First and Nativity Lutheran Churches News and Views

February, 2014

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP
February 18th

10:00 a.m. at First Lutheran
7400 W. Lapham St.

12:00 p.m. at Nativity Lutheran
6905 W. Bluemound Rd.

6:00 p.m. at St. John’s Lutheran
5500 W. Greenfield Ave.

Important Dates to Remember:

2/18  Ash Wednesday
2/25  Wednesday Lenten Services begin
3/7   Irish Concert and Dinner at First Lutheran
      4:00 p.m. Worship
      5:30 p.m. Concert
      6:15 p.m. Dinner Seating

First and Nativity Lutheran Churches (ELCA)
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
(414)476-4664

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Once a year we participate in the strange and ancient ritual of the imposition of ashes, which highlights not only our sinfulness and mortality, but at the same time does so in view of the hope that is ours in Jesus’ forgiveness and resurrection. Lent is meant to serve as a time for personal and corporate spiritual renewal. ....Rev. Peter Holmer

During the weeks following Ash Wednesday, there will be two opportunities to worship each Wednesday:

First Lutheran Church
10:00 a.m. Worship
7400 W. Lapham St.

St. John’s Lutheran
5:30 p.m. Soup Supper
6:00 p.m. Worship
5500 W. Greenfield Ave.

**Please remember the families of these members:**

- 12-1-14 Patricia Hammerling (First)
- 12-11-14 Martha Nowak (Nativity)
- 1-19-15 May Mahloch (Nativity)
WORSHIP MATTERS  
by John Bennethum

February brings us well into the season of Epiphany...the season which follows the 12 days of Christmas and carries us up to the beginning of Lent on Feb. 18 = Ash Wednesday. During Epiphany, which means “manifestation” or “showing the Glory of Christ” we celebrate the Circumcision and Naming of Jesus (Jan 1) and the Baptism of our LORD on January 11th. We end this season with the Transfiguration on February 15th. The color of the season is generally white, but four of the Sundays are designated as green. Lent is purple. We will have supply Pastors during this season. Consider them as “substitute teachers” rather than as candidates for our Pastoral position. Those candidates come later in the process.

For Women Only....
The Women’s Bible Study meets on Wednesdays at 2:30 p.m. in First Lutheran’s Fireside Room. They re studying 50 of the most essential Bible stories in the New Testament. New members always welcome!

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.

VENTURES
O LORD GOD
Who has called us to Ventures of which we cannot see the ending,
By paths as yet untrodden
and through perils unknown:
Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us.
Amen.

Prayer given by John Bennethum at Pastor Peterson’s retirement dinner:

TUESDAY BIBLE CLASS
There was no Bible class on December 23rd nor 30th due to the holidays, and class was cancelled on January 6th due to the weather. During February we will finish our study of the Gospel of Mark. During Lent we will be studying Paul’s letter to the EPHESIANS which correlates with "Grace & Peace" a new Lenten devotional booklet we have available to us. (Cost: $2.25) All are welcome to join us in the Fireside Room from 10am-11am Tuesday mornings. Bring your Bible. All are welcome! Some members of the class go out for lunch after class. John Bennethum is our Teacher. If you have questions, please contact the church office.

We are in need of a Sunday School superintendent and another teacher or two. If God is calling you into this ministry, now is the time to contact the church office.
Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is the name given to the first day of the season of Lent, in which ashes are applied to the foreheads of Christians to signify an inner repentance. Ash Wednesday is one of the oldest “holy days” in the church dating from at least the eighth century.

One of the earliest descriptions of Ash Wednesday is found in the writings of the Anglo-Saxon abbot Aelfric (955-1020). In his Lives of the Saints, he writes, “We read in the books both in the Old Law and in the New that the men who repented of their sins bestrewed themselves with ashes and clothed their bodies with sackcloth. Now let us do this little at the beginning of our Lent that we strew ashes upon our heads to signify that we ought to repent of our sins during the Lenten fast.” Aelfric then proceeds to tell the tale of a man who refused to go to church for the ashes and was accidentally killed several days later in a boar hunt! As Aelfric suggests, the pouring of ashes on one's body (and dressing in sackcloth, a very rough material) as an outer manifestation of inner repentance or mourning is an ancient practice. It is mentioned several times in the Old Testament. What is probably the earliest occurrence is found at the very end of the book of Job. Job, having been rebuked by God, confesses, "Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:6). Other examples are found in 2 Samuel 13:19, Esther 4:1,3, Isaiah 61:3, Jeremiah 6:26, Ezekiel 27:30, and Daniel 9:3. In the New Testament, Jesus alludes to the practice in Matthew 11:21: "Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes."

It is safe to say for most Lutherans thirty five years or older the imposition of ashes is a new thing, much like making the sign of the cross + as Martin Luther encourages, anointing in healing services, use of a crucifix, or even every Sunday Communion is new for some; it is Biblical and historically it is Lutheran.

But most importantly it’s helpful. When the ash mark sits on our forehead we feel marked because, well, we are marked. The ashes designate that we are real sinners and this is something the world refuses to hear. It’s embarrassing to go around town that way on Ash Wednesday, but that’s the point, isn’t it? And then, at the end of the day, do exactly what Jesus says: wash your face.

"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."
Thanks to God for calling volunteers to help with this ministry and pray that he provides us with resources to continue to help others in need.

Thank you to Pastor Peterson for all he’s done for our pantry. We wish him well in this new phase of life called retirement. Everyone will miss him. He has been a guiding force in the growth of our food pantry from the 12-15 bags a week we provided back in 2009 to today’s reality of 35-50+ bags a week plus serving lunch to 80 to 100 people. The growth of the pantry is due, not only to economic factors, but to “word of mouth” in the community due to the acceptance, respect and fellowship that our visitors feel when they come to our church.

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in."
Matthew 25:35

Pastor Peterson invited many people in, spending each Friday morning talking with and ministering to those who were struggling with life, searching for answers or just craving a little fellowship. He has set a high standard for us to reach regarding respect, humility and giving of oneself as we continue this ministry.

We’d also like to thank Pastor Pres Hoffman from St Johns Lutheran Church, West Milwaukee for being so kind as to volunteer to greet visitors to our food pantry and minister to their needs during the month of January.

Our annual food pantry fundraising campaign is in “full swing” from now until Easter Sunday. Each time we collect a $10 donation or 10 lbs. of donated food, we’ll post a “homerun baseball” in the narthex. Let’s “knock one out of the park” and help others in our community.

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!

One item that the food pantry can always use is spaghetti sauce. Each bag of groceries contains pasta and sauce. Watch for sales, save those coupons, and buy a few extra jars the next time you shop.
First Lutheran’s Food Pantry was in full swing during the Christmas season. Jackie and Werner Bayer (top left) distributed holiday mugs and gift bags to food pantry clients. Judi, Joy and Chris (above) ready to serve a Friday meal. Pastor Peterson led prayer before the meal on his last Friday at the pantry (left). Pastor Pres Hoffman (on Pastor Peterson’s right) filled in at the pantry after Pastor Peterson left.

There is a lot that happens around the world we cannot control. We cannot stop earthquakes, we cannot prevent droughts, and we cannot prevent all conflict, but when we know where the hungry, the homeless and the sick exist, then we can help. 

Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky

“God’s work. Our hands.”
Save the date
for music and food!
Saturday, March 7th

There’s an old Irish saying:

“It is pleasant with company at the table; woe to him who eats alone.”

So why eat alone when you can join our community in supporting First Lutheran Outreach Ministries, and help to make our pantry more handicap accessible?!

On Saturday, March 7th, First Lutheran will host a very special evening and YOU are invited to join us for “An Evening O’Irish Delight – Pipes X 3” FEATURING the talented vocal pipes of Susan Platt, the skilled bagpipes of Rob McWilliam, and the organ pipes of our very own Dennis Jon Wolfgang!

The evening will begin with 4:00 worship, continue with the fun-filled Irish music concert at 5:30, and culminate with a delicious Irish supper of corned beef or chicken at 6:15pm.

A free-will offering will be accepted for the concert, and tickets to the dinner are $15/person or $25/pair, though additional contributions will be accepted! Tickets are now on sale, see an Evangelism Committee member after services or contact the church office by email at firstlutheranelca@att.net or by phone at 414-476-4664.

At First Lutheran, our motto “God’s Work. Our Hands.” drives us to reach into the community to help those in need. Our ability to live up this motto is only as strong as our congregation and its support for our ministry. We appreciate your compassion, dedication, and generosity, as we strive to make this event a memorable one!

“Reaching Out in Our Community
to Share the Word of God”

Evangelism committee:
Joy Dowd, Sharon Philippo, Natalie Jaeger, Carla Ullerich, Mari Dixon, Gail Sopa, Dennis Wolfgang, Dave Wegener

START WITH JESUS
STAY WITH JESUS
END WITH JESUS

Bring your family and worship with us every week.

PRAYERS FOR A SPEEDY RECOVERY

Joe Armato, Gail Bartoleria, Mike Grubb, Cheryl Hetzel, Steve Jones, Louise Kohn, Don Leppien, Samantha Matherly, Jill Mickelson, Carolyn Moncher, Carol Monford, Allan Munkwitz, Lillian Ribnek, Gail Sadler, Debra Simerl and Carla Syut

SERVING OUR COUNTRY

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

From Nativity: Helen, Ruth, Pauline, Ruby, Marion, Harriet, Helen and Jeanne.

From First: Marlin, Beverly, Marie, LaVerne, Dorothy, Henry, Bea, John, Earl, Paula, Alfred, Virginia, Marilyn, Betty, Myra, Joyce, Erna, Lois, Barbara and Pat
Clement Manor
Center for Enrichment
9405 W. Howard Ave., Greenfield

Keynote Speaker - 1:30-3:00 p.m.
Feb. 26 - Wiscon-Sing, songs that introduce Wisconsin’s vibrant history with slides, song and musical instruments.
$3 Members, $5 Guests

Lifelong Learning Book Club - 1st Tue. at 12pm
Mar. 3 - The Hit by David Baldacci

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

Regency - New Berlin
13750 W. National Ave., New Berlin

Fri., Feb. 13, 1:30pm - “Kickstart your way to a healthy heart” presented by Pam Plehn, RN, ProHealth Care Rehabilitation Hospital

Tuesdays, Feb. 3 - April 7 at 2:15 Tai Chi & Yoga
$5 class fee
Call (262)789-1699 for more information.

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.

AARP Smart Driver course will be offered at Clement Manor, 9405 W. Howard Ave., Greenfield, on Tuesday, April 12th from 12:45-4:30 pm. Class size is limited, so call 414-546-7302 for registration and cost information. Some insurance companies give discounts for having taken the course.

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.

Just for Kids!
On Valentine’s Day, Feb., 14, from 2-4pm, the West Allis Library is offering a short movie, a treat, games and crafts while supplies last.

Valentine’s Day Luncheon Celebration

Bring a Friend to Lunch: Invite a friend or neighbor to lunch at the West Allis Senior Center on Friday, February 14! Participants are also encouraged to wear red. We’ll provide a few word games and puzzles at 11am. Reservation deadline is noon on Thursday, February 13th.
Nativity hosted the Gospel Choir from Incarnation Lutheran in Milwaukee at their annual Christmas concert. Other performers included (clockwise from top right) Susan Platt, Dennis Wolfgang, Dennis Parker, and liturgical dancers from Incarnation.

Nativity members held a luncheon honoring Pastor Peterson and Lois following the service on December 28th.
FIRST LUTHERAN FINANCES 2014

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<th>INCOME</th>
<th>EXPENSES</th>
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<td>November</td>
<td>$24,507.37</td>
<td>$22,236.93</td>
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<td>December</td>
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FIRST LUTHERAN ATTENDANCE

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<td>November</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>65</td>
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<td>December</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>525</td>
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<td>Year to Date</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. # of Svcs.</td>
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<td>-13%</td>
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<td>127</td>
<td>-11</td>
<td>-9%</td>
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From Jill Mickelson to Cheryl Isotalo, Marlene Smith, Jeff Mickelson, and especially Dennis Wolfgang, Maureen Jones and Jim Ribnek for taking down the Christmas Decorations at Nativity.

From Marie LePage and Sharon Phillippo to everyone who worked so hard at planning and putting together the retirement party for Pastor Peterson. We appreciate all of your help.

BIBLE QUIZ...

Which Jericho woman hid the two Israelite spies, and where did she hide them?

A. Joanna, in her stable
B. Bathsheba, at her neighbor’s house
C. Milkah, under a pile of blankets
D. Rahab, on her roof

Answer: (See Joshua 2:3, 6.)
"People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

1 Samuel 16:7, NLT

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.