



335 Main St. S.  
 Hutchinson, MN 55350  
 Phone: 320-587-2093  
 Email: office@faithlc.com

**LIVE TV BROADCAST**  
 SUNDAYS AT 8 A.M.  
 NUVERA & MEDIACOM  
 ON CH. 7

**PRE-RECORDED BROADCASTS**  
 SUNDAYS 10 A.M.  
 AND 5 P.M.  
 TUESDAYS 5 P.M.  
 THURSDAYS 10 P.M.  
 NUVERA CH. 10  
 MEDIACOM CH. 8

**RADIO BROADCAST**  
 SUNDAYS 8 A.M.  
 KDUZ 1260 AM  
 (PRE-RECORDED)

**YOUTUBE**  
 SERVICE RECORDINGS  
 POSTED SUNDAY  
 AFTERNOONS



Dr. Harry Wendt wrote the *Crossways* Bible study that I have taught for many years. Along the way, he coined many memorable phrases and images. One of my favorites is his description of Christmas: “God’s Son crept down the backstairs of Bethlehem and settled in a manger.” It beautifully represents how God sent His Son into the world, not with fanfare and grand announcements, but in a humble, largely unnoticed birth to a peasant couple in a small village far from their home.

From the very start, the poignant circumstances of Jesus’ birth marked him as being destined for the cross, not for the royal glory that was widely expected for the Messiah, the Savior sent from God. His joyful birth under such difficult conditions pulls at our heartstrings and helps to make Christmas such a beloved holiday.

At the same time, though, I wonder if the unobtrusive way that Jesus “crept down the backstairs of Bethlehem and settled in a manger” can disguise the ultimate significance of Christmas. The truth is that, even as Jesus “crept down the backstairs of Bethlehem,” the Incarnation was an invasion, a stealthy attack on the forces of sin, death and the devil. It was the prelude to war, as God’s Son waded into battle to deliver you and me from our own sin and rebellion. Jesus entered the fray knowing it would end with his torturous death on the cross, yet he willingly and obediently accepted that mission from God the Father.

The old movie *The Longest Day* depicted the invasion of France by the Allied Forces on D-Day in 1944. Its long opening sequence focuses on the hours before the invasion began. As the soldiers wait for it to start, their anticipation and anxiety run sky-high. Their nerves are raw and they’re all jumpy. Some are driven to examine their lives, others to throw caution to the wind. Knowing what is coming, they can hardly control the adrenaline-fueled energy coursing through them.

I wonder if that is also what the halls of heaven felt like as Christmas drew near. The angels watched in anxious expectation as the battle plan took shape. They waited with bated breath through the hours of Mary’s labor. Then, they manned their battle stations to watch over this holy child through the years until he launched his public ministry.

**Inside**

Congregational Update Digging Deeper	2
Stump the Pastor Special Events	3
Seniors’ Scene and Advent Schedule	4
Christmas and Finances	5
Missions	6
Music and Miscellaneous	7-8
Staff Directory Prayer Requests	9

*Continued on page 2*

## Pastor's Page continued from pg. 1

The Allied victory in World War II depended on the D-Day invasion succeeding. Even more so, the salvation of the world and the destruction of death and the devil depended on the invasion of God's Incarnate Son succeeding. And succeed it did!

That victory, which was sealed when God raised Jesus from the dead, is the reason that Christmas is such a joyful celebration. It marked the beginning of God's battle against evil and assured that, as the great Christmas carol declares, "God and sinners (are) reconciled"! May that triumphant promise fill your Advent and Christmas with gratitude, wonder and overflowing joy.

Grace and peace,  
Pastor Scott Grorud

### Congregational Meeting Update



#### Leap of Faith

At the special congregational meeting on November 24, the proposal to move ahead with the Leap of Faith campaign was approved by a vote of 183 in favor to 35 opposed, a margin of 84%. Faith's leaders are grateful for that strong show of support for this vision.

The Leap of Faith capital campaign will begin on Sunday, January 12, 2025, and run through Sunday, March 2, 2025. Watch for opportunities to learn more about the campaign and how you can participate in it. If you have questions, contact any member of the Phase II Finance Team or the pastors. Please pray daily for God's blessing on this effort to complete the long-term building plan for Faith Lutheran and for His guidance on how you can support it.



#### **"Faith Seeks Understanding"**

##### **Continuing Learning Opportunities for Adults**

Digging Deeper sessions are held between services on Sunday mornings at 9:15 a.m. beginning on December 1.

#### Faith in Christmas Films

Join Pastor Dave in the Faith Center for the long-awaited sequel to the Faith in Films Digging Deeper, this time with a Christmas twist! We'll watch some clips from some popular Christmas movies and discuss the theological themes portrayed. Popcorn not included, but coffee is!



#### What We *Don't* Know about Christmas: A Careful Reading of the Christmas Gospels



Christian imagination has filled in many details in the accounts of Jesus' birth in Matthew and Luke, so that what we "know" about Christmas may not actually be in the text. This class will take a careful look at the Biblical texts to sort out what is written from what has been assumed. Meeting in the office conference room with Pastor Scott.



# STUMP THE PASTOR

## Stump the Pastor

*Q: I saw a reference to Jerusalem as the city of David, but the angel who told the shepherds about Jesus' birth called Bethlehem the city of David. Which one is it?*

A: The answer is that they both are. Bethlehem is the city of David because he was born and raised there. Jerusalem is the city of David because he conquered it, and then made it the political and religious capital of Israel.

At the time Jesus was born, most people would have heard any reference to the city of David as applying to Jerusalem, not Bethlehem. That suggests, at least, that the angel's language was a veiled critique of the religious and social power structures in Jerusalem, and an indication that, while Jesus was the "Savior ... Messiah (and) Lord" whom God had long promised to send, he would not be a typically royal figure as most Jewish people expected. He came with a greater agenda and a very different method of conquering his enemies by submitting to them and dying on the cross.

## Special "FLIP" Sunday

Sunday, December 15th  
10:10 worship

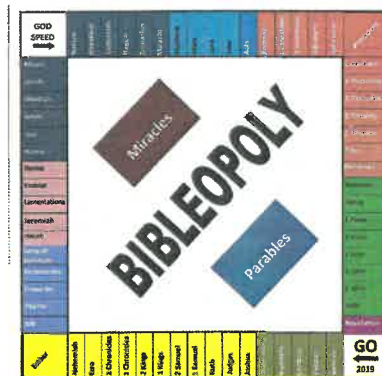


On Sunday, December 15, the pre-k through first-grade students will sing at the 10:10 a.m. Sanctuary Service. This will lead to a number of families who usually attend the Foundation service worshipping in the sanctuary instead. To keep the sanctuary from getting too crowded, the Sanctuary and Foundation worship styles will "flip" that day. That means the Sanctuary style worship service will be in a different space, the Foundation, but with the same service style. Meanwhile, a Foundation style service will be held in the Sanctuary. Holy Communion will be administered at the service held in Foundation. You are welcome to worship in your usual space or you are invited to worship in a different space with the same service style you are used to.

## Do you remember Bibleopoly? This year-long effort to promote spiritual growth in 2019 is back for 2025!

In 2019, the Discipleship ministry team at Faith encouraged every member to read the Bible in a year. Two Bibleopoly Boards were created so that readers could mark their reading progress and we could see how the reading was going throughout the year. We are going to recreate that deep dive into Scripture in 2025! You are encouraged to choose a Bible plan and, beginning on January 1, join the family of Faith in digging into God's Word together. You can read the version of your choice, or listen to a recorded or online version as you drive or do things around the house.

There will be Bible reading plans for teens and



adults, as well as plans for parents to read Bible stories to children in 1<sup>st</sup>-grade and below. Another plan will be available for children in grades two through six. Plans will be found by the boards before the end of the year. Those who participate in this commitment to read are again encouraged to place a sticker on one of the Bibleopoly boards to mark each book of the Bible that they read. The two boards will be located in the gathering spaces by the sanctuary and by the church offices. We hope that everyone resolves to read the whole Bible, the Old Testament, or the New Testament. Parents can read Bible stories to their children. One way or another, take a deep dive into the Scriptures in 2025. Look for the Bibleopoly boards and pick your reading plan, so you are ready to start your reading challenge when it kicks off on January 1, 2025!

Faith Lutheran Church

*Advent Worship*

December 4 at 6:30 pm  
Candlelight Contemporary Worship led by FLY

December 11 at 6:30 pm  
Holden Evening Prayer Service  
preceded by soup and chili supper at 5:00 pm

December 18 at 6:30 pm  
Traditional Worship featuring a hymn sing  
followed by cookies and cocoa

## Soup and Chili Supper

You are invited to the annual soup and chili supper on Wednesday, December 11, from 5-6 p.m. **before** the 6:30 p.m. Advent service. Please sign up at the church by Sunday, December 8, to bring your favorite soup or chili to share so we know how many to expect and set-up for.



## Advent Cookies and Fellowship

You are invited to enjoy cookies, and coffee or hot chocolate, **after** the 6:30 p.m. Advent service on December 18 in the Faith Center. Join us!



## Christmas Poinsettias

If you would like to order a Christmas poinsettia in memory or in honor of someone to help decorate the Sanctuary or Foundation for Christmas, please make sure to place your order before Monday, December 16. Order forms will be in the bulletin, in the church office, and on the website.

You may take your poinsettia home after the Christmas morning service or anytime that following week.



## Seniors' Scene

by Pr. Paulus Pilgrim



So we had our hot dishes in the oven, the fruit salad refrigerated and ready to bring, and then—no Seniors' Potluck. God interrupted with His snowstorm. Oh well, He's God, I'm not. That's the way it should be. We had to cancel—the very first time ever for Seniors' Potluck. But we're not giving up on our trip to Antarctica—never! We're making plans to get there right now. We'll let you know when that will be. Stay tuned.

In the meantime, our December meeting comes earlier in the month, as always, to avoid stuffing the Christmas season too full. We will meet on **Thursday, December 12 but NOT at 12:00 noon** as usual. Rather, we'll gather for our **program first at 11:00 a.m.** to accommodate our guests—**Webber & Ash**—a couple of folksy music artists who will sing and play (piano & violin), and lead us in singing music for the Christmas season. It should be a warm and seasonal experience. Here are some tidbits from their printed information:

*They want to help us celebrate both the sacred and festive spirit of the Christmas season, bringing warmth and reverence, using timeless hymns and carols to fill us with the joy and reflection Christmas inspires.*

The reason our program is first is that this singing team has another appearance at 2:00 p.m. in Mankato. We'll enjoy our program, and then our fellowship and food. Our steering committee assures us the hot dishes will be kept hot.

**See you at Seniors Potluck!!** Come Early. **Program BEGINS right at 11:00am sharp**, so come a little BEFORE that.



## Christmas Worship Opportunities



### **Christmas Eve** (all services include candlelight)

- ◇ 2:00 p.m. Family Service with extended Faith Seeds time featuring the Christmas Story and special music that children can participate in. There are also instruments for children to play during the service and special battery operated candles for them.
- ◇ 4:00 p.m. Simultaneous Sanctuary and Foundation services, one with contemporary music the other with a traditional music style.
- ◇ 6:00 p.m. A traditional candlelight Christmas Eve service
- ◇ 11:00 p.m. A traditional candlelight Christmas Eve service with special candlelight ambiance and Holy Communion

### **Christmas Day**

- ◇ 10:00 a.m. Traditional Christmas morning service with Holy Communion.

Services will not be broadcast live but select services will be recorded and put on the YouTube Channel and HCVN.

## Stewardship Matters

Stewardship  
*A way of living*

Faith Lutheran has a long-established habit of running up a large deficit in the General Fund during each year, only to make it up with enormous offerings during the last few weeks of the year. This year is no different, although the current deficit is smaller than it was last year. As of this writing, Faith Lutheran will need to receive

**\$123,000** in offerings by December 31 to break even in 2024. Watch for updated financial reports in each week's Sunday bulletin.

In December, you will receive an invitation to make a *Joy to the World* offering again this year. Please pray for God's leading on how you can support this effort to ensure the continued financial health of our congregation and the funding needed to carry out our mission and ministry. **Thank you!**



## **Holiday Office Hours**

**Please note that the church offices will be closed on Christmas Day, Wednesday, December 25, and New Year's Day, Wednesday, January 1.**

## You Can Trust Our Funds for Mission Partners Are Well Spent

*Thoughts from Pastor Paul*



The Church in the World Ministry Team is preparing a proposed 2025 mission budget to go to the church council and then the congregation at its annual meeting in January. Some members may wonder how or why we seek to support those ministering on our behalf globally and here in this community and country. That is a legitimate concern.

I lift up one new request that we will be considered for support. Pastor Miguel Nunez and his wife, Varinia Cuello, are planting a congregation in Montevideo, Uruguay. It is a major challenge for them in this huge city. Pastor Dave has connected with them, and we learned that Juliano and Fabi Pater, who serve a large congregation in neighboring southern Brazil and were with us for several weeks earlier this fall, know them well. In fact, their congregation supports this church-planting couple. We are confident that our support will match our spiritual commitments and be used well.

We could also share story after story of why your church leaders and mission team support our many partnerships. We are confident that our generosity will encourage marvelous witness near and far.

### Christmas Giving Trees



The Congregational Life Team is partnering with CHAP Ministries again this year. This organization provides Christmas gifts for senior citizens in need. If you are able, please take a card from the tree, purchase the gift listed on the card, wrap it, write a note for your senior in the card, and place it all under the tree for pickup before December 15! The Christmas Giving Trees will be found in the front entry and outside the sanctuary. Thank you for sharing God's love!



FREE  
**community**  
MEAL

FLOWERS

### Faith Lutheran Outreach Opportunities

The 2025 sign-up boards are available for sponsoring a Sunday morning radio broadcast on KDUZ (\$145/broadcast) and for providing flowers for worship in memory or honor of someone or a special event. There is a separate sign-up in Foundation for those who want to provide flowers for worship there. (For a flower sponsorship, contact the florist of your choice, order the flowers and request delivery to church on the preceding Friday afternoon.)

There is also a board where you can sign-up to serve one of the Free Community Meals. These meals are provided on the second Sunday of each month from 4-5:30 p.m. There are funds available to help pay for the food, but volunteer groups are needed to plan, prepare, serve and clean-up after these meals.



## Our Advent... Holy God

During the month of December, the Foundation worship team will be helping me introduce a new song into our Sunday morning mix, "Only a Holy God." The song itself is not new, being released by City Alight Music in 2016. However, it has not yet made its way into our Foundation rotation. Recently, the words of this song have been on my heart as we quickly approach the Advent season.



*Who else commands all the hosts of heaven? Who else could make every king bow down?  
Who else can whisper and darkness trembles? Only a Holy God.*

"Only a Holy God" is not specifically an Advent or Christmas song, but there are some parallels we can draw from it. The verses list a series of rhetorical questions that are answered by the simple phrase, "Only a Holy God." God is the one who commanded the angel hosts that Christmas night. God is the one who made King Herod afraid for his throne. God is the one who outshines all darkness. This is all true! Only a Holy God, set apart from all else, is capable of such power and majesty. God's power is direct and instant. But then I started to think about these words in the light of Advent and what it means to have an *Advent* God. After all, Advent is the season of preparation, waiting for the arrival of Christ. We live in a culture that detests the idea of waiting. Entertainment is all around us, instantaneously when we request it. So, it can be difficult to wait for God who proves to be all powerful and instant.

*What other beauty demands such praises? What other splendor outshines the sun?  
What other majesty rules with justice? Only a Holy God.*

We wait for God to respond to our praises. We want God to outshine all our sorrows with a simple prayer. The earth has been yearning for God's justice for centuries. We want a Holy God but feel as though we have an Advent God. But who here is the one waiting. Is it us or God?

*Who else could rescue me from my failing? Who else would offer His only Son?  
Who else invites me to call Him Father? Only a Holy God.*

As it turns out, God waits for us. God has already acted in our lives and continues to act in us every day. We are the ones who are slow to respond. As sin continues to get in the way, God continues to wait. We truly have a Holy God. So, what should our response be this Advent season? The chorus of this song says it well,

*Come and behold Him the One and the Only. Cry out sing holy, forever a Holy God.  
Come and worship the Holy God!*

As we prepare for the coming of Christ this Advent season, also prepare your hearts to receive the instant power of our Holy God's love and forgiveness in your life. Come experience the joy that this season brings by worshipping with us our one and only, Holy God.

Peace,  
Austin

## Christmas Caroling

Join the Faith Singers choir on December 22 for an afternoon of Christmas caroling at our local Hutchinson nursing and assisted living homes. We will depart from Faith as one group at 1:30 p.m. and travel to Woodstone, Oaks and Pines, and Harmony River. Caroling is expected to end around 3:30 p.m. This is a great opportunity to involve your kids or grandkids in a beloved tradition, and for youth to gain experience in serving others and volunteering in the community. Hot chocolate and cookies will be provided. Come join us as we bring the good news of Christ's birth to the community of Hutchinson!



### FLCW Women's Christmas Lunch



"Silent Night"

Saturday, December 14th  
11:00 AM to 1:00 PM



### FLCW Christmas Lunch

The Christmas lunch will be held on Saturday, December 14 from 11 a.m.—1 p.m. Treat yourself, family and friends to a lunch featuring Christmas-decorated tables, delicious food, music by Austin and Bailey Willhite and special speaker,

Pastor Donna Olsen. Tickets are \$12 each and will be available via the hostesses until they are sold out. You can request a ticket by contacting the church office.

## Faith Lutheran Church Support Groups



The various support groups at Faith Lutheran are ready to help whether you are grieving, facing cancer, challenged by illness, or feeling alone. Maybe you want to enter the mission field by helping on these teams or need the help yourself. The love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is there for all of us to share. Contact the pastoral care team by calling 320-587-2093 for more information or to join one of the following groups:

- 1) Grief Support Group (Dates vary)
- 2) FACe Cancer Support Group (Second and fourth Thursday of each month at 10 a.m.)
- 3) Caregiver Support Group (Third Thursday of each month at 4 p.m.)

## Nominating Committee Calling

The nominating committee has started to make calls to search for ministry team and council members to serve for 2025. They began by calling current members who are able to serve another term. Once they learned how many spots they needed to fill, they started calling people to ask them if they are willing to serve on one of the ministry teams or church council. Many people, understandably, do not answer calls from numbers that they do not recognize. The committee callers will leave a message if you do not answer. It is VERY IMPORTANT that you return their call, even if your answer is “no thank you,” so that they know not to continue to call you. Thank you for considering the call to lead.



## Annual Report Submissions/Annual Meeting

If you, or a group you are involved in, typically send in a submission for the annual report, the deadline for those submissions will be December 17. Submissions can be e-mailed to Wendy at [office@faithlc.com](mailto:office@faithlc.com).

The completed reports will be available two weeks before the annual meeting which will be on Sunday, January 26, 2023 at 12:00 noon. Make sure to keep that afternoon available to gather and hear about all that is happening at Faith Lutheran.

## 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/](http://Faithlc.com/Give-2/) or using this QR Code.





# Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Dates



## Sunday School

We are learning about the birth of Jesus while also practicing for our Christmas programs!

**No Sunday School on December 1, 22, and 29.**

## B23

Please note that B23 will not meet in December due to the Christmas program that day.

**Next B23 is January 19, 2025.**

## 56er's

At 56er's, we play games, have snack, and see what the Bible says about a variety of questions. This month, we are covering the questions "What does God say to do when I am too busy?" and "What do we really know about Jesus' birth?"

**No 56er's on December 4, 25, and January 1.**

## Aftershock

Aftershock is an afterschool ministry for Kindergarten—5<sup>th</sup> grade on the early release days. Kids come after school for snack time, crafts, games, Bible stories and worship.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Laura Stowman.

**Our next dates are December 4 and February 5.**

## Christmas Program

Join us on **December 15 at 4 p.m.** in the Sanctuary as the **2<sup>nd</sup>—5<sup>th</sup> grade students** re-tell the Christmas story through acting and song.

Join us earlier in the day as the **Preschool—1<sup>st</sup> grade students** celebrate the birth of Jesus with a few special songs during the **10:10 a.m. Sanctuary worship service.**



## Sprouts

Sign up to help with Sprouts! This is a time when preschool—1<sup>st</sup> graders leave during the sermon at the Foundation worship service for an age-appropriate lesson.



## Confirmation

**Mentor Meeting—Wednesday, February 5, 2025**

## FLY Night

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

## New Year's Eve, Eve

December 30, 2024

Come ring in the second-to-last day of this year with fun, fellowship, and reflection! Any youth or alumni can attend!

## Sign Up for the Mission Trip!

We are going to Indianapolis, Indiana July 11—19, 2025. Registration information can be found on the Faith Lutheran Youth Instagram page.



**Preschool - 1st Grade**

**10:10 a.m.**

**2nd - 5th Grade**

**4 p.m.**

## Questions? Contact us!

Kristen Durst—Director of Youth and Family Ministries—[kristenm@faithlc.com](mailto:kristenm@faithlc.com)

Laura Stowman—Director of Children and Family Ministries—[lauras@faithlc.com](mailto:lauras@faithlc.com)



## **Nativity Play**

I am sure many of us have the tradition that as we set up the Christmas tree, lights and décor, we also set up a nativity scene. You may have a nativity set that was passed down to you or a new one, made of wood, plastic, fabric, or ceramic, big or small. Whatever it looks like, it is a special piece added to your home during the season of Advent.

I have fond memories of helping my parents set up the nativity scene on the top of our bookshelf and then a toy nativity set that sat underneath our Christmas tree, which I would play with often. As my sister and I got older, we would set up the nativity scene differently. Mary and Joseph would travel across the room to get to Bethlehem, baby Jesus would join on Christmas morning, the angels would appear to the shepherds who would then join Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus, and the wise men would travel across the whole house to get to baby Jesus.

The nativity scene is a great reminder of what Christmas is all about. We are celebrating the birth of Jesus, the Son of God, the Messiah.

So this Christmas as you listen to Christmas music, bake tons of cookies, gather with family, set up your Christmas décor, find ways to act out the Christmas story. Open up your child's Bible and read the Christmas story. Act it out with your nativity set, make your own nativity set or throw items in a basket that would be great for playing dress up and reenact the Christmas story for the aunts, uncles and grandparents to see! Help make this a tradition for your family.

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)  
 Spc. Jonas R. Reid (Space Force, Patrick, FL - son of Melissa Straka, grandson of Sherry Schuete)

Please contact the church office to make any changes or additions to this list.



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

## Faith Lutheran Church INFORMATION & STAFF DIRECTORY

335 Main St. S. 320-587-2093 FaithLC.com

### Pastors

Scott Gorud	320-587-0171 (home)	scottg@faithlc.com
Dave Wollan	320-583-2385 (cell)	davidw@faithlc.com
Paul Knudson, Missions Ministry	320-587-2227 (home)	paulk@faithlc.com
Paulus Pilgrim, Visitation	320-234-9753 (home)	paulusp@faithlc.com

### Staff

Jeff Amundson, Pastoral Associate	320-587-2093 (office)	jeffa@faithlc.com
Marsha Schmit, Director of Pastoral Care & Evangelism		marshas@faithlc.com
Austin Willhite, Director of Music & Worship		austinw@faithlc.com
Kristen Durst, Director of Youth & Family Ministry		kristenm@faithlc.com
Laura Stowman, Director of Children & Family Ministry		lauras@faithlc.com
Wendy Magruder, Administrative Assistant		wendym@faithlc.com
Sara Wegner, Finance Coordinator		finco@faithlc.com
Owen Weikle, Custodial Services Coordinator		320-587-2093

### Buffalo Lake Nursing Home

Kathy Fabel

### Cedar Crest - Silver Lake

Patricia Lambert

### Cokato Nursing Home

Clara Betker

### Harmony River

Wilbur 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