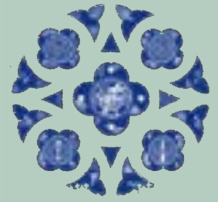




first Lutheran Church



September 2026

Do I Have to Love Even my Enemy?

If you haven't read Pastor Adam Sornchai's article yet I would encourage you to do so. This question is a loaded one that brings up a lot of hurt and pain for many people. As Pastor Adam pointed out, "We have seen examples where these words of Jesus are misused, compelling victims to remain in toxic or harmful relationships." Jesus' message always centers around love and is lived out into the world through love as well. The second question that he poses is one that I will dive into, "How does Jesus' willingness to include someone like Matthew reshape our understanding of what a faithful community looks like?"

This unbridled welcome and love is something that can be quite difficult to understand. We do understand loving our family, treating our neighbors with respect, and caring for our community. We do the service projects, we do the town clean up days, we support our family when we can, and may even mow our neighbors lawn if they need the help. But the way that Jesus welcomes Matthew is beyond any of that. It's easy to be polite to those that are polite in return, and it is easy to love or be kind to those who you see frequently. But Matthew doesn't really fit into any of those.

Being a tax collector he is probably known throughout his community for all of the worst possible reasons. I could see nicknames like; Matthew the child-starver, Matthew the widow-maker, Matthew the stealer, or Matthew the Glutton. I see these nicknames because of his profession because he not only enforced the laws of the occupying force but he would have added to it for himself. Remember in Robinhood the Sheriff of Nottingham? How he shook the money from children's pockets, took from the poor to aid himself and the rich? That would have been Matthew.

Jesus who is preaching love, kindness, generosity, decency for all, and help for the marginalized, that Jesus welcomes Matthew. That Jesus asks for Matthew to follow him, forsake all wealth, forsake all power, and instead care for all those whom he has hurt through his work. What would it look like for us to treat someone who hurts our community with love? It would look truly amazing to see that abundance of love for all people in our community. To see people radically change for the betterment of everyone. No exploitation, just fair living.



Fruitful in Every Good Work

Managing the Gifts God Has Given Us

Stewardship Sunday will be on October 18th, with commitment cards available inserted in the bulletins starting September 27th.

"...walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God."

- Colossians 1:10



God works within our community with our hands. The Missionary Outreach fund within Endowment has annual distribution monies to financially support any Christian project, education, expansion and service to those beyond the physical confines of our church. If you know of any worthwhile project, we could support this year, please present your request to a standing committee within our church to be evaluated and possibly approved to request funds from Endowment. The 2026 distribution funds must be approved for expenditure before the end of this year with flexible disbursement. Endowment meets the second Wednesday of each month. The Missionary Outreach Fund

has \$12,293.96 remaining to be distributed in 2026. First Lutheran has already sent funds to City Mission in the amount of \$3000 and Habitat for Humanity Apostle Build in the amount of \$4000. We hope our benevolence dollars can equip ordinary people with the funds to do extraordinary things in the name of Jesus so that all might see, hear, and experience God's love in tangible ways or partner with local community organizations to help care for the most vulnerable here locally and transform lives for Jesus. The Endowment Committee Funding Request is available in our box in the Communication room, online, or from Sarah in the church office.



September 13 we are kicking off Sunday School at 9:30 am. Adult bible study class will be held upstairs. For children age 4 to 5th grade we will meet in the fellowship hall and be delivering canned goods to little pantry locations near the church, and there will be a Bible Study in the open tomb for 6th to 12th grade!



We are collecting canned goods, nonperishable items or toiletries that the youth will be taking to the little free pantries near the church. There will be a box available in the narthex to put your items. We will be collecting until September 13.



SAVE THE DATE: TRUNK OR TREAT ON OCTOBER 18, 4-5:30 PM.

WELCA Calendar of Events for September 2026

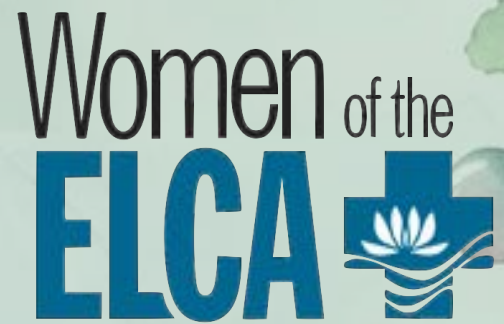
Martha Circle is in-service for the month of
September

Tuesday, September 8 @ 9:00 a.m. – Martha Circle
in the church library
Hostess: Roberta Howard; Leader: Carolyn Wilde

Tuesday, September 8 @ 1:00 p.m. – Rachel Circle – Lunch at Hancock Hotel

Monday, September 21 @ 7:00 p.m. – Hannah Circle
Hostess: Cyndy Rotman; Leader: Marilyn Dunn

Sunday, September 25 – Cookie Sunday – Martha Circle



L.I.F.T. - Living in Faith and Trust



L.I.F.T. will meet on **Tuesday, September 15th** at **11:45**, please take note of the time change. Starting 15 minutes later will allow for those who want to attend the 11:30 Sacred Daily in the church chapel. Bring a brown bag lunch and enjoy a time of conversation. Please contact Sue DeMoss at 419-306-9994 or Marilyn Dunn at 419-722-8543 for more information or if you need a ride.

WELCA Purpose Statement

"As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world."

WE'RE HIRING

Building Manager

The ministry of the Building Manager is to clean, maintain, and preserve the properties of First Lutheran Church. The Building Manager shall be responsible for the day-to-day care of the church property. This also includes, but is not limited to, scheduling needed contractors, coordinating volunteers for large, time-intensive projects, and maintaining the Church Property Budget.

Requirements :

- Cleaning (each room, every 30 days; the entire building, every year)
- Electrical/Painting/Construction/Light Plumbing
- Mow lawn, trim shrubs
- Maintain security system/sound system (in nave)
- Equipment Installation
- Maintain a maintenance history
- Provide in-house computer and network support
- Remove snow around immediate building, contract (with Property Committee) a snow removal contract
- Administer "Building Use Policy" and other tasks as deemed necessary by the Pastor(s), Church Council, and Property Committee
- Ensure local and state inspections and certifications are up to date

SEND YOUR RESUME TO: flcfindlay@gmail.com



"Books are good company, in sad times and happy times, for books are people - people who have managed to stay alive by hiding between the covers of a book. - E.B.White

So, hi there. With all the rain, the storms (especially at night), the grass too wet to mow, I have done an inordinate amount of reading this month.

First off, now don't laugh, I finally read the book selected for study during this past Lent, Love Is the Way by Bishop Michael Curry, the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church. Call them mantras, call them statements to live by, short sentences or guiding rules abound in this book. "Meditate daily on the teachings and life of Jesus." "Take fifteen minutes a day to check in with family or a member of the community." "Walk and talk in the manner of love, for God is love." "Whenever someone tells their story, you are standing on holy ground. You behave differently, hear them differently, and react from a different place. It's so much harder to hate when someone has shown you their heart." "Loving your neighbors as yourself means recognizing the right of everybody to make a life with the person they love." I have chosen not to summarize; Curry's words speak succinctly.

I read Midnight Train by Matt Haig, a companion novel to The Midnight Library and the Midnight World. The M..... Library is an excellent novel in which a library at the edge of the universe contains an infinite number of books about the life you are living with all the other possible directions of your life. The M..... Train puts a character prior to his/her death on the train that visits pivotal times in the dying person's life. This particular Midnight novel perhaps is working with recognizing and dealing with regrets at the end of one's life. While the Library novel is more about addressing all the ways things can turn out in your life. You have the controls. You make the choices. I think the Library was a much better book. The Train was a bit shallow.

The Girl with a Thousand Faces by Sunyi Dean takes place in the ghost-infested slums of Kowloon Walled City in dual timelines, 1941 and 1975. Yes, I said ghosts. And I need to tell you that the main character works as a medium or "ghost-talker" to manage bitter spirits. The story combines Chinese folklore with the human cost of war. Don't ask me what drew me to

the title...the story is dark; it is fantasy. Two genre I rarely read. Yet it was good. A friend loaned me This Is the Door -the Body, Pain and Faith by Darcy Steinke. The author attempts to examine the concept of pain as presented in the various parts of the body. She covers all areas - history, philosophy, religion, pop culture, ,journals, - as humans come to terms with and deal with pain. While the info was interesting, Steinke barely scratches the service. Perhaps the book was intended to be merely an overview.

At August book club, we discussed The House that Love Built: Why I Opened My Door to Immigrants and How We found Hope Beyond a Broken System by Sarah Jackson. Jackson's life's work begins with helping one person and grows into her questioning the dilemma of undocumented people floundering in a government's system where few speak the language, asylum seekers are separated from their families, the guards, those with lapsed visas, the families who are left on their own. She deals out whatever they all need.

The Spy and the Seamstress by Scott Smith jumps into the American Revolution in September 1776 on Manhattan Island. It is the true story of Nathan Hale (I regret I only have one life) and a fictional seamstress Anne Wheaton. What a complex time in American history. People in the same city supporting two different sides of a war; those who spy for both sides passing good and bad info; whom do you trust? Smith uses old letters, diaries and maps to support his tale. The discussion is September 1, 2026 at 7:00.

Finally, I know I have spoken of this study already in earlier newsletters but I have finished Bearing Witness in Acts and Today by Troy Troftgruben. The author, a professor at Wartburg Theological Seminary and is going to Oxford in December, echoes Bishop Curry. He iterates that witnessing starts with simply living out Jesus call to love your neighbor as yourself in tangole and intentional ways. Can't think of what you can do? Troftgruben gives a partial list of 30 plus ways to love your neighbor.

Before saying goodbye, i must thank Phyllis Higgins and Marilyn Dunn for their industrious cleaning of the library. We all appreciate the clean library. God bless. Kathy

Ministry Opportunities

TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY

Would you like to be more involved in your church? Still looking for what that ministry might be? I have something that any male or female might like to do. How about being a driver for members who do not drive anymore but would like to attend church service. It would be for late service and not every week. Sound like something you might like? Please contact Carolyn Bryant at 419-422-0015 and leave a message or see me at church.

Prayerfully consider this, it is a special ministry! Thank you.



2026 Altar Flower Chart

The 2026 Flower Chart is up in the hallway, across from the church office. There is a full year of Sundays that need flowers to brighten not only the altar, but also either your home or the home of a shut-in. Please consider this ministry as a way to share God's love for His people.

On Wednesday, September, 23 we will help with the build of House#71 at 1664 Bishop Lane. We are signed up to help put up trim. 4 volunteers are needed for 2 shifts and also to help with hospitality. The shifts are morning 8-12 and afternoon from 12:30-4:30. Anyone helping with the build needs to sign a waiver. Please consider signing up to help the Melick family begin a new adventure by owning a home. Many of you signed 2 beams which will be used in building the house. First Lutheran will provide food for the breakfast and lunch by using funds provided by Thrivent.

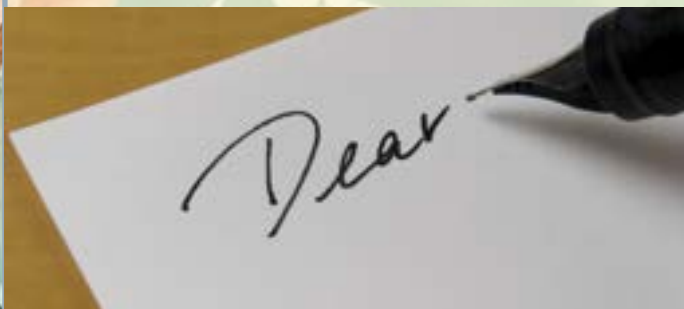


**Habitat
for Humanity®**
of Findlay/Hancock County

The sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board. Please consider helping with this build and the hospitality.

Reaching Out to Our Members

Feel free to make use of our card-writing station in the hall outside of the Narthex! Cards are available and can be placed in the basket on the table to be mailed. On the table are also lists of addresses for At-Home members and birthday lists if you need any ideas for recipients.



MEDITATION GARDEN GETS AN UPDATE!

It's hard to believe it has been five years since our big 175th Anniversary Celebration of First Lutheran Church! But you can check the large circular stone at the "end" of the Labyrinth Prayer walk-- October 1846-2021. Early in that year, when we wanted something to commemorate this milestone in the community, Tim Brugeman, longtime director of Hancock Parks and Master Gardener, drew up a layout of a garden area with benches, mounded beds with trees and perennials, and a Labyrinth Prayer walk, with stones that lead to the center from the Main Street sidewalk or parking lot. The Garden Committee, a subsidiary of the Property Committee, has tended the beds, and the stones were set into the church yard in such a way, so that a mower could mow over them. Over the years the grass has encroached upon the stones, so this past week, Property/Garden Committee members Daryl Rotman, Rich Orr, Eric Huttenlocher, Jim Schoerger, and Kurt Ebersole along with 14 UF students raised all the stones, placed gravel beneath, and reset. There is an "instruction" sheet for using the Labyrinth walk and two benches to sit and rest in God's creation.

Garden Committee members who worked on this project plus weed and Water the Good News Garden (2008) are Diane Adler, Carolyn Bryant, Cheryl Everett, Jane and Kurt Ebersole. Pictures show the work



September Volunteers

ALTAR FLOWERS

Sept 6—Suzanne Kirk

Sept 13—Toni Poling

Sept 20—Beth Meier

Sept 27—Maranda Morrow

ALTAR GUILD

Elaine Miller, Kristen Warren

BLESSING BASKET DELIVERY

Sharon Thompson

COMMUNION BREAD

Sept 6—Sharon Thompson

Sept 13—Toni Poling

Sept 20—Susan Waltermeyer

Sept 27—Missy Sanders

COOKIE SUNDAY

Sept 6—Community Dinner

Sept 13—Church Council

Sept 20—Social Ministry

Sept 27—Martha Circle

COUNTERS

Kristen and Brent Warren

FLOWER DELIVERY

Jane Ebersole

LECTORS

Sept 6—Janet Wobser

Sept 13

8:15—Marilynn Dunn

10:45—Cyndy Rotman

Sept 20

8:15—Deb Kania

10:45—Julie Buck

Sept 27

8:15—Kathy Brooks

10:45—Traci Roth

DEACONS

Sept 6—Toni Poling, Julie Buck

Sept 13

8:15—Marilynn Dunn, Reed Needles

10:45—Gary Johnson, Eric Huttenlocher

Sept 20

8:15—Janet Wobser, Tad Schell

10:45—Mike Heldman, Tricia Cox

Sept 27

8:15—Judy Kipker, Toni Poling

10:45—Bob Schriner, Eric Huttenlocher

SOUND ROOM

Sept 6—Tim Roth

Sept 13

8:15—Tim Roth

10:45—Steve Roth

Sept 20

8:15—Daryl Rotman

10:45—Falkyn Roth

Sept 27

8:15—Tim Roth

10:45—Gary Altman

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Sept 6—

Sept 13

8:15—Daryl Rotman

10:45—Traci Roth

Sept 20

8:15—

10:45—Makenzie Cox

Sept 27

8:15—

10:45—

Happy Anniversary!

Casey and Tricia Cox	2-Sep	11
Craig and Beth Meier	3-Sep	32
Steve and Traci Roth	3-Sep	32
Robert and Arlene Schriener	11-Sep	44
Gary and Virginia May	17-Sep	49
Tim and Dawn Franks	19-Sep	28
Chuck and Beverly Horn	19-Sep	47
Rob and Amber Leipheimer	21-Sep	24
Jeff and Abbey Haudenschild	21-Sep	13
Mike and Chris Zawisza	26-Sep	28



Happy Birthday!

Peggy Fruchey	1-Sep
Tricia Cox	1-Sep
Rylie Needles	2-Sep
Daphne Maag	2-Sep
Tad Schell	3-Sep
Carol Meyer	4-Sep
Evan Pitt	5-Sep
Mike Waltermeyer	6-Sep
Kristen Warren	6-Sep
Martha Schmidt	6-Sep
Cheryl Everett	7-Sep
Carolyn Bryant	9-Sep
Makenzie Cox	9-Sep
Carroll Gossard	10-Sep
Cynthia Rotman	11-Sep
Elaine Miller	11-Sep
Christopher Beck	13-Sep
Sharon Thompson	16-Sep
Kimberly Fultz	16-Sep
Jordan Spoon	17-Sep
Abbey Haudenschild	17-Sep
Douglas Schriener	19-Sep
Scott Schriener	19-Sep
Margaret Maag	20-Sep
Samantha Franks	21-Sep
Jeff Gainsley	21-Sep
Lisa Cox	22-Sep
Bradley Mitchell	23-Sep
Alexandria Johnson	23-Sep
Jonathan Hartman	25-Sep
Teri Foor	27-Sep
Jeff Haudenschild	28-Sep
Weston Haudenschild	28-Sep
Debra McMillen	29-Sep
Mary Lou McCann	30-Sep
Suzanne Kirk	30-Sep
Marilynn Dunn	30-Sep

September

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
		11:30am Sacred Daily 7pm Book Club	11:30am Sacred Daily	9:30am Bulletin 11:30am Sacred Daily		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9:30am Worship 11:30am Community Dinner	OFFICE CLOSED—Labor Day	9am Martha Circle 11:30am Sacred Daily 1pm Rachel Circle 7:30pm Finance	11:30am Sacred Daily 7pm Endowment	9:30am Bulletin 11:30am Sacred Daily		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
8:15 & 10:45am Worship 9:30am Sunday School	10:15am Prayer Group 10:30am Ladies Bible Study 11:30am Sacred Daily 7pm Property 7pm Social Ministry	11:30am Sacred Daily 11:45am LIFT 7pm Theology Pub	11:30am Sacred Daily 7:15pm Choir Practice	9:30am Bulletin 11:30am Sacred Daily 6pm BSA		1pm NYLT
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
8:15 & 10:45am Worship 9:30am Sunday School	10:15am Prayer Group 10:30am Ladies Bible Study 11:30am Sacred Daily 12pm Newsletter Deadline 1pm Staff Meeting 7pm Hannah Circle	11:30am Sacred Daily	11:30am Sacred Daily 7:15pm Choir Practice	9:30am Bulletin 11:30am Sacred Daily		
27	28	29	30			
8:15 & 10:45am Worship 9:30am Sunday School	10:15am Prayer Group 10:30am Ladies Bible Study 11:30am Sacred Daily 7pm Council Meeting	11:30am Sacred Daily	11:30am Sacred Daily 7:15pm Choir Practice			