



Join us for worship!

Saturday Evening:

- 5:00pm - Traditional spoken liturgy and music

Sunday Morning:

- 8:30 - Traditional spoken liturgy and music
- 9:45am - Blended spoken liturgy based on church seasons or themes and a variety of musical styles
 - 11:00am Led by the Praise Team

Wednesday Evening:

- 6:15pm Led by a rotating team of worship teams/leaders

DEEP & WIDE IN 2018

Looking back and looking ahead, with gratitude.

As we look back on 2017, we are reminded of the old and yet look ahead to the new with great anticipation. There are so many things to celebrate from our Deep & Wide them in 2017: The Living Nativity, the progress of our new building, making a difference by supporting LWR and The Shelf at DMS, just to name a few.

And now, with the new year upon us, we look ahead with excitement at all that is to come and all that God is doing through FLC. As we look ahead with anticipation toward our new building ground breaking later this spring, we will continue to keep our eyes on all that God has in store for us as we continue to go Deep & Wide.

Calendar Spotlight

- Jan 1 — Church office is closed
- Jan 10 — Wednesday evening programming resumes
- Jan 7 & 10 — Luther Crest Promotion and Baptism Milestone
- Jan 11 — Men's monthly breakfast
- Jan 15 — Money Sanity Solutions

PASTOR'S PEN

Together We Are Stepping Out In Faith

On Sunday, December 17 the congregation met and voted to give authority to proceed with the development of a one site plan on McKay and to actively pursue the sale of the Douglas Street property. The vote was 180 yes and 2 no. It was the first time a congregational meeting at First Lutheran was live streamed on Facebook and made available to our snowbirds and those unable to attend in person. 17 members voted via Facebook

Over 12 years ago we began to look at the challenges and opportunities ahead of us, it became increasingly apparent that our present facility was not adequate to move us forward into the future. More recently, over the last months we became convinced that operating out of two sites was an unwise investment of our resources and an inefficient use of space and staff. As a result, with congregational approval we will now pursue a one site approach.

We have come a long way and yet a number of steps remain. Over the next month we will continue to finalize the building design and work on a finance plan. We will also list our current location and pursue a buyer. After bids are received in February we will then have a final cost for construction and hold a congregational meeting in late February or early March. The Building Committee and Vision Team will bring a recommendation to the meeting of how to proceed.

Every day you and I take steps of faith, not knowing exactly what each new day holds. It was the same for Abraham and Sarah, for Noah, and for Paul. As we take this step of

faith and build our new church home, there is no "easy button" to hit or someone else who will "make it happen". Throughout our 145 years, we as a congregation have made such steps countless times.

This particular step of faith gives us a plan forward that...

- enables us to be at one site
- gives us more room for worship and hospitality
- a fully accessible building on one level
- a more functional and flexible plan
- expands our ability to be more available to the community
- increases energy efficiency
- allows us to continue to enhance and grow our mission

A lot of time, energy and investment has gone into making this plan a reality but this is about much more than just a building. It is about our vision and mission to our community and beyond. It is about what God is doing right now in our midst and it is about being a church that will continue to be relevant and touch lives for generations to come.

Thank you to the 324 households who have committed \$3,554,558 toward the "From the Ground Up" Capital Campaign. Thank you for taking that step of faith. It's never too late for anyone who has not yet done so to get on board. Info packets and pledge cards are available in the church office and Welcome Center.

2018 is going to be an exciting year at First Lutheran as we step out in faith together.

In Christ,
Pastor Greg

PARISH HEALTH

Friendly Visitor Program

This program gives us an opportunity to show our Christian love and fellowship to the homebound and lonely people of First Lutheran Church. Pastor Ben and Val plan to meet with the current Friendly Visitors on Tuesday, January 16 from 12:00-1:00pm in the Family Room. We are in need of more visitors! If you want to learn more about this important outreach or would like to become a visitor, please join us. Call Val Trumm, Parish Nurse, for more information (320.762.2196).

Homebound Communion Ministry

As part of our caring ministry, First Lutheran has long brought communion to members in their homes. We are looking for people who would be willing and able to join us in this ministry. Volunteers provide brief communion visits as their schedule allows for it. The Care Team (pastors, parish nurse) will provide training to ensure that volunteers have a chance to ask questions and feel prepared. If you would be interested in learning more about this opportunity, please call Val Trumm a(320.762.2196).

Support Groups in and Around the Alexandria Area...

•**Caregiver Support Group:** Meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month (January 9) at 2:00pm at First Lutheran Church.

•**Memory Loss Caregiver Support Group:** Meets the 4th Thursday of each month (January 25) at 1:30pm at the Douglas County Public Works meeting room, 526 Willow Drive, Alexandria. For info call Mary (320.762.3047).

•**Alexandria Area Parkinson's Support Group:** Meets the 4th Wednesday of each month (January 24) at 3:00pm at Nelson Gables in the Governor's Room, 1220 Nokomis St, Alexandria. For more information, contact Val Trumm, Parish Nurse (320.762.2196).

•**Grief Support Group:** Anderson's On Broadway will hold a support group for grieving people on Monday, January 15th at 5:30pm at The Pizza Ranch (in one of the back rooms). Call Jeri (320.491.5409) with your reservation by Sunday evening, January 14th.

PRAYERS FOR THOSE RECENTLY BAPTIZED

Skyler Marie Palm
Flynn Fitzpatrick Lauer
Natalia EmmaLee Hughes

PRAYERS FOR THOSE WHO MOURN

We express sympathy and God's love to the family and friends of:
Marian Barr
Muriel Fisher

COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL

Community Preschool of First Lutheran Church was founded by Opal Martinson in 1960. It was then called Martinson Nursery School. Opal operated the first licensed nursery school in her home on 10th Avenue East in Alexandria. On May 20th, 1979 it was approved by the First Lutheran Church congregation and signed by Rev. Keith A Lentz to become part of First Lutheran Church. Mrs. Martinson donated her nursery school equipment and the name was changed to Community Nursery School.

Today the program is known as Community Preschool of First Lutheran Church. It is owned and operated by the church as an outreach and ministry with the purpose of "providing an early childhood social and educational experience in a Christian atmosphere."

Community Preschool is a state licensed preschool. We provide half-day classes for children 3-5 years of age. We also have a one day morning class for children that turn 3 years of age by January 1st. The program is based on Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (Minnesota's early learning standards), Minnesota Core Competencies and the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale. Our emphasis is on the abilities and interests of each child. The preschool goals are to develop a love of learning, give children a sense of self-confidence in the classroom, provide many opportunities to express themselves and follow directions, and prepare them for their next step in the world of education. Our teachers are licensed educators. Through having the freedom to write their own curriculum, the teachers can prepare lessons with themes that interest the children. Many times this leads to the teachers writing new curriculum each year. The classroom schedule includes structured activity time with an emphasis on play. The classrooms are set up to stimulate mental, physical and social emotional development.

Currently the preschool employs two teachers (Melisa Schueler: Teacher/Director and Kelli Risnes:Teacher) and two assistant teachers (Helen Maier and Angie Carstesen).

We invite the congregation to come and visit our preschool any time. You can also find information regarding the preschool at www.communitypreschoolalexandria.com.

The preschool staff wishes you the very best in the new year!

Melisa, Kelli, Helen, and Angie



ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The WELCA New Year's Party will be Thursday, January 4 from 12:00-2:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. Enjoy chili and all the fixings, games and more. Come for food, fun and fellowship. Invite a friend.
- The next Baptism Class for expecting or new parents will be held on Tuesday, January 9 at 6:30pm in the sanctuary. Call the church office (320.762.2196) if interested in attending or with any questions.
- The Family Ministry team would like to invite you to join us on Sunday, January 28 from 2:00-4:00pm at Luther Crest for an afternoon of family fun! There will be sledding, gym activities, cookie-decorating, and more. All are welcome. We hope to see you there!
- Bookseekers: We just finished reading *Cover of Snow*. Waking up one wintry morning, Norma Hamilton finds that her husband has committed suicide. There is no note, and she doesn't have an inkling as to why he did it. Searching for an explanation, she finds a bewildering resistance.

It quickly becomes clear that no one wants to answer her questions. Beneath the soft cover of snow lies a powerful conspiracy that will stop at nothing to keep its presence unknown. Our next meeting is January 8 and we will discuss *Whistling Past the Graveyard* by Susan Crandall.

Worship Update

One of our shared values at First is Transformational Worship and Music. We are committed to worship and music that is joy-filled, authentic, and inspiring. That can look a variety of ways and can vary from person to person. In order to help everyone at First know what to expect when they come to any of our worship services, beginning in January, our worship services will follow this format:

- Saturday 5:00pm and Sunday 8:30am: Traditional spoken liturgy and music
- Sunday 9:45am: Blended (Spoken liturgy based on church seasons or themes and a variety of musical styles)
- Sunday 11:00am: Led by the Praise Team
- Wednesday 6:15pm: Led by a rotating team of worship teams/leaders

GIFTS & MEMORIALS

BUILDING FUND:

In memory of Olive Leland, given by Gene & Natalie Simpson

In memory of Dorothy Fernow, given by Greg & Val Trumm

In memory of Mitchell Brazel, given by Jerry & Joyce Hansen

In memory of Judy Williams, given by Greg & Val Trumm

In memory of Our Friend Jane, given by Rodney & Elizabeth Engfer

In memory of Keith Lundsetter, given by Allen & Karin Senstad, Roger & Carol Thalman, Sharon Heinrich, Greg & Val Trumm, Sandra Doege, Dianna Anderson, Dennis & Bonnie Miller, Bryan & Chara Anderson, Richard & Chanda Larson, Marcia Gae Schmitt, Jerry & Joyce Hansen,

Lisa Colen, Gene & Carol Westphal, Glee Domschot, Ivan & Lois Wambheim, Gloria Sheils, Ray & Kim Kallstrom, Tim & Carrie Urness,

Jeff & Janna Lindoo, Darrell & Sharon Klimek, Genevieve Trumm, Jim & Rachel Barduson, Richard & Ann Gail, Margaret & Darrel Kalina,

Dennis & Corliss Stark, Gracie Lewis, Ruth Amundson, Orrin & Caroline Berg, Janice Doebber, Stephen & Michelle Nordmark, John &

Marie Stellner, Brian & Suzanne Donahue, Del & Cathy Kirkeby, John Peterick, Betty Woebstrer, Mike & Jan Pray

RADIO FUND:

In memory of Jere Anderson, given by Dianna Anderson

In memory of Keith Lundsetter, given by Stan & Mary Norlien

In memory of John Gronli, given by Gerald Redlin, Randy & Mary Morken

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY AND VBS:

In memory of Judy Williams, given by Mike & Jan Pray

LIVING NATIVITY:

In memory of Keith Lundsetter, given by Ron & Linda Droppo

LUTHER CREST:

In memory of Keith Lundsetter, given by Bud & Joyce Nornes, Michael & Noreen Carlson, Chad & Amanda Meyer, Julius & Florence Mabraten, Kurt

& Denise Mattison, Richard & Dorothy Vold, Curtis & Ann Rotto, Dawn Bjorge, Paul & Rebeca Kahlbaugh, Greg & Judy Richards,

Georgianna Waasdorp, Jessica & Michael Vanderborght, Timothy & Lana Johnson, John & Janet Beavers, Paul & Joan Thompson, Greg &

Charity Vold

UNDESIGNATED:

In memory of Keith Lundsetter, given by Richard & Sandy Telander, Jola Amundsen, Robert & Joanne Kensinger

In memory of Olive Leland, given by Robert & Joanne Kensinger, Donald Leland, Sheila Spartz

DEEP AND WIDE CELEBRATIONS

Mission Board Monthly

First Lutheran's Feed My Sheep group has developed an ongoing relationship with residents at Viking Towers and has hosted four events this year. A focus of these events is to provide a special experience for the residents by providing our time and fellowship. In December, we celebrated the Christmas season together. The Gospel Four added their musical talents to the festivities. Their

program ended with a sing-along of Christmas favorites. Feed My Sheep members shared finger sandwiches, sweet Christmas treats, and tables decorated for the holiday to about thirty residents of Viking Towers. There were smiles, laughter, and many expressions of gratitude from people that we are privileged to get to know.

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 6 through February 7

Upcoming Worship

January 6, 7, and 10: Holy Humor Worship

- Worship will center on the joy of knowing Christ and power of laughter in our lives.

January 14 and 17: Family Blessing

- You are part of the First Lutheran Family! We want to bless you and support you in being the people that God called and created you to be. During worship, families in the broadest sense of the word, are invited forward to receive a blessing.

January 14 – February 7: *Money and Meaning* Sermon Series

- Our faith reaches into every part of our lives. It guides us every day and in all that we do, including our relationship with money. Join us as we go beyond the offering plate to explore the role that money plays in our lives and how it affects us and our relationships.
- As part of our *Money and Meaning* series, we want to create opportunities for us to have meaningful conversations concerning money from practical tips to bigger questions about finance and faith. Setting aside time to talk together opens the door for a more healthy relationship with the resources that we have been given. Join us on Monday nights at 6:30 for four weeks beginning January 15th in The Garden Room as we walk through *Money Sanity Solutions*, a series focused on finding simple ways to talk about the complicated topic of money.

Sunday, February 11 at 11:30am & 12:30pm

Meal and Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars for the Annual Meeting and Meal. Please join us at 11:30am in the Fellowship Hall for the meal and then at 12:30pm in the Sanctuary for the meeting on Sunday, February 11.

YOUTH AND CHILDREN

NO PROGRAMMING

When: January 3 for KICK, KICK JR, FLY/Confirmation

2-YEAR BAPTISM ANNIV. CELEBRATION

When: Sunday, January 7

Time: All worship services

When: Wednesday, January 10

Time: 6:15pm worship service

9TH-12TH GRADES WINTER RETREAT

When: February 9-11

Time: 7:00pm Friday to 12:00pm Saturday

Location: Parkers Prairie

LUTHER CREST PROMO

When: January 7 and January 10

Time: During programming

BAGS OF LOVE SERVICE BLAST

When: January 31 through February 11

What: Bags of Love is a congregational service project that reaches DEEP and WIDE by spreading joy to the older adults in our congregation and/or those going through a time of need. Kids and youth fill the bags with tokens and cards they have made and the congregation delivers them. Bags will be available for pick up in the Family Room on February 3. Please help us deliver these bags and spread some love!

LUTHER CREST WINTER RETREATS

Who: Grades 3-6

When: February 9-11

Who: Grades 6-9

When: February 23-25

*Details coming soon!

5TH GRADE COMMUNION MILESTONE

When: March 10 from 9:00am-2:00pm

Where: Luther Crest

Wednesday Night Worship:

If your weekend is busy or you are out of town, this is a great alternative for worship. Feel free to join us for supper at 4:45-6:00pm in the Fellowship Hall.

1/10: breakfast (sausage, omelets, pancakes)

1/17: chicken strips, mashed potatoes & gravy, vegetable

1/24: hot beef sandwich, chips, cole slaw

1/31: baked potato bar