



Fourth Sunday After Epiphany
9:30 am worship service

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH | Inviting, Growing, Serving...

Becoming fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

January 28, 2024

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

Faith is a growing faith community in the Aurora area. We're people just like you, who are hungry to know God better. We're looking for the answers to life's tough questions. We're struggling to be better parents, spouses, friends, and neighbors. We don't have all the answers but we're growing as we go.

Faith is a great place to find healing for broken hearts and broken lives. In every Sunday message you'll learn new skills and attitudes to help you live life with the kind of joy that God intends for us. You'll also meet people who are also growing in their journey through the joys and challenges of life. You'll find lots of "walking partners" for your journey here. There are no closed doors at Faith, just lots of opportunities to grow in Christ, friendship, and love.

Faith is a church with a great vision; however, accomplishing a great vision requires the participation of many great people like you. There's a place in our vision for you to use your unique gifts and talents.

CURRENT MESSAGE SERIES : THE ESSENTIALS

With so many denominations and opinions on what it means to be a Christian, it can be difficult to determine what are the foundations to our faith. We'll look at what's essential, and what's not, when it comes to following Jesus.

The Gathering

OPENING SONGS *please stand*

The Lion and the Lamb

He's coming on the clouds
Kings and kingdoms will bow down
And every chain will break
As broken hearts declare His praise
For who can stop the Lord Almighty

Chorus Our God is the lion, the Lion of Judah
He's roaring with power
And fighting our battles
And every knee will bow before Him
Our God is the lamb, the lamb that was slain
For the sins of the world
His blood breaks the chains
And every knee will bow before the lion and the lamb
Every knee will bow before Him

So, open up the gates
Make way before the King of Kings
The God who comes to save
Is here to set the captives free
For who can stop the Lord Almighty (*Chorus*)

Who can stop the Lord Almighty
Who can stop the Lord Almighty
Who can stop the Lord Almighty
Who can stop the Lord

King of My Heart

Let the King of my heart
Be the mountain where I run
The fountain I drink from
Oh He is my song
Let the King of my heart
Be the shadow where I hide
The ransom for my life
Oh He is my song

You are good good oh You are good good oh
You are good good oh You are good good oh

Let the King of my heart
Be the wind inside my sails
The anchor in the waves
Oh He is my song
Let the King of my heart
Be the fire inside my veins
The echo of my days
Oh He is my song

You're never gonna let Never gonna let me down
You're never gonna let Never gonna let me down
You're never gonna let Never gonna let me down
You're never gonna let Never gonna let me down

When the night is holding on to me
God is holding on
When the night is holding on to me
God is holding on

OPENING PRAYER

A: Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Word

FIRST LESSON

1 Corinthians 8: 1-13

Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; but anyone who loves God is known by him.

Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. “Food will not bring us close to God.” We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Be Thou My Vision

please stand

Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art
Thou my best thought by day or by night
Waking or sleeping Thy presence my light

GOSPEL

Matthew 16: 15-18

He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.

MESSAGE

Agents of Change | Pastor Rob

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

A: As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God’s blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation.

A: Loving God, we pray that your example of teaching with confidence and authority builds up your church in love. May all church leaders and teachers honor your instruction and model your inclusive ways. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Renewing God, we pray for all of creation, that waterways flow clean and clear, natural spaces are protected, and our planet is healed. Let us commit to thoughtful care of the earth. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Justice-seeking God, we pray for those in government and community leadership, that they lead with honor and mindfulness. May they remember their covenants and be upright in their ways. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Compassionate God, we pray for all in need, especially those who have known rejection, any who struggle with long-term illness or chronic pain, those without access to safe housing or health care, and any who suffer. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Still-speaking God, we pray for our congregation, for its artists and musicians, for its educators and caregivers, that all gifts are used to care for those in need and to live out your example of accompaniment, gospel witness, and love. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Gracious and loving God, we pray for the family and friends of Faith... God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

OFFERING

OFFERING RESPONSE

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

please stand

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heav'n to earth come down!
Fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter ev'ry trembling heart

OFFERTORY PRAYER

A: Blessed are you, Holy One,
for all good things come from you.
In bread and cup you open heaven to us.
Meet us at this table,
that we receive what we seek
and follow your Son, Jesus,
in whose name we pray.

C: Amen.

The Meal

P: God, you are with us.

C: You are always with us.

P: May we open our hearts.

C: May we know your presence.

P: In thanksgiving,

C: And in deepest honor.

P: Holy God, we honor you in whom our lives are founded, and in whom our futures lie. We remember and honor also the human searching over the centuries that has perceived your presence in life, and your meaning for all of life.

Above all we honor Jesus, our Christ, whose life and death reveal to us, as his resurrection, the full nature of your being and the potential nature of ours.

We remember that, on the night before his death, Jesus, as he'd always done, gathered his friends for a common meal. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread and gave some to each one, saying:

“Take, eat: This is my body given for you and for everyone.

Do this in remembrance of me.”

After supper he took a cup of wine, and, when he had given thanks, he gave it to them and said:

“Drink this, all of you: This is my blood which is shed for you and for everyone. Drink this in remembrance of me.”

In light of this, we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

C: Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ's spirit renews our lives.

P: Holy God, may our hearts and minds be alive to what is sacred in this bread and wine. May they open us to your guidance and to your love for us, for all humankind, and for all life on this earth. This is our hope, our common will, and the expression of our love and trust in Jesus, our Christ.

And now, in the spirit of Christ's teaching, we pray:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread;

**Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us;**

**Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO THE MEAL

P: At Jesus' table, heaven and earth are joined as one.
Come and see.

C: Thanks be to God.

DISTRIBUTION

AN INVITATION

We invite you to share in Holy Communion this morning, regardless of your church background or lack thereof. We believe that God is present in the bread and wine as it becomes the body and blood of Jesus Christ and that this presence is a gift of grace in the lives of those who receive it. All are welcomed to the table enjoy this gift of God's love and mercy. Grape juice is in the center of the communion tray. Gluten free wafers available at usher stand.

COMMUNION BLESSING *please stand*

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

C: **Amen.**

The Sending

SENDING PRAYER

A: Giver of every gift,
Christ's body is our food, and we are Christ's body.
Raise us to life by your power
for the benefit of all and to your glory,
now and forever.

C: **Amen**

CLOSING SONG

Hope Has a Name

There is a song I know it well
A melody that's never failed
On mountains high in valleys low
My soul will rest
My confidence in You alone

Chorus Hope has a name His name is Jesus
 My Savior's cross has set this sinner free
 Hope has a name His name is Jesus
 Oh Christ be praised I have victory

There is a light salvation's flame
Christ undefeated trampled the grave
See now the cross be lifted high
The light has come the light has won
Behold the Christ (*Chorus*)

There'll be a day my hope complete
Now home in glory Your face I'll see
My pain no more my fear will cease
I bow my life I fix my eyes
On Christ my king
I bow my life I fix my eyes
On Christ my king (*Chorus*)

DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace. You are God's beloved.

C: Thanks be to God.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to Faith!

We are so glad that you have chosen to worship with us today! Have questions about Faith? Wondering how to get connected or get more involved? We'd love to help. No matter where you are in life or how many times you've visited, we're here to guide you towards your next best step. Stop by the welcome center located near the main entrance. If this is your first time at Faith, let us know, we've got a special gift just for you!

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Today! | 10:45 AM

All members are invited to attend Faith's annual congregational meeting. Agenda items will include a review and celebration of 2023, approval of the 2024 spending plan, the election of council members and nominating committee members.

BLOOD DRIVE

Sat 2/3 | 9:00 AM

Faith is hosting a blood drive in the church auditorium Saturday, February 3. Save the date and make your appointment today www.discoveringfaith.com.

Walk-in's welcome too!

MOM'S GROUP: A Moment for Mom

Sat 2/10 | 10:00 AM

We are hosting moms of children infants-elementary school to come together for a time of learning, laughter, and treats. Take a moment to connect with other moms, while enjoying a yummy breakfast, hearing from a knowledgeable speaker on topics related to parenting, and building your mom village along the way. Our group meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, through May, 10:00 AM - 12:15 PM. For more information about our guest speaker and topic lineup, and to register for events, please visit www.discoveringfaith.com/amomentformom.

ANNUAL CHILI COOK OFF

Sat 2/10 | 5:00 PM

Community Life team is hosting Faith's Annual Chili Cook-Off. Do you make the best Chili? Enter your Chili today! Don't Cook? Join us in the tasting and judge your favorite Chili! Sign up at the welcome center. Open to all ages.

SCOUT SUNDAY

Sun 2/11

Scout Sunday will be observed on February 11th. Faith Lutheran Church's Cub Scout Pack 643 and Boy Scout Troop 508 will be present at both services to greet Parishioners and assist with the service. This is a great opportunity for our congregation and our Scouts to come together. We would also like to invite members of ANY Scouting organization, past or present to wear your uniform, or paraphernalia to service on the 11th so we can recognize your contributions.

The Boy Scouts of America designates a Sunday that falls in February to recognize the contributions of young people and adults to Scouting. This coincides with the anniversary of the creation of the Scouts BSA Program.

Mark your calendars and we hope to see you there!

MEMBERSHIP @ FAITH

Mon Feb 12, 19 | 6:30 PM

The New Year is a time of new beginnings and renewal. For those of you seeking a new faith journey or looking to strengthen your faith journey, Faith will offer a membership course in February. Membership @ Faith invites participants to explore the vision, mission and values of Faith, as well as a broad overview of the Christian faith from a Lutheran perspective. Participants will also discover their unique gifts and how they can use them in serving others. This course is open to everyone and is required of those who wish to become members at Faith. The course meets on Monday nights at 6:30 p.m. for two weeks (2/12 and 2/19). Sign up on line or at the welcome center.

NEXT

Sun 2/18 | 9:00 & 10:30 AM

If you've ever wondered how to get involved at Faith, or how to take the next step, don't worry. We've created a simple next step for you. It's a small gathering called NEXT. This informal gathering lasts only about 20 minutes after services and will provide you an overview of our mission, strategy, and environments to help you determine your best next step for continuing your faith journey. Meets fireside

GROUPLINK

Tues 2/20 | 7:00 PM

If you are interested in learning how to connect to a community group here at Faith please plan on attending Grouplink. In a community group, people study God's Word together and discuss the issues and challenges of life. It's also where they pray, care for one another, and are missed if they don't show up. Life change happens best in these small groups! Sign up at the welcome center or online at www.discoveringfaith.com

LENTEN MIDWEEK MEAL

Wednesdays | 6:30 PM

Each Lenten season we provide a fellowship opportunity for people of faith to gather around a table and share a meal at 6:30PM. This meal is intended to be simple and provide some time for us to slow down and care for one another. Everyone who attends shares in the responsibility of providing different components for the meal. Volunteers sign up each week to provide a gallon of soup for the evening. The remainder of the attendees provide either bread or cookies. Beverages and table service will be provided. The Lenten Meal will be offered at 6:30 PM on Wednesdays: 2/21, 2/8, 3/6, 3/13, 3/20. Our worship series begins after this fellowship time at 7:15PM. Sign up at the welcome center or online at www.discoveringfaith.com

MIDWEEK LENTEN WORSHIP – “Things Jesus Never Said”

Wednesdays | 7:15 PM

Begins 2/21/23

These days it's easy to see life the way we want to. We can filter our images, pick the news we want to hear, and listen only to the viewpoints that agree with us. When we do that, we start to distort our view of the world. The same thing can happen to our view of God. We reshape our perception of Him into what we want to believe, or what we want to think about others. Jesus came to bring us the truth about God and His plan for us, and it doesn't always sound like what you may think.

ADULT ONLINE STUDY GROUP

Tuesdays | 7:00 PM

Becoming a Contagious Christian

Learn how to share the gospel in natural and effective ways, being the person God made you to be. By applying training principles learned in this study to real-life situations and relationships, you'll identify and develop an evangelism style that's effective for you. This 6 week online study will be facilitated by Becky Marchiando. Please sign up at the welcome center so that we may send you Zoom credentials required to participate. Come join us!

KIDWERKS

Sundays at 9:30 AM

Join us as we dive into learning about new virtues each month through stories from the bible so that we can grow in our understanding and relationship with God. For more information please contact jenn@discoveringfaith.com

REVOLUTION

Sundays | 5:00 PM

On Sunday Nights at Faith, we've created an event that attracts **middle & high school students just like you**. After all, we figure you want to be wherever your friends are. We make this time as fun and relevant as we possibly can. The goal is for you to leave feeling energized to go out there and tackle another week!

Prayers

If you would like to add someone to our prayer list and have the prayer team pray for them, please contact the church office at [\(630\) 862-3500](tel:6308623500) or send an e-mail prayerteam@discoveringfaith.com

Prayer concerns will be listed for four weeks unless otherwise noted.

Care

If you know of someone who is in need of emotional, physical, or spiritual support, please contact our care team at: careteam@discoveringfaith.com

Pastoral Emergency

In the case of an emergency that requires immediate Pastoral Care, please contact Pastor Rob directly on his cell phone at [\(630\) 248-5515](tel:6302485515).



Pastor Rob Douglas
DISCOVERINGFAITH.COM

3000 LIBERTY ST. AURORA, IL. 60502 | (630) 862-3500 | OFFICE@DISCOVERINGFAITH.COM