

LETTER OF FAITH

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2024

MINISTERS: ALL THE PEOPLE OF FAITH

On Sunday, January 7th, folks in worship were invited to pick a “star word” to inspire them in the year ahead. These words aren’t meant to be homework. Rather, they are a gift from God – to encourage us in our life of faith. (By the way, if you want a star word – you can still pick one up in the narthex.) That morning, a word was also chosen for the congregation: Overflow!



Wow! What a great word to bring blessing to our year ahead...

As I begin to ponder this word for Faith Lutheran, the sounds of our children singing with Luther Crest staff fill my ears. “Overflow” by Geoff Moore seemed to be one of the favorite “slow songs” at Vacation Bible School in 2023. The refrain says:

Let the river run wild and free
The river of Your love for me
Fill my heart and my soul
Till I overflow

What a delight it is on Sunday mornings when we gather for worship and find a worship space “overflowing” with people of all ages. My prayer, also, is that in our gatherings we experience the “overflowing” love of God. Though we get stuck in sin, Jesus Christ sets us free. Though we make mistakes, God’s forgiveness comes again and again. Though we can only comprehend so much, the Holy Spirit continues to move among us. I think about the words from John 1:14, 16: “And the Word became flesh and lives among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth. From his fullness we have all received grace upon grace.”
Grace overflows!

I love this “overflowing” Gaelic Blessing...may it bless you:

Deep peace of the running wave to you.
Deep peace of the flowing air to you.
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.
Deep peace of the shining stars to you.
Deep peace of the gentle night to you.
Moon and stars pour their healing light on you.
Deep peace of Christ the light of the world to you.
Deep peace of Christ to you.

Grace and peace to you,
-Pastor Emmy

Faith Lutheran Church

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Pastor Emmy Swedlund

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Office Manager Connie Tschetter

faithful@hometownsolutions.net

Youth Director of Fusion Ministry

Heather Black

www.fusion-ministry.com

Pianist Rita Lambert

Director of Music John Kleinwolterink

Website Anne Mitteness

Custodians Cassie & Ryan Snyder

Faith Lutheran Mission Statement:

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

Council Members:

Zach Arnold

Vicky Dosdall

Molly Fluegel

Brent Gausman

Chris Hopkins

Lynnae Lina—President

Tom Loew

Jenny Maras—Secretary

Eric Meichsner

Mike Nordquist—Vice President

Nancy Olson

Liz Spohr—Treasurer

OPEN

Our Hearts



Lent 2024

2 Churches. 2 Worship Times.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.” -Psalm 51:10

First & Faith Lutheran Churches are partnering for 2024 midweek Lenten Services. Join us at a time that works for you, to enrich your spirit this season. May God open our hearts!

Ash Wednesday, February 14

First Lutheran Church | 12:05 pm Worship

Faith Lutheran Church | 5:15 pm Supper is served (free will donation), 6:30 pm Worship

Worship Wednesdays, February 21, 28 and March 6, 13, and 20

HOLY LAMENT



12:05 pm at First Lutheran Church

We'll explore various kinds of lament found in scripture. We'll consider what it means to open our hearts, and be honest with God about our grief rather than push it aside. We will remember that God can take our grief and disappointment and transform them into holy joy and renewed hope. Weekly themes are: What is lament?; “Little” Laments, Laments from the Depths, Individual Lament, Communal Lament. Join Pastor Emmy for this meaningful time of reflection. The plan is for Holden Prayer to be our liturgy.

THE GAMES PEOPLE PLAY



5:15 pm Supper is served (free will donation), 6:30 pm Worship

Through dramas, our youth will help us explore how some familiar games we've all played, can lead us to reflect on our spiritual life. Are our hearts really open to God? Weekly themes: Solitaire—This game of isolation may be harmful to your spiritual health; Hide and Seek—Hiding from God and responsibility strips life of its meaning; Follow the Leader—We're lost without a leader, but how do we know which one to follow?; King of the Hill—Would you do anything to get to the top?; Twenty Questions—Bringing our questions to God. Holden Prayer will be our liturgy.

Upcoming...



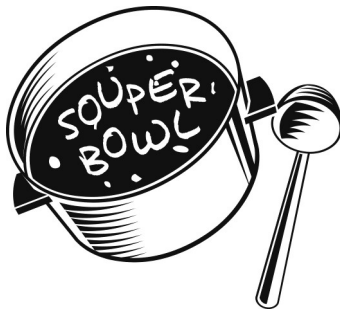
Faith Milestones

Watch for a postcard or check the website for details...

- 4th & 5th Grade Bible Retreat | Wednesday, February 7 from 12:30ish-5:00 pm.
4-year-old Prayer Book | Sunday, February 18 at the 9:00 Worship Service
2nd Grade Resurrection Eggs | Sunday, March 17 during Sunday School
5th Grade Class & Bread Baking with students and parents | Sunday, March 24 at 4:00 pm
First Communion Celebration | Thursday, March 28 at Maundy Thursday Service

“Souper” Bowl Sunday on Super Bowl Sunday Sunday, February 11th

Reminder to bring cans of soup and/or money for “Souper” Bowl Sunday to help the Stevens County Food Shelf stock their shelves with soup for needy families in our area.
THANK YOU!



Luther Crest Bible Camp Summer 2024 Camp Registration is open

Registration for Summer Camp 2024 opened on November 1, 2023.

You will be able to register your camper on their website at 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 Registration Deadline is February 14th.

Congregational Transitions

Funeral

- December 13 Gary LeRoy Anderson Jr
December 22 Adeline Ann Amanda Wevley

Radio Broadcast

Faith Lutheran sponsors the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Worship eight times during the year—if you would like to sponsor a radio broadcast in honor or memory of someone, please call the church office. The cost is \$65.00 per time. **THANK YOU**

YOUR PRAYERS NEEDED

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

-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.

Do Days—Tuesday Mornings

Join them on Tuesdays at 9:00—bring a sack lunch. No experience necessary. Come when you can and help make quilts—you do not need to know how to sew.



MISSION STITCH!

Tuesday Afternoons



Join the group for stitching— at 1:30. Bring your projects; come when you can; stay as long as you can. Every Tuesday. If you have questions, talk to Karen Uphoff or Anita Stoker.

Faith Lutheran Church

2023 Budget for Mission \$317,156.22

December 2023

Year to Date Expense \$308,018.48

Year to Date Income \$310,530.20

Difference + 2,511.72

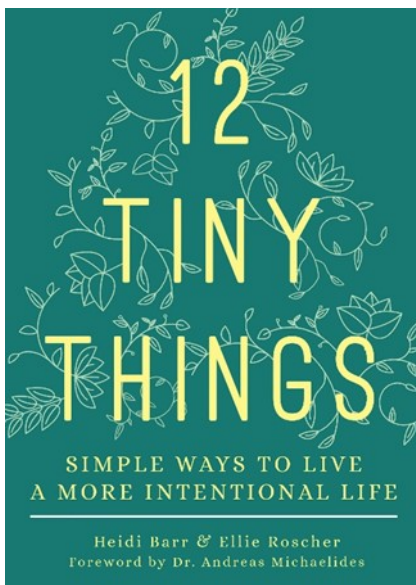


Give online

Items for the Restoration Center at Central Lutheran

They are always in need of men's clothing, socks, underwear and shoes. Also suitcases with wheels that work. Some of their clients are beginning to be able to move into apartments so they can use items such as bedding, towels, silverware, dishes, etc. Thank you for your generosity to this project.

If you are going to the cities and could take a load to Central Lutheran please let us know – Thank You



Join Pastor Emmy in an exploration of the book “12 Tiny Things: Simple Ways to Live a More Intentional Life” by Heidi Barr & Ellie Roscher. Each month, we will explore one chapter from the book, inviting us to take tiny action for growth and renewal in the possibilities God has for us. To start, we will meet the First Sunday of the month from 10:10-11:00 am in Room 14 (off the fellowship hall)
February 4 – Chapter Two: Work
March 3 – Chapter Three: Spirituality
April 7 – Chapter Four: Food

Though reading each chapter is not required, having done so will enhance our discuss.

The book is available through Broadleafbooks.com, Amazon, or Barnes & Noble.

Throughout the week, Faith Lutheran Church shares a **daily devotion through our local radio station.** Radio Devotionals can be heard Monday through Friday on KMRS (1230 AM or 107.7 FM) at 1:05 p.m., KKOK (95.7 FM) at 2:35 p.m. and can be found on the YouTube link on the website. You can help support this ministry that stretches out into our community to share the good news of Jesus. Donations in support of this ongoing ministry are needed. Donate to support a day (\$18), a week (\$90), or a month (\$360).

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 Old #1 on Tuesday, February 13.** Order and purchase your lunch, and enjoy the company of others.

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

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

February 26 "The Five Wishes of Mr. Murray McBride" by Joe Siple

ALL ARE WELCOME

If you are interested in joining the group, please come to Book Club. Maybe you have a book to suggest.



Thank You!



To Jim Riley & Sons for plowing our church parking lots!

They do a fantastic job keeping our lots plowed.

Thank You for Giving in December

Once again we had trees in the narthex area to support different ministries in our area and around the world. Thank you for your generosity.

The Mitten, Hat, Scarf Tree—donations have helped keep many people warm.

ELCA Good Gifts—ornaments hanging on a tree—they had different animals and items to help with hunger and transform lives.

Outreach Tree—for needy families in the area.





Element's Schedule: (6th-8th Grades)

Feb 7th 6-7:30pm at First Lutheran Church



Sr. High Fusion's Schedule: (9th-12th Grades)

Feb 7th 7-8:30pm at First Lutheran Church

Please check out Fusion's updated website for more information. www.fusion-ministry.com

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

Morris Community Meal

Sharing food is a key way to build community. Six times a year, a free meal is served to anyone who wants to come. Regional businesses and organizations fund the meal, and students, faculty, staff, and community members cook together and share a meal. Morris Community Meal uses local foods and sustainable practices as much as possible, and strives to share food from a variety of cultures. Anyone can get involved as a co-sponsor, volunteer, or attendee!

The University of Minnesota-Morris' Office of Community Engagement will be hosting the February Community Meal on Monday, February 26th from 5:30-7:30pm at Faith Lutheran Church located at 108 W. 8th Street, Morris. We also need community members to help prepare on Sunday, February 25th, and prep, serve and clean up after the meal on Monday. This is a terrific opportunity to connect with UMN-Morris students, staff, and other community members.

Volunteers to help with the UMM Community Engagement meals are needed. Contact Sarah at 589-6457 if you are interested in this opportunity.

We encourage all to attend this free event filled with delicious, seasonal food!

*Friendly
Reminder*

Please do not enter the church office if you wear perfume/ cologne or scented lotion, due to allergies of church office staff.

Faith Lutheran Church Council Highlights

December 10, 2023

Faith Lutheran Mission Statement "Faith Lutheran is a community of believers living out their faith in daily life."

Congregational Theme Verse For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God - not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life. *Ephesians 2:8-10*

Members Present: Pastor Emmy, Mike Nordquist, Liz Spohr, Zach Arnold, Chris Hopkins, Brent Gausman, Jenny Maras, Lynnae Lina, Tom Loew, Connie Tschetter, Vicky Dossdall, Eric Meichsner, Nancy Olson, Molly Fluegel

Members Absent: None

Call to Order: Lynnae Lina

Opening Prayer: Pastor Emmy

REPORTS

Pastor's Report: She has been enjoying this Advent season. Pastor Emmy makes visits to Skyview, Legacy, and Westwind Village for communion and visiting. She has a larger rotation with West Central Home. First Lutheran continues to be without a pastor. Their congregation was invited to Faith's Thanksgiving Eve service and Pastor Emmy will preach for them on Christmas Eve. Pastor Emmy loves being a pastor at Faith Lutheran.

Connie's Report: Written Report Shared - Busy with the holiday events. Annual reports are needed from the various ministries.

Fusion Youth Update: None Shared.

Ministry Reports:

Congregation Life (Jenny & Lynnae) - Fall gift bags to shut-ins

Outreach (Chris) - Money raised from the recent breakfast will donate to community meals in the spring.

Worship & Music (Mike & Liz) - The decision was made to not have the live nativity due to shortage of animals. Emmy will be connecting with John Kleinwolterink to collaborate for the Christmas Eve services. Outreach continues to be great on Facebook with 200-300 views and approximately 15 live views each service.

Memorial/Endowment (Eric) - Meeting will be occurring soon.

Property & Safety (Zach & Brent) - The water issue seems to be resolved, along with a few of the toilets recently replaced. The wiring in the music area of the sanctuary will happen after Christmas. The light pole out front along with the lights on the parking lot side need addressing.

Education (Vicky & Molly) - The Christmas program preparations are well underway. Treat bags for the students are already prepared and the meal is planned for afterward. They are still looking for volunteers for serving and extra hands in the kitchen. Classroom curriculum is planned and in the classrooms for the upcoming quarter.

Celebrate & Share (Tom & Connie) - Vocation Sunday was the last event they hosted. There has not been a recent meeting.

Women of Faith (Nancy) - The annual "Cookie Factory" was December 9, 2023 with a fabulous turnout.

Secretary Report - MMSP

Treasurer's Report - MMSP

Mike made a motion and Eric seconded that money coming in yet in 2023 beyond the budget, will be retained within the church for maintenance and improvements for future projects. MMSP.

OLD BUSINESS

Facility Improvement Committee No additional discussion.

Values Pastor Emmy shared a draft of the Faith Lutheran Church Values. These will be used by our congregation, shared on the rolling slides prior to church, posted on the website and on social media. There was a short discussion over suggested edits. Eric suggested the values are reviewed annually in December for the next upcoming year. Lynnae made the suggestion that the senior high students look at the draft as well. The values will be officially debuted at the annual meeting.

Nominating Committee They are meeting regularly in December 2023 and January 2024.

2024 Budget Request Zach shared a list of 10+ items that have been submitted as "wish list" items from various ministries and congregation members.

Other None

NEW BUSINESS

Pastor Emmy Housing Allowance Letter A formal letter was shared from Liz, the Faith Lutheran Treasurer. Mike motioned to approve, with Tom seconding. MMSP.

Community Meal The University reached out asking Faith Lutheran to sponsor a community meal that includes \$250 and 10 hours of volunteer time. At this point, Faith doesn't want to sponsor a meal but will help with advertising efforts by announcing to our members both verbally and in the bulletin.

Other Pastor Emmy will be gone for the January council meeting.

Next Meeting Sunday, January 14, 2024

Annual Meeting Sunday, January 28, 2024

Adjournment & Lord's Prayer

Respectfully Submitted, Jenny Maras - Council Secretary

Faith Lutheran Church Council Highlights

January 14, 2024

Faith Lutheran Mission Statement "Faith Lutheran is a community of believers living out their faith in daily life."

Congregational Theme Verse For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God - not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life. *Ephesians 2:8-10*

Members Present: Mike Nordquist, Liz Spohr, Zach Arnold, Chris Hopkins, Jenny Maras, Lynnae Lina, Connie Tschetter, Vicky Dossdall, Eric Meichsner, Molly Fluegel

Members Absent: Tom Loew, Brent Gausman, Nancy Olson, Pastor Emmy

Guest(s): None

Call to Order: Lynnae Lina

Opening Devotion: Mike shared a devotion themed "*The Fear of the Unknown.*"

REPORTS

Pastor's Report: Written Report Shared - Looking Back & Looking Ahead

Connie's Report: Written Report Shared - End of Year & Beginning of Year transition with time being spent on the Annual Report

Fusion Youth Update: None Shared.

Ministry Reports:

Congregation Life (Jenny & Lynnae) - No Recent Meeting

Outreach (Chris) - No Recent Meeting.

Worship & Music (Mike & Liz) - There is an upcoming meeting scheduled where a recap of the Christmas season will take place.

Memorial/Endowment (Eric) - No Recent Meeting.

Property & Safety (Zach & Brent) - No Recent Meeting.

Education (Vicky & Molly) - A meeting is scheduled for the upcoming week with planned discussion for the spring curriculum and VBS.

Celebrate & Share (Tom & Connie) - No Recent Meeting. Plans are underway for Food Shelf Month.

Women of Faith (Nancy) - No Report Shared.

Secretary Report - MMSP

Treasurer's Report - MMSP

\$53,000 was brought in during the month of December. \$2,511.72 is the offering over the expenses for 2023.

OLD BUSINESS

Facility Improvement Committee Facility maintenance and improvements from 2023 were discussed. We will continually address needs throughout 2024 in terms of facility needs and giving.

2024 Budget Request Increases for paid employees are 5%. Pastor Emmy's salary is based on the Synod's suggestion in addition to our local decision.

An increased amount for Faith Lutheran's contribution to the Fusion youth program is being proposed. A breakdown of participants, numbers, and financial contributions was illustrated in a report.

Zach motioned to approve the proposed 2024 proposed budget with Molly seconding. Motion carried.

Other None

NEW BUSINESS

Annual Meeting Agenda and Hospitality Connie will prepare the Annual Meeting report of which will be available Sunday, January 21. Sunday, January 28, 2024 is the annual meeting date, with February 4, 2024 as a backup. The Fluegel family will serve refreshments.

Other

Continue to thank Jim Riley & Son's for snow removal. Legacy residents really like Pastor Emmy and Vicky suggested ministries and/or youth are intentional about making visits to not only Legacy, but other facilities as well. It was also noted Pastor Emmy's "above and beyond" serving not only Faith but the greater community. Another suggestion was made about having Faith Lutheran clothing. Outgoing council members were thanked and Liz shared her appreciation for her years on Church Council.

Next Meeting Sunday, February 11, 2024

Annual Meeting Sunday, January 28, 2024

Adjournment & Lord's Prayer

MMSP

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Maras - Council Secretary

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Our Vision

Faith Lutheran is a community of believers living out their faith in daily life.

Our Mission

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Faith Lutheran Church is a community of believers striving to:

invite and welcome people to faith in Jesus Christ

nurture and equip people with a living faith in response to God's love

send disciples into our prairie communities and beyond in Christ's service

Congregation Theme Verse

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God – not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life." Ephesians 2:8-10