

Mountain Mover

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH | JANUARY 2021

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FAITH CELEBRATES 75 YEARS!

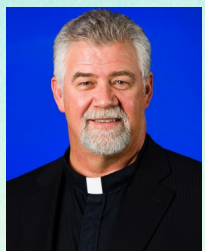


O God, you have promised through your Son to be with your church forever. We give you thanks for those who founded this community of believers and for the signs of your presence in our congregation. Increase in us the spirit of faith and love, and make our fellowship an example to all believers and to all nations. We pray through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Join us on Sunday, January 31 as we begin a year of celebrating the 75th anniversary of the founding of Faith Lutheran Church.

Scattered Thoughts

by Rev. Kerry Nelson, Senior Pastor



And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25

2020 is finally over! The pandemic isn't. The election kerfuffle isn't. Doing congregational life virtually isn't. But there is hope on the horizon and turning the page to January 1 felt good to do. So the best we can do is to continue to be wise, vigilant, and hopeful that things will get better.

A year ago I was very hopeful about launching the "Faith Community Wellness Center." I was hopeful that we could create a new ministry that would benefit both our members and the wider community. A new ministry designed to specifically address peoples' spiritual, physical, and mental health needs in a cost-effective manner.

Then 2020 happened and, even with the limitations posed by the virus, we did create some new opportunities for people to come together in helpful ways.

The following is the list of opportunities we have scheduled for 2021. For further information on how to participate in any of these, just send me an email at revkerry@gmail.com and I'll let you know what you need to do.

GriefShare is a 13 week online gathering of people who want to support one another, and even grow, as they heal from the grief of losing a friend or loved one. The next series of GriefShare meetings will begin on Wednesday, January 6, from 6:00 – 6:45 PM.

DivorceCare, like GriefShare, is a 13 week online gathering of people who are experiencing the pain of divorce. It too combines online teaching videos that participants can watch on their own schedules

Continued on next page...

Check out FaithBellaire.InFellowship.com!

[InFellowship](https://FaithBellaire.InFellowship.com) 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

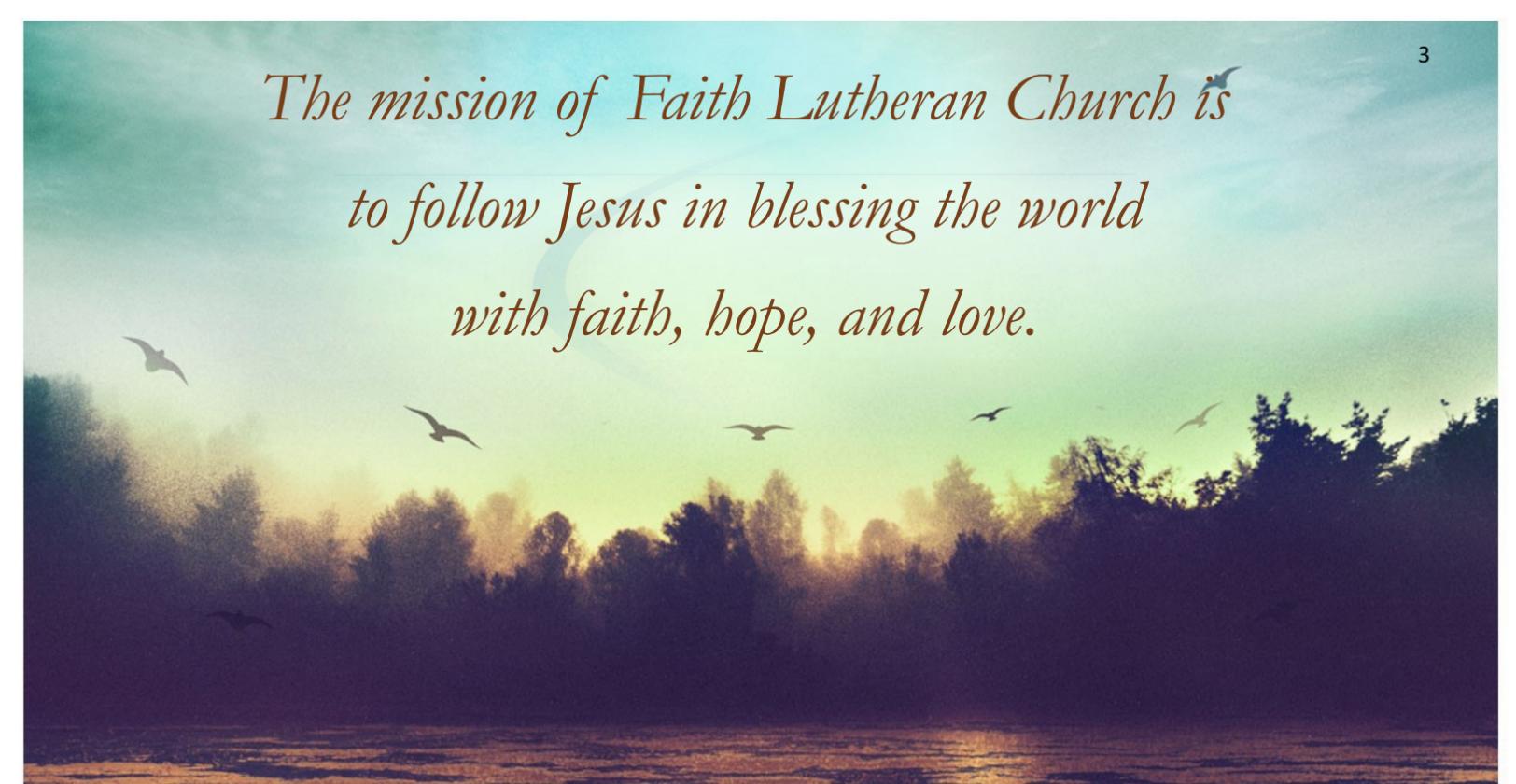
Allows users to opt in to have their information displayed in an online directory. All access to information is controlled by the user by configuring your privacy settings.

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...

and then weekly gatherings for mutual support and learning. DivorceCare will meet on Sunday evenings from 5:30 – 6:15 PM beginning on February 14.

MarriageCare is a new program that we will offer for the first time in 2021. Using the information and resources that I use for premarital conversation, MarriageCare will help couples identify their strengths and growth areas and learn new strategies to deepen their relationships with their partners. We will meet for eight sessions. MarriageCare will meet on Sunday evenings from 7:00 – 8:00 PM, beginning on February 21.

Weight God's Way is a support group for people (like me) who struggle with their relationship with food and are willing to do what it takes to better manage their weight. Weight God's Way doesn't teach any specific dietary plan but it does emphasize how our bodies are designed by God to work so we do pay attention to both what and when we eat. The group will meet on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 – 7:45 PM beginning on January 6.

Prayer Practices is also a new offering for 2021. This group will be limited to no more than eight participants. It will be devoted to teaching and practicing a wide range of prayer practices, including learning more about ourselves and what works for us as individuals. The initial Prayer Practices group will begin on Monday, January 11, and will meet from 7:00 – 7:45 PM.

All of these groups will meet via ZOOM. Quite likely, even after the pandemic lessens and we resume in-person meetings and worship, we will continue to offer these Faith Wellness Center groups online only. The one good thing that will come out of this hard time is discovering how helpful, practical, and convenient it is to gather in this way. It has also proven to be much less intimidating for members of the wider community to benefit from what we offer at Faith.

How can you help? Sign up for a group that fits your needs AND pass on this information to others in your friends/family networks. Again, for further information, just write to me at revkerry@gmail.com.

God bless you all and God be with us as we walk into what we hope will be a much better, healthier, and happier New Year!

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.



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)





Jingle Bell Express 2020 Program Summary

Christian Community Service Center (CCSC) redesigned its 41st Jingle Bell Express program on December 10-12, 2020 to safely provide Christmas cheer to 1,027 children in need amidst a worldwide health pandemic. By pivoting to a drive-thru format, redesigning registration/gift selection and limiting the number of volunteers, the Jingle Bell Express leadership team successfully met program goals for the year.

Jingle Bell Express has always been designed to address the holiday needs of struggling families. This unique event is impactful in three important ways:

- The program offers three layers of services (toys, books and food) to address play, literacy, and hunger.
- In most years, parents individually select items for their own children, providing dignified choices and personal involvement. *This year, parents responded to a toy preference survey and volunteers served as their personal shoppers. Nearly all primary gift requests were matched with preferences.*
- While volunteers are essential to the planning and execution of the event, *this year volunteer numbers were intentionally limited for pandemic safety practices.*

Program Results for 2020:

The drive-thru event provided 826 children (infancy to age 15) with new toys, new books, wooden toys and stocking stuffers. In addition, their 277 families received a \$25 grocery gift card.

- 99% of the families that pre-registered for the event were served
- Gender: 50% of the children registered for the event were female; 50% male
- Ethnicity: 88% of registered clients were Hispanic/Latino; 11% Black; and 1% all other combined ethnicities
- The program was offered to families living in a variety of zip codes. Heavily represented areas included Gulfton/Sharpstown, Galleria and Greater Fifth Ward.

In addition to the drive-thru, CCSC established partnerships with three well-established youth-serving nonprofits. High quality toys and books were provided to help 201 of their clients with holiday needs:

- St. Frances Cabrini Center of Catholic Charities—107 children served
- Houston: reVision—53 children served
- Nehemiah Center—41 children served

Additional Program Highlights:

- **210 volunteers** served at the Registration, Sort and Set Up, and Distribution phases of Jingle Bell Express. These volunteers combined for approximately 1,280 hours of volunteer service.
- Thanks to a generous grant from the **Ladies for Literacy Guild - Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation**, the number of new books provided to each child was more than doubled from prior years.
- CCSC implemented meticulous planning in order to meet strict **COVID-19 safety standards**.

CCSC extends special thanks to the Jingle Bell Express Committee for its unwavering commitment to rethinking and executing a meaningful event; to the churches, schools, businesses and groups that held donation drives; to the St. Luke's United Methodist Woodshop for providing handmade wooden toys; to Faith Lutheran Church and Kenneth Caughron for providing handmade baby cradles; to all volunteers for practicing social distancing; and to Bellaire United Methodist Church for its generous hospitality as the Jingle Bell Express host site.

CCSC believes in sharing Christmas! Thanks to each person for being an essential part of Jingle Bell Express 2020!

Conversation with Alice Tian

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



Many of you know Alice Tian, daughter of Yu Cao our office coordinator and senior at High School for the Performing and Visual Arts. She is an incredibly talented pianist that has blessed us by sharing her musical gifts at church. She is the next generation of church musicians. And it is our job to nurture her and the gifts the Spirit has given her.

One of the events that our church has is the Lutheran Summer Music Program (<https://www.lsmacademy.org/>). Lutheran Music Program was founded in 1981 to celebrate and extend the rich musical heritage of the Lutheran church. The founders believed that by providing high-quality training and performance opportunities to young musicians they could cultivate a lifelong love of classical and sacred music, thus preserving these art forms for generations to come.

The Lutheran Music Program is offering a Winter session this year and I am so happy that Alice will be participating in it. It will be a completely virtual program that includes three private lessons, performance opportunities, masterclasses, and electives. The following is an excerpt from a conversation I had with Alice:



CF: You're going to take organ lessons through the Lutheran Music Program - do you know who your teacher will be?

AT: I'm not too sure - they said they will send out a lesson scheduling tool on January 5 so I'm assuming I'll find out then.

CF: How will you do the organ lessons? Over zoom? Will you use the church organ or a piano?

AT: I think they're over zoom. I'll probably need the church organ, but I'm not too sure.

CF: Did any of the electives look interesting to you?

AT: Yeah, I'm interested in the music therapy one, music and electronics, and the one about J.S. Bach.

CF: You're planning to go to Rice University next year - what major are you considering?

AT: Bioengineering on a premed track but I'm open to exploring the biosciences and maybe health.

CF: What are you most excited about with the Lutheran Music Program?

AT: I'm excited to learn more about the organ and other aspects of worship music. From the electives list, it seems like they're going to go into other genres of music and its benefits, so I'm excited to hear about that too!

CF: Do you see yourself serving the church as a musician in the future?

AT: I really respect the profession and the musicians who do serve in church, but right now I don't think I will, outside of maybe filling in for someone when there's a need for that.

CF: There are plenty of churches that need volunteer and part time musicians. Perhaps you don't see a career in church music, but do you see yourself making music in the church as you move through life?

AT: Yeah, if I have time I definitely want to.

Celebrating 75 Years at Faith Lutheran Church

Preparations are underway for a year-long celebration to commemorate Faith Lutheran Church's 75th 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 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 75th 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!





FIRSTplace
FOR HEALTH

2021 IS HERE!

You've made some New Year's Resolutions that you are "gung ho" to start and keep! Now you need a plan to make that happen. The First Place for Health virtual small group may be your answer if any of your resolutions contain phrases like healthier eating, losing weight, exercising, joining a Bible study group, finding ways to face the emotional turmoil left over from 2020 that may continue well into 2021 through encouragement and support of a small group.

The First Place for Health small group offers support to men and women with those goals in mind on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 to 8:30 PM ZOOM meetings. Our nine week Bible study in January 2021 is "The Joy Adventure."

There is an information session at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, January 12 where you can learn about the program. You are not obligated to join the group, but we would love to have you if you like what you hear. The materials will be purchased following that meeting so that you will receive them in time for the January 19 meeting.

We strive to put Christ at the center of our lives while trying to balance our physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health. If you want to know more about First Place for Health call leader Mardi Mayerhoff at 713-203-1875, email her at mgmayerhoff@juno.com or log on to www.firstplaceforhealth.com.

Be Not Afraid of Loneliness

by Rev. Junfeng Tan, Associate Pastor



Due to the coronavirus pandemic, millions of Americans had to spend the 2020 holiday season alone. So many people are not able to visit their family and friends. Over 300,000 families that lost their loved ones to Covid-19 had to face the empty chairs at the dining table. Social isolation and loneliness have been the most devastating impacts of the pandemic.

I'd like to point out that prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, there was already a "loneliness epidemic." In March 2019, Scientific America published an article, *Loneliness is Harmful to Our Nation's Health*. It says, "a staggering 47 percent of Americans often feel alone, left out and lacking meaningful connection with others. This is true for all ages, from teenagers to older adults. The number of people who perceive themselves to be alone, isolated or distant from others has reached epidemic levels both in the United States and in other parts of the world." Scientists have shown that feelings of loneliness are a major risk factor for higher blood pressure, weakened immune system, cardiovascular disease, and cancer. There's even evidence that social isolation plays a significant role in cognitive decline, depression, and other mental health issues such as Alzheimer's diseases. Public health experts have said in recent years that loneliness has increasingly become a major public health threat. We have the vaccine to end the Covid-19 pandemic. But how are we going to confront the loneliness epidemic?

The Bible says that humans are made in God's image and God, as Trinity, is always in relationship. There is an intimate communion within the Holy Trinity, and a holy fellowship between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The interconnectedness of the Holy Trinity is therefore built into human nature. When we turn away from relationship and enter into individualism, we're entering a state that's contrary to our nature. Let us face the reality: when we do not care to build meaningful connections with others, when we isolate ourselves, when we think we can get through life as if we were a lone ranger, we will suffer physically, emotionally, spiritually. We are created to live in loving relationship with our Creator and other people. Loneliness is a sign and symptom of the fractured relationships and a wounded life.

When Israelites left Egypt, they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. The wilderness wandering could have been the most lonesome journey. But it turned out not to be so, because God was with them, walking and moving among all the people of Israel day and night. When we make it through the wilderness in life, we also need God to walk with us. And we also need companions and fellow travelers to accompany one another.

Christian church is the family of God in which every Christian should be able to build meaningful relationships. It is the place to find relief from loneliness. The family of God isn't united by blood but by God's love in Christ Jesus. The loving relationships with God and people are God's antidote to loneliness.

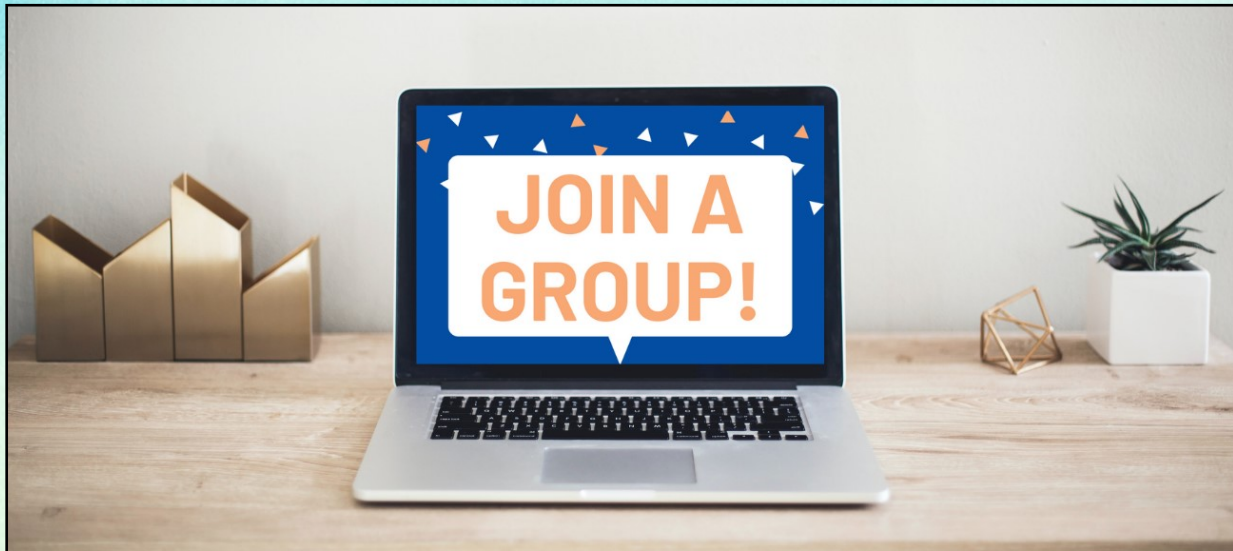
Just as Jesus didn't wait for his disciples to come to him, but sought them out, we should seek to build relationships with our church family before loneliness becomes a serious threat to our health. And everyone in our congregation should ask himself or herself: am I actively involved in the Faith family? How do I invest my time, energy, and talent in building up friendship, not just for my own benefit, but also for other church members and those in our community?

In the world of coronavirus, all of our lives are in each other's hands. No one is safe unless everyone else is safe. If we are going to end the Covid-19 pandemic, we have to do it together. To end the loneliness epidemic, we also have to take the communal approach. We have to help each other. If you know someone who struggles with loneliness, you may need to reach out to him or her. Give that person a phone call, write him or her a note. Let that person know you want to be his or her friend. Let us not forget that we are our brother's or sister's keepers. Let us always remember that Jesus gives us the command to love each other.

Yes, love each other. That is how we help someone battling with loneliness. And that is how we get ourselves inoculated against the loneliness epidemic. And that is how we are going to get through the most difficult winter.

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



I think many of us are eager to say goodbye to 2020 and welcome in 2021. There were certainly innumerable challenges worldwide throughout this past year, and it is important to give ourselves time to grieve and process everything we experienced. However, I also think it would be unwise to dismiss the year 2020 as all bad. Amidst the many challenges, there were bright spots: spending more time with my children, seeing countless people pitch in to keep the CCSC Food Pantry (and other organizations responding to the increased need) stocked, witnessing the sacrifice of healthcare workers as they respond to the pandemic, noticing the untold numbers of people continuing to show up to work to support our basic needs, and using our newfound Zoom capabilities to reconnect with old friends from across the country are just a few examples that come to mind. As exhausting as this year has been, it has also forced me to focus on what is most important. My family and I simply do not have the energy or ability to participate in as many activities as we have in the past. While it was difficult to cut some of our favorite activities from our schedule, it has also been an eye-opening experience to realize the many things we were doing that ultimately were not as important to us as we had previously thought. Each new year presents a fresh start, but 2021 presents a rare opportunity for a nearly blank slate. Instead of continuing to do the same activities we do every year, this year we have the opportunity to approach our lives more mindfully and only reengage in activities that are truly important to us.

One aspect of our lives that changed significantly this year is our faith life. Since we have not had the opportunity to worship together or join for learning groups in person, our faith formation, both our own and that of our children, has largely taken place in the home this year. This experience has emphasized how important it is to have faith rituals we do regularly in the home. My family and I have tried many different things over the course of the year. Some things worked and some failed miserably, but that is all part of the process of figuring out what works for your family! It will most likely be many months before we can worship together again. As you look back on 2020 and make plans for 2021, I encourage you to include faith formation in your reflections. What worked for you and your family in 2020? Which rituals are important to you to carry into 2021? What are some new rituals you would like to try in 2021? We will continue to send out activities each week in our Virtual Family Learning email, which I hope are helpful to you as we navigate these challenging times together. If you do not receive the email and would like to do so, please email me at clerch@faithbellaire.org, and I will put you on the email list. I hope everyone has a safe and Happy New Year!



New Year, New Start

by John Vickery, Director of Youth and Family Ministry



This is an article that I struggle to write each year. How am I supposed to write something helpful for January, when as I write this Christmas hasn't even come and gone? But here we go!

This year is one that we have never seen, and quite frankly we hope we will never see again. When I meet with any group, one of the first activities that we do is share our highs and lows. If I were to venture a guess many of our gut reactions is that there were many more "lows" than "highs."

Something that I have been reminded of is that, in reality there have been some pretty amazing things that have happened in 2020. For my family, our daughter was born and we are being able to watch her grow up, what a blessing that is. We, as a church, have learned new ways to hold meetings, fellowship, worship, Faith Camp, and more in ways that we never thought were possible. Even going as far as including individuals who may not have been able to participate otherwise. So, instead of focusing on the negative, we should realize that there were positives and things that we can carry into 2021.

The start of a new year is an event that is often joyous, though this year it may be greeted with anxiety and apprehension. If we know this, how can we channel these emotions? Or at least grapple with them in a healthy way?

The simple answer is the standard "Sunday school answer:" Jesus. In the Christmas story we are taught that Jesus was born to Mary, setting into motion the life of Jesus to ultimately die on the cross for our sake. Through this we have hope for all of our days. We have hope for our future. We have hope that everything will work out one way or another. We have hope that Christ will one day come again.

Keeping all of this in mind, I wish you and your family a Happy New Year. A happy 2021. May we start the year on the right foot, and make it a good year!

Baking Christmas Cookies in the Cave of Adullam

by Kathy Patrick, Church Council President



In Chapter 22 of First Samuel, the Scriptures tell us the story of David's flight from the anger of Saul to take refuge in the cave of Adullam (1 Sam 22). And, as the story goes, "everyone who was in distress" gathered around him there.

In this pandemic time, where hope is on the horizon but still far away, passages like this speak to me. We have fled from the virus, not to a cave, but to the comfort of our homes. But while our homes offer safety, we are still distressed and *uncomfortable*, because we have lost so much. We have lost the presence of loved ones who've died. We've watched those we love suffer from the virus or the ravages of isolation and unemployment. And we've all felt the absence of our presence together in worship. So we cling to what is normal. We try to do what we have always done, though it isn't the same. Baking Christmas cookies with a group of beloved friends is very different than baking cookies alone, in the Cave of Adullam of our individual homes. But we bake anyway. We bake as an act of faith. We bake to say we are still here. And we bake to let our neighbors and friends know we love them, by sending them gifts of cookies instead of gathering around a cup of cocoa to eat them together.

This is what love looks like when we are apart. Love abides, even when we are not together. And our time apart has given us a chance to learn again what is most important in life: the touch of a hand, the hug of a friend, the teasing and friendly argument over coffee, the reception of Holy Communion in the presence of one another. These simple things. Such seemingly *small* things. And yet now we know how important they are.

As your Church Council looks forward to the new year, we took time to reflect on what this year has meant to all of us. We are profoundly grateful for the leadership of Yvonne Moody—who led us as President in a time that was far from what she expected, but for which God had clearly equipped her to lead well and faithfully. We are grateful for the service of Eric Lerch, Jo Welton, and Qinxiang Zhong, who were wise and thoughtful about the challenges we faced. And we look forward with gratitude and hope, because our returning Council members—Laura Worth, Steve Walker, Nancy Caraway, and Leslie Parkan—will continue to serve and our new members, Zhen Zhou, Jessica Albert, and Carol Strawn have heard the voice of the Spirit calling them to serve and said an enthusiastic "yes."

In the coming year, the 2021 Church Council will be attentive to the open questions that now surround us. In this time of distress, we are going to listen attentively to the voice of the Holy Spirit as we ponder, among other things:

- Who are our next generations of leaders and how will we equip them to live faithfully and serve justly in the world?
- How does our Vision Frame guide our leadership in the wilderness of the pandemic, social injustice, struggle, and division?
- What have we learned from this time of separation and how will our time together change when we are able to be together again, in person?

These are big questions. They call all of us to reflect on what this pandemic time has meant for us and our ministry. We are blessed to have several medical professionals and researchers on the Council, as we must be attentive to what scientists tell us as we monitor the metrics that will guide our return to worship.



And in the midst of all of this, we will pray. The Council has committed themselves to pray daily for the Council, our staff, our congregation, and to listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit to guide us. We invite you to pray for these things, too. We are all baking cookies in isolation, for now, but we are nonetheless gathered as one into the Body of Christ. Please let us hear from you as we do our work, together.

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 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 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.

Here's our mailing address for your reference.

Faith Lutheran Church
4600 Bellaire Blvd
Bellaire, TX 77401

People gathering for the groundbreaking of Faith Lutheran Church in 1946.

Join us as we begin our 75th anniversary celebration on January 31.



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

FaithHouseHouston.org

info@faithbellaire.org

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



THANK YOU from the Faith Church Staff

by Faith Lutheran Church Pastors and Staff

Dear Faith Lutheran Church Members,

This has been a challenging year and you all know the reasons why. This year was not easy for anyone, including all of you Faith members. It was also challenging and difficult for the Faith Staff. We were unsure about many things. It is a scary time to be in ministry when so much is unknown.

As a Church Staff, we cannot tell you how blessed we are to be serving at Faith Lutheran Church. You have been willing to trust that God was carrying us through this time. When we had to go to worshipping online exclusively, you continued to log on and join us virtually. When we had to move our Learning Groups to the Zoom format, you continued to show up and participate. When we had to move our congregational and church council meetings online, you adapted with us and made the changes. When we asked you to consider giving food to the local food pantry or buy a gift for a needy child, you did it.

You've also not pushed us to return to in-person worship too soon. We don't take this for granted, because by doing so you have kept us and our families safe and healthy. That is a sign of your true love for us.

Not only did you do all these things, but you have continued to support the mission of Faith financially during these uncertain times. Additionally, you went over the top with a Christmas gift for us. We are so thankful that you remembered us and our families in this way.

We cannot express enough our gratitude for the people of Faith. It is a joy and blessing to serve God together with you. We are looking forward to the future and what 2021 holds for us and our community.

Sincerely, Pastor Kerry, Pastor Tan, Stacy, Clayton, Alan, John, Courtney, Yu



THANK YOU!