

Faith On the rise

Faith Lutheran Church ELCA . 309 Fourth Street Northeast . Valley City . North Dakota . 58072
Volume XXVIII Issue I Monthly January 2026

IN THIS ISSUE:

Pages 2

A Word from the Pastor

Page 3

Message from

Council President

Annual Meeting

Page 4

New Year—New Logo

2026 Offering Envelopes

Page 5

Baptism Keepsakes

Faith Visitation Team

Welcome New Treasurer

Page 6

WELCA News

Page 7

Mission Team News

Noisy Offering

December Memorials &

Honorariums

Page 8

January Birthdays

& Anniversaries

December Transitions

January Team Meetings

January Service & Care

Page 9

FLC Celebrates 40 Years

Page 10

Sunday School

Kids Club

Celebration of Life Tree

Christmas Poinsettias

Page 11

Confirmation News

Confirmation Service

Projects

JH Youth Group

Page 12

Staff Info

Inserts

Calendar/Dec Pictures

Sunday School Christmas Program—Emoji Christmas



Christmas Eve Service

Thank you everyone who joined us for our Christmas Eve Worship Services. It was such a joy to see you and your families as we joined together to celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Thank you Kristen Pierce for sharing your beautiful voice with us as you sang “O Holy Night”. Thank you Jere Heide for directing the Handbell Choir and those who played. It was so nice to be greeted by the sound of the bells when we entered the building. Thank Jere Heide & Tedi Dimmer for playing your trumpet and soprano sax before & during the services.





Cast your burdens onto Jesus because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:6-7

Happy New Year! A new year is a time for new beginnings, new resolutions and do overs. Many times, we think that change comes from us sitting down and making a list of pros and cons and choosing what we will do next. The truth about change is that most change comes to us not by choice. Change comes when we can no longer put up with the ways things are and we must make a new start. Change comes through struggle and pain. That's why Jesus says, *Cast your burdens onto Me.*

Have you heard the story of the struggling butterfly?

Once upon a time a little girl found a cocoon with a small opening in it. She sat and watched the newly formed butterfly struggle to work its way out of the tiny hole. It seemed like it wasn't making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could and could not go any further. The little girl decided she would help the butterfly, so she took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining tip of the cocoon. The butterfly emerged easily but its body was swollen and its wings shriveled. The little girl watched and waited for the butterfly's wings to expand and fly away. But that did not happen, instead the butterfly wasn't able to support its weight and unfortunately spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings, never able to fly. What the little girl didn't realize in her excitement to help the butterfly was that the butterfly needed to struggle through the small opening itself to force fluid from its body to its wings to ready itself to be freed from its cocoon.



Sometimes struggles are necessary for new beginnings. God does not magically take away the obstacles and struggles in our life to get us to where we need to be. If we didn't have those struggles it would cripple our progress. Without the struggles we would not be as strong as we could have been. And we would not be free to fly.

My prayer for you this January as you start a new year is not to be drug down by your struggles but look at them as an opportunity to grow even stronger, knowing that Jesus does care and is waiting for you to share those struggles with him. And may the outcome of your struggles make you strong enough to meet the next challenge in your life.

May the peace of God which passes all understanding be with you this January,

Pastor Jamie

Heavenly Father,

Fill my heart with joy and contentment in every situation I face this year.
Help me to find satisfaction in Your presence and the blessings You've provided.
May my life radiate Your joy and bring encouragement to those around me.
Thank You, Lord, for being my source of true happiness. In Jesus' name.
Amen.

Message from Council President

Dear Faith Family,

I hope everyone enjoyed a wonderful Christmas and a joyful New Year, celebrating these special moments surrounded by family and friends.

The council finalized the church budget at our last council meeting. The final draft is now complete and ready to be presented at the Annual Meeting in January. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Erin Metcalf, Jessica Jenrich, and everyone involved in preparing this budget—your dedication and hard work are greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or concerns about the budget, please do not hesitate to reach out to any council member or bring your questions to the Annual Meeting.

We are pleased to announce that the treasurer position has been filled. Mary Rausch will begin her service in January. Please join us in welcoming Mary to the council and thanking her for stepping into this important role.

*Thank
you!*

A special thank you goes out to Wendi Wilmes and to everyone who made time in their busy schedules to work with the youth on this year's Sunday Christmas program.

The Emoji Christmas Program brought a fresh and unique perspective, and it was heartwarming to see the church filled with families sharing in both the children's performances and a delicious potluck. We are also grateful to everyone who contributed to organizing and hosting the potluck—it is a significant effort, and your contributions are truly appreciated.

Thank you, Pastor Jamie and Julie Moritz, for all that you do for our faith community. Your hard work and unwavering dedication do not go unnoticed. On behalf of your Faith Family, please know that you are deeply appreciated.

The church's Annual Meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2026, immediately following the worship service. Please make a note of this important date and plan to attend if you are able. Your participation is valued as we look ahead together.

I leave you with this quote:

"Certainly the faithful love of the Lord hasn't ended: certainly God's compassion isn't through! They are renewed every morning. Great is your faithfulness." - Lamentations 3:22-23

Your Council President,

Amy Pederson



Annual Meeting—Sunday, January 25, 2026

The annual meeting will be held Sunday, January 26 immediately following the worship service. There will need to be a quorum of 40 active and confirmed members present to conduct business. The Annual Reports will be available to pick up from the church by January 15, 2026. Reports will only be mailed to the out of the area members by request.

For any committee member that is to write a report for the annual report please have it to Julie no later than Monday, January 5, 2026. Thank you!

New Year, New Logo—A Chance to Share Our Story

As we step into a new year, we are excited to invite the congregation into something creative, meaningful, and forward-looking: **Faith Lutheran Church's "New Year, New Logo" campaign.**

A logo is more than just an image—it's a **visual story**. It's often one of the first things people see when they encounter our church, whether online, on a sign, or in a flyer. A thoughtful logo can help reflect who we are as a congregation and support our mission: Welcome. Serve. Equip. Send.



A welcoming logo can communicate openness and hospitality before someone ever walks through our doors. It can reflect a church that serves others with compassion, equips people to grow in faith, and sends believers out into the community to live and share the Gospel. In that way, a logo becomes more than just a design—it becomes part of how we tell our story and invite others into it.

That's why we want *you* to be part of this process.

From January 11 through February 8, members of the congregation are invited to submit **logo ideas for Faith Lutheran Church**. **You don't have to be a professional designer**—hand-drawn sketches, digital designs, and simple concepts are all welcome. This is about sharing your creativity and your vision for how our church should be seen by both our congregation and the wider community. Additional details about submissions and voting will be shared through flyers and on our social media.

After submissions close, the congregation will have the opportunity to vote over two weeks, with voting ending on February 22. The selected logo will help shape how Faith Lutheran presents itself in the years ahead.

This campaign is not about change for the sake of change. It's about renewal, participation, and sharing the mission God has given us. Whether you submit a design, vote, or simply encourage someone else to participate, your involvement matters.

Let's start the new year by creating something together—something that reflects who we are, what we believe, and how we welcome, service, equip, and send in Jesus' name.

Jacob Rohde
Council Member

2026 Offering Envelopes

The 2026 offering envelopes are ready to be picked up. If you would like envelopes and don't see your name, please talk with Julie in the office and she will give them to you. A reminder: your contributions are recorded whether you use an envelope, place a check in the offering place, drop it by the office, mail it or give online. If you scan the QR Reader Code with your phone it will take you to our website so you can set up to give online.

Your contributions support the ministries and missions of Faith Lutheran as well as the monthly expenses. Your generous giving is greatly appreciated.



Baptism Keepsake Cross Presentation

Baptism Keepsake Crosses will be presented to families on Sunday, January 11, 2026 during the 9:30am worship service. January 11 is Baptism of the Lord Sunday. All who were baptized in Faith Lutheran during 2025 will receive their baptismal crosses compliments of Faith Lutheran. These keepsakes are a reminder of this special step in their Christmas walk of faith.

The following individuals will be recognized:

Daisy Diane Newton, Rhyatt James Earnest,
Jayce Edward Auka, Addalynn Grace Auka,
Brooklynn Michelle Auka, Ashton Mikkal Auka,
Atlas Jasper Brant, Della Kay Kracht,
Alice Joesphine Mallette, Walker Glenn-William Johnson,
Rylan Allen Biggers, Colton Leif Anderson,
Colter Edward Schuster, Arlo Gideon Horner,
Alivia Eileen Thomas, Banks Shawn Johnson, Raven Tove Middlestead.



Faith Visitation Team

We welcome two new members to our visitation team, Joe and Martee Lunde. We're so thankful to witness the growth of this important ministry. Can you dedicate an hour each week to connect with a member of our congregation who is not able to attend church activities and services? These visits are very informal and allow for you and the person you're visiting to set your own time frame and find what's comfortable for both of you. I'm sure you'll find yourself looking forward to these weekly visits and enjoy building this relationship. If you have considered taking part in this ministry or know someone who would like to receive visits, please call Val Moritz at 840-1652 or contact Julie in the church office.

Happy New Year from your Visitation Team: Jody Johnson, Cheryl Foell, Joe and Martee Lunde

Welcome Our New Treasurer!

Please join us in congratulating Mary Rausch, who has graciously **accepted the role of Church Treasurer. Mary's term begins on January 1, 2026**, and we are grateful for her willingness to serve our congregation in this important ministry. We are excited to have her on the team!

We also extend our sincere appreciation to Jessica Jenrich for her faithful service and dedication as she concludes her time as Treasurer. Her contributions have been a blessing to our church!

Pictured: Mary, Kamryn & Nate Rausch





WELCA News

WELCA meeting was held Wednesday, December 10 at Faith Lutheran Church.

On Monday, December 15, we again joined Our Savior's and Trinity WELCA to host a special coffee time with our members who are residents of SMP Health-St. Raphael. We all enjoyed visiting and sharing coffee, punch, and Christmas goodies. Pastor Diane from Trinity brought Christmas Ornaments made by the youth from our congregations to share with everyone. They were cute Snowmen with a message that said, **"God Loves You SNOW Much!!"** What a special gift from our youth! Based on all the smiles and visiting, I hope we can have this special time together again. Pictured: (top, l-r) Marlys Freadhoff, Clara Bredeson w/Audrey Bredeson, Laurette Zachrison w/Deb Shape; (bottom, l-r) Arlene Larson, Ruby Hansen.



REMINDER of the WELCA 2026 Triennial Gathering July 16-19, 2026, in Des Moines, Iowa. The early bird registration deadline is January 5, 2026, but final registration deadline is June 21, 2026. There is a pamphlet on the bulletin board above the water fountain at the church and at www.eandwelca.net where you

can look for all the details. There is a group from Trinity Lutheran planning to go so you could also contact Jeanne Wobbema at 701-230-8745 for more information.

We will not meet in January, so our next meeting will be February 11 at 3:30pm at Faith with Election of Officers. Happy New Year, Elise Miller, WELCA President

Mission Team News

We have wrapped up our Family Christmas Gift project, and the gifts were distributed to the families. They so appreciate your generosity! The SMP Health-St Raphael gifts and gift card donations have been dropped off and distributed to the residents making their Christmas brighter.

The Mission Team will not meet in January, but we will start our Project Ignite Light Pajama project. There will be a box in the gathering area for you to drop off your 2-piece pajamas, sizes toddlers to teens. For those of you that would like to know what Project Ignite Light is all about, it is a faith-based organization located in Rogers, ND that provides children with important personal items when they are entering foster care



because of abuse, neglect or human trafficking. The pajamas you donate are part of those personal items as well as the tie blankets we make in February (more on that project to come in the next newsletter). These donated items are put in a backpack and given to the child, bringing comfort to them at a time when they are feeling very anxious and afraid.



The Mission Team would like to thank all of you for your donations throughout the year. Your **generosity makes such a difference in so many people's lives. We also would like to wish all of you a great 2026 and if you would like to be a part of our team, we would love to have you join us!**

Sandy Brandvold—Chairperson

Noisy Offering—Project Ignite Light



We will be receiving a noisy offering on Sunday, January 18 for Project Ignite Light. The kids will come around with their pails to collect your loose change **and dollar bills. Your caring and generosity makes a difference in people's lives.**

In December \$351.80 was received for the Stocking Stuffer Program at SMP Health—St. Raphael's! **Thank you!**

December Memorials & Honorariums



In honor of 3rd Graders Receiving Bibles given by James & Pr Jolene K. Hanse (Bibles).

In honor of Bea Faust given by Carol Winter Bjorge (Undesignated),

In memory of Jim Bjorge given by Carol Winter Bjorge (Undesignated).

In memory of Dan Faust given by Carol Winter Bjorge (Undesignated).

In memory of Kim Foell given by Cheryl Foell (New Computer).

In memory of Amy Harbaugh given by Cheryl Foell (New Computer).

In memory of Jerry King given by Dean & Amy Pederson (General Fund).

In memory of Bill Winter given by Carol Winter Bjorge (Undesignated).



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS:

3. Mariah Frieze, Amy Pederson, Audrey Peterson, Katie Schuster, Brett Stearns; 4. Rowan Horner, Laney Jenison; 7. Tami Kratz; 8. Amy Johnson, Brenda Rohde,

Brenna Storly; 10. Mara Thompson; 11. Jax Hejtmanek, Joan Noeske; 12. Shane Everson, Jackie Heroux; 14. Jan Kamstra, Helen Ranisate Heley, Tyler Stearns; 16. Bristol Carlson; 17. Jill Rischmiller; 18. Hayden Botz, Kael Jenison, Mark Johnson, Dani Sorensen, Brooke Yanish; 19. Mackenzie Pederson; 21. Breana Buringrud, Parker Rodin; 24. Jill Pederson; 25. Rydell Becker, Tricia Germann; 26. Bailey Duffy, Addy Gerhardt; 27. Linda Gruebele; 29. Morgan Larson; 30. Frank Larson; 31. Claire Heide, Clayton Newton, Sam Ranisate.

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES:

9. Richard & Marsha Anderson; 18. Mike & Pamela Egan, Dallas & Linda Gruebele; 29. Randy & Teri McClafin; 31. Nick & Kayla Holm.

DECEMBER TRANSITIONS

BAPTISMS: **We celebrated God's promise in Holy**

Baptism for Raven Tove Middlestead, born September 25, 2025 and was baptized on Sunday, December 7, 2025. Her parents are Erika Dalgliesh and Ethan Middlestead. God bless Raven and her family.

WEDDINGS: Congratulations Wyatt & Shiloh (Jewett) Bjornson. They were married here at Faith on December 13, 2025 with Pastor Jamie officiating. God bless this couple as they begin their married life.

JANUARY TEAM MEETINGS

Council—Meets Wed, Jan 14 at 5:15pm

FLC Staff—Meets Wed, Jan 7 at 1:30pm

Men's Group—Meets Sat, Jan 17 at 8:00am

Feb Service & Care— Meets Sun, Jan 18 after worship
& by emails texts/ phone



January Service & Care

****Dean & Brenda Klein**

Jill Berg-Foss
Chris & Kalyn Botz
Diane Busche
Jason & Kirstin Gerhardt
Jackie Heroux
John & Jan Johnson
Scott & Lisa Limesand
Tyler & Lacy Majerus
Mike & Vicki Z. Metcalf
Carol Oppegard
Larry & Deloris Welken

*Thank you for serving!

December Attendance

December 7 162 27+ online

December 14 (Christmas Program)

136 28+ online

December 21 207 55+ online

December 24 (Christmas Eve)

3pm 268 171+ online

5pm 154

December 28 No service due to weather

Offering

January	\$19,005.60
February	\$20,335.00
March	\$23,203.07
April	\$21,189.71
May	\$18,830.00
June	\$17,257.50
July	\$18,689.00
August	\$23,412.00
September	\$17,717.00
October	\$21,782.00
November	\$24,005.90
December	\$32,249.50

Offering from Dec 25-31 not included

Needed monthly to meet Mission Plan:
\$23,577.58

Faith Lutheran Church—Celebrates 40 Years

Faith Lutheran was officially formed when First Lutheran and Nebo Lutheran joined together on January 12, 1986! That day the Nebo Lutheran and First Lutheran congregations each walked and met on the corner of the Public Library and all walked back together to what was to become the newly united church. We met to choose a name for the newly merged church. Paul Vangerud and Martee Lunde, along with others, tallied suggestions that our members thought would be the best name for our new church. The number one name on those little pieces of paper was FAITH! It is a name we can all be proud of, no matter what our history. It took faith by those two older congregations to become one and to start anew. Our two congregations in essence adopted each other on that day.

Paul Vangerud was the chairman of the First Lutheran (Norwegian church) negotiations committee and Rich Raymond was the chairman of the Nebo (Swedish church) negotiations committee. After two years of negotiations it was finally approved by both congregations in 1985 to become one congregation. The First Lutheran church building became the home of Faith Lutheran. The Nebo Lutheran church building has since become the home of several different church congregations.

Rev. Tom Peterson, the first called pastor for Faith Lutheran, wrote in our 25th anniversary reflections booklet:

"What I remember is that we cared for each other and that meant we worshipped together, we cried together, laughed together, and chose to walk together".

This article contains contributions from Martee Lunde, Paul Vangerud and Pastor Tom Peterson and was written by Julie Moritz.

**"Forward
in Faith"**
Merger of
Nebo Lutheran and
First Lutheran Churches
January 1986



Sunday School News

Our kids did a fantastic job putting on their Christmas program, *Emoji Christmas!* Thank you to all the teachers, student helpers, and parents for getting the children prepared for their wonderful Christmas program. Pictures on back of calendar.

Sunday School runs from 10:45-11:45am.

Important Dates for Sunday School:

**We resume Sunday School on Sunday, January 11, 2026
with an Epiphany Party!**

**No Sunday School on Sunday, January 25, due to the Annual Meeting.
(We will be showing a moving in the youth room instead during that time.)**



Kids Club!

We welcome all kids going into 4th-6th grade to come to our Wednesday Afterschool program called **Kids Club!** We currently have 19 kids from Faith, Our Savior's, and Trinity signed up. Kids Club meets Wednesdays, from 3:15-5pm here at Faith or we go do a service project around the community. The kids are picked up by Wendi with the church van from Washington School and parents then pick them up from Faith.

Schedule for January

Wednesday, January 7—at Faith

Wednesday, January 14—at Faith

Wednesday, January 21—at Faith

Wednesday, January 28—Service Project!

Celebration of Life Tree

Our youth would like to thank everyone who purchased a cross ornament for the Celebration of Life Tree in memory or in honor of their loved ones. This is a youth group fundraiser. We had 125 crosses on the tree! Thank you Paulette Everson for making all the ornaments.

If you purchased ornaments, don't forget to take them home with you.



Christmas Poinsettias

Thank you to everyone who purchased or brought a poinsettia in memory or in honor of a loved one. The poinsettias adorning the chancel area added to the Christmas atmosphere.



Youth News

Confirmation Information

Confirmation is at Our Savior's Lutheran Church November-January from 6:30-8pm. A light snack will be offered from 6-6:30pm for kids who are hungry after school and sports.

Confirmation will resume on Wednesday, January 7th!

Wednesday, January 7—Class

Wednesday, January 14—Class

Wednesday, January 21—Activity to be decided

Wednesday, January 28—Class



Confirmation Youth Service Projects

Kids in Confirmation from Faith, Our Savior's, and Trinity took part in a special community service project this holiday season. The kids went shopping at Walmart in Jamestown to buy presents for children in need in our community. Thank you to Dakota Prairie Associates—Thrivent for providing \$650 to use to make this happen!

The youth packed 112 Finals/Holiday Bags to give to Valley City State University Students to wish them well as they prepared for their final. They also created handmade cards for each resident of Bridgeview Estates, The Legacy Place, and SMP Health—St. Raphael Care Center. These young people are making a difference in the lives of others through these acts of love and care.



Junior High Youth Group

We will be going to the Carrington Armory in Carrington, ND to help pack meals for Feed My Starving Children on Saturday, January 24th! Watch for more information soon!

FEED MY
STARVING
CHILDREN

Faith Lutheran Church
 PO Box 606
 309 4th St N
 Valley City, ND 58072-0606
 Return Service Requested



Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Valley City, ND
Permit No. 13

Church Staff

Pastor: Pastor Jamie Desai

Administrative Assistant: Julie Moritz

Treasurer: Mary Rausch

*Coordinator of Youth Ministry and
 Sunday School: Wendi Wilmes*

Accompanist/ Worship Coordinator: Cyndi Hill

Custodians: Mark & Sandy Brandvold

Council President: Amy Pederson

Phone: (701) 840-1328

Council: Kalyn Botz, Matt Brandvold,

Rick Bredeson, Cheryl Foell,

Erin Metcalf, Jacob Rohde

***Sandy's E-Mail:** sandy.brandvold@gmail.com*

***Wendi's E-Mail:** wendi.wilmes@gmail.com*

***Mary's E-Mail:** treasurer@faithlutheranvc.org*

***Cyndi's E-Mail:** cyndi.r.hill@gmail.com*

***Pastor's E-Mail:** pastor@faithlutheranvc.org*

***E-Mail Address:** office@faithlutheranvc.org*



***Website:** www.faithlutheranvc.org*

***Fax Number:** (701) 845-5887*

***Church Office:** (701) 845-4390*

"Rejoice! The Lord is near." Philippians 4:5