

FIRST LUTHERAN

Visitor

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From the Pastor

I saw a man not long ago who was wearing a t-shirt with the question "Doesn't anything work anymore?" printed on its front. I thought it was a pretty concise summation of the frustration of our age. We're living in very strange and dysfunctional times indeed. There seems to be a glitch in every mechanism of the society keeping things from running smoothly or even running at all.

All of us have an opinion of what the causes of current frustration may be. Greed, it seems is the leading culprit, but then there's always jealousy or avarice or lust. Just pick out one of the deadly sins and insert it into the sentence, "I blame it all on..." Whatever your choice, you're probably right. But after the finger pointing and blaming we don't really get much relief from the problems. So, what is the answer?

As students of the Bible we all know there's plenty of evidence of such times having happened before. Often such times slide into disastrous ends. But the scriptures remind us that this need not happen when people of faith are reminded that they are also people of hope. Merely to say we believe that "judgment is coming" may not provide much comfort. But, to say, we believe that "God believes in humanity" promotes hope that we can find a new and meaningful way out of the mess we're in.

In the season of Advent we talk a lot about hope. But this hope has a purpose. Hope means that God enters into the events of humankind in every generation. Hope appears when people of faith turn pain into healing, doubt into faith, anger into understanding, and hatred into love. Hope is a tangible thing. Hope means we believe God is not done with history, but always turning the threats of disaster into the promises of renewal.

Your faith, your hope, matters in these confusing times. When you embrace the meaning of Advent, you energize goodness, and give permission to yourself to act with integrity. Hope is all about hopefulness.

Pastor David Folkerts

Our Mission Statement

We are called to awaken the Spirit of Christ...

In ourselves, through a commitment to a life of learning, worship, and prayer.

In our community, by dedication to the renewal of our family, our neighbors, and the disenfranchised, by the practice of our faith through acts of justice, mercy, and kindness.

In our world, by nurture of compassionate partnership with diverse cultures to strengthen our common faith, for the enrichment of all people in Christ Jesus.

CHRISTMAS CONCERTS AND PROGRAM

WORSHIP IN DECEMBER

DECEMBER 4

Second Sunday in Advent

8:00 am Worship -

with Holy Communion

9:15 am Worship -

with Holy Communion

10:30 am Adult Forum -

Cheryl Jones will be here from 10,000 Villages, A Fair Trade store in St. Paul. She will bring samples of the merchandise they sell in their store as well as online.

7:00 pm FLCC Christmas Concert

DECEMBER 11

Third Sunday in Advent

8:00 am Worship

9:15 am Worship

9:15 am Baptism - Bryan Brannick

9:15 am Children's Program

Parish Nurse here today

10:30 am Adult Forum -

The Gospel of John - Part I
presented by Pr. Erick Thompson

DECEMBER 18

Fourth Sunday in Advent

8:00 am Worship -

with Holy Communion

9:15 am Worship -

with Holy Communion

10:30 am - Adult Forum -

The Gospel of John - Part II
presented by

Pastor Erick Thompson

10:30 am St. Olaf Christmas Concert

DECEMBER 24

CHRISTMAS EVE

4:30 pm Worship

10:30 pm Worship -

with Holy Communion

DECEMBER 25

CHRISTMAS DAY

9:15 am Worship -

with Holy Communion

10:30 am - No Adult Forum

First Lutheran Christmas Concert -- December 4

The Christmas Concert featuring FLCC and St. Olaf Choirs & instrumentalists, the Faith First Men's Ensemble, several instrumentalists from the Twin Cities Metro area and also the Bell Choir from House of Hope and First Lutheran will be here at First Lutheran on December 4th at 7:00pm.

Our Organist and Choir Director, Mr. Jerry Bursch has put together a wonderful program for us this year.

Please invite your family and friends to join us for a great evening.

A freewill offering will be taken.

Refreshments will be served in the Community Room after the concert.

We hope to see you there!

Children's Christmas Program -- December 11

The children and youth of First Lutheran will be presenting the story of Christmas in word and song on Sunday, December 11th at the 9:15 morning worship.

We will be singing Christmas carols, hear the telling of the Christmas story once again, and also celebrate a baptism that morning, as well. Invite your family to join you for this annual tradition and come celebrate the joy of the season.

St. Olaf Christmas Concert -- December 18th

Put the real meaning of the season into your Christmas with a traditional Christmas Concert in the restored historic sanctuary of St. Olaf Lutheran Church on Sunday, December 18, beginning at 10:30 am.

The Concert will be presented by the combined choirs of St. Olaf Lutheran Church and First Lutheran Church of Crystal and instrumentalists under the direction of Jerry Bursch.

A free will offering matched by the Northwest Chapter of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans will be taken to send youth to the National Lutheran Youth Gathering in New Orleans and there will be a Bake Sale afterward to repair the organ.

St. Olaf is located at 2901 Emerson Ave. N.

Gospel Gathering

Many thanks to all of you who were a part of this great afternoon. Your support was greatly appreciated.



The event was professionally recorded and CD's will be available for \$10.00 each beginning on Sunday, December 4th.

Faith First Men

Youth Events

FOR THE MONTH

YOUTH NEWS

First Lutheran Youth will continue having bible study throughout the school year. Bible study will be held in the youth room at 10:30am on Sundays. Bible study is youth led, with assistance from adult leaders when needed. Youth will be going through selected books in the New Testament. All youth grades 6-12th and friends are welcome. Any youth wanting to help lead a bible study should contact Youth Director Jessica Johnson.

DQ Fundraiser

Monday December 5th from 5-8pm! Come and enjoy some dinner or try the blizzard of the month at the Crystal Dairy Queen. Our 2012 Mission Trippers will earn 10% of all profits made during this time. Please come and enjoy a sweet treat while supporting our youth.

VFW Steak Dinner

Wednesday December 14th 5-7pm come and enjoy a delicious steak dinner at the Crystal VFW. Our 2012 Mission Trippers will be serving you and will be earning money for their trip. Tickets will be sold after church in the Narthex and in the church office. You may also contact a youth mission tripper to purchase tickets.

Lock-In

There will be a 6-12th grade lock in at church on Friday December 30th from 9pm-7am. Friends are welcome! This will be a fun night of games, food, movies, baking, and other activities. Please contact Youth Director Jessica Johnson for more information.

NEAR FOOD SHELF

Volunteers are needed for NEAR's set-up and distribution of Christmas toys on Dec. 16th and 17th at the Crystal Community Center.
Please contact Shirley Small at 763-537-2635.

A reminder for Christmas needs as you are preparing for the holidays:

We need clean and gently used sweaters, sweat shirts, jackets and coats of all sizes for our Christmas distribution.

Used Christmas decorations are also appreciated by our clients.

Teen age gifts are needed.

There are Christmas gift idea lists on usher's cabinet in the narthex or contact the church office for more information.

Thank you for your continued support and may you have a blessed Christmas!

SENIOR MINISTRY

This month's Senior Ministry event will be on Sunday, December 4th

The Seniors are going to Lyric Arts Theater in Anoka to see "White Christmas". They will board a bus at FLCC at 1:15pm.

For more information about this or future events, please call Myrtle Keniston at 763-537-6908.

Caring Support Group Annual Candle Lighting

In Remembrance of Loved Ones

The Caring Support Group will host a potluck and candle lighting evening on Thursday, December 15th beginning at 6:00pm. Please bring a dish to share and a candle in a holder. We encourage you to bring photographs of your loved one also.

ALL ARE WELCOME!
Invite your family and friends.

For more information, please call the church office.

Two children were baptized at First Lutheran Church of Crystal in November: November 13:

Charlie Kay Larson and Jack Bradley Allender, children of Jeremy Larson and Kaylee Kline.



Grace and peace to you all.

Reminder: The Advent Dinner is Monday, December 5th.

The General Board met on November 7 and chose the recipients of the rummage sale profits.

World Missions at \$265 each: Feed My Starving Children; ELCA World Hunger –Dadaab Refugee Camp; Lutheran World Relief; Central Asia Institute (building schools). Local Missions at \$200 each: St. Olaf Lutheran Church, North Minneapolis; Dinner at Your Door; Adults Saving Kids; Lutheran Social Service and NEAR; \$60 to Kidpack Snack Program. One third of the money will be used for church projects. We have offered to pay for new ceiling tile in Fellowship Hall and to buy supplies for the repurposing of space in the church building.

We will switch our emphasis from school kits to personal care kits for the coming months. Personal care kit items: one light/medium weight bath towel, dark color, 27"X52"; two bath-size bars of soap (4-5 oz.) wrapped; one adult-size toothbrush wrapped; one sturdy comb; one metal nail clipper. Multi-packs of toothbrushes can be used. Place in the collection drawer units in the Community room.

We are in the planning stages of having a kit assembly day in January so everyone can participate.

Remember NEAR and the food baskets they assemble for Christmas. They can make a dollar go a long way in purchasing food. Or, if you would like, buy bags of stuffing mix and/or cans of sweet potatoes.

A Blessed Christmas to you and yours,

Jackie Mortenson

Advent: Christ "coming" in three ways

Advent consists of four weeks before Christmas. The name of this first season of the liturgical year comes from a Latin word that means "coming".

Advent focuses on this "coming" in three ways: 1) the infant Jesus coming in the past--2 millennia ago in Bethlehem, 2) Christ coming in the present in word and sacraments and in the fellowship or communion of the church, and 3) Christ coming again in the future at the end of time. In Advent we prepare for the celebration of Christ's coming in the incarnation, but more importantly we prepare for His second coming, when He will make all things new and judge the world in righteousness.

Two different colors may be used for Advent, 1) blue, the color of hope and 2) purple, the royal color of the coming King. This year we will be using paraments and banners of purple.

Advent is a time for visual restraint and simplicity and should not be confused with Christmas. Advent wreaths have four candles, which represent the four weeks of waiting during Advent. On the first Sunday in Advent, the first candle is lighted and then each Sunday in Advent another candle is lit until all four have been lighted. The candles are to be new each year to clearly indicate the passage of time.

We wish you all a very Blessed Advent Season.

In God's Service,

Pat Hamm and Bernie Swanson

Co-coordinators for Altar Guild

STEWARDSHIP 2012

We have CHOICES!

It has just become easier than ever to support First Lutheran Church of Crystal! You will have the following payment options for 2012 :

- Weekly envelopes for paper checks and/or cash
- Automatic withdrawal from your checking account through Simply Giving
- Automatic withdrawal from your savings account through Simply Giving
- Automatic charge to your credit card through Simply Giving***
- Mobile direct giving via smartphone via Simply Giving***

In addition, if you choose Simply Giving, you also have the following options available:

- Access your Simply Giving account through the First Lutheran website and view all of your account transactions.
- Make additional one time special payments through the website access (flowers, holiday donations, memorial donations, etc).
- Change your scheduled giving and/or account information through the website (change frequency of payments, amount of payments, bank account information, add a donation, cancel a donation, etc.)
- Register and pay for special events (senior ministry trips, confirmation events, etc)
- Purchase and order special fund raising items (plant sales, pie sales, etc)

Initial registration for Simply Giving may be done either directly online or by submitting a paper authorization form.

The online donations page will allow ANYONE to make a donation/payment to First Lutheran – not just members. We're movin' on up!

Bonfire Ministry



Rekindling our faith through our deeds.

A unique unity among neighboring churches

The Bonfire Health and Wellness Team is still looking for volunteers for our respite program.

We need all kinds of volunteers. No experience necessary. The volunteer does not necessarily need to have a medical background. We are looking for any able-bodied person who would enjoy working with others as a team member while doing something worthwhile.

If you are interested, know someone who might be interested, and/or have any good ideas for the respite program, please contact your parish nurse, Debbie Haney at 612-408-2049 Or your congregational representative on the Bonfire Health and Wellness Team.

They are:

Janet Howe and Kay Magon from First Lutheran Church of Crystal in Brooklyn Park;

Orla McClure from St. James Lutheran Church in Crystal; and

Kris Allen and Shirley Fulmer from House of Hope Lutheran Church in New Hope.

Deadline to make your YEAR-END FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

If you would like to make any year-end financial contributions to the church, they must be received in the church office by noon on Thursday, December 29th

Bonfire 2012 Calendar Sales Fundraiser

Looking for a 2012 calendar for your kitchen or office?

Wondering what gift to give to family or friends?

Look no further than the first annual presentation of the **Bonfire Ministry planning calendar!**

These large wall calendars feature photos of events, and people from House of Hope, St. James, and First Lutheran churches.

You may even be in one of them yourself!

Proceeds from the sale of these calendars go to funding the Bonfire Ministry Parish Nurse program for the coming year.

Calendars are \$10 and will be available on Sunday mornings at a display in the narthex or hallway, or M-Th in the church office throughout December.

Global Missions Update

Global Missions uses the “Glocal Missions” concept this year: Glocal Missions uses the idea that all local mission work is global elsewhere, all global mission is local in its own setting. The world has come to us!

In the spirit of Glocal Missions, the Global Missions Task Force has given \$500 towards Bonfire Ministries as seed money from First Lutheran for the Kids Pack lunch program. Kids Pack is the program to provide bag snacks and lunch items for the weekend to children who might not have enough food when school lunches and breakfasts are not provided. Bonfire is working at Meadow Lake and Forest Elementary Schools to provide these snack packs. Global Missions Task Force supports this local mission as an important and much-needed community outreach mission.

Other “Glocal” missions supported financially by GMTF in the past year include:

Youth Mission Trip: Provided \$1600 to pay the way of adult leaders, many of whom gave up their vacation time or took vacation without pay, in order to go on the mission trip to Alabama as adult leaders.

Evangelist support to our Nigeria partner congregation in Mubi: Provided a \$500 gift in ongoing support of their outreach evangelists and health ministry in rural Nigeria near the Cameroon Border.

Gift towards healing surgery for Pastor Joseph Umar, a Nigerian pastor and friend of the congregation: Our gift of \$700 allowed Pastor Joseph to pay medical expenses to allow healing of his leg injuries following a motorcycle accident. He is now able to walk without pain and do his work with the Women to Women school. Praise God!

Fair Trade: Our Equal Exchange coffee, tea and snacks sales and use of Equal Exchange coffee for fellowship promote Fair Trade. That means that farmers get a fair price for their crops and are able to provide for their families. Through cooperatives, communities also benefit. Farming practices also benefit the environment. First Lutheran earns a small profit that helps fund our other activities.

Thank You! A heartfelt thank you to all the members and friends of First Lutheran who have helped to support these vital Glocal Missions and many others. It is amazing how God’s gifts to us are multiplied when we give them back! Your gifts and work allow our hands to reach around the community and around the world to lift up people. God’s work. Our Hands.

Don’t forget about Alternative Christmas Gifts! Catalogs for the Heifer Project, ELCA Good Gifts, and the Lutheran World Relief Handcraft Project are in the Community Room. These are only a few of the many gift possibilities for your family and friends who don’t need any more “stuff.”

First Lutheran Church of Crystal
7708 62nd Avenue North
Brooklyn Park, MN 55428-2883



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Welcome to First Lutheran Church of Crystal

Staff

PastorDavid Folkerts
Director of Ministry Operations
.....Mariana Duffney
Organist/Choir Director.....Jerry Bursch
Secretary.....Jean Brannick
Youth Director..... Jessica Johnson
Sunday School Superintendents
.....Carrie Adams and Jennifer Hernandez
Worship AV Tech.....Angie Brannick
Bonfire Parish NurseDebbie Haney

Church Office

Hours Mon.-Thurs. 9:00 am- 4:00 pm
Phone..... 763-537-4576
Email..... office@firstlcoc.org
Website..... www.firstlcoc.org

Worship Times

Sundays 8:00 am and 9:15 am
Sunday School.....during 9:15 am Service
Youth Bible Study 10:30 am
Adult Education Hour 10:30 am
Fellowship time..... 10:30 am

*May you have a
Blessed Christmas
And
A
Happy New Year!*

DECEMBER 2011

Sunday		Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday	
27 8:00 AM Worship 9:15 AM Worship 10:30 AM Decorate Church for the holidays 10:30 AM Forum - "The Gathering Place"	28 6:00 PM Joyful Ringers Bell Choir 6:30 PM Boy Scouts 6:30 PM S. O. S. 7:00 PM Choir Practice 7:30 PM A. A.	29 9:00 AM Parish Nurse 9:30 AM Card Recyclers Group 10:00 AM Study Buddy 2:00 PM Staff Meeting 4:00 PM Bonfire Kid Pack Assembly 7:00 PM Faith First Men's Ensemble	30 9:30 AM Senior Ministry Steering Committee 1:00 PM O. A. 5:00 PM Alleluia Ringers	1 9:30 AM THUMBS 7:00 PM Youth Team Meeting	2 January Newsletter Articles Due Today 9:30 AM Friday Morning Bible Study 5:00 PM SDA	3 9:00 AM SDA							
4 8:00 AM 3 Baptisms 8:00 AM Worship 9:15 AM Worship 3:00 PM Concert @ Faith-Lilac Way 7:00 PM Christmas Concert	5 9:30 AM Quilting 3:00 PM Global Missions 5:00 PM Youth DQ Fundraiser 5:30 PM Advent Dinner 5:30 PM Executive Team 6:00 PM Joyful Ringers Bell Choir 6:30 PM Boy Scouts 6:30 PM Communications Task Force 6:30 PM S. O. S. 7:00 PM Choir Practice 7:30 PM A. A.	6 9:00 AM Parish Nurse 9:45 AM Debra Circle 10:00 AM Caregiver Support Group 10:00 AM Study Buddy 2:00 PM Staff Meeting 7:00 PM Youth Ministry Team	7 Wildfire Confirmation Event 1:00 PM O. A.	8 9:30 AM THUMBS 11:30 AM Loose Threads	9 9:30 AM Friday Morning Bible Study 11:30 AM Loose Threads Christmas Party 5:00 PM SDA	10 9:00 AM SDA 10:00 AM Crafters							
11 8:00 AM Worship 9:15 AM Baptism 9:15 AM Children's Christmas Program 9:15 AM Worship 9:30 AM Parish Nurse Here	12 1:00 PM Esther Circle 1:00 PM MBS with Linda Rasmussen 6:00 PM Joyful Ringers Bell Choir 6:30 PM Boy Scouts 6:30 PM S. O. S. 7:00 PM Choir Practice 7:30 PM A. A.	13 9:00 AM Parish Nurse 10:00 AM Study Buddy 1:00 PM Rebecca Circle 2:00 PM Staff Meeting 6:00 PM Communications Task Force 6:00 PM Mary Magdalene Circle	14 1:00 PM O. A. 5:30 PM Council Meeting 6:30 PM Confirmation	15 9:30 AM THUMBS 5:45 PM Bonfire Health & Wellness Team Meeting 6:00 PM Caring Support Group Candle-lighting 7:30 PM Kid's Snack Pack Team Meeting	16 9:30 AM Friday Morning Bible Study 5:00 PM SDA 5:30 PM Bible Study	17 9:00 AM SDA							
18 8:00 AM Worship 9:15 AM 4 Baptisms 9:15 AM Worship 10:30 AM Cinnamon Roll Fellowship 10:30 AM St. Olaf Christmas Concert	19 9:30 AM Quilting 6:00 PM Joyful Ringers Bell Choir 6:30 PM Boy Scouts 6:30 PM S. O. S. 7:00 PM Choir Practice 7:30 PM A. A.	20 9:00 AM Parish Nurse 9:45 AM Debra Circle 10:00 AM Caregiver Support Group 10:00 AM Study Buddy 2:00 PM Staff Meeting 5:30 PM Bonfire Council Meeting	21 1:00 PM O. A. 6:30 PM Confirmation	22 9:30 AM THUMBS 11:30 AM Loose Threads	23 5:00 PM SDA	24 9:00 AM SDA 4:30 PM Christmas Eve Worship Service 10:30 PM Christmas Eve Worship Service							
25 One Worship Service Only 9:15 AM Worship	26 Office Closed 6:30 PM Boy Scouts 6:30 PM S. O. S. 7:00 PM Choir Practice 7:30 PM A. A.	27 9:00 AM Parish Nurse 10:00 AM Study Buddy 2:00 PM Staff Meeting 4:00 PM Bonfire Kid Pack Assembly	28 Private Baptism - Chapel 9:30 AM Senior Ministry Steering Committee 1:00 PM O. A. 7:00 PM Caring Support Group	29 9:30 AM THUMBS	30 9:30 AM Friday Morning Bible Study 5:00 PM SDA	31 9:00 AM SDA							

December, 2011

Richard Lewis 12/01	Analise Adams 12/20
Tom Lane 12/01	Herbert Norden 12/21
Donald Henneman 12/03	Gary Brannick 12/21
Malinda Kubly 12/03	Kelsey LeRoy 12/22
Deb Groth 12/03	Zubah Jentzen2 12/24
Aidan Orcutt 12/05	Carol Pettis 12/25
Amy Peterson 12/06	Doreene Suess 12/25
Tsehainesh Yacob 12/06	Alexandria Adams 12/25
Karen Northrop 12/07	Myrtle Keniston 12/27
Amy Norcutt 12/08	Sharon Hanson 12/27
Eric Sanderson 12/09	Sean Suess 12/27
Ruth Rudolph 12/11	Agnes Eull 12/29
Norvella Almer 12/12	Janice Walters 12/30
Kathy Alexander 12/13	Shannon Bass 12/30
Vernon Bodin 12/14	Natalie Steen 12/30
Mavis Hjulberg 12/14	Carrie Adams 12/30
Clifford Kramer 12/15	Alex Orcutt 12/30
Delores Johnson 12/16	Janice Gustafson 12/31
Marilyn Est 12/17	Iola Gulsvig 12/31
Bradley Sanvik 12/18	Nancy Schendel 12/31
Olivia Adams 12/18	Thomas Heineman 12/31
Dorothy Viar 12/20	Alexandra Battina 12/31