

# The Herald

## March 2026

First Lutheran Church, St. Paul, MN, established 1854

Time Change!  
Spring back  
March 8th!



Vol.172, No.3



## A Pilgrimage of Peace!

Life is a mixed bag! Am I right? We are living in a culture right now of massive job loss, inflation climbing, the deportation of immigrants and refugees, and rights being taken away from our LGBTQIA+ siblings, particularly those who are TRANS. Then there is the destruction of so many departments in our federal government that threaten everyone's rights to health care, access to food and education, and even access to public parks — all of this just so the rich can become richer.

It is into this fray, that Jesus comes to gift us with a journey through life that is vitally necessary in this time. In the past few weeks, as we have journeyed with Jesus, he has spent time alone on a mountaintop praying and then comes down the mountaintop to speak the words of what we now call the beatitudes. He then goes about healing and teaching, and having conversations with people along the way that reveals a new way of being in the world - love for the whole world! It is in holding this truth of love for the whole world that we discover how important it is to “belong.” God invites us today to create new places of belonging, places of sharing, of peace and of kindness, places where no-one needs to defend themselves; places where each one is loved and accepted with one's own fragility, abilities and disabilities.

This understanding of a way to be in the world has sustained me in all the years of my life since my birth! Oh sure, there have been times and seasons when the journey, the pilgrimage, gets interrupted, but even then I know that the love between us persists and communities of faith keep on gathering in order to know their belovedness AND the belovedness of every person and every living thing. It is this “knowing that we are loved” that literally drives us to want this for every human being on the planet. We literally spend time on the mountain with God in love and then spend time in the valleys and plains in love for each other.

In the next weeks, we will participate in this pilgrimage of peace during the season of Lent — the season preceding Easter. We will take a hard look at the world and the hurt we carry AND we will take a look at the awesomeness of creation and the creator in order to find hope! You are invited into this pilgrimage as we journey together in worship on Sundays followed by soup and community...and then walking out into the world to see what can be done as a community to bring hope to this hurting world. Whatever it is, when we do it together in community, we are helping create “belonging” for everyone.

Sending you love and light on the journey,

*Pastor Chris*



# First Lutheran Church presents... A Pilgrimage of Peace 2026

Lent at First Lutheran Church  
St. Paul, MN  
"A Pilgrimage of Peace"

**Ash Wednesday, February 18**  
**Being Human!**  
Noon 12 pm, Meal & Worship

**Soup, Story, and Song Sundays**  
Following worship

Feb. 22, **The Open Road**

March 1, **Taking and Leaving**

March 8, **In the Moment**

March 15, **Belonging**

March 22, **Life and Death**



**Holy Week**

**Palm Sunday, March 29 10:00am**  
Palm Sunday Worship  
10:45am Breakfast

**Maundy Thursday, April 2**  
7:00 pm Worship  
Stripping the Altar

**Good Friday, April 3**  
6:00pm, Joint Choir Rehearsal  
7:00pm, Worship  
First Lutheran Church

**Easter Sunday, April 5 10:00am**  
Festive Worship  
with Brass

# Easter Sunday April 5, 10:00am

Festive Worship  
with Brass, Bells, & Choir  
and a beautiful  
Easter Memorial Garden



Clip the form below if you'd like to give to the Easter Flower Garden and send in with your donation and names of people you'd like to honor...

## *Easter Garden at First Lutheran Church 2026*

Living Welcome, Wellness and Worship

It is the tradition at First Lutheran to decorate our worship space with Spring Flowers that have been given in memory or in honor of loved ones. Your gift fills the sanctuary with the colors of the Easter season, and after our Easter worship, we invite you to take a flower home and enjoy it in your own home!

If you are interested in designating flowers in a loved one's memory or honor, please complete this form and either send it in to the church office (464 Maria Ave., St. Paul, MN 55106 or drop in the offering plate by **Wednesday, Apr. 1st**. There will also be memorial garden envelopes located in the narthex on Sunday morning.

I would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ flowers for the Easter Garden.

At a suggested donation of \$25 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

For the printed bulletin, please designate:

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Given by \_\_\_\_\_



*Thank you for your donation!*

# 44 YEARS!



We Celebrate our organist,  
John Petraborg  
Sunday, March 8, 2026  
following worship  
Good food & a time of roasting

**SPIRIT QUEST CONFIRMATION** will be a time of learning during the season of Lent and beyond for those in Jr. & Sr. High and interested Adults! This includes Camp Wapo in the Summer and a Fall Rite of Passage confirming your faith 44 YEARS!. Contact Pastor Chris or Pastor Stanley to register. We celebrate the beginning of a lifelong search for meaning and a spiritual life.

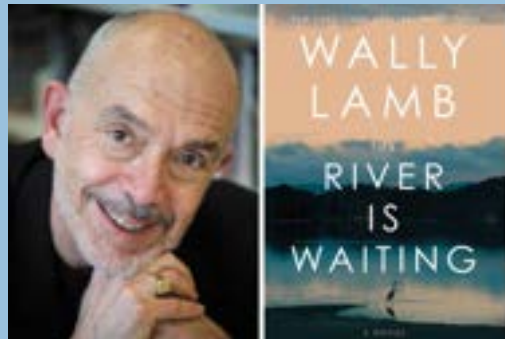


**LITTLES AND PEEPS!** A Children's, Parents, and Siblings group focused on the "Littles" in our midst and the "Peeps" who love them! Beginning in March! Stick around after worship & join in. **BONUS:** Soup lunch (and easy to eat snacks) during Lent!

# Looking Ahead...

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY RETURNS! 10:00am in the Conference Room beginning Tuesday, March 3rd, 2026...and ZOOM BIBLE STUDY, each Thursday evening at 7:00pm.

STITCH ENRICH! A Sewing/Mending/Craft Group led by Laura Rose Paradis — our resident mender and sewing expert will be on hand Saturday, March 21, 9:30am - 12:30pm. Learn a new craft and/or bring some mending as we learn about the “slow clothes” movement. Call or text Pastor Chris, 651-247-8926.



Join us for Book Club, Thursday, March 26, 10:00am. We'll be reading the book... “River Is Waiting,” by Wally Lamb. A novel following a young father grappling with unbearable tragedy as he searches for hope, redemption, and the possibility of forgiveness. We'll have some snacks and something to drink. Hope you can come! Bring a friend or two!

## Nametags are Important!

Naming has been done since the beginning of creation. So, we claim our names together! They help us get to know each other and declare safety for our LGBTQIA+ siblings. We are in the process of getting magnetic name tags with pronouns. Sign up for these following worship in the back of the sanctuary.,



**First Name  
Last Name  
Pronouns**

First Lutheran Church

We encourage the wearing of name tags on Sundays with pronouns. There are paper nametags in the back if you need one.

## Interested in membership?

Fill out a membership form and we will contact you. Thanks for your interest. We will do our best to answer your questions, like “what is an RIC Congregation? What is the ELCA? What is a progressive Lutheran? How do I engage in the activities of this community? Come join us! We'd love to get to know you better!

# Giving Opportunities:

As our project punch list continues to be completed, thanks to much work and many volunteers, March is full of meaningful ways to live into our shared ministry and mission:

## **Outfitting Our Kids' Spaces**

As renovations continue, we are seeking financial donations to help furnish our children's ministry rooms with cleanable, durable furniture, soft toys, and worship and faith-learning materials — especially books. These spaces will nurture the next generation's faith, curiosity, and belonging. You can give online at [www.eastsidefirst.com](http://www.eastsidefirst.com)

## **Soup, Story & Song (Lenten Sundays)**

Bring a pot of soup to share for one of our Lenten Sunday lunches. This simple act of hospitality makes space for conversation, storytelling, and singing as we journey toward Easter together.

## **Movers & Makers Crew**

Our dedicated volunteers continue meeting Wednesdays from 9–11 a.m. to tackle ongoing projects. There is always something to sand, paint, assemble, or organize — and many hands make light (and joyful!) work.

## **Supporting Our Immigrant Community**

We remain committed to walking alongside our immigrant neighbors both within and beyond our church family. You can donate online or bring food donations to CLUES (Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio) on Mondays from 4–6 p.m.

**Good Friday and Easter “Holy Lightning Choir”** Several opportunities are coming to sing in the “Holy Lightning Choir” (watch for rehearsal details) The choir will sing on Good Friday, April 3, 7pm and Easter Sunday, April 5, 10am

Every act of generosity — whether a financial gift, a pot of soup, singing in the choir, a few volunteer hours, or a bag of groceries — helps embody the love of Christ in tangible ways. Thank you for being part of it.



# THE NAMING PROJECT

LOCATION: MINNESOTA  
JULY 26-31, 2026

Register at: [WWW.THENAMINGPROJECT.ORG](http://WWW.THENAMINGPROJECT.ORG)

A Christian Camp for LGBTQIA+ youth



## 2026 Youth at Camp Wapo July 7-9, Grades 1-3 July 19-24, Grades 4-9

Summer is fast approaching and youth from First Lutheran will once again have a chance to spend a week at Camp Wapo for faith-filled fun and learning! Last year we had 6 youth attend, and we're looking forward to those six youth becoming more and growing our opportunities for young families at First! Camp is outreach! Camp

is evangelism! Camp is hope for the present and future of the church! With this in mind, we're trying to raise money for camp scholarships, so that no one is turned away from camp. Coming up in March, we will have a breakfast to raise scholarship dollars for camp on Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026. We have an individual that has offered to match funds raised, up to \$3000! Will you help us reach our goal of \$6000? We're already half way there!

STAFF NAME	RESPONSIBILITY	EMAIL	PHONE
Christine Olson Bingea	Pastor	<a href="mailto:pastor.chris@me.com">pastor.chris@me.com</a>	651-247-8926
Stanley Ayashim	Pastor	<a href="mailto:pastor.ayashim@icloud.com">pastor.ayashim@icloud.com</a>	651-492-7785
Kristin Wolla	Business Admin & Bell Director	<a href="mailto:kristinwolla@gmail.com">kristinwolla@gmail.com</a>	651-776-7210
Brenda Olson Bingea	Development Director	<a href="mailto:brendajolson@mac.com">brendajolson@mac.com</a>	651-247-0360
Ellen Hacker	Organist		



First Lutheran Church  
464 Maria Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55106-4428

*Return Service Requested*



Sunday Mornings...At First Lutheran Church  
10:00 AM - Worship onsite  
followed by Community Refreshment  
[www.eastsidefirst.com](http://www.eastsidefirst.com) for updates  
and ways to donate



A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's Work. Our Hands. [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)



A Reconciling in Christ Congregation open and affirming to LGBTQIA+ folks  
and celebrating Black, Brown, and Indigenous leadership.  
[www.reconcilingworks.org](http://www.reconcilingworks.org)



A partner with the Eastside Health & Well-Being Collaborative aiming to  
achieve wide-spread and equitable well-being in the East Metro.  
[eastsidehealth.org](http://eastsidehealth.org)