



JULY 16, 2025

EKKLESIA

New Sermon Series

Fix Your Focus

Seek first the Kingdom of God—
in every part of your life.

July 20 – July 27 – August 3 – August 10



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

FROM THE PASTOR



*For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born and a time to die;
a time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill and a time to heal;
a time to break down and a time to build up;
a time to weep and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek and a time to lose;
a time to keep and a time to throw away;
a time to tear and a time to sew;
a time to keep silent and a time to speak;
a time to love and a time to hate;
a time for war and a time for peace.*

` -Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8

I've been thinking quite a bit about timing lately. Questioning myself before I take any big steps, make big decisions or big plans and then wondering what it is that God has in store for me, and if it's the same plan that I'm cooking up! I like these well-known verses from Ecclesiastes and the freedom that they offer to us that it is okay to live in a both/and world. That while there may be a time for one thing and a time for another, it never says that it can't all be at the exact same time, too! I know that in my life it feels like all kinds of things are happening at once, that time just mashes it all together, dumps it in my lap and then I have to sort it out. But what I'm finding more these days, is that I need to remember that time is infinite, everyone has the same amount of it, and when I can sit with whatever is in front of me for a minute, take a breath and invite God into that space, I'm learning what this particular season of life might just be about for me.

Where do you struggle to invite God into your time? What is this season of life putting before you; where do you feel called to use your gifts and your time? And maybe it's time for you to focus on how to best use your gifts and your time for your own well-being, to learn a little more about yourself, to love yourself just as God loves you, for who you are right now. I invite you to take a minute and read the Ecclesiastes text, sit with it, and have some time with God, with family, with friends, with those who are most important to you and learn what it looks like to live faithfully for yourself and God in whatever season you find yourself!

Blessings abound,
Pastor Carrie

We are concluding our sermon series today on Elijah, and it seems only fitting that we end with his final story. He is going to die. The end of his life is near. Now, while our scriptures open immediately with God taking Elijah in the whirlwind, my guess is this was written after they saw the chariot of fire, because no one would predict that a man, even a holy man, would not just die like anyone else. There is only one other person in the entire scriptures—his name is Enoch—who is taken up into heaven before Jesus, that is. And so, Elijah realizes that his life is coming to an end. He is going to die just like anyone else. So he starts to act a little strange.

The prophets know that the day is coming, those that are kind of following around Elijah and Elisha, and they keep reminding him, "Don't you know today is the day?" Elijah knows this is coming, so he starts to act a little funny toward his protege, Elisha. Elijah says, "I'm going off to Bethel. You stay here. God has called me to go to Bethel. I'm going to go." And Elisha says, "I'm coming with you." And Elijah says, "Well, okay, okay. Maybe I can move. We'll get to Bethel. And then maybe I can ditch him on my way to Jericho." And so he says, "Okay, I'm going to Jericho now. It's just going to be me and God. I want you to stay here." And Elisha says, "No, I'm going to come with you. Of course I'm going to come with you." And so Elijah says, "Okay, I guess you'll come with me."

And then Elijah and Elisha are having a conversation. And Elisha asks for a double inheritance. Sounds a little greedy, but in Levitical law, he was just asking for what a firstborn son would have received. That's all he wanted. Elijah doesn't have any sons, so his inheritance would be this kind of earthly power, but also anything that he had. He's just asking for a firstborn heir, right? The firstborn son would get a little more than all the other subsequent sons or daughters. So he says, "Give me a double portion." But Elijah says, "That's not really up to me. That's up to God." Right? An easy yes, you would think. Just yes, of course. You've been like a son to me. I will absolutely give you all that I have. And instead, Elijah is just kind of dodging the question. "If you see me go, if you see me die, then I think God will probably give you the blessing."

Now, I think you need to know a little more of the back story between these two, because I think that adds why Elijah might be doing this to Elisha. Back in 1 Kings 19, God has told Elijah to go find Elisha. Go find this man. And so he is working oxen. He is just a farmer with many oxen. And so Elijah goes and calls him and says, "Follow me." And Elisha says, "I need to go kiss my father and mother goodbye, and then I will follow you." Absolutely. Elijah does not like that. He says, "What have I done to you?" He's insulted. "When God has asked me to come and follow, I jump at the chance. I do everything that God says. I don't say, I need to say goodbye first." And so Elijah is a little upset.

But before you get judgy of Eljah, Jesus said very similar things in the New Testament. People would come to him and say, "I want to follow you. Tell me how I follow you." And he would say, "Just follow me." And they say, "Oh, well, I need to go bury my father. I don't know. Thank you. Or I need to go say goodbye to my mother and father." The same things that Elisha says. And Jesus is pretty clear that those who are working towards the kingdom of heaven can't be looking backward. They need to be looking forward. And so as Elijah says this, this is the same idea. You can't be looking back. You need to be looking forward.

But while we don't know if any of those followers that asked how to follow Jesus actually did what they said and then came back, we do know that Elisha did. Elisha goes and he says his goodbyes, and then he doubles down and kills all of his oxen. He essentially says, "I have cut off all ties there. There is no inheritance for me. There is no job there for me. I am done there. I am now going to follow Elijah." So he is all in, and we see this. But I think that Elijah is looking at Elisha and thinking, "This, this is what's next? Are you sure?" Because he

didn't jump as high as Elijah did. Right? When you told me to jump and I said, "How high?" Elisha's like, "Well, I gotta say goodbye first." But I think there's something in this closing of chapters because as Elisha said goodbye to his family so he could move on to his new role as a prophet, Elijah is coming to the end of a chapter here. He's coming to the end of his life. And I think he's starting to reflect on what's next. What's going to happen in this kingdom? Is this Elisha going to be a good prophet? Is he going to speak truth to power? Is he going to do miraculous work? Is he going to be confident in God? Because Elijah has seen so many prophets fall away to foreign idols. And so Elijah is worried about what the next chapter will be for Elisha, for this world, but also for himself. He's contemplating his own death. This is a big end of a chapter.

And so this week I was thinking about chapter closes—times when you're in transition between one thing and the next. Not just the end of your life, but the little things that happen. And sometimes they're good, right? You are in a new relationship, or you just got a new promotion or a new job, or you got into a new program that means you're going to a new place. Maybe you got new military orders, right? There's excitement in the new, but you're immediately grieving the old. A new relationship makes you think about the fact that the last one you loved is now closed. Or the new job, or even the promotion in the old job means that your peers are now the people you're going to supervise. Or you're moving to a new program. It's exciting, it's new, but it probably means closing up your own home and saying goodbye to certain people and places you loved. So even in good chapter endings, there's still some grief. And then there are the harder chapters closing—times when you didn't want that chapter to close. You didn't want that end to come. Maybe you get fired, maybe you get dumped, maybe you get a big rejection. I've had one of those.

And I want to get vulnerable with you for a minute. If you were here five years ago, you might have seen me introduced as the new minister of faith formation. And in my little bio, it said I was a doctoral student, a doctoral candidate at the Graduate Theological Union. I was working toward my PhD. The idea was that within the next

few years, I would have "Doctor" in front of my name. But if you're a good detective, you'll notice that that never happened. Those never came before my name. I did get a new title—pastor—put in front of my name, but not doctor. I never got the doctorate. And now I'm going to tell you the story of why I had been pushing this dissertation for five years. I'd been building it, going through coursework, writing it. I had a nice big chunk of 300 pages ready to go. My defense was set for the next day. The night before that defense, I get an email from my advisor that said, "I've talked with the committee, and we're not going to pass your dissertation. We're going to turn tomorrow's meeting into a feedback session. And that celebratory lunch afterward—we should still do that."

Looking back, I can see where God was giving me plenty of little red flags—like, "This is not your gifting. Maybe this isn't where you belong. Maybe I have other things for you." Don't you see? Life is in other places. Lots of little exit routes I could have taken before hitting this big roadblock. But I didn't. I was stubborn and hard-headed, and I said, "No, I want those few words in front of my name," or behind it, depending on how I wanted to do it. And so I just barreled through until I hit the brick wall—the big rejection.

So I took a big bite of humble pie that next morning, walking into that feedback session, where I heard that my dissertation was far from what they wanted. It didn't have the right resources; it didn't have the right focus. All sorts of things. It feels very blurry now as I try to remember it. But what is very clear is the lunch afterward, where my husband joined us. It was supposed to be, "Yay, you're going to be Dr. Michaela Eskew." Instead, it became a kind of "What's next? What should you do next?" Not just feedback on the dissertation but on me as a person.

I stood across from my advisor and a fellow professor from the Graduate Theological Union. It was actually the other professor who said something I'll never forget, which finally clued me into why this dissertation had gotten so far and then failed. He was very honest, with a big smile on his face, and he said, "This is actually a great work. Please don't be discouraged. This would make an amazing coffee table book. So many people would learn new things about Vincent van Gogh and his religion and his art. But because it's not scholarly enough, because it's not really meant to be read by the academic elite, I can't pass it. It doesn't look like a dissertation. It reads like a regular old book." And I thought, "That's exactly what I

wanted to write—a book that anybody could read! I didn't want a dissertation that would just sit on a shelf and get dusty. I wanted something practical." And that's when I realized I was in the wrong program all along—that this was not where God had called me. This was not the gifting I had. That chapter just slammed shut.

I didn't always know that chapter had closed. In fact, I went through a two-year discernment period, asking, "Maybe I could rework it. Maybe I could start from scratch. Maybe I could do a new research topic." I did all the what-ifs. But ultimately, I think I knew that the chapter was closed. And I was wondering what was coming next—what was next in the world between me and God, my purpose, my place. During those two years of transition, I was standing before you declaring, "I'm still in a graduate program." I had already been rejected, and I still declared, "I'm a doctoral student." I was quite stubborn, remember? Pig-headed.

In that same period, I also attended a January spiritual retreat here, led by Pastor Carrie. She put out stickers with different scripture passages and affirmations—things you could put on water bottles or notebooks. One jumped out at me said, "Until God opens the next door, I will praise Him in the hallway." And I thought, "I'm in a hallway. The door behind me is closed. It's closed, whether I like it or not. And I don't know what's next, but I know God's with me, and I know God's in control."

As I read Elijah's passage today—his approaching his death, approaching this closure—he knows the door is closed. His life is ending, and it will happen today. What does he choose to do? These strange behaviors, when you look at him closer, actually reveal this beautiful relationship Elijah has with God. Because when he kind of turns off Elisha and says, "No, don't follow me. I want to do this alone," it's because he wants this intimate, one-on-one moment with God. He doesn't want witnesses. He just wants God and him to have this final moment.

And then, as Elisha begs for a double inheritance, Elijah could have easily said yes. But instead, he says, "It's not up to me. I have to trust in God. I don't know what the next chapter holds. I don't know what it holds for you or for me, but I trust in God. I trust that God brought me to you, that God called you, called me. But it's God's inheritance to give, as God wills. Because God is the eternal one—from generation to generation. God is the author of our lives, from every end of the chapter to the in-between, to the new chapter. Because God is the author of it all. God is in

control."

Jesus did the same passing. While it's easy to focus on Elijah's story, let's just focus on the new, the better, the next. Sometimes we have to sit in the ends of things. It's uncomfortable, it's real, and it makes us lean on God. Because these ends come, whether we like it or not—especially our very end. And even Jesus, who defeated death and rose from the dead, had to ascend into heaven. He couldn't stay with us forever. And yet, he did. Our gospel today speaks of the Spirit—the advocate—placed upon the disciples to go and spread the good news, to tell everyone.

Our faith gives us that Spirit. Because we have been given the Spirit of God. Just as Elisha eventually passed the mantle to Elisha, we have Jesus who passes the Spirit to all who believe—not just one person. And so we trust in that mantle—the Spirit—that God's Spirit is eternal. It will never leave us, never forsake us. Nothing in our lives, no rejection or hardship, can separate us from the promise we've been given.

Even in our last chapter here on earth, we know we are given eternal life. Elijah thought he would die like everyone else, going down to Sheol, the underworld, until the Messiah came. Instead, he is taken up in a chariot of fire into heaven. Then Jesus comes, and everyone else who dies goes to Sheol until Jesus rewrites the story. He defeats death and offers eternal life—not just for himself, but for all who believe.

While Elijah's ascent into heaven in a chariot of fire is awe-inspiring, that is the promise we are given as Christians—because of Easter, because of Jesus' death and resurrection. We get a new chapter that even those in Elijah's time did not. We have a God who is eternal. And while we've had this great series about Elijah, I want to remind you: the scriptures aren't just about the people in them. They're about God and God's story. Because that is the one theme woven through all of scripture—God. People come and go. They do great things, make mistakes, but God is eternal. God calls us. God is the author of our lives—every chapter, every ending, every beginning, every promise of eternal life.

And so, never worry about the end of a chapter. If you're in transition or about to start something new, know that God is with you. And that is the good news. Amen.

—Pastor Michaela



YOUTH MINISTRY

AT FIRST LUTHERAN



CHRISTMAS
in **SUMMER**

AUGUST 9TH
1 – 5 P.M.

Middle School and High School headed to the North Pole!



YOUNG ADULTS NIGHT AT THE ZOO

September 25, 2025
6–9 p.m.
Cheyenne Mountain Zoo
Ages 21+ only

Join us for a wild night of live music, local bites, craft drinks, and up-close animal encounters—all under the stars at one of the most unique venues in town. Meet up with other young adults for a casual night out with a little roar.

Buy your ticket through the zoo, then use the QR code to connect with our group for meetup details and carpool options.



TAILS
tunes & tastes

The best things come in threes.

VOLUNTEER

HELP WITH VETERAN MINISTRY EVENT AT THE FLORENCE VETERANS HOME

On August 6, First Lutheran is providing a concert and cookout for the residents at the McCandless Veteran Home in Florence. This event is a part of our ministry to local veterans and families supported through the RMS Veterans Service Project. Eric and the choir will provide the concert, and we need a few volunteers to grill and serve meals to the residents. We also need a few volunteers to provide a salad or dessert. The concert will begin at 3 p.m. and the meal will start at 4:30 p.m.. The person for coordination is Jeff Zust, zusthaus@gmail.com or 719.377.7598.



TWICE UPON A TIME

Bring your gently used children's books to the red wagon in the Gathering Place, and they will be refurbished and given to those in need.

We are the
HANDS AND FEET
of Christ!

FLC Contemporary Worship Service

Servant hearts needed to serve
on the **WELCOME TEAM** and
ASSIST WITH COMMUNION.



Welcome
Team
Sign Up



Assist with
Communion
Sign Up

A GIANT THANK YOU TO OUR SECOND QUARTER VOLUNTEERS!

As you can see many of our volunteers serve in more than one area. When they are ill or out of town, it takes several servant hearts to fill their shoes. If you would like to try serving in any of these areas, please contact me cheryl@flccs.net and we'll get you started!

Coffee Reception Hosts (12 filling 26 spots) – Ann & Bruce Carlson, Anne Rivers, Bill & Karen Busovsky, Brooke & Carolyn Smith, Carol Schlater, Cheryl Mahon, Fran Freese, Gary & Patricia Atkins, Kathy Holmes, Marlene & Mike Bigelow, Mindy Mahler, Patti & Rich Bursell; First Shift Communion Team (16 filling 26 spots) – Cathy & Harry Mosco, Charlie & Linda Helmstetler, Dave Aspenson, Jeff Gross, Julie & Ron Furstenu, Kathy Holmes, Lynn & Rob Eggum, Marcus Kochis, Mary Auten, Paul Lindsey, Paula Nickodemus, and Tina Sharp; Contemporary Communion Assistant (14 filling 39 spots) – Anita & Mike Eckley, Betsy & John Tuma, Chuck & Lenora Simmons, Georgie Bever, Landon Richard, Leslie & Nick Striegel, Rachel Thayer, Scott Ellsworth, Scott Keilers, and Susan Hansen; Contemporary Welcome Team (16 filling 39 spots) – Carol Olson, Chris & Vanessa Schweiger, Corby & Teresa Meyer, Delena Garrison-Wellmer, Erin & Mark Hendricks, Georgie Bever, Nick Striegel, Rachel Thayer, Scott & Teri Ellsworth, Stephanie deGuzman, Susan Hansen, and Tom Keilers; Sacristy Coordinator – Shari Brian; Worship Assistant (33 filling 78 spots) – Ann, Emma & Noah Mellott, Anne Rivers, Beth Lindquist, Beth Zautke, Bill & Karen Busovsky, Carol Schmitz, Cathie John Fenell & David Fenell, Gail Friedly, Gini Dugan, Gwen Pool, Jeff Gross, Kathryn Palski, Kathy Holmes, Linda Wilson Holt, Liz Koop, Marcus Kochis, Margie Sisson, Mary Hartwell, Pat Friedell, Patsy Pedersen, Peggy Hinrichs, Rusty Smith, Ryan Kirby, Shari Brian, Sherri Foos, Stacy Gatto, Tristin Vittitow, Verna Severson and Vicki Lieber; Communion Assistant (9 filling 13 spots) – Bernie Herpin, Beth Lindquist, Bill Busovsky, David Fenell, Gail Friedly, Margie Sisson, Mike Bauer, Shari Brian, and Tristin Vittitow; Crucifer (13 filling 27 spots) – Bernie Herpin, Bill Busovsky, Bill Zautke, Darrell Shafer, David Fenell, Ed Koditek, Jeff Gross, Ken Boehm, Larry Bagley, Marcus Kochis, Mike Bauer, Noah Mellott, and Tristin Vittitow; Usher Coordinator (14 filling 39 spots) – Bert Bedford, Bill Zautke, Butch Backlund, David Bondurant, Ed Koditek, Gary Bradley, Mike Bauer, Paul Steinke, Randy Hollar, Rusty Smith, Ryan Kirby, Tad Goodenbour, Tina Sharp, and Wayne Hjelmstad; Greeter (74 filling 156 spots) – Barbara & Joe Dixon, Bill and Karen Busovsky, Bonnie Bagley, Butch & Gail Backlund, Candy Lesoing, Charlie & Linda Helmstetler, Cheryl & Pix Pixley, Chris Gerbig, Chris Lieber, Chris Parkhill, Chuck Donachy, Cindy & Mike Bauer, Colleen McCarty, Dana Olson, Debbie Erickson, Dick & Suzy Utzke, Donna & Rick Flores, Eileen & El Carter, Esther Rose, Eve Koger, Gary Bradley, George & Paula Gillaspie, Georgette Mathews, Gini & Jim Simonson, Gwen Pool, Holli Jarmuth, Jane Juris, Jane Linnenburger, Jeff Gross, Jill O'Brien, Joey Dunahoo, Jon Parobek, Judy Bondurant, Judy Compton, Judy Hagge, Judy Hjelkrem, Julie & Ron Furstenu, Kathleen Capron, Kathy Schroeder, Katie & Scott Kosley, Lance & Lisa Nelson, Lane & LaVon Pinnow, Lenora Simmons, Linda Wilson Holt, Lynn Peterson, Marcus Kochis, Mary Hartwell, Mary Peet, Mike Olsen, Pam Rokke, Patsy Pedersen, Rondi Shafer, Sarah MacLeod, Sherri Foos, Stacy Gatto, Starr Wise, Sylvia Harding, Tristan Fox, and Verna Severson; Usher (67 filling 156 spots) – Andrea Artley, Andy & Eileen Ballas, Anne & Rick Rivers, Bert Bedford, Beth Zautke, Bill & Karen Busovsky, Bob Tim, Brenda McFillen, Butch & Gail Backlund, Carl Egan, Cathie John Fenell & David Fenell, Cathy & Harry Mosco, Charlie Helmstetler,

Cheryl Pixley, Chris & Vicki Lieber, Dan & Pat Friedell, Darlene Edwards, David Bondurant, David Jarmuth, Deborah & Paul Steinke, Diane Millburn, Gary Bradley, Georgia Waldthausen, Gwen Pool, Jan Anderson, Jan Gregg, Jane Juris, Judy Hagge, Judy & Terry Hjelkrem, Julie & Ron Furstenau, Kathleen Capron, Kathy Holmes, Kathy Schroeder, Katie & Scott Kosley, Laura Allton, Linda Loflin, Margie Sisson, Marion Behr, Marlyn & Mary Peet, Mary Hartwell, Matthew Ellis, Patsy Pedersen, Peter Bredlau, Ryan Kirby, Sarah MacLeod, Sherri Foos, Sherrie Denton, Steve Mahon, Steve Steiner, Susan Thorp, Suzanne DuBois, Sylvia Harding, Tad Goodenbour, and Tina Sharp; Welcome Center Host (14 filling 26 spots) – Diane Boldt, Flo Bechtold, Fran Freese, Gail Backlund, Gary & Patricia Atkins, Georgia Waldthausen, Jane Linnenburger, Lisa Podoll, Lois Peel, Mindy Mahler, Patti Olsen, Paula Nickodemus, and Tina Sharp; Second Shift Communion Team (11 filling 26 spots) – Cheryl Mahon, Janice Pavell, Jeff Kidder, Jolene Bedford, Lisa Podoll, Liz Koop, Marcus Kochis, Paula Gillaspie, Ryan Kirby, Sherri Foos, and Tina Sharp; Count Team (12 filling 39 spots) – Cathie John Fenell, Chris Hansen, Erna Haring, Julie & Ron Furstenau, Karen Busovksy, Pat Friedell, Peggy Hinrichs, Ruth Hjelmstad, Sylvia Harding, Trudy Lans, and Vickie Voth; Launder Tablecloths (13 filling 39 spots) – Betsy Pimentel, Bonnie Bagley, Candi Mountain Gaddie, Corinne Gibson, Dana Olson, Georgette Mathews, Georgia Waldthausen, Janice Pavell, Judy Hagge, Kathy Mutz, Linda Helmstetler, Velma Naber, and Vicki Lieber; Flower Delivery (12 filling 24 spots) – Candi Mountain Gaddie, Candy Lesoing, Dana Olson, Erna Haring, Judy Morgan, Lynn Peterson, Mindy Mahler, Peter Hauer, Stacy Gatto, Suzanne DuBois, and Trudy Lans; Sanctuary Clean-Up (5 filling 13 spots) – Diane Millburn, Janice Pavell, Judy Morgan, Mindy Mahler, and Elaine Myers; Worship at the Gardens Skilled Nursing and Rehab (8 filling 18 spots) – David Bondurant, Helen Peterson, Judy Bondurant, Kathy Holmes, Margie Sisson, Patti Olsen, Pete Bredlau, and Wayne Hjelmstad; Care and Share Mobile Market – Charlie & Linda Helmstetler, Chris Gerbig, Dan Friedell, Dave Aspenson, Elaine Myers, Jane Juris, and Lorena Cerniglia; Easter Breakfast Hosts – Andrea Artley, Anne Rivers, Betsy Pimentel, Bill Gast, Charlotte & Peter DeJong, Cheryl Pixley, Chris Parkhill, Gwen Pool, Jane Linnenburger, Janice Pavell, Julie & Ron Furstenau, Linda Cohrs, Marion Behr, Robert & Susan Howland, and Sherri Foos; Potluck Volunteers – Anne Rivers, Becky Wesley, Chris Parkhill, Gary & Patricia Atkins, Gary Olson, Jane Juris, Jeff Kidder, Jon & Vicki Heinecke, Karen Hertsgaard, Kathy Mutz, and Lynn Peterson; Marian House Kitchen – Bill & Eileen Lipscomb, Carol Olson, Cathie John Fenell, Cathy Mosco, Charlie & Linda Helmstetler, Chom & Jeff Züst, Dan & Pat Friedell, Dave & Pat Hardin, Dave Johnson, Ed Strecker, Jan Larson, Joann Horner-Poirier, Kathy Wyant, Linda Parobek, Marcus Kochis, Marlyn & Mary Peet, Mary Hartwell, Mindy Mahler, Riche Kennedy, and Stephanie Smith; Friendship Bag Delivery – Mindy Mahler, Judy Bondurant, Jill O'Brien, Linda Parobek, Gwen Pool, Jane Juris, Jan Gregg, Scott Tonder, and Cindy Bauer; Ekklesia Mailing – Darrel Dolen, Don Kusulas, Gloria Lindsey, and Riche Kennedy; Memorial Welcome Team – Bert Bedford, Jack & Rosemary Anderson, Jane Juris, Kathy Holmes, Linda Helmstetler, Mike Bauer, Mike Olsen, and Pam Rokke; Memorial Receptions – Anne Rivers, Betsy Pimentel, Chuck Donachy, Cindy Berndsen, Janice Pavell, Julie Furstenau, Karen Busovsky, Kathy Holmes, Liz Shoemaker, Margie Sisson, Pat Friedell, Sherri Foos, and Tom Keilers.

INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BOOK GROUP

Meets the first Wednesday of the month in the Library, 7 p.m. New faces are always welcome, including men!

AUGUST 6 - Present and vote on books for the rest of 2025 and 2026

DINING OUT WITH FLC

Do you love to dine out? This group, where all are welcome, meets at 5:30 p.m. on two Tuesdays of each month to enjoy various cuisines and fellowship. Reservations will be made two weeks in advance, so sign up early!

- August 5 – Edelweiss German Restaurant
34 E Ramona Ave
- August 19 – Margarita at Pine Creek
7350 Pine Creek Rd
- September 9 – BJ's Brewhouse
5150 N Nevada Ave
- September 23 – Jack Quinn's Irish Pub and Restaurant – 21 S Tejon St

Keep this link to check as more restaurants are added! Register here: <https://bit.ly/41Rh4ff> or on the "Church" app.



Friends by the Firepit
ON MONDAYS

JUNE 16-AUGUST 18
Mondays at 6 p.m. at the FLC Firepit
(or Peel House Front Porch if it rains)

Fun Fellowship and Discussions
Based from Sunday's Sermons
Bring a Beverage of Choice and Snack!



TRAIL TREKKERS

Thursdays - open to anyone
capable of hiking 3-6 miles

Meet at 8:00 a.m.

JULY 10 – LOWER COLUMBINE – Cheyenne Canyon

Meet in the 2nd parking lot below Starsmore at Cheyenne Rd. and Evans Ave.

The first segment of Columbine begins behind Starsmore Discovery Center and wanders up along North Cheyenne Creek, paralleling the road. The trail continues uphill, connecting with the Middle and Upper Columbine Trails. 3-5 miles with elevation; rated moderately difficult. Lunch after the hike is optional. Please RSVP to Jane at jclinnenburger@aol.com if you plan to join the group.

JULY 17 – HIDDEN MESA – off Highway 83 in Douglas County

Meet at the Park 'n Ride at Woodmen Road & I-25, north end

This loop trail is part of the 1,224-acre open space buffer between Castle Rock and Franktown. It begins at an old homestead, follows a farm lane, crosses over Cherry Creek, and then winds up to the top of the mesa. Lunch will be at a restaurant after the hike. (Option of hiking 5 ½ miles or 7 miles to include a separate loop); rated easy in the valley and moderate over rocky terrain on the ascent to the mesa.

JULY 24 – HORSETHIEF FALLS– south of Divide
Meet at the Safeway parking lot, 3275 W. Colorado Ave, se corner

This trail climbs along the stream gradually for the first mile; then levels out and soon you'll hear the welcoming sound of falling water. 2.8 miles; rated moderate. For a longer hike, we may include part of Horsethief Park. Bring a lunch to eat on the trail.

RSVP to Jane at jclinnenburger@aol.com if you plan to join this hike.

JULY 31 – MULE CREEK – north of Woodland Park

Meet in the Safeway parking lot, 3275 W. Colo. Ave., southeast corner

This is a great hike with multiple shallow stream crossings through meadows, rocky canyons and aspens. Great flowers! This hike is a favorite! Bring a lunch to eat along the way. 4-6 miles, moderately easy.

FLC BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Looking for some help around your home? Do you have a skill you'd like to share with other members of FLC? We keep a list of members interested in serving other members of the congregation with their skills. If you are looking to share a skill and would like to be added to our FLC Business Directory, fill out this form: <https://bit.ly/3VkcBKN> If you would like to have a copy of our current FLC Business Directory, email cheryl@flccs.net and she'll send you the current copy.

WORSHIP & STUDY

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday Sanctuary Worship:
8, 9:30, and 11 a.m.

Contemporary Worship Service:
10:15 a.m. in the Worship
Center, 2nd floor

Online Worship is live streamed at
9:30 a.m.

Wednesday Night Light is on hiatus
until fall.

SUNDAY ADULT SEMINAR

Meets 9:15 a.m., Sundays, in the Peel
House Parlor.

THE ADULT SEMINAR WILL NOT
MEET IN JULY.



SAVE THE DATE
FOR ZENITH!

Mark your calendars
for a special handbell concert on Saturday,
August 2, at 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Zenith, co-
directed by First Lutheran's own Matthew
Compton, is an ensemble like no other – a
select group of ringers from around the world
who gather for one week each year to perform
on two full seven-octave sets of bells. This will
be an extraordinary musical performance that
showcases the unparalleled beauty of handbell
music.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THIS
COMING SUNDAY

Genesis 18:1-10a; Colossians 1:15-28;
Luke 10:38-42

THE EMMAUS WAY

BY LORI DUNCAN



“Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”

—Jesus (John 8:7b)

Please read John 8:2–11. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your thoughts, and then enter into the story through your imagination, as much as you can identifying with the woman in the midst of this horrible situation. As you begin, consider these words from the Old Testament:

“If a man commits adultery with another man’s wife—with the wife of his neighbor—both the adulterer and the adulteress are to be put to death.” (Leviticus 20:10)

You are a woman in Jerusalem, which is teeming with ten times as many people as normal. The Feast of Tabernacles, one of the three yearly feasts that requires all Jewish men to make pilgrimage to Jerusalem, just ended yesterday, leaving throngs of extra people in the city. In the crowd is a rabbi from Galilee who has no problem calling out the flaws and hypocrisy of religious leaders, but you don’t know him and aren’t interested in seeing him. The religious leaders, though, do know him. They like neither his honest assessment of their shortcomings nor his different ways of viewing Scripture, and they are actively seeking ways to discredit him in front of all the people.

An outsider looking in can’t be sure exactly how you’ve ended up in the terrible position in which you next find yourself. Are you consenting to what is happening? Are you being forced against your will? That’s possible, because otherwise, how would the religious leaders have known about the adultery that was occurring? But somehow, they did, and now they’ve dragged you before the rabbi Jesus ... wait, where is the man? Does the law not say that both parties must be killed? *Where is the man?*! Why are you alone in being so incredibly exposed? As you hear the Pharisees say to Jesus, “In the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?”, you realize that your life means nothing; you’re simply a convenient object the Pharisees can use to trap the rabbi they want to discredit.

Then, in the midst of all the accusations against you, you hear the rabbi speak, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” You hear a thud. And another. And another and another. You realize the sound you’re hearing is that of stones being dropped to the ground.

Have you had accusations hurled at you, or even hurled some at yourself? “You’re not smart enough; you’re not pretty enough; you’re not good enough.” If so, can you hear those words falling to the ground, rendered powerless in the presence of Jesus? Can you lift your eyes to see only Jesus standing with you? Can you hear him say, “I do not condemn you. Go and leave your life of sin.”?

There was One there that day who was qualified to throw a stone but didn’t. Instead, he took the stones meant for us upon himself. Let’s walk together with him.

BIRTHDAYS & WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

July 21

Carol Donachy
Jerry Herman

July 22

Jimmy Sipe
Samuel Tonder

July 23

Noel Tonder

July 24

Sandra Harris
Rob Kimble
Tom O. Gosch

July 25

Phyllis Bartel
Joan Bennett
Gary Bradley
Bridger Nelson
Cheryl Stokes
Susan Weeks

July 26

Eileen Carter
Marlyn Peet
Sherry Phipps

July 27

Suzanne Dubois
Marilyn Knutson
Jeremy Marsico

July 21

Rick & Cynthis Haterius - 35 years
Don & Norma Kusulas - 63 years

July 22

Barry & Amanda Cramton - 2 years

July 24

Bart & Debbie Auten - 15 years
Diane Boldt & Paul Hurcomb - 28 years

July 25

Brian & Amanda Goff - 10 years
Eric & Elisa Wicks - 24 years

July 26

Richie & Linda Loflin - 28 years



PRAYER REQUESTS

Please keep these members of First Lutheran, their family and friends, in your prayers this week. If you are requesting to have a member's name added to the prayer list, please consult with the member prior to making your request.

Lannette Abbey	Josh Jones
Cheri Anderson	Shirley Jones
Colly Anderson	Ann Junk
Wanda Anderson	Jonas Kagarise
Victor Babish	Kyong Kelley
Fred Bachmeier	Carlin Kielcheski
Desirae Backlund	Gaye Lynn Kielcheski
Dan Baker	Cindy Koger
Janice Baldwin	Kyle and Family
Elmer Bauman	Jesse Lawrence & Family
Tana Beall	The Lopez Family
John & Hope Bergren	Susan Lundmark
Joan Boehm	Elly Mahler
Susan Bolduc Family	The Family of Sarah Marsh
Bill & Barbara Brown	Jim Matthews
Justin Buck	Nick McKibben & Family
Karl & Pam Cartwright	Hugh McNeely
Tanya Charbonneau	Melanie
John & Debbie Chlebus	Brandon Miller & Family
Nell Clowder	Gwyn Miller
Linda Collier	Marilyn Miller & Family
Debi Deimling	Larry & Lucille Moe
Rinda Dunson	Paul Moe
Alan Flinn	Wilma Nicholaisen
Nathan Foorman	Sam Norton
Edna Fross	Owen & Family
Corinne Gibson	Carol Palmen
Nola Gosch	Jack & Judy Peterson
Doran Gotschall & Family	
Private Steven Harris	
Ginger Hipszky	
Jake Hodnett	
Irene	

Nathanael Price	Becky Sternal
Darlene Radke	Michael Taylor
Jeff Rapp	Aaron & Cindi Thorson
Rondi Robbins	Bob VanDuyn & Karen Henderson-VanDuyn
Tess Rodriguez	Matthew Stark
Emma Rogers	Christine Welch
Steve Ross	Anna Wiese
Rev Dr Stanley Satre	Jody Wilbur
Randy Schacht	Sherry Wilson
Craig Steensma	Greg & Carolyn Young
Dorothy Selleck	Zoe Zambo
Karen Simon	
Gwen Stein	

LUTHERAN FAMILY REFUGEE SERVICES CONTACT INFORMATION

General Inquiries 719.227.8899 - Jessica

Volunteer Opportunities 719.257.3706 - Britton

For Donation Inquiries Britton britton.varn@lfsrm.org

LFS does not accept clothing donations.

LFS accepts household items – limits apply.

**Donations by appointment only – no onsite drop-off at Peel House or at FLC office, please. LFS storage unit is offsite. Neither the LFS office nor FLC have storage for donations.*

FIRST
LUTHERAN
CHURCH
COLORADO SPRINGS

1515 N. CASCADE AVE.,
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80907
719.632.8836 flccs.net

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS ARE FROM 9 A.M. - 3 P.M.,
MONDAY - FRIDAY.



FORD AMPHITHEATER TOUR 95 Spectrum Loop

Tuesday, July 29

Leave FLC: 9:45 a.m. Tour is at 10:30 a.m.; Cost: FREE

Lunch: Mountain Mike's Pizza - Pizza and Salad Bar Lunch Buffet, \$14.99 +\$1.00 soda

Sign Up Deadline: Thursday, July 24, 2025

Hey OWLS – we are heading north again this month to the Ford Amphitheater!! We will be the **FIRST** tour the venue has ever granted!! Ford Amphitheater is an 8,000 person capacity high-quality open-air music concert venue that opened August 6, 2024. (fordamphitheater.com) We look forward to viewing the regular seating area, the firepit area, and hopefully the behind the scenes area unseen to regular concert goers. We will then head just down the street to Mountain Mike's Pizza for a lunch buffet and for fellowship. The pizza chain is a long standing one of 45 years but is new to Colorado Springs. Please sign up by using the following link <https://bit.ly/44x34K7> or by calling FLC at 719.632.8836.

SUMMER MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES

Join us in choir room on dates listed; no audition necessary.



Women's Chorus

Rehearsals: Thursdays, July 17 and 24 ■ 7 p.m.

Sing in all 3 worship services: Sunday, July 27

Men's Chorus

Rehearsals: Thursdays, July 31 and August 7 ■ 7 p.m.

Sing in all 3 worship services: Sunday, August 10

