

FAITH NEWSLETTER

April 2015 / May 2015



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Seventy-five years ago, on April 12, 1940, Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church was officially established. On that day, Eleanor Roosevelt wrote these words:

“No one can think of anything but the war news, and even when people do not speak about it, you soon find that it is the one thing they are thinking about. No wonder, for what is a world going to be like which is ruled entirely by force? All the concepts of right and wrong we have been building up will cease to have any value, if force is to be the determining factor in every situation.”

The United States was not yet technically at war when she penned these words, but eventually Eleanor’s husband led our country to put our ideals of freedom and democracy into action, to defend our country, and to put an end to tyranny and oppression. The world would look very different today if the United States had remained on the sidelines of World War 2.

The founders of our church also chose to put their faith into action. They saw a neighborhood without a place to worship God. They chose to build a church, to evangelize the neighborhood, and to faithfully bring their families to God’s house week after week. I can’t imagine how difficult those first few years must have been. They could have sat on the sidelines and hope that others would do the work for them, but instead they chose to join the action and to struggle against our enemies: Satan, the world, and our sinful flesh. The community of Oak Lawn would look very different if those who founded our church had remained on the sidelines.

Every week you have a choice to make. God’s enemies are still alive and active in our world. Will you live out your faith, will you join the action, or will you sit on the sidelines? Do you believe that our community is a better place with our congregation here? I hope and pray that our congregation will stay vibrant and active for many more years to come, but that won’t happen unless you decide that what we have here is worth fighting for.

The good news is that we don’t do the church’s work on our own. Jesus works in and through us. He fills us with His Holy Spirit as we hear His Word. He unites Himself to us with His body and blood at the Lord’s Supper. Anything good that we have done or will do as a congregation is because of Jesus Christ.

Five years to the day after Eleanor Roosevelt wrote those words, her husband died. He had led the nation through most of the war, but passed away less than a month from V-E Day, and less than a year from V-J Day.

We may not live to see the fruits of our labors here in our congregation. We may struggle against the enemies of the church all of our life, and at times we may fear that the war will be lost. But we know, in the end, that God will have the victory, and that life will win over death, just as it did that first Easter, when Jesus rose triumphant from the grave.

In His Name,

Pastor Birkholz

In and Around Faith Church

Holy Week Services

Maundy Thursday, April 2nd 7:00 PM

The journey to the cross begins with the Upper Room and the Last Supper. Jesus humbles Himself to serve you, feeding you with His body and blood. The service begins with corporate confession and forgiveness, and ends with the stripping of the altar as Psalm 22 is sung.

Good Friday Chief Service, April 3rd 3:00 PM

We gather in silence to meditate upon the suffering and death of Jesus for our sake. The chief service includes the passion account from St. John's Gospel along with the singing of "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded." We pray responsively the bidding prayer for all the needs of our world and our community. Near the end of the service the cross is returned to the sanctuary as the reproaches are read. The service concludes in darkness.

Good Friday- Tenebrae Vespers, April 3rd 7:00 PM

This is the service of darkness; as we sing and listen and pray, candles are extinguished and the sanctuary is darkened. This service also includes the singing of the song of Habakkuk, which is the source of the placards in the front of our church, "God is in His temple, let all the earth be silent before Him." We will hear the seventh and final word of Jesus, "Father, into Your hands I commend My Spirit."

Easter Vigil, April 4th 7:00 PM

This service begins as the last ended, in darkness and candlelight. We start outside with a new fire and a new paschal candle. We proceed into the sanctuary to listen to the ancient stories of faith from the Old Testament. We pray the litany and remember our baptism with water from the font. Finally the alleluias return and we begin our celebration of the resurrection of our Lord by receiving His risen body and blood in the Lord's Supper.

Easter Sunday, April 5th 9:00 AM

We join together in celebrating our Lord's victory over the death and the grave with music and flowers and all the signs of new life. He brings us together, not in fear or trembling, but in joy and confidence that because He is risen, we, too, will rise from the dead.

Anniversary Celebration Service, April 12th 3:00 PM

We give thanks to the Lord for 75 years of His blessing as His people. Our guest preacher will be the Rev. William Weedon, the Director of Worship for The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. We will have special music from the Concordia University Chicago Brass Quintet, Faith's Choir, and Faith's new Children's Choir. We'll be joined by many former members and friends of the congregation, as well as several area pastors. Don't miss out on this opportunity to give glory and praise to our gracious Lord.

Commemorative 75th Anniversary Book

A hard cover book about Faith Church from its beginnings to the present is available. Mostly through pictures it tells a story of the church, its members and organizations. The book will be on display at Easter, at the anniversary banquet and at Sunday services. The cost is \$20.00. If you haven't done so already, please take a look at it and consider purchasing a copy.

VBS: June 15th - 19th

Save the dates for this year's VBS. We'll be looking for helpers and teachers as well as kids to come and learn about Jesus. Amberleigh Birkholz will be the director again this year, and Carl Lisius will be leading the music. Please start thinking about who you will invite to join us this year.

Watch for information on plans for a new Pictorial Directory!

Schedule of April / May 2015 Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>April Event</u>
2	7:00 PM	Maundy Thursday Worship / Communion
3	3:00 PM 7:00 PM	Good Friday Worship Good Friday Eve Worship
4	9:00 AM 7:00 PM	Food Pantry Distribution Easter Vigil
5	8:00 AM 9:00 AM	Easter Breakfast Easter Sunday Worship / Communion
12	9:00 AM 10:15 AM 10:30 AM 3:00 PM 5:00 PM	Worship / Communion Sunday School Adult Bible Class 75 th Anniversary Worship / Communion 75 th Anniversary Banquet
18	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
19	9:00 AM 10:15 AM 10:30 AM	Worship / Communion Sunday School Adult Bible Class
26	9:00 AM 10:15 AM 10:30 AM	Worship / Communion Sunday School Adult Bible Class

Weekly Meetings

Bible Study	Fri. - 11:00 AM
Confirmation Class	Fri. - 4:30 PM
AA Groups	Mon-Wed-Fri - 6:00 PM
	Sat. - 8:00 AM
Alanon	Tue. - 7:30 PM

Ladies Aid

Our April meeting will be changed to Thursday, April 9th at 6:00 PM in the Parish Hall. All ladies are invited to join us. We ask for a \$5.00 donation once a year. May 7th is our meeting and Ice Cream Social at 6:30 PM.

Beginning at 9:00 AM and ending at 2:00 PM on May 2nd, our annual Bake and Rummage sale will be in the church basement. Volunteers are welcome to help us set up on Thurs. and Fri. as well as on Sat. Donations of used items and baked goods are needed.

Blessings of Easter to you and your family.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>May Event</u>
2	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
3	9:00 AM 10:15 AM 10:30 AM	Worship / Communion Sunday School Congregation Meeting
10	9:00 AM 10:15 AM 10:30 AM	Worship / Communion Sunday School Adult Bible Class
16	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
17	9:00 AM 10:15 AM 10:30 AM	Worship / Communion Sunday School Adult Bible Class
24	9:00 AM 10:15 AM 10:30 AM	Worship / Communion Sunday School Adult Bible Class
31	9:00 AM 10:15 AM 10:30 AM	Worship / Communion Sunday School Adult Bible Class

Easter Hymn of the Month

“Water, Blood, and Spirit Crying” (# 597)

This is one of my favorite hymns in our new hymnal. I love both the bold minor key melody and the poetic wordsmithing of Pastor Stephen Starke. The title of the hymn, as well as the first and last verse are inspired from 1 John 5:6, which reads, “This is he who came by water and blood - Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and blood - Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.” This is a hymn about the journey from death to life, which begins in us at our baptism. There is Old Testament imagery from Noah’s Ark and Psalm 23, as well as the picture of the Word of God as the Sword of the Spirit from Hebrews 4:12.

Easter Breakfast April 4th 9:00 AM

Join us for breakfast as we give thanks to the Lord for His resurrection. The youth group will serve and make pancakes, and the Stegmann family will provide ham. Please bring a dish to share, and invite your family and friends to join us.

April / May Elders, Ushers & Lay Readers

April Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

- Apr. 5** Alden Ketchum
Ed Neaves
Gail Henson
Howard Johnson
- Apr. 12** Richard Clark
Frank Oslakovic
Ray Bennet
Mark Trojanowski
- Apr. 19** Richard Clark
Alden Ketchum
Valerie Conrad
Brianna Osterloh
- Apr. 26** Ed Neaves
Frank Oslakovic
Mark Trojanowski
Nick Trojanowski

Holy Week 9:00 AM Sunday

- Apr. 2** Alden Ketchum
Ed Neaves
Howard Johnson
Eric Rosenbrock
- Apr. 3** **3:00**
Richard Clark
Howard Johnson
- 7:00 PM**
Ed Neaves
Frank Oslakovic
- Apr. 4** Richard Clark
Ed Neaves
Katie Kampenga
Mike Kampenga
- Apr. 12** **3:00**
Alden Ketchum
Ed Neaves
Ray Bennet
Valerie Conrad
Katie Kampenga
Mike Kampenga
Brianna Osterloh
Eric Rosenbrock

May Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

- May 3** Richard Clark
Gene Osmanski
Marilyn Diehl
Eleonore Lang
- May 10** Richard Clark
Ed Neaves
Ray Bennet
Howard Johnson
- May 17** Alden Ketchum
Frank Oslakovic
Eric Rosenbrock
Mark Trojanowski
- May 24** Richard Clark
Gene Osmanski
Katie Kampenga
Mike Kampenga
- May 31** Richard Clark
Ed Neaves
Valerie Conrad
Brianna Osterloh

Lay Readers

- Apr. 5** Ed Neaves
- Apr. 12** Mike Kampenga
- Apr. 19** Gene Osmanski
- Apr. 26** Mark Trojanowski
- May 3** Ray Bennett
- May 10** Debbie Hochgesang
- May 17** Nick Trojanowski
- May 24** Katie Kampenga
- May 31** Ray Bennett

Fund Raiser

Madison is a 10 year old stricken with Moya Moya (a rare brain disease that causes strokes). She is uncommunicative and needs a feeding tube. Sat. May 9th at Bourbon St. in Merriquette Park from 3 PM – 8 PM, her friends are holding a fund raiser to help with her medical expenses. If you can help or want to attend please contact Valerie Conrad at Home # 708-634-3695 or Cell # 708-738-9988.

Word and the Wort

Our joint men's Bible Study with St. Paul, Oak Lawn continues meeting on the first Monday of each month. We've begun a look at the history of the church in preparation for the celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. On April 6 Pastor Matthew Zickler will lead a discussion of Augustine and his influence on Luther and the Reformation. In May, we will turn towards the medieval period, taking a look at the rise of monasticism, scholasticism (Thomas Aquinas), and mysticism in the time leading up to the Reformation. As always, we will be brewing and sampling a number of craft beers and enjoying the fellowship of our brothers in Christ.