

Worship Sundays at 9:30 a.m.



FEB. 2025



FAITH TALKS

The Official Newsletter of Faith Lutheran Church of Chico, CA

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About the Cover

It's a bit on the nose for February, but love is the theme of the month! Journey through the book of Corinthians each Sunday during worship throughout the month of February. Explore loving our enemies, the teachings of Paul, and how the blessings of God are so much greater than what the world calls blessings



Pastor's Article

P. Ben Colahan

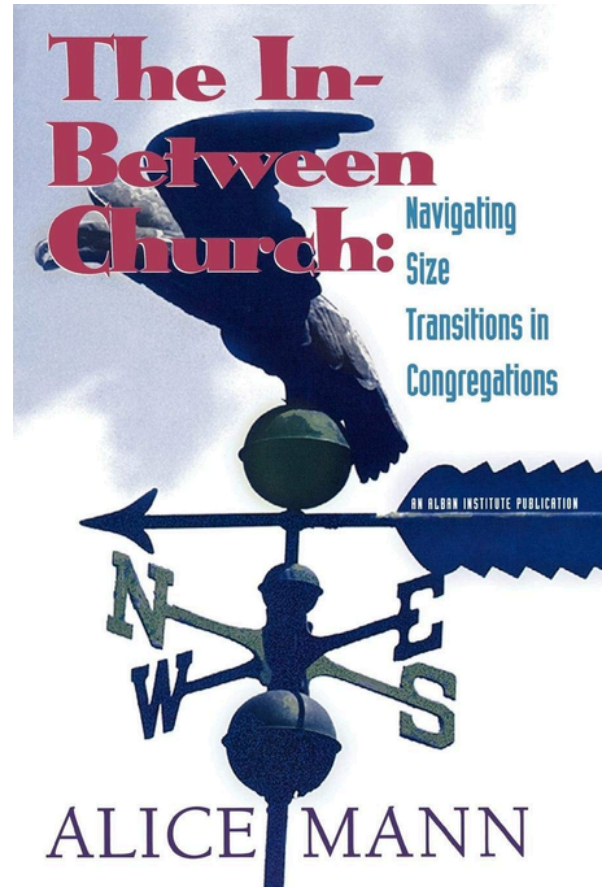
There are a lot of new faces at Faith! For those of you in the pews, I hope this is a wonderful feeling. When people first come to worship with us, they recognize the love, warmth, and hospitality that you share with each other and with them. Folks want to be a part of the joyous community that you create!

For some of you, seeing many new faces may also prompt a feeling of anxiety. This year, the congregational council is reading a book called, *The In-Between Church: Navigating Size Transitions in Congregations* by Alice Mann. One of the themes in the book is that while every congregation claims they want to grow, both clergy and lay people can actually get nervous when they see it happening.

Members in the congregation can begin to wonder if welcoming all these new people will require us to make changes to the very things that we love about our congregation. The TV show *Cheers* made famous the phrase, "sometimes you want to be where everybody knows your name." Particularly with Faith's recent addition of nametags, knowing each other's names has been one of Faith's strengths. If we continue to grow, the reality will be that, eventually, not everyone will know our names.

The In-Between Church states that one of the biggest challenges to congregations at Faith's size is that we have to be explicit about whether or not we truly want to grow. There is much to love about Faith's current size: we are small enough that it's easy to know most people in the congregation and get involved in any aspect of ministry; we are large enough that we can offer a variety of programs for our members and take on sizeable projects that make a difference in our community.

But here is the truth, Faith Lutheran is the only congregation in Chico that both explicitly welcomes all people to share in Christ's love, and has the capacity to minister to the variety of people whom we welcome. This is particularly true for families with children looking for a community rooted in God's grace. Jesus wants each and every person in Chico and Butte County to know that they are loved by God, that they are uniquely empowered by the Holy Spirit for the common good, and that they are part of God's family regardless of who they are.



While I am grateful for the other congregations in our area who equip people to be disciples in their own way, I know there are many families who can only come to Faith to find a Christian community in which every member of their family is welcome. Our calling from Christ to serve these families must overcome our desire for comfort.

And so in the coming months, I will be encouraging you to build more relationships in the congregation. I will be asking you to make sure your relationship in the congregation isn't just with me or other members of the staff, that your relationship isn't just with people you've already known for decades, but that you actively seek out new people with whom you can walk in Christ to support each other.

Starting in February, we'll be offering a new way for you to make these connections. Each Sunday after worship, there will be someone from the Equipping Ministry ready to talk to you about how you might connect. They'll ask you what your gifts and passions are, and what your yearnings are, and then they'll introduce you to people through whom the Holy Spirit might work wonders in both your lives.

While these Equipping Teammates will be of great help for newcomers to Faith who want to get more involved, I also encourage those of you who've been here for decades to stop by the Welcome Table. Maybe you've been doing a ministry for years and would like to try something new. Maybe you want to transform the new faces at church into old friends. Maybe you just want to find out what's going on.

There are so many ways to serve at Faith, and so many different groups to be a part of, including our Tuesday Quilters, Time Out for Art, Just Older Youth Seniors Book Group on Mondays, and Tables for 8 dinner groups, but as your pastor, let me encourage you to consider three different Bible studies that are happening right now. #1. 1st and 3rd Mondays at 5:30pm in Room 7 at Faith. #2. Tuesdays at 5pm on Zoom (visit ChicoFaithLutheran.org and click on the circle that says, "Connect to Zoom." The password is: 667.) #3. In February, we are starting up a new Bible study for those who would like to gather during the day: 1st and 3rd Thursdays at 10am in Room 7 at Faith.

You can get information about these groups and many more at the Welcome Table and from the Equipping Team starting Feb. 2nd. Please stop by to find out how you can connect with the new faces you are seeing so that we welcome more and more people to be part of living out God's love.

Your brother in Christ,
Pr. Ben Colahan



Forming a Data Team

Michael N-De

5

A woman walks into the office. Her hair is short and gray. She has a kind smile, glasses, a shirt whose colors I like, and nails she's just had painted for the season. Not only has she told me her name before, we've had a full conversation. Yet her name is lost within the swarm of to-dos rattling around in my brain.

I squint my eyes. "T...Te...Tar...?"

Tar. This poor woman's name is not Tar. I believe it begins with T. When I try to focus, my ears tell me that the printer's silence means it's out of ink and it has stopped printing; my fingers remind me that the bill I'm holding must be paid today; my eyes alert me to the discarded shoe sitting atop the playground castle in a way that's almost renaissance. Perhaps I should leave it for Time Out for Art to paint. The shoe says, "Please Michael, throw me away already." In time, shoe. First, I must remember who Tar is.

When I figure it out, it'll all come flooding back: her name, and the names of all her grandkids to boot. It's embarrassing! I don't want to offend Tar-esa. Tar-linda. Tar-anne. I do my best to be an active listener, but we're growing, and it's official: I need help!

The staff needs a team to help Faith Lutheran Church maintain its database of 600+ people year-round. I discovered this need when my facilitation, plus a team of 5 people taking on the responsibility of calling folks to gather contact information for the new directory, was not enough to keep up. Reaching out to parishioners to update their contact info once every 3 years is problematic and has caused errors varying in severity, from birthday cards never reaching the intended recipient, to mailing *Faith Talks* to people who are, well, dead. Our membership has grown such that I can no longer manage all our data myself. But what would take me a great deal of extra time can be done easily and sustainably with your help -- a commitment of about 1 hour a month.

I am seeking 5 people (or more) who can commit to that monthly hour, go into our database, and enter contact information. I would ask you to sign a confidentiality agreement to protect our members' data, then, I would train you which takes 30 minutes. The only requirement is that you are a rostered member. What will take you an hour at home takes me several in the office, because I have many, many things to do in order for worship to happen.

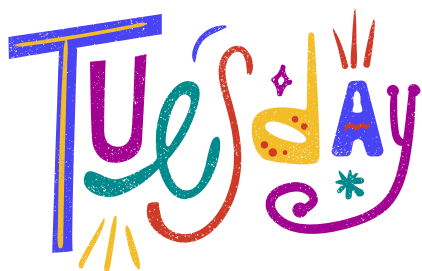
This ministry is one of those behind-the-scenes ones you hear so much about, but is just as critical as those in the spotlight like Sunday worship roles. Please, come to me with questions. Learn more, and feel welcome to say yes or no. I appreciate any and all consideration, and welcome you to reach out as soon as you are able.



Monday Evening Bible Study

1st and 3rd Monday of each Month, 5:30pm, Room 7

A member-led Bible study that will be studying the Book of Esther in February. Members are encouraged to use Martin Luther's techniques for reading scripture to ask the questions that matter most to them. Childcare can be available if arrangements are made with Director of Children and Youth Joshua Edwards ahead of time.



Pastor's Prep Bible Study

Tuesdays, 5-6pm over Zoom

How does the pastor take assigned Bible passages and use their lessons to the sermon preached Sunday morning? Come find out and be a part of the process! Study the upcoming Sunday's Bible passages with Pastor Ben and the others who attend. We will talk a little about history and context, and will focus on using Martin Luther's techniques for understanding how the Bible addresses the needs and concerns of our community today. The link can be found on the front page of our website, chicofaithlutheran.org. Look for the circle that says "Connect to Zoom." The password is: 667

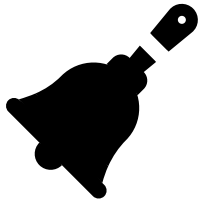


Thursday Morning

1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month, 10am in Room 7

This is a new Bible study that Pastor Ben will help kick off, then hand over the reigns to its members. Biblical background resources and pre-written questions will be provided. In addition to studying scripture, this Bible study ends with time to pray for one another.

Worship, Music, Groups



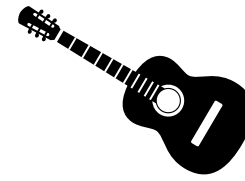
Handbell Practice

Wed's @ 4:00 PM



Choir Practice

Thu's @ 5:45 PM



Contemporary Practice

Thu's @ 7:15 PM

Safe Space Winter Shelter is being hosted by our church at this time. This takes place in the Fellowship Hall from about 5pm-9am. Guests receive dinner, a place to sleep, and breakfast, and may return to the intake center the following evening in order to spend the night here again. This will wrap up on Sunday, February 9th.



If someone needs to use this shelter, please do not tell them to arrive at Faith Lutheran Church! Guests MUST do intake at Safe Space's building 1909 Esplanade. The shelter cannot accept guests who arrive on-site where the shelter is being taken place.

Tables for 8

Gather for a meal and get to know your neighbor at Tables for 8! You may see people at church on Sunday, but would you enjoy getting to know them better? This is a fun opportunity to spend some time (once a month) with others from Faith away from church. There is a signup sheet in the back of the sanctuary, so you can put your contact information down before or after church on Sunday. You can also contact our facilitator, Lynette Stensrud, by calling the office. Come! Share a meal with us and learn more about the folks with whom we share community and Christ's love.

Time Out for Art

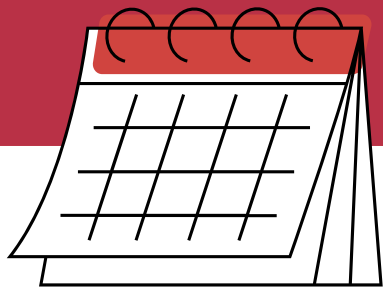
Take time out from the stress of the day and relax with any art project of your choice Mondays from 1-4pm in Room 6.

Tuesday Quilters

Connect with friends new and old and you make beauty out of fabric. This group creates more than just quilts, fabric crafters of all types are welcome. If you don't know how to quilt, the Quilters will happily teach you. Quilters meet every Tuesday from 9am to 3pm in the Fellowship Hall.

Spanish Language Sermon Reflection

Practice your Spanish by discussing questions designed to apply last Sunday's sermon to your own life! Starting this week, Join retired Spanish professor and father of Pastor Ben, Clark Colahan, Wednesday mornings at 9am via Zoom. You can find the link to the Zoom meeting on the front page of our website: chicofaithlutheran.org. Look for the circle that says "Connect to Zoom." The password is: 667



Events

Weekly Meetings

Time Out For Art ~ Mondays from 1-4 PM in Room 6

Quilters ~ Tuesdays from 10 AM - About 2 PM, Fellowship Hall

Centering Prayer ~ 4PM on Tuesdays, Online (Zoom)

Pastor's Online Bible Study ~ 5PM on Tuesdays, Online (Zoom)

Bulletin Folders & Sanctuary Prep ~ Wednesdays at 2pm in the Sanctuary

Thursday Morning Bible Study ~ 10AM, Thursdays in Room 7

Men's Breakfast ~ Fridays at 8AM at Farmer's Skillet on Rio Lindo

JOYS: Just Older Youth...Seniors!

**2nd and 4th Mondays of the Month at 10:30am in Room 7
February 10, 24 | March 10, 24 | April 14, 28 | May 12, 26**

JOYS invites all seniors to attend our small group on the second and fourth Mondays of the month from January to May. Just Older Youth, Seniors! will be reading a book called "Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts of Faith" by Anne Lamott. "Anne Lamott claims the best two prayers she knows are "Help me, help me, help me" and "Thank you, thank you, thank you." Despite --or because of-- her irreverence and wit, faith is a natural subject for Lamott. With an exuberant mix of passion, insight, and humor, in Traveling Mercies she takes us on a journey through her often troubled past to illuminate her devout but quirky walk of faith." Paperback books can be purchased at Faith's office anytime during office hours. They cost \$4 each. We hope you'll consider joining us for book study, fellowship, and faith. Please contact Nola Dosch or Veronika Kehoe by calling our office if you have any questions.

Roses, for Whom we Thank

Everyone who made Christmas possible which includes everyone who helped with worship services, music, service projects, crafts, and children's ministry.

Sandy Wright, Margaret McMillan, and Linda Zimbelman for their musical offerings.

Leanne Chrisman for being our point-person between Safe Space and our security company to make sure guests, the church and its people, and Safe Space staff/volunteers are safe and cared for during the upcoming winter shelter.

Rick Flanagan for testing and installing gate latches to increase child safety on site.

Kate Ory for delivering a powerful sermon in January, and Bill Kees for presiding.

Kate Ory and Kim Schweder for hosting the workshop on The Greatest Gift which rallied 25 people!

Suzanne Steel for baking Communion bread for Sunday worship. All others who baked Communion bread -- we saw it appear in the fridge, and do not know who our mystery baker is, but would like to thank them as well.

Mike Kruschke for making repairs to the rolling doors/windows between the kitchen and fellowship hall that were stuck before.

Malinda Ard for hosting Dungeons and Dragons.

Everyone who brainstormed for the Lenten season.

Everyone who attended the Sunday School planning session, investing in the lives of our children.

All responsible for hosting the MLK event at St. John's Episcopal Church.

Every last one of you who took down Christmas decorations and put them away; it was such a big help to our congregation and staff!





Council Minutes

Tue. Jan. 21, 2025, Conference Room

Alyssa Manes

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Members Present: Pastor Ben Colahan, Steve Hall, Mark Kimmelshue, Alyssa Manes, Leanne Chrisman, Mary Schweder, Elise Gladu, Candy Munson, Elaine Lund, Dawn Stafford, guest Joel Zimbelman. **Members Absent:** Kathleen Pappani, Jill Bentler.

Call to Order, Reading of the Covenant, Welcome

Devotions and prayer: led by Steve Hall. Philippians 2:3-4 is a reminder that we are called to prioritize the needs of the community.

Approval of minutes: November minutes approved

Financial Report given by Mark Kimmelshue. We are looking good overall. Motion made, seconded, and approved to approve Pastor Ben's housing allowance for tax purposes. Financial report approved.

Staff Report sent via email by Pastor Ben. Directory "party," discussed. Discussed rekeying; bids are incoming.

Property Report presented by Joel Zimbelman. Discussed important maintenance needed at the church. Older roofs need to be replaced. There are 5 old HVAC units that still need to be replaced. Other issues are the parking lot (smaller maintenance now will prolong the life and prevent us from having to do a complete replacement), solar panels (the current panels only offset a portion of our energy use; we need about twice as many panels), and exterior painting. We have done many projects in the past few years and appreciate the congregation helping out with things we can (safely) do, like changing light bulbs, doing outdoor yard work, etc. We have some bids/recommendations. We will have a capital campaign to fund the important maintenance.

Equipping Ministry presented by Steve Hall. Working on projects for Lenten services. We will start having an equipping person of the week available at the welcome table after church, to help people connect.

Old Business: Council Book Study. The council reviewed chapters 1-4 and Appendix A of the book *The In-Between Church: Navigating Size Transitions in Congregations*. Discussed the church size/types described by the book: "organism" for smaller churches vs. "organization" for larger churches; "group-centered" (for family-sized and for program sized) vs. "pastor-centered" (for pastoral and for corporate). We look like we're moving from "pastoral" (weekly attendance 50-150ish) to "program" (weekly attendance 150ish-350ish). Pastor Ben recognizes that he will have to grow as Faith Lutheran grows, and we as a congregation will have to grow too.

New Business: Capital Campaign 2025 discussed briefly when talking about the property report. We would like to start a campaign before Easter.

Announcements: Elise trained four people for helping provide meals at the Torres Shelter.

Put it in the Plate/Action Items, Closing Prayer and Adjournment



Financial Report

Mark Kimmelshue

Faith Lutheran Church General Fund Finances as of 12/31/2024

	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Percent Of Budget
TOTAL INCOME	\$321,960.67	\$269,547.04	83.72%
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$295,158.68	\$237,940.77	80.61%
NET INCOME/(LOSS)	\$26,801.99	\$31,606.27	
Beginning General Fund Balance as of 7/1/2024		\$16,135.61	
Net Revenue through 9/30/24		\$31,606.27	
Ending General Fund Balance		<u>\$47,741.88</u>	

The above figures represent the General Fund activity for the first 6 months of the fiscal year. Giving to the General Fund during December was \$91,090.62 yeilding positive revenue YTD of 31,606.27. This added to the General fund balance at the beging of the year gives us a current General Fund balance of \$47,741.88.
Thank You All for your continued support.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact:

Mark Kimmelshue
530-520-8228

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Luke Nicolay | Dir. Youth & Children's Ministries Josh Edwards | Bookkeeper
Jeanette Joslyn | Financial Secretary Lynette Stensrud | President Jill Bentler
VP Steve Hall | Treasurer Mark Kimmelshue | Secretary Alyssa Manes
Council Members at Large: Elaine Lund, Mary Schweder, Leanne Chrisman,
Elise Gladu, Candy Munson, Kathleen Pappani, Dawn Stafford

A COMMUNITY REFLECTING GOD'S LOVE WITH A PLACE AT THE TABLE FOR EVERYONE

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