

## Church Without Church?

Without any doubt, churches everywhere are trying to figure out how to be church when social distancing is in the best interest of everyone's health. First Lutheran is no exception. Unlike most of the churches in Iron River, First has chosen to limit indoor worship once again, and rely solely on the radio and Facebook broadcasts as the primary way to worship God. Absolutely, this is less than ideal. Every one of us, myself included, would rather be in the building, worshiping together in the presence of our church family.

I would rather be able to see you in person, to look you directly into your eyes and extend the hand of peace as we share community together. I would rather greet you in person in the name of Jesus, who binds us together in one body. I would rather join with you in one chorus as we sing of God's greatness, love, mercy, and kindness. I would rather experience God's Word seeping deep into the core of our humanness, and to experience that with you. I would rather share in the Body and Blood of Christ with you . . . without having to even think about germs and aerosols and viruses.

### What is Church?

We have a unique opportunity right now to really get back to the heart of what the church really is. I am definitely aware of the need that many of you have to be in the building. There is something different about that space that has a grounding affect on us. It is almost as if we step into another realm, another dimension of reality, when we walk through the doors of the church building. We have the potential to experience the peace of God there, to leave the cares and worries of our lives behind for a moment, to be validated for who we are as humans beings struggling to understand life and all of its complexities.

However, it is critical that we all understand that the building *is not* the same as the church, and I think we are trying to figure that out right now. The church building is simply a building, a structure, with brick and mortar and wires and pipes, but it is not the church.

Instead, the Church is the body of Christ—it is the fellowship of Jesus' disciples wherever they are located. The Church consists not of building materials but flesh and blood. The Church is the people; the Church is you! Whenever Jesus' followers gather, there is the Church, and there is Jesus among them. Right now, for many of us, the "Church" is gathering in our homes.

First Lutheran Church, you might not be able to gather in your church building right now, but that does not mean that you have ceased to be the Church! You are still the Church. You are still followers of Christ. You are still representatives of Jesus wherever you are. You still carry the peace of God with you. You still live complicated lives, but you do so as people of faith who trust God and the Christ that God raised from the dead.

The day will come when we can gather again in community. The day will come when the doors will be unlocked and the sanctuary will be open. That day will come. Until then, First Lutheran Church might be different from the community of Iron River. But, we do so because we are deeply concerned about the health and well-being of this community of faith, and that is our priority. Until it is safe for us to gather in your space together, I pray God's overwhelming peace to be upon you.

Interim Pr. D. J. Rasner

# CHURCH



# COUNCIL

At the August Council meeting, we welcomed Pr. D.J. Rasner as our Interim Administrator. Pr. D.J. is getting to know us as we are getting to know him. He is in the process of going through the church and parsonage and will be making suggestions as to what items he feels need to be addressed. There is a lot of “stuff” that needs to be taken care of or gotten rid of. There are upwards of 20 pastoral vacancies within the Synod. It, therefore, will take a while for us to receive a candidate as we are at the bottom of the list. The first step will be to update our profile and submit it to the Synod. A Call Committee will then be established when we reach that point.

Regarding in-house services, it was decided to watch the county numbers in August and September, after the students have been in school for a month. We will hold a Council meeting September 29<sup>th</sup> to decide if it will be safe to re-open on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Council felt this would be better than see-sawing from open to closed during this time period. Next month’s council meeting will address a plan to have in place in case the pastor should become ill.

We have experienced some difficulties in broadcasting on Sundays. We hope to resolve these issues as quickly as possible. We will check with other area churches for suggestions of what we can do to make the broadcasting more reliable.

The financial report stated our expenses exceeded our income by \$3,974. Income deficit from this point last year is \$1,785, and \$276 has been received from “other” income. The PPP loan has been fully expensed. First National Bank will contact us once they receive loan forgiveness instructions.

The Property Committee reported we are awaiting an estimate of how many shingles will be required to redo the roof. They will then suggest a fundraiser to help fund this project. It is felt the parsonage garage door can be repaired in-house, along with other structure issues. The parsonage walk-thru resulted in the need to replace the dishwasher and microwave. Painting is needed as well as a thorough cleaning. WELCA has volunteered to do the cleaning. Two convection ovens have been obtained from the school. (Thank you, Tom!) This will eventually allow us to conduct pasty sales within the church.

The Christian Education program will possibly resume in October, after school has been in session. It is possible an on-line program can be developed. A list of student names and ages will be prepared and parents will be contacted for additional input regarding the program.

The September council meeting will be held September 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

Karen Kallio, Secretary



## Stewardship

At a time full of uncertainty, anxiety and concern for our loved ones, we want to say thank you! You have continued to give monetary gifts to help with our ministry here at First Lutheran. There is no greater demonstration of faith than giving at a time of personal uncertainty. We are blessed to have a congregation that although we are not physically worshipping together, continues to give together. And together is how we will get through this unique and challenging time.

Like June, July finances were challenging. Expenses exceeded income by nearly \$4,000. We had an exceptional expense in July of property insurance of \$2,465 which was the majority of the financial deficit. Furthermore, our normal income as compared to 2019 was down by nearly \$1800. Your church and our ministry need your continued support in whatever way you find possible.

Curt

Treasurer

|      | Income     | Debits      | Net          |
|------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| July | \$7,568.98 | \$11,542.63 | (\$3,973.55) |
|      |            |             |              |



## Technology

Work behind the scenes is ongoing to support our ministry at First Lutheran. The technology committee continues to meet and upgrade our systems to provide administrative and ministerial support. Members of the technology committee are Holly Ribicki (website), Lynn Karvala (worship presentation), Jill Poulos (worship slides and congregational database), and Curt Poulos (committee chair). If you would like to join the technology committee please contact one of the members.

One of the new software platforms we are working with is **FaithLife**. Through *FaithLife* we are able to build our website (FirstLutheranIronRiver.com) and develop our presentations for worship. Furthermore this platform, provides a congregational database as well as provides us a vehicle for online giving. One of the software features we are excited to offer to all the members of First Lutheran is **FaithLife TV**. **FaithLife TV** is an online streaming service of Christian Faith and Christian Educational content.

If you wish to have access to this free service, please contact the church secretary at:

[secretary@firstlutheranironriver.com](mailto:secretary@firstlutheranironriver.com). In addition to access to **FaithLife TV** you will also receive access to an online study bible, **Logos**.



## Happy Birthday

|                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| Jeanine Watt     | 02 |
| Helen Berglund   | 03 |
| Paul Lamour      | 08 |
| Denise Spelgatti | 09 |
| Kyle Carlson     | 10 |
| George Peterson  | 15 |
| Seanna Stine     | 18 |
| Kurt Markkola    | 21 |
| Lynne Wilkins    | 29 |

## Happy Anniversary

|                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|
| Tracey and Angie Stine   | 05 |
| Bob and Marla Busakowski | 09 |
| Ken and Jane Maki        | 11 |
| Steven and Tammy Pietila | 14 |
| Mike and Sharon Dedo     | 19 |
| Dale and Jo Holm         | 23 |



The family of Josephine Barry.  
The family of Sonne Stowell.

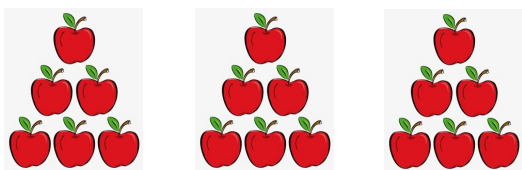


## WELCA NEWS

Ladies, our next WELCA meeting is Monday, September 14th at 11:00AM. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall as that gives us more room to “social distance” and please wear your masks.

We will be preparing items to be shipped for Lutheran World Relief. These include quilts, baby bundles and school backpacks.

Sharon Campbell has been our “Cheer” person for several years and has kept up with the birthday and anniversary cards for members of First. As of October 1st, she will be retiring from this special position and we are looking for someone to take her place. If interested or if you have any questions, please call Lynn at 906-367-6135. Great job Sharon! Thank you for your dedication to our members.



## 2020 World Hunger Donations

Thank you to all congregations who sent gifts for our Synod Assembly World Hunger Offering. Even though Assembly was cancelled, gifts totaling \$21,846.63 have been received in the Synod Office. These gifts are a blessing to those in need.

Please know that your gifts to World Hunger throughout the year are welcomed and vital to many across the world.



**FORTUNE LAKE**  
*A place of grace in Crystal Falls, MI*

## 2020 Fall Fest Auction

**October 2, 2020**

**9:-00 AM to 2:00 PM**

**Mark your calendars:** We look forward to seeing you here at Fortune Lake!

Have an item to donate?

- All submissions are **due on or before September 1**
- Our Fall Fest Committee respectfully requests that **all donated items have a value of at least \$50**. Due to the remote nature of our auction, we need to account for shipping costs and are unable to take items of lesser value.
- Value of items will be assigned by the Auction Committee's assessment of item based on the cost of materials provided.

Please attach the *Fall Fest Auction Donation Form* to each donated item

Our 2020 Fall Fest will be a virtual experience that will bring together supporters and friends of Fortune Lake from far and wide! We'll still have all your favorite elements: beautifully crafted quilts, other quality hand-made art, and plenty of fun ways to support our outdoor ministry. New in this year's auction will be some **Fortune Lake experiences to bid on!** Details are still in the works, but it is sure to be an exciting day.

### Silent Auction: Sept 23 – Oct 3

Bidders will be encouraged to register to our safe, secure platform early to participate in our silent auction which will begin on **September 23 and go through October 3**.

The silent auction will contain most of our items, and you'll have plenty of opportunity to make your selection and set your maximum bids.

On **October 3**, a few select items will be held over for a live virtual auction, during which we invite all of our supporters to join us online for a grand event celebrating the camp we all love!

## Men's Group

The Men's group of First Lutheran met on August 21st at Sunset Lake park. Social distancing was practiced. Agenda was donuts, fruit, coffee and fellowship...not necessarily in that order. It was determined that the men of our congregation would get together on August 28th to repair the parsonage garage.

Next meeting: September 18th

8:30, Sunset Lake Park,  
depending on weather

More information will follow in the church announcements on Sundays.



### NGLS Zoom classes

The Northern Great Lakes Synod is offering Zoom Classes for Adults beginning in September. This is a new series of classes for those who want to grow in spirituality,

faith, and knowledge. Classes offered are:

#### Ecclesiastes Bible Study

With Pastor Tommy Richter of Zion, Manistique

#### Freedom—A study in Galatians

With Pastor Thomas A. Skrenes, Bishop Emeritus

#### Introduction to Biblical Greek

With Pastor Nicole Hanson-Lynn of Zion/Salem, Ironwood

#### Bias in our Communities: Addressing Race in Rural America

With Pastor Christina Forsythe of Porterfield/Beaver

Classes are FREE. Classes will meet weekly for 60-90 minutes for 4-8 weeks. A complete schedule of classes, times, and dates is available on the synod website along with the registration form.

"Greek" requires the purchase of a textbook: *A Primer of Biblical Greek*. Materials available for optional purchase for *Bias in our Communities*.

You will receive ZOOM links from the instructor.

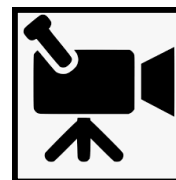
For more information:

<https://www.nglsynod.org/lifelong-faith-formation>

Or Sister Lori Ward 615-519-1969

## Sunday Readers

Even though our church is not open, there are many hands that work together to bring you your service on Sunday. Media, readers, soloist, and musicians. If you can help with any of these positions, please call the church office.



## CREW

The council has decided to wait until school starts before we decide on moving forward with a CREW and Confirmation program. Our Christian Education committee will meet and make plans so when the council decides to move forward, we are ready.

If you are interested in serving on this committee or know of anyone with interest, please email or call the church office. [secretary@firstlutheranironriver.com](mailto:secretary@firstlutheranironriver.com)  
906-265-9518



# September

| Sun  | Mon         | Tue  | Wed | Thu | Fri                                | Sat |
|--|-------------|--|-----|-----|------------------------------------|-----|
|  |             | 1  | 2   | 3   | 4                                  | 5   |
|  |             | 9:00 Quilters                                      |     |     |                                    |     |
| 6  | 7           | 8  | 9   | 10  | 11                                 | 12  |
| 10:00 Service on<br>WIKB, Facebook<br>or Website |             | 9:00 Quilters<br>10:00 Finance<br><br>6:00 Council |     |     |                                    |     |
| 13   | 14          | 15   | 16  | 17  | 18                                 | 19  |
| 10:00 Service on<br>WIKB, Facebook<br>or Website | 11:00 WELCA | 9:00 Quilters                                      |     |     | 8:30 Men's<br>Group<br>Sunset Lake |     |
| 20   | 21          | 22   | 23  | 24  | 25                                 | 26  |
| 10:00 Service on<br>WIKB, Facebook<br>or Website |             | 9:00 Quilters                                      |     |     |                                    |     |
| 27   | 28          | 29   | 30  |     |                                    |     |
| 10:00 Service on<br>WIKB, Facebook<br>or Website |             | 9:00 Quilters                                      |     |     |                                    |     |

[www.firstlutheranironriver.com](http://www.firstlutheranironriver.com)

Webcast: [www.WIKB.com](http://www.WIKB.com)

Broadcast WIKB 99.1 FM

Church Office: Phone (906) 265-9518

Tuesday, 9:00—11:00

[Secretary@FirstLutheranIronRiver.com](mailto:Secretary@FirstLutheranIronRiver.com)

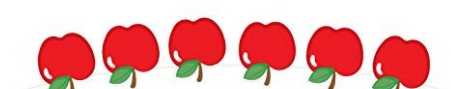
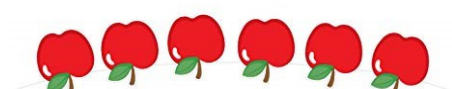
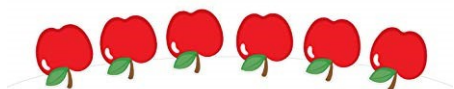
Cell phone: (906) 231-4905

Interim Pastor, The Reverend DJ Rasner

***Come join us!***

*Sowing seeds of grace, growing faith in Christ*

**First Lutheran Church**



First Lutheran Church  
235 E Genesee St.  
Iron River, MI 49935

«Household Name»

«Address1»

«City», «State/Province» «Postal/Zip code»