



first lutheran
church

Rest. Heal. Grow. Love. Serve. Belong.

the torch



Volume 8, Issue 9
January 2015

Musings Joyful and Secure

Well, the last few weeks have been quite an adventure for me. One doesn't get one's heart valve replaced all that often.

As you lie there in your hospital bed recuperating, you have a lot of time to think. I don't know if it was the effect of the anesthetic or all of the drugs they gave me, but some of the things that fluttered through my little brain were ... Why? Why isn't life a bed of roses? Why do physical, financial, family and personal problems enter our lives?

Why, after we go to the Lord in prayer, doesn't He always take away or minimize our burdens?

Even St. Paul, after he prayed to God for relief from a physical ailment, was turned down. So why is life like this?

The Bible says that the Lord has given all of us free will. So when the temptations of the devil, this unbelieving world, or the broken side of our human natures caused by the fall in Eden bring all kinds of burdens into our lives, we don't have to go around angry and unforgiving. We don't have to get upset with God.

Instead we can live in the joy and security of God's promises to us that He will work all for the good of those who love Him.

Abraham lived in God's joy and security when—at the age of 80!—he moved his entire family, simply because God asked him to. And thus the lineage of the Messiah began.

Elijah the prophet lived in God's joy and security when he came down the mountain to face Jezebel and her army who were out to murder him. And thus the people saw God's power working through Elijah.

We too live in God's joy and security when, through faith in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we endeavor to love our neighbor as God loves us, and when we strive to be God's shining light in this dark world so that the world sees Jesus through us.

When we pick up those emotional or spiritual or physical scars in life, let's not crawl into a shell of bitterness or fear or anger, but live in God's joy and security, knowing that His grace is sufficient for us. God's power is made perfect in our weakness.

The Bible says, because Jesus lives in you, take delight in insults, hardships, persecutions and difficulties... for when we are weak, it's then that we are truly strong in Christ.

Pastor Mike

Note: Pastor Mike returns from his "medical leave" during the first week in February.

Deadline to submit items for the next issue of The Torch: Monday — February 24, 2016

EVENTS + Mark Your Calendars!

Sunday, February 14, 2016

VALENTINES DAY

PASSING OF THE LEASH

Our K-9 Comfort Dog officially arrives in February. A “Passing of the Leash” ceremony will be held at both services on February 14. We will hold a reception after the late service in the Fellowship Hall. Hors d’oeuvres and snacks will be served, along with a very special cake! Please join us for the celebration. (And bring snacks or hors d’oeuvres-type foods to share if you can.)

Wednesday, February 10—ASH WEDNESDAY

5:30 pm — **Soup Supper**

6:45 pm — **Ash Wednesday Worship** (with imposition of ashes)

Wednesdays, February 17 & 24; March 1, 8 & 15

6:45 pm — **Lenten Worship**

This year’s Lenten series is: “Living Lent as People of the Resurrection.” Be sure to check your mailbox for your copy of the devotional that accompanies our worship series.

Sunday, March 20 — PALM SUNDAY

Thursday, March 24 — MAUNDY THURSDAY

Friday, March 25 — GOOD FRIDAY

Sunday, March 27 — EASTER SUNDAY

NOTE: For a full calendar of events, please see Sunday announcements, the online calendar... or contact the church office.

Serving at FLC—February 2016

Readers

8:30 am	10:30 am
Feb 7 Rose Wood	Sandy Denley
Feb 14 Barbara Swift	Barbara Franckowiak
Feb 21 Ellen Hackerd	Diane Jaeger
Feb 28 Karin Vannett	Tim Dorcy

Communion

Preparation	A/V Tech
Doug & Lois Tolley	8:30 am— John Swift
	10:51 am— Shellody Efimoff

Look Who’s Celebrating in February!

Birthdays

3 Lisa Gross	17 Alex Myers	25 Jerry Kunde
5 Blake Hamilton	18 Pam Crane	26 Arlyn Matthies
9 Spencer Foss	19 Varina Millang	26 Morgan Warren
11 Connie Foss	21 Kate Mackensen	
11 George Millang	21 Mark Melani	
14 Rhonda Hamilton	23 Anita Lang	
17 Linda Hixon	23 Liam Efimoff	
	25 Dwilynda Huth	

Note: No anniversaries this month.

Comfort Dog Arrives!!

It's been a long wait, but there's a lot of preparation required before a K-9 Comfort Dog comes to stay. We had to raise funds for the dog's training as well as that of the handlers and ministry partners. Then there's the van for travel.

But praise the Lord! The official "Passing of the Leash" ceremony will be held in both services on **Sunday, Febru-**

Humor... and a Little Wisdom

Out of the Mouths of Babes

One Spring afternoon, I came home to find two little girls on the steps of my building. Both were crying hard, shedding big tears.

Thinking they might be hurt, I dropped my briefcase and quickly went over to them. "Are you all right?" I asked.

Still sobbing, one held up her doll. "My baby's arm came off," she said.

I took the doll and its disjointed arm. After a little effort and luck, the doll was again whole.

"Thank you." came a whisper.

Next looking into the tearful eyes of her friend, I asked, "and what's the matter with you, young lady?"

She wiped her cheeks. "I was helping her cry," she said.

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My daughter-in-law Alma and grandson Eddy were digging for fishing bait in my garden. Uncovering a many-legged creature, Eddy proudly dangled it before his mother.

"No, honey, he won't do for bait," his mother said. "He's not an earthworm."

ary 14. Tim Hetzner, President of Lutheran Church Charities will make a presentation between services on "101 Ways to Share the Mercy and Compassion of Christ That Do Not Cost Money."

There will be a reception after the second service in the Fellowship Hall. We are planning to have hors d'oeuvres and/or snacks to serve at the reception. Please bring something to share if you can.

Please join us for the celebration!

"He's not?" Eddy asked, his eyes wide. "What planet is he from?"

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One rainy afternoon I was driving along one of the main streets of town, taking those extra precautions necessary when the roads are wet and slick. Suddenly, my son Matthew spoke up from his relaxed position in the front seat. "Mom, I'm thinking of something."

This announcement usually meant he had been pondering some fact for a while and was now ready to expound all that his seven-year-old mind had discovered. I was eager to hear.

"What are you thinking?" I asked.

"The rain," he began, "is like sin. And the windshield wipers are like God, wiping our sins away."

After the chill bumps raced up my arms, I was able to respond, "That's really good, Matthew." Then my curiosity broke in. How far would this little boy take this revelation?

So I asked, "Do you notice how the rain keeps on coming? What does that tell you?"

Matthew didn't hesitate one moment with his answer. "We keep on sinning and God just keeps on forgiving us."



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Our Mission Statement

Bringing the Word of God and Christ's gift of salvation into every life as the hands and feet of Jesus, meeting physical and spiritual needs.

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We Are First Lutheran Church.