

FAITH at WORK

June & July 2023

Siblings in Christ -

I'm writing this to talk about the conversations we have been having about our future. These conversations began in 2021. They were driven by questions about the financial stability of Faith Lutheran Church.

On the one hand, I know that all of you are good stewards, who support the work of Faith and other charities to the best of your ability. I know that many in our community are on fixed incomes. Moreover, given the size of our congregation, you give faithfully of your time, talent and treasure.

However, our current path does not seem to be sustainable.

The council has been working on visioning for where the future might take us. Working with the synod, Bishop Laurie has outlined for the whole congregation four potential paths for our congregation. We are having listening seasons to determine the possibility of any of these paths.

To be clear the congregation will pick what path, if any we take. I do not have a preference for the congregation to choose friendship, or radical redevelopment, or holy closure, or partnering. But I feel it important as your pastor to encourage the discussion. Because if we don't make a choice as a group and support that choice as a group, then I worry that we will just continue to follow our demographic trends.

We are not alone in this. Christians are never alone. Our story is after all a resurrection story, a hope and trust in the God of the living and the dead. We believe in the communion of saints, of the body of Christ that joins us in mystic sweet communion. And so whatever we chose - whether it be to keep our current course or go through friendship with other congregations, or to work to radically transform, Jesus goes with us.

Faith Lutheran Church

930 Queen Ave SW, Albany OR 97321

email: faithalbany@proaxis.com

website: www.faithalbany.org

Phone: (541) 928-7660



The council has been working on this as a part of every meeting. We have a visioning team: Terry, Mary and myself. We sent a letter to ecumenical communion partners to gauge interest in working together (we deliberately left open ended what that might be). We have been planning events with other congregations, to try to get critical mass for some of those events. We are trying to leave no stone uncovered.

Through it all, we continue to proclaim Christ crucified and risen. We continue to love God and love neighbor. Please talk to me or any of our other council members with questions. Come to the listening sessions (and council meetings). Pray for us. Feed the hungry, care for the sick, speak up for the oppressed. Do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God.

Peace in Christ,
Pastor Mark



Happy 247th Birthday America!

The Gift

To pull the metal splinter from my palm
my father recited a story in a low voice.
I watched his lovely face and not the blade.
Before the story ended, he'd removed
the iron sliver I thought I'd die from.

I can't remember the tale,
but hear his voice still, a well
of dark water, a prayer.
And I recall his hands,
two measures of tenderness
he laid against my face,
the flames of discipline
he raised above my head.

Had you entered that afternoon
you would have thought you saw a man
planting something in a boy's palm,
a silver tear, a tiny flame.
Had you followed that boy
you would have arrived here,
where I bend over my wife's right hand.

Look how I shave her thumbnail down
so carefully she feels no pain.
Watch as I lift the splinter out.
I was seven when my father
took my hand like this,
and I did not hold that shard
between my fingers and think,
Metal that will bury me,
christen it Little Assassin,
Ore Going Deep for My Heart.
And I did not lift up my wound and cry,
Death visited here!
I did what a child does
when he's given something to keep.
I kissed my father.

—Li-Young Lee

Faith Lutheran Church		2023
STAFF		
Pastor		Mark Bringman
Office Manager		Carol Armstrong
Organist/Pianist		Cheryl Blum
Custodian		Vacant
CHURCH COUNCIL		
President		Terry Virnig
Vice President		Bob Buswell
Secretary		Mary Sabatka Gamet
Treasurer		Janice Lee Virnig
Financial Secretary		Alice Weber
Education/Youth		Vacant
Evangelism & Mission		Dick Olsen
Fellowship & Social		Denice Rickard
Property Management		Jon Aaberg
Stewardship & Resources		Wally Oster
Worship & Music		Diane Buswell
Mission Endowment		Carol Olufson



Financials as of: May 24, 2023

Undesignated Income: \$6,187.00
 Budgeted Undesignated Income: \$8,166.67
 Net Undesignated Income: (\$1,979.67)
 Total Expenses: \$24,079.86
 Total Net Income: (\$14,319.90)

Parsonage House Project Update

About the middle of February 2023, the parsonage became vacant after several years of having the same tenant. A group of us looked at the house and we were astonished at the opportunities ahead of us to spruce up the house and fix some issues we noticed.

We had a limited budget and had already contracted out the exterior lead paint remediation and exterior painting of the house. While the contractor was in the early stages of preparing the house for painting it became clear that some of the exterior siding on the east facing wall above the garage had to be removed and replaced. That cut into our budget just a little bit more. Now all the exterior work is complete. The new house color and uniformity make the house look great.

During the last three months, a group of dedicated volunteers have taken on the interior and have either washed or scraped or sanded every surface inside the house. I believe all the walls have been painted. All previously painted built-in cabinets have been repainted and all of the ceilings have been painted. Almost all the doors have been adjusted so that they open and close properly.

We removed all the electrical switch plate covers and electrical plug covers. They have all been replaced with new covers. Open existing electrical boxes have been covered for safety reasons. Electrical junction boxes and electrical fuse boxes have been cleaned and their doors now operate easily. We repaired a few three-way switch circuits and replaced non-LED light bulbs with LED bulbs where possible.

We removed all the old window blinds hardware and all the curtain rods to make painting easier. We washed all the curtains in the house and reinstalled as many of the curtain rods as possible and hung curtains back in place if the curtains made it through the washing cycle (some did not). I believe all the door hardware, hinges and doorknobs, have been cleaned and many layers of paint removed. Most of the hardware looks new or close to it. Door pulls and electrical switches had multiple layers of paint removed as well.

Old nonfunctioning telephone and cable TV leads attached to the outside of the house were removed and holes in the walls were plugged. The old weather head for the second electricals service was removed and holes where critters could gain entry to the house were plugged. Damage to walls caused by critter infestations was cleaned up and remediation to help eliminate future damage was put in place.

We noticed a leaking drainpipe under the house and contacted a plumber to come fix that problem. We also cleaned out a couple of "P" traps under the bathroom and mudroom sinks. The drains all seem to function well now. The two bathtub enclosures had some mold issues and needed to have their caulking replaced. That job made the bathrooms look much better. New handrails were installed on the internal stairways, and it is my hope those stairs will be much safer to use in the years to come.

In the kitchen the under-counter cabinet was modified to accept a new dishwasher next to the sink. New electrical and plumbing connections were installed, and the dishwasher was tested to ensure no leaks and quiet operation.

Throughout the house a few ceiling light fixtures were repaired or replaced, depending upon the current state of the fixture. All the glass from existing light fixtures was removed, washed and reinstalled.

The furnace needed to have a better way to allow the air filter to be changed on a regular basis. We contacted an HVAC contractor to fabricate and install that unit and now the system is much more airtight.

Gaping holes in the walls and behind built-in cupboards (which allowed critters to gain access to inside the house) were plugged and made more energy efficient, hopefully eliminating at least some outside air intrusion.

We tore up the old linoleum floor upstairs and installed beautiful LVP flooring in what used to be the upstairs kitchen. New baseboards were also installed. Some existing fir flooring was patched upstairs as well.

This is a list of most of the people who have helped with this lengthy project:

Damian Baxter	Ellen Taylor	Mark Hams
Wally Oster	Bob Buswell	Terry Virnig
John Berg	Daniel Taylor	George Hunt
Kim Sass	Bob Christensen	Pastor Mark Bringman
Mary Berg	Elain Wogomon	

We also had help from my two granddaughters, Piper and Willow, along with their dad, Chris, one Sunday afternoon painting upstairs.

I want to take this opportunity to extend a very heartfelt and warm thank you to all of those who have helped with this much needed project. I also want to acknowledge my wife, Rose Mary, who has patiently waited while her list of Honey Do's has been placed on the back burner while I have been busy this spring. Lastly, if I missed a volunteer name, and I'm sure I probably did, I apologize; it was not my intent. I think I've covered most of the highlights of the work on the parsonage house listed but I may have missed a task or two.

It has been a fun and yet exhausting past few months but I'm sure the house is in much better shape now than it was before we started this process. We still have a few tasks to complete but will have to schedule that work after the new tenant moves in.

—Jon Aaberg

A Message from Church Council to Members of Faith Lutheran

Friends:

I need not tell you that we are facing challenges to our traditional congregation as we proceed into the future. I am sure you are getting tired of hearing this same theme. We have discussed the matter often and I, too, am getting weary of uncertainty. For that reason, Pastor Mark and I recently sent out a letter to mid-valley churches which are Lutheran or “Communion partners” with this congregation. That letter is shown below. It is an explicit overture to those congregations to explore how we might enter into partnership(s). These partnership(s) could take different forms, however, to address our challenges in a real sense it would need to involve the sharing of resources.

I think the letter is self-explanatory and to the point. I urge you to read it carefully. I will paraphrase here one part as follows:

Are we reaching out to the community? Yes! Are we employing new technology such as web based services? Yes! Is our pastor operating on a reduced schedule? Yes! The list goes on. Eventually, if the trends continue, our situation likely will not be sustainable in its present form.

I do not desire to wait until we are boxed into a corner. I want to explore partnerships now that would both strengthen us for the future while we have options. Yes, this could involve sharing pastors, facilities, services, etc. The message is strengthen our community while maintaining our unique identity. There is a whole world of opportunity out there. Thus, far we are in discussions with 3 other churches. These discussions are in just the preliminary stage. They may not result in any option that is satisfactory to us or them but if we don't make the overture now, we may pass up the opportunity when we are more in need. Remember that no matter what I, Pastor Mark or the Council can arrange, the ultimate choice is made by the congregation. When I know more, I will share. Mary Sabatka Gamet has taken an active role in pursuing this effort. If you have questions or concerns or encouragement feel free to contact her, myself or Pastor Mark.

Thank you.

Terry Virnig
Faith Lutheran Council President

Letter Sent to Potential Partners:

Attn: Church Council Presidents and Community of Christian Congregations of the Central Valley

Friends:

Our congregations are facing unprecedented challenges in today's world. The challenges are being experienced by both our ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Churches of America) congregations and our friends in other denominations. Members of congregations are aging and younger generations are not coming forward to be active congregational members. These ongoing demographics have been

shadowed by the recent three years of pandemic. The pandemic isolated members and contributed to loss of members. The result has been a sustained reduction in the size of our congregations. This of course negatively impacts the available giving needed to support our organizations. At the same time, there has been a reduction in the availability of pastors and ministers available to the congregations. We believe this stems from pastors retiring, leaving the ministry and fewer people being called to word and sacrament.

At Faith Lutheran Church in Albany we have experienced the loss of membership and the coincidental strain on resources. In the last 3 years, we have lost 20 members to deaths and 12 others have moved on for various reasons. This amounts to 27 % of our stated congregational population. We continue to respond by doing more with less. Although we are solvent and should continue to be so in the near term, we are trying to vision into the uncertain future and be prepared.

Are we reaching out to the community? Yes! Are we employing new technology such as web-based services? Yes! Is our pastor operating on a reduced schedule? Yes! The list goes on. Eventually, if the trends continue, our situation likely will not be sustainable in its present form.

That is why I am reaching out to you, our friends in the Christian Community. By now most of you should be familiar with the concepts of partnering congregations. There are many levels that partnering can take. Simple community potlucks and events come to mind. However, I believe that more aggressive measures can and should be considered. This could involve sharing pastors, facilities, services, etc.

Our message to you is that Faith Lutheran, here in Albany, is open to exploring these type of measures between mid-valley Lutheran and Christian communion partners. These type of alliances could pool our assets and make us stronger using the resources, clerical personnel and lay members that we have. Pursuing these alliances does mean change but not necessarily loss of identity. Please consider these concepts carefully. We welcome any response to this overture that you may feel appropriate. We would like to hear back from you by June 1st.

Thank you.

Terrence Virnig
Council President

Mark Bringman
Pastor



Church Announcements and Events

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Pastor Hallie Parkins of Luther House installation

Saturday, June 3

You are invited to celebrate the installation of Pastor Hallie Parkins to the ministry of Luther House! The board for the Lutheran Campus Ministry at Oregon State University and the Oregon Synod invite you to join us on **June 3rd at 4 pm** at **Grace Lutheran Church in Corvallis** for a service of Holy Communion and Rite of Installation. Clergy are invited to vest in green or rainbow. Following worship, you are invited to a hosted reception generously provided by Grace Lutheran Church. **Please RSVP if you plan to attend the reception.**

Listening Season: Radical Transformation—12:00pm

Sunday, June 4

Terri Gonzalez from Immanuel Lutheran Church in Woodburn Oregon is going to be with us on this day. She is a lay member and leader at a small congregation that feeds hundreds on a weekly basis and is changing buildings in a vision to deepen roots in the community and build for a sustainable future. Radical Transformation is one of the future possibilities that Bishop Laurie presented us with as she encouraged Faith Lutheran Church to plan for the future. She noted to us that it takes a lot of energy and a lot of work, but that it can lead to revitalization and regrowth.

I hope that you can join us for these conversations. We together, all of us, are the church, faithful conversations are how we as a community of Christians discern where the Holy Spirit is guiding us.

Monday Study Group—1:00pm

June 5, 19, 26 & July 10

Our focus for June & July is the book Love is the Way by Bishop Michael Curry. The description says: *“Walk the path of love with one of the warmest, most beloved spiritual leaders of our time, and learn how to put faith into action.”*

Our discussion has been focused on the redemptive power of Jesus’ love. The group will meet on June 5, 19, 26 & July 10. We may have lunch after study on July 10.

Red Cross Blood Drive

Thursday, June 8

Blood Drive



The Blood Drive will be in the Fellowship Hall at Faith Lutheran Church from 11:30 am to 5:00 pm. To schedule your appointment, call **800-733-2767** or sign up online at redcrossblood.org, using sponsor code: **faithlutheranalbany**.

Pastor Mark—Light Week

June 22—27

Pastor Mark will lead Bible Study Group on June 22, but will be off for the rest of the week.

Albany Pride March and Rally—9:30am **Albany Courthouse**

Saturday, June 24

There will be a march and rally to celebrate Albany Pride on June 24th at 9:30 am at the Albany Courthouse. You are invited to join and march, recognizing that the God created all of us in love.

Dedication of the Parsonage & Reception

Sunday, June 25

During worship on this day we will rededicate the parsonage, give thanks for all the workers who helped with the renovation and ask for a blessing for the new resident family. There will be a light reception following.

Theology Pub @ The Barn—6:15pm

Tuesday, June 27

Join us for Theology Pub @ The Barn, a light and laid back discussion. Low key events in a public places can be a nice way to invite people to a church event and have it not be intimidating. We will not be meeting in July. If you can't join us at this one, look for another in August.

Sunday Cinema: The Chosen

Summertime is often a hard time to plan activities at Faith Lutheran Church. We will restart Sunday Cinema in the fall. Hopefully you will join us then.

Church Closed for Independence Day

Monday, July 3

Pastor Mark—Vacation

July 14—29

While Pastor Mark is away in July, Pastor Patricia Hughes is the pastor to call for emergency pastoral care. Her cell phone is 503 510 9976. Supply pastors will lead services on Sundays, July 16: TBD & July 23: Pastor Hallie Parkins.

Church Office Hours

10:00am-2:00pm ♦ Monday—Wednesday—Friday

New Chair-Person Needed — Fellowship Committee

Denice Rickard has been serving as our Fellowship Committee Chair for this year. She has asked for a replacement as she will be moving to Eugene in the near future. Please consider volunteering for this. If you would like more information regarding this role, please contact Peggy Preston at (541) 223-0197.

Food Collection for F.I.S.H. of Albany

We are collecting non-perishable food items FISH of Albany. Donations can be placed in one of the baskets in the parking lot entry-way.



****Please check expiration date markings**

F.I.S.H. cannot accept foods past their marked expiration dates.

Quilting and TOMs

Wednesdays @ 9am

Wednesday mornings are a busy time at Faith Lutheran Church. We have quilters working to create comforting quilts that are donated to bring people warmth, privacy and shelter. If you are interested in joining them, there is always plenty to do.



The TOMs (stands for The Old Men, though age and gender are not requirements for the group) are busy working to keep our church property maintained and our grounds clean. If you have able hands and a willing heart, the TOMs will always welcome some help.

Mary Martha Circle



This is a Bible Study for women. We meet on the **second Tuesday of each month @ 1:00pm in the Fellowship Hall**. If you would like more information, please call: Karen Glenn at (541) 928-4729 or Shirley Karstens at (541) 967-8309.

Prayer Chain: We are asking those who are part of the prayer chain to lift up the concerns of Faith Lutheran congregants on a weekly basis and to pray for other concerns as they are shared. This can be as simple as taking a few seconds to ask God to be with those listed, lifting each one up by name. Peggy Preston will be heading up the prayer chain. If you are interested in being on the prayer chain, send her an email: pegprestonn@aol.com





June Worship Schedule

June 7	10:30am Sunday Service
June 14	10:30am Sunday Service
June 21	10:30am Sunday Service
June 28	10:30am Sunday Service

All Worship Services are Live-Streamed on YouTube



A Rose for You

June threw her roses everywhere.
 Their fragrance filled the summer air.
 "Arose for you! And a rose for you!
 Each child gets a rose before I'm through!"
 So said June as she put on her crown,
 and went calling on every child in town.
 "I alone bring the Queen of the Flowers,"
 said June as she filled the garden bowers.

Did you get your rose? And were you glad?
 I wish you had seen the rose I had!
 It was as big as a great pumpkin head
 and, oh, what a beautiful, beautiful red.
 "Is everyone pleased?" asked the month of
 June. Everyone nodded yes, even the moon.

—Lenore Hetrick

July Worship Schedule



July 2	10:30am Sunday Service
July 9	10:30am Sunday Service
July 16	10:30am Sunday Service
July 23	10:30am Sunday Service
July 30	10:30am Sunday Service

All Worship Services are Live-Streamed on YouTube

Worship Leaders Team 2023

June	4	11	18	25
Assisting Ministers	Ellen	Carol	Shirley	Jeff
Altar Prep	Elaine	Aabergs	Pam	Fleischers
Ushers	Kim	Shirley	Wally	Dick
Sound Technicians	Terry	John	Jon	Terry

God Bless America

While the storm clouds gather far across the sea,
 Let us swear allegiance to a land that's free,
 Let us all be grateful for a land so fair,
 As we raise our voices in a solemn prayer.

God bless America,
 Land that I love,
 Stand beside her, and guide her
 Through the night with a light from above.

From the mountains, to the prairies,
 To the oceans, white with foam
 God bless America, My home sweet home
 God bless America, My home sweet home.

By Irving Berlin



Prayer List

13

*PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER THOSE
NEEDING STRENGTH, GUIDANCE AND HEALING:*

Tim B.	Gigi Douglas	Julie Shaw
Brenda Carroll	Chiera Family	Lee Horst
Sandy Hina	Izzy Covalt	Margaret Rowland
Robert Jon	Garrett Baarsch	Olivia Hunter
Linda Gail Voet	Stephanie Bauthman	Nicholas Glass
Melba Wright	Carl Wogomon	Nancy Goodwin
Brandon Crawford	John Busher	Scot Stockwell
Noah Holman	Heather	Karen Hoover

REMEMBER OUR HOMEBOUND:

Ruth Irwin, Connie Griffis, Izzy Covalt, Cindy Harms, Margaret Rowland, Melba Wright, Sangsau Tran

OUR SYMPATHY & PRAYERS TO THOSE WHO MOURN THE LOSS OF LOVED ONES



A Prayer for Every Day

Almighty and Everlasting God, thank You that your Spirit is within me. Lord, fill me anew with your Holy Spirit. Grant me the fortitude to live by the Spirit and to mark my life by a dependence on You. Even though these times deplete my energy and drain my resolve, You restore my soul by the indwelling of Your Spirit. Thank You that You have sent your Spirit and that this is a reason for my joy. In Jesus' name. Amen.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Janitorial Service	2 9:00am - 12:30pm String Therapy 10:00am Reports to Council Due	3
4 10:30am Indoor Worship & livestreaming 11:45am Listening Season: Radical Transformation - Terri Gonzales	5 1:00pm Bible Study Group 7:00pm Boy Scouts	6	7 9:00am Quilters 9:00am TOMs 11:15am Fellowship Meeting	8 Red Cross Blood Drive	9 9:00am - 12:30pm String Therapy	10
11 10:30am Indoor Worship & livestreaming	12 Pastor Mark - Off 12:30pm - 3:00pm Modern Travelers 7:00pm Boy Scouts	13 Pastor Mark - Off 1:00pm Mary Martha Circle	14 Pastor Mark - Off 9:00am Quilters 9:00am TOMs	15 Janitorial Service Pastor Mark - Off	16 Pastor Mark - Off 9:00am - 12:30pm String Therapy	17 Pastor Mark - Off 9:00am Circle of Friends (Peggy's Gazebo)
18 Father's Day 10:30am Indoor Worship & livestreaming	19 1:00pm Bible Study Group 7:00pm Boy Scouts	20	21 9:00am Quilters 9:00am TOMs 7:00pm Council Meeting	22	23 9:00am - 12:30pm String Therapy	24
25 10:30am Indoor Worship & livestreaming 11:30am Worship & Music Planning 11:45am Parsonage Celebration	26 1:00pm Bible Study Group 7:00pm Boy Scouts	27	28 9:00am Quilters 9:00am TOMs 11:15am Fellowship Meeting	29 Janitorial Service	30 9:00am - 12:30pm String Therapy	1



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 10:30am Indoor Worship & livestreaming	3 7:00pm Boy Scouts Church Office Closed	4	5 9:00am Quilters 9:00am TOMs	6 Janitorial Service	7 9:00am - 12:30pm String Therapy 10:00am Reports to Council Due	8
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16 Pastor Mark - Vacation 10:30am Indoor Worship & livestreaming	17 Pastor Mark - Vacation 7:00pm Boy Scouts	18 Pastor Mark - Vacation	19 Pastor Mark - Vacation 9:00am Quilters 9:00am TOMs	20 Janitorial Service Pastor Mark - Vacation	21 Pastor Mark - Vacation 9:00am - 12:30pm String Therapy	22 Pastor Mark - Vacation
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June & July 2023

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

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