



# First Impressions

Worship God, strengthen His people, and reach out  
with the Love of Christ

Volume 18 Issue 1

January 2011

## *Do You See ...?*

*"The LORD will lay bare his holy arm  
in the sight of all the nations,  
and all the ends of the earth will see  
the salvation of our God." – Isaiah 52:10*

I'm a lover of Southern expressions. One of my favorites, especially when I've lost something and just can't seem to locate it is, "well if it had been a snake, it would have bit me." Men, why is it that us guys just can't seem to locate things ... keys, my pocket knife is a good one, cell phone ... you name it, I lose it. Have you ever called your own cell phone to locate it? How about finding things by not trying to remember where you last saw them, but by trying to remember what color coat or pair of pants you wore the day before so you can search the pockets. Here's a good one guys ... why is it that we can't see things in the refrigerator - revealed in the fact that we open the refrigerator door, gaze in (for what seems like hours to our wives), shut the door, and repeat the process numerous times and still coming up empty handed? My lovely bride says that men my age are naturally "blind as bats," not an expression that is exclusively for Southerners, but nevertheless an effective one, right guys? I much prefer to say that I just "overlook" or "misplace" things on a continual basis. Carol jokingly says it's just part of the male make-up pattern that develops twice as fast after we men reach a certain age. I have reached that age!

Here we are, closing out another Christmas season, a New Year is now upon us, and I often wonder about how all of us allow ourselves to "overlook" so much of the good and lasting things, "blinded" (like bats) by things that are only temporary and of this world? God tells us through the prophet Isaiah that wonderful things will happen and that the *"sight of all nations, and the ends of the earth will see the salvation of the Lord."* Does someone you know let the world control their spiritual vision? Did you let 2010 and all the temporary things of the world dictate or control the way you look at things? Have the troubles of the world caused you to miss the heavenly glow of the manger in Bethlehem?

2011 is out there all "brand-spanking" new and fresh. God invites each one of us to begin every day by looking at His gift to all of us. "He lays bare His holy arm" for you to see; His holy arm of mercy and love and He says to each one of us, "there's a different way to look at the world ... and that's through the precious gift of my Son." This Christ Child that has been so wondrously given is not only our joy, but our salvation and our mercy and God call's us to learn more of Him and to share this joy with others daily. *Do you see the Holy Arm of the Lord?* Today He reveals himself to you up close! May 2011 be, for you, filled with the enjoyment of that wonderful sight as you discover more of His love and mercy in His Holy Word.

*Do you see Him?*

*Pastor Tom*

TIM ALLEN - 3  
TERRY LEPP - 5  
WILSON WHITTINGTON - 6  
LILLIAN WHITE - 11  
BRIAN HAYES - 14



MATHEW GRUND - 17  
TEAGAN SHIFLETT - 19  
DONNA SPEEGLE - 21  
STAN WEIR - 22  
AMIE CAHILL - 31

**Thank You!**

*Dearest Friends in Christ,*

*Thank you so much for your wonderful gift this Christmas tide. Carol & I have been so blessed to be a part of this joyful ministry that all of us share together. Your generosity, thoughtfulness and prayers for Carol and I are so much appreciated by both of us. Words cannot express our gratitude. You are all indeed wonderful gifts of God.*



*Happy New Year to each of you and now, may all God's richest blessings given to each of us in our Lord Jesus Christ fill our hearts and minds as we continue together to reach out to others with the good news of Him.*

*Sola Deo Gloria,*

*Pastor Tom & Carol*



**Newborn**

**Congratulations to Sandra & Jay Heidecker on the birth of their daughter, Anna Elizabeth Heidecker. Anna arrived safely into God's world on December 14, 2010, weighing in at 6 lbs. 8 oz. and measuring 19 inches in length. Mom, Dad and Baby Anna are all doing well.**



Our "Praise & Worship" service that was due to begin on January 15, 2011 has been delayed. The new start date is Saturday, February 12, 2011 at 5:00 PM. We hope you will join us and bring a friend!

**VOTERS MEETING**

**Voters Meeting**

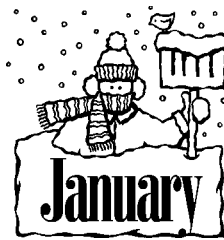
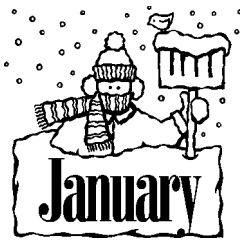


**We were unable to vote or pass the 2011 budget due to lack of quorum at the voters meeting on November 21st. Therefore, it has been rescheduled for January 30, 2011. This is also the fifth Sunday of the month potluck so please pay attention to your bulletin announcements, as well as your phone messages for additional information. Thank you.**

**Fellowship Dinner**



# WORSHIP WORKERS



## FIRST/ EMMANUEL LUTHERAN

### Children's Church –

- January 2 - Julie Cvengros
- January 9 - Kate Cahill
- January 16 - Carol Lackey
- January 23 - NEED HELP, PLEASE!
- January 30 - Kate Cahill

### Readers:

- January 2 - Toby Cahill
- January 9 - Dcs. Peg Anderson
- January 16 - Krista Wanat
- January 23 - Wilson Whittington
- January 30 - Donna Speegle

**Altar Guild:** June Weir

**Candles:** Pat Thompson

**Communion Assistant:** Charlie Hayes

**Ushers:** Graham Sisson, Victoria Sisson,  
Pat Ryan, David Ryan

**Worship Assistant:** Jim Campbell

**Nursery:** Meg Callahan

## ALTAR FLOWERS

1/16 - Krista Wanat in humble thanks & praise for Salvation.



**Harvest** - Graham and Victoria Sisson go through the Bible one chapter at a time.

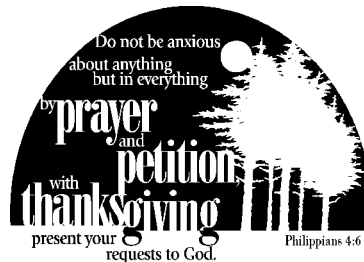
**Adult Bible Study** - General Bible study taught by Pastor Tom.

**Beth Moore Series** - "Esther: It's Tough Being a Woman" taught by Judy Drews and Donna Speegle.

### Children's & Youth Sunday School Classes:

**Early Elementary** - for kids in 1st - 3rd grade with limited reading skills.

**High School** - For youth in 9th - 12th grade.



**Assisted Care:** Annie Harrell, Leona Boehme, Lucille Cooper, Edna Grund.

**Recovering:** Julie Cvengros, Delores Goehler, Flo Fischer, Hildegard Wesson, Buck Halbrooks.

**Mourning:** Rev. Harold "Hal" G. Hermetz and Hildegard Brandenburg.

**Illness:** Norma Jefferson, Corrine Donahoo, Judy Drew's brother-in-law, Steve Norby (brain tumor).


**Thanksgiving:** For the birth of Anna Elizabeth Heidecker.

**Missionaries:** Bible Faith Lutheran Seminary (India).

Members who have lost their jobs.

**Those Serving in the Military:** Mike Golchert, Joel Lackey, and former member, Walt Mattil in Afghanistan.

# JANUARY 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Seasons Meeting 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	27	28 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous	29	30 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM "Reserved - Bob Collier" 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	31 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	1 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM Homeless Mission 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous
2 8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM Worship 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	3	4 RMCS returns 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous	5 6:30 PM Church Council Meeting	6  5:45 PM RMCS Epiphany service 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	7 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	8 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous
9 8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM Worship 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	10	11 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous	12	13 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	14 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	15 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous
16 8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM Worship 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	17	18 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous	19 <u>Newsletter Deadline</u>	20 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	21 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	22 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous
23 8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM Worship 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	24	25 6:45 PM - 8:15 PM RMCS 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous	26	27 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	28 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	29 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous
30  8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM FOOD & Voters Meeting - Buckle! 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	31	1 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous	2	3 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	4 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	5 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM Homeless Mission 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous



Now that the Christmas celebration is over, and we all find a way to resume some semblance of normalcy in our lives - let's pause, take a deep breath, and savor the birth of our Savior - the newborn King of kings. I think a song by Country star Faith Hill just may say it all - "A Baby Changes Everything". Here's just a small sampling of the lyrics:

Shepherds all gather 'round  
Up above the star shines down  
A baby changes everything

Choir of angels sing  
Glory to the newborn King  
A baby changes everything  
A baby changes everything  
Everything, everything, everything

How can we say it any better? In our own lives, as parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters - a baby does change everything. Our life as we know it changes when a baby is introduced to our family dynamic. But this baby, this very special baby - not only changed His parents' lives ... He changed everyone's life. He changed those living at that time, and those who have lived since that time, and those who have yet to be born. This very special baby changed everything! What a loving God we have, that He would send His Son down to earth, born of a virgin, to provide us - sinners one and all - a path to salvation!

The Christmas Story is an old one, but is told anew every year, because when we see the awe and wonder in a child's face and eyes as they hear the Story, and take in the wonder of all that Christmas represents - we can only imagine the awe and wonder those shepherds experienced when they saw and heard the angelic heavenly hosts! Their world was changing before their eyes. The long promised savior king was born! A baby was going to change everything! If they only knew!





Thrivent Builds / Habitat for Humanity 2011: First will have another opportunity to participate in the Habitat for Humanity program sponsored by Thrivent. In years past we have contributed with both financial and human resources. Please keep this ministry in your prayers as we start getting organized for a spring campaign. These builds offer opportunities for all skill levels - and it's a great way to learn new skills, as well! Most of the Lutheran congregations in the greater Birmingham area participate, so it also presents an opportunity for fellowship with our fellow Birmingham Lutherans. More information will be following as it is made available to us.

If you have any questions, please contact Toby Cahill. Ph: 205-681-1157 E-mail: [tobycahill@aol.com](mailto:tobycahill@aol.com)



Red Mountain Community School  
Invites you  
to our  
Fifth Annual  
Epiphany Service and Festival of Lights

Thursday, January 6, 2011  
5:45 p.m.

First/Emmanuel Lutheran Church  
2507 Highland Avenue S.  
Birmingham, Alabama 35205

A Children's Treasure Hunt and Middle Eastern Feast will follow the Service.  
Call the school office at 218-4965 for more details.



“**Happy New Year**” is a greeting that we hear often during the time between late December and early January. And it is a fitting greeting because we move from calendar year 2010 to 2011. However, the Christian Church Year begins with the first Sunday in Advent (which in 2010 was on November 28.)



Why bring this up? The answer has to do with the reality that we Christians actually live in two different cultures—a secular culture and a spiritual culture. The secular culture is the world we live in and specifically the United States of America; the spiritual culture in which we live is the kingdom of God. These two cultures have very different values, especially in regard to Christian stewardship.

In our secular culture we are led to believe that we are owners of all the “things” we have. That means, among other things, that we are free to do whatever we want with our possessions and don’t have to give an account to anyone. As members of the kingdom of God we are instructed by the teachings from the Bible. The Bible gives us a very different perspective on ownership because it teaches us that God is the Owner of all things (Psalm 24:1) and we are managers of all that God has entrusted to our care.

Our eight **Biblical Stewardship Principles** provide some excellent guidance for our lives as God’s stewards. The second principle states: “*God’s stewards are managers, not owners.*” The fifth principle states: “*God’s stewards are in the world, but not of the world.*” (Note: you can go to [www.lcms.org/stewardship](http://www.lcms.org/stewardship) and click on “Stewardship Ministry” [on the left side] and then on “Biblical Stewardship Principles” for the full text and study guide for the principles). A good resolution for 2011 would be to study the principles individually, in small groups or in larger group Bible classes.

The **Biblical Stewardship Principles** help us understand what it means to be one of God’s stewards and to live as His stewards. This can be a real challenge when we live in a culture that is so obsessed with getting more and more so we can satisfy our own desires. As God’s stewards we are not our own; we have been bought at a price (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) so we can glorify God and show love to others!

As God’s stewards we do well to remember what St. Paul wrote to Timothy: “*For we brought nothing into this world, and we can take nothing out of it.*” (1 Timothy 6:7 NIV) What we do between our birth and our death is the measure of our stewardship. In addition, we should not view stewardship as a task that we have to do, but rather something that we get to do with the understanding that “*Christian stewardship is the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God’s family, the church, in managing all of life and life’s resources for God’s purposes.*”

*(Taken from LCMS website)*



## **First/Emmanuel Lutheran Church**

8:00 AM Choir Practice  
9:00 a.m. Sunday School for Children & Adults  
10:15 a.m. Sunday Worship and Communion Service

## **First/Emmanuel Lutheran Church**

2507 Highland Avenue South  
Birmingham, AL 35205-2497

933-0380

Pastor's E-Mail: [pastortom@firstlutheranbham.org](mailto:pastortom@firstlutheranbham.org)

Bulletin E-mail: [secretary@firstlutheranbham.org](mailto:secretary@firstlutheranbham.org)

Web Site: [www.firstlutheranbham.org](http://www.firstlutheranbham.org)

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### **Church Staff**

Rev. Tom Lackey, Associate Pastor  
 Bob Collier, Director of Music  
 Krista E. Wanat, Secretary  
[secretary@firstlutheranbham.org](mailto:secretary@firstlutheranbham.org)  
 Krista Wanat  
 Editor of First Impressions  
[newsletter@firstlutheranbham.org](mailto:newsletter@firstlutheranbham.org)  
[kwanat11803@charter.net](mailto:kwanat11803@charter.net)

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Place first class  
postage here