

The Contact

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH — NORFOLK

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NO. 9

Generosity of Spirit

"But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day."

— 2 Peter 3:8

Deep into the quarantine it became clear that days no longer had names except that certainly this one ended in "y" as our daily rhythms fell apart and homeschoolwork they all blended together as boundaries became meaningless and together alone we drift through this mist of unending days that drag on and fly by and somehow it has become September.

Time has taken on a different sort of quality in the past few months. We still have the same amount of time: 86,400 seconds every single day. Yet those seconds can pass by in mindless ennui and loneliness; or they can be spent in endless Zoom meetings; or they disappear in the haze of parenting and managing work responsibilities; or they are eaten up by the worries and burdens of economic strain and COVID precautions. Sometimes it can feel like we've been going all day and accomplished nothing and are still exhausted at its end. Time passes, but it just seems harder these days to mark time's significance. Just another day ending in "y" indeed...

So whether it is sending your firstborn off to college, or drinking iced tea on a hot afternoon, or corralling busy toddlers while trying to prepare supper, or a stream of doctor's appointments – how do we take note of the passing of our lives? The Psalmist writes:

"So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart."

— Psalm 90:12

"Lord, let me know my end, and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting my life is."

— Psalm 39:4

The time we are given on earth is a gift from God, and we don't know how much time we've been given. The Psalmist invites reflection on the end of our days, so that the intervening time can be used wisely, purposefully, intentionally.

What does it look like to be a good steward of time when our normal routines and relational connections have been disrupted? Does it mean we always have to be productive or learning something new? How does recreation and relationship fit into our stewardship of time? What role does social media or constant news cycles play in our stewardship of time? How do we honor the Sabbath? How does being a good steward of time become a life-giving gift and not a burden?

These are some of the questions the Stewardship Committee will be reflecting on with you in the weekly Life Together during September

so that we all grow in our stewardship of God's abundant and good gifts and may, day by day, grow in our awareness of God's mercies and presence with us:

Day by day, your mercies, Lord, attend me, bringing comfort to my anxious soul.

Day by day, the blessings, Lord, you send me draw me nearer to my heav'nly goal.

Love divine, beyond all mortal measure, brings to naught the burdens of my quest;

Savior, lead me to the home I treasure, where at last I'll find eternal rest.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship 790

What is happening with our Fall Stewardship Campaign?

Usually around this time of year and into early October, the church enters into what is sometimes referred to as "that dreaded season", because it seems like all we talk about is money. The budget. The spending plan. Income and Expenses. How much more of your money the church needs in order to stay open and do ministry. Money, money, money.

This year, we're not doing that. We will have a financial stewardship campaign, but we're moving it to the spring, and it will be only one part of our stewardship efforts.

To be a good steward is to care for the things God has given us – and God has entrusted so much to us to care for. Creation. Time. Relationships. Health. Abilities. And yes, finances. The Stewardship Committee has decided to take a holistic approach to stewardship. We began last month with creation, and we continue this month with the stewardship of our time.

We will talk about the stewardship of our financial resources, but not this fall. We are asking you, therefore, to continue to give at the levels you have been so generously giving. In the spring we will have deeper conversations about financial stewardship as a spiritual practice, as a response to God's goodness and generosity towards us – and hopefully we can have these conversations face-to-face.

Thank you, beloved stewards and disciples, for your faithfulness and willingness to try something new! Together we grow in faith and in generosity of spirit, reflecting the grace and favor first shown to us!

God's Work, Our Hands

This year we will be honoring the annual Week of Service on Sept. 13–19. It will look a little different than in years past, but there still be several (socially distanced!) opportunities to celebrate who we are as the church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbors.

Service activities will include:

- Assisting with the Mercy Chefs dinner at FLC on Tuesday, Sept. 15

- Providing donated items to Ghent Area Ministry (GAM)
- Writing reminder postcards to unregistered voters about the registration deadline before the November election — can be done at home or FLC

Look for more details and a Signup Genius in the weeks ahead!



Holy Cross Day



Do you have a cross that is special to you? Maybe it's a simple cross your child made as a Sunday School project. Perhaps you have an extravagant cross from a European gift shop. Please take a picture of your special cross

and email it to kminnick@flcnorfolk.com a.s.a.p. for inclusion in a Facebook post on September 14. If there is a story behind it, please include it in your email. Participants are invited to submit multiple entries.

Music as Spiritual Care

by Ryan-Michael Blake, Director of Music

During the choir retreat in the summer of 2018, I introduced the concept of music therapy as a goal for ministry at First Lutheran. By that point, I had already incorporated some of the techniques into the choir rehearsals with adults and children, with a plan to expand the offering to the congregation-at-large.

My vision for this ministry includes a program of regular group therapy sessions for our senior citizens; individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and/or dementia and their caregivers; for people with special needs, including developmental disabilities and individuals on the Autism spectrum (a possibility is open to collaborate with Maury High School in this area); for the soldiers and sailors of our community who are experiencing trauma as a result of their service to our nation; reconciliation for people in addiction recovery programs; as well as home or facility visits to our shut-ins. Ultimately, in a long-range plan, I see this as a staff position requiring a highly-qualified and licensed individual.

In May of this year, I did an interview with local music therapist, Becky Watson, about how music can be used in a therapeutic way. A video of this interview is available on the FLC Facebook page, in case you missed it. Between school and church activities, Becky and I have been working together off and on since we met in Minneapolis in 2017. She and I have explored many ways in which we can incorporate music therapy into a religious context. She led a workshop at the choir retreat mentioned above, and also did an introductory workshop as part of the adult component to Vacation Bible School in 2019, which about 25 of you attended.



Over the years, the pastors and I have had many conversations about ideas and events in hopes to, someday, offer music therapy as a regular ministry of the congregation. Becky had graciously agreed to lead four sessions for us over the course of the program year. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, this has all had to be abandoned before it could even get started. Additionally, Becky recently informed me that, due to the pandemic, she has had to close her music therapy business, and seek employment elsewhere.

We will not be able to do drum circles and other interactive programs at this time, but I would like to begin this new program by offering a few guided meditation sessions, the first to be held on Sunday, October 18. The format, whether in person or on-line, will be determined as we evaluate the regathering process. Look for more information in the October newsletter.

As discussed in my article last month, the music ministry of the church will look different for a while, but the ministry of music must continue nevertheless. I think now is an excellent opportunity to launch a new aspect of music ministry which will reach beyond our own walls and, as we sang in worship a few weeks ago, "let God's healing flow through us" to our community in need.

A Mess of Masks

Pictured are just a few of the hundreds of masks distributed by First Lutheran to members, visitors, workers, lunch ministry guests, Tuesday night dinner guests, and friends at the Soap n' Suds on Colley. On average, between fifty and sixty masks have been given out each week since the middle of May. Thank you to the faithful mask makers and helpers-Barbara Chapman, Kaye McGinnis, Cathy Whittecar, Lynn Utecht, Mary Zelasko and Pam Baynard. If you need a mask, contact any of these women, or pick one up at church from the basket behind the Welcome Center desk. Stay safe!



Hunger in the Time of COVID-19: Life for Today and Hope for Tomorrow

Rick Steves, guidebook author and travel TV host; the Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); and the Rev. Shelley Bryan Wee, bishop of the ELCA Northwest Washington Synod, invite you to an online benefit — the first of its kind — for ELCA World Hunger. Our goal is to raise \$250,000 to confront hunger in the time of COVID-19.

When: Thursday, Sept. 24th, 7 p.m. Central time

Where: Zoom virtual event

We are in a historic moment, facing a once-in-a-century pandemic and a global change in hunger unlike anything we have

seen in our lifetimes. Domestically and internationally, hunger is increasing at alarming rates. At this event, you will learn about the unique ways ELCA World Hunger is responding. Our hosts will also discuss the ongoing root causes of hunger and poverty addressed in Rick Steves' recent special *Hunger and Hope: Lessons From Ethiopia and Guatemala*. And you will hear from ELCA World Hunger partners on the front lines of the current hunger crisis, who will tell you firsthand how your gifts make a difference.

We are called by God to share hope in this time of challenge. Join us to face this global hunger crisis head-on and to continue moving toward a just world where all are fed.



**God's Work, Our Hands
Week of Service
September 13-19**

Rally Day 2020

Join Us For Rally Day 2020!!

We Kick Off Sunday School virtually on September 13th

We will be online at 9:00 AM.

Children, Youth, and Families

- Hear fall learning plans • Meet teachers and leaders
- Learn how to enroll in Children's Sunday School, Confirmation Class, and Youth Group

Look for a link in your Life Together Worship Edition email the preceding week (If you miss us at 9am on the 13th, you can still find us later on the FLC Facebook page and website.)

September Birthdays

1 Sep Scott Graham	10 Sep Alana McElligott	18 Sep Ginger Van de Water, Ed.D	24 Sep Charles Poston
2 Sep Clara Strehlow	10 Sep Michelle Peterson	18 Sep Lanier Williams	24 Sep Sarah Stennett
3 Sep Roger Fuller	13 Sep Ryan Diduk-Smith	19 Sep Claire Elverum	25 Sep Charles Bauman
3 Sep Billy Grimball	13 Sep Nick Miller	20 Sep Mike New	25 Sep India Pougher
3 Sep Gail Plauka	14 Sep Seth Cummings	21 Sep Margaret Kelly	25 Sep Cho Cho Williams
3 Sep Barbara Ross	16 Sep Kyle Cummings	21 Sep Caroline Robinson	28 Sep Johanna Fox
3 Sep Derrick Stanfield	16 Sep Stefanie Levensalor	22 Sep Kela Harrison	28 Sep Denise Haag
3 Sep Cameron Williams	16 Sep Kevin Prendergast	22 Sep Gayle Pougher	28 Sep Paul Horsboll
5 Sep Ross Echea	16 Sep Tami Sauter	22 Sep Bill Sauter	29 Sep Evelyn Douglas
5 Sep Andrea Hoover-Erbig	17 Sep John Hogan	23 Sep Harrison Moore	29 Sep Janet Eggen
5 Sep Ray W. Hughes	17 Sep Jennifer Moll	23 Sep Sherry Scheib, MD	29 Sep John Wass
8 Sep Jackson Edwards	17 Sep Orion Posey	24 Sep Sheri Kanipe	30 Sep Kristin Johns
10 Sep Ann Hughes	18 Sep Bob Affeldt	24 Sep Anita Poston	

September 2020

Office Hours: 9 AM—4 PM Monday-Thursday, 9 AM -1 PM Friday
Men's Bible Study: 7 AM, Wednesdays, IHOP, 114 E. 21st, Norfolk, VA 23517
Women's Bible Study: 2 PM Tuesdays online, please contact Pastor Mims for more information.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Pastor Goeres, Pastor Mims, Trina, Betty & Ryan-Michael; Please review the following calendar and let me know of any changes or corrections. I'm not sure when the new music offerings (i.e., handbell lessons, etc.) begin, so please let me know.	1 2 PM Women's Bible Study 6 PM Dinner Ministry	2 7 AM Men's Bible Study 12 PM Lunch Ministry	3 5 PM Fellowship Time online	4 <i>Blessings on your retirement Pastor Rick Goeres!</i>	5	
6 10 AM Worship Service online	7 <i>Labor Day</i> Church Office Closed	8 2 PM Women's Bible Study 6 PM Dinner Ministry	9 7 AM Men's Bible Study 12 PM Lunch Ministry	10 5 PM Fellowship Time online	11	12
13 9 AM Sunday School Rally Day online 10 AM Worship Service online	14	15 2 PM Women's Bible Study 6 PM Dinner Ministry <div>Contact Deadline</div>	16 7 AM Men's Bible Study 12 PM Lunch Ministry	17 5 PM Fellowship Time online	18	19
20 10 AM Worship Service online	21	22 2 PM Women's Bible Study 6 PM Dinner Ministry	23 7 AM Men's Bible Study 12 PM Lunch Ministry	24 5 PM Fellowship Time online	25	26
27 10 AM Worship Service online	28	29 2 PM Women's Bible Study 6 PM Dinner Ministry	30 7 AM Men's Bible Study 12 PM Lunch Ministry			

Connect with Others

FLC Book Discussion Group



As founding pastor of St. Lydia's in Brooklyn, New York, where worship takes place over a meal, Emily Scott spent eight years ministering to a scrappy collective of people with different backgrounds, incomes, and levels of social skills. Each week they broke bread, sang hymns, made halting conversation with strangers, then did the dishes. But in a city where everyone lives on top of one another yet everyone is lonely, these gatherings

filled a longing that most people—even Scott—didn't realize they felt. *For All Who Hunger* is a story about a God whose love has no limits and a faith that opens our eyes to the truth. There's a place for you at the table.

Pick up a copy of *For All Who Hunger: Searching for Communion in a Shattered World* and join the book discussion on October 4th to think about what this book says to First Lutheran and our vision for church. For questions, contact Betty Jean Meyer.

Tuesday Dinners

While most activities came to a halt with the pandemic, First Lutheran initiated a new service project to help feed our neighbors. Hot meals are prepared by Mercy Chefs in Portsmouth and distributed from Strickler Hall between six and seven on Tuesday nights by youth and adult volunteers. Each week since early July, dinners have been given to approximately thirty people. Although church council originally funded this effort as a pilot project for two months, the Service Committee feels that it has met and will continue to meet a need in our neighborhood in the months to come. To extend this effort, we hope to get additional

financial support from the congregation. The cost per month, including meals and bottled water, is approximately \$450. The Service Committee hopes to continue meals through December, at which point the program will be reevaluated. All contributions, large and small, will be extremely helpful. Please make checks out to First Lutheran with "Tuesday meals" on the memo line and mail the donations to the church office. Thank you for considering supporting this exciting new project. If you have questions, please contact Merrie Jo Milner, merjomil@cox.net, or (757)560-0781.

Congregation Council Summary

At our August meeting the Congregation Council

- Received a Thank You note from Lutheran Family Services of Virginia for our \$1,000.00 gift
- Agreed to move unused 2020 Youth Ministry funds to our ELCA Youth Gathering restricted account to support our Youth in attending the event in 2022
- Received updates from our Nominating Committee, Gathering Again Planning Team and Water Infiltration work
- Agreed to send \$1,000.00 gifts to both Lutheridge and Caroline Furnace camps from restricted funds designated for support of the wider Church

- Heard from Pastor Goeres that he is retiring and accepted the arrangements as outlined in his letter to Council
- Shared blessings, prayer concerns and prayer partners

The Congregation Council normally meets at 7 PM on the first Monday of each month. September's meeting will be held on August 31. The meeting is open to the congregation.

Connect with Word and Body

Prayer Concerns for September

Lord God, your son came among us to serve and not to be served, and to give his life for the world. Lead us by his love to serve all those to whom the world offers no comfort and little help. Through us give hope to the hopeless, love to the unloved, peace to the troubled and rest to the weary; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Give joyful thanksgiving

...that in these times of uncertainty and despair that we have a firm foundation in God.
...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

...be aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit surrounding us.
...be kind and 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

...peace and comfort for the family and friends of **Emily Mitchell** upon her death
...peace and comfort for the family and friends of Markeith Phatter (nephew of Trina Winfield) upon his death.
...peace and comfort for the family and friends of Eloise Justice upon her death.
...residents of the Tidewater, Virginia, and all negatively impacted by Hurricane Isaias.
...all who are impacted by the COVID-19 virus.
...all who are working diligently to make a vaccine for the COVID-19 virus.
...all those impacted by the fires in California.
...all those impacted by the explosion in Beirut, Lebanon.
...those who are dying, that they are secure in knowing that God loves them and will welcome them into everlasting life.
...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/or in need of shelter and food.
...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.

Alvene Buckley, Don Buckley, Margaret Fleet, Roger Fuller, Jay Gill, Pastor Goeres and Neva, Joelle Griffith, Kelley Minschke, Lorna Moss, Bill Newlon, Betty Phillips, Grace Ridenhour, Fay Rogner, Deb Thompson, Jeanne Walters, Rich Whittecar, Aidan, Mary and Earl Barbour, Betty Lou, Russ Broman, Catherine, Cindy, David, Emily, Glen Fox (brother of Steve Fox), Gail, Gert, Harriette and Dave, Jim, Katrina, Katie, Kenny, Theresa Smith Milne, Cathy Moye, Peggy, Rachel, Rema, Bobbie Smith, Stephen, Scott White

Those dealing with cancer

Larry Atkinson, Jo Brouwer, James Collier, Iris Corbin, Dave Guelcher (father of Beth Zaletski), David Kelly, Vickie Mack, Mark, Stephen Neuman, Phil, Rob, Sandy, Andie Seagraves, Gerald Stover, Jess WineKing

Military and their families:

All military personnel around the world.
Austin Davidson, Mason Fox-deployed, Kyle Hefner-deployed, Dan Kelly, Bobby Masters, Nick Masters, Ted Peterson, Brian Becker, Alex Diaz and shipmates in the Horn of Africa for a year-long deployment. (Dec., 2019), Jonathan Goeres, Amy Hardbower, Nicolette Huntley, Tim Kelly, Ian Logan, Kelly Mackenzie, John Marfield, Nikki Parkman

With bold confidence in you, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your loving care; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Readings for September

September 6th

Ezekiel 33:7-11

Psalms 119:33-40

Romans 13:8-14

Matthew 18:15-20

September 13th

Genesis 50:15-21

Psalms 103:[1-7] 8-13

Romans 14:1-12

Matthew 18:21-35

September 20th

Jonah 3:10--4:11

Psalms 145:1-8

Philippians 1:21-30

Matthew 20:1-16

September 27th

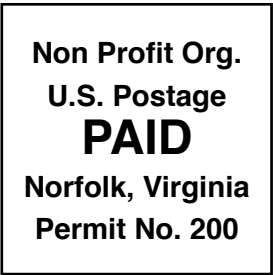
Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Psalms 25:1-9

Philippians 2:1-13

Matthew 21:23-32

First Lutheran Church
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