

FIRST FOCUS

November 29—December 12, 2009



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A time to gather and reflect on . . .

The Reason for the Season

Please join us for a
Women's Advent Brunch
Saturday, December 5—9:30 am

Reservations Required - Space is Limited

*Reservations can be made in the narthex
or at the rear entrance on Sunday, November 29*

\$5.00 per person

Invite a friend or neighbor to enjoy
this special tradition.

Wonderful music program, fellowship & brunch.

*Set aside your cards, shopping, decorating, baking,
wrapping, entertaining, and holiday hustle & bustle
and take time for yourself and reflect on the*

Reason for the Season

Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 13
9 & 11:15 am Worship

Sunday, December 20
8:45 am Worship

For more information, see page 2.

*First Lutheran is a partner in the NC Synod
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

God's work. Our hands.



Worship Ministries

HIGHLIGHTS OF WORSHIP

- We change the color of the paraments on November 29 to BLUE and we have our first reading around the Advent Wreath. Advent is the liturgical period preceding Christmas, beginning on the fourth Sunday before Christmas. (Check out page 14 in the pew hymnal for calendar of colors.) Royal Blue is the color used to welcome the coming of a king. It can also symbolize the night sky before dawn; it is associated with hope and anticipation and is significant in reminding us that we await the one who brings light into our darkness. The beautiful paraments in the worship room are a gift of Francis Daily in memory of her mother, Bertie Rankin Rhyne, who was a charter member of the altar guild.
- Place your poinsettia orders by filling out the forms in bulletin inserts or on the literature tables, please.

As we enter the Advent and Christmas month, there are a lot of events that you will want to enter into your calendars.

Special Worship Music Events:

- December 13 Lessons and Carols Services at both 9 and 11:15
- December 20 Lessons and Carols Service at 8:45
Prelude for Cello and Piano at 11:15
- December 24 4 pm Family Christmas Eve Service
10:30 pm Christmas Eve Service

Special Community Events:

- December 1 (Tuesday) — 5 pm
Free Concert by the Rockingham County Youth Chorus (Director is Dr. Bev Vaughn) at First Lutheran
- December 21 (Monday) — 7pm
Free Will Offering Christmas Concert by the Market Street Brass at First Lutheran

Check out youth presentations of "Unto Us a Child" drama on December 18 and 19 (see more on page 3)

Stewardship



As of November 20 (prior to Generosity Sunday), 91 pledge cards had been returned for the Fall Mission Appeal. Of those, 81 have pledged \$243,560, an average monthly gift of \$250. 9 families have decided to give but not pledge, and one family is moving. Please return yellow pledge cards to Janice Eberenz as soon as possible.

The Stewardship Team's goal is to receive a response from each household. If you would like to help to spur giving and generosity throughout the year, please contact Kathy Peterson, 430-4249

Our Church Family



...to the family of Louise Rivers, who died on November 8.

...to Jim Rhodes on the death of his son-in-law, Gary Fontana on November 12.

...Barbara Watt on the death of her brother-in-law, David Watt.

...to Edyth Long on the death of her cousin, Guy Nichols on November 20.

Godspeed...

...to Mary McIntyre, who has transferred her membership to Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Hampton, VA.



...from Martha Walker and family. "Thank you for honoring my beloved companion, collaborator and fellow sojourner in our spiritual journey of over fifty-five years. For your friendship, gifts and especially love, we are

eternally grateful. May you have enough peace, grace, love, forgiveness and hope to last you forever. Rejoice. The God of your understanding is awake."

...from Bettie Lambeth, daughter of Anne Altvater Byrd. "Thanks to all First Lutheran friends for the wonderful card you sent when my mother died. All of us are so grateful for all the care and support you have given our family for so many years. We send our love and gratitude to the entire First Lutheran family."

"Unto Us A Child"

ADULTS! TRULY PLAY A SUPPORTING ROLE!!!

We need adult & parent helpers to guide and coach our youth as they lead, plan & present this Christmas tradition. We need help with practice supervision & youth will need tech, lighting, costumes, props, backstage, promotion, hospitality and Christmas Cast Party support for this event. Please contact Carol McPeeters, carol@firstlutheran.com or Analyse Triolo - aktriolo@uncg.edu.



Fair Trade Coffee, Tea, Cocoa and Chocolate

...will be on sale outside Frank Moore's office on Sunday, December 13. Stock up for the holidays and help empower farmers and consumers, support small farmer co-ops and help to enable sustainable farming methods.



Youth Ministry

RED CROSS BABYSITTERS WORKSHOP

Coming Back to FLC Saturday, January 23 from 9-4 pm
Open to current 5th - 10th Graders

Learn "life-saving" skills in this workshop geared to youth - both girls and guys! Whether you want to learn how to be a responsible baby-sitter or just need to be prepared for being alone at home, you'll discover new skills, such as CPR, choking and alerting EMS. The cost for this workshop is \$53. This Red Cross workshop includes training, pizza, drinks and snacks as well as a special baby-sitters pack. Sign up by placing your check payable to "First Lutheran" (memoline: RedCross) in Carol McPeeters' box. A \$25 payment is due no later than December 15, 2009 to sign up and hold your spot (balance due on January 10)! If you have any questions, please contact Debbie Sivret (mdkmjsivret@earthlink.net) at 644-6330. Friends are welcome too!



"Unto Us A Child" Rehearsals Begin!

Practice and performance dates (meet in Worship Room)

- Sunday, November 29 - 1 - 5:30 pm - PRACTICE ONLY for Mary, Joseph & 2 Lead Angels roles
- Sunday, Dec 6 AND 13 - ALL practice begin 1 pm SHARP! & end by 5:30 pm
- Thursday, December 17 - ALL Tech & Dress rehearsal 6 - 8:30 pm
- Friday, December 18 - performance - 5 - 9 pm
- Saturday, December 19 - performance - 5 - 10 pm (includes a cast Christmas party)

Questions? Contact, Analyse - aktriolo@uncg.edu

2010 Confirmation Youth Reminders!

We need all confirmation youth present every Sunday morning to participate in Confirmation Sunday Worship planning! There are only 7 Sundays to plan! PARENTS -- Please check your regular mail for very important information concerning the Confirmation expectation deadlines, February 14 worship and the banquet celebration at the Empire Room.

DECEMBER 6 -The deadline for all 'Expressions of Faith' happening in Worship on February 15, 2010... PLEASE contact Karen Brown (Karen@firstlutheran.com) and Carol (carol@firstlutheran.com) to let us know that you would like to perform a piece during one of the two worship services. Also let us know what you are planning to perform.

FEBRUARY 6, 2010 IS A MANDATORY PRACTICE DAY! Make sure you get this Saturday morning rehearsal on your new 2010 Calendar (it's a week BEFORE Confirmation Sunday)! All Confirmation Youth must be present from 9 to 11:45 am to rehearse both services with Karen Brown, Brian Russell and the Pastors.

Women of the ELCA

December Circle Meetings

Mary Martha Circle

Wednesday, December 2, 10 am at First Lutheran to fill Christmas gift bags for shut-ins

Wednesday, December 9, 11 am

Hostess: Dotte McMasters

Meet at church to carpool to Dotte's house. We'll leave promptly at 10:30 am

Powlas Deal Circle

Wednesday, December 9, 6:30pm

Place: First Lutheran Cafe.

Program: Margaret May and Kim Harms

Bring a passing dish and a grab bag gift for approx. \$10.

Sullivan Huddle Circle

Monday, December 7, 6:30 pm

Christmas Dinner and Party

Hostess: Betty Stubbins

531 Hillwood Court

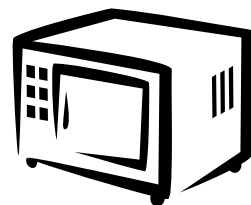
Program: Joanna McCandless

Please bring: a dish of food; an exchange gift, value about \$10; unwrapped gifts for Santa for Seniors; and unwrapped stocking stuffers for the Salisbury Lutheran Home.

All women are welcome; non-members, call Betty so she can set a place for you.

School for Young Children

- The 4's and Transitional Kindergarten children and staff recently celebrated Thanksgiving with their annual Thanksgiving Feast. The children prepared much of the food including making their own butter! First Lutheran Church staff members were invited to attend and as always the feast was a huge success!
- Pastor Charlie recently led the Thanksgiving chapel services for the SFYC kids. Thanks Pastor Charlie!
- With the new building project in full swing, the SFYC office will be relocated. After the Thanksgiving break, the SFYC office will be temporarily located on the west side of the church library. Parents will also begin dropping off and picking up children at the main church entrance.
- The SFYC is in need of a new microwave. If anyone has a gently used microwave that they are willing to donate to the school, please contact Dale or Jan in the school office, 294-0676. Office hours are Monday - Friday 8:30 am - 1:30 pm.



Community Ministries

GIFTS OF GRACE!

Dear First Lutheran members and guests,
Check out this short list for possible ways to be generous. There are many possibilities other than these, of course.

— Your partner in mission, Frank Moore

LOCAL



GREENSBORO URBAN MINISTRY: GUM helps the poor and needy through a wide partnership of faith-based communities. For details, call 271-5959, www.greensborourbanministry.org

In addition, FLC serves 70-100 weekly through a **Friday breakfast team**, and there is also FLC support for a Thursday team. To help financially, make checks to First Lutheran, put Friday (or Thursday) breakfast on offering envelope.



ANGEL TREE: Help children through Salvation Army, children and mothers at Mary's House for women in recovery, members of this congregation or some community residents. The trees go up around Thanksgiving through mid-December.

HONOR CARDS: Cards to support Habitat for Humanity and Greensboro Urban Ministry are available during the week in Frank Moore's office. They will be available also on Sunday mornings around Thanksgiving through early December. Donation of \$5 suggested for each card.



SANTA FOR SENIORS: Senior Resources of Guilford provides items to older adults in our community. For a list of needs, check www.senior-resources-guilford.org, 373-4816. Also, about 40 FLC volunteers deliver Mobile Meals to homebound persons monthly through this agency. For info, contact Jo Fleck, 664-0480, flecks@aol.com.

Also, First Lutheran has specific funds in many areas such as Endowment, Worship, Congregational, Community, and Administration/Property. In addition, the School for Young Children has two funds, one for scholarships and one for enrichment activities. Contact Janice Eberenz, Janice@firstlutheran.com, 292-9125, for details on funds.

INTERNATIONAL



ELCA WORLD HUNGER APPEAL: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America uses multiple strategies such as relief, development, education and advocacy to address root causes of hunger and poverty and is one of the most cost-effective funds available. For details, contact www.elca.org/hunger or 1-800-638-3522.

ELCA GOOD GIFTS: This catalog lists many ways in many price ranges to support the ministries of the ELCA. The ELCA has a project similar to the Heifer Project called God's Global Barnyard. Copies are on literature table near the narthex or Care Card table across from Frank Moore's office.



FAIR TRADE: FLC provides coffee, chocolate and tea on the second Sunday monthly or items can be bought in Frank Moore's office during the week.

STATE

You can support ministries such as Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas, Lenoir-Rhyne College, Lutheran Services for the Aging, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Agape+Kure Beach Ministries, Lutheridge+Lutherock Ministries and Twin Lakes Community. For links, go to www.nclutheran.org, click on Faith in Action button on left.

Community Ministries

An invitation to invite!

- Christmas CDs featuring music from various First Lutheran music groups and musicians will be available at the church in late November and early December for members to invite guests to a number of Advent and Christmas events, particularly Christmas Eve services. Thanks to Andy Mitchum, with great staff support from Lisa Whisenant in the office, for compiling this terrific way to invite friends, neighbors, relatives and co-workers to experience the joy of Christmas at First Lutheran!
- Invitation cards also will be available. Drop a note to a friend to hear Lessons and Carols, for example, or to bring a child (or grandchild!) to experience the Unto Us A Child Nativity drama.
- First Lutheran is responsible for serving dinner at the Night Shelter on Christmas Eve! Louise Lampron-Welker is coordinating, so please call her if you can help between roughly 6-8 p.m., lblampron@earthlink.net, 856-1532.



From the Green Team

Christmas is rapidly approaching - and maybe this year you're dreaming beyond a white Christmas. Here's one way to help you make this holiday more eco-friendly. The 2.6 billion holiday cards sold each year in the United States could fill a landfill the size of a football field 10 stories high. The following options could help reduce that pile.



1. Consider switching to emailed holiday cards. You can send photo and holiday e-cards using sites like Blue Mountain and Amazon.com - and Hallmark has e-cards available too.
2. Try creating a holiday album on a photo-sharing site like *flickr* or *Shutterfly* and circulating that instead of a traditional card.
3. Buy cards printed on recycled paper, handmade papers, or paper made from materials like hemp. Three of Hallmark's lines have recycled content: Shoebox Greetings, My Thoughts Exactly, and Comedy Club.
4. Buy cards that donate a portion of proceeds to a good cause.
5. Reuse holiday cards you receive to make gift tags. Most people don't write on the back of the front of the card.

"Secret" Silent Servant

Did you happen to see the new sign at the entrance to the Memorial Garden? The old one was falling apart, and one of our members offered to make one to replace it. Please take the time to admire the new sign.

From the Pastors...

...and the Bereavement Ministry Committee: Grieving Well, Sharing the Burden, Being Christ's Community

When a member of First Lutheran dies, lots of decisions have to be made and much preparation is required. Our goal is always to walk with the grieving family in a caring and supportive way that helps the family not only grieve their loss, but celebrate the loved one's life and give thanks for their new life with God. In order to do this, we ask that families please contact the office to speak with one of the pastors as soon as possible, preferably before plans are made with a funeral home.

Linda Cline and Barbara Gundersen lead our Bereavement ministry. They work together with other volunteers to coordinate either a reception of light refreshments after the funeral/memorial service, or, a meal for immediate family of up to 25 persons. If you feel called to help with this special ministry of caring and support, please call Linda (288-4402) or Barbara (676-1594) and let them know. You can place your name on their list so that they have a variety of people to call upon as needs arise.

Pastors Charlie and Jay have found that trends and expectations are changing when it comes to how funerals, visitations, memorial services, burials and receptions are being done. The accepted norm used to be that a visitation was held at the funeral home on the evening before the service. Then, the funeral or memorial service was held, followed by a graveside burial. Many families are now choosing another order of things, choosing to end on a more positive note, which allows time for fellowship, catching up with old friends, story-telling and the sharing of memories.

This new pattern has really helped provide more comfort for the grieving families, while offering them more support from those who gather for the service. An evening visitation is still an option that many choose, especially for people who may not be able to take off from work to attend the service. But now, many families choose to have the graveside burial first, for immediate family only. Then, after the graveside burial, the memorial service is held in the First Lutheran worship room, followed by a light reception in the fellowship hall. Many families have commented that this new pattern reduces stress, provides more time for informal conversation, eliminates some of the awkwardness by ending at the cemetery, and just "feels" better by ending on a more positive note. Of course, if the family members' ashes are to be interred in First Lutheran's Memorial Garden, the former pattern can still be used, concluding with the light reception in the Fellowship Hall.

May we always trust in God's Spirit to guide us and strengthen us as we walk with grieving families in this special ministry of care and support.





First Lutheran Church
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 Greensboro, NC 27410
 www.firstlutheran.com

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Deadline for next newsletter: Wednesday, December 2

Coming November 29—December 12 at First Lutheran

Sunday, November 29

- First Sunday in Advent
 8:45 am Traditional Worship
 9:00 am Contemporary Worship
 10:00 am "Gather 'Round the Oak Tree"
 11:15 am Traditional Worship
 1:00 pm "Unto Us" Rehearsal
 5:00 pm Youth Choir
 6:30 pm SHOUT! Service
 7:30 pm Luther Brass

Monday, November 30

- 1:30 pm Spirituality Group
 4:30 pm Women's Bible Study
 5:00 pm Grace Reigns Down

Tuesday, December 1

- 9:30 am Knitting Ministry
 10:00 am Chair Yoga
 11:00 am FACEOUT
 1:00 pm Spirituality Group
 5:00 pm Rockingham Youth Chorus
 7:00 pm Living Stones

Wednesday, December 2

- 6:15 pm Handbells
 7:30 pm Chancel Choir

Thursday, December 3

- 10:00 am Quilters
 7:30 pm Fellowship Choir

Saturday, December 5

- 9:30 am WELCA Advent Brunch

Sunday, December 6

- Second Sunday in Advent
 8:45 am Traditional Worship
 9:00 am Contemporary Worship
 10:00 am Faith Formation
 11:15 am Traditional Worship
 1:00 pm "Unto Us" Rehearsal
 5:00 pm Youth Choir
 6:30 pm SHOUT! Service
 7:30 pm Luther Brass

Monday, December 7

- 1:30 pm Spirituality Group
 4:30 pm Women's Bible Study
 5:00 pm Grace Reigns Down

Tuesday, December 8

- 10:00 am Chair Yoga
 11:00 am FACEOUT
 1:00 pm Spirituality Group
 7:00 pm Living Stones

Wednesday, December 9

- 10:00 am Crocheting Christians
 6:15 pm Handbells
 6:30 pm Powlas Deal Circle
 7:30 pm Chancel Choir

Thursday, December 10

- 7:30 pm Fellowship Choir



Advent

Worship Attendance			
<u>November 15</u>		<u>November 22</u>	
8:45	86	8:45	95
9:00	236	9:00	232
11:15	135	11:15	144
6:30	64	6:30	49