact the church office to schedule a Baptism or a Wedding in advance. If you are seeking pastoral care for yourself or a loved one, please contact the church office to set up an appointment or call the pastor directly in an emergency. Always leave a message at 218-969-5108.

Hibbing Public Access TV

Watch on channels 805 or 118.5 or on the website:
hpat.org- go to **Educational Access** and scroll down to
First Lutheran Church

Live on Sundays at 9:30 am

Rebroadcast on Sundays at 8:30 am, Wednesdays at
8:00 pm, and Thursdays at 2:00 pm

First Lutheran Church – Hibbing is a parish of the
Northeastern Minnesota Synod, one of 65 synods of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The ELCA is one
of the largest Christian denominations in the United
States, with nearly 3.3 million members in more than
8,900 worshipping communities across the 50 states and in
the Caribbean region.



ELCA

Pastor

I was listening to a book on Audible the other day where the author made this realization. He was around 30 years-old at the time, and he said he was reading about 30 books in an average year. And it struck him one day as he stood in a bookstore that if he continued at that rate (which I thought was pretty impressive!) and he lived for another 50 years, he only had 1,500 more books left to read in his lifetime.

At first, 1,500 books seems like a lot – but not when you consider how many books there are out there, and of those how many you want to actually read. He realized that instead of trying to read as many as he possibly could, he had to become much more selective about what he chose to read from here on out.

He also put it into another perspective when he compared how much time he spends reading with the amount of time he wastes on watching trash TV on Netflix or “doom scrolling” through Facebook and the other social media we’re all tethered to.

So, he is going to limit his screen time, cut down or off is social media, and become much more selective about what he reads with the reading time he has left. He wants to have a more meaningful life, filled with the good stuff – not just stuff.

This got me thinking. I have written a lot of sermons in my life. I think if I added it all up – 21 years of Ordination, 52 Sundays per year, plus Lenten midweeks and other holy days – not counting funerals and weddings, and taking off four Sundays of vacation a year . . . we’re somewhere north of one thousand sermons.

When I did that math, I was kind of surprised it wasn’t more, but it was no less distressing. Because of those 1,000 plus sermons I really can’t remember any of them. That doesn’t mean they were bad, though some doubtlessly were. A few may have even been really good, but just a couple of days or weeks later, they’re just another 1,000-1,200 words taking up space in my computer’s memory.

Just because they weren’t all that remarkable, it doesn’t mean they weren’t useful. Like the man who realized he couldn’t really recall one of the thousands of meals he had eaten in his life as being that outstandingly delicious, but also understood that it didn’t mean that all of those ordinary meals didn’t keep him alive. They did the important work they were meant to do, even if they weren’t memorable.

There is one sermon I keep going back to, and not surprisingly, it isn’t one I wrote. For years I have been drawn to read and re-read Jesus’ sermon from Matthew chapters 5 through 7. We call it “The Sermon on the Mount,” though I’m certain Jesus never did. Jesus’ sermon has become not just my scriptural inspiration to

live out the values of the kingdom of God, but it has also become a very good mirror, reflecting back to me the ways I have completely misunderstood or disregarded those values.

More than anything, I have found in these teachings of Jesus the call to follow him more intentionally, not as a practice of religion, but as a deepening of spirituality; not

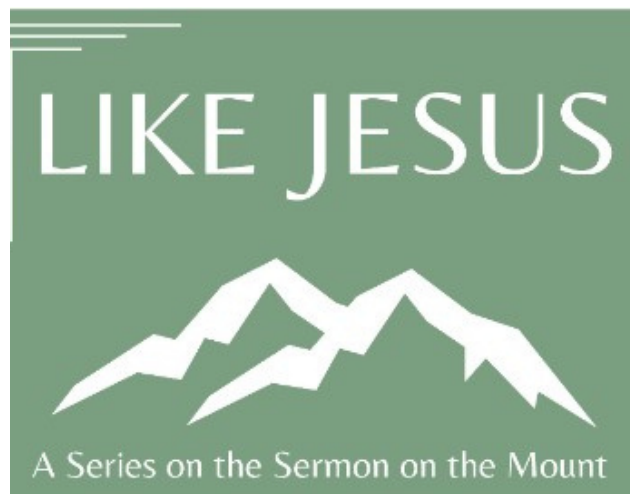
as a way to merit my salvation or to earn God’s love, but as a way to live out my salvation as one of God’s beloved children.

I won’t say it has changed me completely, but each day I find that giving my attention to Jesus’ words in this most memorable sermon changes how I see the world around me, how I choose to interact with my neighbors, how I understand myself and how I relate to God.

This Fall, we’ll be taking a detour from the Revised Common Lectionary and looking at the Sermon on the Mount together, verse by verse, chapter by chapter. If you’d like to go deeper, read the sermon ahead – you can find it in the gospel of Matthew 5-7. You can also join us on Tuesdays for Lunch & learn where we’ll give more time and attention to the themes of the Sermon on the Mount.

Peace and all good.

+ Pastor John Dietz



Worship God

Service of Holy Communion

Sundays at 9:30 am

Join us every Sunday for worship. We gather around the means of God's grace — the Word and Sacrament — every Sunday at 9:30 am. Doors are open by 8:30 am. Gathering for worship is at the heart of Lutherans identity. If you can't be with us in person, make sure to watch on Hibbing Public Access or YouTube (information on the front cover).

Volunteers and Ministers of the Liturgy

Every Sunday we gather for worship, you might notice that there are a lot of people who make it happen. Would you like to be one of them? Readers proclaim the reading and psalm. Assisting Ministers help distribute the Holy Communion. The Altar Guild sets up for and cleans up after the Communion. Ushers and Greeters welcome people into the sanctuary with a smile and a worship bulletin, and let them know when to go up for Communion. Altar Servers (usually kids, but they don't have to be) light the candles and carry the cross in and out of the sanctuary. Audio-Visual makes sure our services are broadcast on HPAT and YouTube. Fellowship Hosts make sure we all have coffee following worship. If you'd like to get involved in any of these ministries, please sign up and if you need help or encouragement, talk to the pastor.

Hymn Sing Sunday

September 24

On Sunday, September 24, we'll be having another "Hymn Sing" Sunday. Parts of the sung liturgy (Gloria, Alleluia, Sanctus, etc.) will be replaced with hymns. Do you have a favorite hymn that we haven't sung in a while? Let Pastor John know.

Choir

September 10

Our Sunday morning choir group is reconvening in September. If you like to sing or play an instrument, we'll be meeting at 9:00 am just about every Sunday this Fall. Our first Fall practice will be held on Sunday, September 10, at 9:00 am in the sanctuary; meet by the organ. We'll gather September 10, 17, and 24.

Fall Sermon Series

September — November

We're announcing a Fall Sermon Series based on Jesus' own Sermon on the Mount from Matthew chapters 5 — 7. Each week we'll look at what Jesus said about the upside down kingdom of God, and how following him will not only change our lives, but change the world we live in. Join us for "LIKE JESUS – A Series on the Sermon on the Mount."

September's Lectionary Readings

September 3 – 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Romans 9:12-21 + Psalm 26:1-8 + Matt. 16:21-28

September 10 – Look Like Jesus
Micah 6:6-8 + Ps. 1 + 1 John 3:1-13 + Matt. 5:1-12

September 17 – Shine Like Jesus
Isaiah 60:1-5 + Ps. 119:105-112 + Ephesians 5:8b-14 + Mt. 5:13-20

September 24 – Forgive Like Jesus
Exodus 19:1-17 + Ps. 119:1-8 + Galatians 5:19-23 + Matt. 5:21-26

If you are volunteering to read, the readings for each week will be available right under the sign-ups on the Welcome Table.

Rally Sunday

Blessing of Students and Backpacks

September 10

Join us on Sunday, September 10, for worship at 9:30 am. We'll be back to having Children's Sermons during the liturgy, and this first one in the Fall will be a Blessing of Students and their Backpacks. So, bring your backpack (or lunchbox, or whatever you bring to school) and receive a blessing for the new year!



Grow in Faith

Rally Day Pastor-Parent Meeting

September 10

Following worship on September 10, we will have a picnic with games and activities for the Sunday School and Confirmation kids. Hotdogs, chips, and dessert provided. Bring a side if you'd like. At 11:15 am, Pastor John will hold a brief meeting with all the parents of Sunday School and Confirmation kids where you'll receive a packet of important information regarding Sunday School and Confirmation. At least one parent/responsible adult must be present to enroll children into these classes.



Fall Lunch & Learn

September 12

We will continue our Lunch & Learn events this Fall, gathering most Tuesdays at 11:00 am to check-in with each other and then dive into a topic. Bring your own lunch to enjoy; we'll have the coffee and water. Please note September's schedule: September 12, 19, and 26.

Breakfast Book Club

September 28

We are starting a monthly Breakfast Book Club and would love for you to join in. Our first meeting will be at the Cardinal Room at the Hibbing college campus on Thursday, September 28. We'll meet at 8:30 am, enjoy a fine meal, and talk about a book (or parts of a book). If you'd like to just join us for breakfast and conversation, you'll be more than welcome! Sign up for the Breakfast Book Club's first meeting are at the Welcome Table. No Book for the first meeting – just an introduction and meal.



Sunday School Classes

September 17

We are so excited to be offering a Sunday School program this year for all of our members and friends ages 3 and up through grade 5. This year, Sunday School classes will be held every Sunday except for holidays and school breaks. Students will leave worship following the Communion and go directly to their classes with their teachers where they will enjoy snack and a Bible lesson, usually mixed in with some art, music, video, and games. Everyone is encouraged to join us for the Rally Day Packet Picnic on September 10 where there will be food and games and an important meeting with the pastor (see above). Classes will be held on September 17 and 24.

Teachers and Adult Helpers

If you are a parent, grandparent, or other caring adult and would like to help out in our Sunday School or Confirmation programs as a teacher or helper, often or occasionally, please talk to Pr. John, Ashley Dietz, or Jane Plese.

Confirmation Classes

September 17 | September 20

Confirmation is a three-year program of education, worship, service, and fellowship for all of our members' and friends' middle school youth. You can begin classes in the beginning of grade 6. There is a mandatory meeting for parents/ adults who are enrolling their children in this program on Sunday, September 10 at 11:15 am in the sanctuary. This year, we will offer two options for Confirmation classes — a Sunday morning and a Wednesday evening format. Families will need to choose which format will work for them. Our first classes of the year will be held on Sunday, September 17 from 10:30-11:30 am, and on Wednesday, September 20 from 6:00-7:00 pm. Classes will meet in the third floor classroom.

Women's Bible Study

September 27

Moms of school-aged children who are looking for a time to connect with each other and the Bible are welcome to this new group forming in the Fall. Women will be meeting a couple of Wednesdays each month from 6:00-7:00 pm in the Fireside Room. If you are bringing your kids, they are invited to play in the nursery. There is nothing to prepare before hand — just come and enjoy the time together. The first meeting will be held on September 27.

Confirmation Family Retreat

October 6-7

We will be heading to Camp Hiawatha for a fun evening of food and fellowship, campfire and worship on Friday, October 6. We'll stay the night and wake up the next day to a great camp breakfast and get involved in some of the service projects on camp workday, heading home after lunch on Saturday, October 7. All Confirmation students — put this on your calendars now! Parents, we will need drivers and chaperones — consider joining us for this great time! All Families are welcome!

Build Community

Fellowship

Be sure to do two things: 1.) sign up to host fellowship — it can be as involved or as simple as you'd like to make it. Coffee is the main thing, and everything else is a bonus. Sign-ups are at the Welcome Table. 2.) join us in the fellowship hall for the coffee and whatever else there may be and enjoy the conversation. It's so good to see so many people sticking around and building up the caring community we are here at First Lutheran.

Remember, if there are name tags and markers at the tables, put one on so we can be intentional about getting to know our visitors and newer members and they can get to know us.

Snowbirds

If you are one of our "snowbird" members or friends, please let us know in the office when you'll be taking off for the Winter. Before we know it, some of you have already headed down to Florida or Arizona. You're important to us — no matter where you're at!

Pie Social & Fundraiser

September 24

On Sunday, September 24, we will be hosting a Pie Social and Fundraiser during our regular fellowship time. Following worship, come into the Fellowship Hall to enjoy a piece of pie or two and make a donation to take a piece or a pie home with you. All donations will go towards the WELCA kitchen fund. If you are willing to make a pie or two (one for eating and another for donating), talk to Barb Tanem!

Rally Day Picnic

September 10

Everyone is invited to kick off the beginning of the new academic year with us on Sunday, September 10. Following worship, we will have a potluck picnic for everybody. Hotdogs, chips, and desserts provided — bring a side if you'd like to share. There will be games and activities for the Sunday School and Confirmation kids.

Building and Grounds Updates

This late Summer and early Fall, you will be seeing quite a bit of work being done here at First Lutheran Church. Our council and property committee members have been working with local companies at getting some important projects taken care of. Range Cornice will be installing a new metal roof over the sanctuary, and re-building the gutters. This work, which will cost around \$80,000, could start at any time. Another major project, with an \$89,000 bid just approved, is the replacement of windows and panels on the West side of the office building. Believe it or not, the office addition is about 75 years old, with original windows throughout. Through those windows we experience major heat loss in the cold months, and extreme heat in the summer. We are also working with HPU and Iron Range Plumbing on developing a new plan for a more efficient heating system; more information on that should be available soon. Other work includes replacing all the building's door locks, painting some of the exterior of the Fellowship Hall/ Sunday School addition, and repairing water damage to the plaster work in the sanctuary. There are also replacements coming for some of the parsonage windows this Fall. We are grateful for major donations that are helping with all of this necessary upkeep of the building. And we thank you for your continued financial support of First Lutheran Church, and for any contribution you might be able to make the Building Fund. Through your generosity we are able to tend to one of our great assets as a faith community — this beautiful and historic building in the heart of Hibbing.





Prayer Partner Tea

Join us on Tuesday, September 26th at 5:30 for the Prayer Partner Tea. This will be the “big reveal” on who has been praying for you all year long. Sign ups for the 2023-2024 year are on the Welcome Table and will be available to fill out at the Tea. You can fill out a form and then Lynn will assign secret Prayer Partners for the year. You can send cards, letting your Prayer Partner know that you are praying for them during the year and at the Prayer Partner Tea, you will bring a gift with a card signed with your name for the reveal! If you have any questions, talk to Lynn Schweiberger or Rian.

Serve the Neighbor

Second Sunday Collections -September 10 HHS Room of Requirements

Thanks to everyone who has been donating items for the Care Cupboard and dropping their change in the Noisy Offering in the buckets on the second Sundays of each month. For the month of September, we would like to help out with the High School’s “Room of Requirements,” which was started several years ago to provide basic daily resources for students, such as healthy snacks, food for home, hygiene items such as soap and toothbrushes and toothpaste, backpacks, clothing, winter wear, gym clothes, sweatshirts, shoes, notebooks and more. This collection is part of First Lutheran’s participation in the ELCA’s “God’s Work, Our Hands Sunday.”



Campership & Youth Fund

We are excited to see young people active in our church programs and activities. Did you know this year we had 16 kids enrolled in Confirmation classes at First Lutheran? 20 kids and 7 adults went on our Faith & Fun Summer Trip to the Cities in June. This Summer, we have about 10 kids from First Lutheran involved in on-site programs at either Camp Vermilion or Camp Hiawatha and we’re looking forward to hosting a VLM Day Camp here in August. With increased involvement in our youth and camp ministries, we’ve begun using the money from the Campership & Youth Fund again – a fund many probably haven’t heard about in a long time, if ever. These funds make going to camp and attending youth trips possible for the kids in our parish. If you are able, any gift to the FLC Campership & Youth Fund will help make sure that these resources are available in the future, and that we can continue to offer fun and meaningful faith formation for another generation. Thank you for your generous support!



VBS 2023

Home on the Range Shelter Donations

It's hard to say how much we brought over to the new "Home on the Range" homeless shelter the week following our VBS Day Camp and Second Sunday collection on August 13. There were bags and bags of non-perishable food items, toiletries and personal care supplies, bedding and clothing. It was a wonderful response. Thanks to all those who donated and to Russ and Linda Smith for delivering the items.



Patriot Day

September 11

On Monday, September 11, the bells of First Lutheran Church will be rung at 8:46 am in memory of the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Wherever you are on Patriot Day at that time, you are invited to pause for a moment of prayer and remembrance.

New Members

September 24

First Lutheran Church is glad to welcome new members to the parish. If you or someone you know would like to be officially received as a member, we will be doing so on Sunday, September 24 during worship – please talk to Pr. John. We will be recognizing members who transferred from Holy Trinity and any others who want to make First Lutheran their church home.

Mr. Ed's Farm

September 24

Everyone is invited to join us for a fun 3F (First Family & Friends) Event on Sunday, September 24. After fellowship (Pie Social), we'll meet at Mr. Ed's Farm for a tour of the barnyards, a horse drawn hay ride, and some snacks around the campfire. There is a minimal cost for this event. Mr. Ed's Farm is located at 10796 Foss Road. Sign up on the Welcome Table!

Spaghetti Fundraiser for Project Care Clinic

September 19 and 20

We are looking for volunteers who can help out with this year's Project Care Clinic fundraiser. As in past years, it will be a Spaghetti Meal with lunch and dinner options. Unlike in past years, the prep work (Sept 19) and the meal (Sept 20) will all take place at the Memorial Building. Beyond the members of Our Savior's and First Lutheran Churches, the other congregations from Hibbing have been invited to participate. Sign-ups will be out for kitchen workers, servers, and drivers. Confirmation students – put this on your calendars! Please talk to Pr. John if you are interested in being part of this event.



EcoFaith Ministry

This summer we were able to start work on the Pollinator Plot out front and the Giving Garden in the courtyard. Be looking for information about an upcoming Salsa Making party this Fall. We will take the tomatoes, peppers, onions, etc that have grown here (other donations are welcome) to make salsa which will be used as part of a Youth & Family fundraiser this October.

Quilters

The Quilters are meeting again starting in September. If you'd like to be a part of this fun group that does amazing work, talk to Barb Tanem or just stop in on a Monday at 1:00 pm. Quilts made here find their way around the country and the world as sources of warmth, security, and even housing for people experiencing homelessness, tragedy, or warfare. All skill levels are welcome!

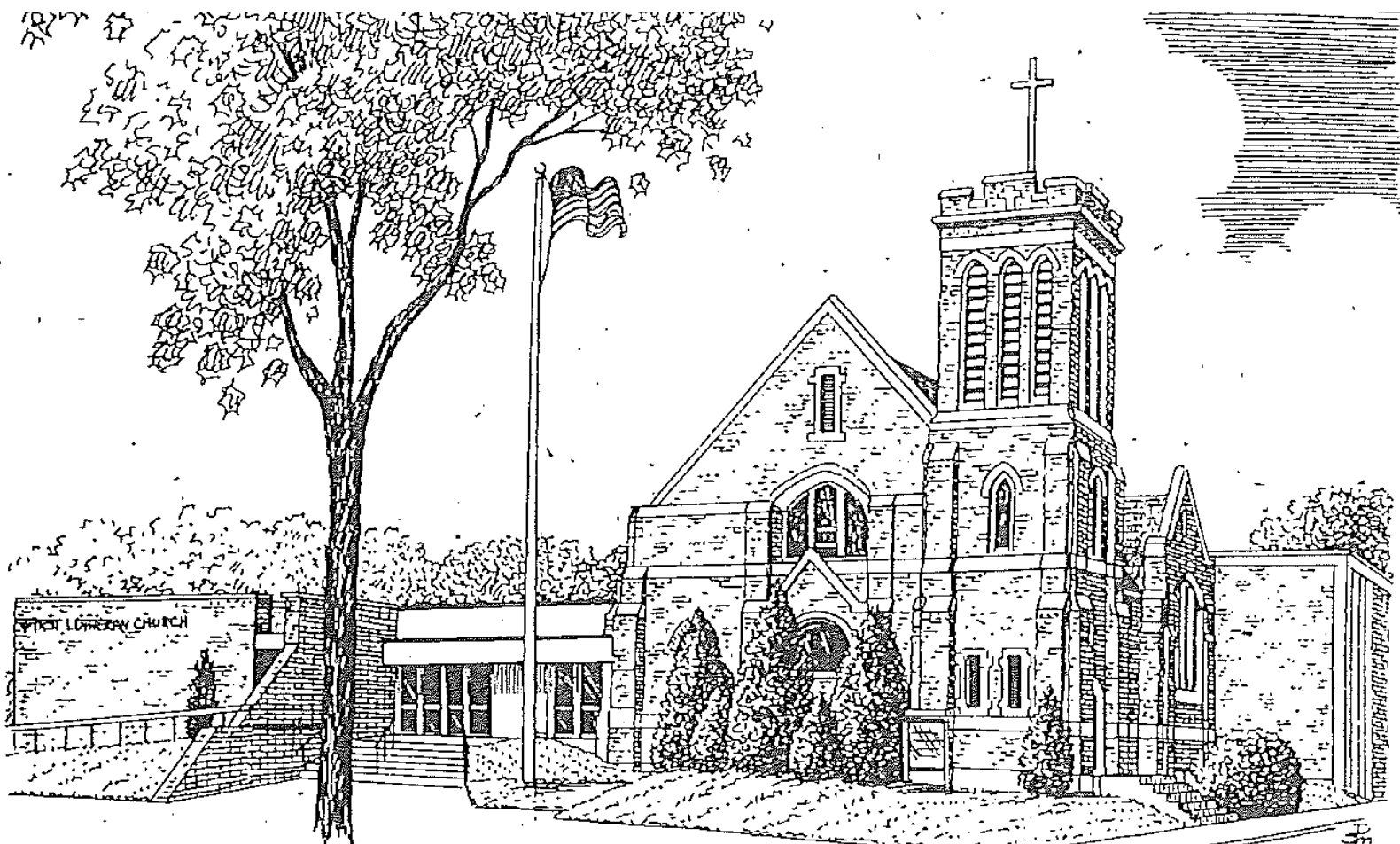


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