

FAITH NEWSLETTER

June 2006 / July 2006

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,



While attending Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, Anna and I were blessed to act as mentors for a doctorate student who was a Lutheran pastor from Bangalore, India. When I was on vicarage in Fredericksburg, Virginia, the mission-minded congregation I served invited our good friend Rev. J. Priestly Balasingh to preach on “The Great Commission” and give a presentation on the Lutheran mission in India. His sermon and presentation were both inspiring and enlightening as he reminded all of us Christians that our mission work is far from over and that our Triune God is truly a Giver of good gifts!

As a Giver of good gifts, God repeatedly blesses individuals, groups, and nations that are in a covenant relationship with Him. This idea is emphasized in the Old Testament through God’s blessings for obeying and honoring the covenant, as opposed to curses for violating it. He blesses His people when He bestows on them diverse temporal and spiritual gifts including vitality, health, longevity, land, prosperity, honor, victory, and power (*Gen. 1:22; 9:1-7; 24:35; Job 42:12; Ps. 45:2; 104:24, 35*). This covenant relationship is continued onward to the New Testament where the blessings of Jesus take on considerable importance (*Mt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 10:16; Mt. 14:19; Lk. 24:50:51; Lk. 6:28*). It is Jesus who, through His life, death, and resurrection, enables Jew and Gentile alike to inherit the blessings promised through Abraham. The people of Christ Jesus, whose sins are forgiven, are the ones who are blessed. They belong to God and are part of His kingdom (*Matt. 5:3-11; 25:34; Lk. 11:28; Rom. 4:7-8; Eph. 1:3; Jas. 5:11; Rev. 19:9; 20:6; 22:14*).

As you probably know, God is not the only one who blesses. We can bless God in our acts of worship, praise, and thanksgiving (*Neh. 9:5; Ps. 115:17-18*) and bless other people too. People do this in their role as intermediaries for God (*Ex. 39:43; 2 Sam. 6:18; Acts 3:26*). They seek to invoke a divine blessing upon another in more ordinary circumstances and areas of life (*Gen. 27:4, 27; 24:60; Neh. 11:2*). Whichever aspect it is, what is sought is the blessing of God’s favor upon humanity. The important thing is to remember that only God is the original source of all human blessings (*Num. 6:22-27; 23:20*).

When talking about blessings, I think of our congregation’s mission statement printed at the end of each Sunday’s Worship Service folder: “*Building Christ-centered families of faith.*” This is a God-given mission to come together in Jesus Christ to share the Gospel and minister in His Name to each other and to the community. In carrying out our mission statement, we at Faith are to be “stretching out Faith’s love” to people, not only in our area, but also in far away places and places in-between (*Acts 1:8*).



“Building Christ-centered families of faith.”

“Stretching out Faith’s love” is providing and maintaining the Food Pantry to help those needing food in our community. “Stretching out Faith’s love” is volunteering to help with Vacation Bible School in “*Building Christ-centered families of faith.*” “Stretching out Faith’s love” is prayerfully and financially supporting brothers and sisters in Christ who are reaching out to people living in areas devastated by natural disasters. “Stretching out Faith’s love” is sharing God’s love and Good News of sins forgiven and eternal salvation in Jesus Christ with people we encounter daily in our lives.

May the Lord continue to bless us individually and collectively as a congregation with His good and gracious gifts! “*Blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD*” (*Jer. 17:7*).

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Steve Bocklage

In and Around Faith Church

LWML

Our LWML activities are over for the summer. We have some activities to look forward to in the fall. The Fall Rally will be at Grace Church in September and the convention will be in October. Have a nice Summer.

Grace Scott

Faith Ladies Aid

June 1st is our end of the year pizza and bunco party. We will begin at 6:30 PM. All ladies are invited to join us for good food, good fun and great fellowship. We do not meet during the summer months.

We will be serving coffee and cake for our Confirmand after worship on June 4th. Please join us as we welcome Brittney Rheinwald into our congregation.

Bible Study

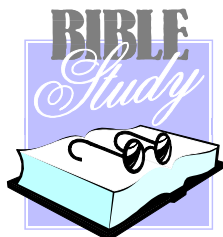
There are many opportunities for you to learn more about the Bible.

Every Sunday after the 9:00 AM worship service, a Bible Study group meets. They are ready to welcome any new comers.

There is a Women's weekly bible study on Friday mornings at 10:30 AM. Betty Baker is leading this group through the books of Ruth and Esther.

Friday evening bible study meets at 7:00 PM and is studying the book of Romans.

All are welcome.



Faith Seniors

We are still meeting the third Thursday of the month. In June, we hope to see the movie "Casablanka". If you'd like to see this "oldie but goodie" come join us.

Grace Scott

Church Picnic

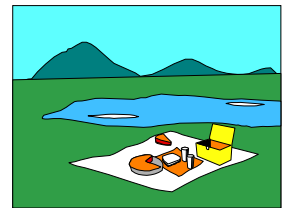
The church picnic is set for Sunday, June 11th. Our regular Sunday worship will be held at church at 9:00 AM. There will be an abbreviated worship service at the picnic grounds at 11:00 AM with the picnic starting immediately after the service.

Once again hot dogs and soda will be provided. Plan on bringing your own utensils, paper plates and a dish for the common table.

There will be games for the children and bingo for the adults. Please bring a wrapped gift worth approximately \$5.00. These gifts will be used as bingo prizes.

We hope to see you at:

Wolfe Wildlife Refuge
109th & Laramie
Oak Lawn



Take Me Out to the Ball Game

We have planned a night out to a White Sox game, July 22nd. The game starts at 6:05 PM with Fireworks after the game.

We will be chartering a bus that will leave from the church parking lot at 4:15 PM. The total cost will be \$28.00 per person. There are 50 tickets available. Please contact the church office at 424-1059 or Ed Neaves at 424-3522.

We hope you can join us for a fun evening and another White sox win!

Schedule of June 2006 / July 2006 Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>June Event</u>
3	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
4	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
		Confirmation
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
11	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	11:00 AM	Worship / Picnic
17	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
18	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
25	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class

A Special Day

President Lyndon Johnson was the first to sign a presidential proclamation declaring the 3rd Sunday of June as Father's Day. The idea of a "father's day" was first proposed in 1901. This idea was supported by several presidents, including Woodrow Wilson in 1916 and Calvin Coolidge in 1924, but it was not made official until 1966.

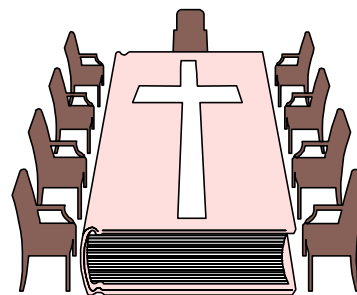


Happy Father's Day

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>July Event</u>
1	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
2	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
9	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
15	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
16	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
23	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
30	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class

Weekly Meetings

AA Groups	M & F - 6:00 PM
	Sat - 8:00 AM
Girl Scouts	Tu - 6:00 PM F - 6:00 PM
ALANON	Tu - 7:00 PM
Choir	W - 6:30 PM
Seniors	(Third) - Th. - 12:00 PM
Ladies Aid	(First) - Th. - 7:00 PM



June / July Elders, Ushers & Lay Readers

Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

June 4 Frank Oslakovic
Ed Neaves
Gail Henson
Mary Slepski

June 11 Alden Ketchum
Nick Trojanowski
Christina Trojanowski

June 18 Bill Weems
Richard Clark
Glenn Werth
Dory Moeller

June 25 Gene Osmanski
Gene Tebo
Bob Stegman

Lay Readers 9:00 AM Sunday

June 4 Frank Oslakovic

June 11 Alma Rissky

June 18 Bill Weems

June 25 Gene Osmanski

Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

July 2 Frank Oslakovic
Ed Neaves
Mark Trojanowski
Elise Trojanowski

July 9 Alden Ketchum
Al Skopec
Andrea Skopec

July 16 Richard Clark
Bill Weems
Nick Trojanowski
Christina Trojanowski

July 23 Gene Osmanski
Mary Slepski
Gail Henson

July 30 Frank Oslakovic
Ed Neaves
Richard Clark
Glenn Werth

Lay Readers 9:00 AM Sunday

July 2 Mark Trojanowski

July 9 Nick Trojanowski

July 16 Alma Rissky

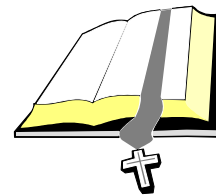
July 23 Ed Neaves

July 30 Christina Trojanowski

DENNIS THE MENACE



“I like Sunday School ‘cause they can’t send me to the Principal’s office.”



Pastor's Corner

"Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." John 20:31

Question...Answer

Have you ever thought about this question: What if Jesus had stayed here on earth with us and had not ascended into heaven? Wouldn't that have been great? We could have seen His miracles and asked Him all kinds of questions! However, this was not in God's salvation plan for us. In fact, Jesus said that it is to our advantage that He ascend into heaven because only then would He send the "Counselor Helper" (John 16:7) to us, whom we know as the Holy Spirit.

A Great Gift!

During the Pentecost season, we realize one of the greatest gifts God gives us is the fulfillment of Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit into our lives and focus our eyes of faith on Christ through God's Word. Jesus says, *"The Spirit of truth...will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on His own; He will speak only what He hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to Me by taking from what is Mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is Mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is Mine and make it known to you."* (John 16:13-15). The Holy Spirit, Jesus, and the Father are coequal yet three distinct Persons, each full and complete in the undivided and indivisible Essence of God and always speaking in unison with one voice.

One Undivided God...

Indeed, the Trinity is one undivided God speaking in one undivided voice with and through the undivided Word of God. This reinforces Martin Luther's insistence that the Triune God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit- *always* speaks through God's Word. Luther warned that you can never be sure of God's forgiveness and compassionate love for you if the Persons of the Trinity speak in contrary ways, such as through feelings, emotions, or uncertain intuition.

Our Daily Lives...

As for the Holy Spirit, He works in keeping us faithful and in guiding our daily lives! He gives us opportunities to share our faith in Jesus. He gives us His fruit (Galatians 5:22-23) that make our lives viable from one day to the next. The Spirit will also guide us in ways that are sometimes beyond our choosing (cf. Genesis 13:8-11; 37:28; 39:20). Being like *"a refiner who sits and purifies silver"* (Malachi 3:3), God will permit, and even cause, certain events to occur in our lives to draw us and keep us close to Him so that His loving will is accomplished (cf. Hebrews 12:5-6; James 1:2-4).

The Truth Never Changes

Don't be fooled, though! We are no longer to be children who are *"tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind"* of teaching (Ephesians 4:14). We need to discern God's truth from falsehood and error because we can be quickly led astray from God and true Christianity. Therefore, *"test the spirits to see whether they are from God..."* (1 John 4:1). Everything centers around the person of Jesus Christ. He is the keystone that never changes. In the same way, God's Word is where God speaks His truth and it never changes either! *"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work"* (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Trust the Word of God and receive it with great eagerness, and daily examine the Scriptures to see what someone is preaching, teaching, or professing that relates to the Triune God and His truth (Acts 17:11).

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism:

*In a simple way in which the head of a house
is to present it to the household*

First

What is baptism? *Answer:*

Baptism is not simply plain water. Instead it is water enclosed in God's command and connected with God's Word.

What then is this Word of God? *Answer:*

Where our LORD Christ says in [Matthew 28\[:19*\]](#), "Go into all the world, teach all nations, and baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Second

What gifts or benefits does baptism grant? *Answer:*

It brings about forgiveness of sins, redeems from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe it, as the words and promise of God declare.

What are these words and promise of God? *Answer:*

Where our LORD Christ says in [Mark 16\[:16*\]](#), "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be damned."

Third

How can water do such great things? *Answer:*

Clearly the water does not do it, but the Word of God, which is with and alongside the water, and faith, which trusts this Word of God in the water. For without the Word of God the water is plain water and not a baptism, but with the Word of God it is a baptism, that is, a grace-filled water of life and a "bath of the new birth in the Holy Spirit," as St. Paul says to Titus in chapter [3\[:5-8*\]](#), "through the bath of rebirth and renewal of the Holy Spirit, which he richly poured out over us through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that through that very grace we may be *righteous and* heirs in hope of eternal life. This is *surely* most certainly true."

Fourth

What then is the significance of such a baptism with water? *Answer:*

It signifies that the old creature in us with all sins and evil desires is to be drowned and die through daily contrition and repentance, and on the other hand that daily a new person is to come forth and rise up to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Where is this written? *Answer:*

St. Paul says in [Romans 6\[:4*\]](#), "We were buried with Christ through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we, too, are to walk in a new life."¹

¹Kolb, R. 2000. The Book of Concord : The confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Fortress Press: Minneapolis

*(Excerpts from "A Pastoral Letter to Pastors of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod From
President Jerry Kieschnick May 19, 2006")*

Dear Brothers in Christ,

Pentecost Sunday is only about two weeks away. This has always been an exciting time in the church year for me, because it is a reminder of how privileged and blessed we are to have a role in God's mission to seek and to save the lost.... God is truly and powerfully using our humble *Ablaze!* efforts in ways that are touching lives for eternity. Stories of the girls and boys, the men and women of our church body boldly sharing their faith in the Savior continue to be heard from every corner of the LCMS. The Gospel is being shared and lives are being changed!

You no doubt recall that the 2004 Synod convention said that each LCMS congregation and school should see itself as a "mission outpost." The convention noted, "God's desire is that all be saved (1 Tim. 2:4) and only under the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12). Our Lord has given to all who are baptized the opportunity and responsibility to spread the Gospel (2 Cor. 3:2-3) as part of the priesthood of all believers, declaring the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His wonderful light (1 Peter 2:9)."

The early Christians, though often threatened in one way or another, witnessed to Jesus Christ with enthusiasm and joy. By means of God's Word and the Sacraments, the Holy Spirit strengthens and empowers us to be witnesses to Christ, just as He empowered and strengthened them. May God grant you many blessings in your ministry, including enthusiasm and joy, as you lead your congregation to be a "mission outpost" in the field where God in His grace has place you!

New Pastors and Vicars

A highlight of every year for the entire Council of Presidents-and for me personally-is the April cycle of vicarage assignments and pastoral candidate placements. COP [*The Council Of Presidents*] attends the candidate placement services at both seminaries every year. Because of scheduling complications, the council attends one vicarage placement service annually, alternating between the two seminaries.

With thanksgiving to God and to the congregations of the Synod for providing calls, the COP this year placed 177 candidates from the two seminaries into their first calls as pastors. Of those, 112 were from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and 65 were from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. Eight available calls were not used.

The council also placed 225 vicars-157 from St. Louis, 68 Fort Wayne. Please keep these candidates and vicars in your prayers that God may bless their service as pastor-leaders in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

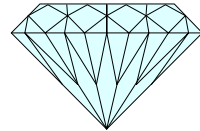
A Parting Word of Encouragement

It's easy to get overwhelmed at the challenge of reaching so many people for Jesus who do not yet know Him. In one of his sermons, Dr. C.F.W. Walther [*The first president of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod*] proclaimed, "Ah, if this great, important, holy matter rested on the fervor of our love, on the abundance of our means, on the training of our missionaries; in short, if it rested on our will and on our faith and strength, then we would have a sad situation. For we are poor miserable sinners, whose love soon disappears; whose strength is only weakness; and whose knowledge is only patchwork. But we should not look at ourselves, but only at the fact that God has commanded this work of missions. He has promised to bless our humble work, and to bless it abundantly" (*from "Arise," in The Word of His Grace, Occasional and Festival Sermons, Graphic Publishing Company, Inc., 1978*).

We are engaged in *God's* mission, not one that we devised for ourselves. And it is *His Spirit* who empowers us for our work in His mission (Acts 1:8; John 14:16). A blessed Pentecost celebration to you all!

Discover the riches of Christ

Join our Vacation Bible School



As you explore our cove of treasure
It will be a pleasure.
With Bible lessons, crafts, treats and songs,
This is where everyone belongs!

Come learn about Jesus while having fun.
We look forward to meeting you.
Just bring yourself, a friend if you can and your enthusiasm.



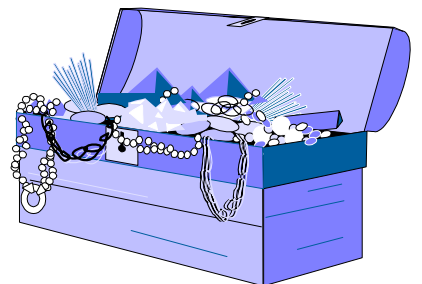
When: June 19th – 23rd.

Where: Faith Lutheran Church
9701 S. Melvina
Oak Lawn, IL.

Time: 9:30AM – 12:00 PM Noon

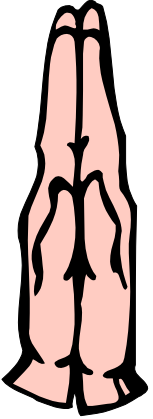
Who: Children age 3 yrs. old – 8th Grade

For more information contact Faith Church at 708-424-1059



I Cannot Pray...

*I cannot say **Our**, if my religion has no room for others and their need.*
*I cannot say **Father**, if I do not demonstrate this relationship in my daily living.*
*I cannot say **Who art in heaven**, if all my interests and pursuits are in earthly things.*
*I cannot say **Hallowed be Thy name**, if I, who is called by His name, am not holy.*
*I cannot say **Thy kingdom come**, if I am unwilling to give up my own sovereignty and accept the righteous reign of God.*
*I cannot say **Thy will be done**, if I am unwilling or resentful of having it in my life.*
*I cannot say **On earth as it is in heaven**, unless I am truly ready to give myself to His service here and now.*
*I cannot say **Give us this day our daily bread**, without expending honest effort for it or by ignoring the genuine needs of my fellow men.*
*I cannot say **Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us**, if I continue to harbor a grudge against anyone.*
*I cannot say **Lead us not into temptation**, if I deliberately choose to remain in a situation where I am likely to be tempted.*
*I cannot say **Deliver us from evil**, if I am not prepared to fight in the spiritual realm with the weapon of prayer.*
*I cannot say **Thine is the kingdom**, if I do not give the King the disciplined obedience of a loyal subject.*
*I cannot say **Thine is the power**, if I fear what my neighbors and friends may say or do.*
*I cannot say **Thine is the glory**, if I am seeking my own glory first.*
*I cannot say **Forever and ever**, if I am too anxious about each day's affairs.*
*I cannot say **Amen**, unless I honestly say, "Cost what it may, this is my prayer."*



WEB SITE

www.faithoaklawn.org

E-MAIL

Pastor: pastor@faithoaklawn.org

Church: info@faithoaklawn.org

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
9701 S. MELVINA AVE.
OAK LAWN, IL 60453-2717
(708) 424-1059



“Building Christ-Centered Families of Faith”

«Mailing_Label_Name»

«Street_Address_1»

«Street_Address_2»

«City», «State» «ZIP_Code»