



FIRST NEWS

A monthly publication for the members and friends of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

August 2026

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Have you experienced mercy or maybe a better question, have you ever offered mercy to anyone? Why would you or anyone for that matter need mercy? What is the big deal about this churchy word, "mercy" that we should even ponder the thought? What does Paul say about mercy in his letter to the Romans in the 11th chapter?³² For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all. Paul is talking to the church about God's mercy, not rejection and Paul comes up with this interesting statement. *God has imprisoned all in disobedience, so that he may be merciful to all.* God longs to be merciful to all and by recognizing the disobedient, those who push back against God, he can be merciful to those he finds. His ability to look at us from a merciful view is much different from our condemning ways. God looks for ways to love others where we often look for ways to divide or separate from those different or those who we think are not living up to our standards. If anyone has reason to reject others, it should be the one who we killed on a cross and yet he does not. We can learn from God in the statement from Paul; *"God has not rejected Israel. Rather, the call and gifts of God are irrevocable so that, while all have been disobedient, God has mercy upon all."* God does not reject us when we fall from the church or turn from the teachings because of life situations, rather, God shows mercy with patience and grace. God's call and gifts are irrevocable, according to Paul. That is such good news, to think God will not let us go even when we turn away from God. When things are difficult in our lives or when life gets so busy we put God on the back burner of our priorities, God does not leave us. As autumn approaches and our summer activities wind down, the school year will fill our calendars again. As we set our schedules, remember that God has been waiting for our return with patience and mercy. We may gather again as family to worship and glorify the one God of all who has mercy for all. All have been disobedient and fall victim to the law of the flesh. It is God's mercy that redeems us, shows love from God's amazing grace, and keeps the promises to all, for all, from the one and only God of peace, grace, and mercy, amen.

Live in Peace and the God of Love and Peace will be with you!
2nd Cor. 13:11 Pastor Tom Evenson

Our mission: First Evangelical Lutheran Church exists to **welcome** people to faith in Jesus Christ; **equip** persons with a faith that works in real life; and **send** us in service into the world in Jesus' name.

Dear Lord:

As we go about our day, please help us make new connections, having our minds set on things that will honor You. Help us experience more of You today and give us wisdom to focus our hearts and minds on You. Amen.

CHURCH OFFICE



Monday - Thursday:
8 AM - 4:30 PM
Friday: 8 AM - 12 PM
320-693-2487

Email:
firstoffice@firstlitchfield.org

WEBSITE:
www.firstlitchfield.org

Church Council

No Church Council Meeting held in July

**"GOD'S WORK.
OUR HANDS."**

PRESIDENT:

Karla Hyberger

VICE PRESIDENT:

Harriette Connor

SECRETARY:

Mattie Baumgartner

TREASURER:

Jim Cottington

Team Representatives:

**Christian Education/
Family and Youth:**

Karla Hyberger

Alexis Engelke

Harriette Connor

Duane Farmer

Evangelism:

Sabrara Evenson

Karla Hyberger

Harriette Connor

Stewardship & Finance:

Jim Cottington

Julie Bredeson

Martha Christensen

Endowment/Memorials:

Julie Bredeson

Jim Cottington

MST:

Sabrara Evenson

Martha Christensen

Personnel:

Karla Hyberger

Tanner Eberling

Property:

Mattie Baumgartner

Betty Allen

Tanner Eberling

Duane Farmer

Social Ministry

Meredith Elj

Betty Allen

Worship:

Meredith Elj

Alexis Engelke

Scout Charter –

Organization Rep.

Tanner Eberling



God's Work ~ Our Hands

September 13, 2026 @ 10:00 am–12:00 noon

Please consider one of the following:

COMMUNITY OUTREACH I

**Meet in Chilstrom Hall, We will be putting together
packets for the residents at Lincoln Apartments,
Meeker Manor and Emmaus Complex**

COMMUNITY OUTREACH II

We will be outside at a neighbor's home to do yard work

FREE EVENT

**2026 National
Night Out**

Police and Community Free Event

Tuesday, August 4, 2026

5:00 - 7:30 PM

Central Park, 311 North Sibley Ave.

in Litchfield



POLICE-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

**Get to know your neighbors, build strong relationships
with first responders, and help build a safer,
more united community. There will be food, music and fun.
Bring a blanket or a lawn chair.**

Also, Free Car Seat checks by Meeker County Public health.

	June	YTD
Offerings:	32,345.20	209,199.80
Dedicated Funds Used:	7,577.08	171,860.71
Expenses:	(51,678.46)	(423,811.77)
Net:	\$ (11,756.18)	\$ (42,751.26)

Dedicated Fund Donations: \$ 4,803.00 \$ 79,244.03

MEMORIALS:

A Gift was given to the Quilters fund in memory of Gladys Johnson from the Johnson family.

Heavenly Father, we come together to lift up our church family. We thank You for the diverse gifts, talents, and hearts You have brought together in this congregation. We pray for spiritual growth and wisdom. Open our eyes and the eyes of our hearts to understand Your truth more deeply. Guide every member in their daily walk with You, granting them the courage to navigate life's challenges with faith rather than fear. Amen

Our GLOBAL MISSIONS offering for the month of August: Operation Boot Strap Africa

CLIPBOARD MISSIONS: this opportunity is found in the narthex, there are three clipboards to sign up on. The suggested offering to support these missions is \$40.

World Missions: Rev. Aaron Fuller and Kelly Schumacher Fuller, Slovakia and Hungary



Attention: First Lutheran Women

We will start quilting again on September 1, 2026. Come join the fun. You do not need to have quilting or sewing skills to help us make quilts for Meeker County Social Services,

Hospice, Wings, First Lutheran graduating high school seniors and Lutheran World Relief. We are in need of ladies who can tie knots or do pinning to keep our assembly line working.

We quilt September through May, the first and fourth Tuesday of the month, 8:30 am to 11:00 am. We take a break at 9:30 a.m. to enjoy coffee and treats. We are also in need of colored sheets in good condition, to be used as backings, and cotton fabric for the quilt tops and backs.

If you have any questions, please contact Jackie Kraushaar or Elaine Lenhard.



Youth Pages

Our "Faithful Follower" education time

Who: 4TH, 5TH & 6TH graders
 When: **Wednesday nights**
Starting SEPTEMBER 16th
 Why: To offer our older Sunday School students two options
 Come Sunday mornings and/or Wednesday nights
 Hours: 6:00 pm - 6:30 pm Meal and Discussion
 6:30 pm Church service
 7:00-7:30 pm Gathering fun
 Where: Chilstrom Hall/Chapel
 (Reminder: Sunday School is from 10:00 -10:45 am)



BABY AND ME

New class for young ones and an adult

Bible fun with your 0- to 3-year-olds
 2nd Sunday of the month
 10:00 to 10:45 am

First class: Sunday, October 11th

(We will meet in the corner classroom in the upstairs preschool room)

Lutheran World Relief School Kit Project



Imagine having to choose between a meal or purchasing a notebook. Project Promise School Kits are sent to places where even the few required school supplies may be more than a family can afford. Pencils and paper can help write a positive future. With school supplies on sale this time of year at great savings, it is a perfect time to help FLC collect supplies for the LWR School Kits.

- Please give new items only.
- Please do not donate items with any religious symbols, messages or your group's name.
- Please do not donate any items decorated with a U.S. flag, patriotic or military symbols, or references to the armed forces, including camouflage.
- Do not add other items or leave out any of the items listed.

- **One 30-centimeter Ruler**
- **One pencil sharpener**
- **Four 70 sheet notebooks of wide or college ruled**
- **One blunt scissors**
(safety scissors with embedded blade works well)
- **One 2 1/2" eraser**
- **Five black or blue ballpoint pens (no gel ink)**
- **One box of 16 or 24 crayons, Crayola preferred**

***Pencils** - we have enough to fulfill this year





MST 2026 - Sunday, July 12th
our mission team ready to leave for
Umphumulo, South Africa.
Left to right: Pastor Michael Buller,
Evan Behrends, Jacob Klinghagen,
Quintin Berbure, Owen Rick,
Stella Shepersky, Josie Bjorkman,
Jailyn Mickelson, and Laura Hultstrum



FIREWOOD



Did you know that the MST group has a supply of firewood at the Lake Ripley Campground? You can support our group by purchasing a bundle or two when you are camping or if you just need some wood for a campfire on your own property! Wood costs \$5 per bundle and can be found in a shed located in the middle of the campground.



July 29 - August 2, 2026 MEEKER COUNTY FAIR

Join us at the fair and enjoy some
delicious food and fellowship.

Thank you for all of your support!
We greatly appreciate all
that you do for us!

We could not get there without your
support! ELCA Co-op MST 2028



We're looking for caring, enthusiastic volunteers to serve in our Children's Ministry! This is a wonderful opportunity to make a lasting impact by sharing God's love with the next generation.

Whether you enjoy teaching, assisting with activities, welcoming families, or helping behind the scenes, there's a place for you. No prior experience is necessary—we'll provide training and support.

If you're interested in serving or would like more information, please contact the church office 320-693-2487 or speak with the Heidi Thoma, our Christian Education Coordinator. We'd love to have you join the team!

Churchwide



August Worship Schedule

Sunday, August 2, 2026

10:45 am ELCA Co-op Worship at the
Meeker County Fair Bandstand
No service held at FLC

Wednesday, August 5, 2026

6:30 pm Worship w/Comm., Chapel

Sunday, August 9, 2026

9:00 am Worship w/Comm. & Baptism
at Lake Ripley, Jaycee Park
**Bring a chair.*
No service held at FLC

Wednesday, August 12, 2026

6:30 pm Worship w/Comm., Chapel

Sunday, August 16, 2026

9:00 am Worship w/Communion
10:00 am Fellowship and Coffee Hour

Wednesday, August 19, 2026

6:30 pm Worship w/Comm., Chapel

Sunday, August 23, 2026

9:00 am Worship w/Communion
10:00 am Fellowship and Coffee Hour

Wednesday, August 26, 2026

6:30 pm Worship w/Comm., Chapel

Sunday, August 30, 2026

9:00 am Worship w/Communion
10:00 am Fellowship and Coffee Hour



Special Dates....

- Purple Heart Day, August 7, 2026

VIEW OUR CHURCH DIRECTORY ON YOUR MOBILE DEVICE!

FREE App for iPhone, iPad & Android

Our church directory is a great resource tool that allows you to get to know our church family better!

Simply go to the App Store, search for *Instant Church Directory* and download the FREE app to begin.

Enter your email listed in the directory, and click "Send Secure Sign-In Link." Check your email, and click the "Log in to Instant Church Directory" button.

If you're not listed in the directory, OR if you have trouble logging into the app, please contact the church office.

Available on the App Store | GET IT ON Google play

Call the church office with any questions. 320-693-2487

MOVIE NIGHT

Saturday, August 15, 2026

5:00 p.m.

Holy Word Theater, FLC

Movie: TBD....

Please join us for a good movie and popcorn.
Please bring your own beverage.



Cable TV Broadcast Schedule

Cable TV broadcasts worship services from the prior week. There is a Lutheran Worship Service broadcast every day of the week at 11am except Saturday! These services are broadcast at 11am on Community Access Cable TV: Channel 7 Mediacom and Channel 13 Nuvera.

August 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
First Evangelical Lutheran Church 703 South Sibley Ave Litchfield, MN 55355 320-693-2487						1 MST Food Stand, Meeker County Fair 10:30 am – 2:00 pm Private Event, Chilstrom Hall
2 MST Food Stand 10:45 am ELCA COOP Worship Service, Meeker County Fair, Bandstand <i>No service held at FLC</i>	3 6:00 pm TBI Support Group	4 7:30 am BREW 2 pm Worship, Meeker Mnr. 5 – 7:30 pm National Night Out, Central Park, Litchfield 6:30 pm NA – Chapel	5 8:30 am Staff Mtg. 6:30 pm Worship w/ Comm., Chapel	6 7:55 am “Open Gate” KLFD 9:00 am Women’s Bible Study	7	8 8:00 am Men’s Group
9 9:00 am Worship w/Comm, Lake Ripley, Jaycee Park <i>No service held at FLC</i>	10 6:00 pm TBI Support Group	11 7:30 am BREW 5:30 pm Worship Team Mtg 6:30 pm NA – Chapel 6:30 pm Exec. Team Mtg. 7:00 pm Team Meetings	12 8:30 am Staff Mtg. 6:30 pm Worship w/ Comm., Chapel	13 7:55 am “Open Gate” KLFD 9:00 am Women’s Bible Study 3:30 pm Guitar/Jam Group	14	15 5:00 pm Movie Night, Holy Word Theater
16 9:00 am Worship w/Comm 10:00 am Fellowship & Coffee	17 6:00 pm TBI Support Group	18 7:30 am BREW 6:30 pm NA – Chapel 7:00 pm Church Council	19 8:30 am Staff Mtg. 6:30 pm Worship w/ Comm., Chapel	20 7:55 am “Open Gate” KLFD WELCA FUN-DAY, Church Basement Ladies Play, Plymouth Playhouse	21	22 8:00 am Men’s Group
23 9:00 am Worship w/Comm, & Baptism, Evan Lucas 10:00 am Fellowship & Coffee	24 6:00 pm TBI Support Group	25 7:30 am BREW 5:30 pm MST Comm. Mtg. 6:30 pm NA – Chapel	26 8:30 am Staff Mtg. 6:30 pm Worship w/ Comm., Chapel	27 7:55 am “Open Gate” KLFD 9:00 am Women’s Bible Study	28	29
30 9:00 am Worship w/Comm 10:00 am Fellowship & Coffee	31 6:00 pm TBI Support Group	Pastor Michael will be on vacation Aug. 10 – 19 Pastor Tom will be on vacation Aug. 25 – Sept 1				

Serving Group & Birthdays

AUGUST 2026 SERVING GROUP

Chairs:

Mattie Baumgartner	Jill White
David & Darlene Meidal	Travis & Breanna Whitcomb
Marilyn Swanson	Chad & Deb Zeppelin
Charlene Tancabel	Kristi Ziegler
Heidi Thoma	Abby Adams
Gaylene Thomas	Jim & Barb Alsleben
Tammy Thompson	Carl & Brenda Anderson
Dianne Thorp	Scott & Joan Anderson
Betty Urdahl	James & Elva Asmus
Gary and Carolyn Vollmer	George & Helen Baldwin
Jan Wagoner	Jeff & Lori Ballard

August Ushers

Derek Isaacson
Duane Farmer
Wayne Carlson



August
Open



AUGUST 1

Kim Evenson
Michael Hemingway
Breanna Huikko
Kyle Kramer
Tyler Wagner

AUGUST 2

Brian Boll
Alexa Desens
Austin Elj
Nicholas Lundin

AUGUST 3

Joseph Thiele

AUGUST 4

Donald Hokanson
Karla Kadelbach
Hunter Keppers
Tyler Sommerfeld

AUGUST 5

Sacia Matheson
Gordon Burdick
Henry Weimer

AUGUST 6

Steven Durkee
Lola Schlenger
Teresa Stille
Heidi Thoma

AUGUST 7

Douglas Desens
Darlene Klabunde

AUGUST 8

Paulette Biermann
Stephanie Herzog
Susan Lemmer
Antonia Barrick
Daniel Walberg

AUGUST 9

Michael Boyle
Megan Larson
Cayden Lease

AUGUST 10

Trinity Meyer
Abbigail Thoma

AUGUST 11

Sean Koehn
Theresa Hoff
Gayle Madsen
Hayden Miller
Katie Kreger
Dylan Schutz
Patricia Westphall

AUGUST 12

Darlene Henkelman
Amber Hoff
Casey Hoff
Dylan Madsen
Evan Matheson
Cindy McKedney

AUGUST 13

Sue Fenton
RJ Geffre
Jennifer Hanson

AUGUST 14

Jason Isaacson
Brittany Burdick
Derek Fruetel
Dennis Hanson
Heidi Kerstein
Janelle Quast

AUGUST 15

Karla Rick
Chase Kowalczyk

AUGUST 16

Elliana Blackowiak
Amy Olson
Nicholas Steinhaus

AUGUST 17

Savannah Bearl
Alison DeWolf
Melissa Hoffmann
Sandra Johnson

AUGUST 18

Kipp Kleinschmidt
Chance Rodriguez

AUGUST 19

Alexander Draeger

AUGUST 20

Noah Hanson

AUGUST 21

Mary Desens
Sandra Hickman

AUGUST 22

James Alsleben
Laurie Koehn

AUGUST 23

Tristen Eberling

AUGUST 24

Griffin Butler
Winton Nelson
Janet Smith
Scott Stradtman

AUGUST 25

Shannon Asmus
Danny Estrada
Janell Haiwick
Wendy Halverson
Trevor Isaacson
Johnny Magedanz
Brandon Stille

AUGUST 26

Cody Beavers
Lowell Goodrich

AUGUST 27

Stuart Busse

AUGUST 28

AUGUST 29

Michael Boll
Nathan Harvego
Kole Herzog
Larry Radunz
Karlyn Sackett

AUGUST 30

Brandon Burdick
Amy Sherwood

AUGUST 31

Kayla Housman
Sylvia Nelson
Ricky Schutz

Our Church is to Be Sold



Our church is to be sold! That statement may sound alarming at first, but rest assured, we are not facing foreclosure or financial trouble. Instead, our church has been planted with a purpose that reaches far beyond its walls and membership. It exists to serve the wider community and to share the hope of Christ with those who may not yet know him. That calling presents us with an exciting challenge.

Our church must be "sold" to the unchurched. There are many people in our community who would gladly worship, serve and grow alongside us if they simply knew what our church offers. Often, the greatest barrier is not resistance, but lack of invitation.

Each of us represents our church every day through our words, attitudes and actions. How much do we value its ministry? How much do we treasure the message of Christ it proclaims? If our church has encouraged us, supported us and helped shape our faith, that story is worth sharing.

Being enthusiastic does not require polished speeches or sales tactics. It simply means speaking honestly about what our church means to us and inviting others to experience it for themselves. When we take our church seriously and talk openly about its mission, we help open doors for others to discover faith, community and hope they did not know they were missing.

Author Unknown

Garden Produce Sharing



The Social Ministry Team invites you to drop off or pick up, fresh garden veggies and fruit during the summer and fall growing season.

Let us once again share our produce with one another!

A table is located in the southeast (Sunday School) entrance, Door #4.

Thanks to all who participated last season.

Enjoy the harvest!

WELCA MINUTES JULY 16, 2026

WELCA met on July 16, 2026, in the Chilstrom Hall with Betty Allen calling the meeting to order. The Purpose Statement was recited. Devotions were given by Betty.

Kris Nelson made a motion to accept the Secretary's report as printed with a second by Dee Bollin. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's report was approved as printed with a motion by LaVerne Decker and a second by Sue Lemmer. Motion carried.

A letter was read from the Meeker Area Food Shelf. During the month of July for every monetary donation they receive, Open Your Hearts to the Hungry and Homeless will give them an additional grant. This grant is designated for the purchase of food and will help them keep their shelves bountiful for those who have empty plates at home. Dee Bollin made a motion to donate \$500 to the Food Shelf and Lana Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Another letter was received from U-Cap to help with purchasing school supplies for area youth. Sue Lemmer made a motion to donate \$250 to U-Cap with a second by Marlys Elam. Motion carried.

Pastor Tom said he was approached by the **Rainbow Singers** who are hosting their **150th Anniversary** on November 8th at 3 pm. They wanted to know if the women would be interested in hosting a gathering, after the concert. Pastor is going to find out more information regarding the duties. We said we would be willing to serve coffee and set the tables. He will let us know further details after his meeting.

Our August Funday is August 20th. The bus will load at 10 am and we will depart at 10:15 for the Cities. Everyone must be on time. As of today, there are still two tickets available for purchase for \$66.10 each.

Dates to Remember: Aug. 2nd - Sunday Worship at the Fair Bandshell, 10:45 am
Aug. 4th - National Night Out - 5 pm, Central Park
Free hot dogs at First Luth. stand
Aug. 9th - Sunday Morning Service at Lake Ripley, 9 am
Aug. 20th - WELCA Funday – August 20th – Plymouth Playhouse
Load bus at 10 am – Bus leaves at 10:15 sharp
Sept 17th - WELCA meeting 1:30 pm

On our program list was to clean the kitchen, and by an unanimous decision we decided to skip that and have coffee and dessert instead because of the heat! Thank you to Lana and Kris for serving.

The Lord's Prayer and Table Prayer were recited and the meeting was adjourned!

Respectively submitted,

Sue Lemmer, Secretary





Be still, Receive God's Love, Embrace
God's Word, Welcome the Day.
B.R.E.W.
meets every **Tuesday morning at**
7:30 a.m. with Pastor Tom



Fun Day: August 20, 2026
Plymouth Playhouse,
"Church Basement Ladies"

BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT GROUP: HEALING TOGETHER

Living with a brain injury can feel
overwhelming, but you don't have to
face it alone.



JOIN OUR SUPPORT GROUP:

No pressure — just support, at your pace.

Meetings are held:

- Mondays
- 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
- First Lutheran Church
- 703 Sibley Ave. S. Litchfield, MN 55355



**If you're interested in joining or have questions,
Please reach out:**

Martin Engelke –President, Peaces of Mind
Findpeacesofmind@gmail.com
Peaces of Mind, a 501(c)(3)/LLC



PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR MEN AND WOMEN IN THE MILITARY:

*Our members known to be in the military are:

Staff Sgt. US Army, Zachary Olimb, Fort Sam Houston,
San Antonio, TX; grandson of Lil Madson

Staff Sgt. Matthew Wiechmann, stationed at Fort Drum,
NY; son of Virgil and Jamie Wiechmann

LCpl Nickolas Peterson, USMC, Camp Pendleton,
Oceanside, CA, son of Buddy and Kate Peterson.

PV. 2 Raigan Miller, Fort Rucker, AL, daughter of Andy
and Sara Miller, granddaughter of Carol Dragt

Welcome Home! to those of you who now have returned
to the States. Thank you all for your service!!

***Please let the office know if titles, locations, and/or
addresses have changed for any of the above.**



Please keep our shut-in members in your prayers,

Lois Rusch, Meeker Manor

Jutta Goodrich, Litchfield, in own home

Gordon "Bud" Johnson, Richard Allen,
VA HealthCare, St. Cloud

Elois Johnson, Hilltop Health Center, Watkins

Calling All Guitar Players

(Ukeleles and Bass Guitars welcome too!)

*For the love of music, come to the next regular
meeting of the FLC Guitar/Jam Group
every *2nd Thursday of the month (3:45-5 pm)*

*Contact Brad Connor or the church office
if interested!*

Save your greeting cards!

They can be recycled! They will take the whole
card or you can cut off the signed names, if you
wish. I will drop them off at the Senior Center in
Hutchinson. **No Christmas Cards please.**

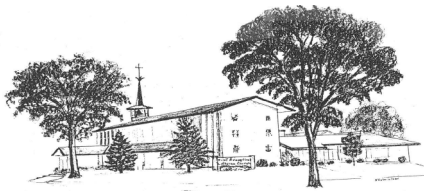
Thank you! Elaine Lenhard

FIRST NEWS is a monthly publication of: First Evangelical Lutheran Church,
703 S. Sibley Ave. Litchfield, MN 55355

Please send submissions to: The Church Office by August 15, 2026

For the NEXT ISSUE: September 2026

Email: firstoffice@firstlitchfield.org



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FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
703 South Sibley Avenue • Litchfield, MN 55355

Address Service Requested

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Organization
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Permit NO. 1
Litchfield, MN
55355



Ministry Staff:

Rev. Tom Evenson, Senior Pastor
firstsr@firstlitchfield.org

Rev. Micheal Buller, Associate Pastor
firstap@firstlitchfield.org

Heidi Thoma, Education Coordinator
christian.ed@firstlitchfield.org

Judy Berglund, Office Manager
firstoffice@firstlitchfield.org

Carol Heath, Financial Secretary
firsttr@firstlitchfield.org

Carol Dragt, Director of Music
firstmusic@firstlitchfield.org

Katie Hultstrum, Choir Co-Director

Joan Anderson, Choir Co-Director

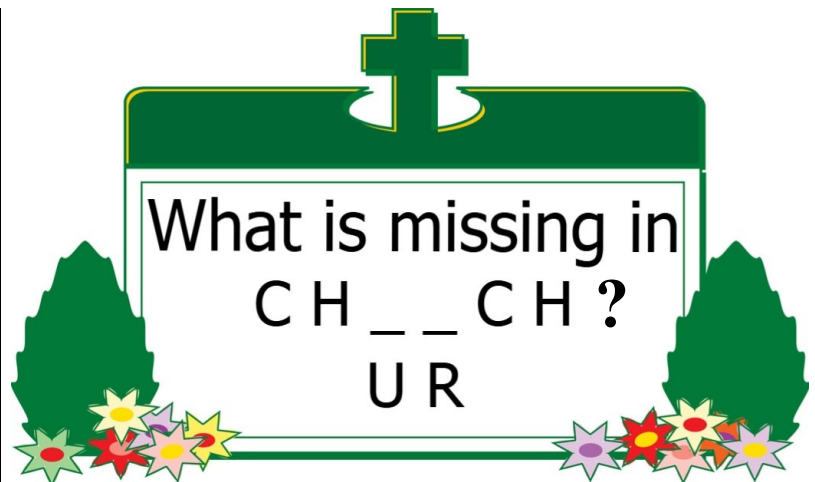
Jodi Findley, Organist

Kipp Kleinschmidt, Media Director
firstmedia@firstlitchfield.org

Scott Nelson, Custodian

Joel Ramthun, Custodian

First Lutheran Church Office: 320-693-2487
LIKE us on Facebook/ Follow us on Youtube!



Join Us on:

Sunday, August 2nd
10:45 AM

Meeker County Fair Grounds
&

Sunday, August 9th
9:00 AM

Lake Ripley, Jaycee Park