

## NOMINEES

*In addition to biographical information, all nominees were asked to respond to two requests:*

1. How do you see your gifts and expertise being used in the position you may be serving?
2. Share your thoughts on First Lutheran's mission and where you see God leading/calling us as a congregation and disciples of Christ.

### CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL (Vote for 5)

#### **Michelle (Denise) Mainquist**

Occupation: IT Auditor

1. The last three years of serving on Council, especially during a pandemic and pastoral vacancies, have established a strong foundation of what is needed for a congregation to function and thrive during times of uncertainty and scarcity. I am experienced with both the organizational and Spiritual aspects of leadership in a congregation. A background in sociology helps me to understand some of the struggles we are facing as a community and I am willing to help us evolve into a community that will flourish in ways we have not previously considered.
2. God has called us to be disciples to all people and to meet them where they are. This is important for people who are in our congregation, as well as those who are not connected to us. We are to recognize that everyone is a unique and loved creation of God, and that we are to act in love, always, even when we disagree. Each of us are to embrace our divinity and be the face of a loving God for all people. Acting in love will manifest relationships and actions that serve our congregation and our world.



#### **Lee Rockwell**

Occupation: Retired Ass't General Manager of Nebraska Educational Telecommunications and owner of Valden Tours.

1. My background in educational telecommunications & marketing, coupled with many developmental efforts in the non-profit arena can support existing and new FLC programs and ministries with a special emphasis for senior citizens. (I am one)
2. The First Lutheran Welcoming Statement, proudly displayed on a wall in the Commons, is a bold statement of our mission. I totally embrace this document and am encouraged with the positive comments I have heard from FLC members and other guests. This is a prime example of God calling our congregation. As a Church Council member, I would look forward to further expanding FLC activities in support of this statement to our church family and the Lincoln community.



## Bruce Hull

Occupation: Retired State Farm Claim Manager

1. I consider myself to be a strong leader and team player. I have been able to lead and work together with teams to accomplish our mission, common goals and help the organizations succeed. Having previously served on our church council, I learned how a group of people can work together to achieve great results and become a team.
2. First Lutheran is a congregation with a strong tradition of transforming its own members along with the community and countries in need. We are known for our benevolence throughout the entire Nebraska ELCA. We genuinely care about each other and our community as a whole. I believe God is calling all of us to come together to strengthen the church's relationship with all of First's parishioners. Together we can/will improve all aspects of our ministry. Specifically, I would like to see a continued focus on our youth and young adults, seniors and those in the middle. In other words...ALL members of First.



## Amy Harrison

Occupation: Human Resources-Nebraska Wesleyan University

1. Recently, I took the StrengthFinders test, and my number 1 strength is connectedness. I am a team builder who values the perspectives of others and ensures all voices are heard and represented. I can easily find common ground among diverse groups, and I easily discern the implications of a decision upon individuals and the community at large. I live my life with a belief that we are not isolated but rather, we are part of a larger community, and all members of the community should be shown love, kindness, unconditional acceptance & justice. I excel at building and sustaining relationships within an organization and within the community outside of church. In addition, God has equipped me with the gift of exhortation, the ability to provide words of love, comfort, encouragement and counsel. In the past, I have served on church welcome committees, and was a member of a pastoral care team. I believe if elected to the congregational council, I will provide a genuine care & concern for the members of the council and congregation, actively engage in Christian contemplation to make wise decisions for the betterment of the congregation and practice strong intercessory prayers. I will balance my decisions between what is just and good for the congregation and the community while listening for the promptings of the Holy Spirit. I will passionately commit to this position on the council.
2. I believe we are being called to create new discipleship and community visions that will challenge us to think beyond our current, comfortable practices. This new radical, exciting vision will lay the foundation for new strategies. I believe God is calling us to develop spiritual strategies that will require us to examine our congregation at a deeper level specifically analyzing the needs of our church members and addressing those needs while becoming more relational within the church. A more intentional, relational strategy will also allow us to take the church out into the community. We can then help people discover Jesus and serve others



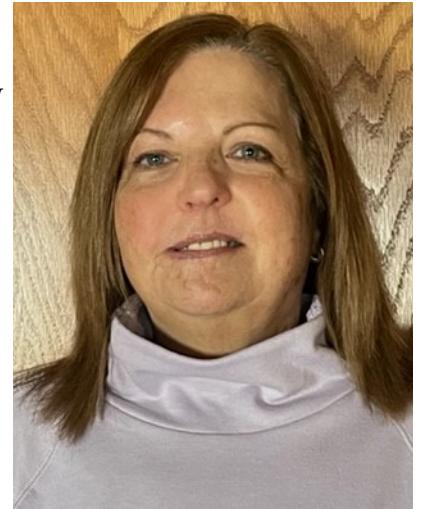
## **Amy Harrison cont....**

as God has called us to do. External forces upon the life cycle of a church requires we explore new innovative ways to increase the sustainability of FLC. On a micro level, I believe the church will need to create new programs or activities to meet the diverse needs of the community.

## **Teresa Brohimer**

Occupation: Retired from United States Department of Agriculture

1. I retired after 37 years with the federal government. In those years, I had to analyze many situations and work through many problems and issues as they developed, as well as keeping the programs I worked with running smoothly. I grew up on a farm and learned that hard work can lead to great things. I hope and pray that my upbringing and work ethics have groomed me to be prepared to serve in this position. I have served on the Stewardship Committee for the last three years.
2. I have been a member of First Lutheran for 14 years and truly believe in the direction the church has taken to be welcoming to all. When we moved to Lincoln 14 years ago, First Lutheran was the first, and only, church we visited before becoming members. It was a perfect fit for us and I hope the church can continue to make all visitors and potential members feel the same way. The congregation is so generous in supporting so many important community programs, and I would love to see that continue. I would also like to see the congregation grow.



## **Jennifer Wemhoff**

Occupation: Communications Manager

1. I'm a lifelong Lutheran, and a member of First Lutheran since 2007. My husband, Mark, and I have two girls, Anna (10) and Elsa (7). I spent over 20 years working in the nonprofit sector, and have experience prioritizing action based on need, impact, capacity, and reality. I understand that the true impact of what we do goes beyond what basic numbers may tell us, and lies in how people's lives are changed for the better. In my current marketing role, I work closely with nonprofits of all types, share stories of how these organizations are doing good, and create a variety of content. I've been a Faith Trek guide for a number of years, was part of the Worship/Accessibility Assessment team, served on the Creation Care committee, and was a member of the Campaign Cabinet for the building project's capital campaign.
2. First's welcoming statement is at the heart of what we do as a community. As we continue to navigate a COVID-19 world, it's more important than ever to be welcoming to all, as God welcomes all, and find new ways to welcome and engage with families and the community at large. The welcoming statement is what I'm most proud of when I tell others about our church home. As a congregation, I think it's important for us to take care of each other in whatever ways we can. Finding ways to bring people back to church - safely - after an extended time apart while also meeting people where they are in terms of comfort for in-person activities will be key in moving the church forward.



## **Scott Seebohm**

Occupation: Public Health Veterinarian with US Dept of Agriculture

1. As someone who has belonged to a variety of churches other than the ELCA in my life, I think I will bring a unique perspective to council discussions and decisions. My gifts of service and faith also inform my thoughts about how to best manage FLC business and other decisions for the good of our members and our community.
2. Honestly, I see us in a very difficult time right now. The effects of the pandemic on our families and our community are not over yet. Though everyone involved in FLC operations has done heroic things to continue worship and other ministries, it has still severely impacted our relationships, our participation in church activities, our presence in the community. Our income continues to lag behind pre-pandemic levels at a time when we face the large debt from our recent building improvements. However, on the brighter side, we have a new lead pastor and hope to hire an associate pastor this year. But we need every member to recommit to each other and our shared purpose if we are going to survive this period anything like the church we used to be. Pastors and other leaders can set a vision, and give examples, but they can't make us into a thriving community - that requires each member's full participation if we want to continue growing into our mission of making disciples of Christ.



## **Clay Ehlers**

Occupation: Manager

1. I love finding ways to serve in our community and problem solving.
2. I believe that our church does not end at the exit doors, it is in the community, walking around in all the hearts and hands of our whole congregation. Jesus showed us how to support the needy, the new, the ignored, and the reviled - that is done on the streets, at the mission, at the food bank, and in our schools. I am hopeful that we can continue to find funds and volunteers to get our message of service and love to our community.



## **Dave Pfister**

Occupation: Web Application Developer

1. I am an attentive and empathetic listener, and have been a mentor at my job for over a decade. I'm an excellent problem solver and critical thinker.
2. I fully endorse the mission at First Lutheran. I feel that faith as a call to action is an important cornerstone of the mission. As such, I'd like the chance to help First Lutheran sustain and grow its mission and ministries in the congregation, community and beyond



## **Bol Ngok**

Occupation: Backboard Manufacturing for Bison Sporting Goods

1. I would bring to Council my ability to listen to the agenda topics and to help gather a consensus within the group along with adding my own opinion.
2. I believe that God is calling us to uplift the people and to trust in God. God says love your neighbor as yourself.



## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE (Vote for 3)**

### **Jan Modica**

Occupation: Claims Adjuster

1. I have been an active member of First Lutheran since before I joined in 1983. First Lutheran isn't just my church to me. The people of First Lutheran are my church family! I have served on Fellowship, Evangelism, Church Council, taught Sunday School, Served on Building, Education, and Call committees, Sang in Choir, and Directed the Cherub Choir for 26 years and many more. Reaching out and talking to my church family is something I could do to benefit our congregation.
2. I pray in the future we grow better at caring for those who are part of our community. Our internal community and our external community of Lincoln and the World, and we continue be a welcoming place.



### **Norm Kempf**

Occupation: Retired in 2001 after working for 40 years for the USDA Soil Conservation Service

1. I am a long term active member of First Lutheran Church. I have served in many different activities of the church. I am able to work with people and get a job done.
2. I see First Lutheran Church that is friendly and inclusive and is led by God. One important mission is to rebuild congregation attendance service participation. This is needed both in house and in our outreach activities.



### **Tera Beermann**

Occupation: Financial Manager of the University of Nebraska Press

I'm responsible for non-publishing operations of the Press such as financial reporting, budgeting, facilities management, and book fulfillment systems. I am a long-time member of First Lutheran and have been involved on various committees over the years. I've been told one of my gifts is being a good listener. I enjoy getting to know people and engaging in discussions with others. Serving



### **Tera Beermann cont...**

as the coordinator for Faith To Go and previously on the new member committee, I feel I have made meaningful connections with our members. These connections provide insight to finding a good match of members' talents and First's needs. I've previously served on the Nominating Committee and am happy to contribute again, if elected.

2. The last two years have really challenged us as a congregation and personally. During this time, First Lutheran remained faithful to worshiping God, serving others, and focusing on our mission of being a welcoming church. There is plenty of work to do as we are called to reach out as the heart and hands of Jesus.

### **Sandy Latshaw**

Occupation: Education Coordinator at UNMC

1. As a longtime member of First Lutheran, I have been blessed to connect with many members throughout the years. First Lutheran has been my family throughout the highs and lows of life. I have served on a variety of committees and groups that have allowed me to meet individuals from a variety of backgrounds. I am a member of the Hunger and Clothing Team, serving as the Meals on Wheels and CROP Walk coordinator, Lydia Circle, Spirit Ringers and serve as a worship assistant in a variety of roles. I have been on previous church councils, serving as both president and secretary. I enjoy helping members recognize their strengths to serve in leadership positions at First Lutheran.

2. The last two years have tested all of us, but First Lutheran has continued to persevere throughout the challenges. We remain a leader in outreach and service to our community and global partners, a vital part of our mission as disciples of Christ. First Lutheran has also shown renewed sensitivity to the needs of our members, as it is difficult to remain connected when one is unable



### **Pat DeWald**

Occupation: Retired

1. I feel like I am a good communicator, I love to get to know people and learn about their talents and how they best could be of use for the congregation.
2. I feel our mission statement speaks to us as children of God. To welcome all as God welcomes all. Jesus commanded us to love all the people. Because when we do for others... we do for Jesus.



### **Kim Janssen**

Occupation: Retired RN

1. Involvement in a variety of church activities has allowed me to meet many of our church members.
2. First Lutheran welcomes all. There are many ways to worship, learn and serve within the church and community.

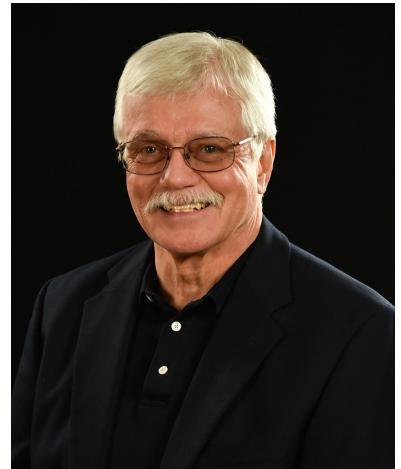


## **DELEGATES TO SYNOD ASSEMBLY** (Vote for 5 - At least 2 men and 2 women)

### **Les Carlson**

Occupation: Retired UNL Faculty Member

1. I served as Council Vice President for our prior two church affiliations in Fayetteville, Arkansas and Clemson, South Carolina. Consequently, I have some experience working with and through other church members that I hope would be valuable in this setting.
2. FLC positions itself as a welcoming place. We follow through on that commitment in our actions which reflect our purpose as disciples of Christ.



### **Heather Chesnut**

Occupation: Client Service Coordinator - Retirement Plans

1. I am a very good listener and see multiple perspectives to any issue or situation.
2. I desire to be more involved with the Church. I also believe it was divine intervention that helped me change jobs in 2020. Being more involved will help me stay tethered.



### **Craig Heier**

Occupation: Retail Receiver

1. I have an interest in seeing the work of the larger church. I've attended several assemblies as a visitor (youth and adult) and as a delegate. I would like to have a voice in how the Nebraska Synod moves forward in mission and in administration.
2. First is a vibrant congregation that provides many opportunities for service within and outside of the physical church. I see God calling us to continue to serve others using the strengths, passions and skills of the congregation. I am continually amazed at the different opportunities that lay members find and follow through with.



## **Kari Hoeft**

Occupation: Insurance Agent

1. I try to focus on processes and procedures that work to bring out the best for everyone involved. I know that change can be very unsettling, however I appreciate the need and importance change brings for growth. I enjoy working with and learning from others, through open communication and listening great things can happen.
2. I love that First Lutheran lives out the mission we have chosen as a congregation. I believe that what we do as a congregation outside of the church walls is how we fulfill our calling as disciples. I look forward to the future First Lutheran has and the opportunities we have to meet the changing needs of the church and serving our neighbors.



## **Judy Batterman**

Occupation: Retired

1. I think I have a lot of insight into the workings of the Nebraska Synod, having served on Synod Council, various committees and task forces. It will be an exciting time in 2022 as we elect a new Bishop and I would love to be a part of that.
2. I feel that First Lutheran is in a good place now that Pastor Erin is here and we are looking to call an Associate Pastor. I love my church and am looking forward to the good things to come and helping make them happen.



## **Gene Cotter**

Occupation: Deputy Administrator for Operations at The Administrative Office of Courts and Probation

1. I have been involved in the bigger picture of the Church from high school forward. From an expertise perspective, I have helped draft policies and procedures, vision and mission statements, strategic plans, and recruited and selected People for a myriad of positions over time. I have served two terms on Church Council, including time as President, a youth group planner, and sponsor, as well as numerous committees and workgroups. From a gifts perspective, and as it pertains to Synod Assembly, especially with the task before this Assembly of selecting a new Bishop, I would like to believe that my gifts include an ability to see the bigger picture, and the ability and willingness to ask questions, including the hard ones, to ensure the greater needs are being accounted for and met. All of this I believe would serve the needs of First and our needed voice within the Synod.



### **Gene Cotter cont...**

2. Ever mindful of the FACT that all people are children of God, First Lutheran has always been a leader in demonstrating the commitment to serve as, and practice, discipleship across the city of Lincoln and the Synod as a whole. Whether our philanthropic giving, our service opportunities, or participation in greater causes such as refugee resettlement, disaster response etc., First has always been at the front of the pack, leading the way. Especially today, as we continue in the throes of a pandemic, and find ourselves in increasing political and civil discord, First must continue to serve in this capacity. Especially now, as the Synod elects a new Bishop, First has an opportunity to rise up and serve as a leader once again.

### **Sherri Cotter**

Occupation: Correctional Specialist - Lancaster County Corrections

1. I am very measured and thoughtful in my approach to complex decisions, looking at issues from all sides before deciding and am not subject to the status quo or outside pressures when rendering decisions. I am comprehensive and inclusive in my views of the world and use this perspective when making decisions. I have been a member of First for 20 years and have observed first hand our evolutions and the impacts that Church-wide decisions have had, as well as the impact the loss of a pastor to a new call, a call to Bishop, can and will have on the Church as a whole. This perspective will be in my mind, if chosen, as we make decisions on our next Bishop.
2. I believe First Lutheran's Mission and Inclusion Statements are values we should all aspire to live up to in our everyday lives and because of our Mission, First is a leader in the Synod and should continue to serve in that capacity.



### **Howard Rasmussen**

Occupation: Retired ELCA Pastor

1. 30 years of pastoring has prepared me well for this position.
2. As for First Lutheran's mission, I'll leave that to others, but First Lutheran's Mission Statement is a fine piece of work, and the best Mission Statement I have ever seen. Using it to guide us into the future we will always be following God's calling and living as disciples of Christ.



## **Jenna Troutman**

Occupation: Student

1. I believe that I can bring new perspective and ideas to our group and discussions.
2. Our mission statement focuses on our congregation going out and being a follower of Jesus, to learn, to serve and to act. I think that this allows us to see how we can be the example and how we can help and show others too. I think that God is calling our congregation to serve wholeheartedly in our community and to help those who are in need. We do a lot of service here at First but I believe that we can never have served enough. We can always help people and we can always be appreciative of what we've been granted and help those who aren't as lucky.



## **Steve Janssen**

Occupation: Account Manager

1. I've served on many committee positions at First Lutheran and I feel that I have the experience to know what our elected volunteers need to be successful.
2. I'm excited to see how this group has become intentionally welcoming and supportive of those who need to experience God's love. I want to continue to be part of this growth.



## **ENDOWMENT BOARD (Vote for 2)**

### **Steve Doolittle**

Occupation: Retired

1. I think my experience in business, finance and investments will enable me to contribute to the mission of the endowment board.
2. I think my experience will enable me to make good use of the funds that the congregation has generously seen fit to provide for the future needs of the community.



## **Kevin Watteyne**

Occupation: Field Research for Bayer Crop Science

1. Hope to help the church make the right money decisions for the benefit of FLC.  
Also, want to get more involved in the church and this is a good first step.
2. I always think about the slogan "Everyone Welcome". That is so appropriate these days, where many people who are searching for a place to go and feel wanted. This church does a great job of welcoming people with open arms and making them feel wanted.



## **Tracy Way**

Occupation: Teacher

1. I have experience with being on various community boards including serving on the finance committee for First Lutheran Church and PEO.
2. We are a welcoming place where individuals can find a place to call their spiritual home.



## **Scott Williamson**

Occupation: Director of Donor Engagement for CenterPointe

1. My experience in finance and fundraising would be a great fit for management of the Church's Endowment Fund.
2. The main reason my wife and I became members of First Lutheran is because we are open to all people. We experienced exclusion and bias at our former church and that is not how we believe God works. All are welcome at Christ's table at First Lutheran, as they should be. No qualifiers. No one is better than another. The parable of the lost sheep is a perfect example of how we should be to those around us. I believe that God is calling us to be that shepherd, bringing the lost back to the flock and rejoicing in saving that one sheep. To let everyone know the Good News and that they are loved.

