

# Faith's Happenings...

December, 2024

## *Happy Birthday*

Ginny Linsberg	1st
Dorthea Fisher	3rd
Bonnie Goldsberry	12th
Art Hanson	15th
Pat Pelic	29th

## *Happy Anniversary*

Susan & Leon Michaleski	14th
Gene & Bonnie Goldsberry	19th
Larry & Linda Bennett	27th
Carl & Sandy Despreaux	28th

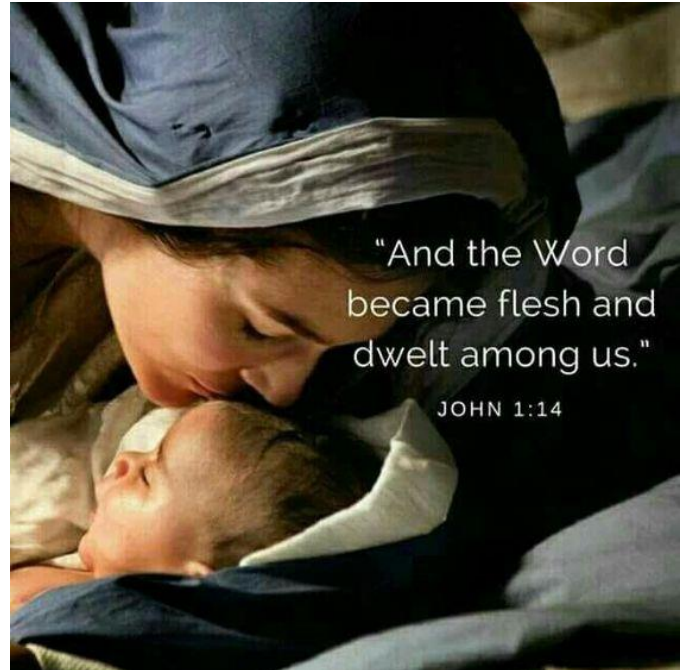
**If we missed your name/date, we're sorry.  
Please notify Barbra in the church office  
to have your special dates added.**

## **December at a Glance**

*Mark your calendars now!*  
*Men of Faith Breakfast: Dec. 3*  
*Ladies Luncheon: Dec. 11*

## **Christmas Cards**

With the rising cost of postage, it is more difficult to send Christmas cards to all the folks you would like to remember. With this in mind, we have decided to revive an old tradition and make the smaller bulletin board in the narthex a spot where you can post your Christmas greetings to the Faith family. When your cards are ready, just bring one in and tack it to the board.



**May the blessings and peace  
of the season be with you  
and yours**



**Christmas Eve**  
**5:00 and 7:00 pm**  
**No Advent evening services**  
**One Sunday morning service at**  
**9:30 until January**

## Men's Breakfast

Guys, you are invited to join us on Tuesday morning, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, at Stefanos. We meet at 7:30 for some great food and fellowship. You can stay as long as you like and get to know your church brothers. No sign-up necessary.

## Long Term Prayer

This prayer list is for those who need continued, long-term prayer. We try to keep the weekly prayer list short, so people named may be moved to the newsletter after a few weeks in the bulletin. If you want to add someone to this list, contact Barbra in the church office (697-3313). Please keep these folks in your prayers: Kathy Kanak, John Schleede, Carl Jaspers, Gary Wilkins, Alex Hoops, Tom Jackling, Ginny Linsberg, Jack Myers, Rosie LaQuay, Doug Skolski

## Ladies Luncheon

The December (Christmas) Ladies Luncheon will be held at 11:30 am on Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, at Arturs Restaurant. It is located at 70 N. Indiana Avenue, just north of the intersection with Dearborn Street, in Englewood. We will order off the menu with separate checks. Come for the enjoyment of fellowship and laughter! Sign up on the sheet in the narthex. Deadline is Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. For more information, see or call Kathie Wiley (941-662-5383).

*Since it's Christmas season, let's do something this year for those less fortunate. When you come to the luncheon, please bring peanut butter and/or jelly, which will be donated through the St. Francis food pantry. (Plastic containers would be appreciated.)*



## Christmas Flowers

If you would like to purchase a poinsettia to help with our Christmas decorating, they are \$11 each. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the narthex. The codes for dedication are listed on a separate sheet. Please write legibly as your name and any dedication will be listed in the bulletin, with information taken from that sheet. You can place your checks, marked "poinsettia," in the offering plate. If you like, you may take the flower home after the second service on Christmas Eve.



Today I read, Isaiah 9:2 *“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.”*

This week we will celebrate our National Day of Thanksgiving. If you have time, read Abraham Lincoln’s Thanksgiving proclamation. Addressing the nation against the backdrop of the Civil War, there is an acknowledgement of the hardship and heartache faced by the nation. There is also an expression of gratitude for the advancement of the nation and a desire to focus on giving thanks to God.

The reality of our nation’s distress at that time is reflective of the struggles in Ukraine, Israel and Palestine. In Rotonda West and Englewood, we have faced different hardships dealing with 2 hurricanes in two weeks, one earlier in the year, and one significant storm in each of the last two years. Amid all this our National Day of Thanksgiving calls us to pause, take stock of who, what and where we are as individuals, communities and nation, and give thanks to God for everything.

The words of the prophet Isaiah serve as a reminder as we enter the Advent season: we have hope. We give thanks to God, because God is faithful. When things are dark, God’s light comes. When people need a savior, God comes: Emmanuel, God with us.

While darkness comes before the evening news and when it is still dark as people go off to work, we yearn for light. Decorations on houses bring light into the darkness. Christmas trees with bright lights bring that light into our homes. Advent holds the promise of God in a wreath and a ring of candlelight.

In the coming weeks we will watch, wait, prepare, then celebrate the Christ-mas, the celebration of the Christ child’s birth. When we need hope. When we yearn for light in darkness, when we experience hardship, exhaustion and frustration, God comes to us. The great celebration of Jesus’ birth holds many lessons for us. In our times of greatest need we remember the true gift of Christmas: Emmanuel, God with us. We are not alone. We have God, we have each other, we have hope, light and life.

May God bless you in the season ahead. May we give thanks for all of God’s blessings. May we pray for our nation and our world. May we pray for people in need and in crisis, our neighbors, our community and people around the world. Join in the celebration of God’s promise fulfilled in the wonder and mystery of Jesus’ birth. May the love, peace and joy of the Christ Child be with you always,

+ Pastor Brian

### **Some Financial Info**

In an attempt to keep the congregation informed, council has decided to include quarterly financial information in the newsletter. Here are the details from the third quarter (July - September):

**Total income:** \$119,747.14  
**Total Expenses:** \$147,588.68  
**First Quarter Balance:** (\$27,841.54)



Merry Christmas  
From the staff  
Of Faith Lutheran

**Save the dates** of Thursday, January 16, 2025, and February 13, 2025, to be part of Friendship Dinners at Faith. Here's the scoop: on January 16<sup>th</sup> we plan to have a large, happy gathering at church at 6 pm. We will each bring a hearty appetizer and our beverage of choice. Table hosts will help coordinate. On February 13<sup>th</sup> we will meet in host homes. The host will be responsible for the entrée and others bring a dish for the meal. This is a fun way to meet new, interesting people, so sign up to participate and let us know if you can be a host, either at church or your home. Sign-up sheets are in the narthex for each date. Please indicate if you will host a table at church in January or host one at your home in February. Contact Ellen Lindhurst (941-681-5542) or RoseAnne Woodliff (269-365-7747) for more information.

