

The Contact

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH — NORFOLK

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NO. 9

Stewardship in Action

*For we are God's servants, working together;
you are God's field, God's building.*

1 Corinthians 3:9

In the February Contact, I wrote that I intended to interview stewards here at First and learn more about ministries that these people support. I have been able to write about just a few of First's faithful servants, but I hope I have provided a glimpse into how varied the ministries at First are. The Holy Folders help produce the Contact that keeps us informed. Eucharistic ministers provide communion to members unable to be present on Sundays. The Comfort Committee provides much needed support to families grieving the loss of a loved one. The faith of our young people is formed and strengthened during confirmation classes. First provides much needed assistance to our neighbors through NEST.

All these ministries, plus the many others here at First, require people who are called to use their gifts to serve others. The Contact articles have highlighted just a few of these people, and the only way these ministries can thrive is if new people with new ideas and energy add their talents to them.

In previous years, one of the ways that people were identified as having a particular interest in various ministries was through the completion of "Time and Talent" sheets. The value of the process in attracting additional people to work in a given ministry came up several times during interviews for articles this year and has been validated as well by positive comments from others. Given this, the Stewardship Committee is reintroducing the concept under a new name, "Let's Connect at First", reflecting the connections we make while working together.

Beginning on Rally Day, September 9, and throughout the month of September, "Let's Connect" brochures will be available at our worship services. Mindful of past comments, we have streamlined the old multiple paged sheets to a single one-page brochure, meant



We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share.

to be built upon in the future through congregational input. I encourage you to take a brochure home and set aside some time to consider where you may be able to help in one of our ministries. You may return your brochure by dropping it in the offering plate or leaving it on the table at one of the entries to the Nave any time during the month of September. After collecting the information, names of those interested in learning more about a given initiative will be contacted by a representative of the appropriate committee. Please note that by indicating an interest in an initiative you are not obligated but are only expressing an interest in hearing more about what is involved.

When each of us became a member here, we were welcomed into and by the congregation with these words: "We welcome you into the Lord's family. We receive you as fellow members of the body of Christ, children of the same Heavenly Father, *and workers with us in the kingdom of God.*"

Where is God calling you to work and to share those gifts He has given you? Please prayerfully consider that question and then Let's Connect.

Chuck Baynard
Chairman - Stewardship Committee
chuck313@charter.net

Kairos 2018

Kairos, meaning “God’s time”, is a VA Synod youth event for High School students and adults from across Virginia who gather at Roanoke College for a week of intentional focus on the story of God in our lives today. *I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart for I have overcome the world.* (John 16:33) was the theme verse explored in large group, small groups, personal reflection and devotions.

The devotion life of the community followed the traditional church hours of prayer beginning with Matins before breakfast at 7:50 AM, five times throughout the day and concluded with Compline at 11:50 PM. I was impressed by the dedication of the group to adhere to the schedule with thanksgiving and the impression these prayer times made on all.

Enjoy the reflections by our youth on what they liked and learned at Kairos 2018!

— Pastor Rick Goeres

Liked & Learned – Kairos 2018

What I liked: Being able to strengthen old relationships and create bigger, and even stronger, ones.

What I learned: You need to have doubts in order to strengthen your faith. This helped my faith by telling me that these doubts are normal.

— Max Kelly

What I liked: I loved every aspect of Kairos. Being on the planning team made me more appreciative of the process that goes on to make events like these happen.

What I learned: That even though you will face tribulation, God is there to help you along the way. This helped my faith because it made me realize that there are always people to talk about faith to, which only strengthens our bond with God.

— Natalie Schaus

What I liked: Everyone in the community at Kairos. I have strong bonds with many people there.

What I learned: Always trust the Holy Spirit to be with me during trouble times. My faith was strengthened because it was tested with personal problems early in the week, but I trusted in God to give me strength.

— Patrick Redmond

What I liked: How the environment and people accepted me. It made me become closer with God.

What I learned: There are others who feel like I do.

— Grace Collins

What I liked: All the love and support from everyone at the event.

What I learned: Everyone is there for you in times of need, including God. It impacted my faith by showing me that God is truly there when you need Him, even by sending friends!

— Cho-Cho Williams

What I liked: I enjoyed the theme of this year’s Kairos – Faithside Out.

What I learned: We discussed and learned about the role that the “little voices” played in our faith/daily lives. My faith grew by making new friends.

— Lauren Silsdorf

What I liked: The community of faith I found at Kairos. The small group time was honest with myself and my friends.

What I learned: We can always be peaceful/at peace. It is ok to share our doubts and emotions.

— Vance Newsome

What I liked: I definitely enjoyed Kairos because of the people and music, as well as the fellowship when we gathered together. I feel as though my faith deepened, as well as we my trust in the Lord and those around me.

What I learned: It doesn’t matter whether you’re surrounded by friends or alone; God is and always has been, with you!

— Jaclyn Cordrey

What I liked: Large group was the best.

What I learned: God doesn’t want you to focus on the finish line but to focus on the race.

What I improved: My faith by knowing God’s love never ends.

— Ella Kopf

What I liked: The theme.

What I learned: The community.

What I learned: More about myself.

— Maggie

Greetings from Pastor John Wertz

Director of Evangelical Mission and Assistant to the Bishop



Since I only had the opportunity to meet a few folks when I worshipped at First Lutheran on July 1st, I want to introduce myself and thank you for partnering with the Virginia Synod to provide a home for the Virginia Synod's Eastern Office. My name is Pastor John Wertz, Jr. and I am the new Director for Evangelical Mission and Assistant to the Bishop

for the Virginia Synod. In my role as Director for Evangelical Mission, I will focus on developing generous stewardship, helping congregations to be healthy and vital, and overall synod mission strategy. Even though I will be working with congregations around the Synod, I am based here at First Lutheran and my office is between Pastor Rick and Pastor Cathy. I will be spending a large portion of my time on the road, but if you are by the church and I'm here, please come upstairs and say, "Hello". Thank you for giving me a place to call home and thank you for all the ways that you support the ministry of the Virginia Synod.

Welcome Kate Minnick!

We are excited to welcome Kate Minnick as our Administrative Assistant / Communications staff member. Since beginning her secretarial career more than 25 years ago, Kate has worked in virtually all types of industry including law, accounting, construction, non-profit, and higher education. She is very excited about working for First Lutheran in Ghent as she hopes her family will one day move to the Ghent area or downtown Norfolk.



Currently, Kate, her husband Andy, and their daughter Sarah reside in South Norfolk where they claim family ties to the community that go back well over a hundred years. Their family are big history buffs, so they enjoy spending a lot of time in various historical sites throughout Virginia, especially Colonial Williamsburg.

God's work. Our hands.

The annual Week of Service will begin Sept. 16th. This is your opportunity to display God's Grace thru your hands! The Service Committee invites EVERYONE to take advantage of at least one of available projects. Free Week of Service t-shirts will be available in the Welcome Center in September. Planned projects and their corresponding point of contact(s) are as follows:

On Sept. 16

after the 11 AM service (pizza lunch will be provided):

- **Grace car wash:** Steve Delaney

- **Blessing of implements and of service providers and recipients:** Pastor Goeres
- **Backpack school supply assembly** (*a good project for children to participate in*): Pam & Chuck Baynard

On Sept. 16 & 23:

- **Collection of fresh produce for the foodbank:** Merrie Jo Milner (Produce needs to be limited to food that can be left unrefrigerated for up to 2 days.)

On Sept. 22:

- **Backpack assembly at foodbank:** Merrie Jo Milner

There will be online as well as Sunday opportunities to begin signing up for these projects starting in mid-August thru Sept. 16.

Prepare to give and receive the blessing of service!

— Julia Siik

Connect with Others

Christian Service

Christian Service is anticipating a very busy year! We have many quilts to tie, plus we have some new techniques to explore. (EGADS! CHANGE! Well, maybe. We'll see what everyone thinks.) We will meet Thursday, September 25th, at 9:30 AM in Strickler Hall. Our meetings are open to anyone who wants to help. No experience necessary. If you can thread a needle, you can help. If you can't thread a needle, we'll do it for you. Remember to bring lunch if you have time to stay after our work session. Questions? Contact Pam Baynard, 638-4812.

FLC Choir

Members of the choir gathered at Richmond Hill on August 18-19th for the annual choir retreat. Participants attended an interactive workshop music therapy, a ministry FLC will be offering this program year (more details to follow). The weekend concluded with an introduction to the global music contained within *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, which we will explore more as a congregation in worship this coming year. Regular choir rehearsals will resume on Wednesday, September 5th at 7:30 PM. If you have interest in singing with the choir at the 8:30 AM or 11:00 AM services, or if you play an instrument, you are invited to contact the Director of Music, Ryan-Michael Blake, at rmblake@flcnorfolk.com.

FLC Book Discussion Group

Do you know what it is about Christianity that made it become the predominant religion in the western world in less than four centuries? Given the changing dynamic of religions in the world today, this is important for each of us to understand. Pick up a copy of Bart D. Ehrman's "*The Triumph of Christianity*" and join the FLC Book group for a discussion which promises many insights into early Christianity. We will meet Sunday, September 9th at 6:30 PM in the reception room.

Can't make the September meeting but want to join us another time for faith dialogue and fellowship? Pick up the fall reading list from the bulletin board in the Welcome Center and join us. All are welcome!

New Sunday School Class this Fall

A new class will meet this fall in Strickler Hall during the Sunday School hour. Conducted by Paul Jersild and Eric Peterson, the subject is "Racism in America." The class will be largely discussion, with introductory lectures, readings, and videos. It is our response to the racial turmoil in our country today, recognizing the importance of a thoughtful, authentic response on the part of white Christian citizens. Members of St. Mary's Catholic Basilica, the African American congregation that we are relating to, will join us on occasion. All are welcome!

Christian Service

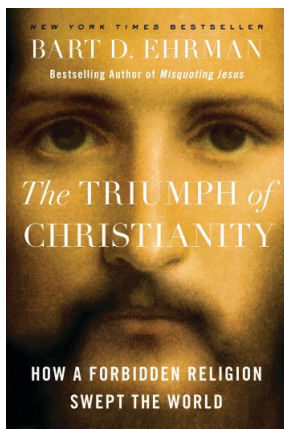
On April 29 the Christian Service Committee will display about fifty quilts sewn this year for Lutheran World Relief. Most of the fabric used in these quilts has been donated by members or friends of First Lutheran. LWR will ship the quilts around the world to provide comfort to refugees, the poor, and the sick. Shipping is expensive, \$2.25 per quilt and \$1.40 per school bag. (First has already delivered 150 school bags.) If you would like to donate to this ministry, please put contributions in the white pew envelopes and mark the donation for Christian Service. Thank you and thank you for your enthusiastic support for the work of this group.

Lydia Circle

Lydia Circle will meet Tuesday, September 4th, at 11:00 AM in Strickler Hall. We will be unpackaging school supplies to be used for filling backpacks for Lutheran World Relief on the Day of Service. Anyone who wants to help is welcome to attend. Many hands do make light work! There will be plenty of time for conversation, so we can catch up after the summer break. Don't forget to bring lunch if you want to stay after the meeting to eat. Any questions? Contact Pam Baynard, 638-4812, pbaynard65@charter.net.

Martha Circle

Martha Circle will meet on September 4th at 7:00 PM at the home of Paula Cook, 106 East Belvedere Road, Norfolk. All are welcome! Please join us for fellowship and refreshments. Questions? Contact Paula at pbcook513@icloud.com





Rally Day 2018 is Sunday September 9th

Please join us to kick off the new year of Sunday School!

THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING...

...a taste of the National Youth Gathering

9:30 AM continental breakfast on the 3rd floor

10:00 AM intergenerational program

- VBS participants sing
- Children meet their teachers
- Confirmation and youth classes meet
- Adults hear about upcoming classes

Taste and see that the Lord is good!

FLC is blessed with freshly baked communion bread each Sunday morning. New bakers are needed for



this satisfying way to serve the worship service. The recipe is simple, and the commitment is flexible. A baking demo will be held in the 3rd floor kitchen on Sept 30th at 9:45 AM. Contact Barbara Chapman at harplover@cox.net or 757-533-5434

Council Summary August

At our August meeting, the Council

- Approved the request from the Worship Committee to have a single worship service at 10:00 AM on May 19, 2019 for the 125th anniversary celebration.
- Discussed the upcoming nominations period for Council
- Discussed ways to share information more readily in the Welcome Center area and with outside signage
- Shared blessings, 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.

September Birthdays

Rita Crusott-McKinney	1 Sept.	Nicolas Miller	13 Sept.	Kela Harrison	22 Sept.
Scott Graham	1 Sept.	Seth Cummings	14 Sept.	Gayle Pougher	22 Sept.
Clara Strehlow	2 Sept.	Cheryl Gebler	14 Sept.	William Sauter	22 Sept.
Roger Fuller	3 Sept.	Kyle Cummings	16 Sept.	Harrison Moore	23 Sept.
William Grimball	3 Sept.	Stefanie Levensalor	16 Sept.	Sherry Scheib	23 Sept.
Gail Plauka	3 Sept.	Richard Prendergast	16 Sept.	Anita Poston	24 Sept.
Barbara Ross	3 Sept.	Tamara Sauter	16 Sept.	Sarah Stennett	24 Sept.
Derrick Stanfield	3 Sept.	Leslie Trower	16 Sept.	Sheri Zanke	24 Sept.
Cameron Williams	3 Sept.	John Hogan	17 Sept.	Charles Bauman	25 Sept.
Ross Echea	5 Sept.	Jennifer Moll	17 Sept.	India Pougher	25 Sept.
Andrea Hoover-Erbig	5 Sept.	Orion Posey	17 Sept.	Huaqiu Williams	25 Sept.
Ray W. Hughes	5 Sept.	Robert Affeldt	18 Sept.	Johanna Fox	28 Sept.
Paula Ross	7 Sept.	Ginger Van de Water	18 Sept.	Denise Haag	28 Sept.
Jackson Edwards	8 Sept.	Edward Williams	18 Sept.	Paul Horsboll	28 Sept.
Elizabeth Hughes	10 Sept.	Claire Elverum	19 Sept.	Evelyn Douglas	29 Sept.
Alana McElligott	10 Sept.	Michael New	20 Sept.	Janet Eggen	29 Sept.
Michelle Peterson	10 Sept.	Margaret Kelly	21 Sept.	John Wass	29 Sept.
Ryan Diduk-Smith	13 Sept.	Caroline Robinson	21 Sept.	Kristin Johns	30 Sept.

Council Elections

As we are approaching our annual Congregational Meeting and elections for members to be part of next year's Congregational Council, the current council has approved Chuck Baynard, Mike Haag, Don Buckley and Joanna Griffin to form this year's Committee on Nominations. Any confirmed member of First Lutheran Church is eligible to serve on our council, and I hope you will carefully consider if this is a role you would like to play in the life of our church. If so, please approach a member of the Nominations Committee, our pastors, or a current council member to discuss being included on this year's list of those who agree to be considered for election to the council. You may also nominate a fellow member of the congregation, provided that the individual you nominate agrees to be considered. I realize that often individuals are reluctant to offer themselves to serve in this manner because we usually include more names on the ballot than there are available slots on the council. Having more names on the ballot than can serve on our council glorifies God by showing that his children are anxious to serve his church in this important role. Offering

yourself for this type of service can be a bit daunting when the prospect exists that you may not be among those elected, but I would ask that we all consider that this type of election is not your typical election. It is certainly not a measure of the esteem in which your fellow members of FLC hold you, or of the love we have for each other. If we accept that the Holy Spirit is at work among us any time we sit together and prayerfully ask for God's guidance as we do his work as his church, then we should look at the results of our council elections as evidence of the Holy Spirit at work. If you offer yourself for service and your offer is not confirmed in our annual meeting, then we must trust that the Holy Spirit will show you the way you should be serving, if not by being on the council. If you are elected, then know that at least for the next 3 years, this is where God needs you in his church. I pray that those of you who are interested in this type of service will include your names in our election in November.

God bless your month,
Eric Peterson
Council President

Congregational Vitality Leadership Team at Work

Our Congregational Vitality Leadership Team is exploring ways to share the results of our Congregational Survey, create small group 40-day book studies of *Unbinding Your Heart* and interview our community about ministry opportunities! You will hear more about their work in the coming weeks while they help to guide our work in Mission and Ministry Renewal as we listen to God, one another and our community. Thank you for keeping the Leadership Team in your prayers: Ginger Van de Water, Elena Ilardi, Carl Spangler, Steve Fox, Sarah McGinnis, Eric Peterson, Pastor Mims and Pastor Goeres.

Congregational Vitality Strength

Our Congregational Survey revealed significant appreciation by our youth and the age group of their parents for faith formation and relationship building opportunities at First! Pastor John Mocko, our Congregational Vitality Coach, further parsed the initial results and shared this finding. In an effort to build on this strength and deepen connections, Pastor Goeres will be taking our youth to lunch every first Sunday of the month starting in September. The group will walk to a local restaurant following the late worship service, enjoy "hanging out" together with good food and return to church by 2 PM. Come FLY (First Lutheran Youth) at First each First Sunday starting September 2!

Connect with Word and Body

Prayer Concerns for September

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 persistent voice of God that always gives us peace and joy regardless of our circumstances.

...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.

Help us

...know that even though God does not eliminate our bad thoughts, he is always in our heads and hearts to give us strength and boldness for whatever we face.

...to be the bread of heaven to the world.

Pray for

...all who are in the paths of heavy rains and flooding, fires and volcano eruptions.

...college students returning to school.

...all the helpers who work and care for others during natural disasters.

...family and friends who are traveling this summer.

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

...world leaders.

...all the marginalized in this world.

...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, Brinkley Goransen, Susan Griffin, Ed Grogan, Ray Hinton, Al Miller, Kelley Minschke, Lorna Moss, Betty Phillips, Norm Stones, Deb Thompson, Howard Warren, Angela, Elizabeth Ashworth, Jonathan Balk, Randall Blake, Dot, Gabrielle Flanagan, Barbara Gaines, Gale, Hannah, Gerald Jackins, John, Kathryn, Katrina, Shannon Louder, Theresa Smith Milne, Cathy Moye, Patty, Venda Peterson, Rachel, Rob, Julia Silsdorf, Bobbie Smith, Annie Stewart, Helen Thomas, Tom and Andrea, Jim Webb, Patrick Williams, Marie and Glenn Wienke

Those dealing with cancer

Mike Gates, Jo, Wade Marlow, Phil, Ann Wilson Rose, Andie Seagraves

Military and their families:

Austin Davidson, Mason Fox, Dan Kelly, Ted Peterson, 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.

Gracious God, we lift to you these prayers and the prayers of our hearts, trusting in your everlasting love and mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings for September

September 2nd

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

Psalms 15

James 1:17-27

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

September 9th

Isaiah 35:4-7a

Psalms 146

James 2:1-10 [11-13] 14-17

Mark 7:24-37

September 16th

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalms 116:1-9

James 3:1-12

Mark 8:27-38

September 23rd

Jeremiah 11:18-20

Psalms 54

James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a

Mark 9:30-37

September 30th

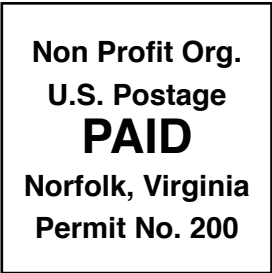
Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29

Psalms 19:7-14

James 5:13-20

Mark 9:38-50

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