

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
A Congregation of the ELCA

28200 Portsmouth Drive, Sun City, CA 92586 * (951) 679-1518

Email: faithlutheranmenifee@gmail.com

Guest Pastor: Pr. Shane Freiberg

OFFICE HOURS: Tues & Thurs 8:30 - 5:00; Fri 8:30 - 12:30

Worship Plan for Sunday, July 26, 2026 * Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

WELCOME TO FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, where grace and love abound. While we wait and prepare for a new pastor, we invite you to participate fully in the vibrant life of the congregation, and to join us in prayer as we continue to serve God and God's people during this time of transition.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT: Enriching lives through faith and God's grace.

MEMBERS & GUESTS: Please fill out a worship attendance card found in the pew racks. Prayer requests may be included on the reverse side for one Sunday or bulletin publication.

INVITATION TO BAPTISM: We would like to extend to you the blessing of Baptism and encourage you to contact the church office to be baptized.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION: Christ is truly present through the power of God's Holy Spirit. We invite everyone to come forward and be renewed in the covenant God made with us in our baptism. All are gladly invited and welcome. If, in coming forward, you choose not to receive the Sacrament, we ask you to fold your hands over your chest so you may receive a pastoral blessing. The Sacrament will be brought to those unable to come forward to the altar (notify an usher). Available upon request: gluten-, wheat-, corn-, dairy- and soy-free wafers.

CHILDREN'S COMMUNION: Families are encouraged to come to the rail together during the distribution. Children may receive Communion or a special blessing from the Pastor.

SUNDAY SCHOOL: Sunday School for children of all ages starts up again on August 9th immediately following the Children's Chat.

CELL PHONES: Please silence your cell phones before Worship.

Following worship, ALL are invited to join us for refreshments in the Fellowship Hall.

Introduction to the day

As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!

GOSPEL MESSAGE: It's the Small Things

Children like to collect things: rocks, sticks, and more. Adults tend to pretend-love the items that are brought to them: "Oh, how beautiful!" "Oh, that's a good one." Children, encouraged, continue their collections, finding the smallest of things and displaying them like they are the most valuable items in the world.

Jesus' parables in today's gospel reading teach the disciples about things that are so small they are often overlooked: a mustard seed, a little bit of yeast, a tiny pearl, and even a net that is quite small until it is filled with fish. These little things in his parables are treasures important for understanding the reign of God.

Adults tend to overlook the small things while seeking larger things, heavier things, shinier things. We walk right past the tiny flower in the crack of a sidewalk, which once would have caught our eye. One pearl? A full necklace is better. A shrub that provides creatures a home? It's now in an inconvenient place.

But Jesus teaches that in God's reign all things, large and small, matter. All people matter. It is a wise disciple who recognizes this. Even King Solomon, with all his wealth, prayed for wisdom. Wisdom helps us see more clearly and begin to understand the depth of God's grace.

And that grace Jesus displayed immediately. "Have you understood all this?" he asked. The disciples answered simply, "Yes" (Matthew 13:51). What a bold answer! They were too worried to admit they did not understand. A little yeast, though, goes a long way. Jesus knew this. Each parable would build on another until the disciples understood the entire collection.

For us today, understanding God's grace takes study, prayers for wisdom, and walking the path while looking for the small things that matter. The reign of God is like a rose among a bramble bush? A child's picture of their home? However you visualize it, it is a treasure to cherish and to share.

AM: WELCOME

Welcome to Faith Lutheran Church where grace and love abound. A special welcome to those of you here for the first time, to those joining us online, and to our guest pastor, Pr. Shane Freiberg. During this season of Pentecost, we celebrate all the ways in which the Holy Spirit moves us and empowers us to strengthen our relationships with God and with our neighbors locally and globally. As our search for a permanent pastor moves forward, so does our ministry together. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate in all that goes on here at Faith.

AM: ANNOUNCEMENTS

The altar flowers were provided by Mike and Joanne McGavran, celebrating Lynn's birthday.

This Saturday, August 1st is Donation Drop Off Day from 9:00am - 12:00pm.

Menifee National Night Out is August 4th from 5:00pm to 8:00pm. We will have a booth and need volunteers! There is info in the Narthex.

Next Wednesday, August 5th, join us at 6:30 for the Ice Cream Social.

Sunday School is coming! Our first day back will be Sunday, August 9th! During Worship, we will have a special blessing of the backpacks for back-to-school, followed by Sunday School! All are welcome! All grades, all ages!

For July, we are collecting small jars of peanut butter, grocery bags, and empty egg cartons for the Community Cupboard.

ONGOING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Join the Blanket Brigade! You can now check out a fleece blanket and knot it at home as you have time. See Candy Pellechio.

God's Work Our Hands is coming up...September 13th! Your Outreach Team has chosen the San Bernardino Community Wellness Campus (men's shelter) to be the recipient of our church day of service. Please look in the Narthex for information on items needed, etc.

This quarter Outreach is collecting beef sticks, beef jerky and body wash/shower gel (any size) for MilVet.

You will find more information about what's happening at Faith in the Narthex.

SILENCE

AM: Let us take a moment of silence to quiet our hearts and minds and prepare for worship.

AM: PLEASE TURN TO HYMN 532

Please stand as you are willing and able.

GATHERING SONG: *Gather Us In* (ELW 532. vs. 1-3)

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P: GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

P: GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

This is the day that the Lord has made,

let us rejoice and be glad in it!

P: CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus

**Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.
Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

P: PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

**Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.**

CHILDREN'S CHAT

P: WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST LESSON INTRODUCTION

God appears to Solomon in a dream, telling him to ask for his heart's desire. Solomon recounts a litany of God's blessings to his father and himself. He humbly confesses his inadequacy to lead his people and asks that the Lord give him a wise and understanding heart to discern good from evil. The Lord is pleased with Solomon's request and grants him power and riches in addition to the wisdom and understanding.

LECTOR: FIRST READING: 1 Kings 3:5-12

⁵ At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I should give you." ⁶ And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on

his throne today. ⁷ And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹ Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?" ¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ God said to him, "Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM INTRODUCTION

This psalm is a meditation on the law of God. A lengthy song (176 verses), this psalm is an acrostic. Each stanza starts with one of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Almost every line contains the word law [torah] or an equivalent. It is good to be reminded that the term means "instruction," guide for life.

The psalmist asks for God's favor. Petitions are offered that he be redeemed, or set free from oppression and still keep the Lord's teachings, learning his statutes. He refers to shedding streams of tears because the law is not kept.

LECTOR: PSALMODY: Psalm 119:129-136

¹²⁹ Your decrees are wonderful; therefore, I obey them with all my heart.

¹³⁰ **When your word is opened it gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.**

¹³¹ I open my mouth and pant because I long for your commandments.

¹³² **Turn to me and be gracious to me, as you always do to those who love your name.**

¹³³ Order my footsteps in your word; let no iniquity have dominion over me.

¹³⁴ **Rescue me from those who oppress me, and I will keep your commandments.**

¹³⁵ Let your face shine upon your servant and teach me your statutes.

¹³⁶ **My eyes shed streams of tears, because people do not keep your teaching.**
Amen.

SECOND LESSON INTRODUCTION

Paul dealt in very succinct, even lyrical, sentences with several subjects of utmost significance: prayer, the assurance of salvation, the sovereignty of divine love, the unbreakable spiritual bond between the believer and God. The whole reading should be approached not as systematic theology but as the experience of profound faith by one who knew what he was talking about. In many respects, this is a meditation on what it means to have a close, personal, faith relationship with God as one who is a child of God and joint heir with Jesus Christ.

LECTOR: SECOND READING: Romans 8:26-39

²⁶ The Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. ²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. ³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

L: Please stand for the gospel

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 151)

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

GOSPEL INTRODUCTION

The gospel continues with the parables of Jesus. Each of them points to a different aspect of the kingdom of God. The mustard seed points to the kingdom's small beginnings (vv. 31-32). The yeast (v. 33) shows how the kingdom can transform the world. Verses 44-46 contain two parables that make a similar point. The kingdom is the hidden treasure or the pearl of exceeding value that the wise person will sell all to possess. The parable of the dragnet (vv. 47-50) is similar to the parable of the weeds and the wheat (vv. 24-30): at the end of earthly existence, God is going to gather the good (his treasure) unto himself and dispose of the evil. The person truly trained in the kingdom will incorporate the new wisdom of Jesus with the treasures from the old covenant (v. 52).

P: GOSPEL: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

³¹ [Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches." ³³ He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened." ⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. ⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. ⁴⁷ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁵¹ "Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." ⁵² And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

AM: PLEASE TURN TO HYMN 781

Please stand as you are willing and able.

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Children of the Heavenly Father* (ELW 781)

With Pr. Ken on guitar

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AM: APOSTLES' CREED

We continue as we confess our faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed.

CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

AM: Please be seated for the Prayers of Intercession

PASTOR AND ASSISTING MINISTER: PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

God our wisdom and our song, we pray for bishops, candidacy committees, those preparing for seminary, those awaiting call as deacons or pastors, and all who seek to lead your disciples in any way. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God our breath and our heartbeat, help us to recognize signs of your presence among us. Protect and support diverse ecosystems, from national parks to family farms, from ranches to wild places. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God our peace and our guide, help civic leaders hear all their peoples' stories with compassion and curiosity, and remind us of your love from which we can never be separated. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God our intercessor and our lawgiver, dismantle the barriers to care and recognition of all who live with chronic illness, mobility struggles, pain, and uncertainty. We pray especially for Briana; Ian Berger; Mary Booth; Judy Brosz; Rich and Sandy Chandler; Vicki Crow; Eleanor Diaz; Doris Hays; Sarge Hunter; Mike Latchford; Don Little; Donna McCain; Sandra Miller; Dee Mills; Michael Myers; Janet Oster; Amy Sinclair; Joyce Stromberg; Kiki Thomas; Nicholas Thomas; Diana Ward; the homebound; those in care and rehab facilities; the emergency responders; and those grieving and anticipating surgery or tests. At this time, we also pray for those we name aloud or silently in our hearts. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God our redeemer, may we trust your love above and beyond all else that distracts, annoys, frightens, exhausts, or divides us. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God who seeks, finds, and saves, for our community's part in the ongoing gift of creation, and for the riches of faith and hope which came before, we give you thanks. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Loving God, be with us during this time of discernment as our search for a permanent pastor continues. Fill all Ministry Leaders and Call Committee members with wisdom and patience as we continue to further the work of your kingdom. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant grace of Christ Jesus.

Amen.

P: PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

P: OFFERING

Let us remember at this time of Offering, that all we have and all we are given are gifts from God. Our offerings of time, talent and treasures are expressions of gratitude to God for all we have received. May we show abundant gratitude. During the musical offering, the usher will bring the offering plate forward to be lifted up to the Lord.

Please feel free to either listen to our musical offering or sing along

MUSICAL OFFERING: “What a Beautiful Name It Is” (sung by Brooke Ligertwood, Hillsong)

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AM: OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might: Heav'n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

P: INSTRUCTION FOR COMMUNION

All of God's children are welcome to Christ's table. Gather at the altar rail. If you wish to receive a blessing, please cross your arms over your chest. You may choose from red wine or white grape juice. A gluten-free option is available upon request. If you would like communion brought to you at your seat, indicate by raising your hand for the Assisting Minister to see and they will bring communion to you.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

DURING DISTRIBUTION:

Come to the Table (sung by Sidewalk Prophets)

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I am the Bread of Life (ELW 485)

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Eat This Bread: Jesus Christ, Bread of Life (ELW 472)

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AM: PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection, that we may show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

Amen.

P: BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace.

Amen.

P: PLEASE TURN TO HYMN 836

Please stand as you are willing and able.

SENDING SONG: *Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee (ELW 836)*

Public Domain: Sources: Text: Henry van Dyke, 1852-1933; Music: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770-1827, adapt.

AM: INVITATION

We would like to invite guests and visitors to come and join us in the Fellowship Hall for cookies, coffee and conversation.

AM: DISMISSAL

AM: You have been empowered for ministry.

C: Thanks be to God. We will share the good news of Jesus.

THIS WEEK AT FAITH

Monday, the 27th: Council meets at 11:00

Tuesday, the 28th: Call Committee meets at 6:00

Friday, the 31st: Al-Anon meets at 10:30

Saturday, August 1st: Donation Drop Off Day from 9:00am - 12:00pm

Sunday, the 2nd: Worship begins at 9:30 with Pr. Rex

If you know of someone on our prayer list who no longer needs urgent prayer, please notify the church office.

THOSE WHO SERVED TODAY:

ASSISTING MINISTER: Candy

LECTOR: Lorna

COMMUNION SERVER: Freddericka

POWER POINT: Mike

USHER: Karla

ATTENDANCE: Diane M.

GREETER: Walli

ALTAR GUILD: Kandie & Diane M.

SOUND: Madeline

LIVE STREAM: Maddie

To give directly to Faith Lutheran Church electronically, you may use one of the below QR codes.

NO FEES
to Faith Lutheran



Zelle
flicfinance1518@gmail.com





The kingdom of
heaven is like
a merchant
in search of
fine pearls

MATTHEW 13:45

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