



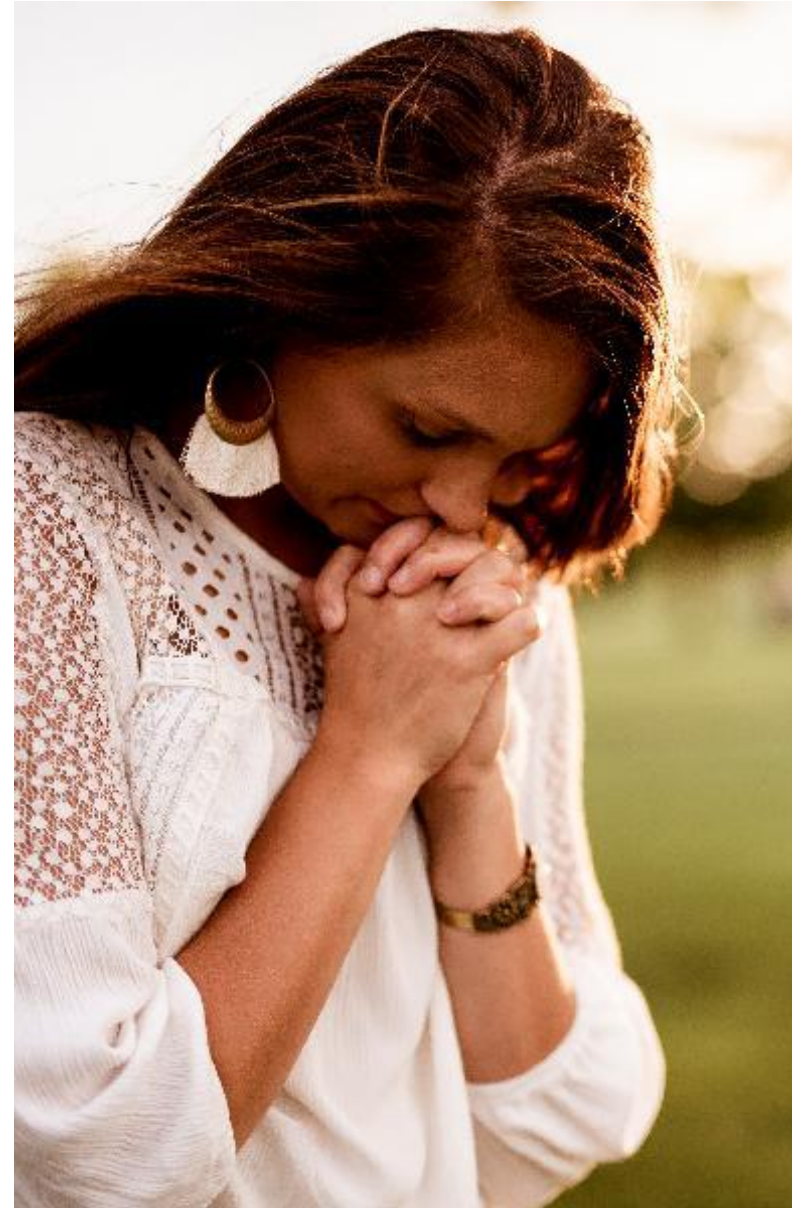
Go and...!

July 28, 2022



Agenda

- Theme of the day – **Share the Story**
- Spiritual practices – Dwelling in the Word and sharing our faith and congregational stories
- Story sharing – The Rev. Marc Stutzel
- Story Matters and Communication as Ministry



LET US PRAY



God's Story Our Stories



WE ALL
HAVE
A STORY
TO TELL 

•No Longer Welcoming

- Bite Size Piece's:
- Month 1: “my church”
- Month 2: “my church is _____”
- Month 3: Think and talk about one thing we do well
- Month 4: Invite one person to something going on
- Month 5: Invite one person to worship

Dwelling in the Word - Habakkuk 2:1-3 (The Message)

¹What's God going to say to my questions? I'm braced for the worst.

I'll climb to the lookout tower and scan the horizon.
I'll wait to see what God says,
how he'll answer my complaint.

²⁻³ **And then God answered: "Write this.**

Write what you see.

Write it out in big block letters

so that it can be read on the run.

This vision-message is a witness

pointing to what's coming.

It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait!

And it doesn't lie.

If it seems slow in coming, wait.

It's on its way. It will come right on time.



Habakkuk 2:2

**And then God answered:
“Write this.**

**Write what you see.
Write it out in big block
letters
so that it can be read on the
run.**

**This vision-message is a
witness**



What do you think
is God’s vision,
hope, and future for
your congregation?

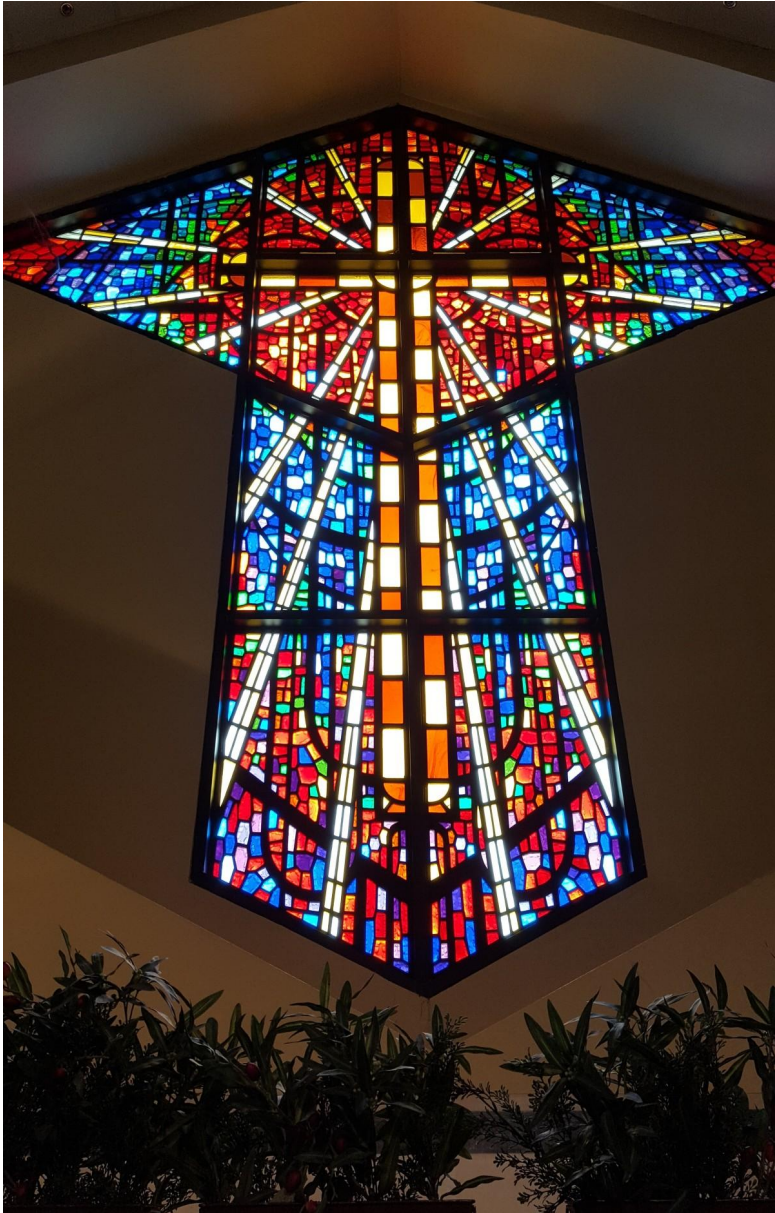
A PERSONAL FAITH STORY AND IT'S RELATION WITH A BIBLICAL STORY

- What is your faith story?
- Who are we and how did we get here?
- Why do you keep going to church?
- What's our vocation and faith journey?
- Is there a biblical story that fits your journey?

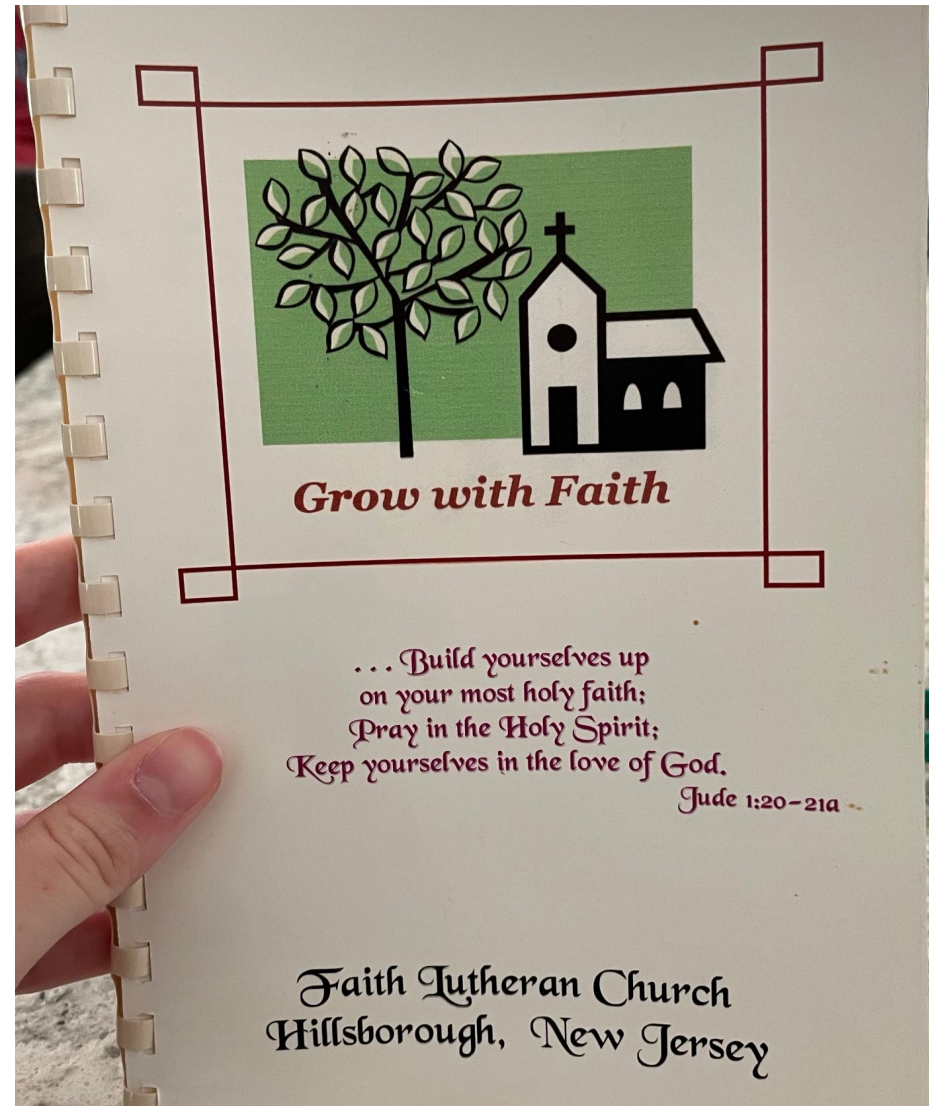


CONGREGATION STORY AND BIBLICAL STORY

- How might a practice of the congregation fit in a biblical narrative?
- What is the one thing that identifies the story of your congregation, and how could you nurture it?



Faith Lutheran Church, Hillsborough



It was September 1999 when Tropical Storm Floyd came to the East Coast. It brought lots of rain, and then flooding to our entire area, especially Manville and Bound Brook.

Two families of Faith were severely flooded with eight feet of water and more. They were fortunate to get out of their homes, but when they returned they found much loss and destruction.

Numerous members of Faith congregation responded quickly to help clean out all that was ruined and destroyed. Hearts, hands and checkbooks were opened up. We not only prayed, but were part of answering our prayers as God enabled us.

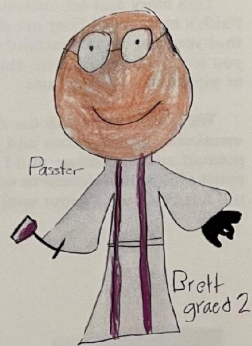
With our monetary gifts, matching funds were received from our *Lutheran Brotherhood* (now *Thrivent*) branch. Our two families were assisted financially and were helped to replace their lost belongings.

This was not the only time I have seen such caring flow from our members of Faith. It has happened also with the illnesses of congregational members, and for the needs of people who are not members of Faith. Faith congregation does "reach out" in love and caring.

As your pastor, I am always moved to thank God that the Holy Spirit does move us and enable us to care for others in Christian love to share the gospel in word and deed.

Pastor Walt

~2~



My favorite thing about our church would have to be the closeness to the members. I've known some of the children there since they were born, and that makes me feel close to them. It's a very close-knit group of people, and I feel comfortable around most of them. That's the best part of the church. I can talk to the adults and interact with the kids. Since I'm going off to college soon, it helps to know that I have a group of people that I can talk to. So, the people at the church, and the friendships that can develop there are probably my favorite part of the church.

Lauren West



I like Faith Lutheran Church on Palm Sunday and Christmas and much, much more.

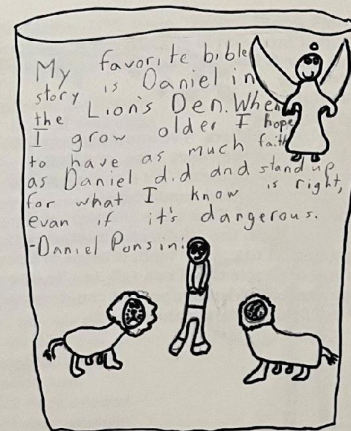
I like the Christmas play and the palms we get for Palm Sunday.

I like the Easter eggs they hide for Easter.

I like it when I made my banner for Holy Communion. That is what I like about Faith Lutheran Church

Tommy Boon - 2nd Grade

~3~



A little over ten years ago, my family and I moved here to Montgomery Township, New Jersey after having lived in north Jersey for eight years. Though our new location was a much better place for us based on where my husband works, it was not easy starting all over again in a new area. There was so much to do...unpacking, unpacking, unpacking. But besides that, one of the first priorities for me was finding a new church home for me and my two sons, Adam and Kyle. They were five and three years old at the time.

~4~

Now, I was raised as a Lutheran, still am and always will be a devoted Lutheran girl! So, of course, I had to find a Lutheran church close by. That church turned out to be Faith Lutheran Church. The first time I worshipped there, I felt so welcomed by everyone. Pastor Wagner was and is so friendly. A gentleman sitting next to me those first few Sundays would always help me keep Adam and Kyle (two very active toddlers) occupied and happy during the church service. Everyone made my boys and I feel like we were already members of Faith! This was certainly the church I had been looking for. A beautiful Lutheran church filled with warm and helpful people with a Pastor who inspires, enlightens and uplifts me each week.

Being a member of Faith and serving God and his people here at Faith in whatever small ways I can - mostly musical as I am a musician - is a very significant part of my life. And my sons feel they are an important part of the church, too! Our church has always had so many programs and activities to offer them. This June I will be so blessed and proud to watch Adam, my oldest - now 15, make his confirmation! Wow! What a spiritual milestone in his life.

I know I will always want to be a humble servant of our Lord and a "faithful" member of Faith! And my greatest wish for my sons is that they will continue to find as much joy and fulfillment in being a Lutheran and doing God's work as I have. We look forward to the expansion of our church and some Sunday in the future, when we are greeting a potential new member of Faith, we'll tell that person how Faith used to be rather small in size but has always been ENORMOUS when it comes to the Holy Spirit and His Love!

*Lord God, May we always know that our lives are waiting to be filled up with the Holy Spirit so that we may do your will and only good and loving things in your sight!
Fill us up, Lord, and send us out into your world with love in our hearts and a firm conviction to make the world You created a better place for all people everywhere!*

Karen Blumenthal

~5~



WHAT CAUGHT
YOUR
ATTENTION IN
THIS
CONVERSATION?

WHAT IS YOUR
CONGREGATION
PASSIONATE
ABOUT?

A Practice that Transforms Us

The Rev. Marc Stutzel

Pastor at Christ Lutheran Church, Woodcliff Lake

Story Matters and Communication as a Ministry

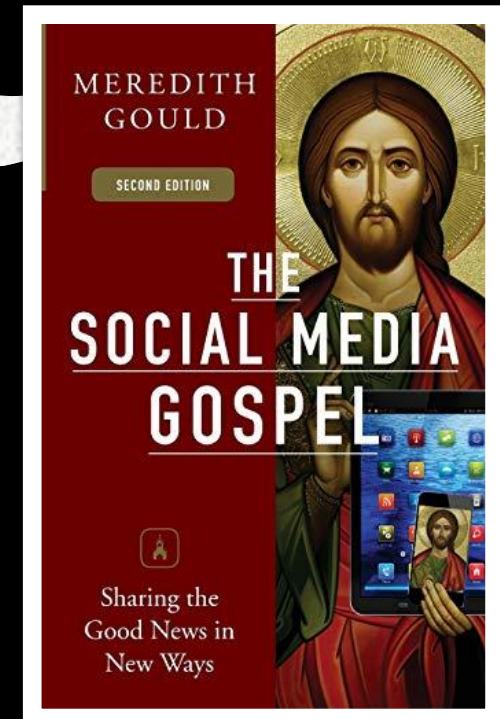


Sharing Our Faith with others



Resources:

- 1) [Story Matters Final.pdf \(elca.org\)](#)
- 2) [The Social Media Gospel](#)
- 3) [Our Congregation Story Matters – Naming God's Presence and Activity Over Time \(document\)](#)



Sending



God is cracking open the Church to go and...



Pray

Listen

Try Something

Be with &
Love Neighbors

Meet new People

Serve & Witness

Join us for our next virtual gathering on Zoom
August 25, 2022 @ 7 p.m.

A photograph of two young Black women kissing on a city street. The woman on the left has curly hair and is wearing a white top. The woman on the right has her hair in a bun and is wearing a black top with a choker. The background is a blurred city street with other people. The text "Thank you!" is overlaid in white serif font in the center.

Thank you!