



JULY 9, 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

Dear Church-

I hope you have a chance to take a breath this summer. To enjoy the lighter schedule, the longer days, the warmer temps, and visits with family and friends. I hope that this season can be a time for rest and refreshment, however that looks for you.

For me, that has looked like taking up golf again, camping (okay, in a fancy camper with bathrooms and a fireplace), visiting family and friends in Minnesota, eating ice cream for dinner, and just enjoying a slower pace. It's a chance to clear my mind a little bit and even do a little mid-year assessment on how things are going in all the different parts of my life.

But, one of my other favorite parts about summer is the consistency that Sunday morning brings. I love that we, the people of God, still show up. I love that even with a slower pace, Sunday mornings are still full, that each of you comes with whatever the week has given you and we worship God together in this community. I love that we have a children's message every Sunday and that the kiddos are excited to share with us whatever is on their minds! I love that conversations linger, that sharing the peace seems to go on for just a little bit longer, that we have (or make) the time to stick around for one more sip of coffee before heading out to continue with whatever the day will bring.

So, in these dog days of summer, what are your favorite things to linger around? And where do you find God lingering with you? I hope that you can find time to catch your breath, do more of what brings you joy, and find where God is walking alongside of you through it all.

I'll leave you with the old camp tune *Linger* and let you think about the ways you want to linger with what brings you joy, with your loved ones, and with God who is always with you.

"Hmmm, I want to linger.

Hmmm, A little longer.

Hmmm, A little longer,

Here with you."

Warmest blessings,

Pastor Carrie

JULY 6, 2025

ELIJAH

1 KINGS 19: 1-18

Brothers and sisters in Christ grace, peace, and mercy to you from Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

Ahab reports to Jezebel that Elijah massacred the prophets. She is mad and sends a messenger to say, “I’ll get even with you, you’ll be dead by this time tomorrow.” Elijah saw how things were going to be and ran for his life. He left a servant in Beersheba and then headed into the desert.

He was tired and wanted God to take his life. He fell asleep. Then he was awoken by an angel, by a messenger of the Lord.

We now have a new character, the messenger of God. The angel touched Elijah and gave him simple instructions, “Get up and eat” (19:5b). Elijah found fresh baked bread and a jar of water by his head. Elijah followed the instructions — he ate and drank — but then he went to sleep again. We can assume that the desire for death was still in play. And this was not the first feeding story in the Elijah cycle. The early Elijah cycle also contained feeding stories. First Elijah is fed by the ravens (1 Kings 17:6), and the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:9-16) gave him the last of her food and drink. The messenger of God returned.

A second touch and a call to “rise and eat.” On the second encounter the writer provides an explanation: without sustenance, the journey will be too much for Elijah. The angel’s advice worked. Elijah arose, ate and drank. Then in the power of that sustenance he was able to go forty days and forty nights. He went on to Mount Horeb, the mountain of God. It is often connected with the burning bush story as well as the giving of the Ten Commandments. There Elijah came to a cave and spent the night. The angel disappears, and in 1 Kings 19:9b we encounter the prophetic formula, The Word of God comes to him and presses Elijah, “What are you doing here?” Elijah defends his record saying that he has been working his heart out for God. He acknowledges that the people of Israel have abandoned the Lord, killed the prophets, destroyed houses of worship, and he is all that is left, weak and vulnerable. Claiming that they will try to kill him next.

Elijah was by all rights on the top of the world when 1 Kings 19 begins. And yet . . . and yet the moment a wicked queen named Jezebel issues a death threat against Elijah, Elijah falls off the top of the world and all the way down into a very deep pit of despair. In an instant he becomes desperately afraid. Elijah, we are told, quite literally ran for his life (“Run, Forrest, run!”). He runs as far as he can before collapsing under a solitary tree, and just before he passes out from sheer exhaustion, he tells God, “Go ahead and kill me, Lord. I have had enough working for you. I’ve had enough of ministry. I’m a nobody going nowhere, and so go ahead: kill me.”

How in the world can this happen? How does a man go from Mount Carmel and one of the most spectacular victories in the whole Bible to being so depressed he’d rather die than ever wake up again? What happened? In some ways I guess it’s hard to say what happened, but I will tell you this much: we all know that it **does** happen, don’t we?

Sermon, cont. p. 4

The reason folks like Elijah and all of us can get knocked down so easily is because the work is hard. As

The reason folks like Elijah and all of us can get knocked down so easily is because the work is hard. As the angel says to Elijah upon waking him up so he can get some food and drink into him, “The journey is too much for you.” *The journey is too much for you.* Indeed, that’s true. Without the food and drink provided by our God, none of us can make it. Given the odds against us in a sinful world of persecution and violence, of brokenness and sin, we would eventually all quit, we’d all lay down and hope to die. Even in 1 Kings 19, Elijah cannot move forward one more foot until the angel comes to him not once but twice. Out there in the wilderness of Elijah’s depression and despair, God graciously revives him twice and it allows him finally to move on from the desert of despair all the way to the mountain of God.

But notice: even once Elijah makes it by God’s grace all the way to the holy mountain, he still goes into a dark cave. His mood still has not brightened. He’s still hiding away, still feeling lost, still wishing to die. So, God tells him to get up and stand before God’s presence. And you know what? Elijah doesn’t move. He stays right in his cave. A wind roars by and splits the very rocks on the mountainside. And Elijah stays put. An earthquake comes and rattles the roots of the mountain. And Elijah stays put. A fire sweeps through and singes the rocky mountain face. And Elijah stays put. We’re told that none of those powerful things were the fullness of God in any event, but the point is Elijah is so depressed that none of them even gets his attention. He’s in a place spiritually where power is not going to cut it. Power alone is not enough to help him. And sometimes I think we find ourselves in that same place. Power just isn’t going to cut it.

If you’ve ever known someone who is really and truly depressed, then you know that very little reaches into their darkness. In our story it is only

when God enters the silence of Elijah’s broken heart and fractured soul that Elijah gets up. It’s when God enters the heavy silence that Elijah feels—it is only when God himself *becomes* the silence—only then does Elijah begin to believe that God understands him and wants to help him. Elijah doesn’t need the fire and the wind, the rattling and the roaring. He needs to know he’s loved. He needs to know he’s held by hands tender and sensitive enough to hold the broken pieces of his life and then gently put them back together with the glue of grace. He needs to know that God sees him, sees his need for help and then takes action, in a quiet way that allows for Elijah’s vulnerability to be seen, acknowledged and then acted upon in stillness. In the quiet of cries that weren’t out loud but were heard by a God who knows us and loves us deeply.

Our God is great and strong, but he also knows that what we all sometimes need is the grace of the still, small voice, the grace of the silence, because that tells us that God understands, that God weeps with us. That is what got Elijah’s attention and brought him out of the cave in a way nothing else did. Of course, once he did that, God was not finished. There was more to say. Elijah didn’t belong there, hiding out in despair. God had his plans. God still had his people. Elijah was not alone—he never had been. And because of that God’s final piece of advice to Elijah was pretty simple, “Get back to work.” It was God’s way of saying, “Look, it’s never going to be easy. Ministry and the life of discipleship will rarely be simple. The journey *IS* too much for you. But I’ve always got more going on, more resources, more people, than you can imagine. So go back to work, Elijah. Go back to your ministry, discouraging though it may look at times. But remember I am with you. Always. Go back to work. And I will be with you. Some days I may be no more than a

whisper in your ear, a tickle on the back of your neck, but I will be with you.” And that is exactly what Elijah did. He went back to work.

This is a rough world in which to live like Jesus and to live for Jesus. If we try to make it on our own, then I suppose that we, too, could end up running for our lives as soon as we encounter the criticisms and hard knocks of life that inevitably come. But we might learn from Elijah in this story that it’s never about us. Discipleship will always be a journey that is too much for us. The journey is too much for us. If we rely on our own strength or talent or intelligence, we will fall into despair. The journey is too much for us. The stories of Elijah remind us of something else—God is always there with food and drink, which for us today is not cakes over open coals or a jar of water but the very body and blood of Jesus in the Lord’s Supper. God’s Spirit comes to us, too, and tells us to take; eat and drink remember and believe that Jesus died and rose again to forgive our every sin and now to energize our every act of service in His name. On our own, the journey is too much for us. But it will never be too much for God.

Because, you see, Elijah was given a sneak preview of what the gospel would be, that God did not stay far away from us and wouldn’t save us through sending down powerful lightning bolts from heaven or confronting the world through raw power. God knew the journey is too much for us, and so God undertook a journey of his own. And in a time when the whole world was focused on the mighty Roman Empire, on the military power of Caesar and on the violent threats of King Herod—when the whole world was obsessed with wind and earthquake and fire—God quietly drew near to us to enter into our hurt. On a starry night in the neighborhood of a place called Bethlehem, those with ears to hear

could detect in the distance what sounded like a still, small voice—a still, small voice that sounded very much like the cry of a newborn baby who was being laid into a manger.

God’s provision comes to us in ways that we aren’t always looking for. In the rest of a well-timed nap, in food being brought to your doorstep when you can’t even think about what you might want to cook. We are sustained by rest when others step in for us and when people provide what we didn’t even know what we needed. God’s presence shows itself in the face of others whom God has sent for us, angels that are doing the work of God and those who act in the stillness simply being present to our needs, knowing without being asked, answering without having to know the question, just being present and having words for us when we have none of our own. God’s presence in the stillness of our not knowing, but God knowing and the messengers and disciples of God who are a part of our lives knowing how to be the still, small voice of God.

God’s purpose for us is not always so clear in our own minds. But we are reaffirmed that when we listen for God, when we rest, when we are sustained physically and spiritually, we know that God is with us. We are affirmed that even when things are not going as planned, or as we had planned, we are not alone. The still, small voice is always there and sometimes we have to slow down enough to hear it, to see it, to fully take it in and experience it. When we are weary, God comes to us and sustains us in word and meal. When you come forward today, remember that no matter what you bring to the table, it is the grace and love of God that you take with you. Amen.

–Pastor Carrie



YOUTH MINISTRY

AT FIRST LUTHERAN

ELITCH YOUTH TRIP

MONDAY, JULY 14th ■ 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Middle School and High School

\$55 (includes lunch and ticket)



**REGISTER
ONLINE**



CHRISTMAS *in* SUMMER

**AUGUST 9TH
1 – 5 P.M.**

Middle School and High School headed to the North Pole!



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

BECOME INVOLVED

NEW MEMBER ENGAGEMENT FORMS

Our old Time and Talent Survey covered many areas. We thought it would be wise to break the survey into three distinct areas of interest, so now we have three new forms. You will find these forms at the very top of the list under “Events” on your “Church” app or at the Welcome Center Desk iPad. I have also included the link here in the event you’d like to check them out on your computer |

- I’d Like to Help on Sundays! - <https://bit.ly/4iLtxsA>
- I’m Looking for Fellowship and Community - <https://bit.ly/3F16MDb>
- I’d Like to Get Involved in Community Outreach - <https://bit.ly/3Z4Jp2m>

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.



AED/CPR CLASS

AED

Retired Colorado Springs Firefighter and Paramedic, Clark Gaddie, is not only extremely knowledgeable, but has the ability to make one feel comfortable using the AED equipment and performing basic CPR. We all need to know what to do in case of an emergency while we are waiting 5-10 minutes for help to arrive after dialing 911. All are welcome! Pizza and salad will be provided. Thursday, July 10, 2025, at 6 p.m. in the Gathering Place. Register here: <https://bit.ly/4kuF3dy>



UPDATE ON THE SUMMER VOLUNTEER CHALLENGE!



Congratulations! As of our June 30, 2025, deadline, you filled 87% of our 741 Volunteer spots for Sunday Worship Services July-September. That's right, there are still 94 opportunities for others to sign up to serve. We need the most help welcoming members and visitors to the 10:15 Contemporary Service. If you attend our Contemporary Service, please give this opportunity to meet new people a try! We also have several slots to serve "behind the scenes" in the areas of Communion and laundry. 9:30 and 11 a.m. services still need several Worship Assistants, Greeters, and Ushers. If you are new to serving, contact Cheryl Mahon cheryl@mahon.us for instructions and encouragement!

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!

- July 22 - Phantom Canyon Brewing Company - 2 E Pikes Peak Ave
- 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

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

EKKLESIA - ONLINE & PRINT

If you usually read the Ekklesia online and also get a print copy, please consider cancelling the print copy. If you would no longer like to receive the print copy, please email the church at flc@flccs.net, or call the office at 719.632.8836.

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

MASTER PLAN BROCHURES

Copies of the Master Plan are available at the Welcome Desk.



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. Colorado 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.

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

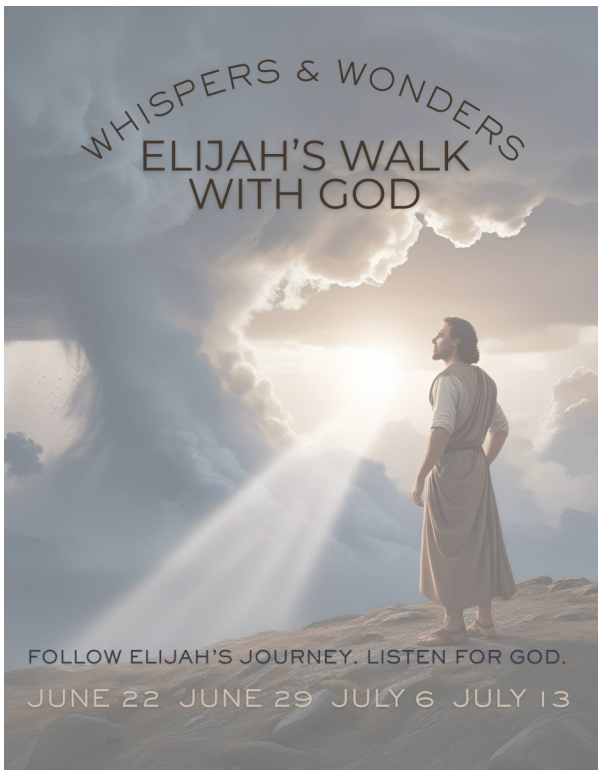
Online Worship is live streamed at
9:30 a.m.

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.



SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THIS COMING SUNDAY

2 Kings 2:1-13, Acts 1:6-11, Luke 24:50-52

THE EMMAUS WAY

BY LORI DUNCAN



“For the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost.” –Jesus (Luke 19:10)

We began our Summer Rest encounters with Jesus last Wednesday, and for the month of July, we will visit abbreviated versions of the encounters here on the Emmaus Way, too. As we go through the stories, I will be setting the scene and asking questions for you to consider as you imagine it. Please know, though, I’m not communicating that the presented ideas are the “right” way to interpret and understand the passage. I will be using conjecture to set plausible possibilities about what could happen. It’s not meant to be a rigid interpretation of truth, but rather a way of engaging the story to meet with Jesus. This week, let’s walk with Zacchaeus as he encounters Jesus, the one who seeks and saves.

Find a comfortable and quiet place to spend a few moments with Jesus. Once you’re settled, close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and invite the Holy Spirit to guide your time. When you’re ready, please open your Bible to Luke 19:1-10 and read through the story. Then, taking your time, go through the story again, closing your eyes to imagine the scene unfolding, pausing to consider the questions.

Imagine first-century Jericho in the desert of Palestine. There is an oasis nearby, though, as is the River Jordan. This water makes the city strategically located along trade routes, which is good for you, a diminutive Jewish man who has likely been mocked your entire life because of your short stature. It’s all right, though—you’ve been able to gain power for yourself over those who’ve ridiculed you by joining the occupying Romans to collect taxes along those trade routes, and you have exerted that power mercilessly, becoming rich in the process. You are hated for it.

Today there’s a rabbi that you’ve heard of coming through town. Something in what you’ve heard makes you want to see him. What might that have been? Is there a part of you right here, right now that longs to see Jesus? You climb a tree to be able to see him. As you’re waiting there, straining for a glimpse, there he is! Can you see him coming along the road? When Jesus arrives at your tree, an astonishing thing happens: he stops and looks at you. With all the people around, Jesus sees you. Now something else astonishing happens: Jesus tells you to come down. He wants to be with you; he is compelled to come into your life. Will you, as Zacchaeus did, gladly host him there?

Imagine Jesus entering your home and sitting at your table. What is the conversation like? Can you hear laughter, feel acceptance and joy? It doesn’t matter what anyone else says or thinks about it; Jesus wants to be with you, in the midst of your life as it is. Whatever happened at that dinner, it was enough to transform Zacchaeus’ heart. Are there any places in your heart that might need the transforming touch of the presence of Jesus? Can you let Jesus say to you, “Today salvation has come here, because you, too, are my beloved child”? Hear Jesus say these words: “I came to seek and save the lost. I came to seek and save you.”

Let’s walk together with the one who came to save us.

BIRTHDAYS & WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

July 14

Mike Eckley
Jason Fox
Chris Parkhill
Helen Peterson

July 15

Stephanie Curtner
Jeana Keenan
Sally Maertens
Jay Voth

July 16

Bella Loper
Shirley Kielcheski
Pam Rokke
Shelly Schmidt
Allyson Stanley
Sherry Wilson

July 17

Jan Anderson
Gary Olson
Lynn Peterson

July 18

Uwe Dahl
Callie Nehme
Amir Safayan
Kaitlynn Vowels

July 19

Jordan Dixon
Carlos Navarro
Gigi Podczervinski
John Samuelson

July 20

Jane Boehringer
Logan Hernandez
Holli Jarmuth
Lisa Podoll
Bob Sommervold

July 15

Jim Head & Linda Kirby - 10 years

July 16

Stacy & John Gatto - 20 years

July 17

Ken & Kay Lee - 54 years
Phil & Ruthe Rose - 65 years

July 19

Jason Fox & Laura Borgstede - 1 year

July 20

Geir Ostrem & Sarah Gunness Ostrem - 23 years
Jim & Gini Simonson - 62 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	Ann Junk
Cheri Anderson	Jonas Kagarise
Colly Anderson	Kyong Kelley
Wanda Anderson	Carlin Kielcheski
Victor Babish	Gaye Lynn Kielcheski
Fred Bachmeier	Cindy Koger
Dan Baker	Kyle and Family
Janice Baldwin	Dwight & Sharon
Elmer Bauman	Lakey
Tana Beall	Jesse Lawrence &
John & Hope Bergren	Family
Joan Boehm	The Lopez Family
Bill & Barbara Brown	Susan Lundmark
Justin Buck	Elly Mahler
Karl & Pam Cartwright	The Family of Sarah
Tanya Charbonneau	Marsh
John & Debbie Chlebus	Jim Matthews
Nell Clowder	Nick McKibben &
Linda Collier	Family
Debi Deimling	Hugh McNeely
Rinda Dunson	Melanie
Alan Flinn	Brandon Miller &
Nathan Foorman	Family
Edna Fross	Gwyn Miller
Corinne Gibson	Marilyn Miller &
Nola Gosch	Family
Doran Gotschall &	Larry & Lucille Moe
Family	Paul Moe
Private Steven Harris	Sam Norton
Ginger Hipszky	Owen & Family
Jake Hodnett	Carol Palmen
Irene	Jack & Judy Peterson
Josh Jones	Nathanael Price
Shirley Jones	

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

A memorial reception for
GLENN FRANK
will be Thursday, July 17, at 11:30 a.m.,
in the Peel House.

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.



OWLS at the Polaris Hotel

WOMEN AND MEN: SUMMER MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES

Everyone is invited to join our summer men's and women's choruses for an opportunity to have a blast singing fun music. No audition is necessary. We rehearse in the choir room on the second level and will sing for all three services on one Sunday. Use this link to sign up! <https://bit.ly/3TOFAvr>

Women's Chorus

Rehearsals: Thursday, July 17; and Thursday, July 24 ... both at 7 p.m.

Sing in Worship: Sunday, July 27

Men's Chorus

Rehearsals: Thursday, July 31; and Thursday, August 7 ... both at 7 p.m.

Sing in Worship: Sunday, August 10