

Winter 2023

Celebrating Our Faith Journey

A publication of Faith Journey Lutheran Church, West Fargo, ND

Good News for You and All People. . .

"Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which will be to all people." Thus spoke the angel of the Lord to shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night when Jesus was born. It's in Luke, chapter 2, verses 8 and following, and is a great tradition to read each Christmas Eve!

This particular angel of the Lord, sent to speak good news to the shepherds, went right to the heart of the matter. The angel did not use an "introduction." There was no, "this is what I'll tell you, then I'll tell you, and this is what I told you." No public speaking class concerns here (whew!). The angel of the LORD went right to the message: *do not be afraid, there's good news for you and for all people.*

Receiving an angelic visit struck fear into the shepherd's hearts, into the center of their beings. Seeing their reaction, the angel of the Lord spoke firstly to their fear, then delivered the content. Brilliant (of course, they're the Lord's angels, right?). *I know you're afraid, it's understandable, and we're not staying in fear.*

And – I love the word, "and." It's a great spiritual word. It conveys that two things can be true, even if they seem contradictory. The Gospel of Jesus, the message about him, his life, and his hope

for us, is about more than what we first feel, or think, or even believe. The gospel names where we are and brings us to where God would have us be.

I noticed something. The angel's words to the shepherds were, in the long run, meant to evoke everything *except fear*. Seems like their words were meant to throw amazement, trust, hope, and faith in God, right into the sweet spot of the shepherd's daily, real, life – the center of their beings, their hearts (where things life fear can reside). God goes right to the heart of the matter: *you might be afraid, I get it. And we're not staying in fear, there's so much at stake for your and others' good. We are on our way to faith.* Reading further in Luke's gospel, the shepherds moved from fear, they couldn't stop talking about their experience of the newborn Jesus!

Through these days of celebrating and recalling the birth of Jesus the Messiah, may our words – day to day – speak good news, joy, hope and faith - the heart of the matter – the Gospel – to all people. From fear to faith!

Bless you!

Pr. Rich



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Mission

- To Equip with faith relevant for 21st Century Life
- To Connect in real and relevant Relationships
- To Empower to serve the world in Jesus' name

Vision

So transformed by God's abundant grace, Faith Journey Lutheran Church rejoices together in Christ-centered life, love and service.



The Great Dechurching: What Do We Do Now?

A sobering statistic was presented at a recent Fargo Conference pastor's meeting. Of the 20 ELCA congregations in our conference all but 4 were declining in membership in 2020. Between 2020 and 2022 average attendance at worship, which has been the main indication of congregational vitality, has decreased 41%! 41% decrease in two years! Yikes! What was anticipated to be a 10-year decline has occurred in two years, no doubt due to the pandemic catalyst. So, here we are right in the middle of that trend.

The median congregation in the United States stands at 60 people, down from 137 two decades ago. Faith Journey, even though diminished from the number of participants we used to have, is still quite a bit larger than average. We still have a lot of faithful folks who are determined to carry on important ministry in our community.

A new book by Jim Davis and Michael Graham called "The Great Dechurching: Who's Leaving, Why Are They Going, and What Will It Take to Bring Them Back?" examines an enormous amount of data from interviews with people who have left church. The reasons that people, especially young people, have left the church are complex. It's a pervasive cultural shift.

Pastor Brad Skogen, Assistant to the Bishop of our Eastern North Dakota Synod, spoke to the interim pastors of our synod about the issue of grieving that loss brings. He suggested that we consider three simple questions.

1. **What have we lost?** Take a moment and think about that question as it applies to your experience of our congregation over the last few years. Name the losses one by one. They are real and they hurt.
2. **What do we still have?** Make a list of all the good things about our church that continue despite the losses.
3. (the most important question for us as we orient to the future) **What do we do now with what we still have?**

The authors of The Great Dechurching recommend that we Be Patient. The Great Dechurching didn't happen overnight and won't be reversed quickly. Congregations will need "relationship wisdom" and a "quiet, calm and curious demeanor" where leaders are quick to listen and slow to speak.

"The path forward," they write, "is not easy, but it is simple."

"The great dechurching could be the beginning of a new moment for churches, a moment marked less by aspiration to respectability and success, with less focus

on individuals aligning themselves with old American values and assumptions. We could be a witness to another way of life outside conventionally American measures of success. Churches could model better, truer sorts of communities, ones in which the hungry are fed, the weak are lifted up, and the proud are cast down. Such communities might not have the money, success, and influence that many American churches have so often pursued in recent years. But if such communities look less like those churches, they might also look more like the sorts of communities Jesus expected his followers to create."

The Holy Spirit is in charge of all of this transition so let's open our ears and eyes of faith and be willing to follow where we are led.

Pastor Steve



Editor's Note: This one's for the staff!





*Christmas
Worship
Schedule*

**Christmas Eve Carols
and Coffee**

**Sunday, December 24
10:00am**

(in place of regular worship services)

**Christmas Eve Worship
with Holy Communion
Sunday, December 24**

3:00pm — Worship

(2:30 Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long)

6:30pm — Worship

(6:00 Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long)

**Christmas Day Worship
Monday, December 25
10:00am**

Christmas Tree Challenge

Our mini-Christmas tree challenge has begun! The challenge will run through December 10th. If you would like to vote for your favorite tree, please place a dollar or two in your favorite tree's jar. Each tree is decorated by one of our ministry teams. *Sponsored by Community Impact Team*



X-tra Blessings Emphasis

Darrell Costain, Stewardship Chair

December is a time to reflect on our many blessings throughout the year with an "extra" gift to our church. The X-tra Blessing emphasis has been in our church for many years and last year our members gave over an "X-tra" \$70,000. As you read this article, over 20 individuals or families have pledged at least a \$1,000 donation to our church before year-end. Our goal this year is to raise an additional \$60,000. With these challenge gifts, we are already over a third of the way to this goal before the kickoff in early December.

If you'd like to give an "x-tra" gift, it can be very easy. Simply make an extra offering in the month of December. Your gift can be for any amount. Simply write "x-tra blessings" on the offering envelope or in the comment section of your check. You can also give electronically using the QR code or visit our website at www.growinfaith.org. In the drop down under Fund, you will find an option for an x-tra blessing gift.

We truly hope you have experienced an extra good year this year and that our church has been part of the year. Your church hopes we all have x-tra blessings to be thankful for.



Midweek Advent Worship—Wednesday, 6:30pm

November 29 Holden Evening Prayer

Hanging of the Greens following worship

December 6 Holden Evening Prayer

December 13 Holden Evening Prayer

December 20 Holden Evening Prayer—Prayer for Healing



Advent Donations for F5

The Community Impact Team is collecting items for F5 to help their organization and members with needs for this winter. Items will be collected November 26 through December 17. The requested items for donation each week are:

November 26: Winter Gloves and Hats for Men and Women

December 3: Shampoo, Conditioner, Body Wash and Deodorant for Men and Women

December 10: Towels: Kitchen, Bath and Hand

December 17: Laundry Soap and Blankets

GriefShare Resumes January

Bonnie Swanson, Caring Ministry Team

GriefShare is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences. You don't have to go through the grieving process alone.



GriefShare sessions will begin Saturday, January 6 and run through Saturday, March 30. GriefShare meets in the Conference Room (lower level across from Fellowship Hall) from 10am until 12 Noon each Saturday.

For more information, please contact Pastor Rich, 701.282.3309, Bonnie, 701.318.0949, or Darcy, 701.552.3881.



The Women of Faith Journey invite you to Christmas Coffee & Tea with dessert breads on Saturday, December 2, at 10am in the Fellowship Hall. Please join us for this time of Christmas meditation, fellowship, and music with Jane and Jolanda.

The program will be presented by Rev. Kim Adams, wife, mother of 5, and campus pastor at Crossroads Lutheran Campus Ministry at NDSU and Concordia College. In her free time, Kim enjoys spending time with family and friends, travel and a great cup of decaf coffee. One of their family mottos is *love wins*—which comes from Romans 8:38-39.

A free will offering will be accepted for Crossroads Lutheran Campus Ministry at NDSU.

Change in Offering Envelopes

With the change in our accounting software came a change in offering envelopes. Our new software does not carry envelope numbers over from year to year. For this reason, and because many are giving electronically or simply don't use their envelopes, and also due to the expense, the decision was made to discontinue mailing envelope packets to members. Going forward we will be using the white pew envelopes for all offerings.

If you have numbered offering envelopes at home, you are invited to use them until they are gone. When you are in need of additional envelopes, you may either pick up a packet of envelopes at the information desk or contact Heather in the church office to request a packet be sent to you. hreimer@growinfaith.org or 701.282.3309.

Care and Share Offerings

Thanks to your continued support of our Care and Share Fund, throughout 2023 we have been able to donate the following:

Assistance to Members	\$ 300
ShareHouse	350
<i>(donation matched on Giving Hearts Day)</i>	
Medical Mission Ecuador	1,406
FM Emergency Food Bank	650
West Fargo Eats	650
Central Cities Ministry	650
Rape & Abuse Crisis Center	650
Youthworks	650
WF Public Schools Backpack Program	650
Nexus-PATH Family Healing	650
Gladys Ray	700

Total Donations to Date \$7,306

November offerings were designated for Churches United for the Homeless. A check for the total November Care and Share offerings will be sent in December.

December offerings are designated for West Fargo Public Schools Milk Program.

Each Sunday Care and Share offerings may be placed in the offering plate on the stand in the center aisle as you go forward to receive communion.

White pew envelope:



Faith Journey Lutheran Church
a member congregation of the ELCA

127 2nd Ave E
West Fargo • ND • 58078

Offering Envelope

PLEASE INDICATE THE CATEGORY FOR YOUR OFFERING

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Fund \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Facility Enhancement \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Care and Share \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry Advancement \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noisy Offering \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship Enhancement \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Impact \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Caring Ministry \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rachel CT/Bible Camp \$ _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ \$ _____ | |

In Memory/Honor of: _____

Name: _____

You are also invited to use the offering envelopes located in the pews. When using the pew envelopes, please include your first and last name on the envelope to ensure your offering is recorded correctly.



**Christmas Blessings from the
pastors and staff of
Faith Journey!**

Pastor Steve, Pastor Rich
Carly, Jane, Heather, Jamie



The heart of our faith

Christianity affirms that at the heart of reality is a Heart, a loving Father who works through history for the salvation of his children. Man cannot save himself, for man is not the measure of all things and humanity is not God. Bound by the chains of his own sin and finiteness, man needs a Savior.

—Martin Luther King Jr.



The Perfect Christmas Gifts

Brenda Jo Gillund, Caring Ministry Team

Heaven's Christmas Gifts

Have you been searching for the perfect gift
And think you never will?
I suggest you take a look
This store may fit the bill.

It isn't found at a mall
Or at a big box store
These gifts can be found virtually
For family, friends, and more.

Just "Add To Cart" some PATIENCE
UNDERSTANDING, too
KINDNESS is for everyone
Some for me, and some for you.

STRENGTH and COURAGE come together
FAITH is the perfect thing
Choose carefully for WISDOM
Don't skimp on UNDERSTANDING.

There are some amazing deals
On JOY and LOVE and PRAISE
Look for specials on SONG
And unlimited amazing GRACE.

Prayer is always handy
Some are big and some are small
Don't forget SALVATION
One size will fit them all.

LOVE came down at Christmas
We remember every year
The greatest gift of all
To be shared with loved ones dear.

Now that your shopping is complete
And you are wondering how much you owe
Just look at the cost to you:

JESUS PAID THE PRICE A LONG,
LONG TIME AGO!

Based on Heaven's Grocery Store poem.

*Thank
You!*



Thank you to my church family for the great send off—closing, at least partially, a very special chapter of my life. I have had the pleasure of working with so many wonderful staff and members. A special thank you to LeAnne Dressel, Paula Kaufman and Sharon Schacher for planning and hosting the party. I have been truly blessed to be a part of the ministry of Faith Journey all these years. May God bless each and every one of you!

Ginnie



Our Church General Fund and the Faith Foundation . . . RMD—Your Required Minimum Distribution

Darrell Costain, Stewardship Chair

December has become our biggest giving month of the year for several reasons. Many of us are in our retirement years and the government requires us to take a minimum distribution from our tax-deferred retirement plans (RMD). By having our financial planner transfer funds directly from our IRA to a nonprofit institution like our church, it eliminates the need to report the distribution as income which results in not paying taxes on that gift. In many cases that can save over 20% in taxes. If you are at least age 70 and want to give a year end gift in 2023, please check on this option. Your Foundation also offers a ND State Tax credit option where donors can receive a 40% tax credit with a \$5,000 gift.

So many changes in staff. Who does what?

Carly is our full time business manager. She oversees all staff and volunteers and is the go to person for most needs, including scheduling meetings, events, baptisms, and weddings. She oversees the church finances, assists with stock transfers for donations, and much, much more!

Heather is Carly’s assistant. She enters donations, is responsible for accounts payable and maintaining our membership database which is no small task. She can answer any questions you have about your donations and make updates to your contact information as needed. Heather’s position is part time.

Jane works closely with the pastors in planning and preparation for worship and coordinating volunteers for worship services. She oversees the creation of the PowerPoints for worship services. She also plans special events, such as our recent Festival of Gratitude. Jane’s position is part time.

Ginnie is our publications volunteer, creating our weekly bulletin, announcement slides, ministry highlights, maintaining the online calendar, preparing congregational meeting packets, maintaining permanent records, updating the website, and coordinating the information desk. All announcements should be sent directly to Ginnie, gberge@growinfaith.org. Deadline is Mondays at 4pm.

Signe volunteers to assist Jane with the preparation of the worship PowerPoints.

Faith Foundation Hosts Workshops

The Faith Foundation hosted three fall workshops in November with discussions centering around the book “When Bad Things Happen to Good People”, by Harold S. Kushner. Workshops included a time of fellowship with coffee and treats, Bible study and a different guest speaker each week.




Thank you to our faithful Tuesday office volunteers! We appreciate all you do!!

Theresa Johnson
Signe Nystuen
Sharon Schacher

Piecemakers Seeking Supplies and Helpers

Eileen Lund

Piecemakers is a quilting group that meets in the Faith Journey Fellowship Hall on Wednesdays from 9am to 3pm.

This year quilts have been made and given to local charities—Churches United for the Homeless, New Life Center, Dorothy Day House, YWCA Shelter, PATH, Gladys Ray, Fraser and Salvation Army. Quilts were also given to Furniture Mission of the Red River Valley. We also make the baby quilts, and sometimes larger quilts, given to those who are baptized at Faith Journey Church.

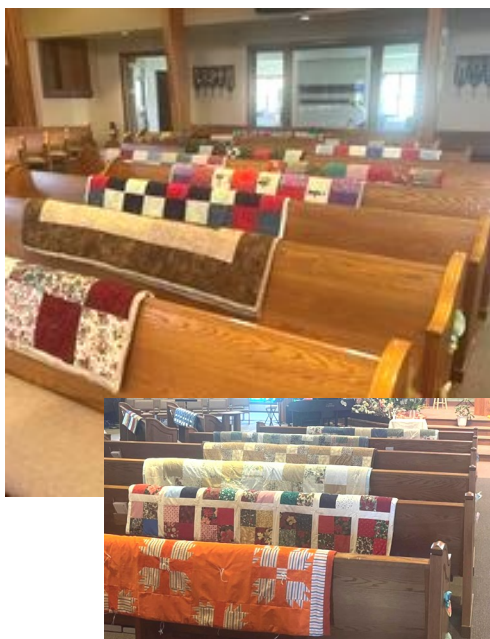
Current Needs

We are in need of twin size sheets—can be new or gently used—for the backing on the quilts. They can be left on the counter of the quilting cabinets in the Southwest corner of the Fellowship Hall. Also, we are in need of quilt tops which can be made at home if you are unable to join us. There is fabric in the quilt cabinets in the Fellowship Hall that can be used. The quilt top should measure 60"x80".

You're invited to join us for a whole day or part of a day on Wednesdays in the Fellowship Hall. No sewing skills are needed. If you can iron, thread a needle, tie a knot—we need you!

Come and enjoy coffee or tea and good conversation!

See you in church on Wednesday!



Piecemakers Raise \$3,600 for Church General Fund

The Spuds 'n Splits meal and silent auction held Sunday, November 5, was a huge success. Thank you to the Piecemakers for your planning, preparation and work for the event. Thank you to everyone who donated items for the silent auction and thank you for coming to enjoy the great food, fellowship and fun!

Proceeds in the amount of \$3,600 have been donated to the Church General Fund.



**Break the Winter Blues
Chili Cook-off
Sunday, January 28
Fellowship Hall**

**5:30 Fellowship
6:00 Meal**

Music, Games and Fellowship



A Huge Thank You to Our Lutefisk Supper Volunteers

Paula Kaufman

The Lutefisk and Meatball Supper has been a fellowship activity of our church for many years. Our last dinner was in 2019 and we were able to resume this event this year because of church members who volunteered to work or otherwise supported it.

Whether you donated money or butter, baked cookies (the cookies and home-made rømmegrøt make our dinner unique), came in Thursday and made cranberry relish, worked Saturday or Sunday, bought tickets or bought leftovers, thank you, thank you, thank you!

The job list for Saturday morning was pages long so you can imagine the total number of hours worked to get everything done. Amazing volunteers completed a task and then came looking for the next task to complete and cross off the list. One of the jobs was very repetitive (scooping and shaping about 5,000 meatballs) but made easier because of conversation and laughter.

Amazing volunteers in the afternoon, some working for the first time and others with many years of experience, and students from West Fargo High School Honor Society who do community volunteering helped serve. Most of them enjoyed eating after they were done and a few tried lutefisk! Supply table, coffee and water, managing bins of dirty dishes, running the dishwasher, filling serving bowls, filling takeout containers were some of the less visible jobs but critically important volunteer tasks.

We are so grateful to those who are willing to do the cooking, thanks Bev for the rømmegrøt, thanks to the Juven Crew from Sons of Norway for cooking the fish and to Neal who prepared everything else.

The "end of the supper" crew was tasked with the packaging of leftovers and cleaning up and putting away supplies. Leftover sales are an important part of this fundraiser and amazing volunteers efficiently packaged food away from the kitchen, which made cleanup easier. An uffda moment was when it was all done and a 50 pound box of lutefisk was found in the cooler that had to be cut and packaged. Those who were washing, scrubbing and putting away supplies had what, at times, looked to be an overwhelming job. After a bit the Fellowship Hall was looking good but the kitchen had stacks of things still needing to be washed and put away. Again, the amaz-

ing volunteers got it done while visiting and laughing.

This fundraiser was planned by the five women who make up the Women of Faith Journey Board, but the work was done by you, members of the congregation. An absolutely amazing group of volunteers. We are so grateful.

Answering questions about the dinner, the scheduling of help, the incredible volunteer reminders, announcements, the putting up and taking down, hauling out—thanks church staff for doing it all.

To all who contributed, your efforts raised \$3,400 for the church general fund.

And, as an extra blessing, the opportunity for fellowship was incredible. We sincerely hope you enjoyed your time volunteering.

Always the third Saturday in October. . .



Year End Giving

A Reminder: To receive credit in 2023, all donations must be received in the church office by December 31st. **If mailed, donations need to be postmarked no later than December 31st.**

If you are planning a transfer of stock before the end of the year, please contact Carly in the church office, 701.282.3309 or ctufte@growinfaith.org, as soon as possible.

Our Sponsored Children in Tanzania



Gibson Flaviana Fransisco



Saigoni Ally



Veronica Samson Samsoni

Faith Journey sponsors three children from Tanzania through World Vision. Our sponsorship ensures these children can receive an education, school supplies, uniforms, village birthday parties, and various classes with their families.

Please continue to pray for Gibson, Saigoni and Veronica. Noisy Offerings received cover all sponsorship fees and birthday gifts.

World Vision provides cards and other activities for our children throughout the year. We also receive

letters from the children.

Thank you to Jen Grund and the Community Impact Team for coordinating this sponsorship.

Each Sunday Noisy Offerings may be placed in the two metal containers located by the two side entrances in the back of the Worship Center.



SEASONAL DECORATIONS—Donations are appreciated to help cover the cost of seasonal decorations that adorn our worship area during the Christmas season and other times during the year. **Please return this form to the church office by Sunday, December 10.** **NOTE:** Forms received after the deadline will not be included in the Christmas bulletin insert.

*If donating through Pushpay or Square, please make your donation to **Worship Enhancement**, write your donation on the last line of the form and place the form in the offering plate or turn in to the church office.*



In Honor of: _____

In Memory of: _____

From: _____

Amount: \$ _____ Circle one: Check Cash Pushpay Square



A CHRIST-CENTERED CHRISTMAS ADVENT READING PLAN

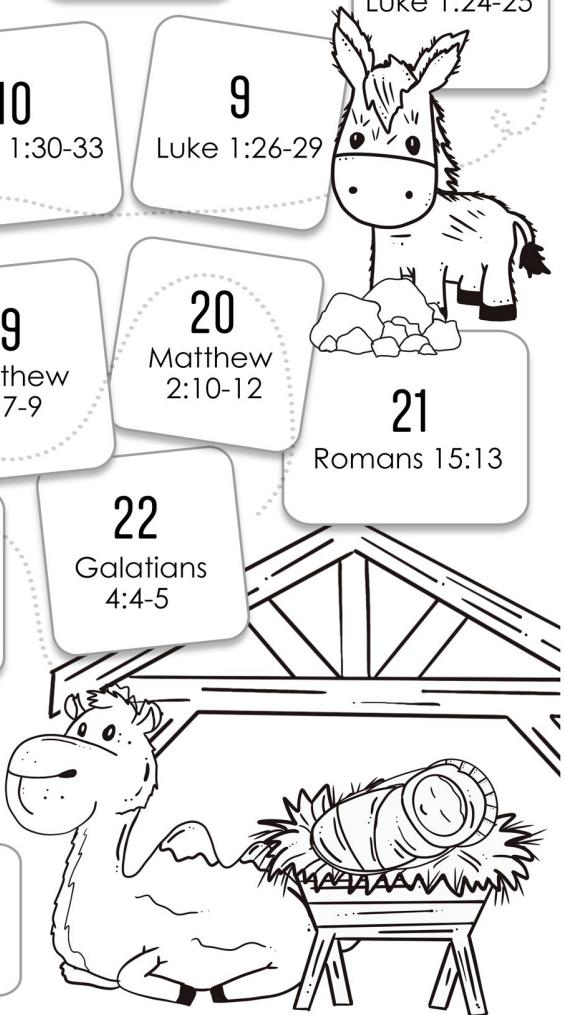


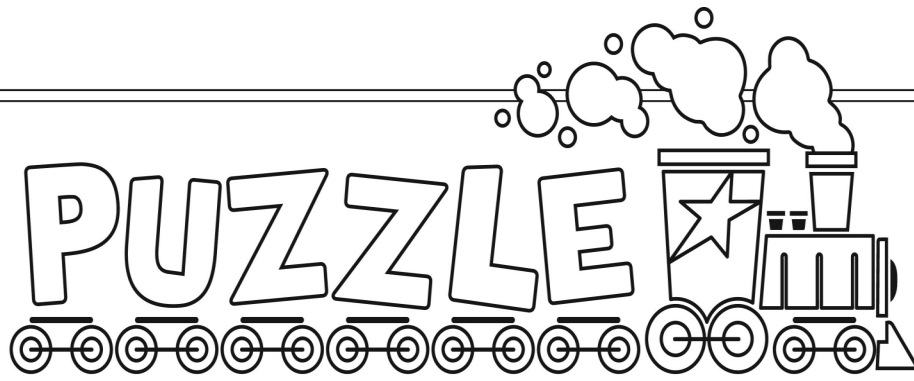
Explore the true meaning of Christmas as you travel through God's Word. Discover God's promises he fulfilled through the birth of His only Son, the **KING OF KINGS.**

1 Isaiah 7:14	2 Isaiah 9:6-7	3 Malachi 3:1	4 Micah 5:2-4	5 Luke 1:5-7	6 Luke 1:10-15	7 Luke 1:18-22
14 Luke 2:15-20	13 Luke 2:8-14	12 Luke 2:6-7	11 Luke 2:1-5	10 Luke 1:30-33	9 Luke 1:26-29	8 Luke 1:24-25
15 Matthew 1:18-21	16 Matthew 1:22-25	17 Matthew 2:1-3	18 Matthew 2:4-6	19 Matthew 2:7-9	20 Matthew 2:10-12	21 Romans 15:13



23 Philippians 2:8-11	22 Galatians 4:4-5
24 James 1:16-18	25 John 3:16





Seeking the story

Angels joyfully announced a special arrival in Bethlehem at Christmas.

Directions: Find the words listed below. Then unscramble the intersecting letters to complete Luke 2:11, NIV.



WORD BANK

- Shepherds
- Child
- Nazareth
- Census
- Baby
- David
- Mary
- Travel
- Town
- Register
- Born
- Night

T	B	W	Y	A	Z	K	E	S	H	N	G	D	J	K
Q	O	Y	A	P	R	A	L	B	F	P	I	C	Q	L
N	R	W	X	B	E	Y	R	M	B	D	M	O	E	E
S	N	O	N	W	G	A	I	B	A	C	D	O	T	D
R	G	X	J	F	I	W	M	V	B	R	R	C	E	O
P	S	C	E	N	S	U	S	H	Y	U	Y	F	P	N
O	T	P	I	G	T	Q	C	N	T	G	M	U	S	T
O	A	N	D	B	E	C	H	I	L	D	N	Z	F	A
A	T	B	A	U	R	W	H	G	F	V	A	B	U	M
T	R	A	V	E	L	J	C	H	V	O	Z	G	N	H
F	B	Q	I	W	D	X	P	T	E	N	A	O	L	Q
Z	C	R	D	Q	S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D	S	V
R	U	V	Y	K	N	I	R	T	K	G	E	Y	I	R
K	V	A	Z	X	L	S	H	Y	T	P	T	J	S	K
L	L	E	S	M	J	Z	L	Q	R	U	H	V	W	X

“Today in the town of David a _____
has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.”

LUKE 2:11, NIV



Share the good news of Jesus' birth in a creative way.



What you need:

- Newspaper
- Bible
- Smooth, clean stones
- Pencil
- Oil paint pens
- Adult help

What you do:

1. In a well-ventilated area, cover a work surface with newspaper.
2. Read Luke 2:1-20 and choose key people and places to draw.
3. In pencil, sketch one drawing on each stone.
4. Follow directions on paint pens to fill drawings with color. Let dry.
5. Hide stones for younger siblings to find, set out a new stone each day or order them in a row and tell the Nativity story.

December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>26 Christ the King Sunday First Sunday of Advent No Launch NOISY OFFERING 9:00am Worship with Holy Communion 11:00am Worship with Holy Communion 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #232</p>	<p>27 6:30pm Boy Scout Troop 213 8:00pm AA</p>	<p>28 9:30am Staff Meeting 5:15pm Churches United - Micah's Mission 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 232 6:30pm GriefShare</p>	<p>29 9:00am Piecemakers 6:30pm Midweek Advent Worship 7:30pm Hanging of the Greens following worship</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>1 Church Office Closed</p>	<p>2 10:00am Christmas Coffee and Tea</p>
<p>3 Advent CARE & SHARE OFFERING <i>Commissioning of Communion Deacons</i> Second Sunday of Advent <i>X-tra Blessings Emphasis</i> 9:00am Worship with Holy Communion 10:00am Launch Christmas Program Practice 11:00am Worship with Holy Communion 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #232</p>	<p>4 6:30pm Boy Scout Troop 213 8:00pm AA</p>	<p>5 9:30am Staff Meeting 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 232 6:30pm GriefShare</p>	<p>6 9:00am Piecemakers 2:00pm Pr. Rich - Chapel at St. Catherine's N 6:30pm Midweek Advent Worship</p>	<p>7 1:00pm Job Bible Study</p>	<p>8 Church Office Closed</p>	<p>9</p>
<p>10 NOISY OFFERING Third Sunday of Advent <i>X-tra Blessings Emphasis</i> 9:00am Worship with Holy Communion 10:00am Launch Christmas Program Practice 11:00am Worship with Holy Communion 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #232</p>	<p>11 6:30pm Boy Scout Troop 213 8:00pm AA</p>	<p>12 9:30am Staff Meeting 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 232</p>	<p>13 9:00am Piecemakers 6:30pm Midweek Advent Worship</p>	<p>14 7:00pm Compassionate Friends</p>	<p>15 Church Office Closed</p>	<p>16 9:30am Launch Christmas Program Practice</p>
<p>17 CARE & SHARE OFFERING Fourth Sunday of Advent ONE WORSHIP SERVICE ONLY <i>X-tra Blessings Emphasis</i> 9:30am Baptism Meeting - Smith 10:00am Baptism - Smith 10:00am Worship - Launch Christmas Program 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #232</p>	<p>18 5:30pm Church Council Meeting 6:30pm Boy Scout Troop 213 8:00pm AA</p>	<p>19 9:30am Staff Meeting 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 232</p>	<p>20 9:00am Piecemakers 6:30pm Midweek Advent Worship</p>	<p>21 First Day of Winter 1:00pm Job Bible Study</p>	<p>22 Church Office Closed</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>24 No Launch NO MORNING WORSHIP NOISY OFFERING <i>X-tra Blessings Emphasis</i> 10:00am Carols and Coffee 2:30pm Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long 3:00pm Christmas Eve Worship with Holy Communion 6:00pm Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long 6:30pm Christmas Eve Worship with Holy Communion</p>	<p>25 Christmas Day OFFICE CLOSED - Holiday 10:00am Christmas Day Worship 8:00pm AA</p>	<p>26 OFFICE CLOSED - Holiday 9:30am Staff Meeting 5:15pm Churches United - Micah's Mission 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 232</p>	<p>27 No Compass 9:00am Piecemakers</p>	<p>28 7:00am Kings Men at Deaner's Diner</p>	<p>29 Church Office Closed</p>	<p>30</p>
<p>31 First Sunday of Christmas No Launch <i>X-tra Blessings Emphasis</i> 9:00am Worship with Holy Communion 11:00am Worship with Holy Communion 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #232</p>	<p>1 New Year's Day OFFICE CLOSED - Holiday 6:30pm Boy Scout Troop 213 8:00pm AA</p>	<p>2 9:30am Staff Meeting 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 232</p>	<p>3 9:00am Piecemakers 7:00pm Compass</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5 Church Office Closed</p>	<p>6 Epiphany 10:00am GriefShare</p>

January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 First Sunday of Christmas No Launch <i>X-tra Blessings Emphasis</i> 9:00am Worship with Holy Communion 11:00am Worship with Holy Communion 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #232	1 New Year's Day OFFICE CLOSED - Holiday 6:30pm Boy Scout Troop 213 8:00pm AA	2 9:30am Staff Meeting 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 232	3 9:00am Piecemakers 7:00pm Compass	4	5 Church Office Closed	6 Epiphany 10:00am GriefShare
7 Baptism of Our Lord CARE & SHARE OFFERING <i>Commissioning of Communion Deacons</i> 9:00am Worship with Holy Communion 10:00am Launch Family Sunday School 11:00am Worship with Holy Communion 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #232	8 DEADLINE TO SUBMIT ANNUAL MEETING REPORTS 6:30pm Boy Scout Troop 213 8:00pm AA	9 9:30am Staff Meeting 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 232	10 9:00am Piecemakers 7:00pm Compass	11	12 Church Office Closed	13 10:00am GriefShare
14 NOISY OFFERING 9:00am Worship with Holy Communion 10:00am Launch Family Sunday School 11:00am Worship with Holy Communion 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #232	15 Martin L. King, Jr. Day OFFICE CLOSED - Holiday 5:30pm Church Council Meeting 6:30pm Boy Scout Troop 213 8:00pm AA	16 9:30am Staff Meeting 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 232	17 9:00am Piecemakers 7:00pm Compass	18	19 Church Office Closed	20 10:00am GriefShare
21 CARE & SHARE OFFERING 9:00am Worship with Holy Communion 10:00am Launch Family Sunday School 11:00am Worship with Holy Communion 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #232	22 4:00pm Faith Foundation Meeting 6:30pm Boy Scout Troop 213 8:00pm AA	23 9:30am Staff Meeting 5:15pm Churches United - Micah's Mission 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 232	24 9:00am Piecemakers 7:00pm Compass	25 7:00am Kings Men at Deaner's Diner	26 Church Office Closed	27 10:00am GriefShare
28 NOISY OFFERING 9:00am Worship with Holy Communion 10:00am Launch Family Sunday School 11:00am Worship with Holy Communion 5:30pm Break the Winter Blues Chili Cook-off 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #232	29 6:30pm Boy Scout Troop 213 8:00pm AA	30 9:30am Staff Meeting 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 232	31 9:00am Piecemakers 7:00pm Compass	1	2 Church Office Closed Groundhog Day	3 10:00am GriefShare

"FOR WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE



**GATHERED
IN MY NAME,
THERE AM I AMONG THEM."**

MATTHEW 18:20, ESV

Regular Worship Schedule

Sundays
9am and 11am
Worship Center

Faith Formation

Launch Family Sunday School
Sundays, 10am
Fellowship Hall

Compass (Confirmation)
Wednesdays, 7pm
Worship Center



memorials & gifts *Thank you to all who have given a special donation to Faith Journey Lutheran Church in honor of a special occasion or in memory of a loved one.*



General Fund

In Memory of. . Kermit Olson from Kelly & Nancy Halvorson; Kenny Ostby from Willie and Sharon Schacher; Verlin Buechler from Jerry & Ellen Liddle; Deb Baumbach from Allan & Ginnie Berge; Rachel Coen-Tuff from Allan & Ginnie Berge; Verlin and Virginia Buechler from Allan & Ginnie Berge

In Honor of. . Paul & Diane Newburgh from Jerry & Ellen Liddle; Noreen Fischer's 90th Birthday from Mabel Pfeifle, Lyle & Judy Jabs, Tim & Kim Keller, David & Jenean Baumann, Allan & Ginnie Berge, Phyllis Olson; Katie Dressel's Birthday from Allan & Ginnie Berge; Ginnie Berge from Janice Kjesbo; Ginnie & Allan Berge from Jerry & Ellen Liddle

Ministry Advancement Fund

In Honor of. . Noreen Fischer's 90th Birthday from Mae Peppel

Rachel CT Bible Camp Fund

In Honor of. . Noreen Fischer's 90th Birthday from Fred & Paula Kaufman; Allan & Ginnie Berge from Fred & Paula Kaufman

Worship Enhancement Fund

In Honor of. . Noreen Fischer's 90th Birthday from Janice Kjesbo

Caring Ministry Fund

In Honor of. . Jenean Baumann from Elaine Martel

Care and Share Fund

In Memory of. . Paul Hyndman from Dianne Hyndman

Piecemakers

In Honor of. . Noreen Fischer's 90th Birthday from Judy Dallmann

Faith Foundation

In Honor of. . Noreen Fischer's 90th Birthday from Jerry & Ellen Liddle



Jul 29 Verlin Buechler
 Aug 28 Thomas Cota
 Sep 4 Whitney Rheault
 Sep 9 Cynthia Miller
 Oct 9 Edward Hongess
 Oct 22 Terry Lodoen
 Oct 24 Richard Belling
 Nov 5 Virginia Buechler
 Nov 15 Norbert Miller

Aug 20 Kinley Kristina Olson, daughter of Nolan Olson and Kari Kluth
 Sep 10 Julian Daniel Rinas, son of Kevin and Carlie Rinas
 Sep 17 Huck Jeffery Lahren, son of Dylan and Lacey Lahren
 Sep 24 Quinn Mae Trosen, daughter of Nathan and Gina Trosen
 Oct 29 Carter Dewayne Christensen, son of Michael and Danielle Struthers
 Oct 29 Ethan and Eugene Struthers, son of Michael and Danielle Struthers
 Nov 19 Brady James Corbit, son of Nicholas and Haley Corbit
 Nov 19 Walker Lane Davis, son of Jeremy and Megan Davis



Ten Youth Affirm Their Faith

The rite of confirmation was celebrated on Reformation Day, October 29, 2023. Ten young people were part of this year's confirmation class. Confirmands were: Ashton Dill, Shayla Erdmann, Chase Johnson, Trace Mattson, Paityn Olson, Hunter Rudolph, Zane Smith, Paige VanDyke, Sandra Wyum, Trent Zachariason

Each confirmand received the gift of a Bible donated by the Faith Foundation.

Congratulations and blessings to our newest confirmed members!

Thank you to their Small Group Guides (a three year commitment): Kari Dill, Terri VanDyke and Rachel Zachariason. Special thanks to Bella VanDyke, helper.



Picture taken at Confirmation Retreat. Missing: Shayla Erdmann, Hunter Rudolph and Zane Smith

The Bulletin Board



Ash Wednesday
February 14
Easter Sunday
March 31

Worship times to be determined.



CHURCH OFFICE
WILL BE CLOSED

The church office will be closed in observance of the following holidays:
 November 23—Thanksgiving
 December 25 & 26—Christmas
 January 1—New Year's Day
 January 15—Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
 February 19—Presidents' Day
 April 1—Easter Monday



Our Staff

The Rev. Steve Thompson
Intentional Interim Senior Pastor
sthompson@growinfaith.org

The Rev. Rich Kramer
Associate Pastor for Congregational Care and Discipleship
rkramer@growinfaith.org

Carly Tufte
Parish Business Manager
ctufte@growinfaith.org

Heather Reimer
Executive Asst. for Finance and HR
hreimer@growinfaith.org

Jane Whaley
Creative Worship Coordinator
jwhaley@growinfaith.org

Jamie Thompson
Contemporary Worship Coordinator

Worship Band
Josh Thompson, Mike Christl, Brent and Benny Gillund

Custodians
Terry Hansen, Danilo Martinez-Rivera

Advent Devotionals Available

ELCA Advent devotionals are available at the information desk.



March Newsletter Deadline



Articles for the Spring newsletter must be submitted by **Sunday, February 1, 2024.**

Please submit articles to Ginnie,
gberge@growinfaith.org



Congregational Meeting

January 2024 Annual Meeting

Date and time will be published in the bulletin.

Staff, Council and Teams deadline to submit reports: Monday, January 8

For More Information


Website: www.growinfaith.org
Instagram: [faithjourneyWF](https://www.instagram.com/faithjourneyWF)
Facebook: www.facebook.com/faithjourneyWF

Church Council Members

Sara Gaebe, President
 Trina Smaaladen, Treasurer
 Signe Nystuen, Secretary
 Jolanda Anderson
 Kari Chitty
 Ali Farstad
 Philip Gaebe
 Brenda Jo Gillund
 Susan Kaufman
 Keven Kercher
 Daniel Knudsvig

Pastor Steve
 Pastor Rich

CHURCH BUILDING SECURITY



For the security of everyone, the church building will remain locked except Sunday mornings and during scheduled activities. For admittance when locked, please ring the bell located above the mailbox to the right of the main (West) entrance or call the church office, 701.282.3309. Thank you.

Ways to Support Faith Journey Lutheran Church:

- ◆ **Online**—<https://growinfaith.org/giving> => click on **GIVE NOW** and follow the online instructions
- ◆ **On Your Phone**—Text "**FJLCgive**" to 77977 click on the link provided and follow the instructions
- ◆ **Use the SQUARE**—A system in our Narthex (lobby) for credit or debit card transactions
- ◆ **By Mail**—Send your gift to the church business office, 127 2nd Ave E, West Fargo, ND 58078 Attn: Carly
- ◆ **QR Code**—Use your smart phone camera to scan this QR code
- ◆ Drop in the mailbox to the right of the main (West) entrance

Contact Carly, Business Manager,
ctufte@growinfaith.org or
701.282.3309 with questions.





Faith Journey Lutheran Church
a member congregation of the ELCA
127 2nd Ave E • West Fargo ND • 58078

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Please notify the church office if
you have a change of address.



**Worship
and
Launch Christmas Program
Sunday, December 17
10:00am
Worship Center**

ONE WORSHIP SERVICE ONLY

Fellowship following worship.



TO FULFILL WHAT THE LORD HAD SPOKEN BY THE PROPHET.

Matthew 1:22, ESV