



Faith Family

News

February 2023

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

Disciplines of Lent - Kinship

By Pastor Adam

On Ash Wednesday, we will all be invited into the disciplines of Lent – prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. This year, I invite you to add another... kinship.

Gregory Boyle in his book, "Tattoos on the Heart," quotes Mother Theresa. In an attempt to diagnose all the ills of the world, she said, "We've forgotten that we belong to each other." How true! The manner in which we treat one another does not grow from a sense of belonging to one another, but of competing against one another. We are too busy to take time to listen and be together. Our hearts are hardened, and we judge and assume the worst without showing grace. Jesuit author Leon Defour, a year before he died at the age of 99, confided in a friend, "I have written so many books on God, but after all that, what do I really know? I think, in the end, God is the person you're talking to, the one right in front of you." We are called into kinship with our God who came to be with us in Jesus and with our neighbor who bears the image of God.

But it's hard. I'll be the first to admit that I get busy and distracted. Last summer, I was diligent with my prayer walks. Among other things, I would pray for specific people and then take time for silence to let God speak to me and place others on my heart to pray for. I would pray for them and reach out to them later in the day to tell them that they were on my mind and in my prayers. Summer has come and gone, and I don't find myself out walking much anymore. Like the leafless trees, this aspect of my prayer life has gone dormant. Do you remember what the Old

English word for Lent means? Springtime! It's a time for our spiritual lives to green up, and it's not just important for us, but for one another as well. That's where kinship comes in.

Our congregation has lost some of its kinship. Don't get me wrong, we love being together – in worship, fellowship, and service, but kinship is more than this. It is caring for one another, standing with one another, walking with one another through life's challenges. There are many ways we continue to do this here at Faith, but we have also lost some of the structures to help us. Our congregation extends across social media now, and we assume that if someone isn't physically here with us, they are with us online, or if we share about a struggle on social media, others will know. But that's not always the case. This last year, there have been some who have felt an absence of kinship in our congregation and have left to find it elsewhere. While these people are very important to us, it isn't necessary to share their names here. What is important is that we adopt the discipline of kinship.

How? Pray for one another, pray with one another, and let others know you are praying for them. If you haven't seen someone, reach out. If you know someone is going through a difficult time, offer to help. If you are going through a difficult time, ask for help. Let us know so that we can walk with you. Kinship is something we do together. It is deeply rooted in Christ as we see Christ in one another and learn again how to belong to each other.

- Pastor Adam

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.

Baptism of Maeve Katherine Ion... and upcoming baptism of Malia Ruth Lee daughter of Nic and Kelsey Lee

Last month we celebrated the sacrament of Holy Baptism for Maeve Katherine Ion, daughter of Levi and Sheila. It was a wonderful opportunity to remember again our own baptisms and the embrace of God that claims us as God's beloved children. We also embraced Maeve, welcoming her into our congregation by sharing our love and commitment to her through poetry and song. It was a day we will remember, and to help her remember we all signed a letter to her, telling her about what happened and about God's promises for her (see the letter below). On Sunday, February 26, we get to do it again!

Join us for the baptism of Malia Ruth Lee, daughter of Nic and Kelsey, as we again celebrate God's love and offer our own as we commit to baptismal promises of worship and service together. Be sure to sign the letter to Malia that will be at the coffee bar, and stick around for fellowship as we enjoy a cake in her honor.



Dear Maeve Katherine Ion,

On the day you were baptized you were surrounded by love.

In the presence of the Faith Lutheran congregation and our Heavenly Father, your parents and godparents proudly presented you to be named one of God's own. Prayers, poetry, and music marked the joyous celebration on that first day of your Christian life.

All in attendance welcomed you and made promises to God and to you that you would grow up in the midst of God's everlasting mercy and grace. While already born a child of God, it is your baptism which made you part of the Christian family, those who know of God's love in Christ. We promised that your journey would be shaped by that love.

Through the waters of baptism God said to you personally that He loves you and promises to be with you forever. And, while your parents named you at birth, it is by your baptism that God bestows a new name upon you: on that day God told you that, like Jesus, you are forever His Beloved. When He sees you, it is as He sees Jesus, just as holy and just as perfect. So, at the baptismal font your first words were words of love. Every time you remember your baptism, remember that and know that you were loved into existence.

Beloved, we rejoiced in your baptism. We recited the words of the Apostles' Creed, the very words that are foundational to our faith. We sang of Jesus' love to you and shared that love with each other as we recalled our own baptisms. Then, together, we blessed your baptism with the following poem written by Jan Richardson:

As if we could call you anything other than beloved and blessed,
drenched as we are in our love for you, washed as we are by our delight in you,
born anew as we are by the grace that flows from the heart of God who bore you to us.

All this happened on the day of your baptism. There was such delight, Beloved. And such great love.

God's Blessings Always,
Your Faith Family

Living Our Mission... Vibrant Worship

An expressed goal for 2022 was 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.

Lenten Midweek Supper and Worship Services **“Open My Life, Lord”**

Prayer and fasting are foundational disciplines of Lent. When it comes to fasting, well, there are lots of ways we can minimize the excess in our lives to make more room for our relationship with God. Don’t let giving up Wednesday evening suppers at Faith be one of them! Come at 6:00 for supper in the Great Room. If you have time, bring a dish to share. If your day is busy, come and eat, knowing that the gift you bring is yourself! Then stick around for worship afterwards at 6:45.

During our Midweek Worship Services, we will explore the prayer in action... through our bodies.

Week 1: “Open My Eyes, Lord” - How does our world change when we view it through the eyes of Christ?

Week 2: “Open My Hands, Lord” - How are our hands used in service to others?

Week 3: “Open My Ears, Lord” - How can we grow from hearing to listening?

Week 4: “Open My Heart, Lord” - How can an open heart increase our willingness and trust?

Week 5: “Open My Life, Lord” - It is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us!

Our service will follow the beautiful and familiar “Holden Evening Prayer” with added Taizé music to facilitate prayer.

Pancakes and Praise

Tuesday, February 21, 6:00pm

Ancient church tradition includes fasting from excess during the season of Lent. To prepare for this fast, on Shrove Tuesday (the day before Ash Wednesday), families would remove all of the fat and sugar from their homes. What do you do with all of that excess goodness? Make pancakes! Join us in the Great Room for a delicious meal of pancakes, eggs, and sausage followed by some time for worship and praise. A free-will offering will be collected to go completely to the needs of the children at Pillars of Africa in Uganda where a team will visit in March.

Ash Wednesday

February 22, - 7:00pm

Lent is just around the corner! Join us for our traditional service of the imposition of ashes. The practice reminds us that we are dust and to dust we shall return... but also proclaims that we find life in the cross of Christ. Stay tuned for more about our Lenten midweek services.

Music Rehearsal Time Changes

Our Exaltation Ringers and Chancel Choir are trying out a new rehearsal schedule to encourage more to be a part of the music program here at Faith.

Chancel Choir will meet on the 1st and 3rd Sundays;
Exaltation Ringers on the 2nd and 4th Sundays;
all from 10:45-11:15am

Why should you consider joining us? How about free singing/ringing lessons, do something for yourself, and learn something new? Music is a gift of God... wouldn’t it be a boring world without it?

Making music together also relieves stress, stimulates the immune system, increases pain threshold, may help snoring, improves lung function, develops a sense of belonging and connection, enhances memory, helps with grief, improves mental health. (*Source: Healthline*)

I hope to see you on **February 5th for our Chancel Choir** rehearsal at 10:45am in the sanctuary!

Jean Welch
Director of Music



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..

Women of Faith Galentine's Day

Join us on **Wednesday, February 15th at 6:00 pm** in the Great Room for a Galentine's Day themed fellowship night. We'll have a waffle bar, chocolates, and a top-secret service project. RSVP to Monica at 217-737-0475 by Sunday, February 12th.

Discipleship Group

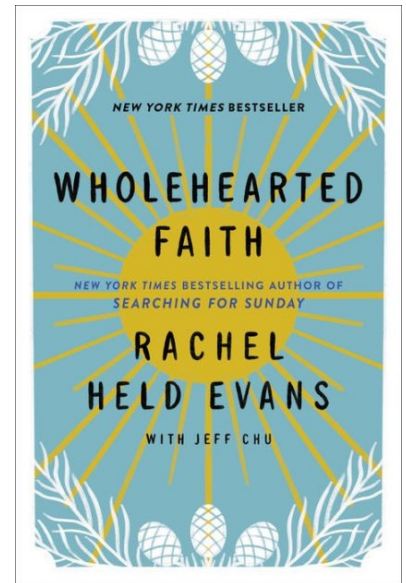
Join us at 10am on Wednesday, February 15, in the Faith Library as we meet for great conversation and fellowship time. If you haven't attended before, don't be afraid to join in! For more information, please contact Kelly Hartz at (217) 502-1979 or by email at khartz@sompo-intl.com.

New Pastor's Pick for February:

"Whole Hearted Faith" by Rachel Held Evans

At the time of her tragic death in 2019, Rachel was working on a new book about wholeheartedness. With the help of her close friend and author Jeff Chu, that work-in-progress has been woven together with some of her other unpublished writings into a rich collection of essays that ask candid questions about the stories we've been told - and the stories we tell - about our faith, our selves, and our world. This book is for the doubter and the dreamer, the seeker and the sojourner, those who long for a sense of spiritual wholeness as well as those who have been hurt by the Church but can't seem to let go of the story of Jesus.

**This month's discussion will be on Sunday,
February 26, following worship.**



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 have a potluck at noon and then watch "The Intern" on **Monday, February 20** (President's Day). Please bring a dish to share and then stay for the movie and discussion.

Confirmation and Youth Group

Youth activities are back for 2023! We had a great ice skating trip in January and are looking for more fun to come. If you know of any youth, grades 6-12, who would like to join us, send them our way! They also have a wonderful time for discussion and learning for Sunday School in the basement.

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, February 4**. Join us again on March 4 to hear from the guys who are going to Uganda.

Living Our Mission ... Showing Christ's Love

An expressed goal for 2022 was 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!

Generous support for our upcoming mission trip to Uganda!

Words cannot express our gratitude to God for your generous support as a group from Faith prepares to travel to Uganda to work with Pillars of Africa school and orphanage in March. We held a pasta bar luncheon and fundraiser on January 22 where **we raised over \$9,000!** These funds will help with travel, room, and board for those making the trip as well as help pay for the children’s clothing, medical supplies, schooling, and our service project of adding electricity to their school. If you would still like to donate, please make checks out to Faith Lutheran Church with “HUGS” in the memo. We will hold another fundraiser at our Pancakes and Praise meal and worship on Tuesday, February 21, with all of the offerings going to support the needs of the children.

In addition to financial support, we desire your prayers! Please pray for Pastor Adam, Benen Dichsen, Kelly and Melissa Street, Patty Nelson, and Kevin Krohe who are making the trip. We are organizing a way where each of you can participate in a prayer project with them and will share more as we get closer.

Food Center Mission Moment

On Sunday, January 29, we shared a digital mission moment in worship and on Facebook, telling 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! Please visit our YouTube channel and Facebook page to view the video and share it with others. If you would like to volunteer in any way, please talk to Lillian. If you would like to donate food, see Lillian’s article to the right for more information on what is needed at this time.

Care Coordinator Corner

Thanks to all **Doorbell Dinner** drivers/riders for volunteering in January. Our next week will not be until late May-early June, when the weather should be fine.

Homebound members continue to receive visits, sermons, and greeting cards. **Confirmation** Class has appreciated the meals that have been provided. Please let me know if you'd like to prepare an easy dinner/dessert for them. **Movie Monday** was a grand success in January with a viewing of *Selma* on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. This month we will have a potluck, followed by the film, *The Intern*, on Monday, February 20 (Presidents' Day). Watch for news about "*Coffee with Sharon*" on upcoming Tuesday mornings. Details to follow.

Jacksonville Food Center

The exciting time for the Food Center, namely distributing the Christmas boxes, is over. 149 families signed up for it, at a cost of \$32,690. Some ordered boxes were not picked up, but were later distributed to families during the usual two-week food box distribution.

In the report to churches, Malissa states the usual statistics: for the bimonthly food orders, a total of 146 families [a total of 312 people] at a cost of \$18,075. At the once weekly visits to the produce, bakery, and meats table, a total of 291 people were served at a cost of \$2,774.

The churches donated \$7,780 in money and \$4,515.50 in food donations.

Faith Lutheran donated \$270 in December. For those wishing to donate food, suggestions are dry pasta, mac and cheese, canned vegetables, canned soups, and cereals. Egg cartons are also needed.

Lillian Korous

Plastic Caps & Lids

Do you know about all those caps we’ve been collecting? **We found a source to make them into a bench for us... maybe two!** Keep bringing your caps and lids to the Mission & Ministry Center/coat closet at Faith. We also need helpers willing to wash them and weigh them before we take them for drop-off.

Worship Assistants

Chancel Committee

Feb. 5 Kris Roth
Feb. 12 Pat Glyshaw
Feb. 19 Kim Heise
Feb. 22 Kris Roth (Ash Wed.)
Feb. 26 **need volunteer**

Communion Assistants

Feb. 5 Karen Sibert
Feb. 12 Hallie Mayner
Feb. 19 **need volunteer**
Feb. 22 **need volunteer** (Ash Wed.)
Feb. 26 **need volunteer**

Readers

Feb. 5 Carol Kilver
Feb. 12 Terri Kimler
Feb. 19 Mike Fenner
Feb. 22 Sharon Woodworth (Ash W)
Feb. 26 **need volunteer**

Coffee Hosts

Feb. 5 Karen Sibert
Feb. 12 Judy D. & Vicki R.
Feb. 19 **need volunteer**
Feb. 26 **need volunteer**

Greeters

Feb. 5 Gayla, Debbie, & Ethel
Feb. 12 **need volunteer**
Feb. 19 **need volunteer**
Feb. 22 Judy & Vicki (Ash Wed.)
Feb. 26 **need volunteer**

Ushers

Feb. 5 **need volunteers**
Feb. 12 **need volunteers**
Feb. 19 **need volunteers**
Feb. 22 **need volunteers** (Ash Wed.)
Feb. 26 **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 and then are available to take home.

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.).

Feb. 5 By the Dichsens in honor of Benen's 14th birthday on February 9

Feb. 12 By Carol Rauen in memory of Dave & Shirley Guse

Feb. 19 **Open for donation**

Feb. 26 **Open for donation**

Faith Telephone Directory draft

A draft of a new Faith Directory is available in the gathering area at church on the Coffee Sales counter by the Mission & Ministry Center — please make any corrections/additions/deletions on that copy.

A new directory will then be available later in February for all to take home (1 per household, please).

Financial Assistants

To be determined at the meeting on January 29.

Newsletter Deadline

February 19

Financial Statements

2022 Financial Statements are available at the tall table outside of the office at church. If there is no envelope with your name on it, please let Pam Devlin know or contact the church office.

Contribution Envelopes for 2023

will be available soon in the gathering area — the printing has been delayed, but the company will get them to us as soon as they can.

After they come in, if you don't see a box with your name on it, please mention this to Barb Davenport, Pam Devlin, or Kris Roth. We will happily provide you with a box. If you would like to register for our easy, **automatic online giving service**, contact the church office. There are no fees, and it saves you from remembering to write that weekly check!