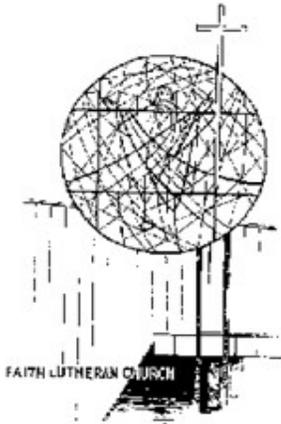


Faith Lutheran Church
50 Leverage Road
Troy, NY 12182



Following Faith

JANUARY 2023

***Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new
creation has come: The old has gone, the new is
here!
2 Corinthians 5:17***

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**

Bill Jarosz, President (Property)

Vacant, Vice President (TBD)

Carol Karpfen, Secretary (Stewardship)

Heather Bull, Treasurer

Rich Anderson, Financial Secretary (Interim)

Doug Adamek (Inreach/outreach, Missions, Property)

Katie Bonnier (Inreach/Outreach, Missions)

Errol Bull, (Property)

Vacant (Education, Worship)

Diane Dyer (Office Administration)

Sara Martin (Education)

Donna Van Zandt (Worship)

Partnership Council – Heather Bull, Bill Jarosz, Carol Karpfen, 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...

If you haven't yet heard me say it several dozen times... our lectionary- the assigned scripture readings- is divided into a three-year rotation: Year A, Year B, and Year C. Each year, beginning the first Sunday of Advent, has a primary synoptic gospel. John and the other two synoptics (from Greek, meaning "see together") are also sampled throughout. Year A is the year of Matthew. Because of how I have been developing as a preacher- with that "teachy" style and liking to do series- I have a particular appreciation for how Matthew is laid out. The anonymous writer of this gospel lumped Jesus' teachings into several discourses- like the Sermon on the Mount. Makes it easier for me to do series or just otherwise talk about the narrative context from one week to the next, how one thing leads into the next. Even though our lectionary divides and tells only portions of any gospel out of narrative order. [sigh-groan]

Matthew's writer quotes the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament that was around in the first century) more than any of the other gospel writers, so (presumably) he had a lot of knowledge of Judaism, as we saw during Advent. Naming four First Testament women in his genealogy of Jesus, a genealogy that like all other Biblical genealogies was patrilineal, was a reminder that Jesus not only came from a Jewish family, but a Jewish family with roots from and branches to other places. A story-filled family going back to Abraham, the one whom God had promised would have descendants more numerous than stars in the sky and grains of sand on the beach. What other stories will we remember or re-learn this year?

I've had some recent conversations with some of you- from both conversations- about young people in church. I had a professor in seminary, the late Dr. Carol Jacobson, who often said, "It is a sin to bore people with the Gospel." I think she was quoting a professor she had had, but I can't remember who. But think about that for a moment. Is church boring? (Don't think too hard on this one; the answer is almost always "yes!") Is

the Gospel? It can certainly be presented that way and I'm as guilty as any other preacher at sometimes failing to highlight Jesus' message of grace and liberation for all. So much of what Jesus said was revolutionary in a time when things had become stale and everyone was worried about their own survival in a world of growing inequality, injustice, and oppression. More than the other three, Matthew's Jesus says, "You have heard it said..." and "but I say to you." Matthew's Jesus tells us the "old" and expands it, breaks it open to something new for a world still full of "nothing new under sun," struggling for survival when we can see the vast disparities in wealth between the poorest in one nation against the poorest of another, when injustice and oppression keep us from flourishing in God's image. What in the Gospel of Christ excites you? How do you share the story of your freedom in Christ with those young people you wish you saw on Sunday mornings? How do we set ourselves free to meet in worship of the Triune God that invites not only other people, but all our questions together?

In our families, the stories we tell and pass down tell us and the next generation about who we are and where we come from. Matthew told us Jesus came from Canaanite women, a Moabite woman, and woman who was taken from her family simply because another man wanted her. In the family of God, what stories do we tell, do we pass down to the next generations? What do they say about where our faith is rooted, and where it branches?

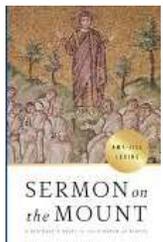
Peace,

Pr. Kate Drefke

Time to Think About Lent!

I know, we're still in the middle of Christmas. But Lent is coming FAST. Looking for input on what we do for the season. Here are the general suggestions. Think about them, and let me know what you prefer.

Midweek Worship: Do a midweek worship of some sort. Probably keep it short, simple, maybe something more contemplative.



Book Study: Like last year, do a book study. Suggesting a couple from A-J Levine (but open to other ideas): *Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven*. Pretty self-explanatory, this is 6 chapters/sessions covering different portions of the Matthean Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount." Since this is the year of Matthew, I want us to do this at some point whether that's Lent or another time. The other A-J idea is *Witness at the Cross: A Beginner's*

Guide to Holy Friday. I know a couple of pastors who used it in their congregations last year and thought it was worth it. This is also 6 chapters/sessions, so either would begin the Wednesday after Ash Wednesday and go through to Holy Week.

Special Topic Study: What's of interest to you that I can put together? Or revamp, like my Evangelism study (6 sessions, designed to be introvert friendly) from internship.

Package Study: A Sanctified Art's 2023 Year A Lent program is called *seeking: honest questions for deeper faith*. It's focal scriptures and questions cover Ash Wednesday, every Sunday of Lent, Palm/Passion Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter/Resurrection Sunday. Options include devotional booklet, sermon planning guide (another series!! I do love them), words for worship, children's curriculum, prayers, and several other things. You can look up more at <https://sanctifiedart.org/seeking-lent-bundle-year-a>.



Thank you! The card and cash gift were very kind and much appreciated! Thank you!!

Pastor's Personal Updates

Just a couple of FYIs for those that haven't yet heard:

1) First, Albany voted in mid-December to call Lowell for a two-year term call, effective January 1 (when his current interim contract expires). He will still be three-quarter time, working full-time hours with extra weeks

off (e.g.: six weeks working, two weeks off). His installation service is tentatively scheduled for February, and I'll share the details when they are firm.

2) Lowell and I have also started in the newly created position of Port Chaplain with the Albany Maritime Ministries. This position is supported through a new partnership with Seafarers International House in NYC. It's a part-time, as needed, and our varying church schedules should allow us to tag-team and catch most ships. I'll also be going to Houston, TX in mid-February for a week of training/ continuing education (and Lowell will go next year).

New Year's Day Worship

Faith and Poestenkill will do one shared service at Faith, 10:45am. It will, as usual, be in person and on Zoom (usual link). The service will be a lessons & carols format with the carols being by request (like our hymn sing worship in July).

Advent Hymns of the Day

The stories of Advent Mothers Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba were the basis for our Advent sermons. There was a special Hymn of the Day each Sunday about the Advent Mother who was the center of the day's lesson. Reading the detail of each of these revealed that Pastor Kate was the writer of the words in each of the hymns that summarized the day's lesson. A hidden talent brought into the limelight! Thanks Pastor Kate!

Our Faith at Work

January Mission of the Month

The Mission for January is in support of the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York. The Regional Food Bank provides food assistance to many charitable agencies serving the hungry and disadvantaged, including food pantries, soup kitchens, emergency shelters, youth programs, senior programs and programs for the disabled. Many of our neighbors continue to struggle with hunger and food insecurity. Our support helps make the Regional Food Bank a better and stronger organization that improves the lives of hungry people throughout the Capital Region. Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

November Mission Collection was \$220.00 (for Joseph's House)

Thank you!

Katie Bonnier, Inreach/Outreach.

December 5, 2022 Council Meeting Highlights

Opening Devotion - Pastor Kate opened with Psalm 146

Treasurer's Report

Discussion: The final budget for 2023 will include December expenses. For the draft budget presented, expenses include January through November. H. Bull will serve as treasurer starting in January, and Roberta Hayward will continue to help with the transition. The Council thanks Roberta for her excellent work as treasurer.

Financial Secretary's Report

Discussion: November's offerings were very low. The church being closed (furnace failure) for two

Sundays contributed to this, but in general offerings are down for the year, which is a troubling trend.

President's Report

Bill Jarosz reported that he spent a lot of time on furnace repair issues. He wishes to thank Fred Howard, Eugene St. John, Rob Hayward, and Mike Moroskey for their work on resolving the issue. Thanks to Sara Martin for arranging the decoration of the Christmas tree and to Donna Van Zandt and Lou Ann Behrens for organizing the Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for needy families.

All council members should check their mailboxes in the office.

Important Reminder: All Annual Meeting reports are due by January 7, 2023. The Annual meeting will be held on Jan. 29 after worship.

Pastor's Report

Pastor reported that we are following a modified liturgy for Advent, and she and D. Van Zandt are planning Christmas services. Christmas Day worship will be available on Zoom and streaming. She officiated at Warren Truland's funeral.

Next year's Synod Assembly will be in Syracuse on Friday and Saturday.

She is officially starting as chaplain for the Albany Maritime Ministry and will need a supply pastor for Feb. 12 to start in that role. She has purchased a new printer that will better meet the church's needs.

Committee Reports

- **Property** – Errol Bull, Bill Jarosz -The furnace repair cost \$1,360. E Bull plans to clean out the closets on either side of the balcony and store Christmas decorations there. Help will be necessary. During Christmas break Bull will remove trees causing damage to siding. He asked that the annex and sexton be topics on next month's agenda.
- **Worship** – Donna Van Zandt, Pastor Kate - Please let D. Van Zandt know if you have a Christmas music request.
- **Church Doors** - Bull reported that it is difficult to find doors or someone to work on the project.
- **Audit of church books** - We are waiting to hear from L. Hulihan.
- **Christmas families – Motion:** If needed to supplement donations for Christmas families, the council approves up to \$500. (Jarosz, Hayward)

New Business

Check Signing - Motion: The council approves H. Bull and Roberta Hayward as designated check signers for the church. Barbara Boord's name will be removed as a signer.

Next regular meeting

Monday Jan 7, 2023, at 7:00pm. – ZOOM ** Note this is a change from our regularly scheduled date.

Joys and concerns

Errol's uncle was killed in a car accident. Two local teenagers known to members were caught in a rip

tide in Florida. One perished. Prayers and condolences offered for all.

Closing with Lord's Prayer Adjournment 8:10 pm

----- *end of council meeting highlights* -----

Heating System Finally Fixed

After a lengthy effort, a functional burner blower was finally received, installed, and commissioned on December 21. The end of an unbelievable saga that took 5 tries, due to problems with the repair parts that were received, before the boiler was finally operational again. Special thanks to Bill Jarosz who spent countless hours verifying that the temporary heating setups were functioning during the very cold spells that came during the time when our normal heating equipment was unavailable.

Quilt Ministry – 2022 in Review

During the twelve months of 2022 a team of six quilters met weekly, Monday or Saturday, for sewing and fellowship. Friendships are formed. Eight single bed quilts were completed.

These quilts were delivered to St. Paul's Center for our Christmas donation early in December. The Center was delighted to receive the quilts on behalf of their residents; looking forward to our 2023 quilts.

Our groups took a break for most of December but are already working on 2023 projects.

Evelyn Jarosz, Master Quilter

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 by phone at 518 421 4576 and leave a voicemail if he is unable to answer.

We ask that the Holy Spirit guide us all as we discern and move forward in the coming year. We pray especially for individual guidance as we commit to our financial support for our church in the coming year.

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 leading to the terror of destructive violence.

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

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.

Leading Our January Worship

Lay Assistants

Jan. 1 - This will be Lessons and Carols.

Jan. 8 – Rich Anderson

Jan. 15 – Fred Howard

Jan. 22 – Diane Dwyer

Jan. 29 - The Bull's

Feb. 5 - Bill Jarosz

Flowers on the Altar for January

Jan. 8 - In loving memory of Marilyn Howard given by Fred and Michele

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.

Newsletter Deadline

The newsletter item deadline for the February, 2023 newsletter is Wednesday, January 25, 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=ZVJDL3FhRjZSN2ZHTTFlU03TVVmdz09>

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>
