

# *First Lutheran Church*

Newsletter for Members & Friends  
January, 2012

---



## **A New Year, Old Challenges**

As I begin my tenth year as your pastor, I have thoughts about what is next? Turning over the calendar does not change much but the year that will take us a month or so to remember to change as we date things.

Maybe it is a chance to start over. We all need that. Start on a healthier life style. Try to start some better habits. Let go of some old hurts and face some new issues. Maybe take a shot of patching up some past mistakes. We all need that.

From my point of view, pastoral ministry is always filled with day to day routines, caring for people, preparing the next week's sermon and liturgy, getting ready for the next meeting, confirmation class, etc., etc. But every once in a while you try to step back from the routine and ask, "Is this really working?" And there is never a clear answer to that. Sometimes it does and sometimes it does not.

With the Centered Life Program Assessment done we come to the next more difficult step: Doing the analysis and small group work necessary to take the Gospel from worship into daily life. Do we have the energy to do this work to change the climate of this church? There was a lot of energy at the Christmas Sunday School Program. What will it take to reproduce that on a consistent basis?

One issue is about leadership. As in many volunteer organizations, finding the right people is always a problem. I sometimes wonder: What is so intimidating about being a leader in the church where the central message is about love, hope, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of Christ, and the joy of service? Maybe our central message is not being heard very well.

Anyway, it is a new year and we have some of the same old challenges. My prayer is that we can find a way to deal with them differently.

*Peace, Pastor Greg*

### **Council Highlights: 12-6-11**

The council met at the parsonage for refreshments supplied by the Olson's with 12 members present, Pastor Olson and Rosemary Sibley. Devotions were given by Marilyn Melton. The treasurer's report was approved.

Pastor's Report: Pastor reported on the Centered Life assessment that has returned to us. Without having much time to reflect on the numbers, Pastor passed out copies of the high points and invited the council members to begin thinking about what all of it means. The assessments will be used to form ministry goals for next year. The

nominating committee has begun its work. Pastor thanked the members of the council who have completed their terms: Marsha Erickson, Dave Meyer, Aaron Johnson, Mary Roland and Nancy Ariens. Pastor will be taking the last week of December off. He announced that the Prophetstown Community Endowment Fund has awarded us \$2,000 for the FLUBBER, Prayer Breakfast and Pizza & Prayer expenses.

President: Dave attended the Synod discipleship event in Dixon in November that dealt with using media networking for the church. We talked about ways to improve the web site and possible WIFI for the church.

Youth and Family Ministry: Rosemary reported on the Jr. League events in November, going to the LYO sleep over at DeKalb NIU and the Peder Eide event at LOMC. Both were well attended and went well. Three of our high school youth helped out at the sleep over. Fund raising for the New Orleans trip continues.

Property: The new highway signs are being worked on by Rick Woolums. Lights were replaced around the building.

Worship and Music: Communion will not be offered on the Sunday of the Sunday School program as it will offered on December 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. Hymns were chosen for January.

Christian Education: Sun. School program is on the way. Teachers are needed for Jan. Evangelism and Social Ministry: The hat and mitten tree for the holidays will be set up. Busy bags were filled.

Stewardship and Finance: Budget items were discussed. The report of giving for next year was given. So far 65 pledges have been made equaling \$153,000. We need to be around 80 pledges and \$175,000. Letters will be sent out.

Old Business: The lot on 203 Locust Street has been applied for tax free status with the lawyer. The executive committee will

recommend budget suggestions after the first of the year.

New Business: The annual meeting was set for January 29<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting ended in prayer and more refreshments.

**Next Council & Committee Meetings**

Tuesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>

Committees - 7:00 p.m.

Council - 8:00 p.m.

**November Financial Report**

	<u>Building</u>	<u>General</u>
<u>Fund</u>		
Beginning . . . . .	\$ (521.79)	5,534.46
Income . . . . .	12,231.12	1,257.09
Expenses . . . . .	16,341.54	96.97
<b>Balance . . . . .</b>	<b>\$ (4,632.21)</b>	<b>6,694.58</b>

**Memorial Comm. - 11:00 a.m.  
Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup>**

The Memorial Committee will meet to prepare their annual report and consider the use of the funds.

**Audit Committee - 6:30 p.m.  
Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Annual Meeting - January 29<sup>th</sup>**

Our constitution calls us together to do the business of the church each year at this time. It is also the spirit of God that calls us to consider our ministry from the past year and prepare for the next year. Budgets need to be approved, new officers elected, reports heard and approved. We will meet downstairs following church and the brunch served by FLY.

Committee chairpersons need to have their report to the office by Wednesday, January 4<sup>th</sup> which will be put in the Annual Report booklet.

Use your God-gifts to keep our ministry going.

## **Brunch - January 29<sup>th</sup>**

Have brunch before attending the Annual Meeting. FLY will be serving our traditional Swedish Brunch on January 29<sup>th</sup>. Swedish pancakes, potatoes, meatballs and fruit will be served. Please join us as we continue in tradition.

## **Stewardship Report**

Have you returned your financial commitment cards and Time & Talent sheets? It is never too late. So far we have received 73 pledge cards totaling 170,000. So far 35 families have raised their contribution for 2012 and nine have lowered or no longer pledging giving us about \$4,000 of new revenue for the new year. Our offering is one of the ways we worship God and take our part in the ministry of the church

Please return your commitment cards. It is never too late. Thanks!

## **Flag - January 6<sup>th</sup> 5:30 p.m.**

The First Lutheran Adult Group will meet for an Epiphany Party to take down the decorations and eat together. You are invited to join us.

## **Nominating Committee**

This year's nominating committee is made up of Bob Anderson, JoAnne Cocking, Dave Meyer, Jeff Olsen, Mary Roland and Donna Roland.

We thank all of you who have agreed to serve on the committees so far this year.

However, we continue to need people for church council. As the pool of candidates for this ministry is you, the congregation of FLC, please reconsider and help the committee and our church by taking a three year term on the church council. We meet on the second Tues. of each month.

## **Pizza Sales**

FLY members will be taking orders for homemade pizza's during the month of January. Pizzas will be made and ready for pick-up on Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup> in time for Super Bowl Sunday. This year, besides ordering the type of pizza you want, you may also order how much cheese you want on your pizza. Sausage, pepperoni, cheese and supreme will be available with light, medium or lots of cheese. You will also be able to order ½ and ½ pizzas.

## **Sign-up Sheets Ready for you!**

The yearly sign-up sheets are ready for your signature for a variety of tasks for the new year. We need ushers, greeters, communion bread, WELCA general meetings and Lydia-Miriam Circle. You can find the sheets on the narthex table.

Thank you FLC for getting involved. It is a big help for you to volunteer for these positions as we try to fill them by February when we set up the directory for the year.

## **WELCA Board Meeting**

Monday, January 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. in the narthex.

## **Lydia-Miriam Circle Meeting**

The circle meeting will be held on Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at the parsonage hosted by Rita Olson.

## **WELCA**

The general meeting will be held Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. at the church. All women members of the church are invited. Devotions only will be led by Ethel Jensen. Hostesses for the meeting will be Jan Carlson and Ethel Jensen The Bible leader will be Pastor Greg.

## **FLUBBER After School Program**

Classes will resume on Thursday, January 5<sup>th</sup>. Students will be picked up at the elementary school playground.

If you can help at anytime please contact Rosemary Sibley or Pastor Olson. We need kitchen help to serve the snacks from 3:15-4:00 p.m. We need tutors to help with homework from 4:00 - 4:30 p.m. We need people to help with the students from 5:00 - 5:30 p.m. during their free time.

## **N. IL. Synod Ski Trip**

Families and friends of Jr. League and FLY are welcome to attend the annual synod ski trip at Chestnut Mountain on Monday, January 16<sup>th</sup>. We will be leaving the church at 7:30 a.m., car pooling to the mountain with return around 6:00 p.m. This is an exceptional deal with a huge discount to all attending. Forms have been sent to all FLY and Jr. League members. Forms and money must be returned by Thursday, January 5<sup>th</sup>. Any questions please contact Rosemary. Children under 6<sup>th</sup> grade need to be accompanied by an adult.

## **January Youth Events**

**FLY:** 10<sup>th</sup> - Prayer Breakfast resumes  
16<sup>th</sup> - Synod ski day at Chestnut Mountain  
29<sup>th</sup> - Serve Brunch  
Pizza & Prayer - January 11<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>

### **Jr. League**

16<sup>th</sup> - Synod ski day at Chestnut Mountain  
22<sup>nd</sup> - Served fellowship

## **Week of Prayer**

The Prophetstown area churches have set aside the week of January 16<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The services are each day at 12:10 p.m. followed by lunch. Their annual

meeting will be held on Thursday at 1:00 p.m. Please attend the following services:

- \* Monday - Congregational Church
- \* Tuesday - Catholic Church
- \* Wednesday - United Methodist Church
- \* **Thursday - First Lutheran Church**  
7:00 p.m. Advent Christian Church
- \* Friday - United Methodist hosted by  
Lyndon/Leon United Methodist Church

## **Cookies for PADS Shelter**

WELCA will be donating cookies for the PADS Homeless Shelter in Sterling this month. Please leave cookies in the church kitchen on Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup>.

## **January Birthday Celebrations**

We wish to send a "Birthday Greeting" to all of our members celebrating this month. A special greeting is extended to our members who are 80 or over.

Harry Johnson - 4<sup>th</sup>

Lillian Parker - 15<sup>th</sup>

Avis Chamberlain - 28<sup>th</sup>

Please refer to your church directory for the entire birthday list of our members.

## **Thank You....**

*Thanks for all the prayers while Alda VanBerg was in the nursing home. Thanks for all the cards and memorial gifts. Thanks to Pastor Greg for his comforting service and to Jeanne Frank for playing the organ. Thanks to WELCA for the delicious lunch.*  
*Lory Wirth and Family*

Thank you to Bob & Rhonda Bohms for taking the FLY group shopping before Christmas. FLY picked two names off of the Angel Tree at the nursing home and bought presents for two residents that never have visitors. It was a busy three Sundays for FLY, with their sponsors they shopped, wrapped and delivered the gifts and

decorated the church Christmas tree. Thank you Bob & Rhonda for giving the group the true meaning of Christmas

Kim Purvis and Amanda Schanze teamed together and with great full hearts from all of us thank you for a beautiful and exceptional Christmas program. It was wonderful to see all the youth participating from Preschool to High School and giving of their gifts of talent. Thank you to all the teachers who helped with the program and Aaron Johnson for doing the sound system.

### **Thanks ...**

This last year has been a tough year for our family, personally. Through all of that, the church of First Lutheran has been so supportive and understanding. You have surrounded us with prayers, cards and expressions of caring. We thank you also for the time you have given us to spend time with my family in South Dakota. The parental care time you have extended to us helped us worry about one less thing during this last year.

We also thank you for the expressions of sharing the Gospel during this Christmas season with us through the cards and gifts that mean so much to us.

As you have for many families this last year, you have risen to the task of caring for others and wearing the Gospel on your sleeves, in hard work and acts of kindness.

We, along with some of our other families are looking forward to a better year next year. But whatever it brings, it will be with fellowship of Christ through his church.

On this subject, I have reproduced some copies of the "Holiday Grief Resource Packet" provided by the pastoral care staff of Trinity Medical Center. Feel free to take a copy. There are inspirational pieces in this for not only the holidays but for any time when grief enters our life. Take one and share it with someone you know is going

through this period in their life. If the copies are gone, I will make more.

*Thanks, Pastor Greg*

## **Pastoral Acts**

July thru December

### **Baptisms**

8-28-11 Pierce Francis Gerlach  
11-11-10 Alexander Russell Ottens

### **Receive Bibles** 9-11-11

Samantha Celestino, Eli Erickson, Dawson Haggard, Max Jones, Sydney Minssen, Danielle Stegman

### **Confirmed** 10-30-11

Mary Chapman, Erin Heflin, Heather Strike

### **Weddings**

9-10-11 Jennifer Caudillo & Tony Schillaci  
9-17-11 Korin Sandrock & Blake Davis

### **Funerals**

7-11-11 Stanley W. Lindahl  
10-12-11 Phyllis J. Larson  
11-23-11 F. Lucille Cady  
12-8-11 Alda J. VanBerg  
12-13-11 June I. Larson

## **Assisting in January**

**Ushers:** Orval Johnson, Reid Johnson, Ron Johnson, Russ & Vicki Ottens

**Greeters:** Jason & Christa Robshaw, Mark & Gayle Melton

**Altar Committee:** Nora Kelly, Betty Lou Olsen, Denise Cady

**Assisting Minister** 15 – Denise Cady

**Communion Bread** 1 – Diane Jones

**Cantor** Cathy Hinrichs

### **Readers**

1 – Drew Emery  
8 – Joan Johnson

15 – Orval Johnson  
22 –  
29 –Judi Breitbach

**Acolytes**

1 – Jack Heflin  
8 – Maggie Kelly  
15 – Garret Lundberg  
22 –Jensyn McKinney  
29 – Madi Purvis

**Nursery**

1 – Karen Buck  
8 – Open  
15 – Open  
22 – Judy Johnson  
29 – Tara Johnson



**Pastor & Staff**

Pastor Greg Olson  
Home: 815-537-2363 Cell: 815-535-3181

Youth & Family Ministry - Rosemary Sibley  
Home: 815-537-5326

**Sunday Worship** . . . . .9:00 a.m.  
**Sunday School** . . . . . 10:15 – 11:15 a.m.

**Secretary's Hours**  
Monday–Friday 9 am - 12 pm

**How to Reach Us**  
Office Phone . . . . .815-537-2758  
Fax Number . . . . . 815-537-5919  
E-mail . . . . . [flcptown@frontiernet.net](mailto:flcptown@frontiernet.net)  
Website . . . . . [www.firstlutheran-ptown.org](http://www.firstlutheran-ptown.org)