



First Things ~ August 2025

Dear friends,

With my daughter's recent birth, raising children in the faith is once again on my mind. The Bible says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." And when we add passages like, "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." And, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction." We see that God wants parents to teach their children the truths of scripture.

I can think of a time in the Bible when parents failed in this regard and did not train their children in the knowledge of God – this was that time between Joshua leading the people of Israel into the Promised Land and the time of the first kings of Israel, Saul and David. After Joshua died, the Bible says, "After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers (died), another generation grew up who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel. Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD and served the Baals. The Lord forsook the LORD, the God of their father, who had brought them out of Egypt." This is not a one-off occasion or an accident. We are always only one generation away from our children not knowing the Lord at all. The need for parents to educate their children is great!

Those who track these things have noted that a higher and higher percentage of people today are completely biblically illiterate. And you don't even need a poll to tell you that. Just talk to people and you'll find many who have never opened the Bible, who don't know who Moses, Abraham, David, Peter, or Paul are at all. And the result of all this? You find people who don't know who Jesus is at all and that is a great loss for our friends, neighbors, and families. Apart from Jesus, there is no salvation. Apart from Jesus, there is no real lasting hope.

So friends, I heavily encourage you to not neglect this most important part of your child's education: the faith. Going to church as a whole family regularly and sending your kids to Sunday School and you yourself attending adult Bible study are some great places to start. Taking advantage of our own childcare center in First Steps, local WELS grade schools and Luther, the local WELS high school, are options that every parent in our congregation should strongly think about. For those of you who don't have children or have grown children, you can support the training of the children of our congregation with your prayers, your support for the parents of our congregation, your time given as Sunday School teachers, your money given to support First Steps, the Weist Pieper grant program or other synod schools, as well as many other opportunities.

Truly, however, the most important Christian education your child will receive is at home with you. If you do daily family devotions, your child sees you reading the Bible on your own, you talk about God and how his mercy and love through Jesus affects your daily lives your child will indeed be started on the way he (or she) should go.

Pastor Pilarski

This Summer in Scripture



This Summer we are exploring different biblical translations: May- New International Version (NIV 2011), June- English Standard Version (ESV), and July- English Heritage Version. These translations were used during worship and added to worship folders to provide an opportunity to compare with NIV 1984. In August all three translations will be presented side by side in the worship folder.

Why? Currently our congregation provides the New International Version 1984 translation in the pews. This translation is no longer being printed and no longer being provided digitally. This change has created the opportunity to select a new translation that we can use in worship, catechism and bible class instruction, and in print.

First Steps News

Garden update: the beans and tomatoes are producing so far. If the air quality improves, we will have the children pick them. (Garden is located by the church parking lot.) The children have been enjoying water days with the help of wading pools and sprinklers.



The search is underway for additional staff. Aides, assistants, and a 3K lead teacher are needed! If you, or someone you know, may be interested in one of these positions please reach out to Carol Schroeder, Director@KeepChristFirst.com.



Fellowship Opportunities and Events



Tuesday, August 5 National Night Out- Join local public safety officials for light dinner, prizes, and *great* activities: **Free Swimming** at the La Crescent Aquatic Center from 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM. Information stations, music, giveaways, and a few surprises too! Demonstrations and visits with La Crescent Police and La Crescent Fire Fighters. Bicycle safety checks with the La Crescent Bike Shoppe.

Sunday, August 10 Worship Survey Due- The Worship Review Committee would appreciate each member to take a moment and complete a survey with their thoughts on worship. You can complete it online by typing in the website (<https://forms.gle/3RggeigSEo6UXR626>), or you can take home a printed copy of the survey (copies are in the entry).

Mon- Wed, August 11-13 Church Office is closed.

Sunday Evenings Campfire Devotions- (**Restarting Sunday, August 17**) On Sundays, **about 5 pm**, you are invited to Pastor's backyard for a campfire devotion! Bring a chair and stay awhile! Pastor will have hot dogs and marshmallows for roasting. You are welcome to bring a dish to pass or none at all.

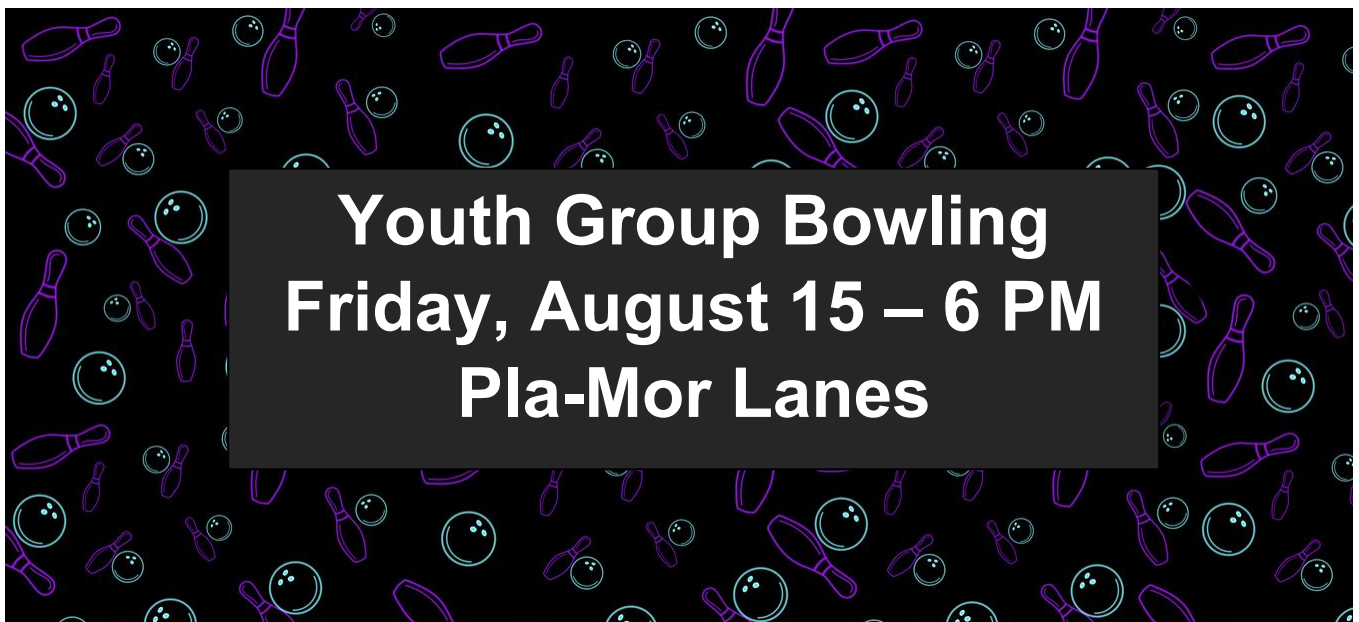


Friday, August 15 Youth Group Bowling! Time to knock down a few pins. Pla-Mor Lanes on Friday, August 15 at 6 PM. *Please sign up in the entry or contact the office.*

Tuesday, August 19 Church Council Meeting- 6:30 PM

Friday, August 22 Food Truck Friday with Chef's Table- Chef's Table food truck will be here Friday, August 22, at 5 PM. This food truck is in connection with our members the Dahlgren family. *This event is not a fundraiser of any kind, just a delicious opportunity.*

Tuesday, August 26 Early Learning Center Business Meeting- 6:30 PM



June

Summary of Financial Information 2025

Financial Summary				
	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Difference	Comments
Net Income (Loss) Church	(\$12,830)	\$0	(\$12,830)	
Net Income (Loss) ELC	\$22,602	\$8,745	\$13,857	
Total	\$9,773	\$8,745	\$1,028	
Grants (net)	(\$10,017)	(\$7,927)	(\$2,090)	
Without Grants	(\$244)	\$818	(\$1,062)	

Total Deficit of ELC	
2018	(\$17,051)
2019	(\$23,087)
2020	(\$2,544)
2021	\$39,832
2022	(\$10,484)
2023	(\$8,202)
2024	\$10,716
2025	\$22,602
	<u>\$11,782</u>

Giving Summary				
	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Difference	Comments
Offerings	\$111,732	\$122,960	(\$11,228)	90.9%
Debt Reduction	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total	\$111,732	\$122,960	(\$11,228)	

Assets				
	2024 December	2025 June	Change	Comments
Checking Account	\$61,664	\$73,870	\$12,205	
Money Market	\$51,540	\$52,610	\$1,070	
Total	\$113,204	\$126,479	\$13,275	Net increase in cash balance

Liabilities & Equity				
	2024 December	2025 June	Change	Comments
Dedicated Funds Total	\$87,041	\$89,473	\$2,432	
Other Liabilities	\$1,830	\$2,900	\$1,070	
Assets less Liabilities	\$24,334	\$34,106	\$9,773	Net increase in equity
Mortgage Balance	\$262,139		Interest Rate	6.34%
Balloon Payment Due	11/1/2027		Monthly Payment	\$2,587.01

Basement Floor Project	
Total Cost	\$15,376
Donations to Date	\$15,376
Amount Needed	<u>\$0</u>
As of June 30	

Required Offerings				
	Budget	Catch up	Total	
July Offerings Needed	\$17,046			
July Offerings Received	\$15,185			
August Offerings Needed	\$15,303	\$13,089	\$28,392	

First Lutheran Church

Pastor Adam Pilarski
Church Office
First Steps Early Learning Center

phone: 605 – 515 – 2388,
phone: 507 – 895 – 4775,
phone: 507 – 895 – 5704,

email: pastorapilarski@gmail.com
email: ChurchOffice@KeepChristFirst.com
email: Director@KeepChristFirst.com

Church Website: keepchristfirst.com

Facebook: First Lutheran, La Crescent

Virtual Worship: vimeo.com/keepchristfirst