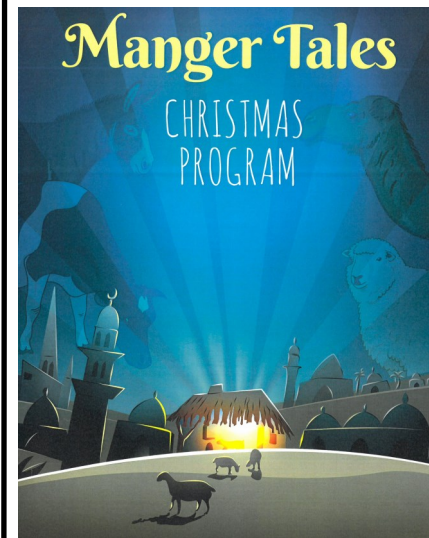


FAITH ON THE RISE

Faith Lutheran Church ELCA . 309 Fourth Street Northeast . Valley City . North Dakota . 58072
Volume XXV Issue XII Monthly **December 2023**

Office Closed December 22 & 25 in observance of Christmas.

Sunday School Christmas Program



Our Preschool-6th Grade Christmas Program, “*Manger Tales*” will be **Sunday, December 17th at approximately 10:45am!** We hope you can come watch how amazing the kids are in telling the Christmas story in a unique way and singing Christmas carols!

We will have our potluck dinner after the program at approximately 11:30am. Bring a dish to share and enjoy fellowship together! Please note we will have our regular Sunday Worship Service at 9:30am that day.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Pages 2

A Word from the Pastor
Annual Meeting

Page 3

3rd Grade Bibles Given
Message from Council President

Page 4

Farewells

Page 5

Thanksgiving Basket
Thank You
2024 Offering Envelopes
Salvation Army Bells
“Sounds of the Season”

Page 6

WELCA News
Ladies Craft Day
2024 Daily Texts

Page 7

Mission Team News

Page 8

December Birthdays
& Anniversaries
Dec. Service & Care

Page 9

Celebration of Life Tree
Christmas Poinsettias
November Memorials
Team Meetings

Page 10

Sunday School
Kids Club
Jr/Sr High Youth Group

Page 11

Confirmation Info
All Saints Day Adventure

Page 12

Staff Info
Inserts
Calendar

Christmas Eve Services

Christmas Eve, December 24th we will have our Sunday morning worship service at 9:30am. This service will not be livestreamed.

No coffee fellowship hour or Sunday School. **The Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship Service will be at 4pm.** This special candlelight service will include special music, favorite hymns, a meaningful message and Holy Communion.

Let us come together to rejoice in the Good News of Jesus Christ!



This Christmas may God bless you with joy that overflows. May the true meaning of Christmas bring you great joy! Let your heart be filled with His love and joy, this season!

Church Staff

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Treasurer: Amy Johnson

Coordinator of Youth Ministry and Sunday School: Wendi Wilmes

Accompanist/Worship Coordinator: Cyndi Hill

Custodians: Mark & Sandy Brandoold

Council President: Justin Foell

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Kent Gronlie, Mike May, Erin Metcalf,

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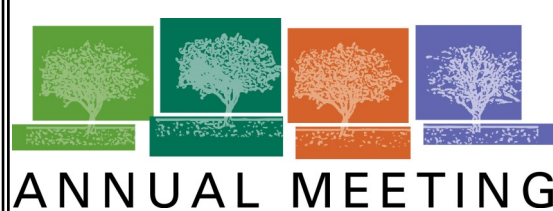
December marks the beginning of the church year. We call this season Advent, the season of preparing and waiting. In Advent we prepare for the coming of Jesus on Christmas. Have you begun preparing for Christmas? The challenge for people of faith during this season is to not to be overcome by the culture's expectations of the season.

The metaphor for Advent is expectation. As Mary is expecting a child, she waits for her child to be born, not only *her* child, but the Savior of the world. As a man I can only imagine what it is like to have a life growing inside a womb expecting the birth of a child. The challenge of Advent is balancing all the expectations of the season while keeping our focus on the birth of the Christ child Jesus.

Let me give you three suggestions that might help you keep your focus on Christ Jesus this season. One helpful activity would be doing an Advent calendar. I remember opening the little boxes on our family Advent calendar as a child and how it was an exciting build up to Christmas as it kept us centered on Christ. A second suggestion would be to begin reading one chapter a day from the Gospel of Luke. Luke has twenty-four chapters so if you begin December first, by the time you get to Christmas Eve you will have read the entire Gospel. You will be surprised by how reading Jesus' life story prior to Christmas will add a whole new meaning to the season. My third suggestion is to set up a Nativity scene in your home. Place a candle in front of the Nativity. Choose a time each night to light a candle and simply stare at the Nativity for a few minutes. You will be pleased by how this ritual will spiritually center you on the meaning of the coming of our Savior into the world.

Happy Advent and please join us for worship Sundays during this season of expectations and preparation for the coming of the Christ child.

God bless and keep you,
Pastor Jamie



Annual Meeting—Sunday, January 21, 2024

The annual meeting will be held **Sunday, January 21st at 10:45am** in the sanctuary. There will need to be a quorum of 40 active confirmed members present to conduct business.

ANNUAL MEETING

More information will be in the January newsletter.

The Annual Reports will be available to pick up from the church by **January 11, 2024**.

For any committee member that is to write a report for the annual report please have it to Julie no later than January 5, 2024. Thank you!

Youth News

Confirmation Information

Confirmation will now be at **Our Savior's Lutheran Church** for the months of **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.



Wednesday, December 6—we will be doing a Service Project
Wednesday, December 13—we will be finishing our Service Project

There is NO Confirmations classes on Wednesdays, December 20 or December 27.

All Saints Day Adventure

Wednesday, November 1st, Pastor Kyle from Our Savior's traveled with the Senior High Youth Group (Our Savior's, Faith, Trinity Youth) to Waldheim Cemetery in rural Kathryn to mark All Saints Day. Throughout the evening memories were shared of loved ones who have died. They closed their time together by singing "This Little Light of Mine" and lit a candle in memory of all the saints gone before us.



Thank you Pastor Sharayah from the Kathryn/Nome/Fingal Parish who shared a history of Waldheim Cemetery and Church and led them through the cemetery sharing stories of saints past and present.



Sunday School

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

Important Dates for Sunday School:

Sunday, December 3—Christmas Program Practice during Sunday School Time

Sunday, December 10—Christmas Program Practice during Sunday School Time

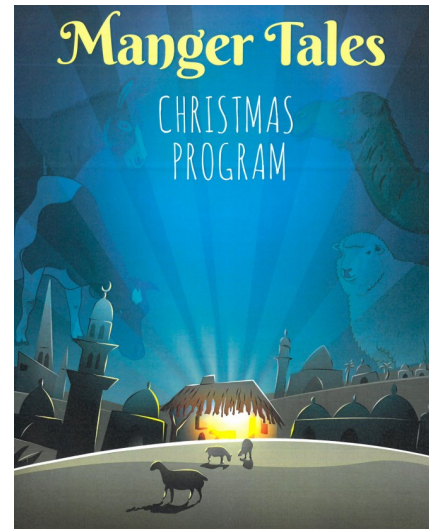
Saturday, December 16—Christmas Program Practice (10am-12pm)

Sunday, December 17—CHRISTMAS PROGRAM!

Sunday, December 24—NO SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday, December 31—NO SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday, January 7—Sunday School Resumes after Christmas Break



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 December

Wednesday, December 6—Bell Ringing for Salvation Army

Wednesday, December 12—Christmas Party

Wednesday, December 20—NO KIDS CLUB

Wednesday, December 27—NO KIDS CLUB



Jr High/Sr High Youth Groups

Dates are still being finalized, but we will head to a Fargo Force hockey game in December! Games are at 7:05pm, so we will leave from Faith Lutheran Church at 5:15pm. Cost will be \$15. Watch your emails for more information soon!



Senior High Lunch

Senior High Lunch is on Mondays at Our Savior's! Wendi will be helping the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month. The freshmen lunch is served at 11:15am and the 10th-12th graders will be served at 12:10pm.

Bible Presentation

Sunday, November 19th our third graders received their first reader Bibles and a blessing during the worship service. When they met with Pastor Jamie the third graders learned how to look up the Books of the Bible, chapters and verses in the Bible. When they received their Bibles they were asked to look up a chapter and verse in Mark and read it together. They embraced the challenge and did a great job reading the verse together. God bless these young people as they read God's Word and grow in their faith.



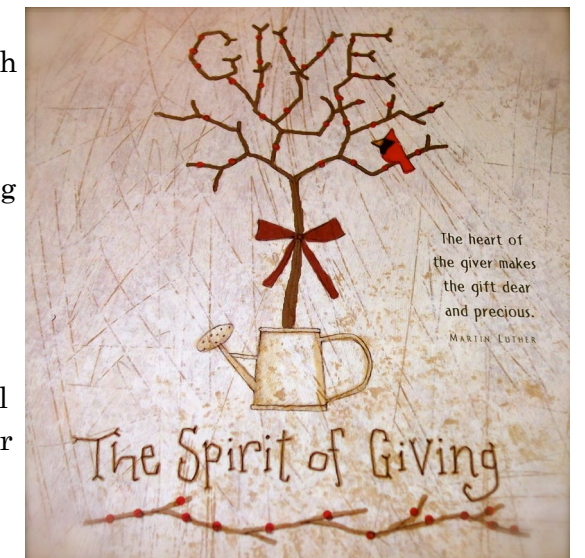
Pictured (l-r): Brad & Megan McKay, Taylor McKay, Carter McKay; Luke & Stephanie Bopp, Copper Bopp; Pastor Jamie; Tyler & Angela Van Bruggen, Harper Van Bruggen.

Message from Our Council President

Happy Holidays,

It is Christmas time which brings a busy time for the church and for all of us with family and friends. It is the season of giving and as we are all finding those perfect gifts for our loved ones please remember to keep the church in our giving plans. The last few years have been very tight, financially, for us as a congregation and December is usually a very important month of giving in our budget. This month also brings us preparing for next year with our annual meeting set for the end of January. We will be voting for new council and committee members as well as voting for changes to our council size.

God Bless,
Justin Foell, Council President





Faith Visitation Team

The Visitation Team is always looking for opportunities to reach out to those who may enjoy an in-home visit. Please call Val at 840-1652 or Julie in the church office 845-4390 if you would like to be included or know someone we should visit.

The Visitation Team had an open house for Lois Brandvold on Thursday, November 9th. It was an enjoyable afternoon of coffee, treats and wonderful conversation! This gave Lois and everyone a chance to visit before she leaves for South Dakota. Lois will be moving to Watertown, SD the weekend of December 15th. **Lois' new address is 220 South Maple Apt. 206, Watertown, SD 57201.** She is moving to be closer to her daughter, Pat, and her South Dakota grandchildren and great grandchildren. We will miss her dearly here at FLC.



God bless you Lois! You hold a special place in our hearts!

Pictured: Val Moritz, Cheryl Foell, Nancy Ost, Elise Miller, Lois Brandvold (in front)

A **BIG THANK YOU** to my friends who hosted the lovely coffee party in my honor and also those who came to share the coffee, goodies and conversation! It was a fun time and I will cherish the memories as I make the move to Watertown! I'll miss all of you.

God bless you and fork of Faith Lutheran!
Lois Brandvold

Farewell Rev. Aanen & Carroll Gjovik

Sunday, November 12th we celebrated Aanen and Carroll as we enjoyed coffee and cake and conversation. Aanen and Carroll have moved to Walla Walla, Washington to be closer to their children and grandchildren.

Aanen & Carroll have been a blessing and we are thankful they made Faith Lutheran their church home while they were in Valley City. Aanen was so gracious to fill in as pastor as we transitioned from Pastor Kyle Germann to Pastor Jamie Desai. We enjoyed his sermons and learned along the way.

As we say in Norwegian "Gud velsigne deg og mange tuk"! (God bless you and many thanks!)



Celebration of Life Tree

The Youth Ministry of Faith continues our tradition of the "Celebration of Life" tree. Buy an ornament for \$5 in memory or in honor of a loved one to celebrate their life. Paulette Everson has made the ornaments. Forms are in the church office and in the bulletin. Fill it out and return the form and money. Your loved one's name will be on the ornament hanging on the tree. Names received by December 17th will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin.



Christmas Poinsettias

We would like to have around 15 poinsettias to adorn our altar on Christmas Eve. If you would like to purchase a plant for \$20 or bring a poinsettia in honor or in memory of a loved one there is a sign up sheet on the table in the gathering area. You may also contact Julie in the office. Names receive by December 17th will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin.



Noisy Offering—SMP-St. Raphael Stocking Stuffer Program

We will be receiving a noisy offering on **Sunday, December 17**. The offering received will be going to the SMP-St. Raphael Stocking Stuffer Program. This helps to buy gifts for the residents to make their Christmas brighter. The kids will come around during the Children's Word with their pails to collect your loose change and dollar bills. In November we received \$322.66 for the Mission Christmas Fund! Your generosity continues to make a difference in people's lives. Thank you!



November Memorials

- In memory of **Leah Green** given by Al & Nancy Sorensen (General Fund).
- In memory of **Liz Johnson-Berge** given by Mark & Krista Johnson (Undesignated).
- In memory of **Arleen Retzlaff** given by Gene & Nancy Bjerke (Youth).
- In memory of **Karen & Ray Smedshammer** given by Jackie Heroux (Undesignated).
- In memory of **Craig Speich** given by Dave & Carol Smith (Building Fund).

DECEMBER TEAM MEETINGS

Council—Meets **Tue. Dec 12** at 5:15pm

Mission Team—Meets **Tue, Dec 5** at 5:30pm

FLC Staff—Meets **Wed, Dec 6 & Wed, Dec 20** at 1:30pm



January Service & Care— Meets **Sun, Dec 17** after worship & by emails texts/ phone

Men's Group—Meets **Sat, Dec 16** at 8am

WELCA—No December Meeting

DECEMBER DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS:



1. Terri Dalgliesh, Ilene Hetler, Alaina Rodin, Deloris Welken; 2. Ali Rodin, Joshua Smith; 3. Brady Anderson, Ashley Horner, Ethan Kapaun, Howard Oppgaard, Weston Smith; 4. Linda Lane; 6. Nikki Moen, John Samuelson, Georgia Welken; 7. Doug Kratz, Larry H. Sayler, Gary Sommerfeld, Angela Van Bruggen; 8. Kalyn Botz, Bonnie Schumacher; 10. Val Moritz; 11. Gabe Jenison, Jessica Kaiser, Brenda Klein; 13. Taylor Yanish; 14. Laura Klevgaard; 16. Lance Jenison; 17. Krista Johnson, Dylan Rafferty, Ranetta Starr; 18. Riley Gerhardt, Drew Kohler; 19. Markus Kratz; 20. Aaliyah Torbenson; 21. Joe Martin, Tony Moritz, W.E. (Windy) Rohwedder; 22. Cale Ludwig; 23. Ashley McClafflin, Julie Opdahl, Tim Ost, Megan Tichy; 24. Owen Johnson, John Kohler; 26. Marsha Sayler; 28. Scott Limesand, Randy Reiser; 29. Brandon Moen, Zach Rischmiller, Warren Ventsch; 30. Kayla Holm, Ben Shape; 31. John Tompt.

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES:

3. Matt & Allison Anderson; 9. Rick & Robin Idland; 10. Lyle & Angi Hansen; 12. Mark & Cyndi Hill; 13. Bruce & Julie Moritz; 14. Nathan & Mary Rausch; 16. Troy & Jodi Miller; 21. Ed & Betty Overby; 22. Don & Kathy Burke; 23. Tyrone & Katie McCullough; 24. Travis & Kim Gray; 26. Doug & Patty Altringer; 31. Ron & LeeAnn Peterson.

November Transitions



BAPTISM: We celebrated God's promise in Holy Baptism for **Mari Rose Anderson**, born

October 19, 2023 and baptized Sunday, November 26th. Her parents are Matt & Allison Anderson and big sister is Joanna. God bless Mari and her family.



NEW MEMBER: We welcome **Jo Ann Neller** to our Faith Lutheran family. We are thankful for her presence among us.

November Service & Care

**Tyler & Angela Van Bruggen
 Mark & Sandy Brandvold
 Matt Brandvold
 Andy & Sam Carlson
 Mike & Pamela Egan
 Matt & Jessica Jenrich
 Duane & Diana Larson
 John & Tonya Samuelson
 Leighton & Dianne Smith
 Gary & Diane Sommerfeld
 Mark & Paula Thomsen
 James & Janet Thornton
 Jarin & Gina Thornton
 Scott & Amy Tichy
 John & Dixie Tompt
 *Thank you for serving!

November Attendance

November 5	136	103+ online views
November 12	87	91+ online views
November 19	127	93+ online views
November 26	97	62+ online views

*online views are households watching

Offering

January	\$18,442.00
February	\$15,343.00
March	\$22,544.00
April	\$25,704.00
May	\$12,775.00
June	\$14,732.00
July	\$20,576.00
August	\$12,836.00
September	\$17,497.00
October	\$18,864.00
November	\$20,359.37

Needed monthly to meet Mission Plan:
 \$21,265.25

Community Thanksgiving Baskets Thank You

A BIG THANK YOU to volunteers and donors who helped make our 2023 Community Thanksgiving Basket project a success! Individuals from Faith Lutheran, Our Savior's Lutheran and Trinity Lutheran churches came together for two nights to pack 125 Thanksgiving boxes, make home deliveries and load cars for pick-up. What a wonderful mission to share with other local ELCA congregations. We received so much appreciation and gratitude from recipients, it really reinforces the purpose and need for this project. Thanks again for your time, talents, treasure, thoughts and prayers. This event wouldn't be possible without all of you. Hope you had a Happy Thanksgiving! God Bless!



-The 2023 Thanksgiving Basket Committee
 (Krista Johnson & Erin Metcalf)

2024 Offering Envelopes



The office will be preparing the 2024 offering envelopes for households to pick up. If you do not use the offering envelopes or would like to have offering envelopes, please let the office know as soon as possible. The envelopes will be available by December 24th so you will have them to use on January 7th.

Thank you to all who have set up online giving. To set up online giving go to our website: www.faithlutheranvc.org and click on the give online button on the upper right side. If you scan the QR code with the QR Reader on your phone it will also take you to our website's online giving. A reminder that your contributions are recorded whether you use an envelope, place a check in the offering plate, drop it by the office, mail it or give online.



Salvation Army Bell Ringing



It's time to spread some Christmas cheer and ring the bells for the Salvation Army! The kettles will be set up at Leavers Foods and Petro Serve USA at the top of the 8th Ave SW hill. Bell ringers are needed for shifts (1 hour each) **Monday-Saturday, 10am-12pm, through Saturday, December 23rd.** If you are interested in ringing the bell, please contact Naomi at 701-541-1418 or Lenora at 840-1357 to sign up.

17th Annual "Sounds of the Season" Brown Bagger Series

If you like to listen to Christmas music during the holiday season, you now have another opportunity to listen to Christmas Holiday music the Wednesdays in Advent beginning on December 6th during the noon hour. These listening opportunities will be held in the sanctuary of Our Savior's Lutheran Church from 12:10-12:50pm. Wednesday, December 6 featured performer is Judy Karch. Wednesday, December 13 featured performer is Faye Bubach. Wednesday, December 20 featured performer is Beth Quick Berge.



WELCA News

Faith Lutheran's WELCA Board met Wednesday, November 15. We discussed the disbursement of the Fall Festival monies. On behalf of the Board, I want to thank Faith Lutheran members for supporting the Fall Festival. Because of your generosity we were able to support 19 different entities within our church, community, and state, as well as Haiti Medical Mission. We are taking advantage of Giving Hearts Day which will double the money we give to those organizations who are a part of Giving Hearts Day. All together we were able to disburse over \$7,800.00.

We voted to purchase two new carts to be used in the kitchen. Thank you to the Men's Group for their donation to our kitchen fund. We will be using that donations to help pay for the carts.



By the time you read this Thanksgiving will be a memory and I hope it is a happy memory for all of you. We will be entering the season of Advent and will be decorating the church on Wednesday, November 29th.



I'd like to leave you with this: "The word **advent** means "expectation." What **Advent** can do for us is create a sense of hope." - Louie Giglio.

Cheryl Foell,
WELCA President

Ladies Craft Day—Saturday, December 2



Enjoy a day of crafting, fellowship and fun! Saturday, December 2 we will have a craft day from 9am-3pm here at Faith Lutheran. Bring your own craft project or work on card kits (cards will be used by the visitation team). Bring a friend. Stay all day or for a few hours. Bring a lunch or order in. Contact Julie May @ 490-1143 with questions.

2024 Daily Texts



The 2024 Daily Texts have arrived! The cost of each book will be \$11.95. If you are interested in purchasing the Daily Texts. they are on the gathering area table. If you would like to purchase the Daily Texts directly you may go to the website: www.grounupgrace.com. You may go to the GroundUpGrace.com/ podcasts to listen to their podcasts.

Mission Team News

The Mission Committee met in November to plan the Christmas missions we bring to the congregation each year.



We will have the **Christmas Family Giving Tree** (new name, previously Angel giving tree). We have worked with the VC elementary principals for families who could use a little extra help during the season. We will have our Christmas Family Giving Tree up with two Ornaments on the tree for each child: one a clothing wish and one a toy idea or for an older child a personal idea, such as bubble bath, hair ties or fleece blankets or other fun personal items. We will also be including two ornaments for each family which will be gift cards to be used for the family. Mission members will be at the Tree the following Sundays: **December 3 and December 10** to hand out the ornaments and answer any questions. This year we have 44 Ornaments for gifts on our tree. The **wrapped** gifts are to be returned by **Sunday, December 17**.

Another Christmas mission we offer this year is collecting for **SMP Heath-St. Raphael Christmas gifts** given to residents. The items we will collect include gripper socks, sweatpants, sweaters/ cardigans, men's undershirts, men's socks and of course candy regular and sugar free. The **UNwrapped** items can be dropped off in the collection box at church by **Sunday, December 17**.

Mission Christmas Our third is the **Mission Christmas Fund** and we should explore how long we have been doing this as it has been many, many years. This is a collection throughout the year and in December, we help families that are experiencing something difficult. Some of the situations we have helped families or individuals with are travel expenses for medical appointments, long term illness with loss of employment, and many other struggles that we may have known. We help with gift cards for gas, groceries, general shopping needs, a restaurant/pizza, distributing based on their greatest need. The funds are from offerings and donations we receive from the congregation, memorials, and other committees, including, WELCA, Men's Group and Endowment Foundation. Recipients are identified by Pastor, committee members or other congregation members who may know of a need. If you know of someone, please call Julie at the church office with information.

Thank you to all who find it in your hearts to help bring the message of love and caring for each other, especially during the Christmas season.

Also, thank you for filling our container with socks, gloves, mittens, and caps throughout the last few months. Those will be brought to APOC (Abused Persons Outreach Center) and the elementary schools in December.

Our committee is always overwhelmed by the generosity of our congregation and are thankful for the blessing our congregation is to all of those we touch with the missions we can provide because of you. Thank you for helping our committee spread God's Love to all the lives our missions touch.

God's blessing to each of you,
Faith Mission Committee
P.S. Come join our group—you will have fun!!