

# FAITH NEWSLETTER

February / March 2007

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Lord says, ***"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you"*** (Ezek. 36:26); ***"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation"*** (2 Cor. 5:17); ***"Behold, I make all things new"*** (Rev. 21:5); ***"Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth."*** (Isa. 65:17). All of that sounds great but what exactly does "new" mean? Well, it means *uncharted waters, non-experienced experiences, and uncomfortable comfort-zone journeys*. And that can be quite disturbing and downright scary.

Nevertheless, new experiences, new challenges, and new opportunities for spiritual growth in 2007 will surely be available to us. In fact, some have been already. The mission or purpose for Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church was begun with Jesus when this congregation was formed in 1940. In God's Word, the Lord has revealed His Gospel truth to us and continues to call us to share that truth with others. The mission to get this message out is always challenging when moving into new and unfamiliar territory. So, ***"Fear not; for I have redeemed you, I have called you by your name; you are Mine"*** (Isa. 43:1). Whatever the challenge or change we encounter, trust the Lord ***"not to forsake us"*** (Heb. 13:5) and do not forsake Him or His Means of Grace (God's Word and the Sacraments). God wants us to be faithful to Him, to trust in Him, and to be mission-minded in doing His will!

**As we move into these "new" areas and look to the Lord for wisdom, guidance, and strength, we also pray that our choices, timing, and experiences will be God pleasing. When mistakes are made, we trust God's forgiveness. As members of God's family of faith, we are to love and trust one another.** Patience and understanding are very important in putting the best construction on everything. This is especially true when we ***"bear one another's burdens"*** (Gal. 6:2); strive to walk together on the Lord's ***"paths of righteousness"*** (Ps. 23:3), and journey with Him ***"to seek and to save that which is lost"*** (Lk. 19:10). In **Ephesians 4**, St. Paul makes the point that under God's control, all the different parts of the body fit together, and the whole body is held together by every joint with which it is provided. So when each separate part works as it should, the whole body grows and builds itself up through God's love.

You are a body part. It is you - each and every one - who are wanted, needed, usable, and looked forward to with joy and excitement in participating together in the mission fields God is laying out before His family of Faith! There are current projects being worked on and "new" challenging opportunities before us. We are moving forward with the Exterior Cross Project and the Lutheran Service Book (LSB) New Hymnal Project will be considered at the March Congregational Meeting. Committees such as *The Stewardship Committee*, *The Evangelism Committee*, and *The Board of Parish Fellowship* have been re-established to meet the various challenges facing us. *The Stewardship Committee* positions have been filled while positions are open on *The Evangelism Committee* and *The Board of Parish Fellowship*. Please prayerfully consider serving on one of these two committees or assisting them when they ask for your help. I am confident that all these committees will faithfully serve the Lord in doing His work as they serve the congregation in meeting its needs.

And so we boldly move forward through 2007. In Christ, we will be ready to receive whatever the Lord places at our feet and faithfully do it. ***"This is impossible for people, but not for God: for WITH God all things are possible"*** (Mk. 10:27). With the help of God, we will continue to come together in Jesus Christ to share His Gospel of forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation with unbelievers. I encourage you to keep praying for yourselves, for one another, and for the surrounding community.

Yours in Christ,  
**Pastor Steve Bocklage**

# In and Around Faith Church

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## LWML

Our Spring activities will be starting soon. In April we will host the Spring Rally here at Faith Church. More details will be forthcoming.

The 2007 Lenten Inspiration will be March 24<sup>th</sup> at St. Philip Church, Chicago. Watch for details in the Northern Light. The registration deadline is March 10<sup>th</sup>.

Grace Scott

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## Faith Ladies Aid

Our Membership Campaign for new and former members of Faith begins with our Feb. 1<sup>st</sup> meeting at 7:00 PM in the Parish Hall. This is an opportunity for all Faith Ladies to join us. It will be our first get together after our Christmas party where we saw many of the Faith Ladies. We sincerely hope they will consider joining us once again. Our dues are only \$3.00 yearly.

Plans for our soup supper and rummage sale will be discussed at the February meeting. I'm sure there will be a special Valentine treat for you. Be sure to check the church bulletin for future functions.

Kathleen Nowak  
Membership Chairman

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## Faith Seniors

Our next meeting will be Feb.15<sup>th</sup>. We hope to see you then.

Grace Scott

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## LCMS Council of Presidents

The LCMS Council of Presidents (COP) at its Nov. 12-14 meeting in Orlando, Florida reported a total of 814 pastoral vacancies in LCMS congregations. Of those, 371 are in congregations that are not calling men to fill those vacancies, and 443 are in congregations that are calling. The category breakdown for the calling congregations is for 328 sole pastors, 54 senior pastors, and 61 associate or assistant pastors.

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## The Graying of America

(Work & Family Life, a Bureau of Labor Statistics report, "Labor Force Projections to 2012")

Older workers will represent a growing proportion of the US workforce as the result of the aging baby-boom population and the high cost of retirement.

Predictions are that by 2012:

10 million more people over the age of 55 will be in the labor force, which represents a 50% rate of growth. The number of workers between ages 35 and 44 will shrink by 3 million, or 6.8%.

The number of women, ages 55 to 64, in the labor pool will increase from 41.8% in 1982 to 60.6% in 2012.

Among workers ages 65 to 74, labor force participation is expected to grow from 16.2% in 1982 to 23.6% by 2012.

Consider what this might mean for families and for church supported ministry to and with the home.

# Schedule of February / March 2007 Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>February Event</u>
3	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
4	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
	11:30 AM	<b>7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> Gr. Confirmation</b>
11	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Children's Msg.</b>
	10:15AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
	11:30 AM	<b>7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> Gr. Confirmation</b>
17	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
18	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
	10:15AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
	11:30 AM	<b>7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> Gr. Confirmation</b>
21	7:00 PM	<b>Ash Wednesday Worship / Communion</b>
25	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Children's Msg.</b>
	10:15AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
	11:30 AM	<b>7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> Gr. Confirmation</b>
28	7:00 PM	<b>Lenten Worship</b>

## O Lord, throughout These Forty Days

LSB Hymn #418

O Lord, throughout these forty days  
You prayed and kept the fast;  
Inspire repentance for our sin,  
And free us from our past.



You strove with Satan, and You won;  
Your faithfulness endured;  
Lend us Your nerve, Your skill and trust  
In God's eternal Word.

Though parched and hungry, yet You prayed  
And fixed Your mind above;  
So teach us to deny ourselves,  
Since we have known God's love.

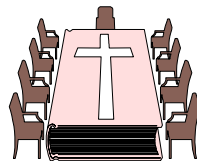
Be with us through this season, Lord,  
And all our earthly days,  
That when the final Easter dawns,

We join in heaven's praise.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>March Event</u>
3	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
4	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
	11:30 AM	<b>7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> Gr. Confirmation</b>
7	7:00 PM	<b>Lenten Worship</b>
11	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Children's Msg.</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
	11:30 AM	<b>7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> Gr. Confirmation</b>
14	7:00 PM	<b>Lenten Worship</b>
17	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
18	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
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	10:15 AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
	11:30 AM	<b>7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> Gr. Confirmation</b>
28	7:00 PM	<b>Lenten Worship</b>

## 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
6 <sup>th</sup> Gr. Confirmation	Tu - 7:00PM
Ladies Aid	(First) - Th. - 7:00 PM



# Feb. / Mar. Elders, Ushers & Lay Readers

## Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

**February 4** Frank Oslakovic  
Bill Weems  
Gail Henson  
Mary Slepiski

**February 11** Gene Osmanski  
Christina Trojanowski  
Elise Trojanowski

**February 18** Ed Neaves  
Alden Ketchum  
Al Skopec  
Andrea Skopec

**February 25** Richard Clark  
Glenn Werth  
Bob Stegman

## Lent Worship 7:00 PM Wednesday

**February 21** Ed Neaves  
Richard Clark  
Glenn Werth

**February 28** Frank Oslakovic  
Gene Osmanski

**March 7** Alden Ketchum  
Mark Trojanowski

**March 14** Ed Neaves  
Glenn Werth

**March 21** Richard Clark  
Gail Henson

**March 28** Frank Oslakovic  
Nick Trojanowski

## Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

**March 4** Frank Oslakovic  
Bill Weems  
Mark Trojanowski  
Colleen Weems

**March 11** Gene Osmanski  
Gail Henson  
Mary Slepiski

**March 18** Richard Clark  
Ed Neaves  
Christina Trojanowski  
Dory Moeller

**March 25** Alden Ketchum  
Al Skopec  
Andrea Skopec

## Lay Readers 9:00 AM Sunday

**February 4** Anna Bocklage

**February 11** Gene Osmanski

**February 18** Alma Rissky

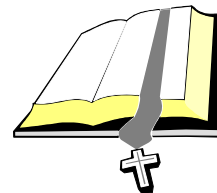
**February 25** Ed Neaves

**March 4** Bill Weems

**March 11** Debbie Hochgesang

**March 18** Mark Trojanowski

**March 25** Alma Rissky



# Pastor's Corner

*“Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.”*

Psalm 51:10

## Preparation...

Lent is one part of the Church season where we intentionally prepare ourselves for the blessed celebration of Christ’s resurrection on Easter morning. This Lenten preparation begins on Ash Wednesday and extends to the 40th weekday (skipping Sundays) before Easter. The word “Lent” in Old English is *lencten* meaning “spring” and in Latin is *Quadragesima* meaning 40 – thus the 40 days of Lent. This 40-day period of repentance and renewal is a time of prayer, fasting, self-denial, and other penitential practices. In worship during Lent, liturgical omissions are implemented when the “alleluias” are discontinued and the Gloria in Excelsis is not sung until Easter morning.

## Observance...

The modern 40-day observance of Lent is the product of a long development in the history of the Church. In fact, the observance of Lent is as old as the 4th century. In Eastern churches, it is calculated as the six weeks before Palm Sunday. In the West, the penitential season begins liturgically with *Septuagesima*, the ninth Sunday before Easter; the next Sundays are *Sexagesima* and *Quinquagesima*. Of the Sundays in Lent, the fifth is Passion Sunday and the last is Palm Sunday, which is the beginning of Holy Week that leads up to Easter.

## Commemoration...

The early Church also observed what is called *the Pascha*, a commemoration of the redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ, including both His sufferings and the glorious resurrection. During the Lenten season, the annual *Pascha* was used as a final preparation for baptismal candidates. They were required to fast and attend classes in Scriptural teachings and the doctrines of the Church. The fast lasted 40 days, reflecting the importance of the 40-day period in various Scriptural accounts. Examinations of the candidates were held, beginning on the third Wednesday of Lent and lasting until Holy Saturday, where at midnight the Lenten season ended.

## Solemnity...

One solid reminder of the Lenten season is the solemnity of Christ’s death and resurrection. During Lent, the somber color purple reminds us of the seriousness of both sin and Christ’s work of overcoming it. Purple is the ancient color of royalty that reminds us that throughout the Lenten season, Jesus remains our humble, heavenly King.

## Intention...

Certainly, throughout history, Christians have been reminded that the intent of Lent is not to dwell on the sufferings of the Savior for the full 40-day period, but rather to prepare oneself for a blessed celebration of His resurrection. The first part of Lent is to prepare believers for the celebration of Easter by calling them to repentance and faith; next is Passiontide, which considers the Scriptural basis for the Savior’s sacrifice; and finally comes Holy Week, which focuses on the suffering Savior. As we look in repentance at our own sinful lives, we also look to Christ’s perfect life and all that He endured in our place. May God grant you a spiritually enlighten Lenten season.

## LENT AND HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR 2007

As always, starting off the 40-day observance of Lent is Ash Wednesday. Pastor Bocklage will be the worship celebrant and preacher for Ash Wednesday, February 21<sup>st</sup> and for the services of Holy Week and Easter.

For the remaining five mid-week Lenten services, other pastors in the Northern Illinois District circuit (Circuit E-20) will again this year take turns leading worship and preaching at Faith while I serve at their respective churches.

### 1) Lenten Mid-week Worship Services at Faith – 7:00 p.m.

*Theme for mid-week services is “The Exoduses of the Scriptures”*

- 02/21/07 – Rev. Stephen Bocklage (Ash Wednesday with Ashes & Holy Communion)
- 02/28/07 – Rev. John Moeller [St. Paul LC]
- 03/07/07 – Rev. William Barthel [St. Peter LC]
- 03/14/07 – Rev. Gary Schmidtke [Grace LC – Willow Springs]
- 03/21/07 – Rev. John Richy [Holy Trinity LC - Burbank]
- 03/28/07 – Rev. Valdas Ausra [Zion LC]

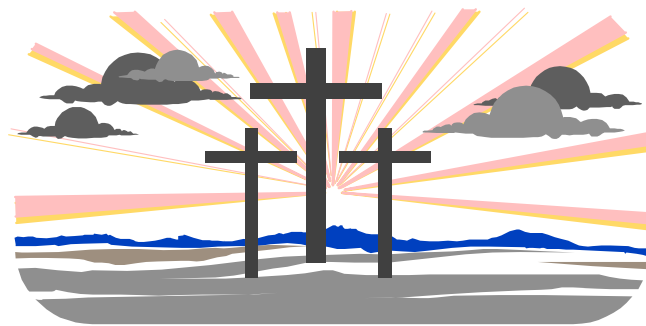
### 2) Pastor Bocklage Presiding and Preaching Lenten Mid-week Worship Services at:

- 02/21/07 – Faith Evangelical LC
- 02/28/07 – Mt. Greenwood LC – Mt. Greenwood
- 03/07/07 – Zion LC
- 03/14/07 – Holy Trinity LC - Burbank
- 03/21/07 – Grace LC – Willow Springs
- 03/28/07 – St. Peter LC

### 3) Holy Week & Easter Services

- 04/01/07 – 9:00 a.m. Palm Sunday (w/ Holy Communion)
- 04/05/07 – 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday (w/ Holy Communion)
- 04/06/07 – 3:00 p.m. Good Friday Day
- 04/06/07 – 7:00 p.m. Good Friday Evening
- 04/08/07 – 7:00 a.m. Easter Sunrise (w/ Holy Communion)
- 04/08/07 – 10:00 a.m. Easter Celebration (w/ Holy Communion)

*(Breakfast provided between the Easter Sunrise & Easter Celebration services)*



# How Does A Christian Family Learn Courage?

(from LCMS Family Ministry)

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1

Christian families like yours and mine are called to stand up to fears, threats and assaults. Sometimes we feel like the early disciples of Jesus. In the book of Matthew (14:22-28) we read that in the first hours of one dark morning they were in a boat out on the Sea of Galilee. A strong wind was blowing. A long way from land, their craft was beaten by the waves, and the wind was against them. To top off the horror they saw a mysterious, terrifying phantom skimming the water, heading straight toward them. They were terrified! How would they survive?

For all of us it takes heart and stubborn durability to overcome the storms, seductions and snares in the deceitful environment that the devil, the work and our sinful nature conspire to create. The question for us is: "How will we learn and then teach our children the courage we and they need?"

The disciples acquired calm and backbone from Jesus Himself. He was the One who approached them from across the turbulent water. He told them simply and clearly: "Take courage." (v.27a) That is, take heart, calm down, be of good cheer. "It is I. Don't be afraid." (v. 27b)

Jesus reaffirmed that He is God. He is God's Word in human flesh and blood. In Him all power in heaven and on earth is embodied. He is the great Reconciler. Through His cross-won forgiveness He unites His Father and all of us in peaceful, intimate companionship. Through faith in Him, we become able to pursue His mission for us. He empowers us.

Our children will be bolstered to act with courage when we lead them to join us humbly and penitently to:

- Openly confess our fears, our feelings of helplessness in trying circumstances and our apprehensions about the future.
- From the heart, without shame, disclose our willing dependence on God's grace and pardon, the washing or renewal in Holy Baptism and the energy of God's Spirit received in Holy Communion to improve our decisions and behavior.
- Be honest and truthful, even under duress and tension.
- Forgive in love anyone who deliberately mistreats and upsets us.
- Ask forgiveness from those whom we fail or disappoint.
- Boldly, but patiently, challenge a person or group when they violate God's purposes for His people.
- Trust God's full care in time of danger.
- Risk offering help to someone when we both are threatened by the same perils.
- Defend someone being wronged.
- Faithfully stick with it when pressured to give up or pull back from what is right.
- Reveal emotional stability, resisting selfish and misguided impulses.

*Here's the key: Take the courage Jesus offers. **He is our Refuge and Strength. Don't be afraid!***

## Why Family Ministry?

(The Rev. Jeffery S. Schubert serves as Executive Director of District and Congregational Services for the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. Pastor Schubert penned the opening chapter of Family Ministry Basics. He titled it "Why Family Ministry" and then unpacked his answer to this core question in the following eight helpful components.)

+ Where we come from, sometimes called "the family of origin," often shapes who we become through the years. "The apple falls close to the tree." "Like mother, like daughter; like father, like son."

+ Our family of origin influences our entire life. What we value, believe and fashion interest in, as well as the styles in which we communicate and show emotions with one another grow out of the roots implanted in our early years. Family traditions impact us long term.

+ Only by the grace of God as we nourish the "basic building block of society - the family" will we create healthier local churches, villages, urban areas, states and nations. Pastor Schubert recalls Martin Luther's soaring view of Christian parents, "Most certainly father and mother are apostles, bishops and priests to their children, for it is they who make them acquainted with the Gospel. In short, there is no greater or nobler authority on earth than that of parents over their children, for this authority is both spiritual and temporal." (Luther's Works 45:46)

+ God calls us to serve one another. That means people in every household, including all of us who have missed the mark of God's design for marriage and family, namely that we live together as husband and wife in a life-long relationship, bringing up our children in His nurture and discipline. An empty debate over the definition of "family" distracts us from Christ's mission in, with and through family members.

+ All families are under attack from demonic forces which deceive and destroy. We have reason to be troubled that homes in each Christian parish are being splintered in distressing numbers. But, this is no time to relax our efforts or merely publicly decry family collapses. This is God's moment for us to multiply the ministries that bolster the members of each household with which we are acquainted with the power of the love and forgiveness of Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

+ Jesus, our Redeemer, rescues, befriends, helps and emboldens us. He gathers His church and invites every cluster of believers to follow His lead. He came, not to be served but to serve and to offer His life as a ransom for many." He welcomes all people, whatever their family setting, penitently to know and trust Him, learning to live confidently by His healing and enabling competence.

The role of the Christian congregation is to "equip, train and strengthen parents to be the primary agents in the faith formation of their children," Pastor Schubert reminds us. Church and home are loving and cooperative partners in the Gospel.

+ Where and how to begin? Sometimes family crises are opportunities for spiritual growth. More routinely, congregations can provide educational, enriching and training activities for family members at each new level of their spiritual lives. We can begin with goals which are specific, realistic and achievable. We can sponsor learning experiences that are both challenging and fun.

In conclusion, Pastor Schubert emphasizes that God does not call us to practice amateur family counseling or conduct experiments in popular psychology. We are Christ's people, students and broadcasters of His saving Word, set aside by our baptisms "to faithfully proclaim Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, who alone can bring forgiveness and life to all families everywhere, by God's unfathomable mercy and grace, through the gift of faith."



## Men in Ministry

by Karen Kogler

(from the Northern Illinois District's "*Sparks*" 10-18-06 newsletter)

Statistics support what is easily noticed in most congregations: women outnumber men in Christian churches. The low ratio of men to women is often even greater when measuring people involved in ministry. One local congregation is changing the numbers a bit through outreach ministries using skills and activities commonly enjoyed by men.

The Oil Change ministry at Cross Lutheran Church, Yorkville, Illinois, is headed by Harry Rothaug. Harry and his volunteers provide free oil changes to people in need. Twice a year, they spend half a day changing the oil, checking fluid levels and tires, and in general giving cars a good looking-over.

"They're very grateful," Harry says of the people whose cars are serviced. The customers, single mothers and others with financial hardship, hear of the service through the county welfare office and through the church office. "We're often asked what organization we belong to," Harry continues. He tells them about their church and invites them to visit if they don't have a church home. "I don't push it," he says. "People don't like that. This is just a first step."

The owner of the service garage plays a key role by providing a place for the volunteers to work. If the guys notice that the car needs additional work, the owner often includes a discount in his estimate to the customer. The customers also seem to appreciate knowing an honest repairman. "It's hard to find someone you can trust," they often tell Harry.

Although most of us no longer change the oil in our own vehicles, it's a task still enjoyed by many, particularly men. Harry has no trouble finding volunteers. "Lots of people are willing to help out," he says. Four volunteers work the half day. Working in teams of two, they service two cars every half hour. "The guys enjoy it," he says. He realizes it may be a first step for them, too. "It's something to do that they might not have done before. They also enjoy meeting other guys within the church."

"It's nice to do something for people in need," Harry says simply. His advice for others who might feel moved to start or join a similar ministry: "If you feel in your heart to do it, do it. Don't wait for someone else to do it for you."

When Harry and his crews are doing an oil change, they often tell people about Cross's Handyman Ministry, another outreach to people with needs. Paul Mueller, who coordinates the Handyman Ministry, and the 28 involved volunteers are looking for people to help. "People, especially the elderly, don't want to call us. They think they're bothering us. But they're not. This is what we want to do."

They patch a leaking roof, replace a broken faucet, or repair a railing. They might replace a broken window or make an electrical repair. Most often, they're helping the elderly or single mothers. Their work is free. If people wish to make a donation, it's put into a fund for those people who can't afford to buy needed parts.

The volunteers on Paul's list have specified their areas of skill: plumbing, electrical, carpentry, etc. Some of the volunteers are in the trades; some simply enjoy do-it-yourself projects. Most are men, but 3 or 4 women are among the workers.

Karen Hardecopf, Director of Care Ministries at Cross Lutheran, and Lisa Dickey, Director of Loving Arms Childcare Center located on Cross's North Campus in Oswego, refer people to the Handyman Ministry when they learn of a need. When someone calls Paul, he calls a volunteer with skills that match the need. The volunteer then calls the individual and makes arrangements to survey the problem and to fix it. "We've helped probably 50 or more since we started 3 or 4 years ago," Paul says. "Most are very appreciative."

Paul notes that the elderly who need their services are often lonely, and appreciate the human contact as much or more than they do the repair service. He recalls one volunteer, who, after making a repair for an elderly person, returned other times, and commented to Paul how much he enjoyed the relationship. "He's a quiet guy," Paul says of the volunteer; that relationship "helped him open up a bit."

From her staff perspective and her involvement in care ministries, Karen Hardecopf sees even more of the connections that result from these ministries. She tells of "a long-haired young man" who helped install a ramp for an elderly couple. The ensuing friendship continued through the death of the elderly man and the marriage of the young man. The elderly woman "was a godly woman and I can only imagine how God used her mature faith to help this young man through some struggles in his life."

Karen relates another story. "Just this last month, I referred someone in the community to the Handyman Ministry. She left me a voice mail as soon as the man walked out the door. She was crying and thanking us, not only for the plumbing repair, but for the kind words of the man who came into her apartment. She asked if she couldn't do something for Cross, even though she has some disabilities. Part of serving others is giving people the same opportunity to be blessed by serving. So I took her something that she could do from her home, some postcards. The man who went to her apartment was blessed, she was blessed by his service, and she was blessed by serving through working on the postcards."

"It's a neat thing," Paul says, "to take the ability God gave you and to be able to go out and use it to help someone," confirming that men, too, want to use their abilities to serve.

*From Martin Luther's Small Catechism*  
Daily Prayers

*HOW THE HEAD OF THE HOUSE IS TO TEACH THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD TO SAY MORNING AND EVENING BLESSINGS*

### **The Morning Prayer**

*In the morning, as soon as you get out of bed, you are to make the sign of the holy cross and say:*

“God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit watch over me. Amen.”

Then, kneeling or standing, say the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. If you wish, you may in addition recite this little prayer as well:

“I give thanks to you, my heavenly Father through Jesus Christ your dear Son, that you have protected me this night from all harm and danger, and I ask you that you would also protect me today from sin and all evil, so that my life and actions may please you completely. For into your hands I commend myself: my body, my soul, and all that is mine. Let your holy angel be with me, so that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.”

*After singing a hymn perhaps (for example, one on the Ten Commandments) or whatever else may serve your devotion, you are to go to your work joyfully.*

### **The Evening Prayer**

*In the evening, when you go to bed, you are to make the sign of the holy cross and say:*

“God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit watch over me. Amen.”

Then, kneeling or standing, say the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. If you wish, you may in addition recite this little prayer as well:

“I give thanks to you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ your dear Son, that you have graciously protected me today, and I ask you to forgive me all my sins, where I have done wrong, and graciously to protect me tonight. For into your hands I commend myself: my body, my soul, and all that is mine. Let your holy angel be with me, so that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.”

Then you are to go to sleep quickly and cheerfully.

*HOW THE HEAD OF THE HOUSE IS TO TEACH MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD  
TO OFFER BLESSING AND THANKSGIVING AT MEALS*

### **The Table Blessing**

The children and the members of the household are to come devoutly to the table, fold their hands, and recite:

“The eyes of all wait upon you, O LORD, and you give them their food at the proper time. You open your hand and satisfy all living things with delight.” (*Ps. 145:15-16*)

(Comment: “Delight” means that all animals receive enough to eat to make them joyful and of good cheer, because worry and greed prevent such delight.)

Then they are to recite the Lord's Prayer and the following prayer:

“LORD God, heavenly Father, bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bountiful goodness through Jesus Christ our LORD. Amen.”

### **Thanksgiving**

Similarly, after eating they should in the same manner fold their hands and recite devoutly:

“O give thanks to the LORD, for he is gracious and his goodness endures forever. He gives food to all flesh. He gives food to the cattle and to the young ravens that cry to him. He takes no pleasure in the power of the horse, nor is he pleased with human strength. The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him and wait for his goodness.” (*Ps. 136:1, 25; 147:9-11*)

Then recite the Lord's Prayer and the following prayer:

“We give thanks to you, LORD God our Father, through Jesus Christ our LORD for all your benefits, you who live and reign forever. Amen.”<sup>1</sup>

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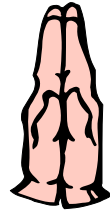
<sup>1</sup>Kolb, R. 2000. *The Book of Concord : The confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Fortress Press: Minneapolis

# Prayer Ideas for Families

(from LCMS Family Ministry)

## **Prayer Wallet**

Items you will need: A small wallet with picture insert and pictures of people in a child's life. Something as simple as a wallet and pictures can be useful tools to teach and encourage children to pray. Choose an attractive small wallet that children can carry around with them regularly (make sure it has an insert to hold pictures.) Fill the insert with pictures of family, friends, things the child is thankful for, and much more. Teach the child to pray for the people/things he/she sees in the picture - thanking God for the people he/she loves, giving thanks for the things he/she enjoys, praying for safety for family and friends, etc. As you are driving in the car, taking a walk, going to a place they enjoy, you can talk to the child about who/what is in the wallet and take turns saying prayers (or repeating prayers).



## **Prayer Shower**

This can be used in addition to or in place of a traditional wedding, baby, or home shower. Invite people to a Prayer Shower. In the invitation, assign each person a day or a week and instruct them to bathe the person/family with prayer. Ask that on their day or week, they send a gift signifying prayer or faith in Jesus (ex: For a baby "prayer" shower, the individual may send a children's Bible, framed scripture, a prayer blanket, etc.).

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