

The *First* Word

Volume 16, Issue 4

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL — HELENA, MONTANA

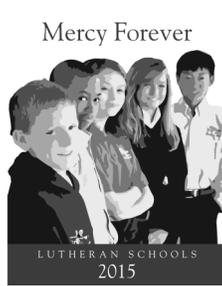
January/February, 2015

Seek **FIRST** His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33

<i>Special</i> <i>January/February Dates</i>	
Life Sunday.....	Jan. 18
WOW! (Women of the Word)..... Bible Study	Jan. 22
National Lutheran..... Schools Week	Jan. 25-31
First Lutheran School Day..... at Buffalo Wild Wings (ALL day)	Jan. 26
Spirit Week at FLS.....	Jan. 26-30
Registration for FLS Kindergarten.....	Jan. 30
Registration for FLS 2015-2016..... school year (for FLC members and currently enrolled families)	Feb. 1-2
WOW! (Women of the Word)..... Bible Study	Feb. 5
FLS <i>Open</i> enrollment begins.....	Feb. 9
Valentine's Day.....	Feb. 14
Transfiguration of Our Lord.....	Feb. 15
Presidents Day.....	Feb. 16
Ash Wednesday.....	Feb. 18
WOW! (Women of the Word)..... Bible Study	Feb. 19
First Sunday in Lent.....	Feb. 22

Proclamation

2015 NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WEEK



Whereas, Scripture says, “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45 ESV); and

Whereas, Dr. Martin Luther wrote, “The greatest of all service is to free him [my fellow man] from sins, to liberate him from the devil and hell. But how is this done? Through the Gospel, by preaching it to him and telling him that he should cling to the works of Christ and firmly believe that Christ’s righteousness is his and his sins are Christ’s. This, I say, is the greatest service I can render my fellow man” (W 10 I); and

Whereas, Lutheran schools are the unique place where the church and academia meet; and

Whereas, Lutheran schools promote a distinctly Lutheran identity that encourages faculty, staff, students and parents to rejoice in the forgiveness and love God has given them in their

Baptisms; and

Whereas, Parents, teachers and pastors remind students that because Jesus has served them in His death and resurrection, they are free in the Gospel to serve those around them: their friends, principals, coaches, instructors and all the children they encounter, from the quiz bowl team to the bus stop; and

Whereas, The Synod’s sixth mission priority promotes and enhances Lutheran education; and be it finally

Resolved, That Jan. 25-Jan. 31, 2015, be officially proclaimed as National Lutheran Schools Week in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

REV. DR. MATTHEW C. HARRISON
President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod



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A brand new beginning

I am the new year. I am an unspoiled page in your book of time; your next chance at the art of living; your opportunity to practice what you have learned about life during the last 12 months.

All you sought, and didn’t find, is hidden in me, waiting for you to search it, but with more determination. All the good you tried for, and didn’t achieve, is mine to grant when you have fewer conflicting

desires.

All you dreamed, but didn’t dare to do; all you hoped, but did not will; all the faith you claimed, but did not have — these slumber lightly, waiting to be awakened by the touch of a strong purpose.

I am your opportunity to renew your allegiance to Him who said, “See, I am making all things new” (Revelation 21:5, NRSV).
— *Author unknown*

New every morning

— from your Board of Stewardship

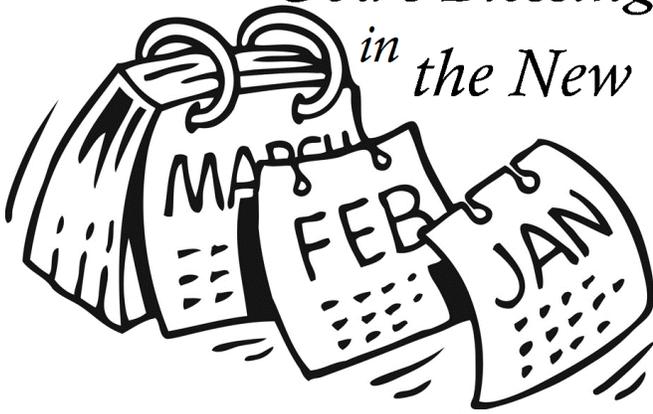
It's a new year! Not only do we turn over a page on the calendar, we begin a whole new calendar. For many, a new year brings promise of a new start, but many don't have such an optimistic view.

will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9).

Jeremiah, the "weeping Prophet," had his troubles, too. He wrote,

Instead of looking around us at our circumstances, or inside ourselves where there is no hope or inspiration, let us look at God's unfailing compassion and His blessings, which He pours out on us daily. Let us spend our prayer time in thanks for all He has done for us and provided for us, rather than in lamenting our sorry state. Let us look to His wisdom to manage His gifts to us in a wiser manner so that we might please Him and be of service in His Kingdom. Especially let us thank Him for the gift of forgiveness and the new start He gives us minute by minute.

God's Blessings in the New Year!



The bills from overspending at Christmas are starting to come in, and there's no more money now than there was a month ago. Your boss is still the same old hard-to-get-along-with guy he was before. Then, there's the problem of the extra ten pounds you put on due to all the goodies you consumed. None of this is new. The calendar may say January 2015, but only the date is new.

Even King Solomon, who wrote Ecclesiastes, moaned that there is nothing new: "What has been is what

"Remember my affliction and my wanderings, the wormwood and the gall! My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me" (Lamentations 3:19-20).

But Jeremiah had another perspective, one that we should adopt as well. He follows those words with, "But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:21-23).

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- Linda Fromm.....Secretary
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The First Word

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- Rev. Larry A. Miller.....Senior Pastor
- Rev. Jason Toombs.....Associate Pastor
- Linda Fromm.....Editor
- Susan McCormack.....Calendar/Servant Schedule
- Volunteer Staff.....Printing/Collation

Deadline for the March First Word is Wed., Feb. 18. Please place articles in the First Word box in the church office or e-mail them to: fozziehoot1917@bresnan.net.



A report from your Board of Finance

	Nov. 2014	FY 2015 Y-T-D
Income	\$49,679.01	\$235,622.79
Expense	\$53,986.27	\$232,259.29
Gain/Loss	(\$ 4,307.26)	\$ 3,363.50



THOUGHTS
FROM THE
HEART

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Believe it or not, **Ash Wednesday and the beginning of the season of Lent is February 18th**. Lent and Holy Week and Easter are just around the corner on the calendar!

I love the season of Lent! The Scripture readings, hymns, prayers and mood of the season all take us to the foot of Calvary's cross and point us to Jesus our Savior. Lent, like no other time in the church year, confronts us with our sin, calls us to repent, and then reminds us again of the love of God poured out for us in Jesus and assures us each of His grace and forgiveness!



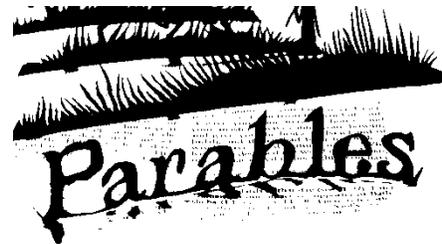
Our Midweek Lenten services this year utilize the Biblical **"Parables of Lent"** to inspire us and grant us God's Lenten gifts for our lives. Within each parable's plot is woven a unique message of what we receive through the crucified Christ and the messages of the parables enrich our own stories of faith in Jesus as we journey together through Lent.

On Ash Wednesday, February 18, the Parable for consideration will be "The Pharisee and the Tax Collector," found in Luke 18:9-14.

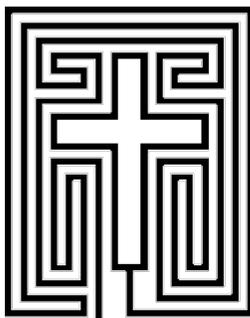


Who will go home justified? Join us and learn the message God has for us in His Word.

On February 25, "The Sower and the Seed" from Matthew 13 shows us which seeds in which soil flourish and which fail.



In March we'll consider "The Good Samaritan," "The Workers in the Vineyard," and "The Prodigal Son" in our Midweek worship services, beginning at 12:10 and 6:30 p.m. each week.



I hope you will join our journey to the cross this Lent and worship with us around "The Parables of Lent" throughout this holy season. I know we'll be blessed with the forgiveness and love of God in Christ Jesus. We have His Word on it!

Rich blessings in our Savior!

Pastor Miller

Odds ‘n’ Ends for winter months — from Pastor Toombs

January 18 - Life Sunday - We are once again going to be celebrating Life on this day. The theme this year is “Comfort, Comfort Ye My People,” as God is the one who comforts all who grieve at the loss of a life. We rest in the comfort that Jesus died for all people, and celebrate this today.

January 18 - Soups and Stews - Come one, come all after late service (12:30 p.m.) to celebrate the warmth that we have in Christ. This will be a Soup and Stew Potluck, and please feel free to attend, even if you haven’t signed up to bring a dish. You can always bring something to the next potluck.



January 24, 31 or February 7 - Youth Snow Day - With the weather not always cooperating with us, we wanted to select a few Saturdays as options for our Youth Snow Day. We will meet at the church at 10 a.m. and head over to the Nachtsheim ranch for fun in the snow. We’ll need help with transportation, and we’re asking for parents to volunteer.

Because we need snow for this to happen, we’ll let you know on the Wednesday prior to the Saturday we’ve chosen to have fun in the snow. The event is for students in Grade 6 and older.



January 25 - Installation of Rev. Mavis at St. Mark Lutheran Church, Butte - Rev. James Mavis will be installed at 4 p.m. as pastor of St. Mark Lutheran in Butte and Zion Lutheran in Whitehall. I know our brothers and sisters in Christ would appreciate any and all encouragement from us.

February 12 - Pastors’ meeting at First Lutheran - The pastors from our circuit will be coming together at First Lutheran at 10 a. m. to celebrate the Lord’s gift of Holy Communion. Everyone is welcome to the Lord’s Table with the pastors from our circuit.

February 15 - Transfiguration Sunday - Today we come together to hear about the Transfigured Jesus who shone brighter than the sun. We also hear about Moses and Elijah and how they paid tribute to Him, and we hear the Father’s voice once again saying that Jesus is His beloved Son.

February 18 - Ash Wednesday - This will begin our 40-day trek to the cross as we start with crosses placed upon our foreheads to remind us of our sinfulness and the need for our Savior. Service times each *Wednesday* during Lent are 12:10 and 6:30 p.m. and we appreciate everyone who is able come out to hear the need for repentance and the forgiveness of sins.



February 22 - First Sunday in Lent - Lent is traditionally a time of fasting from the joys of this world, but if you want to feast on the Word of God, that’s great. Every week during Lent we’ll hear that we need to repent of our sinful ways and turn back to the God who cares for us.

THANK You SO VERY much for the wonderful greetings and words of sympathy while I was sick. It means a lot that you cared for Samantha and me during my recent bout with pleurisy and pneumonia. I spent more time resting and recovering than I thought I would need, and the prayers and encouragement were appreciated. - Pastor Toombs

It's NOT Too Late!

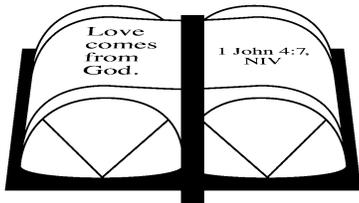


Mark: The Serving Christ. Many people who are great by the world’s standards, or who are in positions of authority, lord their greatness over those they consider below them. Often such people expect to be served. But not our Lord Jesus. The Lord of heaven and earth took on the lowly form of a man to serve humanity and to sacrifice His life to ransom people from sin, death, and Satan.

The Women Of the Word (WOW) will meet the following dates at church at 7 p.m. to discuss this fascinating book of the Bible and follow our Savior’s life and Lenten journey: January 22; February 5 and 19; March 12 and 26; April 9 and 23; May 7 and 21. Mark these dates on your planners, tablets, phones, calendars, and **join us!** It is not too late!

GOD'S SWEET WORD

Share this Bible treat — and God's love — with a special valentine.



What you need:

- Black card stock or construction paper (2" x 1.5")
- Double-sided tape
- 2 wrapped Hershey's Nuggets candy bars (silver or gold)
- Pen or marker
- White paper (2.75" x 1")
- Thin sliver of red paper or ribbon
- Scissors

What you do:

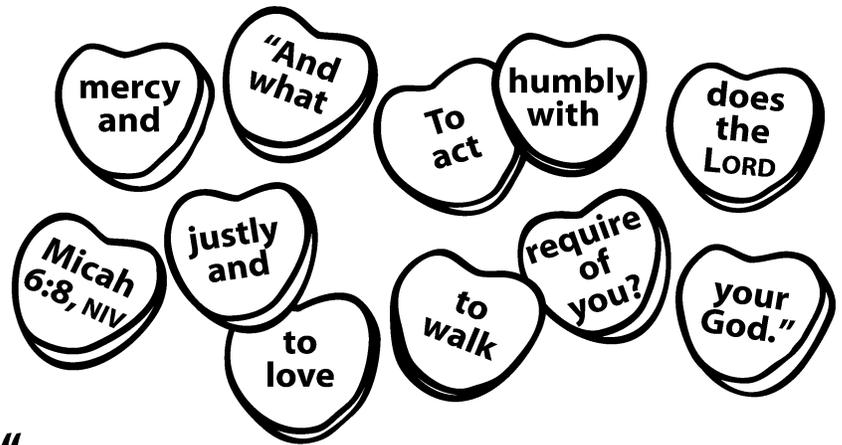
1. In the center of the black paper, tape down the candy bars side by side.
2. On the white paper, write a short Bible verse about love. Then wrap it around the candy bars horizontally and tape it down.
3. Place the red paper or ribbon between the two candy bars, and tape the top of this "bookmark" to the Bible.
4. Give away this fun, sweet message of God's love!



Conversation hearts

The world encourages people to look out for themselves and seek success, but in Micah 6:8, God tells us to live differently.

Directions: Put the conversation hearts in the correct order by writing the words on the lines below. Hint: Capitalization and quotation marks are included.



“ _____
 _____ ? _____

 _____ ” _____ 6:8 , _____

Answer: "And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8, NIV

Tea for flu season

A young mother was sick with the flu. Her daughter wanted to be a good nurse, so she fluffed the pillows and brought a magazine for her mother to read. Then, she showed up with a cup of tea.

"You're such a sweetheart," the mother said as she sipped the tea. "I didn't know you could make tea."

"Oh, yes," the little girl replied. "I put the tea leaves in

the water like you do, boiled it, and then strained it into a cup. But I couldn't find a strainer, so I used the fly-swatter."

"You did what?" the mother asked, making sure she had not heard incorrectly.

Her daughter replied, "Oh, don't worry, mom. I didn't use the new flyswatter. I used the old one."

Two wise resolutions

Christian philosopher Paul Tillich said, “The first responsibility of love is to listen.” Yet in our fast-paced culture, truly listening to someone has become a lost art.

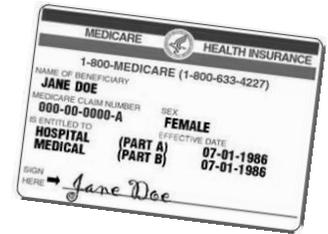
The intricate Chinese written character for the verb to listen offers wise insight about how to listen to people so they feel heard.

The symbol is actually a combination of characters for ears, eyes and an open heart. Basically it reads, “I give you my ears, my eyes and my undivided attention.” What a great image of being fully engaged during the act of communication!

James 1:19 offers two wise resolutions for the year ahead: Be “quick to listen” and “slow to speak” (NRSV). Practicing the skill of active listening is a much-needed way to minister to other people, serving as Jesus’ “ears” in a hurting world.

First Lutheran seniors can help prevent Medicare fraud, abuse and errors

Treat your Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security cards like a credit card, and don’t carry your cards unless you will need them. NEVER give these numbers to a stranger! **Remember, Medicare doesn’t call or visit to sell you anything or ask for your number.**



Record doctor visits, tests and procedures in a notebook or on your calendar. Compare these notes to your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) and Explanation of Benefits (EOB). Report any discrepancies to your medical provider and insurance plan, or contact your local SMP volunteer at 1-800-551-3191 or 406-457-7312, ext. 117.

— This article is being included in the First Word at the request of the Rocky Mountain Development Council in Helena.



February Birthdays!

February 1

*Doris Sparks
Jeff Stefanik*

February 2

Michael Trenk

February 3

Peder Cannon

February 4

*Amber Buchanan
Christopher Charles
Ashtyn Dziekonski
Mashayla O’Malley*

February 6

*Caleb Hoxie
Kate Johnson*

February 7

*Betty Kraft
Miles McCarthy*

February 8

*Kim Hoxie
Ken Olson*

February 9

Arleen Wagner

February 10

*Steve Longsworth
Ruth Stelter*

February 11

Brian Buhr

February 12

Dylan Veach

February 13

*Jean Anderson
Bea Jorgensen*

February 15

Larry Laposky

February 16

*Benjamin LaForge
Dave Tudor*

February 17

*Haidyn Boucher
Terry Hoppe
Dureen Lanter*

February 18

*Gene Hanson
Gary Lindstrand*

February 20

*Tim Schroeder
Sophie Stockburger*

February 22

Marie Ringle

February 25

*Christopher Shields
Meta Spaulding*

February 26

*Tami Cook
Beth Schmeltzer
Pam Tudor*

February 27

*Abby Northrup
Jared Northrup*

February 28

*Angela Hyyppa
Lori Northrup*

February 29

Carol Lindstrand





Happenings at First Lutheran School

Pastors
 Rev. Larry Miller & Rev. Jason Toombs
Director
 Denise Underwood



Teachers
 Heather McIntosh,
 Heidi Westerbuhr, Stacy Smith,
 Donna Fischer & Melissa Mousel



Thank you to all who purchased a Christmas wreath from First Lutheran School!

We are blessed by the support our members and families give to our school! Thank you!



First Lutheran School Day at Buffalo Wild Wings will be Monday, January 26(ALL DAY!). Pick

up a coupon in the school office and take it with you to dine in or carry out. Buffalo Wild Wings will donate 20% of ALL sales that day to our school!

We invite you to join us
 for
Wednesday Evening Worship
 Dinner: 5:30 p.m.
 Service: 6:30 p.m.

Sunday Worship
 8:15 & 11 a.m.
Sunday School & Adult Bible Study
 9:45 a.m.

Wednesday School Chapel
 10:45 a.m. & 2:45 p.m.
 When picking up your child(ren), come a few minutes early and join us!

Mrs. Mousel's 3 and 4-year-old classes are going to "ZERO" in on numbers, now that we are back in school. Counting bears and puppets will help us learn number concepts.

Our trek through the alphabet continues with the letters Ll, Mm, Nn and Oo.

Mrs. Fischer's Prekindergarten classes are starting a brand new year, with lots to do! We will be working on new letters Yy, Ll, Xx and Qq.

Thursday morning, January 29, and Friday afternoon, January 30, will be **BIG** days for us. Q and U will get married!

We look forward to Library time every other Friday.

Miss McIntosh's class completed the unit on Reading Around the World. Everyone had SO MUCH fun! CONGRATULATIONS to 5th grader Megan Taylor, who was the first to finish her expedition around the world.

In History class, we are learning about Ancient Egypt and its culture.

We'll celebrate **Lutheran Spirit Week** from January 26 through January 30, in conjunction with Lutheran Schools Week.

We'll start the week with an assembly on Monday morning, January 26, and have special events scheduled every day that week:

- PJ Day
- Hat Day
- Sport Day
- Spirit Day



Are you interested in enrolling your child in our Kindergarten program? If so, please come by the school office between 9 and 11 a.m. on FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, to register for Kindergarten Roundup.



Keep saving those Box Tops! Our first check from Box Tops for Education has been received, in the amount of \$427.50! What a GREAT job! Our next mailing will go out on Tuesday, February 24. Our goal is \$572.50! Saving box tops is an easy, fun way to earn dollars for our school! Keep saving, cutting and pasting!

Miss Westerbuhr's class looks forward to many things, in addition to normal learning, during the school week! We have fellowship with the 1st-6th grade on Monday; Tuesday is Music; Wednesday is Chapel and Library, and on Thursday we have Technology, P. E. and Spanish Day. **WE LOVE SCHOOL!**

Mrs. Smith's class goes to Capital City Health Club the first Friday of each month, and January brings one of our favorite activities.....**SWIMMING!**

Everyone is excited about our Flat Stanley project. We are beginning to receive lots of letters from around the country as to where he has been!

Registration for the 2015-2016 First Lutheran School year will be held on February 1 and 2 (for First Lutheran members and families currently enrolled). Open enrollment will begin on Monday, February 9. Registration packets may be picked up in the school office.

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FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH is a
Congregation of The Lutheran Church-
Missouri Synod

**THE MISSION of First Lutheran
Church is “Sharing God’s Word
with Everyone, Everywhere!”**

Tune in to—*The Lutheran Hour*—KCAP 950 AM — Sundays at 9 a.m.—sponsored by Tempest Technologies
“*Woman to Woman*”—105.3 KMTX FM—Sundays at 9:30 p.m.
“*Making a World of Difference*”—Channel 11—Fridays at 5 p.m.

New Year’s resolutions for Christians

Pray more

Too many times, when I am struggling, my *last* resort is to pray. It *should* be my first resort, but I often try to fix things myself without bothering God. Then, when I realize that things are not getting better, and are sometimes getting worse, it dawns on me that I should have taken my problem to God first. In the New Testament, Paul tells us, “...*do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus*” (Philippians 4:6-7 ESV). Who couldn’t use a little more peace?

I think Matthew 6:25-34 comes into effect here, summarized in this verse, “*But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you*” (ESV). This past year has had its ups and downs, which I have handled in a variety of different ways; some Godly, some not so Godly. However, every time that I purposefully turned the situation over to God, He took care of the situation in a way that far exceeded anything I would have ever thought of...every single time. I want to get my priorities so in tune with God’s will, that my every endeavor is in line with what He wants for me.

Study the Bible more

John 6:68 tells us that the words of Jesus are the words of eternal life. There is no other book as important as the Bible. No book of philosophy, science, mathematics, medicine, or any other human discipline is as foundational to everything as the Bible. The importance of studying the Word cannot be overstated. The Bible says that, “*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness...*” (2 Timothy 3:16 ESV). If we want to know God, and please Him, we must study His Word.

— from “7 Christian New Year’s Resolutions” by Robert Driskell
Posted to the Internet Dec. 31, 2012