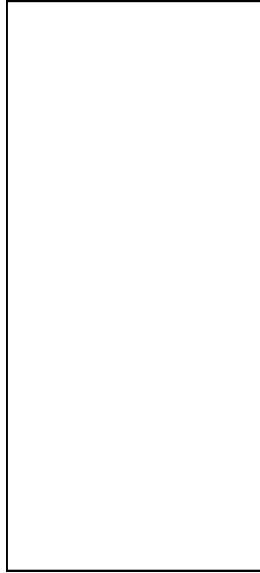


Weekly Worship: Saturday at 5:00 pm, In Person & Live Stream Online, and Sunday at 9:00 am, In Person.
 EASTER Worship services at 8:00 am, In Person, and 10:30 am, In Person and Online.
 Online Worship updates will be posted on www.faithlutheraneldridge.com and on our Facebook page.
 Sunday School and adult faith formation on Sundays at 10:15 am.

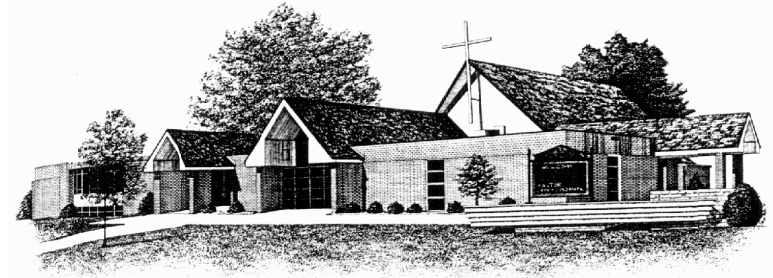
Faith Lutheran Church
 500 W. LeClaire Road
 Eldridge, IA 52748

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Faith Lutheran Church



AMBASSADOR

April 2026

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,

It is hard to believe that we are almost at the end of Lent and ready to walk the path of Holy Week to Easter Sunday together. Throughout this Lent, we have considered all of the ways that God is “all in” for us as God’s people. We have talked about all that God has done for us and continues to do for us simply because God loves us that much. We have also thought about how it is that we can go “all in” with Jesus to adjust the ways in which we see the world and consider ways to be answers to the prayers of those around us as God leads and guides us.

We have considered going “all in for repentance,” which is a culturally unpopular idea. In a society when we are often taught to stand our ground and never give in, even when we are in the wrong, going all in for repentance is a countercultural idea. However, we have a God who is all in for us and continues to love us even when we break God’s heart. God will always welcome us back with open arms when we stop and recognize the ways that we have wandered away and turn back toward God.

We then moved on to consider what it means to be “all in for creation.” We looked at the story of Adam and Eve giving into the insecurity that the serpent wedged into them and eating the fruit that God told them not to eat. While that choice had serious consequences, God never left Adam and Eve, and Adam and Eve continued to be important caretakers of God’s creation, as are we. To be all in for creation means recognizing that we are part of that creation and the ways in which we interact with creation affect not only creation and the lives of others in this world, but also our own lives. As Jesus did when tempted by the devil in the wilderness, we have to recognize who we are as God’s beloved children and trust that God will be with us and guide us even when everything around us tempts us toward greed and power so that we can care for all of God’s creation from the smallest particles to the greatest galaxies.

The next stop we made was being “all in for the unknown.” The reality of this life is that we cannot know all that will happen in our lives, and God can call us to do some pretty crazy things. I cannot imagine what Abram and Sarai thought when God asked them to up and move their whole family to an unknown land at a time when they should be slowing down and enjoying their life, and then to trust that they would have children when they were far beyond childbearing age. Yet, God provided for them when they jumped all in. And Nicodemus was trying to figure out what he did not understand about Jesus when he went to Jesus at night, but so much of what Jesus told him did not make sense in Nicodemus’ understanding of the world. At that moment, Nicodemus was not ready to go all in for the unknown that Jesus was bringing, even though he would be going all in for the God who was about to go all in for him. We get that feeling. We know how hard it is to walk into the unknown, and yet, we have a God who always goes before us and goes all in for us so that we are never fulling jumping in blindly.

We continued with being “all in for wonder” as we considered the story of the Samaritan woman at the well. She was completely blown away that Jesus would talk to her, let alone offer her living water, as their peoples were enemies. She had a hard time understanding what this living water was all about. Yet she was willing to go all

in with her wonder, and because of that, she was able to see who Jesus really was, the Messiah, and share that good news with all the people around her. She became Jesus’ first evangelist beyond the disciples! Sometimes it is hard for us to allow ourselves to go all in for wonder because we are conditioned to become less curious as we get older; however, when we open ourselves to wonder and consider where God is showing up in our daily lives, we can begin to see where God might be calling us to go all in with wonder for the sake of the world.

With the story of the healing of the man born blind, we thought about what it is to be “all in for relationships.” This man had lived his entire life as an outcast, told that he was a product of sin. His relationships were not loving or healthy as he sat and begged in order to survive. However, even after Jesus heals him, this man is still an outcast because the people around him cannot understand what God is doing through him. When Jesus finds that he has been cast out again, he finds him and claims him and invites him into a new relationship as a disciple. And the same is true for us. Even when we feel like we have been ostracized for whatever reason, Jesus reminds us that we are claimed by God and we do belong to God’s people.

Finally, we considered what it means to be “all in for letting go.” Ezekiel and the people of Bethany had to let go of their expectations about life and death to experience God bringing the valley of dead bones back to life and to experience Jesus resuscitating Lazarus. In fact, in nearly every story we looked at this Lent, there was an element of letting go of some kind of certainty to be able to experience God’s glory in our midst. It is often hard for us to let go of anger or fear or pain or our certainty or any number of other things in order to follow Jesus. However, when we can let go of our expectations of how things should be, we often have our eyes opened to the miracles of Jesus.

Now, in the weeks ahead, we will experience the highs and lows that come with Jesus’ triumphant ride into Jerusalem and the quick transition to those same crowds calling for Jesus to be crucified. We will celebrate being “all in for the resurrection” as we experience the miracle of God raising Jesus from the dead to give us the gift of eternal life. Throughout the season of Easter, we will hear stories of Jesus showing up to those who love and follow him so that they can know that going all in for Jesus was not a mistake and to empower them to do all that God would call them to do at Pentecost, when the Spirit fills them so that they can go all in to spread God’s love to everyone, even those deemed unworthy.

My prayer is that this Easter, we will consider all of the ways that we can go all in for this God who has gone all in for us. I pray that we will consider how we can repent, care for creation, be willing to walk into the unknown, allow ourselves to experience wonder, nurture our relationships with God and one another, and let go of the things that we hold so tightly to so that we can hear God’s call to us, survive the highs and lows of this life that are bound to come, and live in the joy of resurrection life, both here and now and for all eternity. I pray that we will consider how we can bring this joy of resurrection life to those around us, in our congregation, in this community, and around the world, and then find ways to go all in together for the sake of all those whom God loves.

Easter blessings to you all!

Pastor Carrie

Greetings - Mike Garner has asked me to write this month's article so he can enjoy spring break with his family. We are well on our way through our Lenten journey, a season that invites us to pause, reflect, and draw closer to God.

Each week during our Wednesday services, we are exploring meaningful ways to connect and truly to "All In" with God. These gatherings remind us that faith is not just something we practice once a week, but something we live out daily – in our thoughts, our actions and our relationships.

Join me in thanking:

- Dan O'Flaherty for managing the restroom restoration process along with the rest of the property committee.
- The Service in the World Committee and other congregation members for serving 76 meals at the United Neighbors meal site on March 17th.

The main level restroom project is now completed and it looks so nice. The project was completed on time and within the projected budget. The council has approved to move forward with using the sanctuary funds on enhancements to the gathering space. Cindy Zabel and Pastor Heather have gotten bids for chair replacements vs. recovering the chairs which came to be more cost effective to do replacement chairs. Fabric has been selected and the chairs for the gathering space and for the three administrative offices will be getting ordered soon. Replacement of the window treatments will be looked at in the near future. The council was approached by a congregation member to do a Boy Scout Eagle Project to enhance and beautify our outdoor worship area. The Worship and Music Committee and Property Committee were consulted and are on board so the council approved for this project to move forward. The endowment committee has \$4200 from interest earned on our endowment funds to distribute in 2026. The distribution requirement is 20% goes to local/synod organizations, 20% to national/worldwide ministries and at least 20% to congregational capital needs and the remaining 40% can be distributed to organizations among those categories as the committee decides. The worship and music committee is planning a Volunteer Appreciation celebration on May 17th, more information to follow on that.



Holy Week Schedule

On **Palm Sunday, Saturday, March 28, at 5:00 pm** and **Sunday, March 29, at 9:00 am**, we will begin Holy Week with a procession of the palms, and during worship, we will hear a dramatic reading of the passion story according to the Gospel of Matthew. Palm Branches will be available for pick-up on Friday, March 27, from 9:00 am to noon and on Saturday, March 28, from 2:00-4:00 pm for those worshipping at home.

Our **Maundy Thursday** service on **Thursday, April 2, at 7:00 pm**, will include the celebration of First Communion for several of our children.

On **Good Friday, April 3**, we will gather for a Service of Light and Darkness at **7:00 pm**.

Join our **Easter Vigil** service on **Saturday, April 4 at 5:00 pm**.

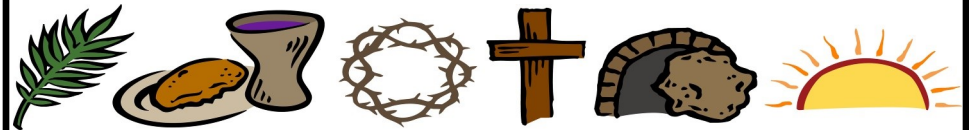
Easter Sunday, April 5

8:00 am – Easter Worship Service

9:00 am—Easter Breakfast in Fellowship Hall

9:30 am—Easter Egg hunt on the front lawn

10:30 am—Easter Worship Service



Join us as we celebrate the truth that "Christ Is Risen! He Is Risen Indeed!"

The youth who are going on the Connecticut Mission Trip in July and their families will serve breakfast on **Easter morning, April 5, from 9:00-10:15 am**. A free will offering will be collected to help with the costs of the trip.





This year's special Easter Offering will be split between the following two organizations:
World Relief of the Quad Cities: This organization is committed to bringing love, peace, and justice to a broken world as they follow Jesus to serve those suffering from poverty regardless of their circumstances.

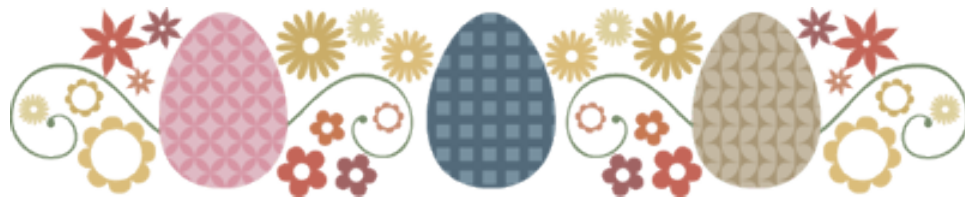
Iglesia Camino de Emaus: This is a Spanish speaking congregation meeting at St. Mark's in Davenport providing worship and pastoral care to the Latino population in the area.

Easter Egg Hunt



Easter Egg Hunt

We invite your family to participate an egg hunt on the church lawn at **9:30am** on **Easter Sunday**. Bring your basket, or we will provide bags. We will celebrate the good news of Jesus' resurrection together.



CONFIRMATION SUNDAY



On **Sunday, April 26, at the 9:00 worship service**, eight of our youth will be celebrating their Confirmation as they affirm their baptism in worship. Candidates for Confirmation include Gareth Black, Bryson Bockenstedt,

Brandon Brown, Teagan Bruns, Jace Cline, Kayden Diercks, Charles Dingbaum, Violet Geest, Will Lindaman, Riley O'Flaherty, Nash Schneckloth, Jase Thurman, Lance Wallace, and Jackson Yanke

On the day of confirmation, there will be tables set up on the east side of Fellowship Hall with the names of the confirmands where you can leave cards and other well wishes for these youth.

There will also be a cupcake reception following worship to honor the confirmands. Please join us as we celebrate this milestone with these youth!

BE OUR GUEST

Faith Lutheran Church invites the whole community to our Spring 2026 event as we share in togetherness and learn about organizations that serve our community.



Join us at Faith Lutheran Church

500 West Le Claire Road, Eldridge

on Tuesday, April 7th from 6:30-8:00 pm

We will get to hear from members of Quad City Canine Assistance Network about the work they do to provide therapy dogs for the Quad City area.

Children and Families are encouraged to join us!



The mission of QCCAN is to provide highly skilled volunteer therapy dog teams to enrich the lives of others in our community.

It is an American Kennel Club (AKC) registered non-profit therapy dog organization. Volunteer dog and handler teams give back to the Greater Quad City Area through therapy dog visits.

Questions? Call Faith Lutheran Church at 563-285-4501.



6th graders: Pre-Confirmation Milestone

All **sixth graders** are invited to join Pastor Heather for pre-confirmation learning, community building and fun for 3 Sunday mornings. 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 on Sunday mornings in April, tentatively scheduled for **April 12, 19, and 26, at 10:15 am**. 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			1 10:45 am Resounding Joy 5:15 pm Confirmation Meal 5:45 pm Confirmation 7:30 pm High School Youth	2 Maundy Thursday 7:00 pm Worship	3 Good Friday 7:00 pm Worship	4 Easter Vigil 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
5 Easter Sunday 8:00 am Easter Worship in Sanctuary 9:00 am Easter Breakfast 9:30 am Easter Egg Hunt 10:30 am Easter Worship in Sanctuary & Online 7:30 pm Wedding	6 Office Closed 6:00 pm Lions Club Mtg	7 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry  6:30 pm VFW (MP) 6:30 pm Jubilation 6:30 pm Be Our Guest (FH)	8 10:45 am Resounding Joy 5:15 pm Confirmation Meal 5:45 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth	9 6:30 pm Team Night 7:30 pm Executive Mtg	10 9:30 am Food Pantry 	11 5:00 pm Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
12 9:00 am Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Fellowship 10:15 am Sunday School & Pre-Confirmation 6:00 pm 4H	13 Office Closed 6:00 pm Lions Club Exec Mtg.	14 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	15 10:45 am Resounding Joy 5:15 pm Confirmation Meal 5:45 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth	16 Team Reports Due 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting 	17 9:30 am Food Pantry 	18 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
19 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Fellowship 10:15 am Sunday School & Pre-Confirmation	20 Office Closed	21 9:00 am Quilting 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	22 10:00 am Grand Haven 10:45 am Resounding Joy 6:00 pm Confirmation Celebration Dinner 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth	23	24 9:30am Food Pantry 1:00 pm Friday Fun Club   DEADLine	25 NOISY OFFERING 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
26 NOISY OFFERING 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary w/ Confirmation 10:15 am Fellowship 10:15 am Sunday School Celebration Sunday & Pre-Confirmation	27 Office Closed	28 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry  6:30 pm Jubilation	29 10:45 am Resounding Joy 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth	30 9:00 am Ambassador Folding  6:30 pm WOF Bible Study		



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 2026 High School graduates during worship on **Sunday, May 10, 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 **Friday, May 1**. 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.*



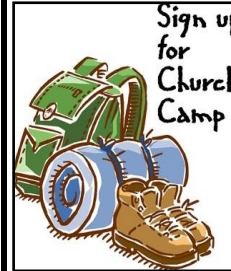
On **June 22-25, from 8:30 am—11:30 am**, Faith will be offering a new Day Camp VBS by providing 4 counselors and programming by Lutheran Lakeside!

The

programming this year will be related to the summer camp theme "A Holy Guide to Loving Your Neighbors." Young adult counselors will bring their energy and excitement to our daily lessons and activities! Some volunteers will still be needed to travel with the kids, provide snacks/drinks and meals for the Lutheran Lakeside Staff. Watch for a volunteer sign-up sheet or contact Cindy Zabel if you are interested in helping.



Summer Camp Registration is Here!!

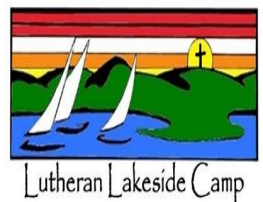


Registration is now open for Lutheran Lakeside Camp this summer. We are planning to attend camp **Week 6, July 19-24**. There is Cultivator Camp for those who have completed grades 3-5 and TrailBlazer Camp for those who have completed grades 6-8. If there are High School youth grades 9-12, Voyage Camp 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 \$500 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 6 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).





In March, the Outreach mission of the Service in the World Committee donated \$150 to Winnie's Place, a Churches United ministry which offers emergency shelter for women, with or without children, who are homeless or may be survivors of domestic abuse. More information can be found at <https://www.cugca.org/winnies-place.php>

Endowment Committee



Faith Lutheran Church has been blessed by a substantial gift of \$50,000 from the estate of Jim Schneider to the Endowment Committee. Jim passed away recently. Jim was well known in our congregation as well as in our community, and was active in our congregation as well as in our community.

Jim's gift will be added to our endowment total and the interest will be used yearly for organizations deemed worthy by our committee.

Please thank Jim's wife Joni and his two girls for his thoughtful and everlasting gift when you see them.

In March the Endowment Committee met and recommended that the 2025 Endowment interest be distributed to the following organizations, in accordance with the Endowment guidelines:



- Project Renewal \$500 (11.9%)
- Argrow's House \$500 (11.9%)
- Lutheran Services in Iowa \$460 (10.9%)
- Lutheran Lakeside Camp capital campaign \$1000 (23.8%)
- ELCA Southeastern Iowa Synod \$900 (21.4%) earmarked for the two Tanzania dioceses
- Faith Unbudgeted Repairs and Maintenance \$840 (20%) earmarked for the parking lot

Council approved this distribution at the March 19 Council Meeting.



If you have a prayer shawl or lap quilt for the May 2026 Synod Assembly, we will need them by **May 10th**. There will be a table in the narthex for you to leave your donation. Thank you for your help with this project.



The Women of Faith are looking for donations of perennial plants for the Eldridge City Wide Garage Sales on **Saturday, May 16, 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 16. Come join the fun!



We will celebrate our volunteers on **Sunday, May 17** after worship. The people who serve include our music groups and skit participants, altar guild members, online streaming staff, church council and their team members, Sunday

School Teachers, confirmation mentors, Snow removers, Feed Our Children helpers, VBS teachers and helpers, ushers, communion assistants, lectors, Faith family heads, offering counters, bread bakers, bulletin and Ambassador folders, substitute office help, funeral visitation helpers, luncheon servers, mission and compassion children support, congregational breakfast and churches united food donations and helpers, Christmas decorators, visiting team, grounds keepers and all other member helpers. There are many opportunities to serve.

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10 (NIV)





Psalm 24:1: The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.

God owns it all. We are called to share our time, talent and treasure because God owns it all. We are caretakers of what God has given us by grace. Are we good stewards of God's creation? The very word "steward" describes someone who watches over that which belongs to someone else. A disciple prays, reads scripture, worships, serves, gives, shares. Thank you for giving and sharing generously and gladly. ~Stewardship Team

FAITH LUTHERAN FINANCES

	FEBRUARY	YEAR-TO-DATE
INCOME*	\$28,364.60	\$70,826.12
EXPENSES	\$32,060.92	\$62,692.18

*Monthly income needed to meet budget is \$34,700



With Appreciation...

Thank you to our March Ambassador Folding Crew: Mary Ann Anderson, Donna Benskin, Sue Casel, Pam Engelbrecht, Darlene John, Carol Marten, Mary Jo McVey, and Tammy Neff.

Thank you to Mary Ann Anderson, Carol Marten and Sue Sissel for folding the March bulletins. The help was very much appreciated!

Thank you to Sue Sissel, Mary Moore, Rhonda Webber, Rita Smith, and Joan Hennigan for covering the office during Spring Break, so that our family could spend time together! *Beth Ann*



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.



Bob Kuehl	April 2	Nancy Meyer	April 26
Dorothy Watson	April 5	Sharie Garner	April 28
Rex McVey	April 10	Barb Paustian	April 28
Marilyn Jansen	April 16	Sue Casel	April 30
Dennis Krambeck	April 21	Linda Szemkus	April 30
Nadine Schwarz	April 21	Chris Porter	April 30
Denny Arp	April 25		

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



Mike & Rita Smith
April 6, 1974



Food Pantry Needs for the month of April are cleaning products such as multi-purpose cleaner, bathroom cleaner, window cleaner, and cleaning wipes. These items will be available to clients in May.



Feed Our Children

During the month of April we are collecting donations of sandwich cookies and individual serving size bags of chips. Thank you for your contributions!



MISSIONARY SPONSORSHIP

Thank you to **Tom & Pam Carlson** for sponsoring the **Bencke family** in April. Thank you to **John & Keri Suiter** for sponsoring Compassion Children **John Chima** and **Denisse Grefa** in April. There are many sponsorship opportunities available in 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. Thank you for your support!**