Welcome to

Faith Lutheran

**March 12, 2017**

****

**Pastor Ellen Schoepf**

[prellen@faithlutheranokemos.org](mailto:prellen@faithlutheranokemos.org)

**4515 Dobie Road**

**Okemos, Mi 48864**

**517-349-0620**

**Late-Night Catechism**

Perhaps as a young person you experienced religious education that was based on questions and answers. That’s what a catechism is. Martin Luther published his Small Catechism in 1529 so that people could hear and understand the basics of the Christian faith. For the most part, Luther sticks to one question throughout: “What does this mean?”

Nicodemus has heard about Jesus and comes to him with questions. He comes by night, a time of day representing mystery, ignorance, and hiding. It would be risky for this religious leader to ask his questions in the light of day. Nicodemus thinks he is coming for information, like getting answers to questions in a catechism. What he finds is a teacher who speaks the language of symbol, spirit, and experience. While a befuddled Nicodemus tries to wrap his analytical and literal mind around Jesus’ strange talk about being born from above, Jesus patiently points him toward the Spirit. Can a person so far along in life have a new beginning? Yes! In baptism we are born again of water and Spirit, a birth that shapes the rest of our lives.

Jesus’ use of birth imagery suggests that sometimes we would rather stay in the warmth, darkness, and safety of the womb than take any risks in life. The season of Lent gives us spiritual encouragement for our birthing. At times it may seem like we don’t get any answers to our questions, or that nothing is clear-cut and simple anymore. But the Spirit is brooding and the wind is blowing where it will. We may not always know what is happening to us or where we are going, but we trust that God is leading us and guiding us.

Nicodemus’s late-night catechism leads him to a new kind of faith. Likewise, in baptism we begin a lifelong journey of renewal and transformation. Jesus, our teacher, leads the way.

**Sunday, March 12, 2017**

Second Sunday in Lent

**Introduction to the day**

During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today’s gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as daughters and sons of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God’s love for all the world.

*If hearing assistance is needed, please ask an usher for a personal PA receiver.*

*The ushers also have large print copies of today’s worship folder available.*

*If it will be difficult for you to stand along with the congregation during*

*any part of the worship service, please feel free to remain seated.*

*There is a nursery available during the worship service for those who wish*

*to use it. It is located at the end of the hall beyond the coat racks.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*We cordially greet all who have come to worship today.*

*Please register your attendance and join us in fellowship after the service.*

Prayer Requests

**PRELUDE**

Flutes of Faith “Sonata in E Minor, Movement One” (Bach)

*The pre-service music signals the beginning of the worship service. Silence during the*

*pre-service music enables worshipers to prepare for worship through quiet meditation.*

**Gathering**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

**Confession and Forgiveness**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism,*

*as the presiding minister begins.*

In the name of the Father,

and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

God of heaven and earth,

you come in close and make us yours.

Equip us by your Spirit to confess our sin,

embrace your forgiveness,

and seek the way you set before us in your Son,

Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

With honesty of heart, let us confess our sin.

*The assembly may kneel or stand.*

Merciful God,

**forgive us.**

**Our will is handcuffed to sin, and we cannot break free.**

**We have spoken when we should have kept quiet.**

*Silence.*

Merciful God,

**We were silent when we should have said something.**

*Silence.*

Merciful God,

**We acted when we knew better.**

*Silence.*

Merciful God,

**We were still when we know we should have moved.**

*Silence.*

**For the wrong we have done,**

**for the good we have failed to do,**

**have mercy on us,**

**through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

**Amen.**

People of God, look to the ☩ Son,

given to heal you and set you free

because God loved the world so much.

Take hold of life—eternal life!

**Amen.**

**Gathering Song**

***Lift High the Cross ELW #660***

*The assembly stands*

**Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**Kyrie**

**Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

O God, our leader and guide, in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**Word**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

**First Reading: Genesis 12:1-4a**

*God’s call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation.*

A reading from Genesis.

1The Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. 2I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”  
  4aSo Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm: Psalm 121**

*The psalm is read responsively*

1I lift up my eyes to the hills;  
  from where is my help to come?  
 2**My help comes from the Lord,**  
  **the maker of heaven and earth.**

 3The Lord will not let your foot be moved  
  nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.  
 4**Behold, the keeper of Israel**  
  **will neither slumber nor sleep;**

 5the Lord watches over you;  
  the Lord is your shade at your right hand;  
 6**the sun will not strike you by day,**  
  **nor the moon by night.**

 7The Lord will preserve you from all evil  
  and will keep your life.  
 8**The Lord will watch over your going out**

**and your coming in,** **from this time forth forevermore.** 

**Second Reading: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17**

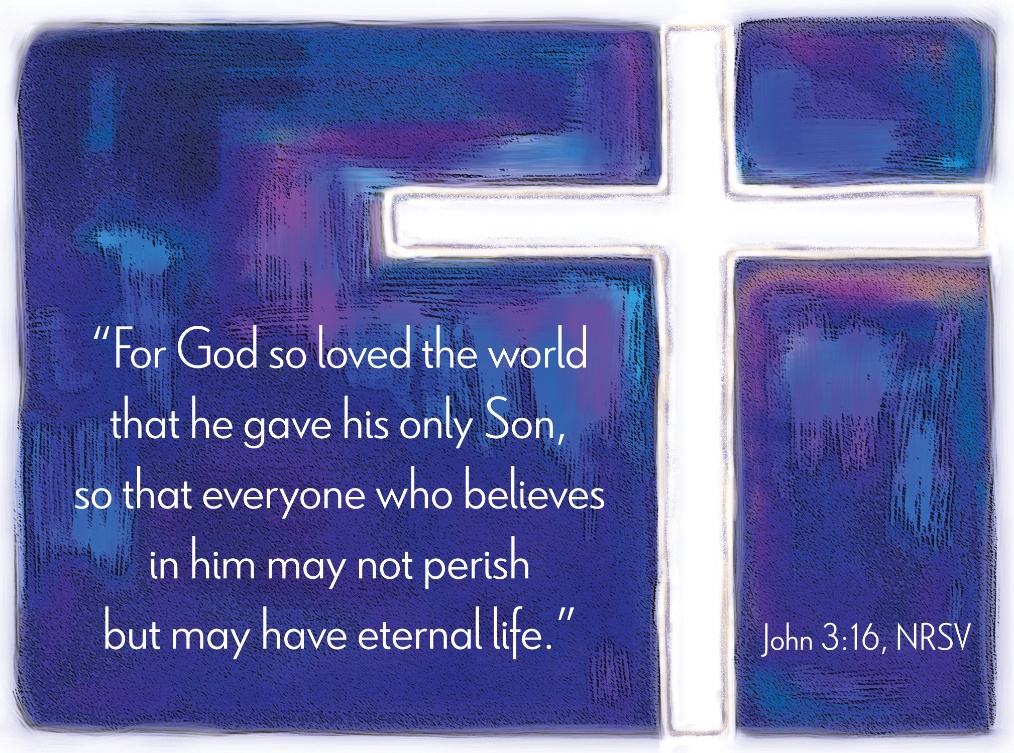
*In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God’s promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jews and Gentiles, because we too trust that ours is a God who gives life to the dead.*

A reading from Romans.

1What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? 2For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3For what does the scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” 4Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. 5But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.  
  13For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. 14If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. 15For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.  
  16For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, 17as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”)—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**

*The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.*

****Gospel Acclamation**

Text and Music printed under CCLI license 720217

**Gospel: John 3:1-17**

*A curious Pharisee visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God.*

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

1Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. 2He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” 3Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” 4Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” 5Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. 6What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ 8The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” 9Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” 10Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?  
  11“Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. 12If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? 13No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.  
  16“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.  
  17“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**Children’s message**

**Sermon**

*The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in song.*

**Hymn of the day**

***We Are Baptized in Christ Jesus ELW #451***

**Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,**

**creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,**

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,**

**born of the virgin Mary,**

**suffered under Pontius Pilate,**

**was crucified, died, and was buried;**

**he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;**

**he ascended into heaven,**

**he is seated at the right hand of the Father,**

**and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,**

**the holy catholic church,**

**the communion of saints,**

**the forgiveness of sins,**

**the resurrection of the body,**

**and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Prayers of Intercession**

Lifting our voices and turning toward God, let us pray for the church, the earth, and all who are in need.

*Prayers of intercession are prayed.*

*To each petition, the assembly responds:*

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*The presiding minister concludes the*

*prayers, and the assembly responds:*

Into your hands, merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your steadfast love; through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*The assembly is seated.*

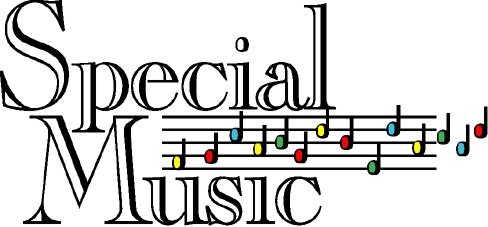
**Meal**

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

**offering**

“Sonata in F minor, Adante, Allegro” G.P. Telemann

Sam Kadrofske, Euphonium

****

**offering response**

Text and Music printed under CCLI license 720217

**Offering Prayer**

Let us pray.

God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**Great Thanksgiving**

**Dialogue**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**Preface**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,

through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You call your people to cleanse their hearts

and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,

that, renewed in the gift of baptism,

we may come to the fullness of your grace.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, Holy, Holy**

****

**Thanksgiving at the Table**

Holy God, our living Water and our merciful Guide, together with rivers and seas, wells and springs we bless and magnify you. You led your people Israel through the desert, and provided them water from the rock. We praise you for Christ, our Rock and our Water, who joined us in our desert, pouring out his life for the world.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await your salvation for all this thirsty world. Pour out your Spirit on this holy food and on all the baptized gathered for this feast: wash away our sin, that we may be revived for our journey by the love of Christ. Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

**Amen**

****

**Lord’s Prayer**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit,

let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in heaven,**

**hallowed be your name,**

**your kingdom come,**

**your will be done,**

**on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins**

**as we forgive those**

**who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial**

**and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,**

**and the glory are yours,**

**now and forever. Amen.**

**Invitation to Communion**

Return to God with all your heart.

Receive bread for the journey, drink for the desert.

*The assembly is seated*

**Communion**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

**Communion Song**

Text and Music printed under CCLI license 720217

**congregational song**

***God Loved the World ELW #323***

**communion music**

“Give me Jesus” arr. James Pethel

*The assembly stands*

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ

strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**Amen.**

**Prayer after Communion**

Compassionate God,

you have fed us with the bread of heaven.

Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage:

may our fasting be hunger for justice,

our alms, a making of peace,

and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts;

through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**Sending**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

**Blessing**

May God who has called us forth from the dust of the earth,

and claimed us as children of the light,

strengthen you on your journey into life renewed.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord’s face shine upon you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor

and give you ☩ peace.

**Amen.**

**sending song**

***Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death ELW #452***

**Dismissal**

Marked with the cross of Christ,

go forth to love and serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

“Lift High the Cross” arr. Carolyn Hamlin

Copyright © 2017 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS000803.New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

“I will bless you…so that you will be a blessing,” said God to Abram (Genesis 12:2). May each of us gathered this morning be blessed so we may go out and bless others. Welcome.



Pastor Ellen Schoepf prellen@faithlutheranokemos.org

Secretary Katie Love klove@faithlutheranokemos.org

Director of Christian Education Melinda Schultz

Director of Music Debra Borton-McDonough

Organist/Pianist Bruce Williams

March 05, 2017 Attendance: 105

Serving Faith March 12 March 19

Acolyte Griffin Ransom Adelle Dingledine

Altar Care Michelle Ransom & Pam Williams

Communion Assistants Griffin Ransom Adelle Dingledine

Mike Eschelbach Zachary Hereza

Linda Hirt John McCraken

Greeters Mike Eschelbach Mark & Molly DeHate

Lay Assistants Mike Eschelbach Zachary Hereza

Readers Linda Hirt John McCraken

Ushers Bill & Pam Williams

Nursery Heidi Bowers Lori Webb

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

FaithFamily&Friends3

**March 12, 2017**

*Log onto Faith’s website www.faithlutheranokemos.org 24/7 for updates*

**DEADLINES**

Sunday worship folder announcements⎯Tuesday of each week

Submit to Katie at klove@faithlutheranokemos.org

***April Faith Family News newsletter*⎯**

**Please submit by Monday March 20**

Submit to Katie at klove@faithlutheranokemos.org

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Please lift up in prayer this week:

🕆 Members—Max Ambs, Lowell Barricklow, Ellen Milne,

Harry Nawrock, Harold Sollenberger and Ken Whitmyer.

🕆 Friends and family—

Harriet,Pat Belonga, Todd Barriklow, Carol Coyer, Chris Cotter, Terrie Becker, Allie, Heather, Al, Lilly, Sai Eshwar Lingamgunta, Jenn Leitch, Jeanne and Leonard, Tom Brown, Susan Heft, Pat Hillberg & Family, Dennis Cobler, John Joseph Lanzetta, Bethany Robison, and the White family. Please keep Rich Weingartners mother, Sally Weingartner and his sister Lani Yearicks in your prayers.

🕆 Our mission partner congregation⎯Lansing Redeemer Lutheran Church

🕆 Those in military service⎯Jon Schoepf, Lani Yearicks,

Melody and Adam Wright and Joe Galvin.

🕆 Samaritas children who seek adoption— Giovanni, Jessica, LeeAnn and

Valerie. Pray for each to be adopted and for Jesus to be their lifelong friend.

**NORTH/WEST LOWER MICHIGAN SYNOD PRAYER PARTNER**

As Jesus calls us to be one, even as he and the Father are one, please include Pastor Julie Winklepleck and the congregation of St. Paul Lutheran Church of East Lansing, Michigan in your prayers of intercession this week.

**FINANCIAL UPDATE**

**Weekly Offering 03/05/17**  Year-to-date as of 01/31/2017

Loose Cash $ 106.00 Income $28,328.54

Loose Checks $ 5.00 Expenses $24,028.33

Sunday School $ 21.75 Net Income **4,300.21**

Youth

Retreat $ 328.00

Shrove Dinner $ 375.00

Spare Time $ 60.00

Flowers $ 75.00

Lois Sollenberger Mem. $ 350.00

Loaves & Fishes $ 10.00

Envelope Fund $ 5.00

Capital Repairs $ 5.00

World Hunger $ 35.00

Ash Wednesday $ 238.00

Shalom Church Books $ 190.80

Facility Rental $ 550.00

General Fund $ 5889.00

Subtotal $ 8243.55

Simply Giving $ 2101.00

Total  **$ 10,344.55**

**ALTAR FLOWER DEDICATIONS ­­­­**

Today’s altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in celebration of the birthdays of Phyllis Shorman and Carol Towl.

THIS WEEK’S CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

\*\*Easter Flower Order forms are available at the end of the worship folder. Due Date: Sunday April 2nd. \*\*

Today

9:00 a.m. Adult & Children’s Sunday School

10:00 a.m. Worship

11:30 a.m. Mutual Ministry Listening Post

Monday, March 13th

Tuesday, March 14th

Worship folder announcements deadline

Noon: Study in Pastor Ellen’s office

Wednesday, March 15th

7:30 a.m. Men’s Study

9:30 a.m. Quilting and Samaritas ACTION

5:30 p.m. Joyful Noise

6:00 p.m. Dinner Begins

6:15 p.m. Faith Bells

6:30 p.m. T & C

7:15 p.m. Worship Service

7:45 p.m. Choir Good Friday Practice

7:45 p.m. Parish Ed Meeting \*\* Date Change \*\*

8:10 p.m. Chancel Choir Practice

Thursday, March 16th

7:00 p.m. RIC Meeting

Friday, March 17th

Happy St. Patrick’s Day!

Saturday, March 18th

11:00 a.m. Lois Sollenberger Memorial Service

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

**Director of Children’s Education**

Melinda Schultz has informed us that she wishes to resign from her position as Christian Education/Youth Director. She has decided her last day will be June 1 of this year. We are deeply grateful for all the fine work she has done while serving in this position of ministry in the church. As Human Resources works to fill this position, we are accepting applications through today. If you would like to apply for this position, please submit a letter of interest along with references to Pastor Ellen. If you have any questions, please speak to Pastor Ellen.

The next listening post will be today in the Library following the worship service.

\*\*The Mutual Ministry Committee was created in March 2015. This committee was formerly called the Pastoral Support Committee. At the April 2015 Quarterly Meeting, the committee members were announced to the congregation. As noted in the By-Laws (approved by the congregation in November 2015), the Mutual Ministry Committee Chairperson shall be elected by the congregation to a two-year term in even-numbered years. The committee consists of 5 members, including 1 chairperson, and 1-2 come off each year. The description of the committee is to advise the pastor about the conditions within the congregational family and to hear pastoral concerns.\*

**\*\*Name Tag Sunday will be Sunday, March 26th . If you don’t have a name tag please let Katie know. klove@faithlutheranokemos.org\*\***

WAYS TO HELP

****

**EASTER BASKET FOOD DRIVE**

My children, we should love people not only with words and talk, but by our actions and true caring.

1 John 3:18

The Caring Committee is sponsoring the annual Easter Basket Food Drive. Meridian Township Human Resources Dept. provides us with the names of 20 families that need a little extra help. Faith members are blessed to be able to help by providing any/or all the items listed below.

Cereal Peanut Butter

Muffin Mix Boxed Desserts

Juice Easter Candy

Boxed Potatoes Easter Egg Coloring Kits

Tuna Mac & Cheese

Canned Fruits and Vegetables

Cash donations help with the purchase of the hams, eggs, and milk for the families. **The delivery date is Sunday, APRIL 9**. Please see the sign-up sheet on the information board in the narthex.

Thank you for your support, care for others and prayers as we do HIS work in the community.

WAYS TO HELP

**What are those Laundry Baskets for??**

**ARROW TREE FOOD PANTRY**

The Caring Committee is launching a community outreach program to help support the Arrow Tree Apartment complex across the street from Faith Lutheran Church. Pastor Ellen and Katie Love have been in contact with the apartment complex manager, Janice, and she has expressed the need for non-perishable food items for some of the residents.

We will be collecting food items in baskets in the lower main church entry, as an ongoing project. Members can drop food items at any time in the baskets. Janice from Arrow Tree will come over and pick up the food items, or Pastor Ellen and Katie will deliver them. Janice will be responsible for distributing the food items on an as needed basis to residents and will store the extra items. Pastor Ellen and Katie will be in contact with Janice as needed.

Suggested items needed: SOUP, MAC & CHEESE, CEREAL, OATMEAL, PASTAS, PEANUT BUTTER, HEALTHY SNACK BARS, TUNA, CANNED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES ETC.

Thank you members of Faith Lutheran for your continued help and support as we reach out to help those in need.

**Let us stop saying we love people; let us really love them and show it by our actions**

**1 John 3:18**

UPCOMING MEETINGS & STUDIES

**Adult Sunday School** Going on NOW

Please join us at 9:00 am on Sunday mornings in the Library as we will be studying Walter Brueggemann’s book “Embracing the Prophets”

Walter, arguably America’s leading Old Testament scholar and theologian, takes us on a wild ride through the poetic prophecy of Hebrew Scripture, identifying cultural contexts, putting a framework to Israel’s history, and, most significantly -and at times challengingly! - drawing connections between Israel’s sociological, economic and spiritual status and that of America today.

**CAREGIVERS SUPPORT Group Meeting**

Join us at 11:30am for a light lunch and discussion. All are Welcome!

Thursday, April 13th: Allie Phillips – Self Empowerment Coach and master energy therapist. The place where energy laws and healing come together for people and pets.

Thursday, May 11th: Kristin Creighton, Fahrenheit Massage will speak on Self-Care tips for the Caregiver and Free Chair Massage.

**Stay Connected!**

Want to know what is happening at Faith Lutheran? Stay connected online:

Website - [faithlutheranokemos.org](http://faithlutheranokemos.org/)

Facebook - [facebook.com/faithlutheranokemos](http://facebook.com/faithlutheranokemos)

**Your Faith Journey Podcast**

* iOS - <http://bit.ly/faithios>
* Android - <http://bit.ly/faithandroid>

You also will find the audio available on the Faith Lutheran Website under worship:

Sermons - <http://faithlutheranokemos.org/sermons/>

Special Music - <http://faithlutheranokemos.org/category/special-music/>

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND YOUTH ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Youth Fundraiser, March Madness Meal, March 19th, 11:30-12:30**Please join us for a fantastic meal in celebration of March Madness. Whether or not you are a fan of basketball, the foods offered during a sporting event are as good as they come. We will have BBQ pulled pork sandwiches, mac n’ cheese, quesadillas, BBQ meatballs, coleslaw and more!! The youth would appreciate any donations of the following items in order to help with our final costs: (30) 12” flour tortillas, (6) packages of 12 white dinner rolls, (2) ranch dressings, (1) jar of mayonnaise, (1) large bag of coleslaw greens, (1) bag of carrots, (2) broccoli heads, (2) cauliflower heads, (1) large container of grape tomatoes, (2) bags of chips, (8) boxes of Kraft mac n’cheese, (4) 18oz. jars of grape jelly, (4) 18oz. bottles of Sweet Baby Ray’s Original BBQ sauce, (1) gallon white milk, (1) 2Liter bottles of Coke, Sprite, Orange, Rootbeer.  
  
**\*\*\*\*\*DATE CHANGE FOR PARISH EDUCATION MEETING**  
Due to a scheduling conflict, I need to change the meeting to Wednesday, March 15th at 7:45pm. We will be discussing the Easter Egg Hunt and Confirmation Sunday. Please let Melinda know if you are able to make this meeting.

**Confirmation Retreat, March 24th-26th**This retreat will be held **March 24th** in Harbor Springs, Michigan. We will be leaving the church on **Friday at as close to 5:00pm as possible** and will be returning to the church around **6:00pm** **on Sunday**. We will stop for dinner on the way to the retreat and a snack on the way back. This is a wonderful fellowship opportunity for the confirmands, as well as an opportunity to continue their lessons in a different environment. All confirmation students should attend a retreat during their two-year cycle. The cost of the retreat, which includes meals, lodging, transportation, and activity fees, is $75.00. Scholarship money is available if needed, just let Melinda know. Checks should be payable to Faith Lutheran.  
I realize that some of our confirmands may have other commitments this weekend. Please let me know as soon as possible if you will not be able to attend the retreat.

**Thrivent Action Teams are needed again!!!**  
Please apply to help your youth group in a one-time fundraiser, service activity or educational event that can be completed within 90 days. Here are some suggestions for your Thrivent Action Teams: Quiche Meal or Faith Vacation Bible School. Use this link to get started: <https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/living-generously/thrivent-action-teams/> Please see Melinda to get specific details or if you have any questions.

**Important Dates in March**   
15th - Parish Education Meeting, 7:45pm  
19th - **March Madness Meal**, 11:30-1:00pm  
24th-26th Confirmation Retreat, 5:00pm-6:00pm

**COMMUNITY FORUM**

WHAT: Community Forum – Race and the School to Prison Pipeline.

WHEN: Thursday evening, March 30, from 6:00 – 7:30 PM

WHERE: Faith Lutheran Church

4515 Dobie Rd.

Okemos, MI

Discussion panel participants include:

**The Honorable Donald L. Allen, Jr**. – Chief Judge, 55th Judicial Court

**Angela Waters Austin** – President and CEO of One Love Global, Inc.

**LaShawn Erby** – Author, Social Justice Warrior, Community Organizer

**Nathaniel Lake, Jr.** – Elder within The Turning Point of Lansing

**Rev. Kenneth Ponds** – Retired ELCA Chaplain (Starr Commonwealth, Albion)

**Moderator – Milton L. Scales** – President of M.L. Scales & Associates, LLC

As we prepare for the Community Forum, Faith Lutheran Church is also sponsoring a showing of the acclaimed documentary:

13th

on Thursday evening, March 23, at 7:00 PM

13th is a 2016 American documentary by director Ava DuVernay. Centered on race in the United States criminal justice system, the film is titled after the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which outlawed slavery. DuVernay's documentary opens with the idea that 25 percent of the people in the world who are incarcerated are incarcerated in the U.S. and argues that slavery is being effectively perpetuated in the U.S. through mass incarceration. The showing of this film will also take place at Faith Lutheran Church. All are welcome to attend.

**Interfaith Circle of Protection – Prayer, Advocacy, Community**

7 – 8:30 PM, Thursday, March 16th at the Central Free Methodist Church, 828 N Washington Ave., Lansing

All people of faith and committed to the common good are invited to this evening of quiet prayer for vulnerable people everywhere. Following prayer in the Sanctuary, there will be time of fellowship and advocacy. For further information, you may contact the church office or Pastor John Burow: pastorjburow@yahoo.com

**SYNOD SPONSORED EVENTS**

**Synod Sponsored Event**

On Saturday, March 25, the North/West Lower Michigan Synod is hosting an event here at Faith Lutheran Church. The event is entitled **"Why Are Lutherans Political?" A Day of Conversation with Dr. James M. Childs, Jr.**

In our Nation today, the relationship between faith and politics is a highly-charged topic of discussion. Dr. James Childs, Jr., Professor Emeritus of Theology and Ethics ad Trinity Lutheran Seminary, will guide us in exploration of this topic through presentations and conversation. This event will be held Saturday, March 25, 2017 from 9:30am to 3:30pm at Faith Lutheran Church in Okemos. All are welcome!  
You may register for this event by contacting Ann at the Synod Office (321-5066). Lunch will be provided for a modest fee.

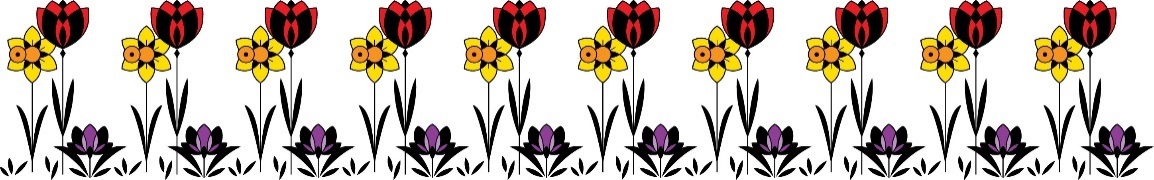
**March 2017 Samaritas Update**

Samaritas empowers people with disabilities to have a voice in their own care and become involved members of their communities. Our community-based residential programs are tailored to fit the needs of each person who calls them home, from those requiring 24/7 care to individuals who are more independent. We also assist people in maintaining independence where they currently live. **Together, we served 412 people** through these programs in 2016. To learn more in the western half of Michigan, please contact Ann Meldrum at [ameld@samaritas.org](mailto:ameld@samaritas.org) or call 231-722-2400; in the eastern half of the state, please contact Kevin Majeske at [kmaje@samaritas.org](mailto:kmaje@samaritas.org) or call 989-513-3416. Learn more about all the services we offer at [www.samaritas.org](http://www.samaritas.org).

Your Servant in Christ,

Pastor Niklaus Schillack

Director of Church Relations



**2017 EASTER FLOWER DEDICATION**

**Order deadline: April 2**

I would like to order the following flower(s) to

be placed in the sanctuary on Easter Sunday:

QUANTITY FLOWER(S) ORDER TOTAL

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Daffodil(s) $10 ea. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Tulip(s)\* $10 ea. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\*Color selection for tulips: Purple Pink Yellow Red

Please PRINT your dedication(s) below:

Name person(s) dedicating:

In memory of:

In honor of:

In celebration of:

Make checks payable to Faith Lutheran Church

Place this dedication form in Connie Nelson’s church mailbox

*Please pick up your flower(s)*

*after the late worship service Easter Sunday*