



Faith Family

News

March 2026

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

JESUS WEPT?!

By Pastor Adam

Last month, in John 11, Jesus did something peculiar. He wept. Now, crying isn't a peculiar thing for you or me to do, but Jesus? He's God! Yes he is... our God who took on flesh and dwelt among us, even experiencing human pain.

In the next column, you can read about empathy from Sharon. A Stephen's Ministry conference impacted her deeply and she realized there is so much hurt, everywhere, in everyone, even here at Faith. Her articles will help equip and encourage us to practice empathy with one another as we care for and love one another. After all... that's what Jesus did, too.

When Jesus wept, he was overwhelmed by the grief of Mary and Martha at the death of their brother, Lazarus. He felt their pain so much that it was his own pain, too. I can't imagine the comfort and love Mary and Martha felt as their Lord and Savior wept with them, giving validation to their pain, permission to grieve, and the assurance that they aren't alone.

As Sharon says, sometimes it's hard to know the right words to say to someone who is hurting. There are no right words. Someone once told me that they never go to visitations because they don't know what to say. I told them, "The people you are visiting won't remember what you say... they'll remember you were there."

Sometimes empathy is as simple as being present with someone and weeping with them. This is a bigger gift than you may imagine. And don't feel embarrassed to cry with others... after all, Jesus wept.

Pastor Adam

THE GIFT OF EMPATHY - PART 1

By Sharon Zuiderveld

Congregational Care Coordinator

How often have you wondered what to say to someone who is suffering or mourning the loss of a loved one? You feel sympathy and love for that person but words just won't come to your lips. You may have heard others say something like this: "Everything happens for a reason" or "Smile. Look on the bright side. Think positive." But there are so many better, more caring ways to respond. That is what empathy is all about.

I learned a lot about empathy from reading *The Gift of Empathy* by Joel P. Bretscher and Kenneth C. Haugk (founder of Stephen Ministries) and by attending the 50th anniversary of this vital ministry, offering training for churches throughout the country. With over 100 people in attendance, I realized that this was a concept I needed to learn more about.

Empathy, in its simplest terms, is a way to help others feel valued, cared for, and understood. Small acts of empathy can be huge. It is not quite the same as saying "I know how you feel." Instead, try this approach:

- experience as closely as possible the other person's feelings and then
- express your understanding of the person's feelings back to them

By using this approach, you are enabled to enter the other person's world, experience their feelings with them, and offer an informed response.

In Part 2, we will explore the power of listening to understand the person's perspective and their feelings.

Sharon Zuiderveld

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.

BAPTISMS & NEW MEMBER WELCOME

On Sunday, February 8, we welcomed Katie Carls and Meghan Roman as new members to our congregation and celebrated the Sacrament of Holy Baptism for their three children, MJ, Shay, and Sean.

Join us on March 15 as we celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Baptism for Jaxon, Jettson, and June, children of Justin and Jenna Sweatman.

A baptism for Clara Joehl, daughter of Jansen and Laurel Joehl, will be held that afternoon.



NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

Council members for the year are Monica Proefrock (president), Mindy Carlson (secretary), Cory Street, Greg Kimler, John Williams, Kay Schnitker, Kevin Krohe, and Patty Nelson

CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY COORDINATOR

A position description for this job opportunity at Faith is available in the church office. We are excited to find someone to help this ministry grow as our Faith Family grows.

"Go. Together!" Synod Relation Trip, April 18

Join this one-day, synod-wide relation trip (formerly the synod-wide mission trip) to the Champaign-Urbana area, where we will serve neighbors in need and build relationships across our communities of disciples. Projects include work at Sola Gratia Farm, a bike rodeo with St. Matthew's Lutheran, Urbana, work at a clothing distribution center, painting and building projects at St. Andrew's Campus Center, projects with LSSI, and more. You pick your projects when you register! All projects are within a five-mile/15-minute drive of Good Shepherd.

Registration is open at CSIS-ELCA.org/gotogether. Please register before March 20.

Date: Saturday, April 18, 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Location: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 2101 S. Prospect Ave., Champaign, is our host congregation. All projects are within a five-mile/15-minute drive of Good Shepherd.

Cost: \$10/person helps us plan and provide snacks and water

- Many projects are accessible and open to folks of all ages.
- Everyone can participate in up to two different projects.
- Lunch is on your own. Suggestions will be offered, but the C-U area is full of options.
- Refreshments will be available both beginning and end of the day.

This event organized by the C/SIS New and Renewing Congregations team.



Reaching Up... Connecting with God through Worship

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CHANGE TO FIRST SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Since last summer, we have been offering both contemporary and traditional worship services on the first Sunday of each month. With Easter coming up on the first Sunday of April, many have requested we all worship together. **We will have one, blended service on both March 1 and April 5.** Stay tuned for updates as warmer weather and outdoor worship provides opportunities for us to continue to explore our worship life together.

LENTEN MIDWEEK

WORSHIP: "BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM"

Throughout the season of Lent, we will gather for Holden Evening Prayer, a beautiful and contemplative liturgy for worship and reflection. Services will be held at 7:00pm on Wednesdays, 2/25, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18, and 3/25. Each night we will reflect on a different "I Am" statement of Jesus from the Gospel of John. These will be wonderful opportunities to be still and center on who Jesus is for us and for all the world.

PALM SUNDAY CANTATA

It Is Finished

This choral Tenebrae service will be presented by the choir of St. John's Lutheran Church from Springfield and chamber orchestra under the direction of Matt Woodson on Palm Sunday, March 29th. We will have a small luncheon at 1:00pm followed by the cantata at 2:00pm. The luncheon is \$5 and will include soup, sandwich, and a cookie. This very moving cantata will lead us into Holy Week. Please join us, and watch for a sign-up sheet for ways to help with the luncheon!

Chancel Choir

We would like the Chancel Choir to sing on Easter. We will have **2 rehearsals at 6:00pm on Wednesday, April 1 and Friday, April 3** (before the Good Friday service). Please contact Jean Welch if you are interested in singing.

MAUNDY THURSDAY

April 2, 7:00pm
"Jesus' Last Words"
John 19:16b-22

GOOD FRIDAY

April 3, 7:00pm
"Jesus the Passover Lamb"
John 19:31-42

EASTER SUNDAY

April 5, 9:30am
"Called to New Life"
John 20:1-18

Don't forget Easter Breakfast! Served starting at 8:00am before and after worship

SERMONS IN LENT - JESUS' PASSION IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Since Christmas, we've been reading through the Gospel of John, and you may have noticed how different it is from the others. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are referred to as the "synoptic gospels" because they are so similar. Through Lent, we will be reading from chapters 10-20 in the Gospel of John. These chapters tell of Jesus' Passion (the events leading up to his crucifixion), with some of the stories and theological views being unique to John. Come join us on this Lenten Journey through John's gospel:

- March 1 - Lent 2 - Jesus Washes Feet (John 13:1-17)
- March 8 - Lent 3 - Peter's Denial (John 18:12-27)
- March 15 - Lent 4 - Jesus and Pilate (John 18:28-40)
- March 22 - Lent 5 - Jesus Condemned (John 19:1-16a)
- March 29 - Palm Sunday - The Crucified Messiah (John 19:16b-22)

Flows. Grows. Shows



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, March 7!** 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.

DIGGING DEEPER

Join Naomi Hahn and friends in the Justice Room after worship to dig deeper into the readings and sermon of the day. It's a wonderful way to connect with others and grow in our faith seeking understanding.

FAITH'S LITTLE FLOCK

(Ages 2-7) During the month of March, Faith's Little Flock will continue our Lenten journey as we learn about the final days of Jesus' ministry and His great love for us. Through stories from the Gospel of John, the children will explore important moments that help us understand why Easter is such a joyful celebration.

Each week includes simple Bible lessons, coloring pages, snacks, and activities that help the children understand these important stories in a meaningful and age-appropriate way. Please keep Faith's Little Flock in your prayers as we prepare our Hearts for the joy of Easter.

Blessings, Melissa

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.

READ THE BIBLE IN A YEAR

Join us in reading the Bible over the course of a year (this new group takes the place of the Discipleship Group). We gather weekly **on Wednesdays at 10:00am in the Faith Library** 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 read assigned daily readings from The Bible Recap so that we can discuss what we read.

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 available to lead gatherings on March 15 & 22 & April 12 & 19. If others would like to help provide a meal or lead a fun activity, please contact Pam Devlin, Carol Freesen, or Celeste Hill on our Discipleship Core Team or **sign up on the sheet in the Gathering Area.** Our typical schedule is for Bible Boot Camp from 4:30-5:30, a meal from 5:30-6:00, and Confirmation/Faith Inkubators from 6:00-7:30.

Reaching Out... Connecting through Outreach

END-OF-YEAR GIVING

For many years, Faith has designated money to be given to a variety of partners in ministry. This year, at our Annual Meeting, we approved \$20,000 to be shared from our Faith Endowment Fund. Along with \$3,500 of designated local needs funds, we were able to give \$23,500. Thank you for your recommendations of worthy ministries to support. Below is a list of recipients selected by our team.

2026 Recipients: CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), Crisis Center Foundation, Esprit de Corps, Faith Scholarship, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Foster Care Closet, Global Refuge, Hearts United in God's Service (HUGS), Hobby Horse House, Jacksonville Food Center, Midwest Youth Services, New Directions, Prairie Council on Aging, Salvation Army, Spirit of Faith Soup Kitchen, Western IL Youth Camp, YMCA, Pastor Discretionary Fund, and the Faith mortgage principal.

LENTEN MIDWEEK MISSION MEALS

Each Wednesday during Lent, before our Holden Evening Prayer Worship, come at 6:00pm for a meal with a mission! Volunteers are preparing the meal and asking for donations to a charity of their choice. Come hungry for some delicious food and generous to support some worthwhile ministries.

February 25 - Church Council supports New Directions

March 4 - OPEN FOR VOLUNTEERS

March 11 - Liddy Stark and friends support Spirit of Faith Soup Kitchen

March 18 - HUGS Team supports their ministry with the children in Uganda

March 25 - Hillary Waddle and friends support PAWS

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.

JACKSONVILLE FOOD CENTER

In January our Faith Family had monetary donations to the Food Center of \$150. Also in January, the Food Center provided food boxes to 594 local families. In addition, there were 1,991 individuals that stopped by to receive bakery items and fruits, vegetables, salads, and other perishable items. All of these items are donated by our local grocery stores and businesses. Sack lunches are provided to the unhoused on a daily basis. Please continue to shop our local businesses, as their support to the Food Center is much needed.

Our Faith Family donations to the Food Center are greatly appreciated.

Blessings, *Pat Glyshaw and Barb Davenport*



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME



**SUNDAY,
MARCH 8**

Remember to spring forward 1 hour on Saturday night (March 7) so you won't be late to church!

Worship Assistants

Chancel Committee

Mar. 1 Pat Glyshaw
Mar. 8 Karen Sibert
Mar. 15 Kim Heise
Mar. 22 Mary Jane Esslinger
Mar. 29 Kris Roth

Communion Assts.

Mar. 1 **volunteer needed**
Mar. 8 Karen Sibert
Mar. 15 Pam Devlin
Mar. 22 Kay Schnitker
Mar. 29 **volunteer needed**

Readers

Mar. 1 Mike Fenner
Mar. 8 Angela Spray
Mar. 15 Terri Kimler
Mar. 22 Barb Davenport
Mar. 29 Carol Kilver

Coffee Hosts

Mar. 1 Judy D. & Vicki R.
Mar. 8 **volunteer needed**
Mar. 15 Martha Krohe
Mar. 22 **volunteer needed**
Mar. 29 **volunteer needed**

Greeters

Mar. 1 Lynette Hamilton
Mar. 8 Liddy Stark
Mar. 15 **volunteer needed**
Mar. 22 **volunteer needed**
Mar. 29 **volunteer needed**

Ushers

Mar. 1 Pat Glyshaw
Mar. 8 Judy D. & Vicki R.
Mar. 15 Liddy Stark
Mar. 22 **volunteer needed**
Mar. 29 **volunteer needed**

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.).

Mar. 1 **Open for donation
& Open for donation**

Mar. 8 **Open for donation
& Open for donation**

Mar. 15 By Liddy Stark in honor of her
daughter, Alyssa's 50th birthday
& **Open for donation**

Mar. 22 **Open for donation
& Open for donation**

Mar. 29 By the Dichsens in honor of Louis' 11th
birthday on March 29
& **Open for donation**

Financial Assistants

Mar. 1 Kevin Krohe & Patty Nelson
Mar. 8 Malinda Carlson & Monica Proefrock
Mar. 15 Kay Schnitker + to be determined
Mar. 22 Monica Proefrock & Cory Street
Mar. 29 Greg Kimler & Patty Nelson

Stewardship Snapshot...

...Sacrificial Giving.

Growing up, I remember seeing my dad at his desk, writing checks. Sometimes there were bills, but always there was one for the church offering plate. Every week, a check would go in the offering plate, but I never felt like we missed the money. One Lent, I remember wanting to order pizza like we did every Wednesday night. "Not this week," my dad said, "we're giving that money to the church." The next week it was an evening at the movies, then an overnight trip with friends. Things kept getting canceled and the money was given to the church. It was a lesson for me on sacrificial giving, about doing without, and feeling the loss, for the sake of others. During Lent, we are invited into the practice of sacrificial giving. What might you be willing to do without for the sake of others?

Pastor Adam

Newsletter Deadline

March 15