



# November



*take up the shield of faith*

Ephesians 6:16

November 2025 Newsletter

### Take Note...

Online giving now available on our website: [faithlutheranlittlefalls.org](http://faithlutheranlittlefalls.org)



**Faith's Core Values:**  
*Discipleship,  
Hospitality,  
Prayer,  
Service,  
Stewardship,  
Worship,  
and Unity*

*From Pastor Mark...*

## A Tradition Rooted In Faith

**“Give thanks in in all situations.”**

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Thanksgiving is a reminder of what unites us as a nation.

The story of the Pilgrims is an example of people who had a vision of living somewhere free from the fear of persecution. When the opportunity presented itself, after much soul searching and prayer, they left civilization to settle in the wilderness of a strange new land. The only certainty they had was their faith in the Living God.

After landing at Plymouth Rock, every day was a life and death struggle for survival. As devout Christians, they understood that they were not perfect. Depending on God's grace, they were willing to sacrifice and work towards a better future. 45 of the 102 immigrant Pilgrims died in their first winter in the new world. It was a traumatic, gut-wrenching, harsh, and unforgiving existence. But they kept praying and, by faith, worked to build a better life in the midst of loss caused by lack of shelter, sickness, and death. They were examples of joy in the midst of sorrow. Through the eye of faith, they recognized God's guiding hand in this imperfect, challenging world. By focusing on what God had provided, rather than what they had suffered and lost, the Thanksgiving tradition was born.

Have a blessed season of giving thanks all of God's grace and goodness.

In Christ,  
Pastor Mark

## President's Message

### Dear Faith Family,

Thank you so much for your thoughtful input during our recent focus groups. It was truly energizing to witness such meaningful conversations, creative brainstorming, and shared vision for the future of our church. Your participation and feedback through the 72 surveys we received were incredibly valuable and deeply appreciated.

### What We Heard

From the rich insights you provided, a few clear themes emerged:

- **Security** was the top area of concern, mentioned frequently and with heartfelt appreciation. Over and over, it was affirmed that our security team is doing a *fantastic* job. The question that followed was: *How can we support them to continue—and even elevate—their work?* We've reached out to our security team to better understand their needs moving forward.
- **Technology** came in as the second area where many expressed a desire for enhancements. Our systems are complex, and our dedicated tech team works tirelessly behind the scenes to keep things running smoothly. We've shared your priorities with them and will continue to explore ways to strengthen and simplify our tech experience.
- **Sanctuary, Narthex improvements, and Programming** followed closely behind. We're already making strides in this area with the introduction of the new sanctuary chairs. Looking ahead, refreshing the Narthex is something we can all dream about together. As for programming, we're seeing exciting momentum! From our summer campfire services to Rally Sunday and Tough Talks, and now heading into October with Trunk or Treat, the Fall Festival, and the Adults Saving Kids event—it's been a vibrant season. We're also thrilled to be planning our first Senior Lunch in November!
- **All other items will be reviewed at a later date**

### Looking Ahead

Survey responses reflected a wide range of views on the potential for a new sanctuary or an addition of some sort—some are ready to build now, others would prefer not to build at all. These differing perspectives are not a sign of division but of deep engagement and care. It's okay that we don't all see things the same way. In fact, it's healthy. There are many factors to consider and many opinions to be weighed. At the heart of it all is this truth: **we are one church, one body, united by one Savior**. Whether we remain in our current space or build something new now or in the future, our mission remains unchanged—**to love God, love people, and share the hope of the gospel**.

We also recognize an important challenge before us: the need for growth—both in attendance and in giving. But growth doesn't begin with walls; it begins with hearts. Hearts rekindled through prayer, worship, and the courage to invite others into our community.

### Let's Move Forward—Together

We will continue to explore what next step is best for Faith Lutheran. All voices are and will be heard. This is an exciting time here at Faith and we encourage all to keep the conversations going, and also continue to give towards Phase II. Now is the time to move forward as partners in vision. Let's commit to listening well, to seeking God's wisdom together, and to focusing on what unites us.

In Christ's love, Faye

## Worship & Prayer Team

The Worship & Prayer Team met for their quarterly meeting on Sunday, October 26th, 2025.

They discussed a few items including the Altar Guilds duties, ordering more Baptism Bowls and Worship Band concerns including the Worship and Prayer Team chair overseeing the schedule in Planning Center. There are a few upcoming events including the Thanksgiving Eve Worship service on Wednesday, November 26th at 7:00 p.m. The Congregational Life Team will be hosting the usual Thanksgiving Eve Pie Social following the worship service.

Christmas Eve is coming up fast as well. We will have the Christmas Eve Candlelight service at 4:00 p.m. The team also reviewed the 2025 budget and set the 2026 budget.

## Youth Director

Hello Youth Families,  
Thank you to all the youth that attended the Youth Fall Festival! It was a fun time of faith and fellowship.

As we welcome November and the Thanksgiving holiday, we are reminded to think about the blessings God has provided in our lives and be thankful. "And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." (Colossians 3:17)

We are also reminded to think of those less fortunate so we will be spending time throughout the month support Samaritan's Purse (Operation Christmas Child).

Our Youth will be packing Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes Wednesday, November 12 from 7 to 8 p.m. **If you would like to help pack some shoeboxes for children in need, you are welcome to join us!**

Operation Christmas Child Collection Week starts November 17th! Please consider filling a shoebox and dropping it off to the church so we can ship it to kids in need.

Blessings to All,  
Heather Byers

## Mission Statement

### *Know, Grow, Go*

- *Know* God and others
- *Grow* in Faith
- *Go* in Faith to Love and Serve the Lord



Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to **stand** your ground, and after you have done everything, **to stand**. **Stand** firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the **shield of faith**, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the **Word of God**. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

### **Ephesians 6:16**

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## Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Collection

Boxes now available!  
Collection will be November 17-24.  
(see calendar for collection times)



## Children's Team

The Sunday School year is off to a great start!!

Something new this year, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday we will gather together in the library and celebrate the birthdays of the month- before going to the Sunday School classrooms.

We are preparing for our Sunday School Christmas program that will be held during the Church Service on December 14.

If you would be willing to help out- we'd love to have you!!

Our **first practice** will be **after** the church **service on November 16**.

Hope to see you there!!

If you/ or your children are unable to be at practice on November 16- but would like to be a part of it, please contact Becky 320.360.4342 – call or text.

We also plan to practice on November 23 and December 7.

The program will be during the Service on December 14.

The Children's Team is excited to be a part of Operation Christmas Child.

We hope to have the children be a part of sharing Christ's love and joy throughout the world.

Once our plans are finalized we will send a note home from Sunday School.

We meet the first Sunday of the month at 8 a.m.— join us if you'd like to be a part of the children's activities.

ALWAYS remember—to be Grateful and Thankful--because **through Christ we are forever Blessed!**

The Children's Team

## Ministry Volunteer Coordinator Report

### Current/Upcoming Small Groups:

1. Women's Bible Study meets on Friday mornings at 9. They go over the sermon text for the upcoming Sunday.
2. Men's Bible Study on Wednesday mornings at 9. They go over the sermon text for the upcoming Sunday.
3. Mission quilters meet on Thursdays at 9am in the Narthex.
4. Dig Deep; a study on Christian Doctrine for Women. Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm at church.
5. Gospel of John, this is led by Blaine MacNeil. He is leading a comprehensive Bible Study on the Gospel of John. This takes place on Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm in the Faith Lutheran library.

The trunk-or-treat was amazing! There was a total of 292 participants/volunteers this year!

I would like to give a huge **Thank You** to all those that volunteered their time before, during and after to help things run smoothly! You are all so greatly appreciated!!

Also, thank you to everyone who helped spread the word to others and those that came to participate in the activities!! It was a beautiful day, and everyone had so much fun!! Can't wait for next year!!

There will be a craft day Saturday, November 8, 9am-4pm Bring a friend or several and a project to work on. Soup will be provided for lunch. Bring a dish to share to go with the soup. Hope to see you there!

Thank you to all those who have been available to assist with Sunday morning service. Just a reminder, online sign-up is available. To sign-up online, follow the link in the weekly 'Faith Happenings' email or scan the QR Code on the sign-up table in the gathering area at church.

We encourage everyone to text "Update" to 320-633-2057. This will help us to keep information updated in our system and we will be able to text important messages and reminders about events. After you text "Update" please follow the link in the text you receive and fill in your information. Thank you for taking time to do this!

Join us Wednesday, October 29 for fellowship and to hear from Pastor Al Erickson, director of Adults Saving Kids as he shares what we need to and can do to protect kids from human traffickers.

There will be a potluck at 6pm and the presentation will begin at 7pm.

If you are interested in being in or leading a small group, feel free to contact me, I would love to discuss options with you! My contact info is below.

If you are on the prayer chain, all you have to do is pray when you receive a prayer request! To join the email list, send an email to [secretaryfaithlutheran@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryfaithlutheran@gmail.com). To receive prayer requests by text message, text the word "Pray" to 320-633-2057.

### Upcoming events

**October 29:** Adults Saving Kids 6pm potluck 7pm presentation; see above for more details

**November 8:** Craft day 9am-4pm; see above for more details

Amanda Hyatt

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### Attendance & Offering

October	5:	160	\$ 6,910
October	12:	174	\$ 4,257
October	19:	128	\$ 3,370
October	26:	144	\$ 4,379

## Congregational Life Team

The team discussed some upcoming events. October 26<sup>th</sup> we will celebrate Claire Stueber's confirmation. We will have a cake reception following our church service. God bless Claire as she continues walking with Jesus in her faith journey.

Soon it will be November! We are planning a pie fellowship after the Thanksgiving Eve service. Please consider bringing a pie to share and also help serve that evening. It is always a fun evening! Sign-up sheet is now available!

It may seem early to think about Christmas, however it will be here before we know it! We have set the date for our Christmas Boutique and Bake Sale for Saturday, December 6th. There will be a sign up sheet on the table soon. Any questions about this contact any member of our team.

I hope you are enjoying the beautiful fall color and sunshine God has given us again this year!

Remember to use the suggestion box in the narthex for any comments and suggestions you may have. These are always reviewed by the church council. Sign your name or not...it's up to you!

Our team is Becky Boody, Rose Buns, Debbie Nelson, Roxanne Wyatt, Judy Berger, Howie Larsen, Bev Larsen and our council reps are Mark Berger and Pam Trang.

For the team, BEV

## September Council Minutes

Tuesday, October 14th, 2025 - 6:30 p.m.

Present: Pastor Mark Johnson, Brian Bergs, Linda Collins, Michael Johnson, Tom Lippert, Faye Sandy, Chris Scholl, Renae Stueber, Pam Trang, Sarah Kalkbrenner. Absent: Mark Berger, Glenn Hietala, Steve Tschida, Zach Leibold. Special Guest: Millie Messerschmidt

Faye called the meeting to order. Chris opened in prayer. There were no additions to the agenda.

**Millie Messerschmidt:** Millie informed the council that she would like to donate towards a memorial in Bill's memory. She stated that it would be helpful if a list of needs was put together for families and individuals who would like to donate to the church. It could include even little things. She is considering donating a exterior flag pole with American and Christian flags to be displayed. She isn't sure on the cost as of yet. She would like to have a light hardwired in so it would come on at dusk and go off at dawn and the flags wouldn't need to be taken down at night. She would donate new flags each year. Another idea would be to purchase a bench for under the portico so people have a place to sit while waiting for their rides. The bench would be made of composite, so minimum maintenance would be required. She would order it and have it sent to the church and someone else would put it together. Tom suggested that the money be donated to the church with the church making the purchase since then sales tax wouldn't need to be paid. The Men's Group is willing to donate toward the flag pole. There is a height restriction since we are in the flight path for the airport. A 20' flag pole with an internal halyard starts at \$1,900 (from a company in Nisswa). There was discussion on how flags would be placed on the pole. For exterior flag poles, we are not allowed to put anything above the US flag. Brian and Faye will continue to investigate the flag option. Millie will donate the bench. Faye suggested giving the congregation a chance to donate to the flag project

**Council Secretary's report:** Brian moved to accept minutes as presented, Renae seconded. The motion carried.

**Treasurer's report (Brian):** We are in pretty much the same position as last month. Our monthly revenues exceeded our monthly expenditures. Our revenues are pretty stable compared to last year. Our expenses are under budget but are running more than last year. Some areas that are currently under budget will catch up before the end of the year. Mike moved to accept the report as presented, Chris seconded. The motion carried.

Brian recommended getting a CD because of our very healthy checking balance. Sarah reported that money was taken from the Reserve Savings account in the past and never put back. Brian suggested getting a CD now and maybe getting another one in December, so they mature at different times. He suggested doing a \$30,000 CD at this time. Chris moved we put \$10,000 into the Reserve Savings Account and \$30,000 into a 9-month CD with Pine Country Bank with the funds to come from the Checking account. Linda seconded. The motion carried. The Building Principal line (under Net Assets) will be combined with the Phase II Construction line. The Thrivent Mortgage and Thrivent Credit Union CD lines need to be zeroed out.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor reported he has been doing visits. He thanked the Men's Bible Study for purchasing the new Blackstone grill. He thanked Youth Director Heather for her work with Youth Sunday and Joe Hyatt for taking over coffee duties and clean up. He thanked the Security Team for their work and proactive approach. Todd Anderson is on board as our custodian. There are six people in the New Member class. A couple of new Wednesday evening Bible Studies will be starting. He and Sarah are working on starting a Young Adults Fellowship. He would like to change how we acknowledge birthdays and anniversaries and instead acknowledge all of them on the 2nd Sunday of the month. People with birthdays or anniversaries during that month would be invited forward to be prayed for. Our current method hit and miss.

### Old Business

**Faith the Next Fifteen:** Faye has been tabulating the surveys. Security was the top area of concern. Technology came in 2nd. Enhancing the sanctuary, narthex, and programming was next. She is working on a report for this month's newsletter.

**Roadside Cleanup:** Pastor reported that Tod Tonsager asked if we would consider setting the dates for Roadside Cleanup for the coming year much farther in advance so they can better plan and prepare. Tod requested April 26th and October 4th for Roadside cleanup for the coming year. These dates will be added to the church calendar.

### New Business

**Nominating Team for Council:** The suggestion was made to get this going sooner than usual so there is more time for the team to work. Two council members and three congregational members are needed for the committee. Members are to be selected prior to November 1st. Renee, Tom, Faye, and Zach are going off this year. Tom agreed to be on the committee. Faye appointed Steve to the committee as well. They will find 3 congregational members for the committee. Faye will make an announcement on Sunday about the need for congregational members for the committee and also asking for people who are interested in servicing on the council to contact the committee.

### Reports:

**Church Secretary Report:** Sarah passed around a Thank you from Millie and Kristin. Pastor hasn't spoken with the Grandparents Support Group yet. Ducts will be insulated. Kinship Soup & Chili Cookoff is on October 20th. One entrant lost their kitchen space and wondered if they could use our kitchen to prepare; they would use it from 1 to 5 on Sunday, October 19th. Joan Novak is on this team. The council agreed to allow the Kinship entrant to use the church kitchen as long as Joan is present. There are two facility use requests – one for Trunk or Treat and Youth Fall Festival. Julie Tonsager will be hosting a Fall Craft Day the 2nd Saturday of November. We received a letter from Discover Card about a settlement for those who accepted Discover. This doesn't apply to us.

**Ministry Volunteer Coordinator Report:** Amanda asking if would be okay to have cars parked on the grass by the dirt road if more cars sign up for Trunk or Treat. There was concern that the grass will be torn up if it rains a lot. In that case, the cars would need to be on the tar.

### Ministry Team Reports

- Children's (Mike) – Over \$1,800 in donations have been received for the Kids Tin Bucket. The Committee wants to use some of this for Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes. It costs \$10 to ship a box. Boxes need to be filled by 11/17. Renee moved to donate \$300 from the Kids Tin Bucket towards Operation Christmas Child, Mike seconded. The motion carried. Practice will start for the Children's Christmas program on November 16th. They need risers to make kids more visible. The committee hung posters up in all the class rooms.
- Congregational Life (Pam) – Dec 6th was approved as the date for the Christmas Boutique. The Council suggested putting funds received towards Sanctuary Chairs or security needs. Faye shared she donated table cloths, which will need to be hemmed.
- Finance and Management – did not meet. The brush line was trimmed back, but not totally cleared out. It was suggested the rest of it be cleared out and sprayed. It was requested that the property team look into getting this done.
- Mission & Outreach (Tom) – they are meeting on Sunday
- Worship & Prayer (Faye) – they are meeting on Sunday
- Youth & Family/ Youth Director Report – They will be using the \$361 raised at the Bake Sale towards shipping for Operation Christmas Child. They would like to pack 100 boxes, so would need \$1,000 to pay for the shipping. After the \$361 from the Bake Sale and \$300 from the Children's Committee, they will still need \$339 for shipping. They were directed to speak with the Mission Committee about covering the remaining shipping costs.

On Wednesday, October 29th Brian's father-in-law will be presenting for "Adults Savings Kids" with the purpose of equipping parents and grandparents. The evening will include a potluck. Faye will talk with Pat Rioux about putting together an article for the Record.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.