



CHRISTMAS IS
COMING TO
YOU!

*God Bringing
His Work to Completion*

WELCOME TO FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

Inviting all People to Faith ... Come and Worship – Go and Work

Pastor – Ben Unseth | Ministers – All

Phone: 712-580-4316 | 2912 Highway Blvd, P.O. Box 1322, Spencer, IA 51301

December 17, 2023 | 3rd Sunday in Advent

Prelude

Welcome

Prayer

Opening Song – “Goodness of God”

*Invocation

We meet in the strong name of our God;

We praise You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Confession and Forgiveness

Let us admit our debt and trust God’s sufficiency.

Merciful Friend, most Holy God, we are grateful that You love us and call us to a life of boundless opportunities and unmeasured joys. Yet around us in this world, we see a desperate search for happiness in all the wrong places.

We have allowed ourselves to become caught up in the world’s busy futility, exchanging love for selfishness, encouragement for criticism, peace for conflict and alienation, wholeness for brokenness, contentment for dissatisfaction, and joy for brief splashes of superficial pleasure.

Loving God, thank You for coming to us with the salvation that only You can give. We are the lost who need a rescuer, the sick who need a physician, the offenders who need forgiveness, and the weak who need Your transfusion.

Most gracious God, please forgive us, and have mercy upon us.

It is written of Christ: *“In Him we have redemption through His shed blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He has lavished upon us.”* Now that really is good news! Believe it, trust it, and be free of shame and anxiety. In Christ, you are forgiven!

*Prayer of the Day

Heavenly Father, You sent us Your Son to be King of our hearts. Jesus, have Lordship over every part of our lives. We praise You as the one true King. Hallelujah! Christ Jesus, our Immanuel has come. Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath and Prayer – Joy

Song – “He Came Down”

New Testament Lesson – Philippians 1:6

*Gospel – John 8:31-36

Children’s Message

Song – “Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”

Sermon – “God Bringing His Work to Completion”

Song – “Amazing Grace”

*Affirmation of Faith – The Apostle’s Creed

Prayers of the Church

Sharing of the Peace

Holy Communion

*Words of Institution for Holy Communion

*The Lord’s Prayer

Distribution Songs

“Jesus, Thank You”

“Nothing but the Blood of Jesus”

*Blessing

*Closing Song – “Noel”

Go in Peace to Love and Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**Please stand if you are able.*

Welcome to Faith Lutheran!

Live Stream: youtube.com/@flcspencer | Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

Office hours: 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Monday - Friday | 712-580-4316 | office@flcspencer.org

www.flcspencer.org | Facebook: Faith Lutheran Church LCMC | Instagram: @flcspencer

Watch us on SMU: Monday @ 8:30 p.m. and Tuesday @ 11:00 a.m.

Text your giving to Faith at 712-214-4317

New Testament Lesson – Philippians 1:6

⁶ Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Gospel – John 8:31-36

³¹ To the Jews who had believed Him, Jesus said, “If you hold to My teaching, you are really My disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

³³ They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?” ³⁴ Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. ³⁵ Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

Guest Speaker Today ... Josh Smith!

Josh & Whitney Smith and children, Jayda, Jonah and Jordyn are members of Faith Lutheran that serve God in Uganda. They are currently back in the States speaking to congregations in the Midwest.

Josh and Whitney, along with their three children, are serving as missionaries to the people of Uganda in Africa. They work with the sending agency International Messengers (IM), which has been operating as an independent, nonprofit mission organization since 1989. In an effort to involve lay people and impact local churches, IM created a ministry concept called Evangelistic English Language Camps. The number of people involved in these English camp teams has grown annually from 15 in the beginning to over 200 at present. This concept continues to expand into medical, nursing, educational and professional English camps.

The Smith family primarily ministers to the community of Pawel, Uganda. There, they work with a school for children without parents, many of whom are refugees from other nations. They are also in the process of building a high school for their older students. As the Smith family works to serve God wherever they go and whoever they meet, let’s remember Josh and Whitney and their family in our prayers and ask God’s blessings and protection over them.



Advent & Christmas Schedule

Wednesday, Dec. 20

5:30 p.m. Advent Potluck ~ Please bring a dish to share.

6:30 p.m. Midweek Service with Alice Nielsen

Sunday, Dec. 24 ~ 4th Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve

9:00 a.m. Regular Worship Service

5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service

Sunday, Dec. 31 ~ New Year's Eve

9:00 a.m. Regular Worship Service

2nd Annual Reverse Advent Calendar!

A Reverse Advent Calendar is fun & caring because we are “giving” rather than “receiving.” Each day in December, a person, a group, or family participating will set aside a non-perishable food item, 24 items in all.

No home canned products, please, due to health and safety concerns.

Participants can collect the items day-by-day & bring them to church weekly, or collect all 24 items before bringing them to church.

There is an area for the items on the east side of the worship area by the library. If you have any questions, please call Alice Nielsen at 712-363-1380.

Some suggested items are:

December 17 Pasta

December 18 Pasta sauce

December 19 Soup

December 20 Canned corn

December 21 Canned green beans

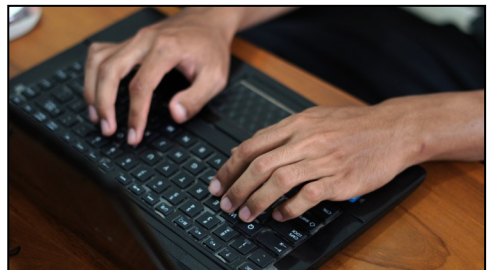
December 22 Catsup or mustard

December 23 Hamburger helper

December 24 Ravioli or SpaghettiOs

Church Council Members

2023 Year-End reports are due now to the Church Office. If you haven't turned in your report, please do so today!





Hat and Mitten Christmas Tree

The Missions Team has set up their hat and mitten Christmas tree near the tech booth. You are asked to help out those in need by bringing either a pair of mittens or a hat, or both! All hats and mittens will go to Grand Avenue Community Outreach and Upper Des Moines Opportunity.

Item of the Month ~

Bath Towels

(minimum size: 20x40”/
maximum size: 52x27”)



These are part of a Personal Care Kit. The simple items

included in these kits provide much needed self-care, critical germ fighting, and the chance to regain dignity amidst situations of fear and uncertainty. These kits remind recipients of God’s loving presence and that there are other people in the world who care. They give hope.

Donated items for both Lutheran World Relief and Upper Des Moines Opportunity can be put in the yellow Missions box near the front doors.



Upper Des Moines Opportunity Food Pantry is in need of the following items for our community:

Canned tuna or chicken,
hamburger helper, shampoo

SMU Holiday Rebroadcast Schedules

Because of Christmas and New Year's Day holidays, SMU has changed the day and time it rebroadcasts our Monday services. Tuesday’s services remains unchanged.

Monday, Dec. 25, has been moved to Thursday, Dec. 28 at 5:30 p.m.

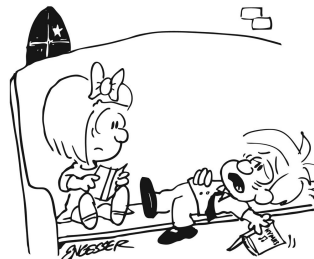
Monday, Jan. 1, 2024, has been moved to Thursday, Jan. 4, at 5:30 p.m.

Faith's normal rebroadcast days and times are Mondays at 8:30 p.m. and Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m.

SMU’s rebroadcast schedules return to normal as of Monday, Jan. 8.

Name and Date Please!

If you put something in the refrigerators that you would like to keep, please put your name and date on the item. The first of each month, someone will go through the refrigerators, cleaning them out.



“That last ‘Glo-ooo-oooh-oooh-oooh-oooh-oooh-oooh-oooria’ about did me in.”

Register Now for Via de Cristo

Now is the time to register for either the men's or women's Via de Cristo. You can register online at [2024 Via de Cristo Pilgrim Application.pdf](#)

Men's Via de Cristo

Thursday, Jan. 11, 7:00 p.m. – Sunday, Jan. 14, 4:00 p.m.

Women's Via de Cristo

Thursday, Jan. 18, 7:00 p.m. – Sunday, Jan. 21, 4:00 p.m.

For more information, please see Justin Spieker (712-260-2414) or Rachel Simington (712-363-0663).

What is Via de Cristo?

A Spanish phrase meaning "Way of Christ," Via de Cristo is a 3-day weekend designed to strengthen and renew the faith of Christian people and bring them to a new awareness of living in God's grace. The weekend is designed to inspire, challenge and equip people for Christian action in their homes, churches and communities. For more on Via de Cristo, please go to www.iowavdc.com



Prayer Chain

*No matter what we are going through,
Jesus knows! He hears our prayers.
Let us pray with you.*

Please send your prayer request to
Dave & Linda Susie at
712-363-1130 or djslrs74@yahoo.com

or to

Doreen Scribner at 712-262-3488 or
doreenscribner@outlook.com

To be placed on Sunday morning's Prayers of the Church, please contact the Church Office at 712-580-4316 or office@flcspencer.org

*Christmas will be here soon!
Need a stocking stuffer?*

2024 God's Creation wall calendars are available for \$10.00 at the back of the church!

Make checks payable to Faith Lutheran and earmark them "Youth Calendars."



12th Annual Three Days of Prayer ~ January 2-4

Prayer was a holy habit practiced by Jesus Himself. Mark 1:35 says “*Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.*” The disciples who walked alongside Him witnessed a connection between His public life and ministry, and this habit of prayer. It was a connection so significant, that they asked Jesus to teach them to pray (Luke 11:1).



LCMC's Three Days of Prayer on January 2-4 is an opportunity for us to follow the Lord's example and to come together as an association of congregations across the U.S. and around the world to pray. www.lcmc.net/three-days-of-prayer

JANUARY 2 – CONFESSION ~ Read and pray using Psalm 130

JANUARY 3 – PETITIONS ~ Read and pray using Psalm 119

JANUARY 4 – VISION ~ Read and pray Psalm 62 and Psalm 67

In Person



Use the Blessing Box in back at service time!

Drop Off

- ◆ Use our drop box located on the wall by the south-facing entry doors
- ◆ Drop it off with the church office during office hours (9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.)



Online Giving

Go to: <http://bit.ly/33RXUbH> please follow instructions!

Mail-In



Mail your offering:

Faith Lutheran, P.O. Box 1322, Spencer, IA 51301

at Faith Lutheran

WAYS to **GIVE**

Thank you to today's worship partners ...

Altar Prep: Gene & Patty Englin
Advent Wreath Lighting & Prayer:
 Kevin, Heidi, Lydia, Rachel, & Caleb Skadeland
Children's Message: Alice Nielsen
Communion Servers:
 Justin Spieker, Kevin Swancutt
Counters: Barb Solberg, Jolynne Eilts
Fellowship & Set-Up:
 Larry & Shirley Nelson
Greeters/Ushers: Cindy Essick, Kevin Swancutt
Instrumentalists: Elliana Antoine, Gloria McKenney, Evan Storley, Anna Quanbeck

Message: Josh Smith
Prayer Intercessors:
 Jake & Karen Jacobson
 Sara DeWitt, Shirley Kooker
Prayers of the Church:
 Dennis DeWitt
Scripture Reader: Joy Kelsch
Camera: Kent Heazlett
Computer: Brittany Spieker
Sound: Cheryl Stueven
Lead Tech: Jacob Weeks
Vocalists: Whitney Gray, Lauren Rouse, Trisha Rohmiller, Corbin Maaland
Worship Leader: Matt Essick

Worship partners for Wednesday, December 20

Altar Prep: Altar Prep Team
Advent Potluck: Justin Spieker, Laura Hamann, Lita Butler
Advent Wreath Lighting & Prayer:
 Haley Eilts, Annabelle Simington
Counters: Larry Wigen, Becky Simons
Greeters/Ushers: Gavin Patten and mentor, Troy Rosendahl

Instrumentalist: Gloria McKenney
Message: Alice Nielsen
Scripture Reader: Nolan Kelley
Camera: Becky Simons
Computer: Brittany Spieker
Sound: Brett Eilts
Lead Tech: Jacob Weeks
Worship Leader: Pastor Ben Unseth

Birthday blessings to ...

Dec. 17	<i>Cherie Banks, Marci Sandven, Carl Simons</i>
Dec. 18	<i>Jerome Christianson, Del Christman, Syndee Patten</i>
Dec. 20	<i>Ross Kreutner</i>
Dec. 22	<i>Kyle Rouse</i>
Dec. 23	<i>Cayann Knoer</i>

Anniversary Blessings to ...

Dec. 17	<i>Pete & Andrea Crew</i>
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**Worship partners for 9:00 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 24 ~
4th Sunday in Advent**

Altar Prep: Altar Prep Team

Advent Wreath Lighting & Prayer:

Lance, Jalyce, Evan, Isaac, Aaron
& Owen Storley

Children's Message: Troy Rosendahl

Counters: Greg Lear, Jolene Hansen

Fellowship & Set-up:

Dave & Linda Susie

Greeters/Ushers:

Troy & Anne Rosendahl

Instrumentalists: Leah Kreutner,

Gloria McKenney, Evan Storley,
Anna Quanbeck

Message: Pastor Ben Unseth

Prayers of the Church: Lisa Buchan

Scripture Reader: Bill Neiderheiser



Camera: Kent Heazlett

Computer: Brittany Spieker

Sound: Cheryl Stueven

Lead Tech: Jacob Weeks

Vocalists: Whitney Gray,
Trisha Rohmiller, Lauren Rouse,
Corbin Maaland

Worship Leader: Matt Essick

**Worship partners for 5:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 24
Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service**

Altar Prep: Altar Prep Team

Advent Wreath Lighting & Prayer:

Mike, Sara, Savannah, Sierra &
Sophia Ruhs

Children's Message: Dodo & Emu

Communion Servers:

Dave & Sharon Simington,
Ross & Beth Brockshus

Counters: Becky Simons

Greeters, Ushers, Candlelighters:

Dave & Barb Solberg
Andy, Laura, Brayden &
Koltun Yungbluth

Eli, Sara & Jeffrey Franker

Instrumentalists: Carolyn Dundas,

Gloria McKenney, Jared Hansen,
Anna Quanbeck

Message:

Pastor Ben Unseth

Prayer Intercessors:

Steve Quattlebaum,
Dennis Larson,
Keith & Diane Van Kleek

Prayers of the Church:

Justin Spieker

Scripture Reader: Cryss Quanbeck

Camera: Becky Simons

Computer: Cheryl Stueven

Sound: Jacob Weeks

Lead Tech: Jacob Weeks

Vocalists: Cassie & Riley Simcox,
Rachel & Annabelle Simington

Worship Leader: Greg Lear





meet **our** STAFF

Pastor Ben Unseth
pastor@flcspencer.org

Church Administrator: Becky Fear-Hatting
admin@flcspencer.org

Finance Coordinator: Carolyn Dundas
finance@flcspencer.org

Worship & Communications Director:
Gloria McKenney, worship@flcspencer.org
media@flcspencer.org

Custodian: Rich Stueven
custodian@flcspencer.org

Stephen Ministry and Visitation Director &
Lay Pastor at Zion Lutheran Church,
Ruthven: Eric Patten, eric@flcspencer.org

Office Assistant: Cheryl Stueven
office@flcspencer.org

LifeKids Director: Cheryl Jackson
director@lifekidsspencer.com

Technology Coordinator: Jacob Weeks
tech@flcspencer.org

Guest Connection Card

Dear visitors, we are glad you are worshiping with us today! We'd love to connect with you. Please share your contact information, and a member of Faith will be in touch with you soon.

Please put this form in the offering kiosk at the back of the church. – Thank you!

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

I'd like to ...

- Visit with the Pastor.
- Learn about becoming a member.
- Hear more about opportunities at Faith.
- Hear about joining a small group.

Thanks for worshiping with us!

2023 GENERAL OFFERING AND ATTENDANCE

BUDGET: \$413,959.25

To meet our 2023 budget and fulfill our financial commitments, Faith needs to receive \$65,291.62 by the end of the year, which amounts to \$21,763.87 each week.

Thank you for your continued generosity!

2023	Attendance	Live Stream Computers	General Giving	Year to Date	Needed to Make Budget
November	168	22	\$25,091.00	\$310,810.63	\$103,148.62
Dec. 1-3	193	19	\$10,280.00	\$321,164.63	\$92,794.62
Dec. 4-10	223	25	\$29,410.00	\$348,667.63	\$65,291.62

This Week at Faith!

Today - Sunday, December 17 – 3rd Sunday of Advent

- 8:00 a.m. Worship Musician and Vocalist Rehearsal
- 9:00 a.m. Worship with Josh Smith
- 10:15 a.m. Fellowship
- 10:20 a.m. Children's Sunday School
- 10:30 a.m. Adult Discipleship in the SON Room

Monday, December 18

- 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. LifeKids After School Program

Tuesday, December 19

- 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. LifeKids After School Program
- 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. Team Restoration Christian Counseling – 515-238-9010

Wednesday, December 20

- 11:00 a.m. Staff meeting
- 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. LifeKids After School Program
- 5:30 p.m. Advent Potluck
- 6:30 p.m. Advent Midweek Worship: Guest Speaker Alice Nielsen
Confirmation
- 7:00 p.m. Worship Vocalist Rehearsal
High School Youth Group

Thursday, December 21

- 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Team Restoration Christian Counseling – 515-238-9010
- 9:00 a.m. Thursday Morning Coffee Fellowship
- 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. LifeKids After School Program

Friday, December 22

- 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Team Restoration Christian Counseling – 515-238-9010
- 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. LifeKids After School Program

Saturday, December 23

- 7:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study

Upcoming Events!

- December 24** 9:00 a.m. Regular Worship Service
- 5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service

Please contact the church office (712-580-4316) for a current calendar of events.

Or, check the online calendar at www.faithlutheranspencer.com/events