



Our Mission Statement!

We, the family of Mabel First Lutheran Church, will constantly strive to be a place for all to come together to worship and learn in peace and harmony in a spirit of forgiveness to further the Kingdom of God.

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WELCOMING THE NEW YEAR



Since the past year was filled with so many troubles and losses, it is likely that many people are feeling an urgent need to try to make the new year better than the last. According to a few polls conducted by the Marist Institute for Public Opinion, it appears somewhere around 40 percent of Americans adopt New Year's Resolutions in an effort to improve the quality of their life. Most of us are familiar with the practice of making resolutions to rid one's self of bad habits and adopting a set of goals which move toward what has been called "the good life." But how successful is anyone at ultimately achieving their resolutions to become happier, healthier, and more virtuous when they simply rely on their own willpower?

After a life of pursuing godliness (a comparison to the good life) in the most rigorous manner, the apostle Paul finally threw up his hands and declared that he had "no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3). He bailed out of his resolutions! But, it took time for him to reach that point. Most certainly, he did not come to that conclusion because he became a cynic or pessimist with a low view of humankind. It was rather that Paul met Jesus and learned that it was through Him alone that humanity finds its true joy and its perfection. He wrote, "whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" (3:7-8a).

The Scriptures make it abundantly clear it is folly to place trust in ourselves and believe we can achieve all the good that is demanded or simply desired. Our righteousness and our personal wellbeing cannot be attained according to the rightness of our resolutions or the strength of our willpower. In recognizing his own human weaknesses, Paul came to find the real source of strength—God. How successful are you at keeping resolutions? Do you relate to Paul? The message of the Gospel is that God has made a permanent resolution to offer grace and give everlasting life to the ones who look to Christ.

Shortly before dying from an inoperable brain tumor in January 2017, a 58-year-old pastor named John Hogenson recorded a video message in his home. Amid slurred speech, he looked at the camera and spoke words that gave inspiration to over 300,000 people viewing his message online (which can still be accessed at <https://pastorhogenson.com/videomessages>). He said, "Look upward, not downward. Press on!" Those who knew Pastor Hogenson knew his strength and joy was from God and his hope came from firmly believing the message of the Gospel. As we begin this new year, let us forgo any resolutions where we rely on our own willpower. Let us instead follow the example of every saint and look to God, trusting that He desires our welfare and is faithful to fulfill all He has willed for our lives.

Your brother in Christ, Pr. Elliott Malm

CHURCH INFORMATION

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ENGAGING IN MINISTRY TOGETHER

PRAYER FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE

Eternal God, you have placed us in a world of space and time, and through the events of our lives you bless us with your love. Grant that in the new year we may know your presence, see your love at work, and live in the light of the event that gives us joy forever—the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (ELW, p. 63)

RECORDED WORSHIP SERVICES FROM MFL AVAILABLE

Did you miss gathering to worship at the church with your friends, family, and neighbors during Advent and Christmas? If so, we have a video recording of the 8 p.m. Christmas Eve service along with four Advent evening prayer services for the home that were led by the confirmation students, Pastor Malm, and Linda Gjerdrum on the organ. Please call the church office if you would like to receive a DVD with these services.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE NEWS

To prepare for the elections that will occur at the annual meeting of the congregation on Jan. 31, 2021, the Nominating Committee is seeking to identify congregation members who are passionate about the ministry of the church and willing to serve in the following leadership positions:

- Congregation Council Members (3-Year Terms)
- Audit Committee (3-Year Terms)
- Memorial Secretary (1-Year Term)
- Nominating Committee Members (1-Year Term)
- Endowment Committee (3-Year Term)
- Mabel First Lutheran Cemetery Association
- Congregational Representative for ELCA Southeastern Minnesota Synod
- Congregational Representative for Area Council of Churches (2-Year Term)

Thank you to all who have served and are considering service to God by giving time for these positions in the church.



ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR JAN. 31

The annual meeting of the congregation will be held on Sunday, January 31, 2021, at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary of the church.

All year-end reports to be presented at this meeting are due by Monday, Jan. 18, 2021.
Emailed reports are preferred.

According to custom, annual reports along with a proposed budget for the year 2021 will be made available in the weeks leading up to the meeting.

WANT TO GROW IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality (EHS) is an 8-week course that unpacks core biblical principles which can guide you into a lasting, beneath-the-surface transformation in your relationship with Christ. Through this course that was developed by teaching pastor Peter Scazzero you can learn how to:

- Confront the crisis of emotionally unhealthy spirituality
- Know and become your authentic self in Christ
- Discover how your family of origin affects you today
- Find your way through "walls" to grow into maturity
- Enlarge your soul through embracing grief and loss
- Integrate silence and sabbath to slow down for Jesus
- Grow into an emotionally healthy adult
- Design a lifelong plan to live in God's love

If you are willing to commit 8 weeks to join others in developing a deeper spiritual life, then contact Pastor Malm. He would like to begin this course in February and has the required course materials available to give to the first five people who contact him.



Discipleship that Deeply Changes
Your Relationship with God

CONGREGATION INFORMATION

CONFIRMATION CLASS NEWS

Temporary Transition to Distance Learning for Confirmation Students



Mirroring the Mabel school's decision to transition to a distance learning model for the first two weeks of January, confirmation students will meet with Pastor Malm using the Zoom videoconferencing platform on Jan. 6 and 13. If the local school returns to a hybrid learning model on the third week of January (as anticipated) then the confirmation students will resume in-person classes at the church on Jan. 20.

Confirmation January Schedule Confirmation class is at 3:30pm

January 6	Confirmation Class via Zoom
13	Confirmation Class via Zoom
20	Confirmation Class
27	Confirmation Class

GRIEF AND THE HOLIDAYS

Mayo Clinic Hospice has been an active member in Community Reflections on Living and Dying, community work group, since its inception two years ago. The group comprises organizations, individuals and businesses passionate about normalizing the end-of-life and grief processes.

During the month of November, Community Reflections on Living and Dying typically offers various in-person discussions and events for National Hospice and Palliative Care Month. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the group moved to hosting virtual events. The three YouTube videos were developed to help normalize grief and the holidays during the current pandemic. The videos also offer practical ideas for celebrating the holidays a little differently than a person may have in the past and/or starting new traditions. Ann Siverling, Mayo Clinic Hospice bereavement coordinator, as well as other community professionals are featured in the videos.

- <https://youtu.be/gvkuSDdNuQk>
- <https://youtu.be/XRSXR9J310U>
- <https://youtu.be/gQv0d52zKms>



SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Our Giving to God

December Giving Goal	\$7,028.00
December Contributions Received	\$15,413.90
January Giving Goal	\$6,500.00

Thank you for supporting our congregation's ministry for the Lord.



PASTORAL ACTS (December)

Baptisms:	None
Funerals/deaths:	None
Transfers in:	None
Transfers out:	None
Weddings:	None

PRAYER CONCERNS

Health Concerns/Long-Term Care

Gary Adams, Gwen Allen, Betty Gjere, Shelly Henry, Ellen Mae Johnson, Lois Johnson, Rosemary Ketchum, Helen Larson, Ryan Lee, Kay Marin, Joe Osbourn, Violet Pederson, Pennian Ramirez, Irene Rice, Becki Russell, Tim Sollien, Dacia Sorum, Linnett Williams

Service Members

Gregery Johnson, Luke Johnson, Adam L. Johnson, Benjamin Lee, Jeannie Vick



CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Steve Darrington	563-735-5816
Barb Davis	507-743-8366
Brian Johnson	493-5658
Joseph Larson	493-5206
Tyler Mikesh	563-419-7377
Rhonda Schmelzer	563-765-5592
Lori Schutte	493-5670
Lynn Sollien	493-5631
Rodney Tollefsrud	493-5570



God's work.
Our hands.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 New Year's Day	2
3 9:00a Holy Communion Noisy Offering	4 MC Preschool (8a-12p) Pr. Malm's day off	5 MC Preschool (8a-12p)	6 MC Preschool (8a-12p) 3:30p Confirmation Class (3:30-5p) 7:00p Congregation Council	Epiphany MC Preschool (8a-12p) 3:30p Confirmation Class (3:30-5p) 7:00p Congregation Council	7 MC Preschool (8a-12p) 5:00p Mabel Area Food Shelf OPEN (5-7p) 7:30p Mabel A.A. (closed meeting)	8 MC Preschool (8a-12p)	9
10 9:00a Holy Communion	11 MC Preschool (8a-12p) Pr. Malm's day off	12 MC Preschool (8a-12p) 9:00a RR Conference Rostered Leader's Meeting	13 MC Preschool (8a-12p) 3:30p Confirmation Class (3:30-5p)	14 MC Preschool (8a-12p) 5:00p Mabel Area Food Shelf OPEN (5-7p) 7:30p Mabel A.A. (closed meeting)	15 MC Preschool (8a-12p)	16 10:00a Mabel Area Food Shelf OPEN (10a-12p)	
17 9:00a Worship Service	18 MLK Jr. Day MC Preschool (8a-12p) Pr. Malm's day off Year-end reports are DUE for the Annual Report!	19 MC Preschool (8a-12p)	20 MC Preschool (8a-12p) 3:30p Confirmation Class (3:30-5p) ALL NEWSLETTER ARTICLES/ITEMS DUE!	21 8 MC Preschool (8a-12p) Mabel Area Food Shelf workday/night 7:30p Mabel A.A. (closed meeting)	22 MC Preschool (8a-12p)	23	
24 9:00a Worship Service	25 MC Preschool (8a-12p) Pr. Malm's day off	26 MC Preschool (8a-12p)	27 MC Preschool (8a-12p) 3:30p Confirmation Class (3:30-5p)	28 MC Preschool (8a-12p) 9:30a Pr. Malm at Salvation Army Meeting 5:00p Mabel Area Food Shelf OPEN (5-7p) 7:30p Mabel A.A.	29 MC Preschool (8a-12p)	30	
31 9:00a Worship Service 10:00a MFCLC Annual Meeting with Elections							

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Mabel First Lutheran Church
Serving God Since 1891

January 2021



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