

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL  
MEETING AGENDA  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2024  
Meeting in Upper Room

- A. Opening Devotions – Pastor Erin
  
- B. Approve Consent Agenda
  - 1. Meeting Agenda
  - 2. Congregational Minutes – August 13, 2024
  - 3. Parochial Report
  - 4. Staff Reports
  - 5. Committee Reports
  
- C. Action Agenda
  - 1. Approve use of Contingency Funds for Heating Repairs
  - 2. Approve submission of Endowment Fund Constitutional Amendments
  
- D. Discussion Agenda
  - 1. Growing Young Follow-up Action
  - 2. Council hosting Fall Festival Games
  - 3. First Things First and First Stories Newsletter
  
- E. Financial Report
  
- F. Open Comments
  
- G. Closing Prayer
  
- H. Adjournment

Executive Committee Meeting  
First Lutheran Church  
September 3, 2024

Present: Pastor Erin, Pastor Andrew, Lee, Judy, Scott, Emily

Opening Prayer: Pastor Andrew

Topics for discussion:

1. **Opening Prayer:** Pastor Andrew
2. **Finance/Budget Analysis- Scott**  
Scott discussed finances and different routes to take for options of covering expenses. The Exec committee is going to bring a proposal to the Council on Tuesday of our ideas.
3. **Growing Young Work Group**  
We discussed multiple ideas on how to implement this into our congregation. Several different methods to take what we've learned and having multiple people work on it such as the staff, adult forum, vitality group, and maybe eventually a specific team.
4. **Staffing Review/Positions Description**  
We discussed that the staff is updating their job descriptions for our information to know their exact duties. We will discuss as a group if we can provide input.
5. **FLC Endowment- Constitution Amendment/ Special congregations meeting October 27, also include Council size reduction**  
We talked about combining both meetings to vote on the Amendment and the Council size reduction to be productive with time.
6. Council sponsor Fall Festival Game- two members per hour- total of six  
We are going to remind the council to please participate in this and gauge everyone's interest in volunteering at the festival. This is highly encouraged.
7. **Other**  
None
8. **Closing Prayer**  
We closed with the Lord's Prayer at 7:56 p.m.

Submitted by Emily Sears, Council Secretary

## Parochial Report

	Baptized	Confirmed
1. MEMBERSHIP as of August 1, 2024	1095	907

Members received:

- A. by baptism (15 years and under)
- B. by baptism (adult)
- C. transfer from ELCA congregation
- 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		
C. transfer to other Lutheran congregation		
D. transfer to non-Lutheran congregation		
E. other and statistical adjustment		

MEMBERSHIP as of August 31, 2024	1094	906
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Average Attendance for August

<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>	<u>2024</u>
365	371	362	357	356	330	online	345	265	239	226

Added:

- Baptism:
- Affirmation:
- Transfer:
- Other:

Removed:

- Death: Rev. Mary Jensen
- Transfer:
- Dropped Due to Inactivity:
- Other:

Notes: [Live Stream average for August 2024 is: no data available](#)

## Congregational Council Meeting

First Lutheran Church

August 13, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pastor Erin Heidelberger, Lee Rockwell, Judy Batterman, Kari Hoeft, Karen Statham, Scott Williamson, Jenna Troutman, Amy Harrison, Patrick Hayden-Roy, Rod Johnson, Dave Pfister, Bev White

MEMBERS ABSENT: John Bonaiuto, Emily Sears, Pastor Andrew Kitzing, Brandon Wiebelhaus, Jennifer Wemhoff

MEETING RECORDER: Ann Carlson

A. OPENING DEVOTION AND PRAYER:

The meeting was called to order by Council President Lee Rockwell at 7:00. Pastor Erin led the opening devotion and prayer.

B. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Meeting agenda
2. Congregational Council Minutes – June 11, 2024
3. Parochial Report
4. Staff Reports
5. Committee Reports

It was moved by Patrick and seconded by Dave to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed.

C. *GROWING YOUNG* VIDEO PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION:

Selected comments from Council Members after watching the video:

- More people in the congregation should see the video.
- Should a small working group be created to discuss ideas to get more young people involved in our congregation?
- An assessment is available through *Growing Young*. It would be a survey as to what we do well and where we should focus.
- There are many young families with children in Las Abejitas.

D. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION AGENDA:

1. Rate for Las Abejitas additional classroom space  
The rate for the Las Abejitas classroom space is \$150 per month.
2. New cleaning contract
  - The new cleaning company, Adams Cleaning, is doing a great job.
  - The ongoing cost is not any greater than that of the previous cleaners (\$2,500/month). If we were to pay in advance, there would be a discount.

- At this time, we do not know what line item in the budget the cleaning contract falls into.
- The cost of deep cleaning the Activity Center floor is \$1,500. This was not included in the original price estimate. The church would pay \$750 as the cleaning company took ownership of the omission.

### 3. Discipleship Coordinator Position

One idea for the discipleship coordinator position would be to create an internship type program.

- It would be a great opportunity to connect with folks at the Lutheran Center.
- The intern would receive a stipend.
- The intern would collaborate with visitors and new members as well as volunteers.
- The intern would work 15-20 hours per week.
- Kari mentioned that one church found grant funding for such a position.
- How would this relate to our current staffing?
- Council members had a favorable reaction to this idea.

### 4. Congregational Committees FY2025 program requests

Council members stated that it is great to see what various committees are thinking. It is a nice start. The requests will go to the Budget Committee for review.

The Mortgage and Property Committee list is significant. Scott is looking at various options as to how to fund the needs.

Council members asked about the status of the insurance claim on the roof.

Church staff has also been contributing to the budget process.

### 5. October 27 Town Hall and Special Congregational Meeting

The Special Congregational Meeting will include the congregation taking a vote to reduce the number of Council members and possibly some amendments to Appendix B of the First Lutheran Church constitution.

### 6. Fall Festival Update

Kayla from Las Abejitas will be involved with the Fall Festival, which will be held on Sunday, October 6.

## E. FINANCIAL REPORT:

YTD receipts through July 31, 2024, are \$11,323 over budget; YTD disbursements through July 31, 2024, are \$12,097 over budget; YTD deficit through July 31, 2024, is \$774.

Scott again mentioned that we carried \$41,000 over from our last year's budget and that we are continuing to lose ground.

Scott will review our options for raising funds to cover the mortgage as well as the list of needs identified by the Property Committee. He will send out something by the end of the week.

F. OPEN COMMENTS: None.

G. CLOSING PRAYER: Pastor Erin led the closing prayer.

H. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 8:57.

MEETING DATE: September 10, 2024

SUBJECT: Use of Contingency Funds for Heating Repairs and related upgrade of software controls

PROPOSED ACTION: Approve the use of contingency funds to repair the heating side of HVAC for multipurpose and commons area and to upgrade the software controls related to said repair.

BACKGROUND: Property Committee has provided a list of repairs we are facing, and these two items are a 'must-do' before winter. In order to pay for this maintenance without borrowing more money or initiating another capital campaign, it is proposed that we use FLC's Contingency Fund.

The contingency fund is a combination of remaining PPP funds and operating surplus, both from 2020. The current balance of the Contingency Fund is \$68,761.66.

The repair estimates for the HVAC is \$22,254 from MMC, and \$38,750 for the software upgrade from Integrated Controls, totaling \$61,004. There may be additional repair costs incurred during installation related to drywall, painting and any other 'unforeseen surprises'.

COST: \$61,004+/-

SPONSOR: Executive Committee

MEETING DATE: September 10, 2024

PROPOSED ACTION: Approve the First Lutheran Endowment Fund amendments within the congregational constitution for submission and approval at the Special Congregational Meeting October 27, 2024.

BACKGROUND: The First Lutheran Endowment Fund Board is requesting several “housekeeping” amendments to Appendix B of the First Lutheran constitution which reflect current operational board procedures. The proposed amendments are contained in the attached pages.

SPONSOR: Endowment Board and Executive Committee



*The purpose of the First Lutheran Church Endowment Board is to grow the portfolio such that the annual distributions do not expend any of the principal of the fund and the portfolio meets a socially responsible investment strategy. It shall be the policy of the Board to distribute up to 6% of the preceding three-year average balance, while never expending the donated principal of the fund. The Board determined that the current method of distributions coming from ELCA Ministry Growth Fund are not in conflict with the language of the First Lutheran Church By-Laws.*

### **First Lutheran Church Endowment Board Agenda**

Meeting Date – Wednesday, April 10, at 7:00 pm First Lutheran Church

Present: Ann Carlson, Steve Doolittle, Karen Peppmuller, Madalyn Popken, Tracy Way

Opening Devotion – Karen Peppmuller

Karen provided opening thoughts and prayer.

- A. Review of Board Members:
  - Ann Carlson – 2<sup>nd</sup> Term, 2<sup>nd</sup> Year
  - Karen Peppmuller – 2<sup>nd</sup> Term, 1<sup>st</sup> Year
  - Steve Doolittle – 1<sup>st</sup> Term, 3<sup>rd</sup> Year
  - Tracy Way – 1<sup>st</sup> Term, 3<sup>rd</sup> Year
  - Madalyn Popken – 1<sup>st</sup> Term, 1<sup>st</sup> Year

Reviewed above list, no changes. Ann provided updated contact information. Tracy's email was corrected.

- B. Approve Agenda

Motion by Steve to approve as presented, second by Tracy. All in favor. Motion approved.

- C. Approve Minutes of Board Meeting on February 26, 2024

Motion by Steve to approve as presented, second by Tracy. All in favor. Motion approved.

- D. Financial Report – Karen Peppmuller, Treasurer

Karen reviewed the February 29, 2024 Endowment Fund Financial Report. Date on report was changed from 12/31/2024 to 2/29/2024. Revised copy will be attached to minutes. The total value of the Endowment Fund as of 2/29/2024 was \$729,507.62. A \$25,000 7-month CD with US Bank has been purchased. Quarterly distributions were reviewed. Motion to approve by Tracy, second by Steve. All in favor. Motion approved.

- E. Scholarships

- 1. Review scholarship applications and determine the dollar amount to award per applicant.

The 11 applicants who applied for scholarships were discussed and it was decided to give \$1,000 to each applicant. Motion was made by Steve and seconded by Karen. All in favor. Motion approved. Tracy will send an email to each applicant thanking them for applying and notifying them of the amount to be given. Money will be sent the first week of August.

F. Endowment Fund Contribution Education (i.e., beneficiary on retirement accounts)

Tracy discussed and had no update. A suggestion was made to possibly have this as an Adult Forum topic. Karen was going to make contact with Patrick Hayden-Roy who is on the Adult Forum Committee about this.

G. ELCA Investor Call

1. The next call is April 26 at 11:15am

Ann had already sent out the Investor Call Information to Board Members. If anyone is unable to attend, a recording will be available.

H. Agenda Placeholder – First Lutheran Constitution Appendix B Updates

There is no motion yet, but it is coming. Council may be soon approving some fiscal internal controls for congregations which may affect this committee and its accountability.

I. Internal Review Placeholder for 2024 financial information

Bryan Hanson has already reviewed the Endowment Fund Financial Records and has signed off on them. The Committee has a letter dated 2/12/24 to that effect.

J. Agenda Placeholder – Mailbox Review – Karen

A letter was received in the mailbox from Rev. Otto B. Schultz requesting funds for a start-up project to support recovery in behaviorally impaired clergy. After discussion, it was decided to wait until the November meeting to make a decision on whether not to approve/deny request and the amount. Ann will reply to Rev. Schultz letting him know. A Meals on Wheels flyer was also received in the mailbox and there was discussion on whether or not this may be a possibility for money distribution.

K. 2024 Tentative Meeting Schedule

1. August 14 – regular meeting
2. November 13 – review year end fundraising requests and determine what should be distributed beyond what was given out for scholarships, regular meeting.

Meeting dates were noted.

L. Other

There have recently been several larger contributions to the Endowment Fund. There was discussion about sending thank you notes to the contributors. Karen offered to do this.

M. Closing Prayer – Karen Peppmuller

Karen provided closing thoughts and prayer.

US Bank Contacts – Johnny Chacon [johnny.chacon@usbank.com](mailto:johnny.chacon@usbank.com) and Burgundy Hajek [burgundy.hajek@usbank.com](mailto:burgundy.hajek@usbank.com)

ELCA Ministry Growth Fund Contact – Gregory Kramer [gregory.kramer@elca.org](mailto:gregory.kramer@elca.org). The planned giving contact (Omaha) is Sarah Callahan [scallahan@lutherangiving.org](mailto:scallahan@lutherangiving.org)

# FLC Endowment BD Financials: 2/29/24

K. Peppmuller

## ELCA Ministry Growth Fund Activity & Balance

Updated 04/09/24

Date	Additions	Withdrawals	Reinvest - MMA	Change in Market Value	Market Value	Distribution	Cumulative Distributions	Annual Distribution Projection
3/31/2023	-	-	-	24,700.42	623,736.96	(6,563.70)	(6,563.70)	
6/30/2023	-	-	-	14,867.49	648,437.38	(6,563.70)	(13,127.40)	
9/30/2023	-	-	-	(21,957.94)	663,304.87	(6,563.70)	(19,691.10)	
12/31/2023	-	-	-	42,397.16	641,346.93	(6,563.70)	(26,254.80)	
1/31/2024	-	-	-	1,819.64	683,744.09	-	-	
2/29/2024	-	-	-	7,734.03	685,563.73	-	-	
					693,297.76	-	-	

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2024 YTD	-			9,553.67	693,297.76	-		

### US Bank

Date	Deposits: Contributions	Deposits: General	Deposits: ELCA MGF	Transferred to ELCA MGF	Distributions	Interest	Balance	Outstanding Checks	Balance Net of O/S Checks	US Bank Statement	Recon Variance
1/31/2024	1,290.00					0.31	34,819.27				
2/29/2024	100.00					0.28	36,109.58	1,000.00	37,109.58	37,109.58	-
3/31/2024							36,209.86		36,209.86	36,209.86	-
4/30/2024											
5/31/2024											
6/30/2024											
7/31/2024											
8/31/2024											
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Activity 2024	1,390.00	-	-	-	-	0.59	36,209.86		36,209.86		

2024 remaining MGF distributions	26,255.00
Expected cash balance	62,464.86

<b>Total Portfolio</b>
<b>729,507.62</b>

Principal	614,808.36
In Excess	114,699.26

### Disbursements in 2024:

Date	Ck#	Payee	Amount	Cleared	Date Cleared	Outstanding

### Projected Distributions:

Distribute %	Distribute \$'s	Scholarships	ELCA Missions	Community Outreach
3.0%	\$ 21,004.57			
4.0%	\$ 28,006.09			
5.0%	\$ 35,007.61			

Average 3 Yr Balance	
Balance	\$
12/31/2021	736,167.25
12/31/2022	645,726.05
12/31/2023	718,563.36
Average	700,152.22

## APPENDIX B

### RESOLUTION TO IMPLEMENT THE ENDOWMENT FUND:

“WHEREAS, Christian stewardship involves the faithful management of all the gifts God has given to humankind -- time, talents, the created ~~world~~world, and money, including accumulated, ~~inherited~~inherited, and appreciated resources; and

WHEREAS, Christians can give to the work of the church through bequests in wills, charitable remainder and other trusts, charitable gift annuities, assignment of life insurance, and transfers of property (cash, stocks, bonds, real estate); and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the congregation to encourage, receive and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with the loyalty and devotion to their Lord expressed by the grantors and in accord with the policies of this congregation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this congregation, in annual meeting assembled on December 13, 1987, approve and establish on the records of the church a new and separate fund to be known as THE ENDOWMENT FUND (hereafter called the “FUND”) of the First Evangelical Lutheran: Church, 1551 South 70th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska; into which shall be placed bequests in wills, charitable remainder and other trusts, charitable gift annuities, assignment of life insurance, and transfers of property (cash, stocks, bonds, real estate) given to the FUND~~S~~. Any undesignated bequest to FLC shall be distributed 10% to the Endowment Fund with the remainder distributed by a majority vote of the FLC Church Council.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the purpose of this FUND is to enhance the mission of First Evangelical Lutheran Church apart from the general operation of the congregation; that no portion of the income generated by the FUND shall be used for the annual operating budget of the congregation; that all principal amounts will be retained and only the income expended~~;~~;

BE IT ~~FURTHER RESOLVED;~~FURTHER RESOLVED that the Endowment Fund Board of directors (hereinafter called the “BOARD”) shall be the custodian of the ~~FUND;~~FUND.

BE IT ~~FURTHER RESOLVED;~~FURTHER RESOLVED that the following Plan of Operation sets forth the administration and management of the FUND~~;~~”

#### 1. THE BOARD

~~“~~The BOARD shall consist of five directors, all of whom shall be voting members of First Evangelical Lutheran Church. Except as herein limited, the term of each director shall be three (3) years. Upon adoption of this resolution by the congregation, it shall elect five (5) directors to the BOARD: two (2) for a term of three (3) years; two (2) for a term of two (2) years; and one (1) for a term of one (1) year. Thereafter, at each annual meeting, the congregation shall elect the necessary number for a term of three years. Members shall be eligible for reelection ~~To an additional~~additional three--year term--. After a lapse of one (1) year, former BOARD directors may be reelected. Either the president or vice president of the Congregation Council shall be an advisory non-voting member of the BOARD. The ~~Congregation Council~~Nominating Committee

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shall nominate for the BOARD in the same manner used for nominating Congregational Council members. Nominations may also be ~~m~~ade from the floor at the annual meeting. In the event of a vacancy on the BOARD, the

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~~vacancy on the BOARD, the~~ Congregational Council shall appoint a director to fill the vacancy until the next annual meeting of the congregation, at which time the congregation shall elect a director to ~~fulfill~~ fill the term of the vacancy.

The BOARD shall meet at least quarterly, or more frequently as deemed by it in the best interest of the FUND.

A quorum shall consist of three (3) directors. A majority present and voting shall carry any motion or resolution.

The BOARD shall elect from its membership a chairperson, ~~financial secretary, and treasurer~~ and recording secretary. The chairperson, or member designated by the chairperson, shall preside at all BOARD meetings. The chairperson ~~or secretary~~ shall ~~esign~~ sign all disbursement checks.

The recording secretary shall maintain complete and accurate minutes of all meetings of the BOARD and supply a copy thereof to each director of the BOARD. Each director shall keep a complete copy of ~~minutes~~ the minutes to be delivered to his or her successor. The secretary shall also supply a copy of the minutes to the Congregation Council after they have been approved at an Endowment Board Meeting.

The ~~financial secretary- treasurer~~ shall ~~assist the congregation's treasurer by maintaining~~ maintain complete and accurate books of accounts for the FUND and shall sign ~~checks and all other~~ necessary documents on behalf of the congregation in furtherance of the purposes of the FUND. The books shall be ~~audited~~ reviewed annually by ~~a certified public accountant or other appropriate person who is not a member of the BOARD-~~ the Audit Committee or congregation's accountant.

The BOARD shall report on ~~a quarterly~~ an as requested basis to the Congregation Council and, at each annual ~~or special~~ meeting of the congregation, shall ~~render a full and complete audited account of the administration of the FUND during the preceding year.~~

The BOARD may request other members of the congregation to serve as advisory members and, at the expense of Endowment Fund income, may provide for such professional counseling on investments or legal matters as it deems to be in the best interest of the FUND.

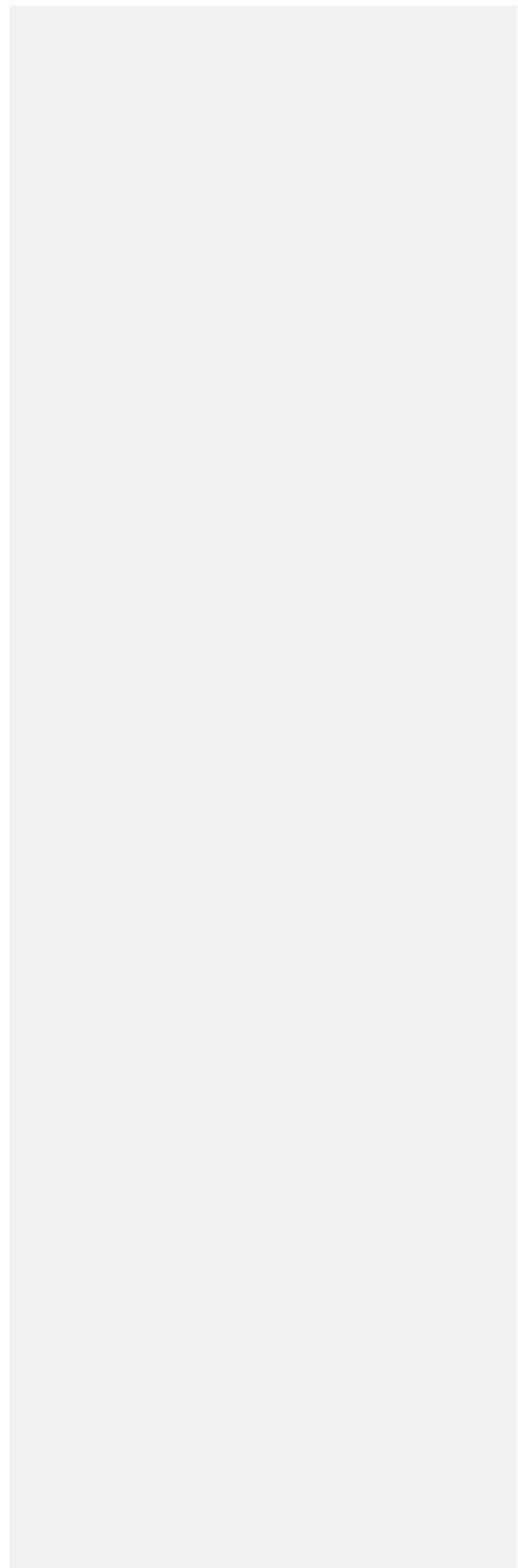
Directors of the BOARD shall not be liable for any losses which may be incurred upon the investment of the assets of the FUND except to the extent such losses shall have been caused by bad faith or gross negligence. No director shall be personally liable as long as he/she acts in good faith and with ordinary prudence. Each director shall be liable only for his/her own willful misconduct or ~~omissions, and~~ omissions and shall not be liable for the acts of omissions of any other director.

No director shall engage in any ~~self dealing~~ self-dealing or transactions with the FUND in which the director has direct or indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from any conduct in which his/her personal interests would conflict with the interest of the FUND.

All assets are to be held in the name of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church Endowment Fund.

All recommendations to hold, sell, exchange, rent, lease, transfer, convert, invest, reinvest, and

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all other respects to manage and control the assets of the FUND, including stocks, bonds, debentures, mortgages, notes, or other securities, as in their judgment and discretion they deem wise and prudent, are to be made by the BOARD in accordance with an investment policy approved by the Congregation Council.

## 2. DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME

“The BOARD shall determine what is principal and income according to accepted accounting procedures and the investment policy.

Approximately \$25,000 presently in the endowment account of First Evangelical Lutheran Church shall be transferred to the First Evangelical Lutheran Church Endowment Fund on December 13, 1987, after which the income generated from the investment of the principal shall be expended as provided in this plan or operation.

Income from the FUND shall be distributed by the Board annually and such other times as deemed necessary and/or feasible to accomplish the following purposes:

A minimum of 10% for scholarships or grants to members of First Evangelical Lutheran Church or others approved by the Congregation Council or the congregation for the purpose of attending college, seminary, nursing or medical school; for church-related camping or leadership conferences; or such other training which enables members of this congregation to grow in Christian faith and service to God’s people.

A minimum of 10% for outreach into the community, including, but not limited to, grants to ELCA colleges, seminaries, social service agencies, ~~institutions~~institutions, and agencies to which this congregation relates, and to special programs designed for those persons in our parish area who are in spiritual and/or economic need.

A minimum of 10% for missions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at home and overseas, including, but not limited to, grants to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for new mission development in North America, professional leadership, educational ministries, world mission and ecumenism, TV evangelism, and capital financing.

And for causes and programs, which at the discretion of the BOARD, are consistent with the FUND purpose.

## 3. AMENDING THE RESOLUTION

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any amendment to this resolution, which will change, alter, or amend the purpose for which the FUND is established shall be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the members present at an annual meeting of the congregation or at a special meeting called specifically for the purpose of amending this resolution.”



#### 4. DISPOSITION OR TRANSFER OF FUND

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in the event First Evangelical Lutheran Church ceases to exist either through merger or dissolution, deposition or transfer of the FUND shall be at the discretion of the Congregation Council in conformity with the approved congregational constitution and in consultation with the bishop of the synod to which this congregation belongs at such time. Consultation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be desirable for continuation of Endowment Fund obligations.”

#### 5. ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION

“This resolution, recommended by the Church Council and accepted by the congregation at a legally called congregational meeting, is hereby adopted.

First Evangelical Lutheran Church By /s/ Andy Kuhn

and /s/ Carlene Falos

Dated this 13th day of ~~December~~December 1987.”

#### **ENDOWMENT BOARD INVESTMENT POLICY**

*Amended: July 10, 2018*

*Approved by the congregation at the annual meeting on January 26, 2003, as an amendment to the Congregational Resolution implementing the Endowment Fund which was approved by the congregation on December 13, 1987.*

The First Lutheran Church Congregation Council will review the First Lutheran Church Endowment Board’s Investment Policy as it relates to the First Lutheran Church Endowment Fund at least annually. The purpose of such reviews will be, among other things, to evaluate the performance of the Fund in light of its investment objectives, to consider whether changes in the investment policies or restrictions might help the Fund meet its investment objectives in the future, and to evaluate the impact the Fund is having in meeting its distributive function.

##### A. Investment Objective

The purpose of the Endowment Fund is to grow the portfolio such that the annual distributions do not expend any of the principal of the fund and the portfolio meets a socially responsible investment strategy.

##### B. Income Distribution

It shall be the policy of the Endowment Board to distribute up to 6% of the preceding ~~three~~year~~three-year~~ average balance, while never expending the principal of the fund; for the

purposes described in the resolution passed by First Lutheran Church congregation on December 13, 1987. (See Appendix B, Section 2).

C. Gifts

The Fund shall sell upon receipt of all securities and real estate received, except when such investments are compatible with the Board's Investment Policy.

D. Investment Manager

The Endowment Board has determined that the endowment funds investment portfolio has reached a point whereby it is prudent to hire an investment manager (Approved by Congregation Council, Dec. 19, 2017). The Board will use appropriate means to advertise, evaluate and select an investment manager. The investment manager chosen would have to be approved by the Congregation Council. The investment manager would be held accountable by the Endowment Board to adhere to the investment manager policy guideline, unless the Board agrees that the manager's own guidelines align with the intent of the document. *(See Investment Manager Policy Guideline at <http://www.flclincn.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Invest-Policy-Guideline-FLC-Endow-May-2018.pdf>).*



**Vitality Initiative Team update:** The FLC Vitality Initiative Team continues its Phase 2 work of interviewing neighbors and community members. We'll gather the information from those interviews and identify some "ah-has" that are bubbling to the surface as we filter that information through biblical and theological lenses. We next meet with the synod staff and our cohort of churches on September 15.

**Text study:** I attended a clergy text study in Ashland on August 15 (we meet every 6 weeks and cover several weeks of texts).

**Boundaries Training:** I attended a day-long boundaries training workshop on August 19. This is a requirement of all ELCA clergy.

**Bible milestone:** I held a "getting to know your Bible" workshop for third-graders and their parents on September 1, and we presented the NIV Adventure Bible to third-graders in worship and also gave copies of the Spark Story Bible to our three-year-olds. Thank you to all who highlighted favorite verses and wrote notes in the Adventure Bibles.

**Stewardship and Commitment Sunday:** The fall stewardship season will kick off soon and run September 15-October 6. We're using synod resources to plan this year's focus around the *Cultivating Love* theme with weekly subthemes of *Cultivating Connection*, *Cultivating Community*, and *Cultivating Grace*. We have a guest preacher lined up for Commitment Sunday on October 6 (no Saturday service to encourage all to come on Commitment Sunday and Fall Festival). A reminder to council members that you will help hand out stewardship packets before and after both worship services next Sunday, the 15<sup>th</sup>.

**All-Church Retreat:** Our third all-church retreat will be held on Saturday, September 21 at Camp Carol Joy Holling. The retreat info page and registration are live on our website. While Sharon is on sabbatical, I'm the point person for the retreat.

**FLC 101:** I will hold classes for newcomers interested in membership on September 15 and 22, and we'll hold our new member welcome on the weekend of October 5-6.

**Reformation Sunday:** We're making plans for some Reformation Sunday (October 27) festivities to help us celebrate Reformation Day. We'll also hold a community meal following 10:45 worship and a special council meeting to "reform" the size of the council and pass updates to the endowment board bylaws. Due to the Good Life Halfsy scheduled that day, we will only have one service that day at 10:45.

**Pastoral acts:** I officiated at the memorial service for Rev. Dr. Mary Jensen at First Lutheran on August 31.

**Calendar:** Continuing education reading week October 7-13 in the Black Hills, SD (one Sunday) and vacation November 25-30 (one Sunday).

**Note for council members:** Please plan on attending our next annual council retreat (for all council members, not only new members) on a Saturday instead of Sunday afternoon. Date and off-site location are TBD.

## **Associate Pastor Report**

**August 2024**

August 12-18 – Vacation

September 4 – Discipleship University began

September 11 – Faith Coalition of Lancaster County

12 – LAMC Gathering at First

21 – All Church Retreat

22 – Confirmation Service Walk-through/Retreat

October 5 – Doug Rothgeb ordination

6 – Fall Festival

We have started our fall programming schedule. Confirmation classes are meeting again. We have a small class this year, which we expected, which will allow us to meet together in the Upper Room. Everyone made it to the first night of class!

Following worship on September 22<sup>nd</sup> will be a walk-through for confirmation Sunday. Confirmation Sunday is November 3<sup>rd</sup>. This is something that everyone who is now a 9<sup>th</sup> grader and expecting to be confirmed this fall is expected to show up to. We plan on beginning at noon and not taking all afternoon. Again, if you expect to be confirmed this year, I expect you to be there.

When I was in Omaha, I had an intern, Doug. Doug was attending seminary through Wartburg's Collaborative Learning program. The CL program is similar to the TEEM program in its format, in that students take classes remotely during the semester while serving part-time in a congregation as an intern. It is a four-year MDiv program. Doug has graduated and has been called to serve Our Savior's Lutheran in Council Bluffs. He is going to be ordained there on October 5<sup>th</sup> at their regular Saturday night service. I'm happy for him and excited for the chance to see him become a pastor.

Thanks for all you do. The programming year is well underway!

Pr. Andrew

# COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY

August 2024

by Kathleen Simley, Communications Director

## SPECIAL AND COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

Here's a snapshot of my special and collaborative activities for August:

- Continued collaborating with the Stewardship Committee by developing a flyer that includes a number of ministry highlights over the past year. Additionally, I created a dedicated webpage for the "Cultivating Love" campaign and filmed members sharing their stories about cultivating connection, community and grace. These stories will be showcased on social media, the campaign website and on the TV in the Commons three Sundays in September. I also created and updated supplementary materials for inclusion in the member stewardship packets.
- Created promotions for the All-Church Retreat on September 21.
- Released the inaugural issue of "First Stories," a quarterly newsletter that delves into the impactful narratives of our ministry activities. This edition is packed with personal stories, testimonials, captivating photo and links for further exploration, covering our ministry efforts from January to June. If you haven't had a chance to read it yet, I highly encourage you to do so. As a leader of our congregation, it's crucial for you to be aware of the ministry stories unfolding at First. I'm confident you'll find it both enlightening and rewarding!
- Designed a mailer promoting the 2024-25 First Friday Jazz season that begins on October 4.
- Attended meetings with the Fall Festival Planning Team in preparation for the event on Sunday, October 6, from Noon-3:00 PM, and have assumed a number of responsibilities, including all promotion of the event.
- Actively promoted Realm, our new member management software, in anticipation of its launch for the entire congregation in the first week of September. A postcard was designed and mailed to all members to inform them about the rollout. I have recruited members familiar with Realm to assist members with account activation on Sunday mornings during

## MY WEEKLY TASKS

- First Glance Insert
- First Things First E-Newsletter
- FaithTrek E-Newsletter
- Sunday Worship Livestream
- TV Slides
- Facebook, Instagram and News posts (daily)
- Publish Sermon Online
- Publish Adult Forum Session Online
- Readers for Sunday Worship

## MY MONTHLY TASKS

- Digital Sign
- Website Updates
- First Friday Jazz Concert
- First Look E-Newsletter

# COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY

August 2024

the 9:30 AM hour throughout September. Additionally, an informational session will be held during the Adult Forum hour on September 29, led by myself and other Realm-trained members.

## **“LEADING FAITHFUL INNOVATION: FOLLOWING GOD INTO A HOPEFUL FUTURE”**

In my report last month, I mentioned that I started reading the book, “Leading Faithful Innovation: Following God into a Hopeful Future,” during the continuing education time I was granted in July.

Allow me to summarize my previous report on the concept of faithful innovation: “it is the process of learning new ways to embody Christian identity and purpose in a changing cultural context. It is about rediscovering how to be the church in the twenty-first century and reconnecting with God, one another and our neighbors. It is a Spirit-led process. The Holy Spirit is the primary leader of the church and the role of human leaders is to help the community listen to and be led by God.”

The book goes on to talk about the increasing numbers of people in today’s world who are pursuing their spiritual journeys outside the walls of churches or other religious institutions. The religiously unaffiliated - the so called “nones” - are now almost a third of the American population. This vast category is largely composed of people who are detached from religion but who are not actively opposed to faith. (Ok. If you didn’t catch on to what that last sentence said, go back and read it again. It’s pivotal.)

It’s also important to keep in mind that many people who consider themselves Christian find themselves outside of the institutional church, too. Many can’t find a congregation to join where they feel they belong or can engage meaningfully. (Here’s another moment to ponder what you just read.)

Of those who attend church only a few times each year, nearly 40% say they don’t go more often because they practice their faith outside the walls of the church.

The bottom line is...we have these kinds of individuals all around us who are outside of traditional church structures. The book speaks about the reasons these individuals are unlikely to come to church. Yet, they are individuals who are searching for wholeness and hope, experiencing longings and losses and dealing with deep feelings of isolation and despair.

Why should the church matter to them? Because it bears the most life-giving answer to the questions that are keeping them up at night. People are suffering profoundly without knowing God’s love and grace.

The churches today that are thriving have figured out how to connect the treasures of the Gospel with what keeps people up at night. They have made a turn toward prioritizing everyday life, removing the divide

## COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY

August 2024

### **“LEADING FAITHFUL INNOVATION: FOLLOWING GOD INTO A HOPEFUL FUTURE” (cont)**

between the sacred and the secular and seeing God’s presence in all spaces. They are listening to what their members and neighbors care about rather than focusing on their own institutional problems or filling the pews on Sunday morning.

The book shares that “to the extent in which churches’ primary messages to members and neighbors concentrate on institutional affiliation, participation and support, they will continue to decline. To the extent to which they learn how to join with the ‘nones’ - listening to them and communicating the difference Jesus makes to their longings and losses, they will discover new connections, energy and hope. This isn’t just a matter of concern for neighbors outside the church. This is essential for those already within the pews as well.”

I leave you this month with these questions to ponder:

- Why church?
- Why First Lutheran?
- What do we know is keeping the ‘nones’ in our neighborhoods and even our own members up at night? What questions are they asking and seeking answers to? What longings do they have?
- If we don’t know, how can we?

Next month in my report I will share the three core practices of faithful innovation: Listen, Act and Share.



## Fellowship Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 13, 2024

**Attending:** Carlene Falos, Judy Bailey, Linda Bogenreif, Karen Moser, Carol Tesar, Ann Allen, Cindy Schuster, Judy Batterman, Linda Carlson

**Devotions** were given by Linda Carlson.                      Next month's devotions: Linda Bogenreif

**Review of past event:** The Saltdogs tailgate picnic and game - July 12. 71 tickets were sold and at least 59 attended. We had a wonderful mix of returning and new participants. The root beer floats and post-game fireworks were big hits. Judy Bailey received a nice thank-you note from Kanai, the Director of Sales and Retention for the Saltdogs. We reviewed the amount of food we brought and made adjustments accordingly for next year.

### **Upcoming Events:**

- 1) Town Hall Potluck & Congregational Meeting – October 27. We will set up for the meal and organize the serving.
- 2) Camp Carol Joy Hollings congregational gathering – September 21. We have not been given any responsibilities.
- 3) Fall Festival – October 6 from noon to 3:00. Our committee has been asked to volunteer in as many activities as we wish, but in particular the planning committee would like for us to distribute water and ice cream. Volunteers are asked to sign up for one-hour shifts online. Activities will include a bounce house, checkers, corn hole toss, a ducking pond, cone toss, sack races, and many others. Another responsibility that Judy Batterman mentioned was the need for greeters from 11:45 to 1:00 and 1:00 to 2:00. At our September meeting we will select activities for which we would like to volunteer. Online volunteering may be done in the meantime.
- 4) Other upcoming events: 1) Thanksgiving Day Dinner – November 28; 2) Advent Wednesdays (lunches and suppers) – December 5, 12, and 19; Christmas is on a Tuesday.
- 5) Third Sunday Coffee will be this coming Sunday between services, and Carlene, Linda, and Karen offered to help. Carlene will make the coffee.

**Other Business:** Judy Batterman turned in our budget worksheets and read what she wrote based on our comments at last month's meeting. Our requested budget for 2025 is \$750; our 2024 budgeted allotment was \$150. Her report met with the committee's total approval.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, September 10 at 5:30.                      Linda Bogenreif offered to give the devotions.

Submitted by Linda Carlson, Secretary

## First Lutheran Church

### Property Committee Minutes August 27, 2024

Attending: Chair Norman Kempf, Rod Johnson, Cole Troutman, Les Carlson, Steve Lenzen, Bob Batterman, Janis Strautkalns

Meeting time: 7:00 PM

Opening prayer: Rod Johnson

Minute taker: Les

Approved minutes of the July meeting.

Agenda:

1. Three pick-up loads of mulch have been distributed by the West fence by Les and Steve L. which covered about half of the space to be mulched. Steve L will arrange a date to complete this work.
2. Steve L will also propose a date for additional parking lot work and repair.
3. Janis initiated discussion which resulted in a motion passed by the PC to notify the alarm system monitoring company to not call the police first when a FLC alarm is set off. Rather, certain FLC members will be identified who would be first notified and who would then check FLC to determine whether others such as the police should be alerted. This is to keep initial responses to alarm alerts "in-house" rather than calling the police. Janis will meet with Bryan Hanson to discuss this and whether there are insurance issues to consider. Pastor Erin will be notified of the PC's motion.
4. Janis has obtained two cost estimates for sidewalk repair work on north side of church.
5. A motor for HVAC system is to be installed Wednesday and by noon Wednesday may know whether HVAC problem in sanctuary has been resolved. The old motor may be repairable and will be kept as a potential replacement – Steve L, Janis.
6. Steve L provided an update and email about the Fall Festival. PC help will be needed to move/set-up and take down tables and chairs for the festival.
7. Norman and Steve L mentioned the occurrence of several rusty spots in the Activity Center as well as some sheet rock concerns. Janis said he has not seen leaks in the Activity Center recently.
8. Janis said fluorescent lighting in FLC can be replaced with LED lights though some existing fluorescent lights may require ballast replacement before transitioning to LED.

Prayer: September Norman Kempf

Note taker: Les