

FEBRUARY 2024

# FAITH | ALIVE

WELCOME TO FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWS

## A Two-Year 40-Day Path Together?

Dear Friends,

Most historians agree that Lent began after the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD as a preparation for baptism and Easter. The Church Father Irenaeus mentions a period of fasting as early as the 2nd century. Though Lent is not mentioned explicitly, throughout the Scriptures we see seasons set aside for God's people to remember who we are and whose we are. These Holy Days return our focus, renew our faith, and reassert our daily vocation to follow.

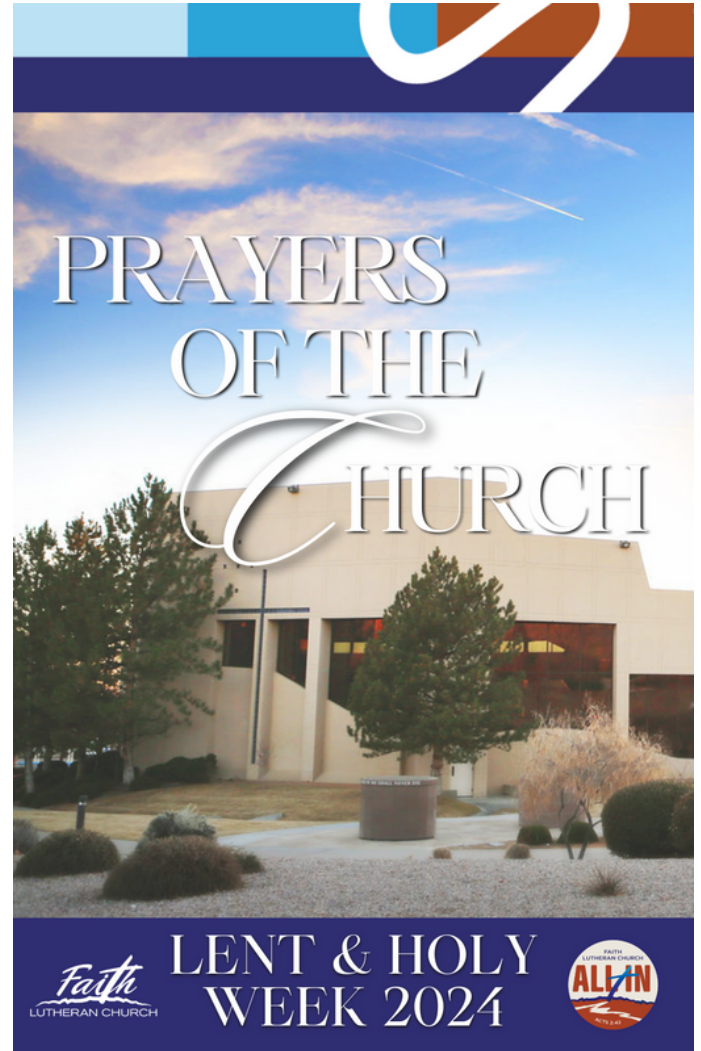
Our **ALL IN** path over the next two years is a season, like Lent, to repent, return, renew, and reassert. What we are doing together is what God's people have done through the millennia. Where is God calling you to dig into His Word or in prayer? Where is God calling you to dig into deeper relationships with fellow members of the Body of Christ? Who is God calling you to share the Gospel with today?

Let us seek the answer to these questions together in prayer. **A prayer guide written by you the church, together with daily lectionary readings and the readings of Mark's Gospel, will be published this year for Lent.** These Scriptures, along with the prayers written by members of Faith Lutheran, will by the leading of the Holy Spirit be a guide to renew our faith and reassert the call from God to walk a Jesus-shaped path together.

Like the church of old, our church today will walk this 40-day path – may the Lord lead us to be **ALL IN**.



DR. JERRY WATTS, SENIOR PASTOR



  
**Ash**  
Wednesday

LENT BEGINS  
FEBRUARY 14, 2024  
WORSHIP AT 12PM & 7PM

# Our Lenten Journey

BY PASTOR MARK BEHENNA

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ;

February 13th will be Fat Tuesday, the climactic day of the Mardi Gras celebration on the U.S. Gulf Coast. All over the Christian world similar celebrations will be held as people eat their fill of traditional pastries. The urge is to be filled up because Lent starts the next day. Lent is a time to give things up and tradition says that most of us will give up food – for example: we don't eat meat, or we stop eating sweets. We don't know why we do these things ... we do them because we always have. The focus is on us. We have to fill ourselves because we are about to decide what we will give up for forty days. But we are wrong. The cycle of our lives we call Lent has little to do with our selves. It has almost nothing to do with what we put into our selves or what we don't put in. Lent is a time to focus on the One much greater than any of us.

This is the time when we put aside our thanksgiving and praise of God just enough, so that we can ask ourselves, "What if there were no God?" or "What if Christ did not come to ransom me from sin?" If somehow, miraculously, you came to be without the existence of God, what could you make of yourself? Answer: When your time on this earth is finished, you would become dust. That would be the end. No accomplishments you have ever produced, no amount of money you have accumulated, no number of family members who have sprung from your lineage would matter a bit. You would be dust. And the same would be true for all your accomplishments, your money, and even your family – eventually. Were there to be no God, or if God ever chose to give up on us, life would not matter. Hope, the human emotion which sustains us through the trials of life, would be a cosmic joke.

We need God in order to understand that life has any meaning whatsoever. But God doesn't need us at all. After all, if there were no people in creation, God could raise up new people from stones.

Fortunately, you are not the product of a cosmic accident. From less than ashes or dust, from out of nothing, God formed creation. Genesis tells us that God scooped up the dust of the ground and breathed life into it. As a result, we have been created by the grace of God. Yes, we have come from the dust. Yes, as our physical bodies age they shall once again be reduced to nothingness. We shall become dust once again. But today, brothers and sisters, we live lives of value. We live because by the grace of God, dust has been formed into God's image ... and we are the result.

We are children of earth, created from the dust, yet filled with the breath of God. As February 14th, Ash Wednesday, approaches this year, we face our mortality once again and we face the limits of our existence on this earth. Ashes will be smeared on our forehead as we hear the same words spoken first by God to Adam and Eve following their disobedience: "You are dust and to dust you shall return." These words remind us of similar words we've heard when we have buried our loved ones: Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

*continued on the next page*

## **Our Lenten Journey *cont.***

BY PASTOR MARK BEHENNA

The imposition of ashes serves as a personal warning that we will not live forever. The dusty mark of the cross is a humbling reminder of our limits as human beings. But I invite you to look beyond the dirt. The mark of the cross will be renewed on your foreheads on Ash Wednesday – the same mark of the cross made once before in your life with clean, clear water – the mark that sealed you with the cross of Christ at the time of your baptism. The mark of the cross you receive on Ash Wednesday is an invitation to go on a profound spiritual journey that will lead you from the dust, to the waters of rebirth, to dust again, and then on to a new life of resurrection. Our Lenten pilgrimage will retrace the steps of our Lord and Savior – a trip to the cross, a body fit only for burial in the ground, and a lifting up of that body to God’s glory.

God doesn’t need us, but still chose to die for us in order to eternally save us. There is no greater love than one who willingly gives his life for another. God did this even though God has no need of us. This is evidence of love beyond bounds. This is why our Lenten challenge ought not to be “what shall I give up” but rather “what if God gave up on me?” God does not give up on humanity, and that is why we are invited during the forty days of Lent to turn away from our natural focus on our selves and to turn attention toward God instead ... especially toward the precious gift of hope given to us in our baptisms.

May your Lenten journey take you to a deeper understanding of your baptism and a closer walk with Jesus Christ in your life. As we journey together, may we all find the true treasure gifted to us by God – not the things of this life which shall surely become dust, but the One who lives forever, the One who gave us the promise of resurrection, Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Peace be with you,  
Pr. Mark Behenna*



### **More great reads inside this issue:**

PR. STRACHAN - 4  
FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS - 5  
MISSION CORNER - 6  
THANK YOUS - 7-8  
GENEROSITY INITIATIVE REPORT - 9  
JAN 2024 COUNCIL SUMMARY - 9  
EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS - 10  
WED. NIGHT MENUS - 10



# A Heartfelt Thank You

WRITTEN BY PASTOR SCOTT STRACHAN

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

***Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ - 1 Corinthians 1:3***

It is with both joy and, admittedly, a somewhat heavy heart that I submit to you my final *Faith Alive* article.

Joy for not only the call God has placed on my life and yours to proclaim the Gospel in Christ's name, but also for the wonderful memories and bonds that have formed with many of you. It has been a genuine honor to serve alongside you at Faith and to be a member of the Church body that resides at 10000 Spain. It is clear that the Holy Spirit is working among the people of Faith and I will continually pray for the whole congregation, staff, and pastoral team.

I grew up at Faith, which in many ways is why this article is hard to write. That growth happened in more than one way. I started attending Faith as a young kid who attended VBS, way back in the early 90's. I grew up in the youth group and even was Confirmed at Faith with one of Pastor Bruce's first confirmation classes in 2000. When my family joined and were baptized in 2013, I was excited that my kids would get the same opportunities to grow here as I did. Subsequently, it was an honor of mine to move from a youth minister role into a pastoral role with ordination in 2022.

In many ways that growth was due to the Holy Spirit, but also in many ways that growth was due to the love and support of the people of Faith. There are simply too many memories to share in one article and no sufficient way to show my gratitude. So, thank you and may God bless you in all that you do to serve Him and in His name!



**In Christ,**  
*Pr. Scott Strachan*



## February Birthdays

PREPARED BY DIANE WILDER, CHURCH OFFICE

**1** No birthdays

**2** Susan Struck

**3** David Anderson, Lindsay Eckelman, Marie Levison

**4** Pr. Scott Strachan, Robert Van Gilst

**5** Donna Burnett, Donna Halvorson, Kathy O'Connor, Dick Peres

**6** Shea Burrell, Nancy Capels, Emily Gahan, Brittany Griffith, Sherry Wubbels

**7** Casey Dunbar, Phil Mayo, Barbara Ruggieri

**8** Jill Lynch, Scott Strachan, Sr.

**9** Kristine Armijo, Yvonne Deshayes, David Gibbs, Jeannie Kramer

**10** Jessica Burwinkle, Amber Otero

**11** Ron Blasing

**12** No birthdays

**13** Reaghan Allison, Joan Reel, John Russell, Erik Strack

**14** Natalie Benson, Jeannine Bulot

**15** Charly Cox, Joel Edwards, Ken Rogers

**16** Irma Ontko, Samsom Riddle

**17** James McLeod

**18** Andy Anderson, Marjorie Cromey, Sharon Lanting, Peter Larson, Abbey Strachan, Zoe Watts, Elizabeth Wilder

**19** Sue Brown, Theresa Campbell, Kati Covel, Cheryle Hinnerichs, Valerie McLeod

**20** Sabrina Goodfellow, Lily Hausermann

**21** Linda Geiszler, Roger Jacobson, Sally Lowder

**22** Beau Anderson, Brad Steward, Alex Zimmerman

**23** Shang-Ying Clark, Lisa Espelien, Jennifer Manteufel, Annikah Vreeland

**24** Gideon Cook, Cheryl Dix, Kim Stake

**25** Emeline Allen, Ina Cook, Anup Dean, John Grassham, Jeff Lawrence

**26** No birthdays

**27** Brad Jenkins, Mark Stavig

**28** Eric Dudley, Lisa Lachmann, Doug Weiss

**29** Diane Umprovitch



# Mission Corner

PREPARED BY GINNI WEBB AND MISSION & SERVICE MINISTRY TEAM

"GO INTO ALL THE WORLD AND PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS TO THE WHOLE CREATION. -MARK 16:15

Your Mission & Service Ministry Team recently made distributions of **December 2023 Mission Offerings** as follows:

**\$848.50 to International Christian Concern:** Giving hope to persecuted Christians since 1995. Every year, 200 million Christians suffer some level of persecution. International Christian Concern exists to bandage the wounds of persecuted Christians and to build the Church in the most challenging parts of the world. Persecution is a multifaceted problem that requires a comprehensive solution. For nearly three decades, ICC has developed a unique approach focused on Assistance, Advocacy, and Awareness. [www.persecution.org](http://www.persecution.org)

## SAMARITAN'S PURSE

One of the first on the scene, no matter where in the world



Click here for the **2023 YEAR-END GIVING UPDATE** from Franklin Graham

<https://www.samaritanspurse.org/our-ministry/year-end-giving-2023/>

## LOOKING AHEAD

A Lenten Project Benefiting Saranam Families

Our local Mission Partner, Saranam, has very exciting news this year. A new westside campus will be opening, allowing up to 10 additional families the opportunity to be part of Saranam's 2-Year Program this spring.

Our Mission & Service Team will be announcing a **Special Lenten Collection of Paper Goods and Toiletry Supplies** to stock the housing units at the new westside campus as well as the eastside campus.



**Announcement at all services February 17-18 with more information.**

"We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works." Ephesians 2:10



# Thank You

Dear Friends of Care Net,

“In all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility” Titus 2:7

A new year filled with new possibilities and the Lord’s promises, we continue to defend life and are thankful you’re on the journey with us.

It is because of YOU that we are able to fulfill this mission. Although there will be obstacles and challenges, we know the Lord goes before us. Thank you for your gift of \$8,615.19 and your faithfulness to us and saving the pre-born. We are paving the way for new heights and are blessed to do it with you by our side.

Defending Life,  
**Care Net ABQ Team**



Hello Pastor Watts and members of Faith Lutheran Church,

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). The advent of Christ transformed the world for eternity. And because of you, people can hear His message of grace and truth. Your partnership enables Faith Comes By Hearing to record and freely provide God’s Word in the world’s languages.

You and your congregation’s gift of \$8,535.32 to Vision 2033 helped send the Audio Bible to a newly established church in the Kelim Katera Serere district of Africa. More than 20 people received Christ, and a children’s ministry launched. Believers of today and tomorrow are disciplined through the Audio Bible.

Gifts to Vision 2033 ensure the spread of God’s Word to individuals, families, congregations, and entire communities still waiting for Scripture in a comprehensible language and format. Thank you for the sacrifices you make so all may hear and know God speaks their language.

Your Servant in Christ,  
**Morgan Jackson**  
**Senior Vice President, Faith Comes By Hearing**



Dear Faith Lutheran Church and Members,

I trust this letter finds you well. With immense gratitude, I extend my sincere thanks to each of you at Faith Lutheran Church for selecting us as the recipients of your generosity initiative this year.

Your benevolence in donating \$11,375.84 is nothing short of a blessing for us at The Rock at Noonday. This generous contribution will play a pivotal role in sustaining our mission and ensuring we can continue providing essential resources to those in need. Your commitment to supporting our cause speaks volumes about the compassionate spirit that defines your congregation.

The impact of your donation goes far beyond the monetary value. It enables us to extend a helping hand to those who walk through The Rock at Noonday’s doors, offering physical resources and the spiritual nourishment found in the gospel. Your support empowers us to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the less fortunate.

We recognize the importance of partnerships like the one we share with Faith Lutheran Church. Your dedication to philanthropy aligns seamlessly with our mission, and we are truly honored to receive your generosity this year.

Once again, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for choosing The Rock at Noonday as the beneficiary of your generosity initiative. May the joy and kindness you’ve bestowed upon us return to you multiplied, bringing blessings to Faith Lutheran Church and its compassionate members.

With Gratitude,  
**Ricardo Devine**  
**Executive Director, The Rock at Noonday**

# Thank You

Dear Faith Lutheran Church,

We thank God for your partnership. Because of you, we can continue to reach Spiritual Orphans in former communist countries with the Hope of the Gospel. Your gift of \$12,328.53 on December 31, 2023, is a great blessing to those who do not yet know they have a Father in Heaven who loves them or that they have brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the world who want to see them adopted into the Family of Christ. SON engages people in the Word of God, helping them to reclaim their identity as children of God and walk alongside them as they are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Thank you for your support and being a part of the Generation of Faith helping to Connect Spiritual Orphans to the Global Family of Christ.

Sincerely Yours,  
**Pr. David R. Breidenbach**  
**SON Executive Director**



Dear Faith Lutheran Church,

Happy New Year! It is with a joyful heart that I join Joni and my colleagues at Joni and Friends to thank you for your generosity! We are grateful for your overwhelming compassion towards individuals and families affected by disability. We extend our sincere gratitude for your friendship and gift of \$7,538.19 to support the work of Joni and Friends New Mexico.

Because of you, Joni and Friends will reach even more special needs families this year. We cherish your partnership and the life-changing impact you're making in the lives of families living with disability. Thank you for standing with us in a shared vision to expand the impact of our programs around the world.

Wishing you a prosperous and blessed New Year!

Warm regards,  
**Mary Lou Gilliland**  
**Director, Grants and Foundations**  
**Joni and Friends**



Dear Faith Lutheran Church,

The Salvation Army would like to thank you for your very generous \$8,028.59 gift. This gift will be used to provide necessities like food, clothing, and other forms of vital assistance to our neighbors in need. You are giving hope to those facing financial hardships.

Last year, because of big-hearted people like you, the Salvation Army New Mexico:

- Assisted nearly 115,000 New Mexicans
- Served close to 900,000 meals
- Provided over 37,000 nights of shelter
- Distributed more than 65,000 Clothing items
- Gave nearly 2,800 people assistance with rent or utilities, helping to keep them in their homes

On behalf of each of the lives touched through your act of compassion and kindness, we express our gratitude. By working together, we are building a better community – one child at a time, one family at a time, one person at a time.

We appreciate your partnership and belief in us. Thank you for making a difference.

May God richly bless you!  
Warm Regards,  
**David R. Yardley**  
**Major General Secretary, The Salvation Army**



## 2023 Generosity Initiative Report

Grand total collected = \$87,473.62

Care Net Pregnancy Centers of ABQ	\$ 8,615.19
Faith Comes By Hearing	\$ 8,535.32
Feed NM Kids	\$11,078.36
Joni and Friends	\$ 7,538.19
Rock at NoonDay	\$11,375.84
Salvation Army of ABQ	\$ 8,028.59
Spiritual Orphans Network	\$12,328.53

Total gifts received exceeding \$67,500.00 will be provided to Faith Lutheran for various ministries and continued service as a mission congregation.

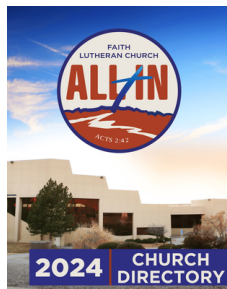
## January 2024 Council Meeting Summary

The meeting kicked off with a presentation from Sherri Adams, our Generis coach. She updated the Council on the latest information regarding the All-In Initiative and gave a look at what's in store for the next two years. New business included votes on authorizing the three standing committees, the three task forces, and the endowment committee. Pastor Strachan has accepted a call to Zion Lutheran in Hudson, Iowa and we have two staff members retiring soon, Diane Wilder and Pastor Schelert.

Did you know you can read the full minutes of each Council meeting? Once the minutes from the previous month's meeting are approved, they are placed in a binder that is kept in a drawer of the curved counter in the Centrum. You are free to access it at your convenience.

### **Your 2024 Church Council**

Stanley "Buzz" Busboom, President	Jessica Anderson	Bill Dennis
Doug Dederman, Vice President	Rachel Archer	Brady Gear
	Hank Bohnhoff	Kaiya Phillips
	Jim Burrell	Jennifer Wilson



**2024 Church Directories  
are here! Pick one up  
in the Centrum.**

# Events & Announcements



## Diane Wilder Retirement Celebration

Diane will be at all services on the weekend of **February 10-11, 2024**. Join us after the 5pm service on Saturday or in between Sunday services to celebrate her long and faithful service to our church!

### ASH WEDNESDAY

**February 14th, 12pm & 7pm**

All regular Wed. night programs are cancelled that evening.

### Revelation class with Pastor Mark Behenna

- Sunday, Feb. 4 **\*final class**  
9:30 & 11am
- Wednesday, Feb. 7 **\*final class**  
6:30pm

### Military Mission Support

**Packing February 12, 5:30pm**

### Men's Bible & Brew

February 6, 20

### "The Chosen" Season 3 study

February 7 - Group Dinner Out

February 14 - Ash Wednesday,  
no meeting

February 21 - Episode 4

February 28 - Episode 5

### Lunch & Learn

Award-winning author & Faith member Jennifer Bohnhoff lectures on the Civil War battle of Glorietta

February 15, 11am

### Dorcas Needlework

February 12, 26

## February menu

for Wednesday nights

7


TACO SALAD

14\*

ASH WEDNESDAY SUPPER-  
TOMATO SOUP  
W/GRILLED CHEESE OR  
CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

\*ASH WED. - NO REGULAR PROGRAMS ON THIS EVENING

21

PIZZA 

28

CHICKEN PATTY  
SANDWICH AND  
MACARONI & CHEESE



Ash  
Wednesday

ALL OUR REGULAR  
WED. EVENING  
PROGRAMS ARE  
CANCELLED ON  
FEBRUARY 14

**WEDNESDAY,  
FEBRUARY 14**

- **Worship at 12pm** with lunch immediately following
- Soup supper at 6pm
- **Worship at 7pm**

# Military Prayer List

SUPPORTING OUR MEN & WOMEN OF THE UNITED STATES MILITARY THROUGH PRAYER,  
SHARING THE WORD OF GOD, AND ENCOURAGING THEIR MORALE & WELFARE.

For changes/additions to this list, please contact Pr Mark Behenna or the church office at 505-296-0762.



**Ainsley Burrell**

**Leah Gallegos**

**James Hansen**

**Chris Hinnerichs**

**Alec Kainer**

**Joshua Fanning**

**Liam Fink**

**Logan Nebl**

**Faun O'Brien**

**Joseph O'Brien**

**Jason F. Ruetschilling**

**Courtney Werth**

**William Werth**

**Patrick Winkels**

---

## General News

### Recent Deaths:

- Delphine Zwegardt on December 28
- Willa Hughes on January 1
- T.J. Williams on January 6
- Jeanne Koury on January 8
- Mitzy Kinion, sister of Pam Biddle, on Jan. 21
- Jacob Sandoval
- Pastor Orval K. Moren, former pastor at Faith, on December 28

### Help Us Stay Up-To-Date!

If you've moved, changed your cell phone number, gotten rid of your landline, changed your email address, etc. - Don't forget to let your church know! You can contact the church office at 505-296-0762 to update your records.

### Listen to Church with your Landline

Listening to Services Over the Phone  
Please dial 1.833.531.1980

### Prayer Chain

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.

### Hospital & Home Visits

Please call the church office to let us know of hospitalizations, illnesses, and situations of need and we will make every effort to be present with you or your loved one. Our prayers continue for all those in need of healing, comfort, and peace.

### LCMC ([lcmc.net](http://lcmc.net))

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.

Faith Lutheran Church  
10000 Spain Road NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87111  
Ph. 505-296-0762  
Email: [faith@faithabq.org](mailto:faith@faithabq.org)  
Website: [faithabq.org](http://faithabq.org)

Current Resident or...

**Thank you Lord for:**

