

# THE MESSENGER

*The monthly newsletter of First Lutheran Church, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

## With Appreciation and Thanks

We want to take the opportunity of using our June Messenger article to expression our appreciation and thanks to Pastor Elisabeth, Jacob, and Jens for their past three years at First Lutheran.

Being open to the Spirit and the call of the Church, the Himmelman family moved to Kearney; though six months before they arrived, a call in Kearney, Nebraska had not been on their radar screen. Through her leadership with FLY, in worship, on staff, and throughout our congregation as a whole, Pastor Elisabeth has significantly enhanced our ministry. Through her leadership, work, and devotion, she also helped revive what had become a dormant ministry at Campus Lutheran.

Jacob has provided leadership in our Advent Workshops and Vacation Bible as well as serving as a Communion Assistant. Jens has participated in numerous programs with his joyful enthusiasm. The whole family has been intentional in cultivating a number of close friendships with members of First Lutheran.

We are grateful for all the ways Pastor Elisabeth, Jacob, and Jens have graced us with their warm presence and contributed so much to First Lutheran Church and its ongoing service to Christ. We thank the Himmelmans, and they will be missed.

Godspeed,  
Pastor Rick and Pastor Michelle



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Prayer Ventures for June can be found:

<https://www.elca.org/Resources/Prayer-Ventures>

These petitions are offered as guides to prayer for the global, social and outreach ministries of the ELCA, as well as for the needs and circumstances of our neighbors, communities and world.



<http://www.elca.org>  
800-638-3522



<http://www.nebraskasynod.org>  
402-896-5311



Lutheran World Relief

<http://www.lwr.org>  
800-597-5972



LUTHERAN  
CAMPUS MINISTRY

<http://www.nelcm.com/>  
(308) 234-1828



[www.elca.org/our-work/relief-and-development/lutheran-disaster-response](http://www.elca.org/our-work/relief-and-development/lutheran-disaster-response)  
800-638-3522



<http://www.nlom.org>  
402-944-2544

**summer  
worship  
times**

SATURDAY, 6:00 PM

SUNDAY, 8:45 AM

**SUNDAY, 10:30 AM**

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 2023 CONFIRMANDS



Back Row: Ella Means, Miranda Wright, Micah Lewis, Preston Eilers, Danielle Seim, Madison Chamberlin

Front Row: Pastor Michelle Holley Carlson, Elle Cochran, Bailey Henning, Preston Russman, Will Fehringer, Kayley Anderson, and Pastor Rick Carlson

### SUMMER MUSIC

Opportunities are available  
to provide special music at all services

Contact Natalie in the church office  
to schedule a time



## Farewell Reception for Pr. Elisabeth and Family.

**JUNE 18 | 9:45 am**

Join us for a card shower with  
coffee and cake provided.





# MISSION OUTREACH

## HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

We were overly optimistic about the progress on the first two houses for 2023 due to the rain in May. It was pretty muddy on the build site in May so we will repeat that walls and roofs are in place for the first two houses of 2023 and windows are installed. This is when many volunteers can work on different parts of the projects at the same time. Siding, dirt moving, insulation, dry wall, painting. Whatever your interest there is a place for you.

The first application for a 2024 homebuilder has been completed and the Family Selection Committee hopes to have two more families identified by September. The Building Committee would like to pour one or two foundations in the fall for the following spring to allow the concrete to cure and to offset any snowy or rainy weather in March or April.

**Hold the Date: June 17** First Lutheran Church will supply morning devotion, noon meal and extra volunteers to support the Kearney Area Habitat project. Please sign up in the narthex.

## ROYAL FAMILY KIDS CAMP

Mission Outreach Team has chosen Royal Family Kids Camp as the special summer project for 2023. RFK is a Christian led organization that provides a week-long summer camp for children ages 7-11 who are involved with the child welfare system. This year's Kearney area camp is July 24-28, 2023. They also serve children in Kearney through a monthly mentoring club during the school year.

(RFKC) is a network of camps, children's clubs, and child mentoring for abused, abandoned and neglected children in the foster care, system. RFK was founded in 1985 by Wayne and Diane Tesch. Their motto is "Every child deserves dignity", and the goal is for every child in the community to experience unconditional love, hope, and safety. It can be challenging to teach children about a loving heavenly Father, when they may not have experienced a loving earthly parent, or have had other disruptions to that relationship. Royal Family KIDS Kearney's mission is to create life-changing moments for children who have experienced relational trauma. They are motivated by the example Christ set to share a common goal, of caring for those Jesus referred to as, "the least of these."

Summer project collection boxes will be available at the Welcome Stations in the narthex.

## LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF KITS

Today and every day, Lutheran World Relief Quilts and Kits of Care are a reminder to families that even in the midst of crisis, they are not alone.

Please help us collect items for Lutheran World Relief Kits! First Lutheran Church takes pride in donating and assembling School Kits, Baby Care Kits, Personal Care Kits, Mission Quilts, Fabric Kits. Pens and pencils, a toothbrush, a quilt...ordinary items we take for granted become treasures in the hands of their recipients. The items you send will be cherished and used by people who take nothing for granted, for whom a simple bar of soap is special. Your gifts of time and resources are beautiful expressions of God's love and grace to those in greatest need. Please give new items only, except where otherwise noted. Please do not donate items with any religious or patriotic symbols. Thank you for your partnership in putting them together.

For a complete list of items needed, visit <http://lwr.org/getinvolved/kits>. There will be a donation box at First Lutheran Church in the cafe.

## Kaitlynn's Newsletter

BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

COMMUNITY ORGANIZER AND HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATOR



Featured in the above photo (from left to right): Photo taken at Iglesia San Lucas with Yuliana (daughter of Pastor), Helena (President of the Iglesia San Lucas), Katie, and Pastor Maria Elena.

### MAIN STORY

I want to take a moment to introduce myself. My name is Kaitlynn Larson and I am accompanying the Iglesia Evangelica Luterana de Colombia (IELCO). I work with the program Justicia y Vida. Justicia y Vida is a program of the IELCO which promotes the protection and education of human rights and works toward the reconciliation of peace following the 50-year civil war, and the signing of the 2016 peace accord.

A little background about me - I was born and raised in Omaha, Nebraska with my two older brothers. My mother, two brothers, and three nephews all still live in Omaha. I was raised as an ELCA Lutheran. I even served as the president of the Lutheran Youth Organization of Nebraska in high school. I always found comfort in the church as it provided me with a safe and supportive community. I believe the church is one of the most beautiful spaces for people from all different walks of life to grow together.

I went to Nebraska Wesleyan University where I studied Global Studies and Spanish. I studied abroad in Cordoba, Argentina, and Montevideo, Uruguay. After graduation, I spent a few years working in local congregations in Nebraska doing children, youth, and family ministry. I transitioned to community organizing in 2016, where I worked doing immigration rights, workers' rights, get-out-the-vote campaigns, and leadership development. After many conversations and many cups of coffee with the people I was organizing with, I realized that certain beliefs and theologies were keeping them powerless. It became clear that I was being called to pursue the path of ordination. I graduated with a Master of Divinity in 2021 from Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colorado. I am in process of ordination with the Nebraska Synod. The IELCO and ELCA are supporting my call and process, and I will be able to do my internship at a local congregation here in Bogota.

In my free time, I love running; I am one of those half-marathon people. I also really enjoy reading, especially poetry, and learning new things or exploring new places.



# MISSION OUTREACH – MISSIONARY UPDATE

## Connect with Justicia y Vida!

 @justividaIELCO

Featured to the right: Me, Pastor Angelica Bernate Rojas, and a member of Vida Nueva.

My 32nd birthday was about 2 weeks after I arrived in Bogota and la Iglesia Vida Nueva helped me celebrate!



## Connect with the IELCO!

 @ielco

 @iglesiaevangelicaluterana



Featured to the left: Me, Katie Larson, and Bishop Atahualpa Hernandez outside the central offices.

## HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT THIS MINISTRY?

- Make an individual gift by check payable to “Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” with “Kaitlynne Larson GCS2071” in the memo line. Mail your check to:

ELCA Gift Processing Center  
P.O. Box 1809  
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

- Make an individual gift by credit or debit card by visiting [ELCA.org/MissionaryGiving](https://ELCA.org/MissionaryGiving) OR by calling 800-638-3522 and specify "GCS2071"
- By automatic monthly bank withdrawal, or to establish a covenant of prayer, communication, and support - contact 800-638-3522, ext. 2820, or [globalchurch@elca.org](mailto:globalchurch@elca.org).



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

JOIN THE NEWSLETTER MAILING LIST BY SENDING AN EMAIL TO  
[KAITLYNNE.LARSON@ELCA.ORG](mailto:KAITLYNNE.LARSON@ELCA.ORG)

# MISSION OUTREACH

## June's Donation: Personal Hygiene Products

Ideas: hand soap, hand sanitizer, bars of soap, deodorant, body wash



The S.A.F.E. Center is the Spouse/Sexual Abuse Family Education Center. The S.A.F.E. Center's mission is to provide free and confidential services for those affected by dating violence, domestic violence, human trafficking, sexual assault, and stalking while bringing awareness and prevention efforts to all individuals across South Central Nebraska.

**Counties we serve:** Buffalo, Franklin, Harlan, Kearney, Phelps

**Please place items on the "Sharing Shelf" in the narthex.**

**Thank you!**



**Hours:** Monday-Thursday 9am-5pm/**Address:** 620 E. 25th Suite 14, Kearney NE, 68847

**Phone:** 308-237-2599/**24 Hour Toll-Free Crisis Line:** 877-237-2513

# OFFICE UPDATES



## FLC STAFF E-MAIL ADDRESSES

### Church Office

office@firstlutheranearney.org

### Pastor Rick Carlson

*Co-Lead Pastor*

rcarlson@firstlutheranearney.org

### Pastor Michelle Carlson

*Co-Lead Pastor*

mcarlson@firstlutheranearney.org

### Pastor Elisabeth Himmelman

*Assoc. Pastor for Youth & Young Adults*

ehimmelman@firstlutheranearney.org

### Kandy Bacon

*Administrative Assistant*

kbacon@firstlutheranearney.org

### Marti Brockmeier

*Bookkeeper*

martibrockmeier@firstlutheranearney.org

### Natalie Radcliffe

*Worship Music Coordinator*

natalieradcliffe@firstlutheranearney.org

### Amanda Lewis

*Lead Teacher for the Preschool*

amandalewis@firstlutheranearney.org

## APRIL FINANCE REPORT

Ministry Budget:	APR 2023	YTD '22-'23'	YTD '21-'22
Budget Supporting Revenue	\$ 63,240	\$ 633,731	\$ 599,340
Budget Related Expenditures	\$ (60,763)	\$ (687,176)	\$ (672,686)

Total 2022-2023 Ministry Budget: \$757,672

Facilities Budget:	APR 2023	YTD '22-'23	YTD '21-'22
Revenue	\$ 8,715	\$ 78,473	\$ 71,872
Expenditures	\$ (2,912)	\$ (41,136)	\$ (33,494)

Total 2022-2023 Facilities Budget: \$34,100

## VANCO GIVING OPTIONS

### FAITH

In addition to traditional giving options for your convenience First Lutheran offers electronic giving!

**VANCO Faith:** which allows people to make financial contributions to the church electronically in the following ways:

1. Online (just go to the First Lutheran website under the "Resources" tab), and
2. Mobile App (download the Vanco Mobile app on the iPhone or Android, create a profile and search for "First Lutheran").

If you have any questions or would like assistance in using any of the above electronic giving options or would like to receive offering envelopes, please contact Marti in the church office.

Thank you so much for your faithful generosity to First Lutheran Church's ministry!

"Now as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you—so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking."  
(2 Corinthians 8:7)



# COUNCIL UPDATE

## Embracing Change During a Time of Transition

Greetings First Lutheran Congregation,

The month of May was a very transitional time for the church. We had a lot to celebrate with confirmation, graduation, and a successful start to the capital campaign. We started saying our farewells to Pastor Elisabeth and her family (which will continue through June). And finally, we started preparing for the budget forum and congregational annual meeting which each occur in June.

With all these transitions happening, it can often bring anxiety to the surface. While that's a natural feeling, we believe through purposeful planning and prayer, we will be able to handle the changes well. The thing to keep in mind is that this is not new territory for the Church. We have people come and go. Kids mature from children's ministry, to youth ministry, to adult ministry every year. We raise money for special projects and outreach efforts. We face challenges, recruit and train new volunteers, celebrate successes, mourn losses, and give thanks to God through it all. Do you know why? Because IT'S ALL MINISTRY. That's what we are all called to do through the Church to serve God and others. It's what we do!

The life of the church, just like life outside of the church, can be messy, and scary, and filled with anxiety. That's when family, friends, pastors, and others are there to lift us up and keep us moving forward.

So now, that's what we focus on. Moving forward. Following the path on which we believe God is leading us. It won't always be easy, but it will be worth it. It's OK to feel anxious, but know that we've been here before. We know God will help and guide us. We know people who care will be by our side.

As we continue to push forward with our capital campaign, filling our youth and young adult ministry needs, filling our open staff positions, and facing the trials and joys of our ministry, we ask for your continued prayers.

Perhaps you feel God calling you to serve in a deeper, more meaningful way to help us through these times of transition? Consider joining one of our ministry teams found at [firstlutherankearney.org/leadership-ministry-teams](http://firstlutherankearney.org/leadership-ministry-teams). Or get involved in Christian Education. There's always great work to be done!

In peace,  
Kyle Means  
Council President

On behalf of: Kelly Russman, Shirley Smalley, Lee Fritson, Mark Kottmeyer, Mike Rafferty, Rachel Leach, Judy Henning, Karen Emal, Pastor Michelle, Pastor Rick, and Pastor Elisabeth.

## CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Kyle Means  
*President*

Kelly Russman  
*Vice President*

Shirley Smalley  
*Treasurer*

Lee Fritson  
*Secretary*

Karen Emal

Judy Henning

Mark Kottmeyer

Rachel Leach

Michael Rafferty

**Have questions?**  
If you want to speak  
to a council  
member, please  
contact the office or  
find their  
information in the  
Narthex on the  
wall.

## BUDGET FORUM

**Sunday, June 11, 2023**  
Centennial Hall  
9:45 a.m.

## ANNUAL MEETING

**Sunday, June 25, 2023**  
Centennial Hall  
9:45 a.m.

# WORSHIP THEMES

**June 4, 2023**

## **THE HOLY TRINITY**

### **FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

GENESIS 1:1-2:4a; PSALM 8; 2 CORINTHIANS 13:11-13; MATTHEW 28:16-20

Though the word *trinity* is not found in the scriptures, today's second reading includes the apostolic greeting that begins the liturgy: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. In the gospel Jesus sends his disciples forth to baptize in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. More than a doctrine, the Trinity expresses the heart of our faith: we have experienced the God of creation made known in Jesus Christ and with us always through the Holy Spirit. We celebrate the mystery of the Holy Trinity in word and sacrament, as we process the creed, and as we are sent into the world to bear witness to our faith.

**June 11, 2023**

## **TIME AFTER PENTECOST**

HOSEA 5:15-6:6; PSALM 50:7-15; ROMANS 4:13-25; MATTHEW 9:9-13, 18-26

Though Jesus was a devout Jew who practiced his faith, he was criticized for eating with tax collectors and sinners – the religiously nonobservant. Jesus criticizes the self-righteous and reminds us that mercy is to be at the heart of our religious practices. God continues to be made known in those margins of society, like Matthew the tax collector and the hemorrhaging woman. As we gather each Lord's day we receive the healing that makes us well and sends us forth to be signs of God's mercy for the world.

**JUNE 18, 2023**

## **TIME AFTER PENTECOST**

EXODUS 19:2-8a; PSALM 100; ROMANS 5:1-8; MATTHEW 9:35-10 [10:9-23]; GENESIS 18:1-15 [21:1-7]; PSALM 116:1-2, 12-19

Moses tells the Israelites that they are called to be a priestly kingdom and holy people. Jesus sends the disciples as laborers into the harvest. In baptism we too are anointed for ministry, sharing God's compassion with our needy world. From the Lord's table we go forth to proclaim the good news, to heal the sick, and to share our bread with the hungry.

**June 25, 2023**

## **TIME AFTER PENTECOST**

JEREMIAH 20:7-13; PSALM 69:7-10 [11-15] 16-18; ROMANS 6:1b-11; MATTHEW 10:24-39; GENESIS 21:8-21; PSALM 86:1-10; 16-17

God does not promise that the path of the disciple will be easy. Jeremiah feels the pain of rejection from those who do not want to hear what he has to say. Jesus declares that his words may bring stark division. Even so, we need not be afraid for God accounts for each hair on our heads. Though we may experience rejection, frustration, division, and death, God's grace and love make us a new creation each day. Marked with the cross and filled with holy food, we are sent from worship to witness to Christ in the world.





# COMING IN JULY:

## Vacation Bible School 2023

Join Us as We Answer God's Call Together



### VBS: JULY 17 – 20 & 23RD

**WEEKDAYS 5:15PM - 5:50PM:**

**VBS CHECK-IN & FREE-WILL DONATION MEAL**

**WEEKDAYS 6:00PM - 8:00PM:**

**VBS PROGRAMMING**

**SUNDAY, JULY 23:**

**10:30AM WORSHIP SERVICE**

**5TH LESSON, PERFORM SONGS, PARTY AFTERWARD**

In the depths of a colorful underground cave, is the beating heart of the hero community: the Hero Hotline Headquarters! Join us this July for First Lutheran Church's 2023 VBS, where ordinary mortals will become Heroes and discover that everyone's gifts are valued and every hero has a role to play. We won't focus on grown-up, comic book versions of superheroes at our VBS -- instead we will focus on how we can be heroic in our everyday lives, striving for the things that bring peace and build each other up! Our VBS Heroes will experience a fun, welcoming, high-energy VBS through bible lessons, music, storytelling, games, arts and crafts, science, and snacks.

### DONATIONS NEEDED:

- Walmart & Hobby Lobby Gift Cards
- 2 Refrigerator (Huge) Boxes
- 1 32oz Container Table Salt
- 1 pkg Granulated Sugar
- Empty & Clean 16oz Plastic Bottles (water, juice, or pop okay - need 100 total)
- 100 Washcloths or Cotton Socks (used okay, clean please)
- 100 Sandwich-Sized Plastic Bags
- 2 Boxes Food Coloring (the dropper type in red, blue, yellow, green)
- 20lb Ground Beef
- Rectangle Plastic Tablecloths (Green, Aqua, Grey, Orange, Purple)
- 2 Boxes of 50 Fruit Snacks (Walmart Brand Fruit Smiles)
- 100 Small Bottles Water
- 100 Boxes Apple Juice
- 100 Capri Sun Juice Pouches
- 100 Mozzarella Sticks

### TO REGISTER:



**OR GO TO**  
[firstlutheranearney.org](http://firstlutheranearney.org)

### VOLUNTEER:



**OR GO TO**  
[firstlutheranearney.org](http://firstlutheranearney.org)

**CALLED TOGETHER  
TO SERVE GOD!**



# WOMEN of the ELCA

On April 22nd, 47 ladies and men gathered at First Lutheran for the Southern Prairie Spring Conference. Elysia McGill, Women of the ELCA president welcomed everyone and shared a message of hope. Hope as numbers at each of the Spring Gatherings was up. Details are being finalized on the Women of the ELCA convention being held the first weekend in October.

After a short business meeting Pastor Michelle led the Bible Study on the Character of Discipleship. It was based on Matthew 5:13 - 16. These verses are part of the Beatitudes which are part of the Sermon on the Mount. It is important to integrate who we are and what we do as Jesus' disciples. The heart of the matter is what does it look like being a Christian. We are to be disciples to glorify God and God's purpose is realized.

Our guest speakers were Deacon Patrick Mangowl, a job coach, and Sister Woinde Nkya, an occupational therapist, with Building a Caring Community in Moshi, Tanzania. The BBC mission is to provide vocational training, therapy, health care and education to children and youth with disabilities. There are 10 centers in Moshi which also provide home services. In 2022, they were able to provide 183 health screenings, 2 new centers opened, 300 people attended the BBC Friends Day and there were 29 graduates of the Young Adult program with home projects and are employed in the community.

After a wonderful lunch and playing Friendship Bingo, we heard from Jason Owens, the principal at the Hanny Arram Center for Success in Kearney. He told how he and his staff provide a safe, caring and supportive environment so that all students get the chance to feel successful. The programming is personalized, so that the students are better than when they came in. They also provide temporary student support for students who are suspended or tutoring at night to help other students receive help in subjects which are difficult for them. The day ended with closing worship, installation of officers and communion.

A few more THANKS for the day. Thanks to Betty Heggemeyer for playing the piano for our opening and closing worship. Thanks to the Prayer Shawl group for the prayer squares which each person attending received. Thanks to Lotys Suhr for making the morning coffee. Thank you to Kandy for making all the copies. It was a wonderful day THANKS to everyone who helped.

On July 6th all women of the church are invited to attend a salad supper. We will begin at 6:00 in Centennial Hall. Please bring a salad to share. We are inviting the ladies from Family of Christ to attend.

## UPCOMING EVENTS for 2023

**June 5 - 7:00pm - Women of the ELCA Board Meeting –**  
Classroom 21/22

**July 10<sup>th</sup> – 6:00pm – Women of the ELCA General Meeting**  
(Salad Supper)



Ladies who are interested in joining a monthly Bible study are invited to attend a women's circle. Circles can be joined at any time during the year.

### President:

**Deb Schauer (308) 233-2669**

### Secretary:

**Bev Vacha (308)-468-6239**

### Treasurer:

**Jo Smallcomb (308)-234-3053**



### **DEBORAH CIRCLE**

7:00 pm –3rd Monday  
Chair: Deb Schauer  
(308-233-2669)

### **GLORIA CIRCLE**

12:00pm—3rd Thursday  
Chair: Judy Workman  
308-237-2781

### **NAOMI CIRCLE**

7:00pm—4th Thursday  
(3rd Thurs. in Nov.)  
Chair: Judy Niemann  
(308)-234-4332



# NOMINATIONS

## Congregation Council Candidates

**P.J. Bartels**



- Member since 1987
- Married to Dorann and have two sons
- Has served on two previous terms of Church council; served as a delegate to the ELCA Synod convention
- Has been a chairperson for the Sunday School/Old Sanctuary Remodeling Committee and Treasurer for Campus Lutheran
- Served for a number of years on the Property and Management Committee
- Just completed second term as chairperson for Personnel Committee
- Served over 10 years as an Assisting Minister and currently is a Lector

**Deb Schauer**



- Has been a member of First Lutheran Church for 39 years
- Previously served on the Preschool Board and Mission Outreach
- A longtime member of Deborah Circle
- President of Women's ELCA
- Retired special education teacher

**Bill Schmidt**



- Member of First Lutheran Church since 2012
- Married to Megan and has three children, Sawyer, JD, and Burke
- Has served on the Call Committee
- Is Currently on the Mutual Ministry Team
- Works as the Assistant Principal at Horizon Middle School

# NOMINATIONS

## Endowment Committee Candidates

### Dennis Gorr



- Recently moved to Kearney about a year ago
- Dennis and his wife, Barb, are Stacy Bean's parents
- The Gorr's are 60+ members at their previous church, Calvary Lutheran in Scottsbluff, NE
- Has served on Church Council and various other boards at his past church for over 30 years

### Barry Sandstrom



- Recent member of First Lutheran Church
- Married by Pastor Ebb in 1969 here at First Lutheran
- Retired President and CEO of Home Federal Bank in Grand Island.
- Lived in Estes Park and were members of Shepherd of Mountain Lutheran Church.
- Ushered and was a member of the Endowment Committee at his previous church.
- Has a daughter, son-in-law, and three grandsons living in Kearney.

### Wendell Wessels



- Member of FLC for 37 years
- Married to Cindy and they have two children, who were both baptized and confirmed at FLC.
- Just retired after working 36 years as the Director of Finance for the City of Kearney.
- Has been a member of the Church Council, Endowment Committee and Property Management.
- Feels like his past experience in finance and budgeting will be beneficial to the congregation and the Endowment Committee.



# NOMINATIONS

## Nominating Committee Candidates

**Desiree John**



- Grew up in First Lutheran Church and left in 1998. Returned to First Lutheran when they moved back to Kearney in 2011.
- Helped with Jubilee Meals, Feeding the Flock and assisting with Worship Services at Brookstone Gardens.
- Taught Sunday School for 6 years.
- Employed as an occupational therapist at Kearney Public Schools.
- Enjoys spending time with family, being outside, going on walks and being with their pets.

**Stacy Seim**



- Member of First Lutheran Church since 2000
- Married to Ben and has two daughters, Kyleigh and Danielle.
- Has taught FROG for 10 years.
- Has been a Confirmation small group leader for the past 6 years.
- Has been a College Planning Coordinator at Education Quest Foundation for 26 years.

**Dave Townsend**



- Member of First Lutheran Church for 42 years.
- Married to Peggy.
- Served on Church Council previously for 3 terms.
- Served on Property Team for 2 terms.
- Served on the Personnel Team.

# NOMINATIONS

## **Sarah Haack**



### **Preschool Board**

- Lifelong member of First Lutheran Church
- Married to Ryan and they have two children, Katie (age 9) and Ryker (age 6)
- Both children are graduates of First Lutheran Church Preschool
- Works as a Reference Librarian at the Kearney Public Library
- Served on the Preschool Board for 3 years and running for a second term.

## **Rachel Leach**



- Member of First Lutheran Church since the late 1990's
- Currently on Church Council (after 6 years).
- Previously served on Preschool Board.
- Founding member of Care and Growth Committee.
- Taught Sunday School, FROG (when it was called "GIFT"), VBS and Confirmation.
- Married to Shawn. They have four adult children, two grandchildren and another one on the way.
- Has worked at Park and Rec for 25 years.

## **Stephanie Todd**



- Member of First Lutheran Church for 13 years
- Married to Damien and they have two sons, Landon and Dalton
- Works at the Buckle
- Has also served on the Worship Life Team
- Served on the Preschool Board for 3 years and running for a second term.

## A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR ELISABETH

Dear First Lutheran,

As I prepare to serve a new community, I want to express my gratitude for your support and care over the last three years. Thank you!!

It was complicated to serve in a shared call between FLC and Campus Lutheran, but your ongoing support helped make the whiplash manageable. The young adults of Campus Lutheran and the teenagers of First Lutheran have made me laugh, kept me on my toes, and loved and served in such meaningful ways. I am incredibly grateful for their insistence on showing up authentically and enthusiastically, and will greatly miss serving and serving alongside these teenagers and young adults.

As we enter the next chapters of our stories, my love for each young person I had the privilege of serving alongside is a lifetime guarantee whether we live in Nebraska, Illinois, or anywhere else. In this adventure, we trust that God goes with each of us and God calls each beloved. No matter what.

As I think about the younger versions of who each of these young humans were when I arrived at First Lutheran in August 2020 and who they are becoming today, I think about how much I've learned from and with them all along the way – about taking a risk to follow Jesus into the depths of complex relationships, of difficult conversations, of holy moments. It is a pure gift of God's grace.

In hope,  
+ Pastor Elisabeth



# FLY

## FLY

Congratulations Class of 2023!

We recognized the Class of 2023 in Worship on May 14<sup>th</sup> including:

CeCelia Berggren  
Dane Buskirk  
Huston Cochran  
Kamryn David  
Grace Draper

Owen Fritson  
Chance Fuller  
Lexxy Gordon  
Cecilia Henning  
Jacob Isaacson

Alexis Long  
Olivia McArthur  
Kyleigh Seim  
Tate Shoemaker

God goes with you into your next chapter!



*Class of 2023 ~ Confirmation Class in 2018*

**FLY** **SUMMER '23**

wednesdays, May 24 - June 21 @ 7-9pm  
YOUTH GROUP IN THE BASEMENT

THURSDAY, May 25 @ 3-10pm  
Grand Island: Spring City Trampoline Park &  
Dinner @ Texas Roadhouse  
COST (INCLUSIVE, PAY AT EVENT): \$25

**new date!** wednesday, June 7 @ 2-9pm  
Grand Island: Island Oasis Water Park  
COST: ENTRY FEE (\$9) PLUS CASH FOR FOOD STOP ON WAY HOME  
NO YOUTH GROUP TONIGHT

FRIDAY, June 16 @ 7-10pm  
MYSTERY OUTING! DETAILS FORTHCOMING

wednesday, June 21 @ 7-9pm  
FLY FAREWELL OPEN HOUSE AT HIMMELMAN'S

# FLY NASHVILLE SUMMER MISSION TRIP

## FLY Nashville Summer Mission Trip!

Thank you First Lutheran for your love, support, and prayers for our high school youth! You are invited to keep this page and pray for each of the youth and adult leaders by name as we serve our neighbors, live together in community, and grow in faith in Nashville, June 24 – July 1<sup>st</sup>.

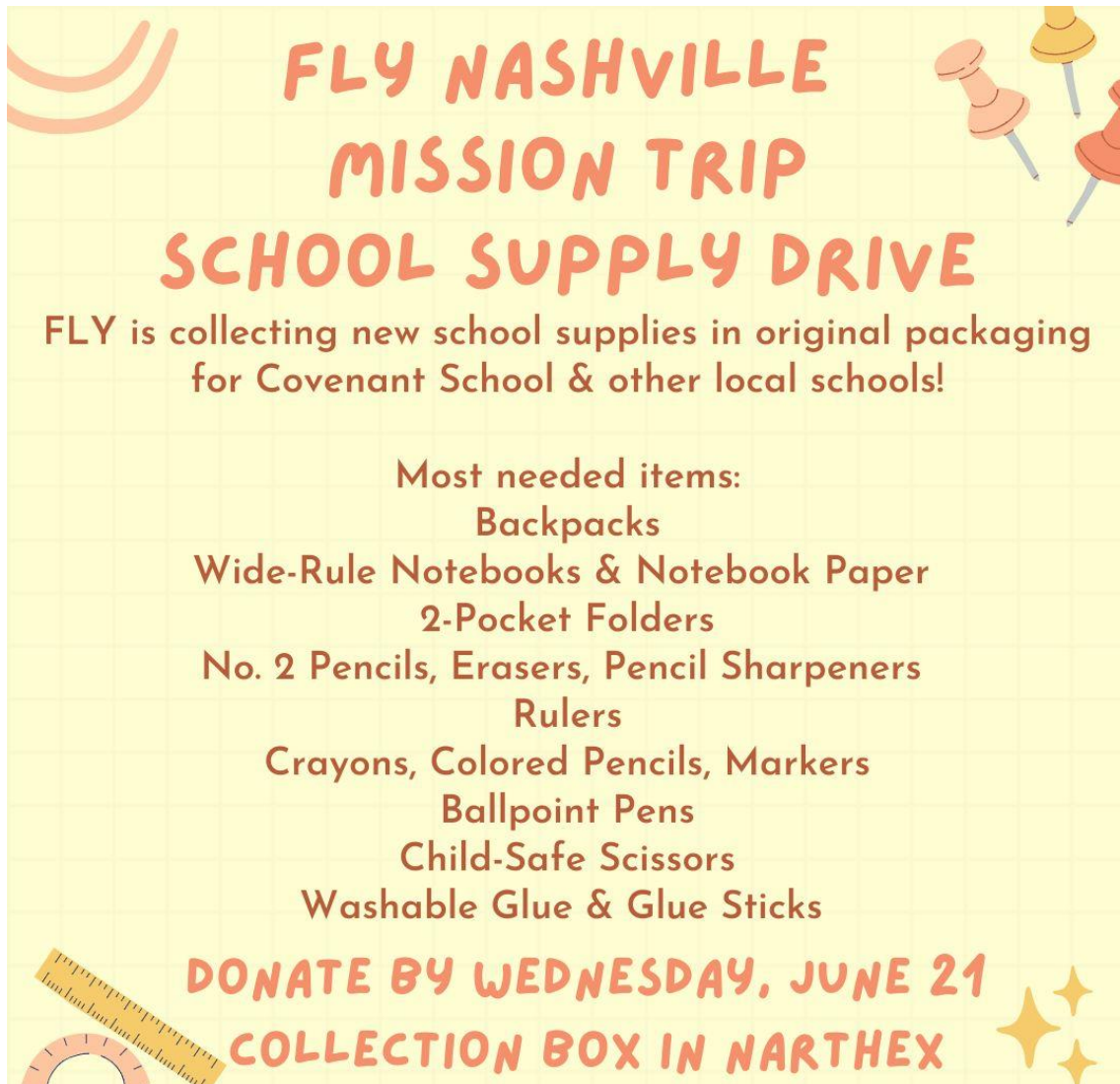
Anna Brandt  
Mitchell Brandt  
Bella Buskirk  
Natalia Cardenas  
Dante Cardenas  
Laura Diets  
Ethan Eilers  
Preston Eilers

Trenton Mauler  
Ella Means  
Giana Mueller  
Daniel O'Valle  
Karson Peterson  
Preston Russman  
Jazlyn Turner  
Kate Vinton

Grace Weber  
Miranda Wright

*Adult Leaders:*  
Keith Powell  
Reed Wagner  
Sophia Harder  
Pastor Elisabeth

*Good and gracious God, bless each trip participant in the work you have called them to do, so that, by the power of your Holy Spirit, they may show your love to all people and glorify you by being the hands and feet of Christ to our neighbors. Amen.*



**FLY NASHVILLE  
MISSION TRIP  
SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE**

FLY is collecting new school supplies in original packaging  
for Covenant School & other local schools!

Most needed items:

- Backpacks
- Wide-Rule Notebooks & Notebook Paper
- 2-Pocket Folders
- No. 2 Pencils, Erasers, Pencil Sharpeners
- Rulers
- Crayons, Colored Pencils, Markers
- Ballpoint Pens
- Child-Safe Scissors
- Washable Glue & Glue Sticks

**DONATE BY WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21**  
**COLLECTION BOX IN NARTHEX**

## Campus Lutheran

So, what's the future for Campus Lutheran? Great news, the ministry is in a healthy place and there are incredible student leaders in place to carry the ministry forward through fall semester.

**The Campus Lutheran Stewardship Team** plans to remain active with monthly meetings to tend the ministry, finances, and property. They will host the Campus Lutheran fall fundraiser, Raising Spirits, again in October, and students plan to meet regularly for Dinner Church on Tuesday nights (note **new** night!) once the semester starts.

Stewardship team members are Mark Schipporeit, Kim Troudt, Annette Schwartz, Lisa Parish, Sophia Harder, and Jon Fredricks (Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministries, NeLCM). Any questions can be directed to Sophia (current student), Jen Puls, or Jon Fredricks (Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministries, NeLCM). The NeLCM board is moving forward on calling a new leader to the role, and it will likely look different than it did in recent years. Your prayers and continued support are deeply appreciated!

On May 11, I gathered with 10 young adults for our final Dinner Church together. I made them each a photo album, and included a letter reminding them of their beloved-ness. It has been a holy and wild ride and I am so very grateful! On May 19, two of our active students, Maddy and Siarah, graduated from UNK. We celebrated them well and sent them out into the world with this prayer:

*O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

+ Pastor Elisabeth



# WITHIN OUR BELOVED COMMUNITY HERE AT FIRST

## Congratulations to our June Volunteers of the Jacob & Jens Himmelman

A BIG thank you to Jacob & Jens for their willingness to jump in and serve wherever needed over these last three years. Jacob helped with serving communion, organizing the Advent Fair, and crafts for Vacation Bible School. In addition, they have hosted meetings at their house such as “Porch Ponderings with Pastor Elisabeth”. Jens rocked his part in this past year’s Christmas Program as well as being an organ assistant for a special prelude. Whenever we needed an extra reader in worship or a banner bearer for a Bishop’s Installation, Jens always stepped up to the plate.

We truly thank you for your service to our beloved community, and we will miss you! Good luck on your new journey!



## Prayers of Peace and Comfort for...

Adam and Mollie Akerson on the death of Mollie’s aunt, Patricia Sheffield.  
Dave and Peggy Townsend on the death of Peggy’s mother, Jean Stalnaker  
Steve and Janet Bugay on the death of Janet’s father-in-law, Dick Bugay.



## THANK YOU!

I would like to thank my church family for all the kindness and care shown to me at the loss of my husband, Frank Wright. I knew we had a good church family; but we truly have an awesome church family! My sincere gratitude for everything! The food, hugs, handshakes and cards were very special and meant so much to me.

Sincerely,  
Mary Wright

# NOTES FROM THE PRESCHOOL: A MINISTRY OF FLC

Hello June!

The month of May was celebrating how God made families and our students. They made their mom and dad presents for their day in May and June. We also finished our creation book! We reviewed letters, numbers, counting, and they even can do a story problem with manipulatives! Each week the kids got a new book that went with the letter and they read it, colored it and then we sent it home to put in their "book box" to read over and over. They have over 29 books in their book box!

These kiddos can count far, know all or almost all of their upper case and lowercase letters, know at least numbers from 0-20, know what a penny, nickel, dime and quarter look like and what each is worth. They can rhyme, sound words out, write letters and words, draw a bunch of new things, cut well with scissors and have seen how to make sentences this year!

It is so impressive how much they have grown! I am excited for their futures! I know they all are going to do great big things and knowing that God is with them to help them at all times, gives them the courage to face those tough times and thank God for those good times! They are such a blessing and we will miss them terribly!

Our graduation was May 12<sup>th</sup>. We sang songs, passed out certificates, keepsakes and a goodie bag for each child. We were supposed to play on the playground, blow bubbles, draw with sidewalk chalk and dance around with our ribbons; but the weather had other plans for us! We still enjoyed pop-ice, ribbons, enjoyed what was in our gift bag from our teachers and played! It has been an amazing year and I won't forget these memories we have made with these wonderful children.

We are full in the Pre-K class next year and have 3 on the waiting list. Mrs. Lora only has a few openings in her Mon./Wed. morning class and Tues./Thurs. class. We start at 8:15am and end at 11:45am. We extended our day by 30 minutes this year and it seemed to help parents with transporting kids and give us a little more time to play/work hard. Pre-K was Monday-Friday this year and we can see that they grew even more with those 2 extra days!

God's blessings,  
Mrs. Amanda & Mrs. Lora

# JUNE CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

**1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Weekends** – Laying on of Hands for Healing during Worship Services

**Fri./Sat. June 2/3** Synod Assembly @ Younes Conference Center in Kearney

**Sat./Sun. June 3/4** Worship @ 6pm, 8:45am, 10:30am  
Worship at Brookestone Gardens at 2:00pm

**Wed. June 7** VBS Planning Meeting –7:00pm  
FLY 2pm outing to GI Island Oasis Water Park

**Sat./Sun., June 10/11** Worship @ 6pm, 8:45am, 10:30am  
Budget Forum - 9:45am in Centennial Hall

**Sun. June 11-Fri. June 16** – Confirmation Camp – Camp Carol Joy Holling

**Wed. June 14** FLY @ 7pm

**Fri. June 16** FLY – 7:00 pm Mystery Outing

**Sat. June 17** Habitat for Humanity Build Day for First Lutheran Church 9am–2pm

**Sat./Sun. June 17/18** Worship @ 6pm, 8:45am, 10:30am  
9:45am – Farewell for Pastor Elisabeth & Family in Centennial Hall

**Wed. June 21** FLY Farewell @ 7pm – open house @ Himmelman's

**Sat./Sun. June 24/25** Worship @ 6pm, 8:45am, 10:30am  
Annual Meeting – 9:45am in Centennial Hall

**Sat. June 25–July 1** Summer Mission Trip to Nashville for Youth

**IMPORTANT**  
**dates to remember**



First Lutheran Church, ELCA  
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Kearney, Nebraska 68847-3699

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**OUR MISSION:**

**Growing in God's grace, reflecting Christ's love, and living in the Spirit.**

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH**

JUNE 2023

3315 G Avenue - Kearney, Nebraska 68847



**The church calendar, weekly bulletins, prayer lists, and LIVE Webstream  
Broadcasts on Sunday mornings can be found on our website:**

**<https://firstlutherankearney.org/>**

**Find us on Facebook: "First Lutheran Church-Kearney"**

**Sign Up for Weekly Email Updates: [office@firstlutherankearney.org](mailto:office@firstlutherankearney.org)**

**LIVE Radio Broadcast Sundays at 8:45am: KXPN 1460AM**

**PHONE: 308-237-5544      WEB: [www.firstlutherankearney.org](http://www.firstlutherankearney.org)**

**Office Hours: 8:30am – 4pm Monday – Friday**