

First TEAM Meeting Saturday, August 4th

The West Pasco Lutheran Team held its first workshop meeting as a formal team on Saturday, August 4, 2007. The meeting was hosted by King of Glory Lutheran Church in New Port Richey. Representatives from five of the six churches attended, along with ELCA Mission Director Pastor Jerry Wahl and facilitator David Raymond from Minneapolis.

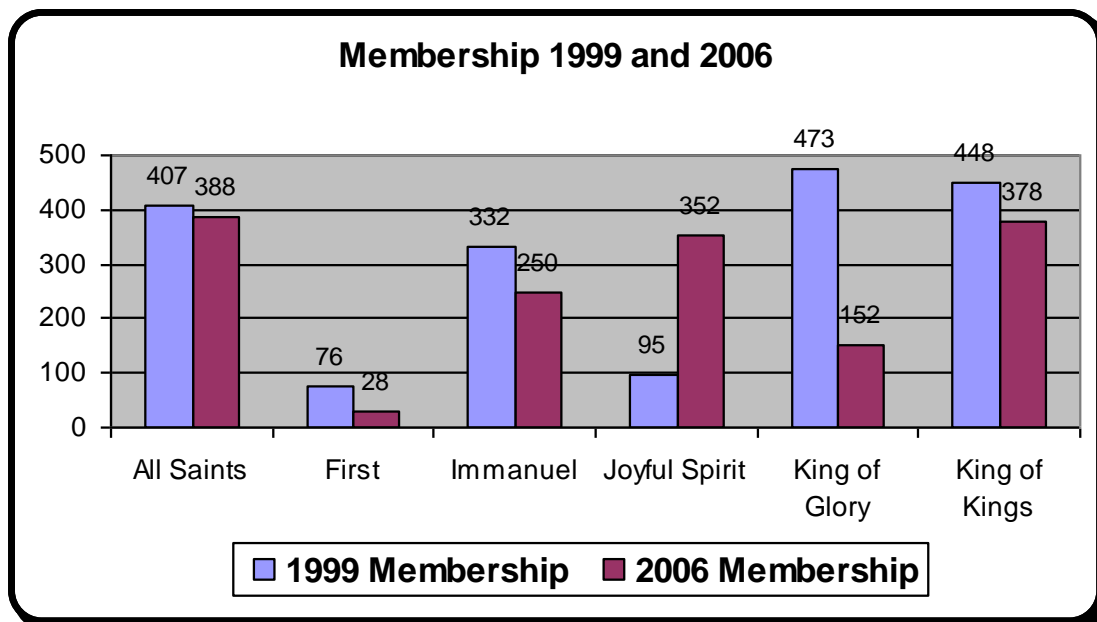
The meeting lasted from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. The purpose of the TEAM is to explore possible avenues of cooperation among the six ELCA churches in West Pasco County.

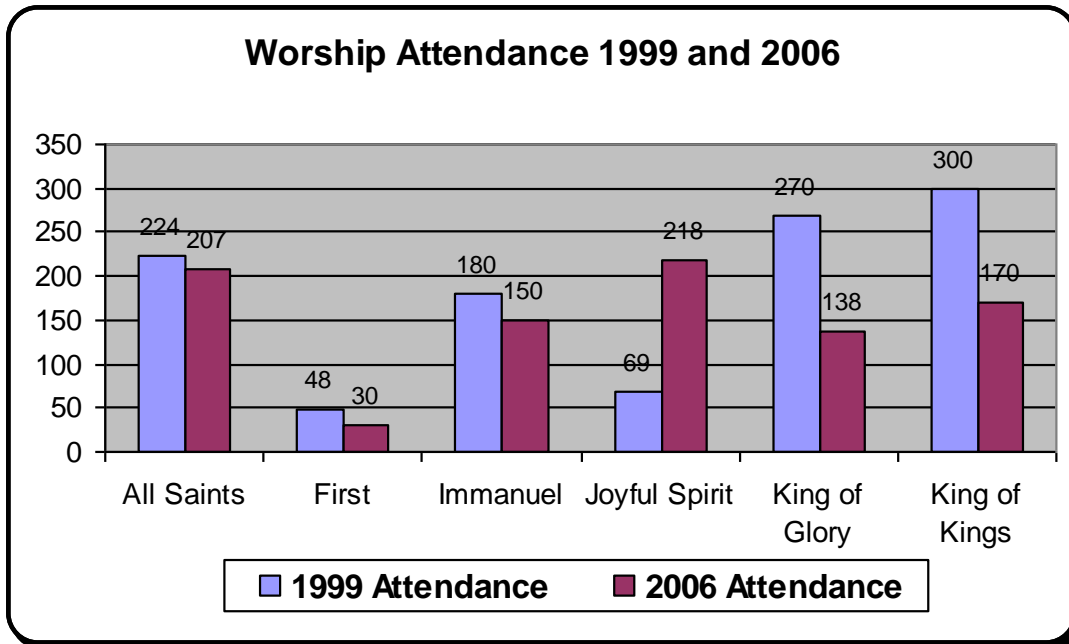
The TEAM's Objective is to revitalize Lutheran ministry in West Pasco County to effectively reach and serve people of all ages in the area by sharing the love of Jesus Christ.

A report of the meeting by Sharon Bellak is below.

Representatives and Pastors from 5 of the 6 West Pasco Lutheran Churches met at King of Glory for an all-day session, led by our consultant David Raymond. After getting acquainted, we learned some demographics of the area that the six TEAM churches serve. This area is about 9 miles wide by 16 miles high. It includes these zip codes: 34652, 34653, 34654, 34655, 34667, 34668, 34669, and 34691. The total population is over 200,000, and the growth rate is approximately 4,000 new people per year. The area has 19,000 families with children. The median age is 47.9 and the median income is \$39,170. The number of families on the poverty level is 4,888.

The six TEAM churches have about 1,500 members and a combined average worship attendance of 900. The charts below show trends for the six West Pasco ELCA churches.





We then did a church identity exercise, telling features of our churches. The most common threads in our perceptions of our churches were “welcoming” and “worship”.

Next, we learned the characteristics of **THRIVING** churches:

- 1) Vision for the future.
- 2) Know how to disagree.
- 3) CHANGE AND ADAPT.
- 4) Open decision-making, not done by an elite group.
- 5) Leadership –open, not dictators.
- 6) Shared food inclusively.
- 7) Worship.
- 8) Real estate resolution.
- 9) Priority on youth.
- 10) Culture of caring.
- 11) Commitment.

Notation: four out of the top five high performance churches in one study had faced serious difficulties in the past decade. This meant they were ready to change and adapt, which ultimately led to their current thriving status.

The following notations are quotes from various sources.

We learned that people change:

- a) when they HURT enough that they have to.
- b) when they LEARN enough that they want to.
- c) when they RECEIVE enough that they are able to.

Permission to lead comes from love: “People willingly give you permission to lead and influence them once they are convinced how much you care for them.”

There are 5 different ways that people respond to innovation: Innovators, Early Adopters, Middle Adopters' Late adopters, Laggards.

The best organizations go about change by doing the following:

- establish a sense of urgency
- create a guiding coalition
- develop a vision and strategy
- communicate the change vision
- empower broad-based action
- generate short-term wins
- consolidate wins and produce more change
- anchor the change in the culture

We ended with scheduling the next meeting on September 22nd at Immanuel.

Short-term measures that we agreed to take were:

- joint confirmation programs ---Pastors will work on this.
- joint worship service of all 6 churches, and a steering committee was formed to arrange this. This included Bob Memoli and Pastor Jerry (both from Joyful Spirit, and Larry Lehlbach and Pastor Sally (both from Immanuel). This steering committee is composed of members from the two churches which have full-time Pastors.