



September

September 2024 Newsletter

take up the shield of faith

Ephesians 6:16

Take Note...

Online giving now
available on our website:
faithlutheranlittlefalls.org



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

From Pastor Mark...

Do you dare?

“...turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth!”

Isaiah 45:22

Do you dare live your life with God truly in charge? Do you dare to live as if God is stronger than the ways of the world which we face in our own life and our culture? Do you dare to live as if God's power is greater than anything we face in life that is against us?

Do you dare turn to our heavenly Father in every time of need and joy? Can you handle the truth from our heavenly Father, knowing that a loving father not only affirms, but also chastises?

When disappointments or tragedies hit, draw closer to God and trust in His goodness.

Our confidence that God is truly in charge motivates us as individuals and as a fellowship of believers. But we acknowledge that people have moments of doubt. Doubt & despair can enter at any point in life, for any reason. But that's all the more reason to remain firm in our mission of sharing the Gospel. Just as people turn to medical professionals when sickness strikes, the people of God should feel comfortable turning to God's messengers to hear the Gospel which heals sin-sick souls. True celebration and joy come when the soul is reconciled to God. If we truly believe that God is stronger than the ways of this world, then that belief will be evident in all that we do.

New School Year, New Opportunities

When relaxed summer schedules give way to busy fall schedules, continue to make time to hear God's Word. The new school year is an opportunity for you to be involved in the life of the church and to hear the Gospel in refreshing ways. Check out the pages of this newsletter for upcoming opportunities for worship, study, and service.

Pastor Johnson

President's Message

Greetings Family of Faith,

Lately I've been reading Pastor Jim Bjorge's book, "A Call to Observe". I highly recommend it. It gives me pause to think about the beauty of nature and the lessons God teaches us in the simple things of life. The book is a series of observations about almost everything he sees around him and what those observations mean to us. Birds, animals, soil, seeds, even fragrance - all kinds of things. It isn't just birds in general, a chapter (each chapter is only two pages long) it's about a specific bird, wood ducks, for instance. Pastor Jim highlights the behavior and instincts that can relate to our own lives. These are the most insightful observations I've ever read. As Pastor Jim says, "In His hand is the life of every living thing."

There are so many issues of turmoil, anger, and ugliness going on around us all the time that it is hard to see God's hand at work. Yet He is always there. We just need to **look and pay attention**. He's there - He's always there.

Why is it so easy to see the ugliness of life and so difficult to see the beauty? God gives us everything we could possibly want or need but we still tend to be unsatisfied. I don't know why that is. Perhaps pure greed and selfishness. Trusting that God, through Jesus, is the way, the truth, and the life gives us promise, hope, joy, peace, and love. To me (as I've seen through Pastor Jim's book) it's a process of a call to observe and learn.

There might be many things we can't change in this unstable world, but we can make changes in our own lives. We can see God's hand in the most simple, natural things around us and take heart in the lessons of life they so desperately want to teach us. That's the beginning. We can start being positive and stop being negative. With God's help we can be calmer and not so frantic. We can do what we can to make life better for others. We can be God's messengers to those around us.

We are all God's children in need of His tender, loving care. He has called us each by name. He loves us and holds us close. He has given us everything. All He asks is that we love Him and obey His commands. God helps us along the way by giving us endless examples of everyday, common events to teach us. He is always by our side.

I pray we all be more observant to God's beauty and the simple ways He teaches us to love.

God bless you all,
Howie

Mission & Outreach Team

Using, in part, funds returned from a previously sponsored ministry, the Mission & Outreach Ministry Team added two unbudgeted items to the list of donations approved by the team at its August 13 meeting. The Word FM donation, budgeted at \$500 for 2024, was increased to \$1,000, pending approval by the church council. In addition, the team voted to approve an additional \$1,000 to the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC), increasing our 2024 budgeted sponsorship amount from \$3,000 to \$4,000, again, pending approval by the council. In addition, the team approved \$500 donations to two missions/ministries—St. Paul Seminary and Pregnancy Resource Center.

The mission team is also finalizing the draft of funding guidelines specifically describing the criteria for organizations/ministries who wish to receive financial support from Faith and how the Mission and Outreach Team will make those decisions. Anyone who would like a copy of the guidelines is invited to contact Pat Rioux or Sarah Kalkbrenner. The team also agreed to provide a gift of up to \$300 to purchase school supplies.

Finally, any Faith member who would like to recommend a mission or ministry that Faith should consider supporting is invited to contact team members. The list is posted on the bulletin board in the gathering area.

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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Jenna Kull's Alaska Mission Trip Recap

Hi Faith Lutheran Family,

I appreciate your generosity so much! Thank you for helping to make it possible for me to go on a mission trip to none other than the very large state of Alaska! I'd like to fill you in on a little bit about the trip!

We took a team of 10 from Fargo, ND (5 guys and 5 girls) Our team was made up of funny, humble, loving, and servant hearts. Our team was able to minister to these kids and show them the love of Jesus in such unique ways because each person connected with different groups of students and were able to love them so well.

Our team drove from Fargo to MSP on Friday, July 12, flew to Anchorage, and then arrived in Bethel Alaska on the afternoon of Saturday, July 13th. From Bethel, we boated along the Kuskokwim River to the location all the village kids know as Camp Hope. We got to meet more counselors from Fairbanks, Alaska! It was amazing to see the way God has worked through the camp over the years. Five individuals who used to be campers when they were younger are now counselors at camp and sharing Jesus with their villages! We boated kids in from many of the rural villages that go by names like Akiak, Tuluksak, Akiachak, and many others. In total, we had 71 campers at camp this year (13-18 year olds)!

We got to spend time with the campers Monday - Saturday morning. Our day-to-day schedule consisted of starting each morning by spending time with God reading His word and praying, and then at 9am we had staff devotions. From 9:30am to 10:30am was time to wake campers up, we slept in tents (the tents were darkened because the sun only set for a few hours) with the campers and their bedtime wasn't until 1am (it was still light outside) so waking them up wasn't an easy task. When they emerged from their sleeping bags they got ready and most campers went on to play some basketball before breakfast. After breakfast, we got into our smallgroups which was an hour with a group of about 9 campers to about 3 counselors. We played games with them, got to know them, and as the week progressed campers got guidance on navigating the bible, opened up about their life outside of camp, and received prayer over their past, present, and future. The growth was so phenomenal that by the last smallgroup campers prayed together, sang worship songs, and talked about how amazing Jesus is. In the afternoon each day, we got to spend time with campers by doing scheduled activities with them. Anything from dip netting, wooden spoon carving, paracord bracelet making, fur sewing, wood burning, wilderness survival, bookbinding, and native dancing. We got to go to these activities with our smallgroup campers and these kids were so smart and skilled they were usually teaching us how to do the activity.

We had lunch and then free time! For the campers, this meant they could participate in the basketball three-on-three tournament, go kayaking, pick berries, shoot bows and arrows, make beaded bracelets, and play games. This was a great time for us to get to know campers who were not in our designated smallgroups, it was so sweet how much the campers enjoyed spending time with us and showing/telling us what their culture is like. After free time we ate supper and then enjoyed worship and a message. The campers loved the worship songs and I would hear them singing them the next day! Throughout the week a few campers even got up in front of everyone to share their story of how God has changed their life! It was incredible! One 15-year-old boy at the end of camp last year decided he wanted Jesus in his life and now coming back this year seeing the difference in him was incredible! He shared how he was stuck in depression and suicidal thoughts but Jesus gave him freedom and now he wants that freedom for everyone! After the message, many campers would stay back from going outside to play, and they would receive prayer and pray for us as well!

A focus of training was remembering that what happens at camp is none of our doing, but only the doing of the LORD and His Holy Spirit. My goodness, did He move. The kids came off the boats with heavy burdens and went home with newly received freedom! So many of these kids were able to receive deep healing for wounds that had never before been touched by the love of God. What an amazing thing to witness!

We would end the night with snack time and a little more free time for campers to get the rest of their energy out for the night! Saturday morning campers got their phones back (yes everyone went a week without their phone)! Another miracle was that many campers said they didn't even want their phones back!

And all of a sudden campers were on their way home. I remember some of the campers who tested my patience the most at the start of the week were the hardest to say goodbye to! After the campers all got home safe, the counselors boated back to Bethel where I enjoyed getting to take a shower for the first time in 8 days! Then after getting to the airport our flight home was canceled and we were scrambling to re-book a new flight to get home and back to our jobs and busy lives. Many of us got sick during the week of sleeping in cold tents and sleeping very little each night, but we recovered quickly and were back on our feet soon enough!

Thank you for taking the time to read this! & thank you so much for your love, support, and prayers!

Love, Jenna Kull



Campers Arriving



Campers + Basketball



My Smallgroup



Raelene and me



Group Photo with all the kids from camp on the last day!

Children's Team

Happy Fall!! We are excited for the beginning of the new Sunday School Year.

The first day of Sunday School will be Sunday September 15, 2024 during the Service with Rally Day activities following the Service.

The Children's team has been busy planning the Sunday School Year.

There are some changes that we hope will allow all the Sunday School Youth to learn and grow through the Sunday School Program at Faith.

This year we will be having Sunday School during the church service, children will attend the church service with their families, then after the Children's Sermon they will be invited back to Sunday School, and then join their families for communion/or the prayers and closing song.

We will not have Sunday School on the 1st Sunday of each month- allowing children to attend the entire service with their families. Confirmation, Christmas Program, the Sunday between Christmas and New Year, Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday will also be days that we will not have Sunday School.

We are still looking for adults and older teens that would be willing help with Sunday School in a rotation schedule or as fill ins. We expect to only have each volunteer in the classroom for 1 Sunday a month.

Please let us know if you can help out!

If you haven't had a chance to register your children, or sign up to help – you can contact Amanda Hyatt- the Volunteer Coordinator, fill out the form at church or follow this QR Code to register.

Looking forward to seeing the Sunday Schoolers on September 15..



Outdoor Worship Wednesday, August 28



Thank you to our musicians!



August Council Minutes

August 15th, 2024 (6:30 pm)

Attending: Pastor Mark Johnson, Howie Larson, Steve Fellbaum, Joe Hyatt, Michael Johnson, Tom Lippert, Jim Nelson, Faye Sandy, Chris Scholl, Renae Stueber, Pam Trang, Steve Tschida, Sarah Kalkbrenner. **Absent:** Zach Leibold
Howie called the meeting to order. Tom Lippert opened in prayer. Additions to Agenda: Lay people leading Communion was added under new business.

Secretary's Report: Renee will bring up the fundraiser idea again during the Youth report. Jim moved to accept the minutes. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report (Joe) Income to date \$189,094.50, budgeted \$212,812.00 so income is \$23,717.50 under budget. For expenses, we are \$33,202.66 under budget. So overall we are \$11,310.70 in the black. However, \$21,700 of the income received was designated, so can't be used for other things. Income received is behind last year. Cetera Brokerage account still needs to be fixed. Tom moved to accept report as reported. Steve T. seconded. Motion carried. Sarah said she is still working on a credit card for the church. Faye will set up an appointment with Pine Country to get this done. It was noted that the report shows that \$250 still due on the credit card.

Pastor's Report (Pastor Mark): Pastor will be moving his parents to Little Falls next week. He is working on confirmation for the coming year, letters will be sent out to families in a couple of weeks. Planning is underway for an Outdoor Campfire Service on Wed., August 28th. The pastoral review will be scheduled the week of the 26th. Pastor has been calling on shut-ins he's aware of once a month. Please let the office know about hospitalizations so he can visit. Also let him know of anyone who is interested in membership. One couple has expressed an interest in membership so far. A New Member class will be held next month. It is a challenge to get contact information for new visitors. Pastor asked that people reach out to him if they have questions about anything.

Ministry Volunteer Coordinator Report: Amanda will be attending the LCMC Annual Convention.

Old Business:

Ministry Team Reports

- **Children's (Mike)** – Sunday School kick-off is Sept. 15th. Sunday School – will be held during the church service this year. The committee recommends that the children attend the church service on the 1st Sunday of the month. An adult is needed to watch the Preschoolers. More teachers are needed. Renee moved that all Sunday school students will attend church the first Sunday of every month instead of attending Sunday school. Joe seconded. The motion carried. Teachers' training will be held Aug. 25th right after the service.
- **Congregational Life (Howie):** Committee worked on planning for the Sunday School kick-off. Tanks have been checked for the grills. We will have lemonade instead of pop. The committee asked to be notified of when New Member Sunday will be held.
- **Finance & Management (Joe)** Deb Colombe is looking into putting up bat houses around the property so bats & birds don't perch above the doors. They are considering if strips should be installed that would prevent birds and bats from perching there. Pastor checked and there are spaces that bats can shelter in. The committee will look into it. Tom moved that North Central Lawn Care be retained to repair the sprinkler system at a cost of \$370. Chris seconded. The motion carried. Lyle Frehrichs repaired the weed whacker for \$44.99. The council discussed cleaning out the attic. It's not safe to store items up there; it could be a fire hazard. It is also not safe for people to be going up and down the stairs. The quilters' and Children's are storing items up there. There is room in the garage to store items now. Children's will work on taking care of this at their next meeting. Howie will talk with the quilters group about it. There are new no trespassing signs available to put up around the property – Joe will put them up before the November meeting.
- **Mission & Outreach (Jim):** Tom moved to give the Mission team approval to give \$500 to Christian radio and \$1000 to LCMC over and above what was budgeted. Pam seconded. The motion carried. The council reviewed the Mission & Outreach Team Funding Guidelines. Faye moved to approve them as submitted, Jim seconded. The motion carried.
- **Worship & Prayer (Faye):** Their meeting is scheduled for the coming Sunday. Howie asked the Worship committee to consider if they want to accept a piano someone wants to donate.
- **Youth & Family (Renee):** The Youth are in charge of set up, clean up, and corn hole for Rally Sunday. The corn hole tournament needs to be promoted. A Raffle fundraiser was discussed; the church would need to get a gambling license. The Council is not comfortable with this, so it will not be pursued. Wed. night youth group starts on Sept. 18th. More volunteers are needed for youth group. The committee is looking at running a youth-led service once a month. They are looking at doing Romans & Christians again and are also looking at curriculum. See You at the Pole is Sept. 25th at 7:30 a.m.

Youth Director Search Update: Faye called the Montana candidate, she does not want to re-locate. Renee spoke with Pastor Keith, Grace Covenant Church. They are looking for a youth director for 20 hours per week. He seemed receptive, but made no commitment – he said he would think about it. The compensation package hasn't been put out yet. Howie requested the team work on suggestions for the compensation package. \$40,000 was budgeted for this year for the position. A job description is online on our website and the LCMC website. Jim moved that we allow up to \$30,000 for a half-time position, total package. Faye seconded. The motion carried. Steve T. reported on the Youth mission trip. It was mission service trip – the kids worked with the homeless, food shelves, day cares, and thrift stores. Everyone got along well and no one was ill. He said he would go again!

New Business

Fall Roadside Cleanup – this should be done in Sept. Howie will check with Tonsagers on the date.

Cintas quote – Sarah reported on the Cintas quote. It was for supplies only. Total came to \$304 per monthly. The quote is more than we are paying right now. Steve T. moved to accept the Cintas quote. Chris seconded. The motion was defeated.

Communion – talked about authorizing lay people to lead communion when the pastor is not here. Concern was expressed that the visiting pastor may feel insulted that he is not allowed to serve.

Fill ins for Sarah – Faye filled in for Sarah yesterday while Sarah went to a funeral. A fill-in is needed for Sept. 30th and Oct. 1st and 2nd. Howie will fill in on the 30th, so someone is still needed in for Oct 1st & 2nd. Some others have said they can volunteer. Volunteers don't need to be council members.

Newsletter – Friday, August 23rd cut off for articles for the Sept newsletter. Howie stated he would like something for the newsletter from each team.

LCMC Augustana District – Howie shared there could be some benefits to coordinating with them. Howie suggested we take a look at the brochures on the table to see if this would be a help for us. Pastor Mark stated the district offers educational opportunities for pastors and for women.

Chris Scholl volunteered for prayer next month. Chris moved to adjourn to adjourn the meeting, Steve seconded. The motion carried. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Attendance & Offering

August 4:	129	\$ 3,863
August 11:	123	\$ 4,817
August 18:	110	\$ 6,464
August 25:	142	\$ 4,253
Church Mortgage		
Balance:		\$142,469