

Faith Matters

October 2024

Giving All That We Have

EMBRACING BIBLICAL STEWARDSHIP

FAITH LUTHERAN FALL THEME 2024

Pastors' Page

Reformation *Day* occurs each year on October 31, the day in 1517 that Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses on the door of the castle church in Wittenberg, Germany. Reformation *Sunday* is celebrated on the Sunday prior to October 31. This year, it falls on October 27. The Reformation started by Luther unintentionally led to the Christian Church splintering into many different denominations such as Lutherans, Presbyterians, Anglicans, Methodists, and many others.

In the 500 years since, Christianity has largely operated within that denominational framework. In the years I have been in the ministry, though, the influence of denominations has declined sharply. The “mainline” churches that once dominated American church life have all shrunk dramatically and have nowhere near the influence they once did. Beyond that, or maybe because of that, the value of identifying with a denomination has been widely questioned. Many individual congregations have changed their names to drop any mention of their denominational heritage. The church in Iowa that is hosting this year’s annual gathering of LCMC, our national church association, just changed its name from St. Mark’s Lutheran Church to FaithLife Church and Shalom Baptist Church here in Hutchinson changed its name several years ago to Crosspoint Church.

As we celebrate Reformation Day again this month, those trends raise the question of whether being Lutheran really matters anymore. Rest assured, there is *no* proposal to change the name of Faith Lutheran, but is there any value in retaining the Lutheran part? In this day and age, does it serve any effective purpose for us to try to maintain a distinct Lutheran identity?

As noted above, many Christians today answer those questions with a resounding “No,” but I believe that the answers are still “Yes,” for at least two reasons. One is that every church is rooted in a particular theological heritage and disguising the fact doesn’t change it. I assume that FaithLife Church will remain Lutheran in its teaching and outlook. I am fairly certain that Crosspoint did not did not change its Baptist theology or practices when it changed its name. Omitting a church’s denominational background doesn’t make it less distinctive; it just takes a little more digging to find out what distinguishes it.

More importantly, there are substantive theological differences among various Christian churches, even when they all confess that Jesus is Lord. One key example is what they believe about the sacraments. To trust, as Lutherans do,

Continued on page 2



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AFTERNOONS



Inside this issue:

Stump the Pastor	2
Digging Deeper and Financials	3
Seniors' Scene and Missions	4
Children and Youth Info	Insert
Support Groups & FLCW	5
Music and Worship	6
Staff Directory Prayer Requests	7

STUMP THE PASTOR

Stump the Pastor

Q: On Reformation Day, we always hear about the 95 Theses. What are they?

A: The 95 Theses are a long list of statements or propositions that Martin Luther wrote in 1517 and posted publicly in Wittenberg, Germany, where he was a monk and a university professor. It was a common practice then for scholars or church officials to create such lists and then debate them, usually before an audience of other academics. That is almost certainly all that Luther expected would happen with his work.

The 95 Theses, however, unexpectedly struck a chord with the public. They were taken down and published, without Luther's consent, and quickly spread across Europe. Very shortly, the pope had his own copy and Luther had a tiger by the tail. Over the next four years, the Church tried strenuously to silence him, without success, until he was excommunicated by the pope in 1521.

Luther addressed two key topics in the 95 Theses. One concerned indulgences, which were certificates sold by the church to relieve people of the consequences of their sin. Originally, they were said only to take the place of earthly acts of repentance, but as they became an important source of revenue for the church, indulgences were eventually said to forgive sin itself, either for the one who bought them or for a relative who had died. That enraged Martin Luther who knew that God alone can and does forgive sins for Jesus' sake.

The other concern Luther raised was the pope's authority to issue indulgences. While the indulgences themselves have received more attention through the years, the question of papal authority was actually the more explosive topic. To question the pope threatened the integrity of the Roman Church, institutionally and theologically, and that had the potential to throw all of society into chaos.

The 95 Theses are not counted among Luther's greatest theological works, but they were certainly the most consequential historically. We continue to remember them as an instrument God used to spark the much-needed reformation of the Christian Church and to drive Luther to pursue his recovery of the radical truth of the good news of Jesus.

Pastor's Page continued from pg. 1

that God is present and active in Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper, forgiving sins and granting faith, is not compatible with a non-sacramental belief that baptism is just a personal decision one undertakes as a witness to the world or reduces the Lord's Supper to a memorial event of what Jesus did long ago. Or again, the Lutheran Reformers' insistence, following St. Paul, that we are justified with God by faith alone in Christ alone cannot be reconciled with a decision theology that hinges everything on our choosing God or declaring that faith in God must be completed by works of love in order for us to be saved.

The point here is not to declare triumphantly that Lutherans are better than other Christians. In fact, the whole notion of better or worse Christians is a contradiction in terms—"all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) Rather, in a day when denominational heritage is being cast aside, or at least ignored, I am convinced that being a *Lutheran* church still matters. Lutheran theology, in particular, is a powerful and precious gift we have to offer to the whole Christian Church. The tradition in which we Lutherans stand is one we can embrace, not pridefully or arrogantly, but with gratitude and conviction. In fact, let's celebrate Reformation Day this year by diving deeper into that tradition, to seek to be more Lutheran, not less so, in appreciation for this powerful witness in the Church and in the world. See you in church!

Grace and peace,
Pastor Scott Grorud



“Faith Seeks Understanding” Continuing Learning Opportunities for Adults

Digging Deeper sessions are held between services on Sunday mornings at 9:15 a.m.

Disciples of the Cross

Faith Lutheran will focus on Biblical stewardship this fall, which is a call to faithful management of our whole lives as disciples or followers of Jesus. But what does it mean—and *not* mean—to be a faithful Christian disciple? What defines the Christian life? This class will explore Christian discipleship in light of the cross and how Lutheran theology informs it. *Meeting in the Faith Center, starting on September 8.*



“How to talk to your kids...”

Tackling difficult subjects with your kids

Join Pastor Dave and friends, along with other parents, to discuss how you can approach difficult conversations with your kids. We’ll talk about faith-related discussions, like prayer and worship, about difficult life situations, like cancer and divorce, and about formative topics, like technology and money. Meeting in the third-floor conference room.

New Member Orientation

An orientation session for those interested in joining Faith Lutheran Church will be held on October 13, 20 and 27 during the education hour. These new members will be received on Sunday, October 27. If you or someone you know is interested in joining Faith Lutheran, please contact Marsha at 587-2093 or marshas@faithlc.com.



Stewardship Matters

Stewardship
A way of living

The fall preaching theme at Faith is *Giving All That We Have: Embracing Biblical Stewardship*. Using the appointed lectionary texts each week, it has focused on some of the many aspects of being good stewards or managers of everything God entrusts to us. The call to Biblical stewardship, however, is not rooted in God’s Law, but in the promises of the Gospel. It is precisely by leaning back into God’s promises that

we are freed both to enjoy all the gifts God pours into our live and also to dedicate all of life to God’s glory and purposes.

Stewardship of our finances is only one aspect of Biblical stewardship, but living in a wealthy nation with a consumerist economy, it is a crucial part of the call. A major reason for that is that financial security can so easily displace God’s promises as the main source of our confidence and hope. By managing our money well, as a tool God gives us to provide for our needs and the good of our neighbors, we can keep money in its place and keep our trust centered in Christ alone.

Phase II Finance Team

After a careful review process, the P2FT decided not to recommend that the church hire a consulting firm to help raise funds for Phase II of our building project. But running a capital campaign remains a huge task, so Faith’s church council recently approved hiring Jessi (Wendland) Boike and Sara Wegner to work a few hours each week to coordinate this important project. This fall, you will see and hear Jessi, in particular, talking about the upcoming campaign and the challenging, but reachable goal it puts before the family of Faith. The capital campaign itself will not begin until January of next year. During this time, please pray for God to lead and fulfill this vision, in your own lives and the life of Faith Lutheran, to build the ministry space we already need, as well as room for future growth.





Seniors' Scene *by Pr. Paulus Pilgrim*

After a three-month hiatus from Seniors' Potluck meetings, it was so good to be together again at our September 26 meeting. The food was so good, as always. Seeing and socializing with "the crowd" was just as good, and the program on

Meghan's Place was interesting and educational. What a ministry! Spread the word.

Our October meeting holds a really different experience for us. Let me introduce it this way: You are wanting to take a vacation. You look over the possibilities for Ireland, Austria, Norway, and Germany. How many of you, after studying brochures and web sites would finally select Antarctica as the place to go? If you're like me, that continent wasn't even under consideration.

We have, however, some people in our congregation who did just that. Ian and Kathy McDonald spent some time in Antarctica and will let us in on what it was that led them to visit there. It should be educational and interesting. Maybe you will want to sign up for a trip there sometime.

That travelogue takes place at our October **Seniors' Potluck** meeting on **Thursday, October 31**, beginning at **12:00 noon**. October 31 is also Reformation Day on the church calendar. You may also know that it is Halloween. SO, if you can't find any Reformation Day costume items to wear, perhaps you can wear your Halloween jewelry, tie, or jacket, just to liven things up a bit.

Antarctica—let's join the McDonalds. Bring a friend or two. **"See you at Seniors' Potluck!"**



Opportunities and Challenges in Our Witness to Muslims

Pastor Paul Knudson



One of the huge challenges facing Christian witness to would-be immigrants is often not recognized. Cultural differences have led immigrants to countries like ours to cluster together with "their people." In my earliest days in ministry, I served a congregation which was founded by Norwegian immigrants in the latter decades of the 1800's. It was always rather humorous that along with the church I served, Swedes founded a church a block away, and the Germans formed their own a block in the other direction. All were Lutheran but many a humorous story could be told of the challenges to any togetherness.

Today immigrants and established populations are often in bitter discord. My present reading led me to a study of the immigration of massive numbers into Europe in the last ten years. Strangely, even those most open to their entry had never considered that these folk would not only stick together, but would strike out at the long-time residents.

This has been most evident in the difficulty of long-time Europeans from many different countries finding the influx of Muslims, also from varied countries, resistant to fitting into now secular communities. Much blood has been shed in the face of seemingly insurmountable differences.

Christian witness is facing challenges that is leading many would-be witnesses to withdraw into their own religious and cultural enclaves. Yet our Lord gives us Good News to share in the person of Christ Jesus. Will we be open not to withdrawing from the call to witness?

We will do well to wrestle with these conflictual realities and pray to our Lord and Savior to shape our witness right here in seemingly homogeneous Hutchinson in ways that will touch those clearly "different from us." May we pray that the Spirit would work on us and through us for God pleasing witness starting right here.

Faith Lutheran Church Support Groups



We are truly blessed with wonderful pastoral care efforts here at Faith Lutheran! People come together and, by faith and God's grace, they are helped through three support groups offered here. These groups are not just for Faith members so feel free to share this information with friends and family members who may benefit from attending one of these support groups.

1) NEW Grief Support Group Starting Soon!

A new four-session **grief support group** will be offered soon. Each session meets on a Thursday, at 4:00 p.m. in the office area conference room. The dates are:

October 24 October 31 November 7 November 14

Anyone who has experienced a loss, member or not, is invited to participate. Grief is not only for someone's death. There are many kinds of losses and they all cause grieving. Grief must be resolved before one can live a productive life. Groups are a great place to come to grips with anguished feelings over grieving. Welcome!

2) FACe Cancer Support Group

Having cancer can be hard and very challenging. Often you can feel alone or without hope. The FACe group is here to help. We can, by the grace of God, shed a little light into the darkness, a little knowledge and experience to the unsure, a little love to let you know you are not alone. This group meets the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month at 10:00 a.m. in the upstairs conference room at Faith. Those fighting cancer and their caregivers are welcome to attend. E-mail Jeff at jeffa@faithlc.com with questions or for more information.

3) Caregiver Support Group

The Caregiver Support Group is currently meeting monthly on the third Thursday of each month at 4 p.m. in the office conference room. This group is for people who are the primary caregiver for a friend or family member. You can contact Pr. Paulus Pilgrim or Marsha Schmit for more information by calling 320-587-2093.

Faith has a number of books and resources used by the Grief, Caregiver, and FACe Cancer Support group participants. If you are interested in checking out a group or the material, or if you want to help offset the book costs for others, please reach out to Pastor Paulus Pilgrim, Marsha Schmit, or Jeff Amundson.



Mugs and Muffins

Mugs and Muffins is on the calendar for 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, October 5. Shauna Best, Director of the Hutchinson Farmers Market, will be there to share some interesting facts about the market here in Hutchinson. Bring a mug and a friend, and we hope to see you there.

SNOW BIRDS



For those of you who head south for the winter, this is your reminder to keep looped in with all that is happening at Faith Lutheran while you are gone. You can stay "in the know" by **making sure the church has your temporary address** so we can send newsletters, envelopes, and tax statements to you. If you would prefer to get your newsletters by e-mail, we can do that, too. Also, if you are on **Facebook**, make sure to **follow FaithLutheranHutchinson**, you can **watch the services via the YouTube Page at**

faithlchutch, and of course, you can always **check on the latest news by going to the Faith website at Faithlc.com.**

Finally, if you don't want giving envelopes sent to your temporary address, let the office know and those mailings can be stopped. If you prefer, you can still give while away by going to the website **Faithlc.com/Give-2/** or using this QR Code.





How Great Thou Art: Celebrating God's goodness for 75 years

The beloved hymn, "How Great Thou Art" has been cherished by generations for years, 75 to be exact! In 1949, English missionary Stuart K. Hine translated the standard version we know and love today. Though this year marks the 75th anniversary of Hine's popular English translation, the original text is much older. "How Great Thou Art" is derived from an old Swedish hymn, "O Store Gud" ('O Great God') written and published by Carl Boberg in 1886, which dates the text at 138 years today. Boberg was a Swedish poet and preacher credited with 60 poems, hymns, and gospel songs during his ministry serving two churches in Stockholm, Sweden. The mid to late 1800's brought a religious revival movement through Sweden that inspired poets and hymn writers such as Boberg to capture God's power and glory in the wonders of creation through lyric and song, and such inspiration motivated him to write "O Store Gud." Walking home from church one afternoon, Boberg witnessed a sudden storm on the horizon. Upon taking shelter, nearby church bells began to ring at the recession of a funeral that had taken place that day. Moved by the song of the bells and the calm that broke after the raging storm, Boberg recalled the words of Psalm 8:

¹ *O Lord, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all
the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.*
² *Out of the mouths of babes and infants
you have founded a bulwark because of your
foes, to silence the enemy and the
avenger.*
³ *When I look at your heavens, the work of
your fingers, the moon and the stars
that you have established;*
⁴ *what are human beings that you are
mindful of them, mortals that you
care for them?*

⁵ *Yet you have made them a little lower than
God, and crowned them with glory
and honor.*
⁶ *You have given them dominion over the
works of your hands; you have put all things
under their feet,
⁷ all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of
the field,
⁸ the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of
the seas.*
⁹ *O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is
your name in all the earth!*

Psalm 8:1-9, NRSV

Thinking upon the words of "How Great Thou Art," we can imagine how Carl Boberg penned such a testament to God's goodness from the words of the psalmist. The literal translation of Boberg's original Swedish chorus follows, "Then my soul bursts forth into praise: O great God, O great God!" which was later poetically translated by Stuart K. Hine to the well-known, "Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee, how great thou art! How great thou art!" Like many others, I grew up with this text. But considering Boberg's original words, "my soul bursts forth," I feel that "burst" is a more accurate way of expressing our profound response to God's goodness. Through the tumult of our earthly lives, we can still "burst forth" in praise with the assurance that God is good! For 75 years, this hymn has been a favorite of Christians around the world. Several polls spanning from 2001 to 2019 rank "How Great Thou Art" second after "Amazing Grace" as an all-time favorite hymn. Hymns remain a relevant part of the Christian canon of music. It is not always because of tradition that we hold on to things past, but because of the pure and raw expression that flows from worship that has spanned the generational steadfastness that we receive from our God.

Soli Deo Gloria! (To God alone be the glory!)

- Austin

Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Dates



Sunday School

Sunday School children have been learning about people in the Bible that God has called, such as Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Esther, the disciples, and us! God doesn't call the equipped. He equips the called!



2nd Grade Students

Children will be getting their big-kid Bibles on October 27 during the 10:10 a.m. Sanctuary worship service. Before, at 9:10 a.m. in the 3rd floor multi-purpose space, students and their parents will have their Bible introduction class with Pastor Dave.

B23 (Birth to Three)

The birth to three year old class is on October 20 from 9:10 a.m.—9:50 a.m. in the nursery. Join other families for a small group discussion about raising children up in a Christ-centered home.

56er's

At 56er's we play games, have a snack, and see what the Bible says about a variety of questions. This month we are asking, "Do people become angels when they die?" and "Is God with us even when we're in the bathroom?"

56er's Service Projects

On October 23, we are packing school bags for Orphan Grain Train.

On October 30, the 6th-graders can join the confirmation students in Trick or Treating for the food shelf.

No 56er's on October 2, 16, and 30.

NEW! Aftershock (Early Release Ministry)

This NEW ministry is for children in kindergarten through 5th grade. It will be held on early release Wednesdays, after school - 4:30 p.m. We will have a snack, worship, Bible story time, crafts, and games. Register on the church website. Space will be limited.



Confirmation

Mentor Meeting—Wednesday, October 2 will be the first Mentor Meeting of the School Year. Please watch for more information to follow!

FLY Night

Faith Lutheran Youth night continues for all high school students on Wednesdays from 7:00—9:30 p.m.

Augustana District Fall Retreat

October 18-20, 2024 at Luther Crest Bible Camp in Alexandria, MN.

Contact Kristen for more details and to sign up.

Questions?

If you have questions about programs for children birth through 6th grade, please contact Laura Stowman, Director of Children and Family Ministry.

If you have questions about programs for 7th grade through young adult, please contact Kristen Durst, Director of Youth and Family Ministry.



Sunday School Service Project

Help us fill 200 boxes!

Sunday School students are packing Operation Christmas Child boxes during Sunday School on October 20. Our goal is to pack one box per Sunday School student and the fall Sunday School offering will go towards Operation Christmas Child.



What is Operation Christmas Child?

Operation Christmas Child brings the hope of Jesus Christ to children all around the world through the gift of a box and with the chance to learn about Jesus.

Who is collecting what?

Preschool will be collecting **TOYS**

- soccer ball and pump, stuffed animal, musical instrument, toy cars, slinky, yo-yo, kaleidoscope, doll, jump rope, finger puppets, and toy figures

Kindergarten—1st grade will be collecting **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

- crayons, markers, colored pencils, notebooks, index cards, scissors, glue sticks, tape, coloring books, dry water color set, pencil case, pencils, pencil sharpeners, pens, and markers

2nd—3rd grade will be collecting **TOYS**

- see note under preschool

4th—6th grade will be collecting **PERSONAL CARE ITEMS**

- comb, hairbrush, toothbrush, washcloth, children's adhesive bandages, nail clipper, nail file, hair ties, headbands, hair clips

Items must be new.

Only donate what is on the list.

Please drop off donations at the front desk in the office.

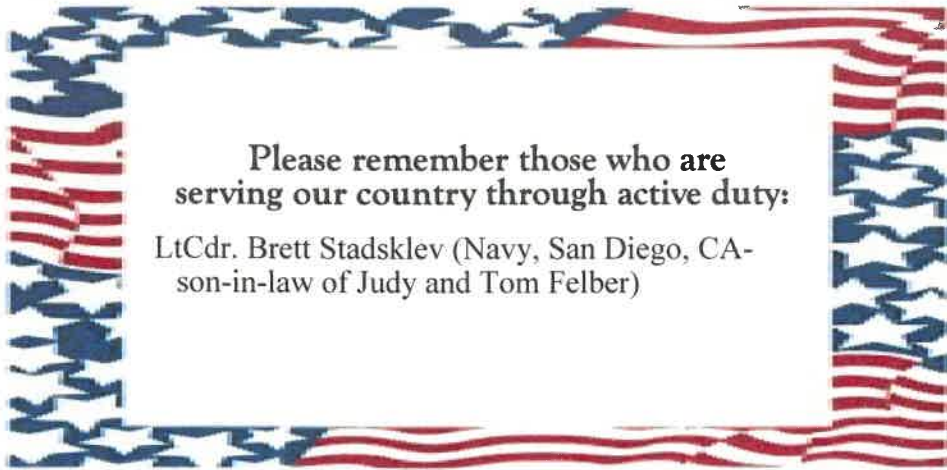
Thank you!

Laura Stowman, Director of Children and Family Ministries

Kristen Durst, Director of Youth and Family Ministries



Please Remember in Prayer



Please remember those who are serving our country through active duty:

LtCdr. Brett Stadskev (Navy, San Diego, CA-son-in-law of Judy and Tom Felber)



Remember our Faith members in nursing homes and health care centers:

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Buffalo Lake Nursing Home

Kathy Fabel

Cedar Crest - Silver Lake

Patricia Lambert

Cokato Nursing Home

Clara Betker

Harmony River

Wilbur and Trudy Johnson

Oaks

Phyllis Blum
Caroline Ficker
Alice Poshek

Pines

Elaine Blade
Maynard and Shirley Holtz
Frances Olson

Woodstone

Cyndy Ollrich

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OUR MISSION IS:
BUILDING FAITH
*"EQUIP THE SAINTS FOR THE WORK OF MINISTRY,
FOR BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST"*
EPHESIANS 4:12



TO LIVE OUT THAT MISSION, GOD CALLS US TO:
FOLLOW JESUS
ANNOUNCE THE GOSPEL
INVITE ALL PEOPLE
TEACH CHRISTIAN TRUTH
HELP ALL WHO ARE IN NEED