



Faith Family News

December 2025

*In response to God's grace flowing
through Christ, we grow in faith
and show Christ's love.*

The Ministry of Prayer

By Pastor Adam

You all have taught me a lot about prayer. I'm not talking about how to pray, though I have learned a great deal about this from many of you. I'm talking about the ministry of prayer and how powerful it is to receive this ministry from others.

Did you know that every Sunday morning, before worship, a small group gathers with me in my office to pray for me? They anoint my head with oil and ask God's Spirit to fill and sustain me in worship. It is a blessing beyond words. Last Christmas, I received a great gift. I told one of you how I was so overwhelmed by our family's struggles that I couldn't even bring myself to pray. Their response to my confession? "That's okay pastor... when you can't pray, we are praying for you." What a gift. And I have so clearly seen the power of prayer, not always accomplishing everything I want, but providing what I need. My eyes have become a leaky faucet, so easily pouring with emotion and gratitude to receive this ministry from you all.

This past week, I was brought to tears again. Someone came into my office and shared how a few of you felt nudged by the Spirit to start a new ministry of prayer. They had become so aware of how praying for my family had strengthened the prayer life and faith of others, and they wanted to grow this impact in two ways. First, by inviting others to join in regular prayer. Second, they want to expand our prayer focus to all who are sick and suffering in any way. As a result, they are starting a ministry of prayer and meditation that you can read more about on the next page – providing a book in which to write prayers and encouragement, a list of those we are holding in

prayer, and an invitation to come to the sanctuary during the week or take time in your home anytime to pray.

On December 14, I suspect the tears will flow again. Bishop Greg Busboom has been walking closely with our family, by our side frequently for Marilyn's surgery, appointments, and treatments. He has been asking to come to Faith and lead us in worship, specifically to provide a time for prayer. Marilyn's next big round of treatment will be December 15-19, so Bishop Greg has agreed to come lead worship with us on December 14, not just to lift up Marilyn, our family, and our congregation in prayer, but to invite us all into the continual ministry of prayer for all who are in need.

Your prayers have been a tremendous gift to my family and me, providing for us and sustaining us in so many ways. Know that I pray for you as well. The prayers you request on the worship cards in the pews give my prayer focus each day, but the Spirit also leads me to pray even where I don't know the need. This is the ministry of prayer, to love and lift up one another, to be loved and lifted up by one another, and to be held in the grace of God. Thank you for sharing this ministry with me.

Pastor Adam

James 5:13-16

¹³*Are any among you suffering? They should pray.
Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise.*

¹⁴*Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders
of the church and have them pray over them, anointing
them with oil in the name of the Lord.* ¹⁵*The prayer of
faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up,
and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven.*

¹⁶*Therefore confess your sins to one another and pray for
one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the
righteous is powerful and effective.*

Flows. Grows. Shows



Faith Family Updates

What's new around Faith? Maybe you haven't been here in awhile or you just haven't noticed, but our ministry is constantly changing.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM "JOY TO THE WORLD"

Join us on December 7 at the 9:30 service for our children's Christmas program. The theme is "Joy to the World" and our children will tell the story of Jesus' birth, God's gift of love for all the world. We will also lift up our partnership with HUGS and the ministry with the children in Uganda. A special giving tree has suggested donations that can be made to provide food and gifts for their Christmas celebration

NEED SOME EXTRA CHRISTMAS CHEER?

The Christmas spirit doesn't have to end on December 25th! We're excited to invite you and your loved ones to our Extra Christmas Cheer celebration on **Saturday, December 27 from 4:00–6:00pm**. Let's keep the holiday magic alive with an afternoon filled with joy, laughter, and warm memories!

Bring the whole family for some festive fun. Cozy up as we watch a delightful, family-friendly Christmas movie together—perfect for all ages! Get creative at our cookie decorating station, where you can design (and devour!) your own sweet masterpieces. Warm up at the hot cocoa bar with all your favorite toppings, and let the kids' imaginations run wild with Christmas coloring activities. In addition to all the festive fun, we'll also be serving pizza for everyone to enjoy!

Whether you're looking to extend your holiday celebrations or just want to share a little more cheer, this event is the perfect way to Gather in Faith Together. Mark your calendars and sign up today to join us for Extra Christmas Cheer—you won't want to miss it! (Brought to you by the GiFT Team)

ADVENT ALLEGRO

LUNCHTIME CONCERTS

We have a great lineup for this year's Advent Allegro concert series.

December 3: JHS Madrigal Singers

December 10: Matthew Nall on piano

December 17: IC Percussion Ensemble

The brief concerts will last approximately 30 minutes and begin at 12:15pm. Lunch of soup, chips, fruit, and dessert will be served beginning at 11:30am and after the concert for \$5.

We could use some help with serving the meal and providing cookies and soup. If you would like to pitch in, contact the church office (245-8919 or faithlutheran62650@frontier.com) or **sign up on the sheet on the counter by the coffee sales.**

PRAYER AND MEDITATION

Prayer and meditation are ways that we invite God into our lives and into those for whom we pray. The health challenges facing Marilyn Dichsen have focused our congregation's attention on the importance of prayers for healing cancer in a gifted young woman. Marilyn's challenges have also brought to our attention all who are struggling with physical and mental health issues. Faith members are encouraged to pray for all who are in need wherever you might find yourself. The church sanctuary is open during regular church office hours (Tuesday-Friday, 9:00-1:00) for members to stop by and spend quiet time praying for Marilyn, her family, and all those who are in need of prayer. Beginning on December 15, a prayer book will be available outside the sanctuary, along with the names of those who have been included in worship prayers and our prayer chain. Please sign your name and record your prayers or words of encouragement, if you so desire. The hope is that the time for prayer and meditation will be incorporated into our lives and the life of our congregation as a continuing ministry.

Reaching Up... Connecting with God through Worship

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WORSHIP WITH BISHOP GREG BUSBOOM

Since last year when Bishop Greg led worship on a Sunday when Pastor Adam was with family in the hospital, he has wanted to come back and lead a prayer service at Faith. On Sunday morning, December 14, Bishop Greg will lead worship and incorporate a liturgy of prayer for Marilyn, the Dichsen family, and our Faith Family as we hold each other through the health journeys that Marilyn and many others are facing. The Dichsens will worship with us, but Bishop Greg has asked to be our worship leader for the day as to offer them a time for worship together. Please join us in welcoming Bishop Greg and coming together for this meaningful time of worship and prayer.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

TWO OPPORTUNITIES TO CELEBRATE JESUS' BIRTH...

THE GIFT OF *MERCY IN A MANGER*

FAMILY FRIENDLY WORSHIP

At 4:00pm, we are offering a family friendly service with familiar carols, the story of Jesus' birth, and some goodies and cupcakes for the children afterwards. Many of our families with young children, or those with evening commitments, are unable to attend our later service, and this gives them an opportunity to celebrate with us at Faith.

TRADITIONAL CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP

At 7:00pm, we will have our traditional Christmas Eve worship with carols on piano and organ, communion, and Silent Night/Night of Silence by candlelight. We cherish this time of worship together and realize it is a big evening for everyone, so we try to keep the service to an hour.

THE CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS CONTINUES...

CHRISTMAS MORNING

Wake up with the shepherds at the manger for our Christmas morning worship at 9:30am. It's a holy celebration of the incarnation with communion liturgy set to the tune of familiar Christmas Carols.

SUNDAY, DEC. 28

LESSONS & CAROLS

Finish off the year with a wonderful morning of Christmas Carols and scripture readings that tell the story of the birth of our Savior. There will be no Faith's Little Flock this Sunday.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4

EPIPHANY

As we near the 12th day of Christmas, we join the three Magi in celebrating Jesus as a light to all nations. Each of our two services will be filled with light and we are sent out to shine the Light of the World to others.

POINSETTIAS

Purchase a poinsettia to help decorate the church for Christmas — sign up at the counter by the Coffee Sales and drop your check (or cash) into the decorated box; the cost is **\$10.00**. Please make your check out to Faith Lutheran Church, with a notation for *Poinsettia*, or call/email the church (245-8919 or faithlutheran62650@frontier.com) by **December 15** and send your check to the church (1385 W. Walnut St., Jacksonville, IL 62650). Please indicate if the poinsettia is in honor or memory of someone special.

CHRISTMAS EVE CONCERT

We will be offering a concert of musical offerings at 6:30 before the Traditional Christmas Eve service. If you have music to share, contact Jean Welch.

FIRST SUNDAY SCHEDULE

We continue to offer two worship services on the first Sunday of each month. Contemporary at 9:30 and Traditional at 11:00.

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Reaching In... Connecting through Discipleship

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Come and connect with the men as we share our faith and enjoy good food on **Saturday, December 6!** At 8:00, we hang out in the kitchen, helping to cook, drink coffee, and visit. At 9:00, we sit down for conversation and discussion on a specific topic.

TABLE TALK DISCUSSION

Over the last year, following worship, we've had some wonderful fellowship and discussions around the readings and sermon of the day. To make sure this ministry continues, Naomi Hahn has volunteered to facilitate future discussions. The group meets in the Justice Room by the ramp following worship (and after a little time for coffee and cookies in the gathering area, of course). They will not meet on December 7, but plan to resume on December 14.



DISCIPLESHIP GROUP

Join us for the Discipleship Group gathering at **10:00am on Wednesday, December 17**, in the Faith Library as we meet for Bible study, discussion, and fellowship. We have a lot of fun with lively discussions. Let's grow together in compassion, connection, and purpose.

NEW - YOUTH BIBLE STUDY

At a listening session with our young families, the youth spoke out that they would like a regular Bible Study. Pastor Adam plans to lead a study with them on Sunday mornings after worship. There will be times he will be away and unable to lead. If others would like to help, please let Pastor Adam know.

YOUTH CARLINVILLE RETREAT

Our youth had a wonderful time at the annual retreat in Carlinville. This year, Beckham Oldenettel, Mason Krohe, Benen Dichsen, and Adam Krohe attended. A BIG thank you to Kevin Krohe for being the adult leader for the whole weekend in Pastor Adam's absence, and for FaceTiming Marilyn Dichsen at their closing worship so she could participate with so many wonderful friends.

FAITH'S LITTLE FLOCK

(Ages 2-7) gathers each Sunday after the Children's Sermon and returns to the sanctuary in time for Communion. During worship on December 7th, our 3-7 year olds will join several of the older youth to share the story of Jesus' birth through narration, costumes, and songs. We hope you will join us for a joyful celebration of the true meaning of Christmas!

Throughout the rest of December, our crafts and activities will reflect the Christmas season, focusing on the message of hope we have in Jesus.

We are always grateful for our wonderful adult and "big kid" helpers. If you feel called to help with Faith's Little Flock, please reach out to Melissa Street, Liddy Stark, or Pam Devlin. Blessings, *Melissa*

Reaching Out... Connecting through Outreach

Flows. Grows. Shows



JACKSONVILLE FOOD CENTER

In October, the Jacksonville Food Center provided food boxes to 726 families or 1,620 people — a significant increase from September. The Food Center received \$72,156.50 worth of donated food from local stores and purchased food at a cost of \$16,892.15. Local churches contributed \$8,759.37 in monetary donations and \$2,351.50 worth of food donations.

In October, our Faith Family donated \$810 to the Food Center and 27 pounds of food with a value of \$135. Lillian would be very happy. There is a lot of need right now, and all donations are greatly appreciated.

Pat Glyshaw and Barb Davenport

NEW DIRECTIONS

The New Directions homeless shelter continues to seek volunteers to provide meals for their residents. You may call ahead to confirm the headcount if you plan to prepare a meal. Drop off your meal between 5:30 and 6:00 p.m.

You may also provide a contribution to Liddy Stark, member of the Outreach Team. She will purchase a gift card from a local restaurant and deliver it to New Directions when they need it.

Blessing Blitz: Faith in Action

A joyful, all-ages adventure in giving — where carts become blessings and faith takes action.

Immediately following our **December 14th service**, we invite children, families, and all who want to share in the spirit of giving to gather in the narthex for **Blessing Blitz: Faith in Action**.

Participants will be divided into teams and caravan together to our local Walmart. Each team will receive a list of items to find in a fast-paced "shopping scavenger hunt." Once the lists are complete, teams will regroup at the designated checkout area.

Over the next two Sundays, we'll be collecting special cash offerings to fund this mission. The items purchased will directly support three local charities:

- **Jacksonville Food Center**
- **The Hobby Horse House Hygiene Closet**
- **The Foster Care Closet**

After the shopping trip, all team shoppers are invited to the **Faith Great Room** for a simple luncheon with hot cocoa — a warm way to celebrate fellowship and the joy of giving together.

This event is designed to be fun for kids, engaging for adults, and meaningful for everyone. Together, we'll be faith in action, mercy in motion, and a blessing blitz to our neighbors in this season of Advent.

FRIENDS FROM FAITH

A ministry team led by Naomi Hahn: on the last Sunday of each month — everyone is welcome to send a greeting card. **On December 28**, visit the tall white table just outside the sanctuary where you can select a card, sign a card, or deposit a card in the mailbox to send. Cards and stamps are provided for your use. If you have extra cards or stamps to spare, please bring them and donate them in the provided jar.

COATS FOR KIDS

The Outreach Team is collecting new and gently-used children's coats in the next month. Please drop off the coats in Sharon Zuiderveld's office. They will be delivered to the Jacksonville Public Schools Foundation for the needs of students.

Worship Assistants

Chancel Committee

Dec. 7 Pat Glyshaw
 Dec. 14 Kris Roth
 Dec. 21 **need volunteer**
 Dec. 24 **need volunteer** (7:00pm)
 Dec. 25 Martha Krohe (9:30am)
 Dec. 28 **need volunteer**

Coffee Hosts

Dec. 7 Martha Krohe (9:30am)
 Dec. 7 Kay Schnitker (11am)
 Dec. 14 Judy D. & Vicki R.
 Dec. 21 Verla B. & Laura S.
 Dec. 28 **need volunteer**

Communion Assts.

Dec. 7 Barb Davenport (9:30am)
 Dec. 7 Kay Schnitker (11am)
 Dec. 14 Liddy Stark
 Dec. 21 Pam Devlin
 Dec. 24 Karen Sibert (7:00pm)
 Dec. 25 Barb Davenport (9:30am)
 Dec. 28 Barb Davenport

Greeters

Dec. 7 Kay Woodworth (9:30am)
 Dec. 7 Carol Freesen (11am)
 Dec. 14 Liddy Stark
 Dec. 21 Lynette Hamilton
 Dec. 24 Judy Dillard (7:00pm)
 Dec. 25 **need volunteer** (9:30am)
 Dec. 28 **need volunteer**

Readers

Dec. 7 Sharon Woodworth (9:30am)
 Dec. 7 Patty Nelson (11am)
 Dec. 14 Liddy Stark
 Dec. 21 John Williams
 Dec. 24 Barb Davenport (7pm)
 Dec. 25 Barb Davenport (9:30am)
 Dec. 28 Mike Fenner

Ushers

Dec. 7 Pat Glyshaw (9:30am)
 Dec. 7 **need volunteer** (11am)
 Dec. 14 **need volunteer**
 Dec. 21 Angie & Mike Fenner
 Dec. 24 Judy D. & Vicki R. (7pm)
 Dec. 25 **need volunteer** (9:30am)
 Dec. 28 **need volunteer**

If you would like to help with assisting for the 9:30am worship services, please **sign up in the gathering area** at the podium by the east doors or contact the church office (faithlutheran62650@frontier.com).

Altar Plants

(\$15 donation appreciated)

If you would like to donate,
 please call or email the church office (245-8919
 or faithlutheran62650@frontier.com) or **sign up in the
 gathering area at the podium by the east doors;**
 please make checks payable to
 Faith Lutheran Church (1385 W. Walnut St.).

Dec. 7 **Open for donation**
 & **Open for donation**

Dec. 14 **Open for donation**
 & **Open for donation**

Dec. 21 By Gayla Smith in honor of her
 baptismal birthday
 & **Open for donation**

Dec. 28 **Open for donation**
 & **Open for donation**

Financial Assistants

Dec. 7 Patty Nelson & Kay Schnitker
 Dec. 14 Mindy Carlson & Patty Nelson
 Dec. 21 Ken Devlin & Monica Proefrock
 Dec. 28 Kelly Hartz & Greg Kimler

Stewardship Snapshot...

...Christmas Giving.

December is historically a strong month for offerings to Faith Lutheran Church, and we depend on your end of the year generosity. At the end of November, we were \$13,803 behind our budgeted income. You can make an end of the year gift designated to the area of greatest need through December 31. If you made a 2025 pledge and would like a reminder on the details, please contact Pam Devlin, our Financial Secretary.

Newsletter Deadline

December 21

The goal of stewardship ministry is to help God's people grow in their relationship with Jesus through the use of the time, talents, and finances God has entrusted to them.