



The Contact

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH — NORFOLK

1301 Colley Ave., Norfolk, VA 23517

Parish Office: 757 625 1953

www.flcnorfolk.com

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NO. 5

A Season of Renewal

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

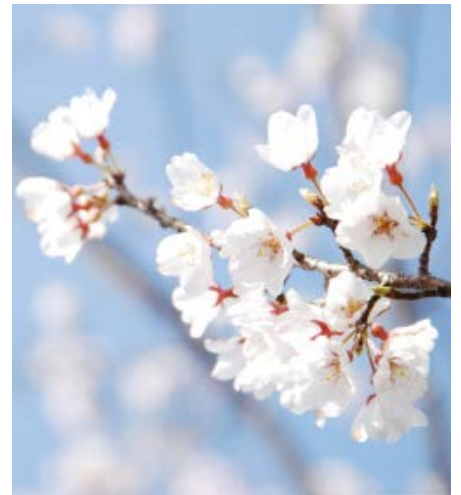
As I write this I am still experiencing the joy that comes with our Easter celebration. These last several weeks I have watched spring announcing itself, and it seems that all of God's creation is reminding me that death is always overcome by new life. As "Easter people," we know this in our hearts, but if you are like me there are many times throughout the year when I find it difficult to see beyond the cares of this life to the hope and promise given to us by that empty tomb. During those times I find it helpful to open my eyes to the Easter blessings that surround me every day, and I want to take this opportunity to tell you about some that I am seeing right here at First Lutheran Church.

I first want to update you on our ongoing journey of Mission and Ministry Renewal. This is the process that our council and pastors have agreed to lead this year as we prepare for next year's observance of our 125th year of Lutheran Christian ministry in this place. During Lent we began our journey by listening to God during our shared 40 Days of Prayer. Later in March our council and pastors spent a day with our Mission and Ministry Renewal facilitator, Pastor John Mocko. We are now entering the next phase of our journey, one in which we will take time to listen to one another. Each of us will have an opportunity to participate in the Congregational Vitality Survey, which will be available for the congregation to complete on either of two successive Sundays in May, May 13th and May 20th. I encourage all of our members, even those who do not attend worship on a regular basis, to attend during one of those Sundays to help make this survey as meaningful and helpful as possible. If you know members who perhaps have not attended in some time, please encourage them to join in worship on one of those two Sundays. Pastor Mocko will report the survey results to us on Sunday June 3rd, a date upon which we will hold a single worship service in order to ensure we have a suitable opportunity to learn about and discuss the survey results. As our journey continues we will establish a Mission and Ministry Renewal Leadership Team to help guide this important work and moving into the summer months we will be going out into the community to listen to our neighbors as they consider our role in the community. All of this input will allow us to

identify our strengths as a congregation, as well as those areas we need to build up. In the fall our pastors, council, and the Mission and Ministry Renewal Leadership Team will take all that we learn by listening and set aside another day to work together.

During that session we will identify work that needs to be done and set goals and timelines, so that in our 125th anniversary year we will be walking the path to congregational vitality for another 125 years.

I also want to update you on the work we are doing on our building. We were blessed last year to retire the mortgage that funded the last set of major renovations to our building. Our sound stewardship in caring for that debt has enabled us this year to pay cash to replace our aged heating and air conditioning system with a modern, reliable, and fuel-efficient system. As I write this note we await only the city's issuance of the requisite permits in order for the contractor, Chesapeake Controls, to begin installation. I expect that by the time you are reading this article work will have already begun. This important system replacement will preserve our building and allow us to use it comfortably in all seasons for years to come. We recently were also able to purchase a new sound system for our Nave. While the new system has needed some tweaks in its first weeks of use (perhaps we should think of these weeks as a "sea trial"), the pastors, staff, and council will continue to work with the installers to ensure the new system lives up to its promise. Both the heating/air conditioning and sound systems fall into the category of systems that serve us best when they do not call attention to themselves, and that is our goal! It is clear to me that as a congregation we are meeting the challenge of being good stewards of this wonderful home for ministry with which we have been entrusted.



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A Season of Renewal

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I also want to touch upon a new ministry here at FLC. As many of you heard in Pastor Goeres' sermon on April 8th, our congregation has entered into a relationship with a fellow Christian congregation, the Catholic Basilica of St. Mary's. St. Mary's history as a predominantly African-American congregation, and our history as a predominantly white congregation, provide an opportunity to use our shared community in Christ to break down racial divisions that plague our community and nation. While we are in the very beginning stages of this relationship, as it matures I am confident it will remind us all that anything is possible through the love of Christ.

Finally, I want to let you know that we continue on a path of financial stability. Over the past several months we have been blessed with approximately \$100,000 in earnings from our endowment. While the bulk of that money will be applied to the property projects discussed above, our council decided to allocate

a title of those earnings toward work that will have an impact beyond this place and time. We are using some of that money to help fund our current Young Adult in Global Mission, Samantha Dibiaso, as she continues her year of work in South Africa. You can read an excerpt from one of her blog entries in this same issue of The Contact. Another portion is being set aside to match a portion of the monies that our youth are raising to pay for their trip to the National Lutheran Youth Gathering in Houston in the summer, with an additional equivalent match being put toward a community ministry opportunity that our council will decide upon in a shared conversation with our FLC youth. I am grateful that our church has been, and continues to be, blessed with such devoted stewards making it possible for us to share our blessings in this world.

May God bless your month,
Eric Peterson
Council President

Lisa Geiger's Call to Special Service and her continuing ministry among us

Our own Lisa Geiger, a Virginia Synod Candidate for the Ministry of Word and Service, has accepted a call from the Virginia Synod Council to serve as the Virginia Synod Candidacy Process Administrator. She will provide administrative oversight to the candidacy process, assist the Candidacy Committee, and provide care and support for ministry candidates as they navigate the often-complicated candidacy process.

Deacon Geiger will remain with us at First as Church

Operations Manager in addition to her responsibilities to the Virginia Synod Office of the Bishop. **Lisa will be consecrated as a Deacon in the Ministry of Word and Service on Sunday, May 6, at 3:00 PM, at St. Michael Lutheran Church in Virginia Beach. All are welcome to attend!**



FLC and St. Mary's Meet

Last month marked 50 years since the tragic assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a dark day in the history of race relations in our country. Being mindful that our journey toward racial reconciliation is ongoing, members of our Church Council have reached out to one of Norfolk's African-American congregations, St. Mary's Catholic Basilica on Chapel Street. On February 5th, three members of St. Mary's Parish Council met with the FLC Church Council, and that visit was reciprocated on March 13th with five of our Council members meeting with their Council. These initial meetings served the purpose of getting acquainted and asking how our two congregations might help each other in addressing issues of race that so deeply divide our society. The meetings were quite

gratifying, and it was decided that we should continue to build on our relationship.

This initiative recognizes our Christian responsibility to do what we can in honestly facing the evil of racism. Establishing a relationship with an African-American congregation gives us a unique opportunity to contribute toward building a spirit of Christian love and understanding in a strife-ridden society. Each congregation will form a committee to work with each other in planning activities that will serve our purpose. Watch for further information on this venture. If you have any questions or want to convey your interest, please contact our Council President, Eric Peterson (ericpeterson1522@cox.net) or Paul Jersild (pmjersild@hotmail.com).

May 2018

Worship every Sunday at 8:30 and 11 AM. Nursery available.
 Sunday School at 9:45 AM with classes for children, youth and adults. Nursery available.
 Office Hours: 9 AM—4 PM Monday, Thursday, 9 AM—1 PM Friday
 Weekday Men's Bible Study: 7 AM Wednesdays at 21st Street IHOP

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>6 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Sunday School 9:45 AM New Member Class 11:00 AM Worship 12:30 PM NYG</p>	<p>7 10:30 AM Adult Ministry 7:00 PM Church Council</p>	<p>8 6:00 PM 125th Committee</p>	<p>9 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study @ Charlie's Cafe 12:00 PM Lunch Ministry 2:00 PM Women's Bible Study 6:30 PM Bells 7:30 PM Choir</p>	<p>10 10 AM—Quilt Group 5:30 PM—Refugee Ministry (800 Colonial Ave)</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12 4 PM Contra Dance Group</p>
<p>13 <i>Mother's Day</i> 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Sunday School 9:45 AM New Member Class 11:00 AM Worship 12:30 PM Worship Committee</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15 <i>Contact Deadline</i></p>	<p>16 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study @ Charlie's Cafe 12:00 PM Lunch Ministry 2:00 PM Women's Bible Study 6:30 PM Bells 7:30 PM Choir</p>	<p>17 10:30 AM Adult Ministry WW I Presentation 5:30 PM Laundry Love (at Soap 'N Suds)</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20 <i>Youth Sunday Offering of Letters</i> 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship 12:30 PM FLY 4 PM Evening Prayer</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22 9:30 AM Christian Service</p>	<p>23 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study @ Charlie's Cafe 12:00 PM Lunch Ministry 2:00 PM Women's Bible Study 6:30 PM Bells 7:30 PM Choir</p>	<p>24 10 AM—Quilt Group</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship</p>	<p>28 <i>Memorial Day Office Closed</i></p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study @ Charlie's Cafe 12:00 PM Lunch Ministry 2:00 PM Women's Bible Study 6:30 PM Bells 7:30 PM Choir</p>	<p>31</p>		

*** NA: Sunday 8 PM, Tues 5:30 PM, Fri 12 PM, Sat 5 PM AA: Mon 5:30 PM, Fri 8 PM, Sat 8 PM SAA: Thurs 7:30 PM Women's AA: Tues 6 PM, Thurs 6 PM ***

Connect with Others

Thank You Teachers!

We would like to thank all of our First Lutheran teachers for their service this year. We appreciate the sharing of their time and talents! A donation has been made in their honor to send FLC Youth to the National Youth Gathering this summer. Teachers will be recognized in church on May 13th.

May 20, 2018 is Youth Sunday

You won't want to miss church on May 20, 2018. The Youth will lead both services and our seniors will be delivering their faith statements. We are unleashing our creativity for Pentecost! Kids Praise will be singing during the 11:00 a.m. service. We look forward to seeing you!

RENT A FLY

As April Showers bring May flowers, our youth will gladly come and help with chores around the home or garden. Just think of something that you would like to task a team or one/two individuals to accomplish (plant flowers, clean porch, cleaning house, etc.) and we will coordinate some youth to come to your home to get it done. Free will offerings are accepted. Please contact Cho-Cho Williams at 757-705-9820.

First Communion Participants

We welcome Patrick Young, Angelo Ilardi, and Cameron Williams to the communion table!! They have each completed the first communion class and created a communion project at FLC.

Martha Circle

Martha Circle will meet on May 1 at 7:00 at the home of June Harvey, 701 River Strand, Chesapeake. All are welcome! Please join us for fellowship and food. Jeanne Walters will lead our program on "Fierce Women". Questions? Contact Paula Cook at pbcook513@icloud.com or 793-0551.

May Blood Drive

The next Ghent Blood Drive will be **Wednesday, May 9th from 1:00-7:00 PM** at **St. Andrew's Episcopal Church**, 1009 West Princess Anne Rd. If you'd like to schedule your preferred time slot in advance, go to redcrossblood.org and use the sponsor code GHENT.

Memorial Day Weekend Concert at First Lutheran Church

To kick-off the holiday weekend, the choruses of Granby and Maury High Schools, led by Ajeé Church and Patrick Garrison, will combine to present a program of music and reflections at First Lutheran Church, on Friday, **May 25, at 12:00 PM**, in thanksgiving for those who gave the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country. Invite your friends; don your best red, white, and blue; and come prepared to sing some of your favorite patriotic hymns.

"Horses, Dogs, Bears, Birds, and More: The Animals of WWI"

Animals in World War I were used on a scale never before seen and never repeated. This presentation will feature some of their amazing stories. And some of these animals are still with us today in one form or another. They may be descendants, imagined characters, literary figures, mascots, or hold places in memorials. On the 100th anniversary of the end of WWI, come hear these tales of bravery, sorrow, inspiration, and humor too. Join us at 10:30 AM on May 17th to hear Donna Koch's presentation. Coffee and donuts will be served.

Church Picnic

Join us Saturday, May 19th, for the annual First Lutheran Church Picnic! The picnic will be at 11am at Lakewood Park in Norfolk. Congregational Life will supply burgers and hotdogs with all the toppings, and drinks. Please bring a dish to share. In addition, this year we will be hosting a cornhole tournament for all those interested! Look for a signup sheet in the welcome center. Contact Jacob Weber at jaweber@vt.edu or 540-521-2099 for more info.

Lydia Circle

Lydia Circle will meet Tuesday, May 1, at 11:00 AM in Strickler Hall. We'll be playing Bible Bingo and discussing plans for the June luncheon and for next year. Remember to bring a lunch if you would like to stay after the meeting to chat. We love having visitors, so please consider joining us even if you've never come to a meeting before. Questions? Contact Pam Baynard, 638-4812, pbaynard65@charter.net.

Offering of Letters for Refugees

In September 2017 the Administration announced that the U.S. would reduce refugee arrivals to 45,000 for 2018 fiscal year, the lowest allocation in the history of our nation's resettlement program. We are now at the mid-year mark of FY 2018 and, as of March 19, 2018, the U.S. had welcomed fewer than 10,000 refugees. The Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service has encouraged us to write to our two U.S. Senators and our one Member of the House of Representatives encouraging them to urge the immigration services to increase the number of refugees to America. We are a land of immigrants and a land of opportunity for those in need. Please join us on May 20th for our annual Offering of Letters.

Thank You Notes

Dear congregation,

My daughter picked up a wheelchair for me to use from your collection. I've already enjoyed it when Paulette, one of my caregivers, took me for a ride in the country. It makes getting in and out of the car much easier. Thank you for your prayers, the home communions, the flowers and visits. I miss you all.

Love,

Brinkley Goranson

Dear friends,

I am thankful for the many calls, cards, food and visits from members at First Lutheran. This has helped in my recovery, and led me to truly experience the church at work!

Peace during this Easter season,

Marilyn Jersild

Council Summary April

At our April meeting, the Council

- Opened with devotions on Stewardship
- Received a thank you note from Southern Seminary for our gift to the scholarship fund we established years ago
- Identified potential Voting Members to the June 8-10 VA Synod Assembly
- Agreed to use an ELCA Vitality Survey in our congregation to identify our strengths and areas to expand for Mission and Ministry Renewal
- Approved a coaching relationship with Pastor John Mocko, DEM (Director of Evangelical Mission-ELCA) to assist us in our Mission and Ministry Renewal
- Identified funds to support ministry beyond our congregation including Samantha DiBiasco's work with YAGM (ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission), our youths' participation in NYG (ELCA's National Youth Gathering) and a community project to be identified through our Mission and Ministry Renewal conversations with our community
- Shared one blessing each that was experienced this month as a part of the ministry at First in worship, learning, service or fellowship
- Shared prayer concerns and prayer partners

The Council normally meets at 7 PM on the first Monday of each month. The meeting is open to the congregation.

May Birthdays

Jonathan Sackel	2 May	Daniel Pirtle	9 May	Betty Peterson	15 May	Louise Hill	23 May
Kathryn Sackel	2 May	Julie Coffing	10 May	Susan Griffin	16 May	Betty Jean Meyer, PhD	23 May
Lynn Broman	3 May	Brett Hogan	12 May	Angelo Ilardi	16 May	Mackenzie Griffin	24 May
Margaret Fleet	3 May	Dylan Holbach	12 May	Matthew Thompson	16 May	Lawrence Kelly	27 May
Scott Silsdorf	3 May	Brianna Kelly	12 May	Max Carver	17 May	John Bissey	28 May
Rebecca Dozier	5 May	Lori Kintsche	12 May	John Faircloth	20 May	Claudia Burckard	28 May
Megan Hurdle	5 May	Lindsay Logan	12 May	Angela Hogan	21 May	Paul Jersild	5/28/18
Jaclyn Velotas	5 May	Kelley Minschke	12 May	Nicholas Masters	21 May	Cathy Mims	28 May
Meghan Velotas	5 May	Gabriel Stachour	12 May	Gregg Clifford	22 May	John Ridenhour	29 May
Carol Curran	6 May	Paula Cook	13 May	Jonathan Hund	22 May	Bruce Johnson	30 May
Joann Klotz	6 May	Michael Haag	13 May	Erik Kisa	22 May	Richard Brown	31 May
Willard Thompson	6 May	Kirsten Bagans	14 May	Gail Simos	22 May		
Holly Weisenbeck	7 May	Andrew Hilton	14 May	Charles Williams	22 May		
Sonja Baker	9 May	Elizabeth Moll	14 May	Reagan Heller	23 May		

Walking Together: Young Adult in Global Mission

FLC member Samantha Dibiaso is currently spending a year in South Africa as a Young Adult in Global Mission (YAGM). You may remember a few years ago that FLC member, and current seminary student, Alyssa Kaplan participated in YAGM and spent a year in Mexico. You can read about

Samantha's experiences as a YAGM during this year through her blog "Walking Together," which can be found at <https://dibiasoyagmsa.wordpress.com>. Below is an excerpt from one of her recent posts, which will be posted in its entirety in the church Welcome Center.

"Breaking Bread Together," from March 28, 2018

My dear friend Mama Golo likes to make this delicious bread we call dumpling, "le dumbolo" in Tswana. I absolutely love it! I always look forward to when she brings me a slice or two once a month. She always smiles and says, "Mama Samanta come and eat your dumpling!" Mama Golo is like a mother to me, and so when I asked her if she could teach me to make dumpling someday, she was so very happy. "You are my daughter, I love you very much," she always says.

On Sunday I picked up my ingredients at the local tuck shop and walked over to her house. I was surprised when she said I only needed a few things! I was surprised at how simple the whole process really was. The prep time took only a few minutes, and Mama Golo showed me that what was most important was a lot of time and good company.

I was so thankful for Mama Golo to go out of her way to teach me how to make dumpling. But actually our work didn't stop there! As we waiting for the dumpling, we cooked A LOT! Typically people in my community spend their Sundays cooking after church and serve it throughout the week. Together we cooked so many things! The more we cooked together the more I wished I had done this more with my neighbors back home. As I live and experience this year in SA, I continue to reflect on how much I have let time negatively impact my relationships with others. And why is that? We are socialized to prioritize time, to have a full schedule. "Sorry, I'm busy." Maybe I've gone through the motions of "breaking bread together," but there is more to it. As Mama Golo and I chatted about life and hummed to the radio in the kitchen, I found a sense of comfort in losing track of the time. She taught me that there's always a time to learn, and it's doesn't have to be on a schedule because it's never too late.

Now when I think of breaking bread together, it's more than just the pieces of bread. It's about taking time that's not on a schedule for others. Its about being vulnerable and not the expert. It's about the process, not the end result. It's an invitation to learn and listen. It's about literally breaking down barriers and sharing stories with one another. And it's all these things that actually fulfill us every day.

To read Samantha's complete story about cooking with Mama Golo, please visit her blog or pick up a copy of this post in the FLC Welcome Center!

Prayer Concerns for May

Rooted in the abundant life and love of Christ Jesus, we pray for the life of the church, the lives of people in need, and the life of all creation.

Give joyful thanksgiving

...for the baptism of Jorge Gonzalez and Donovan Grant Gonzalez.

...that everything in our lives happens under the power of the resurrection and that we are always surrounded by God's grace.

...that by grace through faith God forms us to preach, teach and live God's Word.

...that we are so rooted in the Gospel that our lives overflow in worship, witness, service, learning and support.

Lord help us

...see the world through Resurrection lenses that help us share with others the hope and joy we find in you.

Pray for

...Pastor Keith Olivier and the congregation of St. John's Lutheran Church in their time of transition.

...Pastor Goeres, Pastor Mims and all pastors.

...the family and friends of Lib Justice upon her death.

...those struggling with depression and anxiety.

...those who are traveling.

...all those who are mourning the loss of loved ones.

...the homeless, unemployed and underemployed.

...those struggling with addiction and mental health issues.

Grady Erwin, Roger Fuller, Susan Griffin, Marion Ingersoll, Marilyn Jersild, Frank and Dot Krehft, Betty Jean Meyer, Al Miller, Kelley Minschke, Lorna Moss, Betty Phillips, Deb Thompson, Howard Warren, Jonathan Balk, Gavin Brickhouse, Gaby Cain, Carol, Steve Coleman, Ben Durham, Winky, Kennedy Friedrich, Barbara and LeVester Gaines, Gary, Mike Gates, Bill "Sweet William" Geiger, Hannah, John, Lea, Hayden Miller, Theresa Smith Milne, Mitzi, Cathy Moye, Holly Nitke, Patty, Rachel, Rob and Katrina, Sheila, Bobbie Smith, Hilah Steenrod, Annie Stewart, Vanshawn, Jim Webb, Poling Weeks

Those dealing with cancer

Anne, Willie Edwards, Ann Wilson Rose, Stephanie Troy, Jess Wine-King

Military and their families:

Austin Davidson, Erika Flanagan, Mason Fox, Kelly and Eric Keiser, Dan Kelly, Roland Sanchez, Bill Seaman, Beth Silsdorf, Jonathan Goeres, Amy Hardbower, Tim Kelly, Kelly Mackenzie, John Marfield, Nikki Parkman

Pray for all our service men and women throughout the world.

Trusting in your covenant of mercy, O God, we lift our prayers to you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

Readings for May

May 6th

Acts 10:44-48

Psalms 98

1 John 5:1-6

John 15:9-17

May 13th

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

Psalms 1

1 John 5:9-13

John 17:6-19

May 20th

Acts 2:1-21

Psalms 104:24-34, 35b

Romans 8:22-27

John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

May 27th

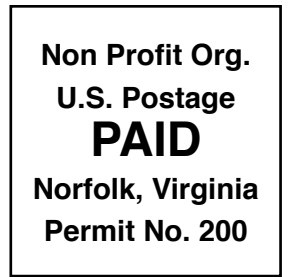
Isaiah 6:1-8

Psalms 29

Romans 8:12-17

John 3:1-17

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
