

Faith Matters

December 2014

Pastor's Page

Although this is the December issue of *Faith Matters*, I am writing this column just before Thanksgiving. That brings to mind the countless blessings God has poured out on me and on Faith Lutheran Church. It is such a privilege to hold a job centered on proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ and doubly so to hold it in a vibrant, mission-minded church like Faith. I thank God every day for the privilege of serving here as a pastor, with a dedicated, talented staff and so many wonderful parishioners.

I am also grateful for the generous response so far to the *Imagine* Capital Campaign. On November 23, Celebration Sunday for the campaign, we gratefully announced that almost **\$635,000** had been pledged so far to keep paying—and reduce as quickly as possible—the mortgage remaining on the new building addition. That is an especially generous response, since it comes from only about **170** of Faith's **796** households. **Thank you** so much for expressing such commitment to the mission of Faith!



But just *imagine* the results if many more of Faith's members also committed to the *Imagine* Capital Campaign! If your household is among those that have not yet made a commitment, please join your Faith family in this important effort.

We want to emphasize that every gift of any amount is vital and profoundly appreciated. Widespread support, above all else, is what makes a capital campaign successful and increases ownership of the church's ministry. In whatever way God has blessed you to be a blessing to our church, please add your commitment to those of others in the Faith family, so that together we can manage the gift of this church as faithfully and efficiently as possible.

I hope for you all a blessed Thanksgiving that carries over into joyful thanks for the greatest gift ever given, the birth of God's Son in human flesh to save us from sin and death. Please note all the opportunities to celebrate the gift of Christmas in this newsletter and join in as many of them as you can. May the great good news of Christmas fill your hearts with thanks and joy!

Grace and peace,
Pastor Scott Grorud

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS AT FAITH LUTHERAN

WED. DEC. 3

5:00 p.m. Chili "Cook-Off"
6:30pm Advent Service

WED. DEC. 10

6:30 p.m. Advent Service

SUN. DEC. 14

4:00 p.m. 2nd-6th Grade
Christmas Program at Park
Elementary

WED. DEC. 17

6:30 p.m. Advent Service /
PreK-1st Grade Christmas
Program

SUN. DEC. 21

4:00 p.m. Caroling to Shut-ins
Followed by a light supper @
Faith

WED. DEC. 24

2:00 p.m. Family Worship
Service
4:00 p.m. Worship Services (in
both the Sanctuary and
Foundation space)
6:00 p.m. Worship Service
11:00 p.m. Worship Service
with Holy Communion

THUR. DEC. 25

10:00am Worship Service with
Holy Communion

SUN. DEC. 28

8:00 a.m. First Word
10:10 a.m. Combined Sanctuary
& Foundation Service with
Holy Communion

Needed: Leaders for Ministry

Faith Lutheran is governed by six Ministry Teams that oversee broad areas of the church's ministry and report to the Church Council. Two members of each Ministry Team, plus the congregational officers, also serve on the Church Council. All told, it involves about 40 members of the church in leadership each year.

Right now, the Nominating Committee is looking for new leaders who will be elected at the Annual Meeting in January to serve two-year terms. Could you help provide leadership for Faith's ministries? If so, please call the church or, if you are called by the Nominating Committee, prayerfully consider saying Yes and adding your gifts to the leadership of Faith Lutheran.

Faith Lutheran Church Women

Women of the Church please join the FLCW Board members Sunday December 7th, 2014 after the second service (11:15 am). Come to the Faith Center to enjoy Christmas Cookies, Cider, Coffee and fellowship. There will be a brief meeting as we disperse funds at the end of the year. We hope to see many of you there!
FLCW Board Members

Thank you also to everyone who has been a part of our many ministries in 2014!

Joy to the World Special Offering!



For the last several years, Faith Lutheran has relied on huge offerings in November and December to close a deficit in the General Fund and to meet all of our mission commitments. I keep hoping that we can avoid the need for a huge year-end financial appeal, but that is not the case this year. Once again,

Faith will need a really generous ***Joy to the World*** offering to close out 2014.

In the last six weeks of 2014, Faith still needs **\$160,000** in offerings to meet all our commitments for the year. That is a very large amount, but the good news is that it is manageable. It is in line with the year-end offerings the people of Faith have given in recent years.

Together, we can reach this goal again. As the Lord enables you, please remember your church with an extra Christmas gift so that we can continue to bring ***Joy to the World*** through the good news of salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Faith Lutheran Church INFORMATION & STAFF DIRECTORY

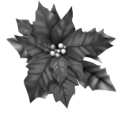
335 Main St. S. 320-587-2093 FaithLC.com

Pastors

Scott Grorud	320-587-0171 (home)	scottg@faithlc.com
Dave Wollan	320-583-2385 (cell)	davidw@faithlc.com
Paul Knudson	320-587-2227 (home)	paulk@faithlc.com
Paulus Pilgrim, Visitation	320-234-9753 (home)	paulusp@faithlc.com

Staff

Marsha Schmit , Director of Pastoral Care & Evangelism	marshas@faithlc.com
Gladys Bonnema , Youth & Family Ministry	gladysb@hutchtel.net
Wendy Toops , Director of Children & Family Ministry	wendyt@faithlc.com
Mike Lauer , Director of Music and Worship	mikel@faithlc.com
Wendy Mayland , Administrative Assistant	wendym@faithlc.com
Diane Pedersen , Finance Coordinator	dianep@faithlc.com
Keith Lang , Maintenance	
Jim Brodd , Custodial Services Coordinator	brodd@hutchtel.net



Advent Services Wednesdays in December



Wednesday, December 3, 6:30pm

Favorite Christmas Carols

Enjoy singing some of your favorite Christmas Carols and worshipping at this first Advent Service.

Wednesday, December 10, 6:30pm

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever - A Dramatization

Sunday, December 14, 4:00 p.m.

A Christmas to Believe In

A play by 2nd—6th graders. Due to being let down by Santa Claus, Billy questions the meaning of Christmas. Grandpa and Billy take us on an exciting adventure through the true Christmas story. In the end, will Billy decide this is truly, “A Christmas to Believe In”?

Wednesday, December 17, 6:30pm

Simply Christmas

Our 3 year olds—1st Graders will share with us a magical Christmas story told through song and our special guests: Mary, Joseph, Angels, Shepherds, and Wise Men.

Sunday, December 14, 4:00 p.m.

Christmas Caroling to Shut-ins and Supper at FLC

Another chance to sing some of your favorite Christmas Carols and share them with shut-ins. A light supper will be provided in the Faith Center after caroling.

2014 Christmas Worship Services

Christmas Eve

Wednesday, December 24

2:00 p.m. Family Service

4:00 p.m. Worship Services

Two 4 p.m. services will occur simultaneously again this year: one in the Sanctuary, and one in the Foundation space.

6:00 p.m. Worship Service

11:00 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion

Christmas Day

Thursday, December 25

10:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion

Chili Cook-Off Wed. Dec. 3 at 5 p.m.

We will hold a Chili Cook-Off once again before the Wednesday night Advent Service on Dec. 3rd. Call the office 587-2093 to enter your favorite recipe, bake a desert, sign up to help set up or clean up or just plan to come, enjoy and vote for your favorite chili! And of course - stay and attend Advent Worship right after.

SENIORS SCENE

After a beautiful fall season the winter of cold temperatures and snow coverings has descended upon us. We are now shivering and hoping for warmer things ahead. The weather experts, however, say a colder winter, with heavy snows.....again!! Oh boy!! Could they be wrong?

In the very midst of all this there is a warmth descending upon us in the month of December. God sends His Son to warm our hearts with His promises of grace and eternal love. It's all so simple--a barn, a stable, some hay, and a new-born baby. This is the Christ child. This is our Savior, says the Father. Receive Him in faith, and live in new life. This is My special Gift to you. It is a sign of the deep love I have for you. A love that will take that child some 30 years later to a wretched cross; there to suffer and die for us. What a Gift! What a new life for us--now, and eternally. In a busy season, filled with events and family gatherings, we'll sing His praises. We have to! We are "warmed" with joy!

One place we'll sing Christmas joy is at **Seniors Potluck meeting**, on **Thursday, December 11th**, beginning with a potluck dinner at 12:00 noon. Come and join us to be led in Christmas carol singing with our music and worship director, Mike Lauer. We also want him to introduce himself to us as another of our newest staff persons. Come, and bring a friend or friends. We have plenty of room, plenty of food, and lots of love to share. Jesus does that to us.

The Season of Giving

This holiday season, **we thank everyone** who has supported Faith Lutheran this past year with their time, talent and financial contributions and look forward to support from all of our members in the year ahead. If you need a **convenient way** to make regular offerings or if you plan to make an additional gift before the end of the year, we encourage you to check out our **electronic giving options**. As the pace of life speeds up, especially around the holidays, you may find electronic giving a most welcome way to make contributions. Visit:

<http://www.faithlc.com/giving-made-easy/>

or contact the church office for more information.

stump
the pastor

Q: Was God ever a baby? Does God have a Dad?

A: These questions from a confirmation group are perfect for Advent and Christmas. They go straight to the mystery and joy of this season.

The answer to both questions is No. The witness of the Bible is that God has no beginning or ending. Anselm of Canterbury famously defined God as "that, than which nothing greater can be conceived." In other words, if you can imagine anything before God, after God or greater than God, you haven't gotten to God yet. God is eternal--as hard as that is for us to grasp.

The answer to these questions, though, is also Yes. The great wonder of the Incarnation is that God's Son "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness." (Philippians 2:7) God chose to *become* a human baby, to live among us and to die on the cross to rescue us from sin and death. And that child, Jesus of Nazareth, revealed God as his Heavenly Father, and also ours.

Just imagine! The eternal, all-powerful God who made heaven and earth also knows what it is to be a mortal human being, to suffer and to die. God endured all of that in Christ, and then raised him from the dead, because he knows you and me, and loves us with perfect, steadfast love. That is what makes the Gospel such immeasurably good news.

THANK YOU - Operation Christmas Child

Thank you to all who participated in the Christmas box program this year. We hope you saw the stacks of boxes in the gathering space. We shipped 111 boxes. If you completed a box or two, thank you!! If you brought boxes, or items to complete boxes, thank you!! If you gave money for shipping them to their destinations, thank you! However you helped, thank you!! Please add your prayers that God will use them for His purposes---to bring Jesus into people's lives.



Franklin Graham, who has personally handed thousands of boxes to children writes, *"Whenever I give Operation Christmas Child boxes to children*

overseas, I am amazed at the way God uses these simple gifts to bring such great joy to every boy and girl. But the most important thing of all is that every child has the opportunity to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ." "What happens to the boxes?" I hear. First, Dean Dietel, along with boxes from Christ the King, transports them to a warehouse in the Twin Cities, where they are inspected and repacked if necessary. From there they are shipped to countries far and wide, like the Philippians, Nigeria, Iraq, Liberia, the Congo and more, especially to places that are devastated by poverty or destruction by storms or disease. Don't you wish you could see the smiling faces and energized bodies as the boxes are distributed and opened? Children receive things they never dreamed of. They are told that the boxes come from God through people whose lives have been melted by His love in Jesus, and can't keep that love to themselves. The hope and prayer is that they come to feel this Jesus must really be something, and that they need to check that out in provided Bible schools and through Christian people. God's saving love is for them too. Simple boxes, and toys, shirts and toothbrushes are instruments to spark their interest and lead them on to the greatest love they will ever know, in Jesus.

Not only recipients' lives are changed. In Phoenix, Arizona, there is a "Changing Lives Center," for young teens and women who have been in drugs and gang life, unimaginable brokenness. In the Center they are learning how Jesus transforms their lives from brokenness to knowing what it's like to give. They are hoping to pack 200 boxes from their meager resources.

OUR THANKS to the children who met on late start Wednesday, November 5th, to pack 90+ boxes. OUR THANKS to those who helped and mentored these young servants: Dodie Fenske, Donna Lundahl, Oscar Salazar, Tiffany Waller, Pat Krueger, Dick and Dorothy Desens, Gladys Pilgrim, Alice Poshek, Angie Ostreich, Roberta Yukel, Cheryl Buboltz, Helen Kieper. OUR THANKS to Chris Ruppert, and Thrivent Financial for their donation. OUR THANKS to Patsy Amundson, who secured the \$250.00 Thrivent Financial grant for items for the boxes.

Digging Deeper

Short-term studies are offered on Sunday mornings throughout the year. Dig deeper at Faith Lutheran with these classes continuing into mid-December. We will have a new list of classes in January's Faith Matters newsletter.

Martin Luther's Christmas Book

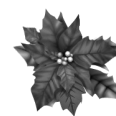
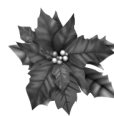
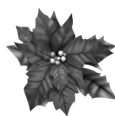
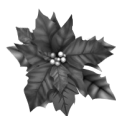
Martin Luther loved Christmas. Its beauty and down-to-earth simplicity perfectly reflected the promise of Emmanuel—God with us. Hear some of Luther's many reflections on Christmas, based on *Martin Luther's Christmas Book*, edited by Roland Bainton, the prominent biographer of Luther.

WHEN "all is not right" - Grief During the Holidays

How is the Christmas season different when a loved one has recently died? How can "Joy to the World" happen when I'm grieving? Expect to gain some insights, and hear some tips that could help.

"The First Noel"

Examining the first Christmas in light of the traditions, symbols, and misunderstandings that have developed in the thousands of Christmases since. This class will look at the source for traditions like Santa Claus and Christmas trees, as well as separate fact from fiction in the Biblical birth accounts.



Other News:

Christmas Poinsettia orders are being taken in memory or honor of loved ones to help decorate the church for Christmas. The order deadline is December 14. See enclosed order form for more details.

FaithLife Camp Gift Certificates are available for sale as a Christmas Gift. If you would like to plan a fun, faith & family filled weekend this summer the dates are August 14-16, 2015.

**FaithLife
Camp**

February Holiday Outreach Meal We are looking for a group to put on this meal. If you would like to plan the meal and spearhead this outreach for February, please sign up in the Sanctuary Gathering Space or call the office at 587-2093.

CRAYO & the Crow River Singers will be presenting Handel's Messiah on Sunday, December 7, 2014 at 4 p.m. at the Hutchinson High School. Ticket information is available at www.crayo.org or call 320-552-3917

Awaken Your Holiday Spirit—a Live Holiday Musical Performance by Mona Hjerpe and "The Awaken Band", with special appearances by Mike Lauer, and the Shalom Baptist Quartet at Zella's. Concert is Monday December 8, with dinner beginning at 6 p.m. Performance supports United Way and Common Cup Ministries and tickets for concert and dinner are available at Zella's or call Kathy Silvernale at 320-292-2619.

Thoughts and Prayers

Please remember all those who are serving our country through active duty:

Sgt. Jason Gaulke (El Paso, TX - nephew of Alice Fransen)

Andrew Hantge (Navy, Virginia Beach, VA - son of Marsha Schmit and Robert Hantge)

Lee Johnson (Fort Bragg, NC - son of Geri & Ralph Johnson)

Sgt. Tyler Lauer (Fort Hood, TX- son of Brian & Cyndi Lauer)

Justin Olsen (Behring, Kuwait - son of Sharon Grivna and Jerry Olsen)

SFC Guy Sing (Korea - nephew of Tony Sing & cousin of Darlene Karg)

Col. Rob Skaar (Duluth Air National Guard) son of Dave & Marian Skaar

Notes of Interest:

THANK YOU! WOW what an amazing response to “Sinking the boat”. On November 24th 1052 pounds of food was take to the food shelf. What a generous outpouring of love to the community.

Fish Fry: Due to the rising costs and the unavailability of rental fryers that we have used in the past, the Fish Fry Committee is disbanding and will no longer be hosting the annual fish fry. The committee would like to thank all the many volunteers over the past 21 years for their support financially and the many hours of prep work, frying and serving the hundreds of happy people that have consumed our tasty fish.

Fish Fry Committee

Remember our Faith members in Nursing Homes & Health Care Centers

Cedar Crest—Hutchinson

Omar Peterson

Cedar Crest— Silver Lake

Nadine Dalin

Lakeside (Dassel)

Dorothy Getz

Harmony River

Valerie Fimon
Charles Kisling
Clarence Kulberg
Charlie & Harriet Thor
Joanne Olesen
Otto Streseman

Prairie Senior Cottages

Delores Saar

Prairie View (Hector)

Jerome Lindquist

Woodstone

Deloris Askew
Betty Garberich
Eleanor Lack
Ruth McKay

Faith Lutheran Church
335 Main Street South
Hutchinson, Minnesota 55350

Non-Profit
US POSTAGE PAID
Hutchinson MN
Permit No 5

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Put mailing label here

OUR MISSION IS:

BUILDING FAITH

*"EQUIP THE SAINTS FOR THE WORK OF MINISTRY, FOR BUILDING UP
THE BODY OF CHRIST"*

EPHESIANS 4:12

TO LIVE OUT THAT MISSION, GOD CALLS US TO:

FOLLOW JESUS

ANNOUNCE THE GOSPEL

INVITE ALL PEOPLE

TEACH CHRISTIAN TRUTH

HELP ALL WHO ARE IN NEED