



FAITH ALIVE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, LCMC

From Pastor's Heart

“If Christ Has Not Been Raised”

Please read 1 Corinthians 15:1-26!

Alleluia! Jesus Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Yes, he is risen indeed! Risen from the dead! Risen bodily. And everything depends on this. Our faith, our forgiveness, our future. Our eternal future. The future of our loved ones who have died in the Lord. Everything hinges on this great and glorious fact: that Christ has indeed risen from the dead.

But what if Christ has not risen from the dead? What then? What would be the consequences? You know, not everyone believes that Christ has risen from the dead. And for us who do believe, what if our faith is misplaced? What if it never really happened? What if this is all a big made-up story? Or what if we're just misunderstanding the idea of Christ "rising from the dead"? Maybe it just means that he kind of rose spiritually, but not bodily? Like, his memory lives on, the great moral example that he set, the nice teachings that he set forth about loving one another, and so on. But not that he rose bodily from the dead! Surely that is too much! Let's not go that far! You know, that is what a lot of people think about Jesus. Good moral teacher, fine example, died unjustly, but that was it. His body must be somewhere. His followers must have taken it and hidden it and made up this story about Jesus rising from the dead. For surely there is no such thing as a real, physical resurrection of the dead!

But this way of thinking is nothing new. It was around also way back

in the first century. This idea had even infiltrated the early Christian church, that there's no such thing as a bodily resurrection of the dead. It apparently was the thinking of some people in the church in Corinth, because the apostle Paul takes on this notion and contemplates the consequences of it, if that were indeed true.

What "if Christ has not been raised?" It's a hypothetical question that Paul is setting forth, for the truth of the matter is quite the opposite. But Paul wants the Corinthians, and us, to consider just what would follow if it were true that Christ has not been raised from the dead.

Now, Paul starts from the other way around. What if there were no resurrection of the dead in store for the Christians who have died? Well, if that's the case, that there is no such thing as a bodily resurrection, then it follows that Christ himself has not risen, and if that in turn is true, then everything falls apart. The whole Christian message becomes meaningless and false, if Christ has not been raised.

So, what is Paul up to? He says in verse 12, "Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?" You see, Paul had proclaimed very clearly that Jesus Christ has been raised bodily. And he reminds the Corinthians of his previous preaching to them in verses 1-8. What Paul is saying is that the physical death and the physical resurrection of Christ is of the first importance to the Christian gospel because it is vital

and essential and absolutely central to everything we believe and hope for. It is the cornerstone of our salvation.

So if this is what Paul had preached to the Corinthians, how can some of them now say that there is no such thing as the resurrection of the dead? Now they may not have been saying this about Christ himself. But they were saying it about the Christians from their church who died. They thought they would not be raised bodily, that a physical resurrection was impossible. But if you believe that, Paul is saying, then you are subverting the very gospel he preached. Because to be consistent, you then also have to say that Christ himself was not raised, and if you do that, then you are undermining the entire Christian message. Do you understand what I am saying?

You see my friends these two things hang together. The bodily resurrection of Christians, which will happen on the day when Christ returns, and the bodily resurrection of Christ himself, which happened on the first Easter Day. The two go together and are inseparably linked. You can read that in verses 13-16!

Then Paul goes on in verses 17-19 to say that if Christ has not been raised, then our faith is in vain. It's empty, it's futile. What's the point? For in that case, not only would there be no hope for us after death, we would not even have forgiveness for our sins right now. It would mean that Jesus was just a man who died unfairly, but that's all. Nothing for us. It would mean that God did not accept his

death as the sacrifice for sin, for our sins. Because sin produces death, and if Christ has not been raised from the dead, then sin has not been dealt with. And therefore we are still stuck in our sins, and God is against us. Which means that the whole gospel falls apart.

Now if Christ has not been raised, then those Christians who have died, there's nothing for them, either. They have perished, died eternally. End of story. Pretty hopeless. And what a joke, what fools, we Christians are shown to be! We above all men are most to be pitied. Why are we putting up with all the misery, persecutions and other things that Christians have to endure, if all we are doing is having a faith that doesn't last, that is not powerful enough to overcome the grave? What a weak serving of thin water-downed oatmeal we have been fed! This life is full of sorrow and tears, and if a resurrectionless Christianity is all we have, what a pitiful bunch we are! If all we're having is our

best life now, a life that, no matter how successful and prosperous we are, is still full of tears and loss and ends in death, if all we have is our best life now, well, there's not much to look forward to then, is there?

But the good news is, we are not having our best life now! Our best life is still to come! Why? Because Jesus Christ has indeed been raised from the dead! As Paul tells us: "But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." It's a fact! And it means that this life is not all there is! The best is yet to come! Here is hope we can have for our friends and loved ones who have died in the Lord. We will be raised, they will be raised, imperishable, at Christ's return. The trumpet will sound, and we will be changed, in the twinkling of an eye. Christ will call forth our dead bodies from the grave, just like he called forth Lazarus, just like Christ himself rose from

the dead.

What a prospect that will be! No more sorrow, no more sickness, no more death! Only life and gladness stretching out before us! The whole company of the saints, all who have trusted in God's promise of salvation through all the centuries, all of us gathered together around our Savior, to enjoy life as it was meant to be, at peace with God and in fellowship with one another. That will be our best life, and it will last forever! Take hope in this, dear friends! Take your stand on this, for it is the rock-solid foundation of our faith. Rejoice in the promise of the resurrection, your resurrection, tied inseparably to the resurrection of Christ our Savior. "If Christ has not been raised..." But wait! "In fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." Alleluia! Jesus Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Pastor Alsen

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

A Word From Our Outreach Community Coordinator

Rejoice! Christ Is Risen!

Warmest greetings to everyone joining us Easter Sunday as we celebrate the glorious Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

As we remember and rejoice in the victory over death, the promise of eternal life, and the boundless love that Christ has shown us. We hope the message of Easter fills your heart with peace, hope, and renewed faith.

A Day of Joy and Connection

Easter is a time for family, friends, and community. We are delighted

to welcome you all, whether you are a regular member of our congregation, a returning friend, or a first-time visitor. Please take this opportunity to connect with those around you and share in the joy of this special day.

We encourage you to invite your loved ones to experience the warmth and fellowship of our Faith Family. Introduce yourself to someone new, rekindle old friendships, and let the spirit of Easter bring us closer together.

Easter is more than just a celebration; it's a chance to build

lasting relationships, to support one another in faith, and to create a welcoming space for all who seek God's love. We believe that through these connections, we can strengthen our community and share the Good News with the world.

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." - Luke 19:10

Your Sister in Christ,

Colleen Palmer
Community Outreach Coordinator

Holy Week Services
Maundy Thursday, April 2
Good Friday, April 3
at 7 pm

Everyone is welcome.



Celebrate Holy Week with Us!

happy
Easter

Sunrise Service: 6:00 AM

Breakfast: 7:15-8:45 AM

Festival Service: 9:30 AM

Join Us!



Amusing Music “Tidbits” From Elaine ☺

HAPPY EASTER!

It's hard to believe that we're already starting April!

I'm going to take you all back to Christmas time for my next “organ story”. At the church I was an organist at, the organ (not a pipe organ) was a pretty old one. It had “issues” that comes with “age”! ☺ The congregation didn't know the issues it really had, because I over-compensated for it. The volume control pedal is where my right foot was most of the time...I would push it forward/backward depending on how loud/soft I wanted the organ to sound. The volume pedal used a “light censor” to help control the volume whenever my foot would move it. However – the censor was feeling its age and not following the rules! It would get loud/soft all on its own. I was able to adjust as necessary to accommodate the changes so it wasn't as obvious to the general public's ear.

I discussed the issue at length with the pastor (who also knew what I was doing and could actually hear it when it wanted to go astray). We tried to convince the church council we needed a new organ. They said they never “heard

the problem”, therefore decided it really wasn't necessary to consider!

So the pastor, bless him for taking such a chance, suggested that I not accommodate the volume coverup and let the organ “do its thing” the next time I played. Well, the next time I played just happened to be Christmas Eve! I asked the pastor if I should wait until Sunday morning service but he said no and to try it Christmas Eve...so I did!

Now I'm going to ask you to use your imagination with the following lyrics to Silent Night! Sing it in your head, and where I have **bolder print**–increase/decrease your “volume” accordingly. (Are you ready for the hymn version of a roller coaster?)

“SiIIIIIIIIIIlent niIIIIIIght.
HoOOOOOOly niIIIIIIgt.
ALLLLLLLL IIIIISSSS calm, all
is brIIIIIIght. ROUUUUUUnd
Yon ViRRRRRRRRRgin....”

I think you get the idea! After the service was over, there were several people of the congregation and the council who came up and asked “why I did that?” I said “I didn't! It was the organ!” The pastor was right beside me and concurred that it was indeed the

organ!

Fast forward—they immediately organized a fundraiser to purchase a new digital organ. It arrived soon after and we began playing on it. Lots of wonderful sounds were created because of it being digitally engineered.

God indeed is good and also has a wonderful sense of humor. I'm sure He was laughing at the organ “misbehaving!”

Now to really put God's humor into focus—I was only able to play on it for about six months because I was hired to teach in Great Falls! This turned out to be awesome because I was hired also by you Faith Lutheran, to play the pipe organ!

So I close this story with a wonderful forgiving God, a fantastic time with you all and the pipe organ, and now in a beautiful church building with an intelligent piano that can create the organ sounds. The grand piano will always be my instrument...to praise our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

God bless you all my dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

Musically in Christ,
Elaine †

Alleluia He Is Risen! He Is Risen Indeed.



Youth and Family/Education Team April News Article

April is a beautiful reminder that God makes all things new. Just as flowers bloom after a long winter, our hearts can grow when we spend time with Him. This month, try to plant “kindness seeds” each day by saying something to encourage others, help a friend, and share a smile with those around you. Take time to notice God’s creation, looking for signs of spring and thanking Him for His handiwork. And don’t forget to pray for growth, asking Him to fill your heart with more love, joy, and peace. Let this be a season of renewal, both inside and out.

Youth and Family Bowling that was held on March 15th was a lot of fun. Photos of the youth and families are included in this newsletter for your enjoyment.

Thank you to everyone who donated candy, Christian trinkets, and helped fill thousands of eggs for the **Easter Egg Hunt**. We also appreciate all the volunteers who made the event

such a success. Photos from the Easter Egg Hunt will be featured in the May newsletter.

Vacation Bible School 2026 – Rainforest Falls: Exploring the Nature of God. Join us for an exciting week of faith and fun at Faith’s VBS, happening June 22–26 from 5:30–8:30 pm! VBS is open to children ages 3 (preschool) through those entering 6th grade. Each evening includes engaging activities, meaningful lessons, and dinner will be provided. Students in 7th grade and up are invited to participate as crew leaders and assistants, making this a great opportunity to serve and grow. We are also seeking volunteers—there are many ways to get involved! Please prayerfully consider being part of this special week. If you’re interested or would like more information, contact me—I’d love to help you find a place to serve!

We’re excited to share what’s coming up in April! Our family

movie for the month will be **King of Kings**, with the date to be announced soon—stay tuned for details. We’re also planning a special family fun event, **“April Showers / May Flowers,”** tentatively scheduled for April 25th. More information will be coming soon, so be sure to keep an eye out! We look forward to enjoying these events together!

Volunteers are always welcome to support our youth and family ministries! If you’re interested in helping with Sunday School, Confirmation, High School Youth, or family events, we would love to have you join us. Please contact me at (406) 590-1061 or reach out to the church office for more information.

The Education Team will meet on Tuesday, April 7th, at 7:00 pm. All are welcome to attend.

God bless,

Annette Hocker,
Youth & Family Coordinator



April 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 10 am Bible Study 6 pm Men of Faith FISH	2 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 1 pm Grief Share 7 pm Maundy Service	3 Noon Evangelism Team Meeting 7 pm Good Friday Service	4
5 6 am Sunrise Service 7:15 am Easter Breakfast 9:30 am Worship Offering: Grace Home	6 Office Closed 6 pm Praise Team	7 10 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm Constitutional 5:30 pm Music/Worship	8 9 am Finance Meeting 11 am Bible Study 4 pm Property Team 5:30 pm Bell Choir 6:30 pm Choir Practice	9 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 9 am Love Day Quilters 10 am LCMC Pastors 1 pm Grief Share	10	11 2 pm Women's Crafting
12 8:30 am Bible Study 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Kids SS 11 am Confirmation 11 am Young Adult Connect	13 6 pm Praise Team	14 10 am Staff Meeting 11:30 am Soulo Sisters 1:30 pm Constitutional 6 pm Personnel 7 pm Youth Ed Team	15 10 am Bible Study 5:30 Bell Choir 6:30 pm Choir Practice	16 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 1 pm Grief Share	17	18
19 8:30 am Bible Study 9:30 am Worship Offering: Receiving Home 10:45 am Kids SS 11 am Confirmation 4 pm Women's Crafting	20 6 pm Praise Team	21 10 am Staff Meeting 3 pm Constitutional 5:30 pm Council Meeting	22 10 am Bible Study 5:30 pm Bell Choir 6:30 pm Choir Practice	23 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 1 pm Grief Share	24	25 2 pm April Showers/ May Flowers Family Event
26 8:30 am Bible Study 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Kids SS 11 am Confirmation	27 6 pm Praise Team	28 10 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm Constitutional	29 10 am Bible Study 5:30 pm Bell Choir 6:30 pm Choir Practice	30 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 1 pm Grief Share		



Who Are the Soulo Sisters?
 If you are widowed or single please join us for Soulo Sisters. We meet for lunch the second Tuesday of the month at various eateries. PLEASE JOIN US!

Love Day Quilters News

Because Easter week is usually a busy and family-centered time for everyone, we will be quilting on the second Thursday in April. This way we can focus our hearts on Jesus during final days of Lent and through our joyous Easter celebration.

Thank you, Barb Wertz, for last month's yummy treats, especially the Mint and Chocolate-frosted Brownies. If you would like to help tie and pin quilts with us, please come! - Augie Records



SPRING Women's Crafting

Saturday, April 11th at 2 pm
 Sunday, April 19th at 4 pm

Fellowship, Laughter, Devotions, & Prayer

Bring your own craft or use supplies provided by the group.

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.

FATHER LEBLANC HOMEBOUNDED COMMUNION

PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE IF YOU, A FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE COMMUNION AND AREN'T ABLE TO ATTEND CHURCH. WE HAVE CHURCH MEMBERS WHO ARE HAPPY TO BRING YOU COMMUNION AND PRAY WITH YOU. CALL (408) 454-1309.



April Anniversaries

- 8: Ron & Diane Steffens
- 21: Roy & Lynn Dittler
- 27: Joel & Dixie Demko
- 29: Sean & Andrea Hoven

April Birthdays

- 1: Holly Imus
Andrea Mikulecky
- 2: Patricia Sletten
- 3: Haven Blevins
- 4: Robert Larance
- 5: Steve Sem
- 7: Ezekiel Jackson
Eden Meyer
- 10: Tom Fundis
- 12: Leroy Ahlers
Tim Webb
- 13: Stewie Jackson
Diane Lowry
- 15: Deb Ammondson
- 16: Barbara Holden
Harper Kieffer
- 17: Keith Bortnem
- 18: Chance Stone
- 19: Carl Dunn
April Hall
- 20: Carol Dawson
- 22: Tom Gruss
- 24: Gordon Matson
- 27: Judy Stubbs
- 28: Tara Rosipal
- 29: Amy Dorr
- 30: Susan Weber Mora



A huge thank you to **Karen Schaefer with Sign Gypsies** for the beautiful signage for our Easter Egg Hunt. Your work was such a blessing and truly helped make the event even more memorable. We are so grateful for your support!

News From FISH

Thanks to the members of your congregation who supported FISH by attending the Loaves & Fishes dinner March 20th. Thank you to those who contributed silent auction items.

Special thanks to all the volunteers, especially the FISH board members, who worked setting up the silent auction tables, picking bones, cooking the salmon, working in the kitchen, serving the food on the line and at the dessert table, pouring coffee, and helping clean up at the end. We could not do the dinner without all your support.

Thank you again and God bless you for helping to raise funds to feed the hungry in our area!

FISH Board of Directors

(Pictures below are from the Loaves & Fishes Dinner.)

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!



Dear Faith Lutheran Church,
Thank you for supporting the Family Promise of Great Falls with your recent gift of \$405.

Because of generous donors like you, we are able to assist over 200 families every year who are going through a rough patch in their lives. The funds that we raise directly support the work that we do within our community.

Sincerely,
Greg Grosenick

Dear Faith Lutheran Church,
Thank you for the generous \$765 donation made in December 2025 to our Meals on Wheels Program. As I review the many wonderful donations provided to our Meals on Wheels Program over the past year, I am awestruck and grateful for the many wonderful businesses and community members who make helping our vulnerable seniors easier. Kimberliegh L. Thiel Schaaf



Submit your newsletter articles and upcoming events for May by April 15!

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

April Special Offerings

First Sunday of the Month

Grace Home

Third Sunday of the Month

Children's Receiving Home



Easter Sunday, April 5th

- **Serving Communion**
- **Ushers**
- **Set up for Breakfast**
- **Serving Breakfast**
- **Cleaning up after Breakfast**



Sign Up at Connection Center or call church office

APRIL SERVICE GROUP

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

We are also 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.

- Susan Adams
- Carl and Crystal Dunn
- Pat and Monica Fournier
- Ron and Diane Steffens
- Barb Wuertz



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CHURCH STAFF

Senior Pastor:
Secretary/Office Manager:
Bookkeeper:
Custodian:
IT Manager:
Outreach Coordinator:
Youth & Family Coordinator:
Music Director:

Pastor Alsen Wenzel
Cindy Fowell
Nicole LaMere
Kristina Cochran
John Plank
Colleen Palmer
Annette Hocker
Jay Gregg

CURRENT COUNCIL MEMBERS

President - Fred Burow
Vice President - Tammie Klinker-Mayes
Secretary - Mellissa Severson-Hampton
Jim Brown Bob Stubbs
Fay Stokes Tom Gruss
Rex Derr Adam Dahlman
Crystal Dunn Deb Schwandt
Carl Dunn John Gass

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



THIS IS THE JOURNEY OF FAITH

