

FLC & OS� Light

Newsletter of First Lutheran and Our Savior's Ministries

Volume 5, Number 3 August 2021

Where Does Our Strength Come From?

I look up to the mountains; does my strength come from mountains? No, my strength comes from God, who made heaven, and earth, and mountains.

Psalm 121:1-2 MSG

In a recent children's message, I indicated that I have been a bit cranky lately. The smoke and hot weather are getting to me. Frankly, everyone seems a little grumpy with the wildfires, weather, COVID, and current events. People seem less civil with each other more than before, and it troubles me.

In times like these, I find myself reading Psalm 121. The opening verses remind me that my strength comes from God. It is not from politicians, or scientists, or any person, but from the Divine. Then, in the eight short verses, I am reminded that the Lord watches over us and will allow no harm to come to me. Life is not all about what you or I do, but how the Lord is with us in life.

At the annual meetings in 2020, our life together seemed so vibrant. Both congregations approved new mission and vision statements. We were excited to follow where God was calling us to be in our communities. Then COVID happened, and it feels like we have lost all momentum.

Yes, we have been able to worship together, but it is different. Fellowship opportunities have started. Still, not all of our members have returned to worship, and we worry. The church leadership feels tired and worried even as we continue to listen to God's call into our lives, church, and community. It is not always easy, especially in these troubling times, but we strive to love one another as Christ has loved us.

In August, I began the sixth year of being the pastor to the congregations. This summer, I have been praying and listening to discover where God is calling us next. I wonder what we can do to feel vibrant in our faith again.

As I wondered, I began to explore possibilities for where God is calling to Plains and Thompson Falls. There have been webinars, but the programs were not a good fit for us. Several programs sounded exciting, but their focus was on large or inner cities. Another program had a complicated approval process involving videos and ways we have been innovative. Another program was outrageously priced.

Then, I stumbled upon Faithful Innovations offered through the Montana Synod. We have successfully used a few of the techniques in the past. My sense is that God is calling to us to this process. (See more information on page 2 on the program.)

Remember that there is something important happening, and God is here, too.

The peace of Christ be with you all.

Pastor Carol

We Have a Mission

First Lutheran Church is called by God to be a welcoming church witnessing to Christ in loving service to the world.

In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16

Rev. Carol Seilhymer
Parsonage: 406-826-4080
Cell: 612-532-9805
pr.carols@gmail.com

First Lutheran Church
Office: 406-826-3516
<http://flcplains.org/>

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
Office: 406-827-3926
<http://www.oursaviorslutheranf.org/>

(Continued from p.1)

THE READINGS IN WORSHIP THIS FALL

Beginning September 12, we are using the Narrative Lectionary. From September through the beginning of Advent, the lectionary provides one text instead of four. The readings for each Sunday are arranged chronologically through the Bible, starting with the Old Testament. Each week is a new story and moves along following the story of God's people. Beginning in the season of Advent, we switch to one particular gospel (this year, we are focusing on John) through Easter Sunday. In the season of Easter, we look at the Acts of the Apostles and one of the Epistles (letters).

CONSTITUTION UPDATE

A special meeting of the congregation will be on October 3rd at the end of worship. It is time for the constitution to be updated according to the 2019 changes.

The synod review has been completed and now awaits our approval. Copies of the revised constitution are available in the Fellowship Hall for your review. The areas highlighted are required changes. Please note changes in the Bylaws which were required to coordinate with the revised constitution.

Your attendance is requested at worship that day for a quorum as required.

FAITHFUL INNOVATIONS

Faithful Innovations is process for the entire congregation that will...

- Train effective lay spiritual leaders through workshops and coaching.
- Help you learn to discern and respond to God's leading.
- Deepen your congregation's spirituality.
- Build connections with other congregations.
- Engage and inspire your membership.
- Affirm your faith that God has a vital role for your congregation to play

Faithful Innovations is not a small group who does all the visioning and work. The process is an 18-month program. We do need 3-4 people to be the Guiding Team. This group attends 3 Zoom workshops at FLC. Then, the team will guide the entire congregation through the process with Pr. Carol as the spiritual guide.

MISSION ENDOWMENT DRIVE

On Sunday, August 22nd, the Endowment Team kicked off the Mission Endowment Drive. The goal is to collect \$8,500 by December 1st, 2021.

The purpose of the Fund is to support the work and mission of FLC in and beyond the local community. No portion of the monies will be used to support regular operating expenses of the church.

How did the team come up with this amount? The church needs \$25,000 to participate in the ELCA Mission Endowment Fund. As of July 31, 2021, we have collected \$16,628.24. This means approximately \$8,500 more is needed to join the Fund.

After the buy-in, there will not be a continuous push for further funds, but there will be intermittent endowment information as well as reports of what the fund is doing.

Why are we doing this? To express the gratitude, love, and appreciation toward our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the work of Jesus accomplished, over many years past and many years to come, through this congregation.

WEDNESDAY BIBLE SCHOOL

Wednesday Bible School resumes in person on September 29, 2021. It is for children age 4 through the 6th grade. Once again, classes are held twice a month from 3:50 – 5:15 pm Students are able to ride the bus from school to First Lutheran Church. If you know a child/ren who would like to attend, please pick up a registration form.

SIX WEEK FALL BIBLE STUDY

Come to the six-week bible study on the Epistles of the Apostle John starting on October 13th at 10 am. Steve Seilhymer, LPA, will be leading the class.

THIRSTY THEOLOGY

Will be on hiatus this fall as the LPAs and Pr. Carol re-envision what this program could be.

WOMEN'S FALL RETREAT

The Great Divide and Five Valleys Women of the ELCA Clusters will be holding their annual retreat in October at Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp. See the LWSO bulletin board for details.