



[First Hearts](#)   [February 2020](#)

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### ***Is your faith showing?***

*“Is my slip showing?”* That was the last question my mom asked my dad before we headed out the door for church on Sunday mornings. *“Is my slip showing?”* Some of you may recall that those were the days when women wore slips... and dresses. Plenty of dresses, certainly to church. However, dressed up as she was—as were all the other ladies—my mom didn’t want her slip showing. It looked tacky.

There are lots of things that we prefer to keep tucked away, hidden from other eyes. However, there’s one thing that should never be hidden and that is our faith in our Savior, Jesus. So here’s the question: ***Is your faith showing?***

The Letter of James reminds us rather adamantly that you can’t “say” you have faith in Jesus without that faith showing. It bleeds through everything you say and do, as it should. Faith in Christ Jesus points to His cross and empty tomb, all for you. It points to His shepherding care and faithful, always-present love for you. And His mercy—oh, we live by His mercy! The fruits of faith always show, evidence of a lively trust in the Lord and His love.

### ***Is your faith showing?***

To be sure, people are watching. I’m especially mindful that our children and grandchildren are watching. They are watching us. They are hearing the words that we speak and measuring those words up alongside our actions. They want to see “faith active in love” (that was Luther’s quote!). They are looking to see if what we confess and say that we

believe is actually being put into everyday practice in our living.

### ***Is your faith showing?***

God's people at First Lutheran are eager to let their faith show, to live what is confessed each and every Sunday as we gather in His house and receive His gifts through Word and Supper. And we are mindful that people around us are watching. They are learning how faith in Christ Jesus is being practiced and lived out. ***Is your faith showing?***

Pastor Rockemann

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**Rev. Todd Peperkorn** has declined the Call to serve as our Pastor. Several copies of his letter to First are available at the rear of the sanctuary. We continue to trust the Lord's will be done as our call committee reconvenes. Please keep these brothers and sisters in your prayers.

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### **Upcoming Events**

Sunday School 9:15 am  
Divine Service 10:30 am

### **Board Happenings**

2/11 School Board 6:00 pm  
2/11 Elders Meeting 6:30 pm

## Monthly Readings:

	Feb. 2	The Purification of Mary and The Presentation of Our Lord	1 Sam. 1:21–28	Psalm 84	Heb. 2:14–18	Luke 2:22–32 (33–40)
	Feb. 9	Fifth S. a. the Epiphany	Is. 58:3–9a	Psalm 112:1–9	1 Cor. 2:1–12 (13–16)	Matt. 5:13–20
	Feb. 16	Sixth S. a. the Epiphany	Deut. 30:15–20	Psalm 119:1–8	1 Cor. 3:1–9	Matt. 5:21–37
	Feb. 23	The Transfiguration of Our Lord	Ex. 24:8–18	Psalm 2:6–12	2 Peter 1:16–21	Matt. 17:1–9
<b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b>	Feb. 26	Ash Wednesday	Joel 2:12–19	Psalm 51:1–13 (14–19)	2 Cor. 5:20b—6:10	Matt. 6:1–6, 16–21

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## In Other News

### Stewardship

Of the three things a person is not to talk about in polite company – religion, politics, and money – the church is called, in one way or another, to talk about all three. Perhaps this is the reason why teaching about stewardship often seems to be an afterthought. It's something that happens only out of necessity when financial constraints are already nipping at the heels.

There is a better way. Stewardship shouldn't be the kind of teaching that comes up only when there is a financial crunch. It should be part and parcel of the ongoing instruction of Christians as they live out their faith in their vocations – members of their family, their society, and their church.

Stewardship begins with the acknowledgment that we are stewards. A steward is a manager of someone else's possessions. In Christian stewardship, we recognize, according to the Apostles' Creed, that God is the owner of all things as the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. And in His fatherly divine goodness and mercy, He gives us what is His to manage here below.

The principal virtue for stewards is faithfulness. As St. Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth:  
"Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful." (1 Cor. 4:2)

Stewards must manage that which belongs to the owner according to the owner's wishes. That is what it means to be faithful in stewardship.

St. Paul expounds upon this further in his letters to the church at Corinth. He instructs them to give regularly (1 Cor. 16:1–2), proportionally (1 Cor. 16:1–2; 2 Cor. 8:12), and generously (2 Cor. 8:20) of our first-fruits (1 Cor. 16:2) 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).

All of this teaching is set forth squarely within the context of stations to which God calls us. This is always appropriate

for the church to speak because it instructs God's people in how they are to live out their faith as His stewards under those who are created, redeemed, and sanctified by Him.

**Dear First Lutheran Congregation,**

First Lutheran School will be hosting the Regional Lutheran Schools basketball tournament on February 13-15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. We would appreciate your support and help with this tournament. If you can spare just a couple of hours during this weekend, it would be fantastic!

Your help is needed on Thursday and Friday from 1:00- 8:00 and Saturday 7:30- 5:00. Please contact me and let me know if you can volunteer to help out during these time frames. There are many different jobs that need to be covered, such as working concessions, gate admissions, etc.

We also need some donations, if possible, for this tournament. Here are a few suggestions:

Concession Items

Powerade drinks  
Bottled water  
Coke products (soft drink cans)  
Hot Chocolate  
Candy bars  
Small bags of chips  
Coffee and Coffee creamer

Other Items

Paper napkins  
Paper plates  
Drink cups  
Styrofoam cups for coffee with lids  
Black plastic (or cloth) tablecloths for a 6' table

Any help would be greatly appreciated. Come and support our school and our team sports! I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Thank you,  
Kari Williamson  
Athletic Director  
First Lutheran School

**55 Alive**

Join us for an enjoyable luncheon on Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, at 12:00 noon (\$7.00/ person). Our presenter will be Samantha (Sam) Pohlot, Retired & Senior Volunteer Program Coordinator, will share how seniors, according to their interests and possibilities, can serve toward the enrichment of our community. This will be done through an interesting slide presentation.

**February Voters Assembly** meeting has been changed to 2/23, after worship, to accommodate a visit from our LCEF representative regarding a loan and repayment plan.

**Help Needed:** The Board of Trustees is looking for 2 – 4 volunteers to clean the church every week (Fri or Sat). What needs to be done is vacuuming the church carpeting, sacristy, pastor's office and narthex. Volunteers would also empty waste baskets in offices, restrooms, cry room, and choir loft, and straighten up the hymnals. Otherwise, the cost for this service is \$5,000 annually. The current volunteers have been doing this for the last 5 years and need a break.

Let the Trustees know if you can help. Please call Al Collver at 865-806-9587.

## **News from First Lutheran School**

As we wrapped up January with National Lutheran Schools week, I have been reflecting on the purpose of Lutheran Schools, their role in the church's history, and the role they play currently.

Martin Luther had strong thoughts on education, and it makes sense that education has remained an important tenet of the Lutheran church in America. In fact, in the early years the LCMS required its congregations to have a school in order to join the synod. This requirement is why First Lutheran has existed for 150 years as a church and school.

At a time when only the wealthiest males were educated, Martin Luther had the radical notion that everyone, regardless of class or gender, should be educated. Not only would this allow greater opportunity and improved welfare, but most importantly it allowed men and women to study God's Word which was to be the center of every education. Luther saw the necessity of education to strengthen community and to provide for the future.

Considering God's instructions to care for and educate children, Luther writes, "What would it profit us to possess and perform everything else and be like pure saints, if we meanwhile neglected our chief purpose in life, namely, the care of the young? I also think that in the sight of God none among the outward sins so heavily burdens the world and merits such severe punishment as this very sin which we commit against the children by not educating them."

In a pamphlet calling on governments of Germany to establish schools, Luther writes, "My dear sirs, if we have to spend such large sums every year on guns, roads, bridges, dams and countless similar items to insure the temporal peace and prosperity of a city, why should not much more be devoted to the poor neglected youth? A city's best and greatest welfare, safety and strength consist rather in its having many able, learned, wise, honorable and well-educated citizens." Martin Luther understood that God's mission went beyond a single congregation or even a single generation. It was about being able to share the message of salvation with as many as possible.

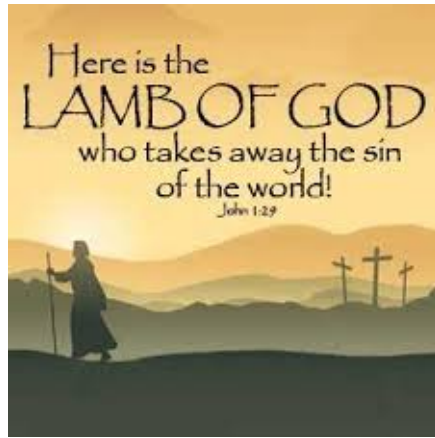
As parochial schools across the country face more and more challenges, First Lutheran is something special. We have maintained our identity "provid[ing] a quality academic structure to educate children's spirits, minds, and bodies in a Christ-centered environment, preparing them as responsible citizens for Christian service and eternal life." The love people have for First Lutheran, and the love they feel as part of the First Lutheran family is because the Cross is our guide and Christ is at the center of all we do.

I have seen middle school students learn the Lord's Prayer for the first time, and preschoolers singing "Jesus Loves Me" to their unchurched families. We have had students who never opened a Bible until they joined our school family. At Chapel every week, our students worship God with their whole hearts. When I hear about our students teaching strangers The Ten Commandments or giving their own time and talents to those in need, I know God is at work.

God has blessed so many people through First Lutheran School, and we pray that those blessings continue for generations to come. We pray that our students, past, present, and future, will continue to learn of God's Holy Word, His saving grace, and to grow in faith. "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6

Jessie Irwin, Principal

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## Anniversaries:

16: Larry and Kim Mabe

## Birthdays:

2: Luke Buckner and Jason Gibson

3: Audrey Miller, Mike Sanders, Denver Slifka, and Brittany Tipton

5: Dave Wheat

7: Dawn Johnson

9: Kari Williamson

10: Judy Kelly and Kara Eimmerman

13: Morgan Lyke

14: Elizabeth Davis, Nathan Parker, Katie Wells, and Emily Norton

15: Isaac Parker

18: Seth Nutter

20: Jim Beck

21: Steve Hardin and Joshua Keyes

22: Amanda Parker and Easton Sternberg

25: Nicaea Lukens

27: Lindsey Blair

28: Emily Blomenberg and Erin Rodgers

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