

Faith Lutheran Church
1187 C.R. 128
Fremont, OH 43420-9797

DECEMBER
2023

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2023 Church Council

President: Alexis Brickner **Vice-President:** Niki Wasserman

Secretary: Annie Gazdecki **Treasurer:** Cheryl Durnwald

Elders: Carol Trick, Becky Fox

Trustee: Ken Walker, Jr.

Deacon: Dave Ring

Endowment: Stan Moyer, Miranda Garlock, Phil Trick, Randy Koch, Larry Leow, Niki Wasserman, Pastor Tim Miller

The Messenger

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church
www.faithfremont.org



DECEMBER 2023

From the Pastor's Desk...

Greetings children of God.

“A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices”... I can think of no better way to describe the state of our world than this line from “O Holy Night;” we are a weary people. Coming from what feels like several years of constant uncertainty, tragic events, and division over countless issues, I see that many people, including myself, are tired. There’s a weariness that has set in with the burden of living in a broken world. But also, as the song states, there’s a hope we have as believers that leads us to rejoice in the midst of weariness. This hope is so much more than simply thinking about the better times that will come. It invades every corner of our lives, transforming us in the most beautiful way. And now, during this Advent season, is a fitting time to not only meditate on this hope that we are given, but also to unequivocally cling to it.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” —1 Peter 1:3–9...As I’ve been reflecting on the birth of Christ this season, I keep coming back to the truth of 1 Peter 1:3. Jesus was born as the hope of this world, and we also have experienced a birth, or a rebirth, to a living hope. As the verse states, this hope isn’t stagnant, but living. It’s not a feeling of excitement, but an expectation of an assured reality. This reality has struck me in a fresh way as I’ve been praying through what it looks like to exercise and apply it in our daily lives as believers. Just as we bear the name of the family we’re born into as children; we bear hope as a marker of our identity when we’re born into the family of Christ. And this hope that we have is living, indeed, it’s Jesus Christ himself. Because of this, we hope not as the world does, marked by wishful longing, but with the assurance that in Christ, every wrong will be made right, every broken thing will be restored, and that our final destination is eternal delight in the fullness of His presence. When

reflecting on hope, we need to recognize it as a position and a standing we're born to, instead of a circumstance we're simply yearning for. When we cling to hope, we're not clinging to an abstract concept, but to Jesus himself. And that's why we're able to rejoice amid weariness. When we're in seasons of weariness, it's the hope we've been given that tends to our tired souls and transforms how we see the world around us.

The reality is, we're not made blind to the troubles of this world, nor do we escape affliction when we become believers. We know that we'll still encounter brokenness and go through trials that can make it difficult to see beyond our current situation. Being born to hope calls us not to ignore the brokenness or simply bear down through trials, but to hold fast to Christ during it all. Hope calls us to remember that, there may be a storm or waves surrounding us, we trust in and are held by the One who calms both at the sound of his voice. Being born to a living hope gives us a new identity. We're no longer identified by our weariness or brokenness, but by our hope. And the living hope we're born to not only changes how we face trials, but also how we walk through daily life. Now born again, we have a new identity as agents of hope to the weary world around us. Others will see and wonder how we rejoice amid weariness, and we get to offer them our living hope. We offer, not wishful and positive thinking, but an assurance of what's to come through Christ. Our calling isn't to merely cling to hope and hide it away, but to participate in the hope we've been born to, by displaying it for others by living differently in the present. Our hope is to come, yes, but it's also already here because we are in Christ. We hold the paradox that the work was both finished through his birth, life, death, and resurrection and will be finished upon his return. Our living hope is behind us, before us and around us. And in this season of Advent, my prayer is that we'd learn, evermore, to cling to and participate in this hope we've been born to as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, our living hope, and await his return.¹

Pastor Tim

¹ <https://outreachmagazine.com/ideas/christmas/69863-rediscovering-the-living-hope-of-advent.html>

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS – NOVEMBER 21, 2023



- Thanksgiving/Christmas offerings split 3 ways between Alicia's Closet, The Missing Link and Pontifex.
- New council members are invited to the December council meeting at 6:30PM for dinner and a quick meeting.
- \$100 to be donated to the Sandusky County Fire Pups Program.



MOMENTS OF INCARNATION

The wonder of the infinite-personal God is displayed, more than anywhere else, in the Incarnation. Nothing can prepare us for the birth of God: a six-pound, four-ounce Jewish boy with dark brown curly hair born in the fall or winter of 5 B.C. in a shepherd's cave on the side of a hill in the city of Bethlehem in the Roman province of Judea in western Asia.

It is so particular it staggers the imagination. God found a parking spot, a specific place and time where his love would touch our world.

[Similarly,] prayer is a moment of incarnation — God with us. God involved in the details of my life.

—Paul E. Miller, *A Praying Life*



CHRISTIAN SYMBOL: ROSE — This flower, often shown as stylized artwork, is a symbol for Advent, the promise of the Messiah and Jesus' nativity. A white rose represents the Virgin Mary, and a red rose stands for martyrs. A wreath of roses symbolizes heavenly joy.



CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM – Sunday, December 17th, at the 8 a.m. service.

CHRISTMAS EVE MORNING WORSHIP will be at 9 a.m. only with Holy Communion.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES: There will be a 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Candlelight Service with Holy Communion. Offerings from these services and Thanksgiving offerings will be split 3 ways between Alicia’s Closet, The Missing Link and Pontifex. Please invite your family, friends and guests as we celebrate our Savior’s birth.

NEW YEAR’S EVE WORSHIP will be at 9 a.m. only with the celebration of Holy Communion.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED

Peter Stoner, a professor who wrote *Science Speaks*, asked students to help him determine the probability of one person fulfilling just eight of the hundreds of Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah. The result? By a conservative estimate, that number was 10 to the 17th power.

To put that in perspective, if you placed that many silver dollars across the entire state of Texas, they’d be 2 feet deep. “Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state,” Stoner wrote. “Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would’ve had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man.”

The professor concluded: “Any man who rejects Christ as the Son of God is rejecting a fact, proved perhaps more absolutely than any other fact in the world.”

Celebrate the Light

Bursting through December nights
that could be long and cold,
our Christmas lights bring warmth and joy
with colors soft or bold.

Cascading from the rooftops,
and from trees both small and tall,
the lights cry out, "We have good news!
We want to shout to all.

"You've seen the darkness earth can hold,
the sorrow, war and fear;
but God has sent his Son for all,
to show his Love is here.

"The darkness can't put out God's Light.
Christ's with us day by day,
illuminating paths so we
can follow in his way."

Light homes and streets and candles.
Make your world shine clear and bright.
God's love surrounds and blesses us.
Come, celebrate God's Light!

—Peggy Ferrell



2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES are available in the narthex. If you have not picked yours up yet, please do so.

CHURCH TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES AND THE F.L.C.W. PROGRAM BOOKLETS for 2024 are available in the narthex for you as well.

REMINDER... *When Sandusky County is under a Level 3 Snow Advisory the church will be closed. This includes Sunday services as well as all weekday events, meetings and activities for that day. If we are under a level 1 or 2 snow emergency, the church will be open and if it's on a day of worship, we will have worship.*

HERE ARE THE NEW GUIDING STATEMENTS - Faith Lutheran Church.



Core Values –

- F aithful fellowship
- A ffirming worship
- I ntentional service
- T ransformative growth
- H onoring tradition

Mission Statement – Equip all to become God’s agents of change in the world.

Vision Statement – A community freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor.

Tagline – Gather, Grow and Go

Narrative Paragraph – At Faith Lutheran Church, we honor tradition by immersing people into faithful fellowship, affirming worship, intentional service, and transformative growth, to equip all to become God’s agents of change in the world, so all may gather, grow and go, creating a community freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor.

2023 THE YEAR OF STORY

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8)



ALTAR GUILD:

A Big Thank You to Debbie Fahle and Bonnie Overmyer for giving special care to our Altar for the month of November. Your service is greatly appreciated.

December Altar Attendants are Annie, Allison, and Lauren Gazdecki.

I would like to Thank the Entire Altar Guild for taking time out of your busy schedules to prepare for communion and tidy up the Altar every Sunday. Faith Church has been truly blessed with a group of special ladies and your assistants (husbands and children) as well as our bread makers. Blessings to each of you and Thank You.

Ginger Walker - Altar Guild Chair

CEMETERY SEXTON NEEDED: To introduce myself, I am Tim Grabenstetter, Manager St Joseph- Calvary Cemetery in Fremont Ohio. I am reaching out to our local churches as I am requesting some help advertising by bulletin, newsletter, or verbal communication, that we are looking for an individual to become our next Cemetery Sexton. The present Sexton is retiring after 38 years of dedicated service. His retirement takes effect at the end of December.

To clear up some misunderstandings, it is the belief of many that the Sexton “performs the burial of an individual”. That is incorrect, the Sexton is charged with digging and preparing the gravesite for the burial vault company, then closing the grave once the burial takes place.

Furthermore, it is the belief of many that only catholic people are buried in St Joseph Cemetery; that notion is far from being factual, The St. Joseph Cemetery is open to people of all faiths.

Please visit us and see how nice a final resting place it is.

You will find more details concerning the requirements on the bulletin board in the coat room area.

CHRISTCARE NEWS - Beginning Saturday, January 6 we will begin a new study using the book *One Thousand Gifts* by best-selling author Ann Voskamp. In this present day, crazy world in which we find ourselves we'll see how this author will help us find joy in the midst of deadlines, debts, drama and our daily responsibilities. We will learn how to intentionally embrace a lifestyle of radical gratitude while we catch God in the moment. Come join us as we begin a new year, a year of joy and gratitude. See Noelle Leutenegger or call (419-307-1063). We can't wait to get started. **Sign up by December 10th** so materials can be ordered.

VALLEY VIEW HEALTH CAMPUS - During the past 2 ½ years a dedicated group of our Faith Family has been bringing Jesus to the folks living at Valley View and what a blessing this ministry has become. We sometimes wonder who experiences more blessings, those we spend time with or we ourselves. We see God in action in so many ways as we attend to the spiritual needs of his precious people here at this facility. Since we began this ministry we have grown, sometimes thinking as one of our regulars said, "We need a bigger space". One woman thanked more than once saying, "We are well taken care of physically here, but you bring us the spiritual care we so need and we so appreciate that". I don't recall her missing any of our weekly gatherings. Another person, with us for her very first visit recently was crying during most of our worship/Holy Communion time. Concerned, after the service we approached her with hugs, asking what was wrong. Through tears she shared, "Oh, these are happy tears. I don't know the last time I felt so loved and cared for". By then she wasn't the only one with tears streaming down their cheeks. So again, the question – Who is more blessed on those Monday mornings?

If this has touched your heart and feel God calling you to this ministry see Noelle Leutenegger or call (419-307-1063) Join us in this blessing. There are also other volunteer opportunities at Valley View – leading a special interest group, making one-on- visits with residents, reading to them, participating on trips. See Noelle for more information or call directly to Valley View and ask for the Life Enrichment Office. Blessings will be given as well as received. And please, always, include this ministry in your prayers. Blessings to all!



FELLOWSHIP & SERVICE SEW DAY

Come out and join the fun. We meet the first and third Thursdays of the month and begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. but come and leave whenever you wish. We work on quilts, health kits and sewing kits. Greeting cards are made and are available for purchase in the Lounge for a donation. Come join the fun!



PRAYER CHAIN IS AVAILABLE FOR YOU!

Please remember that we have a working prayer chain ready and waiting to pray for you or your loved ones in this difficult and unprecedented time of uncertainty. Our prayer warriors will lift you up in prayer to receive God's Blessings. To request prayer or to be a prayer warrior, please contact Barb Kocsis at 567-219-2603 or e-mail her at dbkocsis@gmail.com. Thanks.



PRAYER REQUESTS: Please contact the Church Office to include or continue an individual prayer request. Each prayer request will remain in the bulletin for 4 Sundays. At that time, you may contact the Office to continue. Thank you for your assistance.



NOISY OFFERING UPDATE –

“Change for Change” The Noisy Offering collected on November 19th, was \$114.27. The Noisy Offering is given so Children from our Companion Parish of Bumila Lutheran Church have the opportunity to attend school in the Mpwapwa Region. Thank you for your support of the children of our sister congregation in Bumila, Tanzania.

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN NEWS

PRAYER SISTERS FOR 2024 – You have the opportunity to be matched up with a prayer sister for 2024. Prayer sisters keep in touch with each other throughout the year. This can mean meeting for lunch or dinner, sending greeting cards, praying for each other regularly and anything else fun that you can think of to do together. **It really is quite rewarding!** If you would like to have a prayer sister please let Barb Kocsis, Carol Trick or Ginger Walker know before the end of this year. Thank you.

The next FLCW Board meeting will be January 8, 2024 at 7 p.m.

A CHRISTMAS CONCERT BY TERRA STATE CONCERT CHOIR will be hosted by Faith Lutheran Church on **Tuesday, December 5th, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.** We are asking for your help with providing cookies and brownies to be served after the event. There is a sign-up sheet on the Women's bulletin board in the coat room area. A free-will offering will be taken up to support the choir. Thank you very much and we hope to see you there for a festive evening of song and fellowship!

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTMAS DINNER – Esther Circle invites you to sign up for our Christmas Dinner at The Wall Street Pub & Grill on the Tiffin University Campus on **Tuesday, December 12th, at 6:15 p.m.** We will be ordering off the menu and those choices range from \$8 to \$17.00. They serve Appetizers, Flat Breads, Salads, Burgers, Entrees and Melts. There is a sign-up sheet on the Women's Bulletin Board. **Deadline to sign up is Sunday, December 3rd.** It is **open to everyone.** We hope to see you there!

CHECK IN AT FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH! Faith has WiFi for everyone to use – find Faith (guest) and the password is: welcometofaith Be sure to like the Facebook **Faith Lutheran Church - Fremont, Ohio** page and keep up to date with all of the latest happenings.

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT The Toledo Symphony Orchestra will perform a Community Christmas Concert at Grace Lutheran Church on **Friday, December 1st at 7:30 p.m.** in the church sanctuary. General Admission tickets will go on sale in the Grace church office beginning Monday, October 30 at 9:00 a.m. Ticket prices are: Adults \$10; Seniors (65 & over) \$8; Students (18 & under) \$5. Come enjoy a festive evening of music!

A flyer for a "Blue Christmas" event. The text is in blue and black. It includes the date "Sunday, December 10 4 PM" and the location "St. John's Lutheran Church Fremont, OH". There are two shiny, metallic bows, one blue and one silver, and a logo for "Lift" with a cross and the tagline "LIVING IN FAITH TOGETHER".

Blue Christmas
Sunday, December 10
4 PM
St. John's
Lutheran Church
Fremont, OH

BLUE CHRISTMAS - LIFT's Blue Christmas worship service offers an opportunity to celebrate the Christmas season, while at the same time recognizing the realities of grief, loss, and separation. This prayerful

and contemplative service will be on Sunday, December 10 at 4 p.m. at St. John's Lutheran Church (212 N. Clover) in Fremont.

SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS!! - Join us for this 1 ½ hour Grief Support Seminar which provides encouragement, support and tools to navigate the holidays. It will be held at St. John's Lutheran Parish House, 212 N. Clover St., Fremont on Sunday, November 19th, 5:30-7:00 p.m. Snacks & Beverages Provided. Please use our elevator entrance off of Wood St. to enter. This is a separate program from our weekly GriefShare.

A TASTE OF THE SEASON DINNER (5:30 P.M.) AND ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT (7:00 P.M.) – will be held at Trinity United Methodist Church, 204 N. Wayne St., Fremont on **Sunday, December 10th**. The Concert will feature the music of the Fremont Ross Choir along with our seasonal musical talents! Concert is free and open to the public (a good-will offering is taken and donated). Dinner tickets are \$16.00. For dinner reservations or questions call Terri at 419-332-8167. Deadline for reservations is December 3rd. For dinner menu, please see the flier on the bulletin board in the coat room area.

BREAKFAST IN BETHLEHEM



**December 9
9-11 AM
St. John's
Lutheran Church**

**Journey through the
Christmas story in this
carnival-like event,
complete with breakfast.**



BREAKFAST IN BETHLEHEM – In order to help children and families in our congregations and community better understand the story of Christmas, LIFT will be hosting Breakfast in Bethlehem on Saturday, December 9, from 9-11 AM at St. John's. This free event will feature storytelling, crafts, carnival-style games, prizes, and breakfast as we learn more about the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.

LIFT Advent Wednesdays



**December 6, 13, 20
Grace Lutheran Church
Dinner 5:00-6:30
Worship 6:30**



Come together on Wednesday evenings in Advent: December 6, 13, 20. Worship will be at 6:30 in the sanctuary of Grace Lutheran Church (705 W. State). Using Holden Evening Prayer, the theme will be “The

Glory of the Lord Shall Be Revealed,” using a resource from ELCA World Hunger. Each week, we will construct a family-friendly congregational liturgical art project. Dinner will be from 5:00-6:30.



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS - 2023

- 2-Dale Copley
- 3-Kathleen McClain
- 6-Dean Schneider
- 7-Ruth Ann Seibert, Connie Longanbach
- 8-Sandra Reed
- 10-Linda Stine
- 12-Jeff Buhrman
- 13-Nancy Krumnow
- 15-Gary Cooper, Debra DeMars, Rebecca Sterling
- 16-Miranda Garlock
- 18-Yvonne Vogel, Jackson Fought
- 19-Macie Riehl
- 25-Millie Fetterman
- 27-Tom Miarer
- 29-Larry Leow



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Dec. 23, 1988

Luis & Sharon Peña

35 years

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church

1187 CR 128 Fremont, OH 43420

Please call the church office if you need

Pastoral Care.

Church Office: 419-332-6820

Pastor Tim Miller

E-mail: pastortim.L.miller@gmail.com

Church E-mail: faithchurch@amplex.net

Website: www.faithfremont.org

Facebook: Faith Lutheran Church-Fremont, Ohio

Office Hours:

Pastor's schedule – Monday thru Thursday

Secretary's schedule – Tuesday thru Thursday

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.



September 10th thru May 25th, 2024

Worship 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

9:15 a.m. Fellowship Time and

Sunday School

Holy Communion Celebrated: Every Sunday

Newsletter Articles Due: 3rd Sunday of the Month

Core Values –

F aithful fellowship

A ffirming worship

I ntentional service

T ransformative growth

H onoring tradition