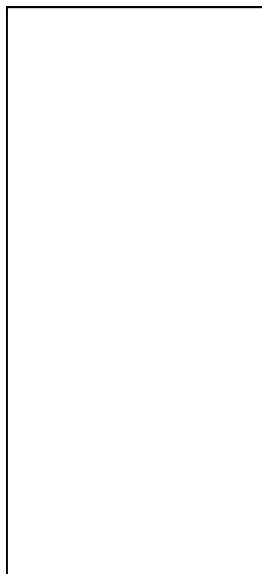


Weekly Worship: Saturday at 5:00 pm, In Person & Live Stream Online, and Sunday at 9:00 am, In Person.
Online Worship updates will be posted on www.faithlutheraneldridge.com and on our Facebook page.
Sunday School and adult faith formation on Sundays at 10:15 am.

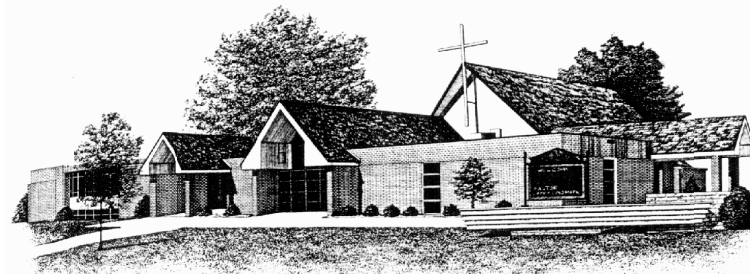
Faith Lutheran Church
 500 W. LeClaire Road
 Eldridge, IA 52748

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Faith Lutheran Church



AMBASSADOR

January 2024

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



When [the wise men] saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road. (Matthew 2:10-12)

Dear Friends in Christ,

In these twelve days of Christmas in which we are currently dwelling, we are still basking in the glow of the celebration of Jesus' birth even as we look ahead to the coming of the wise men to the house of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem some two years later. Again, we are drawn to the light of the world as the star that led the wise men to Bethlehem finally stops over the house where Jesus dwells. I love the way in which Matthew describes what happens next, "When [the wise men] saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy." These men who have no connection to the God of Israel religiously, who are fascinated by the star that appeared some two years prior, who have followed that star across the vast expanse of desert, have finally arrived at the promised destination of the home of a new king. It is as if everything that has seemed a bit nebulous to this point has come to reality, and they are overwhelmed with joy to know that their journey is not for naught.

How would that feeling of being overwhelmed with joy have felt? I imagine that it would be that feeling where your chest is ready to burst. It is that feeling we get when something that we have hoped for and dreamed about has finally come to fruition. It is that feeling that we seek to feel in this Christmas season as we remember once again the promise of a Savior that has been born for us and remember that because of God's love for us in Jesus, we have the promise of eternal life. That is a deep joy that goes beyond happiness and can carry us through both the really good times and the hard times of life.

Which is a good thing because at the end of this reading, we get the hint of what is to come when Matthew writes, "And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road." These words remind us that the birth of Jesus was not welcomed by everyone with the same overwhelming joy that the wise men experienced. Herod was afraid of what this new king might mean for him. If we go forward in the story, we know that, when the wise men did not return, Herod was angry, and he ordered the slaughter of all male babies under the age of two in order to assure that this new king was destroyed. Thankfully, God led Joseph, Mary and Jesus away to Egypt where they would be safe, but for so many families in Bethlehem, the birth of Jesus brought deep sorrow.

We know that even in the midst of the joy that we carry in the promise of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the world in which we live is still not fully the way that God intends for it to be. We are all too aware of the pain and suffering, the tragedy and the loss that surround us and our neighbors near and far. We know the fear and grief that comes when we hear about the wars that are happening around the world, when we experience the political unrest right here at home, when diagnoses bring with them bleak outlooks, and when the death of family and friends looms near. And yet, even in the midst of tragedy and sorrow, we hold to the promise that, in Jesus, "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1:5). We still hold the deep joy in the promise of God's salvation that can carry us through the darkest of times because we know that there is no darkness that can overcome the light of Christ.

Someone said to me today, "I am sure that you are ready to say good-bye to 2023 with all of the tough things your family has gone through. I bet you are ready for a new year in 2024." While 2023 has been a hard year for us, I am all too aware that 2024 will carry with it many sorrows among the joys, just as this year has. What I hold onto as I look ahead to 2024 is that overwhelming joy of the wise men when they found Jesus and the promise that Christ will always shine light into the darkness. May that joy and those promises carry you into and through the year ahead with hope and peace.

In Christ's love,
Pastor Carrie



Happy New Year! As we look forward to 2024, we also look back on 2023. The annual report is being written, the final budget proposal has been approved by Council, and some names are on the ballot

to serve on council or other teams. As of this writing, there are still openings as we search for people to join in with the multitude of volunteers here are Faith. The work of the many hands makes the load light. The amazing people who volunteer here are so much fun to be around. I have received far more reward by helping than the amount of effort I have given. I invite you to join God's mission through us in and from this place. I ask you to ask yourself two questions: 1)If not me, who? 2)If not now, when?

Join me in thanking:

Those who served the November Churches United meal. A literal example of serving hands.

The children, youth helpers, and adults who put on such an enjoyable Christmas program. They brought joy to the Sunday of Joy.

Those who helped provide food for the congregational breakfast. So many delicious foods.

All of those involved in the Cantata. Music brings us closer to God.

Anyone who helped with the Congregational Breakfast. Serving, others serves us and them.

The ladies (and gentlemen) who did such a wonderful job of decorating the church for Christmas.

The regular Council meeting was held on December 21st. The Policies and Procedures manual was finalized and approved. The Council also approved a 2024 budget to present to the congregation at the annual meeting on January 28th, as well as other preparations for the annual meeting.

Mike Garner, Council President
563-349-4459



FAITH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL MEETING NOTIFICATION

January 21, 2024

10:15 am Budget Meeting

January 28, 2024

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

January 29, 2024

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

Budgets will be available by January 21 for pick up at church.



A Special Thanks to:

Everyone that has volunteered for December worship and support and all that have served throughout the year: ushers, communion assistants, lectors and offering counters.

Sue Becker, choir members, and friends for presenting the Christmas Cantata.

The Brass Quartet for providing music of the season for worship.

The Altar Guild committee members that are responsible for setting up for communion, baptisms, changing paraments, banners, and filling candles all year long.

The bread bakers using their talents providing the communion bread for worship.

The Faith Family Heads that faithfully work to fill ushers, lectors, and communion assistants each month so we can all enjoy worship.















Diane Krebs for crafting the beautiful angels for Christmas Eve.

Nina Looney, Worship & Music Team Leader



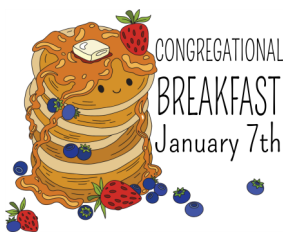
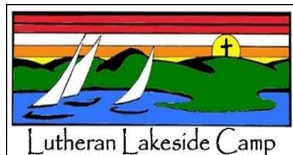
AS WE BID FAREWELL TO THIS YEAR
AND WELCOME THE NEW YEAR,
LET'S JOIN OUR HEARTS IN PRAYER
FOR OUR BELOVED CHILDREN AND
THEIR FAMILIES. MAY THE COMING YEAR
BRING ABUNDANT BLESSINGS, HEALTH
AND JOY TO EACH ONE OF THEM.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Key: (FH) - Fellowship Hall (MP) Multipurpose Room (GS) Gathering Space	1 Office Closed	2 5:30 pm Food Pantry  6:30 pm Jubilation	3 5:00 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth 7:10 pm Resounding Joy	4 6:30 pm Team Night 7:30 pm Executive Committee Meeting	5 ANNUAL REPORT SUBMISSIONS DUE 9:30am Food Pantry 11:00 am Funeral 	6 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
7 WINTER RALLY DAY 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Congregational Breakfast and Rally Day with Lutheran Lakeside	8 Office Closed 6:00 pm Lions Club Mtg	9 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry  6:30 pm VFW (FH)	10 5:00 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth 7:10 pm Resounding Joy	11 Team Reports Due	12 9:30 am Food Pantry 	13 11:00 am Private Event (FH) 5:00 pm Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
14 9:00 am Jubilation Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Fellowship 10:15 am Sunday School	15 Office Closed 6:00 pm Lions Club Exec Mtg.	16 9:00 am Quilting 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	17 Mentor Night, No meal or Confirmation 5:00 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth 7:10 pm Resounding Joy	18 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting 	19 9:30 am Food Pantry 	20 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online 
21 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary 10:15 am Fellowship Hour 10:15 am Budget Review Meeting	22 Office Closed	23 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	24 5:00 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm IGNITE EVENT 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth 7:10 pm Resounding Joy	25 6:30 pm WOF Bible Study	26 9:30 am Food Pantry  Ambassador DEADLine	27 5:00 pm Worship in Sanctuary & Online
28 ANNUAL MEETING 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary with Annual Meeting 10:15 am Fellowship 10:15 am Sunday School 12:00 pm—Girl Scouts (FH)	29 Office Closed	30 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Food Pantry 	31 5:00 pm Confirmation Meal 5:30 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm People of Praise 7:00 pm High School Youth 7:10 pm Resounding Joy	FEBRUARY 1 9:00 am Ambassador Folding (To include Annual Meeting Results) 		

WINTER RALLY DAY celebration

Get ready for some camp fun! On the weekend of **January 6 and 7**, 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 join us during the Congregational Breakfast to give the children 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".



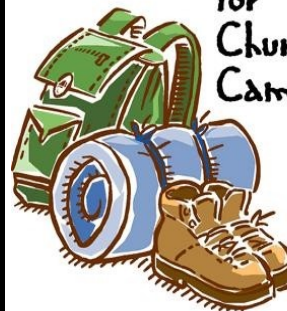
Join us on Sunday, January 7, for our monthly **congregational breakfast** following the 9 am worship service. It is our hope that these intergenerational congregational breakfasts will be an opportunity for us to grow in faith and in relationship with one another.



JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH IGNITE EVENT - The Junior High Youth will be headed to St. Mark church on **Wednesday, January 24th for an IGNITE event**. This is an event with several other Lutheran Churches in the Quad Cities where we will play some games and do learning activities together. We will meet at the church at 5 pm for supper then head down to Davenport. We will be returning to the church around 8:15 pm. Parent drivers will be needed for this event.



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 21-26**. There is Cultivator Camp for those who have completed grades 3-5 and TrailBlazer 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 \$480 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 \$280 for your first child and \$265 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).



YOUR GIVING MATTERS!

Thank You

Thank you for using your Time, Talent + Treasure to further Faith's vibrant ministries. We are making a difference in our church, community, synod, and worldwide. May the Holy Spirit continue guiding and working in our lives and ministry as we enter a new year.

Joan Hennigan
Stewardship Team Leader



The **2024 Offering Envelopes** are now available. They are on the Welcome Center counter for you to pick up. Please contact Rhonda Webber if you have not had envelopes before, but would like some for the new year.

?? ? Bible Quiz ? ?

In the story of the Magi, what word is used to give a sense of Jesus' age when the wise men visited? What does it tell us?

- A. "baby"; Jesus was still a newborn in a manger
- B. "child"; when the wise men visited, Jesus had grown past infancy
- C. "youth"; Jesus was probably between 10 and 14
- D. No word is used to suggest Jesus' age at the time of the wise men's visit.



Answer: B (See Matthew 2:1-12.)

FAITH LUTHERAN FINANCES

	NOVEMBER	YEAR-TO-DATE
INCOME*	\$28,574.07	\$315,350.13
EXPENSES	\$27,549.71	\$312,334.55

*Average Monthly Income needed to meet estimated annual expenses is \$31,626



Our Thanksgiving Offering of \$ 755 was evenly divided between Humility Homes and Services for their emergency shelters in Davenport and with Lutheran Disaster Response with designation for the Middle East Crisis.



Mark Your Calendars - Cheeseburger In Paradise Party FEBRUARY 3 at 6:15 PM



Break out the flip-flops and Hawaiian shirts for some winter warmth and fellowship. Set a reminder for our Cheeseburger in Paradise party on Saturday, February 3rd after the 5pm worship service. Bring a side dish to share and the fellowship team will have cheeseburgers, table service, and drinks covered. Sign up on the bulletin board and we'll have a burger ready for you!

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



Come see a classic tale of friendship on the NSHS stage with your friends from Faith. Several of our high school youth will be acting in Lancer Productions Charlotte's Web. We have a block of tickets for the matinee on Sunday, January 28th at 2 pm. More information will be posted in the coming weeks. See Deanna Nielsen or Pastor Carrie for tickets.



With Appreciation...

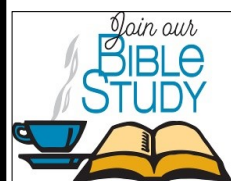


Thank you to our December Ambassador Folding Crew: Tom Bauer, Carol Strobbe, Sue Casel, Darlene John, Tammy Neff, Sue Braack, and Carol Marten.

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



During the Saturday, December 2 worship service, we welcome to our Faith family through the waters of holy baptism, Everett Charles Johnson, the son of Colton and Becky Johnson. Everett's sponsors are Ben and Cat Potter.



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. **Note: We will not hold bible study on January 2 due to the holidays.**



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!



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

Katie Dittmer	January 1	Joyce Rathjen	January 14
Gary Rohwer	January 1	Don Hamann	January 18
David Rose	January 3	Dan Anderson	January 18
Shirley Cole	January 5	Dianne Johnson	January 25
Carolyn Scheibe	January 6	Velma Riley	January 29
Sue Braack	January 10	Fae Harvey	January 29
James Hamann	January 13	Ron Arp	January 31



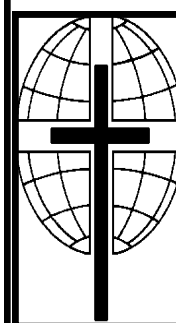
Bob & Ann Bainter -January 15, 1961

Larry & Carolyn - January 18, 1964



Food Panty Needs

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



MISSIONARY SPONSORSHIP

There are many sponsorship opportunities available in 2024. The cost for sponsorship is **\$45/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 at (563)285-4501. Thank you for your support!**