

Following Faith

March 2023 Newsletter



Letter from the Pastor -

First and foremost, here's a prayer we need. Father Jim Martin is a Jesuit priest whose writing I really enjoy. I think he lives in the New England area of the US, but his blizzard prayer stood out to me this week. A prayer related to winter and snow!!!

Prayer in a Blizzard

Almighty God, Lord of the cold and snow, whose Son's voice ruled the wind and waves when he lived with us on earth, and whose Spirit gives us courage, hear a few prayers from us today.

Let the predicted three feet be two feet, let two feet be one foot, let one foot be a few inches, and let a few inches be a dusting. And if, for some mysterious reason, that's not what you had in mind, keep the power on, the pipes from freezing, the tires moving and public transit from stopping. Keep my feet from slipping, my wrist from breaking and my patience from coming to an end. Most of all, open our hearts to protect those most vulnerable in a storm. That is, open my own heart to help those most in need: the homeless, the poor, the sick, the aged, the ill, the shut-in, the lonely. Give me, most of all, as much patience and cheerfulness as there are snowflakes. And, help me to enjoy, in the midst of my annoyance, the beauty of your creation. Amen.

- Fr. Jim Martin, SJ

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LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

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Friends, I hope you have found dry ground, a good cup of tea, and maybe some extra time to watch all this snowfall, or to pray some more, or to sleep in! What a winter!

And what a Lent!

Lent is a time to pray. So last Sunday — in the Adult Class — we began talking about prayer, and various ways to engage prayer along our faith journeys in these forty days. One takeaway is: do what works. What fits for you is probably a beautiful way that God's Spirit wants to show up in the world, so keep at what works for you!

And as we each discern an approach, I thought I would share some thoughts from Fr. Jim. He likes talking about simple ways to approach faith practices, with welcome and with grace. His latest book is *Learning to Pray: A Guide for Everyone*. And I thought this guide was a clear way for folks to imagine a prayer practice. Please consider:

"Before you begin, as in all prayer, remind yourself that you're in God's presence, and ask God to help you with your prayer. Gratitude: Recall anything from the day for which you are especially grateful, and give thanks. Review: Recall the events of the day, from start to finish, noticing where you felt God's presence, and where you accepted or turned away from any invitations to grow in love. Sorrow: Recall any actions for which you are sorry. Forgiveness: Ask for God's forgiveness. Decide whether you want to reconcile with anyone you have hurt. Grace: Ask God for the grace you need for the next day and an ability to see God's presence more clearly."

In class on Sunday we reviewed together Anne Lamott's four words that can guide your prayers: Help! Thanks! Wow! And, Sorry!

And to that idea are the themes detailed above by Father Jim: Gratitude, Review, Sorrow, Forgiveness, Grace.

When I think about prayer, and our prayers this Lent, I don't think there's one right way we all must do it. Just like I don't think there's one right way to appreciate the snow, or pray about it (for more, or less). There's just the honest cry of our hearts and there's the ever-present grace of God. God's grace is like feet of wet snow, falling. You can't step outside without your sweater becoming completely covered. Sure, it may be inconvenient. And your whole body is freckled in white flakes in just seconds. But it's also refreshing, and sustaining, and funny, and makes us slow down.

All the more reason to have soup and prayer on Wednesdays, and worship and refreshments on Sundays, right! Snow big deal at all!

†Pastor Shaun O'Reilly

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings, Faith!

For those of you who are unaware, I was elected president of the congregation council at the council's meeting in February. In just the two meetings I have attended, I have been amazed with the amount of love and care members of this community put in to maintaining this church. Each act, big or small, contributes to the continued existence of this community.

One of those who contributes so much of his time is our new vice president, Eric Weldon. He does so a wide range of projects, from running our Audio/Visual equipment during services to fixing doors (I would encourage you to thank him next time you see him). Listening to his many works during the council meeting, I feel unworthy to be on the council, let alone leading it. When I expressed this feeling, Eric responded that someone needs to lead. I initially assumed that the statement was just a kindness on his part, but I've given the sentiment more weight as I've thought about it.

I believe we often think that we are unable to contribute or should help more. We feel guilty that somehow we aren't doing enough or what we are good at isn't of use to the church. But it is important to remember two things: that our service to the world may not be in the physical place of the church, but that doesn't make it any less valuable or praiseworthy; and, that as a community, we have many different gifts. Trust that you too have something to bring to the table, and when you see an opportunity, grab it and serve in joy!

Sin boldly and believe in Christ even more boldly! -Martin Luther

Benjamin Pesis, FLC Council President

2023 FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL

President: Ben Pesis

Vice President: Eric Weldon

Secretary: Judi Hein

Treasurer: LindaLu Miller

Members at Large: Jean Carter, Sonja Dresbach,
Amy Zimmerman, and Pr. Shaun O'Reilly

IN WORSHIP THIS MONTH

March 5th - Second Sunday in Lent

During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today's gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit and Pastor Carl Wilfrid preaches a sermon titled: "The Wind Blows Where It Chooses."



March 12th - Third Sunday in Lent

In today's gospel the Samaritan woman asks Jesus for water, an image of our thirst for God. Jesus offers living water, a sign of God's grace flowing from the waters of baptism. This theme deepens our Lenten reflections on water, and we'll talk about our life's dependence on the Water Cycle. Pastor Shaun preaches, "If You Knew the Gift of God." And, we observe a Rite of Confession with members of *The Way* process, acknowledging our love for the way of Jesus and asking forgiveness for the ways we find following him difficult.

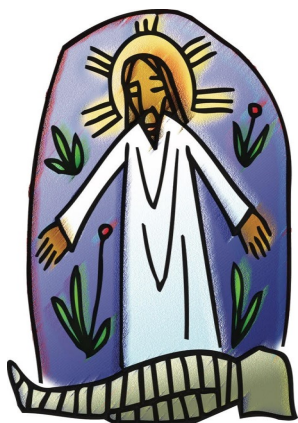
March 19th - Fourth Sunday in Lent

The gospel for this Sunday is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. "I was blind, now I see," declares the man. Our Chancel Choir sings this Sunday, a Lenten hymn that yearns for the blessing of our coming Easter. They sing, "Seed that in Earth is Dying." We observe a Rite of Renunciation of False Worship with members of *The Way* process.



March 26th - First Sunday in Lent

Worshippers, come forth! It's the gospel story of the raising Lazarus from the dead. The prophet Ezekiel prophesies God breathing new life into dry bones. To those in exile or living in the shadows of death, these stories proclaim God's promise of resurrection. In baptism we die with Christ that we might also be raised with him to new life. As we look toward the Easter Vigil, a deep welcoming of the gift of baptism, we observe a Rite of Commitment with members of *The Way* process.



FAITH IN ACTION



Lenten Soup Supper

5 to 6pm, on Wednesdays in March. Join us as we gather for a simple dinner of soup and bread. All are welcome, bring a friend! The sign-up sheet for providing soup for the Lenten Soup Suppers is located on the bulletin board in the Nathex. **CHEFS NEEDED!!!**

Lenten Evening Prayer - 6 to 6:30pm, on Wednesdays in March. All are welcome to join us after our Lenten Soup Suppers for a contemplative service of prayers and hymns.

FOOD PANTRY

Good snowy afternoon,
Here is what we did in the Food Pantry for February.
We had three food pantry Mondays and served 84 households with 177 people; 80 women, and 92 men which consisted of 36 youth, 65 adults and 76 seniors. We had 14 new people that signed up to get food at our pantry. We gave out 3027 pounds of food. We thank our volunteers who make this possible.

- Eileen Way, Food Pantry Director

Food Pantry - Mondays @ 11am - March 6th, 20th, and 27th

There will be no food pantry on March 13th

SHARED HARVEST

Items needed for the March 2023 assembly are as follows. **42 Cans of Canned Vegetables, 42 Cans of Chili, 28 Jars of Peanut Butter** (no larger than 16 oz. please), **and Toothpaste & Toothbrushes in unlimited quantities.**

Our assembly will be at 1pm on March 26th at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

-Sonja Dresbach, Shared Harvest

COMMUNITY NEWS & CONNECTIONS

Prayer Requests

Please send any prayer requests to
the prayer team at:
prayers@faithlutheranreno.org

Online Giving

For your convenience we offer an
online option at our website:
faithlutheranreno.org
Click on "Support Faith" at the top
right of the page.

Bible Study

Join us Tuesday afternoons, from 1:30p-2:30p, to read and discuss the Bible scripture for the following Sunday. This helps us prepare for the next Sunday's Service.

All are welcome!

**Visit our website at faithlutheranreno.org to join Zoom
- via phone or video -**

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

March Schedule

- **Feb 28**/for 03/05: John 3:1-7; Psalm 121; Genesis 12:1-4a; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17
- **Mar 7**/for 03/12: John 4:5-42; Psalm 95; Exodus 17:1-7; Romans 5:1-11
- **Mar 14**/for 03/19: John 9:1-41; Psalm 23; 1 Samuel 16:1-13; Ephesians 5:8-14
- **Mar 21**/for 03/26: John 11:1-45; Psalm 130; Ezekiel 37:1-14; Romans 5:1-11

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

Sunday Worship Live - Online via YouTube

To join with video, go to our website and follow the video link
(www.faithlutheranreno.org) or find us on youtube:
<https://www.youtube.com/@faithlutheran-reno>

Be sure to click on the "LIVE" tab once in YouTube

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.

ST VINCENTS IN DESPERATE NEED OF CLOTHING & BLANKETS!

Clothing, winter coats, blankets, and shoes, in any (clean) condition needed.

Household items are also appreciated!

Donation barrels are located in the hallway off of the Narthex.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

OUTREACH

Rwanda - I have heard from our sister parish in Ndego, Rwanda. Pastor Shema has had phone issues so we haven't heard from him in a while. They have purchased a speaker, soundboard and keyboard with the money we sent them and are very grateful. They have lost their electrical connections but hope to have them restored soon.



Pastor Shema shared these photos with us!



Elmcrest Elementary - We are excited to announce that Faith Lutheran is now a *Partner in Education* with Elmcrest Elementary, a nearby neighborhood school. For Lent we will be collecting items they are in need of for their students. Backpacks, girls leggings, boys socks, prepackaged snacks, glue sticks, expo markers, and kid scissors. A donation box is in the Narthex on Sundays and in the office during the rest of the week.




I have also begun training with **Foster the City**, a Christian organization which focuses on raising up Foster families and supporting them on their journey. It seems to be a well run organization that brings attention to ways we can have an impact on the lives of children and families in our community. We hope to launch this in our church this spring.

- Judi Hein, Outreach Chair

March 2023

Faith Lutheran Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 5pm Lenten Soup Supper 6pm Lenten Evening Service	2	3	4
				PASTOR SHAUN OUT - MAR 2nd - 6th		
5 9:30am Worship	6 11am Food Pantry	7 1:30p Bible Study	8 5pm Lenten Soup Supper 6pm Lenten	9	10	11
PASTOR SHAUN OUT						
12 9:30am Worship Daylight Saving Time Ends	13 FOOD PANTRY CLOSED	14 1:30p Bible Study	15 12p Finance Team 5pm Lenten Soup Supper 6pm Lenten Evening Service	16	17 5:30pm Fellowship Team St Patrick's Day 	18 10am Worship Team
19 9:30am Worship	20 11am Food Pantry 6pm Church Council Mtng	21 11:45am NARFE 1:30p Bible Study	22 5pm Lenten Soup Supper 6pm Lenten Evening Service	23 6pm Communications Team	24	25
26 9:30am Worship	27 11am Food Pantry	28 1:30p Bible Study	29 5pm Lenten Soup Supper 6pm Lenten	30	31	
				Weekly Group Meetings in the FLC Space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ ACA; Mondays at 5:30pm ◆ Sierra High Notes; Wednesdays at 6:45pm ◆ 4-H WhipStirs; 2nd Wednesday at 6:30pm ◆ Scouts; Thursdays at 7:00pm 		