



THE FIRST WORD

CELEBRATING THE LIVING WORD
FOR A GROWING CHURCH.

DECEMBER/JANUARY, 2015

Turning Our Focus onto Jesus Christ by Pastor Ian Reid

Once again the church has reached the New Year, which for the Christian church begins on the first Sunday in Advent. The church year begins not with big celebrations leading to over eating, followed by resolutions to lose weight in the coming year. Instead it focuses our attention directly onto the actions of Jesus Christ and our response to them. Over the next year we will be hearing who this Jesus Christ is from the view of the writer of the Gospel of Luke. According to Luke's Gospel the main theme of Jesus' ministry here on earth is His bringing the reign of God to a world where human and demonic powers all too often rule. Therefore, along the journey we will see the powerless lifted up and the mighty fall, those perceived as knowledgeable to be told they are erroneous and those willing in heart affirmed. Luke's Gospel is considered to be the gospel written to support the outcast, forgotten and lowly in society and at the same time it affirms us all in Christ.

The question then is what does Luke's gospel, and even more importantly, does the whole Bible and church say about Jesus? I think this is an important question, because at a time like this in which we are so divided religiously and politically, it becomes easy to make Jesus into what we personally desire Him to be. This can be seen by the statements we hear and read on social media and in the editorial pages about "what would Jesus do" or "Jesus was an outcast too". Jesus, over the last few weeks I have seen, has been made by some to be a crusader for America's religious freedoms and by others a zealot for

the Assyrian refugees. What this tells me is that there is no better time than now to study the role and person of Jesus in history and in our lives.

Thanks to the church seasons at the beginning of the year we get to see several key aspects of Christ. The first purpose of Christ is revealed during the season of Advent in which we affirm His coming not only as a child, but also as a triumphant ruler and judge. We recognize during the season of Advent that Christ has come into the world to set us free from sin and in the future He will return to bring us into the Kingdom of God where there is eternal life. Until that time we should therefore live as Advent calls us; in hopeful expectation of Christ's return.

If Advent teaches us about the timing and actions of Christ, then Christmas teaches about the nature of Christ. During the season of Christmas we come to gain a better understanding of God and His love for us by sending His son into the world as He did. Every detail about Christ's coming into the world matters, from the humbling birth narrative to the varied groups of people who came to worship Him. We come to find out that Jesus is not only God, but is also fully human and therefore will experience all the realities of life here on earth. Jesus, therefore, is not spared anything but instead will incur the harshest things this life can impose. The church, therefore, lists in the creeds and the Lutheran confessions that Christ was born, suffered, crucified, died and was buried in order that He might reconcile us to the Father.

God understands that reconciliation is not something humans can do alone, but instead, as we hear in the Christmas story, is done by a loving God who is willing to come to us. Finally, the season of Epiphany comes after the twelve days of Christmas in order to enlighten us with the realities of what Christ has done. We are called from near and far to gather together in amazement of who Jesus Christ is, for it is not through power but love that Christ sets us free. We do not bow and give praise to a God who demands our obedience, but instead give thanks and praise for what He has done and continues to do in our lives and the world around us.

As we turn once again our focus to the new church year we also return our focus onto the One that the church is about. The question that we should ask ourselves is not "What would Jesus do" but how we should respond to what Jesus has done. We know what Jesus has accomplished and what He will do in the future according to the scriptures. What we must decide is whether or not we will be like the wisemen at Epiphany who sought Him out and gave Him thanks and praise.

From Your Church Council

FROM YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL ...

This wonderful year of 2015 is racing to a close! We have just celebrated the Thanksgiving holiday with a special thanks-giving service, and are heading right into the first Sunday in Advent on November 29.

In this season of Advent, which most of us think of as the busiest of the year, we must not let all of the shopping, wrapping, decorating, baking, partying, etc., get in the way of what the **actual** reason for the season is ... We must all make sure to take the time to really pay attention to the true Gift we were all given on that special day of Jesus' birth.

Pastor is again leading Compline services on Thursday evenings in December, the 3rd, 10th and 17th. If you have not participated in these services in the past, I urge you to seriously consider adding them to your 'must do' calendar. They are intimate candlelight services of prayer, praise and thanksgiving.

There are all kinds of activities that you can get involved with at church during this Advent season; watch weekly bulletins for times or call the office.

December 6 – practice is scheduled for the Christmas Program at 4 pm with an Advent Work-

shop following at 5 pm. Anyone and everyone is invited to participate in the program and workshop.

December 12 – “Cookeez” sale (and there will be the now-famous Green Tomato Raspberry Jam available at this sale too.) Donations of cookies are being sought – if you can provide 3-4 dozen of your favorites for the sale that will be appreciated!

December 13 – Christmas Program

December 19 – Christmas Baskets for needy families will be prepared and distributed. Helping Hands always welcome for this project!

December 24 – Christmas Eve services beginning at 5:30 pm (note new time this year) with music starting at 5:15 pm, and traditional candlelight service at 11 pm, with music beginning at 10:30 pm. Your family, friends and neighbors will all enjoy these services and Christmas will have a richer, fuller meaning. Invite them to come with you.

The business of the church is on-going no matter what the season. We are continuing to work on the major inventory effort started in November. Part of this is required by the auditing firm performing our financial audit. Ultimately, the total inventory will give us a better accounting of what we have (and a lot of 'stuff' we have already

found that we don't really have a use for ...)

The committee is moving forward with preparation of the Ministry Site Profile. This will help us in our search to identify potential candidates for the associate ministry position approved at our annual meeting.

We have met with the contractor who will be handling the updates of our Fellowship Hall restrooms. They are making some requested changes to their preliminary plan and will present revised plans for our approval soon. They will then begin construction as soon as possible – maybe even before the end of the year!

These are exciting times at First Lutheran. I hope you will share your time and talents which help all of us become stronger in our faith. You will surely find joy in participating and serving. Please contact any Council member with your questions, suggestions and concerns. We want you to be aware and informed.

Finally ... take time to reflect on your blessings and enjoy this wonderful church season.

Andrea Brock, Council President

GERMANY, AUSTRIA AND PRAGUE

In the Footsteps of Martin Luther

12 DAYS: JULY 11 – 22, 2016



Visiting:

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FOR A BROCHURE & MORE INFORMATION CONTACT REV. & MRS. REID:

Tel: (304) 966-6431 *Ian's Cell* - (304) 966-6430 *Rebecca's Cell* Email: PastorIanReid@gmail.com

SPACE IS LIMITED - BOOK EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT!

Up Coming Events

COOKEEZ SALE

Dust off those cookie recipes! Our Cookeez Sale will be held December 12, from 10am -1pm at the church in the library. We will be asking you to bake several dozen cookies for this event. Have fun making cookies with your children or grandchildren!

We have been making our famous Raspberry Green Tomato Jam. You have the opportunity to purchase it before the sale. It's available in the church office for \$4.00 a half pint. There will also be a few pint jars available. Cost is \$7.00 a pint. Please return jam jars or if you see

some sitting around taking up space we would appreciate the donation. Cookies will again be \$4.00 per dozen. We sold all cookies and jam last year by noon. We had 100 dozen cookies, nine loaves of bread, and ____ jars of jam. Let's top that this year!

Christmas Program

When: December 13th @ 6:30

What: Variety Show

This year we will show off our talents. Please consider joining us and get your 'acts' together. Anyone may participate, young or old...reading a poem, singing, playing an instrument, you decide. If you are interested please let Becca or Lori know and join us on December 6th @ 4:00 for practice.

“Lighting Our Pathway Adoption Project”

We are coming to the end of the adoption project. If you are considering ‘adopting’ one of the LED lights for \$1000 in honor or memory of someone to be included on the Memory Plaque,

please contact the office no later than December 30.

After that date we will be finalizing the information for engraving, having the plaque prepared and installed in the Narthex of the Church.

Please continue to pray for the financial success of our electrical upgrade project and regularly contribute to this fund as you are able.

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

DECEMBER 21 AT 7:00 WE WILL OFFER A SERVICE FOR SPIRITUAL SUPPORT TO THOSE WHO HAVE TROUBLE RELATING TO THE “MERRY” IN MERRY CHRISTMAS DUE TO LIFE CHANGES AND LIFE LOSSES.

COMBINED SERVICE DECEMBER 27TH

Eyeglasses for the Lions Club

Have old eye glasses you no longer use but just can't throw them away? We still collect them for the Lions

Club. Effie Ayers takes them to the organization on behalf of First Lutheran Church. Please drop the

glasses off at the church office and we will see they are placed in the box until Effie picks them up.

RECYCLE PLEASE!

We can reuse those empty 8oz. Jelly jars. Please bring them back to the church office and we will use them to make more jelly. Thank you!

Christmas Baskets

Christmas is fast approaching so it is time to get busy collecting items for the Christmas Baskets. We want our celebration to focus on God's good gifts and our responsibility to share what we have with others as we are

able. The list of items needed for the baskets is listed below. Donated items are needed at the church by December 18th. Monetary donations are also greatly appreciated. Please remember...no gift is too small!!!

The Christmas baskets will be distributed on December 19th from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. If you would like to volunteer to shop or distribute baskets please contact the church office or Angie Smith at 304-483-0920.

Food Items:

- Jelly (Grape or strawberry)
- Soups (Tomato and chicken Noodle)
- Pasta (Regular and Whole Wheat)
- Canned Peas
- Complete Pancake Mix
- Peanut Butter
- Instant Potatoes
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Canned Green Beans & Corn
- Turkey & Chicken
- Syrup
- 5 Pound bags of potatoes
- Stuffing
- Boxed Macaroni & Cheese
- Canned Carrots
- Shampoo
- All Purpose Cleaner Bath Soap

Cleaning Supplies:

- Laundry Detergent
- Toothpaste
- Dish Washing Detergent

Matthew 25:35

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in."



POINSETTIAS

Orders are now being taken for poinsettias for the Sanctuary on Christmas Eve. They are \$7.50 each. After the late Christmas Eve Service, you may take your poinsettia(s) home. To order, fill out the form below and drop it into the offering plate or you can call the church office. Please include payment with your slip, place in an offering envelope and mark

it "poinsettias". Your order must be in the church office by Sunday, December 13, 2015.

POINSETTIAS ORDER FORM

Name: _____

Phone #: _____ Number of Poinsettias _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Kids Stuff

December Youth Events

12/6- Advent Workshop- ALL ARE INVITED (young, old, families, grandparents!) to come and carve out a little time to reflect on the season in which we are waiting. We'll make a few crafts and look ahead to Christ's birth.

12/13- Christmas Program! 5 pm- See you to join in the merriment of the season.

12/18 & 19- LOCK IN! Grades 6-12- Meet at the church at 6:30 pm. We'll work on service project things, and have LOTS OF FUN. Friends are welcome to join us! Plan to stay for distributing Christmas baskets at 10 am! (wrapping up by noon on Saturday)

12/20- Christmas Party- games and hot chocolate!

12/27- NO YOUTH- Enjoy your family ☺

1/3- Show and Tell- bring your favorite new present and we'll play with them!

Set These Dates

Youth Church Camp, June 19-25th.

Summer Mission trip to New York City, July 3-8th.

Lay Readers for Sunday Worship

Date	8:30 service	10:45 Service
Dec 6	Adeline Smith	Marcia VanDeVelde
Dec 13	Bob Friend	Karen Creel
Dec 20	Sue Lamp	Jim Smith
Dec 27	Combined service: Julie Davis, Tim Archer, Sandy Davies, Kent Hasbargen, Cheryl Hasbargen, Adeline Smith, Alec Smith, Barbara McDowell, and David Fosselman	

Communion Bearers for Sunday Worship

Date	10:45 service
Dec 6	Lewis and Karen Creel
Dec 13	Chris and Jessica Davis
Dec 20	Roger and Julie Davis
Dec 27	Don and Marie Stanley

Door Greeters 10:45 AND 8:30 (contact church office to volunteer)

Date 10:45

Dec 6	Kit Ruehl and Sherry Dugan
Dec 13	Barbara and Charles Rodgers
Dec 20	Anne and Ed Bobo
Dec 27	Jean Riggs

8:30

Lawrence and Lyndall Hasbargen, Donnie Fosselman, and Stan Null

Phyllis Loudon is always looking for door greeters to welcome people as they come to the 10:45 service on Sunday mornings. Please contact the church office if you are interested in greeting.

Altar Guild Servers

8:30 a.m.	Debbie Marks and Marty Miller
10:45 a.m.	Carole Carter
6:30 pm	Barbara McDowell
Paraments—Marcia VanDeVelde	

Dear Church Family,

Thank-you so much for the kind words, thoughts, prayers and cards in the last month. I am truly blessed to have such a group of prayer warriors. Your continued prayers are appreciated and needed.

Love,
Lori Butler

DECEMBER, 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2 Pastor's Class 10:00 a.m. Handbells 6:00 pm Bereavement 7:00 p.m. Senior Choir 7:30 p.m.	3 Prayer Service 11 a.m. Compline 7:00 p.m.	4	5
6 Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship 8:30 & 10:45 a.m. Invitation to Prayer 5:00 p.m. Youth Group 5:00 p.m. Evening Service 6:30 p.m.	7 Praise Team At church 7:00 p.m.	8 Men's Prayer Breakfast 8:30 a.m. Woman's Bible Study 6:30-8:00 p.m. Al-Anon 7:00 p.m.	9 Pastor's Class 10:00 a.m. Handbells 6:00 p.m. Senior Choir 7:30 p.m.	10 Prayer Service 11 a.m. Compline 7:00 p.m.	11	12 Cookeez Sale 10:00-1:00 pm In church library
13 Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship 8:30 & 10:45 a.m. Praise team at Worthington 2:00 p.m. Invitation to Prayer 5:00 pm Christmas Program 6:30 pm Poinsettias Orders Due	14 Praise Team At Eagle Pointe 7:00 pm	15 Men's Prayer Breakfast 8:30 a.m. Woman's Bible Study 6:30-8:00 p.m. Al-Anon 7:00 p.m.	16 Pastor's Class 10:00 a.m. Handbells 6:00 pm Bereavement 7:00 p.m. Senior Choir 7:30 p.m.	17 Prayer Service 11 a.m. Compline 7:00 p.m.	18 Christmas Basket goods due at Church Youth Lock-in Grades 6-12 @ 6:30 p.m.	19 Deliver Christmas Baskets 10:00-12:00
20 Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship 8:30 & 10:45 a.m. Invitation to Prayer 5:00 p.m. Youth Group 5:00 p.m. Evening Service 6:30 p.m.	21 Praise Team At Church @ 7pm The Blue Christmas Service @ 7pm	22 Men's Prayer Breakfast 8:30 a.m. Woman's Bible Study 6:30-8:00 p.m. Al-Anon 7:00 p.m.	23 Handbells 6:00 pm Senior Choir 7:30 p.m.	24 Christmas Eve Early Service 5:30 p.m. Candlelight Service 11:00 pm	25 Christmas Day OFFICE CLOSED	26
27 Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship Combined Service Invitation to Prayer 5:00 pm Evening Service 6:30 p.m.	28 Praise Team At Church @ 7pm OFFICE CLOSED	29 Al-Anon 7:00 pm Men's Prayer Breakfast 8:30 am Women's Bible Study 6:30-8 pm	30 Senior Choir 7:30 pm Hand Bells 6:00 pm	31 New Year's Eve OFFICE CLOSED		

JANUARY 2016

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 New Year's Day OFFICE CLOSED	2
3 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 8:30 & 10:45 am Invitation to Prayer 5:00 pm Youth Group 5:00 p.m. Evening Service 6:30 pm	4 Praise Team At church 7:00 p.m.	5 Men's Prayer Breakfast 8:30 a.m. Woman's Bible Study 6:30-8:00 p.m. Al-Anon 7:00 pm	6 Handbells 6:00 p.m. D.U.N. Committee 6:30 pm Bereavement 7:00 p.m. Senior Choir 7:30 pm	7	8	9
10 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 8:30 & 10:45 am Praise Team at Worthington 2:00 pm Invitation to Prayer 5:00 pm Youth Group 5:00 p.m. Evening Service 6:30 pm	11 Praise Team At Eagle Pointe 7:00 pm	12 Men's Prayer Breakfast 8:30 a.m. Woman's Bible Study 6:30-8:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 p.m.	13 Handbells 6:00 pm Senior Choir 7:30 pm	14	15	16 First Word Articles Due
17 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 8:30 & 10:45 am Invitation to Prayer 5:00 pm Evening Service 6:30 pm	18 Praise Team At Church @ 7pm	19 Men's Prayer Breakfast 8:30 a.m. Woman's Bible Study 6:30-8:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 p.m.	20 Handbells 6:00 pm Bereavement 7:00 p.m. Senior Choir 7:30 pm	21	22	23
24 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 8:30 & 10:45 am Invitation to Prayer 5:00 pm Evening Service 6:30 pm	25 Praise Team At Church @ 7pm	26 Men's Prayer Breakfast 8:30 a.m. Woman's Bible Study 6:30-8:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 p.m.	27 Handbells 6:00 pm Senior Choir 7:30 pm	28	25	30 31



First Lutheran Church

PASTOR

The Rev. Ian Reid

(email: pastorianreid@gmail.com)

CHURCH SECRETARY/CHURCH OFFICE

Carrie Null

304-428-6174 (email: flcsec@yahoo.com)

CARE & COMMUNITY COORDINATOR

Barbara McDowell

304-483-1010 (email: bam3042@yahoo.com)

OFFICE HOURS

9 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday
Sunday Church School 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship 8:30 and 10:45 a.m.
Invitation to Prayer Sunday Evenings 5:00 p.m.
Evening Worship Service 6:30 p.m.

HOLY COMMUNION CELEBRATED:

All Sunday Services

WEBSITE: firstlutheranparkersburg.com

CHURCH COUNCIL

President, **Andrea Brock**, 304-485-5162

Vice-President, **Betty Smith**, 304-863-5569

Secretary, **Julie Davis**, 304-863-0084

Youth Representative, **Ethan Farinash**

Lori Butler, 304-863-5156

Barb Carpenter, 304-295-9527

Keith Curry, 304-482-0147

Chris Davis, 304-210-7931

Robert Fluharty, 304-485-3484

Bill Kohler, 304-483-7810

Jean Riggs, 724-961-2096

Betty Smith, 304-863-5569

Dale VanDeVelde, 304-834-1560

Treasurer Appointed, **Angie Smith**, 681-229-0443

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