



Black River Falls Location
N6598 County Rd A
Black River Falls WI 54615

Cataract Location
N6774 Acorn Ave
Cataract WI 54656

N6774 Acorn Ave.
Sparta, WI 54656

Phone 715-284-0772

BIRTHDAYS

Garrett Spaude	12/1
Annette Markhardt	12/4
Jerry Eggen	12/11
Aron Bue	12/11
Toni Anderson	12/14
Noelle Kiesow	12/20
Lisa Treptow	12/21
Sharalyn Hartley	12/22
Elaine Fatla	12/24
Deziree Mueller	12/27
Nicole Kiesow	12/28
Justin Goetzka	12/29
Avah Reetz	12/30
Jeremiah Spaude	12/31
Richard Sitarz	12/31
Chris Mueller	12/31

We're on the Web!
www.faithwels.com

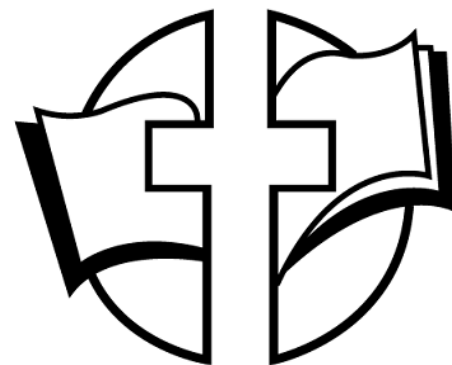
ANNIVERSARIES

Jack + Sherry Bue	12/3
Joe + Alisha Southwood	12/19

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church is a part of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod or WELS. The WELS is a church body with congregations in all fifty states and missionaries in 25 countries.

We are a Christ Preaching Church! We believe, teach and confess that Jesus is God's own Son, who came into the world to be the Savior of all people so that through his sufferings, death and resurrection, we might have forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

We Are A Bible Teaching Church! We believe and teach that the Bible is the true and divinely inspired Word of God, the sole authority for Christian faith and life.



The Messenger

The Messenger

December 2022

Where can I find God?



Christmas is a time for searching. People go from one store to another in search of one specific gift. When they finally find that special present, they feel a sense of relief and accomplishment.

What are you looking for this Christmas season? Many of us spend a lot of time looking but not finding. We look for peace in our lives, but the strains of work and stresses of our relationships bring tension and turmoil. We look for understanding about why our lives have taken the direction they have only to be left pondering and wondering. We look for happiness but find only sorrow. We ask the question, "What's life all about?" We wonder, "What have I accomplished?" We are left searching for answers.

All life's questions really boil down to one. Those who have found the answer to this question also have the answers to the question of peace, understanding, and happiness. This question may be asked

"When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger" (Luke 2:15,16).

Where can we find God? The Bible takes us back to Bethlehem, where we join the shepherds in beholding the Son of God who took on our human nature and was born into the world. He came to seek and save all of us who had lost our connection with God. He came to give us the answer for finding God. We find God through him because he is the Savior who has opened the way to life with God.

No more searching. Jesus is the answer for finding God.

more at this time of year than at any other. If your life needs meaning, peace, understanding, and happiness, then you need to first ask the big question: "Where can I find God?"

Long ago some ordinary blue-collar workers—some shepherds—were presented with the answer. These shepherds were told that the world's Savior was born in the small town of Bethlehem. Was it true? They went to investigate. And they found God!

The Messenger is published monthly for the congregation and friends of Faith Ev. Lutheran Church. Its purpose is to provide information regarding all areas of congregational news and to offer enlightening articles.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, contact—in person or by email—or Laura Mueller: muellerlaura@hotmail.com or Pastor Neumann: pastorjoelneumann@gmail.com

Newsletter deadline: The submission deadline is the next-to-the-last Sunday of each month.

Christmas Party with FiSH!

The FiSH group (Faith’s Social Harbor) invites adults to a Christmas party! We'll meet **Saturday, December 10**, from **6:00 to 8:00 p.m.** at the BRF building location. Bring an appetizer/snack to share if you can. Bring a white elephant gift to exchange if you would like. Experience is NEVER required with any of our activities – come, learn and have fun! This is a great opportunity for you to invite a friend, relative, or coworker. It would also be a great opportunity for a “date night.” FiSH is our social group geared toward recreational activities for adults, single or married, younger or older.



LADIES AID

The Ladies Aid will have their annual Christmas potluck and gift exchange on **Saturday, December 10 at 12:30 p.m. at Linda Jessie's house**. If you are able to participate, bring a dish to pass, a few dozen cookies, and a gift to exchange. All the ladies who are members and friends of Faith are welcome. We try to keep the gift between \$5-\$7.

Faith Teachers

Dec 11 from 12:30-2

The Faith teachers will meet Sunday, December 11, from 12:30-2:00 p.m. in the BRF church building.

CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS BAG DONATIONS NEEDED

If you are able and willing, there is a sheet in the gathering area for items needed for the Children's Christmas bags that will be handed out on Christmas Eve. Items are needed by Sunday, December 18.



CHRISTMAS DECORATING

Both our Black River Falls and Cataract locations will get decorated for Christmas this month. Everyone is invited to help. Here are the details:



Black River Falls—Saturday, December 3 @ 9 a.m.
Cataract—After worship on November 27

HERITAGE TREE

This December, you will notice a Christmas tree adorned with decorations standing in the gathering area in Black River Falls. This is a Heritage Tree. The idea behind the Heritage Tree is that each family in the congregation is invited and encouraged to provide an ornament for the tree. This ornament should have the names of the family members displayed on it and will be stored at church so that it can be set up year after year. What a wonderful way for us to express our unity and see how God blesses our congregation through the many changes that happen over the year. Please consider participating by simply placing your ornament on the tree.



ATTENDANCE

Pastor Neumann, Garrett Jessie, Dale Jessie, Kirk Goetzka, Rick Treptow, Gale Jessie, Brad Markhardt, Rudy Jeseritz, Scott Templeton, Chase Severson, Jeremiah Spaude, Malachi Neumann, Ken Deiner, Mark Mueller, Brent Bacon

ELDER’S REPORT – 3RD QUARTER

Kinsley Jessie and Luke Dobson were baptized
Wyatt and Bryce Geisler were confirmed
Roger Olson was called to his heavenly home
Ashley Dobson was transferred into the congregation
A statistical report for Q3 2022 was presented

SPECIAL REPORTS

Outreach Committee

Bible Soccer Camp was a success with 47 children in attendance and several prospect families that came to the event. Next year’s Bible Soccer Camp will be held July 31 – August 2
Christmas Crafts for kids is coming up Saturday November 12th, please invite your friends and family to attend.
Festival of friendship is coming up November 20th. Please take a postcard and use it to invite your friends and family.
Brad gave updates on the vision timeline action items that the Outreach Committee is addressing, including increased prospect follow up, new member welcome, and better utilizing synod supplied outreach materials.
The vision timeline meeting is coming up on Monday November 28th at 6pm in Black River Falls. All members of the congregation are invited to come to this meeting and discuss the future direction of the congregation!

Property Committee

The new projector is installed in the Cataract location and is working well!

FINANCIAL REPORT

Tyler presented a financial report showing a net gain of \$13,810.39 through Q3 2022. MSC to accept the financial report.
The congregation received a distribution from the Marvin Yeske Trust in the amount of \$17,489.93. From this distribution \$1,750 (10%) will be sent as an offering to CMO. How the remaining amount will be spent will be voted on during the next congregational meeting. If applied to the church loan it would eliminate roughly \$6,000 in interest over the life of the loan.

NEW BUSINESS

The congregation will be donating \$500 to Good Shepherd in Beloit as they start a new daycare center
WELS Youth night was held October 16 th at St. Paul in Onalaska. 40 youth were in attendance.
The congregation moved to purchase 2 refurbished computers for use with the livestream cameras. MSC

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 pm with Pastor leading us in the Lord’s Prayer
The next Quarterly Congregational Meeting will be held January 29 th at 12:00am in Cataract.
Recorded by Garrett Jessie



A life lived shrewdly

So far in our God-Lived Life Challenge we have challenged ourselves to grow in our life of being a disciple; in our life lived for others; and in opening our lives for others in hospitality. This month, we focus on living shrewdly with the blessings and treasures that God has given us.

While stewardship of our finances isn't the only part of stewardship, it is a part of it. God's Word encourages us to use all of the financial gifts God has given us with an eye on our purpose.

Our challenge card this month will focus on living shrewdly with the blessings and treasures that God has given us. But what did Jesus mean when he encouraged us to be *shrewd*? Who is someone you know that is a positive example of shrewdness? In what ways are you already shrewd? In what ways are you not shrewd? How can you honor God by managing with intention the gifts he has given you?

May God bless us as we live a God-lived life, loving others!

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS EVE PRACTICE & SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS (BRF)

Starting Sunday, November 27 and going through Sunday, December 18, the children in Black River Falls will be practicing for the Christmas Eve service during the regular Sunday School/Bible Class hour. There will be no Bible Study (except on December 11—A God-Lived Life Sunday) during this time.



Thank you

As the Property Committee Chairman, I would like to thank all the members who helped with the cleaning of our church in BRF this last year. Your service is appreciated as we continue to have a clean and orderly church. I will soon be working on the schedule for 2023. If the availability of any of you has changed, please let me know. If the months I had you schedule for last year don't work for you this coming year, I can make changes to accommodate you. Also, if you were not on a crew this year, and would be willing to be included on the 2023 schedule please contact me.

Thank you for your service,

Scott Templeton
612-419-8992



JESUS CARES MINISTRIES
Worship at the Cross

Worship at the Cross will be Saturday, December 17, at 1 pm at our Black River Falls campus.

**CHRISTMAS
WORSHIP TIMES**

**Children's Christmas
Eve Service**

December 24, 4 p.m.—in
Black River Falls

**Candlelight Christmas
Eve Service**

December 24, 7 p.m.—in
Catatract

**Christmas Day
Worship**

December 25, 8 a.m.—in
Black River Falls

December 25, 9:45 a.m.—in
Catatract

**New Year's Eve
Worship**

December 31, 6:30 p.m.—in
Catatract





Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

We are now in the 11th month of the year and it's incredible how it feels just like yesterday when we were celebrating the new year. Now that we are just a step to ending the year 2022, there is so much to be grateful for - especially the gift of our Lord's grace. So, we wake up to a new day that He has made.

The past month, October, is the month dedicated to women in Malawi. We join the global community in commemorating the 17 days of activism for the empowerment of rural women leaders and their communities from 1st -17th of October. Here in Africa, including Malawi, women play an important role in our societies from providing safe homes by looking after children and the elderly, to taking a large part in the political and economic organization of our society. We appreciate these women for the many challenges that they endure, especially in rural areas. Many organizations have taken steps to ensure women have the right support so that they can access adequate food and water, improve the standard of living, and give proper protection from all forms of gender-based violence. 11th October was International Day for the Girl Child, giving attention to matters to do with young girls, including the promotion of health and education. The 15th of October happened to be Mother's Day in Malawi, where all the mothers and guardians are appreciated for the roles they play in the lives of so many people, extending from our homes to the wider society. The Lutheran Mobile Clinic has always assisted women and their families in our preventive healthcare efforts in rural villages, while supporting them spiritually as well.

As a clinic, we are working to ensure that we maintain the standards and quality of service and the spaces we are using. We have currently renovated the exterior area 10 house/office as the house fascia boards and putty were falling off as well as the paintwork that also needed attention. The compound is currently looking stunning, like a newly constructed site. We are also renovating the grass fences at our clinics as these fences help in the orderly in-flow of patients to avoid crowding, ensure handwashing and enable screening for infectious diseases.

Every year, the Lutheran Mobile Clinic holds an annual retreat for professional staff as a team building and appreciation trip. This year's event took place at Kambiri Beach in Salima on the 28th of October 2022. The staff members were so happy and appreciative of the gesture as this takes them away from the routine activities of workdays. The day was accompanied by an end-of-month meeting in the morning, followed by lunch, relaxation and swimming.

As a note of gratitude, we appreciate the various forms of donations and your prayers that allow the operation and management of the Lutheran Mobile Clinic and its staff, as well as the physical care and love of our Lord Jesus Christ, to reach Malawians.

God Bless you all!

Lusungu Mwambeye

Clinic Administrator, Malawi Lutheran Mobile Clinic

To our Faith Lutheran family:

"This is the day the Lord has made, rejoice and be glad in it," says our Lord. We are to cherish each day, because we don't know what tomorrow will bring. Karen and I certainly have learned that lesson. Our lives suddenly changed on the 28th of July when Dr. Anderson from Mayo Clinic gave us the news we didn't want to hear: "Karen, you have ALS." How challenging life has become with tears and laughter every day. But one thing we were not prepared for was the outpouring of kindness from the people around us, from neighbors to family members, from strangers to our friends at our church, Faith Lutheran in Black River Falls and Cataract.

With this note in the newsletter, Karen and I would like to thank you from the bottom of our heart for your outreach, help, visits, offers to help, cards, gifts, gift cards, prayers, and lots of food to save me time in trying to put together dinner meals while being a full time caregiver. The Lord has richly blessed us with friends like you. We were blown over with your acts of kindness, motivated by the love of our Savior. Thank you all!

Here our struggles continue every day, with new problems to solve every day as the ALS does its dirty work. However, we know the Lord's promises. "We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

No matter how the day goes for Karen and me, we still can say, "This the day the Lord has made, rejoice and be glad in it." THANKS AGAIN FOR YOUR KINDNESS AND PRAYERS.

In Christ,

Ron Baerbock

DEVOTION BOOK SWAP

Need a devotion book for 2023? Need to exchange the one you use now with a new one? Bring your old devotion book to church to the final services of this month or the first few services of the New Year and pick up a new one after service. Or, grab a devotion book for the first time. Questions? Speak to Carolyn Diener.



Youth Group

Our next youth group gathering will be Sunday, December 18, at 1 pm. We will meet in Black River Falls.

FROM THE LIBRARY

Decorations, twinkling lights, freshly baked cookies.....These and other Christmas traditions fill up your December days and nights, but may shift your focus from what is really important. *Tidings of Comfort and Joy* is a devotion book for the Christmas season. These devotions lead you through God's Old Testament promises about a coming Savior and their fulfillment in Jesus Christ in the New Testament. This book is in the "Devotions" section of our church library located in the Fellowship Hall at our BRF location.

