



Faith Life Together

January 2024 | Volume 8 | Issue 1

Happy New Year

Snapshot of Faith during December 2023

Baptisms: Dec. 17, Evelyn Patten

Births | Confirmed

Deaths | Marriages

New Members

Mark Your Calendar

Jan. 7	Congregational Forum
	Sunday School resumes
Jan. 11-14	Men's Via de Cristo
Jan. 18-21	Women's Via de Cristo
Jan. 28	Annual Congregational Meeting

The Lord will never leave or forsake you

With the start of the new year brings new hopes, new dreams, new resolutions, and maybe even new fears. Some people boldly claim the coming year will be their 'best year yet' - and perhaps it will be, but only God knows what the future holds. More importantly, God is *who* holds the future, so no matter what joys, struggles, or challenges lie ahead this year, it's comforting to know God will always be with us.

On **Sunday, January 7**, we will have a **congregational forum** in preparation for the **annual congregational meeting on January 28**. Both the forum and congregational meeting will be held immediately after the service, so make sure

you mark your calendars and make plans to attend.

Sunday School will also resume on January 7 after taking their winter break for Christmas and New Year's.

Many Faith members will also be attending the men's and women's Via De Cristo retreats from January 11-14 and January 18-21, respectively. If you haven't attended this retreat before and intentionally seek to grow in your faith, talk to Justin Spieker or Rachel Simington for more information.

May God work in each of our lives to strengthen us in our faith and bring us closer both to Him and each other. Thank you for being part of the family of Faith!



From the
Pen of
Pastor
Ben -
Giving
Thanks to
God

Joining Jesus on His Mission

When I first wrote to Faith's Call Committee in 2021, I described my ministry like this, "God uses me to renew a congregation by **encouraging the committed** and **engaging spectators** so that together we may fulfill a congregation's mission to **welcome new people to Jesus.**"

God has brought many people to join us in worshiping and serving together—57 new members in the last two years. Several of our newer members are participating in a small group or a Bible study. Several of our recent and long-term members have stepped into new roles in ministry and serving on a new ministry team. I rejoice in God's work among us!

Yet the words in our giant cross out front cry out to me: "**Inviting all People to Faith.** Come and worship. Go and work." "Inviting all people to faith" echoes the heartbeat of Jesus:

- "Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how He has had mercy on you." (Mark 5:19).
- "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?" (Luke 15:4)
- "Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.'" (John 20:21-22).

In 2024, I call on you to participate in the first part of our declaration: "Inviting all people to faith."

What does this look like? It may sound daunting, but we are surrounded by people who are open to hearing about Jesus! Last week I attended a school concert and introduced myself to the man sitting next to me. I asked if he had a child in the concert. He pointed out his daughter in the choir. I asked if she got her singing ability more from him or Mom. He laughed and said, "Mom, definitely, but I sing in the shower."

We talked about work and weather and who knows what else. I never told him that I'm a pastor, but I said, "Since your family likes music, you would enjoy the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at my church."

"Where's your church?" he asked.

Since his wife is a Spencer native, I asked her, "Do you know where Shopper's Supply was?" When she nodded her head, I said, "That's my church, Faith Lutheran."

The concert began. We enjoyed the music, clapped in between songs, and when it was finished, we stood up to leave. The dad and I shook hands, and when we said goodbye, he added, "We're going to visit your church."

Jesus will guide you and me ... if we are willing to open our mouths. We are surrounded by people who are eager to hear about Jesus.

Prayer Chain

If you have a prayer request for the **Prayer Chain**, please direct it to the Prayer Team Leaders. They are:

Linda and Dave Susie at
712-363-1130 or djslrs74@yahoo.com

or

Doreen Scribner at 712-260-9884
doreenscribner@outlook.com

Sunday Morning Prayers of the Church

If you would like to be included on the Sunday Morning Prayers of the Church, please contact the church office at 712-580-4316 or office@flcspencer.org

The song by Eileen Barton says
*"If I'd know'd you was comin',
I'da baked a cake!"*

Thank you to the carolers for bringing an early touch of Christmas to our home!

Blessings to you,
Dick & Diane Allen

"Light of the World" by Pastor Rob Blezard

In this Epiphany season, remember the wonder and enlightenment the wisemen were able to experience and celebrate. Isaiah 60:1 says, *"Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you."* God continues to do new things among us – healing, restoring, and sustaining – and invites our participation in sharing the good news of the Christ. With the wise men and the faithful across time, we look to Jesus for our hope and eternal abundance. Step into the light and make 2024 a year of abundance "Jesus-style."

Prayer Corner

Lift Up in Prayer...

- Our congregation declares our shared mission of "Inviting all people to faith." Ask for wisdom to listen well and for boldness to share with someone how Jesus has blessed you.
- Pray for fellow members who are participating in a weekend retreat this month – Via de Cristo – that Christ would do His good work in their hearts and lives.
- Pray for Brett Eilts as he prepares to share God's Word with us on January 7.
- Pray for Pastor Ben as he teaches at Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute, January 8-12.
- Ask God to give us unity, humility and wisdom as we prepare together for our Annual Meeting.
- Pray for our high school seniors as they make decisions about this coming summer and beyond.
- Pray for Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Audubon, as they mourn the sudden death of their pastor and make decisions for how to continue their ministry.

- Pray for Pastor Roger and Vickie Godfredsen as he serves as Interim Pastor with St. John's Lutheran Church, Springfield, Minnesota.
- Healing for Mike Trierweiler, Stan Jongma, Al Vanderberg, Christa Gray, Emily Swancutt, John Trierweiler, Joseph Salmon and all those we name in our hearts.

Reasons for Praise!

- Thank God for a local business vendor who asked for prayer while in our church.
- Thank God for fellow members who have agreed to serve as ministry team leaders and officers for 2024.
- Give thanks with families who are expecting the birth of a child.
- Give thanks for Lisa Carpenter, our Treasurer, and for Carolyn Dundas, our Financial Coordinator, both new in their roles.



Gloria
McKenney,
Worship and
Communications
Director

Welcome To the Unknown

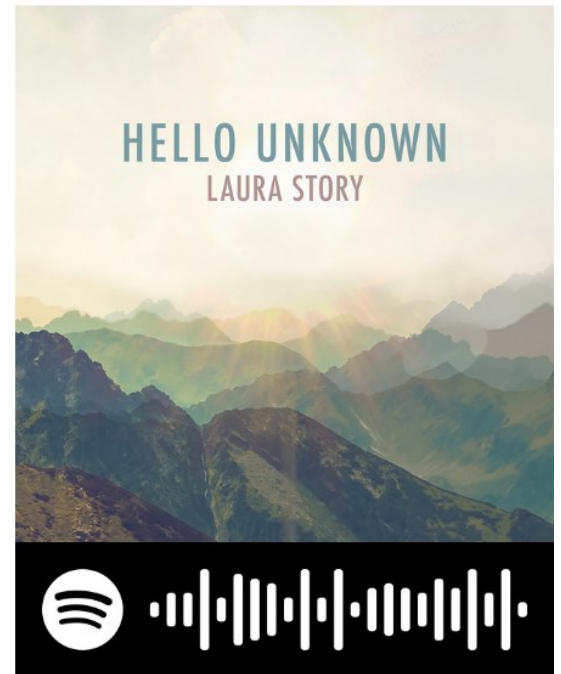
Have you ever been with a kid at a restaurant (or maybe you've *been* the kid at a restaurant)? When it comes time to order, what will they choose to eat? Are they more likely to order something new and unusual they've never had before, or are they more likely to order something familiar, like chicken nuggets? If the kid you're thinking of is anything like most kids, they probably stuck to the tried and true chicken nuggets.

But the truth is, it's not just kids that stick with what they already know works. Adults do too; maybe even more so than kids. Parents often try to get their kids to try new foods, or new activities, or make new friends. Kids go through a lot of changes in their young lives, in part because their parents encourage them to, and in part because that's part of growing up and discovering who they are and who God made them to be. Sometimes adults forget that trying new things can be a beautiful way to discover a deeper part of life and how God is moving and working in the world around us.

Laura Story (who you may best know for her song, "Blessings") wrote the song "Hello Unknown" a few years ago. Much like a kid ordering chicken nuggets, she speaks to how much easier life is when we follow the same routine as always - but then speaks to God and sings, "You call me to mystery." As the song unfolds, Laura sings how often God wants to use the new, unfamiliar, and unknown to refine us, deepen our faith, and cause us to trust Him more fully. As Laura writes, when we relinquish control and embrace the great unknown God has for us, we can "free fall into faith." This step may seem scary, but that's okay. It's part of the process.

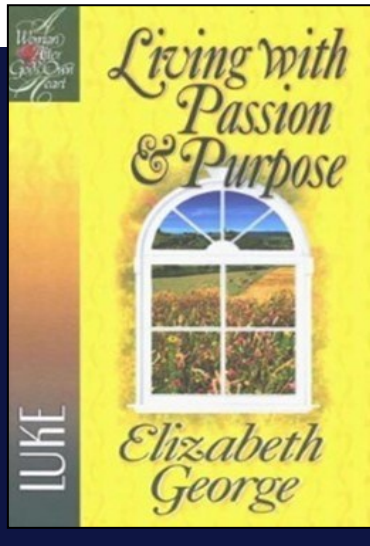
The start of the new year is often filled with anticipation, and perhaps making a resolution or two. While there's certainly nothing wrong with making goals for yourself this year, what if you embraced the unknown? Rather than deciding what you're going to improve something this year, what if you asked God to lead you into mystery? And what if you trusted God enough to take the first step into a path that seems completely covered in mist?

I can't predict where God will take you. But I can guarantee that God will lead you to Himself. Let's step out of our comfort zone, and embrace wherever God leads us. Together, let's sing, "Hello Unknown".



Coming Events at Faith

Bible Study: “Living with Passion & Purpose” Tuesday, Jan. 9 | 1:30 p.m. | SON Room



We will be study Luke 13. Jesus is continuing His journey toward Jerusalem while teaching the people. We will see how Jesus corrects the people's assumption that bad things happen to those who are "worse" sinners, or in other words, 'if I'm good, bad things won't happen'. Jesus tells all to repent. What does that truly mean? We will discuss the Parables of the Fig Tree, Mustard Seed and Yeast.

There is much to learn from Jesus, why not begin the new year with a new habit - participating in a Bible study whether it is with this small group or another one available at Faith.

All are welcome!

Hands-On Mission and Lutheran World Relief

Hands-On Mission Day | Wednesday, January 3 9:00 a.m. to Noon.

There will be quilts to tie, sewing of school bags or quilt tops, and stringing schoolbags.
All are welcome to participate in the way they enjoy!

Item of the Month ~

Adult Toothbrushes

These are part of a Personal Care Kit. The simple items included in these kits provide much needed self-care, critical germ fighting, and the chance to regain dignity amidst situations of fear and uncertainty. These kits remind recipients of God's loving presence and that there are other people in the world who care. They give hope.

Donated items for both Lutheran World Relief and Upper Des Moines Opportunity can be put in the yellow Missions box near the front doors.



Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc.
UDMO

**Upper Des Moines Opportunity Food Pantry is in need of
the following items for our community:**

Egg noodles, tuna, cream of mushroom or chicken soups



LifeKids Spencer



Cheryl Jackson Director



December saw LifeKids focusing on the spirit of giving. Our hand-tied fleece blanket project is underway. LifeKids creates and donates these fleece blankets to Lutheran Services so that children entering the foster care system have something to remind them of God's love. Donations are used to purchase materials for these blankets and LifeKids provide the labor.

The kids also participated for the first time in the Grand Meander downtown in December.



On our full day, the children created 90 handmade Christmas cards that Upper Des Moines Opportunity matched with the Christmas gift baskets they create for local seniors. Even though we were asked for 85, kids decided they needed extras "just in case." They were very worried one of those Grandpas and Grandmas might not have been counted and would feel sad if they didn't receive a card.

The Christmas Story has been an obvious focus for our lessons in December. Thank for your prayers and support of our program. Your donations make it possible to share messages of God's love with these children. They also allow these kids to begin to experience the joy of being the "hands and feet" of Jesus. Christmas blessings from LifeKids to you!

January Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday Blessings to . . .

January 1	Dennis DeWitt	January 21	Colton Doran
January 4	Gil Scribner		Zach Kooker
January 5	Dick Allen		Paizlee Friedrich
January 6	Wyatt Vanderberg	January 22	Amy Freeman
January 7	Kristine Christianson	January 23	Jerry Hanson
	Emma Hines	January 24	Mark Hopkins
January 8	Sam Brockshus	January 26	Becky Simons
	Katie Eilts	January 27	Nickie Hansen
January 9	Levi Simington		Jim Unrau
January 10	Jada Piercy	January 28	Luella Unseth
	Kailyn Griffin	January 29	Lita Butler
	Josh Kruger	January 31	Abe Ortiz
	Kinnick Friedrich		
January 12	Joy Kelsch		
January 13	Connor Tigges		
	Bob Erdman		
January 14	Brad Krei		
January 17	Julie Fisher		
January 18	Lisa Becker		
January 19	Courtney Thompson		
	Debbie Zitterich		
	Kiersten Campbell		
January 20	Pam Hanson		
	Norm Nielsen		

Happy Anniversary Wishes to ...

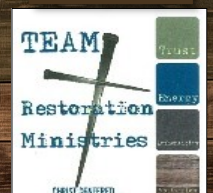
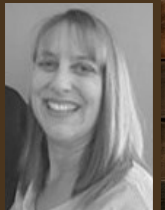
January 19 Paul & Kris Behrens

TEAM Restoration Ministries

TEAM Restoration Ministries has a God-driven commitment and passion for facilitating the healing and strengthening of marriages, families and individuals, both children and adults. They offer many different types of counseling.

Erika Adolph is a counselor working out of Faith Lutheran for TEAM Restoration. Erika is certified to provide equine assisted psychotherapy, which uses horses to assist clients to work through challenges, relationships and to reach therapy goals.

**For more information or to schedule an appointment,
please call 515-238-9010 or www.team-restoration.org**





Jacob Weeks
Technology
Coordinator

Projector Replacement Proposal

The Council and I have been working with RDI to develop a replacement plan for our aging projector system. Our current system is aging and we are doing our best to be proactive in looking at what options we have moving forward before the state of our current system becomes critical over the next several years. We are planning on having a more detailed discussion about this project at the forum in January, but wanted to inform the congregation of the proposed project at this time to allow time for members to think of questions and have discussions with those of us involved. RDI has developed several proposals ranging from roughly \$60,000 - \$80,000 depending on number of projectors, use of projector screens, and a few other minor details. This will be a special project separate from the annual budget. Anyone who is interested in learning more details on this project, please feel free to talk to either myself or Joe Simington.

LCMC's 3 Days of Prayer

taken from the LCMC website ~ www.lcmc.net

Prayer was a holy habit practiced by Jesus Himself (see Mark 1:35; Luke 11:1). The disciples who walked alongside Him witnessed a connection between His public life and ministry, and this habit of prayer. It was a connection so significant, that they asked Jesus to teach them to pray (Luke 11:1).

LCMC's Three Days of Prayer on January 2-4 is an opportunity for us to follow the Lord's example and to come together as one across the association with a shared purpose: to pray.

Day One: Pray for Our Congregations and Leaders

"Lord, we pray that You bless our congregations and leaders with Your favor and with Your provision and power to carry out the ministry and mission You have in store for us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

What can God do through almost 1,000 congregations in the United States and overseas? How many people can He impact with His love and His power through the tens of thousands of members in the churches of LCMC? Wouldn't it be wonderful if our testimony in the years to come, is that God was at work in and through our association, drawing millions of people to faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord?

Let us pray for provision: Provision of the joy and boldness to share our God stories that come through the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit being stirred within us.

Day Two: For Those Who Don't Yet Know Jesus as Savior and Lord, and For the Prodigals

"Lord, give us Your heart for those who don't yet know you as Savior and Lord, and for the prodigals. Create in us a boldness to love them and serve them and to share our God-stories with them as opportunities arise. Open our eyes to be aware of everyday encounters in which we can minister Your love and Your power to those in need. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen."

Today, let's pray that God will bring us together as one across our association in praying that millions might be drawn to a relationship of love for and faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord. Let's also pray that the Lord might bring home the prodigals who have walked away from a life of faith in the Him. Lord, bring home our spouses, bring home our sons and daughters and grandchildren. Lord, bring home our friends and neighbors.

Let's pray that God might set them free from any woundedness or deception that has driven them away from their relationship with Him. Let's pray that they might experience God's love and acceptance and affirmation as His beloved daughters and sons.

Day Three: For Our International Partners

"Thank You, Lord, that You have bound us together with these sister churches and leaders and partner networks. We pray that You will give them protection and provision. We pray that You will show us how we can come alongside them, encourage them, and serve with them. Lord, grant our brothers and sisters Your favor in their cities, communities, and countries. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen."

In Acts 1:8 Jesus says: *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."* It is with and through our international partners that we are being empowered by God to live out this reality of being witnesses of what God has done in and through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, our Lord, and Savior, Jesus Christ. It is with and through our international partners we are enabled by God to live these lives of witness locally, regionally, and throughout entire countries.

Let us pray for God's protection and provision for our sisters and brothers in other nations. Let us pray for God's leading in how He would have us reach out to them and partner with them in the coming year. Let us pray for God's provision of food, medicine, clean water, and safety where these are needed. Let us pray for the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit to fill our sisters and brothers afresh and grant them God's favor as they give witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in their cities, communities, and countries.



In Person

Use the Blessing Box in back at service time!

Drop Off



- ♦ Use our drop box located on the wall by the south-facing entry doors
- ♦ Drop it off with the church office during office hours (9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.)



Online Giving

Go to: <http://bit.ly/33RXUbH>
please follow instructions!

Mail-In



Mail your offering:
Faith Lutheran, P.O. Box 1322, Spencer, IA 51301

Faith's Mission Partners



Atlas of Spencer by Denise Lovitt



Atlas Group was founded in Sioux Center, Iowa in 2004 and has since planted over a dozen independent Atlas organizations across the nation.

Atlas of Spencer was started in 2011 and serves clients in Spencer and the Lakes Area. The purpose of Atlas is to help those in need by providing advocacy through mentoring while walking alongside those seeking help. The current Executive Director is David Lyons.

Atlas of Spencer promotes expanding community ministry that provides relational, emotional, physical, financial, and/or spiritual support and guidance to anyone seeking help with any of life's trials. Atlas mentors provide loving assistance in the process while demonstrating the unconditional love of God, encouraging salvation through acceptance of His Son Jesus Christ, and promoting a relationship to the Body of Christ, the Church.

Atlas tries to get people past looking for a handout. Rather, they help individuals take ownership of their situations and their lives. When they need help from others, they seek a hand-up, not the hand-out.

Are you able to be that neighbor who can be support for someone in the community? Are you available to meet with someone and listen to and pray for them? Would you be willing to pray for Atlas and those they serve or give a monthly or one-time donation?

Atlas is always looking for volunteers and mentors to help individuals and families through the tough times of their lives. To volunteer, phone 712-580-3277. Their offices are at 816 S. Grand Ave. in Spencer. Email: atlasofspencer@gmail.com

Through the Bible in 2024 – One Chapter a Day

Our goal at Faith is to read one chapter from the Bible each day, and in so doing understand the whole Bible from beginning to end. Each chapter can be understood on its own. We will read chapters from the Bible that tell the story of God's work among His people and chapters that point us to Jesus.

Month	Day	Book	Ch	Chapter Summary
Jan.	1	Genesis	1	Creation
Jan.	2	Genesis	2	Adam and Eve
Jan.	3	Genesis	3	Adam and Eve sinned
Jan.	4	Genesis	4	Cain murders Abel
Jan.	5	Genesis	6	God tells Noah to build an ark
Jan.	6	Genesis	7	God sent the flood
Jan.	7	2 Peter	2	The Lord rescues the Godly
Jan.	8	Genesis	8	The flood ends
Jan.	9	Genesis	9	God makes a covenant with Noah
Jan.	10	Genesis	12	God call Abraham
Jan.	11	Genesis	15	God makes a covenant with Abraham
Jan.	12	Genesis	16	Abraham has a son with Hagar
Jan.	13	Genesis	17	God renews His covenant with Abraham
Jan.	14	Hebrews	7	Jesus is Like Melchizedek
Jan.	15	Genesis	18	Abraham pleads for Sodom
Jan.	16	Genesis	19	God destroys Sodom and Gomorrah
Jan.	17	Genesis	20	Abraham lies about Sarah
Jan.	18	Genesis	21	Abraham has a son with Sarah
Jan.	19	Genesis	22	God tests Abraham
Jan.	20	Genesis	24	Isaac and Rebekah wed
Jan.	21	James	1	Humbly accept God's Word
Jan.	22	Genesis	25	Jacob and Esau are born
Jan.	23	Genesis	26	Isaac lies about Rebekah
Jan.	24	Genesis	27	Jacob tricks Isaac
Jan.	25	Genesis	28	Jacob builds an altar
Jan.	26	Genesis	29	Jacob marries Leah and Rachel
Jan.	27	Genesis	30	Jacob's family and wealth grow
Jan.	28	Hebrews	12	Receiving an unshakable kingdom
Jan.	29	Genesis	31	Jacob escapes Laban
Jan.	30	Genesis	33	Jacob meets Esau
Jan.	31	Genesis	35	Jacob returns to his altar



"A New Creation"

by
Kim
Wilson

Here we are again at the beginning of a new year. For some, last year was a blur of memories, filled with occasions that could easily be remembered or forgotten, depending on one's perspective. For all of us, we launch a new year that has promise as it unfolds. The following may be fundamental questions this time of year. Will I look expectantly to the future? Will I revel in the present and make the best of my God-given days? Will I be burdened by the past?

As Christians, we are reminded that *"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation"* (2 Corinthians 5:17). What a wonderful gift God has given to us in the form of His Son, our Savior. This passage ignites a thought process in us to determine and choose our unique form of how God's will can be played out in our lives. We know we are fortified with our belief we belong to Christ. We also realize we must depend on the Holy Spirit to guide our paths to reach God's standard of Christian living.

What does that look like for this coming year as we venture into the uncertainty of the future? Paul tells us: *"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness"* (Ephesians 4:22-24).

You may ask, how do we abandon our tendencies to negatively assess our world and our abilities to gain "true righteousness and holiness." Our mental and emotional health is an important battleground for these principles to take root and thrive. When we are challenged by malice, ill will, and bitterness, our responses can be replaced by love and forgiveness of one's self and others.

Intentional thought life skills (setting measurable goals, establishing a daily routine, strengthening relationships, decluttering our space, reducing "wasted" time etc.) serve as stress relievers and sharpen our sense of purpose. These healthy habits can help our well-being while getting us closer to our relationship with God as we separate ourselves from the world and the Enemy's distractions. We must also remember we are not alone and reach out to trusted confidantes to gain strength and resolve.

Our breastplate of righteousness and our helmet of salvation can be polished when we fend off these strongholds that threaten our lives in Christ. May we remember the result of our hard work is eternally compensated: *"The pain that you've been feeling cannot compare to the Joy that's coming"* (Romans 8:18). May we begin this new year with a constant reminder that our JOY can be refreshed by His Word, the acceptance of our God's faithful love for His people, and the Spirit's promise of renewal each and every day.

To God be the Glory!



Lance and Jalyce Storley

As we ring in the new year, we are featuring a couple that is also pretty new to Faith, Lance and Jalyce Storley.

The Storley family joined Faith last fall and felt called and passionate to get involved right away. Lance, who works at Midwest Mechanical and can repair anything, utilizes many of those same skills with our Properties Team when needed. Lance is also very comfortable in the kitchen and has blessed the Stewardship Team with extra hands during our Thanks-For-Giving Meal two years in a row. He is willing to step in wherever needed, rarely says no, and is helping raise their boys, Evan, Isaac, Aaron, and Owen, with that same commitment to hard work and dedication. Lance maybe not be in front of us often, but his gifts being more behind the scenes and taking care of their boys allows Jalyce to use her gifts up front.

Jalyce, a gem of a woman with such a calming and loving spirit, uses that same calming spirit in the classroom as a teacher's aide at a grade school in Spencer. Jalyce also has been a gift in the kitchen for our Thanks-For-Giving meal and is very hands-on in other places at Faith. You have seen her leading worship, Prayers of the Church, reading Scripture, and also giving the Children's Message. Beyond Faith, Jalyce also plays a crucial role as a 4-H leader in Spencer, specifically the Friends' Project. Her organizational skills are second to none as she has so many details and important information easy to access at a moment's notice. She also is a mentor to many in the program and continues to make a difference in the lives of the younger generation.

Lance and Jalyce, good and faithful servants, you have both been such a blessed addition to our congregation offering your gifts so quickly and generously. Well done for all you do and all you give to your family, your community, and our Faith family. Thank you for jumping in feet first and feeling at home so quickly. May you both be blessed in this new year and always.

Stewardship Snippet

by Pastor Rob Blezard

As we come into the new year, stewardship is usually the main focus of most resolutions. Stewardship is taking care of that which God has given us. Therefore, health, relationships, time, faith, and finances are all part of stewardship, even though most of us think that finances are the only topic discussed when stewardship is brought up. So this year, 2024, keep all of these topics in mind as we all strive to be better and do better in the new year.



Stewards
of the
Month
by
Heidi
Skadeland

Faith Lutheran Council Meeting Minutes December 13, 2023

The meeting was called to order by President Joe Simington at 7:15 PM.

Members present were: David Susie, Barb Solberg, Jared Hansen, Heidi & Kevin Skadeland, Lisa Carpenter, Eric Tigges, Eli Franker, President Joe Simington, Larry Peterson, Kirby Fueston, Pam Hanson, Pete Crew, Laura Heikens, Steph Essick (via Zoom), Carolyn Dundas, and Pastor Ben.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Joe Simington. Chapter 10 of "The Lost Art of Disciple Making" was briefly discussed.

Minutes from October & November's meetings were reviewed.

Motion to approve made by Eric Tigges. Pete Crew seconded the motion. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Last week's giving was approximately \$30,000 so we are closing the gap on the budget for the year. Expenses are under budget but we still need approximately \$20,000/week through the end of the year. Kevin Skadeland made a motion to approve the October & November financials. Kirby Fueston seconded the motion. Motion carried.

PASTOR BEN'S REPORT – Monday & Tuesday nights a few young adults & college students are meeting with Pastor.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Joe Simington) – Nothing to add.

COUNCIL REPORTS

- * **Evangelism (Eric Tigges)** – Nothing to add.
- * **Missions (Pam Harris)** –
- * **Worship (Pete Crew)** – Nothing to add.
- * **Stewardship (Kevin & Heidi Skadeland)** – Nothing to add.
- * **Discipleship (Barb Solberg)** – Discipleship is discussing the different pieces of Advent.
- * **Children's Ministry (Kirby Fueston)** – Nothing to add. Christmas program went well.
- * **Youth Ministry (Matt & Steph Essick)** –
- * **Caring Ministries (Laura Heikens)** – Nothing to add.
- * **Fellowship (Larry Peterson)** – Hy-Vee wants \$115/Sunday for donuts. Casey's has offered to do our donuts for us. Larry is going to check on quantity & pricing. Larry has his replacement for 2024 and going forward.
- * **Music & Creative Arts (Jared Hansen)** – Nothing to add.
- * **Properties (Eli Franker)** – Nothing to add.
- * **Technology** – We will need this committee/position filled as Jacob will be leaving in May 2024.
- * **Leadership (Dave Susie)** – Pastor's review is complete & we are keeping him 😊

OLD BUSINESS

- * **Church rental** – Pam brought a proposal drawn up by Becky. Pam is asking that everyone review it so we can take action next month.
- * **Annual Reports Due** -Just a reminder that these are due so please get them into the office.
- * **Tech project** - RDI met with Dave, Joe & Jacob – One projector, one screen would cost \$61,000. Two projectors & two screens would cost \$80,000. Two projectors and no screens would be \$75,000. Two projectors would put the screens on either side of the cross. This should include most of the labor and we can do some of the construction ourselves. Joe suggested that we bring this to the Congregational forum January 7 along with the budget. He feels we should present this information to them prior to the meeting. There is a specific fund just for the projector & a reserve technology fund that would get us to around \$10,000 we could put towards this project.

NEW BUSINESS

- * **2024 Budget** – Looking at doing a 3% raise for staff this year for everyone except Eric & Pastor Ben. Eric's increase will be the payment of seminary and Pastor has asked for an increase in mileage/transportation as his increase. Insurance will be increasing due to the increased value of our building & contents. Community Insurance is currently our agent. Motion made by Eric to upgrade to the \$6.4 million and add the \$1 million umbrella policy. Seconded by Pete Crew. Motion carried. The staff wage increases & insurance increase will add approximately \$2,500 to the budget. Budget for 2024 is currently at \$417,537.44. Pete suggested to give this proposed budget to the Congregation at the January 7 forum.
- * **Advent offering** – The Advent meal money is to go into the Fellowship budget. The Advent offering will go to the General Fund as it has in the past. Lenten offerings have gone to Missions in the past.
- * **Next year's Nominating Team** – We need someone that is coming off Council to be on this. It can be Laura (Caring), Larry (Fellowship), Pam (Missions) or Kevin & Heidi (Stewardship).
- * **Zion** – Eric Patten is planning on starting seminary part-time in January in Sioux Falls. Greg from Zion is proposing that they would pay for all but \$900/year of this.

Concerns and/or Celebrations – none.

Closing Prayer was given by Joe Simington.

Adjournment – Barb Solberg made the motion to adjourn. Kirby Fueston seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jolene K. Hansen, Church Council Secretary

Next Council Meeting is January 10 | 7:00 p.m. | In person and Zoom

Council Members: Please submit your team reports to the office by
Monday, January 8, at 12:00 p.m. (noon).

GENERAL OFFERING

January 1 through December 24

2023 Budget: \$413,959.25

Year to Date as of December 24: \$363,161.56

Needed to make budget as of December 24: \$50,797.69

Thank you for generously giving in 2023!

Faith Lutheran Church

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Youth Facebook Page: Faith Youth of Spencer
Instagram: [@flcspencer](https://www.instagram.com/flcspencer)
Watch us on SMU:
Monday @ 8:30 p.m. | Tuesday @ 11:00 a.m.