



First Impressions

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

Volume 18 Issue 2

February 2011

Twilight Song

“Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.” – Isaiah 52:9

HAVE YOU EVER turned around and gone in a different direction? Sometimes I'm moving so fast that by the time someone calls my name, I'm so far past them I have to turn around to see them, let alone respond to what they've said. Someone I know well has made it a policy to not turn and look at something they've passed, saying 'it's too much work' (when they're being nice, that is). It takes intentional effort to turn around, and I've found for many people it can take a long time to turn our thoughts and emotions in a different direction.

At the start of Jesus' public preaching and teaching, he challenged people to 'repent': to turn around, turn in our thoughts and actions toward him (toward God's love). He's still challenging us in the same way today: to turn away from our selfish desires and sin, and turn toward him, trusting him and his love. That can be an ongoing issue for us humans, but it is well worth the effort.

Over the last year, the members of First/Emmanuel Lutheran Church have made that effort by seeking out ways to challenge themselves in challenging others with the good news of the Gospel message. Answering the call to “carry out” the great commission of our Lord is no light chore. It involves a lot of hard work, effort and committed time. It means giving up of self so that others may hear this wonderful news of salvation given to us in Christ Jesus our Lord. You have asked for serving opportunities – feeding the homeless, visitation of the sick and homebound, and small group Bible study just to mention a few, have been made available. Now, all that is left is that which our Lord has already commissioned us to do ... we are to “turn around”, reaching out to others, those whom we know and don't know, those who may be un-churched, de-churched or hurting because of life's trials, sufferings and temptations. We are to encourage them with gentle, humble words and be an example for them with our acts of kindness and humiliation. Now, we have the opportunity to ask them to be a part of a loving and outgoing fellowship with folks like them who struggle with life's trials and tribulations ... with us!

On Saturday, February 12, 2011 at 5:00 PM, First/Emmanuel begins a new evening prayer and praise service called *Twilight Song*, a casual service blended with old favorite hymns and new praise hymns ... a service with the simple message of God's love and mercy. It is a good opportunity for you to invite someone to come and hear about a God who indeed loves and cares for all human-kind. Afterwards, there will be a coffee fellowship. Please, come and bring someone. *God has done great things for us! Let us burst into “twilight songs” of joy together!*

God's Peace to all –

Pastor Tom



ASHLEY STIEFEL- 4TH
 JANA ROTTON- 7TH
 LAURA WHITTINGTON - 11TH
 ANNIE HARRELL- 14TH
 MYRA GRUND - 19TH
 PAT THOMPSON -24TH



The offering envelopes for 2011 are ready to be picked up in the rear of the church. Also, the year-end contribution reports are done and waiting for you to retrieve them. If you have any questions,



Drop by the library after February 1 and sign up for your library card. The collection is now processed and items can be searched on our online catalog system. Then when you are ready to checkout we will use your member barcode and checkout by scanning books in and out, just like at your public library! Our next goal is to be able to access our collection online through First's website.



Happy Reading!
 Pat Ryan

Our "Praise & Worship" Service, now called "Twilight Song", 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. The Board of Fellowship will be hosting a coffee and dessert (homemade) reception after the service. Please plan to join us and celebrate this new direction for First/Emmanuel. If you have any questions or would like to join the Board of Fellowship, please contact Donna Speegle or Kate Cahill.



Twilight
 Song



LENTEN
 SERVICE
 SCHEDULE

Mid-week Lenten Services begin on Wednesday, March 9 with Ash Wednesday and continues for the next five weeks. Each week, one or more of the Boards will be hosting a dinner before the evening worship service. If you would like to help, please contact a member of the Church Council.

Lenten Dinner - 5:30 PM - 6:20 PM

Evening Service: Miracles of Lent - 6:30 PM

WORSHIP WORKERS



FIRST/ EMMANUEL LUTHERAN

Children's Church –

- February 6 - Julie Cvengros
- February 13 - Kate Cahill
- February 20 - Carol Lackey
- February 27 - Pat Ryan

Readers:

- February 6 - Carol Lackey
- February 13 - Donna Speegle
- February 20 - Wilson Whittington
- February 27 - June Weir

Altar Guild: Terry Lepp

Candles: June Weir

Communion Assistant: Toby Cahill

Ushers: James Melton, Wayne Speegle,
Mike Twiss, Jim Campbell

Worship Assistant: Wilson Whittington

Nursery: Meg Callahan



The Altar Flower sign up sheet is located on the wall next to the church office. Donations are \$41.00.

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.

Mourning: Hildegard Brandenburg and Buck Halbbrooks.

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.

FEBRUARY 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>30</p>  <p>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 - Budget 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>31</p> <p>6:30 PM Church Council Meeting</p>	<p>1</p> <p>7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>4</p> <p>8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>5</p> <p>8:30 AM - 10:00 AM Homeless Mission 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous 5:00 PM Twilight Song Service</p>
<p>6</p> <p>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</p>		<p>8</p> <p>7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>11</p> <p>6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Netherland Small Group 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous 9:00 AM Truwerk Builders/Helper for Humanty meeting 5:00 PM Twilight Song Service</p>
<p>13</p> <p>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</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p>16</p> 	<p>17</p> <p>8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>18</p> <p>8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>19</p> <p>9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous 5:00 PM Twilight Song Service</p>
<p>20</p> <p>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</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>25</p> <p>6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Netherland Small Group 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>26</p> <p>9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous 5:00 PM Twilight Song Service</p>
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The four Sundays in February are in the Epiphany season of the Church Year calendar. Epiphany is a word that means “showing forth” or “manifesting.” The Epiphany season begins on January 6 with the visit of the Wise Men to worship the Baby Jesus as the newborn King of the Jews. The season continues with the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River, the calling of His first disciples, His preaching the good news of salvation and the opening of His famous Sermon on the Mount. In the four Gospel readings for February we find Jesus teaching that we are

lights in this spiritually dark world who give evidence of our new birth as Christians as we love even our enemies and seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. To live that way is truly an “epiphany experience” to show that we really belong to our Lord Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit live renewed lives.

That’s what Christian stewardship is all about! Wise Christian stewards manage all of life and life’s resources for God’s purposes and do it freely and joyfully! We practice the kind of stewardship that is pleasing to our Lord when we give freely and generously of our time to serve in special ways that bless the mission of the church and the people living in our communities. This kind of stewardship is also shown when we freely and joyfully offer our talents and skills to help the church prosper and make life sweeter for those around us. This kind of stewardship continues when we give freely and joyfully of our financial resources to support the work of the church in nurturing believers and reaching out to invite others to know Jesus.

Many people view Christian stewardship as something that we have to do [a command] in order to be true followers of Jesus. That simply is not true! Real Christian stewardship is the privilege of offering all that we are and have to make a difference in this world of spiritual darkness. Just as Jesus came on that first Christmas to bring light to a darkened world, so we are called to follow His example. Will we follow in His footsteps perfectly, use all that we are and have in truly unselfish ways and be willing to make sacrifices so the mission of Christ’s church on earth may prosper and become a home for many more redeemed people? No, of course not! We are sinners and will fall short of the glory of God. But, in Christ, God has declared us to be saints because our sins and shortcomings have been forgiven and the Holy Spirit empowers us to let our lights shine so that people will see our good deeds and praise our Father in heaven.

The bottom line for Christian stewards is to hear and obey our Lord’s words when he taught: ***“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things [material blessings] will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself.”*** (Matthew 6:33-34 NIV)

From the Deacons ...

This Spring, we have a service opportunity to participate with our fellow Lutheran congregations in the Birmingham area, in another Thrivent Builds/Habitat for Humanity build. Please keep this wonderful mission opportunity in your prayers. More information will follow after the initial organizational meeting on February 12.



Preparations are under way for the introduction of our new blended worship service, to be offered on Saturday evenings, beginning on February 12. If anyone is interested in helping with the organization of this service, such as serving as ushers, greeters, readers, etc., please let me know.

As always, your deacons are interested in your feedback on anything happening within our congregation. How do you like having Communion every Sunday? How do you like the service styles we are using? How about the music? Hymn selection? Sermons? Communications within the church body? Let us know. There are several ways to do so: e-mail, phone call, anonymous letter in the deacons' mail slot outside of the church office, personal meeting. In 2011, one of the goals for the deacons is to improve upon our member contact activity. But please don't wait to hear from us; contact one of us if something is on your mind.

May God bless our ministry in 2011!

Toby Cahill, Graham Sisson, Wilson Whittington, Charlie Hayes, Jim Campbell, Mike Twiss



First/Emmanuel Lutheran Church

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

5:00 PM Saturdays - Twilight Song

First/Emmanuel Lutheran Church

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