

Faith Matters

Pastors' Page

DECEMBER 2016

I have been teaching the *Crossways* Bible study for nearly 20 years. It has so many great qualities, but one I really appreciate is that the author, Harry Wendt, has a gift for turning a clever phrase or captivating description.

One of those that has stuck with me the most is Wendt's description of the Incarnation, of how God's Son took on human flesh in Jesus. He notes that, except for the shepherds, Jesus' birth went entirely unnoticed—and that was just how it was meant to be. Jesus, Harry writes, "sneaked down the backstairs of Bethlehem and settled in a manger."

What a beautiful image of the surprisingly humble birth of the Savior of the world. He didn't come in glory and power or with signs and wonders, but "sneaked down the backstairs of Bethlehem and settled in a manger." That set the pattern for Jesus' whole ministry, apart from his miracles. He never tried to take the world by storm, but lived humbly, served without limit and died a cursed death on a cross. Even his resurrection from the dead, which validated everything he said and did, including his crucifixion, took place out of human sight.

At our mid-week Advent services this year, we are going to meditate further on the contrast between Jesus' humility and his greatness, his ordinary appearance and extraordinary importance. Our theme is "Christ's Cradle," which reflects an image Martin Luther used for the Bible. He compared it to the manger and said that every page holds Christ for us just as the manger served as his first cradle. We will look at key passages from the Old Testament that point to Jesus and from the New Testament that explain his person and work. The services will be held on Wednesdays, Nov. 30 and Dec. 7, 14 and 21, all at 6:30 p.m. These quiet, devotional services are a great respite from the busyness of December.

There are many other ways to celebrate Advent and Christmas with the family of Faith: caroling, Sunday School programs, giving opportunities, the Chili/Soup Cook-off, and, of course, our six services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Please read through this issue of *Faith Matters*, take note of all these opportunities and participate in as many as you can.

We pray that during this holy time, that the Holy Spirit will bring all of you by Christ's Cradle (the Word of God) to Christ's Cradle (the manger where Jesus lay) to see how your Lord and Savior, hidden in a tiny, helpless baby, "sneaked down the backstairs of Bethlehem and settled in a manger." May you all have a holy, blessed and merry Christmas!

Grace and peace,
Pastor Scott



335 Main St. S
Hutchinson, MN 55350

Phone: 320-587-2093
Email: office@faithlc.com



RADIO BROADCAST
SUNDAYS 8 A.M.
KDUZ 1260 AM

TV BROADCAST
CABLE CH. 10
SUNDAYS 10 A.M.
AND 5 P.M.
TUESDAYS 5 P.M.
THURSDAYS 10 P.M.

Inside this issue:

Stump the Pastor	2
Missions	3
FLCW	4
Joy to the World	5
Digging Deeper	6
CCM & Seniors	7
OCC Thank You & Snowbirds Note	8
Prayers and Staff Directory	9
FLYouth	Insert
Faith Kids	Insert
Calendar	Insert

Stump the pastor

Q: Why can't I find the verse that says Mary rode a donkey to Bethlehem?
A: I was asked this question many years ago, and the person who asked was afraid that a verse had gone missing from the Bible. Actually, something—many things—have been added to the Bible by Christian imagination.

Most accounts in the Bible are told in compact, efficient ways. The gaps and lack of detail that result have made many Christians curious to know more and they added details that have become so common that many people believe they are in the Bible. Nowhere is that more true than the Christmas Gospel. Luke does not say, or even hint, that Mary rode a donkey to Bethlehem, but it is impossible to find a depiction of the Holy Family on the road where she isn't seated on one. Or take Luke 2:7, which reports that Mary "gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn." Out of that one verse, Christians imagined that Jesus was born in a stable, that a heartless innkeeper had denied them room, that the birth occurred at midnight and that Mary and Joseph were all alone, except for all the kind-looking animals around them. None of those details are in Luke. They were all added by curious Christians trying to imagine the scene.

These imaginative additions are mostly harmless. Some may actually be accurate, while others are surely not. It only becomes a problem when tradition begins to obscure what the Bible actually says. If the way we have always heard the story convinces us that our Bibles are incomplete, then imagination has become more important than the text, and that is a problem. So, read the Christmas Gospel (in Luke and Matthew) and compare what is actually there to how the story is usually told. You *may* be surprised, but you will *certainly* be blessed!

Important Dates

Wednesday Advent Services

Wed. Nov. 30 - Wed. Dec. 21 at 6:30 p.m.

(We will kick off the first Advent service with the annual Chili/Soup Cook-Off. Dust off your favorite winter recipe and get ready to make a batch to share!)

Children's Christmas Program
Sunday, December 18 at both 10:10 services

Christmas Eve Services:
2:00 Family Worship
4:00 Two simultaneous Candlelight Worship Services in the Sanctuary and the Foundation
6:00 Candlelight Worship
11:00 Candlelight Worship with Holy Communion

Christmas Day:
10:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion



Thank you for Meeting Hunger Needs!

By the time you read this we will be wrapping up our November Mission Fundraising. We do not have totals yet but watch your bulletins for updates on final numbers.

35% of the special mission offerings given will go through Samaritan's Purse to address desperate hunger facing some 800,000 people in Haiti who have been devastated by Hurricane Matthew.

30% will be divided between our mission partners in Madagascar and Ethiopia to be designated for emergency situations that threaten life itself.

35% will stay within this community and will be distributed through Common Cup Ministries.



Once again, you filled and drowned the boat with food for the McLeod County Food Shelf. There were 1,061 pounds of food received and delivered on November 21.

Your generosity will be a blessing to many.

What Can a Van Do? How Can We Help?

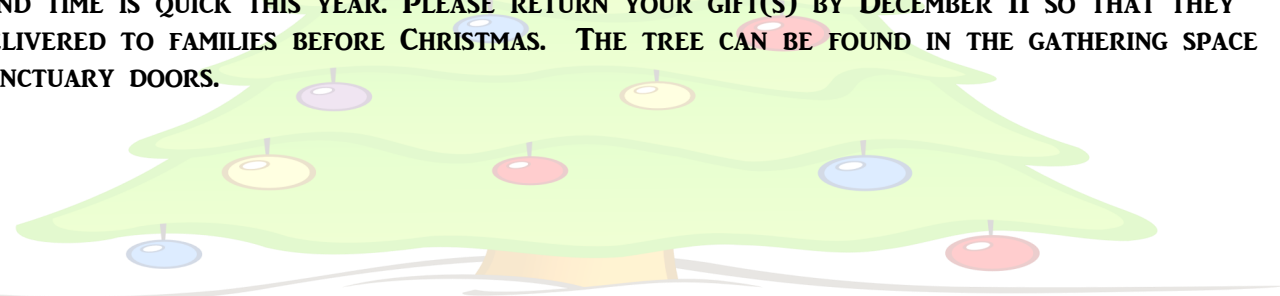
We stand with the Tabor Congregation in Ethiopia in sending out 54 evangelists all across that country. These evangelists need support and training, so leaders at Tabor need to go to them. With long distances, terrible roads, and public transportation nearly non-existent, leaders there are seeking our Augustana District to give funds to match their gifts to purchase a heavy duty used van.



Please pick up an envelope from one of the two displays outside the sanctuary or near the office entrance. Many of you, generously offering a gift of \$5.00, \$10.00, \$25.00, \$50.00, or \$100, will lead the way for our district to meet this critical need. Please return envelopes by December 15.

GIVING TREE

AGAIN THIS YEAR, MEMBERS OF FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH WILL BE PROVIDING GIFTS FOR NEEDY CHILDREN IN MCLEOD COUNTY. BY THE TIME YOU RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER, THE GIVING TREE SHOULD BE UP. THE TREE HAS TAGS WITH THE AGE, SIZE OF CLOTHING OR ITEM DESIRED PRINTED ON THEM. SIMPLY TAKE A TAG, PURCHASE THE ITEM AND RETURN THE UNWRAPPED GIFT WITH THE TAG ATTACHED. THE TURNAROUND TIME IS QUICK THIS YEAR. PLEASE RETURN YOUR GIFT(S) BY DECEMBER 11 SO THAT THEY CAN BE DELIVERED TO FAMILIES BEFORE CHRISTMAS. THE TREE CAN BE FOUND IN THE GATHERING SPACE BY THE SANCTUARY DOORS.



Faith Lutheran Church Women (FLCW)

Thank you to everyone who attended our FLCW Christmas Tea and helped decide where to disperse the funds we raised in 2016. We love using these monies for God's glory.

A special thank you to everyone who served as funeral coordinators this past year. We appreciate your willingness to serve in this important ministry.

Mugs and Muffins and the FLCW are planning a special Saturday on January 21 that will include the usual format plus some relaxing spa features & a salad lunch. What a wonderful way to melt away those winter blues!

Plans are in progress for the 2017 Rummage Sale. There will be some exciting new changes this year including outdoor things in the garage and a bistro serving food while you shop. As you find things you no longer need or want, start a pile and save it up for the sale coming up in April 2017!



Mugs and Muffins

On Saturday, December 17 at 9:30 a.m., the Mugs and Muffins organizers have a special Christmas surprise in store for you. Bring a mug, bring a friend as you find a little peace and pampering in the midst of the busy Christmas Season.

Breakfast and Bibles

Saturday, December 10 at 8 a.m. will be the next opportunity for the men of Faith to gather and dig into some breakfast goodies and the Word. This event is open to men of all ages. Bring a Bible and come ready to connect with other godly men with none of that girly decoration stuff!



MEN'S GROUP



Christmas Caroling

Do you like to sing? (Note that I did not ask "Are you a good singer!") The past few years Faith Lutheran Church members have gone out to visit members who have become shut-in and cannot get out for Christmas. This group of visitors brings familiar Christmas carols to them where they are. This year's caroling will be on Sunday, December 11. Meet at Faith at 4 p.m. to be assigned to a group and get a list of people and places to visit. This is an outreach that is appreciated by those visited each year. Will you be a part of sharing Christmas with your brothers and sisters in this way this year?

JOY

The end-of-year offering called *Joy to the World* has become an important element in the life of Faith Lutheran. It has inspired amazing generosity over the last several years. That, in turn, has been a tremendous blessing to Faith's ministry. It has been a major factor in turning around the financial health of the church. *Thank you* for your great generosity in the past.



TO THE WORLD!

Faith's leaders count on this year-end outpouring to be able to meet all of our ministry commitments, but we never, ever want to take it for granted. Each year, we hope and pray for your continued investment in the work that God is doing in and through this congregation. In December, we will present a little twist on the traditional *Joy to the World* appeal, involving some marvelous opportunities to further Faith's ministry and financial health. Watch and listen for more information about how to give your Christmas gift to the church.

Thrivent Choice® makes a meaningful impact

Directing Choice Dollars® can help support Faith Lutheran Church. Think of the impact you—along with other eligible Thrivent members—can help make by choosing Choice Dollars® to go to Faith. The grant funding we receive from Thrivent Financial through this program can help Faith in many different ways. So far this year, Thrivent members have donated \$7,574.00 to Faith through this program.

Directing Choice Dollars is easy. Simply go to Thrivent.com/thriventchoice to learn more and find program terms and conditions. Or call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt. Together, we can do even more to help strengthen communities and change lives.



Digging Deeper Options

*Pick a class and plug in. Dig a little deeper into your faith and see how you can grow!
These classes run Sundays from November 27 - December 18 at 9:15 a.m.*

WHEN GOD GIVES SPECIAL CARE

During times of suffering one can feel as if God has abandoned us. This class will draw on some of the letters of spiritual counsel that Martin Luther wrote to his friends and colleagues, showing how God actually has special grace for His suffering children.

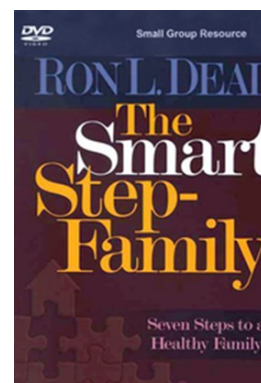
- God's comfort for the sick and dying (Nov. 27)
- God's consolation for the bereaved (Dec. 4)
- Grace for the anxious and despondent (Dec. 11)
- God's care for "Caregivers" (Dec. 18)

A MARTIN LUTHER CHRISTMAS

Martin Luther loved the Christmas Gospel, not for sentimental reasons, but for its profound theological truth. He preached many sermons at Christmas and wrote often about Jesus' birth. Come and explore some of Luther's beautiful reflections on the good news of Christmas. This class is another part of our Reformation track in Digging Deeper as we celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.



THE SMART STEP-FAMILY



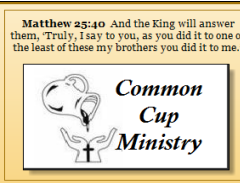
This DVD series is back. Through it, you can discover key steps to building a healthy stepfamily with expert Ron Deal. Through these sessions, you'll learn useable solutions for everyday living and glean valuable insight and practical tips for raising your step-family the smart - not hard - way. Helpful for single parents, especially those considering remarriage, those already in a step-family household and even those who just want a better understanding of your extended family members who may be in a step household. This is part 1 of an 8 week series that will continue in January.

Sundays at Faith Lutheran Church:

- 8:00 a.m. First Word (Traditional Service)**
- 9:05 a.m. Sunday School for Pre-K - 6th Grade**
- 9:15 a.m. Confirmation (7th & 8th Grade)**
and Adult Digging Deeper Classes
- 10:10 a.m. Sanctuary Service**
(Contemporary Service in the Sanctuary)
- 10:10 a.m. Foundation Service**
(Contemporary Service in a contemporary setting)

For the youngest members:

Faith Seeds - a time during each service when children of all ages are invited up front for a lesson geared towards them. Parents and "big kids" are invited too!
Sprouts - after Faith Seeds, during the 10:10 services, children ages 3-6 can leave for a short hands-on lesson. They will return to their parents after the sermon.



Hutchinson
 105 Second Avenue SW Suite #2
 Hutchinson, MN 55350
 320-587-2213
 Website: www.common-cup.org

Glencoe
 925 13th Street East
 Glencoe, MN 55336
 320-864-5511

Community Meal @ FLC
 Sunday,
 December 4
 4-6 p.m.

THANK YOU to all who so faithfully give to HungerFree McLeod's **Backpack Program**, which provides weekend food for students on the free/reduced program in McLeod County schools. Without your help, we would not be able to serve the 200 children in grades K-3 that benefit from this program. If you or a group you know would like to spend a few hours packing bags, call the CCM office and sign up. It really is a fun time.

Time to start planning your **Christmas meal**, so why not get it through **Fare for All**. For **\$30**, you will get a ham and most of the fixings for a full meal, including dessert. December distribution takes place on **Thursday, December 22**, at the CCM Office between **4:30 and 5:30 p.m.** Place your order by **Friday, December 16** at the CCM office.



December Seniors' Scene

When I was a child, my mother would sometimes look in the refrigerator and notice a variety of leftovers. Then she'd announce, "Tonight we're having 'Hodge Podge' soup", or maybe hash. Usually, we kids turned up our noses, but smiled as we approached the table. It actually smelled quite good; and it tasted good as well. We actually anticipated the surprise of it all.

Well...we're having "**Hodge Podge**" for **SENIORS' POTLUCK** this month. The steering committee had so much they wanted to present that we put it all together. None of it is "leftovers." It should be of fresh interest and mission. So here's the list:

We'll have reports from those who attended the Lutheran Art exhibit on Dec. 4, so the 500th anniversary of the Reformation will be front and center. We'll also highlight a couple of rather silent missions of this congregation: Befriender visitors, and our fairly new Caregivers support group. We want you to know about these opportunities, because they are of great help and support in stressful times.

Yes, we'll have a Christmas theme to it all. We'll be singing some Christmas carols, and...we just might have a Christmas surprise, as we often do.

Come to **SENIORS' POTLUCK** meeting on **Thursday, December 8** (yes, it's earlier in the month than usual), beginning with potluck dinner at **12:00 noon**. Be ready for a preview of Christmas, and Christian ministry-"**Hodge Podge!**" Bring a friend. It should be fun and heart-warming.



THANK YOU **Operation Christmas Child, 2016**

This has been a banner year for Operation Christmas Child.

We thank God, and we thank you, as

we pray the name of Jesus will shine forth in new people and places. God's saving love in Jesus will certainly grasp hearts of children and families around the world through your efforts. After three wonderful packing sessions, we are proud to report, that 218 boxes were packed and shipped out.

There were a variety of ways to participate in this mission effort. Some of you brought completed boxes, ready to send. Many brought items to pack. Others brought checks or cash for shipping. Many of you did the actual packing. However you pitched in, thank you! Thank you!

Now, please follow those boxes with prayers that God will use them for His glory, especially to bring people to the knowledge of His Son Jesus as their Savior. Ask God to bless the teachers and students in "The Greatest Journey," the 12-session class proclaiming salvation through Jesus and new life in God. Each box recipient is invited to that class, and nearly 50% of those attending do come to faith in Christ.

We know you were not seeking personal credit in helping with Operation Christmas Child. But we do want to express our gratitude to Linda Nyman, who prepared the 2 narthex displays; to Patsy Amundson, who facilitated Thrivent's involvement with cash subsidies, and to all who gave leadership, and who came to the three packing sessions. To you, the silent ones, who brought boxes, packing items, and cash, we are so grateful!

God bless you as you search for your next opportunity to pour forth God's love in mission for Christ Jesus.

Help us to keep YOU plugged in . . . Please contact the office:

- > If you have cancelled your landline in the past year
- > If you have moved in the past year
- > If you want to receive the weekly or monthly newsletters via email

If you are a snowbird, there are a number of ways to stay in touch with FLC while you are gone.



- 1) Please contact the office with the dates that you will be away and your address change
- 2) follow us on Facebook
- 3) check in weekly on the FLC website for the weekly sermons, weekly bulletins, monthly newsletters, council minutes and the latest news
- 4) sign-up for the weekly E-news e-mail.

Contact Wendy Magruder at wendym@faithlc.com or 234-8403 for more information or to make changes.



Thoughts and Prayers

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

- Lance Corporal Colin Bos (Marines, Quantico, VA - son of Dawn Bos)
- Sgt. Jason Gaulke (El Paso, TX - nephew of Alice Fransen)
- Andrew Hantge (Navy, Virginia Beach, VA - son of Marsha Schmit and Robert Hantge)
- Mason Rutledge (Navy, Norfolk, VA - son of Lenny and Patti Rutledge)
- SFC Guy Sing (Korea - nephew of Tony Sing & cousin of Darlene Karg)
- Col. Rob Skaar (Duluth Air National Guard - son of Dave & Marian Skaar)
- LTJG Brett Stadsklev (Navy, Norfolk, VA - son-in-law of Judy and Tom Felber)
- Nathan Thunstrom (Marines, San Diego, CA - son of Andy & Shelly Hedin and grandson of Dennis & Barb Hedin)



Remember our Faith members in nursing homes & health care centers

Cedar Crest – Cosmos

Patricia Lambert

Cedar Crest – Silver Lake

Nadine Dalin

Cokato Manor

Patricia Paulson

Cottagewood (Buffalo)

Eleanor Lack

Dassel Lakeside

Doris Betker

Glencoe Nursing Home

Kathryn Wendlandt

Harmony River

Millie Blake

James Boll

Valerie Fimon

Ruth Hackbarth

Dave & Betty Jensen

Joanne Olesen

Harold Sanken

Charlie & Harriet Thor

Prairie Senior Cottages

Pat Fimon

Delores Saar

Prairie View (Hector)

Jerome Lindquist

Woodstone

Deloris Askew

Don Fitzgerald

Betty Garberich

Ruth McKay

Lucille Yukel

Faith Lutheran Church
335 Main Street South
Hutchinson, Minnesota 55350

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit
US POSTAGEPAID
Hutchinson MN
Permit No 5

Put mailing label here

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, Director of Youth & Family Ministry	gladysb@faithlc.com
Josiah Frusti, Director of Children & Family Ministry	josiahf@faithlc.com
Looking for a Director of Music and Worship	
Wendy Magruder, Administrative Assistant	wendym@faithlc.com
Diane Pedersen, Finance Coordinator	dianep@faithlc.com
Keith Lange, Maintenance	
Jim Brodd, Custodial Services Coordinator	brodd@hutchtel.net



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:

- F**OLLOW JESUS
- A**NNOUNCE THE GOSPEL
- I**NVITE ALL PEOPLE
- T**EACH CHRISTIAN TRUTH
- H**ELP ALL WHO ARE IN NEED