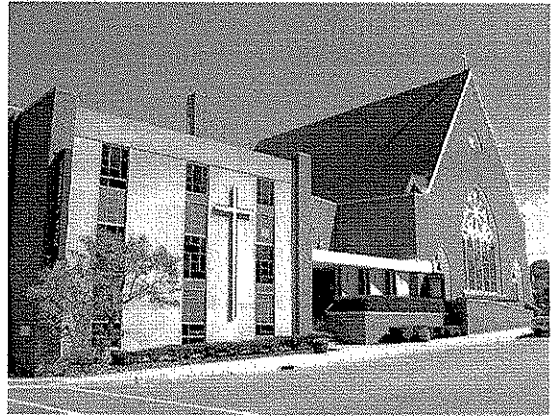


# First News

First Lutheran Church  
Freeport, IL 61032

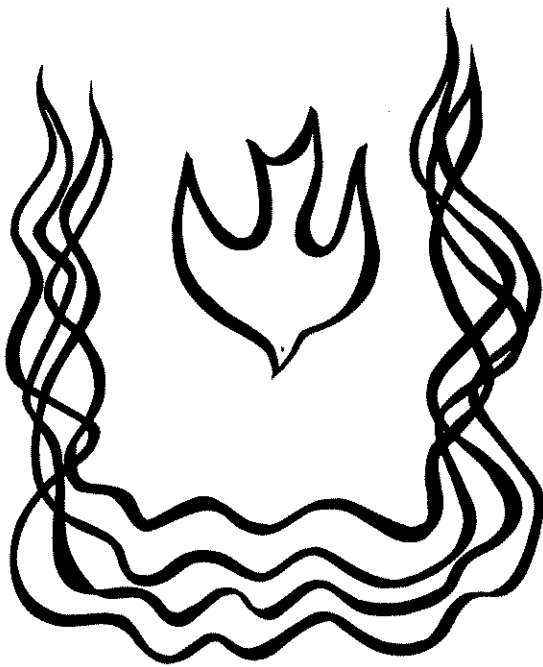


**THROUGH WORSHIP AND LOVING SERVICE,  
WE MAKE CHRIST KNOWN TO ALL**

Volume 35 #37

December 11, 2009

## Third Sunday of Advent



*The presence of the Lord "in your midst" in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the Lord in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with his winnowing fork in his hand, is good news--and cause for exultation--for us who are being saved.*

*Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.*



Many thanks from Greg Zeigler for all the prayers, cards, calls, and gifts - they are very appreciated.

The Rachel Circle will meet on Tuesday, December 15, 6:00 p.m. at Pat Schutte's, 103 N. Sunset Avenue. All are welcome to attend. Please bring finger food to pass.

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 Krys Brose (815-233-4410).

### CHRISTMAS WORSHIP



Our Christmas Eve worship services will be held at 7:00 and 10:30 p.m. this year. Plan on attending and invite your friends to join us.

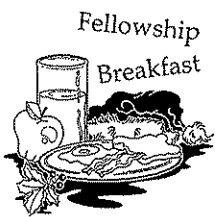
There will no Saturday worship service on December 26. The Saturday evening worship will resume its regular schedule on January 2, 2010.

### LET'S DECORATE THE CHURCH

You are all invited to a family pizza party at 6:00 p.m. this Saturday, December 12 with trimming the sanctuary tree following.

Why not come to the 5:00 worship service first? Reservations are a must and can be made by calling Mike Reichert at 815-990-2187.

### JOIN US FOR BREAKFAST



Plan on joining us for this month's Fellowship Breakfast which will be held this Sunday, December 13, between services. The menu will be: pancakes, eggs, egg casserole,

sliced ham, applesauce, and toast & jelly. The suggested donation to help cover expenses is \$6.00. Please come and enjoy the good food and fellowship.

### CHRISTMAS PROGRAM REHEARSAL



Our Christmas program is coming! On Saturday, December 19 all involved will meet from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. for rehearsal. We need help providing a snack break for that morning. If you can help provide needed items or by serving or cleaning up, please

sign-up on the sheet outside Peg's office by this Sunday. You may also call the church office 815-235-9790 to sign-up.

### "LET'S ALL GO CHRISTMAS CAROLING!"



Share the good news and a great song at this Sunday's youth group Christmas caroling party. Admit it- you secretly love walking from house to house, with your friends, bundled against the cold, singing your favorite Christmas

songs. It is a truly AWESOME way to spread the good news.

Date: This Sunday, December 13, 2009

Place: First Lutheran Church

Time: 4:00 to 7:30 p.m.

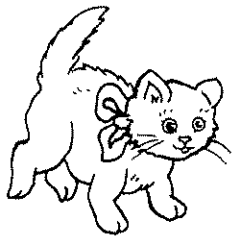
Caroling will start at 4:00 with a gift exchange/pizza party to follow. Please also bring a \$5.00 non-gender specific gift.

## CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to provide Christmas gifts for an individual in the FACC Transitional Housing Program. Donations will be accepted through this Sunday. If you would like to help, please use a pink envelope or a pew envelope and mark it "Gifts for Terry."

**SIGN UP FOR FLOWERS** - It's time to sign up for 2010 altar flowers. The flower chart is available in the entryway. The cost remains \$15.00. You can use a pink envelope or a pew envelope marked, "Altar Flowers."

## CAN YOU HELP?



I received an email from Orv and former Pastor Linda Kersten concerning their preparations to move to a Senior Residence on the northeast side of Rockford.

They are facing the challenges of finding a new home for their "two girls" CiCi and Cleo, 13 year old cats that have been with them since 1996 which means their entire lives. The cats are healthy for their age, had all shots and eat only dry food. They are typical tabbies. They love attention and chase each other and play well together. They don't mind being around other dogs since they are presently living with a miniature dachshund.

Their wish is that they could have a quiet home together where they are the only cats and center of attention in their old age.

If you can open your heart and home to these two kitties or know of someone who would give them a good home, please call me at 815-232-8760 or call Barb Donahue at 815-232-6729.

-Nancy Holtum

P.S. The Kersten's want to thank you in advance for thinking with them about a new home for their beloved "girls".

## KNITTING GROUP

The Knitting Group will meet on Saturday, December 19, from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. You may bring your own project to work on, or you may work on a variety of service projects including prayer shawls, children's sweaters, and scarves. Those wishing to learn how to knit or crochet are welcome to join us.

## PROJECT WORKDAY

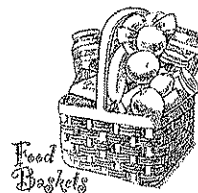


Project Workday would like to thank everyone who donated items for area nursing homes. The items were delivered this week, along with some lap robes made by the workday ladies.

## READING GROUP

The women's reading group will meet on Saturday, December 12, from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. in the Lounge to share our thoughts on the book, "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens. Don't forget to bring a few cookies or a light snack to share, in celebration of the holidays! Anyone is welcome to come and join us!

## FACC CHRISTMAS BASKETS



Thank you for your generous response to our appeal for boxes of stuffing for the FACC Christmas baskets. The deadline is this Sunday, December 13.

## POINSETTIAS



It's time to order your Christmas poinsettias. The cost is \$9.25 and they may be given in memory or in honor of your loved ones. Please use a pink envelope or a pew envelope

First News  
First Lutheran Church  
303 S. Galena Avenue  
Freeport, IL 61032

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Keith Johnson, Pastor  
Peg Huber, Office Manager  
Dawn Zeigler, Music Coordinator, Organist, Bell Choir Director  
Christina Parkinson, Praise Band Director, Choir Accompanist  
Elwyn Euler, Custodian  
Website: [www.firstlutheranfreeport.com](http://www.firstlutheranfreeport.com)

Milt Whitney, Visitation Pastor  
John Moore, Lay President  
Dagny Brandt, Celebration Choir & Kids of the Kingdom Director  
Teresa Parkinson, Choir Accompanist  
Telephone: 235-9790 Fax: 235-9791  
E-Mail: [friends@firstlutheranfreeport.com](mailto:friends@firstlutheranfreeport.com)

**THIS WEEK AT FIRST**

**DECEMBER 13**

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

8:15 & 10:45 a.m. Worship Services  
9:00 a.m. Fellowship Breakfast  
9:30 a.m. Sunday School/Catechism Classes/Discussion Group/Endowment Meeting  
4:00 p.m. Youth Group Caroling Party  
4:30 p.m. Monday Afternoon Program  
7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts

Monday  
4:30 p.m. Monday Afternoon Program  
7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts

Tuesday  
10:00 a.m. Mary Circle at Bev Herrling's  
4:30 p.m. Girl Scouts  
6:00 p.m. Rachel Circle at Pat Schutte's

Wednesday  
1:00 p.m. NW Conference Pastor's Text Study  
6:30 p.m. Youth Committee

Thursday  
6:30 p.m. Kids of the Kingdom Rehearsal  
7:30 p.m. Celebration Choir Rehearsal

Friday  
6:30 p.m. NA Teen Meeting

Saturday  
6:30 a.m. MBA at Big Apple  
9:00 a.m. Christmas Program Rehearsal  
10:00 a.m. Knitting Group  
11:00 a.m. Cantata Rehearsal  
5:00 p.m. Worship Service

**THE PARISH RECORD**

December 5/6 Saturday 5:00-27 Sunday 8:15-127 10:45-53 Total-207 Sunday School-37 Offerings \$6,559.00

# Make It Simple

*A Resource for Stewardship Education and Annual Responses*

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## Sharing Enough

**Philippians 4:11b-13** *I have learned to be content with whatever I have. I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*

What does “contentment” feel like? This is a difficult question in our current culture. When surveys have asked “How much is enough?” responses have consistently been “Twenty percent more than I have now.” If that is true, how do we break the endless circle that this leads us toward—it is always “twenty percent more.” We are told over and over every day—“You don’t have enough...What you have is fragile and could be gone at any moment...You have to go get more!” These messages come from a world focused on scarcity.

In this setting how do we understand our relationship with God? God is creator—we are God’s creatures. How do we live in relationship with our creator? Martin Luther reminds us in his explanation of the First Article of the Apostles’ Creed “that God has created me and all that exists...God daily and abundantly provides...all the necessities and nourishment for this body and life...out of pure, fatherly, and divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness of mine at all!” It is in this relationship that we recognize that God has abundantly provided us with all that we need. Living in that abundance we give of the blessings we have received.

If we focus on the scarcity, we never have enough. When we focus on God’s abundant blessings, there is more than we can ever imagine. Recognizing God’s abundant blessings we experience Paul’s message to the Philippians in our own lives. We can be content with what we have because we know that we are blessed and can “do all things through him who strengthens us.”