



FOCUS

...on life at First

December 2016

Our Mission:

To experience and celebrate God's amazing grace together.

Our Vision:

First Evangelical Lutheran Church will share God's amazing grace by welcoming, growing and serving in Christ's name, enriching the well-being of all.

Upcoming Events:

Christmas Bazaar

Saturday, December 3rd

Mark Smeby Concert

Tuesday, December 6th @7:00 p.m.

Live Nativity

Saturday, December 10th

Sunday School Christmas Program

Sunday, December 11th @ 10:30am

Christmas Eve Worship Services

10am, 4pm, & 11pm

Christmas Day Worship Service

10:00am

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“The Season of Reflections”

As I'm writing the Pastor's greeting for this month's Focus it is the Monday before Thanksgiving. My thoughts drift to the things I'm thankful for as we move into the coming holidays. I also reflect on the challenges of this past year.

This is something that many of us do over Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Year's. We recognize the ways that we have been blessed and we give thanks for those blessings. We give thanks for the ways our needs have been met this past year. We give thanks for the good things that we've seen and experienced. We give thanks for new beginnings. For example: I'm thankful for my nephew's recent engagement. In addition, we may be giving thanks for new children in our family or extended family, or new relationships which have begun, or those relationships that continue.

We also remember the tough events of this past year. We acknowledge loved ones that are no longer with us. Perhaps they have passed away, or have moved, or have chosen to no longer be a part of our life. We may also have faced other challenges this year in our health, job, home, finances or some other area of our life.

In both the blessings and challenges of life we give thanks for the ways that God is with us. Every good gift we have in our life is something that has come from God. Whatever is lifegiving is a gift from God, from our celebrations, to basic needs, to those things in life that remind us that we have more than we need.

As we face our challenges we do so knowing that we never face them alone. God is with us. In our darkest moments of sadness, despair, and anger God is there. In dark times, we pray for God's support and a sense of God's presence with us. We pray for the strength to face whatever we might be dealing with in life. We pray for the courage to take life giving actions that may be needed for others and for ourselves.

Knowing that God walks with us in both our blessings and our challenges is good news for us and for the world. This promise is our source of strength and hope as we reflect on the past. It is our source of strength and hope as we move forward into all that the future will bring.

God's Blessings to you and your family!
Rev. Mark Jensen

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS

Our church is very busy especially around the holiday season. There are a number of ways that you can participate in volunteer activities.

We need folks for a variety of tasks during the worship services and things such as office projects, holiday basket assembly, delivering baskets to individuals, assisting older members, and the list goes on.

We are a very giving family here at First and volunteers help greatly in what we are able to do for our own members and those in the community.

We thank all of our current volunteers and are blessed that you participate in activities that support our ministry.

If you are a current volunteer and are not able to help certain times of the year, please let Phyllis know so that we can be sure not to schedule you when you will be away. We all have busy schedules and want to make sure that we accommodate everyone the best we can. And, if you are not able to make a scheduled shift to help for worship, please try to find a sub right away so that we have it covered.

Thank you all again and if you are not currently volunteering, please consider it in the future. Any time you are able to give is appreciated.



HOLIDAY FOOD BASKETS



As the Christmas Holiday approaches, Social Concerns Small Group Ministry asks you to continue moving forward in your faith and help us provide holiday food baskets to the

members of our congregation and community less fortunate than others. We would like to continue with that ministry and again ask for your financial support.

In addition to your financial support, we need your assistance in updating our food basket list. If you or a family you know could benefit from this holiday basket, please provide the Church Office with the name, address and phone number by December 7th.

In your weekly bulletin, you will find a donation form that can be filled out and put in the offering basket or returned to the Church Office at your convenience. Donation forms will also be available at the information booth in Friendship Hall or in the church office. We will be ordering our food on December 9th and packaging and delivering the baskets on Saturday, December 17th.

At this time of year, we often forget about those who must struggle to put food on the table. We ask for your continued donations of non-perishable food to the Food Pantry box located in Friendship Hall. These items are distributed monthly to the various agencies within our community and are greatly appreciated. Thank you all for your generous donations in helping First Lutheran meet the needs of our congregation.

May you have a happy and blessed holiday season.
Social Concerns Small Group Ministry

Get to Know Our New Members

We are delighted to welcome the following people into membership.

Here is a little bit more about our new members. Please get to know them and make them welcome at First.

Cody Pomerville is currently a student at University of Wisconsin Eau Claire. He was a graduate of Beaver Dam High School in 2016. He also worked as a bank teller at Horicon bank. His parents are Jodi Kreuziger and Brad Pomerville. Welcome Cody!

Christina (Christi) Koukel was born and raised in Illinois. She currently lives on Basswood Road in Beaver Dam and is friends with Anthony Brossard. She is a Pharmacist at Agnesian Pharmacy. She is interested in the Christmas Bazaar, the FOCUS and bulk mailing and the SCRIP program. Welcome Christie!

Jason Ganz was born in Beaver Dam. His father is Bob Ganz. He is married to one of our members, Danielle Friese Ganz. Jason is a carpenter at Mercury Marine in Fond du Lac. Jason and Danielle will become new parents in December. Jason enjoys boating, carpentry and woodworking. Welcome Jason!

Karen and Daniel (Dan) Lessmiller were both born in Green Bay. They now reside on Nickolas Street in Randolph. They have retired from other jobs but remain very busy. Karen was a Food Service Manager for Moraine Park Technical College, but recently has taken a job in food service at the Charleston House. Dan remains active while working at Jung Seed Company. Welcome Karen and Dan!

Carrie and James (Jim) Ketchum are residents of rural Horicon. They have been members in the past and we are happy to say they are returning to our First family. They have joined the ranks of the empty nesters as the second of their two children is in college. Welcome Carrie and Jim!

BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES



Adult Forum

Meets Sundays, 9:15-10:15am

September through May.

Come see us in the Chapel or call the Church Office for more information. (Please see schedule below)

Alzheimer's Care Group

We usually meet on the 4th Monday of the month.

NO MEETING IN DECEMBER

Come if/when you can.

Baptism Class

Meets four times per year @ 9:15am

The following is covered: Milestone Ministry, the meaning of baptism, the Rite of Baptism, parenting styles, prayer and Bible study.

Grandparents and sponsors are welcome to attend also.

Child care is available on Sunday mornings.

Men's Breakfast

Saturdays @ 8am - We are meeting each Saturday in December at the Beaver Dam Hospital cafeteria.

Sharon Circle

On December 13th we will meet at 1pm in the kitchenette for our lesson, conversation and dessert.

Sunday School/Joyful Junction

Sundays @ 9:15am during the school year.

NO CLASSES 12/18 OR 12/25

Weekly Morning Bible Study

Mondays @ 9am throughout the year.

**Come, explore,
and enrich your spiritual growth!**

ADULT FORUM - December 2016

All sessions will be held in the Chapel at 9:15am unless otherwise noted.

December 4th - What is the correct Bible to use?

Monday morning Bible class, presenters

December 11th - "Christmas Jeopardy; Come have some fun". (shorter sessions because of children's Christmas Program)

Phyllis Eilbes, presenter

December 18th - Christmas Sing-A-Long with the Crawford's

THRIVENT

The next Thrivent meeting will be held on Thursday, December 8th at 5pm. **Also, there will be no Thrivent cookie sale in December.**

CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH MINISTRY

The Congregational Health Ministry Team is searching for new members. The Team brings guest speakers to First for Adult Forum and also for the Spring Health Event.

Last year's event was "Living Day to Day with C.O.P.D." and in 2014 "Understanding the Care of someone with Alzheimer's Disease".

Members plan those things for the congregation. Team members are Pastor Mark, Marilea Reinke, Kay Schoenfeld, Ellen Voigt, Mary Ann Aaron, Karla Faber, Ellen Storzer, Edie Scharfenberg and Bob Gionet.

Speak with any member if you want more information on joining our Team. We meet once a month September through May.

CHOIR FESTIVAL

Joyful Praise and Glory Ringers will hold a choir festival at the 8:00 a.m. service only on December 18th. This will be a service of wonderful hymns featuring voices and bells. Plan to attend this music filled service as we lift up our voices to the Lord.

MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES

(See Calendar insert for holiday meeting times as some may be adjusted for the month of December)

New Spirit ~ Mondays @ 6:00pm
(Contemporary music group who lead singing @ 10:30 worship, 1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays)

Joyful Praise ~ Wednesdays @ 7:00pm
(Classical church choir who sing @ 8:00 worship, 1st, 2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays)

Glory Ringers ~ Thursdays @ 7:00pm
(Handbell choir who play @ 8:00 worship, 3rd Sunday of the month)

P-Jays ~ Fridays @ 3:15pm
(Middle school praise band who lead music @ 10:30 worship, 2nd Sunday of the month)

BNA ~ Practice Dec. 14th 6:30-7:30pm
We will **NOT** sing on December 25th
(High school praise band who lead music @ 10:30 worship, 4th Sunday of the month)



Sparks ~ Sundays @ 11:30
(Elementary-aged singing group who sing @ 10:30 worship, 2nd Sunday of the month)

Come share your gift of music!

DON'T FORGET SCRIP

Scrip is a great way to support the church and also use for your day to day purchases or for that hard to shop for person. Most places on our scrip list "gift" the church 5 to 15%! That is a **HUGE** benefit for us.

If you are interested in scrip for the upcoming holidays, please place your order early to ensure we can get the items you need in a timely manner as we don't keep all items stocked in great amount.

Scrip can even be used to make purchases online from most of the companies listed. We keep the basics at the church office year round which include: Recheck's, Piggly-Wiggly, Wal-Mart, Applebee's, Shopko, Kohl's, Fleet Farm, BP, Kwik Trip, and Shell.



Feel free to stop at the office during the week or before and after each of the worship services.

The scrip members would be glad to help you.

PRAYER TEXTING

Remember that Prayer Texting occurs every weekend. We encourage you to be an active participant by texting your prayer requests to the number posted in the worship bulletin each week.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

First Lutheran is hosting Mark Smeby, Nashville Christian recording artist on Tuesday December 6th.

Mr. Smeby is a dear friend of Pastor Mark and Karla. There is no cost for this event as we were fortunate to have this event sponsored by funds from Pastor Mark's Mother's estate. There will be a free will offering collected and those funds will benefit the church mural being painted next summer.

Mr. Smeby will feature music off of his new CD "Hope for the Holidays". Join us as we get to partake in a Celebration of Christmas!

This event is open to the public so please encourage your friends and family to attend.

EQUAL EXCHANGE

It is that time of year when shopping for holiday gifts begins. We will have our display in Friendship Hall the 2nd and 4th weekends. If you need something during the month at another time, just contact the church office at 920-885-4497.



Participating in this program helps artists and farmers in 3rd world countries and they greatly appreciate it. Thank you!!!

REMINDER

The Sunday sermon is now available for viewing on our website at www.firstluthbd.org! Just go to the website, click on the "worship" tab at the top and scroll down to the link. Thanks to Bob Schwoch for helping to make this possible.

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

If you would like to donate toward Christmas poinsettias or decorations, please fill out a pink insert from the weekly bulletin and return to the church office. Cost of a poinsettia is \$12.00 but any donation amount is welcome. You may also place them in Honor, Memory, or Thanksgiving for someone dear to you.

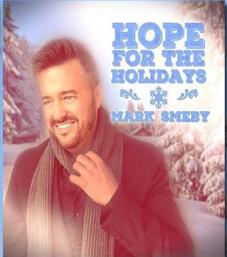
BAPTISM CLASS

The next baptism class will be held on January 8th at 9:15 a.m. If you are interested in attending, please contact the church office ahead of time so we can add you to the sign up list.

AN UNFORGETTABLE CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS!

LET ME BE JOY TO THE WORLD

WITH NASHVILLE CHRISTIAN RECORDING ARTIST **MARK SMEBY**



COMING TO BEAVER DAM!
TUES, DEC. 6TH AT 7:00PM
FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
311 WEST MACKIE ST.

FEATURING MUSIC FROM HIS NEW CD
HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS
AVAILABLE ON ITUNES

FREE ADMISSION
free will offering to help fund church history mural

FOR MORE INFO: 402-426-4073

WWW.MARKSMEBY.COM

**OCTOBER/YEAR TO DATE
FINANCE SUMMARY**

The month of October was a positive financial step for our congregation. October was a five Sunday month which helped us make up \$10,443 of our deficit and leave us at a negative balance of \$5,367. This is about \$50,000 better than we were one year ago.

Thank you for your continue support of this ministry. We are very close to finalizing the 2017 budget which will show a reduction from 2016. You should be feeling good about your Church's finances going forward.

Bob Viola
Co-Treasurer

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting will be held on January 29, 2017. We will also be holding our annual Chili Cook-Off. Be thinking about your favorite recipe in preparation for that day. If you are interested in bringing chili and participating, please contact the church office.

NOVEMBER COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

The annual meeting date was announced as January 29, 2017. Council members volunteered to bring chili for the event. Sig Schecher and Mary Kahler were assigned to a nominating committee for council. Four members need to be recruited to become council members. If anyone is interested, they may contact either Sig or Mary.

Some members and Pastor Terry went through names of those members who have not communed with us or given money for three years. Letters will be sent to these members.

Pastor Mark stated that there will be a Christmas Concert by Mark Smeby on December 6.

Discussion continued on what amount of pastoral staff we would like for the future.

MOVING? NEW PHONE #?

Please remember to contact the church office with any updates to your contact information such as address or phone number. We try to keep our records as accurate as possible and save on returned mail. Thank you for your help!

Christmas Bazaar **BAKE SALE & WHITE ELEPHANT**

All of our spaces are rented for the Christmas Bazaar/Bake Sale on **December 3**. We have vendors of: AVON, Origami Owl, Pampered Chef, Mary Kay, Tastefully Simple, Eden's Avenue, Tupperware, Scentsy Fragrance, Cynergy & Creativity, Norwex, L'Bri, Thirty-One, Young Living Oils and Capital Bee Supply. New this year is Discovery Toys. We have original crafters and many repeats from past years. Also, new this year are beautiful aprons for adults/children. Get your shopping list ready and shop our sale!

The Sale date is December 3rd from 8am-2pm. A cookie walk and bake sale will also be available to buy goodies for your holiday parties. ALL members are encouraged to bake for the sale. Cookies, bars, breads, pies, cakes and candy, etc. are needed. We are in need of MORE decorated cutout cookies as these are the first to go. Your items do NOT need to be package or priced. Bring to church by noon on Friday, December 2nd. Please sign in when you drop off your items so we know for future sales who donated. We are also in need of Christmas tins/plates or plastic holiday containers for our customers.

Help is needed Friday at 11:00 to help get the cookies ready on the serving trays for the cookie walk. The other items will need to be priced and packaged also. Please sign up on the Retirees bulletin board so we know if you are coming to ensure we have enough help. All are welcome.

Any Christmas decorations or items that are like new or new for gifts will be accepted. Gently used books/CD's/DVDs are also acceptable. Please label your box "Christmas bazaar" so it gets into the right location. Help will be needed to help price the items and assemble the cake boxes. **DATES/TIMES** are all listed on the signup sheet on Retirees board. We do go out for lunch those days for great fellowship.

The day of the sale we need help with the sale itself as well as people to serve our guests. You do not need to work the whole time, whenever you are able is appreciated. Sale is from 8 to 2 only. A crew is also needed after the sale for cleanup, putting tables back and boxing up leftovers.

The proceeds from the Bazaar rental spaces/bake sale/white elephant proceeds will go towards the mortgage principal. A **BIG THANKS** in advance to Dusty and John for getting Friendship Hall ready for this event and to our many bakers and workers that help make this event possible.

Our wrap up meeting will be held on December 12th at 10 a.m. in the kitchenette. We again thank Thrivent for the Action Plan funds again this year.

A food stand will also be available the day of the sale. We have the Youth Missions Group running the food stand for the Bazaar and we thank them for doing this.

Any questions please call, Carol Schultz 219-9471
or Pat Marthaler 887-2334.

STORIES TO TELL, GIFTS TO SHARE

Thank you to those who have submitted faith stories. We would like to share a story from Eileen. What a blessing this is. Please enjoy!!

Can a Quilt Tell a Story?

Can a quilt tell a story of God's people giving freely of their time and talents to help their neighbor? For many years, Lutheran women have been gathering to make quilts for people all around the world who are in need and hurting --- hurting physically and spiritually. Some in desperate need just to know that someone somewhere cares for them.

The quilts made by the women of First Lutheran Church are sent to New York for distribution anywhere in the world where there is a need. These quilts are all made from donated materials – old sheets and blankets are used as fillers and the tops are pieces of clothes – small, big, floral, striped, plain, brightly colored or dull and faded. All these pieces are skillfully pieced together and a beautiful quilt is made.

Think of the stories these quilts could tell! Some are used to cover doorways of cardboard shacks in refugee camps, some quilts bring warmth and cuddly comfort to little children, many who are ill and malnourished. They bring comfort and hope for people who have lost everything due to war or natural disaster! And Jesus said, "Whatsoever you do to one of the least of these you do to me!"

Many years ago, I attended a South Central Synodical Women of the ELCA conference in Madison. The keynote speaker was a woman from Lutheran Social Services. The speaker told the story of a young person living in a foster home who had to leave the foster home because she had turned 18 years old. She was there to help prepare the young girl to leave. This young girl had packed all her belongings in an old suitcase and a paper bag, but over her arm she carried a quilt from Lutheran Social Services.

Can you imagine what that quilt must have meant to her? To know that someone cared enough to give her such a lovely gift? Through the years I have often wondered about that girl, did she keep the quilt with her? Did it bring comfort during long, dreary, lonely nights? Did the bright cheerful colors bring her joy? Did she feel the love that was stitched into that quilt?

God can use our gifts to bless many people in the world. Therefore, let us joyfully share God's gifts of time and talents and give thanks for all that God has given to us!

Eileen Brower

FROM THE.....



Another heating season is upon us and we will be spending more time inside during the cold weather. Make sure your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are in working order. Battery operated smoke detectors should be replaced every 10 years. The manufacture date should be on the back in the fine print there, if it is more than 10 years ago that unit should be replaced. Write "Replace in (year)" on the back of the new units to make it easier next time.

So, what is your favorite Christmas tradition? Have you ever talked with your spouse, children or grandchildren about it? Maybe begin a new one this year? The old saying "Remember the Reason for the Season" rings true. Enjoy the time with your family both at home and at church. Try not to get so wrapped up (pun intended) in preparations that it creates a stressful time for you.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Blessed and Healthy New Year, Bob Gionet, R.N., B.S.N., Faith Community Nurse, 920-885-4497, bobg@churchclinic.org

Church Health Services has just received certification to provide A.O.D.A. (Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse) counseling. If you know of anyone needing this service please have them call CHS at 920-887-1766, select option 1, for more information or to make an appointment.

MORTGAGE PRINCIPAL REDUCTION PROJECT

Pat Marthaler has been busy! She has made a variety of pot holders that she is selling with all proceeds being given to the mortgage principal reduction. These potholders are not only colorful but made very well and would be a great gift. She will also have a table set up at the Bazaar, too. We currently have the ones in the picture below at the church office. Cost of the potholders is \$5/set. Stop in to get yours and help this cause.

We thank Pat for her generosity and for sharing her artistic ability with us!



GET YOUR CANDY BARS!

Youth Missions is selling candy bars as a FUNdraiser. Cost of the bars is \$1 each and the group earns a 50% profit! These would be great stocking stuffers or perfect for an afternoon pick me up! They are available in the church office, between services, and from the youth.

YOUTH MISSIONS SAYS THANKS!!

Thank you for your support of the Youth Missions group with their latest Culver's Share Night. Our group raised \$286.37. Thank you for joining us. We sure do appreciate everyone that came.



THANK FROM THE MILITARY

First Lutheran,

I received your care package today. Thank you so much. I really appreciate everything in it. I'm very grateful to have a congregation at home that I know is supporting me wherever I go.

*Thank you,
Aaron Hartl*

WEATHER UPDATES

Since winter is right around the corner, just a reminder to tune to 1430AM WBEV radio station for cancellation information due to inclement weather.

You can also check out our website www.firstluthbd.org or call the church office at 920-885-4497. Extension 29 will give you a status update 1 hr. before the start of the service. This applies to church events as well as worship services.

Thank you!

****To help save on our finance\$, we will not be plowing the parking lot if the snowfall is less than 3".**

SALT NEEDED!

With winter approaching in the not too distant future, we are once again asking anyone who is willing/able to donate bags of salt for the sidewalks at church. The city of Beaver Dam does not have this readily available as in the past.

Your donations can be dropped off during regular church office hours. Please let us know if you need assistance when dropping off your donations. Thank you!!

DINE OUT TO SUPPORT THE YOUTH



Date: Tuesday, November 29th, 2016

Time: 11am to 10pm
(Dine in, Carry Out, or Delivery)

Where: 831 Park Ave, Beaver Dam WI

Join us at Benvenuto's and support First Lutheran Youth Mission Trips. When you mention First Lutheran Youth Mission Trips 20% of proceeds will be donated to the Youth Mission Trips.



SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Our Sunday School children will be holding their annual Christmas Program on December 11th at the 10:30 a.m. service. The theme this year is "Sounds of Christmas". They look forward to sharing their story and songs with us.

LIVE NATIVITY 2016

Please join First Acts as they outline the Live Nativity which will be held on Saturday December 10th following the 5:30 worship service out in the side parking lot.

See how the innkeeper's family, angels, shepherds and wise men made room in their lives for Mary, Joseph and Jesus.

There will be animals, shepherds, angels, wise men and singing of carols. Hot chocolate and Christmas treats will follow in Friendship Hall.



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

6:00 PM	Wednesday	Casual
5:30 PM	Saturday	Traditional
8:00 AM	Sunday	Traditional
	(Broadcast Live on WBEV)	
10:30 AM	Sunday	Contemporary

*Child Care Available Sunday
8:00am to 11:30am*

Handicapped Accessible/Hearing Assisted
Large Print Bulletins & Hymnals Available

Sunday School – 9:15am

Contact us...

Office: 920-885-4497 Fax: 920-885-5886
Mon-Fri 9am-4pm CDT

E-mail: churchoffice@firstluthbd.org
website: www.firstluthbd.org

Rev. Mark D. Jensen 920-318-9593 revjensen@firstluthbd.org	Rev. Terry Larson 608-513-1360 revlarson@firstluthbd.org
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Vicar Tim Knipfer
608-712-4825
vicartim@firstluthbd.org

CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE
WWW.FIRSTLUTHBD.ORG

Church Staff

Heather Gensch Ganske, Administrative Assistant

Deb Vis, Receptionist

Bob Percifield, Accountant/Bookkeeper

Tom Szewczyk, Facilities Manager

John Huebner, Custodian

Phyllis Eilbes, Shared Ministry Coordinator

Mary Irwin, Kathi Wiedenhoef & Bryce Muenchow,
Choir Directors

Tom Irwin, Bell Choir Director

Cheryl Poetter & Liz Figueroa, Nursery

Marty Slager, Organist & Accompanist

Bob Schwoch, Sound Coordinator

First Lutheran Church
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Beaver Dam, WI 53916

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

FOCUS



2016 Church Council

Bev Anderson	President
Signe Schecher	Vice-President
Katelynn Strieff	Secretary
Bob Viola & Joe Bonnett	Co-Treasurers

Pat Abitz (Education)	Shaun Bradley (Finance)
Roger Herpel (Property)	Mitch Klug (Youth)
Mary Kahler (Worship)	Don Erstad (Stewardship)
Sherry Jaquet (Worship)	Jeff Klug (Personnel/Property)
Vikki Fischer-Kurth(Evangelism)	