

First Lutheran Church

Church Council Meeting Agenda

October 12, 2021 -7:00 PM

Meet in the Upper Room or via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84168009362?pwd=ZUpEQWFwaXF2bmZlVFVlVnl3Nko0dz09>

- A. Opening Prayer and Bible Study – Lisa Rauner
- B. Approve Agenda
- C. Approve Congregational Council Minutes – September 14, 2021
- D. Constitution Review – overview of section C12.04
  - a. Council and Officer responsibilities
- E. New Business
  - a. Set date for annual meeting – propose January 30, 2022
  - b. Motion to Appoint Kim Cordonier to Nominating Committee
  - c. Update from Kim Cordonier on Nominating Committee
  - d. Annual review of membership
- F. Old Business
  - a. Dimensions budget impact report agenda item
  - b. Constitution Update
  - c. Furniture for Gathering Area
- G. Financial Report
- H. Staff Reports
- I. Open Comments
- J. Closing Prayer – Lisa Rauner

## Information Items

	Baptized	Confirmed
1. MEMBERSHIP as of September 1, 2021	1133	934
Members received:		
A. by baptism (15 years and under)		
B. by baptism (adult)		
C. transfer from ELCA congregation	2	2
D. other Lutheran		
E. affirmation of faith		
F. transfer from non-Lutheran congregation		
G. other and statistical adjustment		
Members removed:		
A. death	1	1
B. transfer to ELCA congregation	1	1
C. transfer to other Lutheran congregation	2	2
D. transfer to non-Lutheran congregation		
E. other and statistical adjustment	2	2
 MEMBERSHIP as of September 30, 2021	 1129	 930

### Average Attendance 2021

September	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
	408	407	413	426	372	452	382	345	281	Online	314

### Added:

Baptism:

Affirmation:

Transfer: Pr. Erin Heidelberger, Katarzyna Heidelberger

Other:

### Removed:

Death: Dorothy Bruegmann

Transfer: Mitch and LuAnn Snyder, Carol McCants

Dropped Due to Inactivity: Eric Wallace, Shannon Poysa

Other:

Notes: Attendance still reflects Live Stream/Online Worshipers.

Congregational Council Meeting

First Lutheran Church

September 14, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dave Pfister, Brian Niebuhr, Lisa Rauner, Denise Mainquist, Scott Seebohm, Tony Anderson, Kim Cordonier, Lyle Petersen, Fred Ohles, Byron Fischer, Zach Schafer, Bill Watts, Rebecca Pfabe, Pastor Susanna DesMarais, Pastor Erin Heidelberger

MEMBERS ABSENT: Judy Batterman, Amy Tipton

STAFF PRESENT: Sharon Hardel

GUEST PRESENT: Molly Goninan

MEETING RECORDER: Ann Carlson

- A. OPENING PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY: The meeting was called to order by President, Denise Mainquist. Zach led the opening prayer and Bible Study.
- B. APPROVE AGENDA: it was moved and seconded to approve the agenda. The motion carried.
- C. APPROVE CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES – AUGUST 10, 2021: It was moved and seconded to approve the Church Council Minutes from the meeting on August 10, 2021. Sharon Hardel was incorrectly listed as being present at the meeting. The minutes were approved as corrected.
- D. NEW BUSINESS:
  1. Gathering Area Furniture – Molly Goninan  
Molly presented the following to Council:
    - Costs for furniture in both the entry and gathering space with two different options
    - Drawing of potential furniture placement in the entry
    - Drawings of potential furniture placement in the gathering space (options A & B)
    - Photographs of potential furniture for both areasDiscussion followed.
    - Would the gathering area be too congested if coffee were to be served in the space? Where should coffee be served? If coffee is served in the gathering area, can it easily be transported from the kitchen to the gathering area? The individuals who serve coffee (Steve Lenzen, Bob and Carlene Falos) as well as the Fellowship Committee should be consulted.
    - Space for name tags and displays should be considered.

- The Executive Committee will review comments made by Council and will put together a resolution, including the source of funding, for a Council vote.

## 2. Recommendations for the Endowment Board

The By-Laws of the Endowment Fund state that a minimum of 10% of the fund's annual income be distributed to fulfill each of three areas: Education, Outreach and Missions of the ELCA. In November, the Endowment Board will review the funding requests and will determine what should be distributed beyond the \$11,250 that was already paid out for scholarships.

The Board estimates that the total income to be distributed would be \$16,380. A minimum of \$1,638 each to "Outreach" and "Missions" will need to be distributed out of the approximately \$5,000 that remains to be disbursed.

- a. LFS Refugee
- b. Fresh Start
- c. Pastor's discretionary fund/grocery or gas cards

In addition to the items listed in the meeting agenda (items a-c above), Council members mentioned Lincoln Literacy, assistance for those in need from flooding and fires and the UNL Student Center. The UNL Student Center is a line item in our budget.

Denise will compile a list of suggestions from the Council, which will be sent to the Endowment Board.

## 3. Constitution Update

FLC's constitution was last updated in 2017. A new model constitution was released in 2019, so it is time for a review and update.

Currently, our Constitution requires that we have two candidates for each position voted on by the Congregation (Congregational Council, Nominating Committee, Delegates to Synod Assembly and Endowment Board). Rather than the current requirements, having a slate of nominated candidates for a vote of affirmation by the Congregation may be considered. This year, nominations would be done as they have been done in the past.

Fred mentioned that this is the only ELCA church he has attended where there are multiple candidates for each position.

Pastor Erin, Scott and Fred volunteered to work on this together.

The updated constitution would be voted on at the Annual Meeting in January. The constitution must be reviewed and approved by the Synod and then 30 days must be allowed for the congregation to review the constitution and ask questions prior to the meeting.

Our Constitution would also need to be updated if we were to consider allowing future online congregational meetings.

We must also ensure we are in compliance with requirements in the constitution, including ensuring voting members are Confirmed, Communing and Contributing, as this is a requirement of the ELCA.

E. OLD BUSINESS:

Building Supervisor

Alex Gray is our new Building Superintendent. This is his primary job while he goes to school.

F. FINANCIAL REPORT:

As of last week, the Soft Capital Campaign had a pledge total of approximately \$602,000.

YTD receipts through August 31 were \$16,801 under budget; YTD expenditures through August 31 were \$46,880 under budget; YTD surplus through August 31 was \$30,079.

G. STAFF REPORTS: Sharon reported that there will be a kick-off on September 12 to highlight all learning activities at First.

H. OPEN COMMENTS:

What are the thoughts about future staffing?

Pastor Erin needs time to get her feet under her and to get a feel as to what is needed.

The pastoral team needs to complement one another.

Pastor Erin's input is very important.

We have a lot covered with Pastor Susanna here.

Members of the congregation are asking various Council members about the timeline of bringing on either an associate pastor or a deacon. Members would like to hear that Pastor Erin is discerning. Pastor Erin will write an article for *The Voice*.

The Stewardship Committee has struggled with how to handle the stewardship campaign this fall. They will likely do what was done last year rather than a meal. For budget purposes, 124-125 pledges are needed by the end of November. An anonymous donor would give an incentive. During these times, encouraging members to increase their pledge by a certain percentage is more of a negative than a positive.

Biggerstaff was working today, but their digger broke. Members of the Property Committee were at the church to oversee the work.

I. CLOSING PRAYER: Zach led the closing prayer.

J. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 8:25.

## **Serving on your Congregation Council – what you can expect and what is expected of you**

Election to a Congregation Council carries with it the respect and trust of the constituency of your congregation. The value of your willingness to make a contribution to the life of your congregation is significant and appreciated. Your contribution involves your time, expertise, enthusiasm and energy. Saying yes to this responsibility brings some basic duties. In addition to Chapter 12 of the Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA, your congregation's bylaws could include the following responsibilities:

### **Congregation Council member**

- Be a member in good standing of the congregation, regularly attending worship services and involved in congregational life.
- Attend all meetings of the council.
- Attempt to discover, through prayer and discernment, what is best for the congregation.
- Consider the well-being of the council when dealing with specific issues and ministries.
- Treat all matters relating to council deliberations as confidential, until such time as the information is determined a matter of public record.
- Assist the pastor in nurturing the spiritual life of the congregation.
- Care for the congregation's membership.
- Ensure that the decisions of the congregation are carried out.
- Be a part of a united body by supporting all decisions of the council, even if you don't agree with the decision.
- Treat members of the council and staff as brothers and sisters in Christ.
- Be familiar with the governing documents of the congregation.
- Be a leadership presence in the congregation.

### **Congregation president**

- Preside at all meetings of the congregation, executive committee and council.
- May call special meetings of the congregation, executive committee or council.
- Direct meetings according to parliamentary rules of order, keeping meetings running smoothly, speedily and efficiently, assisting in discernment of God's will.
- Encourage each council member to perform his or her duty according to good order and Christian principles.
- Decide in the event of a long discussion whether the issue should be referred for further study.
- Represent the congregation in matters of business and sign or countersign all legal documents.
- Assist in preparing the agenda for council and congregation meetings.
- Uphold the constitution and bylaws and ensure policies are being followed.
- Write annual report of council activities for annual meeting.
- Attend and support synod and churchwide activities that would benefit from representation of council members.
- Assist in solving problem areas as they occur.
- Support and advise council members as needed.
- Be administratively responsible for the operation of all parts of the congregation's program.
- Try to make sure that each committee and board is functioning properly.

- During a pastoral vacancy, serve as liaison between the congregation and a designated pastor as well as the synod.
- During a pastoral vacancy, work with the synod regarding necessary administrative submissions, such as trend (parochial) reports, etc.
- Recognize and seek synod advice and assistance in managing congregational matters beyond the council's expertise.
- Ensure congregational participation at synod assemblies.
- Ensure that congregational processes and procedures are documented.

### **Congregation vice-president**

- Preside at meetings of the congregation, executive committee or council at the request or in the absence of the president.
- Arrange for devotions at meetings.
- Perform the duties of recording secretary in the individual's absence.
- Actively aid the president in the administration of office.
- Chair the Finance Committee and coordinate the financial affairs of the congregation.
- Ensure that the incorporation of the congregation, tax exemptions, etc. are in good standing.
- Review and ensure property, casualty and liability insurance is in good standing and sufficient for the congregation's needs.
- Serve as liaison to Property Committee.
- Assume other duties as assigned by the council.

### **Congregation secretary**

- Keep the minutes of all meetings of the congregation, executive committee and council and be responsible for the distribution and publication of such minutes.
- Be authorized and empowered, in the name of the congregation, to attest instruments that require certified authorized signers and may also be signed by the congregation president or pastor.
- Work with the pastor and congregation's staff, if any, to ensure the storage and protection of all important documents and papers.
- Make sure that annual reports of the congregation's corporate status are filed with the appropriate office in your state (if required).
- Work with the treasurer and pastor to ensure timely filing of the congregation's annual parochial report.
- Sign the letter of call for rostered staff at the time of a call meeting.
- Attest to the synod office that the congregation's records are up to date and under your control at the time of pastoral transition.
- Submit copies of constitution and bylaw amendments to the synod.
- Prepare an annual list of membership changes.
- Carry out correspondence on behalf of the council and the congregation, as directed.

### **Congregation treasurer**

- Serve as financial officer of the congregation.
- Attend monthly meetings of the council.
- Provide oversight of the financial secretary duties and processes.

- Be responsible for paying all bills, invoices and charges.
- Perform or oversee all of the bookkeeping functions.
- Prepare the monthly (or quarterly) financial reports for the council.
- File all of the required federal and state tax forms.
- Monitor the cash position of the congregation and report monthly to the Finance Committee chair, council president and pastor.
- Invest available funds as directed.
- Borrow funds as directed by the council.
- Provide the congregation with financial information deemed appropriate by the council.
- Assist in the preparation of the annual budget for the council.
- Maintain, develop and improve the reporting and monitoring techniques used to communicate the financial status of the congregation.
- Prepare the annual report of the financial status of the congregation.
- Assist with closing the books for a yearly audit.

### **Congregation financial secretary**

- Oversee and participate in counting the offerings.
- Oversee and participate in creating and depositing receipts.
- Train individuals who count the offerings.
- Ensure that two non-related people are always present for any counting procedures.
- Report to the treasurer the total offerings each week and any special-purpose breakdowns.
- Oversee recording contributions to the individual contribution records.
- Report on levels of giving to the council and congregation.
- Provide periodic (usually quarterly) and annual statements to the contributors for tax reporting.

Additional resources containing position descriptions for council, officers and committee chairs, as well as other volunteer and staff positions, can be found at:

[Recommendations for Congregation Secretaries](#)  
[ELCA Financial and Accounting Guide](#)

## **Adult Forum Committee Meeting Notes from Tuesday, September 14, 2021**

Present: Gene Brass, Sharon Hardel, Patrick Hayden-Roy, Jim Kisling, Brian Niebuhr, Lyle Peterson, Gordon Saksena and Connie Kisling. Absent: Elaine Kruse. (Meeting via Zoom)

The Committee was asked if any other changes needed to be made to the draft of the proposed Adult Forum's *Mission Statement* and the *Assessment of Suggested Topics Tool*. There were no changes proposed to either document. A vote was conducted to accept the draft of the proposed Mission Statement. It was accepted unanimously. A vote was conducted to accept the draft proposed of the proposed *Assessment of the Suggested Topics Tool*, and the document was unanimously accepted.

News items included:

- Kay Rockwell was leaving the Adult Forum Committee due to being overextended. We thank Kay for her time while she was on the Committee.
- Connie contacted the Good Evans Restaurant. We will be meeting via Zoom until further notice.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month the Adult Forum attendees will take part in the Intergenerational Faith Formation Events. Sharon gave a brief rundown of planned activities as they were known.
- Adult Forum hybrid progress – Connie reported she had been working with church staff for best possible setup for viewing and sound. Cordless headset mics are available as well as a Zoom mic to pick up in-person attendees voices for Zoomers to be able to hear better on Zoom.

### **Misc. Updates/Suggestions**

- a. *Awareness of Christianity in other places like Brazil* – Fabianne Tavares Gondim, First Lutheran member is scheduled for December 19, 2021.
- b. New Topic Suggestion: *PFlag Lincoln* – helps families advocate and educate children and adults that are lesbian and gays; will be a part of our Gifts of Hope this year – suggested by Annette Watts. Connie will try to schedule before the first weekend in December.
- c. We had a discussion about possible topics could be offered for our forum on December 26<sup>th</sup>.
- d. We have four Church anniversary topics to be rescheduled when that time arrives.
- e. Suggestions for new topics were: *Cyber stuff* from Thrivent; hear from other areas of interest we have within the church to help people plug in; "*Courageous Church*" video; check Ted Talks to use as backups for conversation; Luther through the Ages: Luther in the Nazi Period.
- f. Numerous suggestions were shared (via email before the meeting) that were made by a group of forum attendees at the first forum of the education year.

### **October 2021 Schedule**

**October 3** – Intergenerational Faith Formation Event

**October 10** – *Get to know Pastor Susanna DesMarais, Transitional Associate Pastor*

**October 17** – *Lincoln Action Plan Update* – Ken Winston

**October 24** – TBA

**October 31** – *Finding Home in Flyover Country* - a photographer's journey - Mike Forsberg

**Our Target Audience** – As suggested for thought by Kathleen Simley, the Committee had much discussion specifically in this regard. The Committee decided our target audience is situational, depending upon the day's topic. We actually have a "life stage" audience rather than a specific age group. For example, we want to broaden the audience with topics that are for parents with young children. We have a range of audience demographics, depending upon the topics presented and a need to promote those topics to the targeted people who would have an interest in the specific topics.

**Adjourn**

MEETING DATE: October 12, 2021

SUBJECT: Appoint Kim Cordonier to Nominating Committee

PROPOSED ACTION: Appoint Kim Cordonier to the Nominating Committee for the 2022 annual meeting.

BACKGROUND: The Constitution states that the Church Council of the congregation shall appoint one of its members to be on the committee each year.

COST: No expenses will be incurred

SPONSOR: Executive Committee

MEETING DATE: October 12, 2021

SUBJECT: Report on Dimensions Educational Research Foundation Lease Agreement Addendum

BACKGROUND: Dimensions Educational Research Foundation entered into the 3- year lease commencing on August 1, 2020 at \$2,000 per month. Following notice in July from Dimensions that they intended to leave, President Mainquist briefed the Council and renegotiated the lease consistent with her sense of the Council. The new rent is reduced \$500 per month commencing August 1, 2021 for one year (through July 2022). The reduction is \$6,000 over the one budget year. While there is no direct expense, this report discloses the budget impact of the renegotiated lease to keep Dimensions in place.

COST: No direct cost – anticipated revenue will decrease \$6,000 for the budget year.

SPONSOR: President Mainquist

**First Lutheran Church  
Council Report for October 2021  
Pastor Erin Heidelberger**

**Worship**

- Pastor Harlan Heier will preach the weekend of October 16-17 in celebration of his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- I am working with Nancy Clay on a PMA Sunday, which is scheduled for November 13-14. We will celebrate Parish Ministry Associates and invite others to become PMAs. Pastor Carol Mapa will preach on that Sunday and provide an educational session at our adult forum.

**Refugee Resettlement**

Barb Johnson Frank is leading an ad hoc group, which includes Trish Flury and Bettina Roundey, to coordinate partnership between First Lutheran and Lutheran Family Services to sponsor a refugee family from Afghanistan. LFS in Lincoln and Omaha will receive 470 individuals over the coming months. We will gather furniture and supplies to furnish an apartment.

**150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

I met with Judy Bailey about restarting plans for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. We will meet with the planning committee on October 21 to discuss plans. April 24, 2022, is the tentative date for the celebration, and this is on the synod's calendar.

**Mission Investment Fund Feature**

Jeff Drake from Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA contacted me about featuring First Lutheran's renovation in the *Mustard Seed* newsletter, which is sent to MIF investors and borrowers. I gave permission for him to do that story. I'll provide him with names of people to interview about the renovations and he'll send a photographer to take photos. He will not publish the story before receiving final approval from me.

**COVID-19 Pandemic Response**

The COVID Task Force met on September 28 and recommended no changes to our current protocols, other than easing the restriction on outside groups' use of the building. As long as groups agree to follow our guidelines of masking, social distancing, and no meals served indoors, we can accommodate them. Infection rates continue to drop, along with hospitalizations of Lincoln residents. However, our hospitals continue to be stressed, due to patients from towns outside of Lincoln that do not have mask mandates. The task force meets again October 12.

**Dimensions**

I met with the Dimensions advisory board on September 22. The previous concerns from Dimensions staff have been addressed (no further issues with mice, board is moving ahead with shades/curtains for the infant room windows, no problems with bathroom toilet this month) except for an ongoing concern about building security.

## **Learning**

- I plan to use time between worship services on Sunday mornings to gather with people in the Commons Area. These will be very informal “get to know your new pastor” times for anyone I have not yet had a chance to meet. They will be announced Sunday-by-Sunday, depending on what other events/activities are scheduled.
- I will attend RE:Formation – Nebraska Synod Leadership Summit (formerly TheoCon) in Kearney October 18-20.
- I will lead new member classes at 9:30 a.m. on two Sundays: November 7 and 14 with reception of new members on November 21.

## **Time Off**

We had a house offer accepted (thanks be to God!) and will close on both our Aberdeen house and Lincoln house on October 21. I plan to take time off October 22-27 for our move into the new house, except for a funeral, Sunday worship, and a couple of meetings.

In Christ's Grace + Peace,  
Pastor Erin

## October Council Report

The Rev. Susanna DesMarais, Transitional Associate Pastor

September was a month of learning and exploring for your new transitional associate; first preaching, first presiding, first pastoral visit and so much more. I am still learning who is who and how things work at FLC.

This month included the shift of pastoral care from Pastor Marsha due to her knee replacement. I have now visited 4 homebound and spoken with many more. I will continue to provide coverage on this until Pr. Marsha rejoins us.

I now attend and help, as needed, in the Tuesday night bible study group and attend other church groups sporadically.

Saturday October 2 was the blessing of the animals, a small and barky group, to be sure. All little dogs and no exotic animals, thank God. We accepted donations to the Pieloch Animal Shelter, Capital Humane Society, delivered on St Francis' day, October 4. So much fun!

Despite a short report, it has been a month full of activity, interaction and learning; it just looks scant on the page.

Director of Worship and Music  
Masako Bacon  
September, 2021

### Sunday Musicians

September 5 8:15 – Sharon Hardel, Gordon Youngquist  
10:45 – Carla Osberg, Hannah Ruch  
September 12 8:15 - RJ Metter, Jay Sears, Matt Reckmeyer  
(Jazz) 10:45 – Luke Anderson, Maggie Blazek, Tom Thorpe, Betsy Bjerke  
September 19 both – Spirit Ringers  
8:15 - Adult Choir, Heather Chesnut  
10:45 – Dawn Brock  
September 26 8:15 – Adult Choir, Priscilla Hayden-Roy  
10:45 – Kristi Fisher, Chorister Choir (Orff Ensemble),  
String Ensemble (Konnor Garrett, Sophia Johnson, Brian, Will & Aden Niebuhr,  
Rebecca Simley, Jenna Troutman, Bennett Bacon)

### Saturday Musicians

Christine Carman – September 4, 11, 25      Kristina Hanson – September 18

We are grateful for all the musicians who shared music.

All the regular music groups resumed their ministry at the end of August and started serving on September 19.

**Adult Choir** started sharing their music after closing church in March, 2020. They enjoy communal singing (with mask & distance, and vaccine required).

**Children's choirs** are refraining from singing as they haven't been vaccinated. However, their ministry continues with instruments. Chorister Choir plays Orff instruments during this time. Cherub Choir sings a small portion of time outside and continues to learn rhythms and pitches on Boom Whackers and other percussions (including making their own).

**Spirit Ringers** is the only ensemble who continued their ministry during online only worship time. They also keep safe-distance. With the protocol and the beam in the middle of the choir area requires obscure placement for the ensemble. But they are patient and faithful about serving.

**Brass and Jazz Team** have resumed their ministry as smaller groups from the balcony with bell covers (masks for instruments).

**String Ensemble** has served as smaller ensembles through the COVID time, but it's wonderful to have the larger group making praise together. All are excited about improved acoustics in the sanctuary.

### **Worship and Music Committee:**

- Advent Mid-week Services: Noon and 6:30pm in Chapel
- Christmas Eve Worship Time recommendation: Sanctuary - 3:30pm, 5:30pm, 7:30 pm, Chapel – 9:30pm If COVID situation requires distancing add 1:30pm worship service.
- Service on Remembrance – December 19, 4:00pm

- Christmas Day Worship Service – December 25, 10:00am No Saturday Evening Service
- December 26 – Lessons and Carols
- Christmas Decoration sub-committee has proposed a plan for the sanctuary and was approved by the committee and Pastor Erin.
- Shortage of Worship Assistants was discussed. We will be encouraging people to participate through announcements and personal contacts.
- Altar Guild Chair, Molly Goninan, has stepped down after serving 4 years. Tracy Knezvic has agreed to take over this position which we depend on for every worship.

**Parking-Lot Caroling** - December 12, 4:00pm

In progress for the details with Fellowship Committee

Respectfully submitted,

Soli Deo Gloria

Masako Bacon

## Sharon Hardel's Report to Council September 15, 2021 – October 12, 2021

### Activities This Month:

Faith to Go will continue to meet on Zoom the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month until they are able to have coffee and food indoors.

Gather and Gab meets every Thursday evenings via Zoom.

The Book study group with the Nebraska Synod folks just finished reading "In the Name of Jesus" by Henri Nouwen. We take a few weeks off and will pick up again on October 28 with "Embracing God's Future Without Forgetting the Past" by Michael K. Girlinghouse.

Middle and High School youth group met September 19 and did some team building games then started the accompaniment trip planning lesson learning about God's Boundless Love. On October 3, they met to help sort shoes for Kicks for Kids and decorate candles as a way to remember their baptisms.

I met with the Lincoln area youth workers on September 9. This is the first time we have met in person since February 2020. It was great to catch up and begin conversations about combined events and travel for the Youth Gathering next summer. I also met with the youth leader and Pastor from Our Saviours Lutheran Church on October 5 to discuss some combined youth activities as well as traveling to the Gathering together. They do not attend the youth workers gatherings due to staff meeting conflict.

Our first Intergenerational Sunday Morning Learning session was held on October 3, and we had 7 generations represented. We enjoyed meeting each other and had some conversations over the best and worst things about being our current ages. After that we learned about our baptismal promises by identifying favorite Bible verses and putting them on a bookmark, we made cards for college students and shut-ins, and we tied blankets for children in the hospital.

Middle and High School Learning is going well on Sunday mornings. We have had 12 – 15 youth meeting outside in the back parking lot doing some experiential Creation lessons with Dave Schmitter in September and Denise Mainquist will share some Spiritual practices and we will decorate the CROP Walk route with encouraging messages and pictures as a way of living into our Baptismal Promises in October. (in case you didn't catch it...Baptism is the word of the month for October)

Confirmation Dinner + Learning is still meeting at Roberts Park although it got a bit dark by 7:30 on Oct. 6, so we will most likely return to the church on Oct. 20. The 9<sup>th</sup> Grade retreat on September 25 went well and we have 7 young men prepared to affirm their baptism on Oct. 31. We will have a rehearsal for the service on Wednesday Oct. 27 at 6:00 pm in the sanctuary. One 9<sup>th</sup> grader was not able to attend the retreat and I will hold a makeup session for him Sat. Oct. 9.

E-mails have been sent encouraging children from 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade participate in Explore! Retreat at Camp Carol Joy Holling on Oct. 9. I received response from one parent that their child was planning to go. The Middle School Retreat at Camp is on Nov. 12 – 14 and I have received response from 3 parents so far.

I continue to participate in Staff meetings, Bible Studies, Stephen Ministry, COVID Task Force and Adult Forum meetings. I was invited to participate on the Furniture Committee, and we had our first meeting on Sept. 30.

The Synod Middle School Event Planning Team met twice via Zoom on Sept. 12 and Oct. 3 to plan for the January event. Cami Boyle (7<sup>th</sup> grader) is part of this planning team also.

I finished a 6 week zoom lecture series by Tripp Fuller, Diana Butler Bass, and Brian McLaren entitled "Oh God, What Now?...Christianity 20 years after 9/11." It was an eye-opening, mind-blowing series and really seemed to speak to

where I am and what I'm feeling right now. If anyone would like to find time to meet and view / discuss these sessions with me, I would be more than happy to set up a time and location.

I will be attending the Synod RE: Formation Event Oct. 18-20 in Kearney.

**Projects Working On:**

1. Fall Learning and Youth Group
2. Dinner + Learning
3. ELCA Youth Gathering and Accompaniment Trip

Keeping you all in prayer,

Sharon Hardel

# COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

September 2021

by Kathleen Simley, Communications Director

My September statistical report of our impact and reach for the month, through our social media sites, livestream worship and website, offers a few insights worth noting:

- Our reach on Facebook continues to be high and our following increasing each month.
- Our overall numbers of visitors to our website and viewers of our livestream worship were down slightly from August. However, August had an unusually high number of visitors and viewers which I can't quite explain. So, while numbers were down in September they are actually a bit more aligned with what our average numbers have been in recent months.
- Our livestream worship on Facebook reached individuals in three countries in September! Pakistan, Australia and the Philippines were all represented in our viewership. The individual in Pakistan who watched worship on September 26 messaged and commented how much he appreciated our worship and the sermon.

Special projects I worked on in September included:

- Finished editing the "Welcome" video and published it to the homepage of our website ([www.flclincoln.org](http://www.flclincoln.org)).
- Created a FaithTrek Overview flier, in collaboration with Lindsey Boyle (FaithTrek Coordinator), that is hosted on the Learning page of our website (<https://flclincoln.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/FaithTrek-Overview-2021-22.pdf>) and a FaithTrek Family Resource for the month of September that was emailed to all parents (<https://flclincoln.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/FaithTrek-September-2021.pdf>).
- Collaborated with the Stewardship Committee in preparing the letter that was mailed to all member households, updating the stewardship materials (discipleship plan and pledge card) and the stewardship web page (<https://flclincoln.org/stewardship>).
- Supported the efforts of Barb Johnson Frank and Eunice Fisher and those of 25 volunteer callers who are reaching out to our 546 member households with member care calls. I also developed an online form that is being shared via email to those who have not yet been reached by phone.
- Met with staff to begin planning for our Advent and Christmas seasons.
- Empowered member, Barbara Duncanson, who had expressed an interest in doing writing for our communication ministry, to write a story about Sam Olson, our longest living chartered member. It was his 85<sup>th</sup> baptismal anniversary at First Lutheran on September 6.

Her interview with him was highlighted in a story that was published at <https://fclincoln.org/news/promises-made-promises-kept>.

My “to do” list for October includes:

- Livestream Saturday evening worship with our new mobile camera on Saturday, October 23.
- Update the website with new photos and information (New staff photos are scheduled to be taken for the website on October 12.)
- Continue promoting the Stewardship campaign leading up to Commitment Sunday on October 24.
- Continue collaborating with Barb Johnson Frank and Eunice Fisher as they wrap up the member care calls. We plan to summarize the feedback provided by members in a document and present it to the Executive Committee and Congregational Council at their November meetings.
- Enjoy some time off! I will be taking bereavement leave and vacation time throughout the month of October in hopes that it will offer me some refreshment and recovery from two significant losses in my life over the past six months.

The upcoming month will also include my regular daily, weekly and monthly responsibilities of daily social media posts and News posts on our website, digital sign announcements, managing the Sunday morning livestream worship services, publishing *The Voice* newsletter, sending weekly *First Things First* emails, designing daily announcement slides for the TVs in the Gathering and Common areas, updating information on the website and editing worship bulletins.

# First Lutheran Church

## Reach and Impact

September 1-30, 2021

### FACEBOOK

Page Followers	824 (+9*)
Page Likes	662 (+17*)
Post With Highest Reach this Month	Livestream Worship with Farewell to Pastor Bill Peterson - September 10, 2021 961 people reached

### INSTAGRAM

Followers	177 (+3*)
Posts this Month	13

### EMAIL CAMPAIGNS

Active Subscribers	586 (-1*)
First Things First	57% Average Open Rate (-3%*) 27% Average Click Rate (-5%*)

### WEBSITE

Entire Website	5,058 Total Page Views (-874*) 1,218 Total New Visitors (-167*)
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### WORSHIP

Sunday Facebook Livestream	256 Average People Reached (-47*) 103 Average People Engaged (-10*)
Countries & States Where Individuals Were Engaged With Our Worship Services	NE, SD, KS, MO, MN, IA, TX, PA, CA, MT, WI, WA, ILL, AZ, WY, AR Pakistan, Australia, Phillipines
Livestream Web Page	219 Total Page Views (-105*) 75 Engaged (-27*) 23 New Visitors (-14*)



\*Compared to previous month

**PRELIMINARY REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL  
FIRST LUTHERAN CARE CALL TEAM  
OCTOBER 8, 2021**

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- 25 members of First Lutheran served as volunteer callers for this outreach to all 546 household units.
- Calls were completed over a 7-week period, from late August-early October.
- Callers logged comments to 3 questions, no names required.
- Pastor Erin received half of the logs on October 1 and will receive additional logs by October 12.

**NEXT STEPS**

The Care Call team is going the extra mile to connect with members who did not respond to phone calls, Voice Mail messages and/or texts and, in some cases, letters or emails. Each of our 546 households is unique and carries information that is important to the congregation as we move "Forward Together at First." Details:

- Kathleen Simley developed an online survey link to the Care Callers' three questions. Emails that included the link were sent to 86 households inviting members not reached so far to respond online.
- Paper copies of the survey questions were sent by U.S. mail to 36 unreachable households whose email addresses are not available in the directory.
- We expect to receive call logs from the remaining two Care Callers very soon.

**WRAPPING THIS UP**

The Care Call team is grateful for the dedicated outreach of its callers, the appreciative manner in which members of the congregation received phone calls, for the support of the church staff and for your interest. We are thankful for Kathleen Simley's help in thinking through how to effectively reach all households and in developing the online survey.

We anticipate having a summary report prepared by early November and would be interested in sharing some themes we noted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barb Johnson Frank and Eunice Fischer, Care Call Team Coordinators

First Lutheran Church  
Executive Committee Meeting Agenda  
October 5, 2021

Present: Denise Mainquist, Rebecca Pfabe, Scott Seebohm, Erin Heidelburger  
Excused Absent: Brian Niebuhr

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83073064235>

- A. Opening Prayer--A centering exercise by Denise
- B. Denise had a discussion with Bryan Hansen about Pastor Bill. His end of call was the end of August but he had a medical event prior to that and to comply with his contract Portico said we had to pay him for 60 days and then his disability would kick in. There were some delays and his disability claim has not yet been processed. Bryan talked to Portico and they recommended we pay for his health insurance and pension for October. Once his disability becomes effective, we would get a refund from Portico. The executive committee feels this is the right thing to do.
- C. Dimensions lease--we discussed the motion of record for the adjustment to Dimension's rent. There was a meeting in July between Dimensions and the Dimensions Advisory Committee at FLC, including Pastors Steve and Bill, and Denise Mainquist. Dimensions had decided to break their contract by August 1, so negotiations to retain the relationship happened quickly and included a reduction in rent for one year. Denise has provided a budget impact report agenda item. Brian provided a motion for vote by the council. The members present at this meeting voted to use Denise's report agenda item. Executive Committee members at this meeting, who were present at the July Council meeting, recall general agreement by the Council members when informed of the situation.
- D. New phone system--Our current phone system will not be supported at the end of this month. There are proposals coming for a new system. The executive committee will need to review the proposals for phones and service. We do anticipate it will be a big expense. We need to have this as a hosted service so the company we choose will be responsible for all phones and service
- E. Furniture for Gathering Area--Cyndi put together a committee of people who use the area for additional input on the expected needs for furniture. They met last week. We will expect a report from them in the future.
- F. Building maintenance/expenses--There is a Building and Maintenance fund in Fund 2 if there would be expenses beyond what is budgeted. If there would be a budget surplus then we would not have to draw from Fund 2. Scott mentioned that the property committee anticipates the need for significant work on the parking lot in the next few years. This will be a big expense.

- G. Constitution--FLC is not being very compliant with the Constitution and we need to work on it. Discussed having some education about the Constitution at the Council meetings, and Adult Forum. Perhaps have some audits of compliance with requirements in the constitution. For 2021 we will ensure the annual review of the Membership roster, as required by the constitution, is performed. This will be a review of contributions in the past year to determine voting membership prior to the annual meeting. We discussed whether to require Council members to be on Church committees.
  - a. Committees
    - i. Nominating Committee--this is one area that we feel needs more rigor. The nominees should know that this is a commitment to the church and not just a one hour commitment a month. There are expectations of the Council members per the Constitution. Denise will write a motion to appoint Kim Cordonier to the Nominations committee.
    - ii. Finance Committee--should start working to organize this
- H. Emergency Plan--Al Williams, Norm Kempf and Cyndi Crouse are working on updating it
- I. Safe Sanctuary Policy--We will ask Sharon to incorporate and update the policy
- J. Social Media and electronic publications usage policy and content guidelines--Thoughts on this are: what are the intentions of social media postings, we might need a policy to guide this, who can post on the church's social media account (Kathleen will talk to Pastor Erin)
- K. Policy Committee--we maybe don't need one but maybe the council or staff needs to take a more formal role to review policies every 3 years for oversight
- L. Pastor Erin time off October 22-27 (will lead worship that weekend, meetings, and funeral)
- M. Resume having a Council retreat shortly after election; expectation setting for council members

Church Furnishing Committee  
Meeting 9/30/2021 4:00 pm

Members: Judy Bailey, Judy Batterman, Cyndi Crouse, Bob and Carlene Falos, Sharon Hardel, Steve and Karen Lenzen.

Purpose: This is a self-directed committee whose purpose is to evaluate the submitted plans and make recommendations to the Executive Committee to modify or accept the plan as submitted and offered for review on the church website in the August Council Reports.

All Members were present as we reviewed our Committee purpose and objectives as follows;  
Review the plan from a congregational perspective.

What furnishings are desired/needed for the Gathering Area.

1. Does the submitted plan work for the space considering how we may use it?
2. Are there other considerations regarding the efficient use of the space?

What furnishings are desired/needed for the Commons.

1. Does the submitted plan work for the space considering how we may use it?
2. Are there other considerations regarding the efficient use of the space?

When/if funds should be allocated towards the plan.

Folders were distributed with the pictures of furnishings and the floor plans as drafted by Molly Goninan.

The committee generally agreed that some empty space needed to be reserved for events such as Kicks for Kids, Diaper Drive, Foster Clothing, Youth collections, Food Drives, etc.

The committee unanimously agreed that this year is not the time to make such a large expenditure and that funds should be allocated once the committee has been able to review the plans submitted and discuss them. It was also suggested that we should fill the pew seats for Worship before we take on allocating funds for or budgeting for Gathering space and Commons furniture.

We reached out to Molly Goninan for more information. Molly confirmed for us that the furnishings were to scale, stain resistant and were deemed ADA compliant. Molly is willing to bring in fabric swatches and some furniture for the committee to view.

We will meet again to discuss the submitted floor plan further and continue to discuss the church's need for furnishings and the use of the space in the Gathering and Commons.

Submitted by Cyndi Crouse

## **Columbarium Committee**

### **October 4, 2021**

The Columbarium Committee met on Monday, October 4, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

Present were Rev. Bill Shaner, Kay Rockwell, Dale Bowder, Dale Ripa, Tom Tiedgen, Jan Modica and Pastor Erin Heidelberger. Absent: Jeff Culbertson

Opening Prayer by Pastor Erin

Minutes of the April 12 Meeting approved as distributed.

Financial report

Sep 30, 2021: \$35, 307.60

Committee received the Financial report.

Memorial Garden update

Jeff installed a cross near the west window and planted a vine which was on the marble platform.

Book of remembrance

Still need to add:

- Donna Aschwege
- Burdette E. "Bud" Sandin
- Neal Simley
- Robert Lohrberg

43 people are inurned

Update on Niches purchased since April 12:

1. Dale & Sandra Latshaw
2. Neal Simley
3. Robert and Marilyn Lohrberg

Update on total niches: reserved = 54; remaining =-15; inurned individuals = 43

40 new niches that have been ordered but there are delays due to the company getting the materials. They will installed when they arrive.

Bill ordered 40 new name plates

Adjournment at 6:30

Lord's Prayer

Next Meeting date: April 19, 2022 - 6:00 p.m.

**Standing Information**

NOTE to Kay: Send Word, PDF, & rtf file

**Contact Information for Committee Members**

Dale Bowder	<a href="mailto:dtbowder@aol.com">dtbowder@aol.com</a>	402-525-4346
Jan Mares	<a href="mailto:maresjan@rocketmail.com">maresjan@rocketmail.com</a>	402-499-9453
Dale Ripa	<a href="mailto:Dale.ripa@hartwiginc.com">Dale.ripa@hartwiginc.com</a>	402-990-5454
Kay Rockwell	<a href="mailto:KRockwell1@unl.edu">KRockwell1@unl.edu</a>	402-540-8454
Rev. Bill Shaner	<a href="mailto:billshaner402@gmail.com">billshaner402@gmail.com</a>	402-430-9072
Tom Tiedgen	<a href="mailto:tomtiedgen@aol.com">tomtiedgen@aol.com</a>	402-540-2182
Pastor Erin	<a href="mailto:Pastorerin@flclincoln.org">Pastorerin@flclincoln.org</a> & send to Cyndi	

**Care of Memorial Garden**

Jeff and Lisa Culbertson [jculbertson1@unl.edu](mailto:jculbertson1@unl.edu) 402-484-0207 Jeff (m) 402-429-4474

**Columbarium Committee Terms**

Dale Ripa & Dale Bowder	Renewed May 2019	Terms up in 2022
Tom Tiedgen & Bill Shaner	Renewed May 2020	Terms up in 2023
Kay Rockwell & Jan Mares	Renewed May 2021	Terms up in 2024

**MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE of 2021**

Invocation  
 Scripture Readings - Revelation 7:9-17 – Kay  
 John 14:1-7 -- Kay  
 Meditation – Bill Shaner  
 Special Music – Kristy Fischer  
 Ringing of bell as names are read for those inurned in the Columbarium  
 Prayers  
 Benediction

**First Lutheran Church  
Property Committee Minutes  
August 24, 2021**

Attending: Chair Norman Kempf, Pastor Erin Heidelberger, Bob Batterman, Rod Johnson, Les Carlson, Steve Dickey, Richard Draper, Scott Seabohm, Steve Doolittle

Meeting time: 7:00 PM

Opening prayer: Richard Draper

Minute taker: Les

July Meeting minutes were approved.

Agenda Items:

1. Bob B. reported that the new curb West of the FLC entry is potentially dangerous. This curb needs to be painted an identifying color so that individuals can see the curb. Bob B., Rod J. and Steve D. will complete this painting.
2. Emergency plan and map updates. Norman will follow-up with Cyndi regarding the status of these updates. Steve L. mentioned during this discussion that a list of sub-contractors used during the renovation is needed for reference purposes.
3. Norman provided an update on the bench(es) for the front of church. Steve D. has identified several bench possibilities. A discussion between Norman and Kathleen Simley about how to proceed will follow at a later date.
4. A motion by Steve L. was passed to have Tri-Point remove the stumps. Steve L. noted Tri-Point could do this sometime in the next two weeks at a cost of \$625.
5. Norman said Arborx Tree Enterprises has been contacted about the oak tree treatment which should be completed in the next two weeks.
6. Norman updated about the missing door numbers. We have a bid for replacing those numbers from Nebraska Sign Company for \$38.80 per side per door for five doors.
7. Steve L. gave several updates on replacement carpet squares and a hand railing for the Dimensions area.

Prayer for September: Rod Johnson

Note taker: Les

**First Lutheran Church  
Property Committee Minutes  
September 28, 2021**

Attending: Chair Norman Kempf, Bob Batterman, Rod Johnson, Les Carlson, Richard Draper, Scott Seebohm, Steve Doolittle

Meeting time: 7:00 PM

Opening prayer: Rod Johnson

Minute taker: Les

August Meeting minutes were approved.

Agenda:

1. Norman introduced Alex Gray, the new FLC maintenance person.
2. Bob updated the committee about the curb painting completed by Bob, Steve D. and Rod.
3. Norman has talked to Kathleen Simley about a bench for FLC. Norman suggested several bench options to her and that a bench be placed East of the FLC front doors under the canopy.
4. Steve L. reported that the stumps have been removed and he has filled the holes. The bill for this service is forthcoming.
5. Norman mentioned that the door numbers have been received and that he and Steve D. will be attaching the numbers.
6. Dimensions has conveyed that unauthorized people have been looking into the Dimensions area(s). Pastor Erin had suggested installing a sign to deter this behavior. Norman and Rod Johnson will investigate wording for a sign and who would make the sign. Wording might include verbiage such as "No Outlet" and "Please Respect Our Privacy".
7. Steve L. talked about several sewer and concrete work issues. He included a history of the sewer back-up problems and fixes that have been implemented. Steve mentioned that there could be a break in the storm sewer line and that whether such a break actually exists needs to be determined. Steve Doolittle moved to run a camera inside this line to verify a break, motion passed. Steve L. moved that if a break is found that he and Norman are then authorized to determine a fix for the problem. This motion also passed.
8. Steve L. cited the continuing deterioration of the parking lot. Norman asked Scott to convey to FLC Council that the parking lot is an upcoming as well as ongoing concern.

Prayer for October: Bob Batterman

Minutes taker: Les

September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

Stewardship Meeting---attending were, Mark Wemhoff, Tyler Mainquist, Byron Fischer, Eunice Fischer and Linda Bogenreif. Teresa Brohimer was absent.

In our Stewardship Meeting we discussed the planned Stewardship meal and the pros and cons of having the meal. The whole idea of the meal is having the touch point and community that the meal brings. Given the current circumstances we have decided that there are better ways to use the funds that would be used for the Stewardship dinner and will donate it to the Lutheran Food Pantry like we did last year. Having a drive through prepared meal pickup would be safe but we decided that will not bring the sense of community that is the purpose of the meal. Here are the other topics discussed:

- Theme
  - Forward Together at First
- The start of the Stewardship Campaign typically starts at the beginning of September and ends with the Stewardship Dinner the first weekend in October which would be Sunday October 3<sup>rd</sup>. We decided to post pone the start to the Stewardship campaign a couple weeks, so it did not overlap with the end of the Soft Capital Campaign. The Stewardship Letter will be mailed out Wednesday September 15<sup>th</sup>.
- To engage the competitive spirit of our congregation and get pledge cards filled out earlier than last year, we have added the following challenge to the Stewardship Letter.
  - With Covid cases elevated in the community, we do not plan to have our annual Stewardship Dinner. As a committee, we decided to donate the estimated \$500 expense of the dinner to the Lutheran Food Pantry like was done last year. In addition to this \$500 donation, we have had some anonymous donors come forward and say they will match this donation if the number of completed pledges received by October 31 is equal to or greater than what was received by the end of November in 2020. Last year there were 125 pledge cards completed and returned by the end of November. Therefore, if at least 125 pledges are received by October 31 this year, the matched amount will increase the total donation to the Lutheran Food Pantry to \$1,000!

The next Stewardship Committee meeting is scheduled for October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

Mark Wemhoff  
Stewardship Committee Chair

October 6<sup>th</sup> 2021

Stewardship Meeting---attending were, Mark Wemhoff, Tyler Mainquist, Byron Fischer, Eunice Fischer, Teresa Brohimer and Linda Bogenreif.

In our Stewardship Meeting we discussed ways we can promote stewardship and increase the number of pledges received to reach our goal of 125 pledges by the end of October. Here are the other topics discussed:

- Theme
  - Forward Together at First
- Commitment Sunday is October 24<sup>th</sup>.
- The Stewardship Letter was mailed out Wednesday September 15<sup>th</sup>.
- There are currently 32 pledge cards filled out.
  - Activities With Covid cases elevated in the community, we do not plan to have our annual Stewardship Dinner. As a committee, we decided to donate the estimated \$500 expense of the dinner to the Lutheran Food Pantry like was done last year. In addition to this \$500 donation, we have had some anonymous donors come forward and say they will match this donation if the number of completed pledges received by October 31 is equal to or greater than what was received by the end of November in 2020. Last year there were 125 pledge cards completed and returned by the end of November. Therefore, if at least 125 pledges are received by October 31 this year, the matched amount will increase the total donation to the Lutheran Food Pantry to \$1,000!
- The Stewardship Committee is reaching out to members of the church that may want to be involved in a Trunk-or-Treat for Halloween. Potentially this would happen the Wednesday before Halloween if there is enough interest.

The next Stewardship Committee meeting is scheduled for November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

Mark Wemhoff  
Stewardship Committee Chair