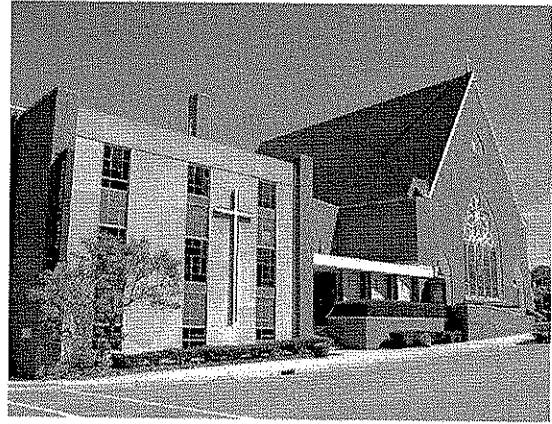


First News

First Lutheran Church
Freeport, IL 61032



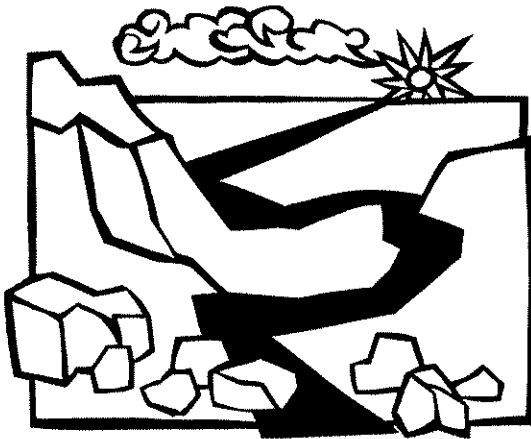
**THROUGH WORSHIP AND LOVING SERVICE,
WE MAKE CHRIST KNOWN TO ALL**

Volume 35 #5

February 6, 2009

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

February 8, 2009



How do you decide which way to go? On a journey, we use a map. In a shopping center, we look for directional signs. For major life choices like colleges or careers, we consult with counselors or elders who can advise us. But how about in matters of faithful living? How can we know - in this particular matter or that - which way God would have us go?

Perhaps Jesus faced such a dilemma near the beginning of his ministry in Mark's Gospel. He had become quickly known and his power to preach and to heal was badly needed and highly desired by all around him. "Everyone is searching for you," they told him. But they found him in a quiet place, praying. And the result? He left to preach in other towns, for that is what he came out to do.

The faithful road is usually not the easy road, nor the most comfortable nor the safest. But God nonetheless beckons us to the faithful road. Following our Lord Jesus, it is down that faithful road we will travel.

Rev. Kurt Hansen, Interim Pastor



Known to be hospitalized is Ivan Sorn at FHN Memorial Hospital.

Care Givers give emotional support when a member is in need. If you know of anyone who could benefit from a Care Giver's visit, contact Kry's Brose (815-233-4410).

From the Volunteer Coordinator -The joy that you give to others is the joy that comes back to you. -John Greenleaf Whittier

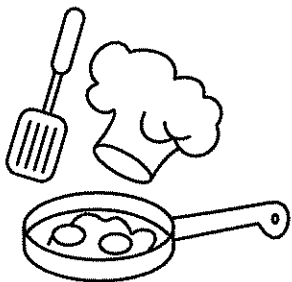
NEW MEMBERS



We are pleased to announce that Kelly Alexander and her children, Sam and Mia Eshelman will be received as new members this Sunday. Kelly is married

to Dave Alexander and moved to Freeport from the Quad-City area in 2004. She is the Executive Director of the Stephenson County Senior Center. Sam is an 8th grader at Freeport Junior High and enjoys soccer through school and the Freeport Soccer Club. Mia is a 6th grader at Carl Sandburg and enjoys tumbling and competes with Pierce Athletics.

STAY FOR BREAKFAST



Plan on joining your fellow members and friends for breakfast this Sunday, February 8, at 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. The menu will be: two kinds of eggs, bacon, toast & jelly, pears, coffee and juice.

The suggested donation is \$5.00.

ENDOWMENT FUND NEWS CELEBRATION OF GIFTS

The individuals and organizations that will be receiving funds from First Lutheran's Endowment Fund have been invited to attend worship services next Sunday, February 15. We hope you will be able to come and see your Endowment Fund in action.

BEARS WIN SOUPERBOWL!!!

The Packer fans amongst the First Lutheran youth would like to reluctantly announce that Bear fans out donated Packer fans in last week's Souper Bowl of Caring event by \$39...thus making the Bears Souperbowl Champions. According to the Packer youth, next year, the outcome will be different! Thanks to the generous support of both Packer and Bear fans, we managed to collect \$600 for FACC. Nationwide, the complete Souper Bowl tally is still being tabulated, but donations seem to be down somewhat. We are truly grateful for the support of the congregation for this and so many other events.

PRAYER SHAWL GROUP - The prayer shawl group will meet on Saturday, February 7, from 10:00-12:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. All knitters, crocheters, and those wishing to learn how, are welcome to come.

NISWO RETREATS - The Northern Illinois Synod Women are sponsoring two retreats based on the theme "Dancing with the Spirit," to be led by Pastor Diane Dardon of NIU Campus Ministry. An overnight retreat at Sinsinawa Mound, WI will be held March 27-28th for the cost of \$75, which includes meals and lodging. A one-day retreat on the same topic will be held at the NIU Lutheran Campus Ministry Center on Saturday, April 4th for a cost of \$30, which includes lunch. Registration forms can be found on the bulletin board near the restrooms. Our WELCA will reimburse one-half the cost to any woman who attends either retreat. If you plan to attend, contact Jan Butterfield or Ruth Wardlow regarding transportation.

BOOK OF FAITH RETREAT



The Northern Illinois Synod's Diakonia Program will present a one-day retreat to educate individuals about the ELCA's Book of Faith initiative. This event will be held on Saturday, February 21 at First Lutheran Church, 324 N. Third Street in DeKalb.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., program begins at 9 a.m. The day will end by 4 p.m. with a closing service and Eucharist. A \$15 fee includes program, materials, continental breakfast, lunch, and snacks. To register, mail or e-mail the following information to Denise Rode, NIS Diakonia Chairperson (drode@niu.edu), 2800 Country Club Lane, DeKalb, IL 60115. For more information: 815/756-8321. Please make your reservation by February 13.

The Book of Faith is an initiative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Book of Faith initiative invites the whole church to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered, and sent by the Word.

The Diakonia program would like to encourage anyone who is interested in growing in their faith and increasing their knowledge of scripture to attend.

PROJECT WORKDAY

Project Workday will meet on Thursday, February 12, from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. in the Martin Luther Room. Come down for part or all of the day and bring a sack lunch if you plan to stay over the noon hour. For the next month we are collecting items for sewing kits for Lutheran World Relief. Donations of 3-4 yard pieces of cotton-blend material, large spools of thread, and packages of sewing needles may be left in the WELCA box located near the mailboxes.

2009 CONGREGATIONAL RESOURCING EVENT:

Word of God. Word of Life.

Saturday, March 7, 2009 - 8:30 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Dr. Matthew Marohl, Associate Professor of Religion at Augustana College and a member of the ELCA Committee on the "Book of Faith" Initiative will be keynote speaker.

The Congregational Resourcing Event (CRE) will offer many varied educational workshop selections for you, your key congregational leaders, and other interested congregation members. Augsburg Fortress will have a display and other displays from agencies and institutions will be present.

During the CRE Worship, a **special offering** will be taken. Please plan to give generously. If you'd like to send a check, please make it out to *Northern Illinois Synod*. As has become traditional, the CRE will be held at Kishwaukee College, Malta, Illinois. Sponsored by the Northern Illinois Synod Congregational Life Committee.

The Northern Illinois Synod's Congregational Resourcing Event is one of this synod's finest yearly events. Church council members, teachers, musicians, staff, volunteers, and leaders--just about everyone in a congregation--can take advantage of this learning event to strengthen skills, gather resources, network with others, and discover new ways to enhance congregational and individual ministries. Come, experience and bring home new ministry tools. Kishwaukee College is handicap accessible. Supervised child care in Kishwaukee College's on-campus Early Childhood Center is provided with pre-registration. A free-will offering will be accepted to cover child-care costs.

You may see a list of scheduled workshops, see a map and directions to Kishwaukee College, and register online at the following URL: <http://www.nisynod.org/cre/>

THIS WEEK AT FIRST

February 8

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

8:15 & 10:45 a.m. Worship Services

9:00 a.m. Congregational Breakfast

9:30 a.m. Sunday School & Catechism Classes

Monday

4:30 p.m. Neighborhood Youth Ministry

7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts

Wednesday

9:00 a.m. NW Conference Meeting

1:00 p.m. NW Conference Pastor's Text Study

7:00 p.m. Council Meeting

Thursday

10:00 a.m. Workday

6:30 p.m. Kids of the Kingdom, Bell Choir, Praise Band Rehearsal

7:30 p.m. Celebration Choir Rehearsal

Saturday

6:30 a.m. MBA at Big Apple

5:00 p.m. Worship

THE PARISH RECORD

January 31/February 1 Saturday 5:00-17 Sunday 8:15-120 10:45-72 Total-209 Sunday School-52 Offerings \$6,877.20