

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH CHIMES

August 2023
Volume 62, Issue 8
www.firstgeneseo.org

Sharing Christ's Love

WORSHIP WITH US THIS WEEKEND!

Informal Worship Saturday 5:30 p.m.

Worship & Livestream Sunday 9:30 a.m.

Milestones Ministry

Back to School Blessings & Blessing of the Keys

Sunday ~ August 13

Students of all ages, teachers, school staff, and faith formation volunteers will be blessed as they begin a new school year. Each student will receive a brand-new backpack tag! The backpack tag is a constant reminder that God is with the students of our community in their daily lives and that their church family will be praying for them throughout the year. We invite members, friends, neighbors, or other family members that would like a blessing! We will also bless the keys of our new and upcoming drivers.



Do-Nut You Love a Back-to-School Party?

Everyone is invited to join us for a back-to-school celebration immediately following worship on *Sunday, August 13*.

We will enjoy FREE DOUGHNUTS, courtesy of Caseys, and pack school kits for Lutheran World Relief.

LWR Kits are specifically designed to help people coping with poverty, disaster, conflict, and more. These kits will be packaged and sent all over the world.

We are still collecting school supplies - see page 5 for a list of items needed.

Entering Confirmation

Sunday ~ August 27

We will be blessing our 7th grade students who are entering Confirmation this year. This milestone marks the commencement of a new chapter of involvement in the faith community and commitment to lifelong learning and serving in the body of Christ. Students will also receive their Confirmation Bibles.

Living in the Purple Zone

I recently started reading a book called “Preaching in the Purple Zone: Ministry in the Red-Blue Divide.” I’m only in the middle of the first chapter, but I’ve already discovered plenty of food for thought.

The author is Rev. Dr. Leah Schade, a Lutheran pastor and professor of preaching at Lexington Theological Seminary. She notes that in our public sphere, especially in media and politics, we tend to reinforce a “red-blue” dichotomy. For any given topic, we are presented with 2 (*and often only 2*) options, and depending on which of the 2 options we prefer, we align with one of the two major political parties. We are either “red” or “blue,” and that’s that.

We look at maps that show which states and counties are red and which ones are blue. “Of course,” Schade writes, “none of us lives in a truly ‘red’ or ‘blue’ state. The colors run together in our families, our houses of worship, our schools, our places of employment, and even within our own hearts and minds.”

None of us are unfamiliar with the phenomenon of living in a purple zone. As hard as we seem to try to divide our nation into two competing factions, most of us are much more complicated than the tenets of a single political party. And we’re familiar with the disagreements that can arise anywhere about what is right and good.

Some may argue that politics has no place in church. And while it’s true that we do have a beautiful Constitution that limits the powers of the state regarding the church and limits the powers of the church regarding the state, it is not true that we can’t talk about political issues in church. There should be no topic off limits in the church, the place where we come to worship, pray, hear Scripture, and learn more about our faithful God. And of course, my faith and my religion influence how I exercise my civic responsibilities, including voting.

Usually when I preach, I focus on how God’s Word is speaking to the struggles and challenges that our congregation may be facing in our day to day lives. I also try to consider the struggles and challenges of our siblings who may not be represented in our congregation, but certainly are our neighbors, whom we are commanded to love. These struggles and challenges are deeply intertwined with policies created by our lawmakers, rulings given by our courts, and how our government assesses and spends our tax dollars.

I am aware that when political topics arise, the divisive and sometimes violent rhetoric that we experience in the public sphere can infiltrate our otherwise respectful, loving congregation. As Schade puts it, “for some, the color purple is not just the blending of red and blue perspectives, but a reminder of the bruising one may suffer when stepping into that place of controversy and divisiveness.” It takes intentional work to create an atmosphere of trust, so that otherwise explosive topics can be discussed with honesty and care for the other.

I will keep reading, and I encourage you all to continue praying. Pray for me to have the courage to try some of the methods Schade introduces in her book, so that our congregation can do the hard but very important work of being a place where politics can be discussed without everyone ending up bruised, or angry, or ready to check out, at the end of the conversation. Pray for our congregation as we do this work. Pray for our nation, especially when the flames are fanned by candidates and special interest groups who have agendas to push and power to maintain. And when an opportunity arises for you to discuss an issue that you are passionate about, pray for humility and for the ability to listen to others and to learn from them. Pray for us all as we work at being faithful while living in the purple zone.

—Pastor Laura

August 5 & 6, 2023

Pentecost 10

This weekend's texts include Isaiah 55:1-5; Romans 9:1-5 and Matthew 14:13-21.

August 12 & 13, 2023

Pentecost 11

This weekend's texts include 1 Kings 19:9-18; Psalm 85:8-13; Romans 10:5-15 and Matthew 14:22-33.

August 19 & 20, 2023

Pentecost 12

This weekend's texts include Isaiah 56:1, 6-8; Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32 and Matthew 15:10-28.

August 26 & 27, 2023

Pentecost 13

This weekend's texts include Isaiah 51:1-6; Psalm 138; Romans 12:1-8 and Matthew 16:13-20.

"Pick Up Choir" Sunday,

August 13!

Children entering grade 3 through adults are invited to join the "*Pick Up Choir*" on Sunday, August 13. Rehearsal begins in the choir room at 8:30 a.m. and the choir will sing the anthem during the 9:30 a.m. service.

FIRST WORSHIP & MUSIC

Nature Pictures Needed!

The focus of worship September 10th through October 1st is "*Season of Creation*", a way to honor and give thanks for all that God has made. The themes for this year include Forest, Land & Prairie, Wilderness, and River & Stream. Please send your pictures of any of these themes (*and please indicate which theme your picture goes with*) to Melinda Wildermuth at worship@firstgeneseo.org. The pictures should be in jpeg format.

Please keep the following Lifelines petitions in your prayers:

World and Community: For the people of Ukraine. For our leaders: President Joe Biden and Governor J.B. Pritzker. For health care workers. For all who work for peace and justice. For those serving our country in the military, especially Brian Hanshaw (*Jan & Steve Weber's son-in-law*), Jessica Ruggles (*Scott Denys' friend's daughter*), Brandon Sandoval, Christopher Unrath, Law Enforcement Officers and First Responders.

Church: For our bishops: Rev. Elizabeth Eaton and Rev. Stacie Fidler. For our partners in ministry: Pastor Daniel Meiyen and the people of Osupuko Parish in Tanzania, Rev. V. Samuel Kennady, Bishop of the Arcot Lutheran Synod, India. For missionaries who share the Gospel around the world. For Lutheran Social Services of Illinois and Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center. For our pastors, parish staff, Preschool staff and Church Council (names listed on pg. 8).

Health and Wellbeing: Steve Alexander (*Bill & Theresa Nelson's brother-in-law*), Joey Eaker (*Jeff & Patti Boyer's grandson*), Jim Eckwall (*Mike Eckwall's father*), Heidi Fleming, Bob Groene, Milo Holth (*Mike & Margi Ficken's great nephew*), Michelle Mustain, Mike Pries, Peggy Schram (*Doris Swanson's daughter*), Marlee Stiener and Kim Stadler (*Kathy Rogers' daughter*).

Joys: On the marriage of Mike & Barbara Eckwall. On the birth of Maddox Elaine Brieser on July 15, daughter of Hannah & Wyatt Brieser and big brother Brooks; and granddaughter of Rich & Linda Sheley. For the faithful servants who pray for each of these requests!

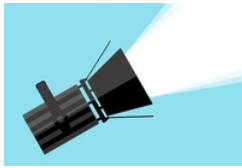
Thanksgiving: For the ministry of Sol's Legacy, founded by Tonya (Delp) Wells. For front-line workers who minister in dangerous areas around the world. May God raise up more believers to step into the "gap" and minister to those in most dire need.

Sorrows: On the deaths of Janice Brudos, mother of Dan Brudos; Jean Clark, member; Judge Clarke Barnes, friend of Pastor Michel Clark; Carol Eckwall, mother of Mike Eckwall; Ruth Conrad, sister-in-law of Wayne Conrad; Geraldine Cassens, mother of Jim Cassens and grandmother of Valerie Kline; and Lynn Eyrich, former member.

If you wish to submit a prayer request, please visit www.firstgeneseo.org and use the password First! to access the prayer request form in the Member Access Section. If you or a member of your family have a medical procedure planned or are admitted to the hospital, please call the church office. In the event of an after-hours emergency please contact Pastor Matt at 703-505-9517.

FIRST PRAYER

FIRST MINISTRIES



Spotlight On...Cover Girls

Each month, we highlight an area of volunteer ministry that has “openings” for additional volunteers. This month is Cover Girls, our quilting group. Pastor Laura interviewed the group one Wednesday in July as they took their 10:00 break. The group that day included Carol Boyd, Patti Boyer, Gail Edwards, Carol Hagberg, Sue Lobse, and Marion Nelson. The newest members of this group have been a part of this ministry for about 2 years. Carol Boyd has been with the group for the longest, at least 4 decades.

1. Why did you decide to volunteer for this ministry? Or, why did you say “yes” when you were asked to serve?

Patti: I was [persistently] invited by Gladys Swanson, and Mary Fuelling before she died, to be a part of the ministry of this congregation.

Gail: I started coming when I worked with donated fabric from Pat Anderson’s supplies, and I had so much fun that I just kept coming back!

Carol H: I was looking for something to do, enjoy sewing, and was invited by Carol Boyd.

Carol B: I came with my mother at first.

Sue: Carol [Boyd] and Janice Nelson invited me.

Marion: I liked to sew at home, and I wanted to be a part of a group and do something good with my time.

2. How is your faith strengthened by your work in this ministry?

Marion: Supplies show up when we need them – it’s a good example that the Lord always supplies what we need.

Patti: When I’m working on projects at home, that is my prayer time.

3. What might you say to encourage someone who is considering joining the team?

Carol B: We have fun.

Sue: We are providing comfort to people all over the world – from local shelters to people on the other side of the world.

Carol H: It’s good fellowship – we support one another, and we talk about (and sometimes solve) family problems.

Patti: It’s a good way to express creativity.

4. How do you get to participate in the work of “*Sharing Christ’s Love*” by serving in this way? All the ladies agreed, there is a great need. (The quilts completed each year are donated to local organizations and Lutheran World Relief, who distributes them internationally to those recovering from natural disasters, fleeing violence and war, or otherwise in need.)

5. What do you like best about this work?

Gail: It’s a very rewarding experience.

Carol H: It’s fun to put different pieces of fabric together, and create something fun.

Patti: And use pieces of fabric that were just sitting around, and put them to good use. We look forward to coming each week.

The Cover Girls want everyone to know:

- You don’t have to know how to sew to join our group – we can show you how to thread a needle and tie a quilt.
- We can always accept donations of fabric, sheets to use as backing, gently-used blankets to use as filler and spools of thread.
- The Cover Girls meet on the first, second, and third Wednesdays of each month at 9 a.m. in Grace Place. Carol Hagberg coordinates the group.
- For many years, this group was also responsible for assembling kits for Lutheran World Relief (*baby care kits, personal care kits, and school kits*). They just focus on quilting now, but if there is someone in the congregation who would like to lead the kit ministry, please let Pastor Laura know.

Women's Ministry

Cover Girls Quilting

Come and work with the "Cover Girls" tying quilts made of donated fabrics on Wednesday, August 2, 9 & 16 at 9 a.m. in Grace Place. The need is great!

Women's Bible Study will gather on Wednesday, August 23 at 1:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Room. We will use the Bible Study from the Lutheran magazine *Gather*. All women are welcome to join us for this time of fellowship and Bible Study.

Faithtime Kids

Registration for Faithtime Kids is open! Faithtime Kids is open to anyone in grades K-5. If you know of other families in our community that would like to join, please contact Abbey Cathelyn, Director of Youth & Family Ministry, or scan the QR code below. The deadline to register is **August 13**. Detailed information on the Children and Youth Ministry program year 2023-24 can be found in the Faithtime Brochure and our website.



FIRST MINISTRIES



Men's Softball Schedule

August 1 7 & 8:15 p.m. Diamond 1
August 7-10 End of Season Tournament
Check for rainouts after 5 o'clock on Facebook Geneseo Church Softball League Group page. Come to Richmond Hill and cheer the team on to victory!

High School

Coming in August... a poolside kickoff event for youth in grades 9-12 and their parents. We will discuss possibilities for the coming school year and for travel in summer 2024. Details for the event will be shared soon!

Lutheran World Relief School Kits

First Lutheran is still collecting school kit items for our mission project on August 13! Following is a list of the items we need to complete our kits.

70-sheet spiral notebooks (<i>no loose-leaf paper</i>)	blunt scissors
rulers	crayons (<i>16 or 24 count</i>)
pencil sharpener	2 ½" erasers
Canvas bags (<i>scan the QR Code to see the options for purchasing the bags</i>)	



Amazon gift cards to purchase items needed to complete the kits.



Scan the QR Code for instructions on how to make the bags!

Each kit also contains #2 unsharpened pencils and black or blue ballpoint pens. We have enough of these to complete this year's kits.

- **Please Note** ~ Each school kit requires four 70-sheet spiral notebooks. Donations may be put in the bus display in the Fellowship Room. Thank you for giving a child the supplies they need to have a great school year!

FIRST MINISTRIES



Food Pantry Collection

The Geneseo-Atkinson Food Pantry is collecting *baked beans, coffee, 100% juice, mashed potatoes mix, canned chicken, Kleenex, food storage bags, dish soap, shampoo and conditioner* to share with those in our community. Donations may be left in the basket by the church office.

- *Another Opportunity* ~ The Clothing room needs towels, small and medium women's underwear and men's boxer briefs.

Did You Know ...

- Hammond-Henry Hospital Dietitians will teach a class about using fresh fruits and vegetables at the Food Pantry on Thursday, August 10, at 10 a.m. University of Illinois Extension will offer a container gardening class on Tuesday, August 15 at 11 a.m. at the Food Pantry. Both classes are free and open to the public!
- The Food Pantry partners with UnityPoint at Home to provide two Foot Care Clinics each month. Nurses soak feet, trim and file toenails, help with ingrown toenails, and give a light foot massage with lotion. Please call 944-3165 or email geneseopantry1@gmail.com to make an appointment. Cost is \$37. Food Pantry Guests are provided with a voucher.

Thank You

First Lutheran Church,
Thank you for the lovely bouquet of flowers from the church garden. They brighten our room and remind us of our Lutheran friends.

—Joan & John Elden

June 2023 Financial Report

General Fund Offering:

June actual	\$27,256
June budget	\$33,825
YTD actual	\$242,156
YTD budget	\$235,050

Net Income Over Expenses:

June actual	\$6,877 deficit
June budget	\$5,407 deficit
YTD actual	\$1,087 deficit
YTD budget	\$17,516 deficit

Another Child Foundation Project Respond Update!

"Because of YOU" children will feel the warmth of love and compassion. Our congregation members collected a total of **44** hoodies and sweatshirts and **26** quilts or blankets. A special thanks to the Cover Girls for their contribution of quilts, each stitch represents a dedication to provide protection against the cold or weather elements. Another Child Foundation Project Respond is a yearly effort to provide humanitarian aid to children and families in Romania, Guatemala and Honduras.

Has the Holy Spirit prompted *you* to join a short-term mission team? There is room for more mission minded people on the distribution mission trip scheduled for October 19-27. Find all upcoming mission opportunities by going to the website anotherchildfoundation.org.

We are grateful for those who chose to donate the much needed items for this year's Project Respond.

—Janet Larson,
Another Child Foundation Board Member

 **Lutheran Social Services of Illinois**

Advancement

1261 IL Route 38, P.O. Box 100

Nachusa, Illinois 61057

LSSI.org

PHONE 815.284.7796

FAX 815.284.0008

July 18, 2023

First Lutheran Church
114 E Main St
Geneseo, IL 61254-1566

Dear Partner in Ministry:

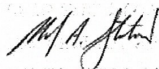
LSSI's history is strongly rooted at our Nachusa campus, where the Nachusa Lutheran Home was first chartered in 1903 on land donated through the generosity of the Shippert family. On May 12, 1904, the home received the first of many children who lived there over the years. As child welfare services have increasingly become home and community based, the need for residential homes and treatment dramatically decreased. Today, all of LSSI's services at its Nachusa office are provided throughout the surrounding communities.

In June, the LSSI Board of Directors approved the sale of our campus in Nachusa to the Dixon School District. The campus will be used to establish a therapeutic school for the district. As part of the conditions of the sale, LSSI will rent office space on the campus for current staff in our Children's Community Services programming, including foster care and prevention services.

The therapeutic school that the Dixon School District will establish at Nachusa continues the tradition of serving children at the campus. Children with special needs will now have services within their community. Some children have had to travel over an hour to receive these services. The therapeutic school will improve access for children in the district.

LSSI is proud of its 156-year history of serving children in northwest Illinois and beyond. Moreover, we are grateful for the continued support and advocacy we have with our Northern Illinois Synod congregations and individuals who call this region home. Together, you help LSSI fulfill its mission to bring healing, justice and wholeness to people and communities.

In faith,



Mark A. Stutrud
President and Chief Executive Officer



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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309-944-3196
www.firstgeneseo.org
e-mail: first@firstgeneseo.org

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Noisy Offering

A *Noisy Offering* will be collected the weekend of August 5 & 6 to benefit the Geneseo-Atkinson Food Pantry. Bring your nickels and dimes!

STAFF DIRECTORY

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Charlene Daniels, Custodian
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Larry Lord, Livestream Technician

COUNCIL

Lance Camp—*President*
Lendol Calder—*Vice-President*
Kathy Heller—*Secretary*
Mike Ficken—*Treasurer*

Jeff Boyer, Mike Eckwall,
Cindy Groene, Jill Laingen,
Lorrie Lord, John Peters,
Linda Sheley

Meeting Schedule:

Cabinet — August 14
Ministries — August 14
Council — August 21

PRESCHOOL STAFF

Misty Slaymaker, *Director*
Margi Ficken
preschool@firstgeneseo.org

**NEXT CHIMES DEADLINE:
THURSDAY, AUGUST 10**

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Tuesday-Thursday
8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Wednesday
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Friday
Office Closed
Closed for Lunch ~ Noon-1 p.m.

STAFF SCHEDULE

Rev. Laura Kamprath
Monday-Thursday

Rev. Matt Kamprath
Monday & Wednesday

Melinda Wildermuth
Monday-Thursday

Mary Jo Brummet
Monday-Thursday

Abbey Cathelyn
Monday-Thursday

Linda Bloomberg
Monday-Thursday, select hours