



January 2016

Newsletter

take up the shield of faith

Ephesians 6:16

From Pastor Nate

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” (John 1:14)

In her book “Amazing Grace” Kathleen Norris observed that, “Over time, I have learned two things about my religious quest: First of all, that it is God who is seeking me, and who has a myriad ways of finding me. Second, that my most substantial changes, in terms of religious conversion, come through other people. Even when I am convinced that God is absent from my life, others have a way of suddenly revealing God’s presence.”

Our God is not a passive God who sits back idly in heaven. Through His great love for us He states, “I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed.” (Ezekiel 34:16) “In the fullness of time” as the Apostle Paul writes, “God sent forth His Son... to redeem us.” (Galatians 4:4) It was necessary for God in Jesus Christ to take on flesh and live among us. This was the only way that God could reveal His love for us and bring us salvation. Jesus will also claim, “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” (Luke 19:10)

And so we see that Kathleen Norris is correct in her personal observations. God does seek us out! And she is also correct in noting that it is through others that God’s presence is revealed.

According to Psychiatrist Paul Tournier, “There are two things we cannot do alone. One is to be married and the other is to be a Christian.” Being a follower of Jesus Christ requires being in fellowship with other believers. As Kathleen Norris observed it is through this fellowship that God is revealed to us and we grow in our faith. As with St. Paul, Dietrich Bonhoeffer also recognized while he was imprisoned that “The physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer.”

In this New Year we will seek more opportunities for Christian fellowship within our congregation and also extend an invitation to our neighbors to join us. In the words of Hebrews 10:24-25, “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

In Fellowship with Christ,
Pr. Nate Bjorge

Mission & Outreach Team looking to expand local, state and national support

Do you have a mission organization located in the U.S., Minnesota or Morrison County that holds a special place in your heart? The Faith Lutheran Mission and Outreach Team is looking to expand the church's support of local, state and national organizations.

Each year 10% of the church budget is designated for missions. The Mission and Outreach Team is examining a variety of local, state and U.S. charitable organizations which could benefit from our support. The team is attempting to balance the mission expenses with one-third going to international missions, one-third to state and national organizations and one-third to local charitable agencies. Please talk to any of the Mission and Outreach Team members to share the contact information of any organizations you would like to see supported with Faith dollars. The team would love to receive your input. Please submit your ideas as soon as possible. Thank you.

Mission and Outreach Team

Attendance & Offering

December 6:	197	\$ 5,853
December 13:	276	\$ 3,663
December 20:	198	\$ 4,867
December 27:	156	\$ 8,540

January Event

Youth and Family team is hosting

Snow Tubing at Camp Ripley

January 31, 1:00-4:30.

(Arrowwood Water Park is a backup if we do not get more snow.)



Worship Prayer Team/Altar Guild

We have just celebrated Christmas with our Christmas Eve service and had a wonderful attendance! Thank you to everyone that helped out on Christmas Eve.

As stated in the December newsletter, we are now the Altar Guild a subcommittee of the Worship and Prayer Team. We developed our new statement of purpose and list of duties at our December meeting. We will see what happens in the new year with the Worship and Prayer Team!

We have enjoyed seeing new faces trying out different ways of serving out congregation! Please continue to try new things and serve our church by helping with communion, ushering or greeting. Sign-up sheets for all the upcoming services are on the table in the Gathering Area. If you are ever interested in joining the Altar Guild or helping out with communion, you are always welcome to visit with any one of the Altar Guild members: Melissa Hanson, Amy Kowalzek, Sandy Berulson or Greg & Kathy Hyatt. God Bless you all in 2016!

News from the Congregational Life Committee

December 2015 2015

We have just celebrated Christmas and it is a glorious time of the year. Even if we are going into a new year I would like to share what we had for our devotions at our December meeting,

What is Christmas all about? Fifty years ago "A Charlie Brown Christmas" was the first broadcast on American television. Some network executives thought it would be ignored, while others worried that quoting the Bible would offend viewers. Some wanted its creator, Charles Schultz, to omit the Christmas story, but Schultz insisted it stay in. The program was an immediate success and has been rebroadcast every year since 1965.

When Charlie Brown, the frustrated director of the children's Christmas play, is discouraged by the commercial spirit of the holiday season, he asks if anyone can tell him the real meaning of Christmas. Linus recites these words from Luke 2:11-14. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Then Linus says, "That's what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown."

Things have not changed that much in the last 50 years. Christians are attacked in all areas of their lives and Christmas has just become another time for us to reflect on this. Schools call it winter break. Business places say Happy Holidays and not Merry Christmas. Commercialism is all about money and businesses want their employees to work on days that should be spent with family celebrating Christ.

God broke into human history to offer us the gift of salvation! Today we hear-you can't say that-you can't do that-it will offend someone. And if you do take "The Stand" you are considered a racist or a hater of some kind. God calls us to be brave, be strong. Mark 8:38 says "If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

I am so thankful that we as a church family dare to "Take the Stand."

We had another successful Christmas Boutique and Bake Sale. Thank you to everyone who helped us in any way. This year we introduced a new idea to try and it went very well. We had theme baskets for people to purchase. It was very interesting to see the different ideas that people came up with and many of our customers commented how they liked this. Faith Comforters worked for 3 months on their work days making special items for the Boutique. The proceeds from the Boutique will be used in this way: ten percent of the entire sale will go to Missions. Faith Comforters will use half of the proceeds to continue their ministry in quilting and the many other ways they help to comfort people. This includes the prayer shawls and baby quilts, and card ministry. A portion that Faith Comforters got will go to the Kindness Kits Ministry right here in Morrison County.

We continue on with the sale of our Faith Cookbooks. They are a great cookbook and make lovely gifts. If you have not purchased one for yourself or as a gift, this would be a great time to do that.

Blessings to you all in the New Year of 2016.

Patricia Fernelius for the Congregational Life Committee

Mission Statement

As Children of God, we are called to love, glorify and submit to the Living Christ, ministering to others by the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.



Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to **stand** your ground, and after you have done everything, **to stand. Stand** firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the **shield of faith**, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the **Word of God**. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Ephesians 6:16

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Faith Lutheran Church Council Meeting

6:00 p.m. December 17, 2015

Present: Al Bauman, Cheryl Zarns, Noel Guerard, Pat Rioux, Howie Larsen, Maureen Miller, Pr. Nate, Mark Whittington, Dave ZumBerge, Tom Lippert, Jason Leibold

Absent: Rich Collins, Tracy Marcus

Treasurer's Report: as of November 30, 2015

PROFIT & LOSS YTD

Income	35,903.50
Expenses	16,291.61
Adjusted Net Income after total other expenses	19,611.89

BALANCE SHEET YTD

Total Current Assets	105,963.19
Total Fixed Assets	1,350,736.33
Total Assets.....	1,456,747.25
Total Liabilities.....	711,960.37
Total Equity.....	744,786.88

DESIGNATED Savings	16,363.74
Gen. Reserve Sav. Bal	25,067.50

The meeting opened with devotions led by Pastor Nate. Noel Guerard moved and Howie Larsen seconded to accept the secretary's report. Motion carried.

ATTENTION MINISTRY TEAM LEADERS and corresponding council reps:

The annual meeting will be January 24 and we will need a report of your team's activities for the past year. Reports are due after the December team meetings. Please send these to Sarah by December 31. Also please remind your ministry teams that monthly meeting reports are needed for the council to do the work of the church. These reports should copy Sarah, team members, and council reps.

Treasurer's Report:

The accounts balance with Daven Hanson's giving report and with the bank. The 2016 budget is set with the expected General Fund giving at \$243,379.00. Pat Rioux moved with Maureen Miller seconding that a check for the funds remaining in the Jamaica Projects fund be sent to the Sunbeam Boys mission upon approval of the Mission Ministry Team. Motion carried. Tom Lippert moved to accept the treasurer's report with Pat Rioux seconding. Motion passed.

Pastor's Report: Pastor reported that the youth enjoyed performing the skits in the Christmas program last Sunday and plans to have them involved in performing in the Lent parable dramas. Pastor talked with the Faith Comforters about holding an informal lunch each month for seniors. The senior lunch for January will take place on January 19, at 12:00. Seniors are encouraged to bring a senior friend. Pastor will be activating our volunteer Faith visiting team so that no one who needs a visit will fall through the cracks. All visits made on behalf of Faith should be reported to Sarah in the office. The Wild Game Dinner will be held January 30.

Old Business: The Father Daughter Ball is scheduled for February 28, 2016. Information concerning the update of the Faith Lutheran directory will be forthcoming soon. The council adopted the Altar Guild as a subcommittee of the Worship and Prayer Ministry Team. The executive council met for the annual Pastor evaluation.

New Business: Mission requests: Pat Rioux moved with Howie Larsen seconding to send Hands of Hope \$500. Motion passed. Howie Larsen moved with Al Bauman seconding to send Outfitters for Adventure \$300. Motion passed. Howie Larsen moved with Dave ZumBerge seconding to send Angel Tree Prison Fellowship \$500. Motion passed. The proceeds of the Christmas Boutique will benefit equally the kitchen fund and the blanket ministry after the cookbook sales and the tithe are deducted. The blanket ministry, Faith Comforters, will use their half of the funds to refurbish the existing sewing machines, purchase another used or new serger, purchase diapers and baby wipes for Kindness Kits, and purchase backing for our graduation and mission quilts.

Howie reported that the audit team this year will consist of Dean Bigalke and Mike March. Howie Larsen and Al Bauman are the council reps on the nominating committee. We have five candidates in the voting pool for the four open 2016 council slots but would like two more candidates. Please see Howie or Al if you would like to be a candidate. Pete Larsen has volunteered to assist Daven Hanson, our Faith contributions secretary, as a back-up counter for times when Daven is unable to be at church.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer. The next Council meeting is Thursday, January 21, 2016, at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Cheryl Zarns, Council Secretary