

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
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VALPARAISO, IN 46383

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WWW.FAITHLUTHERAN.ORG

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



Do Fences Make Good Neighbors?

John 10:1-5, 9 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. ² But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵ A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers..." ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Thank you again to all who helped us complete the fence around the playground area. The children and VCA staff already greatly appreciate and enjoy being able to have the children play outside safely on a regular basis.

As I've watched the children play and sometimes test the boundaries of the fence, it also got me thinking about the popular phrase, "fences make good neighbors." In the poem *Mending Wall*, Robert Frost mentions this line and those who value a good fence. However, he also states that, "something there is that doesn't love a wall." He points out, the forces of nature often tear walls down (as well as provide them) and that people are sometimes motivated to disassemble them, just as others work hard to build them up. The reasons for this vary, but watching the news, a child pulling at a child gate, or what happens each time there is a storm, certainly backs up this assessment that "something there is that doesn't love a wall."

Ironically, if many of us resist walls, then why do we say, "fences make good neighbors," and why do we call repairing a broken relationship, "mending fences?" This begs the question, when are some of the times that fences can be helpful and when are some of the times that they need to be torn down?

Scripture makes it clear that, especially in our broken world, neither individuals nor society can live without good boundaries. Physical, mental, emotional, legal, and spiritual boundaries protect us from outside harm, and keep us from harming ourselves and others. Building or repairing healthy relationships often involves establishing or reestablishing Godly boundaries. What this does not mean, however, is completely hiding ourselves from others behind barriers. It also does not mean that all barriers are good. One writer puts it this way,

In his teaching, Our Lord reminds us of the boundaries set by the Father that human beings since the beginning repeatedly have transgressed. Our Lord took the Ten Commandments, summarized them as two, and so set for us our most essential boundary: Love God, and love your neighbor as yourself. With the beatitudes, he shows us how a person lives by the commandments in this life and the rewards he will receive for living according to the will of God.

With the prayer he gave us, he shows us how to praise the Father out of love each day and what it means to live as a good neighbor in the world. St. Paul gave his life to Jesus Christ and speaks of how those who have been baptized into Christ reveal their baptism in the lives they lead. Living as Jesus Christ taught, St. Paul preaches that a Christian dies to sin and finds life instead in Christ (Rom 6:11-17). ¹

The boundaries God would have us set are not arbitrary ones, but ones based on the word and love of God. Such boundaries are far more solid and discernable than we make them out to be. However, for sinners like us, discerning and establishing these boundaries can feel like a precarious balancing act, in which we often tend to resort to extremes. We see these extremes sometimes being played out on the world stage. However, as the writer above indicated, I think that how we go about building the right fences, begins with our practice at home.

Each of us needs to consider the boundaries we need or don't need in order to be a light of love to the world around us. Where are the places we can and can't go in order to build up our relationship with others in healthy ways? Do I have hang-ups and unbiblical walls I have built up that are preventing me from getting closer to people? Are there behaviors I can't display or be around without being led into sin or leading others into sin? If so what boundaries need to be in place to guard against this in a healthy way?

As the summer begins, you might also ask yourself, are there side by side efforts with my neighbor that would not only allow us to work on a project like mending that fence in the backyard, but will allow us to mend or reach across some relationship fences? How can we respect and maintain healthy boundaries, while growing our relationships in a God pleasing way? As I said before, these are not always easy questions in a sinful world, but they are important ones, especially as we seek to care for ourselves and others. This summer, I encourage you, not only to consider this question of boundaries, but to go out of your way to reach out to your neighbor across the fence, and build that relationship for the sake of the gospel. What God might do with this could be boundless. In Christ,

Pastor Eric Schoeck

Sources and Material for Further Reading:

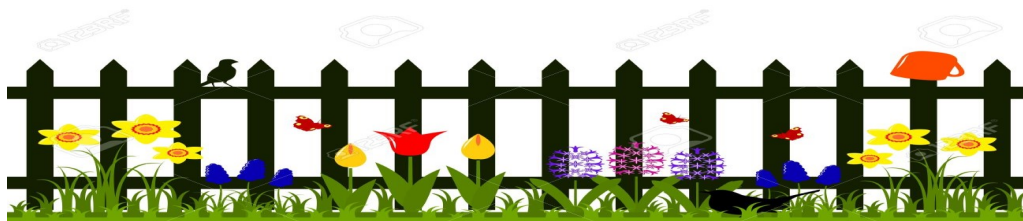
"Good Fences Make Good Neighbors"—The Need for boundaries, Rev. Kevin Bezner¹
Mending Wall, Robert Frost
<https://www.soulshepherding.org/jesus-set-boundaries/>

FENCING FOR VCA

The playground fence is finished and the gates have been installed! Many thanks to everyone who donated money to reach this goal. Pastor and some of the congregation dedicated the fence and benches on Sunday, May 12.

The VCA students will now be in a safe area! A special thank you to Sean Allwardt and his team for getting the shed in place so the fence could be installed.

Thanks to all!



PENTECOST POTLUCK

Come join us for food, fellowship and the presence of the Holy Spirit at the annual Pentecost Potluck dinner.

We will gather at 11:45am on Sunday, June 9 in the church basement.



Plan to be in worship July and August
for sermons focused on the 23rd
Psalm



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

THOUGHTS FROM THE DEACONESS

*When You Send Forth Your Spirit . . .
Psalm 104:30*

Up from the bed of the river
God scooped the clay;
And by the bank of the river
He kneeled him down;
And there the great God Almighty
Who lit the sun and fixed it in the sky,
Who flung the stars to the most far corner of the night,
Who rounded the earth in the middle of his hand;
This great God,
Like a mammy bending over her baby,
Kneeled down in the dust
Toiling over a lump of clay
Till he shaped it in his own image;

Then into it he blew the breath of life,
And man became a living soul.
Amen, Amen.

From "The Creation", James Weldon Johnson,

How then should we live in God's kingdom, if the Spirit, the very breath of God, dwells within us and brings us life?

Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. Genesis 2:7

*You're
Invited!*

WHAT: FAITH LADIES LUNCHEON
WHEN: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 11:30
WHERE: BOB EVANS (located on Gateway
Blvd. off 49 bypass and Tollroad entrance).

There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex or call
the church office (462-7684) to reserve a
spot.

**PLEASE JOIN US AND BRING A
FRIEND!**



We learned all about Lutheran Church Charities K-9 Comfort dogs when Caleb and his handler Kristin Kearney came to visit. Their mission: to bring comfort in a world that can be hard. Find them at

lutheranchurchcharities.org/k-9comfort-dogs

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Church

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**“ For St. Paul
had decided to
sail past Ephesus
so that he would
not have to spend
time in Asia for
he was hurrying
to be in Jerusa-
lem, if possible,
on the day of Pen-
tecost”.**

— Acts 20: 16

FAITH WORSHIP SCHEDULE

The Seventh Sunday of Easter, June 2, 9:00am Holy Communion

The Day of Pentecost, June 9, 9:00am Holy Communion

The Holy Trinity, June 16, 9:00am Holy Communion

The Second Sunday after Pentecost, June 23, 9:00am Word and Prayer

The Third Sunday after Pentecost, June 30, 9:00am Holy Communion

The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, July 2, 9:00am Holy Communion

The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost, July 14, 9:00am Word and Prayer

The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost, July 21, 9:00am Holy Communion

The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost, July 28, 9:00am Word and Prayer

