

FAITH MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
753 N. CALUMET AVE.
VALPARAISO, IN 46383

(219) 462-7684

WWW.FAITHMEMORIAL.NET

Embraced by God through Jesus Christ our Lord, we share this gospel of hope and healing within and throughout our community

A Vision for the New Year & Beyond



Hebrews 12:1-3 *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. ² Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

With the start of each new year we often find people busily setting goals. People, businesses, organizations, all use goals to move ahead. However, without a vision or a plan these goals not only have little on which they are based, they also are not likely to happen.

A basic vision might be as broad as a new and healthier me, eventually becoming a fortune 500 company, or being able to look around and see a vibrant and growing church. Other visions are a bit more detailed. Regardless, a true vision describes what we want to look like, what we are willing to put first, and what we are willing to make sacrifices for. To be able to discern this and make that vision a reality, most successful visionaries will tell you, there is usually something far deeper that drives a successful vision. A core belief, a central person, an existing identity, or something/someone from which we draw strength and guidance.

Fortunately, as the Body of Christ we have all these things in Jesus. While the world struggles aimlessly to find a vision and direction that works, we are blessed to have a relationship with Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith. This does not mean that at times we will not struggle to discern a direction and set goals for ourselves, for businesses, and even for our individual churches. At times believers will disagree or will have to choose between more than one workable way to carry out our calling. Sin and Satan work over time to try to cloud our vision and get us tangled up in all sorts of things that are counterproductive. However, if we fix our eyes on Jesus and center our vision on Him, we can trust that he will guard and lead us even if we cause a few missteps along the way. There will be times when we take the long way around, have to re-chart our course, or will need to admit we simply are not sure where we are supposed to be going at the moment. However, in all of this, we need not grow weary or lose heart because Jesus's own perfect vision has already accounted for every one of our steps good or bad, and in the end He will guide all who look to Him to the same finish line.

On January 24th, the leaders of various ministry teams within the church will also be meeting to look at some goals for our ministry here at Faith Memorial in the coming year. As part of this discussion and planning, we will be considering our current vision and also looking at our long term vision and plans. The entire congregation will be an important part of this discernment process. If you have thoughts about specific places where you believe Christ might be calling us to focus our time and resources please share them with our various ministry team leaders. (Their names are listed elsewhere in the newsletter) If you would like to be involved in a specific area of ministry please talk to that team ministry leader as well. Finally, continue to meditate on God's Word, support each other, and pray, pray, pray. In fact, I encourage all of you to make an intentional effort to pray for the meeting on January 24th from the time it begins at 10:00 until it ends at 3:00. Also continue to pray that as we move forward as a church, that we will always fix our eyes on Jesus and seek to glorify Him both as a church and individually. Even so Lord, Amen.

In Christ,

Pastor Eric Schreck

Ministry Teams and Ministry Team Leaders

Thank you to all who have volunteered and accepted to be leaders in our various ministry efforts here at Faith Memorial. Your efforts to begin identifying areas that need attention and to address those needs are greatly appreciated by the board and staff.

Also thank you to everyone who is active in our various ministry efforts here at church. It is great to see the different members of the Body of Christ using their various talents and working together for the good of the kingdom. Keep supporting each other in this effort!

Ministry Team	Team Leaders
Growth and Fellowship	Marilyn Lindner Paul Nord Paul Grossnickle
Children and Family Ministry	Sherri Nord Jackie Allwardt
Care	Nancy Kickbush Cindy Splitgerber
Outreach, Evangelism, & Assimilation	Jon Dunlap (?) Melinda Kersten (?) Mary Dunlap (?) – (Board liason)
<p>Please note some <u>ministry teams and efforts</u> are still in development or are led in a different fashion through a combination of staff, board, and congregational efforts.</p>	

MINISTRY RETREAT

**WHEN: SATURDAY,
JANUARY 24**

**WHERE: VU (DETAILS
FORTHCOMING)**

TIME: 10AM-3PM

**LUNCH WILL BE
PROVIDED**

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY—BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

Christ warns us that as Christians we will indeed face conflict. Join us in a study of why Christians often face conflict even with each other, and how we can handle conflict in a truly healthy way that allows us to grow, work together, and support each other and the world around us. The first week of this study begins January 4, at 10:30am. All congregation members are encouraged to attend!



CONGREGATIONAL CARE

The holidays are behind us and we praise God that we could shed acts of kindness on a number of children and their families. Continue to “pay it forward” with your random acts of kindness as we enter into the new year. For the months of January and February we will fulfill our commitment to “Day of Caring”. Collections of new stuffed animals, to be distributed to local schools, will be collected for “Reading Buddies”. More information is on the church bulletin board or see Cindy Splitgerber.



Matehuala

We were able to send 45 school kits to the mission at Matehuala, Mexico. We also sent a check for \$140, which was split between Pastor Castro’s church and his retirement fund. This fund will eventually allow him to stay with his son or daughter here in the U.S. Pastor Castro is in his late 80’s. God bless him and his mission endeavors. Than you all for your support.

NWILHMS—Mission Society is flexing its outreach. Trinity Hobart and Trinity Crown Point are looking to start Tutoring and Bible Study Programs this next year. More information will be available after the January meeting.

Thank you to everyone who helped provide dinner at the Mens’ Shelter on December 20. Our next commitment will be on January 17 at Immanuel. The sign up sheet is in the Narthex. We also continue to support Open Arms Womens’ Shelter by providing shelter here at Faith on Monday nights.



THOUGHTS FROM THE DEACONESS

"The Church exists..."

A dear friend of mine was diagnosed years ago as bipolar. Her life since the mid 70's has included an attempted suicide, three stays in the state hospital, isolation from her siblings, living on disability, numerous doctors and therapists and case managers, a never-ending list of drugs and injections, cancer – and the list goes on. We phone and write regularly. Even though it is long distance, I am honored to be part of her care team. She currently lives in HUD housing, with most of the renters being ten to twenty years older than she. In a recent phone call, she was concerned that she wasn't living as God intended. She wondered if God needed her and if she had any purpose. The immediate thought was whether she was suicidal. But that wasn't the issue. God is the center of her life and she really wondered if she was doing the work of the kingdom.

As the phone call continued, we talked of Frank. He regularly feasts on homemade soup and chili because of her. Teddi receives help almost every evening with her anti-embolism stockings. Pat and Anne hear the phone ring several times a week. Mail is picked up and delivered to people's doors. The Cancer Center has a regular volunteer helper and fresh flowers in vases during the summer. Because of her, many see and hear of the love of God.

"In the same way the Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became Man for no other purpose. It is even doubtful, you know, whether the whole universe was created for any other purpose." C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

In this New Year, may we remember and pledge that we exist for nothing else than to draw people to Christ. That is God's purpose and intent for us. Through our words and actions, Christ becomes real to others.

CHOIR SCHEDULE FOR SPRING

SUNDAYS:

February 1 and 8: rehearsal at 11:35am

February 15, sing at 9:00am

February 22, March 1: rehearsal at 11:35am

March 8, sing at 9:00am

March 15 and 22: rehearsal at 11:35am

March 29: sing at 9:00am for Palm Sunday

WEDNESDAYS:

March 11, 18 and 25: rehearsal at 7:45pm

SATURDAY:

April 4, rehearsal at 9:00am

SUNDAY:

April 5, sing at 8:00am and 10:45am for Easter



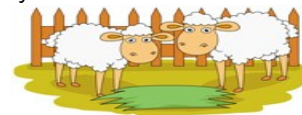
NEWS FROM YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As many of you know, Faith Memorial Lutheran Church was started in 1956 as a mission church sponsored by Immanuel Lutheran Church of Valparaiso. Those of you addicted to "doing the math" will note that Faith is, thus, 58 years old. Our "big sister", Immanuel, this year celebrated its 150th anniversary! If you both "do the math" and "know our history", this means that Immanuel began BEFORE the American Civil War ended! The Board of Directors of Faith voted to send our congratulations on this milestone to Immanuel along with a gift to celebrate their birthday. Not only did Immanuel start us off, but it has, over our mere 58 years continued to bless many of the families of Faith through making available first-rate Lutheran education in grades K-8.

The Board wishes to thank Deaconess Becky Graef and Deb Porter for taking over our church choir as they trade off between directing and accompanying. This year we are trying something new—the choir rehearses at 11:35 am two Sundays in a row after Bible Study and then sings on the third Sunday. That's the entire commitment each time—two rehearsals, one performance. It's easy. Join them. Always thought you were better than Beyone or Pava-rott? Go for it with our choir!

SHARE BIG DREAMS—A FARM OF ANIMALS!

With the help of the congregation, the mission of the Sunday School will be to collect offerings for World Vision. Our goal is to be able to buy 13 animals by Easter. Look for the blue piglet by the entrance into the sanctuary.



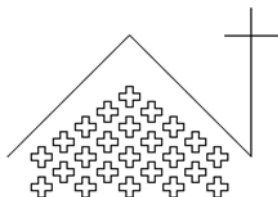
HELPING OUR FOOD PANTRIES

On November 20, Cindy Splitgerber and Fran Marton attended Thrivent's Day of Thanks Dinner. They presented a "one-minute" story on how they would use an extra \$100 for their congregation. After explaining that the Crumbs program, inspired by a sermon by Pastor Schoech, was collecting loose change for area food pantries, Cindy ended the appeal by asking the group to throw some "crumbs" our way for the program. Out of a field of 26 others they received enough votes to receive \$250 for the Crumbs program and \$150 for the NW Indiana Food Bank.

Faith Memorial
Lutheran Church

753 N. Calumet Ave.
Valparaiso, IN 46383

Email:
office@faithmemorial.net



MARK MAKERS

Our next meeting will be held Wednesday, January 7 at Faith Memorial.

We will be making valentines, including some for our shut-in members. Come discover or embrace your artistic side and bring some of your friends. Our meetings begin with a brief lesson focused on that week's project, so no experience is necessary.

FAITH MEMORIAL WORSHIP SCHEDULE

- Epiphany, Sunday, January 4, 9:00 Holy Communion
The Baptism of Our Lord, Sunday, January 11, 9:00 Holy Communion
(with installation of BOD and Ministry Team Leaders)
The Confession of St. Peter, Sunday, January 18, 9:00 Holy Communion
The Conversion of St. Paul, Sunday, January 25, 9:00 Holy Communion
The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany, February 1, 9:00 Holy Communion
The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany, February 8, 9:00 Holy Communion
The Transfiguration of Our Lord, Sunday, February 15, 9:00 Holy Communion
The First Sunday in Lent, February 22, 9:00 Morning Prayer



EPIPHANY