



# Messenger

F a i t h L u t h e r a n C h u r c h

December 2023

volume 63 . issue 12

a message from senior pastor, Jacob Heine

*And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.*

*Deuteronomy 6:6 – 7*

Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them ....



DEUTERONOMY 6:6-7, NRSV

Every organization needs to have Core Values that help guide and direct decisions and all that they do. Faith Lutheran Church is no different. We have our Core Values that help to guide and direct all that we do and the decisions we make. A couple of months ago I started highlighting these values and why they matter to us. We heard how we are to put Christ at the center of all things. Christ is our light and our salvation, and it is important to put Him first in all things. We have heard about the importance of worship, about how we need to hear God’s Word proclaimed and receive His Sacraments.

This month we look at our 3<sup>rd</sup> Core Value.

### Core Value # 3 – Christian Education

Being lifelong learners is critical for all people. It is equally, if not more so, for the Christian. We live in a world that does not always value or appreciate God’s Word. It has never been difficult to hear a teaching that is different than God’s teaching. This is why from the earliest pages of the Bible until the closing chapters the importance of teaching and learning is mentioned. In Deuteronomy God instructs parents to teach their children, at the dedication of the temple the importance of education is mentioned, Jesus instructs His disciples in the Great Commission to teach everything He has commanded, and Paul routinely encourages teaching people the truths of God’s grace.

Martin Luther was so adamant about the importance of teaching and Christian Education during the Reformation. When he wrote his Small Catechism Luther noted several times that this was how the Head of the Household was to teach his family. This would not just be children, but it would include any other adults living in the house as well as any servants or workers in the household if they were present.

In order to live our Mission – to grow in faith, share God’s love – we have to learn about all that God has given to us. We must gather together around the teachings of the Bible regularly with our pastors, DCEs, and those that have been given to us to teach us. We need to go deep into learning so that our faith and trust and God can grow. This is one of the important ways that God equips us so that we can share His love with everyone, everywhere.

Because we have this Core Value, and we recognize the importance of Christian education in everyone’s life, we offer a dedicated education hour for all ages on Sunday Mornings, Wednesday evening classes for all ages, and Small Group ministry. We know that Christian Education is not just about our children, but rather is for all people. We know that Education is also not just a one class experience, but a combination of ongoing learning for life.

In Christ’s Hands,

Pastor Jacob

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*Oh come, let us sing to the  
LORD;  
let us make a joyful noise  
to the rock of our*

**Deborah Circle** met November 14 and had 8 members in attendance. Jan Lyle led a bible study on thanksgiving. We also enjoyed carrot cake for dessert. We will meet December 19 at the home of Janet Zima in celebrating Christmas.

**Eve Circle** met November 13 in the Church Parlor, with 10 members attending. Devotions were led by Nancy Kalthoff. In a brief business meeting Connie Crowder gave an overview of the Chicken Noodle Dinner. Pat Schultz provided refreshments and plans were discussed for a "Holiday Tasting Tea" on Dec 11.

**Hannah Circle** will be meeting on December 1 for our annual Christmas dinner!

**Ruth Circle** will meet December 13 in the Church basement at 9:00am. The morning will consist of organizing the Christmas project, cleaning the kitchen, and having lunch in the church basement. More information will follow.

Rebecca Guterrez and Karen Peterson attended the Kansas District LWML Women's Retreat in Wichita on November 10-11. It was a wonderful time of sharing with other LWML women from across Kansas as we studied the theme of continuous joy presented by Christian author, Sharla Fritz.

**Noodle Dinner/Quilt raffle update:**

The 3 quilt winners were:

Baby quilt, Jennifer Kuhn

Purple back quilt, Shari Albrecht

Patchwork quilt, Sandra Dickison

Quilt sales totaled \$303.00

We served around 200 meals and brought in around \$2200.00 (this number doesn't include the quilt sales).

**Update from  
our treasurer. . .**

MONTHLY FINANCIAL RESULTS

- Donations for October were \$82,534 and expenses were \$90,982 resulting in a **net negative** balance for the month of (\$8,448).
- YTD Donations are \$868,758 and expenses are \$931,585 resulting in a net YTD **negative** balance of (\$62,827).
- October YTD donations are \$21,063 below 2022.
- YTD expenses of \$52,931 are below budget.

**Quilters Needed** Our Monday morning quilters are in need of more help. Please consider joining them on 2nd & 4th Monday mornings here at Faith. Upcoming quilting dates: December 11.



No experience necessary. We are now meeting in a room in the south campus building. Questions? Contact Anne Johnson, 408-8004.

**Care Cards** Join friends at church every-other Wednesday in room 206 to make 4"x4" Care Cards. All materials are provided and no experience is necessary. Card making days this month are Dec. 6 & 20. Finished cards are placed in a box at the Care Card Center near the church's front entry - to be sent to members who need to know people CARE about them. Please write a note to the person(s) whose names appear on the white board at the Care Card center.

Join us for

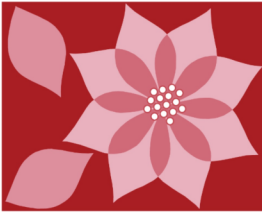
# Advent Worship

Wednesdays at 5pm & 7pm  
Dinner served from 5:30-6:30pm

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Advent Meals

December 6: Baked Potato Bar & Cake  
December 13: Taco Bar & Sopapilla Cheesecakes



# DECEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 8:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Festival of the Nativities 6:00pm Miracle on Kansas Ave Parade
3 <b>Advent</b> 8:00am Traditional Worship 9:30am Education Hour 9:30am Voter's Meeting 10:45am Contemporary Worship 12:15pm Traditional Worship 3:00pm Deaf church	4 7:00pm Boy Scouts	5 10:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Spiritual Life 7:00pm Praise Team Rehearsal	6 11:00am Care Card Making 5:00pm Advent Worship 5:15pm WOW 5:30pm Advent Meal 7:00pm Advent Worship	7 9:00am Scrap-booking 6:00pm Bell rehearsal 7:15pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	8 9:00am Scrap-booking	9 8:00am MOST Ministry 8:30am Concert dress rehearsal
10 8:00am Traditional Worship 9:30am Education Hour 10:45am Contemporary Worship 12:15pm Traditional Worship 3:00pm Christmas Concert	11 9:00am Quilting 7:00pm Boy Scouts 7:00pm Eve Circle	12 10:00am Bible Study 6:00pm LLC 7:00pm Praise Team Rehearsal	13 9:00am Ruth Circle 5:00pm Advent Worship 5:15pm WOW 5:30pm Advent Meal 7:00pm Advent Worship	14 5:30pm Christian Service Team 6:00pm Bell rehearsal 7:15pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	15 5:30pm Junior Youth Christmas	16 8:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Program dress rehearsal
17 8:00am Traditional Worship 9:30am Education Hour 10:45am Contemporary Worship 12:15pm Children's Christmas Program 3:00pm Senior Youth Caroling to the Homebound	18 7:00pm Boy Scouts	19 10:00am Bible Study 7:00pm Praise Team Rehearsal 7:00pm Deborah Circle	20 11:00am Care Card Making 6:00pm Zoo Lights	21 11:30am Senior Saints 6:00pm Bell rehearsal 7:15pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	22 <b>Office Closes at noon</b>	23 8:00am Men's Bible Study
24 <b>Christmas Eve</b> 9:30am Advent Morning Worship 4:00pm Christmas Eve Family Worship 6:00pm Christmas Eve Family Worship 8:00pm Christmas Eve Traditional Worship 10:00pm Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols Worship	25 <b>Christmas Day</b> <b>Church Office Closed</b> 9:30am Christmas Day Worship	26 <b>Church Office Closed</b>	27 7:00pm Praise Team Rehearsal	28	29 6:00pm Scout Lock-In	30 12:00am Scout Lock-In 8:00am Men's Bible Study
31 8:00am Traditional Worship 9:30am Education Hour 10:45am Contemporary Worship 12:15pm Traditional Worship 7:00pm NYE Worship	1 <b>Church Office Closed</b> <b>New Year's Day</b>	2 6:30pm Spiritual Life	3 7:00pm Praise Team Rehearsal	4 9:00am Scrap-booking	5 9:00am Scrap-booking	6 <b>Epiphany</b> 8:00am Men's Bible Study

## Feeling Thankful...and Hopeful!

With Thanksgiving just behind us and a new memory, we have so many things to be thankful for. Let's start with a review of the history of our nation's annual Thanksgiving Day.

One of the first accounts of the "First Thanksgiving" celebration occurred in November of 1621 in what is now Plymouth, Mass. The European settlers on the Mayflower and the Wampanoag Indians shared an autumn harvest. This feast was in celebration of the settlers' first successful corn harvest. Interestingly, among the 102 passengers on the Mayflower were religious people seeking a new home where they could freely practice their faith. Only half of these explorers survived their first winter at this new place. A native American, Squanto, taught the Pilgrims how to grow corn, extract sap from maple trees, catch fish, and avoid poisonous plants...paramount to their survival in this new place.

From the celebration in Plymouth in 1621 and for more than 200 years, days of thanksgiving were celebrated by individual colonies and states on different days. In 1789 George Washington issued the first Thanksgiving proclamation by the national government of the United States. Washington expected Americans to express their gratitude for the happy conclusion of the country's war of independence and the successful ratification of the U.S. Constitution. In 1863 Abraham Lincoln requested all Americans to ask God to "commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife" and to ask God to "heal the wounds of the nation." Thanksgiving was scheduled to be observed on the last Thursday of November, and it was celebrated then until 1941 when a bill was signed making Thanksgiving the 4th Thursday in November, as it is today.

The first Thanksgiving was about giving thanks, but it wasn't much like today's holiday. Hopefully in addition to the turkey, football, and Black Friday shopping we as Christians stopped to give thanks for the many blessings we have here in America...especially being thankful for the freedom to practice our Faith in Jesus Christ without fear of persecution. We are also blessed to have the freedom to vote and elect our leaders and to make choices that affect our health and healthcare as needed.

Looking forward we near the Season of Advent. According to Wikipedia Advent is a season observed in most Christian denominations as a "time of expectant waiting and preparation for both the celebration of the Nativity of Christ and the return of Christ at the Second Coming." Here in the Western World of Christianity Advent is the beginning of the liturgical year. In our Lutheran world Advent begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas...this year beginning on December 3; Advent always ends on December 24. I like to think of Advent as a season of prayer and repentance, as well as anticipation, hope, and joy.

Unfortunately, the holidays Thanksgiving and Christmas are not always met with joy. To many people who are grieving, these holidays are hard to cope with. And grieving can be caused by the loss of a loved one, the loss of a relationship, or with the loss of a job or someone's health. Blue Christmas, a service of healing and hope, is planned for those hurting emotionally and spiritually on Sunday, December 3, at 3 pm, at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. The worship service will contain music, scripture readings, meditation, anointing, prayers, and communion. We have fliers available at church. If you choose to participate in this service or if you choose not to participate, consider these thoughts.

1. Do things simply. Only do what you feel up to doing. But do something. It will help you and your family feel better.
2. Decorating may seem like a lot of work, but it will bring warmth to your home and it serves as a reminder that life goes on. Again, the decorating can be simple.
3. Fellowship is the best medicine for a grieving heart.
4. Remember that traditions can be changed and later changed again. Perhaps you can't put forth the effort to do things like you normally do, but maybe in years to come you can go back to your "traditional" way of doing these things. Or maybe you will find a new "tradition." Change can be ok. Do what helps make you feel good!

Merry Christmas to all!





## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Shelley Jensen	1	Cate Falk	14	Eric Hoyt	25
Alyssa Maxwell	2	Amanda Vines	14	Joshua Landman	25
Dylan Munson	3	Preston Moran	15	Pam Boetcher	26
Matthew Bleich	4	Christopher Wells	15	Michael Domingo	26
Duane Brunkow	4	Erik Meyer	16	Melissa Gateley	26
Fern Buchmeier	5	Dan Stiers	16	Lindsey Munson	26
Nadene Albrecht	6	Ed Carmona	17	Carol Kaufman	27
Laken Jennings	7	Mitchell Hullon	17	Nora Westjord	27
Daniel Lehman	9	Brandon O'Neill	17	Steve Franken	28
Alec Taylor	9	Taylor Reinert	18	Josh Mahon	28
Lindsey Guffey	10	Ella Campbell	19	Brandon Saunders	28
Justin Campbell	11	Zach Snethen	19	James Barrett	29
Brenda Reynolds	11	Connie Crowder	20	Dawson Durkes	29
Pat Schmidt	11	Vestanna McGuigan	20	John Holter	29
Arlene Turrentine	11	Koty Mize	20	Kathy Lange	29
Robert Carlson	12	Brooke Rush	20	Oliver Snethen	29
Brad Grotbeck	13	Norma Haley	21	Linda Wulfkuhle	29
Payton Ogden	13	Betty Schwant	21	Eric Boling	30
Peggy Roberts	13	Ron Kufahl	22	Bryson Hale	30
		Cindy McCormick	22	Emma Johannes	30
		Grace Morlock	22	Brent McGuigan	30
		Susan Rollenhagen	22	Chris Meyer	31
		Joe Zima	22	Kelley Richardson	31
		Gisela Bartling	23	Gary Robinson	31
		Barb Bleich	25	Janet Zima	31

Mark & Pantha Solie	9	Bob & Betsy Thompson	28
Tom & Deborah Pufahl	10	Keith & Juli Mazachek	29
Joe & Janet Zima	22	Meridee & Eriik Westjord	29
Ron & Carol Olson	28	Michael & Amber Long	31



## DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES



**DOORSTEP**

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

### Christmas Adoption Project

Doorstep staff and volunteers have been working hard for months as they prepare their Christmas Adoption Project. Now it is time to make the holiday brighter for the 800+ individuals they have adopted through the Topeka Christmas Bureau.

Each household they adopt will receive a Christmas food order, health kit, blanket/quilt, a household item, gifts, games and toys, school supplies, and a \$20 gift card per person in the household.

At this time, your monetary donations are appreciated and will help cover the cost of gift cards and food. You can send a check, or go to the website ([doorsteptopeka.org](http://doorsteptopeka.org)) to donate by credit card. Please note that you are a member of Faith.

### Doorstep closed for Christmas Adoption Project

Please note, Doorstep will be closed through December 15 if you want to drop off a used clothing donations; however, donations of food and clothing items can always be brought to church and left in the Doorstep box.

### Thank you!

Special thanks to Faith members who made generous donations of food and hygiene items during the month of November. Your gifts will help our neighbors in need!



# .CHILDREN. .YOUTH. .FAMILIES.

Heather McCormick, director of youth & family ministry

## YOUTH

### Junior Youth

Junior Youth will host coffee fellowship on Sunday, Dec. 3 at 8:30am. All proceeds go towards junior youth summer trips.

Junior Youth Christmas Party: This year's Christmas Party will be on Friday, Dec. 15 from 5:30-10:30pm. We will begin at Faith with dinner, before going to do a service project. Following the service project, we will go out for dessert, before returning to Faith for our annual White Elephant gift exchange (no more than \$10 per gift). Friends are always welcome!

### Senior Youth

Senior Youth will host coffee fellowship on Sunday, Dec. 17 at 8:30am. All proceeds will go towards senior youth summer trips.

Senior Youth Christmas Caroling to the Homebound will be on Sunday, Dec. 17 from 3-8pm. We will meet at Faith before heading off to carol at various homebound members' houses. In between caroling, we will stop for appetizers, entrees, and dessert before returning back to Faith for our annual White Elephant Gift exchange (no more than \$10 per gift). Friends are always welcome!

### Lutherhoma: Senior Youth Camp Opportunity

Camp Lutherhoma is offering a senior youth retreat on Friday, Jan. 12 through Sunday, Jan. 14! Registration is open now on their website. Talk to Heather for more information!

## FAMILY LIFE

Faith's **Annual Zoo Lights event** will be on Wednesday, Dec. 20 from 6-9pm at the Kay McFarland building. Enter through the Kay McFarland Garden gate (to the right of the main entrance off of the parking lot). Come have a snack, enjoy the Christmas lights, get a door prize, and warm up after being in the cold with some hot chocolate! Tickets are available to members from the church office beginning November 15 (\$8/adults, \$5/kids under 12 & seniors).

**STELLAR Christmas!** Join us on Sunday, Dec. 17 at 12:15pm for our annual Children's Christmas Program. This year's program is STELLAR Christmas! Connected to our VBS program from June, children will help tell the story of Christmas with their Bible buddies from outer space telling about our "out-of-this-world" God who came to earth to save us from our sins!

**Breakfast Club** continues every Saturday morning at 9am at Hanover Pancake House. All young adults who are 16 years old and up are invited to join us. Come get breakfast, spend time relaxing and talking, or bring homework to work on while you sip your coffee!

**Murder Mystery Dinner!** Faith will be doing a Murder Mystery Dinner on Friday, January 26 from 6:30-8:30pm! Join the intrigue as we figure out this whodunnit mystery! Seating will be limited, tickets are available starting Sunday, December 31 (\$8/person)!

## From our Director of Music & Worship Arts

Let the spirit of Christmas and its *Joyous Light* wash over you at the Music Ministry **Christmas Concert** on Dec 10 at 3pm. Hear beautiful choral selections by our Adult Choir accompanied by a string and wind ensemble; modern Christmas songs from our Praise Team; and delightful holiday pieces by the Alleluia Ringers. Don't miss this wonderful Christmas tradition at Faith!

With **Christmas Eve** falling on a Sunday, Faith will be offering the following services on Dec 24

- Join us for ONE worship at 9:30am with an *Advent-themed* blended style.
- Then come back in the evening to celebrate the Newborn King at one of our *Candlelight Communion* services:
  - 4:00pm – Family-friendly modern Christmas worship led by an acoustic praise team
  - 6:00pm – Modern Christmas worship led by our full praise team
  - 8:00pm – Traditional Christmas worship with organ and the Adult Choir
  - 10:00pm – Traditional worship with "The Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols"

Holiday services continue...

**Christmas Day** at 9:30am for a traditional festival service

**New Year's Eve** at 7:00pm for a traditional service of reflection and gratitude



# Mission • Outreach



**Operation Christmas Child** The Word on Wednesday children's classes, along with the help of adult Small Groups, packaged a total of 31 donation boxes for Operation Christmas Child. The operation benefits children facing adversity in over 100 countries, by sharing Christ's love through these Christmas gifts and sharing the Good News.



**Missionary Visit** Ben, Becca and Viktor Helge, LCMS Missionaries serving the Lord in Eurasia, visited Faith on September 12. It was wonderful to hear Ben and Becca give a presentation on the Lord's work in Czechia during the education hour.



**International Student Visit** We cherish the opportunity to partner with the International Program to host a group of students from Chiba University Japan. After attending a worship service, we enjoyed a social potluck with these visitors.

**American Sign Language** The 8-week course of American Sign Language completed November 17th, In total this program brought over 80 students through our doors. The feedback from participants was truly inspiring as the content and instruction has improved students' relationships and quality of life. Because of the overwhelming support and appreciation, ASL class will continue with another 8-week session beginning in January.



## FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

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### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Mon - Fri 8:00am to 4:30pm (closed 12-1pm)

### SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:00\* - Traditional Worship

10:45\* - Contemporary Worship

12:15 - Traditional Worship

\* also live-streamed on Facebook, YouTube

### EDUCATION

Sundays for all ages: 9:30am

WOW Wednesdays: 5:15-7:30pm (Sept-Apr)

*The Messenger is mailed monthly to all members. January edition deadline is*

**December 16** to the church office.



FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

1716 SW Gage Blvd  
Topeka KS 66604

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Topeka, Kansas

### Address Service Requested



Christian Service Team has determined  
2023 Sunday School /Mission Outreach  
offering will include:

December -

Sunshine Connection

