



FOCUS AT FIRST

Fall/October 2020 Quarterly Newsletter

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

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

October

First Communion Worship—Oct 11th

Affirmation Sunday—October 25th

November

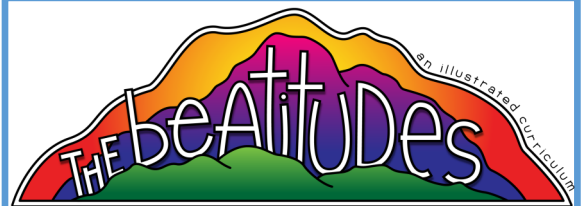
Advent Begins—November 29th

December

Although we don't know what the future brings, please continue to watch the weekly announcements and website for the most up to date information.

Inside this Issue

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| Congregational Life | 2-3 |
| Faith Formation | 4-5 |
| Stewardship | 6 |
| Gifts & Memorials | 7 |
| Outreach | 8-9 |
| Member Care | 10-11 |
| Financials | 12-13 |
| First Lutheran News | 14 |



Don't forget to join us each Sunday until Advent.

Also be sure to join the Bible Study each Wednesday evening at 7:00pm on Zoom and via Facebook Live.

WELCOME TO GOD'S FAMILY!!

Mayzie Burdick

September 14, 2020

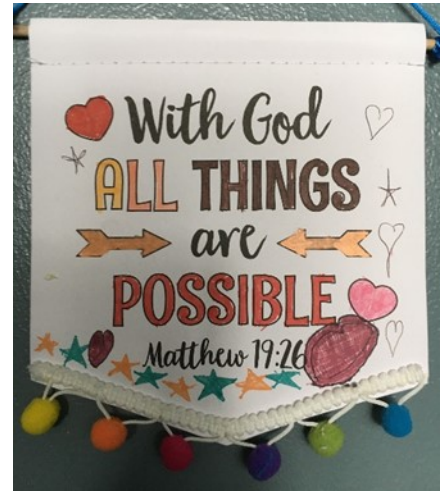


FROM THE BALCONY

Greetings First Lutheran Friends.

I'm writing this in September with the knowledge that the virus will still be with us when you read this next month. The feelings of disappointment, anxiousness, fear, frustration, and maybe anger may remain with us. When I accepted this position, I couldn't imagine the world we see today. I still look to the picture we have on display at the church. It gives me courage, at times of doubt, when I can't answer questions from those in need of relief.

All things ARE possible with the Lord and it reinforces my belief that we all can receive help with our feelings if we only ask for it.



Psalm 62: 1

God the one and only – I'll wait as long as He says. Everything I need comes from Him, so why not? He's solid rock under my feet, breathing room for my soul, an impregnable castle: I'm set for life.

We must trust in the Lord to carry us through this difficult time. That trust may be the only thing we can really believe in with all the information we are exposed to. We are a strong church family. Let's live life bravely and truly trust in God.

Mike Otto

Council President



FROM THE PASTOR

2 Corinthians 4:16 – So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day.

Dear Church,

These are certainly crazy times we are living in! We are entering into our sixth month of pandemic disruption. A COVIDcation for many who are finding the time and a needed distraction to punch a few house projects off the list. For others, this has been a devastating disturbance to life as they struggle with loss of income due to joblessness and quarantine shutdowns resulting in homelessness and food insecurity; anxiety has been heightened with leaders and parents making hard decisions that may impact the health and wellbeing of self and family; and illness and death caused by the COVID virus. There is certainly much reason to lose heart.

Here in the Midwest we sit-by watching our outer nature waste away as fires consume homes to the West and winds and water destroy communities to our East. The political fighting happening in our Nation as well as our community. The issue of health and safety that has resulted in neighbors attacking neighbors over if a person should wear a face mask or not. The brutality by police officers who took an oath to serve and protect those in need that has resulted in needless harm and senseless killing. The looting, rioting, burning of buildings and businesses as both an act of anger and destruction. The racial justice issues and systemic corruption of America. There is much reason to lose heart.

Yet, even still, we see our Barron community being renewed more and more with every day we draw breath. We have seen neighbors meeting neighbors for the first time. Bears sitting in house windows as signs of support for our school aged children. Chalk drawings thanking those who are serving the sick and the dying. Cards and signs to encourage those in resident homes who have been confined to their rooms to protect their health. Peaceful and impactful protests against racial injustices. These and so many more ways Barron has come closer together demonstrating how we are “Small Town Strong.”

Together here at First Lutheran Church we have drawn on the deep wisdom of our faith for strength and courage. Through these past six months we have bore witness to experiencing anakainoo in life, practice, and faith. Anakainoo, translated “renewed” in 2 Corinthians 4:16, refers to how we are currently experiencing being changed into a new kind of life by a force outside of our selves. Here, we see the Holy Spirit influencing our lives, and shaping our hearts. Through these times we are continually being renewed, being changed, little by little. With every decision we choose and every action we make the Spirit is bring about a renewal of our soul. As we look around and see so many examples of how our world, our lives, are wasting away; even if our own personal life and health is being threatened, our inner nature is being renewed.

As a congregation we are experiencing the fruition in part of that renewal. We experienced the first time our congregation has come together with 20 volunteers calling every member of our church to simply ask “how you doing?” and “what do you need?”. We learned about the depth of our Compassion as Christians with a congregational initiative “Compassion Camp.” This was so successful we are going to attempt to repeat a similar offering as we will spend intentional time learning about the Beatitudes. Our congregation has been shaped little by little with the expansion of our online worship service and Bible Studies that continue to reach more people today than we did before the pandemic began. Much of what we had done 7 months ago is different today. Some of which are just temporary aides to get us through to the other side, while other parts we will keep for the long-term. While no one knows what will happen in the future, we can rest assured that our future is held secure in our God who made us and daily works in us to renew us and give us the strength we need to face today’s challenges. May the assured strength of our Father in Heaven, the compassion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the providence of the Holy Spirit renew you day by day.

Loving Others First because God First Loved Us
Pastor Ron



WHAT'S HAPPENING DURING FALL 2020?



CHECK OUT THESE PLANS FOR FIRST'S "FAITH INSTRUCTION FROM HOME"!

AUGUST

SCHOOLS AND S'MORES!

We will bless kids "Returning to Learning" with a Blessing Kit. Kits will be blessed during worship on Aug. 30th at 9:00am. We are praying for our First Lutheran learners!

Then... be sure to pick up your Blessing Kit that evening between 5:30-7:30pm! The Kolpack's are hosting a Socially-Distanced-S'mores Party at their home (786 Pine St.) for all First Lutheran Friends!



SEPTEMBER

BEATITUDES AND BIBLES

On Sept. 13th we kick-off "The Beatitudes," a 12-week series of learning and discussion for the whole congregation! Resources will be provided for Sunday School families to grow in their faith from home. More details to come!



Then, mark your calendar for Sept. 27th as we celebrate a Bible Blessing milestone for our Kindergarten and 3rd grade friends! Bibles will be blessed during worship at 9:00am. Bible classes will be held over Zoom for students..

OCTOBER

COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION

This spring we were unable to celebrate our First Communion milestone. We are excited to now celebrate this! The class will be held for new 6th graders over Zoom on Thursday, Oct. 1st. Students and their immediate families will celebrate their First Communion in person during worship on Sunday, Oct. 11th!

Students who have completed Confirmation instruction will celebrate Affirmation Sunday during worship on Sunday, Oct. 25th.



NOVEMBER

ALL SAINT'S AND ADVENT

We will kick off the month by celebrating All Saint's Sunday during worship on Nov. 1st.

Then, we will close out November with the beginning of Advent on Nov. 29th. Ornament-making, Advent learning resources, and a virtual Christmas

MORE INFORMATION HEADED YOUR WAY ABOUT THESE EVENTS SOON!

Learn more! Visit www.firstlutheran-barron.org or find @FLCBarron on Facebook!

FAITH FORMATION—YOUTH MINISTRY

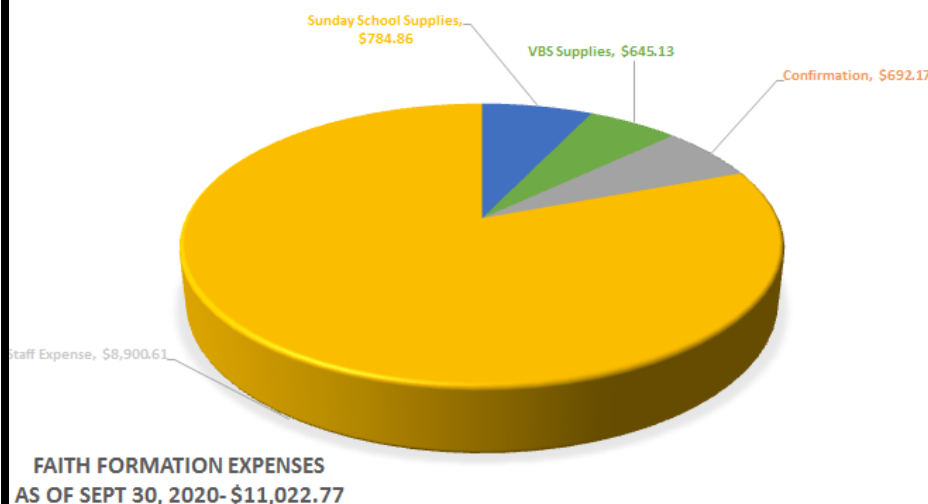
Confirmation 2020-21: Our confirmation youth ministry began in September with an orientation session held via Zoom. Pastor Ron along with Vicar Lucy will be teaching large group lessons weekly at 6pm through Zoom. Our small groups, led by Carsten and Sally Ellison, Kristi Pedersen, Andrew Harrington and Staci Marvin will be meeting weekly at various times.

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. — Philippians 4:6



Summer Mission Trips Summer 2021: We are hopeful that our middle school youth will be able to travel to Duluth July 25-30, 2021 and our high school youth will travel to Niagara Falls, NY July 9-18, 2021 for mission trips serving those in need. Our ELCA National Youth Gathering planned to take place in Minneapolis is being postponed until the summer of 2022.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH 2020: Affirmation Sunday, which was originally scheduled in the spring, was postponed until the fall. The new date for **Affirmation Sunday is October 25th**. Please mark this date on your calendar and pray that we will be able to worship together in celebration of our youth affirming their faith in Christ.



STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

These have been interesting and challenging times for us all. While our challenges are as varied as our contexts, through it all the steadfastness of our Lord remains. In response to all that our Lord has done, we respond in boldness and generosity. *THANK YOU for your financial support to make the mission of FLC possible to Love Others First Because God First Loved Us.* Your involvement in the variety of ministries of our congregation and gracious donations for collection initiatives like our summer CASA Closet items, the LWR School Kits happening right now, and everything else in-between has been amazing. We especially want to highlight and thank the generosity of several donors who each pledged over \$5,000 during this difficult time so we could purchase equipment to improve the quality of our Livestreaming ministry. With stay-at-home orders and discouraged gathering statements issued these past couple months, our digital ministries have become even more important. Thank you for responding to God's grace in your lives in the various ways you have been called to do so!

What we are doing is making a difference in our town and larger community and is made possible because you are a part of it! Thanks to your financial support of our Mission Plan along with our qualified Paycheck Protect Program, we are weathering the pandemic well. However, at present we are roughly \$13,000 behind in our budget. To ensure our current ministry capacity continues and in order to consider future needs, we would like to offer a \$5 a week challenge to our members. Could you consider increasing your giving to FLC by just \$5 a week? If every household accepted this challenge, we would raise \$13,000 by the end of the year. A \$5 a week donation would mean over \$52,000 increase to our Ministry Plan next year. Consider the needs that we have right now that are going unmet in our church, in Barron, and our County and how FLC can meet those needs with this increase!

Loving Others First, Because God First Loved Us

Finance Committee



GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

For Gift from the Heart

| | |
|----------|--|
| \$25.00 | In memory of David Cusick by David and Debbie Olsen |
| \$100.00 | In honor of the many wonderful people at FLC by an anonymous donor |

For Youth

| | |
|---------|---|
| \$25.00 | In memory of Rev CP Thronson & Rev Alf Hjemboe by Dan Alexander |
|---------|---|

For Undesignated

| | |
|----------|---|
| \$200.00 | In memory of Leroy Nevin |
| \$50.00 | In memory of Joe Fall by Peter & Diane Fall |
| \$100.00 | In memory of Joe Fall by Betty Ritchie |
| \$50.00 | In memory of Gladys Hansen by Melanie Miller & Georgia Geiger |

Paper Order In thanksgiving for the Sunday streaming from Donna & Roger Jones

For Live streaming

| | |
|-----------|-----------------------|
| \$1000.00 | by an anonymous donor |
|-----------|-----------------------|

For WELCA

| | |
|----------|---|
| \$150.00 | In honor of all the WELCA members by an anonymous donor |
|----------|---|

CASA \$1,042.00

Thrivent \$19.00

Cemetery Fund \$50.00

Malawi \$125.00



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!

OUTREACH

A NEW FACE FOR OUTREACH– THE SAME GOAL!

“Loving Our Neighbor”

Thank you, Kristi Pedersen for keeping us abreast on The Gift From the Heart!



The Gift From the Heart committee is looking ahead to this year's Christmas season. We are in the middle of a very unusual year with the Covid-19 pandemic that has affected how we gather with others and do business in our communities! We were unable to hold our one and only fundraiser this year, which is our Brat Sale. That was a loss for us knowing that families' needs will be as great or greater this year than in years past.

We are planning to have our hearts be virtual this year. Each church will be handling that aspect a little differently so watch for further information from your church! We hope to have virtual hearts available November 22nd – December 6th. Gifts would need to be turned in by noon on Saturday December 12th.

We understand many of you might be hesitant in taking a heart this year because of getting out to do your shopping and or not being comfortable with online shopping. If that is the case, please consider donating monetarily as a way to still support the children of the Barron School District!

As always, we are still looking for waterproof mittens and gloves in children's sizes-adult sizes.

We can't thank you enough because without your support Gift From the Heart would not be able to continue its work!

Sincerely,

Gift From the Heart Committee

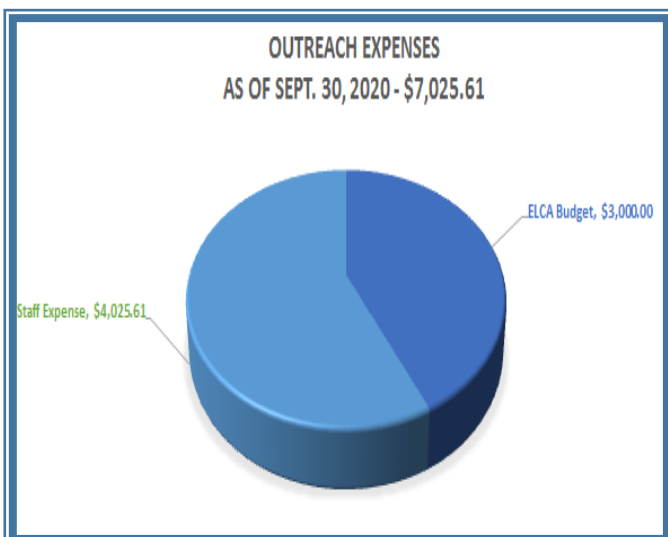


Jail Ministry—Bud Thorsen continues to keep in touch with the Barron County Jail. All programs are on hold until further notice.



Respectfully submitted,
Outreach Committee

**Thank you to Barb Javener for making the adorable the
Comfort Care Creatures for CASA to give to the kids**



OUTREACH CONTINUED....



I need
Hope



**\$1,200 SUPPORTS
ONE CHILD**

Approximately 100 children are currently waiting for a **CASA** in Barron County

CASA of Western Wisconsin is a non-profit 501C3 funded 100% on donations

We are fiscally responsible. As the only 5 county **CASA** in WI, we spend less on payroll - one ED salary split 5 ways - and more on our children!

CASA of Western Wisconsin is part of a nationwide network that began in 1977 by a judge

Your donation supports children in Barron County

Mission Statement

CASA of Western Wisconsin serves as the voice for abused and/or neglected children through high quality advocacy delivered by community based volunteers.

Your generosity provides HOPE

CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocate

Every \$1,200 received allows us to train and assign another **CASA** advocate to a child in desperate need of a safe and loving home and a future filled with hope.

CASA advocates are highly trained and sworn into the court. They spend one hour a week building strong relationships with a child who has typically been removed from their home due to abuse and/or neglect. The **CASA** gets to know all aspects of their life (education, psychological, medical, etc.) and becomes their voice in court and in life to ensure their child has everything he/she needs to not just survive, but to thrive!

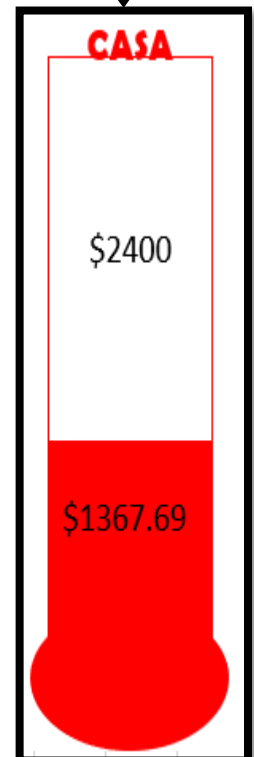
CASA advocates are often the only consistent, reliable adult in the life of a child whose world has been turned upside down due to abuse and/or neglect.

CASA of Western Wisconsin believes that with YOUR partnership, we can break the cycle of abuse and the addiction that so often causes it, to make our community and future generations stronger and healthier...one child at a time!

Thank You!

BSiverling@CASAWesternWisconsin.org 715 972-4800

Our goal was to raise \$1,200 to sponsor one child. We have surpassed that goal!!! The new goal will be to support 2 children at \$2,400 . Together we can do it!!



MEMBER CARE

It has now been over six months of living during a pandemic. We have been feeling the strain of our lives being altered in all aspects. Working from home or in person, classroom versus virtual learning, grocery shopping, child care as well as attending to our elderly loved ones all create unique challenges for individuals and families. Practicing social distancing creates feelings of isolation, anxiety as well as uncertainty. Some may feel angry at the loss of our freedom. We are being asked to sacrifice for the greater good. The recommendations by health experts are meant to slow the virus surge while awaiting a vaccine.

We must pause, take a deep breath and remember, we are not alone. Being open to new ideas, resources as well as reaching out to others may help to see us through this time in our lives.



There are several on-line resources that may prove helpful in navigating life during this challenging time. Some approaches to consider:

Life Strategies

- Maintain a routine for the children and adults in your family. Make a daily schedule for eating, study time as well as exercise. Include activities for your mind as well as your body that are fun.
- Limit news consumption and seek reliable resources.
- Find activities other than television such as reading a book or finding a new recipe.
- Get out a board game, work a puzzle or do some Spring cleaning of a closet or storage area.

Health Strategies

- Maintain healthy eating habits, exercise and eat healthy foods from all the food groups.
- Avoid alcohol and tobacco. This may be a challenging time to quit smoking or the perfect time.
- Walk your dog, participate in on-line exercise class or yoga class.
- Play music or dance. Great for the body, mind and spirit!



MEMBER CARE CONTINUED....

Spiritual Strategies

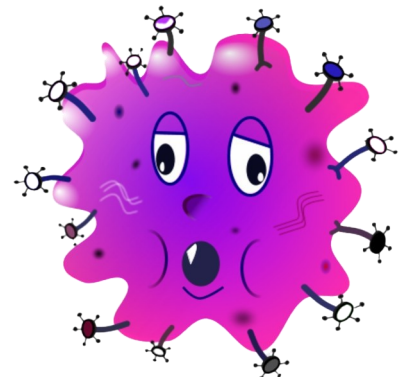
- Be realistic about your concerns. Focus on what you can do and accept what you cannot do.
- Write a letter to yourself and discuss your experiences and thoughts. This is a historical time and future family members will gain knowledge regarding how life was for you.
- Make a list of relatives or friends and call or Face-Time them on a routine basis. Sharing feelings may help you understand you are not alone.
- Call or email an old friend. Check on a neighbor who may feel isolated.
- Seek spiritual guidance. First Lutheran has been blessed to have Live-Streaming, radio broadcast as well as Facebook Page in which to remain connected, spiritually. First Friends is a helpful group of volunteers reaching out to each member to check in and make themselves available if needed. Feel free to be a part of this group or other volunteer groups at FLC.



REMEMBER: WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER!

Flu Season

Influenza is a disease of the respiratory tract. The flu season usually starts in October and continues into Spring with the peak from December through March. Fall is usually the preferred time to be vaccinated. Health experts recommend getting the flu shot amid the COVID 19 pandemic. Speak with your doctor or visit the CDC website at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

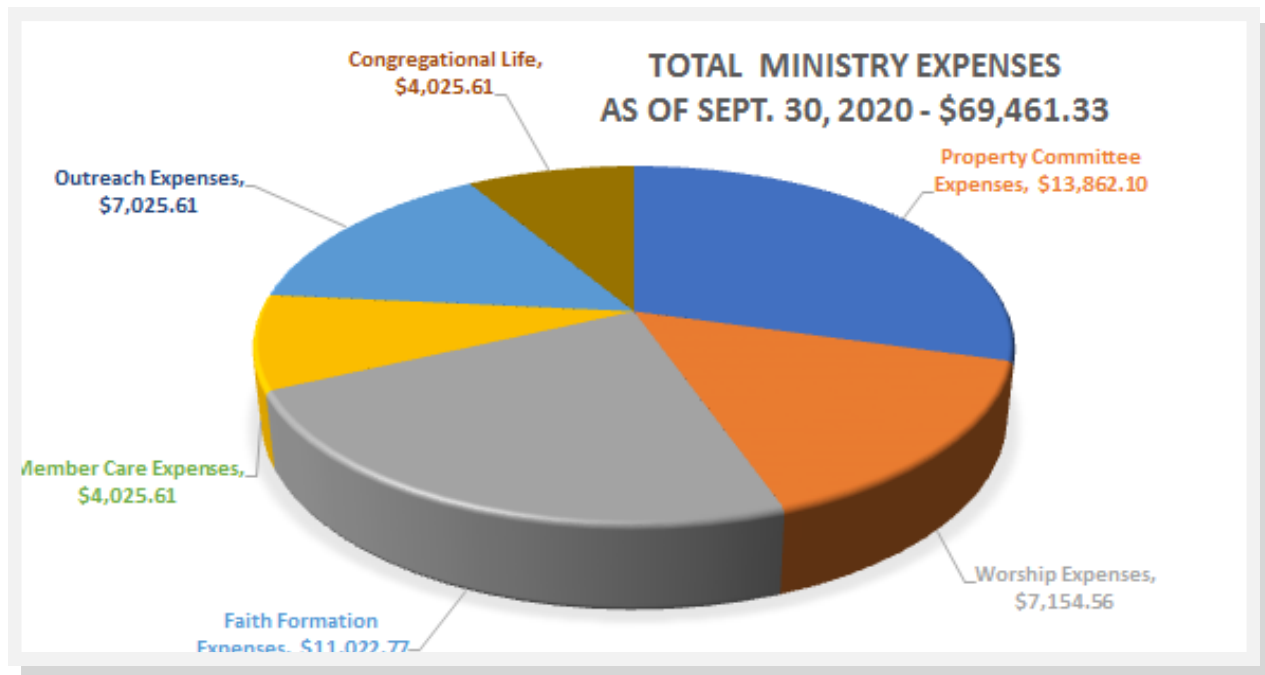


Stay healthy, stay safe.

Blessings,

Carol A Matthys

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 programing 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.

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!

Generosity
changes everything

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

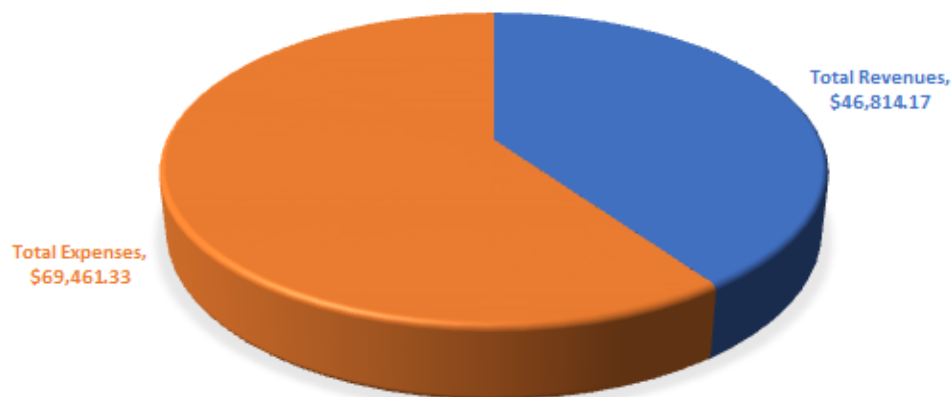
| Accounts | Actual - Quarter 3 | Budget - Quarter 3 | YTD Actual | YTD Budget |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Revenues | | | | |
| Total General Fund Offerings | \$ 46,286.94 | \$ 76,634.03 | \$ 206,449.43 | \$ 214,926.09 |
| Total Non-General Fund Offerings | \$ 527.23 | \$ 500.01 | \$ 1,579.55 | \$ 1,500.03 |
| Total Revenues | \$ 46,814.17 | \$ 77,134.04 | \$ 208,028.98 | \$ 216,426.12 |
| Expenses | | | | |
| Total Pastoral Expense | \$ 28,179.24 | \$ 29,192.91 | \$ 86,236.69 | \$ 88,578.73 |
| Total All Other Staff Expense | \$ 20,256.58 | \$ 25,505.28 | \$ 65,604.12 | \$ 76,765.84 |
| Total Staff Expense | \$ 48,435.82 | \$ 54,698.19 | \$ 151,840.81 | \$ 165,344.57 |
| Total Property Committee Expense | \$ 8,213.35 | \$ 8,700.00 | \$ 20,864.56 | \$ 26,100.00 |
| Total Worship Expense | \$ 1,782.40 | \$ 1,762.50 | \$ 5,332.37 | \$ 5,287.50 |
| Total Personnel Expense | \$ - | \$ 125.01 | \$ - | \$ 375.03 |
| Total Council Expense | \$ 35.00 | \$ 375.00 | \$ 300.00 | \$ 1,125.00 |
| Total Finance Expense | \$ 2,998.06 | \$ 3,727.49 | \$ 11,973.68 | \$ 11,207.47 |
| Total Faith Formation Expense | \$ 2,122.16 | \$ 3,290.00 | \$ 3,618.09 | \$ 7,740.00 |
| Total Member Care Expense | \$ - | \$ 75.00 | \$ 44.30 | \$ 225.00 |
| Total Outreach Expense | \$ 3,000.00 | \$ 3,125.01 | \$ 10,800.00 | \$ 11,175.03 |
| Total Congregational Life Expense | \$ - | \$ 250.01 | \$ - | \$ 350.03 |
| Total Administration Expense | \$ 2,874.54 | \$ 2,627.49 | \$ 8,464.90 | \$ 7,882.47 |
| Total Expenses | \$ 69,461.33 | \$ 78,755.70 | \$ 213,238.71 | \$ 236,812.10 |
| Net Total | \$ (22,647.16) | \$ (1,621.66) | \$ (5,209.73) | \$ (20,385.98) |

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 quarterly budget.
- Column 3 is the year to date donations and expenses.
- Column 4 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.

TOTAL REVENUE VS TOTAL EXPENSES



FIRST LUTHERAN NEWS

Welcome

Hello there from the Hardie family! This is Vicar Lucy Hardie re-introducing myself. I'm excited to begin my internship and partner in ministry with you. I live in Chetek, WI and am in my 3rd year of seminary. Although most of my time will be spent at Dallas and New Scandinavia, I'm looking forward to meeting as many members of First Lutheran as I can while we look at how three congregations can be Church together. God's Peace to you!



SAD NEWS....

2020 WELCA BAZAAR IS CANCELLED

BUT KEEP CRAFTING!!!! We will resume in 2021!



Postponed
until further notice

**NO WELCA Meetings and Activities
until further notice.**

Everyone Stay Safe and Healthy.

See you when we can.

~ WELCA Board



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 closed due to COVID-19

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

Dir. Church Business - Andrea Cox - Andrea@firstlutheran-barron.org

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

Financial Secretary - Shirley Hakari

Parish Nurse - Carol Matthys - Carol@firstlutheran-barron.org

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

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

Maintenance - Brett Gevens - Brett@firstlutheran-barron.org

