



January 2019

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH The PULSEBEAT

Dear faithful First family and friends,

We've made it to yet another New Year, which makes me think about something: New Year's Resolutions. After all, which of us hasn't—at one time or another—made a New Year's Resolution and—for one reason or another—didn't keep it up for too long, maybe not even by January 2nd! New Year's Resolutions and other such efforts remind me of one of the fruits of the Spirit Paul writes about in Ephesians: self-control. When it comes to resolutions and other things we want to change about ourselves or areas in which we want to improve, "self-control" is what we need. Think about this list: diets, exercise, more time reading God's Word, less TV, spending more quality time with family and friends, taking a vacation, and the like. Yes, when it comes down to it, we need "self-control" to accomplish such goals. But, as the old saying goes, "We're usually our own worst enemy." We frequently sabotage ourselves by first, making large goals, dreams, and New Year's Resolutions, and then second, we don't properly plan how to accomplish these lofty endeavors. It takes this fruit of "self-control" to see these plans reach their fruition.



Recently I re-read a book I've had on my shelf for the twenty-somethingth time. It's the book *'Tis a Gift to Be Simple: Embracing the Freedom of Living with Less* by Barbara DeGrote-Sorensen and David Allen Sorensen (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1992. ISBN 0806625732). In this book, the authors give their reasons why living a simpler lifestyle is important and why living this sort of life frees us to pursue more meaning in our lives. Though this book, good as it is, contains more of their theory only. So I picked up its sequel, *Six Weeks to a Simpler Lifestyle* by the same authors (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1994. ISBN 0806627514). This book takes the theory of their first book, but then it provides a plan to live a simpler life. As the authors write, "[*Six Weeks to a Simpler Lifestyle*] is a 'how-to'...our first book is a 'why-to' book" (*Six Weeks to a Simpler Lifestyle*, p. 123). Their books make sense. We live with too much: multiple e-mail accounts, more than one car, too many cable channels, too many choices of food to add to our weight and health issues, all while neglecting the more important matters: quality time with family and friends, regular time with God apart from our worship services, maybe taking time to be silent and alone even if for a short time.

To make their ideas and similar objectives work, though, one needs "self-control." Maybe when we look at the list of Paul's "Fruits of the Spirit," just maybe this final fruit is the most challenging yet: for it's this notion of "self-control" that will enable us to better work on the other fruits. Or to put it another way: without "self-control" it will be more difficult to accomplish what we've set our minds on.

Of course, when we look at "self-control" regarding our spiritual life it takes us to areas reaching beyond New Year's Resolutions and such. "Self-control" coupled with our spiritual life means not giving in to the many temptations we encounter. Many of those temptations, though, are things similar to what we resolve to change for the New Year. Some of these I mentioned above: eating better and not succumbing to junk food and ready-to-cook microwave meals. It takes "self-control" to actually plan better meals. So, too, does it take "self-control" to accomplish our exercise goals. When we attempt to deal with these things, it's so much easier—and pleasurable—not to give in to the added effort. New disciplines, and especially changing long-held, long-established disciplines, are the problem. To change them may be painful and it may require much patience, but these can be done. Meanwhile, back to our spiritual life...

Yes, we want—we want to resolve to, we want to discipline ourselves—to read God's Word more. Yes, we want—we want to resolve to, we want to discipline ourselves—to give more money to God's work here at First Lutheran Church and other organizations. Yes, we want—we want to resolve to, we want to discipline ourselves—to volunteer for more worthwhile causes, but in the midst of our busy-ness, we find it more and more difficult. Perhaps that's why the DeGrote-Sorensen/Sorensen books make sense: to simplify our lives may help us to see why the more meaningful things matter. Yes, "self-control" may help us see things clearly.

It would be easy to beat ourselves up over our lack of "self-control," complaining in an internal monologue that we've not followed through again. That's when this becomes even more problematic, though. For then we



further sabotage ourselves while thinking we're no good. We compare ourselves to others: "If they can do it, why can't I?" This and other sorts of thoughts influence us to the point of getting us down. We may feel guilty that we lack "self-control." We may get depressed that we've blown it again. We may even become resentful of others who do manage to accomplish their goals. And so we may want to give up again, assuming—again—that our attempts are futile. We may think it's not even worth trying this because it's not going to work anyway.

The good news though is that God doesn't care about our unfulfilled resolutions. God doesn't care about our feeble attempts to better ourselves. Instead, God cares about loving us and accepting us even amidst our own lack of "self-control." In time, God will work in and through us. In time, God will help us be better stewards of our selves and of the resources of time, talents, and treasures God's given us. In time, God may even see our lives drastically changed for the better. So when we think we've succumbed to not following through on our dreams, remember that God hasn't given up on us. God welcomes us regardless of what we've done or attempted to do. God welcomes us regardless of our "self-control" and gives us something better: God restores us to wholeness amidst our unfulfilled dreams and desires.

When it comes down to it, "self-control" and the things we may reap from this are beneficial. But all of that pales in comparison to our God who loves us no matter who we are, with our "self-control" intact and even with our lack of "self-control."

Peace and Joy,

The Rev. Darryl W. Kozak
Intentional Interim Pastor

Council Update: Another Revolution Around the Sun

by Carol J. Schultz, Council Secretary

New year's greetings and blessings to you all! We have observed another revolution of our earth around the sun. The year 2018 is history, and 2019 lies before us. Many of us paused to reflect on the highs and lows of the past year. Some of us even summoned the willpower to make resolutions for the year to come. First Lutheran's Church Council held its last meeting for 2018 on December 18 and considered end-of-year business as well as ongoing items. As for resolutions, you'll have to wait for our report on the Council's January retreat. A summary of the December meeting follows.

Devotion. Melinda Person shared a reflection on trusting God's faithfulness in difficult times.

Finances and Budgeting. The Council expects the budgeted deficit of \$50,000 for 2018 to be accurate, although final analysis will occur after the end of the year. First Lutheran has liquid assets to cover this deficit. Because 86% of First Lutheran's expenses are fixed rather than discretionary, e.g., salaries, insurance, utilities, and taxes, the Council has limited opportunities to reduce spending. The congregation will get more detailed information about 2018 finances at its meeting on January 20, 2019.

Congregation Meeting on January 20. The congregation will hold the second part of its annual meeting on January 20, 2019, between worship services. Congregation leaders will present a written, annual report for 2018 at that meeting.

Council Officers. The Council elected the following officers for 2019: President—Dick Krueger; Vice President—Frank DeLouise; Secretary—Carol Schultz; Treasurer—Kem Taylor; and Financial Secretary—Anke Hartung.

Annual Council Retreat. The Council agreed to hold its annual planning retreat on Saturday, January 12, 2019. Please let a Council member know if you have a topic you would like the Council to address in 2019.

Facilities Administrator's Sick Leave. President Dick Krueger informed the Council that Wayne Boss, Facili-

2019 Council Officers:

President: Dick Krueger

Vice President: Frank DeLouise

Secretary: Carol Schultz

Treasurer: Kem Taylor

Financial Secretary: Anke Hartung

Council Members:

Jeremy Kaercher, Melinda Person, Marjorie Wahlsten, and Susan White.



ties Administrator, has accrued about three weeks sick leave. Wayne was injured in a bicycle accident in early December and will need approximately six weeks recovery time. The Council decided to advance Wayne one year's sick leave (about two weeks) so he continues to have income while recovering.

Property. President Dick Krueger continues to communicate with the lift contractor, who told him in early December the City had approved the engineering plans and had requested resubmission of the electrical plans. The contractor cannot order the lift until all City approvals are in place.

Representing the interests of First Lutheran is a privilege and a responsibility your Council members take seriously. Please share your questions, concerns, or appreciation with any Council member.

God's Peace to you all,
Your 2019 Council

Facilities Focus: 2019 Adopt-a-Project

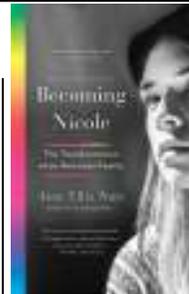
First Lutheran Church is a busy place. Its facility is heavily utilized with something going on six days a week. Such heavy use puts extra wear and tear on the church's facilities and the need to keep it clean and in good shape to create a welcoming place for members and guests. In 2019, various areas or rooms in the church will be highlighted with projects available for adoption. The church relies on the skills, time, and generosity of members and friends to complete these important projects. With the busy and Christmas season coming to a close, projects in the Sanctuary are the focus of this month's highlight.

Sanctuary

Outstanding Tasks:

- ◇ Remove dripped candle wax from chair upholstery
- ◇ Brush or vacuum chair upholstery to remove lint and dust
- ◇ Wash woodwork on upholstered chairs
- ◇ Remove candle wax from center carpet runner
- ◇ Shampoo center carpet runner
- ◇ Dust and wash baseboards
- ◇ Address loose wood features on processional cross

A full list of projects available for adoption and sign-up slips are located on the kiosk in the lounge. For information on the projects, you are welcome to contact Facility Committee members Richard Phillips, Dick Krueger, or Kathryn Kanaan (landscape projects) or leave a note or message with the Church office with contact information.



Book Group Notes

We start off the new year with the inspiring true story of transgender actor and activist Nicole Maines. The profoundly moving journey of Nicole, her identical twin brother, and their parents towards authenticity and justice is told in *Becoming Nicole* by Pulitzer Prize winning author Amy Ellis Nutt.

Four ordinary and imperfect human beings reckon with an exceptional situation, and in doing so, become, in their own modest ways, exceptional.

Join us for reflection and lively discussion Thursday, January 17, 7:00 p.m. at the home of Pat Hendrickson.

Looking ahead: February's selection will be *As Close to Us as Breathing* by Elizabeth Poliner.

Welcome the Babe

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Welcome the Babe project in 2018! Each year we make a difference to more babies and their families in dire circumstances through our gifts of love. The kits will be blessed during services on Sunday, January 6, and an update will be provided in the February Pulsebeat.

January Birthdays

1: Ariet Lero	11: Brehysria Nodd	18: Matthew Carter	22: Kamaria Nodd
1: Akian Slevcove	13: Rebecca Foley	18: Brian Taylor	23: David Oakes
2: Isaiah Alli	14: Mary Claire	19: Debra Kudar	24: Diana Randall
2: Elijah Alli	14: Rosemary Spruce	19: Kem Taylor	25: John Lester
3: Sabine Junginger	14: Waddell Wilcox	20: James Mehlow Morris	29: Caleb Jensen
8: Richard Krueger	15: Renea Aswegan	20: Rob Paul	31: Kathryn Johnson
11: Sophia Lovell	17: James Geison	21: Sue Ana Humphries	



Congregation Meeting Part I

by Carol J. Schultz, Council Secretary

Should a congregation's annual meeting be scheduled so the congregation can plan for the coming calendar year or so it can review the past calendar year? First Lutheran's answer is "Yes!" And, no, we don't meet at midnight on New Year's Eve. Our Bylaws specify a two-part annual meeting. The first part is held in December with an agenda that prepares for the coming year, and the second part is held the following January with an agenda focused on reviewing the past year.

On December 9, 2018, First Lutheran's congregation held Part 1 of its annual meeting and conducted the following business.

Election of Council members. Council members have three-year terms, and one-third of Council seats become vacant each year. The congregation elected Anke Hartung, Carol Schultz, and Marjorie Wahlsten to fill the three vacant seats for the 2019-2021 term.

Revisions to Bylaws. The Council proposed two revisions to First Lutheran's Bylaws, and the congregation adopted both of them. The first revision conforms the Bylaws more closely to the ELCA Model Constitution by providing that members of a call committee or a committee to support interim ministry must be voting members of the congregation. The second revision simplifies check signing by requiring checks equaling or exceeding \$500 be signed by any two authorized signers rather than requiring signatures by the Treasurer and another authorized signer.

2019 Budget. The congregation approved the 2019 budget proposed by the Council, which anticipates a second year of deficit spending. Stewardship in previous years accrued reserve funds; therefore, First Lutheran has liquid assets to cover the anticipated deficit. Because 86% of First Lutheran's expenses are fixed rather than discretionary, *e.g.*, salaries, insurance, utilities, and taxes, the Council has limited opportunities to reduce spending.

Fiscal adjustments. Congregation members recommended the Council analyze the advisability of pre-paying the remaining mortgage payments, the last of which is due in October 2019. They also suggested the Council look for a better interest rate for First Lutheran's money market funds.

Synod Benevolence. First Lutheran has a practice of budgeting 10% of annual envelope offerings as benevolence to the Pacifica Synod. The Treasurer calculates the exact amount at the end of December, and the dollar amount may be more or less than the budgeted figure, depending on actual offerings. The congregation voted to continue this practice, although a sizeable minority favored sending the Synod the budgeted amount even if actual envelope offerings were lower than budgeted.

Part 2 of the annual congregation meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 20, 2019, between worship services. The Council will present the 2018 annual report, including actual budget numbers for the past year.



2018
Christmas
Pageant

Thanks to Jenny Mehlow and Bill Radatz for the pictures!



Call Committee Reflections

by Carol Schultz

As one year closes and another begins, many of us take time to reflect on the past and look to the future. Our Call Committee is no exception. As 2018 transitions into 2019, we recognize we are not where our congregation expected to be on the journey to find Pr. Wilk Miller's successor. Liturgically, we're in the celebratory Christmas season, but our call process feels more like the waiting season of Advent.

Looking back, we remember the highs and lows of the past year, especially how the joy of finding our new permanent pastor became dismay when that pastor decided to remain with his congregation. But we also see our congregation is continuing to carry out our mission at corner of Third & Ash, supporting each other in ministry and fulfilling our calling as the "heart of Christ in the heart of the City."

Looking ahead, we are optimistic the Holy Spirit is guiding us to a positive future. Bishop Andy Taylor and Pastor Terry Tuvey-Allen are working diligently to prepare a list of three pastoral candidates for consideration. As soon as our Call Committee knows who the candidates are, we'll begin reviewing their profiles and scheduling interviews.

So we go forward in the spirit portrayed so beautifully in this prayer by Peter Traben Haas, a leader in the Centering Prayer movement:

Lord God of all creation,
 anoint us with your Holy Spirit
 and let the mind of Christ become available to us.
 Open us to the unlimited possibilities of good
 you have in store for us.
 Feed us with your spirit of wisdom, love, and understanding
 for each situation and person we encounter,
 and bring about the best possible future
 for our transformation in Christ. Amen.

FLC Greets Advent with Fair Trade Fair

Our annual Fair Trade Alternative Gift Fair on Sunday, December 2 was a festive start to the Advent season. Representatives from various nonprofit groups engaged a lively crowd eager to learn about the various organizations, and make donations and purchases to benefit them. The following amounts were raised:

Lutheran World Relief	\$423
Welcome the Babe (LWR)	\$675
TACO	\$210
Heifer International	\$121
Survivors of Torture	\$16
Triqui Indians	\$71
Maseno Mission	\$354
ELCA	\$60

Many thanks to the many volunteers who helped make this a success. Special thanks are due to Sharon Province and Kara Oien who stepped in to help organize this year, and Marjorie Wahlsten who so efficiently did our finances.





First Lutheran Worship Assistants – January & February

ALTAR GUILD

JANUARY

9:00 a.m. Service

Billie Thompson

11:00 a.m. Service

Melinda Person

FEBRUARY

9:00 a.m. Service

Susan White

11:00 a.m. Service

Ruth Clayton

USHERS

JANUARY

9:00 a.m. Service

Carol McGrath & Ruthann Maxwell

11:00 a.m. Service

Ruth Clayton & Ladonna Piper

FEBRUARY

9:00 a.m. Service

Pat Hendrickson & Merv Rettenmund

11:00 a.m. Service

Anke Hartung & Melinda Person

Date	Time	Assisting Minister	Lector	Greeters	Nursery Attendants	Flowers
January 6	9:00 11:00	Jeremy Kaercher Paul Finneseth	Kem Taylor Joe Slevcove	John Hoff Slevcoves	_____ _____	_____
January 13	9:00 11:00	Chuck Leib Frank Jessie	Eric Sloniker Matthew Eckert	Frank DeLouise & Chuck Leib Ruth Clayton	_____ _____	Kjonegaards
January 20	9:00 11:00	Frank Jessie Beth Slevcove	George Falk Elizabeth Connolly	Hanieh Kohan Khaki Shelly Schreiber	_____ _____	Kjonegaards
January 27	9:00 11:00	Brian Shuman Mary Ann Horton	Pat Hendrickson Frank Jessie	Dick & Mary Krueger Marlene Garich	_____ _____	_____
February 3	9:00 11:00	Nate Pratt Paul Finneseth	Brian Shuman Joe Slevcove	John Hoff Slevcoves	_____ _____	_____
February 10	9:00 11:00	Kathryn Kanaan Frank Jessie	Carol Schultz Nancy Eckert	Kem Taylor Elizabeth Connolly	_____ _____	_____
February 17	9:00 11:00	Richard Phillips Beth Slevcove	Sylvia Herman Jim Lovell	Sylvia Herman Ruth Clayton	_____ _____	DeMers



January 2018 Calendar of Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 12 pm AI Anon	2 9 am Acupuncture 12 pm AI Anon	3 12 pm AI Anon	4 9 am Acupuncture 9 am Bread Day 12 pm AA	5
6 EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD 9 am Worship 10:10 Hospitality 11 am Worship 12:10 Hospitality	7 12 pm AA 4 pm Free Meal 5:30 pm Evening Clinics	8 12 pm AI Anon	9 9 am Acupuncture 12 pm AI Anon	10 12 pm AI Anon 1 pm HICAP	11 9 am Acupuncture 9 am Bread Day 12 pm AA	12
13 BAPTISM OF OUR LORD 9 am Worship 10:10 Hospitality 11 am Worship 12:10 Hospitality	14 12 pm AA 12 pm AI Anon 4 pm Free Meal 5:30 pm Evening Clinics	15 12 pm AI Anon	16 9 am Acupuncture 12 pm AI Anon	17 12 pm AI Anon 1 pm HICAP	18 9 am Acupuncture 9 am Bread Day 12 pm AA	19
20 SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY 9 am Worship 10:10 Hospitality 10:10 Cong Mtg2 11 am Worship 12:10 Hospitality	21 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY (OFFICE CLOSED) 12 pm AA 12 pm AI Anon 4 pm Free Meal 5:30 pm Evening Clinics	22 12 pm AI Anon	23 9 am Acupuncture 12 pm AI Anon	24 12 pm AI Anon 1 pm HICAP	25 9 am Acupuncture 9 am Bread Day 12 pm AA	26
27 THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY 9 am Worship 10:10 Hospitality 11 am Worship 12:10 Hospitality 4 pm German Svc	28 12 pm AA 12 pm AI Anon 4 pm Free Meal 5:30 pm Evening Clinics	29 12 pm AI Anon	30 9 am Acupuncture 12 pm AI Anon	31 12 pm AI Anon		

Monday evening clinics include acupuncture, medical, dental, and legal services.

The PULSEBEAT
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The Rev. Darryl W. Kozak, Intentional Interim Pastor
Jared Jacobsen, Director of Music
Hannah DeMers, Church Administrator

First Lutheran Church
A *Reconciling in Christ* congregation since 1989
Deadline for next month's Pulsebeat is **the 15th, noon.**

The Pulsebeat
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Some Thoughts for Our New Year

by Lee Kaercher

“How many loaves do you have?”

Jesus asks this twice in the Gospel of Mark. We know the stories, perhaps too well. In the first, Jesus feeds five thousand plus folks and then four thousand plus on the Judean hills.

Jesus *and* his disciples did this, *and*, in John’s Gospel, it is a young boy who contributes the fish and the loaves. Jesus asked them to put together and use *all* that they had. And what they had was enough to satisfy everyone, more than enough manna for the day.

These stories could be about us sitting on a hillside waiting. And they could be about us and who we all are. Together we are this church. We already have the loaves and the fishes. Yes, it will be good when we have our called pastor. Yet the remembrance in this in-between time is this: we have been, we are now, and we will be God’s called church—this congregation of all sorts and natures, like the odd collection of disciples and the probably odder collection of folks on the hillside—called together for God’s purposes for all these years.

Awhile back, I wrote some thoughts in Pulsebeat about the parable of the Good Samaritan. It seemed to me that, if Jesus was teaching us this story His emphasis might be different. He might convince us that God is always the Good Samaritan bringing people and the world to us for care. Jesus might point, instead, to our role as the innkeeper who has no idea how long his hospitality will be needed, but who has been given enough for the day with the sure promise of future.

How many loaves do we have?

Can we see ourselves as the innkeeper of this church with more than enough for these in-between days?



First Lutheran Church ~ the Heart of Christ in the Heart of the City