



WE LOVE FIRST BECAUSE
GOD FIRST LOVED US.

FOCUS AT FIRST

Winter 2021 - Quarter Four Newsletter

First Lutheran Church — Barron, WI www.firstlutheran-barron.org

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

2022

January

30th – Annual Meeting

February

March

Holy Week service information coming soon. 6:15pm worship on Wednesdays



Join Us for Worship - Sunday @ 9am

Don't forget to join us online each Sunday via the website or FB@FLCBarron or in-person

Also be sure to join Sunday School each Sunday at 10:15am

Inside this Issue

Congregational Life	2-3
Faith Formation	4-6
Outreach	7-8
Gifts & Memorials	8-9
Financials	10-11
Property Update	12



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE—MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR



Dear Church,

2021 is finally over and millions gathered around the nation and world to celebrate the new year. New dreams, new hopes, a new you! At least that's the typical slogan isn't it? "New Year, New You!" We have even formulated this ritual act around making these promises called New Year Resolutions. The thing with this ritual is it also comes with a disclaimer that no person shall be held accountable to their resolution past January. In fact, USA Today wrote that most resolutions are broken by January 17th as people with good intentions revert back into their old bad habits.



Bad habits are hard to break aren't they! The reason they are so hard to break is because they were easy to start. For me, most of my bad habits actually come from giving up something healthier and less desirable for something far easier and more appealing; like sitting on the couch rather than exercising or eating ice cream instead of veggies. And the real catch to these bad habits is there isn't an immediate effect. But we all know that a steady habit of no exercise and eating junk food has only one end. While most habits we think about are geared toward our physical and emotional self, I want to challenge you think about your spiritual self. How's your spiritual life doing? What bad habits have you slipped into last year that you want to break?

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE—MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR CONT...

Faith is a free gift given to us in baptism, but we are called to grow in our faith. Growth requires intentionality. Being intentional about anything requires effort. Our faith demands effort on our part – that is why we have spiritual disciplines to help us. The waters of baptism calls each of us into a lifelong journey with God that involves **seven faith practices: pray, study, worship, invite, encourage, serve, and give.** When you choose to live into your baptismal calling, you are intentionally living out your faith. Choosing to worship as a family, choosing to attend a Faith Formation program, choosing to help with a ministry event, etc. Each of these disciplines has one baptismal goal: so that you may come to know, love, and trust God. And the side-effect in participating is that your presence, insight, and experience will encourage others around you. Your faith forms and shapes a new way of living, a new way of doing, a new way of being. Indeed, living out your baptism is living out a new you!

These faith practices summarize the work of a believer and the work of God's Church. Bad habits of not exercising and eating junk food leads to health problems. Similarly, after a period of time of not praying, not studying, not worshiping, not inviting, not encouraging, not serving, and not giving we all know has only one end – a weakened faith and loss of relationship with God.



As we look towards this new year, how can First Lutheran Church encourage you in your faith journey to live out your baptism?

As you look over this list of seven spiritual practices, where do you see your bad habits have crept in?

What small group gatherings need to take place to feed your Spirit?

What topics need to be discussed to help you be informed?

What ways do you need to be encouraged as you begin this new year?

Looking forward to serving God's Church with you in this New Year!

Pastor Ron



Have wiggles – will worship!

Over the past few months, a small group of volunteers has been in conversation and work to prepare a new space that speaks to the needs of our youngest worshippers. Anyone who has worshipped with young ones before knows that, at times, remaining seated and quiet during the service can be a challenge for this age group. While the nursery down the hall was an option for families, the team felt that it was important to provide a place where children could move their bodies but were still a part of the worship community at the same time. With that goal, the Playground was born!

The Playground has many great features for young worshippers, including child-size furniture, quiet items to interact with such as books, puzzles, blocks, and coloring supplies, and a TV on the wall that livestreams the worship so children and their parents don't miss one moment of worship. The space was designed with children up through kindergarten age in mind.

Just outside the door is a small station for the older elementary age worshippers, which has boxes with crayons, pencils, paper, children's bulletins, and small fidget items. The boxes are meant for children to take back to their pews and use to worship while they wiggle.

A big thank you to Thrivent Financial and a private donor from the congregation for financially supporting this room makeover, as well as the planning team for sharing their time and talents to make the room a reality. We look forward to much joyful noise as families return to our worship space!



Wiggle

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Thank you to ALL actors, actresses, musicians, editors, costumers, and others who participated in this year's Christmas program, "Do Not Be Afraid". While the video presentation was quite different in its approach to sharing the Christmas story, it was so fun to see so many generations represented in the story and to see families working together to share the story of Jesus' birth!



Thank you to all who shared their time and talents to make this such a special program!

YOUTH GROUP

God's 3:45 Youth Group is having a great year! We have an awesome group of 6-8 students that meets on the second Wednesday of each month, joining after their session for worship with the confirmands. During Youth Group, students have participated in a service project, went caroling, learned about their Bibles, played BINGO, and more! The students look forward to coming each month, and we look forward to hanging out with them and building relationships!



Thanks to everyone who has volunteered with Youth Group by sharing their time, snacks, and



planning efforts!





CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR CONFIRMANDS

OCTOBER 24, 2021

JADA HORSTMAN, CODY DONICA, DREW SCHEPS, BRONSON HALVERSON



OUTREACH—GIFT FROM THE HEART

Gift From the Heart Program 2021

We served 142 children from 60 families with gifts of clothes and toys and/or coats and snow pants and hats and mittens this last Christmas. The families also received bags of new/gently used books for the children.

Food boxes filled with everything needed for a Christmas dinner was organized by Marge Colby and her team and given out to each of the 60 families. Also included in the boxes were coupons for milk and eggs from Kwik Trip. Each family received a bag of household goods that included toothbrushes, toothpaste, a bar of soap, shampoo, and dish soap. First Lutheran Sunday School children helped fill the household bags! They were a great help to us! Thank you!

We organized our annual packing and distribution days differently again this year because of covid. We had fewer volunteers helping on each of those days and had the families remain in their vehicles while we checked IDs and loaded their cars! It all went very smoothly thanks to the many volunteers from St. Joe's Catholic Church, Methodist Church, Four Square Gospel Church and our own First Lutheran Church!

8 Somali and 4 Filipino families were included in receiving food boxes for the first time this year along with household bags and books for their children.

Our committee had many conversations over zoom meetings and emails discussing how to make it work despite the covid pandemic again for the second year! Everything from printing posters and putting them together, hanging up the posters, putting the ads in the paper, printing labels and mailing out letters to organizations and businesses, organizing the lists of families and children, handling the virtual hearts, keeping track of the finances, organizing the bags of books, organizing and packing the gifts from First Lutheran, putting together the food boxes, calling the families, filling the coat and snow pants requests, setting up for packing and distribution days, sending out Thank Yous, to the culmination of loading the family's cars full of such wonderful gifts from the Barron Area communities, was accomplished by these amazing volunteers with smiles on their faces!

All this to give the children and families in the Barron Area School District not just a happier Christmas or warm winter clothing, but to give them hope for tomorrow, joy for today and most of all the knowledge that someone cares!

Bless all of you who so generously gave monetarily or gave with your time and your prayers to this program!

Kristi Pedersen
GFTH Chair

OUTREACH AND THANK YOUS

Community Outreach Committee



Over the past couple months, we have held two worship and fellowship events in partnership with Pneuma Church to reach out to the growing Filipino community in the Barron area. Each event had over 50 people attend for worship and dinner fellowship. We are looking forward to our next event in March. It is the goal of this ministry to be a church presence to those individuals and families who left everything behind to start a new life in our community.



Thanks to the generous memorial gift left by Gladys H. FLC now owns an indoor Gaga Pit.



Thank you to all those that helped decorate the Christmas tree this year!



THANK YOU to Blain Sinclair for creating the frames for our cross that hangs in Luther Hall

thank you!

GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

For Streaming

\$100 Given by Roger & Donna Jones in honor of June Edson years as an organist

For Youth Mission

\$100 Given by Nancy Breckner

For Music

\$100 Given by Nancy Breckner

For Cemetery Fund

\$20 In memory of Dick Schultz by Dave & Linda Martinson

\$25 In memory of Dick Schultz by Wayne & Val Gieske

For Undesignated

\$50 In honor of Ron & Jan Barrett by Roger & Donna Jones

\$15 In memory of Dick Schultz by David & Debbie Olsen

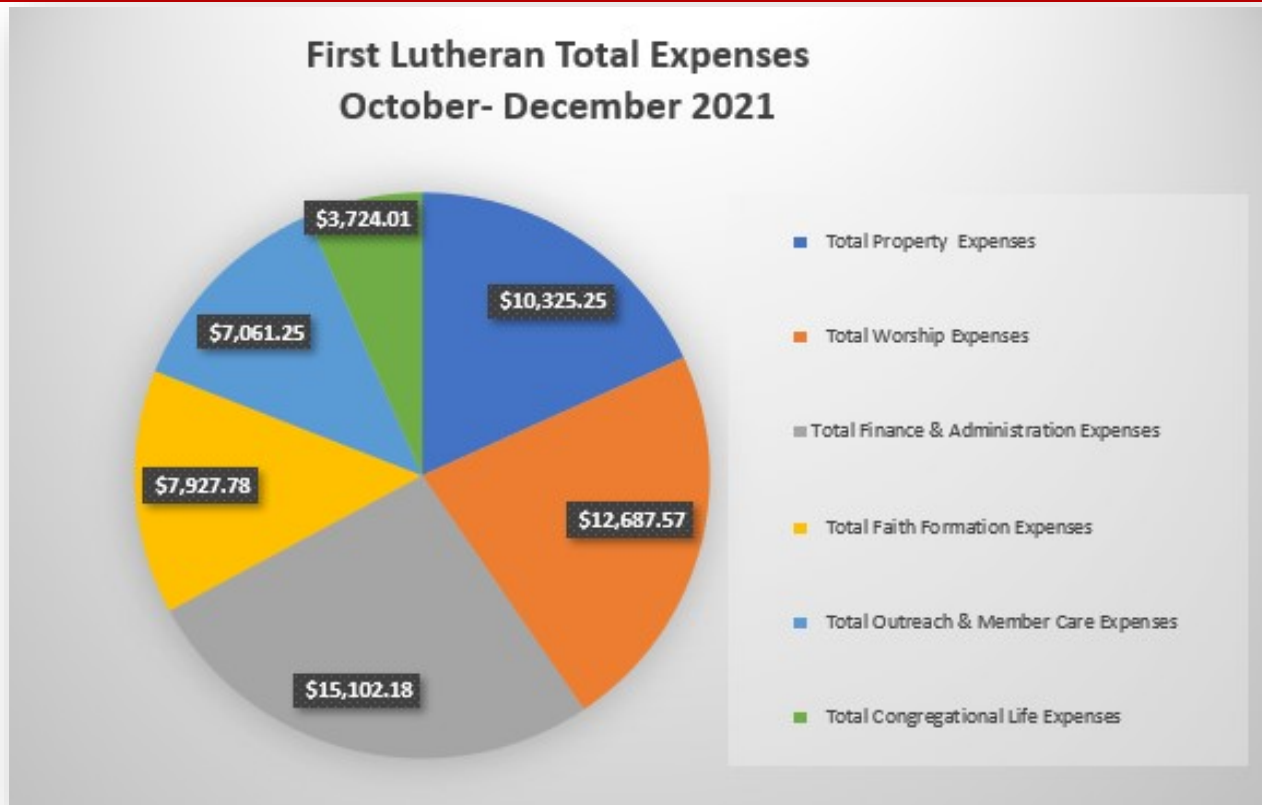
\$50 In honor of June Edson by Steve & Lynn Haugen

\$100 In honor of June Edson by Ruth Ellefson

Thank you to all who have donated to these designated (and undesignated) funds, we appreciate your love and support of the ministries of First Lutheran Church!



FINANCIALS



We are able to provide the ministries we have at FLC in large part thanks to the efforts of our amazing staff team. Because staff enable programming to happen by equipping volunteers, here is a pie chart of our total ministry expenses to help us understand the true cost of what it takes for our ministries to happen. For simplicity in calculations, Pastor Ron's salary is distributed evenly over all the ministry areas. Other salaries vary each quarter. Some expenses are paid in lump sums but allocated quarterly for reporting purposes so totals may not match exactly when compared to final year to date numbers.

These days we aren't gathering in the building like we use to.

GivePlus is an easy way to consistently give financially to support FLC's mission using their autopay feature. You can enroll using either a credit card or bank account. Once you sign-up, you can check your giving records as well. You just need to simply go to our website, click on "Donate" in the menu options to sign-up. If you need assistance or have questions, please don't hesitate to call the church office!



Ways to Give Electronically

Your financial gifts make all that we do here at FLC possible.

Give+ Text: Set up a one time or recurring donation by texting the amount you wish to give to 715-496-6473

Give+ Mobile App: Download the 'GivePlus Church' app to set one-time or recurring donations. You can also manage and view your giving from the convenience of your smartphone.

Give+ Online: Visit firstlutheran-barron.org/give to set up and manage your one-time and recurring gifts.

FINANCIALS

Accounts	Quarter 4 Actual	YTD Actual	Annual Budget 2021
Revenues			
Total General Fund Offerings	\$ 83,263.50	\$ 269,020.57	\$ 301,050.00
Total Non-General Fund Offerings	\$ 526.06	\$ 2,768.69	\$ 5,640.00
Total Revenues	\$ 83,789.56	\$ 271,789.26	\$ 306,690.00
Expenses			
Total Pastoral Expense	\$23,814.63	\$114,588.04	\$ 122,283.24
Total All Other Staff Expense	\$18,265.00	\$64,548.90	\$ 96,071.00
Total Staff Expense	\$ 42,079.63	\$ 179,136.94	\$ 218,354.24
Total Property Committee Expense	\$ 4,960.13	\$ 25,400.05	\$ 36,900.00
Total Worship Expense	\$ 2,579.44	\$ 9,691.29	\$ 9,300.00
Total Personnel Expense	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500.00
Total Council Expense	\$ -	\$ 60.00	\$ 1,500.00
Total Finance Expense	\$ 659.79	\$ 11,466.18	\$ 13,300.00
Total Faith Formation Expense	\$ 1,386.66	\$ 3,943.48	\$ 9,700.00
Total Member Care Expense	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 300.00
Total Outreach Expense	\$ 3,445.13	\$ 13,878.55	\$ 14,300.00
Total Congregational Life Expense	\$ 107.89	\$ 339.86	\$ 500.00
Total Administration Expense	\$ 2,636.29	\$ 8,837.15	\$ 11,350.00
Total Expenses	\$ 57,854.96	\$ 252,753.50	\$ 316,004.24
Net Total	\$ 25,934.60	\$ 19,035.76	\$ (9,314.24)

Explanation for the above chart:

- Column 1 is the actual quarter donations and expenses. This averages out the annual contributions over four quarters.
- Column 2 is the year to date donations and expenses.
- Column 3 is the year to date annual budget.

For questions or clarification of the above expense report or to receive a detailed financial report of expenses please contact the church office.



PROPERTY UPDATE

The property committee had a few major expenses for 2021. with the most recent being a roof leak repair for \$507.69. Additionally in 2021, there was the need for boiler repairs on one of the boilers. An internal part was damaged on one of the boilers due to a venting problem . We will be addressing the other two boilers in 2022 to prevent this problem from reoccurring.

Other expenses for 2021 included \$2400 for a lawn mower, \$1233 for rug services, \$880 for elevator expenses, and \$560 for a fire inspection.

Several projects are being evaluated for 2022 including possible roof replacement or additional repairs in the education wing. This estimated expense is for \$20,000. There is also the need to reconfigure the boiler exhaust and inspect the remaining blowers that were not replaced in 2021. Wiring problems were identified with the boiler power supply and there is a need to update the old system with a new electrical panel. Lastly in 2022 there is a need to inspect the sidewalks and repair any trip hazards that may be present.



FACILITIES AND FUTURE UPDATE

Future and Facilities has been meeting and at this point we will be bringing more information to the congregation early in 2022. This has been an exciting journey and we feel optimistic about the future.

~Rod Norby, Chairperson



4 W LaSalle Ave., Barron, WI 54812
715-537-3575

www.firstlutheran-barron.org

Sunday Worship @ 9am on Facebook @FLCBarron

Church Office Hours: Please call—Building staffed limited hours

Pastor - Ron Mathews - PastorRon@firstlutheran-barron.org

Office Manager/Bookkeeper - Andrea Cox - Andrea@firstlutheran-barron.org

Executive Assistant - Sheila Erb - Sheila@firstlutheran-barron.org

Financial Secretary - Shirley Hakari

Children's Ministry - Amity Mathews - Amity@firstlutheran-barron.org

Youth Ministry - Patrice Akenson - Patrice@firstlutheran-barron.org

Maintenance—Brett Gevens

