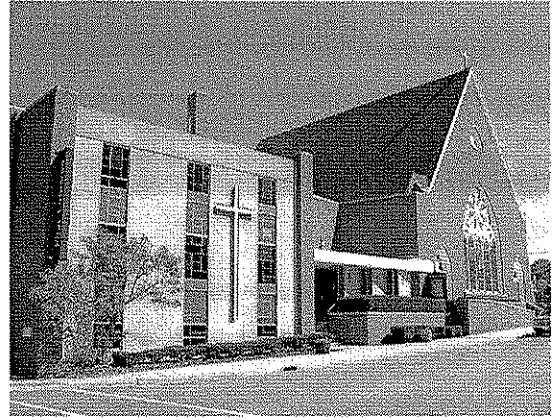


# First News

First Lutheran Church  
Freeport, IL 61032



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

Volume 35 #38

December 18, 2009

## CANTATA AND CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Please join us this Sunday, December 20, for two special services.



The Celebration Choir will present the cantata "I Hear the Prophet Callin', The Christmas Story from Prophecy to Fulfillment" by Pepper Choplin," at the 8:15 a.m. service.

Join us at 10:45 a.m. for the Christmas Program "Signs of Christmas," presented by our Sunday School and Catechism students.





Thank you from Vic and Jan Shields and family for all the cards, thoughts, and prayers during the time of Jan's dad, Mayo Willig's passing.

Many thanks for the get well cards and calls I received during my hospital stay. Also, thank you to Pastor Whitney for his visit. -Rod Simenson

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 Kryss Brose (815-233-4410).

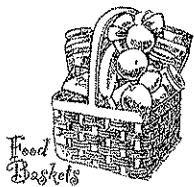
### CHRISTMAS WORSHIP



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.

### FACC CHRISTMAS BASKETS

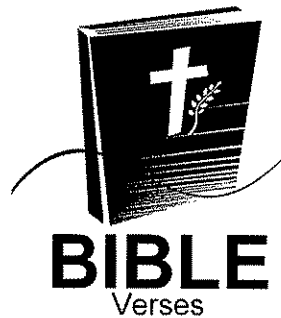


Thank you to everyone who brought boxes of stuffing for the FACC Christmas baskets. We received 300 boxes! Thanks to Elwyn and Duane Euler for delivering the boxes to the Lincoln Mall.

### GIFTS FOR TERRY

Wow! What a generous church. You gave \$453.00 for "Gifts for Terry!" Terry is an individual in the FACC Transitional Housing Program and your contributions gave Terry a very Merry Christmas. He received the following gifts: insulated boots, thermal socks, hooded flannel shirt, long underwear, 2 pair of regular jeans, 1 pair of fleece lined jeans, insulated gloves, a wallet, thermal coffee mug, \$100 phone card and a \$100 gift card. Thanks to Becky Leopold for doing the shopping!

### WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE BIBLE VERSE?



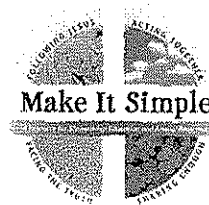
Isn't that a good question? We are looking for volunteers to share their favorite Bible verse with our third grade students on a Sunday morning. So, think about your

favorite Bible verse and then contact Duke Herrling or the church office to volunteer.

### NEWSLETTER

Because of the Christmas and New Year's holidays, we will not publish a newsletter the weeks of December 21 and 28. The deadline for the next issue is Tuesday, January 5. Calendar and volunteer information for January will be needed at that time. (We will however, need information for the January 3 bulletin by December 28.)

### STEWARDSHIP



Please remember to bring your Commitment Cards and Time & Talent sheets to church this Sunday. We need a faithful response from our members in order to plan the budget for the coming year. Thank you!

## KNITTING GROUP

The Knitting Group will meet this 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.

## READING GROUP

The women's reading group selected our next book, "Two Women of Galilee" by Mary Rourke. We will meet on Saturday, January 30, from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. in the Lounge to share our thoughts on the book. This book may be purchased at The Dollar Tree for \$1.00 and tells the story of Mary, mother of Jesus, and her cousin, Joanna. Come and join us!

## MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE CHURCH STAFF

We hope that your Christmas holidays are happy ones, filled with many good memories, and surrounded by those you love. May the presence of Christ be born anew in your heart filling you with a sense of joy and peace.

*Christ  
IS Born!*

GREETINGS BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST,



Well, Christmas is almost here and I remain truly amazed at the depth of the love God has for God's people. Think

about it, God decided to give to the world His gift of love in person. God didn't send anybody else for this momentous occasion, instead God emptied Himself of His glory and came bearing a gift for us clothed as one of us.

Isn't that awesome?

I wonder though. Just how many people will be spending the holidays alone this season? And I don't mean because they couldn't get time away from their jobs, or their families had moved farther apart over the years. No, I wonder how many people will stay away from one another because they are holding a grudge about something and no one has forgiven the other one because they each feel the other one owes them the apology.

I wonder what Christmas would have been like for the world, if God had decided to stay away from us until we admitted that the mess we find ourselves in was our fault? God's gift to a broken world started with forgiveness and is fulfilled in our being present with God forever.

I wonder what difference we could make in someones life if we dropped a grudge, forgave someone and invited someone to share their time with us. Maybe it is time for us to find out?

Have a very blessed Christmas!

Pastor Keith

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Periodicals Postage Paid  
Freeport, IL 61032  
USPS 345110

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**THIS WEEK AT FIRST**

**DECEMBER 20      FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

8:15 a.m. Celebration Choir Cantata  
9:30 a.m. Sunday School/Catechism Classes/Discussion Group  
9:30 a.m. 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> Grades Worship Planning Meeting  
10:45 a.m. Christmas Program

Monday            7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts  
Tuesday          4:30 p.m. Girl Scouts  
Wednesday      1:00 p.m. NW Conference Pastor's Text Study  
Thursday        7:00 & 10:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship Services  
Friday            CHRISTMAS DAY  
Saturday        No MBA  
                      No Saturday Worship Service

**THE PARISH RECORD**  
December 12/13   Saturday 5:00-28   Sunday 8:15-85   10:45-54   Total-167   Sunday School-80   Offerings \$3,400.00