



LIFE OF FAITH

OCTOBER 2026

224 BENTON ST. (P.O. Box 418) / WWW.FLCLEAVENWORTH.COM

PASTOR AARON MUSSER: 509 548 7010 / PASTOR@FLCLEAVENWORTH.COM

From our pastor....



Fat Bear Week: an annual tournament between the many bears who make their home along Brooks River in Katmai National Park, Alaska. These bears

take the internet by storm at the end of September, with photos circulating on Facebook and Instagram showing before-and-after transformations: each bear at the beginning of spring, very thin and hungry, compared with a photo of them now, plump and well-fed.

The tournament celebrates the bears' "success in preparing for winter hibernation." The public is invited to vote for the bear they believe "best exemplifies fatness and success in brown bears." After each single-elimination round, the votes are tabulated until one remains and is crowned Fat Bear Week champion!

Ah, to be a bear whose sole goal is to get rotund on salmon before the winter chill...

The bears are familiar with the rhythm and cadence of the seasons. There is abundant food in the summer and less abundant food in the winter, so they stock up while the getting's good. The lean months are ahead, and they get busy making the necessary preparations to weather the weather.

Similarly, we look ahead to the end of the church year, with only October and November between us and Advent, the season of preparation. The bears are preparing for a deep sleep; we are preparing for abundant joy.

Even before we begin our Advent preparation for Christmas, the town of Leavenworth will surely already be celebrating. For many, October and November become a kind of cultural Advent, preparing for Christmas festivities that begin right after Halloween or Thanksgiving, depending on who you ask.

So what we might learn from the bears as we enter this season of preparation? What are the things we need to stock up on?

Maybe we stock up on moments of peace and quiet, reflective moments before the hustle and bustle of the extended Christmas season. Maybe we stock up on the delicious fruit being harvested from our orchards. Maybe we stock up on those last few chances to hike up a ridge before the winter precipitation comes (and maybe we stock up on prayers that the precipitation may be snow, rather than rain).

Thank God for fat bears, who teach us to stock up and prepare for the season of waiting and for the next celebration.

In Christ,
Pastor Aaron



What's Happening.....



Every Wednesday: Bible study from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. with Pastor Aaron. All are welcome. No preparation required. No homework and doesn't matter how familiar you are (or aren't) with the bible. Come for conversation and fellowship around the biblical texts assigned for the next Sunday. Bring friends!



Time change!

The quilting group has changed the time of their weekly meeting in the fellowship hall to 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. each Tuesday.



Sunday, October 4: St Francis Day, Blessing of Animals



St Francis of Assisi, who died on this day in 1226, was a reformer who loved God's creation. Francis's exuberance in creation's beauty is told in many stories-- how he listened to the birds in praise of their Creator; how he made a covenant with a wolf; how he renounced violence; how led in interfaith Christian-Muslim dialog. When Pope Francis became Pope, he took the name "Francis" in honor of this amazing saint, who teaches us to care for creation.

At worship we invite you to bring animals to share in blessing, as we remember St. Francis



October 8, "Watch Party": See page 6



October 14, 7:00 p.m., Snowy Owl Tickets available at: <https://icicle.my.salesforce-sites.com/ticket/#/instances/aoFPH00000EskDt2AJ>

Billy Mills is an Oglala Lakota athlete who overcame childhood orphanhood to pull off the greatest upset in Olympic distance running, becoming the first and only American to win gold in the 10,000-meter race. He created the Running Strong for American Indian Youth foundation to provide vital life-saving resources, clean water, and support to Native American communities.



*Billy Mills encourages the next generation to soar past adversity, sharing his historic journey from an orphaned childhood on the Pine Ridge Reservation to Olympic gold in his children's book, **Wings of an Eagle**.*

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING September

Pastor's Report

- Pastor Aaron to Chicago/ NYC. Preaching Oct 4: Barb Rossing, Oct 25: Liv Larsson
- Oct 12-14 Bishop's Convocation in Idaho
- Nov 2-5 'First Call' mandatory meetings at Seabeck on Hood Canal
- Taking a month-long class on Palestine – political theory and reading primary sources about the motivations behind the Zionist movement. Hopes to be a Samud Ambassador for the Synod to help congregations with resources advocating for justice and peace in Palestine.
- Working with Saxon Spillman, professor at Wenatchee Valley College, creating a new leadership model to include indigenous people and their thinking.
- New password-protected online directory launched and running. Added a giving page.
- AI Adult Forum: Sept 27. Possible series in Lent about end-of-life matters.
- Joint retreat brewing for cluster church members with the theme "Cultivation," possibly in February. Also, more talk about doing our own FLC overnight retreat.



Treasurer's Report

- *Raise the Roof* funds will be enough to finish the office project. Hurrah!
- Monthly contributions for August okay, but still \$12,000 behind for the year.

Property Committee

- Temporary door / lock for the new pastor's office installed and tools now moved into that space.
- Alpine Roofing made bid on roofing.
- New church insurance with State Farm completed after a long list of have-to's met (panic bars, exit signs, electrical fixes,.....)
- Florea's have donated a new electric lawnmower. Thank you Carl and Deb!

Worship Committee

- Aaron contacting Mountain Meadows about Christmas Day service.

Earth Stewardship Committee

- Next meeting: Sept. 29/ Considering recycling at Ambassador sites on the river.

New Business:

- Synod grant request submitted by Alex Schmidt for Immigration Justice funds.
- Pastor's one year evaluation still needs to be scheduled with the executives.
- Nominating Committee: Barb Rossing, Leesa Broker, John Schramm. Karl will contact.
- Oktoberfest Ambassadors: Still need more

Next Meeting: October 15, 6:00PM

New
Members!

On September 6, Faith Lutheran welcomed 8 new members during worship. Jim and Joan McCord, Rick and Pat Thirlby, Mike and Paula Martin, Tina Reiman and Camille Stemm made public profession of their faith and promised to continue their lives in Christ. The gathered community in turn promised to support and pray for them with God's help and guidance.



IMMIGRATION/RACE JUSTICE GROUP (I/RJG) as submitted by Alex Schmid, September meeting

Present: Seven members were able to attend with 3 special visiting guests, two of whom were charter I/RJG members since 2012.

The visiting coordinator and principal organizer for Wenatchee for Immigrant Justice (WIJ) spoke at length about the work WIJ is doing in the Wenatchee Valley. This includes trainings, accompaniments to ICE office check-ins, monitoring ICE activity, supporting immigrant families, and rapid response team deployments. We expressed our gratitude that she came to have a meal with us and to bring us up to date on their activities and possible ways in which we could collaborate with WIJ.:

Administration/Education:

- a. Our current, accurate, and updated budget account was reviewed. We have not yet received the \$2,200 from the Chamber for our Rec. Ambassador's weekend. *(Alex has sent them a note of inquiry)*
- b. **NWIRP Immigrant Rights webinar** digital flyer has been prepared by one of our talented and skilled members and has been put in the Lwth Chamber's September 23 newsletter *(it has also been sent to the Wenatchee and Cashmere Chamber's offices)*. Those who are able will gather for the watch party at FLC on Thursday, Oct. 8th, **4:45pm to set up dining tables**, info table, screen and projector, and prepare the food. \$280 was sent to Maria Rodriguez for 8 dozen tamales. No word on registrations or RSVP's.
- c. No firm confirmation yet on **Cascade United Universalist Fellowship's** tentatively scheduled Building Bridges anti-racism workshop, Nov. 13, 14.
- d. Support continued for having a community **Building Bridges workshop** at Snowy Owl in early next February. ICCA has been contacted with a favorable response. After some discussion, it was decided that the workshop should be on one weekday rather than splitting it up into two evening sessions.
- e. **Special thanks** to our member for the fine creative work she has done on the Business webinar flyer and the revision of the Building Bridges flyer.
- f. It was suggested that the I/RJG reserve an information table for the **City's Community Engagement night**, November 17th, from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Perhaps we would be able to prepare for an "info" sheet for the table. Several volunteered *(Alex has submitted the application and it has been approved)*.

Direct Support:

- a. One of our members presented needs for rental assistance for two families whom we have previously helped. We agreed to extend to each \$500. One, a single mom with two adult sons, will need to reapply for Asylum status again with a new lawyer. The legal costs may be as much as \$12,000 for each.
- b. **Driver's Education** registration cost of \$900 was reimbursed to one of our members who covered the expenses for two Cascade HS students. Each students' family contributed \$150. Sherry suggested that students who receive I/RJG assistance send thank you cards to the I/RJG with our logo on them and be encouraged to participate in our Rec. Ambassador's weekend July 17, 18 of next year.
- c. The **Small Scholarship application** to be used by students for educational fees is being revised. Other Unidos students will work this month on preparing a number of **citizenship educational flash card** sets. Also it was mentioned that the **folklorico dance program** at Cascade School District did not buy costumes but rented them. The principal of PD Elementary is applying for a \$2,500 grant for this seasonal program (w/two age groups) which we would also like to support,

perhaps with matching funds. We would also seek to contract with a local seamstress to help make the costumes.

- d. **English Classes** will begin Tuesday at the Peshastin-Dryden library Oct. 6th, 6:p.m. and **Citizenship Classes** on Thursday, Oct 15, 4:30 p.m.

Advocacy: Continue to support financially, as you are able, to those organizations that support and advocate for immigrant justice and have the ability to influence state and national policies, such as Faith Action Network (<https://fanwa.org>) and Global Refuge (<https://globalrefuge.org>)

NEXT MEETINGS: October 19th and Nov. 16th. Call Alex 509.548.7012 for details. Hostesses have requested that **EVERYONE** RSVP regardless of whether they are coming.

A very important "Watch Party" hosted by our Immigration/Race Justice Group.

BUSINESS WEBINAR

IMMIGRANT EMPLOYEE SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

OCT. 8

WEBINAR STARTS @6 PM

Presentation will include:

- how to protect employees from ICE enforcement
- know your rights
- what to expect in I-9 inspections

PLEASE RSVP FOR THE WATCH PARTY



WATCH ONLINE



...and look at this!

ATTEND A WATCH PARTY

TAMALES SERVED @ 5:30 PM

Faith Lutheran Church
224 Benton St,
Leavenworth, WA 98826

Hosted by Immigration/Race Justice Group

Please RSVP

Presented by NWImmigrant Rights Project (NWIRP)
Organized by Leavenworth Immigration Race Justice Group

Retire Fossil Fuels from Your Retirement Funds

By Barbara Rossing

Environmental leaders such as Bill McKibben emphasize that divesting our own retirement funds from fossil fuel companies and from banks that fund fossil fuel pipelines, is an important way we can care for God's creation.

In July I participated in an ELCA Intergenerational Climate Advocacy Immersion in Washington DC. Get this: I was more than twice the age of the other participants! We were pleased to learn that our church's investments are 100% invested in funds that screen out fossil fuels and other harmful products. This includes Faith Lutheran's Endowment fund and other congregation's funds invested at the ELCA.

But each pastor has a choice of where their own retirement money is invested at Portico, the ELCA's retirement plan. We were surprised to learn that only 30% of ELCA clergy retirement money is

invested in the ELCA's retirement plan's funds that screen out fossil fuels.

So four of our participants made an ad hoc 4-minute video:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/1ljYcZtdaKVBXv4VbkWTHhSkW9T3faZ2w>

with the goal of persuading pastors and other members of Portico to "retire fossil fuels" from their investments.

The video is totally unofficial – just four of us trying to make the light-hearted case for investing in Social Purpose funds. We are glad the video has been shown to all 65 bishops, and we hope it will be widely used throughout the ELCA.

Wherever your own retirement money is, all of us can look for ways to "retire fossil fuels from your retirement."

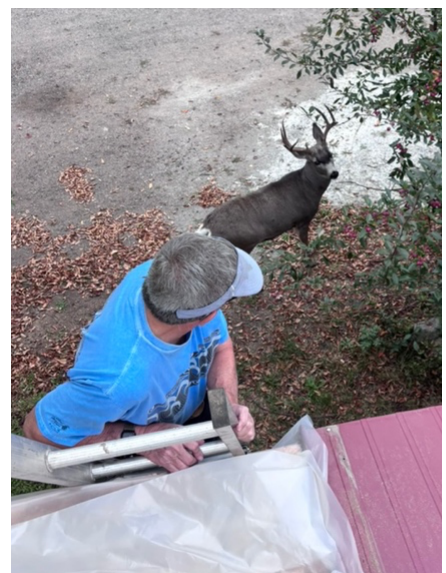


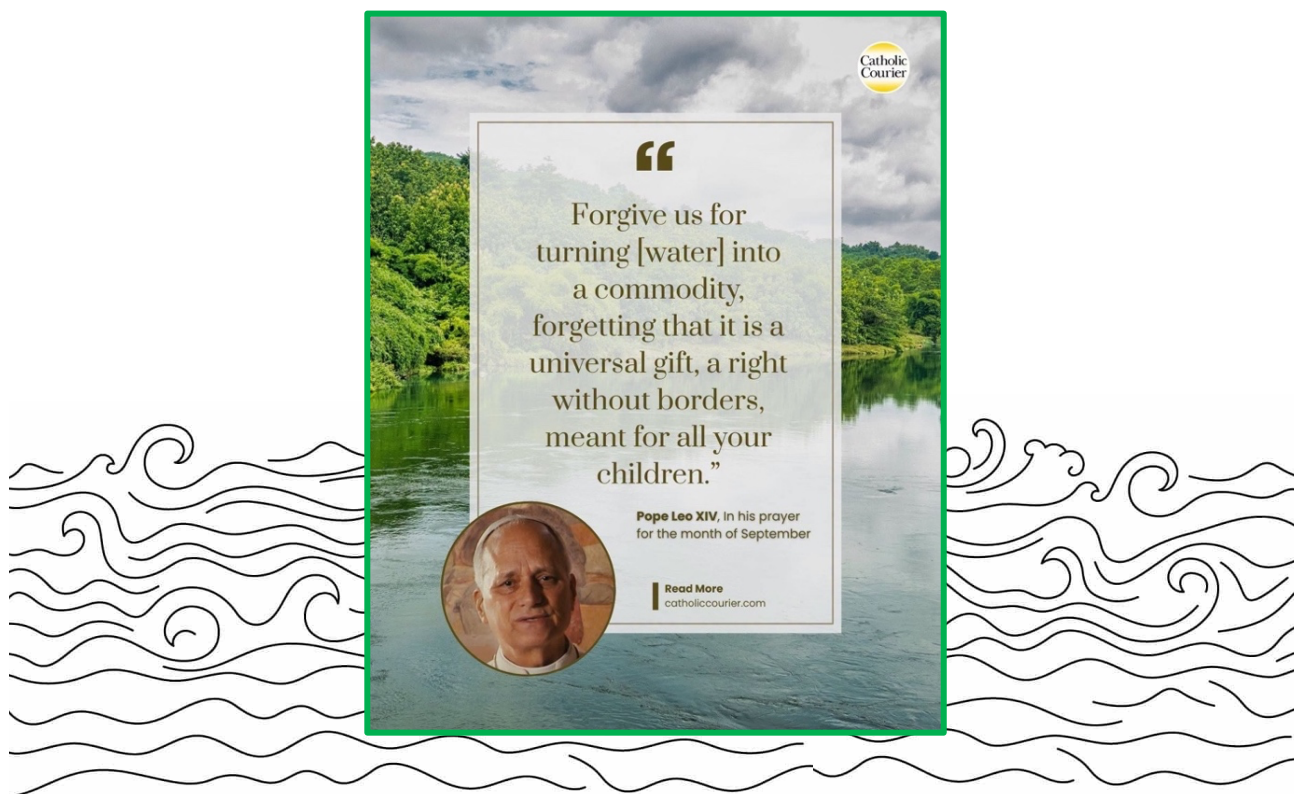
Faith Babies enjoying our recent church picnic.....



Alex and Stacy's daughter Grace and granddaughter, Brisa Peacock holds Elora Kenly Salavarría and Pete and Marcy's daughter Ivyl Speigel Ostrom holds Asha Ruth Ostrem.

Thank you construction workers!





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.



+++++

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 October 26 for the November issue.