



FAITH ALIVE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, LCMC

From Pastor's Heart

Here we are at the end of February 2026 and almost half-way through Lent, can you believe it! By the time you are reading this we will be in the second week of Lent going into the third. My prayer is that our Midweek Lenten series on the "The Revelation for Lent" has been meaningful for you, as well as our weekend worship.

In March we will have four Wednesday services with our Soup Suppers before. And please don't forget our Holy Week services begin with Palm/Passion Sunday on March 29. We continue our solemn observance of Holy Week on Maundy Thursday (April 2nd at 7 pm) with Holy Communion and the Stripping of the Altar, and our Good Friday service (April 3rd at 7 pm). This year we will be doing something a little different at our Good Friday service than we did last year. I am not going to tell you what we will be doing, because I do not want to take away from the intention of the service. I will talk about Easter towards the end of this article.

Now, I would like to switch gears and talk about something that is vitally important. A young friend once asked me what the difference was between all the different Christian churches. It's a question many who are unfamiliar with church ask, but it is very difficult to answer easily. I said that because there are Christian churches that are all centered in Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, even that is not always true. I said there are differences in teachings of the church (known as doctrine) and practice between different groups, as well as the externals of size, friendliness, and

so forth. For those more familiar with theology the differences are serious, and need to be carefully considered. However, for our witness to the community, in general, as to my young friend, the Christian church is confusing and with multiple denominations can be very destructive. Now, this will not change until our Lord returns, but we need to find more ways to speak the truth of the Gospel to those beyond our church doors, which is one reason we have joined with the Momentum Network to help us with this endeavor. As a reminder, Jesus left us with two great commandments: 1) Love God above all else, and 2) Love our neighbor as ourselves. If we, in the church, grow in living these two commandments in all the various aspects of our life, the community will see something different in us and therefore desire to know more about it. For example, Jesus washed dirty feet and so are we called to do that as well!

Now in today's world, there are various and many ways that the Good News of Jesus is being shared with people. There is radio, television, internet, print, mailings, billboards, church signs, and even prayers printed on fast food wrappers. All of these are inviting people to know more about Jesus, which makes it hard for us to imagine that there is anybody who is still ignorant of Jesus and all He has done to forgive and save us. Yes, it's hard to imagine, but the truth is there are many millions out there who have not heard or heeded the Holy Spirit's calling. It makes little difference if they have not heard or heeded, either way they

are missing God's gracious call to salvation and eternal life.

Isaiah 52:7a says: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news." Therefore, how beautiful is that person who loves others enough to find and share a personal invitation to meet the Savior. To invite others to meet the Savior is a trust that God has given us because he knows, not everybody has met or believes in his Son, the Savior.

A great way to invite others to meet the Savior is with our Easter observances, which begins with a Sunrise Celebration Service (April 5 at 6:00 am); followed by our Easter Breakfast at 7:15 am; and then our Easter Celebration Service at 9:30 am. Seeing that Easter is the high point in the Church year, let us make this the biggest celebration for Faith Lutheran, which is then a great reason to invite people to meet their Savior. For we have the best reason to celebrate because Jesus, our brother and Savior, has risen from the grave and has defeated the devil and death for us. Therefore, we need not fear them at all, so let us come together and sing glorious praises to our Lord and Savior. May God bless us as we serve God and serve one another! Let us pray: Lord, thank You for the Gift of Jesus who gives us the gift of eternal life. We ask that you would give us beautiful-feet opportunities, and inspire us to act on them and to invite others to meet their Savior. In Jesus' Name I pray. Amen.

Pastor Alsen

News from Education Team/Youth & Family March 2026

It is the season of Lent. As we enter this sacred season, we are reminded that this is not just a personal journey - it's a family journey. Lent invites us to slow down, reflect, and draw closer to God and to one another. I pray that you all create moments of togetherness with family and friends while choosing kindness over anger, generosity over selfishness, and prayer over distraction.

This season, let's walk hand in hand—young and old—seeking renewal in our hearts and homes. May our prayers be sincere, our sacrifices meaningful, and our love for one another a reflection of Christ's love for us.

Youth and Family Bowling is on Sunday, March 15th, from 2 pm–4 pm, and is for youth in 5th grade and up. Parents are welcome to join in the fun. This free event will be held at Little's Lanes, 517 1st Avenue North.

The March Family Movie Matinee is on Saturday, March 21st, from 3 pm – 5 pm. We will be showing ***I Can Only Imagine***. Please join us for the movie, fun, and fellowship. There will be popcorn, snacks, and soda. All are

welcome to come.

Our annual Easter Egg Hunt is right around the corner! The hunt will take place on Saturday, March 28th at 11 am and is open to children ages 12 and under. This event will happen rain, shine, or snow. We are currently collecting donations of small, wrapped candy and Christian trinkets to fill the eggs. Donations may be dropped off at the church. Volunteers are also welcome to help stuff eggs during the Wednesday Lenten soup suppers. Once again, we will have an Easter Bunny photo opportunity for the children during the event. Families may also pre-register for this year's Vacation Bible School (VBS) at the hunt. Please invite any children you know to join us for this fun community event!

Vacation Bible School 2026 – Rainforest Falls: Exploring the Nature of God. Faith's VBS will be held June 22–26, from 5–8 pm, for children in preschool (3 years) to entering 6th grade. Dinner will be served each evening. Youth 7th grade and up can also attend VBS as crew leaders and assistants. Volunteers are always needed, and there are many ways to help!

Please prayerfully consider volunteering. If you're interested or would like more information, contact me—I would love to share how you can help.

Holy Family Time, this free online resource for families produced by Sola Publishing, would be a great resource for your family for Lent. Develop the habit of praying together, reading Scripture, and talking about faith at home. It is simple and accessible to use, even with busy schedules. Visit www.holyfamilytime.com.

The Holy Family Time devotional is always featured on the homepage.

Volunteers are always needed to support our youth and family ministries! If you are interested in helping with Sunday School, Confirmation, High School Youth, or family events, please contact Annette Hocker at (406) 590-1061 or reach out to the church office. We would love to have you join us. The Education Team will meet on Tuesday, March 10th, at 7 pm. All are welcome to attend.

Wishing you a blessed and joy-filled Lent,

Annette Hocker,
Youth & Family Coordinator



Thank you to Faith Lutheran youth group for the plate of "goodies" for the holidays! They were yummy. Marie Chenoweth



Thank you so much for purchasing my cookies in support of Toby's House. I really appreciate the support. God Bless. April Hall

FAITH LUTHERAN

FREE!

YOUTH BOWLING NIGHT



**MARCH 15
2:00-4:00 PM**

LITTLE'S LANES
517 1ST AVE NORTH
FaithLutheranGF.com (406) 454-1309

RSVP: (5th Grade and up)
parents are welcome
to join the fun!

March Special Offerings

First Sunday of the Month
World Vision

Third Sunday of the Month
Institute of Lutheran Theology

Dear Friends,

Your recent gift of \$100 to The Salvation Army was a true blessing.

Thank you for recognizing the need in your community. Every day, even people who once donated to The Salvation Army are now turning to us for help. Your kind donations make it possible to offer food, shelter, spiritual assistance, and more to local families, and all of our neighbors who are struggling. With your support, we show them better days ahead. You help change their lives.

Sincerely,
Majors Michael and Nancy Halverson



We would like to thank the following volunteers who worked FISH for the week of January 20-23. Carol Dawson, Mike Abbott, Fay and Judy Stokes, Barb Wuertz, Jim and Sharon Wickens, Sandy Clapshaw, Russ and Cheryl Klette, and Mary Pfeifle. Due to the holiday that week, we only volunteered four days. We served 20 families consisting of 28 adults and 26 children. We distributed 1,515 pounds of food. We at Faith Lutheran are very blessed by your willingness to serve in this ministry.

Thank you all!
Ron Pfeifle and Sandy Matthews, Co-Chairs.

The next opportunity to serve at FISH is March 30 - April 2. (April 3 is a holiday.)

FAITH LUTHERAN

FREE!

FAMILY MOVIE MATINEE



**MARCH 21
3:00-5:00 PM**

Join us for a movie, fun and fellowship. We'll be serving snacks & soda.

1300 FERGUSON DRIVE
GREAT FALLS, MT 59404
FaithLutheranGF.com (406) 454-1309

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



Men of Faith

**MONTHLY MEETING ON
MARCH 4 AT 4:30 PM**



**MEN OF FAITH
BIBLE
STUDY +
BREAKFAST**

Thursday mornings at 6:30am

'ON THE NIGHT IN WHICH HE WAS BETRAYED'

The communion liturgy allows us to take part in the story of the salvation Jesus won

If only I could have been there. If only I could have seen Jesus' miracles, His triumphal entry, His death on the cross. Then it would all seem so much more real to me!" Have you ever felt like that? Many people have! Maybe that's why movies and plays about Jesus are so popular with Christians, even though only the Bible tells the story of Jesus' life without error. Yet, every time we take part in the liturgy of the Lord's Supper, we actually take part in the inerrant story of the salvation Jesus won for us! Think about it. The pastor has prayed, and we have silently prayed with him, that it is "truly good, right and salutary" that we should give thanks to God. We thank Him especially for whatever the seasonal focus is—Jesus' birth, death or resurrection, or the coming of the Holy Spirit. And then what happens? We hear these words: "Therefore, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we laud (praise) and magnify Your name, evermore praising You and saying, 'Holy, holy, holy...'"

JESUS SPEAKS

Then we hear the voice of our Lord Himself, on the night in which He was betrayed, saying, "Take, eat; this is my body," and "Drink of it all of you; this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." In the Sacrament, Christ's body and blood are truly present in, with and under the bread and wine.

How can that be? The Formula of Concord, one of our Lutheran Confessions, gives the Biblical answer: "No man's word or work, be it the merit or the speaking of the minister, be it the eating and drinking or the faith of the communicants, can effect the

true presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Supper. This is to be ascribed only to the almighty power of God and the Word, institution and ordinance of our Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus' word does what it says.

LISTENING TO HIM

Faith hears what Jesus has to say. Jesus says, "Take, eat," and, "Take, drink." In faith, that is what we do. We do not presume to use the body and blood of Jesus for any other purpose. We eat it and drink it for the forgiveness of sins, as our Lord says to do. Jesus says His body and blood are "for you," that is, "in your behalf." This is sacrificial language. In Holy Communion, we receive the body and blood that were sacrificed for us.

We must be careful here. We absolutely do not believe that Holy Communion is a repetition of the sacrifice of Christ. Rather, it is a distribution of the benefits of the sacrifice that was made almost 2,000 years ago on the cross, once and for all, for the forgiveness of sins. On our knees, we simply receive the last will and testament of Him who died for us.

Finally, Jesus says, "Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." How often? This, He does not say. We do know that the earliest Christians celebrated Holy Communion at least weekly. We simply assume the same thing.

THE PEACE OF THE LORD

The Crucified One, whose body and blood we receive, is also truly risen from the dead. Again using the mouth of a mortal pastor, Jesus speaks to us as He did to His chosen disciples on that first Easter evening. His

words are words of peace, and those words bestow the peace that they name.

The words are "The peace of the Lord be with you," not "May the peace of the Lord be with you." This is no mere wish. Our Lord truly gives us peace—the peace that passes all understanding — the peace of being reconciled with God. As together we received the peace of the Lord, we rejoice to find that we have also been put at peace with one another.

OUR PERSONAL EASTER

As Christ comes to be among us, we begin by singing what was sung on Palm Sunday. We pray the prayer our Lord gave us. Then we hear His Maundy Thursday words about His Good-Friday-crucified body and His Good-Friday-shed blood. We eat and drink these for the forgiveness of our sins.

So we receive also the promise that death, the great consequence of our now-forgiven sin, will be undone for us as well. We participate in Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday as often as we eat that bread and drink that cup! Where there is forgiveness of sins there is also life and salvation. Our spiritually once-dead souls have now received the resurrection peace of the Lord. How then shall we not also look forward, with all boldness and confidence, to our great personal participation in Easter—the resurrection of our bodies and the reception of the life of the world to come?



Love Day Quilters
 Thursday, March 5th,
 at 9am



SOULO SISTERS

 March 10th at 11:30
 at El Comedor



**Women of Faith
 Spring Luncheon**
 Saturday, March 21st
 Noon - 2pm
 Baked Potato Bar and Dessert provided.
 Special Speaker, Devotions, Fellowship
 Sign up at Connection Center.



Women's Crafting
 Saturday, March 14th at 2 pm
 Sunday, March 29th at 4 pm
 Fellowship, Laughter, Devotions, & Prayer
 Bring your own craft
 or use supplies provided by the group.

Love Day Quilters News

Spring is almost here; I can hardly wait. Of course we do live in Montana and winter hasn't really arrived yet so be prepared for anything. Thank you, Jeanie Thomas and Deb Schwandt, for the delicious treats in February. We put five quilts in the attic that day. We'd love to have you join us! - Augie Records



**Daylight Savings
 Begins on
 Sunday, March 8
 Set your clock
 ahead one hour.**



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

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



Holy Week Services
Maundy Thursday, April 2
Good Friday, April 3
 at 7 pm
Everyone is welcome.



happy
Easter
 Sunrise Service: 6:00 AM
 Breakfast: 7:15-9:00 AM
 Festival Service: 9:30 AM
Join Us!

March Anniversaries

- 1: Craig & Jami Johnson
- 12: Tom & Galia Fundis
- 18: Mike & Jan Abbott
- 25: Scott & Mellissa Hampton

March Birthdays

- 3: Donna Reum
Bamma Taylor
- 5: Pastor Jeff Stoopes
- 7: Wayne "Bubba" Wilson
- 13: Fred Burow
- 14: Sharon Frye
- 16: Jim Lowry
- 17: Susan Stoopes
Kurt Wiggers
- 18: Kari Larance
Bob Palmer
- 20: Lawrence Hoven
Barb Wuertz
- 23: Cameron Hering
- 25: Cathy Graham
- 27: Marge Kline
Leona Wenaas
- 29: Mildred Hensley
- 30: Jay Gregg



A Note From Our Music Director

Hey Faith,

Join the choir and two narrators in church on March 22nd as we prepare our hearts in a time of both celebration and mourning as the Easter season approaches. If you would like to share your spiritual gifts with the congregation, please reach out to me at 719-644-5122 or jaygregg2013@gmail.com or connect with me in person.

As Wednesday services progress, choir will continue to meet on Wednesdays at 5 pm, before the soup supper. Post Wednesday services, we will return to our regularly scheduled time of 6:30 pm on Wednesdays. Bell choir meets as its members are available. We have several praise teams on rotation, there is the possibility of adding a third team to the mix. If you are interested in this idea, please reach out to me in the same manner as previously mentioned.

Thank you and happy March, 😊

Jay Henry Gregg



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!

FISH News

FISH has scheduled its annual fundraiser, Loaves and Fishes, for March 20th. This is a salmon dinner (free will offering) and a silent auction.

Come and enjoy dinner and fun and support a very important mission. Location is Our Saviors Lutheran Church 4:30-6:30 pm.



Amusing Music “Tidbits” From Elaine ☺

Happy March! As I mentioned last month about “the chimes” at the church where I played while I was in college, there was a small keyboard attached to the organ on the right side...with only an octave (which means eight white keys and five black keys). They had a little ‘ending’ melody that was played towards the end of the service. The ‘chime attachment’ needed to be turned on approximately five minutes before being played to “warm up”.

Needless to say...I forgot to turn it on until it was the actual time to be played. It had a ‘sick bellowing sound’ that warbled around. I was so embarrassed, but the church family was very forgiving along with giggles! God has a sense of humor! I thank Him and the church family for forgiveness!

When I first arrived in Great Falls for a teaching position with the school district, there were a couple of churches looking for an

organist. My little family (two sons and myself) came from Valley City, ND where we were members of “Faith Lutheran” there! I was excited to hear of Faith Lutheran here in Great Falls and we went to our first church service. Loretta Riley welcomed us and invited us to sit with her for the service. How wonderful it was to feel so comfortable with this new church family. God is good! So I met with the organist who was leaving because her husband was being transferred with his job and she explained a few things.

This was my first time with my back facing the altar! I was very nervous about having to look at a mirror that was on the right side of the keys showing the altar area. God gave me strength to come to terms with my fears...and He still does! Since I was so nervous, I had butterflies in my stomach as I tried to play the hymns and liturgy to praise God and lead the

congregation with musical praise to our Lord and Savior. I played the incorrect liturgy part but God showed me where to go in the music and guided me back on the right path. When I got down from the choir loft, there were several people who came and thanked me and welcomed me with loving and forgiving arms! They were also giggling as we reminisced my “boo-boos”! As I have said many times—to this day—God is in charge of the good stuff. I’m in charge of the boo-boos!

I have some little ‘funnies’ throughout the past 36 years and will share them with you.

Here’s a organist joke to end this issue:

“Why couldn’t the organist get into the church?

Because her keys were locked inside!”

Musically in Christ, Elaine

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.

MARCH 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 February.

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.

- Jim and Sharon Wickens
- Renee Mullins
- Lane and Sherry Freiboth
- Sue Ferrin
- Rudy and Judy Tankink



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CHURCH STAFF

Senior Pastor:	Pastor Alsen Wenzel
Secretary/Office Manager:	Cindy Fowell
Bookkeeper:	Nicole LaMere
Custodian:	Kristina Cochran
IT Manager:	John Plank
Outreach Coordinator:	Colleen Palmer
Youth & Family Coordinator:	Annette Hocker
Music Director:	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:

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THIS IS THE JOURNEY OF FAITH.

