

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, November 14, 2023

Meeting in Upper Room or by Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84168009362?pwd=ZUpEQWFwaXF2bmZlVFlvVnl3Nko0dz09>

- A. Opening devotions and prayer – Bruce Hull
- B. Approve Consent Agenda
 - 1. Meeting agenda
 - 2. Congregational Council Minutes – October 10, 2023
 - 3. Special Congregational Meeting – October 29, 2023
 - 4. Parochial report
 - 5. Staff reports
 - 6. Committee reports
- C. Discussion – *Growing Young* chapter 4
 - Discuss viewing author's video presentation
- D. Fiscal Report
 - 1. 2023 status report
 - 2. 2024 Budget planning –Scott Williamson, Bryan Hanson, Wyatt Swanson
- E. Action agenda
 - 1. Clarify Pastor Kitzing's Financial Package
- F. Discussion agenda
 - 1. Church Safety Plan Team – Rod Johnson, chair
 - 2. Las Abejitas
 - a. Family adoption
 - b. July 3-4 Fireworks sale
 - 3. Stewardship calls
 - 4. Nominating committee status report – Emily Sears
 - 5. New beginnings team for Pastor Andrew
- G. Closing prayer – Bruce Hull

Executive Committee Meeting
First Lutheran Church
November 7, 2023

Present: Judy, Pastor Erin, Amy H., Scott, Lee

Opening Prayer: Pastor Erin

Topics for discussion:

1. 2024 Budget Update
Bryan and Wyatt presented an overview of the projected budget for 2024
They project a \$16,000 surplus at the end of 2023
The Budget Committee will meet and present at the next Council meeting
2. Associate Pastor Andrew Kitzing
Lee will prepare a motion to correct/clarify an error in the financial package
His start date will be around Nov 25
We are waiting to hear from Synod concerning an installation date
Looking for folks to serve on the New Beginnings Team to help support Pastor Andrew when he starts
3. Vicar Erick's last day will be Nov 14
4. Church Safety Plan Team
Rod Johnson will serve as chair
5. Las Abejitas
Discussed the possibility of adopting a family
Discussed their request to have a fireworks tent in the parking lot July 3-4. Executive Committee does not recommend.
6. Stewardship calls
Pastor Erin will ask Council members to again make "thank you" calls to those who pledged for 2024
7. Nominating Committee challenges
Discussed changes to the way we currently elect our committee members
8. Growing Young
Discussed using the accompanying video at Council
Chapter 4 will be on the agenda for next meeting
9. Annual meeting will be held January 28, 2024

Submitted by Judy Batterman, Council Secretary

Parochial Report

| | Baptized | Confirmed |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| 1. MEMBERSHIP as of October 1, 2023 | 1084 | 902 |

Members received:

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| A. by baptism (15 years and under) | 1 | |
| B. by baptism (adult) | | |
| C. transfer from ELCA congregation | 8 | 8 |
| D. other Lutheran | 1 | 1 |
| E. affirmation of faith | 8 | 8 |
| F. transfer from non-Lutheran congregation | 1 | |
| G. other and statistical adjustment | | |

Members removed:

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| A. death | | |
| B. transfer to ELCA congregation | 5 | 4 |
| C. transfer to other Lutheran congregation | | |
| D. transfer to non-Lutheran congregation | | |
| E. other and statistical adjustment | | |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------|-----|
| MEMBERSHIP as of October 1, 2023 | 1098 | 915 |
|----------------------------------|------|-----|

Average Attendance

| October | <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> | <u>2022</u> | <u>2023</u> |
|---------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 420 | 421 | 408 | 386 | 413 | 374 | 346 | online | 326 | 260 | 300 |

Added:

Baptism: Henry Rarig

Affirmation: Bennett Bacon, Luna Brandt, Caitlin Buckwalter, Sophia Johnson-Alvarez, Owen Paulsen, Elias Schafer, Cole Troutman, Maya Troutman

Transfer: Dean & Sue Hansen, Ronald W. Legg, Megan Hulse, Carol Reckmeyer, Rev Bob & Margie Wes-sels, Mark Mesarch, Arnold & Patty Yurk

Other:

Removed:

Death:

Transfer: Brent, Jill, Ruby & Irena Dolberg, Margaret Allington

Dropped Due to Inactivity:

Other:

Notes: [Live Stream](#) average for October 2023 is 44

Congregational Council Meeting

First Lutheran Church

October 10, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: Judy Batterman, Pastor Erin Heidelberger, Lee Rockwell, Scott Williamson, Rod Johnson, Rebecca Pfabe, Zach Schafer, Lyle Petersen, Bruce Hull, Amy Harrison, Amy Tipton, Emily Sears, Jennifer Wemhoff, Dave Pfister

MEMBERS ABSENT: Fred Ohles, Jenna Troutman

MEETING RECORDER: Ann Carlson

A. OPENING PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY:

The meeting was called to order by Council President Lee Rockwell at 7:00. Rod led the opening prayer and Bible Study.

B. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Meeting agenda
2. Congregational Council Minutes – September 12, 2023
3. Parochial report
4. Staff reports
5. Committee reports
6. Appoint 2024 budget committee: Scott Williamson (chair), Steve Janssen, Brian Niebuhr, Wyatt Swanson, Bryan Hanson, Pastor Erin

It was moved by Bruce and seconded by Jenn that all items in the consent agenda be approved.

Scott made a clarification in the Property Committee report. The boiler repair has been completed. The boiler itself has not been replaced.

The motion passed.

C. DISCUSSION – *Growing Young* – Chapter 3:

The group discussed the following questions (discussion items are in red):

1. What factors do you think create the most generational differences in our church?
 - Music – contemporary vs. traditional
 - Music – long hymns
 - Fewer middle schoolers
 - More members with gray hair
2. How does our church empathize with young people well?
 - Welcoming Statement – we say it, do we live it?
 - Music – Masako puts together music such that folks with all skill levels can participate.

- Music – many choir members attend when the choir is scheduled to sing during a church service. Do they attend when the choir is not singing?
 - It's all about connections. We need to be careful about exclusive groups.
3. What gets in the way of our church empathizing with teenagers and adults?
Some people are not willing to make changes.
 4. What shifts might we need to make in order to be a more hospitable place for young people's journey toward identity, belonging and purpose?
We need to talk to our young people, realizing that initial conversations might be awkward.

D. OPEN COMMENTS:

- a. Zach Schaffer's revised letter
Zach prepared a Letter of Deliberation, which was discussed at the meeting. "How do we honor the work of those engaged in current initiatives, while also working to engage and empower others in our congregation who aren't engaged to act upon their passions, accept responsibility for the work to be done and sustain it in a way that doesn't lead to initiatives that fizzle out?"
- b. Lyle discussed the safety of the church in general. Al Williams began to put some documentation together. Who should complete that plan? This item will be added to the agenda for the November meeting.

E. FINANCIAL REPORT:

YTD receipts through September 30 are \$2,482 over budget; YTD expenditures through September 30 are \$19,290 under budget; YTD surplus through September 30 is \$21,771.

- Scott stated that revenues were down for the month of September, which is consistent with prior years.
- The Budget Committee has their next meeting on November 8.
- The Committee noticed that utility expenses are higher than expected. This matter will be reviewed.
- It is estimated that there will be a \$15,000-\$20,000 surplus at the end of the year.
- As of last night, there have been 114 pledges for a total of \$459,450. Fifty families that have automatic payments have not yet pledged. Thirty-seven families that do not have automatic payments have not yet pledged.
- Programs drive the budget.
- The Committee is having the appropriate individuals put policies and procedures in writing.
- The Committee is looking at segregation of duties in line with the Synod and ELA's best practices and is considering having two individuals sign the checks to protect both the church and our accountant.

F. ACTION AGENDA:

1. Associate Pastor call and compensation package congregational recommendation

It was moved by Dave and seconded by Emily to approve a recommendation for congregational approval of the calling of Pastor Andrew Kitzing for the position of Associate Pastor of Word and Sacrament at First Lutheran Church, and the recommendation of an annual financial package of salary and benefits of \$98,840. Discussion followed.

- Pastor Kitzing has fourteen years of experience.
- If the congregation votes to issue a call to Pastor Kitzing, he could be at First Lutheran to start work in mid-November.
- The proposed financial package for Pastor Kitzing is from the Synod's 2024 recommendations.
- Pastor Kitzing will be introduced to the congregation the weekend of October 21-22. An outside speaker is scheduled for the Adult Forum on October 22. Council members discussed rescheduling the outside speaker. There will be several opportunities during the weekend to meet Pastor Kitzing, so rescheduling the speaker is not necessary.

The motion passed unanimously. An announcement will be made in First Things First tomorrow morning.

2. Continue temporary increase in work hours for Facilities Maintenance Manager

No action is needed on the facilities maintenance manager position. The budget allows Richard to continue extra hours through mid-November and to go back to 20 hours/week for the rest of the year.

G. DISCUSSION AGENDA:

1. Las Abejitas update

Because of their enrollment success, First Lutheran is receiving \$2,500/month. The FLC liaison to Las Abejitas needs to meet with Kayla to discuss items such as the alarm system, etc.

2. Synod Vitality Initiative Update

Amy H. reported on the Vitality Initiative. The first task of the initiative is to delve into the history of the church to assist in discerning our congregational identity. Personal stories should be shared with members of the Vitality Initiative. A PowerPoint presentation will be developed.

3. Immanuel scholarship application

Fred Ohles prepared a grant application for \$4,500, supplemented by \$500 from the First Lutheran Church Endowment Board, to provide re-grants of \$100 per month for up to nine months to families challenged to pay to enroll a child at Las Abejitas Bilingual Education Center.

4. Staffing

If we can add it to the budget, FLC would like to add a Director of Discipleship (50% FTE) for 2024.

H. CLOSING PRAYER: Rod led the closing prayer.

I. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 9:03.

MEETING DATE: November 14, 2023

SUBJECT: Approve a motion to clarify the approved financial package for Associate Pastor Andrew Kitzing, recognizing the error made in preparation of the package approved by the First Lutheran congregation. The Council recommended financial package should be implemented rather what was submitted and approved at the congregational meeting.

BACKGROUND: Reference is made to the Congregational Council action at its October 10, 2023 meeting to recommend to the October 29, 2023 Special Congregational Meeting the financial package to include:

DEFINED COMPENSATION

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Salary | 55,400 |
| Housing allowance | 16,700 |
| Social security | <u>5,516</u> |
| Sub-total | 77,616 |
| OTHER sub-total | <u>21,224</u> |
| TOTAL | 98,840 |

In preparing the resolution extending the Council recommendation, the following errors were made concerning the compensation items:

DEFINED COMPENSATION

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Salary | 54,000 |
| Housing allowance | 16,200 |
| Social security | <u>5,370</u> |
| Sub-total | 75,570 |
| OTHER sub-total | <u>21,224</u> |
| TOTAL | 96,794 |

SPONSOR: Executive Committee

Special Congregational Meeting of First Lutheran Church

October 29, 2029

- I. Call to order and determination of a quorum
Council President Lee Rockwell called the meeting to order at 12:23. Members signed in as they entered the sanctuary. President Rockwell declared that a quorum was present.
- II. Presentation by Call Committee Chair – Gene Cotter
Gene thanked the members of the Call Committee: Scott Seebohm (Council liaison who served until he moved to Virginia), Dawn Brock (served as Chair for much of the time the Committee met), Kari Hoeft, Lisa Culbertson, Dylan Fischer, and Dave Pfister (Council liaison).

The Committee started their work eighteen months ago and considered approximately twenty individuals. The Committee followed the priorities in the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) as they did their discernment. Gene read the letter sent to Council with the recommendation of Andrew Kitzing to serve as Associate Pastor of First Lutheran Church.
- III. Motion and Second to Recommend a Call to Pastor Andrew Kitzing to serve as Associate Pastor of First Lutheran Church
It was moved by Gene Cotter and seconded by Wendy Bonaiuto to consider the Call of Andrew Kitzing as Associate Pastor of First Lutheran Church.
- IV. Discussion – none
- V. Prayer – Pastor Erin led the prayer.
- VI. Vote on the motion to extend the Call
Written ballots were distributed and collected.
- VII. Count by Tellers
The Congregation sang a hymn while the ballots were counted.
- VIII. Announcement of votes for and against
There were 126 votes yes and 2 votes no. President Rockwell declared that the motion passed.
- IX. Motion and Second to Recommend Pastor Kitzing's Compensation Package
It was moved by John Bonaiuto and seconded by Craig Heier to recommend the compensation package as presented in the meeting packet.
- X. Discussion
President Lee Rockwell discussed the details as to how the compensation and other benefits were derived from both the Synod and Portico. He then read the details of the entire compensation and benefits package.

- Since Pastor Kitzing's wife is also a Pastor, 100% of her health insurance is covered.
- One of the details of the compensation package is that up to \$18,000 is available for loan for the purchase of a home. A question was asked about how the amount of \$18,000 was determined. That amount was from revenue received from the sale of a parsonage years ago.
- Pastor Kitzing's wife, Lori, serves at Bethany in Ruskin and First Presbyterian in Superior. It was asked if Lori Kitzing would likely continue to serve due to the miles between Lincoln and Superior. To the best of our knowledge at this time, Lori Kitzing will continue to serve her churches and we will not need to make any changes to our budget for health insurance for her.

- XI. Vote on the Compensation Package motion
The Compensation Package was voted on by a voice vote.

- XII. Declaration of results
The motion carried.

- XIII. Next steps
Pastor Kitzing will be contacted. He will start at First Lutheran Church at the end of November before a busy Advent and Christmas season.

- XIV. Closing prayer – Pastor Erin led the Closing Prayer.

- XV. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 12:53.

Ministry Items of Note/Celebrating:

- **Commitment Sunday and Fall Festival:** Thank you to the Fall Festival committee and everyone who made our second Fall Festival on Oct. 1 possible and successful!
- **Stewardship Season:** Thanks also goes to Stewardship Committee members Mark Wernhoff and Linda Bogenreif for their work on our season of stewardship. We will continue to work on final follow-up communications through the end of the year, and we are in need of additional members to serve on this team in the coming year.
- The **Vitality Initiative team** met on Zoom with the synod team and cohort of churches and met with our coach, Sunni Richardson, as we work on Phase 1 of the Vitality Initiative journey: Discovering who we are.
- **New Members:** I led First Lutheran 101 sessions on Oct. 8 & 15 and we welcomed nine new members on Oct 22.
- **Confirmation Sunday:** Eight awesome young people affirmed their baptism on October 31!
- I attended the **synod fall leadership gathering** in Kearney Oct. 23-25.
- I'm grateful for **Vicar Erick's** additional post-internship time and ministry with us over the last three months.

Upcoming Items of Note/Working On:

- **Realm Church Management:** Kathleen, Mandy, and I are working on a timeline for introducing Realm Connect (app and web access) to the staff and congregation starting with orienting staff to the new software in mid-January and beginning to roll out to the congregation at the end of January with launch activities continuing through Lent.
- **Confirmation:** Our Confirmation programming, Discipleship University, continues on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. I plan and teach the content with Sharon coordinating dinner and activities. With Pastor Andrew's arrival, we will transition to him teaching after Christmas.
- Met with **Las Abejitas Advisory Team** on Oct. 2 as we continue to work on any items that need addressing to support Las Abejitas.
- I'm excited to be working on welcoming and onboarding of **Pastor Andrew** this month and look forward to his first weekend with us Nov. 25-26.
- **Advent/Christmas:**
 - Midweek and devotional Advent theme: "Out of Time"
 - We are observing the season of Advent beginning one week early on November 26. Midweek Advent services with Holden evening prayer will be Nov. 29, Dec. 6, and Dec. 13 at noon and 6:30.
 - Longest Night service will be Dec. 20 (6:30 only—no noon service that day).
 - Adding an earlier Christmas Eve service at 1:30 that will be less traditional and more child/family-focused with an aim of reaching out to families who are not yet a part of First Lutheran.
 - No morning services on Dec. 24 with Christmas Eve services at 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, and 7:30.
- **Pre-marriage sessions:** I continue meeting with one couple who will be married at First Lutheran in June 2024.

Calendar:

- Time off: I'll be on vacation Nov. 20-22 (plus Thanksgiving Day and day after Thanksgiving holidays).
- Continuing education: I plan to attend con ed (Crossings Community seminar) January 28-30.

Vicar Report

October 8 – November 14

Preaching: I preached twice during the past month (10/8 and 11/5). Pastor Andrew preached once in the month of October on the weekend that I would have been scheduled to preach.

Teaching: We completed the Bible Study with me as facilitator on 11/8. There is no Bible study scheduled for the week of Nov 12. The group will take a break next week as they decide whether to continue with the ByHeart material this month, wait until the arrival of Pastor Andrew, or pause until the first of the year.

Pastoral Care: I visited Kathy Bruggeman and family at St. Elizabeth. I met with several congregational members in my office.

As all of you know my last day is 11/14. Thank you all for your support and for allowing me to be part of your council meetings. I appreciate learning and growing alongside all of you. I will continue to pray for all of you as leaders, pray for the people of First Lutheran and pray for the ministry of the church that will reach into the lives of others.

God Bless you all.

If you have a desire to stay in touch I can be reached at:

402-660-3491

Revdrhill456@gmail.com

Vicar Erick Hill (He/Him)
First Lutheran Church
1551 South 70th Street
Lincoln, NE 68506
402-488-0919

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT /OCTOBER 2023

Outreach

*Compared to previous month report

FACEBOOK REACH

| | |
|----------------|---------------|
| Page Followers | 944 (+10*) |
| Page Likes | 766 (+3*) |
| Page Visits | 1,551 (+682*) |
| Total Posts | 40 (+3*) |
| Total Reach | 5,193 (+97*) |

Post With Highest Reach 1,024 people
Post on October 23, 2023 - Quilt Blessing
Sunday (photos of quilts in Sanctuary)

INSTAGRAM REACH

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Followers | 206 (+1) |
| Total Profile Visits | 20 (+10*) |
| Total Posts | 17 (-4*) |
| Total Reach | 115 (+9*) |

EMAIL CAMPAIGNS

| | |
|--|------------|
| Total Emails Sent | 12 |
| (Weekly <i>FaithTrek Blast</i> News, Monthly <i>First Look</i> , <i>First Things First</i>) | |
| Average Open Rate of All Emails | 71% (+2%*) |
| <i>First Things First</i> Email | 71% (0%*) |
| Average Open Rate | 26% |
| (+12*) Average Click Rate | |
| Active Subscribers | 548 (+7*) |

WEBSITE

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Total Web Page Views | 2,932 (+488*) |
| Top 3 Page Views | |
| • Home Page | 993 |
| • "Meet Pastor Andrew" News Post | 281 |
| • About Us | 228 |

LIVESTREAM WORSHIP

Facebook Viewing

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| Average # Weekly Live Viewers | 10 (-1*) |
| Average Minutes LiveWatch Time | 00:06:10 |
| Average # Weekly Published Viewers | 20 (-13*) |
| Average Minutes Published Watch Time | 00:03:40 |

Web Page Viewing

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Total Page Views | 153 (+33*) |
| Total People Engaged with Page | 43 (-7*) |

Vimeo Recorded Sermons

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Total Viewers | 31 (+12*) |
| Total Viewers Who Watched | |
| 100% of Recording | 9 (+2*) |
| Number of Downloads | 5 (+4*) |
| Ave. % of Recording Watched | 37% (+1%*) |

Vimeo Full Recorded Worship Service

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Total Viewers | 14 (+11*) |
| Total Viewers Who Watched | |
| 100% of Recording | 2 (+2*) |
| Number of Downloads | 3 (0*) |
| Ave. % of Recording Watched | 28% (-17%) |

OTHER

News Posts (Website)

| | |
|-------------|----|
| Total Posts | 24 |
|-------------|----|

First Glance

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Total Published | 5 |
|-----------------|---|

Vimeo Published Videos

| | |
|-----------------|----|
| Total Published | 17 |
|-----------------|----|

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT / OCTOBER 2023

by Kathleen Simley, Communications Director

COLLABORATION PROJECTS

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Worship & Music | <p>Recruited readers for Sunday worship services, as needed, and followed up with "thank you" messages.</p> <p>Ensured the livestream worship service was set up each week by either Jim Overcash, Brian Niebuhr or myself.</p> <p>Scheduled and ensured 5 Sunday worship services were streamed by Jim Overcash, me or Brian Niebuhr.</p> <p>Uploaded the sermons from the weekly worship services to Vimeo for viewing and shared as Tuesday Facebook posts with the help of member, Barb Johnson-Frank.</p> <p>Uploaded the full worship livestream services to Vimeo and shared in the <i>First Things First</i> e-newsletter each week.</p> |
| FaithTrek | <p>Published and sent 5 Weekly Blast emails to 56 parents of kids, ages 4-5th grade, in collaboration with FaithTrek Coordinator, Laura Grauly.</p> |
| Middle & High School Youth | <p>Published and sent a monthly email to 62 parents of middle and high school youth, in collaboration with Sharon Hardel, Youth & Family Ministry Director.</p> |
| Hospitality & Care | <p>Sent the Greeter Guide to members who were new to greeting beforehand and sent them a "thank you" message after.</p> <p>Provided refreshments for one of the two New Member classes.</p> |
| Adult Forum | <p>Downloaded recordings of weekly Adult Forum sessions and uploaded them to Vimeo for viewing; links to each recording are posted on our website under Adult Forum ministry (https://flclincoln.org/learn).</p> |
| Stephen Ministry | <p>Created a new monthly promotion for Stephen Ministry.</p> |
| Stewardship | <p>Sorted and compiled data from the 107 Discipleship plans submitted by members and have shared it with staff and appropriate leaders. (If you haven't completed your Discipleship Plan yet, please do so at https://forms.gle/r2ERWDzp3mkgYUyM7.)</p> |
| Fall Festival | <p>Attended the Fall Festival and offered support, as needed. I was primarily responsible for taking photos and capturing video during the event. Created a follow-up video that was published on social media, on our webpage and in <i>First Things First</i>.</p> |

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT / OCTOBER 2023

by Kathleen Simley, Communications Director

COLLABORATION PROJECTS (cont)

| | |
|--|---|
| First Friday Jazz | Promoted the November First Friday Jazz concert with posts on the First Lutheran Facebook and First Friday Jazz pages and a paid boosted Facebook post. |
| Nebraska Synod Fall Gathering | Conducted a 3-hour workshop on communications, upon the request of the Nebraska Synod, at the Fall Gathering in Kearney on October 25. Workshop attendees included pastors, Synod staff and one PMA. The workshop was well-received and I have been contacted by several attendees since the workshop for consulting. |

Sharon Hardel's Report to Council October 11, 2023 – November 14, 2023

Highlights of the month:

Discipleship University is going very well. The youth and parents are sharing in conversation using Joe Davis' book of poetry "Remind Me Again" and related Bible stories that Pastor Erin is also pairing with parts of the Small Catechism. They seem to enjoy the meal and opening games as well. Thanks to Michalla Schartz and Linda Bogenreif who have been serving the meals. (Michalla is also doing the shopping and meal planning) We are thankful that the dishwasher has been fixed and that we can go back to using real dishes.

The Affirmation of Baptism Breakfast and worship service went well. We had lots of compliments on the stoles that the students made, so that will be continued in future years. Thanks to all those who contributed breakfast casseroles and / or pastries for the breakfast. It was nice to have a full activity center and sanctuary for these festivities.

Youth Group and Sunday morning Learning is ongoing. Several youth helped over fall break with food distribution at the Center for People and Nov. 12 we will provide lunch at the Lutheran Center and then one of the students will lead us in a Bible Study and scavenger hunt around campus.

I attended 2 choral concerts at South East and a Band Competition at East to cheer on several of our youth. Gay Sutter joined me as part of the First Lutheran Pep Squad for one concert and the Band Competition. Kristi Fisher joined us at the Band Competition. I met High School seniors for coffee and conversation on Nov. 2 since they were off school. November 10-12 offers a Middle School retreat at Camp, we have 1 youth registered and 3 on the waiting list.

I registered 10 youth, 2 young adults, and 3 adults to attend the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans in July 2024 and was able to secure flights for \$388.10 / person for the trip. We will begin fundraising efforts with the First Friday Jazz event on Jan. 5...Stay tuned.

I secured 10 spots for the Middle School summer trip to Louisville, KY in June of 2024 and am collecting registration forms from youth. It looks like we will need to add a few more spots once everyone turns in their forms. I believe we will have at least 9 youth and 3 adults going on the trip.

I met with the Lincoln Youth Workers on Oct. 12 for conversation and to work on plans for upcoming youth activities. Our next joint event will be Jan. 5 – a lock in.

I participated in a Safe Sanctuary Synod webinar on Oct. 19. Look for a training session for all volunteers working with children / youth in January as well as renewed background checks for many to stay in compliance with our congregational policy.

I attended the Leadership Gathering in Kearney Oct. 23 – 25. I got to spend some time talking with and getting to know Pastor Andrew as well as many other pastors and deacons in the Nebraska Synod.

Coffee Talk and Gather and Gab continue to meet weekly. Our coffee talk group had the privilege of meeting 3 mo. old Oliver Janssen (Kim and Steve Janssen's grandson), and we were all excited to get to hold him and look forward to him joining us again...if you need a "baby fix" we meet on Mondays at 1:30 in the welcome area. (How precious is this pic...)

I met with Karrie Lickliter from Our Saviours Lutheran Nov. 9 to discuss the ELCA Extravaganza and a mini VBS over Christmas Break. Ian Hartfield from Sheridan also joined us, and we worked a bit more on the combined Lockin scheduled for Jan. 5. I also met with Laura Gaulty on Nov. 7 to work on the Gratitude Sunday activities and the mini VBS over winter break.



The Thrivent 500 Can Challenge is underway. We already have over 200 items collected. We will continue to collect food items throughout the month of November.

Projects Working On:

1. Learning and Youth Group programming and Gratitude Sunday Nov. 19
2. Winter Break local service opportunities / Intergen VBS Jan. 2 - 4
3. Summer Youth Accompaniments Trips
4. January Prayer / Meditation opportunity to go with Synod theme Go and....Rest

Keeping you all in prayer,

Sharon Hardel

Council Report November 2023

We here at FaithTrek are a busy lot. Our new classroom for 3-4 year olds, staffed by Erin Phister, has been well attended. Some of these little cherubs were on hand last week to film a scene for the upcoming Christmas pageant, December 17th. As you will see, the “big kids” were adorable and kind with them. We had a HUGE turnout for the filming, even with the Good Life Halfsy. We ran out of sheep heads for the costumes! I decorated the activity center with “millions” of stars for the scene- and hopefully there will be no falling stars until after the Dec. 17th pageant. I continue to work with Judy Bailey to organize and rehearse for the whole congregation intergenerational extravaganza.

I gave the children’s sermon for the 500 can challenge issued by Thrivant for the Lincoln Lutheran Food Pantry. I LOVE that the cherubs are comfortable enough with me to ask those really hard questions- like “Did you steal that shopping cart?”.

Coming up on the 19th will be Gratitude Sunday, with intergenerational crafts for the congregation. The FaithTrekkers will have music from 9:30-10, then we’ll all go down to the activity center to join y’all. Please be prepared to have a conversation and to share a craft with the cherubs. Get to know them-they’re awesome!

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Gaulty



Director of Worship and Music

October 2023

Sunday Musicians

| | | | |
|------------|---|--|----------------|
| October 1 | COMMITMENT SUNDAY | HOLY BAPTISM (10:45) | NOISY OFFERING |
| 8:15 | Jazz Team (Bryce Anderson, Jay Sears, Christopher Simley, Martha Tanner, Scott Vicroy, Bennett Bacon), Aden Niebuhr, Erin Niebuhr, Xander Niebuhr | | |
| 10:45 | Adult Choir, Jazz Team (Dakota Fisher, Spencer Janssen, Jay Sears, Christopher Simley, Jenna Troutman, Bennett Bacon), Bill Peterson, Judy Peterson | | |
| October 8 | 8:15 | Piano Quintet (The Niebuhr Family), Will Niebuhr (vocal solo), Erin Niebuhr (piano) | |
| | 10:45 | Adult Choir, String Ensemble (Kaitlyn Brock, Konnor Garrett, Anna Kruse, Kayla Peters, Jenna Troutman, Bennett Bacon), Anna Kruse (viola solo) | |
| October 15 | both | Spirit Ringers | |
| | 8:15 | Kristi Fisher, Christine Carman | |
| | 10:45 | Adult Choir, Ann Nitzel, Aden Niebuhr | |
| October 22 | NEW MEMBER WELCOME | | |
| | 8:15 | Dawn and Kaitlyn Brock | |
| | 10:45 | Faith Trek Children, Adult Choir, Pr. Bill & Judy Peterson | |
| October 29 | REFORMATION SUNDAY | AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM | |
| | Both | Brass (Tony Anderson, Spencer Janssen, Steve Janssen, RJ Metter, Matt Reckmeyer) | |
| | 8:15 | Aden Niebuhr, Erin Niebuhr, Xander Niebuhr | |
| | 10:45 | Adult Choir, Liana Sandin | |

Saturday Musicians

October 7, 14, 28 – Christine Carman October 21 - Kristina Hanson

Overview

Music: Faith Trek children shared their music for the first time – very well. It was quite uncertain how many children will come as prior Sundays had very slim participants due to busy fall schedule for the families (Pumpkin Run, other sports commitments, fall break, etc.). It has been challenging for the music directors, Jan Modica and Erin Niebuhr, to conduct rehearsals. But the outcome was wonderful. It was so exciting to see them joyfully praising God AND many children came up for the Kid's Message time. Thanks to Laura Gaulty and Sharon Hardel for allowing music staff to take a part in their education hour.

Thanks to **Brass, Jazz Team, and String Ensemble** for their ministry to enrich our worship experiences. Some of them serve more than one group – which means they are at church for many rehearsal days. We welcomed new faces in Jazz Team. The Niebuhr family contributed their gifts for many worship services this month! These bountiful talented musicians at First Lutheran make the identity of this church.

Worship Assistants: 10:45 Usher Coordinator /Head Usher Search: We are searching this important position starting in January, 2024. Thanks to Don and Peg Westerhold for their ministries and setting a good foundation.

Altar Guild: Leaders of the Altar Guild reorganized the monthly structure to the Sunday-by-Sunday system and it has been successful for more people to be able to take a part. It significantly reduced commitment burden. We hope to grow the team.

Respectfully submitted,

Masako Bacon

Soli deo gloria

**First Lutheran Church
Property Committee Minutes October 24, 2023**

Attending: Chair Norman Kempf, Steve Lenzen, Bob Batterman, Steve Doolittle, Rod Johnson, Les Carlson

Meeting time: 7:00 PM

Opening prayer: Rod Johnson

Minute taker: Les

September PC meeting minutes were approved.

Agenda:

1. Steve L reported that after several follow-up visits from Bats to Rats no additional instances of bat droppings have been found in FLC.
2. Norman highlighted an appreciation letter from Lee Rockwell regarding the PC's participation in the Fall Festival.
3. Steve L conveyed that the dishwasher has been fixed, a circuit board was replaced.
4. Steve L related that 20% more has been spent on energy this year compared to last year. Mandy is adjusting FLC thermostats down. Rod noted that energy use and costs have both increased this year.
5. Considerable discussion about various aspects of the FLC pre-school/day care center. There were questions from PC members about increases in energy use attributable to the pre-school/day care center and status of the contract between FLC and the day care center.
6. Steve D noted the extra rugs in the FLC entryway could be a tripping hazard. These rugs and the altar in the activity center were moved to the FLC basement.
7. Steve D said that WELCA has funds that are to be spent on the kitchen and have asked for suggestions on what might be purchased with these funds. Steve D and Steve L were asked to develop possibilities. Steve L sent a list to Steve D and Les.
8. Norman asked Steve L to visit with Pastor Erin about disposition of marble blocks by the storage shed.
9. Discussion about a letter from General Fire and Safety regarding a proposal for conducting certain inspections of FLC equipment was tabled until the November PC meeting.

Prayer November: Les Carlson

Note taker: Les

Fellowship Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 10, 2023

Attending: Judy Batterman, Pat DeWald, Cindy Schuster, Carol Tesar, Linda Bogenreif, Karen Moser, Judy Bailey, Carlene Falos, Gordon Wolfe, Linda Carlson

Devotions: Gordon shared the devotions for this month. Next month's devotions: Carlene Falos

Review of Event: Fall Festival on October 1 - Committee members agreed that it was a very good time, with several positive stories from the event. Three of our members were on the Festival planning committee, and because activity slowed down before 3:00, they may suggest that in the future the event might be a bit shorter, perhaps ending at 2:30.

Upcoming Events:

1. The candidate for Associate Pastor will be at First Lutheran on October 21 and 22, and the Fellowship Committee has been asked to serve a **reception on Sunday, October 22, between services**. (Because we will do this, Steve Lenzen has agreed to serve coffee and donut holes on the third Sunday, our usual time.) Everyone on the committee who is able will bring food is asked to do so. Suggestions include cinnamon rolls, brownies, and the like. We all need to be at the kitchen to plate food by **9:00 a.m.**
2. **Town Hall Meeting & Potluck on November 5 at noon**. We will set up and serve. Be at the kitchen by **11:00 a.m.** Note: There will be no 8:15 service that day.
3. General reminders for all: a) October 29 at noon we will have a Congregational Meeting to vote on calling the Associate Pastor; b) Advent will include four Wednesdays, beginning on November 29.
4. **Halloween Party – October 29, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.** Order of events: Costume Parade, decorating cupcakes, games, supper. The committee agreed upon the following activities/games:
 - a. Music playlist for costume parade will be made by Judy Bailey.
 - b. Musical "chairs" – we will use paper pumpkins instead of chairs.
 - c. Pin the "Boo" on the ghost – Karen Moser will create the ghost on cardboard.
 - d. Halloween Bingo – Judy Batterman will create the bingo boards and tokens.
 - e. Crafts – Pat DeWald has purchased kits for Halloween decorations.
 - f. Flash & Freeze Dance – dance until music stops and freeze in place.
 - g. Guess the Candy Corns in a Jar – Pat DeWald will prepare (and count).

Supper menu: hotdogs & buns, chips, condiments, apple slices, cupcakes, lemonade.

The committee needs to be in the Activity Center by 3:00 for set-up. Registration deadline: October 25.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, November 14, at 5:30 p.m. Devotion will be given by Carlene Falos.

Submitted by Linda Carlson, Secretary