



# First News

Summer 2023

*The Monthly Publication of First Lutheran Church, Portland, ME*

## **CAT Information Meeting** **July 9th**

Thank you to all from First Lutheran Church who completed the “CAT” (Congregational Assessment Tool) survey earlier this year! The CAT Team (Ann Brown, Kris Conant, Hannah Hanson, Nancy Houlihan, and Paul Loven), are grateful to you for helping us all understand better the “Vital Signs” for First Lutheran Church. It is an important tool recommended by the New England Synod for transition times like this. It provides an in-depth look at the experiences, perceptions and aspirations of the congregation as it prepares for its next pastor.

A meeting to share a summary of this survey is being offered to the congregation on Sunday, July 9 in the Fellowship Hall, immediately following worship. There will be time for questions and answers. It is anticipated it will take 45-60 minutes. Delicious snacks and beverages will be provided! Let the church office know if childcare is needed. Even if you didn't fill out the survey, you are encouraged to attend.

Please come and hear more about what FLC folks like you have said about our church and its mission!

*- Transition Pastor Mark Perry*

*Give a Child a Chance*

**NEW FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITY**

**SEE'S CANDIES AND GIVE A CHILD A CHANCE JOIN FORCES!**

**TAKE A LOOK AT THE GIVE A CHILD A CHANCE**

**YUM-RAISING STOREFRONT**

[https://www.yumraising.com/secure/giveaca\\_give\\_a\\_child\\_a\\_chance82/KarJoh1763/candy](https://www.yumraising.com/secure/giveaca_give_a_child_a_chance82/KarJoh1763/candy)

OR USE THE QR CODE BELOW



YOU CAN ORDER SEE'S CANDIES DELIVERED RIGHT TO YOUR DOOR OR TO THE DOOR OF A PERSON YOU WANT TO GIFT WITH DELICIOUS SEE'S CANDIES.

YOU DEAL DIRECTLY WITH SEE'S...GACAC IS NOT INVOLVED WITH YOUR ORDERING OR PAYING.

QUESTIONS? ASK KAREN JOHNSON OR CONTACT [EC-FUND@FLCME.ORG](mailto:EC-FUND@FLCME.ORG)

# New Council

At the Semiannual Congregational Meeting on June 25, six members were elected to serve a two-year term on the Church Council.

Emily Cole, Ken Conant, Lauren Cormier, Gene Kucinkas, Michael McIver, and Bill Mills will be joining Ann Brown, Judy Horn, Nancy Houlihan and Coleen Walther on the new Council. New officers will be elected at the first meeting of the 2023-2024 term, and liaisons to the various committees will be assigned. [These will be listed in the next newsletter and on the church website.]

We thank Emily, Ken, Lauren, Gene, Michael and Bill for their willingness to serve on Council.

Five members are finishing their time on the Council. Paul Loven, Steve Santiago and Matt Thees have served four years (two terms) and could not be re-elected. Corey Hanson has served one term, and will soon be moving to Minnesota. Steve Barmore completed the term he was appointed to fill.

We thank Paul, Steve, Matt, Corey and Steve for their dedication and leadership. You all served through some challenges (COVID and a pastoral vacancy), and we thank God for your service.

# Financial Update

FLC had a net operating deficit in May 2023 of \$2,377. We had expected a deficit of \$530 so the result was unfavorable to our budget. The primary cause was pledge shortfalls. Our operating account maintains a healthy balance, but will erode quickly now that Pastor Mark has begun his ministry with us.

A deficit budget of \$45,977 for 2023 was adopted, updates to reflect the start of Pastor Mark have increased the deficit to \$96,314. More details were presented to the congregation at the semi-annual meeting.

If you have questions, please contact me by e-mail or on my cell phone, 207-939-0820.

--Ed Daggett, Treasurer

[ed.daggett@flcme.org](mailto:ed.daggett@flcme.org)

	<b>Actual May 2023</b>	<b>Actual YTD</b>
Operating Income	\$24,230	\$133,243
Operating Expenses	\$26,607	\$161,033
Net Operating Income (Loss)	(\$2,377)	(\$27,790)



## From the Pastor

### “Opportunity & Risk in Times of Liminality”

Transition times like what we’re in here at First Lutheran Church are times of liminality. “Liminality” comes from the Latin *limen*, meaning “threshold.” It is like standing on the threshold between one room and another. It is an evolving state of an individual, place, organization, or institution, in the space between and an ending and a new beginning.\* Experiences of pregnancy, divorce, moving between homes, starting retirement, job terminations, even the Covid pandemic, are other examples of liminal times. They can be and often are marked by discomfort, anxiety, and uncertainty as well as anticipation and excitement. In our success and achievement-oriented culture, we can be tempted to simply rush or push through these times in order to get onto “the next best thing.” That is a mistake. Doing so leads us to miss out on the opportunities such times can bring to see and experience reality in new and deeper ways. Very often the anxieties and fears in liminal periods, if not addressed or even embraced for what they can bring, are just carried into the next phase of our lives to become unintentionally expressed in unhealthy and even hurtful ways.

We don’t want that to happen here. We want to take the time and effort to enter more fully and expectantly into this liminal time so that we can receive all that God wants to offer in wisdom, guidance, and deepening relationship with Him and each other. We want to squarely and courageously face our anxieties and fears to understand better what they can teach us about who we are and what our areas of growth need to be.

Leading in that process is part of my responsibility as your transition pastor. Upcoming events like the CAT (Congregational Assessment Tool) Summary (see page 1), “The Chapters of Our History Together,” “Why Us?” and other events will be opportunities to work on and reflect upon this together. I’m here also to listen to whatever you want to share or talk about (call or email me to set up a time or come in during office hours, Monday & Tuesday).

Our newly forming Transition Team will help organize and promote these events and other activities. The months ahead will provide us with rich opportunities to discern God’s will and purpose for First Lutheran Church that we might be in as solid and healthy a place as possible for the next pastor and chapter. Let us join together in fervent and continual prayer for that to happen!

Your fellow servant in Christ,

Pastor Mark Perry

(\*quoted from work by psychologist Amy Sander Motanez)

[mark.perry@flcme.org](mailto:mark.perry@flcme.org)



# Youth & Sunday School News

It's officially summer at First Lutheran! On June 11th, the Sunday School had its final class of the 2022-2023 school year. Our dedicated teachers did a FANTASTIC job, showing up early to lead the children in their faith formation and Christian education-- and it's safe to say they had fun doing it! The children also worked hard throughout the year, and we celebrated all their achievements during worship on June 25th. We had a unique award for each child, as well as a little "thank you" parting gift-- until we all meet again in September! We also honored the hard work of the teachers during the service, as well. If you see any of the following people, make sure you thank them for their many hours of volunteer work:

Amanda Conant, Corey Hanson, Hannah Hanson, Lorna Leo, Maddi Leo, Brian Richards, Noelle Pesa, and Sarah Pesa

If you were in worship on the June 11th, you know that our very own Noelle Pesa graduated from high school on June 7th. I was honored to be invited to attend the ceremony at Merrill Auditorium. The auditorium was packed with friends and family, all eager to celebrate their student's achievement; the whole event was so exciting, and I felt moved as I cheered loudly when Noelle received her diploma.

Another young person at First Lutheran also graduated from high school this year-- Sarah Dressel. Both young ladies received a copy of "Jesus Calling for Graduates" by Sarah Young, along with a pen and a journal from FLC. We pray that they will continue to draw closer to God as they venture forth into the next exciting chapters in their lives. Noelle and Sarah, your church family is rooting for you!

I have been hard at work with Rev. Peter Swarr, the priest at Trinity Episcopal Church in Portland, who organizes the Ecumenical Service Corps our youth has been participating in the last few months. In addition to the monthly service projects, Peter and I are working together to expand the program. Our vision is to include a second monthly meeting for kids in grades 6+ that incorporates faith formation and fun with the youth of both of our congregations. We are excited to kick-off the 2023-2024 school year with a lock-in/service project in September! Be on the lookout for an email blast once I've confirmed the details... and be sure to add it to your calendars-- the kids won't want to miss it!

As for the plans for Sunday School to resume in the fall, I am meeting with many folks who are interested in participating in the planning process after church on July 16th to discuss a book on youth and children's ministry. Everyone is invited to attend, as this is not a commitment to teach, simply an opportunity to share knowledge, insight, and experience as we build our children and youth ministries at First Lutheran.

It won't be all work for the Hoffman family this summer, though. Aaron, Fiona, Silas and I are taking a break from work and camp to head to the Adirondacks at the end of July/beginning of August for a much needed family vacation. Wherever the summer takes you and your families, I pray that you have a wonderful and relaxing season.

Finally, on a bittersweet note — the Hanson family is moving back to Minnesota! Corey, Hannah, Blake, Alaina, and Karli: we are all so thankful for the time we had with you here at FLC. And, though we want what's best for you all (even if it means moving!), please know that you will be sorely missed. And we are already looking forward to your first visit back to Maine after the move!

God's Peace to you all,

Jenna

[jenna.hoffman@flcme.org](mailto:jenna.hoffman@flcme.org)

# Pride Parade

What tremendous love was on display on June 17. Wow! It was raining cats and dogs and I was convinced that the Pride Parade was going to be cancelled. But no! Pastor Mark told me that he was going no matter what and he inspired me to get out my rain gear and join in the adventure, despite the downpour. And I was moved to tears as we marched down Congress Street with our signs. I could see the joy and peace on everyone's faces as they clearly felt the love and acceptance that we were trying to communicate. We marched with other Portland area faith communities: The Episcopal Church, The Congregational Church, The Jewish Community, and many others including the Youth Group from St Luke's Cathedral (Luke's Garden). It was SO moving. I was approached after church by two women who thanked me personally for leading this effort to march in the parade. They said that it really meant so much to them personally as one of their sons had just come out as gay. We had five marchers from First Lutheran, two marchers from our Taize service, and at least three others that couldn't join in the march due to the weather. Thank you all for your support of these efforts to show the love of Jesus to those who have felt so hurt by the Church over the years. And to all the LGBTQ members of First Lutheran I say: we see you and we love you as you are!

—Aaron Hoffman



## Evensong Taize

I am personally so thankful for the blessing of our Taize service. Every time I attend I see new people that have not attended before. At our service in June, I talked with a man who has recently had an “awakening”, as he describes it, and has given his life over to the Lord. He said that he really enjoyed the Taize service, especially the ten minute silence and the singing.

If you haven't tasted the rest and beauty on offer at our monthly Taize services, please join us — Sunday, July 2nd at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary. Come, prepared to be refreshed and renewed.

Peace,  
Aaron



**Bake sale this October? Yes!!**

**This will be a FUEL ASSISTANCE fundraiser for our church members, families, and community.**

**All FLC bakers — start thinking about your famous recipes to prepare.**

**More information will be coming soon!**





Thank you for the donation of diapers for our Family Promise babies, and toddlers. Thank you to Thrivent Financial for their monetary support through the Thrivent action team donation. We were able to donate an overwhelming amount of diapers. The Family Promise babies and moms are very appreciative. Thank you!

*Here is an update on Family Promise news from Michelle, GPFPP director. Thank you for your continued support of GPFPP. Thank you for the gift cards, monetary donations, and most recently diapers. All are greatly appreciated by the families. — Wendy*

**Staff:**

We are now back to being fully staffed. We recently hired Luis Chimina and Steve Maboya to fill our two vacant case manager positions. We also have two students from Bowdoin college with us this summer, Marco Stix and Chinwe Bruns.

**Static Shelter:**

We are currently offering English tutoring on Tuesdays. Starting this week, we will be offering English tutoring twice a week on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. This July we will be partnering with the Immigrant Welcome Center to offer classes twice a week. These classes will be open to the public.

We just finished offering a 6-week financial literacy class. We hope to be able to offer this again in the future and open it up to our housed families.

We will be offering and upcoming training on how to conduct your own housing search and how to avoid scams, a legal assistance workshop in partnership with ILAP and an immunization clinic in partnership with Portland Public Health.

The week of June 26, we moved to Williston Immanuel Church from Woodford's Congregational Church. There are 7 families being housed at the static shelter.

**Moves:**

We're back to averaging two moves for a month but some moves are out of the Portland area. Our recent moves were to Lewiston and Biddeford.

We have 6 families whose applications are being processed for Brunswick Landing apartments. The first set of apartments are estimated to be open by the end of August.

**Year End Summary:**

Greater Portland Family Promise (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)

	<b>Total # Families</b>	<b>Adults</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Total # of individuals</b>
<b>Housed</b>	26	48	50	98
<b>Static shelter</b>	9	16	25	41
<b>Case management</b>	34	58	76	134
<b>Food distribution</b>	38	62	81	143
<b>Transitional Housing</b>	1	2	5	7
<b>Across all programs</b>	65	114	131	245

Thank you for all you do to support Family Promise and the families we serve.

With Gratitude-

Michelle



SUMMER IS HERE! We hope you have a terrific summer in Maine or wherever you might land! What better place to live than in our very own and beautiful state!

We want to share a couple of fundraising activities we will be looking into, so keep your eyes out for further information.

First, we will be starting a program with See's Candies (really delicious) whereby you can purchase candy directly from the company. They will mail your order to you or someone you want to gift. The entire process is between you and See's Candies. The beauty of the program is that at the end of the year, Give a Child a Chance will receive a rebate based on the amount sold. Watch for our Give a Child a Chance Storefront on the See's Yumraising fundraiser.

Secondly, we are looking for appropriate restaurants where we can hold a Dine-out fundraiser this fall. We have held these at Ricetta's and Panera in the past (pre-covid) and think it is time to do them again. If you know of any restaurants that are currently offering fundraisers, please let one of our team know, or leave a message with Joleen Knowles at 797-2525.

Of course, we will continue offering our RaiseRight Gift Card sales the first two Sundays of the month (except August). If you have enrolled in the RaiseRight First Lutheran program and have the payment deducted from your bank you can order anytime you wish. If enrolled, you can also use a credit card for your gift card purchases.

Thank you for your continued support of our Give a Child a Chance ministry. You are a blessing to the preschoolers we help!

Questions? Please email us or speak with any team member.

Team Members: Ann Brown, Susan Bollman, Wendy Carey, Karen Johnson and Colleen Taylor

[ec-fund@fleme.org](mailto:ec-fund@fleme.org)

## Prayer Chain Update

The best way to get something on the prayer chain is to email me directly at [coleen@dpjobs.com](mailto:coleen@dpjobs.com) or call/text me at (207) 650-8644. It's always appreciated if you update me on the situation or let me know when you no longer want the person on the Sunday list.

Also, we have a new addition for our prayer requests. We now have a form on the credenza as you enter the sanctuary. If it's too late to get your request to me for Sunday morning (I typically check one last time at 8:00 AM Sunday mornings), you can always add it there and the Pastor or Assisting Minister will pick it up before the service begins.

Thank you,  
Coleen Walther

# Getting to Know Us

## Karen Johnson



Scarborough became my home in December of 1993 when I moved from NH to ME. My search for a Lutheran Church found me at FLC one summer Sunday after Messiah Lutheran Church, a Wisconsin Synod Mission Church in Portland, closed and worship was going to occur by listening to an audio telephone connection from a WLS church in NH. That was a stretch too far for me and so I attended a couple of Lutheran churches in the Greater Portland area, eventually landing at First Lutheran.

A couple of things that are special for me at FLC. First, a group of members got into the habit of going to brunch after Sunday services...and the women in the group formed a bond resulting in a giving, loving and caring group who are always ready to pray for and with you and who are there for moral support and encouragement whenever needed. A second thing that I have so appreciated is the congregation's willingness to take on the "Give a Child a Chance" ministry at FLC. A grassroots effort joined by several congregation members who valued the importance of preschool education to neighborhood children in need. This self-sustaining effort is in its ninth year of operation and helped by so many in the congregation. A blessing for those preschoolers and their families.

My career as an RN provided me so many opportunities both in Nursing Education and Nursing Service — teaching in and developing undergraduate and graduate nursing programs and holding nursing administration positions in medical centers. Those positions not only allowed me the opportunities of moving from state to state (WI, MN, MA, VA, MA, NH & ME) but they also allowed me to travel to Taiwan, Brazil, and Italy. Would I have followed the same path if I were to start over? Probably not. Teaching and Nursing were pretty much the only two options open for women when I was starting my post-high school education. Now, career options are unlimited.

There are two books I read that I cannot get out of my head. The first was "Your Inner Fish" by Neil Shubin that confirmed for me that evolution theory and creationism theory were not in conflict with one another. The other book was "Still Alice" by Lisa Genova. While a book of fiction, the description of Alice's descent into Alzheimer's was chillingly real.

Finally, Lake Wobegon, created by Garrison Keillor, is the closest thing to what my "folks" are like. His imaginary town in Minnesota reminds me of the things I remember about growing up in my hometown in Wisconsin. His characters are so real to me and always a joy.

## Getting To Know Us

### How does this work exactly?

First, I would like to thank my two beginning volunteers. They have helped work out some kinks and provided us with great information about themselves. It really is a very simple process for you to contribute:

- A. Shoot me, Lauren, an email at [cormil61@gmail.com](mailto:cormil61@gmail.com) to say you are willing to give it a try.
- B. I will send a return email with the directions. It will include about 25 questions and some simple directions. Three of the questions relate directly to you at First Lutheran. From the remaining questions you can pick the 3 - 5 that catch your fancy to answer. Answers do not need to be complete sentences or in paragraph form, you can make your answers as long or as short as you would like.
- C. The next step is to email your answers back to me with a picture of you.
- D. I will put them in to article form and email them off to Bill Mills for the next FLC newsletter!



Over 40 members and friends stopped by the Parsonage on June 24th to see all the improvements made, enjoy delicious treats, and spend some time in fellowship with Pastor Mark and Linda and with each other.



## Congratulations

Noelle Pesa graduated from Portland High School in June. She will be attending Southern Maine Community College in the fall. Noelle is the daughter of Peter and Sarah Pesa, and sister to Simon.

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God.*

2 Corinthians 1: 3-4



Ethan Olson & family  
Abbott Knowles  
Ned Long  
Wendy Carey  
Kris Conant  
Judy Horn  
Pastor Bill Barter  
Charlotte Krantz  
Bob Mitchell  
Dave Deuben  
Sue Hayden  
Lynne Fishburn  
Jeffrey Durloo  
FLC Call Committee  
FLC Sunday School  
FLC Church Council  
Bev Beliveau

Jen & Brian Hazelwood  
Paul & Sharon Aube  
Family of Carol Adams  
Victims of racism and hate, especially those in the LGTBQIA+ community  
All victims of violence  
Our brothers and sisters at St. Ansgar Lutheran  
All who travel this summer  
The staff and campers of Camp Calumet



e-mail  
prayer chain

Prayer is such an important part of our daily Christian lives, and sometimes extra prayers are needed. If you have any special prayer requests and you would like to have our "Prayer Warriors" praying as well, please send an email.

[coleen@dpjobs.com](mailto:coleen@dpjobs.com)



- July 1 Christina Dressel
- July 5 Brenda Morneau
- July 7 Robert Mitchell
- July 13 Leigh Baade
- July 15 Greg Morneau
- July 17 Ina Dressel
- July 20 Irene Nelson  
Alaina Hanson
- July 21 Brian Jumper  
Suellyn Santiago  
Catherine Hooper
- July 22 Dan Nelson
- July 23 Zoe Leland
- July 25 Bill Mills
- July 26 Mike Beliveau
- July 29 Susan Bollman
- July 31 Jane Plourde



- August 1 Fred Kilfoil
- August 5 Mark Nordli
- August 8 Nils Leland
- August 9 Leslie Morton
- August 10 Yvonne Jumper
- August 11 Laretta Nielsen
- August 14 Wendy Carey
- August 15 Brian Hazelwood
- August 22 Gene Kucinkas  
Greta Krantz
- August 25 Fred Walther  
Amanda Conant
- August 29 Katie Mueller  
Simon Pesa
- August 30 Terri Cole

# In Christian Sympathy



Carol Adams passed away peacefully on Saturday, June 10, 2023 at the age of 93.

Carol grew up in Concord NH, and graduated from the Chamberlain School of Design in 1950. Carol married David Adams in 1950, and they eventually settled in Portland in 1966. They owned and managed several apartment buildings in the area, with Carol doing the bookkeeping until the age of 89.

Carol was detail oriented, calm, and unassuming. One might not guess that, while in her 70s, she and a niece would happily canoe for hours from Friendship to Port Clyde (and back), with only a saran-wrap covered map of the islands to guide them.

She loved to travel, especially if it involved hiking. She hiked through Spain, England, New Zealand, and the Grand Canyon. Even at 81 she trekked 8-10 miles a day in Paris, eating an occasional pastry to keep her energy up. For 26 years she worked as a volunteer in the kitchen at the AMC Cold River Camp, both for the lasting friendships and the great hiking.

Carol enjoyed reimagining spaces, renovating her home and summer cabin and assisting in multiple updates at her church. She was a member of the most recent sanctuary renovation team, and the beautiful stone wall behind the cross was Carol's inspiration and design.

Carol was a decades-long member of the First Lutheran Church, a place where her faith and friendships flourished. She served on numerous committees and projects throughout the years, always with integrity, dedication and humor.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Carol's family, especially her children Peter, Cheryl and Julie, her four granddaughters Elise, Heather, Audrey & Jayne, and her great granddaughters Piper and Ramona.

The family is planning a Celebration of Life at First Lutheran sometime in August. Details will be communicated once they are finalized.



**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH  
 132 AUBURN STREET  
 PORTLAND, MAINE 04103-2145**

**Summer 2023**



**First News** is a monthly publication of First Lutheran Church. Articles can be submitted to the church office, or by email to [news@flcme.org](mailto:news@flcme.org). The deadline is the 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Worship Service is at 10:00 am**

Church Office Hours are Monday thru Friday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm (797-2525)

[www.FLCME.org](http://www.FLCME.org)

**STAFF**

Transitional Interim Pastor .....Rev. Mark Perry ([mark.perry@flcme.org](mailto:mark.perry@flcme.org))  
 Youth and Music Minister ..... Jenna Hoffman ([jenna.hoffman@flcme.org](mailto:jenna.hoffman@flcme.org))  
 Church Secretary.....Joleen Knowles ([joleen.knowles@flcme.org](mailto:joleen.knowles@flcme.org))  
 Church Organist..... Brenda Morneau ([brenda.morneau@flcme.org](mailto:brenda.morneau@flcme.org))  
 Director—FLC Children’s Community Ministry ..... Sherryl Eastman ([flcpinfo@flcme.org](mailto:flcpinfo@flcme.org))

**OFFICERS**

President ..... TBD  
 Vice-President..... TBD  
 Secretary ..... TBD  
 Treasurer ..... Ed Daggett  
 Financial Secretary ..... Cheryl Cyr