

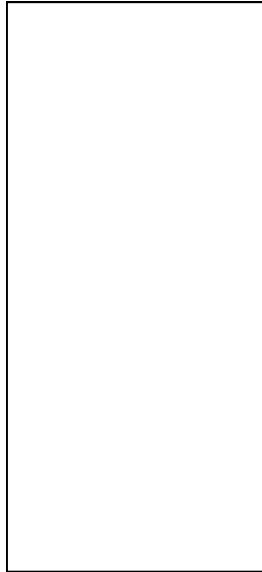
Weekly Worship: Saturday at 5:00 pm, In Person & Live Stream Online, and Sunday at 9:00 am, In Person.
Online Worship updates will be posted on www.faithlutheraneldridge.com and on our Facebook page.

Faith Lutheran Church

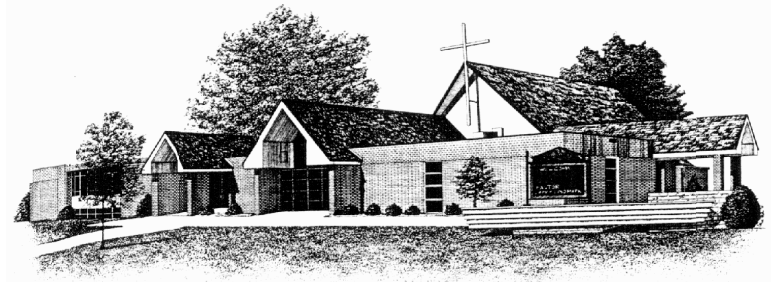
500 W. LeClaire Road
Eldridge, IA 52748

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Faith Lutheran Church



AMBASSADOR

May 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**



Message from
the Pastor

Dear Friends in Christ,

Alleluia, Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

We are in the Easter season, that season of resurrection where we are reminded that, in Jesus' life death and resurrection, God has conquered death forever. In last week's Gospel, we were also reminded that Jesus came that we might have life and have it abundantly (John 10:10).

The truth is that we are also living in a time where death seems to be ever before us. For many of us, this seeming incongruence between the world in which we live and the faith in which we hold can become overwhelming. I sometimes wonder where God is in the midst of all of the pain and sorrow and suffering even as I hold onto the promise that Jesus is meeting us right where we are, knows our pain and suffering, and promises to never let us go. All of this can become exhausting as I live in this seeming incongruence each and every day even as I try to carry on the work that God has called and created me to do through the many vocations in my life. It can wear on my spirit and create within me an inability to be the person and the pastor that I would like to be. Perhaps you can relate to these feelings.

However, it does not seem that this is the way that we are intended to live. This is not what abundant life in Jesus looks like. At the very beginning, after God had created everything, God set aside a day for rest. When God gave Moses the Ten Commandments for the people of Israel, one of the commands is to remember the sabbath day by keeping it holy. How that is described is as a day where every part of creation is to take a day of rest where no one and no animal works. This was at least as radical a concept in those days as it is today. Throughout the gospels, we hear of Jesus taking time away to rest, especially as he faces the stress of his ministry in conflict with the ways of the world around him. We are not always told what he is doing in those times, as he was by himself, but in other places it is clear that Jesus takes time

away to pray, to reconnect with God, the Father, to determine his next best step in his ministry. This seems to be the model that we are to follow.

Thus, I am very grateful that, as we continue to consider a Sabbatical Policy for the pastors of this congregation to provide longer periods of time for rest, prayer, study, and considering the next best steps in our ministry, the Congregation Council has offered both Pastor Heather and me a 30-day respite during this year. This is not the same as a Sabbatical in that this is strictly a time for rest and rejuvenation, with the opportunity to put pieces of our lives back together that we have neglected due to the stresses of ministry and life in this world.

I will be taking my 30-day respite from May 19 through June 17. During this time, I will not be available for pastoral acts other than the wedding that has been scheduled for the better part of the year. Pastor Heather will be covering all major ministry responsibilities. Pastor Travis Fisher-King also has agreed to provide worship leadership and to preach over two of the four weekends that I will be gone.

Part of the reason that I have chosen this time to take my respite is that Abby will be having major surgery on her hip on May 12, and she will require someone being home with her for several weeks as she begins to recover. This is also a time with less activity within the congregation, and it provides me time after I return to complete the plans for the Mission Trip that will begin on July 6.

I am grateful for this time to concentrate on helping Abby to heal. I will also take time to consider what a Sabbatical might look like so that we can reconsider that policy in the fall. Honestly, I also am hoping that this time will help me to organize my house which is not how I would like it, and to focus on relationships that I have not been tending to well.

I pray that, as we head into this summer season after the craziness of May, you, too, will find time to stop, to relax, to rest, to pray, and to consider what your next best steps in your life and ministry. My hope is that these practices might allow us to continue to grow into the people that God has called and created us to be, both individually and as the Body of Christ together.

In Christ's love,

Pastor Carrie



Spring. A time for new growth. Take time to nurture what you wish to grow in yourself.

Join me in thanking:

- Sue and Neal Becker for all of their work on the Lenten services.
- Joni Kuehl-Schneider and Linda Szemkus for their help making chalices that make first communion special.
- All who read on Palm Sunday: Katelyn Bibens, Taylor Crain, Jennie Garner, Joan Hennigan, Evan Keppy, Madelyn La Plante, Chloe Rickerson, Bella Riley, Mike Strom, and Pastor Carrie.
- Joni King, Diane Krebs, and Ellen Bloomingdale, and all of the mentors for sharing their time with the confirmation youth.
- All those who helped in any way to make the Easter morning special. Decorating, serving the breakfast, hiding eggs for the kids, ushers, readers, communion assistants, all played a vital role.

The regular council meeting was held on April 16th. Work continues on refreshing the gathering space with carpet shopping beginning soon. Cindy gave an update on preparations for VBS happening in June. Lutheran Lakeside day camp outreach brings exciting changes to VBS for 2026. Council approved the North Scott Food Pantry's proposed update to the door that they use. They will provide funding for a door that will serve them much better than the current door. Council also approved respite time from May 19th thru June 17th as requested by Pastor Carrie. Finally, 15 candidates were approved for confirmation. Let's celebrate their renewal of their faith.

Mike Garner, Council President



CONFIRMATION

On Sunday, April 26, at the 9:00 worship service, fourteen of our youth celebrated their Confirmation as they affirmed their baptism in worship. Confirmands include Gareth Black, Bryson Bockenstedt, Brandon Brown, Teagan Bruns, Jace Cline, Addy DeMoss, Kayden Diercks, Charles Dingbaum, Violet Geest, Will Lindaman, Rylie O'Flaherty, Nash Schneckloth, Jase Thurman, and Jackson Yanke.



Congratulations to all of our graduates—High School, Trade School, Associates, Bachelors, Masters and Doctoral candidates! 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 for the Senior Recognition Board by Wednesday, May 6. You can mail them, drop them off in the office or email them.**



Summer Worship Outside

Worship at the Outdoor Chapel returns starting **Sunday, May 31st, at 9:00 am**. Every other Sunday morning, we will alternate our 9:00am worship between the outdoor chapel and the inside Sanctuary, through September 6. If the weather does not cooperate, we will move worship inside. Please bring a lawn chair and join us outside this summer on **May 31, June 14, June 28, July 12, July 26, August 9, August 23, and September 6**.

Women of Faith Plant Sale

The Women of Faith are looking for donations of perennial plants for the Eldridge City Wide Garage Sales on **May 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!

Final Friday

WHEN: Friday, May 29, 2026, 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

WHERE: Faith Lutheran Church Yard

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

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

Let the love of Jesus shine!

**Final
FRIDAY!**



Please join us for our Annual Parking Lot Picnic on **Sunday, June 7, 2026 at 10:30 AM.**

This will be a potluck brunch following the worship service. Ham, lemonade, water and table service will be provided by the Fellowship Team. Please bring a favorite side dish and/or dessert to share.

A variety of yard games for all ages will be available! Of course there will be plenty of time for fellowship!

Please sign up on the bulletin board so we can be sure to have enough food and chairs!



Service in the World Compassion Children and ELCA Missionary Sponsorships

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

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

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

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

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

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



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Key: (FH) - Fellowship Hall (MP) Multipurpose Room (GS) Gathering Space					1 9:30 am Food Pantry 	2 9:00 am Spring Clean Up 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
3 Compassion Sunday 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Fellowship	4 Office Closed 6:00 pm Lions Club Mtg	5 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry  6:30 pm VFW (MP) 6:30 pm Jubilation	6 7:00 pm High School Youth	7 6:30 pm Team Night 7:30 pm Executive Mtg	8 9:30 am Food Pantry 	9 5:00 pm Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
10 9:00 am Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Graduation Cupcake Reception	11 Office Closed 6:00 pm Lions Club Exec Mtg.	12 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	13 7:00 pm High School Youth	14 Office Hours 9-12 Team Reports Due	15 9:30 am Food Pantry 	16 8:00 am WOF Plant Sale 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
17 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Volunteer Appreciation Reception	18 Office Closed	19 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	20 7:00 pm High School Youth	21 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting 	22 9:30am Food Pantry   DEADLine	23 NOISY OFFERING 11:00 am Grad Party 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
24 NOISY OFFERING 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary 31 9:00 am Worship Outdoor Chapel	25 Office Closed  MEMORIAL DAY	26 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	27 7:00 pm High School Youth	28 9:00 am Ambassador Folding  6:30 pm WOF Bible Study	29 9:30am Food Pantry  1:00 pm Friday Fun Club 1:00 pm Final Friday	30 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 



FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH PRESENTS LUTHERAN LAKESIDE DAY CAMP

SONGS **CRAFTS** **BIBLE STORIES** **GAMES**

Join Us for VBS Fun and Adventure!
A Holy Guide to Loving Your Neighbor

JUNE 22-25
8:30 am - 11:30 am
Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church
500 W. LeClaire Road Eldridge, IA

Register and invite a friend! Kids ages 4 through 6th Grade
\$15 per child max \$45/family, payable by cash or check at check-in
Financial Assistance is Available
To register, use the QR code or visit:
<https://forms.gle/ubwW3i2dnpMw5EE19>

JOIN US FOR VBS DAY CAMP!

The theme is A Holy Guide to Loving Your Neighbor.

Faith is offering a new Day Camp VBS with Lutheran Lakeside Camp Staff bringing their energy and excitement to share God's word with our community youth. The daily program will include worship with music, skits and interactive bible stories geared toward specific age groups, snacks and drinks, games, arts and crafts, community building and environmental education.

Registration is open to children age 4 through those who have completed 6th grade. Cost is \$15.00 per child with a family max of \$45.00. Financial assistance is available. Payment will be collected on June 22nd. To sign up visit our website at faitheldridge@netins.net, scan the qr code below, or pick up a registration form at the church. Some forms will be available in the outdoor box. We encourage you to invite friends and neighbors to join us!

Volunteers and donations of water bottles are needed. The small water bottles are preferred and can be dropped off in the gathering space under the coat rack. To volunteer there is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. Also, we will be providing 3 meals a day for the four Lakeside staff. Nina and Brian Looney will be hosting and providing lodging for them, which we are so grateful for. If you are interested in donating a meal or gift card for a meal, there is a sign-up and additional information on the bulletin board.

Please call or text Cindy Zabel with any questions at 563-210-4169.

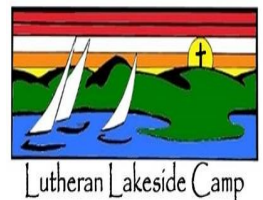


Summer camp

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).



Baptisms

During the Sunday, March 29 worship service, we welcomed to our Faith family through the waters of holy baptism, Brandon Michael Brown, son of Damian and Alicia Brown. Brandon's sponsors are his grandparents, Mike and Rita Smith.

During the Saturday, April 4 worship service, we welcomed to our Faith family through the waters of holy baptism, Reese Harper Donaubauer, daughter of Scott and Brooke Donaubauer. Reese's sponsors are Chad and Jennifer Donaubauer.

Roses were given in celebration of the baptisms in loving memory of Mary House, Maddie Mess, and Jackie Snyder.



Thank you for all of your Mission Trip support this year through the purchase of cinnamon rolls and Super Bowl subs and snack mix.

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

Sales of the Shares will begin on May 10 and will continue throughout May.

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



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)

Thank you
VOLUNTEERS!



With Appreciation...

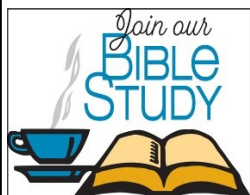
Thank you to our April Ambassador Folding Crew:
Donna Benskin, Sue Casel, Pam Engelbrecht, Darlene
John, Carol Marten, and Tammy Neff.

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

FAITH LUTHERAN FINANCES

	MARCH	YEAR-TO-DATE
INCOME*	\$26,940.25	\$97,806.31
EXPENSES	\$29,400.45	\$91,882.65

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



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. **We will meet May 5, 12, and 19, then take a
break for the summer, resuming August 25.**

Service in the World



In April, the Outreach mission of the Service in the
World Committee donated \$150 to Tapestry Farms,
an urban farm system which grows fresh produce
throughout the Quad Cities area. Refugees and
volunteers work together at a dozen locations to
grow food regeneratively, connecting neighbors in a
shared hope. Tapestry Farms invests in the lives of
refugees by providing support for housing, education, healthcare,
employment, food, transportation, community and citizenship. More
information can be found at <https://www.tapestryfarms.org/>.



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

Curtis Hulsen	May 1	Leonard Hanson	May 15
Kristy Looney	May 1	Patty Mixdorf	May 15
Kevin Jenkins	May 3	Roger Baustian	May 19
Jim Weibel	May 5	Vince Knoche	May 23
Sandra Knoche	May 5	Vickie Paulsen	May 29
Pam White	May 9	Jayne Hirl	May 29
Kris Schwein	May 12	Darlene John	May 30



Feed Our Children

During the month of May we are collecting
donations of cheese sticks and gogurt. Please
place these in the kitchen fridge. Thank you
for your contributions!



Food Pantry Needs for the month of May are
toothbrushes, toothpaste, and kid-friendly foods such as
canned fruit, spaghettiOs, ravioli, peanut butter, jelly,
cereal bars, juice boxes, etc.



MISSIONARY SPONSORSHIP

Thank you to **Dan & Karen O'Flaherty** for sponsoring the
Bencke family in May. Thank you to Jan Hartwig for
sponsoring Compassion Child **John Chima** and to **Tammera**
Long for sponsoring Compassion Child **Denisse Grefa** in May.
There are sponsorship opportunities available in November
and December of 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.

Thank you for your support!