



Faith Family News

January 2026

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

CONFETTI CANON CELEBRATION

By Pastor Adam

Last night, our family caused a major ruckus. We counted down with a timer on tv, and when it hit zero, a confetti cannon exploded in our living room and we were whooping, hollering, and shouting “Happy New Year” at the top of our lungs. There was one catch... it was 9:15 pm! It was already past Desmond’s bedtime, but he wanted to join in the celebration, so we watched a recording of the New Year’s fireworks celebration in London.

I started wondering, what’s the big deal about a new year? It’s really quite amazing to think about people around the globe celebrating. There’s no other holiday that touches so many, regardless of religion or culture, as the entire world celebrates together, every hour in their own time zone, all because of something new.

It’s a fresh start. It’s an opportunity to put some things behind us and let go. It’s an opportunity to start new things and challenge ourselves to make positive changes. But what’s the big deal about 12:00 a.m. on January 1? As our family proved last night, we can celebrate the fresh start of something new anytime we want, because every moment is a new beginning.

Not only that, but because of Christ, the newness we experience is more than an opportunity to try to be a better version of ourselves. Because of Christ, WE are made new! As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 5:17, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation. The old has passed and the new has come.”

Paul tells this to the Corinthians as part of a larger explanation of reconciliation. This new creation we experience is a gift from God. Because of Christ,

when looking at us, God no longer sees our sins as our primary identity, counting them against us. No. Because of Christ, God sees beyond our sin and sees our identity as beloved, forgiven, children of God. This is God’s gift of reconciliation, that we don’t have to wait for a certain day, or be baptized again, or say a particular prayer. God has done this in Jesus, and our life is lived in response and celebration of this gift. This is something we can celebrate every day... every minute... and Martin Luther encouraged us to do so.

Martin Luther recommended that the first thing we do when we wake up is to make the sign of the cross, remember our baptism, give thanks for the new life we have in Christ, and go joyfully about your work. Then, at the end of each day, the last thing we do is to again make the sign of the cross, thank God for the day, ask for forgiveness, commend yourself to God’s care, and go to sleep at once and in good cheer.

This is good advice from Luther, but let’s go back to Paul for a moment. In 1 Corinthians 5 where he proclaims that we are a new creation because of our reconciliation in Christ, Paul tells us that God also gave us a ministry of reconciliation. “From now on, regard no one from a worldly point of view.” A worldly point of view counts one another’s sins against them. When we see one another, we see the sin first, and that becomes their identity and defines our relationship. But God gave us a ministry of reconciliation, so that we can see as God sees, not preoccupied by one’s sins, faults, or differences from us, but as beloved, forgiven, children of God. When we participate in this ministry of reconciliation, not just giving thanks that we have been reconciled to God in Christ, but extending that reconciliation to others... now that’s something new that’s really worth a confetti canon celebration.

Pastor Adam

Flows. Grows. Shows

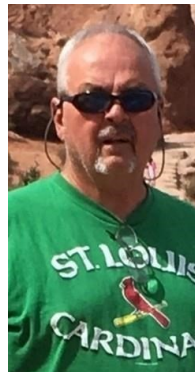


Faith Family Updates

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.

CELEBRATING THE SAINTS

In November and December, Lillian Korous, Bonnie Wallace, Steve Esslinger, and Carol Foley joined the church triumphant. Together we give thanks for our saints, visible and invisible members of the great cloud of witnesses.



Blessing Blitz: Faith in Action

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

Many thanks to all who participated in our Blessing Blitz! Through your generosity, along with an \$800 grant from our synod's Social Ministry, Justice, and Advocacy Committee, we raised over \$4,000. On Sunday, December 14, volunteers took to Walmart and filled carts with much-needed supplies for the Jacksonville Food Center, Hobby Horse House Hygiene Closet, and Foster Care Closet. You couldn't miss the mountain of items in the chancel through the Christmas season. On December 31, more volunteers delivered these items to the organizations. This blitz was a great blessing to us, and now it will be a blessing to countless more.



Thank you to all who gave and served!



Look at all these expert shoppers... shopping for the Lord!



Reaching Up... Connecting with God through Worship

Flows. Grows. Shows



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.

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.

WORSHIP WITH OUR SYNOD STAFF

It was a gift to have our synod staff lead us in worship on Sunday, December 14. Participants included Bishop Greg Busboom, Assistant to the Bishop Pastor Amy Zietlow, Director of Evangelical Mission Deacon Jason Fisher, and Assistant to the Bishop Pastor Kristin Schmid. They also provided a meaningful time of prayer for the Dichsen family and the entire congregation through laying on of hands and anointing with oil. We are grateful for their leadership and the ministry we share together in the greater church.



SERMONS IN THE SEASON OF EPIPHANY - THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

The season of Epiphany begins on January 6, on the 12th day of Christmas, and concludes on Ash Wednesday with the beginning of Lent on February 18. This year, the Narrative Lectionary walks us through the entire Gospel of John. From its beginning with John's birth account ("In the beginning was the Word") to Jesus' resurrection and what comes next with Thomas, the disciples, and the church, you'll find that John's gospel is very different from the others. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are "synoptic gospels," so similar that they are seen together. In the weeks ahead, we will dig deeper into John's gospel and this different way of seeing Jesus, his ministry, and the community of believers that followed him and of which we are a part.

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

What a joy it was to worship together this Christmas, from our two Christmas Eve services to Christmas Morning. A special thanks to Kelly and Melissa Street for helping at the Family Service and to Bishop Emeritus John Roth for leading worship on Christmas morning.





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, January 3!** 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).

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 January, Faith's Little Flock will explore stories from the season of Epiphany, when we hear how Jesus is revealed to the world. Through storytelling, simple conversations, music, and hands-on activities, our children will learn that Jesus invites us to come and see, cares deeply about people, calls us to honor God, and loves us beyond measure. As we follow these gospel stories together, children will be reminded that they are welcome in God's family and that God's love shines in both joyful moments and quiet questions.

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*

READ THE BIBLE IN A YEAR

Join us in reading the Bible over the course of a year, **starting on Wednesday, January 7 at 10:00am in the Faith Library** (this new group will take the place of the Discipleship Group). We will gather weekly to discuss insights and reflections and utilize The Bible Recap by Tara-Leigh Cobble, available on the YouVersion Bible app, to guide our journey. For more information, reach out to Pam Devlin. A sign-up sheet is available in the Gathering Area. People should start reading January 1 and read assigned daily readings from The Bible Recap so that we can discuss what we read.

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.

BIBLE BOOT CAMP AND FAITH INKUBATORS

Pastor Adam is only available to lead gatherings on January 18 and February 15. If others would like to help provide more, please contact Pam Devlin, Carol Freesen, or Celeste Hill on our Discipleship Core Team. Our typical schedule is for Bible Boot Camp from 4:30-5:30, a meal from 5:30-6:00, and Confirmation from 6:00-7:30.

NEW PRAYER AND MEDITATION MINISTRY

Last month we introduced a new prayer ministry, an open invitation to all to come and pray in the sanctuary throughout the week. The church doors are open on Tuesday-Friday, 9:00-1:00. At the back of the sanctuary, by the sound booth, there is a prayer station with a list of people we are praying for in worship, a candle to remind us of God's presence, and a journal for you to write your prayer, words of encouragement, or sign. Prayer is a powerful practice and ministry for all people. Consider making it a more prominent practice in your new year.

Reaching Out... Connecting through Outreach

Flows. Grows. Shows



JACKSONVILLE FOOD CENTER

I don't have numbers from the Food Center as to how much was donated in November. I do know the Thanksgiving Turkey give away was very busy and successful.

In November, our Faith Family donated 41.3 pounds of food to the Food Center with a value of \$206.50. The Blessing Blitz was a Huge Success for our Faith Family. That donation will be a much-needed boost for the Food Center shelves.

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.

NEED SOME EXTRA CHRISTMAS CHEER? STAY TUNED FOR THIS RESCHEDULED EVENT

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 to 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!

While our original event had to be canceled due to illnesses among its organizers, they are looking at their schedules to pick a new date. Stay tuned for more information.

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 January 25**, 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.

DOORBELL DINNERS

On **January 12-16**, we provide drivers and deliverers for five routes in the Jacksonville area. Meet at the hospital at 11:15, and you will be finished by 12:30. We still need volunteers for most routes, and this would be a wonderful opportunity to follow along and learn about this ministry. Please sign up in the gathering area.

Annual Meeting January 25

Anyone who would like to have an **Annual Report** included in the Annual Report Packets for 2025, please have your report to the church office (by e-mail is preferred) **by January 11**. The Annual Meeting will be held on January 25, and we need time to duplicate the reports into a packet to distribute on Sunday, January 18.

Worship Assistants

Chancel Committee

Jan. 4 Pat Glyshaw
 Jan. 11 Martha Krohe
 Jan. 18 Kris Roth
 Jan. 25 **need volunteer**

Coffee Hosts

Jan. 4 Martha Krohe (9:30am)
 Jan. 4 Kay Schnitker (11am)
 Jan. 11 **need volunteer**
 Jan. 18 **need volunteer**
 Jan. 25 **need volunteer**

Communion Assts.

Jan. 4 Pam Devlin (9:30am)
 Jan. 4 Kay Schnitker (11am)
 Jan. 11 **need volunteer**
 Jan. 18 Barb Davenport
 Jan. 25 Kay Schnitker

Greeters

Jan. 4 Lynette Hamilton (9:30am)
 Jan. 4 **need volunteer** (11am)
 Jan. 11 Carol Freesen
 Jan. 18 Barb Fishback
 Jan. 25 **need volunteer**

Readers

Jan. 4 Carol Kilver (9:30am)
 Jan. 4 Patty Nelson (11am)
 Jan. 11 John Williams
 Jan. 18 Barb Davenport
 Jan. 25 Mike Fenner

Ushers

Jan. 4 Pat Glyshaw (9:30am)
 Jan. 4 Patty Nelson (11am)
 Jan. 11 Paul Scheerer
 Jan. 18 **need volunteer**
 Jan. 25 Angie & Mike Fenner

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.).

Jan. 4 **Open for donation**
 & **Open for donation**

Jan. 11 **Open for donation**
 & **Open for donation**

Jan. 18 **Open for donation**
 & **Open for donation**

Jan. 25 **Open for donation**
 & **Open for donation**

Financial Assistants

Jan. 4 Patty Nelson & Kay Schnitker
 Jan. 11 Kelly Hartz & Monica Proefrock
 Jan. 18 Greg Kimler & Kelly Street
 Jan. 25 to be determined

Stewardship Snapshot...

...A New Year.

Thank you for your generous financial support for our shared ministry in 2025! As we begin 2026, we encourage you to continue to grow in generosity, not simply through your donations to Faith, but through the use of your time and talents. Our budget for the new year is but a piece of our desire to step out in faith and be bold in our ministry together. Our ministry thrives when everyone works together contributing what we can of our time, talents, and treasure. And remember...*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.*

Newsletter Deadline

January 18