

Volume 48 No. 12
December 2019
Watford City Area Parish-ELCA
P.O. Box 441
Watford City, N.Dak. 58854

the Clarion

PERMIT 48
NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
Watford City, ND 58854

Return Service Requested

Pastor Rob Favorite
rfave@ruggedwest.com
Phone: 701-842-4589

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Phone: 701-842-4074

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Our website:

www.wclutheranparish.com

Listen to Sunday Worship Service

KTGO 1090 am @ 11:00 AM

Click on "Listen Live" OR

Listen over the internet at

www.BakkenBeacon.com OR

watch on Facebook at *Watford City*

Lutheran Parish (can be watched live at
service time or anytime after that).



Deadline for
articles for the *Clarion* is
the **15th of the month.**
Please drop off or e-mail any articles to the office at
First Lutheran Church.



All are Welcome!

Sunday Worship Times:

10:00 AM - Watford City First Lutheran Worship

11:00 AM - FLC Sunday School

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10:00 AM - Banks Lutheran Sunday School

11:00 AM - Banks Lutheran Worship

(First 2 Sundays of the Month)

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10:00 AM - Garden Lutheran Sunday School

11:00 AM - Garden Lutheran Worship

(Last 2 Sundays of the Month)

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Sunday School Christmas Programs

Sunday, December 15th

10:00 AM - Watford City First Lutheran Sunday
School Program during Worship

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM - Banks Lutheran Sunday
School Rehearsal

4:00 PM - Banks Lutheran Sunday School
Program followed by Potluck Meal

Christmas Worship Times

December 24th - Christmas Eve

5:00 PM - Watford City First Lutheran Worship

5:00 pm - Banks Lutheran Worship

9:00 PM - Watford City First Lutheran Worship

December 25th - Christmas Day

10:00 AM - Watford City First Lutheran Worship



Grace, peace and greetings to all of you!

My recent trip to England gave me a lot of insight into the history and tradition of rural churches across the pond. My wife and I explored a number of these churches in the remote villages of the Cotswold region of that country. Many of these villages were picture-postcard type places in which the church dominated the landscape. These were stone structures built over 800 to 900 years ago, yet have stood the test of time with numerous renovations throughout the centuries. Most still hold worship services, but during the week they are quiet and very cold. Old fashioned radiators attempt to heat the churches on Sunday morning, but are turned off as soon as the service is completed. Learning the history of each of these churches allows you to step back in time and imagine the lives of each of the churchgoers throughout that history, and the issues that they had to face in their time. We did observe the end of one worship service in a village called Stanton, as the Anglican priest stood by the doorway to greet the parishioners as they were leaving. I also observed an aging population in this village, and not one child was in attendance at this church. Perhaps, it was economics that kept younger adults away and living elsewhere in order to make a living. I saw no children playing outside. Our rural churches in the Watford City area had been experiencing something similar to this before the oil rush. Jobs had been hard to come by, and the younger adults were leaving to find work and raise families elsewhere. But I had another thought as I looked around the interior of the churches. They were traditional and historical, and they were a wonder to observe. But had they become so locked into the traditional routines of worship that the spiritual needs of community were set aside? It was hard to know just watching those older people leaving that one village church deep in the Cotswolds.

Speaking of a deeply felt spiritual life, in just a few short weeks we will be celebrating the birth of the Christ

Child – Christmas. And every year we seem to keep the meaning of the season hidden from many who have not experienced the love of Christ in their lives. Instead, we are inundated with people trying to persuade us to buy this or that gift, or who are trying to convince us that our celebration would not be complete without certain food or drink. One journalist jokingly suggested that our season of Advent should be renamed to ADVERT (short for advertising). However, celebrating with family and friends is certainly encouraged at this time of year, as long as we know what the season is all about. How do we convey that to those we love who may be unfaithful? Perhaps, being the love of Christ might help as we show others how to live out that love.

Advent is a season of hope. Through Christ's coming into the world, everything was changed forever. By his example, Christ showed us a new way to live. He showed us life as God intended us to live it, a life full of service to others. Advent allows us a new start once again. It is the beginning of the New Year for the church, and it is a time for reflection and for renewal. We remind ourselves, once again, that we are the body of Christ. I just read a prayer which says, "May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world." And that is our task – to bring light and life to others through the knowledge of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Have joy by bringing joy!

Yours in Christ, Pastor Rob



"⁴² But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; ¹³ esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. ¹⁴ And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the fainthearted, help the

weak, be patient with all of them.

¹⁵ See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. ¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

(1 Thessalonians 5:12-18)

Advent, the season that starts a new Christian year as we prepare for the advent of Jesus Christ, started on December 1st this year. It is a time of new advent-ure, new beginnings, new directions. And as God was doing something new by bringing Jesus into the world 2,020 some odd years ago, God is doing something new in our parish through our parish & church councils this year. Change always brings conflict and pain, and I think we would agree that we have experienced some pretty sharp "labor pains" the past few months. But out of those pains, we are seeing more involvement in church, and a healthier direction for our parish in the new year!

At the close of Paul's first letter to the church at Thessalonica, he has several encouragements, and some admonitions to the church. First, he encourages them to support their leaders through the difficult times. It is easy to interpret this to mean pastors, but the literal phrase is to "*respect those who work tirelessly among you, and care for you in the Lord, and instruct you,*" which certainly can mean pastor, but also most definitely refers to our church and parish council members, who work very hard and care for the parish in the Lord. It also refers to our Sunday School teachers, those who instruct us in the Lord. It can also refer to the ladies of our churches who work tirelessly to care for us and the needs of the churches. Paul encourages the body of believers to rally around all leaders and teachers and workers, those making tough decisions and doing the hard work of ministry and administration in the churches. We are to respect and esteem them in love.

I do not believe it is by accident that the new Christian year falls immediately on the heels of Thanksgiving. In fact, I believe Paul indicates that thanksgiving is the key to being able to love our leaders, do good to one another, and to be at

peace with the world. We seem to have lost our sense of thankfulness in society. In ages past, the time of harvest from All Hallows Eve (Halloween) through the new year was a time of thanksgiving. We thanked God for the harvest, we thanked God for our ancestors who are with the Lord, we thanked God for Christ coming to earth, and we thanked God for the new year and new beginnings. These were holy days of giving thanks to God. Now, kids see Halloween as a costumes and candy holiday, Thanksgiving as a turkey and football holiday, Christmas as a presents holiday, and New Years as a party and parade holiday. That is the way these holidays are marketed 24/7. We have lost the meaning and the purpose for these holy days—to give thanks—so, perhaps in this new Advent, we can make a special effort to give thanks for a month and see how we feel by New Years Day. We have so much to be thankful for in our parish and individual churches! Sunday school is growing in our parish, giving new life and hope for the future. Our churches have had upgrades and improvements also speaking to new life and forward thinking. And with the improved economy in the area thanks to the Bakken oil boom, we are debt free, meaning that our kids won't have to carry the burden of these improvements. We can thank God for all these things, and more! A community that was 1,500 people and struggling 15 years ago is now thriving and bursting at the seams. There is so much potential out there to reach new people and get new families in our churches, we just have to figure out how to reach them. The pastors can't do it all, and, as a pastor I am so thankful for all the folks that have stepped up to help do the ministry of the church!

I thank God for our Sunday School teachers, council and committee members, ladies aid, quilters, janitors, maintenance folks, grounds keepers, all those who assist with worship, and those who host coffee and fellowship. All these things make us welcoming as churches. Then there are the members that help with the food pantry and the thrift store, those who help with harvest and roundup, those who help with 4-H, and Scouts,

preschools, and after school programs. We have a lot going on, and we are very involved in making our community a great place to live. These are the things we can thank God for, and I'm sure you can name a dozen others if you think about it, so that is my challenge to you this month. Think about it and thank God for all the blessings we have, and then thank one person a day for something they do for the community. I believe if we spend a month doing just that, we will have a great start to the new year, and we will do the will of God in Christ Jesus for us.

Together in Christ, Pastor Mark



FLC BUILDING FUND

Virginia Lund	\$1,110.00
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FLC CHOIR/MUSIC FUND

Darlene Wisnes	\$100.00
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FLC QUILTING FUND

DeLaura Dodds	\$40.00
Virginia Lund	\$50.00



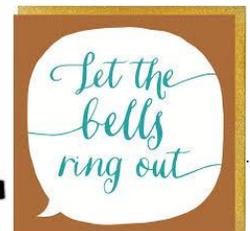
We have **GREAT** news to share...Thanks to everyone's donation(s) to the Building Fund Capital Campaign and the Endowment Trust Fund Committee's 2 for 1 match, there have been enough funds raised to pay off the First Lutheran Church building loan. Everyone's generosity made this happen and is greatly appreciated!



**Thank You...
To Our
RADIO
SPONSORS**

Thank you to the following for sponsoring the Sunday morning broadcast of FLC worship for the month of December: Gen Hutmacher in memory of her mother, Wanda Hutmacher; Lloyd, Ardyce & Trevor Alveshere and Austin, Tillie & Brayden Haugen in memory of Arnold & June Peterson; In memory of Dale Swensrud by his family; Agnes Johnson in honor of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren; Ed & Charlotte Schilke with greetings for the new year.

If you would like to sponsor a broadcast, please call the office at (701)444-3244. Cost is \$110.00.



First Lutheran Church's next big project is repairing the bell tower and has started a new fund called "The Bell Tower Fund". Please help us raise funds to complete these repairs and bring back the heavenly sound of bells ringing once again. When donating, please specify that it is for "Bell Tower Fund".



Members of First Lutheran Church filled 40 Samaritan's Purse cardboard shoeboxes to send to children in need around the world through Operation Christmas Child. Thank you for helping to send great joy and the Good News of Jesus Christ to others!



First Lutheran Council Minutes October 13, 2019

Council Members Present: Craig Paulson, Jeremiah Beard, Erica Johnsrud, Glen Beard, Jenna Bauer, Katie Tschetter, Keith Helmuth, and Ashley Holen

Council Members Absent: Vawnita Best, Jeff Meyer, and Angie Moe
Others Present: Pastors Rob Favorite and Mark Honstein, Anne Beard, Debbie Larsen, and Kathleen Beard

President Craig called the meeting to order at 6:00PM and Dwelling in the Word was led by Jeremiah. Craig welcomed the guests to the meeting.

Moved by Keith, seconded by Glen, to approve the September minutes as presented. All voting aye, motion carried.

WELCA Report: Anne Beard reported Quilt Sunday was held today. Anne reported that the yearly rummage sale proceeds were \$879 for lunch and \$1,920 for the sale. Anne stated need more helpers for next year's sale and that discussion is ongoing to change to a one day sale in the future. Anne stated WELCA is looking to begin a working ladies circle which will meet in the evenings with a shortened schedule. Jenna asked if it would be possible to provide childcare during the evening WELCA meetings.

Executive Session was held by the Council members for 15 minutes for personnel updates. Each pastor met separately with the Council during this time. Following executive session the meeting was reopened to all.

Committee Reports:

Finance: (Jeremiah/Jeff/Keith) – The Finance Committee reported attendance and offering were up and that the Building Campaign was very close to paying off the church addition. Moved by Erica, seconded by Keith, to approve the financial reports. All voting aye, motion carried.

Property: (Glen/Craig) – Glen reported the sprinklers had been winterized. Glen has contacted Gene

Becker to spray for weeds and do some tree trimming. Filters have been replaced, drains were filled with antifreeze, and other minor maintenance items had also been completed. Glen stated Darby Hanson is on schedule for winter snow removal in the parking lot. The pastors will assist with cleaning sidewalks as needed. Glen will check the snow blower to make sure it is in working order.

Worship: (Erica/Angie/Katie) – The Worship Committee will be meeting this week. Duties for ushers were discussed and Pastor Rob will laminate it for the narthex. Discussion was held to bring another row of pews up from downstairs and Pastor Mark volunteered to complete that task. The children will be doing music the first Sunday in November. Anne Beard requested from WELCA that the Council let WELCA know when a potluck would be scheduled and WELCA would then handle the kitchen duties.

Stewardship-Evangelism:

(Jenna/Angie) – Jenna stated God's Work Our Hands went well. Pastor Rob discussed the Samaritan's Purse/Operation Christmas Child for this year. Jenna would check with Gretchen Stenehjem on collection details. Pastor Rob stated Ardyce was now working through the membership lists which were completed by Jean Wold.

Youth & Education:

(Ashley/Craig/Vawnita/Katie/Jenna) – Sunday School and LYO are going well. Katie reported there have been requests for additional 5th Quarter/6th Set nights for the youth. Pastor Mark stated the Committee would be discussing the possible need for additional chaperones at these events. LYO will be helping with the vendor show on November 4th and having a baked goods sale. Confirmation is going well and the youth worked at Bakken Oil Rush Ministry sorting items as a recent community service project. Jenna reported they are working on identifying a Christmas program for the kids.

Mutual Ministry:

(Craig/Angie/Erica/Vawnita/Katie/Steve Holen) – No report at this time.

Old Business: Bishop Narum and Sherie Heine will be here on October

30th beginning at 5:30 to continue mission/vision/value work. All are welcome to attend. The Council was reminded to keep having one-on-one conversations with congregants. Jeremiah discussed the FlockNote program platform. He completed a demo with the company and pricing for up to 600 people was around \$50/month. Information can be emailed or texted to those signed up. Different groups can be set up and reminders can also be scheduled. The platform is free for up to 40 members and Jeremiah recommended beginning to use it as a Council to see how it worked. Moved by Keith, seconded by Glen, for the Council to begin using the FlockNote Platform. All voting aye, motion carried. Discussion was held on the annual meeting motion to change the Council to 9 members with 3-year terms plus a youth member. Kathleen Beard stated the move would assist the Nominating Committee with the number of people that would need to be found each year. Discussion was held on whether members could serve two terms or would be limited to one term. Erica suggested a committee to work on the topic. Kathleen will work with Karen Broderson on this and come back to the Board. Craig and Katie volunteered to work on this as well and be on the nominating committee.

New Business: An email was read from Vawnita regarding concerns regarding Vacation Bible School from UMM. Concerns included FLC not fulfilling all responsibilities within the contract. Pastor Rob stated that in the past the Youth Pastor arranged VBS and handled the organization. Pastor Rob stated he has never seen a list of duties for the church to perform. Pastor Mark stated that in the past the host families fed the counselors but due to changed needs of the hosts it was different this year. Pastor Mark stated the air conditioning was not working the first night but was repaired the next day and that instead of the meals the counselors were given money at the kick-off picnic for their supper meals for the week. Pastor Mark stated food was provided at the house, that things were chaotic and not handled well, that next year would be better, and that he would be willing to

apologize to the UMM counselors. Katie stated she would speak with UMM Director Nick Johnson about the issues and report back at the November Council meeting. Additional discussion was held on making sure to advertise the dates of VBS early.

Vonne Tarnavsky is resigning as the website coordinator for the Parish website. Pastor Rob stated Ardyce is willing to do the updates and Ardyce would coordinate with Vonne. Erica mentioned she contacted Vonne to update the service times on the website, which resulted in new families coming to church at the wrong times.

Pastor Mark requested permission to renew the Microsoft subscriptions for the computers for updates. Glen reported the HVAC computer was tied to Ardyce's computer and there was a need to make this a standalone system. Discussion was held on if there was a need for a server and Pastor Mark will discuss options with RTC.

Discussion was held on Christmas decorating of the Church. WELCA will be decorating the tree in the Fellowship Hall as part of their Christmas party. The Altar Committee is meeting on December 5 at 6pm to decorate the sanctuary and chancel. Anne asked the Council to take care of the narthex, giving tree, and stairway. December 1st is the 1st Sunday of Advent.

Pastor Rob was asked to make sure that offering deposits were being made timely, at least weekly, to the bank as congregants had reported checks were taking a long time to clear.

A request was made to turn off the Facebook broadcasts right after the service and if there was a possibility of assigning that task to someone. Discussion was held on the best location for the livestream and Council consensus was from the balcony if possible.

Jenna discussed the possibility of having a fellowship event to make coffee hour treats. Anne stated she would ask WELCA if they were interested in running this event. Jenna also brought up the possibility of hosting a mother/daughter tea party in the future. Comment cards from the suggestion boxes was read

which included requests for a 2020 service at Tobacco Gardens, making sure the church was open for scheduled events, and more contemporary music at worship.

Staff reports:

Pastor Rob: Pastor Rob reported the Area Parish needed to meet to talk about the budget for 2020. Pastor Rob has checked the website regarding increases for pastoral insurance rates, which is about 4%. Pastor Rob attended continuing ed in St. Paul recently which was a masters homiletics course. Confirmation goes through the end of October and then breaks until January 8th.

Pastor Mark: Pastor Mark reported 5th Quarter is going well and he is working to find ways to continue this event. Pastor Mark passed around information on a November 1-2 seminar on Healthy Congregations in Dickinson. There will be a Life Light free concert on October 18th at the RRC. Pastor Mark asked for permission to explore a Safe Gatherings Program which screens and trains staff and volunteers. Board consensus was to explore this program and bring back a report in November. Pastor Mark requested to assist the Synod Attorney in looking at abandoned cemeteries. Board consensus was to work on this project with the Synod.

Vawnita will provide moderate "Dwelling in the Word" at the Sunday, November 10th meeting, which will be held at 6:00pm.

Moved by Jeremiah, seconded by Glen, to adjourn at 8:19pm. All voting aye, motion carried. Those in attendance closed with the Lord's Prayer.



Christmas Greetings from the FLC Council.

Hi, I am Keith Helmuth, a proud dad of two sons, Kell 17 and Koen 14, and a husband for the past 26 years to my wife Jill. As a lifelong animal agriculturalist, formally educated at NDSU and UNL, I worked in beef cattle and sheep research prior to starting the cow calf operation that we current operate south of Watford City. I find comfort in green pastures... Psalms, the Book of Job, Abel's offering, hearing about the great herds of Abraham, and I feel blessed to be a livestock caretaker.

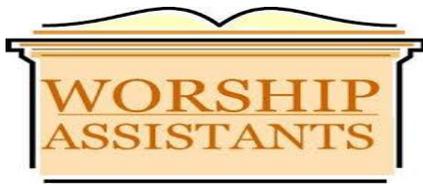
I have served on the FLC Council the past two years, on the finance committee, with considerable effort first reviewing contractor issues and putting pending litigation behind us, and then onto initiating a matching capital campaign to repay the building loan. In retrospect, the FLC Council has been fully engaged, and FLC is on solid ground regardless of the current rumbings or any questions being asked.

I was not always a Lutheran, raised on a livestock farm in Rolette County and attended school at Wolford (it was also Go Wolves!). I was Baptized, received Holy Communion, and was Confirmed in the Catholic Church. Jill and I met while at NDSU and we were married in her home church, Malta Lutheran Church. Kell was born at St. Joe's in Dickinson with heart complications and was Baptized as a Lutheran on a med flight without his parents in route to St Mary's in Rochester. Once back home, reflecting upon that experience and with urging from Karen Broderson and the guidance of Pastor Verle Reinicke, as a family we joined the worship family of FLC. On the lighter side, I was also out voted 2:1!



We would like to welcome the newly baptized to Banks Lutheran Church:

*Brax Scott DeMorrett
Son of Levi & Jade*



Dec. 1 – 1st Sunday of Advent

10:00 AM

Reader: Marcia Hellandsaas

Greeters: Ron & Barb Quale

Ushers: Owen & Laurie Hamre

Communion: Ron & Karen Broderson

Power Point: Brooke Rolfsrud

Coffee Hour: Glen & Anne Beard

Dec. 8 – 2nd Sunday of Advent

10:00 AM

Reader: Anne Beard

Greeters: Dave & Lynette Hansen

Ushers: Kelly & Peni Peterson

Power Point: Aubrey Wollan

Coffee Hour: Justin & Nicole Johnsrud

December 15 – 3rd Sunday of Advent

10:00 AM

Reader: Ari Johnson

Greeters: Korey & Michelle Lass

Ushers: Neal & Lisa Shipman

Communion: Steve & Gretchen Stenehem

Power Point: Ethan Evanson

Coffee Hour: Duke & Sharon Olson

Dec. 22 – 4th Sunday of Advent

10:00 AM

Reader: Frances Olson

Greeters: Craig & Katie Paulson

Ushers: Dale & Vicki Karpyak

Power Point: Max Paulson

Coffee Hour: David & Katie Tschetter

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve

5:00 PM

Greeters: Larry & Debbie Larsen

Ushers: Scott & Jane Swenson

Dec. 25 – Christmas Day

10:00 AM

Greeters:

Ushers:

Dec. 29th – 1st Sunday of Christmas

10:00 AM

Reader: Valerie Williams

Greeters: Michon Sax

Ushers: Don Stenberg & Matt Beard

Power Point:

Coffee Hour: Mike & Sharon Endrud



Meetings for the Women of the ELCA Circles



Wednesday, December 4th

10:00 AM – FLC WELCA General Meeting at FLC

Monday, December 9th

5:00 PM – Hope Circle at the Horizons

Tuesday, December 10th

2:00 PM – Garden WELCA at the Horizons

Wednesday, December 11th

1:30 PM – Peace Circle at FLC

No meeting for Banks WELCA this month



You're invited...

First Lutheran Church WELCA will be having their Christmas Party on Sunday, December 8th at 4:00 pm in the FLC Centennial Hall. There will be no business meeting, only fun fellowship with a short program, decorating the Christmas tree in the Centennial Hall followed by a potluck meal. Please bring a food item to share and join the ladies in Christmas spirit – EVERYONE is welcome!

Please review the following information concerning the bylaws of First Lutheran Church which will be discussed at the Annual Meeting in January 2020:

WHEREAS Article XII – Bylaws of the constitution states in part: Bylaws may be amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting, provided the proposed amendment has been announce and read at a public service or mailed to the voting members, in either case at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

WHEREAS Section 6 – The Church Council of the bylaws states in part: The church council shall consist of 11 members elected each for a term of two years, but elected in such a manner that five would be elected in even years and six in odd numbered years.

IT IS PROPOSED to amend the quoted portion of Section 6 of the bylaws to read: The church council shall consist of 9 members elected each for a term of three years, elected in such a manner that three would be elected each year at the congregational annual meeting.



The First Lutheran Church Choir will be presenting their annual Christmas Cantata on Wednesday, December 18th at 7:00 pm at the First Lutheran Church. This year's Cantata is entitled "Love Came Down at Christmas" by Joel Raney and celebrates God's hope, peace, joy and love through music. Come help us prepare for the birth of our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ while remembering the REAL reason for this beautiful season!

I Said a Christmas Prayer for You because the season's near. I didn't ask for riches but for gifts so much more dear. I asked for joyful gatherings with your family all around, And for carols to inspire you with their old familiar sound. I asked for quiet moments in your heart on Christmas morn, For a special time to celebrate the Savior who was born...