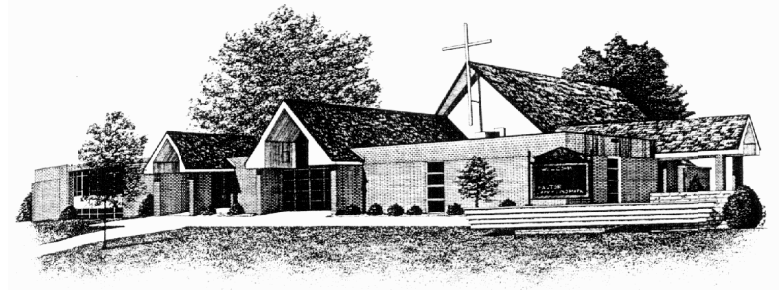


Faith Lutheran Church



AMBASSADOR

April 2023

Rev. Dr. Carrie Lewis La Plante

Rev. Heather Geest

500 W. LeClaire Road

Eldridge, IA 52748

(563) 285-4501

www.faithlutheraneldridge.com

faitheldridge@netins.net

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**Grace-Gifted, Faith-Lifted
Called to Share, Seek, and
Serve Christ**

Dear Friends in Christ,

Throughout the season of Lent, we have spent time considering questions and asking questions about our faith to help us grow deeper in relationship with God and with one another. We have been reminded that having questions and doubts and uncertainty in faith does not mean that we have a lack of faith. These questions are opportunities for us to ponder our faith and grow deeper in our faith. As we talked about on the final Sunday of Lent, the only way to reach certainty in any aspect of our faith is to first wade through the uncertainty and experience how God shows up in the midst of the uncertainty. In fact, the stories of scripture throughout this season have been stories that have led more to pondering faith than answering questions about faith. While all of the questions have been wonderful to consider and ponder together, especially as we have had conversations with one another during our Wednesday evening prayer services and have gotten to know one another so much better through those conversations, perhaps the most fun night was when we considered simple (or not-so-simple) questions as we looked at the story of Nicodemus. Nicodemus came to Jesus at night with all kinds of questions about who Jesus is and what Jesus was doing. While we are not told that Nicodemus had a conversion experience in that moment, we do know that after Jesus was crucified, Nicodemus came and helped Joseph of Arimathea prepare and bury Jesus' body, so something about this conversation changed something for Nicodemus.

As we talked about these questions of Nicodemus at our Wednesday evening worship, we offered the opportunity for those gathered to put their questions about God, faith, the church and more into a jar, and Pastor Heather and I answered those questions to the best of our ability, and/or we pondered together the questions for which we did not have answers. Because the time during worship was limited, we did not get to answer all of the questions, and I promised to answer the rest of them here.

Why do we call the benches we sit in pews? After some research, I found that "pew" comes from the Middle English word *pewe* that comes from the Old French *puye* or *puie*, meaning balcony or elevation. This, in turn, came from the Latin *podia*, the plural of podium. In the churches, there were elevated sections for people of rank (ladies, rich gentlemen, etc...). It evolved to be used for all the bench-like seats we have today.

Did Adam and Eve have belly buttons? To be completely honest, I have no idea, and there is no scholarly evidence either way. My best guess is that they did not, as there was no umbilical cord in their creation; however, God may have put them there simply because God wanted to. God is creative, and perhaps, God appreciated the look with a belly button more. That is definitely a "God question" for when we meet God face to face.

Why do we, as Lutherans, say, "I (We) believe in the holy catholic church" in the Apostle's (Nicene) Creed? The word "catholic" is a late Middle English word that comes from the Old French *catholique* or late Latin *catholicus*, which both come from the Greek *katholikos* which means "universal" from the Greek roots *kata* meaning "in respect of" and *holos*

which means "whole." When used with a lowercase "c," catholic means the universal church, or the entire Christian church. When the "c" is capitalized, Catholic comes to refer specifically to the Roman Catholic Church. Thus, we say "the holy catholic church" in the creeds because we believe in the whole (universal) Christian church, not just our Lutheran expression of it.

Is there a question of faith or a doubt we should never have? While others will likely tell you differently, I do not believe so. I think that any question or doubt that we carry, when asked of God or asked among other believers is an opportunity to explore faith more deeply and grow in our understanding of God. The only question or doubt that I feel hinders faith is the one that is never asked because it does not allow for the Holy Spirit to work in and through us and those around us as we seek God's presence and answers together.

Explain the Holy Spirit. That is a big one. I do not know that the Holy Spirit can be explained other than to say that it is the third person of God, the one gifted to us at Pentecost. The Spirit blows God's light and power in and through us, and the Spirit leads and guides us to live as God's people. To get really churchy, according to Martin Luther in his explanation of the third article of the Apostle's Creed in *Luther's Small Catechism*, the Holy Spirit has "called [us] through the gospel, enlightened [us] with [the Spirit's] gifts, made[us] holy, and kept [us] in true faith" just as the Spirit does for the whole church to keep it in one true faith. The Spirit forgives sins each day, and the Holy Spirit will raise us from the dead on the last day and bring us with Christ to eternal life. As Jesus tells Nicodemus, the Spirit blows as it wills, and we cannot see it, but we know that the Spirit is there with us.

Why does Faith Lutheran Church have blue Advent candles and no Christ candle? Actually, we do have a Christ candle that we use at baptisms and throughout the season of Easter (usually on the baptismal font), as well as for the Evening Prayer Candle during Lent (with the Alleluia turned away). We do not have a Christ Candle in the Advent wreath because that is actually not the way of the original advent wreaths. That was a later addition.

As for the color of the candles, there are several options that can be used: natural to represent the Light for which we wait; purple for the color of royalty and penance which used to be chosen when Advent was seen as a season of penance similar to Lent; and blue, which is the color of hope. Liturgical renewal in the last several decades has shifted the focus of Advent from a penitential season to a season focused on hope and expectation of the coming of Christ, both in the manger and at the end of time. Therefore, the color of the season, as well as the candles, has often transitioned to blue as a symbol of this hope.

What is your favorite Bible verse? Why? I have many favorites, but the one that holds God's promise for me most fully is Romans 8:38-39, "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything

else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” In these verses, we are promised that, because of what Jesus has done for us, there is nothing we can do, there is nothing that anyone can do to us, there is nothing that the world can do to us that can ever separate us from God’s love. There are so many days when I need that promise repeated over and over again, so I have committed it to memory so that I have these words and this promise available to me whenever I need it.

Thank you all for these questions, and thank you for making this journey of asking these deep questions of faith with us this Lenten season. As we prepare for the celebration of Easter, may we continue to ask the hard questions, seek answers together, and dig deeper into our faith so that we can believe all the more. After all, on Easter evening, Thomas will doubt that Jesus can be alive, and week later, Jesus will come to him in his doubt and uncertainty so that Thomas can believe. Jesus continues to show up in our doubt and uncertainty because nothing, not even the deepest, darkest questions that we carry, can separate us from God’s love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Pastor Carrie



Easter is almost here! A time when we spend time thinking about renewal, grace and forgiveness. The renewal part of spring is easy to see and embrace. For me, the grace and forgiveness takes more work. This spring, as I enjoy the renewal of so many living things, I will try and remind myself to practice grace and forgiveness as best I can.

Join me in thanking all of those who helped make the Wednesday Lenten meals happen, including the teams and groups that signed up and provided a meal, as well as those who worked behind the scenes to coordinate all of the volunteers.

The regular council meeting was held on March 16th. This was the shortest meeting in my five years on council. The calendar for April was finalized, the treasurer's report was discussed, we heard how the Lenten meals are going, the final preparations for the council retreat were taken care of, and Myron informed the council about the work being done to update the policies and procedures manual. Your council is made up of great people getting things done.

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



On **Palm Sunday, Saturday, April 1, 5:00 pm** and **Sunday, April 2, 9:00 am**, we will begin Holy Week with a procession of the palms, and during worship, we will hear a dramatic reading of the passion story according to the Gospel of Matthew. Palm Branches will be available for pick-up on Friday, March 31, from 9:00 am to noon and on Saturday, April 1, from 2:00-4:00 pm for those worshipping at home.

Our **Maundy Thursday** service on **Thursday, April 6, at 7:00 pm**, will include the celebration of First Communion for several of our children.

On **Good Friday, April 7**, we will gather for a Service of Light and Darkness at **7:00 pm**.

Join our **Easter Vigil** service on **Saturday, April 8 at 5:00 pm**.

Easter Sunday, April 9

8:00 am – Easter Worship Service

9:00 am— Easter Breakfast in Fellowship Hall

9:30 am— Easter Egg hunt on the front lawn

10:30 pm –Easter Worship Service



FELLOWSHIP EVENT

Enjoy an afternoon at the Spotlight Theater for the matinee performance of Oliver featuring Faith’s own Heather Lueder. Join us for this group outing to the Spotlight Theater located in the former Masonic Temple in Moline on Sunday, April 23rd at 2 pm. Tickets are \$20. **Contact Deanna Nielsen** (285-6194 or deannasielsen@gmail.com) **before Easter** for more information and to reserve your spot. Also there is a sign up on the bulletin board.





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, and place it in the offering plate. Names will be published in the Easter worship bulletin.

****PLEASE SIGN UP BY PALM SUNDAY****



Our Special Easter offering is designated for Lutheran Disaster Response for "U.S. tornadoes." 100% of our gifts will be used toward helping people in U.S. communities impacted by tornadoes.

FAITH LUTHERAN FINANCES

	FEBRUARY	YEAR-TO-DATE
INCOME*	\$23,338.08	\$61,052.42
EXPENSES	\$29,733.28	\$56,951.45

*Monthly Income needed to meet annual budget is \$30,000

We are in need of more congregation members to become offering counters. If you are interested, please contact Rhonda Webber, Financial Secretary, at (319) 230-1228 to schedule training. Thank you in advance for your willingness to help with this important role in our church.



The Worship and Music Team led the Churches United Meal on March 21st. Over 65 people were served. Thank you to all who donated, prepared, transported, and served the meal! Watch the announcements for our next meal service day in May.



Lazarus visited Sunday School! Well, not really, but the kids had fun acting out the story. They made "The Woman at the Well" crafts for a story in March. On Palm Sunday, they will be making and using "palm" branches and donkeys to use for acting out the story. Come join the fun!



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Key: (FH) - Fellowship Hall (MP) Multipurpose Room (GS) Gathering Space						1 Cinnamon Roll Sale 9:00 am Private Event (FH) 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
2 Palm Sunday 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 am Sunday School <i>Cinnamon Roll Sale</i>	3 Office Closed 6:00 pm Lions Club Mtg.	4 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:15 pm Resounding Joy 5:30 pm Food Pantry 6:30 pm VFW (FH) 7:00 pm Jubilation	5 5:00 pm -Confirmation Meal (FH) 5:30 pm Confirmation Service Project/Mentor Night 7:00 pm High School	6 Maundy Thursday 1:00 pm Food Pantry Board Meeting 7:00 pm Worship with First Communion	7 Good Friday 7:00 pm Worship	8 Easter Vigil 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
9 Easter 8:00 am Worship 9:00 am Breakfast 9:30 am Easter Egg hunt 10:30 am Worship 	10 Office Closed 6:00 pm Lions Club Exec Mtg.	11 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 6:30 pm VFW (FH) 7:00 pm Jubilation	12 5:00 pm -Confirmation Meal (FH) 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:15 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School 7:15 pm Resounding Joy	13 <i>Team Reports Due</i> 6:30 pm Women of Faith Board Meeting 6:30 pm Team Night 7:30 pm Executive Committee Mtg.	14 9:30 am Food Pantry 	15 5:00 pm Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
16 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 am Sunday School	17 Office Closed	18 9:00 am Quilting (FH) 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry	19 5:00 pm -Confirmation Meal (FH) 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:15 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School 7:15 pm Resounding Joy	20 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting Zoom 	21 9:30 am Food Pantry  DEADLine	22 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
23 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 15 am Sunday School 30 9:00 am Worship with Confirmation 10:00 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 15 am Sunday School	24 Office Closed	25 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry	26 6pm Confirmation Celebration Dinner 6:15 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School 7:15 pm Resounding Joy	27 9:00 am Ambassador Folding  6:30 pm WOF Bible Study	28 9:30 am Food Pantry 	29 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 



You are invited to the Southeastern Iowa Women of the ELCA (WELCA) Spring Cluster 6 meeting on **Saturday, April 22, 2023.**

Where: **The Vault Coffee & Cafe**, 220 W. Davenport St., Eldridge

Time: **Program begins at 10:00 am**

Program: **Humble Dwellings.** They provide furnishings and needed items for immigrants coordinating with our friends at Tapestry Farms. Dutch Treat lunch to follow, if desired.

Monetary Donations will be collected for Humble Dwellings, Women of Southeastern Iowa Synod, and our Cluster 6. Please bring separate monies for each.

RSVP by April 15 to Barb Spies: bjspies68@gmail.com or call/text to 563-676-1238. You can contact Lynda Miller if you have any questions in regards to the meeting.



2023 Convention and Gathering of the Southeastern Iowa Women of the ELCA

Come join other women from Southeastern Iowa Women of the ELCA June 9 and 10, 2023 at the Stoney Creek Hotel, Des Moines for their 35th Annual Convention and Gathering. There will be great speakers, workshops, and time to meet other ladies. Some of our speakers are Bishop Amy Current, Kim Crawford from Circle Freedom Women's Center, to name some. The Charitable organization to contribute to will be IMPACT community Action Partnership. Along with the Stewardship Committee's charity for 2023 is Iowa Veterans Home. This is a fun 2 days, plan to attend, bring your mother, sister, friend. For more information, contact Lynda Miller, she has registration forms and hotel reservation information.



This Lenten season, thirteen lively students joined Pastor Heather and Joni Schneider in learning more about God's big salvation story and the sacrament of Holy Communion. We had a taste of a Seder

meal, learned how to make bread, formed our own pottery chalices, and deepened our understanding of the Lord's Supper and how we receive Jesus' promise of forgiveness with the bread and wine.

Please join our community of faith as we celebrate and welcome the following students who will join in sharing the meal of Holy Communion this Maundy Thursday: Craig Bloomingdale, Brock Flenker, Charlotte Flenker, Violet Geest, Ben Lewis, Ryan Lewis, Trenton Leininger, Woodrow Leininger, Will Lindaman, Sayla Looney, Alec Polson, Gwen Rasmussen and Harper Strom.





Cinnamon Roll Sunday

Youth who will be attending the High School Mission Trip to New Mexico will be making and selling cinnamon rolls the weekend of **April 1 and 2** to help raise funds for their trip. You can purchase these delicious rolls in person around worship April 1 and 2, or pre-order by signing up online (link found on our website and on

Facebook) or on the sheet in the gathering space. Cost is \$1/roll, \$5/6 rolls, and \$10/dozen. Along with baked rolls, we will have the option to purchase unbaked rolls by the dozen. Thank you for supporting our youth!



Join us as we celebrate the truth that "Christ Is Risen! He Is Risen Indeed!"

The youth who are going to New Mexico for the mission trip in July and their families will serve breakfast on **Easter morning, April 9, from 9:00-10:15 am**. A free will offering will be collected to help with the costs of the trip.

We are excited to have the following youth and adults going on the summer mission trip to Albuquerque, NM: August Bauer, Dylan Bergmann, Reece Crain, Griffin Frank, Mackenzie Gabrielson, Jennifer Garner, Samantha Garner, Addison Harms, Carter Harms, Makenzie Housenga, Gehrig Kirst, Grady Kirst, Abigail La Plante, Madelyn La Plante, Collin Lewis, Jacob Link, Kaycee Newman, Katelyn Peck, Everett Schroeder, Ryan Stickler, Mike Garner, Brea Harms, Sue Kirst, Scott La Plante, Pastor Carrie La Plante. As we lead up to this trip, we will be doing some fundraising to help finance the trip.

UPCOMING AND ONGOING EVENTS:

- ◆ **Cinnamon Roll Sunday**-see article above.
 - ◆ **Easter Breakfast**-see article above.
 - ◆ **Best Choice Save-A-Label**-We continue to collect UPC symbols from Best Choice products. There is a box in the Gathering Space where these will be collected.
 - ◆ **Printer Ink Cartridges**—Please place used printer ink cartridges (no toner) in the collection box in the Gathering Space. We earn ~\$2 per cartridge!
- Thank you in advance for your financial and prayer support!



Easter Egg Hunt

Easter Egg Hunt

We invite your family to participate an egg hunt on the church lawn at **9:30am** on **Easter Sunday**. Bring your basket, or we will provide bags. We will celebrate the good news of Jesus' resurrection together.



Confirmation Celebration

Eleven youth are completing their Confirmation experience: Kendall Behm, Lauren Behm, Maddie Eller, Kamilah Eller, Griffin Frank, Mackenzie Gabrielson, Grady Kirst, Madelyn La Plante, Collin Lewis, Katelyn Peck, Cooper Schoenthaler, and Nick Schryver. We will celebrate these youth on Sunday, **April 30, at the 9:00 am worship service** as they publicly affirm their faith. Please join us in praying for and giving thanks to God for the gifts that these youth bring to the church.



Summer Camp Registration

There is still time to register for summer camp at Lutheran Lakeside, Spirit Lake, Iowa. **We will be going the week of 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. Everyone needs to register on the Lutheran Lakeside website (www.lutheranlakeside.com). Faith will pay \$150 of the registration fee for every youth registered through Faith.



We also hope that a number of adults will join us on the Adult Mission Trip to camp that same week. Please see Pastor Carrie for more details.



During the Saturday, March 4th worship service, we welcomed to our Faith family through the waters of holy baptism, Erik David Alan Rose, the son of Victor and Alex Rose, and ShirleyAnne Rose Miller, the daughter of Chad and Christina Miller. Erik's sponsors are Chad and Christina Miller and Gwynne Pribble. ShirleyAnne's sponsors are Victor and Alex Rose.

During the Sunday, March 5th worship service, we welcomed to our Faith family through the waters of holy baptism, Caden James Noel, the son of Nate and Jamie Noel. Caden's sponsors are Jake and Joy Schneckloth.



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

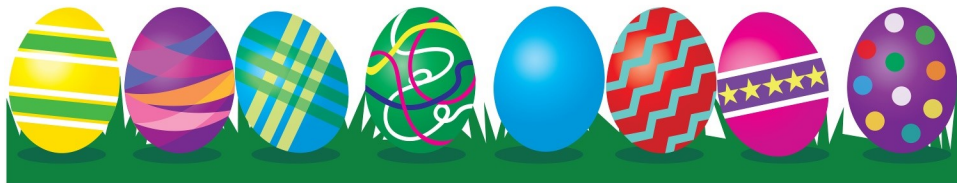


Psalm 24:1: The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.

God owns it all. The Bible tells us so. Are we good stewards of God's creation? A disciple prays, reads scripture, worships, gives, serves, shares. Giving is an important part of being and growing in relationship with Jesus.

Later this spring, look for a Time and Talent sign-up at Faith. We are called to share our time, talent and treasure because God owns it all. We are caretakers of what God has given us by grace.

Joan Hennigan, Stewardship Team Leader



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

Bob Kuehl	April 2	Denny Arp	April 25
Dorothy Watson	April 5	Nancy Meyer	April 26
Glen Keppy	April 11	Sharie Garner	April 28
Marilyn Jansen	April 16	Barb Paustian	April 28
Jim St. John	April 20	Sue Casel	April 30
Dennis Krambeck	April 21	Linda Szemkus	April 30
Nadine Schwarz	April 21	Chris Porter	April 30

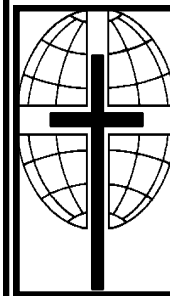


Food Pantry Needs for the month of April are canned meats, fruit, and Hamburger Helper.

Thank You for your support!

Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study

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



MISSIONARY SPONSORSHIP

THANK YOU to *Myron and Carolyn Scheibe* for Sponsoring the Bencke family, John Chima and Denisse Grefa in April. **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. Join us for Easter Worship on Sunday, April 8 at 8:00 am and 10:30 am. 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

