

# FOCUS *newsletter*

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH | QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER | JUNE - AUGUST 2019

## Worship in the Gardens

*Join us this summer at the Legacy of the Lakes Museum Gardens as we celebrate our new outdoor worship location!*

Invite a friend and join us at 10:00am outdoor worship this summer at Legacy of the Lakes Museum Gardens, rain or shine! It will be a wonderful opportunity to connect with God, with one another, and with God's creation in new and meaningful way. This new worship service is made possible in part by a grant through the ELCA and with support from the Northwestern Minnesota Synod. Pastor Ben will be serving as a mission

developer and partnering with Paula Odland, who will serve as a worship coordinator. We will work along with the other pastors, staff, and a host of volunteers to shepherd this new endeavor. This new worship venue will allow us to continue in our shared value to engage in worship that is joy-filled, authentic, and inspiring. Bring your own chair or we will provide camp chairs. We look forward to seeing you at the Legacy Gardens!

## SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

*Memorial Day Weekend through Labor Day Weekend*

### SATURDAYS

**5:00pm | First Lutheran Church**

(1655 18th Ave, Alexandria, MN after Aug 4)

### SUNDAYS

**8:30am | First Lutheran Church**

(1655 18th Ave, Alexandria, MN after Aug 4)

**10:00am | Legacy of the Lakes Gardens**

(205 3rd Ave W, Alexandria)

\*Hospitality Time | 9:30-10:00AM

\*Kid at Heart Time | 9:30-10:00am

**10:30AM | Lake Carlos State Park**

# Summer Challenge

Summer is a busy time in your life, and that's especially true this summer at First Lutheran. We are putting the finishing touches on our new church home and will be packing up and moving in mid-July. Our first worship at our new building will be August 4. Other important ministries that are happening this summer include:

- Vacation Bible School (June 10-13)
- Expanded outdoor Worship at Legacy of the Lakes Museum and Carlos State Park (May 26-Sept 1)
- Camperships at Luther Crest Bible Camp

Our **Summer Challenge** lifts up the importance of

continuing our support of our many ministries, even when summer calls us to head out in various directions. Here's our challenge to you:

- Sponsor a \$100 "Campership" during our June campership campaign.
- Invite your summer guests to worship with you at one of our many summer worship options!
- Sign up for Simply Giving, our automated giving plan. Call the church office for more information.
- Find a new way to serve at church this summer. Call the church office to learn more.
- Use your yellow "Summer Support" envelope in your offering envelope packet.

## Summer Challenge Story...

*"Our family joined First Lutheran Church a little over six years ago. We had moved to the area because Scott took a job running Minnewaska Golf Course. During the school year we are active in worship on Sundays as well as Wednesday night programming.*

*As you can imagine, between Scott's hours managing the golf course, playing a full tournament schedule around the state, and Julie working occasional weekends, we do not get to spend much time physically participating in worship during the summer. We love to listen to the service on the radio as often as we can. We also find great benefit in being able to participate in **Simply Giving**.*

*Through **Simply Giving** we have assurance that we can still support the Church financially and feel connected to worship even when we cannot be physically there.*

*FLC means so much to our family. It is a place where we are growing spiritually and connecting with fellow Christians in our community. Our family is thankful that the church provides programs for all seasons of life. Currently we enjoy participating in Kingdom Kids, VBS, small group and men's breakfast, to name a few. We are proud to call FLC our church home and proud to support it through **Simply Giving**."*

-Scott and Julie McDonald



Beatrice, Susanna, Julie, Scott, Charlie and Amelia McDonald



# Pastor's Pen

*In the coming months as family and friends, we will do all that we can to soak in that promise and immerse ourselves in the good that summer brings.*

Another winter has come and gone, and again we find ourselves surprised by a world that is bursting with new life. As spring gives way to summer, we are reminded that even the songs of red-winged blackbirds and the petals of peonies proclaim the good news that Christ renews this world we call home. Here at First Lutheran, we too are in awe of God's good creation and look forward to gathering together in worship this summer. We invite you to join us this summer for the following sermon series:

**Life in the Spirit:** 6/15 -16 through 7/6 - 7

God's Spirit calls us to have new voices in this world. Together we explore how the Spirit of God leads us into lives of gratitude, hope, grace, and imagination.

**Packing our Bags:** 7/13 - 14 through 7/27 - 28

Through God's grace and leading, we have been called to new places, including a new church home. As we prepare for times of transitions, we reflect on how to do the important work of packing what's most important for the journey.

**On Our Way Rejoicing:** 8/4 All Congregation Service

On August 4, there will be one worship service for the whole congregation beginning at 9:00am at 822 Douglas Street. During worship, we will proceed together from our Douglas Street church to our new church home on 18th Avenue. A picnic will follow worship. **\*There will be no 10:00am Legacy Gardens worship or 10:30am Lake Carlos worship on this date.**

**I Love to Tell the Story:** 8/10 -11 through 8/31 - 9/1

As we begin again in a new church home, we gather around the old, old story of Jesus and his love. It is a story that connects us to one another and one that, as people of faith, we tell again and again. How will we tell it in this new place?

Blessings to you and your families as your lives take on a new pace this summer. May these days be filled with God's goodness. We hope to see you in worship!

Pastor Ben

# An Exciting Summer Ahead

This is an historic summer for us as a congregation as we prepare to move from our location at 9th and Douglas to our new church home. Here is a brief timeline of when and what is happening:

<b>First week of May</b>	Our historic bell from 1907 was removed, sent to Ohio to be restored and fitted for its new home in our bell tower at the new building.
<b>June</b>	Garage build by volunteers from the congregation. Watch for more details.
<b>July 15-19</b>	Offices and items from current location will be moved to new facility.
<b>July 22</b>	Staff members begin working at their new offices at the new location. Worship and funerals will continue to happen at our current facility through August 4.
<b>July 30</b>	<u>2:00-3:00pm</u> : Coffee and refreshments at our new site for our seniors who are 75+ years old. This is an opportunity to check out parking and become familiar with our new location prior to our move.
<b>August 4</b>	<u>9:00am</u> : On Our Way Rejoicing! There will be ONE worship service at our current location and continuing with a procession to our new facility where we will celebrate communion. Afterward we will celebrate with a congregational church picnic.
<b>August 5</b>	Beginning Aug 5, all in-house worship and other congregational functions and ministry will happen at our new church home as of this date. The new mailing address is 1655 18th Ave W, Alexandria.
<b>Mid-August</b>	Organ Update: We are grateful to be able to have the organ with us through Sunday, Aug 4. After that, the organ will be carefully removed, packed and stored until it will be reinstalled in Phase 2 of our building project.
<b>Sun, Sept 8 - Wed, Sept 11</b>	Fall Kick Off Week! Please join us as we gather together after the busy summer months to reconnect as a congregation and celebrate the start of a new programming year.
<b>Sunday, September 8</b>	<u>8:30 &amp; 10:00am</u> : Celebratory Worship
	<u>1:00-4:00pm</u> : Community Open House and Coffee
	<u>2:00pm</u> : Service of Dedication



# Congregational Vitality Survey

In March, we invited the congregation to fill out a survey to help us develop a better understanding of how members perceive the congregation's connection with God, with one another and with the world around us. Over 230 members participated in the survey, with a good representation of our different age groups.

The survey revealed a healthy confidence in our mission as well as a positivity about the congregation and its ministries. It revealed as well that we have a hopeful sense of moving forward and good energy as we prepare to make our move to our new church home this summer. The survey revealed a good understanding of who we are, what our capacities are, and what we have to build on.

The three areas that members identified as growth areas were:

- 1) The need to build a deeper level of engagement and involvement by the congregation
- 2) An interest in growing in their faith
- 3) A need for help in being able to talk about their faith

At a time when many congregations are looking back in

terms of their best days, the survey revealed that First Lutheran is excited for the future. There is a pride in how we relate to our community, and anticipation for even more possibilities of how to connect and build stronger relationships with our community at our new facility.

In April, leadership from the congregation held a retreat to assess the results from the survey and has another retreat scheduled in early June. Jim LaDoux, our congregational coach who we hired to assist us in this process this year, is helping us put a road map and process in place that will lead us forward over the next three years.

Thank you to all who took the time to complete the survey. Your input is vital and has helped us to identify both areas of strength as well as areas where we have to opportunity to grow. We will continue to make you aware of how this process is unfolding.

## Journey of the FLC Bell

First installed in 1907 in the little white First Norwegian Lutheran Church, our bell has been tolling for 112 years on the corner of 9th and Douglas Street. Removed from the little white church in the early 1940's, it was installed in our present bell tower in the late 1940's when the current church and bell tower was built.

We are excited that our bell will be tolling at our new church home late this summer. In order for the move to be made possible, the bell was removed from its present location on April 30, 2019 and shipped to the Verdin Bell Company (one of the last bell foundry's left in the US) in Cincinnati, OH for restoration, cleaning and fitting of the new steel pipe tube mounting bracket. Why the journey to Cincinnati? Each bell is slightly different when poured/cast and when the new hanging bracket and vibro isolator (eliminates vibration) is molded for our bell it must be present for proper fitting. If this bracket and isolator are not properly fitted, the ring of the bell will change and we would no longer toll a beautiful G flat.



# Pastor Judy Holmen

Pastor Judy Holmen will be assisting us as a congregation while Pastor Kari is away on sabbatical in May, June and July. Pastor Judy is from Moorhead and most recently served as interim pastor at Our Savior's Lutheran in Moorhead.

While Pastor Judy is with us, she will primarily serve in the areas of pastoral care and worship leadership. No doubt you will cross paths with Pastor Judy this summer and when you do, be sure to introduce yourself and welcome her to First Lutheran.

Pastor Kari applied for a grant from the Lilly Endowment on behalf of First Lutheran and was awarded the grant, which covers sabbatical expenses. That includes the cost for pastor Judy's work among us. We are grateful to have this support and the opportunity for Pastor Kari to step away for a time of renewal which will provide numerous benefits for her as well as our congregation.



*Celebrate!*

## Radio Broadcast Time Change

*Thank you for your continued support of this important ministry!*

Beginning Sunday, May 26, the FLC radio broadcast will be moving to its new permanent time at 10:00am. Don't forget to mark this time change on your calendars!

## Ages 75+ New Church Building Tour

*Tuesday, July 30 | 2:00-3:00pm | 1655 18th Ave*

If you are 75 years old or older, you are welcome to join us for this exciting opportunity to visit our new church building and all that it has to offer. Refreshments will be served. Watch for more details to come in the coming weeks.

# Kid at Heart Time

*All ages are welcome to join us Sundays this summer at the Legacy of the Lakes Museum Gardens before worship at 9:30-10:00am.*

Calling all people of any age or life stage! Kid at Heart Time will be held prior to our 10:00am worship at the Legacy of the Lakes Museum Gardens this summer and will focus on our ability to notice and tell stories

all week long between worship. Look for the Kid at Heart Spirit Challenge each week in your outdoor worship bulletin! Come early to these beautiful gardens where we will connect and grow together.



# Father's Day Crazy Socks

*Saturday, June 15 & Sunday, June 16*

You're welcome to join us as we honor the fathers and important father figures in our lives. Prizes will be awarded in worship for the dad with the wildest and craziest socks! We will also be

collecting sock donations for our middle schoolers to bring to Churches United in Ministry in Duluth. Place donations in the sock drawer of the dresser near the Welcome Center.

# On Our Way Rejoicing

*A historic worship service recognizing our move from the corner of 9th and Douglas to our new site.*

Sunday, August 4, we officially transition from our current site to our new church home. There will be ONE worship service that morning. It will begin at 9:00am and about midway through the service, the congregation will process out with hymnals and items from the sanctuary and form a procession. The procession will proceed to the new site, where we will celebrate communion and conclude the worship.

At least two hours should be allowed for the worship. Please note this will be the only Sunday when we will not have outdoor worship at the Legacy of the Lakes.

Our annual congregational picnic will follow this exciting event! Be sure to save the date for this important day in the life of First Lutheran!



## UPCOMING EVENTS AT A GLANCE

To see our church calendar with full details and descriptions of all church events, please visit our website: [www.firstlutheranalexandria/events](http://www.firstlutheranalexandria/events).

### JUNE EVENTS

- 6/3: Building & Transition Update
- 6/10: Bookseekers
- 6/10-13: VBS
- 6/15-16: Father's Day Crazy Socks Contest
- 6/18: Adult Mystery Trip
- 6/18: Mission Quilters

### JULY EVENTS

- 7/4: Church Building Holiday
- 7/6: Worship on the Lawn
- 7/8: Bookseekers
- 7/9: Baptism Class
- 7/16: Mission Quilters
- 7/22-26: Chicago Mission Trip

### AUGUST EVENTS

- 8/4: No worship at Legacy Gardens or Lake Carlos
- 8/4: On Our Way Rejoicing (see article)
- 8/5: Lutheran Night at the Twins
- 8/5-7: Middle School Mission Trip
- 8/20: Mission Quilters

