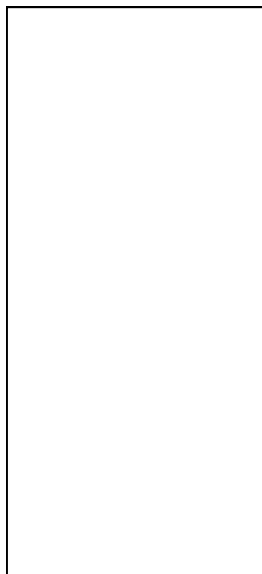
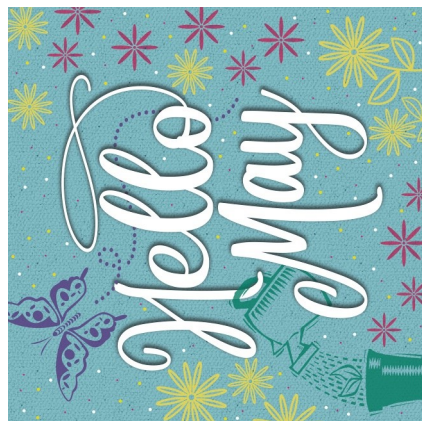


Weekly Worship: Saturday at 5:00 pm, In Person & Live Stream Online, and Sunday at 9:00 am, In Person.
Online Worship updates will be posted on www.faithlutheraneldridge.com and on our Facebook page.
Outdoor Worship on Sundays at 9 am, every other week, starting May 26 through Labor Day.

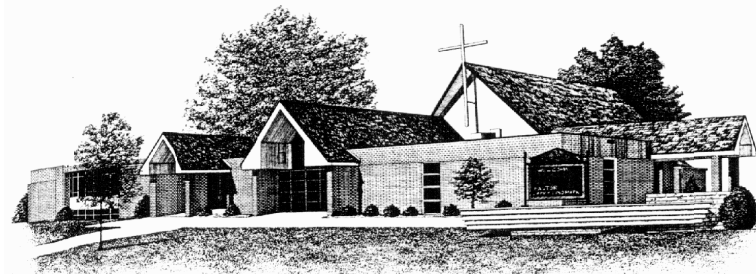
Faith Lutheran Church
500 W. LeClaire Road
Eldridge, IA 52748

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Faith Lutheran Church



AMBASSADOR May 2024

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

From Pastor Carrie	Pages 2-3
Council Notes	Page 4
Baptisms & Summer Outdoor Worship Schedule	Page 5
WOF Plant Sale, Final Friday & Parking Lot Picnic	Pages 6
Service in the World Compassion Child & Missionary info.....	Page 7
Calendar	Pages 8-9
Youth Gathering & Senior Sunday	Page 10
VBS & Summer Camp	Pages 11
Stewardship Reminder & Outreach Information	Pages 12-13
Finance Update, Appreciations, & Easter Offering	Page-14
Birthdays, Food Pantry, & Missions	Page 15

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



Dear Friends in Christ,

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. (1 John 4:7-12)

This passage from the first letter of John has long been one of my favorite passages of scripture. I first committed the first two verses above to memory as a young child when our church children's choirs did a Maranatha Marathon cantata entitled *Psalty's Songbook*. One of the songs was a rendition of these first two verses which I can still sing to this day.

However, over time, I have come to love this passage for the promise that is contained within it. Not only are we commanded to love one another because of the love that God has put within us, but we are also reminded that true love comes not from the love that we show to God. True love is the reality that God loved us first, and out of that love, God sent Jesus into the world to give everything, even his life, for us and our salvation. God lives in us, and that is the love that we share in the world. This is the love born in the promise of our baptism. This is the love experience in the promise that we receive when we gather at the Lord's Supper each week. That is God's promise for us born out of a love that is more than any of us can imagine.

Perhaps that is why these last several weeks have been so powerful for me and so many of us in this congregation. Over the last several weeks, we have celebrated 12 baptisms and celebrated with these children as they received the promise of God's love for them, heard that they are named and claimed by God forever, and were sent into the world to shine the light that God has placed in them for all to see. There is nothing that they have done to earn God's love, but God has always loved them, and now they have heard that love publicly proclaimed for each of them.

That alone would be something to celebrate, but in addition to this, we have celebrated 18 first communions on Maundy Thursday, where these youth received the promise of forgiveness of sins in the bread and wine, body and blood of Christ. They learned of God's love for them in their First Communion Classes, and gathered around Christ's table with family and friends, they experienced God's love for each of them in a new way. I pray that this experience of God's love in this sacrament will be a practice that helps to keep them connected in a tangible way to God's love for them.

This coming weekend, we will celebrate with eight of our youth as they affirm their baptism in the presence of the congregation. While these youth have been living within the promises of God's love for a long time, on this weekend, they are able to claim for themselves their faith and trust in God's love for them. They will hear again the promise that God loves them, no matter what, and there is nothing that they or anything in this world can do to take God's love away from them.

All of these experiences have been reminders for the rest of us of God's love for us as well. We are reminded that God first loved us. We are reminded that God loves us so much that God sent Jesus into the world to give everything for us so that we could know how far God is willing to go to show us God's love for us. We are reminded that God's love lives within us. We are reminded that we are called to love everyone around us, whether we like them or not, because that is how God loves, and that is how God calls us to love.

It is not always easy to trust God's promises and to believe that this love is truly a gift to each of us. It is not always easy to show God's love in this world. That is what makes times like we have shared in these last several weeks so important because we can hear those promises over and over again. We get to participate in showing God's promises to those around us. We are reminded that God's love is not dependent upon us or our faith, but God's love is for us all, and that promise can carry us through all of the highs and lows of this life.

May God's love hold and keep you each and every day of your life, and may that love shine through you into the world around you.

In Christ's love,
Pastor Carrie



Council Notes

Do you know God's phone number? It's Jeremiah 33:3. "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know." Just call. God will answer you. I read that in Savannah Guthrie's new book titled "Mostly What God Does." Prayer is the way we call God. Sometimes we don't know what to pray. In those times, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us as in Romans 8:26: "We don't know what we should pray for. But the Spirit himself prays for us. He prays through groans too deep for words." If we call God, God will answer us, and the Holy Spirit will help us pray. This is good news.

Join me in thanking:

-Pastor Carrie for Confirmation instruction, Confirmation small group leaders, Diane Krebs and Joni King, and Confirmation Mentors.

-High School Youth Group Helpers: Sue Kirst, Joni King

-Sunday School Teachers

-All who had their photos taken for the new directory. Photo session hosts: Michele Olson, Donna Gruenhagen, Sherri Brundies, Sharon Goldsmith, Jean Keppy, Mary Moore, Rhonda Webber, Rita Smith, Carol Marten, Marcia Donaubauer, Denny Hennigan, Pam Engelbrecht, Dean Engelbrecht.

Fellowship Committee for providing cookies during the photo sessions.

-Dennis & Larry Mohr for fixing the lift. It is great to have it working again. Also, thanks to Dan O'Flaherty for facilitating lift repair.

The regular council meeting was held on Thursday April 18. Highlights include finalizing the May calendar, discussing the treasurer's report, and setting our priorities for the year.

2024 Priorities

1: Build and strengthen relationships with Jesus and others through worship, prayer, education, stewardship, and hospitality.

Metric: Average attendance, new members, baptisms, active visitors, and establishment of a narrative budget.

2: Encourage relationships among all age groups with the goal of engaging and empowering children, youth and young adults through those relationships.

Metric: Congregational Breakfasts, Growing Young project, VBS participation, camp participation, worship, Sunday School, and other areas of leadership.

3: Enrich the Church through community involvement and outreach while understanding our neighbors' needs and seeking to be instruments of empathy, unity and peace.

Metric: Food pantry, Feed our Children, Lawn events for community, Service in the World donations, visibility at community events, consider a communication intern to improve social media presence, establish the Faith Connections Team, investigate Friday Fun Day.

Joan Hennigan, Council President 563-285-6867



During the Saturday, March 30 worship service, we welcomed to our Faith family through the waters of holy baptism, Sydney Elaine Nagel, daughter of Michael and Roxanne Nagel. Sydney's sponsors are Mark and Michele Mess.

During the Saturday, March 30 worship service, we welcomed to our Faith family through the waters of holy baptism, Jaxson Leo Davison, son of Courtney Davison. Jaxson's sponsors are Danee Conley, Marshall Mess, and Travis Nelson.

During the Saturday, April 6th worship service, we welcomed to our Faith family through the waters of holy baptism, Nyle Drew Schneckloth, son of Jacob and Joy Schneckloth. Nyle's sponsors are Nate and Jamie Noel.

During the April 7th worship service, we welcomed to our Faith family through the waters of holy baptism, Shepherd Ryan Strom, son of Ryan and Amanda Strom. Shepherd's sponsors are Nick and Marlena Urbain.

During the April 14th worship service, we welcomed to our Faith family through the waters of holy baptism, Rhett Harvey Sawyer, son of Austin and Caitlin Sawyer. Rhett's sponsors are Nicole McIntosh and Evan Salzer.



Summer Worship Outside

Worship at the Outdoor Chapel returns starting **Sunday, May 26th, at 9:00 am**. Every other Sunday morning, we will alternate our 9:00am worship between the outdoor chapel and the inside Sanctuary. If the weather does not cooperate, we will move worship to the sanctuary. Please bring a lawn chair and join us outside this summer on May 26, June 9, June 23, July 7, July 21, August 4, August 18, and September 1 (weather permitting).

Bread Bakers are needed for table communion. Please signup on the bulletin board if you are willing to help with this ministry. Recipes are available. Please deliver on Friday before noon or by 8:30 the morning of worship.



Women of Faith Plant Sale

The Women of Faith are looking for donations of perennial plants for the Eldridge City Wide Garage Sales on May 18th from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm. If you need pots for splitting plants or have extra 9" pots, please call Joni Schneider (285-5829). You can also sell your household items in the church parking lot on May 18th. Come join the fun!

Final Friday

WHEN: Friday, May 31, 2024, 1:15 pm - 3:30 pm

WHERE: Faith Lutheran Church Yard

WHAT: Join in the fun of celebrating the end to the school year and the beginning of a fun filled summer. All kids are welcome to joins us for games, crafts, snacks and fun on the front lawn of the church.

NEEDS: Volunteers are needed for donations of time and a few other items. A sign up sheet will be on the bulletin board. Please consider helping to set up, play, or clean up. If you have questions, please contact Carrie Keppy at ctkeppy@netins.net or 285-4484.

Let the love of Jesus shine!

Final
FRIDAY!



SAVE THE DATE!!!

June 2nd 10:30

Join us for our Annual Parking Lot Picnic "Potluck Style Brunch"

Fellowship Team will provide Meat, Drinks and Table service!
Come Enjoy some Great Food, Fun Games and Fellowship!!



Service in the World Compassion Children and ELCA Missionary Sponsorships

Our thanks to everyone who has sponsored our Compassion children, John and Denisse, as well as our missionary team, the Bencke family. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Your Compassion Child sponsorships help John and Denisse receive support in the form of nutrition supplementation, education assistance, medical checkups and loving Christian care.

The Benckes are members of more than 240 ELCA missionaries that serve in more than 40 countries around the world, invited by global church partners to work together hand-in-hand. Some are doctors in rural areas. Others teach children where there are few opportunities to go to school, or work in seminaries that prepare pastors and future church leaders. Others support, nurture and preach in some of the fastest growing Lutheran congregations in the world. And still others are young adults, engaging in a life-changing, year-long experience through the Young Adults in Global Mission.

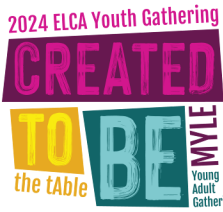
No matter where or how they serve, every one of these missionaries needs your prayers, support and gifts to succeed in their work. Your gift connects you directly to these missionaries. You make their life-changing ministry happen.

Please join us in God's amazing work. Help grow the Lutheran church around the world.

There are opportunities to support John, Denisse and the Benckes. The sign up form is on the bulletin board and on our website. Thank you for your past and future support of our Compassion Children and Missionaries.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Key: (FH) - Fellowship Hall (MP) Multipurpose Room (GS) Gathering Space		 May	1 10:00 am Grand Haven 7:00 pm High School Youth	2 6:30 pm Team Night 7:30 pm Special Council Mtg. 8:30 pm Executive Mtg	3 9:30am Food Pantry 	4 Compassion Weekend 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
5 Compassion Weekend 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Fellowship	6 Office Closed 6:00 pm Lions Club Mtg	7 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 6:30 pm VFW 6:30 pm Jubilation 	8 7:00 pm High School Youth	9 Team Reports Due	10 Office Hours 9-12 9:30 am Food Pantry 	11 5:00 pm Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
12 Mother's Day 9:00 am Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Fellowship	13 Office Closed 6:00 pm Lions Club Exec Mtg.	14 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	15 Graduation Photo & Info Submission Deadline 7:00 pm High School Youth	16 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting 	17 9:30 am Food Pantry   DEADLine	18 8:00 am WOF Plant Sale 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
19 Senior Sunday 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Fellowship 12:00 pm Girl Scouts	20 Office Closed	21 Office Hours 9³⁰-1 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry  Time TBD Churches United Meal	22 7:00 pm High School Youth	23	24 9:30 am Food Pantry 	25 NOISY OFFERING 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
26 NOISY OFFERING 9:00 am Outdoor Worship 10:15 am Fellowship NSHS Graduation Day	27 Office Closed MEMORIAL DAY	28 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	29 5:15 pm Lions Club District Leadership Training (FH, MP, GS)	30 9:00 am Ambassador Folding 	31 9:30 am Food Pantry  1:15 pm Final Friday	



We are excited to have the following youth and adults going to the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans in July: Griffin Frank, Evan Keppy, Christian Keppy, Abby La Plante, Madelyn La Plante, Collin Lewis, Jacob Link, Marshall Mess, Keaton Schmeltzer, Everett Schroeder, Carson Welvaert, Carrie Keppy, Michele Mess, Denise Westendorf, and Pr. Carrie La Plante. Thank you for all of your support this year through the purchase of cinnamon rolls and Super Bowl subs and snack mix.

We have one final fundraiser for this year, which is our Shareholder Fundraiser. Everyone is invited to purchase shares of the trip at \$25 per share (you can purchase as many shares as you would like). Each shareholder will receive a postcard from the youth while on the trip and will be invited to a Shareholder Luncheon after we return where the youth will share stories from the trip, including what they learned, where they saw God at work, and how they grew in faith.

Sales of the Shares will begin on April 21 and will continue through May. Please consider purchasing shares as costs have increased and things that our registration has covered in the past are no longer covered, so actual expenses for the trip are more than we were originally told to budget for. Every share purchased is appreciated!

Thank you all for your financial and prayer support for our youth as they prepare for this amazing faith experience.



Congratulations to all of our graduates—High School, Trade School, Associates, Bachelors, Masters and Doctoral candidates! Blessings to each of you as you begin this next chapter in your lives.

We will celebrate our 2024 High School graduates during worship on **Sunday, May 19, at 9:00 am**. A cupcake reception will follow worship.

Note: Seniors, please send your plans for next year as well as a picture (between wallet and 5"x7") for the Senior Recognition Board by **Wednesday, May 15**. You can mail them, drop them off in the office between 8:00 am and 1:00 pm Tuesday through Friday, or email them to faitheldridge@netins.net.



Faith Lutheran Church VBS invites children of all ages to camp with us at Camp Firelight!

During Vacation Bible School, join first-time camp, Counselor Sam and Lumen, "Lu," the lightning bug puppet, for a summer adventure at Camp Firelight. Campers accompany

Counselor Sam and Lu during each assembly session and learn to face their fears while trusting in God. Each day, Campers see Counselor Sam face new challenges, from as simple as leading Campers on a hike to as intimidating as meeting a new and wise nature expert. With the help of Lu, the Lightning Bug, and the Camp Counselor Guidebook, Counselor Sam and the Campers explore timeless Bible stories showing how Old and New Testament Bible figures trusted God, faced their fears, and went on to do great things in God's name.

As the Campers experience the stories through music, drama and storytelling, games, arts and crafts, science, and even snacks, they learn ways to connect with and trust God. And best of all, they understand they can connect with God at VBS, church, home, and every area of their lives. Camp Firelight invites children on an exciting journey where they learn to trust God no matter what situation life brings, know God is always with them, and feel confident in sharing the good news of God's love through Jesus Christ.

The fun begins Sunday, June 16th, and continues through Thursday, June 20th, from 6-8 p.m. at the church, 500 W. LeClaire Rd., Eldridge.

To be a part of all the excitement at Camp Firelight, visit the church website at www.faithlutheraneldrige.com. To help, please contact Theresa White, (563)370-3767

Last Call for Summer Camp Registration

We hope that many of you will join us for summer camp at **Lutheran Lakeside, July 21-26**, "the best week ever." There are camp options for Children Grades 3—Adult! Please see last month's

Ambassador for registration instructions, or contact Pastor Carrie at pastorcarrie@csteldridge.com or call or text 641-275-1326.



This is just a reminder for those at Faith Lutheran Church that we now have ACH, automatic giving, available for all members. What this means is that your giving to Faith may automatically be deducted from your bank account on a regular basis. No need to use/have weekly envelopes. Your giving is taken care of automatically on a regular basis. This is a benefit to both you and our church. It helps our church to know how much money is available weekly to pay the bills.



For answers to your questions about this program and to enroll, please contact Jerry Neff at 563-340-0264 or jerryandsparkys@aol.com.

Kim Wilkins, Stewardship Chair

Outreach Fund Information

Did you know about the Outreach Fund? For the past several years, some congregation members have donated to this fund. The Service in the World team has the privilege of determining where the money will go each month. As you can see below, the funds have been dispersed locally, nationally and internationally. If this is something you would like to participate in, please place your donation in a pew envelope and mark it Outreach. The information below and on the next page describes how the offerings have been shared.

Outreach Funds 2018	Outreach Funds 2019
June – Water and the Witness - \$200 July – ELCA Disaster Response – \$200 August – School Nurses - \$350 September – RiverBend Food Bank - \$200 October – Calculators for HS at-risk students - ~\$85 November - Salvation Army – \$200 December – Lutheran Lakeside - \$200 God's Global Barnyard – Sunday School kids want to buy an Ox and plow for \$1000. This could help them meet their goal. \$200 match. ALL MONIES HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED EXCEPT FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL MATCH UP TO \$200.	January -OPEN DOOR Crisis Assistance \$200 February - NS School Assistance through nurses March - Women's Choice \$200 April - Lutheran World Relief Newborn Kits \$200 May - local family in need-\$200 June - Red Cross-Local Flood relief Extra-Donate the unspent \$200 designated for Global Barnyard to the Youth Mission Trip July - Lutheran Disaster Relief-Hurricane relief August - Feed our Children September - NS Nurses \$50 to each school October - local family in need (\$300) November - King's Harvest Ministries Homeless Shelter December - Lutheran Lakeside Camp-\$300

Outreach Funds 2020	Outreach Funds 2021
January -Australia-Animal Rescue \$250 February - NSHS Food Pantry \$250 March - Lutheran World Relief-Tornado Relief \$250 April - <u>Quad Cities Disaster Recovery Fund.</u> \$300 May -ELCA COVID-19 Response Fund \$300 June - \$250 Abby Nass/Africa Inland Mission July/August - Disaster Relief in Cedar Rapids (Derecho) through our Synod September -Local Family in need October - Local Family in need November/December - Postage for Christmas boxes and helping 2 families in need with Christmas gifts, clothing, school supplies and household supplies	January - Churches United (\$150) February - Coats for Kids (\$150) March/April - NS Student needs through the school nurses (\$425-\$475 or so) May - King's Harvest (\$200) June - Bread for the World (\$150) July -Bethany for Children and Families (\$150) August - Humility Homes and Services \$150 September - Red Cross Hurricane Relief (\$200) October - The Center (\$200) November - Women's Choice Center (\$200) December - Christmas gifts for children in need through LSI (\$225)

Outreach Funds 2022	Outreach Funds 2023
January -ELCA World Hunger (\$200) February - University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital (\$200) March -Ukraine Relief (\$150) April -John Glenn School-Personal Hygiene products (\$147) May -Tapestry Farms (\$150) June -NS Feed Our Children (\$150, for June and July) July -See June August --Willie Ray's Q Shack-Florida - Hurricane Relief (\$120) September -See August October -All Hands and Hearts (\$250, for Sept.and Oct.) November -Tunnel to Towers (\$100) December -Winnie's Transitional Housing	January - Bread for the World (\$100) February - Habitat for Humanity (\$100) March -Lutheran World Relief-Turkey Earthquakes (\$150) April -John Glenn-Personal Care supplies-\$120 May - Tapestry Farms (\$150) June - Quad Cities Disaster Recovery Fund (Building collapse) (\$200) July - Red Cross (\$150) August - Humility Homes and Services (\$150) September - Lutheran Disaster Relief (\$130) October/November - Churches United (\$250) December -Deafinitely Dogs (\$125)

Outreach Funds 2024
January - Lutheran Home for the Aged (\$125) February - Stead Children's Hospital (\$120) March - No funding April - Bethany Give Kids a Smile (\$100)



FAITH LUTHERAN FINANCES

	MARCH	YEAR-TO-DATE
INCOME*	\$29,144	\$96,735
EXPENSES	\$27,661	\$85,325

*Monthly income needed to meet budget is \$32,990



With Appreciation...

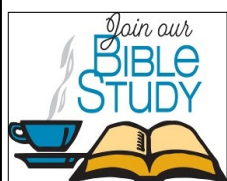
Thank you to our April Ambassador Folding Crew: Pam Englebrecht, Carol Strobbe, Sue Casel, Darlene John, Tammy Neff, Carol Marten, and Sue Braack. Thank you for doing extra duty, and folding a lot of Holy Week bulletins, too!

Thank you to Carol Marten, Sue Sissel, and Beth Raiche-Melheim for folding the Easter weekend & April bulletins. The help was very much appreciated!

Thank you to all who had their photos taken for the new church photo directory April 16-20. Special thanks to the photo session hosts: Michele Olson, Donna Gruenhagen, Sherri Brundies, Sharon Goldsmith, Jean Keppy, Mary Moore, Rhonda Webber, Rita Smith, Carol Marten, Marcia Donaubauber, Pam Engelbrecht, Dean Engelbrecht, Joan Hennigan, Denny Hennigan. Also, thank you to the Fellowship Committee for providing cookies and snacks during the photos. All of the help was very much appreciated.



As of April 24, our Special Easter Offering is \$3,675. This will be split evenly between Humble Dwellings and ELCA Disaster Response where needed most.



Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study

Join us on each Tuesday afternoon, at 1:00 pm, for a Bible study that looks at the lectionary texts for the week.



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

Curtis Hulsen	May 1	Kris Schwein	May 12
Kristy Looney	May 1	Leonard Hanson	May 15
Jim Weibel	May 5	Roger Baustian	May 19
Sandra Knoche	May 5	Ann Kuehl	May 28
Pam White	May 9	Darlene John	May 30

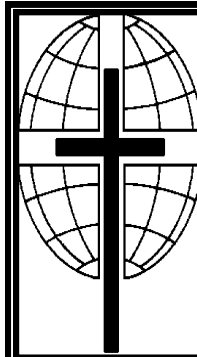


FOOD
PANTRY

Food Pantry Needs

Food Pantry Needs for the month of May are kid friendly foods to distribute to families during the summer months.

Thank you for your continued support!



MISSIONARY SPONSORSHIP

Thank you to **The La Plante Family** for sponsoring Compassion Child **Denisse Grefa**, to **Bob & Carol Kuehl** for sponsoring the **Bencke family**, and to **John Hintze** for sponsoring **John Chima** in April.

Thank you to **Brad and Janet Merrick** for sponsoring Compassion Children **Denisse Grefa** and **John Chima** and for sponsoring the **Bencke family** in May.

There are many sponsorship opportunities available in 2024. The cost for sponsorship is **\$45/month** each for our Compassion Children **John Chima** and **Denisse Grefa** 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 at (563)285-4501.**

Thank you for your support!