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Pastor’s Page

One famous event out of Greek legend is the account of the Trojan Horse. Unable to conquer the city of Troy, soldiers from Athens devised a ruse to get inside the city walls. They built a huge wooden horse, then had one of their men bring it into Troy as a supposed peace offering from the Athenian army. The horse, however, was hollow and filled with Athenian soldiers. As soon as the horse was inside the gates of Troy, they burst out, caught the shocked citizens of Troy entirely by surprise and conquered the city.

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas again, the story of the Trojan Horse provides one helpful way to understand Jesus’ birth. Just as the Trojan Horse appeared peaceful and harmless, so the infant Jesus, lying in the manger, could not be sweeter or less threatening. Just as the Trojan Horse hid fierce warriors within it, however, so, too, the very Son of God dwelt in the infant Jesus and had come to do battle against sin, death and the devil. As the soldiers of Athens burst out in surprise, so Jesus’ earthly ministry was a shock to those who were sure they knew God’s will and how it would work. As the ruse of the Trojan Horse ensured victory for the Athenians, so God’s surreptitious entrance into creation assured the defeat of all the forces of evil.

On the other hand, the one enormous difference between the Trojan Horse and Christmas comes at the end of each account. The Athenian soldiers sneaked into Troy in order to kill and conquer. God’s Son sneaked into the world in Jesus to die on the cross as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. The power of Christ was not to dominate, but to serve. His reign is not one of oppression, but love. The surprise with Jesus is not that he outwitted sinners, but that the sheer grace He bestowed is beyond all human understanding.

As you come again to kneel at the manger this year, relish the surprise, the divine cleverness, the unexpected reality of the beautiful little child lying in the manger. For in Him rests all the power of God, unassumingly entering into this sinful world in order to battle not against us, but for us, to overcome our own sin and unbelief. This newborn Jesus is God’s divine, gracious version of a Trojan Horse, whose humble entrance into this world means certain victory for us!

Grace and peace to you,
Pastor Scott Grorud



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.

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Special Holiday Opportunities

Advent Schedule

Wednesday, December 4

5:00 p.m. Soup/Chili Supper

6:30 p.m. Advent Service: Holden Evening Service

Wednesday, December 11

6:30 p.m. Advent Service: with Glencoe Strings

Wednesday, December 18

5:00 p.m. Supper for Sunday School Families

6:30 p.m. Advent Service: Sunday School Children’s Christmas Program



Christmas Schedule

Tuesday, December 24 - Christmas Eve

2 p.m. Family Christmas Service

4:00 p.m. Christmas Worship in the Sanctuary

4:00 p.m. Christmas Worship in the Foundation

6:00 p.m. Christmas Worship in the Sanctuary

11:00 p.m. Christmas Worship
with Holy Communion

Wednesday, December 25 - Christmas Day

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



Poinsettia Orders

You will have the opportunity again this year to purchase a poinsettia to help decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. The cost is \$11 and orders in honor or in memory of someone are due into the church office by Monday, December 16. You are welcome to take a poinsettia home with you after the 10 a.m. worship service on Christmas morning or anytime that following week. Order forms can be found in your bulletin or in the church office.

Christmas Caroling

Mark your calendar and plan to share the joy of Christmas with some of the homebound members of Faith by joining our Christmas caroling on Sunday afternoon, December 15. Watch your bulletin for the exact time to be announced. This event is for all ages and all singing abilities.



Giving Tree

We are once again providing toys for children in need this Christmas through the McLeod County Christmas Project. The Giving Trees will be up in the gathering space outside the Sanctuary and in the Foundation Space. Instructions will be printed and posted on the trees. The UNWRAPPED gifts will be due back by December 9 for pickup. Please consider giving to a child in need this Christmas!



FLCW Christmas Tea

The excitement is building for the Christmas Tea on Saturday, December, 4, from 10:30-1:30. There will be theme decorated tables, a delicious lunch, and a program about Peru. Tickets are available in the church office beginning December 1, and before and after services on December 1 and 8. This is a great way to get into the Christmas spirit with your family and friends.



Greetings Faith Lutheran!

Thanksgiving and Christmas are right around the corner! I can't wait to show you what all we have been working on. From Faith Singers to our Confirmation Bells slated to play for one of our Advent Services, a lot is going on at Faith Lutheran. More recently, I hope some of you have noticed our fantastic new keyboard in the Foundation that arrived just before Reformation Sunday. There will be other modifications that can be made to our Foundation space once we have more ideas as to what needs to be updated. A special thanks goes to Carl Horton for donating his outdoor speaker equipment! This equipment will go towards improving our outdoor service so thank you Carl! Thanks for all of your support and talk to me if you have any interest in getting involved!

God's peace to you all,
Will

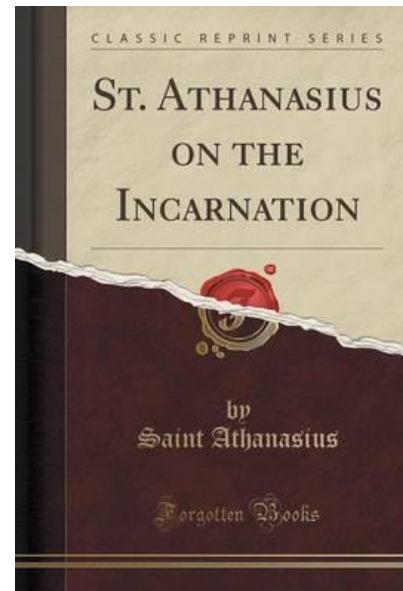


“Faith Seeks Understanding”

Continuing Learning Opportunities for Adults

On the Incarnation

“Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! Hail the incarnate deity!” Those words from a beloved Christmas carol declare the good news of the Incarnation, that God the Son became human in Jesus of Nazareth. But how exactly did that work, why did it happen and what does it mean? This Digging Deeper class will consider a classic little book called *On the Incarnation* by the early church father Athanasius to explore the great miracle at the heart of Christmas. Meeting in the Faith Center starting December 1 at 9:15 a.m.



The Four Advent Words

The Advent Wreath has a variety of different meanings. In a tradition we have used at Faith, the four candles represent prophets, Bethlehem, shepherds, and angels. However, another tradition holds that the candles represent hope, peace, joy, and love. Join Pastor Dave as we dive into a Biblical word study around each of these words and their significance for the season of Advent. Meeting in the office conference room beginning December 1 at 9:15 a.m.

Bibleopoly Challenge Celebration

The end is near, Bibleopoly 2019 is almost over! Keep reading and get a few more dots on the board before the end of the year.

Plan now to attend the Bibleopoly Challenge Celebration on Tuesday, January 14, beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the Faith Center.

Supper will be served and the celebration will be one to remember. To top it off, you will be the first to see the new 2020 reading plan.

Whether you read just a book or two, or you completed the whole Bible in 2019, we hope to see you there!



Seniors’ Scene

We have only one more **Seniors’ Potluck** gathering before 2019 bites the dust, and 2020 takes the stage. Can you believe it? 2020 is the year of two major things for us as members of Faith Lutheran Church:

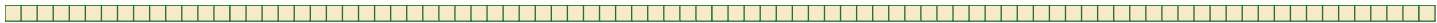
- 1. It is the year of our 150th anniversary of our congregation. Be ready for many ways our congregation will celebrate the ways God has led us through a century and a half of life together. The celebration committee is working hard on making that a memorable time of gratitude for God’s goodness, and recognizing the people, both pastors and lay, He has used to bring Jesus and His saving love into their lives. We hope reliving some of our history will energize us to find new ways to grow and share our faith. This world desperately needs Jesus!
- 2. The 150th anniversary is a great time to see our mortgage papers burned, signifying that we have paid it up completely. We have been so grateful for the progress we have made to date, and look forward to the time when the bill says “zero due.” There is excitement about that, but there also needs to be planning. How will you and I enter into the process? How much can we “stretch” our gift amounts, so that they follow the Biblical concept of “sacrificial?”

When I was living in Hector during my high school years, I recall an incident when a member told my dad, “*Our family could really use a newer car. The old one is suffering from ‘automobile arthritis.’ But, we’re going to have to find ways to make it last, because our church really needs that Sunday School building.*” That’s sacrificial giving! It’s what makes the church special and feeds the idea that ordinary people, fed by the Spirit, can do the impossible.

As for our **Seniors’ Potluck** Christmas meeting—it takes place earlier in the month, on **Thursday, December 12**. As always, we’ll begin with our potluck dinner. So bring your Christmas specialties, or just the regular stuff you like, and we’ll share it together first. Then we’ll enjoy together a musical treat prepared by Will Holt (and guests) and Gladys Pilgrim, a member of our steering committee. The goal is to help build the true spirit of Christmas, centered in Jesus Christ, as a season that uplifts and inspires us, making us want to share the good news of the birth of Jesus, who went on to die for us so we might live for Him!



See you there! Bring a friend, perhaps someone new.



Operation Christmas Child Boxes Thank You!



Thank you to everyone who supported Operation Christmas Child by donating items for the boxes and helping pack boxes! Your dedication to this program completed 136 boxes to be shipped off to make Christmas extra special for 136 children. Thank you very much for supporting this ministry!



Q: In my Bibleopoly reading, I notice that the Old Testament calls Jerusalem the City of David, but the Christmas angel in Luke 2 says Bethlehem is the City of David. Which is it?

A: That is a subtle, but really intriguing note in Luke’s account of Christmas. King David was born and raised in Bethlehem, but once he became king, he was not linked much with his birthplace. Instead, because he conquered Jerusalem, the city was seen as his personal property. He then made it the political and religious capital of Israel, so that “the City of David” always referred to Jerusalem.

Why then did the angels in Luke 2 refer to Bethlehem as the City of David? Luke does not explain, but it suggests that God did not want Jesus to be linked to the power structures and elite leaders of Jerusalem. Instead, he was a new king sent by God, just as God had plucked the shepherd boy David out of the pasture and made him king. It also suggests God’s disapproval of the religious leaders of Jerusalem, a critique that makes more sense as the life of Jesus unfolds, and it is those very leaders who opposed him the most and eventually engineered his crucifixion.



Stewardship Snapshot

As of mid-November, when this note was written, Faith Lutheran needed to receive nearly \$200,000 in offerings by December 31 in order to break even for the year. By the time you read this, we hope and pray that number will be considerably smaller! We will provide regular updates about it in church. Please give according to how God has blessed you to help our congregation end the year in a strong financial position. *Thank You!*



Please note that the deadline for contributions to Faith Lutheran Church to be included on your 2019 tax return will be Tuesday, December 31, by 12 noon.



Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee has begun making calls to find people willing to serve on Ministry Teams and the Church Council. If you receive a message from this team, please prayerfully consider how you could serve Faith Lutheran in this way. Once you have given it consideration, please call the team back even if you decide not to accept a position so they know to continue calling. If you are interested in joining a team or the council and don’t receive a call, feel free to call the office and let any staff member know of your interest.



How Might We Foster Our Partners at Tabor by Being Witnesses “to the Ends of the Earth”?



The Augustana District, of which FLC is a member congregation, began our partnership with the Tabor Congregation in Hawassa, Ethiopia with two driving principles:
We will partner with them to multiply their outreach witness and not to create dependency.
We will partner with this congregation driven by the Great Commission that seeks to live into the audacious goal of reaching the “ends of the earth” with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

We have multiplied their outreach over the past six years, as they have grown from sending out 25 evangelists to now 65 to 70. We are working with their leadership to address how to keep this a vibrant partnership while not creating dependency.

We also want to explore with them and others in Ethiopia if their outreach may be moving to what they see for them at this time to be “the ends of the earth.” One of their goals has been to bring the Good News of our Lord to the people of South Sudan. At present, 700,000 people from S. Sudan have been driven by violence into UN refugee camps in Ethiopia. The leaders of the Lutheran Church of S. Sudan are crying out: “Come and help us train witnesses to these refugees.” This is happening, and we may be able to multiply these efforts.

Faith Lutheran Church will, by God’s grace, give \$6,500 to this partnership in 2019. Your prayers are requested that we may continue as a leading congregation of the AD in such evangelical witness.



Blessing Box

For those of you who have been generously supporting the Blessing Box, thank you! As we enter the winter months we need to be careful with what we put in to box to prevent freezing. Canned goods and glass do not do well in the box. Some suggestions of things that will work well this time of year are: boxed cereal and oatmeal (especially individual packages), Mac & Cheese (family boxes and individual ones) potato mix, pudding mix, dry soup mix, rice, crackers, granola bars, cookies, hot chocolate, Ramon noodles, etc. Items can be dropped off in the office in the bin marked Blessing Box!



News from the New Hope Mission Society

Pastors Paul and Scott recently attended a meeting with one of New Hope’s partners. Dr. Christoph runs a mission agency that works with some 40 evangelists in 20 countries who are proclaiming the Gospel to Muslims. In the course of the conversation, he told us that his biggest challenge right now is having *so many converts*, as many as 150 being baptized each month, all of whom need to be nurtured in their new faith and incorporated into Christian churches. That is amazing and inspiring news of how the Holy Spirit is working to build God’s kingdom and draw all nations to Himself. Please pray for these new converts, those who are ministering to them, and the outreach efforts of Dr. Christoph and NHMS.

CONGRATULATIONS FAITH FAMILY!

We are about to enter into our 150th Anniversary Year!

A committee has been formed to steer us through the year, creating opportunities for us to celebrate a grand occasion for our Faith Family. Activities and programs will be held throughout the year to provide everyone a sense of belonging and pride with continuity to our mission and heritage, driving us forward with God's faithfulness.

More to come... BUT RIGHT NOW....

We are looking for any memorabilia, photos, invitations from the past 25 years, OR anything you have found from farther back that may not have been included in past collections. This could be from family fun days, Luther League, weddings, programs, confirmation, any Faith life events.

Please bring items to the church office, and LABEL anything you would like back. Anything sent electronically MUST be high quality, or it will not be able to be used.

Your FAITHFUL HELP to make this an extraordinary celebration is MOST humbly appreciated!

LOOK for MORE information coming in weekly bulletins and newsletters as dates are set and events are planned.

Under His Guidance, Your Celebration Team



Snow Birds

Are you headed south for the winter?
Do you want to stay in touch with Faith Lutheran and make sure you receive your tax statements while you are out of town?
If so, please make sure to contact the church office. Let us know when you are leaving, when you plan to return, your winter address and your e-mail address if you would like to receive your monthly newsletter and/or weekly announcements via e-mail.
Have a great time away and we will see you when you return.

Amazon Smile

- * Do you shop online through Amazon?
- * Did you know that Amazon Smile donates to non-profits?
- * Did you know that Faith Lutheran is a recipient of Amazon Smile donations?

If you shop through Amazon, you can choose Faith Lutheran as your non-profit preference. Just go to smile.Amazon.com to select the charity of your choice. Then, each time you make a purchase through Amazon, it will donate .05% of your purchase price to Faith.
As the holidays approach, if you are doing online shopping, keep Faith Lutheran in mind and set your Amazon account preference to Faith Lutheran.
If you have any questions, feel free to call the church office for more information.



Please Remember in Prayer



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

- Braiden Bjorge (Marines - grandson of Sandy Curtiss)
- Mike Bjorge (Air Force, Qatar - son-in-law of Sandy Curtis)
- Corporal Colin Bos (Marines, Camp Pendleton, CA - son of Dawn Bos)
- Sgt. Jason Gaulke (El Paso, TX - nephew of Alice Fransen)
- Petty Officer 3rd Class Mason Rutledge (Navy, Norfolk, VA - son of Lenny & Patti Rutledge)
- Pat Scharn (Air Force, Qatar - husband of Elizabeth)
- Col. Rob Skaar (Minneapolis/St. Paul Air National Guard - son of Dave & Marian Skaar)
- LT Brett Stadsklev (Navy, Corpus Christi, TX - son-in-law of Judy & Tom Felber)
- Corporal Nathan Thunstrom (Marines, Reserves - son of Andy & Shelly Hedin and grandson of Dennis & Barb Hedin)
- SPC Ryan Wersal (Army, Fort Meade, MD - son of Roger & Laurie Wersal)

Remember our Faith members in nursing homes & health care centers:

Birchwood House
Ardell Novotny

Cedar Crest – Silver Lake
Patricia Lambert
Bernice Vorbeck
Lucille Wehking

Dassel Lakeside
Doris Betker

Harmony River
Margaret Alrick
Myrt Bauer
Irene Christensen
Betty Jensen
Ruth Larson
Jerome Lindquist
Karol Nolte
Joanne Olesen
Jean Pittman
Doyle Thielman
Harriet Thor

Oaks
Marcella Brede
Arlyce Drahos
Beverly Kirchner
Ellsworth & Delores Lorentzen
Barb Ryan

Pines
Mayonne Martin

Prairie Senior Cottages
Pat Fimon
Charlie & Harriet Wixcey

Woodstone
Betty Garberich
Harold (Swede) Sandgren

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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

**Newsletter via
USPS or E-mail?**

Would you like to receive your monthly Faith Matters newsletter via e-mail? It saves the church postage and printing costs, and you get to see it in color every month! You can request a change to e-mailed newsletters by sending an e-mail to **office@faithlc.com** requesting the change.

