

# Mountain *Mover*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH | DECEMBER 2020

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

### Scattered Thoughts

by Rev. Kerry Nelson, p. 2

### Two Sides of Advent

by Dr. Clayton Faulkner, p. 6

### Celebrating 75 Years at Faith Lutheran Church

p. 7

### Mountains Be Made Low

by Rev. Junfeng Tan, p. 9

### News from the Children's Ministry

by Courtney Lerch, p. 11

### Holiday Reasoning

by John Vickery, p. 12

### A Message from the Council President

by Yvonne Moody, p. 13

## Advent and Christmas at Faith

We continue to worship virtually every Sunday during Advent AND we are providing two additional opportunities each Wednesday. At noon, we are offering an Advent Devotional worship service (that will also be archived and available to use anytime via our website). And, at 7:30 PM, we will livestream "Holden Evening Prayer" using ZOOM. You should be able to access both services from our church Facebook page as well.

On Sunday, December 13, we will continue our annual tradition of "**Lessons & Carols**" with encore presentations from previous years.

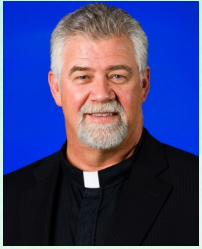
On Sunday, December 20, our children will be sharing their annual **Christmas Pageant** at the conclusion of 8:30 AM worship during Virtual Family Learning.

Our **Christmas Eve** worship service will be available throughout the day on Thursday, December 24 so you can gather and participate together with your family whenever you wish. Take our quick survey about an outdoor Christmas Eve gathering (page 5).



# Scattered Thoughts

by Rev. Kerry Nelson, Senior Pastor



*In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.*

*But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."*

*And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" Luke 2:8-14*

(I don't know how many of you read the Daily Devotions that I (sometimes) write. If you don't, you can easily subscribe. Just go to [www.revkerry.com](http://www.revkerry.com) and click on a subscribe button on the side. What follows begins with the devotion I wrote on November 23.)

Back when I studied the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) in my seminary days, I don't recall much being made of the [parallels between the birth narratives of Jesus and the birth narratives of Caesar Augustus](#). Nor do I remember learning very much about the social and political environment into which Jesus (and John) were born. The information was certainly out there, but our attention was more about "looking back" to the Hebrew scriptures rather than "looking around" at the world at the time.

Obviously, things have changed over the last several decades. I welcome those changes. What some people disregard and criticize as "historical revisionism," I welcome as deeper insights, not only to how we used to look at the world, but how much more helpful those new insights are in understanding the world around us. That happens here in the story of Jesus' birth.

**Continued on next page...**

**Check out [FaithBellaire.InFellowship.com](http://FaithBellaire.InFellowship.com)!**

[InFellowship](#) is our secure and easy to use online tool that allows our members and guests to connect to what's happening at Faith. Through your online accounts, you will be able to:



## 1) Access and update your contact information

Our Privacy Settings allow individuals to determine which pieces of personal information can be viewed by others.

## 2) Search and manage group involvement

This allows group leaders to manage groups and contact members of their group and prospects to find and inquire about joining a group.

## 3) Use the church directory - You MUST OPT-IN

Allows users to opt in to have their information displayed in an online directory. All access to information is controlled by the user by configuring your privacy settings.

## 4) View your contribution statements

Once enrolled, the church office will approve the user profile and contributions will be posted to the head of household's profile.

## 5) Find a group

Click "Find a group" and "Search" to see a listing of current Learning Groups and Relational Groups. See topic descriptions, times and locations, and sign up to participate.



*The mission of Faith Lutheran Church is  
to follow Jesus in blessing the world  
with faith, hope, and love.*

**Continued...**

The two things most noticeable in today's text are the shepherds and the angelic proclamations.

From a biblical point of view, we look back to David, the Shepherd King, and immediately understand how important the announcement to the shepherds was. Jesus too would be a shepherd. Jesus too would be a King. Only his flock would change.

But from the point of view of Jesus' day, that the first announcement would be made to shepherds was scandalous. [Shepherds were the lowest workers on the social totem pole](#). They were isolated from others. They were notorious for overgrazing on land that didn't belong to them. They smelled like the sheep they watched over. They were as despised as tax collectors.

Yet it was to shepherds that the announcement of Jesus' birth first came! That might not tell us much about shepherds, but it tells us a lot about Jesus.

Then we turn to the songs of the angels. The announcement to the shepherds and the song of the angelic chorus. Every phrase in those announcements were echoes of what had long been said of Caesar Augustus. Caesar's birth was heralded by celestial portents. Caesar was the Prince of Peace, the architect of the Pax Romana. Caesar was Lord. His birth was "good news," as was every future decree he would make.

"Nope," says Luke. "Jesus is Lord."

This will be a strange year in the life of the church. We won't be able to enjoy a live Christmas pageant with all of the adorable children playing the parts of the story we are so comfortable with. Our attention is torn between pandemic and political intrigue. Maybe that is not such a bad thing. Maybe it will redirect us toward Jesus the Healer and Jesus the King. As it should.

Let us pray: Gracious Lord, you came to us in humility and vulnerability. Your birth announced to the lowest of the low, that we might immediately know that your love is for all. Use us to be the peace you promise. In Jesus' name. Amen.

The day I wrote this the pandemic numbers weren't looking good in Houston. All three key metrics were going in the wrong direction. Much depends on what happens after the Thanksgiving holiday. But I am still holding on to the hope of doing something safe in our parking lot on Christmas Eve.

Until then, I look forward to our virtual Advent worship, virtual Children's Program, and, of course, Lessons and Carols on December 13.

Be safe. Know that God loves you. And welcome the good news that Jesus is born and Jesus is Lord!



## CREATING A BRIGHT FUTURE, ONE CLEAN HOUSE AT A TIME!

Do you dread cleaning but love that fresh, organized feeling in your home? CCSC has a solution - hire a Martha's Way graduate! There is no task too big or small. Clear out those closets, wipe away the dust, and tidy up neglected corners. Graduates are ready to work on one-time projects, or standard weekly or bi-weekly cleanings.

When you hire a Martha's Way graduate, you receive an outstanding service AND you make a difference in the life of a budding entrepreneur.

Contact Ana Tappan at 713-961-3993 or visit [ccschouston.org/marthasway](http://ccschouston.org/marthasway).



CCSC

Martha's Way

## CCSC Food Pantry Drive

Christian Community Service Center is on the front lines of feeding people and meeting their basic needs. During this national COVID-19 crisis, CCSC is experiencing difficulty obtaining groceries from its distributors, so your food donations will help keep the shelves stocked.

You can drop off food donations at the following two locations:

1. Food Pantry at 3230 Mercer St. (77027) Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM and Saturdays 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM.
2. Food Pantry at 6856 Bellaire Blvd (77074) Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday from 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM, CCSC's Bellaire food pantry is located in the church's Canterbury Hall on the east side of the church campus (the same side as KIPP Connect school). Go to the blue double doors of the building closest to the athletic field.

### Here's a list of items that will help the most:

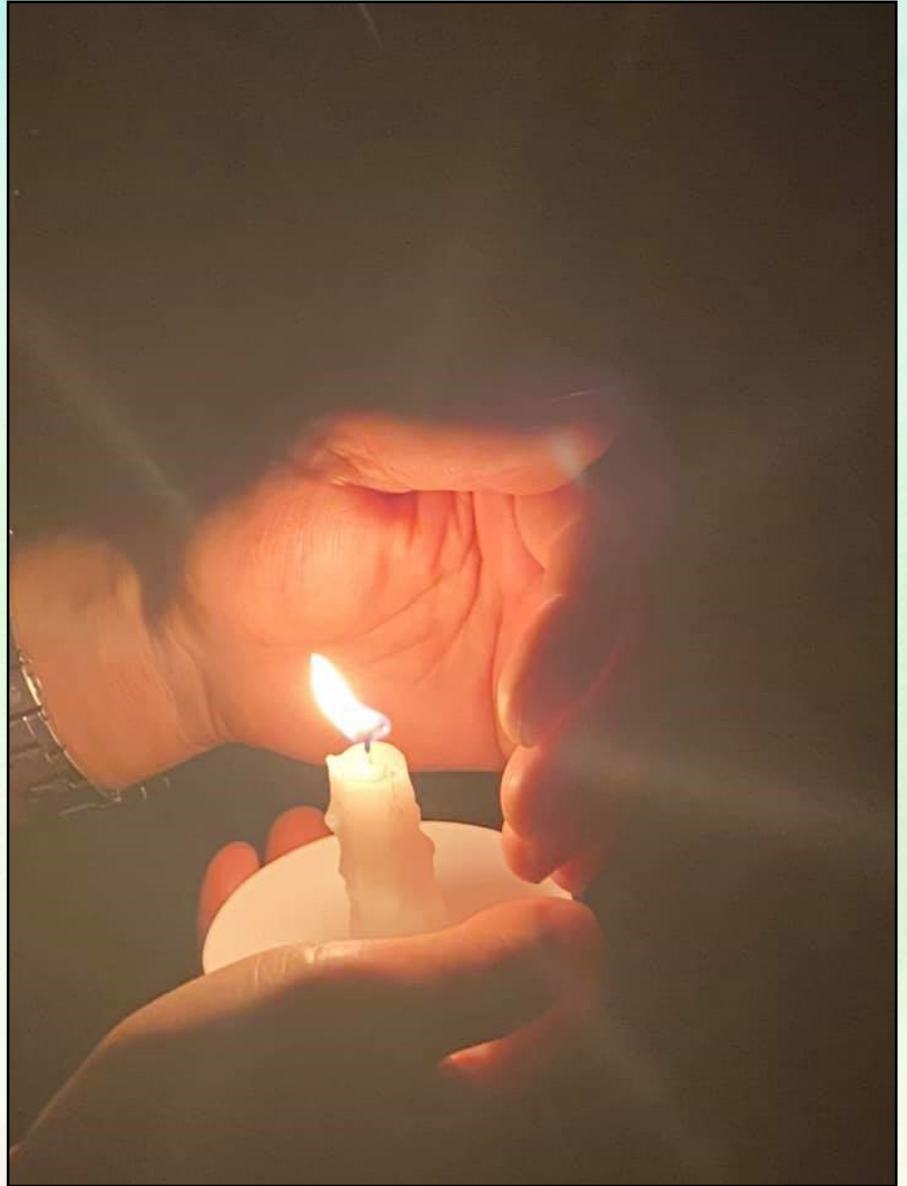
- Bags with handles for packing groceries (paper, reusable, plastic)
- Pasta
- Hearty soups (with meat or beans)
- Canned tuna or chicken
- Boxed dry cereal
- Canned vegetables (all types)
- Canned fruit (all types)
- Cleaning wipes
- Toilet paper
- Bar soap
- Baby wipes/diapers (sizes 4, 5, and 6)



## Outdoor Christmas Eve Gathering Survey

We would like to offer a Christmas Eve gathering in our parking lot for those who choose to attend. We will block off an area in the lot for us to gather, practicing social distancing, with everyone wearing masks. The question is who would come, and when ought we offer it? So give us your opinion.

Our planning will depend on your responses so please let us know as soon as possible.



[Click Here To Take The Survey](#)



## Two Sides of Advent

by Dr. Clayton Faulkner, Director of Worship, Music, and Technology



Everyone can slow down and take a minute. We are in the season of Advent. It is time to wait. We intentionally don't jump into Christmas at the beginning of December (or Thanksgiving, or Halloween if you're in the retail world).


Advent is the season of waiting. It is rich with symbolism. The season is marked by the color blue, which represents the color of the sky, just before the hopeful light of dawn breaks. You might notice the appearance of a poinsettia on the paraments in the chancel. The plant's association with Christmas began in 16th-century Mexico, where legend tells of a girl, commonly called Pepita or Maria, who was too poor to provide a gift for the celebration of Jesus' birthday and was inspired by an angel to gather weeds from the roadside and place them in front of the church altar. Crimson blossoms sprouted from the weeds and became poinsettias. From the 17th century, Franciscan friars in Mexico included the plants in their Christmas celebrations. The star-shaped leaf pattern is said to symbolize the Star of Bethlehem, and the red color represents the blood shed by Jesus at the crucifixion (from Wikipedia).

There is also the Advent wreath, its circular nature, with no beginning and no end, is reminiscent of God's infinite nature and the eternal life found through faith in Christ. The branches of the evergreen are symbolic of the promise of new life that comes with the spring. The color of each of the candles holds special meaning as well. Purple symbolizes expectation, royalty, and penitence. On the third Sunday we light the pink candle, which symbolizes joy. The central candle is the Christ candle, which is not lit until Christmas Eve. White symbolizes the purity of Christ's light to the world.

Advent begins with the end of all things. It is also the season of "already, but not yet." Call it a paradox, or an oxymoron, or whatever, but Advent tells us simultaneously that we are both "there" and "not quite there." We are preparing for the arrival of a baby that already came and saved the world. We experience the "already" because Bethlehem happened; Jesus has already been born. But we simultaneously experience the "not yet" because we await his coming again and the consummation of history. Through faith in Christ we experience the "already" because we are claimed as children of God. But we simultaneously experience the "not yet" because we are still bound to an existence scarred by sin. We experience the "already" because Christ established merciful reign with his first advent. But we wait in the "not yet" for Christ to return to complete his promise and make us heirs of the new heaven and new earth.

Advent is the season when we reflect on living between the first incarnation of Christ and his second coming. We remember his first coming into the world as a baby. God showed up in the most unlikely of places. As we prepare to celebrate the coming of the infant Jesus, we are actually preparing for his second coming as the ruler for all eternity.

God be with you as you wait and watch for Jesus to appear in your hearts and in your lives.

ELCA COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES Online Concerts	
Free online Christmas programs from our partners at regional ELCA colleges. Registration is required for some performances.	
 Saturday, Dec. 5 7:30 p.m. <a href="http://grandview.edu/julefest2020">grandview.edu/julefest2020</a>	 Sunday, Dec. 6 3:30 p.m. <a href="http://christmas.stolaf.edu">christmas.stolaf.edu</a>
 Friday, Dec. 4 7:30 p.m. <a href="http://luther.edu/christmas-at-luther">luther.edu/christmas-at-luther</a>	 Friday, Dec. 18 7:00 p.m. <a href="http://wartburg.edu/christmas">wartburg.edu/christmas</a>



## Celebrating 75 Years at Faith Lutheran Church

Preparations are underway for a year-long celebration to commemorate Faith Lutheran Church's 75<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Anniversary. If you would like to volunteer for one or more of the activities, we want to hear from you! Please email [jubileeteam@faithbellaire.org](mailto:jubileeteam@faithbellaire.org) and let us know what area(s) you are interested in, or if you are willing to help as needed. Specific areas where help is needed include: audio-visual, photo journalism, event hosts, fundraising, and archiving.

**What:** Celebrating 75 Years of God's Blessings: 1946 - 2021

**Why:** In **1 Corinthians 13:13**, Paul writes, "And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (NRSV). The mission of Faith Lutheran Church is to follow Jesus in blessing the world with faith, hope and love. During the Jubilee, we will celebrate how we carry out our mission through worship, healing, and learning.

**When:** Please save the following dates:

January 31, 2021: Commencement

March 21, 2021: Celebrating 75 years of Worship at Faith

June 6, 2021: Celebrating 75 years of Healing Ministries at Faith

November 21, 2021: Celebrating 75 years of Learning at Faith

January 23, 2022: Celebrating 75 Years of Faith Gala

**How:** The following will be heard or seen consistently throughout the year-long celebration:

Bible Verse: 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NRSV)

Prayer: "Anniversary of a Church" from ELW page 62

Song: "Be a Blessing" written and performed by Faith Alive! Band

Hymn(s): "Healer of our Every Ill" and "You are the Light of the World"

The Faith Lutheran 75<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Anniversary Commemorative Book is under construction

**Who:** Jubilee Anniversary Planning Committee co-chairs are: Karen Elsen and George Amundson

We look forward to celebrating with you!





## Jingle Bell Express – 2020 Program Updates!

Christian Community Service Center (CCSC) has designed a SAFE and NEW approach to **Jingle Bell Express** ensuring families in need receive help this Christmas. CCSC's goal is to provide 1,000 children (ages 0 – 15 years) with new toys and books. Families will receive a grocery gift card to purchase pantry essentials or prepare a special meal.

The December event will still take place at our host site, Bellaire United Methodist Church (4417 Bellaire Blvd), but is being modified as a drive-thru event to safely serve our community. Gifts will be packaged in advance and placed in vehicles by a limited number of volunteers. All clients and volunteers must register with CCSC in advance.

### Jingle Bell Express Dates

<b>December 4</b>	<b>Last day to drop off toy donations at CCSC – 3434 Branard St (9 AM – 3 PM)</b>
<b>December 7</b>	<b>Drop off toy donations at Jingle Bell Express – 4417 Bellaire Blvd (9 AM – 6 PM)</b>
<b>December 7 – 9</b>	<b>Event Setup (TBD)</b>
<b>December 10 – 12</b>	<b>Gift Distribution (TBD)</b>

### How Can I Help?

**Volunteers** are still needed, but in a limited quantity through pre-required sign-ups. Indoor and outdoor volunteer opportunity information will be made available in November. Spanish speaking volunteers are especially helpful during the Gift Distribution days.

Please note:

- **ALL volunteers must be at least 14 years old and register in advance at:** <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d4aa8ab2da3f5c25-jingle>
- Sign up ONLY if you can participate in the entire volunteer shift
- Outdoor volunteers are needed, including Spanish speakers (please dress appropriately for weather)
- Some indoor/outdoor volunteer positions require light lifting
- All volunteers will undergo an on-site health screening upon check-in at Jingle Bell Express

**Jingle Bell Express Contact:** Cathy Brown – Youth Services Manager, [seasonal@ccschouston.org](mailto:seasonal@ccschouston.org) or 713-961-3993



# Mountains Be Made Low

by Rev. Junfeng Tan, Associate Pastor



2020 has been a year like no other in our lifetime. It has seen several significant events that will have far-reaching impacts: the Covid-19 pandemic and the accompanying economic recession, the death of George Floyd and the protests against racial injustice, the bitterly disputed presidential election and the test of American democracy. In the midst of enormous challenge and uncertainty, we are entering a holiday season like no other. It goes without saying that the road ahead is going to be rough and steep. While we are making preparation for the celebration of Christmas, we hear Gods' word of hope and promise.

*Every valley shall be raised up,  
every mountain and hill made low;  
the rough ground shall become level,  
the rugged places a plain.  
And the glory of the LORD will be revealed,  
and all people will see it together.  
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken. Isaiah 40:4-5*

The images in these verses are unmistakable, earthshaking, and earth-transforming. They stand for the great social and spiritual transformation that the long-awaited Messiah will bring about. How will this great transformation take place? Let me share with you a well-known Chinese fable *The Old Fool Removes the Mountains*.

The Old Fool was a ninety-year-old man. Two high mountains stood in front of his house and blocked the path to the outer world. One day he gathered his family to discuss the matter. "Suppose we work together to level the mountains?" he suggested. His wife objected, "Old man, you haven't the strength to level even a small hill. How can you move these two mountains? Besides, where will you dump all the earth and rocks?" "We'll dump them in the sea," was the reply. The next day, the Fool set out with his sons and grandsons to work. They dug up stones and earth and carried them in baskets to the sea. A neighbor, who was called the Wise Man, laughed at their efforts and tried to stop them. "Enough of this folly!" he cried. "How stupid this is! Old and weak as you are, you won't be able to remove a hair's breadth of the mountain, much less the whole vast mass of rock and soil."

The Old Fool heaved a long sigh, then said to the Wise Man: "Surely it is you who are narrow-minded and unreasonable. Though I myself must die, my children can keep working on it. Their children can keep doing it. Their children's children will join, too. Since these mountains can't grow any larger, why shouldn't we be able to level them." The Wise Man had nothing to say in reply.

When the guardian gods of the mountains saw how determined the Old Fool and his crew were, they were struck with fear and reported the incident to the Emperor of Heavens. The Emperor of Heavens was touched by their sincerity, so he ordered his two sons to carry the mountains away.

For many Chinese people, the moral of the story is about determination and human efforts. But I want to point out that without the intervention of the Emperor of Heavens, the Old Fool's determination and perseverance would have proved futile and stupidity. This story reminds me of the saying of St. Augustine, "Pray as if everything depended on God. Work as if everything depended on you." I also want to remind you of the ELCA slogan, "God's Work; Our hands."

God's love comes down to us on Christmas day. Each of us can do something to make the Christmas story real and tangible to someone else. Here is a story that is worth repeating. For years, Ken Caughron has made baby cradles for CCSC's Jingle Bless Express. This year is no exception. In August, he came to me and said "I've made 30 cradles. When can I bring them to church?" I said to Ken, "It is too early, Ken. Also, given the pandemic, I have to find out whether CCSC is going to have Jingle Bell Express or not in December." When Ken and I took the cradles to the narthex in mid-October, I was wondering, "We haven't had in-person worship services on the campus for more than seven months. Who will go out of their way and come to church to pick up the cradles and work on them at home, and then bring them back with baby dolls?" I am pleased to tell you that all 30 cradles have been adopted, and as I am writing, more than half of them have been brought back to church. Some of you have done this for years; for some of you, this is the first time. Some of you purposefully teach your children the joy of Christmas by involving them in designing, painting, decorating the cradles, and picking and purchasing the matching baby dolls. Thank you for your labor of love. You may not know the names of the 30 children who will be receiving the cradles. But some of them may make a connection between his or her cradle and the manger in Bethlehem. They will be touched by the magic of Christmas.

Mother Teresa said, "Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love." I think this is how the mountains and hills will be flattened and rough places be made smooth. This is how God's dream for the world will be fulfilled when Christ returns to earth.



## Ways to stay connected with Faith Lutheran Church throughout the week

You can find links to join all our groups at our website: <https://faithbellaire.org/launch-day-august-23/>



### SUNDAY

- 8:30 AM - Online Worship in English
- 9:30 AM - Virtual Family Learning
- 9:45 AM - Virtual Fellowship Hall
- 10:00 AM - Kindergarten-2nd Grade Group
- 10:00 AM - 3rd-5th Grade Group
- 10:00 AM - Taking Faith Home Group
- 10:00 AM - Circle of Friends Group
- 10:30 AM - The Universal Christ Group
- 10:30 AM - Parents of Young Families Group
- 10:50 AM - Online Worship in Chinese 星期天中文敬拜
- 4:00 PM - Confirmation for Middle School
- 5:30 PM - Young Adult Learning Group
- 6:00 PM - High School Learning Group
- 6:00 PM - DivorceCare Group

### TUESDAY

- 7:00 PM - First Place for Health Group

### WEDNESDAY

- 10:00 AM - GriefShare Group
- 12:00 PM - The Word on Wednesday with Pastor Kerry
- 7:00 PM - Weight God's Way Group
- 7:30 PM - Learning Group with Clayton Faulkner
- 8:00 PM - Chinese Learning Group 周三查经

### THURSDAY

- 7:30 PM - Faith Choir Group

### FRIDAY

- 6:30 PM - First Fridays at Faith Group with Kathy Patrick

### SATURDAY

- 8:00 PM - Chinese Couples Group 夫妻小组





## News from the Children's Ministry

by Courtney Lerch, Children's Ministry Coordinator



In a year of seemingly endless uncertainties, there is one thing we know for sure: this year Advent will be unlike any other we have ever experienced. Most of us will have friends and family we will not get to see in person, holiday parties and gatherings that will not happen, and concerts and other events cancelled.

The month of December has its own unique rhythm and traditions, but this year will not follow our usual patterns. For many, the season of Advent is filled with beloved traditions, and we all need to acknowledge our grief at the things we will miss this year.

However, as we acknowledge the sadness of traditions missed, we can also focus our attention on the possibilities exposed by this year's strange new normal.

Our schedules will most likely be more open, giving us more time together as a family and time to invent new traditions. Advent is the time to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Jesus. Perhaps with less hectic schedules we can devote more time to the true meaning of Advent.

Everyone is unique in how one finds meaning and peace. What works for you? Reading scripture? Playing an instrument? Meditating? Baking? Painting? Singing? The possibilities are endless; all that matters is that it helps you recenter and prepare your heart and mind for the celebration of Christmas.

I encourage you to come together as a family to choose some new Advent activities you will try this year. Who knows? You just might stumble upon your new favorite Advent family tradition.







## Holiday Reasoning

by John Vickery, Director of Youth and Family Ministry



Here we are. Entering yet another month of the unknown, thanks to COVID-19. I have to admit that I have been dreading writing this article. I feel like I am running out of things to say that are helpful. The all-too-familiar words of “just hang on it’s going to get better” just don’t seem to cut through the anxiety that I am feeling these days.

As I write this article, Thanksgiving is approaching, and then in the not-so-distant future, Christmas. Without a doubt these holidays are going to look drastically different than we are used to. I know that for my extended family, the holidays were supposed to be a time that they were able to travel to Houston to spend time with us; well really let’s be honest, they want to spend time with Addy more than Kelsey or I. Those plans are now in serious jeopardy now that the number of coronavirus cases begin to, once again, rise to concerning levels.

Couple this with the financial strain that the virus has put onto many families, the holidays seem to be a bleak future.

But perhaps there still is something positive that we can learn from our current happenstance. Take Christmas for example. We know from our Sunday school lessons that the reason we celebrate Christmas is that the baby Jesus was born to the virgin Mary, which set into motion a myriad of events ultimately leading to the cross and Christ’s resurrection for our sake. Somewhere along the line, the discovery was made that Christmas could make money! So, our culture has secularized Christmas to the nth degree, to the point that the true meaning and reason for celebration is lost.

Maybe this is a year that we can change that thinking a little bit. Why not try and focus more on Christ, rather than the “stuff,” in a year that everything seems so topsy-turvy anyway? Maybe this is the little nudge that we needed to get back to the actual heart of the season.

This is what I want to leave you with as we enter together into Advent and eventually Christmas. Check in on one another. Call each other, email each other, text each other, whatever it takes! We are one body of Christ no matter the distance between us, and we can be the church together no matter the distance between us. Yes, it makes it a little harder than usual, but it’s doable.

I wish a happy Advent to you and your family this season!



## A Message from the Council President

by Yvonne Moody, Church Council President

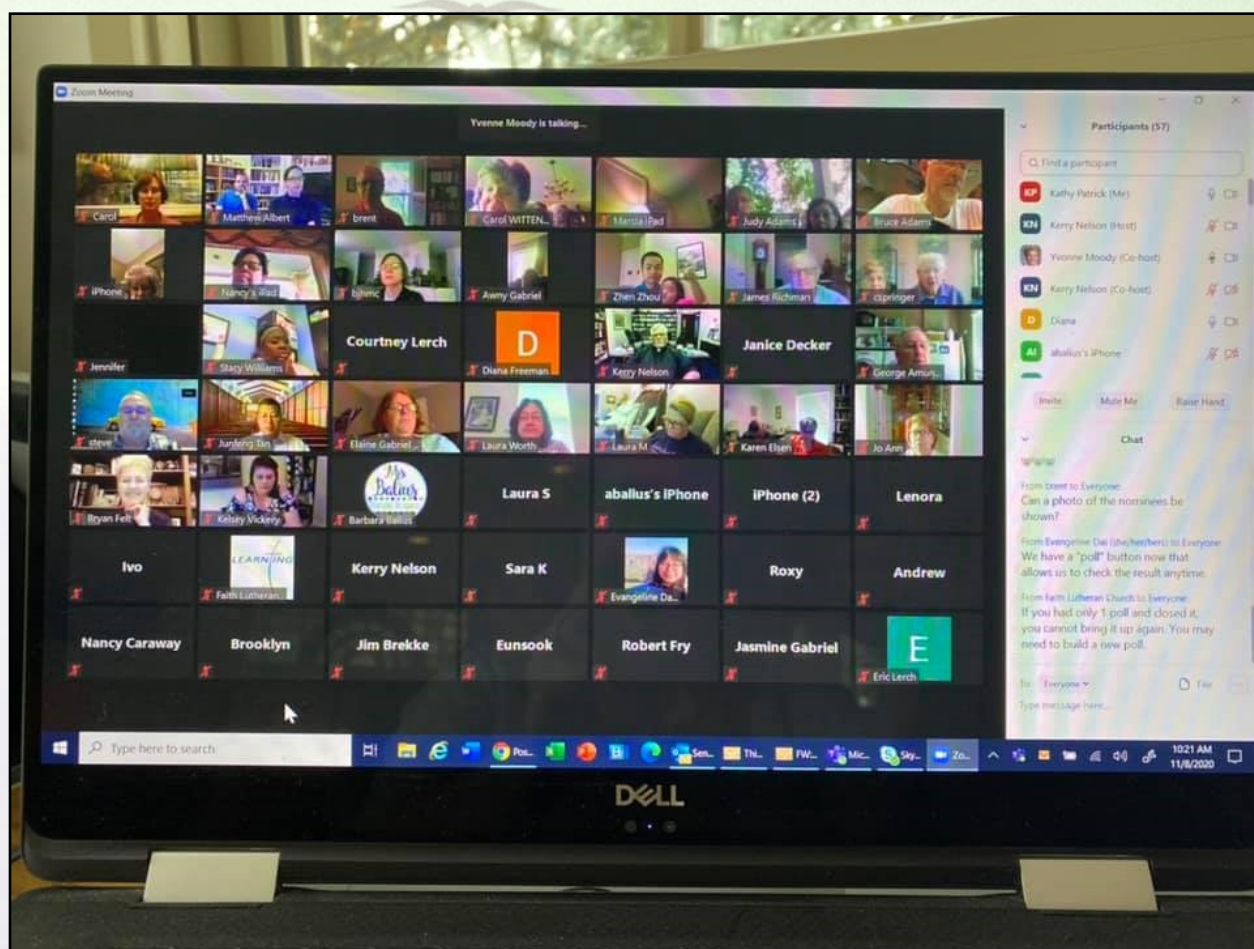


2020 has been a year of unexpected challenges and learning to do things in a new way. As we approach the final month of this very strange year, I want to pause to give thanks. I am thankful for a very dedicated group of lay leaders who have served on the church council this year. In a year of hardship and stress, we have had almost 100% attendance for every council meeting this year! We learned to work effectively in the virtual meeting space, and I appreciate their dedication to the mission of Faith Lutheran Church. I'm also thankful for our amazing staff who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make sure that we are still worshipping and doing ministry, even though everything looks different. We have been blessed with vibrant worship, creative youth and family ministry, and we have continued to make meaningful contributions to and through our community partners. We have made many sacrifices this year, for the sake of keeping each other safe, but Faith Lutheran Church continues to be a place where worship, learning, and healing are a high priority.

I also want to thank the more than 60 people who attended our virtual congregational meeting on November 8. We elected new council members and approved our financial mission plan for next year. It seems strange to end my year as president without having this meeting in person, but I appreciate everyone who made the time to join the meeting so we can continue with the important work of our church.

At our November council meeting, we continued to discuss the metrics that will be monitored to determine when it will be safe to re-open the sanctuary to in-person worship. A full document has been shared with the congregation through our normal weekly email communications. Please take the time to review the information, as a lot of thought and concern has gone into the deliberations by the council to arrive at this guidance. You can expect those guidelines to be a living and breathing document, and council and staff will be discussing these guidelines and plans for worship on a weekly and monthly basis. The final church council meeting for 2020 will be on December 8 and visitors are always welcome.

As we prepare to welcome the Christ child into our hearts and homes, may you continue to be blessed and to be a blessing to others. If you are able, please continue to support the church financially because your gifts help Faith Lutheran Church to **Be A Blessing!** God bless you all and keep you safe.





## Continue to Financially Support Our Mission Through These Challenging Times

The ministry of Faith Lutheran is made possible only by the generous financial support of our members and guests.

As we have joined the rest of the country in moving our worship life online, we anticipate a possible significant impact on our congregational finances. Your continued support of the church and mission is ever more important. Since only about 30% of our giving comes through online giving or automatic bank drafts, we run the risk of losing 70% of our financial support.



### Here is how you can help...by giving online or through bank automated checks.

1. If you use the "bill pay" feature at your bank, 100% of your gift will come in a check sent directly to Faith.
2. Giving online at [www.faithbellaire.org/give](http://www.faithbellaire.org/give) can be very convenient but every gift costs the congregation a small service charge if giving by credit card. Giving online can be set up to give electronically by check (no fee) or credit card and there is also a feature to set up your frequency.
3. Mail a check to the church office using one of our prepaid postage offering envelopes. **Please send an email to the church office at [info@faithbellaire.org](mailto:info@faithbellaire.org) and request for us to mail some to you.**
4. If you are required to make annual IRA withdrawals, consider giving a portion directly to the congregation. Consult your financial advisor for the tax savings and charitable contribution impact of such gifts.

If you have questions about setting up online giving, processing a one time gift, or other types of gifts, please call Stacy Williams at 713-664-3381 or email her at [swilliams@faithbellaire.org](mailto:swilliams@faithbellaire.org).

Here's our mailing address for your reference.

Faith Lutheran Church  
4600 Bellaire Blvd  
Bellaire, TX 77401



## Salem Keenagers - Upcoming Events

The Keenagers **November 12** luncheon at St John's Presbyterian Church and our **November 19** bus trip have been **cancelled** due to the continued spread of the Covid-19 virus.

### UPCOMING KEENAGER TRIPS

Mark your calendars for the following upcoming bus trip dates. More information about these trips will be coming later. Hopefully we will be able to get together again soon.

Thursday, December 17 - No plans at this time

Thursday, January 21 – No plans at this time

Friday, February 12 – No plans at this time

Thursday, March 18 – No plans at this time

PLEASE NOTE: All payments for bus trips must be paid in full at least a week before our trip unless you are on a waiting list or unless tickets need to be purchased in advance. Please use separate checks for each event. If paying in person, please place the money in an envelope and mark on the front of the envelope: the event, the amount, and your name. Please make all checks payable to Carole Knaub as Keenagers does not have a bank checking account. Checks may be mailed to me at 1802 Thompson Crossing Drive, Richmond, TX 77406. Please call Carole Knaub at 281-344-0312 if interested in this luncheon or any of the above trips.

Remember, Keenagers is for anyone age 50 or older regardless of religious preference. Come and get involved and have fun.

#### Faith Lutheran Church

4600 Bellaire Boulevard at Avenue B  
Bellaire, Texas 77401

Office: 713-664-3048

Fax: 713-664-3371

Faith Day School: 713-664-3233

Mother's Day Out: 713-664-7726

FaithBellaire.org

FaithDaySchool.org

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Rev. Kerry Nelson

Rev. Junfeng Tan

Stacy Williams

Dr. Clayton Faulkner

John Vickery

Courtney Lerch

Kendolyn Pope

Yu Cao

Alan Balias

Nettie Rodriguez

Senior Pastor

Associate Pastor

Director of Operations

Director of Worship, Music, and Technology

Director of Youth and Family

Children's Ministry Coordinator

Director of Faith Schools

Office Coordinator

Organist/Choir Director

Evening Facility Manager



# ELCA and Lutheran World Relief partner to fight COVID-19 around the world

by ELCA.org

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has worked with Lutheran World Relief (LWR) to repurpose \$160,000 in project funding for emergency responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

In Latin America, the funding will be used for food assistance in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, which have been hard-hit by the coronavirus and the resulting economic disruption that is causing increased hunger. In Africa, the support will provide improved water, sanitation and hygiene, along with personal protective equipment, to displaced communities in South Sudan. And a project in Nepal will ensure that quarantine facilities are hygienic and comfortable, and that households economically affected by COVID-19 are able to cultivate their crops and sustain their small-scale businesses.

"Thanks to the flexibility and rapid action of our ELCA partners, Lutheran World Relief has been able to quickly ramp up these emergency responses to COVID-19," said Daniel Speckhard, LWR president and CEO. "This is so important because COVID-19 is a major threat to the resilience and well-being of the communities where we serve. Lives will be saved as a result of this support."

"The ELCA has a tradition of standing with our global neighbors in good times and in bad," said the Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the ELCA. "Our partnership with Lutheran World Relief is a reflection of that strong commitment and allows us to deepen and extend it in this time of extreme crisis."

The ELCA and LWR share a long, historical relationship and a mutual commitment to companionship in mission. Through its [ELCA World Hunger](#) program, the ELCA has provided \$1 million in annual support to LWR for projects that serve people and communities in various regions around the world, including Latin America, Asia and Africa.

