



## DECEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church

714 N Grand Avenue

Pierre, SD 57501



*Wise Men and Women Still Seek Him*



### Sunday School Christmas Service

Sunday, December 21, 2025  
9:45 AM-10:45 AM



### Special Advent and Christmas Schedule "Our Dear Christ Enters In"

Wednesday, December 3, 2024  
Midweek Advent 1

7:00 p.m.

"Family Tree"

Wednesday, December 10, 2024  
Midweek Advent 2

7:00 p.m.

"Home Hurts"

Wednesday, December 17, 2024  
Midweek Advent 3

7:00 p.m.

"Baby Names"

Christmas Eve, December 24  
2:00pm, 5:00pm and 7:30pm

Candlelight Service

"Great Joy"

Christmas Day  
Sunday, December 25  
9:00 a.m.

"In Our Hearts"



*Unto Us a Child is Born!*



## When a Pastor Gets a Call

I recently received two calls, one to Marion, Iowa, and another to Alpena, Michigan. I have turned down both of those calls. I want to give some insight into what a call is and what the call process includes. My hope is that this will help you to understand how God puts pastors where he wants them to be.

A congregation in the LCMS can call any LCMS-ordained pastor at any time. The first half of the call process takes place in vacant congregations. For some context, remember that Trinity-Blunt is vacant and is going through this very process. The congregation spends time understanding how ministry is among them and what skills and characteristics they need in their next pastor. Members of the congregation can submit names. This list of names is sent to the District President, who is free to make modifications. Usually, he will add names that he knows of. Even pastors who are not seeking calls (like me) can be placed on these lists.

Often times, the congregation will contact several of the pastors and get to know them. Although it is sometimes called an interview, the normal job application process has almost nothing to do with the call process. This is, I think, what makes it so unclear to some people. The congregation gets a sense of the pastors and the pastors get some sense of the congregation. Then, at a voters' meeting, the congregation votes to extend a call to a particular man. One half down, one half to go.

Once the pastor receives that call, he now needs to determine where God wants him to be. Sometimes the decision is obvious, sometimes less so. As I thought about the two recent calls, I considered what kinds of ministries were taking place at each church. I visited the cities and got an idea of what the communities were like. I met people at the churches. Then I also considered what ministries are in progress at Faith, as well as where we need to go next. I gave some thought to what happens if I stay, both for Faith and for the calling congregation, and what might happen if I go, both for Faith and for the calling congregation.

I did not see any single factor as making the decision. In retrospect, it was a long night of wrestling with God followed by a calm and peaceful moment. I would not say that I decided anything, nor was there any single point of choosing. God made it clear to me that I need to stay at Faith. This is good news for all of you but bad news for the churches in Iowa and Michigan. They resume the call process, seeking God's input on who they should call next. Although I am not seeking any calls, if another one should come, I will continue wrestling with God and see where he leads.

*Pastor Sam*





## BORN IN A BARN

*".....and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."*

Have you ever heard the expression, "Were you born in a barn?" I know I have! It usually referred to impolite and unrefined behavior; lacking in basic manners, such as crude talk, not closing the door behind oneself, or slamming it harder than needed. I do know something about barns though. Being raised in a small farming community, I was very familiar with barns, the dairy business, farm animals and cattle, the creamery and crops. My grandpa was a dairy farmer, and to this day, my cousins are fourth generation dairy farmers. I have two large pictures of barns on my walls because they tell something about me – my rural upbringing. Consider this:

*Born in a barn where cows and sheep  
huddle in the frosty air,  
Mary's baby falls asleep  
while she lifts her heart in prayer.  
Thanks be to God for friendly beasts  
that tonight have not been fed  
so my newborn child at least  
has a manger for his bed.*

Many of my classmates were raised on farms, and they shared experiences of the morning and evening feeding of the animals, thawing frozen water, cleaning pens, and making sure there was adequate straw under animals. In the winter the barn was a cozy place, warm and snug with the scent of hay and feed (and yes, that "messy," too) wafting in the air, along with the gentle sounds of the animals. But there could be chaos as well – sometimes it resembled a maternity ward – the sounds weren't so gentle! Cows would come clomping in, looking for their stalls at milking time. Pigs would snort, barn cats would chase each other, and dogs barked.

*Out in the dark while cattle low  
Mary hears another sound:  
Through the streets the soldiers go,  
Herod's troops patrol the town.*

*Continued on page 4*





## BORN IN A BARN continued

*Quick with her hand she shades the light  
till the boot steps fade away,  
but they haunt her dreams all night  
and keep waking her to pray.*

Grandpa and Grandma sometimes talked of feeling close to their Maker in the barn – praying that a newborn calf would survive, or a tired mother cow would stand, just a little longer. A barn is a fitting symbol of an earthly connection to the divine. Barns are a sign of blessing from God – they store the food and bountiful harvest of God's creation, and represent a thriving and established community. The barn environment suggests peace and connection, as well as the simplicity and spiritual significance of farm life.

God humbled himself to be born in a barn. Jesus was welcomed to life by the bleating and bellowing of lowly livestock, as well as the simple shepherds who came to meet the baby. The nativity reflects the humility and divine presence of our Savior; the thrill of hope in the weary winter of the world.

*Deep in the soul let starlight spring,  
make each heart a manger stall  
till we live what angels sing:  
Peace on earth, good will to all!*

Karen Lindbloom



## Forever Young

Join us at noon on December 18  
(the third Thursday of the month)  
for potluck at noon.

Those members 55 years old and older are encouraged to come for good food and great fellowship with fellow members.

Pastor Urbach & Susan are supplying the Christmas ham. Please bring sides or desserts.

We will sing some Christmas carols and acknowledge those with birthdays & anniversaries.  
We may even play some Bingo!



POTLUCK DINNER  
FOR SENIORS



**Sunday, December 7th  
2:00 pm at Faith Lutheran**

# **WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS**



## **GATHERING (AND IN-GATHERING!)**



### **All women at Faith are invited!**

- Inspirational "Christmas Wrappings" program
- Festive decorations
- Delicious lunch
- Fellowship with other ladies of Faith
- Small gift exchange
- In-gathering of food items for Pierre and Fort Pierre middle school students
- An offering will go to SD District Mites

### **Small gift exchange**

Bring a gift to exchange - value not to exceed \$3.00. (Think dollar store - thrift store - or a small sample of your homemade treats.) Please bag or wrap your gift, with your name inside. That way, both the gift and the giver will be a mystery until it's opened! The gifts will be incorporated into a game.

### **In-gathering**

The Pierre and Fort Pierre middle schools have established the Governors Grocery and Buff's Closet programs to provide free food items for middle school students who otherwise don't have enough to eat at home. At this gathering, we'll be collecting food items to donate to those programs.

Most-needed at this time (individual serving sizes, peanut-free):

- |                      |                                  |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Ramen noodles      | • Granola bars                   |
| • Rice-a-Roni cups   | • Cereal cups/single-serve boxes |
| • Mac 'n cheese cups | • Cracker snack packs            |
| • Pop Tarts          | • Cookie snack packs             |

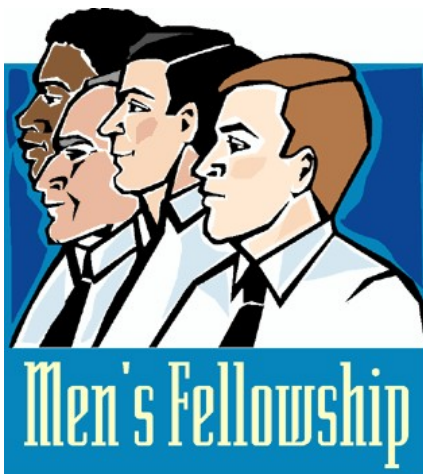




“Music praises God. Music is well or better able to praise Him than the building of the church and all its decoration; it is the Church’s greatest ornament.”

Igor Stravinsky  
(1958)

## Men's Fellowship



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

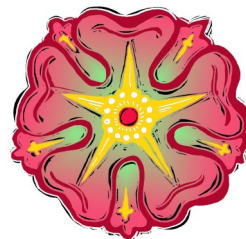
Our gathering is on Monday, December 1 at 7:00 p.m. In the Living Room.

We will play some court whist this month.

Please bring a snack to share. Beverage will be provided.



## Christmas Flowers



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 \$30.00 each







## The Gold Wrapping Paper

Once upon a time, there was a man who worked very hard just to keep food on the table for his family. This particular year a few days before Christmas, he punished his little five-year-old daughter after learning that she had used up the family's only roll of expensive gold wrapping paper.

As money was tight, he became even more upset when on Christmas Eve he saw that the child had used all of the expensive gold paper to decorate one shoebox she had put under the Christmas tree. He also was concerned about where she had gotten money to buy what was in the shoebox.

Nevertheless, the next morning the little girl, filled with excitement, brought the gift box to her father and said, "This is for you, Daddy!"

As he opened the box, the father was embarrassed by his earlier overreaction, now regretting how he had punished her.

But when he opened the shoebox, he found it was empty and again his anger flared. "Don't you know, young lady," he said harshly, "when you give someone a present, there's supposed to be something inside the package!"

The little girl looked up at him with sad tears rolling from her eyes and whispered: "Daddy, it's not empty. I blew kisses into it until it was full."

The father was crushed. He fell on his knees and put his arms around his precious little girl. He begged her to forgive him for his unnecessary anger.

An accident took the life of the child only a short time later. It is told that the father kept this little gold box by his bed for all the years of his life. Whenever he was discouraged or faced difficult problems, he would open the box, take out an imaginary kiss, and remember the love of this beautiful child who had put it there.

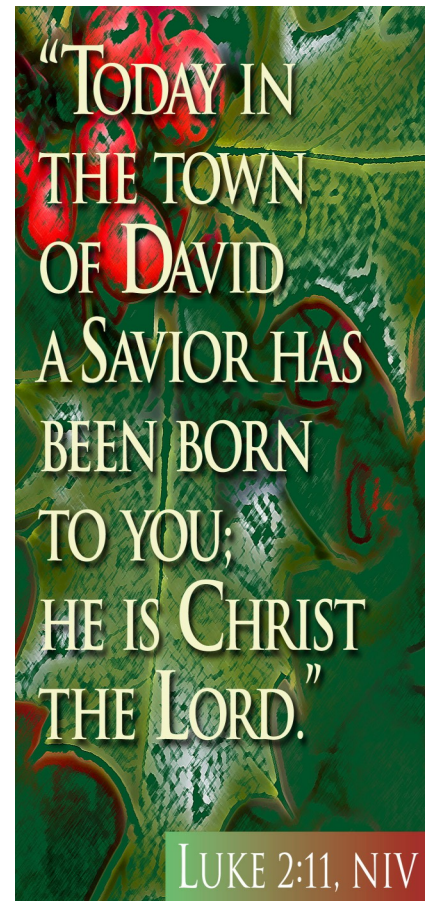
In a very real sense, each of us has been given an invisible golden box filled with unconditional love and kisses from our children, family, friends and God. There is no more precious possession anyone could hold.





## Mexico Mission Trip

As members of the body of Christ, we all have gifts according to the grace given us. On the Mexico Mission trip, we all have a purpose and contribute according to our own gifts. The mission trip is life changing, both for you and for those on the border whom we will serve. Will you or you and your family join us this year on the Mission trip to Mexico? If so, we would like to hear from you soon. The trip is scheduled for the end of May 2026. Soon we will be coordinating many fall projects to help with raising the funds needed. Please contact the Church office (605-224-2216) with a message and they will have Dennis or Carolyn Ryckman contact you,







## FLC Preschool News

We are so excited for the month of December, It's the most wonderful time of the year!! We get to talk about the birth of Jesus with the kids and spread his love. Talking about the true meaning of Christmas with all the kids is one of my favorite stories to talk to them about.

This year we got to spend time in November making ornaments for a Christmas tree at the Capital! We are so blessed to get the chance to decorate one for all the children to get to go see. They are excited to go find THEIR tree.

We have so many things planned in December we will be working hard to get them all done. We have some fun crafts that involve baby Jesus in a manger and a nativity scene. This month we will also be working on the letter Q; we will also talk about the color green and the shape of a star. During the end of the month, we will be



doing preschool assessments to see how far the kindergarten readiness class is coming along.

The kids are working hard on practicing their Christmas songs for the program. We will also be having class Christmas parties where the kids will get to wear pajamas, eat Christmas cookies and enjoy watching the movie "The Star". We love to refer to it as Jesus's Birthday Party!

We will be having our Christmas concert here at the church on December 17<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 PM. Along with the daycare we will be singing a few songs and celebrating Jesus. We welcome you to come out and join us to watch the children sing.

I pray you all have a wonderful holiday filled with love and joy.

Mrs. Kampfe Preschool Director/ Teacher



## FLC Day Care News

It's the most wonderful time of the year to learn the true meaning of Christmas! The children love the extra Christian activities we do this time of year. They always have lots of questions and great conversations with their peers and teachers. Although we have very limited space to store our hands on activities for the Christian part our teachers do a great job incorporating extra fun!

Additional activities are in the making, our teachers are excited to do a little extra to spread the holiday cheer: a Christmas pro-

gram with the Preschool will be Wednesday December 18<sup>th</sup> that we're sure is going to be so much fun for the children and an awesome experience for our children's families as they watch. We are also closed December 24<sup>th</sup> and December 25<sup>th</sup>.

We hope you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Many Blessings,  
Mandy Vogel/Kim Jensen





## Christmas Schedule

### Sunday School Christmas Program

December 15, 2023 at 9:45 a.m.

### Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship

December 21, 2025

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

### Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

December 24, 2025

2:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

### Christmas Day Worship

December 25, 2025

9:00 a.m.

### New Year's Eve Worship

December 31, 2025

7:00 p.m.

*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.*



## GUNS & HOSES BLOOD DRIVE

December 4 & 5, 2025

11:00 am-4:30 pm

Those who are able to give (16+ yrs) are encouraged to sign-up to donate blood.



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

## Offering Envelopes

Offering envelopes will be coming soon and will be on tables in the Narthex. If you don't find your name on a box of envelopes let Helen know and she will issue you a box. If you give through Simply Giving or through Give+ there are still envelopes in the box that you can use and your number is already assigned and no one else can use them. There are special envelopes for Building, Missions, Lenten, Advent and holidays so **please pick up your envelopes as soon as possible.**

## Caroling

The Board of Missions will sponsor a night of caroling on **Monday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>**. Please join us at the church at 6:00 pm and we will enjoy sharing the 'Reason for the Season' with our local community and handing out Christmas goodies.

## Collection for Pastor Utecht Ministry and Christmas Party at Rosebud

The Board of Missions is sponsoring a collection for Pastor Utecht's ministry in Rosebud and Parmalee. An area is set up in the Narthex to collect the following items:

Christian Books/Games for Gifts\*

Nonperishable food items

Toilet paper and other such items

Laundry detergent

\*Examples of kids' books and games are in the Narthex. If you would rather donate monetarily, these books and games will be purchased. Please donate by December 1<sup>st</sup> so the books and games will arrive.

Thank you for your generosity. On **Sunday December 21<sup>st</sup>** we will take a church van to Rosebud with the items collected, departing at Noon. Please join us on this trip. While in Rosebud we will Christmas carol, help with a community meal, assist with the puppet play presentation, and distribute items collected from our Faith Lutheran congregation.





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

LUKE 1:46-47, NIV

*Unto Us a Child is Born!*