

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH CHIMES

January 15, 2010
Volume 49, Issue 2
www.firstgeneseo.org

Sharing Christ's Love

WORSHIP WITH US THIS WEEKEND!

Saturday 5:30 p.m.

Sundays at 8:30 & 10:00 a.m.

Annual Congregational Meetings

Sunday, January 17 & 24



Traditional Worship 8:30 a.m.

Annual Meetings — 9:15 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Souper Bowl of Caring

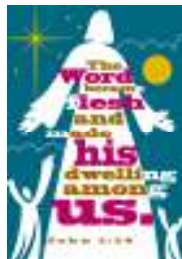
January 30 & 31



More than 20 years ago, the Souper Bowl of Caring began with a simple prayer from a single youth group: *“Lord, as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us to be mindful of those without even a bowl of soup to eat.”* Since that day, more than \$60 million has been raised for local charities across the country. First Lutheran will be celebrating Souper Bowl of Caring on the weekend of January 30 & 31. All Sunday School children are invited to bring a food item, which will be donated to the Geneseo Food Pantry, and place it in the grocery cart decorated with their favorite team! A free will offering will be taken after all church services and the proceeds will go to ELCA World Hunger Appeal. Thank you for helping fight hunger in our community and in the world.

FIRST NOTES

- Pastor's Class every Wednesday from 6:30-7:15 p.m. in Conference Room A.
- Men in Mission on Thursday, January 21 at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Room.
- Bowling Party for adults on Saturday, January 30 at 7 p.m. at Lee's Lanes.



Mission Strategy

Every December, I am asked this question. Was Jesus really born on December 25? Every year since my ordination, I have been asked this question because of some television program or magazine article that suggested our Lord was born in a different time of year.

Here's my answer. Anything is possible, but chances are Jesus was not born in December. Please don't stop reading and don't let this upset you. Press on, there's good news ahead!

We have clues to when Jesus was born. In Luke, the second chapter, we read about shepherds tending to their flocks by night. Typically, the only time sheep were out in the fields overnight was during the mating season which was in the spring.

So how did December come into play? Here's a brief of history of the celebration of Christmas. Back in the 3rd century, the Roman Empire celebrated the winter solstice. This celebration was called the Festival of the Invincible Sun. The festivities were akin to Mardi Gras' celebrations in New Orleans.

The Christian Church saw an opportunity. Our spiritual ancestors saw large amounts of people gathering for a celebration of light and darkness. If the Church could shift the focus from the Invincible Sun to the Son of God, the Church could reach even more people who did not know Jesus. Hence, the Christian Church chose December 25 to commemorate the birth of Christ. Pure and simple, this was mission strategy. Our spiritual ancestors believed it was a sacred calling and duty to engage culture and not shrink from it.

A 1,000 years later, Martin Luther embraced the same mission strategy. Luther rejected monasteries and convents. It was not that he thought such places were evil. No,

not at all. Luther believed that such places encouraged the most faithful of God's people to remove themselves from culture. Luther believed the Kingdom of God was best served when God's people, individually and collectively, expressed the love of God to the culture which was often devoid of the divine.

This mission strategy speaks to my heart. Christians engage culture with love. We witness in word and deed to the good news that God is for us. We live lives that pour out grace upon those who need it the most.

This mission strategy is a good measuring stick for our ministry. As a parish and as members of First Lutheran Church, we should be looking for every opportunity to engage our homes, our workplaces, our schools and our community with the love of Jesus Christ.

This is good news! The story of Christmas is the story of God engaging his creation. It first occurred when the Word became flesh and lived among us 2000 years ago. It continues to unfold as God strengthens the Church to engage a culture which does not know the light of Christ.

—Pr. Arthur

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

John 1:1-4

January 16 & 17, 2010—Epiphany 2

The Sundays after Epiphany continue to celebrate the revelation of the glory of God to us as it was made known to the Wise men and to those who witnessed the baptism of Jesus—today using wedding imagery. Our God rejoices over God's people "as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride." By the power of the Spirit there are gifts galore for everyone. In Christ Jesus the best wine is saved for last. Taste and see. This weekend's texts include Isaiah 62:1-5, Psalm 36:5-10, 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 and John 2:1-11.

January 23 & 24, 2010—Epiphany 3

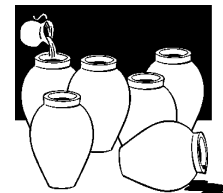
The glory of the Lord is revealed in the reading of scripture. People stand at attention. People weep. People prostrate themselves in prayer. The unity of the church is another

reflection of the glory of God. Most gloriously, the promises of God are fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Gather round. Listen up. Glimpse the glory of God. Texts include Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10, Psalm 19, 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a and Luke 4:14-21.

January 30 & 31, 2010—Epiphany 4

The glory of God is often revealed when and where it is least expected. God uses our lips to declare that glory. God uses our love to demonstrate that glory and so urges us to exercise it. God uses Jesus of Nazareth, water and the word, bread and wine, to reveal God's glory where and when God chooses. Take heed, lest the glory of God slip through our midst unnoticed. This weekend's texts include Jeremiah 1:4-10, Psalm 71:1-6, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 and Luke 4:21-30.

FIRST WORSHIP & MUSIC



Please keep the following Lifelines petitions in your prayers:

World and Community: For our leaders: President Barack Obama and Governor Pat Quinn.

For regions suffering with violence: Afghanistan, Iraq and Sudan. For those soldiers in harms way: Jeffery Halligan, Jonathon Hunter, Jeff Libby, Joshua Rowold and Matt Tallman.

Church: For our bishops: Rev. Mark Hansen and Rev. Dr. Gary Wollersheim. For our partners in ministry: Pastor Paul Metili and the people of Osupuko Parish in Tanzania, Rev. Vijayakumar, Bishop of the Arcot Lutheran Synod, India and the Northwest Haiti Christian Mission in Haiti. For missionaries who share the Gospel around the world, especially Katie Blobaum. For Lutheran Social Services of Illinois. For our pastors, parish staff, Preschool staff and Church Council (names listed on pg. 8).

Health and Wellbeing: Helen Aldridge, Bob & Vi Anderson, Doug Anderson, Rodger Barnhart, Jo Ann Bengtson, Norris Bennett, Robert Bennett, Anne Bergren, Patty Bird, Sarah Bognanno, Jan Bolm, Ryan Brandemeyer, Jackie Burns, Mike Byers, Kenneth Carlson, Mary Lou Chrisop, Erma Cikanek, Richard Collins, Dean & Doris Conrad, Elsa Copper, Jeff Dahl, Mary Ann Daniels, Scott Davis, Sharon DeJaeger, Katelyn DeRycke, Betty Drefchinski, Ester Dunham, Judy Enos, Bonnie Falkenstien, Fred Falkenstein, Angie Fewell, Steve Fleming, Marlene Franklin, Andy Fratzke, Hope Fuller, Roy Gentry, Rob Gilmore, Ida Goldsmith, Ed Goodall, Loretta Grassel, Zilpha Grooms, Steve Hawk, Hilary Holcomb, Sharon Hulick, Samuel Jenkins, Colleen Johnson, Elna Johnson, Jody Johnson, Theresa Johnson, Sherry Kavanaugh, Laura Keser, Julia Klemmer, Kevin Klemmer, Chuck Landon, Larry Larson, Gail LaVinn, Katie Lawless, Andrew Lawrence, Sally Leffelman, Bev Lewis, Mena Lindell, Larry Lowery, Pam Martens, Delores Mason, Kathy Mayerle, Holly McDonald, John McDowell, Pastor Barbara Melaas-Swanson, Ken Montgomery, Ron Myers, Eric Myhre, Tracy Newnam, Linda O., Mary Ortega, Sy Perkins, Ruth Ann Phillips, Henry Porter, Lois Puls, Bob Pyevich, Tammy Quade, Bonnie Rapp, Jessie Rayns, Jeff Renihan, Linda Rice, Morgan Rhinehart, Austin Ross, Curt & Betty Satterlee, Barb Schroeder, Cary Stach, Mark Stader, Linda Steimle, Bill Stenzel, Basil & Ethel Stewart, Julie Stradt, Emily Sund, Fran Swanson, Larry Swanson, Mildred Swanson, Henry Lee Switzer, Lynn Teerlinck, Helen Terpening, Nancy Tieken, Charlotte Vandemark, Claudia VanOpdorp, Mitzi Ware and Eldon Zimmerman.

Joys: Birth of Penelope Kline to Ian & Valerie (Cassens) Kline; Karla Enright, Diane Greenwood, Mike Mills, Hazel Spittler, Jared Thompson, Edna Van Fossan and Sharon Weber are improved.

Sorrows: On the death of Larry Schumaker and Richard Dunham.

Thanksgiving: John Hernandez, Evan McKearn and Laura Pratt are home safely from Iraq.

If you wish to submit a prayer request, please contact Sue Wolf in the church office at 944-3196 or by e-mail prayers@firstgeneseo.org. If you or a member of your family have a medical procedure planned or are admitted to the hospital, please call the church office. In the event of an after-hours emergency please contact Pastor Arthur at home at 309-944-2034.

FIRST PRAYER

FIRST MINISTRIES



December Council Highlights

Financial Report—The November budgeted deficit was \$1,404.49, with an actual deficit of \$10,469.69. The budgeted year-to-date deficit is \$62,360.78, while the actual year-to-date deficit was \$69,914.36.

A preliminary 2010 budget was presented.

Year To Date Offerings as of Dec. 31, 2009

Capital Campaign 2008 YTD \$182,138.20

3 yr. Total \$548,401.62

Building Fund (Main./Repair) YTD \$6,826.00

World Hunger YTD \$11,852.00

Sanctuary Renovation Total \$35,200.00

Parking Lot Repairs Total \$5,439.00

Worship Pastor—Pastor Lynn Bergren was designated as Worship Pastor and will preach one weekend each month.

Church Treasurer—Doris Murray was appointed as church treasurer.

Director of Family & Youth Ministry—Accepted resignation of Heather Monson as Director of Family & Youth Ministry.

Social Ministry Request—Approval was given for requests from Social Ministry as a part of its Benevolence Policy, including \$1,000 to Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center and \$850 to the Navajo Evangelical/Lutheran Mission.

Adult Education

- **Pastor's Class**—Every Wednesday, a pastor's class is offered from 6:30-7:15 p.m. in Conference Room A. Currently, Pr. Arthur is teaching a six part course on *The Reformation* with special focus on 600ad to 1600ad. On January 6 & 13, *The Medieval Church* and *The Gathering Storm* were the focus. (*If you missed those presentations, you can find the class notes and lecture online.*) Here's the remaining schedule for January:
January 20 *The Wild Boar in the Vineyard*
January 27 *New Faces of the Church*

- **Reflections Group**—The Reflections series scheduled to begin on Wednesday, January 20 has been postponed until further notice.

Annual Congregational Meetings

Sunday, January 17 & 24

Traditional Worship 8:30 a.m.

Annual Meetings—9:15 a.m in the Sanctuary

Part I—January 17

Opening Prayer

Reports of Pastors, Program Staff & Preschool

Reports of all Ministries & Organizations

Report of Church Council

Report of Capital Campaign

Report of Mission Endowment Fund

Coordinator

First Reading: 2010 Proposed Budget

Closing Prayer

Part II—January 24

Opening Prayer

Approval of Annual Meeting Minutes from
January 2009

Adoption of the Budget

Elections: Church Council, Audit Committee,
Mission Endowment Fund Committee &
Nominating Committee

Adoptions of Resolutions & Recommendations

Closing Prayer

First Book Club

February's book title is *Water for Elephants* written by Sara Gruen. When Jacob Jankowski, recently orphaned and suddenly adrift, jumps onto a passing train, he enters a world of freaks, drifters, and misfits, a second-rate circus struggling to survive during the Great Depression, making one-night stands in town after endless town. A veterinary student who almost earned his degree, Jacob is put in charge of caring for the circus menagerie. It is there that he meets Marlena, the beautiful young star of the equestrian act, who is married to August, the charismatic but twisted animal trainer. He also meets Rosie, an elephant who seems untrainable until he discovers a way to reach her. Hurry and purchase your copy today and begin reading this compelling novel—you're welcome to join the group at any time.

Bowling Party for Adults!

Don't strike out! Come and join Bill & Theresa Nelson on Saturday, January 30 at 7 p.m. as they host a bowling extravaganza at Lee's Lanes for all adults over the age of 21. We'll split up into teams and bowl a game or two of Scotch Doubles. This is where two bowlers on each team play alternate shots throughout the game. The only time one of the pair completes a frame on his/her own is when scoring a strike. After bowling we will enjoy Happy Joe's pizza and a short awards ceremony. The cost is \$10 per person and includes bowling, shoe rental, and pizza afterwards. The money will be collected that evening. Hurry and sign up at the Welcome Center for this fun evening!

"Thank You"

Thank you to Property & Grounds, Alan Lindell, Denny Lindell, Mike Pries and Mandy Baumgardner! If you weren't able to visit the Youth Room on Sunday, January 10 we hope you will stop by sometime on a Wednesday night. Also, please take a moment to thank everyone for their hard work on the youth room. Thank you for all the time, energy, sweat, effort and thought that went into the amazing job you all did.

Farewell Party For Heather Monson

Join us on Sunday, February 14 as we honor Heather Monson for her years of service on the staff of First Lutheran. Heather's last day as Director of Family & Youth Ministries is February 16, so come and wish her well and thank her for a job well done at this special celebration. The party begins at 11 a.m. in the Fellowship Room with refreshments and a special program. A basket will be available for cards of appreciation. See you then!

C.O.O.L. Sunday School

January Focus—"Lost and Found"

In the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the forgiving father, Jesus teaches us that God's love is always there for us, no matter where we go or what we do.

Rotation	January 24	January 31
Kindergarten	Cooking	Games
1—2 Grade	Games	Storytelling
3—4 Grade	Storytelling	Art
5—6 Grade	Art	Cooking

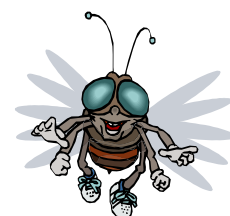
Kindergarten through grade 6 go directly to their Sunday school rooms by 10 a.m., using the staircase at the south end of the Fellowship Room. The C.O.O.L. Aides will greet the children as they arrive.

All 3- and 4-year olds go directly to their single-based classroom in our Zaccheus' Tree House at 10 a.m.

First Lutheran Youth

The Youth Room is open every Wednesday at 4 p.m. for all 7-12 graders and their friends. Come and play the Wii, a game of pool or just hang out and enjoy the fellowship! Dinner will be served during Faithtime from 5-6:15 p.m. in the Fellowship Room.

- **Confirmation Students (7-8th graders)**
Be sure to see Heather in the month of January to get an update on your sermon reports, acolyte schedule and service hours. Lent will be upon us before you know it and you need to make sure you are staying on top of these requirements!
- **Sr. High Youth Ministry (9-12th graders)**
gears up at 6 p.m. in the Youth Room on third floor. During the month of January we will be looking at the topics of change and opportunity. Friends are welcome to attend!



F. L. Y. with us!

FIRST MINISTRIES



2010 First Lutheran Directory

The First Lutheran Church directory will be updated soon. If you have a change of address or phone number or would like your email address added to your contact information, please contact the church office at 944-3196 by Friday, January 29. If your email address was previously listed it will be listed again unless you contact the office to have it removed.

First Friends: Senior Luncheon

Attention all you fun loving game enthusiasts! Mark your calendar for Thursday, February 11 at Noon in the Fellowship Room. Come and enjoy a baked potato bar with many delicious toppings to choose from. The cost of the meal is \$8 and includes your drink and dessert. Sign up at the Welcome Center if you plan to join us for an afternoon of food and fellowship!

DID YOU KNOW?

—Charlene Daniels, our custodian, delivered Christmas poinsettias to our home bound members including residents of Good Samaritan, HHH, Hillcrest Home, and Liberty Village. That's *Sharing Christ's Love*. That's evangelism. Thanks, Char!

First Health and Wellness

Health Tip: Shoulder Pain

Your rotator cuff (*the network of muscles and tendons that connect your upper arm to your shoulder*) loses some elasticity as you age, making it more vulnerable to injury. Until the pain subsides, which could be several weeks, avoid lifting heavy objects and doing activities that call for raising your arm. If you injure your shoulder, see a doctor if there is severe pain or it is very weak. You may have torn a tendon, which could require further rehab or surgery.

Care Ministry: Please call the church office or the Parish Nurse, Joan Holt, if you know of someone in need of a call or visit from a member of our Care Ministry team.

Altar flowers for 2010

Altar flowers can be donated in honor or memory of a loved one, special occasion, or simply for the glory of God. The cost of two arrangements is \$45. The following dates are open for flower donations.

January 24
February 7 & 28
March 7, 14, 21 & 28
April 11
May 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30
June 6, 13, 20 & 27
July 11, 18 & 25
August 1, 8 & 29
September 12
October 3, 17 & 31
November 14 & 28
December 19

If you would like to purchase altar flowers, please sign up at the Welcome Center.

Diabetes Support Group: "Helping Hands" will meet on Tuesday, January 26 at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Room at First. The Clowning Grannies from St. Patrick's Church, Colona will perform several skits for the group. The organization is open to anyone who is directly or indirectly affected by diabetes. For more information, contact Gary or Mary Anne Daniels at 944-2404 or visit the website at www.helpinghandsingeneseo.org.

Women's Health Program: "Gallbladder & Digestive System" is the topic of the noon luncheon on Thursday, January 28 at The Cellar. The cost of lunch is \$8 and you may register by calling Hammond-Henry Hospital at 944-9121.

—Joan Holt, RN, PN
Director of Care Ministries

Women's Ministry

Women's Circles—First Lutheran offers three women's circles that meet monthly for Bible study and fellowship. All women are cordially invited to attend any of the circles.

Elizabeth Circle will meet on Wednesday, January 20 at 9 a.m. in Conference Room A.

Rebecca Circle will meet on Wednesday, January 20 at 9 a.m. at Coffee Break, Downtown Geneseo.

Hannah Circle will meet on Thursday, January 28 at 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Room.

A Special Note of Thanks—

To everyone at First Lutheran who donated gifts, cookies, and punch for Intouch Adult Day Services, a program of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, I offer the most heartfelt "Thank You."

You made Christmas for the clients and staff with your generosity and loving care. Many clients asked me to tell you how thankful they are for Intouch and for your wonderful gifts. I will carry in my heart the smiles, joy and happiness you gave to Intouch this Christmas, as well as to me.

—*Katby Nelson*

Food Pantry collection

The Geneseo Food Pantry is collecting pancake syrup, catsup, mayonnaise, sugar, granola bars, cereal bars, pretzels, soda crackers, cheese crackers, instant mashed potatoes, cold and flu medicine for children (*acetaminophen & ibuprofen*), cough drops, cough syrup, decongestants, kleenex, paper towels, bathroom tissue, household cleaners, small bottles of detergent (*Dollar General*), dish soap, and body wash (*Suave, White Rain or anything generic*) to share with those in need in our community. Donations may be left in the basket outside the church office.

Men in Mission

All men are invited to come and enjoy a delicious dinner on Thursday, January 21 at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Room. After dinner Kent Terry, Chair of the Northern Illinois Synod World Hunger Committee, will speak about his recent travels to Mexico. Elections will also be held for 2010. Bring your hearty appetites and join us for an evening of fun and fellowship! Please sign up at the Welcome Center if you plan to attend.

Thank You—

From all the staff and participants here at Intouch I wish to express thanks for the generosity of the First Lutheran congregation. The members did an amazing job at buying gifts for our participants at Intouch. Their generosity touched many lives, as many of our clients do not receive any other gifts at Christmas. I wish you could have seen their faces light up! The generous church members also provided wonderful cookies and punch for their party! Without the generous and overwhelming support of your congregation—these wonderful clients of Intouch would not have received gifts. First Lutheran Church is truly living out Christ's command to give, love and serve others! Thank you to the congregation from all of us here at Intouch. Blessed Holidays to you!

—*Mary Bivens, Program Director*
Intouch Adult Day Services

Intouch Adult Day Services

Intouch is the largest adult day service in Illinois. It provides adults with the opportunity to maintain their residence in the community while providing peace of mind for their loved ones. Their "wish list" for January is: *large eyed needles, zip-loc bags, silk flowers, plastic forks & spoons, bingo prizes, decaf tea, tennis balls, craft foam, wet wipes, tacky glue and hot glue sticks*. Donations may be left in the basket outside the church office.



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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Charlene Daniels, Custodian

Church Council ~ Bill Nelson—president,
Dan Brudos—vice president, Dawn Ebarb—
secretary, Dave Ahlstrand, Dick Carlson,
Dawn Collins, Joni Conrad, Karen Daniel,
Tim Holmstrom, Jerry Klavohn, Debbie
Krause, Jim Larson, Randy Mullin, Jim
Murray, Mike Pries, Linda Storm, Jim Turner

FIRST LOOK . . .

Preschool Classes M-F 9:00 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.

January 16

9:00 a.m. Third Grade Bible Class
5:30 p.m. Informal/Healing Service

January 17

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
9:15 a.m. Annual Meeting
9:15 a.m. Fellowship
10:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship
10:00 a.m. Sunday School P3-6 Grade
11:00 a.m. Faith Reborn

January 18

10:00 a.m. Bible Study
6:00 p.m. Brownie Troop Mtg.
7:00 p.m. Council

January 19

6:30 p.m. Daisy Girl Scout
6:30 p.m. Hearts on Fire Rehearsal
7:00 p.m. VDC Men

January 20

9:00 a.m. Eliz. & Rebecca Circles
3:30-8:15 p.m. Faithtime Schedule
8:15 p.m. Joyful Spirit Rehearsal

January 21

9:00 a.m. All Staff Meeting
6:30 p.m. Men in Mission

January 23

7:00 a.m. Living Water Via de
Cristo Team Training
5:30 p.m. Informal Worship

January 24

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
9:15 a.m. Annual Meeting-Vote
9:15 a.m. Fellowship

10:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship/Bible
Presentation

10:00 a.m. Sunday School P3-6 Grade
11:00 a.m. Faith Reborn
11:15 a.m. New Member Class
7:00 p.m. Illowa Choral Fest

January 25

10:00 a.m. Bible Study
6:00 p.m. Brownie Troop Mtg.

January 26

6:30 p.m. Hearts on Fire Rehearsal
6:30 p.m. Helping Hands Diabetic Group
7:00 p.m. VDC Men

Wednesday Faithtime Schedule

3:30 p.m. Gathering & Snack
(Grades 1-6)
4:00 p.m. Faithtime Troupe
(Grades 1-3)
Celebration Choir
Youth Room Open
4:30 p.m. Sunshine Choir
Faithtime Troup
(Grades 4-6)
5:00 p.m. Psalm 150
5:00-6:15 p.m. Dinner Served
5:45 p.m. Confirmation
6:00 p.m. Senior High Ministry
6:30 p.m. Pastor's Class
7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

January 27

9:00 a.m. Cover Girls
3:30-8:15 p.m. Faithtime Schedule
6:00 p.m. First Book Club
8:15 p.m. Joyful Spirit Rehearsal

January 28

9:00 a.m. All Staff Meeting
7:00 p.m. Hannah Circle

January 30

9:00 a.m. HC Youth Services
Bureau Program
9:00 a.m. Winter Horticulture
Workshop/Program
5:30 p.m. Informal Worship
7:00 p.m. Adult Bowling Party
at Lee's Lanes

January 31

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
9:30 a.m. Fellowship
10:00 a.m. Contemporary

**Next CHIMES deadline:
Monday, January 18**