

January 2021 Newsletter

Faith Lutheran Church

714 N Grand Avenue

Pierre, SD 57501

NEW
YEAR'S
EVE
WORSHIP



December 31, 2020
New Year's Eve Worship
with
Holy Communion
7:00 pm

Come finish out the year
in our Lord's presence!



I want to know
Christ and the **power**
of his resurrection....

Philippians 3:10

Sent Forth by God's Blessing



"I'd like to get saved. There's just one problem -
I'm terrified of getting baptized."

The Senior Pastor's Page

¹Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD! ²O Lord hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleas for mercy! ³If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? ⁴But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared. ⁵I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; ⁶my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning. ⁷O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with him is plentiful redemption. ⁸And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities. (Psalm 130)

“2020 was a year like no other.” Wow, that sentence is an understatement! Heavier hearts, isolation, fear of illness, and longing for the return for some semblance of normalcy has been the general theme for this year past. It is in times like these that I like to search the Word of God for the comfort I need. Thankfully, through His Word, God always stands ready to provide!

Take the book of Psalms for example. This book is a wonderful collection of hymns containing words of comfort, beautiful expressions of praise, confident words of trust, and all of it points to Jesus Christ.

When Martin Luther was asked what the best psalms were, he chose some that we might not have expected. His choices were not the usual Psalm 23 or Psalm 46. Rather, the psalms that Luther chose were Psalm 32, Psalm 51, Psalm 143, and Psalm 130. Luther affectionately dubbed these the “Pauline psalms” because he thought they resembled Paul’s epistles in the New Testament by showing the realities of sin and the confidence giving in God’s grace and salvation. Yet, for Luther, Psalm 130 was his favorite.

I think Psalm 130 is great for us who’ve lived through such a tumultuous year. No one know what 2021 will bring (even as I write this, the much-anticipated Covid-19 vaccine is about to be rolled out to the general public). No doubt the new year will bring many great blessings and/or some big losses. Yet, in spite of it all, one thing is absolutely certain: God hears our voice and is attentive to our cries!

So, as we approach another year, know that we have a God who sees us in our distresses and problems, and He acts! He comforts! He consoles! He listens and He is there for us.

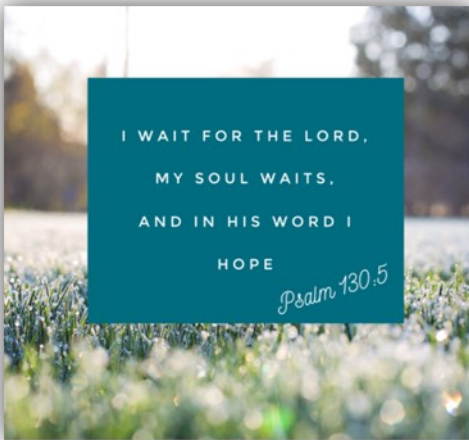
“O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with him is plentiful redemption. And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.” We can count on God’s steadfast love, and His wonderful salvation that He gives us through Jesus Christ.

While we don’t know what the new year will bring, we can at least count on this: Our loving, merciful, and saving Lord will be with us every step of the way. Therefore, it is with boldness, confidence, and in joy, do we approach another year. Amen.

In Service to Christ and Neighbor,

Pastor Coy T. Pji

Sent Forth by God’s Blessing



“Shed for You”



I love the imagery of bread and wine. These two foods are both a coming together of many different pieces. Sadly, since we are somewhat separated from our food, it is more difficult for us to recall the connectedness of both wheat and grapes. Many different kernels of wheat are ground together to form one dough. Many different clusters of grapes are pressed together to form one wine.

Communion highlights this unity. You and I differ in multiple aspects of our lives: our upbringing, our family, our jobs, our interests and hobbies and skills. Yet those differences, while still very real (and even wonderful), do not separate us as God’s people. We come together around a shared understanding and participation in the meal. “This is my body, this is my blood, given and shed for you.”

Yet this connection is not just between us as participants in the meal. You and I also connect with the one who is the meal: Jesus himself. Do you see him up there on the altar? That’s Jesus. I don’t mean a picture or a story about him. That’s actually, physically, literally Jesus on the altar. You eat his body. You drink his blood. There is no deeper participation.

Do you ever wonder about your faith? Are there doubts that creep around the border of your trust in Jesus? Communion is a remedy for uncertainty. Am I forgiven? Am I loved by God? Am I assured a place in his everlasting kingdom? Well, I did just eat and drink Jesus. I would say that I am. I am reminded, in a way that I cannot dodge or misunderstand or forget, that all of God’s promises are spoken to me, that they are true for me, and that I am the recipient of such wonder that I cannot possibly comprehend.

All of this packaged in such a small meal. A God thing. No one else would take such unassuming forms to convey these grand benefits. Only our God would hide himself in the product of abundant

wheat and grapes to celebrate not only our unity with him but also our unity with each other. Come and celebrate a connection unlike any other in the world.

Pastor Sam



Sent Forth by God’s Blessing

WE HAVE SEEN HIS STAR

*“There shall a star from Jacob come forth and a scepter from Israel
rise up and dash in pieces princes and nations.”*

When I was a kid growing up in Minnesota, Christmas couldn't come fast enough. Much to my dismay, my mother didn't do a lot of decorating. She would bring out a red cellophane wreath that had an electric candle in it, and that would go in the front window. The crèche (my brother called it a “manger scene”) took its place on the top shelf of a bookcase, and there was a three-piece Magi, which was placed on angel hair in the middle of the dining room table. We had a live tree, loaded with lights and tinsel, and that didn't appear until about three or four days before Christmas.

But, for whatever reason, I loved that set of Magi – three little silvery camels, and each king had a different jewel-tone colored robe. It was dime store cheap, I'm sure, so I'm not sure why it held such an attraction for me. After I left home, I kind of forgot about those wise men, until I went to visit after Christmas a couple of years ago. No Magi. Mom had other decorations setting out. I asked where the kings were, and she replied, “Oh, somewhere packed away in the attic.”

*“When Jesus, our Lord, was born in Bethlehem in the land of Judea,
behold, from the east to the city of Jerusalem there came wise men who
said: Say, where is he born, the King of Judea? For we have seen
his star, and are come to adore him.”*

My brother and I moved our 94 year-old parents to assisted living this past August. We now have the monumental task of cleaning out nearly 70 years worth of accumulation in the small frame house over the next year. I was back home for a couple of days in November to look for some things Mom wanted. I got to thinking about the Magi, and headed up to the attic where all the Christmas things are stored. I dug around in a number of boxes for about an hour, and finally – there it was – the Magi in their original tattered box! One camel was minus two legs, but the legs were still in the box – and I think I can repair it. I brought it home with me. It's still shiny – and dime store cheap; definitely retro from the fifties era – but I was thrilled!

The two verses above, are excerpts from Felix Mendelssohn's oratorio “Christus.” The music is dramatic and exciting, and one of Mendelssohn's final works. The text is taken from Numbers 24:17, as well as Psalm 2:9, and the chorus is based on “Wie schon leuchtet der Morgenstern.”

*How brightly beams the morning star!
With sudden radiance from afar with light and comfort glowing!
Thy Word, Jesus, inly feed us, rightly lead us, life bestowing.
Praise, oh praise such love o'erflowing.*

On January 6, we will celebrate the Feast of Epiphany, which commemorates the visit of the Magi and the baptism of Jesus. It is the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles; the revelation of God incarnate as Jesus Christ, fully human and fully divine. We don't know a whole lot about the Magi; distinguished foreigners from the east, also referred to as the Three Wise Men or the Three Kings. Of the four Gospels, only Matthew mentions visitors “from the east” who came to worship the “King of the Jews.”

They obviously saw a supernatural phenomenon in the sky. Did it get them to thinking? Something had been revealed to them and motivated them. Did they worship Jesus as true God or did they revere Him only as an earthly king? I'd like to think they realized that Jesus was more than just a human king, and that the appearance of God in human flesh changed them. It is meant to change us also. [During this Season of Light, we walk differently through our days as a result of encountering His presence: God with us!](#)

Karen Lindbloom

Sent Forth by God's Blessing

Daycare News

Happy New Year from Faith Lutheran Daycare!

This last month we held our Parent's Night Out Fundraiser. It was a blast, and we were able to witness to the children about Jesus' birth through a short film. Not as many children attended as we would have liked, but we still enjoyed every minute of it with the children who were able to make it! We had 7 staff volunteers to help with the fundraiser, and I think that shows their incredible dedication to our daycare program. The daycare is so blessed with all of its 16 amazing employees.

Also in December, the preschool children in our daycare joined Hope's Preschool in making ornaments for Mary House residents. Then the Preschool, Schooler, and Toddler rooms decided to color cards for the Avantara residents. This was a fantastic idea on Hope's part, and we plan to make this a yearly tradition!

The new year is bringing many changes to Faith Lutheran Daycare. The Waddler room will be moving downstairs into what is now the Toddler room, as having that age of children upstairs is a safety hazard. The Toddlers will be taking over the room upstairs. We will also be adding another teacher to that group by February to make room for all of the age-group transitions that need to be made.

We're excited to see what else 2021 brings; However, we're simply just praying for the health and well-being of our church, the daycare, community, and the people as a whole.

God Bless!

Moriah, Daycare Director



Preschool News

A Blessed New Year from Faith Lutheran Preschool! We had a wonderful time in December preparing for Jesus' birth. Because of Covid, our Christmas program was canceled for the Christmas season. Although, we were sad that we could not have our program, the children were still taught the true meaning of Christmas and how much Jesus loves each of us.

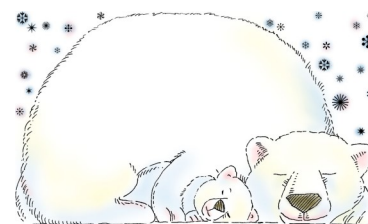
During January this year, we will be emphasizing the color red, the star shape, the letters F, O, H and the number 5. A special activity during January will be Show & Tell. It is fun to see what the children have for new toys from Christmas and some favorite ones.

The stories that we share with the children are all from the New Testament now, starting with Jesus visiting the temple. I like to tell the children about how Jesus was once a little boy just like them.

Stay warm and have a wonderful January.

God's blessings,

Hope LaForest, Director/teacher
preschool@faithluth.com



Sent Forth by God's Blessing

Experience the Joy

Watching your favorite sports team win the big game is an exciting, joyful experience. If you are in the stadium, the joy is contagious. Everyone is clapping, celebrating, and singing. It is wonderful to be part of the crowd and share in the joy of the moment.

Joy

Such is the joy of the body of Christ as it is in the process of being built up.

Such growth progresses as the Church's various parts function to the glory of Christ as the Gospel is preached, people are served, and the members share their faith and love for Christ with one another and those outside the church doors.

Yet do we see such joy often in the Church? Is such a demonstration of joy out of place in the Church? Perhaps we would be un-

comfortable with a "pep rally." But do we experience the joy of seeing others serve as the Holy Spirit has called them? Or are we programmed not to be joyful? Maybe we have come to view Christ's work as an obligation, as drudgery, and not as a thankful response to the grace which has called each of us to the body of Christ. Regardless of the reason for our lack of joy, Christ is always with us, ready to touch us with His joy. He constantly comes to forgive us and empower us through the Holy Spirit to be joyful.

We can indeed sing along all year long with the Christmas choir, "Joy to the world, the Lord has come!" That joy is contagious in the church because the Body of Christ is truly being built up.

THE
STEADFAST
Love
 OF THE
LORD
 NEVER
CEASES

LAMENTATIONS 3:22, NRSV

Official Acts

Baptisms

Evie Joy Handschke

Deaths

Judy Farnsworth
 Shirley English



Sent Forth by God's Blessing

Endowment Fund

It has been requested that we give an explanation of the Endowment Fund and the options within that fund.

This is truly about leaving a legacy. A donation to any part of the endowment would insure that you could support the ministry of this church well after you have passed on or left the church. The different accounts within the endowment were created to help a giver to have the opportunity to be specific about the areas where their investment is directed. Additionally, the giver is not limited to these specific accounts. Other fund accounts may be added (example: Scholarships for the daycare or preschool). The board of endowment wants this to be flexible and accommodating to the givers desires for their donation.

Blessings in Faith is the **original Fund** and is where any undesignated gifts to the Endowment fund go. The earnings are disbursed as follows: the first 15% to Missions (District/ Synod), the second 15% to Seminary student aid, the rest goes to numerous projects within the congregation as requests are received and the Board designate.

Generations in Faith gifts go into the **Endowment General Fund**. The earnings here are used for general operations of the church. Just as if you were designating your offering for the general fund.

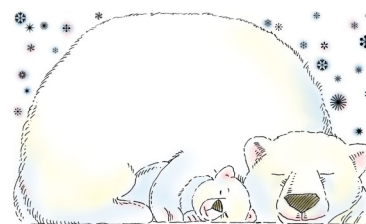
Foundations in Faith gifts go toward the **Endowment Building Fund**. Earnings from this fund go for building and maintenance projects.

Future in Faith gifts go toward **Education**. Earnings here are used for the support of Christian education within the church.



Our February newsletter will be the Annual Report. All entities within the church are to submit their report to the office by January 18. I know some of you are new to this process so if you need an example of previous submissions let me know and I will print one for you.

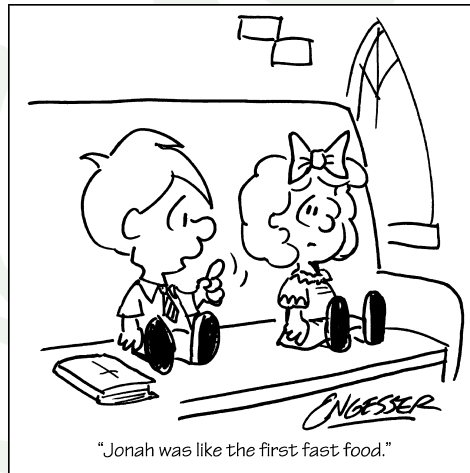
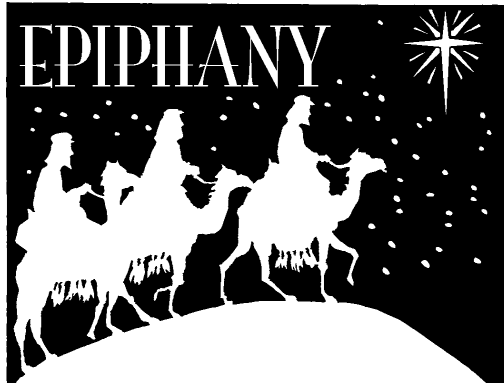
These are usually a summary of events or other actions taken by the entity reporting. Thanks in advance for submitting your reports in a timely manner. Helen



YOUTH NEWS

High School and College Retreat

High school and college students are invited to an overnight retreat at Faith on Jan. 1-2, 2021. We will have worship, games, meals, and learn about the gift of our bodies, especially our gender. Pastor Michael Salemink, president of Lutherans for Life, will lead the classes. For more information, visit highertthings.org, "Retreat" tab, or speak with Pastor Sam.



Bible Bowl

Increase your knowledge of God's Word in a friendly competition with other students from around the state. Students in 6th grade through seniors in high school are eligible for the competition, which will be in March or April.

LeRoy Kropuenske will begin coaching interested students now, either in person or through Zoom. Please contact him or Pastor Sam with questions or to sign up.

Sunday School



Therefore put on the full armor of God ...

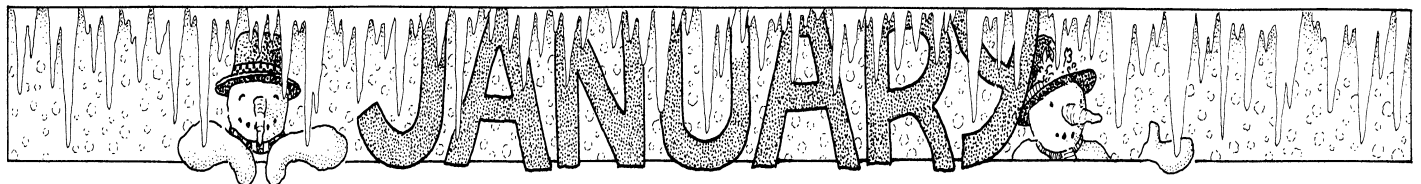
EPHESIANS 6:13, NIV

Sunday School Classes

Our Sunday School Classes will resume January 10, 2021.

Midweek Classes

Our Midweek classes will resume on January 6, 2021.



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