

Following Faith

July Newsletter 2023



FIREWORKS OVER LAKE TAHOE

Happy 4th, Faith Lutheran! It's the month of the birthday of the United States, and what a blessing we've inherited to live in this democracy with its aim toward the "Blessing of Liberty to ourselves and our posterity" (from the Preamble to the Constitution). And what a responsibility we have to share, proclaim, and live this liberty for all!

This is a deep encouragement for me in the scriptures and in the life of the Spirit. No, I don't mean Christian Nationalism. I mean that "*Freedom*" is a key expression of the life of Christian faith. It is not especially reserved for Americans. It is beyond distinction and everywhere, near and far. Thanks be to God!

Christians turn to the letter Paul wrote to the Galatians (Modern day Ankara, Turkey) as a treatise on Christian spiritual freedom. Pauls writes, "*for you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become servants to one another*" (Galatians 5:13).

To what is a Christian made free?

It is to trust God and love God and others.

Great, right?! I know! Freedom and Love will always work on the billboard.

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LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

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Still, just as citizens might have wondered at the birthing of the United States in the 1770's, maybe we are still wondering about some details too.

What will we do? What will this freedom look like?

Well, Paul continues (I'm so, so thankful) and he outlines what kinds of things might grow from this free and faithful life. Spoiler Alert: it is the well-known Fruit of the Spirit in *Gal. 5:22-23*:

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Freedom = Fruit.

Like a healthy tree, connected to its source and bearing goodness in its living.

So, my invitation to us—within this month of which the fourth day is the celebration of our country's birth—is to contemplate the fruit of our Christian freedom. And let's reflect together! Our Adult Faith Formation class, 11am on Sundays in July and August, will look at Fruits of the Spirit and invite attendees into honest sharing about how we succeed and how we struggle with bearing this fruit in our own lives. We will look at scripture and church tradition and cultural examples too, of how these elements take shape with us.

What does love look? Patience in 2023? Gentleness in our church, neighborhoods and at home? Etc.

Mostly, I am blessed alongside you. We've been given freedoms, political and spiritual, and we've been given an opportunity to bear the fruit in the world. We know our calling together, so let's go. We are free to make our community an overflowing orchard of the fruit of the Spirit.

†Pastor Shaun O'Reilly

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings, Faith!

The council, led by the efforts of Sonja Dresbach, has been collecting bids for repairs of the parking lot and concrete fixtures (the front sidewalk, a handicap ramp, and patio). The congregation will need to decide what improvements or the extent of repairs, and then how we want to pay for those repairs. Along with the payment for the repairs, there is the question of paying off the outstanding debt from the roof repair. The congregation is currently carrying over a hundred thousand dollars in the bank, and about forty thousand dollars on the loan. We will hold a special congregational meeting to decide if we want to pay off the loan outright. The date of the meeting will be announced during the next church service. Also, the Waldorf School will be with the church for at least another two years. Their attempted purchasing of the old Episcopal Church 7th Street, fell through. With their continued presence, we will be looking at potential shared projects for shared land use, like a playground. That's all for now.

- Benjamin Pesis, Council President

IN WORSHIP THIS MONTH

July 2 - Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

The welcome of baptism is for all God's children. This baptismal gift sets us free from the power of sin and death. In today's gospel, Christ promises that the disciple who gives a cup of cold water to the little ones serves Christ himself. From worship we are sent on our baptismal mission: to serve the little ones of this world and to be a sign of God's merciful welcome.



July 9 - Sixth Sunday after Pentecost



We are ever-met by the comfort of Jesus. Today he says, "Come to me you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." His rest is peace, and Jesus promises that the disappointments of the world (whether expectations projected on us by other people or our own own limitations or needs) do not have the last word. Even death does not get the last word! Life, love, and the embrace of God await us at the end of each pathway and welcome us home.

July 16 - Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Sarah Toney, MDiv, preaches this day!

Come and support this recent graduate; she is now a candidate for ordained ministry in the ELCA.

The parable of the sower--generous with seed; and the joy of creation! "So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty" - Isaiah 55.



July 23 - Eighth Sunday after Pentecost



With the apostle Paul we reflect that true spirituality means experiencing the reality of the Spirit, which enables us to pray as God's children, keeps us in solidarity with creation, and gives us unseen hope that God will liberate us and creation from bondage to death and decay.

The Choir sings an Anthem!

July 30 - Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Outdoor Worship! (bring lawn chairs and hats, if you like). Throughout Matthew's gospel, Jesus and his disciples proclaim the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near!" Here, Jesus offers several brief parables that explore the implications of this announcement for people's lives. And in Romans Paul proclaims: "nothing will separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus!"



CONGREGATION ACTIVITIES

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

July Schedule

- No Jul 04 Mtng**/for 07/09: Matt 11:16-19, 25-30; Ps 145:8-14; Zech 9:9-12; Rom 7:5-25a
- Jul 11**/for 07/16: Matt 13:1-9, 18-23; Psalm 65:[1-8], 9-13; Isa 55:10-13; Rom 8:1-11
- Jul 18**/for 07/23: Matt 13:24-30; Psalm 86:11-17; Isa 44:6-8; Rom 8:12-25
- Jul 23**/for 07/30: Matt 13:31-33, 44-52; Psalm 119:129-136; 1 Kings 3:5-12; Rom 8:26-39

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.

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.

CONGREGATION ACTIVITIES

Adult Faith Formation Forum - "How Lutherans Interpret the Bible"

Wednesdays in July - 6pm in the Fireside Room

Adult Faith Formation continues again on Wednesday nights at 6pm. Join us!

Continuing through July we will walk through "*How Lutherans Interpret the Bible*" with Mark Allen Powell. Powell is a Lutheran scholar that put together video presentations years ago, and Pr Stan Pesis will host the group interacting with these ideas. Bring your questions and your experiences as we explore topics like "the Word of God," "Where the Bible Comes from," "Bible in Context," "Determining Right from Wrong," "The Many Meanings of the Bible," and ... whatever else comes up along the way!

Continuing in July @ 6pm
Bring a bible and join us!



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 Pastor Shaun O'Reilly

JUNE FOOD PANTRY REPORT

We had three food pantry Mondays for June.

We served 215 people from 98 households.

For the three Mondays we served a total of 391 people; 36 were youth, 82 adults and 88 seniors and 9 unknown; 99 men and 111 women and 5 unknown.

We gave out **3613** pounds of food for the month.

-Eileen Way, Food Pantry Director

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Faith Lutheran Chancel Choir sings again on Sunday, July 23rd.

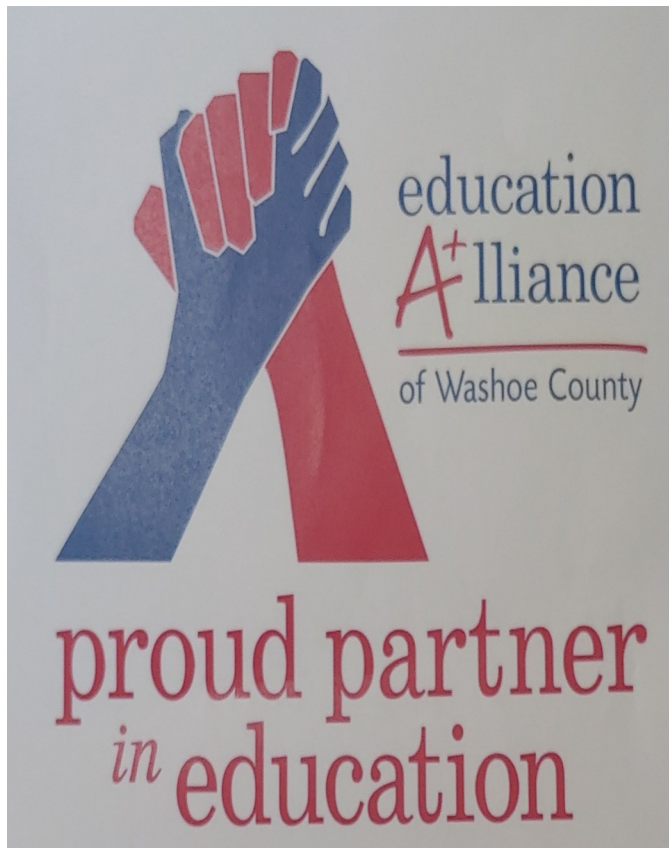
All are welcome, all levels!

Contact Riley if you'd like to be involved. rcloyd@nevada.unr.edu



OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ongoing in our community!



- Judi Hein, Outreach Chair




We will be collecting these school supplies for Elmcrest Elementary School until August 13. They are a neighborhood school that we are a partnership with. These items will help children have a successful start to the next school year.

- ◆ Expo dry erase markers/erasers
- ◆ Colored pencils
- ◆ Index cards
- ◆ Crayons
- ◆ Glue
- ◆ Glue sticks
- ◆ Paint brushes



July 2023

Faith Lutheran Church

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|--|--|-----|-----|----------------------------|
| 2 9:30am Worship | 3 11am Food Pantry | 4  Independence Day | 5 NO LUNCH BUNCH 6-7:30p HOW LUTHERANS INTERPRET THE BIBLE | 6 | 7 | 1 8 10a Worship Team |
| 9 9:30am Worship | 10 11am Food Pantry | 11 1:30pm Bible Study | 12 6-7:30p HOW LUTHERANS INTERPRET THE BIBLE | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 9:30am Worship | 17 11am Food Pantry 6pm Council Meeting | 18 11:45a NARFE 1:30pm Bible Study | 19 NO Finance Team Meeting 6-7:30p HOW LUTHERANS INTERPRET THE BIBLE | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 9:30am Worship | 24 11am Food Pantry | 25 1:30pm Bible Study | 26 6-7:30p HOW LUTHERANS INTERPRET THE BIBLE | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 9:30am Worship Outdoor Worship | 31 11am Food Pantry | Pr Shaun Out Aug 5 - Aug 12 | | | | |

Weekly Group Meetings in the FLC Space

- ◆ ACA; Mondays at 5:30pm
- ◆ Sierra High Notes; **Summer Break thru August**
- ◆ 4-H WhipStirs; 2nd Wednesday at 6:30pm
- ◆ Scouts; Thursdays at 7:00pm