



# The First Word

Monthly Newsletter of First Lutheran Church - Albany, NY

[www.FirstLutheranAlbany.org](http://www.FirstLutheranAlbany.org)

February, 2015

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Dear People of First,

The tradition for many people is that come Lent, you give up something. It's not my favorite tradition because most people chose to give up something that will make their life better. The top choices in recent years have been chocolate, swearing, and alcohol. You might give up chocolate to lose weight. You might give up swearing to feel like a better person. You might give up alcohol to clear out your system for a time. Face book and fast food are also among the top ten: You might chose to give up Facebook to combat what for you has become an addiction. You might choose to give up fast food to eat more healthy food.

The problem with these current day "Lenten disciplines" is that they're generally self-serving. The giving something up for Lent traditionally comes from the desire to identify more closely with the suffering of Christ who gave up his life and suffered for the sake of others. Not self-suffering but choosing to take on suffering to serve others.

This year at St John's and First, you are offered the chance to give up for the sake of others. The others happen to be children and youth. The "suffering" is giving up a couple hours of your valuable time. The opportunity is the Fat Tuesday Carnival for kids from time on Tuesday February 17<sup>th</sup>.

Now Fat Tuesday, itself has a little different tradition. On Fat Tuesday you were to use up something. Use up your sugar your flour and your fats. [Hence the name Fat Tuesday.] Use them all up, so you have none left, because as the tradition goes, you will not have any of that in your house [no baked goods] all during Lent.

For First and St. John's, what we will be using up on Fat Tuesday is love and caring. We're going to be giving away and using up all our love and caring for the neighborhood children and youth who come to the carnival. There's no school that week, and the many of the neighborhood kids, unlike kids from the suburbs have nothing to do with their time. So for a couple hours on Fat Tuesday, we can give them some fun, and some love and care.



Doesn't that sound like a great time to kick off out Lenten season? We hope you will be there. There's food to purchase or prepare, There's costume materials to buy [see pic!]. There's set up and clean up. There's games to staff. There's kids to love. There's something for you! Call the church office or sign up on your bulletin board.

Passionate about our passion of nurturing kids,

*Pastor Allie*

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Rev. Alison L. Leitzel, Pastor

Lauren A. Blatt, Vicar

Dorothy Johnson, Director of Music

Julie Lind, Parish Administrator

Alex Nagy, Parish Sexton



ALBANY CLUSTER  
MIDWEEK LENTEN WORSHIP



**BROKEN** and **RESTORED**

February 25<sup>th</sup>

First Lutheran—*“Broken Vessels”*

Preaching—Pastor Knarvik

March 4<sup>th</sup>

St. John’s—*“Broken Trust”*

Preaching—Pastor Preisinger

March 11<sup>th</sup>

Holy Spirit—*“Broken Community”*

Preaching—Pastor Leitzel

March 18<sup>th</sup>

St. Paul’s—*“Broken Justice”*

Preaching—Pastor Gruenwald

March 25<sup>th</sup>

Good Shepherd—*“Broken Promises”*

Preaching—Pastor Page

**HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER at 7pm**

Every evening begins with  
a Soup Supper at 6 pm



**Ash Wednesday**  
**Wednesday, February 18**  
**7:00 p.m.**

***“Broken Hearts” • Joel 2:12-14***

Our hearts are broken in sorrow over sin; Christ restores our hearts through his forgiveness.

Join us at First Lutheran for a worship service of Confession, Communion and the Imposition of Ashes .

*Vicar Lauren A. Blatt, preaching*



**Mardi Gras - Fat Tuesday**

Mardi Gras is French for Fat Tuesday which is the practice of the last night of eating richer, fatty foods before the ritual fasting of the Lenten season. Popular practices on Mardi Gras include wearing masks and costumes, dancing, parades, parties, and of course debauchery. Mardi Gras is often represented with the symbolic colors: purple, green, and gold. Purple represents justice, green represents faith, and gold represents power.

**First and St. John’s Lutheran Churches are hosting a Fat Tuesday Kids Carnival in Wittenberg Hall at First Lutheran.** There will be carnival games, food, and fun! The carnival will begin at 1:00pm and end around 3:00pm. There will be set up around 12:00pm (after the Albany Senior Orchestra’s practice) and clean-up will occur after the carnival. We need volunteers from both congregations to bring healthy snacks, prize donations, and we need volunteers to be present at the carnival to run games and hand out food! Sign up on the sheets on the bulletin boards at both churches!



Dear Brothers and Sisters in our Lord,

Clinical Pastoral Education is a step in the process of ordination in which candidates serve as a chaplain in a clinical setting (hospital or otherwise). This is most often served during a summer in between seminary semesters. In clinical pastoral education (CPE) I was always taught to talk about death with words like death, dying, and dead. People often try to sugarcoat death by using words like “passed on” or “deceased”. It’s our last feeble attempt to evade death or to pretend like death isn’t final. We, as people of the cross, know that death does not have the final word, but here on earth dead is dead. The dead don’t come back to life, at least not until Jesus returns. It doesn’t seem comforting, but hear me out.

We use Ash Wednesday to dedicate an entire day to talking about death. The imposition of ashes is meant to remind us that we were created from dust, and one day we too will die and return to dust. The most moving experience I’ve ever had in worship happened on Ash Wednesday a few years ago. I watched the pastor reach down to impose ashes on his



3 year old son. He said, “Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.” The pastor then began to cry. It was clear to me that the pastor recognized exactly what he was saying in that moment. He was acknowledging that one day his son would die, and this is something that we aren’t too keen to talk about. We don’t make a habit of talking about how our loved ones will one day die, especially our children.

Remembering that we will die is not something that sounds comfortable, but it’s in the hope of the resurrection that our comfort is attained. When we hear the story of Lazarus’ death we find Jesus weeping. We find Jesus in a pit of emotions, but Jesus doesn’t let death have the final word. Here, Jesus goes to the tomb and cries out, “Lazarus, Come out!” Jesus is the one who does not let death stand. Jesus looks at death, stares death in the face, and Jesus says, “Hey death... where is your sting?” It’s comforting to know that Jesus has gone before us. Jesus came to earth and died,

experienced the fullness of death so death could no longer control us.

As we look forward to our Lenten journey together we can remember that we are dust and to dust we shall return, but we can also remember that in the waters of baptism we are put to death in the water and raised again to new life. Our God has come before us and tasted death and now our God has prepared a place for us and awaits us in glory.



Yours in Christ,  
Vicar Lauren A. Blatt



Midweek Wednesday Lenten worship will be offered at St. John's Chapel, 303 Sand Creek Road, Colonie

**Ash Wednesday, February 18 at 12:15 p.m. and continue weekly through March 25.**

Worship will also be held at the chapel on Maundy Thursday (April 2) and Good Friday (April 3) at 12:15 p.m.

## Who the heck is Habakkuk??

Let’s journey together (with Vicar Blatt) through the prophet’s short 3-chapter prophetic book!



We will discuss the origins, authorship, dates, and other historical facts about Habakkuk as well as what was at stake for Habakkuk and the Jewish people! (*please note: for study at St. John’s, please use any entrance and for study at First Lutheran, please use the State Street entrance*)

### Week 4

Feb. 3rd at 10:00 am @ St. John’s  
Feb. 5th at 7:00 pm @ First Lutheran

### Week 5

Feb. 10th at 10:00 am @ St. John’s  
Feb. 12th at 7:00 pm @ First Lutheran



## *Damien Center Dinner*

The Lutheran Cluster churches are once again sponsoring the February Damien Center dinner. This year the dinner is being held on Saturday, February 28th at our site. First Lutheran is responsible for providing the main entree, which will be lasagna. We need people to make five 9x13 pans of lasagna. If you are willing to bring a pan of lasagna, please contact Janice Logan at 437-1121 or [jlogan6@nycap.rr.com](mailto:jlogan6@nycap.rr.com).

## *Food Pantry Donations*

Thank you to all who have recently donated to the Sr. Maureen Joyce Food Pantry. Last week, we delivered an entire car load of items, for which the Pantry was very grateful! During the holiday season, the demand for food and other necessary supplies increases dramatically. Therefore, once the holidays are over, the pantry resources are greatly depleted. As we begin 2015, please remember to bring that extra non-perishable item to church for our less fortunate neighbors. Thanks again for your continuing commitment.

## *Homeless Shelter Dinners*

The Lutheran Cluster churches provide the Tuesday dinners for the homeless shelter housed in our building. Thank you very much Barbara McGuinness, Kathy Ordway and First Friends for making dinners in December and January.



*The Late Winter/Early Spring Brooks Barbeque Comes Back to Good Shepherd!!*

**Save the date!**

On Friday, March 6, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Loudonville, is having a Brooks Barbeque dinner of chicken or ribs. There will only be take-out available. Tickets will go on sale beginning February 15. Please call Julie in the FLC church office for more information!

## *Senior Services of Albany*

Each year FLC gives money collected from the Food Pantry envelope to different organizations who provide food or feeding programs in the area. One of the recipients of our money this Christmas was Senior Services of Albany for their Meals On Wheels program. Below is the thank you letter they sent us in recognition of this gift.

*Thank you so much for your gift of \$150.00 in December, Your continued support truly does mean so much to us here at Senior Services of Albany and all the people we serve!*

*For more than 60 years, Senior Services of Albany has been the area's leading provider of services and programs to enhance quality of life and foster independence for older adults and caregivers. Senior Services of Albany provides capital region seniors with vital services in our community, including transportation, adult day programs, grocery shopping assistance, friendly home visits, health insurance counseling, health and wellness programs, Meals on Wheels and so much more. As one of the largest Meals on Wheels programs in upstate New York, Senior Services of Albany's staff and volunteers provide more than 800 meals each day and our tiny meals on wheels kitchen prepares almost 250,000 meals a year. Senior Services of Albany continues to serve primarily low-income clients, and relies on the support of the community to help maintain these services and programs.*

*Sincerely,  
Elizabeth Hutson  
Director of Development*



## *Fair Trade Coffee*

You can support farmers throughout the world and drink great coffee by purchasing Fair Trade Coffee. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (Loudonville) has provided a service to members and friends by ordering coffee directly from Equal Exchange - a faith based cooperative for fair trade. Contact the church office for information on how to order. The deadline for this order is February 15.



## Church Council Highlights—January 13, 2015

- The Eloise apartments and a neighbor have requested to rent spaces in our parking lot. We are looking into this.
- Pastor Allie will be on vacation Jan. 29, 2015 – Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>.
- A part-time bookkeeper has been hired to take care of the books and pay bills until the treasurer's position can be filled.
- Joint worship service with SJ will be held at FLC on Feb. 15, 2015.
- An anonymous donor donated money to bring the Sunday School line of the 2015 budget back up to last year's amount.
- Council approved new job descriptions to hire and evaluate employees. The secretary now called Administrative Assistant, the Sexton now called the Custodian, and the Music Director/Organist.
- Council received with regret Dottie Johnson's notice to retire from FLC the end of February. We are indeed grateful for her 3+ years of music ministry with us.
- Council also approved a protocol for handling special giving monies and bills coming into FLC.
- No responses have been received in response to our request for families interested in having a staffed nursery during service.
- Council agreed to sell the FLC van given its poor condition, the cost of insuring it, and its limited use.
- Council agreed to participate in the Green-Fiber Community Paper Recycling program. (More on how this will provide FLC income from paper it otherwise would just recycle.)

## Church Council Highlights December 10, 2014

- There will be a memorial service for Odell Smith before the community dinner, 4:30, on Monday December 15, 2014.
- Council decided to send \$4000 of the \$8665 in the Homeless Shelter account to the homeless shelter.
- All the council members are encouraged to attend at least one community dinner to see how appreciative the neighbors are.
- The council reviewed the 2015 proposed budget and approved recommending it to the congregation. The dedicated funds have been updated and simplified. We will put these changes into place in 2015 and refine the system during the year.
- A new treasurer must be found ASAP. Council authorized Pastor Allie to look into hiring a temporary bookkeeper to keep our bills being paid until we get a new financial system up and running. When the new system is in place, we hope to train a volunteer to serve as Treasurer.
- FTT will be holding a Fat Tuesday event for community school children on Tuesday February 17, 2015. We will need many helpers to make this successful.

*Submitted by Sandy O'Connor*

## Additional Council Notes:

### **News about temporary bookkeeper**

FLC was blessed to hire Shannon, a temp bookkeeper from CFO for Hire, who does not need to be trained. She will keep our bills being paid, and do the month and year end work. Our computer financial system was seriously outdated to the point that we cannot get the proper financial reports we need, so Shannon will keep us going and help us make the transition to a whole new financial system in the computer. When the transition is complete, we will be looking for a volunteer from the congregation to resume the work of treasurer. We thank God for FLC's operating reserves that fund the temporary bookkeeper.

### **Other volunteers needed**

In addition to our future need of a volunteer treasurer, FLC has a number of positions open right now. Please look at this list and see if one of these is a volunteer position you might fill. We have advertised these before with no takers; maybe now is the time for you to say, "Yes! I will do that."

- worship and music chair
- evangelism chair
- 2 members for FTT
- One member for shelter oversight committee

You can speak with Pr Allie or a council member to get more info about any of these positions.



New York State  
COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

## *Moral Mondays Initiative*

As a person of faith you have the opportunity to share in advocacy efforts every Monday of March as we encourage our elected officials to pass a moral budget which addresses the needs of all New Yorkers. Every Monday of March people of all faith backgrounds gather together in the War Room at the State Capitol Building (Albany) and spend 20 minutes to half an hour in quiet prayer and contemplation. This is not a protest. It is a gathering in which we let our elected officials know that we are praying for them, for God's guidance in their work as they make difficult decisions, and for open hearts and minds as they look at things from a moral rather than a political point of view. We also pray for those doing advocacy work that they might find strength, promise, and hope as they work for justice in New York State.

No reservations are needed. We meet at 12:00 noon (Mondays - March 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30) at the State Capitol. If you would like more information about Moral Monday events, please contact the Rev. Dr. Paula J. Gravelle, Executive Director of the New York State Council of Churches (pgravelle@nyscoc.org or at 518-436-9319).

If you've never been involved in advocacy work before this is a great way to get a feel for putting your faith in action in the political arena. Please join us.

## Cornerstone Campus Ministry Winter Break Service Trip 2015—Tucson, AZ

Rev. Sandy Damhof, Protestant Campus Minister

*Each year, First Lutheran contributes \$200 to “adopt-a-student” for the Campus Ministry mission trip. Read on and discover how this years’ trip impacted the students.*

### **Tuesday, January 13, 2015**

The snow of New York threatened to keep us from our destination, but alas, all 11 of us arrived in Phoenix Monday evening and early Tuesday morning; by 4:00 a.m. we were safely tucked in our sleeping bags at The Good Shepherd United Church of Christ only to have our alarms awaken us to our first day of our border adventure. Today we worked with volunteers from Samaritan, an organization that seeks to serve migrants on both side of the border. You can learn more about them at <http://thegoodshepherducc.org/Samaritans.html>. We accompanied volunteers to the Mexican side of the border, where we heard stories the stories of three men who were deported last night and dropped at Nogales. We served at the Jesuits at El Comedor distributing clothing and assisting migrants caught in the middle. It was a profoundly moving day as we listened, learned and shared together. Below are the reflections of two of our students.

### **Wednesday, January 14**

Alas, we’re playing “catch-up” with our blog; had a little laptop issue. So, yesterday (Wednesday) was a pretty intense day. After taking the morning to catch up on our sleep we met Lynn, our guide for the afternoon. Lynn is a regular visitor to Operation Streamline – the federal courts program to process immigrants who are detained; it's been declared unconstitutional twice but Arizona keeps making small surface changes that somehow keep it running. Google it and get ready to be upset. She provided us with a bit of an introduction – basically prepping us for what we would see – up to 70 men and women shackled, wearing the clothes they crossed in (minus belts, shoelaces, etc). About 8 at a time appeared before the judge where they were “processed” at an alarmingly fast rate (nope, no “due process” here). They had previously been given 30 minutes with a lawyer in preparation. Most were then sentenced to 30 – 180 days and sent off preparing the way for the next group; within a short time all 80 had been processed and sent away. Our heads were spinning; our hearts were hurting. Our eyes continue to be opened to reality of our immigration policy and the impact it has on humans – real live human beings. Below are stories from

two of our students. You can view the pictures at our Facebook page “Cornerstone Campus Ministry” (note, we add pictures to our album each day, so scroll down to see the new pics); we actually don’t have many pictures from yesterday since cameras are not allowed in the courtroom or federal building. Again, thank you for your support and we look forward to sharing more of our stories when we return.

### **Thursday, January 15, 2015**

Today was a day to be “on the move”. We started our day with a morning hike at Madera Canyon. The sites were beautiful but everywhere we go we are reminded that these are trails used by migrants and while we leisurely stroll through enjoy the views, the birds, the sites and the sounds, there are others who use these trails and are ever-vigilant about being seen and never get to pause and enjoy the beauty. This afternoon we completed a “Desert Memorial Walk”: a walk through the desert to visit the locations where the bodies of migrants were found – those who never reached their location of their hopes and dreams. As our guide, Ed Ford, led us through us through the trails, we got a small sense of what it must be like to make the journey, constantly dodging the cactus and prickly bushes that make the walk nearly impossible. We had to pause often to remove the cactus “stickers”. No wonder migrants emerge from their journey filled with cuts and bruises, dehydrated with the soles of their feet filled with blisters. We spent 2 hours in the desert in the middle of the day with a trusted guide; they spend 5-6 days walking non-stop, day and night, trying to follow a “coyote” who may find it just as easy to leave them behind if they get sick or unable to stay with “the pack”. Below are the reflections of two more of our students. We hope their words convey what we are experiencing, feeling, learning and living.

### **Saturday, January 17, 2015**

It's hard to believe that our week of learning and serving is over. It's early Sunday morning and we are on our way back to New York. My head is filled with soooooo much information that I have no idea how we'll even begin to share it. We all came to Arizona with a personal expectations and some ideas about immigration. Last night at our "debriefing session" it became abundantly clear that what we thought we knew was only the tip of the iceberg and in reality the issue is huge - so huge that we're not sure we can wrap our minds around it. There's NAFTA and CAFTA, there's phrases like "constitution-free zone", there's checkpoints and searches and deportations and yes, there are deaths. When I first started planning

the trip, I explained that this one would be different - it would NOT be disaster response like we have done in the past - no hurricane, no tornado, no wild fires. But as one of our speakers pointed out yesterday at the "Border Fair" we attended, "this is a national disaster and it's ongoing; over 3000 people have lost their lives; they just don't happen to be American's. The numbers are the same as if a small airline crashed every week and everyone lost their lives but there is no search and rescue."

When we return we look forward to sharing out stories with you. Until then enjoy the stories of two of our students below. (and say a prayer for us as we fly back today).

### Sunday, January 18, 2015

*Hello! My name is Christine Bloecker and I am the Mission and Service Coordinator for Cornerstone Campus Ministry for the fourth year a row. In addition to helping Sandy plan and carry out several volunteer events throughout the school year, I also collaborate with her to plan where we go for our annual winter service trip. Outside of Cornerstone activities, I am a first year graduate student in Atmospheric Sciences at the University at Albany working on climate-related research. (I graduated in May 2014 and returned here for graduate studies; Cornerstone was one of the reasons I chose to stay in Albany.)*

*The summers of 2013 and 2014 were lackluster in terms of the Atlantic Hurricane Season, and the southern US has also been relatively spared from violent tornado outbreaks over the past couple of years. While a shortage of disasters is undoubtedly a blessing for the people of the South, it did leave our group at a loss for where to go this winter to work on disaster relief. Fortunately we have an alumnus by the name of Liz Birch who suggested we go to the US-Mexico border to learn about immigration issues and get hands-on experience working with those affected by the US's border security agenda. Several phone calls and website visits later, we had a host and a somewhat vague plan about what we were going to do.*

*I admit I wasn't really sure what we were getting ourselves into when we planned this trip. All I knew was that we were going to learn how illegal immigration works. I had a neutral opinion on immigration this time a couple weeks ago. That is, I believed they come because they want money for their families, which is a fair goal, but they should get here legally. It's not that hard, right? Just get a visa. I came to realize as I listened to their stories, saw the way they're dealt "justice", and literally walked in their footsteps, the issue is so much more complex than our*

*politicians and society would have you believe. They come here to work because their families are starving or ill. They come here to be with their children and loved ones. They don't get the documentation because they cannot afford the fees, and the paperwork is overwhelming, even for educated migrants. All these migrants know is the only way they can afford the food and medicine they need is to go where the money is, and that place is the US.*

*Since when did undocumented migrants become a danger to our society? Today, this is the question I find myself asking. Jesus taught us to give food and shelter to the stranger and to welcome him into our midst in Matthew 25:34-40-- "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" Even our Statue of Liberty beckons for us to welcome the poor and oppressed into our land of opportunity and share the American Dream- "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free." Who are we to slam the door in the face of the poor when it was in fact our legislation, the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that doomed the Mexican economy, forcing many of them into the situation they face today?*

*Walls won't stop them from crossing. Guards won't stop them. The desert won't stop them. Not even the fear of death will stop them for surely they face that prospect already without attempting to cross the border. They offer us hard labor for mere pennies, and not only are they willing but even grateful to be offered this type of labor we often deem as "undignified". We instead spit in their faces, call them criminals for wanting to provide for their families, and humiliate them with shackles and bigoted legislation and falsely placed blame. It's time for us to meet them where they are, learn the truth, and share it with the rest of our country. In our week at Arizona, we saw people of all ages and ethnicities come together to address this issue with compassion and empathy. I feel Cornerstone did their part in joining the discussion, and if we can share what we learned with others, maybe it can spark something that can result in real change. Rebuilding houses and roofs is good work, but what we did in Arizona was so much deeper on an emotional level, not to mention largely unknown or ignored outside of border states. Despite some planning difficulties, this trip went extremely well for something so new and unfamiliar to our group, and I would jump at the chance to come back in the future and do more.*

*Christine Bloecker  
Graduate and Teaching Assistant in Atmospheric Sciences  
at SUNY Albany*

CHICAGO (ELCA) – Since the outbreak of the Ebola virus in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has provided \$275,000 to support the work of Lutheran companion churches in both African countries.

The funds were disbursed through Lutheran Disaster Response International to ELCA companion churches and partners responding to the immediate needs of people impacted by the disease. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), nearly 8,500 people have died due to Ebola in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea.

“There are some signs the situation in Liberia and Sierra Leone is getting better, (but) Ebola is more than just a health crisis. Ebola also has a devastating impact on the livelihoods in Liberia and Sierra Leone,” said Vitaly Vorona, ELCA program director for Lutheran Disaster Response International. “Women and children are particularly vulnerable.”

“One of my proudest moments as a Lutheran came when Mrs. Roselyn Kawah, (chairperson) of a concerned women group in Monrovia, enthusiastically expressed her gratitude to the Lutheran Church at a presentation ceremony a few weeks ago,” said the Rev. Jensen Seyenkulo, bishop of the Lutheran Church in Liberia. “Mrs. Kawah spoke of the enormous challenges the country faces and how the Lutheran Church has been a shining ray of light in this bleak situation.”

“Although we still have the aftermath of Ebola to deal with, there are very few new cases in Liberia today,” said Seyenkulo. “Liberians have learned a lot. Even these improvements can partly be attributed to our partners' accompaniment. We are grateful, very grateful.”

The ELCA has responded in the following areas:

- **\$10,000** helped cover air-freight costs for Global Health Ministries to ship personal protective equipment to Monrovia. This was at the request of the Lutheran Church in Liberia. Global Health Ministries provides medical supplies and funding for health care programs in Lutheran churches in 20 countries.
- **\$85,000** to the Lutheran Church in Liberia provided food assistance of oil, rice and fish to nearly 3,000 households in six territorial areas. Food supplies were necessary because many areas were under quarantine in an effort to contain the spread of the Ebola virus.
- **\$50,000** to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sierra Leone provided oil, rice and fish to 4,750 individuals who were under quarantine.
- **\$50,000** to Lutheran Development Service in Liberia to help raise awareness and share messages about Ebola symptoms and prevention methods to 4,500 individuals in Liberia. The funds also provided for a contractor to

ensure that the construction of an isolation center at Phebe Hospital and the School of Nursing meets WHO standards. Phebe Hospital is a Lutheran hospital and is the largest public health institution in Liberia.

- **\$80,000** to the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone to support the prevention of the Ebola virus in two districts and 180 communities through various activities, including awareness and distribution of bleach and water containers.

Vorona said moving forward Lutheran Disaster Response will “shift its major Ebola efforts from immediate response to primary attention to recovery needs.”

He said the ELCA will provide \$146,500 to support the following programs:

- **Strengthening health systems** in Liberia and Sierra Leone as an essential component of an ELCA long-term strategy
- **Support to orphans** and youth affected by Ebola in Liberia
- **Promotion of proper hygiene** and safe drinking water in Sierra Leone
- **Income generation** and job creation in Liberia and Sierra Leone

Lutheran Disaster Response provides assistance to survivors of natural disasters and humanitarian crises throughout the world. This support is carried out, both domestically and internationally, in coordination with local affiliates – social ministry organizations, agencies, partners and international companion churches – located in the disaster-affected communities.

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### *Midweek Worship with Vicar Blatt*

This worship service will be contemplative prayer, public prayer, repetitive song, quiet, readings, and “less formal” than Sunday morning’s liturgy. Before and after worship there will be coffee and snacks. This service is meant to not only serve as a time away and a time with God, but it also serves as a time to build community and fellowship with all who gather.

- **Feb. 4th** at 7:00 pm @ **First Lutheran Hartwick Lounge** (enter State Street door)
- **Feb. 11th** at 7:00 pm @ **St. John’s Lounge**—(enter Bradford Street door)

*This midweek service will take a hiatus from Ash Wednesday (February 18) until it resumes on the Wednesday after Easter (April 8)*

## ***We remember in our prayers...***

**Our Members:** Elga Alksnis, Lois Coon, Marcia Coon, Jane Culver, Luther Dyer, Judy Greenwood, Keith and Patricia Hansen, Sue Harper, Gerry Hoyt, Beverly Ann Kurtessis, Jeff Lind, Jim Leonard, Mildred Logan, Ginny MacVittie, Barbara McGuinness, Stan and Jeannie Polonski, Bill and Laura Shufelt, Marc Salzer, Marilyn Salzer, Geri Saulpaugh, Daniel Smith, Elaine Smith, Ed Vining, Nathaniel Weeks, Matthew Wentland, and Charlotte Wolffe.

### **Our Friends, Neighbors & Family:**

- Shirley Anderson: friend of Marcelle Olsen
- Anna Bestenheider: sister of Bernie Shafarzek
- Brad & Chad: prayers for health, housing & work
- Marianne Brunner: friend of Lisa Rittberger
- Joy Bull: friend of the Shafarzeks
- Susan Caltrider, Bertha Siter: nieces of Geraldine Saulpaugh
- Chuck Conklin: brother of Bob Conklin
- Chris Cymenman: friend of Barbara McGuinness
- Clifford Denegar: cousin of Nancy Endres & Barbara Shafarzek
- Marilyn Erling: mother of Anne Erling
- Kathryn Hansen: sister of Bob Frost
- Patricia Havill: friend of Marcelle Olsen
- Nancy Hill: sister of Patricia Hansen
- Kathy Horner: sister of Judy Carlson
- Deborah Igris: great niece of Geraldine Saulpaugh
- Michael Kilmade: friend of the O'Connor family
- Richard King: father of Julie Lind
- Jodie Lanchantin: family member of Karie and Scott Robertson
- Janet Larson: wife of Pastor Ed Larson
- Patricia Leonard: friend of Joyce Aiello
- Rosalind Lombardo: friend of Marcelle Olsen
- Gloria Mangano: sister of Joyce Aiello and her sisters
- Joan Miller: friend of Pastor Hunter
- Dan & Mary Ellen O'Brien: friends of Nancy Endres
- Margaret Onisk: friend of Marcelle Olsen
- Pamela Petersen: niece of Joan & Judy Greenwood
- Lois Phelps: sister of Clara LaBaron
- Ruth Pitts: sister of Joyce Aiello and sisters
- Pastor Paul Rees-Rohrbacher: retired pastor of St. John's
- Kelly Salzio: friend of Marcelle Olsen
- Robert Schoneman, III: great-nephew of Joan & Judy Greenwood
- Melissa & Amanda Sippel: granddaughters of Barbara McGuinness
- Janice Tate: sister of Clara LeBaron
- Lou Thonges: cousin of Bernie Shafarzek
- Lois Van Buren: aunt of Bob Conklin
- Alyson Ward: daughter of Barbara McGuinness
- Matthew & Michael Ward: grandsons of Barbara McGuinness
- Josephine Warren: niece of Geraldine Saulpaugh
- Mahammad Yahgi: friend of First Lutheran
- Gary Wilkie: nephew of Eve and Lyle Norton
- David Young: brother of Jan Frost

### **Our Men and Women in Uniform:**

- Sgt. Taylor Engelhardt, Korea: grandson of Ed & Carol Engelhardt
- Tyler Pressley PVT. 1st class, Korea: son of a friend of Sandy O'Connor
- PO Lindsay Jaeger, Navy, Bahrain: niece of Joni Sanchez

### **Our Wider Mission Concerns:**

- For the people affected by natural disasters.
- For peace.
- For the unemployed.
- For Allie Leitzel, Dean of Hudson Mohawk Conference
- For John Macholz, Presiding Bishop of the Upstate NY Synod
- For Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA



*"Heartfelt thanks from Marie Heins' family to everyone for your cards, calls, and prayers during her recent illness and death.*

*She valued the fellowship of FLC greatly, especially in recent years the home-visit ministries of Barbara McGuinness and Pastor Allie, and her decades-long friendship with the inestimable Julie Lind. You all are part of her extended family, and we thank you deeply.*

*Best wishes to all  
from Vicki Heins-Shaw and Stewart Shaw."*

## ***Help Us to Be Prepared!***


Our Albany Lutheran Cluster Churches are beginning the process of developing Congregational Disaster Preparedness Plans. Representatives of all 5 congregations will gather at St. John's Lutheran Church on Tuesday, February 3, 2015 at 7:00 PM. We will have a presentation from Roger Behrens, a member of our Lutheran Disaster Response Upstate NY team and we will receive guidance from him as we begin to develop plans for our congregations. These plans will not only be beneficial to our own facilities, but we will also develop plans for helping people of our congregations and our communities.

If this is something that interests you, please give some prayerful consideration to being involved. Contact Pastor Allie for more information or to offer your assistance. Even if you aren't available on February 3 but would still like to help, please let her know.

Let's work together to bring God's hope, healing and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters.

## Serving in February

Please let Julie know of any schedule changes that you make between yourselves so that the Sunday bulletin will be as accurate as possible. Many thanks.

Date of Worship	Assisting Ministers	Lectors	Communion Assistants	Ushers	Counters	Altar Guild	Fellowship Hour	Drivers
February 1, 2015	Lisa Rittberger		Judy Greenwood Paul Hyde Richard McElreath	Joe Markowski, Russ Drennen, Brian Lusignan, Ed & Carol Engelhardt	Janice Logan Laurel Catellier	Richard McElreath Michael Kenyon	 Soup Lunch	Cliff Danielson
February 8, 2015	Laurel Cattelier	Beverly Hazzard	Barbara McGuinness Kim Ryan Liz Peters	Fred Sawyer, Chris Fedden, Bernie & Barb Shafarzek, Karie Robertson	Joe Markowski Kim Ryan	Rich Reynders Colin McKnight	Bernie & Barbara Shafarzek	Fred Sawyer
February 15, 2015	Michael Casler		Karie Robertson Paul Hyde Judy Greenwood	Rich Reynders, Lisa Rittberger, Colin McKnight, Vernon Victorson, Michael Kenyon	Janice Logan Ed & Carol Engelhardt	Tim Eskeli Elizabeth Katagiri	Judy Carlson Liz Peters	Bernie Shafarzek
February 22, 2015	Judy Greenwood	Amelia Erling-Colafati	Colin McKnight Ingrid Erling-Colafati Richard McElreath	Bob Frost, Karen Moore, Bev Hazzard, Dom Colafati, Joyce Aiello	JoAnne Evans Shawn Brousseau	Fred and SunCha Sawyer	Clara DeMarco Dee Morton	Paul Hyde

### The Memorial Flowers in February are given to the Glory of God and...

#### February 1

In loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Moore, by their daughters; and in loving memory of their sister, Eleanor M. Konis by Barbara and Bernie Shafarzek and Nancy Endres and their families.

#### February 8

In loving memory of our parents, Marjorie and Bill Reynders and Jim Secovnie by Cindy and Rich Reynders; and in loving memory Sean Murphy by the Murphy family.

#### February 15

In loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Sawyer, by her sisters; and in loving memory of Douglas Coon, given by his family.

#### February 18

In memory of Margaret Fedden given loving by Chris and Trudy Fedden; and in memory of loved ones given loving by JoAnne Evans.

#### February 22

In loving memory of J. Nevil and Martha Horner by Judy Carlson and family; and in loving memory of Ralph and Ruth Kromphardt by Mr. and Mrs. James Cummings, Heidi Kromphardt and granddaughter Kellie Kelm.

Any new requests, questions or changes call Liz Peters, 869-0387 or email mommy5853@aol.com

Altar vase - \$22.50 Sanctuary vase - \$27.50

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1 The Fourth Sunday after Epiphany</b> 9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal <b>10:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion</b> 10:50 a.m. Sunday School 11:30 a.m. Souper Bowl Soup Lunch in Wittenberg Hall 	<b>2</b> 9:00 a.m. Albany Sr. Orchestra <b>10:00 a.m. Bible Study at St. John's</b> 10:30 a.m. Clergy Sermon Study 6:30 p.m. AGMC Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Judo Instruction	<b>3</b> 9:00 a.m. Albany Sr. Orchestra <b>10:00 a.m. Bible Study at St. John's</b> 10:30 a.m. Clergy Sermon Study 6:30 p.m. AGMC Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Judo Instruction	<b>4</b> 2:00 p.m. First Call Group 7:00 p.m. Judo Instruction	<b>5</b> 7:00 p.m. Bible Study at FLC 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Judo Instruction	<b>6</b> 7:30 p.m. NA Meeting	<b>7</b>
<b>8 The Fifth Sunday after Epiphany</b> 9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal <b>10:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion</b> 10:50 a.m. Sunday School 11:15 a.m. Coffee and Fellowship Hour 	<b>9</b> 7:00 p.m. Church Council Mtg	<b>10</b> 9:00 a.m. Albany Sr. Orchestra <b>10:00 a.m. Bible Study at St. John's</b> 10:30 a.m. Clergy Sermon Study 6:30 p.m. AGMC Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Judo Instruction	<b>11</b> 7:00 p.m. Judo Instruction	<b>12</b> 10:00 p.m. Church Women United Meeting 7:00 p.m. Bible Study at FLC 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Judo Instruction	<b>13</b> 7:30 p.m. NA Meeting	<b>14</b> 
<b>15 Transfiguration of Our Lord</b> 9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal <b>10:00 a.m. Joint Worship with St. John's at FLC</b> 10:50 a.m. Sunday School 11:15 a.m. Coffee and Fellowship Hour in Wittenberg Hall	<b>16</b>  Presidents Day <b>Office &amp; Friendship House CLOSED</b> 10:00 a.m. Pr. Preisinger Meeting in Library	<b>17</b>  Albany Sr. Orchestra <b>10:00 a.m. Bible Study at St. John's</b> 10:30 a.m. Clergy Sermon Study 1:00 p.m. Fat Tuesday Carnival 6:30 p.m. AGMC Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Judo Instruction	<b>18 ASH WEDNESDAY</b> 7:00 p.m. Service of Confession, Communion & Imposition of Ashes	<b>19</b> 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Judo Instruction	<b>20</b> 7:30 p.m. NA Meeting	<b>21</b>
<b>22 The First Sunday in Lent</b>  9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal <b>10:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion</b> 10:50 a.m. Sunday School 11:15 a.m. Coffee and Fellowship Hour	<b>23</b> 6:00 p.m. Community Dinner	<b>24</b> 9:00 a.m. Albany Sr. Orchestra <b>10:00 a.m. Bible Study at St. John's</b> 10:30 a.m. Clergy Sermon Study 6:30 p.m. AGMC Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Judo Instruction	<b>25</b>  Albany Cluster 4-week Lenten Worship <b>"Broken Vessels"</b> Pr. Preisinger, preaching 7:00 p.m. Judo Instruction	<b>26</b> 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Judo Instruction	<b>27</b> 7:30 p.m. NA Meeting	<b>28</b> 4:30 p.m. Damien Center Dinner Sponsored by the Albany Lutheran Cluster Churches

# February 2015

*Dates to remember in February...*

- African-American History Month
- Boy Scout Sunday: February 8, 2015
- Valentine's Day: February 14, 2015
- Transfiguration of Our Lord: February 15, 2015
- Presidents Day: February 16, 2015
- Ash Wednesday: February 18, 2015

## First Lutheran Church

[FirstLutheranAlbany.org](http://FirstLutheranAlbany.org)

463-1326



# Annual SouperBowl of Caring Soup Lunch

Sunday, February 1

First Lutheran Church has participated in the Annual Souper Bowl of Caring on Superbowl Sunday since 1995 – that is a whopping 19 years! Over those 19 years, **members of our congregation have contributed \$6,393.00 and just shy of 400 non-perishable food items** for our local soup kitchen & food pantry.

**On February 1**, the children will be collecting dollars at each of the door entrances and at the Souper Bowl Soup Lunch for the 20<sup>th</sup> year in a row. Everything that we collect will once again benefit the Sr. Maureen Joyce Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry.

So, bring a non-perishable food item to church and a couple of dollars to throw in the Collection Pot and join with the rest of the congregation for some good homemade soups after worship!

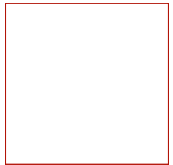
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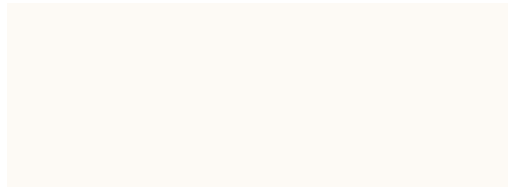
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**First Lutheran Church**  
*The Oldest Lutheran Congregation in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*  
646 State Street  
Albany, NY 12203-1217



**Dated Material: Please deliver promptly!**

*Current Resident or*



*Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper*

**Good Shepherd, Lutheran is having a Pancake Supper on Tuesday, February 17, from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM.** The meal will consist of pancakes, sausage and applesauce, with beverages of coffee, milk, and orange juice.

The cost is \$5.00 for adults and \$2.50 for children ages 5 to 12. Children under 5 are free. Call their church office (518) 458-1562 if you plan on attending. Please mark this date on your calendar and invite your friends and neighbors to come out for some great pancakes and fellowship. A portion of the proceeds will go to a charitable cause not yet determined by the Committee. See you all on the 17th.

“People judge by outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

1 Samuel 16:7, NLT