



Faith Lutheran Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

FAITH'S FOUNDATIONS

March 2021

Working to spread the Gospel here and throughout the world.

6995 US 45 S · P.O. Box 436 · Three Lakes, WI 54562 · 715-546-2770

<http://faithlutheran-threelakes.org> · <https://facebook.com/faith3lakes> · office6995@gmail.com

Office Hours: Tuesday thru Thursday 9:00 am to 12:00 pm



NOTE FROM PASTOR JOHN



As I am writing this Lent is on my mind. As you know Lent began with Ash Wednesday inviting folks to be marked or smudged with ashes on the forehead in the shape of a simple cross. Ashes are an ancient sign of remorse and repentance. Who can forget the scene from the prophet Jonah of the reaction of the King of Nineveh who heard of the prophet's call to repent or face God's judgment? He took off his royal robes and put on sackcloth. Even more, he sat in ashes. He even decreed that animals must take part along with humans: they must put on sackcloth too. Luckily on Ash Wednesday we do not ask you to sit in ashes but the smudge on the forehead is unnerving enough and may feel like an invasion of one's private space. It is meant to be as we hear the stark reminder: "Remember you are dust and to dust

you shall return." It is quite a reality check for someday people will be reading our obituaries.

In this past year of the pandemic where nearly half-a-million Americans who have died there is the feeling that the

whole year was one big "Ash Wednesday". On the news we heard constant reminders of human frailty and death. There are other comparisons to Ash Wednesday and Lent from this troubling year. If one has been exposed to a person with the COVID virus, a time of quarantine was mandated. The season of Lent, 40 days excluding Sundays, was at one time referred to as a period of quarantine, a time of fasting and prayer as part of the healing prescription of repentance. Today when you go to see your doctor a standard entrance procedure is to have

your temperature with an electronic gun-shaped device pointed at your forehead. Ash Wednesday is like having our temperatures checked. The smudge on your forehead gives a troubling reading—we are going to die someday. This should make us all think about our relationship with our gracious God and where we need to make amends in our lives. The ashes are in a shape of a rugged cross lifting us up with hope. Jesus entered this sin filled world not to condemn, but to seek and save the lost. The apostle Paul wrote Jesus became sin for us so that we may become the righteousness of God. Righteousness means God is faithful by sending us Jesus meaning we are marked for reconciliation and not rejection.

Throughout the season of pandemic we have been taught mitigations proven to stop the spread of the virus. Surely you know them by now: wear a mask, social distancing, and hand washing. The season of Lent began with a gospel reading from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount which amount to three faith practices that act as mitigations against the spread of attitudes of indifference toward faith and the Word of God. The first Jesus' mentioned was giving alms, a translation of a word in the original language that means deeds of mercy. Often this takes the form of money donated to local charities dealing with hunger. According to stats from the ELCA more than 40 million Americans are unsure about whether they will have enough food for the next day. Food pantries are quite busy and we are thankful for all the volunteers who staff such life-saving work.

As we know deeds of kindness do not necessarily involve cash. Lent is a good time to love your neighbor. Do you know someone who is grieving and needs a sympathy card with words other than the Hallmark authors. Your personal word of comfort written in your own hand will offer comfort. It is time to think creatively of offering ourselves as 'living sacrifices' for the sake of others. Pray for the Holy Spirit's direction saying "Come Holy Spirit, show me a way to lift someone's spirits, to encourage one who is downcast, and even share my faith with a friend who needs a gently witness of God's great love for him or her.

Speaking of prayer, this was a key mitigation against succumbing to despair. When Jesus encouraged prayer he stated it is not a matter of right words, technical form, or the praise of others. Since God already knows what you need before you ask this grants the liberty of understanding prayer not as a spiritual ATM ("all to me"). Jesus recommended privacy for your personal prayer. Whenever you pray, Jesus said, be sure to shut the door. Enjoy the freeing gift of casting all your concerns on God knowing that God cares for you. This has been proved by Jesus who often looked upon people with compassion, well aware of their sense of being lost and harassed. We pray in Jesus' name, trusting the Good Shepherd to guide us to the Heavenly Father's heart of mercy and grace.

The third mitigation to prevent faith-loss is fasting. Be aware, fasting is to prevent faith-loss and is not a plan for weight loss. It is common to hear of people "giving up" something for Lent.

Personally I have never been good with fasting. I am okay with deeds of mercy and prayer, but fasting is tough. I could do with a good fasting regime for weight loss but again Jesus was not talking about dieting but encouraging us to step back from our usual routines and remember with thanksgiving our gracious God who provides all we need, and all the world would be clothed and fed properly if we would listen to Jesus. The prophet Isaiah had another insight about fasting. Isaiah wrote the fast God chooses is "to loose the bonds of injustice...to let the oppressed go free....share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your home. When you see the naked, to cover them and not hide yourself from your own kin." Isaiah and Jesus both warned about fasting 'to serve your own interests' as if to seek human praise. Isaiah pondered how people can fast and look humble but still "strike with a wicked fist, quarrel and fight". We need the fast the prophet Isaiah mentioned in our country today when we seem so divided and some are even talking about taking up arms against those they do not agree politically or socially. The ELCA has a "Forty Days of Giving Calendar" you can download from the ELCA (Forty Days of Giving) and I like what it says about prayer and fasting. The calendar reads for Lent: "On this day of prayer and fasting I will clothe myself in kindness and let go of hatred. On this day of prayer and fasting I will clothe myself in humility and let go of pride. On this day of prayer and fasting

I will clothe myself in meekness and let go of arrogance". All I can say is "Amen, Help me Lord to be so clothed!"

I looked out the window and I saw a squirrel nibbling on a slice of old bread I had put out for the deer. Suddenly it took up the whole slice and I wish I had a photo of this critter with bread in its tiny mouth. Then the squirrel started hopping around with the bread in its mouth. It started to climb up the tree slowly and stopping occasionally to make sure it was holding on to the slice of bread. I don't know where the squirrel was going, but it sure was determined to hang on to the bread. Hear the parable of the squirrel! Jesus is our Bread, the Bread of Life. In times of a pandemic hold on to the Bread of Life who gives the nourishment of hope. In this time of Lent and the call to repent hold on to the Bread of Life who gives the nourishment to repent through the vitamin power of the forgiveness of sins. When you see your neighbor in need, reach out to comfort and help; when you are estranged from someone, reach out with the hand of reconciliation for the Bread of Life ever nourishes us with the power to love one another. May this Lenten season guide you to the cross and Jesus' gift of salvation. Remember the grace of your baptism where you were marked with a cross, a mark that cannot be canceled or erased since it is the indelible mark of the good news that we are the children of God, marked with the cross for death to sin and forgiveness of sins, and also raised with Jesus for newness of life through the grace of the Holy Spirit.



*“May the God of hope
fill you with all joy and peace
in believing,
so that you may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit.”
~Romans 15:13*

Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod,

There is a scene from the movie, *The Shawshank Redemption* where the protagonist, Andy, is convicted of a crime he did not commit. He spends some 30 years in a dreadful prison until finally he escapes to begin a new life in a little ocean side village in Mexico. He sends a letter to his inmate friend, Red, and invites him to join him after Red is paroled from his own lifetime sentence for a regrettable crime he committed in his youth.

As we watch Red ride a bus towards Mexico, we hear his voice say, “I find I am so excited I can hardly keep a thought in my head. I hope I can make it across the border. I hope to see my friend and shake his hand. I hope the Pacific is as blue as it has been in my dreams. I hope.”

Hope is a powerful force. It pulls us forward through the present as we reach for a different future. It was hope that made Andy’s and Red’s prison time more bearable. And it is hope for so much that pulls us forward from our present circumstances toward a future that promises:

- an end to the pandemic.
- gathering around tables with coffee-filled cups and bakery in hand.
- laughter and conversation once again filling fellowship halls, restaurants, and living rooms.
- voices raised in songs of praise, in harmony, with great gusto.
- ministry without masks.

I can hardly wait!

I Corinthians 13:13 proclaims, “And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

The greatest of these IS love. But this year, in the year of our Lord 2021, our theme will focus on HOPE. Make no mistake, we need love and faith too. But right now, we *really* need HOPE.

As I write this, the inauguration looms large. Plans for armed and potentially violent demonstrations outside each state’s capitol building are being reported, and the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff has issued a public reminder to all military branches of their oath to defend the Constitution. It is more than a little unsettling that they felt such a reminder was necessary.

By the time you read this, whatever happens next week and before the end of January will be in the past. We all will have watched the news, heard the reports, and prayed over what right now has not happened yet.

And still, whatever is going to happen, does not change what we have always proclaimed to be true, that our hope is in the Lord Jesus Christ. What that means for our present circumstances has taken on more urgency. The more we feel the chaos and uncertainty of our present, the more we reach for that which is true and solid and constant.

I hope we find a way towards healing, in our congregations and in our nation. I hope as people of faith we have a witness that is authentic to the gospel message of Jesus. I hope our congregations and pastoral leaders can hold on a little longer. I hope. I hope.

*“O God our help in ages past
Our hope for years to come
Our shelter from the stormy blast
And our eternal home.”*

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.

Yours in Christ,
Bishop Katherine Finegan

From the President...

As we enter this season of Lent, we are reminded of everything that we should be grateful for. I am especially grateful for the wonderful family of Faith that supports our efforts to remain open and to provide a service to our community. Thank you!

We have used our rental money this past month to support the Tri County Council on Domestic Violence, NATH (homeless shelter), and Syndeo (foster parent initiative). We accept suggestions from you for future donations.

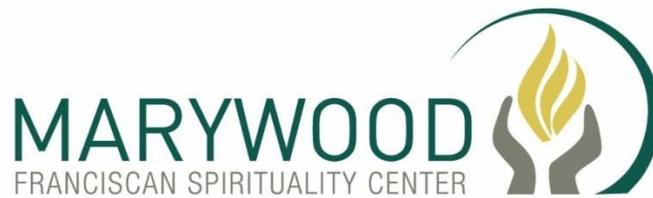
We have purchased and mailed Lenten devotional booklets to members that were not in attendance on Ash Wednesday. We hope they will inspire you!

There is now a donation button on our website that makes it easy to donate. You should have received an email about this. If not, go to our website and check it out.

We look forward to warmer weather and better attendance as we march through Lent on our journey toward Easter!

Blessings,
Marge Anderson





Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center was featured in the Catholic Herald (out of Superior, Wisconsin) in a special retreat issue. The article includes some ecumenical efforts from our very own Rev. Grant Van Lishout! It's a show-and-tell to give a better idea of the ministry to which the Northern Great Lakes Synod has called Pastor Grant. Please enjoy the article ! <https://eedition.superiorcatholicherald.org/Diocese-of-Superior-Catholic-Herald-02042021-e-Edition/1/#>

A Lenten Prayer

From Catholic Relief Service - Rice Bowl

<https://www.crsricebowl.org/>

O Lord,

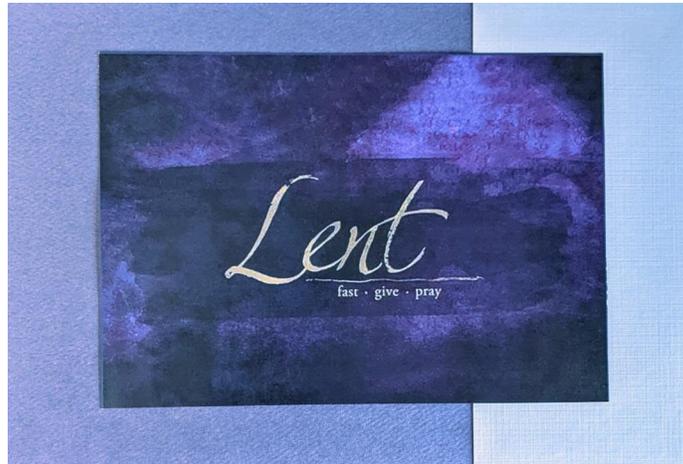
*In my prayer, make me a hungry child
that I may know solidarity with the poor.*

*In my fast, make me an empty bowl
that you may fill the hollow space with love.*

*In my alms-giving, make me a grain of rice
that in the company of others, my gifts may feed a starving world.*

We pray this in the name of your Son Jesus Christ.

AMEN.



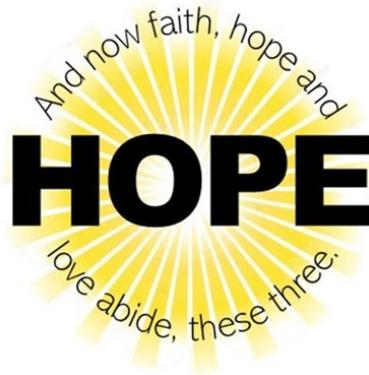
"Remember that Lent and Ash Wednesday are not just about putting away the bad things. It is more about creating good things and helping the poor and needy, being kind to people, and much more."-- Jacob Winters

What to give up ...

Complaining
Pessimism
Worry
Bitterness
Hatred
Negativity
Anger
Pettiness
Gloom
Jealousy
Gossip
Sin



What else can you add to this List?



Synod Assembly May 10-15, 2021

Mark your calendars and join us for a week full of opportunities for engagement, discussion, worship, and information, all with the theme of Hope. Here's a tentative overview of what to expect:

Monday, May 10

Pre-recorded Opening Worship

Tuesday, May 11

Workshops for the whole Synod

Wednesday, May 12

Workshops for the whole Synod

Thursday, May 13

Workshops for the whole Synod

Installation service live-stream

Friday, May 14

Social gathering online

Saturday, May 15

Business meeting (required for voting members)

Voting members will be required to complete orientation sessions online prior to Synod Assembly week. Stay tuned for more detailed information!

Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod,



The other day, right in the middle of a phone conversation, my office phone suddenly stopped working. I was incredibly irritated, and I yelled into my empty office how I felt about that phone. Several days later, I was snowshoeing, and my extendable walking pole contracted unexpectedly to about 14 inches, making it useless. Again, I found myself hurling verbal insults at an inanimate object. The snowy and peaceful silence of the wooded trail was shattered as I called my pole “stupid” and tried to forcibly manipulate it back to its appropriate length. But no matter how much I pulled and twisted and complained, it wouldn’t budge. Stupid thing.

With a vaccine being slowly rolled out, it feels like we should be in the homestretch of the pandemic. But the finish line seems to recede the closer we get. If you feel weary and irritable, with no patience for even the smallest inconvenience, you are not alone. We brace ourselves for the big things – loss and death, ongoing challenges to returning to what we miss, the need to be supportive to loved ones, but the little things...they can send us over the edge. Perhaps you too have experienced an adult temper tantrum over something that, pre-pandemic, would have been more manageable. These days, our skin is thinner and our emotions nearer the surface. Criticism that would have bounced off the armor of personal confidence now cuts deep. We have no reserve, no wherewithal, no room in a psyche already full to overflowing to cope rationally with one more thing.

In a presentation about what it takes to be resilient, I learned the number one thing was being realistic. So, let’s be realistic. This is hard. We want to be done. We want to hug and sing and gather around the family table with loved ones we haven’t had supper with in over a year. All in good time. The day will come. We just need to wait a ...little...bit...longer. Some months at least.

So, we wait. We wait for our well to be filled, our strength to be renewed, our spirits to be refreshed. I have found that laughter helps...and play. But most of all, I have found that acknowledging the feelings of weariness, naming that I am tired of waiting, and then extending grace to myself and others, goes a long way to getting past it.

The prophet Isaiah has something to say about waiting.

*But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.
~Isaiah 40:31*

Wait with me. Wait for the Lord. Wait for new life, for forward movement, for a fainting spirit to rise up on wings. God is with you, and God is at work; creating vaccines, supporting health care workers,

helping leaders think through the details, and offering all of us the promise that with God’s help, our weariness will give way to new strength.

And in the meantime, find joy, in even the little things. It took two pliers, my husband, and a jar opener to get my pole back to its proper length. I’m ready for another snowshoe. If you hear someone yelling “stupid” in the woods, just ignore it.

Yours in Christ,
Bishop Katherine Finegan



Word of the Day

“Faith cannot be taught by any method of instruction; we can only teach religion...Faith, therefore, and not religion, must become the concern of Christian education...experienced faith, therefore, results from our interactions with other faithing selves.”

~ John Westerhoff, from “Will Our Children Have Faith?” 1976



ANNOUNCEMENTS



FACEBOOK

It's true! Faith Lutheran Church now has a Facebook page. "Like" us at <http://www.facebook.com/faith3lakes/> and watch the page for updates about what's happening in the life of our faith community.



PRAYER SHAWLS

To give comfort and peace. There is a tote of prayer shawls under the shelf when you walk in. If you know someone who is lonely and would use one, feel free to take one. Once wrapped around their shoulders it feels like a hug from Jesus and their friends.

LIVE-STREAMING

Did you know that when you're away, you can watch Pastor's sermon as it's delivered LIVE on Sunday morning? You can! Simply go to our church's website (<https://www.faihlutheran-threelakes.org/>) and click "Click here to watch live streaming during worship (Sundays at 9:00

am)" right on the front page. Just put in a name and hit "Enter Live Service". Streaming will start at the reading of the Gospel, which usually happens between 9:10 and 9:15, give or take a few minutes, so if nothing is happening yet when you start watching, just wait a few minutes. You can also watch a recording of many of Pastor's sermons on our website. Simply go to our church website, and go to "Worship" --> "Pastor's Sermons" and click on any sermon in the Archive of Recorded Sermons. It's that easy!

NEW! ONLINE GIVING

Now you can support our mission easier than ever with our new donation platform! You can visit

<https://secure.myvanco.com/YHQE/campaign/YN5F> and contribute securely online. Thank you for your continued support!

BAPTISMS WE REMEMBER THIS MONTH



It is Lent and we are on the journey to the cross. The journey is not easy, but we are not alone! Through our baptism, we are joined in our journey. We are joined by all of God's people of every time and every place. And we are joined by the Lord himself.

Remember your baptism during this season of Lent. And remember those who this month

celebrate their "Baptismal Birthday" – the day God claimed them to be his!

- 28th Gerriane Rawoens

Also remember: Connie Gensler, Chuck Radtke, Griffin Schroeder and Joyce Nykolayko

MONTHLY OFFERING AND ATTENDANCE

Year: 2021
Month: January
Number of Sundays: 5
Average Attendance: 9

JANUARY 2021	MONTH	YTD
Budget Income	\$ 3,304	\$ 34,418
Expenses	\$ 7,725	\$ 17,481
Net Income	- \$ 4,421	\$ 16,936

*** This will be provided on a quarterly basis



IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

THOSE STRUGGLING WITH ILLNESS, PAIN, LOSS OF HEALTH IN MIND, BODY, AND SPIRIT: Kyle Smith, Paul Kragh, Monte James, Rick Jacobson, Ollie DeMuth, Megan Schiller, Ann Woelfel, John and Connie Lyons, Donna Weiss and family, Dave Lederhaus, Sonia and John Dionne, and Sue Sorg.

Our armed forces including: David Bredesen, Kaley Ebann, Tyler Kaltenberg, Nick, Brandy and Nathan Lamal, Jamie Madl, Jared Malda, Jon Priem, Brandon Paulick, Charlie and Will Starke, Nicole Young, and Alex Brendemihl.

ALL THOSE WHO ARE ANXIOUS AND WORRIED ABOUT MANY THINGS

Our Church Ministries:

Congregational Care
Congregation Council
Board of Worship Life
Board of Outreach
Board of Trustees
Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center

Our partners in the gospel of Jesus Christ including:

St. Theresa's Roman Catholic Church
Three Lakes Evangelical Free Church
Union Congregational Church
Grace Lutheran Church

Our synod, the Northern Great Lakes Synod of the ELCA, and its congregations.

Our companion synod, the Eastern and Coastal Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, and its congregations.



STEWARDSHIP CALENDARS



February 2021

	2/7/21	2/14/21	2/17/21	2/21/21	2/28/21
Assisting Minister	---	---	---	---	---
Lay Reader	Jan Harris	Rob Peterson	Rhonda Buss	Marge Anderson	Jan Harris
Altar Guild	---	---	---	---	---
Greeters	Andersons	Andersons	Andersons	Andersons	Andersons
Music	Rhonda Buss	Rhonda Buss	Rhonda Buss	Dawn Gonitzke	Rhonda Buss
Video-streaming	---	---	---	---	---

March 2021

	3/7/21	3/14/21	3/21/21	3/28/21
Assisting Minister	---	---	---	---
Lay Reader	Rob Peterson	Marge Anderson	Jan Harris	Rhonda Buss
Altar Guild	---	---	---	---
Greeters	Andersons	Andersons	Andersons	Andersons
Music	Rhonda Buss	Rhonda Buss	Rhonda Buss	Rhonda Buss
Video-streaming	Marge Anderson	Marge Anderson	Marge Anderson	Marge Anderson

** If you cannot serve on your assigned day, please find a replacement, then notify the church office. **

March 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 9:00 am Holy Communion	8 Office Closed	9 10:00 am – 12:00 pm Pastor John’s Office Hours 1:00 pm Council Meeting	10	11	12	13
14 9:00 am Holy Communion	15 Office Closed	16 10:00 am – 12:00 pm Pastor John’s Office Hours	17	18	19	20
21 9:00 am Holy Communion	22 Office Closed	23 10:00 am – 12:00 pm Pastor John’s Office Hours	24	25	26	27
28 9:00 am Holy Communion <i>Palm Sunday</i> 	29 Office Closed	30 10:00 am – 12:00 pm Pastor John’s Office Hours	31			

Faith Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 436
Three Lakes, WI 54562

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

A member of the Northern Great Lakes Synod
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

P.O. Box 436
6995 U.S. Highway 45 South
Three Lakes, WI 54562

Church Office: 715-546-2770

Office Hours: 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Tuesday – Thursday (closed Monday and Friday)

WEEKLY WORSHIP

Sunday Morning – 9:00 am
Holy Communion

STAFF

Office Administrator: MaryBeth Koslowski
office6995@gmail.com

Interim Pastor: Rev. John Kuziej
pllc@frontier.com

Custodian: Debbie Hock

Organist: Rhonda Buss

VISIT US ON THE WEB

<https://www.faithlutheran-threelakes.org>

VISIT US ON FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/faith3lakes>



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