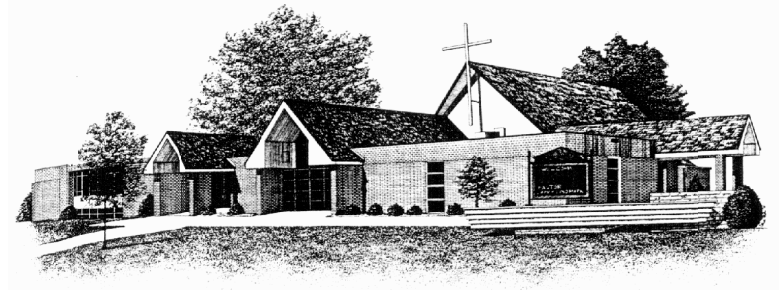


Faith Lutheran Church



AMBASSADOR March 2023

Rev. Dr. Carrie Lewis La Plante
Rev. Heather Geest

500 W. LeClaire Road
Eldridge, IA 52748
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Grace-Gifted, Faith-Lifted
Called to Share, Seek, and
Serve Christ

Dear Friends in Christ,

It is hard to believe that we have already entered the season of Lent, that forty-day season where we walk the road with Jesus to Jerusalem, to the place where he will be betrayed and handed over to the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. We will experience Jesus' trial and witness his death on the cross. We will weep with his followers as his body is laid to rest in a borrowed tomb, and we will gather with the women three days later when they come to find the tomb to be empty and Jesus to be risen.

Along the way, we will hear stories from our faith tradition that cause us to wonder about who we are as God's people. We will hear the story of Adam and Eve who disobey God at the luring of the serpent. We will hear the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. We will join Nicodemus in the darkest of night as he seeks answers to the questions he has about who Jesus is. We will weep with Jesus as he goes to Lazarus' tomb and rejoice with the whole town of Bethany when Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. Ultimately, we will join the triumphant entry into Jerusalem following Jesus on the donkey, and we will be witnesses to all of the events that follow as Jesus is crucified and risen.

As we hear these stories again, it is likely that questions will rise within us. Not the everyday questions we ask like, "How are you?" or "What kind of toothpaste should I buy?" Rather questions like, "What really happens when we die?" or "Why does this terrible stuff happen to people who do their best to follow God?" or "How could God forgive me after what I have done?" or "How do I know what God wants me to do next?" You know, those kinds of questions start to come up.

So often we can feel alone in our questions. Often, we have been told that to ask questions is a sign of lack of faith, so either we are afraid that we are the only ones asking those questions, or we are afraid to name the questions that we carry because we are afraid that others will see our faith as weak. These questions may feel like obstacles to our faith and feel like they are out-of-bounds. Even in the Bible, we read about characters like Job and Nicodemus who ask questions that sound a lot like the ones we carry, yet the answers we receive feel like very touchy responses by God.

But what if faith requires us to ask questions? What if questions are an essential part of growing our faith? What if we need questions to survive and grow as a community of faith?



When we read scripture carefully, we discover that there are questions everywhere. There are hundreds upon hundreds of questions, very few of which get easy, if any, answers. Questions are created in the Garden of Eden. In the Gospel of John, the first words to come out of Jesus' mouth after his resurrection is a question.

Questions come in all types. Some are pesky and others hide in the shadows. Some are loud and beg for attention while some walk with us to the grave. Once we start engaging the questions, we quickly realize that they can be hard to understand, and no matter whether or not we think the questions can stand alone, they almost always require some kind of relationship to gain better understanding.

With all of this in mind, this Lent, we want to engage some of these questions in order to grow our faith and relationships together. Each Sunday in worship, we will engage one of the lectionary passages for the week and talk about some of the questions that come up for those in the story and for each of us. We will begin to think about what God might be moving within us with these questions.

Then, on Wednesday evenings, we will gather for *Holden Evening Prayer*, and we will reengage the questions we started to think about on Sunday. We will read one of the readings from Scripture again, and we will offer an opportunity for you to engage with other members of the congregation in conversation around a series of questions that will help you to grow your faith through those questions as well as grow your relationship with those with whom you speak. Our prayer is that we can let go of some of the certainty that we feel we need to carry with regard to our faith, and together, we can open ourselves up to new opportunities that God might be placing before us.

Do not forget that each Wednesday, there will be a meal provided by a Ministry Team or other group from the congregation from 5:00 to 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We will collect a free-will offering to help offset the cost of the meal. On each table there will be conversation cards that you can use to begin the conversation ahead of worship. Then, we invite you to join us for the *Holden Evening Prayer* service beginning at 7:00 pm where we can engage in deeper conversation around the questions we carry.

We also have a daily devotional available for those who would like to continue this pondering of questions throughout the week. You can pick one up at church, or we can email a copy.

Blessings to you all on this Lenten journey.

In Christ's love,

Pastor Carrie

CHURCH COUNCIL



I am writing this on a snowy night in mid February. A few days ago it was warm and sunny, and a few days from now, it is supposed to be warm and sunny. This winter has not been how I had imagined it would be. I had hoped for a cold, but not very snowy winter so the ground could freeze hard and help the soil form new ways to absorb water, and let roots grow through the cracks created by the freeze/thaw cycle. Farmer's may be the only ones who think like this, imagining the cold part of winter will help the vibrancy of spring and summer. My point is, what we wish for, and what we get are not always the same, but God will provide ways for us to absorb what we need, and give us the strength to grow, even in the face of something difficult.

Join me in thanking Capriotti's Sandwich Shop for supplying some of the meat, cheese, bread, and toppings for the sub sandwiches that the high school students made to raise money for their mission trip to Albuquerque in July. That generous donation helped them raise over \$1,100 to offset the cost of the trip, approximately the cost of one van rental.

The regular council meeting was held on February 16th. We heard more about the exciting new Homebound Ministry. The council retreat was scheduled, and we helped fill out the Annual Congregation Report to the ELCA. This report asks us to answer questions about who we are as a congregation. It provides a good opportunity to reflect on who we are and who we want to become. The council retreat in March will continue this work as we identify the priorities that the congregation has for itself in 2023.

Mike Garner, Council President (563-349-4459)



This year Daylight Savings Time starts on Sunday, March 12th. Please remember to set your clocks forward an hour when you go to bed on Saturday night (March 11th.)



If you wish to contribute toward Easter lilies that will decorate the altar area this year, please list your name and the name(s) of those you wish to honor on the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the narthex area. We are asking for a contribution of \$12.00 to help offset the cost of the plants. **Please indicate 'flowers' on your envelope so we know how to allocate the funds.** Names will be published in the Easter worship bulletin.

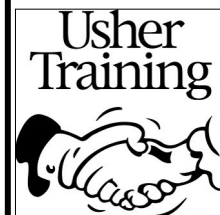
****Help for Faith Family Heads****

Prior to each month one of the 10 Family Heads calls or emails the members on their family list to find the individuals willing to serve at worship as ushers, lectors, and communion assistants. We need to update the list of members willing to serve anytime when the Family Head cannot find volunteers on their list for the month. Please use the sign up sheet on the bulletin board to indicate your interest and availability. Thank you for your support.

We are looking for two Family Heads to help with scheduling worship assistants. If you feel called to serve let me or church know.

Faith Family 9 – Ushers, Readers or Communion Assistants for March I mistakenly contacted most of you for February. I was incorrect and ask that you look at your schedules for March instead. You can sign up for March online using the link on Faith's website, using the paper sign up on the church bulletin board, or giving me a call. I apologize for the confusion. Any member can sign up anytime if interested in helping.

Sincerely, Nina Looney, Worship and Music Team Leader



Ushers and those interested in becoming Ushers...

The Ushers have a important role in the safety and security of our church. Part of our safety plan requires quarterly training for the Ushers. Quarterly training will be held on **Sunday, March 5, @ 10:15 am** in the Sanctuary. Please plan to attend!

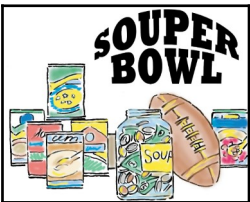
Contact Tom Bauer for more information.



Cheeseburger In Paradise



Thank you to all who helped plan, decorate, manage, serve, clean up and attend the Cheeseburger in Paradise party last weekend. It was a fun event! Check out our Facebook page for more fun photos!



RESULTS of the Souper Bowl Challenge.....

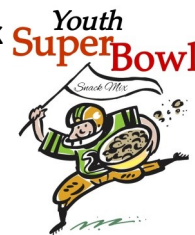
Chiefs	54 items
Eagles	38 items
50 Yard Line	10 items
TOTAL	102 items



The current North Scott Food Pantry needs are soup, pasta, and hot cereal. Thank you!

Thank you for helping us collect items for the NS Food Pantry through this fun challenge! ~
Service in the World Team

Thank you to all who purchased subs and snack mix from our youth! We had fun while raising funds for the summer Mission Trip!



We still need snow removal volunteers! If you could help clear sidewalks after a snowfall, please sign up on the sheet in the gathering area or online using a link on our web page.

Thank you for your help!

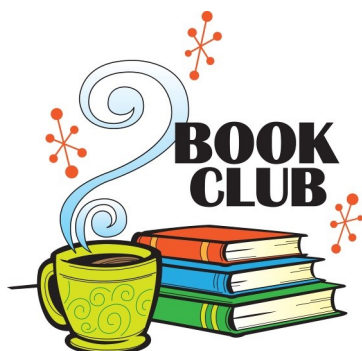


Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 5:00 pm -Congregational Meal (FH) 5:30 pm Confirmation (MP) 5:45 pm—Pre Confirmation (GS) 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm Worship Service 7:30 pm High School	2 6:30 pm Team Night	3 9:30 am Food Pantry 	4 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
5 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 am Sunday School 10:15 am Usher Training	6 <i>Office Closed</i> 6:00 pm Lions Club Mtg.	7 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:15 pm Resounding Joy 5:30 pm Food Pantry 6:30 pm VFW (FH) 7:00 pm Jubilation	8 5:00 pm -Congregational Meal (FH) 5:30 pm Confirmation (MP) 5:45 pm—Pre Confirmation (GS) 7:00 pm Worship Service 7:30 pm High School	9 <i>Team Reports Due</i> 6:30 pm Executive Committee Mtg.	10 9:30 am Food Pantry 	11 5:00 pm Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
12 9:00 am Jubilation Worship 10:00 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 am Sunday School 	13 <i>Office Closed</i> 6:00 pm Lions Club Exec Mtg.	14 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:15 pm Resounding Joy 5:30 pm Food Pantry	15 5:00 pm -Congregational Meal (FH) 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm Worship Service	16 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting Zoom 	17 9:30 am Food Pantry 	18 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
19 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 am Sunday School 12:00 pm Private Event (FH)	20 <i>Office Closed</i>	21 9:00 am Quilting (FH) 5:15 pm Resounding Joy 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 5:30 pm CU Meal	22 5:00 pm -Congregational Meal (FH) 5:30 pm Confirmation (MP) 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm Worship Service 7:30 pm High School	23 6:30 pm WOF Bible Study	24 9:30 am Food Pantry  DEADLine	25 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
26 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 am Sunday School 11:30 am Council Retreat	27 <i>Office Closed</i>	28 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:15 pm Resounding Joy 5:30 pm Food Pantry	29 5:00 pm -Congregational Meal (FH) 5:30 pm Confirmation (MP) 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm Worship Service 7:30 pm High School	30 9:00 am Ambassador Folding 	31 9:30 am Food Pantry 	Key: (FH) - Fellowship Hall (MP) Multipurpose Room (GS) - Gathering Space



Just a reminder that the Church Library is stocked with books for all ages - we would like you to check out a book and experience the thrill of reading a good book - or maybe check out some cookbooks. Hopefully, we have something for everyone. We just ask that you follow the simple rules for checking out a book, and returning the book when finished reading it.

The Library Committee would like to know if there is any interest in starting a book club. We would love to start one if there is interest. Please let Lynda Miller, Sue Sissel or Karen Schmitt know your interest. Maybe you have a favorite book you would like to share with others. The rest of us could check the book out of a library or purchase our own copy. We look forward to hearing about your interest in this.



Women of Faith Bible Study



Join us for a four-session study of the 10 Commandments from the Gather magazine. The third session will be on March 23 at 6:30 pm in the Gathering area. We will look at "Sanctity of Life and Love Commandments 5 and 6". Extra copies of this session will be available.

Sunday School students with the Love Banners they made in February



Midweek Lenten Worship



There are roughly 980 questions in the Greek New Testament along, and most of them occur in the gospels. That is a lot of questions. But why did the original writers of these most holy words write them as questions, when we so often

turn to scripture for answers?

That is one of the questions that we are hoping to explore during the Lenten season. The Sunday readings for this year are designed to invite us into wonder and curiosity, rather than into certainty. Because questions beg for relationship, exploring questions together will help us to build relationships with one another and with God.

Each Wednesday, during our Lenten Evening Prayer Service, we will focus on a question from one of the readings of the previous Sunday to explore together in conversation. The themes for each week and the scripture that will be used are:

Week One (March 1): Questions That Divide, Questions that Bind – Genesis 3:1-4, 6-11

Week Two (March 8): Simple Questions – John 3:1-9

Week Three (March 15): Questions For the Curious – John 4:7-11

Week Four (March 22): Questions That Change, Questions That Change You – John 9:1-3

Week Five (March 29): Questions That Kick – John 11:17-27

There will also be an accompanying daily devotion guide to help you engage various questions throughout the season – questions of scripture and questions of your own. Each day will offer an opportunity to read a couple of verses of scripture to zero in on the question for the day. A couple of additional questions are then added to help you to reflect on the scriptural question. A brief prayer is provided in the form of a question from you to God. There is an opportunity for practice which can include the whole family. And finally, it is encouraged that you create a question jar where, each day, each member of the family places a question or two into the jar. Then, on Sunday, rather than doing a devotion, you spend time as a family exploring the questions in the question jar together. Some questions may have easy and straightforward answers. Others may need some more research or may require conversation with a pastor or doctor or educator or Bible study colleague. Still others may simply be "God questions" that we cannot answer in this life. The hope is that these questions will help us to draw closer to God and one another during this Lenten season.

We hope that you will join us on this Lenten journey as we ask our questions together.



First Communion Milestone

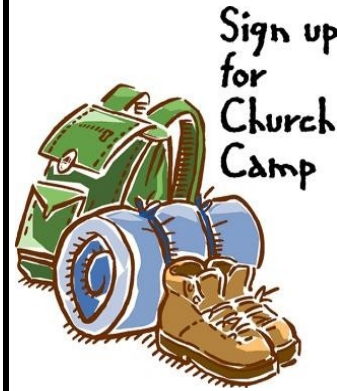
Holy Communion is a gift from God! As with any gift that God gives, it is given with no strings attached. There is nothing we can do that makes us more or less worthy of the gift. Yet—when you or your child receive a gift, it is natural to want to know all about the gift. What is it? How does it work? What do you do with it? These are some of the big questions we'll be learning about during the "First Communion Milestone".

Pastor Heather and Joni Schneider will be leading two important extended learning sessions on March 5th and March 26th from 10:15am-12:15pm. Any students second grade or above who has not received first communion is welcome to attend. During class each student will learn more about the gifts of Holy communion, they will create their own communion chalice (wine cup), participate in a mini-Seder meal, and learn how to make communion bread for worship. After completion of these two class sessions, students will be invited to receive their first communion at worship on Maundy Thursday, April 6 at 7 pm.

If you have any questions or would like to sign your child up for this important milestone, please contact Pastor Heather at church 563-285-4501, or text her cell at 563-639-9606. We need to know how many children are planning on attending so that we have supplies ready for your child. Please reply by March 1, 2023. Again, we look forward to growing in faith with your child this Lenten season.

6th graders: Pre-Confirmation Milestone

All sixth graders are welcome to join Pastor Heather for a pre-confirmation experience for three Wednesday evening during Lent. We will look at the 5 promises made when we affirm our baptism at Confirmation. These sessions will be interactive opportunities to explore how these promises impact our lives. Mark your calendar for these Wednesdays: February 22, March 1, and March 8th. Class will be from 5:45-6:45pm. A meal will be served for the whole congregation each evening beginning at 5pm. The whole family is welcome to join us. Lenten evening worship will begin at 7pm. Please let Pastor Heather know by Sunday, February 19th, if your child will be attending. Contact her at church 563-285-4501, or text her cell 563-639-9606 (please be sure to put your name in the text.) If you have any friends that would like to join you, please invite them to join the fun!



Summer Camp Registration is Here!!

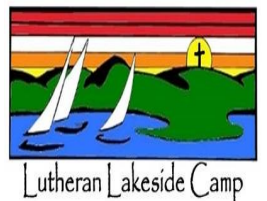
Registration is now open for Lutheran Lakeside Camp this summer. We are planning to attend camp **July 16-21**. There is Junior Camp for those who have completed grades 3-5 and Confirmation Camp for those who have completed grades 6-8. How we will get to camp will be determined at a later date.

For more information about camp, please go to www.lutheranlakeside.com and click on the

Summer Camp drop down menu for more information and the Camp Registration tab when you are ready to register. The total cost for a week at camp is \$475 for the first child. If you send more than one child from your household, there is a \$15 sibling discount for the second and subsequent children. A \$100 deposit is due at registration. **There is an Early Bird Discount of \$50 for all those who register by February 28.** As in years past, Faith will cover \$150 of the cost of camp per child (including friends that they might invite). Therefore, the out-of-pocket cost, if you register by February 28, would be \$275 for your first child and \$260 for any additional children from your household. Please use the code **23EldridgeCamp** to have the \$150 campership applied to your account. Also, please let Pastor Carrie know when you have registered so that she can make sure that the campership is applied and have an accurate count of who is planning to go to help with transportation plans.

Adults are invited to join us for the adult mission trip to do work around the camp that week as well, so if that is something that would interest you, please let Pastor Carrie know.

If you have any questions about camp, please contact Pastor Carrie at pastorcarrie@csteldridge.com or call or text 641-275-1326).





Are you using your spiritual gifts? God calls us to be generous in all areas of our lives and invites us to explore the many opportunities to share ourselves through our time and talents. Stay tuned for an upcoming Time and Talent sign-up later this spring.

1 Peter 4:10: Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

Joan Hennigan,
Stewardship Team Leader



With Appreciation...

Thank you to our February Ambassador Folding Crew:
Carol Marten, Donna Benskin, Tom Bauer, Sue Casel, Sue Braack, Mary Moore, Carol Strobbe and Darlene John



2023 Offering Envelopes

There are still several 2023 Offering Envelopes on the Welcome Center in the Gathering Space. Please check to see if there are envelopes for you or a neighbor, and help us get those delivered. Thank you!



CHURCHES UNITED MEAL Service Opportunity

Churches United is a partnership of Quad City area churches that provides services for needy people, including meals. Our church has volunteered to serve the March 21st meal at 5:30 pm, at Zion Lutheran Church in Davenport. The Worship and Music committee has planned the menu and welcomes help from the congregation. There will be a signup posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex and a SignUp Genius available on our website for menu items and serving the meal. Please help us feed our neighbors in need.



Birthday wishes are extended to the following members who are celebrating birthday number 70 or above.

Rita Smith	March 1	Garry Mueller	March 20
Nina Looney	March 2	Beverly Schmidt	March 22
David Lee	March 3	Sara Nissen	March 23
Ida Weibel	March 8	Ida Bell	March 25
Gary King	March 11	Sylvia Schryver	March 27
Karl Nissen	March 16	Mike Smith	March 28
Dorothy House	March 17	Lea Farley	March 30



Food Panty Needs

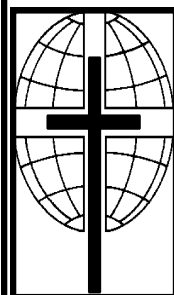
Food Pantry Needs for the month of March are granola or snack bars, soup, and crackers.

Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study

Join us on each Tuesday afternoon for a Bible study that looks at the lectionary texts for the week. **Tuesday afternoons at 1 pm.** We look forward to studying the



MISSIONARY SPONSORSHIP



THANK YOU to Rhonda Webber and Chris Schroeder for Sponsoring the Bencke family, John Chima and Denisse Grefa in January. **THANK YOU** to the La Plante family for sponsoring the Bencke family and to Denny and Joan Hennigan for sponsoring John Chima and Denisse Grefa in February. **THANK YOU** to Tom and Pam Carlson for sponsoring the Bencke family, to Bob and Carol Kuehl for sponsoring John Chima and to the La Plante family for sponsoring Denisse Grefa in March. **We still have sponsorships available!** The cost for sponsorship is \$40/month each for our Compassion Children John and Denisse and \$45/month for the Bencke family. **You can sign up online on Faith's web page, in person on the bulletin board, or by calling the church office.** Thank you for your support!

Weekly Worship: Saturday at 5:00 pm, In Person & Live Stream Online, and Sunday at 9am, In Person.
Sunday School is at 10:15 am. Lenten Worship: Wednesdays at 7:00 pm In Person & Live Stream Online.
Worship updates will be posted on [www. faithlutheraneldridge.com](http://www.faithlutheraneldridge.com) and on our Facebook page.

Faith Lutheran Church

500 W. LeClaire Road
Eldridge, IA 52748

Non-Profit Organization
PERMIT NO. 1
Eldridge, IA 52748

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

