



## Paradise

Each of us has an idea of paradise. For some it's a beach by the ocean, for some a mountain stream, for some a trip to Time Square or a tour of the Holy Land. For me it's time spent by a lake or river with a bunch of kids or a friend or two. Water has a calming effect, the sound of the waves lapping the canoe or the crack of the ice in winter, reassuring reminders of God's powerful creation and physical reminder of the waters of Baptism.

Usually the experience brings about "newness," a new perspective, a new understanding, a new sense of being. Paradise is associated with fun and laughter and easy times.

Once of my favorite Bible stories is the second word of Jesus spoken from the cross: **"Today you will be with me in Paradise."** Not a secluded beach, not a fancy restaurant, not a tour or even a family outing. Today you will endure the cross. Today you will come face to face with your mortality. Today you will suffer and die. Today you will take your place in Paradise.

What make this a favorite story? It is I think the story of salvation unfolded on the cross. Two criminals and Jesus. One criminal realizes his sin and pleads for forgiveness. To this one Jesus offers full pardon. **"Today."** Not after completion of assignments to right the wrong. Not after a period of suffering or any other method imposed on this man. **"Today"**, you will be with me in Paradise. The man realized and admitted his sin, made confession and received the life giving message of forgiveness. He died anyway, along with Jesus and the other criminal, but he died in the forgiveness of God in the promise that eternal life was his future. We cannot judge the criminal who didn't show remorse, that's God work but we can rejoice in the promise delivered; the promise made possible through the cross and Resurrection.

"Wide open are your arms, a fallen world to embrace,  
To win to love and endless rest our wayward human race.  
Lord, I am sad and poor, but boundless is your grace;  
Give me the soul-transforming joy for which I seek your face." (Bernard of Clairvaux)

### Inside this issue:

Faith Church News	2
Announcements	2
Midweek Lenten Services	2
Youth Events	3
Worship Opportunities	4

May you experience Paradise as you continue your Lenten journey now and forevermore!

Peace,

Pastor John Albertson



## Faith Church News

**We continue to pray for** Scott Behnke, Dean Ricklefs, Joyce Smith, Lisa Smith Kovilic cousin of Deb Bell Geiser.

**Faith Member and college student**, Zach Vana gave a presentation regarding his upcoming mission trip this past Sunday. An opportunity to share in this work is available on a table in the narthex.

**Would you like to go on a trip to** the Holy Land & Jordan? Pastor Rodney Bluml and Pastor Linda Livingston will be traveling with a group next February 4-16, 2018. Brochures are on the welcome table in the narthex with details travel plans and cost information. If you have further questions, please contact Pr. Rodney at 389.6153.

**Daytime Disciples will meet** on Tuesday, February 27th at 1:00 pm in the Library. All ladies are invited to attend. See PJ for any questions.

**The Churches of Marion Food Pantry is** always in need of donations for local people in need. All items are currently being accepted including peanut butter, mac and cheese, soups, toilet paper, cereal and all canned and non-glass containers. Please be sure your items have not expired.

## Parish Nurse

**Blood Drive Results:** We had a goal of 40 donations for the Marion Churches Blood Drive and it was smashed by this last drive on February 13<sup>th</sup>. We had 42 donations! Thank you for donating your time to give and blood to help 126 patients with this donation. This time of the year is slow in donations due to the weather. Thank you again! The next drive is in June at Resurrection.

If you would like to talk to me, you can e-mail Christy Pratt at [parishnurse@faithlutheran.org](mailto:parishnurse@faithlutheran.org) or call me at 361-0445. All discussions confidential!

*I want to thank Faith Friends for their prayers and kind thoughts during my spinal surgery and recovery. It meant a lot to me and helped with my healing.*  
Coreen Hein

## Mid-Week Lenten Worship

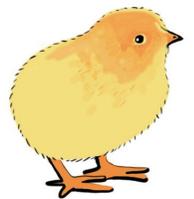
This year, our midweek Lenten theme is "Seven Last Words". Please join us on:

- Wednesday evenings begin with supper in the Family Center at 6:15 pm followed by Holden Evening Prayer at 7:00 pm.
- On Thursdays during Lent, we once again have a Sandwich luncheon in the library at 11:30 am followed by worship at noon. Come as you can!



## Buck a Chick

The Social and Concerns committee and Youth Ministry will again team up for this year's Lenten project Buck a Chick. For every dollar given, the money will go towards buying a chick for a needy family. The family will keep the chick and raise it to produce eggs. The family can either keep the eggs for themselves or take them to the market to sell for income. You can take a coloring sheet to color and we will display it around the narthex.



We will have a friendly competition between the chicks (children), hens (ladies) and roosters (gentlemen) to see who can purchase the most chickens. Last year, the hens won. Can they win again or will there be a new winner?

## Worship Preference Results

75 in favor of one service at 9:00 am

19 in favor of staying with two services

A motion was made and approved by the Church Council based on the recommendation of the worship committee to go to one Sunday worship service beginning fall of 2018.

## Social Concerns & Giving

I am so thankful to be a part of this giving church. Today, Jan 29th, I gave checks out to HACAP, from the contributions from the weekly envelopes, and to the Indian Creek Nature Center kid camps, from our local ministries fund. These organizations were so thankful for thinking of them and for our donations! HACAP stated they will use the money on fresh produce, where they are short on funds. They will send pictures to show how our money was spent. We also gave a check out to Marion Senior Housing, also from our local ministries fund. So blessed!

## Fellowship

**We are looking for treat donations for Sunday Fellowship Time.** To make it easier to donate items, there are two sign up sheets: one for the Adult Fellowship time (9:00am), and one for the Children Fellowship time (10:15am). Please sign up with any dates that work, Thank you for your help, Fellowship Team.

**The group formerly called "20s and 30s"** is now "Faith Social Club". The name change helps eliminate age requirements - we are just a group of adults looking to have fun together in a social setting. Join our next outing!!!

**Fellowship is looking for** soup and dessert donations to serve on March 14th. There is no WNL that night due to spring break. Sign up in table in the Narthex, thank you for your help.

**Good Time Rollers are getting together** for a Games & Gab night on March 9th at 6:30pm at Marlene Pasker's home. Please bring a game and appetizer to share and your drink of choice. Sandwiches will be provided. Please RSVP by signing up in the Narthex.

## March Movie Night

Join us for Family Movie Night on Saturday, March 17th From 7:00-9:00 pm the all ages options in the Family Center is "The Star" (PG) or for Bigger kids & Middle School in the Middle School room we have "Coco" (PG). For Middle School & Older in the Youth Room we have "Thor: Ragnarok" (PG-13). The Grown Up Pick is "Darkest Hour" (PG-13) (Pre-K youth must be accompanied by parent or caregiver) Donations are always welcome to help pay for the snacks, come and join the fun family night!



## Mime Practice Schedule

**Wednesday, Feb. 21st: 7-8:30 pm**

**Sunday, Feb. 25th: Noon-2:30 pm**

**Wednesday, Feb. 28th: 8-8:45 pm**

**Sunday, March 4th: Noon-2:30 pm**

**Wednesday, Mar 11th: 8-8:45 pm**

**Sunday, Mar 18th: Noon-2:30 pm**

## WNL

**Wednesday, Feb 21st**—WNL with Boy Scouts for cooking and clean-up

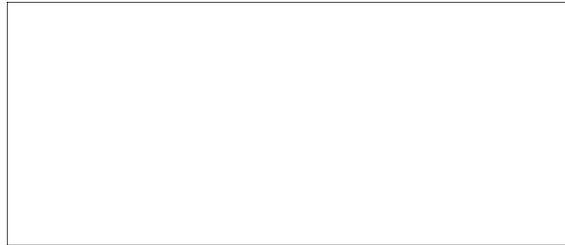
**Wednesday, Feb 28th**—WNL with HS team for cooking and clean-up

**Wednesday, Mar. 7th** —WNL with the Men's team for cooking and clean-up.



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We are a community of Faith,  
growing in Christ, sharing God's love.

## Worship Opportunities

All are welcome and invited to worship at  
Faith Lutheran Church.

### Worship Times

#### Saturdays

5:30 pm—Worship

#### Sundays

8:00 am—Worship

9:10 am —Sunday School All Ages

10:45 am—Worship

### Midweek Lenten Worship

#### Wednesdays

Dinner @ 6:15 pm

Worship @ 7:00 pm

#### Thursdays

Lunch @ 11:30 am

Worship @ Noon

*Faith has been serving the Marion-Cedar Rapids area for more than thirty years; supporting local ministries such as the Marion Food Bank, Habitat for Humanity, and Senior Assistance Programs. We are in partnership with the 10,657 congregations, 28 Lutheran colleges and universities, 8 seminaries, 450 global missionaries and one of the largest non-profit social service networks in the United States; as well as Lutheran World Relief worldwide. All are ministries of the 5.2 million member Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

#### Faith Lutheran Church Staff

**John A. Albertson**

Senior Pastor

**Jen Heinsius**

Secretary

**Diane Lehtinen**

Choir Director

**Jeff Geiger**

Pastoral Intern

**Daniel Stone**

Director of Youth and Family Ministry

**Steve Roggow**

Bell Choir

**Christy Pratt**

Parish Nurse

#### Faith Lutheran Church Council Members

**David Ripley**

President

**Jeff Ausman**

Vice President

**Paula Burley**

Secretary

**Karen Cain**

Treasurer

**Dave Koch**

Financial Secretary

**Diane Lehtinen**

Director of Adult Nurture

**Connie Bulman**

Director of Worship

**Kellie & Josh Osbeck**

Directors of Youth

**Barb & Chris Thompson**

Director of Fellowship

Director of Witness

**Mike Dautremont**

Director of Facilities

**Vicki Barnidge**

Director of Youth Nurture

**Christy Pratt**

Director of Social Concerns

But most of the real work is done by unpaid members of the congregation,  
often without recognition, who see their service as a response to God.