



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



ANNUAL REPORT
2024

Table of Contents

Pg.	Article	Submitted By
4	A Message from the Bishop	Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, ELCA
5	Opening Liturgy	ELCA
6	Today's Agenda	Jill Bentler, Council President
7	Minutes from Last Year's Meeting	Alyssa Manes, Council Secretary
8	A Year In Review	Pr. Ben Colahan
11	Pastoral Acts	Staff
12	Council Nominations	Sharon Prindle, Council Member at Large
13	Proposed Budget (intro)	Pr. Ben Colahan
15	Proposed Budget (spreadsheet)	Mark Kimmelshue, Council Treasurer
18	Welcome	Council President Jill Bentler
20	Equipping Ministry	Steve Hall, Equipping Chair
22	Endowment Committee	Bill Kees, Endowment Recorder
	Columbarium Committee	Staff
23	Facility Mgmt. & Maintenance	Joel Zimbelman, Property Manager & Michael Nicholson Dick, Office Manager
26	Personnel Committee	Tom Melvin, Committee Member
27	Financial Team	Michael Nicholson Dick, Office Manager
28	Worship and Music	Luke Nicolay, Director of Worship & Music
33	Children and Youth Ministry	Josh Edwards, Dir. of Children & Youth Min.
37	Just Older Youth Seniors (JOYS	Nola Dosch, Facilitator
38	GriefShare	Nola Dosch, Facilitator
	Time Out for Art	Staff
39	Men's Breakfast	Staff
40	Dungeons and Dragons	Staff
	Spanish Speaking Group	Staff
	Alphabet Soup	MacKenzie Wilson, Facilitator
41	Wilderness Worship	Staff
42	Tuesday Quilters	Staff
	BSA Troop 12	Staff
	Working Dads Group	Staff
	Tables for 8	Staff
43	Bible Studies	Staff
44	Blue Bags	Staff
	Food Bank	Lisa Roehling, Facilitator
46	Torres Shelter	Elise Glady, Facilitator
47	Steve Troester Memorial Blood Drive	Marge Troester, Facilitator
48	Stephen Ministry	Jamie Holmes, Facilitator
49	Mercy House	Staff

	Safe Space Winter Shelter	Michael Nicholson Dick, Office Manager
50	God's Work Our Hands	Mary Schweder, Facilitator
51	Christmas Gifts Eucharistic Ministry	Staff Staff
52	Sanctuary Art The Greatest Gift Project	Dottie Erhardt, Artist Kim Schweder, Facilitator
55	Administration	Michael Nicholson Dick, Office Manager
60	Ministry Contacts	Staff



A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

All around us, we see signs of God's love and goodness. A person who has stepped away from church for many years steps back into a congregation, feeling the call of the Holy Spirit. Young adults feeling isolated in a digital-first world start gathering in person in a small group, enjoying the warmth of a hug and a new friend asking about their week. A mother plants a garden, and it yields fruits and vegetables, giving her nutritious food for her kids and extra produce to sell at the local market. Everywhere we look, we see signs of Christ's love. In Psalm 93, we read: "More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters, more majestic than the waves of the sea, majestic on high is the Lord! Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore" (4-5).

God's love is a majestic thing, and it moves us to share it in word and deed. The ministries of our congregations, our synods and the ELCA churchwide organization are all working together to share God's love with people in our neighborhoods, across our country and around the world.

I am so grateful for you, dear church. Your generosity to each of these three expressions of the church — your congregation, your synod and the churchwide organization — has bolstered the church's ability to share the message of God's love to people who are longing for it. Through your

“More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters, more majestic than the waves of the sea, majestic on high is the Lord! Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore.”

—Psalm 93:4-5

financial resources, your time volunteering and accompanying others, and your voices, you've helped carry this message of God's majestic love. Thank you, dear church. As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage you to stand steadfast in God's promises, sure of God's love and goodness.

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

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

OPENING LITURGY

Confident in God's generosity and gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us praise God and give thanks ...

God, we praise you and give you thanks.

You are good, and your mercy endures forever.

You gave us a garden with good food to eat.

We praise you for food that nourishes us.

You rescued your people from slavery.

We praise you for freedom.

You gave us prophets to correct, rebuke and encourage us.

We bless you for your justice and mercy.

You gave us your Son, Jesus, to love, redeem and save us.

We praise you for his death and resurrection.

You gave us your Holy Spirit to be our Advocate and Comforter.

We bless you for the gifts of every tribe and nation.

Strengthen your church with every spiritual gift

and commission us again to be your servant people.

Multiply in us the fruit of the spirit:

love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Send us in your love and mercy,

that the world may know you and praise you.

Now Thank We All Our God



1 Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,
2 Oh, may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
3 All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,



who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices;
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,
the Son, and Spirit blest, who reign in highest heaven,



who, from our mothers' arms, has blessed us on our way
and keep us all in grace, and guide us when perplexed,
the one eternal God, whom earth and heaven adore;



with countless gifts of love, and still is ours to-day.
and free us from all harm in this world and the next.
for thus it was, is now, and shall be ever more.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 840

Text: Martin Rinkhart, 1586-1649; tr. Cathering Winkworth, 1827-1878

Music: NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT, Johann Crüger, 1598-1662

Let us pray.

Gracious God, you are the giver of every good gift. Bless us with all that we need for ministry in your name, that we might be a blessing to others. In the name of the one who broke bread and fed the multitudes, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Today's Agenda

Welcome by Council President Jill Bentler

Opening Litany & Prayer by Pastor Ben Colahan

Approval of May 19, 2024 Congregational Minutes

Video: *A Year in Review* by Pastor Ben Colahan and Josh Edwards, Dir. Children & Youth Ministries

Appreciation for Service in Congregation by Council President Jill Bentler

Election of New Council Members, Officers and Synod Assembly Representatives

"Looking Forward:" a Video from Pr. Ben Colahan and Josh Edwards, Dir. Children & Youth Ministries

Time for Questions

Video Presentation: 2025-2026 Budget

Time for Questions

Vote on Budget

Proposed Capital Campaign Presentation by Capital Campaign Team

Time for Questions

Vote on Capital Campaign and Line of Credit

Closing, The Lord's Prayer

Minutes from Last Year's Meeting

May 19th, 2024 in the Fellowship Hall

WELCOME by Council President Jill Bentler

OPENING LITANY & PRAYER led by Pastor Ben Colahan

APPROVAL of May 2023 Congregational Minutes: Motion
made/seconded/approved

A YEAR IN REVIEW presented by Pastor Ben Colahan

APPRECIATION for service in the congregation, presented by Council President
Jill Bentler

ELECTION OF NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS: Motion to approve the following
candidates was made, seconded, and approved: Elise Gladu, Candy Munson,
Mike Boyd, Kathleen Pappani, and Dawn Stafford. There was no change in
executive officers from the previous year.

“LOOKING FORWARD” video from Pastor Ben Colahan

PRESENTATION of the 2024-2025 Budget: Time allowed for questions, followed
by a vote on the budget. Motion made/seconded/approved for the budget.

CLOSING with the Lord's Prayer

A Year in Review

By Pr. Ben Colahan

This has been a year of stepping back to step forward. In June, I stepped away from my pastoral responsibilities and took a three-month sabbatical.

During that time, I rested and strengthened myself in body, mind, and soul, by attempting to summit Mt. Shasta, spending two weeks studying ancient Greek in Greece, and playing with my family. My time away allowed faces both new and old to step forward. We were blessed to have sabbatical pastors who know our congregation well, most notably, the Rev. Carl Wilfrid who served Faith Lutheran for 20 years during the 80s and 90s. Six members of the congregation also stepped into the pulpit and boldly proclaimed how God's Word was alive in their lives. Faith members led classes over the summer on Dietrich Bonhoeffer, spirituality in the wilderness, the power of water, and the sacred architecture of Greece.



In the summer and fall, the congregation rallied together around the children of Faith. Under the leadership of Cindy Kampf, many of you kept Sunday school going during our staff transition. We even sent one youth to the national youth gathering!

Upon my return, the energy of a refreshed pastor and reaffirmed congregation combined for an outburst of activity! We celebrated the ministries of Faith at Rally Day, renovated the playground at Rosedale Elementary for God's Work, Our Hands, and remembered those who have lived out God's love at All Saints Day. In the winter, we held a coat drive, and this has inspired an on-going ministry to collect goods for organizations doing good work in our



community and lay those goods in a manger at the foot of the altar. We've also launched two new Bible studies, and GriefShare, a ministry to support people grieving the death of a loved one.

After a careful search, in November we hired Joshua Edwards to be our new Director of Children and Youth Ministry. Josh has shown time and time again the power of loving children in Christ's name. He has started weekly children's sermons, modernized checking in and out students to Sunday school, and launched a middle school youth group. His collaboration with Emily Puerta has meant that we've been blessed with Faith's own children's choir. His organizational skill put together an Easter Egg Hunt and Trunk festival which drew hundreds of families and got Faith Lutheran on the front page of the Enterprise Record.

Thanks to his work and your ministry, our average Sunday school attendance has gone from 11 to 20 in the past year. The growth in Sunday school has been matched by the growth in attendance during worship. In 2023, our average in-person attendance was 122. In 2024, it was 142. Our attendance for the first four months of 2025 is up by 23 compared to the first four months of 2024; that's an increase of 17.5%.



This increased attendance is both an affirmation of our shared ministry and an invitation to ponder how we can reach more people in Butte County with the message of God's unconditional love in Christ. As we look to the year ahead we are planning how to more effectively share the good news of Jesus through three goals:

1) Improve our facilities.

After 35 years, our buildings need some tender loving care. We will be asking you to support a capital campaign to maintain the ministry of our campus.

2) Develop a second service.

We are starting to fill the sanctuary and parking lot each Sunday. But more importantly, a second service give us the opportunity to create a time and space for worship to connect with people who, for whatever reason, don't connect with our current service. We do not yet have a time, style, or start date picked out for this service. We do have a great team of individuals visiting other congregations in the areas to learn what works well that we might incorporate and what is lacking that we might offer.

3) Strengthen small groups.

As the congregation grows, we will need to be more intentional about keeping people connected to each other and to the Holy Spirit in their lives. Small groups, in which 6-10 people meet regularly to share what's happening in their lives, help each other see God in their midst, and pray for one another, are consistently the most effective way to help congregations feel connected as they grow. In the coming year, if you're not already part of a small group, I will be inviting you to join one to strengthen your walk with Christ.

I am so excited for the year to come. The Holy Spirit is doing incredible things at Faith. I am excited to journey into God's future together with you.

Your brother in Christ, Pastor Ben

Pastoral Acts

Baptisms: 1
Confirmations: 0
Burials: 5
Marriages: 1

Members received by:
Affirmation: 7
Transfer: 0

Members removed by:
Death: 7
Transfer: 1

Total baptized members: 473

Total confirmed members: 405



All Saints Day, hosted by the Equipping Team, where we celebrate saints past and present

2025-2026 Council Nominations

Retiring Council Members

Jill Bentler, President
Steve Hall, Vice-President
Alyssa Manes, Secretary
Elaine Lund (member at large)
Mary Schweder (member at large)
Leanne Chrisman (member at large)

New Executive Officers

Dawn Stafford, Council President
Faye Johnson, Vice-President
Elise Gladu, Secretary

New Council Members

Kate Ory (council member at large)
Cheri Sandberg (council member at large)
Karsen Bradley (council member at large)
Faye Johnson (council member at large)
Chris Brown (council member at large)

Proposed Council for 2025-2026

Pr. Ben Colahan, continuing ex officio member
Dawn Stafford (continuing), Council President
Faye Johnson, Vice President
Elise Gladu (continuing), Secretary
Mark Kimmelshue, Treasurer (continuing)
Candy Munson (continuing council member at large)
Kathleen Pappani (continuing council member at large)
Kate Ory (council member at large)
Cheri Sandberg (council member at large)
Karsen Bradley (council member at large)
Chris Brown (council member at large)

2025-2026 Proposed Budget

The proposed budget for July 2025 - June 2026 reflects our growing congregation. In four key areas our budget will increase: 1) staff salaries, 2) increased costs for a second service, 3) Inflation, and 4) Expanding ministry to our community.

Our staff work hard to coordinate our ministry at Faith Lutheran. In recognition of that work, the council is proposing a 5% raise for all four staff members starting January 1st. In addition to the base 5% raise, we are also proposing an additional 5% raise for our Director of Worship and Music, Luke Nicolay whenever we begin a second worship service. While all the staff will have increased responsibilities with a second service, Luke will take on the most additional work through his role overseeing all worship leaders and musicians. We are grateful for our faithful musicians who give freely of their skills as an offering to God. Sometimes, in Luke's absence, we pay individuals to lead music. For special services like Christmas and Easter, we also hire additional musicians to help us express the grandeur of God's work. As we increase the number of services, we recognize that we will need to pay more for these substitute musicians. The total increase to the budget for all staff wages comes to 12,331.76

Raising staff salaries also means an increase to staff benefits, such as social security and retirement contributions. This combined with an increase in medical insurance costs means our budget for staff benefits also will increase by \$9,196.56

This past year, I challenged members of the congregation to prayerfully consider increasing their tithe to Faith Lutheran by .5% of their income as they pursue a biblical tithe of 10%. Faith Lutheran is practicing what I preach, by increasing our congregation's contribution to the larger denomination by .5% of our budget, meaning an increase of \$3,100.

There are several areas where more members and increased use of our facilities combine with inflation to increase our budget. These mostly appear in the categories of Business Finance and Facility Management and Maintenance. You'll see increased Bank Charges/Tithely reflecting the small amount that credit

card companies take from online giving. As more people give online, this number increases. The cost of paper, postage, printing, and software have all gone up. Our custodial service has increased its prices. And, like for each of our homes, the cost of insurance and utilities continues to increase. This means that in Business Finance we are proposing a total increase of \$3,965. In Facility Management and Maintenance we propose an increase of \$6,840.

We pay composers and publishers royalties to play music in worship. We also purchase supplies like candles, communion wine, and baptismal certificates for worship. As we look to add a second service, we expect a modest increase to Worship and Music of \$1,200.

Every month, we feed people staying at the Torres Shelter. The number of people who stay at the Torres Shelter has increased significantly in the past couple of years at the same time that the cost of food has increased. This, in addition to materials that we use for fixing up schools in God's Work Our Hands, would add \$3,150 to our Social Ministry budget.

We aren't just serving the wider community. Our Equipping Ministry helps members of Faith identify their spiritual gifts and put those gifts into service of God's Kingdom. Throughout the year, Equipping Ministry holds events like Rally Day and All Saints Day to celebrate the ministries at Faith and the people who do them. The Equipping Ministries hopes to expand the ways in which they invite people into ministry and this is reflected in a proposed \$2,500 increase to their budget.

In total, the council proposes a 7% or 42,433.32 increase to Faith Lutheran's operating budget. With two months to go in our current fiscal year, Faith Lutheran is solidly in black, with your generous offerings exceeding our expenses by about \$27,000. This, combined with steady growth in worship attendance, gives us confidence that we can meet this proposed budget that invests in our dedicated staff and expands worship and ministry as we live out Christ's call to be a community reflecting God's love with a place at the table for everyone.

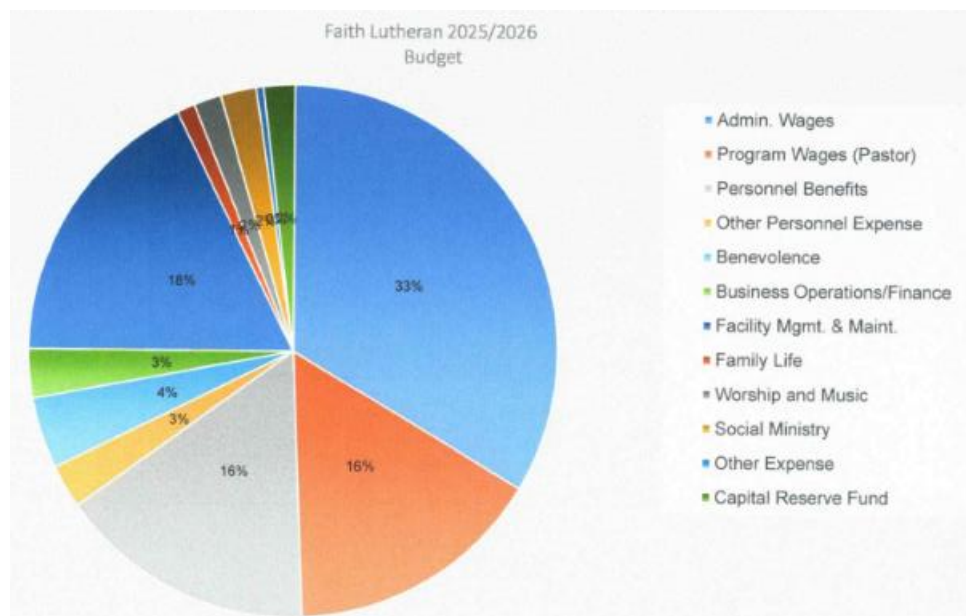
Faith Lutheran Church

Proposed Budget for 2025/2026 Fiscal Year

	2024/2025 Budget	2025/2026 Budget	Budget Difference	Actual Through 3/31/2025
1 Administrative Wages				
2 Worship and Music Coordinator	70,500.00	72,263.00	1,763.00	52,875.00
3 W&M Second Service Stipend		2,644.00	2,644.00	
4 Family Life Director	68,700.00	70,418.00	1,718.00	22,900.00
5 Office/Service Director	52,780.00	54,100.00	1,320.00	39,519.00
6 Contract Bookkeeper and Payroll Service	8,400.00	8,400.00	0.00	5,471.00
7 Substitute Musicians	1,000.00	3,000.00	2,000.00	850.00
8 Nursery Attendant	0.00	0.00	0.00	150.00
9 Subtotal Admin. Wages	201,380.00	210,825.00	9,445.00	121,765.00
10				
11 Program Wages				
12 Pastor Compensation	89,565.00	92,069.00	2,504.00	67,174.00
13 SSI Reimbursement	6,852.00	7,234.76	382.76	5,139.00
14 Subtotal Program Wages	96,417.00	99,303.76	2,886.76	67,174.00
15				
16 Subtotal All Personnel Wages	297,797.00	310,128.76	12,331.76	188,939.00
17				
18 Personnel Benefits				
19 Social Security/Medicare	12,104.36	15,053.74	2,949.38	8,997.00
20 Pastor's Pension and Benefits	40,710.24	43,337.80	2,627.56	28,667.00
21 Worship and Music Coordinator Benefits	12,186.72	13,238.10	1,051.38	10,415.00
22 Family Life Director Benefits	13,992.00	14,503.92	511.92	7,359.70
23 Office/Service Director Benefits	9,737.04	11,862.24	2,125.20	5,272.43
24 Workers Comp Package	1,000.00	931.12	(68.88)	2,437.00
25 Subtotal Personnel Benefits	89,730.36	98,926.92	9,196.56	63,148.13
26				
27 Other Personnel Expenses				
28 Council Spending	400.00	400.00	0.00	136.38
29 Synod Assembly/Leadership Conference	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	0.00
30 Staff Appreciation/performance bonus	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	0.00
31 Pastor's Reimbursed Expenses	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	0.00
32 Staff Reimbursed Expenses	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	0.00
33 Clergy Continuing Education	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	0.00
34 Staff Continuing Education	4,000.00	4,000.00	0.00	1,604.44
35 Pulpit Supply	1,100.00	1,100.00	0.00	556.48
36 Staff Mileage	200.00	200.00	0.00	0.00
37 Subtotal Other Personnel Expenses	16,700.00	16,700.00	0.00	2,297.30
38				
39 Benevolence				
40 Synod Benevolence	21,900.00	25,000.00	3,100.00	10,950.00
41 Seminary Student	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
42 Interfaith Council & Conference Dues	150.00	300.00	150.00	150.00
43 Joseph Project	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	1,858.00

44	Subtotal Benevolence	24,050.00	27,300.00	3,250.00	12,958.00
45					
46	Business Finance				
47	Advertising	750.00	1,500.00	750.00	755.00
48	Bank Charges /Tythly	1,850.00	2,675.00	825.00	2,000.00
49	Devotionals & Magazines	200.00	200.00	0.00	84.00
50	Equipment Purchases	3,500.00	3,500.00	0.00	2,235.00
51	Giving Envelopes	600.00	600.00	0.00	283.00
52	Office Supplies	800.00	800.00	0.00	181.00
53	Paper	810.00	1,000.00	190.00	382.00
54	Postage	2,200.00	3,000.00	800.00	2,217.00
55	Printer and Ink	2,000.00	2,700.00	700.00	2,188.00
56	Software Rental	2,000.00	2,700.00	700.00	2,765.00
57	Subtotal Business Operations/Finance	14,710.00	18,675.00	3,965.00	13,090.00
58					
59	Facility Mgmt. & Maint.				
60	Custodial	13,270.00	14,760.00	1,490.00	7,411.66
61	HVAC Maintenance Contract	4,500.00	4,500.00	0.00	
62	Insurance/Permits/Taxes	15,000.00	17,000.00	2,000.00	?????
63	Janitorial Supplies	1,500.00	1,680.00	180.00	1,236.36
64	Kitchen Supplies for Cong. Meals	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	79.44
65	Coffee Hour Supplies	1,100.00	1,100.00	0.00	
66	Landscaping	5,910.00	6,000.00	90.00	1,918.32
67	Repairs and Maintenance	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00	11,286.19
68	Kitchen Equipment Purchases	800.00	800.00	0.00	
69	Security	5,500.00	5,580.00	80.00	3,675.00
70	Utilities	40,000.00	43,000.00	3,000.00	32,190.00
71	Subtotal Mgmt. & Maint.	103,580.00	110,420.00	6,840.00	10,645.78
72					
73	Discipleship				
74	Faith Adult Christian Education (FACE)	200.00	200.00	0.00	0.00
75	Stephen Ministry	500.00	500.00	0.00	0.00
76	Subtotal Discipleship	700.00	700.00	0.00	0.00
77					
78	Family Life				
79	Confirmation	300.00	300.00	0.00	0.00
80	Children's Ministry	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	66.00
81	Cross Generational/Family Ministries	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	0.00
82	Vacation Bible School	650.00	650.00	0.00	0.00
83	Jr. High/High School Ministry	800.00	800.00	0.00	0.00
84	College/Young Adult	600.00	600.00	0.00	103.00
85	Scholarship Fund	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	0.00
86	Adult Sponsor Expenses/Staff Chaperone	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00	277.00
87	Small Groups	350.00	350.00	0.00	155.82
88	Subtotal Family Life Ministry	6,900.00	6,900.00	0.00	601.82
89					
90	Worship and Music				

91	Arts & Environment	1,500.00	1,100.00	(400.00)	0.00
92	CCLI/Copyrights	1,100.00	1,500.00	400.00	1,062.00
93	Music	2,000.00	2,300.00	300.00	1,481.00
94	Supplies	3,000.00	3,750.00	750.00	2,056.00
95	Equipment Maintenance	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00	0.00
96	Resources (calendars Sundays & Seasons etc.)	450.00	600.00	150.00	0.00
97	Subtotal Worship and Music	9,550.00	10,750.00	1,200.00	4,599.00
98					
99	Outreach/Evangelism				
100	Service & Outreach				
101	God's Work Our Hands	500.00	700.00	200.00	719.00
102	Meals for Safe Space	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	1,479.00
103	Miscellaneous Projects	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00	450.00
104	Pride Ministry	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	0.00
105	Torres Shelter	5,550.00	8,500.00	2,950.00	5,521.00
106	Subtotal Social Ministry	10,550.00	13,700.00	3,150.00	8,169.00
107					
108	Mission Resources/Stewardship				
109	Stewardship	500.00	500.00	0.00	0.00
110	Subtotal Mission Resources/Stewardship	500.00	500.00	0.00	0.00
111	Subtotal Outreach/Evangelism/Stewardship	11,050.00	14,200.00	3,150.00	8,169.00
112					
113	Equipping Ministry	1,500.00	4,000.00	2,500.00	404.00
114	Equipping Ministry Subtotal	1,500.00	4,000.00	2,500.00	404.00
115					
116	Search Committee	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
117					
118	Capital Reserve Fund	12,000.00	12,000.00	0.00	9,000.00
119	Subtotal Capital Reserve Fund	12,000.00	12,000.00	0.00	9,000.00
120					
121	TOTAL BUDGET	588,267.36	630,700.68	42,433.32	313,852.03
122					
123	Estimated Income	594,150.03	637,007.69		



Welcome to the 2025 Annual Meeting Celebration!

By Jill Bentler, Outgoing Council President

What a wonderful year it has been, I have so much that I am thankful for here at Faith Lutheran.

I am thankful for our dedicated council this past year and their commitment to learning, making decisions, and guiding the direction our church is growing towards. I always look forward to our monthly meetings because I get to hang out with terrific people who want what is best for Faith Lutheran. Our meetings have been a time of prayer, celebration, reflection, budget considerations, safety discussions, problem solving, laughter, and snacks. Two of the biggest topics we tackled this year were how do we handle growth and how do we address the physical needs of our church facility.

In regards to growth, a portion of our monthly meetings were given to a book study addressing that topic. [The In-Between Church: Navigating Size Transitions in Congregations](#) by Alice Mann explores size transitions in churches and how to respond to growth. Out of that book study and led by Pastor Ben there are members of our church who are now working towards creating a second service to accommodate this growth. If you have an interest in participating in that discussion, I encourage you to join that team!

In regards to the physical needs of our church there is a lot that needs to be done to maintain and improve our church campus. Our property manager, Joel Zimbelman, has worked tirelessly for the past several years keeping our facilities maintained and up to date but there is more work that needs to be done. I am grateful to Joel for his efforts and especially for his enthusiasm! He has prepared many reports for the council and obtained bids for the work that needs to be done. With the information he and his team have provided the council is seeking approval from the congregation to start a new capital campaign so that we can begin these crucial projects. You will learn more about that campaign at this meeting and in the months to come.

This annual meeting marks the end of my second year as church council president and my third year on the council. I get asked a lot if leading the council has been hard or a burden and I am truthful when I say it has not. I am surrounded and supported by people who want what is best for Faith Lutheran and do the work to make it happen. I have gotten to know so many more of my fellow worshippers more personally and I have been loved and supported by all of you. I am so very grateful for that love and for your prayers. It is time to “hand over the reins” to the next president and her council and I am looking forward to exploring new opportunities at Faith Lutheran. I am thankful for all the council members but want to say a special thanks to Steve Hall, Alyssa Manes, Elaine Lund, Leanne Chrisman, and Mary Schweder for their dedication over the past two and three years to the council as they also move on.

Finally, I am grateful to Pastor Ben for his knowledge, his wisdom, and his support. It has truly been a pleasure to get to know you better. I have enjoyed our many conversations and appreciate all that I have learned from you and for all of your encouragement.

Thank you, all of you, for your love and for making a place at the table for me.



Mark Kimmelshue and Jill Bentler represent the council on Rally Day, 2024

Leadership and Committees

Faith Lutheran Church has 6 committees that help our congregation thrive.

Equipping Ministry ***Steve Hall, Equipping Chair***

This past year has been very eventful for the Equipping Team. Our vision has been to find ways to connect our congregation to God, the Church and to each other. Our Team consisting of Mary Schweder, Margaret McMillan, Dawn Stafford, Dave Rush, Dottie Erhart, Kate Ory, Judy Struck, Annette Jefferson, Vicki James, Michael Nicholson-Dick and Steve Hall, have been very involved in many connections within our congregation.

The highlights of our year have been many. Some individual and some on a grander scale. Starting in late summer was a very active Rally Day. Our Church's Ministries on display along with a Car racing theme and games was not only fun, but educational to all of what our church has to offer. Thanks to Elise Gladu and her group for a great meal. Fun was had by all including egg toss and a Pinata for the kids.

In November the Equipping Team hosted All Saints Day luncheon after service. Many of you provided part of the meal along with Ham cooked by Judy Struck and others. Our team provided an opportunity to celebrate and share your stories of your Saints with your table and with others by providing pictures for us to have displayed. Most of the artwork for All Saints Day was drawn and completed by Dottie.

The Equipping Team also helped during the Lenten season by creating an hourglass for prayers in the Sanctuary. We were all provided the opportunity to write our prayers and place them in the top half of the hourglass and then if our prayer was answered, you moved it into the lower half of the glass. We shared visually our prayers and answered prayers together.

The connections we helped to facilitate with individuals are too many to name. Just know, you are important to not only our team, also to the entire

congregation. Our team has enjoyed the opportunity to work with so many of you and are looking forward to connecting many more in the coming year.

Pastor Ben has been incredibly supportive during this time and love working together for all of you. We sincerely thank Pastor Ben for his interest and collaboration.

*God Bless you all,
The Equipping Team*



Endowment Committee
Bill Kees, Endowment Recorder

When the Constitution was updated the Endowment for Faith became part of the 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 Faith Lutheran Endowment Fund is managed by Thrivent Charitable Impact and Investing.

There have been no distributions from the Endowment fund this year.

As of April 23, 2025 the endowment fund value was \$91,74992.

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

Columbarium Committee

This past year, new plants were planted in our Columbarium Garden. With spring in bloom, we recommend you check it out to see the colorful blossoms, birds, bees, and blooms! We welcome you to sit or meditate there anytime during office hours, and if you have family interred there, you may have a key and visit anytime. The columbarium itself –the marble feature that contains the niches— is full or fully reserved, so our next step will be talking about how and where to install a second columbarium. Design concepts are encouraged, and we invite members of Faith to join this committee to oversee the resting place of our loved ones. If you have a heart for this ministry, let us know!

Facility Management & Maintenance

Joel Zimbelman, Property Manager | Michael Nicholson Dick, Office Manager

We accomplished several projects over the past year that benefited our church plant. As always, a detailed overview of all projects, projections, costs, and maintenance notes are available to you. If you have any questions about specific projects, we invite you to ask Joel or Michael about them.

Our work this past year included:

- Replacement of all the lights and light activation sensors inside and outside the church. Approximately 300 bulbs were replaced with LED lighting. Thank you to Bob Bay, Rick Bentler, and Alex Jia for help on this.
- Completion of our education wing bathroom installation and the remodeling of the preschool room. This included new walls, two toilets, ADA access, and new flooring in the preschool room. (Pictures on next page.)
- A new fire hood system in the kitchen per fire marshal mandate.
- A new keying system for the facility.
- Two workdays to take care of tree pruning and general cleanup.
- Several bids on roofing, parking lot maintenance, painting, flooring, kitchen appliances, building repairs, solar expansion, and HVAC replacement in anticipation of future needs.

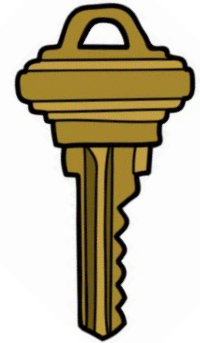
Lots of folks help weekly with our upkeep. In addition to twelve professionals from various companies in Chico, Bob Bay, Rick Bentler, Judy Struck, and Michael Nicholson have been never-ending sources of help in our work. Bill Kehoe is stepping up to help with bid assessments. And of course, many of you are there when we have cleanup days. Stay tuned for future announcements of our work.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joel Zimbelman Property and Plant Maintenance



What to Know About Keys

Last week, May 12th and 13th, our entire campus was rekeyed. The council and staff would like to maintain a clear, concise key checkout system and keep loaning keys to a minimum in order to maintain the best safety and security we can for our congregation. This means that keys cut before May, 2025 will no longer work on our building, except the gate to the columbarium, so that when families from all over are in Chico, they can continue to visit their loved ones without needing a key switch. If you need a new key, please see Michael Nicholson Dick, Office Manager.



Facility Rentals

Faith Lutheran Church shares its space with organizations, groups, and individuals in the broader Chico community and beyond. We are a hub for 12-step programs, concerts, and so many wonderful things in between. Here is a list of the groups we are currently sharing our space with:

Church groups that meet on site: GriefShare, Time Out for Art, Quilters, Stephen Ministry, Choir, Contemporary Musicians, Bell Choir, Just Older Youth Seniors (JOYS), Monday Evening Bible Study, Thursday Morning Bible Study, Dungeons and Dragons 5e, Alphabet Soup, Faith Lutheran Youth (FLY) Night, Sunday School.

Community groups that meet on site: AA Candelight, Nar Anon, BSA Troop 12, PEO chapter V.B., PEO chapter D.S., the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Counties, Synergism Women's Chorus, Chico Children's Choir, Parkinson's Support Group and Rock Steady Boxing, Aging Gracefully, Safe Space Winter Shelter and Cooling Center, Debtors Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, Passages. Church of the Homeless Jesus does not meet on site, but uses our kitchen so that we can supply Pr. Fred Bowdy, facilitator, with water for his food truck which he uses to feed and nourish those without access to basic meals.

Online groups: Pastor's Bible Study, Centering Prayer, Spanish Group.

Personnel Committee
Tom Melvin, Committee Member

Greetings from your Personnel Committee,

The Personnel Committee is a resource for Faith Lutheran Church's staff, council and pastor. We are in the process of completing an employee handbook covering topics from benefits to time off. This is important to make sure we are following all local and government rules and regulations related to employment, as well to ensure fair treatment of our staff. We are also updating job descriptions as needed for staff positions. Offering counsel and support to our staff is another important role we hope to be a valuable resource for.

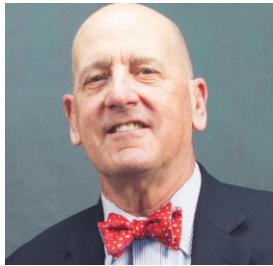
It is important to note that as we establish programs, policies and procedures, we do so in conjunction with the pastor and with council approval.

Currently, the Personnel Committee includes Gayle Palys, Ben Vandersluis and Tom Melvin. If you have questions or suggestions, please reach out to one of our members.



Financial Team

Faith Lutheran Church is grateful for all its ‘behind the scenes’ ministries; those you do not necessarily see on Sunday, but whose work is critical to the operation of our facility. Money management at Faith happens because of these people:



Mark Kimmelshue, Council Treasurer

Mark is the person you want to talk to about the budget, savings, bank accounts, and general financial organization. He has volunteered countless, countless hours of his time over the last several years, giving his time and talents freely to our church.



Jeanette Joslyn, Bookkeeper

Jeanette is our bookkeeper, outsourced through Precision Business Associates. Jeanette has served here through the ministry of several pastors and has been present since before Pr. Ben’s installation. Jeanette handles outgoing money and payroll.



Lynette Stensrud, Financial Secretary (*with husband Howie*)

Lynette is our intrepid financial secretary and manages incoming money, AKA giving. She schedules our counters, orders and gives out offering envelopes, assists them in organizing giving-related paperwork, and spends a good chunk of her own time each week caring for the church's finances.



Michael Nicholson Dick, Office Manager

Michael helps in an administrative capacity. He enters data and cuts checks, so if you have a reimbursement form and need a check cut, or have a question about which line item to use, you can talk to him at the office.

Worship and Music

By Luke Nicolay, Director of Worship and Music

“Rise up, follow me,
Come away is the call,
With the love in your heart
As the only song;
There is no such beauty
As where you belong:
Rise up, follow me,
I will lead you home.”

-From *The Road Home* by Stephen Paulus with text by Michael Dennis Browne

Stephen Paulus composed the piece *The Road Home* in 2001. He found inspiration from a folk tune called “The Lone Wild Bird” found in a larger compilation of tunes called *The Southern Harmony Songbook* of 1835. For many of you reading this, you might recognize these words from a post that I made to honor our good friend and parishioner, Meridith Mason Woods, who died in the Fall of 2024. Over this last several months, I’ve come back to this song over and over again. The tune, the text, and it’s general feeling gave and continue to give me a sense of peace. Each time I listen to it, I feel God’s comforting hand reminding that though there is pain, the love that she shared with all people will be forever present with each of us.

The composing of this piece, by Stephen Paulus, reminds me that with all things in life it takes a village to accomplish. As you read above, the tune came from a compilation of songs that were composed by another musician (or passed down rather), the text came from a dear friend, and the piece itself was written for a choir of several people who, in turn, used their voices to help give life to Paulus’ new song. Just in this short paragraph, we read that Stephen Paulus didn’t do this alone. There is always a large group of people helping us along, sharing new ideas with us, and inviting us into something beautiful. I see this in the ministries

of Faith Lutheran—in the beauty of worship that we share together and in our experiences together with the wider community.

This year has been extra productive as we see new groups using the church, more music being made in numerous groups, and more. It's always a thrill to see groups such as Synergism, De Colores String Ensemble, the Chico Children's Choir, and countless other groups using our spaces to create music and to see how they minister and spread love and beauty to the greater community of Chico.

Along with the groups that use our church spaces for rehearsals and performances, I'm also ecstatic to have so many wonderful ensembles to work with at Faith such as the Sanctuary Choir, the Handbell Choir, brass ensembles, chamber ensembles, and the contemporary team as well as seeing Emily Puerta and others working with the children to nurture them in song.

The music groups at FLC continue to amaze and surprise with their level of dedication, musicianship, and willingness to try new things (even if they may seem difficult and daunting at the outset). Everyone rises to the occasion and is always coming with creative ideas and ways to learn.



This year, the Sanctuary Choir was hard at work preparing for the major seasons of the church year as well as for the 4th annual Festival of Lessons and Carols with St. John's Episcopal Church. In the summer of 2024, we said 'see you later' to some of our dear choir members as they made their way to other parts of the state for work opportunities. With the sadness of saying our farewells to friends, we also welcomed some new faces to the choir and that's been another great joy of the year. As we look forward to the next year, both the choir members and I invite you to come and join us for a rehearsal or for several. We are ALWAYS looking for new folks who are interested in singing. There's lots of great rep, laughs, and wonderful community in the choir. In addition to singing, we also have a good party or two throughout the year. In addition, if you feel called to give to the music ministry, please feel free to make donations to the music dedicated fund or to the visiting musicians fund. Donations help support all of the music ministries at Faith and help us to maintain our instruments such as the bells, purchase new music, pay our visiting musicians, and more.



Along with the choir, the handbell group has had another wonderful and successful year. They, too, participated in a joint bell choir with St. John's Episcopal for the Annual Festival of Lessons and Carols. In addition, we've also added a couple of new faces to the bell choir which has been exciting. This year, the bell choirs focus was to work on playing more often in worship, as well as to

learn new techniques of ringing. It's also been very exciting to have the new hand chimes that so many of you generously donated last year. In addition to the bell choir utilizing them often, we've also been able to have the children in Sunday School work with them and it's been quite fun for them to do this.

The contemporary team has been hard at work each week to help lead the congregation in song. This group works hard every Thursday evening learning new music and continuing to work on familiar tunes.

Worship has continued to be elevated through each and every one of the people who serve in worship each week. It takes a good 20-30 people per service to make everything run smoothly. We couldn't do any of this without you. If you're interested or think that you might have a gift to offer in worship, please talk with us. We'd love to get you connected. There are a plethora of ways to serve from any of the music teams to the worship teams which include A/V, assisting minister, lector, healing minister, communion server, communion clean-up (sacristan), usher/greeter, welcome table/greeter, coffee hour, money counter, and more.



Lastly, it's been a huge pleasure and joy to be able to work with the music and worship advisory teams. Over this last year, Steve Hall and I have been working together to create advisory teams that assist me in planning, leading, scheduling, and training in all aspects of music and worship. This has been an incredibly rewarding process as it's given me the ability to get to know the needs of the congregation better as well as to hear different ideas on how we can get parts of the service to run smoother such as communion—which a number of folks helped us to streamline. The worship committee has taken on the vital role of scheduling and training all of those who share their gifts in worship. The music committee has also been a group that's been meeting since nearly the start of my time here. This group continues to grow and help with the planning not only of music in worship but of many of the creative aspects in worship such as poetry, spoken word, and more. I'm always excited to come to my meetings with them as there's great fellowship, food, great music, and lots of comradery. I'm very thankful for everyone who is involved in all of these groups. Again (and you'll get tired of hearing me say this but I'm going to keep saying it ☺), if you're interested in possibly serving or sharing your gifts by being a part of the worship or music advisory teams, please reach out to me. I'd love to have you aboard the teams and would love to hear your ideas.

As we go into this new year for the church, I look forward to new experiences and to serving a God who abounds in generous love and delights in their people. I also continue to return to the song verse from the start of this report—rise up, follow me, I will lead you home. There is truly no better feeling than being home with all of you at Faith Lutheran. I cherish the moments that we've all spent together and I eagerly anticipate the coming year with each of you.

*Blessings,
Luke, Dir. Of Worship & Music*

Children and Youth Ministry

By Josh Edwards, Dir. Children & Youth Ministries



Things are buzzing in FLC's Sunday School! What started with around 10 kids each week has now doubled, and we're thrilled to see new faces showing up as friends invite friends and families bring each other along. Every Sunday is filled with laughter, music, crafts, and joy, all thanks to our amazing volunteers who pour love and creativity into each gathering. But the real magic happens beyond the classroom as parents are connecting, kids are building friendships, and our church family continues to grow in faith and fellowship.

Our Sunday School lessons follow the same lectionary as the main worship service, giving families a shared theme to reflect on throughout the week. It's not just about what happens on Sunday morning. It's about carrying those

messages into everyday life, sparking meaningful conversations at home and strengthening bonds around the dinner table. As our community grows, we're holding fast to what makes Faith Lutheran feel like home: connection, conversation, and Christ-centered growth for all ages.



The idea of organizing a night specifically for children between 5th and 8th grade is no small task. If you have children, you understand how difficult it can be to plan events for them, especially when you're not sure how many kids are showing up or which ones will be there. But regardless of those uncertainties, FLY Night was going to happen. It all began with making sure we had not just enough leaders, but the right leaders in place to guide a group of tweens.

Thanks to the help of Kate Ory, Jerry Sherril, Pastor Ben Colahan, and Louis Angelucci, we confidently stepped into FLY Night knowing we had assembled the Dream Team of Tween Leaders.

The night came quickly, and the atmosphere was set to show kids that FLY Night is a space to unwind, connect with friends, and grow in their faith. Our goal is to build a community where everyone feels welcome, safe, and encouraged in their relationship with Christ.



Our first night focused on creating a fun and welcoming environment. We made it easy for kids to connect with each other through group activities like chess, ping pong, and cornhole. Snacks and drinks were ready for the kids to enjoy freely, and music played in the background to help set the “vibe” (as the kids say). I can confidently say the “vibe” was right! As the kids arrived, said goodbye to their parental figures, and jumped right into games and conversations with their peers.

We had a total of 8 kids join us for FLY Night, three of them currently don't attend Faith Lutheran but came through a friend's invitation. As the night progressed, things only got better. Icebreaker games like Human Bingo got the kids up and talking, learning fun facts about one another. We dimmed the lights and played worship videos that included lyrics and body movements that got every kid to participate and seemed to genuinely enjoy it.

After more games and laughter, we grabbed Bibles, read scripture together, and then gathered in small groups for meaningful conversations.

It was truly amazing to witness kids willingly praising God through music and not only discussing scripture, but also thinking about how to apply it to their own lives. We ended the night with food, more fellowship, and more games that made it hard for some kids to leave. And that's exactly how we like it.

Faith Lutheran's Easter Trunk & Hunt was a huge hit! It's not every day you feel like climbing up on the roof to make an announcement, but that's how excited I was about this year's Easter Trunk & Hunt. And it turns out, it was for a good reason! Faith Lutheran hosted one of the biggest Easter events in Chico, and hundreds of people from the community came out to join the fun.

The event came together thanks to amazing volunteers who helped make everything run smoothly. From the moment it started, our parking lot was

packed with families, kids, and tons of smiling faces. Every decorated trunk had games, prizes, and activities, and kids loved running from car to car collecting treats.

The local organizations that joined in brought something extra special. The Mobile Library Bus let kids pick out free books (about 200 were given out), and the fire truck was a huge hit. Plenty of kids got to hop in for an experience that they will remember forever. We also had a bounce house and some great food from Pita Pit, Lili's Brazilian Bistro, and Antojitos De Los Buenos. There was something for everyone.

And then there was the egg hunt. Before we even said "go," there were kids lined up and ready. Over 4,000 eggs were hidden inside and outside the church, and watching the excitement on their faces made all the work totally worth it.



What really made the day special was seeing how many new families came out to experience Faith Lutheran for the first time. It was a great reminder that our church is for everyone, and events like this help us connect with the wider community in a meaningful way.

Oh, did we mention we made the front page of the Enterprise-Record? That just shows how much this event meant, not just to us, but to the whole community.

Joshua Edwards, Dir. Children & Youth Ministries

Small Groups

Just Older Youth, Seniors (JOYS) ***Nola Dosch, Facilitator***



J.O.Y.S. is one of our book-study-related small groups. This lively and spirited group of seniors met in the Fall, Winter and Spring months on the second and fourth Mondays in room 7/8. They read and discussed two very different books.

The first book was *The Last Lecture* which was a 2008 New York Times best selling book coauthored by Randy Pausch and Jeffrey Zaslow. This book is known for its witty humor, despite being Randy's farewell to his loved ones due to his terminal pancreatic cancer. Through his past experiences, Randy attempts to give advice to his young children that they may need once he has passed.

The second was *Traveling Mercies* a book by Ann Lamott where she explores the many moments in her life where her sense of faith drastically changed. She documents her journey of faith as a Christian convert after many years of drug and alcohol abuse where she eventually finds a small quiet church for herself and her son. The book is personal, warmhearted and very humorous.

GriefShare

Nola Dosch, Facilitator

GriefShare is a Christ centered support group that is a safe and welcoming place to help adults who are grieving the loss of a family member or friend. While everyone's response to loss and grief is unique, people will experience many of the same challenges.

For people who've lost a loved one, the Thanksgiving and Christmas season can be daunting. We held a 2-hour Surviving the Holidays event, one in November and one in December. This event provided a warm and supportive place to help the bereaved navigate through the difficult holiday season.

In April we began another 13-week GriefShare program where a video is shown each week featuring practical advice, guidance, and encouragement from experts in grief recovery from people who have experienced the loss of a loved one. Featured topics include Loneliness, Sadness, Fear, Anger, Regrets, Relationships, Self-Care, Hope and Resilience and much more. Afterwards the group discusses what they have learned and how it applies to their situation.

Hearing what others are going through can be meaningful and supportive. A comprehensive Participant Guide workbook is provided and serves as a road map through the grief journey. This workbook helps the participant process emotions and experiences and cope with the loss. They will apply what they have heard in the group and gain tools to deal with complicated grief. Between meetings, participants will find personal help and encouragement as they go through the short exercises, journaling prompts and scriptures provided in the workbook.

Time Out for Art

This small group facilitated by Sherrill Heinz, Caryl Quinones, and Alynn Brutsman has been meeting for almost a year now every Monday afternoon from 1:00-4:00PM and will continue throughout the summer. Participants are welcome to bring whatever creative project they are working on or choose to create from materials we have on hand. The group has a devotional near the

beginning of our meeting time. Every other week or so they offer opportunities to learn a new art form together. Sometimes they have guest artists as well.

Time Out for Art has been excited to learn how to tie-dye t-shirts, design and paint shopping bags, make Christmas



ornaments, create with alcohol inks, make gelli prints, and carve their own block prints. Some of them are into making art journals, a way of recording their thoughts, experiences or spiritual sayings with pictures from magazines or their own artwork. It's not about being an accomplished artist; you do not need to have any art experience to come to this group. It's about having fun with creativity! Most of all, it has been a joy for this group and for the church to build community together while doing art.

Men's Breakfast

Men's Breakfast is every Friday at 8:00 a.m. at the Farmer's Skillet on Rio Lindo. Engage in fellowship over breakfast!



Dungeons and Dragons

Dungeons & Dragons (5e) takes place on the second Sundays of the month. We enjoy doing "one-shots," games that are started and finished in the same session. We take turns leading sessions, delighting in roleplay, snacks, and fellowship. First-time players of all ages welcome! Please RSVP at least a week in advance so we can make sure we have a character sheet for you. You can RSVP by calling/emailing Malinda Ard, Kate Ory, or as always, our church office.

Spanish Speaking Group

The Spanish-Speaking Group is perfect for those learning the language and those who are already fluent. Discuss upcoming scriptures, enjoy group conversation, and broaden your Spanish conversational skills. This group meets online on Wednesdays from 9-10 AM. You can connect by going to ChicoFaithLutheran.org and clicking "connect to zoom" on the homepage, using the password 667.

Alphabet Soup

MacKenzie Wilson, Facilitator

As a congregation we are excited to have a resurgence in the Alphabet Soup Ministry. Now more than ever the LGBTQIA2S+ community needs support, fellowship, and visibility. Faith Lutheran is a church that is Reconciling in Christ, inclusive, and affirming. Alphabet Soup will now have monthly Show & Tell meet ups, facilitate a training and panel with Stonewall Alliance, be active at Pride, host post Pride activities, and be connected with Queer Third Space Chico. We want Butte County to know we are a safe place for ALL and that God loves EVERYONE for who they are.

In addition, Alphabet Soup has cleaned up and decorated Room 4. While Alphabet Soup has 'adopted' this room for meetings, the space has been made comfy and cozy for all groups to use. When you have a moment, check out Room 4. If it's a space you'd like your group to meet, let Michael at the office know.



Wilderness Worship

Wilderness Worship meets about once a month to hike, swim, paddleboard, float, and explore Nor Cal. Grow in your relationship with God and each other by noticing God's presence in wilderness places. This group meets on an as-scheduled basis. Keep your eyes peeled in the E-blast and see where our adventures take us next! Here are pics from some of our favorite adventures!



Upper Park Night Hike



Jonesville Snowshoeing



River Float



Table Mountain Hike



Tuesday Quilters

Quilters meet in the fellowship hall Tuesdays from 10am-3pm. They work on projects for boutiques, hosted to raise money for student scholarships and paratransit tickets to help folks get to church. They also work on community service projects. If you're reading this around the time of the Annual

Meeting, May, 2025, then make sure if there's a senior in your home, they apply for a scholarship! Scholarships are good for any extended education including university, junior college, trade and technical school, certificate programs, and other similar education. Reach out to Char Miller or the office!

BSA Troop 12

Troop 12 is our all-female BSA group. They meet Thursdays at Faith Lutheran Church at 6:30 p.m. The troop is always looking for dedicated, young people in 6th-12th grade who would like to join.

Working Dads Group

Working Dads Groups. Fathers in the midst of their professional career meet every other week at 8pm to share joys and struggles, bible study, and pray for one another.

Tables for 8

Tables for 8 is a group of people who meet at homes and have dinner. This is a great opportunity for new and old members to connect and get to know each other.

Bible Studies

Monday Evenings (In Person)

If you are looking for a casual, friendly Bible study where folks can grow in faith and understanding, we invite you to join our Monday Evening Bible Study with Kate Ory at 5:30 PM, on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month in room 7. Group members are encouraged to use Martin Luther's techniques for reading scripture to ask the questions that matter most to them. Childcare can be available if arrangements are made with Director of Children and Youth, Joshua Edwards, ahead of time. To do this, please connect with him via email or by calling the office.

Tuesday Evenings (Online)

How does the pastor go from the bible passages assigned each week to the Sunday morning sermon? Come find out and be a part of the process online, Tuesdays at 5pm online. You can connect by going to our homepage at ChicoFaithLutheran.org, and clicking on “connect to zoom” using the password 667.

Thursday Mornings (In Person)

Join us for a member-led, peaceful and pplifting Bible Study on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month at 10am in Room 7. Together, we will reflect on God's Word, share in fellowship, and find inspiration for our daily lives. Biblical background resources and pre-written questions provided. In addition to study scripture, the Bible study ends with time to pray for one another. All are welcome—come as you are!

Community, Service, and Fellowship

Blue Bags



We are active participants of the “Blue Bags” project. We collect nonperishable goods year-round. In fact, you can drop off your nonperishables anytime during our office hours, just swing on by! Food is given to the Chico Food Locker on the 2nd Friday of every-other month. Your food does not need to come in a blue bag, or any bag necessarily! We’ll take any nonperishables whether they’re in a bag, box, or anything in between. Thank you to Margaret McMillan, who for years has arranged pickups and drop-offs for this project. If you’d like to get involved, let us know!

Food Bank

Lisa Roehling, Facilitator

Dear Faith Lutheran Church,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you deeply and share with you the gratitude of myself, our team of volunteers and most importantly the community members we serve.

January 8, 2021 was our first food distribution at Faith Lutheran Church. We were keeping track of those we served who had been detrimentally affected by the Campfire (33%) and those detrimentally affected by Covid (30%).

In 2021 each distribution two times per month - we averaged 120 Households to 170 Households. Individuals served ranged from 300 to 500. These distributions were drive thru due to Covid and despite a few traffic issues this process was going well.



By 2023 Households served jumped up to an average of 300 – 400 Households and 600 – 700 Individuals at each distribution. October 6, 2023 the distribution was switched to a park and walk up model. The time was also changed to 3:00 – 5:00 pm.

2024 was very consistent in service to our community members with averaging 300 Households and 600 - 800 individuals. We did spend the summer of 2024 in the courtyard and only saw a big drop in service when temperatures reached over 105 degrees.

There are volunteers that support our clients that are unable to stand in line - I affectionately call them “runners” as they are packing up food for our clients that are staying in their vehicles and need assistance.

2025 and we are maintaining the same service counts as 2024.

Our volunteers make this distribution a wonderful and beautiful opportunity for those in our community that are needing a little reprieve from the stress of always worrying about what and when they are having their next meal.

Yes – Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano is supplying the food but the volunteers are showing the community God's love and the peace that comes with loving our neighbors.

*In Gratitude and Appreciation,
Lisa Roehling - Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano
Katie Rodriguez and Tim O'Rourke – French Family Food Bank*

Anybody is welcome to walk up or drive up. No ID or paperwork is required; food is available to all. This food bank takes into account the usability of food; those who have access to a kitchen will be provided with food that can be cooked, and those without often receive quick and easy-to-eat food items. This food bank also distributes healthy produce whenever they can. The volunteers at the food bank and our church believe that no one should have to choose between making ends meet or a meal. The food bank takes place on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month between 3:00-5:00 p.m., and we encourage everyone to consider volunteering!

***Torres Shelter
Elise Gladu, Facilitator***

This last fiscal year, our long-time coordinator retired and we lost all but two of our teams. We have been struggling to keep this ministry going but we have done it and have not missed a month!

Many folks feel this is a positive ministry for our community and we would like to keep this going but we need your help! Just a few extra people would give folks a break and keep things going on a monthly basis. If you were able to sign up for one or two months it would be a great help! We shop for, prepare, cook and serve dinner for the guests at the shelter on the first Tuesday of each month.

We serve between 120 to 130 people on those nights, it is not a difficult task but it does take your time and energy. It's best to have a team of 4 to 5 people, we have made it much easier with a booklet of specific how to's and recipes. If you need a little more help than this there is always time with myself or another team



for training. You do not need to use your own money the churches credit card is available for pickup the day of the event, we have a budget of \$5-5.25 per person, all recipes take this into account. It's a fun and rewarding ministry that helps our community beyond measure! Just give me a call if you would like to get involved.

Elise Gladu

Steve Troester Memorial Blood Drive ***Marge Troester, Facilitator***

Every two seconds someone in the US needs a blood transfusion. Blood is vital for life. It delivers oxygen and nutrients to all the cells of the body. The brain, heart, kidneys, and all the other essential parts of the body need it to survive. When people lose blood in surgery or due to trauma, blood saves lives. When cancer patients become severely anemic or don't have enough platelets to form clots to stop bleeding, blood saves lives.

Thanks to the many people who donated blood or helped out at registration or after-care tables during our two blood drives this year we collected 25 units of blood potentially impacting the lives of 75 people. We plan to continue with an annual springtime blood drive next year. Thank you for your generosity.



Stephen Ministry

Jamie Holmes, Facilitator

Stephen Ministry provides distinctively-Christian, confidential, free, one-on-one weekly spiritual support to people going through difficult times. Since 1975, more than 600,000 people from more than 13,000 congregations and other organizations have been trained as Stephen Ministers.

Stephen Ministers and Leaders are lay congregation members trained to provide one-to-one care to those in crisis or experiencing a difficult time in life such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, caregiver fatigue, relocation and more.

As of this report, Faith Lutheran has 7 Stephen Ministers: Mark Chrisman, Dottie Erhardt, Candy Munson, Cyla Nelson, Linda Rice, Charlene Sandberg, and Dianna Snyder. The Stephen Leaders are Gen Brink-Capriola who handles referrals, and Jamie Holmes who handles continuing education. We share supervision, recruiting, and congregational awareness responsibilities.

Care Receivers are individuals in the congregation or community who are going through a crisis or life difficulty. Potential care receivers often first meet with Pastor Ben but referrals can come from anyone including congregants, staff, or care receivers themselves. Once referred, Stephen Leader Gen then assesses their needs and appropriateness for care; she and Jamie match them with a Stephen Minister. The caring relationship lasts for as long as the need continues. During the past twelve months, we ministered to a total of eleven people.

Stephen Ministry Training – The newest Stephen Ministers have received the required 50 hours of weekly in-class training. The remaining post-class training modules are being completed now in separate continuing education sessions. These are in addition to the continuing education provided in our twice-monthly Stephen Ministry meetings.

Jamie Holmes, Facilitator

Mercy House

Mercy House is a collaboration with Chico Housing Action Team (CHAT) to provide housing and support to medically fragile women who would otherwise be unhoused. Mercy House volunteers from FLC provide friendship and oversee weekly house meetings with the residents to support them in their journey to stability and security.

Safe Space Winter Shelter and Cooling Center ***Michael Nicholson Dick, Office Manager***

Faith Lutheran Church continues to host Safe Space Winter Shelter and Cooling Center on site during the coldest and hottest weeks of the year. For two weeks in the winter and two weeks in the summer, we shelter approximately 60 guests at a time in our Fellowship Hall.

In the winter (usually January), guests arrive at about 6pm and are served hot meals. These meals are often prepared by Faith Lutheran Church teams, however, other community members and organizations step in to cook too not only here at Faith, but at other host facilities. Last winter, we had to ‘fight’ for dates because so many community teams were called to cook. It was the best ‘problem’ to have! After dinner, guests are provided cots and blankets and may sleep here overnight. In the morning they are served coffee and breakfast, then break for the day before returning around 6pm again.

In the summer, we open our Fellowship Hall during the afternoons and evenings. Guests can come and relax whether they want to sleep, get a snack, hydrate, or watch a movie. During the summer, donations of water, drinks, fruit, and similar nutritious, hydrating items are encouraged.

During either shelter, Safe Space staffs and monitors our building. In recent years, Executive Director Hilary Crosby, along with coordinators Quin Troester and Ali McMorrow, have helped us maintain a space of kindness, compassion, welcome, and care. We would like to thank them for all of their hard work.

In American and certainly in Chico, we are facing housing crises, homelessness, a lack of access to food and hygiene, and a severe lack of access to mental and behavioral health care. This shelter offers temporary reprieve for those who need these things most. We encourage you to prayerfully consider how you can help, both by serving at Safe Space and similar programs, and by communicating your feelings to those in leadership like city council members, congressmen, and so on.

God's Work, Our Hands Sunday ***Mary Schweder, Facilitator***

Faith's annual day of community service was on October 13th at Rosedale Elementary school. The planning team worked for months to plan the details. Volunteers came the day before to prep the area by sweeping, blowing, and washing picnic tables. Then on Sunday morning at 8:30 am 97 volunteers gathered for communion and a blessing at the school and cool weather to begin our work. Painting the blacktop, backboards, painting and repairing 12 picnic tables, weeding, and doing paperwork inside to help the teachers with their lessons. Young children as well as older adults were able to participate in the 13 different projects. Rosedale school benefited, but just as important our community of Faith came together and connected with one another showing how God's work is done with the hands of volunteers.





Christmas Gifts

Holiday giving is a big part of Christmas here at Faith Lutheran Church. Last Christmas we put up our giving tree and collected items for low-income families at Rosedale Elementary School. About 25 kids received at least 2 presents, including clothes, shoes, and toys. We're open to ideas, so if you have one for this year's giving tree, feel free to share!

Eucharistic Ministry

Eucharistic Ministers have the privilege of sharing Christ's presence by bringing Communion to the homebound. These ministers often develop deep friendships

with the people they visit and learn stories from the elders of our community. We have a handful of wonderful ministers who would like to see more people partake in this ministry, getting to know the parishioners who can't necessarily make it to church on Sundays but still long for participation, Communion, and companionship.

Sanctuary Art
Dottie Erhardt, Equipping Minister
and Sanctuary Artist

This past year has brought with it several opportunities for artwork in Equipping Ministry and Worship. Rally Day's track pointed the way. All Saint's Day's photos framed the fellowship hall while the larger than life candles surrounded the sanctuary. At this writing the hourglass of Lenten prayers hangs in the sanctuary with Jesus life told through drawings and the words of Don Heinz. To serve this community with artwork is such a wonderful privilege. What a blessing!



The Greatest Gifts Project
Kim Schweder, Facilitator

In Genesis 12:2-3, God tells Abraham, “I will bless you and you will be a blessing; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing to all people on earth.” In other words, we are blessed so that we can be a blessing to others!

The idea began in January of this year with 25 people feeling called to attend an informational meeting following worship and several others indicated interest but were unable to attend the initial meeting. A small idea for a new way to look at community ministries in and around Chico by looking to expand Faith's footprint, began in April. It was originally the thought to have a month-long campaign 2 or 3 times per year. We are happy to report that even though a few months remain open for other campaigns, we have many months calendared



into 2026. Faith Lutheran has been blessed with so many people who are showing their great leadership as well as many who just want to fulfill their passions by helping the various leaders. As of this writing, we have successfully completed the first campaign gathering durable goods for the 6th Street Center for Youth. The campaign for May will benefit Chico 2025 Special Olympics with June benefiting “Path Scholars”. Other community

centered campaigns are planned ranging from “Back to School” to “Blue Bags” to the Chico Animal Shelter and others in between. Some of the questions?

What is “The Greatest Gift” you ask? We as Christians believe that God sent his Son, Jesus, so that He might pay the price for us to inherit eternal life...the Greatest Gift. We receive this gift not to keep it to ourselves but rather endeavor to be more like Christ and give to others. With these thoughts in mind, the thought of “what if the Faith community was to raise the awareness of underserved groups or organizations in and around the Chico area and attempt to make a small dent with our neighbors in tangible ways?” With that simple thought as the inspiration behind “The Greatest Gift Project” became a reality.

What we do: The original idea was to gather durable goods for 3 organizations in 3 separate months of the calendar year. The level of interest and the passions of our people rendered the limitation to 3 obsolete. As of this writing, 9 months for 9 separate projects are spoken for between now and April 2026 (yes, not a typo, 2026!)

What is needed: Over several group meetings, discussion with Pastor Ben, and meetings between Kate Ory and Kim Schweder, it seemed best and easiest to use each calendar month for a different need. A “Position Guide” (Equipping Ministry way to say job description) was assembled (copies available upon request). Plenty of openings for anyone who wishes to be part of the different areas.

Who we need: 3 of the next 12 months are still available. Anyone who feels a passion for or a calling to represent an underserved section of our community is welcome to reach out to either Kate or Kim to discuss their thoughts and ideas. We are viewing all those who have shown interest to be part of the “Greatest Gift Facilitating Team” which will only meet quarterly with our second meeting taking place on April 8th at 5:30 in the conference room. “The Greatest Gift Action Teams” will be made up of not less than 3 people who will take responsibility for communication with the chosen organization, as well as promotion of those needs using our normal communication channels (Faith Talks, Eblast, bulletin etc.)

What we will see: This is likely one of the most exciting ways we will be promoting this project! As we respond to the Greatest Gift ever given to mankind, it seemed only logical to receive these gifts into a manger celebrating that gift. The original plan was to have items received in the back of the church and then Pastor Ben came up with the great idea to receive them into a manger at the foot of the altar. Like so much of this project, this idea too took on a life of its own. Now, Ralph Godwin graciously took on the project to build a manger that found its permanent home in front of our altar in the worship center. Not just ANY manger, but a manger that is solidly built from oak, and stained to match our existing furniture. It is the hope and prayer of our still expanding team that this manger will serve as a place for which people can drop off their small donations as we remember the huge Gift.

We would encourage anyone with a passion and interested in adopting a campaign in and around the Chico community to contact Kate Ory or Kim Schweder and discover the power of connecting a passion with a need.



Administration

Michael Nicholson Dick, Office Manager

For those of you I haven't met yet, hello! I'm Michael, the office manager, and it's good to meet you vicariously through this report. I started working at Faith in 2019, and what a tremendous six years this has been. I tell people constantly that this is the most incredible job. I'll never forget being hired; the entire council called me on the phone and cried out, "You're hired!" in unison. The council has seen new members come and go throughout the years, but each team has upheld that same spirit of celebration and welcome. I'm always sad to see council members phase out, yet I feel excitement to welcome the new ones!

My job is to (*ad*)minister to you! I minister by being available in the office 5 days a week (except holidays). I serve by organizing and editing our newsletters both print and digital, managing publications, assisting with facility organization and overseeing rentals, aiding our finance team, and working with small groups and project facilitators to make sure you have everything you need to carry out your ministries. Essentially, I provide support. If you need help, have a question, want to rent the facility, need to connect with someone, or want to kickstart a group of your own, you can always come to me. My goal is to make sure you are welcomed and comfortable, whether you're feeling good, bad, okayish, celebrating something, mourning someone, or you've completely lost your marbles and need a sanity check. I am here to serve with care, compassion, and occasionally, comic relief.

Recap of the Last Year

Last summer, we said goodbye to Dani Vogel, Dir. Family Life. Luke, Dani and I jokingly called ourselves the "Unholy Triad," and spent much of our time coercing each other into going out for coffee. We miss Dani's lively spirit and creativity, and celebrate the years we spent working together. My last day working with Dani was not at Faith Lutheran, but at the Sierra Pacific Synod



Assembly in Fresno last summer, where she worked as an Audio/Visual aid, and I as the synod's interim administrator, taking photos and publishing daily recaps of the assembly. It was a wonderful last hoorah which we got to share with voting members Jill and Rick Bentler who made it down to Fresno as well.

In the winter, we hired Josh Edwards, our current Director of Children and Youth Ministries. Let me tell you: *Josh is amazing*. My report was going to be boring until he showed up. Now I get to tell you how much our church population has grown and how many community connections we've made in the short time he's been present. Seriously: we've only had Josh for about 6 months, but in that time, we've seen not only an increase in quantity of children and visitors, but in ministry *quality*. Please, read Josh's article on page 33, and enjoy all the pictures!

Social Media and Publications

PLATFORM	2024 Subscribers	2025 Subscribers
Official Facebook Page https://www.facebook.com/Faithlutheranchico	717	761
Private Facebook Group https://www.facebook.com/groups/faithlutheranchico	338	405
Youtube youtube.com/@chicofaithlutheran	166	210
Instagram https://www.instagram.com/chicofaithlutheran/		98
E-blast Subscribers	372	394
Faith Talks	219	240

Volunteer in the Office Starting This Summer!

We've grown. That means there is more work to do. Faith Talks content and bulletin announcements are abundant. What took me a very short time to compile six years ago takes much longer now, and not to quote my mother, but I've been encouraged to seek help.

The plan is to take 1-2 days a month to have volunteers run the desk while I work on Faith Talks and other content in another room. I will still be here on site, but the goal is to have somebody assist walk-ins and answer messages so that I can focus on editing.

The first date I would like to ask for help with is Monday, June 23rd. That is a Monday, and I will have just returned from vacation. The morning shift is from 10am-Noon, and the afternoon shift is from 1pm-4:30pm. My goal is to compile Faith Talks that day, a task that, coupled with other tasks and running the desk, takes me days to finish. With your help at the desk, I may just be able to get it done that day, and if I do, we can proofread, print, and mail it that week, just in time to arrive at your doorsteps by the 1st of July!

Tasks include greeting people, passing along contact info to appropriate parties, and taking messages. You can also bring a project to work on, like sewing, crocheting, art, etc. If you're willing to lend a hand, I sure would appreciate it. Give me a shout!

Database Help

Again, we've grown. Elvanto is our member database, and includes everything from contact information to worship scheduling to demographics to groups. When I receive a contact information form that's been filled out at church, I enter that person's info into Elvanto. But after some time has passed, that information will change. By then, they may have been baptized, become rostered, started serving as an usher, or may have joined several groups.

I am looking for a handful of people to help me enter and proofread information to make sure it's correct. This can be done from your own homes at your

convenience, and I reckon it'll take about an hour to two hours of your time a month. The more people who are involved, the less time you'll have to spend, so by all means, gather up some folks here at church and tell me you'd like to give it a go. If you try it out and it's not your thing, that's okay too.

Staff Workday Schedule

	At work; best time to reach them
*	Working but busy
	Day off

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Pr. Ben	*				*		
Luke	*						
Josh	*				*		
Michael							

*Sundays

Please give the staff as much berth as you can on Sundays. Church is kind of like a performance: the staff are like actors, and they need to focus on the “show,” or in our case, worship. Like a show, there are lines to read, music to memorize, and children to shepherd. Before and after church there are “wardrobe changes,” and cleanup must take place afterwards. If you're familiar with a church, stage, green room, changing tent, or anything of the sort, you know how hectic “performance day” can be! If you have a question for Ben, Luke, or Josh on Sunday, if possible, please direct it to our Council Member of the Week, or our Equipping Minister of the Week. Either are there to help you, and here is the distinction:

- The Council Member of the Week is the best person to go to for staff, council, or campus related questions.
- The Equipper of the Week is the best person to go to for ministry, group, or community outreach questions.

*Thursdays

While Pr. Ben and Josh both work on Thursdays, Ben takes this time to write his sermon, and Josh hosts Faith Lutheran Youth (FLY) Night in the afternoon. That means that they are not always physically present at the office during those times. The best way to reach Ben or Josh on a Thursday is to call the office or email them directly.

Staff Contact Info

To contact Pr. Ben, Josh Edwards, Luke Nicolay, or myself by phone, please call the office at (530) 895-3754. I am friends with many of you outside of church, and want to share that as an hourly employee, I set firm boundaries and do not use my cell phone for work; please reach me at the office for church related things.

Pr. Ben:	ColahanB@gmail.com
Josh:	JoshFaithLutheran@gmail.com
Luke:	LukeNicolay1@gmail.com
Michael/Office:	FaitthLutheranInChico@gmail.com

Ministry Contacts

Please contact the office at (530) 895-3754 or access your church directory to contact the following people. This list is not meant as a comprehensive directory but to know who facilitates each ministry.

Pastoral Care – Pr. Ben Colahan

Worship, Music – Luke Nicolay, Dir. Worship & Music

Secondary Contact for:

- **Contemporary Musicians:** Raquel Krach, Ted Sandberg, Mark Lund, Martha McDermott
- **Choir:** Margaret McMillan or Janine Rush
- **Handbell Choir:** Margaret McMillan, Linda Zimbelman, Carol Hall
- **Organ and Piano:** Margaret McMillan and Linda Zimbelman

Children, Youth, and Family – Joshua Edwards, Dir. Children & Youth Ministries

Prayer Requests/Prayer Chain – Molly Barnum, Lynette Stensrud

Eucharistic Ministry – Bill Kees, Sherrill Heinz

Worship Scheduling – Luke Nicolay, Dir. Worship & Music

Small Groups – Michael Nicholson Dick, Office Manager

Food, Kitchen, Pantry, Coffee Hour – Janine Rush

Welcome Table – Mary Schweder

Equipping Ministry – Steve Hall

Budget – Mark Kimmelshue, Treasurer

Giving, Offerings – Lynette Stensrud, Financial Secretary

Reimbursement Forms, Checks – Michael Nicholson Dick, Office Manager

Community Outreach – Pr. Ben Colahan, Michael Nicholson Dick, Office Manager

Columbarium – Susan Reed, Bob Bay

Endowment Committee – Bill Kees, Bill Youngstrom

Personnel Committee – Tom Melvin, Gayle Palys, Ben Vandersluis

Facilities, Property, Building – Joel Zimbelman, Property Manager

Rentals – Michael Nicholson Dick, Office Manager

Capital Campaign – Dianne Knight, Beth Bradley



Photo by Mary Elizabeth Collins



Faith Lutheran Church of Chico, CA
667 E. 1st Ave., 95926
FaithLutheranInChico@Gmail.com
530.895.3754 | ChicoFaithLutheran.org