

Faith Family News

From the Pastor's Pen...

Dear Friends,

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. Philippians 1:3-6

As we enter April, we begin the month by experiencing Holy Week, that week of Jesus' passion, and then Easter. We experience death and grief, and then we experience resurrection and newness of life.

This is truly the story of our lives.

I think about this story as I prepare to leave you at the end of the month. My life with you comes to an end and, for me, it is a form of death. However, for both you and for me, life will begin anew. You will receive a new pastor and new ministries will be born. And I will have the freedom to enjoy more precious, priceless moments with my family.

Our life together as a Faith community has been especially full of reasons for gratitude and hope. God has done some incredible things through this community over the past eight years in the ministry we have shared. I could not possibly be more grateful for all of you and our ministry together. You have invited me into your lives, and we have shared good times and bad. You have been present at times of joy and sorrow in my own life.

I am excited to see what God will do through Faith Lutheran Church in coming decades. You are a remarkable community of faith, with clear vision, compassionate ministries that touch the lives of people beyond the walls of our building, strong leadership, deep trust in God's immeasurable grace and love, and a humble willingness to risk and change for the sake of our neighbors and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Continued Page 3



Inside This Issue

Serving Faith.....	2
Retirement Party.....	3
Education/Guests.....	4
Holy Week/Easter.....	5
Sunday School/Youth.....	6
Poem for Reflection.....	7
Ways to Help.....	8,9
Social Kin-dom.....	10
Prayers.....	11
Calendar.....	12

Serving Faith

LAY ASSISTANTS

4/2	Randy Royalty
4/9	Paul Hereza
4/16	Kim O'Brien
4/23	Randy Royalty
4/30	Rich Weingartner

READER SCHEDULE

4/2	Jon Harrison
4/9	Linda Hirt
4/16	John McCracken
4/23	Warren Heilman
4/30	Paul Hereza

COFFEE HOUR

4/2	Herek
4/9	Easter
4/16	Confirmation
4/23	Green Team
4/30	Hereza

USHERS

Holste/Robinson
Harrison
Kopf
Hirt
McCracken/Milne

ALTAR CARE

Tammy Heilman
Tammy Heilman
Heidi Bowers
Heidi Bowers
Jamie Royalty

GREETERS

Ken & Ellen Milne
Marla Holle
Rich Weingartner
Doug & Linda Hirt
Chris & Jean Lewis

NURSERY

Open
Jennifer Coe
Open
Brenda Kopf
Open

ACOLYTE

Open
Isaak Nyquist
Open
Jasper Wawrzynski
Open

We need volunteers for Nursery, Lay Assistants and Greeters.

Many hands make light work!! Step up and volunteer!

Lay Assistants/Readers: Diane Hill: hillmaxd6@gmail.com Ushers: Ken Schoepf: kjschoepf@yahoo.com

Altar Care: Elaine Harrison: jon.harrison@comcast.net Sunday School: Pam Williams

Nursery: Jennifer Coe: jenlynncoe@yahoo.com Greeters: Mike Eschelbach: eschelbachm@gmail.com

To Sign up for Coffee Hour please use the sign-up sheet on the Narthex Kitchen Counter

Property Committee News

Our annual yard Spring Cleanup will be on Sunday, May 7th after the morning service. We will do the usual trimming and bed upkeep, and this year we will be mulching as well. The rain date will be May 21st. Please put it on your calendar and help us if you can. Thank you. Property Committee

From the Pastor's Pen Continued....

I feel so much gratitude and hope, but I am also feeling genuine sadness as I leave you. I treasure you; I will truly miss you, and I will continue to hold you in prayer. Throughout the month of April, my priority and joy will be to spend time with you and give thanks for memories too abundant to be encompassed in a letter. I want you to know the tremendous privilege and blessing it has been in my life, my ministry, and my faith to serve as your pastor.

Gratefully, in Christ,

Pastor Ellen



Sign-up forms are available in the Narthex at church or by emailing Katie at
<mailto:klove@faithlutheranokemos.org>

ADULT Sunday School

John Schleicher has connected with **Rep. Elissa Slotkin** and she is planning to come to Faith Lutheran on Sunday, April 16, for both Sunday School and worship. You are invited to join us as we continue to explore Creation Care. As we move through winter and into spring, we experience the perfect time to again focus on our call to care for the earth.

NEW ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS BEGINS ON APRIL 23

A STUDY ON CIVIC LIFE AND FAITH

Beginning on Sunday, April 23, John Schleicher and Rich Weingartner will co-teach a six-session study on ***Civic Life and Faith***. This study curriculum was created by the Task Force on Civic Life and Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and published by the ELCA's churchwide organization as a critical step toward development of a social teaching statement. The curriculum invites participants to delve into the nature of politics, the meaning of the Scriptures, the purpose of government, the responsibility of congregations and church-related organizations, First Amendment issues, the relationship of faith-based living and civic life, connections between worship life and serving neighbor in society, the nature of citizenship, and other relevant topics. These are weighty and difficult discussions for people of faith! We invite you to join John and Rich for this new class.

Friday, May 5 – The Islamic Center community will join us here at Faith Lutheran Church for a catered Halal dinner, and John Schleicher and the Imam will present a program on the Similarities and Points of Contact between Ramadan and Lent. The schedule for the evening looks like this:

6:00 – 6:30, gathering time as people get to know others

6:30 – 7:00, dinner

7:00 – 7:30, program

7:30 – and on, Questions & Answers

For these events, there is a signup sheet in the Narthex. You can also sign up by using this link.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508094caaa623a3f49-interfamith>



Maundy Thursday

The Maundy Thursday service will take place at Faith Lutheran Church on Thursday, April 6th at 7:00 P.M.



Good Friday Worship

Noon worship at Okemos Community Church

7:00 P.M. worship at Faith Lutheran Church



Let's Celebrate Easter

Saturday, April 8th 10:00 a.m. – Noon

At Faith Lutheran

Easter Egg Hunt (at 10:30)

Games, Crafts, Snacks & Fun!

All are welcome!!



Easter Sunday Breakfast

Easter Continental Breakfast

8:45 A.M. on Easter Sunday

Membership Development invites everyone to an Easter morning continental breakfast at Faith. A sign-up sheet is available in the Narthex at the church.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming Membership Development Activities:

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
W H A R T O N
C E N T E R

There will also be a signup sheet for **Wharton Tickets** to Jesus Christ Superstar (thank you Rich Weingartner). The date for this show is Sunday, June 18th (Fyi- this is Father's Day) at 1:00 pm. Rich was able to get a group rate for tickets, so the price is \$82 per ticket. A \$1 handling fee per order will also be charged. Orders and payments must be made by May 5th. What a great opportunity for Faith friends to see this rock opera that has wowed audiences for over 50 years!

Sunday School/Youth Ministry

April 5 – NO CLASS – HOLY WEEK

April 12 – Youth Activity

April 16 – Confirmation Sunday

April 19 – Class – The Creed / Article 3

April 26 – Last Confirmation Class – Celebration Night – Mentors invited

LINKS TO ACOLYTE SCHEDULE & SERMON NOTES:

Acolyte Sign-up Link: bit.ly/faithacolytesignup

Sermon Note Sign-in Link: bit.ly/FaithSermonNotes2223

Volunteering is an important way for people to learn about living life as Jesus did.

Our youth, 6th grade and up, have volunteer opportunities each month. I am hoping to have each student volunteer for at least one activity each month. See below for the Sign-Up Genius to sign up.



[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080b4eaaab22aafe3-march#/
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080b4eaaab22aafe3-april#/>](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080b4eaaab22aafe3-march#/)

POEM FOR REFLECTION

The war in Ukraine drags on. As people of faith, we continue to hold the people of Ukraine in prayer and stand with them in solidarity as they fight for freedom. The following poem, *Lina's Place*, was written by Marianne Peel and is found in her book, *No Distance Between Us*. As we continue to hold the citizens of Ukraine in prayer, this poem is deeply meaningful.

I remember Luba crying
at a Michigan counter years ago
over pre-packaged slabs of pork and beef,
blood-red, obscenely thick.
Rare in her world.

Now, in Luba's Ukraine,
the airport bathroom offers only a hole
and two places to plant my feet.
I am clumsy as I relieve myself, awkward
as I straddle this foreign place.

At Luba's house, everything looks tired.
The washing machine decrepit, weary.
Even the pig is exhausted.
But the garden is alive, and she takes pride
in the lattice that anchors the vines to her garden gate.
Phlox meander lazily beneath a melancholy sky.

Luba lights the stove with newspaper,
tells stories of ancestors who covered their dead
with white lace. She has become an old woman-
a Ukrainian still life on a stoop in a babushka
who makes her own noodles, dries apples for compote,
simmers borscht with grated beet root in the wooden stove.

The knit slippers by her door could fit my feet.
But my calves are weak next to Luba's,
my hands shamefully smooth.
I just want a cup of tea.
But the black night is soot thick.

I'd have to go to the woodpile,
drag water from the well, and then heat it.

And I just can't. Tea is a luxury in this place.

That evening she kills a chicken for me.
I do not hear the bird howl as she breaks its neck.
Luba's movements are quick.
Later that night there is a wedding in town,
and singing past four a.m. A tenor begins;
soon eight-part harmonies bellow into the night.

Lying in the dark, I hear their song.
Luba's chicken fills my satisfied stomach.
I no longer want for tea.

*"Lina's Place," is in the book, No Distance Between Us, by Marianne Peel.
Shadelandhouse Modern Press, LLC 1945049200*

For the month of April, we will be taking a Pantry offering on
Sunday, April 9th and Sunday, April 23rd.
Please contact [Cecelia Kramer](#) if you would like to volunteer to help this
important ministry.

The Little Free Pantry Needs Your Help

The Mini Food Pantry Committee is looking for someone willing to help with stocking the pantries as a member of the elite Box Brigade. The Box Brigade fills each pantry with products from the cupboards at church on an assigned time of one day each week. This entire project takes about 45 minutes. For further information, please contact Cecelia Kramer at 517-349-3297.

Supplies Needed

We have noticed the increase in usage of our pantries and could use some assistance with supplying the needs of some of our most popular items. Just bring the items to the pantry cupboard in the front foyer.

Pantry Needs

Dish Soap - 16-18 oz liquid soap any variety

Facial Tissue – Boxes, any size

Breakfast Cereal – Small Boxes – any variety



Dine at Culver's of Okemos North
MONDAY, APRIL 17TH FROM 5-9 PM

and we will donate a percentage of all sales to the:

FAITH LUTHERAN MINI PANTRIES

Faith Lutheran Church supports two mini food/personal care pantries. One is at their church and the other is at the Okemos Public Library. They ensure the pantries are stocked daily and are raising funds to buy items. They currently spend around \$1,000 per month on items.



FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH



SHARE NIGHT

Enjoy a delicious meal, benefit a great cause and feel good all over.

Thank you for supporting the
FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH!

No flyer or code needed.

*Drive-thru, dine-in, carryout or
order online at culvers.com*



Come on in to your local Culver's restaurant:

CULVER'S OF OKEMOS NORTH

5140 Times Square Dr. Okemos, MI 48864

(517) 853-8714 | culvers.com/restaurants/okemos



REIMAGINING GOD'S SOCIAL KIN-DOM

There are times when we use different wording in The Lord's Prayer. I invite you to read this article to better understand the reasons for changing the wording on various occasions.

REIMAGINING GOD'S SOCIAL KIN-DOM

March 14th, 2023

_By Julianne Snape

“Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name....”

Sitting quietly, I listen to the Lord's Prayer lifted by the congregation's voice, in all its varying tones and tenures. With my eyes closed and breathing deeply, I feel like I am sitting at the threshold of something vast and mysterious, like the ocean's shoreline. Each line of the Lord's Prayer sends waves of something holy enfolded within the material, inviting me to lean into the mystery of our physical world as interwoven with the Holy Spirit. It becomes a verbal sacrament extending God's grace as the eternal within these finite words.

“...Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven....”

After our time in prayer, this line sticks with me. I wonder about God's kingdom and our frequent prayers for it to come. What are we ushering in with those words? Do we believe God is answering this prayer today and every day? And if so, what is our role? How do we participate in the coming of God's kingdom? I am humbled and excited that part of what it means to be a Christian is to point to and jump on board with how the Spirit is moving God's kingdom on Earth as it is in heaven! Yes, as disciples, we practice personal submission to God's will, but God's kingdom goes beyond personal sanctification. Kingdom, the word itself, cannot exist without social implications. Together, we can imagine a world that looks like God's kingdom on Earth as it is in heaven and graciously be a part of its coming. Together, we can discern the Spirit's invitation to join in the transformation of our lives and our world in and through Christ.

However, as we begin to circle 'God's kingdom come,' awareness of the connotations can be important work. Personally, the word 'kingdom' is complicated. At first, my references drum up hero-journey stories and fairytales. Neither offers much of a vision for what a good and just kingdom is beyond individuals' character development. Most of us do not have lived experience of a monarchy. Plus, the word 'kingdom' carries a dominating autocratic and patriarchal tone. Now, I get that God's kingdom is not like any kingdom a human could reign. It is GOD'S kingdom, where perfect love orders the world with restorative justice, ever-flowing mercy, and remarkable grace. And though I can do mental gymnastics to hold a vision for God's kingdom, I have found the word kin-dom to be far more generative.

Wesley understood humans as created and dependent beings. Dependent in that God created us for relationship; relationship with God, others, ourselves, and all of creation. Kin-dom elicits a vital shift for what God's social order begins with and pours out from; a notion of our being all (not only humanity) brothers and sisters in Christ. Such is a dynamic order that displaces hierarchy and invites images of deep interconnectivity, of being kin to one another. Some find the word kindom utterly compelling in its ability to catalyze an alternative worldview. It re-orders notions of power plays, social rank, and men ruling towards vulnerability, belonging, and reciprocity of care. It places our primary identity at the forefront of our imaginations as related and relating beings, interconnected and interdependent. We see this modeled in our Triune God. God's very being is illustrated for us through the relationship and connection of the three (Creator, Son, Holy Spirit) as one.

Now, the point of sharing this is not to convince everyone to throw out the use of the word 'kingdom.' I share all of this because I want us to remember that as we pray for God's kingdom or kindom to come and God's

will to be done, we submit ourselves to joyful participation in this work. We are naming that we are individually and collectively coming before our God to submit to God's will in our personal lives and for the social work of God's kin(g)dom come, on earth as it is in heaven. Our limited and imperfect words, offered in prayer, can ignite our imaginations and awaken us to see the Holy Spirit's work afresh in the coming of God's kin(g)dom.

When I imagine God's kin-dom, I think of a world where relationships with one another, ourselves, creation, and our Creator experience profound healing. When I first read the 2020 Social Principles, I caught glimpses of such realities. The "what if's" for the Church and the world filled my mind. I wondered how we could engage in faithful conversation around what God may be doing through these statements. How were these glimpses of God's kin(g)dom breaking in on Earth as it is in heaven? How is the Spirit inviting us to testify and participate?

Wesley was wholly devout in his spiritual formation. And he saw acts of mercy and justice in local communities and the world as deeply connected to what it meant to follow Christ. Abiding in God and following Christ resulted in compassion for all of creation. Such compassion provoked early Methodists to speak out and rise up with neighbors for social change. These actions stemmed from all they knew of God's love and the Spirit's work throughout time. The United Methodist Social Principles "represent the prayerful and earnest efforts... to speak to issues in the contemporary world from a sound biblical and theological foundation...."[1] In about 40 pages, they offer statements about creation, economics, society, and politics. They offer us a platform to find new ways our faith can intersect with the world's deep pains in and with our communities.

As we continue in this season of Lent, may we be emboldened to look at our sin, not just our personal sin but the social sin that has caused inequality, injustice, and immense suffering. If we cannot make space to hold what is broken or dead, we cannot fully testify to how God is mending, nor know where the Spirit's inviting us to join Her healing, resurrecting work. In my next article, we'll look at the first section of our Social Principles, the Community of All Creation. We'll explore how we can honestly reflect, act, and respond as kin to a creation that is in deep pain and suffering. Until then, I hope you join me in prayer and action for "Thy kin(g)dom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Amen.

PRAYER list

Gracious God, raise up leaders at all levels of government who work to promote the dignity of every human life. We pray for those in military service who are connected to our community: Lani Yearicks, Jon Schoepf, Landon Belanger, Melody and Adam Wright, Tracy Tuthill and Jae Moore, Joe Galvin, Coleman Curry, Hannah Cunningham, and Aiden Seeley.

Compassionate God, you weep when we weep. Be present with those who grieve or who are troubled by illness, especially John, Grace, Daniel, Walter & Brenda Kopf, Michelle Diehm, Linda, Charlotte Hengesbach, Jim Voisinet, Luke Williams, Joan Herbon, Ralph Garber, Nate Statly, Jan Belanger, Glyn, Bob, Jerry Ransom, Lois Neves, Mara Lusic, Charlotte Rasmussen, Marcele, Dale Halverson, Helen Brinkman, Jesslyn Silva, Bob Shorman, Krista, Lee Gerard, Shannon Stobel, Joy Coster, Carrie Christopher, Emily, Marilyn Hogan, Bill Williams, Todd Barricklow, Ben Cowin, Kenley and Allyson. We hold in prayer the ministry of Loaves and Fishes and we pray for all the Samaritas children who seek adoption.

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

April 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Service		No Noon Bible Study	9:30am Quilting and ACTION	7:00pm Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group 7:00pm Maundy Thursday Service	12:00pm Good Friday Service at OCC 7:00pm Good Friday Service at Faith	10:00am Easter Event
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
No Children's Sunday School 8:45am Continental Breakfast 10:00am Easter Worship Service		12:00pm Noon Bible Study	9:30am Quilting 6:00pm Youth Activity			
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Elisa Slotkin Joins for SS & Worship 9:00am Adult Study with Rep. Slotkin 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Confirmation Sunday 10:00am Worship Service	5:00pm Culvers Fundraising Event	12:00pm Noon Bible Study	9:30am Quilting 6:00pm Confirmation			Fellowship Hall Rental
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Green Team Leading Worship 9:00am Adult Sunday School 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Service		12:00pm Noon Bible Study	9:30am Quilting 6:00pm Last Confirmation Class			4:00pm Pastor Ellen's Retirement Dinner
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
9:00am Adult Sunday School 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Service 11:00am Congregational Meeting		12:00pm Noon Bible Study	9:30am Quilting and ACTION	7:00pm Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group	Wharton Ticket Orders Due 6:00pm Halal Dinner	

May 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
9:00am Adult Sunday School 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Service 11:00am Congregational Meeting		12:00pm Noon Bible Study	9:30am Quilting	7:00pm Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group	Wharton Ticket Orders Due 6:00pm Halal Dinner	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Confirmation Sunday 9:00am Adult Sunday School 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Service 11:00am Property Clean Up		12:00pm Noon Bible Study	9:30am Quilting		9:00am Sanctuary Rental	Choir Room Rental/Fellowship Hall 10:00am Sanctuary Rental
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
9:00am Adult Sunday School 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Service		12:00pm Noon Bible Study	9:30am Quilting		6:00pm Sanctuary Rental	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
9:00am Adult Sunday School 9:00am Last Day of Sunday School 10:00am Worship Service 3:00pm Sanctuary Rental		12:00pm Noon Bible Study	9:30am Quilting	6:00pm Sanctuary Rental		
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
9:00am Adult Sunday School 10:00am Worship Service		12:00pm Noon Bible Study	9:30am Quilting			