



The Contact

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH — NORFOLK

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www.flcnorfolk.com

VOL. XXXII

JULY 2018

NO. 7

Blessed To Be A Blessing

Blessings abound in our congregation! Our Council takes time each month to share responses to the following invitation, “Name one blessing you have experienced this month as a part of the ministry at First in worship, learning, service or fellowship.” What blessing would you identify?

Here are some of mine:

- Faithful worship attendance in a time when many other activities occur on Sunday mornings
- Joyful conversations before and after worship with visitors and members
- Desire to deepen faith through learning opportunities, service, and ministering to one another in times of illness and joy
- Energetic, interactive learning experiences for all during Sunday School and mid-week
- Fun fellowship activities including picnics, corn hole, and baseball
- Support of ministries inside and outside the congregation including Eucharistic Ministry, Lunch Ministry, Laundry Love, World Hunger, ELCA Fund for Leaders, Faraja School in Tanzania, VA Synod and its Forwarding Faith initiative, Lutheran Disaster Relief

- Participation in the wider church including Confirmation Camp, VA Synod Youth Events, National Youth Gathering, Young Adults in Global Mission, Power in the Spirit, Southern Seminary Advisory Council, Lutheran Family Services of VA Board
- Celebrating seven Rostered Leaders in the past eight years who were Ordained, Commissioned, or currently in seminary and 900+ members who live out their baptismal identity in daily life
- Advocacy work for justice and peace

These are some of my responses to the invitation to “Name one blessing you have experienced this month as a part of the ministry at First in worship, learning, service or fellowship.” What are yours? I invite you to share them with me and one another.

With every blessing,
Pastor Rick Goeres

just a friendly reminder...

*During August, there will be only **one** worship service on Sundays. Please join us at 10:00 a.m. for worship.*

Synod Assembly 2018

“Only By Grace Can We Stand”, based on Ephesians 2:17-22, was the Theme for this year’s VA Synod Assembly. Voting Members and visitors from 150 congregations gathered at Roanoke College to experience and express what it means to be church together as the Body of Christ in Virginia, care for necessary items of business, participate in and experience corporate worship,

and engage in fellowship and faith formation. We elected VA Synod Council members and Voting Members to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly next summer, approved a 2019 Spending Plan for Ministry, heard from our Youth Assembly participants, and learned that the Forwarding Faith Campaign has surpassed its goal of \$2.5 Million and continues to grow.

Reflections on the Assembly

From our Youth

As it being my first time attending youth assembly I did not know what to expect. This weekend we talked about what we want to see more of in the church, what problems we face as a community and as a synod. My favorite part of this weekend was the service at St. Andrews. Expanding on my faith is something I look forward too as I age and mature. Thank you so much!

— Sincerely, Ella Kopf



Having the opportunity to see and experience the leadership changes Bishop Humphrey is implementing. Being able to see all the congregations that comprise the Tidewater conference and having the opportunity to interact with their representatives. Having the opportunity to hear what other congregations and the youth in the Virginia Synod are doing throughout the year.

— Karen Siegel

The Synod Assembly was a great opportunity to meet folks from other congregations, get to know members of our own congregation better, and to learn about and shape what is going on in the church at a broader and higher level.

— Jason Shea

I really liked how Youth Assembly was a smaller community and how we got to learn about the works of the church outside of our home towns. I got a chance to get to know our new bishop, learn about the YAGM program, and the ELCA’s work with the Lutherans in South Sudan. Overall it was a really enjoyable experience and I’m looking forward to getting a chance to go next year.

— Lauren Silsdorf

From our Adults

Our Forwarding Faith Campaign is laying the foundation for our Virginia Synod and the larger ELCA community - it is simply an amazing testament to our dedication to living by God’s Grace.

— Blythe Scott, VA Synod Council Secretary

I found the weekend to be one of many opportunities for fellowship with members of Lutheran churches throughout Virginia. I also enjoyed all the opportunities to worship together, and in particular the amazing service on Saturday evening.

— David Redilla

I very much enjoyed the small group meetings, and once again loved the many worship opportunities.

— John Bissey

From our Council President

It was a blessing in my life to be able to attend the annual synod assembly again this year. While there were no “attention grabbing” matters before the assembly this year, such as choosing a new bishop, we did take care of some important business. We elected individuals to fill vacancies on the Synod Council, and we elected our synod’s representatives to the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. We also witnessed the installation of the Rev. Kelly Bayer Derrick as Assistant to the Bishop, and our own Deacon Lisa Geiger as the synod’s Candidacy Process Administrator. Lisa will continue to serve as our FLC Operations Manager, as the Candidacy Process Administrator position is a part-time volunteer position. I give thanks for her willingness to devote her spare time to this important need in our synod. One other business item worthy of special note was a resolution that we voted to send forward to our upcoming ELCA Churchwide Assembly. This resolution recognizes the 50th year of ordaining women in the ELCA and its predecessor bodies, and calls for renewed efforts to ensure that our church compensates those who serve it in paid positions equally regardless of gender. In deciding all of these matters we were mindful of our role as God’s servants to carry out his work on this earth.

As I reflect on what it meant to me to be able to attend this assembly, one thing continues to stand out: how much our church is doing, and as our Presiding Bishop, Elizabeth Eaton, reminds us, how connected we are as “church together.” Sometimes it is easy to become overwhelmed by all that is before us at First Lutheran Norfolk: the needs generated by our desire to be good stewards of our worship space, the many voices that must be acknowledged as we examine our ministry in this place and time, and our call to be God’s hands in tending to the brokenness that is all around us. Our recent vitality survey, in which we were given an opportunity to listen to one another, reminded us of so much that is vibrant and healthy in our life together here at FLC, as well as of those areas which require more of our care and attention. That process of listening, to God, to each other, and, as the process moves forward, to our neighbors, will continue in the coming months. I rejoice that together we are undertaking this important activity as we contemplate next year’s anniversary celebration of our youthful 125 years as a congregation.

The synod assembly, however, reminded me of how we at FLC are part of something so much larger than our own congregation. Did you know that our synod provides support, including financial support, to fellow Lutherans in Papua New Guinea? That in this time when our church is seeking ways to address a nationwide shortage in rostered leaders, our synod provides sustained financial support to our Lutheran seminaries? That our synod provides support to outdoor ministries at Caroline Furnace Camp and Hungry Mother camp? Those are just a few examples of ways in which each of us, by being part of FLC and sharing the gifts God has given us, are making a difference in our state, and, by virtue of being part of the Lutheran movement, in our world. Listening to the good news of what Lutheran Christians are doing in our world reminded me that we are truly a church together doing God’s work.

From conversations I have had over the past years, I know there is perception among members of our congregation that only council members can be chosen to represent our congregation at the annual synod assembly (with the exception of the youth who attend the annual Virginia Synod Youth Assembly). That is absolutely not true, and I hope each of you will consider whether you might be able to make time to attend next year’s assembly. Beginning in January the church council will begin recruiting some non-council members to attend in June 2019, and if you are interested in being one of those attendees please make your desires known to the pastors, me, or any council member. At this assembly the synod began a discussion about ways we might change the format, timing, and even location of our annual synod assembly, so stay tuned—someday the Virginia Synod Annual Assembly may be coming to a location near us!

God bless your month,
Eric Peterson,
Congregational Council President



From our Pastors

As usual, synod assembly is always a joyous reunion of learning, faith sharing, worship, community gathered. This year I was particularly impressed with how our synod - individuals and congregations - have responded to the Forwarding Faith Appeal. We are now approaching the 3 million mark this year to assure program support in the future for faith development - from the cradle to the grave. We heard stories of congregations like us who have stepped up regardless of debts and building programs. The excitement they shared of joyful, stretch giving to a cause they valued was so inspiring. I pray that by next Assembly we at First will have joined that effort with our faith story to share.

— Pastor Jean Bozeman

What I always appreciate about Synod Assembly is the opportunity to catch up with friends and meet new people, and to hear about the ministries of the wider church - Lutheran Family Services, Young Adults in Global Mission, ACTS and Power in the Spirit, and so many others, including this year a presentation on the ELCA Women and Justice Draft Social Statement. This year’s theme, «Only By Grace Can We Stand» returned us to the foundations of our faith: all that we have and all that we are, it’s pure gift, given to us by the gracious and loving hand of the God who made us and loves us. The presenters and preachers emphasized the unity we have as members of the household of God. Though economics, politics, education levels, sports-team affiliations, and so much of life tries to divide us, Christ holds us to a deeper and more true unity.

— Pastor Cathy Mims

Bishop Bob Humphrey chaired the Assembly with grace, good humor and insightful biblical reflections. It is always a gift to gather with gifted colleagues and dear friends as we worship and give thanks for the Holy Spirit’s work in Virginia, the United States and around the world.

— Pastor Rick Goeres

Connect with Others

School Supply Drive

School supplies for Lutheran World Relief! Take advantage of back to school sales and help Christian Service fill 150 school kits. We need spiral notebooks (70-sheets, either wide or college ruled), crayons (24 per box), blue or black ball point pens (no gel ink), two and one half inch erasers, blunt tip scissors, thirty centimeter rulers or rulers with one side inches and one side centimeters, unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers, and pencil sharpeners. Please place all donations in the box in the Welcome Center. Questions? Contact Pam Baynard, 638-4812, or pbaynard65@charter.net. Thank you!



God's work. Our hands.

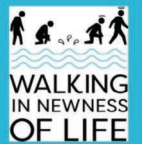
The annual Week of Service begins on September 16. This is a great opportunity to display God's grace through our hands! This summer the Service Committee is working together with all the other FLC committees to identify a diverse collection of service projects for all ages, to take place on or around Sept. 16th. We invite **EVERYONE** to take advantage of at least one of the proposed projects. Some possibilities include:

- Working in community garden
- Grace car wash
- Blessing of implements and of service providers and recipients
- Addressing homebound members' needs
- Letter writing to officials re: world hunger (Bread for the World)
- Foodbank backpack assembly
- Providing fresh produce to Foodbank
- Out of Darkness walk
- Courtyard outreach to community

You will see more about this throughout the month of August. Prepare to give and receive the blessing of service! For more information, or if you would like to propose a service project, please contact Julia Siik at siiker@me.com



July 12-14, 2018



Power in the Spirit

What does it mean to be baptized? Martin Luther asks—and answers—this question in his Small Catechism by looking to the words of Saint Paul: “We have been buried with Christ by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4).

At Power in the Spirit 2018, we will explore what it means to be Walking in Newness of Life as God's baptized people. Come and join us as we dive into the mysteries and promises of baptism. Come and reflect on the life that flows from the font and out into the world. Joining us as our keynote presenter is The Rev. Dr. Sarah Hinlicky Wilson, an ELCA pastor and a world-class scholar who often works in ecumenical dialogues with Pentecostal partners. Our Bible study leader will be The Rev. Dr. Mark Allan Powell, Professor of New Testament at Trinity Lutheran Seminary and an internationally-known biblical scholar.

Register online and download the event packet at <https://www.vasynod.org/power-in-the-spirit/>



VBS Registration is Open!

We have a terrific week planned for your child at First Lutheran Vacation Bible School this summer. All children aged 3 (must be fully potty trained, unless a parent or guardian is on site) through rising 5th graders are welcome to participate **July 30th through August 3rd, from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.** There will be music, crafts, games, and we will have fun learning about the Old Testament story of Daniel and the ancient city of Babylon. Registration forms are available in the Welcome Center or on our website (www.flcnorfolk.org). Please return registration forms (one per child) no later than Sunday, July 22nd.

Thank You Notes

Dear First Lutheran Church,

Just want to thank you for the ongoing support of our ministry at Tidewater Pastoral Counseling Services. You help us to bring hope and healing to others.

God bless,
Marty

Dear First Lutheran Family,

Thank you so much for all your love and support throughout my candidacy journey. I especially thank you for the beautiful white stole presented to me during my consecration service. I will treasure it and think of all of you whenever I wear it.

Love
Deacon Lisa Geiger

Council Summary June

At our June meeting, the Council:

- Opened with devotions
- Received an update and distribution from our Endowment
- Agreed to have one 10 a.m. worship service on Sundays in August
- Heard updates on God's Work. Our Hands. service projects and HVAC installation work
- Discussed the progress of our Mission and Ministry Renewal work and our Questionnaire results shared in the congregational forum lead by Pastor John Mocko.
- Shared the 2019 Spending Plan for Ministry development process
- Established a Nominating Committee for Council elections at our November Annual Meeting
- Welcomed visitors
- Shared blessings, prayer concerns and prayer partners

The Council normally meets at 7 p.m. on the first Monday of each month. We do not meet in July. The meeting is open to the congregation.

July Birthdays

Adam Levensalor	1 July	Lee Azar	14 July	Anna Mason	21 July
Lauren Willis	2 July	Connie Kaiser	14 July	Marilyn Melchor	21 July
Joel Ostroot	3 July	Helen Parker	14 July	Doris Wiele	22 July
Mary Delaney	4 July	Alexander Loope	15 July	Adam Clifford	23 July
Benjamin Farpour	4 July	Jane Van Wolkenten	15 July	William Seaman	23 July
Hannah Duffy	5 July	Barbara Chapman	16 July	Madelyn Baker	24 July
Virginia Temple	5 July	Sarah Delaney	16 July	Darrell Kristo	24 July
Jennifer Echea	6 July	Joelle Griffith	16 July	Lauren Kaplan	25 July
Thomas Gates	6 July	Donald Hurdle	16 July	Matthew Nordan	25 July
Margaret Poston	6 July	Jonathan Miller	16 July	Christopher Powell	25 July
Juliet Kuehl	7 July	Anna Willis	16 July	Ivana DiNini	26 July
Leilani Silsdorf	7 July	Samantha Farpour	17 July	Donna Mangubat	26 July
Katherine Buckley	8 July	Randall Milner	17 July	Debra Acors	28 July
Kiersten Hilton	8 July	David Perron	17 July	Judy Basco	28 July
Mark Torbert	8 July	Marilyn Jersild	18 July	Marie Hill	28 July
Lee Van de Water	8 July	Julia Siik	18 July	P. Fay Rogner	28 July
Jennifer Boykin	9 July	Annika Fox	19 July	Lauren Silsdorf	28 July
James Brady	9 July	John Lewis	19 July	Anna Wood	28 July
Thomas Douglas	10 July	Sophia Phillips	19 July	Nolan Ferguson	29 July
Debra Porter	10 July	Rebecca Poston	19 July	Vicki O'Rourke	29 July
Sean Duffy	11 July	Ethan Hutchings	20 July	Lynda Behnke	30 July
Emily Davidson	12 July	Ella Kopf	20 July	Joy Kelly	30 July
Patrick Seaman	12 July	Janine Brown	21 July	Isa Zamani	31 July

Stewardship in Action

"Where there's a Wil"

Because I was raised as a Methodist, I've always had some unanswered questions regarding confirmation and what is all about. Doing a little investigating, I learned that Confirmation in the Lutheran church provides people the opportunity to affirm for themselves the promises that parents, sponsors, and congregations made for them at baptism. That led me to another question. How does a person prepare to be confirmed?

Here at First the lay expert on confirmation is Wil Thompson who teaches the 7th and 8th grade Sunday School/Confirmation class. I met with Wil over coffee and he answered my questions about confirmation at First, and also how he became involved in it.

Wil has taught Sunday School since he was a senior in high school, when he taught sixth grade boys. At that time, he was living in Colorado, and his church often had interns from a nearby Baptist seminary. Those interns worked with the youth and made a lasting impression on Wil.

When he joined First in 2004, his intention was never to just "attend" church. He wanted to be involved. Two weeks later, at the suggestion of then Associate Pastor Jay Gamelin, he began teaching the high school Sunday School Class. When Jay left, Associate Pastor Nathan Gragg convinced him to take on the confirmation Sunday School class. While Jay envisioned a more individual concept for confirmation, Pastor Gragg wanted the instruction to be more communal. When Pastor Goeres came, he suggested using the current curriculum, Collaborate, which is endorsed by the ELCA.

Wil explained that since the curriculum is taught on a rolling basis it doesn't matter where in the curriculum students begin. Typically, a student finishes in June of their eighth-grade year. That summer, they develop a relationship with a mentor, and over the course of four to six meetings will discuss issues like how the mentor's faith affects them in work, in their family, and in social settings. The goal for each confirmand is to build a relationship with an adult who is not a part of their typical circle, that is, someone besides family members and pastors.

Wil readily admits that as a teacher he doesn't have all the answers. Classes are discussion based, and he encourages his students by letting them know that their thoughts are as valid as his. He observed that confirmation class may be one of the first places students realize that someone - Mom, Dad,



teacher - won't tell them the right answer. He encourages his students to read scripture and to think for themselves.

In addition to working directly with students in the classroom, Wil communicates with parents nearly every week updating them on what had been covered in class and issues that might be raised. He hopes that discussions will continue around the dinner table.

I was impressed by the time and effort Wil puts in to his class and by his obvious respect and affection for his students. He says he is struck by their insights and values their opinions. Seeing them develop in their faith is extremely rewarding for him. At a recent congregational meeting, several of his students spoke up, expressing their views on issues facing our congregation. I'm sure that I was not the only person who was impressed and proud of them, as I am sure Wil certainly is.

"Father in heaven, for Jesus sake, stir
up in our confirmands the gift of
your Holy Spirit; confirm their faith,
guide their lives, empower
them in their serving, give them pa-
tience in suffering, and bring
them to everlasting life."

Amen

Chuck Baynard
Council Liaison- Stewardship

Connect with Word and Body

Prayer Concerns for July

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

...that we are clothed in the garments of baptism.

...that we cannot hide from or separate ourselves from God and that he is faithful to us in all the places of our lives.

...that Jesus meets us in all our dark corners

...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.

Pray for

...peace and comfort for the family of Pastor Guy Shealy upon his death.

...Kaltouma and her family.

...peace and comfort for the family of Connor Ewing upon his death.

...all those who travel this summer.

...world leaders.

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

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

...the homeless, unemployed and underemployed.

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

Jill-Anne Whitson, Judy Basco, Grady Erwin, Roger Fuller, Susan Griffin, Al Miller, Kelley Minschke, Lorna Moss, Betty Phillips, Deb Thompson, Ginger Van de Water, Howard Warren, Jonathan Balk, Randall Blake, Steve Coleman, Gale, Hannah, John, Theresa Smith Milne, Cathy Moye, Mark Opgrand, Patty, Rachel, Rebecca and Kyle, Richard and Lindsey, Rob and Katrina, Sheila, Bobbie Smith, Stephanie, Annie Stewart, Vera, Victoria, Jim Webb, Yvonne and her birth mother

Those dealing with cancer

Bobbi Jean, Mike Gates, Jo, Wade Marlow+, Phil, Ann Wilson Rose, Jess Wine-King

Military and their families:

Austin Davidson, Mason Fox, Dan Kelly, 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.

By the sure guidance of your Holy Spirit, O God, we lift up our prayers in trust and thanksgiving, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Readings for July

July 1st

Lamentations 3:22-33

Psalms 30

2 Corinthians 8:7-15

Mark 5:21-43

July 8th

Ezekiel 2:1-5

Psalms 123

2 Corinthians 12:2-10

Mark 6:1-13

July 15th

Amos 7:7-15

Psalms 85:8-13

Ephesians 1:3-14

Mark 6:14-29

July 22nd

Jeremiah 23:1-6

Psalms 23

Ephesians 2:11-22

Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

July 29

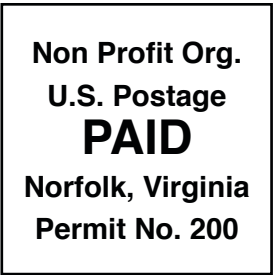
2 Kings 4:42-44

Psalms 145:10-18

Ephesians 3:14-21

John 6:1-21

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