



# The Contact

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH — NORFOLK



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NO. 3

## 2019 Annual Report

Office of the Bishop, Virginia Synod, ELCA

**FAITHFUL + BOLD + SERVING**

Since then, we have such a hope (through Christ Jesus), we act with great boldness (2 Corinthians 3:12 NRSV)

Here are just a few **Ministry Highlights** from 2019:

- Our staff were able to preach, preside and respond to questions in over 90 congregations
- Continued support for the “Forwarding Faith” Endowment Fund
- Mission Support among congregations and individuals has been faithful and strong
- We moved to a new location and format for our Synod Assembly
- We marked the 400th Anniversary of enslaved people in Virginia with ecumenical events
- Virginia Synod Women in Ministry Retreat
- The Office of the Bishops in Region 9 created a Women in Ministry Relational Agreement
- Virginia Synod Team, led by Pastor Kelly Bayer Derrick – 17 day trip to Papua New Guinea
- A Virginia Synod Young Adult Retreat was held at Caroline Furnace Camp & Conference Center
- 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Milwaukee featured several “Faithful, Bold & Serving” actions
- Our Virginia Synod has a record number of people discerning entering rostered ministry
- We celebrated the ordinations of 3 new pastors and welcomed 23 rostered ministers to VA
- Our 7 Synod-wide Youth Events continue to be vibrant, faith-building and strong
- 26 Council and congregational retreats were led by our DEM, Pastor John Wertz, Jr.
- ELCA Fund for Leaders provided 2 full scholarships to VA Candidates

**Derrick**, Assistant to the Bishop; Pastor **John Wertz, Jr.**, Director for Evangelical Mission & Assistant to the Bishop; Pastor **Dave Delaney**, Director for Youth & Young Adult Ministries; **Rebecca Walls**, Administrative Assistant to the Bishop & Call Process Coordinator; **Emily Pilat**, Director of Communications; **Lenae Osmondson**, Administrative Assistant & Events Coordinator; **Tammy Kasper**, Administrative Assistant; **Richard Hoffman**, Financial Assistant and **Skip Zubrod**, Finance & Records.

Our Synod is served by a remarkable **Synod Council** led by **Charles Downs**, Vice-President; a team of 11 Conference Deans, Ministry Area Specialists, Pastor **David Drebes**, Power in The Spirit; Deacon **Lisa Geiger**, Adult Formation & Leadership; Pastor **Suzanne Stierwalt**, Roots & Wings; Pastor **Anne Jones Martin**, Ministerium Team; **George Kegley** and Pastor **Dwayne Westermann**, The Virginia Lutheran.

And then... we could not do all this without the scores of dedicated and talented lay leaders and Rostered Ministers who make **Youth Events**, **Synod Assembly**, **The Gathering of the Ministerium**, **Tapestry** (Inclusion & Justice), **Global Mission**, (including our Global Mission partner, **The Island District of the Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea**), our **Ecumenical Events**, and so much more possible.

All this happens with the remarkable financial, resource, and personnel support from our partners in ministry like **Institutions & Agencies**, **Region 9**, our Lutheran partners in the Southeast, and the **Churchwide Staff** of our church family, the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**. This is just a glimpse of what we mean when we say: **We are Church Together for the sake of the world!**

None of this would be possible without **YOU!** So..., we thank God for you every day as we lift **you** in our prayers and serve this church with great pride. Thank you for your prayers and generous support.

Because God has been **FAITHFUL + BOLD + SERVING**, we are called to be and do the same. Amen!

The Office of the Bishop is truly a shared ministry among 10 people on staff (Bishop **Bob Humphrey**; Pastor **Kelly Bayer**

# Greetings from the Stewardship Ministry!

First, we want to thank you for your continued stewardship at FLC. Your contributions are making a tremendous impact on our ministries.

Second, we want to share with you that we are revamping the Stewardship Ministry this year. This year we will focus on how stewardship is a life-long part of being a disciple of Christ. One change we are particularly excited about is the introduction of “cottage meetings.” These meetings will be an opportunity for congregation members to meet at the home

of a fellow congregation member and discuss stewardship with Pastor Goeres and/or Pastor Mims. The year will culminate on October 4th with Stewardship Sunday. You will be hearing more about the Stewardship Ministry’s new focus and efforts throughout the year.

Last, and certainly not least, if you or someone you know is interested in the Stewardship Ministry please do not hesitate to let Pastor Mims or Christina O’Neill know. We would love to have you join us!

## Letter from the Virginia Synod

December 17, 2019

Letter to John Wittmann, Congregation Council Chair

Dear John;

On behalf of the Virginia Synod, I want to thank you and the people of First Lutheran for being wonderful partners in our shared ministry.

Not only does First Lutheran do wonderful ministry in Norfolk, but your congregation’s willingness to host our Eastern office allows the Synod to provide a stronger ministry presence in the area. Your generous mission support makes it possible for the Virginia Synod to nurture faith in youth and adults, to support seminary students and to cultivate health and vitality in congregations.

Thank you for sharing your congregation’s gifts so that together we can proclaim the good news of God’s love and presence to the world.

Peace and hope,

Pastor John Wertz, Jr.



# Thank You Notes

Dear Pastors Goeres, Mims, and members of First Lutheran;

I am most appreciative of visits from members of First Lutheran. One Sunday, Karen & Ed Grogan came, as well as Bill Robinson, who brought beautiful altar flowers, and was then accompanied by son, Michael and Karen. The following Sunday, the Singers, led by Ginny Fox, came and serenaded me with Epiphany hymns. What a wonderful treat that was! I really miss attending church. I am with you in spirit, if not in body.

— Joann Klotz

I would like to thank everyone for the cards, flowers and birthday wishes for my 90th Birthday. It was very nice being able to celebrate this special occasion, at church with you.

— Grace Ridenhour

February 14, 2020

Dear Friends,

Being part of the First Lutheran Church family that is there in good times and bad times is a treasure. Even though I was absent so long taking care of my Mom, it meant a lot not to be forgotten.

I'd like to thank Pastor Goeres and Pastor Mims for their support following the passing of my parents.

Although I've not been able to thank everyone personally; the prayers, cards, food and flowers were a great comfort and much appreciated.

Blessings,

Jane Van Wolkenten

## March Birthdays

1 March	Chris Holbach	11 March	Charlene Loope	17 March	Mike Westerveld
2 March	Toni Sires	11 March	Jemma Mitchell	20 March	Linda Joella
3 March	Donna Mulder	12 March	John Poston	20 March	Steve Velotas
5 March	Wyann Kaiser	13 March	Chuck Baynard	21 March	Toni Sires
6 March	Stephen Griffin	13 March	Jim Benson	22 March	Tony Echea
6 March	Esther Williams	13 March	Rhiannon Smith	23 March	Mandy Affeldt
7 March	Courtney Faircloth	14 March	Caroline Asam	23 March	Maggie Utecht
7 March	Margel Fisher	14 March	Johnathan Buckley	24 March	Jake Weeks
7 March	Kat Foster	15 March	Sylvia Bourcier	25 March	Hope Fischer
7 March	Jay Gill	15 March	Caroline Boykin	25 March	Jeanne Walters
7 March	Lorna Moss	15 March	Bert Burckard	26 March	Sarah Ammons
7 March	Norma Moss	15 March	Jeff Willis	28 March	Julia Callahan
9 March	Christian Asam	16 March	Nano Masters	28 March	Grasea Pulliam
9 March	Nathan Pitsch	16 March	Ellie Porter	29 March	Don Fisher
9 March	David Redilla	16 March	Vickie Zelasko	30 March	Zachery Posey
9 March	Alex Vera Cruz	17 March	Frances Halcrow	31 March	Dawn Richardson
10 March	Ellis Curran	17 March	Norm Stones	31 March	Gary Weeks
10 March	Jason Shea	17 March	Lynn Utecht		

## Congregation Council Summary

At our February meeting, the Congregation Council

- Opened with devotions on being Faithful, Bold and Serving
- Received a letter of thanks for our congregation's partnership with our VA Synod
- Approved the Endowment Committee's recommendation to take a distribution based on the 1-31-2020 Endowment Account statement. The total distribution would be \$79,809, allocated as follows: Capital Reserves: \$41,860; Music: \$5,938; Council Discretionary \$32,011.
- Established our 2020 Devotion Schedule
- Received an update on our Sexton search process
- Accepted with thanksgiving and placed in our Endowment a gift of \$247,106.92 from Carolyn D. Meakin's Estate "to be used for the maintenance and repairs of stained glass windows in the church"
- Heard updates on our Congregational Vitality Work regarding Small Group Ministry getting starting and making plans to Welcome Visitors through increasing our Safety and Security
- Shared what we liked and learned at the VA Synod's Effective Practices for Innovative Congregations event that we used as our Council Retreat this year
- Shared blessings, prayer concerns and prayer partners

The Council normally meets at 7:00 PM on the first Monday of each month. The meeting is open to the congregation.



## New Sunday School Class – Welcoming the LGBTQ Community

A quick reminder of the announcement in the February Contact. On Sunday, March 15th, the first of several Sunday School sessions on welcoming the LGBTQ community to FLC will take place in Strickler Hall. The first session will address what it means to be a welcoming church. The second session on Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, will discuss several welcoming statements used by ELCA congregations and what we would want to include in an FLC welcoming statement. You are encouraged to join the discussion!

## Congregational Life Committee

Congregational Life is a very small group who organize and provide behind the scenes support for church wide events throughout the year to help provide fellowship opportunities for the congregation. Several events organized by the Congregational Life committee occur each year and include the Easter Breakfast, Annual Picnic, providing the luncheon for the Annual Meeting in November and Advent Coffee two Sundays during Advent season. Other events that have occurred in the past include a Tides game in the summer, the last two Ice Cream Socials and Stew & Brew events held in October. These events may or may not occur every year, and depend on the level of interest and participation shown in the past.

Service and serving is a large and important part of being a member of First Lutheran, but there are times where socializing and fun with fellow church members is also important. These events can help foster a more cohesive sense of church "family" by simply getting to know one another better and develop closer relationships that help bind us together. There are many members who share similar interests, be it travel, history, music, sports, or enjoying craft beer or wine.

To expand opportunities for increased fellowship, the Congregational Life committee is looking at a couple of options for after church events, including:

- After Worship Social outing at one of Norfolk's fine breweries or Mermaid winery following the 11:00 AM service. The outing would coincide with Pastor's monthly youth luncheon.
- Continue the Ice Cream social held in the front courtyard after the 11:00 AM service, potentially partnering up with VBS and FLY/YOUTH COMMITTEE for assistance.
- Possible trips to the Norfolk Botanical Gardens or Chrysler Museum.

However, to make any of this work, we need to hear from you. Do you have ideas for new events or would you like to organize an event? If you would like to join or help support the Congregational Life committee please contact Shelagh Humphreys, David Kuehl, or Mike and Denise Haag.

For our part, the Congregational Life committee will strive to be more visible with better timed write ups in the bulletin and social media blasts outlining upcoming events, along with volunteer needs and also providing the congregation with more information about the fellowship activities available.



# March 2020

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 Bible Study: Men at 7 AM Wednesdays at Charlie's American Café, 4024 Granby Street,  
 Corner of 41st Street  
 Women's Bible Study: 2 PM Wednesdays, Please contact Pastor Mims for more information.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Sunday School 11 AM Worship 12:15 PM FLY Lunch	2 7 PM Congregation Council	3 10 AM Quilt Group 11 AM Lydia Circle 7 PM Martha Circle	4 7 AM Men's Bible Study 12 PM Lunch Ministry 1:00 PM Lenten Worship 2 PM Women's Bible Study 7:00 PM Lenten Worship 7:30 PM Choir Practice	5 10 AM Prayer & Presence	6	7 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><i>7th Day Youth Retreat for 5th &amp; 6th Graders</i></div>
8 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Sunday School 11 AM Worship	9	10	11 <i>Blood Drive Day</i> 7 AM Men's Bible Study 12 PM Lunch Ministry 1:00 PM Lenten Worship 2 PM Women's Bible Study 7:00 PM Lenten Worship 7:30 PM Choir Practice	12	13	14
15 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Sunday School 11 AM Worship <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><i>Contact Deadline</i></div>	16	17	18 7 AM Men's Bible Study 12 PM Lunch Ministry 1:00 PM Lenten Worship 2 PM Women's Bible Study 7:00 PM Lenten Worship 7:30 PM Choir Practice	19 10 AM Prayer & Presence 5:30 PM Laundry Love	20	21 7:15 PM Contra Dancing <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><i>Tidewater Conference Youth Lock-In</i></div>
22 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Sunday School 11 AM Worship 12:30 PM First Communion Class	23	24 9:30 AM Christian Service	25 7 AM Men's Bible Study 12 PM Lunch Ministry 1:00 PM Lenten Worship 2 PM Women's Bible Study 7:00 PM Lenten Worship 7:30 PM Choir Practice	26	27	28
29 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Sunday School 11 AM Worship 12:30 PM First Communion Class	30	31				

\*\*\* 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



## Red Cross Blood Drive

Calling ALL Blood Donors!! Wednesday, March 11th is our annual Blood Drive. This is the one time each year that First Lutheran acts as host for the Red Cross in their effort to collect the Gift of Life for so many in need. Whether you have given previously or not, WE NEED YOU to make this drive a success.

Sign-ups will be held in the Welcome Center on Sunday, March 1st and again on March 8th. You may also sign up at [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) by using the sponsor code GHENT when you enter the site. If you have any questions or would be willing to help on March 11th at our registration desk or canteen, please contact Bob Ritchey at 962-8921 or [ritchey.bob@gmail.com](mailto:ritchey.bob@gmail.com). Thank you!

## First Communion Class

A class is forming for anyone who would like to begin taking communion. It will meet following the 11:00 AM service on March 22nd and March 29th with Pastor Goeres for about an hour. Children should bring a parent/s, grandparent/s, or sponsor and everyone should bring something for lunch. After completion of the classes, students will be invited to celebrate their first communion with their families and the congregation at any of the Holy Week services. Please contact Pastor Goeres at [rgoeres@flcnorfolk.com](mailto:rgoeres@flcnorfolk.com) if you would like to participate or have any questions.

## Martha Circle

Martha Circle will meet on Tuesday, March 3rd at 7:00 PM, at First Lutheran in the Reception Room. All are welcome! Please join us for fellowship and food. We will be tying quilts for Lutheran World Relief. No skill required, OJT provided by Pam Baynard, along with an update on Lutheran World Relief. Questions? Contact Paula Cook at [pbcook513@icloud.com](mailto:pbcook513@icloud.com) or 793-0551.



Lutheran World Relief  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. LASTING PROMISE.

## Christian Service

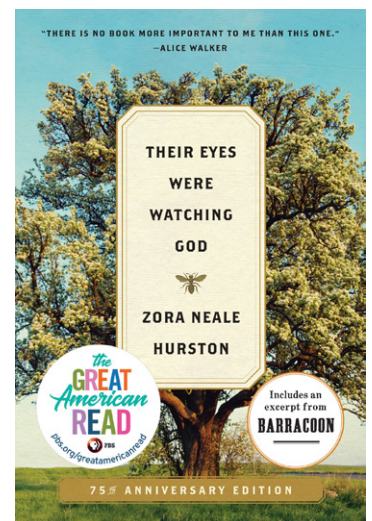
Christian Service will meet Tuesday, March 24th, at 9:30 AM in Strickler Hall to tie quilts. If you can tie a knot, we can use you!

## Lydia Circle Meeting

Lydia Circle will meet at 11:00 AM on Tuesday, March 3rd, in Strickler Hall to continue our study of prayer. Pastor Mims is leading the discussion, and all are welcome to attend.

## FLC Book Group

For April, the FLC book group will explore *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston. Published in 1937, this book is a masterpiece chronicling life around a historic black town in Florida at the beginning of the 20th century. It focuses on the experiences of Janie Crawford, a beautiful and determined fair-skinned black woman living in the American



South. The novel begins when Janie returns to Eatonville, Florida after having left for a significant amount of time. She is met by the judgmental gossiping of Eatonville's townspeople. Amidst their gossiping, Janie's friend Pheoby Watson stands up for Janie and goes to greet her friend. Janie tells Pheoby her life story, including what happened in the time since she initially left Eatonville, which is the story of the rest of the novel. Join us at 6:30 PM on Sunday, April 5th for another great discussion.

Reminder that on Sunday, March 1st, at 6:30 PM the book group will discuss *The Wisdom of Wolves* by Jim & Jamie Dutcher.

## Prayer Concerns for March

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 Jesus says we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world and that we are precious to him.  
...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

...live our lives out of Christ's love.  
...to not waste what Christ's grace has made us.  
...care for one another and pull back the veil to further expose racism, bias, and injustice.  
...as we focus on opportunities to strengthen our ministry to families with children, ministry into our local community and communication.

### Pray for

...comfort and peace for Frances, Catherine, Will, all other family and friends of Rob Burger upon his death.  
...all who are estranged from their families.  
...all who are in harm's way around the world.  
...people fleeing dire humanitarian situations for a better life.  
...the sick, that they are comforted.  
...the despairing, that they receive hope.  
...persons who are homeless and need shelter and food.  
...the unemployed and underemployed.  
...those struggling with addiction and mental health issues.  
...those mourning the death of loved ones.  
...for all who cry out to God in any need.

**Sonya Baker, Alvene Buckley, Janet Eggen, Roger Fuller, Al Miller, Kelley Minschke, Emily Mitchell, Lorna Moss, Betty Phillips, Fay Rogner, Deb Thompson, Jeanne Walters, Doris and Randall Wiele, Dallas Williams, Andy, Betty Lou, Dallas, Dave, Deanna, Rick DeRasmo, Joan Fox, Gert, John Hunt, Joe Jackson, Jim, John, Katrina, Kymberlee, Lydia and Rachel, Kathy Merlock-Jackson, Theresa Smith Milne, Cathy Moye, Patty, Rachel, Reema, Rob, Sandy, Sean, Carolyn White**

### Those dealing with cancer

Larry Atkinson, Jo Brouwer (going through treatments), Iris Corbin, Dave Guelcher (father of Beth Zaletski), David Kelly, Vickie Mack, Phil, Lydia Powell, Andie Seagraves, Rocco Wilson, Jess WineKing

### Military and their families:

All military personnel in the Middle East and around the world.  
**Austin Davidson, Mason Fox (deployed), Kyle Hefner (deployed), Dan Kelly, Bobby Masters, Ted Peterson,** Brian Becker, Alex Diaz and shipmates as they mobilize to Horn of Africa for a year long deployment, Jonathan Goeres, Amy Hardbower, Nicolette Huntley, Tim Kelly, Ian Logan, Kelly Mackenzie, John Marfield, Nikki Parkman, Syd

Confident that you are able to accomplish more than we even dare to ask, we bring these prayers before you, believing in your saving grace revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## Readings for March

### March 1st

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7  
Psalm 32  
Romans 5:12-19  
Matthew 4:1-11

### March 8th

March 8, 2020  
Genesis 12:1-4a  
Psalm 121  
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17  
John 3:1-17

### March 15th

Exodus 17:1-7  
Psalm 95  
Romans 5:1-11  
John 4:5-42

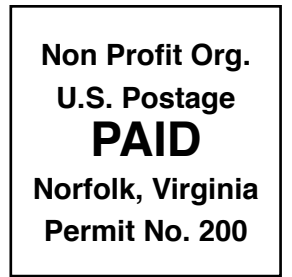
### March 22nd

1 Samuel 16:1-13  
Psalm 23  
Ephesians 5:8-14  
John 9:1-41

### March 29th

Ezekiel 37:1-14  
Psalm 130  
Romans 8:6-11  
John 11:1-45

First Lutheran Church  
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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