



FAITH ALIVE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, LCMC

From Pastor's Heart

With the holidays approaching fast, (by the way I can't believe that it is only the middle of November, with Thanksgiving next week. This week when you are reading this, and once again there are already Christmas commercials on TV and stores are decorated and playing Christmas music. I even saw a yard decorated and lit up for Christmas.) don't forget we have many opportunities to worship our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ this holiday season. We have the Children's Christmas Play on December 14, this will be a special service with no sermon on that Sunday. Then we have our Christmas Eve Candlelight services at 4 & 6 pm on Christmas Eve, which will focus on "A Star... A Song ... A Child." To give you a taste of what these services will be like: "Christmas Carols provide much of the joy and merriment of our Christmas celebration. They have surrounded us during the past weeks – in the shopping malls, on our car radios, on our stereo players at home. Tonight a carol, "Said the Night Wind to the Little Lamb", sets the stage for our worship celebration and directs our movement through our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. It asks us to search our hearts so we can give honest answers to the questions its principals ask: "Do you see what I see? Do you hear what I hear? Do you know what I know?" I pray these services will fill you with joy as we celebrate our Lord's birth.

I would like to thank those that sent birthday cards, as well as encouragement cards. Also a big thank you goes out to all the members for what you have done

for Susan and I throughout this first year with you here at Faith Lutheran, especially as Susan and I celebrated our 14th wedding anniversary. Another thank you goes to my staff here at Faith as well as to the Church Council for their encouragement and support.

I would like to spend the rest of my newsletter talking about "building fence". For those of you who have a ranch with cattle you know and understand what building fence means. But for the rest of us I am talking about building a fence around the things that you love and cherish, so that nothing disturbs that block of time: say your favorite TV show, date night with the wife or husband, which Susan and I try to at least once a month. I am sure all of you have a list of sacred things that have fences around them as well.

My friends, there are 168 hours in a week. That's quite a few, if you think about it, and at Faith, with the exception of Lent, we only gather all of us together for two or three of them. From 8:30 a.m. to around 11:00 am every Sunday, we sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to his sacred Word and receive his blessed Sacrament. Yet so often, because of the busyness of parish life and busyness of life in general, the fence around this time gets broken down. It's not uncommon. We are, as Jesus says, "anxious and troubled about many things" (Luke 10:41).

As I write this article on a very nice and sunny Thursday morning, I have, to continue the metaphor, build a fence around this time to encourage you with a word from the Lord that I hope will strengthen

and uplift you. It's important to serve God, and we should, as his Church, be about the business of living out our calling to go and make disciples. However, for these two or three hours, 8:30 Bible Study and our 9:30 worship, we must stop. We must come and refill our spiritual tanks and "choose the good portion."

Let me encourage you this month to be intentional about the fence we build around these sacred hours; to be intentional about the time we spend, not just with the Lord (you can do that on your own, or in a small group study), not just with one another (you can do that at your favorite restaurant), but together with Christ's saints and at the feet of him who calls us to the good portion that will not be taken away from us.

As we head into a new Church Year, I pray that we keep praying and seeking God's will for this congregation. As always, you can discuss with me at any time your concerns for Faith Lutheran, as well as any ideas that you would like to see happen. Therefore, we turn our hearts over to God and seek and do His will. God be praised!

And don't forget to build a fence and set aside some time each day during the upcoming Advent season to give praise and prayer to our Lord Jesus Christ. May he fill us with the Holy Spirit, so that we can give our praise to him and his coming to us this holiday season! Season Greetings to all and remember Jesus Is The Reason For The Season. To God be all the glory.

Pastor Alsen

December News from Education Team/Youth Family

Christmas is approaching fast, and it's hard to believe how quickly the year has gone by. We're excited to announce that the Children's Christmas Program – "Tree-Mendous Love...From the Manger...To the Cross" will be held during the worship service on December 14th. Throughout November, we've been preparing for this event with both the Sunday School children and the Confirmation group.

If your child or children would like to participate, please let me know. However, I will also be reaching out to families with youth to encourage their involvement. Please note that memorization for any part of the program is not required, making it accessible for all interested participants.

Practice sessions are scheduled for Saturday, December 6th, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm, with lunch provided. There will be another practice on Sunday, December 7th, during Sunday School. The Dress Rehearsal will take place on Saturday, December 13th, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. While attendance at every practice is not mandatory, youth are strongly encouraged to participate in all sessions.

Trunk or Treat Event Recap

We extend a huge thank you to everyone who contributed to the Trunk or Treat event, whether by donating candy or volunteering your time. The event was a wonderful success, with approximately 1,200 attendees enjoying the music and trick-or-treating in the parking lot and popcorn and apple cider inside. The traveling "Best Trunk" trophy was awarded by a landslide to Carl and Crystal Dunn for their creative "Mario" themed trunk. Many attendees expressed their appreciation for the event.

Volunteer Opportunities

We are currently seeking volunteers to serve as Faith Friends for our confirmands. Faith Friends are secret support friends for each youth in confirmation, providing encouragement throughout their journey. There are nine confirmands in need of Faith Friends. If you are interested in volunteering or would like more information about this role, please contact me or Pastor Alsen.

In addition, volunteers are always welcome to assist with any of our family activities and programs. To volunteer, please call (406) 590-1061 or contact the church office. Your help would be greatly appreciated.

Upcoming Meeting

The December Education Team meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 9th, at 7:00 pm. Everyone is welcome to attend and take part in our planning and discussions.

God bless you all,
Annette Hocker, Youth and Family Coordinator



Outreach News

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. - Isaiah 9:6

I love seeing our church blossom. God has blessed us with increasing attendance on Sundays and so many activities that we can invite friends and family to share with us. As we celebrate the gift of Jesus Christ, let us remember to share this gift with others in our families and community. Do you enjoy welcoming our visitors on Sunday and during our community events? Would you like to be on our Hospitality Team? (Not to worry, there's no cooking involved.) You can show them around, help them find the fellowship hall and have a cup of coffee with them. If they have kids and are looking to sign them up for Sunday School you can take them to the right place. Is this something you'd like to dive into? If so let me know so we can meet and make a plan!

Anyone interested in getting a PARENT/YOUNG ADULT group started? I think a great time would be while the kiddos are in Sunday School and Confirmation classes. Then parents and young adults could get to know each other and maybe share a devotional during that time. Let me know if you have any ideas.

GRIEF SHARE: Pastor Alsen and John Gass are facilitating the Thursday, 13-week classes. There are about 9 enrolled right now. Three are from the community, the rest from our congregation. LIFE HAPPENS: This has been put on hold for now. Hoping once we get a few GriefShare sets finished up, that people might want to continue with the Life Happens group.

PARTNERING CHURCH: Pastor Alsen continues to meet with LCMC pastors in Montana to learn about their needs. We're hoping to be able to help LCMC churches in the smaller communities with livestream church services, Bible studies, and other classes.

We're also planning to launch the Church Doctor Ministries (CDM) Spiritual Gifts survey here at Faith. You can either fill out the survey electronically or with a printed version. We did something similar in years past. It's time for a refresher! This will be a great resource to help people find their gifts/talents so they can find meaningful volunteering in the church that they'll enjoy.

We'll also be able to use the information from the Spiritual Gifts survey with "Momentum." Some staff members, a council member, along with Pastor Alsen will begin the training for "Momentum, a network for church revitalization." The Momentum Network is an initiative of the Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT), with partnership from Church Doctor Ministries (CDM) through its Church4Today initiative. ILT brings academic depth, training, and resources to equip leaders. CDM brings decades of practical coaching, consulting, and revitalization experience. The best part is that Momentum is not a program you run and finish. It's an ongoing network of relationships, coaching, and resources that helps churches rediscover mission, renew vitality, and raise up leaders.

Let's continue to Love God. Love Others. Serve the World.

Thank you for all you do! Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Colleen Palmer, Outreach Coordinator

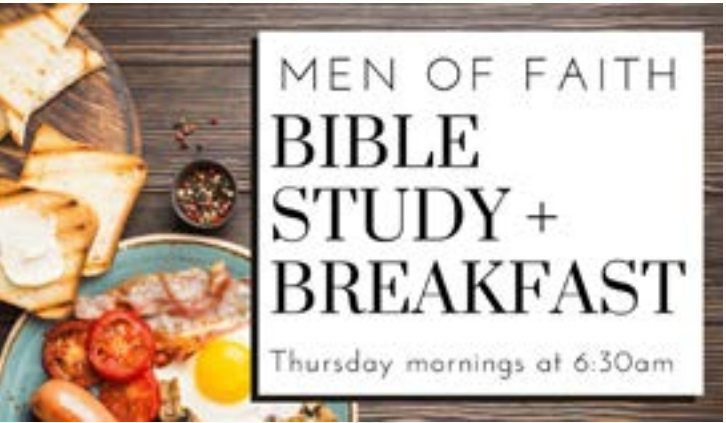


Submit your newsletter articles and upcoming events for January by December 15!

faithlutheran.gtf@gmail.com or drop them off at the front desk.

December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 6 pm Praise Team A	2 10 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm Constitutional 5:30 pm Music/Worship	3 10 am Bible Study 5:30 pm Men of Faith 6:30 pm Choir Practice	4 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 9 am Love Day Quilters 1 pm Grief Share	5 Noon Evangelism Team Meeting	6 2 pm Women's Crafting
7 8:30 am Bible Study 9:30 am Worship Offering: Life Happens 10:45 am Kids SS 11 am Confirmation	8 6 pm Praise Team A	9 10 am Staff Meeting 11:30 am Soulo Sisters 1:30 pm Constitutional 5:30 pm Executive 6 pm Personnel 7 pm Youth Ed Team	10 9 am Finance Meeting 11 am Bible Study 4 pm Property Team 5:30 pm Bell Choir 6:30 pm Choir Practice	11 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 10 am LCMC Pastors 1 pm Grief Share	12	13
14 9:30 am Worship & Kids Christmas Program Reception Following 11 am Confirmation	15 6 pm Praise Team A	16 10 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm Constitutional 5:30 pm Council Meeting	17 10 am Bible Study 5:30 pm Bell Choir 6:30 pm Choir Practice	18 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 1 pm Grief Share	19	20
21 8:30 am Bible Study 9:30 am Worship Offering: Mercy Home 10:45 am Kids SS 2 pm Women of Faith	22 6 pm Praise Team A	23 10 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm Constitutional	24 Christmas Eve 4 pm & 6 pm Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas Day Office Closed	26	27
28 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Kids SS	29 6 pm Praise Team A	30 10 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm Constitutional	31 New Year's Eve			



Dear Congregation of Faith Lutheran Church,
Thank you for the October 31st Trunk or Treat event. It was wonderful to see so many smiling faces and the hospitality you extended to the community.
Sincerely,
JoDee and Mark Black

Winter Is Here
Donations of Ice Melt
For the Side Walks
Around the Church
Are Needed and Appreciated

Dear Faith Lutheran Church Members,
We wish to express our sincere thanks for your donation of diapers and wipes for the Crisis Nursery. Please know that the Board of Directors, as well as the employees, appreciate your caring for children and families in crisis. We were so anxious to open our door and be available for calls asking for assistance. Blessings to you all,
Linda Mettam
Toby's House Crisis Nursery Board Member


I would like to thank the following who volunteered at FISH for the week of September 15-19. Mike Abbott, Adam Dahlman, Carol Turner, Jerry & Pearl Miller, Lorna Kennedy, Ron & Mary Pfeifle, Barb Wuertz, Jim & Sharon Wickens, Augie Records, Tom Fundis, Bonnie Hocavar, Carol Dawson and Sandy Clapshaw. I so appreciate your willingness to serve, thank you all. We wouldn't be able to do this ministry without you!
Help Wanted: If you missed your chance to serve, I have another opportunity for you. Faith Lutheran Church is scheduled to work FISH, December 1 - 5, 9:00-11:00am. You can see me to sign up, or I'll find you!
In His Service, Sandy Clapshaw

December Special Offerings
First Sunday of the Month
Life Happens
Third Sunday of the Month
Mercy Home

Visit our website:
www.FaithLutheranGF.com
for our up-to-date Church Calendar.

‘AND EVERY TONGUE CONFESS’

As we recite the Creed, we confess Jesus Christ crucified and risen with the church of all ages
—past, present and future.

Paul makes this striking statement in Romans 10:9-10: “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For by the heart you believed to righteousness, and by your mouth you confessed to salvation.” Paul makes it very clear to us: Christians confess. It is as simple as that. And what they confess is Jesus Christ who suffered, died and rose again for the forgiveness of sins. Christ is confession—“and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:11).

WE CONFESS IN MANY WAYS

Every day we confess what our hopes and dreams are by our words and our actions. How often have we made the statement, “I believe,” about this or that? Such a statement anticipates a “creed.” The root of our English word creed is the Latin “credo” which simply means, “I believe.”

To confess means to “make known together” or to “speak with one another.” To “confess” in this sense is to speak together, uniformly declaring with other Christians what it is that we believe. The Christian church has always had creeds—those concise statements that make known publicly what it believes.

The word “creed” underscores that I am not only intellectually aware of what a creed says, it means that I believe and accept that what it says is true. And because I believe that it is true, it shapes the way I think and act.

EARLY CREEDS

There are also those who are suspicious of creedal statements, however. Sola Scriptura—

Scripture alone—was a rallying cry of the Reformation. As a result, some have wondered what place humanly authored creeds have in a church that believes that the Bible alone is the source for all that we believe and teach.

From the earliest times, the church has had creeds. Some of these are even in the Bible. For example, more than once in Paul’s epistles the phrase “Jesus is Lord” appears (1 Cor. 12:3; Phil. 2:11), and is certainly a short creed. It confesses who Jesus is and what He means for my life.

Certain needs and challenges drove the church to commit its confession to written form. When these creeds were written, they were not seen as being on the same level as Scripture. But because their contents were based on Scripture, the doctrines they taught were believed as true and necessary for all members of the church to confess.

THE CREEDS AND THEIR CONTROVERSIES

Not only do creeds teach us what to believe, they teach us what not to believe. Early in the 4th century, a priest by the name of Arius taught that Jesus was God’s first creation and inferior to God the Father. An ecumenical council was called and held in the town of Nicea (in modern Turkey). This council produced the first version of the Nicene Creed, which, after several additions, is the creed that we confess in the church today. Like the Apostles’ Creed, the Nicene Creed is divided into 3 articles and similarly emphasizes the second, which teaches about Jesus Christ. By confessing that Jesus is “God of

God, Light of Light, very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,” this creed clearly condemns the teaching of Arius. The Nicene Creed became the means by which the confession of Christians was judged to be in harmony with the truth of the Scriptures.

A similar concern stood behind the writing of the Athanasian Creed. The creed sums up in brief and very emphatic statements the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and, in particular of the person of Christ as true God and true man in one person. Luther is said to have considered the Athanasian Creed to be the greatest production of the western church since the time of the apostles.

THE ‘ECUMENICAL CREEDS’

The Apostles’, Nicene and Athanasian creeds are called the ‘ecumenical creeds.’ That means they are generally accepted by the church throughout the world. When the Lutheran theologians and princes were challenged to confess their faith at Augsburg in 1530, they were careful to emphasize that they faithfully maintained the church’s historic confession. Why not write new creeds? When the church moves on from one situation to another, she embraces the faithful confession of those who have gone before. The creeds do not carry the same authority as Holy Scripture. Scripture alone is the sole source, rule and norm for everything that we believe, teach and confess. The creeds, however, are formed by the Scriptures. The three ecumenical creeds embody the unchanging Biblical witness in a concise and powerful way.

Women of Faith

Women of Faith are hoping to re-introduce a “Secret Sister” program. If you’re interested, the sign-up sheet is at the Connection Center. If enough ladies are interested, the participants will draw a name, hopefully in early December, and you’ll be given their address & birthday/ anniversary info. Then throughout the year you’ll “anonymously” remember your Secret Sister on special occasions with thoughtful notes, cards or small gifts.

Remember it’s the thought that counts. If you have any questions, talk to Monica Fournier 406-788-0735. I will have a Master List, in case of emergency. Have fun!



Birthday Party for Jesus!

Join us for an afternoon celebrating Jesus with a birthday party! The afternoon will include:

- Christmas Carols led by Jay Gregg and Elaine Tews
- birthday cake, punch and coffee
- devotions
- seeing your friends and making new friends

Love Day Quilters News

2025 is almost in the rearview mirror so we will be very busy this month displaying quilts on the pews so they can be blessed on December 7th and distributed to local charities to reach clients in time for Christmas. We should have time to tie a couple of quilts, too. Thank you Dixie, for the delicious pumpkin bread and fresh fruit in November. Come join the fun!- Augie Records



December Anniversaries

- 20: Sheldon & Marilyn Ivers
- 27: Jim & Bamma Taylor
- 28: Stew & Delores Schwartz
Steve & Christy Sem
- 31: Kurt & Ronda Wiggers

December Birthdays

- 1: Marilyn Rubino
Jeanie Thomas
- 2: Greg Schwandt
- 4: Shantelle Hutchinson
Logan Severson
- 5: Brandon Severson
Scott Smith
- 6: Sharon Cope
Marilyn Olson
Dustin Severson
- 9: Dana Wallace
- 10: Sean Hoven
- 11: John Gibney
John Mazur
- 12: Grace Stoop
- 13: Theresa Dittler
- 14: Kay Craig
- 17: Colton Schraner
- 19: Judy Stokes
- 21: Bill Holliday
- 22: Diana Holliday
- 23: Olivia Hoven
- 26: Scott Radford
Elodie Stubbs
- 27: Elizabeth Schroeder
- 28: Sally Morss
Delores Schwartz
- 29: Sheldon Ivers

Merry
Christmas
Faith Family!



CHRISTMAS
EVE
SERVICES:
4 & 6 PM

FOR US A
SAVIOR IS BORN
Luke 2:11

1300
Ferguson
Drive
FaithLutheranGF.com

Fully Staffed
Nursery at
4:00 PM Service

IN NEED OF PRAYER?

If you're in need of prayer, please contact the church office. We can add you or your family members to our prayer chain and/or weekly prayer list.

Share Christmas Joy This December
Bring Christmas Goodies to
Fellowship Time
after Sunday Worship Services



Note: If you're not listed on the birthday list, please call the office at 406-454-1309 or email us: FaithLutheran.gtf@gmail.com. We love wishing all our congregational members a very happy day! So, please, make sure your name and correct date are on the list!

A Word From Our Music Director

Hey Faith Lutheran! I write to you from the air. I spent this weekend in Chicago for some early rehearsals for a project happening later this year. In 2023, Wheaton College kicked off 'The Messiah Project', a reimagining, staging, and storytelling of Handel's sacred oratorio, "Messiah." The project was not only life changing to me, but has brought people closer to Christ in many different ways. The project is piquing the interest of many around the country, and through faith that this is God's will, many alumni are joining the college for another awakening of the project. In 2023/2024, I was struck by how clearly the humanity of Jesus is portrayed and I wanted to share the scriptures on which the project is based.

He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. (Isaiah 53:3)

He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off His hair: He hid not His face from shame and spitting. (Isaiah 50:6)

Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows! He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him. And with His stripes, we are healed. (Isaiah 53:4-5)

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way. And the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:6)

All they that see Him laugh Him to scorn; they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying: "He trusted in God that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him, if He delight in Him." (Psalm 22:7-8)

Thy rebuke hath broken His heart: He is full of heaviness. He looked for some to have pity on Him, but there was no man, neither found He any to comfort him. (Psalm 69:20)

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow. (Lamentations 1:12)

He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgressions of Thy people was He stricken. (Isaiah 53:8)

We, the very ones who despised, rejected, shamed, spit upon, struck, rebuked, scorned, mocked, bruised, wounded, chastised, smote, and crucified Jesus, are the ones He died to save. He is acquainted with our grief, our sorrow, our rejection. Jesus is not just some man that lived thousands of years ago, but a God who lives within us now. Whatever you are going through, whatever struggles, whatever weight you are feeling. Jesus says to you, "Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest." This is not a command, this is an invitation with open arms.

DECEMBER SERVICE GROUP

As a way of serving each other, Faith Lutheran is refreshing our monthly Service Groups. The following are being asked to be available in the month of December.

We are asking the Service Groups to help with set up and clean up for Sunday Fellowships. The treats are provided by the church. You are welcome to bring in treats to share as well.

If a need arises for a funeral or wedding we will call you from the church office.

Thank you to each of you for giving your time and talents to help at Faith Lutheran.

- Gene Bern
- Karyl Viste
- Jim and Sharon Wickens
- Kurt and Ronda Wiggers
- Sara Wilson
- Barb Wuertz



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CHURCH STAFF

Senior Pastor:	Pastor Alsen Wenzel
Secretary/Office Manager:	Cindy Fowell
Bookkeeper:	
Facilities Manager:	Jim Brown
Outreach Coordinator:	Colleen Palmer
Youth and Family Coordinator	Annette Hocker
IT Manager:	John Plank

OFFICE HOURS:

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday

Our monthly calendar is on our website!

Phone: (406) 454-1309

Faithlutheran.gtf@gmail.com

www.faithlutherangf.com

CURRENT COUNCIL MEMBERS

President - Fred Burow	
Secretary - Mellissa Severson-Hampton	
Bob Stubbs	Christy Sem
Jim Brown	Tammie Klinker-Mayes
Rex Derr	Bamma Taylor
Bob Palmer	Deb Schwandt
Sean Hoven	Colleen Palmer
John Gass	



THIS IS THE JOURNEY OF FAITH.

