



LIFE OF FAITH

AUGUST 2026

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From our pastor....



Where are the children?

Soaking up the last rays of summer, while teachers get busy preparing for the upcoming school year that is somehow already around the corner. This month, the youth of our congregation will be at camp, singing songs about God and playing games on the shores of Lake Coeur d'Alene. At Camp Lutherhaven in Idaho, they will join children from around the region as they embark on new adventures and grow in faith and community.

Where are the children?

It's a question that a lot of churches have been asking in recent years. Right now, they're out exploring. But even when they are here, we could do better to notice them. They're present throughout the Gospel stories, but so often we assume that when we hear about crowds, we're hearing only about groups of adults, forgetting that there were likely many children there as well.

There is the child who offered his bread and fish for the feeding of the five thousand in the Gospel of John. There are the shepherds, who very easily could have been children, abandoning their flocks at night because they were so excited by the news of Jesus' birth that they ran all over the hillsides to spread the good news.

So where are the children?

They're here: exploring, preparing, and leading in all their own ways. May God give us the perception we need to recognize the children in our midst, the ways they lead us in faith, and the ways we can support them on their new adventures. And may they have fun at camp!

In Christ,
Pastor Aaron



From our president...



About the time of the Civil War a Ponderosa pine tree sprouted from a seed in a forest near Leavenworth. It was there as the railroad came in and the town grew along with the tree. The loggers came and built a lumber mill but let the tree grow. Our church came in on a railroad car with a steeple as tall as the tree and a small house was built to shelter in its shade. The pine became a majestic giant, over 3 feet in diameter, more than a hundred feet high, looking down on the steeple and the neighborhood that grew up around it.

Then came the December storm of 2025 and laid it low with a mighty gust of wind. It measured its length on the ground next to the helpless little house but didn't crush it. It crossed the yard, the sidewalk, the street, the other sidewalk and lay its crown in the neighbor's yard after destroying 2

power poles and rendering the neighborhood dark. An Act of God.

The downed Ponderosa was then chipped, chopped and broken into manageable pieces. Some will nourish gardens as compost, some will warm folks by their fireplace. The miracle sits in the Narthex at Faith Lutheran, though. An unknown chipper operator working with us the day after the storm advised us to leave a couple of 10 foot lengths from the base of the tree. Greg Harris built a lovely 10 foot long cabinet, and we milled a log, dried it, planed it, and it now graces the south west wall of our church entry. Look carefully - nature provided a 4 foot long cross embedded in the grain of the wood for us.

Have Faith!

Karl Kranz
Council President





August brings multiple opportunities to experience presentations and first-hand conversations with people from Palestine.

Sunday, August 2: Pastor Aaron will share experiences from his recent trip to Palestine after church

Tuesday, August 11 and Thursday, August 13: Faith Lutheran and Celebration Lutheran (East Wenatchee) are hosting Pastor Adham Alaraj from August 10 – 14. He is a young pastor born and raised in Palestine and currently serving Bethlehem Arabic Lutheran church, the first Arabic-language Lutheran Church in CA and the second in the US, as well as St. John's Lutheran in San Diego.

There will be two opportunities to hear Pr. Alaraj speak on *The Palestinian Youth and Young Adult Experience in the West Bank*. Both are free and open to all.

Tuesday, August 11, 6:30 pm

Celebration Lutheran Church
801 8th St. NE, East Wenatchee
(Livestream available on Celebrations
YouTube Channel)

Thursday, August 13, 6:30 pm

Faith Lutheran Church
Fellowship Hall



On *Raise the Roof with Faith* Sunday, a total of \$105,000 was gifted to the new pastor's office building project by members of our Faith community. Thank you for faithful and abundant generosity to all who participated. For those who were not able to be present for the service, it is possible to join the project by filling out a gift card found in either the narthex or Fellowship Hall or online through Tithely.

Special thanks to Pastor Don Haven and Pastor Cindy Carroll for their strong leadership in helping guide this fundraising effort.



CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING July meeting



Pastors Report

- Pastor Aaron has been traveling and happy to be home! He shared some of his experiences from his travels in the Middle East. He attended a wedding in Palestine and visited some holy sites. He is planning to present some photos and information about his travels at an upcoming adult forum, tentatively on Sunday August 2.
- Pastor Aaron also attended the Conference on Worship, Theology and the Arts (CWTA) at St Olaf College. This year's focus was on children.

Treasurer's Report

- Total assets are slightly up from the previous month.
- One CD was cashed out to ensure funds are available to pay bills for early construction expenses for the Office Construction project. Will hold off on cashing out any further CD's until we see the results of the *Raise the Roof with Faith* campaign.
- Restricted Accounts: We discussed the need to find someone to take a leadership role of the Free Little Pantry. This would involve: coordinating volunteer efforts as needed, monitoring inventory and arrange for purchase and stocking of the pantry as needed, monitoring bank account status and identify various means of funding the pantry as needed, and write the brief annual report. Ellen Farley volunteered to take this on and to coordinate with all the great volunteers who have been supporting Lisa's Free Little Pantry.
- Contributions were up in June, partly because two annual gifts came in. We are still about \$11,000 behind budget but are well ahead of where we were last year at this time.
- One donation for the *Raise the Roof* campaign has come in early already!

Property Committee

- **Narthex Improvements.** The new cabinets have been installed in the Narthex, including the new pine top slab that was milled from the Ponderosa Pine that came down on the adjacent church property in the big storm last December.
- **Pastor's Office Addition.**
 - Excavation and concrete foundation form work has begun. The project is now on hold until the permitting process is completed. The city is experiencing a heavy project permitting load so it is taking a long time. No concrete can be poured until a permit is in hand, hopefully in a couple more weeks. We are also asking for a limited approval of the foundation design to allow us to pour the concrete foundations.
 - There has been an effort (thank you Pat Thirlby!) to save the existing Japanese Maple near the entry area and so far, it looks promising.
- **Electrical Upgrades Required for Insurance:** An Electrical upgrade bid was received. However, their start has been delayed due to a health issue for one of their key employees. A new Electrician has been assigned to our project and we hope to get the work underway soon.

- **Panic Bars in Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall for Insurance and Code Compliance:** The property Committee will install panic bars for emergency egress on new doors at the doorway at the back of the Sanctuary and the back doorway at the SW corner of the Fellowship Hall. We will contract with Keyhole Security for installation of Panic bar hardware and locks on the double doors at the front of the Sanctuary. Code compliant panic bar hardware will be installed in the entry to the Fellowship Hall as part of the new construction.
- **New Insurance Carrier:** Greg S is still working on arranging for new insurance for the church.

Worship Committee

- Aaron is scheduling a meeting with the worship team members to plan for the upcoming *Season of Creation*. This is officially a new season in the ELCA church calendar with new liturgy. Aaron says this new season and the new liturgy is “a big deal” and it’s exciting!

Earth Stewardship Committee

- The last movie night was held on June 26 and featured Clair Seamans movie, *The Icicle Calls Us Back: 11 P'Squosa Descendants' Wishes for Icicle Creek*. It was well attended with about 55 in attendance, many of whom were from the community outside of our congregation.
- Our next movie night is tentatively planned for September 11 at 6:30 pm when we will show *Sheep Detectives*.
- Katie Tackman from Link Transit made a presentation at the Adult Forum on June 28.
- The next Garden Tour will be in Spring/Summer 2027.
- The Solar Panels installed by Faith Lutheran on the Middle School are apparently failing or failed. We are looking into how we might assist the Cascade School District with assessing their condition and then repairing, replacing or removing them.
- The Kaiser Canyon Fire is greatly impacting the Colville Indian Reservation. We received a request for support for our P'Squosa/Wenatchee/Colville communities affected by the fire. We plan to send \$500 from the Earth Stewardship Fund to provide support to the fire victims. Pastor Aaron plans to further disseminate information on where individual members can direct additional support if so moved.

Financial Stewardship Committee:

- The *Raise the Roof with Faith* Sunday is July 26. Ice Cream Sundaes will be served after the service!

Old Business:

- Greg Steeber is scheduling and coordinating volunteer Recreation Ambassadors from Faith for August 8 and 9 as a fundraising and community support effort.
- Office Printer. Aaron will coordinate with Greg S to assess printer needs so a new printer or printer rental arrangement can be made.

New Business:

- Letter to the Editor: Council discussed the letter to the Editor this last week in the Echo concerning Pastor Aaron's recent presentation on “Demystifying Christian Nationalism” in Wenatchee. We concluded no action or response from FLC is needed.

Next Meeting: August 27, 2026 @ 6 p.m.



SATURATED BY LIGHT by Amy Carlson

[This piece was begun in May, and I'm just now getting back to it in July.]

"Only in the darkness can you see the stars." MLK

Oh, so corny, but oh so true! It has been a little dark lately—a tree falls on the house, a car gets totaled, a cancer returns, a teaching career is cut short—midnight seeps into my bones and drags my thoughts down into the darkness of abyss....starless. Or is it?

"Pinpricks of light surround us all the time. Remember this!" I tell myself.

Pinprick 1: On a May morning, I ventured onto campus for the first time since winter quarter, since the cancer started eating my T5 vertebrae causing a collapse of the bone and an end to my teaching. With back to the sun, I sat by the campus fountain sighing into the sound of water and the warmth penetrating my body. Students, backpack laden, scurried about between classes or clumped under trees enjoying a moment together, taking a much-needed break. Up walked Quentin; he had wanted to thank me for teaching him the power of the verb, the essential mandate of clear writing [which takes clear & critical thinking, who knew!], and the necessary foundation of creativity. He had asked me to read over his college essays & write him a recommendation to Dartmouth. I suggested he write a prose poem for one of the prompts that begged for a creative angle:

"Be yourself," Oscar Wilde advised. "Everyone else is taken." Introduce yourself.

I told him, "If I was an admission officer who had to read one more essay that started with, 'My name is Quentin, and I am...' I would vomit and immediately eject it into the 'nope' pile. So, the boy did as I suggested and crafted a masterful poem. Here are the first two stanzas with refrain:

Quentin flies down the mountain faster than anyone else.
Snow lifts from his skis in small white storms,
the cold stitching itself into his lungs,
the world narrowing to steamy breath and motion.

Everyone else is taken.

Quentin finds himself high up on the rocks
fingers chalked, arms burning,
sun warming the cliff face, and soothing harsh rock against smooth fingers.
Scaling rock to feel disconnected and learning to dream again

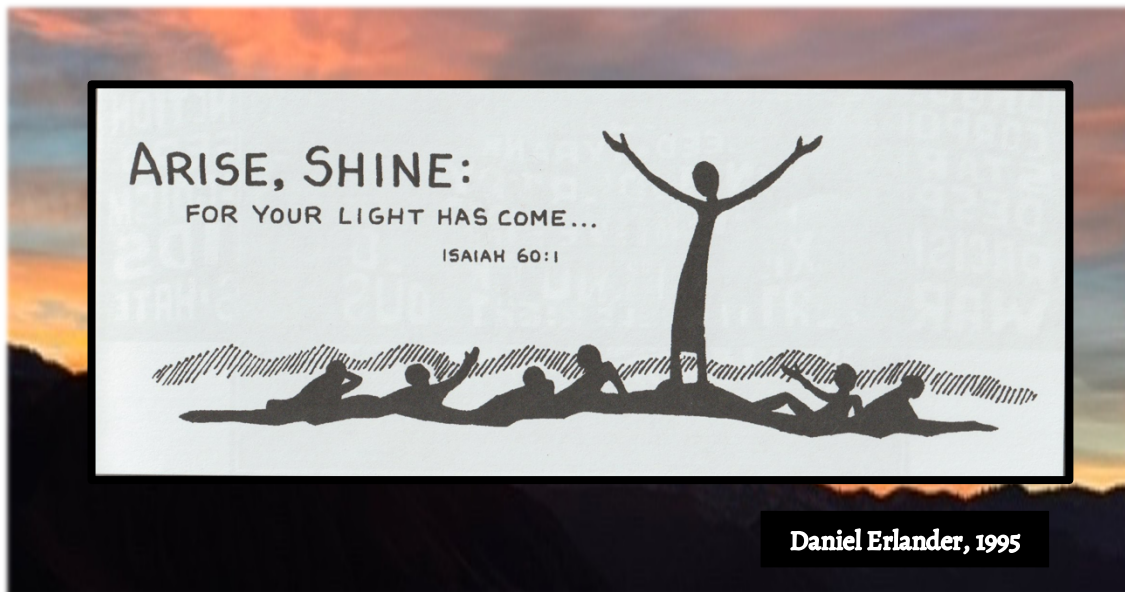
Everyone else is taken.

He got accepted and starts this fall, 2026, and I received that day, by the fountain, the delight in his eyes, a hug and a Dartmouth Skiing t-shirt. [The boy is Olympic material.]

Over the following months, I have been saturated by pinpricks of light:
gifts of fresh organic veggies, recliners, rhubarb cake, casseroles, pesto;

gifts of leopard blanket hugs, laughter in the ER, party hats to celebrate the end of radiation;
gifts of accompaniment to Wenatchee appointments, handholding, tears, offers of places to stay during construction;
gifts of a sister's tenacity in signing me up for Medicare—fast;
gifts of check-in calls by a beloved 90+ year old;
gifts of wildflower abundance – *Lewisia tweedii*, Larkspur, Balsam Root, Spring Beauties, Glacier Lilies,.....and the twitter of nuthatches, chickadees...the squawking of jays....the tumble of black bear cubs....the scurry of lizards,.....;
gifts of guitar music from my own personal minstrel from Seattle, gourmet shrimp dinner [without heavy cream-my request] by my own personal chefs over from Lake Stevens;
gifts of angels rooted by my bedside full of quiet presence day and night [in the beginning];
gifts of angels cleaning my kitchen in preparation for moving back in [after the reconstruction];
gifts of homemade raisin bread made by loving hands;
gifts of log-splitting services by Flintstone Logging [a neighbor=guess who?]
.....and, oh, so many more!

This is a daily exercise of being open to the light that surrounds us even in our darkest moments. See. Hear. Taste. Feel. Smell that light!! Stay open. And thank the Creator for all these gifts given freely.
[Oh, how I need to live into my own words!] Amen.



CLIMATE ADVOCACY MATTERS! By Barbara Rossing

I was reminded of the importance of advocacy work when I traveled to Washington DC and New York with an intergenerational climate advocacy team from the ELCA (I was the oldest at 71; the next oldest person was an Oregon State oceanography professor, age 40!).

In New York, we received official observer credentials for a United Nations meeting on the Sustainable Development Goals—17 goals adopted in 2015 by the UN member states (<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>). Goal #13 is Climate Action.

We took the train to Washington DC, where we spent the next day lobbying Congress and the Senate to pass legislation that will protect the climate. This is a tough moment for the climate because President Trump has eliminated the Inflation Reduction Act's energy and climate provisions and has reversed the Endangerment Finding in the Clean Air Act. A Farm Bill is needed but the version that passed the Republican-controlled House of Representatives has been stripped of important SNAP (food stamp) provisions and contains some terrible provisions. We lobbied for better Soil Protections in the Senate Farm Bill version.

One bipartisan bill the ELCA supports is the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management) Reform Act, whose co- sponsors include our Representative Dr. Kim Schrier; The bipartisan **FEMA Act of 2025 (H.R. 4669)** takes steps to elevate FEMA to a cabinet-level agency, streamlining funding and ensuring oversight and public accountability to ensure that FEMA is serving disaster survivors and communities more holistically and efficiently. We met with Rep. Emily



Barbara Rossing with Senator Maria Cantwell and ELCA climate advocacy team in Washington, D.C.

Randall of Washington's Sixth District who is not yet a co-sponsor and encouraged her to support it. It now needs sponsors in the Senate. Senator Maria Cantwell told us she would co-sponsor the version that Senator Peters of Michigan is working on.

In- person lobbying helps build relationship connections. When seminarian Trevor Boe introduced himself to his Rep. Emily Randall as a Lutheran from Port Orchard, Congresswoman Randall responded, "my aunt just retired from working at the Lutheran church in Port Orchard." Similarly, when I told Senator Cantwell "I met you at Holden Village years ago," she responded right away, "I love Holden Village, and I would love to go back." I think that Holden connection was part of why she spent so much time with our ELCA group.

During the August recess, we have a chance to do more in-person advocacy with our elected representatives.

Thanks be to God for ELCA advocacy work!

Please consider signing up for ELCA Advocacy alerts! You will receive updates on opportunities to message elected officials, on behalf of our church:

https://give.elca.org/page/65066/subscriptions/1?_ga=2.242253314.1877825838.1738155086-2080983423.1729620824

IMMIGRATION/RACE JUSTICE GROUP (I/RJG) as submitted by Alex Schmidt

Summary, July 20th, 2026 at a private home

Present: Five participants were able to attend.

Mutual Support: *We Tequila Toasted our successful Recreational Ambassadors weekend! We then turned our attention to mutual support.*

1. Administration/Education:

- a. Our current, accurate, and updated budget account was reviewed, \$8,952.
- b. **Review of our Recreation Ambassadors** weekend, July 11,12. Thanks to Jill for organizing in Meleah's absence and for having recruited 3 Unidos club members and to Delaney whose friend participated! We were able to earn the full \$2,200 stipend.
- c. **NWIRP Immigrant Rights webinar** for businesses and packing sheds has not been finalized. Several follow-up phone calls and emails have expressed our concern.
- d. **Cascade Unitarian Universalist Fellowship** anti-racism was rescheduled for October. No response yet on an actual date. Alex brought several of the 30+ page workbooks used for show and tell.
- e. **Lwth City Grants** have reimbursed us for one of several receipts/requests for reimbursement. Alex will call Courtney with questions. The group decided to apply for 2027. *(Alex has reapplied for this grant and Courtney has approved 3/5 of our previous requests.*
 - i. YES ,6th Grade retreat, \$2,300 reimbursement was received
 - ii. YES, Student fees \$261, Driver's Ed \$1,342, checks to be sent soon.
 - iii. NO, Office Depot for sign/brochures, and WRI for DDLReyes, because money was spent in 2025, not 2026)

2. Direct Support:

- a. **Sandy Zarate** of Dance Folklorico and another member's meeting to determine options and possible ways of supporting her program has been postponed due to traveling schedules. The dance lessons have been provided for students at the Peshastin Library. The group will present their program at the annual Library's ice cream social, **Saturday, July 25, 7-9 p.m.** One of our members will check on the location of the expensive costumes purchased previously by the School District.
- b. **MEND Pool vouchers** for swim team and swim lessons were discussed. We will call MEND to get more information.
- c. **Drivers' Ed registrations** will be expected as soon as school resumes.
- d. **One of our members** brought us up to date on one of our family's son's imminent and "risky" ICE check-in on Thursday, July 22nd. The mother continues with significant medical issues. Laurie will try to accompany her son to the ICE office and has tried to contact his lawyer many times with no success. ^^*(he was not detained!)*

3. Advocacy:

One of our members participated in the **Court Accompaniment** training by WAISN and briefed the group on the major points.

NEXT MEETINGS: August 10th at Ellen's, 6 p.m. and September 21, possibly at Meleah's. Hostesses have requested that **EVERYONE** RSVP regardless of whether they are coming or not.

HANDBELLS AT FAITH LUTHERAN! by Tina Rieman

English handbells are musical instruments and maintenance is important. The two-octave set that Barbara Rossing has loaned to Faith Lutheran Church are currently at my home where I am polishing the bells one by one. The bells are bronze and can tarnish easily. Polishing bells is the first step in maintenance.

Barbara acquired the set of handbells from her father when he passed recently. Tom Rossing was an internationally known physics professor who conducted acoustical research on these handbells for the Malmark company. Malmark is one of 2 companies that manufacture handbells in the United States.



I am hoping that a small group will be formed to explore a fit for the bells at Faith Lutheran. Maybe that might start with one bell: a call to worship rung in the church simultaneously with the tower bell. Who of you would volunteer to ring that one bell each Sunday? Or maybe three or four would offer to take turns and ring once a month. Who knows what programs might grow from such a simple beginning?



Natalie Abudayyeh has spent one month in Israeli detention with no charge.

On June 2, 2026, Natalie Abudayyeh, a 21-year-old Lutheran young adult of the Church of the Reformation congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL), was abducted from her university housing at gunpoint by Israeli forces alongside three of her classmates. To date, Abudayyeh has not been charged with any offenses. It is not known why Abudayyeh was abducted or continues to be held in Israeli detention and no information has been shared with her lawyer, her family or her church. Abudayyeh's family and pastor have all been denied access to see her, and her lawyer has only been able to speak to her through a video chat.

The ELCA has named the priority to “defend the human rights of groups most susceptible to violations, especially all minorities, women, and children” in the social statement *For Peace in God's World* (p. 14). In 1 Corinthians 12:26, we are reminded: “If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.” Our voice as Americans and as Christians matters in proclaiming that Abudayyeh, her classmates and the thousands of other Palestinians being held without charge have human rights and must be treated with the dignity, respect and humanity they deserve.

Please take a moment to advocate for the release of Natalie Abudayyeh and her classmates.

Take action now

Life of Faith...



New Pastor's Office Committee "huddling" after church picnic

Look at all the Faith Lutheran friends having Happy Hour at Mountain Meadows!



Church Picnic, July 5



Taking time out from the church picnic to move the big log!

Celebrating *Raise the Roof with Faith* Sunday with “Building your own Sundae” on July 26.





Living Water
Season of Creation 2026

Immersion in Living Water
EZEKIEL 47:9, 12

COMING THIS FALL...

From September 1 to October 4, Faith will join the worldwide Christian family in the *Season of Creation* which is an ecumenical time of prayer and action to protect our common home. It is a special season where we celebrate God as Creator and acknowledge Creation as the divine continuing act that summons us as collaborators to love and care for the gift of all that is created. The theme for 2026 is “Living Water”.



Mission Statement

As disciples in Christ, we are called to incarnate the gracious, healing and reconciling presence of God through sacramental worship, congregational nurture and ministries of peace, mercy and justice for all Creation.

Vision Statement

Living in God’s amazing grace, we envision Faith Lutheran Church as a diverse beacon of hope, healing and reconciliation in a broken world.

Faith Lutheran Church is a Reconciling In Christ (RIC) congregation

We provide a safe and healing environment where people of any race, sexual orientation, gender identity, social or economic status can be nourished in their journey of faith.



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Thanks to all who contributed articles and general interest information for this newsletter! Please forward contributions to Mary Steeber at mary.steeber@gmail.com by August 24 for the September issue.