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LIVE TV BROADCAST
 SUNDAYS AT 8 A.M.
 NUVERA & MEDIACOM
 ON CH. 7

PRE-RECORDED BROADCASTS
 SUNDAYS 10 A.M.
 AND 5 P.M.
 TUESDAYS 5 P.M.
 THURSDAYS 10 P.M.
 NUVERA CH. 10
 MEDIACOM CH. 8

RADIO BROADCAST
 SUNDAYS 8 A.M.
 KDUZ 1260 AM
 (PRE-RECORDED)

YOUTUBE SERVICE RECORDINGS
 POSTED SUNDAY
 AFTERNOONS

Pastors' Page

Faith Lutheran Church has been greatly blessed by generous offerings that have met or exceeded annual expenses in 13 of the last 14 years—and the one year that missed still came very close. During that time, the annual church budget has grown, though not dramatically so, to meet the many ministry opportunities that the good Lord keeps putting before us. Meanwhile, the family of Faith has not only maintained, but slightly increased support for mission agencies at home and abroad, and taken on special projects such as the purchase of the Ansgar House and the Faith Lutheran Internship Program. To be in such a financially healthy state is cause for profound gratitude and praise to God.

Yet, a recent analysis of giving patterns in the church (which included only age groups and amounts given, not any names) revealed some concerns. For example, just the **10** highest-giving households provided **23%** of all the General Fund offerings Faith received in 2023. The top **70** households gave **62%** of offerings. In rough terms, that means **nearly 2/3's** of the church's annual expenses are coming from **less than 10%** of Faith's households.

First of all, **thank God** for providing abundant resources to those households and inspiring their commitment to Faith's ministry! And I trust that it goes without saying that Faith Lutheran **deeply appreciates every offering** that is given, no matter its size!

At the same time, however, this pattern reveals that Faith Lutheran's finances are like an inverted pyramid—the bulk of our annual ministry rests on a very narrow base, and even one major change in that base could pose a serious problem for the church. Beyond that, in 2023 fully 25% of the church's income was given in the month of December. If that pattern should continue, one serious winter event could create a financial catastrophe for the church. It seems clear that the family of Faith still has ample room to grow in our financial stewardship, which is not only a monetary discipline, but chiefly a spiritual one.

YouTube



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The church staff recently went on its annual one-day retreat. We focused on the Biblical principles and practices of stewardship. We will talk more about this in the coming months, but let me emphasize just two key points the Bible makes about financial stewardship:

Pastor's Page continued from pg. 1

Christian giving is not mainly concerned with the church or its ministry, nor how my income or giving compares to others. Rather, it centers on **how God has blessed me** or my household. It calls each one of us to manage faithfully what God entrusts to us. We are not called to give because there are needs, here at Faith or elsewhere, but rather because we all have a need to give in order to keep our spiritual houses in order.

Christian giving calls for **equal sacrifice, not equal gifts**. The best way to do that is to base our offerings on a percentage of our income, whether it is 1%, 5%, 10% or more. This method directly reflects what God has first given us and will almost always result in more generous giving than using flat dollar amounts. Moreover, people who begin to give in this way all testify that they do not miss the money they give, but always have enough to meet their needs.

I encourage you to break out your pay stubs, financial records and household budgets. Compare your giving to your income or assets to see what the percentage currently is. Then consider what it would mean to increase that, perhaps by 1%. Above all, trust in God's promise to provide for you so that you can freely and joyfully give—whether to the church or a hundred other worthy causes—knowing that “God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.” (II Corinthians 9:8)

Grace and peace,
Pastor Scott Grorud

STUMP THE PASTOR

Stump the Pastor

Q: The pastors often talk about baptism, but, like most people, I can't even remember mine. What is baptism supposed to mean to me and what difference does it actually make?

A: This is a really important question, because it reveals a basic difference among various Christian churches about what baptism is and how it works. Many churches make baptism dependent on the individual Christians who receive it, so that it becomes all about what I believe, what I experience, how sincere I was at the time I was baptized or how devoutly I believe now. The problem with that approach, as you can see, is that “I” becomes the subject of every sentence and the promise of baptism is made contingent on me and my feelings. In fact, this view really does not see baptism as a sacrament, where God is at work, but simply as a way to testify to God and others about my decision for Christ or my commitment to him. As sinners, we are not nearly reliable enough for that to be a solid foundation for our faith.

Lutherans believe that in Holy Baptism, God is the subject of all the sentences. God is at work, establishing a covenant of salvation with those baptized, putting them to death in their sin and raising them up as new creatures in Christ. Since that is a spiritual death, not a physical one, we continue to sin and so God repeats the action of baptism in us over and over again. We don't ever need to be re-baptized, however, because it's a sacrament that relies on God's promise and commitment, not ours. For Christians to be re-baptized, even with the most sincere motives, suggests that God somehow didn't do it right the first time or that I need to step in to reinforce His promises.

Instead, we can rely on our baptism completely, even if it occurred when we were too young to know it, because it all depends on God and He never fails to keep His promises. Even if people later wander away from their baptism, God waits patiently, like the father in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, to welcome them back with open arms and restore them to their baptismal covenants.

It isn't a problem if you, like me, cannot remember your baptism, because God remembers and God is faithful. It all depends on Him, not you. You can cling for dear life to the promise of your baptism, all through life and even in the hour of death, because God has claimed you as His own child in Christ Jesus, and He will never let you go.



Outdoor Worship Set-up

Summer worship in the park has started! Gathering in Library Square is one of Faith Lutheran's favorite traditions this time of year, but there is a lot of work that goes into set-up and tear-down each week. The Music and Worship Ministry Team could use some help! There are always plenty of hands at the end of the service to haul equipment and pack the trailer, but not so many at the beginning. If you like to get to the park early to grab your favorite spot under the shade tree, consider helping us set up too. As we say, "many hands make light work!"



Handbell Fundraiser—Thank You!

On behalf of the Ringers of Faith, I want to extend another note of thanks to the congregation

for your generous support of our handbell fundraisers. Through event gifts and other donations, we were able to complete much-needed repairs, and clean more bells and chimes than what we originally planned! Though the bells are packed away for the summer, I look forward to the fall when we start our next season with clear, bright, and shiny bells! Ring on!



Faith Kids Music Club

A new endeavor for me this past program year was starting the Faith Kids Music Club (FKMC). This new addition to the music ministry at Faith was a success and I am optimistic about its growth in the coming years. At our peak, we had 16 kids involved, which can get out of hand for one person very quickly! That is why I sought out some adult leaders to help me with this awesome bunch. I'm thankful that Andrea Wollan and Mary Parker answered the call! I am beyond grateful for their assistance, leadership, musical knowledge, and love for the kids. Over the year, FKMC had a few goals.



- 1) Worship ownership—Help plan and lead worship, sing and play instruments
- 2) Positive musical experience—Learn and grow together in music of church with old and new friends
- 3) Intergenerational connectivity—Sing and play with Faith Singers and Ringers of Faith and a quilting project

I hope you enjoyed their addition to our worship life and overall rhythm of the church I know they did! I am excited for what next year has in store for these future musicians of the church. Onward!



Austin Willhite, Director of Music and Worship

Concert Announcement

Join us as we welcome and enjoy a special duo recital concert featuring Kurt Weber (piano) and Ash St. John (violin). Kurt Weber is a local church musician, published sacred music composer, and recital pianist currently touring churches in the Midwest. Kurt and Ash will be stopping at Faith on June 27 at 6:30 p.m.



to lead us in song with their new collection of hymn arrangements as well as a hymn sing. You don't want to miss this wonderful night sure to be filled with uplifting music of the Lutheran Church.



Mission Update: Guy and Leia Johnson



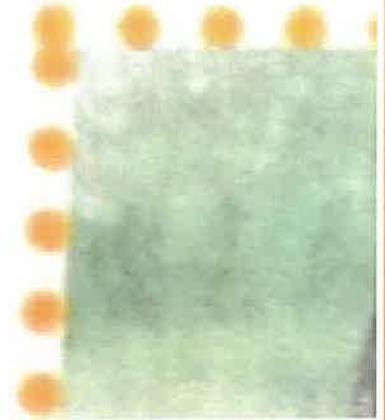
**“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”
Romans 1:16**

For nearly 13 years, Guy and Leia Johnson have been leading teams of university students to bear witness without apology to other university students near and far. Guy has risen to a major leadership role in preparing these witnesses through CRU (formerly known as Campus Crusade for Christ). His gifts and perseverance bring a powerful witness that Faith Lutheran has the privilege of supporting through our prayers and annual mission outlays.

Guy recently reported that, in April, he and other leaders of CRU had the privilege of commissioning 353 current college students for a year or two of serving as interns, bearing witness to Christ in university settings both here in America as well as

in foreign countries. Guy himself will be supervising 33 of these interns on multiple campuses in the United States.

FLC’s support for the Johnsons is \$3,000 for this year. It may not be a major portion of their need, but through this gift we continue to stand with them in “not (being) ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation...”



News from the Faith Lutheran Church Women

2024 Women of the Word Fall Gathering

This fall, Faith Lutheran Church has the honor of hosting the Augustana District’s Women of the Word Fall Gathering. This event will be all day on Saturday, September 21. The FLCW is currently in the planning process for the event and helping hands will be needed in a variety of ways, from decorating and set-up, to a variety of ways to greet and serve that day. The featured guest speaker will be Gretchen Ronnevik. She is a writer and speaker, and is passionate about exploring rich theology rooted in real life. You can check out her book “Ragged” or listen to her podcast “Feely Given.” The cost to attend the event is \$25, but a discount will be provided for those who lend a helping hand. Contact Sarah Hingst, Carreen Pierson, or Jan Kreie for more information on how you can plug in.

Church Cookbook

The FLCW are looking for your favorite recipes to use in the creation of a new church cookbook. Favorite recipes may be submitted to Flcwcookbook25@gmail.com, or dropped off at the church office. The deadline for submitting recipes is September 30. If you have a favorite family recipe that holds a memory, feel free to include a little story that we may include with the recipe. The goal is to have cookbooks available in time to purchase as Christmas gifts.

Newsletter via USPS or E-mail?

Would you be willing to receive your monthly copy of *Faith Matters* 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 a request to office@faithlc.com or calling Wendy at 320-587-2093.

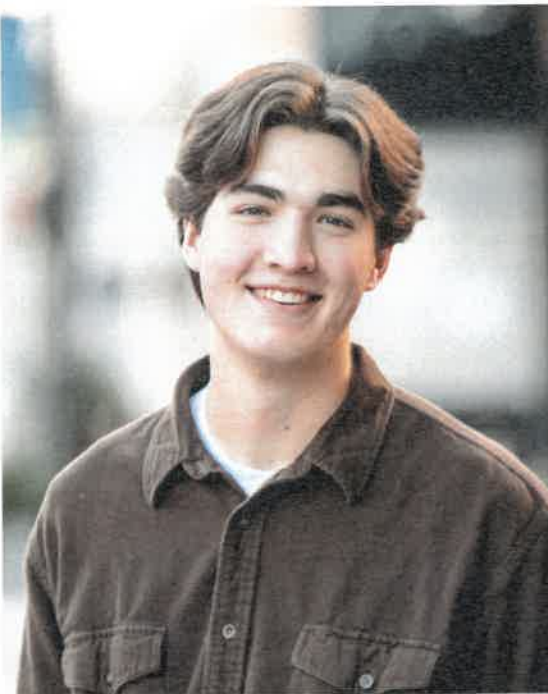




Meet our Summer Fellow

Our Summer Fellow will be serving in children and youth ministries, helping with activities such as God Squad, Middle School Madness, FLY nights, Vacation Bible School, Mystery Bus, and the FLY Mission Trip. We hope you recognize this summer fellow, since he is a long time member of Faith Lutheran Church and his footprint is on the wall of our youth space. We are excited to welcome him back and to do ministry with him!

Laura Stowman, Director of Children and Family Ministries
Kristen Durst, Director of Youth and Family Ministries



Luke Wollan

What have you done after high school?

Since high school I have been furthering my education at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois. My major is Biblical and Theological Studies, and I am on track to graduate in December! In the two summers since high school I have worked as a counselor at Mount Carmel Family Camp in Alexandria, Minnesota.

What was your favorite memory from being at Faith Lutheran Church?

My favorite memory was when Jon Kamrath played Swiper for the Laura the Explorer series during Lenten services. In general, I also just loved being a part of FLY and always sitting in the youth row at the front of the Foundation service!

Why were you called to children and youth ministry this summer?

I felt called to it because it had such a huge impact on my life and truly led me to the place that I am now. I feel called to give back and hope to help provide the children and youth with a similarly important and impactful experience with God that I received growing up.

What excites you about this internship?

I am most excited to learn more about the inner workings of ministry as well as connecting and building relationships with the kids and youth.

Phase II Finance Team (P2FT)

Over the last several months, the Phase II Building Committee (P2BC) has been working with our architect to refine the building plan for Phase II and presenting it to the congregation. Now a companion team has formed to think and plan carefully for how we might raise the funds necessary to make the plan a reality.

The Phase II Finance Team (P2FT) includes the following members: Jessi Boike, Jim Brodd, Mary Christensen, Jon Gelschus, Ian McDonald, Tim Piehl and Sara Wegner, along with Pastor Scott and Pastor Dave. The similar acronyms of P2BC and P2FT indicate that these two teams are focused on Phase II, but with different tasks. They also help to distinguish these two committees from the other ministry teams and governance structures of the church.

P2FT has begun meeting and is carefully considering a wide range of issues, options and methods for how to inspire the family of Faith to embrace the major task of funding Phase II. Although the goal seems daunting, the team believes it is possible to achieve. You will hear much more from them in coming months. Until then, please keep these leaders in your prayers for wisdom and discernment in this important task.

BUILDING FAITH II
A FUTURE AND A HOPE

DID YOU KNOW?

QUESTION

In the last 5 years, how many additional Sunday school classes were added?

A. 1
B. 2
C. 3
D. 4

ANSWER BELOW

ANSWER

WHY IS THIS?

DID YOU KNOW?

Laura is currently running out of classroom space! The new building will add much needed room to grow.

(average 10 new kids each year)

BUILDING FAITH II
A FUTURE AND A HOPE

*Now Accepting
Applications*

Nursery Supervisor Position Available

Faith Lutheran Church is currently looking for a nursery supervisor. This person would love working with small children, preferably have first aid and CPR training, and would be available Sunday mornings from mid-September though late May from 9 a.m.- 11:30 a.m. Additional hours may be available throughout the year. Contact the church office for more details or to apply for this opportunity.

Faith Lutheran Church Support Groups

We are truly blessed with wonderful pastoral care efforts here at Faith Lutheran! People come together and, by faith and God's grace, they are helped.

We have a number of books and resources used by support group participants. If you are interested in checking out a group or the material, or if you want to help offset the book costs for others, please reach out to Pastor Paulus Pilgrim, Marsha Schmit, or Jeff Amundson.



FACe Cancer Support Group



Having cancer can be hard and very challenging. Often you can feel alone or without hope. The FACe group is here to help. We can, by the grace of God, shed a little light into the darkness, a little knowledge and experience to the unsure, a little love to let you know you are not alone. We meet the 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. in the upstairs conference room at Faith. Those fighting cancer and their caregivers are welcome to attend.

E-mail Jeff at jeffa@faithlc.com with questions or for more information.

Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Dates



Thank you for a wonderful school year! We will start back up in September.

- **Fall Kickoff, Sunday School & 3-Year-Olds Receiving Bibles** on September 8.
- **56er's** on September 11.
- **B23** on September 15.

Great Start

The school district is no longer having two hour late starts, but moving to early release. So, we will no longer have Great Start next school year **BUT** we will have an after school program for Kindergarten - 5th grade on early release days. Stay tuned for more information and sign up as we get closer to the start of the school year.

Summer Ministries

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. Scan QR code below to register.



Day Camp is for children who have completed Kindergarten - 5th grade. This year it will be held at Christ the King Lutheran Church August 5 - 8 from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Registration is now open via the QR code and on the church website.



FLY Night

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



Mystery Bus Registration

This mini mission trip for 5th - 7th grade students is June 18 - 20 from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. each day. Each day we do a service project and then something just for fun. It is a highlight of the summer for all who participate. Registration is now open via the QR code.



HAY Ministries Hosted at Christ the King Lutheran Church

Tournament of Tournaments

for high school students
Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m., beginning June 5.

Middle School Madness

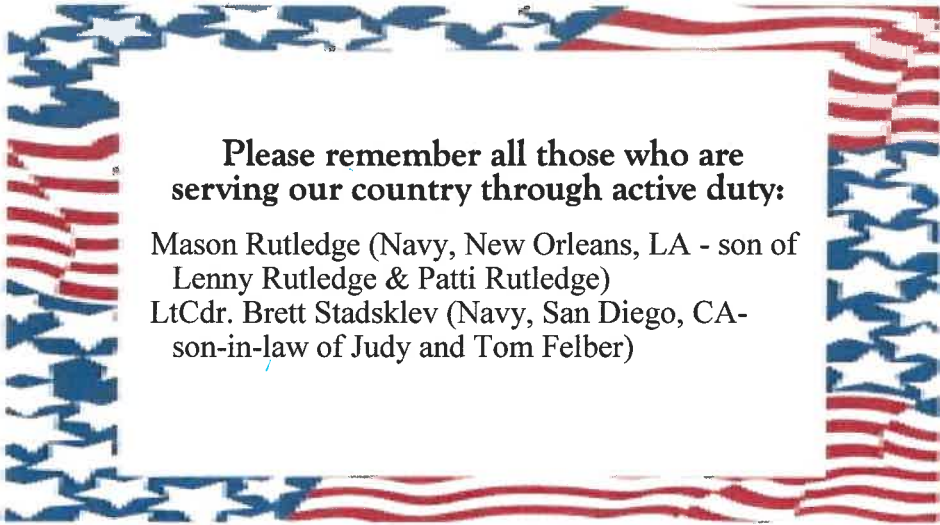
for middle school students
Thursdays, 1-3 p.m., beginning June 6.

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.

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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Paulus Pilgrim, Visitation	320-234-9753 (home)	paulusp@faithlc.com

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Sara Wegner, Finance Coordinator		finco@faithlc.com
Owen Weikle, Custodial Services Coordinator		320-587-2093

Buffalo Lake Nursing Home

Kathy Fabel

Cedar Crest - Silver Lake

Patricia Lambert

Cokato Nursing Home

Clara Betker

Harmony River

Frances Olson

Oaks

Phyllis Blum

Alice Poshek

Pines

Elaine Blade

Maynard and Shirley Holtz

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

