

First Hearts

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January 2018

Dear Members of First Lutheran:

My wife Mary and I arrived here in Knoxville just as the holidays began to kick off. Because of this, we couldn't help but notice the furious pace of the season moving in on us. Everyone and everything was "hustling and bustling" to "get ready for Christmas." Malls were packed. Highways were jammed. We sat for 20 minutes just to get off an off-ramp in one place. There was an intensity in the culture around me!

Likewise, members of the church were busily trying to put things together to decorate the church, to pull off rehearsals and programs, to make it to services. And yes, the teachers as well noticed the increased "energy" levels of all their students as their excitement increased. In short, things were "intense."

Then it happened....Christmas Day.

And suddenly there was an amazing calm over the land. The highways didn't have the volume of traffic. The hustle and bustle wasn't at the same level. Our staff had time off. It was as if everyone said altogether, "Whew, glad that's over!"

And yes, we need rest, especially from the fury of our fast-paced-holiday world! So take some rest, dear members of First Lutheran. Breathe again! Let God's calm fill you! Mary and Joseph no doubt had those moments as well, when the Holy Spirit graced them with His presence and gave them a sense of calm. Can you see Mary holding Jesus in her arms and singing to Him with calmness in her heart?

In the pursuit of that which is calm, though, where do we go? Hopefully God is still the answer to that. Just as He made His presence known on earth in the person of His son, so He still makes His presence known through the Word that is proclaimed and the Sacraments that are administered. In those things our rest is found and our calm is created. God is telling us, I'm here with you!

This is important to know in a time of year when attendance across churches in America is at its lowest. It's as if many are taking a break from the very thing that brings calm to the soul! It's here that we see Mary and Joseph again. The birth of Jesus was over, but not His mission. Because of this, their first order of business was to do the unlikely – go to the Temple and present Jesus.

Yes, Jesus appears in God's House to be placed under the Law that we might be free of its curse! And so are we! We are free to be the people of God! Hopefully this is the

way we confront the after-Christmas lull. We are now free to be the people of God! The world sees this as a reason to stay away from His house. We however, see it as our very joy! We are His people. His house is our house! It's where we hear of salvation! It's where we are set free! It's where we receive our calm!

So join the "after-Christmas crowd!" Not at the local pub, but at a different "watering hole!" The place of baptism! The house of the Lord! And as you come, bring your joy, for that's who we are – the people of joy!

In Christ, Pastor Schmidt

Worship This Month

I pledge allegiance to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the faith for which it stands, one Savior eternal with mercy and grace for all.

January 7 – The Baptism of Our Lord: *Genesis 1:1-5; Romans 6:12-11; Mark 4:4-11.*

January 14 – 2nd Sunday after Epiphany: *1 Samuel 3:1-10; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51.*

January 21 – 3rd Sunday after Epiphany: *Jonah 3:1-3, 10; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20.*

January 28 – 4th Sunday after Epiphany: *Deuteronomy 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28.*

ADVENT 2017 – We invite the congregation to join us for our Advent journey to the manger this year. Our theme will be "Advent, A time for Patience, Preparation and Rejoicing." Please join us!

Prayer List

OUR PRAYER LIST SHOULD INCLUDE:

Sick or Burdened Members:

General: Jim Beck, Don Weaver

Serving Our Country: Brett Anthonijs, Robert Boatman, Isaac Davis, Chad Kaiser, Adam Smith, Jeff Stone, Neil Whitehead

Other Prayer Requests:

MEMBERS WITH SICKNESS OR BURDENS:

Brion Bissell (needs kidney)

Susan Spicer

Margot Bridges (homebound)

Gene & Arlene Stern

Shirley Eimmerman (broken leg) Jerry Stewart (homebound)

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Gladys Frankenberg (homebound) Carl Testerman (cancer)
 Gene Franklin Judy Testerman (cancer)
 Pat Hinds the Varner family
 Karla Hood Don & Carolyn Weaver
 Mike & Mary Jones Kris Weaver
 Dan Jordan Harold & Katherine Whitaker (homebound)
 Donna Korte Mary Ann Wheat
 Don Linde Marilyn Wing (homebound)
 Ralph & Dottie Mertz (homebound). Jerry Wing (nursing home)
 Sharon Mueller the Wolford family
 Blaine Smith

NON-MEMBERS WITH SICKNESS OR BURDENS:

Dennis Lee Bagby (Donna Korte's friend Suzanne Chapman's son)
 Charlotte Brothers (wife of Carla Poore's co-worker),
 doing well; doctors believe they got all the cancer
 and she did not require chemotherapy. Praise God!
 Julie Brummitt (Jim & Rosa Beck's daughter)
 Jonathan Campbell (Diane Baum's co-worker's brother)
 fighting infection after an appendectomy to remove his
 ruptured appendix
 Steven Dew (Carolyn Weaver's friend)
 James Flanigan (Eric's brother)
 Mary Ann Fowler (Mike Anderson's aunt) with cancer
 and prognosis not good
 Andy Fultz (the Rodenbeck's relative) who is facing
 serious health issues
 Ken Hamilton (father of Anna Marie Hamilton, UT
 student from Alabama)
 Judy Hamrick (Shirley Watson's neighbor) with a tumor
 that is growing
 JoAnn Harbaugh (Kathleen Holliday's mother)
 Randy Hetzner (AnnMarie Bissell's father) with a
 broken foot and ankle
 Cheryl Hooks (Diane Baum's friend) undergoing months of
 chemotherapy after removal of part
 of her colon and intestines due to cancer
 Helen Linderfelt (Lynda Graves' friend)
 Joyce Lipscomb (Rick Elmore's friend)
 Annette Lotivio (Marc Blais's friend) with pancreatic
 cancer
 Joanne Mattingly
 Joan Mincey (Shirley Watson's friend) with stage 4
 COPD and breast cancer
 Karen Nall
 Mary Jane Nichols (Becky Marshall's sister) having
 open heart surgery
 Tom O'Brien (Marissa Wilson's co-worker's husband)
 with prostate cancer
 Travis Parrott (the Wolford's son-in-law) needing a
 kidney transplant
 Kallee Pittenger (mother of one of our 3rd grade
 students), having chemotherapy for breast cancer

Tom Roberts (Sara's grandfather) with Alzheimer's
 Daniel Rule (the Slifkas' friend) suffering from RSD
 Jason Rutledge
 Kristy Shirk (Lynda Graves' friend) with cancer of
 the sinuses
 Connie Warren (Slifka family friend), undergoing
 breast cancer treatment
 Sam and Alex Weaver

Other News and Happenings

THANK YOU, Members of First Lutheran! Mary and I wish to thank all the members of First Lutheran for the cards, baked goods, gifts, and well wishes during the Christmas season! Your thoughtfulness and kindness helped us and warmed us as we faced our first Christmas away from all that was familiar. Thanks for reaching out to us in so many ways! May God bless you all as we look ahead to the new year!

NEW SUNDAY BULLETINS – Truth be told, I'm not a person who really likes a lot of change in life. I certainly like my "comfort zones," which in my book is not really a bad thing. They can help life run smoother. But every once in a while it's not a bad idea to try something a little different. It expands our horizons.

One of the changes that we are experimenting with is the Sunday morning bulletins. For many years FLC has used what was really two orders of service. One was a bulletin, the other was the hymnal. You had to consult one to see where you were in the other. The bulletin also did not include the announcements, which left many without church information.

Beginning Sunday, January 7, we are going to combine these two items – the announcement page and the bulletin into one item. We have ordered the "Every Sunday Bulletins" from Concordia Publishing House that many churches use. They have color pictures on them which reflect the theme of the day. We have also ordered the "worship Inserts" which include the necessary items for the liturgy such as the Introit Psalm, the Collect, the Gradual, and the readings.

We invite the worshiper to simply use the insert along with the hymnal. This will do several things. It will save on paper, get the church announcements to more of our members, and help with the flow of worship a bit.

Any change seems unfamiliar at first, but we hope you give it a try. Once it is familiar, it will, hopefully, make sense. May God continue to bless us as we receive His mighty word!

In Christ, Pastor Schmidt

STEWARDSHIP – It's a new year. It's a time when we take stock of the year past in order to improve the year to

come. It's a time when we sit down to plan and implement what we want to accomplish and even change. Part of that is planning our stewardship for the coming year.

Often we find this difficult and daunting and even joyless. But it doesn't have to be. In fact, it is really quite simple and full of joy. So here are some tips to make that planning less stressful. You begin by answering these three questions: Who are you? To whom do I give? And how much?

So, who are you? The Table of Duties in the Small Catechism informs us we are hearers of God's Word.

To whom do we give? As a hearer, a member of the church who receives instruction, St. Paul taught: "Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor" (*Gal. 6:6*).

How much do we give? Our only instructions are these: to give regularly (*1 Cor. 6:1-2*), proportionally (*1 Cor. 16:1-2*; *2 Cor. 8:12*), and generously (*2 Cor. 8:20*) of our first fruits (*Gen. 4:4*; *Prov. 3:9*; *Lev. 27:30*) with a spirit of eagerness (*2 Cor. 9:2*), earnestness (*2 Cor. 8:7*), cheerfulness (*2 Cor. 9:7*), and love (*2 Cor. 8:23*).

Understanding that all we have belongs to God, we set aside a proportionate and generous amount of those first fruits. Ten percent was the standard for the Israelites. This was a command for the ancient Israelites. We can give as much as we want, but ask yourself: do we really want to be less generous than was commanded of the Israelites?

And how are we to give it? We give it with eagerness and earnestness. We give it cheerfully and with love, not out of compulsion, as Jesus said, "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (*Acts 20:35*).

It's that easy. And it is joyful. For in stewardship, our gracious and giving Lord invites us to take part in the work that He accomplishes here on earth, providing for the ongoing preaching of the gospel as well as those who are in need. Taking part in that makes all our work holy – work that is done in service to the Lord as priestly members of His kingdom.

NEWS FROM EVANGELISM – E-mail, Facebook, text message, Instagram, Twitter, and Periscope. What do you mean? I simply want to find out if my friend wants to go fishing. I'm not trying to launch the Space Shuttle. I simply want to ask my friend a simple question and get a simple answer. Why is it so complicated? Did cavemen have these problems? My guess is, probably so. I suspect that there needed to be someone nearby to interpret the smoke signals and hieroglyphics. Now, imagine the impact of the Guttenberg press on the people centuries ago. The way we communicate is constantly changing.

This coming year, the Evangelism Committee will take a look at how we can improve communication among our members that will enhance the worship experience and

increase member participation to support the many ministries we have. We will also look at creating better ways to be more effective in sharing the message of God's grace and salvation to non-believers. We should recognize that it is a privilege to be part of God's work and that being an extravert isn't essential to becoming involved in evangelism, only obedience and love are.

If you would like to be involved or learn more, please e-mail me at shadamattern@gmail.com.

In Hoc Signo Vincas, Shada Mattern

TALENTS NEEDED – If you are a photographer, videographer, graphic designer, or artist of any kind, we are looking to create new content for our website, social media and publications. please contact Shada Mattern at shadamattern@gmail.com.

DAY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING is 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 9.

BOARD OF ELDERS MEETING is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 9.

55 ALIVE will begin the New Year on Thursday, January 11, at 12:00 noon with Al Collver giving a Power Point presentation on his recent trip to Wittenberg, Germany, celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. Luncheon will be served at \$7.00/person. Looking forward to seeing you there!

BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP will meet at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 16.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES meeting and workday at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 20.

A HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE is being hosted by Rev. Michael Wolfram and Teacher Tim Wolfram from February 4-13, 2018. This 10-day Biblical tour of Israel will feature stops at locations highlighting Jesus' ministry. For more information about this faith-enriching opportunity, contact Rev. Wolfram at 515-988-4324 or e-mail him at mcwolfram@aol.com, or contact Tim Wolfram at phone 865-522-0951 or e-mail timwolfram@bellsouth.net. Early Bird registrations begin going away incrementally on January 15, 2018.

GREETERS ARE NEEDED for the Sunday 10:30 a.m. service. Please contact Barb Eisold at 925-0465. Thank you very much!

School News and Happenings

CALENDAR

- 3 – First day back at school
- 12-14 – Basketball Tournament
- 15 – MLK Day - No School or ECE
- 18 – 100th Day – Dress like you are 100
- 21 – All School Choir sings at FLC
- 22-26 – National Lutheran Schools Week
- 23 – Spelling Bee
- 25 – Open House

NEWS FROM FIRST LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Dear Friends,

Another year has come and gone. The year gone by has brought many changes to our ministry. Being Lutheran just the word change can make us shudder, but we know for everything there is a season. It seems that we are in a season of change now and may be for some time.

We live in uncertain times. We struggle to find our identity in this culture of chaos. It is very logical to want to keep things comfortable and of course if I like something a certain way it needs to stay that way. As we look to our 150th anniversary, I have been thinking a great deal about the members and leaders of First Lutheran who were advocates for change. Perhaps not politically or socially, but for the growth and success of the ministry. I'm sure building and moving were difficult. I can't imagine the transition from German services to English. As Christians we ask God to change our hearts, seek His will which at times can be the opposite of what we want, and pray to see a change in those who have hardened hearts. When it comes down to it, we hope for change as long as it's the change we want.

New hymnals are published, songs change, leaders change, and so do the needs of a ministry. These things can all change, but God never does. Why fear change? We know that God never changes and never forgets His promises. The Lord continues to provide for his people. We have had change in our school that we did not expect, but we have been blessed in new and unexpected ways this year.

This month, we will celebrate God's faithfulness during National Lutheran School's Week. Each Wednesday we will come to our Father in Chapel to praise His faithfulness to us and His continued and countless blessings. We are excited about the future and things to come for First Lutheran. Thank you for your continued support of our ministry!

In Christ, Lindsey Hofman

Birthdays and Anniversaries

BIRTHDAYS

- 5 – Kelly Sternberg
- 6 – Natalie Brown, Julie Killian
- 7 – Don Yeatts
- 9 – Jana Hotaling
- 10 – Anna Broyles
- 12 – Natalie Hotaling
- 13 – Camden Smolter, Lillian Tower
- 14 – Sarah Appleton, Megan Varner
- 15 – Steve Byrd, Amelia Hamilton
- 16 – Gladys Frankenberg
- 18 – Josh Blomenberg
- 19 – Shirley Watson
- 20 – Ariej' Robbins
- 21 – Hannah Keyes
- 25 – Nathaniel Davis, Rosie Rosen
- 26 – Liam Bales
- 27 – Doug Slifka
- 30 – Adam Breeden, Roger Wright
- 31 – Sean Bales

ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 – Jim and Linda Perrine
- 7 – John & Beth Crockett
- 13 – Don & Carolyn Weaver
- 14 – Jeff & Stephanie McKenzie
- 17 – Jim & rosa Beck
- 25 – Gary & Christina Boatman

DEADLINE FOR THE FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER IS FRIDAY, JANUARY 19

Edward H. Schmidt, Pastor; Ceci Steele, Editor.
Worship Services are held Sundays at 10:30 a.m. and Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. Children's Sunday School and Adult Bible Classes are held on Sundays at 9:15 a.m.

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+Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<h1>January 2018</h1>						
	1 NEW YEARS DAY 6:00 New Testament Books	2	3 8:30 <i>School Chapel</i> 6:30 Worship Service 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	4	5	6
	<i>NO SCHOOL / NO ECE</i>	<i>NO SCHOOL</i>				
7 BAPTISM OF OUR LORD 8:45 First Bells Rehearsal 9:00 Fellowship 9:15 SS & Bible Classes 10:30 Worship Service	5 9:30 Quilting 6:00 New Testament Books	9 6:00 <i>Day School Board</i> 7:00 Board of Elders	10 8:30 <i>School Chapel</i> 6:30 Worship Service 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	11 12:00 55 Alive	12	13
					<----- Lutheran	Basketball Tournament-----
14 8:45 First Bells Rehearsal 9:00 Fellowship 9:15 SS & Bible Classes 10:30 Worship Service 12:30 Confirmation Class	15 MILK DAY 6:00 New Testament Books	16 7:00 Board of Stewardship	17 8:30 <i>School Chapel</i> 6:30 Worship Service 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	18	19 DEADLINE FOR FEB. NEWSLETTER	20 9:00 Workday
	<i>NO SCHOOL / NO ECE</i>					
21 MITEBOX SUNDAY 8:45 First Bells Rehearsal 9:00 Fellowship 9:15 SS & Bible Classes 10:30 Worship: <i>All School</i> Choir 12:00 Chili Cook-Off	22 9:30 Quilting 6:00 New Testament Books	23	24 8:30 <i>School Chapel</i> 6:30 Worship Service 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	25	26	27
	<-----	National	Lutheran Schools-----	Week-----	>-----	
28 8:45 First Bells Rehearsal 9:00 Fellowship 9:15 SS & Bible Classes 10:30 Worship Service 12:30 Confirmation Class	29 6:00 New Testament Books	30	31			