

FEB 2024



FAITH TALKS



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES FEB. 14TH 7AM & 7PM
WORSHIP SUNDAYS 9:30 AM AT
FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, CHICO, CA

ABOUT THE COVER

The Book of Genesis describes the Tree of Life at the center of the Garden of Eden. Throughout the season of Lent, we will hear how humans lost access to the Tree of Life. We will also hear how Christ upon the cross becomes for us the new Tree of Life.



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PRACTICES OF LENT

BY PASTOR BEN

On February 14th, we begin the church season of Lent. Lent is a 40-day journey with Jesus in preparation for his death on Good Friday and resurrection on Easter. For centuries, Christians have taken on three practices during Lent: almsgiving, fasting, and prayer. From our congregational brainstorming, we have tangible ways that you can participate in each of these practices.

Almsgiving: Almsgiving is giving to people in need. This Lent, the Equipping Team is encouraging our congregation to collectively give 1000 hours of community service outside of our congregation. I encourage you to read congregational Vice-President Steve Hall's article that goes into more detail about how we'll be encouraging and celebrating the ways that you give your time and talents for God's glory outside of our congregation.

We also want to help our children grow in their almsgiving! At the start of Lent, we'll hand out piggy banks to the children in our congregation. We'll encourage them to collect coins throughout Lent and bring those coins to give in worship. The coins they bring will go to ELCA World Hunger, a Lutheran organization which provides food pantries, health clinics, microloans, and education in 63 countries. At home, parents can use the time when their children place coins in the piggybank to talk with them about gratitude and giving to others in need.



Fasting: To fast is to refrain from something. This Lent, I want to invite you to fast from assumptions. I want to encourage you to do this in two different ways. First, during our tradition of ecumenical soup suppers, I want to encourage you to sit with someone you don't know from another congregation. Sit next to the person with whom you would assume you have the least in common. And then ask them about themselves. My guess is that you'll discover that you're more alike than you think.

Second, I want to invite you to participate in a class that I'll be teaching in Lent on Wednesdays at 5:30pm, before our soup suppers. The class is The African Roots of the Early Church. Did you know that, after the Bible, the theologian who most influenced Martin Luther was African? St. Augustine was a Berber from modern day Tunisia. We tend not to think of St. Augustine as African, in part because he has been so influential for what we think of as "European" cultural heritage, and in part because Augustine didn't think of himself primarily as African. The ancient world didn't use skin color and continent to divide people into the categories we do today. They were much more interested in the categories of language, religion, and citizenship. By ancient standards, St. Augustine was a Latin-speaking Christian Roman citizen, and so very much a part of the cultural majority of his day. But like St. Augustine, many of the most influential theologians of the early church were geographically and ethnically what we would think of today as "African." Each week, I'll present an African saint of the early church whose legacy has shaped Christianity to this day. I encourage you to come to this class, not to discover that these saints are somehow unique because they were African, but to realize that our Christian and Lutheran heritage has always been nurtured by a rich, diverse, and global tradition. As St. Paul writes in Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Prayer: Prayer is communicating with God. There are lots of ways to pray and different people find it helpful to pray in different ways. Some forms of prayer use words, some are silent, some use your body, and some involve art. To help you find a way that allow you to connect more regularly and deeply with God, on Sunday mornings after worship, we'll have a class on spiritual practices. Each Sunday we'll present a different way to communicate with God that you can try out during the week.

The word "Lent" means "spring." It is a season of spiritual growth. The scriptures this Lent tell the story of God's garden. We start with the beauty of the Garden of Eden and its destruction due to human sin. As Lent continues we hear that God loves us as the fruit of that garden, and so God gives everything to restore us and this garden world. You will see imagery of a garden throughout our worship this Lent. May these practices of almsgiving, fasting, and prayer help the garden of your soul flourish.

Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Ben Colahan



WORSHIP & MUSIC

LUKE NICOLAY, DIR. WORSHIP & MUSIC

MUSIC PRACTICE

Handbell Choir Practice - Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m.

Choir Practice - Thursdays at 5:30 p.m.

Contemporary Music Practice - Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

WAYS TO PRAY

**Sundays after Worship at 11AM
in the Fellowship Hall**

There are lots of ways to pray and different people find it helpful to pray in different ways. Some forms of prayer use words, some are silent, some use your body, and some involve art. To help you find a way that allows you to connect more regularly and deeply with God, on Sunday mornings after worship, we'll have a class on spiritual practices. Each Sunday different members of the congregation will present a different way to communicate with God that you can try out during the week.



A HISTORY OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Sundays after Worship at 11AM in Room 7

Alex Jia and Bill Augros continue their class by popular demand! You may continue to sit in on this class each Sunday in February.



VALENTINE'S BAKE SALE & BOUTIQUE

**Sunday, February 11th
after Worship**

It's back - - Faith Lutheran's Valentine's Day Bake Sale! Our bake sale is graciously hosted by the Tuesday Quilters, but everybody in the congregation and beyond are welcome to bake something to put up for sale. Proceeds fund paratransit

tickets to help folks ride the paratransit bus to church on Sundays. Proceeds also go to fund the Faith Lutheran Church Women's Ministry Scholarship! This scholarship is given away during the summer to FLC senior students who plan to attend community college, university, trade school, or any form of education or degree/certificate program. Please let us know if you'd like to bake something for this sale or even donate hand-made crafts for the boutique portion! You can reach out to Char Miller directly or contact the office.



BOBBY JO VALENTINE CONCERT Sunday, February 18th at 4PM at FLC

Faith Lutheran is excited to host North State native, Bobby Jo Valentine. Bobby Jo has performed across the nation in theaters, faith communities, festivals and more as well as being featured on TV and in films. Valentine was raised in a faith community that adhered to strict rules and regulations and has now emerged into a kinder and more open sense of faith and community. Come and join us on Sunday, February 18th at 4:00 PM for an afternoon of music, stories, and memories from Bobby Jo's life and experience. The concert is free. Freewill offerings are accepted.

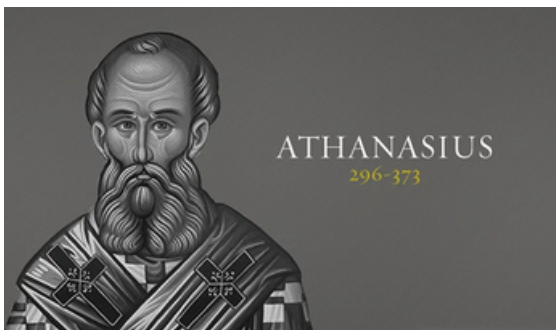
LENTEN WEDNESDAYS

Feb. 21st-Mar. 20th



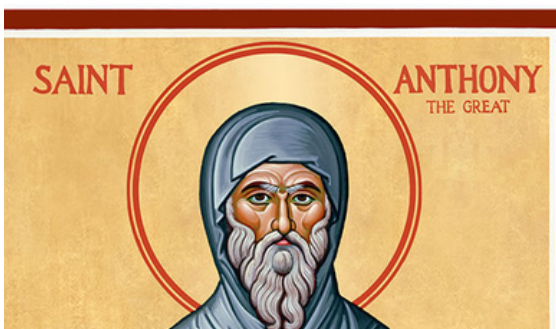
African Roots of the Early Church **5:30 PM in the Sanctuary**

Did you know that, after the Bible, the theologian who most influenced Martin Luther was a 5th century African? Many of the early theologians and saints who most profoundly shaped our Christian heritage were from Africa from the champion of the Nicene Creed, to the father of monasticism, to the first writing by a Christian woman. Each Wednesday in Lent, Pastor Ben will present a different African saint from the early church and explain how they have been foundational to our faith.



Soup Supper **6:15 PM in the Fellowship Hall**

Share food and fellowship with our siblings in faith from other congregations in Chico! If you are interested in being a part of the hospitality team that welcomes other congregations and helps them set up their soup, please contact Annette Jefferson.



Interfaith Worship **7:00 PM in the Sanctuary**

Each Wednesday in Lent, a different congregation in Chico will lead us in worship in the style of their tradition. Come and be inspired by what each part of the Body of Christ has to offer.





LENTEN SERVICE PROJECT

STEVE HALL, EQUIPPING MINISTRY

Hello to all from your Equipping Team. We want to remind you all about our Congregation's Lenten Service Project.

At every baptism, we repeated Jesus' words from Matthew 5:16, "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." In our baptism we are called, empowered, and set free to use our lives to help others know God's glory.

We are asking you all to consider volunteering outside of the congregation during Lent. Your service within Faith Lutheran is essential to our congregation, but when we serve outside the congregation, we become a living witness to God's goodness in the world.

You can volunteer at any organization or group without signing up directly at the church, but the Equipping Team will also provide information about different organizations you may consider volunteering with. Sign-up sheets will be available after services on February 4th and 11th with several organizations to choose from. The Equipping Team will be there to answer questions and provide more information.

We will be keeping track of all our hours throughout the season of Lent. Our congregational goal is 1000 hours of volunteering during the days and weeks of Lent. We know we can achieve this goal. Just think of the good we can do for others in our communities during this time. We will start counting hours on February 12th and end on Easter Sunday. If you are already volunteering at other places, PLEASE DO NOT STOP. We will count those hours as well. If you are able and want to choose another organization to add to your volunteering, please do so.



For those of you who worship with us online from your homes, you are encouraged to join in on this project. No matter where you live, find an organization or group near you that you are interested in and volunteer. Send Steve Hall your hours via email at jshall2323@gmail.com or you can tear off a designated part of the bulletin on Sunday and leave it in the offering plate, and we will add them in. Please also send pictures of yourself doing service so that we can share them with the congregation. Pastor will report our efforts each Sunday to the congregation.

If everyone currently volunteering could please send to the email above your current volunteering organization as we also want to collect all the places our congregation volunteers. You can email Steve at any time starting now with this information.

This Service Project is a way for our congregation to help our communities in which we live. Giving up something for Lent is a way to acknowledge and be involved in the Season of Lent. Our project is another way by GIVING our time and talents for others.

We hope you will embrace this project and we can all make Chico or wherever you live a better place. Thank you for joining this Lenten Service Project. God's blessings to you all.

Steve Hall





FAITH FAMILY NEWS

DANI VOGEL, DIR. FAMILY LIFE

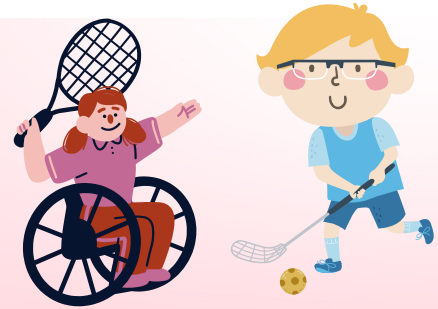
We wrapped up an exciting Christmas season here at Faith Lutheran with children filling worship leader roles on Christmas Eve. Now we are working on music that the children will present on Palm Sunday, March 24th and on Easter Sunday, March 31st. We continue to pair our weekly scripture with the scripture that is being used during worship, featuring stories that include women of the Bible or women's perspectives. We also talk about our family trees, and are learning more about who is in our church family at Faith Lutheran as well.

During late January, I had the opportunity to attend the ELCA Youth Network Extravaganza, which is the continuing education event offered annually for children and youth workers in the ELCA.

Many of our small groups have resumed a new season of meeting. If you would be interested in starting a new small group, please reach out to me and share what sort of group you would like to start up!



Vacation Bible School "All on God's Team"



Children are invited to join the "Athletes of Lutherlandia" in this year's Olympic-themed Vacation Bible School! Kids will participate in athletic events, crafts, snacks, and Bible story time. Each day will conclude with a picnic lunch in the courtyard via sack lunch.

VBS will be held from 9am to noon on Saturdays, June 15th, June 22nd, and June 29th, with a singing celebration and medal ceremony on Sunday, June 30th.

To register or if you have any questions, please call the church office or email me at danifaithlutheran@gmail.com.



COUNCIL MINUTES

ALYSSA MANES, COUNCIL SECRETARY

Faith Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 16, 2024, 6:30 p.m.
FLC Conference Room

Members Present: Pastor Ben Colahan, Jill Bentler, Steve Hall, Mark Kimmelshue, Alyssa Manes, Pat Snyder, Sharon Prindle, Martha McDermott, Leanne Chrisman, Mary Schweder, Sky Sample. **Members Absent:** Elaine Lund.

Call to order, reading of the covenant and celebrations.

Devotions and prayer, led by Sharon Prindle.

Ministry report received for Counters/Financial Secretary/Tables for 8.

December Council Minutes approved.

Financial Report presented by Mark Kimmelshue.

General giving for December was over \$110,000. Wow! We haven't yet paid for the new Heater/AC unit. We haven't put the \$1000/month that we normally do for the last two months into the [Savings] Account, but we'll catch up now. We received a large gift to the designated capital campaign fund. We don't have quite enough money to do the bathroom project yet. Approval of financial report: Steve/Pat/approved.

Staff Report presented by Pastor Ben.

How amazing that we got a gift toward the bathroom project! The youth are planning fundraisers for their summer trip to New Orleans. Dani is planning VBS for three Saturdays in June. Luke wants to encourage people to use Elvanto for ministry scheduling. Michael would like a substitute for the financial secretary when she is unavailable. He recommends a new professional phone system and some upgrades to the facilities.

Solar Panel Update update emailed by Elaine Lund

We had a solar company look at our panels; all the panels are working how they should be. Rates have gone up, and our usage has gone up. We wonder if we could have a committee to look at solar/electric usage monthly

Book Study: Rich Church, Poor Church, Ch 6: Discussed personal thank-you notes to those who give; doesn't have to include an amount. We do a good job of thanking people (e.g. through videos) to show what we have accomplished together.

Council Liaisons presented by Steve Hall

The goal of having liaisons is to be the connection between groups within the church and the council so that the group knows they come to us with concerns, questions, and celebrations. Two ultimate goals: communication (give point people for ministries), and supporting the staff. We may consider teams that support each staff member, rather than individual council members that connect with each ministry. We will continue to discuss, and in the meantime the council representative of the day on Sundays will help be a "point person" to help things run smoothly.

Ministry Volunteer Drive presented by Jill Bentler

People at the brainstorming meeting were excited to sign up to volunteer within the church. Sign-ups will be posted on bulletin boards in the hallway after we are done hosting Safe Space. We may consider having some sign-ups on the church website.

Lenten Service Project presented by Steve Hall

Community groups will present and have tables with information from community organizations for three Sundays in a row (January 28th, February 4th and 11th). A letter in Faith Talks will explain in more detail how we will track community volunteer hours of church members, to serve and celebrate.

Read it on page 8!

Pastor Ben Housing Allowance – approved.

Safety Team has been formed, and will meet soon.

Budget Drafting Process is starting soon.

Sunday School Bathroom Remodel Funding

We got a generous gift of \$25,000 toward remodeling the bathroom. Last quote was about \$35,000. We want to get bids again and have that amount, plus 30%, before we start the work.

Director of Family Life Job Description

Covenant includes regularly reviewing and updating expectations: we have done that recently for Dani. We will revisit and vote on next month.

Facility Use Price Increase: Michael looked at who uses our facilities and what they get charged. Since power rates increased, we should probably increase our rates as well to keep up. Decided on 50% increase on all facility use fees, except groups that are currently paying \$25/month will now pay \$50/month. /passed

Phone System for Office

Motion passed to go ahead with new phone system for 4 staff.

Closing Prayer and Adjournment.

*Some of Safe Space's Fabulous
Volunteer Food Cooks and Servers!*





FINANCIAL REPORT

MARK KIMMELSHUE, COUNCIL TREASURER

Faith Lutheran Church General Fund Finances as of 12/31/2023

	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Percent Of Budget
TOTAL INCOME	\$295,967.08	\$294,081.69	99.36%
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$273,748.00	\$255,320.98	93.27%
NET INCOME/(LOSS)	\$22,219.08	\$38,760.71	
Beginning General Fund Balance as of 7/1/2022		\$25,381.31	
Net Revenue through 12/31/23		\$38,760.71	
Ending General Fund Balance		\$64,142.02	

As you can see from the figures shown above, December was a good month. Actual net income exceeded the current budget by \$16,541.63. This gives us a good buffer for the next 6 months of the fiscal year.

Thank You All for your continued support.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact:

Mark Kimmelshue
530-520-8228

kimmelshue@armcorice.com



ROSES



Safe Space's staff and volunteers for keeping guests warm and safe during these cold months. An additional thank you to each and every one of you who served at Safe Space in any capacity.



Melisse Boyd for preaching her wonderful sermon in January, Bill Kees for presiding, and Margaret McMillan for overseeing music while Luke was away.

Cindy Kampf, Judy Struck, Emily and Evi Puerta, Janine Rush, and Bonnie Pulliam for serving in the office so the staff could take a breather after Christmas.

Everyone who shared their ideas at our Lenten brainstorming session.

Joel Zimbelman for changing out more lights that we can count, and for all of his hard work as Faith's volunteer property manager.

Bob Bay and the tremendous help he's provided in order to keep our property loved and maintained.

Sue Reed and Bob Bay for overseeing the Columbarium, ordering placards, and making the Columbarium garden a peaceful place.

Candy Munson for organizing, hosting, and teaching paint and sip classes for the people of Faith Lutheran.



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CHURCH COUNCIL

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Secretary Alyssa Manes | Members Pat Snyder, Elaine Lund, Sky Sample, Leanne
Chrisman, Martha McDermott, Sharon Prindle, Mary Schweder

A COMMUNITY REFLECTING GOD'S LOVE WITH A PLACE AT THE TABLE FOR EVERYONE

Office Hours: Monday-Friday from 10A-4:30P

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Email: office@chicofaithlutheran.org

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