5 Ways to Make Room for Jesus

The odd, paradoxical, weird thing about Christmas is that it gets so busy it is hard to make time for Christ. But, let’s be honest, it is hard to find time for Jesus—period. So, I have crafted five reminders to help us re-center our lives to make the most important thing, the most important thing. I pray that they help!

Make Room: When Jesus was born there was no room in the inn. If he was born today I am not sure much would have changed. We are the busiest generation ever to walk the planet. Our interruptions are sometime interrupted. Slow down, take a breath, make room for Jesus. It will be the nicest Christmas gift and New Year’s moment you could ever hope for.

Humiliate Yourself: Alright, I do not mean say something stupid or go to work without pants on. What I mean is that the race to go bigger, faster, stronger and better is not the only way to imagine life. Christ humbled himself in his birth. Scholars sometimes refer to the birth of Christ as his humiliation. Infinite power wrapped itself in finite flesh. The grandeur of heaven became the grain box of a barn. In a moment the creator became the created. If God can do all that for us, perhaps we can humble ourselves for God. Offer forgiveness, be nice, listen to others and fight the temptation to make it all about us.

Magnify God: Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord.” There is something in us that demands we magnify ourselves. Try making life about Jesus. One of the mysteries of God’s economy is that the more we make our life about Christ the greater purpose, joy and happiness we feel.

Practice Great Joy: The angels said, “I bring you good news of great joy...” Modernity has not changed this. God is still in charge. The earth and the fullness thereof are still the Lord’s. The world is not crashing down around us apart from the will of God. God is still fully active in the world, still drawing all people unto salvation and still alive. Don’t act as if he is dead, wounded or incapacitated. Smile, make someone else smile, practice great joy—Christ is alive and well.

Bring a Gift: The Bible records the Magi bringing Jesus gold, frankincense and myrrh. What should we bring? How about praise, prayer and thanksgiving? Come to the manger on bended knee and let the Christ child know your life is dedicated to him and him alone. Worship Jesus with abandon, sing his praises, honor his sacrifice and worship.
**Advent Large Group Study:**

**Being Prepared**

Sundays, December 1, 8, 15; Adult Education Room, 10:00 a.m.;
Tuesdays, December 3, 10, 17; Fellowship Hall at Noon, lunch
served with a free will offering

Advent is time leading up to the celebration of the birth of Jesus. This time is marked by preparing, getting ready, and being alert and watchful. Together, we will explore how we might be alert and watchful to the coming of Jesus at Christmas time, but also how we might be attentive to the constant coming of Jesus throughout the many seasons of life.

**Christmas Eve Worship**

Tuesday, December 24 in the Celebration Hall
3:00 and 5:00 p.m. worship
Tuesday, December 24 in the Sanctuary
3:00 and 5:00 p.m. worship; 11:00 p.m. worship with communion

**Christmas Day Worship**

Wednesday, December 25 in the Sanctuary, 9:00 a.m.
worship with communion

**Office Holiday Schedule**

December 24: Office closes at 3:00 p.m.
December 25: Office closed all day
December 31: Office closes at 1:00 p.m.
January 1: Office closed all day

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**You are invited to join us on this special Sunday as we**

**Celebrate the Child**

with Jonathan Swenson

Sunday, December 8; Celebration Hall worship, 9:00 a.m.
Sunday, December 8; Sanctuary worship, 11:00 a.m.

The event of this little baby, born into poverty in an oppressed society in the Middle East 2,000 years ago—this crazy, could-have-been-missed event—ultimately changed the world. The baby grew to be a man who lived a life of love, purpose, and mission—and who, finally, died a horrific death, then rose from the grave that we might live. It is a strange, wonderful confusing, exciting story. And it began with this same sense of wonder, confusion and glory. So, welcome to “the beginning”—as we **Celebrate the Child**.

We are delighted to have Jonathan Swenson with us again. His drama on Ash Wednesday last year was poignant and impressive. For this Second Sunday in Advent, he will share with us another drama about the birth of a baby boy. Rev. Swenson has served as an ordained Lutheran minister for nearly 20 years. **Celebrate the Child** was written by Curt Cloninger, a nationally known Christian actor and playwright.

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**Lights of Love**

Would you like to sponsor a light for the Lights of Love Christmas tree in honor of or in memory of a loved one? This is a great opportunity to see the light of your loved one shine throughout the Christmas season.

Lights of Love order forms can be found on page 10.

Form and payment needs to be turned in by noon, Friday, December 20. $10 per light. Lights will be lit and names read on Sunday, December 22 between worship services.
FaithTalk Christmas Programs

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY: You are invited to a very special party—a birthday party for our baby Jesus. The kids will be decorating the tree and wrapping presents, but it is in the Bible where we find the real reason for why we sing.

Sunday AND Wednesday kids, grades 1-4
Sunday, December 15 at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

SILENT NIGHT: Our littlest ones celebrate the birth of Christ with those visitors who first traveled to Bethlehem. Gather around the manger and remember the “Silent Night.”

Sunday Preschool and Kindergarten
Sunday, December 15 in the Celebration Hall, 11:00 a.m. at the beginning of worship

Wednesday Preschool and Kindergarten
Wednesday, December 18 in the Sanctuary, 6:00 p.m. at the beginning of worship

A Christmas Carol Sing-a-long
Monday, December 9 in the Sanctuary, 7:00 p.m.
What better way to get into the spirit of the season than by singing your favorite Christmas carols! Members of the Red River Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists will be joined by Bellissimo (a superb area handbell choir directed by Jill Post), the children’s choirs of First Lutheran, soloist David Ferreira, and flutist Liz Lyngstad. Meditative readings will be offered by Lauryl Ivers and Brian McClure.

Monetary donations will be accepted for the Fargo Moorhead Emergency Food Pantry. Don’t miss this joyous prelude to your holiday season. For more information, call 701-280-2189.

Massed Choir
Sunday, December 15 during all worship services
This has been a great tradition here at First Lutheran Church for many years and is beloved by many. Come and hear the Children’s and the Cathedral Choir sing in both Sanctuary services and in both Celebration services.

Jazz Sunday
Sunday, January 19 in the Sanctuary, 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. worship services
Jazz Sunday gets our souls and spirits moving with the sounds of several instruments taking part in the music for the morning. We have a trumpeter, clarinetist, a banjo/guitar player, a trombonist, a tuba player, a drummer, and David Ferreira on the piano.

Women’s and Children’s Choir
Sunday, January 26 in the Sanctuary, 9:00 a.m. and in the Celebration Hall, 11:00 a.m.
The Women’s Choir will be singing along with the Children’s Choir. Rehearsal for the women will be on Wednesday, January 22 at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary, preceded by supper in the Gathering Place at 5:00 p.m. Rehearsal for women and children together will be on Sunday morning, January 26 at 8:30 a.m. in the Celebration Station. You are welcome to join them!

Men’s Choir
Sunday, February 9 in the Sanctuary, 9:00 a.m. and in the Celebration Hall, 11:00 a.m.
The men invite you to join in and sing with them! Rehearsal will be Wednesday, February 5 at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary, preceded by supper in the Gathering Place at 5:00 p.m. There will be an additional rehearsal at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday, February 9 in the Celebration Station.

Share the Joy of the Season with Music and Praise!

―Dorothy Heidt, member of the Cathedral Choir
REEL Faith Movie Night

Does life imitate art, or does art imitate life? If you are a film lover, you’ll love “Reel Faith.” We gather around a great movie, a bowl of popcorn, and some good conversation. Everyone welcome! Free will offering.

**The Help** Rated PG-13
Sunday, January 19, BibleMax Theatre, 4:00 p.m.

The time is 1961 and the setting is Jackson, Mississippi. Two maids agree to share their stories of struggle, of hard work and low pay, of fear for themselves and their children. But it is also a time of change, when the Civil Rights movement is developing and hope is nurtured by small acts of courage. *The Help* is a film about empowerment of individuals as well as about social justice for a group.

**Hugo** Rated PG
Sunday, February 16, BibleMax Theatre, 4:00 p.m.

Young orphan Hugo Cabret lives in the walls of an early 1930’s Paris train station. Here he secretly winds the clocks, evades the clutches of the station master and devotes himself to fixing a mysterious automation salvaged by his late father. Stealing clockwork parts for the station’s little toy booth, he incurs the wrath of the shop’s owner, Papa Georges. When he ends up befriending the his adoptive daughter, Isabelle, Hugo begins to uncover the mystery of Georges’ past. What is hidden in his wardrobe? And why does Isabelle carry a key which fits Hugo’s automation?

Board Game Night!
Friday, January 24 in the Fellowship Hall, 6:30 p.m.

January is cold, dark and snowy. But don’t let the winter doldrums get you down! Let’s have some fun and join your friends at First Lutheran Church for Board Game Night. Bring your favorite board games and a snack to share. Drinks provided. All ages welcome!

Snow Shoe Sundays
January 5-February 16 at Rollie Johnson’s, 4:00 p.m.

Open to all ages! Snow shoes are available to check out on a first-come, first-serve basis. Reserve yours via e-mail to Rollie at rjohnson@flcfargo.org. All outings depart from Rollie’s house (505 66th Avenue North in Moorhead) promptly at the scheduled time, and then they head out to various locations.

Giants Ridge Ski Trip to Duluth
Grades 9-12
Saturday-Monday, December 28-30
Cost: $280, does not cover equipment rentals or two lunches

Graham Sibley invites all 9th through 12th grade kids and their friends to join him for three days and two nights of fantastic skiing in Duluth! Celebrate God’s beautiful creation at Giant’s Ridge Ski Resort where there will be both skiing and lodging. Sign up online at www.flcfargo.org.

Men’s Winter Book Study
Wednesdays beginning January 14, 7:00 p.m.

Guys of all ages encouraged to join us! *Men of Integrity* provides inspiration for men in their spiritual growth. This publication helps strengthen and encourage men with thought-provoking devotions by Chuck Swindoll, Tony Evans and many others. It provides biblical insight and practical ideas to help men navigate the issues they face today. Pick up a copy at the church office. Register at www.flcfargo.org.

Men’s Winter Cabin Getaway
Friday-Sunday, Jan. 31-Feb. 2; Cost: $50

Do you enjoy spending time in God’s wonderful winter creation? We’ll stay in a cozy wood-heated cabin that is a comfortable base camp for exploring northern Minnesota’s big woods. Hike under the stars, contemplative quiet times, man to man small group Bible study and discussion, and some fabulous meals. The trip is limited to 10 men. If you have any questions, please contact Rollie Johnson at rjohnson@flcfargo.org. Register at www.flcfargo.org.
CARING FOR YOUR family

In a world of turmoil and uncertainty, it is more important than ever to make our families the center of our lives and the top of our priorities. Families lie at the heart of our Heavenly Father’s plan. At First Lutheran we take this very seriously. Not only do we have a vibrant Family Life Program, we also have a Family Life therapist, Pastor Bill Ahlfeldt, on staff.

Contact Pastor Bill by calling the church office at 701-235-7389.

“Time Out” Marriage Retreat

Coming soon! Dates and cost to be determined

It is a good investment, educational and practical opportunity to learn what works in marriage and what continues to make marriages last. “Time Out” is basic and straight forward, focusing on communication skills. The workshop and material teach couples the skills they need to nurture a lasting love. This retreat will be led by Pastor Corey and his wife, Rev. They have laughed their way through 30 years of marriage, four children and a nearly two year deployment. Come and find out why they are still laughing.

CARING FOR YOUR body

Faith Communities Alive!

Coming soon to FLC! Faith Communities Alive! arose out of the Cass Clay Healthy People initiative, which is aimed at promoting healthy living within congregations. First Lutheran is one of 20 churches that committed to building a healthier community by offering healthy food choices and more opportunities for physical movement. FLC members Rory Beil, Ruth Hanson, and Carrie McLeod have been a part of the planning collaborative since the beginning. The first step is a congregational self-assessment to determine our priorities. You might start seeing fresh fruits next to the cookies at fellowship time. Look for updates in our bulletin and table tents with healthy tips for everyday living. If you want to join the team leading this health and wellness initiative contact Katie Gross, Parish Nurse Coordinator, at kGross@flcfargo.org.

Faith Communities Alive! movement. FLC members Rory Beil, Ruth Hanson, and Carrie McLeod have been a part of the planning collaborative since the beginning. The first step is a congregational self-assessment to determine our priorities. You might start seeing fresh fruits next to the cookies at fellowship time. Look for updates in our bulletin and table tents with healthy tips for everyday living. If you want to join the team leading this health and wellness initiative contact Katie Gross, Parish Nurse Coordinator, at kGross@flcfargo.org.

Faith Communities Alive!

CARING FOR YOUR soul

Three-Day Silent Retreat

Thursday-Saturday, December 5-7, 2013; cost $180

Pacem in Terris (Peace on Earth) is a Franciscan Center of Spirituality called to serve God’s people through prayer and by providing the opportunity to retreat into the silence and solitude of a simple hermitage environment. This experience is for the person wishing to take their faith journey deeper by spending a deliberate and purposeful time alone in silence and solitude with God. First-come, first-serve, $100 deposit holds your spot. Contact Rollie Johnson at 235-7389 with questions, sign up at www.flcfargo.org.

Are you looking for a date night where your money will be well spent?

Valentine’s Dinner & Dance

Saturday, February 15
Dinner at 6 p.m., Dance 7-9 p.m.
FLC Celebration Hall
$35 per person / $240 table of 8

Exquisite meal, beautiful setting, and dancing to the music of...


www.flcfargo.org
“What a blessing it is to have the Beth Moore Bible Study made available to us at First Lutheran—[like this summer’s study] on the Book of James. This study was an opportunity to study in depth what the Bible teaches us, something extremely helpful to me and for which I am grateful.”

-Kathy Sandness

NEW Beth Moore Study
Breaking Free: The Journey, The Stories
Tuesdays, January 28-April 8 in Fellowship Hall, 6:30 p.m.; Cost: $20
Register online at www.flcfargo.org

Join Pastor Laurie and other women as they follow Beth Moore on this in-depth Bible journey that is unlike any other. God intends for you to know and believe him, glorify him, experience his peace, and enjoy his presence. Discover the transforming power of freedom in Jesus Christ. Using scripture to help identify spiritual strongholds in your life, no matter how big or small, Beth explains that anything that hinders us from the benefits of knowing God is bondage. If you are in a place you don’t want to be, don’t stay there. Break free!

First Club Christmas Dinner
Friday, January 10 at the Fargo Holiday Inn, 11:30 a.m.
Come and celebrate the season with your FLC friends. Guests can order off of the menu or eat at the buffet. First Club will take care of paying the waitress’ tip. Larry Gauper will be presenting his program on “Tuning-In to the Golden Age of Radio.” Open to the first 40 who sign up in the church office.

Welcome to our newest staff members!

Katie Gross, Parish Nurse Coordinator
With Ruth Hanson’s retirement at the end of the year, we welcome Katie to the Parish Nurse Coordinator position. Katie has diverse experience in the nursing profession and brings much enthusiasm to the position. She says, “The possibilities of the variety of this position excite me! I think of how many people can be reached and served by parish nurse ministry.”

Daniel Damico, Worship Leader
Katie Damico, Director of “Joyful Noise” Choir
The Damico family lives in Moorhead with their children Isaiah (7) and Lily (4). Katie teaches music in the DGF school system, gives piano and voice lessons “on the side,” and works with Trollwood throughout the year. Daniel is a Software Consultant with Pedigree Technologies in Fargo and for about seven years, he led the contemporary worship group at Peace Lutheran in Fargo. He also directs and does music for shows at FMCT. Their family is very excited about being a part of the First Lutheran family.

Protocol for Closing of First Lutheran Church for Weather and Emergency Events
First Lutheran will close if the City of Fargo has issued a media advisory “No Travel Advised,” the City or State has issued a “State of Emergency,” or if any mechanical or utility failures occur. Announcements will be made on our website, answering machine and the local radio and TV stations. Call Terry Yoney with any questions at 701-235-7389 or 701-238-4059.

New Preaching and Teaching Series:
“You’ll Get Through This”
Series begins Sunday, January 12
Book Studies: Sundays in Adult Ed Room, 10 a.m.
Tuesdays in Fellowship Hall, Noon (lunch served);
Wednesdays in Adult Ed Room, 7 p.m.

We are excited about a new six-week preaching/teaching series entitled “You’ll Get Through This” by Max Lucado. This series follows Joseph, who was abandoned, enslaved, imprisoned, mistreated, and thrown into a pit literally and figuratively. Somehow and some way God was always present, powerfully working in and through his life. We hear this from Joseph to his brothers, “Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good…”

Like Joseph, we are sometimes thrown into a deep, dark pit. We might be thrown into the unemployment line, into divorce proceedings, or suffer the loss of a loved one, the loss of a dream, or simply the loss of hope. At times we all find ourselves in a pit of life wondering, pondering how we will ever get out.

The story of Joseph is a story of hope for difficult times. God was with Joseph. God is with us, too. God is present and instilling the power of hope in, with, and through the daily circumstances of our life. Whatever challenge we are facing, the story of Joseph reminds us that God is opening up a new way forward. You’re invited to join our large group experience each week this winter as we teach our way towards Sunday.
The Sewing and Carpentry Skills Project
Update of Quito, Ecuador

First Lutheran Church is helping the community of Quito, Ecuador. Quito has a population of 2.3 million people and suffers from inflation and an unemployment rate of 50 to 60 percent. With funding from the Global Missions Committee and other faithful sources, we were able to provide commercial sewing machines and power tools.

The sewing machines, along with the necessary materials and supplies, have equipped women to make a living sewing. Becky Anderson and Sue Wild traveled to Ecuador to provide instruction for quilting and other small sewing projects last winter. At least 12 women attended classes every day and were eager to learn more. Three women have obtained employment in a sewing business and many items have been designed and sewn by other women to sell at the local school and to other missionary teams working in the area.

Men are taught carpentry skills by a local man who was hired to head the carpentry skills school. The Global Missions Committee furnished money for power tools, hand tools and materials. The school targets high school kids so they can find employment after graduation. We are hopeful that skills gained in these two areas will continue to provide employment which will result in an increased standard of living for many families in the area. A food pantry has also been established for the local church members.

~ Grace Interrupts ~

Throughout history, God has continually used the least likely, unexpected, and common folk to teach us about life and faith. In Celebration Worship on any given Sunday or Wednesday, God continues to use messengers of his own choosing. Meet Nathan. Nathan is a 20-year-old young man who has autism. Nathan is a lover. Nathan loves his mom and sister and grandmother.

Nathan loves people in general. Nathan loves to give a hug, or lay his head upon my shoulder. Nathan loves God and loves to be a part of the action in church. What Nathan usually lacks is boundaries and knowledge of appropriateness of his actions especially in regards to timing and location and volume.

Nathan loves to be involved, and so he often wanders up to the front of worship during worship with his armful of books or papers to stand with a preacher during a sermon, or sit down on the stairs of the stage while the pastor speaks. He often blurts out his thoughts giving no concern to how loud he is or who’s listening. One can sense the tension in the room and all eyes and focus divert to Nathan.

But God uses Nathan as the bringer and bearer of the means of grace. Where Nathan really shines is in his love for communion. He can sense when it’s coming and he loves to stand up and recite the words of institution, and then lead the entire congregation in saying the Lord’s Prayer. A more pure of heart and pure intention from a worship leader could never be found. His passion is genuine and his enthusiasm is contagious and catching. Nathan reminds us all that worship is not about a perfect performance by a worship band, or a well-rehearsed, practiced and polished sermon. Nathan interrupts performance worship, with a genuine love and praise of God from his heart, not his head. Nathan teaches that God often interrupts us with His grace, when we least expect it, and via forms and means and persons for which we hadn’t planned or empowered to do so. So today we give thanks and praise for Nathan’s presence in our midst and that God is working in and through him for the betterment of us all in faith and worship.

FM Sheltering Churches

The FM Sheltering Churches Project needs your help with donations to cover laundry costs as well as items for those being sheltered. While it has been advised by local authorities that First Lutheran Church not be one of the church shelters, we are supporting this effort by our donations of money and supplies and have agreed to be a community drop site. There is a list of needed supplies on our website: www.flcfargo.org. If you can donate money to help cover the laundry costs or any of these items, please bring them to the main church office. If you’d like to volunteer, please call FirstLink at 211 or 701-235-7335.

Mexico Mission Trip 2014
Called to Serve, Called to Lead

First Lutheran Church has a long-standing tradition of leading mission groups to Mexico. We work closely with Accion Ministries to provide a personal and safe experience in which we affect the lives of numerous people in need. On March 20-30, a delegation will continue the tradition. Please pray for the participants as they prepare for this time of service and adventure.

Please consider an END-OF-YEAR gift to your church

www.flcfargo.org
For kids three-years-old to 4th grade.
Sundays or Wednesdays
10:05 a.m. Sundays or 6 p.m. Wednesdays

The FaithTalk kids continue their rotational model of learning through music, art, drama and video. This is what they’ll be studying in the upcoming months:
**December:** Advent and Christmas
**January:** Jesus and John the Baptist
**February:** The Disciples

Compassion International Children

Our preschool FaithTalk and our CrossTalk kids continue to sponsor these eight children from eight different countries through their classroom offerings. The kids not only support the Compassion Children with money, but also with prayers and by sending letters and drawings. The Cuddly Cubs preschool kids received this letter from their friend Beatriz in Ecuador:

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Dear Cuddly Cubs:

I am so happy to write you a new letter and tell you what I have done lately and how I am. I am doing well in school and I am learning new things. Here in my country is winter. What is the season in your country? Christmas is approaching and at Compassion project we are preparing an event for Christmas. How do you celebrate Christmas in your country? Thanks for your financial support and I know your effort to help me. I say good bye with a kiss and a huge hug. ~ Beatriz

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First Grade Worship CD Milestone

Wednesday, January 22 in the Celebration Hall worship, 6:00 p.m.;
Sunday, January 26 in the Celebration Hall worship, 9:00 a.m.

Research consistently informs us that a child’s faith is nurtured by being present in worship. We invite you to celebrate as we commemorate first graders’ participation in First Lutheran Church’s worshiping community! Children will receive a Go Fish worship CD, “Kickin’ It Old School.” This CD teaches classic hymns to a whole new generation.

If you would like to help support our commitment to our Compassion kids, we welcome the added dollars. Just indicate that your donation is for Compassion International. Thanks!

HOLDING YOUR FAMILY TOGETHER

Sundays, starting February 9 at 10:00 a.m.
Register online at www.flcfargo.org. Nursery provided.

Shelly Erickson’s study of Rich Melheim’s book was so well-received, she is offering it again. Melheim asks us to imagine a home where every person feels loved, valued and heard. Imagine a family where every night is an experience of caring, sharing, comfort and peace. All because of a workable plan based on a simple nightly routine: Share, Read, Talk, Pray, and Bless.

“Thanks so much for putting on this [Holding Your Family Together] study. I do think it is important. I really enjoyed the session last night and we are starting to incorporate the blessings and bummers into our family life right away. I think this kind of sharing will also be helpful for our marriage as well.”

-Catie Garvey, participant in the Holding Your Family Together study with Shelly Erickson

www.flcfargo.org
For kids in 5th and 6th grade
Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

The CrossTalk kids are having a blast with Pastor Corey on the third floor CrossTalk Cafe. They began the year at the beginning, learning the lessons about the creation and fall from Genesis. They’ll continue in Genesis in the next two units on “The Promise” and “Freedom.” This will take them from the covenant God made with Abraham, to Jacob, Joseph, and Moses, finally landing in the Promised Land.

Rehearses Wednesday in the Chapel, 5:30-6:00 p.m.
First Lutheran is proud to announce its newest musical addition—a middle school choir under the direction of music educator, Katie Damico. Anyone in grades 7-9 is invited to come and sing along. They will perform in worship occasionally and with other FLC musical groups. No audition needed.

For kids in 7th, 8th and 9th grade
Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

The 7th and 8th graders have been studying grace and the 9th graders have been talking about faith and how Jesus, God and the Bible are integral parts in developing their faith. Going forward, the 7th and 8th graders will move into the Ten Commandments and the 9th graders will dissect the Apostles’ Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer.

Turkey Trot report: In November, LifeTalk students went door-to-door collecting food items. In just an hour of collecting, they gathered 1,825 pounds of food or 1,765 meals, which will feed a family of four for five months. Good work!

Homeless & Hungry a Great Success!
The 8th Annual Homeless & Hungry Event had over 250 participants for the weekend. Together the community raised over 4,000 items of clothing, just under 2,000 pounds of food, and $46,973 that will be distributed to these local social service agencies: Churches United, Dorothy Day House, Youthworks, Gladys Ray Shelter, YWCA, New Life Center, Stepping Stones Resource Center, Project Hart, Central Cities Ministries, Salvation Army, FM Coalition for Homeless Persons, Homeless Health Services, Sharehouse, Great Plains Food Bank, and the FM Emergency Food Pantry.

Thank you for all of your support and donations. If you’re interested in getting involved, or you’re looking for information, head over to our website at www.fmhomelessandhungry.org or contact Graham Sibley at gsibley@flcfargo.org.

Operation Christmas Child
Since 1993, more than 100 million kids in over 130 countries have experienced God’s love through the power of simple shoebox gifts from OCC. Samaritan’s Purse works with local churches and ministry partners to deliver the gifts and share the life-changing Good News of Jesus Christ. First Lutheran Church delivered approximately 450 boxes this year. Thanks to all who participated! What a great way to show the love of Jesus.
A Gift That Lasts…

North Dakota promotes philanthropy with income tax credits. The North Dakota legislature provides a charitable income tax credit for taxpayers to use when making gifts to North Dakota charitable endowments. North Dakota is a leader nationally in providing tax credit incentives for donors making charitable gifts. Less than half a dozen states offer tax credits. Anyone who pays income tax to the state of North Dakota is eligible for these incomparable tax benefits.

Endowed gifts and planned gifts are appreciated and encouraged at First Lutheran Church and the Church Foundation. Both are perfect examples of thoughtful, purposeful philanthropy, as you take steps to provide permanent funding support for the mission of First Lutheran Church.

TAX CREDIT FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ESTABLISH ENDOWMENTS

This fairly new tax credit first available in 2011 is beneficial for individual taxpayers. This tax credit makes it possible for North Dakota supporters of First Lutheran Church to establish permanent endowments through the Foundation which will help support the outreach of First Lutheran forever; endowments they might not have otherwise established without this credit.

BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTION TAX CREDIT

Businesses and financial institutions (C corporations, 5 corporations, estates, limited liability companies and trusts) which make gifts to The Foundation in the form of an endowment also qualify for a state income tax credit, which amounts to 40 percent of the value of the gift, up to a maximum credit of $10,000 per year. Businesses may carry forward any unused credit for up to three taxable years (financial institutions excluded).

PLANNED GIFTS BY INDIVIDUALS

Individual taxpayers are allowed to claim up to a $1,000 credit and joint tax filers up to a $2,000 credit for planned gifts made to qualifying North Dakota nonprofit organizations such as First Lutheran Church through The Foundation. Similar to the endowment credit, the amount of the credit is computed at 40 percent of the federal deduction created by the gift. The credit may be claimed in the year of the gift, plus a carry-forward period of three years. Eligible planned gifts include: various types of charitable trusts and deferred charitable gift annuities, certain paid-up life insurance policies, pooled income fund trusts, and charitable life estate agreements.

THE COST TO DONATE IS GREATLY REDUCED

You are encouraged to seek out your own tax and legal advice from your own professional advisor. The following is a hypothetical endowment gift example for a taxpayer in the 28 percent federal tax bracket. The tax benefits of a charitable endowment gift in North Dakota for a gift to First Lutheran through The Foundation could look something like this:

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<tr>
<td>Net Cost</td>
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<td>$16,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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For more information please call John Riley Holmen, Giving Consultant at First Lutheran Church at 701-269-2903 or jholmen@flc Fargo.org.

Lights of Love

Due by noon, Friday, December 20. $10 per light.
I wish to purchase a LIGHT for the Lights of Love Christmas tree. PLEASE PRINT. (See page 2 for more information.)

In MEMORY OF: ________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

or in HONOR OF: ________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

From _________________________________________________________________________
Phone ________________________________________________________________

What an honor to represent First Lutheran Church and The Foundation in my role as a giving consultant! There are many jokes about consultants. One that caught my attention was the following:

A medical doctor, an engineer and a consultant were arguing about what was the oldest profession in the world. The doctor started... "Well, in the Bible, it says that God created Eve from a rib taken from Adam's body. This must have required surgery, and so I can claim with a high degree of confidence that mine is the oldest profession in the world." The engineer responded... "But earlier in the book of Genesis, it states that God created the order of the heavens and the earth from out of the chaos. This was the first and certainly the most impressive application of civil engineering. Therefore, dear doctor, you are wrong: mine is surely the oldest profession in the world." The consultant leaned back in his chair, smiled, and then said confidently, "Ah, but who do you think created the chaos?"

It is my hope and prayer that once you get to meet me and know me, I will not create chaos in your lives. I understand and appreciate that giving is a highly personal action. I will always respect that. However, if you have an urgeing and a desire to make a gift to First Lutheran and/or The Foundation, I am here to clarify the options available for you to help support the mission of First Lutheran.

A wonderful donor I got to know very well who was a generous contributor to a college where I worked shared with me her simple yet profound philosophy of her philanthropy, "Because I have been blessed with so much, I am obligated to give back in equal measure.”

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The realization of First Lutheran’s mission in our lives and among the least, the lost and the lonely in our midst and beyond is measureless. Our challenge is to give back in equal measure.

Please Print. (See page 2 for more information.)

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Special Events

Silent Retreat - Pacem in Terris
Thursday-Saturday, December 5-7
Rollie Johnson, rjohnson@flcfargo.org

Ringing Bells for Salvation Army
Saturday, December 7, 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Shirley, stuite@flcfargo.org or 253-7389

*Celebrate the Child:* Jonathan Swenson
Sunday, December 8
9:00 Celebration Hall, 11:00 Sanctuary
Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long
Monday, December 9
7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary
Michael Olson, molson@flcfargo.org

ComedySportz
Wednesday, December 18 at 6:30 p.m.
Celebration Hall
Pr. Laurie Neill, lNeill@flcfargo.org

Snowshoe Sundays
Sundays, January 5-February 6
4:00 p.m. at Rollie Johnson’s house
Rollie Johnson, rjohnson@flcfargo.org

“You’ll Get Through This” Study
January 12-February 16
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.; Tuesdays at Noon; Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.
Pr. Marty Tollefson, mtollefson@flcfargo.org

Jazz Sunday
Sunday, January 19
9:00 and 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary Worship
Michael Olson, molson@flcfargo.org

Board Game Night
Friday, January 24
6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

Valentine’s Dinner & Dance
Saturday, February 15
6:00 p.m. in Celebration Hall
Pr. Laurie Neill, lNeill@flcfargo.org

Children/Family

Giants’ Ridge Ski Trip
Saturday-Monday, December 28-30

REEL Faith
Third Sunday of the month
6:00 p.m., BibliaMax Theater
No movie in December
January: *The Help*
February: *Hugo*

FLC Nursery
For kids age 0 to 5
Sundays, 8:30 a.m. - Noon
Wednesday, 5:30-8:00 p.m.
Monday and Tuesday evenings
Julie Schumacher, jschumacher@fargo.k12.nd.us

Baptism Training Session
First Sunday of each month
10:15 a.m., Chapel
Beck Tollefson, btollefson@flcfargo.org

Education

Christmas Programs
Sunday, December 15
**Sunday/Wednesday Faith Talk, Grades 1-6**
10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary
Sunday, December 15
**Sunday FaithTalk Pre/K Christmas Program**
11:00 a.m. in the Celebration Hall
Wednesday, December 18
**Wednesday FaithTalk Pre/K Christmas Program**
6:00 p.m. Sanctuary
Shelly Erickson, serickson@flcfargo.org

7th and 8th Grade Lock-in
Friday-Saturday, January 17-18
6 p.m.-7 a.m., FLC Gym

First Grade Milestone - Worship CD
Wednesday, January 22, Celebration Hall, 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, January 26; Celebration Hall, 9:00 a.m.

FaithTalk - 3 years old to 1st grade
Sundays, 10:05 a.m. or Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m.
Shelly Erickson, serickson@flcfargo.org

CrossTalk - 5th and 6th grades
Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m., CrossTalk Cafe
Shelly Erickson, serickson@flcfargo.org

LifeTalk - Grades 7 through 9th grade
(formerly Confirmation)
Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.
7th-8th grade, Fellowship Hall
9th grade, BibleMax Theatre
Graham Shibley, gibshil@flcfargo.org

F.L.Y. First Lutheran Youth-high school
Mondays, 7:00 p.m.
Graham Shibley, gibshil@flcfargo.org

Giants Ridge Ski Trip
December 28-30; Cost: $280
Graham Shibley, gibshil@flcfargo.org

Open Gym
Wednesdays, 4:00-6:00 p.m., FLC gym

Family Supper
Wednesdays, 5:00-6:00 p.m., The Gathering Place

Adult Bible Study

Advent Large Group: Being Prepared
December 1-17
Sundays at 10:00 a.m. in Adult Education Room and Tuesdays at Noon, in the Fellowship Hall
Wednesdays, 7:00 p.m. in Adult Education Room

Music

Massed Choir
Sunday, December 15 during all worship services

Cathedral Choir
Rehearse Wednesdays
7:00 p.m., Celebration Station
Michael Olson, molson@flcfargo.org

Celebration Band
Rehearse one hour before Sunday and Wednesday Celebration Worship services
Rollie Johnson, rjohnson@flcfargo.org

Men’s Choir
Schedule at www.flcfargo.org
David Ferreira, dferreira@flcfargo.org

Women’s Choir
Schedule at www.flcfargo.org
Kathy Ferreira, katriferk@aol.com

Heavenly Bells
Schedule at www.flcfargo.org
Mary Weisser, mweisser@hotmail.com

Wedensday Organ Recital
Wednesdays, 12:45-1:15 p.m., Sanctuary
Michael Olson, molson@flcfargo.org

Joyful Noise (Middle School Choir)
Wednesdays, 5:30-6:00 p.m., Chapel
Katie Demaison, kjdemaison@bigfc17.2m.us

Children’s Choir
Wednesdays, 5:30-6:00 p.m., Celebration Station
Kathy Ferreira, katriferk@aol.com

Health

Fibromyalgia Support Group Meeting
Third Sunday of the month
3:00 p.m., FLCL Fireside Library
Sue Pedersen, 701-235-9359

Prayer Shawl Ministry
Fourth Thursday of the month
2:30 p.m., Heritage Room
Katie Gross, fbgross@flcfargo.org

Tues Kwon Do
Tuesday and Thursdays
6:00 p.m., FLCL gym
Rollie Johnson, rjohnson@flcfargo.org

Senior Ministry

Wednesday Fellowship
Wednesdays 1:30 p.m., Chapel

First Club
Third Thursday of the month
2:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Support & Resources

Prayer Partners
Mondays, 9:00 a.m., Heritage Room
Pr. Jim Holberg, 701-235-7389

Fireside Library
Open during business hours and
Sunday mornings
Becky Audette, beckyaudette@hotmail.com

Mission/Outreach

Mission Soup Sunday
Third Sunday of each month
10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall

www.flcfargo.org

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