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

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

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SERVICE RECORDINGS
POSTED SUNDAY
AFTERNOONS



Since this issue of *Faith Matters* will come out shortly before the 4th of July, I was thinking about the relationship between the Church and the government, and how Christians relate to them. I had just read an essay about the literary genius of C.S. Lewis, author of *The Screwtape Letters* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*, and a world-class scholar. It included a quote from Lewis that I had not read before. "A sick society must think much about politics, as a sick man must think much about his digestion."

My first reaction to that statement focused on "must think much." Our society is obsessed with politics, due in part to the 24-hour news cycle spawned by cable television and the internet, although I think it has more serious and destructive roots, as well. This obsession stirs up anxiety and fear, not least in people who are *not* fixated on the news, but perceive how overheated our political world has become.

The day I wrote this article, however, brought the horrific news of the assassination of a Minnesota state legislator and her husband and the attempted murder of another legislator and his wife. Early reports indicate that the attacks were "politically motivated" and that the murderer left a "manifesto," though at this point its contents have not been released. At the same time, destructive riots are plaguing many cities around the country, purportedly in opposition to federal government policies.

That news made a different phrase from C.S. Lewis' statement jump out at me, "a sick society." When political disagreements increasingly spur people to physical violence or rabble-rousing language, it reveals a society that is seriously ill, perhaps sick unto death. Politics, of course, has always been a bare-knuckled pursuit, but in a nation of laws like ours, political violence has been blessedly rare. We remember names like John Brown or Lee Harvey Oswald precisely because such violence has not been the norm and their evil actions stick out as disturbing exceptions to the rule.

As Christians, how can we address this volatile political situation, beyond deploring violent acts and trying to tone down incendiary words? One vitally important resource is Martin Luther's doctrine of the Two Kingdoms or the Two Reigns of God. It is not a simple teaching, but it is very helpful for navigating life in this world broken by sin. Here are some of his key insights.

- 1) Christians live in two realms, not just one; God rules over them both, but in different ways;
- 2) physically, we live in this created world, which "God so loved...that He gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (John 3:16);

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- 3) the eternal life God desires everyone to have is not part of this created world; this world is temporal, time-limited; it is not possible to establish the Kingdom of God in this temporal realm;
- 4) the coming Kingdom of God, however, has already dawned when Christ was resurrected on Easter;
- 5) Christians are brought into that new kingdom by Holy Baptism and live in the overlap between this world and the next; we exist in this world, but "our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Philippians 3:20);
- 6) thus, Christians live *in* this world, but we are not *of* the world; we can devote ourselves to serving our neighbors just because our eternal future has already been secured in Christ;
- 7) that means that all the affairs of this world, though important, are *never* ultimate; only Christ and his kingdom will endure forever.

That last point, I believe, is a key source of the political extremism afflicting our day. Human beings are instinctively religious and will embrace some religious conviction or another, even those who insist God does not exist. In our day, as faith in God has diminished and religious practice waned, many people have made politics their religion, instead. They fail to see that politics, though important, is temporal and has no ultimate value or importance and once secondary matters are given ultimate status, people will go to extreme lengths to defend or enforce them.

The cure for our society's political illness is to repent and turn our hearts back to the Lord. If that were to happen, even on a grand scale, it would not establish God's Kingdom on earth. That cannot happen. But it would provide a proper and much healthier perspective on political issues, and keep people from treating secondary matters as if they had ultimate importance.

See you in church!
Grace and peace,

Pastor Scott Grorud

Stewardship Matters



At the end of May, year-to-date offerings to Faith Lutheran Church were slightly *lower* than they were at the end of May, 2024 and nearly \$80,000.00 lower than the church's year-to-date expenses, even though they remain below budget. Offerings in the month of May alone were nearly \$10,000.00 below May of last year.

As we head into the summer months, this deficit is a big concern and it does not help that, in recent years, September offerings have also been quite low. The church's expenses remain steady through all twelve months of the year, but its cash reserves can only cover so much deficit spending.

There is always economic uncertainty in the world, yet few of us face financial crises. If all the members of the family of Faith gave *in proportion to their income* (whether 1%, 5%, 10% or more), there is no doubt that offerings would more than cover all of our church's ministry expenses.

Could we avoid opening up an enormous hole in the General Fund that has to be made up in the last few weeks of the year? Please prayerfully examine your giving in light of God's steadfast provision for you and the call to be faithful stewards of all that God entrusts to us. For "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)

Stump the Pastor

Q: When did Jesus know he was God's son and what his purpose was?

A: This question from one of our Faith Groups is a great one to keep in your pocket for when you stand before the throne of God one day! It is one on a long list of gaps in the Biblical record that fire people's curiosity.

The Bible provides no explanation for how Jesus' two natures co-existed as he grew. Our human ability to imagine it is so limited that we are likely to downplay either his humanity or his divinity, no matter how we try to hold them together. For example, we cannot imagine how a toddler could avoid the "terrible twos," but if Jesus went through that defiant stage of development, how does that fit in with his having a sinless nature?

The closest we can come is the sole Biblical account from Jesus' childhood at the end of Luke 2, when he stayed behind in the temple in Jerusalem. At 12 years old (13 was then considered the age of adulthood), Jesus was clearly aware of his divine nature. That is why he called the temple "my Father's house," which obviously did not refer to Joseph. Yet, that awareness was also not fully informed. He craved more knowledge, which is why he lost all track of time as he talked with the temple priests. When Mary and Joseph finally found him, he asked why they were searching for him (and why Mary was so angry). That could sound a bit impertinent, but it was more likely totally innocent, as if he genuinely could not fathom why they did not know where he was—a decidedly immature outlook. (It might qualify as the most 12-year-old statement in the history of 12-year olds.) Still, Luke ends the chapter by specifically noting that "he went down with (his parents) to Nazareth and was obedient to them."

There is a mixture there that cannot be entirely reconciled or completely distinguished. Perhaps our best bet is to consider Jesus growing up with a divine and a human nature as part of the miracle of the Incarnation itself, which was, at one and the same time, surprisingly normal and, at various points, utterly confusing.

Mission Partner, Friends of Madagascar Mission, Introduction and Pressing Need

by Pastor Paul Knudson



A long-term major focus of global mission outreach within our Lutheran family has been the country of Madagascar. Generations of witnesses from America have reached out with the Good News of Jesus Christ to this island nation off the coast of Africa.

Presently, this witness is coming through Friends of Madagascar Mission (FOMM) working with the national Lutheran Church there. The focus in part is to help the indigenous church body in their Great Commission witness. In various ways this mission organization has been providing assistance in training and sending these local witnesses throughout this country of several million people.

At the same time, FOMM recognizes that the pressing needs in this impoverished country cannot be ignored. Some ten-million people face huge struggles simply to have water to drink that is safe for human consumption.

Working with local people who know the huge challenges of contaminated wells and the dramatic costs of drilling through rock to get to clear water is driving FOMM to dream big.

From normal human hesitancy to imagine beyond common sense to a Spirit-driven passion to do what seems impossible, FOMM is calling for a response of \$1,000,000 to meet this need. We at FLC could be a part of this response. You can look in the future for information on how we may stand with our partners at FOMM to bring life-giving clear water to brothers and sisters in this faraway land.

Incidentally, a long time personal friend, Pastor David Lerseth, is the central leader along with several others, of this witness through FOMM. None of the "staff" are paid for their leadership. All money donated goes directly to the mission work.

Leap of Faith Capital Campaign

Several people have suggested recently that members of Faith may be holding back on making a commitment to Leap of Faith until they are sure that Phase II of the building project will actually be completed. That may or may not be the case, but the fact that people keep mentioning it suggests that it might be happening.



If it is, the logic behind it is understandable from a financial perspective, but as a giving tactic, it largely insures that the project will never be built. The only way to realize this much-needed ministry space is if more members of the church step forward in faith and commit major gifts to the campaign *so that* Phase II can be built. If large numbers wait to give *until* the project is underway, the church will never have enough funding to secure a construction loan or be able to borrow whatever remaining funds are needed.

Calling this campaign Leap of Faith was no accident! That is exactly what is required for it to have any chance of succeeding. Have you taken the leap?

Car Free Day

One way to avoid the parking issues at Library Square is to join the Faith family by riding your bike, walking, or rolling (strollers, rollerblades/skates, scooters, etc.) to worship.

You and your family are invited to Bike/Walk/Roll to Worship at Library Square on Sunday, June 29. (First Word attendees are invited to come to Library Square at 11:30 a.m. to join the fun.)

After worship, we will have maps available with a list of the new 2025 sculptures and three different-length routes you and your family can follow as you take a walk/ride/stroll along the trails to see how many of the new sculptures you can find. Then everyone is invited to buy a treat at Below Zero or Dairy Queen, come back to Library Square to enjoy your treat and share what sculptures you were able to find.

CAR FREE DAY **SUNDAY, JUNE 29**

Walk, ride your bike, pull out the roller skates or skate board, or push the stroller to worship in the park. Then we will hit the trails and check out the sculptures before returning to the downtown area for ice cream from DQ or Below Zero.



Faith Lutheran Church Support Groups

For more information or to plug into any of the following support groups please call the church office at 320-587-2093 and ask for Pastor Paulus Pilgrim, Jeff Amundson, or Marsha Schmit.



- 1) FAcE Cancer Support Group** This group is open to members and non-members of Faith alike. Those with cancer, those who are in remission, and family members who are caregivers of those with cancer are encouraged to participate in this support group. The FAcE group meets the second and fourth Thursday morning of each month in the third floor conference room at 10 a.m. A Zoom option is available for those who are not able to attend due to health or distance obstacles.
- 2) Caregiver Support Group** Meets the last Thursday of each month September—May at 4 p.m.
- 3) Grief Support Group** meets as needed throughout the year.

Music and Worship

Worship Snapshot: The Lutheran Liturgical Tradition



We Lutherans have always had a unique relationship with tradition. If you close your eyes right now, I'm sure you can clearly visualize the point of view from your "assigned" pew or chair at Faith! The fact is, tradition surrounds us. Every person, every family, every church has traditions. From what we eat on holidays to where we go on vacation, we cherish these "habits" that have been passed down through generations. One of my favorite traditions at Faith is our outdoor worship services. In I Corinthians 11:23, St. Paul describes the institution of the Lord's Supper, a tradition the church has received directly from God. St. Paul also warned the Thessalonians (and us) to maintain Godly tradition and to beware of human tradition that can draw us away from Christ. Lutherans have endured great pains to reject some traditions from the Roman Catholic Church. Martin Luther fought against established rules and doctrines with no clear scriptural foundation that were being held as divinely ordered. He recognized the importance of Biblical tradition and cherished the Gospel. Confessional worship became a pillar of Luther's work in reforming the church, emphasizing the means of grace. The Word of God, the sacraments of the Lord's Supper and Holy Baptism, and the Confession and Absolution of sin are not human inventions, but instead God's gifts to his people. Luther chose to reform the Mass rather than to substitute a new "reformation" liturgical order. This new reformed order restored worship practices to a more Biblical approach.

By this point, you may be asking yourself, "What is liturgy and what does it mean?" Liturgy is usually defined as "the work of the people." Christians understand this word in a sense of willing service to God because of what he has done first for them; worship conducted in a proper, Spirit-guided way. The liturgical order we follow on Sunday mornings at Faith is the corporate structure of the worship experience and practice, centered in hearing God's Word and the proper administration of the Sacraments. Following a liturgical order provides a way for all worshipers to participate. It has become our habitual tradition. Confessing our sin, hearing the absolution, confessing our beliefs through the creeds and praying the Lord's Prayer become second nature. If you have been in First Word worship the past couple of Sundays, you may have noticed that we began to learn a new liturgy, the Service of the Word. This liturgical order is appropriate for Sundays in which the Sacrament of Holy Communion is not observed. This service order puts emphasis on God's Word, hence the name, throughout the entirety of worship, which was most important to Martin Luther as stated above. Though the music and specific verbiage may be new to you, the tradition is all the same. I hope you enjoy using this new service order in worship and that it may facilitate spiritual growth and strengthen your faith.

Soli Deo Gloria,
Austin

In the presence of my
ENEMIES
Jonah Daniel
Faith Lutheran Church **Summer Preaching Series**
JUNE 22—AUGUST 31, 2025

Free Community Meals



The July Free Community Meal will be a picnic style sack lunch served at Veterans Park on Sunday, July 13 from 4-5:30 p.m. All are invited to come down to the park for a picnic.

These monthly free community meals are provided the second Sunday of each month for those in the area that need a good meal. They are also for members of Faith Lutheran who would like to gather for good food and great fellowship.

In order to continue to provide these meals, volunteers are needed to prepare and serve them. There are funds available through the church to pay for the food. Currently, servers are still needed for the August and September meals. If you, your family, Bible study group, or other group are interested in serving a meal, please reach out to the church office for details.

Register Today! Register Today! Register Today!

Register Today! Register Today! Register Today!

Dear Church family, It's time for a New Directory!



*Celebrating faith.
Connecting families.
Sharing hope.*

When people enter the doors of our church they are looking for a place to belong. Our directory brings us together to develop new relationships, connect with our own families, and reconnect with those we haven't seen in a while. Join us for this "Connections Event" and be part of what God is doing right here at our church!

Directory Committee

Connections Event

Our church directory will not be complete without you. Join us to celebrate faith and family with our new church family album.

- Schedule your professional photography session when you stop by the sign-up table at the church or simply go online and follow the instructions below. If we don't see your name on our list of appointments, you will receive a phone call inviting you to participate.
- Everyone who is photographed by Universal will receive a complimentary 8 x 10 portrait and a directory!
- Universal provides a complete professional portrait studio right here at our church! You'll enjoy a variety of poses, backgrounds, portrait sizes, finish and framing options AND have the opportunity to purchase portraits to give to family and friends.

Set your appointment with Universal today!

To schedule your photography appointment online, go to www.ucdir.com. Go to photography appointment scheduling, login on the right side by entering MN562 and password photos.

Register Today! Register Today! Register Today!

Faith Apparel Options Are Back



You have asked and we have heard you. Mid-July there will once again be an opportunity to purchase Faith Lutheran Church Apparel. There will be t-shirts, dress shirts, sweatshirts and more. Watch your weekly announcements, the Friday Faith Five, the Faith Facebook page, and the website for details on how you can place an order.





Introducing Faith's 2025 Summer Fellows

Our Summer Fellows will serve in the Children and Youth Ministries, with activities such as God Squad, Middle School Madness, FLY nights, Vacation Bible School, Mystery Bus, and possibly the FLY Mission Trip. We are excited to welcome back Ellie Wollan, formerly Lien-Wilke, and a new warm welcome to Chris Nelson! Here is a brief introduction to each of these Fellows.

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

Chris Nelson

What have you done since graduating high school?

After high school, I went to college for biomedical engineering, first at Augusta University in Georgia. I'll be finishing my degree at the University of Minnesota in the fall. I've also done multiple summer engineering internships with Kimberly-Clark and volunteered at multiple church camps. During the school year, I focused on my studies and stayed involved with college Bible studies and other ministries at my previous church.

What is a favorite memory you have from your home church?

At a winter weekend retreat, another adult and I led a group of students through devotions, deep conversations, games, and more. One night, the kids put on swimsuits at 11:00 PM (this was in November) to jump into a freezing pool. I jumped in also... I couldn't miss out! Afterwards, we thawed and dried off via a large bonfire—a favorite memory.

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

I had been thinking and praying about going into ministry for more than a year. In January, a series of events at church confirmed in my mind that the Lord is calling me in ministry. That said, I didn't (and don't yet) know where or what my ministry will be. As my family began to prepare for the move from Augusta to Hutchinson, I looked for opportunities to get involved into ministries, and my mom got in touch with Pastor Dave, who informed us about the summer fellowship program. I felt it to be a great opportunity to explore my call and gain experience in the ministry, so I applied... and I'm honored to be here!

What excites you about this fellowship?

This fellowship represents much to me. I see it as way to get my "foot in the door" into ministry. Second, as someone new to ministry I know I have much to learn. The fellowship presents the opportunity to learn, gain experience, and explore my call. I'm excited to meet and work with the youth! I can't imagine a more fulfilling way to spend my summer than directly to serve the Lord's people.



Ellie Wollan

What have you done since graduating high school?

Since high school, I have been attending Bethel University and studying Elementary Education. Most recently, I got married to my husband Luke at Faith Lutheran! In the fall, I will be completing my last semester at Bethel.

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

My favorite memories from being at Faith Lutheran Church were my four mission trips (especially the service sites on the Colorado mission trip!), chatting with friends at youth group, and having church as a place to do schoolwork during hybrid learning.

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

I felt called to children and youth ministry this summer because I love being around children and sharing Jesus's love with them, as this isn't something that I can directly do with students during my teaching placements at school. This is also a cool opportunity to gain a better understanding and appreciation of what my husband will be doing in the future.

What excites you about this internship?

The thing that excites me most about this fellowship is getting to pour into the programs that helped me grow and learn as a youth. I feel blessed to have been a part of Faith Lutheran Church during elementary through high school. I am so excited to be able to help children and youth grow and learn just as I did!



Mark Your Calendars for All the Summer Fun!

All registrations can be found on the Children or Youth pages at <https://www.faithlc.com/>

High School Mission Trip

July 11-19

This summer, 8th—12th-grade students are going to Indianapolis, Indiana to serve with YouthWorks. Registration information can be found on the Faith Lutheran Youth Instagram page. Students can get \$25 off if they volunteer to help with VBS for the entire week.



Bible Camps

Outdoor ministry is a wonderful experience for children as they grow in their faith.

That is why Faith wants to help families bring their children to Bible camp through camperships. Contact Laura for details on how to apply for a scholarship or support a child by donating to the scholarship fund. The last few years we have helped send students to **Ingham Okobojo Lutheran Bible Camps** in Wallingford, IA.

This summer, Faith and Christ the King students are attending **the week of July 13 – 18**.

Follow the link for more information and how to register for Bible camp: <https://www.okobojo.org/youth>

Another favorite Bible camp that our confirmation students have attended for retreats and absolutely love is **Inspiration Point** in Vining, MN. There is no specific week Faith is attending, but I encourage you to talk with friends who are interested. Follow the link for more information and how to register for Bible camp:

<https://ipoint.org/camps-retreats/summer-camps>



Day Camp

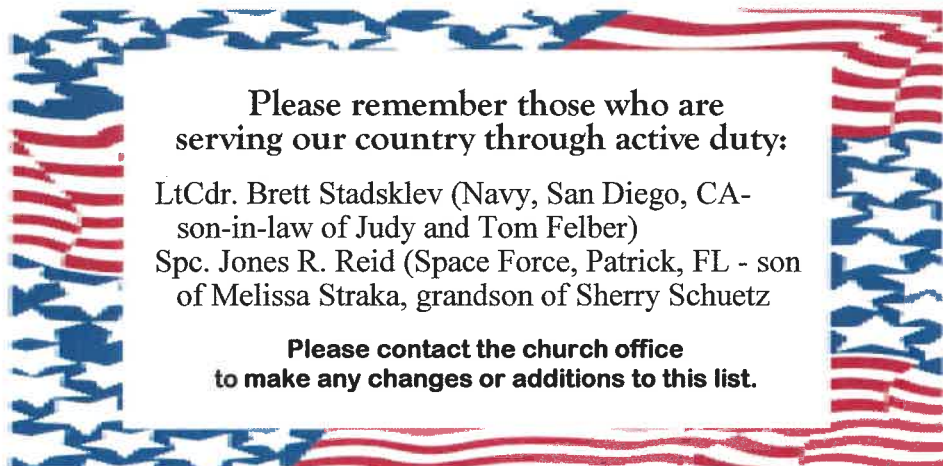
August 4—7 from 9 a.m.—noon at Faith Lutheran Church

This is another summer ministry where Faith and Christ the King partner together, but this time we have camp counselors from Ingham Okobojo Lutheran Bible Camp lead a Day Camp for the Kindergarten – 5th-grade students. Cost is \$25.

Questions? Contact us!

Kristen Durst—Director of Youth and Family Ministries—kristend@faithlc.com
Laura Stowman—Director of Children and Family Ministries—lauras@faithlc.com

Please Remember in Prayer



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

LtCdr. Brett Stadskev (Navy, San Diego, CA-
son-in-law of Judy and Tom Felber)
Spc. Jones R. Reid (Space Force, Patrick, FL - son
of Melissa Straka, grandson of Sherry Schuetz

**Please contact the church office
to make any changes or additions to this list.**



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

Buffalo Lake Nursing Home

Kathy Fabel

Cedar Crest - Silver Lake

Patricia Lambert

Cokato Nursing Home

Clara Betker

Elaine Blade

Harmony River

Alice Hansen

Shirley Holtz

Wilbur Johnson

Oaks

Phyllis Blum

Carol Otto

DuWayne Peterson

Alice Poshek

Woodstone

Cyndy Ollrich

Faith Lutheran Church

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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.



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

