



First Impressions

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

Volume 18 Issue 9

September 2011

Beloved in the Lord,

As we look to our mission of “connecting people to Jesus”, we reflect upon our belief in the priesthood of all believers ... our sharing the wonderful news of Jesus with others. Please take a moment to read this inspiring message from our guest writer this month. – Pastor Tom

LIVING FAITHFULLY

*“For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable.”
Romans 11:29*

God requires that His people live faithful lives. Indeed, He binds Himself by every promise He has made to us, and He encourages us to keep the covenant we have made with Him. God always keeps His promises, but we encounter great difficulty in keeping ours. Our society today is rife with broken promises, so much so that broken promises have become the norm, and promises that are kept have become the exception. Men used to seal business deals with a handshake, but today the simplest agreement is filled with fine print listing both what each party has if the contract is broken. What a sad commentary on our ability to live faithful lives!

Paul tells us, “the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable.” He knew that in spite of our failure to live our lives faithful to God’s call, God never takes back His gifts, and He never rejects us or withholds His love from us. In spite of our weakness and sin, God promises that His love for us will never end. To those whom He called, He will remain faithful; He will never leave us or forsake us. As Jesus loved His disciples “to the end” (John 13:1), God has promised to love us to the end as well.

What kind of lives, then, should we be living? God isn’t looking for polite guarded or “correct” responses of love from us. Rather, He is looking for hearts abandoned to Him in love, hearts overwhelmed by His promise of faithfulness to each of us. Only when we see how dearly we have been loved will we be enabled to live faithfully. Let us look again at the gifts and the call of God in our lives. Let us rehearse His miracles of healing, protection, and provision. Then, let us by the power of His Spirit renew our promises to live faithful lives of love and service, to our God. We have received so much from Him in this call and in the gifts He has bestowed on us. Let us return to Him, then, the only gift He desires—our humble, contrite hearts.

Prayer: Thank you, Lord, for your faithfulness to your promise to be with us in every task you give us to do. Enable us to give you praise and glory in our work done in your name. Amen.

Rev. Kurtis D. Schultz,
President, Southern District, Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod



4th Noah Drews
 6th Major Bowens
 7th Valeria Hubbard
 7th Daralyn Sims
 8th Michelle Stallworth Smith
 10th Priscilla Rivers Williams
 12th Lorenza Robinson

12th Lisa Whittington
 13th Frank Brown
 14th Flo Fischer
 15th Doris Daniels
 16th Linda Brown
 16th Aiden Salter
 21st Michael Golchert

23rd Jacob Drews
 24th Jim Campbell
 25th Marjorie Bowens
 26th Ann Hajduk
 27th Terry Shiflett
 27th Joseph Mayhew
 30th Zo Welch



2nd - Frank & Judy Brown
 6th - Bob & Lee Hunter
 13th - Wayne & Donna Speegle
 20th - Eric & Jody Kilbourne



Congratulations to Mike Twiss, Frances Robinson, Heather Lackey, Pastor Tom, Donna Speegle, Judy Brown, Cynthia Brown, and Ernestine Craig for correctly answering August's trivia question (University of Erfurt). You have won a month's supply of Mercy - enjoy!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

It will soon (too soon) be Fall when we traditionally think about heading back to school. So we also think about learning in Christ at First. It is time to **Rally Around the Word**.

You are each invited to join us for a Sunday School class. We have something everyone – children, youth and adults. Classes will officially start on **Rally Day, September 18th**, but most of the classes are going right now, so you don't have to wait. Sunday School is Sunday from 9 am – 10 am and we begin each month with a joint opening when we celebrate birthdays of that month. Be there to get your cupcake!



ADULTS: Lutheranism 101 taught by Pastor Lackey; Ephesians taught by Pastor Porter; Women's Study taught by Donna Speegle; Harvest (younger adults) taught by Graham and Victoria Sisson (presently joining Ephesians class).

YOUTH: (confirmation through 12th Grade)

CHILDREN: 5th – 8th Grade; 1st – 4th Grade; 3 – 6 year olds
 We look forward to a great year in Bible study and growing in Christ.



From the Editor

In July, we discontinued sending the newsletter via e-mail. In lieu of a survey to see who is actually reading the newsletter, we will be hiding a ?trivia question? within an article, announcement, or some other clever place each month. You may answer the question by sending it to the secretary's e-mail (see back page), on the website, or writing it on a piece of paper along with your name and placing it in the church secretary's mailbox across from the church office. The prize this month - Forgiveness!

The newsletter is available online at our website: www.firstlutheranbham.org.

The ~ answers~ will be published in the following month's newsletter. Have fun and read on!

WORSHIP WORKERS

September



September

FIRST/ EMMANUEL LUTHERAN

Children's Church –

- September 4 - Judy Drews
- September 11 - Kate Cahill
- September 18 - Carol Lackey
- September 25 - Pat Ryan

Readers:

- September 4 - Dcs. Anderson
- September 11 - Heather Lackey
- September 18 - Dee Mayhew
- September 25 - Brian Hayes

Altar Guild: Carol Lackey & Kate Cahill

Candles: Kate Cahill

Communion Assistant: Wilson Whittington

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

Worship Assistant: Charlie Hayes

Nursery: Meg Callahan

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDIES

Ephesians - Taught by Pastor Porter.

Adult Bible Study - Lutheranism 101 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:

Pre-school - 3 - 6 year old.

Jr. High - 5th - 8th grade.

Early Elementary - for kids in 1st - 4th grade with limited reading skills.

High School - For youth confirmation - 12th grade.

Homebound/Assisted Care:
 Charlene Seibert, Corrine Donahoo, Lucille Cooper, Hildegard Wesson, Dean Mizzell, Edward Royal, Dolores Goehler, Leona Boehme, Edna Grund, Charlotte Newell, Becky Jenkins, Evelyn Krueger, Norma Jefferson.

Recovering: Delores Goehler, Hildegard Wesson.

Illness: Pat Ryan (knee surgery), Dean Mizzell (arthritis), Edward Royal (cataract surgery), Alice Callsen (Krista's godmother has tumor), Ethan Melton, Norma Jefferson, Corrine Donahoo, Judy Drew's brother-in-law, Steve Norby (brain tumor), and Arnold Hardin (stomach cancer).

Intercession: For the people of Norway, Japan, Libya, Haiti, and the tornado and flood victims.

Missionaries: Bible Faith Lutheran Seminary (India).

Members who have lost their jobs.

Those Serving in the Military: Mike Golchert, Joel Lackey (deployed).

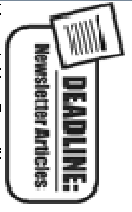


9/4 - In honor of Judy & Frank Brown's 44th Wedding Anniversary

9/11 - In honor of Lorenza Robinson's Birthday

9/25 - In honor of Marjorie Bowen's Birthday

SEPTEMBER 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>28 Church Office Closed 8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Deacon Meeting 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>29 Church Office Closed</p>	<p>30 Church Office Closed 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Women's Bible Study 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p>31 Church Office Closed 6:00 PM Gospel of John Bible Study</p>	<p>1 Church Office Closed 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>2 Church Office Closed 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>3 Church Office Closed 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Narcotics Anonymous 5:00 PM Twilight Song Service CANCELLED</p>
<p>4 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>5</p>	<p>6 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Women's Bible Study 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p>7 6:00 PM Gospel of John Bible Study</p>	<p>8 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>9 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Nehemiah Small Group 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>10 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM Narcotics Anonymous 5:00 PM Twilight Song Service</p>
<p>11 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>12 6:30 PM Church Council Meeting</p>	<p>13 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Women's Bible Study 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p>14 6:00 PM Gospel of John Bible Study</p>	<p>15 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>16 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>17 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM Narcotics Anonymous 5:00 PM Twilight Song Service</p>
<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Women's Bible Study 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p>21  Newsletter Deadline 6:00 PM Gospel of John Bible Study</p>	<p>22 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>23 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Nehemiah Small Group 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>24 Church Office Closed 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM Narcotics Anonymous 5:00 PM Twilight Song Service</p>
<p>25 Church Office Closed</p>	<p>26 Church Office Closed</p>	<p>27 Church Office Closed 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Women's Bible Study 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p>28 Church Office Closed 6:00 PM Gospel of John Bible Study</p>	<p>29 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>30 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>1 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM Narcotics Anonymous 5:00 PM Twilight Song Service</p>



Rally Day
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

8:00 AM Church Office Closed
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Choir Rehearsal
10:15 AM - 11:30 AM Sunday School
11:30 AM Deacon Meeting
7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous

Readings: 9/4 = Ezek. 33:7-9; Psalm 32:1-7; Rom. 13:1-10; Matt. 18:1-20. 9/11 = Gen. 50:15-21; Psalm 103:1-12; Rom. 14:1-2; Matt. 18:21-35

9/18 = Is. 55:6-9; Psalm 27:1-9; Phil. 1:12-14, 19-30; Matt. 20:1-16. 9/25 = Ezek. 18:1-4, 25-32; Psalm 25:1-10; Phil. 2:1-18; Matt. 21:23-32





From the
Board of Stewardship

September 2011—A Month of New Beginnings

Next to January, September is probably one of the biggest and busiest start over months in the year. A number of congregational ministries which may have been on a summer break start up again. A new school year has started. It is interesting to note that September opens with Labor Day when we pause to thank God for honest and fruitful labor. Perhaps that is appropriate since things pick up after vacations and other summer activities and we have more opportunities for service.

September also marks the beginning of autumn and that will be a welcome change for many people who this past summer were impacted by a record number of tornados, serious flooding around major rivers, heat and drought that broke many records, along with many wild fires that caused so much destruction.

In spite of all the above problems God still richly blessed much of our country with seasonable weather so that seedtime and harvest prevailed and the activities of agriculture, commerce and transportation continued so that the earth was fruitful and yielded its increase to supply food for all of God's creatures. Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!

God's stewards appreciate new opportunities to start over again after life has become like a long, hot summer. In September many of God's faithful stewards can get involved with new and exciting volunteer activities in their churches and communities. In September many of our students can begin one of their best years of learning. In 1972, who was the manager of the Detroit Tigers? In September many of our churches and schools can get involved with some of the most exciting ministries in their history. A fresh start is always appreciated. The past is behind us; the future is still in front of us but the present is where we do our work as God's stewards. God has some great things in mind for us as His stewards. He wants us to use our talents, our time, our resources and our relationships in ways that honor Him and bring blessings to those around us.

Sometimes we may feel like we just can't get started! We may feel inadequate to take on new challenges. We may remember when we have tried some bold ventures before and they didn't work out. We can chase those negative thoughts away when we remember words like these from one of our well-known hymns:

*Let none hear you idly saying, "there is nothing I can do,"
While the multitudes are dying and the Master calls for you.
Take the task He gives you gladly, let His work your pleasure be;
Answer quickly when He calleth, "Here am I, send me, send me." (LSB 826)*

So, keep your eyes open for some new opportunities to put your time, talents and resources to work for the Lord and His people, and when those opportunities come, **GO FOR IT!**

Taken from LCMS website



As those who attended the voters' meeting on August 21 will recall, you learned that the Deacons Board is responsible for the following areas in our congregational life: 1) The spiritual welfare of the Pastors) 2) The spiritual welfare of the congregation members 3) The supervision of everything pertaining to congregational worship. This is a tall order, and as sinful humans, we inevitably will fall short from time to time - but we continue, with God's blessings, His Son's salvation, and the Holy Spirit's guidance - to move forward in our congregational goal - Connecting People to Jesus.

Over the next several months, the leadership of this church body will be focusing on several goals, including 1) Conducting a new spiritual gifts survey of all of members, to identify the many gifts and talents our members have, and to help us identify those individuals who fit best into the many positions of responsibility to be found within our congregation - be they short term or long. 2) Assimilating our newer members into congregational life in ways that will strengthen their spiritual walk with their Savior, and create opportunities for each of us to share the common goal of Connecting People to Jesus. 3) To emphasize the importance of participation in Bible Study and to make a variety of study options available. 4) To work together as boards, members, and as a congregational unit, to share God's Light in the community around us, be it near or far, and open our hearts, arms, and doors to those who long to hear about Jesus - even if they don't recognize that longing just yet! 5) To welcome our members new and old, to share in the great celebration of the Lord's Supper, as often as possible, for the forgiveness of our sins and the strengthening of our faith - and for the opportunity to participate in a weekly worship service that gives glory to God, through the hearing of His Word, the receiving of His Sacrament, and the fellowship of those who share our beliefs.

In all things that we undertake, we want to proceed with conviction; with a goal of doing things well and in an orderly fashion; and providing our people with opportunities to serve where their hearts, minds, and gifts give them the best chance of succeeding.

With Pastors Lackey and Porter as our shepherds, God as our leader, Jesus as our focus and soul mate, and the Holy Spirit leading the way, the only limits on our efforts will be those we self-impose. Let's Connect People to Jesus!

I Love to Tell the Story

The Evangelism Board is charged with bringing the Gospel to the unchurched and to accomplish this task involves the work of all of God's people to spread the Gospel. Jesus has charged us all with the great commission, Matthew 28:19-20.

"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. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Simply stated, we are **connecting people to Jesus.**

Your first reaction may be, "I can't speak eloquently!" At First Lutheran Church we use many ways to tell about this wonderful grace and love of God. We use most modern forms of communication and public relations to spread God's word: a web site, a Facebook page, e-mails, signs, special events, press releases, brochures, banners, bulletin boards, signs, greeters, name tags and most any tool you could imagine.

We work with other boards to promote their activities, such as Fellowship events, Rally Day for the Board of Education, and other events. Most importantly, we work with the Pastors to reach out to our community, welcome visitors and new members and to integrate these members into the family of First Lutheran Church.

(Cont. on page 7)



(Cont. from page 6)

It does sound overwhelming--but remember that we are to sow the seeds, water and watch for the Holy Spirit to grow. **There is a place for everyone who can willingly and joyfully participate in this vital effort.**

People who will commit and follow through with a task, whether we are holding a community survey, placing signs along the roadside, or holding an Oktoberfest. As Lutherans, we are making it known that we are here to minister in many ways, feeding the homeless, building houses for Habitat, holding special events- all are tools to connect people to Jesus.

Today I am asking you to commit to a simple task—whatever you are comfortable with, to connect people to Jesus. There are sign-up sheets on the bulletin boards for events that will happen in the next 100 days. Please select one or more activities that you will do. There is something here for everyone!



The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the proper maintenance and repair of the church property, the representation of the congregation in all legal matters, and the general protection of the congregation against loss or damage of whatever nature.

Most people understand quickly what this means, tell someone on this Board when the toilets are stopped up or the refrigerator is not working. Now let me give you the true perspective on the facilities. I recently read "Surprising Insights from the Unchurched and Proven Ways to Reach Them" by Thom S. Rainer.

At First Lutheran Church, we were functioning fairly well in most of principles of reaching the unchurched. Yet there was one glaring shortfall that I was surprised that we did not meet.

And I quote,

“Check Your Facilities

The formerly unchurched spoke cogently of the necessity of having, neat, clean, and updated facilities to reach people. “I saw a lot of things through unchurched eyes before I became a Christian a few months ago. What surprised me was how many churches let their facilities and their landscaping go to the dogs. It was as if they were advertising ‘we don’t care’ by the way they looked. I sure didn’t want to go back to those places.” This quote came from surveys conducted by the author of this book and represented many comments made by unchurched throughout the nation.”

Yes, the Board of Trustees has a part in evangelism too! This board organizes two “work days” annually to tackle a number of projects that range from a good spring-cleaning to painting and landscaping. This effort doesn’t require special skills or training (although that is a great blessing especially if there is an urgent repair to be made). In addition, I will post a list of small tasks that need attention and you may select one or two tasks to complete on your own time. Just initial and check off that task when you have completed it.

Recently we completed a very large project, painting all of the classrooms. Special thanks to Krista Wanat, Tom and Heidi Noon, Lorenza Robinson, Derek Robinson and Everett Robinson, Glen and Pat Thompson, Wilson Whittington and Wayne Speegle who all made contributions to cover the cost of the materials and painted a classroom. Several people who were unable to paint made contributions to the project. The paint and supplies cost \$529 and most of this unbudgeted expense was covered by your special gifts.

Look at this building and grounds as you would look at your own home. You will see things that need repair, cleaning or replacement. And when you tell me or another board member about it, please be prepared to help keep our “home” (God’s house) in a manner pleasing to God. Don’t let our visitors think we don’t care or that we are going out of business!



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

5:00 PM Saturday Evening - Twilight Song
Find us on Facebook!

First/Emmanuel Lutheran Church

2507 Highland Avenue South
Birmingham, AL 35205-2497

933-0380

Pastors' E-Mails: pastortom@firstlutheranbham.org
pastorporter@firstlutheranbham.org

Bulletin E-mail: secretary@firstlutheranbham.org

Web Site: www.firstlutheranbham.org

IN THIS ISSUE

Board Reports.....Pages 5-7
Church Calendar.....Page 4
Prayer Requests.....Page 3
Worship Workers.....Page 3

Church Staff

Rev. Tom Lackey, Associate Pastor
Rev. Arthur Porter, Associate Pastor
Bob Collier, Director of Music
Krista E. Wanat, Secretary
secretary@firstlutheranbham.org
Krista Wanat
Editor of First Impressions
newsletter@firstlutheranbham.org
kwanat11803@charter.net

Place first class
postage here

September 2011