

Faith Talks

MARCH 2023



Sunday Worship at 9:30 a.m.
Ecumenical Worship and Soup each Wed. at 6:00 p.m.

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Above: Faith Lutheran Annual Snowshoe Trip, 2023

Cover image: *Your Faith Has Made You Whole* by
Jorge Cocco



Roses



Judy Struck, Lynette Stensrud, Ted Sandberg, and Ron Heath for helping the staff move furniture and items in the office.

Our avid snowshoers, pictured above!

Pat and Dianna Snyder for hosting the commercial bingo party, and for all who attended.

Those who helped us with Cindy Stewart and Roger Wilson's funeral.

Judy Struck, Lynette Stensrud, Bill Kees, and Jill Bentler for taking care of the office during Michael's away time.

All who came to brainstorm community service needs.

The pilgrims who presented on their trip to the Holy Land.

"A huge thank you to our church members who called, checked in on us, provided meals, took care of Sophia, and invited us over while Ben was away. We felt wrapped in a huge hug of love from our Faith community." -Annalisa Colahan



We had a busy winter here at Faith Lutheran Church with our youth, young adults, small groups and more! Our youth worked together, much like the disciples to find "Aunt Edna's" missing inheritance in her condo at the Chico Escape rooms in January, as well as talking about how it benefited the ministry that the disciples and Jesus did together to pull from a wide variety of people, and not just all



fishermen. We also had some game nights with the youth, and did a comfort activity night where we talked about the things that bring us joy, and how we take care of ourselves. Many Bob Ross pictures were colored during the activity.

Our Sunday School program continues to grow. We've hosted new visitors to our program, and are glad to be making new friends. And our kids are growing up before our eyes, so much so that physically, they're no longer able to fit under the kid's Sunday School table, so we're taking a trip to go pick up a new table for them for their classroom that they'll be able to use fully.

We will be hosting our Easter Egg hunt this year for 2023, and want to encourage you to help in a variety of ways. Our youth and young adults will hide the eggs, and help monitor the chaos here at the event, but we would love to have you help with the event in a few different ways.

1. Donate Easter Eggs! We'd love to be able to continue to host as many children as show up, and that means being prepared with the eggs. Last year we collected 1700 Easter Eggs. We'd love to top that number. If you'd like to donate, please feel free to bring either filled or unfilled eggs here to the church. We'd love to have the candy be of the wrapped variety, and some with small toys/stickers/prizes inside to add to the fun. If you can't fill your eggs, we understand. We'll be hosting a couple of work days closer to the event to help stuff the eggs.

2. Donate some larger prizes. Each year, we have a special egg, that gives the finder a larger basket of goodies. Things included fidget toys, books, larger candy, toys and other fun things. We do divide the items into a kids younger than kindergarten crowd, and for our kids in kindergarten and up.

3. Help with the brunch for our workers and hiders! Help feed the youth and young adults of Faith Lutheran a nice brunch after they hide all those eggs. We'd love a few breakfast casseroles, some cheesy potatoes, some fruit, maybe a couple muffins, and some help with set up and clean up for the brunch.



Continuing Education

Many of you may have followed along on social media while I was in Anaheim attending my continuing education experience through our denominational event called the "Extravaganza". This event was founded in the late 1990's to help educate and provide folks working in Children, Youth, and Family (And Young Adults, and Outdoor Ministries) with high quality speakers, workshops, and opportunities to connect together. Bill Kees, retired pastor, and former head of Youth Ministries for the ELCA was key through his leadership with things like the National Youth Gathering, in helping grow this opportunity into the event that it is today. Bill and his wife Carolyn provided a variety of types of support over the years, including leadership, and spiritual care and direction.

I also got to hang out with the nephew of Mark and Elaine Lund, who serves in a ministry position in Washington state. One thing that powers this group is the sheer number of volunteers that help to put the event on. Many are rostered leaders serving in a variety of ministries throughout the ELCA, some are lay ministers (like me) who have a particular skill that lends itself to helping the event grow and evolve, and even more are dedicated volunteers at smaller churches throughout the country. Many of my photos featured my volunteering through hosting the online experience for folks who were attending through the hybrid option the Extravaganza now offers. I was invited to join the team in late October

through Tom Hoegel, who works at Bethel in Cupertino, and had an opening on the Tech team for someone who could act as an online host and event programmer through the Zoom Events platform.

This year, I attended workshops through 2 different themed tracks. The first grouping was dedicated to discussing things for children, youth, young adult, and family wellness, including refreshers on child safety, navigating and helping families navigate mental health resources, and how to vet outside organizations to make sure the appropriate care and boundaries are provided that are in line with our RIC and ELCA practices. The other track was led by the Bishop of Metro DC synod, and titled "How to build a new kind of church without getting fired." The workshops I attended in this category focused on asking tough questions about existing programs and practices, as well as learning more from folks in similar community types. (Rural mid-sized college communities with diverse populations)

It's through the generosity of the church with giving me a week of dedicated time to devote to continuing education, and funding that I'm able to attend this event or other continuing education opportunities. Last year I attended the Women in Youth Ministry conference in Indianapolis, which offered great workshops and speakers as well. For the Data driven folks, here was the Extravaganza by some numbers: I walked 18.2 miles during the conference, drank 410 ounces of coffee, ate 29 chicken wings, met 9 people who knew Bill Kees well, met 5 that knew Pastor Ben, made friends from 4 time zones, was able to say hi to the camp staff from our experience last summer, attended 17 hours of continuing education classes, and broadcast over 6 hours of content to our online attendees.



SMALL GROUPS

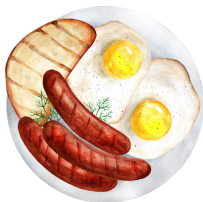
Time out for Art

2nd Mondays of the Month from 1-4 PM in room 6

Contact Sherrill Heinz (530) 518-0433

or Caryl Quinones (530) 864-4630

Take a little time out from day to day stresses and relax with art. Bring a notebook and an art project that you'd like to work on in any medium that you can transport to a classroom.



Men's Breakfast

Fridays at 8am at Farmer's Skillet on Rio Lindo

Contact: Howie Stensrud (530) 896-0616

Join our men of Faith for breakfast every Friday. Come and grab a cup of coffee, a warm meal, and delight in early morning fellowship.

J.O.Y.S. (Just Older Youth Seniors)

Contact Nola Dosch (530) 891-3575

or Veronika Kehoe (530) 566-4798

or Sharon Prindle (530) 965-5870

Join our seniors group as we read *I Love Growing Older, But I'll Never Grow Old* by J. Ellsworth Kalas. Books available at the office.



Alphabet Soup - Potluck

Saturday, March 25th at 3pm

Contact Grace Mahannah (530) 218-6636

or Michael ND (530) 895-3754

Alphabet Soup is an LGBTQ group that plays games, enjoys food, and talks about our experiences as queer parishioners at a Christian church. We are a laidback group, and love to meet new people. Mark your calendars and join us!

Lent: Coming Close to the Cross

The theme for Lent this year is “coming close to the cross.” Each Sunday in Lent, we will hear a different story of someone approaching Jesus. Each person comes to Jesus carrying their own burdens and their own hopes. Each person encounters the same Jesus heading to cross. That intersection between our journey and God’s story is where we hope to draw each of you during Lent this year. We hope to do so in three ways:

1) During Lent, we will have the flower cross standing unadorned in the sanctuary. Each Sunday, you will be invited to bring a photograph to place on the cross where we normally place flowers. Each Sunday has a theme based on the gospel story for what type of photograph you are encouraged to bring. Please bring copies of photos that you do not need returned. If you could like to make a copy of a photo, we can do so in the church office. Through the season of Lent, the cross will be covered in the images of what we bring to the cross. On Easter Sunday, the images will remain on the cross, but be covered in the flowers of Christ’s resurrection.

2) During Lent, we will change how we lift up the prayers of intercession. Instead of the assisting minister preparing all the prayers, we will be asking the congregation to write prayers for the assisting minister. Your bulletins will have a space on which to write prayer requests. After the sermon, there will be three minutes of meditative music in which you are invited to write a prayer and then place it in the offering plate. During communion, someone will organize the prayers and then hand them to the assisting minister to read at the close of communion.

3) Our Ecumenical Lenten Wednesday Soup suppers will be more conversational. Instead of having the soup at 6pm in the fellowship hall and then heading the sanctuary at 7pm for worship, we will have our Wednesday time of worship together with our meal at 6pm. Just as our Jewish siblings mix meal and worship in their Passover seder, and just as Jesus used his Last Supper to institute our most sacred act of worship, we will break bread and join prayers together. Our hope is that this will allow us to enrich our relationships by sparking conversation in response to the various aspects of Wednesday worship.



Each of these shifts in our Lenten spiritual practice are designed to help you find yourself in Christ’s story, to help you give voice to your faith, to help you come close to the cross of Christ. I hope you join us. (cont.)

Coming Close to the Cross: Weekly Photos to Bring

February 26th, First Sunday of Lent

1. Who comes close to the cross: Satan
2. What photos do we bring to the cross: Pictures of our family

March 5th, Second Sunday of Lent

1. Who comes close to the cross: Nicodemus
2. What photos do we bring to the cross: Pictures of our fears

March 12th, Third Sunday of Lent

1. Who comes close to the cross: The Samaritan Woman at the Well
2. What photos do we bring to the cross: Pictures of bodies of water for which we give thanks

March 19th, Fourth Sunday of Lent

1. Who comes close to the cross: The Man Born Blind
2. What photos do we bring to the cross: Selfies of our vanity

March 26th, Fifth Sunday of Lent

1. Who comes close to the cross: Mary and Martha
2. What photos do we bring to the cross: Loved ones who have died

April 2nd, Palm Sunday

1. Who comes close to the cross: Judas
2. What do we bring to the cross: Palms

You are welcome to email pictures to the office. The staff will gladly print them and place them on the cross.

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Music Practice

Bells Tue @ 5pm / Choir Thu @ 5pm
/ Contemporary Thu @ 6:30pm

Lenten Ecumenical Soup Supper & Worship

Wednesdays at 6pm

March 1st: Trinity Methodist

March 8th: First Christian

March 15th: Congregation Beth Israel

March 22nd: First Baptist

March 29th: Bethel AME



How to Preach a Sermon Sundays at 11am Feb. 26th-Apr. 2nd

Pastor Ben is teaching a class on how he prepares and preaches sermons. Learn not only how he studies scripture and crafts a good word, but how you can too! The course takes place in the fellowship hall after worship. All are welcome and encouraged to attend!



In July of 2023, I will have lived in Chico for seven years. That's longer than I've lived in any other place. I have now married a local Chicoan with family in the area. I bought a house that's a block and half from an elementary school. Any way that you measure it, I'm putting down roots. But as I approach seven years in Chico, I face a challenge entirely new to me: discovering what is special, exciting, and sacred about staying put in the same place. I know that God is present and active around me here, but I get so caught up in the daily grind of my home and office, that I can fail to see the Spirit in those places continually calling and transforming me in new and exciting ways.

The Bible tells us we all need time to rest, recharge, and reconnect with God. We are called to do this every seven days with a sabbath (Exodus 20:8). Scripture tells us that every seven years a field needs a season to rest so that it can continue giving abundantly (Lev. 25:3-4). The same is true of pastors. This season of rest for pastors is called a sabbatical.

For the past few months, I've been working with the council to plan for a three-month sabbatical during the summer of 2024. The purpose of the proposed sabbatical is to develop the skills both within the congregation and within me to see sacred space in every place. In addition to presenting this proposal to the congregation, we will also be submitting it for approval to the Lily Endowment, which would fully fund all the costs.

My portion of the sabbatical has three major components: 1) The first component centers around summiting Mount Shasta, providing me an opportunity to explore the sacred in the physical context of wilderness, the social context of solitude, and the occupational context of exercise. 2) The second component centers around traveling to Istanbul with my wife Annalisa, and my daughter Sophia, providing an opportunity to explore the sacred in the physical context of a metropolis, the social context of family, and the occupational context of exploration. 3) The third component also includes my wife and daughter and centers around a two-week seminar reading ancient Greek texts in a Greek village. This final component provides the opportunity to explore the sacred in the physical context of a village, the social context of a community, and the occupational context of learning.

Time for rest and reflection will be interspersed throughout this 12-week agenda. Though these contexts differ, the purpose will be the same: to provide an opportunity to daily reflect on where I see the sacred and how sacred space is present in each of these places in order to cultivate a sense of the sacred in my daily life when I return home.

But it's not just me we want to be strengthened by this sabbatical! While I am away, the congregation would be using this time to strengthen lay ministry and see themselves as sacred even in the absence of their pastor. With money from the Lily Endowment, the congregation would hire a sabbatical pastor for the three months of my absence. The sabbatical pastor would oversee and encourage lay leadership in three key areas for which I am currently responsible: preaching, Bible study, and visitation. Thus, the primary function of the sabbatical pastor is not to carry out my ministry roles, but to coach, support, and mentor the congregation as they carry the church's ministry forward.

This focus on lay-leadership during my sabbatical is a big reason I'm teaching my course on how to preach. During the sabbatical the congregation would alternate each week preaching by the sabbatical pastor and preaching by a lay person who is coached by the sabbatical pastor. The sabbatical pastor would preside at the eucharist for each Sunday worship.

Continuing the small group training that Faith Lutheran has been doing, lay facilitators will take on the Bible study that Pastor Ben leads and be encouraged to start other short-term summer Bible study groups.

The sabbatical pastor will act as a consultant and coach to these Bible study leaders.

Eucharistic ministers are being retrained to visit and share communion with shut-ins and the hospitalized. Faith Lutheran also has a strong Stephen Ministry, which has eight active Stephen Ministers trained to provide one-on-one Christian care to people who are hurting.



Both the eucharistic ministers and the Stephen Ministers would be supervised by Faith Lutheran's Stephen Ministry leadership team. The sabbatical pastor would be called-in to visitations involving life-threatening crises and death.

All these activities, publicly sharing our faith, studying the word together, visiting the sick and lonely, are lay ministries with which Faith has a long tradition, and which could benefit from re-invigoration.

During the three months of the sabbatical, I'll also be reading a book that correspond to each of the places that I will be visiting. The congregation will be invited to read those books in monthly book groups. And when I return, I will hold three weeks of Sunday presentations to share how sacred space was created in each part of my journey. At these presentations I will ask you all to share how you saw the sacred within our community during the corresponding weeks.

This is a brief summary of the sabbatical proposal. You can get a hold of the full 10-page proposal by contacting the church office. We will also be holding a congregational meeting on March 12th after worship to present this proposal to the full congregation for approval. Please join us!

My hope is that at the end of the sabbatical, the congregation will be inspired by what I saw and learned on my travels, both abroad and in our own backyard, and I will be inspired by the ways in which the congregation learned to see themselves as the body of Christ. Together, may we be renewed for the ministry in Chico to which Jesus has called us.



Prayer Shawl Ministry Returns!

During February's community service meeting, a handful of parishioners voiced their desire to knit or crochet prayer shawls again. The prayer shawl ministry is a group of people who meet to create shawls in any medium. When a shawl is made, the group prays over it and blesses it before gifting it to somebody who can use a little comfort and love in their life. If you'd like to join up, let the office know. At the time of this publication we are continuing to find a consistent day and time in which to meet, but expect this ministry to return in March or early April.

LUTHERANS IN THE NEWS

Jamie Holmes was recognized for her work as Spiritual Support Volunteer at Enloe Medical Center this past month. She received a Caregiver Award as part of the Stories of Excellence program for the following story:

On Halloween, Jamie was ending her shift when she heard that a man in the emergency room was not going to survive. In the lobby, the man's wife and three children were waiting. Rather than clock-out and head home, Jamie called another member of the Spiritual Support Team who had training in supporting children. Together, they helped the three children say goodbye to their father, and ensured that the final moments the family had together were spent in love.

If you would like to learn more about the Spiritual Support program and how to get involved, visit: www.enloe.org/make-a-difference/volunteer/opportunities/



CHN Guest Commentary

This article was published in the February 2023
Chico News and Review by FLC member Donald
Heinz, Prof. Religious Studies.



These days, "social justice Christians" are determined to take the gospel out the church door and make it a social gospel. Even more boldly, "Matthew 25 Christians," who are determined to see Jesus in "the least of these" (unhoused, unhealthy, under-fed, unfriended), are encouraged to solicit alliances with social activists in the public sphere. And to unite with them in lobbying the government. Which does not imply theocracy.

I found myself thinking about the churches taking the lead when I read the heart-warming January issue of the Chico News and Review, titled: Mercy Mission: Here and Abroad.

An astonishing list of "social ministry" efforts were showcased, from a wide variety of people and organizations. Perhaps Chico social ministry activists would be leading the churches! I would not want to under-estimate the churches in their own social ministries. Wesleyan Methodists, for example, have from their very origins a commitment to a social gospel built into them. Hence: Salvation Army. Lutheranism is not necessarily distinguished in this area, but the local Faith Lutheran church certainly is. I can hardly keep up with the amazing variety of social ministries that the pastor and versatile lay leader Douglas deSoto (who actively plays in both church and society) initiate. No doubt other local churches can tell similar stories, creating a landscape portrait even larger than that in the News and Review.

I leave off with the next question: Are local churches seriously interested in collaborating with local mercy missions? (The Jesus Center, both a ministry and a community organization, is an obvious answer Yes!) Are local civic mercy missions interested in collaborating with the churches? And the big question: Are both groups actively lobbying government? The legal case brought on behalf of the unhoused changed everything about local approaches, and could be a sterling example of social justice institutions seeking redress through government. Were churches involved in that effort? Would it be ok if they were? Could social justice workers of the world unite?

Donald Heinz was professor of Religious Studies and dean of Humanities and Fine Arts at Chico State. He was recently named to the Emeritus Faculty Hall of Honor. He is also a Lutheran minister with a special interest in social ethics and the church's role in society.



An Invitation to be a Link of the Prayer Chain

When someone is in need of immediate prayer, for example surgery or an accident, the prayer chain takes effect. Parishioners place phone calls to one another and let them know the circumstance. Then, each parishioner prays for our sibling in Christ. Please consider becoming a link of the prayer chain. This is an opportunity to connect with others in a meaningful way, to let your faith touch upon the lives of those experiencing pain, grief, darkness, or other difficult situations. Call or email the office and let Michael know that you would like to learn more.

Music in Lent

Luke Nicolay, Dir. Worship & Music
(530) 895-3754, lukenicolay1@gmail.com



Greetings fellow Faithers! The month of March has come quickly, the Spring is upon us, the almond orchards are blossoming, things are green and the beauty of nature is springing all around us.

Lent has arrived, and what a wonderful time it is for reflection, introspection, and renewed life. I always look forward to this time of year for a number of reasons. We get the chance to worship together on Wednesday evenings with our family members from neighboring congregations, we learn new music, we learn new liturgy, and we have the opportunity to be renewed in ways that we may not experience throughout other seasons of the year.

Throughout this Lenten journey, there are a number of themes, art installments, and musical elements that you'll experience. Our theme throughout the time of Lent will be focused on coming near the cross or Christ. Each week our readings will center on someone coming near the cross or coming near Christ. In order to demonstrate this, we will be asking you to bring photos of people, places, or things that are significant in your life. Some of our friends from our Art Play group will be taking these photos and placing them on the cross each week. On Easter Sunday we will then adorn the cross with beautiful flowers and greenery which will represent the glory and beauty of the risen Christ. Along with our flower cross, there'll also be some sort of art installment placed on the altar that ties in the readings and the flower cross. Many of these art installments will include breads, stone, pieces of silver, and more!

In addition to the themes that we'll be focusing on, you'll also notice that the music has changed quite significantly. The first and most obvious musical change is that all of the organ music will be very gentle and that there is no postlude. You might be thinking "why no postlude?" Well there's a great answer! During the time of Lent we often think of this time as very reflective so we typically dial back the stops on the organ just for a short amount of time. In addition, it also helps add to the glory of Easter Sunday—it creates a wonderful suspense and longing for the diverse and colorful sounds of the voices and organ in full grandeur. Along with the scaling back of the organ, we also omit all "alleluias" throughout the season of Lent—so make sure you get them all out as we prepare for the Lenten season (J haha)!

Lastly, one of the most significant changes you'll notice on Sunday mornings is the order of worship. I'll let Pr. Ben talk about this in greater detail in his article, but one of the main things you'll notice is that the last portion of service will look significantly different than usual. Instead of going right into the prayers following the hymn of the day we will be writing our own prayers each week—this means that we will need some extra time, so we are building into the order of worship a few minutes where you will be able to write down your prayers to share with the congregation. These petitions will be compiled together and will be used as the prayers for that day. Pr. Ben's article will focus more on this aspect of worship, but I ask you to do this—ponder and meditate this Lenten season. What is something you continuously come back to? Perhaps it's something you'd be willing to share with the congregation. If so, write it down and put it in the offering tray and we'll incorporate it into our prayers for that week.

I'm look forward to this Lenten season with each of you. I look forward to reflecting with you, to renewal with you, to new creation with you and most importantly to being the church with you. I'm excited to hear how coming near to the cross or Christ affects those that we learn about each week and also how our own coming near affects us and those around us. Blessings to each of you as you come near to the cross during this Lenten season.

With great anticipation of this Lenten and Easter season,
Luke Nicolay, Director of Worship & Music



Spiritual Gifts pt. 19: Wisdom

Michael N-D, Manager
530-895-3754 , office@chicofaithlutheran.org



"But if any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it. He is generous to everyone and will give you wisdom without criticizing you." -James 1:5

How does Faith Lutheran make important decisions? How do things like staff salaries or capital campaigns get a green light?

Each May, Faith Lutheran Church holds its annual congregational meeting. The entire congregation is encouraged to attend so that everyone can vote on and elect new council members. Council members are those willing to share their wisdom, discernment, and faith with the congregation in order to guide us in a direction that aligns with our mission statement: *being a community reflecting God's love with a place at the table for everyone.*

In the next month you'll have an opportunity to nominate members who you believe have the wisdom to serve us well on the council. If you are nominated, we hope that you prayerfully consider serving on the Faith Lutheran Church council for the upcoming term which starts on July 1st, 2023, and ends June 30th, 2025. Doing so entails developing intimate knowledge of the life and ministry of the church, servicing its members and community, offering strategic support and mentoring to the congregation, and advancing our relationship with other faith communities and the Chico community at large.

Meetings take place once a month. In attendance are the pastor, council president and vice president, secretary, treasurer, and the rest of its members. Meetings are usually on Tuesday evenings at the church and last a couple hours. The council also hosts a yearly retreat (usually overnight at a cabin at Lake Almanor).

In order to be on the council, one must regularly attend Faith Lutheran and its worship services as a fully-fledged member. You must be willing to meet once a month for council meetings, and show an investment in other dimensions of the church beyond council membership.

Please call or email the office if you have an interest in joining the council. People of all ages and backgrounds are encouraged to voice their interest.

Plant Operations

Joel Zimbelman, Property Manager
joelzimbelman@gmail.com, (530) 520-9608



Greetings from Faith Lutheran Church Plant Operations. I just wanted to give you all an update on ongoing campus maintenance and improvements. We have been busy the last few months. We installed all new lights in the Fellowship Hall, kitchen and bathrooms, so you can now see where you are walking when in those rooms. All 13 thermostats on our campus have been replaced and can now be centrally controlled, which should give us greater leverage in keeping our electric and gas bills down. We're removing all soap and toilet paper dispensers in all bathrooms and going back to old soap technology (plunger bottles) and toilet paper rolls to avoid costs, malfunctions, and irritation! The old ride waiting shed off the parking lot will become our new garden workstation for courtyard maintenance. The electrical room near the church office will be cleaned and assigned to electrical switching equipment only. Our roofs and gutters got a good cleaning, and repairs were completed on gutters that were falling off the building. Drainage capture basins were refitted with new lids, and repairs were made to the deteriorating concrete in the back parking lot. The Fire Marshall has required some signs around the campus, and those should go in in the coming few weeks.

The big upcoming project, which we hope will begin in March or April, is to redo the landscaping around our property and accomplish some adjustments to the courtyard space.



We have interviewed four landscape companies, and are down to two finalists. In short order, we should have a contract and will move to fully replace all irrigation on the property; remove part of our front pony wall in front of the nursery and sacristy; landscape the front, side beds, interior courtyard flowerbeds, and columbarium; upgrade plantings with very low water demand plants and trees; and reduce the bulk of grass coverings with plants, spaced ground cover, stone, and bark. A team of FLC consultants from the Council and congregation will be working with our chosen contractor to coordinate work and figure out places where members can volunteer their time and hours.



We will be scheduling a campus cleanup day shortly, so stay tuned concerning how you can assist us in sprucing things up for the summer. And we will have more projects to line up later this year—painting, carpet, telephone systems, and replacement of the remaining 30 year old air conditioning units (five of them are still functioning but on their last legs).

Finally, I have to remind my fellow FLC members that none of this work comes cheap. It's hard to find professionals in Chico in a timely manner who can meet our high expectations, so there are inevitable delays to work assignments. Costs are often more than we would like to pay. But so far, the work quality has been great, and your recommendations on potential contractors to use has been welcomed. I'd be remiss if I did not take the time—as co-Chair of the Stewardship Committee—to encourage your continued and generous giving to the Stewardship Campaign to make sure that all of our projects are brought to completion. Today and I will have more to share on this in the coming months, but our final push for about \$175,000 to complete our renovation of the property will start up again in earnest in the coming months. Stay tuned for further information and a roadmap forward that will get us to our goal!

Sincerely, Joel Zimbelman for the Church Plant Operations Committee and the Stewardship Committee. joelzimbelman@gmail.com



Financial Report

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



Faith Lutheran Church General Fund Finances as of 1/31/2023

	Budget	Actual	Percent
	To Date	To Date	Of Budget
TOTAL INCOME	\$322,435.64	\$308,868.37	95.79%
TOTAL EXPENSE	<u>\$310,639.58</u>	<u>\$281,738.97</u>	90.70%
NET INCOME/(LOSS)	\$11,796.06	\$27,129.40	
Beginning General Fund Balance as of 7/1/2022		\$56,320.95	
Net Revenue through 1/31/2023		<u>\$27,129.40</u>	
Ending General Fund Balance		<u>\$83,450.35</u>	

General Fund giving for December was \$54,783.62.

This exceeded the \$44,000 per month needed to meet and pay for all budgeted expenses. Your continued financial support is greatly appreciated and necessary to maintain and grow Faith Lutheran's programs and mission.

The Church Council will continue monitoring this and report here on a monthly basis.

Thank You All for your continued support.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact:

Mark Kimmelshue

530-520-8228

kimmelshue@armcorice.com

RED CROSS MONTH

March is American Red Cross month, Red Cross's "Annual Celebration of Turning Compassion into Action."

"Every March, we honor people like you who make the lifesaving mission of the American Red Cross possible — the individuals across the country who turn compassion into action, helping others in times of crisis. Our Red Cross Month celebration has been an annual tradition since 1943, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued the first Red Cross Month proclamation.

We invite you and others to join the Red Cross mission by **volunteering, giving blood, learning lifesaving skills or**

making a financial donation. You don't have to wait until next March to help people in need. Choose one or more of the options below and join us today!" For more info, go to

www.redcross.org/about-us/red-cross-month.html



AED (Defibrillator) and CPR Training

**Saturday March 11th, 9AM-11:30AM in
Faith's Sanctuary**

This month, Faith Lutheran church will be offering a 1-day defibrillator and CPR training course. Official CPR certification is granted upon completion of the course, which is planned to last a few hours.

CPR is an easy to learn, life-saving skill that you can carry with you throughout your life. According to the American Heart Association, "If performed immediately, CPR can double or triple the chance of survival from an out of hospital cardiac arrest." If you would like to take this course, please contact the office.



A Letter from the Jesus Center



Dear Faith Lutheran Church,

The end of the year is a great opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments of the year. We would like to thank you for your generous financial support of the Jesus Center in 2022. What simply began with two crockpots and three generous hearts has grown into a relational program of restoration! Throughout 2022 we made big strides, but we are not finished yet! This year we will be breaking ground on the Phase II of our project, the Renewal Center. We are so grateful that you have chosen to come alongside us in support as we work hard to design this program focused on encouragement, resources, love and a pathway to what Jesus calls abundant life! (John 10:10)

We accomplished some big things in 2022 because of you!

- We celebrated our first full year of operations at the new Sabbath House Emergency Shelter on Fair Street, where in 2022 we served 231 unique men and women and provided 17,391 nights of safe sober shelter.
- Broke ground on the Renewal Center after many years of planning, we are on track to open in June of 2023!
- We partnered with the City of Chico as the Operator of the Emergency Housing Site (Pallet Shelter) the 177 units of shelter saw 248 unique men and women and provided 32,912 nights of low barrier shelter to those previously experiencing street level homelessness in our community.
- We launched a Medical Recuperative Care Program (RCP) with Enloe Medical Center at Sabbath House. 16 unique individuals spent 300 nights safely recovering in shelter.
- Celebrated our 17th year of the Run For Food in incredible Bidwell Park with nearly 4,000 people on Thanksgiving morning. Special thanks to our Sponsors and Volunteers that make this event happen each year.

Your donation of **\$1,400** in 2022 allowed us to continue improving and developing a system-wide response to those living under the paralyzing strain of survival on the streets in our community.

Because of your partnership, together, we are able to offer hope and a path of restoration to the lives of many!

With gratitude,
Amber Abney-Bass, Executive Director

Jesus Center of Chico
2255 Fair St, Chico, CA 95928 | (530) 345-2640




Our Garden

The array of colorful flowers you see on campus come from the love and tending of Judy Struck. The staff sees her each and every week weeding, gardening, and caring for our campus. And it's always a treat when -- surprise! -- a bright, new flower has been planted!





We invite *everyone* to garden here! Let us know that you're interested in putting long-time gardening skills to use; or learn a brand new skill and plant something for the first time. Get in touch with the office, and we'll make sure that you have everything you need to feel confident and comfortable tending to our plants on campus.

Our garden will expand to the front lawn (see pages 17 & 18). We plan to plant native foliage that will thrive in California's climate. Let us know if you have an interest in taking part in building a new and beautiful environment on East 1st Ave...or just gardening inside the courtyard!





For God
so loved
the world that
He gave His one
and only Son
that whoever
BELIEVES
in Him shall not perish
but have **ETERNAL**
LIFE.



John 3:16

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A COMMUNITY REFLECTING GOD'S LOVE WITH A PLACE AT THE TABLE FOR EVERYONE

Office Hours: Monday-Friday from 10A-4:30P

Website: chicofaithlutheran.org

Email: office@chicofaithlutheran.org

Phone: (530) 895-3754

