



The Newsletter of Faith Lutheran Church
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December 2024



Grace, mercy and peace be to you from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Yesterday we had a wonderful thanksgiving day at church. The great hall was filled with laughter and good conversation. Part of that conversation was a result of some conversation starters that were placed on the tables.

One starter was to talk about a unique place you were thankful for. I had a hard time picking a place. As you know I have lived in many different places, Liberia, Venezuela, Japan, Iowa, Missouri, California, Florida, Hawaii and many other places. Each place had special memories and those memories revolved around the people I met.

In Liberia I met my wife Gwyn, so of course that is a special place. We would never have met if my parents hadn't decided to become missionaries. Iowa is where I grew up, was Baptized, Confirmed, first encouraged to be a pastor, and married there. Missouri is where I was preparing to be a pastor and where two of my children were born. Another was born in Hawaii at my first parish, and our last in Florida where I was first stationed as a Chaplain in the Air Force. Of course we later moved back to Florida where I have had the opportunity to meet and serve all of our wonderful family of Faith here in Parrish.

We have also lived in Japan twice and always enjoyed the people and the country. One of my most cherished memories is the baptism of our last godchild in a Japanese Lutheran Church. What I found interesting about all of this is that what made each place special was the people I met and the people I was with, my family.

Another conversation started was to think of something that you wouldn't ordinarily think about to be thankful. I have had many wonderful experiences and lived in many places which are easy to think of when giving thanks, surfing, diving the Great Barrier Reef, climbing Mt Fuji. But something that I wouldn't normally give thanks was more challenging, as it was meant to be. What I thought of was in Liberia I got very sick with Malaria. I don't think I have ever thanked God for that. I know it is not something we would normally be thankful for and I wasn't, until this prompt. As I reflect on that time I realize that our lives are very fragile and often we are in very little control of the outcome. Yesterday it reminded me that God was there in the midst of my fever just as much as He was with me through the whole ordeal, not just through medicine and the care of others, but also through the miracle of our immune system. I am thankful for my blood which circulates in my body carrying all those antibodies and other protections.

The final prompt was talk about a one time event that you were thankful for. I am sure that we have all had many one time events that we are thankful for, our wedding, the birth of our children or grandchildren, graduating from school, getting our first paycheck, skydiving, flying a plane and many other events that stick in our memories.

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The one I want to reflect on is one that I do not actually remember, my Baptism. I was baptized when I was an infant. I have never really talked with my family about it too much, except to confirm that it did happen. This one time event, that most of us cannot remember, is worthy of all the thanks we can muster, because in our Baptisms, we were adopted by God and made His children. We were given an inheritance that we will all share without any bickering or jealousy. We will live forever because of it. God loves us because of it. We have so much to be thankful for most of it good, but even the bad we can be thankful for because we learn of God's faithfulness through the trials.

Happy Thanksgiving. Peace be with you. Amen.

Pastor Poock



Please remember to mark your calendars and join Faith Members and Friends at the ONE 10:30 am Christmas Day Divine Service and the 5 pm or the 7:00 pm Candlelight and Family Caroling Service for Christmas Eve Worship, December 24th.

At 10:30 am on Wednesday, December 25th we will share in the Christmas Day Divine Service. The Choir Bells will be part of these services.

Last day to donate to the Military Gift Cards is Wednesday, December 4, 2024.

This will allow us time to purchase the gift cards and get them into the mail, in hopes of getting to the recipients prior to Christmas. Thank you to everyone who donated to this very worthwhile outreach program.



ANNUAL MEETING



The Annual Voters Assembly will be Sunday, December 8th, following the 10:30 am Divine Service (There will only be one service). We will be electing officers, and adopting the budget for 2025. If you have any concerns or questions, contact Greg Wissner, VP (217-418-4260) or Council President, Glen Collier (214-632-8887).

VOTING MEMBERS: Any Member, or Associate Member (Snowbirds), over the age of 18 may be a voting member. All you need to do is sign the voters' registry (if you didn't sign in last December). For your convenience, the Voters' Registry is available for sign-up. This does not replace signing-in for the meeting. The registry will give us a working total to determine the number needed to establish a quorum.

Faith Advent Services (a different service than the Sunday Divine Services) will take place on Wednesdays at 5 pm.

The First Advent Meal following the 5:00 service will be hosted by LWML Ladies on December 4th.

December 11th Advent Meal will be hosted by Board of Elder and Altar Guild members.

December 18th is being hosted by Council Members and Volunteers.

A time of fellowship and light meal will take place following the 5 pm. service. There are sign up sheets on the blue table in the Narthex for you to sign up.

This will help us know how many to prepare for.



THANK YOU

We are grateful and proud to tell you, we have collected 54 Operation Christmas Boxes for Children who don't always receive Christmas gifts. Just think how important your small gifts can be to children in countries where they don't have Christmas like we do in America.



Sincere thanks to Faith Members and friends, whose contributions to Operation Child Shoeboxes have been dropped off at Emmanuel Baptist Church (a Samaritan's Purse Drop Off) by Jenna Fluegge and her family. We thank everyone for their generous donations to support this great ministry for children all over the world so they might know the love of Christ. And we thank Jenna for stepping in to help oversee this outreach ministry.



FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH - CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING**NOVEMBER 12, 2024**

Present: President Glen Collier, VP Greg Wissner, Secretary Jean Roehrs, Treasurer Barb Wikel, Financial Secretary John Niemi, Elder Tony Bowen, Trustee Dave Benson, and Altar Guild Eloise Schwarz. Pastor Pooch arrived after his hospital visit with Pastor Hinman.

The president called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. Elder Bowen reminded us of Job, who through all his trials and tribulations never cursed God. Instead he proclaimed, Job 19:25, "I know that my Redeemer Lives,"

October Minutes were approved as printed.

Treasurer's Report filed. Barb reminded us of the upcoming annual membership meeting, Dec. 8, where we will present the 2025 budget. She will provide a laptop to show the slide presentation. Dave will see that the screen and projector are in place. There will be only one service, 10:30 a.m.

Financial Secretary's report filed. John had a handout outlining the declining offerings for the past six years. Council members had some suggestions to attract new members: putting Bible Studies online; elders, or other volunteers, visit any visitors to services; and calling on homebound members.

VP: No Report.

President: No Report.

Elders: There will be a Thanksgiving Day Dinner provided for members of the congregation at 12:30 p.m. with a free-will offering taken.

LWML: The Fall LWML Zone Rally will be at Faith Lutheran, Punta Gorda, Nov. 16. At the next meeting on Dec.13 they will be packing gift bags for homebound members, and have a cookie exchange, and a Christmas luncheon.

Trustee's Report: Both the refrigerator and freezer needed repairs. Tony questioned if storm shutters might be necessary in view of the recent hurricanes. Someone suggested storm windows.

Altar Guild: For 2025 the altar linen needs replacement and the banner closet needs to be revised. The chalice needs replacement, also, as it is corroded.

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New Business

Annual Membership Meeting: Sunday, December 8, 2024, following the 10:30 a.m. service. Agendas and minutes of last year's meeting will be available.

Vicar Application: Tony had a handout comparing the expense involved as to whether a church is assigned a single vicar or a married vicar with children. Pastor stated his desire for Faith to apply for a vicar. Tony **MOVED** the membership be asked to approve an application to Synod for a vicar, to be approved by the membership each year. There is no guarantee that we would be assigned a vicar. **Motion** seconded and **carried** with all voting yes.

2025 Budget: Barb **MOVED** the proposed 2025 budget be presented to the membership for approval. **Motion** seconded and **carried** with all voting yes.

2025 Planning Calendar: A copy of a past planning calendar was distributed. Council was asked to update it for discussion at the next meeting.

Unfinished Business

Covered entries, narthex: Dave said it would be way too expensive to erect permanent coverings over the entries. Tony suggested awning type coverings that could be rolled up if a hurricane threatened. Dave will look into this.

Pastor's Report: New Members will be received Dec. 1, 2024, with 10 new members being added. He was asked if these classes could be held online. He will look into it.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m. followed by prayer.

Jean E Roehrs Jean E Roehrs, Council Secretary



WOMEN OF FAITH



A

sea of talent and beauty at Faith Lutheran Church

Women of Faith wish to thank the congregation members for their support of our quilting ministry. As of this writing, we figure of the 267 quilts and 42 shawls, 47 quilts and 8 crocheted shawls were taken with a free will offering by church members. We displayed some of the toys we were able to purchase from last year's free will offerings and will be distributing the toys and many quilts to the Redlands Christian Migrant Association in early December. Some quilts will also go to Meals on Wheels and 20 were reserved for our own shut-ins. We will resume production in the New Year, but are still unable to take donations of materials at this time. PLEASE DO NOT leave bags of 'stuff' for us to dispose of. We need seamstresses to sew all the material we already have.

Majorie Weiss 941-757-7307



THE NEXT LWML MEETING WILL BE **FRIDAY, DEC. 13, 2024**. A BIBLE STUDY AT 10:00 BY JEAN ROEHRS. AFTER A SHORT MEETING, WE WILL **PACK HOMEBOUND CHRISTMAS GIFT BAGS** FOR ABOUT 13 HOMEBOUND MEMBERS.

ANYONE INTERESTED IN ASSISTING IS INVITED TO ATTEND OUR MEETING. FOLLOWING PACKING BAGS FOR THE HOMEBOUND WE WILL ENJOY A **HAM DINNER AND COOKIE WALK**. PLEASE BRING **TWO DOZEN COOKIES** FOR THE SHUT-IN BAGS AND **ONE DOZEN COOKIES** FOR THE COOKIE WALK. THE COOKIE WALK IS A GREAT WAY TO GET A VARIETY OF CHRISTMAS COOKIES without all the baking. Please bring A CONTAINER FOR THE COOKIE WALK. PLEASE RSVP TO MARILYN HOWARD AT 941-773-0309 IF YOU PLAN ON ATTENDING.



PRAYER PARTNERS

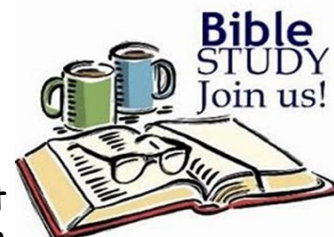
Sweet Hour of Prayer, Sweet Hour of Prayer, that takes me from a world of care.

When we turn to the Lord in prayer, it is comforting to remember that He has promised to answer our prayers. The Bible also tells us to pray without ceasing. Our church is a church of prayer. If you would like to join this ministry contact Jean at jroehrs27@gmail.com and prayer requests will be emailed to you as they are received. You may also request prayers by calling Jean at 941-567-8681 or through the church office. Many recipients take the time to thank us for our prayers and say how uplifting they are.

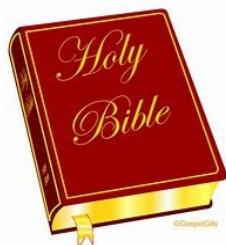


Opportunities for you to grow and become involved...

Adult Bible Classes



Pastor's **Sunday Bible Class** begins at 9:15 in the Great Hall. The Bible scriptures will be discussed in depth and you can take part with your questions or concerns. Come and join us join in the discussions, and enjoy a cup of coffee and a donut.



The offerings received at this time go to benefit pastoral students at the Concordia Seminary.

Pastor's **Wednesday Bible Studies on Genesis** will continue through Advent. They will be at 3:30 and 6:30 pm. Those taking part in the light Advent Meals will have time to get their light meal before attending the Bible Study in the Sanctuary at 6:30.



Let's share our holiday spirit with those less fortunate by filling our Food Barrel with gifts of paper products and non-perishables. We learned that the needs were extremely great for Thanksgiving so please let's do our best to make the Christmas holiday meals fulfilling for those in need. Please consider bringing at least one item each week to make their holidays a little brighter.

FELLOWSHIP



The first Advent Service will be on Wednesday, December 4th, following the 5 pm. Advent Service. We will serve a light meal of soup and sandwiches in the Great Hall. We will also do this on December 11th and 18th. We do have sign up sheets on the blue table in the Narthex and ask that if you plan on attending to please sign up. We do need a count of how many to prepare for.



**BELL CHOIR practice continues every
Thursday evening at
6 pm in preparation for joyous and musical
Christmas Church services
on December 24 and 25.**



The last session of GriefShare will be December 9th. We are not looking to start our next session until April 2025. We have had a great 13 weeks of sharing and caring with 15 participants and 6 facilitators. Our sincere thanks to all of them for trusting us and being part of this walk through grief.



GRIEFSHARE FACILITATORS NEEDED

As we approach the close of another GriefShare session, and look forward to 2025 and beyond, I am asking you each to prayerfully consider whether you would like to join our GriefShare Team to become a **FACILITATOR**.

The attributes of a Facilitator include:

- Being a good listener.**
- Being compassionate and empathetic.**
- Being able to offer encouragement to participants.**

While some may think that being a Facilitator might be too large a task, you will find joy and reward in making a difference in someone's life who is grieving and seeking help.

If you are interested, please contact Pastor Poock or the church office for further information.

This Month's Privileged Servants



Altar Guild

Wednesdays, 5pm

December 4 Eloise Schwarz
 December 11 Robin Parkin & Karen Hill
 December 18 Robin Parkin & Karen Hill

Sundays, 8:00 am /Sunday 10:30 am

December 1 Meta Green / Nancy Niemi
 December 8 Alec Carpp & Erin Henderson
 10:30 ONLY
 December 15 Meta Green / Cindy Nuetzel
 December 22 Martha Riedl / Gwyn Pook
 December 29 ONLY 10:30 Martha Riedl
 and Monica Carena

December 24 5 pm and 7 pm
No Communion (Candle Light Services)

Eloise Schwarz

December 25 10:30 Divine Service
 Caleb Pook

Elders

Wednesdays, 5 pm

December 4 Tony Bowen
 December 11 Tony Bowen
 December 18 Tony Bowen

Assistant

Carl Schwarz
 Curt McCarty
 David Barber

Sundays, 8:00 am

December 1 Tom Weiss
 December 8 Dennis Steinke
 December 15 Tom Weiss
 December 22 Dennis Steinke
 December 29 NO Service

Sundays, 10:30 am

Jack Conte
 Tom Barlow
 Jack Conte
 Tom Barlow
 Jack Conte

Assistant

Caleb Pook
 Alex Boettcher
 Caleb Pook
 Alex Boettcher
 Caleb Pook

Dec. 24, 5 pm Dennis Steinke **7 pm** Jack Conte

Dec. 25, 8 am. NO Service **10:30 am** Tom Barlow Caleb Pook

Offering Counters

December 2 Carol Schreiber, John Niemi, Tom Barlow
 December 9 John Niemi, Judy Sattanno, Stu Lindberg
 December 16 Marilyn Howard, Marti Katterhenry, Nancy Kendall
 December 23 Larry Colton, Jean Roehrs, Nancy Kendall
 December 30 Larry Colton, Nancy Kendall, Jean Roehrs



- 1 Roberta Teitelbaum, Rosanna Markel Bothun
- 3 Hope Lash-Conte, Debbie Bozek,
- 4 Teresa Moore
- 5 Shirley Overmyer,
- 7 Jay Jean Bartelt, Merna Friedrichs
- 8 Jacob Snell, Tom Weiss, Ron Koenig
- 9 John Hicks, Carol Vogt
- 10 Rick Ross
- 11 Kris Porth
- 14 Vicki Costello, Audrey Krieg
- 15 Justin Benson
- 18 Linda Snyder
- 19 Joe Barber
- 20 Jeff Sattanno, Janice Saari
- 21 Rev. John Tuttle
- 22 Christian Morales
- 24 Bob Gardner, Dick Werner
- 25 Caleb Pock
- 26 De Witt Gorman, Meta Green
- 27 Margaret Greenslade, Sherry Janovec, Linda Wiedenmeyer
- 28 Ken Spirduso
- 29 Rev. Patrick Pock, Alex Boettcher, Carol Eichert
- 30 Frances Kurlinski
- 31 David DuChane

**Special Birthday Wishes
to Shirley Overmyer 96 yrs.
and Merna Friedrichs 99 yrs.**

- 2 Rev. Lee & Christine Stisser (57 yrs.)
- 14 Bob & Millie Gardner (44 yrs.)
- 17 Jim & Terry Jones (41 yrs.)
- 22 Rev. John & Sandra Tuttle (51 yrs.)
- 27 Daniel & Ruth Pope, Sr. (74 yrs.)
- 29 Jason & Alexandra Laser (21 yrs.)



A SPECIAL REQUEST FOR FAITH MEMBERS AND FRIENDS
TO GET THEIR ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR LISTED
ON THE CHURCH'S YEARLY WALL CALENDAR FOUND ON
THE HALLWAY WALL ACROSS FROM THE
SECRETARIES OFFICE.

For anyone wishing to set up meeting/s, committee or fellowship times,
please stop by the Secretary's office and request your times be put on the
large wall calendar posted there.

This will allow each group their space and time for gatherings at that
specific time.

Thank you

Reminder: If you want information/news in the Pastor's
Weekly Messages or in the Monthly Newsletters, you must email
your information/news to the Church office by the date requested
on the Monthly Newsletter Calendar or to the church office for
the Weekly Message. It is not the office staff's responsibility
to create an article for your group or committee.



We still have some 2025 'God's Creation' appointment
calendars available for only \$5.00. They can be found on
the purple table in the Narthex.
They make great gifts and the proceeds go to support our
Fellowship activities. Please consider purchasing one to
have for listing all your Faith activities on.

REMEMBER: Only one Divine
Service on December 8th at
10:30 am. Following the
service, we will have our
Annual Meeting for general
reporting, budget approval
and election of officers.

Congregational Meeting



A happy time was enjoyed by about 55 people who attended Faith's THANKSGIVING DINNER on Thursday, November 27. Many thanks to Alice and Tony Bowen who took time out of their busy schedules to plan and prepare for the Cracker Barrel meal of turkey, mashed potatoes, stuffing, green beans, cranberry sauce, cornbread, rolls, butter and a variety of pies.

