

First Lutheran Church - Wiota

November, December

In Our Prayers...

Protection for our military members: Trent Burg, Christopher Hines, Jayney Hoegh, Ryan Johnson, Brianne Munsey, Theo Sager, Benett Sunds, Josh Reed and all other men and women protecting our freedom by serving in the armed forces.

Strength for: Darlene Hockenberry, Rosemary Davidson, Millie Miller, Rich Tibken, Ricky Taylor, Helen Schoenbohm, Glenda Lensch, Marlene Miller, Kenneth Karstens, Dianna Casteel, Pat Nilan, Mitch Osborn, Keira Reed, Shloe Flanagan, Joanne Lienemann, Scott Ward, Collin Evans, Alice Anstey, Jeff Krause, Kathy Dorsey, Mike Lechner, Lynette Steele, Delmar Walker, Pastor Leon Hodges, Brooks Wollum & Daryl Erickson.

Our Missionary Family: Rev. Carl Hanson & Rev. Michael Paul

Pastor Mike can be reached at:
515-238-5446



Sunday School News

Greetings from all of us at Sunday School! We are off to a wonderful year, and have a great group of kids. The end of October we went on a trip to 3 Bee Farms in Griswold and enjoyed an afternoon with our church family. A big thank you goes out to the education board for planning such a fun outing, and to all of you who continually support our youth. Our junior high youth also attended the youth gathering that took place in West Des Moines this past weekend. A great time was had by all!

We are anxiously awaiting the upcoming advent season, which means plans for our Christmas program are well underway. Plan to join us on December 23rd at 10am!



Christmas Poinsettias!
A signup sheet is in the back of the church.
Red & White Poinsettias will be available this year.
Contact Judy Kennedy for more information.

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Do you have a question you would like Pastor Mike to answer in his "Ask the Pastor" section of an upcoming monthly newsletter or on the website? If so, contact him directly (pastormike@q.com) or 515-238-5446

1. Buried or cremated--- does it have significance to God which one we choose?

Genesis 3:19 God says: *"By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."*

This is a matter of Christian freedom and no Christian who chooses to have a loved one cremated rather than buried should be led to think that such a decision is sinful or in opposition to the Word of God.

2. Will I know my husband in the resurrection as I know him now?

Matthew 22:23-30 ³The same day Sadducees came to him,

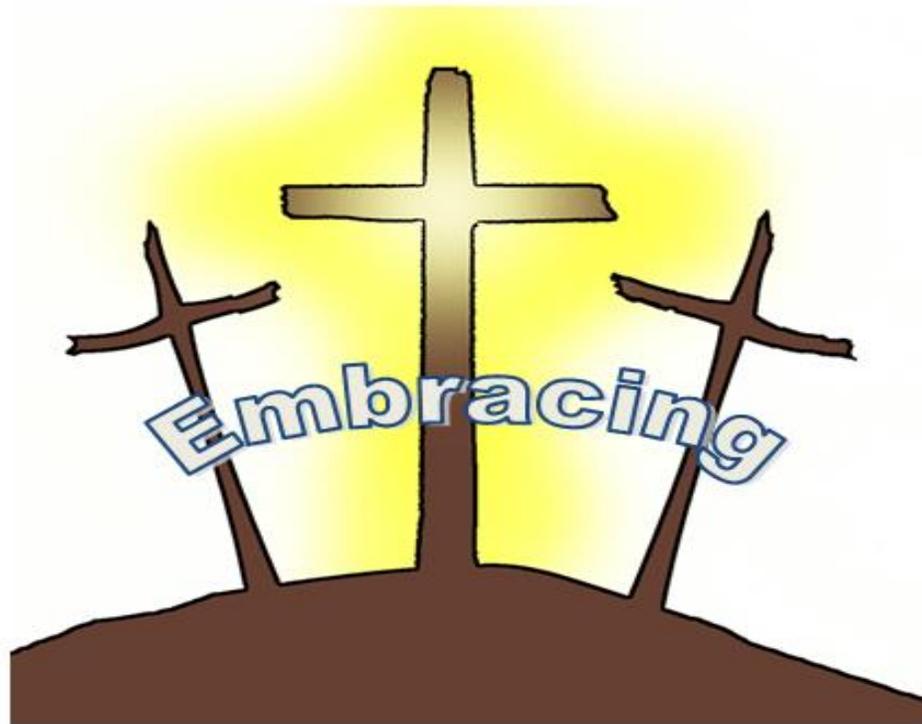
who say that there is no resurrection, and they asked him a question, ²⁴saying, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.' ²⁵Now there were seven brothers among us. The first married and died, and having no offspring left his wife to his brother. ²⁶So too the second and third, down to the seventh. ²⁷After them all, the woman died. ²⁸In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be? For they all had her." "But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. ³⁰For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven".

3. Are we missing out on celebrating the birth of Christ when not having a Christmas day worship service? **Since Christian tradition holds that Jesus was born at night (based in Luke 2:6-8), worship services celebrated on Christmas Eve, traditionally at midnight, in commemoration of his birth. The idea of Jesus being born at night is reflected in the fact that Christmas Eve is referred to as "Heilige Nacht" ("Holy Night") in German, and similarly in other expressions of Christmas spirituality, such as the song "Silent Night, Holy Night"**

Christmas day gives us the time to reflect on the newborn Savior and rejoice in the Word made flesh, Immanuel, God-with-us. Rejoicing in the Glory of God. It is a great tradition to behold and share with your family.

4. In light of all the recent publicity about same-sex marriage, how should Christians respond?

God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride the Church (Eph. 5:32). Homosexual behavior is prohibited in the Old and New Testaments (Lev. 18:22, 24, 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9-20; 1 Tim. 1:10) as contrary to the Creator's design (Rom. 1:26-27). The LCMS affirms that such behavior is "intrinsically sinful" and that, "on the basis of Scripture, marriage [is] the lifelong union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:2-24; Matt. 19:5-6)" It has also urged its members "to give a public witness from Scripture against the social acceptance and legal recognition of homosexual 'marriage' " At the same time, the Synod firmly believes "the redeeming love of Christ, which rescues humanity from sin, death, and the power of Satan, is offered to all through repentance and faith in Christ, regardless of the nature of their sinfulness"



Great Commission Stewardship

**“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19).**

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November, December Coming Soon: “Embracing Great Commission Stewardship”

For three weeks beginning on **Sunday November 4th**, we will have the wonderful opportunity to grow in an understanding what it means to Embrace Great Commission Stewardship. Christian stewardship involves the management of our lives and resources for God’s purposes. Great Commission stewardship helps us to better understand that the ultimate purpose of our stewardship is to direct our time, talents, and money to God’s primary purpose which is to help *“all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth”* (1 Timothy 2:4). As believers, we are God’s instruments through whom He works. We are His hands, feet, and mouth.

Just before Jesus’ ascension into heaven, He instructed His disciples: *“Go therefore and make disciples...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold I am with you always, to the end of the age”* (Matthew 28:19-20). These verses have been identified as the Great Commission. Jesus commanded His disciples to go spread the Gospel throughout all nations. The Great Commission was not just for the immediate eleven disciples but is directed to all believers, and it will not end until Jesus’ second coming.

Faithful stewardship demonstrates our love, devotion, and submission to Jesus. Christian stewardship is motivated by God’s love. God’s love overflowing from within us provides the power and energy for Great Commission stewardship. Through faith, we begin to love our neighbors as our brothers and sisters in Christ. We see others as God’s children who, like us, are lost and hopeless without Jesus. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, we begin to witness and share God’s love with others.

Great Commission Stewardship calls upon us to commit our time, abilities, and our money. When Jesus invites us to follow Him, it is going to radically change how we view and use our lives and blessings. In Mark 8:34, Jesus bluntly states, *“If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.”* Just as Jesus submitted to His Father’s will, we are to submit to His. Our time, abilities, and money are not to be kept for ourselves but are to be used in making disciples for Jesus. Not only does God command us, *“Go therefore and make disciples,”* He has provided us with the tools to make disciples, and He promises to go with us: *“And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age”* (Matthew 28:20). Being encouraged, empowered, and equipped, now go and make disciples!

Daylight savings time ends on November 3rd time falls back one hour don’t forget to set your clocks!

Thanksgiving Evening Worship Service November 21st at 7:00 pm

For to us a child is born,

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*to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Isaiah 9:6*

Jesus came in the flesh. Jesus became incarnate as a man. He did not come in the flesh of a duck. He did not come in the flesh of a dog. Jesus was not incarnate as a caterpillar. Jesus was not incarnate as a goldfish. Jesus came in your flesh. The flesh of a man, of a woman, of a child. He came in the flesh of a person made in the image of God – you. Why did He come? To be given to you. He came to suffer in your place. He came to keep God’s law perfectly in your place. He came to rise from the dead in your place. And you, you are being carried away alongside Christ. And why did He do this? During the season of Christmas, we have images of the baby Jesus lying in a manger. And there is nothing wrong with this at all. But even during the incarnation of Christ as God becoming man, we must remember why He came in your flesh and not the flesh of a duck, or a dog, not the flesh of a caterpillar or a goldfish. He came in your flesh for you. It is like Isaiah said, “For to us a son is born, to us a son is given.” Jesus came in your flesh as a baby for one reason – to be your savior. He came in the flesh to offer His life for your life. He came to have his blood spilled so you could be washed. He came as a man to speak and so that you could hear. He came in the flesh to suffer for you on the cross in your place. He came to offer His life on the cross as a punishment for ALL sin; yes, all of them. And He came in the flesh to rise from the dead, and to enter eternal life so you also might rise from the dead and you also have eternal life. This time of year, if there is enough snow on the ground, people go sled-riding. Sometimes you will see someone pulling a sled with maybe 2 or 3 going along for a ride. Someone will pull the sled and others will sit in the sled being carried along in the wake of someone else’s hard work and someone else’s labor in the snow. The scriptures say you have been pulled along by the hard work and the labors of Jesus Christ for you (Hebrews 4:8). As we prepare for Christmas, let us remember the coming of Christ and the wonderful work He is providing for our salvation every single day. He came as a man, to suffer in our place, and He is still coming to you cradled not in a manger, but a chalice. He is still coming to you in the water of baptism. And the Word is still becoming flesh to you (John 1) as we hear Christ proclaimed in preaching, heard in the readings, and sung with all the angelic voices of heaven in our hymns and liturgy.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we give thanks for the coming of Jesus Christ in our flesh. May we cherish this season as we rejoice in His incarnation, and may we rejoice every day that you are still graciously coming to us. Amen.

Pastor Mike



Midweek Advent thru Christmas worship series

Midweek Advent Services December 5th – 12th – 19th-, with dinner served at 5:45 and worship service at 7:00 pm

What Child Is This?

Children's Christmas Program

December 23rd at 10:00 am

William C. Dix wrote "What Child Is This" about 150 years ago, one of his several Christmas poems. These three stanzas include many important persons in the nativity account: Mary, angels, shepherds, Wise Men, and even you and me. But the main focus is on the most mysterious person of all: the Child sleeping on Mary's lap. As Mary, the shepherds, and the Wise Men all learn of this promised Child, they are confronted with an essential question: "What Child is this?" As we approach Christmas, we must consider the same question: "Who is this Jesus? Why do we celebrate His birth?" Enjoy listening to the children today as they point to the Bible for the answer. As the hymn text proclaims, "This, this is Christ the king, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing." Let us all haste to bring Him laud, "the babe, the Son of Mary!"

You won't want to miss *What Child Is This?* the children's Christmas service at First Lutheran on Sunday December 23rd. Children will tell about Jesus' birth with joyful hearts, songs, and readings. See you there!

Christmas Eve candlelight worship service December 24th at 7:00 pm

Want a Christmas Day worship service? Let your thoughts be known at the congregation meeting on December 9th after our worship service.

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My 2018 Commitment for the Lord

“Embracing Great Commission Stewardship”

Jesus said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:19)

As God’s stewards, we seek to do His will and purpose. God’s Word clarifies for us what His purpose is: He *“desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth”* (1 Timothy 2:4). God has chosen us as His instruments in reaching out to all people. As His hands, feet, and mouth, we are to use our time, talents, and money in ways to extend God’s kingdom.

Time and Talents:

The following lifestyle disciplines will help me, as a disciple, grow in grace and knowledge of my Lord, strengthening my faith and empowering me to live a fruitful life that honors Jesus.

I commit to . . .

- Worship regularly
- Personal Bible reading
- Group Bible study
- Family devotions
- Prayer
- Serving, volunteering



Money:

My (our) weekly offering will be \$ _____, totaling \$ _____ annually.

Name(s) _____

**Please return
this portion**

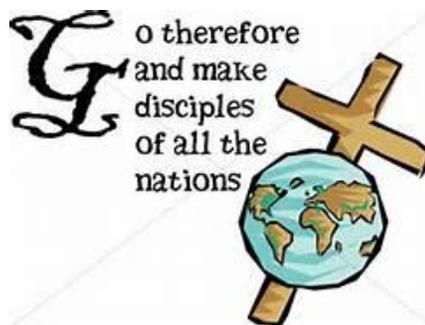
Please return on Commitment Sunday November 18th or send to the church office.

My 2018 Commitment for the Lord *"Embracing Great Commission Stewardship"*

Time and Talents:

I commit to . . .

- Worship regularly
- Personal Bible reading
- Group Bible study
- Family devotions
- Prayer
- Serving, volunteering



Money:

My (our) weekly offering will be \$_____, totaling \$_____ annually.

(First Lutheran Church)

Please detach and
keep for your records