

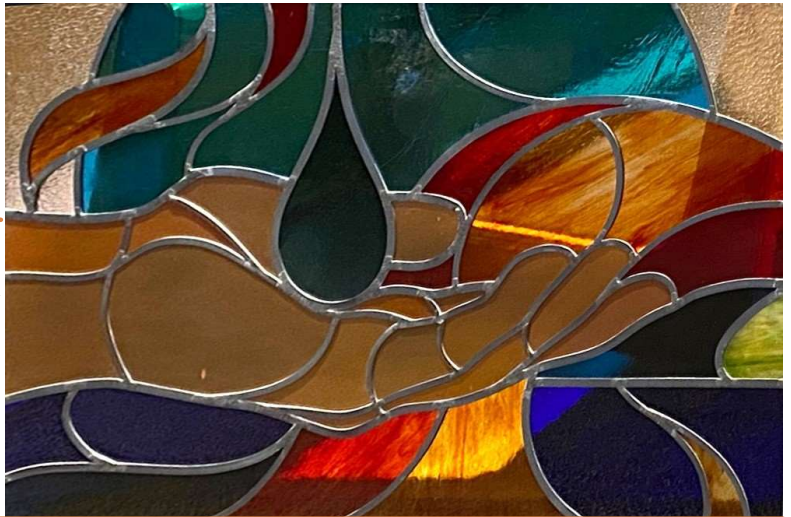


FAMILY OF GOD

"Children by grace, extending Christ's embrace"

Worship and communion
Sundays at 9:30 am

In-person and livestreamed from our
Youtube channel, found on our
website fogchurch.org



Announcements

- Young Adult Bible Study Friday at 6:30 pm
- Rally Day on September 13th
- Bible Study Tuesdays at 9:30 am and 7:00 pm

Family of God Lutheran Church, ELCA
8625 Zane Avenue N, Brooklyn Park, MN 55443 763-424-8625
fogchurch.org

September 2026

A note from the pastor

Pr. Paul Burow

Summer is almost over—September is upon us. Let's talk about Christmas and Easter.

Some of you have heard me say that when I was younger I found many Minnesota Easters to be depressing. Too often they were cold and gray in the early springtime, or rainy and even snowy. Without the bright Spring sun it seemed to me a sort of farce—how can we celebrate when the sun does not shine? How can we frolic in joy when there are 12 inches of snow to shovel? But then as I got older I began to see that the gray Easters are more profound than the sunny ones. Because a lot of life is lived in the in between, and not just in the light but in the shadows. It is in those times that the Easter good news is so needed.

I found two poems by the English writer Thomas Hardy that I'd like to quote. Hardy bridged the Victorian age in England between the Victorian times and the modern era, before the last century and ending with the Great War.

Here is a poem whose title caught my eye:

"A Drizzly Easter Morning" – Thomas Hardy

***And he is risen? Well, be it so...
And still the pensive lands complain,
And dead men wait as long ago,
As if, much doubting, they would know
What they are ransomed from, before
They pass again their sheltering door.
I stand amid them in the rain,
While blusters vex the yew and vane;
And on the road the weary wain
Plods forward, laden heavily;
And toilers with their aches are fain
For endless rest—though risen is he***

And now for Christmas: Christmas weather didn't bother me as much as Easter weather. Christmas was more about mood and family and friends and even doubt. After all, there are these expectations for the "most wonderful time of the year," aptly answered by Charlie Brown and the Grinch when I was a child. But what about those doubts—after all, it is a

pretty fantastic story. The miracle—God made flesh in grace and love to save a fallen humanity. Virgin births, Little Town of Bethlehem, Magi from the East, the Christmas star can sound like a myth. And even more difficult to believe in the gray and cloudy days of postmodernity when people don't believe in Absolute Truth anymore.

Thomas Hardy wrote a poem about the English legend that children were taught that on midnight on Christmas Eve the oxen bowed down on their front legs to worship the newborn Son of God. In its phrases you can hear the stress of the modern age overcoming old truths, and speaking to us about miracles in the incredible times we live in.

"The Oxen" – Thomas Hardy

***Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.
"Now they are all on their knees,"
An elder said as we sat in a flock
By the embers in hearthside ease.***

***We pictured the meek mild creatures where
They dwelt in their strawy pen,
Nor did it occur to one of us there
To doubt they were kneeling then.***

***So fair a fancy few would weave
In these years! Yet, I feel,
If someone said on Christmas Eve,
"Come; see the oxen kneel,***

***"In the lonely barton by yonder coomb
Our childhood used to know,"
I should go with him in the gloom,
Hoping it might be so.***

Some final words, from an anonymous inscription on a Cologne basement wall during WW 2 where Jews were hiding from the Nazis.

***"I believe in the sun, even when it is not shining.
I believe in love, even when there's no one there.
And I believe in God, even when He is silent"***

A note from the pastor

Pr. Erin Koster

Greetings to everyone at Family of God -

We are back to our regularly scheduled programming! It's autumn. This is a time of year when a lot of our groups and ministries resume after summer hiatus. A break for summer is nice, but I always have a sense of excitement when September comes back around. The air feels crisper and we get to see folks who may have been busy or away during the warm months. We are back in the swing of things, and I can't wait to see what the programming year holds here at FOG.

First of all, we have our autumn kickoff. On Labor Day (September 6), we'll have our final outdoor service for the year, weather permitting. The following Sunday (September 13) is Rally Day, the official return from summer to our typical church schedule. A couple of things will happen then. First off, we have the **Blessing of the Backpacks!** Kids (or adults going to school) can bring in their backpacks, or just themselves, and receive a blessing for the academic year. Teachers and other school staff are also very much invited to join in for a blessing as well. The adults who help care for and educate our kids are such a gift and we want to lift them up, too.

On the same day, we have the return of **Sunday School!** This class gathers almost every Sunday during the year and is open to kids from preschool through fifth grade. If you're on the fence whether your kid is old enough, we also have the nursery available during worship services if that's a better fit. There is no cost to sign for Sunday School, but it's helpful if you do register on our website (fogchurch.org) so we know your kid will be joining! Friends are always welcome and you don't have to be a member to participate. We use Spark, a curriculum from our denomination's publishing house. Our young people learn about Bible stories from creation to the start of the early church. It's fun, and our adult volunteers are so kind and dedicated!

For youth in fifth through ninth grade, we have **confirmation**. Our kickoff is Wednesday, September 16 at 7:30PM. We will decide on our schedule and discuss plans for the year. Most of our youth went to Camp Wapo over the summer, so we can talk about doing more overnights during the year. Service projects, mentors, topics they'd like to learn about—we will talk it all over! Like most of our youth events these days, we don't charge and you don't have to be a member. Please reach out to me if you have any questions!

Not related to youth specifically: our **class on grief and dying** is continuing into autumn. Death and loss are a difficult reality of life, but if we talk about those experiences intentionally, it can help us be more prepared and process them in a healthy way. We have a few more sessions in our Bible study, "The Grief Lectionary." We've been digging into Bible stories that reflect the different facets of loss and the emotional responses we have. We also have a class with Sue Arens coming up. She's a retired ELCA deacon and nurse who is a member here. She'll be sharing her knowledge on end of life decisions that most of us will have to make at some point. This weekly class runs after worship at 11AM through September 20.

Autumn also brings lots of other events and ministries. Our Tuesday Bible study will continue, so stay tuned for the exact schedule and topic for the year. We also have Trunk or Treat, the presentation of Bibles to third graders, and more on the horizon. I'm looking forward to hearing more about everyone's summer activities, and to getting back into the program year. See you at church!

Blessings to you and your loved ones—
Pr. Erin Koster

Council Meeting summary

Devotions were led by Nancy Balzer. Meeting was called to order at 7:09pm by Council

President David Loos.

Old Business highlights: Church clean-up will be scheduled in mid-September. Sod will be replaced near the front door. Electronic sign is working again, but could use some touch-ups on paint.

New Business highlights: Pastor Erin and Sue Arens are leading the Preplanning and Preparing for a Funeral Class. Great engagement and feedback has been received. Garage Sale committee will be meeting on Sunday Aug 23rd to do a post-sale review and will document logistics and plans for continuity purposes. This year's sale was a huge success in terms of revenue and people engagement.

Treasurer's report was reviewed and approved. Giving has decreased in the summer months, but July was improved.

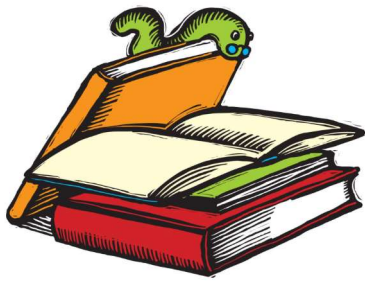
Staff reports were given by Pastor Paul and Pastor Erin. Highlights include lots of pastoral care visits, Camp Wapo for 5 of our youth, roller-rink event, visiting of our Mission family, and update of Confirmation photos in the hallway.

In Committee Updates: Audit committee completed the 2025 audit and plan on doing the first half of 2026 in September. CYF is meeting on Aug 30 to plan curriculum and events.

Evangelism is looking for new committee members. Social Ministry will be asking for cash donations for Every Meal.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm.





Book club meets the third Monday of the month at 1 pm. The following are the books they are reading:

September 21 The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

Sherman Alexie

New members welcome!

October 19 None Stood Taller

Contact **Joan Hemanson** with any questions

Peter Turnham

Family of God will be holding it's semi annual blood drive on September 28th 1-7 pm

There is always a need for blood, and donation can save a life.

"Just for fun" days in September

Sept 4: Eat an extra Dessert Day

Sept 6: Read a Book Day

Sept 9: Teddy Bear Day

Sept 13: Positive Thinking Day

Sept 15: Make a Hat Day

Sept 18: Rice Krispie Treat Day

Sept 21: Miniature Golf Day

Sept 26: Love Note Day

Galatians/Philippians Bible Study: The Apostle Paul planted many churches during his missionary journeys, and through the years helped to encourage and guide them through his letters. These churches had different issues and had different characters. Join me as we study the Books of Galatians and Philippians. The church at Galatia was one of those difficult churches that the Apostle dealt with in firm and even strident tones—in other words they were kind of a pain to work with. But the church at Philippi was one of Paul's easiest to deal with and he rejoiced in their ministry. In ten weeks, beginning Tuesday, September 15 th we'll study these Biblical books and learn Paul's teachings and practical issues in dealing with these early Christians. Morning study goes from 9:30 – 11 am and the evening class from 7-8 pm. Please join us—no cost—just please bring your Bibles. See you then. There is a sign up sheet on the narthex kiosk.



Are you tired all the time? Feel like you're running on fumes?

Your strength is limited. But God's strength is unlimited. Your strength is finite. God's strength is infinite. Your strength is exhaustible. God's strength is inexhaustible.

One of the most well known Christians of the nineteenth century, Hudson Taylor, was a missionary to China. He was a spiritual giant and a brilliant man. In his old age he lost his health and became quite weak. He sent a

letter to a friend and said, "I am so weak I cannot write; I cannot read my Bible; I cannot even pray. I can only lie still in God's arms like a little child and trust."

At some point in your life you may be too weak to work, pray, read the Bible. What will you do in those moments? You rest in the strength of the Lord, in his arms like a little child, and you trust.

Blessings to you all.

Judy Blomgren
FOG Music Director

Ruth Circle News Flash!

After a summer hiatus, Ruth Circle will move forward full speed ahead with its fall schedule. We wish to welcome FOG women to our first fall meeting on Thursday, September 10th at 9:30 a.m. Our schedule then continues on the second Thursday of each month. Be sure to add Ruth Circle meetings to your calendar.

The purpose of Ruth Circle is to provide fellowship and support and to provide service to our church and community. An important part of each meeting is Bible study, led by Pastor Erin or Pastor Paul. A few of our service activities in the past have been funeral lunches, soup suppers, prayer partners, and visitations.

If you need transportation, please phone the church office by Wednesday morning so that arrangements can be made.

Officers for 2026-2027 are: President, Joann Frankena; Vice President, Diane Tripp; Secretary, Stephanie Statz; Treasurer, Jeanne Ferguson.

Please join us on September 10th!





Kingdom Quest

Finding the Gospel in the subcultures of story and imagination.

JOIN THE QUEST. HELP SHAPE WHAT'S NEXT.

We'd love to get to know you and the stories, hobbies, and worlds that inspire you!

DO YOU ENJOY...



Fantasy & Science Fiction
(Stories & Worlds)



Books & Reading



Movies & TV



Tabletop Games



Video Games



Music



Comics &
Graphic Novels



Creative Arts



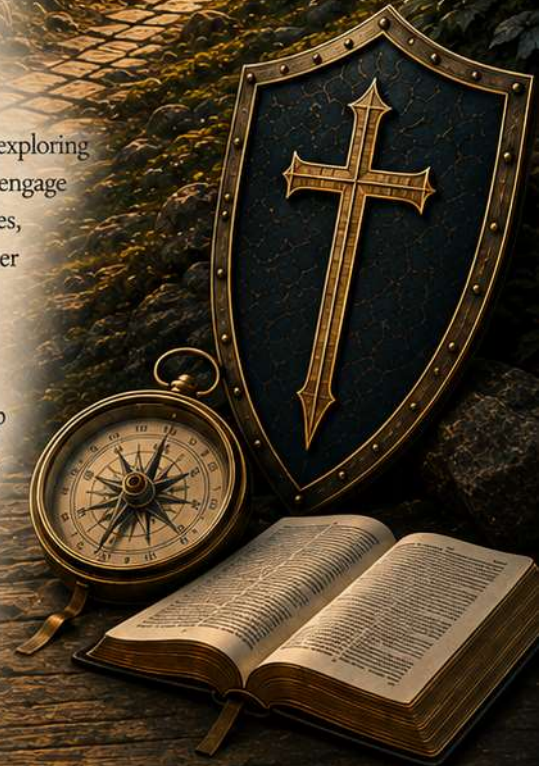
Great Conversations

**...OR SIMPLY TALKING
ABOUT FAITH AND CULTURE?**

Kingdom Quest is a new ministry exploring how Scripture helps us thoughtfully engage fantasy, science fiction, tabletop games, stories, books, films, comics, and other story-rich communities.

Whether you're a lifelong Christian, simply curious, or have never picked up a game, book, or controller in your life, you're welcome.

*Come hear the vision,
ask questions, and help
shape what this ministry
could become.*



CHRIST FIRST



SCRIPTURE FIRST



COMMUNITY ALWAYS

*Equipping believers to engage culture with wisdom,
build authentic relationships, and share the hope of Christ.*

First meeting is on Sunday, September 27th at 11am.
Contact Andrew Peterson for questions.



Sunday Flowers

2026 Flower Chart is posted
on the
narthex kiosk.

The cost of the flowers is \$35.

9/6 Randy and LaDonna Blackorbay

9/13 Chuck and Sandy Lenthe

9/20 John and Cindy Buesgens

9/27 Larry and Nancy Knoell



Global Mission Support

**2026 Global Mission Support
Calendar** is posted on the kiosk in
the narthex. Your \$35 weekly
donation goes to support Megan Tee
and Tee Sieng's ministry work in
Japan.

9/6 Jim and Sue Elsass

9/13 David and Rita Loos

9/20 Jack and Dixie Umland

9/27 Rick and Rhonda Withers

FOG Crafters will be meeting again starting October 22 - 24. Theme for the kickoff event is Sleepover. Wear your cozy PJ's and slippers while watching old movies and snacking on junk food and pizza. We will have a special community project, we will be making cards for Cards for Hospitalized Kids. More information will be sent through the bulletins and will be posted at the church. Join us for all 3 days or just for a few hours for fellowship and fun.

-Steph & LeAnne-

Birthdays

Sarah Hartzler 9/01

Steven Oien 9/02

Cindy Buesgens 09/04

Doug Behrens 09/04

Darrin Williams 09/05

Gary Carlson 09/06

Olivia Butts 09/07

Joshua Phleger 09/07

Todd Letsche 09/08

Richard Stiller 09/10

Sandra Lenthe 09/13

Julie Strub 09/14

Katherine Bengtson 09/20

Sandra Magnuson 09/23

Jill Stiller 09/23

Norah Haywood 09/24

Kaitlyn Tieman 09/25

Sophia Ricci 09/25

Sue Arens 09/26

Melanie Balzer 09/27

Wonser Daynuah 09/27

Alison Sedesky 09/28

Roni Hyatt 09/29

Anniversaries

Linda & Paul Broman 09/10

Gary & Susan Phleger 09/05

Rick & Julie Strub 09/19

If your birthday or anniversary does not appear, please bring this to the office's attention.

FAMILY OF GOD MEMORIAL GARDEN PAVER ORDER FORM

For orders to be accepted the sponsor must be a current Family of God member or the deceased a past member. No non-member orders.

Pavers may be sponsored in memory of a lost loved one (no pets, advertising or political statements).

No cremates may be scattered or buried in the garden

We reserve the right to edit inscriptions for grammar, usage, length, and acceptability.

Each 4" X 8" paver can contain up to 3 lines of copy. All lines do not have to be used.

There can be up to 15 characters or spaces per line.

Each box represents a letter, number, punctuation or space. Use upper case letters.

Each message will be inscribed in the center of the paver in all upper-case lettering.

If you would like two pavers placed next to one another, please staple them together.

One additional adjacent paver may be "saved" for later inscription. Payment for the "saved" paver will be collected at the time of engraving. Fill out contact information and write "Saved" across inscription section and staple to your current order form.

The placement of the pavers will be decided by the Memorial Garden Committee. We cannot guarantee that special requests will be honored.

Sponsors will be asked to proof and approve the final inscription.

The cost per engraved paver is \$60.00, payable at the time of ordering. Cost covers paver, engraving and installation. It also includes care and maintenance of garden and future expansion.

Orders must be turned into the church office by Sunday, Sept. 13th to be included in the November 1st All Saints' Day dedication. Make checks payable to Family of God with "memorial garden" written in the notation space.

DATE _____

SPONSOR'S NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Please notify church of changes in contact information.

INSCRIPTION

/ / / / / / / / / / / / / / /

2026 GARAGE SALE REPORT

This year's garage sale was a huge success. We made \$15,665.19!! Thank you to all who donated items, priced, organized, manned the sale and cleaned up afterwards. It was a huge effort by many people. It would be impossible to name all who volunteered but would like to recognize garage sale committee members/department chairs who worked so hard to make the sale happen. Department chairs were Jane Nelson-men's clothing, Nancy Bixler-boys & girls clothing, Linda Knudsen-women's clothing, Nasser Daynuah & Dorothy Smith-shoes, Marie Newgard-housewares, Terri Anderson Webb-toys, Joan Hermanson-jewelry, Ginny Lancot-books, Joanne Frankena-linens, Gary Carlson-tools/outdoor items, Sue Aleckson-crafts/personal care, Sue Elsass-candles, art, luggage & seasonal, Nancy Rhinhart-china & vintage, Mark Kitoski-CDS & records, Claudia Peterson-games & puzzles, Rhonda Withers-office & school & sporting goods, Nancy Balzer-volunteer coordinator, Joe Rhinhart & Julie Holleman-finance and Stephanie Statz-presales on marketplace and Paul Zahalan-set up and take down.

ALL CONTRIBUTED GREATLY TO THE SALES SUCCESS!!! Our volunteers ranged from members in their 80's to our youngest volunteer, Morgan Peterson.

Unsold merchandise was donated to Goodwill, Salvation Army,

Unique thrift shop which benefits disabled American Vets, YMCA Youth & Family services, Good in the Hood, MN animal rescue society, animal humane society, St. Gerard's holiday sale, and Angels in Minneapolis

We made every effort to recycle or pass on to others who could put our leftovers to good use.

Kathy Behrens, Marie Newgard & Terri Anderson Webb



Nursery Policy Reminder

To help ensure a safe and welcoming environment for the children in our care, we would like to remind our congregation of the following nursery policies, approved by the CYF committee, effective beginning in September:

- **Nursery availability:** The nursery will only be open when designated nursery staff are present and actively supervising children, 15 minutes before service and 15 minutes after service. This applies to regular worship services as well as special events, including **weddings and funerals**. If designated nursery staff are not available, the nursery will remain closed.
- **Age guidelines:** The nursery is available for children **through 2nd grade**. Children older than 2nd grade should not use the nursery.
- **Staffing and supervision:** For the safety of all children, **parents, guardians, and volunteers may not staff or supervise the nursery**. Supervision must be provided by designated nursery staff.
- **Safety procedures:** All established nursery policies, protocols, and safety procedures must be followed at all times.

These guidelines are in place to help protect our children, support our nursery staff, and provide a safe and consistent environment for everyone. We appreciate the cooperation and understanding of our congregation as we work together to care for the children entrusted to us.

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe and welcoming nursery for our church families!

Ms. Claudia and Ms. Madison

Social Ministry Corner

We are kicking off our monthly food drive with North Hennepin Community College. Here is a list of the most requested items. Also included is a report on service numbers.

Grab and go food items (granola bars, oatmeal cups, snack packs, trail mix, etc).

-Rice (brown rice, white rice, jasmine rice, etc).

-Pastas

-Canned fruits and vegetables

-Peanut butter

-Any school supply items (backpacks, folders, notebooks, binders, pencils, highlighters, calculators).

-Hygiene items (menstrual products, toothpaste, lotion, shampoo, body wash)





2025-2026

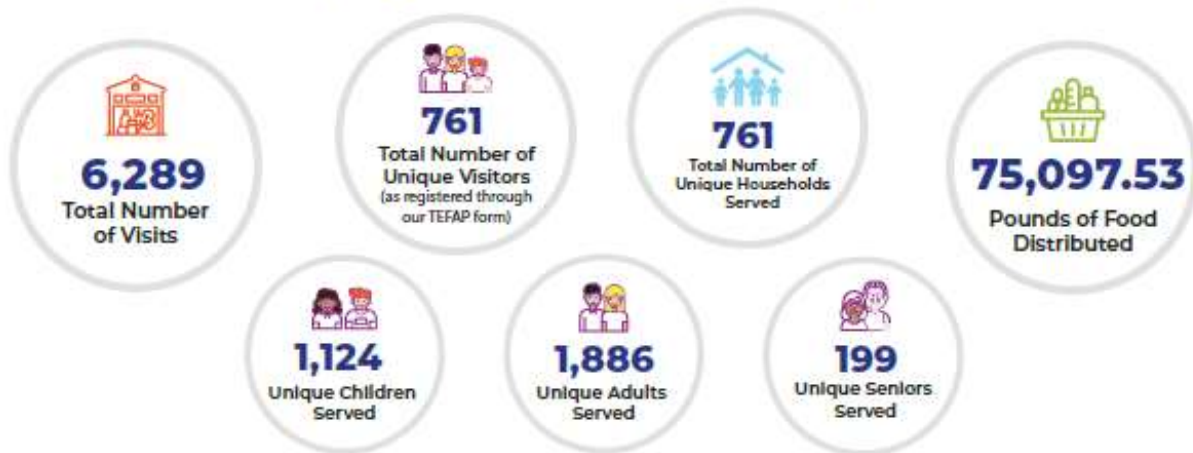
North Hennepin Community College Food Cupboard Report



The North Hennepin Community College Food Cupboard is a community funded resource that strives to provide supplemental food and basic needs resources to the NHCC community. During the 2025-2026 academic year, the Food Cupboard program continued to grow through new partnerships, certifications, and outreach efforts.

Statistics

(August 25th, 2025 - May 13th, 2026)



Community Partnerships

Our Food Cupboard program would not be able to operate without our wonderful community partnerships and donors! NHCC has partnered with The University of Minnesota Extension team to work towards our Super Shelf Certification.

THE FOOD GROUP (TFG): NHCC's main vendor for purchasing food items. TFG is a food bank that also provides grants and professional development around hunger relief.

KITCHEN COALITION: An initiative through Second Harvest Heartland that partners with local restaurants and caterers to provide heat-and-eat meals to communities around the Twin Cities.

THE FOUNDATION FOR ESSENTIAL NEEDS (FFEN): FFEN provides free consultation to food cupboards regarding best practices for physical layout, food sourcing, and grants.

HENNEPIN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH/SHIP RESOURCE: NHCC partners with Hennepin County Public Health's Statewide Health Improvement Partnership to increase awareness of the Food Cupboard and engagement regarding food insecurity and hunger.

* TEFAP - The Emergency Food Assistance Program ** KCM - Kitchen Coalition Meals





September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 No Bull AA 7 pm	2 Connie's Quilters 11 am	3 Youth Bible Study 6:30pm Riverlyn AA 7 pm	4 YA Bible Study 6:30PM	5
6 9:30 am Worship Outside 12pm Christ Chapel Int	7 Office closed	8 No Bull AA 7 pm	9 Connie's Quilters 11 am Choir Practice 7pm	10 Ruth Circle Meet- ing Youth Bible Study 6:30pm Riverlyn AA 7 pm	11 YA Bible Study 6:30PM	12
13 Sunday School Starts <i>Blessing</i> 9:30 am Worship 11:00 am RIC Com- mittee meeting 12 pm Chapel Int	14 Book Club 1:00 pm	15 Bible Study 9:30 am & 7 pm No Bull AA 7 pm	16 Connie's Quilt- ers 11 am Choir 7:pm Confirmation Kickoff 7:30	17 Riverlyn AA 7 pm 7pm Council mtg	18 YA Bible Study 6:30PM	19 <i>FALL CLEANUP.</i> <i>Churchwide. 9 -1</i>
20 9:30 am Sunday School 12pm Christ Chapel Int	21 FOG Book Club 1pm Linus Quilters 10 am	22 Bible Study 9:30 am & 7 pm No Bull AA 7 pm	23 Connie's Quilters 11 am Choir 7:pm	24 Riverlyn AA 7 pm 	25 YA Bible Study 6:30PM	26 Men's Breakfast 8:30 am
27 9:30 am Sunday School 11 am King's Quest meeting 12pm Christ Chapel Int	28 Blood drive	29 Bible Study 9:30 am & 7 pm No Bull AA 7 pm	30 Connie's Quilters 11 am Choir 7:00 pm			

September worship helpers

Lectors

6 Mary Ellen Chinander
13 Paul Geske
20 MaryLou Gorres
27 Andrew Peterson

Refreshments

6 Andrew Ventura
13 Sedeskys
20 J. Frankena & J. Malmin
27 Balzers

Altar Care

6 Sue Elsass
13 Cindy Buesgens
20
27 Balzers

Ushers

6
13 Ryan Peterson
20 Larry Carlson
27 Joe Rinhart

Greeters

6 Mark Newgard
13 Katie Peterson
20 Sue Elsass
27 Betty Masterman

Nursery Care

6 Claudia
13 Claudia
20 Claudia
27 Madison



If you are unable to serve on a Sunday you have signed up for, please inform the church office as soon as possible. Thanks!
** IF YOU CAN FILL IN A BLANK SPOT PLEASE SEND AN EMAIL TO admin@frogchurch.org
SO A MASTER LIST CAN BE KEPT AND SO A REMINDER CARD CAN BE SENT.
THANK YOU!**

Family of God Lutheran Church

8625 Zane Ave North

Brooklyn Park, MN 55443

Change Service Requested

Rev. Paul Burow, Senior Pastor
pburow@fogchurch.org

Rev. Erin Koster, Associate Pastor
Perin@fogchurch.org

Allyson McDonald, Admin Assistant
admin@fogchurch.org

Judy Blomgren, Music Director
judyb305@gmail.com

Claudia Peterson & Madison Benton, Nursery

Office Hours

Monday – Thursday

9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Friday

9:00 am—1:00 pm

Website: www.fogchurch.org