



Jan/Feb Newsletter 2026

**“Inviting ALL to Live
the Gospel through
Faith, Love, and
Compassion”**

10970 185th Street West ♦ Lakeville MN 55044 ♦ 952-435-5757 ♦ www.familyofchrist.com

Message from Pastor

I have spent a lifetime trying to become something I thought the world or God would like. Trying to fix the brokenness of my life and surroundings in order to achieve some sort of “ideal” life or at least one without struggle. I’ve emptied out self help shelves in order to become a better me, and I’ve studied with masters on how to become a good leader. I’ve worked with professionals on my mental health, coaches on how to live better, and Spiritual Directors on how to better follow God, but somehow things still don’t seem to be complete, and there’s always something more that challenges my feelings about myself, my community, and God. I just feel like I have to “do” more.

A couple years back there was a cartoon in the paper that had 2 people yelling at each other. One held a sign that said “Do”, like the world and success depends on simply doing more stuff. On the other side of the page was another person holding up the sign “Be”, representing right thought, right belief, even right principles for living. The two sides kept yelling back and forth “Do and “Be”. Do and Be over and over again until the two sides who started as claiming the only right path moved from screaming to something more. The last frame of the comic had the two sides with arms around each other singing a new song “Do-Be, Do-Be, Do”, a melody that is truly for all.

Our life of faith needs a similar balance. There are times when we need to step up and live out the love we have been given through God’s grace. To support the food shelf, to help the neighbor, and physically take care of those who are vulnerable, to “Do” the work of God. Yet there are times where we are invited to “Be” and seek to understand and hear God’s words of love, hope, forgiveness, and purpose. Most of us tend to be more focused on one over the other, but both are important if we are to do this living thing well. God invites us to see life not as either/or, but both/and.

As I look at the story of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew, I noticed that Jesus even engages this balance. Before any major event in his ministry he goes off with those closest to him or alone to pray and listen to God. Then he goes and does something. Whether that’s physically healing those that are broken, teaching a different way to live, sacrificing himself for the sake of all people, or returning from death itself in the resurrection Jesus showed us a pretty good way to live that combines these two actions into the song that is our lives.

As we start the new year, I invite you to join us as we focus on the song that God gives us. Come and “Do-Be, Do-Be, Do” your own part in this song that changes the world.

Peace,
Pastor Brent

Prayer of Epiphany

O God,
who am I now?
Once I was secure
in familiar territory
in my sense of belonging
Unquestioning of
the norms of my culture
the assumptions built into my language
the values shared by my society.

*But now you have called me out and away from home
and I do not know where you are leading.
I am empty, unsure, uncomfortable.
I have only a beckoning star to follow.*
– Kate Compston



Ash Wednesday Service
Wednesday, February 18
6:40pm



Forms of Prayer & Poetry:

Time Together with Poet & Theologian Pádraig Ó Tuama
Sunday, January 18 @ 3 p.m. | Gloria Dei, St. Paul

Join poet and theologian Pádraig Ó Tuama to look at poems that speak to spiritual yearnings, national belonging and language. There will be opportunities to write, to read, to discuss and reflect. Open to all — whether people of poetry or not; whether people of religion or not — who wish to bring their language and thoughts to the questions that arise in a conversation about poetry and prayer.

Equipping Storytellers:

Saturday, January 31 - 9am-2pm | Gustavus Adolphus, St. Paul

Stories shape faith, build connection, and help the gospel come alive. Join pastor, speaker, comedian, and award-winning storyteller Nathan Mugaas for a playful and practical day designed to help leaders discover, shape, and share meaningful stories in worship.

Through live examples, simple frameworks, and hands-on practice, participants will learn how to craft compelling stories, tell them with confidence, and explore how storytelling can be woven into congregational life—especially in the Lenten season.

The cost is \$25 and includes lunch.

Register on the Saint Paul Area Synod website or contact Pastor Brent.



Telling Your Faith Story

Have you ever spent time looking at your journey of faith? Sitting down to review important parts of your faith journey, how your faith has shaped who you are, and the foundations you hold sacred. Join Pastor Brent and others as we seek to find our own stories and ways to share them with others. Doubt, fear, and uncertainty are most welcome as this is your story. Contact Pastor Brent if you are interested or join him on Jan 31st for the “Equipping Storytellers” event through the synod. The hope would be that some of us would share our stories Wednesday nights in Lent.

BUDGET



2026 Budget Presentation

Join us on January 18th after worship if you are interested in seeing the 2026 budget proposal.

Our council finance people will be available to answer any questions and process any suggestions.

We will meet in the front of the sanctuary.



Family of Christ Annual Meeting January 25th @ 10:45

Join us as we celebrate the blessings and challenges God has brought us through in the last year and make decisions about the future. All are encouraged to be at this meeting and help us look at the direction God is leading us.



New Procedures for Worship Volunteers will begin for the first Sunday in February. Volunteers will be scheduled for 2 months in advance.

These Volunteers will be pulled from those who signed up as interested on their Stewardship Opportunities Sheet, or those who have volunteered in the past 6 months.

If you are new to volunteering, we have new Leads for each role and you will be assigned with one to learn the ropes.

E-mails will be sent to each individual based on his/her interest in roles the week of Jan 11 - 17th.

If you didn't receive an email during this window and want to be added to any of the lists, please contact Brita.

Community Potluck Dinner and Game Night Saturday, February 21

Come one, come all to an All-Ages Game Night at Family of Christ for fellowship and fun.

We will be playing games in the MPR.

Dinner beforehand starting at 5:30...games will follow at around 6pm.

Bring your own games if you want.

Popcorn will be served as well.

See clipboard or sign-up genius to help with the dinner.



Mark your calendar:

Sunday, January 18: Budget Presentation

Sunday, January 25: Annual Meeting

Wednesday, January 28: Feed My Starving Children Pack

Wednesday, February 18: Ash Wednesday Service

Saturday, February 21: Community Potluck and Game Night

Wednesday, February 25: Lenten Services and Soup Suppers Begin

Sunday, March 15: Chili Cook-Off

Trinity Care Center

Thanks to all who participated in and gave gifts to Trinity Care Center. It was fabulous to have such a big crowd. We sang songs and delivered and opened gifts for more than 70 residents. Thanks to Kristin Cuddigan for organizing.



Christmas and Advent Volunteers

Special "Thanks" to all those that helped or participated in our Advent and Christmas worship. From the Holden Worship, to the Advent Community Band, to the Christmas Pageant, to the Christmas Eve Service, we have been doing community together, all thanks to you. You are all so appreciated.



Youth Schedule:

Jan 7, 14, 21: Dinner, Confirmation, Youth Group

Jan 28: Feed My Starving Children - see sign-up

Feb 4, 11: Dinner, Confirmation, Youth Group

Feb 18: Ash Wednesday

Feb 25: Soup Supper, Lenten Service, Confirmation/Youth Group

Youth Sundays: Jan 11 and Feb. 8 – see sign-up



Mission Trip NEWS

Our next 2 fundraising opportunities:

Saturday, January 31: CMA Luncheon

Saturday, February 7: Parent's Night Out

WE NEED PARENT LEADS ON BOTH. See sign-up genius.

Sunday School Calendar

Jan 4: SS – God Will Bring Peace

Jan. 11: SS – Jacob Wrestles

Jan 18: NO SS

Jan 25: SS/Annual Meeting- Activities with older youth

Feb 1: SS – God's Peaceful World

Feb. 8: Youth Sunday (sing) and SS - Salt and Light

Feb 15: NO SS



Parent's Night Out Fundraiser February 7th

Are you in need of a night out- maybe enjoy a dinner that isn't fast food?

Want to shop without dealing with little ones? Or maybe enjoy a quiet night in your own home? FOC Mission Trip Youth are holding a Parent's Night Out Fundraiser on Saturday, Feb. 7th from 4:30-7:30 at church. We will have a light dinner, snacks, drinks, games, crafts, and a movie.

Drop off your young ones and enjoy a stress-free evening.

A suggested donation of \$25 per youth.

Help spread the word- invite your friends and neighbors!

If interested, click the sign-up genius...in the comment section, please add names/ages of kiddos!

An official registration form will be sent to you.

Luther Park Opportunities 2026

We have a designated week at Luther Park for FOC youth to sign up and attend camp with church friends. But know that you can sign up for any week that works for you. FOC youth members attending for a week receive a \$150 scholarship thanks to a memorial fund.

There is also a \$50 discount from LP if you register by Jan 31st. See the website for details.

July 19-22 Grades 1-4 Half Week Cabin Camp

July 19-24 Grades 3-6 Full Week Cabin Camp

July 19-24 Grades 7-12 Full Week Treehouse Camp

Go to www.lutherpark.com to register





January Mission of the Month ***Feed My Starving Children***

Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) believes hope starts with food.
As a Christian nonprofit, FMSC is dedicated to seeing every child whole in body and spirit.
FMSC works with food distribution partners that stay with communities for the long haul,
empowering them to move from relief to development.

Join us on Jan 28th at Feed My Starving Children Eagan.

Our session is from 7:00-8:30pm.

You can meet us in Eagan or be part of a caravan of cars leaving church.
We have reserved 50 spots-So please sign-up clipboard, or sign-up genius!
Come to carpool from church by 6:30pm or join us by 7pm in Eagan.
FMSC is located at 990 Lone Oak Road, Suite 136, Eagan MN

2025 Giving Statements:

Thank you for all your generous gifts in 2025!
We look forward to sharing additional information at the Annual Meeting on January 25th.
The 2025 Giving Statements have been sent out.
If you did not receive your statement, please contact Linda at the office.

Outreach Partners:

Foster Together: Collecting new tennis shoes, new pajamas, new socks and underwear

The Drawer: Collecting NEW socks and underwear

Messiah Luther Food Shelf: Collecting non-perishable food items and toiletries/diaper

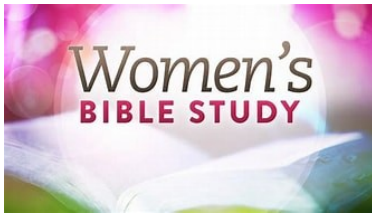
"FoCus" is a publication of Family of Christ Lutheran Church.
Please contact the church office to submit items for publication in our newsletter.

Family of Christ Staff Ministry Team:

Lead Pastor:	Pastor Brent Erler
Church Administrator:	Linda Bauer
Children, Family and Outreach Coordinator:	Dana Sahlin
Ministry Coordinator:	Brita Hanchek
Musicians:	Mary Wescott
	Ann Mikiska
	Solveig Englund
	Kim & Steve Wolff
Custodian:	Kelly Kritsberg

Family of Christ Lutheran Church
is a member of the **ELCA**

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Women's Bible Study

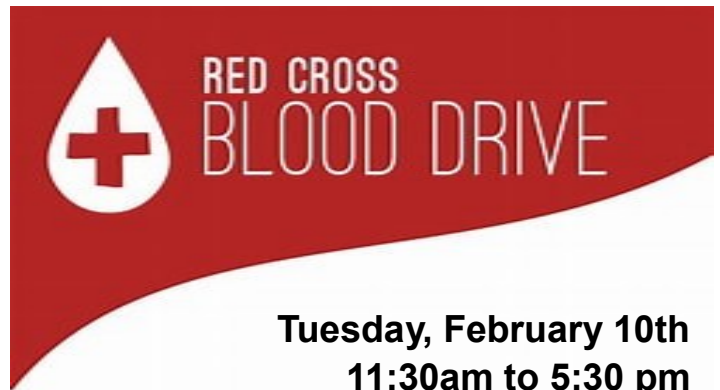
Monday, January 12th

We will meet at FOC at 10am.

The topic is "Praying With Our Bodies"

By Liv Larson Andrews

All FOC women and guests are welcome.



Tuesday, February 10th

11:30am to 5:30 pm

To donate blood, go to www.redcrossblood.org

Contact Glenda Lind for more information.

Advent Luncheon

Thanks to all who participated in the Advent Luncheon and Fundraiser. Over 50 of us had a fabulous time for a good cause. Thanks to all who donated baskets and purchased tickets. Your generosity raised over \$2000 to give to the local food shelf! Combine the \$2000 from our November Mission of the Month/yearly donations and we were able to donate over \$4000. What a blessing! Special thanks to those who donated baskets, helped set up, sold tickets, cleared the tables, washed dishes, brought food, etc. It takes a village to hold such an event- so thanks.



Dates to Remember

Sun. Jan 11: Worship/Sunday School
Wed. Jan 14: Dinner/Conf/Youth Group
Sun. Jan 18: Worship/ No Sunday School
Budget Presentation
Wed. Jan 21: Dinner/Conf/Youth Group
Sun. Jan 25: Worship/ Kids Activities
Annual Meeting
Wed. Jan 28: FMSC with Families
Sun. Feb 1: Worship/Sunday School
Wed. Feb 4: Dinner/Conf/Youth Group
Sun. Feb 8: Worship/Sunday School
Kids Sing
Wed. Feb 11: Dinner/Conf/Youth Group
Sun. Feb 15: Worship/ No Sunday School
Wed. Feb 18: Ash Wednesday

Vision Statement

*Family of Christ invites ALL to Live the
Gospel though Faith, Love, and
Compassion*



Our Core Values F-A-M-I-L-Y:

Faith
Acceptance
Meaningful relationships
Impact
Love
Youth