

February Faith Talks

ONLINE WORSHIP 9:30 AM





Ashes for Ash Wednesday

OPEN WITH CAUTION

Please do not make your own ashes. These ashes are formed from palms and olive oil. Making ashes out of paper and water can result in lye which will burn your skin. If you lose these ashes, please contact the church office for more.

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Roses to Lynette Stensrud for preaching and Bill Kees for presiding while the pastor was on vacation. To Linda Zimbelman, Margaret McMillan, Jacques Williams, Janine and Dave Rush, and Lise Yellen for taking over while Luke was away. To Mary Old Kooi and Donna Garland for sorting through loads of fabric for the Quilters. To Julie Marengo for lovingly putting together these ashes. To Linda Zimbelman and Cindy Stewart for helping folks sign up for the vaccine. And to Cindy Kampf for giving us her portable sound system during A/V installation.





Pastor's Article

Inside the attached envelope are ashes. They are the ashes of palms that we once waved on Palm Sunday. They are not the ashes from the palms of Palm Sunday 2020, but palms from Palm Sundays three, four, and five years ago. They are the ashes of celebration, the ashes of a time when we were all together, singing loud hosannas. They are the ashes of joy.

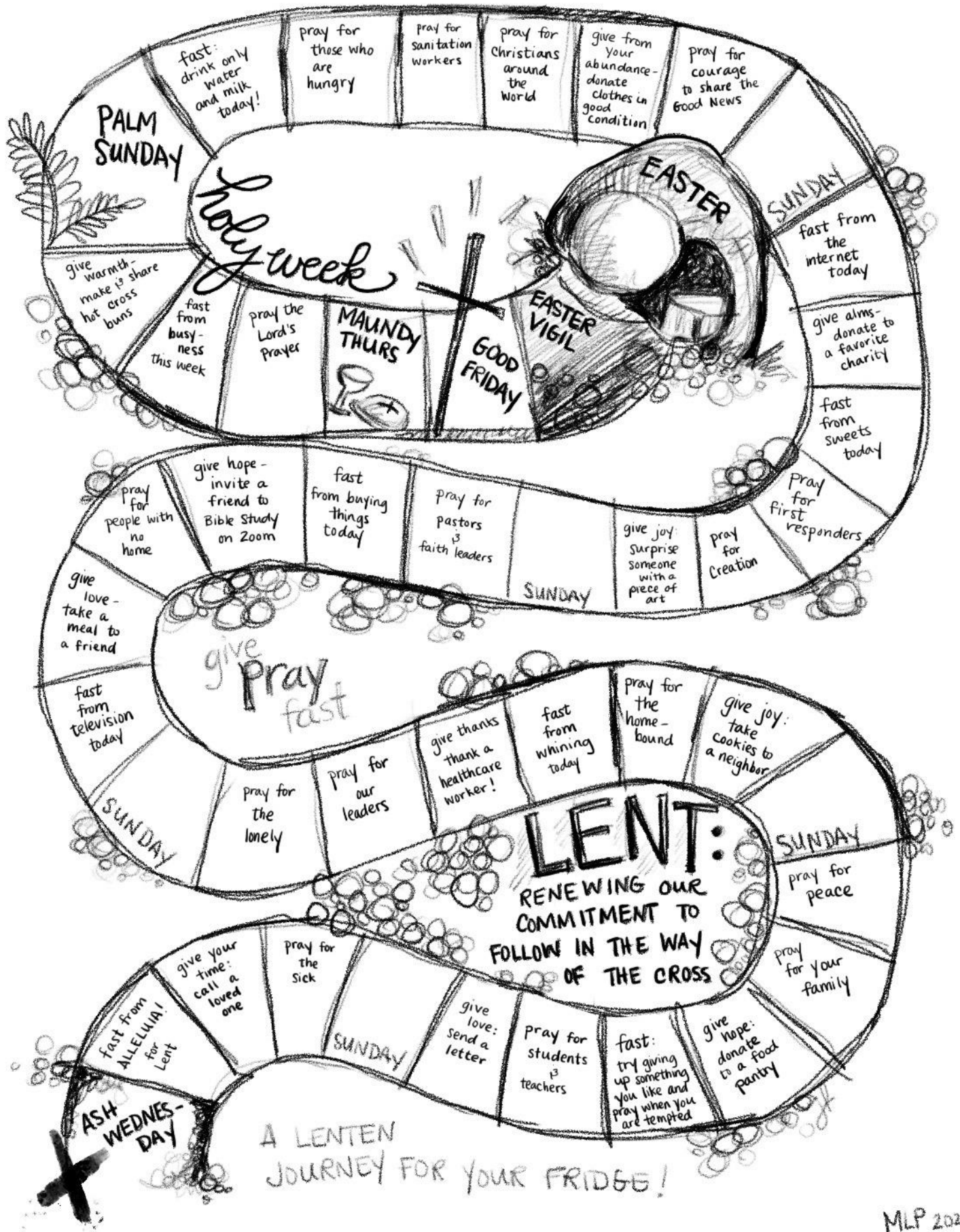
Every year the ashes of Ash Wednesday are the ashes of Palm Sunday, but this year the ashes take on special significance. This year we don't need reminders of our mortality. So perhaps this year the ashes will mean something different to us when we place them on our faces. Perhaps this year the ashes might be a reminder of the joy we once shared. A reminder of how precious and fleeting being surrounded by loved ones can be. But as always, we will wear these ashes in the shape of the cross. May that cross of ash this year be a reminder that though death may try to steal the joy of beloved community, in Christ the beloved community always rises to new and joyous life together.

So on Fat Tuesday, February 16th, 2021, I invite you to have a traditional Mardi Gras celebration in your home. If you fancy French culture, bake a Kings' Cake! If you're in more of a Brazilian mood, play some Samba tunes and dance around your house. If the quiet English countryside speaks more to your soul, cook up some pancakes for dinner. Have fun however you can.

And then on Ash Wednesday, February 17th, 2021, I invite you to tune into our online worship service which will be posted at 7am and available throughout the day. During the service you will be invited to dip your thumb into the (attached) envelope and draw the sign of the cross either on the forehead of a family member or on your own forehead while you stand in front of a mirror. As you do, speak the words, "remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Our joyous gatherings may be dust this year, but that dust belongs to Jesus, who will raise it once more to life.

Your Brother in Christ,
Pastor Ben Colahan





Conscientious Posting

Learn about the 3 Places Faith Lutheran Lives Online and What the Differences Are

There are three main social media outlets Faith Lutheran Church uses:

- **Our website:** chicofaithlutheran.org: Here you can find our calendar of public events, “about us,” church and ministry info, and worship details. All news, events, and updates come directly from the office, ergo, Michael and the staff. Members cannot make changes to the website. *(Our website is the in-person equivalent of somebody coming into our office and asking questions about FLC.)*
- **Our Facebook page:** If people go to Facebook and want to follow our church, they can type in “faith lutheran church chico ca” and this is the page they will stumble across. This page is official, and updated by Michael and the staff, as well as a few key admins. *(Another in-person equivalent of people coming to our office to ask questions, just not as extensive as our website; like reading our brochure.)*
- **Our Facebook group:** A public group meant for members of Faith Lutheran to talk with one another and share information. *(The in-person equivalent of chatting with people in the Fellowship Hall after service.)*

Our Facebook Group is where you all interact with each other directly. Interacting online is not the same as interacting in person! But it is important to remember that even though our Faith family has been communicating over the internet, the people you send texts and comments to are the same people you smile and greet in our Fellowship Hall. As we reflect on this knowledge, we would like to provide our congregation’s Facebook group with a couple of rules:

#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 rather than politicians or political parties. Our faith calls us to act in the public sphere and speak for justice. This group can rightly be a place where we share concerns about the state of our city, country, and world. However, our congregation is a non-partisan community. There are certainly legal reasons for this, but more importantly there are theological reasons. All people are sinners who fall short of the glory of God. Even the greatest politician will let us down. Political parties are composed of people who will inevitably disappoint. Furthermore, people of faith can agree on goals, but disagree on the best means to achieve them. 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 an effective place to change people. God's Word became incarnate in Christ that we might experience transforming love. So too in-person relationships and conversations are the best place to try and change people's minds. Social media is a tool that is best used to reach out, connect, and inspire. If you want to debate a sibling in Christ, invite them to go for a walk or get a cup of coffee.

Some folks expressed their concern via Facebook comments about posting political comments on our Facebook Group, which we would like to address. You might ask, "*Can we talk politics? We're a church, aren't we tax-exempt?*" We are tax-exempt, and here are the legal rules for "talking politics" in a church setting: no more than 10% of our church's activity can be connected to political advocacy. Also, our congregation cannot endorse a political candidate. Please keep this knowledge, along with rules #4 and #5 in mind if you are ever in doubt. The ELCA, for example, talks about (nonpartisan) voting via ELCAvotes. Not only does the ELCA consider voting a Christian call to action, but voting is a topic that does not take sides. Offering a resource is a means of connection, and not an isolated effort to change somebody's view. Remember that those of us keeping in touch via social media are folks we look forward to seeing in person as soon as safety allows. We are a community reflecting God's love with a place at the table for everyone.

Pastor Ben & Manager Mike



A Letter from Luke

Greetings to all of you in this New Year! It's hard to believe that by the time this reaches you we will all be wrapping up January and hopping into February. The quietness of January brought rest and renewal for the staff as many of us took some time to recharge our batteries. While I was on vacation, I was blessed to have a number of folks help out with worship; a huge thanks to Margaret McMillan, Linda Zimbelman, Lise Yellen, Jacques Williams, and Janine and Dave Rush for your time while I was out of town. One of the great joys of this community is the ability to share our time and talents with each other. I'm constantly reminded of that generosity each day that I have the privilege to come here and share time and space with each of you.

February is shaping up to be an exciting month! Both the choir and bell choir are quick on their way to sharing more meaningful music with you for the Lenten season and beyond. The choir will be preparing their second virtual choir for Ash Wednesday. This has been such an exciting time for the choir to connect in a way that we've never done before. At the start of pandemic, we would meet weekly for about an hour or so, talk about some different topics and then we'd be on our way. As Christmas approached, we wanted to change that. Bill Kees and I began to explore the possibilities of doing a virtual choir and what it would take to put it together. Bill Kees' son, Matt Kees, graciously gave of his time to assist us in the process, answer questions, and edit together the finished audio product. The choir all came together and did a fantastic job and are ready for their next big project which we have already begun. This next virtual choir project will be unveiled on Ash Wednesday.

I'm so thankful to all of you for your generosity during these COVID times and for your cheerfulness! We will continue to find new and innovative ways to create and share together. I'm grateful for each of you and for the beauty that you bring to this community, this city, and to the world.

Here's to a wonderful new year!

Luke Nicolay, Director of Worship & Music



Note from the Council President

I often make New Year's resolutions. Usually they are very simple and easy to attain so that when they inevitably crash into the wastebasket of my life, I brush my failings off easily and move on. This year feels different: With lots of health and economic challenges around us, my new retirement, a granddaughter to occupy my attentions, and political headwinds in the air, taking this task more seriously seems like a good idea. And while I set out constructing my own private resolutions, I also want to make some more public resolutions about the rest of this year in my role as Faith Lutheran's Council President. It's not so much strategic planning as giving voice to some aspirations. Let me share some of these with you.

We have a ways to go with this Covid thing, but it's becoming clear that the game is shifting a bit, and that we can—we should—begin to think ahead a few months to that time when the worst will likely be behind us. I doubt that life will fall back into its pre-pandemic normalcy: Too many big scars, fresh graves, personal losses, changed lives, and altered futures for that. But because of what we have experienced as a church (and because of your great and consistent support for our ministries) I know that Faith Lutheran will be called to ramp up, reinvent, and imagine emerging ministries. I have had conversations with many of you and with friends and family on my morning jaunts. And lots of great Christian authors are grappling with the same challenge of exploring the recurring question “how then shall we live?” that often crops up in the “open moments”(the *kairos*) that surface on the other side of huge social upheavals. They are all helping me think through these issues.

Online worship and life together is going to continue in many corners of our everyday life, and life at Faith is no exception. We'll be using our new sound and video system (being installed as I write this) to share our community with those outside our Chico location—and maybe even expand membership a bit! But my own resolution for this year is to do all that I can to make in-person worship as meaningful, nurturing, vibrant, and uplifting for our members as possible. Some of us have not been to any in-person worship since last February—much longer than Jesus' 40 days in the desert! Those first few “together” services will be exhilarating. But when the passions and novelty of corporeal worship lose that initial surge of energy, I hope that we can explore together new ways of making our short times together on Sundays the highlight of our week. When I listen to Faith's adult and children's sermons, wonderful music, and our liturgical celebration (with sounds and light—can we add some incense perhaps?) I realized how blessed we are by the leadership and gifts shared by our staff and many parishioners each Sunday. Throwing ourselves into support for, attendance at, and engagement with every aspect of our worship is going to build the necessary foundation for our future ministries and community flourishing.

My resolution is to give up the couch and the “camera off” button on my Zoom link as often as I personally am able, and make it to in-person worship to share that experience with all of you. Remember that a new name tag is waiting for you on that first day (thank you Cindy Kampf for supporting this financially). And I suspect that there might be renewed interest among some of our unchurched friends to see what it might be like to gather in community after so much anxiety being near any strangers or new faces.

I’m resolved to continue working to invent, encourage, and enhance social gathering among our members. So many great church groups are already in place. These include tables for eight, our quilters, bible studies, prayer groups, growing clusters of musicians, and committees doing great work. I want us to do all that we can to help those groups thrive, and to think about where we each might fit in this mosaic of activity. But there’s so much more that we can do! Adding into the mix larger social gatherings, picnics and potlucks, additional hiking and camping trips, and perhaps resurrecting church camps and Halloween bonfires will give us opportunities to connect intergenerationally, introduce us to new friends, and provide the informal, longer periods of action and reflection that are the foundation for spiritual and real human growth. We’ll be talking more about establishing and nurturing small group ministry at Faith. But as our plans take form, I ask each of you to resolve with me to step out and engage with others in a few of these activities this coming year.

“A Community Reflecting God’s Love with a Place at the Table for Everyone.” If we truly wish to bring this mission statement to life in the coming year, it’s going to require moving beyond our comfort zone (and off our church campus) and rolling up our sleeves. Opening doors and giving invitations to enter our worship and gatherings in the Fellowship Hall will be a blessing to many. But not everyone. The years of social justice work and community engagement that this church has been involved in has shown us that meeting people “out there” in their moments and lives of need will be the defining, distinctive and non-negotiable cornerstone of Faith Lutheran’s calling. The challenges our world faces seem at times insurmountable: Many families in need, the special challenges of the homeless and those who suffer with drug addiction and mental illness, and support of our own church members who face daily medical and other challenges. We also need to recognize new and emerging opportunities for churches like ours to nudge our city and county to embrace and implement policies that will be good for *everyone* in our community. It’s time to make clear that there is more than one Christian view of how faith relates to politics. There are like-minded churches in Chico and Butte County that share this vision. We can’t do it all, and there are times when we just won’t have the resources to engage as we would like. But my resolution this coming year is to help us clarify how we can best and more clearly put that new mission statement into practice. Preaching and theology and potlucks are all gifts to our community—but they are only tools, the means to the end of enacting the Kingdom of God in Chico and in the present (Jesus’ and St. Mark’s idea, not mine).

I ask for blessings for all of you in the coming New Year. By all means gird your loins and concoct your own high-minded and life-changing resolutions for this exciting time. But don’t forget to include Faith Lutheran and its ministry in those plans and commitments!

Joel Zimbelman

Faith Adult Christian Education

WOMEN OF THE GOOD BOOK: EMPOWERED OR OPPRESSED?



Sundays after Worship
11:00 AM on Zoom

[HTTP://ZOOM.US/J/5308953754](http://zoom.us/j/5308953754)
PASSWORD: 667

Join Annalisa Colahan in a 4-week class each Sunday in February, focused on women in the Bible. We will delve into the stories of Ruth, the first evangelists, and female leadership. We will highlight feminine imagery and language for God in the Bible. And how about some of those problematic texts that may cause us to wonder, how does this difficult story fit with the promise of God's love and redemption for a hurting world? Also, what did Paul really mean when he said the husband is the head of the wife? As we reflect on these issues in our own lives, may the focus of our discussion be on building one another up by living into the fullness of God's promises for us, regardless of gender or experience. No text is needed other than your Bible. For those who desire further reading, a reading list will be provided.

Thank you for your generosity supporting the members of our community who have lost work due to Covid. Since July, we have distributed a total of \$8,673.61 to eleven different families. For several of those families, this financial gift has been crucial for paying their rent and staying housed. Currently, we have \$617.63 remaining in our Covid Relief Fund. If you have received a stimulus check and truly don't need it to get you through this pandemic, please consider donating a portion of it to Faith Lutheran's Covid Relief Fund. You can do so either online at Chicofaithlutheran.org/give and select "Coronavirus Relief Fund" in the dropdown menu, or by writing a check to Faith Lutheran and putting "Covid" in the memo line.

**Covid
Fund
Update**

Safe Space Update



This winter, Safe Space Winter Shelter was told they would not be allowed to operate in churches as they had in the past because of issues with fire code. After pleading with Chico city council and the fire marshal, Safe Space received the green light in early January to operate in churches.

This led Faith Lutheran to consider whether or not it would participate as a host for Safe Space this winter. After several weeks of asking questions, gathering information, and discussion with Safe Space, Colter submitted a proposal to Faith Lutheran's church council for discussion during their meeting (see pg. 14 for Minutes). After a lengthy, difficult discussion, the council voted that Faith Lutheran not host Safe Space in 2021 during this COVID-19 pandemic. This was not an easy decision for the council to reach, especially because the need for shelter in Chico is urgent and apparent. The risks presented because of COVID-19 were too great for Faith Lutheran to allow facility use to Safe Space.

Faith remains a strong supporter of the important work of Safe Space, and will continue to partner with them to advocate for shelter for all. Throughout this winter season, Faith Lutheran will maintain contact with Safe Space and is ready to support them in other ways. This might involve members of our congregation preparing meals and delivering them if or when other churches host.

Faith Lutheran's commitment to its unhoused siblings in Christ has not wavered, and Colter and the Social Ministry Team will continue to seek out ways our church can be the hands of Jesus in Chico. If you are interested in being involved in Faith Lutheran's ongoing efforts to support our unhoused neighbors in Chico, please contact Colter at colter@chicofaithlutheran.org.

Blankets Wanted



We still have socks, water, granola bars, and plenty of waterproof bags to hand out to folks thanks to your generous donations from November and December. Blankets are in high demand right now, and while we're currently discussing how to best distribute them, we could use some at the office to hand out directly. We are especially interested in blankets made of fleece, wool, or synthetic blends; tarps; survival/space blankets. Please drop them off with Michael anytime during office hours.



Financial Report

	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Percent Of Budget
TOTAL INCOME	\$236,112.19	\$216,806.76	91.82%
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$222,189.00	\$209,507.56	94.29%
NET INCOME/(LOSS)	\$13,923.19	\$7,299.20	
Beginning General Fund Balance as of 7/1/20		\$33,560.21	
Net Revenue through 11/30/20		\$7,299.20	
Ending General Fund Balance		\$40,859.41	

In an effort to be transparent and keep the Faith Lutheran Community up to speed and in touch with the finances of the Church, this report will be posted in Faith Talks on a monthly basis.

December, as is usually the case, was a very good month for General Fund income. FLC received \$77,901.38 in General Fund Income. As shown above this brings the General Fund Balance to \$40,859.41. As is also generally the case, there will be lean months to come, and this positive balance will be available to help us through those months. We shouldn't become complacent however, so keep up your generous support for all the great things Faith Lutheran is doing as we move into 2021.

Thank you all for your continued support. If you have questions, please feel free to contact:

Mark Kimmelshue
(530) 520-8228
kimmelshue@armcorice.com

Council Minutes



Tuesday January 19, 2021, 6:15 p.m. Zoom

Present: Pr. Ben Colahan, Joel Zimbelman, Sky Sample, Mark Kimmelshue, Sherrill Heinz, Diane Knight, Susan Kimball, Tricia Homesley, Cindy Kampf, Meridith Woods, Penny Melvin, Doug DeSoto, Bonnie Pulliam. Absent: Matt Reed.

- Meeting called to order at 6:21 pm. by Joel
- Devotion – Diane Knight, "I Declare" by Joel Osteen & the music video "The New York City Blessing"
- Opening Prayer — Pr. Ben
- Reading of FLC Covenant
- Approval of minutes from last meeting- moved, seconded & approved
- Financial Report-presented by Mark Kimmelshue. Joel made motion to accept, Susan seconded and passed
- Short announcements and calendar events
 - Food distribution rollout at FLC biweekly - (Doug DeSoto)
Started beginning of January funded through Contra Costa and Solano County to help victims of fire. Ran through Butte College for first two years and moved to FLC in January 2021 and will run through July 2021. Currently is averaging 225 families/individuals per month and expect that to grow to 300.
 - Sound and Video - (Joel) work ongoing, don't need to hire an electrician so there will be a saving and should be totally operational In February.
 - Security on campus and ongoing challenges - (Joel) Going fairly well, however we do have some overnight visitors and some groups congregating. When doors are found open the security company calls the police to have them do a walk through. Has happened twice this past month, but no damage.
 - Testing, vaccines, and church staff. (Pastor Ben) We can sign up to be a volunteer to help with vaccines, but will need to sign up for an 8-hour day. Enloe running clinics beginning at 5:30 am to 2:00 pm. For more information refer to last week's eblast.
 - Stewardship and Capital Campaign - (Joel) Total campaign is to raise \$400,000 over three years. Have received \$123,494 with \$44,321 in additional pledges not yet received. Total sound system and rewiring of offices, etc. will run approximately \$150,000.
 - Online services while the sound system is under construction. - (Pastor Ben) Cindy Kampf donated a portable sound system that can be used for the next few weeks during construction. A huge thank you once again to Cindy!
 - Safe Space in Chico— Does FLC have a role to play? — Questions and conversations:

- a. 24/7 for two or three weeks- daily use and maintenance.
 - b. Guests with nothing to do may tend to get into trouble. What will the daily activities look like?
 - c. Custodial duties will be Safe Space?
 - d. Bathe, laundry? Don't want them to be using the bathrooms to try to wash.
 - e. Cap of 30 guests, will be same people throughout the committed time.
 - f. Security for the campus, neighbors & guests?
 - g. Outdoor spaces? Not using courtyard, perhaps a block of the parking lot?
 - h. Pets? Wear and tear. Where are the pets taken for breaks?
 - i. Three Safe Space employees on site at all times, is this enough to serve food, clean, supervise, etc.?
 - j. No members of the congregation will be allowed. What about communication? Colter will set a time each day to check in with Safe Space staff via Zoom.
 - k. Food and meal prep to be provided by Safe Space.
 - l. Where will the guests eat? Will there be tents in the parking lot? Will drinks be allowed inside?
 - m. How can we be assured that this doesn't turn into a super spreader situation?
 - n. The sanctuary will be locked. Will the kitchen be locked out too?
 - o. Are the guests allowed to leave the property? If so, they aren't tested or vaccinated, how does Safe Space keep everyone safe? This is a very fragile community with underlying medical needs already.
- Safe Space Chico Vote - Pastor Ben requested a council vote allowing Safe Space overnight only, no congregation involvement, 100% staffed by safe space, parking lot set aside for eating and pets, deep clean afterwards. Yes vote =6 and No vote = 5. Due to the close vote and concern of trying to keep guests and volunteers safe it was decided not to move forward with the Safe Space housing at Faith Lutheran this spring.
 - Camp Fire Funds of \$4,500—Disposition (Pr. Ben) Motion made and carried approve the following:
 - a. Approximately \$1,900 to be used to build out General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) capabilities. The donation will be specifically used to add to the repeater location atop a 6,800' mountain in the Coastal Range.
 - b. 50% of the remaining balance will be donated directly to Paradise Lutheran Church to be used to build their own new AV system as well as helping a couple of families in need.
 - c. The other 50% to be donated to CampFire Housing Access Model Program (a program of Chico Housing Action Team).
 - Closing Prayer- The Lord's prayer
 - Meeting Adjourned at 8:17 pm

Next Executive Meeting: Thursday January 28 8:30 a.m. Zoom

Executive Meeting: Thursday February 11 8:30 a.m. Zoom

Next Council Meeting Tuesday, February 16 at 6:15 p.m. Zoom

Respectfully submitted, Diane Knight

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Chico, CA 95926

Non-Profit Organization
Permit No. 345
Chico, CA

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Place Label Here

Faith Lutheran Church Council
council@chicofaithlutheran.org

Predisent: Joel Zimbelman
Treasurer: Mark Kimmelshue

Tricia Homesley
Meridith Woods
Cynthia Kampf
Bonnie Pulliam

Vice President: Sky Sample
Secretary: Diane Knight

Sherrill Heinz
Susan Kimball
Doug DeSoto
Penny Melvin

Matt Reed

Online Worship Sundays at 9:30 AM

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