February - March, 2016

First and Nativity Lutheran Churches

News and Views

Feb. 10th - Worship and Communion
10:00 am and 7 pm at First Lutheran
12:00 pm at Nativity Lutheran

Soup Suppers Will Be Served
at First Lutheran prior to Wednesday services.
6:30 pm on Ash Wednesday, February 10th
6:00 pm on the following Wednesdays

Wednesday Theme - Embodied Sacrifice
10 am and 6:30 p.m at First Lutheran

March 24 - Maundy Thursday
Worship and Communion
12 pm at Nativity Lutheran
6:30 pm at First Lutheran

March 25 - Good Friday Worship
1 pm at Nativity Lutheran
6:30 pm at First Lutheran

March 27 - Easter Worship and Communion
7 am and 9 am at First Lutheran
11 am at Nativity Lutheran

Serving God and Serving One Another

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
E-mail: firstlutheranelca@att.net
Phone: 414-476-4664

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

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

Reaching out in our community
to share the Word of God
Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

I remember back in high school when the movie *The Passion of the Christ* was released in theaters. The hype surrounding the movie ranged from critically acclaimed to negative reviews warning would-be moviegoers of the theological missteps and violence. My youth group decided to attend the movie – the small theater we went to was packed with others who were intrigued by what they would see. As we sat back and watched the film it was like none I had ever seen before. It was horrifically gory and violent.

The movie raised a lot of questions in my mind. Why had I never envisioned the suffering Jesus went through during his trial and crucifixion in this way before? Why hadn’t I ever taken into account the resistance Jesus faced from the religious leaders and their desperation to kill him and squash the movement he had started?

As we begin this season of Lent we will walk with Jesus in two ways: First, as he and his disciples work with the outcast and face accusations of not following Jewish laws. While the people will praise Jesus for his teachings and healings, those in authority will accuse him of breaking the law. Why?

And second, we will see how Jesus’ sacrifice for us was embodied in all the senses: Sight, touch, smell, sound, and taste. We will see Jesus give all he has in order to bring us God’s word of salvation and to eventually become our salvation.

*The Passion of the Christ* reminds me that Jesus’ death was mainly brought on by those in power who wished to silence a man who wanted nothing but for the poor to be lifted up and the rich to be brought down. It was a reminder that Jesus’ ministry was radical and shocking. The world had never seen anything like it before. It made me wonder: What side would I have been on?

I wish I could definitively answer on the side of Jesus and not the religious leaders. I claim that if only I had been there I would’ve stood up for Jesus and his ministry. That somehow I would’ve helped Jesus in his fight for justice. Perhaps you have the same thoughts as well. Martin Luther would have an answer for us: “There are many who would think, ‘If only I had been there! How quick I would have been to help!’ Childish and silly thoughts are these! Why don’t you do it now? You have Christ in your neighbor. You ought to serve him, for what you do to your neighbor in need you do to the Lord Christ himself.”

As we enter the season of Lent we will watch Jesus suffer and die speaking out for the poor and oppressed. We will see him die for us. This spirit of love that empowered Jesus during his ministry lives in us as well. We too are guided by the Holy Spirit to risk our lives for the sake of our neighbors. This is our call: That we love our neighbors as God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son to be born, die, and raised to new life for you.

Peace,
Pastor Bryant
**WEDNESDAY LENTEN WORSHIP**

Jesus’ suffering and death for us involved every aspect of what it means to be human. Jesus touched, tasted, smelled, heard, and saw death. The full magnitude of what this means for us comes alive when we witness the journey Jesus made through each of these senses. For our resurrection to new life in Jesus begins with the cross and all the human emotion and suffering Jesus experienced. Join us on Wednesdays as we remember the sacrifice made for each and every one of us.

During Lent, First Lutheran will be hosting soup suppers prior to the evening worship service. The first supper will be held on Ash Wed., Feb. 10, at 6:30 p.m., followed by the worship service at 7 p.m. Dinners the following weeks will be held at 6:00 p.m., with worship afterward at 6:30 p.m. If you would like to volunteer donate food or help serve, contact Sharon Phillippo or the church office.

**TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS**

In the next few months we will turn our attention to the Gospel of Luke. Pastor Bakkum will be following a new lectionary developed at Luther Seminary which will center our Sunday Lessons on the Gospel of Luke. For this reason we are going to study the same book in Bible class. Wednesdays during Lent will have a different theme than the Sundays this year. We meet in the Fireside Room at First Lutheran from 10:00-11:00 a.m. on Tuesday mornings. Bring your Bible and join us for a lively discussion. John Ben- nethum is our Teacher. All are welcome!

**For Women Only....**

The Women’s Bible Study will begin meeting again after Easter. They will meet 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!

**DAILY LENTEN DEVOTIONS**

This year’s Lenten Devotions go to the heart of the ministries supported by the Greater Milwaukee Synod’s Outreach for Hope. Individuals connected to the 19 ministries receiving support from Outreach for Hope submitted the 40 devotions. Hearing the stories from the people recognizes Outreach for Hope’s 20th anniversary in helping to support ministries serving in low income communities. You can receive these devotions via email at www.outreachforhope.org. In the right-hand column, type in your email address and name and check the box “Lenten Devotions” Paper copies will also be available in the narthex of each church.

**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. Just click on the Sermon button.

Please keep in your prayers the families of Marilyn Mutzenbauer, Erna Stiefel, Cheryl Hetzel, Marion Jurgens, Don Leppien and Helen Dickhut who have recently passed away.
Worship, Study and Prayer

Youth activities

Sunday School and summer activities will be planned according to the number of volunteers who step forward.

Volunteer opportunities are as follows:
• Sunday School teachers, either regular teachers or subs (training will be provided)
• A new Teen program one evening/week is in the works. Would meet from 5-7pm - involving pizza (gotta have pizza!) and activities.

Help with planning is always appreciated, especially if it comes with a helper. Think about stepping up and helping us grow our ministry to youth.

An Early Start to Spring Cleaning

Although Lent starts early this year, before spring appears in many areas, it’s an appropriate time for spring cleaning. Indeed, Lent comes from old German and English words for “spring.” So, while it might be too soon to open windows or hang clothes on the line, now is ideal for some spiritual spring cleaning.

Lent calls us to examine our beliefs, confess and dispose of old grudges and selfish habits, dust off our Bibles for a new routine of study and prayer, air out our hearts and brighten up our attitudes. “Lent cleaning” lets the Holy Spirit freshen our faith — and it’s never too early for that.

“It is spring again. The earth is like a child that knows poems by heart.”

Rainer Maria Rilke

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.

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

From First: Marlin, Beverly, Marie, LaVerne, Henry, John, Earl, Paule, Alfred, Virginia, Richard, Betty, Myra, Joyce, Lois, Barbara and Pat

From the Homebound

Dorothy Daniels, Mike Dowd, Janet Flores, Marilyn Turtenwald, John Vella, Timothy Wegener.

It is spring again. The earth is like a child that knows poems by heart.”

Rainer Maria Rilke

Spring Life

Lent calls us to examine our beliefs, confess and dispose of old grudges and selfish habits, dust off our Bibles for a new routine of study and prayer, air out our hearts and brighten up our attitudes. “Lent cleaning” lets the Holy Spirit freshen our faith — and it’s never too early for that.

Spring Life

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

**HOMEBOUND MINISTRIES**
Thanks to everyone who delivered cookies to our homebound members in December. We received several thank you notes saying how pleased they were to have us visit and how much they enjoyed the cookies. It helps our members understand that they are still an important part of our church community though they cannot attend in person. Said one recipient: “Thank you for taking the energy and time out of your busy lives to do this beautiful and thoughtful gift. The visit and cookies were much appreciated”.

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**WHAT IS YOUR “HEART RATE”?**

Our food pantry is a “vital” ministry in our community. Our “vital signs” for last year’s pantry included the distribution of 1,800 bags of food, which fed 2,135 adults and 672 children, and served about 5,000 lunches. It is hard to imagine the number of people receiving God’s love through us. For our annual fundraiser this year, we will post a Heart Beat in the narthex for each 10 lbs food or $10 donated to this ministry from February 1st through March 31st. Let’s see how big we can build our communal heart rate on order to touch the hearts of others.

**Food Pantry Ministry**

**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.

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**DOING FOR OTHERS IS LIKE DOING FOR CHRIST**

Matthew 25:35-40 “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.”

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“They who love are but one step from heaven.”

James Russell Lowell
WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS
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. Pastor Bryant would be happy to sit down with a cup of coffee and talk about our ministries and answer your questions.

USHER MINISTRY
We are looking for ushers and greeters for the Sunday service. Responsibilities include welcoming members and visitors, providing bulletins, answering questions, shaking hands, collecting the offering and helping with communion. The 2016 schedule is available on the welcome desk and waiting for your signature. Welcoming others to worship is a vital ministry.

Thought for the Day:
“Measure wealth not by the things you have, but by the things you have for which you would not take money”
– Fulton J Sheehan.

Thank You to the West Allis Community Improvement Foundation for the $350 given to the First Lutheran Food Pantry which was part of the proceeds from the 2015 Community Breakfast of Thanks and Giving. They also gave the pantry a large number of food items donated at the breakfast.

Sewers Needed!
If anyone is interested in sewing Christmas Stocking for next year’s Operation Christmas Stocking, please contact Greta Plicka or the church office. We will probably need between 80 and 100 stockings for next year’s distribution.

Calling All Menards Shoppers
If you or family members are Menards shoppers or are ‘wannabe’ shoppers, we invite you to join the Operation Christmas Stocking shopping team.

To stretch our shopping dollars we shop Menards rebate items - men’s tee shirts, baseball caps, pocket flashlights, rain ponchos, shopping bags, gift bags, women’s socks, etc.

As a shopper you would purchase the advertised items, mail in your receipt and rebate slip. Menards will reimburse you with a merchandise credit check. Final cost to you one envelope and stamp. The Operation Christmas Stocking barrel will be in the narthex year round to collect your purchases.

If you have any questions, contact Jackie Bayer or Greta Plicka.

Thank You to the West Allis Community Improvement Foundation for the $350 given to the First Lutheran Food Pantry which was part of the proceeds from the 2015 Community Breakfast of Thanks and Giving. They also gave the pantry a large number of food items donated at the breakfast.

A joyful heart is the inevitable result of a heart burning with love. Never let anything so fill you with sorrow as to make you forget the joy of the Christ risen.

—Mother Teresa

IT’S NEVER TOO EARLY TO THINK CHRISTMAS!
A NATIVITY CHRISTMAS
The hundred or so individuals attending Nativity’s Christmas Concert could not help but be put in the Christmas Spirit. Concertgoers heard vocal solos by Susan Platt, Gus Barnes and Byron Jones, the three of them being in spectacular voice. The Incarnation Lutheran Gospel Choir under the direction of Byron Jones provided spirited treatments of traditional Christmas Carols. Organ and Piano offerings were handled by Rev. Bakkum, Dennis Jon Wolfgang and Incarnation’s Organist; James Stoebe. Audience favorites were the “Audience Sing-a-Long”, the projected image of Nativity’s somewhat hidden “Christmas Stained Glass Window, and the brief pictorial tour of the Nativity Pipe Organ. A big thank you to all who made our “A Nativity Christmas” Concert a huge success.

VIA DOLOROSA (THE WAY OF SORROW)
HOLY WEEK CONCERT SATURDAY MARCH 19TH 1:30 PM
Nativity’s next free concert will be our Holy Week offering “Via Dolorosa (Way of Sorrow) on the Saturday of the Palm Sunday weekend. Soprano, Susan Platt, Tenor, Gus Barnes, Jr., Bass/Baritone, Byron Jones will be joined by special our special guests: The Atonement Lutheran Handbell Choir from Muskego. Rev. Bakkum and Dennis Jon Wolfgang will be at Nativity’s Organ and Piano. Besides many Holy Week favorites such as “The Holy City” the program will also include highlights from Andrew Lloyd Webbers “Jesus Christ Superstar”. Nativity Lutheran Church is located at 69th Street at west Bluemound Road in Wauwatosa. A free will offering to benefit the Nativity’s Organ Fund will be received. Come and relax and enjoy this perfect start to the most holy week in the church year!
Spend an Afternoon with Bishop Eaton

All are invited to attend St. Matthew’s Day of Grace (1615 N. Wauwatosa Ave., Wauwatosa) featuring Presiding ELCA Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, on Feb. 28th. A lunch ($10) will be held at 12:15 followed by the Keynote Address and question and answer time by Bishop Eaton from 1-3 p.m. (this portion is free). Please register on St. Matthew’s website (www.stmattslutheran.org) or call their church office at (414)774-0441.

Who?
The Greater Milwaukee Synod Youth winter retreat is for students in grades 7-12. There will be large group time together and break into middle/high school tracks. Students must attend with a group/chaperone.

What?
A weekend of youth fellowship with:
- Music from Rachel Kurtz
- Pastor Steve Jerbi
- Spoken Word Artist Brittney Nicole
- Ascension Mime Troupe
- Winter bonfire and hot cocoa bar
- Saturday free time options:
  - Gaga-ball, 9 Square in the Air & other sports tournaments with youth from across the synod
  - on-site service projects, craft projects, board game room and more

Where?
We’ll be staying in heated cabins at beautiful Camp Minikani in Hubertus

When?
March 4-6, 2016
- Plan to check in between 5:30-7 pm. Friday dinner is from 6:30-7:15. Our evening kicks off at 7:30 pm.
- We will finish with Sunday morning worship; Sunday lunch is not included

$125 per person includes 5 meals (Dinner Friday, Breakfast-Lunch-Dinner Saturday, Breakfast Sunday). $25 per person non-refundable deposit due with registration. Registration deadline and final Payment due in full February 15th

Contact the church office for more information and registration form.

Donate New Coats for Children in Need

Consider donating a new winter coat for a child to Urban Threads, the LSS clothing distribution center in Milwaukee. Urban Threads is one of the only centers of its kind in Wisconsin that offers brand-new clothing to disadvantaged children. Visit lsswis.org and select “Homelessness/Basic Needs,” then “Clothing Distribution” to learn more about Urban Threads and find a link to a list of LSS offices around Wisconsin that will gratefully accept your donation of new winter coats and clothing. It will warm your heart to help kids keep warm on these chilly winter days!
CLEMENT MANOR
Center for Enrichment
9405 W. Howard Ave., Greenfield

Keynote Speaker - 1:30-3:00 p.m.
Feb. 18 - “Gather by the Waters” David HB Drake sings stories & songs of the people who came here by water (Lake Michigan).
Mar. 31 - “Dirty Shirts: A boundary Waters Memoir” Jim Landwehr presents photos and stories about the Boundary Waters Canoe Area

Lifelong Learning Book Club - 1st Tue. at 12pm
Feb. 2 - The Secret Keeper by Kate Morton
Mar. 1 - Mrs. Lincoln’s Dressmaker: A Novel by Jennifer Chiaverini
Apr. 5 - Major Pettigrew’s Last Stand by Helen Simonson

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

Bridge Group - Every Tues. - 9-11 am. Call to register.

Alzheimer’s Association - Family/Caregiver Support Group - Information and support for dealing with the changing needs of loved ones with Alzheimer’s. Meets 3rd Wednesday of each month.

AARP SMART DRIVER COURSE
Wednesday, March 2, 12:30-4:30 p.m.
Course covers defensive driving and normal changes in vision, hearing and reaction time associated with aging. Class size limited - register early!

Call Clement Manor at 546-7302 for registration or 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.

NEW BERLIN REGENCY, 13750 W. NATIONAL AVE
Fashion on Wheels - Jan. 20 - 10a-1p
Don’t miss this mobile consignment shop from Restyle Studio in Waukesha. Shop for gently used, stylish, and affordable women’s clothing, accessories and jewelry. Everything is priced under $10!

Explore Sunny Italy - Jan. 29th at 1:30 pm
Brookfield native Dave Thornton takes you on an hour-long photo journey through sunny Italy.

WEST ALLIS NEWS
Coffee With the Mayor is held on the first and third Mondays of each month at 9 a.m. Go to www.westalliswi.gov for the location of the next meeting.

Community Dinner Dance Benefits Disabled American Vets
The West Allis Community Improvement Foundation, along with other local clubs, will sponsor the 27th annual dinner dance on Sat., April 16th, from 6-11pm at the Hampton Inn & Suites at 8201 W. Greenfield. The dance will benefit the DAV Chapter 19 West Allis, and will feature a catered dinner, “Taste of West Allis” sweet table, dinner and dancing music and a silent auction.
PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE WHEN....

- A member of your family is admitted to the hospital so that visits can be made
- Your committee or group plans to have a meeting, or cancel a meeting, so that it can be put on the church calendar or in the bulletin
- Either your home or business telephone number has changed, so that the church records can be corrected
- Your email address has changed
- You are planning to move—out of town or locally
- A new baby arrives in your family
- A death occurs in your family
- You or a member of your family establishes a new residence

BIBLE QUIZ...

At a time of deep struggle in Elijah’s life, God made his presence known to him. How?

A. In a strong and destructive wind
B. In an earthquake
C. Through fire
D. Through silence

Answer: (See 1 Kings 19:9-12, NRSV.)
First Lutheran

2/1   Shirley Armato
2/3   Makaila Kurtz
2/14  Shirley Fisher
2/14  Kent Nicolet
2/15  Thomas Herbert
2/18  Beverly Brunn
2/25  Lavone Reis
2/27  Joy Heintz
3/2   Audrey Enloe
3/3   Jason Zehe
3/4   David Gruke
3/11  Roger Gray
3/11  Alfred Korth
3/13  Gus Barnes
3/14  Sharon Smith
3/15  Erin Anderson
3/15  Wesley Anderson
3/16  Joan Hirschinger
3/18  Isabella Dixon
3/25  Debra Kubek
3/27  Dolores Hurst
3/27  Adriana Rees
3/28  Samuel Marquez

Nativity Lutheran

2/1   Jill Sandberg
2/8   Juan Sifuentes
2/11  Cynthia Barbian
2/12  Shirley Zauner
2/17  Bryce DeBack
2/28  Dorothea Isermann
3/1   Audrey Fierst
3/3   Donald Nell
3/9   Arthur Gruetzner
3/17  Evan Reynolds
3/19  John Gordon, Jr.
3/22  Nicole DeBack
3/26  Dawn Reynolds

Spaghetti Dinner & Bingo!

Saturday, February 13th
Dinner served at 5:00 p.m.
Free bingo following dinner
Bake sale and prize drawings.

No One Goes Home Without a Prize!

Tickets are $8.50/adults,
$4/children 3-12.
See Lillian Ribnek or call the
church office for tickets

Nativity Outreach

GOOD SAMARITAN OUTREACH CENTER

In February, we are collecting Spaghetti-o’s, mini-ravioli, milk (2%, 1% or skim), mac & cheese boxes, chicken & tomato soup, and ramen noodles for Good Samaritan Outreach Center. They are also requesting donations of Bibles. There is a box in the narthex at Nativity for your donations.

On the Lighter Side

Pastor Bryant on March 5th!

“To err is human, to forgive, divine, and well, I’ve done my part.”
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

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