

Life of Faith FEBRUARY 2024 224 Benton St. (P.O. Box 418) Phone: 509 548 7010 Email: <u>flcleavenworth@gmail.com</u> www.flcleavenworth.com Pastor Eva Jensen

From our president....

Well, it's the Morning After.....The Annual Meeting, that is, and I am grateful and excited. It was a meeting that defies stasis, negates entropy, affirms to me that our congregation is Alive. The hard questions were the good questions and we can explore new ideas for our larger community. The old Church Council was magnificent. I am so eager to see where we can go with our new Council members. I had rich conversations with several of you after the meeting, leading to this month's presidential topic:

INTERESTING

The lead-in question to those of us in the small group was 'How do we get more people interested in our Faith Fellowship?' Thus began my pondering and wandering. What are people in our community interested in, and how do we, as a Lutheran Church and community entity with a stated vision become more interesting to the community? One of the great joys of my present role in our congregation is getting to know each of you better. Fascinating is a better word for this group. The life skills and life experiences that make up this congregation would fill a fair-sized book. If we put a pin in every country of a world map in which members and friends have spent time it would look like a porcupine. If we catalogued the skills available in alphabetical order it would fill pages. That's *Interesting*. How do we share it with our community? Our dear conservative Christian hiking partners visited us from the Midwest, came to church, and from the viewpoint of their on-line megachurch, opined "You need to fill the pews". I looked in our Constitution and I looked at our Mission Statement and neither said anything about how many square inches of Faith pew cushions must be warmed by worshippers each Sunday but there is discussion of our larger Community.

As our small group looked at this question, ideas on how to share our abilities and opportunities to interest our Leavenworth Community began to flow. We have Artists. Yesterday I learned about 2 more in our Church. Why not have an Art show in the Fellowship Hall on a scheduled basis and invite the town? Musicians—Yes, a concert? How about a Fix It Fair? Not everyone understands how to fix their bike, glue broken furniture, sew on a button or safely use power tools. A broader introduction to quilting skills? A knitter's workshop? How to use your camera? What is it like to live in Africa? Israel? Norway? We have a space. We have skills. I think that we would all benefit from sharing them.

Let us think about what talents and useful knowledge we have that are hidden from the greater community. Perhaps we should stop hiding them under a bushel basket.

I'm interested!

God's Peace Karl Kranz

From our pastor......



In church last Sunday I shared with you the story of Women for Peace in Liberia who formed a human archway of forgiveness and compassion to reconcile and guide returning child soldiers into communities torn apart by violence and war. In this ritual for return, the peoples' experiences of suffering, grief, sorrow and trauma were brought into the open and walked through a guided passageway of healing care to guide the child soldiers into new relationships and community life.

The spiritual discipline of lament – acknowledging the grief that is part of everyday life, holding it, and then placing it in God's hands – a

practice of care for ourselves and one another in which God will meet us with tender compassion. The Bible is filled with prayers, songs, and stories of many faithful people expressing sorrowful or even angry prayers to God.

In our mid-week Lenten worship this year we will explore laments found in scripture and encourage ourselves and one another to "return to God" with our cries of lament for healing and new life.

In a recent New York Times "Guest Essay", Rabbi Sharon Brous wrote:

We desperately need a spiritual rewiring in our time. Imagine a society in which we learn to see one another in our pain, to ask one another, "What happened to you?" Imagine that we hear one another's stories, say amen to one another's pain, and even pray for one another's healing. I call this the amen effect: sincere, tender encounters that help us forge new spiritual and neural pathways by reminding us that our lives and our destinies are entwined. [And], ultimately, it is only by finding our way to one another [with God] that we will begin to heal.

A simple time of reflection, voluntary sharing or silence, song and prayer – following our communal supper of homemade soups – will be led by Erik Krumland and myself. Come for supper. Stay for the blessings of God's love in this faithful community gathering of mercy and grace.

Pastor Eva





BOOK GROUP: Each Tuesday from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Please contact Margaret Neighbors, <u>mneighb67@gmail.com</u> with questions. All are welcome.

SAIL (Staying Active and Independent for Life) Tuesday and Thursdays, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall. Seniors 65 and older are welcome to join this free program. Contact Connie Thomassen (509) 470-8212 for information.

<u>KNITTING AND CRAFTS:</u> February 7 and 21, 1:30 – 3:00, Fellowship Hall <u>QUILT TYING:</u> Each Tuesday from 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall <u>CHURCH COUNCIL</u>: February 15, 6:00 p.m. with zoom capability <u>IMMITRATION/RACE AND JUSTICE GROUP</u>: No meeting in February

February 4: Distribution of Campaign Packets
February 10: Mission Rally, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m., Fellowship Hall
February 11: Mission Rally, after worship
February 14: ASH WEDNESDAY Worship, 7:00 pm
February 21: Soup Supper, 6:00 pm / Worship, 7:00 pm
February 24: Prayer Vigil, Sanctuary, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
February 25: Abundance Sunday
February 28: Soup Supper, 6:00 pm / Worship, 7:00 pm

All are invited...

Sarah Toney, daughter of Faith member Lauren Johnson, will be ordained into Word and Sacrament Ministry by Bishop Meggan Manlove and also installed as pastor of Celebration Lutheran Church in East Wenatchee on <u>February 24 at 2:00</u> <u>p.m.</u> Sarah has preached and presided at Faith and we welcome her into our Northwest Intermountain Synod community with joy.

Please plan to attend. All are welcome!



Hear Keynote address by Faith member Barbara Rossing via zoom



Barbara Rossing will give the keynote address *Kairos for Creation, Kairos for Mission: Hope for our Common Home* at the World Mission Institute in Chicago on February 29.

Register to receive zoom link at <u>https://lstc.edu/event/2024-world-</u> <u>mission-institute/</u> 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time

Climate change presents humanity with a *kairos* moment, a critical moment in time when God is leading us into decisive action. The 1985 South African *Kairos Document* issued a prophetic word about apartheid. More recently, Greek Orthodox Ecumenical Patirarch Archbishop Bartholomew has named the climate crisis as a *kairos*, a term the ELCA and others have also now adopted. How can a biblical sense of *kairos* help our prophetic eco-justice mission of caring for God's creation today?

FAITH MOVING FORWARD Capital Campaign Unfolds in February!

The Faith Moving Forward Capital Campaign began last fall and has gained incredible momentum during December and January. We are grateful to the Faith Lutheran community for the wonderful response and enthusiasm in forming teams and carrying out tasks needed to knit together the various parts to ensure a solid foundation for ministry. The results of their dedication and commitment will be revealed in February! February is THE month for the Capital Campaign. Here are the dates and what to look forward to:

For We Walk by Faith, Not by Sight (2 Corinthians 5:7)

Brochures describing the Vision of the campaign will be distributed. The brochure will also include information about creative giving options that will help the congregation meet its financial goal of \$250,000 and beyond.

February 10, 11 - MISSION RALLIES

Annual Meeting

A Mission Rally is an in-person gathering which provides an opportunity to receive information, ask questions and learn about what scripture has to offer us regarding God's abundance, generosity and the joy of giving. The intent is to offer information needed to prayerfully discern a pledge to the *Faith Moving Forward* Capital Campaign. There will be 2 opportunities to attend one of these events:

<u>February 10, 9:00 – 10:15 am, Fellowship Hall</u> Sunday, February 11 after worship



The church will be open for members of the Faith Lutheran community to be in the sanctuary to pray and further discern their response to the mission and support of Faith Lutheran Church.

February 25 ABUNDANCE SUNDAY

The congregation will have the opportunity during worship to offer their gifts and pledges of support for the *Faith Moving Forward* Campaign. After worship, everyone is invited to the fellowship hall to celebrate the success of the campaign and give thanks for support and generosity.



We're all on this journey together, giving God thanks for the guidance, wisdom, and strength to keep *Faith Moving Forward*!

CHURCH COUNCIL January 2024

Pastors Report

- Wednesday Soup suppers with simple worship are being planned for the Lenten season, February 14 through March 20. The theme for Lent will be "Holy Lament".
- We would like to share more events with the Methodist Church. Pastor Eva is working on developing a contact team for this planning.
- Plans for new members by way of transfers and group preparation are underway.
- There have been 2 successful congregational forums recently, one on the Gaza/Israel conflict and one on climate change. Future topics include End of Life and funeral Planning and caregiver support.
- A 2024 objective is to create a Small Groups and Committees brochure that describes the work and life of the congregation with associated opportunities.

Treasurer's Report

- Our short-term high interest rate CDs have been rolled into different accounts in preparation for the purchase of a parsonage. These accounts have lower interest rates but are more accessible.
- December was a very good month for giving as Faith \$28,000 received in gifts. This end of year giving closed the gap between budgeted income and actual income to \$8,000. Restricted funds are up to date and new terminology will be adopted in the accounting line items; replacing the general term Parsonage with Benton St Property or Tumwater Drive property. This will become clearer as we document income and expenditures for each property. Though we have not purchased Tumwater at this time, there are expenses such as home inspection which need to be accounted for.
- Administrative costs are over budget as expected due to our good fortune in hiring Deanne again as a part time administrative assistant.
- A separate budget and accounting system is in place for Capital Campaign pledges. There has been some activity already as people wished to donate in 2023.
- Pastor Eva and Treasurer Greg Steeber will meet to complete work on the Pastor's 2024 compensation package. The Synod recommends a contractual period from January through December for Pastors, rather than adjustment after 12 months of service.
- The Council spent time reviewing the 2024 proposed budget. It was decided to propose a 5% increase in contributions, not considering the Capital Campaign. This equals \$155,000. The Pastor's compensation package for 2024 has not been finalized. For the purpose of building the budget, non-binding assumptions of a 3% cost of living increase and a 1.1% longevity increase are included in this proposal. Again, for the purposes of planning, the second half of the year may be treated differently if we acquire the Tumwater property. Pastor's housing cost would shift from paying out rent to paying off the mortgage. Means of determining this were discussed.
- The 2024 budget includes an estimated \$10,000 for septic pipe repairs but the actual amount will not be known until repair work begins in the Spring. Council decided that it is better to submit an unbalanced accurate budget to the congregation than a balanced but perhaps inaccurate budget for approval at the Annual meeting.
- A round of applause <a>

 A round of applause
 was offered for the Treasurer's diligent and thoughtful work on the 2024 Budget, more challenging this year than usual.

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Property Committee

- The Carlsons have donated a snowblower to Faith. Thank you Amy and Reed! It is stored under the back porch of the sanctuary.
- Parking behind the church remains available.
- Our plowing contractor plows when snowfall is 4 inches or more.
- Septic repair work is planned for Spring

Worship Committee

• Pastor Eva and Eric are planning the midweek services through Lent.

Endowment Committee

• Disbursements will be in April.

Parsonage Project Committee

- The Capital Campaign is well under way
- A letter attempting to clarify the question "What about Lexar" was emailed to the congregation.
- A formal appraisal is needed for Margaret to receive a tax benefit from the sale of her home to Faith and for the purposes of our Mortgage lender. An appointment has been scheduled.
- Don Haven and Cindy Carroll are doing a great job with campaign management and there was a good turnout for team members at the follow-up organizational meeting.
- Provisional approval of our mortgage application has been received from the Mission Investment Fund. This allows us to present the option to purchase of the Tumwater property to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting for a vote.

Old Business

- Mutual Ministry Team (MMT). A verbal agreement has been completed between Pastor and Council President as per Constitution in lieu of an MMT.
- Pastor Nancy's injury is healing well. She is at home and Rosalyn recently visited with her.
- Free Little Pantry grant application has been submitted.

New Business

- Capital Campaign is going very well and we are on schedule.
- A vote for purchase of the Tumwater house will be presented at the Annual Meeting. There are 2 avenues for Margaret to reduce the price to us. One route is a sale at \$610,000 with an associated gift from Margaret to Faith of \$35,000. The other route is a purchase price of \$575,000 with the difference between assessed value and purchase value being noted as a gift to



Faith on her 2024 1040 Tax form. To keep both of these possibilities open, the specific legal guidelines will require the vote to approve \$610,000 for purchase of the Tumwater property as a Parsonage.

- Council discussed and reviewed with excitement to revive the Earth Stewardship Committee.
- The Nomination Committee has a slate of new Council members.

Next Council Meeting: February 15 at 6:00, please note the earlier starting time

Annual Meeting Highlights....

• Faith Lutheran Church voted to purchase 324 Tumwater Drive from Margaret Neighbor to function as a parsonage.



- The proposed budget was approved.
- Amy Carlson and Heidi Krumland were voted in as new council members.
- John Schramm, Barbara Rossing and Leesa Broker will serve on nominating committee.
- See meeting documents here FLC Annual Meeting documents 2024_0001.pdf



Earth Stewardship Group Begins Again at Faith!



In the early 1990's, an Earth Stewardship group was formed at Faith. They were inspired by the ELCA's *Lutherans Restoring Creation* and active until the pandemic hit in 2020. Some of their notable accomplishments include the installation of 96 solar panels on the Middle School and providing recycling bins and water bottle filling fountains in downtown Leavenworth. There is interest in starting this group up again.

If you are interested, please sign-up on the sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

Another opportunity

EMBODYING CREATION CARE AND ECO-JUSTICE IN THE NORTHWEST INTERMOUNTAIN SYNOD



In gratitude for forests, lakes and rivers that are part of the beauty we enjoy in the PNW, how do we, a people of faith, respond in a way that shows love for all our neighbors within this community of creation? And how do we use the gifts of creation to care for our families

now, while also being just to Indigenous people who were here before us and to those who will live here after us? How faithfully are we tending the portion of God's garden where we live, as instructed in Genesis 2:15?

A group has started meeting via Zoom to explore these and other questions related to creation care and eco-justice within our synod.

All synod members are welcome to participate in this new group.

<u>Next meeting</u>: February 21, 4:30 pm Pacific / 5:30 pm Mountain <u>Starting in March:</u> every second Thursday 6:30 pm Pacific / 7:30 pm Mountain For the Zoom link or if you have questions, contact facilitator, Deaconess Katrina Martich at <u>contact@katrinamartich.com</u>

Rev. Dr. Raheb brings perspectives from Bethlehem to the crisis in Gaza



"Lord, when did we SEE you..." (Matthew 25:44)

Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, whose presentation we watched at Faith in December, has a new talk on "Matthew 25" that he gave January 16 for a Presbyterian conference. It is biblically inspiring and an excellent update on the current crisis in Gaza. Dr. Raheb is a Lutheran leader from Bethlehem, currently in the USA advocating for a ceasefire in Gaza.

Watch his moving presentation here starting at minute 42: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8T1BRfvLWQg</u>



"Steadfast perseverance" in the Holy Land......

The ELCA's new initiative, Sumud: For Justice in Palestine and Israel, presents "Following the Way of Jesus: A Lenten Holy Land Journey." This Lenten video series for individuals and congregations consists of six short videos that introduce people to the land, the

theology of sumud and its significance through Scripture as the "way of Jesus." Each video will be available in both English and Arabic. Sumud (Arabic for "steadfast perseverance") is the ELCA's new name for our church's engagement in accompaniment, awareness-building and advocacy for justice in Palestine and Israel.

Sign up for updates about Sumud and upcoming events at: <u>https://www.bit.ly/SumudSubscribe</u>.

Some thoughts on gratitude.....

Filmmaker, Louie Schwartzberg has been intrigued by gratitude for decades and believes it is where nature and humans intersect in this space we call Life. He has produced a full-length film called **Gratitude Revealed** which takes the viewer on a transformational, cinematic experience. His intimate conversations with everyday people, thought leaders and personalities reveal gratitude is a proven pathway back from the disconnection we feel in our lives – disconnection from ourselves, our planet and each other.



Norman Lear and others are wonderful in this beautiful, ad free film funded by the John Templeton Foundation and a joy to watch. Here is the link to watch the film: <u>https://gratituderevealed.com/watch-film/</u>

The History Corner by Danny Thomassen



As many of us have experienced good times with family and friends during the Christmas celebration season, hopefully it has come with a sense of renewed faith, hope, peace, love and joy. I would like to share with you the story of Martin Luther and the first Christmas tree as we begin our **New Year 2024**. Hopefully with the Christmas spirit still lingering as we remember the birth of Jesus.

Over 500 years ago during the late Middle Ages Martin Luther lived in Wittenberg, Germany. One dark evening while walking through a snowcovered forest he looked up into a clear winter sky that was shining bright with a multitude of stars. As he walked towards home, he became inspired by the beauty of nature that surrounded him. Luther decided to cut down a small fir tree along the pathway to bring into his home and decorate with candles for his family. The beauty of nature had brought him closer to God and he recalled how Jesus had died on a tree or cross to take away the sins of

the world. In his writings, Luther reminds us often that Christ is always with us to bring peace and wisdom to humanity in a broken world through His ultimate sacrifice.

Martin Luther had a passion for music and composed 41 hymns between 1524 - 1543 A.D. for church services at the Castle Church in Wittenberg. He has also been credited with the festive tradition of Christmas caroling. His family which included his wife Katharina (Katie) and children Johnannes (Hans), Elisabeth, Magdelena, Martin (Jr.), Paul, & Margarete would often gather around the candle lit tree in their home and sing songs. Luther firmly believed that music was the best medium to extol and glorify God. He would share these family experiences from the pulpit in church and the practice of group singing began to spread throughout Wittenberg and beyond into Germany.



Immigration/Race Justice Group (I/RJG) January 2023



• **Finances:** Our current bank account was reviewed and brought up to date, including the cashed checks for \$1,400 to the indigenous CEIPA school in Guatemala and \$1,500 for Driver's Ed. The \$1,200 check for an immigrant family in a medical crises at Harborview hospital is still outstanding. There is still no word from the application to the Advent Lutheran (Spokane) Endowment Fund.

• **Citizenship/Literacy Classes.** Currently two citizenship students and approximately a dozen students faithfully do weekly literacy work with 3

volunteers at the Peshastin Library.

- The asylum seeking Venezuelan nursing student whom we assisted earlier is back to school fulltime and again receiving her financial aid.
- All five driver's educations students have been registered (with a special phone call) and will receive our \$1,500 of financial aid. The Migrant Graduation Program facilitator also indicated that ALL her seniors are on track to graduate!
- Last meeting we approved \$600 for a visually impaired immigrant student. We have yet to receive the contact information.
- The mom of one of the families we have helped is now temporarily in North Carolina with a friend and was involved in a car accident.
- One of our group members will be traveling with another couple to Guatemala February 13 for three weeks. We decided to give \$1,400 to CEIPA, the indigenous school in Xela, Guatemala, to insure their sewing program continues.
- Another of our members had a request from a friend of an undocumented woman. After much discussion, this member will meet with the women to get more information on specific needs.
- Another participant is seeking additional medical assistance for an Ecuadorian person, perhaps in Seattle. We suggested the individual go to the Monday night Free Clinic for a second opinion.
- A morning of Starbucks coffee and pastries is scheduled with a Cascade School District's AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination) class on January 31. Those of us who will be mentors will treat the class and introduce ourselves.
- Dia de Los Reyes Magos (Day of the Wise Men, Epiphany, Jan. 6) at the Wenatchee River Institute was considered well done with attendance at 150. Two I/RJG members were involved in the planning. The Wenatchee World had a good article. Plans are to continue this event annually. Next year it will be January 4.
- Vanessa Gutierrez, director of Wenatchee's NW Immigrant Rights Project was not able to attend our meeting this month, hopefully in March.
- Interfaith Justice Coalition. Members are encouraged to attend their next meeting Sunday, February 4, 1:30-3:30 p.m. at St. Luke's Episcopal church, 428 King St., Wenatchee.
- The next meeting will be March 21, 6:00 p.m. No meeting in February.



Come and see...

The work of Faith Lutheran Church member and artist Kate Farrar is on display in the Fireside room in the Leavenworth library from **January 23 to March 1.** Kate has been painting off and on for about four decades. She has studied under Robert Graves at Wenatchee Valley College and has participated in small shows and exhibitions here in the Wenatchee Valley. Her favorite subjects are landscapes, particularly trees and water.





Dia de los Reyes

Dia de Los Reyes (Day of the Kings) is a gift giving celebration in Mexico that honors the visit of the Magi to the Christ child. The Wenatchee River Institute and Faith Lutheran Church partnered to celebrate this important cultural event in the Leavenworth area on January 6. They served pozole, a traditional Mexican soup and tamales with over 80 people attending, mostly from the Latino

community. There is no Santa Claus tradition in Mexico - but whole communities provide gifts for children in honor of the Dia de Los Reyes. Norma Gallegos emceed the event as a way to bring the Latino and white community together as they ate traditional Mexican food, experienced performances of Mexican dance routines and eight-year-old Kataleya Garcia who won the hearts of the crowd with her rendition of Mexican ballads.

Pastor Alex Schmidt, dressed in full costume as Balthasar, recounted the story of the three kings in Spanish and English. He closed with these thoughts. *Immigrants have come and just like the kings, they brought treasures. Their treasures are primarily stories, stories of suffering, stories of courage, stories of faith, stories of strength.* May we share and understand these gifts.





Congratulations!

Pastor Eva and Thomassens on national TV! Check out

https://www.facebook.com/GoodMorningAmerica/videos/952843723030315

Celebrating life and mourning loss...



We continue to hold the Camp family in prayer as they celebrate the life and mourn the loss of Mike's father Bob on January 12, 2024.

Bob was born 10/21/1939, in Morilton, Arkansas. His family moved to California after WWII to work in the farm fields around Fresno. He was a veteran of the Air Force, serving in Tripoli, Libya, as an aircraft

mechanic. After that he worked as an airline mechanic and maintenance manager in Southern California. He and family left SoCal in 1977 and bought the orchard on North Road raising pears and working for the school district as a mechanic and bus driver until he retired. He is survived by his wife, Winnie and children Mike and Theresa. Three of Bob's five grandchildren were baptized at Faith.





Working together to end hunger, strengthen community and celebrate the arts.

The Upper Valley Empty Bowls Festival is an annual fundraiser to support the Upper Valley MEND's Community Cupboard and local youth through art grants. The

soup supper will be March 21 at the Festhalle. Faith member and potter, Dawn Kranz has made 80 bowls this year and will be firing all 650 bowls that participants have painted. Thank you, Dawn, for generously sharing your time, talent and energy!

Here are Faith Lutheran members creating bowls!







for a Cultivating Justice Event hosted by the Sunnyslope Church In partnership with PNC-UCC, the NWIM Synod, and Faith Action Network

DECOLONIZATION for TRANSFORMATION



with Sarah Augustine Executive Director Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery

Saturday, March 2, 2024 9 AM - 4 PM

The Sunnyslope Church 3330 School St., Wenatchee

Event registration and further details will be available by late January Contact: jess.h.ingman@gmail.com with questions

thank you riends The at hanks team



Faith Lutheran Church is a Reconciling In Christ (RIC) congregation. We provide a safe and healing environment where people of any race, sexual orientation, gender identity, social or economic status can be nourished in their journey of faith.

Our Mission Statement

As disciples in Christ, we are called to incarnate the gracious, healing and reconciling presence of God through sacramental worship, congregational nurture and ministries of peace, mercy and justice for all Creation.

Our Vision Statement

Living in God's amazing grace, we envision Faith Lutheran Church as a diverse beacon of hope, healing and reconciliation in a broken world.

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 February 23 for the March issue.