

# FAITH | ALIVE

NOVEMBER 2020

## Here We Still Stand: The Bible

A Message from Pastor Jerry | Page 3

## The Person I Aspire To

A Message from Pastor Mark | Page 4

*Military Prayer List*.....Page 5

*2020 Christmas Toy Drive*..... Page 6

*"Thank You!"* .....Page 7

*Happy Birthdays*..... Page 8

*General News*..... Page 9

*Monthly Financials*..... Page 10



# *I Give Thanks to God*

A Message from Pastor Bruce | Page 2

# I Give Thanks to God

*A message from Pastor Bruce*

## **Dear Friends in Christ –**

I give thanks to God for many things:

- I thank the Lord for you, the people of Faith. Men, women and children have served the Lord as members of our congregation since November of 1955. Each generation has faced unique challenges and opportunities for service and discipleship. Your witness to the Gospel of Christ and support of our life and mission as a congregation bless people here in Albuquerque and around the world.
- I thank the Lord for Senior Pastor elect Jerry Watts, Associate Pastor Mark Behenna and Vicar Scott Strachan. When I served on the Ministry Board and Board of Trustees of our church body, people across the nation asked me again and again, “Where will our pastors come from in the future?” LCMC was just getting started back then and many church members in our sister congregations worried about the future. Pastors continue to “come from” the same place as always....healthy, vibrant, mission-minded congregations like Faith! Pray for Jerry, Mark and Scott as servant leaders in our community of Faith. They need and deserve your Christian love in these challenging times.
- I thank the Lord for my wife, Kirsten. During my last year of seminary before heading to my first congregation in 1984, one professor spoke to a gathering of seminary spouses. His words are still with me to this day. He told Kirsten and the others, “It is harder being married to a pastor than being a pastor. I pray for you as the time draws near for your spouses to go to their first churches. It will be difficult in ways you can only imagine now, but will soon enough experience firsthand. God give you strength and peace.” Kirsten has functioned in many ways as a single parent through the years when my duties and responsibilities prevented me from being at home with our children. On Sunday mornings, I was never there to have breakfast with my family and help get four daughters ready for worship. I was called away from too many birthdays, recitals, family vacations...and even Christmas mornings at home...when members of the congregations I served needed their pastor during emergencies, tragedies and untimely deaths. Kirsten never complained. She did her part faithfully so I could do mine.
- I thank the Lord for this nation. I have not traveled as extensively as some of you, but I have traveled enough to know that our freedom in this country is a blessing and nothing to be taken for granted. I am grateful for our way of life, especially the First Amendment to the Constitution. Our religious freedom must never be taken for granted. Those before us made tremendous sacrifices so that we would not live under tyranny and oppression. Honor them with me by the way in which you serve and worship the living God today.

*Your brother in Christ,*

*Dr. W. Bruce Wilder, Senior Pastor*

# Here We Still Stand - The Bible

*A message from Pastor Jerry*

## **Dear Friends in Christ –**

In a sermon on March 10th in 1522, Martin Luther said, “I did nothing; the Word did everything.” We stand on this Word in 2020 and will stand on the Word everyday ahead.

As I mentioned in last month’s article, over the next several months we will be digging into our confession of Faith found here on our website: <http://www.faithabq.org/welcome/beliefs/>

Together we will explore these confessions and how we can make such bold and confident claims.

We begin where the world began, with God’s Word. With a Word, our Heavenly Father spoke life into existence and by His Word we continue to live and breathe. In 2 Timothy 3:16-17 we read:

*EVERY SCRIPTURE IS INSPIRED BY GOD AND USEFUL FOR TEACHING, FOR REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION, AND FOR TRAINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, THAT THE PERSON DEDICATED TO GOD MAY BE CAPABLE AND EQUIPPED FOR EVERY GOOD WORK. (NET)*

This means that God’s Word is how we orientate what we believe and how we live. As the people of God at Faith Lutheran we therefore confess,

*WE BELIEVE AND TEACH THAT THE BIBLE IS THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD AND THE AUTHORITATIVE SOURCE AND NORM OF THE CHURCH’S PROCLAMATION, FAITH AND LIFE. THE TRUTH WE LEARN IN THE BIBLE IS BOTH RELIABLE AND DEPENDABLE FOR BELIEVING AND LIVING AS FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST.*  
<http://www.faithabq.org/welcome/beliefs/>

Why such confidence in God’s Word when so many today say it is outdated and unreliable? In this brief conversation I will articulate why the Bible reflects remarkable truth, reliable history, and is relevant to our reality.

The Scriptures reflect remarkable truth from beginning to end. However unlike any other ancient text about God it not only tells us Jesus rose from the dead, but that its historical reality anchor its confession. In other words, it says if the resurrection didn’t happen, our faith would be in vain. The Scriptures record the resurrection with over 500 eyewitnesses, is referred to by non-Biblical historians, and includes women as the first eyewitness (important because if you were fabricating an account you wouldn’t have women as the first eyewitness in a patriarchal society). These are just a few pieces of the vast evidence for the historicity of the resurrection. And of course, if the resurrection is true then so is every other claim in the Bible. Remarkable truth points to the reliable Word.

God’s Word also reflects reliable history with archeological evidence, a willingness to show unflattering details, vast numbers of consistent scrolls, and the early first century account. I focus on just two of those examples for brevity. The Pilate Stone, a replica seen in the picture below with Faith members in Caesarea Maritima not far from where it was found in 1961. This stone confirmed the Biblical account of Pontus Pilate as governor in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus’ crucifixion. What once was challenged has now been confirmed archeologically. Early documentation reflects historical accuracy and allows for eyewitness confirmation. Apostles like Peter, Paul, or early disciples like Luke wrote very early accounts. For example, we know Luke’s first volume, his Gospel, was written before Acts which never mentions Paul or Peter’s death – key leaders in the church, facts he wouldn’t have left out. This reflects a first-person early account of the Bible’s absolute confession of Christ as Lord.

Finally, the Bible is reliable because it reflects the reality of our human condition and the human heart. The history of the world reflects the imperfection of humanity and the Bible diagnoses the heart not as we wish it would be but as it really is. Thankfully we have a God who came to the cross not with wishful thinking but with sacrificial love.

God’s Word is reliable and leading us to Christ alone. As you think about and pray about what we believe and confess as the people of God, I pray that like Luther who staked his life on God’s Word, we too can confess, “God’s Word does everything”.

*Here We Still Stand In Christ,*

*Dr. Jerry Watts, Senior Pastor Elect*



# The Person I Aspire To...

*A message from Pastor Mark*

**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

A new pastor always begins an introductory stage of their ministry upon arrival at a new call. Honored and inspired by the congregation's vote of confidence, the new pastor is eager to meet everyone and to begin the process of building a shared walk of faith. The COVID precautions we live with have made this process more difficult than is normal; and so, as I write this, I am aware that you want to get to know me as much as I wish to share in your life's story even as there is this unnatural distance between us.

I'd like to introduce myself a bit, but at the same time I don't want to appear immodest. So, I thought I'd begin our getting-to-know-you process by describing who I aspire to be. My model is a person you don't likely know at all ... his name is Pr. Timothy J. Kielley.

Pr. Kielley was called out of seminary to be an associate pastor for a couple of years. Then he was asked to take over another congregation named St. John, in Littlestown, Pennsylvania. St. John had been founded before our country was, but it had fallen on hard times in the early 1990's. Their previous pastor had split with the Lutheran tradition and started a new congregation just blocks away. My friend was charged with "gracefully closing" St. John upon his arrival.

When Tim greeted that congregation for worship on their first Sunday together, there were but twenty-four souls present. Undaunted, he had prepared some cheesy-looking fish cut out of colorful construction paper. Each fish was hung from a length of yarn so that it could be worn like a necklace. My mentor hung one of these necklaces around each person's neck that first Sunday and charged the wearer with a simple instruction: They were to wear this necklace to worship on each Sunday which followed until they brought someone else to worship with them. When they brought that new person, they were to pass that cheesy necklace on to the person they had invited.

Seven years later, Pr. Kielley and I happened to meet as I was beginning my seminary education. He invited me to assist him at his church every Sunday. (I learned far more in my time with him than I ever did in the seminary classroom.) When I was introduced to the good people of St. John, their membership had grown to 750 souls. There were times when members would invite Jessica and I to lunch at their home following worship. A surprising number of those who hosted us had a curled up construction paper fish hanging in a conspicuous place in their living room. Again and again, their stories connected to those cheesy necklaces were lovingly recounted over the course of our afternoons together.

I remember interviewing Pr. Kielley for one of my seminary assignments as I asked him, "Why has your ministry been so successful, after all, you were sent to St. John to close this congregation. His answer was brief and to the point: "I love them," he said. His ministry showed that he valued most what Jesus commanded us all: "Love the Lord your God, and love your neighbor as your self." He certainly loved the Lord and he labored joyfully in calling others to do the same. And Pr. Tim certainly loved others, he loved me ... my only regret is that I wasn't there to receive one of those fish necklaces myself.

Pr. Kielley was called to his heavenly reward far too early for my selfish tastes. I must trust that the Lord knows best in these things. But I will be eternally grateful for the many things this Godly man did to guide me through my twenty years of seminary and ministry. I may never be the pastor he was, but his example will always be what I aspire to be in service to Jesus Christ, and to you, my newest brothers and sisters.

I am excited by the prospects of our ministry together, and I look forward to getting to know you as soon as it is wise and safe to do so. But mostly, as did my mentor, I look forward to building our relationships to the point where our stories are bound, if not by fish necklaces, than at least by our mutual service in building His kingdom.

*May God's blessings be upon you,*

*Mark Behenna, Associate Pastor*

# Military Prayer List

Prepared by: Kirsten Wilder, Adult Ministry

Dominic Anderson  
John Bohnhoff  
Daniel Brinson  
Jeremiah Brinson  
Brandi Brown  
James Butcher  
Rebecca Castillo  
William Cheshire  
Mark Ciesielski  
Chad Craner  
Melissa Craner  
Timothy Everhard  
Joshua Fanning  
William Fink  
Russ Graef  
James Hansen  
Chris Hinnerichs  
Alec Kainer  
Robert Krause  
Phillip Levison  
Ryan Loyd  
Matthew Lueders

Gaetano Mangano  
Jonathan McDivitt  
Daniel Miranda  
Ian Moss  
Faun O'Brien  
Ryan O'Brien  
Melissa Peterson  
Carl Powell  
Jason F. Ruetschilling  
Sean Ryan  
Brandon Saxton  
Dominique Tinsley  
Courtney Werth  
William Werth  
Craig Wheeler  
Canyon Wilder  
Patrick Winkels  
*\* New Addition*



# The 2020 Christmas Toy Drive!



***There will be a Christmas Toy Drive at Faith this year! Your gift donations will go a long way to help make a needy child (or children) thankful this holiday season!***

***Toy Drive Dates: December 5th - December 13th 2020***

Our Mission & Service Team is happy to announce that Faith Lutheran will be having an UNWRAPPED TOY DRIVE this Christmas Season. All proceeds will be going to The Salvation Army to distribute to needy children.

Christmas seems like a long ways away, but with more people shopping online than ever, we want to give plenty of time for those online purchases to arrive in time for this collection.

Salvation Army is requesting "Unwrapped" toys for children ages 6 months – 12 years of age, as well as new socks and underwear. In years past, gifts for girls ages 9-12 have been slim, so keep that in mind when shopping (**no** laugh-out-loud [LOL] dolls, please).

Collections will begin at the Church at all Church services on December 5th and end Sunday, December 13th. Your gift(s) will be a special blessing to a special child this Christmas. Thank you for your generosity.

*Mission & Service Team*



# “Thank You!”

*Prepared by: Kirsten Wilder, Adult Ministry*

## **Dear Friends,**

Thank you! We recently received your gift of \$800, supporting the life-changing work of The Salvation Army. On any given day in our community, The Salvation Army reaches out and touches the lives of men, women and children in desperate need. Because of your gift, we will be able to provide meals for the hungry, lodging and shelter for the hurting and homeless, and provide social services to a growing number of our struggling neighbors.

We feel privileged that you have chosen to place your confidence in us through your generous gift, and for your partnership in assisting those who are in need. You help us to continue to do the most good in our community.

*May God bless you as you continue to bless others,*

*Majors Dwaine & Deborah Breazeale, Corps Commanding Officers*

# Happy Birthdays

Prepared by: Diane Wilder, Church Office

- |           |  |           |  |
|-----------|--|-----------|--|
| <b>1</b>  | Jamison Calvert, Susan Ellenwood, Diana Haven, Matt Meyer, Campbell Roberts, Nathan Roberts                        | <b>16</b> | Alan Brackett, Linda Hansen  |
| <b>2</b>  | Patricia Forshaw, Damian Hausermann, Jeremy Oswald, Morgan Ramirez, Lois Stueber                                   | <b>17</b> | Susan Craycraft  |
| <b>3</b>  | J.R. Arnold, Paula Martin  | <b>18</b> | Art Humphries, Kenneth Lachmann, Kirsten Wilder                      |
| <b>4</b>  | Harper Kist, Lori Steward, Clardel Walker  | <b>19</b> | Dylan Blomker, Linda Oberdorfer, Diane Sedillo                       |
| <b>5</b>  | Bryn Orell   | <b>20</b> | Sue Dederman, Derek Etcorn, Janice Gale, Jayson Wintermute-Covel     |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>NO BIRTHDAYS</b>  | <b>21</b> | Ashley Walker, Naomi Walker  |
| <b>7</b>  | Marleta Anderson, Matt Bohnhoff, Kent Childs, Megan Eickman, Stephanie Goodrich                                    | <b>22</b> | Janiece Mattison, Gayle Puls   |
| <b>8</b>  | Jim Cumiford, Pam Limke, Keith Miller, Rob Pease   | <b>23</b> | Heidi Beakley, Marcia Castillo, Ann Greenberg, Joyce Thom            |
| <b>9</b>  | William Cottle, Robert Des Jardin, Marie Hall, Scott Lasher, Sarit Mall, Jacob Oswald                              | <b>24</b> | Meghan Frankland   |
| <b>10</b> | David Abbott, Alex Ellenwood, Tom Kirby, Liberty Watts   | <b>25</b> | Tony Sill  |
| <b>11</b> | Ann Bolton, Doris Condon, John Hausermann, Kathy Hedemann, Iris Kelly, Declan Lauckner, Jon Schwenke, Bonnie Smith | <b>26</b> | Sandra Johnson, Christy Strachan                                     |
| <b>12</b> | Nancy Thurow   | <b>27</b> | Ethan Chesser, Amy Gee, Marianne Lasher                              |
| <b>13</b> | Matt Burger, Kyle Fuller, Eric Jorgensen   | <b>28</b> | Howard Ahlness, Peggy Williams                                       |
| <b>14</b> | Shawn Stewart  | <b>29</b> | Joshua Burns, Wayne Davis, Aaron Frankland, Gina Meyer, Diane Wilder |
| <b>15</b> | <b>NO BIRTHDAYS</b>  | <b>30</b> | Terry Hinnerichs, Isabel Miranda                                     |



# GENERAL NEWS

Prepared by: Kirsten Wilder, Adult Ministry; Diane Wilder, Church Office; Kathy O'Connor, Administrative Assistant

## Recent Deaths

*Cathy McDivitt's sister-in-law, Tammy Piotrowski, passed away on September 19, 2020*

*Irene Catanach passed away on September 26, 2020*

*Hal and Nancy Lewin's sister-in-law, Bonnie Lewin, passed away on October 4*

*Karl Max, brother-in-law of Carol Prewitt, passed away on October 5*

*Pam Zimmerman's sister, Mary, passed away on October 7*

*Connor Dix, son of Matthew & Amber Dix and grandson of Everett & Cheryl Dix, passed away on October 20, 2020*

## Hospital & Home Visits

Hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation units, and other medical facilities currently prohibit visits by our pastors. However, we ask you to please call the church office to let us know of hospitalizations, illnesses, and situations of need. Our prayers continue for all those in need of healing, comfort, and peace.

## Prayer Chains

Volunteers for this ministry respond to all prayer requests by praying for the names they receive. All requests are confidential. To notify us of a prayer need, contact the church office at 505.296.0762.

## LCMC

Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ is an association of independent, evangelical and mission driven congregations grounded in the Scriptures and working together to fulfill Christ's Great Commission to go and make disciples of all nations. **Website:** [www.lcmc.net](http://www.lcmc.net)

**Faith Lutheran Church**

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Website: [www.faithabq.org](http://www.faithabq.org)

**Faith Alive Newsletter**

Website: [alive.faithabq.org](http://alive.faithabq.org)

**Children of Faith Preschool**

Website: [www.cofschoo.com](http://www.cofschoo.com)

Current Resident or...

**Thank the Lord for:**

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# Monthly Financials

*Prepared by: Amber Webb Otero, Director of Operations*

	<b>MONTH OF SEPTEMBER</b>	<b>YEAR-TO-DATE AS OF 09/30/20</b>	<b>YEAR-TO-DATE COMPARISON OF OFFERINGS</b>
<b>OFFERINGS</b>	\$103,125	\$1,025,869	
<b>BUDGET</b>	\$159,598	\$1,436,382	(\$410,513)
<b>EXPENSES</b>	\$129,112	\$1,131,302	(\$105,433)

*Please note: Expenses are subject to change pending the Annual Financial review.*

Monthly Budget

	Planned	Actual
Income	\$ _____	\$ _____
Salary	\$ _____	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____	\$ _____