

# FAITH NEWSLETTER

Dec. 2016 / Jan. 2017

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Dear Friends in Christ,  
Happy New Year!

We are about to enter into the year 2017. This is a special year particularly for Lutherans. On October 31, 1517 Martin Luther posted his 95 theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. These were a public call to debate the buying and selling of indulgences. This eventually led to the Protestant Reformation and the restoration of the Gospel in many places.

Lutherans throughout the world are remembering the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation in a variety of ways. Many are making trips to Germany to visit the historical sites. There are special concerts and lecture series planned, some of which have already begun.

I have been thinking quite a bit about how to commemorate this anniversary at Faith. There are lots of different ways that we could celebrate Luther and the Reformation, but I believe that the best thing we can do is to focus on God's Word. The Word of God was the driving force behind the Reformation and continues to be the foundation of our faith today.

Some people try to read through the entire Bible in a year. This can be done, but many people who start never finish. In celebration of the anniversary of the Reformation, I am challenging the members of Faith to read the entire New Testament with me in the year 2017.

The New Testament has 260 chapters in it, which works out to 5 chapters per week. I have put together a schedule for us to work through together. Instead of reading through from Matthew through Revelation, it alternates between the Gospels, the Letters of Paul, and the other books of the New Testament. Reading schedules and reminders will be included in newsletters and bulletins, and a complete schedule will be available on the information table at church.

Join with me in this endeavor, and see how God changes your life and our congregation.

God's Blessings

**Pastor Birkholz**



# In and Around Faith Church

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## Advent Evening Prayer

Join us on Wednesday evenings as we end our day with prayer, song, and the Word of God. Services start on November 30<sup>th</sup> as we decorate and light the Christmas tree. The next three weeks we will hear of Jesus' family tree and see where we fit in with Jesus' family. Each evening a light supper will be served at 6:00p. If you can help bring and serve food, we would greatly appreciate it. The Prayer Service starts at 7:00p. For the December services we will also have a time to sing Christmas Hymns together in church from 6:30p-6:50p.

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## Ladies Aid

We thank everyone who helped make our annual Christmas Bazaar a success. The workers, donators, craft makers, chili makers, kitchen crew and all those who attended are really appreciated.

In lieu of our Christmas party, we will be going to the Christkindl Market at the Naper Settlement in Naperville on Friday December 2<sup>nd</sup>. We will be ride sharing and will leave church at 11:00 AM. All ladies are invited, but please let us know if you will join us by contacting Mary Slepski.

There is no January meeting.

Blessings of Christmas and the New Year.

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## Christmas Cards

This year we will have a new bulletin board featuring Christmas Cards from members of Faith. Please bring your family Christmas card during the season of Advent and add it to the bulletin board.

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## Parsonage Open House

All members and friends of Faith are welcome to the Faith Parsonage (9658 Melvina) on Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 PM until 5:00 PM for an Open House. Light Refreshments will be provided.

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## Children's Christmas Service

On Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup> the children of our congregation will assist in the first portion of our service. They will tell the Christmas story using a nativity scene and readings from the New Testament and leading our songs. On that morning we will also take a door offering to support the work of the Southside Pregnancy Center.

## Member Recognition Brunch

We will be recognizing members of Faith for years of consecutive confirmed membership in our congregation on Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup> with a special brunch following the service. Here are the members who will be celebrating significant anniversaries of membership in 2017. Please contact the church office with any corrections:

65 Years: Barbara Bohne

45 Years: Bob Green

40 Years: Gwen Hresil

35 Years: James Henson

30 Years: Don & Kathleen Nowak; Lori Slepski

15 Years: Flo Bristow; Lisa Owen; Nick Trojanowski

10 Years: Wren Johnson; Lisa Karaus; Joyce Stroh

5 Years: Cheri Hendler; Billy Kampenga; Roger & Lisa Prium; Bob Schutzius

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## Home Blessings

In Christian tradition, homes are blessed during the season of Epiphany to commemorate the visit of the Magi to Jesus' home in Bethlehem. This service involves readings and prayers in each room of the house, as we remember Jesus' promise to be with us and work through us in our homes. This year Epiphany lasts from January 6<sup>th</sup> through February 28<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to schedule a home blessing, please contact Pastor Birkholz.

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## Circuit Epiphany Service

Once again Faith has been asked to host a special Epiphany service for the churches in our area. This service will be held on Friday, January 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. We will also serve refreshments following the service. Watch for more details in the weeks to come.

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## Installation of Officers and Voters Meeting

Newly elected congregational officers will be installed on Sunday, January 8<sup>th</sup> during the Divine Service along with other servants of the congregation. Following the service will be our January Voters Meeting.

# Schedule of Dec. 2016 / Jan. 2017 Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Dec. Event</u>
3	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
4	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
	10:30 AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
7	7:00 PM	Advent Service
11	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
	10:30 AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
14	7:00 PM	Advent Service
17	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
18	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
	10:30 AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
21	7:00 PM	Advent Service
24	7:00 PM	<b>Christmas Eve Worship / Communion</b>
25	9:00 AM	<b>Christmas Day Worship / Communion</b>

## Weekly Meetings

<b>Bible Study</b>	Fri. - 10:00 AM
<b>AA Groups</b>	Mon.&Fri .- 6:00 PM
	Wed .- 7:00 PM
	Sat. - 8:00 AM
<b>Alanon</b>	Tue. - 7:30 PM

## December Hymn of the month:

### “Savior of the Nations, Come” (# 332)

This Advent hymn is one of the oldest in our hymnal. It was written by Ambrose of Milan in the 300s AD. Martin Luther translated it into German in 1524, and the version in LSB draws on the work of several English translators. This glorious hymn tells the story of Jesus incarnation and birth, through to His ascension. It is a prayer for Jesus to return and dwell with us once more, bringing His healing grace to our fallen world.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Jan. Event</u>
1	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
	10:30 AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
7	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
8	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
	10:30 AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
15	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
	10:30 AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
21	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
22	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
	10:30 AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>
29	9:00 AM	<b>Worship / Communion</b>
	10:15 AM	<b>Sunday School</b>
	10:30 AM	<b>Adult Bible Class</b>

## January Hymn of the month:

### “Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty” (# 901)

Benjamin Schmolck was one of the most popular German hymn writers of his generation, writing nearly 1,200 hymns over the course of his life. The baptismal hymn “Dearest Jesus We Are Here” is his composition as well. Schmolck wrote “Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty” in 1732 as a reflection on entering church and an explanation of the Third Commandment. This beautiful hymn describes the church service as heaven on earth, as God comes to us in His Word and Sacrament, and we respond with our songs of praise.



**Joy to the World!**

# Dec. 2016 / Jan. 2017 Elders, Ushers & Lay Readers

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## December Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

<b>Dec. 4</b>	Frank Oslakovic Ed Neaves Mary Slepski Gail Henson
<b>Dec. 11</b>	Gene Osmanski Alden Ketchum Howard Johnson Mark Trojanowski
<b>Dec. 18</b>	Ed Neaves Richard Clark Marilyn Diehl Eleonore Lang
<b>Dec. 25</b>	Frank Oslakovic Gene Osmanski Mike Kampenga Katie Kampenga

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## Lay Readers 9:00 AM Sunday

<b>Dec. 4</b>	Gene Osmanski
<b>Dec. 11</b>	Mike Kampenga
<b>Dec. 18</b>	Katie Kampenga
<b>Dec. 25</b>	Ray Benett
<b>Jan. 1</b>	Ed Neaves
<b>Jan. 8</b>	Dora Haynes
<b>Jan. 15</b>	Debbie Hochgesang
<b>Jan. 22</b>	Mark Trojanowski
<b>Jan. 29</b>	Gene Osmanski

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## Ask the Pastor

**Question:** What is the symbolism behind the eternal candle hanging in the church?

**Answer:** In the Roman Catholic Church, the body and blood of Jesus left over from communion are kept in a special box called a "tabernacle". When the body and blood of Jesus are placed in the tabernacle, a red "sanctuary lamp" is lit. Protestant churches liked the look of the sanctuary lamp, even though we do not have the same practice of reserving the Sacrament to be adored. Lutheran churches that use one of these red lamps usually light it continually to remind us that God is always present in His house with His people.

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## January Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

<b>Jan. 1</b>	Richard Clark Alden Ketchum Cheyenne Breibarth Mark Trojanowski
<b>Jan. 8</b>	Gene Osmanski Ed Neaves Howard Johnson Dora Haynes
<b>Jan. 15</b>	Frank Oslakovic Richard Clark Kenilynn Breitbarth Ray Bennett
<b>Jan. 22</b>	Ed Neaves Howard Johnson Mike Kampenga Katie Kampenga
<b>Jan. 29</b>	Gene Osmanski Alden Ketchum Mark Trojanowski Richard Clark

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## Advent Services 7:00 PM

<b>Dec. 7</b>	Richard Clark Frank Oslakovic
<b>Dec. 14</b>	Howard Johnson Ed Neaves
<b>Dec. 21</b>	Gene Osmanski Alden Ketchum
<b>Dec. 24</b>	Richard Clark Ed Neaves Alden Ketchum Ray Benett

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## Reformation Reading Schedule

Week of January 1: Matthew 1-5  
Week of January 8: Matthew 6-10  
Week of January 15: Matthew 11-15  
Week of January 22: Matthew 16-20  
Week of January 29: Matthew 21-25