



November 2014

October 31, 2014

# JESUS SAID, GO AND DO LIKEWISE LUKE 10:37

Thanksgiving is a time for considering the ways that we can “go and do likewise” by serving those in need both near and far. Each year we meet for worship on Thanksgiving Eve and give God thanks for the many blessings he bestows. The offering we receive at this service is designated for those less fortunate. Your offering during the month to support ELCA World Hunger and other hunger needs is encouraged. Special envelopes are available on the greeters’ table, or you may note “Hunger” or “Disaster” on the memo line of your check. Thank you for your generous giving to those in need around the world. Give thanks with a grateful heart!

#### **A few ways you can make a difference:**

- ✦ Support Food for Kidz/Kids Against Hunger by making a donation or helping at a food packaging event.
- ✦ Serve as a First Lutheran Church liaison to Share A Meal.
- ✦ Volunteer to assist with the Community Thanksgiving Meal.
- ✦ Volunteer your time or provide monetary donations at the Morrison County Food Shelf.
- ✦ Advocate for hunger issues around the world by joining the ONE campaign, a non-partisan effort to end global hunger, go to [www.one.org](http://www.one.org) for more information.
- ✦ Deliver Meals on Wheels to homebound persons in the community, call the church office to volunteer during the week of November 10-14.
- ✦ Provide financial support to ELCA World Hunger Appeal.

**Jesus said, “Go and do likewise!”**

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## ***A Note from Pastor Hank***

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A few weeks ago our readings during worship mentioned that Christ is the cornerstone upon which the church is built. During the Children's Sermon on that Sunday, I asked the kids what the church is. One girl said the church is the building we were in. One boy said it was the place where we learned about God. I told them that they were both right, but that there was another meaning to the word "church" that was the most important one of all. I told them that *they* were the church. I told them that the church is really God's people rather than a building.

Then I pointed out to the kids all of the beautiful stones in the wall behind the altar. I told them how Peter, one of Jesus' first followers wrote a letter to other Christians in which he encouraged them to come to Jesus as a "living stone" and let themselves be built together into God's house.

I told them that we are all living stones—together we are the church, the house of God. Then I told the kids to go up behind the pulpit and the altar and choose a stone—a stone that would be their stone, a reminder that they were "living stones," built into the house of God. I suggested that whenever they came into the sanctuary they should look at their stone and remember that they are a part of the church—a living church, doing together what God wants done in the world.

I hope that all those beautiful stones built into the wall behind the pulpit and the altar and the piano will remind all of us, kids and adults that we are indeed living stones out of which God's house is built—we are the church and without us what God wants done won't get done.

One of the ways we—as the church—do what God wants done is through the seven ministry commissions here at First Lutheran. Dedicated volunteers, who understand what Peter meant when he called the Christians of his time to be "living stones" for the building of the church, meet each month to plan, implement and oversee the ministries that make First Lutheran an effective and vital community of faith. I am grateful for each one of them and deeply appreciate the faith

and commitment that moves them to serve in our ministry and mission. ***I would like to invite you to join them.*** Each commission is in need of at least three to four additional volunteers—and each would be happy to have even more!

Especially now as we begin the process of calling a new pastor, it is of the utmost importance that we strengthen our ability to do ministry that really matters in the lives of people young and old. For that we need to strengthen each commission. For that we need you.

In this edition of the Newsletter, you will find brief descriptions of what the seven ministry commissions do. Please look them over; see if one of them answers to your interests and abilities, and then come as a "living stone" and let yourself be built into the house of God. Thank you.

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Congratulations to Laura and Ellie, Noah and Owen who confirmed their faith on Reformation Sunday. It is indeed a significant milestone in their life of faith. But as I mentioned to them earlier, Confirmation is not graduation. The life of faith is a process of life-long learning. Pray that these young people would continue to deepen their understanding of and relationship with the God who made them and loves them.

*Pastor Hank*

*"As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving."* Colossians 2:6-7

As your staff ministry team, it is our complete joy and privilege to serve alongside each of you here at First Lutheran. We thank you for the many ways that you minister to each of us and the care and love that you show us. Know that you and your love for the Lord are blessings in our lives. Happy Thanksgiving!

In His abiding peace and love,  
Your Staff Ministry Team

**YOUR PASSION—YOUR GIFTS—YOUR COMMITMENT ARE NEEDED  
IN THE MINISTRIES OF FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH**

Churches thrive when their members get involved in the ministries that make things happen. Churches stagnate or decline when the number of committed volunteers goes down. At First Lutheran we have many dedicated folks working to make us a thriving community of faith—but we need more folks to get involved.

At the present time each of the seven commissions that plan, implement and oversee the ministries of First Lutheran are short of members and looking for new volunteers. As part of the process for calling a new pastor, we need to strengthen our commissions and increase our ability to do ministry that matters in the life of our congregation and in the larger Little Falls community.

May I ask you to read through the following brief descriptions of our commissions, find one that speaks to your passions and gifts, and then pray

about whether God is nudging you to become a ministry volunteer. *And let me stress that we are not asking you to sign up for life!* We are only asking for a one-year commitment, and if at any time during that year there are changes in your circumstances that make it difficult to continue volunteering, just let me know.

There are sign-up sheets for each commission in the Gathering Place. We'll keep them there for a few weeks to give you time to think and pray about how you might help your church by volunteering for one of our ministry commissions. Thank you for giving this your serious and prayerful consideration.

*Pastor Hank*

**†††† Commission Descriptions ††††**

**Commission for Worship and Music**

A team of four to eight people who love music and worship and will work with the pastor and Music Director to plan meaningful and inspiring regular and special worship services that are “user-friendly” and welcoming, and faithful to the Gospel. All things music and worship related come under the leadership of this team.

**Commission for Education**

A team of four to eight people who care deeply about Christian education for children, youth and adults who will work with the pastor and Education Coordinator to plan and implement creative, fun and inspirational educational activities, such as Sunday School, VBS and confirmation and adult classes that encourage participants to grow in faith and faithfulness.

**Commission for Health**

A team of four to eight people who care about the physical, emotional/psychological and spiritual health of our members who will work with the pastor and the Parish Nurse to provide educational materials/opportunities and to develop programs that holistically address the health related needs of our members of all ages—children through senior citizens.

**Commission for Youth**

A team of four to eight people who love youth and value their contribution to our community of faith. Their ministry is to plan educational, social and service opportunities for our youth that are both fun and engaging and get them excited about living their Christian faith.

### **Commission for Mission**

A team of seven to nine people who care deeply about the needs of the less advantaged in our community, nation and world, and who will take on the ministry of engaging the congregation in providing help to those who need help as a witness to God's justice and love.

### **Commission for Congregational Life**

A team of four to eight people who love promoting relationships and fellowship and will plan events that help the members and friends of First connect with each other spiritually and socially, and who will find creative and innovative ways to invite and welcome folks from the larger Little Falls community to congregational functions.



### **Council Highlights**

- Offered thanks to Jane Haas and Lori Ronning for their service to the Pastor Parish Relations committee. New members of the committee are Linda Weiss and Debra Yliniemi-Ahlin.
- Heard that new members will be received on All Saints Sunday, November 2.
- Approved creating two commissions, Commission for Worship and Music and Commission for Congregational Life. Seeking new members for all the commissions.
- Regretfully accepted the resignation of Tammy Zwilling from the council. Thank you, Tammy, for your serving.
- Heard that approximately nine baptisms are scheduled in the coming weeks. Thanks be to God for these new children of the Kingdom!
- Heard that the nominating committee consisting of Lois Anderson, Dan Bakke, Doug Dahlberg, John Haas and Les Hittesdorf will be searching for persons to serve in leadership positions for the coming year. Members are asked to give prayerful consideration to this opportunity to serve.

### **Commission for Facilities and Property**

A team of five to eight people who understand and care about the ins and outs of building and property maintenance and capital improvements and will commit themselves to ensuring that we take care of this House of God that we have been entrusted with.

***First ...Servants of All!***



### **Thanksgiving Eve Worship Wednesday, November 26 7:00 p.m.**

Come to give thanks to the God who creates us and all that exists and gives us all that we have. We gather to worship with Holy Communion at 7:00 p.m. Following the service we share a delicious pie fellowship. The Pastor Parish Team will host the dessert time. If you would like to donate a pie, please contact the church office. Give thanks!

### **New Members**

The following people are welcomed into membership at First Lutheran on All Saints Sunday, November 2: Mary Ann Ashby, Kevin Cash and Chantel Panek, Peter Eckstrom, Melanie Erickson and Paige Beseman, Deb Lentner, Jay and Lynn Lowry, and Jerry and Cassie Neumann. Check out the bulletin board for photos and information about the new members and give them a warm welcome!

## Parish Nurse News:

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Over the past several months I have had the privilege to meet some of our First Lutheran seniors in their homes, at assisted livings, at nursing homes and on hospice. For some visits, it is a social conversation and others we read a daily devotion with discussion and prayer. Together we have discussed current events, our families, and our health physically and spiritually, amongst other topics that arise. One common thread that I have noticed is that the elderly can be lonely and depressed. Their spirit has been neglected. We can focus on healthy bodies, but if we neglect our spirits, then we are neglecting the whole person God has created each of us to be.

It is fact that older adults are at increased risk for depression. We know that about 80% of older adults have at least one chronic health condition, and 50% have two or more. Depression is more common in people who also have other illnesses (such as heart disease, dementia, stroke, cancer, and Parkinson's).

Older adults are often misdiagnosed and undertreated. Healthcare providers may mistake an older adult's symptoms of depression as just a natural reaction to illness or the life changes that may occur as we age, and therefore not see the depression as something to be treated. Older adults themselves often share this belief and do not seek help because they don't understand that they could feel better with appropriate treatment.

Because large numbers of elderly people live alone, have inadequate support systems or do not have contact with a primary care physician, special efforts are needed to locate and identify these people to provide them with needed care. Natural supports like church or friends should be encouraged.

I have realized as a Parish nurse a key role in this ministry has been to nourish the spirit. The visits Pastor Hank and myself are doing are a vital piece to this Health Ministry. The seniors look forward

to our visits, they are thankful and their families appreciate it. Consider the health of your spirit. What is your spirit? What does it mean to have a healthy spirit? Do you think your spirit is healthy? What role do other people play in keeping your spirit healthy?

Lord, let us remember that our spirits are a part of the whole person that you have created. Make us mindful of our bodies and our spirits, and let us always be aware of the spirits of those around us so that we might love and protect them as well.

Tracy Moe, RN, Parish Nurse

*(Walk and Talk, Walking Together with Scripture, and NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Health)*

### **Thanks!**

First Lutheran and Bethel Lutheran hosted another successful rummage sale! The proceeds of over \$2,900 support Lutheran Social Service group homes in Little Falls area. Grateful thanks to all who donated items, worked or helped in any way. Start saving now for the next sale in May 2015!

Karen Haaland

**Thank you** to all who helped to make the fall sale at the care center a great success. Whether you donated baked goods, craft items, quilts, silent auction baskets, or came to work or shop at the sale, it is all appreciated. Proceeds support the needs of the residents. Lutheran Care Center Volunteer Board

## Adult Opportunities

### **Women's Circle:**

**"Transformation Takes Time:  
Transforming Life and Faith**  
John 20:30-31

### **Martha Circle**

The Martha Circle meets Monday, November 17 at 10:00 a.m. at the church.

### **Annual Lutefisk Dinner Bethel Lutheran Church Tuesday, December 2 4:30-8:00 p.m.**

Sister congregation Bethel Lutheran has served this annual holiday meal for many years. First Lutheran is offering helping hands for the meal again this year. We will provide support as they host the dinner. Consider how you may assist with this event, here are some possibilities:

- ☞ Setup in early afternoon, or take down following the meal, both on December 2
  - ☞ Assist in the kitchen on December 2
  - ☞ Serve tables in two shifts, 4:00-6:30 p.m. or 6:30-8:00 p.m.
  - ☞ Bake pies – apple or pumpkin
  - ☞ Bake white or rye bread
  - ☞ Bake holiday cookies
  - ☞ Tickets are available soon!
  - ☞ Watch for signup information coming soon or call the church office. You'll enjoy the evening even if you don't eat lutefisk.
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### **Adult Study Discussion Group**

**Thursdays, November 6, 13 and 20  
11:30 a.m.**

We will read and study the texts which will be the basis for the message for the coming week. Pastor Hank leads this study. See you there!

### **Men's Bible Study Breakfasts**

**Wednesdays, November 5 and 19**

All men of the congregation and friends are invited to a Men's Bible Breakfast study. The study meets for breakfast on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 6:15 a.m. at the church. You are welcome to attend any time – come when you are able, leave when you must.

### **Men's Wilderness Week in the BWCA**

**Sunday-Friday, August 16-21, 2015**

Luther Crest Bible Camp is coordinating this adventure in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area wilderness. The men will grow together in faith and spend days paddling and portaging in the incredible scenery of God's creation. There will be campfires, fishing, great food, and abounding blessing. This trip is limited to eight registrations. Contact the church office for more information.

### **Library News**

Stop in the library and see "The Ten Commandments" in picture form and read an explanation of each one. The original painting completed in 1516, is in Wittenberg Germany. There are new and newly donated books available for checkout.

### **Book Club**

**Tuesday, November 26 at 7:00 p.m.**

Watch for the selections for the coming months and plan to get in on the conversation. For more information, contact Tifanii Dahl, 632-8207.

## Keeping Advent

Advent begins on November 30. Our culture will have surrounded us with the sounds and signs of Christmas long before that, but it is important for the Church to observe Advent in its richness.

Advent is a time of waiting, preparing, and hoping. Advent means “coming.” During Advent we wait, we hope, we prepare ourselves in anticipation of the coming Messiah:

- ⌚ We anticipate Jesus’ coming in Bethlehem.
- ⌚ We anticipate Christ’s coming daily into our lives.
- ⌚ We anticipate the coming of Christ at the end of the ages.

Advent, like Lent, provides an opportunity for examining our life of faith. How well do we prepare ourselves and our homes and families for the coming Christ? Advent is a good time to begin a worship practice in the home since the spirit of celebration in the air affects us all – older people, singles, middle-aged couples, busy young families, exuberant teens, and excited young children. And so, we invite you to keep Advent with:



**Women’s Event:  
Advent by Candlelight  
Sunday, November 30, 6:30 p.m.**

All women are invited to set aside the hustle of holiday preparation and focus on the birth of Christ. Beautiful decorations and fellowship provide a delightful atmosphere for you to enjoy music and devotions by candlelight. This event is offered for those high school age and up. First Lutheran table hostesses will set their table and provide dessert for eight guests. Consider inviting someone new to the congregation, someone new to the faith, someone who has experienced a loss or has had a significant life change. Perhaps you’ll invite a co-worker, neighbor, relative, mentee, girlfriend, or ‘soccer’ mom; you get the idea: There is no charge. If you would like to host or co-host a table, you are asked to set a holiday table with your own festive tablecloth, table settings and candles, and provide a dessert for the eight guests at your table. Hostesses or guest attendees may sign up by contacting the church office or Camilla Larson at 612-804-1013, or Debra Yliniemi-Ahlin at 632-3951.

**Advent Wednesday Worship  
December 3, 10, and 17 at 7:00 p.m.**

In preparation for the coming of the Christ child we gather to worship each Wednesday during Advent using the service of Holden Evening Prayer. Let the quiet beauty of song prepare your heart for the real meaning of the season. Refreshments will be served following the service.

**Christmas Wreath Fundraiser**

Place your order for a fresh, fragrant balsam wreath for the holidays. The 25” wreaths are decorated with pinecones and ribbon and are \$20.00 each. Place your order on the order sheet in the gathering space or call the church office. Wreaths will be delivered to church for pickup by November 30. Proceeds support youth ministry programming at First. Thanks for your support!

**Advent Craft Sale  
Saturday, December 6  
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

In just one short month the Advent Craft Sale and Luncheon will be here. We trust you are making plans to attend! We are looking for donations of craft and bake sale items. There will be a delicious soup luncheon, musical entertainment and lots of treats and gift items to buy! This year’s sale will benefit youth ministry programming at First. Your support of this great annual FUNdraiser is appreciated.

## "Children First" Christian Preschool Update

Greetings from Children First Christian Preschool!  
What a fun month October was! Our themes were community helpers and transportation. We had visits from EMTs highway patrol, fire department and construction workers. Thank you to all! The children took their first field trips. We visit each month at the following places: Bridgeway Estates, St. Otto's Care Center. Thanks to Andy's Charter for transportation to the residences. God provides many to share their gifts with us! Thank you!

The Gifting Campaign fundraiser is going well. Thank you to all families that have participated. We have received \$1000 toward the goal of \$4000. Funds raised supports many activities, bussing, classroom materials and much more. Thank you!

"Children First" has a float in the Little Falls "Santa Parade" on Friday, November 28, at 6 p.m.

Registration continues throughout the year pending class openings. Encourage families to check us out. "Children First" Christian Preschool provides a healthy, nurturing environment where children grow in faith, develop social and emotional skills and Kindergarten readiness skills. For more information, contact Gail Hittesdorf at 320-291-4698 or the church office.

We thank God for all of you, our supporters. God has blessed us with wonderful families and a caring, loving staff. Happy Thanksgiving!

Yours in Christ's Service,  
Gail Hittesdorf, Director

"O give thanks to the Lord for He is Good! His faithful love endures forever." *Psalms 136:1*

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### Confirmation Ministries

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**Third Grade:** Thanks to the Third Grade students and parents for completing their Family Devotions on the Gospel of Mark.

**Fourth Grade:** Looking ahead – four-week class on Holy Baptism begins Wednesday, January 7.

**Sixth Grade:** "In God's Image" class for youth and parents begins on Wednesday, November 5. This class is for youth and parents.

**Seventh Grade:** Mark your calendars for class on the Ten Commandments beginning Wednesday, January 7, 2015.

**Eighth Grade:** Looking ahead – class on the Old Testament begins Wednesday, January 7, 2015.

**Mentor Program:** Tenth grade students are in the process of selecting mentors. Mentors are adult members of the congregation who promise to serve as a guide, example, and friend to a confirmand during their last years of high school. If you are interested in serving as a mentor, please contact the church office.



### Angel Tree Gift Giving

You are invited to share your gifts with families and children in our community who are living at or below the federally recognized poverty level. Watch for the display in the Gathering Space and take a tag from the Angel Tree. Return your unwrapped gifts with their tag to the church by Sunday, December 14. Thank you for your continued participation in the Angel Tree project! Your generosity helps many around us to celebrate this holiday season with thanks and praise. For more information, contact coordinator, Annalee VanDenheuvel at 320-232-9366.



**Sunday School Christmas Program**

***Lefse-Making***

Bring your rolling pin and come to help prepare this favorite treat on Saturday, November 29 at 8:30 a.m. Lefse will be sold at the Advent Craft Sale and Luncheon on Saturday, December 6. This project is open to all ages!



**Sunday, December 21**



All children are invited to participate in this year's Christmas program. We will celebrate the simplicity of Christmas with familiar Christmas songs. Many helping hands are important in order to make the program shine. Most rehearsal time will take place during Sunday School. With the spirit of Christmas in your heart, consider how you can share your gifts to assist with the program. For more info, contact Amber Sobiech in the church office, 632-6667.



**Sunday Morning Education Ministry  
each Sunday at 9:35 a.m.**

Sunday Morning Education Ministry continues each week at 9:35 a.m. All ages gather in classrooms. Children in Kindergarten through Fifth Grade follow their classroom opening with a rotational format experiencing Bible stories and themes through Storytelling/Video, Cooking, Games/Science/Music, and Arts/Crafts. Youth in grades 6-12 meet in the Youth Room.

Thank you to all who teach/lead in the classroom and all who have volunteered to teach or lead a station. Sharing your faith journey is important to children in the congregation. The November rotation is "Respect," followed by "Christmas Around the World" in December. If you would like to volunteer with a rotation now or in upcoming months, please contact Amber Sobiech in the church office.



## News of the Family



### Baptism

Trenton Steven Radloff, son of Angela Helgeson and Scott Radloff, was baptized on October 19.



Thelma C. Garrison died on October 19. Her funeral service was held at Shelley Funeral Chapel on October 24. May God grant peace and comfort to her family and friends.



Items for the **December NEWSLETTER** are due on **November 20, 2014!**

**Daylight Savings Time ends. Remember to set your clocks *back* one hour on Saturday, November 2!**

### **Can Care Collection**

Keep saving those aluminum cans!  
Save a can – Save the earth –  
Save our youth budget!  
Keep those cans coming!