



# The *Lamplighter*

St. Paul's Lutheran Church ~ Oak Hill, New York ~January/February 2012

Happy New Year!!!

Yes, we surely are in a New Year, 2012, with all its hopes and fears before us. How do you and I approach what God has in store for us? We leap for joy that God has blessed us in so many ways. We are filled with the Holy Spirit as we contemplate the glory that God has in store for His people. As St. Paul reminds us, "You are not your own, you have been bought with a price". Therefore we give deep thanks to our Lord for the opportunity He is giving us to serve Him in a New Year filled with promise and expectation. We hear the glory of God being announced in the Birth of Jesus, His Son, now living in our hearts and we celebrate His holy Church as God's way of reaching all people with the hope and forgiveness He is offering to all people.

Now, some of us are filled with fear over the coming a New Year, especially those of us who see danger and difficulty of survival in the days ahead. Yes, the Twin Towers of 911 lurk in the back of our minds. Iran possibly getting a nuclear bomb being trumpeted by our negative news broadcasters causes some of us undue concern. Sure, there are difficulties we all face with our lack of finances to accomplish what we feel we need to do. Yes, funerals happen and we ask ourselves "I wonder just who is next?" The future seems full of fear for some people as they consider life without our Lord.

Yet, in Christ, we are a new creation. Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. We are here to elevate His will, His Name, above all our concerns. Whatever happens, God can make good come out of evil and we are His people to advertise His capability to handle everything for the good. Sure, His Church continues to spread His holy Word. Sure, His people constantly know the presence of His Spirit as He attempts to bring us to a new place of concern for others and peace in spite of everything that challenges us. Whatever happens, God is in charge of His people and your life, your experiences and "God works for good for all who believe in Him". No matter what happens, God is able to bring good out of all things in His loving power and presence with you.

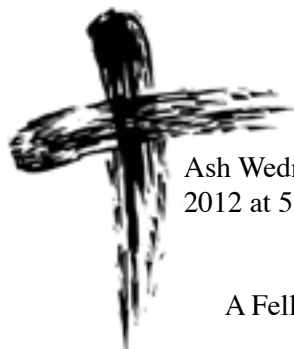
Funerals celebrate the goodness of God and the future we will spend with Him after we complete our time on earth. Death has no dominion over Him or over us. At our death, we enter the eternal banquet of His goodness and look forward to celebrating with all the saints of all the ages God's eternal goodness and light.

So, we thankfully can, each day, look into the future sustained by His Spirit and filled with His certainty that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ which we know in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Happy New Year!!!

*Pastor Beauvais*



If you would like a one year subscription to *The Lutheran Magazine*, please give \$8 to Kathy Lien or Karla Tyson.



Ash Wednesday Service will take place on February 22, 2012 at 5:00 pm

A Fellowship Luncheon will take place on February 12th. Place to be announced.



## Secretary of State Clinton Highlights the Work of ELCA-Related Ministries

ELCA NEWS SERVICE December 7, 2011

CHICAGO (ELCA) -- Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton noted the vital work of Lutheran social ministry organizations in welcoming refugees to the United States, during her Dec. 7 address at the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees' ministerial conference in Geneva.

In her presentation to world leaders, Clinton shared a story about Fatuma Elmi, who applied for asylum in the United States after civil war broke out in her native Somalia in 1991. Settled in Minneapolis, Elmi has worked as an employment counselor at Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota for the past 17 years. She has been able to find jobs for 79 percent of her clients this year, despite the difficult economy.

Elmi's life is "clear evidence of the wisdom of investing in women," said Clinton, adding that the United States would be delivering 28 pledges to the conference, one designed to build awareness on a major "cause of statelessness, which is discrimination against women," she said.

Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota is an affiliated ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), along with 285 other social ministry organizations across the country.

ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson said he appreciates Clinton's sharing of Elmi's story and the recognition of Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, particularly "on this historic occasion of the 60th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 50th anniversary of the Statelessness Convention in a gathering of world leaders." The ministerial conference brings together more than 150 representatives from around the world. Clinton is a member of the U.S. delegation.

"In sharing Fatuma Elmi's story, Secretary Clinton has affirmed the invaluable contributions resettled refugees bring to life in American communities. In naming Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, she has also recognized the vast network of Lutheran social service organizations that are an expression of faith active in loving service to our neighbor," Hanson said.

"This is who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Many are descendants of a once immigrant people, and others of those who came as slaves. Together we are now participating in God's work of restoring and reconciling communities by welcoming refugees and working towards fair and just immigration reform," he said.

"As individuals, congregations, Lutheran social ministry organizations and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, we know we can achieve things together on a scale and scope we could never do otherwise. As the ELCA, let us make these significant anniversaries an occasion for renewing our commitment to welcoming the new immigrant into the life of our neighborhoods and congregations."

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service is one of the United States' leading agencies in welcoming and advocating for refugees and immigrants. Based in Baltimore, it works on behalf of the ELCA, The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod and the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

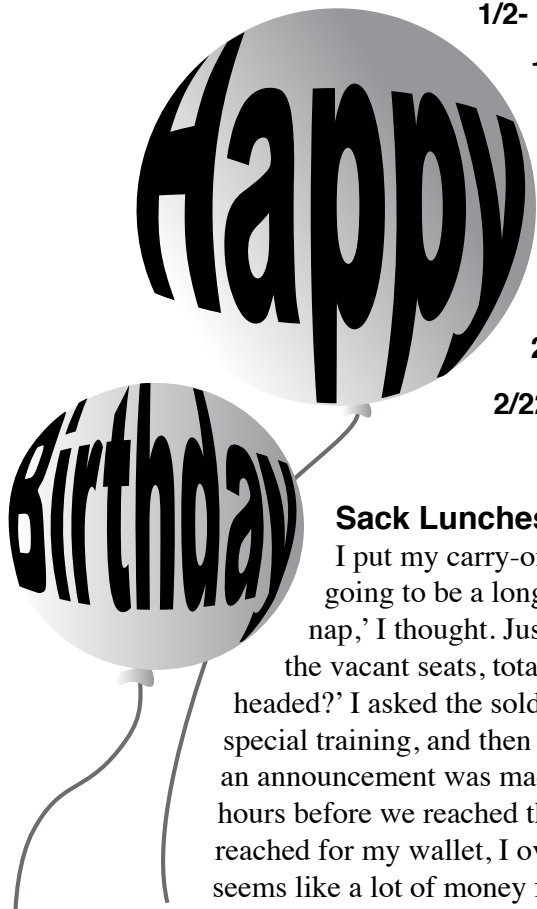
Kim Dettmer, director of refugee services at Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, said Elmi has "dedicated her life to helping refugees find safety and stability in our community as an employment specialist. Through partnerships with employers, primarily in manufacturing and hospitality industries, many refugees have found entry-level work that has required minimal technical or English skills."

Calling this "a win-win-win situation for refugees, employers and our community," Dettmer said it takes "a community to help refugees succeed. Minnesota has a long tradition of lending a hand to refugees, and they have enhanced our quality of life in many ways. Fatuma is a great example of people from war-torn countries who have worked hard to establish new lives and have given back to the community."

Shortly after her arrival in the United States and prior to her work at Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, Elmi volunteered at a Somali women's organization mentoring mothers and daughters to ensure that both understood women's roles in the U.S. and the value of an education. Her actions were effective, as five of the six girls Elmi mentored went on to receive a college education, according to Dettmer.

Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota is one of five resettlement organizations in Minnesota helping refugees gain self-sufficiency. Information about the service is at [www.lssmn.org](http://www.lssmn.org).

Information about Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service is available at [www.lirs.org](http://www.lirs.org).



1/2- Laura Halloway

1/8- George Lord

1/22- Fritz Michaelson

1/24- Bruce Borwegen

2/6- Ingrid Hillicoss

2/13- Eric Mattson

2/18- Vivian Muth

2/22- Carol Fancher

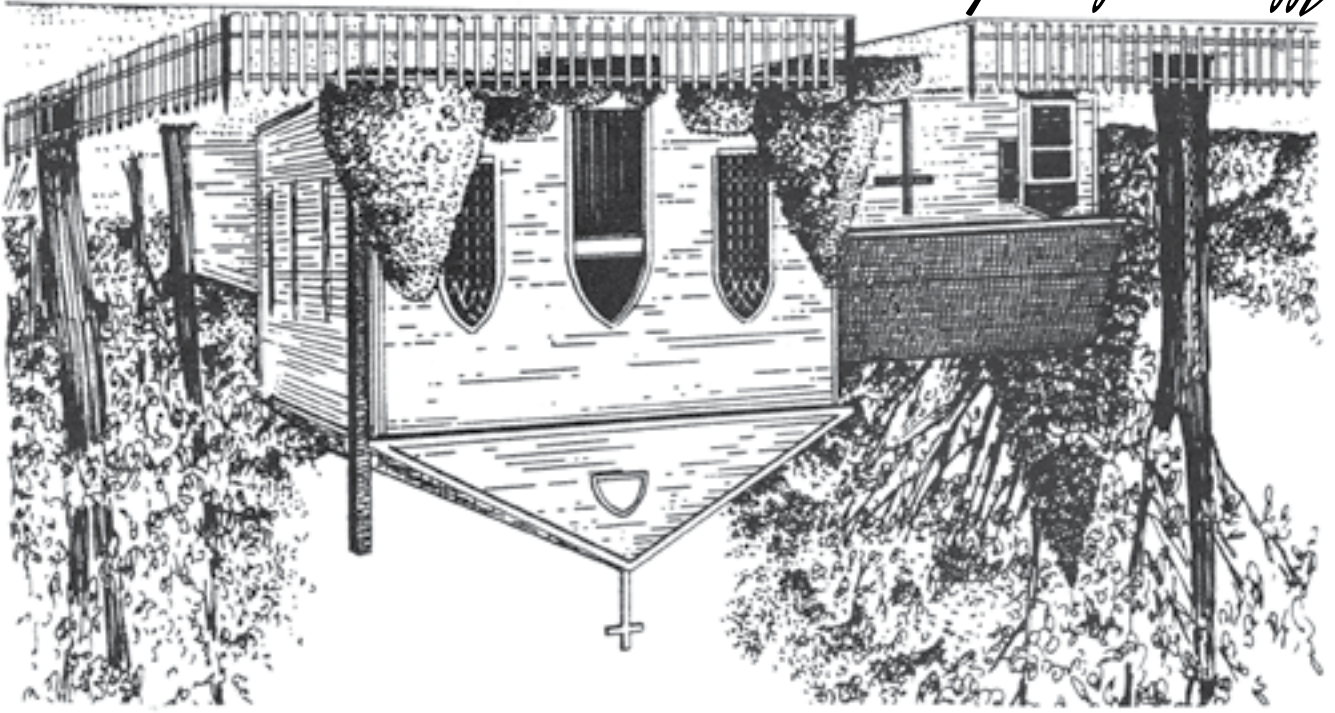
### Sack Lunches

I put my carry-on in the luggage compartment and sat down in my assigned seat. It was going to be a long flight. 'I'm glad I have a good book to read. Perhaps I will get a short nap,' I thought. Just before take-off, a line of soldiers came down the aisle and filled all the vacant seats, totally surrounding me. I decided to start a conversation. 'Where are you headed?' I asked the soldier seated nearest to me. 'Petawawa. We'll be there for two weeks for special training, and then we're being deployed to Afghanistan.' After flying for about an hour, an announcement was made that sack lunches were available for five dollars. It would be several hours before we reached the east, and I quickly decided a lunch would help pass the time. As I reached for my wallet, I overheard a soldier ask his buddy if he planned to buy lunch. 'No, that seems like a lot of money for just a sack lunch. Probably wouldn't be worth five bucks. I'll wait till we get to base.' His friend agreed. I looked around at the other soldiers. None were buying lunch. I walked to the back of the plane and handed the flight attendant a fifty dollar bill. 'Take a lunch to all those soldiers.' She grabbed my arms and squeezed tightly. Her eyes wet with tears, she thanked me. 'My son was a soldier in Iraq ; it's almost like you are doing it for him.'

Picking up ten sacks, she headed up the aisle to where the soldiers were seated. She stopped at my seat and asked, 'Which do you like best - beef or chicken?' 'Chicken,' I replied, wondering why she asked. She turned and went to the front of plane, returning a minute later with a dinner plate from first class. 'This is your thanks.' After we finished eating, I went again to the back of the plane, heading for the rest room. A man stopped me. 'I saw what you did. I want to be part of it. Here, take this.' He handed me twenty-five dollars. Soon after I returned to my seat, I saw the Flight Captain coming down the aisle, looking at the aisle numbers as he walked, I hoped he was not looking for me, but noticed he was looking at the numbers only on my side of the plane. When he got to my row he stopped, smiled, held out his hand and said, 'I want to shake your hand.' Quickly unfastening my seatbelt I stood and took the Captain's hand. With a booming voice he said, 'I was a soldier and I was a military pilot. Once, someone bought me a lunch. It was an act of kindness I never forgot.' I was embarrassed when applause was heard from all of the passengers. Later I walked to the front of the plane so I could stretch my legs. A man who was seated about six rows in front of me reached out his hand, wanting to shake mine. He left another twenty-five dollars in my palm. When we landed I gathered my belongings and started to deplane. Waiting just inside the airplane door was a man who stopped me, put something in my shirt pocket, turned, and walked away without saying a word. Another twenty-five dollars! Upon entering the terminal, I saw the soldiers gathering for their trip to the base. I walked over to them and handed them seventy-five dollars. 'It will take you some time to reach the base. It will be about time for a sandwich. God Bless You.' Ten young men left that flight feeling the love and respect of their fellow travelers. As I walked briskly to my car, I whispered a prayer for their safe return. These soldiers were giving their all for our country. I could only give them a couple of meals. It seemed so little...

A veteran is someone who, at one point in his or her life, wrote a blank check made payable to 'The United States of America' for an amount of 'up to and including my life.' That is Honor, and there are way too many people in this country who seem no longer to understand it.

*All are welcome!*



*Don't forget*  
You can keep up to date  
with St. Paul's at:  
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