Dear People of God,

There’s a power in peace. There’s a hope in forgiveness. There’s a reconciliation in love. From the heavens above to the depths below we are called to proclaim, sing, and shout the good news, the gospel message, the word that Jesus is not only alive, but active and present here and now.

Proclaim that peace prevails in God’s kingdom not only in the future, but here and now. Sing that hope abounds when we lean into the faith we have received from the Holy Spirit. Shout that we have not only been reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, but to our friends and enemies alike.

In this Easter season the story is not over. The journey of Jesus Christ from birth to death to empty tomb was more than a narrative told by the four Gospel writers. It was more than an oral story told to a people in need of peace, hope, and reconciliation. It was more than a short lived rebellion against the powers of the oppressor. It was and it is a living story that continues to be told. It is a living story where you take center stage.

It is a story that must be told. A message that the world needs to hear. A promise that we are empowered to proclaim, sing, and shout from the highest of mountains to the deepest of valleys. Because Easter is not the end of our faith – it is only the beginning. Easter is not where the good news ends – it is only the beginning.

You continue the story. You bear witness to Jesus Christ made manifest in the world around you. All these years after that first Easter there is still oppression, hatred, division, and a system that benefits those in power.

All these years later the people of this world yearn for peace, hope, forgiveness, reconciliation, and love. And as followers of Jesus Christ we are each called through and in our daily lives to proclaim, sing, and shout a Gospel message that splits temple curtains in half, shakes the earth to its core, and brings tyranny to its knees.

You have this opportunity to change the world. You have been equipped and empowered by the Holy Spirit in ways both large and small to proclaim, sing, and shout the Gospel message. Because like Peter, John, and the disciples, we cannot help but proclaim, sing, and shout all the things we have seen and heard from our Savior, Lord, and friend.

We cannot help but continue on proclaiming release to the captives and setting the oppressed free. We cannot help but continue on singing God’s praises for the abundance of gifts we have received. We cannot help but continue on shouting from highest mountain and deepest valley that God’s will be done on earth as it is in heaven: A will of peace, hope, forgiveness, and love – gifts we first received from our risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Peace,

Pastor Bapt
During the month of May we will complete our study of the book of 1 Kings and move to 2 Kings. We will study this book until the Memorial Day break (May 29). Thereafter we will be studying HEAVEN during the summer with guest speakers the third Tuesday of each month. Come to the Fireside Room at First Lutheran from 10:00-11:00am. John Bennethum is our Teacher.

CONGRATULATIONS, Gus!

Gus Barnes is finished with his classes at Wartburg Seminary, and will be graduating in May. As part of graduation, sponsoring churches are asked to make a banner for their student which will be displayed at graduation. Some of our quilters have made a beautiful banner which will be presented to him when he comes here for services on April 28-29.

SUNDAY SCHOOL MAY HAPPENINGS!

Sunday School will conclude on Sunday, May 20th. Our Spring Sunday School theme this year is “Celebrating the Seasons of the Church” as well as Miracles/Parables performed by Jesus. Each lesson includes a Bible focus from our Spark Bible and a lesson. For Palm Sunday and Easter lessons Lori had the children make salt dough hand prints and tie dye butterflies to celebrate spring and the resurrection of Christ. For Mother’s Day the children will make Mother’s Day puzzle cards, practice the Lord’s Prayer and sing a few tunes. Linda will be making maracas and teaching music related to Spring.

Check the Sunday bulletins for updates on our “God’s Global Barnyard” project. There are Barn and Piggy banks to take home to put your spare change in. When they are full return them and the children will use the money to purchase animals. You can also put you spare change in the large barn in the narthex. We collected $3.31 during the first two weeks in April bringing our total to $13.67.

If anyone is interested in teaching Sunday School please contact the Church office.

Sunday School Staff: Lori Marquez, Linda Grulke and Greta Plicka
From the bleakness of Lent at the Maundy Thursday service at First Lutheran (left) into Easter joy in a picture of Nativity Lutheran (above) ready for Easter worship after much work by church members.

Did you enjoy the communion bread that Pastor Bryant made for the Maundy Thursday worship services? If you’d like the recipe, contact the church office. It’s the recipe used by Luther Seminary.

**IT’S VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL TIME!**

**JOIN US!**

**June 28-21**

This year’s Vacation Bible School is centered on Children’s Bible stories which instill the attitudes of love, friendship, caring and sharing. Bible stories, crafts and activities have been chosen to reinforce these attitudes but most of all have FUN!!!

START blocking your calendars and informing family and friends!!!

We'll need help to assist with meal preparation, story telling, crafts and games

PLEASE consider assisting at your availability—anytime would be greatly appreciated!!!

WATCH for sign-up sheets in the Narthex

Thank you,
Heidi Leiser and 2018 VBS committee

**El Salvador Presentation**

The quilters at both churches have been supporting a sewing ministry at Los Heroes, a church in El Salvador.

On Wednesday, May 9, a representative from the Greater Milwaukee Synod will present a program on the Lutheran Church in El Salvador. The program will be held in the Fireside Room at First Lutheran at 10:00 a.m.

Everyone is welcome - not just our quilters! Come join us, enjoy some refreshments, and expand your knowledge of synod ministries!
Here are some pictures from the Palm Sunday concert, held in March. Many many thanks to all who attended and helped and performed and announced and blessed and photographed and baked and wrangled and cleaned! Great music in a great space!
Yummmm! Although all the information is not in as of this publications’ deadline, here are some photos from Our Spaghetti Dinner and Bingo evening on April 14th to enjoy in the meantime. Many thanks to all the hands that worked together to make this all possible, including BSA Venture Crew 999. Everyone who attended got all-you-could-eat of pasta and salad and desserts and fixings, served table-side. And then enjoyed bingo with prizes like a rubber chicken, and drawings for prizes like the gopher from Caddyshack and a wine purse. A big thank you to everyone who donated and cleaned and cooked and served and came and had fun!

Spaghetti Dinner & Bingo
**Rummage Sale**

**IT'S COMING!**
**TIME FOR THE ANNUAL**
**Nativity May Rummage Sale!**

The annual Nativity May rummage sale is right around the corner and set for two consecutive weekends – May 11 and 12, and May 18 and 19.

Nativity DESPERATELY needs your help - volunteers for setup (scheduled for May 6 through 10), and the sale, and breakdown are urgently needed. Please take a moment to use the sign-up sheet in the narthex and add your name where you can. And don’t forget that Nativity can use your tasty treats for the bake sale! And if you have too much “stuff” – Nativity is the place to bring it!

Nativity is also asking for your old political sign frames – these frames make good rummage sale signs. And because these signs don’t always make it back to Nativity, more frames are always welcome.

Thank you, and please mark your calendars for the sale now!

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**Nativity 85 Years Ago – Further Reflection**

Nativity is 85 this year. Here are some of the events, 85 yrs. ago, in May of 1933, that were occurring the year that like-minded people established our church.

In May, the Nazi Germany staged massive public book burnings, legalized eugenic sterilization and prohibited trade unions, Mohandas Gandhi begins a 3-week hunger strike because of the mistreatment of the lower castes, the first alleged modern sighting of the Loch Ness Monster occurred, Paraguay declares war on Bolivia, and the Century of Progress World’s Fair opens in Chicago.

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**Human and Sex Trafficking – Is It in Your Neighborhood?**

Join the Nativity Women of the ELCA in attending this special discussion presented by Deanne Lawson, Executive Director of Inner Beauty Center of Milwaukee, and to be held Saturday, May 5th from 1 PM to 2:30 PM. Refreshments will follow the presentation, and a free-will offering will be taken to benefit the Inner Beauty Center (http://innerbeautycenter.org/). Special event parking for this presentation is allowed on both sides of Bluemound Road by the Wauwatosa Police Department.

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**Any Graduates in the House?**

Please notify the church office if someone in your family is graduating this year - whether it's from grade school, high school or college. We’d like to be sure to recognize them next month!
Committees are up and running, and planning is underway for 2018!

Hungry Friday night folks enjoyed a fish fry at Meyer’s Restaurant and fellowship and dessert in the FLC Fireside Room. This weekend we are looking forward to the return of almost-graduated seminarian, Gus Barnes Jr., and hearing him preach.

Have you heard our new “Gospel Quartet, Plus”? If not come hear us and/or join us at the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month service at 5:30. Practice is 1/2 hour before the start of the service.

Now that warm weather is here, Pastor and the Evangelism Committee are planning to visit new arrivals in the neighborhood. First Lutheran can no longer go back in time, but we can go forward. Let’s do it as a team!

On a sad note we recently lost a friend of mine- Beverly Brunn- a life long member of a First Lutheran who was an active Luther League member and a long time member of the choir. Her mother was the organist, her father the Sunday School superintendent. Bev and her husband, Bob, in turn raised their family at First Lutheran Church.

Werner Bayer, Council President

Operation Christmas Stocking

Operation Christmas Stocking is a year-round project. Please keep us in mind as you shop the winter clearance sales especially men’s and women’s hats and gloves. Check the Menards T-shirt sale, you can buy up to 4 men’s T-shirt and get a full rebate. Menards has this offer about 4 or 5 times a year. For the children’s stockings we are focusing on coloring books/activity books and crayons/markers. They do not have to have a Christmas theme. Thank you for you continued support.

Respectfully submitted
Co/Chairs Jacqueline Bayer/Greta Plicka

Coming soon…
You’re Invited..
Join us for Fun and games!
What: First Lutheran GameFest and Ice Cream Social
When: Sunday, June 24 from 2pm to 4pm
Bring your family’s favorite game or use one of ours.

On a snowy, icy spring day, April 15th, baby Samuel Joseph Guthrie was baptized at First Lutheran. It was wonderful having all of the Guthries back, and we look forward to seeing them again.
Ministry of Hope

The following are excerpts from an article that appeared in the Lenten devotions published by Outreach for Hope, Inc. a local organization that raises awareness and support for congregations within low income areas. It was written by Jaime Larson-McLoone, Mount Carmel Lutheran Church. The article brings to mind the work that we do in our food ministry:

“More than once in the past year or two. I’ve had to remind myself to look for hope. More than once I have wondered whether hope was hiding: times when people seemed to stop caring about our community, about facts and about our creation - and worst, about one another. In those times of wondering, I do have to look for hope, but I don’t have to look hard.”

“I see hope in the way people all around me use their God given gifts. Some serve in ways that are loud and obvious; others share their gifts in quieter ways, ways that might seem like hiding compared with the shouting of leaders portrayed in the media, but they are in no way hiding.”

“If you pay attention, you’ll notice that our community is filled with prophets and preachers. They accompany people with disabilities, immigrants, people of color, and those without homes or adequate healthcare.”

“As our community is filled with the teachers, apostles, healers, and pastors (not all of whom wear robes and collars), they share God’s love, sometimes with words and prayers, sometimes with boots, mittens or a backpack. They take the word of God, along with socks, sandwiches and underwear to streets and neighborhoods that many people are afraid to even speed past.”

“All these people show me hope. They give me hope. They remind me that I, too, am called and equipped by God to share hope in this world.”

Prayer - Thank you, Lord, for all of the people in our community who are agents of hope. Bless their work and bless me too, that I may do my part.”

-Marjorie Pagel, Outreach for Hope

Food Pantry Fundraiser

Thanks to everyone who helped make our 2018 “Taking steps to End Hunger” fundraising campaign a success. During the campaign, from January to Easter, we raised $1,323.00 and collected 200 lbs of food. Thanks to partners Holy Trinity Lutheran, Luther Memorial Lutheran, the West Allis Community Improvement Foundation, Carlson Family, Brenwood Park Sr. Living and the Women’s Club of West Allis for their donations.

Post Office Food Drive

Sat, May 12

First Lutheran will again be partnering with the food pantry at All Saints Church in Oak Creek for the Post Office food drive. We need people to spend the afternoon at All Saints receiving and sorting food (this does not involve heavy lifting) and people to unload the food and stock it at First, beginning in the late afternoon until about 6pm. Please see the sign up sheet on the welcome desk in the narthex. We usually receive a substantial amount of food, which helps support our pantry into the summer, but we can’t do it without helpers.
Meet our Members...

Lori Marquez (L) and Lavone Reis (R) are a great mother/daughter team at First Lutheran. Lavone grew up and went to school in Madison, and came to the Milwaukee area to teach elementary school where she met her husband Jim. They had two children, Scott (deceased) and Lori. When their children were young, they spent weekends in Big Flats, central WI, at their family "cabin" which her father built from harvested pine on their property. Lavone's children were able to have the opportunity to watch the deer, otter, wild mink, wood ducks building nests, and listening to the whippoorwills and owls. When Jim passed away Lavone took over the presidency of Wisconsin Metro Audubon, which he started, and wrote/edited the chapter newsletter. In 1973 she was invited to attend First Lutheran by Laverne Guthrie, their school secretary. She and Lori have been members since with a variety of experiences. Lavone enjoys Bible Study with John Bennethum, and was Stewardship Chairperson for several years. Lavone retired from teaching in 1997 after 32 years and enjoys spending time with her four grandchildren ranging in age from 5-21, keeping the bird feeders full and keeping ahead of Jasper (dog) and Murphy (cat). Lori graduated from Carthage College with a degree in Special Education and manages a care management unit in the social services field which requires some long hours. She met her husband Joel through a friend 11 years ago. Lori has two children, Sam (7), and Karlie (5) and an 11 week old chocolate lab puppy named Millie. Sam, is an avid and very good hockey player so his game and practice schedule keeps Lori busy during the fall and winter months. Karlie loves to swim and plays soccer so her schedule also keeps Lori quite busy. Lori loves to do anything outdoors – walks, camping and traveling. At church she is on Church Council and is one of the Sunday School Staff. She will also be helping with VBS again this summer.

Welcoming New Members

Welcome to new member Kevin Lone. Kevin decided to become a member after becoming involved in cooking Friday lunch served at our food pantry. Cooking has always been a passion of his, especially homemade soup. We hear lots of compliments about his food. Kevin grew up on Milwaukee’s south side and lived on 45th and Tripoli. He now lives on Lapham, only a few houses down from our church. He is one of 7 children and has 2 brothers and 4 sisters in the area. His passion for cooking came from his mother and grandmother, who spent hours in the kitchen. Kevin watched and learned the family recipes. He also has a passion for helping others and has volunteered at several other meal programs in the city, along with helping family and friends. Kevin enjoys fishing and has helped teach kids to fish through the county park system. You are all invited to stop in and visit us in the food pantry on Friday and say “hi” to Kevin.

March Financial Summary Report 2018

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Our expenses exceeded our offering income this month. We’re hoping that the snowy weather is behind us and we’ll have the warmth of spring. Through your support for our ministries, we reach out to over 600 people a month to share the Word and God’s love.

Your Financial Team
Marie LePage and Patt Temke enjoyed visiting and dessert after First Lutheran’s fish fry at Meyer’s.

Our Community

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

“Kindertransport: Escaping Nazis
My Mother’s Story
Presented by Judy Ormond
May 17, 1:30-3:00 p.m.

At age 90, Judy’s other wrote her memoir of her escape on the Kindertransport. She was a 12-yr. old girl living in Czechoslovakia at the time of the Nazi invasion when she escaped.

Call 546-7302 to register. $3 for members, $5 for non-members.

LIVING WELL WITH CHRONIC CONDITIONS
PUT LIFE BACK IN YOUR LIFE

Tuesdays, May 22-June 26
1:00-3:30 p.m.
Aurora West Allis Medical Center
8901 W. Lincoln Ave.

Are you an adult with an ongoing health condition? Find practical ways to deal with pain and fatigue, discover better nutrition and exercise choices, understand new treatment choices and learn how to talk to your doctor and family about your health.

Class is free. There is a $20 deposit to use the book, which will be refunded upon completion of 4 of 6 classes.

HUNGER TASK FORCE STOCK BOX DELIVERY
WEST ALLIS SENIOR CENTER * 7001 W. NATIONAL AVE.

Stock Box provides a healthy and nutritious box of supplementary food to low-income seniors. The next West Allis distribution at the Senior Center will be on May 15th between 1-2 p.m. You can register there, or call Hunger Task Force’s Rick Lewandowski at 414-777-0483 or IMPACT at 211 to apply.
May Birthdays…

First Lutheran
5/1 Judy Keene
5/2 Garrett Labadie
5/3 Joanne Hafner
5/4 Daniel Sopa
5/12 Megan Rowe
5/13 Heidi Leiser
5/14 Jill Bayer
5/14 Shirley Cogan
5/15 Amy Guthrie
5/16 Jennifer Caras
5/20 Jan Salek-Anderson
5/22 William Hansen
5/25 Stephen Andrade
5/25 Robert Long
5/26 Jamie Schoberg
5/27 Robert Gardner
5/30 Patricia Zuback
5/31 Jennette Sigler

Nativity Lutheran
5/20 Jack Schmanski
5/30 Donald Brauch
5/30 Nancy Jene

May Birthdays…

May Birthdays…

May Anniversaries…

5/2 Mike & Greta Plicka (F) 31 yrs.
5/4 Dale & Sharon Phillippo (F) 55 yrs.
5/20 Gary & Cheryl Brautigam (N) 51 yrs.
5/27 Terry & Joyce Favre (F) 40 yrs.

May Birthdays…

Pentecost Geraniums
We’re taking orders for geraniums to decorate the churches for Pentecost, May 19-20. Sign up in the narthex or call the church office to order. And be sure to wear red on Pentecost weekend!

Friendly Reminders

Remember to notify the church office of any address, phone or email changes!

Need pastoral care?
Please remember to notify the pastor or church office if you are ill or hospitalized so that we can offer prayer and support directly to you. If you have a pastoral emergency (death in the family, hospitalization, etc.), you can reach Pastor Bryant by calling him at (414)768-3670.

Missed One??
Missed a sermon? If you’ve missed one of Pastor Bryant’s inspiring sermons, you can catch it on our website at www.firstlutheranelca.org. Just click on the Media button. Some also include a video.

As a community we pray for those with immediate needs of healing and strength:
Annie Bartlett, John Bennethum, Aaron Behnke, Tony Krizan, Becky Murray, Lavone Reis, Marlene Smith, Nanette Steves, Wayne Wagner, Dave Wegener and Robert Yunker

Please keep in your prayers the families of Tom Lindstrom, who died on March 26, and Beverly Brunn who died on April 12. May the hope of the resurrection give them peace.

Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

Proverbs 31:31

National Avenue will be closed from 70th to 76th streets beginning May 1st. Main detour routes will be Greenfield Ave. to the North and Becher to the south. The traffic pattern on 74th and 75th streets will change from one way streets into two way streets, with parking on both sides. These changes will be in effect until November 1st.

Happy Mother’s Day!
If you no longer wish to continue receiving this newsletter, please contact the church office.