

FEBRUARY 2024

Faith Family News

PASTOR'S CORNER

By Pastor Bruce

“Make me to know your ways, O God; teach me your paths.” Psalm 25:4

As we enter the Lenten season this year, we are in transition. As individuals we have been through many transitions in our lives. Each one causes us to stop and think, to stop and reflect on where we have been and wondering what is next. This is where Faith is right now. It is not always an easy place to be, but as individuals we know that we do move through them. In order to do that takes a process. Some of our transitions have been longer than others. There is often a certain amount of anxiety that goes with transitions.

As Christians, we call upon God in Jesus Christ to show us the way through them. It is not different here at Faith. We are called to do the ministry that God in Jesus Christ calls us to. The people in Psalm 25 are looking to God for guidance. Our scripture verse, which we will be reciting on Sunday mornings during the Lenten season calls on God to make known God's ways and teach us God's path. This Hebrew work for this knowing is from the root word Yada. It is an intimate knowing. It is the word used when Adam and Eve knew each other, and Eve conceived Cain. Thus, it is a verb that requires loved and trust. The Psalmist is praying to embody God's way. We don't ask for this kind of intimate knowledge, unless we really want it and trust that this knowledge is safe. It is a knowledge that can determine how to live one's life.

Here at Faith, when we say this together every Sunday during Lent, I challenge us to consider what we are requesting of God. We are asking God to show us the way to live our lives as individuals and as a community. The recitation of this verse is easy, but what will it mean as God speaks to us about God's way for us? Most of us have learned to trust God, but what happens if God chooses to show us a different path than we are on. I believe that when we ask God to do this, God will answer this prayer. Are we ready to listen and give our anxiety over to God?

Each time we say this together, I challenge us to let go and listen and watch for God's path to unfold for us in our transition process.

HEALING SERVICE – February 4, 2024

All of us desire to be whole. As Christians we believe that only happens when we are connected to God in Jesus Christ. There are always things that separate us from God. Thus, our brokenness is calling us to be healed and be brought back into a right relationship with God.

Everyone is invited to come to the communion rail for the laying on of hands. You may have a specific need which you are welcome to share with Pastor Bruce and he will incorporate that into the prayer. The general prayer that he will use without a specific need is:

In the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, be strengthened and filled with God's grace, that you may know the healing power of the Spirit.

The response is AMEN.

SLATE OF OFFICERS

2024 COUNCIL President – Walter Kopf

Vice-President – Randy Royalty

Past President – Mike Eschelbach

Secretary – Molly DeHate

Financial Secretary – Jon Harrison

Treasurer – Gwynne Kadrofske

Member at Large – Jack Dingledine

Member at Large – Jean Lewis

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Christian Education Committee – John McCracken

Stewardship Committee – Paul Hereza

Mutual Ministry Committee – Mark Kadrofske

Membership Development Committee – Tammy Heilman, Erica Boyan, Diane Hill

Worship Committee – Diane Hill

Caring Committee – Kathy Mace & Natalie Dingledine

Evangelism/Outreach Committee – Brenda Kopf

HR Committee – Lori Haven

Property Committee – Bob Nelson & Rick Baderstadt

Technology Committee – Ryan Thompson RIC Team – Rich Weingartner

Green Team – Randy Royalty

LENT 2024

Sunday Morning Worship

The Bible verse that I have used for my Pastor's corner: **“Make me to know your ways, O God; teach me your paths.” Psalm 25:4**, we will be saying together at the end of the announcements. Every Sunday after we say it, I will pause for a minute, for you to reflect upon this verse. My prayer is that there will be a different thought for you to take away each week.

For our Prayers of Intercession during the season of Lent, I will ask that you write prayer requests on cards that the ushers will have available prior to the service. They will see that I get them. When we come to the time for the Prayers of Intercession, we will sing a prayer song. I will then pray using some of the normal petitions and incorporating any requests that you may have submitted on the prayer cards.

While I am praying, Bruce will be playing quietly underneath. At the end of our prayers, we will sing the prayer song once more. I know this is something new, and I feel Lent is a good time to try this. It doesn't mean that it will continue every Sunday after the five Sundays are done. It will give us a chance to experience it and see if it enhances our worship.

Wednesday Evenings – these will be live-streamed

February 14	-	Ash Wednesday Worship	– 7:00 pm
February 21	-	Holden Evening Prayer	– 7:15 pm
February 28	-	Holden Evening Prayer	– 7:15 pm
March 6	-	Holden Evening Prayer	– 7:15 pm
March 13	-	Holden Evening Prayer	– 7:15 pm
March 20	-	Holden Evening Prayer	– 7:15 pm

Transition Team Update

Sunday, March 3, 2024*

A Conversation with the Congregation: (following service)

Subject: Who are we?

****The meeting will include a Chili Cook-off and a Cookie Bake-off.***

HONDURAS – Our Synod Companion

Under the synod Global Mission Committee, the Honduras Task Force works with our partners in Honduras as part of our companion synod relationship.

We provide training and support for the Health for Life Program. We are always looking at ways to strengthen our relationship and, as we prepare for our next visit in April, we are asking for people in our congregations to become a prayer partner with a person in Honduras. I will have notecards available and, if you would like to participate, just put your name, a picture of you would be great, a short greeting, and your prayer request. I will take these with me when I go in April.

If you're ever interested in learning more about our work in Honduras, I would love to talk to you, or you can visit the Facebook page - search "Honduras Health for Life", or go the synod website: Mittensynod.org – Mission – Global Mission.

Thanks!

Jamie Royalty

Confirmation Schedule WINTER / SPRING 2024

- Sunday, February 4 - 11:30 am - 1:30 pm - Old Testament
- Sunday, February 25 - 11:30 am - 1:30 pm - Old Testament

RETREAT – MARCH 8 – 10, 2024

LIVING WATERS MINISTRY IN NEW ERA, MI

This will be for all youth – 6th grade and up. We will leave Friday after school and return Sunday afternoon. More details to follow.

- Sunday, March 17 – 11:30 am – 1:30 pm - Old Testament
- Sunday, April 7 - 11:30 am - 1:30 pm – New Testament
- Sunday, April 14 – 11:30 am – 1:30 pm - New Testament
- Sunday, April 28 - 11:30 am - 1:30 pm - New Testament
- Sunday, May 5 - 11:30 am - 1:30 pm - New Testament
- CONFIRMATION – SUNDAY, MAY 19

The NOISY Offerings for February will be as follows:

- February 11th, Micro Pantry
- February 25th, Michigan Refugee Hope

PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE

We have recently been made aware by County Treasurer Alan Fox that there may be assistance available to property owners who are having difficulty paying their property taxes and who can demonstrate that financial hardship contributed to their inability to pay. If you or someone you know is unable to pay their property tax due to financial hardship, please contact County Treasurer Fox's office to check into potential assistance.

Mike

ONLINE GIVING

Many people already know how to adjust their online giving in Vanco/Vanco Mobile. If you want help in changing the amount of your recurring online giving (perhaps in light of pledge adjustments), feel free to contact Jon Harrison at jon.harrison@comcast.net or call 517-349-4049, or catch him at church for assistance.

Offerings can be made via the following methods:

- Contributions can be placed in the offering plate during worship services. Contributions can also be mailed to the church at 4515 Dobie Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or directly to our financial secretary, Jon Harrison, 3570 Chippendale, Okemos, MI 48864.
- Sign-up for Vanco Online (previously called Simply Giving) to make regularly scheduled electronic contributions. [Click here](#) to sign up. You can also complete the [Simply Giving form](#) and give to the financial secretary.

Use the Vanco Mobile app on your phone or mobile device. [Vanco Mobile Instructions](#). If you have questions regarding giving options, please contact Jon Harrison at jon.harrison@comcast.net.

Supporting God's work at the church, in the community, and beyond is always appreciated.

RIC? Oh, I See!

On January 28, we celebrated RIC Sunday as a reminder and celebration of our RIC status at Faith Lutheran Church. Faith became a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation in 2017 when we adopted our welcome statement (<https://faithlutheranokemos.org/about/>) that expressly includes a welcome to all sexual orientations and gender identities, among many other things. At the time, this was the main requirement to be recognized as an RIC congregation. Since then, ReconcilingWorks (<https://www.reconcilingworks.org/>), the organization that coordinates the RIC program, added new requirements for RIC congregations including naming commitment to racial equity or anti-racism, be open to calling an LGBTQIA+ or BIPOC rostered leader, allow sanctuary and other space to be used for LGBTQIA+ weddings and blessings, and make a meaningful contribution to ReconcilingWorks and the RIC program. We may need to tweak our welcome statement a bit, but otherwise we appear to be fully in line with the RIC program requirements.

Sometimes when we talk about RIC, especially when we bring up the work the RIC team does, we hear "Oh? I thought the RIC stuff was done." or "RIC? What is that?" or "Well of course we do all that, why do we need to keep a team going for it?" Hopefully the above paragraph helps with the "What is that?" question. As to why the RIC team is still active and looks to do more, even after we gained RIC status, is because RIC is more than a status, it is a process. It is a process to continuously work to educate our congregation and reach out into the community. Yes, it is primarily about LGBTQIA+ topics, but also about many minority groups that have often been, and still are, excluded from full participation in many churches. The way social justice works is through continuous actions of education, awareness, and advocacy. To be a fully open, welcoming, and inclusive church, we need to continuously remind and improve ourselves. Just like we constantly pray and study the Bible, we need to do constant work in other aspects of how we express and share God's radically inclusive love for all.

The RIC Team, chaired by Rich Weingartner, is always looking for people to help out with one time events or on a regular basis in coming up with ideas and planning events. This year we plan on participating in the Lansing Pride and Meridian Township Pride events. We would love to host an education event or two as well - about any topic, not just LGBTQIA+. Perhaps building connections with the Native American populations, looking at how our church is equipped for people with disabilities, or more anti-racism work. If you have specific questions about our RIC status, have ideas about what you'd like to have an education event on, or want to help coordinate an event, please contact Rich Weingartner. (mathwhiz@mathwhiz.org) You can also learn more from a video on our website at <https://faithlutheranokemos.org/lgbtq-welcome/>

YOUTH NEWS

Stony Lake Camp 2024

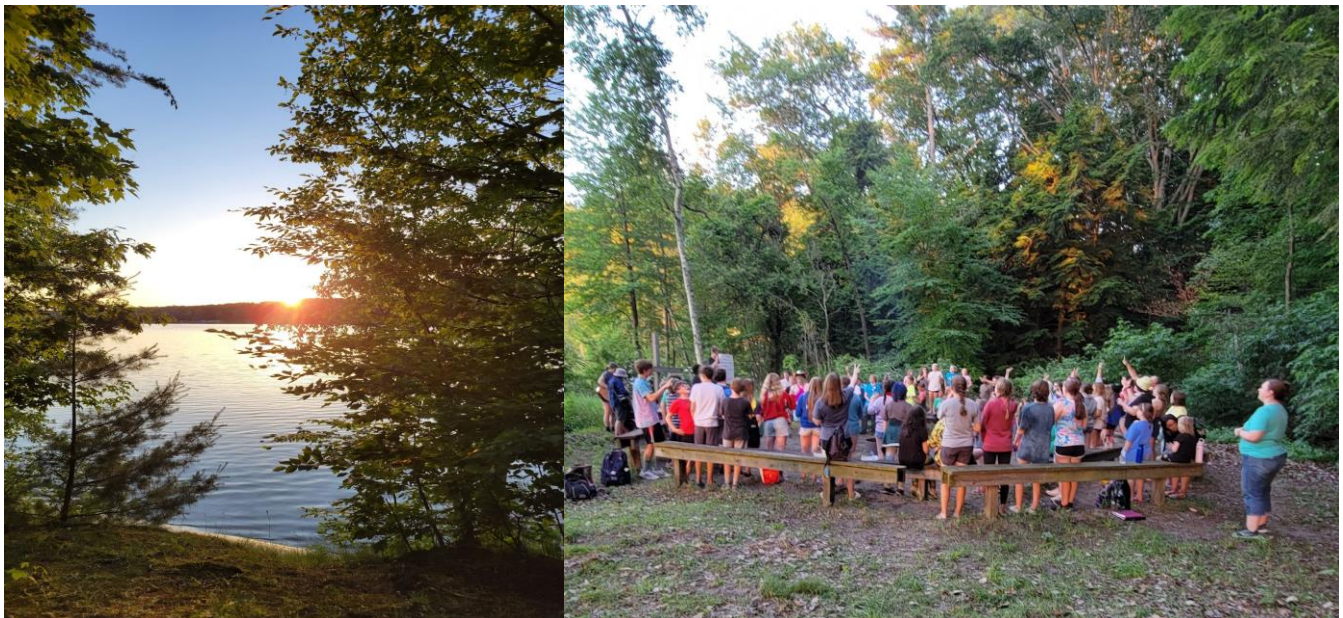
You can now sign up for summer camp!

<https://www.elcalivingwater.com/campprograms/>

Faith Lutheran is once again hoping to have as many students as possible attend week two **June 23 thru June 28th.** There are three-day experiences for the younger ages. There are also three different pay levels so that anyone can go to camp, don't let cost prevent you from sending your child(ren). I will be there as well and we can do some carpooling if people want to. If you have any questions, please feel free to talk to me.

Pam

<https://www.elcalivingwater.com/promotionalvideos/>



EVERYONE IS INVITED!!

[YOUTH SPONSORED]

Shrove PANCAKE Supper**

Tuesday, February 13th; 5:00-7:00 p.m.
Faith Lutheran Church



Two Options:

1. You can come into the church and eat your supper with your family. You can have all the pancakes you would like.
2. You can have your pancake supper to go. You can pull up and we will have a person who can bring you your food.

THE YOUTH will be serving pancakes (let us know if you are gluten free), sausage, applesauce, and drinks (for the people inside)

****We will be taking a free will offering which will go to our Youth programs.**

GREEN TEAM UPDATES

The Green Team will be looking for assistance with maintaining the rain garden and butterfly gardens, once the weather cooperates. All help will be appreciated.

We have installed a countertop paper towel dispenser in one of the Narthex restrooms. This is to try and cut down on the amount of towels that seem to be wasted from the wall mounted dispensers. Feedback is welcome!

Thank you,
Randy

SILENT AUCTION FOR TWO BEAUTIFUL QUILTS!

To raise money to continue their work, the quilting team here at Faith has completed two beautiful queen/king size quilts for silent auction. The quilts will be on display in the Narthex from Sunday, February 18 through Sunday, March 17, so place your bids! Bidding sheets will be located next to the quilts. (If you don't need a quilt, there's also a donation can, and all amounts are welcome!)

The quilting team meets at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday mornings in the church basement. We work for an hour, break for coffee and snacks, and then continue working until 11:30 a.m. or so. Come join in when you have time. You don't need to know how to sew, and we'd love to have more people. More hands can make more quilts, and we know there's a need.

Mutual Ministry Committee

The Mutual Ministry Committee (MMC) meets every three months and provides support for Pastor Bruce. Mutual ministry is defined as a mission-oriented enterprise characterized by a broad vision of ministry and a healthy practice of mutuality designed to strengthen the life and well-being of the church. The MMC can facilitate dialogue between the congregation and pastor and keeps the pastor advised about the conditions within the congregational family. The specific responsibilities include the following:

1. Opening communication concerning the attitudes and conditions within the congregation,
2. Listening for early warning signs of misunderstanding within the congregation, being a “listening post” for the pastor and the congregation,
3. Assisting in conflict resolution,
4. Advising on the health of our pastoral ministry within the congregation,
5. Serving as a sounding board for the pastor in time of personal or professional stress,
6. Identifying continuing education or counseling that would assist our pastoral ministry in achieving the goals of the congregation, and
7. Addressing concerns for the spiritual, emotional and physical needs of the pastor.

Feel free to contact any of the MMC members: Nick Hirschenberger, Mark Kadrofske (Chair), Chris Lewis, Jamie Royalty, and Korine Wawrzynski.

SUNDAY SCHOOL - HELP WANTED

We are always looking for volunteers ... Teachers, back-ups, and those who want to hang out with the 6th graders and older. If you think you would like to give it a try, let me know. Here is the sign-up link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C094EA4AA23A2FAC07-iwantto>



The Caring Committee has partnered with Bring Smiles to Seniors card program. Bring Smiles to Seniors supports over 700 facilities nationwide (over 80 in Michigan) with Thinking of You cards. Handmade cards are received throughout the year, and many need a positive caring sentence or two written inside. This is a quick way to make someone's day and all it costs is time (but they

would happily take your monetary support). Pick up a packet of cards located in the basket near the steps. Once completed, please return to the "Done" basket. Please see information in the narthex about this wonderful program that brings joy to many of our elderly!

Thank you! From the Caring Committee



God our champion, you are our refuge and strength, a very present help in times of trouble. Draw near to all who suffer especially: Andrew Funk, Walter Kopf, Helen Dersch, Dale Halvorson, Marla Holle, Gene Miller, Mavis Halvorson, Alice Hendrickson, Chip Pittman, Trudy Cook, Harry Nawrock, Lois Neves, Mara Lusic, Charlotte Rasmussen, Helen Brinkman, Bob Shorman, Joy Costar, Marilyn Hogan, Todd Barricklow, Eric and Karen Casler, Kenley and Allyson, and Richard Kemmler.

Be their rest and comfort. Amen

**Everyone
is Invited**

**Wednesday, February 21st
at FLC, 11:45 - 1:00**

Hosted by Phyllis & Pastor Schleicher and Annie Mayer

LUNCH BUNCH



This is an opportunity for fellowship and food. **If you would like to host in March, please let Tammy Heilman know.** Hosting would involve providing sandwiches, drinks, set up, and clean up. For anyone attending, please feel free to bring a salad or dessert. You can also bring your own lunch if you wish. We hope you can join us. Come and go as you need to during lunch.

Serving Faith

**We really need volunteers for Readers, Lay Assistants, and Greeters.
Many hands make light work!! Please step up and volunteer!**

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

Readers / Lay Assistants: Diane Hill: [Diane Hill Email](#)

Ushers: Brenda Kopf: [Brenda Kopf email](#)

Altar Care: Elaine Harrison: [Elaine Harrison Email](#)

Sunday School: Pam Williams: [Pam Williams Email](#)

Nursery: Jennifer Coe: jenlynncoe@yahoo.com

Greeters: Mike Eschelbach: [Mike Eschelbach Email](#)

DATE	GREETER	READER	LAY ASSISTANT	USHERS	ALTAR CARE	ACOLYTE	COFFEE HOUR
2/4/2023	Doug/Linda Hirt	Jamie Royalty	Randy Royalty	Harrison's	Diane Hill	Maddie Webb	Thompson's
2/11/2023	Lois Neves	Ryan Thompson	Mike Eschelbach	Hirt's	Diane Hill	Andrew Herek	Herek's
2/18/2023	John/Ramona Backman	Elaine Harrison	Paul Hereza	McCracken/Milne	Brenda Kopf	Isaak Nyquist	Hereza
2/25/2023	Karen Fraser	Alexa Warwick	Rich Weingartner	Holste/Robinson	Brenda Kopf	Calvin Kadrofske	