

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*



## The Best Is Yet to Come

**Jeremiah 29:11-13** *For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for wholeness and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.* <sup>12</sup> *Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.* <sup>13</sup> *You will seek me and find me. When you seek me with all your heart.*

God has a plan. He has had that plan from before the beginning of the foundations of the world, and that plan includes each one of us. Unfortunately, the devil and our own sinful desires often like to make plans of their own. God's plans for us involve wholeness, but our own plans do not, even if we may like they do. We get distracted. We get self-absorbed. We do things that are evil. These things drive a wedge in our relationship with God and others and prevent us from seeking God with all of our heart. However, this is once again where God's plans for wholeness come in.

Throughout Lent and now Easter, we have been celebrating God's continued plan for bringing about that wholeness. For centuries the people of Israel had awaited the Savior, knowing that whatever they face, good or bad, *the best was yet to come*. In many ways, Christ's arrival may not have been what many expected, but its effect was profound. Through His life, death, and resurrection, Christ has given us all a new hope for a new future spent in joyful relationship with God. We will be made whole once and for all. In this way, we truly know *the best is indeed yet to come!*

However, God's desire to begin making us whole with Him, is not something that is limited to some time off in the distant future. When it comes to our relationship with God and the rest of the Body of Christ, God's desire for the future begins right now. Through the power of God's grace and his Holy Spirit at work in our hearts, God has already set great plans in motion for us, as he calls on us to call on Him and seek Him with all of our heart. The question then is what are some of the doors through which God calls us to enter in order to seek and be closer to Him? I think the early church in Acts might give us some powerful suggestions.

Acts 2:42-47 tells us that in seeking to grow together in Christ the family of God,  
<sup>42</sup>devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. <sup>43</sup> And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. <sup>44</sup> And all who believed were together and had all things in common. <sup>45</sup> And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup> And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Witness, worship, Bible Study, fellowship, prayer, giving, and service, these are some of the many doors through which our Lord helps us to grow and become more deeply connected to Him and to each other in the present. By the grace of God, we can start to experience a taste of the restoration that is to come, today, together!

This is where our church-wide event called, *The Best is Yet to Come!* comes in. This is a special opportunity for us as a church to set aside a particular period of time in which to seek to grow in our relationship with God and with each other in a unique way. Starting April 10, in our Sunday sermons we will be looking more closely at some of the doors our Lord has called us to walk through. During this time, we will also be encouraging the entire congregation to be reading the book, *The Best is Yet to Come: 7 Doors of Spiritual Growth*. I am also personally challenging every member of the congregation to join one of our small groups that will be discussing this book and topic during this period of time. While none of us may know exactly what to expect when the Spirit works through an event like this, I believe that it can be something powerful. This is why all those who have helped to prepare this event don't want anyone to be left out. So please, join us in this special time of growing together. After all, *The Best is Yet to Come!*

In Christ,

Pastor Eric Schaeck



# The Best is Yet to Come!

Jesus has opened the joyful door of an eternal relationship with Him! In doing so he has also opened several other doors that allow us to grow spiritually in Him. Join us as we seek to explore and walk through those doors together as a congregation, by studying God's Word using the book, *The Best is Yet to Come: 7 Doors of Spiritual Growth* by John Kieschnick.

- **Books and Small Group Signups** are available before and after church or through the church office.
- **Books are on sale for \$8.** A free small group study guide will later be provided.
- **Small groups** will meet between April 3 and June 25, on an every other week or weekly basis depending on the group.
- **Small group leaders** will be contacting you to invite you to be a part of a specific small group based on the availability you have indicated during the signup.

**This is a whole congregational growth activity and we don't want anyone to miss out. So sign up today!**

If you have further questions please contact the church office, or talk to Pastor or a member of our Education and Fellowship Action Team.

## SAVE THE DATE!

**WHAT: OLD FASHIONED TEA PARTY**  
**WHEN: SUNDAY, MAY 1 FROM 2:00-4:00PM**  
**WHERE: GATHERING SPACE,  
FAITH MEMORIAL**  
**TICKETS: \$10**

**Why? This is a Thrivent Action Team Project raising money to provide noise reduction panels in the Gathering Space to improve the acoustics during meetings and Bible studies.**

**Tickets will go on sale and invitations provided in April. You are encouraged to invite friends and family.**



**If you wish to bake and donate food, please see committee members for recipes and ideas.**

## MEETINGS AND SMALL GROUPS

Monday, April 4	6:30pm-Finance Committee
	7:00pm-Board of Directors
Wednesday, April 6	6:30 pm-Mark Makers
Monday, April 11	6:00pm-Education & Fellowship
Thursday, April 14	9:00am Sewing Seeds of Love
Wednesday, April 20	6:30pm Women Wanting Wisdom
Thursday, April 28	9:00am Sewing Seeds of Love



"Give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day.  
Teach a man to fish and you can sell  
him all of your old gear on eBay!"

## THOUGHTS FROM THE DEACONESS

So . . . now what?

Christ is risen! Alleluia!  
He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

So . . . now what do we do?

Mary Magdalene, Simon Peter, Joanna, Thomas – and all the rest of the followers of Jesus must have been thinking the same thing. They had followed Jesus for three years. They had witnessed healings, people raised from the dead, food for thousands, and had heard wondrous words of a new covenant with God. And now, Jesus is alive after a terrible death. What do you do now?

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 this time, 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 this Easter Season, 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 his feet and listen to words about a God who loves sinners. Grieve at the foot of a cross. Gaze in fear and trembling at an empty tomb. Shout that Jesus Christ is risen!

But let's not stop there. We need 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. Go and tell! Spread the Gospel! Feed my sheep!

There is much work to be done and no time to waste.

## CARE COMMITTEE NEWS

**The small bingo prize items collected last month were enthusiastically received by the folks at Aperion. Thanks so much for your generous donations.**

**The April "cart collection" will be for the *United Way Reading Buddies Program*. These 12-16 inch stuffed animals are given to first and second grade students for use in Valparaiso classrooms. Students read to their buddies for a minimum of 15 minutes a day, helping with reading fluency, confidence and comprehension. Animals are also used by school counselors as counseling tools.**

### **Ways you can help:**

- 1. Donate one or more stuffed animals and place in the cart at church.**
- 2. If you prefer, you can make a check payable to the United Way and write "Reading Buddies" on the memo line.**

**Each donated amount of \$5.00 equals one Reading Buddy. Thanks for considering helping Valpo students by donating to this program.**



### **GREAT LAKES SOUND CHORUS FRIENDS AND FAMILY PERFORMANCE**

**All are cordially invited to a Friends and Family Performance by Great Lakes Sound Chorus (Sweet Adelines) on Sunday, April 24 at 2:00pm at Faith Memorial.**

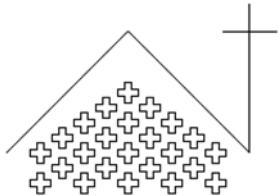
**Great Lakes Sound Chorus uses our Fellowship Hall on Tuesday evenings to practice for their competitions and share their love of singing. In a few weeks they will be joining the rest of the regional Sweet Adeline Choruses to compete in Appleton, Wisconsin. Everyone is welcome. For questions call Patti at (219) 464-9245 or email autenrieths@comcast.net.**



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Lutheran Church

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Email:  
[office@faithmemorial.net](mailto:office@faithmemorial.net)



**DON'T FORGET!.....**  
*On May 22 of this year the congregation of Faith Memorial will celebrate our 60th anniversary! We will enjoy a pot luck luncheon at noon after worship services and Bible Study. Mark your calendars and watch for more news in this newsletter and the weekly church bulletins!*



**FAITH MEMORIAL WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

- The Second Sunday of Easter, April 3, 9:00 Holy Communion
- The Third Sunday of Easter, April 10, 9:00 Morning Prayer
- The Fourth Sunday of Easter, April 17, 9:00 Holy Communion
- The Fifth Sunday of Easter, April 24, 9:00 Morning Prayer
- The Sixth Sunday of Easter, May 1, 9:00 Holy Communion
- The Seventh Sunday of Easter, May 8, 9:00 Morning Prayer
- The Day of Pentecost, May 15, 9:00 Holy Communion
- The Holy Trinity, May 22, 9:00 Holy Communion
- The Second Sunday after Pentecost, May 29, 9:00, Morning Prayer

*Christ  
is  
Risen!*

