

Faith Lutheran Church

The Messenger

March, 2024

What I Learned at the Healthy Congregations Workshop

Introduction:

Rev. Kevin Burney began the workshop by asking a number of questions. These were asked so that we (the attendees) would have an understanding why this program may be helpful.

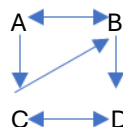
- How “clean” is your mission statement? Do we follow it?
- Does anyone attempt to “hold the church hostage”?
- Do we have members that hold back on decisions they don’t agree with?
- What (if any) of our programs/missions tend to be underfunded?
- What is the status of our endowment fund? How is it used?
- What issues that you have had as a congregation have been resolved?
- What issues that you have remain?
- How are conflicts resolved?
- Where are the “hidden keys” to your church?
 - Hidden keys are the secrets of the church (but everyone knows what/where they are)
- How are decisions made in your church and what processes are used?
- How is information exchanged? (Do people say “I didn’t know about it!”)
- Why and how are major changes made?
- Does giving money have more influence on decisions?
- Who are those who are not enfranchised in your congregation & how are they treated?
- How do we nurture one another?
- Does your church have fun/play time together? How?
 - Side comment: “If you can’t laugh with others, you can’t make good decisions”
- What/when were the “good-old days” and what made them good?
- What influence did “bad things that happened” have on the life of your church?
 - Side comment: Churches that do not deal with issues can come out sideways later in the life of the church
- Do church members “scapegoat”? For example: “If we just would get a different _____ we would be better off!
- Where have we been (as a congregation/church) and what part of that do we want to keep?

Systems Thinking

We were introduced to thinking about relationships in a “system” rather than “separate parts”. Rev. Burney drew several diagrams that helped us to understand system thinking, and gave us 2 handouts which explained what system thinking means. In **separate parts thinking**, you think in lines. Example: A → B → C → D This is cause and effect thinking and the parts can be understood in themselves. In this example, problems belong to the individual, and understanding comes from breaking down issues into smaller and smaller pieces.

In **system thinking**, you think in loops. Example:

In systems thinking the parts mutually influence one another and are co-causal. The whole can be under-



stood by interaction of the parts. The relationships that exist do not exist independently, but only in relationship to something else. Nothing is influence in one direction only and each part contributes to what is happening. A change in one part produces change in other parts.

What I Learned at the Healthy Congregations Workshop (continued)

Systems thinking applies to families, groups, and people in organizations.

Healthy vs Unhealthy (Anxious) Congregations

Rev. Burney showed us an interesting video featuring a church which had added a “Contemporary” worship service featuring modern Christian music with guitars and drum, and led by the youth, to their weekly worship services. While the Pastor and leadership of the church had approved the decision to have added this service in addition to their traditional service, many of the congregation disliked this decision and became very angry and upset at the Pastor (in particular) and the Worship committee (in general) for allowing this service to happen. We discussed this video and learned that **“it is not the absence of conflict that makes a healthy church, it is how the church deals with conflict.”** Through small group discussion and seeing different ways that the church members in the video acted in unhealthy ways (accusing others, name-calling, trying to blame the Pastor for what was a group decision, and not listening or being respectful of others), we were able to see that in most issues being raised, we could identify with the characters in the video.

It was pointed out that **“God speaks through conflict”**, and that all Churches have conflict. We saw a continuation from the first video which showed us what a healthy response to the decision of a Contemporary service would look like: focusing on the Mission of the Church, not feeding others’ anxiety over decisions made, no name calling or saying this is what “I want” or “I like” but rather, what is God calling us to do. We learned that anxiety in a congregation can only remain in the “system, as in systems thinking” if it is fed, analogous to a virus which must have a host to survive.

Conflict resolution is awareness and unfortunately is not usually done well. Human nature is hard-wired for homeostasis, or to stay the same/resist change. It therefore takes courage and trust to change what we are used to, and to accept change. To reduce anxiety, comes down to how individuals control their own anxiety, and the realization that I (myself) can’t control others behaviors or anxiety level. The good news is that even if small improvements are made in anxiety levels it helps in resolving conflicts significantly. An interesting observation is that we all have SOME anxiety about issues. Understanding that If your own anxiety about everything is ZERO, your pulse probably is ZERO too! (Humor!)

Churches Can Either be Divided or Bound Together by Conflict

We were given a handout divided into two columns: Church divided by Conflict and Church Bound Together by Conflict with descriptive terms which describe what you would see in an Unhealthy (Divided/Anxious) Church versus a Healthy (Bound Together by Conflict) Church. We were asked to circle which descriptions/terms applied to our church. Here are a few examples:

Church divided by Conflict

- Conflict viewed as wrong or dangerous
- Disagreement means a lack of respect
- Leaders discourage differences
- Individuals react defensively or explosively to the views of others
- Discussion focuses on the solution (“My solution is right!”)
- People repress inner conflicts caused by past experiences and continually project them into the current conflict

Church Bound Together by Conflict

- Conflict is viewed as an opportunity
- Disagreement = engagement/involvement
- Leaders welcome open disagreement
- Individuals interact thoughtfully with the views of other
- Discussion focuses on the process. (“Does the solution reflect our mission?”)
- Each individual is consciously aware of his or her own past hurts or unresolved conflicts and takes responsibility not to project these in the current situation

After circling the descriptions we felt applied to Faith Lutheran Church, we spent time discussing our choices and how we need to learn to focus on the qualities that describe a healthy congregation.

Faith Lutheran Church’s Strengths

Healthy Congregations focus on their strengths, and we were asked to name the strengths of our congregations. Here is the list of FLC’s strengths that I recorded:

- We have a lot of experts
- Excellent worship services
- Involve lots of people in community work
- Potential Wealth/Resources
- Care for each other well
- Small groups/Community involvement
- Music program Excellence
- Diversity of Congregants (Parishioners)

What I Learned at the Healthy Congregations Workshop (continued)

- Excellent sermons (Jobs get done)
- Open and inclusive/Welcoming - Great Learning Center (Childcare program)
- Well used building (open to groups) - Pride events (Openly supportive)
- Harstead Fine Arts Series (Supportive of arts and open events free to public)

Closing and Summary

Healthy congregations make room for differences. A key point is to listen without trying to change others. Attempting to change others is the herd instinct. Don't say or think "**me and everybody else feels this way!**" Instead, say: "**I hear you, but this is where I stand**".

The focus of anything we do as a church should be related to our mission. Rev. Burney asked what our mission statement was, as that is "What's our why" (we do what we do). Faith Lutheran Church prints our Mission Statement on our Bulletin and our Website. Many of the attendees knew it by heart. It is: "**As followers of Jesus Christ we embrace, reflect, and proclaim God's unconditional love.**" Rev. Burney said that although that was a nice statement, we (our congregation) hadn't completed the mission statement yet. He said that statement didn't have a purpose, and we needed to add these words....so that what?

There were several people who stated what **so that** meant to them. **So that...**

- you can proclaim the gospel
- we may live in joy, peace, and love

His challenge to us would be to complete that Mission statement (as a congregation) and ensure that when we have issues that arise in our congregation, we can use our Mission statement as a way to guide us in our decisions.

In closing we developed Mission statements (with a purpose) for our families and ourselves for the next 90 days. In doing so, we learned that by writing our Mission statements down and by continue focusing on them, is the best way to ensure that we, whether ourselves, our family, or congregation is on the right path to having a healthy self, family or congregation.

Submitted by Bob Henry, Council President

Follow-up: The 42 people who attended Healthy Congregations (HC), found the overwhelming majority stating that this workshop was worthwhile and would attend another HC as well as recommend this workshop to others in the congregation. The one critique that was mentioned the most was related to the time commitment of the workshop. Because of this feedback, Rev. Burney has agreed to facilitate a shorter second workshop: "**Healthy Congregations Respond to Anxiety and Change**", requested most by the participants, on Saturday, March 23. The church will be open at 8:00 am and breakfast will again be served by Parish Life. Expect another delicious breakfast! The program will begin at 8:30 sharp and end at 1:00pm. There will not be lunch, but breaks with refreshments will allow attendees to relax and enjoy a very educational workshop! Sign-ups will begin on Sunday, March 3 in the Narthex. All are invited to attend!





Saint Patrick, who lived during the fifth century, is the patron saint of Ireland and its national apostle. Born in Roman Britain, he was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave at 16. He later escaped, but returned to Ireland and was credited with bringing Christianity to its people.

In the centuries following Patrick's death (believed to have been on March 17, 461), the mythology surrounding his life became ever more ingrained in the Irish culture: Perhaps the most well-known legend of St. Patrick is that he explained the Holy Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) using the three leaves of a native Irish clover, the shamrock.

Today, people of all backgrounds celebrate St. Patrick's Day, especially throughout the United States, Canada and Australia. Although North America is home to the largest productions, St. Patrick's Day is celebrated around the world in locations far from Ireland, including Japan, Singapore and Russia. Popular St. Patrick's Day recipes include Irish soda bread, corned beef and cabbage and champ. In the United States, people often wear green on St. Patrick's Day.

In Ireland, St. Patrick's Day has traditionally been a spiritual and religious occasion. In fact, up until the 1970s, Irish laws mandated that pubs be closed on March 17. Beginning in 1995, however, the Irish government began a national campaign to use interest in St. Patrick's Day to drive tourism and showcase Ireland and Irish culture to the rest of the world. (history.com)



A few lines from a poem by my favorite Lutheran hymn-writer and poet, Susan Cherwien:

When we follow Christ
into Lent
we turn onto a path
into wilderness
where we may encounter
hard rocky places
tempters
and thirst
but that will lead us out
into the gold
of the Easter dawn.

Here are some snippets from the music that you will hear from the choir that reflect these sentiments:

I shall not fear the journey if you are by my side.
My foes are ever near me, around me and within.
Seed that in earth is dying rises to bear much fruit.
We depart in peace.
In the cross of Christ I glory.

I am praying for a blessed Lent for all of us.

In Christ, Kathy

Music@faithlutheranchurch.com

Holy Week



- ◆ Sunday, March 24
Palm Sunday services at 8:30 and 11:00
- ◆ Tuesday March 26 at 10 am
Chrism Liturgy with Bishop Gafjken
- ◆ Thursday March 28
Maundy Thursday service at 7 pm
- ◆ Friday March 29
Good Friday Services at 12:00 pm and 7 pm
- ◆ Sunday, March 31
Easter Sunday Festival Services at 8:30 & 11:00



The Harstad Fine Arts Series proudly presents:

HERS

Molly Carr (viola) and Anna Petrova (piano)

Sunday, March 10 at 3:00 PM

Faith Lutheran Church



The highly acclaimed [Carr-Petrova Duo](#) presents works by female composers from the 13th century's Hildegard Von Bingen to today's Beyoncé. "HERS" vibrantly celebrates the vision, strength, resilience, and vital contributions of women throughout history. Carr and Petrova began playing together during their years at the Juilliard School and the Manhattan School of Music, and have since performed together across Europe, the Middle East and North America. Petrova is Professor for Piano at the University of Louisville. Besides performing in this Duo, Carr is member of the prestigious Juilliard Quartet.

Admission is free, but tickets are required and can be obtained [HERE](#) or on harstadarts.com. For questions, contact info@harstadarts.com.

The 'Days' Holy Week

Christians often describe the season of Lent as a journey of sorts, with its final destination being Holy Week. The events of Holy Week recount the so-called 'passion narratives' in the New Testament Gospels that relate to the suffering, death and burial of Jesus Christ. Thus, Holy Week marks the last week of the Christian season of Lent – the week leading up to Easter. Here's a rundown of what it all means.

Palm Sunday - Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, when Christians commemorate Jesus' 'triumphal entry' into Jerusalem where the Gospels tell us he was greeted with crowds waving palm branches and crying 'Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!' (Mark 11:9-10).

Maundy Thursday - Maundy Thursday marks the Last Supper that Jesus shares with his disciples, his betrayal by his disciple Judas Iscariot, and his arrest at the Garden of Gethsemane.

Maundy Thursday reminds participants of the 'new commandment' (mandatum in Latin) that Jesus gave his disciples to love one another as he has loved them (John 15:12) – a love that is most readily seen in Jesus willingly giving up his life on the cross on Good Friday.

Good Friday - Good Friday commemorates Jesus' trial before Pontius Pilate, his sentence of death, his torture, and his crucifixion and burial. It is called 'good' Friday in the obsolete sense of the word 'good' – connoting something 'holy' or 'pious' ('Holy Friday'), which is striking as 'Good Friday' is the most somber day for Christians, when the agony, death and burial of Jesus is remembered.

For many Christians, Good Friday is a day of fasting, with the faithful attending a church service where they will meditate on and venerate the cross of Christ.

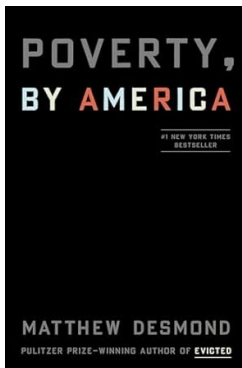
-Bob Derrenbacker



Lenten Soup Suppers will be held on Wednesdays at 6.00pm, before the Mid-Week Lenten Services now through March 20.

If you are willing to provide soup please sign-up in the Narthex after services or contact Barbie Moore (859-361-0665, barbie_moore@icloud.com) or call the church office.

Sophia Group



Gail Swanson will host the March meeting of the Sophia Book Club on Monday March 25 at 7:00pm. We will be discussing the book “Poverty, By America,” written by Matthew Desmond (a sociologist and Pulitzer Prize winning author).

It will be held in the first floor meeting room (just beyond the foyer) at:

Legacy Reserve at Fritz Farm

2700 Man O War Blvd



Confirmation Class

Confirmation Service: May 19th (Pentecost Sunday)

Upcoming dates:

March 3 5pm Youth Room

April 21 5 pm Youth Room

May 5 5 pm Youth Room

We are working through Daniel Erlander’s “Baptized We Live: Lutheranism as a Way of Life.” Parents, sponsors, and grownups of all kinds are welcomed to attend. Pastor Dana is also working to line up some presentations on diverse religious traditions as part of Confirmation (and for anyone else who might be interested). If you have a good contact with a local faith leader, please let Pastor Dana know. We are particularly looking for Orthodox, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Bahai, and Buddhist.

Youth Fundraiser



Thank you so much to everyone who helped make our first soup lunch fundraiser for the National Youth Gathering such a success, especially to those who brought soup! We are going to continue with soup lunch fundraisers on a regular basis, with our next one on March 17th after the 11:00 service. If you would like to bring in a soup for this fundraiser, please reach out to Paige Barricklow and let her know what you're bringing. If not, please plan to stay after church on the 17th for a bowl of soup!

Prayer List

The persons on the parish prayer list are lifted in prayer at every Sunday service. If you would like to be on the prayer list or no longer need to be on the list, please call or email the parish office.

If you would like a pastoral visit or home communion, you may contact Pastor Dana by calling the church office or by email (www.pastordana@faithlutheranchurch.org)

The prayer/care ministry invites you to join them in connecting with persons on our prayer list. You can volunteer to connect by phone or email, by a personal visit, or by agreeing to add one specific person to your daily prayers. Contact Pastor Dana for more information or to become part of this ministry.

Members of the Parish (ongoing concerns):

Nancy George, John Atkerson, Gary Chastain, Diana Seidel, Pete Gross, Bea Rosenberg, Wayne Schedler, Bette Lawrence and Rebecca Chapman.

Friends of the Parish:

Johnson Deshommes, Linda Davis (sister of Barbie Moore), Barbara Babcock (mother of Val Dutcher), the family of Jim Buchanan, the family of Guy Rion, Richard Lee (friend of Judy Page and Elaine Billington), the family of Faye Gross, the family of Nancy Krause, Chelsea and Jeremy Back and Aleisha Hampton.



- 1 Gisela Atkerson
- 2 Doug Dutcher
- 3 Dale Austin
- 5 Aeris Hammonds
- 8 Susan Harper
- 11 JoEllen McComb
- 12 Linda McDaniel
- 13 Judy Templar
- 15 Lin Whitley
- 19 Gene Harper
- 21 Alann Karow
- 22 Karl Krause
- 23 Walt Keinath
- 24 Kathy Egner
- Chris Fugmann
- 27 Joe Swanson
- 29 Denise Adams
- Ray Hughes
- 31 Tim Sorenson

19 Julie & Mike Keller



January Financial Summary

January 2024						
	Total Income - Month	Total Expense - Month	Actual Total Income Less Actual Total Expense	Total Income - YTD	Total Expense - YTD	Actual Total Income Less Actual Total Expense
Budget Forecast	\$24,935.83	\$34,780.21		\$24,835.83	\$34,780.21	
Actual	\$32,345.61	\$27,149.15	\$5,196.46	\$32,345.61	\$27,149.15	\$5,196.46
Variance	\$7,409.78	(\$7,631.06)	\$5,196.46	\$7,509.78	(\$7,631.06)	\$5,196.46
%	129.7%	78.1%		130.2%	78.1%	

Faith Lutheran Church
1000 Tates Creek Drive
Lexington, KY 40502
Phone: 859-266-7621
Fax: 859-266-9600
Email:
office@faithlutheranchurch.com

Church Council 2024
Bob Henry, President
Gayle McGrath, Vice President
David Templar, Secretary
Debbie Rosenberg, Treasurer
Steve Hayes
Urton Anderson
Sue Anne Lau
Brian Lundborg
Pastor Dana Lockhart

Financial Secretary
Jennifer Carey

Sunday Worship Schedule

In-Person Worship 8:30 and 11:00 AM
Online Streaming, 11:00 AM

Staff

Pastor Dana Lockhart
859-266-7621
pastordana@faithlutheranchurch.com
Amanda Nord
Parish Administrator
office@faithlutheranchurch.com
859-266-7621
Kathy Egnor
Director of Music
music@faithlutheranchurch.com
859-266-7621
Neil McComb, Sexton
859-229-8834
Paige Barricklow, Youth Assistant
pebarricklow15@gmail.com
859-940-0631
Charla Heersche, Learning Center Director
fllc859@gmail.com
859-268-0108

Faith Lutheran Church
1000 Tates Creek Road
Lexington, KY 40502