



FAITH ALIVE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, LCMC

From Pastor's Heart

Priorities are an interesting thing. Would you agree? As we all know, everybody has their priorities. We order and prioritize everything in our day-to-day lives, and there's nothing wrong with that. In fact, it's a good and right thing to do. Certain things in life do need to come before other "less important" things. So, I have some hard questions for you to ponder. What's more important: Going out to eat at a restaurant or making sure the electric bill is paid? If you had to prioritize between providing immediate much-needed love and care to a loved one who was suffering in some way and going to a ballgame or mowing the lawn, what would come first? So, what are your priorities? While the answers to these hypothetical questions seem like real "no-brainers," you and I both know that priorities can be and often are wrong. Our priorities do get out of whack from time to time. I know it's incredibly difficult to admit, but there are plenty of times in our lives when we put the wrong things first.

Now, here's where the interesting question comes into play. When our priorities are all out of whack and wrong, are we keenly aware of it? We might have that nagging little feeling in the pit of our stomach that something just doesn't seem right, but for the most part, we really don't know when our out-of-whack priorities are a problem. Why is that? Because, after all, we can justify ourselves and our decisions. Our priorities aren't the same as everyone else's, right? "My

priorities are my business. I don't expect my priorities to match your priorities. We're different people in different circumstances with different wants and needs. I'll readily admit that my priorities may ruffle your feathers a bit. But your priorities seem out of whack to me, too, but I don't say anything. Just because my priorities seem wrong to you doesn't mean that they're wrong." Does all that sound familiar? Unfortunately, it's only when something tragic happens or someone close to us steps up and confronts us that we're forced to re-examine our priorities and face the ugly reality that our priorities may indeed be wrong. And by the way, that wake-up call hurts, doesn't it?

So then the question is, what comes first in your life? How do you set priorities for your daily life? Now for some of us, we may feel that family and friends should take first place. Others of us may place our jobs in the number one time slot and then allow all other things to revolve around this choice. But our Heavenly Father insists that He and He alone must be first place. Jesus says in Mark 12:29-31 (ESV) regarding which commandment is the most important: "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." So Jesus is saying to

us that loving God with all our heart, soul and mind must be our first priority.

So, how do we set that priority? Well, we've got to realize that we don't. We simply need to reflect the love God shares with us in his Son Jesus Christ. You see, loving the Lord means setting time aside for daily growth in God's Word. It means choosing activities that are God-pleasing, that reflect God's guidance for daily living. It means that we come together in worship, service, and fellowship in response to God's invitation.

So then, what comes in second place? It is the love of our neighbor. As Christians this priority seems easy for us to achieve. It is our daily caring for those we serve. It is the extension of our Christian love to others outside of what we normally do. It means sharing the love of Christ in countless daily actions, from meal serving to tutoring. And in the times when we fail to see our neighbor's need, our Savior Jesus Christ calls us to reach out to everyone who needs his healing touch.

I hope you understand, that setting priorities is no easy task. The world will try to pull at our commitment and encourages us to put ourselves first. And our culture, nowadays, sure makes it very easy for us to put ourselves first because it talks about personal needs and encourages the "I'm-Number-1 syndrome". Therefore, it is only through the power of God's Holy Spirit that we can overcome this, for the Holy Spirit serves as our constant companion and guide in keeping

Jesus Christ first in our calendar setting, appointment making, and daily actions.

And make no mistake: Pastors are every bit as guilty. Many a pastor, myself included, foregoes those private devotional “one-on-one” times with Christ because there’s so much to do. “We’ve got evangelism to do here! We’ve got souls to reach and a congregation to grow!” That’s when Christ steps in and gives us that uncomfortable, but much needed priority-check. “You’re abandoning your first love, Me! If you aren’t fed and nourished and healthy yourself, how can you possibly feed, nourish, and nurture anyone else? If you’re running on empty, you’re not going to do anyone else any good. Even I took time to pray and be fed by my Father. Are you better or stronger than Me? Understand: You’re like a wounded medic. You don’t do Me or anyone else any good if you’re sick and starved and running on empty yourself.”

My friends: That’s why we take the time to come together each and every Sunday. We don’t do this for the accolades or brownie points. We don’t do this to show

God or anyone else how good we think we are. We don’t even do this because we have to. We do this thing called “worship” because this is what pleases our Lord and Savior. We do this because this is where Christ wants us to be. This is where He nourishes us with his life-giving Word and his body and blood in The Lord’s Supper. This is where we come in from the world, battered, beaten and bruised, and receive His heavenly healing and strengthening, all so we can go out as his disciples and do it all over again. This is where God specifically asks you to check your priorities and worries at the door and take the time to simply sit and receive and be healed. You have 167 hours in the week to deal with those other stewardship things. Priority number one for sixty minutes is in Church every Sunday.

Now, the staff and I, with the council’s blessing, have a set a priority for Faith Lutheran. Our priority is being a part of a network called Momentum. I would encourage all of you to read about Momentum in Colleen’s article in this month’s newsletter.

Now I know that it will be hard to change our priorities, but with God’s help and guidance we will be able to.

My friends, we need to remember that Jesus Christ loved us so much that he willingly gave up all of heaven’s majesty and perfection in order to come down to earth, take on our fallen and sinful flesh, and then take that flesh and sin to the cross so that it would be dead once-and-for-all. You and I are Christ’s number-one priority. He loved us so much that he suffered and died for us that we may have life eternal with our Heavenly Father. May this unconditional and all-forgiving love of our Lord and Savior be our constant number one priority in all areas of our life, justification and sanctification; giving and receiving; serving and being so richly served, as we serve our world as Jesus’ disciples. My prayer is that every one of us would examine our priorities and fix them where they are needed so that they reflect Jesus Christ first in our life and our love for our neighbor second. See you in Church.

Pastor Alsen

Music At Faith This Summer

Hello Church!

I hope you all have been having peaceful and relaxing summers. I’ve been enjoying going on walks, the farmers’ market, and hopefully by the time this newsletter is released, I’ll have been camping at least once and have moved into a different apartment.

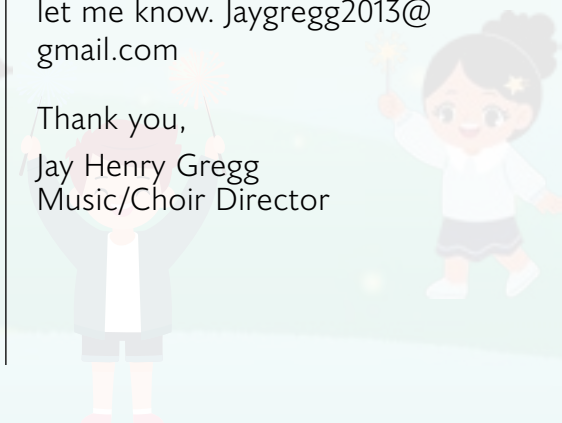
Several large scale choir projects are in the works! More information to come as we enter the coming school year.

I will be hosting a choral methods class on July 15th from 6:00-8:00 pm in the choir room. We will talk about several techniques, including but not limited to: breath support, posture, balance, and color. We will spend a lot of time listening to different choirs as well in order to illuminate and highlight what makes a powerful performance.

I am so looking forward to

this upcoming year. If you have any interest in providing music as worship in any capacity, please let me know. Jaygregg2013@gmail.com

Thank you,
Jay Henry Gregg
Music/Choir Director



From The Jesus Film Project

Thank you for your gift (\$1,327.73) to help share God's message of love and forgiveness to people. Your investment is providing the teams with digital tools to bring people face to face with Jesus.

Until everyone sees Jesus,
Josh Newell, Executive Director
the Jesus Film Project



From Local Girl Scout Troop

A big thank you for opening your doors to our Girl Scout troop! Your generosity has given our girls a place to meet, learn, grow, and have fun together. We are so thankful.

Thank you for being part of our Girl Scout adventure!

With thanks,
Girl Scout Troop 3011
Emma, Leela, Cosette, Olivia, Bella, Maisie,
Alta, Valerie, Lily, Victoria, Lillian, Zoey,
Elena, Isla, Addy, Bailey, Emmy, Sara, Sandy,
Jamie, Sterling, Annette, Heather

From The Cameron Center/Rescue Mission

Dear Friends,

I feel truly blessed by your overwhelming compassion in partnering with Great Falls Rescue Mission in our fight to end the cycle of homelessness and addiction. Thank you for standing with us!

Your gift (\$588.71) in support of the Great Falls Rescue Mission Youth Program will make a world of difference to the many children and youth living at our Cameron Family Center. Your support of the Mission helps us to continue to meet so many needs!

Thank you for providing a firm foundation of love and care for our children and youth who may struggle to find stability in their everyday lives.

May the Lord bless you and keep you!

"A Beacon of Hope Since 1963"

Carrie Matter
Executive Director



Church Office
Closed July 6th
for Independence Day



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



Staff check out the latest technology and Rainforest Falls costumes.

Submitting An Announcement For the Bulletin And/Or Sunday Verbal Announcements

1. Be sure the event is on the church calendar.
2. Announcements need to be submitted a week in advance.
3. Include the who, what, where, and when. Include logos, pictures, etc.
4. Information may be submitted in person, by email, or by phone.

Thank you in advance for your help. These guidelines help to double check information.

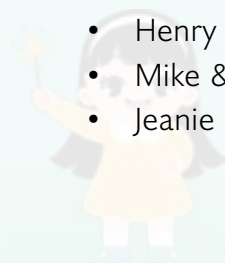
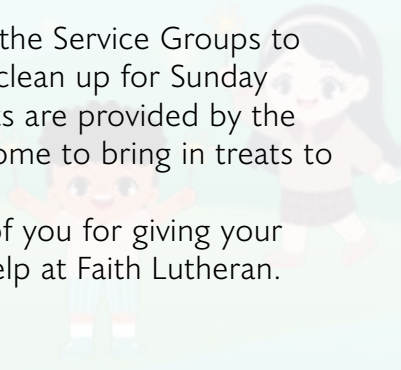
JULY SERVICE GROUP

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

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.

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

- Tom Fundis
- Scott & Mellissa Hampton
- Henry Henning
- Mike & Annette Hocker
- Jeanie Thomas



July 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 5:30 pm Men of Faith	2	3	4 Happy July 4th
5 9:30 am Worship Offering: Food Bank	6 In Observance of July 4th Office Closed	7 10 am Staff Meeting	8 9 am Finance Meeting 4 pm Property Team	9 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 9 am Love Day Quilters 10 am LCMC Pastors	10	11 11 am Celebration of Life - Fred Shauer
12 9:30 am Worship 3 pm Women of Faith Bible Study	13	14 10 am Staff Meeting 11:30 am Soulo Sisters 6 pm Personnel	15 6 pm Choral Methods 6 pm S'mores and Games Family Event	16 6:30 am Men's Bible Study	17	18
19 9:30 am Worship Offering: Great Falls Rescue Mission	20	21 10 am Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Council Meeting	22	23 6:30 am Men's Bible Study	24	25 11 am Celebration of Life - Lenora Graham
26 9:30 am Worship	27	28 10 am Staff Meeting	29	30 6:30 am Men's Bible Study	31	

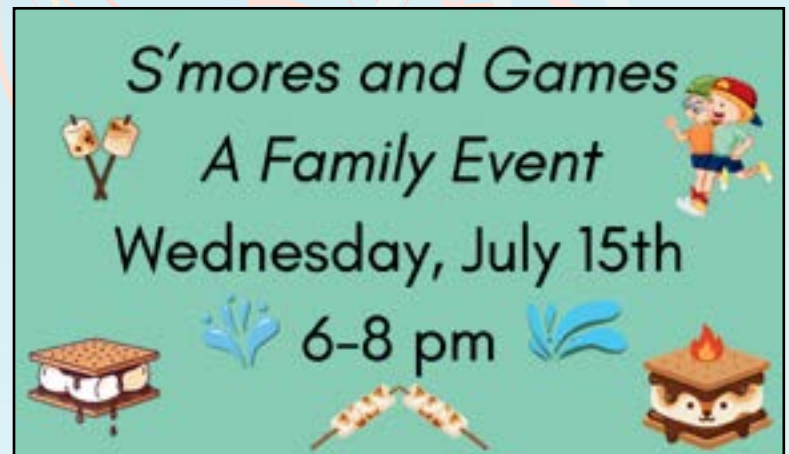
First Communion and Confirmation in June



First Communion
Arianna Hampton, Haven Blevins, Elodie Stubbs

Confirmation
Michael Arndt, Reider Blevins, Chance Stone,
Gabriel Shabaan

Thank you to all the volunteers for Rainforest Falls VBS.
You are appreciated more than you know.
Annette Hocker, Youth & Family Coordinator





Love Day Quilters News

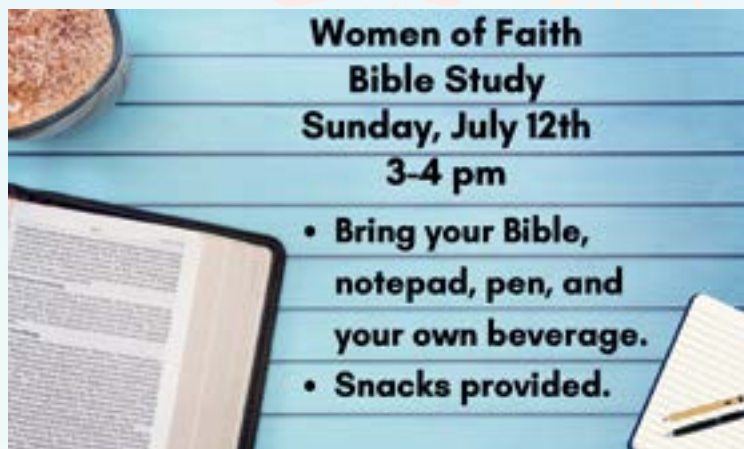
So everyone can celebrate our country's 250th birthday during the first weekend in July we will be quilting on the second Thursday of the month. Last month Carol Barnes informed us that Benefis once more is giving "purple blankets" to newborns and wants us to keep providing them. If you would like to help with blanket stitching them, please call me. Thank you, Marian Franklin, for the delicious cake with a rhubarb-raspberry topping (a sure sign that spring will soon be summer). We'd love to have you join us! - Augie Records

From Labor and Delivery at Benefis

Hello, I wanted to take a moment to thank your quilting group for yet another generous act of donations to Labor and Delivery here at Benefis! Your good work is appreciated by patients and staff, so thank you so much for everything you do!

Sincerely,

Jeremy Smith
Development Specialist



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.



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

July Anniversaries

- 4: Jim & Glenice Brown
10: Cal & Gail Morley
16: Bruce & Barbara Clark
Bill & Sue Ferrin
20: Scott & Nancy Radford
27: Jim & Sharon Wickens

July Birthdays

- 1: Arianna Hampton
Pat Strand
2: Nathan Bring
Olivia Sweeney
3: Brenda Tillerias
4: Annette Hocker
7: Becca Thompson
9: Crystal Patton
11: Cindy Reiquam
12: Melonnie Suek
16: Julie Ritzschke
Diann Stevens
20: Cameo Kieffer
26: Pastor Ken Waag
29: Dick Frye
30: Gail Stubbs

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!

You Have Purified Us As Silver Is Purified

*You, O Lord, have tested us;
You have purified us as silver
is purified. You led us into the net;
You placed affliction upon our
backs... We passed through fire and
water;
Yet You brought us into abundant
blessing.
Psalm 66:10-12*

We have endured many challenges here at Faith. The loss of our church building—then the blessing of a new facility. The retirement of our cherished Pastor Ken Waag—followed by the blessing of our new Pastor Alsen Wenzel. God is Good!

We are now embracing a fresh approach to the Great Commission. As stated in the book *Focus On Mission: Transformative Christian Leadership Series Outreach*, by Kent R. Hunter with Tracee J. Swank, "Outreach will no longer focus on bringing people 'in here,' but on taking Jesus 'out there.' When this transformation occurs, churches rediscover their mission, disciples multiply, and revival ignites. Want to learn more?

You are invited to the Momentum Kickoff, a network dedicated to church revitalization. Momentum will provide our church staff with complimentary tools, coaching, and resources that inspire renewal and develop leaders from within. For individuals, Momentum offers everyday believers free access to training, resources, and community—helping you grow as a disciple and contribute to the church's future.

Mark your calendars for August 4: Join us for a live Zoom session with Tracee Swank from Church Doctors/Momentum. We will begin in the Fellowship Hall with dinner at 6 p.m., followed by the presentation at 7 p.m. Please RSVP so we can prepare enough food. Questions can be submitted via chat during the presentation. The event will also be recorded for those unable to attend in person.

Let's transform lives and advance God's Kingdom!

Colleen Palmer, Community Outreach Coordinator

FISH News

We would like to thank the following volunteers who worked FISH for the week of June 8-12 – Jim and Sharon Wickens, Deb Schwandt, Carol Dawson, Lane and Sherry Freiboth, Dave and Gabe Cunningham, Pat Fournier, Russ and Cheryl Klette, Karen Nebel, Jerry and Pearl Miller, and Mary Pfeifle. We at Faith Lutheran are very blessed by your willingness to serve in this ministry.

Thank you all!

The next opportunity to serve at FISH is August 17-21 and October 26-30. Please contact Ron or Sandy if you want to be on the FISH Volunteer list.

Ron Pfeifle and Sandy Matthews, Co-Chairs.



Amusing Music “Tidbits” From Elaine ☺

Happy July Dear Faith Family!

Here's another example of God's sense of humor, not with music itself, but with His organist/pianist –Me! ☺

As I am writing my Faith Alive – the sun (Son) is shining, there's no wind blowing through our tall grass, 73 degrees...God is good!

Let's roll back 34 years as of June 10th. Back when Faith Lutheran was at 3125 5th Avenue South, Rick and I were married on the 12th there. In front of the main entrance was a huge pine tree that split almost halfway to the top...giving it a look of two big trees. The front doors had a large bronze Jesus statue welcoming everyone in. Once inside, if you turned back towards the street you would see the huge 12-16 foot wooden pedal pipes for the organ.

Now there is an old wives' tale that says it's a good omen if there is a storm on your wedding. It's a sign of good luck in the image of a wet knot, which refers to 'tying the knot'. This 'wet knot' represents a marriage that will last with unity and washing away past sadnesses for a fresh start.

OK–here's where you'll see how God's sense of humor comes into play.

The Wednesday before we were to get married, it stormed. The storm produced quite a bit of lightning. Guess where God sent one of His lightning bolts! Yup–to the top of that big pine tree, causing it to totally split down the middle with half of it falling. Now it had two ways it could have gone–towards the street or towards Jesus.

Rick and I pulled up to have our last meeting with Pastor Rehlander, exiting the car my mouth was wide open! Pastor ran out yelling, “Don't worry, Vern Severson and sons are on their way over to cut it up and haul it off.” God bless you Seversons!

When Friday came, all that was left was about a 10 foot “stub” (they were going to cut the rest down after the wedding)–and it had little “Knots” all around it. They just weren't wet knots! Don't you just hear our awesome Father chuckling! Thank Him that Jesus and the pipe organ were spared.

As I said, we've been blessed for 34 years with God holding

us together! But now that's not where He left off for the 'humor' ...oh no!

We were wonderfully blessed that day that was filled with wonderful music, the love of God, family, friends...even “the dip” was awesome. Come talk to me what ‘the dip’ was! ☺

We had a friend video tape it and were off on our short honeymoon via Rick's truck to Edmonton and back. The friends came over to share the video but were somewhat perplexed. God's humor at work again! As we began to watch the video, everytime he would move it to ‘pan the view’– it would squeal! It was an internal squeal so no one heard it externally. We all were laughing hysterically as we watched the entire thing...with squeals!

God shows His never ending love for us in many ways. He is our awesome Father! So in closing, below is some Holy Humor. I believe most of these songs are from other hymnals!

God bless you all till next time.

Musically in Christ,
Elaine

Celebrate America's 250th!

**Sunday, July 5
after Worship**

**Congregational Life Team
will serve Root Beer Floats
and Snacks!**



Speed Limit Hymns:

- 45 mph: God Will Take Care of You
- 55 mph: Guide Me O Great Jehovah
- 65 mph: Nearer My God, to Thee
- 75 mph: Nearer Still Nearer
- 85 mph: This World Is Not My Home
- 100+ mph: Precious Memories





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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:

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

