

# FIRST

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
*Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

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*“Servants of All”*

April, 2009, Newsletter

April 4, 2009



## Holy Week and Easter Worship

**April 5—Palm Sunday**

*Hosanna!*

8:00 a.m. Holy Communion

9:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship  
and Holy Communion

10:45 a.m. Holy Communion

**April 9—Maundy Thursday**

*The service of Christ: footwashing and meal*

7:00 p.m. – Holy Communion with footwashing and second grade  
students receive communion

**April 10—Good Friday**

*The passion and death of Christ according to John*

1:00 p.m. – Good Friday Worship

7:00 p.m. – Tenebrae Service

**April 12—The Resurrection of our Lord**

*The resurrection of Jesus is announced*

**7:00 a.m.** – Sunrise Holy Communion

8:00-9:45 a.m. – Easter Breakfast

**10:00 a.m.** – Holy Communion



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## Pastor Nate's Article

“Mary stood outside the tomb weeping... She turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, ‘Mary.’” *John 20:11-16*

“I have called you by name, you are mine.” *Isaiah 43:1*

In John's Gospel, Jesus, the good Shepherd, calls His followers by name, for they belong to him. Names are important. This is probably why most parents will put a considerable amount of time and effort into choosing their child's name.

Maybe Joseph and Mary were fortunate in that they did not have to choose a name for their first child. The angel, Gabriel, instructed them that they “shall call his name Jesus.” Jesus (Yeshua) was a common Hebrew name at that time. Yet, like most Hebrew names, Jesus, had a literal meaning attached to it. It meant – God delivers or saves.

Etymologists may study the origin and meaning of words and names, but it is the person who really gives meaning to his or her name and not vice versa. We can take care in choosing a name for our child, but it will be up to our child to define what his or her name means to others. Do you ever think about how you are defining your name for others? Proverbs 22:1 claims that “a good name is more desirable than great riches.” But we all know there are people like Bernard Madoff who sacrifice their name for the sake of great riches. When we live for ourselves or attempt to make a name for ourselves we inevitably “make our name mud.” (In case you're wondering, this expression is attributed to Dr. Samuel Mudd for offering medical help to John Wilkes Booth who broke his leg while escaping after shooting Abraham Lincoln in 1865.)

“Jesus” is not the name above all names because it means “God saves.” It is the name above all names because Jesus does save. “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.” *Acts 4:12*

Jesus defines His name for us because of who He is and what He does for us. “He took on the form of a servant, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, He humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross. Therefore God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” *Philippians 2:7-11*

The good news of Easter is that we can have life in Jesus' name. As our lives are transformed in Jesus Christ our names will also be redefined. They will no longer be mud, but “more precious than silver or gold.” Jesus knows us by name; He calls us by name. And as we celebrate His resurrection we can “rejoice that our names are written in heaven.” *Luke 10:20*

May you have a joy-filled Easter!

In His Name,

Pastor Nate Bjorge

### Council Highlights

FLC council did not meet in March due to inclement weather.



### **Easter Flowers**

Share in the Spirit of Easter by sharing your Easter flowers (for example: lilies, tulips, etc.) with your First Lutheran family. The flowers may be given in remembrance of a loved one or in celebration of a special event or person. Flowers may be dropped off in the Library on Holy Saturday. Please label your flowers. If you would like a remembrance noted in the bulletin regarding your flowers, please call the church office by Monday, April 6.



### **Eco-Palms**

On Palm Sunday, April 5, we partner with Lutheran World Relief to use Eco-Palms. Eco-Palms are harvested in a sustainable manner. Harvesters are trained to gather palm fronds in a way that allows the plant to keep growing. Palm branches are processed in the growing community.

By contrast, in conventional harvesting, workers are paid based on volume and branches are processed outside of the community where they are grown. More than 50% of the palms harvested conventionally are discarded because of poor quality.

Eco-Palm harvesting helps local growing communities to capture more of the profit and benefiting those who labor.

As we raise our branches, we celebrate the important role of Eco-Palms in protecting forests, local jobs and sustainable livelihoods in harvesting communities.



### **Easter Breakfast**

Come and enjoy the fellowship of Easter Breakfast on Sunday, April 12, from 8:00-9:45 a.m. A free-will offering will be received for mission causes. We are serving a hot breakfast of eggs, meat, fruit, pancakes, juice, milk and coffee. Thanks for your support! For more information, contact coordinator, Chad Shelstad, 632-18326.

### **Lenten Soup Suppers**

Thank you to all who shared in the fellowship of Lenten soup suppers. Whether you provided soup or food items, worked in the kitchen, or came to share a simple meal, all is appreciated. Special thanks to this year's "Soup"ervisor Linda Weiss! The freewill offering received at each supper supports youth ministry at FLC. Thank you!

### **Lenten Coin Folders**

Thank you for your participation in this Lenten discipline. Lenten coin folders will be collected during Holy Week, April 5-12. Gifts received from coin folders will support Morrison County Food Shelf and world hunger causes. Thank you for your generous giving to these missions.

**WordAlone Network Annual Convention**  
**Sunday, April 26-Monday, April 27**  
**Calvary Lutheran Church**  
**Golden Valley**

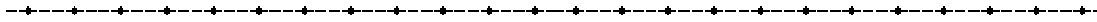
**Defending the Faith**

Believers have always faced challenges to the Christian faith from the unbelieving world. Keynote speakers, Dr. James Kallas and Pastor Gary Jepsen, will focus on equipping believers to defend the faith with clarity, confidence, humility and love—in the world and in our churches. For more information or to register, please contact the church office, 632-6667.

**Spring New Members**

New members received in worship on Sunday, March 29 are: Yvonne ‘Tulla’ Enerson; Jason and Tammie Leibold, Zach, Jake, and Nick; Dale and Sally Lenz, and Tylor; Lindsey Schmidt and Derrick Nagorski, and Abigail; Randy and Lori Pankonen; Jennifer Samuelson; Kurt and Jennifer Schott and Hayden; Scott and Carmen Zehr, and Connor, Paige and Mara. The church council hosted the new members at a fellowship meal.

Check out the bulletin board for pictures and information of the new members and welcome them to the FLC family.



**2009 NE MN Synod Assembly**  
**“Journey into the Word”**  
**April 24-26**

**Learning and Sharing Day**  
**Saturday, April 25**  
**10:00 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.**  
**Cragun’s Conference Center, Brainerd**

FLC voting members and pastors will attend the Northeast Minnesota Synod Assembly Friday-Sunday, April 24-26 at Cragun’s Conference Center, Brainerd. All are welcome to attend the Learning and Sharing Day on Saturday. This year’s focus will be on the Book of Faith.

The Book of Faith Initiative invites the whole church to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered, and sent by the Word. Dr. Diane Jacobson, professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary and Director of the Book of Faith Initiative for the ELCA will be the keynote presenter.

Learning and Sharing Day workshops include: The Beginning of the Gospel: A Journey with Mark, Shaped by the Word, Creation Care Task Force,

Introduction to Lexio Divina, Lutheran Study Bible, Conversation with NE MN Synod Bishop Tom Aitken, and more.

FLC quilters are donating a quilt to the silent auction. Again this year is The Marketplace, a Silent Auction of new items and services. Proceeds from both auctions will benefit ELCA World Hunger Appeal.

Those wishing to attend the Saturday event only will register in the church office. Registration includes lunch and materials.

**Earth Day:  
Caring for Creation  
Tuesday, April 22**



**Earth Day**, officially April 22, is celebrated globally by thousands of communities as a collective expression of our hopes and dreams for a better world. This year's theme "A Green Generation" begins a two-year initiative that culminates on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day in 2010.

In all the stories of Jesus feeding a hungry crowd of 5000, God's abundance is demonstrated when just a small quantity of food becomes a feast shared by many. Again and again, our faith teaches us that God's abundance is given for all to share, yet in our stewardship of creation we often fail to consider how our use of resources will affect other people in our world and the generations who will come after us.

Earth Day is a day to reflect on how we all can be effective stewards of God's creation and what role we as individuals and as a spiritual group can play in addressing this worldwide problem.

**Here are a few ways you can make a difference:**

- *Don't drink bottled water!* Fill a re-usable container with tap water. See related article below.
- *Plant a tree!* Trees increase levels of oxygen in the air and filter out some of the pollutants.
- *Bring your own bag!* Use a cloth bag or reuse a bag when shopping. Local stores have re-usable bags available for about \$1.00.
- *Read to a child!* Help educate future care givers of the earth.  
Read an environmentally focused book such as [The Lorax](#).
- *Speak to your elected leaders!* Call, visit, write, or e-mail your leaders and let them know you're concerned about stewardship of creation.

- *Start a compost pile!* Composting organic wastes reduces the amount of garbage produced by your household by as much as a third.
- *Don't drive!* Walk, bike, run, skate, or carpool.
- *Get a recycling bin!* Reduce, reuse and recycle materials used both at home, at work and at church.
- *Replace a light bulb!* Exchange an incandescent bulb with a compact fluorescent bulb. They last ten times longer and use only one-fourth of the energy.
- *Use your own mug!* When you buy coffee, bring your own mug. Each year Americans throw away 23 billion Styrofoam cups. 500 years from now, the foam cup you used this morning will be sitting in a landfill!
- *Visit the Farmer's Market!* Buy locally produced foods instead of goods that are trucked in.

Check out the Earth Day web-site at [www.earthday.net](http://www.earthday.net) for more information. Take the Ecological Footprint Quiz and find out how many planets would be needed to sustain life if everyone on earth lived as you do!

**Consider this...**

It's outrageous to pay 1000 times more for water in a bottle than from the tap. But that didn't stop Americans from drinking 26 billion liters of bottled water in 2004, more than any country in the world.

Consider the hidden environmental costs. The plastic used for the bottles is derived from crude oil. To meet U.S. demand, 17 million barrels of crude oil goes into water bottles, enough for 1 million U.S. cars for a year.

The Container Recycling Institute reports that 86 percent of plastic water bottles used in the U.S. become garbage or litter. Incinerated bottles produce chemicals such as chlorine and contaminated ash. In a landfill, a plastic bottle will last 1,000 years. *Reprinted from Living Earth, ELCA web devotions, 2008.*

**Fifth Annual Christian Unity Concert**  
**Sunday, April 19**  
**2:00 p.m.**

Oasis/Share A Meal presents this year's Christian Unity Concert at Sacred Heart Chapel on the Franciscan Campus in Little Falls. Choirs from local churches and a massed choir will perform favorite spring or Easter songs. Refreshments and a silent auction will follow the concert in St. Francis Hall. Come out and support Oasis/Share A Meal and enjoy this uplifting concert. For more information, contact Carol Schmidt at Oasis/Share A Meal, 632-9140.

**Oasis/Share A Meal**

First Lutheran Church has provided the meal site to O/SAM as part of our mission for 13 years. FLC commissions take turns hosting one meal per quarter with the help of congregation members. FLC has also sponsored a Paint A Thon team for many years. If you would like to get involved in this valuable, ongoing community ministry please contact the church office at 632-6667.

**Teach Your Kids to Share Day**  
**Friday, April 24**  
**5:00-8:30 p.m.**

**Stearns History Museum, St. Cloud**

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans sponsors this event for kids ages 6-10 and their parents and grandparents. This is an opportunity to build a financial foundation for your family that will last a lifetime. The evening will include interactive educational workshops, playing and learning through hands-on activities, dinner and fellowship. Cost is just \$10.00 per family. Space is limited, so register today at [www.Thrivent.com/shareday](http://www.Thrivent.com/shareday) or call 1-800-236-3736.

**Lutheran Disaster Response**

Many friends, neighbors and relatives of First Lutheran members have been directly and indirectly impacted by the record-breaking flooding in the Red River valley area of Fargo/Moorhead and surrounding area. We are asked to pray that the communities be united and sustained in response to the disaster. Financial gifts are welcome. You can make your check payable to FLC and note 'U.S. flooding' in the memo line. Thank you!

**Common Hope Update**

We are pleased to learn that Little Falls residents Steve and Marilyn Brown, working for several months in Guatemala with Common Hope, were able to arrange a visit with Francisco, the child sponsored by FLC through Common Hope. FLC Sunday School students have been studying about Guatemala and learning about Francisco. We are anxious to hear more about the Browns' visit with him and his family. Thanks to Larry and Pat Sharon for facilitating this meeting!

**Financial Update**

2009 Mission Plan Budget	
January—March 29:	\$ 96,340
Actual received	
January—March 29:	\$ 93,361

Thank you to all who faithfully contribute to our shared ministry at FLC.

You are also welcome to participate in an electronic funds transfer giving plan, Simply Giving. Please see Sue or Gloria in the church office to enroll.

## Adult Opportunities

**April Women's Circles**  
**"The Hidden Hand of God"**  
**Faithful Disobedience:**  
**Esther: For Such a Time as This**  
Esther 4:14

### **Martha Circle**

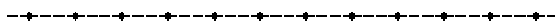
The Martha Circle will meet Monday, April 20, at 1:30 p.m. at the church. Hostess is Yona Scholl.

### **Ruth Circle**

The Ruth Circle will meet Wednesday, April 15, at 2:00 p.m. at the church.

### **Mission Circle of Joy**

The Circle of Joy will meet Tuesday, April 28, at 9:00 a.m. at Naomi Engel's home.



## **Adult Studies and Events**

### **Sunday Morning Adult Study**

We meet weekly at 9:15 a.m. Sunday morning in the library. Bring a friend and your coffee and come for spiritual growth!

### **Cornerstones Potluck (Seniors age 55 and better)**

Are you interested in participating in senior fellowship? Bring a friend and a food item to share and come for potluck lunch on Tuesday, April 21, at 11:30 a.m. We'll gather in Stoltz Hall to share food and conversation.

### **Men's Bible Study Breakfast**

All are welcome to come for breakfast and Bible study! We meet the first and third Wednesday of each month at 6:15 a.m. Come when you can, leave when you must! Pastor Dave leads this study. For more information, speak to him.

### **Adult Study: Discipleship Mondays, 7:00-8:00 p.m.**

What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus? This weekly study continues through April 20. Pastor Dave facilitates the study. Come as you are able!

## **New Adult Studies:**

### **Begin Wednesday, April 15, 6:30 p.m.**

All adults are invited on an adventure to discover what God has implanted in the depths of their hearts. God has designed us for a life full of meaning and passion. Together we will seek to fulfill His vision for our lives.

We will meet together at 6:30 p.m., the men and women will then gather separately to view the studies written by John and Stasi Eldredge. The evening will conclude as a combined group.

**For Men:** Wild at Heart: A Band of Brothers. Think back to your boyhood: Remember the boyhood dreams that had you tracking dangerous villains, swinging swords, and storming the castle? Adventure is what God planned for you. Come for this life-changing, video series and discover how men across the country are recovering their masculinity as God designed it.

**For Women:** Captivating: Unveiling the Mystery of a Woman's Soul. Every little girl has dreams of being swept up into a great adventure, of being the beautiful princess. When women grow up, they are often swept up into a life filled merely with duty and demands. Many Christian women are tired, struggling under the weight of the pressure to be a "good servant," a nurturing caregiver, or a capable home manager.

The study describes how the feminine heart can be restored, and casts a vision for the power, freedom, and beauty of a woman released to be all she was meant to be. Women are invited to recover their feminine hearts, created in the image of an intimate and passionate God.

The women's portion of the study will also meet on Wednesday mornings, at 6:45 or 9:00 a.m. Pastor Nate facilitates the combined group and the men's study; Naomi Engel facilitates the women's study. For more information or to register, please call the church office, 632-6667

## "Children First" Christian Preschool Update

Greetings from the "Children First" Christian Preschool!

During April, children will learn about Easter, Earth Day, and farm fun. If you have a baby farm animal that you would like to show the preschoolers, please call to schedule a visit time.

Spring Flower Bulb orders will be taken April 1-20. Speak to a preschool family or a staff member to place your order. Bulbs should arrive in time for Mother's Day. We thank God for each of you and for your support!

The Third Annual Fish Fry was a great success! Thanks to all who donated items, volunteered or came for dinner. Your support is appreciated! Thank you to Thrivent Financial for Lutherans for supporting the preschool with Care in Communities grant funds.

2009/10 enrollment for the community begins April 1.

Class offerings are:

- ☺ Noah's Animals (33 mos-3 year olds) Tuesday and Thursday, 9:00-11:30 a.m.
- ☺ Jesus' Gems (4-5 year olds) meets Monday and Wednesday, 9:00-11:30 a.m. or 12:30-3:00 p.m.
- ☺ Friday Friends (33 mos-5 year olds) for those families wanting a three-day experience for their preschooler.
- ☺ Registration fee is \$50.00 and is non-refundable. Monthly tuition is \$80.00 per month. Friday Friends class will be an additional \$35.00 per month. Brochures and registration forms are available in the First Lutheran Church office or by contacting Gail.

"Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray." Proverbs 22:6

Yours in Christ's Service,  
Gail Hittesdorf, Director

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### Confirmation Ministries

**Second Grade:** The second graders have completed their sessions on First Communion. Thank you to Nancy Ratzloff for her assistance in making clay chalices and patens. Students and parents participated in a Christian Seder Meal as a part of this class. Second graders will have their feet washed and receive Holy Communion together on Maundy Thursday.

**Seventh Grade:** The seventh grade class on the Apostles' Creed is scheduled at Luther Crest Bible Camp during the week of June 21-26. Pastor Dave will lead this class.

**Tenth Grade:** Mark your calendar for the Means of Grace sessions on Sunday, April 19 and Sunday, April 26. Both sessions meet from 4:00-7:00 p.m. Watch your mail for more information. Pastor Dave will teach this class.

Tenth grade students and their mentors are reminded to stay in touch with one another through conversation and prayer.

### Sunday School News

The final TREK session for the year, "Easter, Go and Tell" begins Sunday, April 19. Opportunities remain for you to be involved in TREK. Thank you for sharing your love of Christ with the students!

☺ Sunday, May 17, Last Day of Sunday School

The next few weeks are the perfect time to talk with the Sunday morning staff about their teaching experience and prayerfully consider joining our Sunday School Staff for the coming year.



**News of the Family**  
**Funerals**

Margaret L. Pelikan died March 8. Her funeral service was March 11 at First Lutheran.

Florence Elaine Brastad died March 20. Her funeral service was March 25 at First Lutheran.

May God grant peace and comfort to the families and friends of these faithful saints.

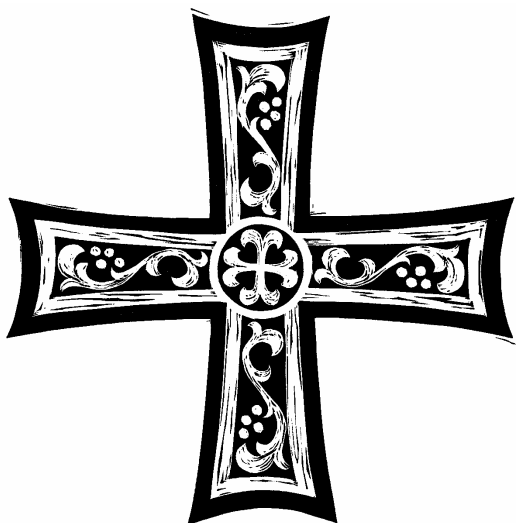
**Baptisms**

Brooklynn Marie McChesney, daughter of Andrew and Amy McChesney, was baptized on March 8.

Aidan Thomas Westling and Ian Henry Westling, sons of Bethany Benning and Ryan Westling, were baptized on March 15.

Maci Ann Bergren, daughter of Michael Bergren and Stacy Ganz, was baptized on March 29.

Ellie Rae Santala, daughter of Jeremy and Amanda Santala, was baptized on March 29.



**Thank you to all who faithfully support  
Christ's mission at FLC with their mail-in  
offerings!**