

# FOLLOWING FAITH NEWSLETTER

Faith Lutheran Church

July 2026



Dear Friends of Faith,

As an article this month I'm sharing a reflection from our presiding bishop, the Rev. Yehiel Curry. With the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence upon us, Bishop Curry offers a word that is both genuinely celebratory and grounded in reality— holding gratitude and confession together. It's a timely piece, and worth reading carefully as we head into the holiday weekend. Here's a word about this country and our church! Peace, Pr Shaun

All Together in One Place

June 23, 2026

America at 250: Holding gratitude and humility

Dear church,

As we look toward the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, many of us will celebrate with fireworks, parades and barbecues. Independence Day often brings us together with family and friends. Yet there is more that connects us than our communal celebrations. We are also connected through a common vision.

Signed in 1776, the Declaration of Independence proclaims a vision of equality for all people. While there were other nations pushing for equality at the time, the declaration was and is a monumental document in the way it names the aspiration so boldly. As we observe and celebrate the 250th anniversary of that signing, we also affirm the vision of freedom and equality it casts. We can be grateful.

And with contrition and humility, we acknowledge all the ways we have failed to embody that vision. As members of this church, we are called to “pray, participate in, and advocate for civic life in the United States that reflects God’s activity and call, which seek both the well-being of all people and a creation marked by justice and peace” (ELCA social statement [Faith and Civic Life](#), p. 89).

As Lutherans, we know the importance of naming realities for what they are. As citizens, we confess the ways we have not yet realized the vision of the Declaration of Independence and, more importantly, as Christians we confess the ways we have participated in or been complicit in failures to live into the vision God provides. This vision is rooted in creation and redemption. God crafts each person in God’s own image and sends Jesus Christ to redeem us, setting us free to follow Christ’s new commandment to love one another.

The history of the United States is complex, and all too often we have fallen short of our stated values. Indigenous peoples across this land have been forced to cede their ancestral homes and pushed to reservations. Women and men have been prevented from voting because of their sex and race and spat on and jailed when they demanded their rights. Japanese American families were interned during World War II. Queer and transgender people’s lives are obstructed by federal and state orders.

There is a photograph of Elizabeth Eckford, one of the nine Black teenagers who integrated Little Rock Central High School in Little Rock, Ark., in 1957. Books under her arm, she faces forward as angry white people crowd behind her. She was just trying to go to school.

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Holding both the failures and the vision in our hearts and minds, I invite us to ask ourselves, “What does it mean to celebrate a promise that is real and yet still unfolding? What does it mean to be a people who always live in ‘the already but not yet’”?

This is a central question for us not only as we mark the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence but also in our daily lives as people of faith. The prophets repeatedly remind us of the vision God casts for all of creation, and they call us to account when, as God’s own people, we fall short.

When we fall short, we remember we are rooted in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We think, speak and live out faith through God’s future. God’s future is resurrection. As a church, we are turned not only to the past but to the future God is making possible right now through us as we love and serve others.

As Lutheran Christians, we believe that God calls us to:

- Remember our connection to each other through baptism, as Scripture teaches us: “We, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another” (Romans 12:5).
- Name sin for what it really is and to repent of it, as the Augsburg Confession and the catechisms remind us.
- Serve the common good in society as “earthly measures toward God’s intention” (Faith and Civic Life, p. 11).

As we celebrate 250 years of the Declaration of Independence, we can hold gratitude and humility, possibilities and shortcomings. We continue to live in the already and the not-yet.

And we hold fast to the most important promise of all: the presence of God with us, the power of the resurrection of Christ, the accompaniment of the Holy Spirit and the ever-unfolding grace of God.

We celebrate this occasion neither as a perfect nation nor as a perfect church but as a people held in God’s grace and called into community in service to all neighbors and for the sake of the world God so loves.

In Christ,

The Rev. Yehiel Curry

Presiding Bishop

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

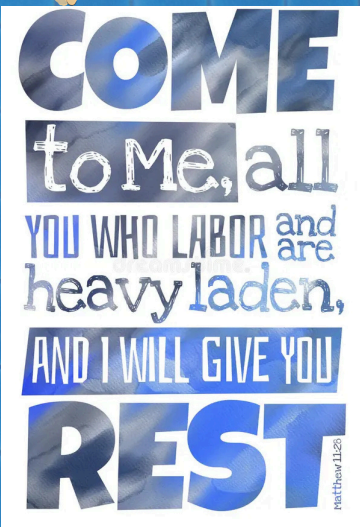
# IN WORSHIP THIS MONTH



## Sunday, July 5th - 6th Sunday after Pentecost

The mystery of God's ways is sometimes hidden from the wise and intelligent. Jesus associates with those often excluded from the religious community. Like Paul, we struggle with our own selfish desires and seek God's mercy and forgiveness. We gather to be refreshed by Christ's invitation: "Come to me, all you that are weary." Gathered around word, water, and meal, we find rest for our souls.

**We'll sing one of the best-known hymns in the English language:** "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee." Beethoven's melody from the final movement of his 9th Symphony accompanies text written by Henry Van Dyke as he was admiring the Berkshire mountains while guest preaching in Williamstown, Massachusetts in 1907.



## Sunday July 12th - 7th Sunday after Pentecost

Into the sections of Matthew where Jesus is telling parables, we engage multiple stories this Sunday. They reveal God bringing forth life where there is only death in every direction. Cypress and myrtle trees rise up in the place of thorns and briars (Isa. 55:13). "Christ Jesus has set [us] free from the law of sin and of death," and the life-giving Spirit dwells in us (Rom. 8:2, 10). The **parable of the sower** elicits reflection, repentance, and, ultimately, new life from its readers and hearers in considering the sort of spiritual life we practice.

\***Congregational Meeting this Day** — (See page --- (where we put the announcement of it)

## Sunday July 19th - 8th Sunday after Pentecost

In the parable of the **wheat and the weeds** we enter into the age-old wondering: why is there evil in the world? In his story, Jesus suggests that both the wheat and weeds grow together until the harvest. Having both within us, we humbly place our hope in the promises of God, and from the Lord's table we go forth to bear the fruit of justice and mercy.



## Sunday July 26th - 9th Sunday after Pentecost

As in the Sermon on the Mount, so in the third discourse in chapter 13, the evangelist has grouped many small sayings into one long coordinated passage about righteousness that is hidden. We hear it in stories of the mustard seed, the leaven, the buried treasure, the pearl, and the fish net. Matthew is continuing his caution concerning a community too prone to judgment.

\***The Choir Sings this Day!**



# SERVING OTHERS

## How I Became the Kitchen Lady by Jean C

Covid was a horrible time for all of us. When we were told by the C.D.C. churches could meet again, we had to wear masks, no physical contact. No unwrapped refreshments at church. We still had our old kitchen. Our countertops had broken pieces on them leaving exposed particle board. I noticed no regular cleaning was taking place. The CDC was saying Covid could be on surfaces. I was freaked out at the fact that it could be live in church and on the counters. I asked if there was a regular cleaning team for the kitchen. No one was designated.

One Sunday I was praying to God, asking what I could do. I felt an answer. Take charge of the kitchen! Make sure it's sanitized as good as one can. So, I started wiping the counters twice a week with strong disinfectants. I wiped everything down — the stoves, freezer, and our one refrigerator. I started making coffee and preparing the paper goods, filling the utensils, napkins, and more. I don't know if it helped. But no one got Covid during that time. We were still wearing our masks. We didn't share the peace during service. I am sure that was a help.

It is my hope to have a Kitchen Team. If you hear God's voice, act on it. Wouldn't that be great?

## Shared Harvest

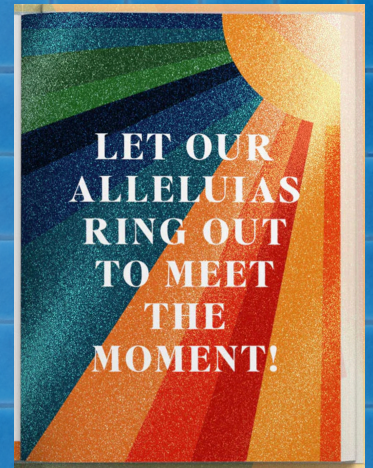


**Shared Harvest July 26th at Lord of Holy Cross Reno at 1pm**  
The needs are: 55 **Canned vegetables** | 42 **Mac n Cheese** | 42 **Saltine Cracker pkts**  
27 **Cold Cereal** | **Unlimited Deodorant** | 1 **box of quart zip-lock plastic bags**

Thank you for your generosity to those in need in our community!  
Contact Tom L. for more details.



Dear Faith Lutheran,  
Thank you for continuous support at Elmcrest. We appreciate all you do for us & look forward to our continued partnership!  
The Elmcrest Staff





# FELLOWSHIP



Faith's Supper Club | Thursday at  
July 23rd Location: **Cheesecake Factory**  
5162 Meadowood Mall Circle  
Time: 4:30 PM

**July takes us to the Patio at the  
Cheesecake Factory.  
Bring a jacket or sweater just in case  
the temperature dips.**

Come join us for good food and  
fellowship.

Sign-up sheet is in the Narthex.  
Hope to see you there!

Jean C



## Our Table

A family tree may not connect us,  
just a booth, a plate, a prayer—  
souls who've walked the same road long,  
grateful to be there.  
Same faith, familiar faces,  
pass the rolls, pass the laughter—  
there's always room for one more chair.

# Save THE Date



**A Special Congregational  
Meeting following worship  
Sunday, July 12th.**

We have an exciting opportunity  
to open our doors to a local  
congregation (Kindred Church)  
so they have worship space and  
so we can engage in a shared  
children's ministry. A special  
committee has been exploring  
key questions and ideas on this  
for the past few months and we'll  
consider their suggestions on  
moving forward.





# OUTREACH

# FAITH FORMATION

Beat the summer heat with a little holiday cheer! Bring the whole family for an afternoon of music, crafts, games, and treats — Christmas spirit meets summer fun.



Live Christmas Concert



Crafts



Games



Snow cones (because it's Christmas... in July!)

**Saturday, July 25th | 3:00–5:00 PM**

All kids and families welcome — come cool off and celebrate!



## Attention Young Adults!

YOU'RE INVITED TO TWO BIBLE STUDIES THIS MONTH:

\* YOUNG ADULTS PUB THEOLOGY EVERY 1ST THURSDAY AT 7PM AT 10 TORR ON MILL ST. NEXT EVENT **JULY 3RD**

\* YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY EVERY 3RD THURSDAY AT 7PM AT FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH. NEXT MEETING WILL BE **JULY 16TH**.

SEE SOPHIA OR SHAUN FOR QUESTIONS OR DETAILS.



### Tuesday Bible Readers by Eileen W.

This group meets on **Tuesdays at 1:30** in the back of the sanctuary.

We read and discuss the lectionary for the following Sunday. You can also join this group on zoom. This is a good way to read the Bible daily and prepare yourself for Sunday.

To find the Lectionary passages Augsburg Fortress puts them in a book *Bread for the Day 2026*. It is a daily Bible Reading and Prayer Book. You can purchase it from Augsburg Fortress or from Amazon.



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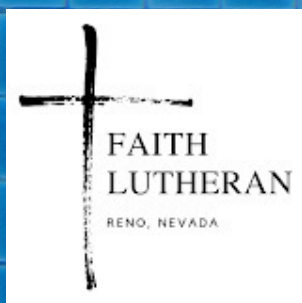
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
			Trinity Lutheran Church staying from June 26th through July 2nd No Lunch Bunch	Scouts 7pm Young Adults Pub Theology 7pm		
5	6	7	8	9		11
9:30am Worship 10:50am Kid's Place 11am Adult Forum	ACA 5:30 - 7:45pm	Bible Study 1:30pm	Memory Care Support 1:30-3pm	Grief Support Group 10:30am Finance Meeting 12pm No Scouts		Worship Team Meeting 10am
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9:30am Worship 10:50am Kid's Place 11am Adult Forum Special Congregational Meeting	ACA 5:30 - 7:45pm	Bible Study 1:30pm		No Scouts Young Adults Bible Study 7pm		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9:30am Worship 10:50am Kid's Place 11am Adult Forum	ACA 5:30 - 7:45pm Council Meeting 6pm	Bible Study 1:30pm		Grief Support Group 10:30am Faith's Supper Club 4:30pm Scouts 7pm		Christmas in July   3:00-5:00 PM
26	27	28	29	30	31	
9:30am Worship 10:50am Kid's Place 11am Adult Forum	ACA 5:30 - 7:45pm	Bible Study 1:30pm		Grief Support Group 10:30am Scouts 7pm		

## Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July! Let freedom ring! 250th Anniversary!

Where to go:

1. Reno has a 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade: starts at 10am on 4<sup>th</sup> street, from Vine St to University Way. The last parade in Reno was in 2008.
2. In collaboration with Reno Artown, Patriotism in the Park will feature live patriotic concerts and performances from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. As part of the all-day Independence Day celebration at Wingfield Park, you can explore The Great American Craft Fair, showcasing over 100 artisan handmade artists and vendors.
3. Star Spangled Sparks, Victorian Square in Sparks, July 4<sup>th</sup> : Centered at Sparks' Victorian Square, head down early and enjoy the patriotic celebration with food, drink, and shopping vendors starting at 4 p.m. Star Spangled Sparks will launch their fireworks show at approximately 9:30 p.m.

Fireworks can be seen at Damonte Ranch, GSR, and Victorian Square.



### **Faith Lutheran Church**

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