

First Words

In this issue:

Stewardship	1
Pastor's Ponderings	2
First Kids Choir	2
Santa Lucia	2
Disaster Response	3
Thanksgiving Eve	4
New Members	5
Lessons & Carols	5
Book Group	6
Birthdays	6
Calendar	7

Fall Stewardship Campaign:

Commitment Sunday is November 13th

Stewardship at First Lutheran is the prayerful use of our resources, time, and talents. It is a year-round commitment and includes not only financial giving but also stewardship of the earth, of our time, and of the many talents which bless this congregation. Coming just before Thanksgiving, Commitment Sunday is a good time to give thanks for the vibrant community of faith that is First Lutheran and to ensure its future through your pledge.

For 2012, we hope to restore areas that were cut in 2011: provide for staff salary increases, reinstate committee funds, and return benevolence to 15% of non-property income. This will be possible with an additional \$21,000 in pledges or a 7.5% increase over 2011 budgeted pledged income of \$280,000.



Please use the form that you have or will soon receive in the mail and bring it to worship to place in the basket on Commitment Sunday, November 13, or mail or bring it to the church office (mark the outside of the envelope 'For the Financial Secretary'), or pledge online (at flcpa.org, click on 'Pledge for 2012' at top of left column).

We invite you to look to the future as you consider the pledge you will make on Commitment Sunday, November 13. Our stewardship gifts make a difference in people's lives, in the life of the congregation, and in the wider local and international community through our benevolence and outreach.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration of your pledge for 2012. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask!

Your stewardship committee,

JOHN ALLURED, CHAIR
LISA KROGH, JUDY LARSEN,
JOYCE RICE, PASTOR SEGERHAMMAR

Running with the message

Stewardship is everything I do after I say, "I believe."

That is a statement that one member of FLC used to love to say, especially at this time of the year.

Mildred Dabney, who was the annual campaign chair for many years, often reminded us that all we do in our lives is in response to God's gracious giving.

Mildred would lead the effort to engage every member of the congregation to make their financial plans for the new year's ministry.

She would emphasize that this be done not out of obligation but in gratitude for God's grace. She (and her team) would lift up the hopes and dreams for this ministry, and challenge us to grow in our financial support in the year ahead.

And then, on Commitment Sunday in late fall, Mildred, along with the gathered worshipers, would joyfully place her pledge form in the offering plate to be offered to God and blessed for the sake of Christ's church.

You and I will soon receive the 2012 stewardship campaign mailing, and be invited into the same practice for the new year.

Our theme for 2012 is Live. Grow. Serve. These words suggest dynamism and action. They are future oriented, and intend to draw us into God's future for ministry in and through FLC.

Open this mailing as soon as you receive it; don't set it aside. Open it with joy, and prayerfully and seriously consider your new year's response to God's gracious love for you, and for the ministry of this church.

The material enclosed will highlight current ministry and lift up the hopes and dreams for the coming year. Commitment Sunday is November 13!

Then, without skipping a beat and before the ink on the pledge form was dry, Mildred and her team would remind us that before the new year's ministries could flourish, current promises needed to be fulfilled between now and December 31!



Let's not limp into the new year but run with the message we heard from that saint of God. We stand on her shoulders!

Yours in Christ,

A West Coast Premiere!

Last June, Julia Simon was contacted by Sarah Garner, organist at St. John's Lutheran Church in Des Moines, IA, and director of the Kisasa Choristers (boy and girl choir, grades 3-6).

The choir received memorial money and wanted to use it to commission a piece for the children.

After several weeks of discussion and ideas regarding how the money might be put to use, the Kisasa Choristers agreed upon a commissioned anthem to honor [Richard Warming] and be dedicated to the Kisasa Choristers.

The next challenge was to find a composer to commission. The director, Sarah Garner, took a survey of some of their favorite composers—Bach and Mozart were among those named.

Unfortunately, they were not available. However, the choristers were particularly excited by the works of Julia Simon, a choral director in Silicon Valley, California."

(from the June 2011 St. John's Eagle Call newsletter)

Julia spent the summer writing the work for All Saints' Sunday choosing the Beatitudes text from the day's Gospel reading.

The Kisasa Choristers and First Kids Choir will both premiere the piece that Sunday, November 7th, 2011.

— JULIA SIMON

First Kids Choir

Calling all tomtens, gingerbread children, star boys, and attendants!

Santa Lucia Rehearsals begin in November!

If you have a child who would like to be in Santa Lucia this year, please contact Julia Simon at Julia@sdgloria.org.

Santa Lucia's entourage will rehearse weekly throughout November and perform in the 42nd Santa Lucia Festival on Sunday, December 11th.

Rehearsals are 6:30-7 pm on Thursdays (Nov. 2, 9, 16 and Dec. 8) and Wednesdays (Nov. 23, 30). Dress rehearsal is Saturday morning Dec. 10 (10-11:30 am).

Major flooding in Central America

Heavy rains for more than a week have swamped some of the poorest countries in the Americas, in a belt running from southwestern Mexico to Costa Rica.

Devastating floods and mudslides have hit El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

“This emergency is potentially on the scale of Hurricane Mitch,” says Eva Ekelund, Lutheran World Federation Regional Representative. 123 people have died and the death toll continues to rise.

Of greatest concern are safety and access. Many have had to leave their homes, upwards of 700,000, yet with flooded roads being impassable, movement is difficult and dangerous.

This has made getting aid to people a major concern. Throughout the region there are many areas prone to mudslides, which have already led to over 90 deaths.

Another concern is that crops that are just getting ready to be harvested will be lost in the flooding.

The Lutheran Church of El Salvador is one of our Companion Synods. In El Salvador 150,000 have been affected, at least 80 communities flooded, over 22,000 wells contaminated, and countless homes destroyed.

34 people have been reported either dead or missing, and over 57,000 have been displaced to shelters throughout the country. At least 12 bridges have been damaged or washed away, 14 key highways are impassable, and 296 schools damaged.

Along with the risk of further mudslides and waterborne diseases, President Mauricio Funes of El Salvador identified crop and cattle loss to be at 70% in the region.

In just two weeks the crops of maize and beans were due to be harvested; now they are all lost under the water. This will lead to a double tragedy with an immediate food shortage and a lack of seed for next year’s crop.

The ELCA is staying in contact with our companion churches in the region and the LWF to assess the situation and possible responses, which so far include shelters and providing food, hygiene kits and some medical attention.

The ELCA has opened a designated account (Central America Floods) to receive gifts for response efforts to this disaster, as well as designated accounts for the four most affected countries (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras & Nicaragua).

100% of all gifts contributed to these funds will be used entirely to respond to this disaster, both for immediate needs and for long-term rehabilitation of communities and livelihoods.

Contributions to this appeal can be made in the following ways:

- Give by phone at **800.638.3522**
- Contribute online at elca.org/disaster
- Make a special donation through your congregation
- Mail a check to: ELCA Disaster Response, 39330 Treasury Center, Chicago, IL 60694. Memo: Central America Floods (or [Designated Country] Floods)

For more information, see the ELCA Disaster Response Website at elca.org/disaster or Blog at blogs.elca.org/disasterresponse

– SIERRA PACIFIC SYNOD

Disaster Relief



FirstWords welcomes all submissions and letters from readers.

Email firstwords-editor@flcpa.org.

Thanksgiving Eve Hearty Eucharist

Join with the congregations of First, University, and Grace Lutheran in Palo Alto.

Rev. Kemp Segerhammar, Preaching

Rev. Greg Schaefer, Presiding

Grace Lutheran Church, Hosting

7 pm in the sanctuary of Grace Lutheran, 3149 Waverley Street, Palo Alto

People are invited to bring non-perishable foods for donation to the local food pantry.

Please come and join us for our annual joint Thanksgiving Eve service on November 23rd at 7 pm in the sanctuary of Grace Lutheran Church.

As a yearly food and harvest centered time in which we embrace hospitality and thanksgiving, this year we will be celebrating the Eucharist (a Greek word meaning “thanksgiving”) in similar fashion to early Christian communities by gathering like a Christian family around a table full of food.

Like the disciples and Jesus, and their later followers, we will bless bread and wine, share it together in a spirit of community and friendship, and sing hymns together.

In addition to bread and wine, we will also serve one another foods such as olives, cheese, honey and fruit because it is thought that these were the foods that were consumed at the earliest Eucharists (along with, occasionally, fish).

Local Events

This is not in any way meant to replace the “economic” Eucharist of our regular worship which honors the simplicity and universality of God’s gift, but simply a way of living into the familial aspect of our Christian heritage and of celebrating God’s magnificent abundance and grace, something we Lutherans in particular lean into every day.

Also, like the earlier Christian church or the community chest of Luther’s time, people are encouraged to bring non-perishable foods for donation to the local food pantry.

As we celebrate the boundless gift of Christ we must always remember and feed the hungry poor.

– REV. KEMP SEGERHAMMAR



New members!


We welcomed two new members in October. Look for their profiles in a future edition of *First Words*.



Judith Stanley

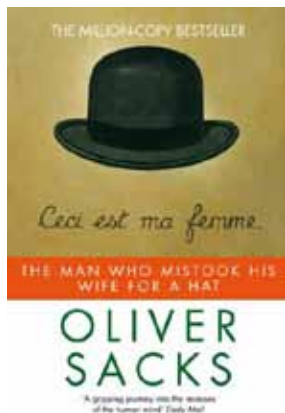


Rich Gillam

<p>MUSIC BY Palestrina Bach Hadley Vann Hall Biebl Saint-Saens</p> <p>The First Lutheran Choir</p> <p>Katherine McKee Choir Director</p> <p>Andrew Chislett Organist</p>		<p>ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI</p> <p>A Service of Advent Lessons & Carols First Lutheran Church 600 Homer Avenue Palo Alto, 94301</p> <p>Sunday, November 27, 2011</p> <p>4:00 pm</p> <p>650.322.4669 flcpa.org</p>
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Book group delves into the unusual

Book Group



Everyone who is interested in psychology will enjoy Oliver Sacks' *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*, the November book choice for the FLC Book Group.

November 14th, from 7 until 8:30 pm upstairs at the church.

– CHRISTINE SEGERHAMMAR

In each chapter, Sacks, trained as a neurologist, tells a real case story of ordinary human experience touched by brain disease, all told with human warmth and a philosophical eye.

All are welcome to join the discussion of this fascinating book on Monday evening,

November birthdays

2	Jeremy Serrano, Steve Soudeers
4	Bob Brohm, Penny Schreiber
7	David Lundeen, Marguerite Fletcher, Holly Pearson
8	Sally Mendiola
10	Melissa Nuckolls
11	Anne Souders
13	Brita Segerhammar, Dianne Kreuger
14	William Freet
15	George Knudson, Whitney Campbell
16	Marilyn Sabatine, Virginia Jensen
18	Iida Mielikainen
20	Trent Parker
22	Julie Valentine
23	Judy Larsen, Jayne Prentice
24	March Dechow
26	Magdalena Dominguez
27	Zelda Jury
29	Karl Hillesland, Muriel Allan

Prayer Ventures was unavailable at press time.

Read it online at elca.org/prayerventures

First Words is a publication of First Lutheran Church of Palo Alto, California.

Officers of the congregation:

Mark Bogott Council President
Holly Pearson.....Vice President
George Knudson Secretary

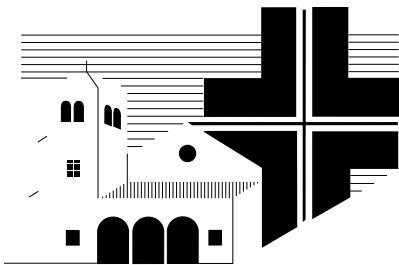
Staff:

P. Kempton Segerhammar Pastor
Katherine McKeeChoir Director
Julia Simon.....First Kids Choir Director
Andrew Chislett.....Organist
Jeremy Serrano.....Youth Director
Karri Haddeland Childcare
Maria Soria..... Custodian
Patricia Kerr Office Manager

The Rev. Mark Holmerud, Bishop, Sierra Pacific Synod
The Rev. P. Kempton Segerhammar, Dean, Peninsula Conference

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Visit our website at <http://www.flcpa.org>.



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