

First Lutheran Church ELCA The Ambassador

August 2026

Volume 26 Issue 8

News From Our Pastor

“I hope you experience the power of the Reformation, and I hope you take it home with you.”

That's what the Pastor said on Sunday morning as a word of welcome to Lorie and I as we worshipped at the Schlosskirche (Castle Church) in Wittenberg Germany. He did not need to say it. The Spirit of the Reformation in that place was overwhelming. Martin Luther stared down at me from the Lucas Cranach painting on the wall, and from his statue rising above the chancel. His tomb lay a few feet from where we sat in the front row.

And I had just climbed down from the pulpit where once upon a time he preached the Word of God and changed the world. Yeah, I could feel the power of the Reformation.

It wasn't just the historical importance of that place or the chance to experience with my own eyes things I had studied and taught for all of my professional life. It wasn't just that this was really the place where it had all happened. It was a pilgrimage moment for me, a touchstone with things that have always shaped my life and my faith. It was a powerful reminder of identity and purpose, a vision that pointed True North.

We are part of something bigger than ourselves.

Obviously this moment meant a lot to me as a Lutheran Pastor and amateur scholar of the Reformation. But it is a truth is for any and all of us. I was not just sitting in an old church - I was being in the presence of ancient truths. For centuries, priests and preachers, congregants and communicants had passed through this place and a many, many others like it, drawn by the same Spirit and promise of grace that brings each of us to our own places of worship again and again and again.

We dare not take it lightly. I think that's why the Pastor used the phrase “Power of the Reformation.” Not just a piece of history, but the presence of the living hope that gave birth to the Faith and to the Church and to the Reformation, the Word that is the Genesis of each of us in our own lives. It is a sacred and holy mission, a weighty burden and a promise that sets us free. It is what connects the darkness of this world with the light of God's Kingdom.

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

(Continued from page 1)

It is not about me. It's bigger than that.

And it draws us in, fills us up, and sends us forth with life and hope.

I cannot count how many churches we saw in the two weeks we spent in Germany. Every day we stepped into spaces that stunned us with beauty and awe. We passed through centuries of time. We were not just tourists, we were fellow travelers with countless generations of the faithful seeking presence of God and the hope of his grace.

Again and again we thought, "They don't build them like this anymore."

Not the buildings. The church.

The extravagance of those places embodied of a very particular understanding of what it means to be the church of Jesus Christ. The soaring ceilings and the dazzling artwork reminded us of how small we are in the presence of God. Which is, of course, what makes the promise so important and meaningful and powerful.

That I, of all beings, should belong to such a God.

The worship service and the sermon in Wittenberg were in German of course. I had a translator app to help me follow along, but I knew the service and I could understand what the pastor said. It was a sermon on Baptism, and he repeated again and again the chorus "du bist mein." You are mine. The words God speaks to each of us at our baptism and whispers in our ears every day. You are mine.

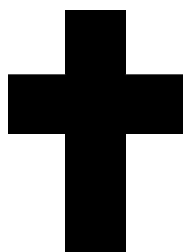
In that holy and historic space the words sang deep in my heart. It is not just any God who claims us as his own. It is the God of majesty made visible in churches that have stood for centuries, the God of generations of the faithful, of reformers and servants and every manner of small and broken humans. There is no reason that he should choose us. But he does. He chooses us and draws us in for great works, to be his church as we have been and always will be, forever and ever. Amen.

-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 Remember in Our Prayers

Please keep these people in your thoughts and prayers

Deb Katt	Elijah - healing
Marian Thomas	Thomas Uhlman - diagnosed with lung cancer
Laurie Wick - healing	Helen Garnett (Jim Garnett's mom) - healing
Judy Thompson - healing	Randy Backman - healing
Heather Fredericksen	Deloris Matson - early stage lymphoma - healing & prayers
Jeff & Cindy Smith - healing	Vivian Walvoord - healing & prayers
Sandy Josephsen (Wilke) - prayers for healing	Dana - healing
Brooklyn Schroeter - healing - knee surgery	Betty Anderson
Shelli McGregor - healing and answers	Irene Thorsen
Betty Megrue - prayers	Meredith Dickerson - Alpha Gal Syndrome
David Latwaitis & Family - peace and healing	Zach - cancer healing/treatment side effects
Dr. Mariah Meyer LeFeber - prayers	Misty - healing and pain relief
Holly Petersen (Daughter of Marcy Bottorff)	Marilyn Svendgard
Randy Isaacson - prayers	Merriebeth Ferguson (sister-in-law of Merriellen Bourn) - cancer - healing
Debra Harris	Chris Kesling - healing
Mary Jean Rahlfs - healing	Alex - surgery & healing
Alicia (Niece of Deb Katt and Mother of Georgia) - prayers	Mary LaScala
Gavin James - prayers	Martin Kuhr - prayers and healing
Greg Megrue (Son of Betty Megrue) - serious health problems	Riley
Paul Kempcke - healing	Georgia (great niece of Debbie Katt) -prayers & healing
Jennifer Novak-Haar - healing	Kyler Reed - healing
Mary Connely	Scott & Katie Abrams - prayers & healing
Sana and Elley Smith	Kay Melby (Angela Ulven and Kari Hernandez's mother) - healing
Marcie Ellenberger - healing	Stacy Thompson Green (daughter of Marcy Bottorff) - prayers & healing
Carla	Larry Kastrup – healing
Kari Hernandez - healing	Leo Aguilar-Hicks – healing for Leukemia
Clint Clausen - prayers	Lekura Parish
Greg Reed	Nebraska Wildfire Victims and all those we name in our hearts.
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	

Notes, Dates, & Reminders

MWM

MID

WEEK

MEAL



LEADERSHIP NEEDED!!

Erika is stepping down as Mid Week Meal coordinator. Please consider joining a leadership team to help this ministry continue for our community!!

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.



THANK YOU!!

Thank you to all of the people who made this FLC Youth Garage Sale the biggest success EVER!! We were able to raise over **\$17,500!!!**

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

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.



Notes, Dates, & Reminders

Important Fall Ministry Update

Dear First Lutheran Family,

We want to let you know that Erika Cada will be away from the office for a period of bereavement leave followed by scheduled time off – July 30 through August 30. During this time, we ask that you keep Erika and her family in your prayers as they experience this season of loss.

Because of Erika's absence, our fall Children's and Youth Ministries will begin **Wednesday, September 16th**. This will include the following:

- WOW Meal on Wednesdays
- Wednesday Worship
- PreK – 5th Grade LIFE Night classes
- 678 Confirmation
- 9 to 12 Youth Group

(Please note: The Mid Week Meal **WILL** continue each Wednesday in Erika's absence.)

The First Lutheran staff is working together to prepare for a wonderful fall season and will keep everyone informed as plans and schedules are finalized. If you have any concerns or questions regarding these areas of ministry, please contact the church office during this time.

We appreciate your understanding, your flexibility, and your continued prayers for Erika. Thank you for your patience as we care for one another as the body of Christ.

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

Del & Trudy Hutton's 70th Wedding Anniversary Open House

Del & Trudy Hutton will be celebrating their 70th Wedding Anniversary with an Open House here at First Lutheran Church in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, August 23rd from 2:00pm-4:00pm. No gifts please. Please stop by and wish them a Happy 70th Anniversary!

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.

Women of the ELCA

2026 Saved to Serve

Come and spend a fun and productive weekend in Fremont at Midland University! This year's 2026 "Saved to Serve" retreat will be hosted by Midland University on August 14-16th. Deadline to sign up is August 1st. Registration sheets will be on the welcome center or the women's activities table.

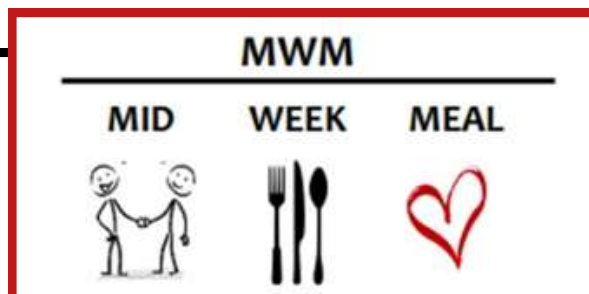
Tangible items being collected will be donated to the Warrior Open Cupboard food pantry. They are hoping for food and hygiene items. There is a laundry basket in the Narthex to put your donations.



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!

Or bake 3 dozen treats for the MWM recipients!!

Signup with Erika or go to this website: <https://signup.com/go/hfewWuF>

Women's Bible Study

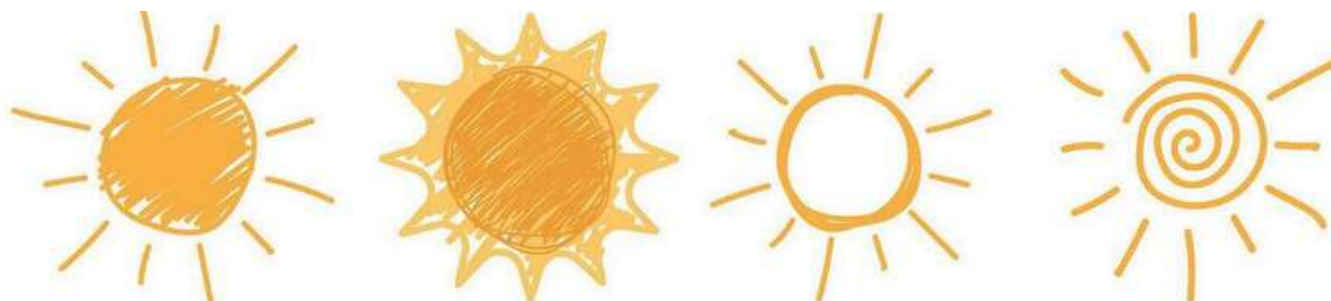
Ladies...now that the holidays are behind us, are you looking for something to keep the spirit of Christmas alive in your hearts and in your lives? Come and join other ladies on Friday mornings as we begin a new study about women of the Bible entitled "Brave and Beloved" by Meredith Storrs.

"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 Pinquoch at spinquoch@gmail.com or call (402) 533-3735.



FLC KIDS NEWS

A note from Erika:

Sometimes, we need a break...

I will be on a break for the month of August. It has been a very busy summer, my son is moving to Lincoln, and my daughter is visiting from Boston. So I will be out of the office in August. If you need anything, please contact the church office. I will return on August 31.

Let all that I am wait quietly before God, for my hope is in him.

Psalms 62:5

August 2026

Next BIG Event:

This year, we're going to try something different.

We will be starting our LIFE Night activities, the WOW Meal (soon to be renamed!!) and Wednesday Worship **IN SEPTEMBER.**

Watch your email for more information!!

Looking ahead:

AUGUST 15TH

CROP Walk to fight hunger

Saturday, August 15th @ 8am
Start at 1st United Methodist Church

AUGUST 19TH

First Day of School in BCS

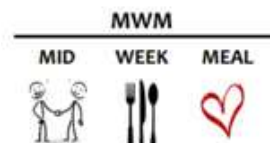
Welcome to a new school year!!

SEPTEMBER 6th

Dedication of our Children's Mural

Designed & painted by Makayla and Hope Andersen

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>

AUGUST 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 AUGUST 2026



Announcements

2027 ELCA Youth Gathering



**June 26 - July 2,
2027**
All 9th - 12th graders
in fall, 2026

**NO MEETING IN
AUGUST**

Sometimes, we all need a break...

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**Let all that I am wait quietly
before God, for my hope is in him.**
Psalm 62:5

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!!

Thank you for all your hard work, your shopping, and your advertising!!

We raised MORE than
\$17,500!!!

This will help us pay for our trip to the ELCA Youth Gathering next summer!

Fall Schedule Change

This year, we're going to try something different.

We will be starting our LIFE Night activities, the WOW Meal (soon to be renamed!!) and Wednesday Worship
IN SEPTEMBER.

Watch your email for more information!!

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 August 2026

2026 Crop Walk

Saturday, August 15th, 8:00 a.m., First United Methodist Church in Blair



QR Code to Register or Donate

Blair's First UMNC, along with Blair's First Lutheran Church is hosting this year's annual Crop Hunger Walk to support fighting hunger both here and around the world. We will join together as a group to walk a 3- mile route in Blair, however, if you are unable to make it the day of the walk, we encourage you to walk on your own. The work of Church World Service (CWS) and our local hunger agencies continues – and with the increased need for food in many parts of the world, raising money for vulnerable people is more needed than ever. As a reminder, 25% of the Walk proceeds will be directed to the Washington County Food Pantry in Blair.

How do I PARTICIPATE? REGISTER at <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/blairne> You may sign up as a solo walker or form a Team. Donations can be solicited through an online campaign and/or by asking your friends and family to make a contribution with cash or check made to CWS. Use the Collection Form attached to record your “in person contributions”. All funds collected should be brought with you on the day of the walk. You may also record any online donations on your form.

How do I DONATE? For online contributions visit <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/blairne>. Click on **MAKE A DONATION**. You may contribute to a specific walker, team, or make a general donation to the Blair Walk. You may also give a contribution directly to a walker or leave a check in either church offices. Checks can be made out to “CWS” with Blair Crop Hunger Walk noted on the memo line.

All walkers and donors are encouraged to join the group Facebook page **Blair Crop Hunger Walk** for additional updates and more information between now and the Walk Day!

Need help with your registration or donating, please contact one of the following and we can assist:

Lynette Jennings: 402-278-0164

John Mark Nielsen: 402-427-4443

You may also learn more about the efforts of CWS (Church World Service) and Crop Walk across the US by visiting <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/> (Social Concerns Committee Continued on Page 11)

(Social Concerns Committee Continued from Page 10)

Washington County Recycling Center, Saturday, August 29th: FLC will again provide volunteers at the Washington County Recycling Center on Saturday, August 29th. Sessions run from 8:00 to 10:00 and/or 10:00 to Noon. Volunteers are welcome to sign up at the Welcome Center for one or both sessions.

Annual Foodbank for the Heartland's Backpack Program



It's time for our annual support of the **Backpack Program** - members of First Lutheran have supported this initiative for many years. 1 in 5 children in the **Food Bank's for the Heartland's** 93-county service area is at-risk for hunger. The Back Pack Program, a partnership with area schools (including Blair), offers packs of weekend breakfasts and lunches to children. During the 24-25 school year, 8,002 packs equaling 32,008 meals - of easy-to-prepare or ready-to-eat nutritious food are distributed to children in 244 schools in 110 school districts in Nebraska and western Iowa.

Presently Woodhouse Auto Family is matching your gift – dollar for dollar up to \$500k. The cost to sponsor one child for the academic year is \$185 but any amount is welcome. You can make an online contribution by clicking <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/online-website-backpackmatch> or you can send a check directly to Food Bank for the Heartland 4645 S. 84th St., Omaha, NE 68127. For more information visit www.foodbankheartland.org. Thank you FLC for your continued generosity of this program!

The Garden Market Cart: 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** and its efforts to alleviate world hunger.

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 thank you notes from The Bridge for the gifts it received from FLC's May ingathering. Cathi Sampson added the following note: "What an amazing collection of gifts. We were able to use the gift cards already as well as several other items donated." FLC also received a thank you letter from Bread for the World expressing gratitude for FLC's continued participation as Covenant Member. The Social Concerns Committee thanks all who have supported these efforts.

Notes, Dates, & Reminders

Farewell Reception for Pastor Glen and Lorie

Please join us for a farewell reception for Pastor Glen and Lorie Thomas on Sunday, August 2nd between worship services. There will be cake and coffee in the Fellowship Hall.

Care Ministry Meeting

The Care Ministry Committee will be having a Care Ministry Meeting on Tuesday, August 4th at 6:30pm in the Library here at FLC. If you would like to join the Care Ministry Committee or find out more information about the Committee please join us on August 4th.



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