



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

# A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

All around us, we see signs of God's love and goodness. A person who has stepped away from church for many years steps back into a congregation, feeling the call of the Holy Spirit. Young adults feeling isolated in a digital-first world start gathering in person in a small group, enjoying the warmth of a hug and a new friend asking about their week. A mother plants a garden, and it yields fruits and vegetables, giving her nutritious food for her kids and extra produce to sell at the local market. Everywhere we look, we see signs of Christ's love. In Psalm 93, we read: "More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters, more majestic than the waves of the sea, majestic on high is the Lord! Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore" (4-5).

God's love is a majestic thing, and it moves us to share it in word and deed. The ministries of our congregations, our synods and the ELCA churchwide organization are all working together to share God's love with people in our neighborhoods, across our country and around the world.

I am so grateful for you, dear church. Your generosity to each of these three expressions of the church — your congregation, your synod and the churchwide organization — has bolstered the church's ability to share the message of God's love to people who are longing for it. Through your

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“More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters, more majestic than the waves of the sea, majestic on high is the Lord! Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore.”

—Psalm 93:4-5

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financial resources, your time volunteering and accompanying others, and your voices, you've helped carry this message of God's majestic love. Thank you, dear church. As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage you to stand steadfast in God's promises, sure of God's love and goodness.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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## Faith Lutheran Church Annual Meeting Agenda – February 9, 2025

Call to Order – Jacque VanDenburg  
 Opening Prayer/ Liturgy – Pastor Paul Anderson  
 Approval of February 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes  
 Approval of December 2024 Annual Budget Meeting Minutes  
 Approval of December 2024 Faith House Meeting Minutes  
 Approval of September 2024 Faith House Meeting Minutes  
 Questions & Answers regarding Annual Reports  
 Old Business -- none  
 New Business  
 Elections – See Stand Alone Ballot Sheet  
 Closing Remarks – Jacque VanDenburg  
 Closing Prayer – Pastor Paul Anderson  
 Adjournment – Jacque VanDenburg

**Faith Lutheran Church, Hamilton, Montana**  
**Congregational Meeting Minutes**  
 February 11, 2024

**The meeting called to order:** at 10:56 am by Council President/Convener - Jacque VanDenburg.

- 41 Members were present; See appendix A

**Opening Prayer:** Pastor Paul

**Approval of Minutes of the February 12, 2023, Annual meeting**

MOTION "Approve Minutes as submitted in meeting booklet": Lans Richardson

SECOND: Leanne Marten

PASSED: unanimous

**Approval of 2024 Budget**

MOTION "Approve Budget as submitted to Congregation Dec 11, 2022": Leanne Marten

SECOND: Jan Serfass

PASSED: unanimous

**Annual Reports:**

The 2023 Council Annual reports were distributed in booklet format.

- Clarification was requested by Tim Wiersum "what is the association between the committee and the church council? Jacque explained that the committees were for the support of the work of the council and reported to a council member.
- No further questions or clarifications were given.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:**

- Tim Wiersum expressed his appreciation of the Quilters. They were asked to stand and be acknowledged for their work.
- Tim Wiersum said he would like to make the following motion:  
 MOTION "That all three furnaces and air conditions be replaced": Tim Wiersum  
 SECOND: none  
 FAILED for lack of a second.
- Sandy Russ expressed concern that there was not the money presently to move forward with the purchase of 3 furnaces.
- Jacque VanDenburg clarified that a priority for the new Steward of Property and Grounds would be to research and propose the next steps of furnace maintenance and/or replacement.
- Dean Drake clarified that one of the furnaces was newer and purchased in 2017.

**Elections:**

The Nominating Committee submitted the following ballot (and blank positions were nominations from the floor for as listed below).

**BALLOT**

President/Convener (1 year term) – Jacque VanDenburg for second term

Steward of Discipleship (2 year term) – Brooke Kimzey for first term

Steward of Finance (2 year term) – Dean Drake for first term

Steward of Property & Grounds (2 year term) – Greg Houser for first term

**Notes:**

*Steward of Communication – Colleen Southwick is continuing with 1 year remaining.*

*Steward of Hospitality & Fellowship – Susan Wetzsteon is continuing with 1 year remaining.*

*Steward of Worship – Amber Richardson is continuing with 1 year remaining.*

*Steward of Outreach – Rick Brown is continuing with 1 year remaining.*

**Endowment Fund Committee****Notes:**

- *Chair: Amber Richardson Current chair serving since 2024.*
- *Judy Griffin serving until 2027.*
- *Shawn Boelman serving until 2027.*
- *Karen Heller serving until 2025.*
- *Clairice Brady is leaving this committee.*
- *The Endowment Fund Committee has not had any business to conduct in the past year and although 1 position is now open for a 3-year term there is not a pressing need to fill this position. Nominations from the floor may be considered at this time or a member may be appointed at a future point in time when there is business to conduct.*

No nominations were received from the floor.

Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp Representative Cory Keith

Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp Representative Jennifer Murillo

Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp Alternate no nominations from the floor

MT Synod Male Delegate: Lans Richardson

MT Synod Male Delegate Alternate: Rick Brown

MT Synod Female Delegate: Jacque VanDenburg

MT Synod Female Delegate Alternate: nomination from the floor = Susan Peterson

Nominating Committee for next year's annual meeting:

Council Appointed - Rick Brown

Nomination from the floor - Lans Richardson

Nomination from the floor - Jennifer Murillo

Nomination from the floor - Judy Griffin

Nomination from the floor - Ben Essary

Nomination from the floor - Sue Brown

APPROVAL of Ballot

MOTION: "Approval of Ballot by Acclamation" Mark Grotbo

SECOND: Deb Cathey

PASSED: unanimous

**Announcements and Suggestions:**

- Pastor Paul announced that Celeste Pogachar was present and is currently serving as a representative of the Five Valleys Cluster for the Montana Synod ELCA (Lake County - Missoula County - Ravalli County - Sanders County)
- Jacque announced that Pastor Paul will be taking a sabbatical in 2024, currently planned for August, September, and October

MOTION "to adjourn the meeting": John Marten

SECOND: Sandy Russ

PASSED: unanimous

The meeting was adjourned: 11:21 pm

## **Congregational Budget Meeting Minutes**

**December 8, 2024**

The meeting was called to order at 11:15 am by Council President/Convener - Jacque VanDenburg.

64 Members were present: See appendix A

Opening Prayer: Pastor Paul Anderson

Faith Lutheran Council Steward of Property & Grounds – Dean Drake welcomed everyone and presented the agenda.

### **APPROVAL OF Agenda:**

**MOTION “Approve Budget as distributed”:** Dan Kimzey

**SECOND:** Ron Hepner

**PASSED:** unanimous

Faith Lutheran Council Steward of Finance – Dean Drake placed the proposed 2025 budget on the overhead projector screen and went through each line of the proposed budget, see appendix B. There were some questions of clarification, but no final changes or additions were suggested.

### **APPROVAL OF Budget:**

**MOTION “Approve Budget as submitted”:** Lans Richardson

**SECOND:** Judy Griffin

**PASSED:** unanimous

The meeting was adjourned at 11:26 am

**Special Congregational Meeting  
Sell or retain the Faith House  
Faith Lutheran Church  
Date: Sunday, December 8, 2024**

1. The meeting was called to order at 11:26 am by Faith Lutheran Council Steward of Fellowship & Hospitality – Susan Wetzsteon
2. 64 Members were present: See Appendix A
3. Susan welcomed everyone and presented the agenda and rules of the meeting with the stated purpose of deciding to sell or keep the Faith House.
4. Susan presented a slide show prepared by Faith Lutheran Council President/Convener - Jacque VanDenburg, of and overview of the property history and its current use and a Summary of financial and maintenance considerations. See Appendix B
5. There were no questions or further input on reasons to Retain the Faith House or reason to Sell the Faith house.
6. Lans announced that he felt the previous meetings and information given to the congregation this year led to this time to vote. He presented the sell option only for purposes to initiate the vote.

**MOTION “To sell the Faith House”:** Lans Richardson  
**SECOND:** Leanne Marten

7. Paper ballots were distributed and counted by Lans Richardson, Troy Hanson and Sandra Styler  
**To sell the Faith House: 49**  
**To retain the Faith House: 15**  
**MOTION:** passed

8. Susan thanked everyone for their work on this issue.

**MOTION “Adjourn the meeting”:** Karen Heller  
**SECOND:** Tom Anderson  
**PASSED:** unanimous

9. The meeting was adjourned by Susan Wetzsteon

**Faith Lutheran Church, Hamilton, Montana**  
**Congregational Special Meeting Minutes**  
 September 29, 2024

**The meeting was called to order:** at 11 am by Council President/Convener - Jacque VanDenburg.

- 47 Members were present; See appendix A

**Opening Prayer:** Jacque

**Informational Slide Show:** Jacque presented a slide show with history and discussion points about the Faith House property belonging to Faith Lutheran Church. See Appendix B

**Council Members' Input:** Jacque invited council members to give any additional input they would like to provide.

- Dean Drake (Steward of Finance) clarified that the rental income from Faith House is now split between maintenance funds and general funds. If Faith House was sold, he would suggest that \$200,000 to \$250,000 of those funds be targeted to go to general funds so that our ministry needs do not suffer from the loss of the rental income.
- Amber Lewis (Steward of Worship) noted that the workload for the Steward of Property & Grounds has increased because of the aging of the church building and deferred maintenance of Faith House. She asked members to consider that if we retain the Faith House, how we would support the workload of the voluntary position of Steward of Property & Grounds.

**Congregational Input with 16 or more people presenting questions and comments.**

- Questions from members of the congregation included:
  - How soon does each maintenance issue need to be done?
  - If we sell, could the church carry the mortgage note?
  - Should our church be landlords, is there a theological basis to keeping the property?
  - Are our numbers going up or down?
  - How many of the people here today will be here in 1, 5, 10, 20, 25 years?
- Comments from members of the congregation
  - When our congregation decided to buy Faith House we had 2 services each Sunday with as much as 200 people worshipping, and a part time youth director. We lost half of those members overnight with the ELCA social statement.
  - We did work to use Faith House for ministry rather than as a rental, before we lost membership.
  - Nationwide there is a Pastor shortage, a parsonage could be the way to recruit our next pastor.
  - If we could sell Faith House, we could use resources to focus on mission. It would be hard to develop a mission in order to decide to sell Faith House.
  - It is not possible to subdivide any of the Faith House property for selling part of it.
  - Faith House was purchased to help us in our ministry, perhaps now the sale of Faith House could give us the opportunity to support community organizations who are doing ministry already.
  - Young families today do not worship in brick and mortar churches like they did in the past. We won't be filling these buildings, but we can still do programs, services, online resources and new ways to reach families and their children.
  - It feels like we could make the decision and vote today.
  - We should not vote today because we need to talk to each other and people who are not here today and tell people when there will be a vote.
  - The annual meeting February 9, 2025, is too long to wait to vote on selling the Faith House, the needs will not change, and our estimates are current.



- The Special Congregational Meeting to approve the Final Budget, December 8th would be a time to vote on such a financial decision.
- We could put these PowerPoint slides on the web for members who are not here today.
- We could simultaneously have a committee to work on mission development. Rick agreed to take the names of people interested in being on that committee.

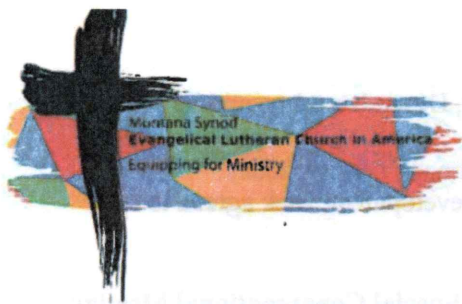
**MOTION “To hold a vote to sell or not sell the Faith House at the Special Congregational Meeting to approve the Final Budget December 8<sup>th</sup> after worship.”: Susan Wetzsteon**

**SECOND: Ben Essary**

**PASSED: unanimous**

**Jacque suggested that the congregation continue talking and thinking about all these issues, to talk with people who were not here, and come prepared to vote on December 8<sup>th</sup>.**

**The meeting was adjourned: 12:08 pm**



January 1, 2025

Dear Siblings in Christ,

*"...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things...If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit." (Galatians 5:22-23, 25)*

Why are you here? Most likely you're reading this at your congregations annual meeting. And perhaps you are pondering this same question: "why am I here when I could be doing something else that's more exciting than a boring church business meeting?"

But what if congregation annual meetings were seen as more than just a "business meeting?" What if we thought of our Annual Meetings as the exciting continuation of our year-long discernment about where God is calling our congregation to go AND, even more exciting, as taking the first and biggest step of the new year into the calling from God that we discerned together?!

Annual Meetings are the time, usually the only time of the year, when the majority of your congregation gathers to make important decisions about leadership for the congregation (president, council members), finances (the budget, compensation packages), and how the congregation hopes and plans to do its ministry over the next year and beyond.

These necessary decisions are hopefully ignited from the values and principles sparked by the Holy Spirit through spiritual discernment. They emerge from hearts and spirits made bold by the transforming love of Christ and empowered through by the Spirit's fruit in "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." They come from a mutually discovered purpose (why are we doing this?) and vision (where is God calling us to go?) in conversation with one another and with God.

What if we entered into our Annual Meetings with the perspective of opportunity and the mindset of generosity rather than just one more church-thing to do on a Sunday afternoon in January that's keeping us from watching the NFL playoffs? Imagine what God could accomplish in and through us for the sake of Christ's congregation, Christ's Church, and the wider world!

Congregations are not the only part of the church that have annual meetings. The Montana Synod, composed of congregations from across Montana and Northern Wyoming will also be having its Annual Meeting (also known as the Synod Assembly) in Great Falls, MT on May 30-31, 2025. As a Synod, we will walk on Christ's way together to elect the synod's leadership including a bishop, manage with generosity the blessings God has given to this Synod, and equip each other for listening to the Spirit's guidance, proclaiming Christ's Gospel, doing Christ's love, and collaborating for Christ's ministry. The theme for the 2025 Montana Synod Assembly is "Equipping for Hope."

There is a third Annual Meeting that will be happening this year – the ELCA's triannual Churchwide Assembly will meet in Phoenix, AZ on July 28-August 2, 2025. As the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, voting members will gather from diverse places across this country to discern the direction of the Holy Spirit in electing a new presiding bishop and new Churchwide

secretary, managing the blessings the ELCA has been given, deciding how we will live as Christ's Church together, and how God is calling us as the ELCA to move toward God's future together.

In all of these opportunities to gather for "Annual Meetings" in the name of Jesus Christ, let us remember that we are each and all parts of Jesus' Church, the body of Christ, and let us be emboldened to live out our faith through the hope, love and joy poured into us by the Holy Spirit.

May your congregation be blessed in this New Year by the new life that comes to us only in Jesus Christ!

In Christ's Love,

Rev. Dr. Laurie Jungling  
Bishop, Montana Synod, ELCA

*“Faith Lutheran Church is a family of God Built on love: worshipping, welcoming, learning, and serving in Christ’s Name.”*

### **Report from Pastor Paul for the year of 2024**

Colossians 3:16 ESV

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

I consider it an absolute privilege and am humbled to serve as Pastor here at Faith Lutheran Church. It has been a joy for me to watch as the many members and friends of FLC have allowed “the word of Christ [to] dwell in you richly,” and as we have worked together, “teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom...”

I am happy to report that Lans Richardson and Jacque VanDenburg completed their requirements in our Synod’s LPA program and were commissioned at the 2024 Synod Assembly. It has been an honor to work with them and mentor them through this process. As part of that training, Lans led a Bible study which included others from other churches and denominations. I am also pleased to report that I continue to mentor Jacque as she is currently serving as Vicar in the ELCA congregations in Circle, and Richie MT while attending Seminary remotely at Wartburg Seminary, as part of the team program, working toward her Master of Divinity Degree to become a Pastor. There are two others who are discerning the possibility of being a part of the LPA program in the fall of 2025.

I am pleased to report that we officially welcomed several members from 2019-2024 into our congregation.

We also held a SOS (Seekers Of Solas) group on the first and third Tuesdays of the month from noon until one PM. This was an informal bereavement group.

I also want to report and thank you all for allowing me to have a Sabbatical time. From preparing and helping to develop a leadership team during my absence and taking care of the Pastoral duties to the actual time during my Sabbatical. It truly was a refreshing, restful, and learning time for Gwen and I. Thank you!

I am pleased to report that we continue to do ministry with our ecumenical partners, the Presbyterian Church USA, St Paul’s Episcopal Church, Corvallis United Methodist Church and the Stevensville United Methodist Church. As partners, we worked together to do a Lenten Lunch and study during Lent. We also had a joint VBS during the summer, (please see the steward of discipleship report).

Lots of ministry is happening here at FLC because of the many members working as the one body of Christ. Please see all of the reports from our Council Stewards, our committees and groups that do so much for the gospel of Christ.

The verse that comes to mind as we move into 2025 here at FLC comes from the prophet Isaiah, “Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old.

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”

My prayer for us as we move into the year of 2025 is this:

Dear God, thank you that you never leave us where we are. Thank you for the promise of something new. Help us to fix our eyes forward in anticipation of all that is to come. Show us what new things you are wanting to do in and through us this year. Holy Spirit help us to see things differently, through your eternal lens. More powerful than any goal we could aspire to on our own is our willingness to join in the new work you are doing. Thank you for your steady guidance and constant love. In Jesus’ name we pray Amen.

Please let me know if you have any comments or questions.

Partners in sharing God’s grace,  
Pastor Paul

**Message from the President/Convenor of Faith Lutheran Church**

Jacque VanDenburg

Dear Members of Faith Lutheran Church,

As we bring this year to a close and reflect on all that has transpired within our congregation, I am filled with gratitude and a deep sense of honor for the opportunity to serve as your President/Convenor over the past three years. It has been a privilege to walk alongside you in faith and to witness the many ways in which our church community has grown and served one another.

One of the significant matters we addressed this year was the future of the Faith House property. This discussion began in the spring of 2024 when our council recognized the need to thoughtfully consider whether continuing to maintain this property was in the best interest of our congregation's mission and resources. A special committee was formed to undertake this important work, comprised of members who brought diverse perspectives and a shared commitment to discerning the best path forward.

Throughout the summer months, this committee and the council diligently gathered information, including evaluations from a licensed contractor to assess the property's condition and a real estate agent to provide insight into its market value. These assessments were invaluable in helping us understand the full scope of possibilities and the financial implications of keeping or selling the Faith House.

In September, we held a special congregational meeting to provide an update on the committee's findings and to open the floor for discussion. It was a time of thoughtful conversation, with members sharing their hopes, concerns, and questions. It was clear that this decision would impact us all, and we approached it with prayerful consideration.

Following additional discussions and prayerful discernment, we convened a second special meeting in December to take a formal vote on the matter. After hearing from many voices and reflecting on the mission and future of Faith Lutheran Church, the congregation voted by majority to sell the Faith House property. This decision was not made lightly, and I commend all of you for the care and respect shown throughout this process.

The decision to sell the Faith House marks a new chapter in our church's journey. While letting go of a property that holds memories and history is never easy, we trust that this decision will better position us to focus on our mission and ministry in new and meaningful ways. As we move forward, we will continue to discern how best to use our resources to serve God's people and share His love with our community.

Reflecting on the past three years, I am profoundly grateful for the trust you have placed in me to serve as your President/Convenor. It has been a time of both challenges and blessings, and I have been continually inspired by the faith, resilience, and generosity of this congregation. I have no doubt that God is guiding us into a future filled with hope and new opportunities to serve.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to Faith Lutheran Church. Your prayers, participation, and support make all the difference as we continue to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world.

In Christ's Service,

*Jacque VanDenburg*

Jacque VanDenburg  
President/Convenor Faith Lutheran Church

## Annual Reports from FLC Stewards

### Steward of Discipleship

#### Annual Report 2024

Brooke Kimzey

This past year at Faith Lutheran Church has certainly flown by! I have completed my first year as Steward of Discipleship; and have started to look ahead to the new year. We are hoping to continue the events listed, as well as begin a new Family Faith Night once a month.

Please see below for a review of the events/activities that took place this past year:

February-March 2024- Women's Bible Study took on Wednesday evenings at Faith. We used the book "A Year of Biblical Womanhood" by Rachel Held Evans and held weekly discussions. There were between 5-9 women that attended each week. We enjoyed sharing, praying and fellowshiping together.

April 2024- Lans Richardson led a BASIC Bible class that was open to all. His weekly study included a meal, lesson and discussion. His average attendance was 25 individuals.

May 2024- Faith graduating seniors were recognized with quilts. Scholarships were presented to both graduating seniors and FLC members who are continuing their higher education.

Summer 2024- Local youths were awarded scholarships to attend Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp on Flathead Lake- FLC is proud to be able to sponsor children in order to attend this incredible outdoor ministry.

Vacation Bible School – July 2024 was held in conjunction with local churches: First Presbyterian, St. Paul's Episcopal, Corvallis United Methodist and Faith Lutheran. Counselors from Flathead Bible Camp traveled to Hamilton and utilized St. Paul's church to lead community children from preschool through 6<sup>th</sup> grade in various activities. Many volunteers from each congregation contributed to an amazing week!

### Steward of Hospitality and Fellowship

#### Annual Report: 2024

Thank you for entrusting me with the Steward of Hospitality position. 2024 was a busy year! Here are some of the highlights!

February:

- Lenten Soup Suppers were held Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and the 29<sup>th</sup>. Hosted by: Council, Ladies Bible Study, The Quilters. Thank you all who provided soup!
- Faith Lutheran hosted the Lenten Luncheon on February 28<sup>th</sup>.

March:

- Lenten Soup Suppers were held Wednesday March 6<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>.
- Easter Brunch to benefit our scholarship program was held on March 31st. Thank you to the Scholarship Committee, Mark Livesay, and everyone who helped make this a tasty success! Over \$1200.00 was given to the Scholarship Fund through the Free Will Offering.

April:

- The family of Merle and Millie Unruh hosted Coffee Hour on the 21<sup>st</sup> in honor of their 70<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.
- The Chili Cook-Off was held April 28th. We netted \$4870.00. It was decided to fund the FLBC Campership \$1500.00 and the balance to our Scholarship Fund

May:

- The Mutual Ministry hosted Coffee Hour on the first Sunday in May, treating us to breakfast burritos!

June:

- The 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Supper featured a pulled pork Potluck. Thank you to whomever stepped in to host it!

September:

- To track purchases paid with donations from the Hospitality Petty Cash, I created a spreadsheet. It is in the envelope with the cash donations. We are asking that expenditures be logged in along with the receipt and indicate any paid reimbursements. Higher purchases still need to be submitted to the treasurer for reimbursement. This will give us a better idea of what and how much we are spending on kitchen supplies and food for Coffee Hour.
- The 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Supper, "Family Fun Night" was held on September 29<sup>th</sup>. With the help of Lans and crew we served Costco Lasagna, Ceaser Salad, French Bread and Ice Cream Sundaes for dessert. We also had beer and wine available (not purchased by the church). Card and board games were available along with Air Hockey. We served more than 40 people.

October:

- It was decided to add the Coffee Hour Sign-up to the monthly volunteer sheet.
- We celebrated the return of Pastor Paul from his sabbatical with cake and ice cream.

December:

- December 15<sup>h</sup>, we celebrated Happy Birthday Jesus with cupcakes and ice cream.
- A Cookie Potluck will be held during Fellowship hour after services on December 29<sup>th</sup>.

As requested by the Council, the Position and Job Description for the Steward of Hospitality and Fellowship were reviewed and updated.

Thank you to all of you who host our Sunday Fellowship hour! Especially our Kitchen Elves (Linda and Helen)!!

Faithfully Yours, Susan Wetzsteon

## **Steward of Property and Grounds Annual Report 2024**

The highlight of this year was the transformation of the women's restroom. New paint, wallpaper, hardware, toilet and lighting have made a big difference.

We had our well water tested and the results have us putting in a treatment system soon.

We will be replacing the hot water tank with an on-demand system.

The East facing door was replaced.

The exhaust fans for both restrooms are working again.

Maintenance work like fixing broken water pipes inside and out cleaning of gutters putting down new bark.

Thank you to everyone who have helped

Thank you everyone for the opportunity to steward the property and grounds.

Greg Houser

## **Steward of Worship Annual Report 2024**

Sing a Joyful Noise to the Lord!!! What a wonderful year of worship we at Faith Lutheran have had. None of it would be possible without the help from our many worship assistants. A big thank you to our assistant ministers, our readers, ushers, counters, sound and online engineers, and our computer technicians, accompanists and especially our lay pastors who filled in during Pastor's Sabbatical. And those folks working behind the scenes, an even bigger shout out. Thank you to our alter guild, and our communion bread baker.

We have been re-using bulletins for our services with an insert for changing hymns, prayers, and announcements.

We are happy to have had some performances by our Faith choir this year. How wonderful to sing to the Lord a new song!!! If you are interested in singing, please contact the church office.

Are you reading this report, wondering how you can get involved? Do you need special training? Maybe you don't have a lot of time but are looking for ways to share your talents with the church. There are so many opportunities, big and small, almost all that don't require much training. Good at running a computer? A passion for reading? Musical gifts, be it voice or instrument? Want to light the alter candles?? All gifts can be used to enhance our worship services. Please feel free to reach out to me and we can talk about how you can use your gifts here at Faith Lutheran. In the meantime, Let Us Worship Together!!! Looking forward to seeing you all at Faith Lutheran in 2025!!

Amber Richardson  
Steward of Worship



**Steward of Finance, Dean Drake**

**2024 Annual Report**

First, Council wishes to thank all those that were able to continue giving during 2024 to support God's work through this congregation. Approximately 75% of Faith Lutheran Church's total income comes from collections during church services and this helps provide primary funding for our ministries and pays our bills. We could not continue to do what we do without this critical support.

Thank You!

**2024 Highlights:**

Two primary reports are used to help understand the financial health of FLC. They consist of the 2024 Balance Sheet (a snapshot of where the church stands in terms of assets and liabilities) and the statement of Profit and Loss (a way to look at 2024's operating income and expenses). A summary of these reports for 2024 follows.

1. **FLC's Balance Sheet** shows that we ended the year in fine shape as we own both our Church facility as well as Faith House and carry no long or short term debit and our investments with Thrivent and First Security Bank are healthy. FLC has total assets of over \$1.1 million of which over \$720 thousand are fixed assets (Church property and Faith House).
2. **FLC's Profit and Loss** statement shows that, while giving was up approximately 6%, our total net operating income was barely able to meet our operating expenses. This is of concern moving forward as we do not want to be in a position where we must use savings to pay for current operating expenses. We must strive to live within our means so we will be watching this closely in 2025.

Of note, the congregation approved several much-needed deferred maintenance projects for 2025 at our Budget meeting in December. These projects total approximately \$50,000 and relate to upgrades for our church facility. Funding for these projects was planned to come from our Thrivent savings funds and not from our current Operating Income.

One piece of very good news for 2025 is that, with the congregational approval for the sale of Faith House, we will have much more flexibility in funding these deferred maintenance projects and will not be required to draw down our Thrivent savings.

Again, I want to thank this congregation for all that they do to support our ministries both financially and through volunteering their time and talents!

May God bless you all! Dean Drake, Your Steward of Finance

**Steward of Communication, Colleen Southwick  
Annual Report 2024**

As Steward of Communication, I have enjoyed working with this wonderful church council. I am thankful for each one of you. The church office has been well served by our Administrative Assistant, Jennifer Larson. She is so organized and so kind.

We have been working to update the church database and determine the most efficient ways to communicate with members, and at the same time honor their preferences in types of communication to receive, and their privacy concerns. Some people prefer email, some prefer a newsletter mailed through the postal service. Some people like to be on the auto-call list and some people find it annoying. Some people would like to have a printed copy of member names and contact information, and some worry about privacy issues.

We developed a "Congregation Communication Preference Form" and sent it to all Active Members and Inactive Members as identified in the present church database records. At this point 98 members have returned the forms. These forms are available at the church office. If you have not received a form yet give Jenny a call at the church office, 406 363-2964. Please help us invite everyone, members, friends & visitors, to complete the form, and when situations and preferences change, complete a new one. Below is a screenshot of the form. Thank you for your kind and gracious help in this matter.

*Faith Lutheran Church  
171 Lewis Lane  
Hamilton, Montana 59840*

**Members and Friends and Visitors of Faith Lutheran Church**

If you would like to receive information and notices from Faith Lutheran Church or change the way you are receiving it now, please complete the information below.

**The Faith Herald:** is the church newsletter mailed or emailed monthly as well as available on the Faith Lutheran Church website and in the Church Narthex. You may like to say no to both options below and not have it sent to you.

**CallMultiplier:** is a phone service Faith Lutheran Church uses to reach multiple congregants (all at once) by phone to give updates on upcoming events/activities in our church. You may like to say no to this option below and not receive these phone calls.

**Printed Church Directory:** *available in print form only at church office for member use only.* This directory will not be placed on the website or shared in digital form. Indicate below what information you would like to have in the directory. You may like to say no to each line and not be included in the church directory.

	<b>If you would like to receive the Faith Herald, how should we send it?</b> <small>enter yes or no each line</small>	<b>Would you like to receive calls from our church office CallMultiplier?</b> <small>enter yes or no below</small>	<b>Which lines (if any) would you like included in the Church Directory?</b> <small>enter yes or no each line</small>
<b>NAME = First Name Last Name</b>			
<b>ADDRESS = Address</b> <b>City State Zip Code</b>			
<b>PHONE = Home Phone</b>			
<b>EMAIL = E-Mail</b>			
<b>BIRTHDAY = Birth Date</b>			
<b>CHURCH NARTHEX BOX = Name</b>			

Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return the completed form to the church office at your earliest convenience.**

## **Steward of Outreach Annual Report 2024**

**Dear Faith family: Blessings to you all and thank you for being God's hands and feet in our community. Your prayerful support has reached out this year in so many ways, including:**

**Community Meals.... What a faithful crew! Feeding hundreds a year, and church ladies can really cook!**

**Faith Worship Livestream...Hundreds of views every year, some are members now who have never been here physically but join us every Sunday.**

**Cotton Candy ...We sold and gave away cotton candy from a booth at all the Sapphire Summer Concerts, and invited bunches of kids to VBS. We met so many new people and told them about Faith Lutheran Church and our loving family. We gave away cotton candy to the kids on the final day of VBS!**

**Facebook...We have 330 people who follow us!**

**YouTube...We have 101 subscribers to our channel.**

**Pastor Paul continues to bring people to our faith community through his Hospice Chaplain work, his grief groups, his willingness to take on funerals and memorial services for so many who have nowhere else to turn. They come to visit Paul at his church, and you and your welcoming hearts make them want to keep coming back for more!**

**Respectfully submitted**

**Rick Brown, LPA, outgoing Steward of Outreach**

## **FLC Office Annual Report 2024**

**Greetings Faith Lutheran Church:**

**It has been a pleasure to serve as your secretary and worship among you. The office has been busy: supporting the church council members, updating membership data, publishing and distributing the newsletter, creating bulletins and power points for worship, reporting music for licensing, compiling the Annual Report booklets, and so much more.**

**Thank you all for your support! As always, I am here to help. Please come see me or contact me (email: [faithlutheran59840@gmail.com](mailto:faithlutheran59840@gmail.com), phone: 406-363-2964). The office hours are Monday through Friday from 9 am to 1 pm. If you think of something outside of office hours, you are welcome to leave a note on my desk, drop a note in the basket attached to the office door, or send an email. I will gladly and promptly address it during the hours of operation. Thank you for taking the time to write it down for me; it ensures that it will get done. I look forward to seeing you all on Sundays for worship and fellowship.**

**In Gratitude:**

**Jennifer Larson**

## **Committee Reports**

### **Endowment Committee 2024**

Once again, the Endowment committee has had a fairly slow year. While the Quasi Endowment funds are back to principal balances, we have not had many requests for funds. The committee did meet after the annual meeting last year as well as agreed to spend funds on the Sapphire Lutheran Homes concert series.

If you have questions about the endowment committee or how we determine what to spend funds on, please let me know.

Amber Richardson  
Endowment Committee Chair

### **Memorial Committee 2024**

There were no Memorial Gifts received nor expenditures regarding the Memorial Fund. If you have questions about the Memorial Fund, please contact the Church Office.

### **Mutal Ministry Committee 2024**

The responsibility of the Mutual Ministry Committee (MMC) is to provide love and support to the Pastor, the staff and all the parishioners. To be an advocate when requested and a sounding board providing open and honest communication.

The MMC members for 2024 year were Cory Keith (Chair) LaDonna Grotbo (Secretary), Troy Hanson, Scott Southwick, Jacque VanDenburg (Council Liaison) and Pastor Paul Anderson.

Quarterly meetings consisted of the following:

- Yearly staff reviews being completed and/or in process.

- 2024 Pastor Sabbatical.

- Ministry in community.

- Overview of upcoming church season and activities to be held.

During 2024, no changes recommended to policy.

The staff appreciation luncheon was held on December 17, which all staff attended. Faith is blessed to have hardworking and dedicated staff members who keep the day-to-day operations of the church running.

Serving faithfully in Christ,  
Cory Keith  
Committee Chair

## 2024 Outreach Activities

### **“Love Day” Quilters**

The Love Day Quilters meet to assemble quilts the first and third (plus any fifth) Wednesdays of each month. The quilts become local and world-wide outreach from our congregation.

During 2024, 105 quilts were shipped to the Lutheran World Relief clearinghouse in Minnesota.

Six quilts were given to Faith’s graduating High School seniors. Two were given to Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp. One quilt was donated to S.A.F.E. for a fundraising effort. Eight lap quilts were donated to a Christmas Elder and Veteran project. And, at the present time, there are another 60 plus completed for the next shipping date. Anyone is welcome to attend the quilting sessions to help assemble these quilts – no special skills are required.

### **Community Meals (sponsored by the Family Shelter of the Bitterroot)**

Faith Lutheran has participated in the Community Meals program since its inception in 2013.

Meals are served September through May. Faith Lutheran serves the meal on the 4th Tuesdays of the month except November and December due to the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. During 2024 over 25 different members of the Faith family plus friends helped prepare the food in the early afternoon and/or serve the meals later at the Cornerstone Church on Fairgrounds Road. This accounted for over 300 volunteer hours. We did serve 7 meals totaling over 600 Dine-In and/or Take Out servings. In addition, any leftover food was taken to the Massa Youth Home early in the year before its closing. We also began delivering 25 servings to the Willow Court community to accommodate residents who have limited incomes and mobility issues. Donations of time, food items, money, and/or Thrivent Action Team assistance are always appreciated to keep this helpful program possible.

### **Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes (Samaritan’s Purse)**

Operation Christmas Child (OCC) Shoeboxes share God’s love and the Christmas story with children around the world. This year Faith Lutheran Church members packed a total of 155 shoeboxes. The “After-Church” party that included food and fellowship happened the second Sunday of November. In addition, the packing line was set up a few days before and after this date for additional opportunities to pack a box. Donations of filler items for shoeboxes and/or money to help with this outreach ministry are welcome all year long. Boxes can also be packed online by going to the Samaritan’s Purse website. To learn more, visit the website or with Linda Beyer, contact person.

### **Golden Group**

The Golden Group made up of retired and/or mostly retired members of our congregation continued with social, educational, and charitable activities. An email communication labeled the “Golden Group Scoop” is sent periodically to share info and activity ideas. This year activities included Karen H. sharing Safari in Kenya photos and commentary and a salmon lunch courtesy of the Nancy and Ron Osborn. No other organized activities were proposed so there has been a hiatus in activities, however anyone can plan one in the months to come. The Golden Group is an opportunity for those who do not work full time to share in fellowship. There are no membership rules or expectation and **anyone** of a more “mature” 😊 age is welcome!

**KOGUDUS RENEWAL MINISTRY**  
**(2024 Annual Report to the Montana Synod)**

The K.R.M. Board of Directors and I thank the Montana Synod and all who have supported this retreat ministry in 2024 and previous years. As a ministry partner K.R.M. began in 1976 under the leadership of Rev. Olaf Magis who had begun Kogudus retreats in 1969 while he was a pastor of First Lutheran Church in Glasgow, MT. The Estonian word, Kogudus, means "Christian fellowship". Olaf chose that word to convey the **message of Christ, fellowship in Christ, and service for Christ** to describe this ministry. Kogudus retreats have been held throughout the U.S. and in other countries. In recent years, however, retreats have been held in Montana and Illinois.

The original retreat called "**Faith and Life**" is a study of the Apostles' Creed and the New Testament Greek words for various kinds of servants. It inspires those who attend to discern their God-given gifts and consider how the Holy Spirit calls them to put those gifts to use for the common good of Christ's Church and the world. Another retreat, "**Lament and Laughter**", was introduced in 2011. It connects our losses to the cross and our joys to the resurrection. Dying and rising in Christ (daily baptism) is experienced at this retreat and encouraged as a daily spiritual practice.

"**Contrast Community**" was introduced in 2014. It is a retreat inspired by Dr. James L. Bailey's book by that name and focuses on the Sermon on the Mount. "**Sojourners in Recovery**" was developed in 2003 and was first offered at Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp for those recovering from chemical or other dependencies. It connects the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and other recovery programs with their Biblical basis to offer spiritual support and guidance to Christians and others who seek sobriety and serenity. Family members of those in recovery (or not in recovery) are encouraged to take part as well.

"**Blessed to Be a Blessing**" is the most recently developed retreat. It was offered at both state prisons in Montana in 2022. The focus of this retreat is on Christian stewardship. It may also be adapted for use in congregations. The format is the same at most Kogudus events: small group Bible study, three presentations, large group sharing, creative worship, lively singing, and joke telling.

Two retreats were held in Montana in 2024. "**Contrast Community**" was used at Montana Women's Prison in Billings September 21-22. Seventeen inmates took part; and nine team members from around the state led the retreat. The same curriculum was offered at Montana State Prison in Deer Lodge November 2-3. Twenty inmates attended and nine team members led. Inmates at both prisons expressed gratitude and enthusiasm for being able to take part. Their responses were evident in their singing, sharing, poster making, and written evaluations. Numerous inmates have shared over the years how grateful they are to be treated with love and acceptance as fellow siblings in Christ.

I resigned from serving as the Executive Director to fully retire as a pastor of the E.L.C.A. December 31, 2024. I have been blessed in many ways to have helped lead this ministry since 2002. I want to personally thank the K.R.M. board of directors (present & past), Tami Grosenick along with all the previous Administrative Assistants, retreat team members, Kogudus leaders in Illinois, Montana, and North Dakota as well as all who have provided spiritual and financial support over the years. Thanks be to God for the joy and privilege to have taken part in this spiritually transforming ministry of the Church!

Tami Grosenick continues to serve as the K.R.M. Administrator along with her position at Bethel Lutheran in Great Falls. David Deffinbaugh has served as the Financial Manager (Dynamic Accounting Services); and the ELCA Foundation manages the Olaf and Darlyn Magis Endowment. More information may be found at [www.kogudus.org](http://www.kogudus.org) or by calling Tami Grosenick at 406-727-5210 or emailing: [kogudus.renewal@gmail.com](mailto:kogudus.renewal@gmail.com). The K.R.M. motto prayer is appropriate for all of us as followers of Jesus Christ: "**COME, HOLY SPIRIT! REVIVE YOUR CHURCH! BEGIN WITH ME!**"

Submitted by Rev. Greg Karlsgodt



**Pastor Eric Huseth**  
 eric@emmausmontana.org  
 406-549-7821  
[www.emmausmontana.org](http://www.emmausmontana.org)

## 2024 Annual Report to Congregations

**Emmaus Campus Ministry** continues to thrive as an ELCA ministry working in partnership with the Episcopal, United Church of Christ, and Methodist congregations and denominations. Emmaus is a community living in the vision of Jesus' radical love and dignity for all people and life. Emmaus is a Reconciling in Christ organization which means it is open and affirming to people of all gender and sexual identities and strives towards racial justice and equality in our world.

**Student residents and staff:** We currently have housing for 15 students living in three different houses including the Ark, Emmaus House, and the Wesley House. We have about 25-30 young adults who are active in some way with us. We also have students that are active and even employed in several congregations outside of Emmaus and two(!) students who are seriously discerning seminary in their future. A new and strong partnership has developed between Emmaus and Grace United Methodist Church. Thanks to our already solid collaboration with Wesley House, we have secured support and funding to hire Caleb Koebble as our new, half-time *Associate Minister of Community Life* while also serving as the new pastor at Grace UMC. We want to particularly thank Lynn Miller Jackson, District Superintendent and Associate to the Methodist Bishop of the Mountain Sky Conference, for helping to envision this new position and partnership. Caleb's new position will continue some of his duties in property management while also allowing him time to better connect and lead programming with students. His new role will enable Emmaus to be a larger presence on campus and connect with more students in the months and years to come. We see this as an example of the future in collaboration among church organizations as well as the opportunity in thinking creatively which can make all partners stronger and more effective at ministry.

**Student Programs:** The heart of our student group remains our weekly dinner sessions on Wednesday nights during the semester with an average of about 15-20 students. These sessions always consist of cooking and sharing a meal with one another as well as rotating between a worship/ritual activity and discussion/presentation topic. It has been a great opportunity to invite students to help lead these worship rituals and discussions as well as be involved in recruiting guest speakers and community members. We hosted a Winter Retreat in February which included 10 students skiing/snowshoeing at Lost Trail Ski Area while staying at Faith Lutheran Church in Hamilton and joining them for Sunday worship. We took a record 22 students (which included 12 international students!) to Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp for our Fall Retreat in September. This weekend retreat included swimming, sailing, and deep ritual conversation on the shores of Flathead Lake. Finally, we took 8 students to San Francisco, CA for a Spring Break service learning trip that centered around experiencing "faith in action" and learning more about the experience of homelessness, social justice, and ministering to people on the margins. 2025 is looking fun and busy as we are gearing up for a winter retreat in February and another Spring Break/service learning trip to El Paso, TX!

**Community Outreach and Programs:** Emmaus Campus Ministry continues to be a bridge for students to connect with the broader Missoula community. One new program that got grant funding to launch in 2025 is called the Elizabeth Project, an intentional student-mentorship opportunity that connects Emmaus students with members of partner congregations to do a once-per-month lunch and a once-per-semester service project together. Student and congregational energy for this project has been positive and the official launch will take place in spring semester of

2025. Our Faith and Climate Program continues to be in transition and discernment, but has also received grant funding to sponsor a young adult faith and climate summit gathering in fall of 2025.

**Buildings and Grounds:** Minor updates to all the properties were completed this summer including boiler work, wiring for internet, and painting. We also sealcoated the parking lot to lengthen its life. Emmaus continues its close and positive partnership with Wesley House and will manage and coordinate needed maintenance on those houses in the coming year. Pastor Eric and Caleb will apply for grant funding for more major renovations and improvements in 2025.

Thank you so much to all of our partner congregations as well as individual supporters who have lent an incredible amount of time and financial resources in volunteering, maintenance, and just simply connecting with our students. In these unpredictable times, your support is more needed than ever and know that your gifts will make a HUGE difference for our organization.

**STAY TUNED FOR EMMAUS CAMPUS MINISTRY'S ANNUAL REPORT  
with financial details in our winter newsletter!**

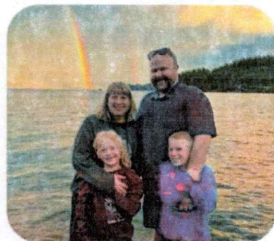


# Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp

## 2024 ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY

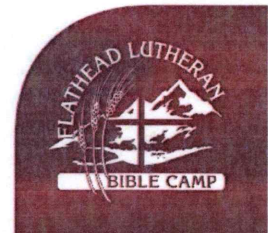
### 2024: THE YEAR AT A GLANCE

<p>Started the year with a beautiful winter wedding retreat &amp; camp.</p> <p>Registration for week-long summer family camp opens &amp; filled in 17 minutes!</p> <p>Board of Directors vote to do a full feasibility study based on the Master plan, testing 6M for needed improvements.</p> <p>Super cold weather calls for rebooking January school groups.</p> <p>Karen Ramage, PD, travels to colleges around the country, recruiting summer staff.</p> <p>Pastors Grant and Amanda Applehans leave for opportunities/call in WI.</p>			
<p><b>JAN '24</b></p>	<p><b>FEB '24</b></p>	<p><b>MAR '24</b></p>	
<p>Columbia River Financial Group Seattle &amp; Northridge Lutheran Men build the new outdoor chapel benches, with gifts from sponsored benches.</p> <p>SHALOM home completed! Under budget thanks to all donors, and Tim Rogge Construction.</p> <p>Feasibility study is conducted by GSB.</p> <p>Chapel Benches and the Shalom Home were dedicated at the Partners luncheon, Nancy Nelson, Partners speaker, thanked all who helped!</p> <p>We say thanks and good-bye to Richie Withycombe, Wilderness Coordinator</p>	<p><b>APR '24</b></p>	<p><b>MAY '24</b></p>	<p><b>JUNE '24</b></p>
<p>The Board of Directors receives the report from the consulting firm, suggesting the campaign could raise 2.5M. The board will need to decide priorities, and if to proceed with a capitol appeal.</p> <p>Summer camp: Great staff ~ awesome campers ~ safe ~ and many stories of spiritual growth and fun!</p> <p>Partnership with Montana Youth Diabetes Alliance. Our biggest week of the summer with 256 campers and volunteers. The ropes course was the highlight for these campers, who grew so much!!</p>	<p><b>JUNE '24</b></p>	<p><b>JUN-JUL '24</b></p>	<p><b>AUG '24</b></p>
<p>FLBC Hosts the Lakeside-Somers Chamber. Many said "the best food around!" THANKS Chef Jess!</p> <p>The Amphitheatre benches are complete... still, some 'benches' to adopt! THANKS to the ELCA Mission Builders who worked so hard to accomplish in less than 2 weeks</p> <p>Join us for a retreat, invite us to come to your congregation for an outreach program and or camp Sunday or event. We are here to serve your congregations ministry.</p>	<p><b>SEPT '24</b></p>	<p><b>FALL-WIN '24</b></p>	



#### DID YOU KNOW?

- FLBC is recovering from the pandemic. Numbers are growing again. School groups & retreat guests are coming back to camp to be involved in wonderful programs.
- No one was turned away for financial reasons... thanks to amazing gifts!
- 53% of youth campers listed none or minimal connection with a faith community.
- 88% of youth campers said they grew in their faith at summer camp.
- Over 4600 campers and retreat guests were served in 2024 (still down from 7386 in 2019... but we are coming back!)
- FLBC will launch a campaign for bathroom upgrades, housing needs, & endowment growth in 2025.
- 91% of campers in 2024 said they learned about the Bible (some said they knew it all, already!!)
- 94% of guests in 2024 said they would recommend FLBC to their family and friends.



406.752.6602 • 603 S. Main Street, Kalispell MT 59901 • office@flbc.net • www.flbc.net

# ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

## OPENING LITURGY

Confident in God's generosity and gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us praise God and give thanks ...

God, we praise you and give you thanks.

**You are good, and your mercy endures forever.**

You gave us a garden with good food to eat.

**We praise you for food that nourishes us.**

You rescued your people from slavery.

**We praise you for freedom.**

You gave us prophets to correct, rebuke and encourage us.

**We bless you for your justice and mercy.**

You gave us your Son, Jesus, to love, redeem and save us.

**We praise you for his death and resurrection.**

You gave us your Holy Spirit to be our Advocate and Comforter.

**We bless you for the gifts of every tribe and nation.**

Strengthen your church with every spiritual gift

**and commission us again to be your servant people.**

Multiply in us the fruit of the spirit:

**love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.**

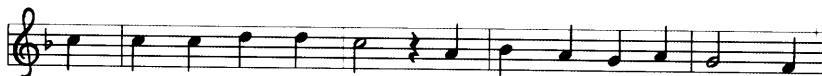
Send us in your love and mercy,

**that the world may know you and praise you.**

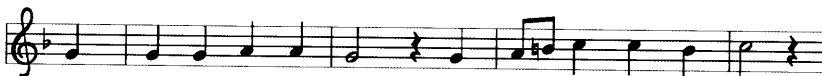
### Now Thank We All Our God



1 Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,  
2 Oh, may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,  
3 All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,



who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices;  
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,  
the Son, and Spirit blest, who reign in highest heaven,



who, from our mothers' arms, has blest us on our way  
and keep us all in grace, and guide us when perplexed,  
the one eternal God, whom earth and heav'n adore;



with count-less gifts of love, and still is ours to-day.  
and free us from all harm in this world and the next.  
for thus it was, is now, and shall be ever - more.

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

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*ISBN 0 8006 2700 0*

Let us pray.

Gracious God, you are the giver of every good gift. Bless us with all that we need for ministry in your name, that we might be a blessing to others. In the name of the one who broke bread and fed the multitudes, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

Through your generosity, God is at work across the ELCA. A portion of your offering, called Mission Support, advances the ministry of our church, helping the ELCA nurture Christian community, raise up leaders, serve our neighbors and strive for justice. Read stories and learn more at [LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA](https://LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA).



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America