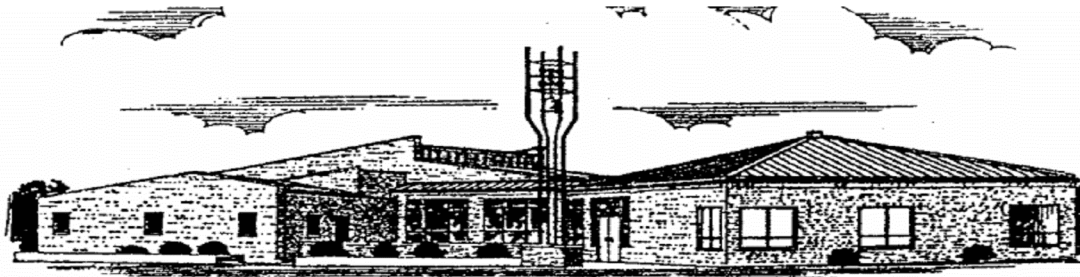


# DISCOVER FIRST



Empowered by the Holy Spirit, We Worship  
Reach Out, Share the Gospel and Serve

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**September 2016**

First Evangelical Lutheran Church  
287 West Main Street, Xenia, OH 45385  
372-7421  
Pastor Alicia Nierman

E-Mail Address: [firstluthxenia@sbcglobal.net](mailto:firstluthxenia@sbcglobal.net)  
Web Site: <http://www.firstlutheranxenia.com>

Worship with us on Sunday morning at 9:30am  
Children's Sunday School at 9:25am beginning Sept 18<sup>th</sup>  
Catechism Class at 11:00am beginning Sept 18<sup>th</sup>  
Adult Sunday School at 11:00am beginning Sept 18<sup>th</sup>

## A Message from Pastor Alicia

A story is told about a farmer who was hoeing his garden by the side of the road when a stranger wandered up to the fence. "Farmer," said the stranger, "tell me about the people in that town just up the road. What are they like?"

"Well, stranger," replied the farmer, "let me ask you a question. What were the people like in the town you just came from?"

"Oh," said the stranger, "those people. They were inhospitable, mean-spirited, stingy and just plain rude."

"Well," said the farmer, "I've got some bad news for you. The people in the town up the road are just like that."

"Pity," muttered the stranger, shaking his head as he continued his journey up the road.

A while later, as the farmer continued to hoe his garden, another stranger happened by. Approaching the fence he, too, hailed the farmer. "Farmer," he said, "tell me about the people in that town up the road. What are they like?"

"Well, stranger," replied the farmer, "let me ask you a question. What were the people like in the town you just came from?"

"Oh, they were wonderful people - good hearted, generous, and just as hospitable as they could be."

"Well, I've got some good news for you. The people in that town up the road, they're just like that, too."

The point of this story is obvious. It's about point of view. If one is positive and sees the best in people they've known or situations they've lived through, they'll see the best in people and situations they'll encounter in the future.

Now, lest I'm accused of being a purveyor of the power of positive thinking, as are some TV preachers, I want to assure you, I am not. I prefer to think of this story as a metaphor for good discipleship as members of the church. Again, it's about a person's point of view.

One person might view our congregation as a small family-sized church that is no longer in its hay day. "Why, 20 years ago," you might think, "there were about 100 people here on an average Sunday. Young families with lots of little kids were everywhere. Programs abounded, as well as fellowship activities. Today, however, we have an average of 68 people on a Sunday, and our congregation is aging. We must just be going down-hill."

However, another person might view our congregation differently. We are a small family-sized church, BUT, only five years ago our average Sunday attendance was 58, and now it's 68. We have lots of older folks, and we treasure them as they help us remember from whence we came. They are also an example of steadfast faith. We also have lots of young families. The sounds of children ring in our sanctuary on Sunday - a sign that we're alive and thriving. We have 9 youth grades 6-11. This year we will confirm 6 young people. The ringing of laughter comes from our crowded narthex as we fellowship after church each Sunday.

The quality of our music and worship far exceeds that of any church I have served, large or small. We are a welcoming group, holding out our arms to embrace those who would come seeking Jesus. Our stewardship is more than remarkable for a congregation our size. An average of 150 hungry souls come to our basement every Thursday, and they are filled with good food. Our Mission Endowment Fund has helped ministries of the congregation, community and synod. A brand new church van is being used in a variety of ways. The building has never looked better.

AND, we have a 10-year vision from God, from which God has birthed a strategic plan that is being implemented in more and more ways. So, I've got some good news for you. The people in that little church on Main Street in Xenia - they're growing in countless ways; and following God on a path to a bright future - and all by the power of the Holy Spirit. Thanks be to God!

Yours in Christ,  
*Pastor Alicia*



**YOU ARE INVITED AND URGED TO ATTEND**

**OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP! Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 9:00am-12:30pm**

At the meeting, now an annual event, we will hear reports from those who have been working on short and long-term goals that have sprung from God's 10-year vision for First Lutheran.

This year we will be entertaining other ideas for the group to consider. These ideas should fall within the guidelines of our purpose statement:

***EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, WE WORSHIP, REACH OUT,  
SHARE THE GOSPEL AND SERVE.***

The group will then decide on the five most promising ideas. We will then prayerfully consider those in the congregation who might have the needed gifts and talents to take on these goals. We would then seek these folks out and speak to them about working on the projects.

If you plan to attend, please sign the sheet on the kiosk in the narthex. If you need a copy of the vision, or ideas which have been previously entertained, please just email me at [aanierman@hotmail.com](mailto:aanierman@hotmail.com). or call me in the office, 372-7421. Momentum is picking up as we implement our strategic plan. Don't be left out!



## **FISH Sunday September 4<sup>th</sup>**

Since 1994 the first Sunday of each month has been designated as FISH Sunday here at First Lutheran. Please bring an item or two to church on Sunday, September 4<sup>th</sup> or any Sunday each month!

Monetary donations are also accepted, you can use one of the pew envelopes and mark "For Food Pantry."

Thank you! Our first Sunday of the month contributions to the FISH Pantry are greatly appreciated.

Our first Sunday of the month food donation continues to collect food for the Xenia Hunger Backpack Cuisine Program.

This is an ongoing addition to our FISH Sunday requests for food for the Food Pantry. Please place your donations into the box in the narthex marked for the Backpack Cuisine Program. (For September we've been asked to bring pop top cans of fruit, 8-9oz, OR 8.5 oz cans of vegetables.) Our donations are always appreciated.

Requested items include:

Pop top can 7.5oz single serve fruit 8-9 oz

Non-refrigerated puddings 3.5oz

3oz pop top cans of tuna or chicken

Dinty Moore beef stew 7.5oz

individual oatmeal box of 8-10single servings

10 pack fruit juices 5-8 oz

cans of vegetables 8.5 oz

gold fish and animal cracker snack paks

cereal bars & granola bars box of single serve

Cheesy Mac 2-3 oz single servings

peanut butter 18 oz containers

squeezable jam/jelly 20oz



*Fun for Seniors*

## **SPICE OF LIFE, September 27<sup>th</sup>**

Mark your calendar...we will be meeting at Noon on Tuesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>. All seniors in the congregation, 55 and older, are invited to attend these gatherings for friendship, fellowship and food.

Linda Blanton is "in charge" this month... On the menu: spaghetti chicken casserole and green beans..

You are asked to bring a salad, veggi or dessert.



**Has resumed.** Choir practice began on August 31<sup>st</sup> and continues every Wednesday night at

6:00pm. The first Sunday for choir to sing is September 18<sup>th</sup>. YOU are welcome to come and make a joyful noise with us!

☺ *Lisa Szwec*

## Outreach Opportunities through the Congregation



Volunteer to help on Thursday evenings at *The Caring Place*. Talk with Barb Swinehart, or Deb Baldwin about ways in which YOU can help serve others.



We continue to collect items for the FVPC here in Xenia. JUST IN...the FVPC is now collecting used cell phones, if you have one to donate bring bring it and place in the FVPC basket in the narthex. The following items are needed and appreciated: soap, conditioner, shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste, mouthwash, deodorant, lotion, combs & brushes, razors (like Bic), envelopes, lined writing tablets, pens & pencils, paperback books, coloring books & children's books. A donation basket is in the narthex



Continue saving your old prescription glasses, they will be taken to Africa by Betty Peppo's son, Dr. Roger Pacholka, and his mission team.



Continue collecting Campbell Product UPCs for Oesterlen Home in Springfield. (Please be sure and save only the square UPC symbol on the label.)



for this month is Tuesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 6:00pm



**First Lutheran Disciples** Jean Akers, Linda Blanton, Sue Stover, Paul Handwerker,  
Betty Peppo, Barb Taylor, Allison Reno  
**Homebound Members** Dottie Ripp, Marge Lovett, John Paul Saraga



Tuesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 6-7:30pm

**Book to read for September:** "The Longest Ride" written by Nicholas Sparks

Questions? See Adele Lerch or Pastor Alicia. Don't forget to bring a friend! We do want the name of our book club to really represent who we are – First Lutheran along with our friends! Be ready for a fun and lively discussion!



Sunday, September 11<sup>th</sup>

The day will include:

- ...Sunday School teacher commissioning
  - ...All children present will receive a small gift and a blessing as they start the school year.
  - .. A worship service with children (of all ages) in mind
- After the service, join us in the narthex for hot dogs, chips and root beer floats.

During the time of fellowship anyone in the congregation who would like to participate in a "Youth Group Task Force" will gather to talk about ministry to youth of all ages at First. (We will gather in the Oesterlen Room).



### *Sunday School Start-up*

Children's Sunday School class will resume meeting at 9:25am on **September 18<sup>th</sup>** and continue with the "Deep Blue-One Room Sunday School"



**Catechism** The Catechism Class will resume meeting each Sunday at 11:00am, **Sunday September 18<sup>th</sup>**



resumes **Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup>**, meeting 11am to 12 noon. The fall session, entitled, "The Way, the Truth, and the Life," will focus particular attention on Ravi Zacharias's book, "*Jesus among Other Gods*". Advancing a compelling and vigorous defense of Christianity, Zacharias highlights the singular significance of Jesus Christ, and shows us why we ought to be traveling the road with Him. Don't miss this opportunity to develop and deepen your understanding of and commitment to the Gospel. There is no fee to participate. Sessions are led by Jim Will.

**Come one, come all!**



### **Bible Study Returns on Thursday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> at Noon**

RETURNING and NEW participants **ALL** are welcome! Bring a simple brown bag lunch with you. We meet for an hour from noon to 1pm at the church every Thursday. **BRING A FRIEND!** You don't need any special Bible knowledge. This is an informal, fun & inspirational discussion time that will lift your spirits and give you new insights into your faith. **Upper Room** devotional booklets will be provided at no cost to all participants. Our topics are different every week so **ANYTIME** is the right time to come! Questions? Contact the church office.



Have you ever wondered who changes the light bulbs, takes out the trash, does general fix-up and clean-up around the church and many other numerous things? Well, that would be the **First Maintainers!** If you are a retired man and have a couple of hours that you would like to share on Tuesday mornings (9:00am-noon) you are invited to join the group. Give us a call in the church office, 372-7421, with any questions you may have.

### ***First Lutheran Mission Endowment Fund***

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Xenia, Ohio established a Mission Endowment Fund in 2006 and in the Spring of 2014 received a substantial anonymous cash gift from an estate. According to the guideline of the Endowment Fund, the fiscal year begins July 1<sup>st</sup> of the previous year and ends June 30<sup>th</sup> of the current year. At the end of each fiscal year, any profits earned from the funds invested (excluding the initial principal) are to be distributed to support different ministries and organizations.

The MEF committee is disappointed to have to report that this past year (ending June 30<sup>th</sup>) due to several downturns in the market during that time, the fund did not make a profit and therefore we are unable to make any contributions Please feel free to contact Denny Nagel or Bob Altick if you have any questions or concerns.

### **A Note from our Stewardship Committee.....**

This is the time to plan. Plan for the up-coming holidays, plan for our winter survival, plan for the next tax season, and plan for our life as a congregation planted and rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

So we need your plan for time to support our activities. We need your talent to execute the plans . We need some of your treasure to support those plans.

It is time to ask ourselves to prayerfully consider what we can share in support of our plans for 2017.

We will mail commitment cards early in October, and will receive them during the service on Commitment Sunday, October 16<sup>th</sup>. *Thank you* for you on-going support!



If you have a new e-mail address or the church does not have your email address PLEASE be sure and let us know. Call us or E-mail it to [firstluthxenia@sbcglobal.net](mailto:firstluthxenia@sbcglobal.net)



**Coffee Fellowship** TIME sign-up sheet is on the Kiosk in the narthex. If you would like to provide refreshments for this brief time of fellowship following the morning worship service please fill in your choice of dates.



I would like to thank the congregation for their calls, cards and prayers following my surgery earlier this summer. You are all appreciated. *Tom McKown*

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Thank you very much for the lovely reception in celebration of my 20 years of ordained ministry, and the beautiful cards. I was truly surprised and touched. God bless you all.

In Christ's love. *Pastor Alicia*

To the Congregation of First...

We wanted to thank you so much for allowing us to meet here at the church for our girl scout meetings from 2011-2016. We really appreciate your kindness.

*Girl Scout Troop 30382*

(FYI...Following their presentation to the congregation on August 14<sup>th</sup> the troop left a monetary donation, it has been put into the Youth Ministry Fund here at First. *Thanks* to Troop 30382)

Dear First Lutheran,

Your very generous donation of school supplies for our Xenia students in need is greatly appreciated. Thank you so much.

Kind regards,

*Kathy Napier*  
Homeless Liaison

*Denny Morrison*  
Superintendent

Xenia Community Schools





### **Operation Care Package**

Our Outreach Committee is requesting donations for supplies/goodies to fill care packages to send to our deployed military personnel. Our packages will be sent the weekend after Veterans Day (November 11<sup>th</sup>) a basket is in the narthex for your donations. Below is a suggested items list:

**Food Items:** protein powder & protein bars, powder drink mixes,  
beef jerky/slim jims, sunflower seeds, pre-packaged candies/cookies, Cliff bars, power bars,  
Gum breath mints, single serving snacks such as: pretzels, Cheetos, Fritos, Chex mix, Wheat Thins,  
chips, Oreos, Nutterbutter, Rice Krispy treats, Little Debbie snacks

**Toiletries:** Visine eye drops, nasal spray, multi-vitamins, air fresheners (not plug-in), lip-balm/ chapstick,  
disinfecting wipes, medicated footpowder, toothpaste or toothbrushes

**Entertainment & Sports:** DVD movies (recent releases, new or used), Popular books,  
Magazines (no swimsuit issues or explicit material), iTunes gift cards  
posters for decorating walls, small 2017 day planners, travel size board games,  
nerf footballs, frisbees, hacky sacks

If you know a deployed military person who would like a care package please call the church office. Any questions can be directed to Adele Lerch or Rick McClellan or call the church office.

(Monetary donations are accepted as well to help defray the mailing expenses.)



September 4<sup>th</sup> (16<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Pentecost)

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Psalm 1

Philemon 1-21

Luke 14:25-33

September 18<sup>th</sup> (18<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Pentecost)

Amos 8:4-7

Psalm 113

1 Timothy 6:6-19

Luke 16:19-31

September 11<sup>th</sup> (17<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Pentecost)

Exodus 32:7-14

Psalm 100 (*All People That on Earth Do Dwell*)

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Luke 15:1-10

September 25<sup>th</sup> (19<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Pentecost)

Amos 6:1a, 4-7

Psalm 146

1 Timothy 6:6-19

Luke 16:19-31

### Opportunities in the Community....

On Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, the Jeremiah Tree, in conjunction with the Refuge Ministries will host "Equipping the Church to respond to the Heroin Epidemic." The event will be held at First Church of Christ, 441 Ledbetter Rd and will feature local experts in the fields of law enforcement, addiction, recovery, and Christ centered care. The event will be moderated by Pastor Greg Delaney. Check-in starts at 8:30am and will conclude at 2:30pm. A continental breakfast and light lunch will be provided. There is no charge for the event, but please register at EventBrite: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/equipping-the-church-to-respond-to-the-heroin-epidemic-tickets>

**WE CARE ARTS** is pleased to present, **Celebrate Your Style: Shades of Autumn** on **October 8, 2016**.

This fun-filled morning will help to support the art programs We Care Arts provides for people at all levels of ability who live throughout the Miami Valley.

At Celebrate Your Style, you'll have the opportunity to catch up with friends, enjoy a delicious breakfast buffet prepared by the chefs at NCR Country Club, and get an early start on your holiday shopping. Here are the details:

**When:** Saturday October 8, 2016 10:00am to 12:00noon  
Kim Faris will host the style show, which will take place between 10:45 and 11:15am

**Where:** NCR Country Club 4435 Dogwood Trail, Kettering

**Fashions:** Kohl's Department Store  
Wearable art created by We Care Arts participants

**Cost:** Tickets: \$40.00

The buffet will begin at 10:00am. When you arrive, you can shop, grab a bite to eat, and then settle in to watch a special program featuring We Care Arts clients modeling wearable art, and fashions provided by Kohl's. If you see something you like during the program, but had missed it when you came in, you'll have plenty of time to shop afterward!