

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 with-  
in and throughout our community*



## Valuing Marriage to Death: The Story of St. Valentine

**Ephesians 5:1-2** *Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. <sup>2</sup> And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God*

Heart shaped cards, candy, and loving gestures, these are the things most of us think of when we think of Valentine's Day. Even in a world that now often defines love very differently and does not value marriage in the same way, few people probably think about stoning and decapitation being a part of what many consider the most romantic day of the year. This being the case, the story of the man might surprise you. In an interview with CBN, Father Frank O'Gara of Whitefriars Street Church in Dublin, Ireland, tells the story of St. Valentine, this way...

*He (St. Valentine) was a Roman Priest at a time when there was an emperor called Claudias who persecuted the church at that particular time. He also had an edict that prohibited the marriage of young people. This was based on the hypothesis that unmarried soldiers fought better than married soldiers because married soldiers might be afraid of what might happen to them or their wives or families if they died."*

*"I think we must bear in mind that it was a very permissive society in which Valentine lived," says Father O'Gara. "Polygamy would have been much more popular than just one woman and one man living together. And yet some of them seemed to be attracted to Christian faith. But obviously the church thought that marriage was very sacred between one man and one woman for their life and that it was to be encouraged. And so it immediately presented the problem to the Christian church of what to do about this."*

*The idea of encouraging them to marry within the Christian church was what Valentine was about. And he secretly married them because of the edict."<sup>(1)</sup>*

Valentine was later caught, imprisoned, and tortured for acting against the Emperor's edict. While in jail there are several stories about Valentine's actions. These stories include a healing of the daughter of one of the men who was supposed to judge Valentine. This resulted in the man's conversion, and supposedly one of the last messages Valentine wrote was to this man's daughter, signing it, "from your Valentine." While we may not know for certain the accuracy of all the details of this part of the story, it does appear that for his defiant stand for marriage Valentine was ultimately sentenced to a three-part execution including beating, stoning, and ending with his being beheaded. In the same interview mentioned above, Father O'Gara had this to say about Valentine's grisly death,

*"What Valentine means to me as a priest, 'Is that there comes a time where you have to lay your life upon the line for what you believe. And with the power of the Holy Spirit we can do that—even to the point of death.'"*

*"If Valentine were here today, he would say to married couples that there comes a time where you're going to have to suffer. It's not going to be easy to maintain your commitment and your vows in marriage. Don't be surprised if the 'gushing' love that you have for someone changes to something less gushing but maybe much more mature. And the question is, is that young person ready for that?"*

*"So on the day of the marriage they have to take that into context, Love—human love and sexuality is wonderful, and blessed by God—but also the shadow of the cross. That's what Valentine means to me."*

I think Father O'Gara's words are well said, not just for married couples, but for all of us. When it comes to love, we all live in the shadow of the cross. Our love is meant to go deeper than the superficial and self-centered love we see so often. Godly, love and service can be bloody difficult. St. Valentine reminds us of that.

Moreover, Valentine's sacrifice in the name of Christian marriage points us to the greatest sacrifice and marriage of all. When Christ died on the cross and rose again, He sacrificed himself so that we, the people of God might be His bride. Christ, our bridegroom, shed His blood so that we, His bride, could be covered in the brilliant garment of His righteousness, and remain with Him forever. Talk about a Valentine's day gift or a wedding present! That sure beats chocolate!

Hopefully, knowing the story of St. Valentine's sacrifice and more importantly that of Christ, will make us all think a little differently about relationships, marriage, and sacrifice this year as we celebrate the love we have in Christ Jesus. May our love always flow from and resemble His.

In Christ,

*Pastor Eric Schoech*

Pastor Eric Schoech

(1) <http://www1.cbn.com/st-valentine-real-story>



### Did you know.....?

In 1945 World War II left an estimated one-fifth of the world's Lutherans homeless. Here in the United States, Lutheran churches in at least 20 states mobilized to help in Europe. Much has changed in nearly 75 years. But in thousands of congregations, in millions of offerings and in uncounted prayers, US Lutherans continue to support Lutheran World Relief's work.

Lutheran World Relief was there in the late 1940's when 800,000 Palestinians were forced from their homes by the creation of the state of Israel...in the early 1950's when Hong Kong, Korea and Bangladesh and much of Asia was mired in strife...during the 1970's and '80's when civil wars and drought plagued Africa.

Today, Lutheran World Relief operates in East and West Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Middle East, helping some of the world's poorest communities build the resilience they need to thrive through a new agency called Lutheran World Relief.

(source: Lutheran World Relief website, [lwr.org](http://lwr.org).)

### KEEP ON ROLLING!

Join us for an afternoon of bowling fun at Inman's Bowling & Recreation Center on Sunday, February 24. The pins will be set at 2:00pm, so we hope to see you there.



### BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

Alexis Brandt	February 6
Patsy Berndt	February 7
Anna Price	February 7
Deb Porter	February 12
Carroll Morris	February 15
Kenny Frank	February 22

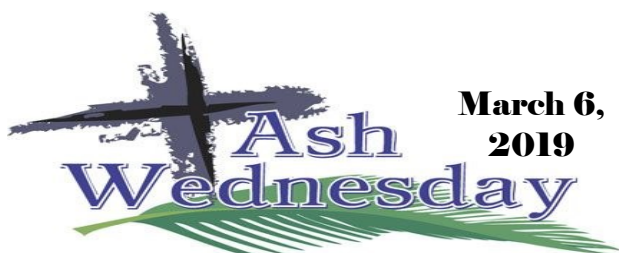
If we have left someone out, please call the office at (219) 462-7684 or email [office@faiththmemorial.net](mailto:office@faiththmemorial.net)



Faith Lutheran will continue our tradition of donating corn muffins and corn bread to the Hilltop Soups Dinner on February 27. There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex. Please note that the location has changed and the event is now being held at Harre Union on the VU campus. If you need assistance in delivering your food to this site please see Nancy Kickbush or call the church office (462-7684)

### SPRING 2019 CHOIR SCHEDULE

January 27:	rehearsal, 11:35am-12:05pm
February 3:	rehearsal, 11:35am-12:05pm
February 10:	rehearsal, 11:35am-12:05pm
<b>February 17:</b>	<b>Sing, 6th Sunday after Epiphany (9 am)</b>
February 24:	rehearsal, 11:35am-12:05pm
March 3:	rehearsal, 11:35am-12:05pm
March 10:	rehearsal, 11:35am-12:05pm
<b>March 17:</b>	<b>Sing, 2nd Sunday in Lent (9 am)</b>
March 24:	rehearsal, 11:35am-12:05pm
March 31:	rehearsal, 11:35am-12:05pm
April 7:	rehearsal, 11:35am-12:05pm
April 14:	rehearsal, 11:35am-12:05pm
<b>April 21:</b>	<b>Sing, Easter Sunday (8:00 &amp; 10:45am)</b>



March 6,  
2019

Ash  
Wednesday

## THOUGHTS FROM THE DEACONESS

*"Yokes"*

What is the heavy burden that you carry? What keeps you awake at night? What saps your energy and fills the days with dread?

unpaid bills, health, dead dreams,  
a job that brings no joy, natural disasters, death,  
random shootings, care-giving,  
children who are distant physically and emotionally,  
a nation that can't find a path of working together,  
faith that has been shaken,  
injustice,  
unfulfilled hopes,  
emotional or physical scars from abuse,  
difficult co-workers  
Does God even care about me?

**"COME TO ME, ALL WHO LABOR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN,  
AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST.  
TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU, AND LEARN FROM ME;  
FOR I AM GENTLE AND LOWLY IN HEART,  
AND YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.  
FOR MY YOKE IS EASY, AND MY BURDEN IS LIGHT."**

*Matthew 11:28-30*

How intriguing that the yoke and burden of following Jesus and working to spread the Gospel is a far easier and lighter burden than any we or the world have placed on ourselves.

**Beginning March 1 Becky Graef will no longer be the organist for regular Sunday worship services. The Board of Directors is currently in the process of hiring someone to fill that role.**

LENTEN SUPPERS WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAYS DURING LENT (MARCH 13, 20, 27, AND APRIL 3 AND 10. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP OUT, WATCH THE NARTHEX FOR SIGN UP SHEETS OR SPEAK WITH PAUL GROSSNICKLE.

**Lenten**  
  
**Soup  
&  
Fellowship**

### GRAPE CLUSTER VALENTINE'S PARTY

The annual Valentines Party for Faith's congregation will be hosted by the Grape Cluster on Saturday, February 16 beginning at 7:30pm. As always, it will be the home of Bruce and Marilyn Lindner. (459 E. 900 N., Valpo).



**Dress will be casual, munchies and beverages provided by the cluster. High school age or older are welcome, come alone or bring a friend!**

*Directions from Faith: turn right (east on highway 6, go about 4 miles past Anderson Winery and turn left (north) on 500 E. Go one mile, when road ends turn left (west on 900 N. Go 4 miles to home on north side of road. (gray house).*

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**2019 LENT AND  
EASTER SERVICES**

**ASH WEDNESDAY—**  
March 6, 7:00pm Holy  
Communion

**WEDNESDAYS DURING  
LENT—** March 13, 20,  
27, April 3 and 10,  
7:00pm Evening Prayer.  
(A light supper in the  
Fellowship Hall will be  
held at 6:00pm )

**PASSION SUNDAY—**  
April 14, 9:00am Holy  
Communion.

**MAUNDY THURSDAY—**  
April 18, 7:00pm Holy  
Communion.

**GOOD FRIDAY—**April  
19, 3:00 Liturgy of the  
Cross & 7:00 Tenebrae.

**THE RESURRECTION OF  
OUR LORD—**Sunday,  
April 21, 8:00 and  
10:45 am Holy Com-  
munion.

**FAITH WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany, February 3, 9:00am Holy Communion

Prayer & Praise, Thursday, February 7, 6:15pm Contemporary Worship

The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany, February 10, 9:00am Morning Prayer

Prayer & Praise, Thursday, February 14, 6:15pm Contemporary Worship

The Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany, February 17, 9:00am Holy Communion

Prayer & Praise, Thursday, February 21, 6:15pm Contemporary Worship

The Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany, February 24, 9:00am Morning Prayer

Prayer & Praise, Thursday, February 28, 6:15pm Contemporary Worship

The Transfiguration of Our Lord, March 3, 9:00am Holy Communion

Ash Wednesday, March 6, 7:00pm Holy Communion

The First Sunday in Lent, March 10, 9:00am Morning Prayer

The First Wednesday in Lent, March 13, 7:00pm Evening Prayer

The Second Sunday in Lent, March 17, 9:00am Holy Communion

The Second Wednesday in Lent, March 20, 7:00pm Evening Prayer

The Third Sunday in Lent, March 24, 9:00am Morning Prayer

The Third Wednesday in Lent, March 27, 7:00pm Evening Prayer

The Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 31, 9:00am Holy Communion

*3 things will last forever  
- faith, hope, & love -  
& the greatest of these is  
love.*

**I CORINTHIANS 13:13**