



First News

November 2023

The Monthly Publication of First Lutheran Church, Portland, ME



Once Upon a Holiday

November 18th - 8 AM to 1 PM

You are invited to join us for a wonderful Holiday Fair! FLC will be transformed into a Holiday Wonderland featuring live music, where both Thanksgiving and Christmas items will be featured in the following areas:

All that Glitters – lovely pieces of jewelry that will catch your eye.

Bake House – will have all those festive goodies from pies, cakes, cookies, whoopie pies and other dreamed about confections as well as jellies, jams and pickles.

Book Nook – Do you still enjoy turning pages? There will be lots of classic and current selections to choose from here.

Café – We are expanding the menu to include delicious breakfast and luncheon items. Plan to stop by and visit with friends over lunch.

Chic, Unique & Antique – there will be collectibles, antique items, small furniture, glassware and dishes waiting to be discovered.

Handicraft Boutique – Wait until you see all the wonderful crafts that have been made by the talented folks at First Lutheran. There will be many home decorating and gift items to choose from.

Kids' Korner – This kids only room has new and gently used items for everyone on their Christmas shopping list.

Kozy Korner Knits – will include beautifully knit scarves, mittens, adult and youth hats—just in time for the cool weather.

The Sweet Shoppe – is where you will find homemade candy! Line up for fudge, peanut butter balls, peppermint patties, peanut brittle and more.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

fair@firstlutheranportland.org

Council Update

Pastor Mark put together a great program, making our mini-retreat on September 30th a very positive event. It was a time of sharing, getting to know each other better, planning, prioritizing, and of course, eating! We thank the hard working staff at Brian and Jennifer Hazelwood's Subway in Westbrook for having our order ready at such an early hour.

As most of you know, our Stewardship Campaign is our number one priority. Please prayerfully consider your 2024 pledge.

Ken Conant has reached out to several companies regarding estimates to patch/repair/pave the potholes in the parking lot. We have contracted with one company, and they are planning on doing some basic repairs and paving before the winter, and then will finish the project in the spring.

As always, if anyone has any questions, concerns or suggestions, please speak to any Council member and we will be happy to address them at our next meeting. If you would personally like to address the Council on any issues, please contact me and we will welcome you at our next scheduled meeting.

In Christian Fellowship,
Coleen Walther

Financial Update

FLC had a net operating surplus in September 2023 of \$406. We had expected a large deficit so the result was favorable to our budget. Our receipts were also significantly over budget due to a large payment by an annual giver. There was also a favorable timing difference so this result is not expected again. Our operating account maintains a healthy balance, but will be under increasing pressure as we continue the rest of 2023. We will need to make difficult choices as we begin to consider our 2024 budget.

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

	Actual September 2023	Actual YTD
Operating Income	\$27,819	\$237,739
Operating Expenses	\$27,413	\$287,662
Net Operating Income (Loss)	\$406	(\$49,923)



November 1



November 11



November 23



November 26



“STEWARDSHIP: AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE”

During this Thanksgiving month in our worship and life we are focusing on what it means to respond with gratitude for all that God has done for us and all He gives to us.

Our worship services this month are featuring special testimonies about how the speakers have been blessed and what they did in response to those blessings. The sermons will focus on how we respond in gratitude for our spiritual gifts, our possessions and for our whole selves, all given to us only because of God’s grace and love for us and for all creation.

We will also be shaping a “Wall of Gratitude” on the Fellowship Hall bulletin board. During worship this month, we’ll have sticky notes for you to write on to describe where your fellow congregation members are living out their calling and sharing their gifts. Write a note of thanks for something you have noticed. It could be here at church, out in the community, at work or school, or at home.

Examples to get you started thinking:

- Maria was teaching her granddaughter how to take communion, sharing her lifetime of faith.
- Jose is an amazing teacher at the elementary school, caring for each individual student.
- Malik is a great advocate for our local housing program. He makes me want to get involved!
- Beth is a great soccer player. I love how she used her athletic skills in a game and supported her teammates. (Sharing names can also be optional.)

You’ll be invited to place those notes on the whiteboard near the front on your way out of worship. They will then be removed and added to the bulletin board display throughout the month. Be sure to stop by and read and rejoice in all the ways God’s blessings are shared through people!

You also should have received a letter* about the stewardship opportunities we have here at First Lutheran and the invitation to consider your own commitment in time, talent, and treasure for 2024. This will be critical as we look towards calling a pastor at the end of this transition time so we can know what resources we’ll have available for that prospect. Please bring the Time and Talent Survey and Commitment letter to worship on November 19th where we lay them at the altar as a symbol of our gratitude for ALL that God gives to us, especially in the salvation we receive through Jesus Christ.

(*If you didn’t receive this letter, please contact the church office and we’ll send it to you).

Pastor Mark

Transition Team Update

Thank you to all who participated in the “Why Us?” Event on Sunday, October 29th! We looked at various bible stories, events and people to see which ones inspire and inform us as a congregation about our current mission and purpose. The results from this event, as well as the Heritage Sunday event, the CAT (Congregational Assessment Tool), informal conversations, and other input, will be incorporated into the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) that will be used as the basis for matching our congregation with a new pastor. The Transition Team will be working on that MSP this month with the goal of presenting it to the Church Council at their December meeting. If the Council approves it, along with any edits or additions, then it will be presented to the Congregation for input and questions following worship on December 17, 2023. It would then go to the New England Synod to start the Call Process for a new part-time or full-time pastor (depending on 2024 financial commitments). For more information, see the “Transition Timeline” on the Fellowship Hall bulletin board or contact Transition Pastor Mark Perry or any of the members of the Transition Team: Susan Bollman, Ann Brown, Barb Daggett, Phyllis Kilfoil, and/or Sarah Pesa.

Our Community Involvement

Operation Christmas Child

First Lutheran is participating in [Operation Christmas Child](#), which is sponsored by the international relief organization called [Samaritan's Purse](#). As many of you know from previous years, this rewarding project involves packing gift boxes that will be sent to children in disadvantaged communities all around the world, especially in Africa. More than 200 million children are expected to receive gift boxes this year! The goal of Operation Christmas Child is to bring joy to children through age-appropriate gifts and also to spread the good news about Jesus Christ. Each box will include a copy of the book, "The Greatest Journey" which families can read together. We invite you to participate in any of the following ways:

1. At First Lutheran's lobby/preschool entrance, you will see a display. Simply take a box and directions (and if you wish, a "ticket" with directions about how to track the box to its destination). Then, go shopping and bring the box back to First Lutheran by Sunday, 11/5! The gifts should not be expensive or big. [Here is a list of suggested items by age](#). We ask that you select one slightly bigger item as well as a few smaller items. The young people in your life might enjoy the process of shopping with you. Consider writing a letter to the recipient! ([Here is one](#) that kids can use).
2. If you don't wish to pack a whole box, no problem! You can still participate! Join us after church on November 5 at our "Packing Party!" On that day, if you wish, you can bring an item... or bring nothing at all. We mean that! We will have a collection of items to be put into the boxes. We will just need your enthusiasm! This is a great way to pack a box without going to a store and spending any money. Perhaps you or your child would consider writing a note or drawing a picture for the child receiving the gift.



3. You can also pack a box online. Just go to [this webpage](#) or scan this QR code. Then pay and choose the gifts you would like to send. Not only will your gift bring joy to a child, but your gift box will still count towards our church's total number of boxes!

Thank you for participating in Operation Christmas Child! We can't wait to see how many boxes our congregation can pack. Imagine the joy we will be sending!

November is FLC's month

As a reminder, November is the month for FLC to consider giving to Family Promise by either donating Hannaford, Target or Walmart gift cards, quarters for laundry, or cash to be used for purchasing bus passes, helping with rent deposits or other needs. Congregations involved with GPFPP are asked to contribute in this way once a year and November is our month. If you are interested in purchasing gift cards, please consider getting them through Give a Child a Chance RaiseRight sales. It helps their fundraising efforts along with helping GPFPP. A win-win situation! Any gift card amounts are most appreciated along with any amount of quarters or cash. You can certainly give the quarters or gift cards to me and I will give them to Family Promise. If you would like to give a dollar amount directly to Family Promise, you can send it to the following address:



Greater Portland Family Promise
P.O. Box 11048
Portland, Maine 04104

Thank you for your continued prayers and support.

Wendy



Give a Child a Chance

The Applebee's Dine-out Fundraiser raised \$105.00 for GACAC. Thank you all for your support; we are glad you had some fellowship time with folks from FLC and beyond!

There is lots going on with GACAC — here are some things to watch out for this November and December.

- November is our month to support families cared for by the Greater Portland Family Promise program. Pick up some gift cards for Walmart, Hannaford, Target and/or Shaw's to be used this month by these families. RaiseRight Sales will be held the first and second Sundays in November.
- See's Candies for Holiday giving is ongoing. Access our storefront Yum-Raising site by going to the following link:

https://www.yumraising.com/secure/giveaca_give_a_child_a_chance2/KarJoh1763/candy

The deadline for ordering See's Candies is **December 1st**. Don't be disappointed by waiting too long!

- Equal Exchange/Fair Trade Fundraising in December.

As Fall approaches Winter, we all look for ways to stay warm and cozy. What better way to achieve that goal than with a hot cup of coffee or cocoa and a bite of rich chocolate! GACAC will begin offering coffee, cocoa and mini chocolate bars in December as part of our fundraising efforts. Each sale item comes from Equal Exchange Fairly Traded. Their mission is “to build long-term trade partnerships that are economically just and environmentally sound, to foster mutually beneficial relationships between farmers and consumers and to demonstrate through our success, the contribution of worker cooperatives and fair trade to a more equitable, democratic and sustainable world.”

All this is done in our effort to help us help them — the preschoolers who would otherwise be unable to attend our FLC early childhood education programs. Everyone wins!

Questions? Please contact any team member or email us.

Ann Brown, Susan Bollman, Wendy Carey, Karen Johnson, Colleen Taylor

ec-fund@flcme.org

Thank You!

Thank you to First Lutheran for graciously allowing the use of the kitchen and fellowship hall for Portland Altrusa's annual Empty Bowl event. Altrusans put on a spread of 14 different soups, chili, crackers and bread, served in a hand selected bowl, which you are encouraged to keep as a reminder that some of our community members may be experiencing food insecurity (an empty bowl). 100% of the funds raised went directly to Project Feed to support our neighbors in need of nutritious food, in our small effort to ensure our neighbors bowls are not empty.

It was a wonderful evening, and I loved seeing some out our congregation in attendance! The event was very successful and we were able to send just over \$2,000 to Project Feed.

If anyone is interested in Altrusa's mission and would like to hear more, I have been involved in the group for two years, and I would love to have you join me for a meeting or event soon. Reach out to me at kwblamb@gmail.com or call (207) 329-4630.

Katie Lamb

Education Update

The Education Committee concentrates on teaching the word of God, whether it is via Sunday School lessons, Vacation Bible School, Bible Study classes, or other programs.

The Education Committee held a couple of meetings during the month of October. The meeting times were arranged to support parent availability. A total of 10 different participants joined the two meetings. Two folks also sent information, one via email and one via an anonymous note. (We are still wondering who left that thoughtful, helpful note in the Centennial Room — thanks!). The purpose of the meetings was to explore with interested people what faith formation might look like going forward.

All parents of school aged children and youth have received at least one call and a couple of email contacts. The Education Committee continues to seek input, so if you have been contacted but have not had a chance to share your thoughts or offer input, please contact Pastor Mark, or call Gene at (207) 415-9609. If you feel you should have been contacted, but haven't yet heard from Pastor or Gene, please reach out to us immediately.

The information gathered by the participants has been extremely helpful in identifying some ideas and thoughts for what could and should be offered at First Lutheran moving forward. A couple of clear consistencies include the offering of Sunday School for our youngest children, connecting our middle and high school aged youth to service opportunities, incorporating all children and youth with an interest directly into our services in terms of supporting roles such as usher, reader, greeter, singer, and other varied roles. Finally, there is interest in starting multi-generational periodic events that bring the whole congregation together with a service and devotional focus.

The Education Committee continues to welcome all interested church goers of all ages. Our next meeting will be held Sunday, November 12th from 11:30am to 12:30pm. If you are unable to attend that meeting, but would like to continue to offer input or ideas, please call Gene and he can meet with you at an alternate time. The agenda for this meeting will be sent out on November 3rd.

Respectfully,
Gene Kucinkas

Fuel Assistance Fund

The Fall Bake Sale on October 22nd raised \$1,519 for the Fuel Assistance Fund! Thank you to everyone that came and purchased the delicious treats, and thank you to all of our talented bakers that made the wonderful items.

The Fuel Assistance Fund is available for our members and friends who may need a little help paying for heating costs during the Maine winters. If you need some assistance, or you know of someone needing help, please contact Pastor Mark or the church office with a name, address and the name of the heating fuel company. All names are kept confidential.



Getting to Know Us

Jake Brown



Jake grew up in the little town of Etters, Pennsylvania. Like many of us, his first job was in lawn care. He mowed neighborhood lawns and helped his dad and brothers with their local church cemetery. A highlight of the job for him was being able to ride his bike to all the locations and use their equipment.

When he graduated from college in 1989, Jake began his work career in Austin, Texas as a Technical Support Engineer for a company based in the Netherlands, ASML. After six years in Austin, Jake and his wife Ann moved to Westbrook when he took a job at National Semiconductor to work in their newly built lab close by the airport.

This job has afforded Jake a lot of travel opportunities. He has gone to many spots in both the US and around the world, including Eastern Canada and Quebec, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, France, England, Scotland, Ireland, Taiwan, and Australia. In recent years, Jake is able to do most of his job from home. This has worked out great, as Ann now cares for their grandkids Monday through Friday. Jake enjoys all the opportunities that this gives him to play with them.

In early 1996, Jake and his family began coming to First Lutheran. One of the main reasons they checked out FLC was because of the preschool. "Once we attended, we stayed. Basically, I just followed Ann."

Jake has many interests and favorite activities — summer Miata drives, spending time with family, learning a new woodworking hobby, going to races, and even occasionally racing in a small simulator rig. Jake's dream job would be to work as a mechanic on a Formula 1 team.



All those affected by the shootings in Lewiston
The people of Israel and the innocent civilians of Palestine
Ethan Olson & family
Abbott Knowles
Ned Long
Wendy Carey
Judy Horn
Bob Mitchell
Dave Deuben
Sue Hayden

Lynne Fishburn
FLC Call Committee
FLC Sunday School
FLC Church Council
Bev Beliveau
Jen & Brian Hazelwood
Paul & Sharon Aube
Peter Rovnak
Victims of racism and hate, especially those in the LGTBQIA+ community
All victims of violence

November 3 Lauren Cormier
November 6 Steve Barmore
November 12 Phyllis Kilfoil
November 15 Garrett Thees
November 20 Bob Taylor
Sophia Thees
November 23 Ken Carr
November 28 Kay Ahlquist

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

November 2023



**Daylight Saving Time ends on
November 5th. Remember to
set your clocks back one hour!**

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.

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

STAFF

Transitional Interim PastorRev. Mark Perry (mark.perry@flcme.org)
Church Secretary Joleen Knowles (joleen.knowles@flcme.org)
Church Organist..... Brenda Morneau (brenda.morneau@flcme.org)
Director—FLC Children’s Community Ministry.....Sherryl Eastman (flcpinfo@flcme.org)

OFFICERS

PresidentColeen Walther
Vice-President Ann Brown
SecretaryKen Conant
TreasurerEd Daggett
Financial Secretary Cheryl Cyr