



November 2016

October 28, 2016

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. A portion of 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:

- ✦ Serve as a First Lutheran Church liaison to Share A Meal or volunteer to assist with a Thursday evening meal. First Lutheran will prepare and serve a special meal on Thursday, December 22.
- ✦ Volunteer to help serve the Community Thanksgiving Day Meal – contact Tim Sumner at 632-2540 – *see page 3*
- ✦ Volunteer your time or provide monetary donations at the Morrison County Food Shelf.
- ✦ Provide a respite meal for fellow servants in need at First Lutheran.
- ✦ 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 for more information.
- ✦ Deliver meals to homebound persons in the community, during the week of November 14-18, call the church office to volunteer.
- ✦ Provide financial support to ELCA World Hunger Appeal.

Jesus said, “Go and do likewise!”

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A major theme for November each year is giving thanks, or Thanksgiving. An article I once found put it well... "It has often been pointed out that thinking precedes thanking. When we are presented with a gift, it is because we think of its significance and meaning that we are led to express our appreciation." (*The Prairie Overcomer*)

This reminds me of a poem, author unknown:

*"Thank God for dirty dishes,
They have a tale to tell;
While others may go hungry
We've eaten very well.
With home, health and happiness
I shouldn't want to fuss,
By the stack of evidence
God's been very good to us!"*

What are the thoughts that lead to thanks for you? Somewhere in the thoughts of a Christian there should be thoughts of God. Think of all he is—provider of all good gifts, gracious, merciful, forgiving of our sins who sent us Jesus and empowers us by his Holy Spirit. God is the giver of all blessings, material and spiritual. The spiritual gifts are greater even than the material.

In the book of Romans, the Apostle Paul traces the downside of where humankind went wrong somewhere back in our collective past, writing, "...When they knew God...(they) glorified him not as God, neither were they thankful." *Romans 1:21*

What are you thankful for? Think of those things in life which give you joy. Maybe it's a sunrise, maybe the love of family, or healing of some kind in body, mind or spirit. Thank God for those things. Many times it has been said that we are not always thankful because we don't stop to think.

As the article continued, "The cares and riches and pleasures of this life choke the plant of gratitude, and our lives become unfruitful...Thanksgiving is thus really the product of careful cultivation. It is the fruit of a deliberate resolve to think about God, ourselves, and our privileges and responsibilities. By giving thanks we make manifest the fact that our lives are not controlled by the imperious cares and concerns of this life. We give testimony to the fact that material things do not dictate the horizons of our soul." As Psalm 105:1 says, "...O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever."

Thank the Lord for all his goodness today!
I thank God for so many blessings, including the privilege of being your pastor.

Your Servant in Christ,

Pastor Jake Dyrhaug

"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

Council Highlights

- Approved the “Children First” Christian Preschool budget for 2016/17.
- Heard that new members will be received on Sunday, November 20.
- Planning for ministry team staff evaluations.
- Beginning discussion for 2017 Mission Planning.
- Heard that the nominating committee consisting of Stephanie Adams, Craig Ahlin, Doug and Michelle Dahlberg, and Ted Pfohl 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.



Thanksgiving Eve Worship Wednesday, November 23 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!

Community Thanksgiving Day Meal

Thursday, November 24, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

This annual community event is for anyone who would like to enjoy a meal with others on Thanksgiving Day. Volunteers are welcome and encouraged to assist with the meal. Last year about 425 meals were served. There are many ways to help: greeters, meal prep, servers, dishwashers, meal delivery and more. If you can assist or need more information, contact Tim Sumner, 632-2540, or at cometotheriver@hotmail.com.



New Members

Those desiring to become members of the congregation at First Lutheran met to get to know one another on Sunday evening, October 30. These new members will be received in worship on Sunday, November 20. First's council and ministry team members will host a fellowship reception between worship services that day. Watch the bulletin board for photos and brief bios of the new members and give them a warm welcome.

Ministry Fair

Sunday, November 20

The church council and seven ministry teams will host a ministry fair on Sunday morning, November 20. Each of the ministry teams will be present and display information to highlight their areas of ministry in which they are involved and for which they have responsibility. You will find information about specific events, opportunities to serve, and small group opportunities.

The teams are: Congregational Life, Education, Facilities and Property, Health, Mission and Worship and Music. Members and friends of First Lutheran are encouraged to visit with the team members and participate in any of the many ways that are available. Ministry teams always welcome new members and your ideas—See you there!

Adult Opportunities

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 13. 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 VanDenheuvell at 320-232-9366.

Annual Lutefisk Dinner Bethel Lutheran Church Tuesday, December 6 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 6
- ☞ Assist in the kitchen on December 6
- ☞ 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. ☺

Martha Circle

The Martha Circle meets Monday, November 14 at 9:30 a.m. at the church.

Men's Bible Study Breakfasts Wednesdays, November 2 and 16

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 7:00 a.m. at the church. You are welcome to attend any time – come when you are able, leave when you must.

Women's Bible Study

Begins Tuesday, November 8, 9:00 a.m. Or Wednesday, November 9, 6:30 p.m.

We begin a new study on Philippians, an uplifting book of joy! This study is offered at two times during the week, come to the time that fits your schedule, the first sessions meet Tuesday, November 8 at 9:00 a.m. or Wednesday, November 9 at 6:30 p.m. Naomi Engel will lead this study. For more information, contact the church office.

Luther Story: Reformation Tour in Pictures Monday, November 14, 7:00 p.m.

All are welcome to come for this presentation by Rev. Dennis and Naomi Raymond. The Raymonds, parents of Stephani Dyrhaug, will share this presentation following a trip to Germany and the land of Luther. Dennis is a retired ELCA pastor. Bring a friend and come to learn about the sights and get inspired for the celebration of the 500th year of the Reformation.

Book Club Tuesday, November 29 at 7:00 p.m.

We meet to discuss Great Expectations, by Charles Dickens on Tuesday November 29 at 7:00 p.m. The group will not meet in December. For more information, contact Tifanii Dahl, 632-8207.

Parish Nurse News

Tracy Moe, RN

The flu season varies in length each year. It is never too late to ask your health care provider if you need a flu shot. A change to the flu shot protocol this year is that FluMist, a nasal flu vaccine, will not be given due to a recommendation from The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Minnesota Department of Health. FluMist was found to be less effective in preventing influenza infections than the injectable form of the vaccine.

Cookies and Conversation with Dyrhaugs

Continuing on Thursdays, at 6:30 p.m., Pastor Jake and Stephani Dyrhaug invite members of the congregation to the church library to enjoy coffee, Steph's home-made chocolate chip cookies and informal get-to-know-you conversation. We hope to meet with 10-15 of you each week. Things to consider: What is the story of First Lutheran and what brought you to this community of faith? What is something you enjoy doing? What are your hopes for First Lutheran in the years ahead? There are several ways to schedule: you can sign up on the schedule in the gathering space, call the church office, send an email to firstserv@flclittlefalls.org, or schedule when office staff contacts you. Thank you – We look forward to getting to know you better!

Pictorial Directory

The pictorial directories produced for the congregation by Lifetouch have arrived. Each individual or family who sat for a photograph receives a directory. If you have not received your copy yet, please pick up in the church gathering space. If you did not have a photo taken and would like a directory, please ask in the church office.

Prayer Shawl Group

Do you enjoy knitting or crocheting? Come for fun and fellowship—bring a friend and your helping hands! We are making prayer shawls and baptismal shawls. We meet the second Monday of every month at 1:00 p.m. at the church – our next time is Tuesday, October 10. If someone you know could use the comforting hug of a prayer shawl, please contact the church office. For more information, call Naomi Engel, 632-3167.

Servant Opportunity Home Delivered Meals

First Lutheran participates in delivering meals in the community. Our next dates to deliver meals are Monday-Friday, November 14-18. Meet at the Buckman building at 9:45 a.m., you'll be done by 11:00 a.m. To volunteer for this opportunity or for more information, please contact the church office at 632-6667. Thank you!

Share a Meal

First Lutheran provides the space for the weekly community Share a Meal served here each Thursday at 6:00 p.m. Many groups and organizations from the community and surrounding area prepare and serve a healthy meal each week. First Lutheran will prepare and serve the meal on Thursday, December 22. As this is right before Christmas, we would like to serve a festive holiday meal to the people who attend. Watch for more information on how you can assist. If you would like to provide musical entertainment or can help with serving, please let the church office know.

Keeping Advent

Advent begins on November 27. 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 27, 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 November 30, December 7, 14 and 21 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 December 1. Proceeds support youth ministry programming at First. Thanks for your support!

Advent Craft Sale Saturday, December 3 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!

We enjoyed the beautiful October weather and our themes, Community Helpers and Transportation. We had visits from Jason Brown, Highway Patrol, Lisa Lintner, Fire Department, and Adam Surma, Road Construction! Thank you for sharing with "Children First." Please 'friend' our Facebook© page to see photos. We experienced our first field trip to Bridgeway. The residents are excited for our monthly returns. Thank you to Andy's Charter for bus service. God has provided us with many individuals sharing their gifts to help us—and we are thankful for these helpers. November themes and activities will be Stories of the Bible, Five Senses, Nutrition/Healthy Bodies and Thanksgiving.

"Children First" will participate in the Fishing Museum Christmas Tree Lane. We will collect food items and gift cards for tree decorations. Larger food items will be placed under the tree and smaller items will become tree decorations. Place items in the box by the Preschool entrance and give all gift cards to Preschool staff. All are welcome to contribute. It is our hope that the bidder of our tree donates the tree, along with the food, to a family in need this Christmas.

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held this month. This is a time for teachers and parents to meet one-

on-one to discuss your child's developmental stages and to ask and answer any questions you or the teachers may have regarding your child. Signup sheets will be posted on the parent board by Preschool entry.

Reminder: You can help us by saving Coborns/Cashwise Food Club points located at the bottom of your receipt when Food Club, Top Care and Full Circle products are purchased. We also collect Campbell's points located on the labels of various products. Campbell's is phasing out this fundraising program. Place points or labels in the box on the Preschool coat cubby area.

Registration continues at "Children First" Christian Preschool throughout the year pending class openings. We encourage families to check us out. Visits are welcome! Contact Gail Hittesdorf 320-291-4698 or the church office for more information.

We graciously thank God for our Preschool supporters. We appreciate your kind words, your giving, your sharing of talents, and your prayers. God has blessed us with wonderful families and an awesome loving, caring 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*

Confirmation Ministries

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

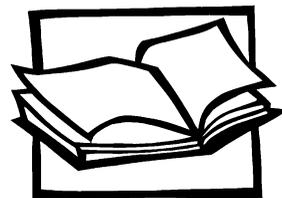
Fourth Grade: Looking ahead – four-week class on Holy Baptism begins Wednesday, January 4.

Sixth Grade: "In God's Image" class for youth and parents meets for three weeks beginning Wednesday, November 2. This class is for youth and parents.

Seventh/Eighth Grade: Class time on the Old Testament continues on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

through November 16. We will resume on January 4, studying the New Testament.

Ninth/Tenth Grade: Looking ahead – combined class on the New Testament and Lutheran Identity begins Wednesday, January 4, 2017.



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace and Peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

It has been a very busy first month for me as I settle into the Youth and Family Minister role here at First Lutheran. As I'm getting used to everything, I am constantly and repeatedly shown support by parents and members of the congregation, and for that I am very thankful. It has been a challenge to learn the system, but I love the support I've been given, and it has made the learning curve a lot easier.

I don't think I need to tell anyone this, but there are a ton of youth here at First! It's amazing to see them all over our church and our community. We consistently have over thirty students every week for Sunday School, we have a full seventh and eighth grade confirmation class, and I meet with at least fifteen youth every Wednesday night for FLY (First Lutheran Youth) Night. This is awesome, and I cannot thank all the helpers and teachers enough for the work they do.

That being said, we can always use more help! We're always looking for Sunday School station leaders and group leaders, and we can always use help making a meal on Wednesday nights. These opportunities are open to everyone, and are a great way to volunteer and give to First, as well as help support the Christian Education of our youth.

On Wednesday, October 26, the Wednesday night FLY group talked about our spiritual needs and our spiritual appetite for God. We talked about how to be better Disciples, and youth were challenged to read Proverbs 11:1-11, and actively think of and search out ways to deepen their faith and express their faith on a daily basis. This is a tough challenge and one that I think everyone needs to set their minds on, no matter how old you are. We discussed simple ways such as daily prayer and scripture reading, but also discussed harder ways such as consciously using Christ as the lens through which we see all people and make all decisions. Tough stuff!

If there are any questions about needs or how you can volunteer with Youth and Family activities, please call the church.

Thank you to Darrell and Arlene Larsen for the fun hayride event at their farm on October 9, and to Jordie's Trailside Café for the treats. Much appreciated!

Upcoming events include:

The Northeast Minnesota Synod sponsored Middle School Gathering, held at Cragun's Resort, Fri-Sat, Nov 18-19. 17 youth and three adults are registered!

Keep your eyes and ears open to hear more information about other events such as the annual wreath sale, the advent craft fair, and other fun events.

May the Lord bless you and keep you in all that you do,

Daniel Ditmanson
Youth and Family Minister
Cell: 218-370-2307
Office: 320-632-6667





Lefse-Making

Watch for an upcoming date to bring your rolling pin and come to help prepare this favorite treat. Lefse will be sold at the Advent Craft Sale and Luncheon on Saturday, December 3 .



Sunday School Christmas Program Sunday, December 18, 3:00 p.m.



All children are invited to participate in this year's Christmas program. We will learn the songs during Sunday School opening time in December. 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 the church office, 632-6667.



Sunday School Ministry each Sunday at 9:35 a.m.

Sunday School Ministry continues each week at 9:35 a.m. All ages gather in the sanctuary for opening time. Children in Kindergarten through Fifth Grade follow with a rotational format experiencing Bible stories and themes through, Cooking, Games, 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 current three week rotation is "Three Women of Faith." We will learn about Lydia, Priscilla and Dorcas and their important role in spreading the gospel through art, cooking, and games. Our next rotation is "Journey to Bethlehem." If you would like to volunteer with a rotation now or in upcoming months, please contact in the church office.

Thank you to all who contributed items for the "Blessing Bags" that we assembled on Sunday, October 23. Thank you to all the kids and adults in attendance who assembled the bags and made personalized greetings for our Common Hope sponsored child, Luis Miguel Cucuj. Thanks to all who gave a contribution for Luis and other sponsored children. These donations will make Christmas gifts possible for the families in Guatemala.

On Sunday, November 27, Thanksgiving weekend we will have a mission Sunday project during the Sunday School hour. We will make a Christmas ornament for mission giving.

Thank you to all the children, parents and teachers who make Sunday School a priority each week!

News of the Family



Lydia Kate Wippler, daughter of Catherine and Nick Wippler, was baptized on October 2.

Dakota Lee Joslin, son of Jeff Joslin and Shelly Wysocki, was baptized on October 2.

Trinlee Rose Andres, daughter of Eric and Stephanie Andres, was baptized on October 16.

Kayden Donald Cash, son of Kevin and Chantel Cash, was baptized on October 23.

Please keep the newly baptized and their families in your prayers.



Items for the **December NEWSLETTER** are due on **November 20, 2016!**

Daylight Savings Time ends. Remember to set your clocks *back* one hour on Saturday, November 5!

Can Care Collection

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