

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*



## The More Things Change...

**Psalm 90:1-17** Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. <sup>2</sup> Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. <sup>3</sup> You return man to dust and say, "Return, O children of man!" <sup>4</sup> For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night. <sup>5</sup> You sweep them away as with a flood; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning: <sup>6</sup> in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers... <sup>13</sup> Return, O LORD! How long? Have pity on your servants! <sup>14</sup> Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. <sup>15</sup> Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, and for as many years as we have seen evil. <sup>16</sup> Let your work be shown to your servants, and your glorious power to their children. <sup>17</sup> Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!

Another year has come and gone. We have had some exciting new changes this past year. We paid off and burned the mortgage. The Valparaiso Christian Academy moved into our building and we began the exciting new process of partnering together in ministry. For these and several other reasons we have reason to give thanks to God for this past year.

I'd imagine many of you are looking ahead to some exciting changes in the next year as well. New grades, new schools, new job, new adventures in retirement, may all be in the near future for you or your loved ones. Maybe you have plans to make some other long needed or long awaited changes. Perhaps you are just hoping this next year will be better than the last.

There may also be some less desired changes on the horizon as well. Perhaps you are looking at another year, that is likely to be much like the last one, and that is not an inviting prospect. Each of us goes through cycles of good and bad, sometimes several times in the same year. We think we have one thing conquered or managed, only to have the same or another problem take its place. Sometimes even for all our cycling, (or one might even say hard peddling) we just feel stuck. As I look across the world and the lives of various people I know both inside and outside our congregation, I am reminded of the phrase, "the more things change the more they stay the same."

See if any of these sound familiar: Hard challenges or decisions at work; a steady flow of tasks, paperwork, and deadlines; financial woes; the car, house, or other repairs that keep on coming; a stubborn behavior pattern; the challenges of illness and bodies not working like we want them to; difficult choices with the care of a loved one; dealing with the ongoing aftermath of a loss; living alone again or for the first time; reliving or living the wounds in a past or present relationship; finding yourself unable to deal on your own with everything coming your way; searching and hoping for someone to help, as old and new challenges arise; being depressed by lists like these and items I did not even include here.

If you don't think you know someone who is struggling with some of these things now, you probably have in the past. You may have even struggled with them yourself. Even if you have or are hoping for some very positive things on the horizon this year, it is important that we not forget to reach out and care for those hurting around us. Even a little love and compassion and a few moments letting someone know you are thinking of and praying for them can go a long way. Taking the time to genuinely ask how things are going, share where we are at, and seek how we can help one another is part of being the family of God. One thing is certain, there will always be people facing challenges and those in need of care. After all, the more things change the more they stay the same.

However, while this phrase can weigh heavy on us, it can also be a source of great strength, because the one thing that stays the most constant in our times of change or lack of it, is God. He truly is unchanging and so is His love. The greatest One we can hold onto in our times of struggle, even greater than our compassion for each other, is our heavenly Father. He helps bring about change in stagnation. He is our steady rock in times of change or chaos. Most importantly, through Christ our Savior, whose birth we just celebrated, God has already produced in us the change that is most needed, and prepare for us an unchanging place of peace for us with Him in eternity.

So whatever the New Year holds, let us rejoice and take comfort in knowing it is the Lord who has prepared it. He will also walk with us and provide for us. Therefore, let us also follow His example and walk beside each other in Jesus' name. Amen.

In Christ,

*Pastor Eric Schoech*

Pastor Eric Schoech



## PRAYER AND PRAISE AT FAITH...

RESUMES ON THURSDAY,  
JANUARY 10 at 6:15pm.

A light supper will be served at 5:30.

Please join us and help us spread  
the word — Prayer and Praise will  
continue every Thursday  
evening this winter.



Lutheran World Relief

From the LWR website.....

### *COFFEE'S NEXT GENERATION IN NICARAGUA*

**As the average age of coffee farmers rises globally, here's one approach to engaging their children.**

Across the developing world, coffee farmers face a dilemma: they're growing older— the average age of the coffee farmer is over 60 years old— but their children have no interest in taking their place. The younger generation tends to migrate to cities, where they'll have a better chance at making a living.

In Jinotega (Hee'no-te'ga), the heart of Nicaragua's coffee-producing region, Lutheran World Relief is working to find solutions with Farmer Brothers, a US coffee roaster, wholesaler and distributor of coffee, tea and culinary products. Through the Sustainable Coffee Program, we are striving to assist 350 coffee-farming families who by improving the quality and productivity of their crop, will ultimately increase their income and help them to thrive. And we've engaged the children of the coffee farmers to help achieve that goal.

*Learn more about the programs of Lutheran World Relief by visiting [LWR.org](http://LWR.org).*



Karen Martinsen	January 3
Jon Dunlap	January 13
Shirley Knutson	January 13
Ken Kehe	January 15

*If we miss someone's birthday please call the office at 462-7684 or put the correct date on the birthday calendar in the Narthex.*

## THOUGHTS FROM THE DEACONESS

### *"Pursue"*

Many years ago I had a little black dog. Maybe I should really say that he had me. Even though his name was Oreo, there wasn't a white patch of fur to be seen. He was about 15 pounds and a mixed breed, though his stubborn streak revealed a predominant Scottish terrier. When he first came home with me, he was wary. Living in a shelter does that to dogs and people. With time, he realized that I was ok and worth being around. There was a backyard, a never-ending supply of dog biscuits, walks, and car trips to Mac Donalds. Even though his one wish that a cooked hamburger would fall off the kitchen counter never happened, he still stuck with me.

When I was home, Oreo had to know where I was. If I had the audacity to move to another room, he followed. Even when I taught piano students, he was in the music room or under the piano. I could go nowhere in the house or yard without being pursued by this black fur ball.

Psalm 23, a favorite of many, ends with the phrase, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Thinking of Oreo and his need to pursue me, reminded me that a more accurate translation of the word "follow" in that last verse is "pursue" or "chase". What an image! God's goodness and mercy are pursuing us. No matter what room we are in, no matter where we go, we are being chased by blessings from God.

As we begin another year, we can't help but reflect on years past. We can't predict what this year will bring – will there be more joys than sorrows or how many times we will fail to follow our Lord. In spite of the unknowns, we are promised in this psalm that God's mercy and forgiveness will handle all of our frailties and failing.

And no matter what difficulties will arise, God will bring good from pain and sorrow. We may not be allowed to see what that good is until we dwell in the house of the Lord. But good is promised, and God keeps promises.

Goodness and mercy will be nipping at our heels in this New Year and in all our earthly years to come.

### **FROM THE STAFF AT FAITH LUTHERAN....**

**A BIG thank you for the Christmas gifts from the congregation as well as all the thoughtful individual gifts. We are truly blessed.**



### **MINISTRY AND SMALL GROUPS WILL RESUME IN JANUARY**

**Sewing Seeds of Love meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at 9:00am in their sewing room in the church basement.**

**Mark Makers meets the first Wednesday of the month at 6:30 at church.**

**Women Wanting Wisdom will resume meeting on their regular day, the third Wednesday of the month (January 16, 2019) at 6:30 at church unless otherwise indicated. This month they will continue their study of The 5 People you Meet in Heaven. The next chapter is the *"The Third Person Eddie Meets"*.**

## Faith Lutheran Church

753 N. Calumet Ave.  
Valparaiso, IN 46383

Email:  
office@faithmemorial.net



### Valparaiso Christian Academy

In July, 2018, Faith Lutheran welcomed Valparaiso Christian Academy Pre-school and Daycare Center to our Faith family. VCA is the only 501-c-3 faith-based, non-profit early learning center of its kind in the Valparaiso area. We are excited and blessed to participate in this ministry.

For information about enrollment or activities of VCA please call (219) 548-5799 or visit [www.valpochristianacademy.com](http://www.valpochristianacademy.com).



### FAITH WORSHIP SCHEDULE

The Epiphany of Our Lord, January 6, 9:00am Holy Communion  
Prayer & Praise, Thursday, January 10, 6:15pm Contemporary Worship  
The Baptism of Our Lord, January 13, 9:00am Holy Communion  
Prayer & Praise, Thursday, January 17, 6:15pm Contemporary Worship  
The Second Sunday after the Epiphany, January 20, 9:00am Holy Communion  
Prayer & Praise, Thursday, January 24, 6:15pm Contemporary Worship  
The Third Sunday after the Epiphany, January 27, 9:00am Service of Word & Prayer  
Prayer & Praise, Thursday, January 31, 6:15pm Contemporary Worship  
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

