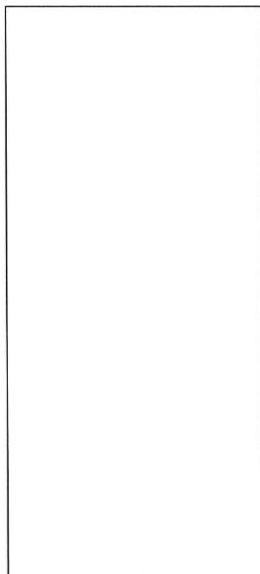
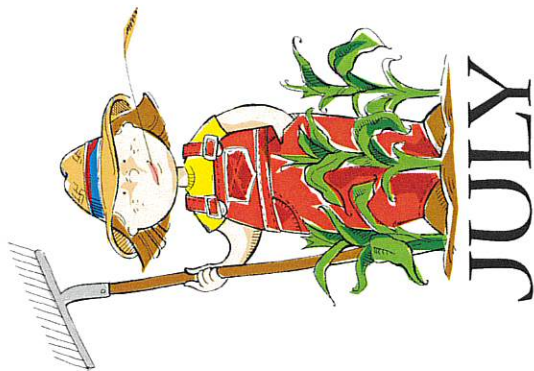


Weekly Worship: Saturday at 5:00 pm, In Person & Live Stream Online, and Sunday at 9am, In Person.
 Adult Book Study is at 10:15 am. Online Worship updates will be posted on [www. faithlutheraneldridge.com](http://www.faithlutheraneldridge.com)
 and on our Facebook page. Outdoor worship every other week from May 28 to September 3.

Faith Lutheran Church
 500 W. LeClaire Road
 Eldridge, IA 52748

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Faith Lutheran Church



AMBASSADOR July 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,

I have to admit that preaching this summer is hard. It is not because there are other things I would rather be doing, like enjoying some fun

in the sun at the pool. It is because the readings from Matthew's Gospel that are assigned for this season after Pentecost are filled with Jesus' teachings about what discipleship looks like. While many who claim to be Christian try to convince us that, to be disciples of Jesus means that our lives will be easy, and we will have no struggles, the description of discipleship that Jesus lays out throughout Matthew's Gospel is far riskier and full of uncomfortable realities. What Jesus tells us is that proclaiming God's love looks like curing the sick, raising the dead, cleansing the lepers, and casting out demons (Matthew 10:8). It means spending time with people who make us uncomfortable, praying for those who have hurt us, sharing God's love with those who are thieves and liars, working with people who are outside of our comfort zone, and trusting that God's transforming power can and will work through us to transform the lives of those whom we touch. That does not mean it will be easy or that living that way does not come with a cost. As I said in my sermon this past Sunday, often, following Jesus means paying some kind of price before reaping a reward.

If we follow Jesus' lead, we see that he starts off his ministry in a way that appalls those around him. After calling his disciples, Jesus is found at a dinner gathering with tax collectors and sinners. Tax collectors would have been seen by most people as thieves as they often lined their pockets in their collection of the taxes for Rome that kept their people oppressed. While we do not have a description of the sins committed by the other sinners, they must have been people who the religious folks have pushed away for when they Pharisees see Jesus eating and conversing with these folks, they pull the disciples aside and ask, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" Jesus replies to their inquiry, "I have come not to call the righteous but sinners" (Matthew 9:10-17). Jesus knew that he was bringing the transforming love of God to those most people could not even begin to love or care about.

Even when Jesus calls his disciples, he does not call the most learned or well-represented people. Peter and Andrew, James and John, and

probably Philip are fishermen who were not well-respected in society in those days as it was a dirty and smelly job. Matthew is a tax collector who would have been in cahoots with the Roman government and seen as a thief. Simon was a zealot, one who sought to overthrow the Roman government. Peter would deny Jesus. Judas would betray Jesus. Thomas would find it hard to believe Jesus. Philip would question Jesus. The rest of them, well, we really do not know any more about them than their names (Matthew 10:1-4). None of them have it all together or all figured out. Most of them would disappoint Jesus at one time or another. Yet, Jesus still calls all twelve of them to carry out the work that Jesus needs done. We can never be sure who Jesus will call and transform with his love, even when it is us.

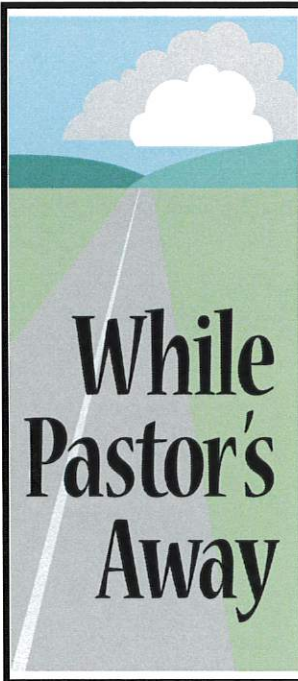
In the weeks ahead, we will hear many of Jesus' parables that involve seeds. First, we will hear about the sower who recklessly sows the seed on all kinds of soil: on the path, on the rocky ground, among the thorns, and finally on the good soil (Matthew 13:1-9). Then, we will hear a story of a master who sowed good seed in his field, but an enemy came in and sowed weeds among the good seed. When the seed began to sprout, the servants of the master asked if they should pull the weeds from among the wheat. The master, however, wise as he was, told them to leave the weeds as it would be hard to know, before the plants were mature, which were truly the weeds and which were the wheat (Matthew 13:24-30). While, in both of these parables, it seems clear what is the good and what is the bad, the truth is that, with humans, distinguishing between those who have good soil in their hearts and those who have rocky soil is nearly impossible. To be honest, we can all have hard paths or rocky soil or thorny hearts or hearts full of good soil on any given day. It is also hard to distinguish the weeds from the wheat among our siblings in this world as outside appearances and even actions can cause us to believe that wheat are weeds and weeds are wheat. We have a transforming God who can change the weedy hearts to wheat with God's love.

Finally, we see that even Jesus needed some convincing on who was in the realm of his care. When he meets a Canaanite woman whose daughter is possessed by a demon, and she asks for Jesus to heal her daughter, Jesus tells her that he has only come for the lost house of Israel, not for Gentiles like her. However, when the woman persists,

Jesus recognizes that he was sent by God to do more than he imagined, and he heals the woman's daughter (Matthew 15:21-28). If even Jesus had something to learn about the unimaginable love of God, perhaps we could be open to God and those around us challenging us to love and care for and pray for those we could never imagine loving on our own.

These are only a sampling of the teachings of Jesus that we will experience this summer, but I pray as we read and struggle and learn together, we can hear Jesus calling each of us to a discipleship that reaches to those who are hurting and struggling, those who are hard to love and who have hurt us, those who we see as sinners and in need of healing, and all of God's people who are in need of God's transforming love. As Paul writes in his letter to the Ephesians, may we all come to know the massive love of God that is beyond our comprehension and trust that God's power working within each of us can accomplish abundantly more than we could ever ask or imagine as we live as Christ's disciples in this world (Ephesians 3:18-21).

In Christ's love,
Pastor Carrie



Pastor Carrie and Pastor Heather will be taking short vacations July 2-7. Pastor Stephanie Wood will be providing pastoral coverage during this time.

Pastor Carrie and Pastor Heather will be teaching our Confirmation students and leading Congregation time at Lutheran Lakeside Camp with our children, youth, and adults July 16-21. Pastor Joel Nau will provide pastoral coverage during this time.

Pastor Carrie will be taking the youth on mission trip July 22-29. Pastor Heather will be available for pastoral care during this time.

Please contact the office at 285-4501 for pastoral care and we will contact the appropriate pastor.

CHURCH COUNCIL



Summer is here. It is the time of the year when we think things will slow down for a bit as school is on summer break and some of our regular programming here at Faith takes a break as well. Does it really slow down though? So many exciting things go on here at Faith, even in the summer: VBS, campers and adult volunteers heading to Lutheran Lakeside, youth and adult helpers heading to Albuquerque for a service learning trip, and North Scott Feed Our Children Ministry are all ways that we can grow in faith while having fun.

Please join me in thanking those who have helped:

- "Parking Lot" picnic volunteers. It is always fun to be together, and we thank those who helped make it happen.
- Property team for all of their work to keep Faith looking great, particularly anyone who helped redo the landscaping and helped repaint the outdoor chapel.
- Final Friday helpers. The kids had a great afternoon celebrating the end of the school year.
- Feed Our Children volunteers. This ongoing ministry is currently serving about 200 lunches each Tuesday and Thursday. They are always happy to have more help from 10:00-11:30 each Tuesday and Thursday.

The regular council meeting was held June 15th. There hasn't been a comprehensive policies and procedures manual in the past, and Myron Scheibe has been working on assembling all of the various documents into one place. In June, we started the council review and edit of the draft, and we will continue to work on this each month until finished. It was also decided to change to Church Mutual insurance to realize a significant savings. Finally, we heard the great news that the North Scott Food Pantry will be using a large donation to fund a repair of a section of the parking lot. They offered it as an expression of gratitude for the use of space here at Faith.

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



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

A huge thank you to the following people who worked so hard on the beautification of the flower garden on the south side of the pastors office: **Bill Wittkowski, Brad Merrick, Dean and Pam Englebrecht, Denny Mohr, Steve Sawvell, Nadine Schwarz, Joni Schneider, Mike Garner, and Karen O'Flaherty.** We all should be quite proud of our property and thankful for those who keep it looking so nice.

Thank you to those who served in the office in June: **Rhonda Webber, Pam Englebrecht, Rita Smith and Carol Marten.**

A special thanks to all the coffee hour volunteers for their treats and adding to fellowship after worship.

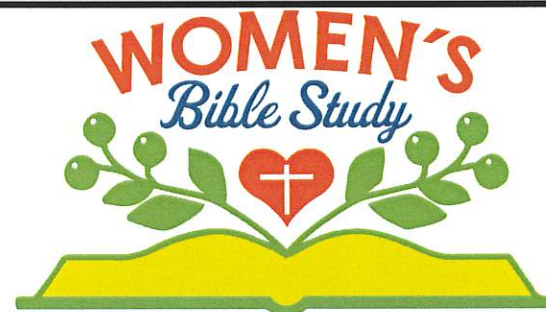
A huge thank you to **Bob White** and **Matt Briehl** for scraping and painting the outdoor chapel. It looks great.



FAITH LUTHERAN FINANCES

	MAY	YEAR-TO-DATE
INCOME*	\$22,782.43	\$141,821.97
EXPENSES	\$26,304.74	\$137,001.52

*Average Monthly Income needed to meet estimated annual expenses is \$31,626



Join the Women of Faith for a Summer Bible Study on **Saturday, August 5, from 9 am to 2 pm.** The three session Bible Study is from the Gather magazine titled "Salvation Now." We will look at "Promised Salvation Now - Jesus Brings Wellness," "Tangible Salvation Now - Christians Bringing Wellness," and "Needed Salvation Now - A World Wanting Wellness." Morning refreshments will be served at 9am. Lunch will be a salad buffet, dessert, iced tea and coffee. For planning purposes, a sign-up is on the bulletin board.



Summer Camp Registration

There is still time to register for summer camp at Lutheran Lakeside, Spirit Lake, Iowa, for grades 3-8 and adults. **We will be going the week of July 16-21.** 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. Adults are invited to join us for the adult mission trip to do work around the camp that week as well. If you have any questions about camp, please contact Pastor Carrie (pastorcarrie@csteldridge.com or call or text 641-275-1326), and she will be happy to answer them.



Lutheran Lakeside Camp

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Key: (FH) - Fellowship Hall (MP) Multipurpose Room (GS) Gathering Space						1 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
2 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship Hour	3 <i>Office Closed</i>	4 <i>Office Closed</i>	5 6:30 pm VFW (FH)	6 10:00 am Feed Our Children 6:30 pm Team Night	7 9:30 am Food Pantry 	8 <i>Eldridge Summer Festival & Moonlight Chase</i> 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
9 9:00 am Outdoor Worship 10:00 am Fellowship Hour	10 <i>Office Closed</i> 6:00 pm Lions Club Exec Mtg.	11 10:00 am Feed Our Children 5:30 pm Food Pantry	12 <i>Eldridge Summer Concert Series & Car Cruise</i>	13 <i>Team Reports Due</i> 10:00 am Feed Our Children 6:30 pm Executive Committee Mtg.	14 9:30 am Food Pantry 	15 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
16 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship Hour	17 <i>Office Closed</i>	18 10:00 am Feed Our Children 5:30 pm Food Pantry	19	20 10:00 am Feed Our Children 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting 	21 9:30 am Food Pantry 	22 9:00 am Private Event (FH) 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
23 9:00 am Outdoor Worship 10:00 am Fellowship Hour	24 <i>Office Closed</i>	25 <i>Office 9am-12pm</i> 10:00 am Feed Our Children 5:30 pm Food Pantry	26 <i>Office 9am-12pm</i>	27 <i>Office 9am-12pm</i> 9:00 am Ambassador Folding Team  10:00 am Feed Our Children	28 9:30 am Food Pantry 	29 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
30 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship Hour	31 <i>Office Closed</i>					

YOUR GIVING MATTERS!

Proportional Giving

2 Cor 8:12: "For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have."

The chart shows proportional giving percentages for weekly income amounts. Prayerfully consider tithing 1/10 of your income as a response to God's blessings in your life. Or, consider increasing your financial giving by 1% each year in response to God's presence in your life. God has blessed us generously. Remember we are caretakers of God's creation. We can't out give God. Go to our webpage faithlutheranelldridge.com for giving options. Thank you for giving generously and gladly.

Weekly Income	Beyond A Tithe		Tithe	Upper Range Giving			Middle Range Giving			Lower Range Giving		
	15%	12%		9%	8%	7%	6%	5%	4%	3%	2%	1%
\$200	30.00	24.00	20.00	18.00	16.00	14.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	6.00	4.00	2.00
\$300	45.00	36.00	30.00	27.00	24.00	21.00	18.00	15.00	12.00	9.00	6.00	3.00
\$400	60.00	48.00	40.00	36.00	32.00	28.00	24.00	20.00	16.00	12.00	8.00	4.00
\$500	75.00	60.00	50.00	45.00	40.00	35.00	30.00	25.00	20.00	15.00	10.00	5.00
\$600	90.00	72.00	60.00	54.00	48.00	42.00	36.00	30.00	24.00	18.00	12.00	6.00
\$700	105.00	84.00	70.00	63.00	56.00	49.00	42.00	35.00	28.00	21.00	14.00	7.00
\$800	120.00	96.00	80.00	72.00	64.00	56.00	48.00	40.00	32.00	24.00	16.00	8.00
\$900	135.00	108.00	90.00	81.00	72.00	63.00	54.00	45.00	36.00	27.00	18.00	9.00
\$1,000	150.00	120.00	100.00	90.00	80.00	70.00	60.00	50.00	40.00	30.00	20.00	10.00
\$1,100	165.00	132.00	110.00	99.00	88.00	77.00	66.00	55.00	44.00	33.00	22.00	11.00
\$2,000	300.00	240.00	200.00	180.00	160.00	140.00	120.00	100.00	80.00	60.00	40.00	20.00
\$3,000	450.00	360.00	300.00	270.00	240.00	210.00	180.00	150.00	120.00	90.00	60.00	30.00

Biblical teachings on giving are strongly based in proportional giving. Use this chart as a tool to help you understand your giving as a percentage of your income. This chart is not meant to pressure, shame, guilt, or compare to others as giving is between you and God.

Joan Hennigan
Stewardship Team Leader



Y o u t h

Service Learning Trip



Shareholder Fundraiser

Thank you to all who purchased shares for the Service Learning Trip to Albuquerque, New Mexico. We were able to raise a little over \$1,800 which will significantly help with our unexpected housing expense.

All those who purchased shares will receive a postcard from one of the youth participants while on mission trip and an invitation to join us for the Shareholder Dinner on Sunday, August 20, at 11:00 am, when the youth will serve a meal and share stories from our trip.

Thank you for your support of the faith formation of our youth!

August Bauer
Dylan Bergmann
Reese Crain
Griffin Frank
Mackenzie Gabrielson
Jennie Garner
Sammie Garner
Addison Harms
Carter Harms

Makenzie Housenga
Grady Kirst
Gehrig Kirst
Abby 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



Vacation Bible School
June 25-29

Food Truck Party VBS was based on Matthew 6:11: "Give us this day our daily bread." This verse reminds us that everything we have comes from God – but it also calls us to turn to God in Prayer to meet our daily needs. Here's how Food Truck Party helps chefs learn to turn to God:

Food Truck Party was such a fun event!! Our student chefs learned about God's ability to provide. They were guided each night by the Food Truck's Top Chef and DJ Cupcake to learn about our Daily Special, lines of a familiar prayer that teaches us to turn to God to meet our needs. We had a unique food truck with the Garners '53 Ford and served our yummy snacks from it!! On Thursday, we served Capriotti's to our students and families out of our VBS Food Truck. The Top Chef, DJ Cupcake, and our student Chefs learned about how we can depend on God to take care of us.

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU to Pastor Carrie, Pastor Heather and our wonderful volunteers who helped make our VBS successful!!!

Amy Powell, Theresa White, Mike, Lisa, Katie, Sammie and Jennie Garner, John Hintz, Evan, Christian, Carrie and Chad Keppy, Joni Schneider, Marla and Brian Zabel, Kristina Gehrls, Rita Smith, Karen O'Flaherty, Linda Johnson, June Reimers, Scott, Abby and Maddy LaPlante, Beth Raiche-Melheim, Denny and Joan Hennigan, Cindy Zabel, Bill Wittkowski, Ethan Mueller White, Amanda and Mike Strom, Diane Cole, Chelsey Dingbaum, Nina Looney, Linda Szemkus, Natalie and Rylie O'Flaherty, Brandon Brown, Teagan Bruns, Dylan Bergmann, and Katelyn Peck.





A Reminder About Healthy Communication at Faith Lutheran Church

Sometimes, we need to be reminded of what makes for healthy communication within the church. The best means of communication is to have a direct conversation with the person with whom you have a concern so that the issues may be addressed directly. If you are uncomfortable addressing a situation directly with a particular person, you are welcome to bring your concern to either of the pastors or to a member of the Congregation Council who can help to address the situation at hand. Any concerns that are brought to the attention of the pastors or Congregation Council anonymously will not be addressed as the appropriate response cannot be made when we do not know who it is that brought forward the concern. Please join us in open and honest conversations so that we can serve the church and the community together in Christ's name.



Final Friday Fun!



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

Patricia Reese	July 2	Becky Stutt	July 19
Mary Bender	July 3	Kay Friederichs	July 21
Kathleen Stoltz	July 6	Donna Knapper	July 22
Ruth Greve	July 7	Sally Puls	July 24
Cathy Henzen	July 7	Lynda Miller	July 24
Carol Marten	July 8	Craig Hirl	July 24
Ann Bainter	July 10	Allan Kluever	July 30
Marcia Donaubauer	July 13	Carol Strobbe	July 30
Sue Sissel	July 18		



Fred & Marilyn Jansen, July 17, 1955

Earl & Dorothy Kuhl, July 21, 1956



The North Scott Food Pantry is collecting school Supplies in July for distribution in August. *Thank You for your support!*

North Scott Clergy Block Parties

On the third Wednesday of June, July and August, the North Scott Clergy Group will host block parties to bring the North Scott Community together. The next party is scheduled for July 19th. Details will be shared when available.



MISSIONARY SPONSORSHIP



THANK YOU to **Mike & Rita Smith** for sponsoring the Bencke family, John Chima, and Denisse Grefa in July. 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!*