



First Hearts June 2026

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From the Pastor

Why More Never Feels Like Enough

The world tells us we always need something else. More money. Better health. More recognition. Greater convenience. All around, we are surrounded by advertisements that promise a better way of living with this or that product. Don't worry, this next thing will make your life complete. Except, it never does. More is a bottomless pit that can never be satisfied.

This is the cheese in the mousetrap we all fall for. We begin to believe that health, wealth, romance, or success can somehow save us. We believe that they are essential to life. So, we attempt to perfectly control these gifts. Which ultimately leads to the ruining of our ability to enjoy them as the gifts that they are.

Jesus warns us of this trap in Luke 12:15: "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions."

The danger is not possessions themselves, but trusting them to give us security, joy, or identity. Contentment is treated as a commodity. Christ teaches that contentment is learned through trusting in God's provision.

This is a radical mental change. Consumption is second nature. Don't question, just consume. Compare yourself to others. Measure your life by what you own. Social media, ads, and busy schedules convince us that we are always missing out on something.

Scripture points us to something different. St Paul wrote that he had "learned in whatever situation to be content." Contentment is not an automatic reaction. Rather, contentment is formed through repentance, gratitude, generosity, and most importantly, faith in Jesus.

Contentment means simplifying your life. It means reducing unnecessary purchases, eating as a family, and spending time in conversation and prayer with the ones you love. You may just be surprised that you'll find peace, more time together, and a thankfulness springing inside of you for God's varied and daily gifts.

Enough is not having everything you want. Enough is found in Jesus. He daily provides us with what we need for body and soul. He teaches us to pray to the Father for daily bread. That is what the Father provides, and more. That is the way of the Gospel: not endless craving, but the overflowing generosity of God.

I encourage you to try for one week, to buy nothing unnecessary. This means asking, "Is this a need or a desire?" Then, spend each day in prayer and conversation, being thankful for God for specific gifts you already have. In the end, you'll

strengthen your contentment muscles.

With God's grace, you'll begin to see that in Christ, you already have more than enough.

Amen.

Weekly Events

Sunday - Divine Service 9:30 am; Bible Study/Sunday School 10:45am

Board Happenings

6/15 - School Board 6:00pm

Other Church Activities

6/14 - Young Adult Bible Study 12:00pm

6/5 - 6/11 - CAMPfirmation - Youth

6/21 - Youth group 12:00pm

	June 7 (Prop. 5)	Second S. after Pentecost	Hosea 5:15-6:6	Psalm 119:65- 72	Rom. 4:13-25	Matt. 9:9-13
	June 14 (Prop. 6)	Third S. after Pentecost	Ex. 19:2-8	Psalm 100	Rom. 5:6-15	Matt. 9:35- 10:8 (9-20)
	June 21 (Prop. 7)	Fourth S. after Pentecost	Jer. 20:7-13	Psalm 91:1-10 (11-16)	Rom. 6:12-23	Matt. 10:5a, 21-33
	June 28 (Prop. 8)	Fifth S. after Pentecost	Jer. 28:5-9	Psalm 119:153-160	Rom. 7:1-13	Matt. 10:34- 42



From the Principal

“Oh, the Places You’ll Go!” The classic children’s book by Dr. Seuss has long been a favorite graduation theme, especially for younger students. In recent years, many families have even started the tradition of having teachers sign a copy of the book each year, with the hope of presenting it to their child at high school graduation. Milestones naturally lead us to think about the future: Where do we go from here? What will we become? What plans has God laid before us?

For our 8th graders, this season brings both excitement and nervousness as they prepare to move on to a variety of high schools. What is especially meaningful, though, is that being part of the First Lutheran family does not end at graduation. In fact, there are at least six former First Lutheran students who will be rooming together in college next year. Long after leaving our classrooms, they continue to stay connected with one another. That lasting bond speaks volumes about the Christ-centered culture and community God has blessed us with at First Lutheran.

This year, our graduates are heading to a variety of schools. Some will attend private or parochial schools, while others will attend their local public schools. No matter where they go, we are confident they are prepared for what lies ahead. When First Lutheran students walk out our doors, we pray they carry with them qualities that will guide them throughout their lives:

- **Lifelong Learners:** Curious and independent learners who confidently explore God’s world and embrace new ideas.
- **Critical Thinkers:** Reflective problem-solvers who use logical reasoning and understand both details and the bigger picture.
- **Empathetic Individuals:** Compassionate people who live out God’s grace and build respectful, trusting relationships.
- **Resilient Workers:** Responsible individuals who persevere through challenges and take ownership of their actions.
- **Capable Communicators:** Respectful listeners and thoughtful communicators who effectively share and synthesize information.
- **Christian Citizens:** Christ-centered servants who live with humility, faith, joy, and hope in God’s promises.

Dr. Seuss’s *Oh, the Places You’ll Go!* celebrates adventures and journeys to exciting places, but as Christians and members of the First Lutheran School family, we know the greatest destination of all is the eternal home Christ has prepared for us in heaven.

In Other News

Stewardship

What Do You Want?

Originally published June 2023

One of the best-known and most-beloved psalms is Psalm 23, the “Shepherd Psalm.” There we learn that the Lord is our Shepherd. And since He is our Shepherd, we will not want. We will not suffer want because the Lord, our Shepherd, will lead us to green pastures and beside still waters. In other words, the Lord, our Shepherd, will provide for all that we need in both body and soul.

Yet, we live as though this is not the case. We live as though we actually suffer from want, that the Lord, our Shepherd, will not provide for all that we need. And thus, we live as though the Lord is not our Shepherd. And that means that we live as though we are not the Lord’s sheep.

When do we live as though the Lord is not our Shepherd? When we put anything else before Him and His provision for us. When we think that going to work is more important than receiving His gifts in church on Sunday (in violation of the First and Third Commandments). When we fail to give generously of the first fruits of what the Lord has provided for us because we don’t know what the future will bring (even though He has promised that He will lead us to green pastures and still waters).

We live as though we are not the Lord’s sheep when we think that the Lord is only in the business of helping those who will help themselves. We act this way because our minds are set on earthly, temporal things and not on heavenly, eternal things. We act this way because we have stopped hearing the call of our Shepherd, which comes through His Word.

Through the Word of God, the Shepherd calls us to Himself. Through the Word, the Holy Spirit gathers and enlightens us with His gifts. Through the Word, we are kept holy and nourished in the one true faith, the faith that follows our Shepherd wherever He leads us. He promises to lead us to our true home, to the land flowing with milk and honey, to a better country, not of this world, but a heavenly one.

And so, here’s the Good News: the Lord is your Shepherd, even and especially for wayward sheep. For Jesus seeks and saves those who are lost. He finds the lost sheep and carries them back to the fold. He is the Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep. The Lord is your Shepherd. Let us live as His sheep.

Young Adult Bible Study - please join us on the second Sunday of every month.

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

Website: Please visit the church website www.firstknoxville.org for Bible study and other resources.

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



Anniversaries:

June 1: Jim & Dawn Roberts

June 10: Mark & Allie Spangler

June 14: Keith & Becky Hodson

June 17: Andy & Melinda Busch; Bob & Barb Eisold

June 21: Pastor Ed & Jenna Maanum

June 22: Steve & Julie Killian

June 24: Eric & Holly Flanigan; Robert & Sheila Wolford

June 25: Chris & Cindy Cox

June 30: Ryan & Michaela Johnson

Birthdays:

June 1: Levi Sprecher

June 2: Paul Ortstadt

June 3: Kristy Byrd; Susan Rodenbeck; Christine Sprecher

June 4: Cayden Bland

June 5: Karen Farris; Karla Hood

June 9: Michelle Hamby
June 11: Lisa Wolfe; Sheldon Yeatts
June 16: Elsie Nutter
June 17: Rachel Buckner; James Hamby
June 18: Carroll Ward
June 19: Ezra Sprecher
June 21: Sandy Anthonijs; Michael Blumenberg; Jessie Irwin
June 22: Danny Sanderson
June 23: Don Weaver
June 25: Emily Dalton; Matt Keller
June 26: Dan Jordan
June 27: Sherry Ward
June 28: Gordon McSween
June 29: Olivia Cooper; Avram Sprecher