

# Faith Lutheran Church

# The Messenger

## December, 2024



Dispatch from Adventide

Although I am occasionally accused of being a grinch or a scrooge, I honestly have nothing against Christmas. It is a beautiful season of the year, full of wonder, beauty and joy. What better service could there be than a candlelight eucharist on Christmas Eve? Christmas is magical! My issue with Christmas, at least the popular version of it, is that it is like a mighty river that has overflowed its banks. No matter how important or picturesque that river might be, it completely swamps everything around it.

And nothing gets flooded quite like Advent. I feel this keenly every year: Advent is my favorite season. Not only does it have the best color, but it has some of the best music, scripture readings (Advent IV this year is the Magnificat!), and themes. The reminder that we are waiting, along with all of creation, for the second coming of Christ, just as the people of God, along with all creation, waited for his first, hits home year after year. I long for the return of Jesus. Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us!

One year, the principal at Bea's school sent a fun poll out to parents about the Christmas season. The poll asked, "when does the Christmas season officially begin?" The options given were what one would expect: after Halloween, after Thanksgiving, all year, etc. The correct answer, from a historical and liturgical perspective, was unfortunately not an option: Christmas begins when Advent ends. I ended up writing the principal and got back a nice reply, though one that expressed surprise that there would be a church leader who thinks Christmas starts on December 24<sup>th</sup>!

Even in my own household (from whence several of the accusations of being a "grinch" or "scrooge" come), I find myself in the minority. Bea is adamant that Christmas should begin on December 1, and I suspect that Victoria might just be one of those "Christmas 365" people. As I hastily remove certain radio station presets from our cars (lest "Last Christmas" by Wham! cause me to drive into a ditch), I wonder if it would not be easier to just capitulate to the red and green deluge around me. Perhaps, but I think I will remain a true-blue Adventist for another year. Come Lord Jesus!

In Christ,

Dana

PS. My daughter recently spoke up on behalf of all fans of early Christmas and told me that I really should write a Christmas devotional for this newsletter. After all, Christmas will be over by the time the January Messenger comes out (the pedant in me avoided mentioning that it will still be Christmas until January 6<sup>th</sup>...). In response, I said that if she wanted to, she could write one. And she did:

*We all know about the Christmas spirit, the joy, the laughter, the overall feeling. But Christmas is also a great time to be spiritual. So, somewhere in the mess that is this holiday, sit down and think. Think about all that Christ has done for us. After all, that's what Christmas is about. So, when you're shopping for Christmas gifts, think about the gift God has given us. When you're writing your Christmas list, think about what God has already given you. Christmas is a time of happiness and love. But, when it really comes down to it, Christmas is about the birth of Jesus Christ.*

*-Beatrice (Bea) Lockhart*

## Save the Date

Faith Lutheran Church's annual meeting will be held on January 19th, 2025 following the 10:00 service (note: one combined service for that day). Please make plans to attend as there will be several important items of business this year.

## The Nest/Reindeer Express

**New Date: Please bring all items to the church by December 1 so they can be delivered on time. For more information, please contact Joyce Cornett.**

It's time once again for the Reindeer Express 2024! The staff at the Nest is expecting to have more requests for help this Christmas than ever before. The Nest in Lexington currently serves 475 families and 1000 children. They are in need of winter wear for kids 0-5: winter coats, hats, gloves, and scarfs in sizes for newborns up to 7/8. Last year we furnished 52 coats, and accessories! This year our challenge to the congregation is to match or beat that number!

The Nest also requests new unwrapped toys in the same age range 0-5. Dolls, toy trucks or cars, character toys, pretend play, sports items and arts and crafts items. All items need to be collected by **Sunday, December 1st**. Items can be brought in to the collection center (behind the screens) in the Narthex in the marked barrels/boxes. If you have any questions please email Joyce Cornett at netu-bet44@bellsouth.net

## Long-Range Planning Committee

The Long-Range Planning Committee will meet on Thursday, December 5, 2024 at 5:00 pm in the Narthex at Faith Church. If you a member of the committee or are interested in what our church is planning for the future, please make plans to attend!

## Convening the Gift Committee

A revised gift policy was adopted by the congregational council in October. This policy charges the gift committee with the responsibility of reviewing gifts offered to the congregation and making recommendations regarding gift acceptance and use. At the November council meeting, the council asked for the gift committee to be convened specifically to make recommendations for the large gift we received earlier this year. The council intends that recommendations about use of the gift will be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting in January. As such, we are asking committees with representation on the gift policy committee to designate a representative as soon as possible. According to the policy, the gift committee is composed of:

- a. One (1) Member from the Finance Committee
- b. One (1) Member from the Property Committee
- c. One (1) Member from the Worship Committee
- d. One (1) Member from the Parish Life Committee
- e. One (1) Member from the Stewardship Committee
- f. One (1) Member from the Outreach Committee
- g. One (1) Member from the Faith Formation Committee
- h. One (1) Member from the Executive Committee (Non Voting ex Officio) (Treasurer Debbie Rosenberg will serve as representative)
- i. One (1) Pastor (Non Voting ex Officio)

Committee chairs: please send the name of your committee's representative to Pastor Dana and Debbie Rosenberg. The plan is for the gift committee to make a recommendation ahead of the December council meeting (12/16). As time is short, scheduling the first meeting will begin as soon as a quorum of representatives has been designated.

## Faith Lutheran Learning Center

As we prepare to close out calendar year 2024, we are thinking about all of the changes we have experienced and how our Program has continued to grow and improve:

We said a bittersweet goodbye to our former FLLC Director, Charla Heersche, in April 2024.

We got through a challenging time through the leadership & support of Assistant Director Lindsay Scott as our Interim Director and our many staff members who “stepped up” and took on more responsibilities.

We welcomed our new FLLC Director, Courtney Herald, in early June 2024.

We hosted our largest K-5 Summer Camp ever, as well as Vacation Church School!

We were so fortunate to have Miss Rainy step up and take over in our Kitchen as our Cook so that we did not “miss a beat” when Miss Kathy left for another opportunity.

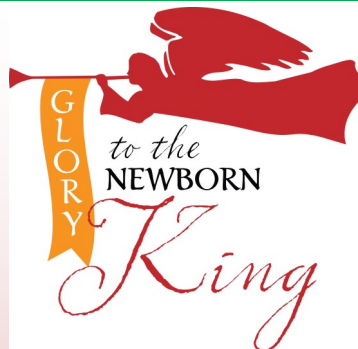
We hosted a highly successful Fall Fest fundraiser where over \$ 4,500 was raised toward our gate/fencing project!

With continued thanks & appreciation for the support of everyone at Faith Lutheran Church,

Courtney Herald – FLLC Director

Val Dutcher – Chair, FLLC Committee

## Christmas Worship Services



**December 22, 6:00pm Blue Christmas**

**December 24, 7:00pm Christmas Eve Worship  
with candle lighting and Holy Communion.**

**Cello and piano prelude begins at 6:50pm**

**December 29, 10:00am The First Sunday of Christmas  
One service at 10:00am**

## Grace Jar Entries



Thank you to everyone who has placed a note in the Grace Jar. Here are the entries we received in November. Please continue to place these in the jar in the Narthex.

- ◆ Great thanksgiving for Kathy and our growing children's choir
- ◆ Beautiful service on All Saints Day. It was moving to honor those who have passed.
- ◆ Wonderful celebration of stewardship and fellowship with Java Jukebox coffee!

## Blue Christmas



This year, we are offering a Blue Christmas celebration on December 22 at 6:00pm. This will be a quiet and meditative celebration of the hope we have in the incarnation of our Savior. We will hear scripture and sing Christmas songs. We will light candles to remember those we have lost in the past year or years, to remember the past weeks, months and, for some of us, years of difficult times, and to remember our faith and God's gift of hope. Together we will celebrate Holy Communion and receive the gift of God's comfort. You do not have to be suffering loss to attend this service. You may simply want to experience the quiet beauty of Christmas worship.

*And you, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,  
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow:  
look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing;  
oh, rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing!*

From ELW 282, *It Came upon the Midnight Clear*

# Last Month at Faith



On Consecration Sunday we had Java Jukebox set up in the parking lot with delicious coffee and pastries. Everyone seemed to really enjoy it! We are looking into doing something similar next summer. Stay tuned for details!



Faith Lutheran Church welcomed new members on Reformation Sunday.



On All Saints Day we commemorated those who have passed away in the past year.



Local photographer Terry Wild has been attending service at Faith and shared this picture with us taken in our sanctuary.



Volunteers picked up turkeys that were cooked by generous members of our congregation and delivered them to Nathaniel Mission.



Families and staff sharing moments of fellowship and connection at the Faith Lutheran Learning Center Thanksgiving potluck.



## Prayer List

# IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

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 [pastordana@faithlutheranchurch.org](mailto: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 (recent concerns):** Ray Ranta, Richard Heine, Joan Sorenson, Paul Sorenson, Gayle McGrath and Denise Adams

**Members of the Parish (ongoing concerns):**

Wayne Schedler, Nancy George, Joe Swanson, Linda McDaniel, Dave McGrew, Mike Keller and Eva Lau

**Friends of the Parish:**

Johnson Deshommes, the family of Richard Lee (friends of Judy Page and Elaine Billington), Jim Pinkston, the Nickou family, Don & Colleen Black, Pauline, Bob and Elizabeth Short (friends of the Polnisch family), the family of Barb Babcock, Donald Woehler (brother in law of Charlie Hamilton), Lola Baker (mother of Courtney Herald), Mark & Ronda Giesey, the family of Val Flagstad (mother of Ruth Lundborg), Charla Heersche, Tom Scott (cousin of Bonnie Chastain), Rory Hefner-Templar (daughter of David Templar), Walter Dixon (nephew of Kathy Wilson), Jim Johnson (brother of David Johnson), Dr. Mike Marvin (cousin of Judy McGrew), John Klee, Wendy Meadors, the family of Sue Raney and Britney Harris (daughter-in-law of Leta Harris).



- 2 Joyce Rector
- 9 Joyce Cornett
- 10 Urton Anderson
- 13 Cindy Heine
- 14 Paul Sorenson
- 16 Amanda Nord
- 17 Carolyn Walker
- 18 Roland Born
- 19 Marcus Atkerson  
Janet Walker
- 21 Diana Erickson  
Gayle McGrath  
Laura Zink
- 24 Dan Kazee
- 29 Luise Wendroth

- 20 Darryl & Diane Terry
- 27 David & Sharon Fegley

## Office Closure

The Parish Office will be closed Wednesday, December 25 for the Christmas holiday. We hope everyone has a great holiday.



## New Year = New Prayer List

Advent I is December 1st this year. As this is the first Sunday of the liturgical year, we will be beginning our prayer list anew. This can be a helpful practice of refreshing our list annually. Please contact Amanda in the church office to add names to the "Year C" prayer list.

## Children Sing in Worship



On December 1 at the 11:00 service, the Children's Choir will sing for the first time. The choir is composed of choristers from Faith Lutheran as well as those from the Learning Center. They have been working hard on their pieces and are excited about honoring God with their voices.

## Thomas Keesecker



**Don't miss this!**

### Advent Music Program by Thomas Keesecker

On December 8 at 3pm, we will welcome Thomas Keesecker, who will present an informal program of piano music, hymn singing and poetry. He will also share his piano music compositions and direct the choir at 11:00 service. He travels all around the country presenting his unique programs and is known for his sensitive, delightful, and meditative piano arrangements of hymns. His hundreds of musical pieces for choir and piano are published by, among others, Augsburg Fortress and Concordia. His informal, folksy programs have been compared to a show featuring Garrison Keillor and George Winston! We will be able to sing some of his arrangements, as well as listen to his piano interpretations. It is a tremendous honor to have him here with us at Faith Lutheran. You will have an opportunity to contribute to a free will offering to help defray costs.

## Thanks for Giving

On behalf of the Outreach Committee, thanks to the members of the Congregation who signed up to give their time and energy to cook Turkeys for the Nathaniel Mission Thanksgiving Meal AND for those who agreed to ring the bell for the Salvation Army on December 7<sup>th</sup>! All the slots are filled and it is a tribute that we have members that are willing and able to do these things for our neighbors in need! ALSO, thanks to the people who took tags off the tree (all are taken!) for the Santa for Seniors program AND those who provided gifts for a child in the CASA Angel Tree Program! All these gifts of time, effort, and money are truly appreciated and come from the heart! If you would still like to be part of the giving season, the Nest can still use winter wear and toys (see announcement). May God bless you all who have blessed our neighbors with your gifts!

## October Financial Summary

October 2024	Total Income - <u>Month</u>	Total Expense - <u>Month</u>	Actual Total Income Less Actual Total Expense	Total Income - <u>YTD</u>	Total Expense - <u>YTD</u>	Actual Total Income Less Actual Total Expense
Budget Forecast	\$24,935.83	\$34,780.21		\$249,358.30	\$347,802.10	
<b>Actual</b>	<b>\$26,682.26</b>	<b>\$44,588.62</b>	<b>(\$17,906.36)</b>	<b>\$298,901.51</b>	<b>\$362,226.69</b>	<b>(\$63,325.18)</b>
Variance	\$1,746.43	\$9,808.41	(\$17,906.36)	\$49,543.21	\$14,424.59	(\$63,325.18)
%	107.0%	128.2%		119.9%	104.1%	

**Faith Lutheran Church**

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**Church Council 2024**

Bob Henry, President  
Gayle McGrath, Vice President  
David Templar, Secretary  
Debbie Rosenberg, Treasurer  
Pastor Dana Lockhart  
  
Steve Hayes  
Urton Anderson  
Sue Anne Lau  
Penni Black

**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**

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**Kathy Egner**

**Director of Music**

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**Neil McComb, Sexton**

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**Paige Barricklow, Youth Assistant**

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**Courtney Herald, Learning Center Director**

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