



Faith Family

News

March 2023

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

A Gift of God's Grace

By Pastor Adam

Last month I received the worst phone call I'd ever received in my life. While we were over a thousand miles away in Florida, my mom had died instantly of a ruptured aortic aneurism at the breakfast table with friends at her independent living facility. Thus began a journey of many miles and many tears as we made our way home to grieve with family and friends.

The next days were filled with so many unexpected emotions. I knew I would miss my mom, but not this much. I knew I would need the support of others, but not this much. Words can't express how much your love and prayers have meant to me. Thank you!

I also didn't realize how badly I needed to be with my Faith Family. If you heard the sermon at my mom's funeral, you know she loved communion. She came to church hungry every Sunday. She couldn't wait to come to the table, extend her hands, and receive the grace of God offered in the body of Christ. It was meaningful to her also that it was an open table, open to all who were hungry in this life and all who have gone before us into eternal life. Every week, at Holy Communion, she knew she was eating with my dad.

On Ash Wednesday, back here in Jacksonville with you all, something else unexpected happened during Holy Communion... not in the receiving, but in the giving. Moments before, I had looked each of you in

the eye, smeared ash on your foreheads in the shape of a cross, and told you, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Then, in Holy Communion, I looked beneath the shadow of the cross and into your eyes, placed the body of Christ in your hands, and proclaimed, "The Body of Christ, given for you." Each exchange brought healing and a gift of God's grace. It was glorious!

Since then, I have reflected in prayer and realize how important it is for me to do what I am called to do with people I love. I'm called to be a husband and father, and so I need to take time to be with Karen and our kids as we grieve together. I am called to be a pastor, your pastor of Word and Sacrament, and so I delight in proclaiming the gospel, splashing in baptismal waters, and sharing in the body of Christ with you. I am called to be a Child of God, and so I need to be who I am, feel what I feel, and let God carry me.

Life gets busy, and it's often hard to take time to do what we are called to do with the people we love, but my mom's death puts things into perspective for me. I'm grateful for every time I put the busyness of life aside to be with her, and for the opportunity to live out my calling as husband, father, and pastor.

How is God calling you? In what ways are you called to serve with people you love? In what ways can you serve here at Faith with your Faith Family? Life is short. Answer your call. Seize your opportunities to serve. And come to the table.

- 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.

Upcoming Baptism of Malia Ruth Lee, daughter of Nic and Kelsey Lee

Holy Baptism is a sacrament in the Lutheran Church. It is a gift of God's grace for all of God's children, and we rejoice in the opportunity to celebrate it anew with Malia. Join us on February 26 as we proclaim to Malia the promise of God's faithfulness, her identity as a Child of God, and celebrate that she and all of God's children have been loved into existence by their Creator. It's also an opportunity for us to remember our baptism and the claim that God has made on us. Join us on this special day, and may you take the opportunity every day to remember the gift of baptism in your life!



First Communion Instruction

Do you have a child interested in receiving communion? If they are in first grade or older and you feel they are ready for this step in their faith, come talk to Pastor Adam. He will be leading a three-session course that will include teaching, discussion, making chalices, and baking communion bread. The classes will be held in April and May with plans to celebrate First Communion with the congregation on Mother's Day, May 14.

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 **Sunday mornings** for these rehearsals at 10:45am in the sanctuary!

Jean Welch 
Director of Music

New Sound Panels in the Great Room

This last month, a major improvement was made to the Great Room. We added acoustic sound panels to the ceiling to help minimize echo so that we can better visit, worship, eat, and fellowship together. The change is dramatic and made a big difference for our Pancakes and Praise service! Come check them out during a Lenten soup supper and see what a difference they make. A big "thank you" to Kevin, Adam, and Mason Krohe, Greg Kimler, Robert Trenter, Drew Snodgrass, and Matt Snodgrass for installing them!

New Audio/Visual Booth

Over the last few years, our audio/visual technology and volunteers have been stretched to the max. With the help of memorials, we are installing an updated sound board and will soon build a counter to house the equipment. Wireless microphones for the singers will make it much easier to set up, take down, and move outdoors for worship. New lighting for the cross and altar will be installed at a later date to save energy and improve our beautiful worship space. Many thanks to Kevin Krohe and Greg Kimler for their hard work with the A/V! We are always looking for more who are willing to learn and help with live streaming our worship!

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.



Pancakes and Praise

Our Shrove Tuesday Pancakes and Praise service was a hit! Thank you to all who helped plan, cook, play, sing, and praise. It was a wonderful evening as we enjoyed the food and fellowship and sang out our alleluias before burying them



away for Lent. We even welcomed some guests from the community and collected a generous offering to support the children we will be visiting in Uganda.

Sunday Mornings in Lent: “Lessons Learned”

Our gospel readings during Lent lead us through some challenging parables of Jesus. Time and time again, he confronts us, challenging our notions of God and neighbor. Each week we will learn more about God and about ourselves as we hear these stories of forgiveness, generosity, community, judgement, and seeing Christ in our neighbor. We will also be introducing a portion of a new liturgy from the hymnal, Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW). It is an upbeat liturgy to lead us through Lent as we sing, “Kyrie Eleison - Lord have Mercy.” Each week we will also take time for reflection as we sing a Taizé song from the previous Wednesday night. Taizé music is simple and repetitive as it provides time and pace for meditation and prayer.

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

It’s time for Lenten midweek soup and worship! Suppers are potluck style. Come at 6:00 in the Great Room, and bring a dish to share. If your day is busy, come and eat, knowing that the gift you bring is yourself! Worship begins at 6:45 and will follow the Holden Evening Prayer format. Our theme is “Open My Life, Lord” as each week looks at a different way God opens us to deeper faith. The “body prayer” engages our whole bodies and a Taizé song draws us deeper into prayerful meditation. You won’t want to miss these wonderful opportunities for fellowship and worship as we gather together as the body of Christ!

During our Midweek Worship Services, we will explore the following themes:

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!

Living Our Mission ... Faith Formation

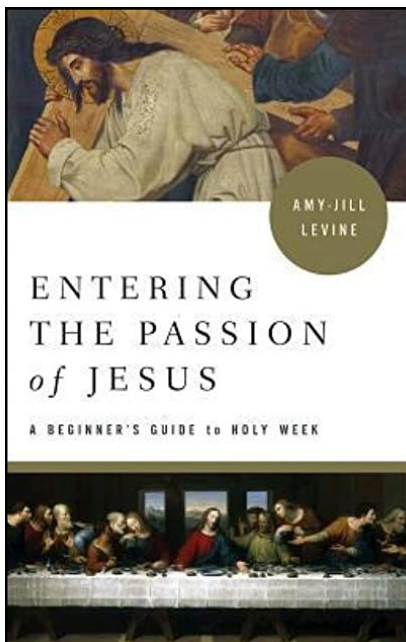
It's a new year with new opportunities for Small Groups!
Check these out and consider how you might get involved..

Discipleship Group

Join us at 10am on Wednesday, March 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.

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. Our next potluck and movie will be on Monday, March 6 at noon. The movie will be *The Robe*, a 1953 classic about a man who wins Jesus' robe in a dice game after the crucifixion and discovers his Christian faith along the way.



Youth Game Night

Come for a night of pizza and fun in the church basement. Play some ping-pong, pool, air hockey, or just hang out together. Bring a friend and join us for a chance to connect. Stay tuned for the date and time.

Men's Breakfast

Our Men's Breakfasts have been 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. Join us on **March 4** to hear from the guys who are going to Uganda.



New Pastor's Pick for March: "Entering the Passion of Jesus" by Amy-Jill Levine

We return to author Amy-Jill Levine who wrote our Advent pick last year. In this book, Levine delves into the history and literature surrounding the last days of Jesus' life. She sets the narrative in historical context and analyzes the risks and motives of the story's characters. Join us after worship on Sundays in the Peace Room for video and discussion. If you are already committed to choir or bells, you can check out the DVD or join us when you can.

What is Holy Week?

Have you ever wondered what all took place on Holy Week? Did you realize that the gospels don't share the same timeline from Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to his death and resurrection? What significance does this have for us today? Join our confirmation class on **Wednesday, April 5** for a night of intergenerational fun as we walk through the events of Holy Week with discussion, trivia, and games. Bring a dish to share for a potluck at 6:00 p.m. and stay for the events beginning at 6:30 p.m.

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!

Mission Trip to Uganda - March 8-23

It’s finally here! Our team of six is off to Uganda! After a flight that will take them through Amsterdam and Tanzania, they will arrive in Kampala, Uganda and spend nine days with the children and leaders of Pillars of Africa orphanage and school. They will worship with Patrick and his congregation, serve by installing electricity in the school, play with the children, build relationships with the kids and staff, prayerfully discern ways to grow this ministry, and much more that only God knows! Their trip will conclude with an opportunity to experience the wild beauty of Africa through a safari in Merchison Falls National Park and headwaters of the Nile River.



THANK YOU for your generous support of this mission! Donations have covered the cost of the mission portion of their trip, the electrical installation for the school, and is providing gifts of food, clothing, medical supplies, and more. It is truly our entire congregation on this journey together!

PLEASE PRAY for Pastor Adam, Benen Dichsen, Kelly and Melissa Street, Patty Nelson, and Kevin Krohe who are making the trip. Retired Pastor Glen VanderKloot has organized a prayer team where each volunteer is paired with one of our missionaries to pray for them five times each day. If you are interested in being a part of this team, contact Glen at pastor@faithlutheran.com.

A SENDING will take place in worship on March 5 before their departure and a **CELEBRATION** of their trip will be held in worship on April 30 with a meal and presentation afterwards.

Jacksonville Food Center

Melissa, Food Center Director, is working on an application for a \$30,000 grant that may be used for any expense except payroll. The weekly pick-up of donations from Aldi and Walmart are once again happening. There was one new person every day last week for food boxes, which are available to families twice a month. Produce, bakery, and meats (once a week availability) has lately been busier than the food boxes.

Looking into the future, a decrease in Food Stamps to pre-pandemic levels will happen in March. The Food Center expects a big increase in requests for extra foods. Add to that, the end of school in summer also increases the need for extra food.

The Food Center served 183 families for food boxes, totaling 459 people, at a cost of \$23,795. They served 172 families for extra bakery and produce, a total of 363 people at a cost of \$2,915. The meat cost for the bakery-produce customers was \$696. In January, the churches donated \$2,435 in food and \$2,536 in money.

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 sort (and possibly wash) them and weigh them before we take them for drop-off.

End-of-Year Giving 2023

At the 2023 Annual Meeting, our congregation approved the donation of \$15,000 to be given from endowment interest for the glory of God and benefit of all God’s children.

Worship Assistants

Chancel Committee

March 5 Martha Krohe
March 12 Pat Glyshaw
March 19 Kris Roth
March 26 **need volunteer**

Communion Assistants

March 5 Karen Sibert
March 12 Hallie Mayner
March 19 Liddy Stark
March 26 Kay Schnitker

Readers

March 5 Kelly Hartz
March 12 Barb Davenport
March 19 John Williams
March 26 Sharon Woodworth

Coffee Hosts

March 5 Barb Davenport
March 12 Laura Sweatman
March 19 Liddy S. & Hallie M.
March 26 Martha Krohe

Greeters

March 5 Kay & Sharon W.
March 12 Hallie M. & Lynette H.
March 19 Lillian Korous
March 26 Judy D. & Vicki R.

Ushers

March 5 **need volunteer**
March 12 **need volunteer**
March 19 **need volunteer**
March 26 **need volunteer**

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.).

March 5 **Open for donation**

March 12 **Open for donation**

March 19 **Open for donation**

March 26 By the Dichsens in honor of Louis' 8th birthday on March 29
& By Carol Rauen in celebration of Connie Braner's birthday today

Faith Telephone Directory

A new Faith Telephone Directory **will be available on March 5** for all to take home (1 per household, please). These will be located on the Coffee Sales counter by the Mission & Ministry Center.

Financial Assistants

To be determined the first week of March.

Newsletter Deadline

March 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!