

Faith Lutheran Church
50 Leverage Road
Troy, NY 12182



Following Faith

February 2025 Newsletter

***Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people."
-Luke 5:10***

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)**

Evelyn Jarosz, President, (Finance, Inreach/Outreach)
Diana Rieker, Vice President, (Property)
Donna Van Zandt, Secretary (Worship)
Linda Hulihan, Treasurer
Errol Bull, Financial Secretary

Council Members

Doug Adamek (Education, Finance)
Mike Moroskey, (Property)
Diane Anderson (Missions)
Dana Cerrone (Inreach/Outreach)

Partnership Council – Linda Hulihan, Evelyn Jarosz, Doug Adamek, and Donna Van Zandt

Want to Speak with Pastor?

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

Faith Online

“Like” us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FLCTroy/> We’re also on Instagram! @faithlutheran.troy

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

Direct link: <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://open.spotify.com/show/0eBYyey9x0b7gCJCnEAwYE>

Vacation! Pr. Kate Drefke will be on vacation Feb. 12-18. If you have a pastoral emergency, please call Pr. Lowell Chilton (First, Albany and Good Shepherd, Loudonville) at 518-285-0441. Kate will follow up when she returns.

From the Pastor’s Desk

The second half of Genesis is devoted to the story of Joseph- the guy with the amazing technicolor dream coat. It ends with his family settling in the land of Egypt, refugees from famine in the land of their ancestors. Joseph’s dying wish is that when the time comes for their people to leave, that his bones be carried with them to the land of their ancestors. Exodus opens with a new pharaoh, who did not know Joseph, claiming there are more Israelites than Egyptians, that they will become more powerful than the native-born Egyptians, and therefore they must be oppressed. He enacts laws to force them into servitude. The Israelites- refugees and resident aliens- are now slaves to Egypt. The male babies are ordered to be killed at birth, but the Hebrew midwives fear their god and claim that the Hebrew women give birth too quick for them to do as Pharaoh has ordered. So, the Egyptians are ordered to throw any Hebrew boy babies into the Nile. This is how we get Moses.

I’m writing this on Monday, January 27, the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz by the Soviet Union. There are very few survivors of the Nazi Concentration Camps still alive. And those who are- many are working to tell their stories, their families’ stories, the stories of those lost people and places lost to the

Holocaust. I saw headlines over the weekend that there are increasing numbers of young people- teens and adults- who doubt the severity of the camps, if they even believe they existed. I find this extremely distressing as I see pieces of this history repeating itself. Again.

Again, native-born people of a place are claiming refugees and immigrants are “taking over” and must somehow be eliminated (and challenging birthright citizenship). Again, we are being told by those at the top that various others are threatening our ways of life, or the “natural order of things” and become subjected to even more violence and discrimination. Again, we see people pledge their loyalty to an individual’s unjust ambitions, marching through our streets bearing weapons and waving banners of hatred. Just last week, a plea for mercy was labeled a threat, while several people who still regularly receive threats against their lives for speaking truth to power had their protection details removed by that same power.

While the primary victims of Hitler’s death camps were Jewish, they were not singly pursued. Disabled, LGBTQ+, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and Roma (Gypsies), among other minority groups, were targeted. As were people who spoke out against Hitler and the Nazi party- political enemies. E.g.: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, German Lutheran pastor and theologian who was thoroughly against the Nazi regime from the beginning, speaking publicly against them and their evil works. He was arrested in 1943 and held at Tegel Prison for a year and a half before being moved to Flossenbürg concentration camp before being executed 8 April 1945. [Flossenbürg was liberated by the US Army 23 April 1945.]

Some people play a thought game of “what would I have done if I was there during [X event/ time in history]?” It can be a really good exercise in self-reflection, thinking about who you are, your gifts for justice, for mercy, and so on. Take a moment to think about yourself and your gifts for neighbor care. [*... seriously. if this was being spoken, it’d be the uncomfortable silence where you’re all expected to think about these things ...*]

Now, put yourself in 1930s and ‘40s Europe, particularly in and around Germany. Now ask yourself things like, “What leaders am I trusting?” “Do I sign on with the Nazi Party and why?” (e.g.: employment needs, belief in the platform, etc.). “What about this Adolf Hitler? Do I vote for him? Do I think he’s right about the Aryan race and wiping out Jews, Gypsies, and gays?” “Who is speaking against Hitler? What exactly are they saying? Do I think they’re right? (Also, they seem to be disappearing... what’s happening?”

Generally, most people believe they would have been anti-Hitler and opposed the concentration camps, the Holocaust, political retaliation. But the harsh reality is, most of us would have either joined him, or been otherwise complacent through our inaction. “It doesn’t concern me. I’m safe. I’m following the law.”

Beloved Church, we are here, now, in a time when future generations will look back and ask themselves, “What would I have done?” Look now around our communities, our nation, our world. Who is poor and oppressed? Who is being targeted by the rich and powerful? What lies are being told about people who don’t look, love, or identify like the majority? These are the ones in need of good news. In need of liberation from death, from debt, from hiding. These are our neighbors, and they are hurting, they are afraid, they are being targeted by unjust orders. Moses and Jesus and countless others in between and since have called to us again and again and again to set them free. This is our moment to stand up and speak out, to be the Body of Christ we are baptized to be.

Christ’s Peace,
Pr. Kate Drefke

First they came for the Communists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Communist

Then they came for the Socialists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Socialist

Then they came for the trade unionists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a trade unionist

Then they came for the Jews
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Jew

Then they came for me
And there was no one left
To speak out for me

~Commonly attributed to Martin Niemöller
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_they_came_

What is the Pastor Reading?

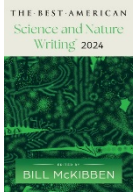
While driving to visit Lowell's family over New Year's, we started listening to the Kingdoms of Sand and Sky trilogy by Sarah Henning. We got through book 1, *The Princess Will Save You* (©2020), and started the second, *The Queen Will Betray You* (©2021). In an unusual switch of things, Lowell did most of the driving and caught some zzzzz's. But I got the main points of this fantasy romance. Princess Amarande's mother left when she was very young, and now her father, a warrior king, has died. But he left nothing in place for his only child- a girl- to ascend to the throne and the council is in the way. Then her bestie and secret crush, the stable boy Luca, is kidnapped. She sets out to save him and learns some family secrets along the way.



And now I'm (slowly) reading a book that deserves better: *Scorched Grace: A Sister Holiday Mystery* by Margot Douaihy (©2023), the first of (so far 2, hoping for more), amateur sleuth stories told from the perspective of Sister Holiday, a heavily tattooed, chain-smoking, queer nun. "When Saint Sebastian's School becomes the target of a shocking arson spree, the Sisters of the Sublime Blood and their surrounding New Orleans community are thrust into chaos." It opens with Sister Holiday smoking a confiscated cigarette in an alley, a fire at the school, one of the groundskeepers falling (pushed?) from the second floor, crashlanding, dead, to the ground. Suspects include a fellow nun, a student, other teachers at the school.



The Poestenkill Library winter reading program/ challenge has a couple of "read a new to you genre, author, format" spaces, so I've picked up *The Best American Science and Nature Writing 2024*, edited by Bill McKibben (©2024). I'm going to read about climate change and its impacts on human living, and why Maui burned.



----- January 6, 2025 Council Meeting Highlights -----

6:30 p.m. – In Person

In attendance - Diane Anerson, Linda Hulihan, Evelyn Jarosz, Mike Moroskey, Diana Rieker, Donna Van Zandt, Pastor Kate.

Absent - Doug Adamek, Dana Cerrone, Errol Bull

I. Call to order -

- President Jarosz called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

II. Opening Devotion -

- Pastor Kate shared a reading from Matthew, Chapter 2 followed by a prayer.

III. Approval of Agenda -

- There were no additions to the agenda

IV. Approval of December meeting minutes

V. Treasurer's Report

- During the months of March, September, and December our Treasurer needed to transfer \$10,000.00 each month to cover our monthly expenses. One reason for our deficit is due to our Synod donations. We have lowered that donation.

- With the contributions from various Congregants (thank you) we were able to keep the cost of the siding at bay.

- Kate's housing budget will remain the same for Faith. This will be \$2,000.00 per month.

VI. Financial Secretary's Report

VII. Pastor's Report

- Christmas has ended! All appeared to have gone well.

- We are now in the season after Epiphany. We will be changing to a new setting and hymns are set for January and part of February. A new service booklet is being prepared. If anyone has any ideas for Pastor's sermons during Lent, please reach out to her.

- Ash Wednesday is March 5, 2025. A 1:00 p.m. service will be held at ELCP. Faith will hold their service at 7:00 p.m.

- Kate will be on vacation from Feb. 12 - 18. Our supply will be Allison Dillard. She is the Chaplain at Union College. We will not have a coffee hour service that Sunday. It will be a regular service held in the church. (Coffee hour will follow the regular service.)

- The Lenten book study will be on the Gospel of John.

VIII. President's Report

- December was a relatively 'easy' month.

IX. Committee Reports

- Nominating Committee - Evelyn J. shared that we need one person to fill one vacant seat for Council. There was discussion as to reach out to. Following a lengthy discussion, Evelyn will reach out to a couple of possibilities.

- Property - Mike M. reported that a broken pipe was discovered on Dec. 22nd. Our thanks to Fred H. and Errol B. for addressing this issue. A vent has been closed off and this will keep this from happening again. Mike M. also shared his annual report listing what items were addressed and completed in 2024 and what the property committee is looking to do during 2025.

- Worship - Pastor Kate addressed this report in her report.

X. Old Business

- Thanksgiving and Christmas Families Donna Van Zandt expressed her thanks to everyone who helped with these projects. We were able to feed two families with a few little extras at Thanksgiving. For Christmas we provided meals and gifts to two different families. It came across that all families were very grateful for our generosity. Thank you again, to all that were involved with these projects.

- LPL - (a financial investment) A letter needs to be signed and mailed to change some names and keep things updated.

XI. New Business

- The current Christmas decorations need to be taken down and stored. Those who are available will meet on Friday, Jan. 10 at 10:00 a.m. to work on this.

- Proposed Budget for 2025. The proposed budget for 2025 was distributed. It was suggested that Faith's music director be given a raise as she has not received one for a number of years. A motion was made to increase the music director's salary to \$10,000.00 (a \$500.00 overall increase). Carried.

A motion was made to accept the budget as adjusted. Carried.

XII. Joys and Concerns

- Word has been received that Ryland Bull made it through surgery and would be moved to an ICU room in a short period of time.

- Ron Turcotte has received a thumbs up from his Dr. and that he is doing well following his recent surgery.

- Ellie Lastrup has been in the hospital. Hopefully, she was able to come home today.

- Mike Moroskey reported that his great-niece, Brittany, has taken a step backwards, and Brittany's sister will be having a baby very soon.

XIII. Next Meeting - Monday, February 3, 2025 - 6:30 - in person

Thank you to all our Council members who have served during 2024. Welcome to our Newest Member(s) beginning in February.

XIV. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer.

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

----- **January 26, 2025 Annual Congregational Meeting Highlights** -----

- I. President Evelyn Jarosz called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m. followed with a prayer. 24 voting members were present.
- II. The meeting agenda was reviewed with no additions.
- III. Approval of the previous 2024 congregational meetings minutes
- IV. Report of Nominating Committee. A written report was included in the meeting packet. The only vacancy was for Donna Van Zandt who has completed her two two-year terms. Errol Bull has agreed to fill this position. (He will also continue as our Financial Secretary.) Those who are willing to continue to serve for a second term are: Dana Cerrone, Linda Hulihan, and Evelyn Jarosz. There were no nominations from the floor.
- V. Presentation of the Financial Plan and Expenditure Budget
 - Due to the tightness of the budget not many adjustments can be made.
 - Payment for the siding project has been made in full. A loan was not necessary.
 - A question was raised on how we take care of our proposed budget deficit. Although we have plenty of assets, we do need to come up with a long-term financial plan.
- VI. Financial Secretary's Report
 - A report was submitted and placed in the Annual Meeting Packet
 - Errol Bull shared that overall the church is staying steady.

Bill Jarosz shared that he wanted to thank both Linda Hulihan and Errol Bull for all that they do to keep our treasury straight and all the necessary paperwork that goes with these jobs. **Thank you, Linda and Errol!**
- VII. Continuation and Renewal of the Covenant Agreement
- VIII. Old Business
 - Nothing brought to the floor
- IX. New Business
 - Nothing brought to the floor.
- X. President, Pastor and Committee Reports
 - Education: A question was asked in regards to how we have reached out to our youth and encouraging them to consider confirmation. Pastor's response included weekly announcements at church, through letters to the parents of potential children, and the monthly newsletter. Jim Hulihan also added that Adult Education can help influence the children as well.
 - Missions: There are times when contributions exceed our general contribution of \$250.00. A motion was made stating if contributions exceed our monthly giving of \$250.00 that the entire amount be sent to that particular mission.
 - Pastor's Report: No questions or concerns brought to the floor. On behalf of the congregation Fred Howard shared his **thanks** for Pastor's precise and informative report.
 - Property: Mike Moroskey shared his **thanks** to Errol Bull and Bill Jarosz for all their help this past year with the various property projects. In return, Errol **thanked** Mike Moroskey for everything he does to help with the upkeep of the church and church property.
 - At this time Diana Rieker shared her **thanks** to Evelyn Jarosz for all her hard work and projects accomplished this past year as President of the Council.
- XI. Joys and Concerns
 - How nice to see Janet W. back in church
 - Although Ryland Bull needs to continue to rest he is home and doing very well after his open heart surgery.
 - We welcome Carol Huber and Deb and Jim Keegan as new members of Faith!
- XII. Adjournment followed by the Lords Prayer

----- **End Annual Meeting Highlights** -----

Mission of the Month

The mission for February is in support of the Wycliffe Bible Translators. Our congregation has a personal connection with this organization. Jeff is Bill Speanburg's nephew! Jeff and Sissie D'Jernes successfully completed the translation of the New Testament in the Arop dialect of the Arop-Lokep language spoken on Long Island, Papua New Guinea in 2014. They are continuing in the Arop-Lokep language development project through involvement with local literacy efforts; linguistic analysis and description; and Old Testament translation. While these initiatives continue, they are ready to launch a new 3-year initiative to adapt the Arop translation into the Lokep dialect and use that effort as a training platform to develop an already identified national translator to subsequently assist the speakers of the Karnai language on Umboi Island with their own Bible translation goals. This is an exciting time for Jeff and Sissie as they pursue this new phase of ministry. Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

Total contribution of \$250 was made in support of our January mission, Regional Food Bank.

Diane Anderson, Missions

Creative Threads

The members of Creative Threads are back from their midwinter hiatus. Everyone is busy working on their new projects for the coming year.

The quilt featured for February was pieced and quilted by Janet Walsh. The spring colors are a reminder that spring is just around the corner.

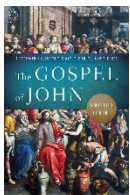
~Evelyn



Lent is Coming!

Lent is a bit later this year, but it's fast approaching.

Ash Wednesday worship services will be March 5 at 1pm at Poestenkill and 7pm at Faith.



We're looking at doing something a little different for our Sunday worship.

And this year's **midweek book study** by Dr. Amy-Jill Levine is *The Gospel of John: A Beginner's Guide to the Way, the Truth, and the Life* (©2024). Copies of the book are already available to pick up at Poestenkill for \$13. The tentative plan is to meet Wednesdays, starting March 12, in person at 1pm, and on zoom at 7pm. Details to be finalized, but mark your calendars.

SERVING OUR FEBRUARY SUNDAY PROGRAMS

Lay Assistants

Feb 2 Rich Anderson
Feb 9 Tim Lund
Feb 16 Fred Howard
Feb 23 Diana Reiker

Coffee Hour

Feb 2 Howard After
Feb 9 Jarosz After
Feb 16 Rieker After
Feb 23 Bull After

If you would like to be a coffee hour host, please see Bill Jarosz.

Counting Team

Feb 2 Jarosz
Feb 9 Anderson
Feb 16 Howard
Feb 23 Bull

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

Altar Guild

February 2 Evelyn Jarosz
February 9 Kathie Vumbacco
February 16 Kathie Vumbacco
February 23 Roberta Hayward
March 2 Roberta Hayward
March 5 (Ash Wed) Dana Cerone

Thank you in advance for your continued support.

If you would like to volunteer with preparing for the altar for Sunday's service, please see Diane Anderson

Altar Flowers



Feb 2 In loving memory of Cynthia & Jim Crossen. Given by Mary Maselli and Kathie Vumbacco.

Feb 16 In loving memory of Frank Vumbacco. Given by Kathie Vumbacco.

If you would like to place flowers on the altar in honor or memory of someone, we ask that you sign up on the calendar in the Narthex. The price remains the same at \$19.00 per bouquet. Reach out to Donna Van Zandt with any questions or concerns.

Mark Your Calendar!

Faith will be holding it's second Blood Drive on Tuesday, March 18th. Plan to sign up when the portal becomes available. Times will be from approximately 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Let's beat our goal of 18 pints!



AMONG OUR PEOPLE

Teach us to forgive ourselves and one another. Restore wholeness to all who seek hope and healing in times of sickness, economic struggle, and all of life's other difficulties.

Janet Walsh's son, John, has ascended to the resurrection. Please keep Janet and John's family/ies in your prayers.

Mike Moreskey's great niece, Brittany.

The Coleman/Lansing family is thankful for the continued healing of matriarch, Carolyn. Also, remember Steve who is in a nursing home, and Larry who continues to struggle with his chronic conditions.

Prayers for the Speanburg extended family. For Bill and Carolyn who have both had medical issues and for the rest of the family who are supporting and helping with care and doctor appointments.

Prayers of sympathy for Alan Fike and the Sara Martin and Amy Relyea families with the passing of their wife and mother on December 21, 2024. Carol had been ill for several years and was hospitalized repeatedly. God's blessing on all of Carol's family.

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

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.

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 deadline for the February 2025 newsletter is **Sunday, February 23, 2025**. Please email your letters or articles to Pastor Kate Drefke, drefkekate@gmail.com, and put "Feb 25 newsletter" in the subject line. If you would like a special joy or concern shared, you can also contact her by phone at 518-279-6127 (Voice and Text) and leave a voicemail if she is unable to answer.