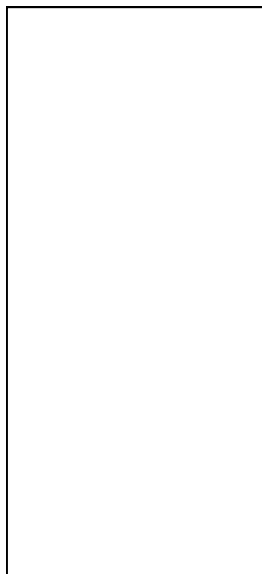


Weekly Worship: Saturday at 5:00 pm, In Person & Live Stream Online, and Sunday at 9:00 am, In Person.
Online Worship updates will be posted on www.faithlutheraneldridge.com and on our Facebook page.
Sunday School and adult faith formation on Sundays at 10:15 am.

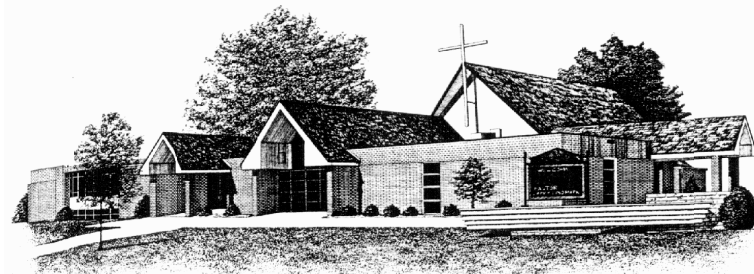
Faith Lutheran Church
500 W. LeClaire Road
Eldridge, IA 52748

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Faith Lutheran Church



AMBASSADOR February 2025

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,

When Jesus went home to speak in the synagogue among those who had known Jesus since he was a child, Jesus stands up and reads these words from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” (Luke 4:18-19;

Isaiah 61:1-2a)

Jesus then preaches one of the shortest sermons ever. “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing,” Jesus says. But has it really? When I look around at all that is going on in these days, it hardly seems that this scripture has been fulfilled. There are still so many who are broken and bound and hurting and unable to see in so many ways. How has the year of the Lord’s favor been realized? How has it been fulfilled?

If we get a little “Greek-geeky” as I am wont to do from time to time, the verb “has been fulfilled” is in the perfect tense which means that the scripture has indeed been fulfilled in its hearing, and the effect of such hearing is an ongoing reality. This means that Jesus’ sermon does not actually end with Jesus. Jesus came to show us how to be about love and freedom and good news in the world, but Jesus also has called us to continue this work. Jesus has called us to be the ongoing fulfillment of good news, release, sight, freedom and declaring the year of the Lord’s favor. However, we tend to leave Jesus’ sermon preached in his hometown in the past and see it as good news preached to those who first heard it. Yet, this is also a call to us to take on this promise and carry it into the future. Otherwise, the ongoing reality of the promise that Jesus declared risks the possibility of extinction, of being left in the past as something that does not relate to us.

Paul reminds us in his first letter to the Corinthians that, just like our bodies that are made up of many parts, all of which are important regardless of their function, so each person in the body of Christ is important and needs to be cared for with the utmost respect. For Paul reminds us that when one member suffers, all suffer with it, and when one member is honored, all are honored with it (1 Corinthians 12:12-31a).

As we look around us, and we see those who are hurting, those who are struggling, those who are oppressed or bound up, those who

cannot see the reality around them, those who are most vulnerable around us, and those who are in need of some good news, we are called to bring that freedom and sight and good news for the sake of the whole body.

There is a plaque on the outside of the chapel at the Primacy of Peter, where tradition says Jesus appeared to his disciples at the shores of the Sea of Galilee after the resurrection, prepared a meal to share, and invited them to come and eat. The plaque’s inscription is based on Luke 5:5 where Jesus is calling his first disciples. On it is written, “Simon answered, ‘Master, we have worked all night long, but have caught nothing. Yet, if you say so, I will let down the nets.’” The plaque goes on to read, “The deeds and miracles of Jesus are not actions of the past. Jesus is waiting for those still prepared to take risks at his word because they trust his power utterly.”

As we see the fear and the pain and the suffering that is being inflicted on those around us, we know that our work is not done. There are still risks to be taken, there is still good news to be shared with the poor, release to be declared to the captives, sight to be brought to those who cannot see in all kinds of ways, freedom to be shared with the oppressed, and the year of the Lord’s favor to be proclaimed in the midst of a world where, so often, all evidence is to the contrary at times. Are we willing to take risks for the sake of Jesus’ word because we trust Jesus’ power utterly? Are we willing to believe that, through the love of Jesus within each of us, we can change the lives of people around us in order that the whole body might be changed? Are we willing to believe that, even though the road might not yet be clear and the path yet untrodden, that Jesus is still calling us to fulfill this Scripture?

I am convinced these are the questions that we will need to answer in the days ahead so that, through us, the Scriptures will continue to be fulfilled, just as Jesus promised for all people, particularly those who are most vulnerable around us. We need to decide what loving all parts of the body of Christ, especially those who are suffering, looks like in these days, and then we need to do something about it. God’s promises are still being fulfilled among us. What part will you play?

In Christ’s love,
Pastor Carrie





Bloom where you are planted. This phrase may sound spring-like, but it applies anytime of year. Galatians 5:22 says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." I pray that we can all bloom where we are planted. The fruit of the Spirit is not produced by human effort, but by the Holy Spirit's work. The fruit of the Spirit should be evident in our daily interactions.

Join me in thanking:

- Sunday School teachers and Teri Wittkowski for the joyous Children's Christmas program.
- Diane Krebs for making the angel ornaments given at Christmas Eve services. It is a beloved tradition at Faith.
- Meal Ministry team for serving the congregational breakfast on Dec 15 and Jan. 5. It is our hope that these intergenerational breakfasts are an opportunity for us to grow in faith and in relationship to one another.
- Decoration crew and property committee for removing Christmas decorations.
- Sue and Neal Becker and Resounding Joy for providing the Lessons and Carols services on Dec. 28, 29. It was beautiful and moving.
- All involved in the Christmas Cantata.
- All worship leaders, our pastors, helpers, ushers, communion assistants, readers, counters, Altar Guild, Sunday School teachers and helpers, committee leaders and members, Choir, Chimes, Jubilation, and musicians.
- All who prepared and served the January Churches United Meal. it is truly God's work, our hands.
- All who contributed to the Capital Campaign.
- Fellowship Committee and helpers who planned and served the Cheeseburgers in Paradise in the tropical Fellowship Hall. It was fun and delicious!

The regular council meeting was held on January 16. The great news of the year end giving that will propel our mission and ministry was celebrated. Preparations for the annual meeting were discussed, as well as the Sanctuary Update project.

The annual meeting of the congregation was held on January 26 at 9 am. Pastor Carrie thanked everyone who donated or helped in any way to shine God's light in our world. The love and hope it spreads is inspiring. Elected to Council are: Michelle Rasmussen, Randy Reimers, Annette Tomlinson, Cindy Zabel. Nominating Committee members are: John Hintze, Joan Hennigan, Gayle Staples, Mike Strom, Kim Wilkins. Endowment committee members are: Tom Bauer, Janice Hartwig. Synod Voting Delegates are: Gayle and Mike Staples. Alternates are Jim Schneider and Mike Strom. Budget was approved. Sanctuary Update was discussed.

Joan Hennigan, Council President
563-285-6867

The results of our annual meeting election are as follows:

Congregation Council:

Michelle Rasmussen, Youth
Randy Reimers, Property
Annette Tomlinson, Faith Connections
Cindy Zabel, Christian Education

Endowment:

Tom Bauer, Janice Hartwig

Nominating Committee:

Joan Hennigan, John Hintze, Gayle Staples, Mike Strom, Kim Wilkins

Synod Voting Delegates:

Gayle Staples, Mike Staples

Alternate Synod Voting Delegates:

Mike Strom, Jim Schneider (write in)

We thank all of you for serving!





Sanctuary Update

Growing in Faith...Sanctuary Update

We are glad to announce that we have met and exceeded our stretch goal for the capital campaign reaching a current pledged amount of \$455,350, and the flow of the money is such that we will be able to pay cash for the sanctuary update with no loan needed. Thank you!

At this time, we have ordered the furniture from New Holland Church Furniture with an expected installation date of mid-July. We have received and accepted bids on the lighting, which will be completed this spring. We are in the process of receiving bids on demolition work, flooring and audio/visual needs. We plan to begin on June 16 and be back in the space by September 8. If you know of anyone who could use our current furniture, please let Pastor Carrie know.

Thank you for the support of this project to continue to make Faith a more welcoming and accessible place for people to worship and gather.



February Breakfast

Join us on Sunday, February 9, for our monthly **congregational breakfast** following the 9 am worship service. It is our hope that these intergenerational congregational breakfasts will be an opportunity for us to grow in faith and in relationship with one another.



Ushers & Readers

February Worship Assistance: Please consider signing up online, on the bulletin board in the narthex or contact Joni Schneider for Worship helpers. Thanks for all you do.

Feed Our Children

During the month of February we are looking for donations of:

Juice Pouches



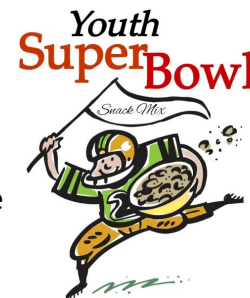
Remember:
You are
LOVED.



Youth Mission Trip Update

Our youth are raising funds for this summer's mission trip to Denver with their annual Super Bowl Sandwich and Caramel Chex Mix Sale. Paper order forms are available on the Welcome Center, and an online form can be found on our Facebook page.

Pick-up will be on Super Bowl weekend, February 8 and 9, around the worship services. Order forms are due by noon on Sunday, February 2. Subs are \$8 and caramel snack mix is \$12 per gallon bag. We look forward to helping to provide your Super Bowl Sunday treats. Thank you in advance for your support.



Cinna-Yum!

Also, keep your eyes open for the next cinnamon roll sale on Palm Sunday weekend, **April 12 & 13.**



6th graders: Pre-Confirmation Milestone

All sixth graders are invited to join Pastor Heather for pre-confirmation learning, community building and fun for 4 Wednesday evenings during Lent. We will be learning more about what it means to be a faithful follower of Jesus and how it makes a difference in our personal lives and the world around us. Classes will be held in the gathering space on Wednesday evenings from 5:45-6:30pm on March 12, March 26, April 2 and April 9. Please let Pastor Heather know if your child will be attending. Contact her at church 563-285-4501, or text her cell 563-639-9606 (please be sure to include your name in the message.) Feel free to invite your friends, the more the merrier.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Key: (FH) - Fellowship Hall (MP) Multipurpose Room (GS) Gathering Space		 Love is patient, Love is kind. 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4				1 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
2 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 am Sunday School	3 Office Closed 6:00 pm Lions Club Mtg	4 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry  6:30 pm VFW (FH) 6:30 pm Jubilation	5 5:00 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth 7:00 pm Resounding Joy	6 1:00 pm Food Pantry Mtg. 6:30 pm Team Night 7:30 pm Executive Mtg.	7 9:30 am Food Pantry 	8 Sub Pick Up Day 9:00 am Sub Making 5:00 pm Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
9 Sub Pick Up Day 9:00 am Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Congregational Breakfast 12:30 pm Girl Scouts 4:00 pm 4-H	10 Office Closed 6:00 pm Lions Club Exec Mtg.	11 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	12 5:00 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth	13 Team Reports Due	14 9:30 am Food Pantry 	15 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
16 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Fellowship 10:15 am Sunday School 6:00 pm Cub Scouts	17 Office Closed	18 9:00 am Quilting 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	19 5:00 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth	20 6:30 pm Church Council 	21 9:30 am Food Pantry 	22 Noisy Offering 11:00 am Private Event (FH) 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
23 Noisy Offering 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Fellowship 10:15 am Sunday School	24 Office Closed	25 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry  6:30 pm Jubilation	26 5:00 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth	27 9:00 am Ambassador Folding  6:30 pm WOF Bible Study	28 9:30am Food Pantry 	 Love one another. 1 JOHN 4:7



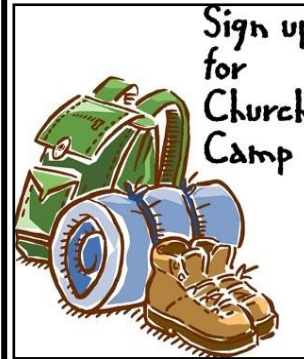
First Communion Milestone

Holy Communion is a gift from God! But what is it? How does it work? This Lenten season we will be offering a communion preparation and formation class for students 2nd grade and older Sunday, March 9th and April 6th from 10:15am-11:45am. During these learning sessions your child will learn more about the sacrament of Holy Communion with Pastor Heather and Joni Schneider will teach them how to form their own clay chalices which will be used during their first communion worship service on Maundy Thursday, April 17th at 7pm. The expectation is that your child will complete both these learning sessions as we have packed four sessions into just two mornings.

You may be wondering when your child is ready to begin receiving communion. At Faith Lutheran our understanding of what is an appropriate age for receiving holy communion has evolved. In the past, communion instruction and formation were offered to 5th grade students as it was their Holy Communion Milestone. Because we believe each child is different and each will pick up the significance of the meal at different times, our current practice is to include students that are 2nd grade and older. One important clue for discerning your child's readiness are the questions and conversations taking place at your home regarding communion practice, as well as your child's sense of being excluded or included into a sense of belonging in the faith community. If your child shows signs of readiness and is eager to begin receiving the sacrament and the gift it brings, we hope you will bring your child to holy communion preparation and formation classes this Lent.

Please RSVP to the pastors or the church office by February 23rd if your child desires to participate in this class. This way we can prepare supplies to equip your child for this milestone. Thank you for encouraging and supporting your children in their faith formation, we look forward to walking with you this Lenten season.

Summer Camp Registration is Here!!



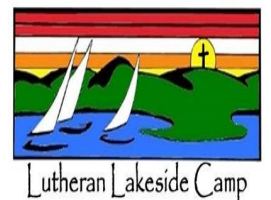
Registration is now open for Lutheran Lakeside Camp this summer. We are planning to attend camp **Week 7, July 20-25**. There is Cultivator Camp for those who have completed grades 3-5 and TrailBlazer Camp for those who have completed grades 6-8. If there are High School youth grades 9-12, Voyage Camp is also available

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 \$490 for the first child. If you send more than one child from your household, there is a \$25 sibling discount for the second and subsequent children. **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 \$290 for your first child and \$265 for any additional children from your household. To receive the \$150 from Faith, when you register, use the DISCOUNT CODE: **FLEcamp**, and the \$150 will be deducted from your total. You can then pay the remainder of the camp fees online. 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. If you would like to join us, please register online like above. You will register for Week 7 Mission Trip. Please use the DISCOUNT CODE: **FLEmission** when you register to cover the total cost of your registration.

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





Annual Giving Statements

2024 Annual giving statements have been mailed out. Please contact Rhonda Webber with any questions about your 2024 contributions. Thank you for your continued support of Faith.

FAITH LUTHERAN FINANCES

	DECEMBER	YEAR-TO-DATE
INCOME*	\$56,524	\$377,844
EXPENSES	\$47,112	\$370,534

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



The **2025 Offering Envelopes** are now available. They are on the Welcome Center counter for you to pick up. Please contact Rhonda Webber if you have not had envelopes before, but would like some for the new year.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Our Christmas Offering of \$1,490.00 was sent to ELCA Disaster Response—where needed most.



ELCA Disaster Response is accepting donations to help the California Fire victims. Please pick up an orange donation form/flyer if you are interested assisting those affected through Lutheran Disaster Response. You may also find out more info and donate online through [ELCA.org/wildfires](https://www.elca.org/wildfires).

The Service in the World committee donated \$100 to the Lutheran Lakeside camp in the month of January through Faith's Outreach mission. Lutheran Lakeside provides campers with a loving, belonging, caring atmosphere where all can grow in faith, express joy in creation, and build relationships. More information on Lutheran Lakeside can be found www.lutheranlakeside.com.

Service in the World Events

Good Gifts Christmas Project

Our thanks to everyone that donated to the Good Gifts Christmas Project. Your gifts will make a difference in the lives of people around the world. We raised a total of \$1,400 towards the purchase of many goats, pigs, chickens, bees, clean water, vaccinations and much more. Thank you for your generosity during the Christmas season!



Help Local Family Affected by Fire

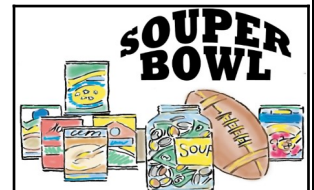
Service in the World Team is collecting items and gift cards for a North Scott family that recently lost everything in a home fire. One student is in need of girl's size 9/10 clothes and size 2-4 footwear. Two students are in need of women's size medium clothes, and women's size 8-9 footwear. Please contact Joni Schneider for more information.

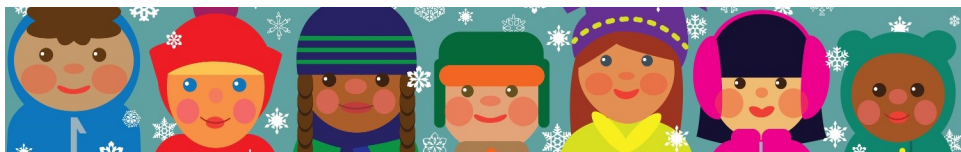
Compassion Children and Missionary Sponsorships

Our thanks to everyone who has sponsored our Compassion children, John and Denisse, as well as our missionary team, the Bencke family, during the past year. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Our Compassion children receive support in the form of nutrition supplementation, education assistance, medical checkups and loving Christian care. There are opportunities now available to sponsor an upcoming month for 2025. The sign up form is on the bulletin board and on our website. Thank you for your past and future support.

Souper Bowl Event

The Service in the World Team is once again offering you an opportunity to root for your favorite Super Bowl team and support the North Scott Food Pantry at the same time. We invite you to bring cans of soup between **January 26 and February 9**, and place your cans on the side of the football field designated for your favorite team. If you do not have a favorite team, you can always place your cans on the 50-yard line. Thank you for supporting our neighbors in this fun way!





THANKS FROM THE HEART

With Appreciation...

Thank you to our January Ambassador Folding Crew: Tom Bauer, Donna Benskin, Sue Braack, Sue Casel, Darlene John, Carol Marten, Mary Jo McVey and Tammy Neff.

Thank you to Carol Marten, Mary Jo McVey, and Sue Sissel for folding all of the January bulletins. The help was very much appreciated!

Thank you to Sue Sissel and Rhonda Webber for helping in the office so that I could attend two out-of-state funerals in January. ~ *Beth Ann*



During the Saturday, January 18 worship service, we welcomed to our Faith family new member Kelly Pannier. Welcome, Kelly!



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.



It is time for snow removal volunteers! If you are able to help clear sidewalks after a snowfall, please sign up on the sheet in the gathering area or online using the link on our web site: www.faithlutheranelldridge.com.

Thank you for your help!



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

David Hardesty	February 1	Dale Dammann	February 13
Fred Jansen	February 2	Jean Keppy	February 14
Sue Hillman	February 2	Dennis Mohr	February 14
Bill Wittkowski	February 3	Dan O'Flahrity	February 18
Kathryn Zelinko	February 11	Janet Bowman	February 20
Carolyn Hulsen	February 12	Kim Flenker	February 24
Karen Schmitt	February 13	David Golinghorst	February 24

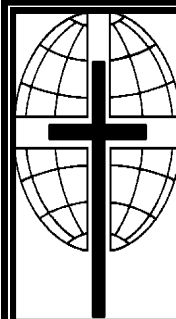


Don & Delores Rathjen
February 15, 1958



Food Panty Needs

Food Pantry Needs for the month of February are crackers and pasta.



MISSIONARY SPONSORSHIP

Thank you to **Rhonda Webber and Chris Schroeder** for sponsoring the Bencke family and Compassion children John and Denisse in January. Thank you to **Joan and Denny Hennigan** for sponsoring the Bencke family and Compassion children John and Denisse in February. There are many sponsorship opportunities available in 2025.

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!