

# FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH (LCMC)

HUTCHINSON, MN

## 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

MEETING ~ SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 2026, AT 12 NOON



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



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## **2025 Church Leadership, Personnel and Volunteers**

### **Church Council Officers**

President ..... Jon Kamrath  
Vice President ..... Scott Glaser  
Treasurer ..... Al Liepold  
Secretary ..... Niki Pokornowski

### **Pastoral Ministry**

Pastors ..... Scott Grorud, Dave Wollan  
Mission Ministry ..... Paul Knudson (Part-time)  
Visitation Pastor ..... Paulus Pilgrim (Part-time)  
Pastoral Associate ..... Jeff Amundson (Part-time)

### **Lay Ministry Staff**

Director of Children and Family Ministry ..... Laura Stowman  
Director of Music and Worship ..... Austin Willhite  
Director of Pastoral Care and Evangelism ..... Marsha Schmit  
Director of Youth and Family Ministry ..... Kristen Durst  
Administrative Assistant ..... Wendy Magruder  
Custodial/Maintenance ..... Owen Weikle (Part-time)  
Finance Coordinator ..... Sara Wegner (Part-time)  
Nursery Attendant (Sundays) ..... Monica Schiller (Part-time)

### **Music Ministry**

Worship Leaders - Sunday Mornings ..... Andy and Tabetha Dawkins, Ronda Eckhart,  
Leah Kamrath, and Lara Liepold  
Assisting Musicians and Vocalists..... Justin Beck, Evan Boike, Kevin Elton, Kaylee  
Entinger, Mona Hjerpe, Hudson Maiers, Mike McDowell, and Bailey Willhite  
Organists ..... Sharon Barton and Ronda Eckhart

### **Wedding Consultants**

Niki Pokornowski, Wendy Magruder, and Kristen Durst

### **Volunteer Office Assistants**

Monday ..... Linell Loncorich and Angie Lohrenz  
Tuesday ..... Sharon Romo  
Wednesday ..... LoAnn Hanson  
Thursday ..... Muriel Dobratz and Lynn Lange  
Friday ..... Kathy Athey and Maria Weikle

# **Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda**

## **Sunday, January 25, 2026**

Call to Order

Adoption of the Agenda

Opening Devotions

Secretary's Report

Treasurer's Report

Leap of Faith Capital Campaign Update

Auditors' Report

Pastors', President's and Ministry Team Reports

Order of Business:

Election of Church Council and Ministry Team Members

Approve 2026 Budget

Other

Closing Prayer

Adjournment

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*Please bring this report with you to the annual meeting.*

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# **Faith Lutheran Church Annual Meeting Minutes**

**January 26, 2025**

- I. Call to order at 12:00 p.m. by Dennis Langehaug, Congregational President.
- II. Adoption of Agenda
  - a. M/S/C to adopt the agenda as printed on page 5 of the annual report.
- III. Opening Devotions by Pastor Scott Grorud
  - a. Isaiah 49 – God’s promises to the Jewish exiles in Babylon, that they will be restored to abundance and have unexplained blessings.
  - b. The staff has a similar feeling of abundance when looking at all of the vibrant ministries going on at Faith. All of this is God’s doing in our midst.
  - c. Psalm 118:23 – This is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.
- IV. Secretary’s Report
  - a. M/S/C to accept the minutes from the annual meeting dated January 28, 2024, as printed on pages 6 and 7 of the Annual Report
  - b. M/S/C to accept the minutes from the special congregational meeting dated 11/24/2024 as presented on pages 8 and 9 of the annual report.
- V. Treasurer’s Report
  - a. A summary of the report was presented by Al Liepold, congregational treasurer.
  - b. A detailed report can be found in the Financial Reports Addendum 2024.
  - c. There were no questions.
  - d. M/S/C to approve the Treasurer’s Report.
- VI. Leap of Faith Capital Campaign
  - a. The Upon This Rock campaign ended in 2020, but the account remained open and has been receiving regular contributions. The current balance is \$225,573.76.
  - b. The new Leap of Faith capital campaign began in January and will be seeking pledges.
  - c. M/S/C to accept the Leap of Faith Capital Campaign report.
- VII. Auditors’ Report
  - a. The report is printed on page 9 of the Financial Reports Addendum 2024; no irregularities were found.
- VIII. Pastors’ Report
  - a. Printed report is found on page 10 of the annual report.
  - b. Pastor Dave reported that the task for 2025 is to encourage all members of Faith Lutheran to participate, get involved, get excited. We want the congregation to be all in on the life of Faith and the Leap of Faith capital campaign.

- IX. President's Report and Ministry Team Reports
- a. Dennis Langehaug presented. The printed report is found on pages 10-11 of the annual report.
    - i. It is a blessing to see the level of activity that goes on around the church.
    - ii. If you are hesitant to serve when the nominating committee calls, don't be. It is a great experience.
  - b. Ministry Team written reports begin on page 17 of the annual report. There are six ministry teams that oversee broad areas of Faith's ministry. Thank you to those who serve on them.
- X. Order of Business
- a. Election of Church Council and Ministry Team members.
    - i. Seven current members agreed to serve second terms.
    - ii. Richard Settergren is nominated to fill the open position on the Children, Youth and Family team and Derek Durst is nominated to fill the opening on the Worship team.
    - iii. Two positions remain unfilled.
    - iv. Call for any nominations from the floor
    - v. M/S/C for the secretary to cast a unanimous ballot for the election of new members.
    - vi. M/S/C to give the Church Council approval to fill the open positions.
  - b. Approve 2025 Budget
    - i. The budget is found in detail in the Financial Reports Addendum 2024
    - ii. Proposed budget is \$1,021,259.
    - iii. Benevolence, health premiums and salary increases account for most of the increase.
    - iv. M/S/C to approve proposed 2025 budget.
  - c. Reflections from church staff on the Leap of Faith capital campaign and how its success would impact each of their areas, including one-level worship, unified special services such as confirmation and the children's Christmas program, space to host events that we are unable to at this time, additional Sunday School rooms, having space to be in community with one another, that our current worship spaces are very separate from each other, the ability for our vibrant congregation to help spread the mission to our local community and the world.
- XI. Closing Prayer led by Pastor Dave Wollan.
- XII. Adjournment
- a. Thank you to all who served and helped prepare for the meeting.
  - b. M/S/C to adjourn the meeting at 1:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Amanda Schueler, Congregational Secretary

## Pastors' Report

*"Jesus said to him, 'If you are able! All things can be done for the one who believes.'"* – Mark 9:23

In 2025, as Faith Lutheran celebrated its 155<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the year began by looking ahead and taking a leap of faith. This congregation has been so blessed with thriving ministries, packed worship spaces, overflowing Sunday School rooms and a gifted staff. These blessings have led to a fortunate dilemma: we need more room. The Leap of Faith capital campaign's goal was to raise the funds needed to provide that space for growth and to unify our congregation. Thanks to the hard work of the Phase II Building Committee (P2BC) and the Phase II Finance Team (P2FT) led by Jessi Boike and Sara Wegner, we recounted the stories of Faith's past capital campaigns and prepared to "leap" together. In response, the family of Faith made the highest number of pledges that it ever has for a capital campaign, including the biggest individual pledge ever given! Even with those generous commitments, however, the amount pledged still falls way short of what it will take to pursue the full Phase II project, leaving the church with some decisions to make about how to move forward. These decisions will no doubt be a part of Faith's story in 2026.

Beyond the Leap of Faith capital campaign, it was pretty much business as usual this year, but at Faith Lutheran business as usual means a lot of exceptional ministry and energetic mission. Worship attendance has been strong. We are on track to meet our annual budget again. Our staff continues to work hard to lead effective ministries. As a member of this church, we hope you see the energy and enthusiasm around children's and youth ministries, and the beauty and quality produced by our music ensembles. What you might not see are the countless relationships, ministries, and initiatives that occur behind the scenes—support groups, Bible studies, pastoral visits, numerous volunteers and so much more that is reflected in this report. We are so blessed!

As we move into a new year, would you join us in prayer?

- Pray that more of our members will see the need and feel inspired to make generous pledges toward the Leap of Faith capital campaign. Pray for the Lord to guide the P2BC and P2FT teams as they explore and present options to the congregation.
- Pray for Faith's staff, that God will inspire them and give them endurance as they continue to serve our congregation in the ministry areas in which they are called.
- Pray for the Lord to provide for the ministry needs of our congregation by inspiring generous givers to help fund Faith's ministry fully again in 2026.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to continue to gather, enlighten, and sanctify us here at Faith, drawing us to worship, service, learning and fellowship with one another. Pray that He would continue to draw in the lost and mobilize us to go in peace and serve the Lord!
- Pray that the Lord would call some Flinterns for the 2026-2027 year. We have received some promising interest, so pray that those prospects follow through.
- Pray for us! Ask God to continue to equip us and use us to fulfill our calling to serve Christ's Church through the office of ministry. It is an honor and a privilege for us to serve!

Let's leap into 2026 together!

Pastor Scott Grorud

Pastor Dave Wollan

## **Congregational President's Report**

Dear fellow members of Faith Lutheran Church,

It is hard to believe that two years have already passed. On one hand, the time has gone by so quickly. On the other, I think of all that has happened at church in that time from youth events, community meals, building projects, special congregational meetings, after school programs, holiday services, council meetings, Sunday school programs, organ drama, so many doughnuts, the list goes on and on. Time really does fly when you're having fun. I have learned and appreciated so much about how our church works and the amount of effort our pastors, staff and volunteers put in to support the various ministries our church offers. It has been a blessing to be involved in the decision making and to have a behind-the-scenes look into all that goes on at Faith. I am thankful for this time and for the support of the congregation. I have enjoyed the deeper connection to our church and the relationships that have developed as a result. I also encourage others to plug-in and get involved, to contribute so that all that we enjoy about Faith Lutheran can continue.

It has been a joy to serve alongside the pastors, staff and other council and ministry team members. There are so many talented people with a wide range of experience, skills and expertise that make working together to solve challenges and accomplish goals simple and straightforward. I praise God for bringing people together to be able to make their unique contributions. We all have something to offer. Some of us have time to give, others have money and still others are good at making decisions or offering wisdom or have a background that is well suited for an area of ministry. Thankfully, as members of the body of Christ, no one of us needs to be an expert on everything, but we can rely on each other. God does not need us all to be able to give great sermons or wrangle large groups of children. He can use each of us in the ways we have individually been equipped.

As the President, I have been serving on the Management Ministry team which is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the church building. This effort is never ending; however, I am pleased with what we were able to complete this year to support all that goes on within and beyond these walls. Things like carpet, windows, door locks, plumbing pumps and keeping the weather out are all part of what we have been spending time on this year to ensure the other aspects of the life of the church have a place to operate. There are more details in the Management Team report, but I am glad for those that contribute financially and/or with their time to keep our church building and space comfortable, safe and useful.

As we begin a new year, I want to focus on a couple of items. The capital campaign for the Phase II building project is still very much active and funds have continued to be contributed. These funds have been and will continue to be responsibly invested to earn interest while we await the day when there is enough to take action on a new sanctuary. This sanctuary is meant, figuratively and literally, to bring together our somewhat segmented congregation, and I pray that day will be here soon. This will only happen with congregation-wide generous and sacrificial giving. I would also encourage consistent giving throughout the year, rather than catching up on offerings in the last few weeks of the year. We, as a congregation, approve the next year's budget and at the same time, personally commit financially to fund that budget. Historically, 20% of the annual budget is given in December. Meanwhile, expenses have been steady for the other 11 months of the year. Each year, the church dips into a reserve balance to cover the gap, but how great would it be not to be running a large deficit for most of the year? I would ask each family prayerfully to consider how they can help support the current and future mission and ministry of Faith Lutheran Church.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve, and I look forward to what God has planned for His Church.

May God continue to bless Faith Lutheran Church and may He continue to bless each of you.

Jon Kamrath  
President



## **Report from Pastor Paul Knudson, Missions Ministry**

I simply want to thank the congregation for the blessings that come to me with my multiple connections to mission partners. In the turbulence all around the world in these troubled times, being able to hear the concerns of our mission partners and to be able to see what our mission dollars do to encourage them and sustain them in their witness blesses my life.

Our partners in places like India, Ethiopia, Estonia, Nigeria, and YWAM (Katie Weikle) are grateful for the prayer and financial support they receive through us. The dollars may be great or small. It is the encouragement they feel and express that brings joy to my life. In this report I simply want to thank you and encourage us to be faithful and generous as we go into a new year.

While leadership in our mission endeavors is my principal role, I continue in small ways to visit the elderly in their homes or care facilities. This also is a blessing.

## **Report from Pastor Paulus Pilgrim, Visitation Pastor**

I thank God that we had a good year of visitation, support groups, and Seniors' Potluck events. During 2025 we mourned the loss of steering committee member Norine Roepke. While she was a member of St. Matthews, Fernando township, she regularly came to potluck meetings and accepted the call to be on the steering committee. Our steering committee has a strong line-up of interesting programs for 2025-2026 program year. They are given a vote of confidence by the fact that attendance numbers are slowly climbing upward. So thanks to each member: LoAnn Hanson, Dick Desens, Daryl Bateman, Gladys Pilgrim, Marsha Schmit and yours truly.

Our visitation program continues in strength. We focus on two groups: (1) those with acute illness and emotional trials; and (2) those unable to attend worship due to being homebound or housed in assisted living or nursing home facilities. Besides my visiting members, our Pastoral Care team includes all four pastors, Marsha Schmit and Jeff Amundson. Marsha makes numerous calls and texts to keep our visitation list current and keep us tuned in on acute needs. Our biggest frustration is when we don't know that someone has been hospitalized or in some other acute need. By law, hospitals and facilities are prevented from notifying us. Please call us!

Most people are hesitant to attend one of our support groups – FACe (cancer group), grief support, and caregivers support. Those who overcome their timidity and attend tell us how glad they are to have participated.

Praise God that we are known as a congregation that cares and provides care in practical and compassionate ways.

## **Report from Pastoral Associate Jeff Amundson**

God continues His blessings for me, being able to continue to serve Him and Faith Lutheran. I have had many wonderful experiences and service opportunities.

The last year, I was blessed to continue meeting with the Faith family and sharing conversations, worship and communion. Many of those I visit with have, like me, been around Hutch for a long time and we have great memories to share. The time often flies by so quickly. The Seniors' potlucks are a wonderful time to talk to many people and share our faith together. Plus, there is tasty food!! And good speakers!!

Bible studies continue at some facilities, and I was even asked to have a "Bible study series." I increased my activities and visits in 2025 and hope God grants me the strength and blessings to continue in 2026. Bless the Years Sunday was very inspiring as Pastor Paulus, Marsha and I teamed up to give the sermon and celebrate Faith's Seniors.

The Fellowship Against Cancer (FACe) Group continues to meet and discuss topics related to cancer including faith, family, treatment, terminal prognosis, and the challenges of living with the changes that cancer brings to people and those around them. We had our 4<sup>th</sup> annual gathering this last summer with great food, camaraderie, and a great speaker talking about grief management.

Dealing with daily living losses for the cancer patient and their families is a significant challenge. FAcE continues to grow in members, and the benefits for patients and their families are undeniable. Sharing together is a true blessing from God, giving hope, lessening stress and worry, and helping to give greater joy to each day.

It has also been a great blessing to help out in Faith's other activities like Digging Deeper, lectionary study, reading, communion helper, etc. Overall, it was a fine year, and I look forward to 2026 with hope and excitement on where God will lead us.

## **Report from the Director of Pastoral Care and Evangelism**

**Marsha Schmit**

*“Listen to me, my people and give heed to me, my nation; for a teaching will go out from me, and my justice for a light to the peoples.” Isaiah 51:4*

This year has been kind of tough in our world. These words from Isaiah spoke to me as a reminder that God is in control and His justice will prevail!

I started my 27<sup>th</sup> year working at Faith in July. Every year is different, but one thing remains! I enjoy what I do and thank God for the privilege of working at the church! Below is a recap of some of the things that took my time:

- Took and gathered pictures, arranged for greeters for photography and worked with the company for the new pictorial directory.
- Met with Paulus and Jeff for monthly mentoring, and prepared and gave my first mini sermon for Bless the Years Sunday! I have a new appreciation for our pastors who preach every week. It takes so much preparation!
- Worked with Paulus and Jeff on the monthly Seniors' potluck.
- Monthly book club has fourteen in the group. I order the books and facilitate the conversation. It is a great group and a true joy to meet and learn together.
- Worked with the pastors to organize pastoral care: visits, communion services, etc. I am privileged to go on a few visits a month and go on visits to moms when they have their first baby. I also organized the Caring Card Ministry and helped to train two new Befrienders with Paulus.
- Weekly exercise group and weekly Prayer Team meetings with some faithful ladies.
- Organized weekly volunteers for the worship services and help on Sunday mornings with whatever is needed.
- And our favorite thing on staff: other duties as assigned! (You'd be surprised at those! 🍌)

Again, it is a true joy to work at Faith, and I thank God and you for the privilege!

## **Report from the Director of Children and Family Ministries**

**Laura Stowman**

### **SCHOOL YEAR**

**Aftershock:** This is an afterschool ministry on the early release days of school. Children in Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> grade are picked up from Park, Tiger and West Elementary by the Laabraton Bus around 1:15 p.m. They are dropped off at church and picked up by parents at 4:30 p.m. While at Aftershock, children have snack and quiet time, and rotations of crafts, games, and Bible Story. We meet for worship and end with snacks and more quiet time. Serving 48 children and supported by 3 staff members, 4 adult helpers, and numerous high school helpers.

**56er's:** This is an afterschool ministry for anyone in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade. We have 25 students who come to Faith from 2:30 p.m. – 5:15 p.m. We have a hang-out time, snacks, lesson, and game. Our lessons always involve asking a question about God, the Bible, or our faith and then looking at the Bible to see how we can answer the question. We also do a few service projects like help with Trick or Treat for the Food Shelf, pack boxes for Operation Christmas Child, newborn kits for Global Health Ministries, and school bags for Orphan Grain Train.

**Sunday School:** We kicked off the 2025-2026 school year on September 7 at Library Square. Students had class at picnic tables and Faith Rocks was at the band shelter. This is always a great way for students to ease back into Sunday School and for new students to feel comfortable meeting their teachers and classmates. Since we have 182 children registered, a fourth 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade class was created. In total, there are 17 classes with a regular attendance of 120 students/ Sunday.

**Christmas Program:** Since we have so many students in Sunday School, the children had to split their Christmas Program. The Preschool – 1<sup>st</sup> grade students sang three songs at the 10:10 a.m. Sanctuary Worship Service on December 21 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade Sunday School students presented a Christmas Program at 2 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

**Sprouts:** Sprouts has really grown in attendance for this year, with about 25 students attending (max. has been 45 students). Volunteers lead a pre-written lesson for children based on the Gospel reading for the day during the sermon of the 10:10 a.m. Foundation worship service. We are always looking for volunteers though.

**Nursery:** Monica Schiller staffs the nursery from 8:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. each Sunday during the school year to provide parents with babies and toddlers the opportunity to attend Digging Deeper classes and 10:10 a.m. worship services with less distraction.

### **SUMMER MINISTRIES**

**God Squad:** On Wednesdays in the summer, from 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., the summer interns, Kristen and I led games, a Bible study and small groups for children who completed 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grade. We had fewer students this summer, but the conversations were still wonderful!

**Vacation Bible School:** June 30 – July 3 from 9 a.m. – noon at Christ the King Lutheran Church. 101 children signed up to participate in True North VBS and 50 volunteers helped. Faith partnered with Christ the King to teach children that we can trust Jesus in this wild world, because He is our True North.

**Mystery Bus:** June 24 - 26 from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. with 22 students attending. Mystery Bus is a fun-filled local mission trip for middle school students, with service projects and team building in the morning and an activity for fun in the afternoon. Service projects included touring Creek Side Soil, then weeding and removing invasive trees at our local parks, cleaning out Sunday School rooms, and packing food for Feed My Starving Children in Chanhassen. Activities included going to Slick City, rock climbing at Vertical Endeavors, and visiting the Science Museum.

**Day Camp:** August 4 - 7 from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at Faith Lutheran Church, for kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Time filled with worship, crafts, and games. 50 children attended. The program was led by counselors from Ingham Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camps. Sadie (the Day Camp Leader), Nick, Susanne, Monse, and Evan were wonderful!

**Bible Camp:** Ten children attended for either half of the week or for the entire week of July 13 – 18 at Ingham Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camps. The cost of camp was lower due to the amazing financial support of donors from our church to go toward camper scholarships!

**Interns:** Kristen and I had two summer interns this summer, Ellie Wollan and Chris Nelson. They learned how to work as a team, connect with youth, help with VBS, lead lessons and games, helped with Middle School Madness, and helped with Mystery Bus.

## **Report from the Director of Youth and Family Ministries**

### **Kristen Durst**

Oh, what a year! Every day I give thanks that God has called me to this ministry at our church. Our young people, our teenagers, are my favorite people. It is a blessing to see how God shows up in their lives and that I get to walk alongside them in their faith as they walk along with mine.

**Middle School:** The joy that middle school ministries bring to me is immense. They fill my days with laughter, deep questions, and so much fun. I loved our retreat up to Inspiration Point to learn about the history of Martin Luther in April. These retreats are one of the best things about our youth program at our church and our kids acknowledge and celebrate that. Over the summer, Laura and I were able to take our middle schoolers on the Mystery Bus, which is a mini-mission trip. I love that our kids like to have fun together. We confirmed our 9th graders on October 26 with a very full sanctuary. What a gift to fill a worship space to the brim to celebrate the faith of our young people.

**High School:** This year has been a year of consistency. I have loved having each class come up over the years. I

am proud of our 9<sup>th</sup>-graders for how consistent they have been and how they keep inviting people to come. We see between 30 - 40 youth on any given Wednesday. In a world full of choices, our high schoolers choose to be here on Wednesdays digging into God's word, worshiping, and having fun together. I am grateful for the support that the high schoolers are to me and to our leaders. We have dived into various books of the Bible, talked about hard topics, and had real conversations about life. I am thankful for the leader team that regularly shows up for our youth. What a gift their ministry is to the life of our youth. I would be absolutely nothing without them! One highlight is that we have had many high schoolers get baptized for the first time this past year. It was an honor to welcome Julian Volkov, Cooper Larson, and Brady Larson officially into the family of God!

**Mission Trip:** In the beginning of 2025, I was able to lead a college-aged mission trip to Camp Penuel in Costa Rica. I took six young adults with me there and we were able to be immersed in camp life and enjoy the warmth. This is my third time serving there and I am so thankful for the relationships that our church has built! Though our return left a little to be desired with our group passing around norovirus, I thank God for his provision and the joy that this place brings to us! We took our annual mission trip to Indianapolis, Indiana this past summer with 45 youth and 13 leaders. God showed up time and time again on this trip. From the generous support of our congregation, to luggage being delivered when it got left in Minneapolis, to a bin being retrieved that was left three hours away; I can't thank God enough for His provision in the chaos. We had the opportunity to serve in various hunger relief organizations all around the community. This trip was marked with some of the most intentional prayer I have ever witnessed and the community was tight-knit. Thank you to our congregation for your continued support of these mission trips. We are so blessed and I do not take that for granted.

**Interns:** This past summer, we were able to bring on two summer fellows to work alongside Laura and me. We are thankful for the ministry and leadership of Ellie Wollan and Chris Nelson. We are looking forward to having a few interns in the fall as we have many strong leads for candidates. Please be in prayer for this!

**Prayer Request** - Please pray for God to continue to bring youth to our church to dive into their faith. I have been so encouraged by this and I pray that this place is a source of God's love. Pray for the people who lead these youth, that their cups abound and pour over as they pour into others.

Thank you for your continued prayer and support of youth ministries at Faith Lutheran Church. I do not take for granted serving in this church. I am privileged and humbled to serve here.

## **Report from the Director of Music and Worship**

### **Austin Willhite**

New Year's greetings to all the family of Faith Lutheran Church. 2025 was a year truly blessed by the Lord and I pray that his faithfulness continues to be evident in all that we say and do through the next! The information below is a comprehensive summary of what each ministry in the music department at Faith accomplished this year, as well as where we are going and what we as the congregation should expect in 2026.

#### **FAITH SINGERS**

Ministries that run the course of what we call our "program year" (September through May) are presented in the annual report as the late half of the previous year, or season as I refer to it, and first half of the current season. I write my reports in this way to keep all information within one year's time frame and to show growth or decline of the ministry programs from the conclusion of one season to the start of the next. This is the case for Faith Singers.

The late half of Faith Singers' season (2024-25) that concluded in May of this past year ended well with 21 members active or somewhat active in rehearsals and worship performances. Outside of regular Sunday worship and the extra Lent through Easter services in the spring, members of Faith Singers participated in the annual *Messiah Sing* on May 4. After a summer hiatus from weekly rehearsals, the 2025-26 season began in September with an open house that added two new members to the roster. Having lost two members, the current membership remains at 21 active or somewhat active members. September through December brings many special worship opportunities such as Reformation Day, Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas, and more in between. Faith Singers started the year strong, singing well in worship and outside of worship. The group prepared and presented its own selection as well as participating in the mass choir for this year's annual "Coming Together in Song" fundraising concert for Common Cup Ministry, for which I also serve as the artistic director.

This concert took place at Christ the King on Sunday, November 16. We also had an additional opportunity this fall as we welcomed the singers from St. John's Lutheran Church in Howard Lake for an afternoon concert on Sunday, November 30. Several new music selections were purchased for Faith Singers this year.

## **RINGERS OF FAITH**

Ringers of Faith is another ministry that runs its season over the program year. Last season ended strong with 10 members. During the open house at the start of our 2025-26 season, we gained three new members bringing our total to 13, with one of those members serving as a "swing" (in case of emergency/substitute). This is the largest the group has been since it revived in 2020! New binders, gloves, and music were purchased over the summer for this current season.

## **FAITH KIDS' MUSIC CLUB**

Faith Kids' Music Club (shortened Kids' Club) is a Wednesday program for children in grades 2 through 4 that meets from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. in the music room. Last season ended with seven kids and this season we have eleven enrolled with an even mix of ages—a great improvement from last year's numbers! Kids' Club continues to sing songs, try new instruments, and play games, all while learning about worship, the church year, and the Bible. A new curriculum was purchased to supplement the current lesson and activity plans.

## **TECHNOLOGY/EQUIPMENT**

Two main events with technology and equipment are noteworthy.

1. The organ experienced issues over the summer. Communication from the technician is slow, but the problems seem to have been identified. A long-term fix is yet to be reached, with hopes of being fulfilled beginning in 2026. Funds to pay for the organ repairs were sourced from undesignated memorial monies and donations by two anonymous members of the congregation.
2. Sanctuary and Foundation sound systems. The sanctuary sound system experienced issues over the summer that raised concerns about the age of the current equipment and the longevity of such equipment in both the sanctuary and Foundation worship spaces. Two audio/visual companies were contacted for quotes, Sim Sound of Winona and Audio Logic Systems (ALS) of Eden Prairie. Representatives from both companies came to survey the current set-up of both worship spaces and to gain an understanding of the needs. It was later determined that the representative from ALS, Jim Jordahl, had used, but nearly new equipment for sale that would lower the cost of an entirely new system. This equipment was purchased and will be installed in January of 2026 in the Foundation space. The issues in the sanctuary have been remedied, but the needs, primarily for the Foundation space, are still pressing. Funds to complete the entire project have not yet been secured.

## **OTHER MINISTRIES/EVENTS**

January – Austin attended National Lutheran Choir (NLC) choral "tune-up"

May 4 – Annual *Messiah Sing*, jointly with Christ the King choir and other community members

August – Austin attended Augsburg Summer Music Clinic

November 16 – *Coming Together in Song* Common Cup Ministries fundraiser concert

November 30 – Joint choir concert at Faith with St. John's Lutheran of Howard Lake

## **PRAYER REQUEST**

*May the God of creation who blessed us with the gift of musical expression continue to guide our hearts and minds through him and Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen!*

Soli Deo Gloria, Austin

## **MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS**

### **Children, Youth and Family Ministry Team**

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY TEAM 2025 members: Jamie Kaping, Tara Strey, Jessi Boike, Lola Bradford, Tayja Mackendaz, Kati Katzenmeyer, Richard Settergen; Kristen Durst and Laura Stowman, staff advisors. The Children Youth and Family ministry team has a wide variety of programs, activities, and ministries that it works with every year. The team supports Christian parents in nurturing the faith of children and youth in the church by various means.

In 2025, we worked together in the following areas:

#### **Community Outreach Meal:**

The CYF team served walking tacos and cookies or bars on Sunday, October 12, 2025.

#### **Faith Family Fun:**

Family events organized by our team to bring generations together included: assisting in the Graduate Recognition breakfast and confirmation breakfast, swimming at the Hutchinson Middle School Pool, having Fall Kickoff at Library Square with outdoor Sunday School, and hosting a Happy Birthday Jesus Party.

#### **Supported our Director of Children and Family Ministries in the following ministries:**

Vacation Bible School, B23, Mystery Bus, Sunday School, Sprouts, Christmas Program, and Day Camp.

#### **Supported our Director of Youth and Family Ministries in the following ministries:**

Confirmation teaching and service, Youth Night, God Squad, and Mission Trips.

### **Church in the World Ministry Team**

Members: Pastor Paul Knutson (Staff Advisor), Rebecca Dressen (Chairperson), Kim Pearson (Council Rep.), Sharon Jenkins (Council Rep.), Dorothy Desens, Carol Otto, Connie Saloum, Lisa Ishihara and Patti Lenz.

The Church in the World Team is dedicated to supporting mission work locally and globally by building relationships, fostering hospitality, and partnering with organizations that share Christ's love through ministry and service.

Through our global mission partnerships, we extend Faith Lutheran's outreach, bringing the Word of God and support to communities around the world. This year, we were blessed to welcome Thelma from Camp Penuel in Costa Rica, who shared stories of the camp's ministry and its positive impact on children and families. We also enjoyed hosting Miguel and his wife Varinia, one of our newest mission partners serving in Uruguay, and learning about their call and ministry in a largely secular and agnostic country.

Our local mission efforts included partnerships with organizations such as Common Cup, Awaken Project, and The Closet, and Faith Lutheran's own ministries, including the community meal and the Blessing Box. Through these partnerships and ministries, we are able to extend care and support that makes a meaningful difference within our local community.

In early November, the Church in the World Ministry team presented during Digging Deeper on Mission Sunday, giving us the opportunity to share the breadth of our mission work and celebrate the ways our congregation supports these efforts.

Each year, the committee receives a budget equal to 11% of the previous year's total General Fund offerings, which is used to support our mission partners near and far. Through faithful stewardship of these funds, we are able to participate in God's work both in our community and around the world.

### **Congregational Life Ministry Team**

The Congregational Life Ministry Team seeks to integrate church members into the life and mission of Faith Lutheran. Members include: Sue Alrick, Tanja Glaser, Shelly Grorud, Tammy Kirchoff, Juli Monahan, Monica Schiller and Marsha Schmit (Staff liaison).

Here's a list of things the Congregational Life Ministry Team accomplished in 2025...

- Welcomed Sue Alrick to our team
- Served cake/coffee during the Leap of Faith Capital Campaign Launch
- Wrote out/mailed cards to 22 First Communion recipients
- Planned/prepared/served a "Community Meal" in Faith Center
- Planned/prepared/served a "Lenten Picnic" in the Faith Center
- Organized food drive for "McLeod County Food Shelf"
- Wrote out/mailed cards to 20 students confirmed at Faith Lutheran
- Donated money collected during the Lenten Picnic to:
  - Meghan's Place (\$150) Common Cup (\$190) Food Shelf (\$150)
- Discussed/began organizing photo sign up etc. for the Faith Lutheran pictorial directory
- Wrote out/sent 19 graduation cards for Faith Lutheran, high school graduates
- Organized/served "Treats in the Park" for an outdoor service in Library Square
- Hosted "Sundaes on Sunday" between both services at Library Square
- Collected/served the "Pie and Dessert Social" after Thanksgiving Eve service
- Put up the Giving Christmas Trees and collected 50 Christmas gifts from the congregation for Chap Ministries which provides gifts for seniors in McLeod County

Submitted by,  
Juli Monahan, Chair

## **Discipleship Ministry Team**

Discipleship is a lifelong journey of following and becoming more like Jesus Christ, involving spiritual growth, and helping others to do the same through relationships, mentorships, and living out faith daily.

Members for the 2025 year: Cheryl Buboltz (Council Representative), Shari Dorival Barb Hedin, Wendy Magruder (Staff Liaison) Mike McDowell, Tim Meier, Julie Renkes, Lori Swift (Council Representative), and Roberta Yukel.

Our Purpose: To support group activities that encourage unity and growth as the body of Christ.

This team was involved in selecting and implementing a number of ministry activities throughout 2025.

- 1) Welcome Calls – made to all new members shortly after joining Faith personally to welcome them and answer any questions they may have, encouraging them to become personally involved in the church based on their interests and talents.
- 2) May Baskets were created and personally delivered to homebound members of Faith.
- 3) Free Community Meal – this team prepared and served a pre-bagged meal to those in the community from Veterans Park. Leftover meals were distributed via Common Cup and the Blessing Box.
- 4) Soup/Chili Supper – this team is responsible for organizing and putting on the annual soup and chili supper. Donations at this meal were sent to Common Cup Ministries. This team also purchased and prepared winter survival packets for CCM to hand out.
- 5) Served treats at one of the Library Square park services. The team found this a great opportunity to meet and greet individuals that they do not normally see at more typical worship services.
- 6) Celebration cards were sent throughout the year to members celebrating a baptism or their membership anniversaries.
- 7) Bibleopoly – 2025 was a year of challenge to our congregation to read the Bible. Bibleopoly display boards were created and set out for readers to place stickers to track their reading. This was followed up with a "Bibleopoly Celebration" on January 4, 2026.
- 8) This year the team organized a float for the annual Water Carnival Parade as an opportunity to hand out flyers about Faith Lutheran Church.

Respectfully submitted by Lori Swift



## **Management Ministry Team**

Members of the 2025 Management ministry team included Jon Kamrath, Scott Glaser, Al Liepold, Niki Pokornowski, Maria Weikle and Lenny Rutledge. Staff liaisons were Pastor Scott Grorud and Sara Wegner.

The Management ministry team oversees the finances and property of the church by:

- Supervising the budget process of the church and the allocation of all funds.
- Securing adequate insurance to protect the church and its properties.
- Keeping record of all money and property donated to the church and investing or dispersing of funds as directed by the Church Council or congregational meeting.
- Providing monthly financial reports to the Church Council.
- Overseeing the maintenance and improvement of the church properties.
- Recommending, supervising and supporting the church custodian(s).

Highlights from the Management team's work in 2025:

- Installed new carpet in the west narthex
- Fixed and replaced interior and exterior door locks
- Replaced a window on the north end of the upper level
- Reclaimed Ansgar House lawn from weeds
- Parking Lot - filled cracks, sealed surface, painted parking lines
- Replaced Ansgar House garage doors (3)
- Replaced Ansgar House shed roof and floor
- Sealed bell tower attic floor

Respectfully submitted by Jon Kamrath

## **Worship Ministry Team**

The Worship Ministry Team is responsible for guiding and supporting ministries at Faith Lutheran which pertain to worship services and other special music services.

- We welcomed new members in February. The elected team included: Karna Blake (council rep.), Dave Skaar (council rep.), Sandy Curtiss, Roxanna Boe, Mona Hjerpe, Emily Troska, Mary Parker, Derek Durst, and Austin Willhite, staff liaison. After the death of Sandy Curtiss, Karna Blake also stepped down. Justin Beck filled one open position, leaving one position (the council rep. position) open. This position remained open the whole year, with Dave Skaar as the only council rep. from the Ministry Team.
- Served the community meal in April 2025. We served sloppy joes, chips, coleslaw, and various dessert items. Attendance was 39 people.
- Coordinated the Maundy Thursday disciple reenactment skit and provided a meal to all involved. This is a much-beloved part of the Maundy Thursday service, and it was very rewarding to see it come to fruition!
- Had two audio-visual companies come in to assess our sound needs in both the sanctuary and the Foundation worship spaces: Sim Sound of Winona, MN and Audio Logic Systems of Eden Prairie, MN. This will help determine our best path for upgrading and ensuring a stable system. This process is on-going and will require funding through the new year.
- With Austin's guidance, the Ministry Team attended to needs with the organ. We worked with the Allen organ technician to find the problem and solutions. The ministry team made a recommendation to council for repairs. Funding for repairs was provided by undesignated memorial funds and donations from two anonymous donors. At the time of writing this report, completion of repairs is still on-going.
- Stayed involved with the set up and tear down of Library Square worship. Kudos to all who volunteered!
- Implemented a new digital mixing board for the summer park service and trained additional volunteers in its operation. We will expand this new mixer's capabilities in the future for other purposes outside of park worship.
- Austin hosted two open houses for the Faith Singers and Ringers of Faith to encourage people to engage and inquire about these opportunities in a casual environment. Several new folks signed up for these ministry programs.



- Secured some used sound gear for the Foundation space, to be installed at a later date.
- Justin Beck has agreed to be a council representative beginning in 2026.

We are looking forward to several projects in 2026, which include seeking a sound system upgrade in the sanctuary and the Foundation worship spaces. These upgrades will be key in maintaining a good worship experience for our congregation. The equipment that is currently in place has served us well for nearly 30 years, but it is becoming increasingly unreliable and problematic. With these upgrades, the system will be simplified while greatly increasing stability.

We are also looking forward to seeking ways to beautify our worship, be it through physical beautification of the worship spaces or addition of special music during the various services. We also hope to bring more concerts and music events at the church for our community.

Respectfully submitted, Justin Beck

## **Personnel Committee Report**

Current members of the Personnel Committee: Dennis Langehaug, Jon Kamrath, Scott Glaser, John Olsen, Chris Wilke, Brett Johnson, and Sara Wegner (chair).

The personnel committee is responsible for reviewing the staff benefits and compensation budgets, making any needed updates to the church's "Employee Policies and Handbook," working closely with staff and pastors on any staff concerns, issues, or hiring needs, and reviewing our 401(k) plan.

During this year, we reviewed the upcoming Minnesota Paid Leave plan that began on January 1, 2026. The committee also recommended an update to our benefits policy to allow part-time employees who work 20-29 hours per week to participate in the church's health insurance plan offered through LCMC, with such employees paying the entire cost of the premiums for any elected coverage.

We thank the staff members for their dedication and service to the congregation and community. Also, we thank the many volunteers for the time and commitment they give to support Faith Lutheran's staff and ministry.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sara Wegner, Personnel Committee

## **Seniors Task Force Report**

Most years our Seniors Task Force meets but once, and while they have their duties clear in their minds before coming to that meeting, it is more than mere routine. Task force members are LoAnn Hanson, Virginia Brodd, Lynn Splittgerber, Patti Anderson and David Franzen. These people plan our annual service of recognition of the contributions and needs of our beloved senior members. It is called "Bless The Years" Sunday and is held on the first Sunday in May. You may recall that our sermon on May 4, 2025, was a three-person proclamation by Jeff Amundson, Marsha Schmit and myself. Each of us focused on one facet of ministry to our senior members here at Faith Lutheran Church.

We also highlight one or more seniors who we believe exemplify faith in God in action and in Christian service in a *Faith Matters* article entitled, "Spotlight on Seniors." We thank God for our faithful senior members who bring wisdom, examples of faithfulness to God, and Christian service in our midst!

When other matters relating to seniors present themselves, this task force will meet to address them. For example, we recall when they prepared a special time for homebound and facility-housed seniors. We prepared transportation for them to the newly dedicated addition to our church. We supplied wheelchairs to give them a personal tour of the entire addition. Then we had treats and a special worship service for them. We are now longing for the next opportunity to repeat that preparation in our new sanctuary, entry space, kitchen and gathering space.

## **Faith Lutheran Church Women (FLCW) Report**

The following events were scheduled for 2025: Annual Rummage Sale, Augustana District's Annual Women of the Word (WOW) Fall Gathering and Christmas Luncheon.

The Rummage Sale was held May 1 and 2 during Hutchinson's city wide garage sale days. The reconstruction of Hassan Street closed all our parking lot entrances except for our 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue entrance. The dates were later than usual due to Easter being later in April and set-up would have been on Easter Sunday to have our sale the week before city wide sales. We raised \$5,600.00.

We provided treats for a July and an August outdoor worship service in Library Square.

In September, the FLCW hosted a live-streamed telecast of the Augustana District's Women of the Word Gathering at our church. The actual event was held at New Creation Lutheran Church in Perham, MN. Registrations totaled 10 women attending this live-streamed event. The theme was Be Still. We ordered sandwiches from Jimmy John's, and we had salads and dessert for our lunch. Speakers at Perham were: Erica Varcoe, pastor of LCMC's Table Ministry in Sioux Falls, SD; Lexy Carson, pastor at two rural Lutheran churches, Salem and Sauk Valley in Osakis, MN; and Jessica Bergland, a physical therapist and founder of Empower – helping women learn how mindfulness and faith work together to boost our spiritual, mental and physical well-being.

The November annual meeting began after the worship services concluded with an appetizer buffet and hot apple cider. The following women were elected officers for 2026: President Renee McRaith, Vice President Jan Kreie, Treasurer Mary Ann Ward and Secretary Barb Hedin.

The church kitchen got a well-needed deep cleaning in early December.

The Christmas Luncheon, with beautifully decorated theme tables, was well-attended, including two men. Our guest speaker was Linda Reinert from Mosaics on the Farm, Hutchinson. She spoke on peace, our theme, and how God can pick up our broken, cracked and chipped lives and make us into 'beautiful works of art' for His Glory. At Mosaics on the Farm, her home, Linda takes scraps of stained glass, broken china pieces and many other discarded items and makes them into jewelry and decorative pieces. Austin Willhite sang "Let there Be Peace on Earth."

Funds were disbursed to local and international groups: Faith Lutheran Church Missions & Outreach, FLC Leap of Faith capital campaign, Common Cup, New Hope Mission Society sewing project, Meghan's Place, FLC Hunger Appeal, McLeod Alliance for Domestic Abuse, Orphan Grain Train, Global Health Ministries, YWAM Ukraine Aid, Meals on Wheels, and Woodstone. The Ansgar House will receive funds when interns are residents again.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Barb Hedin

## **Faith Lutheran Quilters Report**

It has been a busy year for quilting at Faith. We were able to send:

To Orphan Grain Train

269 Quilts, 24 Book Bags, and 48 Pillowcase Dresses

To Global Health Ministries

510 pairs of socks, 21 body slings, 86 gowns and uniforms, 26 bed pads

150 assorted blankets, 1,900 rolled bandages, and 62 newborn kits

We would like to thank everyone who donated materials and the extra time spent delivering all of these items. A special thanks to all of the quilters who spent many hours of their own time so we could make all of this happen.

Diane Ferguson

## **Confidential E-Mail Prayer Chain**

***“Don’t worry about anything; instead pray about everything...” Philippians 4:6***

We have 30 men and women who receive prayer requests via e-mail. Our prayer warriors pray specifically upon receiving the confidential requests. You can submit prayer requests to me at grjohn45@gmail.com. If you would like to become a Faith Lutheran prayer warrior, please send me your e-mail address.

Geri Johnson

## **Prayer Shawl Ministry**

***“Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. I always pray for you and I make my requests with a heart full of joy...” Philippians 1:3, 4***

Our Faith Lutheran Prayer Shawl Ministry began in May of 2006. We have ten women actively involved in our ministry. In 2025, we presented 17 shawls. Over the past 19 years, we have presented 1,079 shawls! They have been given to residents of nursing homes/care centers, missionaries serving abroad, injured soldiers, deployed soldiers, Common Cup Ministry, those who are hospitalized, those who are mourning the death of a loved one, our youth, foster children, Hutch Health Cancer Center, and others. The shawls serve as a physical reminder that we remember the recipients in prayer.

***“Children are a gift from the Lord, they are a reward from Him.” Psalm 127:3***

Faith’s Prayer Shawl Ministry includes prayer blankets for newborn babies. We are currently in need of volunteers to crochet these baby blankets using the pattern and yarn that we will provide. Please call me at 320-587-6733 or e-mail me at grjohn45@gmail.com if you would like more information.

We supply yarn for our shawl makers. The yarn is purchased through gifts of money from the FLCW, the Endowment Fund, Mission & Outreach and individuals. THANK YOU for your continued support. THANK YOU to all who create our beautiful shawls and blankets. Each shawl and blanket is photographed and placed in an album with the name of the woman who created it. When each is given, the name of the recipient is recorded by the photo and also on a spread sheet.

If you knit or crochet and would like to become a part of our Prayer Shawl Ministry, please contact me at 320-587-6733 or grjohn45@gmail.com

Geri Johnson

## **Faith Lutheran Endowment Fund Report**

Members: Scott Ziegler, Chair; Kyle Schantzen, Treasurer/Secretary; Andy Reid, Virginia Brodd, and Bob Winslow

The Faith Lutheran Endowment Fund Committee for the year 2025 continued to follow the intended purpose of the fund to enhance the outreach mission of Faith Lutheran Church. During 2024, the Endowment Fund earned \$ 45,635 of investment income. The By-Laws state that 20% needs to be reinvested and the remaining amount was to be disbursed in 2025. The Endowment Fund did receive new donations of \$250 for the 2025 calendar year to be invested.

In 2025, the committee dispersed income totaling \$36,510 as follows:

- Global Mission – K.K. Alavi’s work in India, Augustana District/Tabor, YWAM for Katie Wielke, TAT, Global Health Care, Samaritan’s Purse
- Regional Missions – Ingham-Okoboji Camp, Mt. Carmel Bible Camp, Luther House of Studies, Abdul Messiah, Institute of Lutheran Theology, Lutheran Seminary Scholarship, Lutheran Disaster Assistance Fund
- Local Mission – The Closet in McLeod County, Student Scholarships, Common Cup, Christian Counseling Fund, Hutchinson Parent Life
- Special Mission Needs – Youth Mission Trip, New Hope Mission Society – Bible College, Rev K.K. Alavi Support, Augustana District, FLIP Internship Program

Respectfully submitted, Scott Ziegler, Chair

## **New Hope Mission Society (NHMS) Report**

The Board of New Hope Mission Society is thankful for the leadership Faith Lutheran Church continues to offer in seeing that Jesus Christ is lifted up through our partners, primarily at the Bishara Center and Bible college in southern India. The generosity of the congregation and its individual members giving leadership on the board is crucial for this mission still thriving in its witness.

Pastor Abdul Messiah was with us earlier this fall to share the mission's story to present and future supporters. Of special significance was his presence and sharing at our NHMS table at the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) annual gathering. It is apparent that LCMC has been adding new congregations and individuals to sustain this mission with their financial giving. We are thankful for Abdul and all who have helped tell the story of this witness primarily to Muslims.

K.K. Alavi, the founder of the mission, had a health scare this fall. It was seen as possibly life threatening. As a result, Abdul found it necessary to return home to be with him. Subsequently, it was found that K.K. could well go forward with his witness, for which all of us are thankful.

We have good reports of students of the Bible college returning to their home locations and giving leadership to house churches and other forms of witness. Sustaining this Bible college is very significant in ongoing training of these witnesses.

NHMS gives modest support for a leader of Christian witness in war-torn Nigeria. Dr. Christoph, our partner in witness, reports that, in the midst of trials, the witness of Christians to Muslims is continuing to bear much fruit in Nigeria.

Pastor Paul Knudson, for the Board of NHMS

## **Augustana District Annual Report**

Dear Augustana District Congregations: We have been reading our three-year-old daughter, Ruth, the story of her namesake in Scripture. It's not a long story to begin with, but we have been taking it in small pieces each night before bed. A few nights ago, we came to one of my favorite lines; words many of you may have heard at your weddings: "Where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God." (Ruth 1:16) My Ruth wrinkled her nose in confusion and asked what that meant. So, we talked about it; about God's faithfulness to us, and how we, in turn, are called to be faithful to those He has placed in our lives.

As I look back over this past year, God's faithful abundance has been on full display through all that he has accomplished in the Augustana District. Our staff and leaders planned and carried out events for pastors, lay members, and youth that not only proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ but also equipped participants with new tools and insights for living out their faith in a world that is passing away. Marney Fritts and the Board of Theology and Ministry welcomed new pastors into our midst. Nate Hanson and the Board of World Missions worked alongside congregations to vet mission partners and dream up new ventures, both domestic and international. And I, together with the District Council, helped onboard congregations into LCMC and the Augustana District, so that they might be encouraged and supported through the joys and challenges of ministry. I could offer a long list of statistics and data to show what we have accomplished this past year, but at the heart of it all is something far more important: God was faithful among us, freely giving his Word of forgiveness and mercy through his Son, Jesus Christ.

Not only was God faithful to us, but I also had the privilege of watching how faithfully our staff responded to you, and how you, in turn, poured into our district through your prayers, financial gifts, and countless other forms of support. I've said this many times (so often you may be tired of hearing it) but it's worth saying again: what sets the Augustana District apart within the LCMC landscape is the investment we've made in people. We walk alongside your pastors, leaders, and congregations because we believe ministry is never meant to be done alone.

When our staff gathers each month for meetings and check-ins, one theme always rises to the surface: it is a joy to be part of your stories. And in turn, it's a joy to have you as part of ours; to see you at events, to be welcomed into your boardrooms, to take your phone calls, field your questions, and navigate unknown waters together. To borrow Ruth's words: where you go, we want to go, because your God is our God.

Looking ahead, 2026 will no doubt bring its share of both trials and triumphs. Yet our staff is already dreaming about new ways to serve you in the year to come. New events are being planned, new resources are in development, and we remain committed to listening carefully to what you and your congregations need to flourish. So please reach out. Call, e-mail, or connect with a member of our team. Attend a gathering. Invite Marney, Nate, or me to visit your congregation in person or over Zoom so that we can equip and encourage you for the work before you. Through it all, our mission remains the same: grounded in confessional Lutheran theology, we seek to nurture healthy congregations and to cultivate abundant mission ventures. Thank you, dear friends in Christ, for your faithfulness to the Augustana District in 2025. Over 500 of you joined us at district events this past year, and we hope to see even more of you in the year to come. God's promise of faithfulness carries us forward into 2026, that where we go, He goes; and where we lodge, He lodges; for we are His people, and He is our Father.

In Christ,  
Rev. Aaron Deutsch  
District Coordinator

## **Common Cup Ministry Annual Report**

*"The mission of Common Cup Ministry is to gather and share spiritual and financial resources of area churches into one 'Common Cup' to serve those in need through the love and grace of Christ."*

Common Cup Ministry is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization governed by a board of directors from member churches and the area ministerial association. The board of directors meets monthly. Member churches are encouraged to have a representative to serve on the representative's council. This council meets monthly.

Bev Bonte is the Director of Common Cup Ministry. Jen Wicklund is the Program Director and Diane Pedersen is the bookkeeper.

Through a voucher system, Common Cup funds are administered by volunteers to help those who fall through the cracks of other assistance. These vouchers assist with rent, lodging, transportation, utility bills, laundry, clothing, medical resources, etc. We make referrals to McLeod Emergency Food Shelf and maintain a mini-food pantry at the CCM office. CCM promotes participation in the Fare for All food buying co-op. We support and help promote Laundry Love in both Hutchinson and Glencoe.

The CCM Thrift Store in Glencoe serves through receiving donations of household items and offering these items for resale and to those in need.

Volunteers are always welcome. Our volunteers offer spiritual ministry, as well as financial and emotional resources and support. For opportunities, please call Director Bev Bonte at 320-587-2213 or e-mail her at [bev@common-cup.org](mailto:bev@common-cup.org) or call Jen Wicklund at 320-583-9929 or email her at [jen@common-cup.org](mailto:jen@common-cup.org). THANK YOU to all who give so generously of your time!

Our space needs were solved this fall when we moved the CCM office to 405 California Street.

Our outreach programs for McLeod County residents include the...

- ... Annual Back to School Supply collection and distribution (served 550+ students)
- ... Annual Warm Coat collection and distribution, (approximately 600 people were served) We continue throughout the winter to provide these items per requests.
- ... Weekend Backpack Feeding Program for K-6th graders in McLeod County (385 students currently served)
- ... Bi-Monthly distribution of diapers in Hutch and Glencoe (over 120 bags given per month/totally)
- ... Food products delivered to area REACH programs
- ... Personal care products delivered to McLeod County schools, senior housing & family housing facilities.

The Annual Meeting of CCM will take place this spring at Hunter's Ridge Community Church in Hutchinson. Each CCM member church selects one person (their representative to CCM) to be its voting member. Reports on our financial position and outreach programs will be given. All are welcome and encouraged to attend this meeting.

THANK YOU to Faith Lutheran and its members for your generous gifts and for your willingness to volunteer. Through the generosity of our member churches, businesses and individuals we have been able to continue our assistance to individuals and families with an immediate need and to provide resources for assistance through other programs offered in McLeod County.

Geri Johnson  
Faith Lutheran's Representative to CCM

### Faith Lutheran Memorial Fund

The Faith Lutheran Memorial Fund receives financial gifts that are given to the church in memory of loved ones. These gifts can be designated to a specific area or ministry such as Sunday School, youth ministries, missions, music, the FLCW, endowment fund, etc. They can also be given as undesignated funds to be used for things that are wished for or needed but are not a part of the current budget. In the past, undesignated funds have been used for things like Sunday School risers, equipment for the office, sanctuary banners, hymnals, new puppets, repairs on the organ and more. If you have questions about the Memorial Fund, please contact Sharon Romo or me.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Virginia Brodd

### Faith Lutheran Church Budget vs Actual

	2025 Budget	Jan - Dec 25 Actual	2026 Proposed
Total REVENUE-OFFERINGS	968,500.00	990,777.91	1,022,000.00
Total REVENUE - MINISTRY ACTIVITY	43,809.00	33,808.03	45,765.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>1,012,309.00</b>	<b>1,024,585.94</b>	<b>1,067,765.00</b>
Total MINISTRY - Benevolence	102,603.00	103,603.00	109,000.00
Total MINISTRY FOR DISCIPLESHIP	47,532.00	44,600.32	46,890.00
Total MINISTRY FOR FLIP	4,000.00	116.40	4,000.00
Total MINISTRY FOR OUTREACH	14,165.00	12,812.14	14,265.00
Total MINISTRY FOR CARE	5,850.00	7,889.34	6,500.00
Total MINISTRY FOR WORSHIP	10,725.00	23,755.05	14,900.00
Total MINISTRY FOR ADMINISTRATION	136,750.00	131,132.45	136,290.00
Total MINISTRY FOR PERSONNEL	690,684.00	684,084.69	735,920.00
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>1,012,309.00</b>	<b>1,007,993.39</b>	<b>1,067,765.00</b>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Net Income</b>		<b>16,592.55</b>	
Other REVENUE - Mission Gifts		9,568.85	
Other MINISTRY Expense - Mission Gifts		9,568.85	

\*Full financial reports will be available in the church office.  
Please stop in or contact the church office at (320) 587-2093.

## **2025 Membership Updates**

### **Received through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism**

Wrenley Anderson	James Hjerpe	Lincoln Miller
Archer Cameron	Weston Hjerpe	Clara Pedersen
Adalynn Carter	Hudson Johnson	Daniel Resmen
Blair Corrow	Cooper Larson	Sonny Resmen
Maxwell Dettman	Colson Lee	Odin Rau
Sophia Dettman	Jace Lyons	Huxley Schwecke
Ezra DeMeyer Eickhoff	Lainey Mandelkow	Julian Volkov
Rhett Gauger	Lennon Mandelkow	Briella Wacek

### **Confirmed in their Faith on October 26, 2025**

Luca Docken	Nora Langins	Henry Solien
Ethan Dressel	Taryn Loe	Jones Thode
Gabriella Hudson	Lex Ostlie	Taylin Timm
Claire Katzenmeyer	Carley Putz	Maddox Varpness
Isabel Katzenmeyer	Kaden Schantzen	Judson Wendling
Gracyn Kosek	Samuel Schumann	Isaac Wilke
Faith Kottke	Hudson Smith	Bo Wilttrout
Taylor Lang		

### **New Members in 2024**

Erick and Brianna Bajari	Zac and Micaela Pedersen with Chase
Linda Betker	Margaret Schlisner
Mark Betker	Jullian Volkov
Joshua Fernandez	Kerry Ward
Eric Inselmann	Cal Wick
Aaron and Kayla Kellner with	Jia Wright
Kailyn, Bristen, Ryker, and Kaiser	Dan and Melisa Zenner

### **Married in 2025**

Jason and Kaylee Entinger	Jake and Miranda Wendland
Jacob and Jillian Gunderson	Cody and Jessica Wendlandt
Greg and Emma Mattson	Luke and Elizabeth Wollan
Joseph and Alexa Meyer	

### **Deaths in 2025**

John Ball	Alice Hansen	Craig Smith
Dean Bemis	Marcella Hansen	Arlen Solie
Crystal Branson	Frances Olson	Brenda Sturges
Sandra Curtiss	Jerome Reiner	Roger Voss
Shirley Hahn	Scott Schwarze	

# Faith Lutheran Church 2026 Council and Ministry Team Members

## Congregational Officers

**President:** Scott Glaser (2026)

**Secretary:** Niki Pokornowski (2026)

**Vice-President:** Jeff Schiller (2026; president-2027)

**Treasurer:** Jon Gelschus (2026)

## Ministry Team Members

### Children, Youth and Family

#### **Church Council Representatives**

Richard Settergren (2026)

McKenzie Smith (2027)

#### **Members**

Jamie Kaping (2026)

Tara Strey (2026)

Ashley Albrecht (2026)

Kati Katzenmeyer (2027)

Ashley Engel (2027)

Nora Langins (2027)

### Church in the World

#### **Church Council Representatives**

Kim Pearson (2026)

Connie Stromseth (2027)

#### **Members:**

Lisa Ishihara (2026)

Patti Lenz (2026)

Sharon Jenkins (2026)

Janet Taylor (2027)

(2027)

(2027)

### Congregational Life

#### **Church Council Representatives**

Monica Schiller (2026)

John Olsen (2027)

#### **Members**

Juli Monahan (2026)

Sue Alrick (2026)

Shelly Grorud (2027)

Judy Felber (2027)

### Discipleship

#### **Church Council Representatives**

Lori Swift (2026)

Donna Eastman (2027)

#### **Members**

Barb Hedin (2026)

Berta Yukel (2026)

Mike McDowell (2026)

Tim Meier (2027)

Kerry Ward (2027)

Scott Gandrud (2027)

### Management

#### **Church Council Representatives**

Scott Glaser President (2026)

Jeff Schiller Vice-President (2026)

Niki Pokornowski Secretary (2026)

Jon Gelschus Treasurer (2026)

#### **Members**

Lenny Rutledge (2026)

Maria Weikle (2027)

### Worship

#### **Church Council Representatives**

Dave Skaar (2026)

Justin Beck (2027)

#### **Members**

Emily Troska (2026)

Mary Parker (2026)

Derek Durst (2026)

Linell Loncorich (2027)

Steve Loncorich (2027)

Kaylee Entinger (2027)

### Nominating Committee

Shelly Kirchoff (2026)

John Langins (2026)

Kevin Elton (2026)

Amanda Langins (2027)

Jeff Kirchoff (2027)

Casey Nornes (2027)