

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 2)

Ann Bouma

Occupation: Instructor

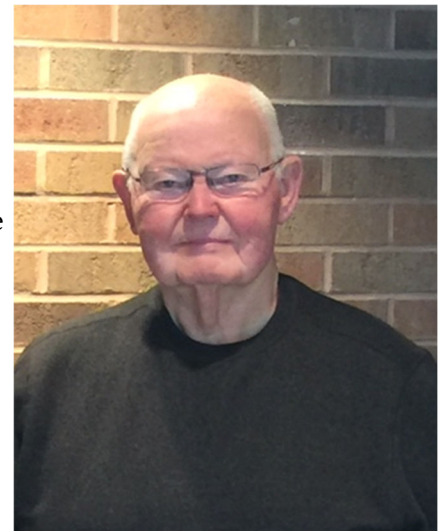
1. Serving on Congregational Council will give me a chance to be more involved with First Lutheran. I will be able to assist in making decisions and bring my own viewpoint to the discussion as well as understand how other viewpoints impact the church. The main talent that God has given me is teaching. I have been teaching English to a wide range of international students for many years. This has given me an appreciation of how the many cultures have impacted our society and our church. Because I have taught Sunday school for many years, I understand the importance of our mission of Christian education. Finally, with my service to the bell choir, I know that music is important to the worship service as well. All of these areas have my support as we make financial decisions.
2. We are a community of lifelong learners who serve Christ who calls us to create a community in our church, community and the world. We serve Christ through worship, activities, and education for the members of our congregation as well as welcoming those who are unchurched. We show Christ's love through city outreach to provide help to those that need it with meals, and services. Finally our congregation is called to assist the international community by helping organizations that meet needs around the world.



Gordon Youngquist

Occupation: Retired

1. I am willing to listen and make decisions with First Lutheran as my guide.
2. I believe that First Lutheran is a community of people who are trying to live as God instructs us through the word, welcoming all who are searching for answers to the questions of our life challenges



Bryce Anderson

Occupation: Retired Agricultural Meteorologist

1. I want to serve in this position as since initially attending services at First Lutheran church 3 years ago, I have received many instances of welcoming and being included. I would like to be more involved and contribute more of my time to the presence of First Lutheran. I would certainly have that opportunity as a Church Council member. My gifts and expertise is that I am willing to ask questions during meetings and discussions. This gift/talent was useful when I was a Church Council member in a previous congregation. I believe this attribute would also be useful as a First Lutheran Council member.
2. First Lutheran carries out a terrific ministry of being open and caring to all people. This spirit of welcoming and caring is very important in this time of harsh and divisive commentary and action. I would support First Lutheran's inclusive efforts as a Church Council member.



Bev White

Occupation: Retired

1. I am committed to the mission statement of welcoming and including all people. I see everyone as a valued member of this congregation. I would like to support meaningful, consistent life sustaining relationships inside the church and in the community. I've only been a member of First for a little over a year. I was raised in a Lutheran church along with participating all my life as an active member. I would like to learn more about the working at First and be a partner in the future directions. I tend to think beyond what has been done in the past by saying "how can it be made better" to meet the needs of everyone. I have many years in the teach field, as a teacher of students with a variety of needs and as a district leader for professional staff learning. In our last congregation, I was on the Church Council for six years helping to lead through many congregational changes. I was on the Education Committee for twenty plus years before becoming the director of Christian Education. I directed Summer Sunday Fun (Vacation Bible School) for thirty years progressing from five morning a week during the summer to generational events and activities on Sunday and weekends.
2. I see us sharing the word of God, along with working together.



NOMINATING COMMITTEE (VOTE FOR 3)

Jan Modica

Occupation: Claims Adjuster

1. I was asked and I feel it is a place I can help serve. I have been a part of First Lutheran Church for many years. The things that I have been a part of while at First Lutheran bring me in contact and get to know lots of First Lutheran's Parishioner's.
2. I feel God is calling us in growing God's church and our faith together as a family in Christ.



Bryan Hanson

Occupation: Retired

1. I was asked to serve on the Nominating Committee and feel that I'd be able to contribute to the mission of selecting candidates for the various leadership roles of our church. I have served on Church Council and been involved with our church finances for over 30 years, which has allowed me to build many relationships with our members. I would feel comfortable reaching out to prospective candidates to gauge their interests in where they could contribute within our church.
2. Our Welcoming Statement is the foundation behind all that we should strive to achieve.



Linda Bogenreif

Occupation: Retired

1. First Lutheran is blessed to have gracious, giving, and joyful leaders and doers. It is a gift to be asked to contribute. I'm grateful to the congregation for the opportunities I've been given to serve. I've joined several committees over the 45 years I've been a member at First. Each has shown me how we all are needed, and are blessed, to build our faith with each other.
2. We are a community of faith and grace. We not only support each other, but are eager to be a part of our neighborhood, city and world mission to show the love of Jesus.



Barb Johnson Frank

Occupation: Retired Elementary School Teacher, LPS

1. If chosen, I would be honored to encourage members of the congregation to consider serving in leadership positions. I enjoy helping people connect with serving opportunities that match interests and skills that they've identified on their Discipleship Plans or elsewhere. I think it's important to involve people



of a variety of ages and experiences, as well as newer members. Nominating potential key leaders is a responsibility that needs to be done with care. First Lutheran still chooses lay leaders by voting, but the goal is that every candidate would do a fine job if selected to serve. I am committed to being inclusive, thorough and thoughtful, seeking willing and capable leaders.

2. First Lutheran's Mission Statement, Welcome Statement and the work of the Vitality Initiative team are reliable guides for the congregation. A high priority for me is building an even more closely knit community of faith, where each person is seen and heard and where we respond to one another's needs with listening and care. Many people in Lincoln long for a place where they matter. It is time for us to work on both internal community building and outreach, going to the places in Lincoln and beyond where God is already at work.

Molly Goninan

Occupation: Interior Designer – RLC Communities

1. It is nice to call and meet people to help with our church. I enjoy getting to know people and want to help in the church.
2. I have been a lifelong member here and am appreciative of how we reach out to so many different organizations to help in whatever way we can. It is humbling to think how long this has been going on and that we should continue to support this.



Cora Hoeft

Occupation: Student

1. I would like to learn more about the different areas of the church and the role each area has within the church. My gifts and expertise is enjoying meeting new people and learning more about them.
2. First Lutheran's mission is to welcome our neighbors to worship with us. As a congregation we are called to share God's work through our hands.



SYNOD ASSEMBLY VOTING MEMBERS (VOTE FOR 5 - AT LEAST 2 MEN AND 2 WOMEN)

Rosemary Ohles

Occupation: Retired

1. I welcome the chance to represent my fellow members of First Lutheran at the Synod Assembly to bring a balanced viewpoint of opportunities to grow and challenges facing our congregation. I will try to talk to representatives of other congregations at the Synod Assembly to gather new ideas and understand better the state of our Synod. I have been a member of First Lutheran since 2007. I attend services faithfully, read church related emails and newsletters regularly to



keep up with what is happening in the congregation. I served for several years on our Adult Forum committee, including as chair. Currently, I serve on the Mission Committee of Immanuel Communities (a nonprofit Lutheran organization which runs senior living facilities). From 2009 to 2016, I was on the board of trustees of Augsburg Fortress Publishing House (renamed 1517 Media in 2016). From 2017 to 2019, I served on the board of directors of Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska. My other volunteer work in our community includes serving the Statewide Advisory Board of the Lied Center for Performing Arts and chairing the board of OpenSky Policy Institute. My work experience was in banking and financial advising. I also assisted my husband, Fred, with development work while he served as president of Nebraska Wesleyan University. I also assisted Fred in conducting seminars about vocation and mission for prospective college presidents and their spouses. I believe that my work and life experiences have taught me to listen well and to work well with other people to find common ground, which should be helpful at Synod Assembly.

2. I strongly endorse our church's all encompassing welcome statement. I firmly believe that God is calling us to be a spiritual community that cares for each other by sharing our gifts as we are able.

Fred Ohles

Occupation: Retired

1. With my family I have been a member of First Lutheran since we moved to Lincoln in 2007. I was honored to serve a term on the Church Council and a year as president. We love the vibrant mix the people of First offer of tradition and innovation, extreme hospitality and deep faith, personal humility and a collective drive to continue telling Christ's story boldly. I have extensive experience, including leadership roles, with various kinds of associations outside of church - college consortiums, athletic conferences, advocacy groups. For example, I chaired the tax committee as a member of the board of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. My experiences give me a pretty good understanding of both policies and budgets and the choices they represent. I was a delegate to our ELCA synod assembly in West/Central Illinois when we lived there about 25 years ago.
2. I'm drawn to how clearly First Lutheran as a church family pursues grace, gives voice to faith and makes room for exploration. We do seem to be at a crossroads, however, still dealing with the stunning combination of divisiveness and lethargy that settled onto American society leading up to and through the COVID pandemic. We seem to me to be hopeful overall yet needing to do more about fewer young families being among us than before. In our own congregation and in the Nebraska synod alike, I want us to return to a spirit of bold ambition, lifting our light high.



Ryan Luckey

Occupation: Pipe Organ Builder

1. I think it's important for members to be involved in various ways. At the synod assembly we connect with other congregations and strengthen our own ministries. Through my work at Bedient Pipe Organ I see how many other congregations organize, prepare, and offer worship and ministries. I enjoy learning about the differing perspectives. This would be continued at the synod assembly and give me the opportunity to discern how those ideas might be applicable at First Lutheran.
2. Strongly rooted in Lutheran traditions, we share our faith through our internal and external ministries, and by sharing it with the greater community. I appreciate the positive and welcoming atmosphere at First Lutheran and I hope that everyone who visits, becomes a member, or is in any way involved with us feels that too.



Craig Heier

Occupation: Part-Time Warehouse Worker

1. I like the purpose of the Endowment Board, namely distributing funds to those who need them for things like college and seminary education. I have previously served on the Gifts and Memorials Committee. The purpose of that committee is to disperse funds according to the request of the families.
2. I see First Lutheran's mission as that of being Christ in our neighborhood, city, state and beyond. Through monies and time, we serve others in many ways, including feeding the hungry (Matt Talbot Kitchen), providing relief in times of natural disaster (Lutheran Disaster Relief), and clothing those who need it (Kicks for Kids). We also have a mission of preaching and teaching the Good News to all.



Trish Flurry

Occupation: Retired DHHS Administrator

1. Attending the Synod Assembly would be an opportunity for me to learn more about ELCA processes and the issues of current importance to the denomination. In doing so, I believe I could listen, contribute, and represent our congregation. In this position, I would rely on my natural inclination to assess the big picture, strategize options, and facilitate team building. I think those are gifts that have developed through my pre-retirement management positions and my involvement at First Lutheran, as well as offices held in churches I previously attended.
2. I believe a church is called to nourish spiritual growth and inspire its members; to provide a warm welcome to all; and to serve the wider community with Christian love. I am grateful to have found all those elements at work in First Lutheran. I am currently involved in a few of the many growth and service opportunities available here- including Bible



study, Stephen Ministry, Eucharistic Ministry, and refugee resettlement—and am thankful that we are engaged now and planning ahead for the glory of God.

Verdell Bohling

Occupation: Retired from NE DHHS

1. At Synod Assemblies a feeling of comradery exists within members across Nebraska. Current views of the ELCA are reviewed and discussed granting I insight into how the congregations across the state can work to spread the good news of Christ. I feel that I can represent our congregation and bring back ideas presented. In my last position at DHHS I supervised Economic Assistance and Medicaid workers that determined eligibility for various programs. In addition, I taught the Refugee Resettlement Program added workers to SAVE, the System Alien Verification Enforcement so I am familiar with those in need and how the system works. I was nominated and awarded the honorary title of Admiral in the Great Navy in the state of Nebraska upon Retirement and am currently appointed to the Governor's Commission on Mental Health Services. This background will help me in making clear decisions that the NE Synod should take in helping those in need and less fortunate within the framework of Christ's teachings.
2. While I was on the Church Counsel the congregation and Council developed the Welcoming Statement. It was voted on and approved by the Congregation after several town halls. A welcoming committee was started, and recommended the church be remodeled to be ADA compliant which we approved. The one issue that has been important to me had been to invite not just welcome the groups mentioned in the statement. It was important for me that last year we set up at Star City Pride. This last Sunday groups representing all of the 11 groups mentioned in the statement were represented at Gifts of Hope. We need to continue the process, to invite, welcome and when they come accept them for who they are which has been a great value to me here at First Lutheran.



Gordon Saksena

Occupation: Software Engineering/Cancer Data Science

1. I am interested in learning how other church bodies organize small and medium sized discussion groups, to see if there are ideas I can bring back to First Lutheran. I like the environment that small discussion groups create, both for learning and developing relationships. I have been a member of the Adult Forum steering committee the past several years, to help others experience this. I've also been an active member of the Saturday Morning with the Guys book group and the Tuesday evening bible study when I can make it. Even as these groups have helped me grow, through my participation I try to make them a healthy environment where others feel comfortable and are able to grow from where they are at.
2. The First Lutheran community is about both growing in our relationship with God as well as sharing or demonstrating God's love with those outside the church. Practicing our Welcome Statement is at once a way



to encourage more people to grow and also a demonstration of God's love itself. We are most vibrant when we are both learning and doing, as each one enhances the other.

Linda Carlson

Occupation: Retired Educator

1. It is an honor to be nominated. I know that sounds like a response to the Academy Awards, but it is true. As I was growing up in another denomination, at some point I knew that I didn't exactly fit the mold. But when Les and I were married, I attended pre-member sessions led by First Lutheran's Associate Pastor Wally Taylor. Each meeting left me more excited and convinced that the Lutheran denomination and specifically First Lutheran Church was the right fit for me. After living in other places for twenty-three years, Les and I returned in 2008 to Lincoln, family, and First Lutheran. It is home. I love serving on the Fellowship Committee, and realize that there is more that I can and should give back to this congregation. Some years ago, I attended the South Carolina Synod Assembly as a visitor. I was so impressed with the dedication that delegates gave to listening, discussing, and making synodical decisions. I feel that it is time for me to attempt to be a part of the wider church happenings and to engage in broader discussions. I think that my gifts include compassion, a positive attitude, good judgment, and a listening ear. I tend to see more than one side of an issue, and I try to remain open and respectful of others. I suspect that serving as a synod delegate requires these attributes, as well as knowing the concerns that we as First Lutheran delegates would take to Synod Assembly.
2. I love our mission statement's emphasis on ALL being welcome here. God loves us all, and we, as children made in the likeness of God embrace everyone. Because humans tend to judge others, or put others in boxes, it is important to have our mission of inclusiveness guide us in all decisions and actions. Caring for all should be at the core of us as Christians.



Kathy Havlicek-Cook

Occupation: Healthcare Provider

1. I hope to become more involved (once again) with First Lutheran in the near future, as I'm currently finishing up a (published!!) medical research study and I'm completing my (4th) doctorate degree. In this regard, I would like to represent First Lutheran at the Synod meeting and meet/work with other outstanding Lutherans across Nebraska (I'll even take a jello salad to share with them!). I have a long (and strong) background in leadership and management, which includes working with people from all walks of life and backgrounds. I'm a friendly, outgoing person (extrovert), who tries to be warm and receptive to others. I also see the world (...most days!) as the glass being half full. I'm generally a very happy person who tries to see, and bring out, the best in people. I also think it's important to be a good listener. My motto (borrowed from something I heard or read a long time ago, goes something like this:): "God have you 2 ears and 1 mouth, use them proportionately!"

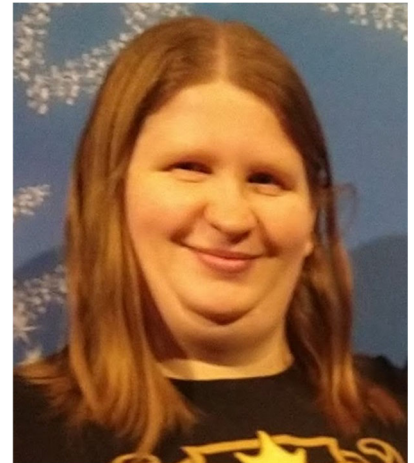


2. Being a welcoming church. This was something that absolutely stood out as a huge positive when my family joined First Lutheran. We transferred to First Lutheran from another ELCA church in Lincoln, the only other church I had known (I was baptized, confirmed, and married there). While I didn't see it, because I was "an original" of the church, my husband always felt like a outsider, with a "vibe" from other church members that "you're not a 'real' member of this church." He didn't ever get that "vibe" at First Lutheran (nor did I). Bottom line, I'm proud of the warm, welcoming mission at First towards everyone, with actions that put this into practice. The (personal) lesson in this, is to always be non-judgmental towards others, just as Jesus would want us to do. It's not only the "right" thing to do, but it also makes a difference! I wouldn't ever want First to accept just "the originals" or longtime members! As the saying goes, it's all about being a team, and by doing so, Together Everyone Achieves More.

Amanda Heier

Occupation: Worker at the Wild Bird Habitat Store

1. To represent First Lutheran at the Synod Assembly. I can represent the voice of a younger generation in the church and give a perspective that is disappearing in other churches around the state.
2. Hopefully our congregation can be a place in the community where people can go who may not feel welcome at their former churches or in the church period for many different reasons. Our Welcoming Statement is something that I've been very proud of ever since we adopted it.



ENDOWMENT BOARD (VOTE FOR 2)

Marsha McKinsey

Occupation: Systems Accountant

1. The Endowment's offering of scholarships as well as providing financial support to other important missions has been a part of First's ministry since I have been a member. I have often thought I would like to learn more about the work being done by this Board and would welcome this opportunity to give back to First Lutheran by serving on the Endowment Board. I hope my years of accounting experience can provide assistance when working with the rest of the Board in reviewing financial requests and determining how funds will be distributed from the Endowment fund.
2. First Lutheran's mission is calling us to also serve those outside the doors of the church. I see the purpose of the Endowment Board as just one of the many ways in which we are being called to carry out this mission.



Tracy Way

Occupation: Adjunct Professor UNL/Substitute Teacher

1. I am honored to have the opportunity to run for second three year term on the Endowment Board. During my current three year term on the board, I been amazed how the Endowment Board funds help members, church missions and the general Lincoln community. As a long time member, I believe in the mission of First Lutheran Church and Endowment Board's role in it. As the Endowment Board gives out scholarships every year to our congregation members, the board will continue to benefit from my expertise on scholarships my previous experience includes being members of the Nebraska FCCLA, the Hospitality and Education Foundation and the Kappa Chapter of Chi Omega scholarship committees.
2. I am proud to say I am a member of First Lutheran where all are welcome. As a congregation, we celebrate our uniqueness as children of God. This is shown in all we do through our various outreach programs including the Gifts of Hope and the Las Abejitas Bilingual Education Center - East.



Matt Peters

Occupation: Product Specialist

1. The future of First Lutheran is very important to me. This position would allow me the opportunity to serve the church by serving youth with a fund that would allow them further educational opportunity, something I am very passionate about. My gifts and expertise would be used in the youth of this church. This committee would allow the opportunity to serve the future generations of First.
2. First Lutheran's mission should always include helping the future generations of the church get off and running on the right foot, especially when it comes to education. This committee is crucial to the church for that cause. I look forward to serving in this role so I can serve the future.



Steve Doolittle

Occupation: Retired

1. Being on the Endowment Board is something I can do to help others. I have experience in budgets, businesses and finance.
2. My thoughts on First Lutheran's mission and where I see God leading us as a congregation and disciples of Christ is, our need to help those in need to the best of our abilities.



