

Gethsemane Lutheran Church and School  
Transition Team  
Final Report  
June 29, 2008

**I. Overview – Transition Team**

The dictionary defines ***transition*** as "the act, or state, of passing from one place, condition, or action, to another". The purpose of the Transition Team at Gethsemane Lutheran Church and School was to be involved in strategic planning at Gethsemane. The group's first task was to gain an understanding of Gethsemane's history, including age-sex distribution, membership activity, worship practices, and giving trends. The group then focused on determining Gethsemane's new identity, including gaining an understanding of how the past affects the present, developing goals and actions for the future and presenting recommendations to the congregation. The Transition Team's work will also help Gethsemane congregation see what kind of a pastor the congregation wants, and needs, to lead them through the transition from a pastoral church to a program church.

Members:

Steve Bathke, Member – School Board  
Kris Campisi, Chair – Board of Parish Education  
Paul Gutknecht, Layman  
Al Hopkins, Chair – Board of Missions  
JoDee Kuehn, Strategic Ministry Planner, Teacher  
Pastor Roger Schlechte, Intentional Interim Pastor  
Pat Snyder, Financial Secretary, TT Advisor  
Anjee Stiles, Teacher, TT Advisor  
Elenor Winters, Member – Board of Missions  
Terry Woehrle, Member – Board of Elders

The Transition Team was formed in January 2008. The team met weekly during January – March 2008 and bi-weekly during April – June 2008. The team created minutes to document the work completed in each of these meetings.

The Transition Team worked as a whole group and also completed activities within three sub-committees: Self Study, Staffing Needs and Mission/Vision. The team presented six reports to the congregation during mid-week Lenten services. In addition, the team presented their Mission/Vision work on June 1<sup>st</sup>. The team facilitated small group discussions after each of these presentations and used the resulting comments and feedback to further guide their work. The team selected June 29<sup>th</sup> as the date to present this Final Report. This date also marked the completion of the Transition Team's work and the recognition of their work in that day's worship services.

The Transition Team's primary findings and recommendations are documented through this report. This information is available as a tool for the congregation, church council and call committee as Gethsemane begins the process of calling a new pastor in the summer of 2008.

## **II. Historical View**

How Gethsemane developed in the past partly explains the congregation's "place" or "condition" now. In 1961, the land was purchased and construction of the building was completed by the Rocky Mountain District (RMD). The first service was held on July 9<sup>th</sup> with 257 people in attendance. The Congregation was officially chartered on October 1<sup>st</sup> with 142 charter members. The RMD had

envisioned a Christian Day School would be started along with the church, so a pre-school and kindergarten was initiated in August, 1962 with 90 students.

By 1964, Gethsemane no longer needed support as a mission congregation and became self-supporting. The Congregation continued to grow and was using Hulstrom School for Sunday school. A building program was begun in 1969 to add a Sanctuary which was dedicated on Palm Sunday, April 1971. After construction of classrooms in the school, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades were begun in the fall of 1976, with plans to add a grade each year until 8<sup>th</sup> grade was reached. In 1983, Gethsemane became a complete elementary school with pre-school through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Throughout the 1990's, the congregation continued to grow and this growth was mirrored in the school. The school grew to the point where the church basement was renovated to move 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> grades there in 2000 & 2001. Even with this renovation, projected growth in the school prompted further expansion. Construction of the expansion was started and completed in the summer of 2004. Seven new classrooms were added to the school, office space and the Narthex area were expanded, and an elevator and air conditioning were added to the church.

During the 2004 expansion the school experienced an unexpected decline in enrollment. The decline in enrollment combined with a restructuring of school tuition (and the elimination of church member discounting) negatively impacted church membership and participation of school families.

By 2008, church membership and school enrollment had stabilized after the initial decline in the early 2000's. The congregation in 2008 is in a state of transition and is looking for ways to fruitfully use Gethsemane's rich history and current strengths and resources to build a successful future.

### **III. Current Condition**

A demographic study was prepared by the Lutheran Church Extension Fund to assist Gethsemane in carrying out its mission. This study revealed the following about Gethsemane congregation:

- Relatively few members between ages 20 and 34
- Very few active members, or leaders, in that age group
- 83% of leaders are age 40 or older
- Per communicant giving has increased steadily
- Membership has increased gradually each year since 1997, except for 2003 when a sizeable number of inactive people were removed; Membership today is about the same as in 1997
- Gethsemane's neighborhood today is about 20% Hispanic and the percentage will continue to grow
- Average family income in Gethsemane's neighborhood is about the same as the average for all Colorado
- Gethsemane's neighborhood is relatively young - average age is 32.7
- Gethsemane's neighborhood will grow almost 14% in next 5 years
- 40% of Gethsemane's neighborhood is unchurched

The demographic study also indicated that Gethsemane might be able to take advantage of the "funnel effect." The "funnel effect" means that Gethsemane, especially the school, can be appealing to people living much farther north than the area generally considered

Gethsemane's neighborhood, because Gethsemane is "on the way to work" for people working downtown or in the Tech Center.

The Transition Team also conducted several surveys within the church and school. Overall, the surveys indicated the congregation agrees that Jesus addressed the Great Commission to Gethsemane congregation, as well as the original disciples. These are some of the survey findings:

**What does the congregation think Gethsemane does well?**

- Providing worship that deepens members' experience of God and their Christian faith
- Providing Christian education for adults
- Members help each other in times of trouble

**What does the congregation want to improve?**

- Providing Christian education for young adults
- Sharing the good news of the Gospel with the unchurched
- Providing a youth program that is social, as well as spiritual
- Helping members discover their own gifts for ministry and service
- Informing Gethsemane's neighborhood of the activities here at Gethsemane
- Providing training for new leaders
- Dealing with disagreements and conflicts

**IV. The Future**

There are, however, barriers to the growth that Gethsemane may hope for in the future. Historically, Gethsemane has been a pastoral church. Pastoral churches are generally smaller in size (less than 150 worshipers on Sundays) and they rely on the pastor to be the center of activity within the church and congregation. Program churches tend to be larger in size (151-350 active worshippers on Sunday) and they rely on groups/teams/committees to plan and implement programs and activities. Within a program church, the pastor is the executive

and he spends his time planning with lay leaders to ensure that work is completed within the church. For the past 10 years (or so), Gethsemane has been attempting to grow but keeps hitting a glass ceiling of 230-240 active worshipers. As new members have joined, others have left which has prevented Gethsemane from growing beyond this number of active members.

While the congregation did have the numbers to support a program size church, it has continued to act as a pastoral size church in that the relationships of people within the congregation still center on the pastor rather than on other staff and/or lay leaders. In addition the pastors continued to be the master coordinators of ministry in the congregation, whereas in a congregation that operates in a program mode the senior pastor would function as the executive with other staff and Board managers overseeing programs. The pastor's role in a program church becomes one of encouraging, supporting, training and equipping others to lead programs in the congregation.

The Transition Team created a list of Gethsemane's top four barriers which – if removed – would create the biggest positive impact to Gethsemane's growth:

- The congregation can't balance the budget at the church and school's current size, so people worry that Gethsemane can't afford any growth or increase in the budget.
- The congregation isn't effectively using its members (need to bring back time and talent sheets).
- The church and school struggle to get the job done with the current staff (e.g. part-time school principal, no church secretary) so people worry that Gethsemane will have even more difficulties in staffing a larger church/school.
- The congregation seems to want a full church, but they don't necessarily want a program church.

The Transition Team also tried to identify the top five barriers to Gethsemane's growth that the congregation is most ready to address:

- The congregation doesn't have a firm plan and methods for reaching out (e.g. postcards, visits, banner waving, advertising, etc.)
- The congregation isn't effectively using its members (need to bring back time and talent sheets).
- An overall financial strategy needs to be developed that includes:
  - A clear vision.
  - Steps to realize the vision.
  - A plan to build spiritual commitment to proportional giving.
  - Incorporates new members effectively.
  - Connects members to hands-on ministries related to their spiritual gifts.
  - Sends trained visitors to reach out in caring ministry to lapsed members when they stop attending.
  - Teaching planned giving (naming the church in one's will).
- It takes several members, not just the pastor, to assimilate new members.
- See pastoral care as a task of the faith community, not just the pastor.

## V. **Sub-Committee Work and Recommendations**

### Self-Study

This sub-committee focused on reviewing Gethsemane's Constitution, Bylaws and ministry descriptions. They also reviewed (when possible) the policies/handbooks of the congregation and school, including the guidelines for weddings held at Gethsemane. The review of Gethsemane's Constitution and Bylaws performed by this sub-committee focused on the most important changes and compliance with Synod guidelines. In addition, however, this sub-committee

recommended that a more detailed review of the Constitution and Bylaws should take place with an emphasis on identifying the minor errors and inconsistencies. Further, this sub-committee suggested that handbook and procedural reviews occur concurrently with the detailed review and revision of the Constitution. Once all reviews and updates are complete, Gethsemane's revised Constitution and Bylaws should be filed with the District office to officially replace the 1976 Constitution and Bylaws currently on record. Please see Attachment A for the complete sub-committee report.

#### Staffing Needs

This sub-committee studied the various and many job descriptions at Gethsemane. After this review, they determined that many of the job descriptions could be consolidated. They undertook the effort of combining job descriptions when possible and they also created job descriptions when necessary. They also intended to do a review of the Gethsemane Lutheran Church and School Personnel Manual, but they discovered that Gethsemane has no such manual. Based on their review of job descriptions and current staffing, and due to the lack of a Personnel Manual at Gethsemane, this sub-committee made the following recommendations. Please see Attachment B for the complete sub-committee report.

- Hire a Director of Youth Ministry/Christian Education
- Hire a Church Secretary (half-time)
- Expand Custodial Services
- Develop a GLCS Personnel Manual

#### Mission/Vision

This sub-committee reviewed the existing mission statement. They used the Transition Team's survey data to identify a high level set of goals for the congregation and they fashioned a related vision

statement. They then created objectives associated with each goal. All of this information was presented to the congregation with the opportunity for small group discussion. Based on feedback and approval from the congregation, the sub-committee was then able to compose a list of actions to assure that the objectives for each goal could reasonably be met. Please see Attachment C for the complete sub-committee report.

**Core Values**

Worship  
Spiritual Maturity  
Fellowship/Community  
Missions Outreach

**Mission Statement**

By God's grace we DECLARE salvation through Jesus Christ,  
PREPARE all God's Children for life by faith in Christ,  
SHARE Christ's love with our families, community and world.

**Vision Statement**

An energized, devoted family of believers rooted and growing in God's Word actively serving and reaching out to our community and world.

**Goals**

- Goal # 1: Spirit filled worship relevant for all ages.
- Goal # 2: A congregation growing in faith through the study of God's Word.
- Goal # 3: A mobilized laity effectively utilizing their God-given personal abilities.
- Goal # 4: A congregation that actively cares for its members, school families and community.

**VI. Summary**

Over the course of six months, the Transition Team compiled, studied and assimilated a large amount of information about Gethsemane's history,

strengths, weakness, values, expectations and hopes for the future. The team took all of this information and created a vision statement and a set of recommendations along with goals, objectives and actions to help guide Gethsemane congregation in its first steps toward positive change. The Transition Team believes that as the congregation adopts and acts on these recommendations, goals, objectives and actions, it will be able to confidently call a pastor who can nurture, support and encourage Gethsemane congregation as it moves toward being a program size church.

## **VII. Concluding Recommendations**

While the Transition Team can make recommendations to the congregation, it has no authority to adopt or implement plans or programs.

Recommendations will need to be considered by the congregation through the appropriate Boards, organizations, Church Council, and as prudent, the Voters' Assembly.

In light of that and to help the congregation move into the future with purpose and excitement, the following recommendations are made:

- A. The Transition Team recommends the adoption of Attachment C (core values, mission statement, vision statement, goals, objectives and actions) by the Church Council with the understanding that the actions may be modified after study by the appropriate Board or organization.
- B. The Transition Team recommends that a Design Team be appointed to synthesize the information from Attachments A, B, and C to develop a three year plan subject to congregational approval in preparation for the capital funding campaign in the fall of 2008.

C. The Transition Team recommends that the Church Council be responsible for the implementation and ongoing review of the above Transition Team recommendations.

# ATTACHMENT A

## TRANSITION TEAM Self Study Sub-Committee Report May 29, 2008

### A. CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS

Gethsemane's Constitution and Bylaws are one document, and organized differently than the Synod Guidelines for Constitution and Bylaws, however, Gethsemane's document does include all the important points in the Synod Guidelines, and generally conforms to the Guidelines. Certain ideas deserve further review and possible amendments to Gethsemane's document:

1. Discrimination because of race or ethnic origin should be specifically prohibited.
2. Sexual harassment should be specifically prohibited.
3. It is legally impossible to call some Articles "UNALTERABLE", which Gethsemane's document does. This language should be removed, but the spirit of the language could be maintained in two ways:
  - a. Require more notice for a meeting which would consider amendments to these Articles. This method is the Synod's recommendation.
  - b. Raise the amendment vote requirement above the usual two thirds.
4. Women **cannot** now hold the offices of Chairman, Vice Chairman or Elder. They should be allowed to be Chair(man) or Vice Chair(man).
5. The language about Pulpit and Altar Fellowship in Gethsemane's current document is out of date, and should be changed.
6. All Boards and Committees should review the Constitution Articles defining their authorities, duties and responsibilities, and correct as necessary.
7. The Voters' Assembly is now the governing authority of the Church and School. It meets six times each year, and is a rather small group. Gethsemane has two possible options:
  - a. Leave the current Voters' Assembly structure and process unchanged.
  - b. Make all communicant members part of the Voters' Assembly and give more authority to the Church Council, but meet only once or twice per year, plus special meetings for extending calls to ordained ministers and commissioned ministers.
8. The Nominating Committee for Pastor calls is the full Board of Elders. In order to interest more members in the process, and to

get a more diverse range of views, Gethsemane should consider expanding that Nominating Committee.

#### B. HANDBOOKS

1. The Faculty Handbook and Student Handbook should be reviewed and updated by the School Board.
2. Dorcas' Wedding Handbook should be reviewed and updated by the Board of Elders.

#### C. PROCEDURES

Procedures for "handing over" when term limits are reached, or resignations occur, are not consistent. Board and Committee Chairpeople should develop a written checklist including the appropriate Article of the Constitution and all other practical advices. The Vice Chairman should be responsible for a similar checklist for the Officers. The responsible person should report to the Church Council that "handover" information has been dispensed.

#### D. CONCLUSION

The review of Gethsemane's Constitution and Bylaws performed by this sub-committee focused on the most important changes and compliance with Synod guidelines. Our report summarizes only what we considered to be high priority changes, and we recommend that Gethsemane's Constitution and Bylaws be modified based on the information listed in this report. In addition, however, this sub-committee recommends that a more detailed review of the Constitution and Bylaws takes place with an emphasis on identifying the less serious errors and inconsistencies. Further, this sub-committee suggests that handbook and procedural reviews occur concurrently with the detailed review and revision of the Constitution. Once all reviews and updates are complete, Gethsemane's revised Constitution and Bylaws should be filed with the District office to officially replace the 1976 Constitution and Bylaws currently on record.

## ATTACHMENT B

### TRANSITION TEAM Staffing Needs Sub-Committee Report June 16, 2008

The sub-committee for staffing needs/job descriptions did a study of the various and many job descriptions at Gethsemane and found that many could be incorporated into one description. We created job descriptions for Director of Youth Ministry/Director of Christian Education with emphasis on youth ministry; Principal, School Teacher, School Secretary, Business Manager, Church secretary, Organist and Custodian. We developed what we thought were descriptions which would best serve the position and Gethsemane Church and School. The descriptions were reviewed with other members of the Transition Team and a "recommended final job description" was drafted. These job descriptions are recommendations only, and this sub-committee hopes they will be helpful to the Board that is responsible for the hiring of the personnel to fill these positions. We also intended to do a review of the Gethsemane Lutheran Church and School Personnel Manual, but we discovered that Gethsemane has no such manual. Based on our review of job descriptions and current staffing, and due to the lack of a Personnel Manual at Gethsemane, this sub-committee recommends the following:

#### 1. Hire a Director of Youth Ministry/Christian Education

This is essential to the growth of the church and school

- In the formal and informal polling of the congregation it was noted that a person who will engage the youth was a foremost necessity.
- Youth activities and education are the reasons families join a congregation.
- This person could assume some of the youth ministry duties currently performed by the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher/principal to free him up to perform administrative duties that he currently doesn't have time to complete.

#### 2. Hire a Church Secretary (half-time)

Consistency in the managing of the church business is essential to the growth and day to day running of the mission.

- There are many duties that are being done by the Business Manager that could be accomplished by the secretary.
- Volunteers are utilized to complete the day to day business of the church.

### 3. Expand Custodial Services

A clean and presentable environment is essential in attracting and keeping members

- The custodian will continue to clean the main entry areas of the church and school, the main hallways and all bathrooms.
- The duties/compensation of the job will expand with the growth of the church.

### 4. Develop a GLCS Personnel Manual

It is important for all GLCS staff to have a set of common instructions and guidelines for their duties at the church and school. Although the GLS staff has a Faculty Handbook, there is no common manual for all staff. This new manual could outline:

- Vacation/sick time guidelines and tracking
- Crossover church/school duties
- Dress code/behavior guidelines
- Internet use policy

## ATTACHMENT C

### TRANSITION TEAM Mission/Vision Sub-Committee Report June 16, 2008

This sub-committee consisted of three members of the Transition Team along with another lay person from the congregation. We began our work by reviewing the existing mission statement. We then used the Transition Team's survey data to identify a high level set of goals for the congregation and we fashioned a related vision statement. We then created objectives associated with each goal. All of this information was presented to the congregation with the opportunity for small group discussion. Based on feedback and approval from the congregation, our sub-committee was then able to compose a list of actions to assure that the objectives for each goal could reasonably be met. Below we have listed the components of our work.

Core Values are the values Gethsemane believes God wants most expressed by the congregation's actions in the future. The Mission/Vision sub-committee used the results of the congregational surveys to help define these values. These values are an "umbrella" over Gethsemane's ministry plan: mission, vision, goals, objectives and actions.

These are the Core Values that were proposed by the Transition Team and accepted by Gethsemane congregation on June 8, 2008:

**Worship**  
**Spiritual Maturity**  
**Fellowship/Community**  
**Missions Outreach**

The Mission Statement is Gethsemane congregation's understanding of why God wants Gethsemane here as a congregation. Gethsemane's Core Values are reflected in the Mission Statement:

**By God's grace we DECLARE salvation through Jesus Christ,  
PREPARE all God's Children for life by faith in Christ,  
SHARE Christ's love with our families, community and world.**

A Vision Statement is Gethsemane congregation's best understanding of God's will for the future of the congregation (as experienced by

Gethsemane's community, guests and members). Gethsemane's Core Values and Mission Statement directly connect to its vision:

**An energized, devoted family of believers rooted and growing in God's Word actively serving and reaching out to our community and world.**

Goals are broad statements that describe long-term targets or directions of development. They state in general terms what Gethsemane wants to accomplish or become over the next several years. Gethsemane's Core Values, Mission Statement and Vision Statement lead to these specific goals for the congregation:

**Goal # 1: Spirit filled worship relevant for all ages.**

**Goal # 2: A congregation growing in faith through the study of God's Word.**

**Goal # 3: A mobilized laity effectively utilizing their God-given personal abilities.**

**Goal # 4: A congregation that actively cares for its members, school families and community.**

Each goal has associated objectives which clearly describe a desirable outcome or end result. Objectives should be: specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely. Each listed objective should be specified by three things: the achievement, the condition(s), and the measurement. The order of the listed objective does **not** imply a ranking of importance. These are Gethsemane's objectives:

Goal # 1: Spirit filled worship relevant for all ages.

Objectives:

- a) Relevant, doctrinally sound teaching and preaching.
- b) Children are an integral part of worship.
- c) Music, drama, choirs for worship services. A condition might be resources available. Measurement might be the number of services with these features.

Goal # 2: A congregation growing in faith through the study of God's Word.

Objectives:

- a) Church and school ministry to children that helps them grow in their faith. Measurement: types of ministries being conducted.
- b) Relevant and challenging Bible study opportunities  
Measurement: Variety of Bible studies offered
- c) Small Groups that meet needs of fellowship, caring, and growth in God's Word. Measurement: # of leaders trained, # of groups organized.

Goal # 3: A mobilized laity effectively utilizing their personal God-given abilities.

Objectives:

- a) An inventory of members' talents and interests in serving.  
Measurement might be # of people who have completed time and talent surveys, the tabulation of talents.
- b) A system for matching people's abilities with opportunities for service.  
Measurement might be: people who need the information have it available, or know how to get it.
- c) Trained leadership for congregational Boards and organizations.  
Measurement might be # of new board members each year and # of former board members who move to other opportunities.

Goal # 4: A congregation that actively cares for its members, school families and community.

Objectives:

- a) Ministry to reclaim inactive members. Measurement might be number of people trained and number of inactive members reclaimed for God.
- b) Caring ministry for new and current members. Measurement: Training program organized, completed, calls made, Elder districts organized and working
- c) Age appropriate youth programs. Measurement: # of Leaders trained, number of groups meeting for activities
- d) A united church and school. Measurement might be events planned and conducted.
- e) Active outreach in the community. Measurement might be # of people trained, # of calls to visitors, etc.

Actions are the list of tasks that ensure an objective is met. Ideally, once each objective under a goal has been met then that goal has been accomplished. However, please note that in Gethsemane congregation's particular situation, the list of actions under each objective is neither exhaustive nor mandatory. This list of actions will change over time based on circumstances, resources and any other identified constraints.

Goal # 1: Spirit filled worship relevant for all ages.

Objectives/Actions:

- a) Relevant, doctrinally sound teaching and preaching.
  - a. Call a pastor who is a good match for Gethsemane's mission, vision, goals and objectives.
- b) Children are an integral part of worship.
  - a. Include children's messages in the service
  - b. Provide opportunities for children to participate in the service through music, drama or Sunday School programs
    - i. Have a "Children's Sunday" when children can greet, usher and help with jobs normally done by the adults.
  - c. Bring back Acolyte program
- c) Music, drama, choirs for worship services
  - a. Upgrade the sound system
  - b. Implement a projector system for worship
  - c. Create a Director of Music position
    - i. Recruit a Celebration Choir director
    - ii. Create a children's choir made up of both church and school children
    - iii. Strengthen New Song Praise Team
      - 1. Increase practice schedule
      - 2. Recruit new members (including drummer, bass guitarist, 1-2 tenors)

Goal # 2: A congregation growing in faith through the study of God's Word.

Actions:

- a) Church and school ministry to children that helps them grow in their faith.
  - a. Expand Sunday School program by marketing to the school children and neighborhood children

- b. Offer Vacation Bible School in the summer
- b) Relevant and challenging Bible study opportunities
  - a. Create shorter-duration Bible study opportunities (e.g. 4 or 6 week studies)
  - b. Offer group-specific Bible study opportunities (e.g. studies for women, married couples, parents, retirees)
  - c. Offer Bible-studies conducted away from church (i.e. a lay-led Bible study at someone's home)
- c) Small Groups that meet needs of fellowship, caring, and growth in God's Word.
  - a. Establish "Meet, Greet and Eat Groups" –Form groups of 4 families to get together at least once a month for 3 months then form new groups. These meetings could be in homes, going out for a meal, bowling, maybe a weekend campout.

Goal # 3: A mobilized laity effectively utilizing their personal God-given abilities.

Actions:

- a) An inventory of members' talents and interests in serving.
  - a. Train members to understand Who we serve and why we serve Him
  - b. Educate members about service opportunities
  - c. Request that all members fill out a time and talent survey
- b) A system for matching people's abilities with opportunities for service.
  - a. Create a volunteer position to oversee time and talent information
    - i. Tabulate time and talent survey
    - ii. Create reports to give to boards and organizations
- c) Trained leadership for congregational Boards and organizations.
  - a. Update board descriptions and handbooks
  - b. Create procedures for transition of positions
  - c. Establish mentoring between senior and junior members of boards and organizations
  - d. Adhere to a reasonable, limited length of service for boards and other positions

Goal # 4: A congregation that actively cares for its members, school families and community.

Actions:

- a) Ministry to reclaim inactive members.

- a. Identify all inactive members through attendance records.
  - b. Develop brochure as an aid in making calls or visits (contact District)
  - c. Train Elders and/or special teams to call or visit all inactive members
  - d. Make call on all inactive members; tabulate information from calls/visits to help improve programs at Gethsemane.
  - e. Use attendance records to keep track of all members to alert Elders of potential problems
  - f. Follow-up with absentee members within a month.
- b) Caring ministry for new/current members.
- a. Establish a New Member Orientation program to be used before they get confirmed or received into membership.
  - b. Assign a current member to sponsor and assist a new member for their first year.
  - c. Use sponsor to assist, inform and communicate with new members during the first year.
  - d. Involve new members in church life quickly.
    - i. Implement a 3-1-1 program. Encouraging members to try to visit at least 3 minutes with someone they are familiar with then 3 minutes with someone they are less familiar with. This could be a guest or new member.
    - ii. Create a "Fruit Basket Upset" Sunday, it would be announced the week before we'd like everyone to sit in a different place in Church next week. Connecting with people we don't usually sit by.
  - e. Start some support groups. Example: Grief, Cancer, Divorce
  - f. Create Fellowship opportunities
    - i. Mother Daughter Banquets
    - ii. Christmas Progressive Dinners
    - iii. Sunday School Christmas Program
    - iv. Start a book club
    - v. Oktoberfest Party
  - g. Communicate with members through letters, calls and the GEMS.
  - h. Create a church photo directory to help members put names and faces together.
- c) Age appropriate youth programs.
- a. Reestablish the Youth Board
  - b. Contact youth within the congregation and invite them to youth fellowship activities at the church

- c. Create opportunities for youth to fellowship away from the church setting
- d) A united church and school
  - a. Create fellowship opportunities
    - i. Ice Cream social
    - ii. Family summer campouts
    - iii. Dinner nights out at local restaurants
    - iv. School children participating in Sunday worship
    - v. Lent and Advent suppers
    - vi. Fall Church and School picnic at E.B. Raines Park
    - vii. Dorcas bazaar and fall festival
    - viii. All Saints Day festivities
      - 1. Alleluia party
      - 2. Trick or Trunk in parking lot
  - b. Create more opportunities for church members to be involved in the school
    - i. Greeting students in the morning
    - ii. Reading in classrooms
    - iii. Volunteering in the school library
    - iv. Serving refreshments at special school events
  - c. Inform school families of church events through the Gladiator and other notes home
  - d. Inform school parents of service opportunities at the church (e.g. Trustee work day, etc.)
  - e. Inform church members of school events through the bulletin, GEMS and calling tree
- e) Active outreach in the community
  - a. Train members through sermons, GEMS, articles and classes on evangelism and the Great Commission
    - i. Encourage members to invite a neighbor to church
  - b. Set up a special committee to communicate within neighborhoods using Synod's "New Member Outreach" program
  - c. Warmly welcome visitors
    - i. Use the blue cards to do follow up visits with them. Invite to come back and see if we can be of any service to them.
    - ii. Establish a welcome station where they could be given a "Welcome to Gethsemane Lutheran Church and School" ribbon / bookmark or some other gift.
  - d. Tabulate and track all visitors; keep staff informed of potential new members.
  - e. Create church community program

- i. Church members can participate in 1-2 projects each year that benefit/improve the surrounding neighborhoods/community
- f. Create Advertising Program
  - i. Utilize new church sign
  - ii. Distribute neighborhood flyers
  - iii. Place door hangers around the neighborhood
  - iv. Hold social events at the church that are open to anyone