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**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL**  
MISSOURI SYNOD • KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE



**First Hearts September 2025**

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**From the Pastor**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ! It's such an exciting time of year. School is starting. Sports are sporting. Our congregation is re-starting our monthly church newsletter. In the following pages you'll find the usual suspects like announcement and calendar. There will also be encouragement for daily Christian living, reflections on our life together, opportunities to service and other resources to aid your growth in God's Word. The worlds is getting more and more noisy, divided, and angry. Yet, the Church, the Bride of Christ, remains steadfast. She is the center of our community founded on the Word and Sacraments rightly administered.

I pray this newsletter, small that it is, will strengthen us in our fellowship. That we

are reminded and strengthened in our identities — people who are in Christ. Every month you can expect:

- 1) A devotion or theological reflection based on Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions and how they are seen in the rhythms of the Church Year.
- 2) Updates on upcoming services and events
- 3) Stories from different ministries here at First
- 4) Opportunities for prayer, service and study laid out in our calendar
- 5) There will also be occasional writings from members like poetry.

We pray that this newsletter will be a benefit for everyone, and a reminder that we are all members of the same body of Christ. He is at work among us, and through us, for the good of our neighbors and for the hallowing of His name.

Thank you for being part of First Lutheran. We look forward to walking together in faith, love, and fellowship.

In Christ,  
Rev. Ed Maanum

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### **Weekly Events**

Sunday - Divine Service 9:30 am; Sunday School & Bible Study following

### **Board Happenings**

- 9/9 - School Board 6:00pm
- 9/9 - Planning Council 6:30pm
- 9/15 - Board of Elders 6:00pm (at Kern's)

### **Other Church Activities**

- 9/6 - Men's Bible Study 8:30am
  - 9/10 - Ladies' Bible Study 5:45pm
  - 9/10 - Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm
  - 9/14 - Voters Meeting at 10:45am
  - 9/14 - Young Adult Bible Study 12:00pm
  - 9/15 - LWML Meeting 6:15pm (at Ale Rae's)
  - 9/20 - Men's Bible Study 8:30am
  - 9/21 - Youth 12:00pm
  - 9/24 - Ladies' Bible Study 5:45pm
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|  |                        |                                  |                |                      |  |               |
|--|------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|--|---------------|
|  | Sept. 7<br>(Prop. 18)  | Thirteenth S. after<br>Pentecost | Deut. 30:15–20 | Psalm 1              | Philemon 1–21                            | Luke 14:25–35 |
|  | Sept. 14<br>(Prop. 19) | Fourteenth S. after<br>Pentecost | Ezek. 34:11–24 | Psalm<br>119:169–176 | 1 Tim. 1:(5–11)<br>12–17                 | Luke 15:1–10  |
|  | <i>or</i>              | Holy Cross Day                   | Num. 21:4–9    | Psalm 40:1–11        | 1 Cor. 1:18–25                           | John 12:20–33 |
|  | Sept. 21<br>(Prop. 20) | Fifteenth S. after<br>Pentecost  | Amos 8:4–7     | Psalm 113            | 1 Tim. 2:1–15                            | Luke 16:1–15  |
|  | <i>or</i>              | St. Matthew                      | Ezek. 2:8–3:11 | Psalm 119:33–<br>40  | Eph. 4:7–16                              | Matt. 9:9–13  |
|  | Sept. 28<br>(Prop. 21) | Sixteenth S. after<br>Pentecost  | Amos 6:1–7     | Psalm 146            | 1 Tim. 3:1–13 <i>or</i><br>1 Tim. 6:6–19 | Luke 16:19–31 |

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## In Other News

### Stewardship

#### Work and Keep

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15).

Genesis chapters one and two are familiar to us. We know them best as the Creation Account. Chapter one is where we hear the familiar, “let there be...and there was” directives. Chapter two gives us the account of Adam (the man) being formed from the “Adamah” (the dust) and becoming a living being when he receives the breath of life in his nostrils. Because of this, it would be quite easy to simply lump these two chapters into the category of creation accounts.

But do not be too hasty in this! While these two chapters do faithfully relate to us the account of creation, they also give us the creation of the “office” of steward. The man, created in the image of God in Genesis 1 and formed from the dust in Genesis 2, is created for a distinct purpose. He is created to be a steward of the perfect and beautiful creation that the Lord has made! In fact, this is THE reason that man was made. He — and we — were created in the image of God to be stewards of God’s creation.

This purpose is spelled out in verse 15 of Genesis 2. The steward has one job, with two purposes. It is fitting that in the month that our nation marks Labor Day, we consider the task of steward. The first purpose of the job of steward is to work. The steward is the caretaker of the Garden. Being a steward is work! Before the fall into sin, this was not an onerous task. But it was an active thing.

Imagine being a farmer in the Garden of Eden! Work would be only harvest. No plowing. No planting. No cultivating. No weeding. The perfect garden that the Lord had made would simply produce automatically to provide for man, woman, and all living beings!

But there is a second task in verse fifteen. The word “keep” is not just a synonym for work. This second task is related to defending. This garden, holy by virtue of its being called into existence by a holy God, needed to be defended. Here is where the vocation of steward becomes priestly. The steward was to defend the perfect and holy garden from that which was unholy. Later in the Old Testament, this was the

task of the priests in the tabernacle and temple. They were to defend with their lives the Holy of Holies. This too is the labor of stewardship. It is a labor that calls the steward to be willing to put the garden before life!

Stewardship was always work. It only got burdensome after the original steward, Adam, failed to defend the garden from the alien word of the serpent. But this was not a failure of harvest. It was

a failure to defend the garden! As a result, all work that followed that failure became burdensome.

The steward failed but was never fired. That is why we have such an issue with stewardship to this day. We continue to live out a pre-fall vocation in a fallen world as failed stewards. That is why we in the church need to be reminded of our vocational call to be stewards. We so easily forget that this world is not ours to do with as we please. Nothing is ours. We are but stewards entrusted with managing the creation for the glory of God and the benefit of the neighbor.

It is a daunting task. But it is the one to which we have been called. We cannot do it on our own. Apart from the grace of God shared with us through Jesus, we would be burdened to the point of temporal and eternal death. But the Holy Spirit calls us by the Gospel! This Gospel connects us to the fertile garden of Christ's Work on our behalf. Now we are stewards of that grace! The Holy Spirit works this in and through us today and every day.

This is the work of the church. It is also the work of the individual steward. The Lord has placed us in the "garden" with the same twofold purpose: work and keep! Enjoy your labor. For in the Lord, our labor is never in vain!

**All ladies are invited to join our women's bible study this year!** We will be using the book "Meant For Good: A Study of Joseph," which can be purchased on Amazon or the CPH website. We will gather from 5:45-7:00 in the meeting room, on the following Wednesdays: September 10 and 24; October 15 and 29; November 12; January 14 and 28; and February 11. There will be an informational meeting after church on August 31st where you can sign up - or you can reach out to Christine Sprecher at [christinesprecher@gmail.com](mailto:christinesprecher@gmail.com) to be added to the group. We would love for you to join us!

**Theology on Tap:** Young adults (Sr in High School and above), are you interested in have deeper theological discussions? Do you enjoy playing games like Ticket to Ride and Werewolf? If you answered yes to either of these, then come and join us on the second Sunday every month after Sunday School. Bring some beverages to share (adult for those of age). We'll also have food. See you September 14th.

**LADIES** - Come to dinner at Ale Rae's at 6:15 PM on September 15. We will be having food and fellowship. Questions? Ask Melanie Bartholomay 865-607-1629 or [mlbartholomay@gmail.com](mailto:mlbartholomay@gmail.com)

**Sunday School** - Just a reminder that we have Sunday School available from Pre-School through High School. We look forward to having you!

**Choir Rehearsals** will resume September 10th at 7pm!

**Youth!** Mark your calendars, join in fun and fellowship after Sunday School on the third Sunday of every month.

**Online Services:** Please visit the church website [www.firstknoxville.org](http://www.firstknoxville.org) to view our worship services and to participate in worship at your home. There are also links for Bible study and other resources.

**Facebook Page:** Follow First Lutheran on Facebook for all the latest updates: <https://www.facebook.com/KnoxFirstLutheran/>

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### **News from First Lutheran School**

Our theme for this school year is "Make a Joyful Noise" based on Psalm 98:4. Lutheran schools across the country are using this verse to guide their year, from classroom devotions to special programs. I was especially excited about this theme because it not only invites us to lift our voices in songs of praise to God, but it also encourages our students to share Christ's love by making their voices heard.

We've all heard the old saying, "Children should be seen and not heard." Clearly, that phrase wasn't written by someone who spent much time in a classroom! Of course, there are moments for silence and calm, but let's be honest - learning is often noisy. There are shouts of joy when a new skill is mastered, groans of frustration when a plan doesn't work out, and plenty of chatter as students problem-solve together. Where there is learning, there is noise. And with that noise comes communication - and with communication, we build relationships.

Those relationships between families, students, teachers, and staff are at the heart of FLS's mission. They are how Christ's love is shared in every classroom, every day. Parents know that silence isn't always golden - sometimes it's a warning sign! But when the halls are filled with the sounds of children talking, laughing, and even

singing, I know that God is at work in our school and the mission of First Lutheran is thriving.

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**Birthdays:**

Sept. 1: Nathan Sanders  
Sept. 5: Veronica Bartholomay; Kevin Broyles; Dolly Roth  
Sept. 6: Carrington Tillman  
Sept. 7: Emaleigh Wadsworth  
Sept. 8: Alexis Gibson; Janie Lanham  
Sept. 10: Ariane Blais  
Sept. 13: Emma Brown  
Sept. 14: David Bryant; Mary Ann Wheat Miller  
Sept. 15: Orville Heine; Josh Swiger  
Sept. 16: Melissa Lyke  
Sept. 17: Shannon Schell  
Sept. 18: Dylan Baum  
Sept. 20: Taylor Smith  
Sept. 21: Mary Bales  
Sept. 23: Jadealynn Flanigan  
Sept. 24: Kyizer Fielden (Wheat)  
Sept. 25: Cindy Cox  
Sept. 26: Alycia Hacker (Wheat)  
Sept. 27: Hayden Reed; Robert Wolford  
Sept. 29: Beth Buckner; Rebecca Nutter  
Sept. 30: Cameron Mabe

**Anniversaries:**

Sept. 8: Rick & Lynda Elmore  
Sept. 9: Howard & Monika Rash; Dave & Tammy Wheat  
Sept. 14: Josh & Jennifer Swiger  
Sept. 26: Mark & Michelle Tillman