

# FAITH NEWSLETTER

February / March 2009

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Last week I was visiting one of our members in the hospital. Her daughter, who has moved out to the suburbs, was there, too. She mentioned that she was looking for a new church but hadn't found one yet. "What are you looking for?" I asked. She responded, "I'm just looking for a place where I'm comfortable."

In thinking about this conversation, I remembered a sermon I heard several years ago. The main point of the sermon was: The church is a hospital; not a health spa.

At a health spa, the goal is to make you comfortable. From the robes, to the whirlpools, to the massages, everything is designed to help you relax and feel good.

At a hospital, the goal is to get you better. Often this involves making you uncomfortable: the tests, treatments, and therapy are all often quite painful. The doctors and nurses ask you personal, uncomfortable questions. They poke you and prod you and may tell you that you have to make drastic changes in your lifestyle if you want to get better. The hospital is an uncomfortable place, but everything that happens is done for your good.

Imagine going to a luxurious hospital, a place with the most comfortable beds around, widescreen TVs, and gourmet food service, but the doctors and nurses never did any tests, never gave you any medicine, just pampered you. It might be nice for awhile, but you would never get better.

Many people are looking for the church to be like a spa, a place where they can relax and be comfortable, chat with their friends, maybe sing a few songs, hear an uplifting message, have a cup of coffee, and then return to their everyday life. They want pastors who aren't demanding and who don't ask too much of them.

The church is not a spa; the church is a hospital. We are all suffering with the sickness of sin. We need God's word to diagnose us. This is an uncomfortable experience as all of our faults and failings are exposed. God's word tells us things that we don't like to hear.

At the seminary, we were told that the task of the pastor was "to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable." Some folks come to church needing to be made uncomfortable, to hear that they are sinners in need of salvation. Other folks come to church because they are bothered and troubled by their sin and need to hear the comforting words of God's love and forgiveness.

The gospel is the only thing that brings us true comfort. It is not the comfort of relaxation, but the comfort of being at peace with God and our neighbor. It is comfort that we receive only through the discomfort of our Savior Jesus Christ. He endured the discomfort of the manger, the discomfort of three years of homelessness, the discomfort of arrest, trial, and torture, the discomfort of the cross for you.

The Christian life, then, is not one of material comfort, but of love and self-sacrifice. The cross was not comfortable. And yet Jesus calls you to deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Him. When you have died along with Christ, your concern is not your own comfort, but comforting those around you with His love and forgiveness.

In Jesus' Name,

Pastor Mark Birkholz

# In and Around Faith Church

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## Ladies Aid

Blessings to all in 2009.

There was no meeting in January due to our weather conditions. We are thinking about spring and our annual Rummage Sale. Watch for more details in the Sunday bulletins. Please consider amassing your used items as well as household items that could be sold on our "almost new" table. Of course we will also have our bake sale.

We encourage our lady members to join our group. Our dues are \$3.00 a year and when joining you benefit from Christian fellowship.

We hope to see you on Thursday, Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM in the Parish Hall for our meeting.

Kathleen Nowak

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## Anniversary Celebration

Our special anniversary celebration of 50 years of service to God in our current building will be on Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup>. We are celebrating the past and rededicating ourselves to the future of God's work.

A special worship service will begin at **10:00 AM**, followed by a program and a catered dinner. Please plan on attending by returning the response card you received in the mail. If you know of any former members who would like to attend, please pass on the information and have them contact the church office.

In order to make the program more personal to all, we are asking for stories or memories you might have that we can share on that day. Your response will be needed by Feb. 15th.

This congregation of Faith has been blessed by all those who have walked through its doors and by God who saw fit to use us as a means of telling the Good News.

Keep Faith in your prayers as we continue this wonderful journey.

## New Pictorial Directory

The congregation decided it was time to make a more current directory. The photo sessions will be Friday, Feb. 27 from 2:30 – 9:00 PM and Saturday, Feb. 28 from 9:30 AM – 4:00 PM. Watch for further details. Each participating family will receive a complementary directory and an 8x10 portrait. It will be up to you to consider purchasing any other photos. More details will be in the Sunday bulletin or you can contact the church office or check our website.

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## "An Evening with Jesus"

We are continuing with our once a month Bible School.

Thursday, February 19th from 6:00 PM until 7:30 PM we will be meeting in the Parish Hall for a celebration of Jesus' love with Bible stories, crafts, songs and refreshments. If you are between the ages of 3 years and 12 years, you are invited to an exciting and fun evening. Bring a friend so we can all learn about the special gifts given to us through Jesus.

We will continue this event on Mar. 19, 2009 with a focus on Baptism.

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## LWML

I still haven't received the schedule of projects for 2009. If you did not receive a copy of the winter Quarterly, please take one from the LWML basket on the literature table in the Narthex. The magazine contains some interesting articles.

Grace Scott

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## Thank You

The total amount received for our 2008 Special Project was \$4,662. We thank everyone who generously contributed to this fund for much-needed repairs.

# Schedule of Feb. / March. 2009 Events

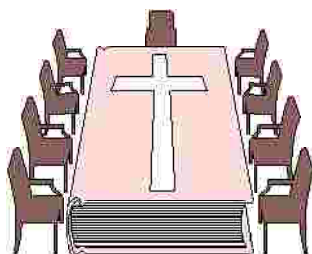
<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Feb. Event</u>
<b>1</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	<b>10:15 AM</b>	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
7	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
<b>8</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>Worship / Children's Msg.</b>
	<b>10:15 AM</b>	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	<b>10:15 AM</b>	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
21	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
<b>22</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>Worship / Children's Msg.</b>
	<b>10:15</b>	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Ash Wednesday Worship w / Communion</b>

## 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
Adventure	(First) - Sun. - 7:00 PM
Crew	

## Congregation Meeting

Our next congregation meeting will on Sunday March 22 following worship. Please plan on participating as we attend to the business of Faith.



<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Mar. Event</u>
<b>1</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	<b>10:15 AM</b>	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Lenten Worship</b>
7	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
<b>8</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Special Anniversay Worship w/ Communion</b>
	<b>11:15 AM</b>	<b>Anniversary program</b>
	<b>12:30 PM</b>	<b>Anniversary dinner</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Lenten Worship</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	<b>10:15 AM</b>	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Lenten Worship</b>
21	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
<b>22</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>Worship /Children's Msg.</b>
	<b>10:15 AM</b>	<b>Congregation Meeting</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Lenten Worship</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	<b>10:15 AM</b>	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>

## Midweek Lenten Services

As we approach Easter, we again take time to prepare our hearts and minds for the Resurrection of our Lord.

February 25<sup>th</sup>, Ash Wednesday, begins our mid-week Lenten services at 7:00 PM.

You are invited to join us each Wednesday evening through March as it leads us to Holy Week.

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

## Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

**Feb. 1** Bill Weems  
Alden Ketchum  
Nick Trojanowski  
Glenn Werth

**Feb. 8** Ed Neaves  
Ray Bennett  
Franny Rheinwald

**Feb. 15** Frank Oslakovic  
Gene Osmanski  
Mark Trojanowski  
Elise Trojanowski

**Feb. 22** Richard Clark  
Mary Slepiski  
Gail Henson

## Lenten Services Wednesday 7:00 PM

**Feb. 25** Gene Osmanski  
Frank Oslakovic  
Glenn Werth  
Howard Johnson

**Mar. 4** Ed Neaves  
Alden Ketchum

**Mar. 11** Richard Clark  
Glen Werth

**Mar. 18** Gene Osmanski  
Frank Oslakovic

**Mar. 25** Ed Neaves  
Alden Ketchum

## Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

**Mar. 1** Bill Weems  
Alden Ketchum  
Glen Werth  
Dory Moeller

**Mar. 8** 10:00 AM  
Ed Neaves  
Ray Bennett  
Howard Johnson

**Mar. 15** Frank Oslakovic  
Gene Osmanski  
Nick Trojanowski  
Mark Trojanowski

**Mar. 22** Richard Clark  
A.J. Bray  
Franny Rheinwald

**Mar. 29** Bill Weems  
Alden Ketchum  
Glen Werth  
Dory Moeller

## Lay Readers 9:00 AM Sunday

**Feb 1** Bill Weems

**Feb. 8** Ray Bennett

**Feb. 15** Gene Osmanski

**Feb. 22** Debbie Hochgesang

**Mar. 1** Mark Trojanowski

**Mar. 8** Elise Trojanowski

**Mar. 15** Nick Trojanowski

**Mar. 22** Ed Neaves

**Mar. 29** Ray Bennett

