



Life of Faith

December 2021

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From Pastor Nancy.....

Our Old Testament lesson for the first Sunday in Advent is from Jeremiah and begins:

The days are surely coming says the Lord when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

The days of Advent, our time of waiting, are here. November 28 we will light the first candle on our Advent wreath—the candle of Hope. It will be followed in the coming weeks by Peace, Joy and Love and finally on Christmas Eve, we will light the Christ Candle to signify that the light of Christ has come into the world. Join us as we gather to celebrate “Immanuel” - God with us - on Wednesday evenings, Sunday mornings and special Christmas services celebrating the birth of Jesus. See details below.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. (John 1:5)

I will light candles this Christmas

Candles of joy, despite all the sadness,
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch.
Candles of courage where fear is ever present,
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens.
Candles of love to inspire all my living.
Candles that will burn all the yearlong.

Howard Thurman



God bless you and your family—every one.

Pastor Nancy

PLEASE NOTE

Advent online worship can be accessed on the FLC website.

Masks are required for indoor worship.
Services will be transmitted into the Fellowship Hall should there be too many people attending to be seated safely in the sanctuary.

Sundays at 9:30 a.m. - Indoor worship

December 1, 7:00 pm - Advent online worship

December 8, 7:00 pm - Advent online worship

December 15, 7:00 pm - Advent online worship

December 22, 7:00 pm - Advent online worship

December 24, 5:00 pm and 7:00 pm – Christmas Eve, indoors

December 25, 10:00 am - Christmas Day, indoors

Advent Hope by Mary Schramm



Is it just me (or just I, if I were to be grammatically correct) but life these days seems so out of kilter, so different from a year and a half ago.

Masked people engage me in conversation, the grandchildren are engaged in school via zoom lessons, worship services took place outside of the church building until weather forced us inside to reconnect with our congregation in pews within the sanctuary. Being sociable seemed more of a task than a natural way to share life with my sisters and brothers.

And yet, in spite of this, here comes Advent. For thousands of years, this time within the church has helped people to focus on the way God's children got ready to say "Hello, Jesus. Thank you for being part of our lives. Thank you for showing us the path of love that prepares us to be part of God's family."

Advent is full of hope. Each year it signals a new beginning, another way to assure one another that God is indeed a huge part of our future as well as our lives now. We set aside this time to prepare, to welcome, to acknowledge that Jesus did come as both baby and Spirit and will continue to enter our lives with love that is beyond understanding. Thank you, Jesus.

ELCA World Hunger Good Gifts



As members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), we believe that God is calling us into the world – together. And with generous, loving hands, we can make a difference. During the Christmas season or any other time of the year, ELCA Good Gifts is your opportunity to provide critical support to the ministries and programs that mean the most to you and the people you love.

Click here to learn more and access the Good Gifts Catalog: <https://goodgifts.elca.org/>

Faith Lutheran Endowment Grant Applications

The Endowment Committee is accepting applications for grants until December 31, 2021. Applications tend to come from the same people to fund the same things, so please think about whether you might have a new request to bring forward. Grants are distributed as follows:

- Minimum of 20% for outreach to the local community or synod.
- Minimum of 20% for Churchwide ministries.
- Minimum of 20% for extraordinary programs/capital improvements or other ministry initiatives within this congregation.
- Minimum 10% for other non-profit humanitarian organizations.
- Remaining 30% distributed through any of the above categories.



Applications are available from Lisa Therrell at merrymulesears@msn.com or any other committee member including Pastor Nancy Gradwohl, Leesa Broker, and Jan Monroe. Please contact any of us if you have questions.

CHURCH COUNCIL November 2021



- The Christmas/Advent schedule for worship was discussed.
- Judy Derpack is using the Fellowship Hall on Fridays for 'Art and Play'.
- Both giving and expenses were down in October so bottom line remains stable.
- The ELCA Endowment Fund paperwork was reviewed.
- We have submitted a grant request to the NWIM Synod for sun shade sails for outdoor worship next summer, no word on approval yet.
- The annual benevolence giving was reviewed and it was decided to sponsor 2 children for a year in the backpack food program through the Methodist Church amounting to \$940 per year. This will replace contributions to the Cascade School lunch program (which did not happen this year) and the Council's benevolence choice line item.
- The mortgage balance is now below \$30,000 for the parsonage property. There was a discussion about the potential benefits of paying off the remainder of the mortgage from savings. This will be brought up at the Annual Meeting. Council recommends payoff of the Parsonage mortgage.
- Snow removal: Luis Fonseca will remove snowfall of 4 inches or more. Faith members will need to be scheduled for snow removal on Sunday mornings for snowfalls less than 4 inches.
- The Endowment Committee is working on the language in the continuing resolution that created the endowment in order to provide more clarity about annual spending options. Recommendations will require a 2/3 yes vote from the Council to approve.
- The Council is reminded that the end of the year is approaching and the Nominating Committee is looking for 1-2 candidates for Council as well as Nominating Committee members.
- Council recommends mandatory masking continue for all attending indoor worship and continue the online video for those that would prefer not to attend in person. We have not resolved the technical issues of livestream into the fellowship hall but continue to work on it. This will be particularly important for Christmas services.
- Pantry boxes are complete and Mike and Mark Schramm will install a post and complete the installation process.
- SAGE plans to use the space in the Fellowship Hall are on hold.
- A routine fire inspection was scheduled but the Fire Dept did not show up. No new date has been scheduled.
- The Worship Committee and Altar Guild have discussed the use of candles during the Advent, Christmas and Epiphany seasons. The Council recommends that the use of real, flame candles should be confined to only in the Advent Wreath and Christ Candle. Other wax candles will not be used as they present a risk to respiratory hygiene (we don't want people blowing out their candles) Battery operated LED candles will be used as needed.
- The Annual Meeting is scheduled for January 23, 2022. It is uncertain at this time whether it will be in person or Zoom.
- Alex has requested that Faith sponsor the Immigration Justice Group for purposes of nonprofit giving status. The Council is generally in favor but guidelines such as 'no lobbying or political activity' need to be reviewed and confirmed for the Immigration group.
- Council would like to plan a long term planning retreat for sometime in the Spring.
- Next meeting: December 9 at 6:30 pm at church.



FREE LITTLE PANTRY Launches at Faith Lutheran



At long last, Faith Lutheran now has a Free Little Pantry! It is installed near the sidewalk. Akin to Free Little Libraries, the idea is that you can either take items, or leave items, the ultimate in crowd-sourcing kindness. The end of the month is especially hard for many working families, as they await their next paycheck and food benefits may have run out for the month. The idea behind the pantry is to be a stop-gap in case someone is struggling to provide for their next meal. It does not replace other food assistance programs such as the Community Cupboard Food Bank or WIC benefits.

We are looking for donations, and a shelf is in the entry to the Fellowship Hall for your items. Consider items that are easy to prepare without additional ingredients or can even be eaten straight out of a can. Cans with pull tops are helpful. Pick foods that are relatively healthy and shelf stable. Be sure donations are in good condition and that food is not past its pull date. Food can't be repackaged. Cleaning products, toiletries, feminine hygiene products, TP, and diapers are also helpful donations. We will see what people need, and if canned goods work once the weather freezes.

Here are suggested items:

**Canned soups, stews, chili, etc.
(Pull tops are helpful)
Canned beans, vegetables, and
fruit
Pasta sauce
Salsa
Canned meat and fish
Pasta
Cup of Noodles
Top Ramen
Rice (small packages)
Peanut butter
Jam
Oatmeal
Milk in aseptic packaging**

**Pancake mix
Cooking oil
Small packages of mixed nuts or trail
mix
Tortillas
Crackers
Bread
Shelf stable sausages
Dish detergent (small sizes)
Bar soap
Shampoo
Toothpaste
Tooth brushes in packaging
Toilet paper
Hand sanitizer**

The History Corner (Part 2) submitted by Danny Thomassen

It is November 1918 and the storm of war over Europe has subsided with the surrender of Germany and its allies. Captain Martin Niemöller was counting his blessings after surviving four years in Germany's submarine U-Boat fleet. Of the 344 boats in service, 178 (52%) were lost at sea during 1914-1918. The U-boats eventually became known as "iron coffins" by their crews. Niemöller would resign his naval commission at the end of war rejecting the newly formed democratic Weimar Republic.

Niemöller was a strong conservative German nationalist and pro-monarchist (Emperor-Kaiser Wilhelm II) considering the Weimar period (1919-1933) "the years of darkness". He openly supported opponents of the new government and initially welcomed Hitler's accession to power in 1933 with the hope for a national revival for Germany.

Like many Germans in the military, Niemöller could not comprehend Germany's loss of the war. In 1918 the Russians had surrendered to Germany on the Eastern Front, the German army was occupying France and Belgium on the Western Front and their ally German-Austria was holding the line against the Italians on the Southern Front. German soil had not been occupied by an enemy during the four years of war. Under stipulations of the surrender, Captain Niemöller was ordered to turn his U-Boat to England but he refused and "scuttled" his boat to the bottom of the North Sea. The Allies *Versailles Treaty* was "punitive"; for many Germans the war had not ended in 1918. There would be a prelude intermission before the final conflagration (1939-1945); concluding the German Thirty Years War (1914-1945).

Niemöller was the son of a Lutheran pastor. After the war he entered Wilhelms University in Münster, Germany to study Protestant theology (1919-1923). He was ordained as a Lutheran pastor 29.June.1924 and eventually become Superintendent of the United Evangelical Lutheran Prussian Union Church serving in Dahlem, an affluent suburb of Berlin. It was here that he met Lutheran pastors Karl Barth and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. In 1934 they co-founded the new Lutheran Confessional Church that would formally oppose nazification of the German Protestant churches.

Niemöller met Hitler in a personal audience as a formal representative for the Protestant Churches of Germany. He was assured by the Chancellor that the churches would be protected under national law but Niemöller was betrayed. Within one year the regime had arrested almost 800 Lutheran pastors and other church leaders. He gradually abandoned his pro-Nazi views realizing by late 1934 that the new government was a dictatorship. Niemöller's sermons sharply criticize their policies publicly declaring the "Aryan Paragraph" as incompatible with Christian virtues of charity. For his overt opposition to Nazis state control of the churches, he was arrested by the Gestapo and interned for eight years in a concentration camp.

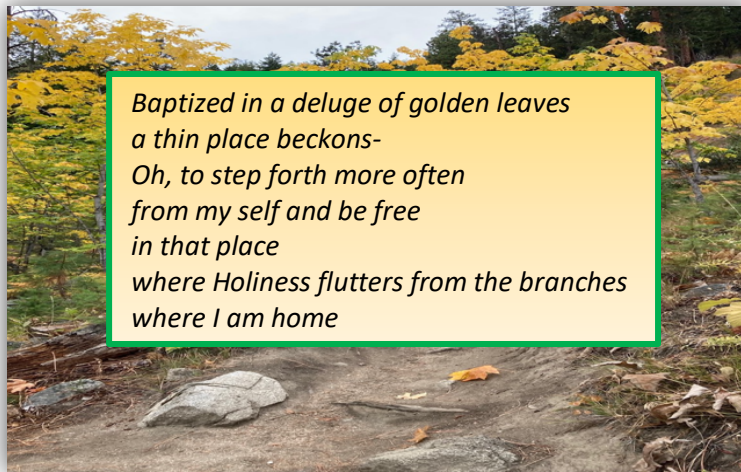


German Iron Cross from WWI (i.e. black & white neck ribbon) purchased in a small jewelry shop next to the Deutsch Bank in the town square of Wittenberg, Germany by Danny Thomassen in 2003. The shop keeper told him the item was found during a "dig" and most likely belonged to a German soldier who did not make it through the war. The tattered neck ribbon seemed symbolic.

Spiritual Practices by Leesa Broker



The most engaged I ever become in my spiritual practices is when I am out walking, a practice I do almost daily. Walking alone allows my head to clear. As I begin, I work through problems or process my upcoming schedule. But as I get deeper into the walk, my thoughts, past and future, become wholly in the present. The minute details in the plants and the patterns of leaves come alive, reflections begin to jump off the water, the sun warms my face, the smell of the black cottonwoods fills my nose. Everything becomes heightened and vivid. Some might call it an experience of flow, a time of perfect peace, of joy, and even the transcendence of time. I feel connected to the universe. Liz Caemmerer often spoke about the thin places where one connects to God in the “aha” moments as the clouds part. Wendell Berry captures it best.



December Birthdays

6	Danielle Totman	21	Sasha Morgan
9	Austin Cassayre	22	Greg Steeber
10	John Butruille	23	Shirley DeCourcy
10	Dick Dickenson	25	David Nierman
17	Laurie Peek	28	Lindsay Camp
17	Teddy Rieke	29	Winnie Camp
21	Terry Leverenz	30	Dan Wilkinson

WORSHIP AT FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH



Faith Lutheran Church strives to gather and worship as safely as possible. It is expected that persons who attend worship in person are vaccinated. People who are not vaccinated are encouraged to participate in worship online. Attendees are reminded that masks must be worn at all times with the exception of the brief time it takes to receive communion and that all practice social distancing. There are four air purifiers running during worship at all times. Services are now transmitted into the Fellowship Hall for viewing should there be too many persons present to be seated safely in the sanctuary.

Snow Shoveling

Faith Lutheran has hired a company to clear snowfalls of more than 4 inches. Volunteers from our community are needed to clear all sidewalks in front of the church and parsonage. Many people have already committed to a week or two but there are still openings. Please consider signing up on the sheet in the narthex. Here is a summary of commitments and opportunities:

Nov. 21 – 27	Lauren Johnson
Nov. 28 – Dec. 4	John Butruille
Dec. 5 – 11	Zeke Reister
Dec. 12 – 18	Greg Steeber
Dec. 19 – 25	Greg Harris
Dec. 26 – Jan. 1	_____
Jan. 2 – 8	_____
Jan. 8 – 15	Lauren Johnson
Jan. 16 – 22	Greg Harris
Jan. 23 – 29	_____
Jan. 30 – Feb. 5	_____



Thanks to all who contributed articles and general interest information for this newsletter! Please forward contributions to Mary Steeber at mary.steeber@gmail.com by December 27 for the January issue.

