

The Faith Herald

December 2022

*Faith Lutheran Church is a family of
God built on love:
Worshiping, welcoming, learning, and
serving in Christ's name.*

Faith Lutheran worships each Sunday at 9:30 am.

In-person worship is at
Faith Lutheran Church
171 Lewis Lane | Hamilton.

The worship service is streamed online
- via YouTube and Facebook.



171 Lewis Lane | Hamilton, Montana 59840,
Website: www.faithlutheranhamilton.org

Phone: (406) 363-2964
Email: faithlutheran59840@gmail.com

Facebook: Friends of Faith Lutheran Hamilton, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/354338311306730/>

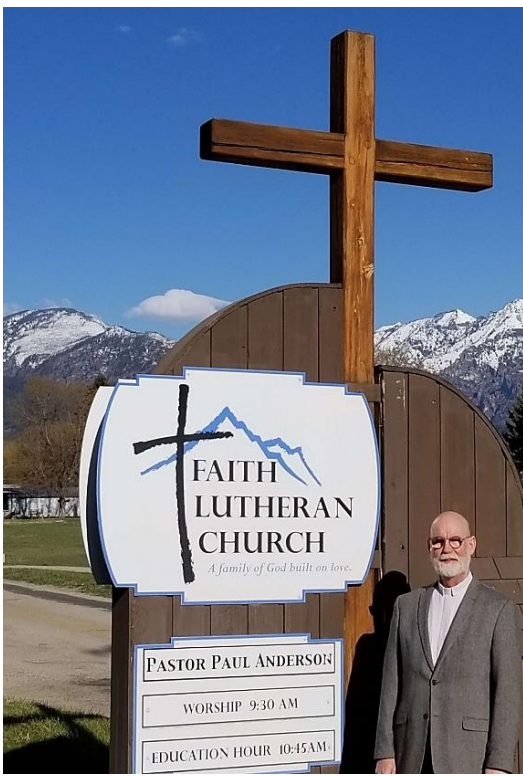
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Please let us know if you would be interested in looking at the Faith Lutheran Church Financial Statement. Just email our Steward of Finance: Sandy Russ at flchamilton.finsec@gmail.org

If you would prefer getting the Faith Herald emailed to you instead of receiving a hard copy in the mail, please email the church office at faithlutheran59840@gmail.com and include your full name and the email address or addresses you would like us to use.

You can also get this Faith Herald online at <http://www.faithlutheranhamilton.org/> and click on Faith Herald under Calendars and Newsletters.



From Pastor Paul

Dear Friends and Members of FLC

Christmas will be here soon, and Rick posted this on our Facebook page. I enjoyed the article from Brian Stoffregen, and I trust you will as well. Merry Christmas to you all.

Pastor Paul

“There are often complaints about the word “Xmas”. “They have taken Christ out of Christmas,” decry some.

Christ may have been replaced by commercialism in the celebration of this Festival season, but that isn’t where the “X” comes from.

The word “Christ” in Greek looks like this: ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ (pronounced “christos”). The first letter is an “X,” but it is not an “ex” as in our alphabet, but a “chi” (rhymes with “sky”) in the Greek alphabet. This letter has a “ch” sound – like in the word “Christ”.

While the second letter looks like a P (pee), in Greek it is a Rho and sounds like the English “R”.

The “chi rho” is common Christian symbol that uses the first two letters from ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ. Because of the shape of the letters, the symbol is often mistaken for a “PX”. A chi-rho symbol is one of the oldest Christian symbols. Some examples of the Chi-Rho symbols are attached. There’s probably one in your congregation.

Spelling the holiday “Xmas” doesn’t necessarily take Christ out of the holiday; neither does spelling the word “Christmas” put Christ into the holiday.”



December Birthdays

- 12/2 - Mary Schmidt
- 12/4 - Vicki Silvan
- 12/6 - Heather Wintergerst
- 12/7 - Sally Berland, Steve Shook
- 12/8 - Bob McKee
- 12/9 - Holly Mahon
- 12/12 - Lila Farrenburg
- 12/14 - Josie VanDenburg
- 12/17 - Sandy Russ
- 12/18 - Elaina Lewis
- 12/20 - Cole Harden
- 12/21 - John Carlson
- 12/22 - Peggy Trexler
- 12/26 - Sandy Drake, Grace Reichart, Kristina McCloskey
- 12/28 - Emmet Harden
- 12/29 - Dan Mitchell



Providing Warmth

Our "Golden Group" did a great job of cutting, sewing, and fringing fleece material and ended up making 82 scarves and 16 neck warmers. They will be passed out to local groups and food pantries within our community so those in need can stay warm this winter season (which has started early!).

As Jan Serfass was putting a tray of scarves out at Haven House one woman asked for one right off the bat.

Thank you to everyone who helped and to Thrivent for the seed money to purchase the fleece and for the lunch goodies. The activity was made possible by a Thrivent Action Team grant provided by John and Jan Serfass.





Council Corner *December 2022*

'But Mary treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart.' Luke 2:10

We are on the eve of another Advent Season. A time to rejoice yet a time to reflect and yes contemplate as Mary did on that holy night. What does Christmas mean to us now? Do we allow ourselves to truly experience this holy season and to let ourselves relax and reflect on the comfort God in Jesus offers us? For me it is a combination of both. I try to slow down enough to reflect in my preparation for the Christmas season, yet I know that I fall short of pondering as Mary did on the first night. I can say it is because I am overwhelmed with all that Christmas demands – shopping, decorating, planning, traveling, but Mary had to be overwhelmed herself. Travelling to Bethlehem while pregnant, finding no place to rest, having to rely on, her new husband, Joseph to be her midwife, and giving birth in a barn. Yet, she found the energy to 'ponder' all that she had experienced in her tiredness and discomfort. Who am I to say I don't have the time or energy to take a few moments to stop and take in the miracle of this most magnificent gift – the birth of the Messiah. Is there anything more powerful for us to 'ponder'? Is there anything more that can bring us such 'comfort' and peace?

In all the interruptions, worries, joys and sorrows we often miss the time to simply slow down and observe and feel the peace and love and hope of this Christmas Gift from God. The Joy of Christmas and the hope of a New Year we can have a renewed sense of the goodness of God and the blessings of a caring and compassionate congregation of friends and family where we fellowship and outreach to each other and to our community.

After this Christmas Season life will return to its usual pace so let us permit ourselves to be reborn with this gift of the Messiah, let us like Mr. Scrooge find the real meaning of Christmas, the spirit of joy and sharing with each other. God brought great comfort to His people and taught us how to comfort each other. God's gift to us was Jesus, so let's ponder the importance of this gift everyday this coming year. Let us rejoice and bring true joy to the world in song, in deeds, in our words and in our faith. This is the gift that will truly change our life and that of others. So, as the angels sang to the shepherds: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" On us who God favors!

Merry Christmas and may you feel God's blessings this Advent Season.

Jacqueline VanDenburg
Council President & Convener



Community Meals

Faith Providing in Our Community

Just a quick reminder Faith will not be serving a Community Meal until January 24, 2023. If you would like to help those dealing with food insecurity during the next month, please consider giving goods directly to our local food banks or a monetary donation to:

the Montana Food Bank Network
(5625 Expressway, Missoula, MT 59808)
which supports all our
local food banks.

**TACKLE
HUNGER**

Coming in January!

With the increase of food insecurity and hunger in our area, Faith Lutheran Church has decided to challenge our members with the Souper Bowl of Caring program. Beginning January 8th, 2023, we will be collecting cans of soup, stews, heat 'n eat cans of Spaghettios / raviolios, plus boxes of crackers to go with that soup. These will be displayed in the church and on Super Bowl Sunday, February 12 we'll offer a blessing over the collection and distribute it to several of the food pantries in our area. Let's support this worthwhile outreach and collect a mountain of soup!

Adopt-A-Family

Dear Angels,

Faith Lutheran Church Council has once again decided to assist Bitterroot Adopt-A-Family in blessing needy, south valley families over the holidays.

The main sponsor of each family purchases a \$100 grocery certificate, in addition to the wants and needs of the family, BUT we all know \$100 doesn't buy many groceries.

You can help in this effort by purchasing gift cards in any denomination to local businesses. Ideas are of course grocery cards, as well as fuel cards, Chamber Bucks, or certificates to Easi Cleaners. Any gift would be simply amazing!

A small Christmas Tree has been placed in the Narthex. Thank you SO much for your contributions to the Adopt-A-Family tree in the narthex! There is still time if you have yet to donate. Please clip your donations to the tree by December 4th. They will be given to some of the valley's most needy families. Thank YOU!

Thank you for blessing those less fortunate and sharing His love!

Kerry Hanson, Director

Kerry contributed to the third grade Adopt-A-Family program for many years while working at Daly Elementary School, then took over the program when she retired from teaching in 2014. The program requires that recipients be anonymous for reasons of confidentiality. Kerry is the only one who knows who the families are and who is sponsoring them. Call Kerry if you have questions 406.240.4672



During the Advent season we will be holding the Holden Evening prayer services on the Wednesdays in Advent. The first one will be held on Nov 30th at 7:00 PM and continuing each Wednesday with the last one being on December 21st. We hope you are able to Worship with us during this time of Advent.



Grief Group

For the month of December, the Grief Group will meet a 1:00 pm at the church Dec 7th, 14th and 21st. Next month the meetings will be also at 1:00 pm on Jan 11th, 18th and 25th.

Our Christmas Program will be on December 18th during our Sunday



worship service. We will be singing Christmas carols as the Christmas story is played and acted out. Everyone will have a chance to be a part of the program. If you are able to read and would like to have a reading part, please let the Pastor or the office know. Also, if you are interested in providing some special music for this service, let Pastor Paul know. This will be a celebration of Christ's birth, with birthday cake following the service.

Blue Christmas Service December 18th at 7:00 pm

A Blue Christmas is a Western Christian tradition that happens on or around the longest night of the year, usually December 21st the Winter Solstice. It is about comforting others who are grieving and struggling to find joy and hope during the season.

A Blue Christmas service provides a quiet and contemplative worship service as an alternative to the more traditional gatherings. This is in honor of those who are experiencing grief and struggling with loss. I hope you are able to join us for this Worship Service.



The Shoeboxes Have Begun Their Journey!

The Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes are on their way to children around the world. Faith Lutheran sent off 134 boxes. Most of these were packed at the well-attended Packing Party on November 13th. Many thanks to everyone who donated items, packed one or more shoeboxes, donated money to help with shipping the boxes, helped during the packing party with food and extra hands. It's very true many hands make light work and bring great joy! Please consider keeping the children who will eventually receive these boxes in your prayers in the months to come!



Sapphire Lutheran Home Bazaar

Will be held 9 am–2 pm, December 3rd. This is an annual affair and an opportunity to find gift items or a tasty treat. You are welcome to reserve a table to sell items as well. Call 406-363-2800 and ask for Dominic for information on tables.



Remembering Dale Brady

It was suggested to the Memorial Committee that we use some memorial money to purchase a snowblower in memory of Dale Brady. Clairice was humbled and agreed that this would be a wonderful way to honor her late husband, Dale Brady.

The committee voted to approve the purchase, and the snowblower was picked up on Saturday November 19th. Everyone who I have talked to about the purchase has agreed that this indeed was a great way to honor Dale who took pride in our church and the caring of the grounds.

- Pastor Paul and the Memorial Committee.



There will be an Advent Unity Service December 13th at the Corvallis Methodist Church at 7:00 PM. The Pastors from the Corvallis Methodist Church, St Paul Episcopal Church, Faith Lutheran Church, First Presbyterian Church of Hamilton, and the Methodist Church in Stevensville will be leading the service. I hope you are able to join us for worship.

The Faith Herald is mailed the first week of each month. The 20th of each month is always the deadline for the next month's publication. Please send info for the Faith Herald to: faithlutheran59840@gmail.com

December

2022

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
27 Worship 9:30 am	28	29	30 Quilters 9 am – 12 pm ***** Grief Group 1 pm ***** Holden Evening prayer services 7:00 pm	1	2	3 Sapphire Lutheran Home Bazar 9 am–2 pm
4 Worship 9:30 am ***** Church Budget Q & A after worship	5	6 Church Council Meeting 9:00 am	7 Quilters 9 am – 12 pm ***** Grief Group 1 pm ***** Holden Evening prayer services 7:00 pm	8	9	10
11 Worship 9:30 am ***** Church Budget Vote after worship	12	13 Advent Unity Service at Corvallis Methodist Church 7:00 pm	14 Grief Group 1 pm ***** Holden Evening prayer services 7:00 pm	15 Men's Bereavement Breakfast 9:00 am	16	17
18 Worship & Christmas Program 9:30 am ***** Blue Christmas Service 7:00 pm	19	20	21 Quilters 9 am – 12 pm ***** Grief Group 1 pm ***** Holden Evening prayer services 7:00 pm	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Worship 4:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship 7:00 pm
25 <i>Christmas</i> Worship 9:30 am	26	27	28	29	30	31