



From our president....

Midwinter, the land lies fallow, bears sleep and perhaps dream and my thoughts turn to gardening and allegories. One Spring day, many years ago, I decided that I wanted to grow blueberries. Our flower and veggie garden was fenced, tilled, irrigated and I had 2 rows available for planting, so I purchased a dozen 4 foot tall blueberry bushes and plunked them in the ground. Voila, I was growing blueberries and enjoyed my first crop that summer.

Next summer, I found I had 3 foot tall bushes which didn't look all that healthy and we harvested a few blueberries, the next summer I had a few 2 foot tall plants after I pruned off the dead branches and the next summer there were no berries and I pulled what remained of the plants up.

Bad stock, obviously, I must have bought the wrong kind of blueberries, so I went to Blueberry Hills in Manson and bought new thriving healthy plants and started over in the same rows with the same good watering and fertilizing. It started to happen again!!! Dying bushes, poor yields, yellow leaves, what should I do?

Well, a miracle occurred. I bowed my stiff neck and returned to Blueberry Hills asking Grandpa, with his acres of lovely blueberries, "what must I do?". He listened carefully to my story, thought a bit, and then asked me "what's the soil PH in that row, as blueberries must have an acidic soil environment to grow well." I had no answer, I had never thought to test.

He considered for a moment more and then gave his advice which I followed. I carefully dug up every blueberry plant I had, laid them on their sides on the ground outside the garden, spaded up both rows and added SIX large bricks of peat moss to the soil, a whole pickup load. I mixed it into the clay dirt thoroughly, replanted the bushes in the refreshed soil, started checking the soil PH twice a year and continuing to acidify the soil and last year my blueberries were finally as I envisioned them, large, sweet, and delightful. What a bunch of work to get there. I learned that if you take the time to prepare the soil well, blueberry plants thrive and the harvest is abundant.

May the winter be lovely and Spring find you planting.

Karl Kranz
Council President



FEBRUARY WORSHIP AND EVENT SCHEDULE

FEBRUARY 1: Valentine Decorating and Games 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. Fellowship Hall

FEBRUARY 2: Jess Ingman preaching
Adult Forum - Jess Ingman, regional organizer for Faith Action Network, will give an update on Washington state's legislative session and provide information about how to participate in the advocacy process. Come hear how you can make a difference!

FEBRUARY 14: Valentine's Dance (see pg. 3)

FEBRUARY 9: Pastor John Hergert

FEBRUARY 16: Pastor Barbara Rossing

FEBRUARY 23: Pastor Barbara Rossing



Painting by Mary Carol Nelson

Weekly Happenings / Monthly Meetings

BOOK GROUP: Each Tuesday, 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Current book is *What's So Amazing About Grace?* by Philip Yancy. Next is *Saving Jesus from the Church: How to Stop Worshipping Christ and Start Following Jesus* by Robin Meyers. Anyone interested in joining the group, contact Margaret Neighbors (509) 387-0883.

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

KNITTING AND CRAFTS: February 5 and 19, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

QUILT TYING: Each Tuesday from 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

CHURCH COUNCIL: February 20, 6:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

IMMIGRATION/RACE AND JUSTICE: February 26, 6:00 p.m. Contact Alex Schmidt 509-548-7012 for details.



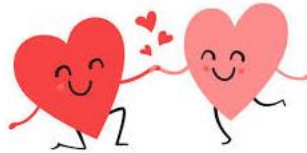
Retired pastors of our congregation are available to provide pastoral care whenever needed. Please reach out to Pastor John Schramm at 509-548-0404 for assistance.



Save the Date!!



Fat Tuesday / Mardi Gras Party
Tuesday, March 4
6:00 to 8:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall
Gumbo, Dessert and Beverages provided
Sides welcome



All are invited to Faith Lutheran Valentines Dance
Friday evening, February 14 from 7-9 p.m.

We've extended a special invitation to our Methodist neighbors as well as our friends and coworkers at MEND

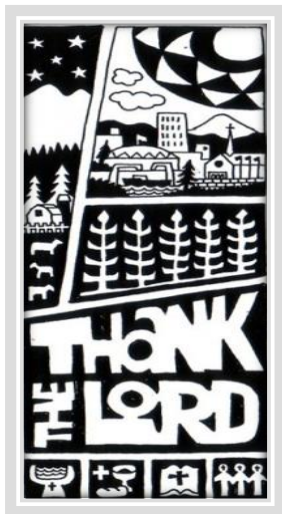
Please welcome other friends and acquaintances in the community!

Now is your chance to dig out that lonely gown or dress jacket that you've been waiting for an occasion to step out in. Wear your fancy shoes and then kick them off as we continue wearing out our old carpet. Easy versions of Foxtrot, Waltz and Two Step will be taught. Traditional dance rhythm music, soft disco light ambience, sweet punch, salty snacks and wallflower chairs will be provided.

Stag attendees will not be neglected
Y'all come now. Valentines Day at 7 p.m.



CHURCH COUNCIL January 2025



Treasurer's Report

- Contributions in November (\$20,000) and December (\$30,000) covered a third of overall contributions for year. Our giving total was \$158,000 for year plus \$288,000 for capital campaign.
- Reserves are down \$40,000 because of purchasing the Tumwater property, updating the HVAC systems and the need to replace the sewer line. The Free Little Pantry, Immigration Justice and Earth Stewardship groups have some funds left.
- The proposed budget for 2025 was reviewed. New budget expenses include \$5,000 for church office, \$15,000 for patio work at church, \$11,200 for our promised tithe to MEND and \$20,000 payment for Bridge loan on Tumwater property. Proposed pastor salary, \$49,450 for 6 months, was based on a candidate who is 35 years old with family. The Sunday School fund was increased from \$200 to \$500 to provide child care during services.

Special presentation, Pr. Barbara Rossing, Internship: The cost of engaging an intern would be approximately \$25,000. Amy and Barbara have completed the application and the council agreed to submit it understanding that it does not commit us to hiring an intern.

Property Committee

- Karl has created written instructions for the new church sound system
- Snow removal. Luis is doing front walks, rear parking and Kirk's driveway. Karl is removing snow at Tumwater property.
- Snow roofs need to be built in the spring for the heat pumps as they continue to ice up. They have been inspected by Alpine Air who confirm the units are operating properly. We suspect a location error by the installer, will monitor

Worship Committee

- The committee will be opened up to congregants who want to help with Lent. Flow of Wednesday evenings may include Bible study, supper, quiet meditation and then service.
- Council agreed worship committee and Barbara did a great job with Advent/Christmas.
- Over 15 people came to our open sanctuary for prayer and meditation on MLK Day. Amy suggested opening the church once a week or every other week for an hour as turmoil in the world and our country continues.

Parsonage Project Committee

- No renters have been found yet. We are looking to rent for 6 months but most renters want at least a one-year lease. May consider asking congregants if they have connections with someone who would rent monthly and rent to cover parsonage mortgage?
- Gas fireplace repair has been completed.
- Tumwater needs a new water heater. PUD rebate of \$1000 available through March.

Old Business

- A Finance Committee needs to be created. The council recommends that this committee be separate from the executive committee (President, Pastor, Treasurer).
- Start discussion with leadership at our neighboring church regarding security and parking. Tabled until next meeting.
- Free Little Pantry is now in the budget.

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New Business

- Werner Janssen has requested (online) membership to our church via letter of transfer.
- Council members can access the church computer by asking the president or treasurer. Zoom access will be shared with Amy for future meetings.
- A key box for the spare key and a keypad lock on the back door are needed.
- *Food and Fun* for 5 or 6. Volunteers for planning and scheduling are needed. We will mix up groups so people can get to know others better.
- Valentine dance is being planned for Friday night, February 14.
- With the newsletter being published on our website, internet security needs consideration. Children's faces are generally avoided but perhaps more needs consideration.
- We need an Adult Forum coordinator.

Council work re: Pastors

Find resources for our church-family model. Faith as a Sabbatical site was briefly discussed. Again need to explore the possibility of an intern and if it would be what we need and could support.

Other questions for discussion: Call Committee, who might serve? When do we start?

Council Retreat scheduled March 1, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m possibly at Tumwater property.

Topic from Pastor's letter list to work on this month

Transparency? Moved to council retreat or next meeting

Next Meeting: February 20 at 6pm



Northwest Intermountain Synod Pilots Listening Program at Faith

The Northwest Intermountain Synod has identified Faith Lutheran as a site to pilot a new listening program designed to help congregations more effectively articulate their sense of purpose and vision for the future. Pastor Phil Misner, Assistant to the Bishop, outlined the program for us in a forum late last year and indicated that more information would be available as the specifics of the program take shape. Here is a summary of the program and Pr. Misner's recent update:

The program provides opportunity for members of the Faith Lutheran community to engage in brief (15 to 20 minutes), one-to-one listening sessions with a team of 2 individuals from the synod. Pastor Ann Bjorklund serves as leader of the project and is in the process of assembling the teams to carry out the listening sessions. There will be 3 teams of 2 (one will ask the questions, the other will take notes). Once the teams are finalized, the plan will be to have dates & times when the listening team is available to hold the sessions. The hope is that 2 teams will be able to be present, in-person in Leavenworth providing both weekday and weekend opportunities and one team available to conduct the sessions remotely via Zoom. Individuals who are unable to participate in a listening session will have an opportunity to submit written responses. Folks will have the questions ahead of time and are welcome to bring notes with them.

After all listening sessions are complete, Pr. Bjorklund will provide a summary report that will be available to the congregation. The hope is that the summary will be beneficial to the call process.

Faith Lutheran Church Annual Meeting + Potluck!

January 26, 2025



The meeting was called to order by President Karl Kranz. Signatures of members in attendance were collected and a quorum confirmed. Pastor Abby d'Ambruoso, guest preacher, offered prayer. Annual reports were distributed electronically in advance with hardcopies available at the meeting.

Opening remarks, Karl Kranz

- The Council is working to address specific recommendations by our former pastor as well as improving communications and transparency in the congregation.
- The Northwest Intermountain Synod will be piloting a new listening program in our congregation that is designed to more effectively tell the story of our community and ministries. See page 5.
- A Church Council retreat is planned for March 1.
- "Food and Fun for 5" activities are being planned to provide fellowship opportunities.
- The Council is considering the possibility of sponsoring a pastoral intern. There was discussion about what this would entail as well as considering a call to an intentional interim pastor to serve during a transition period prior to initiating a call process for a permanent pastor.
- The deadline to apply to be considered as an intern site is January 31. The application does not commit our congregation to engaging an intern but rather creates the opportunity if that is what the congregation wants in the future. Karl asked the congregation if there were any objections to submitting an application for an intern knowing that a decision about whether or not to offer an actual internship would require future discussion and approval by the Church Council and the Congregation. There were no objections voiced to this plan.

Nominations and elections

- Karl Kranz and Greg Steeber were nominated and unanimously elected to new 2-year terms on the Church Council.
- Greg Steeber and Dawn Kranz were nominated to serve as lay voting members representing FLC at the synod assembly and were unanimously elected.
- John Schramm, Barbara Rossing and Leesa Broker were nominated and unanimously elected to continue serving as the nominating committee.

Financial Report and 2025 Budget

- Treasurer Greg Steeber provided an overview of our financial status at the end of 2024. After lagging behind budget for most of the year, a very strong November and December brought contributions up and actually exceeded the budget by nearly \$3,500 by years end. Thanks to all who contributed.
- Financially FLC is in a good position and our reserves have improved over the last year, in addition to the large contributions made during the capital campaign in 2024.
- Lisa Therrell requested a final report on the capital campaign be prepared.
- The proposed operating budget for 2025 is a total of \$155, 612, which is essentially the same total as the 2024 budget. It was moved and seconded that the budget be approved as presented. Motion carried with unanimous vote.

A big thank you was extended to Don Haven and Cindy Carroll for the new camera they provided to improve the video and audio quality of our web broadcasts for our Sunday services.



Immigration/Race Justice Group January 2025

*The Immigration/Race Justice Group endeavors to accompany and provide support for our immigrant community through **Education, Direct Service, and Advocacy.***

Thanks to those who were able to participate in the two recent Adult Forums on Immigration. In the first forum, Vanessa Gutierrez, Director of NW Immigrant Rights Project (NWIRP, Wenatchee office) summarized the legal issues coming with the new administration and a reminder of actions that can be taken by immigrant families. The second forum went into greater detail on how families can prepare for possible immigrant raids, including “Know your Rights” as well as the functions of a Community Rapid Response Team that would go and monitor Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activities. In addition, steps were presented that Cascade School District could consider in preparing for the eventuality that local packing sheds could be raided, resulting in the loss of parents and children.

A copy of the PPT with resources is available by contacting Alex lxhappns@nwi.net

Education and Administration:

- Our current bank account has received additional gifts at the beginning of the year!
- The application for a \$500 endowment grant from Advent Lutheran in Spokane is still pending.
- Alex will look into the new “Legacy Fund” through NCW Community Foundation.
- Forum (Jan. 12) at Faith Lutheran regarding immigration presented by NWIRP went well with 30-40 participants. Next week (Jan. 19) Alex will present a second forum on how families, businesses, Cascade School District, and other organizations can respond and prepare. A copy of the PPT and Resource page will be mailed to those who have expressed interest. A listing and all the necessary PDF downloadable documents for Family Safety and Security are available on our I/RJG website: <https://irjgroup.wixsite.com/irjg>. If you are desiring a copy of the PPT or the Resources page, please contact Alex: lxhappns@nwi.net

Direct Support:

- The CSD director for AVID classes was our guest and spoke at length to the positive results of this past year’s senior student’s accomplishments. Maleah also reviewed the various kinds of scholarships available and those undocumented students cannot access. She also mentioned that the upcoming months will require the assistance of volunteers to help with scholarship applications. Several in the group will sign up when the February list of dates is prepared. On Tuesday, February 4, there will be a classroom AVID “introduction” (with treats!) with our group of volunteers.
- One of our members will be leaving for a 3 week Guatemala visit on January 20. A former member remains in Confluence until a care center is found. She has been visited by members of our I/RJG.
- A single mom whom we have helped for over a decade to obtain asylum status, continues in fragile health and is hoping to reapply through United States Citizenship and Immigration Services which will entail an entirely “new” and costly process. It has already been more than 13 years!
- One of our members, a CHS teacher, informed us that nine CHS students have enrolled in drivers’ education as of last week! They had received over \$1,400 in assistance from our group. She also told us of how CSD’s new “Unidos,” group (which she “sponsors”) provides a safe and supporting group for Hispanics is blossoming and how they sent us \$450 to continue helping with student driver’s training scholarships.

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Advocacy:

- Members are encouraged to access future WAISN (WA Immigration Solidarity Network) trainings on Know your Rights and Community Rapid Response trainings <https://waisn.org>
- Hopefully there will be continued interest within the community and schools to continue providing such informational forums and possible next steps for families.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 26, 6 p.m. Contact Alex for details lxhappns@nwi.net

Immigrants in our community.....

Sherry Thompson, Canada. I immigrated to the US with my family when I was 7 years old. My father was a mining engineer who followed gold mines south from British Columbia, Canada. We moved to Wenatchee, WA where he was the mine superintendent at Lovitt Mines for 16 years. We registered as “aliens” every January during those early years. I became a US citizen shortly after graduating from university, as did the rest of my immediate family. We were welcomed as economic immigrants. Today I enjoy dual citizenship with the US and Canada.



Ellen Farley, Germany. After surviving WWII in Germany as a child and finally living a normal life, my parents gave the permission to visit the United States for one year to improve my knowledge of the English language. I came by boat to New York City. The immigration officer handed me my green card in sight of the Statue of Liberty. I didn't realize at that time how lucky I was to possess this card which allowed me to work without any issues (?) in the United States. On a trip from New York to Acapulco on a Greyhound bus, I met my future husband. My one year stay turned into a lifetime commitment which I never regretted.



Meleah Butruille, South Korea. My sister and I were born in Ulsan, South Korea. We were both adopted by our parents Janet and Glen when we were 11 and 6 years old. We became naturalized citizens around 1988.



Alex Schmidt, Germany. During WWII, my parents fled as refugees from Russia to the allies in Germany where I was born. When I was 5 years old, my dad was able to bring my mom, two older sisters and myself to Peshastin (1952) as “indentured” servants to work for an orchardist on North Road. After 6 years, my parents became naturalized and I automatically became a citizen. I still have my green card! Later, I returned to Germany (1973) as a 1st Lt. in the U.S. Army and was able to visit my place of birth, Bayreuth. Then in 1993 my mom took me to Russia to see where she was born.

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Christine Jakobsen-Morgan, Denmark. In 1994, while I was a forestry student at the Royal Veterinarian and Agricultural University in Copenhagen, Denmark, I was invited to participate in a student field trip to Idaho and Montana with the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations. This was my first visit to the U.S. Later I returned to the University of Idaho to learn more and, as it turned out, to meet my future husband, David. I came out of **curiosity** and stayed for **love**. In January 2017, I applied for U.S. citizenship and become a dual Danish-American citizen. I look forward to being able to vote and not need to always keep track of the paperwork involved in being an Alien.



Energy Workshop and Thoughts about the Illuminated Cross on Tumwater Mountain Proposal from Barbara Rossing

Two Earth Stewardship matters grew out of Faith Lutheran's work.

First, the synod Eco-Faith Network will hold a Zoom workshop on Energy Feb 25, 10 am. See invitation here. It is very exciting that Faith Lutheran's heat pumps will be showcased as a case study in energy rebates.

Second, two reporters asked to interview me about the proposed cross on Tumwater Mountain. I was grateful to be able to meet with them in the Faith Lutheran sanctuary, drawing on the Earth Stewardship statement in August opposing illuminated objects on the skyline.

See the statement I gave the Seattle Times reporter Paul Roberts, underscoring God's love for the dark night sky on the next page...

Save Money ... Power Up Mission

A virtual workshop on energy rebates and offers Tuesday, February 25, 10 a.m.

Learn how your congregation can save money on energy-efficient upgrades that will lower utility bills. This win/win opportunity is especially beneficial for aging buildings on tight budgets.

Join ELCA energy expert Rev. Dr. Jim Martin-Schramm and local church leaders to hear how **Faith Lutheran in Leavenworth is saving money with new heat pumps**; how Salem Lutheran in Spokane is saving money on new energy-efficient windows. Rebates and other incentives also often apply to solar, wind, and geothermal options.

*Brought to you by EcoFaith Action Network,
an ad-hoc ministry of the ELCA Northwest Intermountain Synod*



The Leavenworth Valley's dark starry night-sky is a gift from God. We don't need a gigantic artificially - illuminated cross over Leavenworth to proclaim our Christian faith. I sympathize with Christians wanting to inspire awe for God's greatness. But an illuminated cross that brings light pollution may cause negative feelings about Christianity among some neighbors, including people of other faiths.

*The heavens—the night sky itself—already declare God's glory, says Psalm 19. We need to be able to **see** the star constellations mentioned in the Bible:*

- *In the book of Job 9:9, "God is the maker of the Bear [the Big Dipper] and Orion, the Pleiades and the constellations of the south."*
- *In the prophet Isaiah 40:26, "Lift up your eyes to the heavens: Who created all these? God who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength." **Not one of them is missing.***

As Isaiah 40:26 states: Nothing is missing. No additional illuminated object is needed.

Places in the world where constellations and the Milky Way are visible are becoming fewer and fewer. Because of light pollution, many of my students in Chicago (where I taught the Bible before I moved to Leavenworth 20 years ago) have never seen the Milky Way.

I have been to Bavaria and have seen wayside crosses. But the Bavarian crosses are smaller and not lit up at night. Honor the Bavarian theme; do not illuminate a large cross at night.

Here is a statement from the Faith Lutheran Church Earth Stewardship Group, August 20, 2024:

"We oppose the construction of any 70-ft illuminated object on the skyline because light pollution is objectionable and we want the structure to be subject to the permit process that includes addressing light pollution and any other environmental impacts."

***--Faith Lutheran Church Earth Stewardship group,
Leavenworth***





Evangelical
Lutheran
Church in America

From our presiding bishop.....

Dear church,

On Monday, our nation witnessed the peaceful transfer of power central to our democracy, followed by sweeping actions by the incoming Trump administration. Facing such changes, we receive guidance through Martin Luther's words in the Large Catechism.

In the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer, where we pray "Give us this day our daily bread," Luther writes about the importance of praying for our leaders, asking God to grant them wisdom and strength. He also speaks to the responsibility of leaders to provide stability, sufficiency and equity, saying, "[I]t would be very proper to place in the coat-of-arms of every pious prince a loaf of bread instead of a lion, or a wreath of rue, or to stamp it upon the coin, to remind both them and their subjects that by their office we have protection and peace, and that without them we could not eat and retain our daily bread."¹

This past week has been one of rapid and cascading change, from the inauguration of a new president and vice president to the flurry of activity in government orders and regulations. The policies and decisions reflected in this week's executive orders and regulatory changes have the potential to profoundly impact our lives, the well-being of our neighbors and the future of the planet. Therefore, I am concerned about the ways that many of the executive actions have created uncertainty and fear in our communities among neighbors struggling to survive, neighbors struggling to provide for their children, and neighbors struggling to be seen.

As a church, we are called to speak up when the government distorts or denies the image of God in each person by endangering access to protection, peace and daily bread. Where harm or inequity occur, we are called by God to respond with love and advocacy.

Prayer is not passive; it's an act of hope. Prayer reminds us to ground ourselves in God's promise. We

pray for strength, to love unconditionally and to serve one another. As we lift up our petitions, we must also act—advocating for policies that affirm the dignity of every person and stand against actions that demean or exclude.

This church is committed to upholding the humanity of everyone, regardless of who we are or where we come from. We are a church called to love our neighbors and accompany all people in their joys and struggles. We must remain steadfast in this calling. As the ELCA, we will continue to proclaim the radical inclusivity of Christ's love. And we will deepen our local and global partnerships with those working to build a just and compassionate society, especially through our ecumenical and interreligious networks.

I commend to you the social message "[Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy](#)," which states on page 7: "To evaluate how well agencies of government are doing their proper work of providing for the safety and well-being of those within their borders and/or jurisdiction, Lutherans ask one simple but all-encompassing question: Is the neighbor being served?"

I encourage our congregations to use the resources of the [ELCA Witness in Society Team](#) with advocacy networks on the state and federal level. And get involved with [AMMPARO](#), the ELCA's strategy toward just and humane policies affecting migrants.

As we move forward, let us hold fast to our faith and to one another. Let us be bold in our witness to the gospel, steadfast in our prayers for those in authority and tireless in our efforts to seek justice for all.

May God grant us courage, wisdom and peace in these days.

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



God poured out manna day after day, dreaming of a universal manna society - a world where all receive, thank, and share. Yahweh dreamed of a world where there are no big deals and little deals, no rich and poor, no oppressors and oppressed - where humans live in harmony with all creation, each part living for the good of the whole. Yahweh dreamed of SHALOM, a mended universe.

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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.

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.



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.

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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 21 for the March issue.

