

November 12, 2014

Dear Members and Friends of Faith Lutheran Church,

I'm writing to you today to bring you up to date with regard to the financial condition of our church, and to ask for your help.

Overall, we are in pretty good shape. All our bills are paid, and we have a strong vision for our future together that incorporates vital worship, a special emphasis on young families, and a pursuit of excellence in the arts as a means of expressing the good news of Jesus Christ.

Two funds, however, are in need of our immediate attention.

First, giving to our General Fund, that is the fund from which all our salaries and ongoing expenses are paid, is currently 2% above where we were last year at this point in the year. That's not bad, except that the budget we approved last January calls for a 4% increase by the end of the year. What is especially challenging is that the amount we are ahead of a given point the previous year has steadily gone down each week from +8% at the beginning of the summer. And, all want to expand our ministry next year, not cut it back.

Second, giving to our Mortgage Fund has allowed us to keep current with our payments and have currently a surplus of \$1,409.42 for the year. That's not bad either, except that we had a deficit in giving of \$2,164 for the month of October, and of \$3,623.91 for the month of September. Our mortgage has been paid from surpluses earlier in the in the year but, you can see, we are dangerously close to a deficit for 2014.

I am asking you, therefore, to pray about your current giving and to be open to increasing it. Sally and I together have been giving over 11% of my salary to the General Fund and \$6,000.00 per year to the Mortgage Fund, plus special offerings, and additional charitable giving (including 15% from Sally's income). We are happy to give, and we see what is left as our actual income.

We have come a long way together at Faith Lutheran Church, and I believe that God has plans for us for a long time to come. We have had an exciting year so far and have recently added our long planned-for adult choir! We filled two music and singing classes for pre-schoolers and are now putting together a third, all of which will form a pre-school choir. We had a wonderful Rally Day, Western Days, and Family Harvest Festival, and we are planning a direct-mail outreach, new working groups for Evangelism and Church/Community Relations, and Visioning for next year.

God continues to lead us to a time of tremendous opportunities for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ! I ask that you give according to the Bible's model of accountable stewardship: **first fruits** (the first check you write after receiving income), **proportional** (a percentage of income), **growth giving** (growing to 10%, that is, a tithe, and beyond).

Finally, please use the enclosed envelope to help us fund our ministry this year and give us a springboard to next. I thank you for your generous partnership in our ministry together.

Sincerely,

David Berkedal,
Pastor