

Newsletter

April 2015



take up the shield of faith Ephesians 6:16

From Pastor Nate

Dear brothers and sisters in Faith,

In case you have not had the opportunity to look over our congregation's web site this is what is written on our welcome page:

In Revelation 3:8, Jesus tells the congregation at Philadelphia, "I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut." In John's Gospel, Jesus claims to be the Door. "I Am the Door; if anyone enters by me, this person will be saved." (John 10:9) At Faith Lutheran Church, we hold open the door and invite all to join us in seeking the abundant life that Jesus offers to us.

We have taken the "shield of faith" as our symbol, reminding us that God has given us the "shield of His salvation" (Psalm 18:35) and that we rely on His strength and the armor He provides for our protection from the powers that work to separate us from the word of God and the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 6:10-17)

As a family of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, it is our calling to evangelize - share the good news of Jesus Christ with all people. Therefore we will do whatever is necessary to invite, encourage, motivate, and inspire others to join us in worship and join us in service to all of God's people.

As grateful as I am for the Little Falls School District and the Franciscan Sisters it is wonderful to now have a church building, a house of prayer and worship. We are no longer limited to certain hours on certain days for when we gather for worship, Bible Studies, meetings, fellowship events, etc. And so the doors of our building are now open for anyone who would like to enter and experience the love, forgiveness, and transforming power of Jesus Christ.

And with our building and property, in the words of St. Paul, "a wide door for effective work has been opened to us." (1 Corinthians 16:9) Hopefully having a new church building will inspire us to reach out to those who may be looking for a church family or those who do not yet know Jesus Christ. We may have completed the first phase of our building but we are called to continue to build up the Body of Christ. Take the opportunity to welcome visitors and introduce yourself to those who you do not know. Let's extend an open invitation to join our Family of Faith!

The stone has been removed. Jesus Christ has risen! He is the door to our salvation. This is the promise of Easter!

In Faith,

Pastor Nate Bjorge

Take Note



**"Why do you seek
the living among
the dead?
He is not here,
but has risen."
Luke 24: 5-6**

Attendance & Offering

March	1: 211	\$ 6,490
March	8: 173	\$ 3,461
March	15: 183	\$ 4,433
March	22: 212	\$ 5,225
March	29: 189	\$ 5,426

President's Message –

Members of Faith Lutheran

As you read this, Easter is upon us and spring is a reality instead of a future event! Once again we have faced winter and won (although this year wasn't all that hard!)

As we go about our tasks this spring, raking leaves blown in by winter winds, making the Earth ready for planting, and the myriad of other things we become involved in, prayerfully consider that we are not in charge; that honor belongs to God. He makes sure that we have all that we need, always.

There is tremendous power in prayer.

There is empirical evidence that prayer helps people heal. We have witnessed that, just look at the number of people who have been healed in our congregation.

Remember when we had our first service in the new building? I was so aware that the Holy Spirit was there, it moved me in ways I cannot describe. I know there were many present that day that felt that wonderful presence, too. Was that an answer to our prayer vigil? Only God knows!

What does it mean to pray without ceasing? I think that is a personal experience, and I think we all must consider what it means to us. But when you pray many times during the day, giving thanks for the great and small things; asking for guidance during the less than great things, your focus changes. You become more aware of others and what an impact you have on them.

When you pray without ceasing, you will begin to realize that the sunrise you witnessed is just for you; the person who provided a helping hand when you needed it was provided just for you; when you are in a hurry and a parking space opens just when you need it, that is not coincidence, that is God working in your life; when you feel the need to help another or simply say a kind word to someone, that is God answering prayer. Give thanks, continually, and see if you suddenly have a new appreciation for things around you.

Develop an attitude of gratitude and see what a difference it will make in your life!

Worship & Prayer Ministry Team

Over the last couple of months, we have had opportunities to host two different events at church; one with the Minnesota Teen Challenge program from Brainerd on February 8th and one with Food for the Poor program on March 8th. They gave some great testimonies of what God has done for them and shown us how he can work in so many different ways.

We are now in the midst of the Lenten season, with our last Wednesday evening service being this week with the soup supper starting at 6:00 pm and worship at 7:00pm. These services were held on February 25th, March 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th. Maundy Thursday service will be held on April 2nd at 7:00 pm. On Good Friday, April 3rd, we will have a worship service in collaboration with several other local churches. Easter Sunday service will be at 9:30 am with a breakfast preceding the service.

We will be having our next New Member Sunday on April 19th. If you know of anyone that is looking at becoming a member of Faith Lutheran, please have them talk to Pastor Nate.

We want to thank all those that have stepped up and signed up to serve our church in all the ways possible. Together we make it all happen! If you are interested in signing up please check out the sign up table in the narthex or come talk to one of the Worship and Prayer team members (Melissa Hanson, Amy Kowalzek, Greg Hyatt, Sandy Berulson)

After being at the Ash Wednesday service and the Lenten Wednesday services and hearing some of the story of Ernest Gordon and hearing the testimonies from the Men from Minnesota Teen Challenge, I felt this Bible verse was fitting of what we need to do in our own lives.

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. - 1 Corinthians 16:13

News from the Congregational Life Committee following the March meeting 2015

Hebrews 12:1-2 "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."

We are already a good way into 2015 and yes; we do need to run with endurance the race that is set before us. We all are busy and involved with many things but we do not want to get bogged down with things that would hinder our race for Christ and His kingdom.

We are celebrating during the season of Lent with our soup suppers and Wednesday evening worship services. They have been well attended and the soups have been fabulous. It has been a real treat to have choir music each week as well. We are in the process of organizing our Easter breakfast. Easter is always one of the best times of the year as we truly reflect on what Jesus did for us because He loved us so much.

It will be a busy season for our committee as there are several events coming soon. A New Member Sunday is being planned, along with Graduation Sunday and our Sunday School Picnic.

Our new tablecloths have arrived for the 24 round tables. They are in memory of Jan Erbstoesser, donated by her husband Charlie. Thank you, Charlie for this generous contribution for our kitchen.

Many times we think that the things that we do and say are insignificant and they are just small things, but God has said in His Word that even offering a drink of cold water to someone is a way to honor God and make a difference. All of us have a specific calling to be that kind of a person in our families, in our church, in our community and those that we come in contact with.

Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith and when we stand before him some day we all would like to hear Him say, "Well done, Good and Faithful servant." As we keep our eyes on Jesus, He will empower us to be that kind of person.

Thank you to everyone in our church who has contributed to making our soup suppers so great and in advance for making our Easter breakfast a wonderful event. You ALL are needed and appreciated.

Until next time!

Patricia Fernelius for the Congregational Life Committee

Note:

**No reports this month from
Facilities and Maintenance Team
Mission and Outreach Team or
Children's Ministry Team**

Youth and Family Team:

April Event: You are invited to enjoy an afternoon of **Roller Skating on Sunday, April 19 from 1-4 p.m. at the Skatin' Place in St. Cloud.** Faith will cover the admission (including roller skates) and 1 game of Laser Tag. Bring your own In-line skates or rent them for \$2 extra. Questions, please contact Amber Rausch at 320/360-5804.

We are planning a summer trip to **Noah's Ark** in Buena Vista, Colorado, for students who will have finished 7th grade. Noah's Ark is a Christian camp that offers a number of challenging activities, including whitewater rafting, rock climbing and repelling, and hiking up to a Rocky Mountain peak. We will leave Little Falls on Friday, July 25th and return on Thursday, July 31th. www.noahsark.com

The approximate cost is \$250. We will be having fundraisers to help with the cost.

Mission Statement

As Children of God, we are called to love, glorify and submit to the Living Christ, ministering to others by the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.



Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to **stand** your ground, and after you have done everything, **to stand**. **Stand** firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the **shield of faith**, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the **Word of God**. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Ephesians 6:16

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Faith Lutheran Church Council Meeting 6:00 p.m. March 19, 2015

Present: Mark Whittington, Pat Rioux, Cheryl Zarns, Noel Guerard, Al Bauman, Howie Larsen, Maureen Miller, Tom Lippert, Rich Collins, Pr. Nate

**Treasurer's Report:
as of February 27, 2015**

PROFIT & LOSS YTD	
Income	21,654.70
Expenses	12,931.73
Adjusted Net Income after total other expenses	8,742.97
BALANCE SHEET YTD	
Total Current Assets.....	87,031.21
Total Fixed Assets	1,324,479.33
Total Assets.....	1,411,558.27
Total Liabilities	751,377.60
Total Equity.....	660,180.67
Gen. Checking Balance available for operations	
	31,978.45
DESIGNATED Savings	4,359.77
Gen. Reserve Sav. Bal.....	25,020.16
Park. Lot/Landscaping Fund...	14,398.65

Absent: Dave ZumBerge, Jason Leibold, Tracy Marcus

The meeting opened with devotions led by Mark Whittington. Rich Collins moved and Maureen Miller seconded to accept the secretary's report. Motion carried.

Noel reported that in order to preserve checks and balances, the person who receives the bills for the church should not be the person who signs the checks for the bills. After discussion, it was resolved that team chairpersons should sign for their team's payment vouchers. It was also clarified that our building payments are made to a mortgage and not a line of credit. Howie Larsen moved to change our Pine Country Bank account from a personal account to a business account. Al Bauman seconded with the motion passing. Howie Larsen moved with Tom Lippert seconding the motion to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion passed.

Pastor's Report: There were six second-graders in attendance for the First Communion class, with possibly two more planning to attend. A Seder meal for them will be held on Palm Sunday with their families helping with the meal. There will be a Noah's Ark trip to Colorado planned for the end of July. The chaperones are in place and two youth have committed to attend so far. Any youth who will have completed 7th grade may join the trip. Pastor received a grant for \$250 from

Thrivent for the Easter breakfast. All proceeds from the breakfast will go toward the Noah's Ark trip which was moved by Pat Rioux and seconded by Howie Larsen.

Old Business: The new gutters have been installed as have the main door decals.

New Business: The Facility and Maintenance team will be touching up wall paint Friday, March 20. Jackie Rens and Cheryl Zarns will be installing the Easter decorations.

A notice will be put in the bulletin inviting those interested to form a group to explore building a columbarium on Faith property. Pat Rioux from the Mission Team requested a \$1,000 check be issued to Morrison County Food Shelf. Howie Larsen so moved with Noel Guerard seconding. The motion passed. Howie Larsen moved with Rich Collins seconding that two 6 X 6 entrance rugs be ordered for a total of \$332.00 with funds coming from the Erbstoesser fund and the General fund. Motion passed.

Mark Whittington will look into purchasing two power strips for the kitchen serving counter which will handle multiple appliances with ease. Pat Rioux moved and Howie seconded to authorize Daven Hanson to order 150 units of offering envelopes for 2016, with motion passing. Roadside cleanup for spring is tentatively scheduled for April. Rich Collins moved with Howie Larsen seconding to allow Pastor to obtain health care insurance through Medi-Share Insurance which will results in savings for both him and Faith.

Mary of Lourdes (Catholic Christian elementary school) registration forms can be found on the information table in the Narthex. If you have any questions, please see Lisa Christensen.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer. The next Council meeting is April 16, Thursday, at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Zarns, Council Secretary