

FAITH NEWSLETTER

June 2008 / July 2008

Bid them to come or bring them in?

When was the last time you were a visitor at a church you knew nothing about? When was the last time you attended a church with which you were unfamiliar, and knew no one there? Being in either of these situations can be a good reminder of what it's like to be a visitor at Faith Evangelical.

The following is typical of my experience in going to another church (not necessarily Lutheran) when away from Faith Evangelical. While on vacation, I usually visit a church I know little about. I am alone in a town far away from home. As I drive into the parking lot, my apprehension begins to rise. I wonder if the time of service that I'd noted on the sign at the motel was correct. I sometimes am a bit late, and there seems to be no activity in the parking lot. I have trouble finding a spot. The only ones left are far from the church building. That means I have to walk a long way, making me even later.

In getting out of the car, I wonder if I would be embarrassed not taking my Bible or taking my Bible. As I walk into the church building, I hear music. The worship has already started! There's no one at the outside door, but there is an usher still lingering with a few bulletins in his hand at the entrance to the worship area. I feel awkward and hesitant as I approach him and look for a place where I can sit inconspicuously - toward the back. Since the service has started, the usher doesn't say much to me. He just points to the only seats that are left in the worship area - at the front! As I walk down what seems to be a very long aisle, I feel sure that every eye is upon me, even though they sing the opening hymn. Sitting down in the front pew, I feel like I am on a stage. I fear that I will stand when I am supposed to sit or sit when I am supposed to stand. I am alone in the pew. As the service moves along, I can't help but wonder whether there will come a time in the service where I will be singled out and put on the spot through the announcing of guests. I wonder if I might feel nervous or embarrassed during Holy Communion when I remain seated while everyone else goes forward. It is an anxious time. I'm not sure how much of the sermon I even will hear.

Many of us in the Lutheran church have not been visitors for a long time. Many of us grew up in Lutheran families and have never been in the position of being a first-time visitor, all alone at a Lutheran church. Some of us were visitors, but it was so long ago that we forgot what it was like. We've forgotten how much effort it takes to move across that stained-glass barrier.

Happily, the often-uncomfortable experience of being a first-time visitor can be dramatically changed when someone who belongs to the church brings you with them. It makes a world of difference when someone who knows what they're doing is at your side.

Most new members are very enthusiastic about their church. They love the pastor. They think the worship services are exciting. And they get involved with a number of groups. But before becoming a member they had formed many friendships, mostly with people who, like them, were unchurched. Though they may not realize it, they have - as all friends do with one another - a lot of influence over these people.

To their credit, new members *tell* many people about their new church. They relate their excitement about the congregation. They even *invite* a few friends to come to their church sometime. But they usually don't *bring* anyone to church. In fact, it usually doesn't dawn on them that that would be an important thing to do. This is the situation with a typical member of the Lutheran church.

As I look at Faith Evangelical - keeping in mind some of the above, considering the 'maintenance mentality' that is a drag on any congregation, and noting the potential for ministry here - it is absolutely essential that we *bring* potential visitors to church. This strategy does not exceedingly challenge a visitor's 'comfort zone'. Not at all! By moving away from a strategy of telling and inviting and moving toward one of bringing, we can help visitors over the threshold so they can hear the Gospel unencumbered. You (Mr., Ms., and Mrs.) Faith Evangelical member can personally and directly help out and contribute to the ministry by:

- Moving from a "telling" or "inviting" strategy to a "bringing" one.
- Take a few moments to note the names of unchurched people in your sphere of influence. Pray for them. Look for opportunities to bring them to church.
- If a potential guest feels uncomfortable about meeting you in the church, then offer to meet them outside in the parking lot, and walk in together.
- Invite guests to brunch or lunch after church. Such a time would allow for further fellowship and reinforcement of the worship experience.
- Offer to bring them back the next Sunday. Try to do this for at least four consecutive Sundays even with lunch, if necessary! The second or third time, invite other church members with similar interests to join you for lunch.
- Wear a Name Tag?
- Read the Guest Book - noting the names of recent visitors. Take the initiative in welcoming them to worship.

There can be other efforts at making the unchurched churched at Faith Evangelical (i.e. Friendship Sundays, Life-Style Evangelism programs, et. al.) but start with the above, personally - knowing that your sacrifices will be a little like our Lord's sacrifice in bringing you to King of kings!



PASTOR SIMPSON

In and Around Faith Church

Ordination and Installation

We welcome Pastor Mark Birkholz to our Family of Faith. On Sunday July 20th at 3:00 PM he will be ordained and installed as the Pastor of Faith Church. Following the service we will have a buffet style dinner in the basement so that everyone can meet and greet Pastor Birkholz and his new bride Amberlee.

Pastor Birkholz and Amberleigh would like to invite any members of Faith who are interested to attend their wedding ceremony. The ceremony is at 2:00 PM on June 14th, at St. John's Lutheran Church located at 125 East Seminary Ave. in Wheaton, Illinois.

Pastor will be starting his service to Faith beginning the week of July 20th.

What a blessing pastor's have been to God's people down through the ages! May God continue to bless the church mightily through His gift of pastors. A.L. Barry

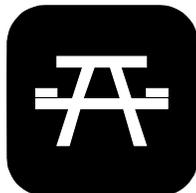
Annual Church Picnic

Once again the time has arrived for everyone to join us at Wolfe Wildlife Preserve at 109th & Laramie on June 8th at 11:00AM.

The picnic begins with an abbreviated worship service followed by food and fun. Hot dogs and soda will be furnished courtesy of the Oslakovic's. Please bring a dish for the common table along with your own paper plates and utensils.

We are planning to play Bingo called by Mr. Ed Neaves so please bring a wrapped \$5.00 gift for the Bingo prizes. We look forward to seeing you there.

There will also be worship at Church at 9:00AM if you can't make it to the picnic.



Faith Ladies Aid

Yes, our ladies did spring into energetic enthusiasm with the success of our Rummage Sale.

Thanks to all who worked hard and to those who baked and came to help us. Our profits will benefit many projects here at Faith.

Our May Ice Cream Social was a double super celebration with Evelyn Luer's 90th birthday.

Our last gathering before summer break will be our annual pizza and Bunco party. We extend a welcome invitation to all ladies to join us at 6:30PM on Thursday, June 5th. Please let Mary Slepski or Gail Henson know if you plan on attending.

Kathleen Nowak
Membership Chairman

Thank You

To Our Friends at Faith Lutheran Church

Thank you so much for your kindness and prayers during our time of need. Your generosity allowed us to take care of some financial needs and lessen our stress during this time. We are overwhelmed with gratitude to be blessed with such wonderful people in our lives.

Thank you and God bless.

The Newton Family

LWML

We are again collecting used medicine bottles to be given to a different country. There is a basket on the literature table in the Narthex.

In July, we will begin collecting baby products such as shampoo, powder, wipes, etc. These will be taken to the convention in October and given to an agency in the area for needy children. There will be a container for these items in the Narthex.

Thank you!

Grace Scott

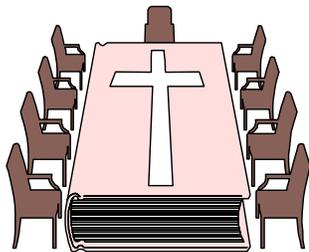
Schedule of June / July 2008 Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>June Event</u>
1	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
7	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
8	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	11:00 AM	Worship at Church Picnic
15	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
21	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
22	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
29	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>July Event</u>
5	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
6	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
13	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
19	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
20	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
	3:00 PM	Ordination/Installation
	5:00 PM	Reception for Pastor Birkholz
27	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class

Weekly Meetings

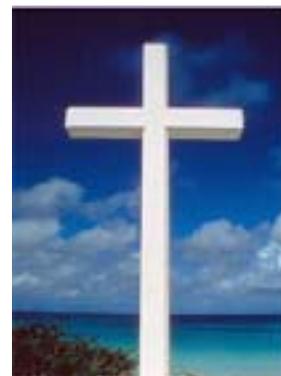
AA Groups	M & F - 6:00 PM
	Sat - 8:00 AM
Bible Study	Fri. - 10:30 AM
Girl Scouts	Tu - 3:30 PM F - 6:30 PM
ALANON	Tu - 7:00 PM
Choir	W - 6:30 PM
Ladies Aid	(First) - Th. - 7:00 PM



Cross

The day has finally arrived. Faith Church has an exterior cross. Thanks to memorials, Frank Oslakovic's diligence, Ed Neaves' time with the Village of Oak Lawn and the physical labor of our robust men, our cross is planted. Plans to illuminate it will be implemented in the near future.

The dedication will be Sunday June 15th during the morning Worship service.



June / July Elders, Ushers & Lay Readers

Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

June 1	Frank Oslakovic Bill Weems Nick Trojanowski Glenn Werth
June 8	Alden Ketchum Howard Johnson Bob Stegmann
June 15	Ed Neaves Gene Osmanski Christina Trojanowski Elise Trojanowski
June 22	Richard Clark Dory Moeller A.J. Bray
June 29	Bill Weems Frank Oslakovic Glenn Werth Mark Trojanowski

Lay Readers 9:00 AM Sunday

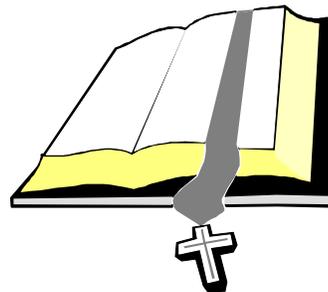
June 1	Bill Weems
June 8	Debbie Hochgesang
June 15	Gene Osmanski
June 22	Ed Neaves
June 29	Mark Trojanowski

Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

July 6	Alden Ketchum Ed Neaves Gail Henson Mary Slepski
June 13	Ed Neaves Mark Trojanowski Dory Moeller
June 20	Richard Clark Gene Osmanski Nick Trojanowski Bob Stegmann
June 27	Bill Weems Nick Trojanowski A.J. Bray

Lay Readers 9:00 AM Sunday

July 6	Elise Trojanowski
July 13	Christina Trojanowski
July 20	Frank Oslakovic
July 27	Nick Trojanowski





Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is a joy to receive your call to serve the Lord with you in Oak Lawn. We have been anxiously waiting to see where the Lord would place us, and we look forward to beginning our time with you.

Until we have an opportunity to get to know each other in person, we thought it might be helpful to tell you a little about ourselves.

I was born and raised in the northern suburbs of Detroit, MI. Both of my parents were Lutheran school teachers, and I attended Lutheran schools from preschool through college. From Michigan I came to Concordia University, River Forest for the pre-seminary studies. At Concordia I was involved in the Wind Symphony and Concordia Youth Ministry. For my seminary education I attended Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. I did my field work at a small congregation in southern Illinois (Emmaus, Dorsey) and my vicarage was at Grace Lutheran Church in LeMars, IA. I graduated from the seminary in 2004, but chose to defer my call in order to do graduate studies. I spent a year in Australia doing a second master's degree, and I am currently completing my PhD in New Testament studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, IL. I am currently serving as an adjunct professor at Concordia University Chicago as well as assisting with weekend services at St. John Lutheran Church in Wheaton, IL. I live in Wheaton in one of St. John's vacant parsonages.

I am engaged to be married to Amberleigh Klement. We are looking forward to our wedding on June 14 in Wheaton. Amberleigh is originally from the Cleveland, OH area. She also attended Concordia University, River Forest where she played in the Wind Symphony and worked for the Security Department. She earned her bachelor's degree in Social Work. After graduation Amberleigh worked as a police dispatcher for the Village of Bellwood, IL, and now she is back at Concordia where she serves as Director of Public Safety.

We've both lived in Chicago for a few years, and have come to think of this city as our home. We're excited to become a part of the family of God at Faith Lutheran Church and see how the Lord uses our gifts in this place. There's so much more we could tell you, but at least this gives us a place from which to start. We can't wait to get to know each of you as well.

In Christ,

Mark Birkholz

Join Us for Vacation Bible School



Do you have the time to spend?
Take a trek with us through the forest.
Learn about Jesus our forever friend!
Making discoveries will be the best.



Come be a part of a fun, exciting week.
Meet some new friends.
We look forward to meeting you.
Just bring yourself, a friend, if you can, and your enthusiasm.

Parent or guardian required for first day registration.

When: June 23rd – 27th

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

Time: 9:30AM – 12:00 PM Noon

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

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