



THE MESSENGER

JULY 2024



Church Office Hours:

Monday—Thursday
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Friday

7:30 a.m. to 12 noon

**First Lutheran
Church**

107 2nd Street Southeast

Aitkin, MN 56431

Office: 218-927-2028

E-mail: office@flc-aitkin.com

<http://www.flc-aitkin.com>

[facebook.com/flcaitkin](https://www.facebook.com/flcaitkin)

[facebook.com/flcayouthaitkin](https://www.facebook.com/flcayouthaitkin)



Before every baptism I do, I have a short baptism refresher class with the parents. And one of things I tell them is what Luther wrote about baptism in the Large Catechism. He said that our baptism is like an unsinkable ship. It won't sink because it was built by God. But life can be like a storm that rocks that ship, and sometimes it washes us overboard, and it feels like we're drowning. But that ship is still there. It will not sink. So, Luther writes, "Those who do fall out should immediately see to it that they swim to the ship and hold fast to it, until they can climb aboard again."

I like that image because it means that no matter what happens to us, we have that promise to fall back on. Even if our world falls apart around us, even if we feel like nobody cares about us, we have that promise that God loves us. And that promise will always be there for us. Even if we don't love God, God will love us, and that's a lifeline for us when we're drowning. If we cling to it, it will save us.

It's at those times that Jesus reaches down and pulls us back onto that unsinkable ship. He looks us in the eye and speaks right into our soul, "You are a child of God, you are loved, and that is enough."

And that's why baptism is the absolute bedrock of our faith. We have been baptized. We were washed in the cleansing waters of the Father, marked with the cross of Christ forever, and sealed by the Holy Spirit. We were given the name "Child of God," and no one can ever take that away from us. It's our identity. It's who we are, and more importantly, whose we are. We belong to God.

Every time we remember our baptism, it gives us another chance – a chance to start over, to be resurrected with Christ, to let God's grace prevail. Baptism is an unsinkable ship. We have a God of good promises. And good promises are powerful. They have real meaning for our lives today.

That's why we have decided to celebrate our baptisms here at First! You have heard at every one of our baptisms that we ask parents to celebrate the anniversary of their child's baptism every year, and we are going to take our own suggestion.

Beginning in August, we will celebrate the Baptismal Anniversary of every member of our church. Each month, in the newsletter, we will publish the names of everyone that was baptized in that month – everyone that we have a baptism date for – and we'll invite each one to come and celebrate their Baptism Anniversary month with us. Then, one Sunday each month, we'll call those who have their anniversary that month to come forward to the font as a group to remember what a great gift their baptism is to them, and what a great gift they are to their church.

Obviously, we do not have in our records the baptism date for every one of our members who were baptized in other congregations. We ask, if you do know that date and notice that we have not published it or invited you that month, please inform the office of the date, so we can add it to our records.

But you don't need to wait to be invited to celebrate your Baptism Anniversary! When we call forward everyone who was baptized that month, you can join the group.

Even if you don't know when you were baptized, a good rough estimate is to pick a date 6 weeks after your birthday. You can join the Baptism Anniversary that month!

Beginning in July, watch your mail or email for your invitation for your month. Let's celebrate! I can think of no better reason to come together than to recognize the day you became a member of the family of God!

See you in church!

Pastor Reggie

Parish Nurse Ministry

Parish Nurses
Rebecca May
Marcy Mateyka
Traci Moreland



Music, Faith, and Healing

What is music? Music is a language of symbols that has a depth that words do not. Music is like poetry with symbols and rhythm. It is an art form with rhythm and melody used in liturgy, prayer, praise, and celebration. Look at Psalm 150- celebration with cymbal, string, pipes, trumpet, lute, timbrel, harp, and dance. Or look at 1 Samuel 16: 23 where David took his lyre and played for Saul and refreshed him. Also in Zephaniah 3: 14,17 where the Lord delights in you with singing and rejoicing. But not all music is praising. It is also lament. The Psalms are poetic songs that praise and lament.

Music can be associated with words and serves multiple functions- it enables words to have deeper meaning, aids memory, and is highly associative with other occasions. Singing a familiar tune brings back memories of another time and place and emotion. It can also increase cognitive ability, reduce agitation, help to regain speech, help us move, and decrease pain by releasing dopamine (a feel good chemical in the brain). Music can transform one's well being. Music can also satisfy the human need of self expression and pleasurable feelings.

When we sing, we are engaged in a holistic experience- body, mind, and soul all working together to produce sound. Music involves the whole person through singing,

moving, dancing, and gesturing. Music is good medicine; it helps you breathe deeper and release pent up anxieties. Words we sing together shape us; our beliefs, attitudes, values, and faith. We sing out what we treasure about God. Words have power to uplift and heal. The heart is the place where our whole being comes together; body, mind, and spirit. By singing together we connect with a greater community.

Music is an integral part of worship. We start with the prelude to prepare our hearts for worship. Liturgy is the work of the people. Music serves God's Word and the Sacraments and liturgy. Voice and sung text are the primary instruments in worship. Singing is a communal, relational activity that helps to unify the church. Hymns stir memory, nurture faith and spiritual growth, and form the rhythms of the church year. Other instruments aid the singing voice. Playing an instrument is a multi tasking activity using executive function and memory.

Music connects human souls; speaking a language that needs no words. Music is comforting and beautiful. The secret of music makes the world quieter; silence enhances music. We thank the Lord for the gift of music.

Submitted by Rebecca May, Parish Nurse



The “Reverse Offering” as part of Stewardship Time and Talent continues to move along. There have been a number of reports of what people have or are doing with their “Reverse Offering”. River wild rice was sold, special flavored treats for dogs is being offered, cookies and bars are offered, fudge is going to be offered, two settings of a five course French Provencal Dinner have taken place and sixteen people participated between the two events. While the intent was that money earned would be turned into the church, some people have done very interesting things with their “Reverse Offering” such as using it to be matched for the American Cancer Society fund, supply items for two school classrooms and buying wood to make cutting blocks for wedding gifts. Thank you to all who are using their “Time and Talents” in this fun voyage. Oh—eighty-four “Reverse Offerings” were taken.

The Mission Endowment Foundation Committee has been exploring how to help the congregation understand how people can pass on their financial assets after death. There are many who have had the ability to build up finances and wish to have those assets used in charitable and maybe long term purposes. This fall, there will be an opportunity for members and others to hear more on this subject. More to come on this.

There is a saying that goes this way: Spring has sprung, fall has fell, summers here and it’s hot as ---usual!” Summer may also be the time when our offerings and estimates of offering end up playing second fiddle to the busy events that summer does bring. If you are reading this and have thought about using automated giving but left it on the back burner, maybe this summer is the time to explore how that works. You can call the church office and get the process. Automated giving or payments has become a regular part of our life in many areas. Perhaps you would like to expand that to your church offering. Give the church office a call at 927-2028 to hear more.

As we look at the special summer colors of blue sky, various shades of green in the trees and grasses, shadows of coolness and the myriad flowers and their unique addition to God’s creation, it is truly a time to be impressed with what we are gifted with by our Lord. Amen, Lord!

Douglas Larson, Stewardship Ministry

DID YOU MISS THE “REVERSE OFFERING?”

**OR DID YOU
JUST THINK
OF A WAY
TO USE
YOUR TIME
& TALENTS?**



**NO WORRIES!
THERE IS STILL
MONEY
AVAILABLE. STOP
IN THE OFFICE AND
GET YOUR REVERSE
OFFERING AND
START USING YOUR
TALENTS !**

REVERSE OFFERING--TIME AND TALENTS AT WORK! THE WORK CONTINUES

Reverse Offering continues to move along with some interesting uses of the “offering”. One couple served two settings of a five-course French Provincial Dinner to sixteen people. The “Pocket Crosses” that were made and given out for donations was a nice idea. Cookies and bars are being made and sold. Fifteen one-pound bags of river wild rice were handled by a couple. Doggie treats are available to be bought and there is still homemade fudge to be made ready.

While the intent was that monies made by the “Reverse Offerings” would go to the General Fund, there have been some creative and nice uses of the money that have done other things: buying school supplies for two classrooms, matching funds for the American Cancer Society, and buying wood to make cutting blocks for wedding gifts.

The use of member’s “Time and Talents” was the main reason for this event. And it seems that is happening as members are using their time and talents to reach out and make differences in the world!



TIME TO APPLY FOR FLC’S COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP

Any FLC member attending a post-secondary school is eligible to apply. Applications are available in the narthex or on our website at flc-aitkin.com

Applications are due to the office no later than July 15, 2024. They may be dropped off or emailed to office@flc-aitkin.com

Worship On the Water

with First Lutheran Church

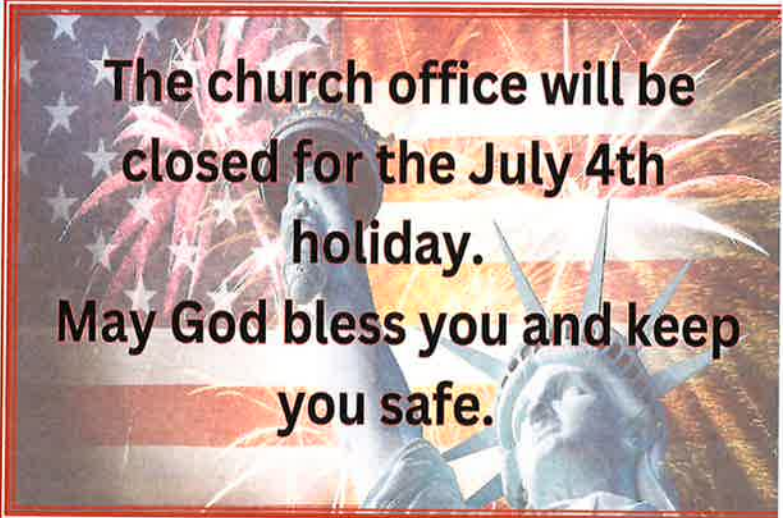
Sunday, July 28th - Cedar Lake

Sunday, August 25th - Spirit Lake

All Services at 11 am

All are welcome!

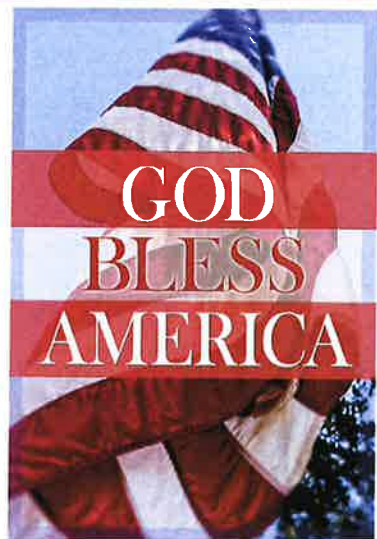
Cancellation possible if there is inclement weather.
See our Facebook page on the date of each service
for exact location on the lake.



The church office will be closed for the July 4th holiday.
May God bless you and keep you safe.



The Community Meal will not be served Thursday, July 4, in honor of Independence Day. See you next Monday



In Memory

Our sympathy and prayers go out to the friends & family of Robert "Bob" Harwarth who passed away May 2, 2024, especially his wife Marie, daughters and family.



80-Plus Birthdays for July

- | | |
|-----------------|---------|
| Linda Hommes | July 31 |
| Richard Johnson | July 7 |
| Judy Matthias | July 6 |
| Lois Schultz | July 7 |

Welcome to our new Sunday School Coordinator



Justine Nordick

I'm excited to be taking on this role at First Lutheran. My husband and I have lived in Aitkin for the past 15 years. I have 3 wonderful kids in Sunday School that keep me busy. I also teach 4th grade at Rippleside Elementary. During my free time, I love to hike, travel, read, sing, and play tennis. As the new Sunday School Coordinator, I hope to communicate and organize things in a way that helps families recognize and appreciate all that our amazing church has to offer.



SCUBA VBS DATES JULY 29 - AUG 1ST
TIME: 5:30 - 7:30
AGE 3 - 6TH GRADE

REGISTRATION LINK:
[HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/MNRWDHF2D4A3UPK16](https://forms.gle/MNRWDHF2D4A3UPK16)

DEADLINE TO SIGN UP IS JULY 1ST.

VBS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!
July 29 - Aug 1st
Contact Dante if interested



WNF Leader Needed

Please contact Dante if you are interested.

- FLC WNF
- 1 Meeting time**
4:30 - 5:30
 - 2 Ages**
5th and 6th Grade
 - 3 Date Range**
Wednesdays from September to May

May/June Liberia Newsletter

Greetings from Liberia!



I'm writing to you from the front porch of our house, as the breeze blows the palm trees and cools the air. This is rainy season in Liberia. This year's rainy season is cold and hot, a bit unusual. This will be my last Newsletter as an ELCA Missionary to Liberia. I am retiring as of the end of this year, December 31, 2024. My time with Global Mission in Liberia ends on June 30, at which point I will travel to the U.S. for a period of 5-6 months of visiting sponsors, family, friends, and planning for the next chapter of my life. My husband, Bishop-Emeritus Jensen, and I will be settling here in Liberia. I have been an ELCA pastor for thirty-one years. During that time God called me to serve in suburban and urban Chicago (Resurrection-Franklin, Park, Zion, southside Chicago, Trinity-Park Forest and the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago) and lastly as an ELCA missionary to the Lutheran Church in Liberia. The calls have been interesting, challenging, and always showing glimpses of God's grace and presence in the world. This last chapter of my life has led me to amazing ministry opportunities here in Liberia, and also sharing about Liberia in the U.S. and on-line world wide. I thought for this last newsletter I would share highlights of the last 9 years and what's ahead for me in this retirement. I'm a photographer. It seemed the best way to represent these last 10 years has been through pictures of the people and places I love. Most of all, I want to say thanks to you for your prayers and financial support as well as to the ELCA and the Lutheran Church in Liberia for the unlimited opportunities in ministry. It was and continues to be an amazing journey.

Rev. Linda Johnson Seyenkulo, May 22, 2024

My Ministry Highlights in Liberia



Teaching the Evangelists and Deacons of the LCL at the Louis T. Bowers Lay Leaders and Ministers Training Center has been the joy of my life these past nine years. The learning, and the theological insights shared by those students has been a gift of God's grace to me.

Teaching, learning, serving in ministry with my colleagues, the Pastors, Deacons/Deaconesses, Evangelists and Lay people of the LCL.



Serving in the pastoral ministry at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church as Associate Pastor under five different Pastors-in-Charge and serving in the Monrovia District of the LCL.

Founding the Empowered by Light Program and working with the amazing women and students of that program, as well as the Deaconess Community of the ELCA and other friends of the program.



Serving as the "Mother of the Lutheran Church in Liberia" during my husband's tenure as Presiding Bishop of the LCL and witnessing the joy and love the people of the LCL have for God.

Serving as an Advisor to the National Lutheran Women's Fellowship of the Lutheran Church in Liberia. Those women are powerhouses!



Again, thanks for your support and your interest in ministry here in Liberia. Blessings on you and prayers appreciated as I move forward into this new venture in life. As I leave, I encourage you to continue supporting Global Mission through the Service and Justice arm of the ELCA. Here is a link to get you started: https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Global-Mission/Global-Service/Support-Missionaries?_ga=2.193463981.1842930507.1716423944-2071451763.1705189266



Baptism of Rocco Zinnecker



**PARENTS: ELISE &
TYLER ZINNECKER**



**SPONSORS: ALLEY GENDRON
& AARON GENDRON**

Baptism of Bennett Braton



Parents
Alicia
&
Jack
Braton



Sponsors
Anne
Farley
&
Dayton
Hallaway

BUSY BAGS GET AN UPDATE!

Lydia Circle has taken on the project of updating and maintaining the Busy Bags. All bags have recently been washed, all contents removed, inventoried and evaluated. New supplies were purchased and bags were restocked. There are 6 Toddler bags, 6 Pre-School bags and 4 School Age bags – all with age appropriate contents. Finger puppets and fidgets, story books and sewing cards, coloring books and crayons – and more! They are available on the wall next to the doors leading to the Fellowship Hall. We invite all young worshippers to enjoy!



Barbara Larson, on behalf of Lydia Circle

Thank you Lydia

ATTENDANCE

Week of	5/26	6/2	6/9	6/16
Sunday	78	96	88	71
9:00 a.m. (In-person)	20	22	26	18
10:30 a.m. (In-person)				
9:00 a.m. (YouTube)	68	64	64	n/a



ALL YOUTUBE ATTENDANCE IS BASED ON YOU TUBE VIEWS AS OF June 19. A VIEW MAY BE MORE THAN ONE PERSON PER VIEW. WEDNESDAY NIGHT IS ALL IN PERSON ATTENDANCE. MAY 8 WAS THE LAST WEDNESDAY NIGHT SERVICE UNTIL FALL.



Extra Mile Mission Focus for July

If you'd like to donate, please go to our website www.flc-aitkin.com or send a check to the church

VOYAGEURS LUTHERAN MINISTRY



SILENT AUCTION SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER RESULTS



A BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE TO EVERYONE WHO JOINED THE SILENT AUCTION FUNDRAISER FOR SCHOLARSHIPS! YOUR VICTORIOUS BIDS BROUGHT IN AN AMAZING \$2683 TO SUPPORT BUDDING FLC SCHOLARS IN THEIR EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS. HATS OFF TO YOU FOR TURNING DREAMS INTO REALITY!

JULY WORSHIP SERVICES

ALL SUNDAYS IN JULY

9:00 am & 10:30 am

Coffee fellowship immediately following
9:00 am worship

All are welcome!



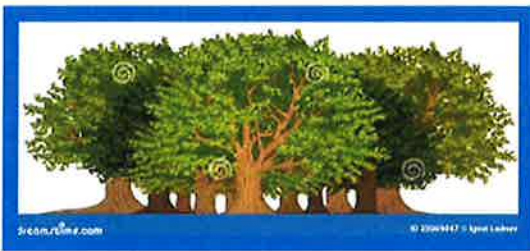
July's Services

July 7: American Voices

July 14: Hymn Sing

July 21: Northwood Service

July 28: Christmas in July



MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE UNTO THE LORD!

DO YOU SING? PLAY AN INSTRUMENT? SING AND PLAY GUITAR OR PIANO? PLAY THE HARMONICA?

THIS SUMMER WE WOULD LIKE TO FILL EACH SUNDAY WITH SOME SPECIAL MUSIC. IF YOU HAVE SOME MUSICAL ABILITY, DON'T BE SHY. SHARE IT WITH OUR VERY APPRECIATIVE CONGREGATION.

CALL REBECCA MAY AT 218-927-3481 TO

SCHEDULE A SUNDAY OR TWO
ALL SKILL LEVELS WELCOMED!



thank
you

Happy
Birthday

Otto Sotnak
would like to
thank First
Lutheran for the
birthday wishes.
He turned 95 on
June 8.

CREATION CARE



**REDUCE
REUSE
RECYCLE**

Green Tips (factual information about environmental problems and causes) can now be viewed at the Synod's EcoFaith Network website, under the "Green Blades Rising Newsletters" or "Green Tips" links. (www.nemnsynod.org/ecofaith.html).

PLEASE AVOID USING STYROFOAM WHEN WORKING IN THE CHURCH KITCHEN. THANKS!

Finance Committee

Financial Summary through May 31, 2024

	2023	2024
General Operating Income - YTD	153,716	149,868
Actual Expenditures - YTD	174,060	163,041
Unpledged Dollars Rec'd – YTD (Regular Offering)	47,858	39,904
Building Fund Income - YTD	18,063	15,776
Building Fund Expenditure - YTD	19,635	14,635
Campership Balance	7,398	10,162

In comparing General Fund income with actual expenses, you will see a shortfall of \$13,174. This compares to last month when the shortfall was \$12,786.

General Fund offering for May was \$29,114. Historically, May results in 8.45% of general fund giving. This amount would be \$37,607.

Ministry opportunities at First Lutheran:

If you would like to participate in worship services, call any of the following people and volunteer.

Training provided.

Prayer Leader (reading the Prayers of the Church):

Contact the office (218-927-2028)

Communion assistant: Contact the office (218-927-2028)

Usher: Contact the office (218-927-2028)

Children's sermon: Pastor Reggie (218-927-2028)

Sound Technician: Contact the office (218-927-2028)

Power Point Technician: Contact the office (218-927-2028)

Video Technician: Dave Sadlowsky (952-221-3861)

Worship Committee: Rebecca May (927-3481)

Contemporary worship song leaders/musicians: Jill Sadlowsky (218-927-1905) Pete Lowe (218-831-4210)

Hymn selections: Linda Delaney (927-6237)

Altar Guild: Mary Peterson (927-6820)

WELCA: Mary Peterson (927-6820)

Dinner at your Door: Carla Hakes (320-333-1876)

Please call me back I'm one of those people who regularly calls for lectors, communion assistants, kitchen help, worship assistants, Sunday coffee hour help, etc. If you're not home, I leave a message on your answering machine. It would be most helpful if you would return my phone call with a yes or no—then I'll know you received my message and it will save me more phone calls. Thank you for making my volunteer job much easier!

New Option: We have a new scheduling program – Ministry Scheduling Pro. Very easy to use and to volunteer for many positions. Contact the office to get signed up.

STAFF

Pastor Reggie Denton

(Senior Pastor)

reggie@flc-aitkin.com

Jill Jameson

(Office Manager)

office@flc-aitkin.com

Colleen Kent Chute

(Ministry & Media Coordinator)

colleen@flc-aitkin.com

Barb Bendson (Accountant)

barb@flc-aitkin.com

Dante Irizarry

(Youth & Family Coordinator)

dante@flc-aitkin.com

Justine Nordick

(Sunday School Coordinator)

justinenordick@gmail.com

Mike Purdy (Custodian)

Rebecca May (Organist)

Michele Plagman (web site)

mplagman@usa.net

Sarah Grovogel

(Nursery Facilitator)

Traci Moreland (Tiny Tots Coordinator)

Aaron Perrine (Choir Director)

Support Groups

1. **Rides for Health** (Aitkin Co CARE) 927-4077
2. **Memory Loss/Caregivers** (Aitkin Co CARE)- 1st Wed 1230 pm 927-1383
3. **Doughnuts with Dawn** (previously memory lane cafe) – Maryhill Manor every Wed 1000-1200 pm
4. **HOPE** (healing, opportunity, provided equally) (previously AADA)- domestic violence- Wed 800-900 am for women, Thurs 400-500 pm for teens
5. **Sexual Violence Resource Center/Support Within Reach**- 927-6226- Mon and Wed 800 am-500 pm
6. **Aitkin Co Child Abuse Prevention Council** 927-6226
7. **Diabetes Resources**- Riverwood Health Care Center 927-5152
8. **Suicide Prevention**- Aitkin Co Public Health – 927-7272
9. **Crisis Line** 1-800-462-5525

Mission Statement

With God's love we embrace one another, our neighbors, and all creation.

Vision Statement

Doing God's Work with Our Hands by Providing:
Spiritual Growth for All
Opportunities for Living Out Our Christian Faith

Support of our Mission and Ministries

Church Values

TRUST and LOVE in Jesus Christ
COMMIT to living God's Word
PRACTICE hospitality with welcoming and kindness
RESPECT and CARE for all people
SERVE our community

Live Stream/Recording of every 9:00 a.m. Sunday Service

Can't make it to church? Watch it live.
Missed last week? Catch up by watching the recording.
Want to see it again? Or pass it on...
Go to YouTube – enter First Lutheran Church in Aitkin
Scroll thru and search for the date you are looking for.
Click on play. It's that simple.

How do I turn on subtitles/closed captioning on YouTube?

Steps

1. Open a YouTube video.
2. Click the gear icon in the bottom-right corner of the video player to display the video player settings.
3. Expand the combo box next to Subtitles/CC.
4. Click the desired subtitle language to begin displaying subtitles.

You will have to do this each time with any video.

WORSHIP TIMES
All Sundays in July:
9:00 am &
10:30 am

**NEWSLETTER
ARTICLES**
DUE ON THE 15TH OF
EVERY MONTH

**9:00 a.m. worship service is
livestreamed on YouTube at First
Lutheran Church of Aitkin and broadcast
at 10:00 a.m. on KKIN 94.3 FM Aitkin**

*PLEASE NOTE: The church is charged 75 cents for undeliverable mailings. If you do not want to
continue receiving this mailing, please request that your name be removed from our list by returning
the attached label to First Lutheran Church, 107 2nd St., SE, Aitkin MN 56431, or by emailing the
church at office@flc-aitkin.com July 2024*



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
107 2ND ST SE
AITKIN MN 56431

