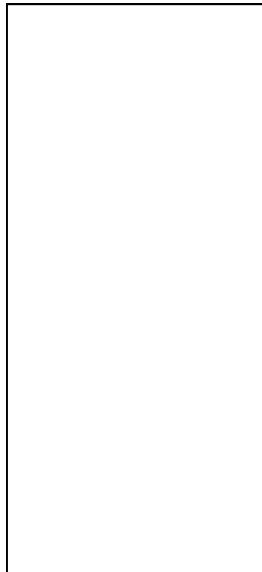


Weekly Worship: Saturday at 5:00 pm, In Person & Live Stream Online, and Sunday at 9:00 am, In Person. Christmas Eve
 Worship will be at 2:00 pm, 4:00 pm, and 9:00 pm. The 4:00 pm and 9:00 pm will also be live streamed online.
 Online Worship updates will be posted on www.faithlutheraneldridge.com and on our Facebook page.
 Sunday School December 7th and 14th, at 10:15 am. Will resume on Winter Rally Day, Jan 4th.

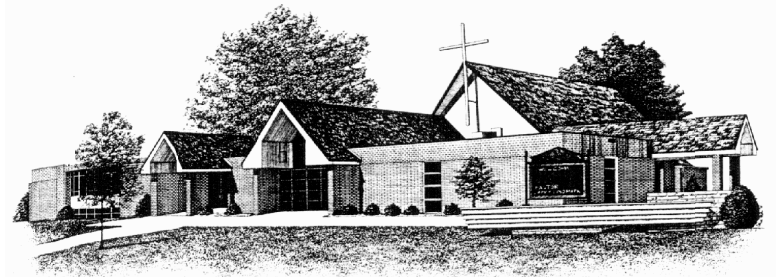
Faith Lutheran Church
 500 W. LeClaire Road
 Eldridge, IA 52748

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Faith Lutheran Church



AMBASSADOR

December 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



*"A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn;"*

Dear Friends in Christ,

It is hard to believe that we are on the cusp of a new church year as we soon will begin Advent. Advent is that time of watching and waiting. We watch and wait for the Christ child that will be born in a manger in Bethlehem. We watch and wait for children's Christmas programs and Christmas concerts. We watch and wait for family to gather for holiday

celebrations. We watch and wait for Christ to come again and make all things new.

One of my favorite things about this time of waiting and watching and then celebration of Christmas is the music. The lines above come from one of my favorite pieces of Christmas music, O Holy Night. What I love about this song, and so many Christmas hymns is that they recognize is that they remind us that Jesus is our hope in the midst of all that makes us weary in this life. We are promised that, in the midst of our darkest nights, yonder breaks a new and glorious dawn. Even when things feel heavy, we carry with us the hope of new life that will come.

We are all too aware that the world around us presses us to be merry and joy-filled during this season. We also are all too aware that sometimes the anticipation of the watching and waiting can be overcome by the heaviness and struggle in the world around us and in our own lives. Sometimes, it is hard for us to find joy in the midst of grief that we are feeling, whether that is from the loss of a job, the death of a loved one, a separation from a friend, or any number of other things we might be mourning. Sometimes, the news of war and destruction, pain and insecurity, injustice and oppression in the world around us and our feelings of helplessness in the midst of it all feels like more than we can bear. We wonder whether we can find joy in this "most wonderful time of the year."

Yet, the very thing that we celebrate at Christmas is the way in which Christ's light came to shine into a weary world. Jesus was not born as a prince on a throne, but in a manger in a stable in the backwater town of Bethlehem. According to Matthew's telling of the story, Joseph, Mary and Jesus, had to flee to Egypt after the magi came because Jesus was born into a world that wanted to get rid of him. Unfortunately, Herod's rage at the magi not returning to tell him where Jesus was led to the death of all the small boys in the area. Throughout Jesus' life, there was oppression and hardship. Jesus lived and worked among sinners, the sick and the dying. Jesus was born into a broken world, just as we live in a broken world.

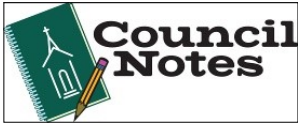
However, Jesus was able to shine the light of God's love into the world with his teaching, his healing, his loving, his forgiving of sins, his promising life with God forever, and even in his dying on the cross. And quite frankly, that is often where we meet Jesus, right there at the foot of the cross, where Jesus gives everything for us. We meet Jesus in his most vulnerable state where he meets us in our most vulnerable state and promises never to leave us. There, at the foot of the cross, Jesus gives us hope and promises us that out of all of the weight that we bear will come a new dawn breaking with new life for us all. This is where the thrilling hope that allows our weary world to rejoice is born.

So, if like me, your heart is heavy and a bit weary as we enter this Advent and Christmas season, know that you are not alone. Others are walking a similar path with you, and Jesus, the true light and hope of the season will never leave you. May we help one another to celebrate the thrilling hope and rejoice in the face of our weary world, trusting that there is a new dawning in the promises of the Christ child who was born for us and in the returning Christ who calls us all to him.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Carrie





"Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths." Luke 3:4.

Let the season of Advent be a time when we look forward with great expectation to the coming of the Lord, trusting that God will do a new thing in our life and in the life of the world.

Join me in thanking:

- All of the Trunk or Treat participants who braved the cold and enjoyed the trick-or-treaters. It is a fun, safe outreach in our community.
- The Meal Ministry team for another great congregational breakfast. It is our hope that these breakfasts will be an opportunity for you to grow in faith and in relationship to one another.
- All those who organized or donated blood to the blood drive. It is a lifesaving gift to those in need.
- Sunday School teachers who donate their time. Time well spent with our youngest members.
- Music Ministry leaders and participants. Music adds much joy to our worship services.
- Service in the World Team for preparing and serving the November 18 Churches United meal. It is an important meal ministry outreach and we are grateful for their work.
- Property Team and helpers for Fall Clean Up. Our church buildings and lawn look beautiful.
- All who have given to Faith Lutheran Eldridge this year, whether it is time, talents or treasure. We appreciate all contributions to our ministry and mission.

The regular Council meeting was held on November 20. The special Christmas offering has been decided. Budget proposals are being reviewed. The nominating committee is working hard to find the next batch of leaders called to join council and other volunteer roles here at Faith. The joy and rewards of giving and serving are countless. Prayerfully consider where you might serve.

Joan Hennigan, Council President (563) 285-6867



Christmas Worship Opportunities

Please join us for all of our worship celebrations in the Christmas season!

On Saturday, December 20 at 5:00 pm, and Sunday, December 21 at 9:00 am, we will gather for Advent 4 worship.

On Christmas Eve, worship services will be held at 2:00 pm, 4:00 pm and 9:00 pm. The 2:00 pm and 4:00 pm candlelight services will be particularly appropriate for children. The 9:00 pm service will be a traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.

The 4:00 pm and 9:00 pm services on Christmas Eve will be streamed online. We invite you to have a candle available to light at the end of the service as we sing Silent Night. For all of the online services, we invite you to have bread and wine or grape juice available to celebrate Holy Communion.

On December 27 at 5:00 pm and December 28 at 9:00 am, we will hold the service of Christmas Lessons and Carols. Join us as we hear the story of Jesus from the prophets to the Word made flesh and sing many of our favorite Christmas carols.

We look forward to celebrating the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, with you this Christmas season.





During the Sunday, November 16 worship service, we welcomed to our Faith family through the waters of holy baptism, Pearl Marie Cronkleton, daughter of Matthew and Ali Cronkleton. Pearl's sponsors are Roni Trizzino and Andy Cronkleton.

The rose on the altar was given in celebration of the baptism in loving memory of Mary House, Maddie Mess, and Jackie Snyder.



Faith Welcomes Christmas Brass Quartet

On Sunday December 7, our brass quartet returns to play many of your favorite Christmas carols before, during, and after the service. Come and enjoy the sounds of Advent and Christmas!



Christmas Poinsettias

If you wish to contribute toward Christmas poinsettias 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, or online using the link on our website. We suggest a contribution of **\$10.00** to help offset the cost of the plants. **Please indicate 'flowers' on your envelope so we know how to allocate the funds.** Names must be received by **December 14** to be published in the Christmas Eve worship bulletin.

Everyone loves a treat after church! We need people to provide treats for fellowship time on Sunday mornings. Not a baker? No problem! Store bought items and homemade are all enjoyed! The sign up sheet is on the bulletin board.



We are looking for Ushers, Readers and Communion assistants to serve during December, especially during Christmas Eve worship services. Please check the sign up sheet on the bulletin board or on our website to sign up. **Thank you for helping with worship!**



The Sunday School Christmas program will be on **Sunday, December 14, at 9:00 am.** We will practice during Sunday School on November 22 and December 7. We will not have Sunday School on November 30 due to the Thanksgiving Holiday weekend.

Sunday School will be on Christmas break December 21 and 28. We will resume on Sunday, January 5, with our Winter Rally Day and Congregational Breakfast!



CHRISTMAS Special OFFERING

Our Christmas special 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/>.



Stewardship Gifts

Thank you for your generous giving to Faith Lutheran Church throughout 2025. You have helped make all our ministry programs possible. As you consider your end of year gifts, please note that all mailed-in contributions must be received in the office by **noon on December 31** to be counted with the offerings for 2025. Thank you!



The **2026 Offering Envelopes** have been ordered, and will soon be available. *We will put them on the Welcome Center counter as soon as they are in.* Please contact Rhonda Webber if you have not had envelopes before, but would like some for the new year.



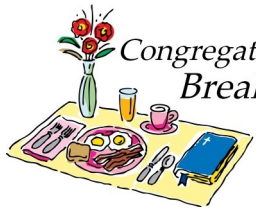
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 <i>Office Closed</i> 6:00 pm Lions Club Mtg	2 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 6:30 pm VFW Mtg. 	3 10:15 am Resounding Joy 5:15 pm Confirmation Meal 5:45 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth	4 1:30 pm Food Pantry Board Mtg. 6:30 pm Team Night 7:30 pm Executive Mtg	5 9:30 am Food Pantry 	6 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
7 9:00 am Worship w/ Brass Quartet 10:15 am Fellowship 10:15 am Sunday School 4:00 pm 4H (FH) <i>Coat collection ends</i>	8 <i>Office Closed</i> 6:00 pm Lions Club Exec Mtg	9 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	10 10:15 am Resounding Joy 5:15 pm Confirmation Meal 5:45 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth	11 <i>Team Reports Due</i>	12 9:30 am Food Pantry  Ambassador DEADLine 1:30 pm Cinnamon Roll Baking	13 <i>Cinnamon Roll Sale</i> 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
14 <i>Cinnamon Roll Sale</i> 9:00 am Worship w/ Sunday School Program 10:15 am Congregational Breakfast and Sunday School <i>Poinsettia Orders Close</i>	15 <i>Office Closed</i>	16 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	17 10:15 am Resounding Joy 5:15 pm Confirmation Meal 5:45 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth	18 9:00 am Ambassador Folding  6:30 pm Council Meeting 	19 9:00 am Food Pantry Basket Distribution 1:00 pm Friday Fun Club	20 9:00 am Food Pantry Basket Distribution 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
21 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Fellowship	22 <i>Office open 9-12</i>	23 <i>Office open 9-12</i>	24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> <i>Office Closed</i> 2:00 pm Worship 4:00 pm Worship 9:00 pm Worship 	25 <i>Office Closed</i> 	26 <i>Office Closed</i> <i>Food Pantry Closed</i>	27 <i>NOISY OFFERING</i> 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
28 <i>NOISY OFFERING</i> 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Fellowship	29 <i>Office Closed</i>	30 Food Pantry Closed	31 <i>2025 Year End Offerings need to be in by Noon.</i>			Key: (FH) Fellowship Hall (MP) Multipurpose Room (GS) Gathering Space



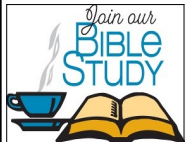
Cinnamon Roll Sunday

Youth who will be attending the mission trip to Denver next summer will be making and selling cinnamon rolls the **weekend of December 13 & 14** to help raise funds for their trip. You can purchase these delicious rolls in person around worship December 13 & 14. Pre-orders will be taken beginning in the middle of November. The cost of cinnamon rolls will be 2 rolls for \$3, 6 rolls for \$8 and a dozen rolls for \$15. They will be available baked and unbaked.

Thank you for supporting our youth!



Join us on **Sunday, December 14**, 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.



Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study

Join us on **Tuesday afternoons at 1:00 pm**, as we read and discuss the scriptures for the week ahead. ***We will not meet on December 23 or 30.***



Give something unexpected this Christmas!

Thank you for your support of the ELCA Good Gifts program. It is a fun, meaningful way to honor friends and family with gifts that make a difference in the world. Choose from more than 50 gift-giving options, each with the ability to make real, lasting change in the life of someone in need. You may give on-line using this link goodgifts.elca.org or in-person at Faith Lutheran Church.

In-person giving is easy:

1. Select an ornament with a symbol of the item you wish to purchase, write your names on it and place it on the tree.
2. Place your donation in the drop box, please make checks payable to Faith Lutheran Church.
3. Select a card to let friends and loved ones know about the ELCA Good Gifts that have been given in their honor.

Thank you for your generosity during the holidays to help abate world hunger!

ELCA
GOOD
GIFTS
CATALOG



Service in the World



In November, the Outreach Mission of the Service in the World committee donated \$175 to All Hands & Hearts. All Hands & Hearts is a global disaster relief nonprofit that delivers immediate response and long-term recovery. Their teams are on the ground in Jamaica taking action after Hurricane Melissa made landfall. More information on All Hands & Hearts can be found at www.allhandsandhearts.org.



Join with others as our church welcomes children kindergarten through 6th grade to "Friday Fun Club" the ***last early dismissal Friday*** of each month. December's Club will meet on **Friday, December 19.**

Volunteers are needed in Arts & Crafts, Storytime, Music, Game time and Snack time. Donations of supplies and snack items are also needed.

A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board at church or call Mary Moore at 285-7223 to volunteer.

Photos from October Friday Fun Club





With Appreciation...

November Ambassador folders: Donna Benskin, Sue Braack, Sue Casel, Pam Engelbrecht, Darlene John, Carol Marten, and Tammy Neff.

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

FAITH LUTHERAN FINANCES

OCTOBER YEAR-TO-DATE

INCOME* \$20,277 \$288,814

EXPENSES \$28,977 \$314,346

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

Feed Our Children

Feed Our Children Ministry is asking for donations year-round to stock up for next summer. In December, we are asking for **Ziplock sandwich bags**.



Did you know....Luther Properties provides affordable, independent housing for seniors? This ELCA organization consists of 5 complexes, 2 in Davenport and 3 in Bettendorf. These apartments provide safe homes for those seniors who struggle financially. Rent is based on income, with electricity and water costs included. If you know of someone who could benefit from such assistance, please contact Kevin Krebs (563-499-2619) or Kim Wilkins (563-370-1393) for information.



Do you love to bake? Bread bakers for the communion loaves are needed for 2026. Please sign up on the bulletin board at church.



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

Doug Olson	December 1	Tom Bauer	December 16
Mary Moore	December 8	Rhonda Webber	December 22
Dan Nielsen	December 13	Jerry Neff	December 28
Richard Cole	December 16	Susan Whitney	December 29
Dennis Hennigan	December 16	Paul Atkins	December 30



The North Scott Food Pantry thanks Faith Lutheran Church for all of its support. Not only has the congregation faithfully supported us by food collections and monetary donations, but the volunteer hours provided by members make this outreach program such a success. Also a big thanks for allowing us to use space as needed. The food pantry motto says it all, *Neighbors Helping Neighbors*. Thank you from the North Scott Food



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.faithlutheraneldridge.com.

Thank you for your help!



MISSIONARY SPONSORSHIP

Thank you to **John Hintze** for sponsoring the **Bencke family** and **Compassion Child Denisse Grefa** in November. Thank you to **Nina Looney** for sponsoring the **Bencke family** and **Compassion Child John Chima**, and to **Tammera Long** for sponsoring **Compassion Child Denisse Grefa** in December. There are many sponsorship opportunities now available for **2026**. 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.**