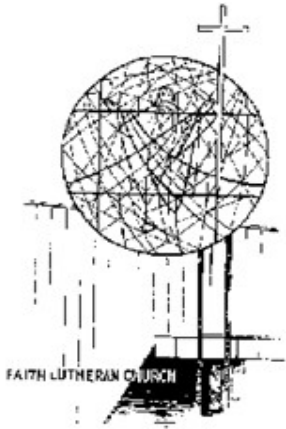


Faith Lutheran Church
50 Leverage Road
Troy, NY 12182



Following Faith

JULY 2022

***And they will know that we
are Christians by our Love.***

Faith Lutheran Church

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

Pastor Kate Drefke

drefkekate@gmail.com

(518) 279 1627 (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
10:30 AM at Faith

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

Vacant, President
Bill Jarosz, Vice President (Property)
Carol Karpien, Secretary (Stewardship)
Roberta Hayward, Treasurer
Rich Anderson, Financial Secretary (Interim)

Doug Adamek (Inreach/outreach, Missions, Property)
Katie Bonnier (Inreach/Outreach, Missions)
Errol Bull, (Property)
David Cerrone (Education, Worship)
Diane Dyer (Office Administration)
Sara Martin (Education)
Donna Van Zandt (Worship)

Partnership Council – Roberta Hayward, Bill Jarosz, Carol Karpien, and Donna Van Zandt
Fred Howard, Interim Newsletter Editor

Virtual Office Hours

These are being discontinued during July and August. See phone contact information above

from the pastor...

Maybe some of you have seen or heard the term “Christian nationalism” recently and wondered what that means. Maybe you thought, “Christian. Loves the US. Good!” Totally understandable thought process! But Christian nationalism is NOT a good. It is an evil corrupting and perverting both our Christian faith and our patriotism. Christian nationalism, as defined by Andrew Whitehead and Samuel Perry in their book, *Taking America Back for God: Christian Nationalism in the United States*, is

a cultural framework- a collection of myths, traditions, symbols, narratives, and value systems- that idealizes and advocates a fusion of Christianity with American civic life ... the ‘Christianity’ of Christian nationalism represents something more than religion. [...] it includes assumptions of nativism, white supremacy, patriarchy, and heteronormativity, along with divine sanction for authoritarian control and militarism. It is as ethnic and political as it is religious.¹

Christians Against Christian Nationalism says,

Christian nationalism seeks to merge Christian and American identities, distorting both the Christian faith and America’s constitutional democracy. Christian nationalism demands Christianity be privileged by the State and implies that to be a good American, one must be Christian. It often overlaps with and provides cover for white supremacy and racial subjugation.²

¹ As cited by Drew Strait in his 30min presentation Political Idolatry: Countering Christian Nationalism

<https://www.ambs.edu/discuss-political-idolatry/>

² <https://www.christiansagainsthchristiannationalism.org/statement>

As Christians, which literally means “of Christ,” we have been joined with Jesus in the waters of baptism in which we are drowned to sin, and from which we rise again to new life. Baptism is death and resurrection for our earthly living. As resurrected people we follow the teachings and example of Jesus- feeding the hungry, advocating for the poor, sharing God’s love, and speaking out against empire. We are to be like Christ, like Jesus, to one another. Of Christ. And being of Christ, citizens of the Divine Realm, any other citizenship, any identity other than child of God, is secondary.

We can love our country and serve with pride in our military or various government services, swearing an oath to protect and defend the US Constitution. We can exercise our rights as citizens in voting, even working on campaigns, and serving in community organizations. What we cannot and should not do is conflate our love for God and our Christian faith with our love for our country or require that one be “a Christian” in order to be “a real American.” Ultimately, we belong to the one who said to give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s. While that was on the issue of taxes to the emperor in a specific social-cultural context, today, in our social-cultural context, it means that we are of Christ, but we do not require others to be of Christ. We celebrate their faith (or non-faith) with them. We learn from one another, discovering together new wonders of Creation. And we follow Jesus’ words to advance justice and mercy for all peoples.

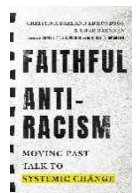
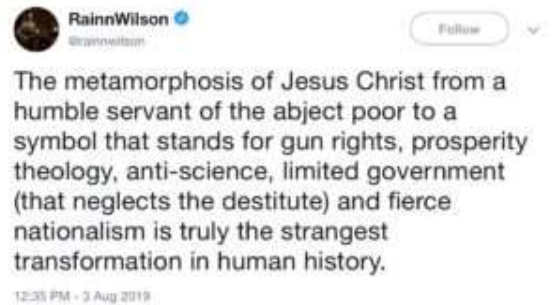
Still confused by Christian nationalism- what it is and why it’s bad? Think back to January 6, 2021. The attack on the US Capital is a perfect, if also extreme, example of Christian nationalism in action. You can read more about that at <https://uncivilreligion.org/home/index>. Other examples you might see in daily life include items that say things like, “God Guns America” or “I stand for the flag and kneel at the cross.” In our news right now (in addition to the January 6 hearing), is the SCOTUS ruling overturning Roe. Abortion bans may also be examples of Christian nationalism when linked with certain “Christian” statements because it is essentially legislating a Christian perspective over other Christian and other faithful, religious perspectives. For example, in Judaism the life of the mother takes priority over the fetus’s life. If a woman is pregnant, and her health or life endangered by keeping the pregnancy, she is required under Jewish law to terminate that pregnancy so she has the best possible outcome. Banning abortion infringes upon the rights and free exercise of Jewish women’s religion. (I wrote a paper on this in seminary. If you’re curious to know more, ask and I can look it up and email it to you).

You can learn more about Christian nationalism at <https://www.christiansagainstchristiannationalism.org/> or by watching this hour-long webinar, “Political Idolatry: Countering Christian Nationalism”: https://youtu.be/zNC_jKOcDeY. There are also several books and articles that you can find out about by searching online, or by going to the library, or ask me for copies of what I’ve been reading in the periodicals to which I subscribe.

In Christ,
Pr. Kate Drefke

Reading

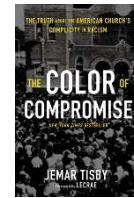
If you stop in the office while I’m there, you might hear a couple minutes of *Faithful Anti-Racism: Moving Past Talk to Systemic Change* (2022) by Christina Edmondson and Chad Brennan (they also narrate the audiobook). Edmondson (a black woman) and Brennan (a white man) share their experiences encountering and confronting racism and white nationalism, taking confidence in the truth of Christ overcoming the world, including racism. Admittedly, I’m not paying full attention as I listen while putting together bulletins, but it is interesting enough.





While Lowell was visiting his family in NC after Easter, I binge-watched all three seasons of *Mr. Mercedes* based on Stephen King's Bill Hodges Trilogy (2014, 2015, 2016). I watched it because Kate Mulgrew (Capt. Janeway in *Star Trek: Voyager*) is in the third season. Excellent show! And now I'm reading the first book in the trilogy. Some significant differences between the book and the show, but very good.

Not presently reading, but I did mention and quote from it in my sermon on June 19: *Compromise: The Truth about the American Church's Complicity in Racism* (2019) Tisby. I've read the first few chapters, talking about colonization and slavery in America and forming of the US, and the Christian Church's role/s. "From the American colonization, Europeans crafted a Christianity that would allow them to faith without confronting the exploitative economic system of slavery and the social inequality based on color" (p.38).



The Color of
by Jemar
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Service Starting Time Beginning in September

As you may be aware, a worship time change has been under discussion this spring. Evangelical Poestenkill requested we move to a 10:45 start time to accommodate their need for some time with Pastor following their service. This change will also allow more adequate time for Pastor and Donna to drive safely between churches and set up for an on-time service start at Faith. After several discussions at the Faith council and at a joint council meeting with ELCP, it was determined that our present start time of 10:30 was not in compliance with our Covenant Agreement with Poestenkill that states that Faith's service "shall not start earlier than 10:45." The Covenant Agreement was approved by both congregations in 2017 and has been reaffirmed annually each year at our Congregational Meeting. The confusion about start times seems to have occurred as result of all the changes that were made because of remote service scheduling during COVID-19.

With this in mind, beginning September 4, Faith Sunday Worship will begin at 10:45.

Council President Resigns

Portions of her letter of resignation are included below.

Dear council members,

I have chosen to resign from council president, council, and all other leadership positions at Faith Lutheran Church. This includes Altar guild president and Dinner Club president. I will continue as a member of the church for now and I'm happy to help out when called upon by others.

This comes after multiple heated council meetings with a feeling of nothing being accomplished, migraine headaches, countless hours planning in the pursuit of keeping our members together and looking to grow our church. My final decision comes from the Covenant Council effort to establish a 10:45 start time for Faith without bringing this matter to the Faith congregation for consideration.

While I was council president, I was fortunate to have many helping hands, even though we were a small group. I was proud to work alongside you.

It is now in the best interest of the church that I step aside. I am hoping this is what the church needs to grow in the right direction. I truly want Pastor Kate to succeed and the church to thrive. I am very comfortable with my

decision. Eugene and I have made many memories over the years at Faith; some bad experiences but many good ones. We have stuck with Faith Lutheran Church when we have felt God's presence and even when we have not; this is because of our Faith family members. It is not our intent to change churches at this time but we do look forward to attending church with other family members.

Respectfully submitted, Donna St. John

Donna's resignation leaves a large void in our congregational leadership and we thank her for her many years of dedicated and faithful service.

Our Faith at Work

We will be supporting the Young Women Christian Association (YWCA) of the Greater Capital Region (GCR). For over 100 years, the YMCA -GCR has been the start of positive change for thousands of local women and children. The programs offered are designed to help women prepare for school and employment through economic advancement programs. It provides affordable, safe and supportive transitional and permanent housing, food, security services, homelessness prevention and advocates for gender and racial equity. Our donations will join others efforts to continue building a healthy and strong community in downtown Troy. Your support is greatly appreciated.

May 2022 Mission collected \$396 (\$260 to Unity House of troy and \$136 to Holy Cow)

Katie Bonnier, Inreach/Outreach

Pastor Jennifer Wegter-McNelly Memorial Service

Jennifer Lynn Wegter-McNelly, 52, a beloved interim Pastor for out congregations, passed away at home on December 17, 2021 after a difficult four-year-journey with breast cancer. A memorial service will be held for Jennifer on Saturday, July 16, 2022, at 11:00 a.m. The service will take place at [Trinity Presbyterian Church](#) (185 Swaggertown Road, Scotia, NY, 12302) and will be [live-streamed](#), refreshments to follow.

----- Council Meeting Highlights June 7, 2022 -----

Anderson reported that \$136 was collected for the Holy Cow Mission at Synod Assembly and is recorded in the Mission line.
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<i>Motion to Accept</i> (Van Zandt, Jarosz)

St. John reported on the joint council meeting with ELCP and that Helen Inglis' family was pleased with her memorial service.

Pastor reported on the Inglis memorial service and the recent baptism. She will be officiating at another memorial service. She plans two preaching and worship series themes for the summer.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inreach/Outreach – Kate Bonnier & Doug Adamek Bonnier sent a written report on her progress, including two ideas for outreach: Monthly community dinners and partnering with the Boys’ Club to provide Friday food bags. • Office Administration – Diane Dyer - Hayward is working on getting Microsoft Office. • Missions – Kate Bonnier is working on the June mission (Bread of Life Food Pantry) and reported that April mission for Lutheran World relief totaled \$376. She awaits May mission info. • Education – Sara Martin, Dave Cerrone - A game night is in the planning stages at ELCP on 6/25 from 6 to 8:30pm. • Stewardship – Carol Karpien, and council collaboration - A brief quarterly report was submitted for the newsletter. • Property – Errol Bull, Bill Jarosz Planning for a paint-the-church project is taking place. • Worship– Donna Van Zandt and Pastor Kate are trying to get a committee going. Diane Anderson has joined altar guild • Partnership Council Carol Karpien, Roberta Hayward, Bill Jarosz, Donna Van Zandt - No change will be made to the Partnership Covenant. Therefore, return to a 10:45 worship start time will start on September 4. Karpien will make an announcement in church on Sunday explaining the reason the upcoming changes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synod conference was held June 5-6th Pastor Kate and Donna VanZandt - Van Zandt reported that the Assembly was good and changes are being made so congregations can now make joint calls. Racial and Social Justice were important themes. • Media and web presence Pastor continues to post on FB. Finding a new web page developer is still an issue. • Altar purchases We purchased two new altar candles and a brass paten, engraved in <i>memory of Helen Inglis</i>. Total cost \$347.75 • Policy writing team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hall Rental agreement. - Memorials gift agreement Karpien will work on this.
<p>Roberta Hayward will be retiring as treasurer this September. Unless we have a volunteer, we need to revisit hiring an administrative staff member and bookkeeper. Jarosz will contact L. Hulihan. We need to move forward quickly. Roberta will help with the transition. We are very grateful to Roberta for her excellent work and will miss her wise council.</p>
<p>Next Council Meeting - Tuesday July 5, 2022, at 7:00pm. - zoom Special meeting to be called by the President, at the request of Pastor Kate. Date to be announced.</p>
<p>Joys and Concerns - The Jaroszes will be great grandparents again. Kathy Adamek had a successful surgery.</p>

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

SCRAPS TO FABULOUS

Featured this month is a quilt made by Diana Rieker from fabrics gathered from her quilt stash. A quilter collects leftover fabrics used in former quilt projects to construct a new quilt. The leftover fabrics are known as her stash. Quilters love to shop their stash.

This quilt will keep someone at St. Paul's Center warm this winter.

There are two quilt groups; one meets on Monday and another's meets Saturday. All are welcome to join us.



Evelyn Jarosz, Master Quilter

A Note from Helen Inglis's Family

A sincere and heartfelt thank you to the people of Faith Lutheran Church. The "Celebration of Life" for our mom, Helen Inglis was truly just that! Thank you to so many who were able to come and join us and to those who shared faith and fellowship with our mom and all of us. And special thanks to Donna Van Zandt for leading us in music and Pastor Kate who grew to know mom in spirit. It was all so memorable and just perfect!

With love and appreciation, The Family of Helen Inglis

AMONG OUR PEOPLE

We ask that the Holy Spirit guide Pastor Kate and each of us as we discern and move forward in the coming years together!

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.

Continued prayers for healing and recovery for Larry Lansing.

Paul Haas who continues to do well at Van Rensselaer Manor. He has his cell phone 518-892-2231 and enjoys telephone calls from his friends.

Prayers of healing for Bob Hayward as he recovers from a badly broken arm.

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

Leading Our July Worship

Lay Assistants

July 5 – Fred Howard
July 10 - Rich Anderson
July 17 – Carol Karpfen
July 24 - Diane Dwyer
July 31 – Evelyn Jarosz

Flowers on the Altar

July 31 - In loving memory of Marilyn Howard. Given by Fred and Michele Howard.

If you would like to place flowers on the Altar, fill in the flower chart hanging in 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.

We Are in Need of YOUR Help!

Come One, Come All! Faith is looking for help on Sundays. All generations are welcomed. Experienced or Inexperienced does not matter. We just need a little bit of your time and help.

From time to time, would you be willing to share your help and/or your thoughts?

Would you consider being a lay assistant, or would someone in your family be willing to be a lay assistant? Your spouse or significant other? One of your children or a grandchild?

The church is also looking for members to sit on the Worship Committee. Come and help with the decisions that are made for our worship services.

If you or someone you know is willing to help, please let me know. Any and all questions can be addressed either by email or by speaking to me in person following one of our church services.

I ask that you give these requests some thought. Thank you.

God's Peace,
Donna Van Zandt

2022 UPSTATE NEW YORK SYNOD ASSEMBLY

SUMMARY

The 2022 Assembly took place from Sunday, June 5, 2022 to Monday, June 6, 2022 at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center. The theme of this year's Assembly was "Generous Love", which is the first of the discipleship practices of the G.R.A.C.E. Mindset that the Bishop and Synod have been sharing over the course of this past year. That Mindset is: G.R.A.C.E. - Generous Love, Restorative Justice, Adaptive Leadership, Collaboration, Experimentation. Even though attendance was only half of what it has been in the past, it was still inspiring to be able to once again gather in person and worship as one.

The Assembly opened at 6:30PM on Sunday with a Liturgy of Holy Communion. The service was presided over by Rev. Kimberly Vaughn, ELCA's representative with Bishop Miller delivering the sermon. Throughout the service we prayed that God would "replenish our strength...stir up our hope...and fill us with peace..." as we try to make sense of all that is happening in our lives today - racism, rifts of political and ideological divides, climate change, mass shootings, and loss of lives to Covid. The worship service ended with Bishop Miller's address to the Assembly with this acknowledgement: *"The Upstate NY Synod acknowledges that we live and work on the traditional land of the Haudenosaunee (ho-dee-no-SHOW-nee) past and present, the Shinnecock Nation, the Unkechaug Nation, the Stockbridge-Munsee, the Lenni Lenape, and others no longer living in the region. Indigenous peoples do not believe that the land and waters belong to them, but that they belong to the land and waters. With this Land Acknowledgement, we honor, with gratitude, these communities and through their example, we commit ourselves to honoring the earth and all of her gifts..."* The assembly was then declared in session. A theme throughout the assembly was a desire to change the world's view of racism, bigotry and gender equality.

Sunday evening's session consisted on general business issues: adoption of the agenda and rules of procedure; introduction of guests; appointment of committees; report of Nomination Committee and explanation of the nomination/election process; introduction of Memorials and Resolutions; introduction of Mission Proposal 2023; recognition of anniversaries, Synod Council/Deans, terms ending, etc. Plenary 1 ended around 9:00PM after which a Fresh Air Fellowship was held.

Monday morning prayer service was at 8:30 after which Plenary 2 began. Various reports were given by the following: assistants to the Bishop; secretary's report of 2021 Zoom Assembly; Conference Deans; ELCA Mission Investment Fund; Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center camp (which will be open this year); Campus Ministries; Cherish All Children ministry; Gender Justice Task Force, Portico; Global Ministry; Hunger Team; Lutheran Disaster; as well as others.

The Resolution to Give Voice and Vote to Synodically-Authorized Ministers at Synod Assembly was presented to the assembly. After explanation of this resolution, some discussion and a minor amendment, this resolution went to vote and passed.

A Memorial on Setting/Calling Body was presented to the assembly. This memorial calls for change in the ELCA's constitution which, simply stated, would allow more than one congregation to concurrently call the same person as pastor. The process for a memorial is that it be presented to our assembly, accepted and then sent to ELCA Council to be worked up as a Resolution to be presented at the next ECLA Churchwide Assembly to be voted on. Obviously, this process takes a while and will most likely not go into effect (if a positive vote is taken) for at least another year. But with more and more pastors serving more than one congregation (there are some who serve 3) it's at least a step in the right direction.

After a brief recess the Synod Treasurer presented the Financial Report and the Proposed 2023 Synod Budget Proposal. As is the case with most (if not all) of the congregations in the Synod, the Synod itself has experienced a decrease in revenues but has taken fiscally responsible steps to bring their financial systems to a good place. The 2023 Budget Proposal was presented and passed.

The 2022 World Hunger campaign was entitled HOLY COW - The "Udder" Joy of Giving. The funds raised will help sustain the livelihood of farmers across the globe. \$500 will purchase a HOLY COW which can produce a few gallons of milk per day. This production of milk can generate income for a family by selling

extra milk, cheese, yogurt, or butter. The total amount raised during the assembly for this worthy cause was \$30,758.

ELCA Representative Rev. Vaughn reported that the ELCA has raised over \$800,000 so far this year to help Ukraine, and will continue that mission as needed.

After the lunch break, the Plenary 2 continued with a presentation from the two Vice President nominations (Tom Madden and Lyndsay Stannard) after which a vote was taken. Tom Madden won the position by 5 votes. The session continued with votes for other positions. It's worth noting that positions were open for youth and persons of color and/or language other than English, however, no nominations were presented either from the conferences or from the floor of the assembly.

As we were running ahead of schedule, it was decided that the afternoon break would be skipped and we began our Service of Thanksgiving, Praise and Prayer to close the assembly. Installation of the Synod Vice-President, Synod Council members, Deans, Synod staff, and Commissioning of Churchwide voting members took place at this time. Pastor Imani Olear (Assistant to the Bishop as Director of Evangelical Mission) gave an extremely moving and thought-provoking reflection on racism, bigotry, and inequality. She definitely gave us something to ponder on our travels home! The Assembly was declared closed at approximately 3:00PM.

----- *End of 2022 Assembly Summary* -----

Newsletter Deadline

The newsletter item deadline for the August, 2022 newsletter is Sunday, July 28, 2022. 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=ZVJDL3FhRjZSN2ZHTTFlUGo3TVVmdz09>

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>
