



# Faith Family

## News

February 2024

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

**“It is to your advantage that I go away...”**

**- Jesus**

It's the night of Jesus' betrayal. He washed his disciples' feet, promised them the Holy Spirit, and urged them to stay connected to him, the true vine. Then, in chapter 16, he says this: “It is to your advantage that I go away.” Really Jesus? That's a harsh thing to say! But it's true. In just hours, he would be betrayed, arrested, and taken away to be crucified. He was going away, and in his absence, his disciples will receive the Holy Spirit and discover the power of God so powerfully at work among them.

Now, I'm not Jesus and Golgotha is NOT on my list of sabbatical destinations, but Jesus' words ring true... “it is to your advantage that I go away.” Why? I've been your pastor for over eleven years now. It has been a joy and privilege to walk with you in your joys and in your sorrows, and I LOVE what I do and the ministry we share. But, over time, a congregation can begin to look a lot like the pastor, they can get too comfortable relying on the pastor, and their commitment to ministry can become dependent on the pastor. For all of these reasons and more, it is to your advantage that I go away.

It is to your advantage because this isn't my church, it's Christ's church and should reflect him above all else. It is to your advantage because this ministry is OUR ministry. In my absence, more attention can be given to the work of God's Spirit among you and the many spiritual gifts you have to give. It is to your advantage because one's presence in the pew on a Sunday shouldn't depend on who stands in the pulpit, but solely for the purpose and privilege of worshipping God in response to God's grace poured out in our lives.

And, before you think I just have a big head, this door swings both ways. It is good for ME that I go away as

well. A pastor can become so consumed by their ministry that it takes priority over everything else. They can become so focused on their identity as “pastor” that they forget that they may also be a spouse and parent. They can be so busied by their call to spiritually care for others that they neglect their own spiritual care. I confess... too often, I am this pastor.

For the next three months, I am going away. I'm going away so that you can plug into faith in new ways and Paul's words in Ephesians 4:12 can bear fruit, “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” I'm going away so that I can plug into my identity as husband, father, and - most central of all - Child of God. I need to be reminded that my greatest identity is not as “pastor,” but a broken and mended, vulnerable and forgiven, beloved Child of God.

That reminds me, there is another advantage that I go away. I am so grateful for this opportunity, and I wish that everyone would be given a sabbatical, but I know that is not the case. If nothing else, I hope this will be a reminder to you of just how important sabbath is for us all. Sabbaticals may be recommended for pastors every seven years, but sabbath living is to be lived every week. Every day! Take time to stop and rest. Take time to play and pray. Take time to step aside and let the Holy Spirit lead. Take time to be grounded in faith and be reminded that you also are a broken and mended, vulnerable and forgiven, beloved Child of God.

So, yes, it is to OUR advantage that I go away, but it will also be oh so good to be back! In the meantime, keep my family and me in your prayers as you will be in mine. Plug into faith through your spiritual practices and shared ministry. Celebrate the Holy Spirit at work in you, accomplishing more than you can ask or imagine.

*Pastor Adam*

# What's Happening During Sabbatical?

**For Pastor Adam...** sabbatical will be a time for grounding as he plugs into his identity as a husband, father, and Child of God. He will seek renewal through play, rest, and spiritual reflection and growth through books, retreats, and conversations.

For the month of February, he and his family will be headed south for quality time



together. Highlights will be hanging with gators in the Everglades, snorkeling in the Keys, sitting on beaches, a Savannah ghost tour, visiting family and friends, and returning to some family reunion sites from their past.

In March, as his family settles back into their homeschool routine, Pastor Adam will take time connecting with schooling, playing creatively with some home projects, and finding quiet places for reading. He will also take a 10-day trip north to a retreat center on the north shore of Lake Superior and to his brother's in northern Wisconsin where he can explore the winter beauty of God's creation and explore his inner being.

In April, more time will be spent at home. The family will take a camping trip in southern Illinois to view the total solar eclipse, and Pastor Adam will attend a church conference in Arkansas to get fired up for his return on May 5.

Pastor Adam and his family want to thank you all so much for your love, support, and this opportunity for renewal. They will hold you in prayer for renewal in your life and for our whole Faith Family!

**For our Faith Family...** sabbatical will be a time for grounding as well. With Pastor Paul Schwartzkopf as our interim pastor, we will enter into the season of Lent with renewed focus on spiritual practices, plugging into faith through worship, prayer, service, and more. Monica Proefrock leads a team that will help us take a look at our Total Ministry triangle as we explore how God made us for worship (UP), gave us spiritual gifts to contribute to ministry (IN), and passions for service (OUT).

In Pastor Adam's absence, it will also be a time for us all to pitch in and help. There are many things he did that we can learn to do, too. Please consider how you can give your time and abilities to our ministry. Pick up a ministry team menu in the Total Ministry Center by the sanctuary and get involved with a ministry team. This is a wonderful opportunity for each of us to serve and grow!



If any questions or concerns arise, please direct them to our Church Council: Kelly Hartz (president), Mindy Carlson, Ken Devlin, Greg Kimler, Gaylon Martin, Patty Nelson, Monica Proefrock, and Kelly Street.

**From Pastor Paul...** Ann and I are looking forward to participating with you again in the ministry of Faith. Being with you that year in 2011-2012 was both a joy and a blessing for us.

You ministered significantly to us recently on Christmas Eve. Several days before Christmas, Ann and I both came down with Covid, although we both were vaccinated and up to date on booster shots. On Christmas Eve we were quarantined at home. Under the early influence of Covid, Ann had tripped and broken a bone in her left foot. The crack was in line (not displaced), so emergency personnel put her left leg in a boot and told her to put no weight on it. I was unable to lead worship at the small United Church of Christ congregation that I'd been serving. We were seriously dejected. Then, the live stream of your Christmas Eve celebration of Christ's birth into this sick and broken world was the Good News that picked us up and gave us hope. Thank you very much!!!

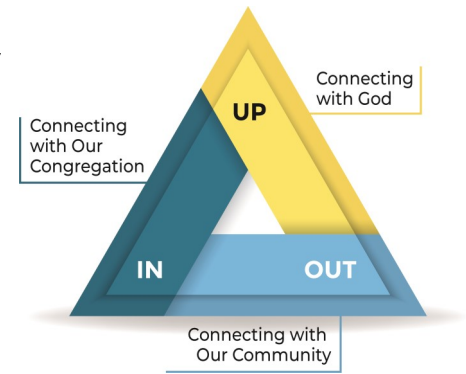
Because riding in a car 14 miles to see the podiatrist is painful for Ann, she will not come to Jacksonville with me when I drive up January 28<sup>th</sup>. Ann is getting around in the house with a great invention called a knee walker, and our daughter and son-in-law live only two blocks away. They have been marvelously doing whatever we have needed. Plus, several neighbors have volunteered to help Ann, if needed. We anticipate that the boot will come off by mid-February and she —walking on both legs — can join me in Jacksonville.

The best way to reach me when I'm not in the church office is on my cell phone: 217-316-9399. Please do not hesitate to call or text me. My email is prpsps7@gmail.com.

*Pastor Paul*

# Reaching Up... Connecting with God through Worship

Total ministry is a balanced ministry as we reach up, in, and out... connecting with God, our congregation, and our community



## Ash Wednesday

February 14 - 7:00pm

Lent is just around the corner! Join us for our traditional service of the imposition of ashes. This 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.

## Lenten Wednesday Workshops

Lent will look a little different this year with Pastor Adam on sabbatical, but please plan to join us for midweek Lenten evenings that will help us learn about ourselves as people of faith and of Faith, and to grow deeper in our relationships with God and each other. Plan to join us in the Great Room on **Wednesday evenings from February 21 through March 20** for a potluck meal beginning at 6:00pm followed by a time of learning and fellowship at 6:45pm, and take time this Lent to become Grounded in Faith.

- *Monica Proefrock*

## Preaching with Pastor Paul

February 4 — “Faith or Fear” In Mark 5:21-43, Jesus affirms the faith of the hemorrhaging woman whose behavior looks a bit like superstition. Then Jesus calms the fear of people who think that Jairus’s daughter has died, but Jesus says that she is sleeping. They laugh at him. Then Jesus raises her from the sleep of death.

February 11 — The Transfiguration “Light or Dark” In Mark 8:27-9:8, we see the disciple Peter in the light of Jesus the Messiah. We also see Peter in the dark of human misunderstanding in which he just doesn’t “get it” in the light of Christ.

February 14 — Ash Wednesday “Valentines and Ashes” In Mark 9:30-37, Jesus associates his suffering, death, and resurrection with loving a little child. Love for others sometimes requires suffering by the Lover.

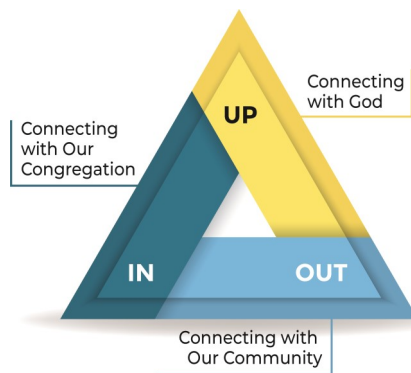
February 18 — “Earning or Receiving” In Mark 10:17-31, a rich man thought that he had to do something to inherit eternal life. Then Jesus teaches him that eternal life cannot be earned by human effort. Eternal life is a gift from God — a gift of God’s grace.

February 25 — “Power or Mercy” In Mark 10:32-52, two disciples want Jesus to give them positions of power, and a blind beggar wants Jesus to give him mercy. Jesus answered the prayer for mercy, not the demand for power.

## Baptisms

We celebrate with Aaron and Calla Merriman at the baptism of their daughter, Fallon Marie, on January 14 and with Dustin and Emilee Secrist at the baptism of their daughter, Emma Kate, on January 21. We welcome you into the mission we share and join in giving thanks to God!





# Reaching In... Connecting with our Congregation through Discipleship and Fellowship

Total ministry is a balanced ministry as we reach up, in, and out... connecting with God, our congregation, and our community

## Discipleship Group

Join our monthly discussion at **10:00am on Wednesday, February 21**, in the Faith Library. This month, we'll explore "foolishness," both God's and our own. For more information, please contact Kelly Hartz at (217) 502-1979 or by email: [khartz@sompo-intl.com](mailto:khartz@sompo-intl.com).

## Men's Prayer Group

While Pastor Adam is away, the Men's Prayer Group is seeking to grow our group! You can meet in person at Faith on Wednesday mornings at 7:00, or on zoom. Contact one of the guys to let them know you are coming: Gilbert Joehl, Kevin Krohe, or Larry Kuster.

## Youth Group Help Wanted

One of the hats worn by Pastor Adam is youth leader. In his absence, we are looking for people willing to lead an event, host a meal, or lead a youth Sunday school class. If you are interested, please let Kelly Hartz know. We have a wonderful group of youth, and you would be blessed by your time with them!

## Sabbatical Book #1 - "Let Your Life Speak"

Pastor Adam has selected a number of books to read on sabbatical, but would like to invite you to join in reading some of them with him. We will discuss them together; then, when he returns, he plans to host a series of discussion sessions to share what we have learned.

Our first book: "Let Your Life Speak" by Parker Palmer. With wisdom, compassion, and gentle humor, Parker J. Palmer invites us to listen to the inner teacher and follow its leadings toward a sense of meaning and purpose. Telling stories from his own life and the lives of others who have made a difference, he shares insights gained from darkness and depression as well as fulfillment and joy, illuminating a pathway toward vocation for all who seek the true calling of their lives.

From Pastor Adam: "I have read this book twice already and chose to read it again because it has spoken wonderful wisdom into my life during times of discernment. I particularly appreciate the way Palmer calls on us to recognize the gifts God gives us in baptism. When we use these gifts, living out our vocation, *our life speaks!* I am eager to get in touch with my gifts and renew God's call in my life... I invite you to do the same!

Books are available for \$10 each. Talk to Kelly Hartz about a time for discussion.

## Women of Faith Fellowship Night

Join us on Wed, Feb. 7 at 6pm in the Great Room at Faith for our **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Galentine's Party!** We'll have a waffle bar and a bloom bar from *Another Way: Blooms & More*. For \$20 you can enjoy unlimited homemade waffles and be guided in making your own beautiful arrangement to take home or gift to a friend. Please RSVP to Monica Proefrock by **Sunday, February 4** at 217-737-0475 or [monica.proefrock@gmail.com](mailto:monica.proefrock@gmail.com). Checks can be made to Faith Lutheran with "Galentine's" in the memo line.

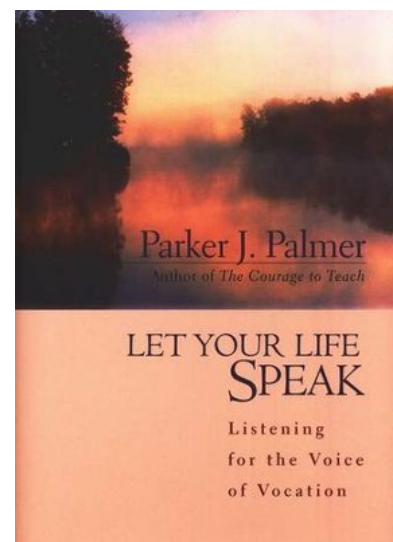
## Men's Breakfast

Come and connect with other men as we share our faith and enjoy some good food on **Saturday, February 3**. Come help at 8:00 and eat at 9:00.

## Thank You

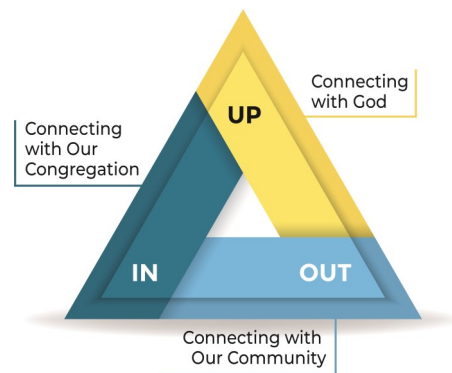
Thank you so much for all the wonderful birthday cards and Christmas carolers for my Christmas birthday. My Faith Family is a blessing!

— *Martha Sturgeon*



## *Reaching Out... Connecting with our Community through Outreach*

Total ministry is a balanced ministry as we reach up, in, and out... connecting with God, our congregation, and our community



### **Jacksonville Food Center**

The number of food help requests continued to increase all year. In December, 736 families received biweekly food orders, a total of 1,373 people, at a cost of \$90,860.00 equaling 34,210 lbs. The Food Center served 123 families for extra bakery, a total of 263 people at a cost of \$2,045.00. The churches contributed \$3,484.38 in money and \$8,816.50 in food donations. Faith Lutheran donated \$350 to the Food Center in December.

The Food Center gave out the traditional Christmas baskets on December 19 and 20. It included a food voucher for meat that could be used at HyVee.

Other news: it might be of interest to learn where all the support for the Food Center comes from. Each donation, no matter how small, is very important. Donations of food and money come from churches, individuals, organizations, stores, schools, and governing bodies. Some donations are important to the Food Center facility -- an example is the donation of two walk-in coolers in the new facility by a company who will use the donation as a deduction from income taxes. Another person did the electrical work to set them up with no charge to the Food Center for the labor. These acts of kindness, generosity, and love keep the Food Center able to do so much good. *Lillian Korous and Pat Glyshaw*

### **Friends From Faith**

A ministry team led by Naomi Hahn: on the last Sunday of each month — everyone is welcome to send a greeting card. **On February 25**, visit the tall white table just outside the sanctuary where you can select a card, sign a card, or deposit a card in the mailbox to send. Cards and stamps are provided for your use. If you have extra cards or stamps to spare, please bring them and donate them in the provided jar.

### **Music is a great way to connect!**

Stay tuned for a rehearsal schedule for **Exaltation Ringers**. If you might be interested in ringing, contact Jean Welch for more information.

We are always looking for people to sing or play special music for a prelude or a stewardship offering.

[jrwelch53@msn.com](mailto:jrwelch53@msn.com) or 217-652-7009 (phone/text)



### **We Remember**

#### **Jerry Roegge and Hank Gregory**

Jerry Roegge died on November 3 and a service was held at Faith on November 8.

Hank Gregory, Tina Freeman's father, died on December 28 and a service was held on January 3.

Our prayers are with their families. We give thanks to God for our partnership in ministry and for the hope we share in eternal life.

# Worship Assistants

## Chancel Committee

Feb. 4 Martha Krohe  
Feb. 11 Pat Glyshaw  
Feb. 14 Kris Roth (Ash Wednesday)  
Feb. 18 **need volunteer**  
Feb. 25 **need volunteer**

## Communion Assts.

Feb. 4 Karen Sibert  
Feb. 11 Hallie Mayner  
Feb. 14 **need volunteer** (Ash Wed)  
Feb. 18 **need volunteer**  
Feb. 25 Kay Schnitker

## Readers

Feb. 4 Terri Kimler  
Feb. 11 Patty Nelson  
Feb. 14 **need volunteer** (Ash Wed)  
Feb. 18 Liddy Stark  
Feb. 25 Barb Davenport

## Coffee Hosts

Feb. 4 Terri Kimler  
Feb. 11 **need volunteer**  
Feb. 18 **need volunteer**  
Feb. 25 Kay Schnitker

## Greeters

Feb. 4 Hallie Mayner  
Feb. 11 Hallie Mayner  
Feb. 14 Angela Spray (Ash Wed)  
Feb. 18 Malinda Carlson  
Feb. 25 Angela Spray

## Ushers

Feb. 4 **need volunteer**  
Feb. 11 Pat Glyshaw  
Feb. 14 **need volunteer** (Ash Wed)  
Feb. 18 Hallie Mayner  
Feb. 25 **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.

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. 4 **Open for donation**  
& **Open for donation**

Feb. 11 By the Dichsen family in celebration of Benen's 15<sup>th</sup> birthday on February 9  
& **Open for donation**

Feb. 18 **Open for donation**  
& **Open for donation**

Feb. 25 **Open for donation**  
& **Open for donation**

## Financial Assistants

Feb. 4 Ken Devlin & Kelly Street  
Feb. 11 Kelly Hartz & Greg Kimler  
Feb. 18 Malinda Carlson & Ken Devlin  
Feb. 25 Kelly Hartz & Monica Proefrock

## Financial Statements

2023 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.

## Offering Envelopes for 2024

Offering envelopes are available in the gathering area at church. If you do not see a box with your name on it, please let us know.

## Newsletter Deadline

**February 18**

## Plastic Caps & Lids

We stopped collecting caps in December, but the Jacksonville Public Library is now accepting caps and lids.