Reformation Weekend
October 24-25, 2015

God has nothing but the best, and he offers it to us, weeds us, sustains us and cares for us through his Son. That’s the way our hearts are changed to follow Christ.
—Martin Luther

Important Dates to Remember:

10/3 Pet Blessing at both churches
10/10-11 Clergy Appreciation Weekend
10/17 Pastor Bryant’s installation at First
10/31 Nativity Halloween Spooktacular
10/31 First Lutheran Meet & Greet
10/31-11/1 All Saints Weekend

First and Nativity Lutheran Churches (ELCA)
Rev. Bryant Bakkum, Pastor
Henry Hammerling, Pastor Emeritus at First
Dennis Jon Wolfgang, Dir. of Music/Organist
Shirley Cogan, Mission Interpreter
Barb Reed, Secretary
Natalie Jaeger, Custodian, First Lutheran

Office Hours: Monday thru Friday 9am to 12pm
Office located at 7400 W. Lapham, West Allis

IN THIS ISSUE......

P. 2 Pastor’s Letter/Church Info.
P. 3 Growing Our Faith
P. 4 Worship, Study and Prayer
P. 5,6 First Lutheran News
P. 7 Synod Opportunities
P. 8 World and Synod Support
P. 9 Nativity News & Outreach
p. 10 Local Opportunities
P. 11 This ‘n That Around Here
Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Is your faith risky? When was the last time you explored the boundaries of your faith and trusted that God would catch you if you fell? Over next couple of months I would invite you to wonder with me about what this faith thing means for our lives.

It’s quite easy to think of faith as some type of knowledge that we have gained over the course of our lives. As if it was possible to be more faithful one month and less the next. And perhaps this is how our lives feel sometimes – a constant roller coaster of having lots of faith and other times experiencing great doubts. Perhaps we’re afraid we don’t know the Bible well enough. Or that our neighbor seems to be more faithful than us. But can we truly be faithful? I like to think of it this way: I don’t trust that my human self has the capability of fully trusting in God at all times. But I know that God trusts in me at all times. I know that through Jesus I have been reconciled to God no matter how little faith I may have on certain days. One quick glance at the Gospels shows us that the disciples were told constantly how little faith they had – and they followed Jesus around for years. So it’s no wonder that we cannot possibly hope to be faithful to God or understand what God’s Kingdom looks like in this world. And that’s why faith is risky. It’s like walking blindly into the world and then causing great change. We can do this because we’re not the ones affecting the change – Jesus is through us. When we are able to leave our worries about our faithfulness at the door we have the ability to step out into the world and be Christ in the world. Sometimes we won’t know what we’re doing – and that’s okay – but with Jesus walking by our sides we will have real power to change the lives of those we meet.

I gain much confidence from Theodore Roosevelt’s quote from his speech, “Citizenship In a Republic”. His words speak to our call as disciples of Christ to go out into the world: “The credit belongs to the person who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly.”

What is faith but daring greatly? Daring greatly to trust in a God who sent his Son to redeem our lives. With that confidence we can move out into the world with the knowledge that wherever we go Christ is with us. And that even when words fail us we show our love by simply being with our brothers and sisters. I look forward to daring greatly with you!

Peace,
Pastor Bryant
Growing Our Faith

WORSHIP MATTERS by Shirley Cogan

Wait a minute! Who stole our summer? And where is our Indian Summer? I’m not ready for Fall. I can’t believe it’s October! Well, I guess I’ll just have to “grin and bear” it. (It’s just that it snuck up on me - sigh). I’m losing it (not my mind, just my time!) I really do love Fall and Winter. They’re beautiful seasons from inside a warm, cozy house.

But let’s look at the good things. There’s lots of activities coming up. On Oct. 3rd we’ll have the Pet Blessing. I love this event. On Oct. 17th Pastor Bryant will be installed at First Lutheran. He’ll finally be all ours! Yeah! Hurray!

And... many Christians will be celebrating the birthday of our church, Reformation, on Oct. 24-25. That is one of the four most special days in our church year: Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and Reformation. We might celebrate with cake and even ice cream, but we won’t be nailing points to be debated on our church door. It might be a good time to reflect on our lives as Christians, and if finding something we’re not pleased with, “reforming it”. I, myself, need to pray more, find more ways to do “good works” and tell more folks I come into contact with about our Lord. I need to be a better evangelist. - I’m a little weak in that area of witnessing.

It’s good to “take stock” once in a while. Don’t you agree? Hope you do some “reflecting” too.

In Christian love,
Shirley Cogan

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

During the month of October we will continue our study of the Book of First Samuel. Bring your Bible and join us in the Fireside Room from 10:00-11:00am. Some of the group goes out for lunch each week and you are welcome to join us. John Bennethum is our Teacher.

For Women Only....

The Women’s Bible Study meets on Wednesday afternoons in the Fireside Room at First Lutheran. They’re studying the 100 most important stories in the Bible. Materials are available and new members are always welcome! Call the church office for meeting times.

The more you read the Bible, the more you’ll love its author.
...anonymous
All Saints’ Weekend

On Saturday, October 31, and Sunday, November 1, we will remember our members who have died during the past year with a candle lit in their memory. We encourage you and your family to join us. If you have any additional friends or family you wish to have recognized, please contact the church office.

HEROES OF THE BIBLE!

On Rally Sunday, September 13th, the Sunday School children marched down the aisle dressed as Noah’s family to kick off this year’s theme “Hero’s of the Bible”. Music Director Dennis Wolfgang created thunder on the organ while the ushers supplied us with lightning. After placing all the animals in the ark on the altar, Pastor held a Blessing of the teachers and the students. During the past two weeks the students created an Ark, ate animal cookies (two by two) and created multi-colored floods with secret ingredients. In the weeks to come we will study Deborah, David and Goliath, Daniel and the Lions and Jonah and the Big Fish.

Come join the adventure!

Worship, Study and Prayer

Gail Bartoleria, Gayle Engelstad, Jackie Grauberger, Mark Gruetzner, John Horst, Debra Knitter, Don Leppien, Luz Maria Lozada, Samantha Mathery, Lillian Ribnek, Gail Sadler, Kathleen Santos, Crystal Schuman, Jill Schuman-Kuperus and David Wegener.

From Nativity: Helen, Pauline, Cheryl, Ruby, Dorothea, Marion, James, Harriet, Helen and Jeanne.

From First: Marlin, Beverly, Marie, LaVerne, Dorothy, Henry, John, Earl, Paula, Alfred, Virginia, Marilyn, Betty, Kammy, Myra, Joyce, Erna, Lois, Barbara and Pat

Come aboard!

PRAYERS FOR A SPEEDY RECOVERY

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PRAYER CAN HELP...

If serious illness or other life factors affect you or those you love, contact the church office and we will send your request through our prayer chain. We have people who will pray for your need. If you are interested in joining a prayer chain, contact the church office.
**GOING SHOPPING?**

Save your plastic bags from grocery stores (except Sendiks) - we need bags that the paper grocery bags will fit inside. We’ve finally run low on them. Some items that the food pantry can always use are zip lock bags – gallon, quart and sandwich size.

**“I have learned that the best way to lift one’s self up is to help someone else.”**

--- Booker T. Washington, educator, writer and orator

**HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?**

Bring in your extra zucchini, tomatoes, etc. so we can share them with our food pantry visitors. Contact the office at (414) 476-4664 to arrange a time to bring them in. Please do not leave them outside the doors.

**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY**

Thanks to everyone who contributed funds for Habitat for Humanity. We provided a donation of $41.00 toward providing lunches for their many volunteers working on various projects. We appreciate the work of the Habitat volunteers who are helping to revitalize neighborhoods and provide safe, affordable housing for families.

Many thanks to the members and friends of First and Nativity Lutheran Churches who support our pantry by donating food or preparing food for our Friday lunches. Each week, visitors to our pantry tell us how grateful they are to have received a delicious lunch and food for their cupboard. We also appreciate those who have shared their bountiful garden vegetables. They are really appreciated!

We could use some help greeting food pantry visitors and checking them in at the sign-in desk on Friday between 10am and noon. You would work about every five to six weeks and will always be with a partner. We also need substitutes to fill in once in a while. If this interests you, contact the church office or stop in on a Friday and see what we do.

**DO YOU HAVE A THRIVENT INSURANCE POLICY?  DO YOU HAVE A TTHRIVENT ANNUITY?**

If you are a Thrivent Financial member with Choice Dollars to direct, you can help our church continue its ministry here and reach out to the greater community. Simply direct Choice Dollars to First Lutheran. We plan to use these grant funds to provide supplies to our quilters and food to our food pantry. You can make your direction online at [Thrivent.com](http://www.thrivent.com) or call Thrivent at 800-847-4836 and say “Thrivent Choice” after the prompt. The Thrivent Choice charitable program lets eligible Thrivent members recommend where some of Thrivent’s charitable dollars are distributed. To see if you are eligible to participate or if you have questions, call Thrivent toll free at 800-847-4836.
Thank you “Happy Scrubbers”

Thank you to the “Happy Scrubbers” who helped clean the woodwork and pews in the church and Pastor’s office and cleaned and organized some areas in the kitchen. Thanks to Cindy, Jamie, Chris, Natalie, Pam, Werner, Delores and Joy. We didn’t quite get everything done, so watch for the next “Happy Scrubbers Saturday” in the spring.

First Lutheran News

PET BLESSING, SAT. OCT 3 10AM

Be sure to bring your pets to the “Blessing of the Animals” service at First at 10am and Nativity at noon. Each pet in attendance will receive a special blessing. If your pet is hard to transport, bring a picture of your pet, fill out one of the “prayer slips” or contact the church office in advance. The short service is held outside, so be sure to dress for the weather and have your pet leashed or in a carrier.

Dear God,
You have given us care over all living things; protect and bless the animals who give us companionship and delight. Make us their true friends and worthy companions. Amen

-Deborah Nicolet

CANDY MEET AND GREET, SAT. OCT 31, 4PM

We’ll be sharing the word of God’s love and a little candy with neighborhood children on Saturday, Oct 31st beginning at 4pm. The city celebration runs from 4pm-7pm, but we will only work until the traffic slows or the candy runs out. We’ll be outside, handing out bags that contain information about Sunday school, worship opportunities and a treat! Last year we had hundreds of children stop by. For this to be successful we need donations of candy plus YOU (volunteers) to hand it out. We need lots of candy! Please be sure that each piece is individually wrapped. Remaining candy will be donated to Operation Christmas stocking. Sign up or contact the office if you can help pack the bags or distribute candy.

“All of us could take a lesson from the weather.
It pays no attention to criticism.”

Catch Us on the Web...

Check out First Lutheran’s new website where you can find information on our activities, view an online version of the First and Nativity newsletter, in color (saves postage costs) and see upcoming events. You can also view copies of Pastor Bryants sermons online. Go to: www.firstlutheranelca.org

Stewardship is a way of life! It integrates our faith and the way that we live our lives. It is a mindset, a culture and a discipline that can never be contained in an annual three week financial response. It is the way in which we use all of the resources that God has entrusted to our care so that we can love God and our neighbor. Stewardship is about love! It is a matter of the heart.

- God’s love comes down to us in Jesus Christ. He also comes down to us in the sacrament of baptism. In baptism, we are claimed as children of God. We belong to God and all that we have belongs to God. We are bearers of God’s love, grace and gospel. At creation, god gave humanity dominion over all that God had made.

- We look in to discover all of the resources that God has entrusted to our care. He gave varying talents, time, money and stuff. While our gifts may seem meager, put in the hands of God, these gifts can become so much more. We use our resources to love God and our neighbor. We need to look in to see the abundance that God has entrusted to us.

- We look out to see how God is calling us to love our neighbor with all that God has entrusted to our care. We give joyfully, graciously and sacrificially because we know that our resources are not ours to keep but are God’s to share. Stewardship is the way that we use all of our resources to love God and our neighbors.

The church’s bills must be paid, but, stewardship is also about how the congregation together can do God’s work. It is directly tied to discipleship. It is no longer about the congregation’s need to receive, but about the giver’s need to give. Stewardship is a way of life. It is about living out God’s call to love God and our neighbors.

Lavone Reis
**King of Glory Lutheran Church**

Fall Bazaar  
Saturday, October 24th, 2015  
9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.  
4330 S. 84th Street, Greenfield

Handmade items from Helping Hands sewers  
Variety of crafters and businesses  
Raffle/Donation items  
Book Sale  
Home-baked goods  
Donated food items benefit KOG’s Food Pantry

Sponsored by WELCA to raise funds for Community Outreach!

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**Empty Bowls Milwaukee**

The Central City Churches Outreach Ministry will benefit from this annual fund-raiser this year. CCC is supported by 8 congregations including Great Milwaukee Synod’s Redeemer, St. Paul’s and Our Savior’s in Milwaukee. It’s fun to choose a handmade bowl and fill it with delicious soup. All for a $20 donation. We look forward to seeing you there!

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**Partners With El Salvador**

The attic is bare! As we prepare for upcoming synod visits to El Salvador, the El Salvador Committee is looking for used suitcases in which to haul donations to El Salvador. Check out your basements and attics for suitcases with wheels, handles and which are not too heavy. Donations are being accepted NOW through December 1st. Bring donations to the church office.

How can YOU participate and support the 2016 Mission of Healing Wellness Fairs in El Salvador?

- **Collect Band-Aids** (boxes of regular size - no tiny ones). We want to give some basic first aid items to each participating family!
- **Collect toothbrushes!!** Adult and child sizes, soft bristles. The goal is to give out 10,000 toothbrushes to people who need them!
- **Collect arts and crafts supplies** (construction paper, yarn, scissors, glue bottles, stickers, crayons, acylic paint, brushes, tissue paper etc.) for the adult and children’s art centers and to leave with Sunday Schools.
- **Collect games** such as chess sets, memory games, and other games that are not language-dependent

Go to [www.partnerswithelsalvador.org](http://www.partnerswithelsalvador.org) for more information on what our Synod is doing. The quilters of First and Nativity have been supporting a sewing school there for three years now. **What can you do?**

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**Young Adults in the ELCA**

“My name is Elise Hynek, and I am the great niece of Elsie Boese, a member of First Lutheran Church.

I recently came back from a year of serving in England through the ELCA’s Young Adults in Global Mission program. If you are interested, you may read about my experience throughout the year at [http://profiteorinbritannia.blogspot.com/](http://profiteorinbritannia.blogspot.com/). “

Check her out! Our young people are doing great things!
The First Lutheran Sew and Sews held their 3rd annual Quilting Bee on September 12th. Thirteen quilts were tied, displayed in church for a quilt blessing over the weekend, and then packed along with other quilts for shipment to Lutheran World Relief. While the majority of quilts are sent to LWR, the quilters also provide quilts to food pantry clients in need and to children who are baptized at First Lutheran.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? CHECKING IN WITH FORMER PASTORS
At August’s Bible study our former Pastor, Richard Peterson and wife Lois came to talk with us about mission work in Mexico. Pastor and Lois are enjoying their retirement and have already made several trips to Minnesota, Illinois and California (which was a long road/camping trip in their new camper). They’re enjoying spending time with their three children and seven grandchildren.

Prior to being ordained, Pastor and Lois served in México with the World Mission Prayer League (wmpl.org) from 1976-90. Now, having retired from pastoral ministry in the USA, they have renewed their relationship with WMPL and plan to go to places in Spanish speaking Latin America where there is a need to train and mentor leaders in the church. They are presently planning several mission trips to Mazatlán, Sinaloa, México and elsewhere in Latin America. As opportunities present themselves, they will be planning other trips.

They ask for your prayers that our Lord continue to open doors for training and teaching in Latin America and for travel safety. You will be able to follow them at the web site above.

NEXT MONTH: What has Pastor Syre’ been doing lately?
Nativity News & Outreach

HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR
October 31st  1:30 p.m.

The 1639 pipes of Nativity’s Verlinden Pipe Organ, will be featured in a Halloween Spooktacular Concert. Organist, Dennis Jon Wolfgang will be at the console of the organ furnishing an abundance of spooky organ music. Our own newly ordained and installed pastor, Pastor Bryant Bakkum is a gifted pianist and will join Dennis at the Mason and Hamlin of New York studio piano. They will be joined by incomparable Milwaukee soprano and Nativity favorite, Susan Platt and by Wartburg Theological Seminary student, tenor Gus Barnes, Jr. This concert will be one of Mr. Barnes’ final appearances before his year of internship and call to full time ministry.

Highlights of the concert include the duet for two organists at one organ console “Ghouls and Gremlins” composed by Dennis Wolfgang’s longtime friend and Director of Music/Organist of the Episcopal Cathedral of Memphis, Dr. Dennis Janzer. The program will conclude with highlights from Andrew Lloyd Webber’s soaring musical “Phantom of the Opera” including “Music of the Night” and “All I Ask of You”. We are also promising a few new surprises not before seen at a Nativity/First Lutheran Concert.

The Concert is free but donations will be received for the preservation and improvements of Nativity’s Verlinden Pipe Organ.

SAVE THE DATE...
AND YOUR STUFF!

Nativity’s Fall Rummage Sale will be held on Fri. & Sat., Nov. 12th & 13th. You can start bringing your items for sale to church beginning Nov. 1st. Contact Don Brauch or the church office if you need to make special arrangements for drop-off.

GOOD SAMARITAN OUTREACH CENTER

As part of our support of the Good Samaritan Outreach Center, Nativity will be collecting the following items during October: toiletries, canned food, vegetables, fruit, and beef stew. They can always use canned foods such as beef stew and spaghetti-o’s. There is a box in the narthex for your donations.

NATIVITY QUILTERS

Every Wednesday, the stack of quilts at Nativity Lutheran Church grows higher and higher. As of August 26th, the Nativity Quilters have sewn 284 quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Outstanding work, ladies!

Breven DeBack, a member of Nativity, and his band “Path” participated in the Bay View Bash community festival which took place September 19 on Kinnickinnic Avenue. Several church members were present to cheer them on.
The West Allis Senior Center has many helpful programs available.

**Stockbox** - A box of healthy food once/month provided by the Hunger Task Force.

**AARP Tax Assistance Program**

**Senior Nutrition Programs**

**SeniorLAW** - a Program of Legal Action of Wisconsin.

There are also many activities taking place at the center such as trips, classes and support groups. Contact the center for more information at (414)302-8700.
### FIRST LUTHERAN FINANCES 2015

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### FIRST LUTHERAN ATTENDANCE

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<td>345</td>
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<td>79</td>
<td>-2</td>
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### October Birthdays

**First Lutheran**

- 10/1  Gail Sopa
- 10/3  Pita Garcia
- 10/3  Marie LePage
- 10/3  Rylee Siskoy
- 10/8  LaVerne Cronce
- 10/8  Odemaris Dixon
- 10/8  Henry Hammerling
- 10/9  Sarah Sackett
- 10/11 Linda Grulke
- 10/12 Ashley Nusberger
- 10/13 Cindy Labadie
- 10/16 Carie Pfugradt
- 10/17 Earl Casto, Jr.
- 10/20 Elizabeth Gray
- 10/21 Myra Shields
- 10/22 Bradley Fox
- 10/22 Gloria Grassell

**Nativity Lutheran**

- 10/2  Angela Isotalo
- 10/10 Dale Isotalo
- 10/12 Jonathan Sadowski
- 10/14 Evan Sadowski
- 10/17 Robert Saur II
- 10/26 Harriet Miller
- 10/28 Carol Garza

**First Lutheran**

- 10/6  William & Guyon Metzen  53 yrs.
- 10/21 James & Sandra Larson    42 yrs.
- 10/27 Michael & Susan Nekich   42 yrs.

**Nativity Lutheran**

- 10/6  William & Guyon Metzen  53 yrs.
- 10/21 James & Sandra Larson    42 yrs.
- 10/27 Michael & Susan Nekich   42 yrs.

### On the Lighter Side

**F.Y.I…. October is Clergy Appreciation Month**

“I hope you don’t think I’m presumptuous. I died at a costume party.”

### BIBLE QUIZ…

In response to Jesus, Zacchaeus vowed to repay people he had defrauded; by how much did he promise to do so?

A. In full
B. Twice the amount he had stolen
C. Threefold
D. Fourfold

Answer: See Luke 19:8
Worship With Us

Saturday
5:30 p.m. at
First Lutheran

Sunday
9:00 a.m.
at First Lutheran
11:00 a.m. at
Nativity Lutheran

If you no longer wish to continue receiving this newsletter, please contact the church office.