

the voice



FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

Naples, Florida

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.”

Proverbs 3:5

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July
2020

The Voice of Faith is a monthly publication of Faith Lutheran Church of Naples, Florida. Please address comments and articles to: jrobertson@ficsnaples.com. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of every month.

Love Your Neighbor

“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and the first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” Matthew 22:36-40.

As we approach the 4th of July, it seems like our world is in complete turmoil. Lutherans, including Faith Lutheran Church, don’t just withdraw and isolate ourselves from the world around us. Martin Luther believed that people of faith have a duty to participate in the political sphere, and when necessary, to call civil authorities to account. He offered this timely advice in his explanation of the 8th Commandment: “We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light” (Luther’s Small Catechism)

One can see that the world is a dangerous place and many in our country are troubled by recent events. As we celebrate our Independence, now more than ever, candidates and political parties have the duty to speak to these concerns and make the case for their platform.

Politics that doesn’t ensure that the “other” is treated with the same respect and care that we would wish for our own brother or sister or father or mother is not what God intends for God’s family of Faith.

Remember, we are people of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. We have been redeemed by Jesus’ act of love on the cross. We continue to pray that each of us, and those seeking office, would remember that we are entrusted with a redeemed world, and we must always remember that those who disagree with us are also those for whom Christ Died. This is our neighbor.

Loving Our Neighbors,
Pastor Don

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The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) is primarily about spreading the Gospel, but it is also given to us because Jesus wants us to get to know other people. All nations in fact. It’s obvious. God prefers everyone. He took on a lot of discomfort in making Himself familiar to us while we could care less. From Romans 5:6-7: “*For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*”

All of us are sinners to the core, which by default makes us natural born enemies before a holy and perfect God. And yet, while we could still be considered His enemies, Christ died for us. We all need this holy and humbling perspective. Just because a person or group may look unlike, speak different, is younger/older than me doesn’t mean they are more so inclined to be me enemy. So I’m in shock. I was once an enemy of God because of my sin. Yet He came to me, redeemed me with His precious blood, and now calls me as one of His own. Because God loves me, I in turn ought to love my enemies. This is one of the hardest crosses to bear as a follower of Jesus, yet we are still called to do it (Matthew 16:24-28). **Love your enemies.** As you do, always remember that God loves you and that God certainly loves those you deem to be your enemies. Tough call. But it’s God’s call nonetheless for each and every one of us to the glory of our Lord’s Kingdom. It all starts with how it began between God and us: extend, reach out, destroy the barriers put up, and become part of other peoples’ lives. Listen to their story, be in their story. Share God’s story, bring them in His story of salvation. The Lord give each of you the strength to do it. Amen.

What a friend we have in Jesus,
Pastor Sam

Loving Your Enemy

*“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, **Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you**, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”*

- Jesus -

Matthew 5: 43-48

Who is my neighbor? The answer is clear from Jesus: everyone on the face of this blessed creation, especially those who are downcast and downtrodden (see Luke 10). It is God’s Truth that we all can agree is good, right, necessary, and one that we all eventually come to terms with after some struggle. But what about the answer to this question: who is my enemy?

It tragically seems that while we take our time to consider who exactly is “my neighbor”, we are locked, loaded, and jump right at the opportunity to label our “enemies.” Those private and public. It’s an easy trigger to pull and a great temptation that many welcome and embrace. When that happens, two terrible and sinful misconceptions threaten to become ingrained in our hearts. That is, we take matters into our own hands.

Sinful misconception #1: My enemy is someone who wronged me...now it’s my turn

We all can think of that one person, who did or said something that was hurtful. Yesterday, last week, 5 years ago. It is still raw and hurts. Feeling self-righteous / justified in our anger and grief we let resentment fester and build. We plot and scheme against the person in our hearts. We enact vengeance via dirty looks, slander, or worse violence in order to “come out on top.” We make ourselves judge and executioner with full immunity never realizing that we are becoming the enemy of the person we claim to rightfully hate. Let it be known, we are not ever called to be enemies of anybody. We are made and called to be merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, salt and light (Matthew 5). How so easily in our preference for pride, we glance over the most challenging prayer of all by Jesus... “forgive us our sins, **as we forgive those who sin against us...**” (Matthew 6:12). I shudder at the thought if God were to ever to exact His anger on me with the same immediacy I impose on others. But He doesn’t.

Undeservedly so, our Father is slow to anger and rather abounding in steadfast love (Psalm 103:8). What would ever make me in the right to being so quick with my anger and lust for vengeance? Much to my chagrin, nothing. We are never in the right. God alone is perfect and just. That is why Jesus directs us to **pray for those who persecute you**. The Son of God commands me to give it over to the Father. Instead of keeping my enemies in my hands, I give them over to God’s. It’s not so much about just “letting it go.” It is more so getting over myself and giving the person over to the perfect God Who deals perfectly with my enemies. In His time. In His way. Who knows if that person’s heart will turn? God knows. God does. So pray for them. Be honest about your anger and grief. Lay it out before the Lord, don’t lay it out on others by your own means.

Sinful misconception #2: My enemy is someone who is not like me.

It’s subtle. We prefer our own. There’s comfort in familiarity. When we are led away from it unhealthy fear can creep in. It is the very product of our sinful human nature to distrust, objectify, and fear those we don’t identify as one of us and situations outside of what we pridefully prefer (see Genesis 3-6). So, rather than investing and taking the holy opportunity to grow in love, we are drawn instead to point, label, accuse in order to maintain our sense of security and familiarity. Much to our unholy dismay, we are called to extend. Reach out. Destroy the barriers we put up. The God of Salvation Who has made Himself known to us in Christ, calls us to go out to those we presuppose are our enemies.

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Thank You Holy Spirit for Your wisdom and guidance these past several months!

Dear Faith family, as we continually monitor and observe how this pandemic unfolds, we have been blessed to be open for limited in-person worship since late May. Looking ahead to establish the “new normal” for us, we will scale back our online streaming services starting in July. That is, we will live-stream our services at the beginning of the service, and end it after the sermon, so that everyone is encouraged to help us make the next step in coming back for in-person worship. But, this can all change back at a moment’s notice because of anything Coronavirus related. God only knows, and we seek Him and His holy wisdom from above.

You all are constantly in our praying! Continue to keep in touch with us as we seek to faithfully serve as your Pastors in the Name of Jesus Christ. The Lord bless and keep you!

Pastors Treglown, Maconachy, Hildebrandt

I would like to thank our Faith Family for all of the prayers, phone calls, and cards, during my surgery

Blessings,
Gil and Lois Poretti

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 Summer Hours 8:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. No Meetings in July			1 8:00 a.m. - Men's Bible Study (DR) 11:00 - 2:00 Itchin' to Stitch (FH)	2	3 10:00 a.m. Ladies Bible Study(FH) Office Closed	4 Independence Day 5:00 p.m. Saturday Service
5 Pentecost 5 8:00 a.m. – <i>Worship(Comm)</i> 9:00 a.m. - Fellowship (CY) 9:15 a.m. - <i>Praise Worship (Comm)</i> 11:00 a.m.. - <i>Worship (Comm)</i>	6 9:30-2:00 p.m. - Cravin' to Craft	7 11:00 a.m. – Marines (FH) 6:30 p.m. - Praise Team	8 8:00 a.m. - Men's Bible Study (DR)	9	10 10:00 a.m. Ladies Bible Study(FH)	11 5:00 p.m. Saturday Service (S)
12 Pentecost 6 8:00 a.m. – <i>Worship (S)</i> 9:00 a.m. - Fellowship 9:15 a.m. - <i>Praise Worship (S)</i> 11:00 a.m. – <i>Worship (S)</i>	13 9:30-2:00 p.m. - Cravin' to Craft	14 11:00 a.m. – Marines (FH) 6:30 p.m. - Praise Team	15 8:00 a.m. - Men's Bible Study (DR) 11:00 - 2:00 Itchin' to Stitch (FH) <i>Voice Deadline</i>	16	17 10:00 a.m. Ladies Bible Study(FH)	18 8:30 a.m. – Packing for the Troops (FH) 9:30 a.m. – OSL meeting (YA) 5:00 p.m. Saturday Service (S)
19 Pentecost 7 8:00 a.m. – <i>Worship(Comm)</i> 9:00 a.m. - Fellowship (CY) 9:15 a.m. - <i>Praise Worship (Comm)</i> 11:00 a.m.. - <i>Worship (Comm)</i>	20 9:30-2:00 p.m. - Cravin' to Craft	21 11:00 a.m. – Marines (FH) 6:30 p.m. - Praise Team	22 8:00 a.m. - Men's Bible Study (DR)	23	24 10:00 a.m. Ladies Bible Study(FH)	25 5:00 - Saturday Service (S)
26 Pentecost 8 8:00 a.m. - <i>Worship (S)</i> 9:00 a.m. – Fellowship 9:15 a.m. – <i>Worship (S)</i> 11:00 a.m. - <i>Worship (S)</i>	27 9:30-2:00 p.m. - Cravin' to Craft	28 11:00 a.m. – Marines (FH) 6:30 p.m. - Praise Team	29 8:00 a.m. - Men's Bible Study (DR) 11:00 - 2:00 Itchin' to Stitch (FH)	30	31 10:00 a.m. Ladies Bible Study(FH)	

From the Director of Music

Hello Faith Family –

Some may find it surprising to learn the history of organs and pipes predates Christianity and spans over 2300 years. The origins of the “pipe organ” can be traced to almost 300 years before the birth of Jesus Christ. These first organs were called “*hydraulii*,” and they were operated by using water pressure to push air through the pipes. A hundred years later, the *hydraulis* would commonly be used in stadiums and coliseums throughout the Roman Empire. By the 15th century and peak of the Renaissance, pipe organs, as we recognize them in our present time, were used for religious services in monastic churches throughout Europe.

Psalm 150 tells us to praise our God with the trumpet, lute, harp, tambourine, strings, pipe, cymbals, and especially through our song. Everything that has breath (the use of breath is very important to this article) is supposed to give praise to our God. So why is the organ so important to a church service? Consider asking yourself this question: “why is the organ important to us for our church services?” Is it important to you individually, or do you feel it is not important? Imagine what it would be like to completely take away the organ, piano, and all other instruments away from our services.

In 2007, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops published an article entitled “Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship.” It said this about the use of organs in a service:

“Among all other instruments which are suitable for divine worship, the organ is ‘accorded pride of place’ because of its capacity to sustain the singing of a large gathered assembly, due to both its size and its ability to give ‘resonance to the fullness of human sentiments, from joy to sadness, from praise to lamentation.’ Likewise, ‘the manifold possibilities of the organ in some way remind us of the immensity and the magnificence of God.’”

The pipe organ is a “breathing” instrument – remember... “everything that has breath shall praise the Lord.” A pipe organ is operated through the controlled blowing of pressurized air through the pipes. Our organ, which is completely electronic, emulates this “blowing of the air” by way of pre-recorded sounds (MIDI). If I were to hold down a key to play a note, that “air” will always blow, and the sound will always be heard until I lift my finger. The organ is one of the best instruments for the church because it assists to guide a congregation to breathe and sing, making the instrument itself a leader for the church. When we gather for services, we seek God through Christ, faith, prayer, and scripture. We accomplish all these things through spoken word and through *song*. The pipe organ is specifically designed to support and accompany the human voice as we sing praises to worship the Lord.

We all can recognize the grand majesty of sounds which can be produced by the organ, but the “heart” of the instrument lies in how it supports and leads those who accompany the instrument. This heart breathes life into the grand pipe organ, which has become a vital part of the church for centuries. As we listen and lift our voices in praise, remember that this powerful and majestic instrument and your voice reflects “the immensity and the magnificence of God.”

Blessings,

Matthew Swingle
Director of Music & Organist

July Mission of the Month - Disaster Relief

Our mission of the month for July is Disaster Relief. With hurricane season upon us it is time to be prepared, not only in our own homes, but also to be prepared to help our community when the opportunity arises.



We would to take this time to thank you for your support of the May Mission of the Month *The Gideons!* A total of \$2,675.00 was received.

I don't want normal!

I can honestly say it irritates me every time I hear someone say, "I can't wait to get back to normal." What was "normal" for you? Was it really that amazing that you hunger to go back? You know what I hunger for? Transformation! What have you learned through this season? Where and how have you encountered our holy and living God during this season? How can anything supersede a time when the world stopped and caused us, the body of Christ, to rise up in a way that we have never had time before and turn our face, devotion and attention to Him. Please, do not go back to normal! Go out into this new world transformed and preach the gospel. Preach the good news to a world that has been lied to and confused. I pray that for the past few months we didn't fall on our face pleading with God to end the virus so that we can get back into the building we call church.

Ephesians 6:12 "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

It amazes me that right now we are witnessing this spiritual battle. This battle is not Republican versus Democrat or black vs white – this battle is God versus satan. The church will win the battle for Jesus in their prayer closets on their knees and out in the street encountering the lost. I don't want to go back to normal. I want to be transformed and finally become the light that comes out of the dark. The darker the world becomes the brighter we are to shine.

John 1:5 "The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."

Well, there is it. I said what was on my heart. Some of you may think this is harsh but I am your Stewardship and Finance Board Chairperson - I could have asked you to increase your tithe but that would be too easy.

Barbara James – Stewardship@fclnaples.com

Summer Sermon Series

Dear Faith family, we are humbled in Christ to once again preach a summer sermon series starting July and running through August.

We pray that throughout the time each of you are built up in the strength, love, and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord be with you! - your Faith pastors

The Whole Armor of God

Ephesians 6:10-20

July 4/5 - Introduction

July 11/12 - The Belt of Truth

July 18/19 - The Breastplate of Righteousness

July 25/26 - Shoes of the Gospel of Peace

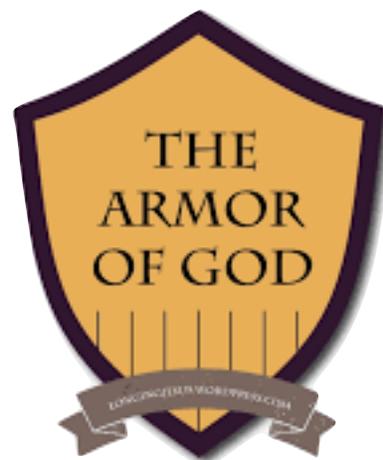
August 1/2 - The Shield of Faith

August 8/9 - The Helmet of Salvation

August 15/16 - The Sword of the Spirit

August 22/23 - Praying Ephesians 6:10-18

August 29/30 - Conclusion





FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

Naples, Florida



Faith Lutheran Church is a member of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. We strive to be a friendly, family oriented church united under the goal of enriching our community through the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Faith Lutheran Church
4150 Goodlette Rd
Naples, FL 34103
(239) 434-5811

faithnaples@flc-naples.org
www.flcnaples.com

Weekly Worship Opportunities:

Saturday:

5:00 p.m. Traditional

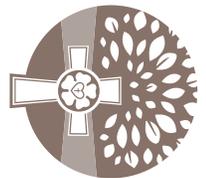
Sunday:

8:00 a.m. Traditional

9:15 a.m. Contemporary

11:00 a.m. Traditional

Holy Communion will be served every Saturday and the first and third Sundays of every month



FAITH
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Naples, Florida

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

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4150 GOODLETTE RD
NAPLES, FL 34103