

First News

October 2024

The Monthly Publication of First Lutheran Church, Portland, ME

150th Anniversary Celebration

Faithfulness Through the Ages

2024 marks the 150th anniversary of First Lutheran Church. We will be celebrating this milestone with two special events during the last weekend of October.

Saturday, October 26 at 5:00pm

Harvest Potluck Supper and Celebration Program

We will have a potluck supper starting at 5pm. (Look for sign-up sheets in the Fellowship Hall.) Following the meal, we will have a time of fun and fellowship, including a video and pictures looking back at the history of First Lutheran. There will be a hymn sing-along and some FLC trivia.

Sunday, October 27 at 10:00am

Reformation and Anniversary Worship Service

We will celebrate our anniversary and the Reformation in Word, Music and the Sacrament. The *Maine Blend* singing group will provide a special song, along with our own choirs and musicians. Following worship, there will be a special coffee hour complete with a celebratory cake!

We hope you can join us as we reflect on 150 years of ministry and look forward to the future.

Council Notes

Last month was a busy and exciting time at First Lutheran, which can be summarized in with the theme of “Looking forward, as we remember the Past”. We kicked off another school year with our Welcome Back Barbecue. It was a wonderful event of friendships and fellowship, which happened the day after we said goodbye to our long time member and friend, Bob Mitchell. We met and started planning our 150th Anniversary celebration weekend that will be happening in October. The security grant updates have been started with some now completed. We have the new windows and brickwork in the Fellowship Hall area, new doors at the exterior of the offices, new keyless lock system, and new Ring cameras. The locks have been replaced, and interior doors were keyed as well to create a seamless system for the preschool/school age care wing.

I am grateful for all of the help we have received in our pastoral coverage. I look forward to our continuing work on Council to further the mission here at First Lutheran. We are working together to create new memories and history, as we take time to honor the first 150 years of our past. Fellowship and Education committees are working together to create a wonderful celebration on Saturday, October 26th and Sunday, October 27th. We have amazing outreach for Maine Needs and Family Promise, a Property Committee that continues to astound me, and an A/V team that does a great job each and every Sunday to broadcast our services. The Worship Committee helps make every Sunday special, and countless volunteers for all the committees make every event successful in their own way. First Lutheran Church has so much to be excited about as we look forward!

Each and everyone of us has a gift and a talent that God calls us to use. Think about if your talents could benefit one of our many opportunities here at First. Maybe it’s helping with the Christmas Fair or the coffee hour. Maybe your gift is behind the scenes and you could help with the audit committee, or the A/V team on Sundays. Maybe you could collect the offering, read on Sunday, help with communion, or sing with the musicians. If you think you could help out in any of these roles, please reach out to anyone on Council. We can help connect you to the right spot!

Finally, I want to take a minute and thank the staff for their hard work and dedication to First Lutheran. We take for granted all of the people that make things happen daily. Joleen, Brenda, and Ed keep everything going. Sherryl Eastman and Beth Rovnak make our Children’s Program run fantastically, often helping out with building issues during the week. We have such an amazing team here, and we are truly blessed.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out.

In His Service,

Ann Brown, FLC Council President

Special Congregational Meeting

When Pastor Mark Perry left FLC, we asked if there was anything that we could change or do better for the next pastor. He shared that he felt very strongly that the pastor should have a vote on Church Council. Over the last two months, Council has discussed this issue, consulted with Synod, talked with other congregations, members, and pastors.

At our last council meeting, we came to the unanimous conclusion that we recommend the Congregation make the change in our church constitution that would allow a future pastor to have a vote on Council. We feel this will follow our new mission statement, and potentially help secure a full time pastor. The Synod also recommends this change.

To do so, we will need to hold a special Congregational Meeting. That meeting has been scheduled for Sunday, October 20th. I will host a pre-meeting to discuss this with anyone interested on Sunday, October 13th at 11am in the Hospitality Room. If you have any questions prior to the meeting, feel free to contact anyone on Council.

Ann Brown

Stewardship Moments

As one of my favorite books, James lends so much to consider in re-evaluating how we live our everyday lives as witnesses to Christ. I share with you a recent experience.

I went to Las Vegas with some friends as it was on the ‘bucket list’ of one of them. I too was curious as I had heard of its spectacle and wanted to see if it matched what I had heard. But what I saw was contrast... Chanel, Gucci, Dior boutiques and beautiful, over the top hotel lobbies were flanked by panhandlers only a hundred feet away. On our first full day we walked by a young, presumed homeless, couple holding a sign asking for anything. I walked by, not making eye contact, but then wept. I thought about the inequity but more so that they were ignored, not just by me, but by hundreds of people walking by them every day. I thought of Daniel’s warning to Nebuchadnezzar, that he needed to turn from his ways and be kind to the poor and downtrodden. I also thought of James’ judgment of the hoarding rich. I was well past the couple when I turned, left my friends, and gave the couple \$20. The girl looked stunned and thanked me. I said it was my pleasure to do so and that God bless them. I left weeping even more; not so much for them but for our fallen society and the callousness of our hearts. For the remainder of our trip I made sure I kept cash in my pocket to give to those on the street. I felt if I’m going to be in ‘Sin City’ I might as well do a small part to counteract the sin.

Another time, I saw a man wearing a shirt that said, “To Life, Love and Loot!”. People commented on the shirt, admiring it, wanting one for themselves. I was disgusted. Materialism and self gratification is at the heart of Las Vegas for sure.

But all this brings me to James chapter 5:1-5. Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming upon you. Your wealth has rotted and moths have eaten your clothes. Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter.

James is not directly scorning the rich for having riches. He is calling them out on not using their wealth wisely in the eyes of God. If we aren’t using it, we are abusing it. In part, hoarding our money and possessions means we are withholding what we don't even use from others who would treasure it. You have certainly heard the saying, ‘Use it or lose it’. The fact is, we’re going to lose our earthly treasure anyway. We’re not taking any of our stuff with us when we die. Remember, James reinforces the royal law of ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’. Simple, to the point, easy to understand, because we all know how to love ourselves. As we enter the season of home and comfort related to harvest and then to Thanksgiving and Christmas, let us live out this simple but powerful command.

Blessings on your stewardship journey,

Alison Smith

Help Still Needed

Our Audio/Visual Team is still looking for volunteers who would be willing to assist occasionally with the operation of the sound/projection system, as well as streaming the Sunday Worship services on YouTube.

The live streaming and recording of our worship services has become an essential outreach to the community. Three positions are needed every Sunday morning to make this happen. Your help would allow us to schedule and fill those positions and continue providing these services.

No experience is needed—volunteers would be thoroughly trained. You also won’t have to necessarily work every Sunday.

Can you help? Contact the church office or speak to Ken Carr, A/V Coordinator.



Financial Update

FLC had a net operating surplus in August 2024 of \$6,562. We had expected a deficit of \$2,204 so the result was \$8,767 favorable to our budget. The monthly giving was significantly over budget and our expenses were well under budget resulting in the large favorable variance. Our cash reserves remain sufficient to fund our ministry at least through the end of 2024. Council and the Finance and Stewardship committee continue to explore ways to increase receipts and reduce expenditures as we seek an improved financial position to support calling a full-time pastor.

If you have questions, please contact me by e-mail or on my cell phone, 207-939-0820.

--Ed Daggett, Treasurer

ed.daggett@flcme.org

	Actual August	Actual YTD
Operating Income	\$26,626	\$228,743
Operating Expenses	\$20,064	\$219,821
Net Operating Income (Loss)	\$6,562	\$8,922

Give a Child a Chance

ANNOUNCING SOME WONDERFUL NEWS

100+ Women Who Care awarded us \$3,500 as part of their award contest. This enabled us to contribute \$10,000 to tuition support for neighborhood kids to attend our early childhood education program. Our total contributions to tuition support since 2015 is \$82,000! Thank you all for your support over the years!

We would love to have you register with RaiseRight for ease in ordering physical gift cards and e-cards.

REGISTRATION BRINGS THESE BENEFITS:

- Order cards, e-cards and reloads online anytime — day or night
- E-cards appear in your “wallet” in your RaiseRight account in a few minutes; just print the coupon, take to the retailer, and use just like a credit/debit card.
- Set-up direct withdrawal payment from your bank account
- You can use a Credit or Debit card
- You can pay with cash or check made payable to FLC with RaiseRight on the memo line and give it to one of the team members

HOW TO SET-UP YOUR VERY OWN ACCOUNT:

- Go online to RaiseRight.com
- Select “SIGN UP” in the upper right corner of the page
- Select “Join an existing program” on the left-side of the page
- Use the following FLC Enrollment Code: 9A936A95552L6
- Complete the information requested
- Pick a 4 number PIN for your use only – no one will know your PIN. Then order away!

Need help in registering? Just ask us at the Give a Child a Chance table in the Fellowship Hall during RaiseRight Gift Card Sales.

Team members: Ann Brown, Susan Bollman, Karen Johnson, Lynn Macken, Colleen Taylor

Ec-fund@flcme.org

Our Community Involvement

Maine Needs Holiday Gift Boxes

Thank you to the many people who have contributed to this ongoing project. This month, the Outreach Committee will be collecting items for children 0 to 9 years old. Please stop at the donation clothesline in the hallway for gift ideas.

Maine Needs has supplied us with very useful lists of popular gifts for each age. Check these out:

Teens and pre-teens

Uno, Skip-Bo card games
Puzzles
Lego build kits
Art supplies
Craft kits
Rubiks Cube
Fidget toys
STEM toys
Chess set
Light-up soccer ball or basketball
Magnetic dart board
Door frame basketball hoop
New, warm socks
Adidas slides
Bluetooth speakers
Wireless earbuds
Pedicure/manicure set
Mascara, nail polish or lip gloss
Headband, hair ties
Loofa, wash cloth, razor
Slippers
LED twinkle lights

2-9 years:

Duplos and Legos, blocks
Dolls
Cars, trucks, trains
Animal figurines
Action figures
Costumes
24—100 piece puzzles

0-2 years:

Shape sorters
Stacking toys
Baby clutch toys
Sensory toys

Please no toys with batteries or stuffed animals

Once Upon a Holiday Fair

The fall is the perfect time to consider how you can contribute to FLC's Thanksgiving & Christmas Fair. How so, you say?

As you put away your summer things and bring out the scarecrows, pumpkins and skeletons, how about evaluating what you still like and use vs. what you haven't put out in years. Donating those items to the fair will help contribute to the success of the Chic, Unique & Antique, or finding gently used items for the Kiddie Korner. It is also a good time to go through those bookcases. Really, are you ever going to reread all of those? The Book Nook is a popular area for fans that still enjoy holding an actual printed-on-paper book. What you may not enjoy any longer will give pleasure to someone else.

No need to prompt the knitters, quilters and crafters to get going! However, if you have UFO's hanging around (unfinished objects) bring them by and we may have someone that can finish it for you. No regrets because you lost interest or felt overwhelmed, and a lot to feel good about by donating to the fair.

Already downsized, aren't crafty, but you want to support our efforts to raise funds to help members and the community in their times of need? Here are some suggestions:

- ◆ Tell your friends about the friendliest fair in greater Portland on **November 23, 2024**, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ Come and bring your family and friends
- ◆ Financial donations to defer the cost of advertising and expenses (request a Thrivent community card)
- ◆ Join the community! Sign up to help for an hour or two during the fair

For more information contact Barb and Lorna at Fair-Chairs@flcme.org.



Education Team Update



September 22nd Cross Generational Event

Many thanks to the participants in our initial Fall 9 to 10 AM Cross Generational Event. We enjoyed some learning and fun as each group explored the upcoming Gospel lessons and learned a bit more about each group member. Our next Cross Generational Event will be held on Sunday, October 20th at 9 AM. This will involve Crafts, Learning and Fun. Please consider joining and helping us to build this ministry.

The Educational Team held our monthly meeting on September 16th. At that meeting, the team: (a) reflected on the opening Sunday (9/8) games and activities; (b) finalized plans for the September 22nd activity and planned the October 20th activity; (c) reviewed the sharing of fruit and snacks celebrating Lyseth teachers and staff and discussed this type of event; (d) agreed to reach out to other churches to seek ongoing Bible Studies and co-leading or inviting members of the congregation to be part of those studies; (e) heard about the new youth leader, Amber Burks, in Portland and agreed to share those events with youth of First Lutheran; (f) agreed to support and be a part of the Trunk or Treat Children's Program event on Oct. 26th (early afternoon); (g) discussed participation in the 150th celebration.

This group, in working with Josh and coordinating with Joleen, will facilitate the creation of the new church directory. The goal is to complete photos by the weekend of October 26th and have the directory ready to go (online) in November. Photos will be taken on Sundays during October.

Members of the Committee continue to be committed to education and involvement of all members in this aspect of our church. Our next meeting will be held on Monday, October 21st at 7 PM via zoom. All are welcome!



Trunk or Treat Event — October 26th

The First Lutheran Children's Program is holding a Trunk or Treat event in the church parking lot on Saturday, October 26th from 2:00 to 4:00pm. Members of FLC are invited to bring kids to the event, or you are welcome to come and decorate a trunk and hand out candy. See Ann Brown for more details.

Fun, Food & Fellowship at our Welcome Back Cookout on September 8th




Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God.

2 Corinthians 1: 3-4



<p>Susan & John Bollman Ken Carr Abbott Knowles Joy Hansen Carol Mitri Doris Kilfoil Pat Graham Al Lorenz Ashley Sawyer Leslie & Russ Morton Joan Moore Jean Twomey Penny Arsenault</p>	<p>Victims of racism and hate, especially those in the LGBTQIA+ Community FLC Call Committee All victims of Violence, especially those of the Lewiston mass shooting one year ago Those in the Southeast affected by the recent hurricane and flooding</p>
---	--



Prayer is such an important part of our daily Christian lives, and sometimes extra prayers are needed. If you have any special prayer requests and you would like to have our "Prayer Warriors" praying as well, please send an email.

prayer-request@flcme.org



- October 3 Marlene Christensen
- October 14 Doris Warren
- October 21 Wendy Barmore
- October 22 Kris Conant
- October 30 Kathy Condon
- October 21 Calvin Conant



October 14



REFORMATION Day

October 31



In honor of our 150th Anniversary, the City of Portland will be issuing a Proclamation at Portland City Hall on Monday, October 21st at 5pm. We will have this available during our celebration weekend.

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
132 AUBURN STREET
PORTLAND, MAINE 04103-2145**

October 2024

Our Church's 150th Anniversary



Join Us October 26th & 27th

First News is a monthly publication of First Lutheran Church. Articles can be submitted to the church office, or by email to news@flcme.org.

Worship Service is at 10:00 am

Church Office Hours are Monday thru Friday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm (797-2525)

www.FLCME.org

STAFF

Transition Contact Pastor.....Rev. Amanda Gerken-Nelson
Church Secretary.....Joleen Knowles (joleen.knowles@flcme.org)
Church OrganistBrenda Morneau (brenda.morneau@flcme.org)
Director—FLC Children’s Community Ministry.....Sherryl Eastman (flcpinfo@flcme.org)

OFFICERS

President.....Ann Brown
Vice-President.....Bill Mills
Secretary.....Ken Conant
Treasurer.....Ed Daggett
Financial Secretary.....Cheryl Cyr



First Lutheran is a Reconciling In Christ congregation. Here we believe there is a place for **Everyone**.