

## INSIDE

- p. 1** “From Pastor Rita”,  
Dates at a glance
- p. 2** Bishop Finegan’s Letter
- p. 3** Synod News / Faith’s News
- p. 4** Council Meeting minutes
- p. 5** “About Faith Lutheran”,  
Homebound members, Office  
Notes
- p. 6** February Birthdays and  
Anniversaries
- p. 7** February Calendar

## **DATES AT A GLANCE**

- \* **Feb. 2, 2025**  
Groundhog Day
- \* **Feb. 9, 2025**  
Annual Meeting
- \* **Feb. 14, 2025**  
Valentine’s Day
- \* **Feb. 17, 2025**  
Presidents’ Day

**Office hours for  
Faith Lutheran Church:**  
Mon. through Thurs.  
9AM—2PM

**In case of Pastoral  
Emergencies Pastor Rita  
can be reached at  
1(312) 478-6212  
Or by email at  
critawilliam@gmail.com**

## Letter From Pastor Rita

February 2025

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. **Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.** (Philippians 4: 4-6)*

**Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,**

The Lord has given us opportunities to rejoice every day! By rejoicing, we can remain joyful even when we are stressed or overwhelmed by our daily obligations. When we put God first in our lives, we can feel gladness even in the midst of our many sorrows.

As we approach spring and Lent, we will be introduced to many church activities and ministries that allow us to rejoice in God's Word. During Lent, we will have soup supper followed by lantern devotions on Wednesday evenings, Foot Washing on Maundy Thursday, and Stations of the Cross on Good Friday— which I look forward to. If everything goes according to plan, we will start a Bible Study soon.

Our lives have been blessed by God even in the midst of challenges, so let us rejoice and be glad in Him. As a church, we have been blessed to have such a loving, faithful, and welcoming congregation and staff. The Lord is building up our church family with your love and support.

We pray that God continues to bless our ministries.

**Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Rita.**



**Join us Sundays at 10:30am\***

You can watch live on Facebook

\*We begin with organ music at 10:20am

<https://www.facebook.com/FaithLC1966>

*"So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith."*

~Galatians 6:9-10

Dear People of the Northern Great Lakes Synod,

Grace and peace to you in this new year of our Lord 2025. I remember as a senior in high school, we were asked to write an essay describing ourselves ten years in the future. I imagined myself as a single woman working as an English teacher, living in some small town in Wisconsin or Minnesota.



My real life-ten years out of high school-looked very different. By then I had moved away from any aspirations that involved teaching high school English. I was living in East St. Paul and going to seminary while serving as a Youth Director at a church. I was married, with a new baby, and considering where a seminary education might lead.

My high school essay was not meant to be a future plan or an exercise in goal setting. I was not striving to make what I had imagined into a reality. However, considering that my real life unfolded so differently than my imaginings makes me wonder about our imaginings, and even our future goal setting, as a church.

I think it used to be that the church of my youth thought that church was always going to be the way we were experiencing church then. Church councils developed five, ten, even twenty year plans with no imaginings that culture would shift, that worship attendance would decline, that the classroom and fellowship additions to their buildings would not always be full of Sunday school children and adults in Bible study.

We know better now. Our current reality is not something we imagined. Plans and goals are well and good, but I think we have learned that being able to adapt to what is, rather than holding out hope for what was, is a far more realistic approach to the changes we are experiencing.

The emerging model for some of our congregations is Lay-led and Pastor-supported ministry. Effective adaptation would then include:



- Equipping lay people, not only for ministry, but for leadership. This includes education, support, and accountability.

-Encouraging attendance at Lay School. Both the East Central Wisconsin Synod and the Northwest Wisconsin Synod offer in-person and online education opportunities. In addition, Faith+Lead through Luther Seminary and our ecumenical partners. NGLS scholarship funds are available.

- Some adjustment of congregational expectations. In many of our congregations, small teams of people are being trained to bring communion to shut-ins, offer hospital visits, provide crisis care, lead Bible studies, and more. What was considered the sole realm of the pastor is being shared among the priesthood of all believers, that is, people willing to contribute in new ways.



As our three-year theme of Seed Sowers continues, we focus this year on "Apollos watered." We not only water seeds of faith in people, but we water talent for ministry, nurturing spiritual gifts that give glory to God and further the work of Christ.

And as so often happens when the Spirit gets involved, we find ourselves doing something we never thought we would do, beyond our previous imaginings. From reading the lessons in worship to preaching, from having conversations of faith to leading Bible Study, from greeting someone at church to holding their hand before surgery, God is at work in you, and through you, the Spirit moves in your congregation, and through your congregation, God is present in your community and the world.

I pray God's blessings upon your efforts as together we meet the challenges of our time and adapt to being Church for the future.

Yours in Christ,

Bishop Katherine Finegan



# Synod News & Faith's News

## Winter Classes Begin in January and February

For more information and to register, visit the Northern Great Lakes Synod website:  
[nglsynod.org/lifelong-faith-formation](http://nglsynod.org/lifelong-faith-formation)



Youth ministry, the Bible, church traditions, and “Walking With Our Indigenous Neighbors” are included in the focus of Lifelong Faith Formation this winter.

In its fifth year, the program is one way for the people of the Northern Great Lakes Synod, and beyond, to take part in conversations that nurture spiritual growth and Christian community. Four courses will meet online via Zoom. One, “Take and Eat,” will be meet in person at Immanuel Lutheran in Escanaba.

## *Annual Meeting*

We invite you to attend Faith's annual meeting following the worship service on **Sunday, February 9th**. Elections will be held at the meeting, and offices will be elected.

Please plan to join us for this important annual event for our church committee.

## LENTEN DEVOTIONS

We will be holding 5 weeks of Lenten Devotions on Wednesday evenings starting

**March 12th to April 9th**

with a soup supper at 5PM

followed by the devotion at 6-6:30PM.

## Thank You

We are very grateful to Ed Hallquist for repairing the pulpit and altar candle stands and to Wayne Olsen for repairing the tall candle stands. Thank you both so much for your help!

## Flower Arrangements

If you would like to have special flowers on the altar in honor of a birthday, memory, or anniversary, please contact **Lily Randall** at **(734)-546-7037** to make arrangements.

The church council has voted to raise the flower donations from \$20 to \$30.

## Thank you

to everyone who helped with putting up and taking down the Christmas decorations in the church. We are so appreciative of everyone's willingness to help out.

## **Faith Lutheran Church Council Meeting Date November 19, 2024**

The meeting was called to order by President Cathy Tibbett at 7:00 PM

Members Present: Pastor Rita Chirala, Cathy Tibbett, Sandy Lawson, Kathy Flickinger  
Ben Deatrck, Ken Randall, Cynthia Wright

Member Absent: Dennis Brindley excused; Dixie Picotte excused

Devotion: November: Cynthia Wright      January: Dennis Brindley

Future Council Meeting: January 21, 2025

Minutes: Ben Deatrck made a motion to accept the October 15, 2024 council minutes including the Council Budget planning meeting October 28, 2024, Email vote October 30, 2024 for use of Fellowship Hall for Scout Troop 5154, and The First half of Congregational Annual budget meeting on November 10, 2024. Ken Randall seconded. Motion passed.

### **Old Business:**

A: QTC— The paperwork has been approved, and the Council signed the contract in October. Our building was booked for December 16, 2024.

B: The Second half Congregational Annual meeting will be on February 9, 2025

C: Council Christmas Dinner will be on December 12, 2024 at the Country Club.

### **New Business:**

A: Nominating Committee to meet with the prospective candidates in January 2025.

B: Offering envelopes for 2025 will be available at Narthex starting from December 1, 2024

Pastors Report: Pastor Rita gave her Pastors report.

### **Committee Reports:**

Campus Ministry: A discussion was held on Campus Ministry. Sandy Lawson made a Motion to place Campus Ministry on pause, Ken Randall seconded. Motion passed.

Christian Education: Several students continuing to attend Sunday School.

Come to the Table: No Report

Endowment: No Report.

Fellowship: A delicious Thanksgiving meal and recognition to Church volunteers on

November 17, 2024 was enjoyed by 40 people. Thank you to the Fellowship Committee and all the people who stayed for the clean up afterwards.

Finance: The Financial Report was given to the council members.

Membership: The committee will meet after Thanksgiving.

Memorial: No Report.

Outreach: No Report.

Property: No Report.

Staff Support: Custodians Eric and Amie will be leaving in December. Thank you for their services. Nesburn Richards has been hired part time as new custodian.

Stewardship: Stewardship month was successful, we had Stewardship Temple Talk and the last week of October was dedicated for the blessing of the pledge cards.

WELCA: Members continuing to work on Christmas bags for the shut-in members.

Worship and Music: The next meeting is November 21, 2024.

Ben Deatrck made a motion to accept the committee reports including the Pastors Report and Financial Report. Kathy Flickinger seconded. Motion passed.

Ben Deatrck made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Cynthia Wright seconded. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00PM with the Lords Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sandy Lawson, Council Secretary

**THE PATHFINDER** is the monthly Newsletter of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America community at:  
Faith Lutheran Church, 1600 Park Street,  
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. (906) 632-7246

The deadline for the Pathfinder is the 15th of each month. Please send articles, comment, news items c/o Pathfinder Editor, 1600 Park St. Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Or e-mail to [faithlutheranchurchssm@gmail.com](mailto:faithlutheranchurchssm@gmail.com)

Pastor: Rev. Rita Chirala  
Church Office: Lakeisha Richards  
Congregational Council: Cathy Tibbett, Dennis Brindley, Kathy Flickinger, Sandy Lawson, Ken Randall, Ben Deatrack, Cynthia Wright, and Dixie Picotte.



**Our homebound and nursing home members are often so isolated that your phone call, visit, even a card can mean the difference between lonely existence and continued life in our faith community. What can you do? Please reach out to those who have been such a vital part of our congregation and give back.**

Faith Lutheran Church is a member congregation of the Northern Great Lakes Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Synod website: [nglsynod.org](http://nglsynod.org)  
Denomination website: [elca.org](http://elca.org)

### **Online giving is here!**

You can now make an electronic contribution on our website. Just go to our website:

[www.faithlutheransaultstemarie.org](http://www.faithlutheransaultstemarie.org)

Scroll down to just above our videos. There, you will find a green button that says

**“Online Giving”**

Click that and enter in your information, and Faith will receive your contribution within 48 hours. The online giving company we went with (Tithe.ly) is one of the largest and most secure companies who specialize in online church giving, so your information is safe and secure. If you would like any help going over this process, please call the church office and we would be happy to help you.

**Beverly Tankersley**- Medilodge- Rm A10  
1011 Meridian St. SSM, MI 49783

**Linda Doran** - 590 Three 1/2 Mile Rd.  
SSM, MI 49783 (906) 630-1942

**Mary Oja** - McKinley Manor, 110-E 2023 W  
4th,SSM, MI 49783 (906) 632-7496

**Bill Markstrom** - 3205 S Sunglow Dr.  
SSM, MI 49783 (906)635-1343

**Jack Armstrong** - 528 Clubhouse Boulevard  
New Smyrna Beach, FL 32168

**FEBRUARY  
BIRTHDAYS**

- 3rd Dennis Aho
- 4th Russell White
- 5th Gregory Oja
- 6th Bonnie White
- 8th Daniel Gervasio
- 8th Eunice Kinnear
- 9th John McDonald
- 10th William Skidmore
- 11th Matt Brindley
- 11th Julia Gervasio
- 11th Jamie Sanderson
- 13th Steve Sanderson
- 19th Marc Carr
- 21st Willard Kocsovsky
- 21st Beverly Tankersley
- 26th Kiahna Sanderson
- 28th Melissa Bricco



Ken & Joy Lake  
63 years 2/3/62

Patricia & Wayne Olsen  
56 years 2/15/69

Nancy & Paul Brewster  
37 years 2/13/88

**February 5th**  
**WELCA**  
Meets on the 1st  
Wednesday every  
month at **10:30am** for  
their bible study,  
meeting, and meal.

Join us for a  
**Healing Service,**  
Sunday  
**February 2nd**  
following  
our regular  
worship  
service.

Please join us on Sunday,  
**February 16th**  
for Sloppy Joes and Bingo after the worship service.  
We are asking a few members of the congregation to  
please bring deserts. For more details contact Kathy  
Flickinger.  
*Come and join the fun!!*

**Financial Statement**

**Faith Lutheran**  
Statement of Financial Position For All Funds as of 12/31/2024

	12/31/2024	12/31/2023	\$ Change	% Change
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>-13,588.05</b>	<b>-19,227.23</b>	<b>5,639.18</b>	<b>-29.3%</b>
<b>Total Liabilities + Net Assets</b>	<b>119,309.90</b>	<b>118,509.88</b>	<b>800.02</b>	<b>0.7%</b>

# February 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Psalm 147:1-11,20c
2 Fourth Sunday of Epiphany Worship 10:30am	3 Micah 6:1-3 Quilting 1pm	4 Psalm 15 Yoga 9:30am	5 Matthew 5:1-12 WELCA	6 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 Yoga 9:30am	7 Mark 1:21-28	8 Luke 4:21-30
9 Fifth Sunday of Epiphany Worship 10:30am Annual Meeting	10 Isaiah 40:21-31 Quilting 1pm	11 Psalm 147:1-11,20c Yoga 9:30am	12 Mark 1:29-39	13 Matthew 5:13-20 Yoga 9:30am	14 Luke 5:1-11 Valentine's Day	15 Psalm 138
16 Sixth Sunday of Epiphany Worship 10:30am	17 Deuteronomy 30:15-20 Quilting 1pm	18 1 Corinthians 3:1-9 Yoga 9:30am	19 Psalm 119:1-8	20 Jeremiah 17:5-10 Yoga 9:30am	21 2 Kings 5:1-14	22 Psalm 30
23 Seventh Sunday of Epiphany Worship 10:30am	24 Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18 Quilting 1pm	25 Matthew 5:38-48 Yoga 9:30am	26 Isaiah 43:18-25	27 Mark 2:1-12 Yoga 9:30am	28 Genesis 45:3-11,15	



**PATHFINDER**



**FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH\***

**Phone: 906 - 632 - 7246**

**Email: [faithlutheranchurchssm@gmail.com](mailto:faithlutheranchurchssm@gmail.com)**

**Website: [http:// www. faithlutheransaultstemarie.org](http://www.faithlutheransaultstemarie.org)**

\* A CONGREGATION OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF AMERICA

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