



Living Faith

Kindle a Fire

It's fireplace season. The 1920s-era craftsman in which I grew up has a large wood-burning fireplace that dominates the living room. I have countless memories of that fireplace; it was the center of our homelife in the winter. We huddled around it when it was cold. We opened amazing gifts in its warmth. We laughed and ate and drank in its flickering light. I love that fireplace.

When the days got short and the night got long, there was always something hopeful and joyful about preparing to kindle the fire. It was a kind of resistance to the darkness and cold. When we'd strike a long match and place it in the tinder it was like we were declaring that light, life, and warmth will endure.

The winter liturgical seasons of Advent and Christmas have long been associated with light and fire. During Advent it's customary to light candles atop a wreath at the beginning of worship as we meditate on hope, peace, joy, and love. On Christmas Eve we hold lit candles aloft in a darkened sanctuary as we sing Silent Night. We blanket our homes in lights, too, lightening the darkness of our neighborhoods.

In this season of long nights, there is something deep within us that yearns for fire and light. Before our species had permanent outdoor LED lights affixed to our homes or force-air furnaces, fire and light was a matter of survival. In these months, having a fire could be a matter of life and death.

Even now, having a fire remains a need. As we gather at Faith this Advent and Christmas we will pray that God kindles a fire within us through the promise of Jesus. We will pray that God gathers us together around the light who shines in the darkness. And we will pray that this fire will guide us through the long night.

In this season, we need the light and warmth of the promise of Jesus Christ. So in the days and weeks to come, may our congregation huddle together, share amazing gifts, and laugh, eat, and drink in light of God's coming to us. May we rejoice in the promise that "within the darkest night, [God] kindle[s] a fire that never dies away."

By Pastor Adam White



Faith On the Go

Community, Faith, and Conversations

Faith Lutheran launched the Waconia Faith podcast this fall. Available on Spotify and Apple Podcasts, Waconia Faith is a locally-focused show exploring the people, ministries, and partners of the Faith Lutheran Community through conversations and questions. Hosted by Pastor Adam, episodes range from 15-25 minutes and feature two segments: the first is a guest interview, and in the second the guest asks Pastor Adam a question of their choosing.

"I'm hoping this is a way we connect with soccer dads and hockey moms and anyone else who wants to listen," Pastor Adam said. "This is the kind of thing that's quick. Short. You can listen to it when you're on a walk or picking up your kid from practice."

The format allows for a variety of people and information, serving as a channel to get to know members and partners of Faith more deeply while discovering upcoming events, learning about the Christian Faith, or digging into current events.

The first four episodes featured conversations around Faith and Politics, and the most recent have focused on the Holidays.

While not Pastor Adam's first foray into podcasting (he co-hosted a Nebraska Synod podcast from 2011-2013), he admits this feels new:

"I'm a little out of practice. It takes a while to get your legs, but I've had great guests and I'm excited to see where this goes."

You can find Waconia Faith at Spotify, Apple Podcasts, or through waconiafaithlutheran.com.

Listen to Waconia Faith on:



Spirit of the Season

December In Our Town focuses on the everyday life of a small community during the month of December, highlighting the festive atmosphere, holiday traditions, and the sense of togetherness experienced during this time, often with a focus on the small joys and connections within the community as they prepare for Christmas. Through their experiences, they grow to understand each other better, and learn that peace, joy, and hope are holiday traditions that can be shared by all.

We have had a great team working on this special program with our Sunday and Wednesday SPARK groups. From the idea of the program, to rehearsals, to sharing the message with our friends and family, it is a wonderful time of year!

By Shannon Anderson



Sunday SPARK Program // December 15th, 11:00am

Wednesday SPARK Program // December 18th, 6:00pm



Bonhoeffer:

The Lutheran pastor, community builder, and theologian

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity! (Psalm 133:1 NIV)



Thus begins Dietrich Bonhoeffer's 1939 book *Life Together*. Bonhoeffer, a German Lutheran pastor and theologian, became famous for his involvement in an assassination plot against Adolf Hitler, for which he died in Flossenbug concentration camp in April 1945. Flossenbug was liberated two weeks later by the allied forces.

I sat down for an interview with the member* who reserved a theater showing of the new Bonhoeffer movie for Faith, to better understand what sparked their interest and what it was that kindled this energy for them.

For this member, the interest in Dietrich Bonhoeffer has not been life-long, but rather has been sparked by many pastors over time. A spark that grew over the years into excitement and passion. They spent time in Germany and learned about the German church of the 1930s and 1940s. They watched another movie - *Bonhoeffer: Agent of Grace*, released in 2000 - in which the German clergyman wrestled with the question "What is a moral person to do in a time of savage immorality?"

Recently, this member read Bonhoeffer's 1939 book, *Life Together*, and resonated with the deep need for community in the German church of the 1930s and all churches today. What began as a spark of interest, kindled into a flame of wrestling and wondering about the questions: How do we live in community? What does it mean to live in community today? What does that look like moving into the future?

As Bonhoeffer said in *Life Together*, "The more genuine and the deeper our community becomes, the more will everything else between us recede, and the more clearly and purely will Jesus Christ and his work become the one and only thing that is vital between us."

The new movie, *Bonhoeffer: Pastor. Spy. Assassin.* has garnered significant attention and protest from the actors involved, Bonhoeffer's descendents, and Bonhoeffer scholars. Together we will tease out these pieces to better understand Bonhoeffer as a theologian, pastor, and resistance worker.

Running Sundays December 1, 15, and 22, Sunday Morning Adult Education will focus on Bonhoeffer, his life, his theology, and his stance on the Reich Church of the 1930s and 1940s. Watch for more information on a possible follow up movie night to watch *Bonhoeffer: Agent of Grace*.

**Faith member has chosen to remain anonymous*

By Pastor Katie Jorgensen



Seeking Connections, Community, and Belonging

As German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer said in his book *Life Together*, “The person who loves their dream of community will destroy community, but the person who loves those around them will create community.”

At Faith, we hope to be a place where people are growing in their relationship with Jesus Christ, one another, and those beyond our walls.

The newly re-formed Connections Team is on a mission to connect members of all generations, and make Faith a place where everyone feels welcome. The team has a passion for integrating new members and longtime members, so that everyone can get connected and share our God-given gifts for the good of the whole community.

Are you looking to get connected with others from Faith? Check our website and social media for more information. Here is a sampling:

Dinner for 8

Winter is coming! Imagine four families gathering for two hours of good food, new friends and warm conversations. You have to eat anyway, so why not do it while building relationships with others at Faith? Connect with other adults/families once a month (January-April) for rotating meals hosted in homes, at Faith, and other locations.

**We want to ensure everyone has the opportunity to participate. If you worry your home does not accommodate a large gathering, please reach out to the church office to host your group's meal in the Community Room.*

Faith Nights at The Brass Hat

Gather with members of Faith and the Waconia community for your beverage of choice (and dinner) in Waconia's own modern speakeasy, the Brass Hat, Tuesday, December 10 from 6-9pm. From 7-8pm join the Theology Tour table for a discussion of anything theological. Mention Faith Lutheran to enjoy 10% off your meal or beverage at the Brass Hat. (note date change to Dec. 10)

The Women's Ornament Exchange

Monday, December 16th at 6pm at Waconia Brewing Company. Watch for a sign up and bring a wrapped ornament valued at \$10 or less.

SAGES

Social gatherings for those 55+ is starting up again! They had a potluck in mid-November, and look forward to more opportunities to gather moving forward!



Faith Nights at The Brass Hat



Women's Ornament Exchange



SAGES Potluck

Lenten Season at Faith

Ash Wednesday

March 5th – Services at 12:00, 5:30 & 7:00pm.

Soup Suppers

Weekly on Wednesdays, March 5th – April 16th.
5:30-6:45pm, free will offering.

Lenten Worship

Sundays 9 & 10:30am, Wednesdays 7pm.

Scrub Hub:

A Ministry of Hope

The Scrub Hub ministry started this fall with the mission of providing cleaning supplies to lower income families in our community. Our goal is to support these families by providing the basic supplies needed to settle into, or stay in, their apartment or home. We are thrilled with the generous donations we have received from the Faith Congregation!

In the first month, we completed deliveries to 10 homes in the Waconia, Cologne and Norwood/Young America areas. Some of these families have lived in the area for a while, some are moving back here, while others are moving here from another country. When we deliver the supplies, we typically ask the recipient where they are from and how long they have been in the area, and we let them know we are happy to have them living in our community. All deliveries are warmly received, and many of them end with the recipient giving us a hug. It is heartwarming to know we can help these families who are struggling to make ends meet.

Under the leadership of Kelly Jo Raether, the young adults from Waconia Public Schools Transitions program are taking care of most of the weekday deliveries, shopping for new supplies, and managing our inventory of supplies. Several young adults from the Transitions program have volunteered at Faith Lutheran Church for over a decade. It is wonderful to have another opportunity for them to participate in. It's exciting to have them take a leading role on the Scrub Hub ministry team!

By Chuck Bies



December Needs:

For December, we're requesting the following donations to continue supporting families in our community. If you're able to contribute, please leave your items in the Love INC bags on the Scrub Hub table in the Gathering Space:

- All-purpose cleaner
- Glass cleaner
- Toilet bowl cleaner
- Dish soap
- Paper towels
- Kitchen garbage bags

Note: We do not need bleach, drain opener, or outdoor window cleaner at this time.

Volunteer Drivers Needed:

We're seeking volunteer drivers for evening and weekend deliveries. While most deliveries are made during the day and covered by the Scrub Hub Team, we occasionally need help with evening and weekend drop-offs to accommodate recipient schedules. Deliveries take about an hour, and we recommend pairing up to complete them. If you're interested in volunteering, please reach out to Chuck Bies at chuckbies@gmail.com or by phone at 763-226-0122.

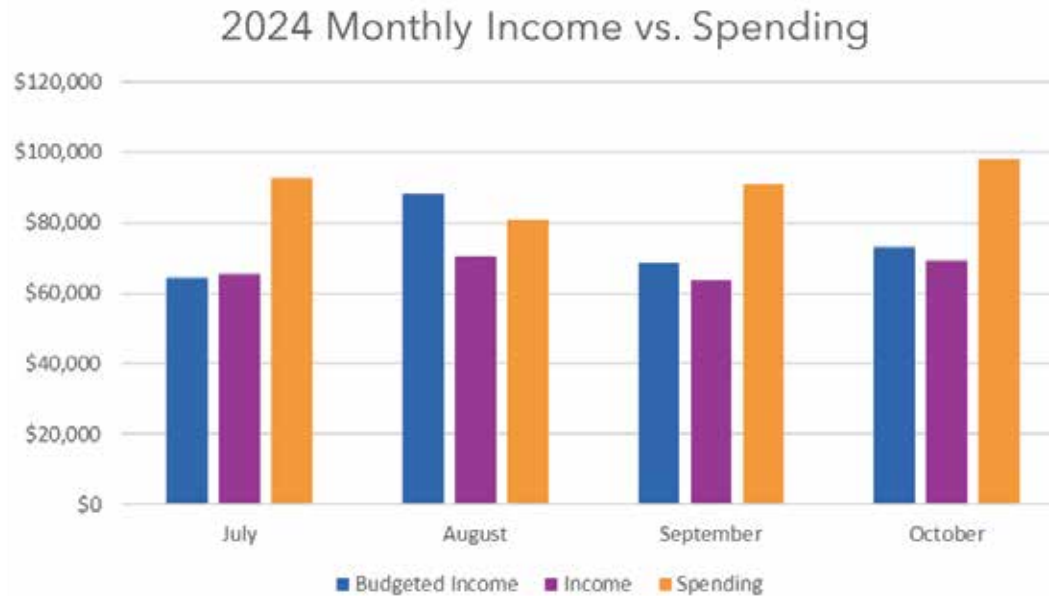


Scan to donate



Financial Update

Note: Through October, we've spent \$103,059 more than we've received. According to budget projections, we've spent \$29,766 less than we planned to spend, and we've received \$30,595 less than we planned to receive.



Come Worship with us!

Sundays @ 9am & 10:30am

Prime Time Wednesdays @ 6pm

www.waconiafaithlutheran.com

952-442-2101



Pastor Adam White

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Pastor Katie Jorgensen

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FAITH
LUTHERAN



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KINDLE A FIRE

**CHRISTMAS EVE
AT FAITH LUTHERAN**

DECEMBER 24

10:30am Joyful Christmas Eve Worship
5:00pm Lessons & Carols with Faith Choir
7:00pm Candlelight & Communion Worship