

October 2017



Grace, peace and greetings to all of you!

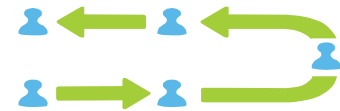
Do you know that we have a number of Study Bibles in our church that address just about any personal or societal issue that you can imagine? And if there is a topic or interest that you have, and wish to search in Scripture for what it would say, how would one find answers without relying solely on the study or teaching of others to establish understanding? I know that a good many of you read your devotions. Christ in Our Home is a great resource for spiritual nourishment, and a good learning tool as well. Sometimes, it is hard to dig deeper into Scripture without knowing the context surrounding the writer's point of view. Personally, I enjoy leading Bible study twice a week. In both cases the study is a text study on the lessons that will be read on the following Sunday. Good discussion occurs and everyone's input is important. Context and history become a part of that study. And I do believe that those, who have attended Bible study have had a renewed worship experience because the readings now mean something to them when they hear the lessons and the message on Sunday. But, I know that for many of you, the timing doesn't work out for you to attend Bible study on Tuesday afternoons. If there is interest in having an evening Bible study, I would be open to starting one. However, in the meantime, there are some ideas for you to try as

you read your Bible on your own. First, as you read a section of Scripture (by the way, don't try to bite off more than you can chew), jot down some notes either in the Bible or on a separate notepad, those things that you discover or have questions about. Also, see what words or phrases a writer likes to use consistently. Paul has tendencies in his letters, especially as you read Romans, or 1st Corinthians, or even 1st Timothy. Think about what the writer is trying to convey, and to whom. If you are using a Study Bible, check out the index for topics that you are interested in, and see how many writers address that topic, and go ahead and explore. What I find helpful is to read Bible commentaries, especially if I am stuck on what I am to preach about on a Sunday morning. Commentaries can be quite useful and helpful. As you read and keep notes, save those notes, because they may come in handy as you read the same Scripture later. The Internet does have ways to help you to navigate through the Bible.

Yours in Christ, Pastor Rob



First Lutheran Choir practices every Wednesday evening at 7:00 PM—if you are interesting we would love to have you join us.



Worship Assistants
October calling chair, Teri Taylor

01 - 9:00 AM

Reader: Marcia Hellandsaas
Greeters: Arden Berg
Ushers: Tim & Teri Taylor
Comm: Arden Berg/ Ken & Carol Sanford
Coffee Hr: Myron & Marcia Hovet

11:00 AM

Communion: Confirmation Students

08 - 9:00 AM

Reader: Sue Jorgenson
Greeters: Gene & Elaine Fedorenko
Ushers: David & Celeste Berg
Coffee Hr: Curtis & Jennifer Sorenson

15 - 9:00 AM

Reader: Owen Hamre
Greeters: Rollie & Judy Dahl
Ushers: Kelly & Frances Olson
Comm: David & Celeste Berg
Coffee Hr: JoAnn Faulkner

11:00 AM

Comm: Confirmation Students

23 - 9:00 AM

Reader: Ari Johnson
If you would like to assist in worship please let Pastor Mark know.

Greeters: _____

Ushers: _____

Coffee Hr: _____

30 - 9:00 AM

Reader: Don Stenberg
Greeters: Brandon & Brittney Bradford
Ushers: Jayson & Amy Lund
Coffee Hr: Arlys Frazier & Arlene Johnson





Operation God's Child Samaritan Christmas boxes will be available in the Narthex of the church. Please consider this ministry to bring happiness to a needy child's Christmas. The boxes can be filled with small items, not expensive, as a family project, spreading love and joy to a child in need. Please return your box to the church by November 19th. Boxes will depart from Watford City by noon on that day. Please check the table in the narthex of the church for more information. YOU will be helping a child have a wonderful Christmas!

First Lutheran Church Council Highlights of September

Present: Ari Johnson, Megan Wirtz, Gretchen Stenehjelm, Craig Paulson, Mikka Haugeberg, Mark Sparby, Stefanie Russell

Others present: Pastor(s): Rob Favorite, Mark Honstein and Alyssa Quade

Absent: Angie Moe, Eric Johnsrud, Steve Holen

Guest: Glen Beard

Meeting was called to order by President, Ari Johnson and devotions were given by Gretchen Stenehjelm. Minutes of the last meeting were accepted.

Finance: Mark Sparby reported that offering is down for the summer. Report was approved with questions /clarifications.

Property: Craig Paulson reported the handicap ramp will be completed before winter. A church wide work day is being planned to fix minor issues in and around the church. WELCA had stated they would help pay for some of those projects. Glen Beard is working on a plan to fix the chipped cement on the wall.

Worship: the music is picked through October. A motion was made to purchase an iPad for the sound system. MC. Plans for a Reformation service is in the works.

Stewardship/Evangelism: Gretchen Stenehjelm gave a general report on the success of the God's Work, Our Hands event on 9/10/17. She also touched on the Operation Christmas Child project coming up in October/November.

Youth/Education: Mikka Haugeberg reported that Teen Ministry has started for the 7/8 graders. LYO will be meeting on 9/27/17 with a paintball game and dinner. 5th Quarter will start on October 21st. Mikka suggested that the LYO host coffee hour once a month following the early service to raise money for the 2018 National Youth

Gathering. A generous gift of money was giving for the Children's Ministry.

Staff: Rob reported on a successful Rally Sunday. He is meeting with the youth going to the National Gathering. Life Touch called and asked if the church would like to do a digital directory. He said that confirmation is going well. A \$2000 donation was given to the church- Mark Sparby suggested it go into the maintenance fund.

Mark reported that the Scouts will meet Tuesday/Wednesday each week at the church. The Sheriff's Department asked if they could use the church for "ALICE training" and are willing to pay the building usage fee- MC

Alyssa gave her report in the youth/education committee

Other Business: Glen Beard stated that Watford City Electirc will repolace the light pole for free. We need to replace the light fixture over the Luther Rose. No resolution with Vercon as of yet. Glen volunteered to fill the vacant term (until 2019) left by Brandee Profit.

Next meeting: October 11th @ 6:00 PM

Thank You!



Thank you to the following for sponsoring the Sunday morning broadcast of FLC worship for the month of September: Kevin & Jackie Sullivan and Duane & Melissa Frick in memory of Levi Kenneth Frick, Darlene, Jeff & Kelly Sullivan and Kenneth Thomas; Craig & Barb Sorenson in memory of Homer & Alice Sorenson, Emile and Mabel (Botner) Sorenson; Agnes Johnson in memory of Artie Johnson.

Please check your special dates and call the office (444-3244) to sponsor a Sunday in 2016.

The cost is \$110.00 per broadcast.



First Lutheran Church weekly offering for August

06:	\$ 8,823.00
13:	\$ 3,350.00
20:	\$ 3,696.00
27:	\$ 3,696.00
Total:	(\$ 15,869.00)
Need for the month:	\$24,572.00



Want to be a part of something fun? Check out joining the FLC Praise Band... practice is 7:00 PM every Thursday evening.





WOMEN OF THE ELCA



A HUGE THANK YOU to Bob & Deb Wisness for their generous donation for the beef during Rally Sunday! THANK YOU to Angie & Terry Moe for their amazing donation of Games to Go for the kids to enjoy fun outdoor blow up games! Terry & Angie Moe along with Steve & Gretchen Stenehjem donated Ice Cream and the buns. THANK YOU to everyone who brought salads and contributed to the Rally Sunday honoring past and present Sunday School teachers. We especially appreciate everything the Sunday School teachers – past and present- who have lead children in Christian education. Also thank you to Pastor Alyssa, the Church Council President, Ari Johnson along with Pastor Rob, Pastor Mark and the entire council for their assistance for Rally day. Rally Day was a great kick off to a fun Sunday School year. The congregational dinner is fast becoming a great tradition for our church family.



A Perfect Potluck!

12 NOON – October 29th

First Lutheran Church will hold their monthly potluck on Sunday October 30th It will start following the second worship service --- **Everyone is invited**

Thank you to everyone who participated in the annual WELCA rummage sale and lunch this year. It was great to see all of the familiar faces, as well as many new ones, both those who helped with the process, and also those who benefited from the tables of items and the delicious lunch. The reasons for our rummage sale are many:

- **Service to the community:** Stories abound of those who found either the one perfect item to those who filled a cart with items they needed for their family. Heartwarming stories!

- **Service to our members:** Our church members - and other members of our community - are able to donate items that can be repurposed and appreciated by others. Thank you for your time spent in organizing your closets and helping to fill tables for our sale!

- **Fundraising** The sale and lunch are fundraisers for WELCA projects. The unofficial proceeds this year are about \$1,296.00 from the lunch and \$ 4,000.00 from the rummage sale, with some expenses still to be subtracted from these amounts. Our silent auction items netted \$150.00. WELCA members have discussed several uses for these funds, both in our church and parsonage, and will be working on those projects going forward.

- **Fellowship** Our church members can gather, work together and enjoy catching up over a cup of coffee (or over tables of items to be sorted and marked!) How we appreciate those of you who donated food, took a shift in the kitchen, emptied

boxes and filled boxes, and smiled through it all! A special thank you to the men of our congregation who gave their time to set up and clean up. All very gracious and giving examples of fellowship and stewardship. Thank you for a very successful event!



Women of the ELCA Circles

Wednesday, 4

10:00 AM FLC WELCA General mt. @ library

Monday, 9

5:00 PM Hope @ the Horizon

Tuesday, 01

2:30 PM Garden @ the Horizon

Wednesday, 11

1:30 PM Peace @ the church
No meeting this month for Banks



“Dish with the Bishop”

Mark your calendars!! Bishop Mark Narum will be at First Lutheran Church Tuesday, October 24th at 10:00 AM. Everyone is invited to come for coffee and fellowship with our Bishop.





Growing, Together, In Christ

²¹But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, ²²the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, ²³since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴they are now justified by grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith.”
(Romans 3:21-25)

In the Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions by Fortress Press the authors state, “The Reformation began when a new theology drawn from the intensive study of Scripture and early Christianity clashed with the popular theology behind (Catholic) penitential piety. The center of this new evangelical theology was the certainty of God’s forgiveness to those who repented of their sin and trusted in Jesus Christ alone as the way of salvation. The knowledge that we are saved by grace through faith in Christ alone was so freeing and revolutionary for Luther he had to share.

He had wrestled so long to understand God as someone other than the malevolent punisher of sinful people that, when he finally grasped Paul’s meaning in Romans 1:17, “The just shall live by faith,” he spread the good news in his classes and church services. He discovered that God’s justice was not an unattainable standard of living, but rather our justification (being pronounced free from guilt) through Christ’s death and resurrection! So, when the church started offering forgiveness for a price through indulgences, Luther was furious. Indulgences struck at the very heart of his newfound faith that God’s grace, not man’s payments or penance, was the hope of righteousness.

On October 31, 1517, on the eve of the Feast of All Saints, Luther posted 95 theses or statements against indulgences on the door to the chapel at Wittenberg. He wrote them in Latin because he wanted to debate them with fellow students and professors. Indulgences were not yet established as dogma, so they were fair game for debate. The problem was that no one came to the debate. In fact, things got real quiet around the campus as if everyone was waiting to see what would happen. After two weeks, Luther shared his theses with some friends, this time in German. They in turn used the new Guttenberg Press to print them up and spread them throughout the area.

Many people had the same concerns, but they had kept quiet until Luther’s teachings started to go public. Their objections may have been more financial than theological, but Luther’s statements spread nonetheless. The sparks of the Reformation flared and swept through all of Germany so fast that it scared Luther. He later wrote, “It seemed as if with one blow I was trying to storm the gates of Heaven and set the world on fire.” As his theses spread throughout the country, and the upheaval they caused increased, Luther felt that the people’s response to the cause of his newfound joy — salvation by grace through faith, not through works or indulgences — was overwhelming. Martin, who loved to sing and often used musical allegory, wrote, “The song was trying to go too high for my voice.”

But can we blame the people for responding to this new understanding of God’s grace with such excitement and fervor? They too had been struggling to make their relationship with God right. And the means offered by the Catholic church at the time left them despairing their possibility of salvation. They were hard working, uneducated common folk. They could not afford much and the church was taking the little money they had for the promise of heaven. I cannot imagine what it would have been like to make huge sacrifices, going without food or new clothing to pay mom’s way into heaven. No wonder Luther desired to debate the issue of indulgences.

Indulgences were not the only reforms people saw the church needed, but because Luther’s theses spread so widely so fast, they became the focal point of the Reformation and the church’s response. He was officially excommunicated in 1520, tried at the Diet of Worms in 1521, and the final break with the church came with the Augsburg Confession in 1530. In the meantime, he completed his German translation of the New Testament in 1523, married Katie in 1525 and wrote two catechisms in 1529. Four years after Augsburg, Luther completed his German translation of the whole Bible and gave it as a gift to Prince Frederick who supported him from the time he first arrived in Wittenberg.

Wittenberg was only the start of the Reformation. From Germany it spread to Scandinavia and Switzerland where Calvin formed the Reformed church. It spread to England where the Episcopal and Methodist churches grew, and all because of a German monk who questioned a particular practice in the Catholic church. Luther was not a radical reformer, he never wanted to leave the church and certainly did not want a church named after himself. He would have preferred the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America were simply called the Evangelical Church in America, and that spreading the good news of God’s grace remained the focus of the church.

So, what does this mean for us today? Well, where do you see a need for reformation in the church? Where do the practices of the church make it hard for you to experience God’s grace? How do we need to change in order to reach more people with God’s grace and love? I invite you this month to bring in your Reformation Suggestions, ideas we can share and lift up in prayer this month, and possibly start to use to reform our churches in order to be the kind of churches Luther would be proud to claim. May God inspire us anew!

Together in Christ,
Pastor Mark

