



FIRST
LUTHERAN
CHURCH
COLORADO SPRINGS

ekklesia

09.24.25

FROM THE PASTOR

THIS WEEK I'VE been in budget meetings. Certainly not what most people think a pastor does on the regular. I want to share with you a bit behind the curtain of what it looks like for our church to determine our ministry funding plan for 2026. Just like any budget planning there are two competing principles. On the one hand you have all the hopes and dreams of everything you'd like to do. On the other hand you have the limitations of the money you'll likely have to accomplish the ministry.

Most of our funding comes from the generosity of our members who have made a commitment to tithe or give an offering out of their faith in the Lord. That makes us extremely grateful and also extremely careful to be good stewards of those gifts of love.

I asked our staff to dream, within reason, about the ministry they'd like to do for 2026. They developed a proposal for music, youth, children, discipleship, outreach, worship, and fellowship full of wonderful ministries. They also shared that the costs of simply maintaining the ministry had increased due to inflation. For example, we received word that our health benefits would be increasing by almost \$50,000.00. The Finance Committee went to work projecting potential income for 2026 and came up with a number that was about \$100,000 less than the first draft of

the budget. Dreams meet reality! That's when the hard work begins.

The staff, Finance Committee, and Council work hard to craft a budget that stays within the means of the congregation and also continues to grow the ministry and incorporate some of our hopes and dreams. We make choices about current ministries and staff, what needs to continue, and what needs to end to make room for the new. We get creative about staffing and funding to develop a proposal that finds the balance between our dreams and our means.

It's a process that leads me to prayer. I ask God to help us make wise decisions that will bless our people and help us to reach new people with the good news of the gospel. We will finish our proposal this week and present it to you next week in preparation for the Ministry Gatherings and our annual meeting.

Please join me in prayer for all of these decisions and join me in thanking our staff and Finance Committee and Council for their hard work in discerning our plan for 2026.



PASTOR TRAVIS NORTON

Sunday's Message

SEPTEMBER 21, 2025

PASTOR CARRIE BAYLIS

1 TIMOTHY 2:1 – 7

BROTHERS AND SISTERS in Christ: Grace, peace, and mercy to you from Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. This morning we continue our sermon series from the book of First Timothy looking at the letters Paul wrote to him as he was in Ephesus leading a group of people there. We should understand that it was a time of turmoil that the letters that Paul wrote to Timothy and the work that Timothy would carry out would be controversial at best and would be unacceptable to some at worst, but Timothy wanted to lead us down the path that Paul brought teaching us about the call of Jesus, what that would mean to us, and what Jesus would like us to take into the world. How we could see one another, not just for what we are, but what we could be, who we could be and what hope we should hold out for a world that has a savior in Jesus Christ.

I want to paint two pictures for you this morning, two pictures of a very different person, and I want you to just listen and think about who you picture or what the face is that you put with these thoughts. One is a God-fearing man – someone who is trustworthy, somebody who lifts up Jesus at the center of what they do, who claims to be inspired by their faith in making decisions for the world, for their country; it's a leader who has been elected and who has held a place of high esteem for years. This person believes that marriage is between a man and a woman, that transgender identities are not true, that they're simply false. They believe that gender identity is a mistake and that we can only be of the sex that we were born. Somebody who believes that we have to put ourselves first – we must put the individual before the collective, and that while violence isn't the

answer to solving differences, in some cases it might be acceptable. This is someone who will staunchly defend the First Amendment, and the Second Amendment as a right to act individually and to be used offensively to protect oneself.

The second picture I want to paint for you is somebody who claims to be a man of God, who believes that they look at the world and act in the world through their lens of faith. This man believes that marriage is between two people who love one another, he believes that individuals have a role in understanding their gender identity regardless of the sex they were assigned at birth. They believe in community and in greater unity. Decisions are made for the good of all rather than the individual. This is someone who believes in the First and Second Amendments as well, but understands them to be for the collective and to protect the freedom of all.

Both of these pictures are of somebody who believes that they are acting for the best of all based on their own system of beliefs, based on their own hope for the future, somebody who looks at the government and believes that it stands side-by-side with their faith. Someone who believes in the First and Second Amendments, but again, might look at how it applies toward them and the world as they understand it. I think we can look at these different identities and see that they come from the same place of believing that they are acting for the greater good. They might have different ideals or different values, and they are on different paths that are designed to lead others to the life that they believe was intended for them. I suspect that as you heard me label these people and you put a face with them, one looks more

similar to you than the other. You might believe that one is maybe more right or more righteous than the other and you're likely going to be inclined to pray for them differently based on how you perceive them to be through our own lens of faith. Paul had the job of writing this letter to Timothy so that Timothy could share with his people that whether these leaders look like us, or like somebody else, or like our neighbor, or like someone we don't ever want to look like – all the same we need to pray for them.

Paul urged Timothy and the church in Ephesus to make prayers of all kinds, for all kinds of people, because that reflected the desires of God for all people. Praying for people in more than one kind of way is a specific spiritual exercise that keeps the people we pray for, human. In other words, when we get into a rut of praying for people, especially when we are praying for people that fall more on the “enemy” end of the spectrum, we can easily dehumanize them by making our prayers only about what we want to see changed. But when we can sit with the Holy Spirit long enough to be able to pray with thanks for our enemy, or we can pray God's blessing upon them by interceding for them, or we can pray for them to have their needs met in specific ways by God (supplications) we are reminded that they are more than the conflict and/or bad behavior we want to see changed. Not surprisingly, praying all the kinds of prayers is the kind of prayer life that finds itself in the stream of prayers that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are continuously offering for God's people. Such prayers have a way of reminding us that the people we're praying for belong to the same human race as ourselves – we're all human after all. And such prayers, when offered with sincerity (even if that sincerity is slow to arrive in our lives and we have to fight hard to keep it), are the marks of a “pure heart, a good conscience and sincere faith” (1 Timothy 1:3).

We pray for everyone in all kinds of ways to avoid sinning against them by making them less than ourselves; in essence, we pray for all because we are part of the all. And we pray for everyone because doing so is right and acceptable to the God who desires good – and the ultimate good of salvation – for everyone,

going all the way back to the beginning of all things being made, carried through the Abrahamic covenant to be a blessing to the nations, solidified in the instructions to the Israelites to seek the good of the city where they were exiled, culminating in the incarnation of Christ, and commanded to faith communities as part of their witness to the good news of the gospel.

There was one group that Paul decided to single out as part of the “all:” “kings and all who are in high positions so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity.” Why? Well, if everything we've thought through is the way the Spirit intends us to understand Paul's instructions on prayer, then the same goal applies: the witness of the gospel. If the infighting within the church had made its way outside into the public sphere, the church itself was in jeopardy; and if the church was in jeopardy, then the spread and witness of the gospel was in jeopardy.

The ability to lead quiet and peaceable lives that are characterized by godliness and dignity is the result of praying for everyone in all kinds of ways, including for people who could make surviving, let alone thriving, really difficult for a Christian community in the Roman empire and still today. We make them human, too; not more than human as the emperor may have desired, because there is still only one God, but a part of the all.

We pray to one Savior for those who look different than us, for those who we disagree with, for those who have different morals, ideologies and theologies and different places of grounding than we have. And, we should take a look at how we pray for others, too. I have a tendency to say, “Oh, I can pray for this person. I'm going to pray that they do better. I'm going to pray that I'm never like them. I'm going to pray that they come to their senses.” What if we pray for them in ways that were loving? To pray for those who we hold a deep distrust for, and maybe even hatred – what if we prayed for the ways that we feel about them to soften, or at least be willing to remember that they too are a child of God – what if we prayed to open our hearts to seeing things through the lens of others and through our lens of faith? What if we

could change our own hearts to open them up and recognize that even though we may not agree with someone, we still love them and we still pray for God's good graces upon them? We still pray that God works through them to live out his command to love, that God works through others so we might know love and forgiveness. We need prayers that point us to the place where we are rooted in grace, remember to show mercy, and to believe that we can do better together.

We have a lot of work to do. We have a lot of work to do, but I think when we can look at our work in terms of love in the world around us, offering love, receiving love – when we look at the work as a call to prayer, of praying for one another, praying for the safety, care, and love of one another and lifting up grace and mercy toward one another, then we are getting to the work of prayer. I'm not even suggesting that we look for unity in the things that bring us together rather than the things that divide us: that should be a no-brainer. I'm saying, let's look at the things that divide us and decide that love is greater than any of them. We have a lot of work to do just as Timothy did. To come to a place where the church is united, where we are united in one Savior Jesus Christ, in one God, who is for all of us; in one Holy Spirit, who breathes life into each of us ... we have one God who serves many people, one Jesus Christ and Savior of this world, one Holy Spirit who breathes life into each of us who are so vastly different, but who come from a place where love and God's grace is bigger than anything that might separate us from each other and from God. I invite you to pray for somebody who doesn't look like yourself, to pray that you can love them, to pray that you will accept them as they are, ideologies, politics, theology aside, because they were made in God's image just like you and me. Amen.



FALL CITYSERVE

OCTOBER 3 AND 4

The COSILoveYou CityServe projects are live! For 10 years, the “Big-C” Church has gone out into neighborhoods, parks, schools, and non-profits to express the tangible love of Jesus through every pile of leaves raked, every wall painted, and every card written with care. Plan a day to volunteer with your small group or pew neighbors! You can choose to serve on Friday, October 3; or Saturday, October 4. For more information, visit **<https://serve.cosiloveyou.com>** or scan the QR code, below. The website lets you filter projects by category, type (family friendly, little kid friendly, middle school friendly, high school friendly, limited mobility friendly, etc.), and zipcode.



2 Corinthians 9:6-7

FALL STEWARDSHIP 2025 SOW GENEROUS

MINISTRY GATHERING DATES

- Sunday, October 5 · 1:00 p.m. in person
- Tuesday, October 7 · 10:00 a.m. in person &
7:00 p.m. Zoom only
- Sunday, October 12 · 1:00 p.m. in person



Join us at a time that works best for you in
The Gathering Place. Use the QR code for Zoom.

CHERYL'S CORNER

THIRTY YEARS AGO, TODAY A REMINISCENCE

Brett, then two years old, and I became members of First Lutheran on Sunday, September 24, 1995. Steve became a member later. Steve and I drove to Colorado Springs from Manassas, Virginia, looking to find a quieter place than the Washington, D.C. area, to raise our new little family. MCI/Comsys had hired Steve, and I was a stay-at-home mom. It took us four days to drive across the country. Steve (with our dog Bailey) drove the Ryder moving truck towing my car, and I drove Brett in Steve's car. We communicated via CB radios as this was pre-cell phones. Brett wanted to talk to Daddy on the CB radio, so I bought him a toy CB radio at a truck stop along the way. We had two weeks' notice to pack up, get our house on the market, and hit the road. Our first year here in town, we rented a house off North Carefree

just west of Powers, back when there was **nothing** east of Powers! Although Steve was born and raised a Catholic, we had been married at my Lutheran church and, afterward, attended a Lutheran church together. We looked in the yellow pages (remember those?) to find Lutheran churches in Colorado Springs. We chose First Lu-

theran because it was centrally located, and we really didn't know where we would end up. Neil was born November 1, 1995, and baptized at the church on June 16, 1996. We built our first home on the northwest side of the Springs, but it was still easy to get to church. Later, we moved our family to Rockrimmon and thought about changing churches, but both boys insisted we stay at First Lutheran. They were quite involved with handbells and youth group, so here we stayed!

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY A GREAT WAY TO SERVE!

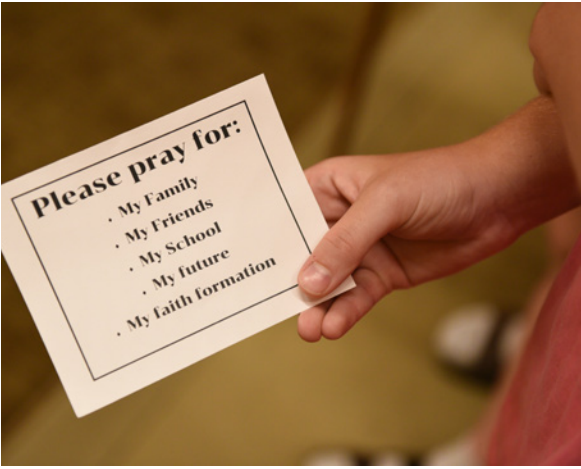
Our First Lutheran team will work on the Apostles Build home Saturday, October 11, from 8:30 a.m. to noon. We need you! Please email me at cheryl@flccs.net right away if you are interested in serving in this very special way!

FRIENDS BY THE FIREPIT MONDAY EVENINGS | 6 P.M.

We will meet for 60 to 90 minutes around the firepit just north of the Peel House. Bring a beverage to enjoy while we make s'mores and discuss questions based on Sunday's sermon. Sermon-based questions may be picked up Sunday mornings from an usher or at the Welcome Center. In case of rain, we'll meet on the porch. If it gets too cold, we'll meet inside the Peel House parlor. Childcare is available.

CHERYL MAHON, DIRECTOR OF LAY MINISTRIES





RALLY DAY SNAPSHOTS







Parish House Baroque

Colorado Springs' Early Music Ensemble



*Prepare to be dazzled!
This program spotlights the
thrilling virtuosity of the music
of the Baroque and features our newest
instrument – a real, pipe, continuo organ!*

Saturday and Sunday
September 27 and 28

Both concerts begin at 3 p.m.

IN THE SANCTUARY AT FIRST LUTHERAN

Tickets available at the door or online at:
PARISHHOUSEBAROQUE.ORG

HANDBELLS 101

**Five Thursdays | Beginning October 16
7 – 8 p.m. in the Handbell Room**

Explore the fun of ringing in a five-week class – no experience required! You'll learn to ring using a variety of techniques and discover rhythm notation and music reading. Led by Deacon Joan Kuehn. Everyone, Grade 6 through adult, is welcome. Please register using the QR code, right. For more information, contact Joan by email at jlynnkuehn@gmail.com.



THE EMMAUS WAY

“We can incarnate the welcoming heart of God for the world.” – Adele Calhoun

HAVE YOU EVER felt truly welcomed by someone? If so, can you remember how it made you feel? It is an incredible gift to have another unreservedly and fully open their hearts to you to receive and embrace you.

That is what God does for us in Christ Jesus. The doors of heaven are thrown wide open to receive us with joy through all that Christ did. God’s heart and posture toward us are utterly open in Christ. Will you try to picture that right now – Jesus looking at you with joy, arms open wide to welcome you to himself?

We’ve said many times here that it is God’s love and presence that transform us, and our transformation isn’t just for ourselves – it’s for others as well. Truly welcoming

others through soul hospitality is something we can do to “incarnate the welcoming heart of God for the world.”

What do I mean by soul hospitality? Most of us understand hospitality in general, but soul hospitality goes beyond providing food or shelter to someone else to include joyfully offering an expansive

and safe space for the entirety of the other person. It means humbly extending holy listening, because that is what Jesus has given to us. It includes the idea of not simply entertaining the guest but of loving them. It means maintaining a generous, open posture towards even our enemies, because that is what God did for us when we were his enemies.

I know it’s difficult in our current world to offer soul hospitality to our “enemies,” but I suppose it always has been: there’s always been threat from others to come and rob you of your goods, your family, your life. Yet offering soul hospitality and welcome to others is what we are invited to do, for the glory of God. It’s not possible on our own, but through the transforming presence and work of the Holy Spirit, we can increasingly grow into becoming that kind of person.

Janice and Eugene Peterson (the author of *The Message*) were famous for their hospitality. I’ll close with some of her words as to why soul hospitality and welcoming others is so important: “I learned that our hospitality should not be a way of working God and our way into the lives of others, but creating an opportunity for others to find God and his way in their lives. That’s what I call offering ‘holy space.’” Let’s walk and create holy space for others, together.



LORI DUNCAN, MINISTER OF SPIRITUAL CARE



TRAIL TREKKERS

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2 | 9 A.M.
THE CRAGS

Meet at the southeast corner of the Safeway parking lot, 3275 West Colorado Avenue. This trail, south of Divide, has a bit of everything: deep, cool pine forests, a bubbling stream, marshy meadows, spectacular rock formations, and an incredible view from the top. Will there still be some “gold in them thar hills?” We’ll have lunch on the trail. Five miles; rated moderate with elevation gain/loss and a short, steep climb to the top. Anyone capable of hiking three to six miles at altitude is welcome! For more information or to register for the hike, contact Judy Hagge by email at outdoorjudy@comcast.net.

REMEMBER ...

Prepare a daypack to include essentials: rain poncho, wind breaker, sack lunch, snacks, sunscreen, personal identification, at least one quart of water, bandana, hiking poles, other personal items.

Dress in layers; wear a hat, sunglasses, sturdy walking shoes or boots.

Moderate hikes have elevation changes, somewhat rugged terrain.

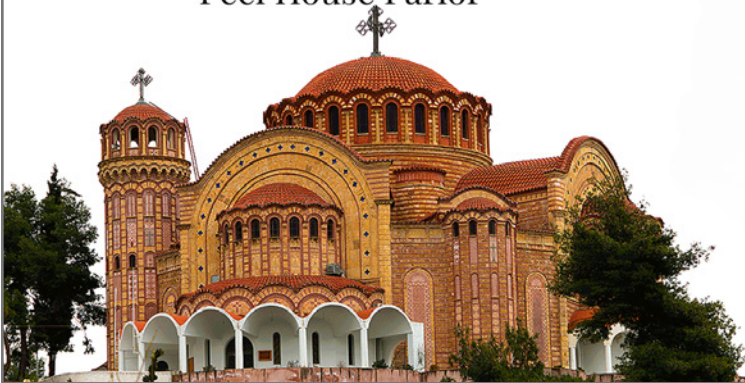
In the Footsteps of Paul

6 Week Lunch & Learn Course

September 21 to October 26, 2025

Sundays from 12 – 1 p.m.

Peel House Parlor



Please register in advance
for this course by visiting
<https://bit.ly/4p7aWM2>
or by scanning the qr code.



THEATRE GROUP

MS. HOLMES & MS. WATSON, APT. 2B
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5 | 2 P.M.
FINE ARTS CENTER

Oddball female roommates Sherlock (Wait, is it a girl’s name? Is it even a name?) Holmes and Joan Watson join forces and emerge from the Covid pandemic fog as a deeply codependent, quasi-dysfunctional odd couple adventure duo. Solving mysteries and kicking butts, they soon come face-to-face with a villain who seems to have all the answers. An irreverent, darkly comic, modern take on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s famous sleuth and sidekick, this fast-paced romp reexamines the world’s most famous detective story with a bold new lens. To register, visit <https://bit.ly/4pkGeiv> or scan the QR code, left. Cost is \$56.70; register by noon on September 30.

HOLIDAY “CRAFTING AROUND”

SELECT TUESDAYS | 9:30 A.M.
JOSEPH’S WORKSHOP

This group meets in the basement of the main building. This season, three additional crafters have prepared several different craft projects for people of any skill level for the upcoming holiday season. Sign up for one, a few, or all the projects being offered! The cost for these fabulous crafts is a bargain at just \$5 each again this year. Please pay in full when registering to ensure we have the necessary supplies. Be sure to check out samples of these crafts, on display in the Gathering Place near the Welcome Center! To register, visit <https://bit.ly/4l8eTwT> or scan the QR code, below.

September 30	Rock Painting I*
October 7	Rock Painting II*
October 28	Tree Wreath Ornament
November 4	Gift Card Holders
November 11	Yarn Christmas Tree

* One \$5 fee covers both sessions

DINING OUT WITH FIRST LUTHERAN

SELECT TUESDAYS | 5:30 P.M.
VARIOUS RESTAURANTS

All are welcome to join this group, which meets at local restaurants on two Tuesdays of each month to enjoy various cuisines and fellowship. Reservations will be made two weeks in advance, so be sure to sign up early. To register, visit <https://bit.ly/4iRh4ff> or scan the QR code, below.

UPCOMING SCHEDULE	
October 21	Old Spaghetti Factory 3101 New Center Point
November 4	Mi Mexico 3956 Academy Boulevard
November 18	Lazy Dog 7605 Academy Boulevard
December 2	Ai Sushi 3215 Cinema Point

OCTOBER INGATHERING OF FOOD

BENEFITS CARE AND SHARE

Please bring non-perishable and unexpired food to the Gathering Place vestibule. Especially needed are canned meats and peanut butter.

FOURTH QUARTER VOLUNTEERS

The forms to sign up to volunteer for Sunday worship services, October – December, have been emailed. Volunteers are needed for Communion preparation, worship assistants, etc. If you need a link, contact Cheryl at cheryl@flccs.net.

QR Codes for This Page



THEATRE GROUP



CRAFTING AROUND



DINING OUT

In the Life of the Church ...

Birthdays

September 29 Lisa Christopherson
Sissel Disbrow
Bruce Harmon
Marilyn Miller
Ben Weilert

September 30 Leighton Sybrant

October 1 Sherry Coutts
Finley Cramton
Steve Iskra
Beret Mangino
Judy Robinson
Frank Sotomayor

October 2 Susan Anderson
Hope Bergren

October 3 Mackenzie Dixon
Mary Kerwin
Caden Mathiesen

October 4 Debra Boehm
Cambria Isidore
Joanne Larson

October 5 Sophia Barnhart
Alexis Edwards
Denny Weber

Anniversaries

September 29
Rob and Krista Heavner 25 years

October 3
Jeremy and Brit Ashida 15 years



Prayer Requests

Lannette Abbey
The Family of Cheri Anderson
The Streeter Family
Wanda Anderson
Ashley
Fred Bachmeier
Janice Baldwin
Elmer Bauman
Tana Beall
Tom & Georgie Bever
Joan Boehm
Bill & Barbara Brown
Justin Buck
Calista
Karl & Pam Cartwright
Tanya Charbonneau
John & Debbie Chlebus
Nell Clowder
Debi Deimling
Russell Downs
Rinda Dunson
Alan Flinn
Edna Fross
Corinne Gibson
Nola Gosch
Private Steven Harris
Carla Hartsell
Paul & Kathy Herrmann
Ginger Hipszky
Jake Hodnett
Bill & Doreen Hulka
Irene
Matthew James
Josh Jones
Shirley Jones
Ann Junk
Jonas Kagarise

Kyong Kelley
Gaye Lynn Kielcheski
The Family of Charlie Kirk
The Chris Kleine Family
Cindy Koger
Jesse Lawrence & Family
Sharon Lakey
The Spencer Lehmkuhl Family
Timothy Lillich
Dayne Lindquist
Susan Lundmark
Elly Mahler
Pete & Mary Mahler
Jim Matthews
Nick McKibben & Family
Hugh McNeely
Brandon Miller & Family
Gwyn Miller
Marilyn Miller & Family
Larry & Lucille Moe
Paul Moe
Amanda Norris
Sam Norton
Owen & Family
Jack & Judy Peterson
Ed Pounds
David Prater
Darlene Radke
Jeff Rapp
Steve & Laurie Ross
Lisa Schartel & Family
Shay
Matthew Stark
Jackie Steensma
Gwen Stein
Becky Sternal
Michael Taylor

Tom & Gretchen Tetzlaff
Debra Thiem
Aaron & Cindi Thorson
Hailey Ullrich
Bob VanDuyn
Karen Henderson-VanDuyn
Christine Welch
Jody Wilbur
Greg & Carolyn Young

Please keep these members – and family and friends – of First Lutheran in your prayers this week. If you are requesting to have a name added to the prayer list, please consult with that person prior to making your request. Prayer requests may be submitted by using a Connection Card (in church) or by emailing **teri@flccs.net**.

In Remembrance of Erv Rokke

MEMORIAL SERVICE
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8
11 A.M.

Join us in the Sanctuary as we remember the life and witness of Erv, husband of Pam, father of Lisa and Eric, father-in-law of Cliff and Susan, grandfather of four.

Worship and Study

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP

SUNDAYS IN THE SANCTUARY
8, 9:30, AND 11 A.M.

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP

SUNDAYS IN THE WORSHIP CENTER
10:15 A.M.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT LIGHT

WEDNESDAYS IN THE WORSHIP CENTER
DINNER 5:15 P.M. | SERVICE 6:30 P.M.

ONLINE WORSHIP

STREAMED LIVE AT 9:30 A.M.

Tune in on First Lutheran's YouTube channel,
on the church website, or in the church app.

SUNDAY ADULT SEMINAR

PEEL HOUSE PARLOR | 9:15 A.M.

THIS SUNDAY: Friends of Club 21: helping families
and individuals with Down syndrome to flourish,
led by Joe Mason. **Please note:** September
will be the last month for the Adult Seminar.
Quarterly Adult Education teaching series
will be offered as part of our new Discipleship
Pathway. A full schedule will be available soon.

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY

LUTHER HALL | 10 A.M.

GENERATION TO REVELATION

FIRST LUTHERAN'S NEW PODCAST!

Find our podcast on YouTube, on the church
website, or anywhere you get your podcasts.

PASTORAL TEAM

The Rev. Travis Norton, Senior Pastor

The Rev. Carrie Baylis, Associate Pastor

The Rev. Michaela Eskew, Associate Pastor

NEXT SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURES

Amos 6:1a, 4 – 7

1 Timothy 6:6 – 19

Luke 16:19 – 31

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COLORADO SPRINGS,
COLORADO 80907
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FLCCS.NET

