

Faith Lutheran Church
50 Leverage Road
Troy, NY 12182



Following Faith

March 2024 Newsletter

***“Grace and peace to you from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ”
Galatians 1:3***

Faith Lutheran Church

50 Leverage Road
Troy, New York 12182
(518) 237 4641

Pastor Kate Drefke

drefkekate@gmail.com

(518) 279 6127 (Voice and Text)

(Observes Sabbath 9:00 PM Thursday thru Friday)

(In an emergency call the number above)

www.faithlutherantroy.com

Gospel and Sermon Recordings <https://anchor.fm/kate-drefke>

Sunday Morning Worship

In Person and Zoom

10:45 AM at Faith

Church Council Officers**(Committee Assignments)****Council Members**

TBD, President, Vice President, Secretary

Mike Moroskey, (Property)

Donna Van Zandt, (Worship)

Linda Hulihan, Treasurer

Errol Bull, Financial Secretary

Doug Adamek (Education, Finance, Property)

Diane Anderson (Missions, Stewardship)

Diana Rieker, (Property)

Evelyn Jarosz (Inreach/Outreach, Finance)

Dana Cerrone (At Large)

Partnership Council – Linda Hulihan, Evelyn Jarosz, Doug Adamek, and Donna Van Zandt
Fred Howard, Interim Newsletter Editor

Want to Speak with Pastor?

See phone/text/email contact information above and let her know that you want to speak with her.

From the Pastor's Desk

Chapter 2 of our Lenten book study on *The Gospel of Mark: A Beginner's Guide to the Good News* by Amy-Jill Levine (©2023), spends a fair amount of time talking about the death of John the Baptizer (Mark 6:14-29). This is the only story in Mark where Jesus is not the main character or otherwise the center of focus. Instead, the story centers on John the Baptizer. Herod Antipas is married to Herodias, his brother's wife. His brother is still alive, so this is an illegal marriage. Mark reports that John had been public in calling out Antipas' bad behavior. At the time of this story, John is sitting in prison. At Antipas' birthday party, where the action of this story takes place, the entertainment includes Herodias' daughter (Antipas' niece *and* step-daughter), who was probably about twelve years of age, doing an erotic dance for Antipas and his guests- men of the political elite. These men are so taken with the performance (which again- is very much *not* like when you make your kid play *Twinkle Twinkle* on their band instrument for company because you're just so proud of their off-tune skills), that Antipas tells her he will grant her *any* request. The girl goes and consults her mother, who is *not* happy about John calling out her inappropriate marriage, and says to ask for John the Baptizer's head. The child returns to Antipas, still with his buddies/ cronies, and says she wants John the Baptizer's head on a silver platter.

Antipas is kind of a fan of John's. He's interested in what John says, respects him. He doesn't want to kill John. But he's made this promise to give the girl whatever she wants, in front of all these guests. So, instead of doing the right thing and saying "that's really not ok. Try again," he has John executed, and his head delivered on a silver platter. "His oaths [and ...] his guests, are more important than justice. So, too, the person

responsible for the death of Jesus is, ultimately, Pontius Pilate, and not the people who, according to Mark's narrative, manipulated him. John's beheading thus anticipates Jesus' crucifixion" (p. 41).

On the question of "who is responsible?" even when it might have been another's actions, my sister (A) and I have been kind of following the school shooter case of Ethan Crumbley and his parents. Ethan was 15 when he killed 4 students at his high school. He pled guilty and was sentenced to life without parole in Dec. 2023*. In a rare twist, his parents were *also* arrested and are being tried for manslaughter for each of the four people killed by their son. Jennifer has already been convicted and is awaiting sentencing. James' trial is scheduled to begin in March. The elder Crumbleys are being tried as accomplices because they gifted their son the gun used, did not properly secure it, ignored or otherwise dismissed warning signs their son needed help, *including* being called to the school *the day of the shooting* and refusing to take him home. A and I believe that they absolutely share in the responsibility for their son's school shooting.

In the past week my social media feeds have been filled with words of grief for Nex Benedict and Aaron Bushnell. Nex was a 16-year-old non-binary Native descent child in OK who was beaten up by three girls at school and died the next day. In OK, laws forbid minors to receive gender-affirming care, and require students to use the bathroom associated with their assigned sex. Aaron was a 25-year-old active duty US Airman who set himself on fire in front of the Israeli embassy in DC. Prior to lighting the match, he said "I will no longer be complicit in genocide." As he burned, he shouted "Free Palestine!" Despite first responder and medical efforts, he died from his burn injuries.

I think about the multiple persons who share in the responsibility for John and Jesus' deaths- bystanders who could have said, "Hey, Anti, this has been fun, but I feel like murder might be crossing the line." Or if Pilate had listened to his wife (Matthew 27:19). I wonder how we- society- share in the responsibility for deaths of Nex and Aaron. What if Nex was growing up in a state where simply being who they were wasn't illegal? Would they still have been bullied and beaten for their differences? What if our elected officials were stronger in their anti-genocide stance, called out Israel for their atrocities instead of supporting with money and weapons?

This Lent, our first readings on Sunday mornings have focused a lot on covenant- God repenting and making covenant with Noah to never again destroy the world; God freeing the Hebrews from slavery and making covenant with them for how to live together as people of faith, as people in community. Millennia later we are still covered by and bound to these same sacred promises of life and living. Within the covenant, we are responsible for one another's actions and good care. We are responsible for saying "no;" for making sure kids are safe; for telling those in power when they are wrong. This is good news- we share in making God's promises become reality for all.

Peace,
Pr. Kate Drefke

*If you're curious, ask me why I firmly believe this is an unjust sentence, and then buckle in for a sermon.

What's the pastor reading?

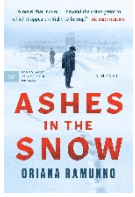
Playing by the rules, I got most of the way through the Poestenkill Library's winter reading challenge for adults. There were four reading directions for books: by or about a BIPOC (Black Indigenous Person of Color); a banned book; a story taking place in winter; and a recent book- something published in 2023 or 2024. See last month for the BIPOC book, *Grievors*.



My banned book was *All Boys Aren't Blue: A Memoir-Manifesto*, by George M. Johnson (©2020). It's often challenged or banned because of its honesty about queer identity, and sexual assault. Johnson's memoir is written for adolescent/YA readers, so it reads fast, and gives readers

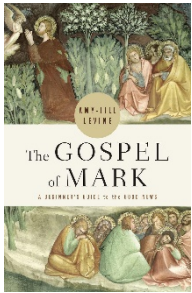
affirming encouragement. “Navigating in a space that questions your humanity isn’t really living at all. It’s existing. We all deserve more than just the ability to exist.”

For my winter story I read *Ashes in the Snow* by Oriana Ramunno (©2021), translated by Katherine Gregor (©2022). It takes place at Auschwitz over Christmas 1943. Detective Hugo Fischer has been called in to solve the suspicious death of a renowned Nazi doctor. Throughout the story, Hugo’s past regrets and current secrets (like his own illness) are revealed to the reader as he struggles with learning and living in the truth about what happens at the camps. He learns that right and wrong are not always clear, that sometimes compromises are made. He questions his own integrity and courage to do what is right. In case I’m not able to fit this into a sermon sometime soon, I was quite taken with this understanding of doubt and hope: “He’d learned that, for as long as there was doubt, there was also hope: *doubt* that one day his lungs would stop, *doubt* that his illness could worsen, *doubt* that one day he would no longer be able to walk. It could happen- or not. Certainty, however, was a terrible thing.”



And, to finish off just in time, I read *O Body*, by Dan “Sully” Sullivan (©2023), a book of poetry weaving together metaphors and descriptions of Sully’s body and his beloved Chicago, talks about becoming and being a husband and father, a student and a teacher. I think one of my favorites in this collection is April is National Celery Month: “People who say/ cheese curds are overrated/ are the same that think/ celery is a snack.” I LOOOVE cheese curds! Reading this book, I wanted cheese curds and pierogis.

Lenten Book Study



What: *The Gospel of Mark: A Beginner's Guide to the Good News* (©2023) by Amy-Jill Levine. Sessions include a 10-12 minute A-J video talking more about each chapter. Books will cost ~\$14-16 depending on ordering source and shipping.

When: Wednesdays of Lent, 2pm in person & 7pm on Zoom
February 21, 28, March 6, 13, 20, 27

Who: You! Anyone interested in co-leading either the 2pm or 7pm times should talk to Pr. Kate.

----- End of From Pastor’s Desk -----

Letter to the Editor

None this month.

February 6, 2024 Council Meeting Highlights

In Attendance - Doug Adamek, Diane Anderson, Linda Hulihan, Evelyn Jarosz, Diana

Rieker, Pastor Kate, Donna Van Zandt

Absent - Errol Bull, Dana Cerrone, Mike Moroskey

- I. Pastor Kate called the meeting to order at 6:44 p.m.
- II. Pastor Kate began the meeting by reading Psalm 102, followed by a prayer.
- III. Election of the 2024 officers

- A fairly extensive conversation was held. Council members were nominated and asked if they would consider taking on the role of President. As there was no consensus the decision of Council Officers was postponed until the March Council meeting. Those in attendance were asked to ponder and consider taking on the role of a Council Officer. (Pres., V.P., and Sec.)
Donna Van Zandt accepted the role of the Interim President for one month.

- Committee Commitments by Council Members -

Doug A. - Education, Financial Investment, Property

Diane A. - Missions and Stewardship

Evelyn J. - Financial Investment and Inreach/Outreach

Mike Morosky - Property

Diana Rieker - Property

Donna Van Zandt - Worship

Doug Adamek, Linda Hulihan, Evelyn Jarosz, Donna Van Zandt - Partnership Committee with ELCP.

IV. Secretary's Report

Motion to approve January's minutes as written - Carried

Annual Meeting - Minutes from this meeting, held on Jan. 28th, will be approved at the annual meeting in 2025.

V. Treasurer's Report

Motion to approve - Carried

VI. Financial Report (questions could not be answered as our Financial Secretary is out of the country)

Motion to approve as presented- Carried

VII. Pastor's Report

- Pastor Kate felt the Annual Meeting went well
- Pastor Kate along with several Council members have been involved with a Small Church online presentation. A worthwhile program with more to come.
- The next book study will be from Mark.
- During Lent the sermons will be based on the Old Testament, first readings.
- Pastor will be away on Feb. 25th. Pastor Becca will be her supply.
- The second annual Retreat Day with both Councils is being planned for Saturday, March 16th. It will be held at ELCP this year. Time - 9:00 - 3:00 Lunch included. Please, mark your calendars.

VIII. Old Business

- Postponed until March

IX. New Business

- Let's do a walk-through of the church and then discuss and prioritize the different things that should be addressed with the church proper.
- Coffee Hour Worship Services

Do we want to continue? Yes, through the month of June.

Discussion held on how we can make these services better.

X. Next Meeting

- Scheduled for March 4th - Live at Faith beginning at 6:30.

XI. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn Carried

- Meeting adjourned at 8:05.

----- End of Council Meeting Highlights -----

March Missions of the Month

The March Missions are in support of the Lansingburgh Boys and Girls Club and The Ebenezer Foundation and Care Trust School.

The Lansingburgh Boys & Girls Club provides a healthy environment of social, educational and recreational programs for boys and girls ages 5 to 18. Their mission is to inspire and enable young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as healthy, responsible, and productive citizens.

The work of the Ebenezer Foundation. The foundation is a U.S. based not-for-profit organization created to provide financial support to the Ebenezer Child Care Trust in Zambia, Africa. The Trust is dedicated to saving, raising and educating impoverished and orphaned children living in the city of Livingstone, and operates exclusively on donor support. Ebenezer Child Care Trust operates a children's orphanage, a primary school, a farm and a community food program. Our donations help to continue the foundation's commitment to sustaining a loving home for the Ebenezer orphans and a quality education for all Ebenezer students.

Total contributions of \$640 were received in support of our February missions Wycliffe Bible Translators and Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer County.

Creative Threads Heart Theme Applique Quilt

quilters. Evelyn

The month of February brought to mind hearts. Keeping the heart theme in mind, this month's featured quilt was designed, machine appliqued, and quilted by Evelyn Jarosz.

The quilters are extending an invitation for you to join with them on Monday, March 4th at 10:00 a.m. here at church. We will be tying a quilt, getting it ready for St. Paul's Center. Many hands will make light work. Bring your lunch, we can end the day sharing a meal and enjoying fellowship.

This past month, the quilters welcomed a new quilter, Tim Lund, into their group. All are welcomed to join us, from experienced to novice



Serving our March Sunday Programs

Lay Assistants

March 3	Bill Jarosz
March 10	Rich Anderson
March 17	Fred Howard
March 24	Palm Sunday – Tim Lund
March 31	Easter – Errol Bull
April 7	Carol Karpien
April 14	Diana Rieker

Flowers on the Altar for March

March 17 - In memory of Our Family. Given by Bob and Joyce Duncan.

March 24 - In memory of Marilynn Howard and Sylvia Weber. Given by Fred and Michele Howard.

The flower chart for 2024 is on the bulletin board in the Narthex. If you would like to place flowers on the Altar this year, please sign your name and who the flowers are in honor/memory of. The price remains the same at \$19.00 per bouquet.

See Donna Van Zandt with questions and/or payment. Checks should be made out to WELCA.

Easter Plants

As in the past, we will have a variety of spring flowers adorning our Altar this Easter. Please see the order form on the last page of this newsletter

and have your order in no later than Palm Sunday, March 24, to Donna Van Zandt>

Coffee Hour

The coffee hour service on the third Sunday continues this month.

Mar. 3	Janet Walsh & Joyce Duncan
Mar. 10	Donna Van Zandt
Mar. 17	Diane & Rich Anderson – Coffee Hour Service in Fellowship Hall
Mar. 24	Kathy Vumbacco & Mary Maselli
Mar. 31	Easter – No Coffee Hour
Apr. 7	Jim Peters

If you would like to be a coffee hour host, please see Fred Howard.

Counting Team

March 3	Fred & Michele Howard
March 10	Errol & Heather Bull
March 17	Joyce Duncan & Janet Walsh
March 24	Ev & Bill Jarosz
March 31	Rich & Diane Anderson
April 7	Fred & Michele Howard

If you would like to volunteer to help with counting and depositing our weekly offering, please see Errol Bull.

AMONG OUR PEOPLE

We ask that the Holy Spirit guide us all as we discern and move forward. We pray especially for individual guidance as we commit to personal participation in our congregation's future via our pledges for the coming year and thru sharing our time, talent, and treasure.

Prayers for Alan and Carol Fike as they deal with repeated hospitalizations and now require 24 hour care. Also, for Sara Martin and her sister who plan, manage, and share in their parents' care.

Prayers for healing for Peter and Patricia Edelman as they deal with serious medical conditions.

Prayers for strength, healing, and continuing support for Nancy Johansen as she lives with chronic conditions and disabilities.

Continued prayers for Larry Lansing, suffering from chronic conditions. We ask for continued healing and a return to better health.

Prayers of thanksgiving for the prayers that have been answered for the numerous successful medical procedures that our members have undergone in recently.

Prayers of supplication for people suffering in war torn countries. Where there is starvation nourishment; where there is persecution, shelter, and clothing for refugees; and where there is open warfare, negotiations leading to peaceful settlement of the issues that are leading to the terror of destructive violence.

Prayers for renewal of our Congregations as we work to move into a new journey of faith, service, and outreach in our communities.

Finally, prayers for our country that we focus on the things that unite us as one nation under God, rather than differences that divide us.

Newsletter Deadline

The newsletter item deadline for the April, 2024 newsletter is Monday, March 25, 2024. Please email your letters or articles to: farmerfl69@aol.com. If you would like a special joy or concern shared, you can also contact him by phone at 518 421 4576 and leave a voicemail if he is unable to answer.

Online

“Like” Faith on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FLCTroy/> and keep up with what’s happening.

Can’t make it in on Sunday morning for worship? Join us on Zoom!

Zoom Meeting ID: 83772454374 Password: 049977 Dial-In: 646-558-8656

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83772454374?pwd=ZVJDL3FwRjZSN2ZHTTFlUGo3TVVmdz09>

Miss worship altogether, but still want that Gospel lesson and sermon? Pr. Kate posts audio recordings of her sermons online each week at <https://anchor.fm/kate-drefke>

EASTER PLANTS

Once again we will have a variety of spring plants adorning the Altar for Easter Sunday. If you would like to place a plant in loving memory of or in honor of someone please fill in the information below and return it to Donna Van Zandt no later than Sunday, March 24, 2024.

The price for each plant will be \$14.00.

I would like to purchase _____ Easter Plant(s) at \$14.00 each in loving memory or

honor of _____

Given by _____

My plant(s) may be given to the sick or shut ins. _____ Yes _____ No

If possible please fill out a separate order form for each plant purchased.

Make your check payable to WELCA.

Thank you.