

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

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WWW.FAITHVALPO.ORG

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



Who was that masked man?

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.' (Matt. 25:34-40)

The Lone Ranger, Zorro, the Caped Crusader... these characters had several things in common. While others ran from danger and difficult situations, these individuals ran toward them. They found ways to help others, when no one else would or could. Their actions often involved great personal risk and sacrifice. They accomplished their goals through a powerful mix of compassion, belief in something bigger, and being willing to think and act outside the box. It is worth mentioning that despite standing out from the crowd and having names that included the word "Lone," these individuals rarely did not have at least one helper walking beside them. Oh and one other thing...much like many of us today, they all wore masks!

One of the great ironies I always found with masked heroes was that their masks really did not hide their identities very well. Whenever someone asked a question like, "who was that masked man," you sort of had to suspend your disbelief. How could they not know? However, even if most people in these stories somehow did not recognize the hero's face, they still had a pretty good idea of what these individuals stood for. At the very least, people took notice and started asking questions. In some cases, they even began to share the hero's beliefs and to take actions toward the same cause.

Now for all the attributes of our favorite fictional characters, you might say that the greatest real character, both masked and unmasked is God. For centuries, God has worked in ways that are both visible and hidden to us. Sadly, even with the revealing of himself in the person of Jesus Christ, many people still do not recognize Him. For those of us who have been Christians most of our lives, we might ask ourselves, how could people not know? Yet, God's character and what He stands for is indeed there for all to see. From the manger to the cross to the empty tomb, in ways that stand out and in ways that we might least expect, God's love and mercy are there on display. Where others would not and could not act to save sinful humanity, our Lord sacrificed and took action on behalf of us all. Even Jesus' detractors have had to take notice and start asking questions. Some of them have even come to believe in Him, and answered his call to follow Him and His example.

So what does this mean for us? How are we, who are blessed by the Father to know Jesus and who will inherit the kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world, called to act? For starters we are called to feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, clothe the needy, visit the sick and the imprisoned, and show compassion for the least of those around us. After all, Jesus says, "as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me," Right now, we are very aware that many people are dealing with things like isolation, illness, need, etc. However, these conditions are not unique to life during COVID-19. These problems persist constantly throughout our fallen world. We may have to get a little more creative at times from behind our masks and computer screens. Yet, whether it is now or in the future with different challenges, God places new opportunities in front of us every day to live out the calling that he has given us to run toward people and situations that others might not and share with them God's love and the message of the gospel. In many cases, people may never see our faces, literally or figuratively. Yet hopefully, our actions will get them asking the question "who was that masked man or woman?" Hopefully, we will indeed be able to give them the chance to get to know us, but even more so, hopefully they get the opportunity to know the One we represent. Even if they never learn our names, it is important for us to look for ways to place the name of the God who truly helped them in front of them, planting seeds for the future, so that one day they too can believe in Him, and answer his call to follow Him and His example.

On behalf of the church and all those who may never know your names, thank you to all of you who continue to look for ways to help and support those around you, year in and year out. Thank you for using the gifts God has given you in various efforts including worship, your everyday jobs, supporting families and children, making masks, food donations, blood drives, phone calls, and so much more. Thank you for serving and being the face of Christ to our community and to each other. Keep up the good work. May God bless you and to Him be the Glory!

Pastor Eric Schoech

Pastor Eric Schoech



Sewing Seeds of Love has been busy during this quarantine. The ladies have been making masks. 50 masks will be delivered to Porter Regional Hospital by May 22. The ladies will continue to make masks. If you need one contact Dorothy Kehe. When the church services return the masks will also be available in the Narthex.

Stay well, be kind, see you soon.



A NOTE TO OUR ASSISTING MINISTERS

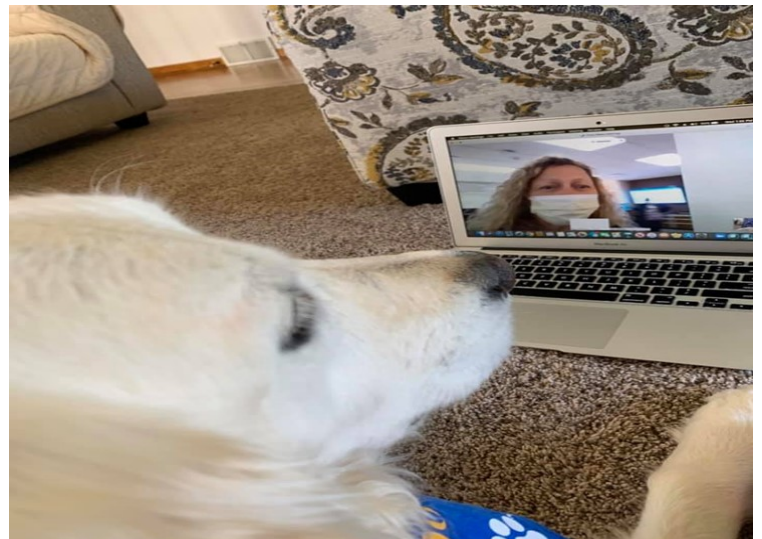
During this time of social distancing, our Assisting Ministers will have the summer off unless specifically contacted by Becky.

Please refer to the insert in this newsletter for specific information on building use, and worship, communion, sharing of the peace, and more as we transition back to services inside the church during COVID 19.

The need for food and monetary donations to our area's food pantries is greater now than ever. Hilltop Food Pantry and Immanuel Lutheran Food Pantry are both grateful for any donations they receive. (Pictured: Hilltop Food Pantry)

Hilltop Food Pantry: 606 Union St., Valparaiso—477-4222 X 251
Immanuel Food Pantry: 1700 Monticello Park Dr., Valparaiso
462-8207 X 226

During the COVID 19 crisis Lutheran Church Charities Comfort dogs and their handlers are still working. They make virtual visits and also visit patients and first responders in hospitals and nursing homes from outside the windows.



THOUGHTS FROM THE DEACONESS

"I Am the Vine; You Are the Branches."
John 15:5

A wonderful sight-seeing trip in Northern California is the Napa Valley. One loses count of the number of wineries that are open for tasting and tours. The valley is surrounded by foothills, with one winery positioned higher than the valley. From its outside patio, the view is outstanding – rows upon rows of grapevines of varying shades of green depending on the variety. In the fall, during the crush, the air is filled with the odor of grapes.

As any dedicated gardener knows, if you want good grapes, you must be brutal with the pruning shears. The thick vine comes out of the ground and can stretch its branches in all directions. Too many branches yield more leaves than fruit, so the vine dresser cuts away all the excess and leaves only a few branches. Any branch that is not healthy is also cut away. Before the spring growth, the vine looks like a skeleton – naked and bare. By crush time, the branches are difficult to view. They are covered in leaves and large, juicy bunches of grapes.

Jesus takes this familiar image and applies it to himself and us. He is the vine; we are the branches; and God is the vine dresser. In the same way that the branch will bear no grapes if not attached to the vine, we cannot bear the fruit of love if we are not attached to Jesus. We must be in constant contact with the Vine. We remain in contact through worship, Bible study, the sacraments, prayer, the community of believers. Without those, Jesus cannot feed us and enable us to love. And in the same way that the vine dresser must prune in order to get the best grapes, God allows struggles and trials into our lives as ways to prune away the dead growth and bring about the most wonderful fruit.

When we bear fruit – when we love and forgive – we bring glory to God. God becomes the focus and center of all that we are and all that we do.

"As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me."
John 15:4b



Marj Elam	June 2
Paul Grossnickle	June 10
Gabriel Beagley	June 12
Inge Nimtz	June 22
Jay Gottlieber	June 23
Fran Marton	June 25
Kristin Busch	June 29

If we have left out your birthday please call the office at (219) 462-7684 or email office@faithmemorial.net.



This has been a terribly stressful time for our family, friends and neighbors who are in nursing or assisted living homes. The dogs and handlers of the LCC Comfort Dog Ministry are doing their best to visit through windows as well as virtually via ZOOM Facetime and other social media.

**Faith Lutheran
Church**

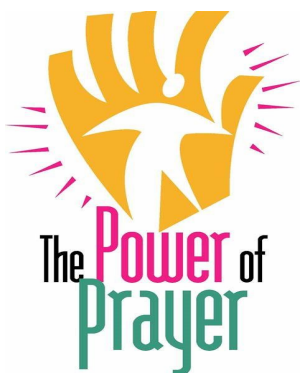
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**FAITH LUTHERAN
PRAYER CHAIN**

Prayer requests may be
made by contacting
Jan Dixon:
(219) 344-2963 or
jdixon7572@gmail.com



FAITH WORSHIP SCHEDULE

The Day of Pentecost, Sunday, May 31, 9:00am PARKING LOT ONLY

The Holy Trinity, Sunday, June 7, 9:00am PARKING LOT ONLY

The Second Sunday after Pentecost, June 14, 9:00am inside and parking lot

The Third Sunday after Pentecost, June 21, 9:00am inside and parking lot

The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, June 28, 9:00am inside and parking lot.

For parking lot services tune your radio to FM99.1.

