



An FLC Wish List

It's that time of year! Andrea and I have sent texts to our children, once again asking them to provide us a Christmas "wish list" of things they'd like for gifts. Shopping for family becomes more difficult each year (and I think their wishes get more expensive each year, too!) There's an old Amy Grant Christmas song about her "grown-up Christmas list," in which she wishes for things like world peace. Mine would include things even less likely than world peace, like a Vikings Super Bowl win!

That said, as I was thinking about what to share with the congregation this December, I thought I'd share a little pastoral, Faith Lutheran Church, wish list. These are the things I'd love to see at Faith:

1. **Increasing Attendance.** It's been a good fall as far as our worship attendance goes. We're trending in the right direction. We had several Sundays of over 400 people in worship. That said, we really should have more! So my wish is that attendance would continue to increase. Some have visions of sugar plums; I have visions of 500 people in worship!
2. **Breaking even.** Last year was the first time in 13-years that we did not break even on our church budget. While giving has been stronger this year, we still have some ground to make up before year's end. I wish for a strong financial finish for Faith, so that we can start 2024 strong!
3. **New leadership.** Last year, despite a strong effort from our Nominating Team, we went into the Annual Meeting with several holes to fill in our elected positions. Our Nominating Committee is off to a strong start this year, and my wish is that they will have no trouble finding eager and called folks to step into leadership positions on the church council and ministry teams.

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LIVE TV BROADCAST
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ON CH. 7

PRE-RECORDED BROADCASTS
SUNDAYS 10 A.M.
AND 5 P.M.
TUESDAYS 5 P.M.
THURSDAYS 10 P.M.
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RADIO BROADCAST
SUNDAYS 8 A.M.
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4. **Advent Expectation and Christmas Joy.** The season of Advent is one of my favorites. It's a season of expectation and preparation. It's a season of beautiful worship services in beautiful worship spaces. My wish is for abundant participation in our Midweek Advent services and, of course, our Sunday services. I also wish that participation would spill over into packed Christmas services as we celebrate the joy that has come into the world!

Those are my Advent wishes! I hope it's not just wishful thinking! I believe that the Faith Family is more than up to it!

I am thankful that one thing I do not need to wish for is a God that is with me, because that wish is a reality! Join me in worshipping Immanuel, our God who is with us, throughout this Advent and Christmas season!

See you in church!

Pastor Dave

"Blessed to Be a Blessing" Still Moves Our Witness Forward Mission Reflection from Pastor Paul Knudson

This month we look forward to celebrating the marvelous, unique gift of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Our heavenly Father has blessed us with his beloved Son. In and through him our broken, self-driven lives are made new and renewed each day. In Christ, we are blessed to be a blessing. The greatest blessing we can give to one another and those in faraway places is simply to keep testifying to him in word and deed.

This past month has reminded me how our Lord's generosity and his sacrificial love, move us to pour out our lives to reflect that same generous and sacrificial love. Our giving at year's end, among other important things, allows us to stand with our partners in witness by funding their efforts.

We support witnesses who live on a tiny fraction of what we have as yearly incomes. Some of them are also facing life-and-death opposition to their witness. Through our year-end, generous, sacrificial offerings, we can bring encouragement to them beyond what we can imagine.

Locally, I recently witnessed local partners making sure the simple need for food was being met. Others were acting on our behalf to work with foster children and their families to bring healing and hope where desperation too often ruled. We heard again of the marvelous work of Common Cup Ministries. Some of us sang in a concert to support this ministry and hundreds came to give generously so that this witness could continue.

It's time for worship, kneeling before our newborn King above all kings. Blessed so miraculously, we go forth to bless others with a reflection of such sacrificial love.



Christmas Giving Trees

There will be trees located in the front entry gathering space and outside the sanctuary with gift suggestion tags on them. The Congregational Life Team is partnering with CHAP Ministries to provide Christmas gifts for senior citizens in need. Please take a card from the tree, purchase the gift and wrap it, write a note for your senior in the card and place it all under the tree for pickup before December 13!



Last month, four representative of the New Hope Mission Society (NHMS) traveled to India to visit Rev. K.K. Alavi and Dr. Abdul Messiah at the Bisharah mission. NHMS was founded by Faith Lutheran, which remains its main supporter. Ian McDonald from Faith Lutheran and Pastor Randy Freund, who served at Faith until 2013, were part of the group. The following is a reflection on their experience that Randy wrote:

A Beacon of Light: A Treasure of Hope

Deep in the heart of Kerala, India, lies a school, an outreach center, a place of refuge called Bishara. A delegation of four people (Ian McDonald, Zeke Hanson, Nate Hanson, and Randy Freund) visited this ministry, sponsored by the New Hope Mission Society, a vetted mission partner of the Augustana District. Although the Bishara center primarily provides outreach, service and training to Muslim converts, its reach of love and support extends further.



During this recent visit, we witnessed the scope of this outreach, participated in three dedication services, and filmed what will become a documentary on the life of Rev. K.K. Alavi.



The Outreach

A father of four sustained injuries from a fall that no longer allowed him to work. His family was destitute. Adding to this, their conversion to Christianity had consequences. The oldest son was kidnapped and drugged. The damage is permanent. They turned to this place called Bishara. With funds provided by the Tabshir Project, they received a Tuk-Tuk vehicle. This will allow them to transport goods and provide income for their family.

She was young and quiet, but present, serving during our meals. When asked about her story, we found that she was rescued from a red-light district, the victim of human trafficking.

At the microphone during a service celebration, one convert after another lined up to tell their stories of conversion and hope. The Center's Administrator, Dr. Abdul Messiah, translated their stories into English for us.

With dedication and attention, students listened and took copious notes as their instructor taught about early mission development in India.

A beautiful and long-anticipated building to house guests and those who need refuge was finally completed and ready for use.

Worship and meditation in the chapel three times a day provided a consistent rhythm for our time at Bishara.



The Dedications

During this amazing week, we were privileged to be a part of three dedications. A guest house with seven beautiful rooms and office space was dedicated, complete with the beautiful songs from the school choir. We dedicated the Tuk-Tuk for the family mentioned above. What a joy to hand over the keys and accompanying papers indicating their ownership. Bisharah's founder, Rev. K.K. Alavi, is no longer able to walk around the campus. A motorized wheelchair, funded by gifts from NHMS donors, was received during our stay and we also dedicated this wonderful gift. It will allow Rev. Alavi to attend chapel services and teach in spaces outside his home.

The Documentary Film

One main purpose of our trip was to capture film and interviews to document the amazing life and ministry of Rev. K.K. Alavi. Film producer and writer Zeke Hanson captured hours of interviews and thousands of images during the week. Sponsored and provided by New Hope Mission Society, Hanson will produce a short documentary film that will soon be available.

We were humbled and honored to witness this ministry. Bishara is truly a beacon of light and a treasure of hope deep in the heart of Kerala, India.

Pastor Randy Freund

STUMP THE PASTOR

Q: Why does God love us so much?

A: This is one of a long list of “why” questions that I have collected over the years, especially from confirmation students. The list is interesting first because it reflects our deep human desire to know the answer to every question we have, the explanation of every dilemma we face, the rationale for every action that occurs or the solution to every problem we confront. That thirst to know “why” drives human ingenuity and knowledge, but it also explains our need always to feel in control, even in our relationship with God, and why we struggle to live faith and not by sight.

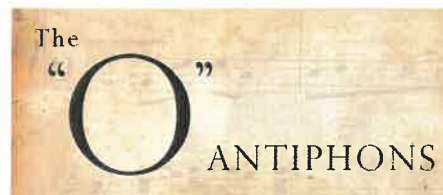
The “why” questions are also intriguing because the Bible almost never answers them. It tells what happened or will happen, it proclaims promises, it reflects the whole range of human experience, good or bad, but it reveals very little about God’s motives or rationales in His own actions or in what happens to others. In almost every case, the only answer to “Why did God do...” is “Because He did.”

That is the case with the question about God’s love. There is no logical reason why God should love incorrigible, rebellious sinners, but the resounding testimony of the Bible is that He does. As Christmas approaches with the stunning news of the Incarnation of God’s only-begotten Son, we can only marvel that “God *so loved the world* that He sent his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.” I have no idea *why* God would go to such lengths, but that He did is reason for jaw-dropping awe, trust and joy.



Advent Services

Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m.



“The Mystery of the Messiah” will be the theme of Faith Lutheran’s four mid-week Advent services this year. We will use a series of ancient Advent-Christmas prayers called “The Great ‘O’ Antiphons” to explore different Biblical titles for Jesus and what he was sent to do. These antiphons are the basis of the beloved hymn, “Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel,” which will be the theme hymn each week. Mid-week Advent worship is a renewing, reflective break from the busyness of holiday celebrations. Join us each Wednesday, November 29 – December 20, at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary.



Advent Cookies & Fellowship

You are invited to come for cookies, coffee, or hot chocolate **after the 6:30 p.m. Advent service on December 6** in the Faith Center. Join us!

Check out page seven for information about a special dinner before the December 13 service.

Stewardship

As this is written in late November, Faith Lutheran will need to receive about \$200,000 in offerings by December 31 in order to meet all of its mission commitments for the year. Although it is projected that the church will spend \$26,000 *less* than the budget approved at the 2023 annual meeting, offerings have not kept up with expenses through the year. Again this year, the congregation will be invited to give a “Joy to the World” offering during December to help close the gap and help Faith start out the new year in a strong financial position. **Thank You** for your faithful support of the ministry God has entrusted to us at Faith Lutheran Church!

Stewardship
A way of living

Intern Update

Hello Faith Lutheran Family!

It has been a while since our last intern update and a lot has happened since then, so I will do my best to try to give you a look into what has been going on either at the church or the Ansgar house.

First of all, we have been very blessed by the congregation of Faith Lutheran. The support that we receive is amazing and we are so very thankful. Whether that be from a gift card to buy some groceries, being invited over to someone's house, or even being prayed for. The community here at Faith Lutheran is so welcoming and caring.

As for what we have been doing as interns at Faith Lutheran between the last update and now, we have gone over pastoral ministry with Pastor Dave and Pastor Scott, children's ministry with Laura, pastoral care with Pastor Paulus, Marsha, and Jeff, missions with Pastor Paul, and just recently we went over finances with Sarah, custodial with Owen, and administration with Wendy. We have learned so much about Faith Lutheran and what it means to work in a church, and there is a lot more that we can learn.

This past month we were given the opportunity to join Pastor Dave at Mount Carmel Ministries in Alexandria for a week while he and Pastor Steve Olcott from Christ the King were teaching over the synoptic gospels for a gap year program there called "The Awaken Project" (T.A.P.), which belongs to the "Greenhouse Collective." We were able to attend the teaching sessions along with their three T.A.P. students. While we were there, we got to join T.A.P. in going to a program called Care Car where they offer volunteer work in fixing up some cars. We got to change a car's tire rims and put on new tires.

Living at the Ansgar house has also been great! Courtney and Trevor are both doing online classes during their time here and Trevor is also in the National Guard, which means once a month he will have drill for a week-end. Courtney and I have also recently been on the search for jobs to pay for things such as groceries and gas. Courtney has recently applied to be a Sub-Para for the school district and I have gone back to a gun warehouse where I used to work a year ago. It's in Plymouth so it is an hour's drive which can be quite a bit, but with how flexible they are with hours, it works for me.

It's been such a great experience to be interning here at Faith Lutheran. I love how much God is working here in the church and in the community of Hutchinson. I thank God for calling me here and allowing me this opportunity to serve His kingdom and to continue to learn from Him daily.

Blessings to you all and Happy Holidays!

Joshua Fernandez



*Women's
Ministry*



FLCW Christmas Luncheon

The 2023 FLCW Christmas Luncheon is set for Saturday, December 9, at 11 a.m. Doors open at 10:30. Lunch will be served on beautiful theme-decorated tables beginning at 11 and will be followed by a program featuring a devotion time, door prizes, and a special speaker. Invite your friends and family for a relaxing time of fellowship, food prepared by Chef Laurie Gelschus, and lots of fun. Tickets are on sale in the church office now for \$10 each and seating is limited, so get your tickets today!

Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Dates



Sunday School

Join the Sunday School children on December 17 at 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary as they perform the Christmas story through song and acting.



There is no Sunday School on Dec. 24 and 31.

B23

There will be no B23 this month as the Sunday School children will be getting ready for their Christmas Program.

56er's

There will be no 56er's on December 27.

Great Start

The next Great Start is December 6 from 7:45 a.m. - 10:20 a.m.

Happy Birthday Jesus Party is Sunday, December 10, from 4:30 p.m.—6:30 p.m.. Children from birth - 5th grade can celebrate Jesus' birthday with us as we do crafts, play games, have dinner and read a Christmas story. Parents can enjoy two hours of time for themselves. Registration can be found online.



Powerhouse

Friday, December 15 from 7 p.m.—10 p.m.. For any 6th—8th grade student. Cost is \$5 to attend and students should register by December 8. There will be games, pizza, snacks and more games! Registration is online.

Confirmation

Mentor Meeting—Wednesday, January 24 for our current Confirmands.

FLY Night

Faith Lutheran Youth night continues for all high school students on Wednesdays from 7:00—9:30 p.m.



FLYouth New Years Eve, Eve Party

High school students are invited to ring in the last day of 2023 together. Meet in the youth space on Saturday, December 30 from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. to celebrate together.

Ansgar Community (Young Adult Community)

This group of college and young adults will meet on Sunday nights at 7 p.m. at the Ansgar House. Contact Kristen with any questions.

Questions?

If you have questions about programs for children birth through 6th grade, please contact Laura Stowman, Director of Children and Family Ministry.

If you have questions about programs for 7th grade through young adult, please contact Kristen Durst, Director of Youth and Family Ministry.

Seniors' Scene

by Pastor Paulus Pilgrim

A special thanks to all who helped make the Operation Christmas Child boxes a success, and to those who rolled bandages. This was a long-time partnership with St Matthew's, Fernando. This year we were blessed and honored to have the young people from Meghan's Place join us with Mona Hjerpe leading them. Together we completed 103 boxes and rolled 86 bandages. Praise God! A special thanks to those who gave us extra hours of help arranging the items beforehand, and those who supplied us with Thrivent gift cards to purchase items, as well as financial contributions toward the cost of shipping the boxes.

Christmas and Christmas caroling are great partners. The message of Jesus, God's Son, coming to earth as a human being and living with us in our world of joys and hardships grabs our attention and interest. Jesus in the flesh gives us a greater understanding of Who God is and What He is like for us. He is Savior, Lord and daily companion in all our struggles. It's something to sing about.

So at our next **Seniors' Potluck**, we will sing Christmas carols. But where did they come from, and who wrote them? Each carol has an interesting history so Austin Willhite, our Music and Worship director, will tell us some of those rich backgrounds before leading us in singing them. That meeting is earlier in the month of December to avoid family Christmas events. We will meet on **Thursday, December 14, 12:00 noon starting with our usual potluck dinner**, then we will hear about **"CHRISTMAS CAROLS FROM AROUND THE WORLD."**

I hope we have good weather. You won't want to miss it. Bring a friend. "See you at Seniors' Potluck."



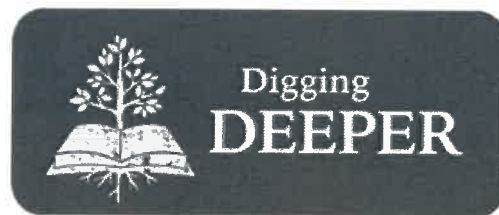
FACe (Cancer) Support Group

If you know someone who has cancer or is a caregiver of someone with cancer, please invite them to attend a "FACe" session on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month. E-mail Jeff at jeffa@faithlc.com for more information.

"Faith Seeks Understanding"

Continuing Learning Opportunities for Adults

Digging Deeper sessions are held between services on Sunday mornings at 9:15 a.m. A variety of topics are offered throughout the year. Continue to watch *Faith Matters* and Sunday bulletin announcements for the current opportunities and locations.



The Prophesied Christ—This four-week class will consider some of the key Old Testament prophecies that pointed to Jesus as the Savior of the world. Meeting in the Faith Center with Pastor Scott Grorud.

The Advent Words—Join Pastor Dave Wollan as we examine four important Advent words, as presented by The Bible Project. We will view and discuss the Bible Project videos as they deepen our understanding of the Advent concepts of hope, peace, joy, and love.



*Find more information and schedule updates
on our Website at Faithlc.com and Facebook Page!*

Come and Dine So Bells Can Shine

(Music Fundraiser for Handbell Repair and Maintenance)

You are invited to join the Ringers of Faith and the Worship and Music Ministry team for an evening featuring a candlelight dinner, Christmas music sung by special guests, followed by the third Advent worship service led by the Ringers of Faith. Tickets are available now in the church office and will be sold before and after worship on December 3. Come support the Ringers of Faith as we raise money for bell repair and maintenance.

Where: Faith Lutheran Church, Faith Center

When: Wednesday, December 13. Doors open at 4:30 p.m., dinner will be served at 5:00 p.m., and worship starts at 6:30 p.m.



Tickets are available in the church office. Deadline to purchase tickets is Wednesday, December 6. Adult \$20 and tickets for children 10 and under are \$10. Seating is limited for this special event, so get your tickets right away.

Menu: Roast beef with gravy, garlic mashed potatoes, cooked vegetable, dinner roll, spring salad, and dessert.

Contact Austin Willhite with any questions austinw@faithlc.com



FLOWERS

2024 Radio and Flower Sponsorship Boards

If you would like to sponsor a radio broadcast or purchase flowers for the altar in honor of or in memory of someone in the coming year, the new sign-up boards are available. This year we have also added a board for flowers in the Foundation on the counter on the north end of the hallway. Thank you for your support through these opportunities.



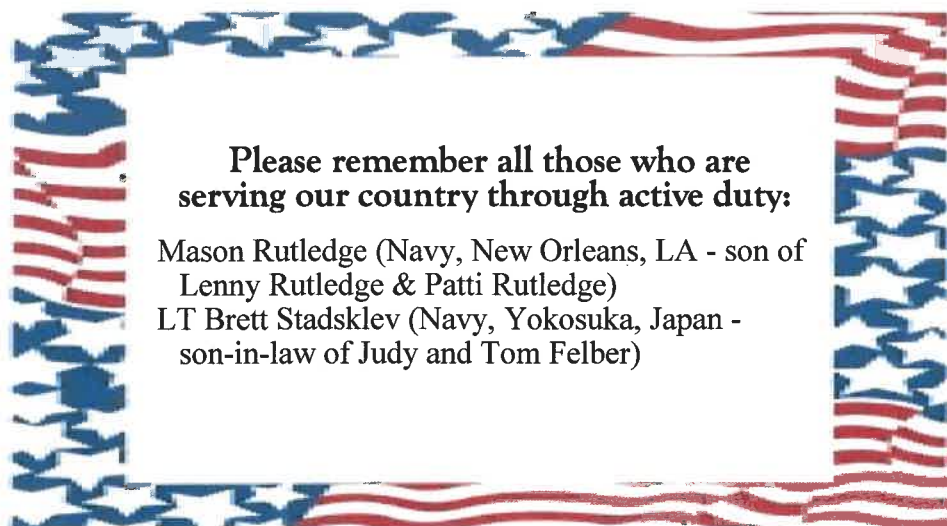
Nominating Committee

The nominating committee has started its annual task of calling to find members to serve on the church council and ministry teams. If you get a call, please prayerfully consider your response. If they leave you a message, please return the call, even if your answer is a "no." If you feel called to be a part of a ministry team, feel free to reach out to Pastor Scott Grorud or Pastor Dave Wollan. Thank you.

Phase II Building Committee (P2BC)

The P2BC has been meeting with architects each month, refining a plan for the new building. Watch for a presentation of the plan to the whole congregation, with an opportunity to respond, early in 2024!

Please Remember in Prayer



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

Mason Rutledge (Navy, New Orleans, LA - son of
Lenny Rutledge & Patti Rutledge)
LT Brett Stadsklev (Navy, Yokosuka, Japan -
son-in-law of Judy and Tom Felber)



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

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Clara Betker

Harmony River

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Phyllis Lamp

Jean Pittman

Rose Wagner

New Haven - Maple Plain

Ardell Novotny

Oaks

Phyllis Blum

Pines

Elaine Blade

Frances Olson

The Gardens-Winsted

Alice Poshek

Woodstone

Dodie Fenske

Cyndy Ollrich

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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





Rest in this Season

Here comes Jesus Christ, Here comes Jesus Christ right down Bethlehem lane! Those are the lyrics, right? Whoops! Maybe not. The Advent and Christmas Season are here. The hustle and bustle of this time of year always leaves me feeling chaotic and stressed. I have had many conversations with my youth about their jobs. I have several youth that work retail in Hutchinson and they have echoed to me how busy their stores are. People doing their shopping or decorating for the Christmas season have flooded the stores. This season that should be peaceful really just ends up being far more stressful than anything else.

I wanted to share some ideas of how to find rest in this season as we await our Savior's birth.

- Plan when you will be attending worship to celebrate Christmas. Faith Lutheran has many worship services on Christmas Eve and one on Christmas Day. Invite your extended family, too! In addition to worshipping on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, plan to attend the Advent worship services on Wednesday evenings. Worship is a place that you can find rest as you praise your Creator!
- Invest in family devotions. Some of my greatest childhood memories surrounded us discussing each week of Advent. We would have our wreath on our kitchen table, and we would light each candle and talk about the hope, joy, love, and faith that Advent brought to our lives through Jesus.
- With however many parties you have this season, I pray you find time to take family time. I have seen so many beautiful options for family movie nights, baking together, or game nights. I think back on my childhood and teenage years and I reflect more on the memories rather than the gifts.

If this season is hard for you because of hurtful memories or stress, I pray that you find refuge in the One who sent His Son to come as a baby to redeem us. You are loved and I pray that you know that!

Kristen Durst, Director of Youth and Family Ministries

Laura Stowman, Director of Children and Family Ministries