



Faith Family News

April 2026

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

LISTENING TO JESUS

By Pastor Adam

As Sharon points out in her column, listening is crucial to empathy. Give it a read for more information. As we've read in John's gospel the last few months, listening is also important for our relationship with Jesus. He says, "I am the Good Shepherd. I know my sheep and they know me. They listen to my voice." As you are practicing listening to others, practice listening to God.

How do I listen to God? It helps when I have fewer distractions... when I'm riding my bike, taking a walk, or sitting in silence. These times rarely just happen, so it takes effort for me to make time to listen. There are also times that I feel God is trying to get my attention, breaking through the distractions and busyness, and it's important for me to recognize it, pause, and focus on listening for more.

How do you listen to God? Where do you go or what do you do to get away from distractions? I challenge you to make time every day to listen. It can be a few minutes or an hour. Or perhaps you sense God speaking to you in the midst of your activities? Don't push it aside, but acknowledge it and focus.

Finally, do you have a story about a time you heard God speaking to you? Come and share, I would like to listen to you as we listen to God together.

Pastor Adam

THE GIFT OF EMPATHY - PART 2

By Sharon Zuiderveld

Congregational Care Coordinator

How good are you at listening? Really listening? Many times, I need someone to repeat themselves since I have skipped ahead to how I might respond. But this isn't very helpful. A much better way is to cultivate the skill of listening, requiring a bit of practice.

In *The Gift of Empathy* by Bretscher and Haugk, they provide some excellent advice on how best to listen to those who are suffering or grieving. "Listening effectively is crucial to experiencing what the other person is feeling. Focus your listening on two main goals:

- 1) understanding the person's perspective; and
- 2) identifying the person's feelings"

Less helpful is when we listen to respond, to argue about the person's experience, trying to fix or solve their problems, trying to correct the situation, or trying to convince the person to take a course of action you think is helpful. These motives shift the focus to you instead of the person you're talking with.

One way to understand the person's perspective is to try to see the situation in their eyes. Another way is to acknowledge their feelings, even if they are unable to articulate them very clearly. Feelings aren't good or bad, but they are real. Listening is critical to discern their feelings.

In Part 3, we will examine who benefits from empathy and how we can best empathize with those who are close to us, friends, siblings, parents, and children.

Sharon Zuiderveld



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.

EASTER LILIES

We have ordered 16 lilies to put in the Chancel for Easter. If you would like to give a lily in honor or memory of someone, please sign up in the Gathering Area and indicate whose life you would like to celebrate. **The cost per lily is \$12** – please put your money in the provided box (checks made out to Faith Lutheran Church noting *Easter Lily* in the memo line). After the Easter worship service, please take your lily home to enjoy.

EASTER 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.



SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

On Sunday, March 15, we celebrated the Sacrament of Holy Baptism for Jaxon, Jettson, and June Sweatman, children of Jenna & Justin Sweatman (left) and Clara Joehl, daughter of Jansen and Laurel Joehl (right).

ALTAR FLOWERS FOR FAITH'S GARDENS

Beginning after Easter, we will be purchasing flowers each week for the altar that will then be planted in our church gardens. If you would like to donate a plant, the cost is \$15, and you can sign up at the podium in the Gathering Area.

"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 31.**

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.

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



Reaching Up... Connecting with God through Worship

Flows.Grows.Shows



HOLY WEEK AT FAITH

Holy Week at Faith is full of wonderful opportunities to reflect deeply on God's love in Jesus Christ and gather together for worship. Take a look at what is coming up and join us for these special events and worship services.



PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP - MARCH 29 @ 9:30 A.M.

We will begin with our traditional palm procession, this year gathering in Faith's new garden. John's gospel will take us from one parade to another – from the triumphal entry to Jesus carrying his cross.

HOLY WEEK CANTATA - MARCH 29 @ 2:00 P.M.

We welcome the choir and orchestra of St. John's Lutheran Church in Springfield as they lead us through Jesus' passion in music and song. Bring a friend, come early at 1:00 for a soup and sandwich lunch (\$5), and stay for the Cantata at 2:00.

MAUNDY THURSDAY WORSHIP - APRIL 2 @ 7:00 P.M.

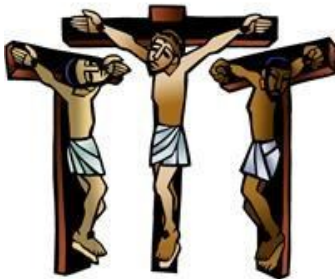
We hear Jesus' last words from the cross. In the Gospel of John, Jesus calls forth the new community of faith that will move on in his name and continue his mission.



COMMUNITY GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

APRIL 3 @ 12:00 P.M.

Come gather as a community for the Jacksonville Area Conference of Churches Good Friday service at Centenary Methodist Church. In place of a sermon, some of our youth are joining others in the community for a series of monologues.



GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP - APRIL 3 @ 7:00 P.M.

Tonight we will hear passages from the Old Testament and New that point to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. We will lay our hands on the cross and confess our sin, witness the stripping of the altar as a portrayal of the suffering and vulnerability of Christ on the cross, and hear the closing of the tomb.

EASTER BREAKFAST - APRIL 5 @ 8:00 A.M. AND AFTER WORSHIP

Faith's Men's Breakfast team invites you to come share the joy of Easter together with our Faith Family over a delicious breakfast before and after worship. If you would like to donate coffee cake, milk, or juice, there is a signup sheet at the Coffee Sales Counter. A free-will offering will be taken for the ministry at Faith. It's true that we do not live by bread alone... but it sure is delicious!

EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP - APRIL 5 @ 9:30 A.M.

Come celebrate the resurrection at this joy-filled service where Easter lilies bloom and our Alleluias rise to the heavens. **We will have one, blended service at 9:30.**



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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.

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Come and connect with the men as we share our faith and enjoy good food on **Saturday, May 2!** 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.

Reaching In... Connecting through Discipleship

BIBLE RECAP

Our Bible ReCap group had a Pentateuch Party on Wednesday, March 25, after successfully reading through the first five books of the Bible (the Pentateuch). We meet on **Wednesdays at 10:00am in the Faith Library** to discuss insights and reflections from the week's reading. For more information, reach out to Pam Devlin. All are welcome and you can start at anytime.

WHAT IS DISCIPLESHIP???

As we've been reading through John's gospel the last few months, we've learned that following Jesus involves listening to him (our Good Shepherd) and abiding in him (he is the Vine and we are the branches). Here are some wonderful ways we can listen and abide as we spend time together in God's Word and prayer...

PRAYER AND MEDITATION MINISTRY

Come spend time in prayer and meditation here at Faith. The church doors are open 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 your name. If you come at a different time, follow the new path from the south parking lot that leads to our garden. There are seats by the garden and on the porch where you can sit and pray.

BIBLE BOOT CAMP

We will be holding Bible Boot Camp on April 12 & 19 for our elementary and pre-school children and are looking for volunteers to provide a meal or lead a craft/activity. If you would like to help, please contact Pam Devlin, Carol Freesen, or Celeste Hill on our Discipleship Core Team or **sign up on the sheet in the Gathering Area.** Bible Boot Camp meets from 4:30-5:30 with a meal from 5:30-6:00.

DO YOU WANT TO LEARN HOW TO PRAY?

Many have shared that they are uncomfortable praying out loud or on their own because they don't think they can do it "right." What is "right" when it comes to prayer? This summer, Pastor Adam will be leading a sermon series on prayer and would like your input. A suggestion box will be in the gathering area where you can ask your questions about prayer. Pastor Adam will try to address them in his sermon series and group discussions.

Reaching Out... Connecting through Outreach

Flows. Grows. Shows



Picnic & Planting Day at Faith

Join us after church on Sunday, May 3, for a Picnic & Planting Day at Faith! We're inviting everyone to stay after worship for food, fellowship, and outdoor planting to help spruce up our garden spaces. Kids and adults are welcome—there will be jobs for all ages. Picnic food will be provided. This special day is a collaboration between the Garden Team and the GIFT Team—come ready to eat, connect, and get your hands a little dirty!



Our End-of-Year Giving team met with representatives from recipient organizations on March 15 to celebrate and support our shared ministry. We gave a total of \$23,500 to the following:

HUGS, Global Refuge, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Western IL Youth Camp, YMCA, Esprit de Corps, Crisis Center Foundation, Jacksonville Food Center, Hobby Horse House, CASA, Midwest Youth Service, New Directions, Prairie Council on Aging, Salvation Army, Spirit of Faith, Foster Care Closet, Pastor's Discretionary Fund, Faith Scholarships, and Faith mortgage.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THIS OUTREACH!

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 and 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 February our Faith Family donated \$740 and 46.6lbs of food to the Food Center... amazing! In February the Food Center provided food to 507 local families for a total of 1,057 people. Also, 713 individuals stopped by to receive bakery items and fruits, vegetables, salads, and other perishable items, all of which are donated by our local grocery stores and businesses. Sack lunches are provided to the unhoused on a daily basis.

The generosity of our Faith Family is greatly appreciated by the Food Center and the individuals they serve.

Blessings, *Pat Glyshaw and Barb Davenport*

THANK YOU

The Jacksonville Area Conference of Churches wishes to thank everyone who donated to the recent "Gratitude of Grains" food collection. Eight churches collected a combined total of 590 lbs. of food with a value of \$2,937.00!

The Food Center greatly appreciated all of the food. Together, we can do great things!"

Pat Glyshaw, Faith's JACC Representative

Worship Assistants

Chancel Committee

April 2 Kris Roth (M. Thurs.)
April 5 Martha Krohe
April 12 Pat Glyshaw
April 19 Kim Heise
April 26 Mary Jane Esslinger

Communion Assts.

April 2 **need volunteer** (M Thurs.)
April 5 Pam Devlin
April 12 Liddy Stark
April 19 **need volunteer**
April 26 **need volunteer**

Readers

April 3 Liddy Stark (G. Friday)
April 5 John Williams
April 12 Angela Spray
April 19 Angela Spray
April 26 Sharon Woodworth

Coffee Hosts

April 5 *Easter Breakfast*
April 12 Laura S. & Verla B.
April 19 **need volunteer**
April 26 **need volunteer**

Greeters

April 2 Kay & Sharon W. (M. Thurs.)
April 3 Liddy Stark (G. Friday)
April 5 Lynette Hamilton
April 12 **need volunteer**
April 19 **need volunteer**
April 26 **need volunteer**

Ushers

April 2 Pat Glyshaw (M. Thurs.)
April 3 **need volunteer** (G. Fri.)
April 5 Liddy Stark
April 12 Pat Glyshaw
April 19 **need volunteer**
April 26 **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.).

- April 5 By Vicki Robson in memory of
Kelly's birthday on April 3
& By Judy Dillard in memory of her
anniversary on April 4
- April 12 By the Dichsen family in honor of
Rigby's 14th birthday on April 10
& **Open for donation**
- April 19 By Pat Ashbaker
& By the Roth family in celebration of
Maria Snodgrass' birthday on April 16
- April 26 **Open for donation**
& **Open for donation**

Financial Assistants

- April 5 Barb Davenport & John Williams
April 12 Cory Street & Kay Schnitker
April 19 Patty Nelson & Monica Proefrock
April 26 Mindy Carlson & Greg Kimler

Stewardship Snapshot...

...Happy Tax Day

Last month I shared about my dad's lesson in sacrificial giving during Lent. Here's a crazy one. Every April 15, he would tell me, "Happy Tax Day!" For the life of me, I couldn't think of why it was a happy day. He would go on to explain, "It's a privilege to live in this country, so I'm giving in gratitude." It's a lesson I'm still trying to learn. While my checks to the IRS aren't always written with joy, I've found great joy through giving in gratitude. This April 15, I invite you to find gratitude for the blessings we have in our country, but I also invite you to reflect on the blessings our Faith Family has been in your life. Consider making a gift to our general fund for our day-to-day ministry. Your donation will support and grow all the great things we do together in Christ. And when you give, let it be a gift given in gratitude.

Pastor Adam

Newsletter Deadline

April 19