



Faith Family

News

January 2023

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

Pastor Adam and others plan trip to Uganda **By Pastor Adam**

What is more dangerous than saying “No” to God? Saying “Yes!” Let me explain...

I was sitting down with a delicious piece of pie after one of our outdoor services this summer when Patrick Kunihira pulled up a chair next to me. Patrick is the director of Pillars of Africa Children's Ministry in Uganda, a ministry supported by many at Faith and Hearts United in God's Service (HUGS), a non-profit organization started by members at Faith. He was visiting the U.S. in order to grow support from other churches across the country. When he sat next to me, he shared how much he appreciated all that had been done to support Pillars and then dropped the bombshell: “I think God wants you and others from HUGS to come and visit us in Uganda.” I was so shocked that I stopped eating my apple pie!

The partnership between HUGS and Pillars has been going on for several years. We have organized and strengthened our support by developing a child sponsorship program, worked with a matching grant from doTERRA to construct their school building, and more. He explained how good it would be for us to come and celebrate all that has been accomplished, to help prayerfully discern how to improve the sustainability of their ministry, to grow closer to the children, and grow closer to God. What did I say? My words politely assured him that I would think about it, but my brain said, “NO WAY!!!” I think he could read my mind because he

said, “Before you say ‘no,’ what might happen if you say ‘yes?’”

Through a series of events and conversations that involved Patrick spending the day with my family later that week to share more about life in Uganda and their deep faith in God, it became clear to me that my answer would be “yes!” But do you know what can be harder than saying “yes” to God? Asking your spouse to agree with you!

Karen's concerns were the same as mine: the cost, the time away from church, and the time away from family. After a couple of weeks of prayer and avoiding the subject, she asked, “Are you still thinking of going to Uganda?” “Yes,” I said, “but not without your support.” Her response blew me away. “I think you should go... and I think you should take Benen with you.” I was speechless! Not only was she allowing me to go, but also one of her children! Benen has more compassion in his pinky than our whole family combined. He insisted that we start sponsoring Collin, one of the children at Pillars, a year ago. The two of them have sent pictures and videos back and forth and have built a great friendship. For Benen to meet Collin in person and experience life in Uganda would change his life forever.

So, we have said “yes” to God, along with a few others from Faith and other churches. In March, we will be making the journey of a lifetime, and we want to take you with us. You won't be able to physically travel with us, but we want to share our experiences with you every step of the way. We can't do this alone and welcome your prayer and financial support.

... continued in the “Living Our Mission” section

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.

Advent and Christmas Highlights

Our Advent and Christmas seasons were such a joy here at Faith. Our **Advent Allegro concert series** was a hit, drawing a total of 261 guests for the concerts and 127 for lunch. We enjoyed a hymn sing, Tyler Carpenter on marimba, the Jacksonville High School Madrigal Singers, and Anna Ferraro Winkler and Bethany Ferraro on piano and violin. Money for the musicians and supplies was provided by grants from Thrivent, and we raised **\$803.25** to support future concerts and music ministry at Faith.



A **merry band of carolers** hit the streets and visited several of our Faith family and friends. It didn't compare to the angels in the fields of Bethlehem, but it was a powerful proclamation of the glory of God and was deeply appreciated by all. Thanks to all who joined us, and we will definitely be doing this again!

Our **youth celebrated Christmas** early with food, fun, and games at their confirmation class and youth group gathering. A goal of ours for 2023 is to grow our youth ministry, and we are off to a great start! From the Christmas bake sale and donations through the end of the year, we've raised nearly \$5,000! This will go a long way to help support the various camps and gatherings of 2023. Thank you!

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Our Children were encouraged to learn the story of Jesus' birth and tell it through advent story cards, Sunday school classes, and beautiful nativity story stones.



We reached out to share the light of Christ with our neighbors by filling 41 bags of food for our **Reverse Advent Project**. We also raised money to provide shoes, clothing, bags, and a Christmas meal for the 52 children at the **Pillars of Africa** school and orphanage in Uganda.

Our book group dove into Advent with Amy-Jill Levine and a Jewish perspective on advent by reading **"Light of the World,"** and we enjoyed a display of nativity scenes that you all brought in to share.

The crown jewel is always our Christmas Eve and Christmas morning worship.



Thank you to all who worked so hard to bless us with beautiful music during our concert and worship services. It was a joy to celebrate the good news of great joy that comes through Jesus. Remember... "He will be our peace!" Take time each day to adore.



Living Our Mission... Vibrant Worship

An expressed goal for 2023 is the continued fostering of vibrant worship. This specifically supports our mission as “we respond to God’s grace flowing through Christ.” In worship, God’s grace flows to us through sacraments, Word, and community, and we respond with joyful praise.

JANUARY 1 - LESSONS AND CAROLS

After you watch the ball drop, set your alarm to join us for worship at 9:30 to start the New Year with a wonderful morning of Christmas Carols and scripture readings that tell the story of the birth of our Savior. Our communion liturgy is set to the tune of familiar Christmas hymns. If you have a picture of you or your family at Christmas, bring it with you and add it to our display on the library windows.



January Sermon Series -

“Inside out and Upside Down”

A new year brings new beginnings and opportunities to implement change in our lives. The narrative lectionary leads us through stories of Jesus and parables that are not what we would expect. We don’t live on bread alone? Blessed are the meek? Treasures in heaven are more important than those on earth? Come answer the call to learn what it means to live our faith in contrast to the ways of the world.

It was great to hear our youth talk about how they felt called to serve and then to see them do so as acolytes, crucifers, readers, communion assistants, musicians, and more. How about you? Did you know that God made you beautiful and unique? In what ways might God be calling you to use your gifts and serve? The next time you are worshipping with us, notice the many opportunities to use your gifts. How might your interests and abilities be used to enhance our worship? If you ask the youth who have been serving, you’ll find that it not only blesses our congregation, BUT YOU TOO! As you worship and consider ways to serve, please pray this prayer:

“Dear God, thank you for making me just as I am. Help me to serve you by being who you made me to be and using the gifts you have given me. Open my eyes and my heart to see how to serve and give me the courage to do it. Amen.”



Holy Baptism for Maeve Ion January 8

Baptism is a sacrament that is often misunderstood. What happens in baptism? Why are we baptized? What happens if we are not baptized? As Lutherans, baptism is central to our identity and daily living in Christ, but is easy to overlook and forget. On January 8, come learn about the significance of Holy Baptism as we witness the grace of God poured out on Maeve Ion. We will learn again the meaning of this sacrament, hear God’s proclamation that we are beloved, and commit to the joyful and essential work of walking with one another on the journey... all while remembering that this good news is for us as well! After worship, stick around for fellowship and then come back into the sanctuary for a special presentation and discussion on what the sacrament of Holy Baptism means to us.

Worship Participation... Our Youth Lead the Way

In November we had a wonderful Youth Service that included the gifts and leadership of many of our youth. That night, at our confirmation and youth group gathering, we discussed the ways that God has made each of us beautiful and unique, with different abilities and gifts, and that we all are called to follow and serve as God created us.

Living Our Mission ... Faith Formation

It's a new year with new opportunities for Small Groups!
Check these out and consider how you might get involved..



Ties That Bind

A Women's Retreat - January 14

Start your new year off by taking time to reflect on the ties (relationships) that have had an impact on your life while creating new ones at the same time. Women at Faith are invited to join us on Saturday, January 14th from 9:00am to noon for brunch and a macrame plant hanger workshop led by local macrame artist and owner of One Knotty Maker. Cost is \$25 per person and includes all supplies, a plant to take home in your hanger, and brunch. Only 20 spots are available. Sign up at the coffee sales counter by **Sunday, January 8th**.

New Pastor's Pick for January: "Tattoos on the Heart: the power of boundless compassion"

Start your year off with a powerful read! For 20 years, Gregory Boyle has run Homeboy Industries, a gang-prevention program located in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles, the gang capital of the world. In *Tattoos on the Heart*, he distills his experience working in the ghetto into a breathtaking series of parables inspired by faith. Pick up a copy at Faith for \$10, and join Pastor Adam on January 25 at either noon or 6:00 p.m. for a discussion.

Faith and Film

Do you like the ways movies nurture and challenge our faith? Come check out this new small group as we gather for fellowship and lunch, then watch a movie and have discussion. We'll begin by watching "Selma" on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, January 16. Join us for a free lunch at noon and then stay for the movie and discussion.

Confirmation and Youth Group

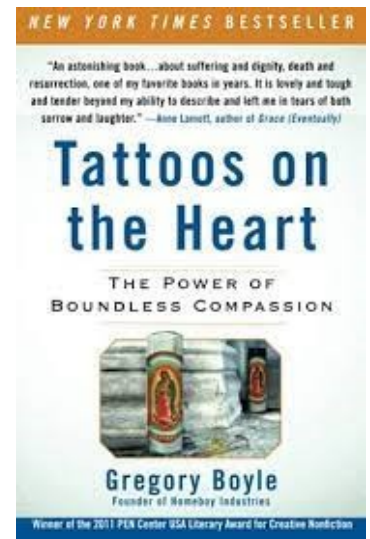
Our youth are kicking off a new year with Sunday evening confirmation classes and various fellowship events. In January, they will be making a trip to Springfield for ice skating and pizza. If you know of any youth who would like to join us, let them know!

Discipleship Group

Join us at 10am on **Wednesday, January 18**, in the Faith Library as we meet for Bible study, discussion, and fellowship. We have a lot of fun with lively discussions. If you have questions, please contact Kelly Hartz at (217) 502-1979 or by email at khartz@sompo-intl.com.

Men's Breakfast

Last Fall, our Men's Breakfast was a delicious hit! At 8:00, we hang out in the kitchen, helping to cook, drink coffee, and visit. At 9:00, we sit down for some conversation and discussion on a specific topic. Our next breakfast is **Saturday, January 7**, and we will be discussing our hopes for the new year. Join us again on March 4 to hear from the guys who are going to Uganda.



Jigsaw Puzzle Exchange

On Sunday, January 15, bring a puzzle you no longer wish to keep and take home another. They will be set out in the gathering area for all to see and pick from.

Offering Envelopes for 2023

Offering envelopes will be available soon at church for you to pick up. If you do not see a box with your name on it, please let us know.

Living Our Mission ... Showing Christ's Love

An expressed goal for 2023 is strengthening congregational care. This supports our mission “showing Christ’s love” as we share the love of Jesus with one another at Faith and our neighbors near and far. Here are some ways we are doing this and opportunities for you to join us!

Pastor Adam and others plan trip to Uganda

(continued from cover)

On January 22, after worship, we are hosting a meal to raise funds and tell our story. This article just scratches the surface of how God has been opening doors and drawing us on this journey, and we want to share more. Our goal is ambitious. We seek to raise \$10,000 to support those of us from Faith, covering airfare and room and board while we are there. After the four days of travel to get there and back, we will have 10

days with our friends in Uganda to experience their lives and what God is doing through their ministry. We know that it will change their lives, and ours, forever.

It's amazing what happens when you say “yes” to God. It's both scary and awesome. I wonder... what might God be asking you to do? Perhaps there is a place in your life where you quickly say “no.” What might happen if you were to say “yes”? Consider it. Pray about it. It may change your life forever.

- *Pastor Adam*

Count Up to Advent in Our Reverse Advent Project

Thank you to all who participated in our Reverse Advent Project and filled bags of food for our neighbors in need. **If you would like to help distribute them, we will be meeting at Faith at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 31st.** It will take about one hour, and you and another will drive the bags to a home where they will be delivered. If you are able to help, please contact Pastor Adam.

Doorbell Dinners

Our next week to deliver is **January 9-13**. Please put it on your calendars and consider helping with this important ministry. A sign-up sheet is available in the gathering area on the counter by the Coffee Sales.

Food Center Mission Moment

On January 15, we will be sharing a digital mission moment in worship and on Facebook, sharing about the significance of the work of the Jacksonville Food Center in our community. We are so blessed to have this organization in our community and are grateful to Lillian Korous for faithfully volunteering as our congregation's liaison to deliver our donations to the center and update us on their work!

Salvation Army Bells!

Thank you to those who rang bells for the Salvation Army: Laura & Larry Sweatman, Donna Bradley, Pat Glyshaw & Lynette Hamilton, Patty Nelson, Judy Dillard & Vicki Robson, and Sharon Zuiderveld.

Jacksonville Food Center

The number of bi-weekly food orders is still increasing. In November, 195 families were served at a cost of \$25,650. 194 families, a total of 373 people, were also served with a once-a-week supply of bakery and meats, displayed on the site, at a cost of \$3,811.50.

148 families have signed up for Christmas boxes to be distributed December 20 and 21. The orders were filled using the 5,000 pounds of foods that were donated by Dot Foods in October. The boxes include all Christmas dinner supplies plus more, plus a \$15 meat voucher.

Other news: Nestle Foods donated 398 individual chicken dinner boxes.

Needed: a volunteer with a pick-up truck who is available on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday mornings to get food donations from Walmart and Aldi. The person who kindly donated his time for this is ill.

Faith Lutheran donated \$130 to the Food Center in November.

Lillian Korous

Worship Assistants

Chancel Committee

Jan. 1 Kim Heise
Jan. 8 Pat Glyshaw
Jan. 15 Kris Roth
Jan. 22 **need volunteer**
Jan. 29 **need volunteer**

Coffee Hosts

Jan. 1 **need volunteer**
Jan. 8 **need volunteer**
Jan. 15 **need volunteer**
Jan. 22 Terri Kimler
Jan. 29 Kay Schnitker

Communion Assistants

Jan. 1 Hallie Mayner
Jan. 8 Ken Devlin
Jan. 15 Pam Devlin
Jan. 22 Liddy Stark
Jan. 29 Kay Schnitker

Greeters

Jan. 1 Hallie Mayner
Jan. 8 Lillian Korous
Jan. 15 Barb Fishback
Jan. 22 Judy D. & Vicki R.
Jan. 29 **need volunteer**

Readers

Jan. 1 Barb D'port & John Wms.
Jan. 8 Kelly Hartz
Jan. 15 Mike Fenner
Jan. 22 Carol VanderKloot
Jan. 29 **need volunteer**

Ushers

Jan. 1 Char & Paul Hubbard
Jan. 8 **need volunteers**
Jan. 15 **need volunteers**
Jan. 22 **need volunteers**
Jan. 29 **need volunteers**

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

Altar Plants

(\$15 donation appreciated)

Plants are placed in the chancel that remain for an extended period of time.

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. 1 By Carol Rauen in loving memory of Gladys Cox

Jan. 8 **Open for donation**

Jan. 15 By Connie & Gary Braner in memory of Mildred Strawn's birthday

Jan. 22 By the Roth family in celebration of Drew Snodgrass' birthday

Jan. 29 **Open for donation**

Plastic Caps & Lids

The bench project is on hold at this time, but we continue to accept your caps and lids in the Mission & Ministry Center/coat closet at Faith

Financial Assistants

Jan. 1 Barb Davenport & Kelly Street
Jan. 8 Mike Oldenettel & Ken Devlin
Jan. 15 Barb Davenport & Lisa Taylor
Jan. 22 Barb Davenport & Kelly Hartz
Jan. 29 Naomi Hahn & Karen Sibert

Newsletter Deadline

January 15

Adult Faith Formation

“Foundations of Christian Theology:
A Lutheran Perspective”

Six Sessions beginning January 7 — 9am till Noon

The goal of this course is not only to study what other people have to say about theology but to think about what our Lutheran theology means for each of us in our lives and ministry.

For the complete course schedule and registration, visit **CSIS-ELCA.org/theology23** or pick up a flyer at Faith on the counter by the coffee sales.

Thanks to a generous congregational gift, this course is **FREE** and open to all. It also satisfies course requirements for Synod-Authorized Ministry students.