

# June Newsletter

## TREES



*For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the **trees of the field shall clap their hands.** Isaiah 55:12*

I have been thinking about Pentecost and Trees. We are in the long growing season of the church year and in the growing season of summer. I love to see the crops in the fields begin to poke their heads through the soil of the earth and reach for the sunshine and rain.

We are a lot like trees too. We need the earth to ground us and create our food. We need to reach for the sunshine to be fed by the light. We need to grow in our faith so that our root system becomes stronger and stronger.

Four Sundays and Wednesdays this summer we will explore a series for curiosity, courage, and connection... "I've been meaning to ask..." will help us begin more courageous conversations beginning with simple questions and curious listening. My hope is we disrupt assumptions, cultivate curiosity, foster listening, and find deeper connections to each other and God.

Our first discussion will begin following worship on Sunday, June 27th with a cup of coffee in the Joy Room. Our first pondering is "I've been meaning to ask...where are you from?"

So, what does that have to do with trees. When we grow deeper in relationship to God and with each other we will be like trees who sing, dance, and clap their hands.

And, we have five new maple trees along the church parking lot. The trees are in memory of Ed Matul by the Matul/Groth family.

*Pastor Julie*

### **Rock Painting**



Time together to paint some rocks and visit – **June 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 downstairs.** We will use the technique, mandala, or you can use your own style of painting. Pastor Julie will bring all the tools and supplies including rocks. You are invited to bring your own rock if you choose.

## Wednesday Worship Returns

Beginning Wednesday, May 2nd at 6:00 pm Worship returns in person and the sanctuary. We will have outdoor Wednesday worships this summer too – TBA.

## Youth Director's Hired – Sarah and Sarah

Personnel Committee have hired two young women who will share a part time position. Sarah Hildebrandt and Sarah VanEpps can't wait to inspire our youth of all ages to grow their faith and relationships with each other. Welcome Sarah and Sarah.



### REOPENING THE CHURCH

On 5-19-21 the Council voted to accept these worship committee recommendations for reopening the church: We will reopen all areas of the church with the exception of the kitchen area which will re-open June 1, 2021. Persons who have been FULLY vaccinated for Covid-19 do not need to wear a mask. For those not fully vaccinated, masks are RECOMMENDED. Singing will go back to normal. Kids Globe Offering will resume. –BILL LEWIS, WORSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR–



### LOVE DAY LADIES

We welcome new helping hands. We plan to meet the 2ND and 4TH Thursday afternoons each month, beginning at 1:00 P.M. No experience necessary – Just Come – Enjoy stitching, tying and chatting while we make quilts for those in need. June meeting dates: June 10 and June 24.

## SAVE THE DATE! ☆ Kenyon Area Internship Committee (KAIC)\_\_\_\_\_

KAIC will be hosting a community event on **SUNDAY, AUGUST 1** from 2:00 – 4:00 PM at First Lutheran. Each church will be asked to bring dessert/treats to share, and 2-4 cakes/pies for a silent auction. There will be fun door prizes as well. This is an (almost) end of the year party for Lucas, as well as a fundraiser for KAIC.

## KAIC INTERN PASTOR LUCAS

In late spring and early summer, I sometimes take the time to go back and reread Aldo Leopold's *Sand County Almanac*. Leopold, who was a conservationist and a farmer from western Wisconsin, talks about his love for the land here in the Upper Midwest, and about the lessons this place has to offer us in how we see creation. Rereading the book helps me to prepare to appreciate the summer here in all its beauty. As I was reading recently, I found a paragraph that stuck out to me. Toward the end of the book, he writes about the idea of perception, and about how we might be more blessed in understanding than we might think. He comments,

*“Like all real treasures of the mind, perception can be split into infinitely small fractions without losing its quality. The weeds in a city lot convey the same lessons as the redwoods; the farmer may see in his cow-pasture what may not be vouchsafed to the scientist adventuring in the South Seas. Perception, in short, cannot be purchased with either learned degrees or dollars; it grows at home as well as abroad, and he who has a little may use it to as good advantage as he who has much.”*

While he's speaking about nature, I think this is wisdom that can apply to how we approach God and one another, too. We who are only human might find ourselves confounded by the great mysteries of a God who is beyond understanding, but that doesn't mean that we have no perception at all. In the small places of our lives, in listening and in serving, we have the same lesson as if we had seen things from God's perspective. The scope of our sight may not be the same, but lessons we learn are.

This was something I saw firsthand during our conversations on hospitality last month. In those sessions, I heard stories of humanity, and those small stories are mirrors of the big story of God. I was humbled by the honesty and support that came from the community during those times we spent together. Thank you to everyone who helped make my internship project possible by being a part of the conversations we had. I'm honored to have been a part of those conversations too, and I'm looking forward to seeing how the Spirit works in light of them.

Peace, Intern Lucas

### **Scholarship Opportunity**

The Endowment Fund was made possible by generous donations to First Evangelical Lutheran and consists of 5 categories; ELCA Mission, Community Outreach, Scholarships, Capital Improvements, and Committee Discretion. Students planning to continue their post high school education are welcome to apply for scholarship funds. The Endowment Fund Committee meets quarterly during the year to act on any requests; January, April, June and October. Application forms are available in the church office or contact Carmen Nesseth, committee secretary. Donation envelopes for the Endowment Fund are available in the church narthex.

## First Lutheran Church Council Minutes, May 19, 2021 @ 7:30 pm

**Welcome and Call to Order:** Carmen Nesseth

**Present:** Carmen Nesseth, Brad Nesseth, Pastor Julie Rogness, Bill Lewis, Jackie Mortensen, Jim Fountaine, Erica Aronson, Tammy Fletcher and Sandy Doehling

**Devotions:** Bill Lewis

**Adopt Agenda:** M/S Jim/Sandy, Approved

**Secretary's Report:** M/S Bill/Jackie, Approved

**Treasurer's Report:** M/S Brad/Tammy, Approved

04/30/2021: Checking Account Balance **\$6,108.80**, Memorial Account Balance **\$525**

**Pastor's Report:** Worship-4, Live streaming-4, Pastor Chris Miller preached as Pastor Julie was on vacation-2, New Members-2 received on Sunday, May 2nd, Meetings for Council-2, Roundtable, Mwangaza-2, Personnel-2, Boundaries Workshop, Worship and Evangelism, EdYou, Moving Jim and Faye - awesome help, Funeral for Eloise Berg, Continuing Ed--Charlson Meadows, Confirmation via Zoom-2, Phone calls and in person visits, Sharing gift cards that are still being given, School Play - excellent, Preparing to celebrate the life of Audrey Nesseth, Theresa Pittman and Matt Peterson. **Looking forward and Gratitude:** Thank you for refreshing and rejuvenation time away with family, Baptism-Aubrey Lair, Book study "A Good Time For The Truth" w/Kalia Yang joining via Zoom on May 27th, Senior Recognition and Pentecost, Worship this summer - "I have been meaning to ask" at least 4 weeks, Wednesday Night services beginning June 2nd at 6 pm, Preaching at Baccalaureate-Wed, May 26th at Trinity Lutheran Church in Wanamingo at 8 pm.

### Continuing Business:

1. SEMN Synod Assembly themed Everlasting Faithfulness with worship led by the Bishop attended via Zoom by Carmen and Harris.
2. State Regulations that were and will be dropped by the end of the month and ELCA considerations regarding in-person worship. See Worship Report. M/S Brad/Bill, Approved.
3. Use of Church by other groups. See Worship Report. M/S Brad/Bill, Approved.

### New Business:

1. Senior Recognition - May 23rd - FLCW will host coffee and cookies outdoors following the service.
2. Synod Assembly Offering Amount - \$250 from our congregation towards funding ministry partners of the Synod. M/S Carmen/Tammy, Approved.
3. Co-Youth Director Position - The Personnel Committee has met several times to create a job description to include planning, coordinating and fundraising for events, recruiting youth and parent participation and attending committee meetings requiring an average of 40 hours per month. The Personnel Committee recommends to the council to approve the hiring of Sarah Hildebrandt and Sarah Van Epps who have expressed interest and passion for engaging with the youth of First Lutheran, have met to review the job description and discuss how a co-position could work. M/S Carmen/Jackie, Approved. Sarah Hildebrandt and Sarah Van Epps are permitted to sign the First Lutheran Church Youth checking account at Security State Bank of Kenyon for the sake of writing checks. M/S Bill/Carmen, Approved.

### Committee Reports:

*FLCW* - will present the Class of 2021 with quilts created by the Love Day Ladies and a devotional book during Senior Recognition on Sunday, May 23rd. Coffee and cookies will be provided outdoors after the service.

*Youth Representative* - not present

*Worship/ Evangelism* - met 5/18/21 Members present (via Zoom): Pastor Julie Rogness, Bill Lewis, Tammy Fletcher, Shari Quam, Carly Tousignant and Sherry Sathrum. Discussion points: 1) Recommendations in light of new CDC guidelines and mask mandate being lifted: ● If vaccinated, no mask required. If not vaccinated, a mask is recommended. ● All rooms will now be open- fellowship hall will need to be cleaned. ● Pew ribbons will be eliminated. ● Kitchen to re-open June 1st to allow for cleaning, etc ● Singing will be back to normal. ● Will continue to leave offering plates at the door. ● Greeters will be tabled and discussed again in fall. ● Communion--will use purchased "pods" and then transition to normal communion with no intinction. ● Globe Offering for Kids will return. Other items discussed: ● A family requesting use of the kitchen/ fellowship hall for a graduation party was told it was not available due to CoVid restrictions. Family will be contacted to allow a grad party. ● Bill will contact FLCW as the kitchen may need to be cleaned. ● Possibility of opening a Venmo

account for offering. • Possibility of coffee at church- bring your own cup/ lid. • Will maintain hybrid model of live streaming. Next meeting: July 6 at 6:30 via Zoom. RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED, SHERRY SATHRUM

*Property and Management* - Committee did not formally meet however worked on a couple of projects. 5 new maple trees purchased in memory of Ed Matul by the Matul/Groth family were planted and now line the south end of the church parking lot. Special thanks goes to Barb and family along with those with the equipment needed to make this happen - Don Herrlich for trailering and temporarily watering the trees, to Todd Angelstad and use of his trac-hoe to dig the holes, and to Troy Estrem for use of his truck and utility tractor needed to move the trees. A special 'thanks' to Joy as well for her helping hand. Mulching has since been completed and watering will likely continue throughout the summer. The original church property/grounds has recently been sprayed for weed control. Thanks again goes to Troy for the use of his equipment and donating the herbicides necessary. BRAD NESSETH, P&M CHAIR

*Stewardship* - Jim announced the open position on the committee has been filled by Dave Kolsrud.

*Youth and Education* - will host an intergenerational event including chalk art, a bonfire and yard games on Sunday, May 23rd at 1:00 pm in the church parking lot. The committee is seeking volunteers to assist with upcoming activities. Next meeting is slated for June 8th at 6:30 pm.

*Long Range Planning/Endowment/Personnel Committee/KAIC* - Planning is underway for the KAIC fundraiser to be held August 1st at First Lutheran Church. Stay tuned for details.

**Next Meeting:** June 16, 2021 @ 7:00 pm

**Devotions:** Pastor Julie

**Adjournment:** M/S Jim/Tammy, Approved

**Closing with the Lord's Prayer**

Respectfully submitted, Sandy Doehling, Council Secretary

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## **MISSIONARY UPDATE - Central America**

AMMPARO Is Spanish meaning protection from suffering for children forced to flee their countries.

There has been extensive media coverage of the number of migrant children trying to enter the US from Mexico as well as treatment they receive while in custody. The situation has improved, and most children are now turned over to relatives or sponsors within 30-40 days.

A relevant question is: "Why do they keep leaving their countries of origin?" The question focuses us to examine the root causes of the exodus of children and families from places like Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador.

The AMMPARO strategy was adopted overwhelmingly by the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in 2016, and identified the principal causes as "extreme violence, poverty, lack of access to educational and employment opportunities."

In summary, the driving forces behind Central America migration will not weaken any time soon. As proposals to address root causes are considered, advocacy will be critical. I invite you to help us amplify their voices, Now is a perfect time to join the growing AMMPARO movement of ELCA members, congregations and synods. [www.elca.org/AMMPARO](http://www.elca.org/AMMPARO)

*—Your companion in global mission: Stephen Deal, ELCA Missionary Costa Rica—*

## Everlasting Faithfulness

### 2021 SEMN Synod Assembly Report by Carmen Nesseth

On Saturday May 8, 2021 Harris Haugen, Council President, and Carmen Nesseth, Council VP, attended the SEMN Synod Assembly via Zoom. A pre-assembly Report was emailed to all voting delegates that contained information to prepare for the Assembly, reports from tables, teams and staff, celebrations of ordination anniversaries and retirements, worship, and reports from Ministry Partners. The Southeastern Minnesota Synod is a faith community of 167 congregations, six Synod Authorized Worshipping Communities, as well as related institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The assembly opened with Worship lead by Bishop Hassanally. Her message was from 1 John chapter 4: Abiding in Christ's love we are able to go out & do the work of Christ. We are the hands & feet of Christ in the world. The guest speaker was Judith E. B. Roberts, Sr. Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for the ELCA responsible for articulating and championing a comprehensive approach and vision for diversity and inclusion within the ELCA. There was a message from Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. Report of the Treasurer regarding Mission Support-\$787,863 from SEMN Synod. Over 40 million church wide; 41% Domestic, 22% work in US, 37% develop current & Future Leaders, ie Shelter Church in Mankato, MN. Covid response fund, \$1.8 million to support 387,000 people served. World Hunger, Domestic Hunger & Big Dream Grant partners-ie Ruth's House of Hope. Lutheran DisasterResponse; floods, fire, hurricanes, tornadoes, conflicts domestically \$920,000 & long term. ELCA Fund for Leadership-297 candidates, 6 from our Synod, including Kris Kincaid. Companion Synods. Investments & Loans, 12 loans, \$10,289,188 in SEMN investment. ELCA Youth Gathering. One Resolution 2021-1, Minimum Compensation and Guidelines passed.

In Bishop Hassanally's report she said telling the story of God's love, the story remains the same but may be told in many different ways. Election of Council, Boards, and Committees-since there were no new nominations the Bishop declared all elected.

The Treasure Jeff Chestnut moved to adopt as printed the Adoption of Spending Plan 2022-23, which passed. Synod Offering was earmarked for 75% Ministry Partners, Crossroads Campus Ministry (Mankato), Lutheran Campus Center (Winona), Luther Seminary, Good Earth Village, Minnesota Council of Churches, Lutheran Advocacy-Minnesota, and 25% Holy Spirit Fund. The Holy Spirit Fund is a new account designed to provide a way for the synod to come alongside congregations who are following the movement of the Holy Spirit in innovative, Gospel-centered ways. The congregations of the synod are all invited into the same central purpose; we are "called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world." The intention of the Holy Spirit Fund is to support congregations as they explore new ways to bear witness to God's activity in the world.

The new Synod VP Elect, Lisa Dirks from Trinity Wanamingo Lutheran, spoke a few words. There was instillation of Council, Boards and Committees followed by closing Worship. In the sending we were asked to continue to strive to live together as the body of Christ and use the gifts we have been given for the sake of God's good work in the world.

# June Calendar 2021

Sunday Worship is In-Person & Live Stream



		1	2 6 Wed Worship	3 7 AA	4	5 <i>Memorial Service Theresa Pittman</i>
6 9 Worship 7 AA	7	8 9 KW Cares 6:30 EdYou	9 6 Wed Worship	10 1 LOVE DAY 6:30 Stewardship 7 AA	11	12
13 9 Worship 7 AA	14	15 6:30 Rock Painting	16 6 Wed Worship 7 Council	17 7 AA	18	19
20 Father's Day 9 Worship 7 AA	21	22	23 6 Wed Worship	24 1 LOVE DAY 10 Round Table 7 AA	25	26 <i>Burial- Matthew Peterson</i>
27 9 Worship 10 Conversation 7 AA	28	29 7 KAI	30 6 Wed Worship			

*"I've been meaning to ask"*

**FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**309 Forest Street, Kenyon, MN 55946**

J • U • N • E  
NEWSLETTER



**A weed  
is but an  
unloved flower."**

**ELLA WHEELER WILCOX**