



# Faith Matters

## April 2022

### Pastors' Page



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Someone mentioned to me the other day that it was right at this time two years ago that the governor suddenly closed all the churches—along with schools, many businesses and other activities—because of the Covid-19 pandemic. That decision had a profound impact on the life of churches and its effects still linger.

During the shutdown, Faith Lutheran was richly blessed by an amazing level of giving and we were able to welcome people back to in-person worship fairly soon, especially at our outdoor services in the summer. Still, our overall worship attendance has not returned to anywhere near the levels it was before the pandemic. But that has only accelerated a longer-term trend of declining church attendance here.

That is very worrisome, because there is no substitute for gathering with other Christians in God's presence to receive the gifts of grace through Word and sacrament. We are well aware of how busy life is for many people today, but that only makes it more important to prioritize weekly worship, so that it does not get pushed out by other activities.

At a retreat for our ministry team and church council members recently, we suggested making the purpose and value of worship the central focus of this year at Faith Lutheran. As part of that, we are proposing to the family of Faith the goal of **Plus 1**.

**Plus 1** is a call for Faith's members to take on one of the following commitments:

- Attend *one* more worship service each month;
- Invite *one* person to come with you to a worship service;
- Take on *one* more point of engagement in or beyond Sunday services. Here are just a few examples:
  - Learn—Digging Deeper, Bible study, Faith Groups
  - Serve—usher, read, serve communion, help in children's ministry
  - Music—Faith Singers, Ringers of Faith, Messiah sing
  - Mission—New Hope Mission, Common Cup, Blessing Box
  - Fellowship—special events, Faith Family Fun, Seniors' Potluck

(Got all those covered already? Read further in this newsletter to find one more **Plus 1** option.)

In his final sermon at Faith Lutheran in 2008, Pastor Dave Christensen described our church as a sleeping giant with tremendous untapped potential. Even with all of the vital ministry that occurs here, that description still seems to fit in many ways. As we emerge from pandemic-formed habits, let's "wake up" one step at a time by taking on the **Plus 1** challenge!

Grace and peace,  
Pastor Scott Grorud



RADIO BROADCAST  
KDUZ 1260 AM  
SUNDAYS 8 A.M.

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

YOUTUBE SERVICE  
RECORDINGS



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## Stewardship Matters



Still looking for a good *Plus 1* option? As promised on page 1, here is another option. At Faith Lutheran's annual meeting in January, the congregation voted to increase the church's benevolence giving from 10% to 11% of General Fund offerings received. Faith's members might follow that example and increase their giving by 1%, as well. That, in turn, might allow the church to increase its benevolence to 12% next year! One step at a time...



## Faith Forward: 150K for the Next 150 → Greenhouse: Cultivating Faith



Faith Forward, the short fund-raising campaign that capped off the church's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, has received nearly \$80,000 in gifts! (The formal campaign has ended, but gifts to it are still welcome.)

Those funds are now being put to work under a new name, *Greenhouse: Cultivating Faith*. A Greenhouse task force has begun meeting in hopes of welcoming a small group of seminary students as early as this fall for a year-long internship experience at Faith Lutheran.



Greenhouse is a name used by two other Lutheran churches with similar programs (or plans). We hope to work in concert with them as we seek to prepare leaders for the Church. Watch for more information on the Greenhouse project in coming months.

## Lenten Schedule

Lent continues with Wednesday evening services at 6:30 p.m., through April 6

Mark your Calendar for Holy Week  
April 10-17

**Sunday**—Palm Sunday (regular service times) with children's palm processional and breakfast served between services

**Thursday**—Maundy Thursday services at 6:00 and 7:30 p.m., celebrating first communion with our sixth grade students

**Friday**—Joint Good Friday services, 12:00 noon at Christ the King and 6:30 p.m. at Faith Lutheran

**Easter Sunday**—Services with Holy Communion at 6:00, 8:00, 9:30 and 11:00 a.m.

## Handel's **MESSIAH**

SUNDAY | 05.01.22 | 3PM  
PERFORMED AT CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH  
CONCERT PRESENTED BY CHRIST THE KING  
AND FAITH LUTHERAN CHORAL ENSEMBLES





## **Help Provide for Refugees from Ukraine**

### **Working with Faith Lutheran's Mission Partners**

Ukrainian refugees are fleeing to many countries, including Germany and Estonia, where long-time mission partners of Faith Lutheran are preparing to give them shelter, food and

the love of Christ. These trustworthy, efficient missions are great avenues to provide aid directly to those who are suffering.

Katie Weikle, the daughter of Owen and Maria, and sister of Laura Stowman, Faith's Director of Children and Family Ministries, helps to lead a training center for Youth with a Mission in Nuremberg, Germany. She has asked for assistance in their efforts to house and feed refugees who have fled from Ukraine to Germany. The center has plans to welcome up to 40 of these desperate people and extend the love of Christ to them in countless other ways.



In Estonia, the Tartu Academy of Theology has begun an intensive effort to help meet the needs of some 15,000 refugees who have already fled to Estonia, with many more expected to follow. With funds from congregations like ours, TAT plans to house a small number of refugees at its Home of Hope and to help Estonian Lutheran churches do much more.

**To contribute to this urgent need through Faith Lutheran, please make checks out to Faith Lutheran and clearly mark your gift in the memo section for Ukrainian Refugees or give electronically through the Faith website (faithlc.com). All gifts received will be divided equally between YWAM-Nuremberg and the Tartu Academy's Home of Hope.**

### **Our Partners from Estonia Will Be with Us on Sunday, April 24**

Pastor Siimon Hamer looks forward to sharing with us their Spirit led efforts to bear witness to Jesus Christ through the Tartu Academy of Theology and its many ministries. This once overwhelmingly Lutheran country had its Christian population decimated through nearly 50 years of Soviet occupation beginning in World War Two. Their story is an exciting one, and it is one we at FLC are seeking to support and encourage against ongoing challenges.

Area churches will be invited to be with us here, Sunday, April 24, at 7 p.m. We also hope that his nephew, Mattias Hamer, will have an opportunity to meet with area youth. Those details are still being finalized.

### **Steven and Jen Freund Sharing Their Mission Time in Peru**

On April 3, during the Digging Deeper hour, Steven and Jen Freund will be with us to share their two year experience in Peru during the pandemic. They are thankful for the support from FLC and wish to take this time to thank us and update us on the challenges to witnessing to Christ in the South American country of Peru.



## **RUMMAGE SALE**



### **Your Help is Needed to make the FLCW Annual Rummage Sale a Success!**

The annual rummage sale is right around the corner, it will be held this year the week after Easter, April 21 and 22. Many hands are needed to help in a variety of ways to make this a successful event. This year, help will be needed in the following roles on these dates: \*Saturday, April 16, strong arms and backs are needed to help set up tables from 9 - 11 a.m. \*Monday -Wednesday, from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., donations can be dropped off and help will be needed to sort and set up sale items \*Thursday, the sale will run from 2-7 p.m. and Friday from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. And help will be needed to man the cash registers \*Saturday, April 23, help is needed to clean up from 9 a.m. - 12 noon.

#### ***How will you plug in and help make this a super sale this year?***

Please note that we can NOT accept televisions, computers or computer equipment, appliances, or electronic exercise equipment. Thank you!



## Seniors' Scene

What if we (Faith Lutheran Church, that is) had a mission fund that distributes anywhere from \$25,000 to \$40,000 every year to worthy causes, would you like to know about it? Did you know it exists? Do you realize it is a mission above what we usually do through our budgeted benevolence giving, so you don't have envelopes for it and are not asked to contribute to it periodically? So how does this fund arrive at such extensive amounts of money to give away? Finally, is there any practical way I can be a part of it without over taxing my spirit of generosity?



At our next **Seniors' Potluck meeting**, on **Thursday, April 28, 12:00 noon** you will hear Pastor Scott Grorud speak about our FLC Endowment Fund, and the ways it serves many people. Perhaps it's one of those things about which you've heard, but haven't spent much time understanding it's importance. Well...here's your opportunity. Come to be informed, ask questions and become so grateful for the fund, the board that makes benevolent decisions, and more.

Please come with a friend who might become a regular at Seniors' Potluck, and expand our Christ-centered fellowship. It will benefit them and us.

**See you at Seniors Potluck!!**



## Stump the Pastor

*Q: I just read Revelation 20:12-13, "Also another book was opened, the book of life. And the dead were judged according to their works, as recorded in the books....and all were judged according to what they had done." I thought we were saved by faith in Christ, not our works. What gives?*

*A: Those verses in Revelation do sound as if we are saved by our works or actions. That is confusing enough, but it is doubly confusing because in Revelation, the only "work" that really matters is clinging to faith in Christ alone as Lord and Savior. The central issue throughout the book is who really is Lord and, therefore, who deserves our trust.*

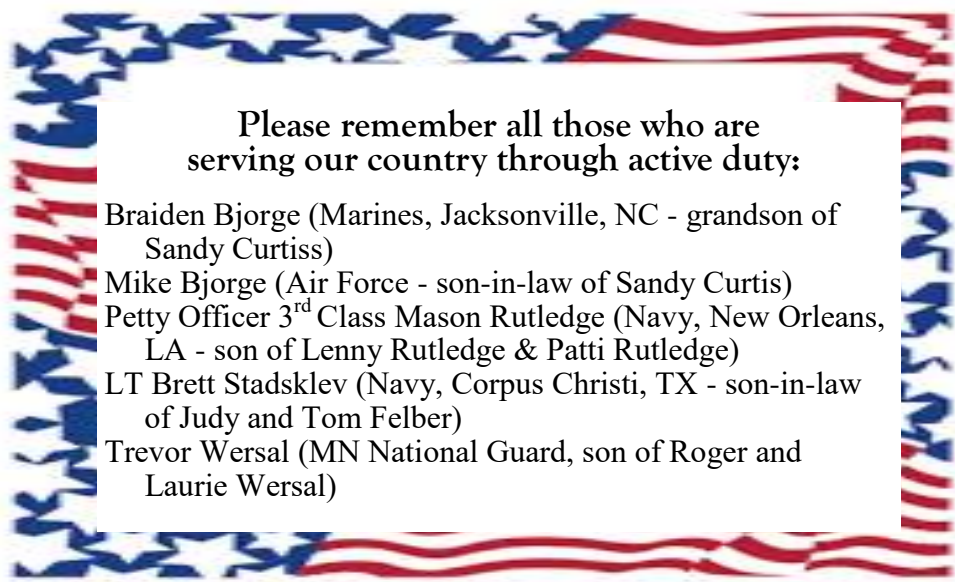
Revelation was written for Christians who confessed that Jesus is Lord. The problem was that he had long since ascended into heaven and had not yet returned. Meanwhile, some Christians were being persecuted, ostracized by their families or excluded from business dealings because of their faith. It is apparent that some of those believers were wavering in their faith or looking for ways to compromise with the culture around them, going along to get along.

At the same time, the Roman emperors were claiming ever more god-like status. They adopted the titles Savior and Lord for themselves, and demanded that everyone in the empire burn incense before their statues. To all appearances, the emperors had complete authority, but to admit that, even by implication, rejected Christ as Lord. That meant apostasy, abandoning the faith.

Into this fraught situation, every part of the vision in Revelation declares that Christ Jesus alone is Lord and Savior, and exhorts Christians to cling to him, even at the cost of their lives. It urges believers not to compromise on even the tiniest detail, such as burning a pinch of incense to the emperor with their fingers crossed behind their backs. All of Revelation's concern about Christians' *works* concerned diligently maintaining their *faith* that Christ alone is Lord.

That remains true for us, as well. Our culture offers plenty of alternative "lords" and "saviors" to compete with our faith in Christ. It is as vital for Christians now as it was for those in the Roman Empire that none of our thoughts, words or actions contradict or deny our Christian faith. But that is essential precisely because we are saved by Christ alone and *not* by our works.

# Please Remember in Prayer



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

Braiden Bjorge (Marines, Jacksonville, NC - grandson of Sandy Curtiss)  
 Mike Bjorge (Air Force - son-in-law of Sandy Curtis)  
 Petty Officer 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Mason Rutledge (Navy, New Orleans, LA - son of Lenny Rutledge & Patti Rutledge)  
 LT Brett Stadskev (Navy, Corpus Christi, TX - son-in-law of Judy and Tom Felber)  
 Trevor Wersal (MN National Guard, son of Roger and Laurie Wersal)



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

Cedar Crest – Silver Lake

Patricia Lambert  
 Lucille Wehking

Cokato Nursing Home

Clara Betker

Glenfields–Glencoe

Mae Sondergard

Grand Meadows–Glencoe

Rose Wagner

Harmony River

LeRoy Barrick  
 Ruth Larson

Ellsworth & Delores Lorentzen

Fran Lundeen  
 Karol Nolte  
 Jean Pittman  
 Harriet Thor

New Haven - Maple Plain

Ardell Novotny

Pines

Ralph and Phyllis Blum  
 Milt Lueneburg

Prairie Senior Cottages

Harold (Swede) Sandgren

Woodstone

Dodie Fenske  
 Betty Garberich  
 Geraldine (Gerry) Grams

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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:

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

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