

State of the Church 2009

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Boards, Committees & Organizations

Church Council	Board of Elders
Board of Trustees	Board of Evangelism/Outreach
Board of Stewardship	Board of Christian Education
Adult Continuing Education	Youth Program
Sunday School	Vacation Bible School
Altar Guild	Choir
Altar Flowers	Friday Office Help
Endowment and Capital Fund	Facilities Board
G.A.L.S.	Parish Guild
Prayer Chain	Stephen Ministry
DVD Ministry	Hospital Visitation Ministry
Thrivent Board members	Ushers/Greeters
Memorial Garden ribbons	Senior Friends
Fund Raiser Committee	Policy/Procedures Committee
Ad Hoc Committee for Enriching Church Services	
Ad Hoc Committee for Evangelism/Outreach	
Ad Hoc Committee for Advancement of Christian Education	
Feasibility Study Assistance Committee (FSAT)	

One Body, Many Parts

¹²The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. ¹³For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

¹⁴Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. ¹⁵If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.

¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. ¹⁹If they were all one part, where would the body be? ²⁰As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

I Corinthians 12: 12-20

2009 Calendar Highlights

January

- 11 Commission new officers & guest preacher Rev. Dr. Gene Bunkowski representing Lutheran Bible Translators
- 19 Congregational hospital advocacy training

February

- 8 Scout Sunday
- 15 Stewardship Sunday Celebration
- 18 ServSafe training
- 22 Voters Meeting

March

- 1 ELCA v LCMS Differences and Similarities, first session
- 6-7 Spring Rummage Sale
- 21 Free Family Fun Festival
- 28 Rent-A-Youth Day
- 29 New member reception

April

- 9 Maundy Thursday with DaVinci's Last Supper Drama
- 10 Good Friday Tenebrae
- 12 Easter Sunrise; Youth breakfast
- 25 LWML Zone Rally
- 26 Last Sunday of two services

May

- 2 Join Hands Day and LCC work day
- 9 Church Council Budget Workshop
- 10 Evangelism Explosion pinning ceremony
- 24 Voters Meeting

June

- 12-14 FL/GA District Convention
- 14 Commission all VBS staff, teachers and volunteers
- 15-19 Vacation Bible School
- 21 VBS Children's Service of Word and Song with picnic/potluck
- 28 Farewell and Godspeed to Vicar Augustine and family
Conducted first service at Southport on Sunday afternoon (+/- 50)

July

- 5 Launched first in series of four Temple Talks by Council members

August

- 1 Welcome Vicar Wright and Rebekah
- 2 Rite of Induction of Vicar Wright
- 9 Welcome dinner for Vicar and Rebekah Wright with free will offering as their new home shower gift
- 5-7 Hosted Third Annual Concordia Theological Seminary Continuing Education with Rev. Dr. Walter A. Maier III
- 15 Cake Auction & Ice Cream Social
- 16 Special Voters Meeting to revise budget
- 30 New Member reception & unveil Cross Monument design

September

- 8 Sarasota Circuit Forum to elect delegates to 2010 LCMS Convention
- 10 Lifelink Senior Housing presentation
- 20 Health Fair
- 27 Voters Meeting
- 28-30 FL/GA District Conference

October

- 11 LWML Sunday with brunch
- 14 Annual meeting of Section 20 Deep Creek Property Owners Association
- 15 LCC Grant Team presented request for feasibility funding to FL/GA District
- 21 Annual meeting of Section 23 Deep Creek Property Owners Association
- 30-31 Fall Rummage Sale

November

- 1 Start of two services; Dedication of Memorial flower urn
- 7 LWML Fall Rally
- 14 Seventh Annual LCC Golf Invitational
- 22 German Evening Prayer Service begins
- 26 Thanksgiving Day service & dinner
- 29 Voters Meeting—Vicarage Program included in budget

December

- 1 Decorate for Christmas with luncheon
- 11 Hosted Sarasota Circuit pastors appreciation dinner
- 13 Sunday School Children's Service of Word and Song; Evangelism Explosion Pinning Celebration
- 20 New Members reception
- 24 Christmas Eve services at 5 & 7pm
- 25 Christmas Day service at 10:15am

Review of Church Council Minutes for 2009

January: hospital advocacy program training was provided for 22 members of LCC; Board of Christian Education granted permission to seek grant money to fund a feasibility study for child development center; EMV program to launch You Are Chosen II; revised FMC Operating Guidelines were submitted for consideration; Phase I of senior housing feasibility study affirmed need but financing has “dried up” and 1.8 million would be needed to proceed with the project; 129k budget shortfall adopted in budget discussed at length; all boards and committee nominees were affirmed by Council according to constitution bylaws;

February: Cross Monument plans submitted to surveyor and discussed with Dwayne Leininger; an Overture #6-09-001 was adopted to recommend to congregation regarding funding for child development centers in FL/GA District;

March: “We have a hit!” is the quote from director Gloria Brown concerning the Last Supper drama; Pastor Redmann respectfully declined an offer to serve the LCMS as member of the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support to mentor first and second year pastors; 24 different grant sources have been researched as possible providers for our child development center feasibility study; LCC is one of only 17 sites for continuing education course;

April: We received letters from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, LCMS World Relief and Human Services, and FL/GA District all expressing how the current economic conditions are adversely effecting their ministry; LCC overture jointly submitted with Hope Lutheran Church of Bradenton was submitted to FL/GA District; Vicarage application was submitted; Preschool study team is preparing a grant request; Board of Stewardship determined next year to have a video presentation to take the place of the tables; 137 homes have been visited through the EMV for You Are Chosen II; lots of activities have been conducted in FMC and more to come; replacement paraments, banners, and pastor’s stole is being considered by the Altar Guild;

May: Treasurer is anticipating an \$80-90,000.00 shortfall if all things continue like this to the end of the year; we have been assigned Seminarian Andrew Wright as our new vicar; pursuit for funding a feasibility study for the preschool continues; Council approved purchase of paraments, banners, and stole; financial workshop is scheduled for May 9; treasurer is looking in to refinancing our mortgage; regularly scheduled Council meeting is designated for financial review on May 19th to consider items that will come forth from the budget workshop;

June: Pastor and Linda proposed a reduction in total salary and benefits as a “sacrificial offering” to lead the way for the congregation; Parish Guild submitted a gift of \$6,800.00 originally designed to pay down the mortgage principal balance but was asked by Council to redirect this generous gift to the General Fund for the monthly mortgage payment—that was done and greatly appreciated by Council; the cost of the worship folder was debated over and against the benefits; Council is considering designating two or three “approved” memorials so that more funds could be generated to the General Fund; You Are Chosen II was not going to meet original expectations of +/- \$287,000.00 in pledges over three years; **JUNE 2:** Special Council meeting to deal with budget; tabled Pastor and Linda’s proposal to reduce salary and benefits; did line-by-line review of expenses; **JUNE 10:** Special Council meeting to deal with budget; worship folder under review; discussed dedicated funds that could be moved to General Funds; eight-week series alternating between letters and Temple Talks signed and delivered by Council; **JUNE 30:** Special Council meeting to review budget and prepare it for presentation to congregation; moved dedicated funds to General Fund; motion to use Pipkorn Fund to make up accounts payable; motion to show \$40,000.00 under special fundraiser;

July: Budget reductions would need congregational approval; David Gruntman volunteered as lay delegate to Circuit Forum and to be considered as lay delegate to the LCMS convention in 2010; LifeLink is newest lead for senior housing project; anticipated ELCA announcement of adoption of Statement on Human Sexuality; topic for four letters and four Temple Talks were determined; a list of “approved” memorial gifts was approved; 42 children enrolled in VBS; consideration of non-smoking area; Special Voters meeting to propose revised budget set for August 16, 2009; Cross Monument soil boring test results were reported positive; Rev. Dr. Walter A. Maier III replaced Rev. Dr. Wenthe as our guest presenter for Continuing Education program; motion to pay bills from Pipkorn was addressed and a second motion was unanimously adopted to BORROW these funds; Council established paid holiday days; Pres. Manthei, VP Leininger, and Pastor met with a representative from LCMS Foundation to discuss possible strategy for long-range funding through gifts and bequests;

August: Special Voters Meeting August 16, 2009 adopted revised budget, \$129,629.00 was reduced by You Are Chosen \$43,954.00 and further reduced by reduction in expenses of \$39,637.00 and SHORTFALL of \$40,000.00 made up the difference to balance the 2009 budget; no Council meeting;

September: Nominating Committee appointed; our LCEF mortgage was being sold to solidify the position of LCEF; review of pastor’s health benefits and discussion to change to lower premium plan tabled; Assistant Treasurer is needed; Policy/Procedures Committee appointed; LifeLink optimistic that they can fund a senior housing program with 100% funding; welcomed Vicar Wright to his first Council meeting; Board of Elders unanimously recommended NOT to change the worship folder; application for a grant from FL/GA District to be presented 10-15-09; entire campus designated as “No Smoking” except the parking lot; Open Letter to the Community re: ELCA v LCMS position; Special Council meeting 9-27-09: Council adopted Pastor and Linda’s recommendation to change health benefit to Blue HRA saving approximately \$3,600.00 for the church in premiums annually but increasing Pastor and Linda’s possible deductible by \$6,000.00;

September 27, 2009: Voters Meeting: Announced that Pastor Redmann was elected as pastoral delegate to LCMS Convention in 2010; Cross Monument project, concept, and design was approved;

October: LifeLink is still working on senior housing funding; Open Letter to the Community was published; unanimous decision to remove from consideration to reduce further Pastor's salary and benefits package; Nominating Committee submitted its slate for 2010; proposed budget for 2010 recommended to congregation for adoption;

November: Pricing for "dedication pavers" was presented to fund the ongoing operating expense of the Cross Monument; formal presentation to Sarasota Circuit pastors for Cross Monument project asking them to place this opportunity before their people; Dan Najjar is working a bid for the Cross Monument; Pipkorn fund "held in budget reserve in the General Fund"; Kantorei invited to visit in January; Fundraiser Committee being developed; LifeLink reported that LCC has been designated as "rural" by the federal government and that funding from government programs is not possible at this time; FL/GA District conference topic was "Unchristian" and very informative; John Phillipp and Chris Wrightsman presented, and Council approved, a contract for a new copier; Strengthening Grant application was submitted to the district—not encouraged by them that it would be funded; now taking orders for the new Lutheran Study Bible; "Higher Things" youth gathering was introduced by Vicar Wright; Friendship Sunday scheduled for May 9, 2010; secured health department permit for kitchen; kitchen passed health inspection with glowing report; Procedures Committee established;

December: Larry Martin and John Phillipp commended for outstanding service on the Council; transferred \$8,466.00 from Pipkorn to General Fund; LCC awarded to host another Continuing Ed course by Concordia Theological Seminary; adopted contribution to FL/GA District be our vicarage program and our tithe from You Are Chosen II; anonymous donor pledged \$17,500.00 to fund feasibility study for child development center; a Feasibility Study Assistance Team is being formed; LCC board and committee membership rosters were presented and approved; Christmas bonuses approved for hourly staff; Financial Review Committee appointed; pewter collection being placed on the internet for 90 days.

Summary of Past & Vision of Future

Membership and Attendance:

Each year, each LCMS congregation is asked to complete a Congregational Statistical Report. This year, we report that Lutheran Church of the Cross had a slight increase over last year with a total of 331 baptized members. This number does not include our approximately 60 Associate Members and, of course, does not include our regular visitors whom we care for within our Christian family who cares for one another. This means we are a Christian family of approximately 400 souls.

According to our internal attendance records, our total attendance has continued to grow for five years in a row. Our average attendance for Sunday morning was 209 during 2009.

Clearly, the Lord has blessed us with new members and with growing attendance. Historically, we can be very encouraged that we are moving toward achieving the attendance once accomplished in 1998, our highest attendance on record. This points out the tremendous potential the Lord has provided for Lutheran Church of the Cross.

The work of ministry continued in 2009:

Many years of prayer, thought, and vision culminated in 2005 when, as a congregation, we determined our four primary areas of focus for our mission and ministry: Christian Education, Evangelism, Enriching Church Services, and Senior Citizen Ministry were chosen in that order of priority.

Future goals, immediate and long-term:

We will address our goals on the basis of our four primary priorities for ministry.

Christian Education: Out of this committee came the recommendation for a second full-time person. That has been addressed through the Vicarage Program and, at the November 2009 Voters' Meeting, we determined to extend the vicarage program for 2010-2011. Thanks to an anonymous donation of \$17,500, we have the entire projected cost of our Child Development Care feasibility study paid in full. A Feasibility Study Assistance Team (FSAT) is now gathering data for Mr. Paul Brandt, our consultant who has put us on "task." We are researching area pre-schools and/or daycare centers, and they are developing a prototype vision statement that eventually will be proposed for adoption by the congregation. The unique benefit of Mr. Brandt is that he is the only consultant offering to develop a business plan as Phase II of the study. Mr. Brandt is a member of the LCMS and has a long list of references from LMCS congregations from all across the nation. We are thrilled to be working with him and look forward to his first visit on March 23rd. This year we are using our FMC to present another DVD series, linked with the internet to explore "How We Got the Bible."

Evangelism: David Gruntman and I have completed Evangelism Explosion training. Having trained several members with this skill, we are now merging this training with a more relaxed but very intentional outreach program by scheduling a Friendship Sunday. We are employing further ideas garnered by an Outreach/Assimilation workshop that Vicar, David, and Herb Sass attended. You will be asked to think of your friends, neighbors, family, and co-workers who you might invite to a morning of worship and an afternoon as our guests for dinner and fellowship. In addition to this exciting community event, I have sent an email to the leadership of the congregation presenting a partnership opportunity with the Charlotte County Family YMCA. Mr. Rod Berger, Executive Director, has met with us and we are exploring how LCC might merge our heart's desire of fulfilling the Great Commission utilizing our facilities with the good name of the YMCA. More on this as it develops.

Enriching Church Services: This committee launched the DVD recording program that is wildly successful and greatly enjoyed by those unable to attend on Sunday mornings. This committee initiated, at the request of the Altar Guild, the plan to replace our green paraments. They are beautiful! This committee also did enormous legwork for the Board of Elders in researching in-depth, the value, cost, and benefits of our worship folder.

Senior Citizen Ministry: Research for the Adult Congregate Living Facility (ACLF) is ongoing. Maxfield Research has completed Phase One of their study and it demonstrates a need in our area. However, first Lutheran Services Florida (LSF) backed out of the program and recently Ecumen, because of recent economic upheaval, informed us that 100% financing is no longer available. We thought LifeLink was going to pick up this project but, because we are designated as "rural" by the federal government, the likelihood of funding is very, very slim. Therefore, this project needs to go on the back burner for now awaiting a time when the financial industry grows stronger.

A word about new committees: The Fundraising Committee is charged with brainstorming ideas for creative, fun activities that will support our mission and ministry and utilize our facilities more fully. The Policy/Procedure Committee is evaluating all our existing policies and procedures and formulating them into a manual. This is a terrific service that will benefit our ministry for years to come. In addition to our wildly successful DVD program, our Stephen Ministry has also given birth to a Hospital Visitation Ministry. Our Stephen Leader, Joyce Spier, is currently crafting with Father Art Shulte of Peace River Hospital a visitation plan that will allow us to meet with patients prior to surgery to offer Christian prayer. Fantastic! In addition to that, I am looking into the possibility of having Peace River Hospital playing worship DVDs on their closed circuit TV each week. We are constantly on the lookout for other ways to proclaim God's true Word.

A word about our vicarage program: I cannot express how wonderful our vicarage program is! Not only does it provide real relief for me as we share in the work of pastoral care, but I also truly enjoy nurturing these aspiring men in the blessed work of being a parish pastor. I love being a pastor and I pray I can encourage these men in this high and noble task. Furthermore, while it does take time and effort to share the things they will need to know, these men are a tremendous blessing to us! Consider how unique our three men have been. Consider how their wives and families have contributed to our mission and ministry. Consider how we have benefited watching them grow and develop and learn from their unique gifts and skills. I have said it before, I know, but where else are we going to invest +/- \$35,000.00 and have a greater impact upon our beloved LCMS if

not in shaping, molding, and forming a pastor for our church? I absolutely believe that Lutheran Church of the Cross is now responsible for “missions” in Sylvan Grove, KS and in Vermillion, SD. I believe Pastors Needham and Augustine were properly equipped to serve and I believe Vicar Wright will be as well. Finally, it takes a special congregation to love her vicars, care for them, nurture them, and incorporate them into our hearts and lives and our Christian family. Way to go, Lutheran Church of the Cross!

Clearly, the Lord has energized His people with remarkable courage and enthusiasm. Please continue to pray with me that God will lead and guide us into paths of uprightness that will give Him all praise, honor, and glory.

Respectfully submitted to the glory of God,
Pastor Redmann
February 28, 2010

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.
(Ephesians 3: 20-21)