

First Lutheran Church ELCA **The Ambassador**

July 2026

Volume 26 Issue 7

News From Our Pastor

This year on the 4th of July we will celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. It is no small thing to celebrate an idea that has endured for a quarter of a Millennium.

History asks us what we have done with this gift.

This is an important question - not just how we remember a thing that happened a long time ago but how we keep its spirit alive and make it new for every generation. Our ancestors were doing a daring and radical thing, turning their back on what was known for the sake of a better future. They were not willing to accept the world as it was. They called the world to a new path ahead.

Dare we do the same?

I often wonder if the signers of the Declaration even understood the depth and possibility of what they were doing. They had no idea what it meant to say, "All men are created equal" because no one actually believed that or lived that in their day. I doubt they could imagine what it would come to mean in ours. But the gift of that moment is the enduring power of its truth, based not so much on what they wrote on the fact that someone wrote it.

If the world is we must write a new future now.

We suffer chronic blindness when it comes to change. It's not that we can't tell that things are changing around us. We are blind to the truth of it, stubbornly clinging to the false belief that it isn't really happening, that it shouldn't really be happening, that it's only happening because it's somehow wrong.

We think that it has nothing to do with us. But it has everything to do with us, and we must have everything to do with it.

It's not just about seeing change. It's about understanding change, accepting change, even embracing change. And we are not capable of doing that because we are far too much in love with the world as we have made it to be. We have worked hard to build this Kingdom and we are not going to let it go, never ever ever Amen.

(Pastor Glen's Newsletter Article continued on Page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

No matter what God may have in mind.

And there it is. There is the break from faith that keeps us from God's Kingdom, there is the moment when our condition moves from chronic to terminal. We cannot move on from the past because we would have to turn our back on ourselves.

We miss the promise: as we turn our back on ourselves we will certainly see the great new thing that God is doing.

So how does one do this? How does a poor human being, how does a broken human world take that dramatic history-making-everything-turning-upside-down-life-giving step with God into the amazing and glorious day he has promised?

You turn your back on the past. You turn your back on what you know. You turn your back on what is comfortable and sure and yours. You shake the dust from your feet and move on. You keep a tight grip on your peace and you do the hard work of what comes next.

I was recently reminded that the last time the New York Knicks won an NBA championship Richard Nixon was president and gas cost less than 50 cents a gallon. Ancient history. Things change. It is on us whether or not they change for the better.

We are not prisoners of the tombs in which we live. We are God's resurrection, embodied and lit up for a brand new day.

You don't even have to roll away your own stone. He will do that for you.

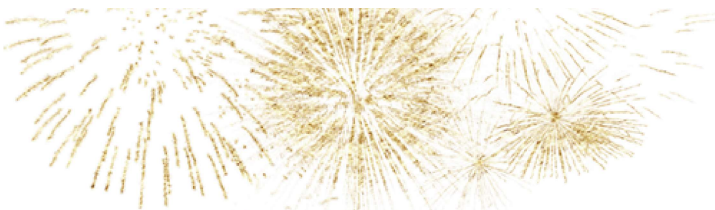
-Pastor Glen

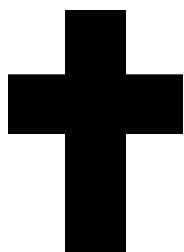
Notes, Dates, & Reminders

The Christian Growth Board would like to remind members of FLC to consider including the Christian Growth Fund in your estate planning.

We are now
livestreaming our
worship services on
Facebook Live.

Please join www.facebook.com/flcblair to be alerted whenever a live video Begins. This is a real-time, virtual worship experience, and we invite you to join us if you can't be with us in person. Each live video will begin as the regularly scheduled worship time.





We Remember in Our Prayers

Please keep these people in your thoughts and prayers

Family of Susie Christensen
Family of John Forsen
Family of Robert Olson
Family of David Kaiser
Family of David Rasmussen
Jeff & Cindy Smith - healing
Sandy Josephsen (Wilke) - prayers for healing
Brooklyn Schroeter - healing - knee surgery
Shelli McGregor - healing and answers
Betty Megrue - prayers
Jayde - prayers and healing
David Latwaitis & Family - peace and healing
Dr. Mariah Meyer LeFeber - prayers
Holly Petersen (Daughter of Marcy Bottorff)
Randy Isaacson - prayers
Debra Harris
Mary Jean Rahlfs - healing
Alicia (Niece of Deb Katt and Mother of Georgia) - prayers
Gavin James - prayers
Greg Megrue (Son of Betty Megrue) - serious health problems
Paul Kempcke - healing
Jennifer Novak-Haar - healing
Mary Connely
Sana and Elley Smith
Marcie Ellenberger - healing
Carla
Kari Hernandez - healing
Clint Clausen - prayers
Greg Reed
Mary Frey (mother of Rhonda McMurtry) - prayers
Wayne & Carolyn Behrend (Parents of Deb Henson) - prayers for healing
Mick Jensen
Julia Maettes - cancer treatments - prayers & healing

Patrick McKinnis - healing
Elijah - healing
Thomas Uhlman - diagnosed with lung cancer
Helen Garnett (Jim Garnett's mom) - healing
Randy Backman - healing
Deloris Matson - early stage lymphoma - healing & prayers
Vivian Walvoord - healing & prayers
Dana - healing
Betty Anderson
Irene Thorsen
Meredith Dickerson - Alpha Gal Syndrome
Zach - cancer healing/treatment side effects
Misty - healing and pain relief
Marilyn Svendgard
Merriebeth Ferguson (sister-in-law of Merriellen Bourn) - cancer - healing
Chris Kesling - healing
Alex - surgery & healing
Mary LaScala
Martin Kuhr - prayers and healing
Riley
Georgia (great niece of Debbie Katt) -prayers & healing
Kyler Reed - healing
Scott & Katie Abrams - prayers & healing
Kay Melby (Angela Ulven and Kari Hernandez's mother) - healing
Stacy Thompson Green (daughter of Marcy Bottorff) - prayers & healing
Larry Kastrup – healing
Leo Aguilar-Hicks – healing for Leukemia
Lekura Parish
Nebraska Wildfire Victims and all those we name in our hearts.

Notes, Dates, & Reminders

MWM

MID

WEEK

MEAL



Thank You

Immanuel Vision Foundation!!

We are blessed to have received a grant for the Mid Week Meal ministry in the amount of \$8,000!!



"...helping seniors live safely & independently at home"

Handouts & brochures are available at the Welcome Center if you missed the presentation

www.homeinstead.com



**Come find your treasures!!
Something for EVERYONE!!**

JULY 9 @ 8am-6pm

JULY 10 @ 8am-6pm

JULY 11 @ 8am-12pm

All funds will support our trip to the 2027 ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis!

"At the Table"

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



VBS 2026!!

Mark your calendars!!

July 20-24

9am-12pm

**Stop in and say hi
to the kids!**

It's a HAPPY place!!

Register Here:



Notes, Dates, & Reminders

Women's Bible Study

Ladies...now that the holidays are behind us, are you looking for something to keep the spirit of Christmas alive in your hearts and in your lives? Come and join other ladies on Friday mornings as we begin a new study about women of the Bible entitled "Brave and Beloved" by Meredith Storrs.

"Women of the Bible are just like us, but their particular lives, choices, and problems can sometimes feel foreign when we read them today. Through their stories, we can glimpse a

vision of what it means to be a godly woman, but sometimes their experiences leave us scratching our heads.

This Bible study looks specifically at key women in Scripture to discover how their stories upend cultural expectations and reveal the nature and character of the God who created us all."

This Bible study meets on Friday mornings from 9:15 to 10:45 in the church library. No need to sign up, just show up. Questions? Email Susie Pinguoch at spinguoch@gmail.com or call (402) 533-3735.

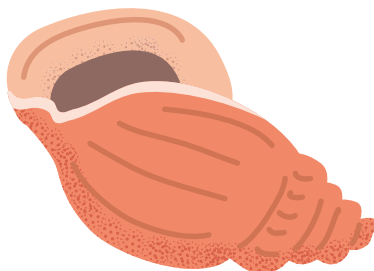
W.O.W. Meal is over for the summer! (In House Meal)

Starting on Wednesday, May 6th you are welcome to order meals for delivery or pick up with MWM since the W.O.W. meal will be over for the summer. Please reach out to Erika and or the church office to place your order! W.O.W. meals will resume when the fall Wednesday services start back up.

Martha Sorensen

New Christ in Our Homes are here

Christ in Our Homes-If you would like a Christ in Our Homes daily devotional they are available at the Welcome Center in the Narthex and also on the usher table outside of the LIFE Center for July, August, and September. The Christ in Our Homes is a book that has a daily devotional to read and pray. Please stop by and pick one up if you would like or if you need one delivered please call the church office at (402) 426-4073.



Notes, Dates, & Reminders

Flowers for Worship Services

Would you like to provide flowers for worship services at First Lutheran in celebration of an important event in your life or to honor someone important? We would be grateful for your gift! Please follow these directions:

1. Sign up for an available weekend on the flower chart on the bulletin board outside the Sacristy door. Only one family per weekend please.
2. Mark your calendar or leave yourself a reminder! You will NOT receive a reminder notice from the church prior to the weekend you have chosen.
3. You are responsible to order and pay for a floral arrangement and provide for it to be delivered or brought to the church on the Friday afternoon prior to the weekend you would like it used. The church staff is NOT available to order or pick up flowers for you.
4. You may wish to consider the season of the church and choose suitable colors. Please bring LIVE flower arrangements only.
5. Information about the flowers and to whom they are dedicated must be provided to the church office (office@firstlutheranblair.org) by Thursday afternoon. It will be included in the weekly email blast.

All Roads lead to Romans An online Bible study. Summer 2026

The Epistle to the Romans plays a major role in our understanding of how God works his grace through the crucifixion and resurrection. Every great theologian in the history has learned from Paul, from Augustine to Luther to leaders of the church today. In the depths of Paul's masterwork lie the foundations of faith and life and hope. Beginning June 10, join Pastor Glen as we examine selected texts from Romans which are included in this summer's lectionary readings. Every Monday morning we will post a video presentation to watch at your convenience and on Wednesday evenings join in an opportunity to join an online discussion. Just follow this link below:

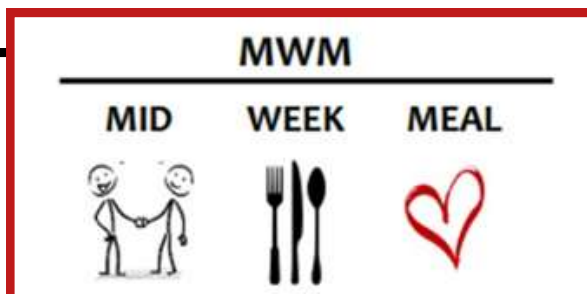
All Roads Lead to Rome Discussion
Wednesdays at 8:00pm
Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/wfm-xdcv-inb>
Or dial: (US) +1 727-202-2888 PIN: 679 956 242#

Notes, Dates, & Reminders

Pickup or Delivery

We serve our meal in the east
parking lot
2146 Wright St.
Wednesdays 5:30-6:15pm



Text name & # of meals
402-533-0918
Include address for delivery

PLEASE CONSIDER STEPPING UP TO HELP THIS MINISTRY!

Please contact me if you're able to step up and serve your neighbor.

Cooking, Bagging items, Serving, & Delivery

All times are flexible—weekly, biweekly, monthly, whenever it fits into your schedule!

Christian Growth Board Update

The Christian Growth Board reviewed scholarship applications from the following students for the 2026 Scholarships:

Jayden Backman
Hayden Daggett
Morgan Dondelinger
Charlie Gutzmann
Sophie Kempcke
Abby Leggott
Ruby Petersen
Ella Pike
Natalia Roberts
Maxwell Rump
Lydia Schaapveld
Quinn Thompson
Reese Uptmor
Brady Wolff
Brady Work
Hope Andersen

Makayla Andersen
Nadia Davey
Maddison Kempcke
Ryleigh Schroeter
Anna Taylor
Kaylee Taylor
Mac Tupa
Eli Cada
Leah Chance
Tanner Jacobson
Mallory Stirek
Kalli Ulven
Shelby Wolff
Kyle Gross
Tyler Andersen



We are pleased to announce that each applicant will receive a \$500 scholarship.

FLC KIDS NEWS

A note from Erika:

VBS 2026!!
"At the Table"

We need KIDS!!

Please click the QR code to register!

Invite your friends!

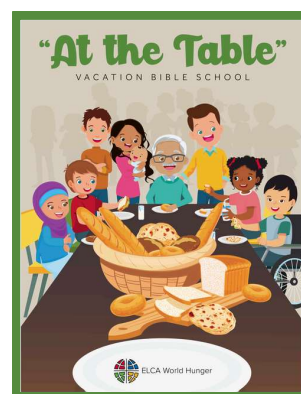
We need more kiddos to fill the church with
laughter and joy!!



July 2026

Next BIG Event:

VBS 2026



Looking ahead:

JULY 4TH

Happy 250th Bday USA!!

Celebrate the birthday of our country where
we are all God's children!!

JULY 9TH-11TH

FLC Youth Garage Sale!!

Thur & Fri 8am-6pm & Sat 8am-12pm

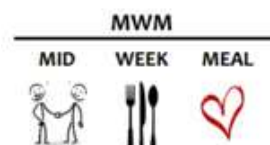
JULY 20TH-24TH

VBS @ FLC!!

Mon - Fri 9am-12pm

Daily Community Lunch @ 12pm-free will donation

Summer Offering:



Please consider making a donation to our
Mid Week Meal ministry this summer!
You AND your kiddos can give a financial
donation, you can volunteer on a
Wednesday to cook or fill bags with fruit
and cookies, or you can sign up to bake
goodies (link below)! Help your kids help
their neighbors this summer!

<https://signup.com/go/hfewWuF>

JULY BIBLE VERSE:

Summing up: Be agreeable, be sympathetic, be
loving, be compassionate, be humble. That goes
for all of you, no exceptions. 1 Peter 3:8 MSG

FLC YOUTH

NEWS JULY 2026



Announcements

2027 ELCA Youth Gathering



June 26 - July 2, 2027
All 9th - 12th graders in fall, 2026
We need more of you!!!

Cost: \$100
1st Fundraiser: Garage Sale 2026
1st Meeting: Sunday, July 26 @ 6pm

This is our 1st monthly BONDING mtg
But please come if you're curious and
still considering joining us!!

LIFE Night Help!!

Do you love little kids?
We need helpers on Wednesday
nights this fall!!



Contact Erika for more info!!

Fundraisers

2026 Garage Sale!!

Come help us sort and prepare for
our sale this year!!

Setup: July 5th - 8th

SALE: July 9th - 11th

Signup to work here:

<https://signup.com/go/EOucmuk>

We raise 1,000's of dollars!!

So we need ALL FLC Youth here to
help us make the sale GREAT!!

Confirmation **Class Schedule**

Wednesday, Aug 19 @ 6:15pm
Parent AND Student Orientation

Wednesday, Aug 26 @ 6:45pm
All classes begin

Worship Lab 1st Night
Wednesday, Aug 26 @ 6:15pm
6th Graders receive Bibles!!

Micah 6:8



Do justice
love kindness
walk humbly
with your God.

To Serve As Jesus Served...

projects and events of the church, the community, and the world reported monthly by the FLC social concerns committee.

FLC Ambassador

Social Concerns Committee

July 2026

July and August Opportunities

Mark your calendars now for a couple of opportunities to serve the Lord in July and August.

FLC First Fruits and Garden Market will kick off June 27-28. We appreciate and look forward to our congregational gardeners once again sharing their produce with the congregation. Those who take from the Garden Market Cart are asked to make donations. All money collected through the end of the gardening season is sent to ELCA World Hunger its efforts to alleviate world hunger.

2026 Crop Walk: Tentative plans are being made to schedule this year's Crop Walk on Saturday morning, August 15, 2026. Usually, the Crop Walk has occurred in October, but this year members of First United Methodist Church in Blair have expressed to organize the Walk. The Social Concerns Committee welcomes their willingness to lead this year and we support their efforts. More information will be forthcoming in announcements and the August Ambassador.

FLC's participation at the Washington County Recycling Center – Our next opportunity to volunteer at the Recycling Center is on Saturday, August 29th. As that date draws closer, a signup sheet will be placed on the desk in the Welcome Center. The final Saturday that FLC will provide volunteers in 2026 is November 7th.

Food Collection is an On-Going Project at First Lutheran

Members of First Lutheran are reminded that they may donate food & other needed items for the Washington County Food Pantry right here at the church. Donations can be made by placing items in the receptacle located on the south side of the narthex. These donations will then be delivered to the Washington County Food Pantry.

It is requested that such perishable items as bread and other unpreserved foods not be donated at this time. Depending on how fast the box is filled, it may be a couple of weeks before it is delivered allowing mold to set in.

Gratitude for Generous Congregational Support

Finally, the Social Concerns Committee has received a thank you note from the Washington County Food Pantry for the gift it received from last year's **Crop Walk**. 25% of what is collected is shared with the local food pantry, and the Food Pantry finally received its check. Thank you to all who participated last October. We hope we will have good participation this year, despite the Crop Walk taking place at a much different time of the year.

Notes, Dates, & Reminders

Special Letter from Rev. Johanson Monyo in Tanzania to Wanda Blomker about Pastor Pam Ciulla.

Dear Mama Wanda and the First Lutheran Parish Family,

It was with heavy hearts that we at Lekura Parish received the news of the passing of our dear sister in Christ, Pastor Pam Ciulla. We join you in mourning a faithful servant who touched so many lives through her devotion to the Gospel and her generous heart.

We remember Pastor Pam with great affection. Her visit to Lekura more than ten years ago remains a significant chapter in our parish's story. Though her stay was brief, her ministry at our altar left a lasting spiritual impact. She served with a grace that transcended language and culture, reminding us all of the universal bond we share in Christ.

That bond was only strengthened when we had the opportunity to visit Nebraska. We will never forget the warmth with which she welcomed us into your community. Her ministry of hospitality was a family affair; we still hold dear the memories of when she and her husband opened their home to us and graciously invited our group to visit the Air Force base where he served. These gestures were not merely social visits, but true expressions of the Christian fellowship she lived out every day.

While we feel the sting of this loss, we give thanks to God for the gift of her life. She was a true ambassador of Christ who worked tirelessly to bridge the distance between our two parishes. She has finished her race, and we find comfort in knowing she is now at peace with the Master she served so faithfully.

Our prayers are with her husband, her family, and the entire First Lutheran community. May the Holy Spirit provide you with comfort and peace that surpasses all understanding.

“The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” (Job 1:21)

In Christ's love.

Rev. Johanson Monyo

Notes, Dates, & Reminders

Church Office Closed

The church office will be closed on
Friday, July 3rd.

Happy 4th of July!



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
2146 WRIGHT STREET
BLAIR, NE 68008
July 2026