Lent, the church-year season that begins on Ash Wednesday, is a time of penitence and spiritual renewal. Some people give up a luxury or vice during Lent as a form of self-denial; others undertake a project that benefits others.

The point isn’t to denigrate ourselves or to see how much we can do without. Instead, Lent helps us reflect on Jesus’ death. As Timothy Keller writes in *The Reason for God*: “The Christian Gospel is that I am so flawed that Jesus had to die for me, yet I am so loved and valued that Jesus was glad to die for me. This leads to deep humility and deep confidence at the same time. It undermines both swaggering and sniveling. I cannot feel superior to anyone, and yet I have nothing to prove to anyone. I do not think more of myself nor less of myself. Instead, I think of myself less.”

Worship With Us On
ASH WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 26
FIRST LUTHERAN
10 a.m. & 7 p.m.
NATIVITY LUTHERAN
12 p.m.

“Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.”
— Corrie ten Boom
As a community we pray for those with immediate needs of healing and strength: Diane G., Jackie Gottwald, Shannon Irvine, John Isaacson, James Larson, Edward Nolinski, Carrie Pflugradt, James Ribnek III, Lillian Ribnek, Kathy Santos, Myra Shields, Steve Schilcher and Rachel Tripi

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Join us on Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. in the Fireside Room at First Lutheran. Our new study is “Bible Women: All Their Words and Why They Matter”. After visiting for just one session, you’ll see why we all think it’s a great study. You don’t need to have attended previously to come.

On Tues., Feb. 18th, we’ll be watching the movie “Paul, Apostle of Christ” starring Jim Caviezel.

Please join us and see what it’s all about. All are welcome!

Sunday School Happenings

Our Spring theme this year is “Builders in the Bible”. Each week we include a lesson about special events and people in the Bible. Along with a weekly lesson there are crafts, science, games and music. Our January/February lessons include David’s Harp, The Disciples, Jesus Commands the Winds/Wave, Jesus Walks on Water, Fishes & Loaves, Wedding in Cana and Jacob’s Ladder. Linda taught the children about the Disciples and the Disciples at First Lutheran. Ask one of our Sunday School children who they think are First Lutheran’s Disciples. On January 26th ‘Jesus Commands the Wind/Waves’, Greta and the children created a storm that erupts in a bottle and made their own snow storm in a jar to take home.
Happenings at Nativity Lutheran

Call Process Committee

With the need to call a new pastor, change has come again to Nativity. And now you at Nativity can help to determine and direct that future by joining the Call Process committee. Part of this process is creating a ministry site profile that helps ELCA match Nativity with prospective pastors. Want to be a part of this process? See Jim Ribnek or any council member today!

Nativity Phone Numbers Have Changed!

There is a new telephone number for Fellowship Hall: (414) 988-2622. Please make a note of the change in your personal directories.

The main Nativity number has not changed – it is still (414) 476-1853.

Amazon Smile

I am a shopper and I love Amazon. If you are a shopper too, you can now let Amazon donate a percentage of everything you buy through Amazon to Nativity Lutheran 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!

Women of the ELCA members Cheryl Isotalo (left) and Kerry Neusen hold hymnals sporting the new bookmarks made by WELCA.

Women of the ELCA members Cheryl Isotalo (left) and Kerry Neusen hold hymnals sporting the new bookmarks made by WELCA.
MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!
Nativity’s next concert is coming soon, so mark your calendar now to keep the date clear!

MARCH 14
Irish Benefit Concert
Come celebrate St Patrick’s Day with traditional Irish music for voice, organ and bagpipes!
Special post-concert event follows to benefit Nativity Lutheran Church.

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 28, 2019. Nativity helped to bring in the New Year with a Victorian Christmas at Nativity. Special thanks go out to everyone who helped make this possible, and to all the concert-goers who brought a can-do attitude to our caroling. And last but not least, deserved thanks to everyone who brought the treats for the reception. Pictures to follow!

CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATES
It’s time to check your entry in the Nativity church directory.
Please see Jill Mickelson, who has the master list, and take a moment to let Jill know if all is well, or what changes need to be made. Thank you.

BROWN BAG IT LENT
Don’t have time to attend weekly Lenten services? We have the answer at Nativity: BROWN BAG IT LENT! Bring your brown bag lunch. We’ll provide coffee, water and other items. Dine while attending an informal Lenten worship service.

Wednesdays in Lent:
March 4th through April 1st
12 noon.
We’ll be done in less than 25 minutes!

FEEL THE NEED TO VENT?
Feel the need to vent? Then join the Nativity Church council and help shape the direction and purpose of your church – of OUR church!

Nativity needs you!
Please see a current council member if you are interested.
Since this is our last joint newsletter issue, I thought I’d include some pictures from the past. Blessings to both Nativity and First on their new ventures. .......Barb
Hoping everyone had a Blessed Christmas and good New Years. We are now on the other side of 2019 with 2020 looking very promising and exciting. Going into 2020, I think we all need to be mindful the world is shifting dramatically and “we” (FLC family) need to respond to the changes that are needed to sustain into the future. We have a God who loves us and this is my stronghold every day.

Today, the traditional faith practices may not meet the spiritual needs of many and how we meet the spiritual needs for all of us is challenging. While we’re anchored in the foundation of our faith, how that carries out in a multi-generational culture such as our congregation requires faith, trust, respect and prayer within this evolving process.

I thank the worship assistants for all their work this past year especially needing to be flexible with our fill-in Pastors and their Service preferences/practices. Jesse Rofritz, Carla Ullerich and I welcomed Katie and Justin Kocan to the Worship Assistants Committee and now extend a warm welcome and thank you to Janelle Cyrus for volunteering to be a reader.

So 2020 will be exciting with the changes and a new Pastor. I know that God will continue to bless us and the Holy Spirit will remain a strong presence.

See you in Church.
Heidi Leiser-O’Neil
Sister-in-Christ

Thank you to Dolores Hurst, Marie LePage and John Hrovat for cleaning and hanging new curtains in the pastor’s office!

**HOW DO PEOPLE START ATTENDING CHURCH?**

- A Friend Invited Me - 86%
- Organized Visitation - 6%
- Invited by the Pastor - 6%
- Advertising - 2%

churchgrowth.org
Thanks to Dave Berther and to Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church, for their generous donations of food for our food pantry. Their support of our ministry means a great deal.

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 1,413 bags of food in 2019 and served 3,820 hot meals!

“Thank you for your generosity in 2019. Your support of Serving Older Adults of Southeast Wisconsin, Inc. allows older adults in our community to engage in meaningful experiences which improve the quality of their lives. Your gift will support SOA’s ongoing efforts to provide older adults with an opportunity to enrich their physical, intellectual and emotional health. With gratitude, Cathy Wood, President”

“Thank you so much for your generosity and thoughtfulness over Christmas. Your heartfelt gesture means so much. …..”

The staff and residents of Serenity Inn

Thanks to the West Allis Community Improvement Foundation, Inc., for their gift of $250 and groceries, which were proceeds of the 2019 Community Breakfast of Thanks and Giving. We appreciate the support of our community.

LIKE FOOD?
The food pantry is looking to add to its cooking team. Most of the cooking is done on Thursday mornings and finished on Friday mornings prior to lunch being served at 10am. A basic understanding of food safety and previous cooking experience in a commercial setting is helpful.
**TOTALLY DOABLE 2020**

**NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTIONS**

- Start your day with a life-giving bible verse instead of scrolling through your phone.
- Be more generous with your smiles, they look good on you!
- Delete one harmful word or phrase from your vocabulary and replace it with something more constructive. Remove it from your thoughts about yourself, too!
- Say “thank you” to others.
- Give up your spot in line to the person behind you.
- Pray for others every day.
- Compliment your spouse or significant other.
- Whisper to your kids when you feel like yelling.
- Be a good neighbor.
- Test your comfort zone by trying something new.
- Love God and people more than you did in 2019.

............Life Church, by Beth Castle

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Operation Christmas Stocking is a year-round project that provides gift bags for ELCA Synod Serenity Inn Program, clients at First Lutheran’s Food Pantry and stockings filled with age appropriate items for their children/grandchildren. You can help us out by donating the following items:

For men and women: Socks, toothbrushes and toothpaste, deodorant. bar soap, travel toiletries, gloves and hats for men, pocket tissues.

For children: coloring books and activity books (they don’t have to be a Christmas theme), crayons/magic markers, mittens, toothbrushes/toothpaste, small toys (Matchbox cars, Playdoh, card games etc.).

We also except cash donations to purchase the above items.

Respectfully submitted
Co/Chairs Greta Plicka and Colleen Siarnicki
Meet Our Members...

Dave and I grew up 3.5 miles apart on family farms in Iowa. We met when I took piano lessons from Dave’s aunt. She would take us to civic music concerts where he would tease me. Our first date was the junior prom at our high school. We dated through college and got married in 1973. We had Beth in 1979 in Iowa. In 1981 we moved to Wisconsin for Dave’s job. In 1982 we had Laurel and in 1987 we had Matt. Dave has worked in advertising sales, commercial insurance and home improvements. Linda has worked as an Aurora nurse since 1982 in the ER and disease management. The kids went to Sunday School, VBS and confirmation at First Lutheran. Beth and Don were married at First. Dave has been on the church council multiple times and is currently the treasurer. Linda's first Sunday School class was co-teaching with Miss Lola a long time ago. We have three dear grandchildren, Gwen, Seth, and Eli and a dear dog named Abby.

................Linda Grulke
VILLAGE AT MANOR PARK
8536 W. Oklahoma Ave., West Allis
414-607-4186

AARP TAX ASSISTANCE
Wednesdays, Feb. 5, 12, 19 & 26
By appointment only from 10:30a-2:30p
Counselors will assist low to moderate-income taxpayers with their returns, especially those 50 and older. This service is not available if you have income property.

ENTERTAINMENT NIGHT WITH THE FESTIVAL CITY CHORUS
Tuesday, Feb. 11 at 7:30 p.m.
Milwaukee Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society share their joy of singing. A minimum free will offering of $3.00/person is suggested. Refreshments served afterwards.

EDUCATION & ENTERTAINMENT
Famed Chimpanzee Expert Dr. Jane Goodall
Thursday, Feb. 27, 1:00 p.m.
Enjoy a presentation of Dr. Jane Goodall’s life, education and lifelong love of animals and her work to preserve their habitat.

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FEBRUARY OUTINGS

SIMPLY SWINGIN’ - Sinatra & Friends
at the Riverside Theater
Sun., Feb. 9, Leaves at 1:30 p.m.

AN AMERICAN IN PARIS
at Drury Lane, Oakbrook, IL
Thurs., Feb. 13, leaves at 9:30 a.m.

Other outings are available. Contact the office at VMP for ticket pricing and further information.

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

Keynote Speaker
50 YEARS UNDER THE DOMES
Presented by Friends of the Domes
Feb. 27, 1:30-3:00 p.m.
Learn about the amazing historical significance and unique engineering feat of the Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory. What is the history of the Menomonee Valley and why were the domes designed and constructed?

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

Lifelong Learning Book Club - 1st Tue. at 12 p.m.
Feb. 4 - The Library Book by Susan Orlean
Mar. 3 - Before We Were Yours by Lisa Wingate
Call 546-7302 to register for above programs
To fall in love with God is the greatest of romances, to seek him the greatest adventure, to find him the greatest human achievement.
—St. Augustine

February Birthdays
First Lutheran
2/1 Shirley Armato
2/10 Nora Kocan
2/14 Shirley Fisher
2/14 Kent Nicolet
2/15 Thomas Herbert
2/25 Lavone Reis

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

February Anniversaries
2/15 Warren & Joan Hirschinger (F) 69 yrs.

Don’t Forget to notify the church office of any address, phone or email changes!

Need pastoral care?
Please remember to notify the 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.) contact Barb at (262)939-2728.

Bible Quiz
The precise number varies depending on the Bible version, but roughly how many times does the word "love" occur in the Old and New Testaments combined?

A. 200-300
B. 400-500
C. 600-700
D. 800-900

Answer found on p. 2

Morning is God’s way of saying one more time, Go make a difference,
Touch a heart,
Encourage a mind,
Inspire a soul
and enjoy the day.
First Lutheran Church
7400 W. Lapham St.
West Allis, WI 53214

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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