

Spring 2024

Celebrating Our Faith Journey

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

An Attitude of Gratitude. . .

Editor's note: This article appeared in our Summer 2016 issue and was written by Adele Swenson who was a cherished member of our congregation and my newsletter mentor. I have taken some editorial privilege with regard to current staffing.

The Mayo Clinic is recognized world-wide for its medicine and for its organization. One finding of the Clinic is that it's good for our physical and mental health to be grateful each day. It causes measurable changes in the brain. Imagine that! It's not hard for us at Faith Journey to fill that moral prescription because we have so much to be grateful for.

We are grateful to stalwarts who rise to leadership on any project and stay steadfast in their compassion and commitment. . .especially to our children.

We are grateful to Pastor Steve taking on a complex role in a "process" we do not always understand.

We are grateful to Pastor Rich who has more and more become the "face" of our church. . .inimical to his true nature of modesty. We need to cherish both pastors.

We are grateful to those who share their professional musicality and grateful to our choir, bell choir, cantors and worship band who enhance our worship. Sweet sounds of praise!

We are grateful to our administrative staff who carry on through change that would drive many away. We need to cherish them.

We are grateful for our volunteers –

faith formation, administrative and custodial - filling in the gaps left by a cut in staff.

We are grateful for others who share God's love. . .council members, quilters, Women of Faith Journey, Kings Men, our ministry teams and more.

We are grateful for long-term members . . .sometimes second generation. . .for their adjustment to a new generation of believers with different needs. We cherish them.

We are grateful for our new members who have chosen us to fuel their spiritual needs. We need to cherish them.

The Mayo Clinic says it's important to our brain health and our physical health to feel grateful every day. We know a secret. . .it's also good for our souls!

grat·i·tude

[grat i tood]

noun

the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness

INSIDE this issue

- 2 Message from the Pastor
- 3 National Youth Gathering
- 4 Women's Night Out
- 4 Lent, Holy Week, Easter Schedule
- 5 Caring Ministry / Bible Camp
- 6 Columbarium Update / VBS
- 7 Letters from Tanzania Kids
- 8 Seasonal Decorations Form
- 9 Kids Page
- 10 Memorials and Faith Events
- 11 Bulletin Board
- 12 Summer Worship Schedule



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.



It's time for Faith Journey Lutheran to move toward completing the ministry profile that will help our synod staff find candidates for a call committee to consider for future

leadership. As I am preparing to guide that process, I am learning that there are different kinds of problems and challenges before us. Some are technical and some are adaptive.

Technical problems are those that can be addressed with existing resources and expertise. For example:

Our website desperately needs an overhaul!

Our constitution needs to be updated to bring it into line with how we are actually structured now.

We will have several issues to tackle as the old building comes down.

We have some issues with the maintenance of our building and property.

We need to assure that important pieces of ministry previously managed by paid staff, which have been cut, are covered somehow.

Adaptive challenges are more challenging. Examples of adaptive challenges would be:

Established ways of worship and faith formation are not speaking to younger generations and they are abandoning church. We are not sure what might work better.

Our congregational structure and business model of membership, pledging and volunteerism is breaking down and we are not sure what will replace it.

People in our congregation don't feel comfortable naming how they sense God's presence and activity in their lives. Many cannot identify their source of hope.

The technical problems are clear. We can simply decide to fix something or change it for the better. We

raise some money to buy some new piece of equipment. A new p.a. system was installed and some worn out carpet was replaced recently, for example.

Adaptive challenges have no easy answers. They require new learning and more discernment together.

Over the next several months we will be thinking a lot about our congregation's very reason for existing. We will examine our priorities. We will ask questions of our problems and challenges. Are they more technical or more adaptive?

For some things we will simply make a plan and do something (anyone want to serve on a constitution review committee?) 😊

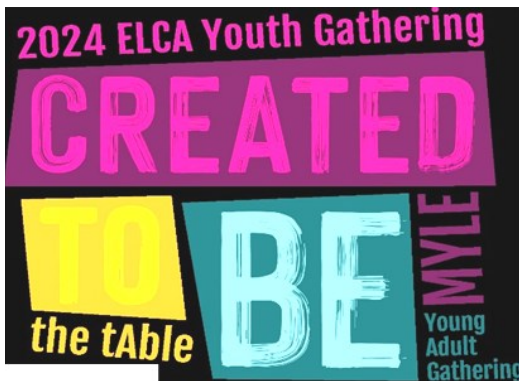
But what kind of challenges baffle us? These are the ones we might rather not face. When we begin with the question "We don't know how to...?" we are moving into the territory where we must pray for guidance by the Holy Spirit. The definition phase of innovation brings us to the question "HOW MIGHT WE...? How might we, LORD?"

God is faithful. If we are open to the movement of the Spirit, especially when we are led out of our comfort zone for the sake of the wellbeing of our neighbors, I believe that we will have opportunities to see God doing a delightful new thing. How might we?

Shalom, brothers and sisters,

Pastor Steve





Faith Journey Youth Will Attend National Youth Gathering in New Orleans

By Carly Tufte

As many of you know, some of our youth will be attending the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans this summer! This is one of Rachel’s responsibilities I have taken on, and have helped to organize.

We have 8 youth and 2 chaperones signed up to attend the Gathering. The attendees will be riding a bus to New Orleans. Travel arrangements were made by Camp Metigoshe staff. Congregations from our area traveling as part of the Camp Metigoshe group include:

Bread of Life from Minot, Peace Lutheran – Burlington, Faith Lutheran – Valley City, Our Saviors – Valley City, Trinity Lutheran – Valley City, and University Lutheran – Grand Forks. The bus will be picking our attendees up on July 13th and will start the journey to New Orleans, making some fun stops along the way. They will arrive in New Orleans in time for the gathering to start on July 16th and go through July 20th.

Fundraising efforts for the trip so far this year include bake sales, the “That’s My Pan” fundraiser, and food sales during Rally Sunday. As you can imagine, this has been quite an undertaking to get the funds together so that our youth can attend this fun event.

The Theme: “Created To Be” -

We have been created to be ourselves. Created by the Holy One. We are created to be in relationship with one another.

We are created to be brave, to show up with an open mind and heart, willing to be challenged. We are created to be authentic, to bring our whole selves and know that we are loved by our Creator. We are created to be free, to be transformed by the gospel. We are created to be disruptive, to work for justice for all our siblings. We are created to be disciples, to be sent out into the world to love our neighbor just as we are loved by God.

Throughout the gathering our youth will dive deep into justice, mental health and anti-racism conversations.

The goal of the gathering is to create environments and opportunities for faith formation through worship, interactive learning, Bible study, service and fellowship.

Please keep our youth in your prayers during this special journey and event.

ALTERED by the Spirit

By Ginnie Berge

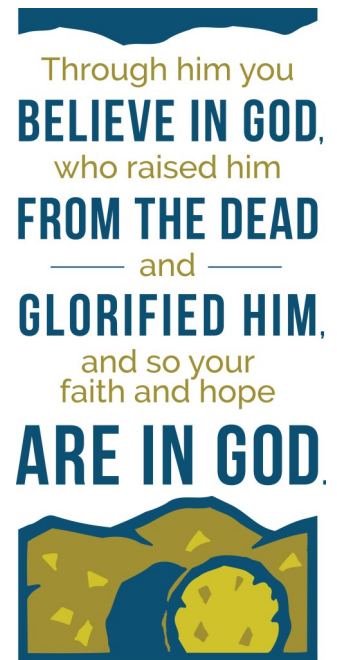
Through our Lenten theme this year—*Altered by the Spirit*—we’ll see the ways the Spirit alters our perspective, transforms our communities, and consistently blazes a trail ahead of us. We’ll find ourselves:

- ◆ Altered in witness
- ◆ Altered through God’s Creativity
- ◆ Altered on the Edge of Belonging
- ◆ Altered Alongside our enemies
- ◆ Altered by disruption
- ◆ Altered through Stories We don’t Trust
- ◆ Victory Altered



The Spirit is alive in, with, and under our ordinary lives, always calling us forward into transformation.

Plan to join us on this journey through Lent on Sundays and Wednesdays.



1 PETER 1:21, NIV



Women's Night Out
Friday, April 12, 6pm

By Paula Kaufman

Our Women's Night Out event will be Friday, April 12 at Faith Journey Lutheran Church, 127 2nd Ave E in West Fargo. The evening begins at 6:00 with a social in the narthex followed by dinner and a speaker.

This special meal is prepared and served by men of Faith Journey. **This year's Scandinavian themed menu is:**

- Agurksalat—Cucumber Salad with Onion and Tomato*
- Danish Smorrebrod with Dill Shrimp and Pickled Onion*
- Lefse*
- Norwegian Chicken in Gjetost Cheese Sauce*
- Swedish Hasselback Potatoes*
- Rodkal—Danish Red Cabbage*
- Mandelsmaken Kak—Norwegian Almond Cake*

Speaker is Chad Filley, Award-winning Author, Storyteller & Comedian.

Chad was confirmed at Faith in 1983 and from 1991-1994 was our first Youth Director. His presentation, Scandinavian Storytelling, is a combination of compelling and humorous stories of immigrants and their descendants as well as a few personal stories.

Tickets are \$20 and will be available at the church from 8:45 to noon on Sunday, March 17 and 24 and April 7 or from 9:00 to noon on Wednesday March 20 and 27. The net earnings will be given to the church general fund.

Guests are always welcome!



From time to time, candid photos of various church activities will be posted on our church website and social media. If you do not want photos of yourself or those of your children posted, please inform the church office. Please note - no photo of children will contain personally identifiable information.



Midweek Lenten Worship

Altered by the Spirit
Wednesdays at 6:30pm
February 21, 28 and
March 6, 13 and 20

Meal served by the youth from
5:30-6:15pm
Menu: Soups, Salad and
Great Harvest Bread



Palm Sunday Worship
Sunday, March 24
9am—Traditional
11am—Traditional

Kings Men Pancake Breakfast
 ~Gluten Free Available~
8am-12:30pm
Fellowship Hall



Easter Egg Hunt
Palm Sunday, March 24
Sponsored by
Caring Ministry Team

Maundy Thursday Worship
with Holy Communion
March 28, 6:30pm

Good Friday Worship
March 29, 6:30pm



Easter Sunday Worship
7am—Traditional
9am—Traditional
11am—Contemporary

Elder Abuse

Marlene Batterberry, Caring Ministry Team

Abuse happens to youth but is also common with our elderly population. Older adults can be seen by predators as easy prey. Friends and family members are encouraged to watch for potential signs of abuse. Four possible signs to observe are:



- Physical signs: bruises and broken bones. However, not all harm is visible. Poor Hygiene, decreased appetite or weight loss may also indicate mistreatment.
- Financial irregularities: Inability of a person to access their financial accounts or incurring sudden large expenses. Scams may be the reason, but money may also be taken or spent by a caregiver or family member.
- Unusual behavior with a caregiver or other individual. Has this behavior changed during your observation of the person when the caregiver or other person is present? The behavior may be distancing or overt friendliness and flirting.
- Emotional, social or cognitive changes. Aging individuals sometimes exhibit depression, anxiety and confusion but these could also be symptoms of abuse. Withdrawing from their usual social activities is a common sign.

As you observe loved ones, watch for these changes or others. If you become concerned about these observations, contact someone. A counselor, therapist, pastor or a member of the Caring Ministry Team may be able to help you.

Written with information from The Generations publication of The Forum.

GriefShare Thursdays, 6:30-8:30pm Conference Room



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.

Sessions will run from April 11 through June 27.

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

GriefShare: Loss of a Spouse Thursday, August 22 6:30-8:30pm Conference Room



Created to Be is the theme for this summer at Red Willow Bible Camp, Binford, ND. The Faith Formation Team has decided to have our campers attend Red Willow this summer.

Registration is now open for kids planning to go to Bible camp. Students and parents will choose the week that works the best for them. Small groups might want to plan to attend the same week.

Genesis is for kids entering grades 5-6

Disciples is for kids entering grades 7-9

Dates available for both Genesis and Disciples are:

June 9-14

July 28-August 2

August 11-16

All camp weeks start on Sunday and end on Friday.

We are asking parents to be responsible for driving their kids to and from camp with the option to car-pool, if desired. We no longer have staff to drive kids to camp, and this will also eliminate travel cost to the church.

There's a kind of sliding fee scale of cost for attending. Ability to pay the registration fee should never be a deciding factor in whether a child attends camp. Because of the generosity of our members in response to our annual Bible Camp Fundraising letter, scholarships are available from our Rachel CT Bible Camp Fund. Parents will be in charge of any additional fundraising efforts.

To register, visit:

office@redwillowbiblecamp.org

Red Willow Bible Camp
1651 Jacob Dr
Binford ND 58416

701.676.2681

Carly or Heather in the church office will be able to assist with any scholarship needs, 701.282.3309 or

ctufte@growinfaith.org

hreimer@growinfaith.org

An Update on Our Columbarium

By Darrell Costain

Plans are progressing on taking down our old church. In the process of doing this, our Columbarium will be repositioned within the courtyard. Here is an artist's rendering of what it will look like when completed.



We'll have opportunities for members to help support this move financially to make this a peaceful garden for loved ones to visit this area year-round.

If you have questions, feel free to call Darrell Costain at 701-730-4575.



Vacation Bible School

July 15-18
Monday-Thursday
1:00-4:00pm

Preschool
Through
Grade 5

Watch the bulletin
and social media
for additional info.

Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, March 24, 8am—12:30pm

Gluten Free Pancakes Available

Faith Journey Lutheran Church
Fellowship Hall
127 2nd Ave E, West Fargo
(West Entrance)

Free Will Offering

Proceeds used for a new security system for the church.

Sponsored by the Faith Journey Kings Men

Book that Date!

By Darrell Costain

Palm Sunday is on March 24 this year. Besides thinking of the obvious reason to think of that day, it's also the date the Kings Men hold their annual pancake feed.

This year we've expanded the hours to 8-12:30. That way those that worship at our 9 o'clock service can come early to enjoy breakfast. Also, this year we will be raising money to put a new security system in our church. It will be a wireless system that can be monitored from anywhere when the church is locked.

The pancake feed is a free will offering but remember, give until it feels good. It helps our church!



Wanted: Volunteers proficient with Word and/or Publisher to:

- ◆ Prepare weekly bulletin
- ◆ Prepare quarterly newsletter
- ◆ Prepare Constant Contact E-News
- ◆ Prepare weekly announcement slides and create video
- ◆ Prepare weekly Ministry Highlights slides and script
- ◆ Maintain church website
- ◆ Oversee information desk
- ◆ Prepare congregational meeting packets



If you are willing to be trained this summer to take over any of the above office duties currently covered by Ginnie, please contact her for details at gberge@growinfaith.org.

Greetings from Our Sponsored Children in Tanzania

By Jen Grund, Community Impact Team



Gibson Flaviana Francisco



Veronica Samson Samsoni



Saigoni Ally



Each of the three children from Tanzania Faith Journey sponsors through World Vision have sent us a greeting. (You will find the original letters posted on the whiteboard outside the Church Office-see picture to right.) Saigoni, Veronica, and Gibson are doing well. We hope you enjoy learning more about them from their letters! We also sent Easter cards to each of them.



Thank you all for your continued support in funding these sponsorships through noisy offering! Noisy offerings received cover monthly sponsorship fees which provide education, school supplies, uniforms, village birthday parties, and various classes with their families.

Please continue to keep Gibson, Saigoni, Veronica, and all children throughout the world in your prayers.

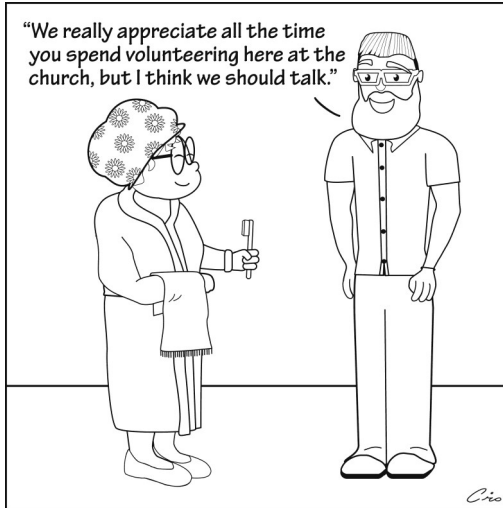
Each Sunday Noisy Offerings may be placed in the two metal containers located by the two side entrances in the back of the Worship Center. Children (and adults who wish to) are invited to drop their donations in the containers while offering is received during worship.



By Ginnie Berge

According to the Urban Institute's most recent data, Americans volunteer 8.8 **billion hours** annually. National Volunteer Week began—and continues to be—a national holiday that formalizes the recognition of volunteers in our communities.

National Volunteer Week is celebrated each year during Global Volunteer Month. National Volunteer Week, April 21-27, is about placing a spotlight on inspiring figures whose invaluable seeds of kindness through volunteering are **bettering our community and the world in general**. This significant celebration which was established in 1974 provides the perfect opportunity to say **thank you Faith Journey volunteers and those who volunteer in so many ways in our community!!**



SEASONAL DECORATIONS—Donations are appreciated to help cover the cost of seasonal decorations that adorn our worship area during the Easter season and other times during the year. **Please return this form to the church office by Sunday, March 17.** NOTE: Forms received after the deadline will not be included in the Easter bulletin insert.

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



In Honor of: _____

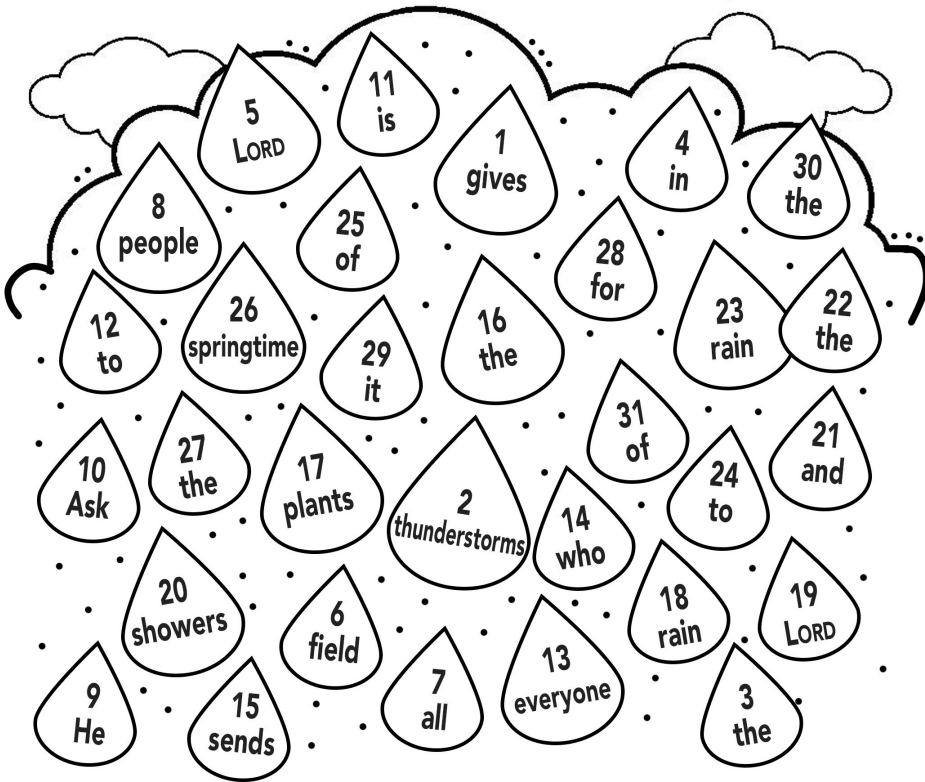
In Memory of: _____

From: _____

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

Puzzle!

Complete a Bible verse about spring by writing the word from each raindrop on the correct numbered line below.



_____ 10 _____ 16 _____ 5 _____ 28 _____ 18

_____ 4 _____ 22 _____ 26 _____ ;

_____ 29 _____ 11 _____ 3 _____ 19 _____ 14 _____ 15

_____ 27 _____ 2

_____ 9 _____ 1 _____ 20 _____ 31 _____ 23

_____ 12 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 21 _____ 17 _____ 25

_____ 30 _____ 6 _____ 24 _____ 13

Zechariah 10:1, NIV

Answer: Ask the LORD for rain in the springtime; it is the LORD who sends the thunderstorms. He gives showers of rain to all people, and plants of the field to everyone. Zechariah 10:1, NIV

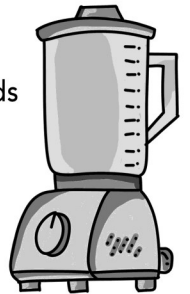
SOMETHING OLD,

Something New

Use scrap paper to fuel new growth and make a gift that keeps on giving.

What you need:

- Scrap paper
- Water
- Herb or flower seeds
- Blender
- Strainer
- Cookie sheet
- Towel
- Adult help



What you do:

1. Tear the scrap paper into strips and place in a bowl. Cover the paper with water and let it soak overnight.
2. Pour the mixture into a blender and blend about 10 seconds.
3. Strain and squeeze the paper pulp to remove excess water. Place in a bowl.
4. Sprinkle seeds over the pulp and mix to incorporate them into the pulp.
5. Shape the pulp into a flat layer on the cookie sheet. Use a towel to soak up excess water. Allow the paper to dry completely.
6. Tear paper into shapes or fold into a card. You can plant the paper directly into soil. Water it and then watch your plants grow!





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. . Virginia Buechler from Jerry and Ellen Liddle; John and Elizabeth Roth from James L. Roth; Anita Sackman from Rita Goodwill; Norbert Miller from Eileen Miller, Jerry and Ellen Liddle, Vince and Mabel Dalke, Norbert Mayer, Roger and Mary Jean Olson, Marcia Sheggerud, Lisa Udem, Darren Miller, John Brager, Scott and Aneta (Hoger) Miller, Jared and Katina (Sprenger) Miller and Jace, Dana Leopold, Barb Fraundorfer, Eleanor Tronnes Sorenson, Brent Montgomery, Walter and Eileen Dahl, Bob Jernberg, Mary Yahnke and family, Eileen Knutson, Stacey Dahl Voeller, Jewel and Jady, Tony Heinze, Terry and Betty Potter, Judy and Lyle Jabs, Steve Wingad, Margie (McClellan) Halstenson, Linda Isaacson, Darrell Lindemann, Flora and Bill West, Dregseth family, Gary and Sally Nelson, Vivian Kranzler, Elmo and Ardena Bentz, Bonnie Christl and family, Mike and Jenna McMahon, Loretta Lambrecht, Don Mayer, Harry and Connie McClellan, John and Corinna McClellan, Loren and Julia McClellan, Rueben Mayer; Carole Johnston, Amy, Mike, Jazmyn, Foster and Emmet Stevahn, Larry and Carol Olson, Esther Maier, Julia Halstenson, Donna Quam, Linda Ulland, Cenora Grivnor, Dave and Jenean Baumann, Marlys (Lang) Banks, Donna and Dana Gibbs; Marion Kostelecky (sister-in-law) from James Roth; Betty Pfeifle (aunt) from Tim and Peggy Buchholz; Allan Nelson from Sharon Nelson; Ida and Arnold Roth from James Roth; Eugene Christl from Cheryl Crowe; John and Peggy Swensen from Maren and Rich, Josh and Ben Kramer; Dortha and Otto Evenrud from James Roth; Anna and Lewis Kostelecky

Care and Share Fund

In Memory of. . Norbert Miller from Betty Hansen; Paul Hyndman from Dianne Hyndman

In Honor of. . Our Dear Pastors from Dianne Hyndman

Faith Foundation

In Memory of. . Mildred and Floyd Costain from Greg Falde and Rebecca Anderson-Falde

- Dec 17 Noah Grace Smith, daughter of Garrett and Danielle Smith
Dec 20 Lee Sage Goldade, daughter of Brianna Goldade
Jan 7 Oliver Derek Rice, son of Derek and Kayla Rice

~ ~ ~ ~ ~



- Jan 27 Burton "Burt" Borgerson
Feb 2 Nancy Brekke
Feb 2 Donald Solberg

~ ~ ~ ~ ~



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

The Bulletin Board



Congregational Meetings

Save these dates and plan to attend!

April 28, 2024
Following 11am worship
Worship Center

October 20, 2024
Following 11am worship
Worship Center

PLAN AHEAD

Rally Day—Sun, Sep 8
Lutefisk Supper—Sat, Oct 19

Family Celebration with Worship

Plan to join us this summer for an evening of worship, good music, fun family activities and amazing food.

Watch announcements for more information.

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, during office hours, call the church office at 701.282.3309. Thank you.



The church office will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

- Feb 19—Presidents' Day
- Apr 1—Easter Monday
- May 27—Memorial Day
- Jun 19—Juneteenth
- Jul 4—Independence Day

Fall Newsletter Deadline



Articles for the Fall newsletter must be submitted by **Thursday, August 1st.**

Please submit articles to Ginnie, gberge@growinfaith.org

For More Information

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



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 Tuft
Parish Business Manager
ctuft@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

Church Council Members

- Sara Gaebe, President
- Trina Smaaladen, Treasurer
- Signe Nystuen, Secretary
- Jolanda Anderson
- Kari Chitty
- Ali Farstad
- Brenda Jo Gillund
- Susan Kaufman
- Daniel Knudsvig
- Pastor Steve
- Pastor Rich

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, ctuft@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.



Summer Worship

Beginning Sunday, May 26

**Blended Worship
Sundays
10:00am**

(Memorial Day through Labor Day Weekends)