

# Lent



## Pastors' Page

Faith Lutheran's church council recently authorized an uncommon and occasional policy for the Foundation worship service. The council provided an explanation of it at a Foundation service last month, but it involves an important liturgical issue that is worth presenting to the whole congregation.

This decision was made because the Foundation service, especially when Holy Communion was served, was often lasting 80 or even 90 minutes. Especially with the large number of small children attending there, it was becoming as much of an ordeal as a blessing. To make it balance better with the simultaneous Sanctuary service, the Foundation order of service was altered to place the Lord's Supper before the sermon rather than afterward. The change has worked well when both pastors are present, but when one of us is gone, it poses a problem. Pastor Dave and I always switch places in the middle of those two services, but on a Sunday when either of us is gone, the pastor who is here is not finished preaching at the Sanctuary service before it is time to administer the Lord's Supper in Foundation.

Normally, that role is reserved for an ordained pastor and is almost always done by Pastor Dave or me. For these rare occasions only, however, the church council authorized a lay member of the church, who has often led the opening liturgy at Foundation at non-communion services, to administer Holy Communion, as well, and we guided him on the theology and the practical aspects of doing so.

So why give this long explanation of a simple, practical decision? It is because there is widespread and strong disagreement in the Christian Church as to who has authority to administer the Lord's Supper. Some churches, such as Roman Catholics and Anglicans, teach that when priests are ordained God grants them a special grace that empowers them to turn the bread and wine into the sacrament. Those churches insist that an ordained priest *must* administer Holy Communion or there simply is no sacrament.

Some other Lutheran churches maintain that the Office of Ministry is essential for the sacrament to be valid. That is, it does not depend on any special grace given to the individual pastor, but it does require someone called into that office in order to administer it properly. Other churches, mostly in the Evangelical wing of Christianity, have little or no concern about how or even whether Holy Communion is conducted. The sacraments do not play a central role in their theology or ministry.



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## The Season of Lent Continues



The season of Lent continues with mid-week Lenten services each Wednesday until Holy Week. Faith Lutheran is again partnering during Lent with area LCMC churches: Christ the King, St. Matthew's in Fernando, St. Paul's in Stewart and Zion Lutheran in Buffalo Lake.

The theme for this year's mid-week services is "Fools and Fiends, Weeds and Workers: Parables for Lent." Through this series we are exploring seven intriguing parables that Jesus taught as we journey with him to the cross.

We encourage the whole family of Faith to attend these mid-week services to enrich your experience of Lent and to help prepare your hearts to celebrate the central good news of our faith, Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Here is the schedule of all the special services during Lent:

- **Lenten Services** – Wednesdays, through March 25, services at 6:30 p.m.
  - \* Confirmation students and families will attend services, then students will meet in their confirmation small groups for about a half hour after each service.
- **Maundy Thursday** - April 2, services at 6:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. (First Communion students will receive the Lord's Supper for the first time)
- **Good Friday** - April 3, joint services at 12 noon at Christ the King and at 6:30 p.m. at Faith Lutheran.
- **Easter Sunday** - April 5, Sunrise service at 6:00 a.m., traditional Easter services at 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. and a Foundation-style service at 11:00 a.m.



## Lenten Picnic

The Annual Lenten Picnic will be at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 18 before the mid-week Lenten service. Come for grilled hotdogs, beans, chips, lemonade and bars, and fellowship with the Faith family! Please join us for this taste of summer and then stay for the Lenten worship service at 6:30 p.m.



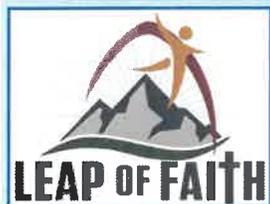
## Stewardship Matters

Last month, we reported the astounding outpouring of generosity to Faith Lutheran during December. It was a stunning amount that allowed the church to end last year slightly in the black and gave a big boost to the Leap of Faith capital campaign.

Given that flood of year-end offerings, it may not be a surprise that giving to the church in January was markedly lower. Gifts to the General Fund were \$9,000 below January, 2025, and \$13,000 lower than the budget plan for the year.

Even if they are perfectly understandable, though, those January totals are also worrisome. If that trend continues, the church will soon open up an enormous deficit that will be even more difficult to close at the end of this year. We urge the whole family of Faith to commit to continue to give regularly *in proportion to* how God first blesses you, so that we have the resources to do the ministry God has entrusted to us. **Thank you!**

## Leap of Faith Capital Campaign



On March 1, Faith Lutheran will celebrate the first anniversary of the Leap of Faith capital campaign and the Phase II Finance Team will provide information on how we can proceed from here. But here is a preview: the results of this first year have been amazing, even though we have a long way to go before Phase II of the building project could become a reality. Thank you to all who have contributed so generously to Leap of Faith. If you have not yet taken the leap, please prayerfully consider joining with your family of Faith in the confidence that God "is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine." (Ephesians 3:20)



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## STUMP THE PASTOR

### Stump the Pastor

*Q: I always hear about the 40 days of Lent, but there are actually 46 days from Ash Wednesday to Easter. How does that math work?*

**A:** The number forty plays a key role in the Bible. Moses spent forty days on Mt. Sinai receiving God's Law. Israel wandered through the Sinai wilderness for forty years on the way to the Promised Land. Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness for forty days. Forty is almost a standard length for any special period or time of testing. When the Christian Church established the season of Lent as a time to examine our lives and repent of our sins in preparation for Good Friday and Easter, forty days was the natural time period to set aside for it.

At the same time, however, the Church considers every Sunday of the year to be a "little Easter," a reminder and a celebration of the victory Christ won over sin and death by his crucifixion and resurrection. To celebrate Easter during the solemn season of Lent, however, seemed incongruous, if not contradictory.

So, the Church made a curious compromise. It determined that the *Sundays* during Lent would not count toward the forty days of Lent. The *weekdays* between Ash Wednesday and Holy Saturday do add up to forty. The six Sundays all foreshadow the glorious conclusion of Lent when we "tell that grim, demonic chorus: 'Christ is risen! Get you gone!'" (WOV #672)

### Seniors Scene

Our Seniors' Potluck meeting in March will give us a look at archaeology, specifically as it relates to the Bible. How interested are you in archeology? I can't say it was a favorite subject for me...until 1973. That's when we were privileged to travel in the Holy Land. Usually those trips added another country, which for us was Greece. We saw some diggings in Israel itself, but they were usually not too approachable. We did see and touch some of the pottery in which they found the Dead Sea scrolls. They were in the hotel entrance where we stayed. But those were high in the mountains in the desert. Archeology is more about digging in the subsurface where things have long been covered and filled in over the centuries.

In Greece we toured old Corinth, where St. Paul was an active evangelist for Christ Jesus. We were able to stand and move around on the very spot where Paul spoke with the Greeks about their "unknown god." You recall Paul told them he knew Who that unknown God is—it's Jesus, and the Father who sent Him.

Pastor Dave is interested in Biblical archeology, and he will take us underground (not really) to envision some interesting things that have been uncovered through painstaking work by archeologists. Some of the findings can enrich our understanding of what life was like during "Bible times."

Be sure to mark **Seniors' Potluck** on your calendar. It's on **March 26, at 12:00 noon**. Don't miss it. Bring a friend or someone new. **"See you at Seniors' Potluck!"**



### The Faith Project ~ Saturday, March 14, 9-11 a.m.

#### *Saint Patrick, Patron Saint of Ireland*

Are the legends you have heard about Saint Patrick, patron saint of Ireland true or myths?

Hint: He has nothing in common with green beer.

Did you know he was a slave, imprisoned, a bishop and betrayed by his best friend?

We will share these curious aspects and more about this famous saint at our March 14 gathering in the Faith Center from 9 – 11 a.m.

All free-will donations are given to Leap of Faith capital campaign.

Refreshments will be served and **everyone** is welcome to attend for fellowship and conversation.

Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk  
in his ways. You will eat the fruit of your labor,  
*blessings and prosperity* will be yours.

*Psalm 128:1-2*

*Happy Saint Patrick's Day*

## Pastor's Page continued from pg. 1

The Lutheran heritage in which Faith is rooted strikes a balance among those other practices. On one hand, we believe that Holy Communion depends solely and entirely on the promise of Jesus Christ that is proclaimed in the Words of Institution, not on the person who proclaims it to the congregation. On the other hand, we are deeply committed to keeping good order in the Church, and treating the Lord's Supper with the dignity and care that its importance warrants. That is why a lay person can serve in this way only in rare situations and with the public authorization of Faith's church council.

There is a precedent at Faith Lutheran for this decision. Before Pastor Dave was ordained, the church council authorized him to lead worship and administer Holy Communion at Faith on Grove. That, too, was done in the confidence that it is the Lord's Supper, not ours, and also with proper commitment to good order in the Church.

I hope this explains the church council's decision and why it could be considered controversial. We believe that it is a faithful and orderly way to assure that the whole congregation can receive the Lord's Supper in an effective way. If you have further questions about any of this, I encourage you to talk with Pastor Dave or me.

See you in church!  
Pastor Scott Grorud



### Central to Going Forward: Being Clear on the Heart of Our Witness *Pastor Paul Knudson*

"These are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name."

The Gospel of John is not at all like many a novel. I am told that mystery novelists keep you in suspense until the very end. The Gospel of John is very different. The writer begins with an extended prologue that focuses on the distinct identity of the central character in the story. Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life." As the Gospel continues we see Jesus identified as the Good Shepherd, the Light of the World, the Bread of life and so much more. Finally, in the last line of chapter twenty we read the ever-so-clear words quoted above.

Oh, that we may continue to go forth as a congregation, as the Augustana District of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC), with such clarity and passion for witness! I invite your prayers towards this end. Our Lord and Savior commissions us for such witness. Pray that we will go forward boldly, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

### Supporting the McLeod County Food Shelf "Watch the Food Garden Grow"

Did you know that Feeding America reports that 537,890 Minnesotans are facing hunger and 34% of these individuals are under the age of 18?

Now through the **end of March**, the Congregational Life ministry team is inviting you to bring in non-perishable food and other items listed below to help the McLeod County Food Shelf. Please bring your donations in and place them in the **Garden Box by door #2**.

Thank you!

**Most Needed Items:** canned fruits and vegetables, whole grain cereals and pasta, nuts, canned meats, baking items, personal care products and household items.

**Cash is always appreciated for purchase of items most needed and can be dropped off in the office.**



## Worship Snapshot: Seeing Lent with Our Whole Bodies



As we enter the season of Lent, you may notice that our worship space looks—and feels—a little different. This year we are introducing a new table display and seasonal sanctuary decorations that reflect the journey of these forty days. These changes are not meant to distract us, but to invite us more deeply into the story Lent tells: a story of repentance, honesty, mercy, and hope that leads us to the cross—and beyond it.

Lent is a bodily season. We kneel more. We sing in quieter tones. We pray words that name our need for forgiveness. It makes sense, then, that Lent is also a *visual* season. Physical symbols—cloths, colors, textures, empty space—speak to us in ways words alone sometimes cannot. They encourage, ground, inform, strengthen, and even challenge our faith.

### **Encouraging faith**

The symbols of Lent often appear sparse or subdued: darker colors, rougher materials, fewer adornments. At first glance, this may not feel “encouraging” in the way bright banners or flowers do. Yet there is encouragement here of a deeper kind. Lent gives us permission to bring our whole, honest selves before God. In that honesty, we find encouragement—not because life is easy, but because God is faithful even when life isn’t.

### **Grounding us in the story**

Physical symbols root us in time and space. They remind us that our faith is not abstract or imaginary. Jesus walked dusty roads. He ate, wept, suffered, and died in a real body. Lenten symbols—earthy elements, ashes, wood, unadorned tables—ground us in that reality. They help us remember that our salvation was accomplished not in theory, but in flesh and blood.

### **Informing our faith**

Symbols also teach. They are a form of proclamation. Martin Luther understood this well. He insisted that visual elements in the church must serve the Gospel. He once wrote that images are acceptable “if they are used to instruct the simple and remind the learned.” In Lent, the visual language of the sanctuary teaches us what kind of season this is. The absence of “Alleluia,” the restraint in decoration, the focus on the cross—all of these inform us that we are on a journey of repentance and renewal.

### **Strengthening faith through repetition**

Week by week, seeing the same symbols has a quiet power. They begin to work on us over time. Just as repeated prayer shapes the heart, repeated visual cues shape our imagination. They strengthen faith not by spectacle, but by steady presence. Luther teaches that faith is created and sustained by what is *outside* of us—the Word proclaimed and the promises given. Physical symbols support that work by pointing us again and again to Christ and his saving work.

### **Challenging us to pay attention**

Lenten symbols can also unsettle us—and that is a gift. They may feel uncomfortable or stark. They may challenge our desire for constant brightness and celebration. In this way, they mirror Lent’s call to self-examination. Luther wrote that the Christian life is one of daily repentance. The visual environment of Lent asks us to slow down, to notice, to ask what needs turning in our hearts. Not everything that is faithful is comfortable—and that is okay.

### **Decoration vs. symbols**

In the Lutheran church, we make an important distinction between *decoration* and *symbols of faith*. Decoration exists primarily to beautify a space. Symbols exist to serve the Gospel. This is why Lutheran worship spaces can change with the seasons. Luther resisted anything that turned church practices into requirements for salvation. He was clear that “the conscience must not be bound” by human traditions. At the same time, he affirmed that external things like art, music, and visual symbols can be good and helpful when they point to Christ. In other words, we are free to use them, and free not to use them. So, when you see new seasonal displays or changes in the sanctuary this Lent, know that they are offered as invitations to look, to reflect, to pray, and to listen. They support the proclaimed Word.

As we walk through Lent together, may these physical signs help us see with fresh eyes, trust with deeper honesty, and follow Christ more faithfully through the cross, and toward the promise of resurrection.



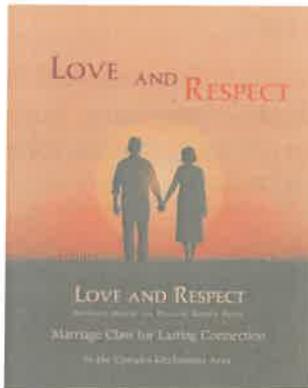
Digging  
**DEEPER**

**“Faith Seeks Understanding”**  
Continuing Learning Opportunities for Adults  
Sunday Mornings from 9:15-10 a.m.

## Digging Deeper Opportunities Through March 22

### *Whatever Became of the Apostles?*

The 12 disciples have a major presence in the Gospel, but soon disappear from the book of Acts. How did they spend the rest of their lives? What is history and how much is legend? Come to explore the ongoing stories of the apostles; meeting in the Faith Center.



### *Love and Respect*

This marriage class is based on the *Love and Respect* series, by Emerson Eggerich. We’ll watch a video presentation and discuss how the concepts of love and respect play out in our marriages. Join Pastor Dave in the upstairs kitchenette area.



## 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 THIRD Thursday of each month September—May at 4 p.m.
- 3) **Grief Support Group** meets as needed throughout the year.



**Are you looking for a well grounded, faith-based preschool for your child?**

Stop in to for a tour at the Open House for King’s Kids Preschool on Saturday, March 21, from 9-11 a.m.

Christ the King  
1040 South Grade Rd. SW  
Hutchinson, MN

For more information you can contact King’s Kids by calling 320-484-2354, or sending an e-mail to [ctkkids@hutchtel.net](mailto:ctkkids@hutchtel.net)  
You can also register via their website at [www.kingskidshutchinson.weebly.com](http://www.kingskidshutchinson.weebly.com)



### Aftershock

This ministry meets on the school early-release days from 1:15 p.m.—4:30 p.m., and is for children in kindergarten—5<sup>th</sup> grade. Children get picked up from school, have a snack, make crafts, play games, have a Bible story and worship time.

**NEXT DAY: April 1.**

**If you are able to volunteer for Aftershock, please reach out to Laura Stowman. Thank you!**

### 56er's

56er's is an after-school program on Wednesdays for ANYONE in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Our time is filled with hang time, snack, Bible lesson, and games.

This group meets right after school until 5:15 p.m. Go to our church website to register your child.

**NO 56ER'S on March 11.**

### Sunday School

This month Sunday School children are learning about the events of Holy Week.

**NO SUNDAY SCHOOL March 8.**

### First Communion Instruction

The 6<sup>th</sup>-grade students have begun their communion instruction. They will receive their first communion during the Maundy Thursday worship services on April 2 at either the 6:00 p.m. or 7:30 p.m. service.

### Mark your 2026 Summer Calendars!

**Mystery Bus**  
5<sup>th</sup>—7<sup>th</sup> grade  
**June 9—11**

**Vacation Bible School**  
Preschool—4<sup>th</sup> grade  
**June 29—July 2**

**Day Camp**  
Kindergarten—5<sup>th</sup> grade  
**August 3—6**



**Sign-ups are live!**  
**Go to the children's page on our website at faithlc.com**



### FLY Night

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



**PALM SUNDAY BREAKFAST**

**SUNDAY, MARCH 29**  
**8:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.**

*Come support our youth going to Wilmington, North Carolina this summer by having breakfast with us! All proceeds offset trip costs!*

Faith Lutheran Church | Faith Center | Free Will Offering

**Questions? Prayer Requests? Contact us!**  
Laura Stowman—Director of Children and Family Ministries—[lauras@faithlc.com](mailto:lauras@faithlc.com)  
Kristen Durst—Director of Youth and Family Ministries—[kristend@faithlc.com](mailto:kristend@faithlc.com)



## Teaching the Importance of Giving

During our Sunday School time, children attend Faith Rocks, which is a time of singing Christian children's songs, hearing about the Bible story of the day, praying, and giving an offering. In the past, the Sunday School offering has gone to pay for the shipping of Operation Christmas Child boxes.

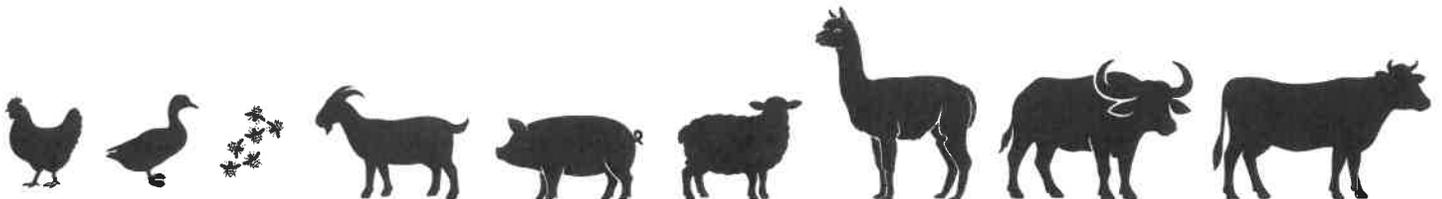


**This spring our Sunday School offering will be going toward Heifer International.**

Heifer International works to give animals to families living in poverty around the world. Heifer does this because livestock has a really important role to play in ending global hunger and poverty. By giving animals to families, Heifer helps provide nutritious food, generate income, help women thrive, give renewable energy, and help against climate change. **Our goal is to see what animal or animals we are able to give.**

Here is a list of animals and what they cost:

Flocks of chicks (\$20), ducks (\$20), honey bees (\$30), goat (\$120), pig (\$120), sheep (\$120), alpaca (\$150), water buffalo (\$250) and a heifer (\$500).



By tithing, you are helping teach your child the importance of trusting God rather than trusting in money or other worldly things. Tithing reminds us that God alone is our real and everlasting hope. God is our provider who has graciously given us so much, and therefore we gladly share what we have.

One idea to help make giving fun is to pick out a coin purse for your children to bring each Sunday with their Sunday School offering.

As your children attend Sunday School, I encourage you to send them with a dollar, quarter, dime, nickel or even a penny, and talk to them about why we give an offering at church. This is a great start to encouraging generosity in your child and learning about tithing.

Laura Stowman,

Director of Children and Family Ministry

# Please Remember in Prayer



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

GlenFields– Glencoe

Barb Helland

Harmony River

Shirley Holtz

Wilbur Johnson

Gerald Paehlke

Prairie Senior Cottages

Lorallen (Smudge) Schmeling

Prince of Peace

Maynard Holtz

Oaks

Phyllis Blum

Helen Kieper

Deloris Olson

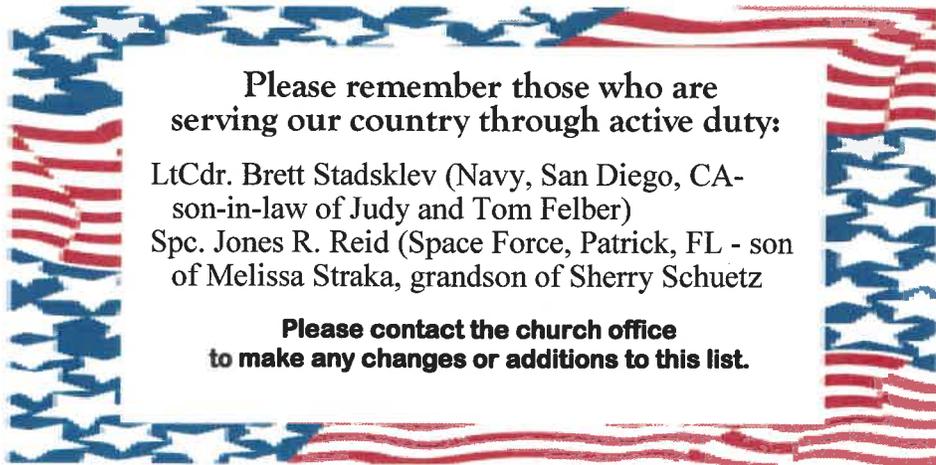
Carol Otto

DuWayne Peterson

Alice Poshek

Woodstone

Cyndy Ollrich



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.



## Faith Lutheran Church

### INFORMATION & STAFF DIRECTORY

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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:

- F**OLLOW JESUS
- A**NNOUNCE THE GOSPEL
- I**NVITE ALL PEOPLE
- T**EACH CHRISTIAN TRUTH
- H**ELP ALL WHO ARE IN NEED

