

## LETTER OF FAITH

# FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

JANUARY 2022

MINISTERS: ALL THE PEOPLE OF FAITH

### **From the Pastor**

#### ***Putting God First in Living and Giving***

The life of Moses which included Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt is a great example for us to follow. He was a faithful servant of God. Leading the Israelites was not an easy task. They complained. They were quick to worship idols.

The Israelites had a golden calf built and worshipped that calf when Moses was away receiving the Ten Commandments. So do we worship idols? The confirmation class that I taught last year were quick to answer "Yes." So I asked them what our false idols are. The answer from the class may surprise you. Almost instantly I heard the response "Money". Try as we might, I believe it's easy to fall into the habit of worshipping money. It almost comes natural for us humans. One of my pastor mentors had a habit of asking people, including me, "Are you ready for Christmas?" If the answer was "yes." he would then say, "I hope you didn't stop after buying gifts for family and friends. Have you given to mission projects?" He changed the way I thought about getting ready for Christmas. Now, don't get me wrong. I'm not saying that we shouldn't give gifts to loved ones. It's one of my biggest pleasures. But, I need to not stop there. My Christmas list should also have the projects that I want to support under God's mission. Whether it be an extra gift to congregations or other causes, I shouldn't discard my Christmas list until the checks have been written for those projects as well.

This time of year, at the time of Jesus' birth, we are reminded of God's generosity. It is only fitting that in response to his sending us the perfect gift in Jesus that we should rethink our generosity as well. We are called to put God first in our lives. We all know this. We all try to do that. But it isn't easy. We have distractions galore. It is a constant struggle to keep God as our first priority.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 is the most foundational for the Jewish faith to this day. These verses are called the Shema.

***"Attention, Israel! GOD, our God! GOD the one and only!  
Love GOD, your God, with your whole heart: love him with all that's in you, love him with all you've got! Write these commandments that I've given you today on your hearts. Get them inside of you and then get them inside your children. Talk about them wherever you are, sitting at home or walking in the street; talk about them from the time you get up in the morning to when you fall into bed at night. Tie them on your hands and***

Faith Lutheran Church

108 West Eighth Street

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320-589-2970

[www.faithlutheranmorris.org](http://www.faithlutheranmorris.org)

Interim Pastor Vicki Toutges

Office Manager Connie Tschetter

[faithful@hometownsolutions.net](mailto:faithful@hometownsolutions.net)

Youth Director of Fusion Ministry

Heather Black

Pianist Rita Lambert

Director of Music John Kleinwolterink

Custodians Ryan & Cassie Snyder

Website Anne Mittness

### **Faith Lutheran Mission Statement:**

***"Faith Lutheran is a  
community of believers  
living out our faith in  
daily life."***

Remember to check the website for future happenings at Faith. If you know someone who does not have access to the website remember to share information with them.

If you have questions, please call the church office at 589-2970.



**Sunday, January 23rd**

**Special Worship Service with the Kingery Family.**

**They will lead us in worship.**

**Plan to attend the Worship Service.**

**The Kingery Family was with us a few years ago—everyone really enjoyed their music and message.**

**Church Council Meeting January 9**  
**(Sunday)**

10:00 Following the Worship Service

**Burgers, Beverages and Blessings**

6:30pm Fireside in Morris

Please join us on Wednesdays

All are Welcome and Invited

**Sunday—Winter Months at Faith Lutheran**—just a note—please be careful when walking in and out of church. The parking lot can be very slippery. If you foresee needing help—please let us know. We do not want anyone to fall. We will try to have someone that will be available to help you. **Please be cautious and keep an eye out for your neighbor who might need help. Thank You**

**Do Days**

Will meet on **all Tuesdays** beginning at **9:00am**

Bring a sack lunch

**All are welcome**

*No experience necessary*

**Come for the fellowship**

***Mission:Stitch***

**JOIN US FOR MISSION: STITCH!**

Tuesday afternoons in the lounge at Faith Lutheran Church

**TUESDAYS beginning at 1:30**

**Come when you can, stay as long as you feel like it. You do not need to be present for the whole time. This group is open to anyone. You do not have to be a member of Faith Lutheran – invite your friends, family, anyone who is interested in joining us.**

Questions—talk to Anita Stoker

**Radio Broadcast—Daily Devotions Sponsorship**

The daily devotion radio broadcasts (Monday—Friday) on KMRS and KKOK are \$90.00 per week—if you would like to help with this ministry please call the church office and let us know. Any amount is appreciated.

Thank You!

**Financial Statements for 2021 will be mailed**

If you need your statement early please let me know. Thank You.

Connie

**THANK YOU**



Thank you for all of the donations to the ELCA Good Gifts; the mitten, scarf, hat tree; and to the Wish tree for needy families—many lives were touched by your generosity.





### Sr. High Fusion Youth: Youth in 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Jan 9<sup>th</sup>** – Sr. High Fusion 6:30-8pm at First Lutheran Church  
**Jan 16<sup>th</sup>** – Sr. High Fusion 6:30-8pm at First Lutheran Church  
**Jan 23<sup>rd</sup>** - Sr. High Fusion 6:30-8pm at First Lutheran Church  
**Jan 30<sup>th</sup>** - Sr. High Fusion 6:30-8pm at First Lutheran Church



### Element Schedule: Youth in 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Jan 5<sup>th</sup>** – Element @First Lutheran Church 6-7:30pm  
**Jan 12<sup>th</sup>** – Element @First Lutheran Church 6-7:30pm  
**Jan 19<sup>th</sup>** – Element @First Lutheran Church 6-7:30pm  
**Jan 26<sup>th</sup>** - Element @First Lutheran Church 6-7:30pm

### Fusion Youth Ministry Needs:

Parent/Caregivers of youth 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Bible Study! Barb Barsness has volunteered to lead a bible study for any parent who is interested in participating. It will be held on Wed evenings during Element's time. 6-7:30pm. Location will most likely be at First Lutheran Church. (look on Fusion's website [www.fusion-ministry.com](http://www.fusion-ministry.com) for updated information).

January 12, January 19, January 26

Sometimes plans change so please check out Fusion's updated website for more information.  
[www.fusion-ministry.com](http://www.fusion-ministry.com)

Join us on social media Facebook@fusion56267 and Instagram@fusion56267

Dear Church Family,

Thanks so much for entrusting me and my fellow adults with your youth! Ministry with Sr. High Fusion & Element has been fun, and eye opening this past year. In a world that is rebuilding, in a sense, after a rough pandemic year – we at Fusion are doing the same. I sometimes forget that Fusion has only been in existence for almost 2.5 years and 1.5 of those years has been a pandemic and the uncertainty that comes with this causes us to continually look at what we are doing and why. We are learning as we go, changing to adapt to the needs of the youth, trying our best to teach these amazing youth about who Jesus is and how to follow Him in a day to day life. We may make mistakes and do things wrong from time to time. But I 100% believe that we are also doing so many things right! We are learning about who God is, who Jesus is and how to follow Him. Serving our community through service projects, learning how to communicate and live in community with each other, and all the while having some fun too.

Fusion is blessed with some amazing volunteer leaders who give of their time, talents and heart to minister to the youth of our churches. We have 6 adult volunteers in the Sr. High Ministry: David Black, Nick Milbrandt, Brent Gausman, Kendra Jergenson, Katie Moser & Amy Swanson. We have 11 adult volunteers in Element (our Jr. high group): Tony Feuchtenberger, Nate Haseman, David Black, Mike Odello, Mark Torgerson, Craig Swanson, Amy Swanson, Katie Hassler, Haley Ourada, Elissa Breuer & Naomi Fynboh. As well as our pastors who bring experience and wisdom to the table: Pastor Chris Richards, Pastor Dan Belgum & Pastor Matt Orendorff.

What an honor for me to serve along side of and lead these people! If you have a youth, know a youth or have a grandchild that attends Sr. High Fusion or Element – one of these people have made an impact on those youth's lives. And I will speak on their behalf – “it's our pleasure!”

Heather Black, Fusion Youth Director



What: ELCA National Youth Gathering

When: July 24-28, 2022

Where: Minnesota

Who: Students in Grades 9-12

For More Information—Please contact Danielle Lesmeister or Amy Swanson

Registration deadline is approaching so if you are interested—please talk to Danielle or Amy or call the church office for a registration form.

There are so many people in our congregation who have attended as students and/or chaperones who have great memories. Plan to attend!

**ELCA Youth Gathering Overview**

Every three years, 30,000 high school youth and their adult leaders from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gather for a week of faith formation known as the ELCA Youth Gathering. Through days spent in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, young people grow in faith and are challenged and inspired to live their faith in their daily lives.

**Element Winter Retreat**  
FEB 11TH-12TH, 2022

**LUTHER CREST**

*Activities*

- Snow tubing & Sledding
- Cross Country Skiing
- Broomball
- Connecting with Friends
- Learning about Jesus

**SIGN UP ON THE FUSION WEBSITE**  
**WWW.FUSION-MINISTRY.COM**

**Luther Crest Summer 2022 Camp Registration**

Registration for Summer Camp 2022 opened on November 1, 2021.

You will be able to register your camper on their website at [www.luthercrest.org](http://www.luthercrest.org).

*Reminder – Faith Lutheran Church will pay half of the registration fee (on the lowest fee for the camp) for members of Faith – one camp per child per year.*

**Early Bird Deadline is February 14th**

Inspiring faith, community, and stewardship in God's creation.



# Book Club

**Come join us for a Book Club at Faith Lutheran Church on the last Monday of each month at 1:30.**

**January date is Monday, January 31.**

*All are Welcome.*

**January book will be “The Same Sky” by Amanda Eyre Ward**

If you have questions, talk to Karen Uphoff.  
Please bring book suggestions so we can plan a few months ahead.

**Happy Reading!**

# Happy New Year 2022

## January Daily Bible Verses

1. Psalm 32:6,7	11. Matthew 24:35	21. Luke 24:33,34
2. Proverbs 29:1	12. Matthew 24:43, 44	22. Romans 6:22,23
3. I Peter 5:8-10	13. James 4:6-7	23. James 3:17
4. Jeremiah 3:22	14. John 17:3	24. I Peter 4:12,13
5. II Chronicles 20:21	15. I Peter 5:6,7	25. Ephesians 1:7
6. Psalm 29:2	16. John 16:24	26. Malachi 3:10
7. II Corinthians 5:17	17. Romans 6:22	27. Psalm 29:11
8. Jeremiah 6:16	18. Psalm 138:6	28. Philippians 1:9,10
9. I Peter 3:10	19. Daniel 12:3	29. Philippians 1:6
10. Psalm 146:5-9	20. Luke 24:32	30. Psalm 139:13,14
		31. Psalm 139:1-4

### Gatherings for Widows and Widowers

Please join with others who have experienced the loss of their spouse, partner or significant other for a wonderful time of fellowship and conversation. *Gatherings for Widows and Widowers* will meet for lunch, 12:00 noon, at **Common Cup** on Sunday, January 9. Order and purchase your lunch, and enjoy the company of others.

For questions, please call Pedersen Funeral Home 589-3220.

### Noisy Offering Sunday

#### January 9th will be the next time

The second Sunday of each month will be Noisy Offering Sunday – remember to bring your change to church for the children to collect in buckets.

October amount collected was **\$158.23**

November amount collected was **\$209.05**

December amount collected was **\$124.42**

Thank You to Everyone who contributed!

### YOUR PRAYERS NEEDED

-Pray for our ongoing ministry as we join with our brothers and sisters in ministry from South Africa. Pray for the churches of the South Eastern Diocese of South Africa.

-Pray for Dr. Stephen and Jodi Swanson and their children who are serving in Tanzania.

Psalm 119:105

***Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. (NRSV)***



This is a portion of the letter we received from the missionaries we help sponsor in Tanzania—Dr. Stephen and Jodi Swanson.

Frank, age 3. A graduate of the NICU (112 days hospitalized), and among our smallest, sickest babies ever. A star of our recent *Tiny Feet, Big Steps* Neonatology Conference.

Dear Faith Lutheran Church,

Last you heard from us, we were embarking on a Neonatology Conference during the end of October. We are so grateful to give you a positive report!

We completed what was likely the largest-ever training conference on Neonatology in East Africa, held here in Arusha and hosted by our hospital. ***Tiny Feet, Big Steps*** was meant to train doctors and nurses from just our zonal region of northern Tanzania. As word grew of our conference, attendance requests increased. We ended up with **160+ nurses and doctors from Tanzania**, as well as from **Ethiopia, Malawi, Kenya and Uganda! 55 hospitals were in attendance.** It was an amazing 3 days of lectures, skills workshops, and learning.

International doctors and nurses came from the United States, Germany and Canada to join our Tanzanian colleagues, and together we created an unforgettable team and conference! One of the most emphatic comments in the evaluations at the end of the conference was, "Please repeat this conference next year!" There was "a buzz" about the place everywhere you looked, in every session, with so many questions and constant engagement. I think it was fair to say, there was not a dull moment.

Throughout our time in Tanzania, we have had a **Vision** for creating a clinical space where every baby, no matter how small or sick, can have the opportunity to get compassionate, life-saving care. Our **Mission** to teach, train, and improve care in East Africa was at the heart of this conference. Since the conference ended, we have continued to receive requests to host visiting doctors and nurses and train them. Next month, we welcome a pediatric doctor from Ethiopia to learn from us, followed by doctors coming to us from the national referral hospital in Dar es Salaam.

As I write this, I know that we are stretched beyond our limits most days. I am receiving calls from the hospital late into the night regarding admissions, and we have no more space in the NICU... but they keep arriving (4 sick babies arriving tonight alone).

We are challenged by a demand for care that is far greater than we can humanly provide. Our reputation now results in even more referrals to our NICU from outside hospitals, and they arrive without advance notice. We face continual shortages of nurses, declining supplies, tired doctors and limited donor funds to cover all our charitable care, equipment and training costs. We want to help every baby and child, and we just can't.

Yet we continue to try because we choose to live in mercy and compassion. We have a deep conviction that God values the smallest and the weakest among us. We depend on your generosity to help us train, equip, and care.

Advent Season reminds us that God comes to us at the most unexpected, inopportune moments. A dirty stable and cries of childbirth opened the world to unimaginable grace and holiness. With pregnant faith, we believe that God remains alive and present in messy stables all over the world. He meets us in our stable.

In joy and anticipation of God, Steve & Jodi

## Faith Lutheran Church Council Highlights

December 5, 2021

Members present- Pastor Vicki, Connie, Lynnae Lina, Lisa Loew, Mark Torgerson, Nancy Olson, Nichole Mahoney, Liz Spohr, Tony Reimers, Mike Nordquist, Matt Solemsaas, Todd Hodenfield, Eric Meichsner

Members Absent -Vicky Dosedall

Liz - call to order

Pastor Vicki- opening prayer

Pastor's report - handout. Planning services and visiting members. Vacation days December 26 to January 1st.

Connie's report - attached to agenda.

Call Committee - did practice interview and went well. Learned a lot of things. Has two rostered minister profiles for the call committee to review. Lynnae will be contacting them today and forward info to rest of committee.

Fusion/Element - Danielle Lesmeister had a board meeting. Nothing new to report. Executive committee met with Lonnie Anderson about some concerns.

Ministry reports:

Congregational Life - no meeting

Outreach - no meeting

Worship and Music - Christmas service depending on what is decided by council today. Advent had about 20 people.

Memorial/Endowment - January 23, 2022 Kingery family doing worship.

Property and Safety - nothing to report.

Education - meet tomorrow. Nothing to report.

Celebrate and Share - Vocational Sunday went great.

Women of Faith - decorated church.

Secretary's Report - approve October and November MMSP

Treasurer's Report - going very good. Approve October and November MMSP

Old Business:

Worship service - online worship 23 today. Thanksgiving service has had 193 views and most services are 150 to 200 views. Just Facebook numbers. YouTube not as many views.

New Business:

Covid protocols - continue as we currently are. Council members try to mask as an example.

Christmas services - 3 services 3,5 and 11 pm - motion passes MMSP. Will be shorter services and less singing. Live nativity to be discussed with music and worship. Possibly a modified nativity without animals.

Nominating committee - Molly Fluegel to chair committee. Going off council Nichole Mahoney, Lisa Loew, Nancy Olson and Matt Solemsaas.

Executive Committee - handout proposed budget for 2022. Stayed the same except for salary increases. Suggestion that increases need to be closer to 5% for full time employees. Have over \$50,000 over budget. Will hold onto some funds in reserves and then do our normal donations comparable to the last two years. Donate approximately \$8,000 to \$10,000.

Annual meeting January 30th.

Next council meeting January 9, 2022

Adjournment and Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Loew

Council secretary

Faith Lutheran Church, ELCA  
108 West Eighth Street  
Morris, MN 56267

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA**

<b>Interim Pastor</b>	<b>Vicki Toutges</b>	
<b>Office Manager</b>	<b>Connie Tschetter</b>	<b>faithful@hometownsolutions.net</b>
<b>Youth Director of Fusion Ministry</b>	<b>Heather Black</b>	
<b>Pianist</b>	<b>Rita Lambert</b>	
<b>Director of Music</b>	<b>John Kleinwolterink</b>	
<b>Custodians</b>	<b>Ryan &amp; Cassie Snyder</b>	
<b>Website</b>	<b>Anne Mitteness</b>	

**Congregational Church Council**

<b>Liz Spohr —President</b>	<b>Lynnae Lina—Vice President</b>		
<b>Lisa Loew—Secretary</b>	<b>Mark Torgerson—Treasurer</b>		
<b>Vicky Dosedall</b>	<b>Todd Hodenfield</b>	<b>Nichole Mahoney</b>	<b>Eric Meichsner</b>
<b>Mike Nordquist</b>	<b>Nancy Olson</b>	<b>Tony Reimers</b>	<b>Matt Solemsaas</b>

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**Website**      [www.faithlutheranmorris.org](http://www.faithlutheranmorris.org) (Worship Services can be viewed on the website)