

FAITH NEWSLETTER

October 2006 / November 2006

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,



One of the great orators of the 1950's and 1960's was a preacher who had a vision of the way things could be. On August 28, 1963, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. clearly articulated to the world on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. his dream and vision of the future for the common good of America. His vision was rooted in fundamental values, cultural traditions, and personal conviction. Due to his speech, Dr. King gave life to a vision so that people could see themselves in it.

Of course, Dr. King did not corner the market on seeking a vision for tomorrow and planning for the future because these are Biblical concepts. There are many examples of godly people planning for their future and carefully executing their plans. For instance, in **1 Chronicles 12:32**, the men of Issachar **"understood the times and knew what Israel should do."** How about St. Paul and the mission work God gave him to do throughout Asia Minor and Europe. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Paul planned and selected certain cities for his mission work.

It's important and helpful for a church to have a vision. It enables them to see where they're headed and how they're going to get there. A vision keeps the congregation focused on the shared purpose. It energizes God's people to wisely use their God-given time, talents, and treasures. God has called us together as Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church to prayerfully seek His will for the mission work He wants us to faithfully and joyfully do.

The story is told of the foreman on a building site who asks one of the builders what he is doing. The builder replies, "I'm breaking rocks." Another worker is asked the same question, and he answers, "I'm earning for my family." The question is posed to a third worker. With a glint in his eye, he responds, "I'm building a cathedral." Each of these three workers has a different perspective on what they are doing but they share the same purpose.

In seeking God's will and plan for our congregation, may we share the same purpose with different perspectives as we contemplate the following questions and pray about the answers:

- 1) What is God's vision and will for our congregation?
- 2) Where do you see God leading us now and in five, ten, and twenty years?
- 3) How will we best accomplish His will?
- 4) Who will faithfully do the work God has planned for Faith?

Dream and visualize exciting possibilities the future holds! George Bernard Shaw once said, "Some men see things as they are and ask 'Why?' I dream of things that never were and ask 'Why not?'" God can do great things through ordinary people like us. He did great things through a reluctant Moses, a young-shepherd boy David, and a fervent persecutor of Christians named Paul. Our God who created us and redeemed us through the blood of His Son Jesus Christ and made us holy through the work of the Holy Spirit is able to do things beyond our wildest imaginations!

In **Proverbs 19:21**, the writer declares that **"Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails."** Seek God's purpose and vision! Pray to God to trust in Him and help us know His good and gracious will so that our vision coincides with His vision for Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Steve Bocklage

In and Around Faith Church

LWML

At our September 23rd fall rally the members tied 60 fleece blankets to be donated to the Katrina survivors. Our next activity is the NID Convention October 14th. We will select new projects that will be funded by mite contributions.

Grace Scott

Faith Ladies Aid

If you missed our first meeting, you were missed. We hope you will be able to join us for our future planned activities.

October 5th is our "Antique Road Show" following our business meeting.

At our meeting November 2nd we will be making plans for our Bazaar.

November 7th is our Bazaar. 11:00 AM–12:30 PM is the chili lunch. The pork roast dinner will have two seatings 5:00 PM and 6:30 PM. Contact Gail Henson at 599-4990 for tickets. We are in need of crafts. Please contact Grace Scott or Erma Johnson if you can donate or help. Homemade goodies will also be appreciated for our Bake Sale. New or almost new items will help fill our "White Elephant" table. Watch for more details in the church bulletin.

Looking ahead, plans are being made for a Christmas Tea Party for all ladies on Sunday afternoon Dec. 3rd.

Come and join us for good Christian fellowship.

Kathleen Nowak
Membership Chairman

Faith Seniors

We met in September and decided to keep the group going. In October we will have a movie with popcorn and soda.

Grace Scott

"Equipping to Share" Workshop

November 4, 2006

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church
Lemont, IL

Equipping to Share: Workshop for Everyday Evangelism

Are you ready for "mission moments," those moments God gives you to share the truth and love of Jesus Christ with unbelieving family and friends?

Equipping to Share (EtS) workshops from *Lutheran Hour Ministries* are designed to strengthen and encourage believers for outreach. The mission is God's, the message is God's, and the power is God's.

EtS concentrates on our privilege to speak the Gospel, express the impact of Christ in life, seek understanding of the lost, and connect new people into the church family.

Come experience these and other highlights of the **EtS** workshop. Receive practical insights you can use immediately and discover how **EtS** can help you and your congregation meet today's outreach challenges.

Contact Pastor Bocklage if you desire to attend so materials are made available for you. Also, let him know if you want to carpool or if you need transportation to and from the workshop.

Food Pantry

The food pantry has recently met the needs of 17 people. In order to keep this outreach program operating we are in need of your help. Next time you are at the grocery store please pick up a few extra items, or purchase a gift certificate, or donate money. It will be greatly appreciated. Thanksgiving is coming and many more people will use the food bank.

Thank you.

Schedule of October 2006 / November 2006 Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>October Event</u>
1	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
7	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
8	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
15	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
21	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
22	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
29	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>November Event</u>
4	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
5	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
12	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
18	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
19	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
22	7:00 PM	Thanksgiving Eve Worship
26	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
29	7:00 PM	Wednesday Advent Service

Surprises About Unchurched People

Surprise # 1: Most of the unchurched prefer to attend church on Sunday morning if they attend.

Surprise # 2: Females are likely to be either the most antagonistic or the most receptive to the gospel.

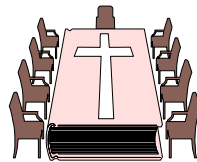
Surprise # 3: Most of the unchurched feel guilty about not attending church.

Surprise # 4: 82% of the unchurched are at least "somewhat likely" to attend church if they are invited.

-- From "The Unchurched Next Door" by
Thom Rainer

Weekly Meetings

AA Groups	M & F - 6:00 PM
	Sat - 8:00 AM
Bible Study	Fri. - 10:30 AM
Girl Scouts	Tu - 6:00 PM F - 6:30 PM
ALANON	Tu - 7:00 PM
Choir	W - 6:30 PM
Seniors	(Third) - Th. - 12:00 PM
Ladies Aid	(First) - Th. - 7:00 PM



Youth Gathering

The 2007 National LCMS Youth Gathering will be held July 28 – August 1, 2007. Youth participants range from 15 years old by September 30, 2007 to a 2007 high school graduate or 19 years old. "Gathering" registration is October 25, 2006 to November 8, 2006. For further details, contact Pastor Bocklage.

Oct. / Nov. Elders, Ushers & Lay Readers

Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

October 1 Frank Oslakovic
 Ed Neaves
 Gail Henson
 Mary Slepski

October 8 Richard Clark
 Anna O'Neal
 Anna Bocklage

October 15 Bill Weems
 Al Skopec
 Andrea Skopec
 Dory Moeller

October 22 Alden Ketchum
 Mark Trojanowski
 Elise Trojanowski

October 29 Ed Neaves
 Gene Osmanski
 Nick Trojanowski
 Mark Trojanowski

Lay Readers 9:00 AM Sunday

October 1 Anna Bocklage

October 8 Barb Tebo

October 15 Alma Risky

October 22 Christina Trojanowski

October 29 Ed Neaves

Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

November 5 Frank Oslakovic
 Richard Clark
 Glenn Werth
 Bob Stegman

November 12 Bill Weems
 Colleen Weems
 Gene Tebo

November 19 Gene Osmanski
 Alden Ketchum
 Nick Trojanowski
 Mark Trojanowski

November 22 **7:00 PM Thanksgiving Eve**
 Ed Neaves
 Gene Osmanski
 Richard Clark
 Nick Trojanowski

November 26 Ed Neaves
 Al Skopec
 Andrea Skopec

November 29 **Wednesday 7:00 Advent**
 Richard Clark
 Frank Oslakovic

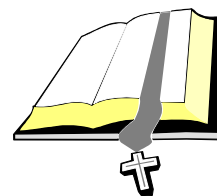
Lay Readers 9:00 AM Sunday

November 5 Frank Oslakovic

November 12 Bill Weems

November 19 Gene Osmanski

November 26 Mark Trojanowski



Pastor's Corner

“But just as you excel in everything-- in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us--see that you also excel in this grace of giving.”
2 Corinthians 8:7

STEWARDSHIP Thoughts

Dr. Kennon Callahan, a noted American church consultant and author, wrote a book entitled:

Twelve Keys to an Effective Church.

Relational Characteristics

1. Specific mission objectives
2. Pastoral and lay visitation
3. Corporate & dynamic worship
4. Significant relational groups
5. Strong leadership resources
6. Streamlined structure and solid participatory decision-making

Functional Characteristics

7. Several competent programs and activities
8. Open accessibility
9. High visibility
10. Adequate parking and land
11. Adequate space and facilities
12. Solid financial resources

The Free and Joyous Activity...

It is noteworthy that "solid financial resources" is listed last. The twelve keys are not necessarily listed in order of importance, but Callahan maintains that *money follows mission* rather than mission following money. A definition that has been used in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) for a couple of decades defines **Christian stewardship** as *“the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God's family, the church, in managing all of life and life's resources for God's purposes.”*

The Seven “T’s”...

Managing money is only one part of stewardship. We often hear of the "Three T's of Stewardship," known as "time, talent, and treasure." We should consider expanding this list to include:

1. "Testimony" reminds us that we have a stewardship responsibility to get the good news of Jesus out.
2. "Tissue" gives us the opportunity to talk about care and use of our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit.
3. "Trash" gives us the opportunity to talk about taking care of the earth and our environment.
4. "Totality" reminds us that stewardship involves the wise management of all of life and life's resources.

WHAT Is Being Accomplished...

Stewardship is not just about money, but it is ALSO about money. Sometimes the congregational budget seems like the ultimate target of all stewardship activities rather than serving as a spending guide. While it is important to share financial information, it is more helpful to stress WHAT is being accomplished because of the gifts of God's people. *Money follows mission!* The mission of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church is *"to come together in Jesus Christ to share the gospel; and minister in His Name to each other and the community."* When that happens and as that happens, the financial support follows.

Giving Ourselves First...

The Macedonian Christians (2 Corinthians 8: 1-7) in St. Paul's time served as an example and encouragement to the Corinthian Christians to make good on their pledge to financially support the effort of bringing help to famine-stricken Christians in Jerusalem and Judea. Because these words are included in the Scriptures, they are also written for our encouragement and instruction. Stewardship really does flow out of hearts changed by the Holy Spirit. Like the Macedonians, we are at our stewardship best when we "give ourselves first to the Lord" and then the rest, including our gifts of love for the Lord's work follows.

Latest statistics show drop in LCMS membership

September 3, 2006 LCMSNews -- No. 55

If there's a bright spot in the Synod's statistical report for 2005, it's that "back-door" losses -- the number of adults removed from congregational rosters (not counting deaths and transfers) -- have declined by 2,453 members. That figure dropped from 44,219 in 2004 to 41,766 in 2005.

But LCMS membership and contributions from members to congregations also declined, as did the number of baptisms, confirmations, and Christian education programs/students, according to 2005 congregational statistics reports.

Baptized membership fell from 2,463,747 in 2004 to 2,440,864 in 2005, a drop of nearly 23,000 members. And confirmed membership in 2005 was 1,870,659, a decrease of 9,554.

LCMS Senior Research Analyst Dr. John O'Hara attributes the loss of members to a "continuing trend" that is affecting most mainline Christian denominations.

In the 1950s and '60s, churches saw a "natural increase" because families were larger, O'Hara noted. Today's families are much smaller, and societal norms regarding religious participation have changed, he said.

"The expectation that you went to church [every Sunday] isn't as prevalent as in the '50s," said O'Hara. "You have to work harder to get the people in the front door."

The downward trend in membership and Sunday-school students -- in spite of a rising U.S. population -- also is a sign that "we're not reaching as many people as we could reach," he said.

Membership figures for 2005 were based on reports from 81 percent of the Synod's 6,144 congregations. Nineteen percent did not provide information on membership, so figures from their previous reports were used to compile the data for 2005.

Also down are contributions from members to congregations, which fell \$10,945,272 -- from \$1,307,764,010 in 2004 to \$1,296,818,738. Those figures do not include contributions members give directly to LCMS entities.

The shortfall of nearly \$11 million in 2005 is due primarily to the "under-reporting of contributions," says O'Hara, who estimates that some 29 percent of congregations did not provide that information.

LCMS Secretary Dr. Raymond Hartwig, who supervises the Synod's Office of Rosters and Statistics, which compiles the information, says it's "less than helpful" when congregations choose not to report -- a phenomenon that occurs every year. And, he says, "it's a little puzzling, since we've simplified the forms to the extent that it would only take a few minutes to complete them and return them."

Every three years, the Synod's national office asks district staffs and circuit counselors to contact their own congregations in an effort to get the forms returned because "delegate representation at the coming convention depends on the statistics we receive," Hartwig said. "Our [return] goal is 100 percent, and one of these years we're going to get there."

According to the 2005 report, of the nearly \$1.3 billion congregations received in contributions, they gave \$120.2 million for work beyond their own ministries. This "work at large" total includes money forwarded to the 35 LCMS districts, which then send a portion to the national and international work of the Synod. Congregations sent \$3.2 million less for "work at large" than in 2004.

In 2005, the Synod had 6,144 congregations served by 5,343 pastors. The number of congregations declined by seven, while the number of active pastors increased by 20. Average attendance at weekly worship services was 164.2 in 2005, compared with 173.6 the previous year.

The number of baptisms, confirmations, and Christian education programs/students all fell between 2004 and 2005, according to congregations. But the number of adults gained by "profession of faith" grew -- from 12,878 to 13,114, an increase of 236.

Among the official acts reported:

- 31,701 children were baptized (down 1,150).
- 24,572 teenagers were confirmed (down 753).
- 18,684 adults were confirmed (down 469).

In the Christian education category:

- 3,922 weekday religion classes (down 230).
- 184,934 students in weekday religion classes (down 13,120).
- 24,078 non-members in weekday classes (down 2,582).
- 3,804 vacation Bible schools (down 181).
- 5,106 Sunday schools (down 224).
- 423,958 enrolled in Sunday school (down 27,456).

Membership and attendance statistics for 2005 will be included in *The Lutheran Annual* for 2007, available from Concordia Publishing House by year's end.

New Lutheran Hymnal - Lutheran Service Book (LSB)

from Pastor Steve Bocklage

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod's Commission on Worship and Concordia Publishing House (CPH) have completed a new worship hymnal titled *Lutheran Service Book* (LSB). The new worship resource has been in preparation since 1998, when the Synod convention that year authorized its development.

A copy of the hymnal and accompanying information is available in the narthex area of the church for you to peruse and to familiarize yourself with it. As your pastor, I encourage you to take some time and look it over. If you would rather borrow the hymnal and look it over at home, please contact me to make arrangements.

LSB Workshops are available through the middle of November for getting more acquainted with the new hymnal. The cost is \$20.00 and you will receive a hymnal. A schedule is posted on the church bulletin board at the base of the stairs. On September 30th, Music Director Dr. Betty Baker and Faith Choir members attended a workshop in Tinley Park at Trinity Lutheran Church. I encourage you to speak with them about that workshop and ask them questions.

Frequently Asked Questions & Responses

Why prepare a new hymnal at this time?

In one sense, a hymnal is never new, since it contains hundreds of hymns and liturgical items that appeared in previous hymnals. But, with the writing of new hymns and liturgies, it is important to update hymns from time to time.

Our two current hymnals, *Lutheran Worship* and *The Lutheran Hymnal* are 21 and 62 years old, respectively. When the Commission on Worship determined in late 1996 to prepare a new hymnal, they consciously planned to give themselves up to a decade to carry out the work.

Will any of the services be familiar?

Yes. The communion services from *TLH* p. 15, *LW* p. 158 & 178, and *HS98* will be included. This means that when the new hymnal first appears, every congregation should have at least one service with which it is familiar. Also, Matins and Vespers from *TLH/LW* and Morning and Evening Prayer and Compline from *LW* are being prepared.

Why should we learn new hymns and liturgies?

In every age God blesses his church by sending poets and composers who are able to set the Word of God in fresh, new ways. As the church updates its hymnals by including the best of these new compositions, it provides the opportunity for our worship to be enriched through new expressions of the saving truth of God's Word.

If you think about it, every hymn and liturgy we sing was at one point "new." With the revision of a hymnal comes the opportunity to learn new hymns. Not every new hymn will become a favorite. But of the thousands of new hymns that have been written in the past three decades, some will be included in the new hymnal, and a few of these *will* become favorites.

Will the Small Catechism be included?

Yes. Many have found its inclusion in *Lutheran Worship* to be very beneficial.

What is the purchase price?

The pew edition is at the special price of **\$18.50** (through September 2007) and a personal / gift edition is \$40.

2005 – 2006 Lutheran School Statistics

LCMS Lutheran school statistics within Lutheran school enrollment:

- 3,538 children baptized
- 3,914 adults baptized/confirmed
- 5,003 adult transfers
- 7% of unchurched were baptized

**The Lutheran Church— Missouri Synod
District and Congregational Services**

2005 - 2006 “Average” Lutheran School

Early Childhood Center
Students 45

Elementary
Full-Time Teachers 9
Students 140
Students/FT Teacher 16

High School
Full-Time Teachers 15
Students 216
Students/FT Teacher 14

Number of Students by Grade Level

Child Care (Full Day)
20,934
Pre-K
109,692
Kindergarten
20,186
1st
16,787
2nd
15,786
3rd
15,678
4th
15,398
5th
14,968
6th
14,739
7+h

59% (3,527) LCMS Congregations Operate all Schools and Centers

Ethnicity of Students

White **82%**
Black **7%**
Hispanic **5%**
Asian **3%**
Other **3%**

National Lutheran School Accreditation

Early Childhood Centers 39
Elementary Schools 482
Middle Schools 1
High Schools

Student Church Affiliation

LCMS operating congregation 40%
Other LCMS congregation 5%
Other Lutheran church 4%
Non-Lutheran church

**AVERAGE STARTING SALARY
0 YEARS EXPERIENCE**

\$26,014

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.."

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Harbors of Hope

Have you ever met an encourager - one who motivates, affirms and inspires you? The word "encouragement" has its root in the Latin word *cor*, meaning "heart". To encourage literally means to "give others heart". Who encourages you? Whom do you encourage?

The ministry of encouragement is the most effective way of carving out "harbors of hope" - whether it is the home, the school or the church - for people. As encouragers we draw alongside others and communicate by action and word the liberating love of Jesus. His love compels us to:

- ♥ **Hear** the Gospel and energize one another with Christ's love.
- ♥ **Encourage** others through awareness and sensitivity in what they are attempting to be and to do.
- ♥ **Affirm** others, helping them to be delighted in themselves - the people God called them to be.
- ♥ **Respond** to the Gospel with the commitment of all that we have and all that we own.
- ♥ **Teach** and communicate the hope of salvation, freely expressing the forgiveness, acceptance and viability of Christ's love.

Excerpts from "The Heart of the Matter" written by Judith Christian C. 2001. Published in Alight Vol. 31 No. 3 by The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod District and Congregational Services - School Ministry.

School Supplies for Operation Blessing

The members of Faith responded to the request from Operation Blessing for school supplies in a great and caring way. As we sorted and packed the supplies we took a count of the collected items.

43 boxes of crayons
16 bottles of glue
18 glue sticks
7 pencil boxes
11 scissors
8 rulers
3 binders
53 folders
2 composition books
24 pkgs of notebook paper
7 pkgs of erasers
57 spiral notebooks
at least 8 dozen pencils
2 dozen pens

The school supplies were delivered in August, just before the school year started.

The volunteers who came out to receive our donation were very appreciative. A thank-you note from Operation Blessing is posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Thanks to all who supported this endeavor.