



The First Word

**First Lutheran Church
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December 2011

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Christmas Worship

December 24, 4:00 PM
**Family Service
of Lessons and Carols**

December 24, 11:00 PM
**Candlelight Communion
Service**

December 25, 10:00 AM
**Christmas Day Service
with Holy Communion
(bring bells to ring)**



“The Surprising Christmas Pageant” Sunday, December 18 at 10:30 AM

The children of First Lutheran Church invite you to their annual Christmas Program on Sunday, December 18, at 10:30 AM in the Worship Room.

Our Cross Walk kids are working hard to share this wonder-filled story with you through word and song. A free will offering will be received and added to the funds for ELCA Malaria Campaign.

Dates to Remember

Naomi Circle December 1
 Boy Scout Pancake Breakfast December 3
 Women's Christmas Luncheon December 10
 New Member Reception December 18
 Cross Walk Christmas Pageant December 18

Dear Friends in Christ,

Ready or not ... Advent is here! Advent is that season in the church year where we watch and wait, and watch and wait some more, for that wonderful day when we will celebrate anew the birth of Christ, our Savior. It is an awesome season of the year if we can stay focused on the real reason for the season. And there is the catch, isn't it?



What so easily takes over our focus in these Advent days is the hustle and bustle of “getting ready for Christmas.” There are always so many things we think we **have** to do to make the season perfect. I realized long ago that the thing that wearies me most about preparing for Christmas is the expectation society places on me to “spend, spend, and spend some more” throughout the season until I find the perfect gift for everyone I love. However, this is exhausting ... and what is a “perfect” Christmas gift anyway?

When all is said and done, the only “perfect” Christmas gift there is, is the one that has already been given ... when the little baby Jesus was born in a rugged Bethlehem stable some 2,000 years ago. In that precious little one, the hope of the world was born. We sing of that hope each Christmas in the words of the beloved hymn, “O Little Town of Bethlehem.”

*“O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth, the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.”*

To receive that “perfect” Christmas gift, we don't have to do any preparation. No shopping. No decorating. No baking. No writing on Christmas cards. No throwing big expensive parties. No, all we have to do is open our hearts and minds to receive him ... to invite the One who offers hope, healing, and blessing into our lives. That's all, my friends, that's all ...

*“How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming; but, in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.*

And so, let us pray this Advent season ...

*“O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
Oh, come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!”*

A blessed Advent and Christmas to you and yours ...

Pastor Marilyn

Our sympathy is extended to the family and friends of our member, **Jane Manning**, who passed away on October 27; to the family and friends of our member, **Barbara Yamber**, who passed away on October 16; and to **Jean Callary** and her family at the death of her mother who passed away on November 19. May God comfort those who mourn.

Congratulations to Jake and Allison Wadle on the birth of their daughter, Zoey Danica, born on November 2. Proud grandparents are **Mike and Sharon Wadle**.

Congratulations to **Allyn and Otta Ritzman** who celebrate their 63rd wedding anniversary on December 4; to **Don and Phyllis Franzene** on their 51st anniversary on December 17; to **Daryl and Paula Rolland** on their 51st anniversary on December 23; to **Jeremy and Stephanie Corn** who will celebrate their 10th anniversary on December 29; to **Don and Pat Johnson** on their 60th anniversary on December 29; and to **Ralph and Carla Neumann** who will celebrate their 40th anniversary on December 31.

Please remember the following people in your

Come Support Our Scouts



Pancake Breakfast

Troop 33 will hold a Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, December 3, from 7:00 to 10:30 AM in the Social Hall. Tickets are \$4.00 for adults, \$2.00 for children age 12 and under, and free for pre-school children. The Pancake Breakfast features a menu including all-you-can-eat pancakes, sausage, eggs, coffee, and lemonade. Tickets are available at the door. The proceeds help boys pay for their Scouting activities.

The Scouts will also be collecting food for the Salvation Army Food Pantry. Plan now to attend and support our scouts.

prayers: **Wenke Hansen, Amy Harris, Pat Dahlberg, Lois Johnson, LaVonne McDowell, Dan and Hazel Metzger, Paul Yamber** and Phyllis Feken (mother of **John Feken**).

Share the Vision

Our annual stewardship mailing was sent on Monday,



November 21. They should be arriving in your homes in the next few days. Please prayerfully consider how you will share your time, talents, and treasure with First Lutheran in the year ahead. Pledge cards were included in the mailing. Please plan to bring those to worship on Sunday, December 11, along with your time and talent sheets and we will offer them to god at the altar during the morning offering.

From the Altar Guild



Please Note: It's that time of year to place your order for poinsettias

for the Christmas season. The plants will come from Yaeger's Greenhouse in a choice of three colors (red, pink or white) at a cost of \$12.00. All orders must be received by Monday, December 12. Checks should be made payable to Altar Guild.

Cross Walk Sunday News



Workshop Updates —

Rotation 4 – (Rotation in a Day) Candy Cane Christmas, December 4

During Rotation 4 students will learn about the history of the candy cane and how it is related to Jesus and his birth. In Apostle's Art Studio, students will create starlet and fuzzy candy canes. During Cookin' with Jesus, children will decorate candy cane cookies. Finally in Living Word, students will discover the history of the candy cane and make an ornament about it.

Greeting Schedule — The third Sunday of each month is designated for our Cross Walk children to be greeters before the 9:00 AM worship service. Please note when your child's class is scheduled to greet. The class will meet approximately 20 minutes before the start of the service. Thank you! The First - Third Graders will greet on January 15.

A Big Thank You for our Angels! We had many wonderful angels who donated many items to help make Cross Walk possible. Thank you to the **Baker Family, Charlotte Bross, Jim and Paula Bryner, Lynn Cook, Vivian Courtney, Joyce Davidson, Pat Johnson, Terri and Kyle Kuhns, Lou Longeville, Joyce Lothson, Ethel Moline, the Riel Family, Linda and Gerry Sanderson, Jan Setchell,** and all you anonymous angels. Your generosity is truly appreciated!

Bible Sunday



On Sunday, November 13, age-appropriate Bibles were available for 16 of our young people to receive: **Aaron Anderson, Maurice Anderson, Meghan Anderson, Ella Colvin, Gage Holder, Adelynn Levine, Ashley Nelson, Eric Nelson, Jessica Nelson, Kasey Nelson, Seth Nelson, Aaron Oduber, Jacob Oduber, Christian Rubio, Ellie Young, and Nicolas Zurko.** The Bibles were a gift from the Kenneth A.

Johnson Memorial Fund.

The Bibles were presented to the parents to give to their children during the 9:00 worship service. Parents were then invited to attend a special class during the Christian Education Hour with their children on "Introduction to the Bible." Thanks to **Carrie Engstrom** for graciously leading this class.



Tiny Tots **Luke Oland, Logan Corn, and Lilly Baker** eat their whales swimming in the ocean (gummy fish in blue jello) while **George Jaros** reads them the story of Jonah in Rotation 1.

Hark the Herold, Angels Sing!



This year all friends and family are invited to celebrate the joy of the newborn king at First Lutheran's **Surprising Christmas Pageant** on Sunday, December 18, at 10:30 AM.

Calling all Angels and Shepherds — The Christmas Pageant Ministry Team would like to invite all children, youth, and adults to be a part of this year's pageant. The three acts can be practiced separately with each act's characters. The music is easy for kids to learn. With this in mind, the practice times will be efficient and quick.

Check your calendars for the following dates and times you will need to attend:

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Sunday, December 4 | After Christmas Cross Walk, 11:00 – 11:30 AM |
| Sunday, December 11 | Cross Walk Sunday, 10:20 – 11:30 AM |
| Saturday, December 17 | Dress Rehearsal, 9:30 AM – 12:00 NOON TinyTots/Pre-K, 11:00 AM – 12:00 NOON |
| Sunday, December 18 | Perform the Pageant, 10:30 AM |

If you would like to participate, please fill out an information form provided in the Atrium, call the Church Office at 815-758-0643 or e-mail: office@firstlutherandekalb.org

The Christmas Pageant Ministry Team would like to send a personalized invitation to all friends and family of Christmas Pageant participants. Please fill out one of the forms in the Atrium or send the address information by e-mail.

Looking forward to celebrating Christmas with you,

Stephanie Corn, Ann Oduber and Jan Womack
The Christmas Pageant Ministry Team

Cross Walk Wednesday Nights

Paradise Island Resort invites you to attend an evening of fun with live steel drum music, games, snacks, and more on Wednesday, November 30. We are introducing a new puppet home for our special puppet Schooner, a noisy macaw bird!

An island dinner of Caribbean Jerk Chicken with rice, chicken nuggets and fresh vegetables will be served at 5:30 PM. Donations for the meal are appreciated.

Pack your bags! It is time to visit Cross Walk's... Paradise Island Resort, the place for fun activities from 6:00 to 7:30 PM!



Thanksgiving Baskets



Through your generosity, 15 families were provided with a real Thanksgiving feast, through the Thanksgiving baskets which the confirmation youth packed for the Salvation Army Food Pantry. Thank you for caring for the poor in our community.

A Delightful Thanksgiving Dinner

Thanks to all who joined us for our annual Thanksgiving Dinner on Sunday evening, November 20. It was a marvelous meal enjoyed by over 100 members and friends. Special thanks to **Bill, Lee, and Brittany Todtz** who took charge of preparing the turkeys and hams and **Cliff Golden and Boy Scout Troop 33** for helping to serve the meal and do the clean-up afterward. Thanks to the many others who helped with all the details ... setting tables, carving the meat, cutting desserts, preparing the beverages, scrubbing the pots and pans ... and to all the fabulous cooks who brought the delicious side dishes to make it one fantastic Thanksgiving feast. And finally, thanks to **John Feken** for organizing the program and to **Sue Grafe, Isaac Hietanen, Lynn Cook, and David Kuhn** for sharing their talents with us and to **Judy Neumann, and Karen Sjolund** for leading this year's hymn sing. It was a wonderful way to end the evening that was filled with great food and fine fellowship.

Operation Christmas Child



A hearty thanks to everyone who participated in this international effort to provide gifts to needy children around the world. If you contributed a Christmas shoebox, we have stickers for you to wear on Sunday. Pick one up at the Christmas table in the Atrium.

It was fun to hear stories of people who took their children or grandchildren shopping to select items for their boxes. Your generosity is proof of God's love for all his children. Our boxes were taken to a collection site in Sycamore; from there they will be sent to Rockford, then Minneapolis, and then around the world. Last year almost eight million shoebox gifts were collected in the US and ten other sending nations! Thank you for your support

Invitation to Membership

Are you, or someone you know, interested in membership at First Lutheran? If so, we invite you to formally become a part of our community of faith on Sunday, December 18 at the 9:00 AM worship service. An orientation for those who wish to join the church will be held on Sunday, December 11, from 11:30 AM – 1:15 PM in the Social Hall. A light lunch will be served.

The orientation will provide time for prospective members to get acquainted with one another, receive information on the basic teachings of the Lutheran Church and the various ministries and activities of our congregation, meet some of the staff of First Lutheran, and take a brief tour of the facility.

To express interest or to learn more, please contact Pastor Marilyn by phone (815-758-8023) or e-mail: pastor@firstlutherandekalb.org.



First Lutheran Church Members are being offered a fantastic opportunity to participate in a stroke and vascular screening. Stroke Detection Plus, of Des Moines will be at First Lutheran Church on Monday, December 5, from 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM. They will perform screenings to identify people at high risk for Stroke, Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm, Peripheral Arterial Disease, and Osteoporosis. These are all silent, disabling conditions, yet very preventable through early detection. First Lutheran Church members can receive all four tests for \$115.00 — savings of \$20.00. Appointments are necessary. Please call Stroke Detection Plus toll free at 877-732-8258 to schedule your appointment.

Letter of Thanks

Dear Pastor Marilyn,

On behalf of the entire cast and crew of the UNTITLED RAMIN BAHRANI FILM, we would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude for your assistance and contribution to this project.

Thank you for allowing us to use First Lutheran Church as one of our locations for filming. Thank you so much for your patience and understanding throughout our entire filming process, from our schedule changes, to our ongoing requests. You were so generous in allowing us to include your congregation as our 'background actors' in that scene. You and your staff — **Bill, Lynn, and Ann** were incredibly accommodating. Thank you all for extending yourselves so kindly to me personally, and to all of us. Your hospitality was a welcomed gift and it is rare we are given such kind treatment in return. It was a pleasure working with you all.

Respectfully,

Michele Baker, Production Supervisor
Untitled Ramin Bahrani Film
Farm Film, LLC

The Hand of God



God does not pick up the phone and call individuals, but He does prompt and guide His people to be His hands or voice. Recently, there are three amazing examples of how God has reached out to people using church members. The first scenario is a woman who over a year ago, stepped out of her comfort zone and introduced herself to a stranger within the walls of our church. This is such a beautiful example of God working through an individual because it was a handshake that made the initial contact. The handshake turned into a hug, the hug turned into care, the thoughtful care turned into love. Genuine love turned into church attendance. Not that church membership equates faith in God, but attendance gives people the opportunity to grow closer to Him through hearing the good news of Jesus Christ.

This gets better! The second example of God using a church member is via a really high-tech app called the US Mail. A good, old fashioned letter was the method of communication that the individual used to be the hand of God. What the letter said, I am not sure, but I do know the beautiful result... exactly what that family needed to know.

Another analog communication device an individual used to reach out to someone was the telephone. This church member quit waiting for the perfect timing and just made the call. The person on the other end of that fiber optic cable just about fell off her chair in surprise because her prayer group had just met that week and the prayer group had asked God to help this person get back to church and get involved more at First Lutheran. God called her with an answer, because a church member made the call, reaching out to be the voice and hand of God.

Let Your Light Shine

Advent, The Twelve Days of Christmas, and Epiphany are seasons of light. It is one of the best times of the year to “Let Your Light Shine” for Jesus. For most of the world Jesus gets buried in the shopping crowds, the wrapping of the gifts that are soon discarded, and the many preparations given to December 25. Each of us needs to use Advent to prepare our way and others to the Christ of Christmas. If you are not already doing so, start each day during Advent with devotions and consciously invite Jesus into your shopping, greetings, music, and preparations. **Let Jesus’ light shine through you to prepare the way of the Lord. Invite others to share this journey!**

Sue Grafe, chair
The Evangelism Team

November Church Council Highlights

- Continued discussion on the book, “Reaching People Under 40 While Keeping People Over 60.”
- Reviewed and approved the financial report for the month of October.
- Authorized Pastor Marilyn to review the applications for the Nursery Attendant position, conduct interviews, check references, do a background check and then present the selected candidate’s name to the council for final approval to hire.
- Heard that new members will be received on December 18 with a reception to follow the worship service.
- Accepted, with regret, the resignation of **Mark Mackeben**, our church organist, effective November 20.
- Referred the review of the job description for the church organist position to the Personnel Committee.
- Voted to encourage any interested high school youth in our congregation to serve on one of our congregation’s ministry teams.
- Postponed action until the December meeting on whether or not to create a 2-year non-voting member position on the Church Council for a high school student.
- Adopted the following policy: “First Lutheran Church will require background checks for all volunteers who chaperone youth on overnight trips. Background checks will include fingerprinting and will be conducted by the DeKalb Police Department, with the cost to be paid out of the Youth Ministry Fund.”
- Referred the draft job description for Volunteer Youth Directors to the Personnel Committee to review and approve before Church Council votes on final approval.
- Received a thank you note from **Ann Lindahl** for the monetary support of her continuing Diakonia Program.

Celebration Chorale’s Christmas Cantata

The Celebration Chorale, under the direction of Christine Monteiro, will present its Christmas Cantata “Only Love” on Saturday, December 3 at 7:00 PM and Sunday, December 4 at 3:00 PM at the First United Methodist Church on the corner of North Fourth and Oak Streets in DeKalb. No admission, but a freewill offering will be received.





December 2011

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| 27 9:00 AM Worship 10:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 10:20 AM NO Cross Walk Sunday Activities | 28 6:00 PM GED Classes 6:30 PM FPU Class 7:00 PM Boy Scout Court of Honor | 29 8:30 AM Project Group 9:00 AM Staff Meeting | 30 6:45 AM Red-Eye Bible Study 10:45 AM Clergy Text Study 5:30 PM Family Meal 6:00 PM Cross Walk Activities 6:00 PM Faith Trek 6:00 PM GED Classes 6:30 PM FPU Class | 1 2:00 PM Naomi Circle 6:15 PM Handbell Choir 7:30 PM Adult Choir | 2 | 3 7:00 - 10:30 AM Boy Scout Pancake Breakfast |
| 4 Food Pantry Donations 9:00 AM Worship with Holy Communion 10:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 10:20 AM Cross Walk Sunday Activities 10:20 AM Adult Forum | 5 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM Stroke Detection Clinic 6:00 PM GED Classes 6:30 PM FPU Class 7:00 PM Boy Scouts | 6 8:30 AM Project Group 9:00 AM Staff Meeting 6:30 PM Ministry Team Meetings 8:00 PM Executive Comm. | 7 6:45 AM Red-Eye Bible Study 10:45 AM Clergy Text Study 5:30 PM Family Meal 6:00 PM Cross Walk Activities 6:00 PM Faith Trek 6:00 PM GED Classes 6:30 PM FPU Class | 8 9:00 AM Prelude - Women's Bible Study 6:15 PM Handbell Choir 7:30 PM Adult Choir | 9 4:00 - 8:30 PM Consultation Process | 10 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM Consultation Process 11:30 AM Women's Christmas Salad Luncheon |
| 11 9:00 AM Worship Communion 10:00 AM Coffee Hour 10:20 AM Cross Walk Sunday Activities 10:30 AM Love Auction 11:30 AM - 1:15 PM New Member Lunch and Orientation | 12 6:00 PM GED Classes 6:30 PM FPU Class 7:00 PM Boy Scouts | 13 8:30 AM Project Group 9:30 AM Northeast Conference Pastor's Meeting at Salem, Syc. 6:30 PM Congregation Council | 14 6:45 AM Red-Eye Bible Study 9:00 AM Staff Meeting 10:45 AM Clergy Text Study 5:30 PM Family Meal 6:00 PM Cross Walk Activities 6:00 PM Faith Trek 6:00 PM GED Classes 6:30 PM FPU Class | 15 Newsletter Deadline 6:15 PM Handbell Choir 7:30 PM Adult Choir | 16 | 17 8:00 AM Men's Breakfast and Service Project 9:30 AM - 12:00 NOON Cross Walk Christmas Program Rehearsal |
| 18 9:00 AM Worship with Holy Communion and Reception of New Members 10:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 10:30 AM Cross Walk Christmas Pageant | 19 6:00 PM GED Classes 6:30 PM FPU Class 7:00 PM Boy Scouts | 20 9:00 AM Staff Meeting | 21 6:45 AM Red-Eye Bible Study 11:00 AM Clergy Text Study No Cross Walk Activities | 22 6:15 PM Handbell Choir 7:30 PM Adult Choir | 23 9:00 AM Altar Guild Decorates for Christmas | 24 4:00 PM Christmas Eve Family Service of Lessons and Carols 11:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service |
| 25 10:00 AM Christmas Day Service of Bells and Carols with Holy Communion Worship | 26 Church Offices Closed for Christmas Holiday | 27 9:00 AM Staff Meeting | 28 6:45 AM Red-Eye Bible Study No Cross Walk Activities | 29 | 30 | 31 Happy New Year!! |

Naomi Circle to Meet

Naomi Circle will meet next on Thursday afternoon, December 1, at 2:00 PM. **Judy O'Connor** will present the program on "Carols of Christmas." **Vivian Courtney, Wenke Hansen, Joyce Nelson, and Jeanne Smith** will serve as hostesses for the afternoon.

Christmas Luncheon

Mark your calendar for Saturday, December 10, at 11:30 AM for the Women's Christmas Salad Luncheon. This is a wonderful time of the year to join other women of First Lutheran Church as we prepare for the holiday season. A special program is being planned. Those attending are asked to bring a salad to share with the group. If you are interested in decorating a table for the luncheon, please contact the Church Office. We hope to see many of you for a time of fun, fellowship, and great food — bring a friend!

"Prelude" A Morning Bible Study for Women

Prelude, the ongoing Thursday morning Bible study group for women, will meet once during December, on the 8th of the month, from 9:00 - 10:30 AM in Classroom A. The theme for the December study is the "*Gospel of Mark: Beyond Boundaries.*"

The Prelude Bible Study group welcomes newcomers at any time. We begin our day with a good cup of coffee, tasty treat and a lively conversation. Then we wrestle with how God's Word connects to our everyday life. Pastor Marilyn serves as the facilitator of the group.

Altar Guild News

Our November meeting was held on Tuesday, November 15 with devotions given by **Terri Kuhns. Kayla**



Kittleson brought four battery operated candles to be used under the balcony for the Christmas Eve services. We are asking Altar Guild members to come to the church on Friday, December 23, at 9:00 AM to help decorate the church for Christmas.

We looked over the 2012 schedule and are in need of someone to assist the first Sunday in February when we have full table communion. If you can help, please contact **Kayla Kittleson, Mary Letheby**, or the Church Office.

Members assisting during the month of December are: **Stephanie Corn, Joyce Gardner**, and **Terri Kuhns** on December 4; **Stephanie and Terri** will also do December 11 and 18; the Christmas services will be taken care of by **Stephanie, Terri, Kayla, and Mary Lou**.

Looking for a way to serve First Lutheran Church. We would love for you to join our Altar Guild team. We have four regular meetings on the third Tuesday of: March, May, September, and November. Please contact **Mary Letheby, Kayla Kittleson**, or our Church Office, for more information.

The Flower Chart for 2012 is located in the Narthex. Please be sure to check it out and sign up. The altar flowers will come from Glidden Florist and will cost \$40.00 (plus tax) for the two arrangements.

Getting to Know Our Members

Darrel and Barbara Henson are members of the First Lutheran family you should get to know. Barbara shares these reflections with us: Darrel was born in DeKalb but graduated from Sycamore High School; I was born in Dixon but graduated from DeKalb High School. We met at Luther League at Trinity Lutheran Church in DeKalb and were married there. With the exception of Darrel's Air Force years (he served in Vietnam; we lived in Colorado Springs, where he was stationed later), our married life has been spent in DeKalb.



Darrel and Barbara Henson

We have three daughters: Dana Dunaway, an R.N. and stay-at-home mom in Parkville, MO (a Kansas City suburb); Melinda Henson, who's in customer service for a shipping company and lives in Aurora; and Kristina Oland (a FLC youth group volunteer leader), who is student teaching in Sycamore this semester and will receive her master's in special education in December. We also have three wonderful sons-in-law and four fabulous grandchildren, with another due in February.

We are retired teachers. I taught English and journalism at Sycamore High School. Darrel taught 5th and 6th grades at Southeast School and Sycamore Middle School. Managing a productive and joyful retirement is definitely a full-time job. We are thrilled to be able to spend lots of time with our grandchildren and to travel to places we always dreamed of seeing. We have returned many times to a medical clinic in Haiti to volunteer as support personnel, and we enjoy volunteering locally for Love INC gap ministries like the Linen Closet, the moving ministry, and others. We both enjoy reading, working in our yard, and supporting the NIU Huskies. Darrel, a former volleyball coach, now enjoys officiating at matches. I am a CASA advocate.

My favorite Bible verse is Micah 6:8 – **For what is required of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and walk humbly with your God?** It helps me keep my Christian mission in focus. Darrel's is Ephesians 2:8 – **For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God** – because it is the essence of being a Lutheran. My favorite hymn is "*Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee,*" the ultimate hymn of praise! Darrel's is "*In the Garden,*" which was also one of his dad's favorites.

We joined First Lutheran in 1995 because we wanted to belong to a congregation that was enthusiastic in its support of the mission of the ELCA. I would like to see FLC develop more opportunities for service so that everyone, from kids to the elderly, are able to put their faith in action. My faith provides the blueprint for my life. I have learned that the greatest fulfillment in life comes from serving others, and it's a joy to have a church family that provides so many great models for this life.

Meals on Wheels Thanks

A great big THANK YOU to everyone who helped with Meals on Wheels this year. November is normally a busy time of year and these people took time out of their busy schedules to help deliver meals to the area shut-ins.

**Big
Thank
You!**

Special thanks to **Barbara Anderson, Don & Dee Anderson, Bill Colvin, Joyce Davidson, Al & Debbie Fisher, Don & Phyllis Franzene, Joyce Gardner, Marilyn, Breanna, & Meghan Hanson, Jim & Colleen Johnson, Adam & Julie Karolus, Kyle & Terri Kuhns, Dick & Sharon Retrum, Patti Salazar, Ron & Jan Setchell, Keith Setchell, and Tarryn Thaden.**

Feeding the Hungry

Thanks to all who have responded to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal by making a contribution during World Hunger month. As of our November 20 offering, we have received \$2,289.25 for 2011. Many people will be fed and nourished because of your generous gifts. Thank you to all who have contributed! If you haven't yet made a gift to World Hunger and would like to do so, it's not too late! Gifts will be graciously received through the end of the year.

Volunteers Needed

The chart for Hope Haven volunteers is posted on the bulletin board outside the Social Hall. Volunteers are asked to help provide a portion of the meal (a main dish; a vegetable or salad; or

dessert). First Lutheran Church is responsible for the second Wednesday of each month. If you are interested in helping, please contact **Carrie Engstrom** at 815-758-2588. Thanks in advance for helping with this worthwhile community service.

Local Food Pantry Needs

Thanks to **Dean Burgemeister** for being the volunteer coordinator for the Food Pantry for First Lutheran Church. We are scheduled to work once a month for three hours. Please contact Dean, 815-756-4364, if you are interested in helping out at the Food Pantry. **Don't Forget!** The first Sunday of each month is a special collection of canned goods, paper products, and/or toiletries for the Food Pantry. Please place your item/s in the basket in the Narthex.

Campus Ministry Meals

Prior to worship on Wednesday nights at Grace Place (formerly Lutheran Campus Ministry), students meet for fellowship and to share a meal. First Lutheran is scheduled to serve on the fourth Wednesday of each month — our next scheduled evening will be January 25. We are looking for individuals willing to make the meal. There is no set menu and several people may join together. Ideas would include sloppy joes, chips, fruit, and dessert; a cheese and cracker tray and veggies and dip, or a \$30.00 donation to order pizza, etc. If you are willing to sign up for a certain month, contact **Teresa Lange**, 815-758-0855, or sign-up on the bulletin board outside the Library. Thank you.

Love Auction for the Ketumbeine Parish



Please join us for the annual Love Auction during the Social Hour on Sunday, December 11.

What a gift it is for the Ketumbeine Parish that the price for a plate of cookies or a cake just keeps going up. That is the job of auctioneer **Bill Johnson** to help us raise as much money as possible to help our sisters and brothers in Tanzania.

We know about the auction, thus I would like to share a little more about the Ketumbeine Parish and how the money will be used. There are 26 churches in the Ketumbeine Parish. The furthest one is about 60 miles from the main church — but remember there is little transportation. About 20 of those churches have an evangelist (serving as a pastor) living in the area. This year our monies raised will help support the evangelist. Our gifts will provide money to buy seed for those areas that can grow crops and buy goats for other areas. Thus we hope to make the evangelist and the churches more self-sustaining. Our gifts may be matched by other individuals or businesses. Further, Pastor Seth will be in the area after June to oversee the work.

May God make our hearts and financial gifts abundant to bless our friends with our Christmas gift. Please join us and it would be fun and good to have new people bidding.

You may pick up a gift plate and sign up to make an item for the Auction. Plates will be available in the Narthex soon.

Harold Grafe
Social Ministry Team

Jack Cress to Lead Forum

Jack Cress, a member of First Lutheran Church, travelled to Tanzania, Africa this past summer. He will be leading the Adult Forum on Sunday, December 4, in Classroom B. Jack took lots of pictures while there and will be showing them as he tells of his travels. All are welcome!

Pastor Seth Sululu to Preach

Pastor Seth Sululu will preach on Sunday, December 11. Pastor Sululu, from our Companion Parish of Ketumbeine, Tanzania, is enrolled in a two-year Master's Degree program in the Department of Music at Northern Illinois University. Please join us on December 11 for worship and the Love Auction.

Help Us Restock The Linen Closet!

First Lutheran's Linen Closet is a "gap ministry" associated with Love INC (Love in the Name of Christ), an organization that serves families whose needs for assistance can't be met through the usual tax-supported or volunteer agencies. When a family or individual needs support, Love INC does its best to help. Because those needs vary so widely, many congregations in the northern Illinois area are prepared to "fill the gap." There is a kitchen ministry and a diaper ministry and a moving ministry, for example -- specific efforts to meet specific needs. For First Lutheran's Linen Closet, the gap is linens: sheets, blankets, pillows, mattress pads, bath towels and washcloths, shower curtains, kitchen towels, and teddy bears. Why teddy bears? Because many of the families we serve include children, and what do children need at bedtime? A pillow, clean bedding, a blanket, and a sweet little stuffed animal or doll.

The Linen Closet has reached out to over 100 individuals this year -- people who have been hit hard by unemployment, illness, or broken families. At this time of year, we know that pleas for financial support are coming at you from every direction. The Linen Closet is asking for something you may already have in your closet -- an extra set of sheets, a sturdy blanket, a towel or two. An extra dollar from everyone reading this note would let us buy enough pillows and mattress pads to fill that need for quite a while. We hope you can help us continue this amazing ministry. Thank you for your support of the Linen Closet.

What's New at Love INC?

Need of the month: A \$12.00 gift card from WalMart can help build a work ethic, develop Christian faith, and support a family when contributed to First Baptist Church's Helping Hands program. Participants are provided work on Fridays, along with a Bible study and encouragement. Your \$12.00 goes a long way to allow Helping Hands to continually build relationships and offer work to those in need. Please drop off or mail the cards to First Baptist Church, 530 W. State Street, Sycamore.



It's Moving Ministry Mania! On Saturday, December 3, we plan to make all our requested deliveries and pick up donated items before the snow and cold move in for the winter! This is a great service activity for your small group, your youth, your family ministry, or just interested individuals. It's a time for fellowship together as we work to provide those in need with basic items for their homes. Call the Clearing House at 815-217-0082 to sign up.

Items needed for clients include lamps, mattresses and couches in particular. Donations should be free of stains and rips. Please call 217-0082 to arrange pick-up or drop-off. **Do you feel a call to serve** the community through Love INC? Intake workers, board members and a clearing house coordinator are needed. Call Nathan at 815-217-0082. **In October we served 43 homes and assisted with at least 113 needs.** Thanks to all those who served in the name of Christ!

Feed My Starving Children Event — Hunger to Hope



Working in a factory on a Saturday night definitely does not sound like a relaxing evening with friends or family. But, 30 First Lutheran volunteers had a fabulous time doing just that!

Volunteers of all ages came out to pack food at the Suter Co. Inc. facility on Saturday night, November 19. Feed My Starving Children, a non-profit sets up mobile food packing locations around the Twin cities and Chicagoland area, in order to utilize volunteer manpower.

Church members like **Nancy Dashner** and **Dawn Gersic** messed up their gorgeous hair day by wearing safety hair nets, in order to participate. After watching a video that explains how FMSC gets the food packaged, boxed and delivered to starving children, many understood the importance of this project. Youth like **Aaron Oduber** and **Elliot Lange** were emotionally effected by the fact that 18,000 children die every day from starvation.



Elliot Lange holding a cup of rice

This type of volunteering is so fun because FMSC has, “everything well organized.” said **Jan Womack**. Everyone can do the jobs at the team packaging tables from holding Mana bags so that others can scoop chicken powder, dried veggies, soy powder and rice into the funnel. Some weighed and sealed the Mana packs and others loaded the boxes. FMSC even plays fun music so that you can dance or sing while working which youth like **Ashlee Mecklenburg** and **Breanna Hanson** enjoyed.

The result from a night of fun? 173 children will eat for one year because we spent a Saturday night in a factory! Thanks to **Teresa Lange** for organizing our church group. Thanks to volunteers who worked and gave donations to keep children alive for another day. For 173 children, that is another year for them to hear the good news of Jesus Christ!

Men’s Moving Ministry Delivers!

Men, come and help deliver furniture to people in need for Love INC on the third Saturday of each month. We meet at the Lincoln Inn for breakfast at 8:00 AM and then deliver furniture from 9:00 AM – NOON. All men of the congregation are invited to join the group next on Saturday, December 17. More help is always welcome — especially some of you younger guys! This is a great service opportunity right in our own immediate area. Please join us! Contact **Jim Womack** with questions or to volunteer.



- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Lisa Cowley | 8. Janis Nelson | 18. Barbara Henson |
| 2. Marian Larson | 9. Robert Rosene | 20. Raelyn Colvin |
| Gary Skinner | 10. Russell Cook | Bill Freeland |
| Will Todtz | 11. Carole Johnson | 22. Maxwell Lange |
| 3. Pam Larson | 12. Karen Sjolund | 23. Audrey Bowden |
| 5. Madison Bauling | 13. Ronald Johnson | Scott Meier |
| JoAnn Nordeen | Angela Listy | Ruth Smith |
| Carolyn Schmidt | Donna Peterson | 25. Hannah Pumfrey |
| 6. Lindsay Franzene | 14. Dylan Nelson | 27. Holly Peifer |
| 7. Karen Hart | 15. Grace Bauling | 28. Jenna Levine |
| Mark Hartman | Ethel Moline | Michael Wadle |
| Katie Mooney | John Pickens | 31. Heidi Hietanen |
| | Jason Wood | Joyce Listy |
| | 16. Anna Fell | Wanda Parsley |
| | Carol Stubbs | Heidi Peterson |
| | 17. MacKenzie Carter | Sarah VanderBleek |
| | Margaret Marten | |
| | Joyce Nelson | |

Comptroller Report for October 2011

| | October Actual | Year-to-Date Actual | Remaining Budget |
|----------------|----------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Income | \$30,179.75 | \$302,692.70 | \$175,707.30 |
| Expenses | \$25,920.19 | \$307,151.92 | \$173,550.08 |
| Ahead/(Behind) | \$4,259.56 | (\$4,459.22) | |

Capital Building Fund Loan Balance - \$263,661.15

One day's interest on mortgage - \$42.13

Attendance Figures for October 2011

| | 9:00 AM |
|------------|---------|
| October 2 | 159 |
| October 9 | 123 |
| October 16 | 181 |
| October 23 | 221 |
| October 30 | 162 |

First Staff

Senior Pastor

Marilyn G. Hanson
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Administrative Assistant

Financial Secretary

Lynn Schmidt
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Sr. High Youth Directors

Trent and Teresa Lange
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Comptroller

Ken Hermach
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Adult Choir Director

John Feken

Bell Choir Director

Judy Neumann

Custodian

Bill Colvin

Security

Kyle and Jennifer Guymon

Congregation Council

President

Paul Letheby

Vice-President

Barbara Henson

Secretary

Nancy Dashner

Treasurer

Bob Snow

Randall Baker

Lisa Cowley

John Countryman

Joyce Davidson

Cathy Foelske

Bill Sanders

Barbara Schrader

Ministry Teams

Children & Youth Ministry

Endowment

Evangelism

Finance

Personnel

Property

Social Ministry

Stewardship

Worship/Music/Fine Arts

*First Lutheran Church ...
... hearing, living, and
sharing God's Word
together.*