
❖ Faith Builder ❖

Volume 15 Issue 3

“A Church with a Heart for People”

February 2008

Church Health

Since 2003, our church has participated in a program called Natural Church Development (NCD). NCD is a church health process that has been used effectively in more than 325 congregations in every region of the Reformed Church. The “yardstick” used in the NCD process is a survey which is taken by 30 individuals from our congregation who are representative of our church family. We have taken the survey in 2003, 2005 and December 2007.

The NCD process is unique to every congregation. When it comes to God's work in and through the local congregation, one size does not fit all. After carefully studying 25,000 congregations, eight "quality characteristics" were identified that affect the life, effectiveness, and growth of congregations: Empowering leadership, Gift-oriented ministry, Passionate spirituality, Functional structures, Inspiring worship, Holistic small groups, Need-oriented evangelism, and Loving Relationships. Research shows that if a congregation scores low on any of the eight quality characteristics, the fruitfulness of that congregation is limited. After a congregation takes the NCD survey, it uses its strengths to address the characteristic in which it scored lowest.

We were greatly encouraged by the results of our most recent survey, where we showed significant improvement in 7 of the 8

categories! Importantly, we consistently met basic levels of “health” in each of those categories. For this type of survey, that consistency is a very good indicator that our congregation is functioning fruitfully!

The area that remains our lowest factor is passionate spirituality. This term invokes many [images](#) and is associated with an array of qualities and habits connected with living a Christ-centered life – joyfulness, prayerfulness, Bible study and service, to name a few. A first-order question in exploring passionate spirituality may be: *Are the hearts and lives of Faith Community Church members being transformed into the image of Christ, through the Holy Spirit, by the Living God?*

In the coming months, our NCD team (Joanne Prusa, Kurt Galley, Leanne Bough, Phil Assink, Teri Peterson and Tim Sebens) will be working with our NCD coach, Chuck Marr, as we seek to hear and understand God's plan for our church as it relates to growing in passionate spirituality. Throughout the process, we will be involving members of the congregation in discussion groups. If you have any questions about the results of the survey or the process itself, please ask any one of the NCD team members.

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 6, at 6:30 PM, there will be an Ash Wednesday soup dinner in the Fellowship Hall. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent when Christians reflect on what Jesus did for us by dying on the cross, ending with the celebration of his resurrection at Easter. Not only will we have a delicious soup dinner, we will also watch a DVD from our missionaries, the Scheenstras. We will learn about their ministry with the Orma people in Kenya. Please sign up at church if you plan on attending.

Summer Mission Trip

If you are interested in joining a team for this year's summer mission trip, plan on attending the informational meeting on Sunday, February 10, at 10:30 in the library. If you cannot make it to the meeting but are interested in finding out more about mission trips, please contact Teri Peterson at church.

This summer's Vacation Bible School has been changed from July 14—18 to July 7—11. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact April Haberman or Kate Riddle. Remember, VBS is a success because of you!

College Scholarship

The Scholarship Committee is now accepting applications from graduating high school students as well as college students who are in the process of study towards a Bachelor's degree. Each year for the past two years, the committee has awarded one or two scholarships of \$500 each to students whose families are members of Faith Community Church. Completed applications as well as college or high school grades/scores/transcripts and letters of recommendation will be reviewed by the committee in choosing the next awards for 2008.

Application forms are available by contacting Karen Sebens or in the church office. The completed application must be turned in no later than April 30, 2008.

Contributions received for the scholarship fund are placed in a mutual fund and each year the committee determines how much is available for scholarships. The committee encourages church members to contribute to this worthy cause.

Girls Choir

Girl's Choir Practice will be held on March 2 and 9, beginning at 10:15 AM. The girls will practice for Palm Sunday Service. It is not too late to join! If you're interested, please contact either April Haberman or Kate Riddle.

Adult Easter Ensemble

Back by popular demand: the Adult Ensemble is reuniting for a special Easter presentation. Adults and high school age youth are invited to participate in the group that will sing on Easter Sunday, March 23. Rehearsals will be after church every Sunday in March from 10:15-11AM. There will also be a final rehearsal on Thursday, March 20 at 7PM. There are no musical talent requirements- just a joyful heart and a desire to lead worship with your church family. For questions or if you are interested in participating, please contact Kate Riddle at 206-650-7280 or rid-dlekt@gmail.com.

Men and Mountain

Any men interested in summiting Mt. Rainier this June are invited to talk to Phil Assink about the trip. Doug Weaver from Church of the Good Shepherd, who has been to the summit 20 times, will be the main guide.

Inquirer's Class

Sunday, March 2 at 5 PM, people who are interested in learning more about Faith Church and the Christian faith are invited to a special seminar. The class will cover basics of the Christian faith and how our local church functions. Participants who would like to formally join Faith Church will be given the opportunity to do so on Easter Sunday, March 23. To insure adequate material, those planning to attend are asked to contact the office to register. There is no cost for the class which runs from 5 to 8 PM.

February Facility Fixers
is on February 11.

Faith Builder

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