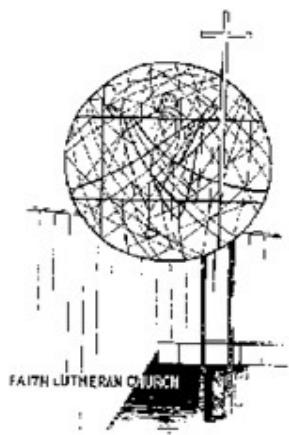


Faith Lutheran Church
50 Leversee Road
Troy, NY 12182



Following Faith

October 2023

*To the King of the Ages, immortal, invisible,
the only God, be honor and glory forever.
1 Timothy 1:17*

Faith Lutheran Church 50 Leversee 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
Bill Jarosz, President (Property) Sara Martin, Vice President (Education) Donna Van Zandt, Secretary (Worship) Linda Hulihan, Treasurer Trainee Financial Richard Anderson (Interim), Secretary	Doug Adamek (Inreach/outreach, Missions, Property) Katie Bonnier (Inreach/Outreach, Missions) Errol Bull, (Property) Evelyn Jarosz (Stewardship) Roberta Hayward, Treasurer trainer, at large	

Partnership Council – Linda Hulihan, Bill 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.

Pastor's Desk...

Most of us like music. Listening to, performing, singing along with our favorite songs. I'm almost always listening and singing along in the car and office. Music accompanies our lives and worship. It influences us in many ways. Maybe you remember a few weeks ago when I shared the sermon I'd started got derailed by a song playing on my Spotify "Release Radar" auto-playlist. I changed the whole thing for that coming Sunday and asked, like Jesus asked his disciples, "who do you say Jesus is?" Thinking about our different sources of information and influence- like what we read, listen to, what we see, and who we talk to- what do we each think about and believe about Jesus? According to the song that changed my sermon, Jesus was a drag queen (also the song's title), a feminist, a trans kid, and a radical, among other things. I don't think Melody Walker, writer, and singer of "Jesus Was a Drag Queen," believes the historical Jesus was a drag queen or trans (not that I can speak for her), but that she's being deliberately provocative to make a point about a vision of Jesus as radically inclusive, and as seen in each of us.

Sometimes I think about the stuff I ask you all in preaching, and this past month, I've been thinking about some of the music that has most recently influenced my thinking about Jesus, and the Divine in general. For the past year, I've listened to the album *Bible Belt Baby* by drag performer Flamy Grant more than anything else. The opening track, "What Did You Drag Me Into?" is a play on both the art of drag, and the feeling of "Lord, what did you drag me into?" that often accompanies the Spirit pushing (or dragging) us outside our comfort zones or otherwise disrupting our plans. The music video takes place in church with drag artists releasing the few attendees and their preacher from their drab confines. The second track, an anthem against shame, opens, "God is a storyteller/ A lover composing a letter/ And every word is hope and light and glory." In "Esther, Ruth and Rahab" she talks about growing up, being bored in church, and finding hope and courage in the stories of women, even

as the women around her were silenced. And I quoted the chorus of the final track, “Good Day” on Trinity Sunday, connecting God’s multiplicity to our own as we have been made in God’s image, by God, and good in every way.

The Gospel of Matthew, where we’ve been focused this year, talks a lot about the kingdom of heaven. The HighWomen sing, “All my heroes are going to heaven/ All the junkies and the liars and the fools” in “Heaven is a Honky Tonk.” In other secular music, Brandi Carlile’s “Stranger at My Door,” a song that talks of exorcizing demons and selling souls, always calls to my mind Matthew 25:31-46. It ends, “But nothing scares me more than the stranger at my door/Who I fail to give shelter, time, and worth.”

I contemplate, as I sing along with, “But them wafers ain’t meat; they’re just made of wheat; no one ever got drunk off of blood. So pass that wine around, my friends, redemption will just have to wait” in “Jesus Ain’t Dead” by Gasoline Lollipops from their album, *Resurrection*. (I also wonder what it means that Jesus is “home asleep in bed and Elvis is cookin’ him eggs.”) Semler, featured in the Flamy’s cover of Amy Grant’s “It Takes a Little Time,” sings about being queer and Christian. In their song, “Jesus from Texas” they sing, “I grew up a preacher’s kid cleaning up after communion/ So I know that a church is not a way to live/ It’s a weekly reunion.” I wonder, what does it mean for the church to be perceived as a social club, and not a place of welcome, acceptance, affirmation...; that church is a place where faith is a commodity and not how we are transformed by God’s love? Semler sometimes sings with Trey Pearson on his track, “Hey Jesus” after coming out but being told by the church they’re wrong, “Hey Jesus can you hear me out/ I just wanna love like everyone else/ I was wonderin’ could you love me the same?” Do we believe Jesus loves us as we are, or are there conditions?

As our gospel readings the next few weeks take Jesus into Jerusalem for death, and then Advent prepares us for his birth keep considering the question, who do you say Jesus is? What does music- the stuff you enjoy, that we sing in worship, and even what you don’t like- say about Jesus and the Divine?

Peace,
Pr. Kate Drefke

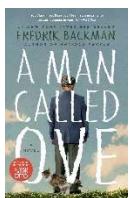
Playlist: I’ve made up a playlist if you’re interested in the tracks mentioned above, and added a few more for funsies. You can access it here:

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLseH5CjnJqaOqjS0v3_NVdtJb2L5MwPx&si=JWiETVn2SRoJ5mS (or search “October 2023 newsletter” on YouTube).

What the Pastor is Reading

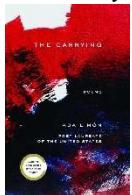
Most of my reading the past month has been a binge of Louise Penny’s Inspector Gamache series, but in between chapters I’ve also read:

A Man Called Ove (© 2012) by Fredrik Backman.



A very popular novel from ten years ago, Ove is a grumpy man, with exacting expectations of others. Through narrative flashbacks, life’s many disappointments and his character formation are revealed. Taking after his father, he believes that what is right is right, even to the point of breaking friendships over the cars each drive. Grieving and thinking he has nothing left to live for in this confusing modern world, his plans for death are repeatedly subverted by “incompetent” neighbors and faulty materials. He is also adopted by a cat who has seen a few things.

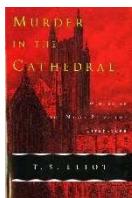
The Carrying: Poems (© 2018) by Ada Limón.



Lowell and I spent a lot of time in bookstores while traveling this summer. This book was highlighted on a shelf at the independent bookstore we went to in Seattle because Limón is the US Poet Laureate, her second term began this September. This collection’s poems cover race, in/fertility, a new national anthem, life and death, aging, and bodies. “On a Lamppost Long Ago”

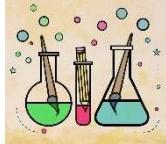
language, with bees, disappears. “In the time it takes to say *I love you*, or move in with someone,/ or admit to the child you’re carrying, all the intricate words/ of a language become extinct.”

Murder in the Cathedral (© renewed 1963) by TS Eliot.



By coincidence, I had picked this up at a used store in Chattanooga so that when one of those Gamache novels kept referencing it, I had it handy on a shelf to read. Back in 1170, Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, was murdered in the cathedral. Eliot's play is written in poetry and prose, handling issues of faith, politics, and the common good. “The last temptation is the greatest treason:/ To do the right deed for the wrong reason.”

Fall Worship Experiments



We're playing with our worship this fall! On the third Sunday of the month (17 Sept, 15 Oct, and 19 Nov) we're going to play with some of the elements of worship. In particular, the sermon is going to be a time of reflection and discussion with one another, asking questions, making scripture more alive in our lives. We'll try these things for a couple of months. If we like it, we'll keep the experiment going a few more months before deciding on making it “permanent” (or not). @ELCP our worship will intentionally include our youngest members of Christ's body in the different pieces of worship, and the sermon will be a time of dialogue and reflection with them. Bring the kids in your life and all their questions! @Faith our worship and coffee hour will happen at the same time. Drink your coffee (or tea or hot chocolate or whatever cold beverage) and munch on snacks while we explore the day's scripture together.

Weekday Evening Worship

Poestenkill is experimenting this fall with offering a casual, come-as-you-are Thursday evening service on the first and third Thursday of the month at 6:45pm (or shortly following food pantry). This quiet worship meets in the undercroft, includes communion, and time for reflection and questions after the sermon (which is incomplete and very drafty).

Catechism! for the Already Confirmed



Year 2 is fast approaching, and we'll be studying the Bible. Utilizing The Lutheran Study Bible, and the Greatest Story books from Augsburg (our ELCA publishing house), we'll learn scripture, history, theology, and ways of reading the Bible.

This year we're going to try meeting on Tuesday afternoons at 1pm, starting Oct. 3, at Poestenkill. Join us!

MARITIME MINUTE

Ahoy There! Albany Maritime Ministry Needs YOU!

Did you know 90% of EVERYTHING we buy spends part of its life on the ocean? Did you know there's a port right here in Albany? Curious about what goes on at the Seafarer Center and want to get involved? Come to the Albany Maritime Ministry Volunteer Open House. October 7, 10am – Noon at the William G. Hempel Seafarer Center at the Port of Albany. RSVP at: <https://albanymm.us/howtohelp.html>

-The Rev. D. Lowell Chilton is one of the chaplains with Albany Maritime Ministry and pastor at First Lutheran, Albany

----- End of From Pastor's Desk -----

Letters to the Editor

Coffee Hour Worship

Faith held its first Coffee Hour Worship on September 17th. I really enjoyed this new format for a variety of reasons. I felt it gave the congregation more opportunities to participate in the service in a relaxed setting and the ability to ‘go off script’ by inviting personal thoughts and experiences of congregation members at different points in the service. All this plus an abundance of coffee and snacks made for a very enjoyable experience! Join us for the next Coffee Hour Worship scheduled for the 3rd Sunday of October!

Diana Rieker

September 11, 2023 Council Meeting Highlights

In attendance: Doug Adamek, Richard Anderson, Katie Bonnier, Roberta Hayward,
Linda Hulihan, Bill Jarosz, Evelyn Jarosz, Pastor Kate Drefke

Excused: Errol Bull, Dana Cerone, Sara Martin, Donna VanZandt

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 by President Bill Jarosz

Pastor Kate’s opening devotion was a reading from Psalms followed by a prayer.

Motion to approve the agenda. Carried

Motion to Approve minutes of August 7 as written. – Carried

Motion to approve the Treasurer’s report. – Carried

Motion to accept the Financial Secretary report. – Carried

President’s Report:

Errol Bull and Mike Morosky were thanked for their work on the purchase of a new lawn mower.

A sign-up sheet has been put up on the bulletin board in the Narthex looking for more volunteers for counting Sunday offerings, and hosting coffee hour following service.

Looking forward to the new family worship service Sunday, September 17th, and the start of the Catechism new season October 3rd.

Pastor’s Report:

Catechism study will commence Tuesday, October 3rd, at 1:30 pm. Jill Gresens from ELC will order the Bibles and the study books for the group.

Our family worship service is starting Sunday, September 17th in the fellowship hall. Our Zoom members will be able to join in on and be a part of the service. Bishop Miller will be joining us at the family service Sunday, October 15th.

The new fall worship booklets are being used for service.

Advent worship possibilities are being explored.

Committee Reports:

In Reach/Out Reach - Katie will sign up for a coffee hour

Missions: The collection for August mission of \$250 has been sent to YWCA.

Mission giving: The council had a discussion on the monthly missions. It was suggested we have a minimum donation of \$500 for the monthly designated mission. A motion our monthly mission minimum expenditure be \$500 starting in September was presented by Roberta Hayward, seconded by Evelyn Jarosz, and carried. Realizing that monthly mission collections fall short of \$500 most months the shortfall will come out of the general fund.

A check for \$200 was received from Simple Paradox Union grant fund in memory of Ruth Goerold. Motion to put the check in the general fund earmarked for missions in October. Carried

Stewardship - Evelyn will get together with Pastor to work on a theme for the fall

Property – a new mower has been purchased for \$3499. There have been offers to purchase the old mower for parts. A toilet in the women's bathroom is out of order and will be fixed this week.

Finance/Investment – August 9th a letter was sent to Synod close out our funds held by them.

Old Business:

Treasurer's replacement – Linda Hulihan is now the treasurer in training.

Motion to accept the audit report. Carried

The Bishop will visit October 15th for our family worship service. An email will be sent to him following the September service letting him know what we want him to do.

New Business:

Bill is working on a replacement for the Financial Secretary. Rich Anderson is filling in in the meantime.

In the coming month Katie will work on reviewing the mission giving list and have suggestions for the October meeting.

Fred Howard sent a request to the council to update the Newsletter mailing list. By consensus the council gives Fred permission to update the mailing list.

A discussion ensued regarding our constitution, last updated in 2009, the church rolls and mailing list. Roberta and Doug offered to begin work on the constitution to be addressed in the October meeting. Pastor Kate and Evelyn will address the church rolls.

Joys and Concerns:

Katie's husband and daughter are recovering from bicycle accidents.

Linda will be having knee surgery October 11th.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 with the Lord's Prayer.

Our next meeting is October 2nd at 7:00 pm on Zoom.

Acting Secretary
Evelyn Jarosz

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

October Mission of the Month

Our Mission for the month of October is in support of St. Paul's Center for Women and Children. St. Paul's Center, located in Rensselaer NY, provides emergency and transitional housing for homeless mothers and their children. To assist the residents in moving on to independent living, they receive support and services in counseling, parenting, homemaking, budgeting, literacy, pediatric care, mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence education, job training and placement and permanent housing. Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

August Mission Collection was \$250 (for the Ebenezer Foundation)

Thank you, Katie Bonnier

Fellowship and Training Opportunities

On Oct 14th from 9:00am to 3:30pm Defensive Driving Course will be help at church. Cost is \$30.00 which includes lunch. For reservations call John at 518-279-9552.

Creative Threads – North Wind Birds

A second North Wind Birds quilt was stitched with pastel colors by Evelyn Jarosz.

Our group met in August to tie their latest quilt creations. All will be donated to St. Paul's Center, as we continue our mission to brighten a life of someone struggling to succeed.

The quilt group mourns the loss of our two senior members, Polly Hayward, and Ruth Goerold. Their commitment, humor, and wisdom will be missed.

Evelyn Jarosz, Master Quilter



Serving our October Sunday Programs Lay Assistants

Oct. 1 - Bill Jarosz
Oct. 8 - Diane Dyer
Oct. 15 - Rich Anderson
Oct. 22 - Errol Bull
Oct. 29 - Evelyn Jarosz

Flowers on the Altar for October

October 1 - In loving memory of Bob Hayward.
Given by the Hayward Family.
October 8 - In loving memory of Gwenlillian
Lynch. Given by Janet Walsh.

If you would like to place flowers on the Altar, fill in the flower chart hanging on the Narthex Bulletin Board. Please fill in your name along with who the flowers are in memory or in honor of.

The cost continues to be \$19.00 per bouquet. Cash or check made out to WELCA is accepted. See Donna Van Zandt for questions and/or payment

Coffee Hour

The coffee hour service on the third Sunday (October 15) continues this month. See the Letter to the Editor above for a reaction to this new service form!

And consider signing up to Host sometime!

Oct 1 Mary & Kathy - after service.
Oct 8 No one - after service. **An opportunity for service!**
Oct 15 Diana Rieker - Coffee Hour Service in Fellowship Hall.
Oct 22 Howards after service.
Oct 29 Jaroszs after service.

There is a sign-up sheet on the Bulletin Board in the Narthex if you would like to participate in being a coffee hour host.

AMONG OUR PEOPLE

If you have a special Joy or Concern that you would like to have included in this section, please email your item to: farmerf169@aol.com, or by phone at 518 421 4576 and leave a voicemail if there is no answer.

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.

Please remember Ruth Goerold's family in your prayers. We all are saddened by her passing, but she lived a productive long life and was supported by her family allowing her to live in the home that she loved until the end.

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.

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

Prayers for Kathy Adamek's Brother Mike Lewis who is confronting a serious health issue.

Prayers of supplication for people suffering in war torn counties. 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 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.

Prayers of thanksgiving for all who are those who are/have made successful recovery from surgery including Ron Karpfen, Katie Bonnier, and Ernie Phillips.

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.

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. Amen.

Newsletter Deadline

The newsletter item deadline for the November, 2023 newsletter is Thursday, October 26, 2023. Please email your articles to: farmerf169@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=ZVJDL3FxRjZSN2ZHTFIUGo3TVVmdz09>

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>