

Following Faith January 2022



by Jan Richardson, the Painted Prayerbook

*Light shone in darkness
at the world's creation,
bathing in beauty nature's revelation.*

*All that has being, crying in adoration,
"Praise for the light. Amen!"*

Happy New Year Faith Lutheran Church!

Blessing and Peace and Health and Goodness to you in 2022.

"But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine."

Oh, I've needed this message this week and in this new year! This passage comes from our Hebrew Scripture reading this coming Sunday, Baptism of Our Lord Sunday. And one of the beautiful resonances is that our baptisms remind us that when God proclaims at Jesus' baptism, "You are my beloved son," Jesus turns right around in his divine life and self-giving and says to you and me: "I make you my beloved siblings."

So this passage from Isaiah becomes ours in Christ: **formed, redeemed, called and beloved.**

I've needed that news this week amidst all the national/global news in January 2022. It all sounds sadly familiar to our past two years. Covid-19 cases are on a steep rise and schools and workplaces and sanctuaries are all conversing again: How can we meet safely and responsibly? How do we care for one another now? Oh, and, why are we still enduring all this???

As your pastor, having begun my call during this pandemic, I most definitely want to greet you in a new year and be focused with you on worship, service, encouragement, community—

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all the good things we can be called to as the body of Christ up on this hill! And so I am tired and burdened to return to what feels like a worn-out conversation about distance, patience and endurance.

But then, you know what?—> When faithful folks were in that worn-out existence, that's when the prophets were sent to speak to God's people.

How can we be patient, keep caring for one another, make the best choices and endure together? In part, because of God's faith-creating Word:

"But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you." -Isaiah 43

From God, by the love of Christ, in the life of the Holy Spirit, we are formed, redeemed, called and beloved.

This is the promise of baptism; this is the light of epiphany. Hear the sacred good news: God's generative word find us this new year, in our high places and in our worn-out valleys. Even in our deserts is the surprising, new promise of refreshment and life and the companionship of God.

And may God's love animate our hearts and hands and feet to keep loving each other with divine endurance. However this word finds you, keep connected to us as we walk this road together.

Holding onto promise, and with you,

+ Pastor Shaun

* Please be sure to read **page 6** for information regarding the Annual Congregational Meeting *

Team Leaders

Communications: Amy Zimmerman

Fellowship: Sonja Dresbach & Pat Porter

Finance: LindaLu Miller

Personnel: Linda Zimmerman

Property: Sonja Dresbach

Stewardship: Pat Porter

Worship: Judy Carlin

Church Staff

Accompanists: Karon Felten & Derek Friend

Admin Assistant: Grace Tibben-Lembke

Custodian: Eileen Way

Newsletter Editor: Grace Tibben-Lembke

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

"Thanks for the Memories". We all remember Bob Hope's theme song. I will borrow it now as this is my last report as President of our congregation.

Four years on the Council, two of them as your President and it certainly has been an interesting term. During this time we have installed a new Pastor, closed and reopened the Sanctuary, invited a school to use our building when they outgrew their facility and continued our service to our community through outreach services, all in the Lord's name.

The most difficult part of this responsibility was the decision to close in-person worship. This is the Lord's house and we were not able to even enter His house for one full year. But, with the wise thinking on the part of Interim Pastor Stan Pesis, we connected to Zoom for our worship and then offered "drive-thru" communion. Many callers and visitors remarked they wished their home church did the same. It was an innovative and successful idea.

Then the Call process came with Pastor Shaun O'Reilly being asked to be our leader. But, he gets chosen to lead, but can't even be installed for a year! This is one for the books, but it will make a great story for what we pray will be a long and rewarding life serving the Lord.

As I close my term, I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to this congregation for your support and commitment to Faith and service to God. My thanks to the Church Council members who have worked with me to make the building stay open, to the teams who prepare worship and fellowship for all to enjoy, and our musicians and choir who help us sing praises to our Lord. My sincere gratitude to Eileen Way who tirelessly keeps the building clean and seems to be at the church every day. A special thank you to Pastor Stan and Elizabeth Pesis for their personal assistance to me and to Pastor Shaun for his support in everything we do.

May God continue to bless this congregation, its members and extended families and our guests reminding us that "All Are Welcome in This Place".

May God bless all of you and "Thanks for the Memories".

Pat Porter, President
Faith Lutheran Church

Church Council

<u>President:</u>	<u>Members at Large:</u>
Pat Porter	Betty Thompson
<u>Vice President:</u>	Kathy Wilson
Eileen Way	Amy Zimmerman
<u>Secretary:</u>	Pr. Shaun O'Reilly
Jean Carter	
<u>Treasurer:</u>	
LindaLu Miller	

Online Giving

On our website (faithlutheranreno.org), anyone now has the option to donate online. Faith Lutheran utilizes Tithe.ly, a secure online giving company, that is associated with the ELCA.

December Food Pantry Report from Eileen Way

In December we had three Food Pantry Mondays, we took the 27th after Christmas off.

We served 156 people from 139 households, serving a total of 284 for the month.

- 93 Adults, 27 youth and 36 seniors
- 74 men, 82 women
- We had 16 new to our pantry
- We gave out 5,821 pounds of food
- On Dec. 20, Catholic Charities gave us spiral sliced bone in hams to give out plus a bag of food for their Holiday Meal.



**Healthy Food.
Every Person.
Every day.**

A Letter from the Stewardship Team

Ahh, January...

January is the month when we tend to look two ways: we reflect on the year past and express hope for the year opening before us. These two views will be with us as the **Annual Congregation meeting takes place on Sunday January 23rd** .

As your stewardship team we ask you to **please attend** this important meeting to be held immediately following the service. This is the time when the congregation elects new council members and votes on the church budget for 2022. The new budget includes a proposal, previously approved by the Finance Team and the Council, to increase Pastor Shaun's position from half to three-quarter's time. The annual report will also be available, giving highlights of the teams/committees activities for the past year as well as the pastor's and treasurer's reports. **Your participation in the meeting is an essential act of service to support the ministries of Faith.** And yes, there will be coffee and food!

Previews of the proposed budget will be presented following Sunday services January 9 and 16. These informal sessions allow for questions and discussion prior the vote at the annual meeting.

As we reflect on the past year, thanks go to all of you who give so generously of your time (minutes, hours, days); talent (voices, music, cookies, carpentry, hugs, smiles, cleaning, organizing, thinking, planning, creativity, and much more); and financial resources (pennies, dollars, and many dollars more) to the Faith community. You are truly earth angels! **May your new year be blessed with all that is good.**

Your Stewardship Team

Writings on Epiphany from Living Lutheran

“A Revelation of Grace”

by Aaron Fuller

January 17, 2019



On Jan. 6 the Western church observes Epiphany, the revelation of Jesus to the magi, who represent all nations. The Time after Epiphany is marked by more revelation stories in our lectionary, telling of Jesus' baptism, his turning water into wine at Cana, and his controversial proclamations in his hometown.

Often this message gets lost on us. Epiphany and the time after it seem like a pit stop in the liturgical year between the two biggest church seasons. As a result, we aren't as attentive to the power of this season's Gospel texts. But if we listen carefully, they offer something important to consider.

I'm stationed in Germany, ministering as a Navy chaplain to men and women returning from yearlong deployments. While I help them make sense of their deployment and plan for reintegration into the U.S., I frequently hear them describe their experiences in terms of "good" or "bad."

In the U.S., one only has to turn on the TV, log in to social media and, sadly, listen to others and ourselves talk at and about each other to hear this rhetoric of "good" and "bad." But as Lutherans, we don't see the world in terms of "either/or" but rather as "both/and." We believe in a God of grace. In my ministry, I've interpreted this as a "third way" to think about life.

What if Epiphany is about the revelation of a third way? That Jesus reveals to us a new approach to living. That the world isn't divided into "good" or "bad": red or blue, evangelical or mainline, nationalist or socialist. We're fundamentally human—tragically flawed but infinitely loved by God.

I believe our baptismal identity is calling us into places we neither expect nor want to go. I believe miracles and fulfillment of prophetic texts aren't just means to prove Jesus is the Son of God, but rather are powerful examples that tune us into the ways Jesus is present today and bringing us together.

Looking at life in the U.S. from across the ocean has convinced me that our witness as Lutherans is crucial to a hurting world. We must take our cue from Jesus, insisting to those bent on division that we belong to God and we belong to each other. In this revelation, grace shines through and healing, connection and hope can flourish.

If this season is a time of revelation, then there's no better time to open our eyes to the God of grace in our midst and embrace Jesus' challenging, hopeful call to love and serve our neighbors.

* Annual Congregational Meeting! *

Faith Lutheran: It's time for our annual meeting. For an overview, this is how our congregation makes key decisions leading into each new year. We hold these annual meetings according to our bylaws, and it's planned by your Congregation Council and led by our president.

The purpose of the annual meeting is to conduct the official business for the year. Members read minutes, make and receive reports, vote on the budget, elect new officers and/or council members, elect members to committees, elect members to attend synod assembly, and transact any other official business. The agenda is therefore structured like a business meeting, and we need members to attend! Reach out to your council with any questions or concerns.

This year's meeting will be held on **Sunday, January 23rd**, immediately after worship.

The two Sunday's prior to the meeting, Jan 9th and 16th, informal meetings will be held to review the 2022 budget. Please use these meetings as an opportunity to view, discuss, and ask questions regarding the budget before voting on Jan 23rd.

Giving in our community

Thank you to all who contributed warm hats, gloves, and coats to Elmcrest and Grace Warner Elementary Schools in December! We were able to bring a great deal of joy to the students in our neighboring community, and we are excited to continue to grow these relationships.

When we first contacted Elmcrest, they indicated that another way to support their students is through supplying socks, underwear, and pants. This Spring we will begin to collect these items in the narthex, but for the time being, you are welcome to deliver items to the office. Specific sizes are listed below.

Socks- plain white unisex

- Little kid size small and medium

Boy's Underwear

- 1 pack of 10 Small (4-6)
- 1 pack of 10 Medium (8-10)
- 2 packs of 6 Large (10-12)

Girl's Underwear

- 2 packs of 10 Small (4)
- 1 pack of 10 Medium (12)
- 1 pack of 10 Large (14)

Boy's Pants- sweatpants are a great option as they are more versatile!

- 4 pairs, Size 7 (S)
- 3 pairs, Size 8-10 (M)
- 3 pairs, Size 12/14 (L)
- 1 pair, Size 16 (XL)

Girls Pants- Leggings are a great option

- 4 pairs, Size 4 (XS)
- 6 pairs, Size 6 (S)
- 6 pairs, Size 6x (M)
- 6 pairs, Size 7 (L)
- 4 pairs, Size 8 (S)



Sunday Worship Zoom Information

Visit our website faithlutheranreno.org to join Zoom via video

Join Zoom via Phone

Dial: 1 669-900-9128
Meeting ID: 97416357933
Password: 303457

If you feel so moved, you are welcome to set aside a designated space to worship. You are invited to light a candle, add a flower vase, or perhaps cover the space with a special cloth; whatever aids you in centering for worship.

LUNCH BUNCH

The lunch bunch has resumed, meeting on the first Wednesday of the month at 12pm, noon. Join us for a potluck lunch and fellowship on January 5th.

January Food Pantry

Jan. 3rd	CLOSED
Jan. 10th	OPEN
Jan. 17th	OPEN
Jan. 24th	OPEN
Jan 31st	OPEN

Recipients are asked to remain in their vehicles while Food Pantry volunteers distribute pre-bagged food in the parking lot.

Prayer Requests

Please send all prayer requests to prayers@faithlutheranreno.org, rather than Sonja's personal email, thank you!

Bible Study

Join us Tuesday Afternoons 1:30-2:30 to read and discuss the Bible scripture for the following Sunday. This helps us prepare for the next Sunday's Worship Service. All are welcome, join us as we share and learn from each other.

To join us on Zoom, follow these instructions:

Call: 669-900-6833

Meeting ID: 81034813266

Password: 430175

January Schedule

- Jan 4: Luke 3:15-17,21-22; Psalm 29; Isaiah 43:1-7; Acts 8:14-17
- Jan 11: John 2:1-11; Psalm 36:5-10; Isaiah 62:1-5; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11
- Jan 18: Luke 4:14-21; Psalm 19; Nehemiah 8:1-3,5-6,8-10; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
- Jan 25: Luke 4:21-30; Psalm 71:1-6; Jeremiah 1:4-10; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13
- Feb 1: Luke 5:1-11; Psalm 138; Isaiah 6:1-8 [9-13]; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

For more information contact Eileen Way at helenflc@hotmail.com or 775-560-3248.

Shared Harvest

Thank you to everyone who donated and helped assemble bags last month! Below are the requested items for January's Shared Harvest.

Bags will be assembled on January 23rd at St. Luke's Lutheran Church.

- Canned Vegetables 42 cans
- Macaroni & Cheese 55 boxes
- Crackers (saltines) 42 sleeves
- Cold Cereal 27 boxes
- Deodorant Unlimited

January 2022

Faith Lutheran Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9:30am Worship	3	4 1:30pm Bible Study	5 12pm (noon) Lunch Bunch	6	7	8 10am Worship Team
9 9:30am Worship	10 11am Food Pantry	11 1:30pm Bible Study	12	13	14	15 10am Finance Team
16 9:30am Worship	17 11am Food Pantry 6pm Council Meeting	18 1:30pm Bible Study	19	20	21	22
23 9:30am Worship Congregational Meeting!	24 11am Food Pantry	25 1:30pm Bible Study	26	27	28	29
30 9:30am Worship	31 11am Food Pantry	Weekly Group Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACA; Mondays at 5:30pm • Sierra High Notes; Wednesdays at 6:00pm • 4-H Whip-stirs; 2nd Wednesday at 6:30pm • Scouts; Thursdays at 7:00pm • NARFE; 3rd Tuesday at 11:00am 				