



Firs Things

December 2009

A monthly publication of
First Evangelical Lutheran Church

**100 Peace Ridge
Lake City, Minnesota 55041**

Phone
651-345-5003

Fax
651-345-5099

Office Hours
8 a.m. — 4 p.m.

First Lutheran Website
www.firstlc.org

Regular Worship Schedule
5:30 p.m. Saturday
9:00 a.m. Sunday

TV Worship Times
Sun. 5:30 p.m., Mon. 11 a.m.,
Tues. 9:30 a.m., Thurs. 4 p.m. & Fri. 8 p.m.

Pastor Darren Paulson
651-380-0473 (cell)
darren.paulson@firstlc.org

**Director of Youth and
Family Educational Ministries**
Cindy McPeake....cindy.mcpeake@firstlc.org

Director of Worship & Music
Coleen Fowler....coleen.fowler@firstlc.org

Organist
Jim Bahler

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Receptionist
Anne Pflaum....anne.pflaum@firstlc.org

Custodian
Loren Prigge

LIVE NATIVITY

**Sunday, December 20
4:00 PM TO 6:00 PM**

COME AND VISIT THE STABLE AT 100 PEACE RIDGE AS FIRST LUTHERAN PRESENTS ITS 3RD ANNUAL LIVE NATIVITY.

AFTER VIEWING OUR OUTDOOR NATIVITY, COME INSIDE AND SEE THE LARGE DISPLAY OF PERSONAL NATIVITY SETS IN THE FIRESIDE ROOM.

STAY FOR A BOWL OF CHILI, CRACKERS, BARS, COFFEE/COCOA.

Christmas Eve Worship Services

4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve By Candlelight
6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve By Candlelight
with Communion

Christmas Day Worship Services

9:00a.m. Christmas Day with Communion

Adopt-A-Family...Correction

All gifts with the mitten tags are due back on church by **Monday, December 7**--sorry no later--gifts will be distributed that week to the food shelf families.

Thank you for putting a smile on a child's face this Christmas!

Pastor's Page from Pastor Darren Paulson



They arrived in the mail today! Just as they have been for the last ten years!! The chocolate-filled Advent calendars with the little cardboard doors numbered for each day leading up to... Christmas Day. The arrival of these calendars has become as much a tradition as the tree decorating, gift buying, goody baking and – in our household – worship planning. In previous years, our friends have mailed us two Advent calendars, one for each of our children. But this year, perhaps they sensed that my wife and I also needed that spiritual exercise of expectant waiting – so they sent four. A magnificent surprise!

So we too will arrive at the breakfast table, eager for the next door to be opened to reveal a tasty part of the Christmas story. Some of the symbols appear as secular images: candy canes, gift boxes, toys and reindeer. But other doors reveal the more substantial part of the Story: wise men, angels, shepherds, a star... and a manger. With each chocolate image, is our opportunity to talk about God's coming and our faithful response. Perhaps the most important piece of the story are the searching eyes and the little (and big) fingers fumbling through the news of God being born again and again and again into the hearts and lives of people yearning for the sweet goodness of God. We never outgrow the hope-filled expectancy of hearing that declaration of Good News.

As we prepare for Christmas, this year especially, I invite you to be mindful of those who struggle through the holidays. You may have a neighbor who has lost a loved one and this is their first Christmas without a husband, wife, parent or child. Perhaps a co-worker has been downsized this year and is financially stressed. Or a new resident in our community faces the possibility of sitting alone for a Christmas dinner. Just as God has taken a bold step to enter our world of hurt and fears, may you be emboldened and inspired to enter their world with a simple act of kindness and compassion. A note, a cake, an invitation, a listening ear. Or even think about the strangers among us by taking a mitten from the Adopt-A-Family tree at church. This material gift might be a sweet reminder of God's presence in their life. God in flesh. Emmanuel.

This extends not only to those across the street, but around the world. Consider making a significant impact on the mission and ministries of your church, the ELCA, by going to www.elca.org/goodgifts and supporting a missionary, buying a goat, sponsoring a water well, providing a fruit tree, helping immunize a child, responding to disaster... or any number of things that we can do to make a positive impact in a hurting world. We CAN get beyond our guilt and helplessness!

A final note – for those who rest uneasy with the materialism of Christmas, consider visiting www.adventconspiracy.org which is a resource for Christians who would like ideas of how to make this time meaningful as you Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More and Love All. It allows us to ask the question “What if Christmas became a world-changing event again?” The tinsel and bows and lights and paper have the capacity to obscure the powerful proclamation that “...God so loved the world, that he sent His only begotten Son...”

Blessed Advent,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Darren Paulson".



To help you prepare for worship, please read the following texts for the month of December.

Dec. 6	Mal 3:1-4	Luke 1:68-79	Phil 1:3-11	Luke 3:1-6
Dec. 13	Zeph 3:14-20	Isa 12:2-6	Phil 4:4-7	Luke 3:7-18
Dec. 20	Micah 5:2-5a	Ps 80:1-7	Heb 10:5-10	Luke 1:39-45
Dec. 24	Isa 9:2-7	Ps 96	Titus 2:11-14	Luke 2:1-14
Dec 25	Isa 52:7-10	Ps 98	Heb 1:1-4	John 1:1-14
Dec. 27	1 Sam 2:18-20, 26	Ps 148	Col 3:12-17	Luke 2:41-52

Youth Connection with Cindy McPeake
Director of Youth, Family & Educational Ministries



It was just an ordinary day...with ordinary people....

There was no red carpet entrance. No cameras flashing. No special gathering. No band to announce the good news. There was just Mary, Joseph and a few shepherds to welcome in the King or Kings, Savior of the World, the great Emmanuel.

In fact, if it hadn't been for God pointing us in the right direction, the event might have been overlooked. Let's take a look at the characters...

Mary- a quiet teenage girl, just waiting to get married and start a new chapter in her life. Nothing special. We encounter women like her every day.

Joseph- a carpenter, trying to make ends meet in a small town. Looking forward to a marriage, many children and an honorable life. Sounds like some people I know.

The Shepherds- field workers, nomads, living off the land and caring for their sheep. Covered in dirt and living a not-so glamorous lifestyle. But happy.

The stable- old, stinky, full of dust, bugs and who knows what else. But it's home to animals and protects them. Definitely not a prestigious hospital.

Jesus- King of Kings, Awesome God, Everlasting One, Savior of All comes to us as a crying, small, needy baby. Hardly a great beginning.

God started his work in this world with ordinary people, in an ordinary place. He didn't ask the beautiful Egyptian queen to bear the world's savior. He didn't get the most renowned poet to announce the birth. He didn't ask the most powerful king to be the father.

He asked a small town girl and boy, along with nomads to be present at the most important event in all time.

Jesus comes to us. Ordinary people. Jesus is proclaimed by us. Ordinary people.

So be ordinary...involved in the extraordinary.

CALLING ALL PARENTS!!

Need some time off before the holidays??? Here's your answer...

Parent's Time Out!

Bring your kids to church on Friday, December 11 or Saturday, December 12 for some FREE child care (well, we will be accepting donations!). Take some time out for yourselves or to get those last minute holiday details "wrapped up" See below for more information...

Friday, December 11. 5:30-10pm

- Games, snacks, movie and free time
- Quiet room for bedtime
- Dinner provided

Saturday, December 12. 8-1pm

- Games, snack, movie and free time
- Outside play time (weather permitting)
- Lunch provided

Please sign up at the Welcome Center by Wednesday, December 9!

Chatting with Coleen Fowler Director of Worship & Music Ministry



Let's start this month off with some **SPECIAL NEWS!!** Several weeks ago I received a letter and check for \$500.00 for music for our bell choirs from Carol Siewert and family. The two bell choirs will be practicing together until after Christmas.

GRAND PIANO FUND is getting closer to completion each week!! Bev and Bob Polk decided to gift our church with a new adjustable piano bench. All our pianists will now be able to adjust the level for better control of the keyboard. The bench will be ordered next week. The renovation project has turned into a Church Family Project. Individuals keep coming up with different ideas to contribute. Tyler Johnson and Noah Paulson have earned money through the stewardship committee. Last week I got a call from a daughter of a church member who wondered if all the grandchildren could go together and "buy a key" for grandma for Christmas and if all their names could be listed. What a great idea. I'm eagerly awaiting that gift. If you would like to be a permanent part of our church history, you still have an opportunity to contribute to our piano renovation fund.

We are looking at a **MUSIC APPRECIATION CONCERT** at which time we will dedicate our new piano and bells. A tentative date of Sunday April 25th has been set. A booklet telling the history of the piano, how it was renovated, and who has contributed to this important addition to our church will be printed. You will notice contributions made in honor of loved ones such as grandchildren, an anniversary, a birthday and several contributions from friends of the church. What a great project! We have raised \$3,061.99!!!! As I started digging into some history while working on the 140th, I discovered that all our keyboard instruments past and present have all been purchased with all or some memorial monies.

With all the talent in this church I'm asking for a special committee including "fine arts" people who are interested in incorporating gifts such as, quilting, banners, painting, scrap booking, sewing, hand work and the list goes on. Let me know if you will be on a **MUSIC AND FINE ARTS COMMITTEE**. There will be few meetings as everyone interested will have a responsibility to organize. Another new and exciting project.

WEDNESDAY REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

4:00 Cherub Choir
4:30 Junior Choir
6:00 Handbell Choirs are rehearsing together until Dec 9th
7:15 Senior Choir
8:30 Small groups, Solos, Ensembles

All are welcome to join!! Please contact Coleen at the church office if you are interested!!

PRAISE ENSEMBLE rehearses every Saturday at 4:30 before the 5:30 worship service. Anyone is welcome to sing with us. Just come early and rehearse with us before the service. We are recruiting new members for the Advent season.

BRASS ENSEMBLE rehearses when needed. Usually rehearsals are on Saturday or Sunday after Worship. They will play during Advent but the weekend won't be announced until next week. If you are interested in joining us call me. We use different instruments each time we play as our instrumental scores call for varied instruments.

We will be using a new liturgy for Advent similar to the Holden service we use during Lent. There will be additional special music all four weeks during Advent including bells, brass, solos and small groups.

From our Congregation President, Dean Flugstad



Fellow Members-

We have celebrated Thanksgiving as a church family and as individual families and oh how much we have to be thankful for. Some feel that, during the Stewardship Appeals, traditional use of the words, time, talent and treasure have been over-used. So let's call them moments, gifts and gifting. The Church Council and myself personally, owe a huge thank you to all of you for sharing your moments, gifts and gifting so willingly to help make other's lives more fulfilled. We want, need and encourage more of you to say " Yes I will !!!!" when asked to become a part of the First Lutheran Team. What better team could you be on?

The Nominating Committee will be meeting this month to start thinking about who of you will be our new leaders and helpers in 2010. Please be ready with a great big positive "Yes".

We have a wonderful and talented staff, who go the extra mile for all of us, and yes they are paid. But their compensation is greatly expanded when they hear from you how well they are doing. Thank you for doing so.

May the season of Christ's birth be very blessed for you.

Dean Flugstad

Family First

FAMILY FIRST: *Faith is caught, not taught...*

Nativity Ornament...Explore the Christmas Story!

Materials Needed (for each Nativity Scene):

- 6-inch piece of ribbon
- 5 cinnamon sticks
- Small wooden or cardboard star
- Yellow paint
- Glitter
- Paintbrush
- Christmas cards with Nativity scene
- Colored pencils
- Paper
- Glue
- Scissors
- Potpourri

Directions:

- Have each child paint the small star with yellow paint and sprinkle glitter on it. Allow to dry.
- Glue 5 cinnamon sticks in the shape of a house.
- Create a Nativity scene by cutting out the figures from a Christmas card and glue onto a sheet of paper. Attach to the cinnamon stick stable.
- Glue potpourri onto the sides of the stable for a rustic look and nice smell.
- Glue the star to the top of the stable.
- Attach the ribbon to serve as a hanger.

Read: Luke 2:4-7

- How might Mary and Joseph felt when there was no room at the Inn?
- Have the children create a life size Nativity scene using boxes, dolls, stuffed animals and other props.
- Set your family Nativity scene and talk about the different pieces of the set, along with family stories.



From our Financial Secretary and Treasurer Mavis Hawkins and Chuck Bremer



GENERAL FUND

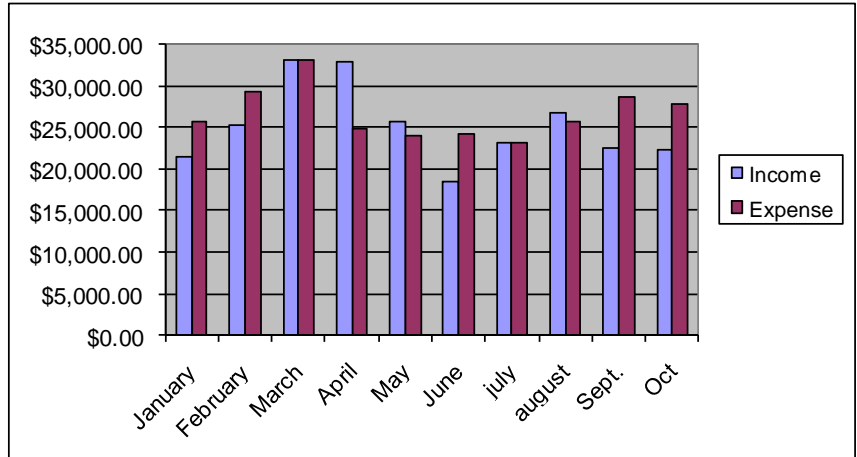
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
Income	\$21,563	\$25,316	\$33,176	\$32,897	\$25,640	\$18,566	\$23,107	\$26,856	\$22,477	\$22,372
Expense	\$25,712	\$29,406	\$33,100	\$24,886	\$24,059	\$24,222	\$23,208	\$25,764	\$28,769	\$27,856

General fund: Oct. 31, 2009

income year to date \$250,341.68

expense year to date \$258,709.52

income less expense -\$8,367.84



BUILDING FUND

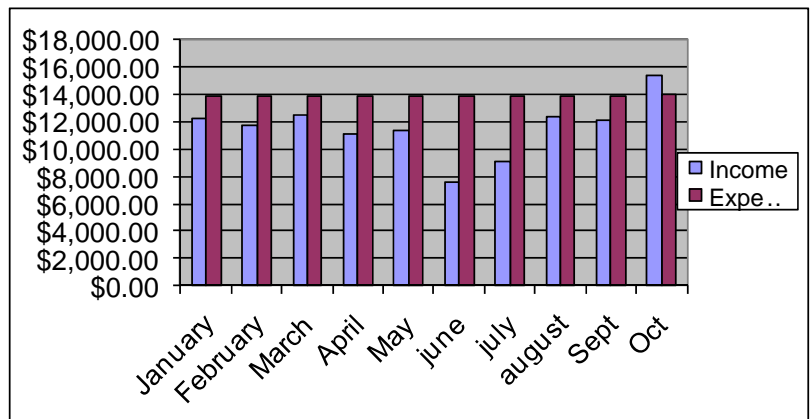
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
Income	\$12,180	\$11,713	\$12,527	\$11,090	\$11,312	\$7,573	\$9,067	\$12,332	\$12,123	\$15,325
Expense	\$13,854	\$13,854	\$13,854	\$13,902	\$13,854	\$13,854	\$13,854	\$13,854	\$13,854	\$14,029

Building fund: Oct. 31, 2009

income to date \$114,067.62

expense to date \$138,764.79

income less expense -\$24,697.17



Prayer Ministry

Prayer Request

Here is a list of the Prayer Team Chairpersons for each week in the month of **December**.

The Prayer Chain is an invitation to our members to pray for each other, members of our extended Christian community and world concerns. If you have a prayer request, you may contact the Chairperson listed for that week or call the church office at 345-5003.

Dec. 6: Prayer Chain #1 Vi Stinson 345-4371
Dec. 13: Prayer Chain #2 Deb Holmgren 345-5555
Dec. 20: Prayer Chain #3 Betty Smith 345-2304
Dec. 27: Prayer Chain #4 Shirley Luettinger 345-2429

Our prayers and congratulations are extended to...

- ◆Valerie & Uriah Peterson on the birth of their daughter Greta Jean born on October 31, 2009. Grandparents are John & Audry Plote.
- ◆Chris & Melinda Klein on the birth of their son Garrett Michael born on November 12, 2009.
- ◆Ellie (Svien) & Justin Kaas on their October 31, 2009 wedding.

Special Thank you to . . .

- ◆Funeral Assistants: "I would like to thank all of the people who served the lunch at my brother, Freddie Knaup's funeral. Also thanks you for opening your beautiful church to my family at this difficult time." ~Rita Richardson
- ◆Brigitte Rol for creating the Christmas Tree for the Adopt-A-Family mittens.

Remember in Prayer...

Health Concerns

Bob Johnson	Margaret Wehking
Marv Berkeland	Dave Moses
Dawn Heitman	Joe Jerdee
Jerry Narveson	

Friends and Family

Garrett Michael Klein (newborn son of Chris & Melinda Klein)
Ken Staples (Corrine Johnson's brother)
John Brunkow (Dale Nibbe's cousin)
Mary Dwelle Coyle (Glenn & Angie Dwelle's daughter)
Allen Fravert (Carol Schmidt's father)
Audrejean Myrah (Kristi Griffin's mother)
Jan Kylo (Mary Berg-Prigge's cousin)
Richard Stalvo (Sandy Swan's father)
Rita Dwelle (Glenn & Angie Dwelle's daughter-in-law)
Jessie Kutina (mother of Debbie Mickelson)
Judy Francois (sister of Dick Severson)
Gary Paulson (father of Pastor Darren)
Darl Boone (son-in-law of Phil & Dana Gartner)
Mia Oeltjen (granddaughter of Donna Oeltjen)
Kristopher & Rebecca Hartwig (our missionaries in Tanzania)
First Lutheran Council Members

In our Nursing Home, Home Bound, and

Assisted Living: Howard Fick, Arline Schmidt, Gertrude Martin, Lillian Johnson, Mary DeGroat, Rozella Lloyd, Ralph O'Connors, Ione O'Connors, Fred and Pat Vavra, Bill & Edith Hammer

All service men and women: Jared Morgan, Justin Fuchs, Todd Plote, Ricky Frickson, Randy Frickson, Garret Rigelman, Matt Sikkink, Ryan Steffenhagen

If you would like to be part of an email prayer chain group that prays for the healing of others, please email Pastor Darren Paulson at

darren.paulson@firstlc.org

2010 Offering Envelopes Are Available!

2010 Offering envelopes are ready to be picked up in Gathering Area! Please pick up before the end of the year.

Some households have chosen to do automated giving through our bank – a simple, consistent way to support the ministry that is important to you and your household. You can still use your offering envelopes so you can make that important act of generosity during worship... however just indicate on your envelope that you use the automated giving program. Contact the church office to request an easy, confidential form for the automated giving program.

Youth & Family Ministries—December Events

Sunday, December 6: First & 3rd. It's Romans and Christians time! Wear dark clothes and bring you "A" game! Pizza will be served! *First & 3rd meets from 6-7:30pm every first and third Sunday of the month! 7th grade and up invited!*

Sunday, December 13: AGAPE! "Sprinkle Sunshine....." Agape, a hip hop artist (one of Cindy's FAVORITES) will be at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Rochester-we're getting a group together! Meet at 4:30pm in the church to carpool to Gloria Dei and plan to arrive back around 9pm. Please bring cash for dinner (we'll be stopping at some sort of fast food place) and \$2 towards a children's toy. Gloria Dei is asking for unwrapped children's toys for the cost of admission. Please sign up at the Welcome Center by December 12. **We need adult drivers. Please see Cindy if you can help out.**

Wednesday, December 16: K.F.C./Children's Choir Christmas Party! We'll be celebrating Christmas with yummy snacks, fun games and caroling at the nursing home. Please see Cindy if you can provide a snack or help shuttling kids to the nursing home. We will meet from 3-5pm as normally scheduled.

Saturday, December 19: Youth Christmas Party at Cindy's House! Our normal First & 3rd event will be on Saturday in order to celebrate Christmas. Festivities start at 6:30pm with supper, snacks and games...we will head out to carol around town, and then return back to Cindy's house for warm drinks and an ornament exchange. We will be picking names and making ornaments that night...bring your craftiness. We will gather at Cindy's house at 6:30pm and should finish up by 9pm. See Cindy for directions to her house.

K.F.C. Schedule/Topics: *K.F.C. is for First- Sixth graders. We meet every Wednesday from 3-4pm.*

<i>Schedule:</i>	<i>2:50 Pick up at Bluff View</i>	<i>Topics:</i>	<i>2: Advent Wreath</i>
	<i>3-4 KFC Activities & Snack</i>		<i>9: Bethlehem Star</i>
	<i>4-5 Children's Choir & Quiet Activities</i>		<i>16: Christmas Party</i>
			23 & 30: NO K.F.C.

Sunday School:

Sunday, December 6 and 13- Christmas Program Practice. We will be practicing for the Christmas program from 10:15-12pm on December 6 and December 13.

Sunday, December 20: Christmas Program and Party. Our annual Christmas program will feature the traditional Christmas story along with some favorite hymns. The program starts at 10:15am during our education hour. We will have a celebration after the program with snacks and games. All members of the congregation, along with extended family members, are invited to come!

Sunday, December 27: No Class, Christmas Break.

Sunday, January 2: No Class, New Years Break.

Offering: During December our offering money will continue to go towards Adopt-a-Family. We will be raising money to help make some children's holiday a little brighter!

Birthdays: November birthdays will be celebrated on December 20- make sure to bring in your pennies if you have a birthday this month!

ReKindle:

Wednesday, December 9: No Class, Small Group Night. Watch for more details as small group plan their individual events

Wednesday, December 23: No Class, Christmas Break

Wednesday, December 30: No Class, New Years Break

REMEMBER YOUTH QUAKE FORMS AND DEPOSIT ARE DUE DECEMBER 16!

Happy Birthday and Happy Anniversary!

December 1

Lisa Carlson
Eric Hanson
Tanner Tufto

December 2

Mike Bobb
Shirley Pierson
Alex Schneider

December 3

Andrea Berkeland
AnnElise Ender
Kim Vander Laan
Wes & Jessica Nibbe

December 5

Lillian Johnson
Cole Kriett

December 6

Ray Tiedeman

December 7

Gail Jungclaus
Violet Larson

December 8

Katherine Yotter

December 9

Nancy Albright
Stephanie Eggenberger
Phil Jacobson
Joe Jerdee
Lidia Wallerich

December 10

Courtney Brunn
Jacob Davis
Keith Leiseth
Paula West

December 11

Janee Klipfel
Brady Kuchinka
Robert & Jane Johnson
Jack & Wanita Parker

December 12

Paulette Clare
Sydnee Stolzenberg
Bruce & Vi Stinson

December 13

Susan Davis
Allison Hanson
Patty Leiseth
Clint & Janet Moe

December 14

Adam Fuchs
Renee Merten
Jenna Swan
Roger & Lorna Hinck

December 15

Kari Dietrich
Judy Johansen

December 17

Carl Rol
Morgan West
Mason West
Dr. Scott & Beth Knudsen
Elmer & Mavis Sprick

December 18

Marge Copp
Jessica Nibbe
Eric Skifton
Marvin & Eloise Blattner
David & Stephanie Harvey

December 19

Dale Adler
Patricia Hinck
Dave Schultze
Brooke Tracy

December 20

Kristie Breyfogle

December 21

Jerry Jensen

December 22

Jordan Ebert
Jim Rodester
Milo & Margaret Wehking

December 23

Marcus Jacobson

December 24

Lydia Mueller

December 25

Kathryn Hollman
Louie & Marlene Boehmke

December 26

Jim Anderson
Glenn Dwelle
Cole Erickson
Jodi Lundell
Login McCarthy

December 27

Janice Barker
Darla Geary
Holly Pfeilsticker
Nickolas Sievers
Lucy Sontag
Duane & Blanche Brommer
Jerry & Sue Jensen
Dr. Alan & Marcia Knudsen
Don & Nancy Mueller

December 28

Kevin Gunhus
Lyle Papenfuss

December 29

Wanda Myers
Thoren & Naomi Mangold

December 30

David & Patricia Hinck

December 31

Alexandra Berlin
Jack & Jenny Gabor

Birthdays are listed first
Anniversaries are in italics
If your birthday or anniversary is not listed, please let the church office know at 345-5003

December 2009 Ministry Assignments

USHERS SATURDAY 5:30 PM (2 NEEDED)		USHERS SUNDAY 9:00 AM (4 NEEDED)	
5 Roger & Kathy Hollman		6 Jake Griebenow, KaBree Krier, Dick & LaDonna Severson	
12 Roger & Carole Helgerson		13 Jon & Sonda Featherstone	
19		20 Elmer Sprick/Marv Blattner	
26		27 Elmer Sprick/Marv Blattner	
GREETERS SAT. 5:30PM	GREETERS SUN. 9AM	READER SUNDAY	ASSISTING MINISTER SUN.
5 Alyssa Wooding	6 Elmer & Mavis Sprick	6 Cheryl Luettinger	6
12 Ken & Virginia Oliver	13 Mitch Kuchinka, Logan Meincke	13 Sandy Anderson	13
19 Kyle Paulson, Jessica Witte	20	20 Cheryl Luettinger	20
26	27 Arnie & Paulette Clare	27 Shirley Pierson	27
ASSISTING MINISTER SAT.	COMMUNION ASSISTANTS SAT. (2)	COMMUNION ASSISTANTS SUN. (2)	
5 David Barker	5	6 Lucy Sontag	
12 Jenny Schlagenhaft	12	13	
19	19 Jenny Schlagenhaft	20	
26	26	27	
ALTAR FOR SAT. & SUN.	HELPING AT THE NURSING HOME	SUNDAY COFFEE	
5/6 Blanche Brommer & Mavis Sprick	8	6	
12/13 Blanche Brommer & Mavis	15	13	
19/20 JoAnn Thompson & Angie	22	20	
26/27 JoAnn Thompson & Angie	24	27 Arnie & Paulette Clare	
	29		
ACOLYTE SATURDAY 5:30 PM	ACOLYTE SUNDAY 9AM	WELCOME CENTER SUNDAY	
5 Tanner Tufto	6 Reid Lundell	6	
12 Tyler Ruiz	13 Chelsey Mandelkow	13	
19 Michael Pfeilsticker	20 Johanna Ender	20	
26 Hannah Alitz	27 Courtney Haviland	27	
VIDEO TAPE SUNDAY	SOUND & SCREEN SAT-URDAY	SOUND & SCREEN SUNDAY	VISITATION
6 Randy Zanto	5	6	
13 Mark Bailey	12	13	
20 Mary Hallenberger	19	20	
25	24 4pm: 6pm:	25 10am	
27	26	27	

December 2009 Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<p>1 First Luth Quilters 8:30am @ FLC Cub Scouts 6:30pm</p>	<p>2 KFC 3-4pm @ FLC Children's Choir 4-5pm Handbell Choirs 5:30pm ReKindle 6:00pm Property Board Mtg 7pm Senior Choir 7:15pm</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 Cindy's Day of Rest AA Bible Study 7pm</p>	<p>5 Dick Fowler Bible Study 7:30am Worship 5:30pm</p>
<p>6 Worship 9am Christmas Program Practice 10:15-12pm First & 3rd 6pm</p>	<p>7 ADOPT-A-FAMILY GIFTS DUE Pastor Darren's Day of Rest Boy Scouts 6:30pm</p>	<p>8 Cub Scouts 6:30pm</p>	<p>9 Grief Group 10:30am KFC 3-4pm @ FLC Children's Choir 4-5pm Handbell Choirs 5:30pm No ReKindle-Small Group Night Senior Choir 7:15pm</p>	<p>10 No Bible Study Piecemakers 9-12 @ Dragon Fly Lay Ministry 7pm Outreach Board 7pm</p>	<p>11 Jessica Meyer/Jason Holst wedding 6:30pm Cindy's Day of Rest Parent's Time out 5:30-10pm AA Bible Study 7pm</p>	<p>12 Violet Stinsen Anniv Party in Gathering Area 2-4pm (75ppl) Worship 5:30pm Parent's Time out 8-1pm</p>
<p>13 Worship 9am Children's Choir 8:30am for worship Christmas Program Practice 10:15-12pm Agape Group leaves from FLC 4:30pm</p>	<p>14 Pastor Darren's Day of Rest Boy Scouts 6:30pm</p>	<p>15 First Luth Quilters 8:30am @ FLC Cub Scouts 6:30pm</p>	<p>16 Esther Circle 10am @ FLC Children's Choir/ KFC Christmas Party 3pm Handbell Choir 5 & 6pm ReKindle 6:00pm Senior Choir 7:15pm</p>	<p>17 Martha Bible Study 9:15am FLC Nursing Home 3:30 & 4pm Church Council 7pm</p>	<p>18 Cindy's Day of Rest AA Bible Study 7pm</p>	<p>19 Dick Fowler Bible Study 7:30am Worship 5:30pm Youth Christmas Party @ Cindy's 6:30-9pm</p>
<p>20 Worship 9am Children's Christmas Program/ Birthday Party for Jesus 10:15 Live Nativity/Chili Feed 4-6pm</p>	<p>21 Pastor Darren's Day of Rest Boy Scouts 6:30pm</p>	<p>22 Cub Scouts 6:30pm</p>	<p>23 Grief Group 10:30am NO Children's Choir NO KFC NO ReKindle Handbell Choir 5 & 6pm Senior Choir 7:15pm</p>	<p>24 Office Closed at Noon No Bible Study Worship 4 & 6pm</p>	<p>25 Christmas Office Closed Cindy's Day of Rest Worship 10am</p>	<p>26 Worship 5:30pm Cindy Out</p>
<p>27 Worship 9am No Sunday School Cindy Out</p>	<p>28 Pastor Darren's Day of Rest Cindy Out AM Boy Scouts 6:30pm</p>	<p>29 First Luth Quilters 8:30am @ FLC Cub Scouts 6:30pm</p>	<p>30 NO Children's Choir NO KFC NO ReKindle Handbell Choir 5 & 6pm Senior Choir 7:15pm</p>	<p>31 No Bible Study Cindy Out</p>	<p>January 1st Office Closed Cindy's Day of Rest</p>	

Upcoming Events & Announcements

Advent By Candlelight: Sunday, November 29, 6:30pm... Advent by Candlelight presents: I Wait...I Wonder. In all her humanness and uncertainty, Mary shares her conflicting emotions in four powerful monolog: Watching and Waiting; Worthy and Unworthy; The Magnificent; and Journeys Ended and Begun. Women of First Lutheran and guests, please join us for an evening of quiet stillness, reflection, music, and fellowship as we prepare our hearts for the Christmas season. Advanced registration (include your name and the names of all guests) is required by Sunday, November 22. Seating after this date is not guaranteed. We are also in need of table hostesses and dessert makers! Please sign-up at Welcome Center.

It's time to Make Lefse: Saturday, December 5... Please join us at First Lutheran Church on Saturday, December 5, at 8:30 a.m. to make lefse. If you have the lefse equipment, please bring it along. If you've never made lefse and would like to learn how to do it, call Wanita Parker at 345-3105. (She'll give you Jack's secret recipe!)

For those of you that would like to purchase lefse, a sign-up will be at the Welcome Center in November. Only lefse that is pre-purchased by Sunday, November 29 will be available for sale. Order your lefse! Price is \$5.00 for 6 rounds. All proceeds will go towards the Building Fund. Any questions, contact Wanita Parker at 345-3105.

Adopt-a-Family: Monday, December 7...REMINDER: All gifts with the mitten tags are due back on church by Monday, December 7--sorry no later--gifts will be distributed that week to the food shelf families. Thank you for putting a smile on a child's face this Christmas!

Widows Speak: Tuesday, December 10... The Widows Speak support and social group will take place on December 15th at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Corrine Johnson. Women attending are asked to bring a dozen Christmas cookies. This social/support group is open to all widows at FLC and the community. Women having any questions are asked to contact Corrine Johnson 345-3016 or Carol Siewert 345-2107.

Animals & People needed for Live Nativity Scene... First Lutheran has begun preparation for our annual Live Nativity Scene!! Wanted are: Carpenters, Participants for our "Outdoor Scene" (Teens and Adults are needed), Animals, Animal caretakers, Hay Bales. Costumes will be provided. No speaking parts! Also, needed are your personal Nativity sets for our indoor display. Please sign-up at the Welcome Center or contact Mavis Hawkins at 345-2343.

Limited Number of Poinsettia's Left... There are 2 white and 3 red Poinsettia's remaining!! They are beautiful 7" Poinsettia's from Angie's Creations for \$14.00. Sign up at the Welcome Center before they are gone!!

Attention All Snowbirds... Please let the church office know your address and the dates you will be leaving and returning so that we can make sure your FLC mail is forwarded properly!!!

Help for Daily Living-Did you know... that we have some men in our congregation eager to serve you? If you have a task or project that needs the attention of a friendly, enthusiastic volunteer – we have just the right folks for you. Tim Schlagenhaft and Randy Klipfel have been leading the Help For Daily Living group for several years and have enjoyed putting their faith in action as Jesus calls us to "love your neighbor as yourself." Previous projects have included light carpentry, yard work, cleaning, rides, moving, hauling – just to name a few. All it takes is a call to Tim (345-3078) or Randy (345-2136). Also, if you are handy and also willing to serve in this way, please pass your name and number to Tim.

Lake City Food Shelf... is in need of Ketchup, Mustard, Bottles Salad Dressing. Please bring your food to church and place it in the wooden bin by the Welcome Center.

Stewardship Board

A Note from the Stewardship Board...

Thank you for returning your Estimate of Giving cards for the 2010 **General Fund** (operating budget)! This year, our total number of "pledge" cards are lower than in previous years and subsequently also the total giving amount.

	# of Pledges	Total Amount
2009	132	\$193,714
2010	112	\$167,611

If you plan to return your Estimate of Giving Card, please give it prayerful consideration and return it soon so that our Finance Board and Church Council can make wise and informed decisions as we plan next year's operating budget.

Additionally, we have also received the same number of Estimates of Giving for the **Building Fund** – mostly indicating a continuation of their 3-year pledge. A few households indicated and increase their pledge, some indicating a decrease – which effectively allowed the commitment to the Building Fund to remain steady. However, this past year, our giving to the Building Fund has so far been approximately \$24,000 LESS than our mortgage obligation. This has required us to dip into our reserve funds. If you have not already pledged to the Building Fund, please consider doing so this year as we come to the final year of our 3-year fund appeal.

Thank you!

Outreach Board

Outreach Visitation Teams

We're pleased to launch our Outreach Visitation Team! We have two teams consisting of Jenny & Tim Schlagenhaft and Dick and Marvel Klein who will make personal visits to our second-time worship visitors. You, too, can participate in our welcoming ministry by making sure the Friendship Registers (red books in the pews) get passed so we have accurate information of our worship guests. Additionally, take an extra minute in worship to greet a person that you don't know. They may be a long time member – and surprise! – you've just made a new acquaintance. Or they may be a new visitor – and surprise! – they have just discovered that First Lutheran Church is as friendly as we hope it should be. Additional OVT teams are welcomed – please contact Pastor Darren if you wish to participate.

Health & Wellness Ministry

The Health and Wellness Ministry taskforce members met on Sunday, November 15th. There were 10 members in attendance.

Additional wellness measures or tools were discussed: Blue zones health assessments and practices, use of our website for communicating about Health and Wellness, use of our FLC space for 12-Step meetings and other community groups, public health interventions and information and job loss workshops.

Our next meeting will be held, Sunday, December 6th from 10:15-10:45 in Pastor Darren's office. Please grab a cup of coffee and join in if you have an interest.

Agenda for December 6th Meeting:

1. Identify action steps and ownership for steps we'd like to take in the first quarter of 2010 to move us forward toward our goals in three areas:
 - A. Advocacy for health issues
 - B. Collaboration with existing boards
 - C. Focus on areas of deficiency in Physical Health, Intellectual Health (specific to health and wellness) and Environmental Health.

Please call (345-4512) or email (amkjelland@gmail.com) Anne Marie Kjelland with questions or feedback.

Bible Studies

Leading men and women into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ

Thursday Morning Bible Study with Pastor Darren Paulson... will meet on **Thursdays at 8:00 a.m.** We will be studying the Gospel of John. **Note: December 24 & 31 No Class.**

Men's Bible Study with Rev. Dick Fowler... will meet on **Saturday, December 5 & 19 at 7:30 a.m.**

Martha Bible Study for Women... will meet on **Thursday, December 17 at 9:15 a.m.** in the Fireside Room.

Esther Circle... will meet on **Wednesday, December 16 at 10:00 a.m.** at FLC. After the Bible study we will go out to lunch!!! Any questions please call Corrine Johnson 651-345-3016 or Betty Smith 651-345-2304.

Women's Ministries

First Lutheran Quilters... will meet on **Tuesday, December 1, 15 & 29 at 8:30 a.m.** in FLC Gathering Area.

First Lutheran Piecemakers... will meet on **Wednesday, December 10 at Dragonfly Dreams from 9-noon.** Please contact Lori Lichtblau at 345-5502 or Lichtblau@embarqmail.com with any questions.

NEW!! From Women's Ministry

Finding Strength for Your Struggles *A Max Lucado Study*

For many people, life is a jungle. Not a jungle of trees and beasts but of failing health, broken hearts, and empty wallets. Is your life a jungle? Confusing? Difficult to maneuver? Scary? God has provided you with all you need to make it through the jungle of life. This four-part study will help you find strength through God.

We will meet Mondays, 5:30 – 7:00pm, in the Fireplace Room at First Lutheran:

January 11 – Lesson 1: *A Second Chance at Life*

January 25 – Lesson 2: *Standing Strong in Life's Storms*

February 8 – Lesson 3: *Trusting More, Worrying Less*

February 22 – Lesson 4: *How Hurts Bring Hope*

No book is necessary. Come as often as you are able!

Please RSVP to Jenny Schlagenhaft at jtnschlag@earthlink.net or 345-3078.

Adult Forum December 2009 & January 2010

December 6: *Do Jews, Muslims, and Christians Worship the Same God?* From the DVD series, "Good God Questions." **Pastor Darren** will lead the discussion following the DVD. This DVD is an introduction to a two-part forum series on Islam (December) and Judaism (January).

December 13: *Understanding the Muslim Faith - Dr. Fatma Reda.* Dr. Reda was born in Egypt, and is a devout Muslim. She is a highly regarded psychiatrist practicing in the Twin Cities, and an articulate spokesperson for the Muslim faith. In our diverse world, it is becoming ever more important that we understand and respect peace-loving persons whose expressions of faith are different from our own. Dr. Reda is such a person.

December 20: No forum. An intergenerational Sunday for the forum. The Sunday School Christmas program will be presented in the sanctuary - everyone is welcome.

December 27: No Forum - Christmas weekend

January 3, 2010: No Forum - New Year's weekend

January 10: *The Dead Sea Scrolls - DVD.* We have been searching for a DVD on this subject for a couple of years and finally located one. What are the Dead Sea Scrolls? One of the greatest archaeological finds of the 20th century - fragments of the earliest-known texts of the Bible. Also include mysterious writings of a group calling themselves "Sons of Light" which are among the oldest manuscripts ever found. Written in Hebrew and Aramaic they are around 135 BC - over 2,000 years old. Discovered between 1947 and 1956 in 11 caves in the Judean desert on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea (near Qumran on the West Bank). Why were the scrolls put there? Who wrote them? Please note: There is a Dead Sea Scrolls exhibition created by the Israel Antiquities Authority and the Science Museum of Minnesota opening on March 12, 2010, at the Science Museum in St. Paul. Tickets are on sale now, for more information go to www.smm.org.

Adult Forum on Sexuality Reflections...

On Sunday, November 8th, we held a forum to discuss the resolutions that were passed at the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA this past August. The principal goal was simply to seek understanding by presenting the resolutions, describe the process and find understanding for how and why decisions were made. The two particular topics of some concern related to homosexuality: the blessing of same-sex unions, and the ordination of gay and lesbian clergy in committed relationships.

There was a good attendance for the morning. Our time together allowed some time initially to first describe the process for resolutions to come before the churchwide assembly. We briefly looked at other resolutions presented that reflect the wide array of important social concerns that we have felt called by the Gospel to respond to in faith. There was a video introduction by Bishop Huck Usgaard of the SEMN Synod Office that nicely set the stage for faithful, thoughtful conversation.

In small groups, members were provided an opportunity to share fears and concerns – as well as hopes and joys – as a result of this discussion. The material was presented with some conversation – however three things were evident:

1. That we were able to remain both *honest and civil* with one another while discussing a topic that in other contexts have the ability to be emotionally charged and divisive. Several were grateful for the information provided and appreciated the tone in which the conversation was held. Thanks be to God!
2. People would like to *continue conversation* on this matter. A few requests were made by the "snowbirds" that we schedule session sometime after March upon their return so they may continue to participate. Please look for more information in coming months as we schedule our follow-up conversation.
3. There have been *no changes in policies or procedures* within the ELCA related to the result of these resolutions. They did, however, open the door for future changes in policy related to the blessing of same sex unions and ordination of gay and lesbian clergy in committed relationships. But currently, the ELCA, and this congregation, continue to operate under the previously determined policy – that we observe no rite of marriage for same sex relationships, nor do we ordain gay and lesbian clergy in committed relationships. There are no requirements to teach otherwise coming on behalf of the ELCA. The Executive Committee of First Lutheran as well as the broader Church Council, felt that we need not establish any policy at this time – other than to honor and uphold the policy currently in place.

More information on the full text of the resolutions and additional downloadable resources can be found online at www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/JTF-Human-Sexuality.aspx or simply stop into the church office and request materials from Pastor Darren.

**First Lutheran Church
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December FAMILY FUN Event!

Sunday, December 20

Children's Christmas Program

Bring the whole family for our Christmas Program. Our kids will be retelling the Christmas story along with singing some favorite Christmas Hymns. The WHOLE family is invited (make sure to bring other relatives) to share in this special story. Program starts at 10:15am

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