

Faith's Happenings...

October, 2021

Happy Birthday

Fred Carley	1st
Roger DeMeritt	2nd
Bruce Rieck	4th
Bill Speth	6th
Frank Ulissi	6th
Autumn Hardenstine	16th
Jim Hardenstine	18th
Anne Hebert	19th
Lynn Beck	20th
Larry Bennett	22nd
Pastor Brian	23rd
Tom Jasper	24th
Byron Speth	25th
Irene Foerster	26th
Harold Schultz	28th
Gary Rosemore	30th
Janice Junker	31st

Happy Anniversary

David & Candace Montessi	
	7th
Jim & Lou Taylor	13th

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

October at a Glance

*Mark your calendars now!
Men of Faith Breakfast: Oct. 5
Ladies Luncheon: Oct. 20
New members received: Oct. 24*



It's Fall in Florida!

Coffee Social

Our October coffee social, scheduled for the 10th, has been cancelled.

Job Opening

We are looking for some people willing to help on the Stewardship Team. No visitation is required. Instead, you would help to develop written communication with the congregation. If you are willing to help, see Pastor or call Barbra in the church office (697-3313).

Want to Join the Family?

If you would like to affiliate with Faith as a member or associate, we will be receiving new members on Sunday, October 24th. If you are interested, see Pastor Armen or call Barbra in the church office (697-3313).

Men's Breakfast

Men, we invite you to join us for our monthly breakfast at Stefano's restaurant. We will meet at 7:30 am on Tuesday, October 5. Please join us!

Stephen Ministry in Our Congregation

Could you benefit from the confidential, one-to-one care and support of a Stephen minister? Call (941) 681-0297.

Long Term Prayer Update

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: Ralph Crites, Sarah, Hester and Carter Newton, Joanne Best, Kathy Kanak, Scott Schultz, Sandy Honeycutt, Larry Bennett, John Schleede, Barb Neilson, Jack Myers, Carl Jaspers, Lois Howell, Glenna Seperic, Rick and Roberta Luckow, Ethel Hunn, Jackie Magee

Electronic Giving

To contribute to support God's work, you may visit our web page <https://alivingfaith.org> and use the "Give" button.

Opportunity

Council is still looking for one man and one woman to represent Faith at the Synod Assembly and/ or the Conference Assembly this year. The dates for the Synod are October 15-16 and for the Conference, November 6. Both will be held by Zoom. If you are available, tell Pastor Armen or call Barbra in the church office (697-3313).

Help Appreciated

This past summer Brandy Schneck was supposed to serve as a volunteer chaplain at a hospital to fulfill her requirements for a degree. Normally, this would be done at the person's hometown but, because of covid, no hospitals here were open and she was unable to come home.

Instead, she stayed at the dorm and worked in a hospital in South Carolina, thus incurring \$3000 in unexpected expenses. The church will pay some of the cost, but we are asking folks to help share the expense, too. If you can help, make checks payable to Faith with "Brandy" in the memo line, and leave them in the offering plate. Sunday, October 3 will be the last day we will receive donations for her.

You Are Invited

Lois Burger invites you to attend a memorial service at faith for George on Friday, October 29, at 10:00 am. All are welcome!

October Ladies Luncheon

Ladies, our October luncheon will be Wednesday, October 20, 11:30 at Mango Bistro! Always a favorite with our ladies, you will want to join us for their new eclectic menu with something for everyone! Please sign up on the sheet in narthex. Deadline to be included is October 17th. Questions? Call Kathie Wiley (941-662-5383). See you there!

Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Matthew 6:34



October 2021

*..for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.
Philippians 2:13 NIV.*

October brings so many thoughts to mind as Fall is one of my four favorite seasons. The combination of leaves turning color with fiery reds, yellows, browns and every shade in between, the apple harvest and fresh apple cider, hayrides, pumpkin picking and a corn maze. Over the years it seems a visit to a pumpkin patch of some sort was always on the calendar. The smell of burning wood, campfires and roasting smores round out the fall experience. The harvest season is something that we experience with every sense: sight, touch, taste, smell and sound.

In my first parish in rural North Dakota, there was one additional fall ritual: The Lord's Acre. Since the community lived connected to the land and the uncertainties of sun, rain, wind, hail, drought and weeds, and the harvest time was full of long days and long nights as the labor of summer was brought in from the field, there was both relief and celebration once the harvest was complete.

Overall, the community lived out good stewardship of water and land on a daily basis. Their commitment to each other, community organizations and the church, was a testimony to their faith and trust in God, the witness of the generations of farmers that had come before them, and a strong desire to maintain the rural way of life, connected in community and to the land.

For a city kid like me, even one with a deep appreciation for the country, being immersed in this rural way of life presented me with a steep learning curve. The Lord's Acre was one of those learning experiences. The initial premise behind the celebration went back to the days of small farms. Each farmer would plant an acre for the Lord. And whatever that acre brought in that year, that was collected as a special offering on a designated Sunday. But, as I discovered, the Lord's Acre was about more than supporting the congregation. It was a generous gift of thanksgiving to God for the gifts of land, water, seed, crop and harvest. And it was an acknowledgement of the gift of God in being able to work the land for another year, prepare the fields for winter and looking forward to the next year's planting.

The offering associated with The Lord's Acre wasn't used to support the daily work of the church as expressed in the congregation budget. The offering was used for special projects benefiting the community, the local Lutheran Camp, the Lutheran Home and many other missions. It was a "paying it forward" of the blessing the people had received for the benefit of others, planting seeds of hope, help, encouragement, faith and life where people were in need.

The older I get the more I appreciate those life lessons learned long ago, while I continue growing in my understanding of their significance. Harvest time in Florida is different from what I experienced up north. Yet, as we enter into October and this harvest season, it is important to remember we are still connected to the land, even if it is a bit sandier than other places. We still experience the circle of life, the change of temperature, the rate of growth in our foliage and the rate at which the grass grows. Harvest is a time for us to respond with

gratitude for God's faithfulness and blessing during the past season. Life is not always easy, there are hardships and challenges we face. But we stand together as a community of faith, with God having our back (our sides and our front too!) God is faithful.

Like it was for the farmers I knew in North Dakota, a part of our fall routine at Faith is preparing for winter, preparing for next year, moving forward and preparing to share God's accomplishments during our focus on stewardship. In preparation, I invite you to join me this month in reflecting on your personal experiences of God's grace and faith in your life, and how other people's generosity has shaped who you are today. Enjoy the change of season, the cooler temperatures, opportunities to get out and socialize. Welcome back friends and neighbors you haven't seen in six months. Give thanks to God for what we have and all that is before us.

Paul, as he writes to the church at Philippi, reminds them, "for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose." It is God who is at work in us in all the different seasons of life. God gives us strength and opportunity to accomplish his purpose. Please join me in giving thanks to God and responding in gratitude. I'm not sure what your "Lord's Acre" looks like, or consists of, but look for ways to respond in generosity so that you do God's work on behalf of those who struggle.

On a personal note, at my last oncologist visit Tuesday, the report was they had found nothing wrong yet. Still, the oncologist wants me to have another consult and several more tests before she is satisfied. So, in October and November, I will still appreciate your prayers for wisdom and

discernment for the doctors and techs in all these things. But also, join with me in rejoicing that they have ruled out some additional complications.

Give thanks in all things for God is faithful and works through us,

Pastor Brian

