

# Faith's Happenings...

February, 2024

## *Happy Birthday*

Elizabeth D'Amico	4th
Nancy Smith	7th
Gene Newlon	13th
Barbara Hanson	14th
Ruth Ash	18th
Anne LeVasseur	21st
Adrienne Bakker	26th
Lester VanAllsburg	27th
Linda Grosvenor	28th
Jeff Petersen	28th

## *Happy Anniversary*

Thomas & Adrienne Bakker	11th
Sam & Susan D'Amico	24th

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

## **February at a Glance**

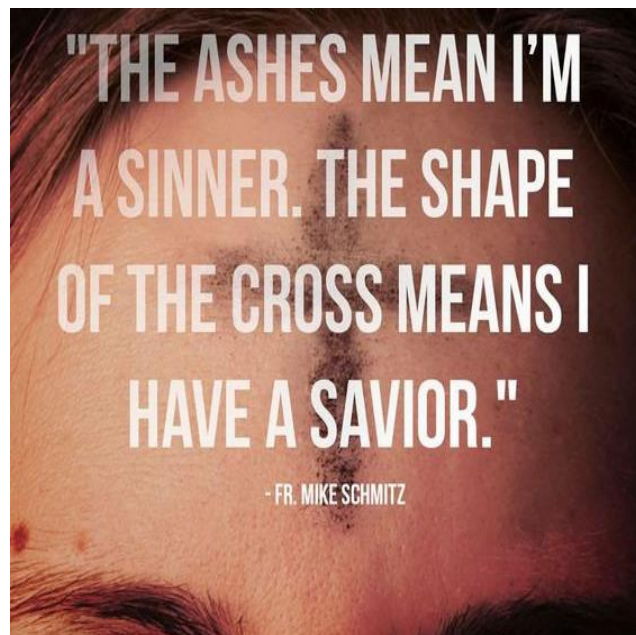
*Mark your calendars now!*

*Men of Faith Breakfast: February 6*

*Ash Wednesday: February 14*

*Valentine's Day: February 14*

*Ladies Luncheon: February 21*



**Ash Wednesday is  
February 14.  
Join us at 6:00 pm  
For worship.**

## **Lenten Worship**

You are invited to join us at 6:00  
on Wednesday evenings in Lent  
for a time of worship.

## **You Are Invited**

Priscilla Fullerton, former organist for Faith, will be presenting a concert, "Hymns and Classics," on Sunday, February 4, 3:00 pm here at Faith. No cost to attend, but a freewill offering will be taken at the end. Half the money will go to Faith's Music Fund.



## Valentine's Day February 14

### Men's Breakfast

Guys, you are invited to join us on Tuesday morning, February 6th, 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: Joanne Best, Kathy Kanak, John Schleede, Carl Jaspers, Lois Howell, Gary Wilkins, Scott Schultz, Alex Hoops, Tom Jackling, Ginny Linsberg, Jack Myers, Rosie LaQuay



### An opportunity for fellowship.

We are having soup suppers on the Wednesdays during Lent, starting with February 21<sup>st</sup>. The supper will be at 5:00 pm, followed by mid-week Lenten worship at 6:00 pm.

A sign-up sheet will be in the narthex for those able to bring soup (in a crock pot). Dessert is also appreciated. We need 4-5 people each week to provide nourishment. There will also be a sign-up sheet to help with set up and clean up. This is a great time to meet other church friends and enjoy a light supper before the Wednesday Lenten service.

If you are attending, please bring a place setting, bowl and sandwich (if you want one) for the meal. Sandwiches are not provided.

### Ladies Luncheon for February

Ladies, we will meet at 11:30 am on Wednesday, February 21, for our February luncheon. Location is Cool Pickles in Paradise, located on Placida Road, immediately south of the Cape Haze Resort, in the Ace Hardware Plaza. We will order off the menu, with separate checks. Come enjoy the fellowship, laughter and food. Deadline to sign up is February 18<sup>th</sup>.



# From the Pastor



In Mark 1:17, Jesus' invitation and challenge to the Disciples is "Come follow me, and I will make you fishers of men (people)."

What does this mean? One commentator wrote; "Jesus' thoughts on fishing in becoming a fisher of man meant that Jesus was going to use his disciples to grow the kingdom of God." Another wrote: "In other words, you think what you're doing now is good, but if you follow me, I can show you greatness. They were content catching fish. Jesus called them to change lives. There are levels in our lives that God wants to take us too." [sic]

It is hard to summarize in a sentence or two what Jesus means when he invites people to follow him. It is an adventure into the unknown and unexplored. There is an assurance that God is leading us, that God knows the direction. But to step out on that journey, whether it be the Disciples with Jesus 2000 years ago, or the power of the Holy Spirit with us today, requires faith and trust in God. Our faith begins with the faithfulness of God across the generations. Our faith is a response to what God has done, and what God promises to do. As we walk with God by faith, we build a relationship of trust and commitment that carries us through life.

In February we will enter the season of Lent, celebrating Ash Wednesday on February 14<sup>th</sup>. We will gather for worship at 6:00 PM with the opportunity to have the sign of the cross made on our forehead and celebrate Holy Communion. It is during the 40-day season of Lent that we witness the depth of God's love for us. We see it in Jesus first living his life for us, then giving his life for us, paying the penalty for our sin. On the five Wednesdays of Lent, those between Ash Wednesday and Holy Thursday, we begin with a 5:00 PM soup supper. (Signup sheets for soup makers/contributors are in the narthex.) Everyone is welcome to attend. After soup, at 6:00 PM we will gather for worship in the sanctuary.

In this Lenten journey we are invited to walk with Jesus, learn from Jesus, serve like Jesus, and change the lives of those around us. The greatness comes, not from ourselves or our actions, but through what God is able to accomplish in us and through us. The invitation is given, the challenge for disciples of every generation, is to live by faith so God's work is done in us and through us for the sake of the world. At the congregation meeting Sandy Cox, Sue Baran and Gene Newlon were elected to serve on the congregation council. Jeff Petersen, Jay Fisher and Kathie Wiley were elected to serve on the Nominating Committee. Debby and Jim Porter were elected to be our voting members at the May 31 to June 2 Florida Bahamas Synod Assembly.

We also adopted a shared time budget for 2024 to address an income shortfall that resulted from a number of significant events: the COVID pandemic, Hurricane Ian, the financial struggle people have had with repairs and insurance claims, people moving to be closer to family, some seasonal people not being able to return to their Southern communities, and a number with health issues.

What does a Shared Time Budget mean? What changes? For our Faith congregation it means aligning our expenses with anticipated donations for this year. It also means we will be sharing my time with Convivial Jacaranda Trace (a senior living community in Venice) working to develop a new Spiritual Life presence in the community.

What doesn't change? Our commitment to doing God's work, building our congregation, reaching out to the community and doing all that God invites and challenges us to do as followers of Jesus and fishers of people. I will still be leading worship at Faith as I normally do. I will be available in the office Monday and Tuesday mornings, and other times by appointment as determined by the needs here and at Jacaranda Trace. I am still available on call at any time for any pastoral needs or questions. I am still available for home visits and communion. I still answer my phone 24/7.

Looking at this change to a shared time ministry acknowledges my role as the called Pastor focused on this congregation. It also acknowledges that some time is shared as a member of a Spiritual Life Team at a senior living community. God's work is being done. With love, grace, patience and understanding we will move into this new way of doing ministry together.

+Pastor Brian

