



DECEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church

714 N Grand Avenue

Pierre, SD 57501



Wise Men and Women Still Seek Him



9:45 am N-3 Christmas Program

“Jesus’ Family Tree”

Sunday, December 20, 2020



Special Advent and Christmas Schedule

Wednesday, December 2 (7:00 pm)

“Jesus, the Seed of Jesse’s Tree”

(Genesis 1:27; 3:8–15)

Wednesday, December 9 (7:00 pm)

“Jesus, the Root of Jesse’s Tree” (Genesis 22:1–18)

Wednesday, December 16 (7:00 pm)

“Jesus, the Life of Jesse’s Tree”

(Genesis Matthew 3:13-17)

Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship

December 20, 2020

8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Christmas Eve, December 24

“Jesus, the Promise of Jesse’s Tree”

11:00am and 2:00pm,

5:00pm and 7:30pm

Candlelight Service

Christmas Day, December 25

“Jesus, the First-fruit of Jesse’s Tree”

(John 1:1-14)

9:00am Worship with

Holy Communion



Unto Us a Child is Born!



Then Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain. The glory of the LORD abode on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days; and on the seventh day He call to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. The sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud as he went up into the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights. (Exodus 24:15-18)

Stop me if you've heard this one before, "You know what they say, 'Patience is a virtue.'" I've gotta be honest, I hate that saying because, most of the time, I hear it when my patience is running out!

And, when I look around, it seems there are others, like me, who are experiencing a deficit in patience. For example, I am always amazed at how many people speed through the intersection trying to make it through before the light changes to red. Lack of patience, perhaps? Or how often people bounce from checkout line to checkout line in order to save those few precious seconds. I know I'm guilty of the latter too!



Patience, it's one of those things that is so hard to learn and even harder to put into practice. And I'm not necessarily talking about our day-to-day physical activities. We can be just as *impatient* about our spiritual activities as well. It's one of those things I truly wish we didn't have to learn — but God requires it of us! As I was

reading through the passage above, it dawned on me that Moses sat on the mountain for *six entire days* before the Lord spoke to him. Talk about patience! I wonder how many would wait six entire days at church for the service to start. I know, I wouldn't.

So often we think we can just do as we please with our lives and then come running to God for a few minutes of prayer and get an answer right away. Even Moses needed to be prepared for six full days in order to be able experience the awesome presence of the Lord! If *Moses* had to wait six days – then it should not surprise us if we need to wait 40 days, 40 months or even 40 years for the Lord to prepare us to receive His blessing!

Hmmm... perhaps the Lord is saying to us today — "Be patient my child, wait on me and I will give you the greatest gift!"

On November 28th, as we prepared our hearts for the Advent season, we must remain be patient. We must wait on the Lord and He will give us the most precious gift this world has ever known. It is the gift of a child, "born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons" (Gal. 4:4-5). Jesus Christ, by His sacrifice, has set us free from our sinful state in order that we might live with Him forever.

So, be patient! The Lord is preparing great things for us. Stay grounded in the Word. Don't pass up the opportunities to receive Christ's body and blood in Holy Communion and wait on the Lord!

In Service to Christ and Neighbor,



“The Son of God”

Pastor Coy T. Pji



This month’s window is different from our previous two. Although stained glass does allow light to pass through, this window’s colors portray a dark event. Instead of blue or green, the main color is red. There was plenty of red blood to see during Jesus’ crucifixion. The window helps us to focus on a few features of this event.

I immediately noticed the white lightning strike. The weather surrounding Jesus’ death was unnatural. From noon until 3PM, the sun’s light failed. The darker red panes help to reduce the overall light of the window and reinforce this. The Gospels also record that an earthquake occurred just after Jesus yielded up his spirit. It was so violent that rocks were split in two.

Jesus’ cross was the next feature I noticed. The color of his cross is slightly different from the two other crosses behind him. With such a strong focus upon the front cross, the others can almost fade into the background. But they remain nonetheless. Jesus was crucified in between two thieves. One of these robbers recognized a truth about Jesus while the other did not. He asks Jesus to remember him when Jesus comes into his kingdom. The robber saw a king hanging upon the cross, while many other bystanders saw only a condemned man getting a fitting punishment.

The last object is the hill. Although the Gospels simply note the place where Jesus died, the book of Hebrews attaches special meaning to it (Hebrews 13:11-13). In Old Testament times, the remainder of the animal sacrifice was taken outside the camp and burned. It was treated in a similar way to refuse. Jesus also was shunned and rejected, treated like refuse by those in authority. But we see him rightly, the same way that the one robber saw him. Jesus is the Son of God, he is **the** King.

This month, we rightly focus upon remembering the birth of our Savior. But we should not lose sight of his entire life, and in so doing, miss the





DISTURBED BY THE LIGHT: BORN UNTO YOU

And there were shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shown around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."

Luke 2:8-11

A week or so ago, I was leafing through a book I bought several years ago titled, "Above the Moon Earth Rises." It is a collection of hymn texts, anthems and poems by Thomas Troeger that are grouped together by images and patterns of association. One section caught my eye: **Born in a Barn.** Beautiful poetry on the topics of animals in a barn, the shepherds, stars, angels and the Magi.

*Disturbed by light while fighting sleep,
their eyes half closed, half watching sheep,
the shepherds might have turned away
and rested till the break of day:
Why risk the night, the winds that blow?
Why risk the way we do not know?*



The shepherds were insignificant to many in Bible times. A shepherd's life was one of hardship and isolation. It certainly was a job without glory, one that paid meager wages, and probably with little recognition. The hills of Judea were their workplace – rocky, hilly and mountainous, rugged, and no doubt treacherous. Hot in the summer and cold in the winter. But somebody had to watch the sheep, because the terrain was filled with wildlife from which the sheep must be protected. Being a shepherd was a lonely life, no doubt uncomfortable, and one of poverty. The least of the least.

*Disturbed by light that marked the sky
where dark alone once met the eye,
the magi might have paused to test
the wisdom of their star-born quest:
Why risk the night, the winds that blow?
Why risk the way we do not know?*

It is interesting that God chose this class of men to be the first recipients of the greatest tidings ever revealed to mankind. I can't imagine what the shepherds were thinking! That burst of light exploding in the sky obviously interrupted the quiet of the night and startled and surprised the shepherds. But it was no mistake. The angel's message wasn't delivered to the wrong people. Jesus was a King for ALL people. The angel announced, "Unto you a child is born." The Sovereign of the universe would come and be born to the people – in a barnyard stall, of all places – where he would experience from the beginning, the humble, the poor in spirit and the meek. Those He came to save.



DISTURBED BY THE LIGHT: BORN UNTO YOU *continued*

(Continued on page 5)

*Disturbed by light that draws us past
the world we grip so hard and fast,
we might delay our starting out
until we answer every doubt:
Why risk the way we do not know? Except –
except our hearts refuse to slow
and every beat insists we go.*

These unsuspecting shepherds, presumably dirty, smelling of sheep and wearing soiled work clothes, were the only guests invited to this heavenly concert. The night sky burst forth with a heavenly host proclaiming the praises of God for what was revealed to man. It had to

be a majestic and glorious sight! “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!” The people were given the Gift of God, Emmanuel. Do you sometimes feel as insignificant and nameless as a shepherd in Judea? Be assured, the Lord knows who you are. The shepherds headseek out angel said. hear the tions they risk the not know? of our heart go!



The shepherds headseek out angel said. hear the tions they risk the not know? of our heart go!



dates to Remember

Wednesday, December 2 (7:00 pm)
“Jesus, the Seed of Jesse’s Tree”
(Genesis 1:27; 3:8–15)

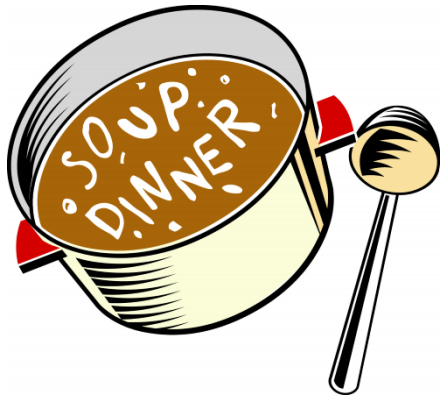
Wednesday, December 9 (7:00 pm)
“Jesus, the Root of Jesse’s Tree”
(Genesis 22:1–18)

Wednesday, December 16 (7:00 pm)
“Jesus, the Life of Jesse’s Tree”
(Matthew 3:13–17)

Christmas Eve, December 24
(11:00 am, 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm & 7:30 pm)
“Jesus, the Promise of Jesse’s Tree”
Candlelight Service

Christmas Day, December 25 (9:00 am)
“Jesus, the First-fruit of Jesse’s Tree”
(John 1:1–14)
Worship w/ Holy Communion





The Board of Missions will be hosting Advent soup suppers on December 2, 9 and 16 from 5:30-6:30 p.m. We are asking for a free will donation with the proceeds going to Rosebud mission project. Congregational members who are homebound and would like meals delivered should contact Melissa Neyhart at 280-8493 to



Men's Fellowship



sign up.

All men of our Parish are invited to our Men's Christmas Fellowship.

It is on Monday, December 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Let's



play

some court whist this



Sign up in the Narthex
This is a way to remember your Loved ones and make our Chancel area beautiful
At the same time!

The cost is \$16.00 each





ROSEBUD CLOTHING AND BLANKET DRIVE



Dear Members of Faith Lutheran Church,
The Board of Missions & Evangelism requests your help! **We will be taking clothing, full & queen size blankets, and Christian children's books and Bibles to Rosebud Reservation.** We will have boxes set up in December in the narthex to put items in if you wish to donate. We will take **gently** used books and clothing but request that the clothing be **clean** and that the blankets be **new** and not used. If you have any questions please speak to a member of the Board of Missions & Evangelism: Luann Zuercher, Dennis Ryckman, Shannon Zeeb, Jolynn Haberling, Mike Lauritsen, Melissa Neyhart, Megan Goltz, Dean VanDeWiele or Connie Bolte.

**Deadline to have items turned in is
December 20.**

Thank you!

LWML: December 14

Usually the Faith Lutheran LWML hosts a lively Christmas party in December. But this year, LWML will instead hold a brief meeting and servant event starting at 7:00 pm on Monday, December 14th. The meeting agenda will include voting on proposed bylaws, installation of officers, a short devotion, and communion with Pastor Rajek. All women in the congregation are welcome to attend. The group will be social distancing, and participants are asked to wear masks.

The LWML will also wrap up the blanket project on December 14. Blankets that have been collected for families on the Rosebud Reservation will be sorted and packaged with a Christmas card.

For additional information, please contact Jan Larson by phone at 280-0862 or by email at larson920@hotmail.com.





Light in the World

Regardless of how you decorate your Christmas tree, the one essential is that it has lights—the more, the better! As you drive around your city during this Christmas time, you see homes with various reminders of the season, and the common ingredient is lights—the more, the better! As stewards who celebrate the birth of the Christ Child, we understand that these lights are but dim symbols of the One True Light, the Light of the World, Who has come into our world and into our hearts. Jesus told us, *“I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in Me may remain in darkness”* (John 12:46).

Our celebration at Christmas is much more than gatherings of families and friends and the exchange of gifts, although that is part of it. Our earthly celebrations have eternal roots. Before we were claimed by our Savior, we were in darkness. His appearance has changed all that, and we are now *“light in the Lord.”*

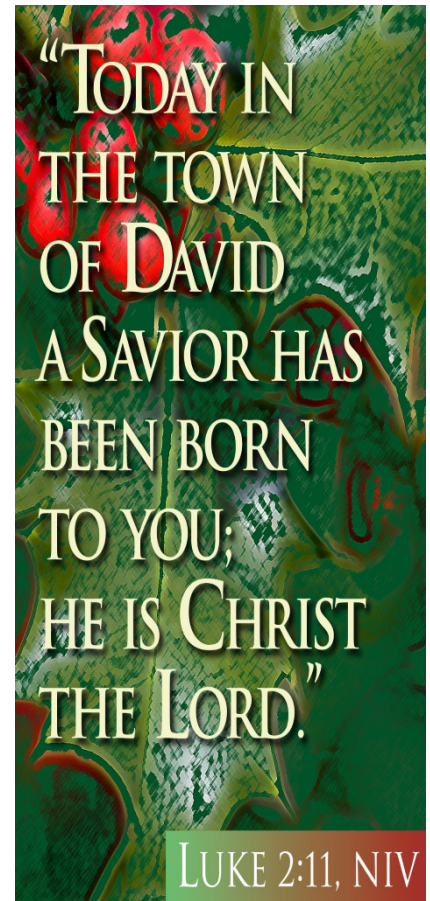
Because of who we are—Christ’s redeemed called to be stewards of all His gifts—the Apostle Paul continues the statement of identity above by writing, *“For at one time you were in darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord”* (Ephesians 5:8-10).

May the light of this Christmas season continue to remind us of our high calling.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, thank You for being our light in a dark world. Grant us Your strength to be a beacon of light to others. In Your name we pray. Amen.

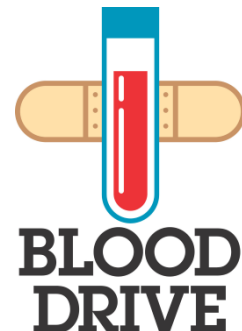


THE MEANING OF
CHRISTMAS



Blood Drive

Faith Lutheran Blood Drive is on Tuesday, December 21 from 10:30 pm to 6:30 pm. To make an appointment: You can go online at bloodhero.com then enter link: pierrefaith. We are always looking for new donors so give us a call.





FLC Preschool News

Faith Lutheran Preschool had a busy and fun filled November. We talked about the first Thanksgiving; it is great to be able to tell the children why we celebrate Thanksgiving – to tell God “thank you” for all the good things that He gives us!

During December, we make a gift for our parents, decorate our own tree at preschool, make ornaments for a tree in the church Narthex, and learn the story of Jesus’ birth. Our color for December is green, the shape is triangle and the letters are D and K. We are sad that we couldn’t have Doughnuts with Dad to celebrate the letter D this year. This year, our Christmas program



has been canceled due to Covid. Although, we are sad that we can’t have our program, we are still planning to have a fun filled special day for the children. The theme of our special day is Polar Express and the children will get to wear their pajamas, drink hot cocoa and eat cookies. This year has been quite different but the best part of this time of year is teaching the children the real meaning of Christmas and how much Jesus loves each of us.

Praying that your Advent and Christmas holidays are bright with the love of Jesus! God Bless you for all your support and prayers.



FLC Day Care News

How is it that we’re just about to move into another new year? This year has been quite a ride, but despite all the trials and difficulties, we have so much to be thankful for. I would like to list a few: We experienced a huge drop in enrollment because of COVID but were able to keep on all of our staff that wanted to stay, as we were blessed with two \$17,000 grants. We were so fortunate to have Angela Schwartz as our daycare director, as she kept staff morale up and worked so hard to keep and direct the daycare mission. She taught me so much and made sure that I was well prepared to step into her hard-to-fill shoes. As the last few months have progressed, we’ve welcomed many wonderful, new families into our daycare (all of our rooms will be nearly full by January, and we’ll look into adding one or two more). Things are looking good here at Faith Lutheran

Daycare!

In November, we welcomed 2 children into our care. In December, we plan to welcome 3 more.

Friday, December 11th, from 5:30p – 8:30p, we will be holding a “Mission: Save Christmas / Parent’s Night Out” fundraiser for our daycare families. Our goal is to raise money for daycare equipment, provide a night for parents to get away and find time for themselves, and to teach the children about the true meaning of Christmas. Following dinner, we plan on showing the short, animated movie “The King is Born.” If anyone would like to volunteer to help with activities, dinner, or just to





Christmas Schedule

Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship December 20, 2020
8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship December 24, 2020
11:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship December 25, 2020
9:00 a.m.

New Year's Eve Worship December 31, 2020
7:00 p.m.



Christmas Program and Practice Schedule

Music practices will be held during regular Midweek and Sunday School times throughout the month of December.

Christmas Program

Sunday, December 20th

N—3rd Grade

“Jesus’ Family Tree”

9:45 a.m. in the sanctuary
(during regular Sunday School time)

Our Dress Rehearsal

Saturday, December 19th

N—3rd grades from

9:30-11:00 a.m.

Any questions, please feel free to contact Pastor Handschke at the church office at:
(605) 224-2216.



*“Bethlehem...
out of you will come...
one who will be
ruler over Israel.”*
M I C A H 5 : 2 . N I V

Over two thousand years ago, the world received its greatest gift. That is when God gave His Son to be born in a manger to fulfill the plan for our salvation. God’s gift was planned centuries before it was given. God didn’t give His leftovers. What is the greatest, best gift He could give? Himself! And so He did in the Person of His Son, Jesus. He gave His Son Who gave His life. What gift could be more appropriate? Christ is exactly what we need! What He wants from us is our hearts.



A Trunk or Treat Thank You



*Trunk
or Treat*

Thanks so much to all of you who made our Trunk 'N' Treat so successful. It was a great event for all! Thanks to our Board of Missions, our LYF Youth, those who do-

nated candy, and all those of the community that participated in this fun, if a bit chilly, evening at Faith.



Offering Envelopes

If you have not already done so, please pick up your offering envelopes for next year. If you don't find your name on a box of envelopes let Helen know and she will issue you a box. Your envelopes will not be mailed to you. You must pick them up. If you give through Simply Giving or through Give+ there are still envelopes in the box that you can use. There are special envelopes for Building, Missions, Lenten and holidays so please pick up your envelopes today.



And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior ..."

LUKE 1:46-47, NIV

Youth News

Upcoming Youth Dates to Keep in Mind:

Advent Services Dec. 2 / 9 / 16 from 6:30-7:00 p.m.

December 19th Children's Christmas Program Dress Rehearsal 9:30-11 am N-3rd grade

December 20th Children's Christmas Program: N-3rd grade 9:45 service

Dec. 20, 27, Jan. 3 No Sunday School Class

Dec. 23 & 30 No Midweek Classes

Dec. 24th Christmas Eve Worship - 11:00 am, 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm and 7:30 pm

Dec. 25th Christmas Day Worship - 9:00 a.m.

Jan. 10th Sunday School Resumes

Advent Services...Please join the congregation for Advent worship Wednesday evenings on Dec. 2, the 9, and the 16 at 7:00 p.m. Your worship life will be blessed because of it. Lord, stir our hearts.

Sunday School and Midweek Children's Christmas program

is going to be Sunday, December 20th with the Nursery – 3rd grade program taking place at 9:45. Christmas program dress rehearsals will be Saturday, Dec. 19th at 9:30 a.m. for Nursery – 3rd

grade. Thanks in advance for the wonderful ways in which each parent encourages and allows their child to share their faith and the



Unto Us a Child is Born!

As God's children, you are taught in the Bible about the importance of giving. God gave the world the best and biggest gift possible when He gave the world His Son Jesus.

Scripture tells us how, on that Christmas day more than two thousand years ago, the angels, shepherds, and wise men all gave. The angels gave Jesus the gift of music as they told the world of Jesus' birth through their songs, the shepherds left their flocks to give honor to baby Jesus, and the wise men brought Jesus gifts of gold, incense, and myrrh.

The wise men brought Jesus gifts but before presenting their gifts they first gave Him honor through the giving of themselves. Matthew 2:10-11 says, *"When they saw the star they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother, and they fell down and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh."* Before you give God your quarters or dollars, do what the Wise Men did first. They knew who Jesus was, and they thanked Him for coming to us. This is the meaning of stewardship. God wants your praise and adoration.



Gospel story at Faith Lutheran.

Faith Lutheran Blood Drive Tuesday, December 21 from