



First Word

The monthly newspaper of First Lutheran Church

Advent Expectations

By Pastor John Christopherson, Senior Pastor



My first rub with “great expectations” came when I was a young, freckle-faced fourth grader – attending Sanford Elementary School in Montevideo, Minnesota. To a large, or should I say “great” degree, it had to do with my first girlfriend, “Maggie.”

It was stormy week in mid-December. The halls were decked with candy canes and little cotton ball snowmen, all donning their classic stove-pipe hats ... while our classroom windows were plastered with small paper cut-outs of snowflakes. As if southwest Minnesota needed more reminders of snow?! And in the midst of that mid-winter storm a young cowgirl moved to town. “Name’s Maggie,” she said with bravado. “My family just moved here from Montana where I lived on a ranch that had lots of buffalo.” And I thought: “O give me a home! ...”

Besides her beautiful long auburn hair, blue eyes and awesome smile; well, let’s get down to the real attraction, she could run faster than any of the guys in our class and could out arm-wrestle Jack McDougal, the toughest kid in school. Ah, what a gal! John Denver hadn’t written the song yet, but it was a “Rocky Mountain High” whenever you were hangin’ out with Maggie. And true to the West, “seldom was heard a discouraging word.” Not yet, anyway ...

One day, as Christmas vacation would be soon upon us ... We were walking home after school – including our neighbor-hood gaggle of real-live snowmen and women – all bundled-up and shuffling through yet another foot of freshly fallen snow – Maggie whispered: “Hey, let’s go together!” And I said: “Go where?” (Hey, I was only in fourth grade.) Well, to use the language of the 60s, I thought overall that the idea was pretty “Cool.”

Now ... news flash! ... I’d never had a girl-friend before. Maybe that’s why a well-meaning friend, Joel (an upper-classmen in 5th grade) gave me some advice during Christmas vacation. “A guy is supposed to do nice things for his girlfriend,” he said. “Like what?” I asked. “You know, like walk her to class dummy.” “But there is only one 4th grade classroom,” I shrugged. “Well then,” said Joel, “you should carry her books or sit with her during lunch. Stuff like that.”

So, the first Monday after Christmas break I did just that. And then, just two days later, Maggie’s best friend, Susie came up to me and broke the news: “Maggie wants to break-up.” I was dumbfounded. “What for?” I asked. “Well, cuz you didn’t sit with her at lunch yesterday.” (On Tuesday I had played recess hockey with “the guys.”) So much for that song about a “seldom discouraging word.” ... “Buffalo chips!”

So, I had my first question about girls that day. I would learn later, however, that the deal was not a gender problem; it was a human problem. That is, it’s a problem about expectations. You see, Maggie had certain expectations of me. I sat with her at lunch *one day*; *ergo* I should sit with her at lunch *every day*. Heavy logic for a fourth-grader. Though nothing was ever stated, the perception was there. Though no agreement was ever made, the assumption was just as strong. Maggie expected me to be there. I let her down. We broke up.

Sound familiar? How about your experience with “expectations”? They can get serious, you know. They’ve been known to do a lot more than just mess-up a fourth-grade romance. Divorce, job tension, family friction, embittered friendships, even world wars – all can be caused by this same little culprit: *expectations*. As we enter

now into this Advent Season, what are the expectations that both our Old and New Testament texts are setting before us?

Advent I: Isaiah 64:1-9; Mark 13:24-37

In the first week of Advent we think of the “cultured despisers” in our own time and the Atheist-Join-The-Club billboards that line not only Minnesota Avenue but our own hearts of chronic self-centeredness: when “No one calls upon [God’s] name” (Isaiah 64:7a). *We’re broken up. What should we sinners expect?!* ... “**Yet, O LORD, you art our Father**” (Isaiah 64:8a; cf. Mark 13:31). Listen here for *God’s Word of steadfast FAITHFULNESS*.

Advent II: Isaiah 40:1-11; Mark 1:1-8

In the second week of Advent we think of the “Babylonian Exile” in our own time, when so many constructions of self-righteousness – even in the church – have now reaped the whirlwind of turning-in on it-self with little to no sense of Scriptural Authority ... with seminaries withering, and mainline Protestantism fading: “A voice says, ‘Cry!’ And I said, ‘What shall I cry?’ All flesh is grass ...” (Isaiah 40:6). *We’ve broken up. What should we sinners expect?!* ... “The grass withers, the flower fades; **but the Word of our God will stand forever**” (Isaiah 40:8; cf. Mark 1:1-3). Listen here for *God’s Word of redeeming GRACE*.

Advent III: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; John 1:6-8, 19-28

In the third week of Advent we think of “the many who mourn” from the devastations of terrorism, of mass shootings, of wars and rumors of war that riddle the earth ... “by the devastations of many generations” (Isaiah 61:4c). *We’ve broken up. What should we sinners expect?!* ... “The Spirit of the LORD GOD is upon me,” exclaims the prophet, “because the LORD has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives ... to proclaim the year of the LORD’S favor” (Isaiah 61:1-2a; cf. John 1:6-7, 23). In our world when many feel cursed, rather than blessed ... listen here for *God’s Word of claiming FAVOR*.

Advent IV: II Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:26-38

In the fourth week of Advent we think not only of King David’s best of intentions – to glorify God by building a grand temple (II Samuel 7:5) – but how often we still confuse the temple of God for God (Jeremiah 7:4). We think of God “inside the sanctuary” when actually, as with Elvis, God “has left the building!” (What might this say about evangelism strategies?) The

whole universe is God’s sanctuary. “Heaven and earth are full of your glory.” And so God came not only to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, but to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the *house of David*; and the virgin’s name was Mary. And the angel Gabriel said: “Behold you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus” (Luke 1:26-27, 31). O, poor Mary must have also been thinking: “*We’ve (Joseph and I) broken up fer sure. What should we sinners expect?!* ... And the angel answered: “With God nothing will be impossible” (Luke 1:37; cf. Luke 1:52). And so, listen here for *God’s Word of EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS*. ... “And [God’s] Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14a).

Living between Christ’s first and second Advent ... with great expectations ...

j.r. christopherson
Senior Pastor

Celebrate the Birth of Christ

with First Lutheran Church

During the seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, we worship together around carols of the season, candlelight and the good news of a Savior promised and born for all the world. Unique opportunities to celebrate during the months of December and January include Lessons and Carols, worship on Christmas Eve, and a Festival of Light celebrating the Epiphany of our Lord. Bring family and friends to hear again the “good news for all God’s people!”

First Week of Advent • “Expect God’s Faithfulness”

Saturday, Dec. 2 • 5 p.m. Vespers
Sunday, Dec. 3 • 8, 9:30, 11 a.m.

Second Week of Advent • “Expect God’s Grace”

Saturday, Dec. 9 • 5 p.m. Vespers
Sunday, Dec. 10 • 8, 9:30 & 11 a.m.

Peace to You and Grace from Him

Advent Lessons and Carols

Sunday, Dec. 10 • 6 p.m.
The Sioux Falls community is invited to join us in singing carols of the Advent season with festival choirs, orchestra, handbells, and organ as we anticipate the arrival of our Lord.

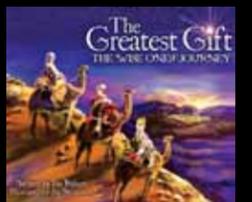


Third Week of Advent • “Expect God’s Favor”

Saturday, Dec. 16 • 5 p.m. Vespers
Sunday, Dec. 17 • 8, 9:30 & 11 a.m.

Children’s Christmas Pageant

Sunday, Dec. 17 • 2 – 3 p.m.
with cookies and hot cocoa following. This year’s pageant will be based on the book “The Greatest Gift,” written by local author, Tom Roberts. Tom will be at the pageant to tell the story to the children and the children will share their own story and songs.



Fourth Week of Advent • “Expectations Exceeded”

Saturday, Dec. 23 • 5 p.m. Vespers
Sunday, Dec. 24 • 9:30 a.m. only

The Nativity of Our Lord •

Christmas Eve

Sunday, Dec. 24
2:30, 4:30, 7:30 & 9:30 p.m.
Surrounded by candlelight and carols of the Christmas season accompanied by brass, organ, flute and violin, come and celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.



The Nativity of Our Lord • Christmas Day

Monday, December 25 • 10 a.m.
Celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior.

Festival of Light • the Epiphany of Our Lord

Saturday, Jan. 6 • 6 p.m.
Meal begins at 4:30 p.m.
Trace the Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany story with brass, timpani, flute, organ, choirs, and tableau. We celebrate the Epiphany of Our Lord and conclude with the visit of the magi to the Christ-child.



Expectations

By Pastor Lars Olson, Executive Pastor



“The Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news” – Isaiah 64:1

Advent is a time of preparation and waiting, but just what are we preparing and waiting for? It seems so confusing. Are we preparing for Christmas? Then Advent is merely a time of shopping, decorating, and wrapping presents as we wait for the holiday. The scriptures of the season point to Jesus’ second coming? Yet we don’t actually expect that to happen during the four weeks leading up to Christmas just because we call the season Advent (which means, “he’s coming”). Plus, he has promised to come in a surprising, unexpected time. Knowing what to expect is helpful in knowing how to prepare, so the reverse is true as well. It’s difficult to prepare when we don’t know exactly what to expect!

I suspect this is why Advent is such an odd season for us. When we are preparing for an event, like Christmas, then we know exactly what needs to get done. But how do we prepare to be surprised? How do we prepare and wait for an unexpected moment? And yet, that is likely exactly what Advent is for. I suppose we can imagine Advent to be a time of repenting from our need to plan, prepare, and expect the exact moment an event is to occur. Then our preparation is to learn just to do nothing more than expect Jesus Christ to come to us in constantly surprising ways that we cannot anticipate. Advent would be a season to prepare for our being unprepared. A time of God reminding us that while we cannot fully know everything, every time, every event, we wait in hope and expectation because of Jesus’ promise.

Jesus being born in the flesh was foretold, but not expected. His death and resurrection was an open secret, but nobody was prepared for the event. I’m sure that’s exactly what will happen in Jesus’ second coming. We are told that it will happen, and we are waiting expectantly for its coming, but when he arrives I’m sure we will all be surprised.

When I was four years old, my dad, brother, and grandpa were making plans to go on a fishing trip the next morning. I was a little young for the trip because it included a long hike and everyone would have to carry their own gear. So they “asked” if I wanted to go with them, while placing a great emphasis on the difficult hike, the long day, and boring nature of fishing. I’m convinced to this day that they were greatly relieved when I agreed to stay home rather than go fish with them for the day. They went to sleep expecting a day of leisurely hiking and fishing, getting a good night’s rest with the dream of not having to babysit me. Imagine their shock when I was up, dressed, and ready to go at 5 a.m. with fishing pole in hand, for I changed my mind in the middle of the night. They had gone to bed expecting to go fishing, and the surprise was that fishing that next day was not as expected.



The gospel of Jesus Christ is always new, because it is “Good News”. It’s neither bad news, nor old news, for good news always brings us joy and hope. Even when we have grown accustomed to the content of the news, such as Jesus died for you, hearing it again never gets old because it gets behind our preparations, sneaks around our expectations, and finds a way into our hearts even when we thought we had it all figured out.

Advent is full of expectation, as it is a season of hope and preparation. That is, of God preparing us to hear again and again that Jesus has come into the world, for you.



Wednesday Night Forum Nov. 29 – Dec. 13 • 6:30-7:30 p.m. Friendship Room Led by Donna Johnson

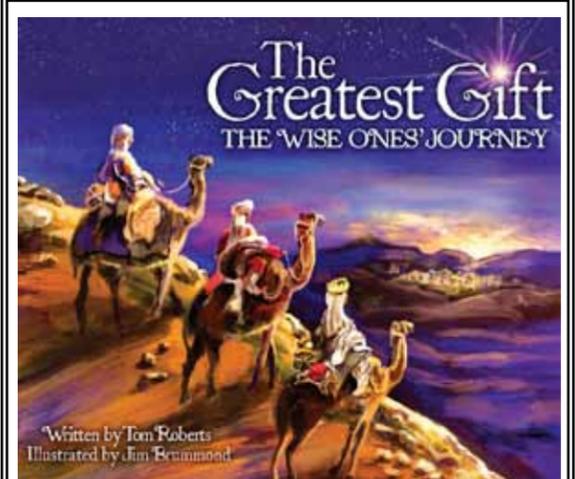
Have you ever been blessed to participate in a performance of Handel’s “Messiah”? Did you pay attention to the lyrics? Have you ever run into them while perusing your Bible? Did you feel goose bumps the first time you heard “And the glory of the Lord shall be re-vealed” and recognized it as part of God’s message of comfort, deliverance and restoration to the kingdoms of Israel and Judah after release from their captivity (Isaiah 40:5)?

Come, join us for a study of the scriptures, the history and the music of Handel’s “Messiah” in preparation for season of Advent. Please register for the class by stopping by the FLC Information Desk or calling the church at 336-3734 so we know how many study handouts to print. You may also contact Donna Johnson, dbj808@sio.midco.net, or 331-5442, for more information or to register. Attend any or all of the sessions. Drop-ins are welcome.

Blessing and Joy in Jesus’ birth from the First Lutheran Staff



Front row: Judi Mueller, Kristy Zuraff, Dave Wilson, Jana Elkins, LaVonne Wolf. **Second row:** Marnie Dahle Backer, Donna Jahr, Heather Smith, Susan Bell, Shirley Barlow, Jeff Hartnett. **Third row:** Jared Callahan, Rick East, Sandy Rieck, Zachary Rygiel, Cleo Sorensen. **Fourth row:** Elias Youngquist, Marilyn McNeill, Pr. Katherine Olson, Pr. John Christopherson, Jeff Backer, Pr. Lars Olson



Christmas Pageant 2017 Sunday, Dec. 17, 2 p.m.

The annual Christmas Pageant will be on Sunday, Dec. 17, from 2 – 3 p.m., with cookies and hot cocoa following the pageant. This year’s pageant will be based on the story “The Greatest Gift,” written by local author, Tom Roberts. Tom will be at the pageant to tell the story to the children and then our children will share their own story and songs. Sign up online at flcsf.org/pageant or contact Heather Smith, Children’s Minister, 339-1983, ext 238, or hsmith@flcsf.org.

Practices are in the sanctuary:

Saturday, Dec. 2, 12:30 – 2:30 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 16, 12:30 – 2:30 p.m.

“The Greatest Gift,” books will be available for \$20 with all proceeds going to Children’s Home Society.

WELCA looks to 2018

By Marcia Huffman, WELCA President



Are you looking for a new group to join at First Lutheran in 2018 that offers you interesting programs, inspired Bible Studies, and a chance to serve others in our church, our community and around the world? Then we might be just what you are looking for. Following is a list of the dates, times and topics for our 2018 monthly meetings.

Jan. 4 at noon, we will welcome Dusty Hoffman with CRU (short for Campus Crusade for Christ). Dusty will enlighten us about Christian action on our college campuses.

Feb. 1 at 10 a.m., Pastor Robin Duncan, faculty member at Sioux Falls Seminary, will speak to us about his experiences as an African American Pastor.

March 1 at noon, we will have a special program featuring service dogs. A speaker from PAWS will explain how regular dogs are trained for special service.

April 5 at noon, Anne Marie Rossing will offer a presentation on Forgiveness. This will be fitting as it comes in the month of Easter when Christ died for the forgiveness of our sins.

May 3 at 6 p.m., we will host a "Sisters in the Faith" Pot Luck Salad Supper – a guest event. The Basement Ladies from St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Clear Lake

will give us a humorous view of church ladies of the past.

June 7 at 10 a.m., you are invited to Bible Study and to display and share a special collection you might have.

Aug. 2 at 10 a.m., come enjoy an outing to the Good Earth State Park. They house a display of Native American Culture, and we will welcome a Native American speaker.

Sept. 6 at 6 p.m., we will gather at the church in Heritage Park at Augustana for an old-fashioned church picnic and hold our meeting in the church. The topic will be the "good old days" when communities revolved around their churches.

Oct. 6 at noon, Arlene Bich will give a program entitled "Seasons of Life." We will no doubt be able to identify with what Arlene has to say.

Nov. 8 at 10 a.m., is a Salute to Veterans, as we welcome and honor veterans and listen as they tell us what America means to them.

Dec. 1 at 10 a.m., our 2018 season ends as we celebrate Jesus' Birthday at our Christmas Party.

Please prayerfully consider joining in 2018 as we reach out to welcome guests and explore new topics. You may call Marcia Huffman at 360-4168, or Kathy Stelzer at 332-1820, if you have questions. We will be blessed to have you.

Giving thanks for successful Bazaar

"Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song, sing His praise in the assembly of the faithful!" – Psalms 149:1

We give thanks unto God for the blessings which He, again, gave the assembly of the faithful at the 2017 Bazaar.

Thanks be to the congregation and staff of First Lutheran for the hours of preparations, volunteering of time and talents on Bazaar day, and the cheerfulness in which all was given; the joy in the day was evident! We rejoice that "The Gift of Christmas" was shared in so many ways among the workers and the guests who came to support the Bazaar - to feel the spirit of fellowship; to give to therefore carry out God's message to us throughout our community; to carry on the traditions that built First Lutheran Church.

The celebrating continues as we distribute at least \$50,000 of the proceeds to our church, community, and globally. Thanks be to God for His abiding love and blessings.

Tusen Takk!

Sandy Fink and Jean Colon, Bazaar Co-Chairs



Lois Johnsrud and Bill Westerdahl taking a break from the Scandinavian room.



Kaffee Stua (coffee shop) is readied by Julaine Walker, Phyllis Bueckens, Jan Outka, Donna Doeden, Phyllis Knutson, Jane King, Carol Feuerstein, Joanne Gerdes and Lunette Horne.



Nancy Oakland, Shirley Thom, Kris Tank and Arlene Gackle ready to help shoppers in the quilt room.



Darlene Colwill and her daughter, De Ann Clark are ready for shoppers with a sweet tooth.

2017 Prison Christmas Sacks

Homemade Fudge *The recipe and wrapping instructions must be followed exactly, otherwise the fudge will not be allowed in the prison!*

Please mark the number of pieces of fudge on the outside of your container.

- 1½ sticks butter or margarine
- ½ lb. Velveeta cheese
- 2 lbs. powdered sugar
- ½ cup unsweetened dry cocoa
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- ½ cup semi-sweet chocolate chips



- In a large saucepan, melt cheese, chocolate chips, and butter together. Stir together until smooth. Remove from heat and add vanilla and nuts.

- In a large bowl, stir together sugar and cocoa. Add melted cheese mixture. Mix well. The candy may be very stiff and mixing with gloved hands may be necessary.

- Press the candy evenly in a 9 x 13 inch pan coated lightly with nonstick spray.

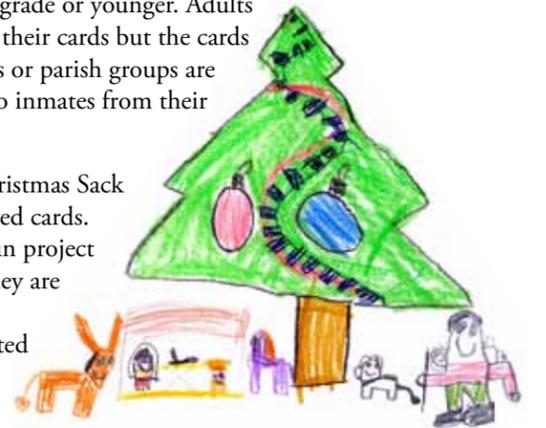
- Cool and cut into 24 pieces. Wrap each piece in plastic wrap. (No plastic bags –not allowed in the prison.)

Handmade Cards Preschoolers and Sunday school students through 3rd grade are invited to make cards. Cards from children of our community have been an integral part of the Inmate Christmas Sack program since its beginning. Most of the inmates are parents or grandparents themselves and the inclusion of a card from a child carries a meaningful message of inclusion and acceptance for the inmate recipient. Because the prison has strict policies for items coming into the prison the following guidelines will assist those directing this program in our schools, churches and families:



- **CHILDREN ONLY** - The program will only accept cards from children, preferably in the lower elementary grades, 3rd grade or younger. Adults may assist small children in making their cards but the cards should come from the child. (Adults or parish groups are encouraged to send personal cards to inmates from their community or inmates they know.)

- **HAND MADE** - The Inmate Christmas Sack program will only accept hand created cards. Computer created cards may be a fun project for the child making the card but they are essentially without meaning for the inmate receiving them. A hand created card sends an entirely different and more positive message of thoughtfulness and sincerity.



- **MESSAGE** - The Inmate Christmas Sack program is a Christian sponsored effort so the messages within the cards should be a simple Christmas greeting and appropriate good wishes for the season. There should be no overtones of judgment or harshness. Proselytizing messages are not acceptable. The cards may not contain pictures or any other enclosure. The child should sign the card with a first name only. No identifying information can be included.

- **SIZE** — Cards need to fit into the sacks. Please make the card 5½ "x 4" (half sheets of standard size paper folded once).

- **MATERIALS** — The prison has strict rules about materials allowed into the prison. Cards for this program must not use stickers, glitter, tape, ribbon or glue. The cards should only contain drawings, coloring and writing. Nothing else may be attached to the card. No envelopes are allowed. NOTE: Cards not following these restrictions will be discarded.

- **ADULT SUPERVISION** - Children have vivid imaginations and a small child may be frightened about sending something with their name on it to the prison. Adult supervision for the card program is needed to reassure any such children and to reinforce the positive spirit of the program. A responsible adult must review each card for appropriateness before submitting it to the program. An inappropriate message, innocent or mischievous, can do a lot of harm.

Money - Donations for purchasing peanuts, hard candies, candy canes and sacks are always much appreciated.

Thank you for your interest in our Inmate Christmas Sack Program. We look forward to your participation and the inmates look forward to their cards and fudge.

Chaplain's Advisory Committee SD State Penitentiary

Please bring all items and donations to the First Lutheran Information Desk no later than Wednesday, Dec. 13.

CARING MINISTRY



Grateful for Foundation's Support

By Pastor Katherine Olson, Associate Pastor



The First Lutheran Church Foundation has asked ministries and groups to let the Congregation know from time to time how their Foundation dollars are being used.

The Caring Ministries of First Lutheran Church receive significant support from the First Lutheran Church Foundation each year. We are incredibly grateful for this funding which assists in funding our church's visitation pastor program, and allows us to provide support and help to members in need.

You may know that First Lutheran Church employs four part-time visitation pastors who connect to our church's homebound members, sharing communion, prayer and conversation. These visitation pastors also help us provide care to individuals who are hospitalized, recovering from medical procedures, or in the care of hospice. While their work is not always visible to the wider congregation, their ministry is crucial to the life of our church as they bless individuals and families in times of sorrow, vulnerability and need. The Foundation's

annual contributions to this ministry total approximately one-third of the yearly funds necessary to keep these four fine pastors on our staff. For this funding, and for the ministry of Pastors Bob, David, Roger, and Dennis, we are so grateful!

The First Lutheran Church Foundation also provides annual support to a fund which allows us to offer financial help to members in need. Funds from this account have helped us bless members with housing assistance, prescription costs and medical bills, funeral expenses, clothing, gas, food and more. It is good for us to offer struggling church members a gift on behalf of their church family while also helping them connect to local resources which provide further support. Those of us who are directly involved with giving away this assistance are humbled and honored to do so on behalf of the body of Christ.

Thank you, First Lutheran Church Foundation, for the many ways in which you support the ministry of our church and care for our congregation's future!

Rev. Katherine Olson
Associate Pastor of Caring Ministries



Grieving with Grace continues Dec. 2

Grieving with Grace group participants learn about the grieving process and are gentle with themselves as they work through the grief of a loved one's death, together with others. Grieving with Grace sessions usually take place on the first Saturday morning of the month in the Gathering Room at First Lutheran Church. Social Time begins at 9:30, and the group sessions last from 10-11 a.m. All sessions are open to first-time participants. Led by Pastor Katherine Olson, sessions include video clips on topics relating to grief, comfort from Scripture, prayer, encouragement and access to resources for support.

Please join us for any or all of the following dates:

- Dec. 2 – Adjusting Through Grief
- Jan. 7 – Moving Forward In Grief
- Feb. 3 – Growing Spiritually Through Grief

If you have questions about Grieving with Grace, reach out to Pastor Katherine at kolson@flcsf.org or 339-1983, ext. 214.



Healthy Snack Drive for Compassionate Connections

Our church's "Compassionate Connections" ministry is holding a Healthy Snack drive from Dec. 10 – 31. These snacks are given away by staff or Compassionate Connections volunteers to those who come to the church in need of food and crisis assistance - something that happens nearly every day. Bring any of the following healthy snacks to the donation boxes located in the atrium and in front of the Caring Ministry office. If we collect more than what we can reasonably store and use before expiration, we will donate extras to Church on the Street and other local partners.

Items being collected:

- Hearty protein bars and soft cereal bars
- Beef sticks (individually wrapped)
- Nuts, sandwich crackers, tuna (individual packages)
- Applesauce individual pouches (squeezeable, not cups)

Interested in volunteering with Compassionate Connections? Reach out to Katherine Olson, Associate Pastor of Caring Ministry, at kolson@flcsf.org or 339-1983, ext. 214.



Births

- Aug. 24 William Robert Van Demark, son of Robert Van Demark III and Laura Jacobson
- Oct. 12 Emily Lorraine Heinert, daughter of Alex and Kelsey Heinert
- Oct. 17 Wilder Carew Strenge, son of Adam and Sanna Strenge
- Oct. 21 Jameson Brian William Carney, son of Shad and Seri Carney

Baptisms

- Oct. 8 Steven Gary Schwartz (Adult)
- Oct. 8 Nolan Lee Reith, son of Scott and Brittany Reith
- Oct. 15 Richmond T. Phocole, son of Saah and Vivian Phocole
- Oct. 15 Owen Michael Deibert, son of Michael and Stacy Deibert

Weddings

- Oct. 6 Zachary Karn and Jennifer Harner
- Oct. 14 Eric Johannesen and Jamie Hopp
- Oct. 21 Korey Kyle and Abby Powell

Wedding Blessing

- Oct. 8 Steven and Lenae Schwartz

Deaths

- Oct. 16 Herb Mikkelson



Comfort Keepers thanks First Lutheran for feeding seniors!

"We cannot say thank you enough to First Lutheran for participating in our Feed Seniors Now Food Drive this fall. We were overwhelmed with the very generous response of your congregation. During this drive, we collected 6,000 pounds of food, which we will distribute in November at the Salvation Army. Every good and perfect gift is from above. We love because he first loved us. Sincerely, the staff of Comfort Keepers."



Senior luncheon

All First Lutheran senior adults and their friends are invited to join us for lunch Tuesday, Dec. 12, at noon. The Lincoln High School Choir will entertain the seniors with a program of Christmas Music. The menu is fried rice, cashew chicken and crab rangoon. Please remember to RSVP by calling the church receptionist at 336-3734, by Wednesday, Dec. 6. Need a ride? Please call Project CAR, 332-2777, by 9 a.m. on Monday, Dec. 11.



YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY



Expectations

By Marnie Dahle Backer,
Youth & Family Ministries Director



Milestone Minute

Receiving pebbles for milestones begins at Baptism and continues every year through sixth grade with a few more to follow after that. This year when the sixth grade youth were preparing to begin their confirmation year, we told them we would conclude our time by coming to the font to receive a blessing and a pebble. There were audible gasps of excitement from the sixth graders! It was thrilling for Pastor Lars and I to witness. Of course we love when anyone gets excited about faith! And then at the four-year old prayer pillow milestone, little Annika Kimber came right over to the baptism bowl with the pebbles inside and gently explained to her brother – this is where we come when we're done today to get a pebble and make a cross on each other's foreheads (as she made a cross for her brother). Our children have come to expect these milestones of faith in their lives. And now as we look toward Advent and the coming of the Christ Child, it reminds us that we too have come to expect this incredible gift of faith in our lives. May you take time this Advent season: as you cut and assemble your Advent Calendar or put up your Christmas Tree or buy gifts for your friends and family, to pray together, share your FAITH5 and let the Holy Spirit enter in to your plans and celebrations.



Baby's First Christmas was a new milestone this year for baby's newborn to 18 months and their families. The babies received a plush baby Jesus and had their picture taken. Parents spent time talking about holiday traditions and rituals and how we can incorporate God, prayer and our faith into all these wonderful moments.

Pictured clockwise above: Photographer Suzie O'Meara Hernes sets up to take a picture of baby Owen Deibert with mom, Stacy and dad, Michael looking on. Anna Aughenbaugh and sweet Lorelei loving on baby Jesus. Grace Zuraff, Everett Beatch and Micah Muller hanging out in the manger with their baby Jesus "dolls."



Christmas Giving

You can make a difference in the lives of the those facing difficult circumstances this holiday season through Joining Hands Around the World Christmas Giving Ministry.

Two ways to give:

Christmas trees decorated with ornaments listing items such as

coloring books, games, gift cards, gloves, flannel shirts, hats, hand warmers and more will be located in the Welcome Center and Chapel narthex. Donations benefit Church on the Street (ministry to the homeless) and Pueblo de Dios (an ELCA congregation reaching out to the Latino community to share the Gospel.) Simply take an ornament off the tree, purchase the item and return it to the tree by Sunday, Dec. 10.

Sponsor a family or child/youth: Church on the Street has 11 families that have recently been placed in a home of their own but need some assistance making this holiday a great one. Pueblo de Dios has 14 families who are members of the congregation who need a little boost to help make their holidays special as well. We hope to bring some extra joy to these families. For details, please see the flyer at the FLC Information Desk or visit flcsf.org/christmasgivingproject.



Apostles' Creed

was our fourth grade milestone. The children memorized the Apostles' Creed and learned what it means to believe in God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. They will continue to learn more about this important creed as they move into their confirmation years. The fourth graders led the congregation in the Creed, received their pebble and a blessing.

Pictured clockwise: Fourth graders getting in a final practice of the Apostle's Creed. Jackson Hoffman works on decorating his frame. Emma Masselink and her parents, Tim and Jessica get her Milestone pebble and bless each other.



Affirmation of Baptism was celebrated with 22 confirmands. These sophomores have been studying together for the last five years about First Communion, the Bible, The Small Catechism, What it Means to be a Lutheran, and much more. We continue to pray for them as they maneuver their world as children of God.

- Front Row: Heather Smith, Melia Dockter, Isabella Ellingsen, Alyssa Wiseman, Britta Larson, Payton Ortman, Pr. John Christopherson
 2nd Row: Pr. Katherine Olson, Brooke Kokenge, Sophie Jansa, Elizabeth Searles, Morgan Oskar, Noah Specht, Marnie Dahle Backer
 3rd Row: Pr. Lars Olson, Max Martin, Caitlin Kramer, Annika Kramer, Kate Amundson, Taylor Neely, Lauren Williams, Jeff Backer
 4th Row: Garrett Masters, Cole Olson, Rangismun Bargmann, Armen DerHagopian, Eli Moore, Jack Glenn, Elias Youngquist

Joy Ranch Family Retreat Jan. 19-21

Join us at the beautiful Joy Ranch, Lutherans Outdoors Bible Camp near Watertown, SD for a weekend of family time: meals together, games, friends to make, horses to visit, faith to share. What a great way to share community together. Visit losd.org to learn more about Joy Ranch and see photos! Cost is \$260 (2 night stay) plus \$40/person for meals. We will gather by 7 p.m. on Friday night and return early afternoon on Sunday. Sign up in the Youth & Family Office.



Did You Know?

Thank you to all the children and families who have given offering on Sunday morning during worship or during music time at Scripture First. In 2017 we have been able to donate \$500 to Church on the Street (a ministry for the homeless), \$500 to Pueblo de Dios (an ELCA Congregation for Latino families) and \$500 for children at Lowell Elementary to help provide warm weather clothing. WOW! What a powerful impact on our community the smallest children of God are having!

MISSION

First Lutheran Church welcomes all people into the community of Jesus Christ, equipping and sending them forth to serve and witness in Jesus' name.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We are grounded in the great commandment of Jesus.
(Matthew 22:34-40)

We are grounded in the great commission of Jesus.
(Matthew 28:16-20)

We are committed to welcome and minister to all people.

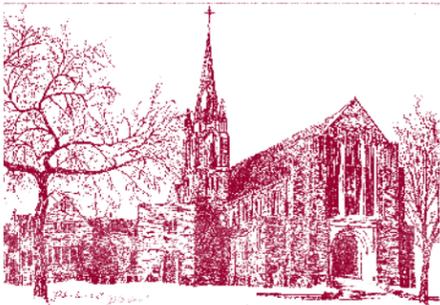
We are committed to equipping people for ministry.

We are committed to service in our community and world.

We are committed to a ministry of relationship building.

We are committed to our heritage and identity as a reforming church.

We are committed to excellence in broadcast ministry.



WORSHIP SERVICES

Saturday (Chapel)

5 p.m. Vespers/Communion

Sunday (Sanctuary)

8 a.m. Traditional Worship with Communion

9:30 a.m. Traditional Worship

11 a.m. Contemporary Worship

Media Ministries Broadcasts

8 a.m. KELO-FM Radio (101.9)

11 a.m. KSFY (Sioux Falls), KPRY (Pierre) and KABY (Aberdeen)



www.youtube.com/flcsf



www.facebook.com/flcsf



@FirstLutheranSF



@firstlutheransf

First Word

First Word is the monthly newspaper of First Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, S.D. It is distributed to members of the congregation and others upon request. Opinions expressed in First Word are those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by the First Lutheran Church congregation or staff. The editors of First Word reserve the right to edit submissions.

Newsletter submissions are due the first business day of the month. Please submit articles or questions regarding First Word to Susan Bell, Communications Coordinator, at sbell@flcsf.org. Reader feedback is always welcome. First Word is available to read or download online at flcsf.org/firstword.

Colombia Mission Trip Crew



Greetings from Bagotá, Colombia! These folks traveled the week of Nov. 10-18 to share stories, build relationships and see how God is alive in another part of the world.

Pictured left to right: Paul Zuraff, Kristy Zuraff, Tasha Letcher, Marilyn McLeod, Sandy Pedersen, Jeff Backer, Edwin Mendivelso

Lent 2018 "I AM"

Planning has begun for Lent, even though we are not yet through Advent. Our worship will revolve around the "I Am" sayings of Jesus in the Gospel of John. The first Wednesday service in Lent will feature Rev. Paul Oman who will paint a mural of the Lent theme. (See Rev. Paul's work at paulomanfineart.com.)

Watch for details in coming months.

Lent Devotional – 40 writers are needed for the First Lutheran Lenten devotional. If you, or someone you know, would be a good writer, please call the First Lutheran office and leave a name and number. We look for writers of all ages, long time and newer members, who can write a brief devotion for our entire congregation. Writing guidelines and encouragements are provided.



Church Council highlights

If there is an item that you as a church member wish to add to an upcoming Council meeting agenda, please contact Marilyn McNeill, Business Administrator, at 339-1983 ext. 236, or mmcneill@flcsf.org. Council agendas will be posted on a bulletin board in the Atrium and on the church website home page, flcsf.org, the weekend prior to meetings. Meetings are held the fourth Thursday of each month. First Lutheran Church members are welcome to visit meetings.

Oct. 26, 2017

Reports:

- Marilyn McNeill gave the administrative report. Jana Elkins, Parish Nurse, has resigned. We are looking to see how this position might best be filled. Improving the sanctuary sound system is being looked into. There are a few people going to Watertown to listen to a sound system in a church. The FLC Bazaar is Nov. 4. There will be a Reformation service on Nov. 1 at 6:30 p.m., celebrating the 500-year anniversary of the Reformation at the Arena.

- Pr. Lars commented that there is a lot of great activity at FLC. Tuesday and Wednesday nights are very busy. Heather Smith will be having a new Christmas program this year with the Scripture First kids. The boards are getting ready for Advent and Christmas. There is a different schedule for some events.

- Pastor John's prayer and ours also is that the 500-year anniversary of the Reformation will be an awakening and also transforming at FLC.

Old Business:

- There was a handout regarding the Budget Process Plan. The boards are encouraged to be more thoughtful about their ministry and to think about more than money when figuring out their budgets.

- Luther House fundraising was discussed. FLC will be giving \$50,000 per year for five years with help from the Foundation if needed. There has been a lot of support from other congregations in the area. A member of FLC has suggested a match challenge opportunity to raise funds. There will be more discussion about this.

- There was much discussion about the governance process and proposal. Getting the information to the congregation is very important. The goal of the governance changes is to better carry out the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The changes are centered around the Cross of Jesus Christ and how we work together as a congregation. There are informational meetings set up for the congregation to attend. The special congregational meeting will be Dec. 3, 2017.

CHURCH COUNCIL

Officers/Executive Committee

Brian Aamlid President
Aaron Ellingsen Vice President
Eric Severson Treasurer
Mindy Moore Secretary
Pr. John Christopherson Senior Pastor

Council Representatives

Alma Kallesen Adult Discipleship
Gayle Johnson Caring Ministry
Colleen Kokenge Evangelism, Mission & Outreach
Deb Nelson Financial Services
Marcia Huffman FLCW/WELCA
Brad Thompson Media
Julia Kramer Member-at-Large
Diane Atchison Member-at-Large
Maria Neely Member-at-Large
Lyle Eidsness Property
Tim Heinemann Stewardship
Suzanne Willadsen Worship and Music
Ben Ready Youth and Family

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH DIRECTORY

Pastoral Staff

(203) Dr. John Christopherson Senior Pastor
(210) Rev. Lars Olson Executive Pastor
(214) Rev. Katherine Olson* Associate Pastor
(209) Jeff Backer Intern Pastor
(202) Rev. Bob Chell* Visitation
(202) Rev. David Houck* Visitation
(202) Rev. Roger Noer* Visitation
(202) Rev. Dennis Tranberg* Visitation
(202) Rev. Dave Johnson Emeritus

Administrative Staff

(202) Donna Jahr Secretary to the Pastors
(236) Marilyn McNeill Church Administrator
(201) Judi Mueller* Receptionist/Mbr. Secretary
(201) Cleo Sorensen* Receptionist/Mbr. Secretary
(201) Sandy Rieck* Receptionist/Mbr. Secretary

Caring Ministries

(202) Cheryl Satterlee* Wedding Coordinator

Financial Services

(211) LaVonne Wolf Financial Specialist

Media Ministries

(252) Susan Bell Communications Coordinator
(213) Jared Callahan* Communications Assistant
(236) John Cerwinski* Sound Board Technician
(213) Kathy Hein* Broadcast Director
(213) Garrett Masters* Broadcast Director
(213) David Palmer* Broadcast Director
(213) Hons Oakland* Broadcast Director
(213) Tanner Wangness* Broadcast Director

Facilities

(201) Dave Wilson Facility Manager
(201) Rick East Custodian
(201) Jeff Hartnett Custodian

Worship and Music Ministries

(260) Zachary Rygiel Director/Organist, FLYGHT and Jubilant Singers Director
(261) Shirley Barlow* Administrative Assistant
(261) Donna Hamilton* Accompanist
(261) Dr. Jerry Hanson* Dir. of Music Emeritus
(261) Ali Hoffman* Youth Handbell Director
(261) Marcia Kittelson* Organist Emerita
(261) Bonnie Lindgren* Carol Choir Director
(261) Dr. Paul Nesheim* Adult Choir Director and Women's Choir Director
(261) Larry Olson* Contemporary Worship Coordinator
(261) Mary Ryrholm* Agape Ringers Director
(261) Sue Severson* Accompanist
(261) Pam Sonnichsen* Instrumental Coordinator

Youth and Family Ministries

(204) Marnie Dahle Backer Director
(228) Nancy Henrichsen* Nursery Attendant
(228) Gayle Johnson* Nursery Attendant
(228) Irma Rodriguez Leon* Nursery Attendant
(238) Heather Smith Children's Minister
(228) Kris Stark* Nursery Coordinator
(228) Samantha Stark* Nursery Coordinator
(235) Elias Youngquist Youth Minister
(228) Kristy Zuraff Administrative Assistant

() = Direct dial phone extensions *Part-time

Main phone: (605) 336-3734
Direct dial: (605) 339-1983
Toll-free: (800) 425-9899
Fax: (605) 336-8370
Pastoral emergency: (605) 610-9431
Custodian cell: (605) 351-8281
Project CAR: (605) 332-2777

FINANCIAL SERVICES



Gifts and memorials

Gifts to the First Lutheran Foundation in honor of:

Pr. Jim Christopherson: Elaine Berg

Gifts to the First Lutheran Foundation in memory of:

Herb Mikkelson: Jan Boettcher, Steve & Doris Bushard, Jim & Sandy Fink, Dorothy Grevlos, Don & Joyce Helberg, Gladys Halstenson, Paul & Barb Halstenson, Emil & Carol Knapp, Eileen Quanbeck

Eunice Quamen: Carl & Janet Naessig, Sharyl Wolf

Gifts to the Foundation - Youth in memory of:

Herb Mikkelson: Betty Pfeifle
Jean Paisley: Betty Pfeifle

Gift to God's Gifts. Our Responsibility. in memory of:

Eunice Quamen: Judi Eliason

Gift to Caring Ministry in memory of:

Tina Fechner: Jay & Elizabeth Wood
Herb Mikkelson: Jay & Elizabeth Wood
Eunice Quamen: Richard & Glenna Burns

Gift to Caring Ministry in honor of:

Pr. Jim Christopherson: Bob & Carolyn Bauman, Stephen Johnson, Emil & Carol Knapp

Gift to Media Ministry in honor of:

Pr. Jim Christopherson: Don & Flo Toft

Gift to Media Ministry in memory of:

Tina Fechner: Mary Child, Darlene Colwill, First Lutheran Church Women, Barb Matson, Lori Melemseter, Eileen Quanbeck
Billie Greenfield: First Lutheran Church Women
Herb Mikkelson: Karen Lidel, Thomas & Jeri Paca, Mae Ranschau
Don Minor: Darlene Colwill
Jean Paisley: Alfred Borgen, First Lutheran Church Women, Dave & Linda Munson, Milt Mutch, Howard & LouAnn Paulson, Mae Ranschau, Robson True Value Hardware, Cheryl Satterlee

Eunice Quamen: Duane Anderson, Phyllis Harmsen, Mary Ann Hohman, Dick & Alma Kallesen, Dennis & Maryann Knutson, Karen Lidel, Ruth A. Lone, Herb & Dorothy Mikkelson, Dave & Linda Munson, Tom & Martha Nelson, Pr. Leroy & Elaine Nevin, Bill & Nancy Olson, Ione Pereboom, Lois J. Peterson, Viola Peterson, Bryan & Diane Polyak, Leona Polyak, Jon & Connie Salberg, Dale & Dianne Schnabel, Mike & Gloria Simpson, Kathy Stelzer, Alan & Penny Thorson, Don & Flo Toft, Doug & Carol Uthe, Donna Van Houten, Darlene Weis, Bill Westerdahl, Barb Wiczorek

Ione Simons: Dale & Rosie Williamson
Bev Stoeckman: James Stoeckmann

Gift to Meals from the Heart in memory of:

Eunice Quamen: Tracie Osthus, Sandy Pedersen

Gift to Scripture First in memory of:

Jean Paisley: Paul & Jean Colon

Gift to Music Ministry - Lankford Bequest in honor of:

Pr. Jim Christopherson: Steve & Doris Bushard
Special Bazaar Bookworms: Steve & Doris Bushard

Gift to Music Ministry - Lankford Bequest in memory of:

Jean Paisley: Steve & Doris Bushard

Gift to Music Ministry in memory of:

Eunice Quamen: James & Mindy Moore
Jean Paisley: Don & Judy Erickson, Dale & Aggie Schlump

Gift to Lowell Elementary in memory of:

Jean Paisley: Jeanne Brandenburg, Susan Brzezinski, Jeff & Sarah Herbert, Mark Paisley

Gift to Volunteer Shop in memory of:

Herb Mikkelson: Larry & Marilyn Anderson, Bob & Carolyn Bauman, Roger & Bev Lamp, Marilyn & John McNeill

Financial update

Through October 31, 2017

Total Revenue – year-to-date

2017 Actual \$1,637,716
2016 Actual \$1,545,818

Total Expenses – year-to-date

2017 Actual \$1,654,088
2016 Actual \$1,627,259

Contract For Deed, Ideal .. \$331,166

God's Gifts. Our Responsibility.

Income..... \$4,001,648

Campus Improvement

Income \$200,752

Worship Attendance October 4,512

Year-end Giving

Please prayerfully consider your year-end giving to First Lutheran Church. Have you fulfilled your pledges? Gifts must be received or postmarked by Sunday, December 31, 2017, in order to be recorded in 2017.

Are you interested in online giving, gifts of stock or money from your IRA to fulfill your pledge? Please consult your tax advisor or Certified Public Accountant to learn if there are tax advantages for you to give in this way. Also, please allow sufficient time (a minimum of 10 days) for stock gifts to process in order to be recorded in the current year.

2018 Stewardship Campaign

We invite you to prayerfully consider Ministry Engagement and Ministry Giving for 2018. Please complete and return the Thankful Giving pledge as soon as possible. Our goal is to increase pledges to better plan ministry and invite each household to increase giving as you are able. Giving forms are available at the Information Desk, in the church pew pockets and online at flcsf.org/thankful

MEDIA MINISTRY



Media broadcast sponsors September – October

First Lutheran Church's worship can be seen every Sunday at 11 a.m. on KSFY, KPRY and KABY in South Dakota, southwest Minnesota, northwest Iowa and northeast Nebraska. A live radio broadcast of worship is aired Sundays at 8 a.m. on KELO-FM, 101.9.

KELO broadcast sponsored:

- Sept. 24: By the family of Pastor Jim Christopherson in honor of his 63 years of ordained ministry.
- Oct. 1: In honor of the First Lutheran pastors and given by the staff.
- Oct. 8: In memory of Arlen, Bea and Chuck Osthus by their family.
- Oct. 15: In loving memory of parents, Leo & Ingrid Knutson and Adolph & Lucile Quail and brother, Leonard Quail by Allan and Phyllis Knutson.
- Oct. 29: By the FLC Women in appreciation for all the volunteers who help with the bazaar.

KSFY telecast (fully sponsored unless noted otherwise):

- Sept. 17: In memory of Lloyd Osthus by his wife Jean and family.
- Sept. 24: In memory of former First Lutheran choir members Howard Hagen, LaVonne McElroy, Julia Simons, and Wally and Alicemae Steele through the memorial gifts of family and friends.
- Oct. 1: By Franklin and Marit Pudas in celebration of their 60th wedding anniversary.
- Oct. 8: In loving memory of Bill Kost by his wife Janice, family and friends.
- Oct. 15: In memory of Terry Graves by his family.
- Oct. 29: By David and Judy Van Veldhuizen and family – Dan, Angela, Sam, Ella, Isaac, Paul, Heidi, Jack, Winter, Gabrielle, and Sasha.

KSFY closed captioning sponsored:

- Sept. 3: In loving memory of Donna Gallant by Dianna and Greg Spath.
- Oct. 8: In loving memory of Ron Hohman whose birthday would have been Oct. 13, by his wife Karen, family and friends.

Sponsorships available

Worship broadcasts are made possible by supporters from all around the country. To learn more about sponsoring a radio broadcast, telecast or closed captioning in honor of, or in memory of a loved one, or in celebration of a special life event, please call Donna Jahr at (605) 339-1983, ext. 202. Donations of any size will help the broadcast ministry. Dates for future months not listed may be available. Please call for additional dates throughout the year.

KELO radio broadcast sponsorships (\$150) available for Dec. 31,

KSFY telecast sponsorships (\$1300) are available for Jan. 7, 14 and 21.

Closed captioning sponsorships for the weekly KSFY telecasts (\$140) are available on Dec. 3, 10, 17, 25 and 31; Jan. 21.

Un-sponsored broadcast, telecast and closed caption dates are made possible in part through gifts and memorials to First Lutheran Church Media Ministries.



Thrivent Choice® Dollars Charitable Grant Program

Thank you to all Thrivent members who have supported ministries at First Lutheran Church with Thrivent Choice® Dollars. Every Choice® Dollar received has an impact. Choice Dollars® have supported music, youth, quilting, the volunteer shop, media and various other areas of ministry. Are you an eligible Thrivent member with Choice Dollars® available to direct? If so, you can help support First Lutheran Church through the Thrivent Choice® member-advised charitable grant program. Choose to make a difference by directing Choice Dollars® today. Visit Thrivent.com/thriventchoice to learn more.

EVANGELISM, MISSION AND OUTREACH MINISTRIES (EMO)



We are all criers...

By Jeff Backer, Intern Pastor



He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' " as the prophet Isaiah said. John 1:23 (NRSV)

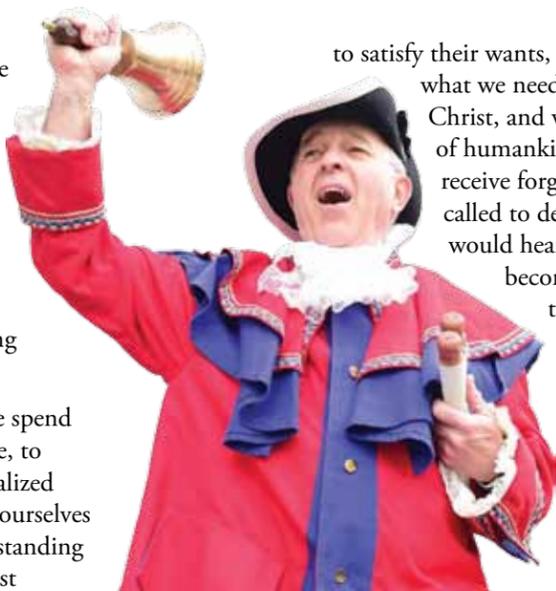
Throughout the advent season, we will hear over and over about John the Baptist. The prophet Isaiah had foretold of, the one, the anointed one,

who would come out of the wilderness to declare that "the one more powerful than myself lives amongst you, but you do not know him."

Through the whole of the Old Testament, we understand the over-arching message to God's people is that the one who will finally bring peace to the world is coming; expect him at any time. The message that John was bringing was something different. It was no longer "wait, he is coming", but "he is here." No longer were the voices of the prophets needed. John is the first crier as was foretold by Isaiah.

The job of a crier is not to prepare, but it is to declare. "What you have been waiting for is here!, Let all hear!"

The majority of the time, we spend Advent being told to prepare, to anticipate. In the commercialized spirit of the season, we find ourselves rushing from here to there, standing in long lines, finding that just perfect gift for our special someone's, trying to make everything as perfect as we can for the celebration to come at Christmas. We anticipate loved ones coming home, we anticipate Mom's special treats. There is a LOT of expectation in this holiday.



What are you expecting this Christmas? Are you focusing in on all of the business of Christmas? Or are you waiting to hear something different?

John the Baptist is called the one crying from the wilderness. In God's vocational calling, John is the first preacher. His cry is that Jesus Christ is here, now, for you. John's cry is more powerful than the prophets, because his message is something new, it is the good news.

"We are called to declare this good news to all who would hear."

In this Christmas season, we have an amazing gift to share as the people of God. In a time and season that people spend countless resources trying to satisfy their wants, we as the church can actually give what we need. That is the good news of Jesus Christ, and what he has done for the whole of humankind. Christ has come that we may receive forgiveness, and salvation. We are called to declare this good news to all who would hear. Like John, we have been called to become criers; we have been anointed to spread the good news. We have the amazing ability to give exactly what people need. We get to make known the one who is amongst us. The perfect gift in Christ!

This is certainly good news!

Peace and joy to you in this Christmas season.

Special Offering for December

By Cherie Hopper, EMO Board Member

The special offering for December is for Charis Ministries, Furniture Mission and The Community Outreach. Your donation stays local helping people in Sioux Falls and surrounding communities.

Charis which means "Grace" is a nonprofit organization owned by 13 ELCA congregations in Sioux Falls. Together the churches sponsor:

The Mobile Food Pantry distributes food each Thursday night. The first Thursday distribution is at Eastside Lutheran, second Thursday at Messiah New Hope, third Thursday is Augustana Lutheran and the fourth Thursday is held at St. John's Lutheran. Those needing assistance can visit their neighborhood church once per month. Tuna and tuna helper are being collected in December. First Lutheran's own Todd Smith works as the coordinator for this ministry.

Necessities for Neighbors is held the first Sunday of each month at Peace Lutheran where they hand out laundry detergent, adult/child diapers, toilet paper and feminine hygiene products. We just collected a "mountain of toilet paper" in September, but Necessities can always use diapers and toilet paper.

Healthy Rides provides seniors free rides to health appointments. Avera and Sanford supplement the program. This is a joint ministry with "Project CAR" and new drivers are always needed.

The Furniture Mission provides gently used furniture and household items to those in need. A furnished household is a better environment for raising a family. People receiving furniture are referred by a social service agency, school, church or hospital. This summer, I was able to donate household items after my mother-in-law passed away. Cleaning supplies and items needed for a first-time apartment or house add up quickly. The Furniture Mission is always looking for gently used furniture, blankets, bedding, pots, pans, towels, rugs, small appliances and decorative items.

The Community Outreach is located downtown in the Sioux Falls Ministerial Center (225 E. 11th St.) where they "Partner in Christian ministry to share hope and provide tools for daily living." The Community Outreach has impacted more than 5,000 family units this year focusing on housing, utilities, work-related transportation, information, referrals and mentoring. Mentors, volunteers in a variety of areas and tax deductible donations are always needed. The Community Outreach is a strong partner with First Lutheran Church as we address the needs of those coming to the church looking for a hand-up to make life manageable. Executive Director, Dane Bloch, and his staff have also been helpful in forming the Compassionate Connections ministry here at First Lutheran.

Please consider supporting one or more of our local missions. All areas can use volunteers and or monetary donations. Please place your special offering envelope in the offering plate, or drop it off at the information desk.

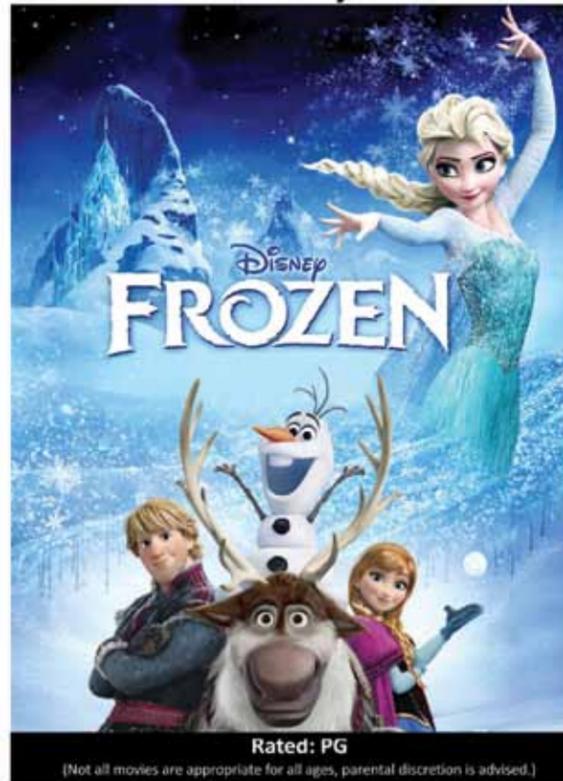
"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." – Hebrews 13:16



The church will be closed on Mondays, December 25 and January 1.

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Madison, SD

First Friday Movies



Friday, December 1, 6:30—8:30 p.m.

First Lutheran Church - 327 S. Dakota Avenue
Gym-Reformation Hall

FREE Family Event—Snacks provided!

Sponsored by

THRIVENT FINANCIAL



IN THIS ISSUE...

- 1 Advent Expectations
- 1 Advent and Christmas worship schedule
- 2 Christmas Pageant - The Greatest Gift
- 4 Grateful for Support, Caring Ministries
- 5 Christmas Giving Youth Project

Special Congregational Meeting

Sunday, Dec. 3, at 12:15 p.m.

A meeting of the congregation will be held to approve the proposed changes to our constitution and bylaws. Please join us, your voice is important!

First Word
First Lutheran Church
327 S Dakota Ave
Sioux Falls SD 57104

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED