



October

October 2023 Newsletter

take up the shield of faith Ephesians 6:16

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**Faith's Core
Values:**
*Discipleship,
Hospitality,
Prayer,
Service,
Stewardship,
Worship,
and Unity*

From Pastor Nate

My Grandma on my Mom's side was born and raised on the same farm in southwest Minnesota. When she was 80 she took a trip with her two daughters out to the east coast. It was her first flight on a plane. Other than that trip, the furthest that she ever traveled out of state was to Sioux Falls, S.D. My Mom was the only sibling to move away from the community. Unlike my Grandma, my Mom and our family moved to six different locations. I was a shy kid and I hated moving and having to start at a new school and make new friends. I have wondered what life would have been like if I had lived my life in just one location.

Kate and I have moved to five different locations since we were married and have now officially relocated for a sixth time to Fergus Falls. I am grateful that we have been able to live and serve in this community for over seventeen years. The members of Faith Lutheran have truly been an extended family to us. Most of you know that Kate accepted the position of Foundation Development Director at Lake Region Healthcare in Fergus Falls. We prayed about this decision before she applied and after she was offered the position. It appeared that doors were being opened for us and that it was time for us to move on.

The word job is not used for ministry positions, rather we use the word "call." We believe that we are called by God and by a congregation to serve. I agree with Martin Luther when he states that people are "called" into many vocations. I trust that Kate has a calling to her position at Lake Region Healthcare. She has God-given talents to serve in this capacity. And Jesus makes it clear that we should not bury our talents. Kate has followed me in my callings several times and I trust that it is my time to move with her. I know that God will also provide me with a calling.

From the time I was a child moving has always brought some apprehension. Change can often create anxiety. I suppose because I have moved so often, I have grown in my confidence that God will provide a way. I also have confidence that God will provide a way forward for this congregation, this Family of Faith. There are always challenges with change. But we also know "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." (Ecclesiastes 3:1) And with every new season God promises to be with us, to lead and guide us. With His presence we can overcome any challenge and have the certainty that the change that we experience will only help us grow in our faith.

I truly want to thank you for "your partnership in the Gospel" and for how you have blessed our family over the years. I am grateful that in a changing culture you are a congregation that believes that God's Word does not change. You will continue to be in my prayers. I know this sounds like a farewell letter, however both Annika and I plan on being here through October, so consider this a long midwestern farewell.

Together in Christ!
Pastor Nate & Family

President's Message

In my last message I asked that we would be united in prayer in our search for a pastor as the next spiritual leader for our congregation. Your prayers have made a real difference!!

As our Call Committee has worked together there has been a powerful sense that we are being Holy Spirit led. We continue to make progress as we patiently search, research and interview potential candidates. Please keep us in your daily devotions praying that the Lord will send us the right spiritual leader for our congregation. May our prayers be answered!

Looking forward,
- Jim Nelson

Congregational Life

Our team met twice in September.

We discussed the Rally Sunday picnic and also the farewell gathering for the Bjorges.

Rally Sunday was September 17th. It was a beautiful day so most everyone spent the time outdoors. Games were played, face painting for the kids, and plenty of good food! There were 80 people in attendance.

The next "event" will be October 1st when we have a farewell for Kate, Nate, and family. There will be special music, a short "program" at the end of the church service, and then a lunch with a delicious menu catered. Please attend!!

Enjoy this beautiful autumn weather!

Any questions, comment, and ideas?? Bring them to any member of our team or use the suggestion box on the table in the gathering space.

Our team members are Roxanne Wyatt, Karen Underhill, Becky Boody, Noel Guerard, Jackie Rutten, Greg Rutten, Bev Larsen.

Howie Larsen and Steve Fellbaum are our council reps.

Bev Larsen for the team

Children's Ministry Team

Greetings! Our first Sunday School was a HUGE success. We had a total of 17 students attend, which is more than double the number of students we had attend last year. As you know, Sunday School is now during the church service and we are hoping this will continue to increase our Sunday School attendance. We have a few volunteers that are willing to teach on a rotating basis. If we can add a few more people to the rotation, we would be thrilled! Please contact Amanda Hyatt and she will add you to the list. The lessons are already prepared and binders have been organized so it's easy to teach and takes little to no planning time. Thank you for your consideration!
Heidi Larsen

Mission Statement

Know, Grow, Go

- *Know* God and others
- *Grow* in Faith
- *Go* in Faith to Love and Serve the Lord



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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Youth Leader Report

The leaves are changing colors, the air is crisp, and God's mercies are renewed each morning. Many people complain about the winters in Minnesota, but it is important to remember that not all states have a beautiful fall season like ours. This is something we can be grateful for. God calls us to live our life with gratitude. Though life is full of ups and downs, God gave us the greatest gift. By sending His son to die for our sins, God gave us the gift of freedom and eternal life with Him. This is something we can and should be truly grateful for.

This past September, I have been attending some of the youth's activities. The Little Falls girl's soccer team is having a great season. I am enjoying watching Avery Juelke, Amber Johnson, and Sami and Brooklyn VonBerge display stellar talent on the soccer field as well as encouragement and kindness both on and off the field.

One of our youth, Christ Novak, bravely joined the Marines. I had the opportunity to have dinner with him in Fargo the day before he shipped out to California for basic training. We discussed the importance of relying on God and remembering that He gives us strength and courage in times of fear and difficulty.

Our youth group and confirmation resumed this month. The youth group is doing Lee Strobel's The Case for Faith curriculum. We will be learning about how to challenge doubts about the faith as well as learning how to defend our faith.

Middle school and high school youth played Romans and Christians on September 22nd. This is a game that provides students a chance to experience what life was like for Christians during the Roman Empire as well as learn how to defend their faith. For the first time in the history of Faith Lutheran playing Romans and Christians, I am overjoyed to announce that the Christians finally won the game!

At the end of the month, students had the opportunity to gather around the flag pole at the Little Falls Community Middle School for the annual See You At The Pole event. The students gathered into small groups and prayed together before the school day began.

Transitions are happening within our church. During this season of change, it is important that our church family remains unified and remembers to rely on God. We may not know the future, but God does, and His plans are greater than our plans. We can't prepare for all the changes life brings, but we can remain grateful for God's mercy, our faith family, and the hope and strength God provides.

Ministry Volunteer Coordinator

Fall is in the air and there are some fun and exciting things coming up in October! We are hosting another Alpha course. The first Wednesday will be October 11th. The evening will begin at 6:15 with hors d'oeuvres being served. There will be a brief welcome at about 6:50 followed by the video. We will then break into small groups and go into discussion. The evening is set to wrap up at 8:00 PM. This will continue on Wednesdays. The week of Thanksgiving, Alpha will be moved from Wednesday November 22 to the previous Sunday evening, November 19. The weekend away details are still being planned, but it will be the first weekend in December. Alpha will wrap up with the final session being on December 20. If you have questions, feel free to contact me.

There are several ways to register for this event. You can use the sign-up sheet in the Narthex; scan the QR code or contact me and I'll add you to the list. This is a **great** opportunity to invite family/friends to explore the Christian faith in an open-minded and welcoming environment.

Another exciting event that is happening, we are hosting a Trunk or Treat! This will be held October 28 from 1-4pm. There will be music, games and of course, Trunk or Treating! For those unaware of what Trunk or Treating is, it's where people open the back of the vehicle and decorate it. Each vehicle is treated as a house, as families arrive, they go trunk to trunk. There will also be music and fun activities to take part in. If you would like to decorate your vehicle and pass out goodies, please let me know. Be sure to invite family and friends!

There is also an upcoming Women's Bible Study. This will begin Tuesday, October 24 and starts at 4:30. It's called "Forgiving What You Can't Forget" by Lysa TerKeurst. There is a book and study guide suggested for this study. Please sign up so we can order books before starting. This will be at Faith Lutheran and run by Maureen Miller. For questions about the study, please speak with her or contact me.

Thank you to all those who have been available to assist with Sunday morning service. Just a reminder, online sign-up is available. To sign-up online, you can scan the QR code at the sign-up table at church or go to this site: <https://signup.com/go/LVFrUUV>.

To contact me, call/text 320-630-2887 or email at volunteerfaithlutheran@gmail.com
God Bless, Amanda Hyatt

September Council Minutes

Faith Lutheran Church Council Meeting, September 21st, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

Present: Judy Berger, Joel Hanson, Joe Hyatt, Howie Larsen, Zach Leibold, Tom Lippert, Jim Nelson, Cheryl Rioux, Faye Sandy, Renae Stueber and Pastor Nate

Absent: Steve Fellbaum and Denny Myers

The meeting was called to order by Jim Nelson and opening prayer led by Faye Sandy.

Secretary's Report: Tom Lippert moved and Howie Larsen seconded to accept the August Council Minutes. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Tom Lippert shared the August Financial Reports. Revenue is about \$30,000 behind for the year but \$43,000 ahead of last year. We are \$16,000 below budget on expenses but \$20,000 more than last year. Due to a few large IRA donations, the budget is not concerning at this time. Faye Sandy moved and Joel Hanson seconded to approve the August financial reports. Motion carried. Another large anonymous mortgage principal payment has come in, we will continue with the plan to make the large mortgage principal payment after the last deposit in December. The Youth Summer trip expenses have been finalized. They brought in more money than spent for the trip so their funds will roll over to any events next year.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Nate will be gone Sunday, September 24, Paladin Meyer will fill in. Confirmation classes have started, there are 13 students in the class this year. Nate is considering starting a Sunday morning Adult Education class.

Youth Leader Report: Annika's report shared how the start of Youth Group has gone and some events she has attended. Wednesday Youth Group is using the Case for Faith video series by Lee Strobel. Coming up they have the Romans & Christians game on Friday, September 22nd and she will be attending more youth events into October.

Ministry Volunteer Coordinator Report: Amanda shared her ongoing projects including the Directory, and the upcoming Alpha course. She is also planning a Trunk or Treat event on October 28th. Maureen Miller will be leading a Women's Bible Study starting October 24th.

Old Business:

Ministry Team Reports:

- Children's Team: Sunday School began last Sunday. Some classes were rearranged due to the number of students in each grade. The team is still working on how to handle dismissal.
- Congregational Life Team: The Sunday School picnic served 80. Pop, water and ice were donated by the Ruttens. The Borge Farewell lunch planning is underway; there will be pork, potato salad, haluskis and the Congregational Life Team will be doing fruit and desserts. Refreshments are also being planned for October 8th so people can stay and visit with the Pastor candidate.
- Finance & Management Team: No meeting this month. They did begin striping the parking lot, but more paint needed to be ordered.
- Mission & Outreach Team: Only budgeted payments were sent this month.
- Worship & Prayer Team: No meeting this month. Cheryl Rioux is training some more people to do the sound board and working with Cyndi Stanek to fix some technical difficulties with the video camera.
- Youth & Family Team: The team is hoping to begin planning a mission trip for next year. There were 33 at the softball game on August 27th. Romans & Christians is scheduled for Friday, September 22nd. They've looked into doing the Camp Ripley course again, but it is no longer available.

Call Team Update: Several interviews have been conducted. The team would like to invite one of the Pastor candidates to preach here on October 8th. This would involve a hotel room, mileage and a pulpit supply payment. Howie Larsen moved and Zach Leibold seconded to allow up to \$800 from the Memorial: Other fund toward this. Motion carried. Cheryl will set up an account for these pastoral search expenses under the Administrative heading.

New Business:

Second Harvest Heartland Request: This group, which provides food to senior citizens, is requesting use of the church once per month for their distribution and storage of some leftover boxes. Our only storage option would be the garage which would be frozen during the winter. Howie will contact them to see if that would suffice.

Computer for Videography: Cyndi Stanek has had the same computer for years and is now having issues with it, so it needs to be replaced. Howie Larsen moved and Joe Hyatt seconded to purchase the computer Cheryl Rioux recommends for \$905 with funds coming from our budgeted Computer Repairs and Maintenance account. Motion carried.

Directory: Amanda has set up several quotes to have the directory printed. We would still have the email option which would continue to be updated. The printed copies would be ordered once. A sign-up sheet will be placed out to determine how many we need to order. The Men's Bible Study group will cover the costs.

LCMC Conference: The conference is October 1-4 in St. Charles, MO. No one is interested in attending from Faith this year.

The meeting closed with prayer.

The next meeting will take place October 19th, 2023

Submitted by Sarah Kalkbrenner, Faith Lutheran Church Secretary

Attendance & Offering

| | | |
|---------------|-----|--------------------|
| September 3: | 119 | \$ 4,823 |
| September 10: | 146 | \$ 5,159 |
| September 17: | 133 | \$ 4,428 |
| September 24: | 108 | \$ 4,857 |
| | | Church Mortgage |
| | | Balance: \$316,021 |