



The First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Rush City
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SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

Worship Changes for Fall: Following the recommendation of the Worship and Music Committee, the Church Council at its August 26th meeting approved developing procedures for worship in the sanctuary. Worship in both the sanctuary and parking lot will begin on Sunday, September 20th, 2020. Audio from sanctuary worship will broadcast to the parking lot on FM 96.5. Plans are also underway to livestream sanctuary worship to the internet.

August Church Council Meeting Highlights: Church Council met for its regular meeting on Wednesday, August 26th, 2020. Highlights of the meeting include: General Fund Balance of \$36,164.65 and a Building Fund Balance of \$13,340.11; Received information from Jim Schoolmeesters about the lighting system's computer control module and recommended replacement; Approved a contract for \$7,022 for new computer control module for the lighting system and calling of congregational meeting for final approval on Sunday, September 13th, 2020; Christian Education Committee reported on plans for in-person Sunday School, Confirmation and after-school program outreach via the Fun Bus; Recommended exploring partial compensation for interim praise band leader Jaime Holmstrom; Approved to offer an option to worship in the sanctuary in September following completion of the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan; Approved cancelling the Turkey Dinner for this year; Approved a new trash hauling contract with Pete's Rubbish; Bus maintenance discussed; Approved additional expenditures from undesignated memorial funds for equipment for livestream worship from the sanctuary. Official minutes of the meeting are available at the church office. The next regular meeting of the Church Council is Wednesday, September 16th, 2020 at 7:00 PM.



Worship in the Home: For those unable to gather with us on Sunday morning, remember that you can still worship in spirit with us using the weekly "Worship in the Home." It's always available on our website, but let us know if you'd like to have one mailed to you weekly.



Blessing of Backpacks: Rally Sunday, September 13th, 2020 during worship.

Rally Sunday: Sunday, September 13th, 2020 right after the 9:00 AM worship. There will be a registration table available to sign up and sidewalk chalk and bubbles outside for all to enjoy. Sunday school class will be a one-room schoolhouse format (*similar to W.A.S.P.*) with all ages and will be held during worship. The children will attend church with you as usual, and then be dismissed for Sunday school. We plan to have them back to you by communion/closing word.



Sunday School Teachers Needed: 2 teachers are needed every week, per our safety policy.



American Red Cross Blood Drive: We are happy to open our building to critical needs, including an upcoming blood drive for Monday, September 14, 2020 from 1:00 - 6:00 PM here at FELC. With a shortage of donations around the country, giving blood is more important than ever. As long as you are healthy and not sick, you can give. To register or to get your rapid pass, please call 1-800-733-2767 or visit: www.redcrossblood.org

W.A.S.P.: Is cancelled this year due to school being distance learning. We plan to do the Fun Bus once a month on the 3rd Wednesday starting on September 16th, 2020. If you do not want to receive a bag, please let JoAnn know.

Confirmation: Begins Wednesday, September 16th, 2020 for 45 minutes per class. 6th graders will attend from 4-4:45 PM, 7th graders from 5-5:45 PM and 8th graders from 6-6:45 PM.

Youth Campfire: The First Lutheran Youth (*6th - 12th grade*) are welcome to join us for a bonfire, s'mores, and outdoor games on Wednesday, September 16th, 2020 at 7:00 PM at the church near the fire pit.



In the Family: We're happy to share births, baptisms, marriages and deaths for those connected to our church family. Keep in touch and let us know who we may have missed.

Deaths: Edward "Ed" Rohlf (April 27, 1930 - December 25, 2019) Private Committal was August 8th, 2020. A public memorial service will be held at a later date.

Robert "Bob" Erickson (September 13, 1934 - August 4, 2020) Funeral was August 15th, 2020. Committal at Fort Snelling was on August 18th, 2020.

Raymond A. "Ray" Lundquist (October 6, 1927 - October 16, 2018) Private Committal was August 28th, 2020.

Compassionate God, give courage and faith to all who mourn, that they may have strength to meet the days ahead with steadfastness and patience; not as those who are without hope, but in thankful remembrance of your great goodness, and in the joyful expectation of eternal life in your presence, with those they love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Baptism & Membership: God's grace is a gift that is freely given to us. We don't earn a thing when it comes to God's love, and we only try to live in response to that gift. Please speak to Pastor Nathan if you interested in baptism or becoming a member of the congregation.

Feed My Starving Children Thank You: "Dear friends, you are such a blessing. Your gift on July 13th, 2020 to Feed My Starving Children is sending 304 nutritious meals to those around the world who need it most. Hope is greater because of you."

Saint Paul Area Synod Thank You: "Dear friends in Christ, Mission support to the synod increased in July and you are part of why that happened. Thank you for supporting our common work here and across the ELCA." - Bishop Patricia Lull

Election Survival Guide

Well, it's happening. The 2020 election season is likely to be as ugly as any in living memory. As Christians, God calls us to be good citizens - to voice our concerns, speak up for our neighbors and, of course, to vote. Far more important, however, is how we conduct ourselves despite the bad examples of many political leaders.

In Jesus' first sermon in Matthew's gospel (see chapters 5 - 7), after announcing his blessing upon the poor, dispossessed, powerless and starving, Jesus turns to the rest of us who are more well-off and starts preaching from the Ten Commandments. (This is also where Martin Luther begins in the Small Catechism.)

What Jesus has to say still shocks and challenges us today. Simply put, the bar for Christian conduct in the world is quite high, which means we always can do better. As the retired State Trooper who trained me in dementia chaplaincy put it, "I'm a believer in constant improvement."

In his popular translation of the Bible called The Message, Eugene Peterson gives us some punchy and pithy language to hear these Ten Commandments, re-told and re-interpreted by Jesus.

For the 5th Commandment, "You shall not murder," The Message says, "The simple moral fact is that words kill." We see every day how politicians' words (or lack of words) can kill others. Let's not go down that same rabbit hole, but re-dedicate ourselves to words that build up and not tear down.

For the 6th Commandment, "You shall not commit adultery," The Message says, "Your heart can be corrupted by lust even quicker than your body." It's easy to point your finger at the follies of the rich and famous, but the hard truth is that seed of evil rests in our hearts, too. Paying attention to that and taking it to God in prayer is the best medicine.

For the 8th Commandment, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor," The Message says, "Don't say anything you don't mean... When you manipulate words to get your own way, you go wrong." This is blatant in today's reality-show politics, but let's not let that seep into our daily lives. Let's do our best to tell the truth - not just our own but our neighbor's truth, too.

On the supposed commandment to hate your enemy, Jesus turns the tables and commands us to "love your enemies." The Message says, "No more tit-for-tat stuff. Live generously. Let your enemies bring out the best in you, not the worst." I don't know if there's anyone on a political campaign staff advising this, but this is the best advice for we who are called to bear each other's burdens (see Romans 12:9-21, the Second Reading for worship on August 30).

With these commandments and others, Jesus breaks us open to live as children of God and not as members of a tribe. Tribes live by hating and winning, but Christians live by loving and regarding all people as God's children. The Message says, "Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you."

Be a good citizen. But even more, be a good Christian.

- Pastor Nathan