

**Faith Evangelical Lutheran**  
**Church**

**Tuition Study**  
**February 25, 2007**

## **Table Of Contents**

Committee Charter	p. 3
Recommendation	p. 4
Philosophy	pp. 5 – 7
Scripture	pp. 8 - 15
Ministry	pp. 16 - 23
Financial	p 24
Pro's and Con's	p. 25
Congregational Input	pp. 26 - 29
Tuition Survey	Separate Excel Spreadsheet

**COMMITTEE CHARTER**  
**Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**Fond du Lac, Wisconsin**

**Tuition Study Committee**

Number of members: 6 – 10, including a School Board member.

**Responsible Board**

School Board

**Mission Statement**

It is the mission of the Tuition Study Committee to study the possibility of tuition at Faith Evangelical Lutheran School, educate the congregation about the issues surrounding charging tuition and present a potential tuition model to the School Board.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

The committee has been mandated by the School Board to study tuition as an appropriate tool for Christian stewardship at Faith Evangelical Lutheran School and make a recommendation. In keeping with the Scriptures, the main themes shall be Christian love, stewardship and kingdom balance.

The study is not to be driven by budgetary concerns.

Board Charter date:	05/08/06	<u>Committee members</u>
Church Council Granted date:		Michael Pacetti - Chairman
Charter Review date:		Dean Patchett
Charter Review date:		Orren Grundmeier
Charter Review date:		Jim Huey -Secretary
Charter Review date:		Guy Bouthillier
Charter Review date:		John Calkins
		Linda Pedersen
		Leanne Wciorka
		Lana Jacobs

## Recommendation

Dear Members of the School Board,

The tuition study committee was tasked with studying the use of tuition as an appropriate tool for Christian Stewardship at Faith Evangelical Lutheran School. In keeping with Scriptures our main theme is Christian love, Stewardship, and kingdom balance. We studied this issue from five points of view. Those points are philosophy, scripture, ministry, financial, and pros and cons. Our facts and reasoning are attached. The recommendations are as follows:

- 1.) We recommend Faith continue to use the current tuition model.
- 2.) The committee needs to educate the congregation about this study. We are strongly recommending another town hall/open forum in May 2007 to inform the congregation of our study results.
- 3.) It is the opinion of the committee that tuition is not an appropriate stewardship tool for Faith. Other avenues should be explored to expand our ministry balance.
- 4.) We recommend a tuition assistance fund be established to help all who seek a Christ centered education
- 5.) The committee recommends that the school be used more as an outreach tool.
- 6.) We recommend an educational endowment fund be established. Anyone and everyone can contribute to this with the funds being used by those who need assistance with educational fees.
- 7.) The committee recommends that a volunteer position be created to oversee ways to increase revenue. For example, Thrivent matching, Script, Labels, Milk Caps, and an educational endowment fund.

Faith Evangelical Lutheran School should not implement a new tuition policy or model but rather maintain the current tuition model. To summarize: Faith Members pay a registration fee, (\$250) Non Faith WELS members pay tuition (Currently \$2,500.00 and registration fee), and Non members pay tuition (Currently \$3,100 and registration fee). After the School Board and Church Council review the study, we strongly recommend and encourage the congregation be educated about this study. We feel the best approach is to have another congregational meeting. This meeting could serve as a way to introduce the voters and members to our study results prior to going to the voters for action.

The discussion of tuition in Scripture is a matter of adiaphora. However, in studying God's Word on this issue we feel that tuition is not appropriate for Faith. The real issue Faith faces is one of stewardship. Our study reveals that tuition is not an appropriate stewardship tool for Faith.

Our study has indicated that the 117 families enrolled in the school are supporting the school (44%) and church budget (23%). Implementing a new tuition model will have a negative effect on our first fruits giving and merely serve as a transfer of funds from offerings to tuition. We are also concerned about the effect a new tuition model would have on families that have children at WLA as well as Faith's ability to support WLA.

1.Cor.10:23 Everything is permissible, but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible, but not everything is constructive.

Respectfully Submitted In His Service,

Michael Pacetti, Dean Patchett, John Calkins, Guy Bouthillier,  
Jim Huey, Orren Grundmeier, Linda Pedersen, Leanne Wciorka, Lana Jacobs

## Tuition Study Philosophy

November 13, 2006

The Great Commission.

Then Jesus came to them and said: *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”* (Math 28:18-20)

In Holy Baptism we pray in the exhortation: “Our Lord commands that we teach his precious truths to all who are baptized. Christian love therefore urges all of us, especially parents and sponsors to assist in whatever manner possible so that a child may remain a child of God until death. If you are willing to carry out this responsibility, then answer: yes as God gives me strength.” The congregation emphatically answers. **Yes, as God gives me strength.**

The Great Commission and Holy Baptism is the cornerstone of our philosophy regarding tuition. The congregation is to assist parents in raising up the lambs in the Word. It is through Christian love and understanding that we develop our philosophy. Tuition is not a replacement for congregational support of Christian education it should come from good stewardship.

As Christians, we have been given the great commission to carry out as believers in Christ, and to give glory to God above all things. It is one of the foundations of Scripture that anyone who receives instruction in the Word must share all good things with his instructor (Masters – as in Pastors, Teachers):

*“Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor.”*  
(Galat 6:6)

*“Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart”* (Eph 6:6)

Therefore, Faith Congregation members need to question themselves, looking into their hearts, and asking what exactly are we doing to honor God’s command of educating Christians in the Word, as well as the Lord’s command to share all good things we are blessed with our instructors. God made it abundantly clear in Exodus 23:19: *“Bring the best of the first fruits of your soil to the house of the Lord your God”*. And in Hebrews 13:15: *“ And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for such sacrifices God is pleased”*.

How do you measure the value of a Christian life? The Lord warns us about secretly sinning against God’s will as stated in the First Commandment: **You shall have no other gods.**

- a) Are we more concerned about storing up things, money and material things for ourselves than for God’s commands?
- b) Do we love our possessions; material things, status symbols, more than our true love for Christ and his ultimate sacrifice for our sins?
- c) The Lord told us to not love the world or anything in the world, as the love of the Father is not in us.
- d) In Psalm 62:10, though your riches increase, do not set your heart on them.
- e) And in Jeremiah 17:5, Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the Lord.

God has blessed Faith with a beautiful church to worship in, a LES school which provides not only a great secular and Christian education to our young lambs, but a place to assemble and share the Word as God asked us to do. God provides. In the Lords prayer, we ask him to *‘Give us today our daily bread’*. God freely gives us everything we need for our bodily welfare, such as food and drink, clothing and shoes, house and home, land and cattle, money and goods, a godly spouse, godly children, godly workers, godly and faithful leaders, good government, good weather, peace and order, health, a good name, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like. (The Forth Petition: Luther’s Catechism).

We are at a crossroads. We have not shared all good things we are blessed with our instructors, doing the will of God from your heart. How else can we explain how we yearly have to balance the offerings which do not cover the financial needs of our instructors, nor the costs associated in running the facilities God has blessed us with? We now are considering tuition at Faith. But before we get to the tuition matter, it is very important we ask ourselves, as followers of Christ, as Christian disciples and members of a congregation called Faith some very important questions:

- a) Do we still support the school as a major part of Faith’s Ministry?
- b) Does Faith have a strong culture of LES education, and does this culture draw WELS membership to our congregation?
- c) How will the future demographics (development in and around the church & school) impact the membership and enrollment at Faith?
- d) Are we providing sufficient Ministry to children, teenagers, college students, adults, seniors, and the sick, members who are wayward?

Tuition is neither a good thing, nor a bad thing. It is but a tool to provide our instructors and infrastructure with a means to raise the financial resources required to provide the instruction of the Word. The question is how each and every member understands the concept of tuition, and truthfully does introspection in their hearts in regards to what we want our congregation to become in the upcoming years:

- a) How important is education to our members?
- b) WELS Christian education has tuition for pre-school, WLA and College. Why is tuition such an issue at Faith for Elementary education?
- c) Will the free will offerings continue to support Faith Ministry needs, Faith LES and WLA if tuition is instituted?
- d) How does tuition help provide sufficient Ministry means to all members?
- e) Will tuition be an obstacle for Christian education to some?

Let us answer some of these questions. We cannot answer all of the questions because most of them are very personal and need to be answered in the depths of each of our hearts.

First of all education is very important to our members. This is why we have a long established Lutheran Elementary School. Our members realize the importance of receiving a quality secular education immersed in the Word and centered in Christ.

Currently tuition is in place at Faith. We charge non-members \$3,100 a year for schooling. These families pay this tuition because they consider it a great value to receive a quality education with Gods Word first and foremost. If they did not think so they could become members and only pay a registration fee.

Tuition is an emotional issue at Faith because the LES is part of a whole single congregation. WLA is a Christian school. It is a community of several congregations. As those congregations decrease their financial support tuition has to increase at the school. Faith's culture toward our LES has been to provide a great Christian education to our lambs.

Our charter stated we are to study tuition as a stewardship tool. Tuition is not a stewardship tool. It is a means to provide "Kingdom balance" within our ministry. All ministry has a cost and we are unable to do all ministry. We have to choose what is most important. In all instances God guides us in this choice if we are willing to listen. Currently, we have a LES but we are having difficulty effectively meeting other ministry needs. An example of this is our struggle to minister to our inactive communicant members. The LES takes a majority of our resources. Tuition can help us bring a balance to our ministry work.

Tuition should not be implemented to solve a budgetary crisis. The congregation should continue to support the LES. We should provide the opportunity for members of the congregation to provide resources toward supporting our LES. Thus, providing another opportunity for members to examine their hearts listen to the Holy Spirit and continue to gladly give first fruits, and the opportunity to give above and beyond.

We are at crossroads. God has and continues to give us our daily bread. He freely gives us his mercy and promise of eternal life if we believe and follow his Word. Are we forgetting to do good and to share with others, for such sacrifices are God pleasing? Will instituting tuition make us feel better about supporting a part of God's kingdom? We believe the answers to this last question is no.

"...we need to encourage with deep passion treasure-based giving of time, talents and treasures. Knowing the treasure that we stand on and live on is by the grace of God in Christ Jesus that we are free. The treasure frees the slave of selfishness. The treasure frees the servant of stinginess. The treasure woos the calendar and checkbook to be re-commissioned for service in God's kingdom. We need to shout: "treasure, treasure, treasure!" not "Need, need, need!" "I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" – (Phil.3:8) – Pastor Liebenow

**Tuition Study Committee**

**A Scriptural Study**

**Faith Evangelical  
Lutheran Church**

**January 2007**

It is the mission of the Tuition Study Committee to study the possibility of tuition at Faith Evangelical Lutheran School and to educate the congregation about the issues surrounding charging tuition. The most important aspect of the study overall is to examine this issue in keeping with Scripture. Faith Lutheran Church was founded in 1946 as a daughter congregation of St. Peter's in downtown Fond du Lac. From 1947 to 1959 Faith supported those member families who chose to send their children to St. Peter's Lutheran School by paying their tuition. From 1959 to 1961, tuition was no longer required since Faith supplied its own teacher to serve on the faculty at St. Peter's. In 1961, Faith erected the building which would serve as its home for the next 30 years and also began its own Lutheran Elementary School.

From the beginning, Faith Congregation has chosen to fully support those member families who desire to provide a Christian-based education to their children. Faith has embraced the concept of Christian education as the church's full responsibility throughout its history. In 1993, the issue of tuition was voted upon with the results showing that 56% of Faith members did not want to charge tuition to its members.

“We are also heirs of another tradition, the tradition that our elementary schools have been operated largely or completely without charging tuition to members who send their children....Our 150 year history in the WELS of funding elementary schools through general offerings has left many long-time WELS members with this clear expectation: there *should* be no tuition. It is a deeply cherished belief in our circles that the *best* way, the *right* way to fund a Lutheran school is for the congregation to share the total or near total cost in its general fund.”<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> A Philosophy of Tuition for WELS Congregations supporting a Lutheran Elementary School, Rev. Terry L. Laabs, St. John's. Ev. Lutheran Church, Burlington, WI 2002

In our country, in the 1700s education was done in the home by the father and mother. As our society changed from an agricultural society to an urban society, the father left home and went to work and the mother was the homemaker. The mother then took on an even greater role in educating children. With more social changes and financial pressures, along with the growth of single-parent homes, mothers started working outside the home as well. These historical changes created the desire for our church's to provide a Bible-based education system.

“...A hundred years ago classrooms of 50, 60 or even 70 students were not unheard of...I don't recall extensive discussions about student/teacher ratio...For the first hundred years of its history, few if any in the WELS expected our schools to offer every program, course or extra-curricular activity offered in the local public school. We were willing to make do with worn or outdated textbooks and faded basketball uniforms...The focus rather was on teaching the Word, memorizing the catechism, learning hymns and Bible stories and Christian discipline, and covering the “three R's.” Since most WELS congregations were not trying to support any other large ministry programs, they could afford to pay nearly the full cost of their Lutheran elementary schools.”<sup>2</sup>

So then, whose responsibility is it to educate our children? *“Train up a child in the way that he should go, and he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6 “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; Instead bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4* God in His Word gives the command to train children in the Word of God to the fathers (parent). Having our children attend a Christian day school does not replace the parents teaching their children, rather it is a beneficial tool to assist families. Jesus also tells us in the great commission to *“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you”*. This mandate from our Heavenly Father fills the agenda of the Church in a comprehensive way “Going into the world, dealing with all nations, teaching everything Christ commanded implies more than what one typically assigns to theology...if God's people were to teach others to obey what

---

<sup>2</sup>A Philosophy of Tuition for WELS Congregations supporting a Lutheran Elementary School, Rev. Terry L. Laabs, Pastor, St. John's Lutheran Church, Burlington, WI 2002

Christ has said, it needed both a comprehensive understanding of God’s word as well as a comprehensive understanding of God’s world.”<sup>3</sup>

The Church by virtue of the Great Commission and Christian stewardship bears the responsibility to make disciples, to baptize and teach, along with all that implies. Every member of the Church bears that responsibility separate from being a parent and a temporal citizen and should carry out as God allows it to. Martin Luther makes the case of it being a Christian’s responsibility to support education in his commentary on Genesis 28:20-22.

“...vows of love...are natural and continuous...if the ministers of the church are not supported, then this vow becomes a natural and moral precept that everyone should help the preservation of the ministry in his place...we are all bound by virtue of the Christian religion to pledge to give to the schools...” Luther is saying that by virtue of being Christian, we all, each of us, has an understood obligation to support Christian education, especially if we see that there is a need for such support...every Christian will actively participate in this support by contributing to it.”<sup>4</sup>

Therefore the responsibility to provide a Christ-centered education falls to both parents and to every Christian, which can be accomplished through our Church offerings. Is charging tuition, then, against God’s will? Nowhere in Scripture does God directly tell us to have a Christian day school or not to have one, nor does it tell us how we are to fund it. So if we choose to use tuition and follow Christian principles, it is acceptable. The basic Christian principle we speak of here is to ensure we are not combining Christian stewardship with paying for a service rendered beyond the basic communicating of the Gospel (tuition). *“Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”* 2 Cor. 9:7 This Bible passage refers to the attitude that the Lord calls for in Christian giving and does not define the use of the gifts given. The gifts to the church can be used for paying teachers, school and school supplies, but does not command the use of the

---

<sup>3</sup>Funding Our Christian Ministries: High Road or Low Road, Pastor John Liebenow, Cross of Glory Lutheran Church, Washington, MI

<sup>4</sup>Funding Our Christian Ministries: High Road or Low Road, Pastor John Liebenow, Cross of Glory Lutheran Church, Washington, MI

gifts to the Lord. Parents and the congregation have the right to choose where they spend their money; on world missions, home missions, pastoral ministry, worship facilities, schools, a gym, etc. Parents paying tuition can do so in confidence knowing that the Lord will bless their labors and gifts of love. This can be done when paying for tuition or buying a Bible. "...tuition, while remaining a matter of adiaphora, is most logically understood to be a substitute for good financial stewardship, by which people take the easier, low road to supporting Christian education rather than taking the high, more difficult road of trusting solely in the gospel to generate sufficient support."<sup>5</sup>

It seems there is a tendency to exchange the free-will nature of support for an obligatory nature of support. The unwillingness to support our Church's ministry through first-fruit giving is the single biggest problem. Therefore individuals often feel they are constantly being asked for money rather than giving according to the blessings God has showered upon them.

If a congregation decides to have a Christian day school, each family will make a decision whether or not to choose to send their children to the school. When they make that choice, they also choose to accept the cost which goes along with it. There is not a law that demands you send your children to the school, rather it allows you to choose whether or not to use this service offered by the congregation. If we are free to use tuition and decide to implement a tuition structure, we should respond with a positive attitude of being thankful for what Christ has done for us, which in turn glorifies God the Father. The only thing that is free in the church is God's grace. As individuals in a congregation, we pay for the building, the up-keep, the utilities, the salaries and everything we decide we need to operate...Only God's wonderful gift is free.

What is the motivation to study tuition? Is it because our weekly offerings are not meeting the budget needs? Do we feel the need to consider tuition to help us meet the budget? A need is an indication that something is missing. If we don't recognize our needs, how can we respond to them? What matters is how we respond to the need. As Christians, we need to respond in a positive manner doing what needs to be done in

---

<sup>5</sup>Funding Our Christian Ministries: High Road or Low Road, Pastor John Liebenow, Cross of Glory Lutheran Church, Washington, MI

gratitude for what God has done for us through Christ. *“I the Lord do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you” says the Lord Almighty. But you ask, “How are we to return?” “Will a man rob God?” Yet you rob me. But you ask “How do we rob you?” In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse—the whole nation of you—because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. “Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit,” says the Lord Almighty. Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land.” Malachi 3:6-12* The Lord does not change.

This is at the beginning of the admonition to give. This is paramount to the discussion of giving—whether it comes to Malachi’s people in the Old Testament or to believers living in New Testament times. God does not change and he couples this thought with another thought equally important to our understanding of his command to give. God’s goodness and preservation are not dependent upon our giving as if they trickled through the meter of our giving to him. His mercies to us are new every morning. Because of this, God’s people are not destroyed because if he did give in proportion to their giving to him, they would most certainly perish. God’s complaint was not over money—as if He needed his people’s money!—but over what the giving of that money demonstrated....LOVE!

As a congregation, we have hit a bump in the road—a giving challenge. How we respond to this challenge says a lot about the spiritual maturity of Faith congregation. God offers a wonderful challenge in Malachi. “Trust me in this.” God is saying try and out-give me. “The more you give to me, the more I will give back...see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.” If Faith was blessed with a \$400,000 surplus in our budget, would we be studying the possibility of tuition? As a congregation, are we saying let’s charge tuition to help bring in additional money to help with the budget shortfall or are we taking God up on His challenge—“Test me in this.”

When does the budget drive the giving and when does the Gospel motivate us to give? The Gospel motivates us to give when we understand the principles of giving and when our goals are in balance with God's will. When we see a family in desperate need, do we turn our back on them or does the Gospel remind us to help out of love. We see the need, and we give help. As a congregation, our first fruits giving I used to spread the Gospel and feed the sheep. As a member, if we see the sheep not getting fed and the Gospel not being spread, does that motivate us to reflect back on our giving? Through the needs of the congregation and its budget, God gives us the opportunity to respond back to what God has done for us.

Budget-driven giving is how the secular world handles money. The prevalent attitude is—"Here are the expenses that I have and I need this much money to pay them. I have more expenses than income so I either cut my expenses or increase my income." Compare the two approaches—Gospel-motivated giving, which is God sent His Son for me, and gave me everything, and I respond by giving back to God; vs Budget-motivated giving, which is that it costs us \$X to run the congregation so we need \$X.

The last element is the possibility of a stumbling block to some of our members. God reminds us in I Corinthians 10:27-33 "*Do not cause anyone to stumble...I am not seeking my good, but the good of the many.*" If Faith's culture has always been to provide free Christian education to its members and now we decide it's time to charge tuition, how might our members respond? Will charging tuition cause some members to stumble and leave the congregation? Is losing five families over the issue of charging tuition an acceptable loss? How many families leaving would be "acceptable"? 5-3-1? How much is a soul worth? God tell us in Matthew 18:13-15 "*And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.*" Mark 9:42-43 "*And if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around his neck. If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out.*" Romans 14:19-21 "*Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food*

*is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble. It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything else that will cause your brother to fall.” I Cor. 10:31-33 “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God—even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.”*

Tuition is an adiaphora and we have the Christian freedom to charge tuition or not. But we need to think about the motivation behind charging tuition. Is it budget-motivated giving or Gospel-motivated giving? Even though charging tuition is an adiaphora, after studying the Biblical principles of giving, we believe charging tuition for our congregation present so many danger signs due to our congregation’s past and current culture that it may prove to be more damaging than good. I Cor. 10:23 *“Everything is permissible—but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible—but not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.”* We believe that every aspect of Spiritual education regarding stewardship and first-fruits giving, including understanding the cost and needs of running a congregation, to include a congregational challenge, should be exhausted before things like tuition, salary reduction or other cutbacks are made.

“Under certain circumstances a tuition policy for members can be a blessing. Parents are moved by the Lord to pay the tuition costs and not decrease their offerings. This helps the congregation to its God-assigned work. But if such a policy harms the sanctification of the members, or if spiritual problems affecting the congregation are not addressed, a tuition policy for members is not beneficial to the Lord’s work.”<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup>Funding Lutheran Elementary Schools, LeDell Plath

# Tuition Study Committee

## Areas of Ministry

### Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church

February 25, 2007

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church has been blessed with over 170 areas of ministry. A ministry area is defined as anything a congregation does to advance the Kingdom of God. Faith Lutheran Elementary School is not just one ministry area, but rather it is a living, growing concern that is interconnected to numerous ministry areas where God's Word is proclaimed. The school and its subgroups is currently the largest area of the ministry at Faith.

When we take an honest look at the effectiveness of our ministry areas, the school historically has been given priority. Our school is one of the few in the Wisconsin Synod that is maintaining or growing in size. When we look at our other ministry areas, some are doing well and some still need improvement. Faith has undertaken new ministry areas and therefore it is difficult to quantify their effectiveness at this time. The goals laid out in our mission statement are clear. "As part of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), our mission is to spread throughout the world the soul-saving message of Jesus Christ."

As we look at the congregational studies and after discussing Faith congregation's spiritual needs with our pastors and principal, it is the Committee's opinion that most of the ministry areas can be improved through more effective management, not necessarily more funding. Adding more staff, like a third pastor or staff minister would be beneficial, however, the congregation has said that it is not ready for that step yet, nor as a congregation are we financially capable at this time to move in that direction. Stewardship of our members' time and/or talents may need to be called upon for those that do not have the means to increase their financial stewardship (treasures).

It is the mission of the Tuition Study Committee to study the possibility of tuition at Faith Evangelical Lutheran School and to educate the congregation about the issues surrounding charging tuition as it relates to Ministry Balance. So let us explore the concept that is referred to as "Ministry Balance." Ministry balance is a term used to describe the attention ministry areas get within a congregation relative to time, funding and/or focus. The theory of ministry balance is that if one area is given very little attention or ignored – the ministry is out of balance.

"Financially speaking with regards to the school, does paying school expense prevent other important ministries from getting the financial support they need? A 1997 Commission on Parish Schools' survey found 67% of the congregations operating a Lutheran Elementary School expended over 51% of their financial resources for the operation of their school."

If that congregation focuses by means of time or funding or energy more on education and less on lost sheep, is that congregation considered to be in the wrong or out of balance? Does each individual church have to achieve perfect ministry balance?

Where does the Wisconsin Synod or the invisible church as a whole fit into this equation? In our sinful world, is it even possible for a congregation to be in perfect balance?

Throwing money at a problem rarely makes those problems go away. A school spending the most on education will not make that school and its education the best. The New York Yankees spend the most on players almost every year. Do they win the World Series every year? No, they don't! Why? Money does not solve problems, people solve problems with God's help. The key is people – not buildings, not computers, and not the latest technology. People and their love for other people solve problems. Taking funding away from one program that is working well and throwing it at some other program may not be beneficial.

Knowing what skills and abilities which God has given a congregation and focusing those skills and energies to work towards being the best can be a plausible approach to ministry. In fact for many congregations, education is one of their greatest strengths. The Committee believes Faith has been blessed with an excellent elementary education system. Why apologize for it and why hide it? We should be shouting it out on top of a mountain. There is no doubt that a child will get a better, Christ-centered education at Faith Lutheran School than at a local public school. One of Faith's objective is to "provide its school children with a Christian education which includes daily instruction in God's Word and a Christ-centered secular education." There is little debate that this education model is the best available to train our children. Since God has blessed us with our Lutheran Elementary School as one of our congregation's greatest strengths, should we change our focus? The system works well right now. Making changes to strengthen our LES and help it continue to grow is always good, but changing a major variable (funding/tuition) may be a formula for disaster. To coin a phrase – "If it ain't broke don't fix it."

Public education has its place, but in an ever sinful world, as a Christian parent we must be vigilant to ensure our children are being brought up with Christ as the center of our lives. Under these conditions it is imperative that we protect Faith's educational system and spend as much of our resources as possible to assist in God's command to "Train up a child in the way that he should go, and he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6

The Committee believes that changing the variable of funding education at Faith and charging tuition with the goal of balancing the budget to free up money for other ministry areas may prove to be dangerous and shortsighted. The solution is simple – ask God for help, show his people the challenges in the congregation and let the Holy Spirit work in their heart. The solution is simple – but the execution is difficult. People are sinful. People need to understand that shrinking ministry areas that are valid is allowing sin to win. God gives us everything. We only give him a very small percentage of it back. How much would we spend on a doctor's treatment to give us ten more years of life on this earth? Many people would give up their life's savings. What we sometimes forget is Jesus Christ gives us not just ten years of life but he gives us eternal life with him in

perfection and he does this at no charge to us. Why are we so reluctant to part with our treasures that we can't even take with us when we die?

We dance around financial stewardship at many of our WELS churches, and Faith is not an exception. Every week, in every sermon, we teach salvation, sanctification, justification and evangelism, but we carefully talk about stewardship. Why? We are afraid of it. We have no problem telling someone, thou shalt not kill, but telling people what God demand's by "first fruits" is too difficult. To be successful and do God's work efficiently, we need to be more aggressive in educating our members on the doctrine of stewardship and to reach out to those "lost" members. As much as our congregation is blessed with time, talent and treasure we should never have a shortage of anything. Fix stewardship and ministry balance will be an extinct term.

### **FAITH MINISTRIES BY SUPERVISING BOARD**

Church Council

Voters

Church Council meetings

Financial Recording Secretary

    Tellers (counting offerings)

Treasurer

    Budget Committee

    HR Committee

    Treasurer's Advisory Committee

Nominating Committee

Auditing Committee

Long Range Planning Committee

Planned Giving

Church/School Office Staff

    Newsletter (FOCUS)

    Bulletin

    Faith-o-gram

    Coordination of office volunteers

o Communion cards

o Assembling bulletins, newsletters, mailings

    Financial work (recording of offerings, payment of bills etc.)

WELS

    WELS congregational contact

    Congregational Mission offering (CMO)

    WELS Connection

Elders

Board meetings

- Pastoral ministry
  - Worship
  - Sacraments
  - o Shut-ins
  - o Baptisms
  - Funerals
  - Weddings
  - o Premarital counseling
  - o Planning & conducting wedding services
  - Counseling
  - Member visits
  - Adult Instruction Class
  - Catechism class
  - Needy Family Fund
  - Children's sermons
- District Elders
  - Annual visits
  - New member calls
  - Delinquent Calls
  - Worship service assignments
  - o Greeting (Thursday & Saturday)
  - o Communion assistance
  - o Wedding assignments
- Vicar program
- Altar Committee
- Ushers
- Greeters
- Shepherding Ministry (Assimilation)
- Visitation Ministry
- Parish Nurses
- Faithful Stammers
- Worship Committee
  - Organists
  - Planning of special services
  - Senior Choir
  - Wings of Light
  - Tenor Bass choir
  - Handbells
- Jail Ministry
- Pastoral called worker care
  
- School Board
- Board meetings
- Principal
  - Area principals meetings
  - Administration

- Counseling
- Student teacher
- Teachers
  - Classroom teaching
  - School assemblies
  - School music
- Policies and enrollment issues
- Athletics
  - Athletic Committee
  - Coaches
  - Concession volunteers
  - Game volunteers
- Christmas 2006
  - Promotion Committee
  - Service Preparation
  - Christmas service volunteer organization
- Piano lessons
- Special Education Fund
- Tuition Study Committee
- Self study Committee
- Technology committee
- Safety Committee
- PSF
- Teacher called worker care
- Reading volunteers
- Hot lunch program
- SCRIP program
- BoxTops, Campbell's labels etc.
  
- Adult Discipleship
- Board meetings
- Friends in Faith
  - Birthday Brunch for Jesus
  - Special event dinners
  - Thanksgiving distribution for needy families
- Ladies of Faith
  - Sunshine Committee
  - Grocery receipts
  - Funeral dinners
  - Special event meals
  
- Adult Spiritual Growth
  - Sunday morning Bible Class
  - Tuesday morning Ladies' Bible Class
  - Wednesday morning Bible Class
  - Prof. Petrie's at-home Bible Study group

- Friday morning Bible Class
- Meditations
- Stewardship
  - Offering envelopes
  - Ministry updates
- Evangelism
  - Videotaping
  - Visitor cards follow-up
  - Christmas & Easter ads
  - Christmas & Easter invites
  - Prospect list
- WELS Moms
- Faithful Quilters
- Mission Partners
- Fellowship Committee
- Library Committee
- Website
  - sermons
  - calendars
  - information
  
- Youth Discipleship
- Board meetings
- Sunday school
- VBS
- WLA
  - Grade School Band program
  - Plenary Board
  - Tuition Assistance
  - Forward in Trust/WAMB III
- Teen Ministry
  - Teen Bible Class
  - Youth Rally
  - Empty Dugout (Youth softball tourney)
  - Youth service
- Non-LES confirmation
- Lutheran Girl Pioneers
- Lutheran Pioneers (Boys)
- Campus Ministry
- Faith 'n Fun
  - Board members
  - Parent volunteers
- Cradle Roll
- Calvary Academy
- Camp Phillip
- Babysitting

Property Management  
Board meetings  
Custodian  
Work days  
Lawn mowing  
Gary's committee  
Volunteer snow removal  
Volunteer church cleaners

Listed that we don't have  
Empty Nesters Ministry  
Leadership Training  
Communication Committee  
Radio ministry

A philosophy of tuition for WELS Congregations supporting a Lutheran Elementary  
School. By Pastor Terry L. Laabs  
Faith Lutheran School's Parent Handbook – Objectives Pg 1.

## Financial Analysis

There are 627 families that are members of Faith Lutheran. 117 of those families (18.7%) have a child attending Faith's elementary school.

For the 2006-2007 school year the cost per student at faith is \$3,080.00. This is based on the following break down:

Teacher Salary/ Benefits	\$441,976
Secretary (25% of \$21,351)	\$5,338
Secretary (50% of \$15,925)	\$7,963
Custodian/Groundskeeper (85% of \$31,561)	\$26,831
Staff Further Education (75% of \$5,000)	\$3,750
Teacher Utilities	\$2,700
School Utilities(65% of \$61,180)	\$39,767
Property Maintenance (75% of \$29,830)	\$22,373
Property & Liability Insurance (50% of \$10,500)	\$5,250
Workman's Comp Insurance (50% of \$3,500)	\$1,750
Mortgage (40% of \$45,600)	\$18,240
<b>TOTAL</b> (53% of Budget)	<b>\$575,938</b>

(187 Full Time Students / \$575,938 = \$3,079.88 )

Additional Resources:

Countless Hours of Volunteer Work	Priceless
School Fees Collected	\$45,000
Monetary Donations, matching gifts, etc	\$7,000
Tuition Collected	\$9,900
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$61,900</b>

Tuition represents 2 non WELS @ \$3,000, 1 WELS @ 2,400, and 1 non WELS Kindergarted @ \$1,500.

Of the 117 families with children attending the school their annualized offerings to the general fund is projected to total \$252,600 this year. This is 23% of the total budget (\$1,089,195) and 44% of the (\$575,938) budget amount assigned to the school. If all 627 families gave at the same level as the 117 school families Faith's total budget would be exceeded by over \$265,000.

Mr. Jim Brandt WELS Commission on Parish School Administrator told us that 61% of WELS schools charge tuition and the average tuition is \$1,200.00.

**PROS AND CONS OF INSTITUTING TUITION**  
**AS SUGGESTED AT THE TUITION FORUM**  
**JANUARY 22, 2007**

**PROS**

- May be able to provide more services (for example, services for children with special needs.
- Offering these services would enable children who need those services to receive a Christian Education
- Would be able to help balance the budget
- Could help support future improvements/construction on the facility if needed/  
Could slow the growth of the school thus reducing the need for future construction
- Could help limit enrollment and contain strain on class sizes and staff
- Paying tuition may foster value and appreciation of Christian Education.
- Would be able to more fairly compensate staff.

**CONS**

- Giving may go down or be “re-designated”
- Could set up a “road block” for families who may not be able to afford tuition
- The school could lose parent volunteers
- Could cause a division between the school and the church.
- Tuition goes against the idea of our school as a mission of the church
- If we charge tuition for school, it could open the door to start charging for other things, such as Sunday School.
- Could cause a division between the more privileged and the less privileged
- Could affect WLA – giving to and being able to afford.
- Could increase expectations (i.e. services for children with special needs)
- Could force families to leave, causing a reduction in enrollment
- The children in families who do leave could be “lost” spiritually if congregation or parents don’t follow through
- Could lose families who might otherwise develop a stronger faith by staying (i.e. Finn Family)
- If numerous families leave, confirmation classes could become larger and become more for the Pastors to manage
- Tuition could become “whipping boy”, and would be relatively easy to raise if more funds are needed
- Tuition could decrease the school’s success and importance (if the money from tuition is diverted to other budget needs)
- Tuition could be perceived as forced giving
- St. Peter’s new facility could affect our enrollment
- Lower enrollment could cause increased tuition

**QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE TUITION FORUM**  
**JANUARY 22, 2007**

**Tuition's Effect on Giving**

- “First Fruits” giving could decrease if tuition was instated.
- People could “re-designate” where they are giving their money.
- Giving could be reduced due to a perceived lack of need (if people aren't informed about the financial need of the school)
- Do parents give their fair share?

**Tuition Assistance/Ability to Pay Tuition**

- What about “financially strapped” members?
- Would charging tuition affect “changing families”? (Single-parent and mixed families)
- Large families may not be able to afford tuition
- Limited income affected by cost of living
- Would Tuition Assistance be available for those who need it?
- How many people would actually ask for tuition assistance? Many people have a strong sense of pride and may not feel comfortable asking for help.
- Need to make tuition affordable for everyone

**Motivation for Tuition**

- What is the motivation to study tuition?
- Would tuition be used to balance the budget?
- Are we studying tuition because the school needs the money? (Is the motivation for studying tuition correct?)
- When the recommendation is given, will the motivation for the study be given?

**School as a Mission/Outreach**

- Why are we charging tuition if the school is a mission?
- Are we fulfilling the mission of our congregation if we are deterring parents from providing a Christian education for their children?
- By not charging tuition, the school served as an outreach tool for the Finn Family.
- Our mission is to feed our lambs
- Is not offering Special Education denying those children Christian Education?
- How would we help/follow up on families who leave due to tuition?

**Long Range Planning (For Families and For Church)**

- Would tuition at the primary level affect secondary education? (Future planning for high-school tuition)
- Would tuition affect Faith's support of WLA? (If a family is paying tuition to Faith they may have less money available to give to WLA. They may even feel they cannot afford WLA if they have a large family.)

- Is there a plan to keep our school going?
- We need to keep in mind the long-term consequences and the impact on the facility
- Long-range planning – **put our trust in God to provide**

### **Tuition’s Effect on Enrollment**

- Would tuition affect enrollment?
- Tuition that is too reasonable could increase enrollment and put a strain on class sizes and staff.
- By our raising tuition, would St. Peter’s new facility affect our enrollment?
- Would fluctuations in enrollment affect tuition?

### **Tuition’s Effect on Congregational Attitude and Expectations**

- Tuition could cause a division between the school and the church.
- Could tuition be perceived as forced giving? (Motivation)
- Paying tuition may foster value and appreciation of Christian Education.
- Being a cheerful giver is a matter of the heart.
- There could be more division in the Congregation between the more privileged and the less privileged.
- Would tuition change expectations, for example, additional services for children with special needs?

### **Suggestions for Alternatives to Tuition**

- Tuition is not tax-deductible. An alternative could be a cafeteria-type plan or an “education fund”.
- Life-giving payment plan
- What do other FDL WELS schools do for tuition? /Study
- Do we need more education in stewardship?
- Is an alternative to tuition a 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Pastor to strengthen the Faith life of the adult membership?
- Can we work Scrip program more effectively?
- Does the book fee only pay for books? What is it used for? Should we raise the book fee? (Instead of calling it “tuition”)
- Fundraising and creative financing?
- School Choice/School voucher and how would it affect our school?

### **Suggestions for Tuition Models**

- Extremes vs. reality (compromise). Tuition doesn’t have to be 0 or \$5000 (extremes). In reality, it could be a lower amount and we could figure out a way to work with what we have.
- The tuition study model could be zero. The directive as stated in the outline does not appear to require that we recommend tuition

### **How Would Tuition be Applied?**

- Would tuition become the “whipping boy” (to balance the budget)?

- If tuition is implemented, it would be easier to raise than the book fee.
- Would the tuition go into the general fund?
- Would tuition apply to Sunday School?
- Would there be a reduction in tuition based on the number of children in a family?
- If families leave, how would the church still provide Christian Education for their children? Would they be encouraged to go to Sunday School? Would they be provided with materials?
- Who would collect tuition? What about payment plans and late fees? (If tuition is instituted, it would require setting up a new infrastructure to collect it. Additional office staff time would be required to collect and monitor it. What happens if someone is behind in their payment? Is there a late fee? Is there interest?)

### **Additional Comments and Questions**

- We could lose some of the volunteer parents if those parents need to go to work to earn a second income to pay tuition.
- Ministry balance; would the school be priority #1? (The School needs to remain the #1 priority, and by charging tuition, it could endanger the school's success and importance)
- Is tuition consistent with the results of the survey from the every member visits? (The survey was a "how are we doing in these ministries" report)
- Tuition - ability of non-WELS members to support the school/mission
- Proper value, recognize stewardship
- Newcomers are surprised at the low cost
- Do we already have tuition – book fee?
- The need for tuition is a symptom for a larger problem.
- Remember the "80/20 rule". (20% give 80%)
- How much tuition would it take to make it worth losing even one family?
- Why is funding WELS more difficult now than 20- 30 years ago?
- Historically, teachers are underpaid
- Sacrifices 30 – 40 years ago vs. now. Changing life experiences.

### **“Thoughts and questions for the Tuition Study committee from Renee Witte**

- 1) Where did the directive for looking into tuition for members come from? Is our school really in trouble financially that it became necessary to explore this option? Are we bailing out the church?
- 2) If tuition for members is put into practice I feel it will hurt the mission of the congregation in several ways.
  - a) Instead of us working together as the body of Christ, we may be split into “school” vs. “church”. I have been blessed to attend Lutheran grade school, high school and college. People from my home congregation enabled me to do this through their offerings. Now it is my turn to help not just my own children, but other children as well to enjoy the wonderful blessings of Christian education. My prayer is that we would all – school parents and non-school people – continue to support Christian education as a united group of believers rather than putting a separation into our congregation.
  - b) Our school has served to build our congregation. I’m sure there are examples of families who have come to our school, gone through Bible Information Class, and by the work of the Holy Spirit have come to know their Savior and become members. If we implement tuition for members, what if there are families who see the blessings of our school, but have not been blessed financially to afford the tuition? Are we making a road block to those families? Are we turning our school simply into a private school rather than a school that has the support of a congregation? If people feel they are paying for education through tuition, how will their hearts be moved to continue to give through their offerings? Will we, in the end, deter parents from providing their children with the opportunity to hear God’s Word every day, to have subjects taught in light of God’s Word, to be disciplined in God’s love, and to learn of what God has done for them simply because it seems like a “quick fix” to an earthly problem of debt? If we are deterring parents from providing a Christian education for their children, are we fulfilling the mission of our congregation?
- 3) If tuition is implemented, and members opt not to send their children to school, how are we still going to provide Christian education for them? Will we make sure to encourage them to come to Sunday School? Will follow- ups be made on the families and materials given to assist them? Will confirmation classes after school become larger and more for the Pastors to manage?
- 4) If tuition is implemented, will we see a drop in offerings because people feel they are already paying for school? I feel it could just be a way for people to “re-designate” where they are giving their money.
- 5) Thank you for the time you have put into this committee. I know you volunteered your time for the work of the church and that is greatly appreciated. God has all things in his control and will lead us to the path he wants us to go as we follow in the ways of his Word.”