



WE LOVE FIRST BECAUSE  
GOD FIRST LOVED US.

# FOCUS AT FIRST

Winter 2023 - Quarter Four Newsletter

First Lutheran Church — Barron, WI [www.firstlutheran-barron.org](http://www.firstlutheran-barron.org)

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### 2024

#### January

14—10:15am Breakfast Bites and Bunco

22—Afternoon Singalong

#### February

4--8:45 Hymn Sing

11-10:15am Breakfast Bites and Bunco

14—Ash Wednesday 6:15 Worship

25—Annual Meeting

26—Afternoon Singalong

#### March

3--8:45 Hymn Sing

25--Afternoon Singalong



Join Us for Worship - Sunday @ 9am

Don't forget to join us in person each Sunday at 9am or on the radio at WAQE 97.7 You can also view us online anytime via the website or FB@FLCBarron

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## PASTOR RON'S MESSAGE

As we enter into a new year, I look back at the challenges we overcame and the concerns for the future. I recently saw a video of a truck driving down a highway. The truck was relatively new and pulling a decent-sized boat that was engulfed in flames. I can't help but think how that accurately describes moving from 2023 into 2024. We had a lot of great things happen last year and a lot of struggles and as we are heading into the new year with hope and positivity, we are dragging some flaming baggage with us.

Need a better example of what I'm trying to describe? Just before Christmas, I injured my foot. I don't know how I did it, but I haven't been able to walk for the past 3 weeks. And did I mention that it has been incredibly painful? So, I'm rolling into the new year, literally on a knee scooter. Like pulling a trailer engulfed in flames, we are taking some of the pain and problems we had last year with us into this new year. But we also have cause to celebrate and approach the New Year with hope.

What will this year bring? I guarantee it will bring hardships. But it will also bring joys as well. I look back on 2023 with a lot of gratitude for your support in the mission and ministry of FLC. Your generosity and commitment have allowed us to make significant impacts on the hearts and lives of many in Barron and Beyond. Just look at how our K-WoW program has grown this year! And we crossed a milestone of 30 years in ministry with Gift for the Heart, having served thousands of families in need. These and all the other ministries of FLC are made possible only by your support. As we look to set our Ministry Plan for 2024 (a.k.a. the 2024 Budget) we are making plans to meet even more needs of our community. Just one plan that you've heard about is the Tiny Home project that is expected to start this Spring.

As we celebrate the accomplishments of this year and look forward to the opportunities that await us in 2024, I am excited about the future and am grateful to serve alongside you in Jesus' name to *"Love Others First because God First Loved Us"*.

**Pastor Ron**

## Property Committee News

Happy New Year from the Property Committee! With a vision of a new church in the process with the Facilities and Future Committee, First Lutheran continues to have issues with our current building. Below is a recap of what we have repaired in 2023 and a few of the larger projects we plan on addressing in 2024.

### **2023 projects completed:**

1. Replace roof over the Education wing.
2. Landscaping on the southeast corner of the church and built an area for the garbage dumpster.
3. Repair the exhaust fan in the kitchen.

### **2024 projects:**

1. Repair the upper walls in the sanctuary where there has been moisture damage.
2. Replace the south entrance steps and three slabs of concrete in front of the stairs. Pastor Ron has made temporary steps to get by until we are able to get the concrete company to come in the spring. (With our chicken dinner fundraising and member's donations, money has been raised to cover the cost of this project.)
3. Repair the ramp near the coffee bar. The ramp has dropped slightly that it has created a safety issue.
4. Repair/Replace the urinal in the men's restroom near the coffee bar.

The Property Committee meets the 2nd Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Please join us as more hands will help maintain our current church.

*Rod Nordby, Jason Kisting, Keith Kolpack, Randy Severson and Judy Rassbach*



## **Trunk or Treat**

was held in the Woodland School parking lot on October 30<sup>th</sup>.

FLC youth were there to help our Outreach Team hand out candy to kids!

Thanks to Rankin Mathews, Eden Kisting and Lilliann Horvath for your energy and enthusiasm!





# OUTREACH NEWS



## Gift From the Heart

The 30th year for Gift From the Heart was a great success! There were 64 families with 151 children that received gifts of clothing and toys. The children also received a bag of new/gently used books and the families received a box of food with everything to make a Christmas dinner! Each family got a bag of household goods containing toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, dish soap and bar soap. Because we had many donations from both businesses and private givers, each family received a gas card from Kwik Trip! We also had 38 children that were in need of just coats, hats and mittens that we were able to supply them with! This could not have happened without the support we receive from you, our First Lutheran Family! This church has been the foundation of this program since the beginning! Thank you,

**GFTH Committee**





### Community Outreach

We have had several new families move into the Barron School District this year and we've been able to support them with coats, hats and mittens if needed, and also with blankets and a coupon to the Cupboard and Closet. The children also received games and learning activities!

There continue to be people coming from the Philippines to work in the nursing homes in Barron and the surrounding communities. We support them with coats if needed and blankets and coupons to the Cupboard and Coset.

We will again have a blanket tying session with material we have for more blankets!

*Kristi Pedersen*

Outreach committee chairman



### What is a Tiny Home of Barron County?

Tiny Homes are built for unsheltered individuals or families who are in need of temporary housing. They provide a safe place to live while the individual/family gain financial stability, make connections to resources and look for permanent housing. These Tiny Homes are equipped with a sleeping area, a chemical toilet, and kitchenette that includes a microwave and mini refrigerator.

As a church, we would provide the space and electricity for the Tiny Home and provide support to the individual/family living there by inviting them to worship, to our Wednesday community meals and by periodically checking in with them!

The Barron County Tiny Homes are not for anyone that is found to be homeless right off the street, but for those that have been vetted by the county and that are gainfully employed already. These people have worked hard to qualify for this type of housing!

The Tiny Home committee will plan to hold listening sessions beginning sometime in January in preparation for the installation of the Tiny Home in March!



### ***“A SIMPLE ACT OF LOVE CAN SAVE A VILLAGE”***

Once again, I give thanks for the generous support that First Lutheran Church-Barron has extended to the dire needs in Malawi, Africa. Throughout the Lenten Season and the year, FLC lifted our sisters and brothers in prayer, generous financial support, and love.

This year, Malawi suffered the most catastrophic consequences from Cyclone Freddy. Strong winds, mudslides, landslides, and flash floods hit 15 districts. Leading to death, displacement, and destruction. Crops being lost, wells being contaminated along with rivers and Lake Malawi. The worst outbreak of Cholera since 2003 which was prior to vaccines. Centre for Girls and Women Empowerment turned their attention to life saving strategies.

With the huge financial support given to CFGWE from FLC they had the capability to supply clinics and hospitals with: M200 bottles of IV fluids, 150 cannulas tubes, 3,500 examination gloves, 360 packets of aqua tablets for drinking water, 50 kilograms of chlorine powder, along with sets and sets of safe water stations. The fight against Cholera was urgent because Cholera kills within hours when left untreated. I cannot express the gratitude shown in your prayers, financial support, and love to assist Malawians to survive and recover the best they could from such a catastrophe. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

November was the beginning of the planting season. The foundation turned their attention to education on healthy gardening practices. The importance of growing a variety of produce to nurture children to prevent stunted growth and mental retardation. Permaculture gardens are of the utmost importance. Strides are being made to develop them.

Classes on business management for individuals and groups are also being offered. Those who have been working toward a goal in business or education for a better way of life can receive assistance. Our basic belief is when a person invests in themselves and strides to achieve through their own initiative they will succeed. This in turn gives them the ability to pass it forward.

CFGWE is looking forward to 2024 being a year filled with many achievements. Your blessings are immeasurable!

God bless each of you,

*Ann Knutson*





### **Lenten Worship**

*Please join us Wednesdays during Lent for evening worship at 6:15pm with Holden Evening Prayer, beginning Ash Wednesday, February 14th. Come early for a meal served from 5:30-6:00pm.*



**Practice Wednesdays  
@ 6:30**

*Come early for meal  
served 5:40-6:15*

***All Are Welcome!***

### ***Afternoon Singalong Upcoming Dates***

**January 22, 2024**

**February 26, 2024**

**March 25, 2024**

***Fourth Monday of the Month.***

***1:30 Monroe Manor***

***2:30 Dove***



## Celebrating the New Year with Breakfast Bites and BUNCO!!!

FOR ALL AGES---KIDS THRU OLDS & OLDERS---JANUARY 14TH

Following the 9:00 worship service in FLC's Celebration Room  
15 minutes of breakfasting and socializing,  
followed by 45 minutes of dice-rolling, bell-ringing,  
prize-winning BUNCO fun!

LOTS OF PRIZES! NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED!



## Celebrating the New Year with Breakfast Bites and BUNCO!!!

FOR ALL AGES---KIDS THRU OLDS & OLDERS---February 11TH

Following the 9:00 worship service in FLC's Celebration Room  
15 minutes of breakfasting and socializing,  
followed by 45 minutes of dice-rolling, bell-ringing, prize-  
winning fun!

Sign up by Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, in Luther Hall or by calling/texting  
715-418-0057.

**INVITE YOUR FRIENDS TO JOIN US!**

No cost, donation basket set out.

Contact Lynn if you can help with  
EASY setup, serving, and cleanup!

**BUNGO**



*It's How We Roll!*



# CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

## Thankful Hearts Pie Social



## South Steps

Our South Steps Fundraiser Creamed Chicken on Biscuits Dinner was successful and enjoyed by all!

Our crew served a delicious meal, and thanks to the generous gifts of our congregation, raised the necessary \$6,000 to cover the estimated expense of the new steps.

Watch for our new steps coming in the spring!

## South Steps Fundraiser



**Thank You!**



## K-WOW! Praise Band

Our K-WOW! Praise Band shares their love of music with us every Wednesday during 5pm Worship!

## W/ELCA News

### W/ELCA Wishes Everyone a Happy New Year!

Our next W/ELCA Board Meeting is January 21st at 10:15 a.m.

W/ELCA will again be having some lunches before the Bible studies that Pastor Ron has on Wednesdays at 1 p.m. All lunches are from 11a.m. to 1 p.m and everyone is welcome to attend the lunches and Bible Studies.

Following are the dates and menus:

### Wednesday Luncheons

#### February 21

Tomato soup/  
crackers  
Grilled cheese sand-  
wiches  
Pickles  
Bars

#### March 20

Potato soup  
Crusty bread/  
crackers  
Cheese tray/pickles  
Cookies

#### April 17

Stuffed Green Pep-  
per Soup  
Cheese tray/pickles  
Crackers/buns  
Cookies

#### May 15

Pasta Salad  
Meat/cheese tray/  
pickles  
Buns  
Cookies

### W/ELCA Bazaar

#### Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

Thanks to everyone at First Lutheran who helped and/or contributed items to sell at our Bazaar on November 4<sup>th</sup>. It was a huge success!!! It would not have been without all of your hands.



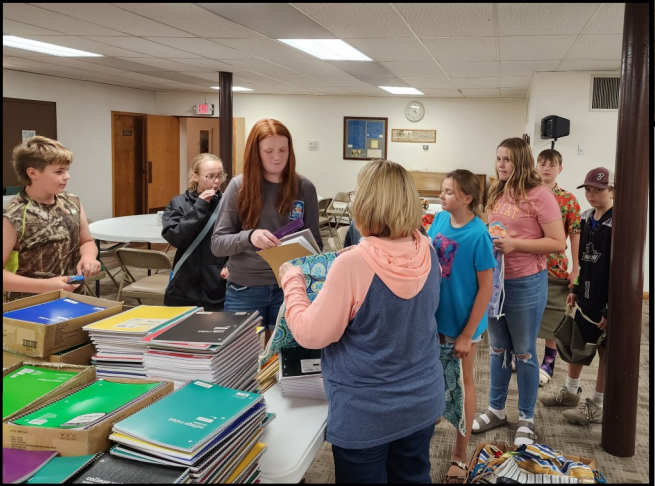


### Making Lefse





Packing School Kits for Lutheran World Relief





# FAITH FORMATION

## Luther Park Recharge October 20-21, 2023





K-WOW!  
Christmas Party

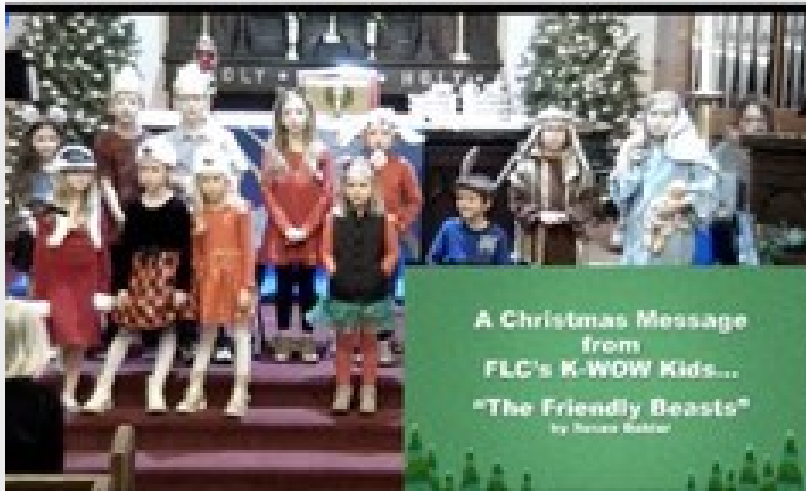


*Merry  
Christmas*

*From  
First Lutheran  
Church*



*Kids and the Word on Wednesdays  
Christmas Program*



Thank you to  
Director Lynn Kolpack,  
Susan Babler,  
Bea Lundequam,  
Rayann Tallman and  
Cathy Anderson for  
leading our  
**K-WOW Youth!**

**K-WOW!**

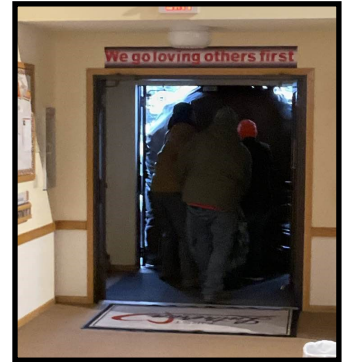
Join us for K-WOW! We meet every Wednesday beginning after school until 4:55. To learn more and register your child, visit our website!





# LUTHER HALL CHRISTMAS TREE

*It takes many hands and a lot of work to cut, deliver, set up and decorate our Luther Hall Christmas Tree, but the result is always worth it!*





## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP

In the Gospel according to Luke we hear the angels  
say to the shepherds,



*Glory to God* IN THE  
HIGHEST HEAVEN,  
*and peace to God's people*  
ON EARTH.

At this time of the year, perhaps our longing for peace is even more acute. We know the world isn't right. Nevertheless, we wait for and trust in Jesus, the Prince of Peace. The angels proclaimed, "Peace on Earth. Good tidings we bring." We pray for peace in our world and in our communities. Every week we take time during worship to greet one another with the message of peace. We reach out, grasping hands across pews, across the aisle. Some may walk to other areas of the sanctuary to give a message of peace to a neighbor or a visitor.

"The peace of Christ be with you." "And also with you." We share the peace, the love of God, and as we do, we know that God has reached from heaven to earth and, in the Prince of Peace, is sharing God's peace with us. In this season and all year round, may the peace of Christ be with you.

*Merry Christmas, dear church.*

*Elysiun L. Eaton*



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America.



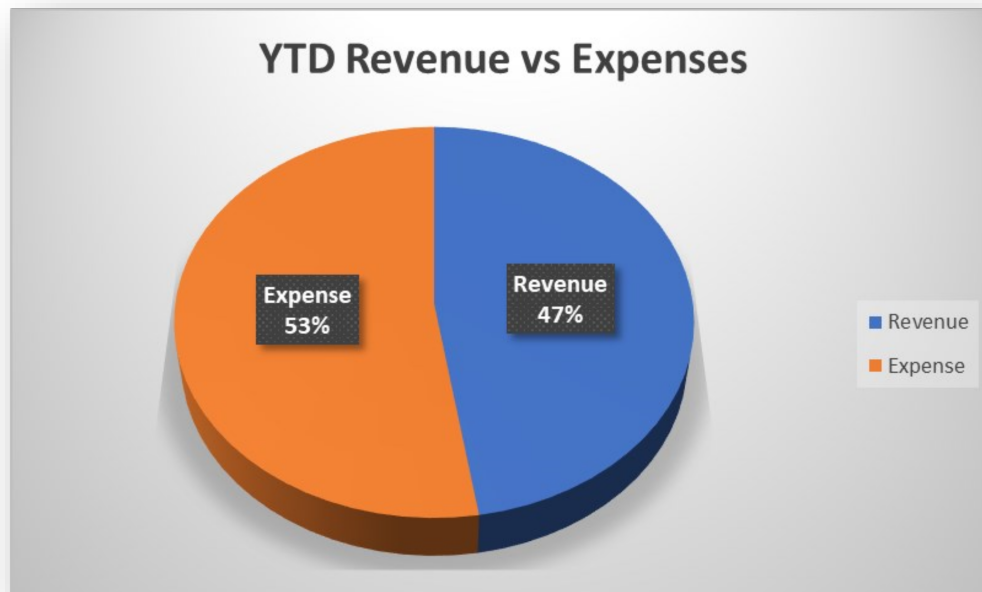
# FINANCIALS

Accounts	Actual Quarter 4	Actual YTD	2023 Annual Budget
<b>Revenues</b>			
Total General Fund Offerings	\$ 54,886.88	\$223,989.55	\$252,100.00
Total General Fund Other Offerings	\$ 3,244.19	\$ 14,533.39	\$ 31,450.00
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 58,131.07</b>	<b>\$238,522.94</b>	<b>\$283,550.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Total Pastoral Expenses	\$ 29,674.79	\$111,228.11	\$105,920.00
Total All Other Staff	\$ 16,556.57	\$ 61,159.10	\$ 64,559.00
<b>Total Staff</b>	<b>\$ 46,231.36</b>	<b>\$172,387.21</b>	<b>\$170,479.00</b>
Total Property Committee Expenses	\$ 6,214.22	\$ 29,880.02	\$ 28,500.00
Total Finance - 5400	\$ 615.06	\$ 13,266.54	\$ 13,277.00
Total Faith Formation Expenses -5500	\$ 2,095.26	\$ 7,751.35	\$ 29,700.00
Total Administration - 5900	\$ 2,616.37	\$ 16,291.45	\$ 12,950.00
Total Council Expenses	\$ 188.98	\$ 313.43	\$ 1,500.00
Total Congregational Life - 5800	\$ 600.75	\$ 1,573.69	\$ 1,700.00
Total Outreach Expenses - 5700	\$ 3,375.00	\$ 13,902.50	\$ 14,300.00
Total Personnel Expenses - 5300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500.00
Total Member Care Expenses - 5600	\$ -	\$ 200.00	\$ 700.00
Total Worship Expenses	\$ 2,099.58	\$ 8,194.87	\$ 10,650.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 64,036.58</b>	<b>\$263,761.06</b>	<b>\$284,256.00</b>
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>\$(5,905.51)</b>	<b>\$(25,238.12)</b>	<b>\$ (706.00)</b>

Explanation for the above chart:

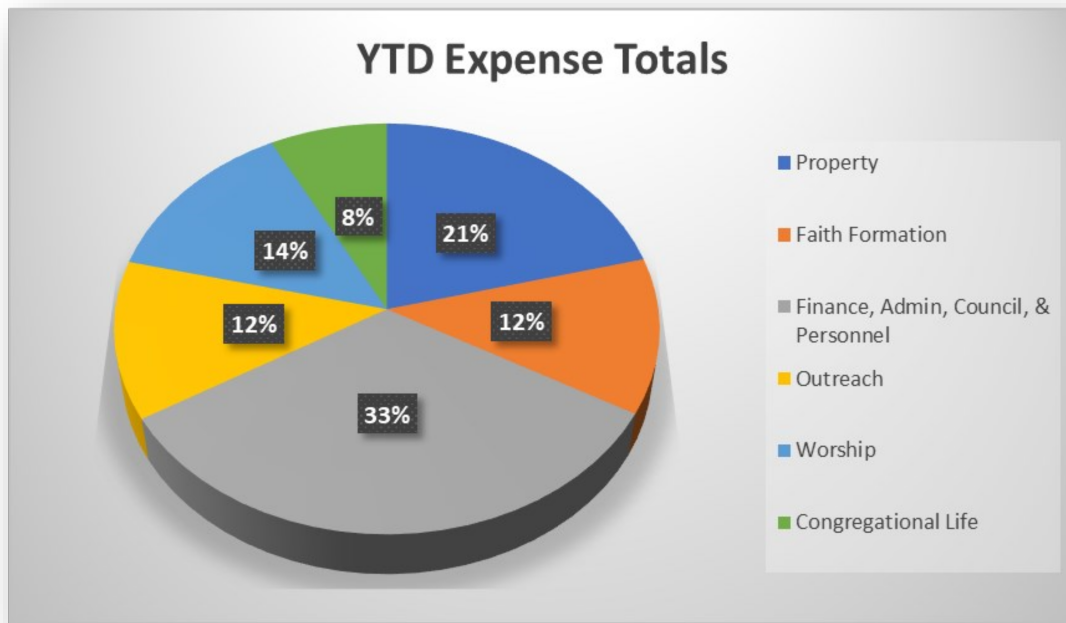
- Column 1 is the actual quarter 4 donations and expenses.
- Column 2 is the year to date donations and expenses.
- Column 3 is the total annual budget.

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



# FINANCIALS

We are able to provide the ministries we have at FLC in large part thanks to the efforts of our amazing staff and team of dedicated volunteers. 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. Some expenses are paid in lump sums but allocated quarterly for reporting purposes.



## *Gifts and Memorials*

### *For Undesignated*

\$40.00 IMO Nancy Krahenbuhl by Sharon Nelsen.  
 \$20.00 IMO Gail Larson by Steve & Lynn Haugen

### *For Quilters*

#### *In Memory of Nancy Krahenbuhl:*

\$20.00 by Rick and Judy Rassbach  
 \$20.20 by Teresa Clark  
 \$40.00 by Dale & Donna Freiemuth  
 \$15.00 by Craig & Ruth Anderson  
 \$15.00 by Agnes Prine  
 \$25.00 by Brian & Mary Carr  
 \$20.00 by Kristine & Stuart Schaefer  
 \$40.00 by William & Mary Dexter  
 \$50.00 by Chad & Melissa Weber  
 \$50.00 by Jeff & Billie Church  
 \$100.00 by B&G Club of Barron Co.  
 \$10.00 by Sally Gores

100.00 by Joseph & Cindy Kinsella  
 \$40.00 In memory of Gail Larson by Anonymous  
 \$50.00 In memory of Gail Larson by Dallas & Diane Sloan

### *For Cemetery Fund*

#### *In Memory of Nancy Krahenbuhl:*

\$20.55 by Prudy Shay  
 \$20.55 by Pam Jacoby  
 \$90.00 by Anonymous  
 \$25.00 by Terry & Carolyn Miller  
 \$25.00 by LuVerne & Sherri Hanson  
 \$25.00 by Edwin & Sally Gunderson  
 \$40.00 In memory of Donna Lenbom by Phyllis Johnson  
 \$30.00 In memory of June Edson by Phyllis Johnson

### *For South Steps*

\$100.00 IMO Dale Prine by Thomas & Dawn Urban  
 \$25.00 IMO June Edson by Bruce Severude  
 \$25.00 IMO June Edson by Terry Miller (Continued next page)



# GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

## *For Organ Ranks and Chimes*

### *In Memory of June Edson:*

\$250.00 by the Reichwald Family

\$100.00 by Ruth Ellefson

\$25.00 by Carol Romsos

\$10.00 by Robert Hanson

\$20.00 by Carolyn Verhulst

\$40.00 by Sharon Nelsen

\$25.00 by Wendell & Mary McDonough

\$100.00 by Valeri Scheps

\$50.00 by Bobbi Monchilovich

\$25.00 by Audrey Bilodeau

\$25.00 by Kelly and Steve Hover

\$500.00 by Jones Family Trust

\$20.00 by Wayne & Val Gieseke

\$20.00 by Lee & Kay Zabka

\$25.00 by Harold & Rita Thorson

\$50.00 by Billie Jerome

\$50.00 by Craig & Ruth Anderson

\$50.00 by Robert & Betty Missling

\$50.00 by Rick & Patti Bjelland

\$25.00 by Steve & Lynn Haugen

\$50.00 by Roger Jones

\$75.00 by Diane Elmgren

\$50.00 by Sandra Bergum

\$25.00 by Wendy Halverson

\$25.00 by Lynn Emmons

\$25.00 by Suzanne Nehring

\$250.00 by Doris Laursen

\$20.00 by Marcia Sheneberger

\$50.00 by Sheryl Edson

\$20.00 by Delores Bjugstad

\$50.00 by Glenn Kolb

\$50.00 by Jerilyn Wibbens

\$10.00 by Maxine Williams

\$100.00 by Michele Hechanova

\$20.00 by Sonja Johnson

\$50.00 by Thomas Kurschner

\$100.00 by Kari Hoiem

\$60.00 by Sharon Ronning

## *For Livestream Fund*

\$20.00 IMO June Edson by Keith & Lynn Kolpack

## *For Altar Guild*

\$200.00 In memory of Maureen Vruwink by Billie Jerome

## *For Malawi Fund*

\$800.00 In memory of Elaine Gonske by Harold Gonske

## *Additional Gifts Received*

\$185.00 Thrivent Choice Dollars:

by Pamela Mathews, Roger Mathews,  
Lillian Nevin, Bruce Severude, Tamy Severude, Lori  
Wiegrefe, Janice Barrett, Ronald Barrett, Amy  
Beckendorf



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715-537-3575

[www.firstlutheran-barron.org](http://www.firstlutheran-barron.org)

Sunday Worship @ 9am on Facebook @FLCBarron

**Church Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:00am - 4:00pm**

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

**Office Administrator - Patrice Akenson** - Office@firstlutheran-barron.org

**Bookkeeper - Andrea Cox** - Andrea@firstlutheran-barron.org

**Financial Secretary - Shirley Hakari**

**Choir Director - John Krull**

