



Faith-Lilac Way Lutheran Church

2023

February Banner

(763) 537 4523 | Faithlilacway.org
5530 42nd Ave N, Robbinsdale, MN
55422



Pastor Article

Are you friendly? I would guess that, if asked, most of you would think of yourself as friendly. I know I would.

But, the pandemic has affected the way that people interact, and as a result, some scholars fear that in addition to the Covid19 epidemic, Americans have experienced a “loneliness epidemic.”¹ This is in part because during the pandemic we were isolated and encouraged to keep distance. But Dr. Diana Butler Bass, scholar and author, suggests that it might be something more. She writes, “I’m not confident that Americans know how to be or make friends very well anymore.”² She wonders if we have become a bit rusty in our friendship skills. However, she also thinks that churches might be able to help with that.

People in churches want to be friendly. After all, Jesus has called us to share the Good News and we can’t do that if we don’t talk to anyone. But like everyone else, we might be a little rusty too.

Having meaningful conversations with “friendly looking strangers” is one of the things that our Faith-Practices, Neighboring Practices team has learned how to do. It isn’t rocket science. But, it does take a little bit of work – and intentionality -- to take the first step and to be truly friendly.

Dr. Bass says, “Friendly” isn’t just about surface niceness or hanging out with fun people.” And she warns that “friendly” can be shallow or even manipulative. But, she also notes being friendly “implies feeling welcome and accepted. It is the first step of friendship — learning how to be together with others, practicing things like empathy and reconciliation and service in community.” These are the habits that we want to cultivate. These are the bonds that give our lives deeper meaning and resilience. These are habits born out of the love and care that we have received from God and that we seek to share with our neighbor. We were made for friendship - with God and with one another.

Friends, let us seek out opportunities to be friends to one another and to our neighbors. Check out the Bingo at RobbinsWay (page 4), [Sunday morning Treats and Talk \(page __\)](#) and the pew in front of you when you come to church. You might even want to introduce yourself to your next door neighbors - and invite them to church!

¹ Diana Butler Bass, Sunday Musing blog, January 8, 2023

² Diana Butler Bass, Freeing Jesus.

May you be blessed with good friends.

May you learn to be a good friend to yourself.

May you be able to journey to that place in your soul where there is great love, warmth, feeling, and forgiveness.

May this change you.

May it transfigure that which is negative, distant, or cold in you.

May you be brought in to the real passion, kinship, and affinity of belonging.

May you treasure your friends.

May you be good to them and may you be there for them;

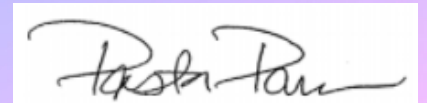
may they bring you all the blessings, challenges, truth, and light that you need for your journey.

May you never be isolated.

May you always be in the gentle nest of belonging with your anam cara.

— **John O’Donohue** (anam cara means “soul friend”)

Thanks for being friends,



Getting Through the Winter Blues

The first snowfall always feels a little magical as I marvel at God's creation sparkling white. Winter brings holiday traditions and time with family and friends. Winter, at least in the beginning, can be fun. But now it is February—the Christmas decorations are put away, the air is still cold and the snowdrifts outside are getting taller.

If you are anything like me, Winter can sometimes feel long and dreary. I start to miss the warm sun and green grass. I find myself more tired with less energy. For many folks it is not uncommon to experience the Winter Blues or even Seasonal Depression. The colder weather keeps us cooped up inside and less sunlight can affect our brain chemistry in a way that changes the body's internal rhythm. We might feel more tired, bored, sad or sluggish.

We can't control the weather, so what can we do to get through the Winter Blues? The American Psychological Association offers some advice. Eating healthy meals and sticking to a sleep schedule is helpful, as is staying active. Get sunlight by going outside or sitting by the window on a sunny day. Bundle up and go for a walk if possible, but other practices like stretching and yoga indoors can also be a good option. The American Psychological Association also recommends social activities such as spending time with friends and family, volunteering in the community, or going to church.

The cold winter days can be a blessing in their own way too. Spending more time inside can give us more time to slow down and enjoy some hobbies around the house. Maybe you like to curl up with a warm blanket to read a book, or maybe you like to do art projects. Maybe you play an instrument, put together jigsaw puzzles or cook. Winter can be a great time to get back to an old hobby or experiment with new ones! A winter day can also be a good time for Bible Study or journaling. Finally, make a list of the things you are thankful for now, and dream of fun possibilities to look forward to in warmer months.

Hopefully you will find some of these ideas helpful, but if you still find yourself struggling you can talk with your doctor for some additional support. Know that you are not alone and there are people and resources to help. Warmer days are coming!

Sending warm and sunny thoughts your way!

Vicar Joanna



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stay Tuned for Vicar Joanna's Internship Project--Mental Wellness and the Church!

As you likely know, seminary internship students are required to do an internship project--something that will help the intern grow in their leadership skills for ministry as well as benefit the community. I have a passion for Mental Health and Wellness, so I am working on putting together some conversations and activities during Lent that will support Mental Health and how we as a church community can support those who are going through a difficult time. Stay tuned for more details in the coming weeks in our bulletins and weekly email for more information.

February Treats and Talk!--Exploring Prayer

Join us in the library on Sunday mornings after worship for Treats & Talk! Enjoy some yummy treats and conversation to celebrate community together. All are invited! See the schedule below for our Treats & Talk activities in February. This month we will be exploring different ways to pray and experience God.

February 5th-- Praying in Color Activity with Vicar Joanna

February 12th-- What is "Contemplative Prayer"? with Pastor Pam

February 19th-- Listening to God through Music with Vicar Joanna

February 26th-- Visio Divina--Experiencing God through Art



Wednesday Afternoons--Contemplative Prayer and Bible Study

Join us on Wednesday afternoons as we explore contemplative prayer followed by a Bible Study, TED Talk Conversation or book club. All are welcome to come to either one or both activities. Come and experience for yourself or contact Vicar Joanna and Pastor Pam if you would like to know more.

Wednesdays at 2pm--Contemplative Prayer in the Chapel

Wednesdays at 2:30pm--Bible Study/TED Talk/Book Club

February 1st--TED Talk (no preparation needed)

February 8th-- Bible Study (no preparation needed)

February 15th-- Book Club:

February 22nd Ash Wednesday service at RobbinsWay

A Celebration of Life for Bev Maas will be Saturday, April 22. More details to follow.

Pastoral Acts: Congratulations to our Confirmands!

On Sunday, January 8th, Rylee Vierzba confirmed his faith and became an adult member of Faith-Lilac Way. Travis Gaspar, who also went through our confirmation program, confirmed his faith and will become an Associate member. Travis is a member of Bethany Lutheran in Grantsburg, Wisconsin.

Mission of the Month: Every Meal

Faith-Lilac Way and other Wildfire Churches are partnering with Every Meal because we want to make sure children in our neighborhood have enough food to eat.

Did you know: More than 300,000 children in Minnesota live with food insecurity. We're on a mission to change that. Every Meal fights child hunger by focusing on filling the food gaps children face on weekends, extended breaks, and summer when they're not able to access school meal programs. When they don't have consistent access to enough food, the risk of hunger is very real. Through our multiple food gap programs, we provide children and families experiencing food insecurity with access to good food. Faith-Lilac Way and other Wildfire churches support Every Meal financially and some of our volunteers go to the local schools to put the bags in the children's backpacks so they will have enough to eat. Want to help? Either: Come to the Marty-Graas event - see poster. Or make a donation to our February Mission of the Month. If writing a check, make the check out to FLW and write Every Meal in the memo line.

Events:

EveryMeal Mardi Gras Fundraiser on February 18th at Holy Nativity!

Faith-Lilac Way and our Wildfire Partners are proud supporters of the organization EveryMeal which provides food to school children across the Twin Cities and surrounding communities. On February 18th at time there will be a Mardi Gras themed fund at Holy Nativity. All are invited and encouraged to come for an afternoon of fun and community. Describe activity. All proceeds from this event will go to EveryMeal to support them in their mission of feeding our community's children. **Cost?**

RobbinsWay "Marty-Gras" Bingo Party!

Tuesday, February 21 from 6-7:30 PM
Snacks, Games and Prizes!

Come and join friends (and friends to be) at a Bingo party with our neighbors at RobbinsWay on the evening before Lent begins. In New Orleans they call this Mardi-Gras but in honor of Martin Luther, we call it a Marty-Gras! Pun intended. Why are we holding a party? We want to get to know our neighbors and have fun with them!

Prayers: Come Holy Spirit, draw near to all who are suffering violence, injustice, poverty, illness and pain. In our congregation, we pray for all in need of healing including: Lois Anderson, David Bjorkquist, Helen Brandon, Carol Brown, Jacqueline Butkowski, Larry Geer, Carolyn Lageson, Joyce Merkel, Jo Parvey, Edith Theilmann, Jackie Woolgar, and Vic Woolgar. Bless the memory of Bev Maas and all the saints who have gone before us. Hold her family in your care.

SAVE THE DATE!

Osseo's Annual Pow Wow

April 29th, 2023

Osseo Middle School

Stay Tuned For Details



News from Camp Wapo!

Wilderness Canoe Base If you have any individuals or small groups that are interested in a boundary water canoe trip, please share the Open Canoe Trip option at Wilderness. This is perfect for youth, young adults, and adults of all ages who want to participate in canoe trips without the need for an organization leading the group registration. The 2023 dates are July 16-21, July 23-28, July 30-August 4, August 6-11.
(wcboffice@campwapo.org)

New in 2023

Grandparent/Kid Camp at Wapo July 18-

21 Grandparent/Kid Camp is a 3-day program, where multi-generational family groups can come enjoy camp. With a focus on giving grandparents and their grandkids an opportunity to do camp together, this camp is open to all the generations, from parents, to aunts & uncles, and even cousins. The program includes meals, lodging, and fun camp activities that range from swimming in the lake, campfires, crafts, and much more. Come make memories that will last a lifetime!

Wapo Youth Leadership Enrichment (WYLE) July 18-

28 A new leadership offering for High School campers, those who have completed 10th grade. This is a 10-day program full of classic camp fun with the added gift of leadership enrichment and learning. Ideal for campers who have shown leadership skills in their own church and gifts for working with kids. The application can be found here <https://forms.gle/VFHXXgVGkKC3cyQd6>

Summer Staff Recruitment We are currently hiring summer staff for 2023. If you know any young adults that would be great, please send them our way! The minimum age to work on staff is 18. (or



Monthly Spiritual Practice:

February's Spiritual Practice—Praying in Color!

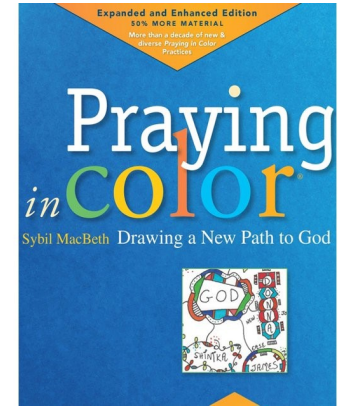
Prayer comes in many forms, and some people enjoy praying through coloring or doodling. Don't worry—you don't need to be an artist! Author Sybil MacBeth of *Praying in Color* explains how coloring can help us to slow down and spend time with God. As we color or doodle we can reflect on our prayers and have a conversation with God.

The practice is simple. Take a piece of paper and write the word "God" in the middle, then draw a shape around it. Add some colors, lines, dots—anything that you want to the shape. As you draw, talk to God. Tell God how you are doing today, what you are thankful for, whatever is on your heart. When you're ready you can find another spot on your paper and write the name of someone or something else you want to

pray for. Draw a shape around it and start coloring some more.

As you color around that name pray for that person or thing. Your drawings can be as simple or detailed as you want—there is no wrong way to color! You can even use a prepared coloring page if you prefer (I'll include one if you want to use it). What matters is taking the time of calm and quiet to breathe and simply talk to God.

Give it a try, and if you decide you really enjoy the practice or want to try some more, you can purchase Sybil MacBeth's book *Praying in Color* online on Amazon, Walmart.com and similar websites.



LENTEN SOUP SUPPER!

Feb 22, March 1,8,15,22,29

5-6:45 PM

Come for soup and fellowship and then stay for the service!

Sign up in the narthex or contact the office to sign up to bring a soup or a salad. Don't like to cook? Come anyway. There's plenty to share. All are welcome!

Wednesday Mid Week Lenten Services

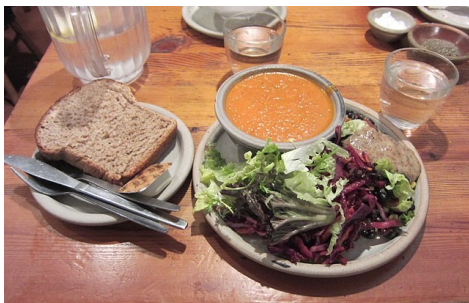
March 1,8,15,22,29

Explore Jesus' Parables with Paul Oman's Paintings

2:30 PM at RobbinsWay

5:00 Soup Supper

6:30 PM at Faith-Lilac Way Sanctuary



This year during Lent we will be using paintings from Paul Oman (the same artist who painted our paintings in the Fellowship Hall downstairs) to help us explore some of the parables of Jesus. All are welcome!

We also plan to have a healing service as we enter into Holy Week. This service of healing is meant for any kind of healing you feel a need for, whether it be physical healing, spiritual healing, healing for a loved one or healing for the world.

To all NEAR Partner Church Clergy and Admin, Board Members, Toy Distribution Volunteers and Supporters -

We hope that everyone had a blessed Christmas holiday!
 There aren't enough words to say how thankful we are for your investment of time, donations, and care for others during the return to an in person Toy Distribution event this year!! It was clear once again on Saturday, December 17th, that this event means so much to the clients and makes a true difference in their celebrations of Christmas! Seeing the smiles on the clients faces as they find that perfect gift and hearing their heartfelt 'thank yous' to the volunteers is everything that we need to experience to know the type of impact this event has. We deeply appreciate everything that you do for our clients at NEAR!

With Gratitude,

Thea Bruley
 Food Shelf Manager/Afternoon Volunteer
 Coordinator

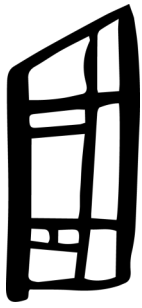


From Amanda White, ELCA's Director, Congregational Generosity:

Thank you for your gift to ELCA World Hunger. Your generosity is getting at the root causes of hunger and poverty in over 60 countries, including the United States. It provides access to clean water, health care, agriculture, livestock, education, and peace and justice. Through your gifts, you are joining with the whole church as we work toward a just world where all are fed. Thank you!



Corliss Valiss	2nd	Grace Whitney	18th
Kyle Anderson	3rd	Ruby Johnson	19th
William Rosenberg	10th	Joyce Merkel	20th
Mesa Vierzba	11th	Miranda Hortenbach	21st
Brian Blackman	13th	Lois Anderson	25th
David Fernelius	16th	Sarah Peloquin	28th
Christine Evenson	18th		



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ASH WEDNESDAY

February 22

2:30 PM Service at RobbinsWay

5:00 PM Soup Supper

6:30 PM Service at Faith-Lilac Way

The Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of our Lenten Journey. This is perhaps the most solemn service of the church year. We have put away our Alleluias. Instead, we read Psalm 51, a penitential Psalm that is credited to King David. David had been a great King and follower of the Lord - but he lost his way, he broke lots of commandments and needed to repent. While our sins may not be as spectacularly obvious as David's, we too need to take time to confess and repent of the times in which we have not been the people God made us to be. At this service, we are also reminded that we are mortal as an ashen cross is placed on our forehead.

That ashen cross not only reminds us that we are mortal - but also that we are baptized and marked with the sign of the cross. Further, because we are baptized, we are forgiven sinners. The way forward is hopeful. We are invited on the Lenten journey in which we can grow in faith, a journey that leads to the cross - and the shouts of Easter Alleluias.

