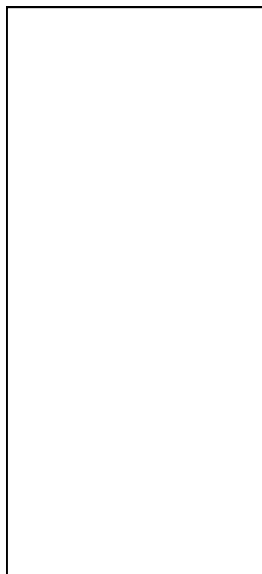


**Weekly Worship: Saturday at 5:00 pm, In Person & Live Stream Online, and Sunday at 9:00 am, In Person.
 Ash Wednesday worship 7pm March 5th. Mid-Week Lenten Worship Wednesdays at 7:00 pm. Online
 Worship updates will be posted on www.faithlutheraneldridge.com and on our Facebook page.**

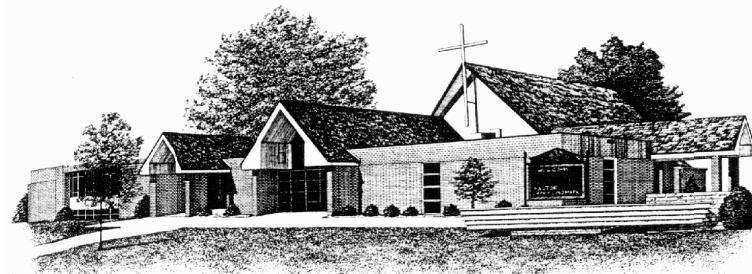
Faith Lutheran Church
 500 W. LeClaire Road
 Eldridge, IA 52748

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Faith Lutheran Church



AMBASSADOR March 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,

As we enter a new month, we are also entering a new season in the church year. We enter into the journey of Lent. In fact, no season of the church year invites us into a *journey* more than the forty-day season of Lent.

What is the Lenten journey? One compelling description comes from the text of the Ash Wednesday Invitation to Lent that we will hear on March 5. It beautifully sets out the goal of the journey that God has established from the beginning: "We are created to experience joy in communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation." On our journey to this renewed promised land, we travel in a way that "contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor." Lent is "our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection."

As we embark on this journey, we change our patterns of living to an extent. We will add to our weekly schedules an additional time to gather in worship on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm. On March 5, we will celebrate Ash Wednesday with the imposition of ashes and the celebration of Holy Communion. We will remember our mortality as we recall that we are dust, and to dust we shall return. Yet, we also gather around the Lord's Table to remember that though we are dust, we are forgiven sinners who have been promised eternal life in the bread and the wine of communion because of the death and resurrection of Jesus. It is a powerful way to begin this journey.

For the following five Wednesdays, we will gather at 7:00 pm for evening prayer. These services will feature Holden Evening Prayer, along with a drama series entitled "Conversations at the Pearly Gates". As the title suggests, we will hear various conversations between residents of Heaven, the newly deceased, and residents of Hell (known as "the Other Place"). Each week, various characters will have stunning, profound, and sometimes humorous, conversations about why God lets people into heaven. Ultimately, we will learn that the redeeming work of Jesus is the answer.

On the weekend of April 12 and 13, we will enter Holy Week with the celebration of Palm/Passion Sunday. We will begin worship with the procession of the palms as we remember Jesus'

triumphant entry into Jerusalem on a donkey. The service will quickly change in tenor as we turn to the story of Jesus' passion. Our sermon for the day will be a dramatic reading of Walter Wangerin, Jr.'s "The Cry of the Whole Congregation" presented by our high school youth. This telling of Jesus' passion is based on Luke's gospel, and has congregation participation as well.

Holy Week continues on April 17 with Maundy Thursday, when we will remember Jesus' final meal with his disciples where Jesus teaches the disciples to love one another as Jesus has loved them and he gives them the promise of forgiveness of sins and eternal life in the bread and the wine, his very body and blood given and shed for them. We will celebrate with those who will receive their first communion on that day, and we will experience the final installation of "Conversations at the Pearly Gates" as we hear about how the angels take the news of Jesus' passion.

On Friday, April 18, we will celebrate Good Friday with a service of light and darkness. We will use a special service called "Tenebrae: A Service of Shadows" which will feature People of Praise, Resounding Joy, and the Congregation. Together, we will make the final journey with Jesus to the cross.

On Holy Saturday, April 19, we will explore the larger story of God's plan of salvation, hearing stories from the ancient scriptures that lead us to God's new covenant with us in Jesus Christ as we prepare for Jesus' resurrection. We will end the service with a renewal of baptism and the celebration of the first eucharist of Easter.

On Easter Sunday, April 20, we will celebrate Jesus' resurrection in all its fullness. We will have worship at 8:00 and 10:30 am. The high school youth who will be going on the mission trip this summer will provide an Easter Breakfast for the whole congregation at 9:15 am, and we will have our annual Easter Egg Hunt on the front lawn (weather permitting) at 9:30 am.

I hope that you will join us on this journey, experiencing the fullness of this time that we set aside to experience and remember what wondrous love it is that God has for us. It is a love so deep that Jesus was willing to give it all, even his life, for each of us and for all of creation. It is a love that resulted in Jesus rising again so that we have the promise of eternal life. Join us on this journey toward love.

In Christ's love,
Pastor Carrie



*Grow in the grace and knowledge
of our Lord and Savior Jesus
Christ. 2 Peter 3:18.*

The month of March can be a time of rebirth, growth, and preparation for the future. March can symbolize the reawakening of nature and a time for personal growth. It can also be a time to nurture one's faith and relationship with God. We can focus on growing in our relationship with Christ.

Join me in thanking:

- Property Team (Mike, Myron, Dan) for all of the time and effort keeping our boilers working to provide heat for our beautiful church, (Tom) for mounting first aid kits, as well as replacing lights throughout the building (Brad). Also, thanks for helping provide the beautiful new lights to our altar area. It truly brightens it up! All greatly appreciated.
- All who helped with Friday Fun Club on Jan 31. It is an important outreach to our community and a fun, safe space for the children on the last early out of the month.
- All who bought Sub Sandwiches and Chex mix supporting our high school Youth Mission Trip to Denver this summer.
- All who donated cans of soup for our Souper Bowl for the North Scott Food Pantry. We added 138 items to help feed our neighbors in our community.
- All who helped at the funeral luncheon and visitation. Thanks for serving.
- *Meal Ministry Team for serving the Congregational Breakfast on Feb. 9. This intergenerational fellowship helps our Faith Formation and creates meaningful connections, conversations, and delicious food.

The regular council meeting was held on Thursday, February 20. Highlights included:

- Welcoming new council members. Thank you for serving!
- Great news of January giving propelling our mission and ministry into the new year!

- Approved Myron Scheibe to Council for one year term.
- Discussed Sanctuary Update, reviewed and accepted bids.

Joan Hennigan, Council President
563-285-6867



Ash Wednesday - Wednesday, March 5

It is hard to believe that we will soon be in the season of Lent. Ash Wednesday is Wednesday, March 5. Please join us for a soup supper at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall served by our

Confirmation Students. We then gather for worship, including imposition of ashes and Holy Communion at 7:00 pm.

If you would like to provide food items for the soup supper, a signup is available online and on the bulletin board.

Join us on **Sunday, March 9th during worship and breakfast**, in welcoming a special guest from Uganda, related to our local Hearts to Harvest team. Mr. Barigye is the Managing Director of Mountain Harvest, a coffee company that improves the quality of life for smallholder farmers in Uganda while supporting healthy and thriving natural ecosystems. Growing Hope Globally previously supported the Uganda Mt. Elgon program and is currently supporting the Uganda Rwenzori program in partnership with Mountain Harvest and Lutheran World Relief.



Join us **Sunday, March 30, at 11:15 am** for a simple meal and conversations to help us get to know each other. If you plan on attending, please email or call the office to let us know. New Member Welcome will be during the worship services on the weekend of **April 5 & 6.**



Daylight Savings Time starts on Sunday, **March 9**. Please remember to set your clocks forward an hour when you go to bed on Saturday night (March 8.)



Join us on Sunday, March 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.



Support Meyer

Notecards and card making supplies will be provided at the Congregational Breakfast on **Sunday, March 9th**, to send get well greetings and prayers to Meyer Mixdorf, son of Cory and Elizabeth Mixdorf, grandson of Pastor Dan and Linda Mixdorf, and to others kids at St. Jude going through Cancer treatments. We will collect the cards and send them all out together from our congregation. If you are unable to attend the breakfast on the 9th or need more information you may contact Pastor Heather or Cindy Zabel.



Ushers and those interested in becoming Ushers...

The Ushers have a important role in the safety and security of our church. Part of our safety plan requires quarterly training for the Ushers. Quarterly training will be held on **Sunday, March 16, at 10:15 am** in the Sanctuary. Please plan to attend!

Contact Tom Bauer for more information.



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 \$15.00 to help offset the cost of the plants. **Please indicate 'flowers' on your envelope so we know how to allocate the funds.** Names received by **April 6** will be published in the Easter worship bulletin.



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.

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.



We are looking for Ushers, Readers and Communion Assistants to serve during April. Please sign up using the sheet on the bulletin board, on our website, or contact Mary Moore to sign up. Thank you for serving during our worship services!



This year, all of the Easter Offering will go to Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI). LSI empowers families and communities by recognizing and honoring the strengths and gifts of every individual. It is affiliated with the ELCA and a member of Lutheran Services in America. More information can be found on their website, <https://lsiowa.org/>.

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 in Sanctuary 10:15 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 am Sunday School	3 <i>Office Closed</i> 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 <i>ASH WEDNESDAY</i> 6:00 pm Soup Supper 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service 8:00 pm High School Youth <i>*NO CHOIR REHEARSALS*</i>	6 6:30 pm Team Night 7:30 pm Executive Mtg.	7 9:30 am Food Pantry 	8 5:00 pm Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary & Online
9 9:00 am Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Congregational Breakfast & First Communion Class 12:30 pm Girl Scouts 4:00 pm 4-H 6:00 pm Cub Scouts	10 <i>Office Closed</i> 6:00 pm Lions Club Exec Mtg.	11 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Resounding Joy 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	12 5:00 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation (MP) 5:45 pm Pre Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm Worship Service 7:30 pm High School Youth	13 <i>Team Reports Due</i>	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, Sunday School & Usher Training	17 <i>Office Closed</i>	18 <i>Office Hours: 9-12</i> 9:00 am Quilting 5:30 pm Resounding Joy 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	19 <i>Office Hours: 9-12 Spring Break -No Confirmation or Youth Group</i> 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm Worship Service	20 <i>Office Hours: 9-12</i> 6:30 pm Church Council 	21 <i>Office Hours: 9-12</i> 9:30 am Food Pantry Ambassador DEADLine	22 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online
23 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Fellowship & Sunday School 30 <i>Noisy Offering</i> 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Fellowship & Sunday School 11:15 am New Member Class 6:30 pm Girl Scouts	24 <i>Office Closed</i> 31 <i>Office Closed</i>	25 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Resounding Joy 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	26 5:00 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation (MP) 5:45 pm Pre Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm Worship Service 7:30 pm High School Youth	27 9:00 am Ambassador Folding 6:30 pm WOF Bible Study	28 9:30am Food Pantry 1:00pm Friday Fun Club	29 <i>Noisy Offering</i> 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online



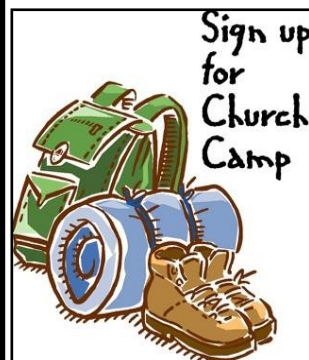
First Communion Milestone

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 contact the pastors or the church office right away 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. As in years past, Faith will cover \$150 of the cost of camp per child (including friends that they might invite). 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.



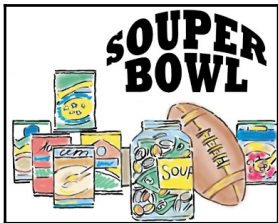
YOUR GIVING MATTERS!

The chart on the next page shows the average weekly giving in 2022, 2023, & 2024. Families give weekly, monthly, or annually, so we calculated the total annual offerings by each giving unit into a weekly average for comparison purposes. The total number of giving units for 2024 was 233. As you review the chart, prayerfully ask yourself the following:

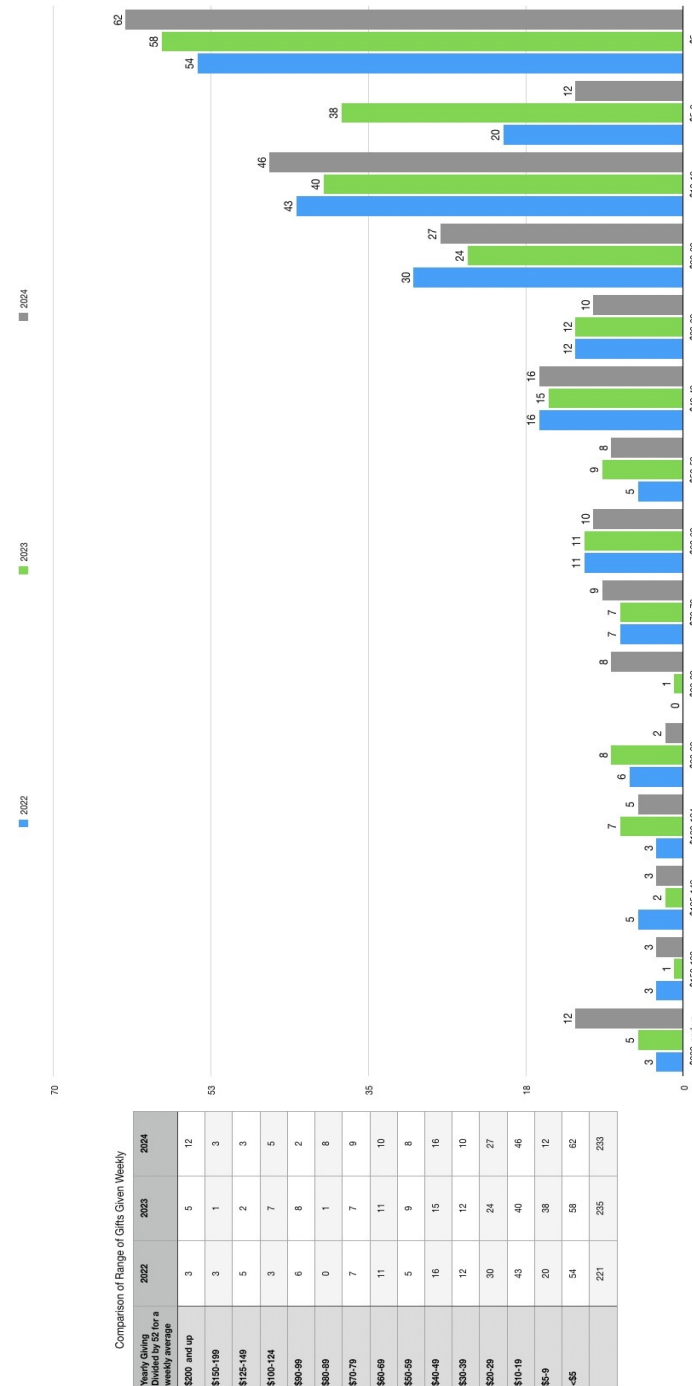
- How does my giving compare with other ways I use my money each week?
- How adequately does my giving reflect my gratitude to God for all that I have received?
- How much more could I give I give if I really wanted to?

If we increase our giving, we would be able to begin new ministries that are now only dreams. We will also be able to share those gifts with ministry partners.

Thank you for giving generously and gladly,
Joan Hennigan, Council President



Service in the World would like to thank everyone who contributed to our 2025 Souper Bowl collection of cans. The cans accurately predicted that the Eagles would win by having 57 cans, compared to the Chiefs at 52 cans, and the fifty yard line had 29 items for a grand total of 138 items! Thank you for your generosity towards those in need and the NS food pantry.
~ Service in the World Team





With Appreciation...

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

Thank you to Carol Marten and Sue Sissel for folding the February bulletins. The help was very much appreciated!

Thank you to Rhonda Webber for faithfully recording all offering and deposit transactions, and to Jerry Neff for diligently handling our Faith Giving ACH transactions. Your service is important and appreciated!

FAITH LUTHERAN FINANCES

	JANUARY	YEAR-TO-DATE
INCOME*	\$49,166	\$49,166
EXPENSES	\$31,344	\$31,344

*Monthly income needed to meet budget is \$33,818



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

We need 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.faithlutheraneldridge.com. **Thank you for your help!**



Through the Service in the World committee's outreach program, \$100 was donated to Bread for the World in February. Bread for the World is a Christian organization that advocates for policy changes to end hunger in the United States and around the world. Working through churches, campuses, and other organizations, Bread for the World has strengthened nutrition assistance programs, impacting millions of people worldwide. For more information, visit www.bread.org.



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

Rita Smith	March 1	Dorothy House	March 17
Nina Looney	March 2	Garry Mueller	March 20
David Lee	March 3	Beverly Schmidt	March 22
Ida Weibel	March 8	Sara Nissen	March 23
Gary King	March 11	Ida Bell	March 25
Cynthia Slama	March 12	Mike Smith	March 28
Karl Nissen	March 16		

Feed Our Children

During the month of March we are collecting donations of chips and fruit cups. Please make sure the expiration date is June 2025 or later. Thank you for your contributions!

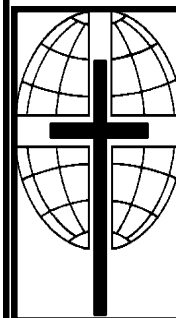
We also give thanks for a generous donation of \$3,000 given to Feed Our Children in recognition of the work that Katie, Sammie, and Jennie Garner have done for the ministry.



Food Panty Needs

Food Pantry Needs for the month of March are toothpaste, dental floss and individually wrapped toothbrushes.

MISSIONARY SPONSORSHIP



Thank you to **Mike & Rita Smith** for sponsoring the Bencke family and Compassion children John and Denisse in March. 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!**