

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

(219) 462-7684

WWW.FAITHLUTHERAN.ORG

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



## Living life Debt Free

**Colossians 2:11-14** <sup>11</sup> In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, <sup>12</sup> having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. <sup>13</sup> And you, who **were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,** <sup>14</sup> by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

We rejoiced together this past month at the paying off of the mortgage of the church. We certainly have a great deal to be thankful for in terms of the efforts, abilities, and resources that God has gifted this congregation with in order to make that possible. Thank you to all of you for your part in this and the church's other ongoing efforts.

For many today, living debt free is a difficult and even foreign concept. The truth is all of us owe somebody something for where we are today. Some kinds of debts we can never really repay. Other debts, particularly the monetary ones, can loom over us, overwhelming our attention and perhaps preventing us from doing what we really want to do. Many people dream of living in a carefree day when they can once again splurge or never have to worry about money again. Others tell themselves that if they can just get free of their debt, they will cut up the credit cards, stop taking chances and never risk going into debt again. However, the truth is I'm not sure many of us fully have a handle on what it truly means to live debt free.

Perhaps this is why the Bible has so much to say about debt. For example, consider the parable of the unforgiving servant in **Matthew 18**. When Peter asks Jesus how many times he should forgive his brother, Jesus tells him a story about a person drowning in financial debt. The servant owes his master a massive sum with no way to pay it back. The repercussions rightfully could have been dire, but instead, the master chooses to graciously forgive and wipe away the entire debt. Unfortunately, unsure of how to live debt free, the servant chooses instead to be a slave to his own fear and seeks security in all the wrong places. Rather than actually deciding to live in and share the freedom he has just been given, the servant digs himself back into a whole new debt, which includes a lack of love and compassion.

The comparison Jesus makes here between financial debt and spiritual debt repeats throughout scripture. **Colossians 2** and other scriptures speak of how God cancelled our debt, paid our ransom, and redeemed us on the cross. Born as sinners, each of us has added to our sinful debt every day. Yet, by the incredible Grace of God, Jesus paid for all of our sin, past, present and future. When we put our faith and trust in Him, Jesus forgives our debt, and opens the door to a whole new life of freedom in Him.

So, how do we live debt free? How can we give thanks to God for lifting the mountain of sinful debt from our shoulders, as well as all the other blessed ways he provides for us? Scripture gives us two answers, one in **Matthew 18** and one in the next chapter of Colossians. First, we extend the forgiveness we have received to those around us, particularly to those who have wronged us, and second, we change our spending habits. In Christ, God has graciously provided us with both the ability to forgive and the power to spend our lives as those who have been set free.

Whether it is our physical or spiritual debt we have a choice. One option is to take the forgiveness and the resources God has given us and lay back, lock these things up, try to play it safe, seek to live care-free, and mostly only spending these things on ourselves. The second option involves continuing to extensively spend these gifts of forgiveness, caring, and the many others that God has given us for the good of other people and the good of God's kingdom. Ironically, only the second option reflects the behavior of one who is living the life of one who is living debt free. Therefore, may we as a church and as individuals, continue to live the lives of those who are debt free, giving thanks to God both for His forgiveness and for all His other countless blessings.

*In Christ,*

*Pastor Eric Schoech*

**FAITH'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS** would like you to know.....

Your opinions and ideas are important to them.

If you have a concern or a question about something going on at church and would like to speak with a member of your board they are:

**Mary Dunlap**

**Paul Grossnickle**

**Sean Allwardt**

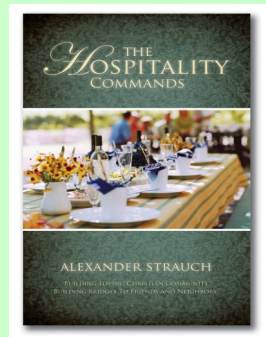
**Bruce Berner**



## **WOMEN WANTING WISDOM**

WWW will be reading and studying *"The Hospitality Commands: Building Loving Christian Community; Building Bridges to Friends and Neighbors,"* by Alexander Strauch.

Books, either Kindle version (\$4.99) or paperbacks (\$7.99) may be ordered on Amazon, or speak with Deb Porter for more information.



## **PENTECOST POT LUCK**

**THE DAY OF PENTECOST IS SUNDAY, MAY 20. PLEASE JOIN US AFTER CHURCH SERVICES AND EDUCATION HOUR FOR A POT LUCK DOWNSTAIRS IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL. CHECK THE NARTHEX FOR SIGN UP SHEETS.**



**All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit!**  
Acts 2.4

## **COLLECTIONS FOR HILLTOP FOOD PANTRY**

In February of this year, a devastating flood ruined the displays and destroyed much of the food inventory at the Hilltop House Food Pantry. Since then, the community has stepped up to help. Here at Faith, the Care Committee continues to collect food donations. (Monetary help is always welcome also). For their spring mission project, the Sunday School students will also collect food donations for Hilltop.

Any help you can give is greatly appreciated!



## THOUGHTS FROM THE DEACONESS

*"So . . . now what do we do?"*

The Season of Easter only has a few weeks left. That first glorious Sunday in April is only a memory. Jesus is risen from the grave. So, what do we do about it? Do we just get on with our lives, focus on Mother's Day, Memorial Day weekend, and summer vacations? What difference has a risen Savior made in our lives?

I wonder if the followers of Jesus were thinking similar things. They had followed Jesus during his ministry. The disciples and women had witnessed healings, people raised from the dead, food for thousands, and listened to wondrous words of a new covenant with God. And now, Jesus had risen from the dead. What do you do when the man you followed died on a cross, but now is alive?

For them and for us, this time period known as the Easter Season is the bridge between the days of living with Jesus and the days of putting into action the teachings of Jesus. During these days before Jesus' ascension into heaven, the disciples heard some new words: Go and tell; Spread the gospel; Feed my sheep. We, too, hear these words. With the disciples, we remember that there are other sheep that do not know the love of God. We cannot lock ourselves into our private lives, just as the disciples attempted, out of fear, to lock themselves into a room. We hear the same words: Go and tell; Spread the gospel; Feed my sheep. The Easter words – Christ is risen – cannot and should not stop on Easter Sunday.

During the remaining weeks of this Easter Season, we should reflect upon the life of Jesus. Think back to Advent and Christmas. Hear again the words of angels – a Savior is born for you! Watch a man heal lepers and bring Lazarus to life. Sit at Jesus' feet and listen to words about a God who loves prodigal children. Grieve at the foot of a cross. Gaze in fear and trembling at an empty tomb. Shout that Jesus Christ is risen!!

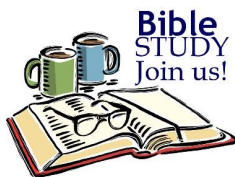
But we can't stop there. We have to prepare ourselves for the work that is to come with the gift of the Spirit on Pentecost. Those same words that the disciples heard before Jesus' ascension into heaven will be words that we will hear and must act on. Go and tell! Spread the gospel! Feed my sheep! There is much work to be done.

### SMALL GROUP NEWS

At Faith Lutheran, there is a Bible Study or small group for everyone.

Brew Crew is doing a study on Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah, Mondays from 7-8 pm at Ironwood Brewery, now until Memorial Day. Bring your Bible and join us at any time!

For other news regarding small groups or Bible Studies, please speak with Pastor Schoech.



Micah Nord	May 2
Connie Pilz	May 3
Donna Cawby	May 4
Jennifer Kasper	May 6
John Stingely	May 6
Dan Kasper	May 8
Marc-Anthony Nicholson	May 8
Sherri Nord	May 8
Marilyn Lindner	May 11
Jon Beagley	May 13
Thomas Nimtz	May 15
August Nord	May 24
Don Ballard	May 24
Julia Roesler	May 25
David Allwardt	May 29



**Faith Lutheran  
Church**

753 N. Calumet Ave.  
Valparaiso, IN 46383

Email:  
office@faithmemorial.net



**DATES TO REMEMBER**

(all events below will be  
held at church)

**MARK MAKERS**

**MAY 2**

**6:30PM**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**MAY 7**

**7:00PM**

**SEWING SEEDS OF LOVE**

**MAY 10 & 24**

**9:00AM**

**WOMEN WANTING**

**WISDOM**

**MAY 16**

**6:30PM**

**PENTECOST POTLUCH**

**MAY 20**

**11:30 AM (AFTER EDUCA-  
TION HOUR/SUNDAY  
SCHOOL)**

**FAITH MEMORIAL WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

**Prayer and Praise Service, May 3, 6:15pm Contemporary Worship**

**The Sixth Sunday of Easter, May 6, 9:00am Holy Communion**

**Prayer and Praise Service, May 10, 6:15pm Contemporary Worship**

**The Seventh Sunday of Easter, May 13, 9:00am Morning Prayer**

**The Day of Pentecost, May 20, 9:00am Holy Communion**

**The Holy Trinity, May 27, 9:00am Holy Communion**

**The Second Sunday of Pentecost, June 3, 9:00am Holy Communion**

**The Third Sunday after Pentecost, June 10, 9:00am Service of Word & Prayer**

**The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, June 17, 9:00am Holy Communion**

**The Nativity of St. John the Baptist, June 24, 9:00am Holy Communion**

