



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

September, 2011 Newsletter

We apologize for such a short newsletter this month, but here's the most important information we wanted to get out to you.

WORSHIP WITH US BACK "HOME" AT FLC:

Sunday, September 11, 9:30 AM -- "*We're All Being Brought Back*"

Join us for our return back "home." Even if you haven't been here for a while. Even if you've never been here. Even if you've been WAITING to worship back "home" here at First Lutheran –

All are WELCOMED!

- ◆ Pastor Ken will be preaching – "*In the Beginning ...*"
 - ◆ Special music from First Lutheran Church Bell Choirs, Cathedral Choir and elements of the Minot Area Brass Band
 - ◆ Back to school blessing for our school children and teachers
 - ◆ We'll gather in the courtyard between the Parish Center and the Church for the beginning of the service.
 - ◆ The ELEVATOR is NOT Working—but we'll have crews to help those who need assistance to get into the church for this historic day. (Those needing assistance, please park in the North parking lot in front of the parsonage.)
 - ◆ Free spaghetti lunch provided afterwards by Sammy's Pizza
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WORSHIP TIMES TO CHANGE:

Having worshiped well with Zion this summer at some times we were initially not accustomed to and having recognized significant time conflicts with our Sunday morning worship and education schedules, our worship times will be adjusted slightly this fall:

Saturday – 5:30 PM (starting September 17th)

Sunday – (starting September 18th)

8:30 AM	First Service -- Traditional Liturgy
9:45 AM	Education Hour (<i>starting October 2nd</i>)
11:00 AM	Second Service -- Good News Band/Voices for Worship

Wednesday – 7:15 PM (starting October 5th)

The main concern was to alleviate the scheduling conflict among Sunday School teachers and families who choose to worship together. These folks were weekly either having to leave First Service early or having to arrive at Second Service late. This also allows for some coffee and visit time without intentionally competing with the Education Hour, which is now a true hour.

We recognize that change, especially worship time changes, can be unsettling and uncomfortable. Nonetheless, the pastoral staff, the council, and most elements of our Music & Worship Board and

worship staff believed these were good changes, especially for the sake of our Education Ministry. We hope all can agree, even if the changes don't personally suit them. Thanks!

SUNDAY/WEDNESDAY SCHOOL & CONFIRMATION SCHEDULES TENTATIVELY SET:

As with our *"We're All Being Brought Back"* Service on September 11, our *"tentative"* September dates had to be moved back because of unsolved infrastructure issues. So here's the new *"tentative"* plan – let's hope that we can hold to these dates.

Sunday, October 2 -- RALLY SUNDAY

Our weekly Sunday School Schedule will be as follows:

9:45 – 10:45 AM	Pre K - 2nd Grade Sunday School 3rd Grade - Adult Family Sunday School (Exciting details to follow!)
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Wednesday, October 5 -- RALLY WEDNESDAY

Our weekly Wednesday School & Confirmation Schedule will be as follows:

5:00 – 5:45 PM	Supper
5:45 – 7:00 PM	Confirmation
6:00 – 7:00 PM	Wednesday School
7:15 – 8:00 PM	Wednesday Worship Service

ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC POTLUCK:

This will be yet another chance to celebrate our survival of the flood by "All Being Brought Back."

**Sunday, September 18, from Noon – 3:00 pm,
at Polaris Park Shelter #2 (on North Hill)**

FLC will provide hot dogs, buns and a beverage. There will be family games & activities. Bring lawn chairs and your potluck dishes: A-M please bring salads, N-Z please bring desserts or chips. See you there!

FLC'S ROMMEGROT FOR HOSTFEST:

We will be making Rommegrot for Hostfest again – probably September 20 – 22 (dates/times not yet set). We need people to come help make it and we need confirmation students to help pack the pints. This can qualify as a "Service Requirement" for the confirmation student. Please call Vick Rusch if you can help out, at 852-4853. This is a very important fundraiser for the church, especially since the fair was cancelled.

FROM THE PASTOR:

First Lutheran Members & Friends:

*"Search me O God, and know my thoughts. Try me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting."* Psalm 139:23-24

Anxious thoughts. Has there been a summer when such thoughts more easily bubble to the surface? At our May church council meeting, I led our leadership in a devotion encouraging them to take time to enjoy the summer, to rest, to do deliberately and often something that for them was "life giving". At the moment, that seems like the most ill timed, inappropriate devotion I have ever offered. Backyard barbeques, gardening, golf outings, swimming in our city pool, walks or bike rides along our city's trails have all given way to evacuations and reality of destruction on an unprecedented scale. At least I wasn't alone in thinking this way...the sign just outside Lincoln School says to this day "have a great summer". It has been sobering, to say the least to have had such a trying one. Lingering in our minds are the questions of financial survival and whether a house can become a home again after a flood. We grieve the loss of friends and longtime members of our community and congregation who have moved on to other locations, not wanting or able to re-build their flood ravaged homes.

Our church home is likewise faced with challenges that bring no shortage of anxious thoughts to the surface. On the positive side, and there is one, our parish center is taking shape again, with classrooms in the basement all painted, carpet soon to be laid, and many new chairs and desks for the kids on order. Still to be installed is a new phone system to replace the aging one ruined by the flood. There will be some floor plan changes, consistent with our ministry needs and the evaluation of our space as part of the capital campaign. But while the flood damaged much, it also gave us the space so to speak to make these needed decisions. We hope the main parish center hall will be ready for Luther's Kitchen again soon.

The main church building is still a ways off. It will house the new heating and cooling system that will be more efficient and service the parsonage, main church and parish center, with the potential to service the new addition some day. This major improvement to our facilities was part of the Creating Connections Campaign proposal. Again, the flood forced us to implement this sooner than anticipated, but it will serve us well. New components to the elevator on the south side are needed and the work has been scheduled for later in September. But our basement gathering areas will be noticeably "bare" when we return for worship on September 11th. It is for this reason, and the tight timetable for finishing work in the parish center basement, that we are delaying the start of our education ministries until the first week of October. We simply don't have space ready to host our confirmation ministries right now, but our contractors tell us that by the end of September, we may be nearing the completion of those major jobs, and can clean and arrange our space for all the classes that happen on Wednesday nights.

All of this has caused no small amount of anxiousness on the part of our staff. We'd love to get at it again, just like always, in a few weeks. We will resume our ministries again, but just not as soon as we would have liked. In the meantime, we acknowledge that so many in our congregation are far from getting at it again, just like always. Anxiousness about the winter, not to mention the spring and overall future is not uncommon, surprising, nor unwarranted. For each anxious thought, difficult decision, and incomplete task, for the anxiousness produced by loss, for the anxiousness of what most folks tell us will be a "new normal" in our community and our families, we turn to the Lord who promises to guide us in an everlasting way. The Psalmist often wrote *"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, his steadfast loves endures forever, his faithfulness to all generations"*.

Chastened by the events of the summer, weary of too many decisions, we need that faithfulness, and we will be shown it. Though running behind a bit, we are pressing on...

Because of a cross,

Pastor Ken Nelson