

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

900 Main Street  
Brockton, MA 02301  
Phone: 508-586-9021  
Fax: 508-583-5501

VISIT US ON THE WEB  
WWW.FIRSTEVLUTHERAN.ORG

A Congregation of the  
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

**Our Vision Statement**

Our vision is to become a visible, outreaching community resource consisting of diverse, active, enthusiastic and supportive Christians of all ages, working together with dynamic leadership and ministering to the spiritual and social needs of the congregation and community.

**Our Mission Statement**

Gathered in Christ, Together We Serve

**MINISTERS:**

**The Members of First Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**STAFF:**

**Transitional Pastor: Rev. Edward Sproul**

E-mail: ed.sproul@gmail.com Cell: 774-633-6747

**Pastors Emeriti: Reverend Michael P. Fruth, Ph.D.  
Reverend Kenneth W. Hilston, Jr.**

**Parish Administrator: James E. Benson**

Cell Phone: 508-207-8746 E-mail: jbenon@firstevlutheran.org

**Church/Financial Secretary: Paula M. Fedele**

E-mail: pfedele@firstevlutheran.org

**Interim Organist: David Burnham**

**Minister of Music Emerita: Hope E. Mehaffey**

**Sexton: Brian Gagne**

**First Evangelical Lutheran Church**

900 Main Street  
Brockton, MA 02301

Non-profit Organization

U.S. Postage

**PAID**

Brockton, MA

Permit No. 418

*Time Dated Material Please Do Not Delay*

Or Current Resident

**Our Elsie**

**THANKS!**



On December 28 First Lutheran member, Elsie Bassett celebrated her 90th birthday. A regular volunteer at our Food for Friends Food Pantry, Elsie was surprised by pantry volunteers with a cake on the pantry's December distribution day.

Elsie serves as a wonderful role model of volunteerism and her spirit, charm and feistiness are all enjoyed and appreciated by those who work with her.

Shown in the photo is Elsie on the left and volunteer Kerstin Denholm. Photo courtesy of Willette Thompson

49 plus people responded on our time-talent pledge cards in November. Four people so far, have responded favorably to serving on the Discipleship Commission. Stepping up to help in the ministry of our church is where our future lies.

**Pr. Ken Bjorklund**

*Ash Wednesday, February 18*

6:00 pm

*Lenten Soup Supper*

7:00 pm

*Service of Holy Communion  
with Imposition of Ashes*

*Wednesdays During Lent*

6:00 pm

*Soup Supper*

7:00 pm

*Service of Holy Communion*

**L  
E  
N  
T  
2  
0  
1  
4**

*Lenten Luncheons*

*Fridays from Noon to 1:00 pm*

*February 20*

*Roast Turkey, Mashed Potatoes, Squash, Dinner Rolls*

*February 27*

*Seafood Newburg, Broccoli, Biscuits*

*March 6*

*Swedish Meatballs, Mashed Potatoes, Peas,  
Swedish Rye*

*March 13*

*Smoked Shoulder, Cabbage, Carrots, Potatoes,  
Irish Soda Bread*

*March 20*

*Baked Ham, Potato Casserole, Green Beans, Rolls*

*March 27*

*Lasagna & Meatballs, Corn, Garlic Bread*

*All served with salad, homemade pies and coffee*

# TIDINGS

## PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

LENT 2015

I write as the storm of the decade (a little early to call it the storm of the century, isn't it?) bears down on New England. When we emerge from our snow forts, we'll be looking at Lent, that meaningful time on the church calendar filled with reflective renewal in our faith journey. I pray many of you will be able to take part in the various offerings. For me the highlights will surely be the first communion classes and the New Testament overview that promises to bring it all home.

We continue to pray for the Call Committee and the congregation as a couple more pastoral candidates are being interviewed this month. But it is not just the pastoral vacancy we need to fill. We also pray that all our groups leading us in various parts of our mission and ministry will find effective participants. Everyone should be involved in one aspect of another, even those who are homebound. Talk to me if you don't see how this can happen, because I firmly believe it can.

I continue to be concerned from my part-time position about some things that need more attention than I can give. At the

same time I continue to be surprised by the grace of God and the graciousness of many members here. May our remaining months together be a mutual blessing.

*Pastor Ed Sproul,*  
Transitional Pastor

**A Special Meeting of the congregation has been called for Sunday, March 1 immediately following the 9 am service in the nave. This meeting should be brief.**

*The sole purpose of this meeting is to ratify the actions taken by the Annual Meeting held on January 25, 2015.*

**This action is necessary due to a lack of a quorum (100) at the annual meeting. This special meeting must have a quorum of 100 either in person or by proxy. If you need a proxy statement they are on the table outside the Chapel or available from the office. Thank you!**

## EXPLORE THE DEPTHS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

Ash Wednesday and Holy Week are the times when the whole Christian Church reaches into the core of its being. With the beginning and the end of Lent, out time of preparing for the cross and resurrection, we lift up the disciplines of the faith and rehearse the mighty events by which God has redeemed the world and reconciled us to be part of God's reign.

At 7:00 PM we will gather with our brothers and sisters from Grace Chapel for worship both ancient and familiar - on Ash Wednesday on February 18 with receiving ashes of repentance and Holy Communion; on Maundy Thursday on April 2 with Holy Communion; and on Good Friday on April 3 with reflections around the Cross.

**SPECIAL  
CONGREGATIONAL  
MEETING  
SUNDAY, MARCH 1**

## THOUGHTS ON LENT: CALLED AGAIN TO A NEW LIFE

**Ash Wednesday: February 18, 2015**

A Collect prayer for Ash Wednesday.

Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and our neighbors. Call forth our prayers and acts of kindness, and strengthen us to face our mortality with confidence in the mercy of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Let us interpret this prayer briefly:

Gracious God, ***The Creator*** who out of your love and mercy you breathed ***creatively*** into dust the breath of life, thus creating us ***for a purpose*** to serve you and our neighbors.

Call forth ***that is motivate us to worship you by*** our prayers and acts of kindness,

and ***give us the boldness we need to*** strengthen us to face our mortality with confidence in the ***forgiving love and mercy*** of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

In other words:

In this prayer we acknowledge God as not only the creator of the world, but especially us who are 'dust alive' and more than human pets but active workers with a purpose of worshipping God and serving the needs of our fellow beings. In the fact of having a limited life span we can have the gift of boldness to do this 'service living' because all failure and sin we do is readily forgiven through Jesus life, death and resurrection.

Being called to worship and service of our neighbor, my thoughts are leading me to find a neighbor to invite to attend with me to the services of Lent and Holy Week. Do you have someone that you have been a little shy about asking to come with you? Is it time to use our confidence? Yes!

*Pr. Ken Bjorklund*

## Book of Faith

Each Sunday morning we gather in the youth/library room on the lower level of the church. Additional people are always welcome and bring new questions and concerns, try us out while waiting for your children in the Sunday school classes.

The Book of James is coming up and following that the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew will be very informative and different from the other Gospels. We will inquire as to when it was written, authorship and intention for writing it. Studies of scripture are a method of getting away from just taking the Bible as a dry old book and experience how our with Christ is enriched and challenging.

*Pr. Ken Bjorklund*

## Call Committee

Our Call Committee has been given the names of two potential candidates to interview. These interviews will soon take place and we ask that you keep the committee and the candidates in your prayers as the holy Spirit leads us all through this process.

## Synod Assembly

The New England Synod meets in assembly on June 5 & 6 in Springfield this year. Since no one was nominated to go as a voting member council needs to appoint people. If you are interested speak to a member of council, Pr. Sproul or jim Benson. We need one male, one female and one person under 30. the congregation covers the expenses of its voting members to attend.

## KUDOS

Many thanks to *The Enterprise, their readers and the Helping Hands Fund* through their efforts our Food for Friends Food Pantry was the recipient of \$4,500.00 this Christmas season. These funds will be used to buy food for our food pantry and a portion has already gone to the food packaging event held on January 24 that provided Mac & Cheese meals for the Blessings in a backpack program.

## And More

Thank you to the Brockton Cultural Council for awarding the Cornerstone Concert Program a grant of \$3,500.00 to assist in the sponsorship of the 2015 concert series. In 2014 the council provided us with a \$3,500.00 grant as well. Thank you to parish administrator, Jim Benson, for writing the grants and for meeting with the local council to explain the program and use of the funds to them.

## Outreach Gift

From the Estate of Vilma Hall we are pleased to report that \$1,000.00 was also bequeathed separately to the church for outreach to members such as radio ministry, and other methods of keeping members connected to their church. This gift has also been placed in the Memorial Accounts to be disbursed as needed by the congregational council.

## Permanent Fund Receives Gift

The church has received a bequest from the Estate trust of Vilma Hall in the amount of \$61,300.00. This gift, per the terms of the trust, is to be held by the Permanent Fund and the income to be used for the general purposes of the church. Vilma died in 2008 at the age of 96 and left her estate in trust for the care of her sister, Phyllis Cousins. Phyllis died in July of 2014 just three days short of her 100th birthday. Upon Phyllis' death distribution was made of the residual of the trust. Both sisters were lifelong members of this congregation and we thank them for this gift and for their stewardship which will enrich the work of the church beyond their lifetimes.

## Sunshine Gift

From the Estate of Vilma Hall we are pleased to report that \$1,000.00 was bequeathed separately to the Sunshine Committee without restriction for the work they do. This gift is being held in the Memorial Funds of the church and will be disbursed to the Sunshine Committee as they have need of the funds.

## Memorial Gift

On January 7 Keith Evans, son-in-law of Pr. Ken & Grace Bjorklund died after a lengthy illness. Funeral service for Keith were held here. Keith's wife, Kathryn, had made a generous memorial gift in Keith's name to be used for "kitchen needs" at FELC. Keith was a chef and the gift is fitting. Pastor's Aid & Martha Guild have been made aware of this gift which will be held in the Memorial account until requested for use in the kitchen.

We are most appreciative for this gift.

## Easter Memorials

In this Tidings is an insert for those wishing to have an Easter Memorial in memory of a loved one on Easter.

If you wish to participate in this opportunity we ask that you return your memorial form no later than Palm Sunday, March 29.

## LENTEN OFFERING

Enclosed in this edition of Tidings is a special Lenten Offering envelope. Several years ago we switched from the quarter self-denial folders to these envelopes. You may return this envelope with your Lenten gift anytime during the Lenten/Easter season.

## Children's Ark Fundraiser



Children's Ark Preschool is once again selling Hilliards Candy Bars as a fundraiser. Candy is available after church on Sunday or from the preschool.

**\$2.00 each**

**or**

**2 for \$3.00**

## MINISTERIAL ACTS



### Funerals

*Robert A. Sigren*

*Walter Wells, Jr.*

*Keith Evans*

## SPECIAL WEDNESDAYS IN LENT

The five Wednesdays after Ash Wednesday yet before Holy Week have usually been a wonderful opportunity for extra reflection, fellowship, and conversation about the development of our Christian faith. This year is not the exception.

Based on Keith Russell's *In Search of the Church* from the Alban Institute's *Once and Future Church* Series, we will be taking an overview of the New Testament in a unique way - by looking at each early Christian community where the books of the New Testament were written and considering the aspects that apply to us today. The book is out of print but used copies can be found on line.

Each Wednesday evening from February 25 through March 25, we invite you to join in a light soup supper with wonderful informal fellowship from 6 - 7, followed by a devotional time 7-7:30 of prayerfully reflecting on the topic of the week, and then having a discussion until about 8:15 or whenever you need to depart.

The schedule of topics:

February 25 - Mark: An Alternative Community

March 4 - Matthew: Households of Justice

March 11 - Luke: Signs of the Kingdom

March 18 - Paul: Communities of Reconciliation

March 25 - Peter & John: Homes for the Homeless - Communities of Resistance

The basic question will be, "When and how do we find ourselves supported in our Christian journey in our time by this wonderfully rich heritage we share?"

Pastor Ed Sproul

## HOLY COMMUNION CLASS

Understanding Holy Communion this year we offer a class geared for those ready to receive communion. All had the classes year ago. All encouraged.



This year the classes will be during the Sunday School hour March 1 - 22 with first communions on Palm Sunday, March 29. Anyone desiring the class but unable to attend the designated times will need to speak to Pastor Sproul about arranging options.

***GATHERED IN CHRIST, TOGETHER WE SERVE***

## PLEASE JOIN US IN THE *BASKETS OF PROMISE* CAMPAIGN

This Lent we're joining Lutheran World Relief's **BASKETS OF PROMISE** campaign. Each week we will collect a different item that we'll use to assemble Personal Care Kits that give people around the world tools to stay healthy in life's most challenging situations. Our goal is to assemble 25 Personal Care Kits during Lent. Here is our collection schedule, bins will be outside the Chapel:

February 22nd **Bars of soap** (4 to 5 oz. any brand) in original wrapping

March 1st **Bath towels** (light weight, maximum 52" x 27", dark color recommended)

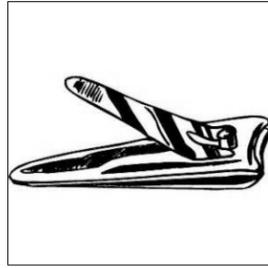
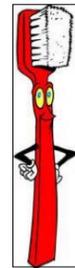
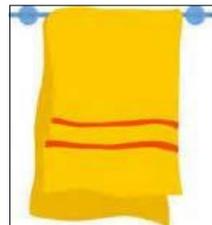
March 8th **Toothbrushes** (adult size, in original packaging)

March 15th **Combs**

March 22nd **Nail clippers** (metal, attached file optional)

We will assemble our Personal Care Kits on March 29th (Palm Sunday) immediately following the 9:00 am service.

*"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" Matthew 6:21*



## MALARIA SUNDAY, APRIL 26th

### "Gifts that grow the church and transform lives"



#### DID YOU KNOW:

Malaria is a preventable treatable disease spread through the bite of an infected mosquito. The disease claims the life of a child every 60 seconds. Malaria was virtually eliminated from the United States in 1951, but it remains a major health concern in more than 100 countries worldwide. To most of us in the United States, mosquitos are nothing more than a nuisance. But many countries in Africa just one bite from an infected mosquito could transmit malaria and lead to death. A bed net treated with long-lasting insecticide, coupled with training and education on how it is used, helps ensure that families are protected from this life-threatening disease as they sleep.

It takes only \$250.00 to supply mosquito nets for an entire village. Please help us reach that goal and save one village at a time. Look for the mosquito net outside of the chapel throughout Lent and donate as you are able.

Any questions, please contact Susan Rovaldi

Commission for Social Ministry

*Photo courtesy of Wikipedia*

## MEAL PACKAGING

On Saturday, January 24 amid a light snowstorm 52 volunteers gathered in the Hilston Gymnasium of the Fruth Center to package meals for the hungry. This event was sponsored by Joy in Christ Lutheran Church, Abington, First and our Food for Friends Food Pantry in collaboration with EndHungerNE, part of Outreach/Kid's Care.

Volunteers under the direction of EndHungerNE coordinator, Matthew Martin formed assembly lines that packaged beans & rice and mac & cheese meals. Funds for the food came from Joy in Christ and from Food for Friends. The beans & rice meals will be distributed through Food for Friends and the Mac & Cheese meals through the Blessings in a Backpack program in the Brockton Public Schools.

In addition to volunteers from First and Food for Friends help came from Joy in Christ, the local Girl Scout troops, Chartwell's, the Brockton Public Schools food service provider, Ward 2 School Committee member, Andy Robinson and members of the community. Brockton Superintendent of Schools, Kathy Smith stopped by with our own Maxine Richardson, Director of Community Schools and After School Programs.

There exists a great need for food just within the schools of the city and Food for Friends hopes to be able to partner with the school department and others to work to abate that need. More information will follow!



Chris Newman & Pat Crosby prepare beans and hot dogs for workers.



David Perry working the mac & cheese line

Below: Our worker bees packaging food



Al Bandlow, Pete Carlson and Erick Benson



Matthew Martin from HungerNE gives workers their instructions



The Woodward men packaging beans & rice



## 2015 Cornerstone Concert Series

The Cornerstone Concert Committee is happy to announce a great schedule of concerts for 2015. Proceeds from these concerts benefit the exterior restoration of our historic church building. Major sponsors of the series are the Massachusetts & Brockton Cultural Councils, Montello Heel Mfg., Co., Barbour Corporation and Rockland Trust Company.

**Sunday, February 8:** LeFemmes, musical trio



Bassist Genevieve Rose • Vocalist Amanda Carr • Pianist Yvonne Monnet

**Saturday, April 25 (Fruth Center):**

Armstrong Bros. Band, The New Nashville Sound



**Sunday, September 27:**

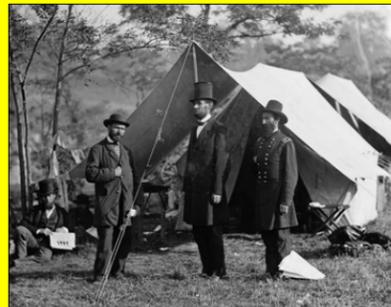
Organist,  
Joseph Ripka



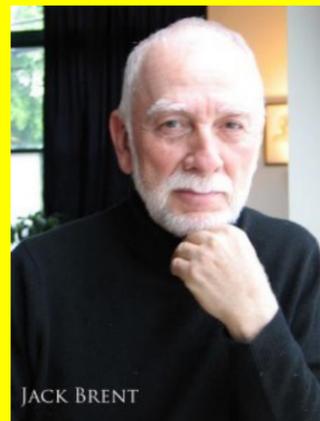
**Sunday, March 22** members of the Brockton Symphony Orchestra performing "Carnival of the Animals" and Chamber Music



**Sunday, May 17:** Richard Hill, organ & Brockton Historical Society  
Celebrating the 150th Anniversary  
of the end of the Civil War in music & history



**Sunday, October 25:**  
Pianist, Jack Brent



JACK BRENT

**MORE TO COME!**

## LENTEN LUNCHEON SPEAKERS

*Fridays in Lent from Noon to 1:00 pm*

February 20

Speaker: To be Announced

February 27

Speaker: Mr. Thomas Burke, Director

Chartwells, Meal Service to the Brockton Public Schools

March 6

Speaker: Mr. Jason Korb, Principal, Capstone Communities

Re-use of Brockton's historic Stall & Dean/Geo. Knight Building

March 13

Speaker: To be Announced

March 20

Speaker: Mr. James Benson, Brockton Historical Society

The 110th Anniversary of the Grover Disaster, March 20, 1905

March 27

Speaker: Mr. Kenneth Klier, Senior Vice President,

Social Services, Old Colony YMCA

## 148th Annual Meeting

The 148th Annual Meeting of the Congregation was held on Sunday, January 25, the following resolutions were passed:

1. That the proposed Annual Budget of \$ 534,144.00 for 2015 be approved; and that the members of First Evangelical Lutheran Church be exhorted to give their full support to the programs and ministries of the congregation in the coming year.
2. That the following resolution, adopted at the 147<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting be continued as specified: That up to \$10,000.00 be transferred from the Parsonage Account of the Permanent Fund when and as needed to cover expenses related to the Calling of a new pastor.
3. That the following resolution, adopted at the 145<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting be continued as specified: That the Congregational Council and Church Treasurer be authorized to draw from the Heritage Account of the Permanent Fund up to \$88,000.00, as needed, between January of 2015 and January of 2016 to meet the mortgage obligation on the Fruth Center property.
4. That the Congregation adopt, as recommended by the Congregational Council, the new Mission Statement: *“Gathered in Christ, Together We Serve”*
5. That the amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws of First Evangelical Lutheran Church be adopted as presented.
6. That we give thanks to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, for His presence with us in Word and Sacrament within and through this community of faith.
7. That we give thanks to our dedicated staff –administrative, elected, secretarial, musical, maintenance, ministerial and volunteer - for their faithfulness in the performance of their duties. We give thanks to all persons who shared the gift of their presence, their time, their talents and their resources, in the diverse ministries of this congregation.
8. That we give thanks to all who so generously gave to support this year’s Giving Tree and especially to Eric Olson for his generous gift in memory of his parents, Paul & Priscilla Olson.
9. That we give thanks to Almighty God for the young men and women from this congregation who are in the service of their country in these uncertain times. May the protective hand of God guide and watch over them as they strive to seek peace and guard our freedoms; and be it further resolved, that we gratefully remember those from among us who in past generations protected those sacred freedoms.
10. In the spirit of thanks to God we remember with thanksgiving the faithful witness of those who have gone before us, who have encouraged us by the witness of their faith and the generosity of their hearts. We encourage all members of the congregation to be faithful in the giving of their time, talents and resources to the ongoing ministries of the church. And that all members of the congregation be encouraged to remember the church in their wills, estate planning, memorial gifts and other stewardship opportunities.

### ELECTIONS

At the Annual meeting the following were elected to Council: Diane Perry, Mark Richardson, Brad Ness, Patricia McAfee & Lynn Pearson. Elected to the Nominating Committee were Dana Christensen, Herb Woodward, Jean-Ellen Ouellette-Kenney, Brian Pearson, Jan Anderson & Willette Thompson. William Dunphy, Sheri Anderson and Liz Belanger were elected to the Audit Committee and Richard Pearson & Jean-Ellen Ouellette-Kenney were elected trustees of the Permanent Fund. There being no nominations for voting members to the Synod Assembly it was left to the Council to appoint such persons.

## THANK YOU!

We wish to express our thanks to four outgoing council members who have given generously of their time and talents over the past six years as members of the council. Please extend your thanks to Jean-Ellen Ouellette Kenney, Dana Christensen, Brian Pearson & Herb Woodward when you see them.



The Children’s Ark Preschool, Inc. will be accepting registrations for the school year 2015-2016, beginning on February 1.

A \$50.00 non-refundable registration fee (of which the full amount will be applied to September’s tuition if your child is registered by March 31, 2015, if registered after April 1, \$25.00 will be applied to the tuition) must accompany the registration form in order to hold a place for your child, please make checks payable to Children’s Ark Preschool.

If your child is not accepted due to full enrollment your registration fee will be returned to you and your child placed on a waiting list. Registration forms may be picked up at the preschool or at the church office.

## SPEAKING OF NEIGHBORS

Through its mission of educating scholarly leaders for the world-wide Church, LSTC, our Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago enjoys a number of on-going partnerships with regional churches across the globe. One of those partnerships is with the Mar Thoma Church of India. One of the oldest groups of practicing Christians in the world, the Mar Thoma Church traces its origins to the eastward mission of Jesus original disciples, St. Thomas. The Mar Thoma Church is distinctive in that it belongs to the Eastern Reformed Tradition that theologically blends the Christian heritages of both East and West. Based in Kerala in southeastern India, today the denomination has over one million members worldwide.

The Mar Thoma Church has two theological seminaries, the Mar Thoma Theological Seminary in Kottayam, and Dharmajyotti Vidyapeedom in Faridabad, plus a number of Bible colleges in India. In addition, the Mar Thoma Church cooperates in ecumenical organizations and theological institutions with sister denominational churches in India and abroad.

Want to know more about our Christian neighbors in the U.S.A. and abroad? Ask Tana Jenkins our own local, national global ministries Resource Leader.

## LIVING LUTHERAN: A PLACE TO WITNESS AND SHARE EVERYDAY LIVING FAITH

At Living Lutheran, there’s something new for you every day, well almost every day. How about something posted five days a week, all year long? Martin Luther said, ‘Our faith is a living, busy, mighty, active thing.’ Living Lutheran invites you to share in the sense of purpose and call to action that our faith brings to our lives.

As an online publication of the ELCA, Living Lutheran’s goal is to provide a place for members and friends alike to find lively engagement in faith and life. At Living Lutheran you’ll find the voices of ELCA members, as well as what’s happening in communities, congregations, synods and ELCA- related organizations across the country and around the world.

Something new is posted each week day: feature blogs, stories, photo blogs, an ‘Ask a Pastor’ column, videos or new Seeds resources and programs for congregations. Living Lutheran offers a place for ELCA members to share their diverse experiences of what it means to live Living Lutheran every day throughout the year at [www.ELCA.org/Living-Lutheran](http://www.ELCA.org/Living-Lutheran).

A more local question is, if you are willing to work on bringing Digital Media to minister to our own members please contact Dana Christensen or Pr. Ken Bjorklund. Thanks.