

Faith Lutheran News

Jesus Loves You

September, 2025 Page 1

Faith Lutheran Church

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Pastor Karen Johnson

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Office Hours:

Contact Pastor for an appointment

Tuesday and Wednesday

Church Council

President: Kathleen Walsh

Vice President: Wayne Earthman

Treasurer: Susi Lewis

Financial Secretary: Loretta
Soracco

Secretary: Carol Lagomarsino

Worship & Music: Kaarn Egge
Westerhoff

Property Chairperson:

KC Anderson

Newsletter Editor: Kaarn Egge
Westerhoff

Pastor's Message

"Jesus, looking at him, loved him..." (Mark 10:21)

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

When did church become something we go to? What would it mean for us to "be the church" and not just to go to church?

These are questions from a Zoom class offered by our synod recently that looked at practicing our faith in our daily lives, in the places where we naturally gather with others outside of church. The instructor didn't encourage us to "give testimony," or start a new ministry outside our walls, or even to invite people to church. Instead she invited us to ***incarnate God's love for all people, as Jesus did***, by listening deeply to others, loving them and serving them, and building community that becomes a safe place to explore questions and practices of spirituality and faith. She gave many examples of ways this could happen. I was intrigued; it is a whole different mindset toward evangelism, and I look forward to learning more and sharing with our council. Meanwhile, you might reflect on these questions: Who are the people that you get together with regularly? Where are the places that you naturally gather with others? What are hobbies or passions that you share with others? And could you begin to listen for the spiritual yearnings of those you connect with already? More to come....

Last winter, several of us took a class called "The People's Sermon," on preaching as a ministry of the whole congregation, and lately we have been putting some of what we learned into practice. Our weekly Bible study looks at the lessons for the coming Sunday, so that we might get more out of the readings and anticipate themes in the sermon. And recently we have had lay preachers in our worship when I have been on vacation – KC in May, Kaarn in July, and Rob in August. Preaching is **not easy**, and I ***so appreciate*** their willingness to step up to the pulpit and share their reflections and insights in a sermon. Thank you for your support for our lay preachers!

It has seemed pretty quiet around Faith this summer, but perhaps that's because I was away for vacations, online classes, and a one-day retreat. It feeds my soul to spend time with family, friends, and colleagues in ministry. How did you feed your soul this summer? Thank you for the time off, and thank you to everyone taking care of our flock in my absences. You each are a blessing of love and grace!

In Christ and his love,

Pastor Karen

Check out the Synod website: www.spselca.org for pictures of our synod's activities:



Deans' Retreat, August 19, in Sacramento

ELCA Elects a New Presiding Bishop

The ELCA held its triennial Churchwide Assembly July 28-August 2 in Phoenix. The Rev. Yehiel Curry, Bishop of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, was elected to a six-year term as Presiding Bishop of the ELCA. The Rev. Lucille "CeCee" Mills, Assistant to the Bishop in the North Carolina Synod, was elected to a six-year term as Secretary of the ELCA. Both Rev. Curry and Rev. Mills are Black, which is significant for "the whitest denomination in America," and both were ordained through the TEEM (Theological Education for Emerging Ministries) Program. We give thanks for Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and her twelve years of leadership in these challenging times, and we pray for the Spirit's presence and power to be with Presiding Bishop-elect Curry and Secretary-elect Mills as they step into leadership among us.

Sierra Pacific Synod sues Homeland Security

The Sierra Pacific Synod is one of several plaintiffs, including eleven other ELCA synods, in a civil suit filed in the Federal Court in Massachusetts against the Department of Homeland Security and Kristi Noem. This lawsuit was filed in response to the decision of the government to rescind the longstanding policy that respected the faithful practices of churches and considered them to be "sensitive locations" for ICE enforcement activities against undocumented people. Several pastors in our synod gave depositions attesting to the harm that this policy change as caused to their (mostly Latino) congregations and to their parishioners' ability to freely practice their religion, as even those with documentation and permanent status are fearful of being swept up because of their accents and skin color.

Pride in the Park – September 6

We will be joining with Open Door UCC (formerly First Congregational Church) at their booth for Murphys Pride in the Park, Saturday, Sept. 6, noon-5:00 PM. If you would like to sit at the booth for an hour to greet people, please let Pastor Karen know.

Save the Date – HarvestFest October 5

We expect that the annual multi-congregation HarvestFest Worship and Luncheon at Ironstone Vineyards will be on Sunday October 5. Watch for details to come!

Worship in September

We continue in the Time after Pentecost, the “long green season” of growing in faith and discipleship, with challenging teachings and parables from Jesus in the Gospel of Luke. This year the lesser festival of Holy Cross Day, September 14, falls on a Sunday, and we will observe that day with red paraments and reflecting on the “theology of the cross.”

Bible Study “**Pericope**” not “**periscope**”

Our Bible study continues as a “pericope” (*per-ih-cuh-pee*) study, looking at the lessons for the Sunday coming up. What do we notice in our readings? What do we wonder about? What delights us or concerns us? This kind of study helps us to get more out of the readings as we hear them on Sunday... and your insights could make it into the sermon, so that you will be part of the ministry of proclaiming the good news of God in Jesus Christ! You are invited to join anytime and be a part of this weekly dive into the scriptures. **Wednesdays at 3:00 PM** in the narthex.

Breakfast Fellowship – Tuesdays 8 AM

You are invited to gather with Faith folks for breakfast each week, **Tuesdays at 8 AM**, even-numbered days at **Grounds** and odd-numbered days at the **Murphys Hotel**. Hope to see you there for this time of food, fellowship, and faith. Check with Rob if you are coming for the first time, because occasionally the schedule changes.

Fill the Red Barrel September 7

The first Sunday of the month is designated as “Fill the Red Barrel” day. You are invited to bring in food for the Pantry’s red barrel in the narthex or make an extra monetary donation to Pantry (make checks to “Faith Lutheran Church” with “Murphys Food Pantry” in the memo.) Thank you for your generosity toward this ministry of caring for our community. Together we are making a difference!

“**Meal-in-a-Bag**” Program for Senior Center

We are invited to fill a bag with items for a sustainable “shelf food” meal. Please check the weekly announcements for the meal ingredients this month.

Interested in The Helping in Worship?

Our worship services have many opportunities for leadership and assistance; perhaps you would like to help. Especially needed are helpers for altar care (setting up communion), counting offerings, and providing fellowship. Training is available. If you are interested, please talk to Kaarn or Pastor. Thank you to those helping already, and to Kaarn Westerhoff for coordinating our worship helpers.

Worship Leaders Refresher and Training

Saturday, September 27, 11:00 AM.

Council meeting – Tuesday September 16, 3:00 PM, in the narthex.

Happy Birthday

September Birthdays			
Liz Gilbert	7 th	Kyle Johnson	12 th
October Birthdays			
Teresa Johnson	1 st	Song Croyle	21 st
Dave Johnson	3 rd	Sherry Rogers	23 rd
Andrea Schoen	5 th	Janet Skenfield	23 rd
Kathy Walsh	12 th	Gary Thomas	25 th
Allison Pry	18 th	Jason Burita	27 th
Al Armstrong	18 th	Charlene Peery	31 st
Susi Lewis	21 st		
October Anniversaries			
Kaarn and Rob Westerhoff	6 th	Ruth and Henry Ferguson	31 st



Sunday Date	September 7	September 14	September 21	September 28
Reader/Worship Assistant	Janet Skenfield	KC Anderson	Liz Gilbert	Robert Westerhoff
Altar Care	Annette Stout	Kathy Walsh	Carol Lagomarsino	KC Anderson
Counters	Kathleen Walsh and KC Anderson	Carol Lagomarsino	Rob and Kaarn Westerhoff	Kaarn Westerhoff and Carol Lagomarsino
Sunday Date	October 5	October 12	October 19	October 26
Reader/Worship Assistant		Janet Skenfield	KC Anderson	Robert Westerhoff
Altar Care		KC Anderson	Carol Lagomarsino	Annette Stout
Counters		Rob and Kaarn Westerhoff	Kathleen Walsh	Carol Lagomarsino and Kaarn Westerhoff

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
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*Do justice, love kindness, and
walk humbly with the Lord.
Micah 6:8*