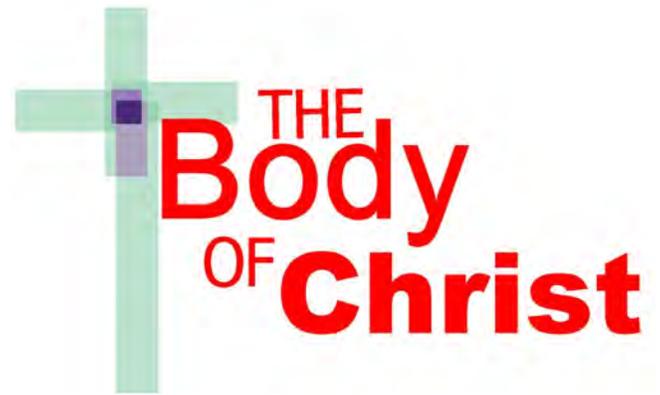


# First and Nativity Lutheran Churches



News and Views

December 2015 - January 2016



**Church Decorating after services**  
December 6



**Christmas Program at First**  
Rehearsals December 6, 13, 9a.m.  
Program December 20, 9a.m.



**Caroling at the V.A.**  
December 10  
Meet at First at 1:30 p.m.



**Poinsettia Order Deadline**  
December 13



**Christmas Eve Candlelight  
Worship** December 24  
5:30 p.m. at Nativity  
7:00 p.m. at First



**Christmas Day Worship**  
December 25  
10:00 a.m. at First



**Christmas Concert at Nativity**  
December 26, 1:30 p.m.



*And she  
gave birth  
to her  
firstborn son  
and wrapped  
him in bands  
of cloth,  
and laid him  
in a manger,  
because  
there was  
no place for  
them in the  
inn.*

*Luke 2:7*





Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

As we enter this Advent season we encounter a young girl named Mary living in the small village of Nazareth. She seems like a remarkably normal girl; we don't find her doing anything too extraordinary, but she's a *girl*. Women in the 21<sup>st</sup> century still do not make as much money in the workplace as their male counterparts. They are still underrepresented in Fortune 500 companies. They are still marginalized. Can you imagine how marginalized Mary would have been at the turn of the 1<sup>st</sup> century? And, she was betrothed. Think of being betrothed as a step above being engaged, but a step below being married. For Mary, this meant any infidelity would nullify betrothal her Joseph, which then, like a marriage, would require a written divorce. Mary is in no state to be told she is about to have a child that's not Joseph's. Her entire life would be upended, the state of her impending marriage threatened, and her own life would be in peril.

It's no wonder she asks the angel, "How can these things be?" Mary had just been told she was going to be the mother of Jesus. Her heart is racing, her mind flooded with emotions. And yet, she trusts in God. After being greatly troubled at the angel's greeting and wondering how his words would come to be Mary responds with: "I am the Lord's servant." Mary humbles herself and understands that God will be with her no matter what.

Isn't this what we are preparing for during this season of Advent? For God to be with us? This is the power of the incarnation; it is the power of God dwelling with God's people. It is an incredible event that joins us with God; it's an event that makes us wonder why God would choose us – why God would choose a young girl from a small village to be the mother of our savior. We wonder with Mary when God chooses us and we do not know how the future will unfold. But we do know one thing: God is with us.

While we may celebrate Christmas as Jesus coming to us in the form of a baby, Mary experienced the power of Christmas in this moment: As her world is turned upside down, as she begins to wonder what her future will bring, she is only certain of one thing: God is already with her. Just like God is already with us. This is the power of Christmas: Emmanuel, God with us.

Peace,  
Pastor Bryant

**NATIVITY LUTHERAN CHURCH**

6905 W. Bluemound Rd.  
Wauwatosa, WI  
Nativity Phone: 414-476-1853  
Nativity Phone (basement): 414-257-9980

PRESIDENT: JAMES RIBNEK, III  
VICE PRESIDENT: MAUREEN JONES  
SECRETARY: NICOLE DEBACK  
TREASURER: JILL MICKELSON  
Mission Interpreter: Shirley Cogan

*Nativity: an inviting and nurturing community  
dedicated to proclaiming the Gospel and serving Christ*

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH**

7400 W. Lapham St.  
West Allis, WI  
[www.firstlutheranelca.org](http://www.firstlutheranelca.org)  
E-mail: [firstlutheranelca@att.net](mailto:firstlutheranelca@att.net)  
Phone: 414-476-4664

PRESIDENT: DAVID WEGENER  
VICE PRESIDENT: NATALIE JAEGER  
TREASURER: WERNER BAYER

Christian Education: Mari Mitchell  
Evangelism: Joy Dowd  
Finance: Werner Bayer  
Memorial Fund: Marie LePage  
Mission Interpreter: Shirley Cogan  
Social Ministry: Earl Casto  
Stewardship: Werner Bayer  
Worship & Music: John Bennethum

*Reaching out in our community  
to share the Word of God*

**WORSHIP MATTERS** by *John Bennethum*

The new church year calendar begins on November 29th with the season of ADVENT (blue). There are four Sundays in Advent. Each week we light another candle on our Advent wreath until the Christ candle is lit on Christmas eve. This begins the 12 days of CHRISTMAS.(white). January 6th is Epiphany, the traditional arrival of the wisemen and the start of the season of EPIPHANY. There are five Sundays in the Season of Epiphany (white) this year which ends on Ash Wednesday, the start of the season of LENT (purple). Look forward to many changes in our worship services during these exciting seasons of the church year. May they enhance our worship experience. Deacon John

**TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS**

By Christmas this year we will have finished our study of the Books of 1 and 2 Samuel. We will take a week out for a special Christmas lesson with our new Pastor as our Guest Teacher. We plan to go to Kegel's Restaurant for lunch that day (January 12). On the next week (January 19) we will start our new study in the Book of Luke. This study will follow the new weekly readings as we pass through Epiphany and on into Lent 2016. All are welcome. Join us in the Fireside Room from 10am-11am each Tuesday. John Bennethum is our Teacher.

**For Women Only....**

The Women's Bible Study meets on Wednesday afternoons at 2:00 p.m. 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!



**COME SEE  
"MINIONS  
AT THE  
MANGER"  
on Sunday,  
Dec. 20  
at 9:00 a.m.  
at  
First Lutheran**



**MISSED ONE???**

Missed a sermon? If you've missed one of Pastor Bryant's wonderful sermons, you can catch it on our website at [www.firstlutheranelca.org](http://www.firstlutheranelca.org). Just click on the "Sermons" button.



The children in first Lutheran Sunday School have been learning about the Heroes of the Bible this semester and so far have covered Joseph and His Brothers, Deborah, David and Goliath, Daniel and the Lions, and Jonah and the Big Fish, using the Spark Bible. They have created a variety of projects from various mediums to help them remember these stories. They include a multi-colored coat for a paper doll Joseph, swords and shields to honor Deborah's valor, a cute felt and yard lion's face to remember that Daniel tamed the lions, as well as an origami whale that swallowed Jonah. Science experiments and music rounded out the curriculum.



On December 6, the children will begin practice for the Christmas Program, "Minions at the Manger." We hope you will attend the program and support our children and teachers. Thank you to all of the Sunday School teachers – Linda Grulke, Greta Plicka, and Mary Nyback, for their dedication to the Christian education of children at First Lutheran.

Mari Mitchell, Superintendent

*And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors."*

*Luke 2:13-14*



Mary & Dave Corlette, Wayne DeHusson, Mike Dowd, Shirley Ellis, Gayle Engelstad, Tom Hackl, Greg Harte, Louise Kohn, Brody Ormond, Gail Sadler, Carlos Santiago, Bill Schneider, Carla Syut and David Wegener.



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

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



Sean Brown, Robert Chrzanowski, Jason Dowhie, Andrew Dowd, David MacDonald, Sam Rogers, Robert Simmer and Zach Tennison

**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.*

# SOCIAL MINISTRY

## CAROLING AT THE V.A.

Then join us to deliver cards and share a little Christmas cheer and caroling with the veterans on Thursday, **December 10 at 2pm**. We'll meet at church at 1:30pm and carpool to the VA Hospital on 51st and National. Songbooks will be provided. Thanks to Mike and Patt Temke for arranging the tour and escorting us. Please sign up or contact the office so we can arrange for rides and provide a list of names for the VA.



## PUT A SMILE ON A FACE!

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.

## Food Pantry Ministry



### FOOD PANTRY

Thank you to our awesome dedicated volunteers and donors who help us feed the hungry in our area. Each week we hear "thank you" from grateful families, young adults and seniors needing help to make ends meet. We especially want to thank Peggy, Glenn and Chris, all friends of First Lutheran, who make a delicious lunch for us to serve to about 100 people a week. We'd also like to thank our shoppers Mike and Greta Plicka, John Hrovat, Natalie Jaeger, Patt and Mike Temke and Roger Gray for getting food to First so it can be bagged, stocked or cooked. We are so grateful for the resources that God provides this ministry. We are so happy that Pastor Bryant is able to join us each week to pray with us, comfort those in need and spread the "good tidings" of God's Word. God Bless Us, Everyone....

### SHOP FOR YOUR FAMILY AND SUPPORT OUR MINISTRIES



Sign up for the "Fun Funds" program at **Gordon Food Service Stores**. Each time you show your card at the checkout, First Lutheran receives a rebate check for a percentage of our quarterly purchases. It is an easy way to support our missions.

### FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS...

The First Lutheran food pantry can always use donations of food, money and volunteers! They can also use donations of adult winter clothing. Unfortunately, there is no room to store baby clothing, out of season clothing, furniture or household items. If you have donations to bring, please contact the church office first. Any items left outside the doors will have to be discarded due to weather and animals in the area.



**LIGHTING OF THE  
ADVENT WREATH CANDLES**

Christmas is a time for sharing, caring and spending time with our families. This year, the congregation is invited to participate in the lighting of the advent candles. Gather your friends or family to light a candle in the advent wreath at the beginning of the service. All you need to do is to pick a service(s) to participate. The deacon will help you light the candle and with a short reading. Contact the church office to sign up.



**WELCOMING  
NEW MEMBERS**

Welcome to new members who have joined us in 2014 and 2015. The welcoming ceremony and prayers will be held during services on January 16 and 17, 2016, followed by a reception in the Fireside room. If you've been thinking about joining our church family, now would be a good time. We will provide you with all of the supplies and support needed. Talk to Pastor Bryant or ask a church member how to get started.



**IT'S CHRISTMAS  
TIME AGAIN!**

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, Dec. 11, we will distribute totes filled with mugs, gloves, socks, hygiene products and other goodies to our Food Pantry clients. On Friday, December 18, we will give 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 the Milwaukee Synod's Serenity Inn.

A special thank you to Linda Grulke and the people who work with her for their generous donations through the years. Our Christmas outreach program would not be possible without the donations and volunteers that help us out each year.

**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 and Nativity after Sunday service at Coffee And.. and after various meetings and get-togethers until Dec 6th.

## Music at Nativity

### THANK YOU NATIVITY!!!

A big thank you to all who made our Halloween Spooktacular Concert a huge success. Nativity Lutheran Church was transformed into a haunted cathedral for several hours on October 31<sup>st</sup>. Our decorating crew outdid themselves; the elegant reception following the concert was enjoyed by all. Pastor Bakkum provided a wonderful piano accompaniment and through his electronic wizardry the audience was able to see the hands and feet of the organist(s) for the first time at one of our concerts. Susan and Gus never sounded better in Andrew Lloyd Webber's soaring musical masterpiece "Phantom of the Opera".



### "A NATIVITY CHRISTMAS"

**CHRISTMAS CONCERT SAT., DECEMBER 26<sup>TH</sup> 1:30 PM**



Incarnation Lutheran Church's musical ministry will be our special guests at our A Nativity Christmas Concert. The Incarnation Lutheran Church Gospel Choir, under the direction of Byron Jones, and Incarnations organist James Stoebe will offer new and old music in the holiday tradition. Byron Jones is a wonderful baritone soloist and will join soprano Susan Platt and tenor Gus Barnes in presenting beautiful, traditional music of the season. Rev. Bryant Bakkum will be at the piano and Dennis Jon Wolfgang will be at the organ, they will also offer one of their popular four handed organ duets. A free will offering to benefit the Nativity's Organ Fund will be received. Please bring non-perishable food items for the Incarnation Lutheran Church Food Pantry. A reception will follow in the fellowship hall.

Come and relax after the rush of Christmas and enjoy the beautiful music - and tell all of your friends!

**KINDNESS COUNTS**

- Make blankets or scarves for home less people.
- Send a care package to someone who's in college or the military.
- Collect coins for a charity or cause.
- When you can't attend an event, give the tickets to strangers.
- Provide tutoring or mentoring in your field of expertise.
- Offer to babysit or pet-sit for free.
- Send a note of appreciation to someone who's made a difference in your life.
- Share your gifts of music, reading or conversation at a nursing home.
- Donate old sports equipment to schools.
- Give someone the benefit of the doubt — maybe even a family member or yourself!



**THE SALVADORAN LUTHERAN CHURCH**

First Lutheran sent \$500 of our benevolence money to El Salvador a few months ago. The Synod sent us a letter saying the money paid for 18 scholarships to the Los Heroes sewing school.



**Nativity Outreach**

**GOOD SAMARITAN OUTREACH CENTER**

In December, we will be collecting rice, soup, beef stew and canned vegetables for Good Samaritan Outreach Center. They can always use cartons of non-perishable milk found at Dollar Tree stores. There is a box in the narthex for your donations.



**THE MITTEN TREE IS BACK!**

The mitten tree for Good Samaritan is up in the narthex. Bring in your scarves, mittens and gloves. Good Samaritan is also asking for gently used coats. They will be delivered on December 17th.



Mari Mitchell, Natalie Jaeger and Jan Stasiak at the Children's Meet and Greet at First Lutheran

**BIBLE QUIZ...**

When Jesus was born, which two earthly rulers were in power?

- A. Quirinius
- B. Pontius Pilate
- C. Caesar Augustus
- D. King Herod



Answers: (See Luke 2:1-2.)

**CLEMENT MANOR**

Center for Enrichment  
9405 W. Howard Ave., Greenfield

**Lifelong Learning Book Club** - 1st Tue. at 12pm  
**Dec. 1** - The Invention of Wing: A Novel by Sue Monk Kidd

**Club Loomineers** - A No-Needle Knitting Group  
1st Wed. of month. 12pm. No charge.

**Bridge Group** - Every Tues. - 9-11 am. Call to register.  
Call Clement Manor at 546-7302 for registration or info.



**WEST ALLIS NEWS**

**Remember the Veterans:**

Stop by City Hall and pick a star from the Veteran's Christmas Giving Tree in the main lobby. Purchase the requested gift, and return the unwrapped gift to the Mayor's office by Wed., Dec. 16th.

**Christmas on the Avenue** will take place in West Allis on Sat., Dec. 5th, on Greenfield Ave. from 70th - 76th St. From 1:30-3:30pm enjoy crafts, games, music and hay rides. For Brunch with Santa call 763-5150. Community Sing & Tree Lighting 4-4:30 p.m. The annual Christmas parade follows tree lighting.

**Star Wars Celebration**, Dec. 10, 6:30-8:30 pm at the West Allis Library. Costume contest, trivia, crafts & more!

**Community Alliance Against Drugs** New Years Family Night, Dec. 31st, at Central High School, 86th & Lincoln, 6:30-11pm.

**WEST ALLIS SENIOR CENTER**

7001 W. National

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.

“There  
has been  
only  
one  
Christmas  
- the rest  
are  
anniversaries.”

W.J. Cameron

**People of First & Nativity,**

My wife, Katie, and I would like to extend our deepest gratitude and thanks for the wonderful gifts we received at the installation dinners. The generous hospitality you have showed Katie and I has been incredibly humbling and we would like to give thanks to God for the love and support of two wonderful congregations. Your generosity is truly a gift from God and we have seen it at work in all the different ministries at First and Nativity. Once again, thank you for everything; it is truly a blessing to be here.

Peace,  
Pastor Bryant & Katie



If you have a pastoral emergency (hospitalization, death in the family, etc.,) you can reach Pastor Bryant by calling him at (414)491-1252.

Weather related cancellation of church services or activities will be posted on WTMJ Channel 4.

**ANNUAL MEETINGS**

The annual meeting for Nativity Lutheran will be held on Sunday, January 24th, at 12:00 p.m. First Lutheran's annual meeting will be held on Sunday, February 7th, at 10:00 a.m.

Please bring in or email your annual committee/ministry reports to the church office by January 3rd, 2016, for incorporation into the 2015 Annual Report.



*“Christmas  
is a  
time  
when you  
get  
homesick  
-  
even  
when  
you're  
home.”*

*Carol Nelson*



**POINSETTIA ORDERS**

Be sure to order your poinsettia to decorate the altar at each church for the Christmas Eve worship. Order forms are available at Nativity from Jean Leppien. The sign-up sheet at First is located on the welcome table in the narthex.

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

To Deacon John who was recognized as a 50 year Mason by West Allis Masonic Lodge on November 19, 2015. He wears his new gold 50 year pin proudly!



**LAST CALL  
FOR 2015 DONATIONS**

In order for your donations to be applied to the 2015 year, please have all donations turned in by December 27th. Thank you for your generosity and commitment to First and Nativity Lutheran Churches!



## This 'n That Around Here

### First Lutheran



- 12/1 Dorothy Daniels
- 12/2 Linda Kaehler
- 12/5 Mari Mitchell
- 12/5 Jennifer Roesler
- 12/6 Kenneth Masch
- 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 Katie Bakkum
- 1/5 Paule Kolff
- 1/9 Jill Petermann
- 1/11 Carla Ullerich
- 1/12 Christina Behmke
- 1/14 Timothy Wegener
- 1/15 Melissa Wallow
- 1/21 John Isaacson
- 1/22 Patrice Olszewski
- 1/31 Joshua Armstrong

### Nativity Lutheran

- 12/4 Roger Reinert
- 12/5 Marcus DeBack
- 12/13 Maureen Jones
- 12/18 Wallace Buske
- 12/31 Lorraine Kuchma
- 12/31 Lori Leiser
- 1/4 Gary Soerfass
- 1/5 Katie Bakkum
- 1/7 Alexander Leiser
- 1/21 Anna Sullivan

FIRST LUTHERAN FINANCES 2015			
MONTH	INCOME	EXPENSES	DIFFERENCE
October	\$ 12,96.14	\$ 15,401.71	-2,605.67
<i>Year to Date</i>	\$ 121,543.58	\$ 111,265,10	10,278.48

FIRST LUTHERAN ATTENDANCE				
	2015	2014	Diff.	% +/-
October	330	299	31	9%
<i>Year to Date</i>	2,577	3,676	-1,009	-30%
# of Svcs.	8	8	0	0%
<i>Year to Date Svcs.</i>	93	95	-2	-2%

*There will be NO Saturday evening service at First Lutheran on Dec. 26.*

Friendly  
Reminder



Both churches will be decorating for Christmas on Sunday, Dec. 6, following the worship services.



### Nativity Lutheran

There are no wedding anniversaries at Nativity during December or January

### First Lutheran

- 12/11 Carrie & Joseph Muffler      5 yrs.
- 12/12 Garrett & Cindy Labadie      34 yrs.
- 1/14 Wayne & Lucy Wagner      55 yrs.

### On the Lighter Side



First Lutheran Church  
7400 W. Lapham St.  
West Allis, WI 53214

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid

Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Permit No. 3633

Mailed on 11-24-15

Address Service Requested

Dated Material  
Please deliver by 11-28-15



**First and Nativity  
Lutheran Churches (ELCA)**  
Office Hours: Monday thru Friday 9am to 12pm  
Office located at 7400 W. Lapham, West Allis  
(414)476-4664

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

*Worship With Us:*  
*Saturdays at 5:30 p.m. First Lutheran*  
*Sundays at 9:00 a.m. at First Lutheran*  
*Sundays at 11:00 a.m. at Nativity Lutheran*

***“May the spirit  
of Christmas  
bring you peace,  
The gladness  
of Christmas  
give you hope,  
The warmth  
of Christmas  
grant you love.”***

*Author Unknown*

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