

First Lutheran

FEBRUARY MESSENGER

A NOTE FROM PASTOR SAUL

Issue 2, February, 2015

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WHEN I SURVEY THE WONDROUS CROSS

The central event of the Christian faith is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Cross and resurrection are at the core of our preaching, our worship, and the church year. Lent prepares for it, and the Fifty Days of Easter are a celebration of it. We will soon enter the season of Lent (Ash Wednesday is February 18) and so it is appropriate now for us to ponder the meaning of the cross.

One of my favorite hymns and choir anthems is *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*. I get goose bumps, when I hear the organ swell on the final verse as the choir sings,

*"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small,
Love so amazing so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."*

Dietrich Bonhoeffer says this about the cross:

God has erected a strange, marvelous, and wonderful sign in the world, where we can all find him – namely the cross of Jesus Christ, the cross of the suffering love of God. Under the cross of Christ we know that we all belong to one another, that we are all brothers and sisters in the same need and with the same hope, that we are bound together by the same destiny, human beings with all our suffering and all our joys, with sorrows and with desires, with disappointments and fulfillments, and most importantly, human beings with our sin and guilt, with our faith and hope.

Of course, the deep meaning of the cross confronts us with something that we don't like to think about – because as it symbolizes Jesus' self-giving death on our behalf, it reminds us of our own mortality. But, again, in the words of Bonhoeffer, *"The wondrous theme of the Bible that frightens so many people is that the only visible sign of God in the world is the cross."*

It is precisely at the foot of the cross, where we contemplate the suffering and death of our Lord, that we also are near to the resurrection. The same is true of the crosses and suffering we often must endure in our own lives. That is precisely where we will discover that God's power is revealed, and that Christ is active and near to us.

Please join your brothers and sisters here at First Lutheran during Lent as we journey together towards the cross of Good Friday and the empty tomb of Easter. Make worship a priority – Sunday worship as well as Wednesday worship, and especially the worship services of the Triduum: Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter vigil, and Easter Sunday.

For, *"the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. But to us who are being saved it is the power of God."* 1 Corinthians 1:18

In Christ,

Pastor Saul

Saul Stensvaag

FEBRUARY WORSHIP THEMES

February 1 *Evil and the God of Love*

Text: Mark 1:21-28

As Jesus begins his public ministry in Mark, His proclamation of the Kingdom of God means he must do battle with all of the evil forces arrayed against God's will. As Jesus' disciples, how do we do battle with the forces of evil in our world? What hope do we have of victory?

February 8 *God will Lift You Up*

Text: Mark 1:29-39

Today we hear the story of how Jesus healed Simon's mother-in-law and lifted her up. There's a lot in this world that will push you down. Not Jesus. We hear today that "those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Jesus will lift you when you are down.

February 15 *Up and Down the Mountain*

Text: Luke 9: 28-43

Just think how special Peter, John, and James felt when Jesus took the three of them up the mountain and, through eyes heavy with sleep, they caught a glimpse of his divine glory. But they can't stay on that mountaintop forever and soon they must confront the everyday world where their faith is shown to be a frail thing. In our day, glimpses of Christ's glory give us the strength to face the everyday world.

February 22 *Up From the Waters*

Text: Mark 1:9-15

As Noah was brought to new life through the waters of the flood, so Christ takes us by the hand and brings us through the waters of baptism into new life as children of God. As Luther says, we should therefore "ceaselessly, joyfully, and from the heart thank, praise, and honor God for the gift of baptism."



The Muriel L. Nelson Scholarship, awarded through the First Lutheran Foundation, is now available. Muriel L. Nelson gifted an endowment to the Foundation to provide scholarships and assistance to persons pursuing a Christian education. This year, two, \$700 scholarships will be awarded to persons pursuing a Christian education at a church related post secondary school and who are members of First Lutheran Church or have families who are members of First Lutheran Church. The application is available by contacting the church office. Questions may be directed to Missy Mattson, Foundation Board Member at missymattson@yahoo.com or 736-6281. The application deadline is April 15, 2015.

The First Lutheran Foundation's mission is to use funds entrusted to it to further the mission of Christ's church so that the blessing of the gospel may be shared with all people. If you would like to learn more about giving to the Foundation, please contact any of the Foundation members: Orrie Leabo, Leonard Hatzenbuehler, Vicki Hanneman, Chad Felstul, Linda Mellon, or Missy Mattson.



**DEADLINE TO SUBMIT
ARTICLES FOR THE
MARCH
MESSENGER
IS FEBRUARY 17**



Your Giving
Makes a Difference

Electronic Giving!



Action Unit for FEBRUARY

The following are the people in this Action Unit

Please say "YES" when you are called to help!

Allegra Anderson	Robert Hemmingson	Gerald & Christine Peterson
Ross & Carrie Anderson	Mark & Susan Hermes	Karen Schafer
Patti Ashworth	Denny & Ruth Hystead	Brian Shuck
Mark & Diane Boen	Gary & Pam Jaenisch	Art & Karin Storm
Chris & Lindsey Clark	Wayne & Marlene Johnson	Doris Teberg
Carolyn Ellingson	Sue Kilde	Laurie Tomhave
Marcia Ferber	Shane & Kristen Kragness	Brian & Kristin Torgerson
Steve & Gayle Fitz	Robert & Barb Lorsung	Greg & Tara Wagner
Kurt & Pam Gustin	Darryl & Dana McClaflin	Pam Western
Kevyn Heck & Angie Bowman	Linda Merz	Tom & Jane Willett
	Dale & Jann Peterson	

Picture Directory :

We are in the process of setting up photography appointments for our new pictorial directory. You can sign up from 9:30—11:00 a.m. on Sundays. February 15th is the last Sunday to make an appointment. You may sign up online on the church website at www.firstlcffmn.com and click on the link provided. This link will open the site where you follow the prompts to schedule your photo session. You will receive confirmation via email, along with coupons to print off. After February 15th, church representatives will be calling all families who did not sign up. There is no cost to you and you will receive a complimentary 8 x 10 portrait and a picture directory for participating. You will be able to view your images electronically immediately after you are photographed.

Pictures will be taken:
2nd & 4th week of March
2nd week of June



News from the First Lutheran Foundation

So much of ministry takes place outside the walls of First Lutheran Church. It is our responsibility as Christians to share and spread the Good News wherever we go.

Through the radio ministry of this congregation, our members and others who are unable to attend worship have the opportunity to maintain a connection with this church every Sunday.

We believe that this radio ministry is important in the lives of our members and others in the community. For that reason, we are committed to matching whatever funds are donated for the radio broadcast through the month of February up to a total of \$2,700.

We hope that you will prayerfully consider supporting the radio ministry of our congregation, and your funds will doubly bless the listeners during this time. Thank you in advance for your contributions. If you have any questions or comments on this or other activities on the Foundation, please contact any one of us.

Orrie Leabo, Chad Felstul, Vicki Hanneman, Missy Mattson, Tim Johnson, Leonard Hatzenbuehler, Linda Mellon.

MEMORIALS JULY-DEC 2014		
In memory of Jack Andrews:		
	Handbell Choir Fund	1,325.00
In memory of Audrey Pratte:		
	Memorial Undesignated Fund	100.00
In memory of Dale Marcus:		
	Memorial Undesignated Fund	100.00
In memory of Harold Beckman:		
	Good Samaritan Fund	20.00
In memory of Marie Cole:		
	Joyful News Youth Choir Fund	10.00
In memory of Eric Thompson:		
	Handbell Choir Fund	15.00
In memory of Jeanette Enstad:		
	Senior Choir Fund	55.00
	Education Fund	25.00
In memory of Neal Morstad:		
	Joyful News Youth Choir Fund	20.00
	Senior Choir	1,830.00

BOY SCOUT PANCAKE BREAKFAST

February 15th, 2015
8:30—11:00 a.m.
Fellowship Hall

Come and enjoy a delicious breakfast served by the Boy Scout Troop #304. They wish to show their Thanks for being able to utilize our church for their

*Happy
Valentine's
Day*

Right: Cathy Stone talking to our young children about Habitat for Humanity. They are one of our many benevolences. Cathy talked about how proud she was of the children for their efforts to help their friends and neighbors in need. She suggested that they could come visit her anytime to learn more about Habitat for Humanity.



OUTREACH

This year's theme for Sunday School is "Faith Builders: Building Faith Brick by Brick". Throughout the year, the kids have been learning what it means to be a Faith Builder - being nice to people, helping our neighbors, strengthening their faith, etc. This January they were challenged with the task of teaching our congregation what it means to be a Faith Builder through an art contest. They were asked to draw a picture, build a sculpture, write a poem...anything!

Winner of the art contest: Caroline Stumbo

Honorable Mention goes to the following students:

Gabe Carlson
Nolan Felstul
Charlie Fuder
Rylynn Krein
Solvie Smestad

Congratulations and thank you to all of the kids that participated in this fun event!



Cathy Stone, Habitat for Humanity Representative, receiving a \$685 check from the contest winners during worship on Sunday, January 25th.



WELCA Board Meeting

Not Meeting in February

Quilters' LOVE DAYS

Every Monday 9am-3pm

(except President's Day on Feb. 16)

Circles

Sarah: Wed. Feb. 25th at 9:30am

Pioneer Pointe

Hannah: Wed. Feb. 25th at 1:00pm

First Lutheran Church

Kairos Room



In the next several issues, we will print testimony from our 2014 Tanzania Mission Team which they shared at the outdoor worship service on August 17. Enjoy!

My name is Brittany Kollman. When I was young I always watched the Tanzania videos that they had in church and definitely knew I had to go when I got the chance. I'm here to tell you that it was the right decision and would go back to-day if I could. I loved every minute of it there. I'm going to tell you about one of my favorite parts of the trip which was the Plaster House. The Plaster house was started by Dr. Mark Jacobson of Arusha Lutheran Medical Center and a woman named Sarah whom we got to meet and she was an amazing person. Dr. Jacobson and Sarah started this house for kids that need surgery and kids recovering from surgery. She also started an outreach program to find kids in need of surgery who are out in the tribal villages and towns.

The moment we showed up at the Plaster House I started walking to the door and soon a little girl came out and went right to me and held my hand. This reminded me of Matthew 19 verse 14 where Jesus says, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." With this verse in mind we took a tour of the new facility which was very beautiful.

When the tour was over we were free to play and just spend time with the children. There were about 80 kids all together in the facility. We walked up to a small group of young boys sitting in a circle. They soon noticed the cameras around our necks and the phones in our hands and took them from us and started taking pictures of everything! us, each other, and even some selfies. They enjoyed seeing the pictures that they took especially seeing ones of themselves. One of the kids took Lexi's phone and somehow found where the music was. He got a little nervous at first and stared at the phone confused but in no time we were all singing along and dancing. I turned on the song "come with me now" and one boy soon started repeating the beginning which was a low growl "Come with me now." Not too long after everyone was saying it and laughing. I met this girl named Darcus who sat on my lap as we swayed to the music. After they had tea time I started a game of patty cake with her and line after line she would repeat after me and we would laugh and start all over. This small game of patty cake was one of the best times I had in Africa.

Now, it was time for the kids to go to school which is a huge privilege because in Tanzania kids with physical or mental disabilities do not usually get the chance to go to school. This was the time we broke up into small groups and taught the kids who were on bed rest from just completing a surgery. I taught this boy named Calvin animal noises and when he would repeat them he would laugh. In these kids' smiles is where I saw God the most on this trip. A boy came up to the door and was crying I picked him up and gave him a beanie baby and he soon had the biggest smile on his face!! Then we all went into the school room and gave the others beanie babies and the older boys hats. They absolutely loved them!! We started playing catch with some of the kids with the beanie babies which was soon the best game in the world and everyone wanted to play.

After seeing so many little faces of God it was very hard to leave them. I hugged the boy who had been there the longest (3 years) and started to tear up. He was there because he had fallen in the fire while having a seizure and was severely burned, especially his face. We then said goodbye to all the kids and had to leave. This place was so filled with joy and smiles which sort of surprised me because after all they are there just waiting to have another surgery or recovering from a surgery that would change them forever.

The Plaster house was absolutely one of my top three favorite parts of the trip. A wise man named Marcus Aurelius said "Remember this, that very little is needed to make a happy life" This quote was in my head the whole time in Africa and especially at the plaster house.

Brittany Kollman



Altar Flowers

The Altar Guild would like to thank all of the members, families, and friends of First Lutheran Church who have provided the church with altar flowers throughout the years. It adds so much to our services to have fresh flowers on the altar. Following is some information you might want to know when giving flowers, particularly if you have never given them before or you are unaware of the procedures:

- Sign up on the flower chart located on a kiosk outside the church office.
- Someone from the church office will contact you to check on how you would like your gift to be acknowledged in that Sunday's church bulletin.
- At the present time the church orders the flowers from The Flower Mill, and The Flower Mill will bill you directly for the cost of the flowers, which is typically about \$45.
- You can provide flowers from you own garden, from a family wedding or anniversary, from a family funeral or memorial service, or from some other special event.
- If you would like a particular kind or color of flowers, please make your request to the Flower Mill directly. (Be aware that some requests might increase the cost of the flowers.) Otherwise, The Flower Mill or the Altar Guild will make that determination. (For example, for Pentecost Sunday or Reformation Sunday, the Altar Guild might request red flowers to go with the red paraments.)
- Typically, The Flower Mill arranges the flowers to fit our taller brass vases; however, we do have lower brass vases that can be requested.
- A member of the Altar Guild Flower Committee takes the heavy plastic liners (which fit into our brass vases) to The Flower Mill early in the week, The Flower Mill delivers them on Thursday, and the Altar Guild person places them on the altar.
- Following the 2nd service on Sunday (or another day of the week following the Sunday of your gift of flowers), you are welcome to take your flowers home or give them to a person you choose.
- You should **not** take the brass vases or the heavy plastic liners home with you. (The vases are very expensive and the special plastic liners cost \$70 each even though they do not look that expensive.) Instead, there are plastic fast-food cups or plastic milk cartons with the tops cut off that you may use. They are located on the counter or in a lower cupboard to the left of the sink in the Altar Guild Room (also called the sacristy) which is located beyond the door next to the choir area. If you pick up your flowers on a day other than the Sunday of your gift, you might find the flowers in the refrigerator of the Altar Guild room.
- If you do **not** want to take the flowers you contribute, it would be helpful if you would inform the office so that the Altar Guild can reuse them or can take them to a church member who is ill, is in a nursing home, etc. The office staff or pastors might also enjoy the flowers.

Again, thank you so much for providing the flowers for our worship services. It also gives you an opportunity to celebrate a special event such as a birthday, anniversary, or wedding.

FIRST LUTHERAN
CHURCH

**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

- In keeping with our Faith Building theme, the Children's offering from worship was given to Habitat for Humanity.



FEB. EVENTS

Preschool 2 Milestone Class 1

Preschool 2 Blessing in worship 8

"Butterflies" 8

"Dragonflies" 15

1st gr. Milestone Class 22



Sunday School News

CINDY LARSON

FEBRUARY 2015

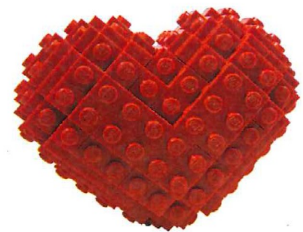
Faith Building Everyday

As the students worked diligently on their posters last month, they came up with a central theme: We can all build our faith, and we can all be faith builders! Good words for us adults to remember! Their thoughts were recorded in words on the bulletin board in

the Education hallway. Take a look! Their ideas were put on posters for all of you to view in the Narthex.

The winner had the honor of presenting a check to a representative for Habitat for Humanity for \$685! Way to go, Kids!

Happy
Valentines Day!
Share God's Love!



Faith Milestone Classes

Every grade has a Milestone Class once a year on a different topic. We want to help you and your child have a faith experience through play, games, special guests, hands-on

activities, fellowship and conversation. As partners with you in your child's faith education, we can facilitate a time for families to discuss lots of faith related topics that are age

appropriate. We appreciate your efforts in being in attendance at these one-time a year classes. Added bonus: a great time to get to know other First families!





February Fly News

First Lutheran Youth



Senior Fly Schedule:

(8th-12th Grades)

February 4: 7:30-8:30

February 11: 7:30-8:30

February 18: 7:45-8:30 (After Vespers)

February 25: 7:45-8:30 (After Vespers)

A leap of faith

I had an opportunity to go downhill skiing in Colorado in college. I wasn't a great skier, but always enjoyed skiing at least once each winter. At my local ski hill, I was starting to progress in my skiing and was working on some black diamond (hardest level) hills. So I know that I had enough skiing experience that I'd do okay in Colorado.

Man, those ski hills in Colorado are no joke. The snow was amazing—all fresh snow—none of this artificial stuff. I struggled with the green circle (easiest) hills the whole day but was starting to feel like I knew what I was doing. My friend who was with me encouraged me to try a blue diamond (intermediate) hill. She was a ski instructor. I trusted her. I got to the top and looked down. It was SO steep—basically

straight down. Would I make it down the hill? Would I do summersaults down the whole thing? (My nightmare.) My friend said, I've been watching you ski. You can do it. So I did it. Was it pretty? Probably not. But I didn't fall. I survived and lived to tell the tale. Am I a great skier? No. But I learned to take a leap of faith and trust my friend.

I think God calls us to take leaps of faith in the same way. Are these things easy? Are they always pretty? Probably not. But if you've ever felt God trying to tell you to go and be nice to the new kid, or bring cookies to a shut-in, or try ushering at church, I hope you'll answer God's call and give it a try!

See you in church!

Fly K4 and Fly 57 Schedule:

(4:30 PM-5:15PM)

February 4: Fly 57

February 11: Fly K4

February 18: Fly 57

February 25: Fly K4



Andes Tower Hills—February 16

Monday, February 16th (Presidents Day: There is no school!)

Meet at 9:30 at Church (We will return by 7:00 PM)

All Ages Welcome! (5th graders and younger must bring an adult with you!) Friends are welcome!

Cost: \$21 Lift Ticket \$14 Ski Rental \$5 Ski Lesson (optional)

\$24 Snowboard Rental (Bring Along Money for Food & Snacks)

Sign up & pay by Sunday, February 8th.