

GOOD NEWS: Did You Know That...?

- ...During the first three months of 2019, we have received more than **\$109,599** in “pledged” and “unpledged” offerings? Because of your generosity, this means that we are currently **\$23,580** ahead of our budgeted expectations. Your faithful generosity allows us to touch the lives of others with God’s love. Thank you for your continued support!
- ...In an effort to receive 500+ likes on the First Lutheran Church Facebook page, we recently asked people to go on Facebook and “like” the congregation’s page? From March 11 – April 7, we reached more than 5.3K people, (which was an increase of **654%**); we had more than 1.8K post engagements (for an increase of **166%**); and we had an **80%** increase in the number of New Page Likes. If you have not already done so, we invite you to visit www.facebook.com/1stlutherantopeka and “Like” us.
- ...The water damage on all 3 floors of the Luber Education Wing has been repaired? The repair costs were covered by insurance. We are thankful for the accommodations that the CDO staff and students made as repairs were done. Please stop by and visit, when CDO is not in session.
- ...First Lutheran Church will be hosting a Gospel music concert by Richetta Manager on Sunday, April 28th, beginning at 4:00 p.m. (a reception will follow in the Parish Hall)? Richetta is a Topeka native and an internationally renowned singer and we are hoping to fill the sanctuary to capacity for this concert. There is no charge for admission, but a free-will offering will be received. This event is underwritten by the Sibberson Endowment Memorial Fund. You can help us promote this event in any of the following ways:
 - a) Invite family and friends to attend the concert with you;
 - b) “Like” and “share” the event with others via www.facebook.com/1stlutherantopeka
 - c) Mention the concert in your conversations with others.
- ...The work on the sanctuary sound system is nearing completion? Many people have already reported how much better they can hear what is happening in the sanctuary. There is still work that needs to be done on the video improvements that are being made. New sound and video volunteers received training on April 7th. No additional fund-raising efforts were needed, as the cost of the improvements were covered by existing funds designated for sound system improvements.
- ...The ceiling in the church library has recently been replaced? We invite you to come in and take a look at it. While there, you are invited to check out a book, a video and/or a magazine to enrich your faith.

A COMPREHENSIVE OUTREACH STRATEGY

Eileen Caspers, Joyce Koenig and I attended a Radical Hospitality conference at the Church of the Resurrection (COR) in Leawood, Kansas, April 4-5, 2019. At the April 8th church Council meeting, the Council authorized the Outreach Committee to begin work on the development of a Comprehensive Outreach Strategy for First Lutheran Church. Here are some preliminary ideas as to the potential components of a congregational strategy:

Step 1: Getting the Word Out About the Congregation

- Social Media: Visit the congregation's website; Like/share the congregation's Facebook page
- Invite people to attend church programs/events: worship services; concerts, etc.
- Nothing succeeds like a personal invitation!

Step 2: Receiving Guests at Worship

- Maintain the church building and grounds in excellent condition
- Hospitality volunteers—greeters; ushers; Welcome Center
- Notice people: The 10 foot/3 minute rule—Smile and greet everyone within 10 feet of you + introduce yourself and speak with someone you do not know very well for 3 minutes, then introduce that person to someone else.

Step 3: Following Up With Guests

- How can we improve the ways in which we receive the names and contact information of guests?
- Volunteers needed: to make telephone calls; in-home "Thank You" visits; send a card or email

Step 4: Inviting New Members

- New member classes
- New member sponsors
- Begin small group ministry groups

Step 5: Making New Disciples & Caring for New Members

- Provide opportunities for people to deepen their faith—through existing groups and the development of new groups
- Walking with and caring for new members

Step 6: Ministering to Inactive Members

- Develop plans to keep members active and a plan to reach out to those who have become inactive

Some additional things to consider:

- We share God's love with others, because it is what God has called us to do.
- It may take some time to develop a "comprehensive" strategy, but an improvement in even one area is an improvement in our overall strategy.
- Not everyone can do everything, but each person can do at least one thing!
- The process will be grounded in prayer. There will be opportunities for prayer in each area of the strategy.
- As we reach out to new people with God's love, not only will their lives be changed, but we will grow in our faith and devotion to God too!
- We look forward with an eager sense of anticipation as we seek to discover how God is calling us to be faithful servants.

We are excited by the possibilities that God has placed before us and we look forward to your participation in this process.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Bob Dealey