



First Impressions

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

Volume 17 Issue 7

July 2010

A Focused Lens

“For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.” – Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians, Chapter 2, verse 2.

RECENTLY, WE BOUGHT a digital camera to help us capture those wonderful little moments in life that we all experience and want to remember (children, grandchildren, vacations, Christmas and times of sharing with loved ones). A camera is a great tool that helps us hang on to those memories. It was a great buy, and it was really more fun than I anticipated just looking at all the options and various models. I was especially fascinated by looking at the digital pictures that come out on my end for viewing. The quality and clarity is just fascinating. Not knowing much about how all this comes together, I become even more amazed. What kind of lens does this thing have and is it really still called a “lens” or is it something else that operates as a lens? I would think that a lens, or its new digital substitute, would be a key thing that determines whether or not the shot turns out. Sure, there are other ingredients, like light, shutter speed, etc., but what you see, and how focused it is, is crucial. You need to have the right lens (or new digital substitute) to do the job.

St. Paul thought like this, long before old-fashioned, much less digital, cameras were in use. He knew that we must have the right focus for our whole life in order for it to operate correctly, to do what is best and just be fully human. He pointed to following Jesus, doing what He did, living like He lived, and living with the same attitude that Jesus had. That was the “lens ” that Paul said was the best.

I’ve seen this to be true in my life too. Have you ever slowed down and taken a moment to notice that when our focus on Jesus is first and foremost, then our lives, no matter how tough the circumstances may be, are more joyful and meaningful? Yeah, I know, how do we find joy at the death of a loved one, in a broken relationship, or the loss of a job? I think the thing to remember is that we don’t find the joy but that Jesus brings the joy to us. The lens of the heart must focus in on Christ our Lord. Jesus said, *“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”* - John 15:5.

I invite you to discover more of this joy, this fruit that Jesus brings, by just focusing the lens a little. The focus button is God’s Word, his revealing himself to you. Be strong in God’s Word, my friends. Take a moment each day to rediscover your friend, Jesus. Talk with him, see him in the Psalms, and renew the experience of praying them as David did. Let great Old and New Testament books tell you more of God’s wonderful gift to you. God has placed the joy there for us to see. All we have to do is focus the lens a little and He always will invite and encourage you to do just that.

Pastor Tom

Kelly Shiflett—7/16
 Dorrie Mayhew—7/19
 Justin Rudd—7/19
 Dee Mayhew—7/27



Jay & Sandra Heidecker
 — 7/3/99
 Wilson & Lisa Whittington
 — 7/7/01
 Nelson & Marcy Sharit—
 7/17/93



Finally, it's a girl!
 Congratulations to Leigh & Todd
 Dorrough on the birth of their
 daughter, Vivian Marie. She
 arrived into God's world on
 May, 28, 2010 weighing in at 8 lbs., 4 oz.
 Mom, Dad, and Baby are doing great, as
 well as elated Grandparents Frank & Judy
 Brown.



Brian Hayes (Emily)
 1031 Maryanna Road
 Calera, AL 35040



24/7 Synod Convention Prayer Vigil

A national 24-hour, seven-day prayer vigil
 will be held on behalf of The Lutheran
 Church—Missouri Synod during the week
 of the Synod convention. The vigil will be-
 gin on Sunday, July 11, at 8 a.m. and will
 last until Saturday, July 17, at 11 a.m.

During this special week of prayer,

participants are invited to pray specifically for the proceedings
 of the Synod convention and for the work of the Synod as a
 whole.

General prayers are requested that the Lord will keep Satan far
 away from our Synod and its convention and that He will bless
 our convention and the work of the Synod with the Spirit's
 presence. Daily information about specific convention
 activities will be available on the convention Web site,
www.lcms.org/convention.

To sign up as a prayer-vigil participant, go to the vigil Web site
 before June 26 at <http://www.lcms.org/prayervigil>. Follow the
 sign-up instructions, which include selecting a specific hour to
 pray during the week.

“The prayer of a righteous person has great power while it is
 working”
 (James 5:16).



Are You Willing?

Room #2
 Kate & Donna
 require your
 assistance in
 cleaning out

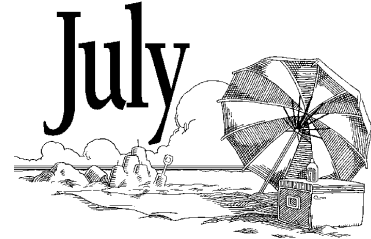
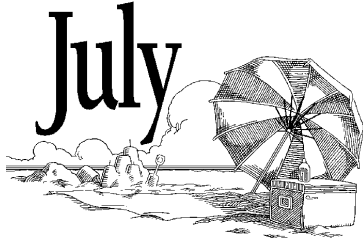
the storage room (#2) in the Fellow-
 ship Hall. It is essential that we have
 several people (and a truck or two)
 to work on July 17th or 24th or both!

Cleaning and clearing begins at
 9:00 AM and runs until about 12:00
 PM. Please contact Donna or Kate
 to be counted as one willing to lend
 a hand!



The church office will be closed from July 2 through July 8, 2010
 and from
 July 16 through July 20, 2010. If you need assistance, please con-
 tact your deacon. The list is posted on the bulletin board, next to

WORSHIP WORKERS



FIRST & EMMANUEL LUTHERAN

Children's Church –

- July 4 - Julie Cvengros
- July 11 - Kate Cahill
- July 18 - Carol Lackey
- July 25 - NEED HELP

Readers:

- July 4 - Wendy Lepp
- July 11 - Mike Grund
- July 18 - Glen Thompson
- July 25 - Graham Sisson

Altar Guild: Terry Lepp

Candles: June Weir

Communion Assistant: Mike Twiss

Ushers: Graham & Victoria Sisson and Pat & David Ryan

Worship Assistant: Brett Steifel

Nursery: Meg Callahan

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

Small Group - Topical Bible study for a limited number of participants taught by Rachel Mudd.

Adult Bible Study - General Bible study taught by Mike Twiss.

Children's & Youth Sunday School Classes:

Pre-School - for kids 2-5 years old who cannot read.

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

Upper Elementary - for kids in 4th - 5th grade.

Middle School - for youth in 6th - 8th grade.



Altar Flowers

July 25 - Celebrating Kate & Toby Cahill's Anniversary



REQUESTS — FOR — PRAYER

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

Recovering: Delores Goehler, Flo Fischer, Hildegard Wesson.

Mourning: Dorothy Schucknect (Krista's Great Aunt).


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

Thanks & Praise: Floyd Seibert whose latest test was normal and received a medical release!

Missionaries: Bible Faith Lutheran Seminary (India).

Members who have lost their jobs.

Those Serving in the Military: Former member, Walt Mattil in Afghanistan.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>27 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Deacons Meeting 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous @ First</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous - Cancelled until further notice</p>	<p>30 6:00 PM Prayer Team Meets</p>	<p>1 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM "Reserved - Bob Collier" 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous @ First</p>	<p>2  ON VACATION Secretary Out of Office 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous @ First</p>	<p>3 Secretary Out of Office 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM Homeless Mission 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous</p>



Secretary Out of Office
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 @ First

5 Secretary Out of Office
6:30 PM Church Council Meeting - CANCELLED

6 Secretary Out of Office
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous - Cancelled until further notice

7 Secretary Out of Office
6:00 PM Prayer Team Meets

8 Secretary Out of Office
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM "Reserved - Bob Collier"
7:30 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous @ First

9 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Nehemiah Small Group
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous @ First

10 10:00 AM till Dusk Family Fun Day
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous

11 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM Sunday School
10:15 AM - 11:30 AM Worship
7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous @ First

12

13 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous - Cancelled until further notice

14 6:00 PM Prayer Team Meets

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16 Secretary out of office
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17 Secretary out of office
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Work Day Room #2

18 Secretary out of office
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 @ First

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7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous @ First

26

27 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous - Cancelled until further notice

28 6:00 PM Prayer Team Meets

29 12:00 PM - 5:00 PM R.M.C.S.
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM "Reserved - Bob Collier"
7:30 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous @ First

30  12:00 PM - 5:00 PM R.M.C.S.
6:00 PM Lutheran Night at The Barons
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous @ First

31 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous

Lutheran Night at the Barons

Birmingham Barons vs. Chattanooga Lookouts



Friday, July 30, 2010
Dinner begins at 6:00 p.m.
Game time is 7:05 p.m.
Fireworks following the game

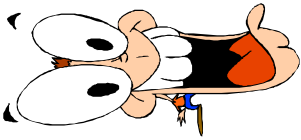
Ticket price is \$11.00 per person
(includes dinner, drinks, general admission & fireworks)

Hot dogs, chips, cookies, peanuts & drinks
provided in the Banquet Room



Sign up sheets are at the rear of the sanctuary and on the new bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

See June Weir to purchase tickets or call Terri Ray at 205-631-2585.



Mark Your Calendars!!

**Family Fun Day
Brown Family Lake house**

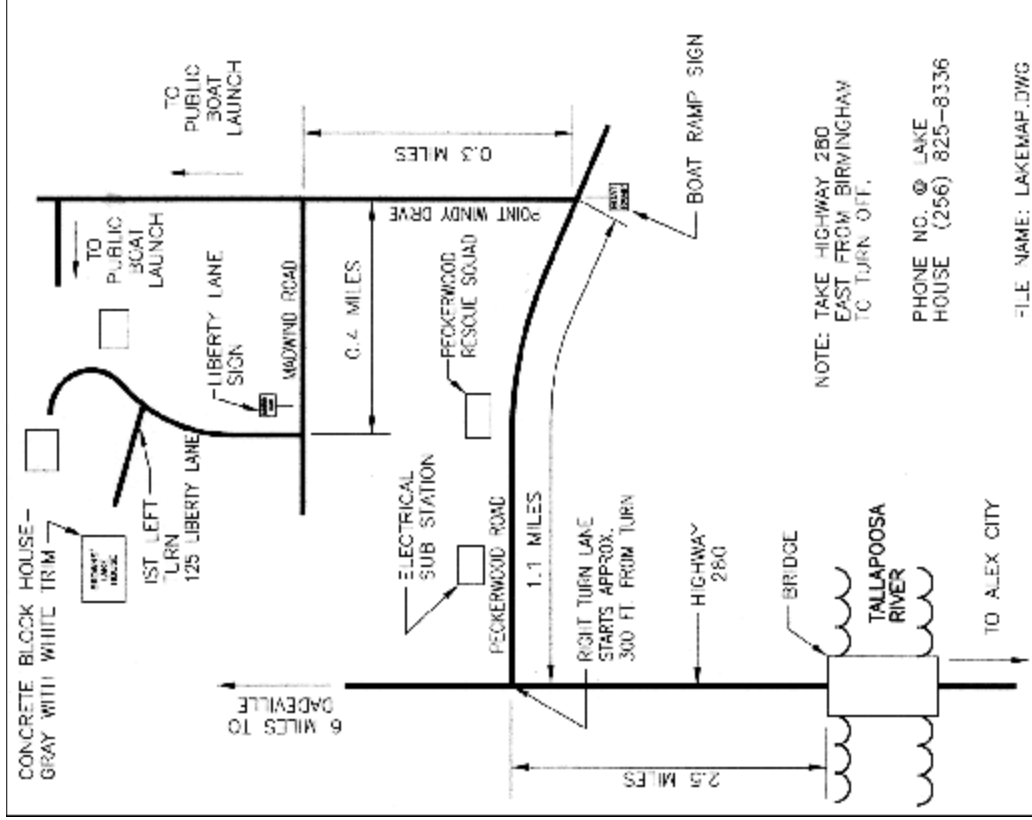
July 10, 2010, 10:00 a.m. 'til dusk

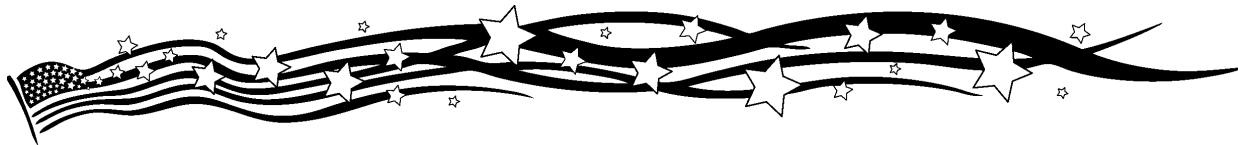
**Hotdogs, baked beans, and potato salad
for lunch**

Just bring a snack and drink to share

**Other items to consider bringing:
swimsuit, towel, bag chair, swim shoes,
sunscreen**

**Lake house phone: 256-825-8336
More info: 822-8078**





“July is Freedom Month!” - submitted by the Board of Stewardship

July 4, 1776 was a memorable day in the history of the United States of America. On that day, the founding fathers of our nation declared their independence from England and English rule. Each year we pause to remember the freedoms we enjoy and give thanks for all those brave men and women from 1776 to this date who have risked their lives for the sake of freedom and independence. We enjoy the freedom of religion, of gathering in public, of oppression from the government or any other agency. We have the freedom of electing our national, state, and local leaders into office as our leaders. In November, we will have the opportunity to exercise that freedom one more time. It is our privilege and duty to vote whenever we have the opportunity. History teaches us that national apathy has destroyed numerous empires and America can also flounder and fail if we citizens do not exercise our freedoms in a responsible way.

Not only are we citizens of probably the greatest nation in the history of mankind, but we are also citizens of the Kingdom of God! Because of that citizenship, we enjoy countless freedoms and blessings, like the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. These freedoms and blessings come to us at a great cost--not on our part, but on the part of our gracious Savior Jesus who offered Himself up to death as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Even though we can never adequately express our thanks to Jesus, we can by the power of the Holy Spirit live each day more and more like the children of God. In Colossians 3:12-17, we find a list of virtues that are appropriate for us as God’s children.

God’s children are stewards or managers of the many blessings that God has bestowed upon us. Stewardship is not meant to be an oppressive response to God’s grace and goodness, but rather a joyful response. In our church we have defined stewardship this way: ***“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.”*** What a beautiful definition for our Christian stewardship!

Because Christ has redeemed us to be the children of God and heirs of salvation, we have the privilege and responsibility to give evidence of this precious freedom through our words and actions. Jesus changes everything in our lives (relationships, use of money, time, talents, and so much more) so that we practice our stewardship not in order to gain salvation, but rather as a free and joyous response because of what God has already done for us through the sacrifice of Jesus and the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

What a joy to freely and joyfully practice Christian stewardship not because we **have to** but because we **get to!** Enjoy your freedom as a citizen of the United States of America and a citizen of the kingdom of God and let your life show it!

Taken from LCMS Website



First/Emmanuel Lutheran Church

9:00 a.m. Sunday School for Children & Adults
10:15 a.m. Sunday Worship Service
Communion Service 1st and 3rd and 5th Sunday

First/Emmanuel Lutheran Church

2507 Highland Avenue South
Birmingham, AL 35205-2497

Phone: 933-0380

Pastor's E-Mail: pastortom@firstlutheranbham.org

Bulletin E-mail: secretary@firstlutheranbham.org

Web Site: firstlutheranbham.org

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July 2010

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