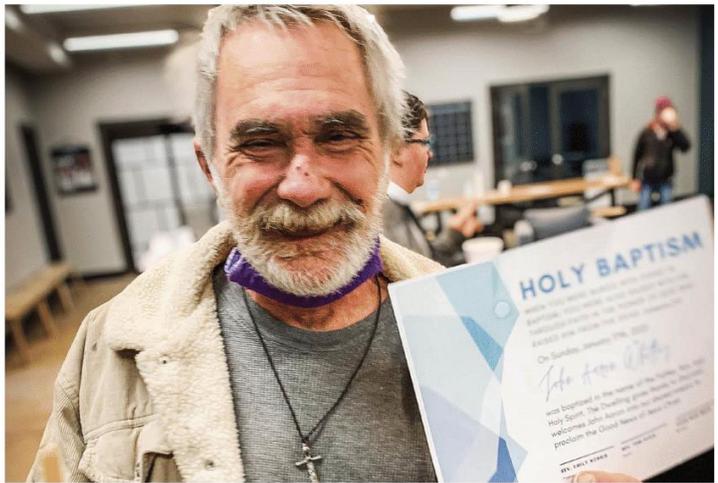


ANNUAL REPORT

2021



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

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A MESSAGE FROM ELCA PRESIDING BISHOP

*Elizabeth
Eaton*

Dear friends in Christ,

The last year has been one of adapting and learning. In many places we have seen vibrant and vital ministry spring forth from changes made due to the pandemic. Digital worship opportunities have introduced to our congregations people who may never have walked into one of our buildings. Many congregations have found new ways to invite people to share their generosity through online giving. And many ministries have found just how vital they are as they continue to serve alongside people in their communities.

The first chapter of James, verse 17, reminds us that “Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.” Yes, this has been a season of change, but Scripture also reminds us that we serve a generous, steadfast God.

While we stay rooted in God’s enduring, unchanging promise, God also gives us the gifts of creativity and learning. Across all three expressions of the church we have used those gifts to serve God, love our neighbor and share the good news of Jesus Christ. In this time of change, we have opened our arms wider to meet people where they are, living into the reality that we are not defined or confined by the four walls of our buildings.

Through all this, I am so grateful for your generous sharing of creativity, time, talents and resources. All good gifts do come from God, and we are called to share and use those gifts. We have and will continue to answer that call. There is still much change and learning to come, but God’s steadfast love energizes us for the work God is still doing in the world through this church.

Elizabeth A. Eaton

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

“Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.”

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OPENING LITURGY



Today our congregation gathers in prayer and hope to begin another year of ministry. We bring with us the memory of a year like no other, even as we move into a future that we cannot yet imagine. Yet even now, as in every age, God is our refuge and strength. In times of plenty and want, in times of conflict and peace, in times of growing and pruning, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

We remember the past year with lament and gratitude. We have lost so much, and so much still feels uncertain. We have also witnessed God's hand at work in new and unexpected ways. We delight at hidden seeds bearing surprising and wonderful fruit. When our own resources fail, when we cannot predict the future, when we must rely on God alone, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

We celebrate this moment and the many ways God has held us together as a community. We give thanks for the gift of our church building and the welcome it provides, even as we bless God for the marvel of technology and the new bonds of connection it makes possible. When our bodies need sanctuary, when our minds need expanding, when your grace must transcend our limitations, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

We look ahead to the road we will travel together this year. We anticipate and receive with joy the new gifts God's love has planned. We pray for the grace to let go of what has served its holy purpose. When we are trailblazers or followers, when we are seekers or visionaries, when we must walk by faith and not by sight, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

And so we pray: Grace our meeting, O God, with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the Spirit who has guided the church from the beginning, the Spirit of our risen Lord Jesus, the Spirit who sends us as healers and restorers of your beloved world. You are the source of our life together. You are the rock and cornerstone.

You have called us for such a time as this.

God of the Fertile Fields

1 God of the fer - tile fields, sha - per of
2 We would be stew - ards true, hold - ing in
3 As grows the hid - den seed to fruit that
4 God of the coun - try - side, dear to the

earth that yields our dai - ly bread: forth from your
trust from you all that you give; help us in
serves our need, so your reign grows. Let all our
Christ who died to make us one: we pledge our

boun - teous hand come gifts your love has planned,
love to share, teach us like you to care
toil be used, no gift of yours a - bused,
lives a - new in faith - ful love to you.

that all in ev - 'ry land be clothed and fed.
for peo - ple ev - 'ry - where, that all may live.
no hum - ble task re - fused your love be - stows.
Guide all we say and do. Your will be done.

All Creation Sings #1063

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**O God,
you have called your servants
to ventures of which we cannot see the ending,
by paths as yet untrodden,
through perils unknown.**

**Give us faith to go out with good courage,
not knowing where we go,
but only that your hand is leading us
and your love supporting us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Amen. (ELW, p. 317)

Welcome by Council President Cynthia Kampf

Opening Litany & Prayer by Pastor Ben Colahan

Approval of May 23, 2021 Congregational Minutes

A Year in Review by Pastor Ben

Staff, Financial Secretary, Council, and Faith Family Appreciation by Cynthia Kampf

Election of new Council Members & Officers

Audit Team

Presentation of the 2022-2023 Budget

***** TIME FOR QUESTIONS *****

Vote on Budget

Update on Stewardship & Capital Campaign

***** TIME FOR QUESTIONS *****

Learning Opportunities

Closing, The Lord's Prayer



Annual Meeting Minutes, Sunday, May 23, 2021 on Zoom & In Person

WELCOME by Council President, Joel Zimbelman

OPENING LITANY AND PRAYER: Pastor Ben Colahan

APPROVAL OF JUNE 28, 2020 CONGREGATIONAL MINUTES: Carl Johnson made the motion to accept the minutes, Sherrill Heinz seconded and carried motion to approve the minutes as recorded.

VIDEO: Pastor Ben presented a video of our year in review highlighting the vast number accomplishments by the congregation and a number of small groups. His presentation included COVID challenges, worshipping outside when possible, and use of the hand bell and string instruments in place of the choir during COVID. It went on to include Easter sunrise outdoor service, assisting the homeless, four new confirmands, the new audio-visual system and hosting a foodbank in the parking lot.



APPRECIATION OF COUNCIL & STAFF: Sherrill Heinz from Equipping Ministry & Joel Zimbelman thanked the current council members for their work throughout the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

APPRECIATION OF FINANCIAL SECRETARIES: Joel Zimbelman & Mark Kimmelshue thanked Judy Struck for her many years of service, and to Lynette Stensrud for taking over the role and to all the money counters and assistants.

ELECTION OF NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS: Joel went over the slate of council officers and members. A motion was made and seconded to accept the proposed slate. Motion carried.

Joel announced the executive team for 2021-2022 fiscal year will be President: Cynthia Kampf, Vice President: Sky Sample, Treasurer: Mark Kimmelshue & Secretary: Sherrill Heinz.

PRESENTATION OF THE BUDGET: Treasurer Mark Kimmelshue discussed the 2020-2021 year to date financials. The full proposed budget for 2021-2022 was posted on line for all congregational members to review. Mark then reviewed each line item on the proposed 2021-2022 budget. The budget was approved as presented.

PRESENTATION OF STEWARDSHIP & CAPITAL CAMPAIGN: Joel reviewed all of the improvements (specifically the audio-visual system) that had taken place over the past 12 months, then laid out the next steps and additional planned improvements. He reiterated that no money has been spent until the cash to cover the improvements had been raised.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted, Diane Knight, Secretary 2021

A Year in Review

This past year has been one of rebirth.

The rebirth of this past year has been most obvious on Sunday morning. For starters, we can actually show up and worship in the same physical space together! We slowly reintroduced congregational singing. Following the removal of the state's mask mandate, we can see each other's full faces. After years of keeping six feet of distance, we once more can hug, shake hands, and share tangible signs of peace; once more people gather after worship for coffee and conversation, food and fellowship; children once more fill our Sunday school and share in proclaiming God's love on Sunday morning.



*Pastor Ben Colahan
(With wife Annalisa & daughter Sophia)*



*Luke Nicolay plays the organ at our
Christmas Eve Candlelight Vigil*

Our Director of Worship and Music, Luke Nicolay, arrived one month before the pandemic started. For the first two years of his tenure here it felt like Luke's focus was directing small groups of musicians and soloists. But at Christmas, Luke was able for the first time at Faith to direct the choir. The awe and wonder of the music that night proclaiming Christ's birth not only lifted weary souls but reminded us that Luke was primarily trained to conduct choirs, he just hadn't been given the chance to do it. At Easter, Luke's first without Covid restrictions, he brought together the full array of Faith's musical talent from the choir and the brass to the bells and the guitars, that with one voice we might proclaim the resurrection with such power that the graves of our hope break open and convince our hearts that life truly does triumph over death.

New birth at Faith occurred beyond Sunday morning. Our social ministry team has never stopped serving the needs of our community during this pandemic, but the past year has seen Faith find new ways to love our neighbor. Just over a year ago, a family in our congregation purchased the Mercy House specifically to be used by the Chico Housing Action Team to house four women who would otherwise be on the streets. A team from Faith Lutheran visits the house weekly to provide support and encouragement. The social ministry team has recently begun partnering with North State Shelter Team to provide a mobile shower and clean clothes to people without homes. And after a year's hiatus, Faith's fellowship hall once again became a low-barrier shelter for two weeks in the summer and in the winter, providing warm welcome and sanctuary from extreme weather. Thanks to the capital campaign, we have been able to renovate the classrooms, giving new life to spaces used both by the congregation and community groups providing social services from twelve step groups to mental health care.

*Doug Desoto, Bonnie & Glenn
Pulliam, and Ralph Godwin
build a planter box
for the Mercy House*



*Dani Vogel, and Grace & Vaughn Quinlan
play minigolf with the Young Adults*



New birth has also been happening in the ways we connect to each other throughout the week, in large part thanks to our new Director of Family Life, Dani Vogel. If the past two years have taught us anything, it is how precious relationships are. The ability to gather with a group of friends in person is a blessing beyond measure. Since her start in August, one of Dani's central goals has been midwifing the rebirth of small group ministry at Faith Lutheran. After months of planning and weeks of training, people of faith are once more gathering in intimate settings to grow deeper in their love of God and one another.

Fourteen groups, both new and returning, meet around everything from hiking and art making to quilting and book study. But no matter the format in which they meet, at the center of all these groups is Christ's love.

One group in particular has experienced an incredible rebirth this past year, our young adult group. Once virtually non-existent, now over a dozen young adults meet regularly for fun, service, and spiritual growth. You may see these young adults running our AV desk or taking down Christmas decorations. In a beautiful act of intergenerational ministry, the elders of our congregation donated over 1,700 Easter eggs, which the young adults hid around the church, and which over twenty children exuberantly found. It was a beautiful celebration of new life and a powerful reminder of what is possible when we work together as the body of Christ.



The Colahan Family

On a personal note, there was one new birth this past year that was profoundly special to me: the birth of my daughter Sophia. My wife, Annalisa and I are so grateful for your incredible support as we learned to be parents. I am delighted and excited to raise Sophia at Faith Lutheran, where we acknowledge our grief and messiness and let God build beauty, where we face our sin and brokenness and let Christ break it on the cross. We know the Spirit is calling us to new and more abundant life.

This year has truly been one of new birth, of death and resurrection. Once we looked through a glass darkly, but now we see each other face to face. Once we sat in silence, but now we sing with choirs of angels. Once we were a congregation completely online, but once more we are a community incarnate, a community reflecting God's love with a place at the table for everyone.

**Your Brother in Christ,
Pastor Ben Colahan**



Pastor Ben and assisting minister Sherrill Heinz

2022-2023 Council Nominations

Retiring Council Members

Doug De Soto, outgoing Council Member
Penny Melvin, outgoing Council Member
Bonnie Pulliam, outgoing Council Member

New Council Officers

(a vote will be conducted to approve these candidates)
Vice President, Sky Sample

New Council Members

(a vote will be conducted to approve these candidates)
Alyssa Manes, Steve Hall, Pat Snyder, Jill Bentler

Proposed Council for 2022-2023

Pr. Ben Colahan, continuing ex officio member
Cynthia Kampf, Council President (continuing)
Sky Sample, Vice President
Secretary, Sherrill Heinz (continuing)
Mark Kimmelshue, Treasurer (continuing)
Joel Zimbelman, Council Member (continuing)
Meridith Woods, Council Member (continuing)
Kyle Groh (continuing)
Alyssa Manes
Steve Hall
Pat Snyder
Jill Bentler

This Year's Nominating Committee

Doug DeSoto, Penny Melvin, Bonnie Pulliam



2022-2023 Annual Budget

The following is the 2022/2023 Budget for the operation of Faith Lutheran Church as recommended for approval by the Church Council. This Budget is an estimate of the amount of funds that will be needed over the next fiscal year (July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023) to maintain current staffing and programs at FLC.

You will notice that the upcoming year's budget has increased by over \$53,000 from the current year's budget. This increase is centered in three areas: Salaries, Employee Benefits, and Business Operations. These three areas comprise 78% of the budget as shown on the Budget Pie Chart (page 12). It is the church council's desire to set an example for others, by providing our pastor and employees a living wage and health and retirement benefits and providing adequate funding to efficiently and effectively operate the church for the upcoming year.

The Council understands that this budget is a big stretch. But it is what is required for Faith Lutheran to grow and be a contributing factor in our community.

This will also require each of us to make a big stretch and increase the amount we are currently giving to the General Fund in support of our ministry.



*Mark Kimmelshue, Council Treasurer
(With wife Diane)*



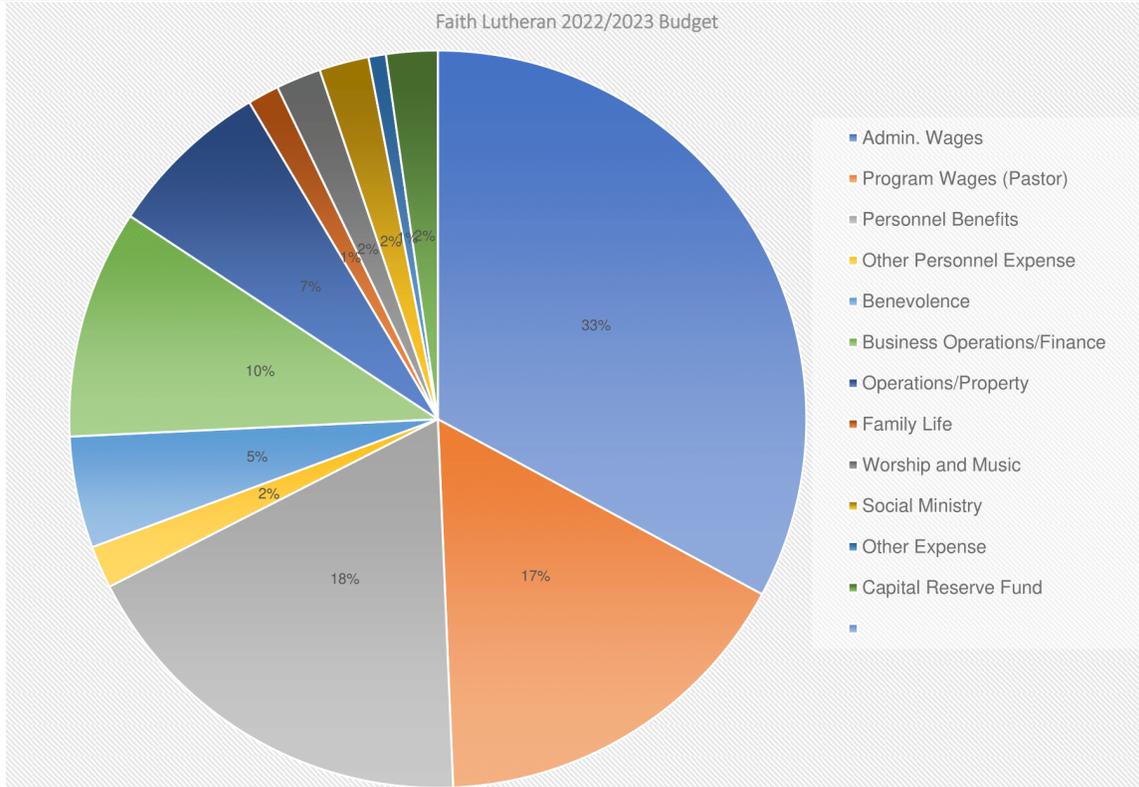
Faith Lutheran Church
2022/2023 Budget

	2021/2022 Budget	2022/2023 Budget	Budget Difference	Actual Through 3/31/2022
Administrative Wages				
Subtotal Admin. Wages	161,000.00	175,080.00	14,080.00	107,472.62
Program Wages				
Pastor Compensation	77,250.00	81,422.00	4,172.00	58,321.87
SSI Reimbursement	5,910.00	6,229.00	319.00	3,946.85
Subtotal Program Wages	83,160.00	87,651.00	4,172.00	58,321.87
Subtotal All Personnel Wages	244,160.00	262,731.00	18,252.00	165,794.49
Personnel Benefits				
Social Security	11,215.37	19,320.26	8,104.89	5,880.69
Pastor's Pension and Benefits	29,665.00	38,956.20	9,291.20	25,422.51
Worship and Music Coordinator Benefits	11,972.16	13,415.52	1,443.36	7,843.08
Family Life Director Benefits	11,972.16	14,989.80	3,017.64	3,836.68
Office/Service Director Benefits	2,700.00	9,027.36	6,327.36	6,440.94
Workers Comp Package	2,100.00	1,000.00	(1,100.00)	633.93
Subtotal Personnel Benefits	69,624.69	96,709.14	27,084.45	50,057.83
Other Personnel Expenses				
Council Spending	400.00	400.00	0.00	57.29
Synod Assembly/Leadership Conference	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	
Staff Appreciation	200.00	200.00	0.00	70.00
Pastor's Reimbursed Expenses	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	
Staff Reimbursed Expenses	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	
Clergy Continuing Education	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	
Staff Continuing Education	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	1,711.23
Pulpit Supply	2,000.00	1,100.00	(900.00)	1,507.50
Staff Mileage	800.00	200.00	(600.00)	14.28
Subtotal Other Personnel Expenses	11,400.00	9,900.00	(1,500.00)	3,360.30
Benevolence				
Synod Benevolence	20,700.00	21,900.00	1,200.00	15,525.00
Seminary Student	1,000.00	0.00	(1,000.00)	
Interfaith Council & Conference Dues	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00
Joseph Project	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	1,953.13
Rwanda Kagitumba Parish	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	1,500.00
Subtotal Benevolence	25,850.00	26,050.00	200.00	19,128.13
Business Operations/Finance				
Bank Charges/Tythly	2,100.00	1,850.00	(250.00)	1,378.23
Postage and Mailing	1,740.00	2,775.00	1,035.00	1,850.00
Machine Leases/Copiers/Overage	1,200.00	1,550.00	350.00	1,437.41

Office Supplies	1,500.00	1,300.00	(200.00)	870.98
Equipment Purchases	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	4,052.04
Insurance, Permits & Taxes	8,000.00	9,250.00	1,250.00	6,487.63
Utilities	25,000.00	31,250.00	6,250.00	20,696.32
HVAC Maintenance	0.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	
Software Rental	1,860.00	1,950.00	90.00	1,583.98
Advertizing	1,000.00	750.00	(250.00)	291.77
Living Lutheran	600.00	600.00	0.00	296.01
Christ in Our Home	160.00	160.00	0.00	
Subtotal Business Operations/Finance	45,160.00	57,935.00	12,775.00	38,944.37
Operations Property				
Janitorial Supplies	1,100.00	1,000.00	(100.00)	557.03
Fair Street (Janitorial/Landscaping	19,850.00	21,200.00	1,350.00	15,905.26
Misc. Landscaping	2,000.00	1,000.00	(1,000.00)	19.37
Repairs and Maintenance	6,000.00	7,500.00	1,500.00	12,405.85
Security	7,000.00	6,500.00	(500.00)	4,687.50
Kitchen Supplies for Cong. Meals	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	0.00
Subtotal Operations Property	36,950.00	38,200.00	1,250.00	33,575.01
Discipleship				
Faith Adult Christian Education (FACE)	200.00	200.00	0.00	119.97
Stephen Ministry	500.00	500.00	0.00	
Subtotal Discipleship	700.00	700.00	0.00	119.97
Family Life				
Advertizing	550.00	550.00	0.00	160.78
Confirmation	300.00	300.00	0.00	0.00
Nursery Child Care Supplies	200.00	200.00	0.00	0.00
Cross Generational/Family Ministries	700.00	700.00	0.00	729.29
Vacation Bible School	500.00	650.00	150.00	0.00
Jr. High/High School Ministry	800.00	800.00	0.00	480.73
College/Young Adult	300.00	800.00	500.00	379.97
Scholarship Fund	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	0.00
Adult Sponsor Expenses	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00	0.00
Sunday School	0.00	350.00	350.00	
Small Groups	0.00	500.00	500.00	
Subtotal Family Life Ministry	5,850.00	7,350.00	1,500.00	1,750.77
Worship and Music				
Arts & Environment	2,300.00	2,500.00	200.00	533.54
CCLI/Copyrights	600.00	600.00	0.00	331.00
Music	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	967.87
Supplies	2,700.00	4,000.00	1,300.00	3,721.03
Equipment Maintenance	1,900.00	1,900.00	0.00	526.89
Resources (calendars Sundays & Seasons etc.)	800.00	500.00	(300.00)	250.26
Subtotal Worship and Music	9,300.00	10,500.00	1,200.00	6,330.59

Outreach/Evangelism				
Social Ministry				
Jesus Center Garden	200.00	200.00	0.00	0.00
Pride Ministry	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	40.74
Safe Space	2,000.00	1,500.00	(500.00)	1,057.57
Rise Against Hunger	3,000.00	0.00	(3,000.00)	0.00
God's Work Our Hands	500.00	500.00	0.00	250.00
Torres Shelter	4,800.00	4,500.00	(300.00)	2,206.76
Misc.	350.00	300.00	(50.00)	33.47
Monthly Giving to CHAT	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00	900.00
Monthly Giving to Hunger Trolley	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00	900.00
Nonthly Giving to Shalom Clinic	0.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	
Subtotal Social Ministry	14,250.00	11,600.00	(2,650.00)	5,388.54
Mission Resources/Stewardship				
Stewardship	500.00	500.00	0.00	0.00
Giving Envelopes	600.00	600.00	0.00	362.63
Subtotal Mission Resources/Stewardship	1,100.00	1,100.00	0.00	362.63
Subtotal Outreach/Evangelism	15,350.00	12,700.00	(2,650.00)	5,751.17
Equiping Ministry	2,250.00	2,250.00	0.00	311.94
Welcome Table			0.00	0.00
Coffee Hour Supplies			0.00	0.00
Subtotal Equiping Ministry	2,250.00	2,250.00	0.00	311.94
Search Committee	5,000.00	0.00	(5,000.00)	6,171.26
Capital Reserve Fund	12,000.00	12,000.00	0.00	9,000.00
Subtotal Capital Reserve Fund	12,000.00	12,000.00	0.00	9,000.00
TOTAL BUDGET	483,594.69	537,025.14	53,111.45	340,295.83

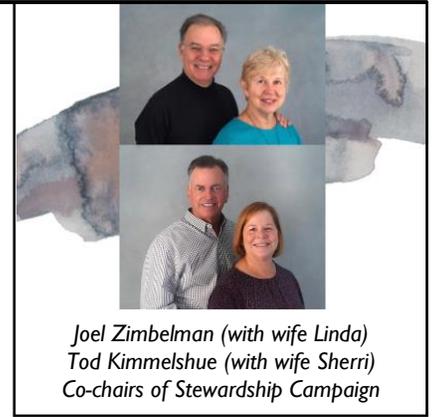
Faith Lutheran 2022/2023 Budget



Stewardship/Capital Campaign

Dear members of Faith Lutheran Church,

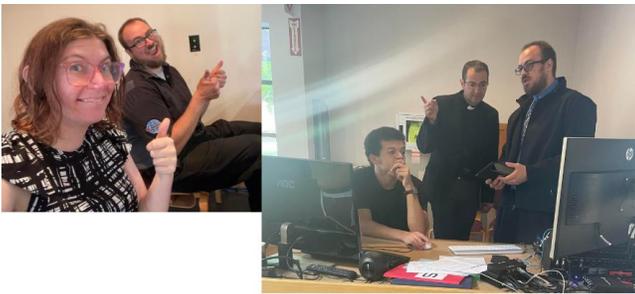
As we write this letter after our Easter celebrations, our Stewardship Campaign is heading into its last year. At this point nothing better describes our experience serving as co-chairs of this committee than thankfulness and gratitude. We truly live in a blessed community. You all have been consistent and present members in these challenging times, and have come through financially for Faith when it really counted. Your regular giving and special gifts over the past two years (and commitments from many of you for support into the coming year) has allowed us to make huge inroads with facilities maintenance and the upgrades that we committed to in 2020.



Joel Zimbelman (with wife Linda)
Tod Kimmelshue (with wife Sherri)
Co-chairs of Stewardship Campaign

Most importantly, we can celebrate a new AV system in the sanctuary with a new soundboard, speakers, mics, and bluetooth hearing connections. This has improved sanctuary worship and allowed us to connect to many members who were unable to get to church during Covid. We have a campus network system in place that will supply cable to all of our rooms and a full mesh wi-fi coverage of our campus. It will also allow phone and security upgrades down the road. We've refurbished offices, the conference room, and classrooms with paint, carpet, and lights. In addition, we've replaced four air conditioning units, replaced air duct work and thermostats in our education building, and installed new lights and fire suppression equipment in the kitchen. You don't see it just by walking around the courtyard, but we had to face roof, electrical, and landscape water challenges, and these are now behind us. Our stove, refrigerator, freezer, and safety equipment is all in great shape to serve us for many more years. New furniture (purchased and gifted) is replacing pieces that have outlived their life in ministry.

*AV team members Kyle Groh and Kai McDermott Pappani
managing the AV system*



Still, we have a ways to go to finish up our long list of capital maintenance and needed projects. Bathroom renovations, new lighting in crucial spaces, office refreshes, landscaping and exterior paint, and nursery and toddler gathering spaces are crying out for attention. Heating and AC needs are going to emerge in the not-too-distant future. But, at this point, look at what we have accomplished together. Your generosity and care for Faith has made our needed improvements a reality!

The growth and vibrancy of our future ministry is going to depend to some degree on what we can accomplish on that "still to do" list in the coming months. Our overall stewardship drive has a goal of \$400,000. As of May 2022 we have received about \$240,000 in pledges and about \$210,000 in actual gifts, so we are more than half way to our ultimate goal. You will be hearing more from us about ways we hope to complete the \$160,000 of the Stewardship Campaign in the coming year. Our regular budget and the capital campaign both present us with challenging goals, but both of us know the history of this congregation's generous giving and its commitment to the rich ministries in which we are engaged.

Seeing your faces back in live worship and at weekly church activities confirms our feeling that we are members of a most blessed Christian community!

**Tod Kimmelshue and Joel Zimbelman, Co-Chairs
Faith Lutheran Stewardship Campaign Committee 2020-2023.**

Pastoral Acts & Eucharistic Ministry

Baptisms: 1

Confirmations: 0

Burials: 5

Marriages: 1

Members Received by
Affirmation: 9

Transfer: 0

Members Removed by
Death: 7

Transfer: 0

Baptized: 459

Confirmed: 392

Eucharistic Ministers take communion from Sunday morning worship to people who are homebound due to health concerns. The Eucharistic Ministry was largely put on hold due to the pandemic, but has slowly started to resume. Although our Eucharistic Ministry slowed down, our Fellowship has grown (see page 31). Prayer connections still take place in person and online. Bill Augros's prayer group, started very early on in the pandemic, still meets once a week. Centering prayer still meets weekly. As the pandemic subsides, we hope to resume a more regular Eucharistic ministry. If you would be interested in bringing Christ's presence to people who cannot attend church, please contact Pastor Ben.

Cyla Nelson, long-time Eucharistic Minister, will be moving to Washington State. We would like to thank her for all of the love, light and service she had shared over the years.

Endowment Fund

The church council approved Faith Lutheran's Endowment Continuing Resolution in 2012 which is now part of the Faith Lutheran Constitution. The purpose of the endowment fund is to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.

The Endowment Fund will provide support for mission work at home and around the world. The fund is called to strengthen and extend God's mission through Faith Lutheran Church, reaching out in response to human need, by making grants to promote and support education for Christian life and service. It will provide ways for members who have the desire to benefit Faith Lutheran Church through charitable giving that is consistent with its mission of witnessing to the message of salvation through Jesus Christ on both a local and global level.

The endowment funds are managed by Thrivent Charitable Impact and Investing. This name change occurred in 2021. In 2021 the committee recommended to the council to choose to use \$2500 to help purchase the new HVAC at Faith. The Council approved that recommendation.

Presently, the endowment fund value is \$82,894.16 (March 10, 2022).

The Endowment Committee appointed by the Council are Bill Youngstrom, chair, Leanne Chrisman, Joan Palmer, and Bill Kees, recorder.



*Bill Kees (with wife Carolyn),
Endowment Committee Recorder*

Report from the Council President

When I took over as Church Council President on July 1, 2021, I was fortunate to follow three highly competent and energetic leaders. Sherrill Heinz wisely led this congregation through some trying times. Raquel Krach took over, helped fill remaining staff positions, and provided stable and loving care for the congregation. After Joel Zimbelman's two-year term as President, he remained on the council and has served as a tireless steward of our Operations and Property. In addition, he has continued his work with Tod Kimmelshue on the Stewardship and Capital Campaign to facilitate the continued upgrades to our campus. The growth of our congregation during the last several years would not have been possible without their leadership. We thank them for their continuing involvement.



*Cynthia Kampf,
FLC Council President*

Looking back at the past year, we have much for which to be thankful. Thanks to Ralph Godwin and an anonymous donor, we now have over 300 name tags on the beautiful kiosk Ralph built. Children and adults alike can feel a part of our Faith family. It is nice to be reminded of the large number of members who serve important roles in this family. Sunday services are made possible by the continued support of many volunteers. Worship leaders, musicians, bell ringers, singers, welcoming table greeters, ushers, the audio/visual team, altar guild communion preparers and servers, assisting ministers, coffee servers, and choir members all give generously of their time and talents.

The nametag kiosk Ralph Godwin built, and banners made by Art Play



During the week, we are graciously served by small group leaders, quilt makers, prayer groups (online and in-person), our Social Ministry Team, and numerous volunteers who keep the campus looking good by watering plants and decorating the sanctuary. We are very fortunate to have so many members of our congregation take part in building the spirit and passion of this place. All are welcome. All are needed. Thank you all.

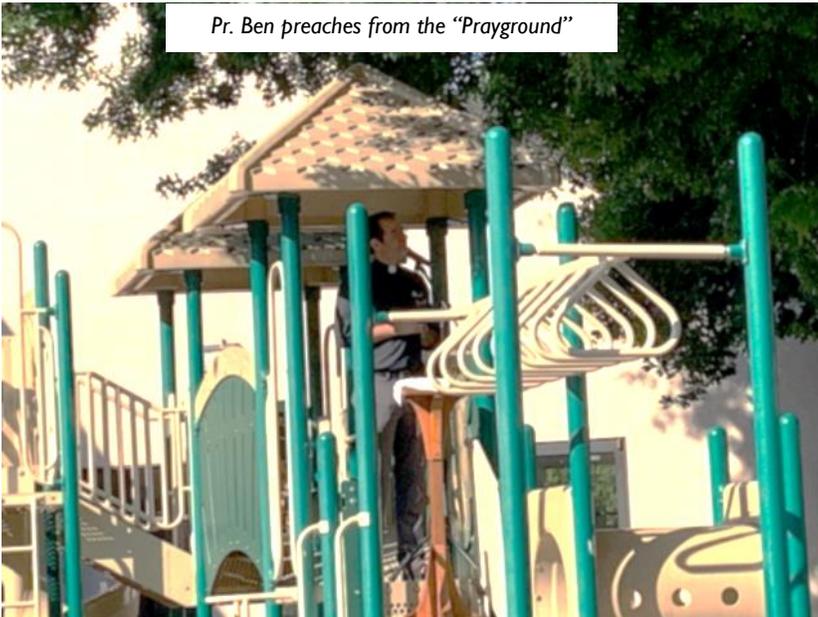
In July of 2021, the church council met for a weekend advance (aka retreat). We spent hours discussing our vision for the coming year. I asked the council to select three areas for implementation in the first 90 days. They selected welcoming to worship, building community through small groups, and equipping members for service.

The welcome table has been staffed throughout the pandemic. Greeters initially took temperatures, provided masks, and insured that everyone had a seat at the "outdoor table." When we felt safe to resume indoor worship, greeters made sure that everyone had a name tag (permanent or temporary with an application for a permanent one).

Small group ministry started with defining the purpose of small groups, selecting and training leaders, and providing support for the groups. Leaders meet regularly to share ideas and receive additional training.

The Equipping Ministry Team gathered before the beginning of the pandemic with training by Kim and Mary Schweder. The passion that they exhibited provided the impetus for many of the changes we've seen. The Welcoming Table, name tags, and support for ministry have been enriched by their ideas.

Pr. Ben preaches from the "Prayground"



The pandemic first brought worship out on the grass in the courtyard and "Pray Structure." This year we celebrated Christmas services in the sanctuary with a renewed sense of joy and community. Easter week was a monumental task for the staff and worship volunteers. Those who attended in person (over 200 on Easter Sunday) and online (30 or more) received a gift beyond description. Many were brought to tears by the music and sense of community. We are indeed fortunate. Thank you to all who participated and attended during that week.

Today we will nominate and elect several new church council members. Members serve for two-year terms. They provide support to staff and manage church finances, policies, and oversight of our buildings. We also provide

strategic vision for the congregation. Meetings are held at least once a month as a group (including Pastor Ben). Our Executive Committee (president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary) meet as needed with Pastor Ben to deal with necessary business issues.

It has been an honor to serve as your president this year. I look forward to one more year of service. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please talk with any council member or call me anytime. You can get a directory from the church office.

You are a key member of this Faith family. Thank you for your continued involvement and support for your brothers and sisters in Christ. You are welcome in this place.

Cynthia Kampf
President of the Congregation



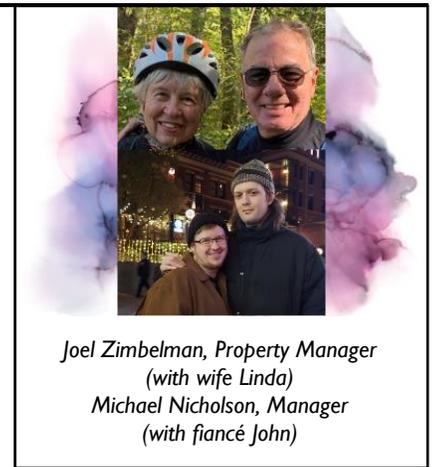
Musicians play at the Advent Workshop

Facilities Management Report

This has been a busy year in terms of property care and upgrades. The upgrades you can read about on page 13 by way of Capital Campaign. Here is the work we've done this past year:

AC

We're sure you remember how tricky it was to navigate worship last summer when our air conditioners stopped working. The units that heat and cool our sanctuary are large and complex, and work had to be done to replace and repair units both on the ground outside, and in the attic space above the sanctuary. Shortly after this work was done, one of the units in our office wing broke. We replaced that unit which was on the roof. As Covid cases began to drop, the usage of our classrooms increased. The unit that was heating and cooling rooms 5-8 was not working properly. We discovered that the duct work did not provide adequate airflow. Suitable ducting was installed, and now our Scouts, anonymous groups, small groups, and other members are comfortable in the newly refurbished classroom wing. New maintenance contracts with Royal Aire are in place to maintain our HVAC going forward.



*Joel Zimelman, Property Manager
(with wife Linda)
Michael Nicholson, Manager
(with fiancé John)*

Kitchen and Restrooms

One night during Safe Space Winter Shelter, a ceiling light in the women's bathroom caught fire. First and foremost, we are eternally grateful that Safe Space was not only there, but handled the situation with the utmost care and grace. There were no injuries and the damage to the building was minor. This incident was the starting point that led to other much-needed repairs and maintenance, namely our fire suppression system in the kitchen. The Ansul system needed electrical upgrades to keep us up to code. This year, the system was given the thumbs-up by the fire marshal. That, coupled with our usual Butte County Public Health inspection passing, means that our kitchen is currently in tip-top shape. Electrical repairs were made to the lights in the women's restroom as well as the breaker box, and a new bathroom countertop was installed to replace the former one which had melted due to the fire.



New counter in the women's room

Water Leaks

We have dealt with pesky leaks over the last year. We would like to thank Judy Struck for her help on this issue. She came to the campus many times to test sprinklers and check out waterlines with Cal Water. Because of her help and hard work, we were able to work with Cal Water to patch some leaks. Our water bill has significantly decreased. Many of the ladies here can attest to the troublesome leak in the women's restroom; after the bathroom fire during Safe Space, a new (much more beautiful) countertop was installed. In doing this, the leak was addressed and is no longer an issue. Beyond that, we spent some significant funds improving the condition of our roof, which in the last couple years had caused issues with a leak in the sanctuary. Had that not been addressed, it could have gotten a lot worse during storm season.

Refurbishing Classrooms and Office Spaces

There is an ongoing issue of certain classroom and office spaces being too "cold," taking into account the paint color, old carpet, and old furniture. We can't address every room at once, but we have been chipping away at them,

New paint and furnishings in Room 7/8



improving them and making them warmer, more inviting spaces. We encourage you to check out room 7/8, which is a good example of what our hopes for improvement looks like. The walls in room 7/8 were grayish, with a teal floor and mismatched couches. The closets were filled with things that had accumulated over the years. We gave away the old couches, and agreed on paint colors that would brighten the space. New couches were donated, a matching set with flecks of primary colors embedded in a warm, sandy hue. Carpet is being shipped to us so that the linoleum can be replaced. The ceiling color – vibrant white – is being used to repaint the ceilings in all the classrooms to open up the space. We’re chipping away at room 6 as well. A warm white was painted over walls that were once described as “butter yellow.” We plan to use this as a

classroom, in the literal sense of the word, with tables, chairs, a monitor, whiteboard, and all the things that make a productive learning and teaching space. The “Prayer Room” has been moved to the office building into a room that gets more natural light, and is now called the “Chapel.” The goal is to implement the healing elements of the former prayer room, plus give the room some new paint, carpet, and eventually, furniture. We want this space to be one of healing and mindfulness, open to all who need time to meditate, reflect, or share their hearts with their siblings in Christ.

Sanitizers & Hand Soap Dispensers

Old, mismatched soap dispensers were replaced with the same model. This model accommodates both sanitizer and hand soap refills, all from the same local distributor, JC Nelson. JC Nelson works directly with Work Training Center, who oversees our yardwork and janitorial work. You can find these dispensers in the restrooms, sanctuary, offices, and even outdoor events, as we have portable, standing dispensers. Air fresheners were also installed in the men’s and women’s restroom. Bulk, rechargeable C-batteries and a charger were purchased to provide a waste-not source of power for our dispensers, and save on future battery costs.



Security

California Security Company is still our security detail. They perform regular walk-throughs of the campus. Since we hired them, we have noticed a significant decrease in nightly foot traffic on campus.

All this work has been essential to getting us back to being fully open and functioning after the Covid-related closings of the past year. Look for four or five big changes to our buildings and grounds going forward. We will take these tasks on as soon as we assure that our regular operating budget is in good shape and our Stewardship Campaign wraps up in the coming year. Our biggest challenges will be to complete the painting and carpet upgrades of remaining offices, nursery, toddler space, and classrooms; a new bathroom upgrade in the education wing; interior painting of the sanctuary and fellowship hall; exterior painting of all three of our buildings; and of course the removal of much of our front lawn and the installation of new landscaping around the campus.

People are needed to join the property committee. If you want to be part of the ministry managing these improvements in the coming year, please give Joel Zimbelman a call at 530.520.9608 or email joelzimbelman@gmail.com

Worship & Music

Dear Fathers!

Oh my goodness, can you believe we are here? It's another year later and we're on to the next annual meeting. While writing on this article, I reflected on all the wonderful times but also on the hard times we've experienced together—as a church family, as a worshipping family, as a musical family, and as an artistic family.

Throughout this year so many exciting, artistic projects came to fruition, recitals and events happened, bell choir and choir blessed worship with music, our song leaders strove to create meaningful participation for the congregation, and so much more. There are so many wonderful and exciting things that happened.

As many of you will remember in August of 2021 I tested positive for COVID-19. To say that I was completely distraught was an understatement. I was scared, I didn't know what would happen and most of all, I felt like I had let down the staff at FLC and all of you. Immediately after testing positive, I alerted everyone that I had been in contact with that week and then got re-tested both at CVS and at LHI, the state-wide testing site. In every single one of my conversations with members of the choir, bell choir, etc. each person asked me how I was, both mentally and physically. Everyone wanted to make sure that I knew how much I was loved, even though I felt guilty for catching this horrible thing that I'd worked so hard not to come in contact with. The staff checked up on me each day, brought me work supplies, and made sure that I knew how important I was to the team. I have to tell you... this made me cry more times than I care to admit! Throughout my quarantine, thankfully, my symptoms were mild. I had a loss of taste and smell and a slight cough. Luckily, I regained my senses within a week after losing them and I sure was grateful. So many of you brought amazing foods for me to keep my strength up and I couldn't taste a thing, which was a real bummer—I sure do enjoy food! I think one of the strangest things about losing my sense of taste and smell was the degree to which I lost them. I could tell you that something was salty, sweet, creamy, tangy, but if I were to be blind-folded, I couldn't tell you what it was. I could only describe things, in very low detail.

As many of you could guess, I couldn't stand being alone and stuck in my room for 10+ days, but it did give me time to reflect on my response to getting covid and to my response toward those who had already gotten it. It taught me that

FLC Staff Christmas photo



it's ok to slow down for a bit and most importantly that things will continue on, even if I can't be 100% physically present, and that it will be okay (even if I feel like a complete mess and am burdening others). A number of people stepped in for me and made all transitions during my two-week quarantine smooth and gentle. I think the most important lesson that covid taught me was that it's ok for me to say I need help and to not feel like I'm inconveniencing others. I found that people love to help and that was such an eye-opening realization for me.

While having covid wasn't particularly how I'd dreamed of spending the end of August/start of September, I am thankful for the lessons it taught me and for the ability to be able to be present without fully being physically present and most importantly to attend to the needs of myself and to those whom I work with.

Once I came out of the covid blues, the bell choir resumed and began preparations for the Advent and Christmas season. The bell choir also launched, for the first time, a joint day of bells and ringing with St. John's Episcopal Church. It was a joy to get together with our friends from St. John's to work on music that



*Luke Nicolay,
Director of Worship and Music*

both choirs were working on. Barb Janzen, one of the ringers from St. John's, led us in a ringing technique workshop amongst several small workshops that we did throughout the day. In addition, the bell choirs also spent time together—talking, sharing a meal together, and sharing in the joys of creating music together. The bell choir here at FLC also worked hard to prepare for the Christmas Eve service where they played a stirring rendition of “Still, Still, Still.” It was truly a treat to work with them during this time. Fast-forward to the Lenten season and to Holy Week/Easter. The bells continued to work hard and to be a huge part of Holy Week and Easter Sunday. This year was particularly special, as after 2 years of no in-person worship, we were finally back on and in-person. The bells played a piece, “Ah, Holy Jesus” for Good Friday and then “Christ the Lord is Risen Today” for Easter Sunday along with organ, choir and congregation singing praises to our Risen God! It was a truly joyful season and one that we will always remember. The bell choir will continue to meet until the end of May, when they will then go on recess for the summer until mid-August.

Handbell Choir during Advent season



The Sanctuary Choir has had quite the interesting last year, also, to say the least. As things began to open the choir returned in August and were singing again and what a joyful time it was! It was thrilling to see familiar faces (albeit masked), to hear great voices, and to be together making music again. However, not three weeks into our time together, we paused due to the major rise in covid cases (and also because of the reality that covid was now hitting closer to home). The choir then went on a short hiatus until the late Advent season when they began to meet again. The choir worked diligently for several weeks to prepare “Silent Night” by Dan Forrest. The choir was then able to sing at the Christmas Eve service and sang in a large round throughout the entirety of the sanctuary. It was a true delight to be able to experience the Christmas season with the choir: it had been nearly 2 years since we were last able to gather. Shortly after, due to the rise in the omicron variant, the choir went on a 2-month sabbatical. However, once March rolled around, we were able to gather and sing again. It was truly exciting, and this time it was for real! The choir immediately began preparations for Holy Week and Easter. They prepared hard and were able to do some wonderful repertoire which was celebrated by all who attended worship.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Vigil



Lastly, art has consistently become a major focus of our worship time throughout this last year. We created several small projects that adorned our space and focused our hearts and minds on worship. What really kicked off the art was the space for Advent. We focused on the loving warmth of darkness. We saw that from the dark, beautiful things could be created. This was reflected in the sanctuary in numerous ways.

A banner made by the small group Art Play



Several folks came together and created these gorgeous panels in the Narthex with swatches of color in circular patterns to reflect that of the womb. This gave us a feeling and sense of security and love. This project then spurred Gayle Palys and I to start a small group called "Art Play" which has become responsible for many of the art projects that we will begin to see in the sanctuary. With many helping hands and lots of creative ideas the Art Play group created 2 beautiful banners for the Easter season.

In addition, before the creation of Art play, the same group that created the panels for Advent also created the Lent art project which featured a vessel filled to the brim with different things representing the 7 Deadly Sins, which Pr. Ben spoke about each week during Lent. The final culmination of Holy Week was the vessel being smashed under the weight of the sin that had accumulated. The vessel was then renewed and made whole on Easter Sunday when we saw a beautiful floral arrangement shooting out of a new and whole lantern. The Art Play group will be continuing on with projects such as new banners, art projects appropriate to the season, and more as the year continues on. Anyone is welcome to come and join in!

It's such a joy to be able to come together and sing, ring, and create art with so many joyful souls. I want

to thank the handbell choir, sanctuary choir, guitars, the Sunday morning worship leaders, the music planning committee, Art Play, and everyone who came together this year to create so much beauty in the midst of wars, COVID, depression, chaos, and life (in general) to make this world a little more beautiful than the day before. We are blessed to serve a God who is, by definition, all that is beautiful and that we get to share that beauty with one another, with our community, and with the world. None of this would be possible without your generosity, support, hard-work, and time. It's been an absolute joy to get to know the members of FLC even better and to get to know our new members as well. I look forward, with great joy and anticipation, to all the wonderful and beautiful things we get to do together.

With love and care,
Luke Nicolay, Director of Worship & Music



Family Life

As I sit in my office here at Faith Lutheran, it's hard to believe that I've only been here 8 months as I write this in late March. I've felt so much love and enthusiasm here at Faith Lutheran as we continue to live out our calls through the church mission statement. Since my time here at Faith Lutheran, we've resumed a number of in-person activities as Covid 19 limitations and restrictions have allowed us to meet safely in person again.

Programing and care for our youngest students offers a Sunday-School-style learning format during the first portion of our worship services in our nursery space. This is open to all elementary students, and our smallest toddler friends.

In addition to this in-person offering, we also offer mobile Sunday School! Families at Faith can sign up to have a Sunday School session brought to their front yard or kitchen table. We learn about stories from the Bible and the people that Jesus ministered to, share snacks, and do crafts together. We will also be offering an in-person, outdoors VBS experience for the coming summer season.

Our middle school and high schoolers have come back to youth group in an in-person fashion. We gather twice a month for a time of Bible Study, games, and snacks, as well as a number of fun activities including pumpkin carving and bowling. While the Covid-19 restrictions caused our summer plans to be on hiatus for our trip to Rancho Santa Marta, we found an alternative Youth Gathering event to attend in Southern California this summer, and through the generous support of the congregation, we are able to defray the costs.

In-person intergenerational events also returned this fall and winter! We were able to hold an outdoor, scaled down version of our Advent Workshop, where attendees were able to create Advent and Christmas crafts together. Faith's youth group built a beautiful art piece nativity that served as a reminder that Jesus brings beauty to things that are often discarded as trash. We also headed to Butte Meadows to snowshoe this year, as Lassen's trails were heavily impacted by the Dixie fire in 2021.



Unicorn White Snowflake



Dani Vogel,
Director of Family Life



The Lavins, Colahans, and Bradleys at the Easter egg hunt (above).
(Below) Many families gather to hunt eggs on the Saturday before Easter.



The youth carve pumpkins for Halloween



The young adults dress up for the first annual Faith-tucky Derby



There were Easter events for all family ministries this year. The youth gathered for an Easter egg hunt, dyed Easter eggs, and talked about the 7 Deadly sins, focusing on greed and what it means to have enough. Our young adults gathered the morning of April 16th for a service project -- hiding eggs for our toddlers and elementary-aged kids! Over 1,100 Easter Eggs were collected through your amazing generosity as a congregation for this event. We had so many donated that we were able to use 350 additional eggs for our young adults to have their own hunt, and for our kids on Sunday morning to hunt as well. Our young adults also shared breakfast together before they had their egg hunt.

Faith's young adult ministry continues to grow. As many as 25 young adults connected to our congregation have attended a variety of events and activities hosted by the church over the last year. The

Blue Jacket is handed out for a variety of talents and skills once a month, and each time it changes hands, a new patch is added. The jacket continues to spread joy to the winners of contests. Aside from jacket competitions, non-competitive game nights have provided lots of conversation and community building time. Through the generosity of hosts and snack providers, our group meets twice a month and continues to grow over time.

Faith Lutheran continues to charter Troop 12, a Boy Scouts of America troop here in Chico. Ours is a troop for female students that is steered by a mix of both male and female adult leadership. Scouts from Troop 12 participate in events and activities that strengthen leadership skills, teach valuable outdoor adventure skills, and build their relationship up with the surrounding community.

As a reader, I continue to build up my own skills through a number of books to aid in ministry here at the church, as well as by attending continuing education provided through the generosity of the congregation. I attended the first ever Women in Youth Ministry conference in Indianapolis, Indiana, where I was able to connect with 150 other women who serve in a variety of leadership positions through 19 different faith groups and denominations. We learned about the emerging generation that we serve, coined Generation Alpha, as well as looked at how the needs of Millennials, Gen Z, and the newest generation have changed and will change to predict the needs of our church members.

I also utilize membership in the ELCA Youth Ministry network to further my skills and stay in community with other Lutheran children, youth, and family ministry leaders. In 2023, the continuing education event that this group hosts will be located just down the road in sunny Anaheim, which I plan to attend.

I've been blessed to be a part of the Faith Family, and love the connections that continue to grow here at the church, and in the Chico area.

Dani pictured with Troop 12



Dani Vogel, Director of Family Life

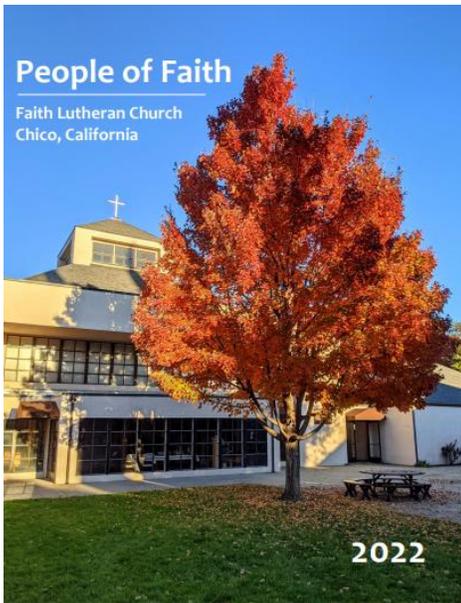
What's Happening in the Office?

Howdy folks! I'm Michael: manager for 3 years and change. I run the office, bookkeep, create content (E-blast, Faith Talks, press release, website, social media, banners, brochures, etc.), edit our audio, manage our member database, oversee big projects like directories, work with Joel to manage our facility, administrate for the Social Ministry Team, and most importantly, make sure everyone may easily connect with our church.

Last year, I talked about the endeavors of bookkeeping, church management (our Elvanto database, specifically), the operations manual, position guides, fresher graphics for our content, and social ministry support. I'm still writing checks and inputting finances, Elvanto is up to date, the manual is up to date, position guides are done (page 35) graphics are funky fresh, and I'm still involved in social ministry. So we're right on track!



Most of my work this past year has centered on getting small groups off the ground. (You can read the small group report on page 37.) I took the small group facilitator training, booked groups so they have a space to meet, advertised, made brochures, and helped create content for the groups who needed it. I would like to commend Dani Vogel and Pastor Ben for the hard work they poured into finding loving and creative solutions to keep us connected during a pandemic.



This year I designed my second directory which has since been distributed. If you don't have one, you can pick one up for free at the office. I would like to thank Nola Dosch, Bill Kees, Judy Struck, Molly Barnum, and Lynette Stensrud for editing, proof-reading, and fact checking. Another thanks to Bill Kees for taking photos last fall. I maintain a database of 500 members and visitors, and while I do my best with these directories, information does fall through the cracks. If you see information that is wrong, has been omitted, needs to be changed, or find typos (shoutout to "Arl" Skounborg), please tell me! You are all important to me and I want to make sure your correct info is published. Please keep me posted on address or contact info changes. And you are always welcome to send me photos of yourself and your family so that we have them on file for whatever publications may come next. Plus, we just love seeing your faces!

I have done a ton of work this last year on position guides, spiritual gifts, brochures, visitor mugs, and all manner of Equipping Ministry things. It has been my favorite project this year. Check out page 35 to read about it -- it was a *huge* project!

Social media maintenance has been another task I've paid special mind to. What inspired me most during the pandemic was how we grew as a congregation in so many ways; we didn't just get new members, we created ministries of fellowship, prayer, and small groups to stay connected inside and outside of worship. This began with the installation of our A/V system which allowed folks to connect with us anywhere in the world. But even before the A/V system was there, we had a Facebook presence, the weekly E-blast (email newsletter), our website, Youtube, and our Google business listing.

Facebook Page ([facebook.com/Faithlutheranchico](https://www.facebook.com/Faithlutheranchico)): Although the staff is maintaining a more consistent social media presence, we have reached fewer people in general this year. I hope to grow our Facebook presence over the next

year. Our most popular Facebook demographic is women 65 and over. The top cities we reach outside of Chico are Oroville, Durham, Oakland, Orland, Sacramento, and Los Angeles. Outside of the United States, we have had people visit our Facebook page from Canada, Indonesia, Nigeria, Peru, Bangladesh, Burundi, Germany, India, and Uruguay. I would like to see an increase in global presence, perhaps through social ministry and educational investments through the ELCA, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS), and other global partners. That said, we have actually seen an increase in social media activity since March because of post-scheduling. Facebook has a nifty feature that shows our FLC staff the optimal times for posting, namely when the most people are online. For example, our Facebook is more active Sundays at 5 a.m. than it is at say, 8:30. Since that's the case, I started scheduling our Sunday morning posts to go out earlier. I've been doing this with most of our posts, and we have seen a noticeable increase in activity.

Facebook Group (facebook.com/groups/faithlutheranchico):

This is a private group that one must request permission to join. There are 294 members of this group -- a group that works kind of like the fellowship hall does after worship; it's a place where folks can share what's on their mind, chat with one another, or show pictures. When we aren't standing face-to-face with someone and the veil of the internet shrouds us, sometimes we forget that we are speaking to people that we see each Sunday at church. The staff implemented the following rules (right) which one must read before asking to join us.

E-blasts: There are 304 people subscribed to our weekly email newsletters called "E-blasts." Aside from calling me and asking to be added to the list of subscribers, anybody who visits our website can subscribe on their own. I was impressed at the amount of people who registered on our website. That they were able to do so without calling the office says two things to me: we're engaging enough that people want to know more about us, and it's easy to connect with us. Our E-blasts still go out every Tuesday (or Wednesday if a council meeting took place that Tuesday) and contain graphics, events, articles, and blurbs cobbled together by yours truly.

Website: We switched from Squarespace to Tithely in March of 2020, and we're impressed at how seamless website maintenance has been in comparison. Our website and newsletter have the same host, and any news or events that I create on the website can be dragged-and-dropped into the E-blast. Not only does it save time, but the look is consistent and clean. And since the E-blast goes out weekly, the staff are held accountable in making sure our website is up to date.

Youtube: since 1/1/2021, we have had 6,321 views; 1,720 hours of watch time; and we have gained 38 subscribers putting us at 100 subscribers total. Our Easter and Epiphany videos were the most popular. In February, I began adding tags to our livestreams. "Tags" are words that people search for, like "ELCA," "Lutheran," or "worship service" implemented to allow people to discover videos like ours when they search for those key words on Youtube. So when someone goes to Youtube and types in "worship," they may find our service! My goal is to continue adding tags and give our Youtube a cleaner, more presentable look.

Google Business Profile: Currently our business listing on Google gets over 700 views per week. 75% of people who search for us do so to view our website, with 15% asking for directions and 10% needing to find a phone number. Google reports that the photos on our business listing have been viewed over 3.8 thousand times, which is over 4 times as

- 1 **Speak with love.** ...
Facebook is no different from the parish hall. Both are places where we gather as siblings in Christ. The way you treat people on Facebook is a reflection of Christ's name.

- 2 **Keep the content focused on faith.** ...
Faith covers an incredibly broad swathe of topics, from the lives of members of our congregation, to inspiring prayers or scripture, to theology, to social issues.

- 3 **Respect people's privacy.** ...
This group is a great place to post prayer requests, but please get permission from people before posting about them or sharing personal information.

- 4 **Focus on values, not politicians/parties.** ...
Please do not advocate for or condemn specific politicians or parties in this group. Share how Jesus shapes your values and draw attention to how we could live out those values.

- 5 **Post to connect with people, not change people.** ...
Social media is not not an effective place to change people, and is best used as a tool to inspire and connect. If you want to debate a sibling in Christ, invite them to talk over coffee.

much as similar business's photos are viewed. In short, we are a growing ministry, and I plan on posting more photos to our Google business page to better highlight the work of our ministry.

Other: Our church has an Instagram account which we seldom use. My goal is to start posting more to Insta to engage with a younger crowd.

YOU can help with social media! Send pictures of any church events you're at, be it worship, small group meetings, or just seeing your friends on campus. Not only is this helpful for social media, but it's nice to include these meaningful interactions in *Faith Talks* or the E-blast. We love seeing each other in photos!

My right-now-goal is to wrap up the projects that are near completion from this year; and conversely, to maintain content that is on the ground like position guides, our member database, our website, the brochures I put out, social media, and everything else.

I will also be taking an accounting class through Butte College this fall so that I can get to know our books better, and getting married on November 11th. Everyone is welcome to attend. (The wedding, not Accounting 101. RSVP with me).

There is one, final thing I want to emphasize: there isn't just a place for everyone at the table, there's a place for you and your family in *Faith Talks*, the E-blast, the bulletin board in the fellowship hall, on Facebook...the list goes on. Please, send us things to publish. Have you written a poem recently? Did you take a cute picture? Do you have an article you'd like to write about worship or social ministry or your small group? Has your kid drawn Jesus high-fiving Batman? Have you drawn Jesus high-fiving Batman? Let us know. Our publications aren't just the jabber of the council and staff, they're the conversations that take place at our table. Email anything you would like to share with me at office@chicofaithlutheran.org. Until next time!

Michael Nicholson, Manager FLC



Social Ministry

The Social Ministry Team was able to make meaningful human connections this past year through our ongoing ministries involving the Mercy House, the Torres Shelter Dinner, Blue Bags Program, the Hunger Trolley, the Parking Lot Food Bank, Comanche Creek Clean-Up and two new partnerships we are excited to be part of; the North State Shelter Team and the Shalom Free Clinic. The Social Ministry Team also provided support to local service providers who work with those without shelter and food, including Safe Space, the Jesus Center, the Torres Shelter, and Chico Housing Action Team. While COVID-19 and its variants continued to impact the ways Faith Lutheran served both the local and wider community this past year, our congregation remained a generous and caring body reflecting God's love to those we served as reflected in these highlights from our past year's activities.



*Doug Desoto, Social Ministry Chair
(with wife Carmelita and dog Emma)*

Summer 2021

Faith Lutheran Church and **Safe Space** teamed up to host a free, easy-to-access cooling center from our very own Fellowship Hall in July. We were blessed to be able to minister to those seeking relief and safety from the unusually extreme temperatures.

The Social Ministry Team teamed up with North State Shelter Team and Caring Choices in July to establish **Micro Shelters** on Faith Lutheran Church grounds. Unfortunately, while we were ultimately unable to proceed with the plan, the process made us aware of needs and opportunities for ministry to our immediate neighbors.

Our Blessing of the Backpacks supply-stuffers



In July the **Social Ministry Team** advocated for the Faith Lutheran Church Council to take action to publicly highlight the inadequacies of the City of Chico's official "resting place" for homeless people near **the airport**.

The annual collection and distribution of **backpacks and school supplies** for students occurred in August. The 2021 drive benefited the homeless youth of Butte County. 130 backpacks filled with school supplies and \$550.00 donated for clothing was distributed to the BCOE School Ties Program and Fair View High School.

Everyone from FLC who cleaned the creek for God's Work, our Hands Sunday

Fall 2021

In September Faith observed the ELCA's annual "**God's Work, Our Hands**" Sunday. Members of Faith marked the annual day of service by sponsoring and teaming up with the Butte Environmental Council to remove trash and recyclables from our beloved Bidwell Park.



The Annual **Steve Troester Memorial Blood Drive** took place in November. Members of Faith signed up to go to the donation center in Chico and a total of 9 units of life-saving blood were collected.



The front lawn during Trans Day of Remembrance

Trans Day of Remembrance occurs annually in November. This year, in honor of the 867 lives lost worldwide in the past two years to acts of violence against Trans People, members of Faith planted flags in the church's front lawn and took part in the outdoor candlelight vigil in the Faith Lutheran Church courtyard.

Faith participated in the annual **Thanksgiving Event** by providing holiday pies to each of the 65 Chico Housing Action Team houses in Chico, serving over 260 individuals.

In line with the Social Ministry Team's goal of supporting efforts related to homelessness and hunger, members of Faith committed to **donating the food items needed** to prepare one of the **Hunger Trolley's Helper Group weekly dinners**, once a quarter, **starting in November**.

Winter 2021

The Social Ministry team solicited donations of **socks for our unhoused neighbors** in the Chico area. Members of Faith rose to the occasion and donated socks that were gift wrapped and distributed on Christmas Eve along with a Christmas message of love to our siblings in Christ living at the Comanche Creek encampment.

In December, the Social Ministry Team sponsored Faith's **Global Giving Tree** that graced the entry way to the Sanctuary. The tree was adorned with ornaments, each a service opportunity in which members of Faith could support the ELCA on a global level.

Vicki Doeden and Doug Desoto volunteer at the mobile shower



Faith Lutheran Church hosted the **Safe Space Winter Shelter** for two weeks in January. Faith provided space for 35 guest each night and during the first week of Safe Space, members of Faith cooked meals for the folks staying at the shelter. FLC provided \$1057.57 worth of groceries to make these hot meals.

In January, the Social Ministry Team offered a new service opportunity for Faith members wishing to volunteer time to help staff the **North State Shelter Team's (NSST) Shower Trailer Project** providing showers to people who do not normally have access to a shower at different homeless encampments in the Chico area.

The Social Ministry Team sponsored a **Random Act of Kindness Day activity**, the "Clothes and More" donation drive, in February to benefit the North State Shelter Teams' Shower Project. Multiple boxes of towels, clothing, and hygiene products were donated, and \$1,000.00 was raised.

As recent events in Ukraine and in Afghanistan resulted in violence and the loss of life, the Social Ministry Team supported the work of **Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS)** and invited the members of Faith to join LIRS in support of our Ukrainian and Afghan neighbors through prayer, advocacy, and financial support.

Spring 2022

The Social Ministry Team is committed to raising awareness about health-related ministries in our local community. Earlier this year the Social Ministry Team voted to formally support the work of the **Shalom Free Clinic** by allowing the group to use one of the church's classrooms for counseling purposes and through an on-going financial commitment starting in July. As part of this new collaboration, the Shalom Free Clinic offers Faith members, interested in making a difference in our community, the opportunity to volunteer time and knowledge to the Clinic.

During **Red Cross Month**, the Social Ministry Team hosted an information table and provided material and information on the American Red Cross to members of Faith.

In May we got on our legislator's agenda to talk policy and justice for **Lutheran Lobby Day**. We gathered with our neighbors from across the state for a day of advocacy, worship, and prayer.

Committed to supporting and celebrating the health, empowerment, and joy of the California North State LGBTQ+ community, Faith will once again participate in the **Chico Pride 2022** event in June.

Faith Lutheran Church is a community reflecting God's love with a place at the table for everyone. As we look ahead to a new year and ways we can expand that table, we encourage anyone interested in taking part in one or more of the ministries supported by Faith Lutheran to contact any member of the Social Ministry Team or the office for more information.

Elise Gladu & Torres Groceries



Memorial Banner for Chico Unhoused



Parking Lot Food Bank



Doug Desoto, Bonnie Pulliam, and Mercy House Residents

Annual Social Ministry Events

January	February	March
	<p><i>Random Acts of Kindness Day</i></p> 	<p>RED CROSS MONTH</p> 
April	May	June
		<p>PRIDE Month</p> 
July	August	September
	 <p>Backpack Drive</p>	 <p>God's Work ~ Our Hands</p>
October	November	December
<p>STEVE TROESTER MEMORIAL BLOOD DRIVE</p> 	<p>CHAT CHICO HOUSING ACTION TEAM THANKSGIVING</p>  <p>TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE NOV 20</p>	<p>Gift Wrapping</p> 

Fellowship

Fellowship takes on so many shapes: when we chat during Coffee Hour, when we visit one another at our homes, and when we share the love of Christ with each other. It has been beautiful watching our fellowship ministry not only grow, but bloom during the midst of the pandemic.

Cooking & Food. So many of you contributed to Meal Trains over the course of the last year, mine included! Though we were unable to serve hot meals, many of you donated baked goods to Trans Day of Remembrance to provide to-go comfort food to those in mourning. Torres Shelter dinner teams are still going strong and others are starting to take an interest in cooking and serving meals to those staying at the Torres Shelter. We've donated the groceries needed to provide entire meals that the Hunger Trolley serves at Comanche Creek... three times!



The Torres Shelter dinner team preps a meal

Courier. Worship CDs are still being burned and hand-delivered. This ministry, affectionately known as “Ding Dong Dash,” is organized by Molly and Dave Barnum. Several other Faith Lutheran members have started making deliveries too, evening out the workload of driving. Right now we're delivering CDs to about 3-6 people, a big decrease as folks have started returning to worship.



Greeting Cards. As we transitioned to using the Elvanto database and created a new directory, we felt this was a good time to get to know birthdays better. For the last several months, Faith has been sending out birthday cards to let you know we love and celebrate you. Please let us know when your birthday is... we want to celebrate you!

Women's Ministry. As we have started to come out of Covid, the Women's Ministry was able to host their Mother's Day Bake Sale & Boutique. We have missed these sales dearly, and are so happy that this ministry has returned to raise money for paratransit tickets that help folks get to church, and for scholarships for students.

Quilters. Our quilters still meet regularly each Tuesday (with the exception of holidays) in the Fellowship Hall from 10am-noon. Quilts are given to outgoing members, or in celebration of certain events. Quilting is for everyone, beginners and veterans alike, so please stop by and get to know the quilters!

Phone Call Ministry. You may be a part of this ministry without even knowing it! A phone call minister is any person who takes time out of their day to pick up the phone and connect with somebody who may need to hear a friendly voice. This ministry boomed over the pandemic, and lives on.

Funeral Committee. The Funeral Committee put on a handful of lovely memorial services this past year. Guests felt welcomed in the warm and inviting space that this committee so lovingly made available. Flowers were put out, refreshments were served, and folks got to chat about their loved ones in a beautiful space.

New Ways to Serve. There is becoming more and more need for **movers**, like the folks who graciously helped Dani and Luke move into their new apartments, and **house sitters**. We encourage all members of Faith to let the office know if they're available to help in either endeavor, or want to participate in anything listed above. 😊

Columbarium

The Columbarium Garden continues to evolve into a space where our congregation can gather together in peace, contemplation and the celebration of everlasting life. We hope to expand and construct some new areas for more niches in the near future.

This month we celebrated the lives of two dear parishioners, Al Shumate and Jim Kirks, ultimately placing their ashes within our Columbarium Garden. As most of you know, Jim had a major role in bringing the Faith Lutheran Columbarium into fruition. We have acquired a memorial birdhouse in Jim's honor made by local birdhouse maker Bernie Vigilon to honor his service and legacy.



There has been some transition within the columbarium committee and we are still in need of a new treasurer. The position entails light bookkeeping and some overseeing of funds. Please contact me if there is anyone up for a new position of service.

Thanks and appreciation to Robert Bay for his ongoing support and help with maintaining our sacred space.

Love and Blessings,

**Susan Reed
Columbarium Chair**



Prayer

Centering Prayer at Faith has been happening for about twenty years. Anyone is invited to participate. We continue to gather on Zoom every Tuesday at 4 PM which you can connect to on our homepage at chicofaithlutheran.org, password 667. The only Tuesdays we don't meet is if Christmas Eve or Christmas Day or New Year's Day falls on a Tuesday. We presently have as many as 10 gathering.

We gather in community to listen to the stillness that comes in the quiet. When our minds are quieted we are then prepared to listen to God's word. The hope is that there will be refreshment for our soul.



Facilitating Centering Prayer entails leading the gathered community through exercises of breathing, opening prayer (could be Psalm for the day) and then music that aligns with the day. After that you will ring a bell and still the mind with Psalm 46: 10, "Be still and know that I am God." We sit in silence for 20 minutes. If your mind begins to be active have a word to bring you back to the quiet, like Jesus or love. At the end of the 20 minutes you will ring the bell and then read the Gospel for the coming Sunday two or three times. After the reading participants may share a word or phrase that draws them. We conclude with a prayer.

Holden Evening Prayer took place in March and December 2021. In Advent we explored the ways in which scripture describes places of darkness giving birth to safety, liberation, and life.

The Prayer Chain is immediate, community prayer. Let Molly Barnum or another member/staff member know who is in need of immediate prayer. Members will call Molly, who then calls all the other "links" in the chain. The prayer chain was used 33 times over the last year.

Small Groups are taking on prayerful roles as well. Groups like A Good Enough Lent, Alphabet Soup, the Mary & Martha Women's Bible Study, Wilderness Worship, and Pray & Play all heed spiritual mindfulness and embrace others in prayerful support.

The COVID-19 Prayer Group was founded by FLC member Bill Augros at the start of the pandemic. During the height of the pandemic, this was a daily prayer group. It still meets once per week on Thursdays at 7PM over the phone.

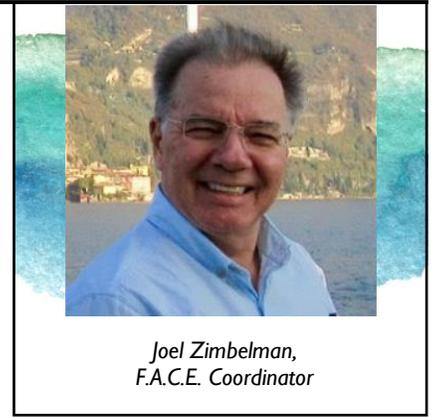


The beauty of Table Mountain from last year's wildflower hike

Education

Faith Adult Christian Education (FACE) classes are one important educational commitment we have at Faith. Sunday mornings are a time for adults to gather in person or online and discuss books, scripture, emerging topics, and get insights into special churchwide and community engagement issues. This past year we offered the following classes and presentations:

- A presentation on the Jesus Center by Laura Cootsona to update us on the pallet shelter situation in Chico.
- A class about Matthew 25: Christians and the call of service with Don Heinz.
- A report by Becky Rouse on her ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission service in Baltimore .
- “Dear Church,” a 4-part discussion on the book by Lutheran pastor Lenny Duncan calling church leaders and lay people to fight for racial equality and justice.
- A philosophical class on free will vs. predestination.
- A study on the Gospel of Mark.
- An end-of-life planning class.
- “Empowered or Oppressed:” a class on the role of various women in the Bible by Annalisa Colahan.
- “A New Ancient Harmony: Exploring Christian Life,” a study on John Phillip Newell’s book about the essential oneness of life by Sherrill Heinz and Penny Melvin.
- A church-wide service day incarnating our commitment to God’s Work Our Hands.



*Joel Zimbelman,
F.A.C.E. Coordinator*

With the return to more regular live worship, we’re hoping to offer a full range of Bible studies and other classes during the fall and spring in the coming year. Don’t forget that there are many, many other study, prayer, fellowship, and engagement options at Faith that fall outside of the Sunday morning worship and FACE schedule. But for those that want to follow up their worship experience with coffee, pastries, and fellowship in study and discussion, FACE classes will be available for you! If you have ideas for a class or a guest speaker or series, please let us know!

**Joel Zimbelman, Coordinator for FLC FACE classes.
Tel. 530.520.9608 or joelzimbelman@gmail.com**



Becky Rouse gives a presentation on the Lutheran Volunteer Corps

Equipping Ministry

Last year, the church council created a vision for Faith Lutheran Church. That vision is to make others feel **welcomed in worship, gathered with community, equipped for purpose, and finally, sent to serve.**

Welcomed in Worship

As mentioned in the article by council president Cynthia Kampf, “we now have over 300 name tags on the beautiful kiosk Ralph [Godwin] built. Children and adults alike can feel a part of our Faith family. It is nice to be reminded of the large number of members who serve important roles in this family.”

But we aren’t just focused on equipping people who walk through the door on Sundays; we want to equip our worship leaders too. Emergency Contact & Location Reference Sheets were created by Michael Nicholson, manager, so that if there is an emergency or if any parishioner has a question that an usher or greeter can’t answer off the top of their head, they can reference the sheet. Is there a Sharps container on campus? Who do you call if there’s a leak or a break-in? What if someone wants to volunteer at the food bank? The info sheet equips ushers and greeters with those answers. Luke Nicolay, Director of Worship and Music, equipped our worship leaders by making check-lists; all the things a leader needs to do to be ready to serve on Sunday morning.

The bulletin boards in the fellowship hall are updated weekly so that everyone can stay up to date after worship. On the boards, you’ll find all the articles from the latest edition of *Faith Talks*, sections for Family Life, Worship & Music, Staff & Council, and a brand-new Ministry Highlights section! You can now also find birthdays!

New visitor mugs are in the works, and will include informational brochures on the church, social ministry, and small groups; cleaner visitor cards; a giving envelope; and some FLC swag.



Annalisa & Pr. Ben's baby shower

Gathered with Community

While the campus remains the hub of connection in the physical sense, the love of God is not limited to our buildings. Rather, the love of God continues to shine through our small groups, social, and fellowship ministries. We connect people to our larger and individual Faith communities by making announcements on Sunday mornings, using social media, sending out E-blasts, keeping the bulletin boards in the fellowship hall current, and making sure that our website is up to date.

Read our Small Groups article on page 37 and see not only the power our ministry has bestowed this past year, but what we strive to achieve moving forward.

EQUIPPED

TO

SERVE



**THE GIFTS AND MINISTRIES
OF FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH**

Equipped for Purpose

Our vision served us well when kicking off our new small groups, and was a crucial component in creating *Equipped to Serve*. *Equipped to Serve* is a book all about your spiritual gifts, how they apply to the ministries of Faith, and includes position guides for each and every ministry. This book walks you through the Spiritual Gift Assessment from the ELCA -- the test you take to find out what talents you have. These talents are then applied to our very own ministries. If you discover that you have the gift of hospitality, for example, you can flip to the hospitality-page and browse a list of ministries powered by that gift. From there, you can read the position guides. Say you're interested in serving at coffee hour. Flip to the Coffee Hour page and learn about the qualifications and commitments required, and what Godly benefits you accrue by serving.

Equipped to Serve also helps new members and visitors feel connected by following some metaphorical stepping stones: join us in worship, get a name tag, meet the staff and other ministers, exchange contact info, take the spiritual gift assessment quiz, browse *Equipped for Purpose*, tell us where you'd like to serve, and finally...serve! This is also a great tool for long-time

members too, because you might see these stepping stones and realized you missed one. Maybe you don't have a name tag and need one; or maybe you haven't actually met our Director of Family Life but want to!

And at the very back of the book is a loose leaf ministry interest form available to turn in. In short, we want to make it as easy as possible for people to know what's happening at Faith, and how they can get on board without feeling overwhelmed or like they might not fit in.

Sent to Serve

And serve we do! Make sure to check out the work we do in Social Ministry on page 27 and Fellowship on page 31.

The Equipping Ministry has once again started to meet, and is planning some exciting events for the summer and fall, including a ministry fair. Make sure to stay in touch via Sunday announcements, *Faith Talks*, E-blast, and Facebook for the most up-to-date news. And if you are a part of a ministry and feel there is room for improvement or that any process can be streamlined, please reach out to the office.

Having fun during God's Work, Our Hands Sunday

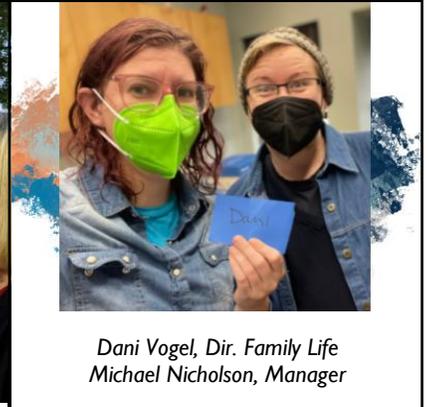


Small Group Ministry



Caryl Quinones presents at the facilitator's training

Diane Knight blesses Kim Schweder



*Dani Vogel, Dir. Family Life
Michael Nicholson, Manager*

Small Groups have been re-launched at Faith Lutheran with a number of options to feed our congregants. This ministry launched through a 4 week facilitator training in February and March of 2022. 14 facilitators attended and built and refreshed a number of skills to aid in successful ministry groups here at Faith Lutheran Church.

Pray & Play is our 40-and-over group that participates in activities and prayer. If you've found yourself envious of the activities and fun our young adult group has been having, but you're 40 or over, this group is for you. Activities include Hatchet House, art projects, tours, etc. Contact: Elise Gladu, (530) 520-4440.

The Seniors Group is a conversation based group to help support the senior members of Faith Lutheran. Contact: Nola Dosch, (530)891-3575, or Veronika Kehoe, (530) 566-4798.

The Quilters meet in the Fellowship Hall every Tuesday (except holidays) from 10am-noon. Contact: Char Miller, (530) 345-6825.



Lola Taylor and Mary Old Kooi tie a quilt

Art Play meets in the Fellowship Hall Monday nights from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM. The purpose of Art Play is to grow in our relationship to God and each other by collaborating and creating ways to enhance worship through visual art. Contact: Gayle Palys, (530) 520-4150.

The Mary & Martha Women's Bible Study meets on the second Thursday of the month in the prayer room for fellowship and scripture study. Contact: Randy Franken, (530) 891-8634.

The Theater Appreciation Group sees plays at the Chico Theater Company, and heads to Cynthia Kampf's home afterward to eat dessert and discuss the production. Contact: Cynthia Kampf, (530) 680-0925.

The Men's Breakfast occurs at 8am on Fridays at the Farmer's Skillet. Come and engage in fellowship over breakfast. Contact: Howie Stensrud, (530) 896-0616.

A Good Enough Lent meets once per week at Faith on Wednesdays from 3:30 to 5:00 to work through a devotional by Kate Bowler. Together we are going to take ourselves off the hook for perfection and realize the beautiful work of being human. We live in a world that loves us when we are shiny, but the truth is most of the time we aren't. We invite you to join us for a good enough Lent. Contact: Raquel Krach (530) 519-8629 or Diane Knight at (530) 520-2036.

Alphabet Soup is for LGBTQ fellowship and meets once every three weeks for games, Bible study, food, and meaningful conversation. Contact: Michael Nicholson, (530) 895-3754, or Grace Mahannah, (530) 218-6636.

Alphabet Soup plays Yhatzee at Candy Munson's home



Wilderness Worship meets one Saturday morning of each month, with a few exceptions to hike various trails and creeks in Nor Cal. Grow in your relationship with God and each other by noticing God's presence in wilderness places. The hiking portion of each gathering will be one to two hours long on "easy" rated trails. Contact: Pr. Ben Colahan, (530) 895-3754.

We plan to continue to add more small groups over time to continue to meet the growing needs of our community, therefore encourage you to reach out to us if you have an idea for one. You can pick up a Small Group Interest Form at the Welcome Table on Sunday mornings, or simply call Dani at the office at (530) 895-3754 or by emailing danifaithlutheran@gmail.com.

Wilderness Worship takes their first hike in Upper Park



Change and the need for creativity have become constants over the last year and a half in many aspects of life, including the church. This was the case for **Living Christ Lutheran Church** in Flagstaff, Ariz., even before a global pandemic caused many of us to rethink what it means to be church. Generosity from all three expressions of the ELCA (the churchwide organization, the Grand Canyon Synod and members of Living Christ) helped turn a congregation “on the road out of town, near the mall” into an online presence reaching over 500 people a week from Phoenix to the Philippines. (Read more about Living Christ in the current issue of “**Stories of Faith in Action**” at [ELCA.org/SOFIA](https://www.elca.org/SOFIA).)

Many other congregations have found new ways to connect both when in-person worship was impossible and when congregations began to return to their sanctuaries. Generosity, especially through Mission Support, helped us find and support these new ways of being connected. Early in the pandemic, ELCA Worship launched the “Worship in the Home” webpage, with Scripture, hymn links, prayers and reflections for each

Sunday. These resources were and continue to be used in congregations across the ELCA—even at **Sitka Lutheran Church** in Alaska, whose members printed and hand-delivered “Worship in the Home” resources to fellow members without internet access.

Change and creativity have taught us many things. As Pastor Sandra Rudd of Sitka Lutheran Church noted, “The pandemic was a stark illustration of the fact that the church is not a building. A lot of people say that, but we didn’t fully know it until we didn’t have a building to use. We learned that there are many ways to be connected as the church.” Throughout the pandemic, the ELCA has changed and adapted, doing ministry in new and creative ways, because of the generosity of its members. Even now, you may be gathering in a new way for your annual meeting, to discern how you will steward the gifts shared generously with your congregation to do ministry in your community and beyond. As you have these important conversations, remember that your gifts of time, talent and resources have helped create new spaces beyond our walls and buildings where we continue to worship, serve and love God and each other.

ANNUAL REPORT

2021