



October 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

From Fixing to Listening

I haven't been up to my little cabin by the creek lately and because of that there are a lot of things that need fixing. Now I like doing little stuff, but I sometimes think that all my time could be taken up by “fixing” what isn't right. What hopes to be a balanced place often becomes one more anxiety in a broken world. It seems like fixing isn't enough.

Last month we talked about the “Pivot's” we are making to better understand where God is leading us as a church through Luther Seminaries Faith +Lead initiative, and between now and Christmas we will be examining the first, a pivot from **Fixing to Listening, Discerning, and Experimenting**.

This pivot moves from positions of wanting to fix problems to gestures and practices of wondering together what God is up to and experimenting our way into a new future that addresses problems but also anticipates and develops opportunities. It emphasizes what is behind certain ministries, and while we fix a broken furnace it may not be enough to fix confirmation by buying the latest and greatest curriculum because it may not fit us. To sit down and listen to what people truly want and need from Family of Christ is maybe even more important. So, I ask you that question. How can we as a church help you on your faith journey? Personally, as a family, as a community, think of them all. Then join us for one of our listening sessions to share and listen yourself. Here are some of the questions we will be investigating;

What brings you joy?

Where do you find community?

What's really hard?

What could help you grow in your faith?

I invite you to this journey by listening to your own heart. Ask yourself these questions and genuinely sit down and reflect on them. Then come and share them with us in small groups, meet with me one-on-one or as a family, or simply drop me a message with your answers. While we need your help in fixing and doing things at FOC, we also want to know you and our neighbors, so we can grow into the church our community needs.

Peace,

Pastor Brent

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Our New Bishop Rev. Justin Grimm

On Sunday Sept 13th the Saint Paul Area synod installed our new Bishop, Justin Grimm. Justin has been a part of the Saint Paul Area Synod staff as the Director of Evangelical Ministries and has been crucial to many of our ministries here at Family of Christ. We are hoping to have him join us soon and share an exciting vision for the future.

Financial Update

As our church year continues, we want to thank you for your financial generosity. As we approach the last quarter, we ask that you prayerfully consider keeping up with your pledged giving and if possible share even more with FOC. With some unexpected expenses this past year and our pledged giving down, we need your generosity. Current statements will be emailed in early October.

Giving YTD (as of 8/31/26)	Actual \$274,362	Budgeted \$293,486	Deficit \$-19,124
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Tanzania Sunday- October 11th

Come join the celebration & learn more about Family of Christ's Tanzania Ministries including: Our Usokami Partnership, Secondary Student Scholarships, Medical Scholarships, Daughters for Dignity, and Iringa Hope Micro-finance.

Together Night: Food, Fellowship, Community

A warm evening of food, friendship, and faith. Bring a dish to share and stay for relaxed community time as we reconnect, laugh, and support one another. Everyone is welcome -come be part of the joy of growing together. All members are invited. Bring a friend, neighbor, or co-worker! If you are able, sign up to bring a item to the potluck! Thank you! The first two are October 21st and November 18th.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E4CAFAD2EA3F58-65991489-community>

COMMUNITY NIGHTS



Confirmation Sunday- Oct 26

Join us on October 26th as several of our youth Affirm their Baptism as they are confirmed during worship. Come support and encourage our youth and their continued journey in faith.

Fall Raking will be back! Dana is gathering a list of youth that are willing to rake and will be available for anyone who is looking to have their yard raked. Be watching the bulletin inserts as the list becomes available.



OPPORTUNITIES

LAMA Serving Opportunity & Winter Gear Drive

LAMA (Lakeville Area Mutual Aid) is looking for volunteers to help set up, serve, and take down the free community meal at St. John's Lutheran Church's Trunk & Treat event on Sunday, October 25. If you can lend a hand, please sign up through our Sign-up Genius by scanning the QR Code provided.

During the event, LAMA will also be collecting gently used or new winter gear for elementary-age children. Most-needed items include: Boots (Youth 3–6 or Adult 7–9) and Youth XL or Adult Small winter gear.

Your help makes a real difference for families in our community. Can't make the event but still want to donate, bring your items to Family of Christ or St John's Lutheran before 10/25.



Listening Sessions

Join us Sundays after worship from 10:45-11:30 for some listening sessions as we vision for the future. We ask that you join us for one of these sessions and share feedback as to how we can better serve God and one another in our Christian journey. No prep necessary, but we'd like everyone's thoughts. 1st session will be Oct 4.

Spiritual Gifts Retreat

Saturday, Oct. 10 - 9 a.m.-4 p.m. | Lutheran Church of Peace, Maplewood

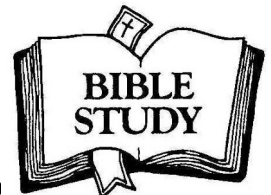
Who has God created me to be? This retreat will provide you with an opportunity to look deeply at who you are and how God has uniquely blessed you with certain gifts. Using spiritual gift inventories, conversation and other tools, you'll go home with a better sense of who you are and how you might best serve your faith community and the world! The cost is \$30 per person and includes lunch. Registration is on the Synods' website. <https://spas-elca.org/event/spiritual-gifts-retreat-fall-2026/>

Tuesday Morning Bible Studies

Join us on Tuesday mornings from 7:30-8:30 AM in the conference room as we share our stories and grow our faith by studying the scriptures. You can either join us in-person or online. Contact Pastor Brent for the link or just show up.

Women's Bible Study - Monday, October 5th

Women's Bible Study meets the first Monday of each month at 10 AM. Join us as we study the journeys of Hagar, Ruth, and Mary Magdalene. All are welcome.



Help Wanted: Altar Team (Altar Guild):

We are in search of one or two people to stay after worship on the following Sundays to help switch out the altar paraments. October 18th, October 25th, November 1, November 15, and November 22. Contact Brita in the church office with any questions. A Sign-Up sheet will be in the Narthex on Sundays to sign-up.



FOC YOUTH NEWS

Youth Programming Wednesday Schedule:

6:00 PM - 6:20 PM Pizza Dinner (optional)

6:20 PM - 6:45 PM Message/Music/Games for ALL

6:45 PM - 7:45 PM Break out into Confirmation & Youth Group



Youth Fall Retreat

All youth in 6th-12th grades are invited to join us Oct. 2-4th for some time to have fun, build friendships, and grow in faith. We will meet at church at 5:45pm on Friday, Oct. 2nd. We will drive the van over to Spring Lake Lodge in Rosemount. We will return to church at 10:45am on Sunday, Oct. 4th. Registration is online. Cost is \$30.

Register: <https://familyofchristlakeville.breezechms.com/form/FallRetreat>

The Vanco link will be in the confirmation email or follow the link below to pay online:

<https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZHW2/campaign/C-149M9>

If you want to help with some of the food on the retreat- here is the link.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E4CAFAD2EA3F58-66038010-youth>

Congratulations to the following young people who received a Confirmation Bible:

Easton Iseda, Beckam Bryant, and Annie Hellier. May the stories you read bless you and help you grow in your faith.



Youth Worship Volunteers/Acolytes:

This sign-up genius has been changed/edited to include all upcoming Youth Sundays as well as ALL acolyte openings for every Sunday. We encourage youth to participate in these worship volunteer options!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E4CAFAD2EA3F58-worship>

YOUTH SCHEDULE

Oct 2 - 4: Youth Fall Retreat
Oct 7: Youth Programming
Oct 11: Youth Sunday
Oct 14: No Youth Programming (MEA)
Oct 21: Community Night
Oct 25: Confirmation Sunday
Oct 28: Youth Programming

Nov 4: Youth Programming
Nov 8: Youth Sunday
Nov 11: Youth Programming
Nov 15: Christmas Program Role Announcements
Nov 18: Community Night
Nov 25: No Youth Programming (Thanksgiving)



FOC KIDS NEWS

Sunday School Schedule:

Sept 27: The Chief Priests
 Oct. 4: Parable of the Vineyard
 Oct. 11: Youth Sunday (sing), The Wedding Banquet
 Oct. 18: NO SS
 Oct. 25: The Greatest Commandment

Join us Sundays as we continue another great year of Sunday School. After enjoying a treat, we meet in the MPR for a little bit of singing, dancing, and bible story video, then we break into classes to learn about our bible story and that we are all loved by God. There are 3 classes: PREK-K, 1-3rd grade, and 4-5th grade. Children are still able to register online. Classes are from 10:35-11:30. The 2nd Sunday of the month is Youth Sunday. The kids will sing a song during worship. Our first song is on Oct. 11th and is "Humble Thyself".

Pray Ground/Listening Room Reminders

We love having children at worship (not all churches do.) With that said, we do have a few things in place to help young ones during our worship time. If you have little ones who like to talk more than the occasional comment, we ask that you bring them and yourself to our wonderful listening room (especially if it is happening during the sermon.) You can still watch and listen to the service from this room. We also have a "pray ground" with some quiet activities- this is meant for kindergarten and under. We also have activity bags for children to do in their seats.

Did you know? FOC has 2 Amazon Wish Lists!

We have created a wish list of items to help stock up on items our youth have requested. Thanks in advance if you can donate!

Here is the wish list for Pray ground/Listening Room

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2Y5K22RKZPK63?ref_=wl_share

Here is the wish list for the Youth Room and SS

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/143CC54UTT9GJ?ref_=wl_share



Blessing of the Backpacks on 9/13
 where all in attendance received a pocket Jesus.

KIDS SCHEDULE

Oct 4: Sunday School
 Oct 11: Sunday School
 Oct 18: No Sunday School (MEA)
 Oct 21: Community Night
 Oct 25: Sunday School
 Nov 1: Sunday School

Nov 8: SS Kids Sing @ Worship/Sunday School
 Nov 15: Christmas Program Role Announcements
 Nov 18: Community Night
 Nov 22: Sunday School
 Nov 29: Sunday School

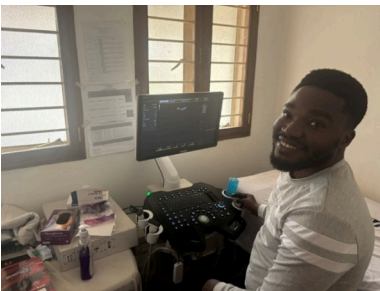
Tanzania Ministries

October Mission of the Month



Bega Kwa Bega is the phrase we use to describe our companion synod relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. In English, the phrase means 'shoulder to shoulder' and describes the way in which we accompany one another in a spirit of mutuality, inclusivity, and vulnerability. Through the work of this partnership and the leading of God's Holy Spirit, we envision deeper faith and fuller life, accompanying one another as participants in God's ongoing mission in both America and Tanzania. Our partnership supports the Ilula congregation, secondary school students, medical school scholarship, Daughters for Dignity, and Iringa Hope micro-financing.

Dr Kenneth Temba, an optometrist who FOC sponsored, attending an eye injury patient at Ilula last January while he was on break from studies. Dr. Temba came back to Ilula to see patients. He is now full time at Ilula and held a 3-day eye clinic at Ilula where he saw 150 patients including 70 who needed vision correction and 35 that needed cataract surgery (these were referred to Iringa). The business plan for developing an ophthalmology program at Ilula and basic equipment were provided via an on-site consultation from Global Health Ministries.



Dr Justice Bwisso performed an ultrasound at Ilula this past January. Dr. Bwisso also returns to Ilula over school breaks to see patients. He is the much-needed expertise for the x-ray machine that Shoulder to Shoulder raised funds for. He will also be the most highly skilled ultrasonographer in the region and will even be able to do cardiac ultrasounds.

"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:	Brent Erler
Children, Family, & Outreach Coordinator:	Dana Sahlin
Ministry Coordinator:	Brita Hanchek
Musicians:	Solveig Englund
	Ann Mikiska
	Mary Wescott
	Kim & Steve Wolff
Custodian:	Kelly Kritsberg

Family of Christ Lutheran Church

is a member of the **ELCA**



Email us at: Office@FamilyofChrist.com
Visit us at: www.FamilyofChrist.com
Facebook: @FOCLakeville
Instagram: @family_of_christ_lakeville
YouTube: @familyofchristlutheranchur5351
or Call us at: 952-435-5757

Tanzania Sunday - Oct. 11

On Sunday, October 11, Family of Christ will observe Tanzania Sunday. FOC's Tanzania Ministries include Secondary Student Scholarships, Medical Scholarships, Dignity for Daughters, and Iringa Hope Usokami Micro-Finance Project.

Secondary student scholarships- Since 2004, FOC members and friends have sponsored 420 Usokami secondary students. During the current school year there is a total of (19) secondary school age students, including (6) boys and (13) girls who are supported by Family of Christ. Providing scholarship support for these students is a great investment toward a brighter future for them, their community, Tanzania, and Africa.

The 2026 FOC scholarship goal is to raise \$8,900 which covers the cost of room, board and education for an entire year for those attending Lutheran private schools (100% of current FOC sponsored students) and to increase the number of sponsored students. Any size donation will help reach the new \$8,900 financial goal and is such a generous gift. Scholarship donations are due by October 25..

Watercolor paintings will be available through the month of October with all proceeds raised going to the Tanzania Secondary Education Scholarship Fund. Any questions, please contact Kitty Soderberg (952.807.3696).

Medical Scholarships: FOC is currently supporting (3) medical scholarships: Justice Bwisso is completing his Internship at Makerere University in Uganda; and Dr. Elisha Chungu (Orthopedics Master) and Dr. Irene Malumbo (Ophthalmology Masters) have started their advanced 4-year studies at the Muhimbili University, Dar es Salaam. All three students will return to the Ilula Hospital upon completion of their studies/internship.

On Tanzania Sunday, craft items made by the Tanzania Medical Scholarship team will be available for purchase. All proceeds from the sale will go towards Tanzania Medical Scholarships. Also, the Tanzania Medical Scholarship team will have a booth at Grace Lutheran Church, Apple Valley and the Farmington Lutheran Harvest Market (Annual craft, Quilt & Bake Sale) on November 7 to help raise funds for this ministry. Any questions, contact Kathy Derner at Sew4scholarships@gmail.com.

Usokami Micro-finance through Iringa Hope- In 2019 FOC started the Iringa Hope ministry which works through the Micro-Finance Institute at the University of Iringa to loan small amounts of money to farmers and shopkeepers. Any questions contact Pastor Brent at pastorbrent@familyofchrist.com

Dignity for Daughters: An organization created to provide sexual reproductive health education and reusable menstrual health kits to students attending secondary schools of the Iringa Lutheran Diocese. A Tanzania Quilt Raffle tickets (\$5 each or 5 for \$20) are currently available after & before Sunday services with the drawing on Tanzania Sunday (need not be present to win.) Proceeds from the raffle will go to FOC's Dignity for Daughters Tanzania Ministry. Any questions, contact Ann Mikiska or Tami Maddio.

A letter from our partners at Shoulder to Shoulder:

"Greetings Family of Christ brothers and sisters!

We at Shoulder to Shoulder continue to be humbled and thankful for your generosity in supporting scholarships at Ilula Hospital over the past many, many years.

I feel we sometimes do not do a good enough job relating to FOC the tremendous impact it has had on Ilula and the collaborative efforts FOC has contributed to. Anyway, we are so grateful for your ongoing support and partnership."

Dr. Randy Hurley

U.S. Shoulder to Shoulder support team member for Ilula Lutheran Hospital



Family of Christ Lutheran Church
10970 185th Street West
Lakeville, MN 55044

Dates to Remember

Fri. October 2 - Sun. October 4: Fall Youth Retreat
Mon. October 5: Women's Bible Study
Tues. October 6: Red Cross Blood Drive
Sun. October 11: Tanzania Sunday
Wed. October 14: No Youth Programming (MEA)
Wed. October 21: Together Nights
Sun. October 25: Confirmation Sunday/Reformation
Sun. November 1: Daylight Saving Time Ends/All Saints Day
Mon. November 2: Women's Bible Study
Wed. November 18: Together Nights
Sun. November 22: Christ the King Sunday
Wed. November 25: No Youth Programming
Sun. November 29: Advent Begins
Sun. December 13: Christmas Program & Trinity Care Christmas Party
Sat. December 19: Advent Luncheon

Vision Statement

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



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

Faith

Acceptance

Meaningful relationships

Impact

Love

Youth