

FAITH MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

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Trail Blazers

Micah 4: 1-5 *It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it. And many nations shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths"... For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever. (Read also all of chapter 4).*

As you may have noticed Micah Nord, his team of Boy Scouts, and others have been making progress on a prayer labyrinth, behind the church. They have also been working on a trail, for prayer, meditation, and which may one day connect to a campfire/worship area that can be used by Scouts and other groups our church seeks to support.

All this hard work got me thinking about the subject of trailblazing and paths. If you have ever helped to carve a trail for the first time it can be a lot of work. Thorny bushes, uneven ground, dense underbrush, all these things and more can certainly get in the way. Once the trail has been carved, one important part of maintaining it is that it be traveled regularly. Regular footsteps help to carve and flatten out the ground. Regular passers-by actually help to keep the overgrowth at bay. Also, those who travel the trail frequently know the trail best and can give the best guidance to others. While still in its early stages, with regular use I believe the new path behind the church will be a very nice addition, and I look forward to taking advantage of it on a regular basis.

Ironically another trailblazer was a prophet named Micah. This Micah served the Lord during some very difficult times. Israel had once again turned from God and had lost their way, resulting in some serious consequences. Part of Micah's task was to proclaim God's judgment on the people of Israel so they would recognize and repent of their disloyalty to God. However, his purpose was also to proclaim the hope of the great restoration that was and is to come, and to lead those who would hear him back to the path of faith. Micah's path was not an easy one, but it was an important one. The message Micah preached to Israel, was ultimately intended for all nations, and it still applies to us today.

Despite all of life's distractions, as Christians each of us is called to walk in the name of the Lord. Going to the house of God, or in our earthly context going to church on Sunday, is just a part of our Christian walk. Every moment of every day, God calls us to constantly be in relationship with Him, *"that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths."* Time spent reading God's Word, talking to God while walking a prayer trail, caring for others, and various other forms of living out our Faith, all help keep our feet on a God pleasing path. The weeds and thorns of sin will still try to overgrow our path, but the more regularly we walk the path God sets before us, the better we will be able to continue to talk in God's ways, even when the weeds of life are most aggressive.

Of course none of this would be possible if Christ had not already blazed a path for us in a way we could not. Jesus is our ultimate trail blazer. Through His journey to the cross and His resurrection, Jesus has carved for us the path to salvation, and opened for us the gates of heaven. In fact, Jesus describes Himself as *"the way"* to a restored relationship with God. Thanks to Jesus we and all believers will enjoy the joys of the eternal future, described in Micah 4:1-5, and know what it is to *"walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever."* Until that day, we also have the joy of knowing that Christ will be with us every step of the way in our current walk of faith, as He helps place our footsteps firmly in His own. Life will have its obstacles, and sin will likely cause plenty of bumps in our path, but through Christ and the power of His forgiveness not only is our future destination already secure, but our new relationship with God has already begun. So until the days described in Micah chapter 4, may our every step give glory to God and guide others to do the same.

In Christ,

Pastor Eric Schoech



ADULT CHOIR

A new thing is happening with the Adult Choir at church! Due to a number of issues, including work schedules and time commitments, the Adult Choir will be meeting at a different time this fall. Rehearsals will be on Sundays from 11:35am-12:05pm (immediately following the Education Hour). The choir will rehearse for two Sundays in a row and sing on the following (third) Sunday.

Here is the schedule:

Rehearse on 9/14 and 9/21, from 11:35am-12:05pm.

Sing on 9/28

Rehearse on 10/19 and 10/26, from 11:35am-12:05pm.

Sing on 11/2

Rehearse on 11/9 and 11/16, from 11:35am-12:05pm.

Sing on 11/23

Rehearse on 11/30 and 12/7, from 11:35am-12:05pm.

Sing on 12/14.

Deb Porter and Becky Graef will be sharing the accompanying and directing responsibilities.

If you have never sung in a choir, but wanted to try, this is a perfect opportunity. The music will be simpler and easier to learn, since rehearsals will only be 30 minutes long, instead of 90. You only need to commit to three weeks at a time and may commit for only one set of three Sundays or for two or three or all four sets.

A choir will also be singing for the two Christmas services. Those rehearsals will immediately follow the Wednesday evening Advent services. Rehearsals will be from 7:45pm-8:30pm and will be exclusively focused on music for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Here is the schedule:

Rehearse on 12/3; 12/10 and 12/17, from 7:45pm-8:30pm. Sing on 12/24 and 12/25.

You may commit to every time the choir sings, or just the Sundays, or just Christmas. If you have any questions, please speak with Deb Porter or Becky Graef or Bruce Berner.

Sing Praises to God!



THOUGHTS FROM THE DEACONESS

"Walking is falling forward. Each step we take is an arrested plunge, a collapse averted, a disaster braked. In this way, to walk becomes an act of faith." Paul Salopek

Paul Salopek is on a seven year quest to trace the spread of humans across the world. When completed, his "Out of Eden Walk" project will cover 21,000 miles. He is planning to walk every mile. (The National Geographic magazine is chronicling the walk.) If there is any person who does and will grasp what walking entails, it will be Paul.

Any parent who has watched a child take their first step, fully understands that walking may also mean collapsing. Any of us who have seen news reports about soldiers in rehab regaining the ability to walk also understand that walking may mean falling. Most, if not all of us, have taken a step that put us down on the ground, rather than forward to the next step. We know that we must get up again. Feet must be firmly placed on the ground and a second step attempted.

As Christians, we are on a walk. We label it "the walk of faith" or "the journey of faith". When we were baptized, most of us had sponsors who promised for us that we would stay with this walk. At Confirmation, we pledged on our own to commit to this walk. Martin Luther reminds us that we should daily remember our baptism, our promise, and continue the walk.

This walk of faith is not easy. Following the path that Christ took is contrary to the path that the devil puts before us. The devil's path is easy. The path of Christ is hard. The devil's path has us focus on ourselves, our wants, our dreams. The path of Christ has us focus on others, on their wants, on their dreams. The devil's path turns us in the opposite direction from God. The path of Christ leads directly to God.

Our congregation is also on a walk of faith. As members, we have committed to that path. We will step out in faith and we will fall. The devil's path, at times, will be more attractive. But as with our own personal journey, Christ will be with us. Christ will help us get up, place our feet back on his path, and enable us to take the next step.

So we are always of good courage.

*We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord,
for we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Cor. 5:6-7*

VBS 2014

Thanks to the efforts of Sherri Nord from Faith Memorial and Pastor Steve Driver from Immanuel, this year's Vacation Bible School was a great success!

There are photos of the kick-off dinner held here at Faith posted in the Narthex.

Thank you Sherri and Pastor Steve! A great time was had by all!



SCHOOL KITS FOR MATEHUELA

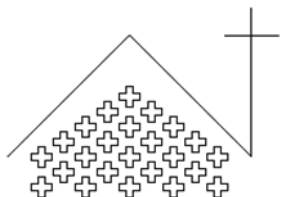
Back to school is a special time here at Faith. This time of year is when we collect School Kits to send to our mission in Matehuala, Mexico. A sample kit and lists of items needed for each kit are on a table in the narthex. Items should be placed in a ziplock bag and returned to church by August 17. Monetary donations are always welcome as well.



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**FOOD PANTRY
DONATIONS**

The condiments we collected during the month of July were delivered to the Duneland Food Pantry.

During August we will concentrate on collecting our School Kits for the children at the mission in Matehuala, Mexico.

Watch the bulletin and the next newsletter for food pantry collections for this fall and holiday season.



FAITH MEMORIAL WORSHIP SCHEDULE

The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost, August 3, 9:00am Holy Communion

The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost, August 10, 9:00am Morning Prayer

The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost, August 17, 9:00am Holy Communion

St. Bartholomew, Apostle, August 24, 9:00 am Holy Communion

The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost, August 31, 9:00am, Holy Communion

The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost, September 7, 9:00am Holy Communion

Holy Cross Day, September 14, 9:00am Holy Communion

St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist, September 21, 9:00am Holy Communion

The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost, September 28, 9:00am Word and Prayer

