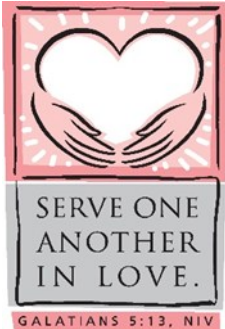


FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
753 N. CALUMET AVE.
VALPARAISO, IN 46383

(219) 462-7684

WWW.FAITHVALPO.ORG

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



Be My Valentine?

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴ For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Gal. 5:13-14)

To love is to serve, and to truly serve is to love the Lord with all your heart and follow His example in how you love the people around you. If you look at how Jesus lived out the perfect example of love when he walked among us, or even at the story of the man who Valentine's Day is named after, you will find that the way people today tend to approach love and things like Valentine's Day are pretty backwards.

People often spend much of their life looking for that one person who will complete them, love them unconditionally... or more accurately who will continue to serve and fulfill their ever-changing desires. The reasons people give for "falling out of love" frequently involve some kind of boredom or not receiving enough of whatever it is they feel they want or deserve, but what are people in this situation truly lacking?

I once heard another pastor say that if we are looking for someone inside or outside of marriage (or other specific human relationships) to complete us we are looking in the wrong place. Only God's perfect love can do that. It is only from His perfect love that we can begin to love others (or ourselves) as we ought, not with a self-serving heart, but with sacrificial Christ-centered love. How should God's loving call for us to, "Be His" and His related actions toward us, change our approach to the statement, "be mine?" Here are some helpful thoughts from Luther:

[A Christian] ought to think: "Although I am an unworthy and condemned man, my God has given me in Christ all the riches of righteousness and salvation without any merit on my part, out of pure, free mercy, so that from now on I need nothing except faith which believes that this is true. Why should I not therefore freely, joyfully, with all my heart, and with an eager will do all things which I know are pleasing and acceptable to such a Father who has overwhelmed me with his inestimable riches? I will therefore give myself as a Christ to my neighbor, just as Christ offered himself to me; I will do nothing in this life except what I see is necessary, profitable, and salutary to my neighbor, since through faith I have an abundance of all good things in Christ." Behold, from faith thus flow forth love and joy in the Lord, and from love a joyful, willing, and free mind that serves one's neighbor willingly and takes no account of gratitude or ingratitude, of praise or blame, of gain or loss. For a man does not serve that he may put men under obligations. He does not distinguish between friends and enemies or anticipate their thankfulness or unthankfulness, but he most freely and most willingly spends himself and all that he has, whether he wastes all on the thankless or whether he gains a reward. As his Father does, distributing all things to all men richly and freely, making "his sun rise on the evil and on the good" [Matt. 5:45], so also the son does all things and suffers all things with that freely bestowing joy which is his delight when through Christ he sees it in God, the dispenser of such great benefits.

Therefore, if we recognize the great and precious things which are given us, as Paul says [Rom. 5:5], our hearts will be filled by the Holy Spirit with the love which makes us free, joyful, almighty workers and conquerors over all tribulations, servants of our neighbors, and yet lords of all. For those who do not recognize the gifts bestowed upon them through Christ, however, Christ has been born in vain; they go their way with their works and shall never come to taste or feel those things. Just as our neighbor is in need and lacks that in which we abound, so we were in need before God and lacked his mercy. Hence, as our heavenly Father has in Christ freely come to our aid, we also ought freely to help our neighbor through our body and its works, and each one should become as it were a Christ to the other that we may be Christs to one another and Christ may be the same in all, that is, that we may be truly Christians.

Who then can comprehend the riches and the glory of the Christian life? It can do all things and has all things and lacks nothing. It is lord over sin, death, and hell, and yet at the same time it serves, ministers to, and benefits all men. But alas in our day this life is unknown throughout the world; it is neither preached about nor sought after; we are altogether ignorant of our own name and do not know why we are Christians or bear the name of Christians. Surely we are named after Christ, not because he is absent from us, but because he dwells in us, that is, because we believe in him and are Christs one to another and do to our neighbors as Christ does to us. But in our day we are taught by the doctrine of men to seek nothing but merits, rewards, and the things that are ours; of Christ we have made only a taskmaster far harsher than Moses.

We have a pre-eminent example of such a faith in the blessed Virgin. As is written in Luke 2[:22], she was purified according to the law of Moses according to the custom of all women, although she was not bound by that law and did not need to be purified. Out of free and willing love, however, she submitted to the law like other women that she might not offend or despise them. She was not justified by this work, but being righteous she did it freely and willingly. So also our works should be done, not that we may be justified by them, since, being justified before-hand by faith, we ought to do all things freely and joyfully for the sake of others.

Martin Luther, Luther's Works, Vol. 31: Career of the Reformer I, ed. Harold J. Grimm and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 31 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1957), 367-68.

Celebrating
FEBRUARY
Birthdays

Alexis Brandt	February 6
Anna Price	February 7
Patsy Berndt	February 7
Deb Porter	February 12
Beth Underwood	February 13
Kenny Frank	February 22
Frank Morris	February 22

Please call the church office at (219) 462-7684 to add a birthday to our list.



Sewing Seeds of Love—The ladies made 6 veterans' quilts that were delivered in December to the post in Porter. We are now working on scarves, hats and gloves for the homeless. We will have about 20 sets to deliver. Your purchases from the sale will buy gloves and hats. If you know of someone who is hurting from a loss or are sick, be it a friend or neighbor please let Dorothy Kehe know, we have shawls and quilts that you can give them. We care because God cares.

Calling all ladies of Faith Lutheran Church!

Join us as we shower Charity Grubb with love for her new little blessing! We hope you can join us at church on Saturday, March 8, 2025 at 2:00pm in our Fellowship Hall (downstairs). Cake and light refreshments will be served as we celebrate her expected arrival and welcome her little one with gifts.

Charity is registered at Target. Please RSVP by February 15 through the church office at (219) 462-7684. For more information please see Sue Schoech, Amy Tilley or Diane Driver.



BOWLING AT INMANS



The bad news is that there is a rash of tenpinitis going around. The good news is there's a simple cure. Just join us at Inmann's at 2pm on February 2nd for the Faith/VCA bowling outing! Hope to see you there!



Love Board Games and/or Football?

Sunday, Feb. 7, 2025 – Starting at 4:00PM
Super Bowl Game projected on our big movie screen

Board and Card games of various levels available to play
Area for the kids to play
Some Pizza and Drinks Provided
(You are welcome to bring food and games to share as well)

Please RSVP, if possible, so we have an idea for how much food to have (We will order extra just in case)

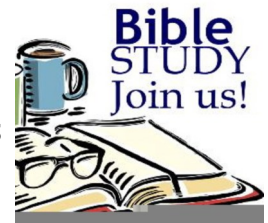
For more info contact: (317) 983-3652

Disciples of Light will meet on Friday, February 28 at 5:00pm to share a meal and continue watching and discussing the series "The Chosen".

All are welcome! For more information please speak to Jackie or Sean Allwardt or Kari or Nathaniel Koehneke.



Brew Crew and Micro Brew Crew are two small groups who meet at church twice a month. All are welcome and encouraged to come and learn more about us. For February meeting times and dates please call the church office at (219) 462-7684 or speak with Paul Nord or Diane Driver.



Please join Valparaiso Christian Academy for our

Valentine's Day Dance

Friday, February 7th 2025
From 6:30pm-8:30pm

Daddy-Daughter
Mommy-Son
And fun for the whole family.

Free Pasta Dinner!
Live DJ!
Dancing!
Fun Photo Station!
Prizes!

Please RSVP to the VCA office: (219) 548-5799 by Monday, February 3

Toy Parking and Care

For safety and ease access to certain parts of the basement the cars and other toys now have clearly marked, "parking areas." Please help guide children to return toys to their places when not in use, or if no children are present, please help keep everyone safe by helping us keep the "parking area" as depicted on the walls. Note that only large cars should go on the wall near the sewing room. Also, please report and set aside parts to any toys that may be broken. Please do not dispose of parts without talking to the church or preschool staff's permission. Thank you for your help!



**Faith Lutheran
Church**

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FAITH WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany, February 2, 9:00am Holy Communion

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany, February 9, 9:00am Word & Prayer

Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany, February 16, 9:00am Holy Communion

Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany, February 23, 9:00am Word & Prayer

Transfiguration of Our Lord, March 2, 9:00am Holy Communion

Ash Wednesday, March 5, 7:00pm Holy Communion

First Sunday in Lent, March 9, 9:00 Word and Prayer

First Wednesday in Lent, March 12, 7:00pm Evening Prayer

Second Sunday in Lent, March 16, 9:00am Holy Communion

Second Wednesday in lent, March 19, 7:00pm Evening Prayer

Third Sunday in Lent, March 23, 9:00am Word and Prayer

Third Wednesday in Lent, March 26, 7:00pm Evening Prayer

Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 30, 9:00am Holy Communion

For God

so loved the world,
that he gave his
only
begotten
Son,
that whosoever
believeth
in him should not peri-
sh but have everlasting life.

John 3:1

It bears all things,
believes all things,
endures all things.

Love never fails.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:7-8

