

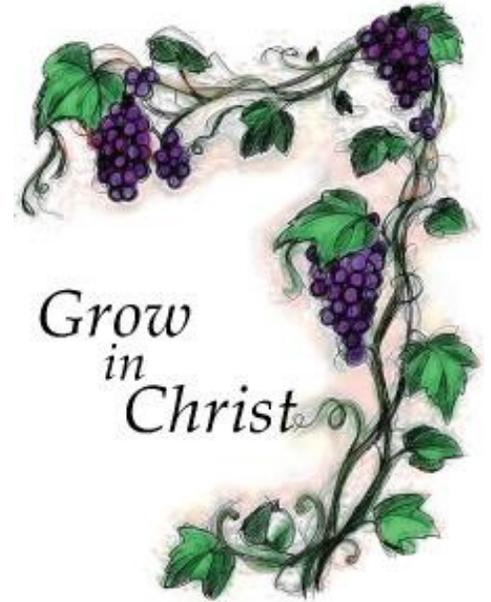
# The Grape

# Vine

*Faith Lutheran Church  
Lake Hanska Lutheran Church*

## December 2025

### ***Happenings in & around the Parish***

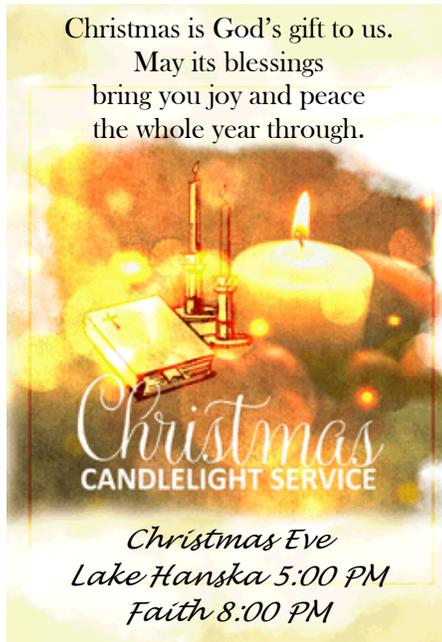


**Wednesday J.A.M.  
Christmas program  
at First Presbyterian Church**  
Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>  
5:30 PM,  
followed by a light meal.

Start your holidays by attending and enjoying this Christmas Season with your Church Family & Friends



Christmas is God's gift to us.  
May its blessings  
bring you joy and peace  
the whole year through.



**Christmas in the Barn**  
Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>  
4:30 PM  
  
Joe & Missy Wagner's  
21385 494<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Lake Crystal, MN

## **MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

### Christmas for Children

Christmas for Children is sponsored by the Madelia Ministerial Association and participating churches. Many thanks to Bethel, Faith Lutheran, First Presbyterian, Salem Lutheran, St. Mary's Catholic, Church of Christ, Trinity Lutheran, and United Methodist for your continued support to provide a Christian response to the families of Madelia during the holiday season.

Tags are now available at church, Alliance Bank, Pioneer Bank, and City Hall for anyone who would like to purchase a gift for an area child.

Gifts need to be **wrapped**, with **tag securely attached**, and **returned to the church or City Hall**

**BEFORE December 14<sup>th</sup>.**

Thank you for your continued support!

### **Join Us For Worship!**

If you are searching for a church home or are currently a member, we want to extend a warm welcome to you. Faith and Lake Hanska observe the "Open" communion policy. For all people in Christ are welcome at our Lord's Table.

Time to start thinking about **Annual Meeting Reports!** Dates to be announced after December Council meetings

The day and hour are unknown. That was the theme of the gospel for the first Sunday in Advent. And November 30<sup>th</sup> is exactly one day in the 156<sup>th</sup> year of our church at Faith! Having just celebrated the 155<sup>th</sup> anniversary on the 23<sup>rd</sup> – it is easy to look back and be giddy about all the great things we have accomplished as a church in 155 years, because Lake Hanska also reached that milestone last year. We can't just think because of those things that we can take a break, after all things get busy with holiday planning, family get-together's etc.

In this time of Advent, we need to always be aware that while we know when Jesus came to earth as a child, we do not know when he will return, and so we have to be awake and keep watch for His return. We need to realize the true meaning for this time – it is gift giving for sure, but the greatest gift we received was Jesus' birth, life and death on the cross for our salvation. There's not a gift we can give to match that.

Advent is the time of anticipation and excitement awaiting to celebrate the birth of our Savior in that cold, dank, stable 2025 years ago. And it should be with a child-like anticipation of wonderment of what awaits them under the tree when they awake on Christmas morning or whenever the family celebrates the giving of gifts. But for the next four weeks we also have to have patience. I want to share a couple of comments my mentor Pastor Sarah Zender had in her message for her church in Luverne.

"If you also feel a little overwhelmed by the season ahead, you are not alone. I mean cookies, concerts, presents, plays, church and parties and all the things! It can be hard to connect to what really matters. It can be hard to settle ourselves into the deep stillness of waiting for a baby to be born. For Jesus to come again.

*I invite you to take a deep breath and remember God loves you always. Look up and wonder, how can Advent be a time to make the joy of Christmas, the real Christmas, alive in my heart this year. It will be different for all of us. I usually need to slow down and simplify my days so I can hear God. Some people need to find more time to be in community to be with neighbors. Others might want to find ways to serve their neighbor to connect with their faith through service."*

However you find yourselves attempting to patiently await Christ' birth, As Sarah said, "Seek God in this season of waiting, and God will show up to nourish you soul."

May God reward your anticipation and patience this blessed season.

*Just one of you in Christ ~ Ralph*

## Sunday Readings for December

DATE	FIRST READING	PSALM	SECOND READING	GOSPEL
Sunday, December 7 Second Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 11:1-10	72:1-7, 18-19	Romans 15:4-13	Matthew 3:1-12
Sunday, December 14 Third Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 35:1-10	146:5-10	James 5:7-10	Matthew 11:2-11
Sunday, December 21 Fourth Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 7:10-16	80:1-7, 17-19	Romans 1:1-7	Matthew 1:18-25
Sunday, December 28 First Sunday after Christmas	Isaiah 63:7-9	148	Hebrews 2:10-18	Matthew 2:13-23

## Faith Lutheran Church Council Minutes –Nov. 13, 2025

President - Randy Gustafson      Vice President - Lori Pietsch  
Secretary - Stacy Reed      Treasurers - Kathy Guyer, Jane Piepgras  
Deacons - Sherri Gustafson, Cindy Lehman  
Trustees - Chad Becker, Ben Odegard  
Synod Authorized Minister (SAM) - Ralph Flitter

**Secretary's Report:** Approved October minutes as printed in the newsletter.

**Treasurer's Report:** October expenses were \$10,166.29 and receipts \$10,646.16. We are sitting at 80.5% of our annual budget.

**Trustees Report:** We are still awaiting insurance policy information to review and present to the congregation. We have begun budget planning for 2026 and would like to get the insurance renewal and Ralph's contract switched to a calendar year renewal.

**Deacons:** The month of December we will be collecting for the MHS pantry needs.

12/3 – decorate the church 6:00pm

12/6 – shopping with Mrs. Claus

12/10 – JAM Christmas program 5:15pm at First Presbyterian Church

12/14 – Live Nativity in Springfield 6:00pm; the confirmation kids are attending but all are welcome.

There was a confirmation retreat held at the church Nov. 8<sup>th</sup> with 2 members from the Gustavus Youth organization leading the retreat. It was very interactive and a great program for the students.

**Board of Ed:** No report.

**Ralph's Report:** We received a thank you card and donation from the Dick family for the parking accommodations during the Center street construction. It was a busy October with conferences, training, visitations, home visits, 1 wedding and 1 burial service. We discussed the anniversary celebration, Lake Hanska will not have a service that Sunday.

***Ralph requested a \$1,000 donation be made to the Synod Office Capital Project, these funds would come from the Memorial fund. Chad made a motion to approve the request, Ben seconded.***

Motion to accept reports was made by Ben/seconded by Kathy.

**Old Business:** Ralph will check with the Synod for any Safety/Security guidelines for church services.

**New Business:** A request was made to have instructions printed for the heating and cooling thermostats.

Motion to adjourn was made by Kathy and seconded by Ben.

Respectfully submitted, Stacy Reed, Secretary

Just a few pictures that were taken on the 155<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We could not have accomplished this great day without the leadership of Randy and Sherri, Mary and Arlo (and not pictured-Bruce and



Barb Nelson)  
Thank you, Ralph,  
for leading us every  
Sunday! God Bless!!





Faith Lutheran Church  
155<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Madelia, MN 56062

The *Faith of Our Fathers* was the inspiration and beginning of Faith Lutheran Church. It all began on November 29, 1870 in a humble sod hut on the Torger Olson farm in rural Madelia Township.

The first small church in Madelia was begun in 1873, and was located on the corner of Center and First Street. The cost of the church was \$400. Sunday School was organized in 1875 with 16 pupils, and the Ladies Aid was organized in 1880 with 6 members. On May 15, 1898, the women got the right to vote.

In 1901 the second church was built on that same spot and the first church building was moved to 227 Adams Ave. N.E., Madelia.

In 1908 we adopted the rules of the Lutheran Free Church, and in that same year the church bought land for the cemetery.

The present church was built in 1958 with Pastor Theodore Nystuen as its first pastor. In that same year Lincoln Lutheran Church, the sister church in rural Lincoln Township, merged with Faith. The new church was dedicated on September 20, 1959. The name was then changed to Faith Lutheran Church.

In 1962 the Lutheran Free Church became the American Lutheran Church of Madelia and was united with Our Saviour's Lutheran Church of Butternut. The two churches shared the same pastor. (Our Saviour's closed in 2020.)

In 1988 another merger occurred and the A.L.C., the L.C.A., and the A.E.L.C. became the E.L.C.A. or the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America.

As time moved forward the congregation at Faith Lutheran began to take on a number of ambitious programs to provide much needed out-reach programs. Some of these programs include Community Vacation Bible School. All the children in the area are welcomed to a week full of fun activities! The theme for the program changes from year to year and it has been extremely successful. Another successful venture has been to partner with First Presbyterian Church to provide a weekly session of J.A.M. *Jesus and Me*. Class is an after-school class held every Wednesday during the school year. This is open to all children in the community. Another mission-based program we have been participating in for a number of years is Operation Christmas Child. Supplies are donated by congregational members and others to fill boxes with school supplies, hygiene items, and fun items. These boxes are sent to all corners of the world to spiritually hungry children. What a wonderful way to show the love of Jesus to the world.

Our present minister is Ralph Flitter, who is part of a new Synod program, S.A.M. Synod Authorized Ministers. He has been a beacon of light to this congregation, and we are so grateful to have him.

As we gather in the name of Christ to remember our past and look ahead to the future, we have much to remember - 155 years worth! As people of hope, we have much to look forward to because we follow the living Savior! The history of Faith Lutheran Church is a gift from God. The importance of this anniversary is evident in the Biblical witness. It is to REMEMBER that we are God's people, claimed through Baptism. And that nothing in the past, present, or future can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus!

*"God's People Leading Others to the Love of Jesus"*

PEACE LOVE HOPE JESUS PEACE LOVE HOPE JESUS

## News from Lake Hanska Lutheran Church

**Food Shelf Report** - At the end of October, another 13 # of food and products was delivered to the Food Shelf. The Food Shelf is so grateful for the monthly donations.

**Our winter and holiday season is approaching and the need is growing.** It is so easy to drop any non-perishable groceries, cleaning supplies, or hygiene supplies into the box provided in the Narthex of the church.

**WELCA Quilters Report** - 5 ladies and Ralph met on Wednesday, November 12 for a fun get-together. They were joined by 3 men and due to an extended Bible Study led by Ralph while having lunch, no quilts were made. We'd love for you to come join us. We have received a gift of sheets to transform into quilts. Another way to help out is to donate materials, old sheets in good shape, or donating cash to buy more materials as our resources for funds are limited. If interested, we do also sell our quilts for \$25 each. Any quilts we have are donated to NUMAS Haus, Brown County Human Services, Watonwan Human Services, Senior Homes, NOVA House, and more. We have also sent quilts to Ukraine.

**\*\*\* A monetary donation box will be available in the Narthex for any gifts towards quilt supplies.**

**Bible Study** -- Ralph Flitter continues to lead us in a more in-depth look of the Gospel from the worship the Sunday before we meet. This is a very relaxed, informal discussion of the Gospel. Everyone (men-women-Faith Lutheran members and non-members) are welcome to join us. You do not have to do any quilting if you come for the Bible Study. We will enjoy coffee and treats (optional: bring a treat to share) during the study. We look forward to seeing you.

**Living Meadows General Store** --- We continue to have a basket located in the narthex to receive small gift items to be donated to Living Meadows General Store for bingo prizes and other things. Items can be lotions and cremes, soaps, body sprays, hygiene care items, toothpaste, coloring books, large sized crayons, Word Finds, greeting cards, snacks and sugar-free candies, room décor and other small items.

**Snow Removal Season** --- Like it or not we are entering the season of possible snow removal. Please be considerate of the need and pitch in when you can. A shovel, broom, and salt are provided near the west door of the Narthex. If you have a blower or scoop, the trustees will be forever grateful for the help.

## Confirmation News

Month of December - collecting items for MHS pantry

Wednesday, Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> 6:00-7:30 Confirmation decorating church for Christmas, we need adult volunteers to help, contact Ralph or Lori if you can help Wednesday night and/or Tuesday Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> getting decorations out of storage

Saturday, Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> Shopping with Mrs. Claus at Faith Lutheran 10:00-1:00 (a confirmation service project for the children of our community). Need items for children to buy for their moms and dads, such as adult books, puzzles, games, coffee mugs, sports items, plush, knick-knacks, anything a child may choose as a Christmas gift for their parents/guardians. Donated items can be left at church and labeled "Shopping with Mrs. Claus" donations prior to Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>. We currently have gift bags and tissue paper. If you would like to help contact Ralph or Lori.

Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday, 5:30 Jesus and Me children are presenting a Christmas program at the First Presbyterian Church followed by a light meal. Contact Patty or Julia Young for more information. ALL are welcome!

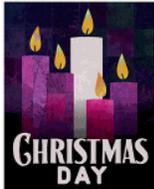
Sunday, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> the confirmation students and their families are attending the LIVE nativity pageant in Springfield, MN that begins at 6:00 pm. There will be a signup at church for anyone who wants to join in!

Confirmation workshop with Gustavus students and Trunk or Treat at Faith was successful.

# December 2025

## Faith/Lake Hanska

God's People. . . Leading Others to the Love of Jesus

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Confirmation kids will be collecting donations for the MHS Pantry every Sunday during December	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> 10:00 AM Chair Yoga at F 11:15 AM Pray Without Ceasing @ Living Meadows 1:00 PM Coffee & Communion @ Living Meadows	<b>3</b> 3:15-5:00 PM J.A.M. @ 1st Presbyterian 6:00-7:30 PM Confirmation @ Faith DECORATE the church	<b>4</b> 10:00 AM Chair Yoga/F	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 8:30 AM Men's Morning Out 9:30 AM-1:30 PM Lake Crystal Holiday Market/LCARC 10:00 AM-1:00 PM Shopping with Mrs. Claus @ Faith
<b>7 Communion</b> 9:00 AM Lake Hanska 10:10 AM LH Council 10:30 AM Faith  Second Sunday of Advent	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 10:00 AM Chair Yoga at F 11:15 AM Pray Without Ceasing @ Living Meadows	<b>10</b> 9:00 LH Quilting 3:15-5:00 PM J.A.M. @ 1st Presbyterian 5:30 PM Christmas program followed by a light meal 6:00-7:30 PM Confirmation @ Faith	<b>11</b> 10:00 AM Chair Yoga/F  7:00 PM Faith Council	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>  4:30-6:30 PM Trinity Lutefisk & Meatball Supper
<b>14 Communion</b> <b>Children's Church</b> 9:00 AM Lake Hanska 10:30 AM Faith-Baptism 6:00 PM Confirmation LIVE Nativity Pageant Springfield Third Sunday of Advent	<b>15</b> 9:00 AM Ruth Bible Study	<b>16</b> 10:00 AM Chair Yoga at F 11:15 AM Pray Without Ceasing @ Living Meadows	<b>17</b> NO J.A.M. 3:30-5:30 PM Madelia Food Shelf Open House 6:00-7:30 PM Confirmation @ Faith	<b>18</b> 10:00 AM Chair Yoga/F	<b>19</b>  Christmas for Children distribution at First Presbyterian 4:00-7:00 PM	<b>20</b> 8:30 AM Men's Morning Out 10:00 AM-Noon
<b>21</b> <b>Children's Church</b> 9:00 AM Lake Hanska 10:30 AM Faith  Fourth Sunday of Advent	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 10:00 AM Chair Yoga at F 11:15 AM Pray Without Ceasing @ Living Meadows	<b>24</b> 4:30 PM Christmas in the Barn-Joe Wagner's 5:00 PM Lake Hanska Christmas Eve service 8:00 PM Faith Christmas Eve service	<b>25</b> 	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 9:00 AM Lake Hanska 10:30 AM Faith  First Sunday of Christmas	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 10:00 AM Chair Yoga at F 11:15 AM Pray Without Ceasing @ Living Meadows	<b>31</b> O Lord, let my New Year's resolution be to follow you more closely and to trust in your loving guidance.	<b>1</b> 	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 8:30 AM Men's Morning Out

### Faith Lutheran Church

306 Abbot Ave SW ~ Madelia, MN 56062  
Phone: 507-642-8500  
Facebook.com/FOSParish  
Website: www.faithoursaviours.org  
E-mail: office@faithoursaviours.org

### Lake Hanska Lutheran Church

17923 115<sup>th</sup> St ~ PO Box 65 ~ Hanska, MN 56041  
Phone: 507-439-6635  
(FB) Lake Hanska Lutheran Church

### Ralph Flitter ~ Synod Authorized Minister

Cell Phone: 507-317-4204 E-mail: flitterralph@gmail.com



# **The Grape Vine**

Faith ~ Lake Hanska  
Main Office Address  
306 Abbot Ave SW  
Madelia MN 56062

Non-profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Madelia MN 56062  
Permit #34

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year*

~ **December** ~

## **Worship Schedule**

Every Sunday: 9:00 AM @ Lake Hanska

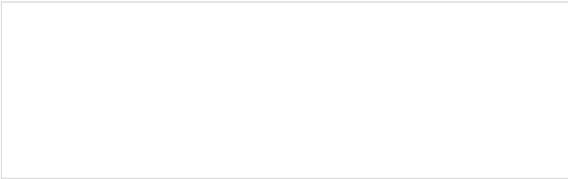
Every Sunday: 10:30 AM @ Faith

Faith Office Phone: 507-642-8500

Lake Hanska Phone: 507-439-6948

Faith Email: office@faithoursaviours.org

Ralph Flitter Email: flitterralph@gmail.com



### Office hours:

No set hours for Joyce. Please call the office to see if anyone is there.

You can call Ralph at 507-317-4204, Joyce at 507-642-8500,  
your church president: Faith: Randy Gustafson 507-380-3677

Lake Hanska: Jim Lilleodden 507-227-4222

or email the church: office@faithoursaviours.org or Ralph: flitterralph@gmail.com  
for your church needs or assistance.

## **Lake Hanska ~ December ~ 9:00 AM In-Person & LIVE on Facebook**

Communion is the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month

**Altar Committee:** Sue Stoesz, Lanna Raatz

**Ushers:** 7, 14: Ian Kjeshus, Brady Mosenden  
21, 24, 28: Tim Peterson, Justin Kraus

### **Reader**

### **Accompanist**

December 7

Mya Hanson

December 14

Audrey Anderson

December 21

Mya Hanson

December 24 5:00 PM

Mya Hanson

December 28

Audrey Anderson

## **Faith ~ December ~ 10:30 AM In-Person & LIVE on Facebook**

Communion is the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month

**Altar Guild:** Mary and Arlo Feder

### **Reader**

### **Accompanist**

December 7

Barb Overlie

Mya Hanson

December 14

Dorie Cummins

Audrey Anderson

December 21

Mya Hanson

December 24 8:00 PM

Mya Hanson

December 28

Audrey Anderson

**PLEASE SIGN UP - YOUR TALENT MAKES OUR SERVICE MUCH BETTER!**