



Pastors' Page

C.S. Lewis wrote several fantasies that express core Christian truth in ways that would capture the imagination of his readers. The best-known of them are *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *The Screwtape Letters*, but he also wrote a science fiction trilogy for the same purpose. The three books in the trilogy form one larger story, but the third, *That Hideous Strength*, is generally deemed to be the best of them.

The plot of *That Hideous Strength* is too complicated to summarize here, but it portrays the dangers of a secular view of the world in which God is denied or ignored. Jane Studdock, the main female protagonist in the novel, has embraced that materialist view, assuming that it is livelier and closer to reality than any religious outlook, but she comes to discover that the opposite is true. Her secular view of the world is drab and conformist, while the spiritual riches of Christianity are dynamic and full of life, yet she struggles to make sense of that.

Toward the end of the book, Jane tries to process her experiences with her mentor, Ransom, who is the main character in all three novels. As he explains the spiritual realm which is becoming real in her life, Jane finally asks, "You mean I shall have to become a Christian?" Ransom replies, "It looks like it."

I love that snippet of conversation, because of how it portrays Christianity as simply true, the only place where a person can find true life and meaning, yet it does so without any triumphalism or arrogance. It is not an aggressive argument to sell Christianity in a idealistically favorable light, but passively, almost reluctantly admits that a Christian view of reality reflects what is actually real. It is the truth that stands when all other systems and efforts fail.

We will soon celebrate Easter and the great good news that Jesus' tomb was empty. It is one of the best-attested facts in all of ancient history and proves that Jesus is a unique figure in history. The resurrection validates and makes sense out of everything he said and did. It establishes that Jesus is Lord of heaven and earth, and that all things come together in him—forgiveness of sins, life and salvation.

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In light of Easter, all other claims to truth and meaning fade away. Even if we find it hard to grasp how the resurrection could occur, it is simply true and leaves us, like Jane Studdock, with no other viable options. "You mean we shall have to be Christians?" "It looks like it." But, as Jane also discovered, what peace, what assurance, what joyful realism and realistic joy come with the good news that Jesus, who was crucified, rose again from the dead in order to reconcile us with God and one another. It's just true—gloriously, inescapably, graciously true. Thanks be to God!

Grace and peace,
Pastor Scott Grorud

Stump the Pastor

Q: Why does the date of Easter keep changing, but Christmas is always on the same day?

A: You can credit (or blame) the Bible for that discrepancy. The two accounts of Jesus' birth in Matthew and Luke provide no hints of when Jesus was born. Early on, the Christian Church did not celebrate Christmas nearly as much as Easter. Once Christmas began to gain popularity as a festival, the Church simply, but carefully, chose a date for it. Since December 25 is a chosen date, unrelated to other historical events, it does not change from year to year.

On the other hand, all four Gospel accounts explicitly date Jesus' death and resurrection to the Jewish festival of Passover. The date of Passover does change each year, because it is based on a lunar calendar, rather than the solar calendar. In order to keep Easter connected to Passover, it, too, needs to move each year.

The formula for determining the date of Easter is the first Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox. (Although the spring equinox can occur between March 19 and 22, the Church always designates March 21 as the date for determining Easter.) By that calculation, Easter Sunday can fall on any date between March 22 and April 25. This year, Easter leans toward the early end of that range on March 31.

Seniors Scene

"Fire! Fire!" That's something you certainly do NOT want to hear coming from somewhere in your own home. Right?

So what exactly can you do to be sure you'll never hear it, OR you will know what to do if it should ever happen? Most of us have fire alarms, check batteries regularly, have fire extinguishers in strategic places, etc. We pretty much know it all when it comes to fire prevention. We've heard it many times. Or...is there more I really should know?

SENIORS' POTLUCK is your opportunity to fine tune your personal or family fire prevention. Our Hutchinson fire chief, Mike Schumann will be with us to make us feel more at ease about our own efforts at fire safety. We meet on **Thursday, March 28** with potluck dinner the first item on our agenda. Be sure to get that on your calendar. Bring a dish to pass, and a special friend. Who knows? Our homes and community could possibly be still safer places to be. **SEE YOU AT SENIORS' POTLUCK!!!**



MISSIONS

Challenges to Witness We May Not Be Able to Imagine Reflections from Pastor Paul Knudson

Can you imagine any one of us as witnesses to Jesus Christ declaring these words?

“Instability and death are everywhere. These crises left us to be in deep pain, poverty, loss of trust, displacement, uncertainty, disappointment and confusion. It is much tougher to share the Gospel to the lost and even sometimes to exist as a church. There is fear everywhere to move from place to place and visit our congregations. The economic stress is beyond imagination.”

These words come from President Wagnew Andagre of the North Central Ethiopia Synod of the Ethiopia Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY). President Wagnew has become a dear brother in Christ whom it has been my privilege to know now for some twelve years. He shares here the agony of his heart, including the fears for safety of his family, of pastors under his charge, and of other witnesses to

Jesus Christ in the northern part of Ethiopia where his synod is located.

Faith Lutheran has the privilege of standing with these witnesses through the mission endeavors of the Augustana District. One of the AD congregations, Living Word Lutheran Church in Moses Lake, Washington, is the main supporter of a three days a month training program and support effort for the beleaguered pastors of congregations. In the recent past, the AD has sent \$50,000 to encourage these witnesses of NCES facing civil strife with destruction of church property and much more.

You are invited to keep these brothers and sisters in your prayers. Pray especially for President Wagnew who carries a heavy burden of shepherding this flock of Christ's own.

“Watch the Food Garden Grow”

Now through the **end of March**, the Congregational Life Team is inviting you to bring in nonperishable food and other items listed below to support the mission of the McLeod County Food Shelf. Please bring your items and place in the Garden Box by door #2.

**Canned Fruits &
Vegetables**

**Whole Grains
Whole grain Cereal
Pasta**

**Proteins
Nuts & Nut Butters**

**Cooking & Baking Items
Seasonings & Spices
Condiments & Sauces
Baking Items**

**Personal Care Items
Shampoo, Soap, Body Wash,
Deodorant, Toothpaste,
Toilet Paper,
Feminine Hygiene**

**Household Items
Laundry Soap, Dish Soap,
Kitchen & Bathroom Cleansers,
Paper Towels**

Cash is always appreciated for the purchase of items needed and can be dropped off in the church office. Checks should be made out to, or marked for, “Food Shelf.”

Phase II Building Committee (P2BC)

It was exciting to see the proposed plan for Phase II of Faith's building plan that our architect, Brian Berg, unveiled at the annual meeting. Watch for displays of the images he prepared at the church.

Amidst all the excitement, however, the sobering reality is that construction is very expensive and not getting any cheaper. The rough estimate of \$10-\$12 million to complete Phase II is daunting. Given that, we do want to address some concerns that we have heard about Phase II.

- ◆ Faith's leaders are convinced that this project is not a luxury, but is driven by the needs of the church. There are compelling *ministry* reasons to complete the Phase II project. You will hear much more about this in the days ahead.
- ◆ The total price tag is high, but it is not unfaithful to offer our best for God's work in our midst, rather than economizing as much as possible. That is obviously no excuse for irresponsibility or excess, but it is motivation to have a church facility that glorifies God and provides needed space for ministry.
- ◆ That total price is also not as unmanageable as it may first seem. For example, on any given Sunday there is likely well more than \$1 million worth of cars in Faith's parking lot. When large costs are spread out over many households, they become much more manageable.
- ◆ Completing Phase II would almost certainly require a mortgage, but no lender would let Faith Lutheran borrow the full cost of the project and, even if one were willing, we would never do so. Any financial plan that is finally put together must be manageable over the long term.
- ◆ Any decision to move ahead with construction lies with the congregation. If the funding is not there, the project cannot happen. If the funding does materialize, the final decision to build or borrow would still be made by congregational vote, not by the church council.

As any questions or concerns arise, please express them to the members of P2BC or the pastors.

Megan Piehl, Chair

Mark Guggemos

Josh Kamrath

Austin Willhite

Shannon Brice

Kurt Hjerpe

John Olsen

Pr. Scott Grorud

Isabelle Dressen

Kayleen Jensen

Chris Wilke

Pr. Dave Wollan

As we seek God's leading in this major project, we want the process to be as transparent, responsive and responsible as it possibly can be. Thank you for your continued investment in the mission of Faith!

Were You There?

Witnesses to the Passion

Mid-week Lenten Services 6:30 P.M.

Lenten Worship Opportunities

Lenten services will continue to ask *Were You There?* as we look at the *Witnesses to the Passion* each Wednesday evening at 6:30 p.m. through March 20.

Holy Week

Lent concludes with Holy Week: Palm Sunday, March 24 at regular service times; Maundy Thursday on March 28 with services at 6 and 7:30 p.m. (including First Communion for those completing instruction); Good Friday with services at 12 noon and 6:30 p.m.; and concluding with Easter Sunday on March 31 with services at 6:00, 8:00, 9:30 and 11:00 a.m.



Holy Week

Family Fest Fan The Flame



tries for a "Fan the Flame" event. A catered dinner will once again be served before the presentation begins. The event is free, but you need to reserve your tickets by March 3. Tickets are available in the church office and between church services on March 3. A free-will offering will be accepted at the event to help offset the costs of the speaker and food.

Save the Date ~ Date Night is Here!

Friday, March 8, from 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Cabin Fever - Game Day Sunday, March 10 from 2-4 p.m.

Note the date change!

Card games, board games, bingo, and more!
Play what is here or bring your favorite game with you.
Bingo will start at 3:30 p.m.
Snacks will be provided or you can bring your own.
Bring a friend, bring the family and come out for an afternoon of indoor fun.



Lenten Picnic

The Congregational Life Team invites you to attend the annual Lenten Picnic on Wednesday, March 13, from 5:00 – 6:15 p.m. in the Faith Center. Come for grilled hotdogs, beans, chips, lemonade, bars and fellowship with the Faith family! Please join us for this taste of summer and stay for the Lenten Worship service at 6:30 p.m.



News from the Faith Lutheran Church Women



- 1) **Mugs and Muffins** will be held on Saturday, March 2, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Faith Center. Marsha Schmit will be the guest speaker for this event.
- 2) The FLCW has decided to make a **new Cookbook** slated for sale in 2025. Soon they will be asking for recipe submissions so start thinking about what favorite one(s) you might want to share.
- 3) The **Annual Rummage Sale** is now in the planning phases. This year the sale will be held on April 18 and 19. Donations will be accepted and set-up will take place April 15-17 and help with clean-up will be needed on April 20. If are able to help in any way, even for an hour or two that week, please reach out to Bobbi Knudson at 320-455-7208 and let her know about your availability.
- 4) The FLCW is considering bringing back the **Garden Tour/Salad Luncheon** this year, but first we need a list of beautiful gardens to tour. If you have a garden and would be interested in hosting a tour, please email us at faithlutheranchurchwomen@gmail.com



New Member Orientation

The spring New Member Orientation classes will be held Sunday mornings on April 7, 14, and 21 at 9:15 a.m. during the education hour. If you or someone you know is interested in joining Faith Lutheran, please contact Marsha at 587-2093 or marshas@faithlc.com for more details.



YOUNG ADULT NIGHT

“Young Adults, ages 18-30, join us Tuesdays 6:30-8:30 p.m. Watch for locations as we bounce back and forth between Faith and Christ the King.”

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)
LtCdr. Brett Stadskev (Navy, San Diego, CA-
son-in-law of Judy and Tom Felber)



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

Faith Lutheran Church INFORMATION & STAFF DIRECTORY

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Erika Smith, Nursery Attendant		

Cedar Crest - Silver Lake

Patricia Lambert

Cokato Nursing Home

Clara Betker

Harmony River

Ray Krueger

New Haven - Maple Plain

Ardell Novotny

Oaks

Phyllis Blum

Alice Poshek

Pines

Elaine Blade

Frances Olson

Woodstone

Dodie Fenske

Cyndy Ollrich

Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Dates



Sunday School

There is no Sunday School on March 31.

B23

Join other families with children birth—3 years old in the nursery for a teaching and small group time. We will meet on March 17 from 9:15 a.m.—9:50 a.m..

56er's

There is no 56er's on March 27.

Great Start

The next Great Start is on April 3 from 7:45 a.m.—10:20 a.m.. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Laura Stowman.

First Communion Instruction

The 6th-grade class will complete their First Communion Instruction and receive their First Communion on Maundy Thursday.

Summer Registrations Open!

Vacation Bible School is for children who have completed Preschool—4th grade. This year it will be held at Faith Lutheran Church on June 24 –27 from 9 a.m.—noon.



Day Camp is for children who have completed Kindergarten—5th grade. This year it will be held at Christ the King Lutheran Church. Dates to be announced.



Confirmation

Mentor Meeting—Wednesday, April 17.

FLY Night

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

Young Adult Night

This group of young adults (18 –30 years old) will meet every other week on Tuesday nights at 6:30. We will have dinner, dig into discussion, and enjoy fellowship. Contact Kristen or Dave with any questions.

High School Ecumenical Lunch Help

Faith Lutheran Church is serving the High School Ecumenical Lunch on Thursday, March 14. If you are able to help serve the meal, please contact Kristen Durst.

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.



What the Children's and Youth Ministry Directors Want Parents to Know

Recently, Laura and I both got to present during Digging Deeper about what we want parents to know about children and youth. To our surprise, we overlapped in a lot of ways. I wanted to share some thoughts with you that we agreed on.

1. We are not the substitute for your duties as Christian parents to your children. We are here to help supplement and walk alongside you in all that you do, BUT you have the greatest impact. You are the ones your kids will look to for their spiritual investment.
2. The spiritual habits you teach at a young age are the ones that stick. Through weekly attendance at church, devotions at the dinner table, praying before bedtime, and anything else you can think of, you are building a foundation that is faith-based. Your model will lead to continual investment from your kids.
3. The world is a complicated place to figure out. You, as parents, are the lighthouse for your kids as they navigate pressures and challenges in their day-to-day life. You are a protector and advocate for all that your kids do. If you need resources or have questions about anything, please know you can rely on us for help.
4. We love your kids like they are our own. We would not be in the business of ministry for our young people if we did not. We love having a loud church on Sundays and Wednesdays. We miss the fun when we are gone.
5. We are so grateful for all that you do in the lives of your children and the fact that you share them with us. We admire you and your strength as parents. Our hope is that you can lean on us for support as we walk and invest in your children's lives together.

Kristen Durst, Director of Youth and Family Ministries

Laura Stowman, Director of Children and Family Ministries

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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

