

News & Views

First and Nativity Lutheran Churches February, 2019



Dear people of God,

We enter this new year following the narrative of the Gospel of Matthew. The Gospel writer had a Jewish audience and as such highlighted numerous connections between Jesus and the prophets and prophecies of the Old Testament.

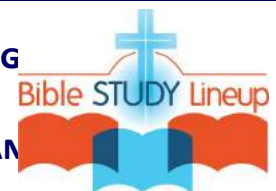
The God that we worship and follow in Jesus Christ is the same God that created the universe, spoke through the prophets, and walked with the people of Israel to the promised land. The God in Jesus Christ is the same presence of new life and love that has been active since before the beginning of time.

In Jesus Christ the promised Messiah has been born as one of us. A Savior, shepherd, and friend who is the very presence of God – a presence that dwells with people across time.

As we continue our journey through Matthew this winter we will see the love, power, and humility of God made manifest – a presence that through and in Jesus Christ empowers, strengthens, and loves you always.

Peace,

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS AT FIRST LUTHERAN



Pastor Bakkum has been leading the class since John Bennethum's retirement. After taking into consideration the suggestions of the group members, we'll have a variety of topics that will be covered this spring. The tentative schedule is below – although it's subject to change depending on the length of some discussions! Check the topics, and come for just a couple, or every week. Join us in the Fireside Room at First Lutheran on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. All are welcome!

- 2/5 Mary's Parents/Seasons of the Church
- 2/12 Lutheranism & Other Denominations
- 2/19 No Class
- 2/26 Christianity & World Religions

- 3/5 Why Ashes?
- 3/12 Prayer
- 3/19 Sharing Faith
- 3/26 Prayer

- 4/2 Why Holy Week
- 4/9 Seven Last Words/John's Farewell Discourse

- 4/16 Communion: Bread, Wine & Jesus
- 4/23 Four Gospel Endings
- 4/30 *So much more.....*

If there are topics that would interest you that are not listed above, please let Pastor Bryant know.

Christian Life

SUNDAY SCHOOL AT FIRST LUTHERAN



Our Spring Sunday School "SUPERHEROES OF THE BIBLE" about a well-known Bible hero and their story. Our lessons will focus on the life of Moses, the Ten Commandments and David and Goliath. Along with the weekly lesson there are crafts, science, games and music. The children are creating their own Vest of Many Colors, which they will display in the Spring.

This year the Sunday School participated in "God's Global Barnyard" project. There were Barn and Piggy banks to take home to put spare change in and a spare change barn that Marie LaPage made us in the Narthex. On Sunday, December 16th we had a noisy offering which was very successful. The children will use the money to purchase animals. Our Global Barnyard account is \$221.00. Thank you Matt Grulke for being our "Global Barnyard" treasurer.

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

Sunday School Staff: Lori Marquez, Linda Grulke and Greta Plicka



On Sun., Dec. 16, the Sunday School children presented their Christmas Program "The Stable Where Jesus Was Born".





Remember in Prayer

As a community we pray for those with immediate needs of healing and strength:

James Larson, Heidi Leiser, Bob Pekrul, Joyce & Don Thornwal, Wayne Wagner, David Wegener, Sue Winters and Sonja.

Please remember in your prayers the families of Elsie Boese, Joyce Staub and Keith Martin who have died in the past two months.



On November 17, great grandma Dolores Hurst celebrated with Jeffrey & Alicia at the baptism of Kensington Aubrey Alexander.

Keeping Current

What's Coming Up Soon?

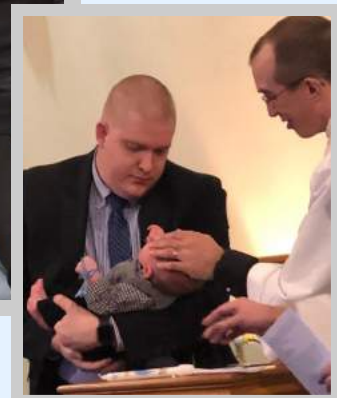
Feb. 24 - Bishop Erickson will be visiting both churches for Sunday worship

Mar. 6 - Ash Wednesday
10a - First Lutheran
12p - Nativity Lutheran
6:30p - First Lutheran

Midweek Lenten Services
10a - First Lutheran
12p - Nativity Lutheran



On Sun., November 25, grandparents Mike and Greta Plicka rejoiced at the baptism of Harrison Robert, son of Megan & Mike Rowe.



Happenings at Nativity Lutheran



BISHOP ERICKSON TO VISIT NATIVITY AND WILL BE GIVING THE SERMON!

Please mark your calendars now!
Bishop Erickson will be visiting Nativity
on February 24th at the regular
Nativity Sunday worship time.

He will also be giving the sermon
that day as well.

Come join us at worship at Nativity on
that day with your Nativity congregation
and Bishop Erickson.



TRYING OUT A NEW RECIPE?

Too many brownies? Bring your
favorite treat, a box of donuts, or a
bag of bagels to the Nativity coffee
hour. Nativity and your fellow
churchgoers will appreciate your deli-
cious donations. You can co-ordinate
those tasty treats with Don and Joan
Brauch.

Women ^{of the} ELCA 

Nativity's WELCA, Women of the
ELCA, will meet on Sun., Feb. 10th,
at 10:00 a.m. in the "Upper Room"
All women in the church are welcome!

GOOD SAMARITAN OUTREACH CENTER

Please continue to bring donations of food for
Good Samaritan Outreach Center. They are
also requesting donations of Bibles. There is
a box in the narthex at Nativity for your dona-
tions.

amazon.com

You shop. Amazon gives.

Next Time You're Shopping....

I am a shopper and I love Amazon. If
you are a shopper too, beginning Feb-
ruary 1, you can now let Amazon do-
nate a percentage of everything you
buy through Amazon to Nativity Lu-
theran Church. Donating this way is
easy and it doesn't cost you any extra
money. Every time you want to make a
purchase at Amazon.com, login
through **Smile.Amazon.com** instead!
You will see the same great Amazon
web site, but now you can designate
Nativity as your charity of choice.
Nativity will receive any donations
quarterly. Thank you!

...Susan Platt

A NATIVITY CHRISTMAS Wrap-up!

A lovely crowd of brave souls came out of the cold and into the warmth of the Nativity Christmas concert held December 29, 2018. Nativity helped to bring in the New Year with a celebration of the 200th anniversary of Silent Night featuring a performance of that original version. Special thanks go out to everyone who helped make this possible, especially Maureen Jones, for the narration that added such a special touch to the story of Christmas and to our caroling. And last but not least, deserved thanks to everyone who brought the treats for the reception.



WELCA FUNDRAISER

Nativity Lutheran WELCA held a fundraiser selling candy bars, and raised \$150 for the "Street Angels" who provide a hot and cold meal at four locations for homeless in Milwaukee. When Milwaukee's homeless can't find shelter on cold nights, Street Angels give them \$5 gift cards for McDonalds which enables them to go inside and have a meal or cup of hot coffee. With the proceeds from the candy sale, WELCA was able to purchase 30 of these gift cards for the Street Angels to distribute. Thanks for your support!



Maureen Jones, organist Dennis Jon Wolfgang (above left), and vocalists Susan Platt and Robert Stuart Mitchell presented the beautiful Christmas concert in December. Jill, Sophia and Sandie dressed up for the occasion... and so did Dusty the dog!

First Lutheran News

As the calendar welcomes a new year, I often make a new year's resolution to relax more (haven't we all tried that!) and focus on spiritual growth and renewal. I came across the following "song" and thought I would share it with everyone else with the same resolution.....Joy

"REStored By Grace" by Pastor Meg Sander

*Come and take a rest with me,
Lift up your head and you will see,
My signature across the sky
Billowy clouds that float right by.*

*Breathe in my breath and out your stress
And feel the tensions less and less
Let the cares of each day go,
And my uplifting Spirit know.*

*You've shared yourself and done your best,
Now give yourself some time to rest.
Drink in the wonder of each day,
Take time to listen and to pray.*

*Be REStored, refresh your soul
O, let me take and make you whole,
Know that I am by your side,
To give you strength and be your guide.*

"Take time to rest and give God your best."

"God of goodness and grace, help us to find joy every day as we put ourselves in your hands. Feed us and lead us so that we might continue to connect people to Christ. Amen."

Meg Sander, '83
Transitional Pastor, Immanuel Zion Lutheran and Zion Lutheran Church, Albion, Nebraska

**Share the good news of
First Lutheran with others!**
When you are out and about, take the challenge: Use one word or phrase that describes our congregation well and use that to finish the phrase "My church is _____."



We're coming to the close of another church year. I was hoping I could shout to you that we have turned the corner and were increasing our attendance, but we fell short by 4 people per week. Through the hard work of our Pastor and active committees and committee heads, I am confident we can reverse that trend in the coming year.

I want to thank all of the council members for their dedicated service. Joyce Favre and Carla Ullerich are ending their terms and deserve a big thank you. Dave Wegener and Colleen Siarnicki stepped up during the year to fill vacancies. The rest of the officers and council members worked hard and showed a real dedication to the job.

During the year our Bible Class instructor of 20 some years, John Bennethum, stepped down, at least temporarily. Thank you, John, for all you've done for the church all these years.

We were fortunate to be able to hire Gary Hanson as our organist. His talents add a lot to our worship services. He is also a dedicated volunteer cook for our food pantry. Thank you Gary. We also hired a cleaning service to replace our custodian, Natalie Jaeger, when she moved away.

We did upgrade our lighting by repairing the lights above the altar, improving our lights in the fellowship hall and improving our exterior lights to the main entrance.

We have tried to establish an outreach program using the book "From Surviving to Thriving" as our guide. It is an optimistic, solid outreach plan that I believe will work over time.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as president, and God bless you and our church in the coming year.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS STOCKING

We would like to thank Members of First Lutheran, Nativity Lutheran and Community Members including coworkers of Linda Grulke who filled stockings, donated mugs and items for children's stockings and men/women's totes. Others used their time and talents to knit & crochet hats, scarves, mittens and decorate holiday stockings. Special Thank You to Colleen Siarnicki for donating decorated Christmas frames that were handed out during the month of December.

During December 2018 we gifted:

- 125 Holiday Mugs
- 58 Men's Totes
- 48 Women's Totes
- 20 Men's Totes (Serenity Inn)
- 82 Children's Stockings

We continue to accept donations throughout the year, especially adult hats, gloves, socks and Christmas mugs.

Thank You,
Respectfully submitted,
Co/Chairs Jaqueline Bayer/Greta Plicka

Thanks to all of our talented bakers who baked cookies, and friends who visited our homebound members in December! It's important to feel connected.

Watch for new containers to accept your food pantry donations. Next time you visit your dentist, ask if they'd like to donate toothpaste samples or toothbrushes.



Social Ministry

SHARING GOD'S LOVE AND ABUNDANCE 5,000 TIMES!

Thanks to your support and the support of other churches, schools, area businesses and community organizations (and our awesome volunteers!), the food pantry was able to provide families, seniors and the homeless with 1,497 bags of food in 2018 and served 5,128 hot meals. Do you realize that we shared God's love well over 5,000 times last year, and that is not even counting the congregation at worship each week, homebound members plus other community

FACES OF GOD

We ask for your continued support during our annual food pantry fundraiser which runs from January through April. For each \$10 donated to the pantry or 10lbs food, we will be posting a post-it in the narthex!

THANKS...Giving and Receiving

Dear First Lutheran, Thank you for your donations of food to our pantry. Blessings to you this holiday season. Peace, Pastor Aida and All Peoples Lutheran staff.

We received a \$200 donation from the West Allis Community Improvement Foundation.. "We sincerely hope that this contribution on the Foundation's part helps provide food for some needy West Allis People. Thank you for your continuing efforts in this regard."



Meet our Members...

Joy Dowd has been a lifelong member of First Lutheran. Her parents, members Warren and Joan Hirschinger, were married in the old church on 73rd and Orchard. Her aunt, member Laverne Williams, was maid of honor. Joy was baptized in that church and attended Sunday school at this new church. She remembers hearing Miss Lola read Bible stories to her Sunday School class and having fun at youth group outings. At one outing, we went sledding with Adoration Lutheran in Greenfield. Joy's boyfriend Mike (eventually her husband) was president of that youth group and all had a lot of fun. She and Mike were married here in 1974 and have two sons, Jerin (Nikki) and Jace (Alana), and two grandchildren, Logan and Bailey.



The boys were confirmed here, Jace and Alana were married here and Logan was baptized here. Joy graduated from UW-Eau Claire with a teaching degree and taught in West Allis and Greenfield schools for a few years before starting her family. She also sold real estate, trained and supervised customer service reps at Wisconsin Gas and retired as a Business Process Specialist for We Energies. Joy is currently finishing her third round of being the church Treasurer, coordinates the meal portion of our food pantry ministry, leads the Evangelism committee and is a member of the Social Ministry committee. She also represents First on the advisory council for West Central Interfaith. She has learned that God's work is never easy but she feels called to help others.



Stop in a little early for our Saturday service and enjoy a hot cup of coffee and a treat before worship. Coffee is served beginning at 5pm.

Do you enjoy having coffee and treats on Sunday mornings after worship, and having a little time to visit with friends? Consider signing up to bring treats for one Sunday. Coffee is set up ahead of time - all you need to do is plug it in. We've had some very faithful treat providers, but they deserve a week off now and then. Sign up in the Fire-side Room. Thanks!



The Evangelism Committee is planning several family fun events this year. We need helpers to to plan and work at the event. What interests you?

May – Game Day with a beach theme as a kick off to VBS.

July – Family movie nights inside or outside.

December – “Birthday party for Jesus” on a Saturday morning. Includes a pancake breakfast (9 – 11am), crafts, games, etc.

Talk to Joy, Heidi, Mari or Werner for more information. We also have other activities “in the works” that you will be hearing about soon!

First Lutheran December Financial Summary Report 2018

	Income	Expenses	Over/-Loss
Actual Income & Expenses	\$11,190.60	\$12,179.93	-\$989.33
Year To Date 2018	\$113,035.72	\$129,444.53	-\$16,408.81

	Income	Mo Budget	Over/-Loss
Giving to General Fund	\$8,769.60	\$9,558.27	-\$788.67
Giving to Benevolence	\$1,262.50	\$658.33	\$604.17

*God entrusts me with his money not to build my kingdom on earth, but to build his kingdom in heaven.”
– Author Randy Alcorn*

This & That Around Here.....

THE CHURCH as Mosaic



A mosaic consists of thousands of little stones. Some are blue, some are green, some are yellow, some are gold. When we bring our faces close to the mosaic, we can admire the beauty of each stone. But as we step back from it, we can see that all these little stones reveal to us a beautiful picture, telling a story none of these stones can tell by itself.

That is what our life in [the church] is about. Each of us is like a little stone, but together we reveal the face of God to the world. Nobody can say: "I make God visible." But others who see us together can say: "They make God visible." [Christian] community is where humility and glory touch.

F.R.I.E.N.D.S...

*Fight for you.
Respect you.
Include you.
Encourage you.
Need You
Deserve you.
Stand by you.*

*"Friendship is always a sweet responsibility, never an opportunity."
(Khalil Gibran) How can you be a friend to others we meet at church?*

News Flash!

The "Noisy Offering" at First Lutheran on Dec. 15th raised \$110.95. The money was added to the Sunday School's collection for ELCA Good Gifts for a total of \$221.00. The children chose to purchase either a goat or a sheep and some chickens. Thanks for your support!



THANKS to everyone who has sent Get Well cards, called me by phone or sent me emails since I fell and broke my right shoulder on Sunday, December 10, 2017.

My shoulder has healed but I am having a hard time with my right arm not working normally and both shoulders because of arthritis. I am still doing PT twice a week and use a walker for balance. Thanks to you all.

John C. Bennethum



Out and About in Our Community

CLEMENT MANOR

Center for Enrichment
9405 W. Howard Ave., Greenfield

“WICKED MILWAUKEE”
Presented by Yance Marti
Feb. 21, 1:30-3:00 p.m.

The Cream City of yesteryear was a dingy haven for scofflaws and villains. On River St., Kitty Williams & Mary Kingley operated high-class brothels. Marti will look at the disadvantaged people of yesteryear in his bock and how they were marginalized by cultural, racial, political and gender norms of the times.

\$3 for members, \$5 for non-members.

Early Stage Support Group - Meets first Monday of each month from 2:30-4pm. For those in early stages of Alzheimer’s disease or related dementia and their care partners

Alzheimer’s Assoc. Family/Caregiver Support
Meets third Wednesday of each month from 2-3pm.

Call 546-7302 to register for above programs

Lifelong Learning Book Club - 1st Tue. at 12p

Feb. 5 - The Life She Was given by Ellen Marie Wiseman

Mar. 5 - The Bartender’s Tale by Ivan Doig

Monthly Mystery Book Club - Mondays 1pm

Feb. 18—A Cold Day for Murder by Dana Stabinow Brown

Tuesday’s Bridge Group - Meets to play every Tuesday at 9:00 a.m.

Club Loomineers - A No-Needle Knitting Group
First Wednesday of every month at 1pm

Write-On: A Weekly Writer’s Group - Meets every Wednesday from 1-2pm. Any kind of writing you want.



“Advance Care Planning: Making Your Wishes Known”

February 21, 1:00 p.m.

Kathi Brueggemann, Dir. of Independent Living, and Christine Klug, Social Worker, will share information on Power of Attorney documents.

RSVP to 414-434-1768

WAUWATOS RECREATION DEPT.

WAUWATOSA WEST HIGH SCHOOL

COMMUNITY PLANETARIUM SHOWS

Free program in the Gary E. Sampson Planetarium at 7 p.m., lasting 1 hour. Live tour of night sky is part of every program. Feb. 5 & 7 - “Cosmic Recipe - Setting the Periodic Table”
Make reservations at 773-3390.

VOICE-OVERS...NOW IS YOUR TIME!

2/25 - 6:30-8:30 p.m. - Rm. 235

Adults - Learn how you could begin using your speaking voice for commercials, films, videos and more! \$31.00 . Call 773-2900 for registration information.

JUST A “CLICK” AWAY

If travels, illness or schedule conflicts have kept you away, Pastor Bryant’s weekly sermons are available on our webpage. You can either listen to an audio recording or read them online. If you are receiving this newsletter online, use this link to access the sermons at:

<https://bryantbakkum.wordpress.com/> .

Read them online by selecting the MEDIA tab on our web page at firstlutheranelca.org or at firstlutheranelca.com.

February Birthdays First Lutheran

2/1 Shirley Armato
2/3 Makalia Kurtz
2/14 Kent Nicolet
2/15 Thomas Herbert
2/25 Lavone Reis
2/27 Joy Heintz



February Anniversaries

2/15 Warren & Joan Hirschinger 68 yrs.

February Birthdays Nativity Lutheran

2/1 Jill Sandberg
2/8 Juan Sifuentes
2/11 Cynthia Barbian
2/12 Shirley Zauner
2/17 Bryce DeBack
2/26 Dennis Wolfgang



LIGHTEN YOUR LOAD

Keeping sabbath, not just on Sundays but throughout the entire week in an integrated way, keeps us sane, says Donna Schaper. While our culture pushes us to move faster, work harder and acquire more money and stuff, sabbath observances promote play, rest, love and worship.

"Sabbath — time for God — is a gift in its origin and in its keeping," Schaper writes in *Sabbath Keeping* (Cowley Publications). "It is not another must; it is a may. God invites us to keep sabbath; God does not demand it."

The commandment to keep the Sabbath day holy, she notes, "is an invitation to a party, not to a hanging. Sabbath keeping is not one more thing to add to our already long lists. [It] is lightness, not heaviness."



HUNGER TASK FORCE STOCK BOX DELIVERY

WEST ALLIS SENIOR CENTER
7001 W. NATIONAL AVE.

The next West Allis distribution at the Senior Center will be on Feb. 12 between 1-2 p.m.



In Luke's account of Jesus calling the first disciples from their work as fishermen to follow him and "fish for people" (NIV), which disciple is not named?

- A. James
- B. John
- C. Simon
- D. Andrew

Answer: (See Luke 5:1-11.)



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.



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 1-24-19

Electronic Service Requested

Dated Material
Please deliver by 1-28-19



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

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
Sunday School is at 9:00 a.m. on Sundays
at First Lutheran

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

7400 W. Lapham St.
West Allis, WI
www.firstlutheranelca.org
E-mail: firstlutheranelca@att.net
Phone: 414-476-4664

**NATIVITY LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

6905 W. Bluemound Rd.
Wauwatosa, WI
www.nativitylutheran.us
Nativity Phone: 414-476-1853



*“Love
each other
as I have
loved you.”*
JOHN 15:12, NIV



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