



**I will raise
him up on
the last day.**

John 6:54

**August 18, 2024
Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
9:30 AM Worship**

First Lutheran Church
709 5th Ave. – P.O. Box 218
Washburn, North Dakota 58577
www.flcwashburn.com
701-462-3775

PRELUDE AND BELLS

AS WE GATHER

(The Holy Spirit has called each one of us through the Gospel, enlightened us with his gifts, and sanctifies in the true faith. The Scripture readings for today emphasize how the Spirit of God calls our hearts to obey. Welcome to God's house today!)

WELCOME

(put prayer requests on yellow cards)

HYMN LBW #241
“We Praise You, O God”

241

We Praise You, O God

1 We praise you, O God, our re - deem - er, cre - a - tor;
 2 We wor - ship you, God of our fa - thers, we bless you;
 3 With voic - es u - nit - ed our prais - es we of - fer

In grate - ful de - vo - tion our trib - ute we bring.
 Through tri - al and tem - pest our guide you have been.
 And glad - ly our songs of thanks - giv - ing we raise.

We lay it be - fore you; we kneel and a - dore you;
 When per - ils o'er - take us, you will not for - sake us,
 With you, Lord, be - side us, your strong arm will guide us.

We bless your ho - ly name; glad prais - es we sing.
 And with your help, O Lord, our strug - gles we win.
 To you, our great re - deem - er, for - ev - er be praise!

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESSp. 56

P: In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P: Most merciful God,

C: we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name. Amen

P: Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Let us pray.

C: Life-giving God, you sustain us with the power of your Word and feed us with your Son's body and blood. Help us so to abide in him and he in us that we may live our lives in obedience to your will and service to others; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns

**with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever.
Amen.**

FIRST READING Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18
(Joshua gathered God's people and called them to remember all that He had done for them. Remembering the faithfulness of the living God, Joshua calls the people to choose whom they will serve. His words invite us to do the same.)

¹Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel. And they presented themselves before God. ^{2a}And Joshua said to all the people,

¹⁴“Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. ¹⁵And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”
¹⁶Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods, ¹⁷for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed. ¹⁸And the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”

PSALM (Read responsively) Psalm 34:12-22
(The Psalmist calls God's people to turn from evil and do good, taking refuge in God's almighty mercy.)

¹²What man is there who desires life and loves many days, that he may see good?

¹³Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.

¹⁴Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

¹⁵The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous and his ears toward their cry.

¹⁶The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth.

¹⁷When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles.

¹⁸The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

¹⁹Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.

²⁰He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken.

²¹Affliction will slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

²²The Lord redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

SECOND READING Ephesians 5:6-21
(St. Paul speaks directly to the evil age in which we live and calls us to be wise in our choices and live faithful lives to the honor and glory of God.)

⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷Therefore do not become partners with them; ⁸for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. ¹³But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, ¹⁴for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." ¹⁵Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

ALLELUIA

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 6th chapter.

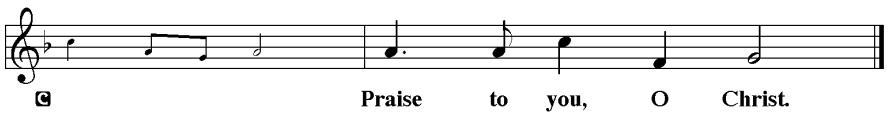
Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL READINGJohn 6:51-69
("I am the living bread that came down from heaven." Many turned away after hearing Jesus speak these words, but the twelve remained with him. Their faithfulness inspires us to remain with Jesus in the midst of a world running away from him.)

⁵¹{Jesus said to the Jews grumbling about him,} "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." ⁵²The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" ⁵³So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁵⁵For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. ⁵⁷As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever." ⁵⁹Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum. ⁶⁰When many of

his disciples heard it, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" ⁶¹But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, "Do you take offense at this? ⁶²Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴But there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) ⁶⁵And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father." ⁶⁶After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. ⁶⁷So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" ⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, ⁶⁹and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

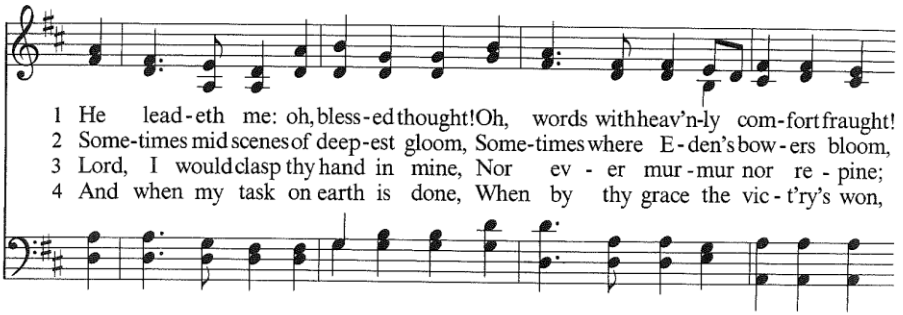


SERMON Pastor Paul Krueger
 "Being Wise People in Foolish Times" - Ephesians 5:6-21

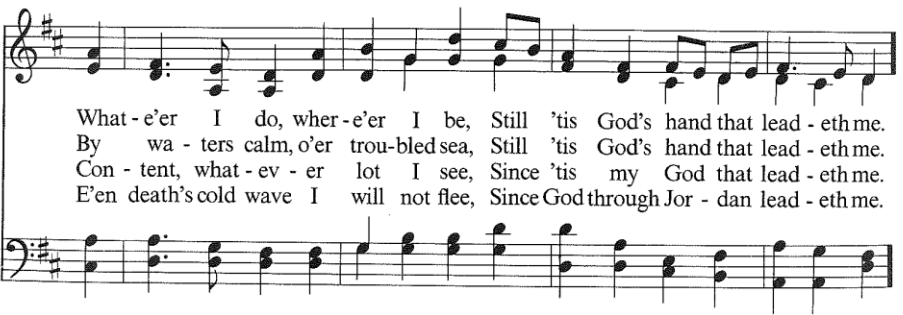
APOSTLES' CREEDp. 65
I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

HYMN LBW #501
 "He Leadeth Me: Oh, Blessed Thought!"

501 He Leadeth Me: Oh, Blessed Thought!

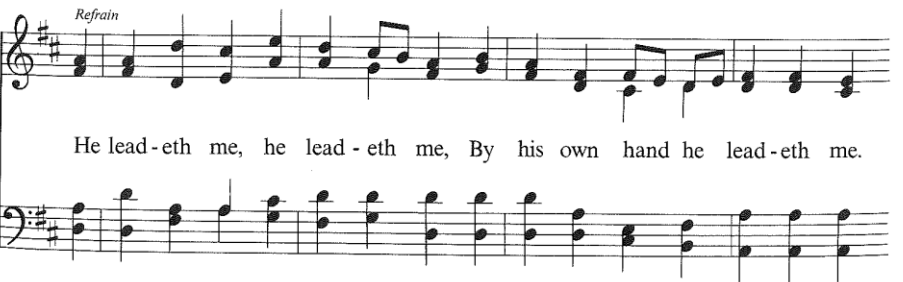


1 He lead-eth me: oh, bless-ed thought! Oh, words with heav'n-ly com-fort fraught!
 2 Some-times mid scenes of deep-est gloom, Some-times where E-den's bow-ers bloom,
 3 Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine, Nor ev - er mur-mur nor re - pine;
 4 And when my task on earth is done, When by thy grace the vic-t'ry's won,

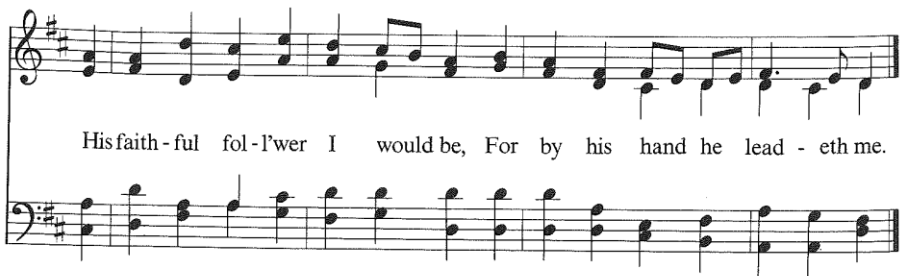


What - e'er I do, wher - e'er I be, Still 'tis God's hand that lead - eth me.
 By wa - ters calm, o'er trou-bled sea, Still 'tis God's hand that lead - eth me.
 Con - tent, what - ev - er lot I see, Since 'tis my God that lead - eth me.
 E'en death's cold wave I will not flee, Since God through Jor - dan lead - eth me.

Refrain



He lead - eth me, he lead - eth me, By his own hand he lead - eth me.



His faith - ful fol-l'wer I would be, For by his hand he lead - eth me.

OFFERINGS ARE RECEIVED

OFFERTORY



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our
cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the
seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u - nite them with the
prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: Merciful Father,

C: we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

THE CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

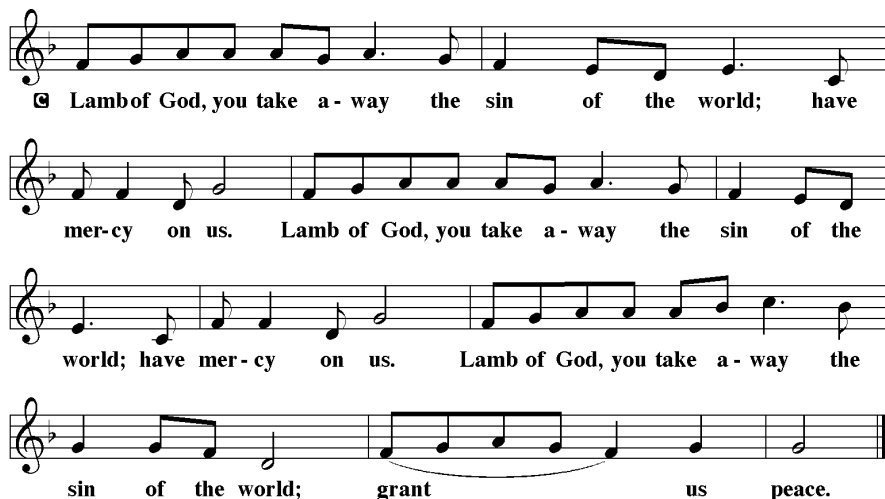
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION (2 Aisle Floor Stations)

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION:

Lamb of God – p. 72



☐ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

LBW #482 – “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”

LBW #368 – “I Love Your Kingdom, Lord”

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

1 When I sur - vey the won - drous cross On which the
 2 For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast Save in the
 3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet, Sor - row and
 4 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, That were a

prince of glo - ry died, My rich - est gain I
 death of Christ, my God; All the vain things that
 love flow min - gled down. Did e'er such love and
 trib - ute far too small; Love so a - maz - ing,

count but loss And pour con - tempt on all my pride.
 charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to his blood.
 sor - row meet, Or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?
 so di - vine, De - mands my soul, my life, my all!

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

Tune: adapt. Edward Miller, 1731-1807

ROCKINGHAM OLD
LM

I Love Your Kingdom, Lord

368

1 I love your king - dom, Lord, The place of your a - bode;
2 I love your Church, O God! Its walls be - fore you stand,
3 Be - yond my high - est joy I prize its heav'n - ly ways,
4 Sure as your truth shall last, To Zi - on shall be giv'n

The Church our blest Re - deem - er saved With his own pre - cious blood.
Dear as the ap - ple of your eye And grav - en on your hand.
Its sweet com - mu - nion, sol - emn vows, Its hymns of love and praise.
The bright - est glo - ries earth can yield, And bright - er bliss of heav'n.

Text: Timothy Dwight, 1752-1817, alt.
Tune: Aaron Williams, 1731-1776

ST. THOMAS
SM

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE

☐ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.

Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear his name.

He re - calls his prom - is - es and leads his peo - ple forth in joy with

shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven; hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen

BENEDICTION

Psalm 32:10

L: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✕ give you peace

Numbers 6:24–26

In the name of the Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

HYMN LBW #480

“Oh, that the Lord Would Guide My Ways”

480 Oh, that the Lord Would Guide My Ways

1 Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways To keep his stat - utes still!
 2 Or - der my foot - steps by your Word And make my heart sin - cere;
 3 As - sist my soul, too apt to stray, A strict - er watch to keep;
 4 Make me to walk in your com - mands, 'Tis a de - light - ful road;

Oh, that my God would grant me grace To know and do his will!
 Let sin have no do - min - ion, Lord, But keep my con - science clear.
 And should I e'er for - get your way, Re - store your wan - d'ring sheep.
 Nor let my head or heart or hands Of - fend a - gainst my God.

*Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.
Tune: William H. Havergal, 1793–1870*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

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Today's Worship Leaders & Volunteers – Thank You!

PASTOR Pastor Paul Krueger

USHERS/GREETERS Elmer & Arlene Schwarz

READER Brooke Knutson

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS Beth Knutson

Pamela Vollmuth, Amanda Vetter

ORGANIST LeAnn Richard

VIRTUAL SERVICE Nate Fiedler

ALTAR GUILD.....Brenda Ankenbauer & Val Swanson

FELLOWSHIP/COFFEE HOUR.....Elmer & Arlene Schwarz

SERVICE GROUP COORDINATORS Terry & Donna

Gunderson and Dwight & Margaret Rasmussen

First Lutheran Church
709 5th Ave. - PO BOX 218
Washburn ND 58577
701-462-3775

PASTOR: Paul Krueger email: revpaulkrueger@gmail.com

Cell phone: 701-240-4712

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY: Jeannette Rost

Church Office: 701-462-3775

Email: flc@westriv.com

Website: www.flcwashburn.com

COORDINATOR OF STUDENT MINISTRIES: Melissa Rothe

Email: fly@westriv.com

OFFICE HOURS: T-T-F 9:00 am - 12:30 pm, 1:30 - 3:30

W – 9:00 am - 12:30 pm

ORGANISTS: Theresa Petersen and LeAnn Richard

CHOIR DIRECTOR: Randy Hall

BELL CHOIR DIRECTOR: Gwen Hall

CUSTODIAN: Jeff Schmidt

Our Mission

“Working hand in hand to know Christ and make Christ known through Worship, Christian Education, Evangelism, Fellowship, Caring Ministries, and Service.”

Welcome to all who have come to worship.

Welcome! “Reverence for the Eternal is the first step toward wisdom: (Psalm 111:10, The Voice Bible). So let us come before God in awe and praise.

Visitors

We welcome all visitors to First Lutheran today and ask that you sign our guest book in the narthex.

Nursery

The nursery, located beside the narthex, is available for use for any parent feeling the need to use it during worship services with their child.

Thank you for your giving

Sunday, August 11th

Attendance – 109

Online Viewing – 28

General Fund & Plate Giving - \$2,007.00

Altar Flowers

Altar flowers today are from Mac & Judy Beaudry in honor of their 30th anniversary which is this Tuesday, August 20th.

Hearing Assist

First Lutheran has hearing assist systems to be used during the worship services. If you feel you could benefit from this or want to try it, please see the ushers in the narthex.

Holy Communion

All are welcome to receive the Lord's Body and Blood who are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and believe that Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, is truly present in, with and under the forms of bread and wine for the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. Receive the bread into your open, flat palm. Ask if you wish to receive grape juice or a gluten free wafer. Alert an usher if you, or someone you know, needs communion served in the pew.

Pastoral Care

Please call Pastor Paul (701-240-4712) or the church office (701-462-3775) if you or a loved one are in the hospital or know you will be going to the hospital. The church does not get informed of your stay by any of the hospitals even if you are registered under our congregation's name. We want to make sure you get pastoral care. Thank you!

This week we pray for:

This Week's New Prayer Requests: Komal Petersen, Helen Samuelson

Prayers of Christian Sympathy:

Long Term prayer requests:

Members: Alton Krebsbach, Howard Johnson, Karen Goehring

* The person in parenthesis is who the person is related to or friends of. Please feel free to ask these individuals how best you can pray for their family/friend.

This month we pray for:

Members: Sande Wagner, Arlene Schwarz

Friends & Family: Clara Olson (Sharon Chrest), Steve Reynolds (Brad & Cathy Sheldon)

This Quarter we pray for:

Members and Nonmembers: Corrine Kerzmann (Donna Gunderson), Marion Narum (Peggy Moran), Ty Brown (Jody & Nicole Brown), Alice Richard, Jackie Olson

Military Prayer and Card List

We pray for the Men & Women in our Military who protect our country, especially those assigned to serve overseas or away from home.

- **Members of First Lutheran on Active Duty in the Military and the National Guard:**
 - SGT Bryce Rost – Army National Guard
 - SPC Olivia Retterath – National Guard - Deployed
 - SPC Cassidy Sommer – National Guard
 - SGT Jonathan Melvard – Army National Guard
- **Friends and Family on Active Duty in the Military and in the National Guard:**
 - SGT Dustin Enockson – National Guard
 - Emily Johnson – Air Force
 - Bryar Anderson – Marines
 - 1SGT Jordan Ternes – Army National Guard
 - Tech. SGT Andre Austin – Air Force
 - Hunter Feigum – National Guard
 - Morris Duffy – Medical Air Guard
 - Adam Walsvik – National Guard

Notice of Prayer List Policy

We have a monthly /quarterly prayer list cycle. When you add someone to our prayer list the request will remain on our monthly list for four weeks and then be removed. If you would like to have the request moved to our quarterly list, please contact the office and the request will be added to our "This Quarter we pray for:" list for the next three months. Please help us keep our prayer list current by communicating updates to the office at 701-462-3775. Thank you all for your faithful prayers for all of God's people.

Large Print Bulletins

We have large print bulletins for those wanting or needing larger print. Ask the ushers for one.

Confirmation Leaders Meeting

There will be a meeting for all confirmation leaders today following the worship service.

Carpet in Basement Sunday School Rooms

New carpet will be put in the four Sunday school rooms in the basement before Sunday school starts. Total cost of the carpet and installation is \$4,500. A hat will be passed this Sunday to take a collection to help pay for the carpet. The four rooms were already painted this summer. So they will have a fresh new look.

Office Hours

Jeannette will be in the office this week Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Newsletter Deadline

Please have all articles for the September newsletter to the church office by noon this Monday, August 19th.

Quilting

All women are invited to join the quilters this Thursday, August 22nd. Join us for quilting and fellowship.

Mission Trip Informational Meeting

Calling young and old to join us on a mission trip to Guatemala in June 2025! Anyone seventh grade and older is welcome (including adults)! We will have an **informational meeting on September 4th at 6:30 pm** to discuss cost, activities in Guatemala, fundraising opportunities, and answer questions! Individuals will need to commit to go by October 2nd. Questions - contact Melissa Rothe.

New Sound and Video System Training

On **Saturday, September 7th at 1 pm**, there will be a training for the new sound and video system. **Anyone interested** in learning more about the systems are welcome at the training! We are always looking for more individuals to help with streaming our services! Questions - contact Melissa Rothe.

Helping Hands Volunteer

Helping Hands is looking for a volunteer from First Lutheran Church to be on the committee. If you have any questions, please call Elaine 460-1307.

Altar Flower Signup Sheet

A signup sheet for altar flowers through September 29th is on the table in the narthex. Signup for that Sunday you want before it is taken. You furnish the flowers and make sure they get to the church.

Connections Magazine

The July/August issue of *Connections* is in the magazine racks in the narthex. Pick up a copy today to read updates on LCMC, NALC and other interesting articles.

Our Daily Bread and Portals of Prayer

The June/July/August issue of *Our Daily Bread* and the July - September 2024 issue of *Portals of Prayer* are in the magazine racks in the narthex. Pick up a copy to use with your daily devotions.

Back to School Community Prayer Walk

Come join us for a Back to School Community Prayer Walk on Sunday, August 18th at 1:30 pm. We will be walking around the school grounds praying for the students, teachers, and staff. All are welcome!

Dress for the weather

Guided prayer stations

BACK TO SCHOOL

Community Prayer Walk
for Washburn Public School

August 18th, 1:30 pm

Meet outside the Elementary office door

Anyone who cares for the needs of our kids, teachers, and staff is welcome!

THIS WEEK AT FIRST LUTHERAN

TODAY	9:30 AM	Worship w/Holy Communion
	10:30 AM	Fellowship/Coffee Hour
	10:45 PM	Fireside Bible Study
		Confirmation Leaders Meeting
	7:00 PM	AA Meeting Al-Anon Meeting
MON.	Noon	Newsletter Deadline
TUES.	10:00 AM	Mommy's Group
WED.	7:00 PM	FLY
THURS.	9:00 AM	Quilting
SUN.	9:30 AM	Worship
	10:30 AM	Fellowship/Coffee Hour
	10:45 AM	Fireside Bible Study
	7:00 PM	AA Meeting Al-Anon Meeting

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 15) – August 18, 2024

“Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.”

–Ephesians 5:6–

Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me. Many of us have heard this little rhyme before, and it couldn't be further from the truth. Words matter in our daily lives. What we say to one another matters. It's been said that if we receive 99 compliments during the day and 1 insult, we remember the one negative insult over and above the 99 positive compliments.

During the time of Paul's ministry, how a Christian presented him or herself mattered. Paul warned them to watch their behavior and their language, not to fall into the practice of making crude jokes or impure comments which have no place in Christian community. Why? What harm could crude humor really have? The fear was that this kind of behavior could lead one into darkness. In other words, it could lead a Christian away from the light of Christ.

The Ephesians struggled, living in a world that rebels against God and his teachings. We, too, face the same struggles. Like the Ephesians, we are faced with temptations each and every day to stray from God's law. But we also know that we can rely on Christ's Word and the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us through a world that would prefer to do things its own way.

May we use our words to encourage one another, build one another up, and share the good news of Jesus Christ with others rather than using our words to harm others, to bring them down, to spread rumors.

God's eighth commandment states, “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.” Martin Luther explains, “We should fear and love God so that we do not betray, slander, lie, or gossip about our neighbors, but defend them, speak well of them, and put the most charitable construction on all that they do.”

Prayer: Forgiving Father, help us to use our words to bring life to others. Forgive us when we harm others with our words, and give us strength to stand against those who deceive. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.