



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH BROOKINGS

Volume 27 Issue 4
August/September
2026

Fostering Faith. Creating Community. Loving All.

Dear FLC Family,

Last week, I had the joy of spending time at NeSoDak Bible Camp with some of our youth. While I loved watching them grow in faith, I also had an unexpected opportunity to reconnect with God and myself.

I brought along a large pile of writing and administrative work to accomplish in the downtime between camp activities. For the first two days, my time was entirely saturated with this focused work. It felt urgent and important, even if a little tedious. When it was finally complete, I truly arrived at camp. Coated in sunscreen, I ventured to the beach, grabbed a paddle board, and pushed off from shore. Paddling against the wind was a challenge, but once I reached my goal, I sat down and splashed my feet in the cool lake. Laying back on the board, I realized the wind and waves were effortlessly carrying me back toward camp. As I relaxed, nature revealed its wonder. A dragonfly perched on a reed, and above me, pelicans flew haphazardly, gliding and reorganizing their flocks with incredible grace. The contrast was sharp and captured my attention: I felt the drastic difference between the "important" work I had strived to complete and the unhurried existence of the natural world that had surrounded me long before I was ready to sink into it.

God is profoundly revealed in creation. When we pause, we are reminded that we are held by the very love that holds the universe together. So often, we act as though we must spin up our own security, believing we only earn rest once our work is done. But grace tells a different story. The wind carried me back to shore without my striving. In these fleeting days of summer, and as the season turns to fall, resist the tyranny of the calendar and the clock that will attempt to claim you. I invite you instead to receive God's free gifts of grace.

This unhurried grace was exactly what I hoped our campers would experience. Before we left, alongside practical camp details and advice, I sent this message to their parents:

"This one is for parents—You can do this too! You are raising a beautiful child who is doing some more things for themselves every day. What a wonder! You will miss them...and that's a good thing every now and then. But you are connected across the distance. Find a little time this week to connect with God yourself and remember how you are loved and held in a promise that knits us all together. At the baptismal font, we were reminded that our children belong to God in the first place, and this week they're spending time soaking up that reality."

When Friday arrived, tired and dirty campers headed home. After a few hot showers, the amazing stories of their camp experiences finally began to flow.

Remember that you, too, belong to God. Step off the treadmill of productivity, float on the waters of grace, and soak up that reality.

Peace, Pastor Jess

P.S. Mark your calendars for January 10 & 13, 2027, for Camp Days at FLC! We'll unveil next summer's camp dates so you can sign up to experience God's grace at Lutherans Outdoors in South Dakota too.



Mission Coffeehouse Mission of the Month



LaDeane presented Joni Mueller with the May 2026 Mission of the Month check in the amount of \$1,454.42 for the Brookings Regional Humane Society.



We are sending a check in the amount of \$1,371.46 for the June 2026 Mission of the Month to Kingdom Boundaries Prison Aftercare.

The heat has turned up high this summer! Hope everyone has stayed as cool as possible and enjoyed the hot summer days. The weather and life are very similar as they are both unpredictable. Whether it is the hottest day in July or the coldest of winter, embrace each season with faith and patience and enjoy the ever-changing weather as life changes with each season.

The warm weather hasn't kept our loyal customers away. The coffeehouse has continued to fill up, whether for coffee and homemade caramel rolls or a sandwich and homemade pasta salad. We appreciate your continued support and loyalty to the Mission Coffeehouse Ministry!

Every newsletter, I rave about our wonderful volunteers. Their time and hard work do not go unnoticed. In June, I had my second Volunteer Appreciation gathering. We enjoyed time together with conversations and several delicious snacks. We even played BINGO and the volunteers received gift bags. Thank you for being the biggest reason the Coffeehouse remains the amazing place that it is!

Speaking of volunteers, I would like to welcome Nancy Stewart to our team. Nancy is a loyal customer of the coffeehouse and learned from one of our veteran volunteers, Diane Spencer, that we were looking for some new additions. She enjoys lunch with her friends every Thursday as they gather for their weekly bible study. Welcome Nancy, we are happy you are here!

We will continue with our summer schedule with Fridays closed until September 4th and our fall schedule will begin starting September 11th with Fridays open. Heading into September, the fall activities will begin with the first Journey meal on September 2nd. This meal is a free will donation meal that is served from 5pm - 6pm.

As we step into the next season, I look forward to the opportunity for further learning and growth within myself and the Mission Coffeehouse. I will embrace the next chapter and live in the moment, celebrating life and all that comes my way.

LaDeane Harrison
Mission Coffeehouse Manager



Above: Many of the volunteers who spent a fun appreciation afternoon together



Above: new volunteer, Nancy Stewart with LaDeane



The Membership Records of First Lutheran Church for June and July 2026

Baptisms:

Coen Keith Roach, son of Carter and Jaclyn Roach

Deaths:

Jeremy Deutsch, James Selleck, Doris Glatzel

Gifts given in memory of:

Marian Rude

MUSIC DEPARTMENT UPDATE

The following quote comes from the book Sundays and Seasons.

"In many a church you will find a sign that says, 'All Are Welcome here!' But how often do we forget what it means to welcome each other fully into our worship and community? Jesus makes it clear that when we welcome him, we also welcome the one who sent him, just as when we welcome someone into our worship space or into our lives, we also welcome whatever sent them. When we say all are welcome, that means welcoming people as their whole selves and as Christ himself."

It has been an observation that it is easy to welcome friends we have not seen since last week. I challenge all to seek out the people sitting alone at coffee after worship, or who are looking around confused by our service or space. A friendly smile and greeting has the capacity to show Christ's love and light.

Alternating summer services with the Praise band has been a refreshing change for all. It is good to see faces that may attend a later or earlier service.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mary Ermel for all her work at funerals, weddings, and Sunday services while I have been recovering from knee replacement surgery and third nerve palsy in my eye! She has been willing to cover all the services that I have been unable to play for. Thank you also to Craig Vostad and his expertise at balancing sound in the sanctuary. Song leaders and cantors have been vital to leading the congregational hymns and liturgy. Thank you Craig Long, Susan Immanuel, Jeryl Israel, Ross and Julie Bergan Abraham.

Fall worship and activities will appear in next month's newsletter.

Pat Anderson, Music Coordinator for traditional worship



REMINDER: We will return to two services on Sunday Morning starting Sunday, September 13th at 8:30am and 10:30am

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY



I don't know about you, but it feels like summer flew by! As we transition from summer into fall, I wanted to take a moment to celebrate some of the wonderful things that have been happening here at First Lutheran Church over the past few months.

A big thank you to everyone who volunteered to help refresh the Christian Education wing with a fresh coat of color! The space looks fantastic, and it has me excited for all that this upcoming year of ministry and programming will bring.

The youth have gotten the opportunity to gather and catch up during this busy season. Thank you to Diane Almos for hosting a bonfire get-together in late June.

We have around 25 friends attending LOSD (Lutherans Outdoor South Dakota) this summer—between Camp NeSoDak and Outlaw Camp. It's a joy to be able to join alongside these children and families as they go to a place where they can be present, fill up with scripture (and amazing food), community, and meeting new and old friends.

This year's theme at LOSD is 'We are Chosen' and it makes me think about when I started to participate in church activities when I was younger. Coming from a small congregation, my family was always involved in some way. From ushering, altar care, leading liturgy, participating and volunteering for children ministries, and many other things. We are all "chosen" to be a part of this thing called ministry. When you were growing up, what where you or your family involved with? Was attending and participating in church activities a part of it? Big or small programing? It takes a lot of hands to do God's work in the world and we can't do it alone.

As we look ahead to the school year (hard to believe it's already approaching!), I'm excited to share what's coming up. In Journey, we will continue following the lectionary with the theme "Treasures of the Bible". Confirmation students will explore stories from both the Old and New Testaments and spend time learning about the Ten Commandments during Lent. Youth Group will kick off the year by talking about the National Youth Gathering, which will take place next summer in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

In the October/November newsletter I'll reflect on VBS and the Youth Trip as they were happening at the end of the month, so keep an eye out for that!

As summer winds down and a new season begins, my prayer is that each of us remembers this important truth: We Are Chosen.

Thank you for your support of the Children, Youth, and Family Ministry here at First Lutheran!

**Blessings towards the summertime,
Rose Baerenwald, CYF Ministry Director**

JOURNEY, CONFIRMATION AND YOUTH GROUP STUDENTS! REGISTER TODAY FOR 2026/2027 CYF ACTIVITIES

Have questions? Feel free to call Rose at 605-697-2759 or email her at rose@firstlutheranbrookings.org and schedule a time to get together.



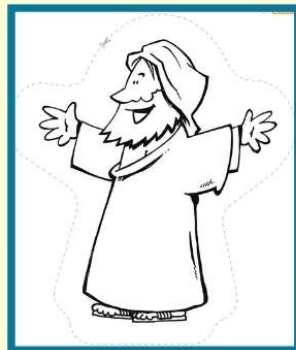
August 2026

- **August 2nd**– CYF Volunteer Training | 10am-12pm
- **August 19th**– Faith Project Workshop | 5pm-8pm
- **August 23rd**– Youth Get together | 10am-1pm
- **August 30th**– Rally Sunday | 4 yrs old Steppingstone 'Welcome to Worship' @ worship

September 2026

- **September 2nd**– Wednesday Journey Parent Meeting | Confirmation Parent Meeting | First Evening of Activities
- **September 6th**– Journey Together
- **September 9th**– 10th Grade meeting w/ Parents
- **September 13th**– Sunday Journey Parent Meeting
- **September 16th**– Kindergarten Steppingstone 'Learning to Pray' Class | 9th Grade meeting w/ Parents
- **September 20th**– Kindergarten Steppingstone Blessing @ both services | Faith Project Workshop 11:30am-3pm
- **September 23rd**– 1st Grade Steppingstone 'Learning to Share' Class #1
- **September 27th**– 3 yrs old Steppingstone 'Welcome to Worship' @ worship
- **September 30th**– 1st Grade Steppingstone 'Learning to Share' Class #2

"FLAT JESUS" PUTS ON SOME S"MILES"



AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR, WE ENCOURAGED STUDENTS TO TAKE "FLAT JESUS" WITH THEM THIS SUMMER. WELL, A FEW OF THEM SENT US PHOTOS FROM THEIR TRAVELS. "FLAT JESUS" WENT WITH THE GAYNE FAMILY TO NIAGARA FALLS AND WITH MIRJAM LAMB TO DES MOINES.



WHERE DID YOUR
"FLAT JESUS" GO?
EMAIL A PHOTO TO ROSE@FIRSTLUTHERANBROOKINGS.ORG





The education wing in the lower level got a makeover this summer. Rooms were painted with bright geometric patterns and one of the rooms got a sunshine mural. The door frames were painted with different colors and room numbers to make them easy to identify. Thank you to some great volunteers who helped out!



Youth group members enjoyed a bon fire at mentor Diane Almos' house in June.



CAMP 26

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Happy Summer from First Lutheran Preschool!

It's hard to believe summer is already flying by, and before we know it, a new school year will be here!

I'd like to take a moment to introduce myself. My name is Kami Bartels (Ms. Kami), and I am honored to serve as the new Director of First Lutheran Preschool. I am especially excited because this truly feels like coming home. I had the privilege of teaching at First Lutheran Preschool for over 10 years, and I am grateful to be back, serving the children and families of this wonderful church community once again.

The preschool staff and I are eagerly preparing for an exciting year ahead. We are looking forward to doing what we love—teaching, nurturing, and helping God's precious children learn and grow in a loving, Christ-centered environment.

We can't wait to welcome back our returning families and meet all of our new students at our Fall Open House. This special evening gives children an opportunity to meet their teachers, explore the classroom, and begin feeling comfortable before the first day of school. Families with enrolled students will receive additional information and event details in the mail soon.

We still have a few openings for the upcoming preschool year! If you or someone you know is looking for a nurturing preschool experience, we'd love to visit with you. Please contact the preschool office at 605-697-2756 or email Kami@firstlutheranbrookings.org for more information.

Our first day of preschool is
Tuesday, September 8.

The staff and I are excited to welcome everyone and look forward to a wonderful year of learning, growing, and sharing God's love together. We can't wait to see you soon!

Blessings,
Kami Bartels
Director, First Lutheran Preschool





belize

Celebrating FLC Connections in Belize

Transformation in Belize

How do repurposed decorations make a transformative difference in the lives of students?

Here's the way that happens within FLC's ministry in Belize:

1. Folks, like you, donate gently used purses, jewelry, and Christmas décor, by bringing items to the Mission Coffee House Welcome Desk or by requesting a pickup at their homes.
 - a. Special request for only 5 - 7 ft. Christmas trees or mini-size trees.
 - b. No garland or lights, please.
 - c. Contact Jean (605) 695-0389 or Mary (605-690-8862) for information or help.
2. Service-minded volunteers redecorate and refurbish these donations for a first-class sale.
3. Eager shoppers find beautiful bargains at the Purses for a Powerful Purpose sale Dec. 5.
4. Proceeds support student scholarships and programs at our Belizean school where Dee Shanley teaches and oversees student progress.

Want to hear some of these success stories? We will give thanks to God as Dee showcases her students at the Tuesday, August 4 luncheon. Please RSVP to save your seat: Debbie at 605-691-1803 or lolaruby1977@gmail.com.

Join us for an
Appreciation Luncheon
Supporting Students in Belize
Tuesday, August 4, 2026
12:00 noon

**First Lutheran Church
Activity Center**
337 8th St, Brookings, SD
Please RSVP to Debbie
605-691-1803 or
lolaruby1977@gmail.com
***or sign up at MCH Welcome Center**

Program to include:

- Reflections from travel team
- Updates from ALYNHS
- Dee Shanley – Scholarship Updates
- Sponsorship Opportunities and Methods

Questions or to Sponsor a Scholarship,
contact Dee Shanley 605-690-8460





FLC QUILTERS NEWS



QUILTING BEE 2026

The 2026 First Lutheran Church "Quilting Bee," on June 20 welcomed approximately thirty-five individuals of intergenerational ages to help tie and sew mission quilts. The six boxes of completed quilts will be sent to Lutheran World Relief or given to local agencies for families in need. FLC members and those quilters from area churches joined in a fun fellowship of working together to complete this major mission project.

THANK YOU!!!!

Thank you to everyone who donated fabric and funds to cover the costs involved in this special mission project.



THANK YOU!!

Thank you to everyone who purchased raffle tickets this spring for the "Bee Quilt."

Congratulations to Becky Lockwood as the quilt raffle winner.

The raffle receipts of \$335 will help cover shipping costs for the quilts this coming fall.

THANK YOU!!

Thank you also to the members of the FLC quilting group who planned, prepared, served and worked during the "Tie One On" Quilting Bee. The work before, during, and follow-up is appreciated as we conducted this outreach project from First Lutheran Church.

Personal Health Care Kits



What can we do when floods, storms, and disasters strike in places both near and far?

Consider providing a gift of dignity and hope in the form of Personal Care Kits. Distributed by Lutheran World Relief (LWR) to neighbors in nearby states and across 15 countries, these simple items of soap, comb, toothbrush, nail clippers wrapped in a bath towel remind folks that, even on their darkest days, the love of Christ is near!

Good news: we are well on our way to collecting enough items for 100 kits again this year! Here's what we still need to complete this project:

- Dark-colored light-weight bath towels (65 needed)
- Shipping fee donations (\$4 each kit)

Towels can be left at the Welcome Desk in the Mission Coffee House during August and September. With thanksgiving for your generosity, we will assemble these items for shipment in October.



Julie Bell, Brenda Hayne, and Mary Moeller greet Katie Luther at the WELCA Convention in Des Moines last month

WELCA INVITES ALL WOMEN TO JOIN

All women of First Lutheran Church are members of WELCA (Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), a welcoming community centered on faith, fellowship, and service. WELCA offers a monthly Bible study that meets on the third Thursday of each month at 10:00 a.m., providing opportunities for spiritual growth and meaningful discussion.

Members participate in service projects that share Christ's love with others, including baking Valentine cookies for shut-ins, preparing frozen meals for families in need, and supporting church and community ministries. WELCA also sponsors family-friendly events, such as painting flower pots and planting houseplants, and helps enhance our church home through projects like updating the Family Care Room. Through fellowship, friendship, and service, we celebrate God's love for us and extend that love to others. Remember: You are worthy!



Family Care Room Refresh

Women of the ELCA of First Lutheran are working to help our congregation provide a more welcoming space in the Family Care Room, formerly known as the "Cry Room," located in the rear of the sanctuary. Parents use this space to change diapers, feed babies, and comfort little ones. The room will be made more comfortable with new items like rugs, chair cushions, a changing table, small quiet toys for toddlers, and one-way window covering for privacy. If you would be interested in being a part of this special effort to welcome and serve young families, please reach out to Brenda Hayne (605) 627-5692 to find out what is needed.

REFLECTIONS FROM FACILITIES AND EVENTS

Slow Down Summer!

As summer reaches its peak, our church grounds look beautiful and welcoming thanks to the generosity and dedication of volunteers. We are grateful for everyone who helps care for our facilities, making them a place where our congregation and community can gather, worship, and enjoy God's creation.

Thank You to Our Grounds Volunteers

A heartfelt thank you goes to Doug and Judy Odegard, Ron Langner, and Lyle Anderson for the many hours they have devoted to mowing the lawn, maintaining borders, and keeping our church grounds looking their very best. Your faithful stewardship and hard work are noticed and appreciated by everyone who visits our campus.

We would also like to recognize Stuart Little for the outstanding care he has given to the Community Garden located just south of the playground. Thanks to Stuart's dedication, the garden is flourishing and producing an abundant harvest for everyone to enjoy.

Visit the Community Garden

If you haven't had a chance to stop by the Community Garden this summer, we invite you to take a walk over and see all that is growing. The garden is intended to be a blessing to our church family and the community.

Please feel free to help yourself to any fruits or vegetables that are ripe and ready for picking. We hope this shared harvest will nourish families, encourage fellowship, and remind us of God's abundant provision.

Enjoy Summer at First Lutheran

Whether you're attending worship, having lunch at the Mission Coffeehouse, visiting the playground, or simply enjoying the beauty of our grounds, we hope you feel welcomed and refreshed.

Thank you to all who give of their time, talents, and resources to make First Lutheran Church a place where faith grows, friendships flourish, and our community feels at home.

Psalm 67:6: The earth has yielded its harvest; God, our God, has blessed us.

In Peace,
Doriane
Director of Events and Facilities



MISSION: OUTREACH



On a hot Saturday in July, volunteers from FLC traveled to Sioux Falls to serve with the Church on the Street outreach ministry. They helped provide a meal for guests, led a lively game of Bingo, assisted individuals in finding new clothing, and joined together in a worship service. Watch the bulletin for future outreach opportunities.



AUGUST

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Only church activities are included on this calendar. Check the on-line calendar for outside meetings and events scheduled. (Calendar subject to change.) HC = Holy Communion SS = SteppingStone						1
2 9:00am Worship Service w/HC 10:00am CYF Volunteer Training	3 9:30am Staff Meeting 5:30pm Sew What	4 8:30am Quilters 12:00pm Belize Appreciation Luncheon in Gym	5 12:00pm Bible Study in Parlor	6	7 Kroger/Hague Wedding Rehearsal	8 Kroger/Hague Wedding
9 9:00am Worship Service	10 9:30am Staff Meeting 5:30pm Sew What	11 8:30am Quilters	12 12:00pm Bible Study in Parlor	13	14	15
16 9:00am Worship Service w/HC	17 9:30am Staff Meeting 5:30pm Sew What	18 8:30am Quilters	19 12:00pm Bible Study in Parlor 5:00pm Faith Project Workshop in youth room	20 10:00am WELCA bible study	21	22
23 9:00am Worship Service with back to school blessing 10:00am CYF volunteer training	24 9:30am Staff Meeting 11:30am FLC Book Club 5:30pm Sew What 6:00pm Church council in parlor	25 8:30am Quilters	26 12:00pm Bible Study in Parlor	27	28	29
30 RALLY SUNDAY 9:00am Worship Service led by youth with 4 yr old "Welcome to Worship" Steppingstone Blessing	31 9:30am Staff Meeting 5:30pm Sew What					

SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Only church activities are included on this calendar. Check the on-line calendar for outside meetings and events scheduled. (Calendar subject to change.)		1	2	3	4	5
		8:30am Quilters	5:00pm Meal 6:00pm Journey w/parents 7:00pm Confirmation w/parents & 1st mtg of youth group			
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9:00am Outdoor Worship Service w/HC and Donut Party 10:00am Journey Together	CHURCH OFFICES AND MISSION COFFEE HOUSE CLOSED 5:30pm Sew What	8:30am Quilters 9:30am Staff Meeting 2:00pm Bible Study	5:00pm Meal 6:00pm Journey 7:00pm Youth Group, Confirmation & 10th grade "Affirmation of Baptism" SS mtg w/parents	Blood Drive		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
8:30am Traditional Worship Service 9:30am Journey w/Parents 10:30am Contemporary Worship Service	9:30am Staff Meeting 5:30pm Sew What	8:30am Quilters 2:00pm Bible Study	5:00pm Meal 6:00pm Journey; Kindergarten "Learning to Pray" SS class 7:00pm Youth Group, Confirmation & 9th grade mtg w/parents	10:00am WELCA bible study in Parlor		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Kindergarten "Learning to Pray" SS Blessing - both services 8:30am Traditional Worship Service w/HC 9:30am Journey 10:30am Contemporary Worship Service w/HC 11:30am Faith Project workshop in youth rm	9:30am Staff Meeting 5:30pm Sew What	8:30am Quilters 2:00pm Bible Study	5:00pm Meal 6:00pm Journey; 1st grade "Learning to Share" SS class#1 7:00pm Youth Group, Confirmation			
27	28	29	30	HC - Holy Communion SS - SteppingStone		
3 yr old "Welcome to Worship" SS Blessing - both services 8:30am Traditional Worship Service 9:30am Journey w/Parents 10:30am Contemporary Worship Service	9:30am Staff Meeting 11:30am FLC Book Club 5:30pm Sew What	8:30am Quilters 2:00pm Bible Study	5:00pm Meal 6:00pm Journey; 1st grade "Learning to Share" SS class#2 7:00pm Youth Group, Confirmation			



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If you have an article or information for the Oct/Nov newsletter, please have it to the church office no later than 5:00pm on Sept 10th

If you would like information put in the Sunday announcements, please have it in the church office by noon the Monday before. Thank you!

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter via email, please call the church office at 605-692-6251 or email office@firstlutheranbrookings.org



2026		SEPTEMBER					
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	
		1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
27	28	29	30				

YOU ARE INVITED
TO THE
**ANNUAL
MEETING
AND
POTLUCK**

ON SUNDAY,
SEPTEMBER 27TH AT
11:30AM. WATCH
THE BULLETIN FOR
MORE DETAILS

x

x

x