



Faith Lutheran Church

Newsletter *November 2023*

A Message from Pastor Chris

May God's blessings of hope, peace, joy and love be with you as we enter into another Advent season!

This year Faith Lutheran Church is beginning our observance of Advent one week early! This will allow us to avoid having to celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent on Christmas Eve—an already busy day! I invite you to wear something blue on November 26th as we begin our Advent journey.

Advent is a preparatory and contemplative season in which we are invited to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming light of Christ entering the world at Christmas. Of course, in our contemporary society Advent also overlaps with a hectic pre-Christmas season, a time laden with the stresses of a busy schedule, holiday shopping, and numerous gatherings, all amid the press of deepening winter and seasonal darkness. While there the religious observance of Advent and Christmas may seem to have little remaining relationship to the civil and retail Christmas season, both afford us the opportunity to gather with family and friends, to practice the gifts of generosity and hospitality, and to express our love and care for our family, friends and the community around us.

In our congregational life we light successive candles each week during Advent, a visible counting down of the time to prepare ourselves for the coming of Jesus. Our Lectionary Readings during this season address the “almost but not yet” reality of Advent, both as a preparatory season for our observance of Christ's coming at Christmas but also a time in which we look forward to the next coming of Christ. The first Gospel text of this season (from Mark 13) points us to the second coming of Christ in end times, reminding



people of faith to “Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come.” (Mk 13:33). In the second week of Advent we are greeted with Mark's telling of the story of John the Baptist, who sought to prepare human hearts and minds for the coming Messiah. In the hearing of this Gospel lesson, we are invited to likewise make ourselves ready for the coming of Jesus. The Gospel text of the

Third week in Advent picks up the testimony of John the Baptist from the perspective of John's Gospel, pointing us toward the light of Christ which dispels the darkness of this world. Finally in the Fourth Week of Advent we are listen in on the revelation of the angel Gabriel relating to Mary her role in God's unfolding plan to bless the world through the coming Messiah.



(continued on page 2)

A Message from Pastor Chris (continued from page 1)

Our observance of the Fourth Sunday of Advent on December 17th will also be blessed with our Sunday School Pageant! Please come prepared to participate as our Sunday School tells the story of the coming of Jesus.

Beginning in November, our Christmas Hamper Committee will be hard at work preparing 24 hampers for members of the wider community. In order to complete this project we will need both financial support as well as your time and talents. Help is needed to both pack the hampers as well as delivering them. Please look for sign-up sheets in the church Narthex (foyer) in the coming weeks.

Please come and join us on December 2nd at 5:00 pm for a time for food, fellowship and music as we gather for an Advent Celebration! We will be sharing a Lasagna dinner, having some advent songs, and making a Christmas craft that will be donated to the residents of River Park Gardens Personal Care Home. There will also be a craft for the children to make and take home. Please register your attendance with the church office as well as the number of children by Wednesday November 29. If you decide at the last minute, you are still welcome. Hope to see you there!

Members of the congregation are also invited to share their gift of singing and holiday cheer in a time of Caroling at River Park Gardens Personal Care Home. We will be gathering at River Park Gardens at 6:00 pm on December 18th to sing to residents and staff as we wander through the halls spreading the joy of the season.



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Faith Lutheran Church *Newsletter*

This newsletter helps us achieve our vision: *Faith Lutheran, reflecting God's grace, is seeking to reach out and serve people, primarily in southeast Winnipeg; to become a community of belonging and hope, built on caring and nurturing relationships, and spiritual direction and growth.*

Published periodically, *The Faith Lutheran Church Newsletter* provides spiritual reflection, helps build community, fosters caring and nurturing relationships, and promotes opportunities for fellowship and celebration. The newsletter encourages ways to support our community missions, and provides updates on how we are working towards achieving our vision.

We welcome your contributions, which may be edited for length or style. You can reach us at:

officeadmin@faithlc.ca

(204) 253-1491

Faith Lutheran Church, 1411 Dakota Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2N 1V8

A Message from Pastor Chris (continued from page 2)

On December 21st at 7:00 pm we will be hosting a Blue Christmas Service for all who are feeling the effects of grief and loss during the holiday season. While Advent and Christmas are for many of us seasons of joyful celebration with family and friends, we recognize that this time can be deeply challenging to those who have suffered the pain of loss. On this longest night of the year we will gather to light candles in remembrance of the losses which we are grieving and to remind us of the light of Christ which shall not be overcome by darkness.



Our Christmas Season begins with our Christmas Eve Candlelight Services, which will be held at 3:30 pm and 5:30 pm on December 24th. Please note that there will be no regular Sunday Worship Service that day. We will gather again at 10:00 am on Christmas Day for a Service of Holy Communion. Our final Worship Service of the Christmas season will take place on December 31st when we will gather for a Service of Lessons and Carols. We will be taking suggestions of favourite carols for this service (up to 12 of them!)—

please submit your favourites to the Church Office no later than December 11th.

We pray that you will be able to take part in some or all of these opportunities to mark this coming Advent and Christmas seasons with us! May the light of Christ which banishes all darkness shine brightly in your lives as we close the year 2023 and look forward to a Happy New Year.



Give us your views on the Faith newsletter

Faith's Communications Committee is seeking feedback on the Faith Newsletter. We hope you will read this issue, and then we invite you to send your feedback to officeadmin@faithlc.ca.

Tell us:

1. Which articles did you find most useful or interesting?
2. What is one thing we could do to improve the newsletter?
3. Any other comments are also welcome.

We will use your feedback as we plan future issues in the year ahead. Thank you.



Joy to the World!

Christmas Day

Service of Holy Communion

10:00 am December 25



Lessons & Carols

Sunday, Dec. 31

10:00 am

*Submit your favourite carols
to officeadmin@faithlc.ca
no later than Dec. 11*



Christmas Eve altar flowers

Families wishing to place flowers on the altar for the Christmas Eve services can do so by designating offering donations of \$25 to "Christmas Flowers" on or before December 15th. Please include a note indicating if the flowers are placed in memory of someone, or in thanksgiving for someone/thing.

(Please do not bring flowers/plants due to allergies.)



Annual caroling event at River Park Gardens

Meet inside the front entrance of 735 St. Anne's Road.

Start at 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm. on Monday, December 18th.

We will be singing familiar carols as we walk the halls and bring Christmas joy to the residents. Song books will be provided. All ages are welcome.



Memory Tree

During Advent, we invite you to hang an ornament on the Christmas Tree in the entrance of the sanctuary in memory of a loved one. (These ornaments can be picked up after Christmas.)



Advent Congregational Event

Please join us on Saturday December 2 at 5:00 pm here at the Church.

We will be sharing a Lasagna dinner, having some advent songs, and making a Christmas craft that will be donated to the residents of River Park Gardens Personal Care Home. There will also be a craft for the children to make and take home.

Please register your attendance with the church office as well as the number of children by Wednesday November 29. If you decide at the last minute, you are still welcome. Hope to see you there!



Greetings from our Council Chair

Greetings Faith family. I hope this newsletter finds you well in the midst of the lead up to the holiday season. It feels like winter is upon us earlier this year than it has been in recent memory with several snow storms to clean up after in only the beginning of November.

When winter sets in I am always reminded of my childhood growing up in southern Manitoba on a farm to the west of Winnipeg. I remember walking through the fresh snow, and seeing the beauty of snow clinging to the trees. Sometimes, living in the city, I need to remind myself that this is actually the same season as I shovel the snow off my driveway and see the snow in the streets that more resembles coke slurpees than it does the pillowy white snow I remember in my youth.

Whatever your situation, I hope that over the next few weeks you are able to see the beauty of the freshly fallen snow, or enjoy the warmth of a crackling fire with family and friends as we all prepare for the holiday season. These are things that I cherish from my youth, and the approach of the holiday season always fills me with anticipation for when I can experience those things again.

I would like to wish you all a happy holiday season, and I hope to see you all before the end of the year. I would also like to leave you with a reminder that our Annual General Meeting is coming up shortly into the new year, on Sunday February 11th. God's peace be with you.



Chris Buffie, Council Chair

Nominating Committee

We are looking for some new members to join Church Council in 2024!

Council meetings are held once a month, usually on the second Tuesday in the month. You can attend the meetings in-person or via Zoom. The meetings are under two hours in length, there is no meeting in July, and the meeting in August is a Zoom only meeting.

If you are interested, or have questions, please talk to any of our current Council members, or email Chris Buffie at councilchair@faithlc.ca

Thank you!

Treasurer's report

Hello Faith family,

I hope this report finds you well. I got my holiday lights hung on the house a few weeks ago, before the snow arrived. This worked out much better and quicker than prior years when the snow was already here.

I have reviewed our Giving to date in 2023. Our Giving does increase in the last few months of the year, based on 2021 and 2022.

I am projecting our Giving to be about 42,000 less than budget at the end of 2023.

Ways to give

You can mail in post-dated cheques or contact our Office Administrator, Cathy, to arrange to drop them off at the office.

You can also contact Cathy to set up Electronic Funds Transfer or Pre-Authorized Remittance.

If you prefer, you can also donate through our website <https://www.faihlc.ca/> by clicking OFFERING or by going to Canada Helps <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/18521>

Giving Analysis at October 31, 2023 <i>All amounts rounded to nearest dollar</i>			
Budget Jan. - Oct. 2023	Actual Giving Jan. - Oct. 31, 2023	Difference to date	Budget Jan.- Dec. 2023
\$279,167	\$179,105	-\$100,062	\$335,000



Bill Byers, Treasurer

Secretary's report

Here are some highlights from Church Council's meetings:

- **Two Adult Bible Studies** are being held this fall, one on Monday evenings based on the book of Acts and one on Wednesday evenings based on the Psalms.
- **Welcome Back Sunday** was a great event and thank you to all who helped out and to all who attended. It was great to have so many out.
- **Sunday School** started on Sunday, September 17th, with a new lectionary-based digital curriculum called "Whirl."
- **The Confirmation program** has moved to a 3-year program beginning at Grade 7.
- **The Urban AGM** was held on October 17th and Sue Care attended as our delegate at that meeting.
- **Worship and Music** has shifted the first Sunday in Advent ahead one week so the fourth Sunday in Advent does not fall on Christmas Eve day. The first Sunday in Advent will be celebrated on November 26th.
- **Members of Church Council** met with members of Faith Lutheran Management Corporation board on October 22nd to learn more about the history of Kirchhoff Gardens and the six suites owned by Faith Lutheran Church.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for December 12th.



Melissa Ulrich, Secretary

Confirmation Schedule 2024

Classes run Tuesdays 6:30 PM to 7:30PM

Winter Term (8 sessions)

January 9	St. Mark's Lutheran Church
January 16	St. Mark's Lutheran Church
January 23	St. Mark's Lutheran Church
January 30	St. Mark's Lutheran Church
February 6	St. Luke Zion Lutheran Church
February 13	St. Luke Zion Lutheran Church
February 20	St. Luke Zion Lutheran Church
February 27	St. Luke Zion Lutheran Church

If you have any questions regarding confirmation, please send an email to committee at youth@faithlc.ca

Sunday School

Sunday School is in full swing at Faith Lutheran Church. We are having fun in some redesigned spaces and using a bit of a different format. The program that we are following is the Whirl Lectionary from Spark House. It has been wonderful using the same lessons that are being used in church. It has also been exciting having parents and grandparents help us with the teaching!

Christmas Program

The Sunday school will be joining the congregation on December 17th during the service. We will be doing a Christmas play that will have the congregation singing and participating! The Sunday school will begin practicing on December 3rd and 10th. We hope you will be able to join us on the 17th!

SHOUT OUT

An update on our Youth Ministry - Director of Youth Ministry

Hello everyone, I hope you are doing well!

The Faith Lutheran Youth Group (FLY) has had another successful fall of events. We had a nice time at the MNO Synod wide Thanksgiving Retreat that happens at Luther Village annually. We learned about faith and love from a great resource leader, and we heard some beautiful music. We learned about various types of spiritual practices as well. The weekend also focused on self-esteem and self-worth which is a wonderful thing to learn about. We connected with other groups through games, sharing in delicious meals and the beautiful scenery. It was a super fun growth experience for us, and we encourage youth to join us next year.

Some other highlights this fall were the Corn Maze, playing games, and bowling. In addition, we greatly enjoyed sharing our wonderful CLAY experience with our congregations at Faith and St. Marks during our post CLAY services.

Our events are for youth in grades 7-12 and youth are always welcome to bring along friends. The more the merrier! We are looking forward to more fun events this year. We are going to the MNO Synod wide event at Fort Whyte on Dec 3rd from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. There is a cost of \$10 associated with this event. We have been collaborating with the St. Marks youth group and will have a Christmas party with them this year. In January, we are excited to volunteer at Harvest Manitoba again and join more MNO Synod events. We will also be going to the Snow maze at Amaze in Corn, more details to come for timing of these events.

The MNO Synod is having a winter retreat Friday February 9th to Sunday February 11th, 2024. Attendance for confirmation students is encouraged. Youth grades 7-12 that are not in confirmation are welcome to come as well! These retreats are a great way to connect with other youth, while learning and having fun! I will have more to share about location and the speaker soon. The cost of this retreat is \$65. Registration will be due at the end of January.

Please do not hesitate to contact me via email at youth@faithlc.ca if you would like to join our youth group or have any questions! Thank you.

Faith's Community Missions in action

November Monthly appeal: Christmas Hampers

The Christmas Hamper Campaign 2023 is up and running. Faith will be providing 24 hampers to St. Vital families this year. All together there are 40 children that we will be buying gifts for!



We need your help to wrap these gifts on Sunday December 10th after church and we will need help to deliver the hampers on Saturday December 16th. There are sign up sheets in the narthex for those able to help on these days.

Also we need your financial support to help make our campaign successful. You can make your donations through your church Offering. Please indicate it is for Christmas Hampers.

Thank you in advance for your generous support. This year has been especially difficult for many low income families as food costs are rising. We are thankful that we are able to help out these families during this Christmas season.

December Monthly Appeal: Canadian Lutheran World Relief



Canadian Lutheran World Relief is our monthly appeal for December, and what better way to support their foundation than by purchasing a 'gift from the heart' this Christmas Season.

Canadian Lutheran World Relief's new *Gifts from the Heart* catalogue has something to inspire and delight anyone on your list this year. It's full of meaningful, tangible gifts that will touch your loved ones and share God's love with the world! Copies are available through the church, by emailing clwr@clwr.org or you can shop online at clwr.org/GFTH.

Baby Layettes for Healthy Start

The New Year is coming and Women of Faith and Faith Book Club #1 will be collecting donations for the baby layettes that will be donated to Healthy Start. The majority of these layettes are given to Newcomer families that are expecting a baby and attending the parent support groups that are facilitated at various sites around Winnipeg. The specific group for Newcomers was formerly located at Knox Church but is now hosted at Freight House in the inner city area.

The items needed to make up the layettes are 0-3 months onesies and cotton sleepers, newborn or size 1 diapers, flannelette receiving blankets and 0-3 months sweater and hat sets. We will be collecting items in January, February and the beginning of March. Last year we donated 52 Layettes. Financial donations are also welcome and can be made through your church offering. If you have any questions you can call Susan Care or the church office.



Faith's Community Missions in action

More than \$800 donated to Street Links at Chili Lunch October 15

More than 70 people attended the Chili Lunch at Faith on October 15 in support of our Community Missions work to help the homeless.

Street Links' Executive Director Marion Willis spoke about the work they do, and thanked the congregation for its generous donations of winter clothing, sheets and pillows, as well as prepared chili and eggs over the past year. People were very engaged in hearing firsthand about the struggles of those who are unhoused in our community.

The lunch had a freewill offering that resulted in \$859 being donated to Street Links for its community outreach.

Thanks to the Property Committee for set up and take down, the coffee team, and those who helped prepare and serve the delicious chili lunch.

Gathering more donations of socks, blankets and pillows

On November 10, with an urgent appeal from Street Links for men's socks, the Missions team dropped off donations of 47 pairs of socks, along with 9 toques, 4 scarves, 3 parkas, 1 pair of mitts and a couple of sweatshirts. The team at Street Links sends a genuine thank-you to everyone who donated these items.

We are gathering more donations of men's socks as well as blankets and pillows, and will drop these off at Street Links in late November. Please place any donated items in the Street Links bin in the Narthex.

Preparing more chili

A team met at the church on November 13 to prepare another batch of chili. Each batch produces four large aluminum trays, or approximately 135 cups of chili. Watch the weekly email for opportunities to help the team preparing chili.

Applying for a Healthy Communities Grant

The Community Missions Committee has submitted an application for a \$3,000 grant from the Youville Healthy Together Now program. Decisions on successful applicants are expected by year-end.

If successful, our application has a training component – to equip more volunteers with Food Safety Handling training –as well as a practical component to provide Street Links with a nutritious breakfast and/or lunch on a periodic basis to be determined.

Stocking Rene Deleurme's Community Cupboard

Faith is helping the Rene Deleurme Centre on St. Anne's Road stock up their Community Cupboard in time for the holidays. Dry, canned, fresh and frozen foods as well as toiletries and diapers will be purchased to fill their shelves. Thank you, congregation members, for supporting the children and families at Rene Deleurme Centre.

Faith's Community Missions in action

Cooking for the King

Cooking for the King is a small group of committed people from our Church, as well as friends of the Church who love food and want to reach out to anyone in need of a good meal. They meet monthly to fill our Church freezer with food that is available to anyone in need of this support. Sometimes this need is due to illness, sometimes it's a crisis in their family, sometimes it may be the happy advent of a new baby or many other such life events that may bring stress.

Whatever the need, these tasty home cooked meals are available to all.

To accomplish this, our group meets one Saturday of each month to prepare a variety of soups and casseroles to be placed in the freezer for future need.

In September and November, members of Cooking for the King team and friends worked together to make 120 sandwiches for the lunch bags delivered at the Urban mission. Each lunch bag had as well a fruit, a juice box and a granola bar.

The Urban ministry manager, Rhonda Gorham, was extremely happy and appreciative.

Also in September, October and November, we had great cooking days. We were able to make many wonderful meals with beef, Italian sausage and chicken. The freezer looks great with many dishes and soup to share. Thank you to everyone that helped. We look forward to meet and cook in the new year 2024.

We are always looking for more members!

Everyone with a passion for cooking and serving is welcome to join. If you would like to know more about Cooking for the King, contact Elaine at 204-254-2166 or e-mail her at schultz.ensemble@shaw.ca.

These tasty home cooked meals are available for distribution to help someone in need, by contacting the Pastor or our office administrator (204.253.1491) or any member of Cooking for the King team.

Taco Mac

- 1 tablespoon oil
 - ½ medium onion (finely diced)
 - 1 red bell pepper (chopped)
 - 1 lb lean ground beef (cooked or raw)
 - 2 tablespoons taco seasoning
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1 1/2 cups milk (whole or other)
 - 284 ml canned Rotel tomatoes with green chiles
 - 1 cup low sodium beef broth
 - 2 3/4 cups dry macaroni
 - 3 cups shredded cheddar cheese (divided)
1. Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add oil, peppers and onions and cook, stirring often, until softened.
 2. Stir in ground beef (cooked or raw), taco seasoning and salt. If you have some previous cooked beef, you can just cook and stir 1 minute. If you are starting with raw ground beef, cook and stir until browned.
 3. Add milk, tomatoes and beef broth and bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. Stir in dry macaroni.
 4. Cover and cook, stirring often, until pasta is cooked through — about 10 minutes.
 5. Stir in cheese (you can add a splash of broth or milk if you need to make the sauce come together) and let melt, reserving 1 cup to sprinkle over top if desired. Serve. Enjoy!

Faith's Community Missions in action

Seeking input on community organizations for \$500 donation

The Community Missions Committee is seeking suggestions from the congregation on local organizations that we may consider for a \$500 donation from the Committee's Community Support budget. The Committee will consider non-profit organizations that help improve quality of life for underserved groups within our community. Please send any recommendations to officeadmin@faithlc.ca by November 30, 2023.

In 2023 the Committee has sent cheques for \$500 to each of four organizations in our community:



Jocelyn House Hospice, which provides comfort and care for people who are living at the end of their lives.



St. Amant Respite Care, which provides respite for children and youth to give families a break and help keep them thriving together.



Alpha House, a home in St. Vital for women and their children who have experienced domestic abuse or family violence.
breaking the cycle of violence



Sleep in Heavenly Peace, which builds beds and provides bedding for children ages 3-17 who do not have a bed.

A team prepared lunch bags for **The Urban** in September. Each contained a ham and cheese sandwich, an apple, a granola bar and a juice box.



“Reconciliation is getting to know one another”

Mary Simon, Governor General



November 2023 News from your Ministry Manager

Cold weather has reminded us all that winter is on the way! Extreme cold, gusty winds, slippery and snow-covered sidewalks really affect the everyday life of those who mostly walk to all of their destinations. We are really grateful for donations of mitts, gloves, scarves, toques, socks & gently used men’s/women’s winter jackets, boots.

Resilience and good humour are words that always come to mind to describe our Urban community. Inner strength has been honed by setbacks and the daily struggles of food and housing insecurity, as well as difficult events of life, grief and loss.

Losses within our urban community are always heard with so much sadness. Within the past seven days a 19-year-old young man, and a man who had developed serious health issues in recent years have both passed away. Both came to the Urban for many years and we will remember and miss them.

Some of our circle topics in the past month:

The Boy and the Starfish Story – the power of small acts of kindness; God will not leave us alone; Life anecdotes.

“Depression” was the topic in our Mental Wellness Sharing Circles in the first week of November with facilitators from the Canadian Mental Health Association Manitoba/Winnipeg. These are taking place the first week of each month on Wednesdays at our Men’s Lunch/Sharing Circle and our Women’s Sharing Circle, and also at our *Thursday* Co-ed Sharing Circles – from September 2023 to April 2024. Good information and terrific discussions in all three circles. The topic for the first week of December is **“Stress Management”**. Mental wellness topics are applicable for people of all walks of life. Also, great conversations and topics in the other circles during the month including “how is your week going”?

To our Urban Community and our MNO Congregation Members and Clergy- please drop by anytime to our:

Sunday Worship Service: door opens at 1:00 p.m. with coffee/tea. Worship service 1:30 – 2:15 p.m.

Men’s Lunch/Sharing Circle every Wednesday - Downstairs at Noon

Please stop by at 12:00 p.m. Noon (*ring the doorbell*) for lunch and great fellowship and conversation!

Women’s Sharing Circle every Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. (until 3:30 p.m.)

Please arrive at 2:00 p.m. (*ring the doorbell*) for coffee/tea/dessert and great fellowship and conversation!

Women’s Drop-in every Wednesday from 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Please drop in (*ring the doorbell*) for coffee/tea/cookies and visiting together! Kids & grandkids welcome to come with you and we have colouring and arts and crafts to keep them busy.

Co-ed Sharing Circle every Thursday at 4:30 p.m. (please arrive at 4:30 p.m.)

Please stop by at 4:30 (*ring the doorbell*) for great fellowship and conversation! And coffee/tea/dessert.

Kind regards,

Rhonda Gorham, Ministry Manager, Lutheran Urban Ministry Corp.

Faith Singers

Practice weekly 9:00 - 10:00 am.

We will sing approximately once a month.

All are welcome. You don't need to read music, just sing, enjoy and share in laughs and a small group ministry friendships. If you are interested join us for a few practices and see if this fits for you!

I wish all the mystery of the Christ child, the joy the angels sang, the awe the shepherds experienced, and the knowledge the wisemen sought! Merry Christmas and Blessings throughout the New Year. What a pleasure to be part of the Faith Family.

Choir Director for Faith Singers & Men's Chorus

Randall



Men's Breakfast

A Men's Breakfast will be held on Saturday November 18th and Saturday December 9th.

All men in the congregation are invited to attend along with their friends or neighbours. The breakfast will commence at 8:30 am and continue to 9:30.

The cost is \$5.00. Call Trevor Hayden or the church office to register.



Women of Faith

Please join us for Bible Study on December 2nd, 2023 at 10:00am.

We are doing an Advent Bible Study discussing The Power of Peace and God With Us.

Our first Bible Study in the New Year will be Saturday January 6th, 2024 at 10:00am

We will be picking a new study in December so please stay tuned to see what it will be.

If you are looking to study the Bible and hoping to meet some enchanting women for fellowship and friendship, we may be the small group you are seeking. We usually meet the first Saturday of the month unless it is during a holiday weekend.



Faith Book Club Chapter 1

Faith Book Club Chapter 1 meets in the Blue Room at the church on the 4th Tuesday of the month September to June (except for December) at 7:30 p.m. We are small group that comes together to share our love for reading. Our upcoming reading list is listed below. Please consider joining us, we would love to have you. Contact the church office with any questions.

On Saturday, November 25 from 10:00 to noon we will be decorating for Christmas at River Park Gardens. This is an annual event for us and is greatly appreciated by the residents and staff at RPG. It is a wonderful way to begin the Christmas season and connect with the residents. If you are interested in joining us please contact the church office.

Faith Book Club Chapter 1 Schedule for 2023-2024



November 28, 2023	<i>The Last Thing He Told Me</i> by Laura Dave
January 23, 2024	<i>The Book of Longings</i> by Sue Monk Kidd
February 27, 2024	<i>The Vanishing Half</i> by Brit Bennet
March 26, 2024	<i>Vanderbilt, The Rise and Fall of an American Dynasty</i> by Anderson Cooper
April 23, 2024	<i>The School for Good Mothers</i> by Jessamine Chan
May 28, 2024	<i>Everybody's Son</i> by Thrity Umricar
June Potluck and book selections – date to be determined	

November 28, 2023 - *The Last Thing He Told Me* by Laura Dave

Before Owen Michaels disappears, he manages to smuggle a note to his beloved wife of one year: Protect her. Despite her confusion and fear, Hannah Hall knows exactly to whom the note refers: Owen's sixteen-year-old daughter, Bailey. Bailey, who lost her mother tragically as a child. Bailey, who wants absolutely nothing to do with her new step-mother.

As Hannah's increasingly desperate calls to Owen go unanswered; as the FBI arrests Owen's boss; as a US Marshal and FBI agents arrive at her Sausalito home unannounced, Hannah quickly realizes her husband isn't who he said he was. And that Bailey just may hold the key to figuring out Owen's true identity—and why he really disappeared.

Hannah and Bailey set out to discover the truth, together. But as they start putting together the pieces of Owen's past, they soon realize they are also building a new future. One neither Hannah nor Bailey could have anticipated.

January 23, 2024 - *The Book of Longings* by Sue Monk Kidd

"I am Ana. I was the wife of Jesus."

Raised in a wealthy family in Sepphoris with ties to the ruler of Galilee, Ana is rebellious and ambitious, a relentless seeker with a brilliant, curious mind and a daring spirit. She yearns for a pursuit worthy of her life, but finds no outlet for her considerable talents. Defying the expectations placed on women, she engages in furtive scholarly pursuits and writes secret narratives about neglected and silenced women. When she meets the eighteen-year-old Jesus, each is drawn to and enriched by the other's spiritual and philosophical ideas. He becomes a floodgate for her intellect, but also the awakener of her heart.

Faith Book Club Chapter 2

Faith Book Club Chapter 2 meets offsite usually on the fourth Thursday of the month.

Please join us for a lively book discussion and Fellowship. Contact the church office for location.

The selection for November 23rd, is *Butter Honey Pig Bread* by Francesca Ekwuyasi

Spanning three continents, *Butter Honey Pig Bread* tells the interconnected stories of three Nigerian women: Kambirinachi and her twin daughters, Kehinde and Taiye. Kambirinachi believes that she is an Ogbanje, or an Abiku, a non-human spirit that plagues a family with misfortune by being born and then dying in childhood to cause a human mother misery. She has made the unnatural choice of staying alive to love her human family but lives in fear of the consequences of her decision.

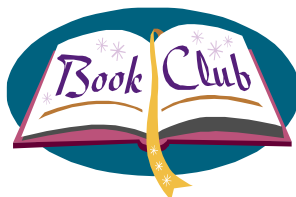
After more than a decade of living apart, Taiye and Kehinde have returned home to Lagos. It is here that the three women must face each other and address the wounds of the past if they are to reconcile and move forward.

This is a story of choices and their consequences, of motherhood, of the malleable line between the spirit and the mind, of finding new homes and mending old ones, of voracious appetites, of queer love, of friendship, faith, and above all, family.

The selection for December 14th, is *The Spoon Stealer* by Lesley Crewe

Born into a basket of clean sheets—ruining a perfectly good load of laundry—Emmeline never quite fit in on her family's rural Nova Scotian farm. After suffering multiple losses in the First World War, her family became so heavy with grief, toxicity, and mental illness that Emmeline felt their weight smothering her. And so, she fled across the Atlantic and built her life in England. Now she is retired and living in a small coastal town with her best friend, Vera, an excellent conversationalist. Vera is also a small white dog, and so Emmeline is making an effort to talk to more humans. When she joins a memoir-writing course at the library, her classmates don't know what to make of her. Funny, loud, and with a riveting memoir, she charms the lot. As her past unfolds for her audience, friendships form, a bonus in a rather lonely life. She even shares with them her third-biggest secret: she has liberated hundreds of spoons over her lifetime—from the local library, Cary Grant, Winston Churchill. She is a compulsive spoon stealer.

This book is full of humor, family secrets, women's friendship, lovable animals, and immense heart.



Faith Gardens Inc. NEWS

November 2023

“Stability”

Over the years FGI has been blessed to be able to support the Spiritual Care Program at River Park Gardens. This has been accomplished by applying to various granting organizations, and making appeals to donor groups and individuals. Fund raising events have also raised significant dollars, and provided needed awareness of the role the Spiritual Care Provider plays in the lives of residents and staff at River Park Gardens.

Organizations are always looking to find funding sources that will provide financial stability in the long term. Some of our funding is committed to us long term, some annually, but a large portion depends on how successful our appeals to you, who are reading this are.

One time donations large or small at any time are always gratefully accepted. Monthly or annual gifts go a long way to provide stability to the process of budgeting for the ongoing ministry at River Park Gardens.

Please consider whether you feel you could provide a longer term commitment to support the Spiritual Care Program at River Park Gardens.



As a legacy of his vibrant faith, Doug Norris established a Bursary at Faith Lutheran Church. The purpose of this bursary is to provide an opportunity to the Youth (ages 14-22 years) to advance their education; or assist in the cost of travel to a Youth Convention sponsored by the Lutheran Church.

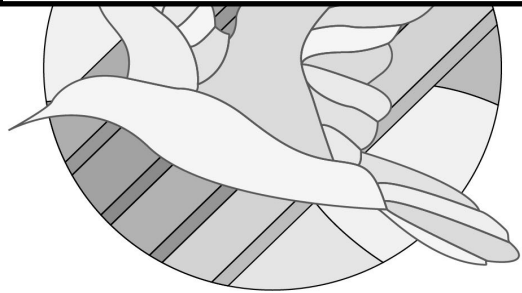
Examples of appropriate opportunities include:

- Participation in ELCIC Youth or Young Adult Gatherings
- ELCA Global Mission programs
- Educational programs

Applications:

The application deadline is January 31st, 2024 with announcement of the awards taking place in March 2024. Applicants must be members of Faith Lutheran Church aged 14-22 years. Applications shall be made in writing and delivered to the Church Office (marked Attn. Norris Bursary). Applicants are asked to answer the following questions:

- What would you like to do? Provide a brief synopsis of the opportunity.
- In what ways do you feel that this opportunity will enhance your faith?
- Describe the costs associated with the opportunity. How do you plan to meet these costs?



Doug Norris Bursary for Youth Development