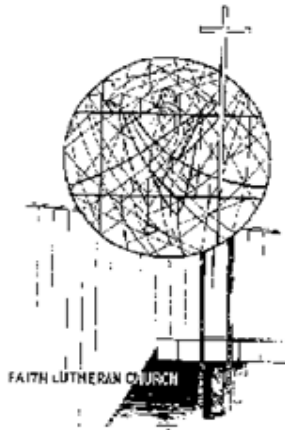


FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
50 LEVERSEE ROAD
TROY, NEW YORK 12182



Following Faith

JANUARY 2017

Following Faith

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**May God bless us
and guide us in 2017**

I can hardly believe it is the new year already and also that I have been your Interim Pastor for more than half a year now. A lot has happened in our brief time together. Some are little things: I don't get lost in the Worship Book as often on Sunday morning; I know what most of the keys on my key ring do. Others have been profound: sharing baptisms, funerals, and weddings; doing the congregational survey and continuing to think about the past, present, and future of the congregation; sharing some wonderful moments in worship, Bible study, or around tables in conversation.

At the upcoming Annual Meeting of the congregation, we'll have a chance to share and give thanks for all that happened at Faith in 2016. Some of these are things that happen every year and others have been particular to the transition time. We'll also look ahead to 2017 and make some decisions about the budget and other topics. For my Pastor's Report at the Annual Meeting, I am setting aside some time for teaching and sharing with you about the interim time. I'll be giving a brief introduction to interim ministry in general (read more about this in the article in this newsletter) and offering some observations about what I've been learning about your congregation so far.

I look forward to the surprises and challenges we will undoubtedly encounter in the year ahead. Please don't hesitate to call or email if you want to talk more about what's going on in the church or would just enjoy a visit.

***Peace in Christ,
Pastor Jennifer***



**Faith Lutheran Church
50 Leverage Road
Troy, New York 12182
(518) 237-4641**

www.faithlutherantroy.com

**Sunday morning worship: 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School: during worship**

Rev. Jennifer Wegter McNelly, Pastor

Church Council Officers:

**Donna VanZandt (President)
Sara Martin (Vice President)
Barbara Boord (Treasurer)
Diana Rieker (Secretary)
Fred Howard (Financial Secretary)**

**Council Members
Errol Bull (Property)
Dana Cerrone (In Reach/Out Reach)
Elizabeth King (In Reach/Out Reach)
Sara Martin (Education)
Michael Moroskey (Property)
Carol Perrott (Missions)
Diana Rieker (Stewardship)
Ben Wagar (Property)**

NOTE FROM OUR COUNCIL PRESIDENT

I would like to give everyone a quick update on our search for a new minister. Both Faith and Evangelical have learned the results of their assessments as well as where we are alike and where there are differences.

After the holidays the Councils will be communicating and taking steps to move forward with this transition. During January, congregants will have opportunities to have conversation/give feedback to various Council Members. (More information on this to come.)

I understand that some people feel this process is not moving very quickly, but your patience is needed here. We want to make sure we get the best possible person to help meet our needs, and that will take some time.

On another note, I would like to thank all of you who gave of your personal gifts and time to make this season special for so many. The Families in Need Project, Gifts for the Albany Maritime Ministry, Cookies for the Shut-ins, the Sunday School Presentation, Caroling to the Shut-ins, Sharing of Poinsettias, and the extra effort from the Choir to enhance our Worship. What a blessing you are and to our church.

Finally, I want to wish all of you a wonderful New Year of Peace, Joy and Good Health.

Peace to You this Day and Always,
Donna Van Zandt
Council President

AMONG OUR PEOPLE

Polly Hayward continues to recover from her fall. She punctured her lung and fractured 5 ribs. Her healing process will be a lengthy one. I'm sure that our prayers and well wishes are greatly appreciated. Dave Cerrone has begun his new therapy which will be continuous for seven months. Shirley Kelly passed away in December. Condolences may be sent to her family.

INTERIM MINISTRY AND HOW IT'S CHANGING JENNIFER WEGTER-MCNELLY

During my first half-year as your Interim Pastor, two themes have often come up in conversation. The first is your consistent encouragement, support, and appreciation for my ministry with you. I am grateful for that all the time.

The other topic that regularly comes up often goes like this: "Are we going to call the new pastor soon?" "Why isn't anything happening?"

This desire to see progress and get to the end of the transition process is completely understandable. All the congregations I have served have felt this to a greater or lesser degree. Particularly if one is not currently serving on the Council or in some other leadership role, it can feel like nothing much is going on.

Actually, quite a lot of important work is happening – by the grace of God and through our faithful keeping on and learning new things together. Though it may not be as concrete as fixing the steeple, I can see that God is helping the congregation to know itself better, figure out what God is calling you all to next, and ultimately, calling the pastor with the gifts and skills to walk with you into that future.

At the congregational meeting later this month, I will be spending some time teaching about the tasks of Interim Ministry in general, and then making some observations about what we have been doing to accomplish these. I'll also offer my perspective about what I have been learning about your church and a preview of some of the plans ahead.

By way of background, I want to share with you a little bit about how Interim Ministry came to be and how it is continuing to change with the evolving needs of the broader church. (At the end, I have listed two good articles you might want to explore if you'd like to read further.)

Interim Ministry as a strategy and as a specialized area of training for ministers was developed in the 1980s. Mainline Protestants, including the Lutherans, realized that the transition time between called pastors offered both opportunities for learning and vitality, and the risk of the next pastorate going poorly if certain work was not attended to.

Five broadly recognized areas came to be recognized as essential to a successful interim time

in a congregation. They are known as the Five Developmental Tasks of Interim Ministry:

- Coming to terms with history (sometimes called Heritage)
- Discovering a new identity
- Negotiating shifts of power and leadership changes
- Rethinking denominational linkages (sometimes called Connections)
- Commitment to new leadership and a new future

These Five Tasks are not are not steps that happen one at a time or in any particular order. Rather, they are broad themes that consistently come up when congregations engage their transition time in a thoughtful, spiritually-grounded way. Attending to each of these topics helps a congregation to call a pastor from a position of unity and spiritual focus.

More recently, some new tasks have been identified. Because the fast pace of change in American culture in general has impacted the role of Christianity in our communities, church leaders have realized that other tasks are also essential for churches in transition. Simply doing a good job of the ways of being church that worked well in the 20th century isn't necessarily going to work in the 21st. A new paradigm is needed. Here are examples of some additional tasks for interim pastors and congregational leaders (from the Anthony B. Robinson article):

Six Critical Tasks for Today's Interim Pastor

1. Tend to the pastoral basics and do them well (e.g. planning worship and preaching, pastoral work, and church administration.)
2. Help congregations understand the seismic shifts in American culture.
3. Do a congregational assessment. ("Before change can or should be undertaken it is important to know, as accurately as possible, what's going on—what a congregation's current reality is.")
4. Revisit key texts and themes of scripture that most clearly address the nature and calling of the church.
5. When necessary and with suitable deliberation, make some tough calls (e.g. transitions in staffing, ending programs, or building issues.)

6. Provide encouragement. ("Many congregations need steady, if realistic, encouragement with regard to their strengths, their capacity to make a difference, and God's power to use and surprise them.")

Both the original Five Tasks and Anthony Robinson's suggested Six New Tasks are important themes I have consistently experienced in interim ministry with congregations...and there are more!

I look forward to sharing with you more about how I see these interim tasks happening at Faith – in my report at the upcoming congregational meeting, in future newsletters, and whenever you want to talk with me about this time of transition. I see that God has already done a great deal with us in these months together, and I am looking forward to diving into some new things together in the coming year.

Two articles I have referred to extensively here and recommend if you'd like to read more:

["Rethinking Interim Ministry"](#) by Anthony B. Robinson

["Rethinking Transitional Ministry"](#) by Norman B. Bendroth

COUNCIL SUMMARY

Holy Cow presented an analysis of the assessment results to the congregation on December 4th. A joint congregation meeting was held on December 14th, where Holy Cow presented on the distinctiveness of Faith and Evangelical as identified from the assessment results. A new draft of the "Steps in the Pastoral Calling Process", including milestone dates, was distributed and discussed at the December Council meeting. A preliminary 2017 budget was prepared and distributed to Council members for review. A nominating committee to identify candidates to replace outgoing Council members was formed. January 22nd is the annual congregational meeting.

For any concerns or problems, please advise us. We will discuss and address issues at our next meeting on Monday January 2nd, 2017 at 7pm.

Diana Rieker, Secretary



Laustraup

- January 15th** In memory Marilyn Howard
Given by Michele and Fred Howard
- January 22nd** To the Glory of God
- January 29th** To the Glory of God

It is hard to believe, but as you are reading this, we will be preparing and ringing in the New Year. We are looking forward to making 2017 a great one for Sunday School this year!

Thanks to all of you that "participated" in the Sunday School Nativity Pageant. We couldn't have done it without you. The kids had a blast looking through and trying on all the Nativity costumes and it was wonderful to see them all playing their parts in this year's program. We were also lucky enough to have some Sunday School families participate in this year's Christmas caroling efforts for the shut-ins. They all had a great time and even made some small gift bags to give to the residents and church friends.

Envelopes are available for Sunday School students for 2017. If you haven't received your child's already, please see Sara Martin for a box.

Although we haven't finalized the teaching schedule, we do have the tentative date schedule for Sunday School in 2017. Sunday School will commence on January 8, 2017. There will be no Sunday School on the following date: January 15, February 5, March 19, April 9 and 16, May 28. First Communion will be held on June 4. This means that the last day of Sunday School will be May 21.

Please check out our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/FLCSS/>) and friend us if you haven't already.

Sara Martin, Education Director

FLOWERS for JANUARY

- January 1st** To the Glory of God
- January 8th** In memory of Bob and Mark Laustraup
Given by Russ and Elinor

OUR FAITH at WORK

Our mission for the month of January will be in support of the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York.

The Regional Food Bank provides food assistance to over a 1,000 charitable agencies serving the hungry and disadvantaged, including food pantries, soup kitchens, emergency shelters, youth programs, senior programs, and programs for the disabled.

Your thoughtful contributions will help feed the hungry and provide peace of mind to thousands of individuals and families who live in the shadow of hunger and food insecurity on a daily basis.

Thank you for your continued support.

Carol Perrott, Missions

SERVING FAITH in JANUARY

Jan. 1 st	Altar	Pam Perras and Stephanie Wagar
	Lay Assistant Ushers	Aaron Cordes Rob and Roberta Hayward
	Counters	Linda Hulihan and Donna Gibson
	Coffee Hour	Donna and Gene St. John

Jan. 8 th	Altar	Pam Perras and Stephanie Wagar
	Lay Assistant Ushers Counters	Bill Jarosz Beth and Joe King Diane and Rich Andersen
	Coffee Hour	Rikki Franklin
Jan. 15 th	Altar	Evelyn Jarosz and Donna Gibson
	Lay Assistant Ushers Counters	Carol Karpier Barbara Boord and Pat Brundige LouAnn Behrens and Janet Walsh
	Coffee Hour	Sara and John Martin
Jan. 22 nd	Altar	Evelyn Jarosz and Donna Gibson
	Lay Assistant Ushers Counters	Bill Maloney B. Morgan, B. Stevens and B. Speanburg Joyce Duncan and Pat Brundige
	Coffee Hour	Janet Walsh and Merilyn Niles
Jan. 29 th	Altar	Karen Cordes and Janet Walsh
	Lay Assistant Ushers Counters	David Truland Carol Perrott and Stephanie Wagar Polly and Bob Hayward
	Coffee Hour	Heather and Errol Bull

*If you are unable to serve on your assigned Sunday, please arrange to trade dates with another assistant. Thank you in advance for your assistance.
Donna Van Zandt, Worship Chairperson.
Schedule for Altar Guild by Pam Perras
Schedule for Coffee Hour by Heather Bull*



The ladies of ELCA held their annual Christmas luncheon Saturday, December 3rd. Following a luncheon of delicious pot luck selections the ladies shared some of their favorite Christmas memories. The afternoon continued with the packing of home baked Christmas cookies for our "Special Church Members". The ladies also assembled 19 boxes for the Maritime Mission. The boxes were delivered to Pastor Bill for distribution to the sailors.

The January meeting and bible study will be Tuesday, January 17th at 10:00 o'clock here at the church. We will also be planning our missions for 2017. Please plan to join us.

CHOIR REHERSAL

Choir rehearsals are generally held every Thursday at 7:00 PM for about an hour. Anyone interest in joining is welcome to come and enjoy singing our praises to the Lord.

SMALL GROUP STUDIES – PAST AND FUTURE JENNIFER WEGTER-MCNELLY

During Advent, a small group of us from Evangelical and Faith churches gathered weekly to share in Bible study and discussion. The shared Prayer Group had already been meeting weekly for a number of months – and will continue meeting in 2017 to pray together for our congregations, ourselves and our loved ones, and the world. The Bible study met five times after the Prayer Group's gathering.

We were studying some of the "canticles" or songs that various people in the Bible sing when they are

filled with God's Spirit. In addition to learning a lot together about those Bible passages, we also had some great conversation about songs – our favorite songs; songs that held special meaning for us, and some contemporary songs that we felt spoke to our questions and prayers for the world today.

We also learned that a couple of members of our group have been moved to write spiritual songs themselves. Wow!

Knowing that we are planning a study series for Lent – with schedule options at more times during the week – I invited members of our group to write something for the newsletter to describe for those of you who haven't been part of a small group what the experience is like. Someone said that it was important for people not to feel like they had to have a lot of knowledge of the Bible or any other qualification to be a part: our group had all kinds of backgrounds with the Bible and each person added something unique.

One of our members went to work on this. She originally intended to write a paragraph for the newsletter, but her reflection came out in the form of a song. She agreed to share it anonymously with you here:

GET TOGETHER!

(To the tune of "Humble & Kind")

When we gather together, what happens?
There's a calm and a peace over all
We share time in the now,
A connection that pleases somehow.

When the day may be cloudy or sunny,
Or maybe it's dark or it's bright
It will always be new
But be sure, it will flee out of sight.

And know this, it'll not be time wasted
For we'll share in each others' insights.
And time will pass fast
So quickly it soon will be night.

Here's a thought that will hopefully stir you,
Don't be slow to gather with friends,
Because life goes by fast,
And together we make it last.

Think of reasons to bring us together
Doesn't matter important or fun,
But do it right now
Keeps us joyful tomorrow will come.

We were not meant to be little islands
But to share in this big spinning world,
Helps us all grow and learn
Give and teach with each other in turn.
Helps us all grow and learn
Give and teach with each other in turn.



DINNER CLUB

December 10th Dinner Club held their Christmas party. The committee served a festive meal of Jambalaya topping off with a dessert of ice cream. Fred Howard led this year's rendition of the Twelve Days of Christmas. It was agreed that our singing has not improved with age. The exchange of grab bags; where much stealing back and forth of gifts completed the evening.

STEPS IN THE PASTORAL CALL PROCESS

(LAST UPDATED 12/15/16)

The milestones below reflect the necessary initial steps in the Call process:

1. ***Call an Intentional Interim Pastor. This has been completed and Pastor Jennifer is effectively and successfully performing this role. (June, 2016)***
2. ***Assessing who we are, what we are about, and where we want to go. The Holy Cow initiative provides us with baseline information. (December 4, 2016)***
3. ***Make printed copies of the Vital Signs Report, which resulted from the analysis of the 62 responses that were submitted by members of the Faith Lutheran***

*Congregation, available in the Narthex
December 11, 2016.*

4. *Conduct a joint meeting with Evangelical where Kelly R. addresses members of both congregations and provides her counsel on areas of compatibility and difference as we journey forward together. December 14, 2016, at the Tamarac High School Library.*
5. *“Survey Data is not the end of a conversation, but a beginning.” Receive initial feedback from members of our congregation. “Listening Sessions” with Council Members are scheduled for congregant feedback/conversation at 10:00 AM and at Coffee Hour on January 8 and January 15, 2017 in the Fellowship Hall.*

Fred Howard

**BARBARA BOORD NEWSLETTER
EDITOR/COORDINATOR**

Barbara Boord is coordinating the Newsletter efforts. Hard copies of the Newsletter will be available at church for pick up when you are present.

You may go to the church web site at:
www.faithlutheranchurchtroy.com any time and view the newsletter.

We will email you a copy if you send your email address directly to Barbara at her email address shown below.

At your request, we will be happy to send you a copy via the USPS.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The February newsletter deadline is Monday January 23rd. Please email your articles to barbboord@hotmail.com.

Assistance with the compiling and distribution of the Newsletter is always appreciated. Anyone that can give some time to this joint effort is encouraged to contact me at the above e-mail address.

**A HAPPY, HEALTHY, AND
PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR TO
ONE AND ALL.**

GOD BLESS AND KEEP YOU.

JANUARY 2017

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Council Meeting 7:00 PM	3 Annual Meeting Reports Due	4	5 Choir 7:00 PM	6	7
				Home Bureau 2:00 to 4:00 PM		
8	9	10	11	12 Choir 7:00 PM	13	14 Dinner Club 6:30 PM
			Speigle Elders 10:30AM-2:30PM			
15	16	17	18	19 Choir 7:00 PM	20	21
				Home Bureau 2:00 to 4:00 PM		
22 ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING	23 Newsletter Items Due	24	25	26 Choir 7:00 PM	27	28
			Speigle Elders 10:30AM- 2:30PM			
29	30	31				