

Faith Into the Community

By Kevin Kindelin



As I pulled into the church parking lot on that Saturday morning, a smile came to my face at the amount of cars that were there. I expected a fair turnout to the Men's Ministry Breakfast, but this exceeded my expectations. As the sixty or so attendees gathered downstairs in Discipleship Center, I saw a host of familiar faces, as well as many I didn't recognize. We were all there for the same reason...what can we, as men of Immanuel and Palatine, do to help our Community? This was the theme of the "Faith into the Community" breakfast on March 28th.

We gathered together to discuss how we can help those in need in our community and what our role is as Christians toward our neighbors. Mayor Jim Schwantz, the keynote speaker, shared his inspirational journey from hometown hopeful, to the NFL, to mayor of Palatine. We started the morning off by welcoming each other, praying, singing and recognizing the mayor.

George Frahm got up to share his insight into the *Art of Neighboring*. He provided a "Who is my Neighbor" exercise and challenged us all to find out more about our neighbors, learn how to be of service to them, and share the love of Christ with them. George knows a little about neighboring. He and his wife Shary are also our Missionaries to Cambodia. He shared that he likes to bake bread and offer it to his neighbors as a way of breaking the ice and getting conversations started about *His* story.

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After a tasty breakfast was served buffet style and table introductions, Mayor Schwantz shared his story with us about growing up in Palatine, the ups and downs of playing in the NFL and coming full circle to living back in Palatine and serving as its mayor. Grateful for all God has given him, he gives back to the community by serving in this role. He offered that Palatine has many opportunities to serve as part of a larger community. Immanuel is a smaller community that contributes to the larger community of Palatine as well as the Christian community. It was noted that we served as the headquarters for LERT (Lutheran Emergency Relief Team) during the terrible storm of September, 2014.

In this meeting, we discussed how Palatine is the mission field and it is our responsibility to get to know our neighbors so we can learn how to serve and share the Word with them. We agreed that we need to develop mechanisms to determine what needs to be done and how. Pastor Warren suggested future meetings to which there was resounding approval. This meeting was the first step toward a concerted and directed effort in becoming a more integrated part of the community. As such, we have the opportunity to serve others as well as to bring them to Christ.

After we closed with prayer and song, I smiled as I left that morning. Many more of the faces were familiar now and they exuded the same commitment I felt toward becoming a more integral, serving community within a community. We may not yet know the way, but we have the will to get there. Future meetings will determine how we do this.