



August 2019

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH The PULSEBEAT

From the Pastor...

As my time with you will conclude in a few weeks, I am preparing for a brief interview with the next church (still confidential for now) where the bishop would like me to serve as an interim pastor. This will be my ninth interim call, and I thought I'd share with you some of the questions I ask going into an interview during that portion where I'll likely be asked, "Do you have any questions for us, potential interim pastor?"

Here are some things I try to remember to ask:

Other than the recent departure of your settled pastor and the need to find a new pastor, what do you feel are the most challenging issues for your congregation?

What do you see as the biggest challenge for your congregation moving forward during this interim time?

What are your expectations of this interim time and of the interim minister? Who, if anyone (other than yourself), shares those expectations?

What is one thing you think as an interim pastor I will learn about your congregation fairly quickly?

During the interview I take note of how people talk about their congregation. For example, where might they inadvertently use terms like "Us" and "Them" in discussing various groups in the church. I try to notice body postures and facial expressions. I am alert to notice if there seems to be a tension between certain individuals or if people seem pretty much at ease with each other. I take note of what programs, people, or concerns get mentioned more than once. An interview as an interim pastor gives me a chance to be sort of a detective of the church system I am being considered for as an interim pastor.

As you soon will welcome into your midst a new shepherd and leader, you may wish to bear in mind some of the questions above as you get to know each other. In my experience, it takes about a year for a pastor to move from being "The new pastor" to being this is "Our pastor." Relationship building takes time when it is done thoughtfully and well. The good news is that God's grace is present and is abundant as relationships grow and deepen. We have the freedom in Christ to slowly discover one another as children of God, and inheritors of eternal life. (Romans 8:17) I wish you well in the months and years ahead!

In Christ,
Bridge Pastor Rich Ajer

Church Cell Phone Numbers

Pastor Rich: 619-990-4589

Hannah: 619-977-2646

Church Email Addresses

Pastor Rich: pastorrich@firstlutheransd.org;

Hannah/Church Office: administrator@firstlutheransd.org

2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly

The ELCA Churchwide Assembly will meet in Milwaukee, WI, August 5-10 to discuss and make decisions about how to go about God's work as a church.

Over the course of the assembly, voting members:

- Hear reports and review the work of churchwide officers, leaders, and units;
- Receive and consider proposals from synod assemblies;
- Elect officers (including the Presiding Bishop), board members, and other leaders as specified by the constitution or bylaws;
- Establish ELCA churchwide policy;
- Worship together;
- Adopt a budget; and
- Conduct other business related to the ELCA churchwide organization.

Summer Gospel Choir

The Summer Gospel Choir will rehearse on Tuesday, August 13 at 6:00 p.m. here at the church, and sing at both services on August 18. All are welcome to come and join the choir!



Council Update: The Halfway Mark

by Carol J. Schultz, Council Secretary

Hard to believe that more than half of 2019 has passed already! With the exciting prospect of welcoming a settled pastor soon, it's natural for us to be looking ahead. And the Council is. But not only ahead. The Council also is looking at where First Lutheran is at the halfway mark of this year, how we got here, and what it means for the second half of 2019.

Pastoral Transition. Pr. Kurt Christenson will begin his tenure as First Lutheran's settled pastor September 1, 2019, and he plans to preach that day. Pr. Rich Ajer will continue to serve as bridge pastor through Sunday, August 25, leaving no gap to be filled. The Council is grateful to Pr. Ajer and to the First Lutheran member-pastors who have served generously during the three years since Pr. Wilk Miller accepted a call to Holy Trinity in New York City.

Financial Report. The mid-year financial picture is sobering. First Lutheran's actual year-to-date deficit is almost \$41,000, that is, the amount of revenues collected through June is \$41,000 less than expenses paid. This shortfall has been building even though actual expenses continue to be slightly less than budgeted expenses. In other words, the deficit is coming from the revenue side of the ledger not from the expense side. Because the bookkeeper's reports to the Council were delayed this month, the Finance Committee will present its detailed mid-year analysis to the Council in August.

Animals in Church. Some congregation members have asked whether dogs are allowed in the church building. After reviewing the requirements for admitting service dogs under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Council decided to restrict access for animals inside the church building to service dogs and to post signs that comply with the ADA. The ADA defines a service dog (it doesn't recognize any other service animals) as one required by the owner's disability and trained to perform specific tasks to support its owner. As a result, the only two questions someone may ask a dog owner are: (1) "Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?" and (2) "What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?" The ADA does not allow anyone to request documentation for the dog, require the dog to demonstrate its task, or ask about the nature of the person's disability. More information is available on the ADA website at https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.html.

Use of First Lutheran's Building. Organizations like AA and Al-Anon regularly use First Lutheran's building for their activities, and individuals sometimes use it for special events. Unlike Third Avenue Charitable Organization (TACO), which has exclusive use of part of the building at all times, these users are non-exclusive and they come and go. In order to make sure all such users are treated fairly, the Council is drafting a written agreement that spells out the responsibilities of the parties and ensures appropriate insurance coverage and waivers are in place.

As you can see, Council members handle a wide variety of leadership and operational matters. Representing the interests of our fellow congregation members is a privilege and a responsibility we take seriously. We invite you to share your questions, concerns, or appreciation with any Council member.

God's Peace to you all,

Your 2019 Council

Back to Sunday School September 8!

Looking forward to seeing all children ages 5 and up on Sunday September 8 at 11:00 a.m.!

AND TO ALL ADULTS, get to know our little people! Sunday School assistants are once again needed and warmly welcomed. There is a rotating list, and you would probably be scheduled once every couple of months. Sunday School begins at 11:00 a.m., and then all rejoin the congregation at Passing of the Peace.

If you feel called to serve in this way, please contact the church office or Martha Radatz (619-575-2845 or m28rz@icloud.com).

2019 Council Officers:

President: Dick Krueger

Vice President: Frank DeLouise

Secretary: Carol Schultz

Treasurer: Kem Taylor

Financial Secretary: Anke Hartung

Council Members:

Kara Oien, Melinda Person, Marjorie Wahlsten, and Susan White.



Lutheran World Relief School Kits

Education is one of the strongest tools a community has for breaking the cycle of poverty. LWR School Kits contain essential supplies to help children—and in some cases, adults—continue learning in the face of serious obstacles. That learning leads to a better life for them, their families and their communities.

Our LWR School Kit summer project is off to a great start thanks to all who have already donated supplies. We will be collecting items for the next month, then having our Sunday school children assemble the kits to get ready to send to the Lutheran World Relief warehouse to be distributed around the world where most needed.

Now is the perfect time to take advantage of those summer sales at stores like Target, Office Depot, Staples, and Walmart as many items are drastically reduced before the school year starts. The string backpacks have already been donated and any school supplies included on the list are welcome contributions.

You can pick up a handy card with all the items listed to take with you when you shop, or you can make a monetary donation and have a personal shopper do the work for you. Stop by the table in the lobby before or between services on Sunday to talk with Pat Hendrickson or Mary Krueger if you have any questions, or visit the LWR website at <https://lwr.org/schoolkit>

School Kit Supply List

- 70-sheet spiral notebooks
- 30 centimeter rulers
- Pencil sharpeners
- Blunt student scissors
- Unsharpened pencils
- 2.5" eraser
- Black or blue ballpoint pens
- Box of 16 or 24 crayons

Facilities Focus: Orphan Projects

Each month, *Facilities Focus* highlights various projects around the church facility available for adoption. There are several “orphan” projects in need of adoption to keep the church facility in good shape and help reduce the cost of hiring the project out. The church relies on the skills, time, and generosity of members and friends to complete or help fund these important projects. Adoption can be doing the project or providing funding to have them completed. Below are a few “orphans” in need of adoption:

- Wash interior and exterior windows in narthex, library, and administrative offices
- Heavy duty cleaning of tiles floors in narthex, kitchen hallway, and restrooms
- Repair dinged walls and touch up paint.
- Repaint walls in administrative hallway entrance
- Replacement of missing tile piece at entrance to kitchen
- Wash walls and baseboard in hallway to kitchen
- Shampoo carpets in various rooms

A full list of projects available for adoption and adoption slips are located on the kiosk in the lounge.

Checking In

If you've noticed that someone who usually comes to church hasn't been seen in a while, please consider either contacting them yourself, or let a member of the council know. We want to be sure that no one gets lost in all of the changes that have been happening here at First!

Join in a Fun Lunch

The Lutheran Lunch Bunch meets again Tuesday, August 6 at 12:30 p.m. We're a fun talking/eating group for young and old, female and male, and just everyone who can make the time. Don't be fearful of coming by yourself. Everyone is welcome. We're meeting at Jo's Diner on Washington in Hillcrest. There's free parking!

Make your reservation by emailing Billie at thompsonbilliek@gmail.com.

Deadline is August 1.

Volunteer Nursery Attendants

As you can see in the Worship Assistant schedule, we now have some volunteers! But you'll also notice that there are a lot of repeat names. The more people who volunteer, the less often each person will have to do it. And it's really easy! You only need to be a second pair of eyes—you can play with the kids if you want, but you don't need to change diapers or help with going to the bathroom. **Please help us take care of our kids!**

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Hannah DeMers.





Perspective: A Pastor's "Rules" for Worship

by Stephanie Lape (from *Living Lutheran magazine*)

I recently read a list of “20 rules of etiquette for attending worship” shared by a clergyperson (not of my denomination). They were things people needed to do if they wanted to do worship “right”—such as never giving kids snacks; never looking at cell phones; bowing, sitting, standing and kneeling at all the right times; dressing in a certain way, etc. In response, I thought I’d share my own clergy list of etiquette.

- 1.** I assume that, when you walk into church, you feel weighed down by the world. You probably had a hard week at work or failed on your diet or argued again with your spouse or have had it up to *here* with the kids. I could be wrong, but I assume you need a break. My job is to smile and welcome you. Your “rule” here is simply to walk in the door, if you choose.
- 2.** As our guest of honor, you are in church to be served. This means you do not come to serve God or anyone else. Before you worry that this will make you feel entitled, remember that the gathering commonly called “mass” was renamed “service” by Martin Luther, who said *God* is the one serving. God is lavishly serving you in word and sacrament. This is not to make you feel entitled but to make you feel loved and free to love others. (You will know when God puts it on your heart to serve others, prompted by your overflowing love.) So your “rule” here is to try to open your heart to God, who will serve you as you worship and praise God. It’s not really a rule but a good idea. You’ll get more out of things this way.
- 3.** The music is always nicer if you sing along. The prayers are more powerful if you join your voice in the ancient rhythm created by billions of people over thousands of years. You’ll get more out of the sermon if you listen. So your “rule”—let’s call it a *suggestion*—is to involve yourself in what we call “the work of the people,” which is what “liturgy” literally means. It’s not a requirement, though. If what you need to do is sit in silence, cry, meditate, whatever—have at it.
- 4.** Parents and grandparents, we give you all the breaks you need. Jesus loved kids and loves yours. Feed them Cheerios, give them toys—yes, quiet ones would be nice—step out of the sanctuary if you want, utilize the nursery and Sunday-school options, and ask your neighbors for help. Many of us have been there, and you’re doing great. (I can preach with kids in the room. I just get louder!) If they are loud, do your best—but know that we love you and we love them.
- 5.** The table is owned by Jesus Christ. He called you and all people to join in Holy Communion. I will never withhold the sacrament from anyone. (It’s not mine to withhold.) Don’t feel worthy? Well, Jesus fed Judas. It’s not about worthiness; it’s about God’s love for you. Feel better? Good. Get up here and let me put bread in your hand!
- 6.** Ask me anything about worship that you want to understand but know that it all unfolds over time and that we all grow, as we should, over a lifetime.
- 7.** Cell phones are best kept quiet—but hey, pull it out to tweet an interesting sermon note (I do say some tweet-worthy things sometimes). Record, go “live,” spread the gospel in new ways. No rule here either.
- 8.** Wear whatever you want. This is the most irrelevant thing in the history of *ever*.
- 9.** Your love of God pales in comparison to God’s love of you. If you are a persistent troublemaker, I’ll let you know. But regardless of your culture or background, if you are wounded, broken, anxious, insecure, depressed, or unsure if you even believe in God, you will not be judged by God or our congregation. Bring your authentically human self to the worship service—and see how much God serves you in profound and soul-healing ways.
- 10.** Relax.

Rules and requirements won’t save you, me or anyone. Salvation was—and is—a gift from the cross. If any of us could have earned salvation by being the perfect churchgoer, the cross wouldn’t have been necessary. I assume that we’re all trying our best with what we know. But our trying is *nothing* compared to God’s love. The mercy flows from God into our hearts.



TACO Corner



With Comic-Con now a memory, and temperatures rapidly climbing, summer is in full swing. While most of us celebrate summer, many see it as a time of challenges. A challenge to stay cool, a challenge to hydrate, and a challenge to find a “safe” place for a moment as patrols relentlessly clear the Gaslamp. This was vividly played out for me last week, when a patrol car slowly drove on the bike path by the convention center to clear out the homeless. The image of people running or furiously pedaling their bike to avoid the patrol was heartbreaking.

As always, TACO is here to provide a measure of relief to those less fortunate, and to continue this effort, we could use donations of certain items: shorts, t-shirts, sweatpants, underwear, and razors would be most helpful right now as we are running low.

On behalf of those we serve, thank you for your time, support, and well wishes.

Blessings,
Brad Young, TACO Volunteer Coordinator
byoung@tacosd.org



Book Group Notes

In our August selection, *Little Wolves*, author Thomas Maltman weaves together the lives of a father, a son, a pastor’s wife, and a community in this mystery of murder and secrets. The story takes place in the 1980s in a small rural Minnesota town. It is told from two perspectives: Clara Warren, a Norse mythology scholar and pregnant wife of the new Lutheran pastor, and Grizz Fallon, a local farmer whose family has long been community scapegoats and whose life becomes even more tragic when his son Seth commits a sudden murder.

Organized religion, myth, and mysticism mix with Midwestern culture in this unusual and intriguing story about loss and death, how people come to terms with tragic events, find closure and move on. “Churning with the tension of a building prairie thunderstorm,” it has been called “a literary page turner,” “dark, redemptive and beautiful,” with “peace and justice to be had in the end.”

This book is sure to launch a great discussion when we meet Thursday, August 15, 7:00 p.m. in the community room of Susan White’s condo. Mary Krueger will host. Please join us!

Looking ahead: September’s book will be *Cork Boat* by John Pollack.

There has been some discussion the past couple of months about splitting our group in two as it has grown quite a bit. Some have requested a day-time group. Logistics have yet to be worked out, but stay tuned as we fine tune how this might happen!

Electronic Giving

First Lutheran Church has an electronic option for making regular offerings. Contributions can be debited automatically from your checking or savings account, or put on a credit card. The program is called Vanco Give+. You can sign up for it through the “Give” section of the First Lutheran Church website (www.firstlutheransd.org). You can schedule a single payment or a recurring payment, using either your bank account or a credit card.

Those who are already paying through Vanco can use their email addresses to access their accounts and make any changes or updates as needed.

August Birthdays

| | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1: Audrey Garton | 13: Ellen Street | 18: Rebecca Kjonegaard | 26: Gary Muhlbach |
| 1: Charlotte Garton | 16: Hannah DeMers | 20: Marjorie Wahlsten | 26: Beth Slevcove |
| 1: Benjamin Radatz | 16: Sebastian Hallerberg-Junginger | 20: Lara Wright | 26: Dave Wegmann |
| 1: Maureen Taylor | 16: Loren Harrell | 22: Maxwell Engel | 28: Mary Krueger |
| 9: David Keitel | 16: Scott Ruth | 25: Lynn Wegmann | 29: Richard Elliott |
| 13: Dawn Moats | | 26: Lee Kaercher | |



First Lutheran Worship Assistants – August & September

ALTAR GUILD

AUGUST

9:00 a.m. Service

Jessica Friedrich

11:00 a.m. Service

Ruth Clayton

SEPTEMBER

9:00 a.m. Service

Carol McGrath

11:00 a.m. Service

Ladonna Piper

USHERS

AUGUST

9:00 a.m. Service

*Sharon Province &
Dell Wilcox*

11:00 a.m. Service

*Anke Hartung &
Ladonna Piper*

SEPTEMBER

9:00 a.m. Service

John Hoff & _____

11:00 a.m. Service

Marty Topp & Ruth Clayton

| Date | Time | Assisting Minister | Lector | Greeters | Nursery Attendants | Flowers |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| August 4 | 9:00 11:00 | Jan Neuhaus Paul Finneseth | T.J. Tallie Joe Slevcove | John Hoff Slevcoves | Mary Krueger Hannah DeMers | Merv Rettenmund |
| August 11 | 9:00 11:00 | Kathryn Kanaan Mary Ann Horton | Marjorie Wahlsten Frank Jessie | Pr. George & Ethel Falk Marlene Garich | Dick Krueger Joe DeMers | _____ |
| August 18 | 9:00 11:00 | Richard Phillips Beth Slevcove | Lynne Falcon Elizabeth Connolly | Jim Friedrich Ruth Clayton | Marjorie Wahlsten Paul Engel | Dan Kjonegaard |
| August 25 | 9:00 11:00 | Eric Sloniker Frank Jessie | Chuck Leib Nancy Eckert | Rebecca Kjonegaard Elizabeth Connolly | Lee Kaercher Kathryn Kanaan | Kjonegaards |
| September 1 | 9:00 11:00 | Chuck Leib Paul Finneseth | Kem Taylor Joe Slevcove | Frank DeLouise & Chuck Leib Slevcoves | Joe DeMers Hannah DeMers | _____ |
| September 8 | 9:00 11:00 | Frank Jessie Beth Slevcove | Russ Hoxie Jim Lovell | Marjorie Wahlsten Marlene Garich | Kathryn Kanaan Joe DeMers | _____ |
| September 15 | 9:00 11:00 | Jeremy Kaercher Beth Slevcove | Frank Jessie Matthew Eckert | Loren Harrell Shelly Schreiber | Kem Taylor Paul Engel | _____ |



August 2019 Calendar of Events

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|---------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|-----|
| | | | | 1 12 pm AI Anon | 2 9 am Acupuncture 9 am Bread Day 12 pm AA | 3 |
| 4 EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 9 am Worship 10:10 Hospitality 10:10 Pride 10:10 11 am Worship 12:10 Hospitality | 5 12 pm AA 12 pm AI Anon 4 pm Free Meal 5:30 pm Evening Clinics | 6 12 pm AI Anon | 7 9 am Acupuncture 12 pm AI Anon | 8 12 pm AI Anon 1 pm HICAP | 9 9 am Acupuncture 9 am Bread Day 12 pm AA | 10 |
| 11 NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 9 am Worship 10:10 Hospitality 11 am Worship 12:10 Hospitality 4 pm Meet & Greet | 12 12 pm AA 12 pm AI Anon 4 pm Free Meal 5:30 pm Evening Clinics | 13 12 pm AI Anon | 14 9 am Acupuncture 12 pm AI Anon 6:30 Church Council Mtg | 15 12 pm AI Anon 1 pm HICAP | 16 9 am Acupuncture 9 am Bread Day 12 pm AA | 17 |
| 18 TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 9 am Worship 10:10 Hospitality 11 am Worship 12:10 Hospitality | 19 12 pm AA 12 pm AI Anon 4 pm Free Meal 5:30 pm Evening Clinics | 20 12 pm AI Anon | 21 9 am Acupuncture 12 pm AI Anon | 22 12 pm AI Anon 1 pm HICAP | 23 9 am Acupuncture 9 am Bread Day 12 pm AA | 24 |
| 25 ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 9 am Worship 10:10 Hospitality 11 am Worship 12:10 Hospitality 3 pm German Svc | 26 12 pm AA 12 pm AI Anon 4 pm Free Meal 5:30 pm Evening Clinics | 27 12 pm AI Anon | 28 9 am Acupuncture 12 pm AI Anon | 29 12 pm AI Anon | 30 9 am Acupuncture 9 am Bread Day 12 pm AA | 31 |

Monday evening clinics include acupuncture, medical, dental, and legal services.

The PULSEBEAT
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First Lutheran Church
Edited by Hannah DeMers

Serving Downtown San Diego Since 1888
1420 Third Avenue
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www.firstlutheransd.org

First Lutheran Church
The Rev. Rich Ajer, Bridge Pastor
Jared Jacobsen, Director of Music
Hannah DeMers, Church Administrator

First Lutheran Church
A *Reconciling in Christ* congregation since 1989
Deadline for next month's Pulsebeat is **the 15th, noon.**

The Pulsebeat
First Lutheran Church
1420 Third Avenue
San Diego, CA 92101-3193

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Wine into Water

**Saturday, August 17, 2019
3-6 p.m.**

**St. Paul's Cathedral, Queen's Courtyard
2728 Sixth Ave, San Diego, CA 92103
\$20 tickets**

At this unique wine-tasting experience we turn "wine into water" and raise money for clean water projects!

Tickets are \$20.00, and include 2 glasses of wine + tastings. All proceeds from this event will go to support the water drop program through Border Angels, to leave water jugs in the desert along high-traffic migrant paths. The event is sponsored by St. Paul's Cathedral, Christ Lutheran Church, University Christian Church, Normal Heights United Methodist Church, and Thrivent Financial. Get tickets at <https://wineintowatersd.brownpapertickets.com>



Help Feed the Hungry on GoFundMe for Project Hand Chula Vista/San Diego

Lutheran Social Services Southern California is initiating a GoFundMe Campaign to raise funds for Project Hand, our pantry located on the campus of St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Chula Vista.

LSS started immediately after the end of World War II, and those first years were focused on getting groceries to returning Veterans and their loved ones. As such, Project Hand has been serving the greater San Diego area for over 70 years.

We are currently engaged in a funding effort to raise \$50,000 for the purpose of keeping this pantry open and filled with food. We have operated on a deficit for generations, and thus need everyone's help to make contact with as many people and organizations as possible.

To help, go to <https://www.gofundme.com/project-hand>



First Lutheran Church - the Heart of Christ in the Heart of the City