



February Newsletter 2024

**“Inviting ALL to Live
the Gospel through
Faith, Love, and
Compassion”**

10970 185th Street West ♦ Lakeville MN 55044 ♦ 952-435-5757 ♦ www.familyofchrist.com

Message from Pastor

Dear Family Friends,

In Lent, we're reminded that, again and again, suffering and brokenness find us. We doubt again, we lament again, we mess up again. Again and again, the story of Jesus on the cross repeats—every time lives are taken unjustly, every time the powerful choose corruption and violence, every time individuals forget how to love. With exasperation we exclaim, “Again?! How long, O God?” And yet, in the midst of the chaos of our lives, God offers a sacred refrain: “I choose you, I love you, I will lead you to repair.” Again and again, God breaks the cycle and offers us a new way forward.

I invite you to join us in a time when much is unclear. We come to God again and again with our prayers, our dreams, our hopes, and our doubts. We will continue to be community to one another—especially when it's hard—by choosing each other over and over again. We will continue to love God with the same persistence God chooses and claims us. Join us this Lent as, again and again, we bring all of who we are to God and trust that God will meet us, time and again, along the way.

Peace,

Pastor Brent



10 Years with Pastor Brent Celebration Sunday, February 18, 2024

As of January, Pastor Brent will have been at Family of Christ for 10 years. Some amazing changes have taken place over that time and we would like to invite you to come and celebrate with us. We will be having a special worship service and a brunch afterwards. To sign-up to help with brunch, a clipboard will be available in the Narthex or a Signup Genius online ([click here](#)).

If you are interested, you may also contribute toward a congregational gift for Pastor Brent in a few ways:

1. On-line [click here](#) (you can use the miscellaneous donation classification and add a note in the comment field).
2. We will also have special envelopes available from the ushers at worship for the next few Sundays.

Contact Linda at the church office (linda@familyofchrist.com) if you have any questions.

Finally, if you have any pictures of Pastor Brent with us over the past 10 years, please share for a slideshow. Contact Dana for the Shutterfly link or email to her at Dana@familyofchrist.com.



Sunday Lent Worship Series - Again and Again

Feb 18th Again & Again, God Meets Us

Feb 25th Again & Again, We Are Called to Listen

March 3th Again & Again, We are Shown the Way

March 10th Again & Again, God Loves First

March 17st Again & Again, We are Reformed

March 24th Palm Sunday Again & Again, We call on Courage



Ash Wednesday Worship February 14

We begin our Lenten journey with Ash Wednesday. This service is an invitation to observe a holy Lent through the practices of prayer, worship, service, creativity, and community.

Join us at 6:40pm on February 14th as we start our Journey towards Easter.



Wednesday Nights in Lent Contemporary Parables and Holden Evening Prayer

Join us on Wednesdays during Lent as we look at famous parables through a modern lens. We will relive these stories through theater and storytelling where all can be involved. Lent is the perfect time to commit or recommit to a spiritual discipline, as we enter a season of self-examination in preparation for Easter. Lent Worship at 6:40pm.

Lent Suppers

We will begin the community meal of soup and sandwiches Wednesdays during Lent on February 21st.

Come and bring your family from 6:00-6:30pm as we gather before worship.

We need help with food for the Lent Soup Suppers! Please sign up on the clipboards in the Narthex or online to bring soup, sandwiches, dessert or other items. ([click here](#)).

Food needs to be here by 5:45pm



Adult Education

Join us after worship from 10:45-11:30 starting February 4th for an informal time of bible study and topics of faith. We will meet in the Conference room next to the office. This season we will be looking at the Gospel of Mark through the music and teaching of Marty Haugen as well as discussing "Difficult Topics in Healthy Ways" and how our faith may speak to them. All are welcome and no experience necessary.





Sharing our Stories...

There are countless ways in which my life has been impacted by being a part of the Family of Christ Community. A time in my life, when I was called to rely heavily on my faith, and community was almost 5 years ago when my husband passed away unexpectedly. This was just before our World changed in so many ways, due to the Covid Pandemic. One of the ways I volunteered at FOC was helping with the bi-monthly American Red Cross Blood Mobile, which uses our church as home base. There were, and are an amazing group of people who help the Red Cross run the events, and I joined the team. I got to know many of our members who were regular donors, members of the Lakeville Lions, and a group of "kitchen" ladies who always showed up, showed kindness and hospitality to the staff and donors and stayed until the last donor was leaving. These women- Glenda, Doris R. , Sandy, Audrey, Sheila, Janeen, Doris P, Shirlee and others became my trusted confidants- my mentors and friends. I don't know what I would have done without them when my husband died, as they circled around me and shared their wisdom and love as did so many other members of our congregation. One of the things I value most about our community is that Pastor Brent, our amazing staff, congregation and volunteers impact so many in such great ways. There are so many ways to get to know others through volunteering and I encourage everyone to do so in some way. For me, it has enriched my life and my circle of friends.

Martha Johnson



South Metro Mobile Pack Feb. 5-10, 2024

Scan the QR code to learn more,
or visit southmetromobilepack.org



Come join in at the South Metro Mobile Packing Event at Hosanna Church.
You may sign up for any shift during the week of Feb. 5th-10th.
The goal is packing 2 million meals. 8000 Volunteers are needed to make this happen.
**Family of Christ is designating Thursday night shift from 6-8:30
and Saturday 12:00-2:00 shift (childcare is available.)**

Go to the FMSC website to register or use the link on the FOC Facebook Page.

Women's Ministry Soul Sisters

Thanks to all who participated in the Women's Advent Luncheon. It was so wonderful to gather together. Thanks to all who donated baskets and purchased tickets. Your generosity raised \$1,695 for 360 Communities - our biggest fundraiser yet! Combine with the November noisy offering and other gifts we were able to donate over \$2,445 to 360 Communities Food Shelf. What a blessing! Special thanks to those who helped set up, sell tickets, clear tables, wash dishes, bring food, etc. It takes a village to hold such an event - so thanks. We hope to have more women's gatherings in 2024!



THANK YOU! Volunteers

Special "Thanks" to all those that helped or participated in our Advent and Christmas worship this year. From the Holden Worship, to the Community Band, to the Christmas Pageant, to the Christmas Eve Service, we have been doing community together, all thanks to you. You are all so appreciated.

Trinity Care Center

Thanks to all who participated in and gave gifts to Trinity Care Center. It was fabulous to have such a big crowd. We sang songs and delivered and opened gifts for more than 70 residents. Thanks to Kristin Cuddigan for organizing.



Youth Schedule:

Jan 31: Dinner, Confirmation, Youth Group
 Feb 7: Dinner, Confirmation, Youth Group
 Feb. 14: NO Programming- Ash Wednesday
 Feb. 21: Soup Dinner, Lenten Service, Combined C/YG
 Feb 24: Community Dinner and Game Night
 Feb 28: Soup Dinner, Lenten Service, Combined C/YG

YOUTH GAME NIGHT Friday, March 1st

Do you love games and hanging out with friends? Are you a 6th-12th grader? If so, then come join the group on Friday, February March 1st from 6:30-9:00. Games are provided: Pit, Exploding Kittens, Taco-Cat-Goat-Cheese-Pizza, One Night Ultimate Werewolf, and of course Grogg. Feel free to bring your own favorite games. Bring a snack or drinks to share if you can!



Sunday School Schedule

Jan 28: Sunday School- movie and activities
 Feb 4: Sunday School
 Feb. 11: Sunday School
 Feb 18: NO SS- 10 Year Celebration and Brunch
 Feb. 24: Community Dinner and Game Night
 Feb. 25: Sunday School

Community Dinner and Game Night

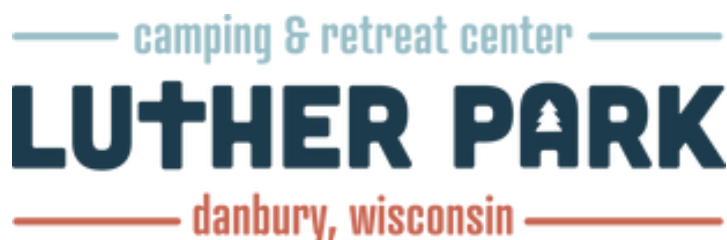
Saturday, February 24th

Come one, come all to an All-Ages Game Night at Family of Christ for fellowship and fun. We will be playing games in the MPR on Saturday, Feb 24th. Dinner beforehand starting at 5:30...games will follow at around 6:00. Bring your own games if you want. Popcorn will be served as well. See clipboard or sign-up genius to help with the dinner.



Luther Park Opportunities 2024

Attention Family of Christ kids and parents!
 Luther Park has a special week planned for our youth.
 \$150 scholarship will be given to each camper
 July 21-24 Grades 1-4 Half Week Cabin Camp
 July 21-26 Grades 3-6 Full Week Cabin Camp
 July 21-26 Grades 7-12 Full Week Treehouse Camp
 Go to www.lutherpark.com to register





February Mission of the Month Planting Hope

Family of Christ is one of the 110 congregations and mission starts in the Saint Paul Area Synod. We are excited to join together with the synod for the Planting Hope Campaign, a three-year effort to adapt to changing realities and equip a vibrant church for the future.

These campaign's four areas of focus include:

- Inviting neighbors into life in Christ
- Renewing the congregations of the synod
- Raising up the next generations of leaders
- Investing in a transformative project on the East Side of St. Paul with Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota.



Thanks for all your generosity in the last year.
Through your gifts of treasure, time, and talent we have done
amazing things in God's name.
Come and join us for the Annual Meeting after church on
January 28nd to see exactly what we did.
You can watch online as well.

***"FoCus" is a monthly publication of Family of Christ Lutheran Church.
Please contact the church office to submit items for publication in our newsletter.***

Family of Christ Staff Ministry Team:

Lead Pastor:	Pastor Brent Erler
Church Administrator:	Linda Bauer
Children, Family and Outreach Coordinator:	Dana Sahlin
Musicians:	Mary Wescott Ann Mikiska Solveig Englund Kim & Steve Wolff
Custodian:	Kelly Kritsberg

Family of Christ Lutheran Church
is a member of the **ELCA**

Email us at:
office@familyofchrist.com
Visit us at: www.familyofchrist.com
Telephone: 952-435-5757

FROM: Usokami Parish

To: Family of Christ.

Praise the Lord. Happy New Year. This is a New Year greetings from Usokami sisters and brothers in Christ. We love you so much and we will keep on praying for you.


This year 2023, we taught a confirmation class with 28 students. We thank God that all of them were confirmed on Sunday 17th December. At the same day we baptized 4 adults. On Tuesday December 26th also we baptized 11 children.

I am writing to give thanks for the funds you sent for avocado project. We purchased a land, manure and avocado seedlings, ready to be planted in January 2024. We are now preparing the land by cleaning or cutting down unwanted trees to make it a farm suitable for planting Avocados. All members are so excited and happy. Thank you so much.

The members are asking, when are you planning to visit us again? This means we miss you. When you come, beside of other things, we will be happy to show you the avocado farm as well.

Happy New Year

Pastor Pascal Fyataga (Parish Pastor)
Yusuph Kiswaga (Parish Secretary)



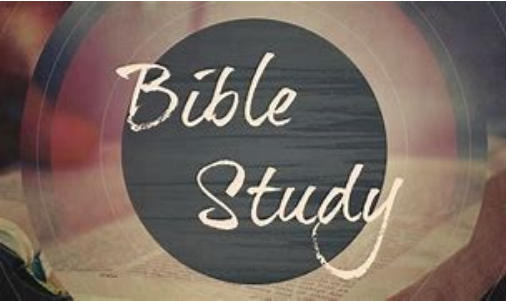
**RED CROSS
BLOOD DRIVE**

**Tuesday, February 13
11:30am to 5:30 pm**

To donate blood, go to www.redcrossblood.org
Contact Glenda Lind for more information.

**Women's Bible Study
Monday, February 5**

The October Women's Bible Study will held at
10:00am on Monday, February 5
at Family of Christ.
For additional information contact Linda Bartz
All women are welcome! Invite a friend.



**Tuesday Morning Bible Study
7:00—8:00am**

Join us on Tuesday mornings from
7:00-8:00 AM in the conference room as we
share our stories and grow our faith by
studying the scriptures.
You can either join us in-person or online.
Contact Pastor Brent for the link
or just show up.

Dates to Remember

Sun. Jan 28: Worship/Sunday School Activities
Annual Meeting

Wed. Jan 31: Confirmation/Youth Group

Sun. Feb 4: Worship/Sunday School

Wed. Feb 7: Confirmation/Youth Group

Sun. Feb 11 : Worship/Sunday School

Wed. Feb 14: Ash Wed Service
NO Wed night programming

Sun. Feb 18: Worship/No Sunday School
10th Anniversary Celebration

Wed. Feb 21: Lent Soup Supper
Holden Evening Worship
Confirmation/Youth Grp

Sat. Feb 24: Community Dinner/Game Night

Sun. Feb 25: Worship/Sunday School

Wed. Feb 28: Lent Soup Supper
Holden Evening Worship
Confirmation/Youth Grp

Vision Statement

*Family of Christ invites ALL to Live the
Gospel though Faith, Love, and
Compassion*



Our Core Values F-A-M-I-L-Y:

Faith
Acceptance
Meaningful relationships
Impact
Love
Youth