

FAITH NEWSLETTER

April / May 2007



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The weather is starting to warm. The days are getting a little longer. Daylight savings time has gone into effect. And the wind continues to blow...and blow...and blow. I've heard it said that the reason Chicago is called "the windy city" had something to do with Chicago politicians but I'm convinced it is for weather reasons. I say that because the winds of Chicago continue to show me the wonder of God's creation.

As I think of the winds of Chicago, I remember the words of our Lord: ***"The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."*** (John 3:8) This comes in the midst of Jesus' discourse with Nicodemus. In Acts 2, another wind event was on Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came mightily upon the believers in Jerusalem and the Christian Church burst onto the scene. No one can control the wind. Neither can anyone control the Holy Spirit. He works as He wills in the hearts of people – igniting the flame of faith in their hearts as well as keeping the fire of faith burning brightly within the heart of believers.

Since I started presiding and preaching in worship as your pastor in October 2005, a peculiar thing has happened with worship attendance. Worship patterns have not improved. In fact, worship attendance overall has declined in the last few years. I have pondered this and asked myself why. And the only reason I can come up with is that I have approached the whole thing wrong. Instead of encouraging you to become faithful in your worship attendance, I should have been praying for the wind of the Spirit to blow through our congregation and fan into flames that faith which is within each of us. I think of Paul's words to young Pastor Timothy, ***"For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you...."*** (2 Tim. 1:6)

There are two things I want to lay before each member of Faith. The first is that I want to apologize to you. As your pastor and spiritual leader, I feel like Nicodemus. The truth of God's Word was right in front of me and yet, I was not listening to it. I was using the Law to try to push you in your spiritual lives and it doesn't work. I am sorry for that and ask your forgiveness.

Second is that I am praying that the power of the Holy Spirit would come upon all of us in the congregation, beginning with me (No I am not becoming a raging charismatic or spiritualist. I am still a confessional Lutheran). I pray that the Holy Spirit would revive each of us in our desire to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the Word of God. I pray that the Spirit would fan into flames that fire of faith that has begun to smolder inside each of us. I would also ask you to pray for your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ so that they might become filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. As the wind of change moves through our congregation, we pray that the Lord will do mighty and wonderful things with us as His people.

My friends, by the power of the Holy Spirit, continue praying, reading the Word of God, and worshipping together. Gracious Lord, may the fire begin with me and may the excitement of God-given faith be renewed in our hearts.

Your humbled Spirit-filled servant,

Pastor Steve Bocklage

In and Around Faith Church

LWML

Our next activity will be the Spring Rally on April 14th. Faith Church will be hosting this event and all of our ladies of Faith are invited. A silent auction is on the program. Registration is at 8:30 AM with a breakfast at 9:00 AM. The meeting starts at 9:30 AM and will feature a speaker.

Our next project will be making "Welcome Home" packages for the Katrina families that will be moving into their repaired homes. More information will be coming.

Grace Scott

Faith Ladies Aid

A big thank you to all those who helped make our Rummage Sale a huge success. We use the profits to help out with various projects for our church. We truly have a dedicated group of hard working ladies. Your endeavors are truly appreciated.

Please note the following date changes!

Our April meeting will be on Thursday April 12th at 7:00 PM. Thursday May 3rd will be our ice cream social at 7:00 PM. Looking ahead, our June meeting will be June 7th at 6:30 PM. This is our pizza night.

Ladies! There is always a chair waiting for you at our meetings. You are always welcome to join us for great fun loving Christian fellowship. May the risen Lord bring joy into your lives!

Kathleen Nowak
Membership Chairman

Faith Seniors

Our seniors have decided to go on hiatus. When more people become interested we will most certainly start up again.

Grace Scott

Notable Quotes by C.F.W. Walther

(founder and first president of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod)

On Pure Doctrine

"We, who possess the pure Gospel and the genuine Sacraments, certainly have a great advantage over those who, perhaps from their youth, were victimized by false preaching. But let us not think that our membership in the orthodox Church and our adherence to the pure doctrine will be sufficient for us. To whom much is given, from him much will be demanded. The purer our doctrine, the more firmly we must cling to it and the more carefully we must guard against the invasion of false doctrine. The richer the comfort we receive from the Gospel, the more faithful we must be in the faith. The more numerous the spiritual blessings we receive from God, the more fervent must be our love and the works in which we demonstrate our gratitude. If we walk as children of the kingdom and not as children of this world, we are blessed, for them we will not be cast out. Instead, we will be taken into the kingdom of eternal glory."

From: "God Grant It" - CPH: 2006, p. 150.

On Christ In Us

"Christ wants to cover our sins, but He also wants to take them away. He wants to clothe us with His righteousness, but He also wants to take shape in us, to be the High Priest who reconciles us with God, and to the King who rules over and in us. He suffered and died to atone for our sins, but He also rose and ascended into heaven that He might live in us and we in Him and so we might walk in a new life. For this reason, "No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen Him or known Him...The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil."" (1 John 3:6,8).

"Therefore, whoever has trusted in a Christ who would allow him to remain in his sins yet to come into heaven without repentance, without conversion, without sanctification and without self-denial needs to know that there is no such Christ. His Christ is a false Christ, who will not rescue him from death, damnation, and judgment, but will forsake him in the greatest distress. Whoever wants the right Christ must turn to Him whom God made our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. With Him there is salvation. He helps against sin, trouble, and death. To Him be praise and glory in eternity."

From: "God Grant It" (CPH: 2006), p. 889.

Schedule of April / May 2007 Events

Date	Time	April Event
1	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
	11:30 AM	7 th & 8 th Gr. Confirmation
5	7:00 PM	Maundy Thursday Worship / Communion
6	3:00 PM	Good Friday Worship
	7:00 PM	Good Friday Worship
7	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
8	7:00 AM	Easter Sunday Worship / Communion
	8:15 AM	Easter Breakfast
	10:00 AM	Worship / Communion
15	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
	11:30 AM	7 th & 8 th Gr. Confirmation
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
	11:30 AM	7 th & 8 th Gr. Confirmation
29	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
	11:30 AM	7 th & 8 th Gr. Confirmation

Church Picnic

Once again plans are set for our annual church picnic. We will be meeting at the Wolfe Wildlife Refuge at 109th and Laramie on **June 10th**. Please make plans to join us.

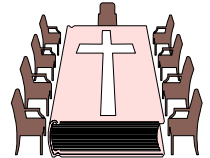
There will be a regular worship service at church at 9:00 AM and an abbreviated worship service at the picnic starting at 11:00 AM.

Hot dogs and soda will be provided but we ask that you bring a dish for the common table. Also you may choose to bring a \$5.00 wrapped item for the bingo prizes.

Date	Time	May Event
5	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
6	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
	11:30 AM	7 th & 8 th Gr. Confirmation
13	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
	11:30 AM	7 th & 8 th Gr. Confirmation
19	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
20	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School (Last Day)
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
	11:30 AM	7 th & 8 th Gr. Confirmation
27	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
	11:30 AM	7 th & 8 th Gr. Confirmation

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 th Gr. Confirmation	Tu - 7:00 PM
Ladies Aid	(First) - Th. - 7:00 PM



April / May Elders, Ushers & Lay Readers

Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

April 1 Frank Oslakovic
Bill Weems
Gail Henson
Mary Slepski

April 8 **7:00 AM**
Richard Clark
Alden Ketchum
Christina Trojanowski
Elise Trojanowski

10:00 AM
Gene Osmanski
Ed Neaves
Glenn Werth
Dory Moeller

April 15 Bill Weems
Frank Oslakovic
Colleen Weems
Mark Trojanowski

April 22 Richard Clark
Howard Johnson
Bob Stegman

April 29 Ed Neaves
Alden Ketchum
Al Skopec
Andrea Skopec

Lent Worship

April 5 Maundy Thursday 7:00PM

Bill Weems
Ed Neaves
Nick Trojanowski
Mark Trojanowski

April 6 Good Friday 3:00 PM

Alden Ketchum
Glenn Werth

Good Friday 7:00 PM

Frank Oslakovic
Richard Clark

Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

May 6 Gene Osmanski
Bill Weems
Gail Henson
Mary Slepski

May 13 Frank Oslakovic
Nick Trojanowski
Glenn Werth

May 20 Ed Neaves
Richard Clark
Al Skopec
Andrea Skopec

May 27 Alden Ketchum
Elise Trojanowski
Christina Trojanowski

Lay Readers 9:00 AM Sunday

April 1 Anna Bocklage

April 8 Christina Trojanowski (7:00)
Gene Osmanski (10:00)

April 15 Alma Rissky

April 22 Debbie Hochgesang

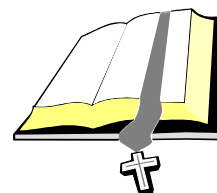
April 29 Ed Neaves

May 6 Bill Weems

May 13 Nick Trojanowski

May 20 Mark Trojanowski

May 27 Christina Trojanowski



Pastor's Corner

Christian stewardship is 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.

God's Stewards Are God's Stewards

God's stewards are stewards by virtue of creation and re-creation in Holy Baptism. Therefore, they belong to the Lord. When you first hear the words of this principle you may think it's just another example of double-talk. But it's not. Rather it is the articulation of the foundational principle that God is the Creator of all things and that He has redeemed, or re-created, us in Holy Baptism. Stewardship is, as a Lutheran leader long ago said, "everything I do after I say I believe." Therefore, stewards do not "belong" to the congregation. Stewards "belong" to God and, as they mature, they seek out God's will for their stewardship attitudes and practices. They have a right to know what God is up to in this world and to support that work with their time, talents and resources as the Spirit leads them.

Building the Foundation

We build the foundation of our first principle on what Scripture teaches us. Do not move too quickly through this principle, its meaning and supporting passages. Take time to ponder what each verse is telling you and what that means to your life. **Genesis 1:1** underscores the basic truth that God created all things, visible and invisible, and thus He is the rightful Owner of all things. If we do not have this basic principle of "ownership" in the proper perspective, then we are tempted to believe that all the things we surround ourselves with are ours to do with as we please. **Isaiah 43:1** affirms that God is our Creator and Redeemer. He loves us so much that He knows us by name and cares about how we live our lives. St. Paul confirms this truth when he writes in **1 Corinthians 6: 19-20**: *"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."*

A New Creation In Christ

The classic passage explaining our connection in baptism to the death and resurrection of Jesus is **Romans 6:4**. The Holy Spirit who lives within us after baptism enables us to do those things pleasing to God. In baptism we have been "resurrected" to live new lives, mindful of God at work in our lives and the mercy and power we receive from Him. Thank God for the refreshing and renewing waters of baptism and the marvelous change it makes in our daily lives! Likewise, the words of **2 Corinthians 5:16-17** states clearly that we are new creations in Christ. We are no longer content to live according to our own sinful natures or according to the will and ways of the world. In **Colossians 3:1-4**, we set our minds on those things, which are above, where Christ is seated. By our baptisms we have been transformed as St. Paul speaks about in **Romans 12: 1-8**. Spend some time reflecting on what it means to be a new creation in Christ!

"What Shall I Do, Lord?"

Ephesians 2:8-10 eloquently states the truth that we are God's workmanship and this is all a matter of grace. It is so comforting to know that our salvation does not depend upon our works. If it did, we would never have the assurance that we have done enough. Make sure you spend some time reflecting on **verse 10**. We Christians have not just been "saved from" but we have also been "saved for," that is, saved for doing good works that honor God and bless others. In **Acts 22:10**, Paul asked of Jesus: *"What shall I do, Lord"* This question is not only a good question, but it is a good stewardship question. Remember that Christian stewardship deals with all of life and managing life's resources given by God for God's purposes. Remember that maturing stewards do the right things for the right reasons and strive for excellence in all they do!

From Martin Luther's Small Catechism

Table of Duties

***THE HOUSEHOLD CHART OF SOME BIBLE PASSAGES
FOR ALL KINDS OF HOLY ORDERS AND WALKS OF LIFE,
THROUGH WHICH THEY MAY BE ADMONISHED, AS THROUGH LESSONS
PARTICULARLY PERTINENT TO THEIR OFFICE AND DUTY.***

For Bishops, Pastors, and Preachers

“A bishop is to be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, virtuous, moderate, hospitable, an apt teacher, not a drunkard, not vicious, not involved in dishonorable work, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not stingy, one who manages his own household well, who has obedient and honest children, not a recent convert, who holds to the Word that is certain and can teach, so that he may be strong enough to admonish with saving teaching and to refute those who contradict it.” From [1 Timothy 3:2–4, 6a](#).

Concerning Governing Authorities

“Let everyone be subject to the governing authority. For wherever the governing authority is, it is ordered by God. But whoever resists the governing authority, resists God’s order, and whoever resists will incur judgment, for that authority does not bear the sword in vain. It is God’s handmaid who executes punishment against those who do evil.” From [Romans 13:1–4](#).

For Husbands

“You husbands, live reasonably with your wives and, as co-heirs of the grace of life, give honor to wives as to the [weakest] instrument, so that your prayers may not be hindered.” [1 Peter 3:7](#). “And do not be harsh with them.” [Colossians 3:19](#).

For Wives

“Let wives be subjected to their husbands as to the LORD, as Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him lord. And you have become her daughters, when you do right and are not so fearful.” From [Ephesians 5:22](#); [1 Peter 3:5-6](#).

For Parents

“You fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, lest they become fearful. Instead, bring them up in the discipline and admonition of the LORD.” From [Ephesians 6:4](#).

For Children

“You children, be obedient to your parents in the LORD, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother.’ This is the first commandment that has a promise, namely: ‘that it may go well for you and that you may live long on earth.’ ” From [Ephesians 6:1–3](#).

For Male and Female Servants, Day Laborers, Workers, etc.

“You servants, be obedient to your bodily lords with fear and trembling, with singleness of heart, as to Christ himself; not with service meant only for the eyes, done to please people, but rather as servants of Christ, so that you do the will of God from the heart [with a good will]. Imagine to yourselves that you are serving the LORD and not people, and know that whatever good anyone does, the same will that person receive, whether servant or free.” [Ephesians 6:5-8](#).

For Masters and Mistresses

“You lords, do the same to them, and refrain from making threats, and know that you also have a lord in heaven, and there is no partiality with him.” [Ephesians 6:9](#).

For Young People in General

“You young people, be subject to your elders and in this way show humility. For ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’ Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in his time.” From [1 Peter 5:5–6](#).

For Widows

“She who is a real widow and is left all alone sets her hope on God and remains in prayer day and night; whereas she who lives self-indulgently is dead while alive.” From [1 Timothy 5:5–6](#).

For All in the Community

“Love your neighbor as yourself. In this all the commandments are summarized.” From [Romans 13:9](#).
“And entreat [God] with prayers for all people.” From [1 Timothy 2:1](#).

*Let all their lessons learn with care, So that the household well may fare.*¹

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

This Matter of Repentance

From Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick, President
The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod

Permit me to share a story from my youth that speaks to this matter of repentance.

When I was an eighth-grader in my congregation's Lutheran school, two classmates and I did some things that we later regretted. A prank that we thought was funny ended up causing some grief for our teacher and principal. We had five pizzas and five taxicabs sent to his house at 10 o'clock one night.

The principal called a meeting. He invited us (whom he somehow suspected), our parents, and the pastor. He laid the matter at our parents' feet. Later that night, at home, my father asked me, "What do you know about this?" Quite shaken and afraid of the consequences, I confessed to my role in the prank. Instead of administering corporal punishment, he told me to do something that in my opinion was even worse. He told me to pick up the phone, call the principal, and confess.

Believe me, I didn't want to make that call, but I did. I confessed my involvement in this act of disrespect and repented on the phone. His response was remarkable. After assuring me of his forgiveness, he asked me to meet with him before school the next morning. He was so evangelical and forgiving!

That experience taught me a valuable lesson, one addressed by the psalmist in these words: "Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the LORD'--and you forgave the guilt of my sin." In practical terms that means simply that the response to penitence is forgiveness.

In addition, I also learned the value of a Christian parent confronting a child with his responsibility and just asking in a gentle but clearly parental way, "What do you know about this?" I had a relationship with my father that made it impossible for me not to tell the truth! The Law was at work, but the Gospel prevailed in the end. Dad also forgave me, and I had a fresh start. The same is true in our relationship with our heavenly Father, whose response to our confession of wrongdoing is to forgive the guilt of our sin, because of the redeeming act of Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord.

Hope for the Hurting: A Mission Moment

While in Florida, presenting a workshop, my wife and I stopped in to visit our friends in a nearby retirement village. Supposing that we were interested in purchasing a home there, they had an appointment arranged for us to look at a property, for sale by a man who had recently lost his wife.

Carolyn and I met Ken, the property owner, who showed us around the house. When I asked him what he was going to do if the property sold he broke down in tears. We changed the subject and looked at other parts of the house. In the bedroom were all of his wife's things just as she had left them. He told us that he sleeps on the couch in the front living room because he can't handle even being in this room since she died. More tears. I suddenly realized that this was a mission-moment.

I said: "Ken, I think that I am here to do more than look at your house, to give you some hope and comfort for your future." I asked him, "Are you a Christian?" He said: "Not really." I told him that my wife and I were visiting Florida to present a Lutheran Hour Ministry workshop, teaching people in the church how to share their faith. I asked him if I might share with him what I believe. He said "yes."

"Do you have a Bible in the house?" I asked. He disappeared for a while and brought a Catholic Bible to me. I said, "Ken you need to know what the Bible says about your circumstance of losing a loved one." Amidst conversation, we discovered that he had found his 58-year-old wife slumped over in the car at the grocery store parking lot. She passed away about 6 months ago.

I first read the 23rd Psalm to him; and we talked about it awhile. He shared some things about himself: They were backsliding Catholics. So I reminded him of his confirmation vows and shared about what Jesus said about death in John 14:1-4. Ken said that he believed in God but didn't have a clue about salvation and had put religion far in the background. He remembered about Good Friday so I shared the gospel of grace and forgiveness to a believer and about one of the thieves on the cross and how he received grace.

Ken didn't think he was worthy, so I took him to Luke 15 and shared the story of the Prodigal son and how, after his confession, his father welcomed the prodigal back home and even threw a party for him. "That's how our heavenly Father is waiting to welcome you back into the fold." More discussion followed.

Then I took him to Romans 10:9-10: about confessing with your mouth and believing in your heart, that you will be saved. I asked if he believed that scripture was true. He did. So I asked if he would repeat after me and pray for the Lord Jesus to reveal himself to him as Lord and Savior and be his personal Lord and Savior. Again, he said yes and did pray after me. More tears.

I said that we couldn't do anything about his wife's death, but he could have the assurance of this heaven that Jesus promised us. I encouraged him to read his Bible and get involved in a Bible-believing church. His whole demeanor had changed within a 30-minute period.

My friend living in the village was to pick him up Friday and take him to his church, where they offer counseling to people that are grieving. We keep Ken in our prayers. We also realize that there are many people out there in hopeless situations like Ken with no one to turn to for comfort. We, as the people of God, need to be equipped to share the love-of-Christ with those people as mission-moments occur. May God bless all of us as we endeavor to share our faith with other hurting people!

*Provided by Erwin Kranawetter – Lutheran Hour Ministry presenter of Equipping to Share.
Newburgh, Indiana.*

Thought of the Day

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." Luke 19:10

Researcher George Barna's Observations

Some of the findings that he cited at the end of 2006 are these:

- Large majorities of the public say that their faith is "very important," but only 15 percent of those who go to church said their relationship with God is their top priority in life. On the other hand, pastors on average think that 70 percent of adults in their congregations rank their relationship with God the top priority in their lives.
- "Three out of every four teenagers have engaged in at least one type of psychic or witchcraft-related activity." These activities include using Ouija boards, reading books about witchcraft, and having their fortune told.
- Involvement in house churches is growing. At the same time, four of five house-church participants also maintain a connection with a conventional congregation.
- Most Americans are actively involved in a church youth-group at some time in their teens, but most disengage from "organized religion" in their 20s.
- Most 8-to-12-year-olds would rather be popular than do what is morally right-even though seven of 10 parents say they are effective at developing the spiritual maturity of their children.

Barna says that four themes emerge from last year's research:

- Most adults, and even most teens, see themselves as people of faith, and they have definite **opinions** about religion.
- "American Christians are not as devoted to their faith as they like to believe."
- Measured against Biblical standards, "Americans are spiritually lukewarm."
- Most intriguing, he says, is "the growth of various converging movements of deeply spiritual people who are departing from the conventional forms and communities of faith."

For more information on these findings-and for more research results-go to www.barna.org.

*Some Thoughts on Barna's Findings from
Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod President Dr. Jerry Kieschnick*

"Obviously, we want to believe that the LCMS is above the norm when it comes to such findings. Yet, ongoing Christian education and catechesis tends to be a daunting challenge as we try to help our people advance beyond the 8th-grade level in their understanding of the Christian faith.

We cannot assume that once a child is baptized or confirmed, he or she will be self motivated to continue with Christian education. We must help them apply Scripture to the realities of life's problems. What does the church have to say to and about young people whose lives revolve around iPods and cell phones on the one hand, and poverty and homelessness on the other-and everything in between? Why would they want to come to our churches? What in our churches meets needs that they encounter on a daily basis? How do we help them face temptation?

All these issues are exacerbated by the large number of single-parent homes, as well as by the number of children who grow up largely without parental supervision. At the same time, these kids get pressure from media-television, movies, music-that say to them that nothing is sacred, that anything goes, that basic Christian morality and values are essentially to be scoffed at.

Obviously, many if not all of you are more than well aware of these issues and other related ones faced by people in our world and nation today. Please be encouraged as you seek to reach our youth-and adults-with the application of God's Word in ways that address the issues they are facing in their lives."