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First and Nativity Lutheran Churches (ELCA)
Richard Peterson, Pastor
(414)324-8296
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
Dear Friends in Christ;

Since I am retiring from the ministry of First and Nativity Churches I want to leave you with the message of the Angels at Christmas time. The Angel of the Lord appeared to the Shepherd and said, “I bring you good news of great joy for all the people, to you is born in the city of David a Savior who is the Messiah, the Lord.” (Luke 2:10) This is the Good News that we always want to make known to all people. My prayer and hope for all of you is that the wonder of knowing Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord be yours everyday and especially at Christmas.

As Lois and I leave this wonderful ministry we know that God will supply a new Pastor to continue the ministries of the Churches.

I do hope you will all come to worship service during this time of Advent and Christmas. It’s truly a time to let Jesus Christ reign in your life.

In Christ at Christmastime,

Pastor and Lois
Worship Matters
by John Bennethum

It is always hard to say goodbye to friends whom we have worked with closely for several years. So it is as Pastor Richard and Lois prepare to retire at the end of this year and leave their ministry here at First and Nativity Lutheran Churches. Our team worked well together and I think things went along rather smoothly. I know the Deacons are all sad to see them go. But we realize change is always with us, and so we bid them Godspeed as they leave us. Our ministry team will move on as it must and with everyone’s help we will succeed. We hope they enjoy the winter in California with their family and whatever ministry awaits them in the future. May God continue to Bless and keep them. Let us pray for their health and safety. Deacon John

For Women Only....

The Women’s Bible Study meets on Wednesdays at 4:30 p.m. in First Lutheran’s Fireside Room. New members always welcome!

Tuesday Bible Class

During the months of December and January we will continue our study of the Gospel of St. Mark, which will be the Gospel read starting with the first Sunday in Advent (Year B) which is Nov. 30th. The color for Advent is blue. There will be no class on December 23 and December 30th due to Christmas and New Years. Our Special Christmas Lesson will be held on January 6th, Epiphany (White) We should finish our study of Mark before Ash Wednesday on February 18th. As usual ALL are welcome to join us in the Fireside Room at 10am on Tuesdays. Bring your Bible and a friend! John Bennethum is our Teacher.

With Pastor Peterson retiring, we are losing a valuable member of our Sunday School team - Lois! Won’t you prayerfully consider becoming a part of this dedicated group of adults? We need people willing to commit to spending one Sunday a month with our children. Training provided - no experience necessary...... just a love of God and children. Contact the church office if you are interested.

Bed, Bethlehem and Beyond

Sunday, December 14th
9:00 a.m.
First Lutheran Church

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 Marie Le Page (First Lutheran), Laverne Breed (Nativity Lutheran) or the church office.
Sunday School News

The children in First Lutheran Sunday School have been busy learning about Moses. The children read stories about Baby Moses, Burning Bush, Plagues and the Red Sea. The curriculum was enhanced by art projects, science experiments and music. In November we concentrated on the Ten Commandments and practicing for the annual Christmas Program. A shout out to Linda Grulke for the selection and coordination of the BED, BETHLEHEM & BEYOND program this year. We hope you will all attend the program and support our children and teachers. Thank you to all the Sunday School Teachers: Linda Grulke, Jamie Schoberg, Lois Peterson and Greta Plicka for their dedication to the Christian education of the children at First Lutheran.

Submitted by Greta Plicka

For Unto Us A Child is Born

Operation Christmas Stocking

Operation Christmas Stocking is First Lutheran’s annual holiday outreach remembering those in need in our church, community and Synod. We would like to thank members of First Lutheran and Nativity Lutheran, as well as many community members who helped make this year’s program a success. On Friday, December 12th we distributed totes filled with mugs, gloves, socks, hygiene products and other goodies to our Food Pantry Clients. On Friday, December 19th we gave out Children’s stockings filled with toys, mittens, hats, crayons and coloring books to the children of our Food Pantry Clients. We also delivered totes to ELCA Synod Serenity Inn (men) and expectant/new parents in the WA/WM Shared Journeys Program. A special thank you to Linda Grulke and the people who work with her for their generous donations throughout the years. Our Christmas outreach program would not be possible without the donations and volunteers that help us out each year.

Nativity Mitten Tree

Please bring gloves, mittens, scarf’s and knit hats to be placed on the mitten tree in the narthex at Nativity. The items collected will be going to Good Samaritan Outreach Center, located at 59th and Burnham.

Thank you!

Nativity is donating food for Good Samaritan Outreach Center - the lists of needed items are in the Narthex. We will also do Christmas gifts for children that don’t receive anything at Christmas. Please help with gifts for Christmas, or food, whatever you can do. The list for Christmas gifts is also in the Narthex. Due date for Christmas gifts is December 15th. Food is welcome anytime, all the time. Please help where you can. If you have any questions contact Cheryl Isotalo or call the church office.
Thanks to God for calling volunteers to help with this ministry and for providing us with the resources to help others in need.

We asked our food pantry visitors if they had any comments to share about our food pantry and its many volunteers. Here are a few:

- Thanks for all your time that you give, and for being who you all are. God Bless.
- I am a college student and the food pantry really helps me stay focused through the week. Thank you!
- Thank you for the food. You help my grandkids and me.
- Blessing! It helped me through!

Fundraiser 2015

Our annual fundraiser is kicking off in January, 2015. Help us take steps to feed the hungry and make life a little easier for local families.

God is Everywhere

God is like General Electric,
He brings good things to life.

God is like Bayer Aspirin,
He works wonders.

God is like Tide, He gets out the stains that others leave behind.

God is like Hallmark cards, He cared enough to send the very best.

God is like VO5 Hair Spray, he holds through all kinds of weather.

(Anonymous-continued next month)

Shop for Your Family and Support our Ministries

Sign up for the “Fun Funds” program at GFS Marketplace stores. Each time you show your card at the checkout, First Lutheran receives a rebate check for a percentage of your quarterly purchases. It is an easy way to support our missions!

Cookie Delivery

We’ll be visiting, delivering cookies to and sharing a little holiday cheer with our homebound members. The home-baked cookies are available for delivery after December 10th. Thank you to Marie LePage, Natalie Jaeger and Cindy Labadie for baking the cookies.

NATIVITY LUTHERAN

Sunday, Jan. 25, 2015
12:00 p.m.

FIRST LUTHERAN

Sunday, Feb. 1, 2015
10:00 a.m.

Notice of Vote to be Taken..... At the First Lutheran Church Council meeting on Thursday November 13th,a motion was made and passed to have a handicap accessible chair lift installed in the front entrance. This will be a single chair that will wrap around the center wall with a stop at the entrance, where it can go back up to the narthex or down to the fellowship hall. The cost for the lift will be $14,523.00 from the Access Elevator Co. The electrical service will be about $1,000.00; so the total cost is $15,523.00. According to the Constitution and By-Laws we need the approval from the First Lutheran Church congregation to make this purchase. The vote will be held at the annual meeting on February 1st, 2015 after regular Church Services.
When people give of themselves to the Lord, The Lord makes things happen!

Thank you to the people of First Lutheran who have generously promised to support our church, its missions, and the many groups dependent on churches such as First Lutheran, to employ their missions! Your annual pledge helps us forecast, with confidence, the level of financial support our congregation will receive in the year ahead. It is through the pledges, contributions of our members and participation that we are able to carry on our work here at First Lutheran. If you have not returned your pledge card, please do so soon.

As you consider your contributions, we remind you that we offer Electronic Giving as a way to automate your offering and be more environmentally correct by conserving trees. Many families currently use automatic payment methods to make mortgage or utility payments, to receive payroll earnings or social security income. The program, Simply Giving, in which First Lutheran participates, is endorsed by Thrivent and administered by Vanco Services. Contributions can now be debited automatically from your checking or savings account.

If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes, or carry cash. When travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, this program will allow your weekly offerings to continue on an uninterrupted basis and it helps our church maintain a consistent cash flow to pay bills in a timely manner.

You can join or discontinue the Simply Giving at any time. Talk to Barb, in the office, Werner Bayer, or Joy Dowd for further information and application form.

God’s work, Our hands! Our 2014 stewardship program, concluded on Sunday, November 2, 2014 with the consecration of the pledges and a chicken dinner prepared by Dave Grulke. The one weekend service filled the church with congregants from Nativity and First Lutheran. Fellowship hall was also filled with grateful people enjoying the chicken dinner. Every bit of chicken was consumed as was a package of hot dogs, macaroni and cheese, relishes and other treats. A huge THANK YOU to Dave Grulke and his crew which included Linda Grulke, Joy Dowd, the Kubecks, Dave Wegener, those who donated food and all who helped decorate, and clean up.

Thank you for your continuing support of First Lutheran's mission!

"....where our treasure is, there will our heart be also." (Matt. 6:21)

With Thanks and Praise,
Lavone Reis (First Lutheran Stewardship Chairperson)

God’s blessings on Bryce DeBack following his Confirmation on Sunday, October 26th.
First Lutheran members distributed treat bags to children during West Allis’ “Meet & Greet” on October 26th in front of the church. They met over 300 children and their families.

“God’s work. Our hands.”

Linda Grukle (below) and Jackie Bayer presented “A Low Carb Diet - It’s Not Just For Diabetics Anymore” to Breadbreakers on October 28th. They served low carb dishes and distributed recipe books. Lavone Reis & Jackie Grauberger listened at the event.
LILAC BUS
Open to all West Allis Area Seniors

Call 302-8715 to make a reservation -First Come, First Served! Cost is $3 per round trip. You will be picked up at your home.

Tues., Dec. 2 - Shopping at Wal Mart and Steins. Lunch at Genesis.
Fri., Dec. 12 - Shopping at Southridge & Greenfield Plaza. Lunch at Southridge.
Wed., Dec. 17 - “Christmas Lights”. Tour Candy Cane Lane and downtown Christmas lights. Lunch at McDonalds.

REGENCY - NEW BERLIN
13750 W. National Ave., New Berlin

CLEMENT MANOR
Center for Enrichment
9405 W. Howard Ave., Greenfield

Lifelong Learning Book Club - 1st Tue. at 12pm
Dec. 2 - Prayers and Lies by Sherri Wood Emmons
Club Loomineers - A No-Needle Knitting Group - 1st Wed. of month. 12pm. No charge.
Bridge Group - Every Tues. - 9-11 am

Call Clement Manor at 546-7302 for registration or more information

Top 5 LWR gifts for Christmas

1. Goats can thrive where food supply is precarious, giving milk that nourishes and sells
   Lutheran World Relief offers an alternative to fighting the crowds at the malls. Go to lwrgifts.org for ideas. Give a gift in honor of someone, and help support a family in another part of the world.

2. Hens and Chicks give families eggs to eat, eggs to sell and chicks to grow a flock.

3. School Supplies mean that children have the tools they need to achieve.

4. Dairy Cows provide nourishment and income for families.

5. Medical Supplies support Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem.

If you’re determined to shop, check out serrv.org. SERRV is Lutheran World Relief’s preferred partner for Fair Trade Handcrafts. SERRV is a nonprofit organization with a mission to eradicate poverty wherever it resides by providing opportunity and support to artisans and farmers worldwide. Shop for home décor, jewelry, clothing and more.

“Maybe Christmas, [the Grinch] thought, doesn’t come from a store.” —Dr. Seuss
Nativity Lutheran held their fall Rummage Sale on November 7-8.

Laverne Breed (right) displays a pineapple turkey donated by Marlene Smith to the sale. The other workers proudly wore their new t-shirts.

RUMMAGE SALE UPDATE

Thank You to everyone who generously gave of their time and/or possessions to make our Nativity rummage sale a success!

Special “Thanks” goes out to Don & Joann Brauch for providing the hot dog lunch on Friday, and to James Ribnek for the soup & sandwiches on Saturday!

I am happy to announce that we had 515 people go through our doors for the two day sale, and we made a grand total of $2,867.59. All profits from our sale go toward helping support our church and its missions.

So...let’s keep collecting and start growing. The May “Spring Plant/Rummage Sale” will be here before you know it!

Jill R. Mickelson
A Special Baby

Mark Lowry, who wrote the lyrics to the Christmas song “Mary, Did You Know?” says he’s always been amazed by Mary’s silence at the cross, as her son was being crucified. Maybe she was remembering back to that first Christmas, he wonders, when she counted Jesus’ fingers and toes.

“I wonder if she realized then that those were the same fingers that had scooped out the oceans and formed the seas. I wonder if she realized those were the same feet that had walked on streets of gold and been worshiped by angels. Those little lips were the same lips that had spoken the world into existence. When Mary kissed her little baby, she wasn’t just kissing another baby; she was kissing the face of God.”

Mary silently watched her son die 33 years later, Lowry notes — not just for the world but also for her own mother. “The baby boy she had delivered on that first Christmas was now on a cross delivering her.”

Thank you for your service

We’ll be signing Christmas cards for veterans in the VA Hospital gain this year. Cards are available in the office, plus there will be lots of “signing opportunities” at First Lutheran after Sunday service at Coffee And., after Saturday service and various meetings and get-togethers until Dec 7th.

Join us to deliver cards and share a little Christmas cheer and caroling with the veterans on Wednesday, December 10 at 2pm. We’ll meet at church at 1:30pm and carpool to the VA Hospital on 51st and National. Thanks to Mike and Pat Temke for arranging the tour and escorting us. Please sign up or contact the office so we can register your name.

Fundraising Dinner & Concert
Sat., Feb 14th

Everyone is invited to First Lutheran to enjoy a delicious Italian themed dinner and wonderful “Bits O’ Broadway—Songs from the Heart” concert during dinner. The evening will begin with the Saturday night service at 4:30pm (note earlier start time), which will include the opportunity for married couples to renew their vows. It is a perfect opportunity to invite your family and have a wonderful dinner and entertainment.

There will be lots of benefit drawings, fantastic prizes and great food. This concert is a fundraiser for the ministries of First Lutheran. Tickets will be available soon. If you would like more information, like to donate a prize or would be willing to help at the event, please see the sign up sheet on the welcome desk or contact Joy Dowd or the church office.

Know someone who needs a bit of encouragement? Someone who is celebrating a special birthday? Please consider volunteering to help provide those special thoughts, words, and cheer to help make life a little more comforting and reassuring. Names of people needing cards as well as stamps and cards (both hand-made and store-bought) appreciated. Contact the church office to share a name or join. Hearts will be blessed!

Get Well Wishes
Birthday Blessings
Anniversary

Catch Us on the Web...

Check out our website at: www.firstlutheranelca.org

You can find Information on our activities, view an online version of the First and Nativity newsletter in color (and save postage), and see upcoming events.
December-January Birthdays

First Lutheran
12/1 Monica Bayer
12/1 Dorothy Daniels
12/2 Linda Kaehler
12/5 Jennifer Roesler
12/6 Kenneth Masch
12/12 Crystal Zehe
12/17 Crystal Wegener
12/18 Kathleen Santos
12/20 Jason Zehe
12/22 Maxx Jaeger
12/27 Michael Temke
12/28 Donald Moncher
12/29 Joy Dowd
12/29 Dorian Jaeger
1/1 Nancy Krizan
1/5 Paule Kolff
12/9 Jill Petermann
1/11 Carla Ullerich
1/14 Timothy Wegener
1/15 Melissa Wallow
1/21 John Isaacson
1/22 Patrice Olszewski
1/29 Brooklyn Scheid
1/30 Lois Taylor
1/31 Joshua Armstrong

FIVE GIFTS FROM GOD
Love makes our friends a little dearer.
Joy makes our hearts a little lighter.
Faith makes our paths a little clearer.
Hope makes our lives a little brighter.
Peace brings us all a little nearer.

Nativity Lutheran
No anniversaries in December or January

First Lutheran
12/11 Carrie & Joseph Muffler 4 yrs.
12/12 Garrett & Cindy Labadie 33 yrs.
12/22 David & Meagan Ulbrich 5 yrs.
1/14 Wayne & Lucy Wagner 53 yrs.

December-January Birthdays

Nativity Lutheran
12/5 Marcus DeBack
12/13 Maureen Jones
12/18 Wallace Buske
12/26 Terry Domagalski
12/27 Michael Czaplewski
12/27 Pauline Haerter
12/31 Lorraine Kuchma
12/31 Lori Leiser
1/7 Alexander Leiser
1/19 James Sadowski

First Lutheran Finances 2014

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<td>$13,357.43</td>
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First Lutheran Attendance

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<td>October</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>322</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year to Date</td>
<td>3,676</td>
<td>3,854</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year to Date Svcs.</td>
<td>95</td>
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Bible Quiz...
What’s the name of the angel who told Mary she would give birth to God’s Son?

A. Gabriel
B. Raphael
C. Michael
D. Jonathan

Answer: See Luke 1:26

Cass Park Church’s carolers were always ready to make necessary adjustments.
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.