

VISION DOCUMENT PROPOSAL

Friedens Evangelical Lutheran Church – October 2011

Purpose of this document: Friedens Evangelical Lutheran Church is a church that has been blessed to be a congregation of believers for the past 156 years in Kenosha, Wisconsin. God has blessed the congregation with faithful pastors to guide the spiritual lives of the members of the congregation and also with many principals and teachers to feed the lambs of the congregation in the grade school years with knowledge for both their bodies and souls. Many blessings have been received over the course of this congregation's and school's history, for which we thank and praise God and without whose power and help that would not have been possible.

As a result of some difficult circumstances, the leaders of Friedens congregation felt it necessary to seek consultation from Crossroads Ministry, formerly known as Parish Assistance when it was a part of the WELS programs of ministry. Over a period of time and much work, we have now reached the point where a clearer vision of our mission is needed to help us proceed with the work that God is giving us to do. Listening visits and other meetings have helped us to identify and prioritize the needs and the direction that we should pursue.

The Friedens Evangelical Lutheran Church Family is committed to Christ and will:

- **'BELIEVE' the GOSPEL**
- **'SHARE' the GOSPEL**
- **'LIVE' the GOSPEL**

As we continue to teach the members of Friedens the truths concerning God's great love for us and how undeserved that love really is, we will also need to equip them to spread the Gospel to those in our surrounding neighborhoods and in their own neighborhoods, as the membership of Friedens no longer is located in the neighborhood of the church as it once was.

As part of this broader mission, the following three ministry priorities were identified with objectives needed to accomplish each ministry. The time frame for reaching the completion of each priority should also be established, perhaps a 3 year time frame at a minimum.

Vision Ministry Priority #1 - Promote Spiritual Growth

- To accomplish this, the leaders feel the following objectives need to be carried out:
 - ▣ Grow the membership in stewardship principles
 - ▣ Teach the membership evangelism tools
 - ▣ Increase church attendance
- For these things to be accomplished, the following strategies can be considered:
 - ▣ Offer more, and a greater variety, of Bible studies
 - ▣ Consider a contemporary style of worship in addition to the current worship opportunities
 - ▣ Focus additional ministry on more specialty groups

Vision Ministry Priority #2 - Leverage the School

- To accomplish this, the leaders feel the following objectives need to be carried out:
 - ▣ Growth in the early childhood department
 - ▣ Increase the visibility of the school as a whole
 - ▣ Work at making the school more affordable for more people
- For these things to be accomplished, the following strategies can be considered:
 - ▣ Seek to reach state licensing and accreditation
 - ▣ Establish a tuition assistance/scholarship system to meet the financial needs of those that apply
 - ▣ Determine the feasibility of a unified WELS Lutheran Elementary School in the Kenosha area

Vision Ministry Priority #3 - Improve Communication

- To accomplish this, the leaders feel that the following objectives need to be carried out:
 - ▣ Encourage members to use tools already being used
 - ▣ Improve communication with new members
 - ▣ Establish more information concerning all of the groups and opportunities available
- For these things to be accomplished, the following strategies can be considered:
 - ▣ Develop a shepherding program made up of elders and key members, who will be assigned an amount of families they can “shepherd” and communicate to and with them in a variety of ways
 - ▣ Assemble ‘new member’ packets and develop a better assimilation system for incorporating new members into the ministries of Friedens
 - ▣ Continue to use existing means of communication, seeking to make greater use of them, and strive to add to the means of communication to reach more people—members and community alike

It is of extreme importance that we continue to review our goals and objectives on a yearly basis, so they do not become forgotten or so that the wheels do not stop turning. It is of extreme importance that we continue to do what works and change what does not work, so that we can be filled with joy and not frustration. It is of extreme importance that we plan far enough ahead, so that we can be proactive and not reactive, and so that we can be prepared if the need for a renovation or even a move to another location and a new facility is needed.

Friedens Evangelical Lutheran Church and School indeed have much to be thankful for when we consider the blessings that God has showered upon us for 156 years. But the mission that God has given to us continues and perhaps with more challenges and opportunities than ever before. Located in a changing neighborhood, we cannot deny that! Living in a world that continues to need the Gospel message of Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we cannot deny that! Knowing that the Word of God does not change and that our mission does not really change, but that the way that we may carry out His mission or reach people can, we cannot deny that!

It is good to reflect on our past and be reminded just how blessed we have been. It is important to continue to look ahead, with a mission, a strategy and a vision to help us carry out the work that God has for us. The love of God will continue to move us, the power of God will continue to help us overcome our enemies, and the grace of God will continue to bless us. May we continue to trust in the promises of our God, be strengthened by the power of His Word, and thank and praise Him for all of the blessings that we will receive from His gracious hand. To God be the glory!