

First Hearts

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January 2019

Dear Members of First Lutheran,

The days just fly by – it seems. I know that you – especially if you have a few years on you – experience your life seeping away from you at increased speed as you age. No longer are there days that creep slowly by from Christmas to Christmas as we experienced them we were young.

Likewise, two thousand plus years have sped by since Christ walked the earth as a boy – then as a man who performed miracles and healing – raised the dead – walked on stormy seas and ate and drank with sinners like you and I. Regardless of all the years, if one could take away technology and the machine age, things would be pretty much the same – especially if one only regarded human nature and human behavior.

Men – and women – are still sinners. The death rate is still 100 %. Spend billions on heart and cancer research if you will, but we all still die. God's will for humanity will not be changed. God does not want us to live forever in sin and separation from Him. In God's great love for us, He has willed that we die, so that we can be resurrected when His Son comes again in His Glory to be reunited with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Many wonder why God allows us to die. Ultimately the answer to that question is that sin causes death. "The wages of sin is death." "So it is written that man should die once, and after that comes the judgment." And for what are we to be judged? Are we to be judged and punished for our sin? If that were so then God would indeed be a terrible God who punishes twice for the same sin. God has already punished His Son for the sins of the whole world. Would he again judge us for the sins for which His Son paid?

No, dear ones, Christ has already paid for all sin.

We are to be judged for our faith. All the way back to Abraham God judges faith. Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness. When Christ comes again, we will be judged by our faith. Those who believe Christ will go with him into paradise. Those who do not believe Christ will indeed endure eternal punishment in hell - also known as the lake of fire in the book of Revelation.

Over and over and over, that is the message of the Holy Scriptures. And it is a good message – a very good message – especially for those who believe. When Christ comes again, He will send out His Holy angels to gather those who believe in Him and take them with them to Christ in paradise, also known as heaven. Those who do not believe in Christ will be cast into the lake of fire, where there will be crying and gnashing of teeth for eternity.

Fast year or slow year – that is the story. Five years or a hundred years or two thousand years – that is the story. The story doesn't change because God doesn't change. For those who believe in Him, it is a good thing that God doesn't change. His love for us through the suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of His Son is never wavering – cannot change – will not change. God loves us so much that He gave His Son in exchange for us. That is the never-ending story. Thanks be to God for the gift of His Son. Thanks be to God for the gift of faith given to us by the work of the Holy Spirit so that we can believe in God's Son as the Savior of the World from sin, death, and the devil.

I hope that the year of 2019 AD – Anno Domini – really is the "Year of our Lord" for you. May 2019 be a year filled with images of the Christ Child, the Cross, the Empty Tomb, and the Ascension for you and yours.

In Christ, the Son of the only true and living God,
Pastor Floyd Smithey

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 6 – 1st Epiphany: *Isaiah 60:1-6; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12.*

January 13 – 2nd Baptism of Our Lord: *Isaiah 43:1-7; Romans 6:1-11; Luke 3:15-22.*

January 20 – 2nd Sunday of Epiphany: *Isaiah 62:15; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11.*

January 27 – 3rd Sunday of Epiphany: *Nehemiah 8:1-3,5-6,8-10; 1 Corinthians 12:13-31; Luke 4:16-30.*

Prayer List

OUR PRAYER LIST SHOULD INCLUDE:

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) Pastor & Mary Schmidt
Margot Bridges (homebound) Carl Testerman (stroke)
Gene Franklin the Varner family
Gladys Frankenberg (homebound) Don & Carolyn Weaver
Karla Hood Kris Weaver
Mike & Mary Jones Harold & Katherine Whitaker (homebound)
Don & Sandy Linde Mary Ann Wheat
Sharon Mueller Marilyn Wing (homebound)
Douglas Rodenbeck (transition to being homebound)
Jasmine Longley Family
The William Smolter family.

NON-MEMBERS WITH SICKNESS OR BURDENS:

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)
Bill Flynn (Sharon Mueller's brother), whose cancer has returned
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)
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
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
Tom Roberts (Sara's grandfather) with Alzheimer's
Daniel Rule (the Slifkas' friend) suffering from RSD
Kristy Shirk (Lynda Graves' friend) with cancer of the sinuses
Ceci Steele
Barbara Thornton (Janice Kaiser's relative)
Sam and Alex Weaver
Katherine Sween (a friend of Susan Spicer) with severe back pain.

Other News and Happenings

STEWARDSHIP –

It is no secret that God calls us to be generous with the gifts He has given us. Throughout the Bible, we read that just as God has generously given to us, so are we to give generously one to another. As Jesus said, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35) and "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36).

But God also calls us to give to Him. And He, who does all things well, presses it into service for the benefit of all the people of God. See for example what God spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, after he and the people were safely brought out of Egypt across the Red Sea on dry land:

The Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the people of Israel that they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him you shall receive the contribution for me. And this is the contribution that you shall receive from them: gold, silver, and bronze, blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, goats' hair, tanned rams' skins,

goatskins,[a] acacia wood, oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, onyx stones, and stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breast piece. And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it. (Ex. 25: 1-9)

Notice in verse two that the Lord instructs Moses to tell the Israelites to "take for me a contribution" and that from everyone motivated from gratitude for what God has just accomplished and given to them, Moses is to gather up "the contribution for me." In the meantime, as God, even now, continues to call us to give to Him, let us, who have been saved from slavery to sin and death, the devil and hell, be so moved in our hearts as to give generously to Him so that the means of grace, the means of His gracious dwelling among us, would continue now and into the future.

DIRECTORY CHANGE: Delete 865-933-0342 from Phyliss Nall's Information

QUILTING: will begin again on Monday, January 14 at 9:30 a.m. in the Meeting Room.

LEGS will meet January 14 at 6:30 at Pelancho's Downtown West. Please let Angela know if you plan to attend!

BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP MEETING is scheduled for 7:00 on Tuesday, January 8th.

DAY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING is 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 8th.

BOARD OF ELDERS MEETING is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 8th.

55 ALIVE –Our first meeting in the New Year will be Thursday-Jan.10th with a luncheon @ 7.00/person. Edie Wadsworth, our very own member at FLC, will be our special speaker telling us about the new book that she is writing. Her first book, "All the Pretty Things" was a real success as she told her life's story. To get a book published is a major achievement and long process! We are so proud of Edie and look forward to hearing from her again!!!

BOARD OF TRUSTEES meeting and workday at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 19th.

ELDERS CHILI COOK OFF will be January 27th following worship service in the gym!

BUY GROCERIES AND SUPPORT OUR SCHOOL – It's as easy as linking your shopper card online or speaking to the cashier.

Kroger: (Kroger.com/account/communityrewards) code PN664

Food City: (foodcity.com/schoolbucks) code 40424

Ingles: (ingles-markets.com/toolsforschools-link) code 11634

Amazon: (smile.amazon.com) code 62-0553429

School News and Happenings

CALENDAR

7- First Day Back
8 – ECE Closing at 5:30
18-19 – Basketball Tournament
21– MLK Day- No School or ECE
22– Spelling Bee
27 – All School Sing FLC
28-2/1 – National Lutheran Schools Week
31- Open House and PTL Soup Dinner

NEWS FROM FIRST LUTHERAN SCHOOL

A letter will be emailed out soon! Thank you for your patience and understanding!

**DEADLINE FOR THE FEBRUARY
NEWSLETTER IS FRIDAY, JANUARY 18th**

Birthdays and Anniversaries

BIRTHDAYS

4 – Darryl Veenstra
5 – Kelly Sternberg
6 – Natallie 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, Ameilia Hamilton
16 – Gladys Frankenburg
17 – Ellie Chrapliwy
18 – Josh Blomenbeg
19 – Ariej Robbins
21 – Hannah Keyes
25 – Nathaniel Davis, Rosie Rosen
26 – Liam Bales
27 – Doug Slifka
30 – Adam Breeden, Roger Wright(Sr.), Shirley Eimmerman
31 – Sean Bales

ANNIVERSARIES

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

Floyd P. Smithey, Associate Pastor; Ceci Steele, Editor.
Worship Services are held Sundays at 10:30 a.m.
Children's Sunday School and Adult Bible Classes are held on Sundays at 9:15 a.m.

First Lutheran Church
1207 Broadway NE
Knoxville, TN 37918
(865) 524-0366
e-mail: office@firstknoxville.org

