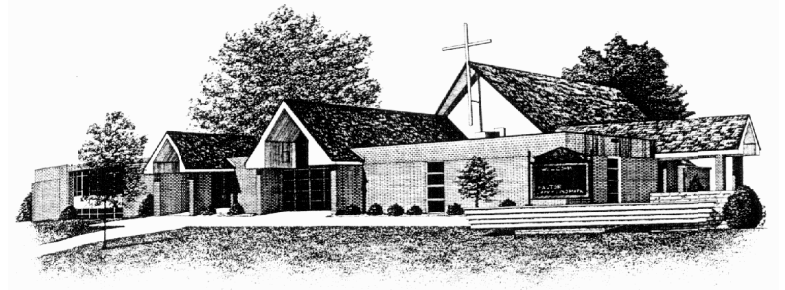


Faith Lutheran Church



AMBASSADOR

January 2023

Rev. Dr. Carrie Lewis La Plante

Rev. Heather Geest

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Eldridge, IA 52748

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**Grace-Gifted, Faith-Lifted
Called to Share, Seek, and
Serve Christ**

New Year's Message

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends in Christ,

We are embarking on a new year! Many of us have made New Year's resolutions for any number of things to improve our health, our relationships, our practices of faith, and many other aspects of our lives. It is a time for new beginnings or starts in new directions, for strengthening that which is going well and letting go of those things that hold us back.

As we enter this new year at Faith, we also carry with us great hope for what is coming in the year ahead. While 2022 carried some ups and downs along the way, we ended the year with amazing strength as we saw more and more people attending worship and other programming, giving to the General Fund was amazing and helped us to close the gap between giving and expenses, and giving to the Roof Replacement Fund has been so very generous. Our ministry teams are making plans for some fun events in the year ahead, and they are dreaming of creative ways to expand our ministry to meet the needs of more people in the community. It really is an exciting time, and I look forward to beginning 2023 strong.

As I was reflecting on all of this, the reading from Titus from Christmas Eve struck me.

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds. (Titus 2:11-14)

It is not a reading we often spend a lot of time with on Christmas Eve as we tend to focus on Luke's telling of the birth of Jesus; however, in this reading, we are reminded of the gift that God gave us in Jesus, and how, because of this great gift, we live in hope in spite of the world around us as we await Christ's return. As those who follow Christ, the

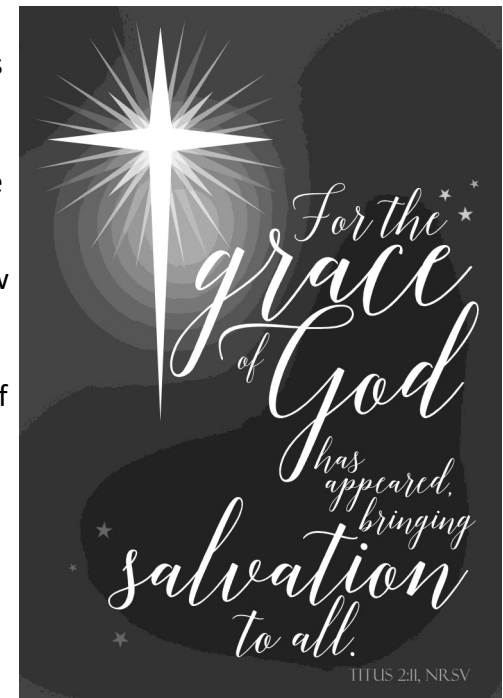
one who gave his very self to redeem us from our sins and give us the ultimate gift of eternal life, we are called to live in this hope and share that hope with others.

I want to thank you for all the ways in which you have lived into this hope and shared this hope with others in this past year, and I look forward to all the ways that we will live out this hope in the year ahead. At our Annual Meeting on January 29, we will get to review the year together and hear about some of the dreams that we have for the year and years ahead. I encourage you to join us for that meeting, and, if you have any Faith clothing, be it the new swag that the youth sold to raise funds for their mission trip to Albuquerque, your favorite old Faith sweatshirt, one of any number of mission trip T-shirts from over the years, or anything else, please wear it to the meeting as we celebrate our hopes and dreams over the years and look ahead to the future.

I also hope that you will consider joining one of our many ministry teams in the year ahead to be part of putting our dreams into action. If there is a ministry that we are already doing that you have passion for or a ministry that you feel is missing and you would like to help us get it started, please talk with me or Pastor Heather, and we will help you to find the other people in this congregation with similar passions and dreams to share our hope in Christ with the community and the world.

As I wish you all a very blessed new year, I pray that our Savior, Jesus Christ, who came to earth and brought us salvation will fill each of us with hope as we continue to await together his coming in glory and align our actions to Christ's mission for the sake of the world.

Blessed new year to you all,
Pastor Carrie





Happy New Year! As we look forward to 2023, we are also looking back at 2022. The challenges, the places where we feel like we have fallen short, the times we felt like everything was fantastic, yet, through it all, faith that God is there beside you, always. The council is also looking back to 2022 as we prepare the annual report of the congregation, as we look forward to the ways that we are called to be, and serve God's people in the year ahead. The annual meeting of the congregation will be January 29th at the 9am worship service. There will be a budget information meeting held January 22nd at 10:15am to answer any budget questions you may have. Please plan on attending the annual meeting and join in the future we share together.

Join me in thanking:

- The Christian education team of Theresa White, Marla Zabel, Amanda Strom, and Betty Strom for their work planning and presenting the Children's Christmas program.
- Those who served the Congregational Breakfast after the Children's Christmas program: Sherri Brundies, Kory and Tim Winter, Diane Cole, Brad & Janet Merrick, Beth Raiche-Melheim, and Deanna Nielsen.
- Everyone who helped with the Christmas services or decorations in any way.

The regular council meeting was held on December 15th. The 2023 budget was approved after very thoughtful discussions over the last three months. While it is always difficult to consider our expenses and missions in terms of dollars and cents, the council has kept the mission in mind throughout the discussions. The council is also very thankful for all those who contributed their time, talent and treasure to Faith Lutheran this past year. Additionally some exciting ideas surrounding the Lenten services were discussed. Look for more information in the February Ambassador as plans are finalized.

Mike Garner, council president
563-349-4459



The Worship and Music team has reviewed the Sunday morning worship schedule as promised. Our conclusion after discussing this with the clergy, organists, choirs, and not receiving any negative input from the congregation, we will continue the 9am service time for Sunday.



FAITH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL MEETING NOTIFICATION

January 22, 2023

10:15 am Budget Meeting

January 29, 2023

9:00 am Annual Congregational Meeting ,
following a brief worship service
(Review of Reports, Election of Congregational
Leaders, 2021 Budget Approval)

January 29, 2023

Immediately following the annual meeting
Special Meeting (Election of Officers)

Budgets will be available by January 22nd for pick up at church.



Sanctuary Update Committee

The Sanctuary Update team would like to share our progress for improvements with the congregation this month. We understand that it is not the right time to start the project as our current focus is to replace the roof, but we would like to share what we've been working on in hopes that we may be able to execute this update in the next few years.

Our team began working four years ago to create a plan for improvements to the sanctuary. We held cottage meetings to hear the needs of our congregation, met with the Mission Investment Fund to learn about design possibilities and financial options, worked with Gunder Church Furniture to create designs for the updated space, and obtained bids for other key improvements such as electrical, flooring, and sound system.

The overall goal of the sanctuary update is to improve accessibility and functionality of the space so that all may have a comfortable worship experience. There are four key areas we are wanting to improve: 1) reconfigure the seating floor plan and altar area to allow for increased accessibility and flexibility, 2) incorporate technology into the space to enhance in-person and online worship, 3) update the sound system so that all can hear during worship, 4) refresh the aesthetic of the space while still keeping the Mid-Century Modern style.

The changes we are proposing would have an immediate benefit, not only for people who are elderly or impaired, but also families with children. We have carefully considered changes that will have longevity for our congregation. Looking to the future, having an updated space will also allow us to be equipped for worship opportunities not yet imagined.

We are currently estimating the project to cost \$150,000-\$250,000, recognizing that costs likely increase as more time passes. To reiterate, we are not asking for this funding right now, but would like to give transparency for the scope of the project. Our goal is to have the renovations started by 2025.

Our team will be presenting the design boards and highlighting the updates in our Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 29th.

The boards will be set up in the gathering space two weeks prior, and team members will be available to discuss the update in the informational budget meeting that will be held January 22nd.

We look forward to sharing with you.

Amy Murray, on behalf of the Sanctuary Update Team



We are raising funds to replace our aging roof over Fellowship Hall and the Education Wing. Our goal is \$50,000.

As of December 27, we have raised \$43,020 of our \$50,000 goal! Thank you to all who have generously given toward our roof campaign. If you have not given, please prayerfully consider a gift .

Please contact a Council Member with any questions regarding our campaign. ***Thank you for helping us Replace the Roof!***



Mark Your Calendars - Cheeseburger In Paradise Returns!



Cheeseburger In Paradise Potluck will return to the Fellowship Hall on Saturday, February 4th, 2023!!!! The Fellowship Team will provide cheeseburgers, condiments, table service and drinks. Please sign up by January 25th, 2023, either on the bulletin board or online and include what side dish you plan to bring, so we can plan accordingly for the cheeseburgers!

There will be games for the kids to play (Bags, Hula Hoop, Limbo, Flamingo Ring Toss to name a few). Sign up for Door Prizes: Child and Adult. Other prizes to be awarded: Best Hawaiian/Tropical attire. Who has the Whitest Legs at Faith? – We shall soon find out!

Hope to see you all there – *The Fellowship Team*



FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

JANUARY 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9am Worship	2 <i>Office Closed</i> 11:00 am—2:00pm Private Event (FH)	3 1 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 7 pm Jubilation	4 5 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:15 pm People of Praise 7 pm High School Youth 7:15 pm Resounding Joy	5 6:30 pm Team Night	6 9:30 am Food Pantry	7 5 pm Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary & Online
8 9 am Jubilation Worship 10 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 am Sunday School	9 <i>Office Closed</i>	10 1 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry	11 5 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:15 pm People of Praise 7 pm High School Youth 7:15 pm Resounding Joy	12 <i>Team Reports Due</i> 6:30 pm Executive Committee Mtg. 6:30 pm WOF Board Meeting	13 9:30 am Food Pantry	14 5 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online
15 9 am Worship 10 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 am Sunday School	16 <i>Office Closed</i>	17 9 am Quilting (FH) 1 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry	18 5 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:15 pm People of Praise 7 pm High School Youth 7:15 pm Resounding Joy	19 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting Zoom	20 9:30 am Food Pantry	21 5 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online
22 9 am Worship 10 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 am Sunday School 10:15 Budget Meeting	23 <i>Office Closed</i>	24 5:30 pm Food Pantry 7pm Jubilation	25 <i>Confirmation Mentor Night—No Meeting</i> 6:15 pm People of Praise 7 pm High School Youth 7:15 pm Resounding Joy	26 9 am Ambassador Folding 6:30 pm WOF Bible Study	27 9:30 am Food Pantry	28 5 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online
29 9 am Worship & Annual Meeting 10 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 am Sunday School	30 <i>Office Closed</i>	31 5:30 pm Food Pantry				



The Faith Lutheran family generously provided \$860 for this year's special Thanksgiving offering. These gifts have been split evenly between ELCA World Hunger and Humble Dwellings. ELCA World Hunger partners with congregations in the United States, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands to help support the more than 820 million people worldwide who are hungry and in poverty. Humble Dwellings is a local organization dedicated to restoring dignity and hope to those less fortunate by transforming their living space into a warm and inviting home using gently donated furniture and household items. Thank you all for helping Faith Lutheran support these impactful organizations.

New Offering Envelopes

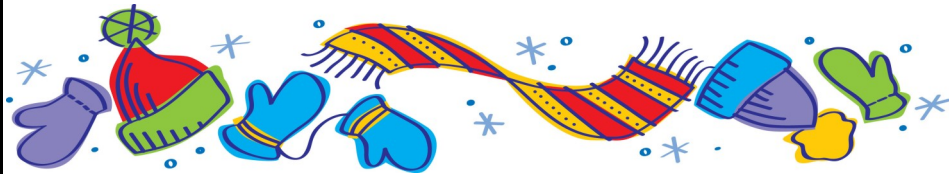


The 2023 Offering Envelopes are delayed due to staffing of the envelope company and the printer. We will notify you when they are available. In the meantime, please use pew envelopes for your offering.

On behalf of Humility Homes and Services, I would like to thank the members of Faith Lutheran church for your very generous donations of winter clothing. Over the course of the last several weeks, the congregation has been donating items for this drive. I have made three trips to drop off these items to Humility Homes. Each time the back end of my car has been heaped with coats and other winter clothing. The congregation has donated: 32 adult coats, 27 kids coats, 51 pairs of kids and adult gloves, 38 kids and adult stocking hats, 10 blankets, 3 neck scarves, 3 kids winter vests, 1 kid snow pants, 1 adult winter vest, 2 sweaters and 1 pair of winter boots. Your generous donations have been very appreciated.

Thanks again, Betty Strom

Thank You!



Homebound Ministry Team

In writing to the Church at Galatia, Paul said: "So, then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith." (Galatians 6:10)



Our church is interested in starting a homebound ministry team to focus of the spiritual needs of those who cannot attend church regularly by offering a listening ear and a comforting presence. Through home visits and phone calls, ministry volunteers will provide and strengthen our social and spiritual connection with members who cannot be physically present in worship.

If you are interested in more information about this ministry, please contact Pastor Heather at 563-285-4501 or JoAnn Holston at 563-200-1988. Our first informational meeting about this ministry will be sometime in February. We will schedule a date once we know who is interested in being a part of this ministry. Thank you for prayerfully considering being a part of this way to encourage and support one another in this community.



IT'S TIME for snow removal volunteers! If you could help clear sidewalks after a snowfall, please sign up on the sheet in the gathering area or online using a link on our web page.

Thank you for your help!



WOMEN OF FAITH BIBLE STUDY



Join us for a four-session study of the 10 Commandments from the Gather Magazine. The first session will be on January 26 at 6:30 in the Gathering area. We will look at "Dancing the Decalogue, Commandments 1 & 2". Extra copies of this session will be available.



Get ready for some camp fun! On the weekend of January 7 and 8, Britt Swanson, the Executive Director of Lutheran Lakeside Camp will be here to bring greetings from our favorite summer getaway. She will be present during the worship on Saturday and Sunday to share a children's message. On Sunday, she also will spend the Sunday School hour with the children to give them a mini-camp experience full of fun, games, and camp songs to get them excited for camp this summer. You will not want to miss this weekend as we prepare for "The Best Week Ever".



Please bring in all BEST CHOICE LABELS if you have been saving them. They will be turned in and used toward the 2023 youth mission trip. *Thank you!*



Mission Trip Update

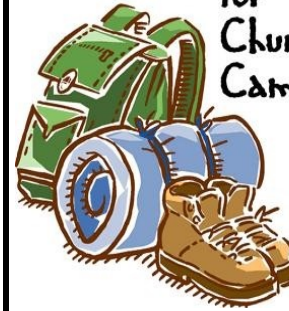
We have 20 youth who are planning to join us for our mission trip to Albuquerque, New Mexico, this summer. They are excited for the opportunities that will come with this trip, and they look forward to sharing our experiences with you.



In order to make this trip a reality, our youth will be doing several fundraisers throughout the year to help pay for the trip. First, they would like to thank all of you who purchased items from their Faith webstore in December. We were able to put \$450 toward the trip from that sale.

The next fundraiser will be the Super Bowl Sandwich and Caramel Chex Mix Sale. The order forms will be available on the Welcome Center, on our Facebook page and on our website by January 8. Pick-up will be on Super Bowl Weekend, February 11 and 12, around the worship services. Order forms will need to be received by the end of the day on January 29. We look forward to helping to provide your Super Bowl Sunday treats, and thank you in advance for your support.

Sign up
for
Church
Camp



Summer Camp Registration is Here!!

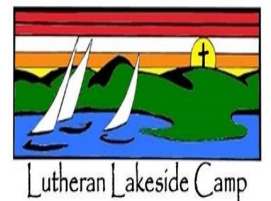
Registration is now open for Lutheran Lakeside Camp this summer. We are planning to attend camp **July 16-21**. There is Junior Camp for those who have completed grades 3-5 and Confirmation Camp for those who have completed grades 6-8. How we will get to camp will be determined at a later date.

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 \$475 for the first child. If you send more than one child from your household, there is a \$15 sibling discount for the second and subsequent children. A \$100 deposit is due at registration. **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 \$275 for your first child and \$260 for any additional children from your household. Please only pay \$100 at the time of registration and be sure to let them know that you are going with Faith Lutheran Church so that they apply the \$150 campership appropriately. You can pay the remainder of the camp fees after the campership is applied. 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, so if that is something that would interest you, please let Pastor Carrie know.

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





With Appreciation...

Thank you to our December Ambassador Folding Crew: Sue Casel, Carol Strobbe, Mary Moore, Darlene John, Carol Marten, and Donna Benskin.

Thank you to our "Online Livestream" team of Lucas Golinghorst, Scott La Plante, and Kevin Zidarich for tirelessly making sure worship is available online.

Thank you for the many cards and sweet treats we received during the holidays. You brought us joy with your many surprises! ~ Faith Staff

A special thank-you to Linda Szemkus for coordinating the Altar Guild with the many changes that we have had with providing for communion and making sure the supplies are available for worship.

A special thank-you to all the Altar Guild volunteers that makes sure communion supplies are available and everything is ready in the sanctuary each weekend.

Thank you to Carol Strobbe, Beth Raiche-Melheim, and Sue Cassel, for folding bulletins during December!

Thank you to Magda Brodersen and Karen Schmeink for watering our plants and flowers every week, all year long, and keeping the live plants looking so nice!

Worship Technicians

The Evangelism and Worship and Music Team have a joint need for audio and video help. If you are gifted in these areas, please check out the sign up on our web site, or at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/805094EABA62CAAF85-video>



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

Katie Dittmer	January 1
Bud House	January 1
Gary Rohwer	January 1
David Rose	January 3
Shirley Cole	January 5
Shirley Baustian	January 7
Sue Braack	January 10
James Hamann	January 13

Joyce Rathjen	January 14
Wyatt Frahm	January 16
Don Hamann	January 18
Dan Anderson	January 18
Velma Riley	January 29
Fae Harvey	January 29
Ron Arp	January 31



Bob and Ann Bainter on
January 15, 1961

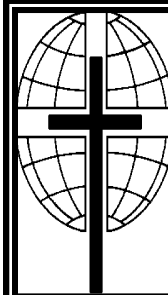


Food Panty Needs

Food Pantry Needs for the month of January are soup, pasta, and hot cereal.

Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study

Join us on each Tuesday afternoon for a Bible study that looks at the lectionary texts for the week. **Tuesday afternoons at 1 pm.** We look forward to studying the scriptures together.



MISSIONARY SPONSORSHIP

The cost for sponsorship is \$40/month each for our Compassion Children John and Denisse 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!

**Weekly Worship: Saturday @ 5:00 pm, In Person & Live Stream Online, and
Sunday at 8am and 10:30am, In Person. Worship Updates will be posted on
[www. faithlutheraneldridge.com](http://www.faithlutheraneldridge.com) and on our Facebook page.**

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

