

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
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Embraced by God through Jesus Christ our Lord, we share this gospel of hope and healing



We Care Because God Cares

1 Jn. 4:11-21 *Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. ¹³ By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. ¹⁷ By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. ¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹ And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.*

In the last newsletter we started talking about four words that each have a very important place in the Christian life: Welcome, Care, Gather, and Grow. To start off this newsletter, I want to thank all of you who have responded to my invitation to every household in the congregation to sit down with me and share a little bit of what has been going on in your life. I have truly enjoyed the conversations so far, and I welcome and look forward to the opportunity to visit with the rest of you. (*More details on setting up a visit with me can be found in another section of this newsletter*)

Building on this idea of welcome, where does Christian caring fit in? There are many things Christians care about, because there are many things that God cares about. Many of us could probably recite Jesus's story about the Good Samaritan, how at great personal cost, the good Samaritan went out of his way to help a man, in ways no one else was willing to. Jesus also tells us that whether sick, hungry, or in prison, when we care for the least of these, we are caring for Him. Clearly God cared enough to send Jesus to be our Savior and calls us to take up our crosses and follow Him. God also cares that we seek to follow His will and His commandments, the greatest of which are to love God and love neighbor the way God, **not** the world, does. After all God's love, and the care that flows from it, are greater than any definition or distortion made by man. God's Word also shows us He cares about things like the truth, good and evil, and a whole host of things we can't begin to cover in one newsletter article.

For now let's go back to the kind of care centered on a loving and welcoming heart, the kind of heart that cares about people the way God cares about people. Notice that this kind of caring is genuine not fake. When Jesus cared enough to become one of us and walk among us, he did all kinds of caring and genuine acts. He healed the sick, provided food for the hungry, showed compassion by having conversations and meals with people that many other people chose to avoid. However, one thing you never saw Him do is compromise His Godly values or the truth. There may be times where Jesus did not share things that those around him were not ready for or did not yet need to hear. Yet, Jesus also never affirmed, or joined in bad behavior or false beliefs. When the time came to speak the truth in love Jesus did so. In this way, Jesus had compassion on crowds and individuals, rejoicing in those who received Him, weeping over those who would not, and through it all remaining the picture of genuine care.

We live in a world that often demands that we "care" for people on their terms, accepting and giving them what they want. When we as Christians give in to these kinds of demands and emotional blackmail, many people are too willing to take advantage of it. Yet at the same time, many of the same people can smell the disingenuous or hypocrisy of this a mile away. The effect is toxic all around.

So then what do we do? We look to Jesus. We love like He loved. Passionately, compassionately, uncompromisingly, we care because Jesus cares. As we extend welcome and invitation to those around us to have a connection with us and as we watch and respond to other people reaching out to us, it is through caring, that our connection with others begins to grow. Casual hellos turn into longer conversations. Conversations reveal needs and opportunities to offer care, prayer, and other ways of loving other people. Sometimes this opens additional doors. Sometimes it doesn't. However, if we are not intentional about it; if our eyes are not open to Jesus leading; if we do not look for and prioritize welcoming people to connect with us in a way that opens doors to care for them and then follow through, how can we show Jesus to others? Caring is at the heart of who we are as Christians. So make an extra effort this week to show both Christians and non-Christians alike how much you care. Trust me, someone will take notice.

In Christ,

Pastor Eric Schoeck



The Spirit and the food was moving at this year's Pentecost Potluck. Good to spend some time together.



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|----------------------|---------|
| Loretta Frank | July 2 |
| Hannah Grossnickle | July 4 |
| Paul Nord | July 5 |
| Gail Hoover | July 5 |
| Peyton Marton-Gipson | July 8 |
| Nathaniel Koehneke | July 13 |
| Mark Price | July 14 |
| Mike Porter | July 14 |
| Mackenzie Brant | July 14 |
| Alice Bernard | July 23 |
| David (Mike) Blouir | July 24 |
| Dayla Fryman | July 24 |
| Elizabeth Dunlap | July 29 |
| Cheyenne Nicholson | July 30 |

ANGIE REYES — WELCOME TO THE VCA!

Hello Everyone! My name is Angie Reyes and I am the new Director of the Valparaiso Christian Academy, and I wanted to take a quick moment to introduce myself. I have joined the program over the past two weeks and it has been an exciting time for me. I have been in Early Childhood Education for my entire career of over 27 years and I am very passionate about what I do. I have my degree from Purdue University and also have a background in developmental therapy and early intervention special education.

Jim Gammon, Pastor Eric and the Board of Directors have all been very welcoming to me and have made me feel like a new member of the family. I sincerely look forward to meeting more members of the congregation soon and encourage you to come and see us at VCA as well, as we are making so many wonderful improvements to our program and what we provide to our families.

Sincerely
Angie Reyes

CRAWFISH BOIL! EVERYONE IS INVITED!

On Friday, July 1, Immanuel Lutheran has invited the members of Faith as well as other local Lutheran churches to *Let the Good Times Boil!* Pastors will provide guests with an authentic crawfish boil outside in the preschool pavilion. Join in the fun from 5:00-6:30pm. There is no charge.



THOUGHTS FROM THE DEACONESS

Summer Reading List

If you haven't yet made a summer reading list, may I be so bold as to suggest a few books? They are short. Most take less than an hour.

Philemon: the author, St. Paul, helps to rebuild the connection between Philemon (the owner) and Onesimus (the runaway slave).

Ruth: the author, anonymous, tells of Ruth's love for her mother-in-law and how Ruth became the great-grandmother of King David (the best king that Israel ever had).

Esther: the author, anonymous, shares the roots of the Jewish festival Purim with a childish king, a wise, beautiful, courageous queen, and a supporting cast of thousands. A true Biblical soap opera.

Jude: the author – himself – a brother of James who was a brother of Jesus! When Jude uses the word “beloved”, put your name there instead.

1st John: the author – not John the Baptist – but the John who was one of the 12 apostles. The one who stood by Mary's (Jesus' mother) side at the crucifixion. If you need to hear about love, this is the book to go to. Oh, when he writes “little children”, substitute your name!

If the thought of an entire book is too much, try Psalm 46 or 23, Isaiah 53, Hebrews 11 (how many of those Biblical characters do you remember?), 1st Corinthians 13, Romans 8 (especially verses 31-39), Luke 24, . . .

Enjoy the rest of summer!

Launched in August 2008, the Lutheran Church Charities K-9 Comfort Dog Ministry is a national human-care ministry embracing the unique, calming nature and skills of purebred Golden Retrievers. The [LCC K-9 Comfort Dogs](#) and handlers, [Kare 9 Military Ministry](#) Dogs and veteran handlers, and [LCC K-9 Police Ministry](#) Dogs and law enforcement officer handlers are a bridge for compassionate ministry, opening doors for conversation about faith and creating opportunities to share the Mercy, Compassion, Presence and Proclamation of Jesus Christ.



LCC K-9 Comfort Dogs are working animals, trained to interact with people of all ages and circumstances who are suffering and in need. The dogs participate in scheduled and special events. Dogs are permanently placed with churches, schools and other ministries involved in Christian human care by LCC. Permanent placement includes full training for handlers and caregivers along with ongoing support, coaching and training. LCC K-9 Comfort Dogs live in the homes of assigned caregivers. The LCC K-9 Comfort Dogs serve every day in the community in which they are placed and are dispatched in times of disaster and crisis to bring comfort to all those affected, including first responders and the volunteers who serve them. LCC K-9 Comfort Dogs were in New York and New Jersey visiting victims of Superstorm Sandy, and in Connecticut after the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School. More recently LCC Comfort Dogs have been deployed to Uvaldi, Texas and Buffalo, New York. Lutheran Church Charities currently has over 130 LCC K-9 Comfort Dogs serving in more than 27 states. LCC operates training facilities in Illinois and Nebraska.

For more information about this ministry visit lutheranchurchcharities.org/K-9Ministries.

SEWING LESSONS

The ladies of Sewing Seeds of Love are offering sewing lessons this summer. Everyone is welcome. Lessons will be held on Thursdays, July 7, 14, 21 and 28 from 9-11am. If you know of someone who would be interested please let them know. Last summer the group worked on mending and bowl huggers.

The teenagers this year will be making sleeping pants. The group meets on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 9am and will resume in August.



VISITS WITH PASTOR

Pastor Schoech would like to visit with every household in the church over the next several months. The purpose of these visits will be to check in with you and also to get your thoughts regarding some questions involving Faith Lutheran and its ministry. Visits may be scheduled at church, at your home, or at another location. A sign-up sheet with instructions for scheduling a visit is available in the Narthex. You can also call the church office to schedule a visit during an available time (church office hours are Tuesday-Thursday from 9:00 to 3:00).

Faith Lutheran
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FAITH WORSHIP SCHEDULE

The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, July 3, 9:00am Holy Communion
The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost, July 10, 9:00am Non-Communion Service
The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost, July 17, 9:00am Holy Communion
The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost, July 24, 9:00am Non-Communion Service
The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost, July 31, 9:00am Holy Communion
The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost, August 7, 9:00am Holy Communion
The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost, August 14, 9:00am Non-Communion Service
The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost, August 21, 9:00am Holy Communion
The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost, August 28, 9:00am Non-Communion Service

