



October 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 of Christ,

I want to begin by simply saying thank you. In the midst of constant change, global instability, and learning how to “be church” in a variety of ways we might never have expected, you have responded to the invitation to bring your best before God. Your leadership in generosity contributes to the long-standing success of our community of faith. Because of your commitment to the ministry of this congregation, we are an ever-increasing effective witness to the radical welcome of Jesus Christ. This congregation is grateful for you and for the example you set for each of us about what it means to respond to God’s prompting to be a faithful steward.

I join with you in celebrating the opportunity to give to others with such joy. Being a partner in movements that change the lives of individuals and enrich our community is so satisfying. That is a secret I wish more people could discover for themselves! Our financial gifts and gifts of time do remarkable things when they are transformed into ministry and mission. I am especially proud of our growing community partnerships, expanding youth programs and the foundations we have put in place for the future.

Our God is a generous God: A God who has been revealed in Jesus as the one who deeply and passionately loves us. Our God is a God of invitation: who invites us on a faithful path of transformation that changes us and through us changes the world.

In the coming weeks, you will hear stories about how we as a congregation are responding to God’s invitation to bring our gifts. Each of us will be challenged to take even bolder steps to invest our whole life into becoming the church God is urging and encouraging us to become. I want to invite you to join me in our decision to respond to this important invitation with an increase in the amount of our financial gifts in the coming year. It is a time of great possibility for our congregation and the future of its mission.

Again, I thank you for your support. Giving in the manner that you do is the result of faith, trust, intentional choices, and a life of discipline. We join you in the hope of creating a culture of generosity that touches every person in our church. Giving is where we find the true meaning and purpose for our lives, a discovery you have already made.

Please plan to be with us for Commitment Sunday on October 27th. It is an opportunity to respond to this important invitation with our estimates of giving for next year and we will join on Reformation Sunday to celebrate the abundance of our God.

Peace,

Pastor Brent



Imagine: God Speaks to Us Through Prophets of Ages Past and Through Visionaries and Leaders Today

God speaks in our hearts “with sighs too deep for human words” (Romans 8). And God speaks through spirited debate as we seek to discern the right thing to do. In all these ways, God stretches our imagination for what’s possible and what’s necessary.

Together: God calls us into community. We follow Jesus as siblings in faith. United with other believers, we form a Christian movement living the way of Jesus. Faith is not a solitary life but one that brings our hearts close to others. As a statement of faith from the United Church of Canada affirms, “we are not alone; we live in God’s world.”

The spiritual practice of generosity arises from imagining all that God calls us to do as a community. Our donations to our congregation make it possible to turn what we imagine into a reality. Through our annual commitments to our congregation, we imagine together all that we can do. In October we will make our annual financial commitment to Family of Christ and the ministry God calls us to. Join us as we tell the story of FOC’s impact and prayerfully consider how we can bless this community in the next year.



Reformation and Confirmation Sunday

Join us October 27th as we celebrate this important day in our Lutheran church. It is a time to bless our youth as they take on their own faith journey and remember the roots of where we come from.

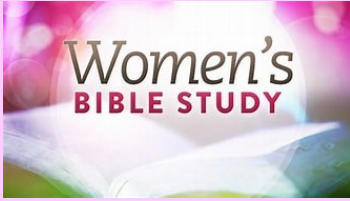
Worship at 9:30am with a fellowship celebration to follow.

Join us after worship at 10:45am in the conference room next to the church office for conversations on Lutheran faith and life.

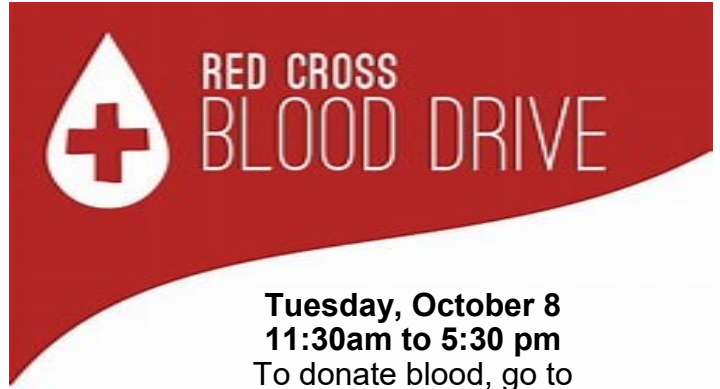
This is a great chance to meet new people and to have some great conversations.

Starting Sunday, October 6th.





The FOC Women's Bible Study will meet
Monday, Oct, 7th at 10:00am
 at Family of Christ.
 We will continue our study of
Ephesians: God's Power Works In Us.
All our Welcome!



Tuesday, October 8
11:30am to 5:30 pm
 To donate blood, go to
www.redcrossblood.org
 Contact Glenda Lind for more information.



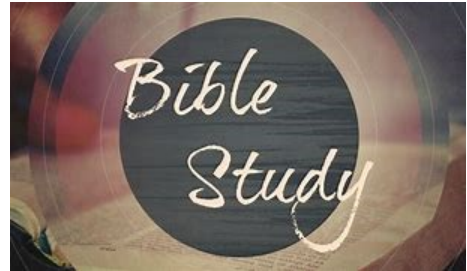
Foster Together Trunk of Treat: Thursday, October 10th

Come join the fun on Oct. 10th from 4-6pm as Foster Together and others will provide treats and trinkets for the young ones in costume. If you would like to host a trunk, reach out to Dana for registration.



Fellowship: Bunco Night
Monday, October 21
6:30pm-7:45pm

Back by popular demand!
 You do not need to know how to play,
 it is easy to learn!
 For all ages and genders.
 Contact Dana to sign up and for more
 Information: dana@familyofchrist.com



Tuesday Morning Bible Study
IS MOVING!!

(to Wednesday Mornings for October)
 Join us on Wednesday 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.



The Church Office is open
Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays
8:30am to 3:00pm.



If you are looking for additional information
be sure to check out the Church calendar
on our website.

Youth Updates

It has been a fabulous start to the new year with the kickoff of Fall Programming at FOC. We started with a Blessing of the Backpacks where all students were blessed and given treats with a message. Rally Sunday was held as the young ones were able to see their classrooms, meet teachers, and help decorate their rooms. The following Sunday we gave out bibles to our new PREK and new confirmation youth. Such a wonderful start to fall!



Sunday School

Join us Sundays as we continue another great year of Sunday School. We leave worship during the last song. We meet in the MPR for a little bit of singing, dancing, and a bible story video, then break into classes to learn about our bible story and that we are all loved by God. There are 3 classes: PREK, K-2nd grade, and 3-5th grade. Children are still able to register online. Classes are from 10:30-11:30. The 2nd Sunday of the month is Youth Sunday. The kids will sing a song during worship. Our first "song" Oct. 13th is the Hippo Song.

Upcoming SS schedule:

Oct. 6: Adam and Eve

Oct. 13: Youth Sunday (sing), A Rich Man's Questions

Oct. 20: NO SS

Oct. 27: Bartimaeus Sees



Bible Sunday:

Congratulations to the following young people who received either a Spark Storytime Bible or a Confirmation Bible:

Lily Carlson

Etta Bouley

Ezra Gilbert

Jack Philpot

Livia Strenge

Iris Bouley

Caleb Gilbert

Calvin VanMinsel

Gordy Smith

Valerie Marks

Betty Hellier

Gwen Basballe.

Joanna Huus

Libby Gilbert

Max Klimpke

May the stories you read bless you and help you grow in your faith.





Wednesday Night Schedule:

- 6:00pm: Pizza Dinner
- 6:20 - 7:40pm: Confirmation
- 7:40 - 8:40pm: Youth Group



Confirmation and Youth Group

- Oct. 2: Dinner, Confirmation, Youth Group
- Oct. 9: Dinner 6:00, Confirmation 6:20-7:30, MT Meeting 7:30-8:00, Youth Group 8-8:40
- Oct. 23: Dinner, Confirmation, Youth Group
- Oct. 30: Dinner, Confirmation, Youth Group



Fall Retreat

All youth in 6th-12th grades are invited to join us Oct. 4-6th for some time to have fun, build friendships, and grow in faith. We will meet at church at 5:30pm on Friday, October 4th. We will drive the van over to Spring Lake Lodge in Rosemount. We will return to church at 10:30am on Sunday, Oct. 6th. Registration is online. Cost is \$30.



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Mission Trip 2025 Meeting

We are excited to announce our mission trip for next summer at our Fall Retreat on Oct. 3rd!! This service opportunity is for all current 6th-12th graders. The week we will be going is July 6-11, 2025. There will be a parent/youth meeting to learn more about this opportunity on **Oct. 9th at 7:30pm.**



TANZANIA SUNDAY OCTOBER 6th

Join us on Sunday, October 6th as Family of Christ will observe Tanzania Sunday.

Our relationship with the Lutheran church in Tanzania and with our sister congregation in Usokami have been an important part of sharing God's love and Grace with the world. Join us as we celebrate this partnership and find more ways to support one another.

October Mission of the Month Tanzania Ministries

Bega Kwa Bega is the phrase we use to describe our companion synod relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania.



In English, the phrase means 'shoulder to shoulder' and describes the way in which we accompany one another in a spirit of mutuality, inclusivity, and vulnerability. Through the work of this partnership and the leading of God's Holy Spirit, we envision deeper faith and fuller life, accompanying one another as participants in God's ongoing mission in both America and Tanzania.

Our partnership supports the Ilula congregation, secondary school students, medical school scholarship and Iringa Hope micro financing.



2024 Tanzania Mission Trip Quilt Raffle

Proceeds from raffle will go towards the 2024 Family of Christ Mission Trip to Tanzania. Tickets are \$5 each and will be going on sale Sunday, September 22 before & after church or can be purchased from Kathy Derner or Vickie Heggen. Drawing Sunday, October 20, need not be present to win. Pastor Brent, Ann Mikiska & Tami Maddio will be traveling to Tanzania on October 30 through November 11. Preliminary plans has the members visiting Usokami, the Ilula Hospital, Lutheran Secondary Schools where some of FOC's sponsored students attend and various other locations. *Quilt made by Kathy Derner and machine quilted by Cheryl Wills*

***"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:
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Telephone: 952-435-5757

Secondary Student Scholarships

Since 2004, FOC members and friends have sponsored 401 Usokami secondary students. During the current school year there are a total of (14) secondary school age students, including (5) boys and (9) girls who are supported by Family of Christ. Providing scholarship support for these students is a great investment toward a brighter future for them, their community, Tanzania, and Africa. According to UNICEF, Tanzania has significantly expanded school enrolment in recent years, especially among girls. However, 3.2 million children aged 7–17 are out of school, of which 1.2 million have never attended. The net secondary enrolment rate is only 27%. Rural and poor girls are the most affected with higher dropout rates starting at age 12.

The 2025 FOC scholarship goal is again to raise \$8400 which covers the cost of room, board and education (\$615) for an entire year for those attending Lutheran private schools (100% of current FOC sponsored students) and to increase the number of sponsored students. Any size donation will help reach the new \$8400 financial goal and is such a generous gift.

Scholarship donations are due by October 27



Iringa Hope Micro-Finance Project

In 2019 We began to partner with Iringa Hope, an organization that raises funds and administers microfinance loans. **Iringa Hope** uses a unique model to deliver agricultural financing, marketing, and training to smallholder farmers in Tanzania. The organization develops self-governed and self-sustaining member owned and operated cooperative societies that help to alleviate poverty and empower entrepreneurs. Microfinance loans are made to small businesses and farms with an average loan of \$300. The repayment rate of the loans is 98% so our donations continue to be loaned out year after year. By supporting this ministry we are able to reach even more people.

Envelopes for the Tanzania ministries are available on the Tanzania display table or from the ushers.

2023-2024 Family of Christ Tanzania Secondary Students



Medical Scholarship

The Tanzania Medical Scholarship team is sponsoring two medical students:

- Keneth Temba who is in his final year of a 3-year of an Optometry diploma program at the MVUMI Institute of Health Science. With his completed studies in 2025, he will test patients for Visual Acuity and prescribe corrective lens at the Ilula Hospital.
- Justice Bwisco who is in his 3rd year of a 4-year radiography training at Makerere University in Uganda and will return to the Ilula Hospital after completion of his studies.

To help support these medical scholarships, a craft sale will be held after church on Tanzania Sunday, October 6. Stop by and purchase some of our unique, one-of-a-kind craft items. The Medical Scholarship team will also participate in other area craft fairs.





Dates to Remember

- Sat. Sept 28: First Communion Class
- Sun. Sept 29: First Communion during service
- Fri. Oct 4 - Sun. Oct 6: Youth Retreat
- Sun. Oct. 6: Tanzania Sunday
Medical Scholarship Craft Sale
- Tue. Oct 8: Red Cross Blood Drive
- Wed. Oct 9: Mission Trip 2025 Meeting
- Thu. Oct. 10: Foster Together Trunk or Treat
- Sun. Oct 13: Youth Sunday—kids Sing
- Wed. Oct 16: No Conf/Youth Group—MEA Break
- Sun. Oct 20: No Sunday School—MEA Break
- Mon. Oct 21: Bunco Night
- Sun. Oct. 27: Reformation/Confirmation Sunday
Commitment Sunday
- Wed. Oct 30: Team leaves for Tanzania

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:

Fait
Acceptance
Meaningful relationships
Invoke
Love
Youth