

Beacon of Faith

Worship God. Grow in faith. Offer hope.

Faith Lutheran Church and Preschool

December 2025



Welcome Statement

In response to God's unconditional love and grace, the people of Faith Lutheran Church seek to follow Jesus' commandment to love God, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We express that love in our commitment to racial equity, and in our welcome of people of all ages, races, economic status, intellectual and physical abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, along with their families and friends, to join with us as we worship God, grow in faith, and offer hope.



**Deadline for 2025
Financial
contributions
is Noon
Wednesday, Dec. 31**

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ADVENT ARRIVES!

November 30

First Sunday in Advent

Lighting of the Advent Wreath and Holy Communion at both services

December 7

Second Sunday in Advent

Lighting of the Advent Wreath and Holy Communion at both services
Advent/Christmas decorating in-between the services

December 14

Third Sunday in Advent

Lighting of the Advent Wreath and Holy Communion at both services
Advent Children's Choir sings at both services

Faith @ 4 Concert

At 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Featuring Sonnenberg Station

Men's Vocal Ensemble

Enjoy Christmas music!

December 21

Fourth Sunday in Advent

ONE service, 10 a.m. in the sanctuary

Christmas Music Sunday

Featuring an expanded choir/guest musicians

Lighting of the Advent Wreath and Holy Communion

Followed by Christmas goodies in the Kinship Café

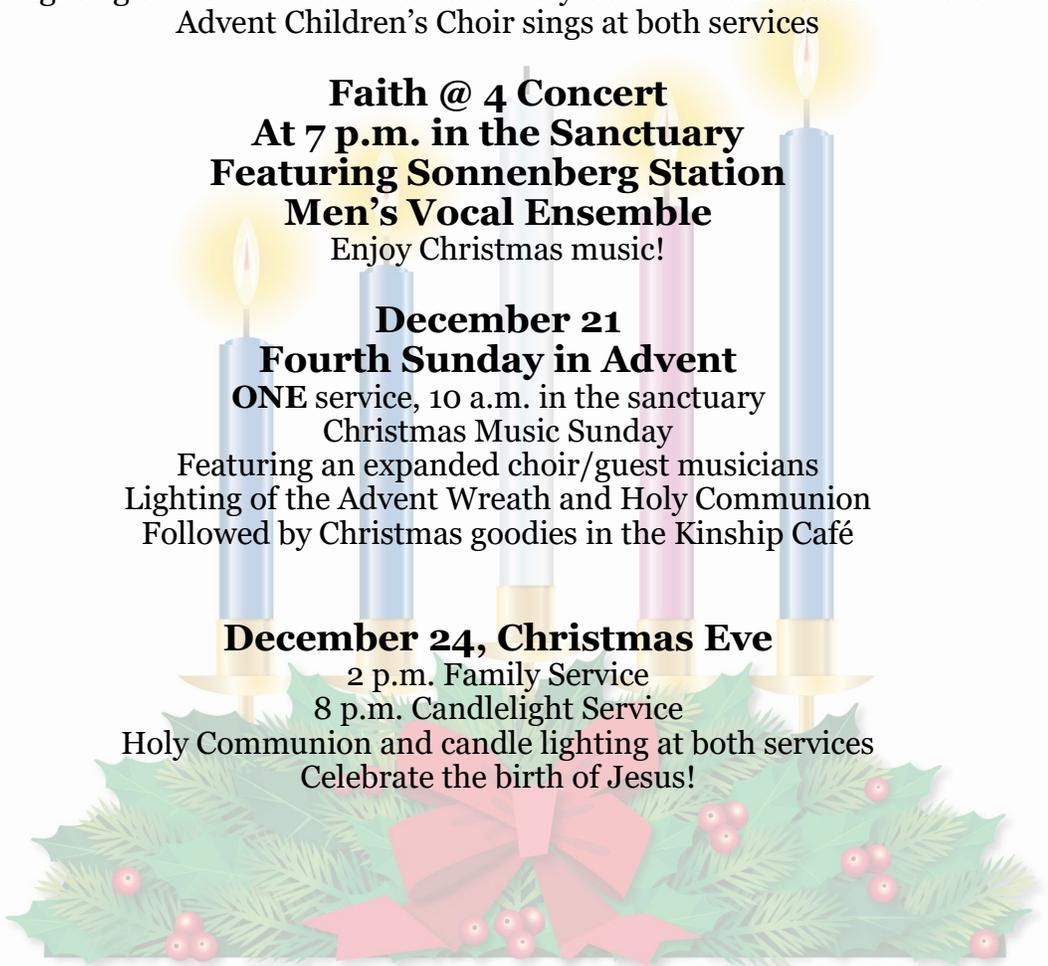
December 24, Christmas Eve

2 p.m. Family Service

8 p.m. Candlelight Service

Holy Communion and candle lighting at both services

Celebrate the birth of Jesus!





Pastor's Pondering
Pastor Jean M. Hansen

Another month has passed; January 31, 2026, my retirement date, is getting closer. Last month I shared a document that I created on my 20th anniversary as Faith's Pastor; it covered May 2002-2013. Now I am sharing "the rest of the story"; printed below are highlights of events that occurred in the congregation in 2013-2025. Please note that while this time-line is filled with notations concerning projects, programs, events, initiatives and ministry focus, it is very SHORT on what makes ministry happen in a congregation – FAITH and PEOPLE. For both, my gratitude is unending.

2013

- Lent collaboration with St. Hilary begins.
- Five Alive Initiatives are initiated: Building Re-Visioning; Christian Education and Worship Schedule, Programs; Organ Refurbishing; Outreach Partnerships; Youth Ministry and Partnerships.
- FACE (Faith and Community Enrichment) Time begins – education and fellowship in-between the services; worship times adjusted to 9 and 11 a.m.
- Star Shine Worship and Fellowship for people with intellectual and development disabilities, and care givers is initiated.
- Funds are designated by the congregation for the organ project, youth space and future building improvements, with final proposals to be presented to the Church Council by June 1, 2014.

2014

- Organ Repair and Renovation Project is completed: dedicated on Nov. 9, 2014.
- Ground-breaking for the "Racing Forward in Faith" Building Project is held, June 15, 2014.
- Technology Upgrades in the Fellowship Hall are completed in November, 2014.

2015

- Discussions begin with St. John/St. Paul Lutheran Church concerning combining our congregations; "getting-to-know-you" activities are held.
- Combining document is approved by both congregations on June 28, 2015.
- Final worship service is held at SJ/SP on July 12; Pastor Rick Gordon and organist Julie Lehman move their ministries to FLC.
- "Vision for Mission" gatherings are held concerning enhancing outreach, with support of the SJ/SP Endowment Fund.

2016

- "Faith at Four" Concert Series is established.
- First grant requests are received for the SJ/SP Endowment Fund.
- "When God Left the Building" movie is viewed in worship.
- Racism is the focus of the Lent collaboration with St. Hilary.

2017

- It is the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation – activities abound!
- Temple Israel and New Hope Baptist Church join Faith Lutheran and St. Hilary Catholic churches for the newly named "Interfaith Justice Series" using book, The Original Sin, by Jim Wallis.
- Congregational/Community Assessment (outreach) is compiled/presented in October 2017.
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day service and supper are planned at New Hope Baptist Church.

Continues on the next page.

2018

- Pastor Jean celebrates the 30th anniversary of her ordination.
- Staffing Task Force is formed: recommends hiring an Interim Outreach Director to initiate a new outreach ministry; a part-time Property Manager; a part-time Administrative Assistant for Music Ministry.
- A Faith Outreach Team is established to develop an outreach program/framework and inform/educate the congregation about it.
- Interfaith Justice Series focuses on Inherent Biases.
- Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Discussion begin in Church Council.

2019

- Areas of focus are: Outreach, Communications, RIC.
- Revamped Outreach Program is introduced; kick-off is held.
- On-going commitment to DLM at Holy Trinity begins.
- Website redesign by Triad is completed.
- New Mission Statement is developed: **Worship God! Grow in Faith! Offer Hope!**
- Website Content Manager/Communications Specialist staff position is created.
- Council votes to enter RIC discernment process; RIC Core Team is formed.
- Pastor Rick Gordon retires on June 30, 2019.

2020

- Welcome Statement is presented by the RIC Core Team, approved by the Church Council; RIC Panel Discussion is held in February.
- Interfaith Justice Series is: "Moving from Trauma to Healing".
- Emphasis on Outreach continues – DLM, Family Promise, Rise Against Hunger.
- **March – Coronavirus Covid-19 Pandemic** shuts down or limits all services and activities.
- Technology Team is formed: initiates Live-Streaming of Worship (one 10 a.m. service), ZOOM meetings. New Normal???
- Welcome Statement is accepted, FLC is added to RIC Roster by congregational vote, August 2020.

2021

- Coronavirus Covid-19 Pandemic continues to shut down or limits all services and activities; vaccines begin to be available.
- Congregation returns to two services in June (9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.), but pandemic protocols continue.
- Christian Education is no longer on Sunday mornings; focus on worship, fellowship and music rehearsals.
- FLC is selected for ELCA Congregations Lead initiative
- Faith Preschool thrives in spite of the pandemic.
- Kitchen is renovated.

2022

- March 2022, pandemic protocols are removed.
- "Interfaith Justice Series" focuses on Cultural Humility; speaker, Dr. James Knight.
- "Loads of Faith" Laundry ministry begins.
- New Christian Education format is initiated: classes for children/youth in-between the services return.
- Participation in Congregations Lead Initiative of the ELCA continues.
- Revised Constitution/By-laws (2021) are approved by the NEOS.

2023

- Three break-ins occur in less than a month; a security assessment is done.
- A second site is added for the "Loads of Love" Laundry Ministry.
- An on-line Church Directory is developed.
- The Faith Preschool celebrates its 40th anniversary.
- Digital Ministry Task Force is formed.

Continues on the next page

2024

- A Safety and Security Team is formed to oversee the selection and installation of an enhanced church security system, and to address other safety and security concerns.
- The congregation hosts “Safe Space 101: LGBTQ+ Cultural Competence Training”, “Bystander Violence Prevention Training” and “Senior Safety” Presentation.
- Discussion on collaboration with Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Akron begins.
- The final Ohio Mission Trip is held after 17 years of meeting needs.

2025

- Listening Sessions are held as collaboration with Holy Trinity Lutheran Church is considered; decision is made to continue collaborating, but not to pursue a joint call of rostered leaders (clergy, deacon) at this time.
- The 5-week Interfaith Justice Alliance Series continues with FLC, New Hope Baptist, Prince of Peace Baptist, St. Hilary and Temple Israel.
- Pastor Jean Hansen announces her retirement date of January 31, 2026 in July.



Business - Call Process Update

This is my third monthly update as we continue moving through “Phase 1: Saying Farewell” of our transition process. There had been a flurry of activity earlier this fall as we did our best to prepare for Pastor Jean’s retirement before the typical end-of-year church business and the holiday season. Planning and preparation continue afoot.

The search for a full-time interim pastor has begun. A small group, made up primarily of the Executive Committee, recently met with Pastor Mitch Phillips (Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership) to provide him with insights into some of our immediate needs. This will assist the Office of the Bishop in their search to provide us with an intentional, full-time interim pastor to guide us until the call process is complete. Once candidates have been identified they will be interviewed, and a final candidate will be chosen by Council.

The official Transition Team is taking shape. This group will be under the guidance of Pastor Nathan Krause (Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational Vitality) and the interim pastor (once chosen) to make a clear and honest assessment of the congregation, clarify our mission and goals, and determine the appropriate staffing to lead us towards those goals. The Transition Team will become active in February following the conclusion of Pastor Jean’s call. Most of those contacted have replied, and each of these members has been willing to serve in this vital role for Faith.

Planning also continues for the retirement celebration for Pastor Jean. This will be an open house format on Saturday, January 24, from 2 to 4 PM in the Welcome Center. The following day Sunday, January 25, Pastor Jean will be presenting her final sermons as lead pastor at Faith Lutheran Church. She plans to preside over both the Traditional and Informal Worship Services that day. Please plan to attend and thank Pastor Jean for her many years of spiritual care and leadership at Faith.

If you have been considering volunteering to serve in any capacity at Faith, I encourage you to do so. Council will be meeting in December and will be choosing the Church officers. If you have accounting experience or if you have business or organizational budgeting experience and are willing to serve, please contact me to be considered for the role of Treasurer. I believe it is critical that we have our complete lay leadership team in place before Pastor Jean’s retirement.

As always, if you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me or any other Council member.

Darryl P. Anderson
President, FLC Congregation Council



Business

Congregation Council



Your Congregation Council members meet once a month to oversee and guide the church's mission and ministry. There are nine members who are serving 3-year elected terms. This month we introduce Nicole Vincent.

Nicole brings a spirit of service, creativity, and community to her role on the Church Council at Faith Lutheran Church. Now in her second year of council leadership, Nicole serves as the liaison to the Memorial Courtyard Team, where she helps steward meaningful spaces that honor loved ones and foster reflection.

Nicole and her husband Brian have been married for 20 years and live in Bath with their two daughters - Elyse (13) and Juliana (10) - and their beloved Cavapoo, Bentley. As a family, they thrive outdoors, enjoying skiing, biking, hiking, kayaking and pickleball. They love to travel, especially to national parks, ski destinations, and spend time at her Mom, Linda's Lake house in Port Clinton.

Professionally, Nicole has spent over a decade in e-commerce at a major consumer packaged goods company. More recently, she co-founded *The Souper Sisters*, a local business crafting frozen soups with a mission: to help busy people enjoy healthy meals while giving back to the community. Their quarterly soup fundraisers for Faith Preschool are just one example of how Nicole blends entrepreneurship with service. Nicole has also led the Faith Community Garden for the past seven years, a role that began because her husband owned a large tractor, and grew into a ministry of abundance. Each year, the garden yields over 2,500 pounds of organic produce donated to OPEN M, nourishing neighbors in need.

Grateful to have found a spiritual home at Faith, Nicole and her family are engaged in church life - from hands-on projects to joyful events. She treasures the relationships she's built and the opportunity to grow in faith alongside a welcoming, purpose-driven community.



**Attention Team Leaders
Annual Reports Due
January 11, 2026**

Please e-mail them to the church office, nancy@faithlutheranchurch.org

Thank you!

Giving Thanks for Council Members



We are blessed by Faith members who give of their time and talents to serve on the Congregation Council and thank **Lori Ashenfelter and Tom Peyton** who are leaving the Council following three years of service. We are grateful for their insights and faithfulness as leaders of the congregation.

We also give thanks for **Darryl Anderson (second term), Kurt Mackall and Lynne Poulton** who were elected to three-year terms on the Council at the Annual Meeting on November 23, and for **Joe Antal, Wendy Gajarsky, Nicole Vincent, Duane Daily, Nancy Hooper and Fedearia Sweval** as they continue serving on the Council.

The church is only as strong as its members are willing to serve; so we are indeed grateful for all who take on leadership roles.

Please note: In January, the Council will meet for a day-long retreat on January 17, and therefore will not meet on January 19.



Dear Penny & Team,

Wow! You did it again! Thank you so much for your donation of 74 books to our Berry Good Reading Program. The delivery from Penny was filled with amazing book titles with a great variety of classics and new, fun titles! It's like Christmas morning when we receive your donations and we get so excited to go through them.

We are so grateful that you also see the importance of early literacy and continue to pay forward the books that you receive. It is our honor and responsibility to steward your donation wisely, and we are thrilled to be able to put them in the hands of our patients and families. Your spirit of generosity is appreciated more than you know!

Thank you again!
Nancy Blanchard, Lindsay Riley
Regional Advocacy Reach Out and Read Program Coordinators

Worship

The Christmas Season Continues!

December 28

First Sunday of Christmas
Worship Schedule, as usual
9 a.m. in the Sanctuary
10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

The Informal Service will be “Table Worship” with interactive activities, children’s message and a conversation sermon.

January 4

The Epiphany of Our Lord
Worship Schedule, as usual
9 a.m. in the sanctuary
10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

We remember the arrival of the Magi, who were led by a star to Jesus!

Please note these Sunday updates for Children and Youth

There will be no Christian Education for children and youth in-between the services on December 21 and 28. Classes will begin again on January 4.

Key Dates



Help Decorate the Church Sunday, December 7 In between the services

Jobs for all ages.
Many hands make light work.
Meet in the narthex.

Another opportunity to get to know your fellow Faith members. Questions? Contact Loralee Daily 330-644-0928 or duanelo-ralee@netscape.net

3rd Thursday Women’s Bible Study Thursday, December 18 10 a.m. in the Youth Room

The December meeting will be purely fellowship related. Our group will be meeting to celebrate Christmas and the joy and love which it brings. For more information contact Bonnie at 330-606-3230/janellebonnie@gmail.com.

Men of Faith Bible Study and Discussion Group 9 a.m. in the Youth Room Saturday, December 20

For more information contact Geoff Whidden, geoffrey.whidden@gmail.com or Karl Demuth, karl-demuth@hotmail.com.

Key Dates

Tinsel & Tea
Sat., Dec., 6
11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.



For those that signed up the event, it begins at 11 a.m. with a punch bowl social.

For information, please contact Fedearia Sweval, fedearianicholson@gmail.com.



Come and See!
The Chosen
Season Five

The final episode will be viewed and discussed in the Youth Room
Dec. 7 - *3-5:30 p.m.

For the fifth time in recent years a group will gather at Faith Lutheran Church to view and discuss The Chosen video series on the life of Jesus. Season Five covers the final week of Jesus' life, from his triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to the Last Supper and his arrest. It explores themes of authority, judgment, and the conflicting reactions of religious and political leaders to Jesus' growing influence. All adults and teens are most welcome to attend.

** Please note earlier time.*



Salvation Army Angel Tree
Located in the
Welcome Center

Choose a tag(s) from the tree and place your name and contact information next to the corresponding tag number on the clipboard. Shop! Bring your unwrapped gifts in a garbage bag (with name tag securely attached to the bag), to the church and place under the Angel Tree.

Please note deadline to return bag of gifts
is Sunday, December 7.



to Decorate the Sanctuary
Please fill out a red poinsettia order form and place in the offering plate or turn into the church office.

The deadline to place your order
is December 1.

Key Dates



Christmas Concert

7 p.m.
Saturday, December 20

St. Luke's Lutheran Church
2121 6th Street
Cuyahoga Falls



Calling All Singers!
Join the expanded choir for
Music Sunday Worship!

Christmas Music Sunday is Dec. 21, with the service **at 10 a.m.**. This year we will sing Christmas Hymns and the Celebration Choir and Orchestra will present several offerings of the season. You are welcome to join the choir for this special service! All you need to do is stop by the choir room at 10:30 following the 9 a.m. service and join in rehearsals. We have a good time!



Faith @ 4 Concert
Sunday, December 14
At 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary
Featuring Sonnenberg Station
Men's Vocal Ensemble
Singing Christmas Songs



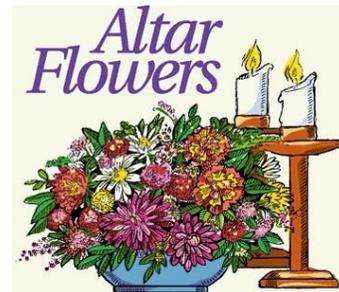
Kinship Café News

**Snikerdoodles, Gingerbread,
Christmas cutouts...**

Whatever you like to bake, please consider donating a dozen or two, or more, for the cookie reception that will follow the:



10 a.m.
Music Sunday
Service
on
December 21



The 2026 Altar Flower sign-up chart is now out and located on the bulletin board across from the Meeting Room. Please be sure to sign up early for altar flowers to ensure you get the Sunday of your choice. Cost is \$60 payable to the church. Payment may be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church office. Contact Nancy with any questions.

Outreach



David Simpson
Community Outreach Coordinator
Outreach@faithlutheranchurch.org
330-836-8811



OUTREACH QUIZ



Various abbreviations and acronyms periodically appear in Outreach news. Can you identify the names or words associated with items in the following array? There will not be a prize, but answers with credits will be published next month. Please leave your answers in the Outreach Office.

AAIC
ACF
APS
ASIA
DLM (Two correct answers)
ELCA
LoF
IJA
PROJECT R.I.S.E.
OASIS
OPEN M
RIC
SJ/SP

Hint—most of these have websites related to the initials.

INTERFAITH JUSTICE ALLIANCE

As previously reported the program dates will be **February 25, March 4, 11 and 18**. The theme will be food deserts, food accessibility, food policy, nutrition deficiency and its health consequences as well as solutions for the future.

You may recall that recent programs focused on the following issues:

- Civility in the midst of divisive issues - Braver Angels and Dinner and a Fight (Dialogue)
- Gun Violence
- Complex racial issues

Outreach

OASIS AND MASON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COLLECTIONS

Both of these collection drives were successful and well supported by our congregation members, despite the short notice for each.



Hats & gloves for Mason Middle School



Supplies, snacks & other items for OASIS

SALVATION ARMY



DOING THE MOST GOOD®
NORTHEAST OHIO DIVISION

Following up on inquiries regarding the cost and distribution of Angel Tree Christmas gifts, David Simpson reviewed these concerns with Cheryl Knerien who coordinates the program for the Salvation Army. She clarified their expectations with the following message:

Families from all over Summit County can register for assistance with toys for Christmas. After the registration process, the children's wishes are placed on "Angel Tags". Other information is added to the tag, so donors know a little about the child. It is up to the donor to decide what they can purchase for the child and what they would like to do. Each child will receive everything listed on the tag. Even if donors do not purchase the entire list of items, the Salvation Army will supplement as we can to make sure that each child has a good Christmas.

Thus, there is no expectation that donors purchase all the listed items on the tags. There are currently 40 tags available on the Angel Tree in the Welcome Center. **Gifts are due Sunday, December 7.** Please see **details on page 9** of this newsletter.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

On October 27 Sandy Selby made a final delivery of our produce to OPEN M. As our garden team was clearing the plots for winter another unexpectedly large quantity of food was harvested. This 172 pound collection was added to our annual total causing another revision to the 'final' tally which now stands at 2,889.92 pounds. Congratulations to all the gardeners and thanks for their work from all the preparation, through the growing and harvesting as well as the end of summer clean-up. The following is an account of that morning by Sandy.

This morning I delivered to OPEN-M 172 pounds of tomatoes, peppers, eggplants and greens from the FLC Community Garden. Naturally, they were not expecting a produce delivery on October 27!

When I opened the trunk of my car, the food service employee said, "WOW! I need to go get Marcia (Food Services Manager)!" Marcia told me: "The timing of this could not be better! With SNAP payments probably suspended next week due to the government shutdown (affecting 77,000 Summit County residents), and this being the 5th week of the month when demand is always high, there will be a lot of demand at the local food pantries. Normally, we have around 35 families per day here at OPEN-M. Last week we averaged around 60 a day, 1/3 of whom were new. THANK YOU! Please know how much we appreciate the people of Faith Lutheran Church!"

Outreach

ELCA FOR 2026



It is not too early to consider projects for our ELCA Day of Service next year which will be on **September 6, 2026**. Please share any suggestions you may have with David Simpson.

AKRON AREA INTERFAITH COUNCIL (AAIC)

Our participation in AAIC, permits us to have two members from the congregation serve on the Council which meets on the first Tuesday of every month. If you are interested in learning more about this, you are welcome to come to one of their meetings. David Simpson can arrange this for you. You may also check out the AAIC website at this link: <https://www.akroninterfaith.org/>

INVITATION FROM SOUTH STREET MINISTRIES



South Street Ministries equips and inspires the restoration of community, economy, and faith

We recently received the following message from Rev. Michael Parisher, Development Director for South Street Ministries:

One of our big pushes right now at South Street is to be better connect with churches who support us. I would love to find a time to either come to Faith Lutheran or have you and anyone you think would be good, come to South Street and see what it's all about. Let me know what times this fall/winter may be good for you and the team.

Please let David Simpson, Faith's Community Outreach Coordinator, know if you would be interested in a visit to South Street Ministries. Here is a link to their website: <https://southstreetministries.org>

Reconciling in Christ (RIC)

A big thank you to Sue Harman, for her beautiful painting that now hangs in the Welcome Center. In her work, Sue mirrors the mission and values of the RIC team. It is with love, hope and faith that we at Faith Lutheran Church show that we are open to diversity, equality, acceptance, inclusion and kindness to all who enter our doors.



Outreach

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Salvation Army Angel Tree Gifts - Deadline is Sunday, December 7
- Loads of Faith Laundry Ministry for 2025 - December 17
- DLM Schedule for 2025
December 13 – Breakfast with Santa (Kids/Families)

JUST FYI

NEWS FROM TEMPLE ISRAEL

We are kindling the passion to connect to each other, to the sacred, and to the world.



Marlene Whitman was hired as the first Executive Director in the 160-year history of Temple Israel Akron in Bath Township, the Executive Director Task Force and Board of Trustees of the Temple recently announced. “After a thorough and deliberate selection process, we found Marlene to possess a rare and powerful blend of a business mindset, strategic insight, professional achievement, a familiarity with a broad spectrum of synagogue leadership, and a deep-rooted commitment to Jewish life,” Linda Barr, outgoing Temple president, said in a news release. “We are confident that her unique visionary leadership aligns perfectly with the future direction and needs of Temple Israel.” Whitman said in the release she is “thrilled to be joining this incredible community and look forward to guiding it into its next 160 years.”

DECEMBER COMMUNITY CHARITY EVENTS IN AKRON

Summit County Continuum of Care Annual Holiday Dinner for the Homeless:

Help spread joy and warmth by supporting this holiday feast for those in need.

Date: Saturday, December 6, 2025, at 11 a.m.

Venue: Quaker Station Catering, 135 South Broadway Street, Akron.

Venue: Akron-Summit County Public Library, 60 South High Street, Akron.

Cuyahoga Valley National Park Adopt-a-Trail:

Volunteer to assist park staff in maintaining trails for safety and upkeep.

Ledges Trail - Saturday, December 6, 2025, at 9 a.m..

Lake Trail & Cross Country Trail - Thursday, December 4, 2025, at 1 p.m..



Outreach

FIRST SERVE

First Serve has posted the following two volunteer opportunities

- 1. Findley CLC:** 65 W Tallmadge Ave, Akron
Jane Penny, First Serve Coordinator, vnd832@apslearns.org
Findley Food Bag Packers- Twice a month on a Wednesday evening, First Serve Volunteers are needed to pack over 500 weekend bags of food for each of the students at Findley CLC.
- 2. North High School:**
985 Gorge Blvd, Akron
Kris Stoehr, First Serve Coordinator, kstoehr@hudsonucc.org

We are in desperate need of volunteers to assist with the food pantry.

Food Pantry and Clothing Room: The school year is off to a very busy start. In September, Food Pantry visits by students and families doubled since last year. We need your help! Please consider working in the North High School Pantry to assist students and their families with food insecurity.

Interested in working in the Clothing Room? Times and dates are flexible. Contact Kris for more details, kstoehr@hudsonucc.org.

LOVE AKRON



The following message has been received from Kemp Boyd, Love Akron's, Executive Director:

*Can you believe it's been 30 days since we celebrated 30 years of Loving Greater Akron together? I want to remind you, it's all about the who, not the what. Relationships change lives, and we need you! Take action today! **Join the Mission** → Get involved today and discover your who through one of the Progressions at Love Akron. **Fuel the Mission** → Join Coach Kemp's 50x50 Team to become a monthly supporter of Love Akron or make a one-time donation today. Come alongside Love Akron and be one of the many who's making a difference right now!*

"Love begins with the Who, not the What."

Kemp A. Boyd
Executive Director

For more information, go to Love Akron's website at <https://www.loveakron.org>.

FAITHKIDS & JR YOUTH GROUP



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CHOIR

All students 4 years old through 7th grade are welcome to join in the Children's Christmas Choir! Students will be performing 2-3 songs during the 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. worship services on Sunday, December 14.



Practice Times

November 23, 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall
(Children will practice their songs and then participate in a fun Thanksgiving Program during the Annual Meeting)
December 7, 10:40 a.m.-11 a.m.

Performances

December 14, 9 a.m. AND 10:30 a.m. Worship Services

ADVENT FAMILY NIGHT

“All Creatures Great and Small: A Night in the Manger”

Wednesday, December 3, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Come with us to travel to Bethlehem on December 3!



Kick off this season of Advent with our Annual Advent Family Night. This year, we will build on our Bethlehem theme of last year and invite you back to this holy town, to focus on the animals that made room for Christ's birth in their home among the hay. We will explore the animals of the story and see how we can still draw near to Christ as we celebrate God's creation big and small living in a humble stable. Join us for crafts, songs, live animals to pet, charity project, and activities! We will have pizza at 5:30 followed by our program.

Please RSVP to Pastor Sarah so that we can make sure to accommodate all for food and materials, faithkids@faithlutheranchurch.org.

FAMILY CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

2 p.m.

Join us for this interactive family friendly worship service. We will hear the story of the birth of Jesus, invite young ones to come forward as they participate in the retelling and welcome Him into the world once more!



Growth & Learning



Faith
PRESCHOOL

Special Thanks to Sandy Dolan of the Prayer Shawl Team for making 50 (!) “Prayer Squares” for each one of our preschool students. They were distributed during Religion Class with Miss Dineen, where she showed how you can hold a prayer square when you fold your hands to pray. One student said she was going to put it under her pillow and pray at bedtime!



Gifts for Others At Faith Preschool, we learn the important lesson of sharing what we have with others. Faith Preschool will adopt 4 families from Head Start to help them have a happier Christmas. Gifts are donated by our families, wrapped and delivered before Christmas. These families are identified by a social worker friend of Faith as those who sometimes fall through the cracks of assistance. Preschool families are always so generous with their giving! We are blessed to be a blessing!

Gift Wrappers Needed! If you enjoy gift wrapping to Christmas music, then join Dineen, the Preschool Board members, and any available parents to WRAP GIFTS on Monday, December 15, 9-11:30 a.m. in the Youth Room. We sort and organize the donated gifts, then wrap them, and bag them for pick up on Tuesday. We know the families will appreciate these signs of God’s love!



Preschool Nativity A Christmas pageant is part of our annual Christmas program for the older Dolphins and Bluebirds PreK classes. On Friday, December 12, at 6 p.m. our students will present the perfectly preschool “ABCs of Christmas”. Songs will be interspersed throughout while children in costume set the stage for the Nativity story. We value this important retelling of the reason for the season. Merry Christmas to you!

Notes from the Preschool Board If a family is experiencing financial hardship and their child is enrolled at Faith Preschool, they may submit a request for tuition assistance, to be reviewed by the Preschool Board. Church members who would like to donate to “Preschool Scholarships” to support students in need can use the DONATE link on the church website (or speak with Dineen). Past donations have helped 3 students attend Faith Preschool this school year!

There is still room in the Monday Mom, Dad, and Me Class for 2 year olds and a grown up! See Dineen for details.

Our afternoon Lunch Bunch is growing so much that we need to add staff. Thanks to Amanda Hyter for her willingness to step into this role starting in January. This is on top of her morning duties as Mom & Me teacher (MWF) and Lambs Class Assistant Teacher (T/Th). We are grateful for her continued presence at the preschool!

Church members with preschool age children can register for 2026-2027 on January 18, 2026. Enrollment for next year opens to current families on Jan. 20 and to the public on Jan. 26. Tell others to “Have Faith!”

Growth & Learning

flcyou(th)



Eric & Abby Jezewski
Youth Leader & Co-leader
330-836-8811/
faithlcyouth@gmail.com



Sunday December 7, all youth in grades 6 -12 are invited to help decorate the church for Christmas, beginning at 10 a.m. As is our tradition, immediately following decorating we will meet in the Youth Room for our annual Advent Lunch! All youth and friends are invited to join us for lunch, games, treats and a Christmas movie! We look forward to celebrating the Christmas season with everyone!

The new **Acolyte and Communion Assistant schedule** has been sent for the winter months. As always, PLEASE make sure you add your youth's assignments to your personal calendar at home. Hard copies will be in church mailboxes and hanging in the Youth Room. Additionally the schedule is posted in the Band App! If you need to switch, please remember that you are responsible for finding a replacement and communicating with Nancy (nancy@faithlutheranchurch.org) in the church office. Thanks!

Coming up in January, we will hold our first **FLC Youth Game Show** for all youth and friends in 6-12th grade! This event will incorporate games from some of your favorite (or at least well known!) televised game shows! All youth are invited to bring their A-Game to help their team come out on top! RSVP's are mandatory so that we can plan games and lunch accordingly.



Confirmation Sunday is set for January 11. **Treader Anderson, Cy Jezewski, Adam Schafer and Celia Shiban** will be confirmed and we look forward to celebrating their confirmation! We are so thankful to Pastor Jean for all of her years of teaching and learning with our confirmation classes!

From our family to yours, we wish you a very Merry Christmas! We are so grateful for our youth and our Faith family! Here's to hoping that the new year brings health, happiness and love.

ACME RECEIPTS = CASH FOR OUR YOUTH PROGRAMS

It's that time of the year again; the **Acme Community Cashback** program is now in full swing (**receipts dated 8/1/25- 2/15/26**). Please save your Acme receipts to benefit our youth programs! Drop off your receipts in the collection boxes in the Welcome Center, Narthex, or the counter outside of the Fellowship Hall.



In Our Prayers:

Health Concerns:

Faith member Polly Dobkin
Faith member Pastor Rick Gordon
Tommy Gorman
Faith member Pastor Tim Keeler
Faith member Linda Lewis
Faith member Dede Morrison
Faith member Terry Vernon
Faith member Mark Watkins
Faith member Barbara Wiedmann

For Faith members Marian, Liane, Shirley, JoAnn, Ann, Don, Heather, Dottie and Vee who are in assisted living facilities, or receiving nursing care.

In Times of Loss:

For Edward Pleasant and family upon the death of his mother, Alberta (Al) Davis on November 11, that they may be comforted.

For the family and friends of an unhoused man who died in the woods near Faith member Jennene Pritt's home, as well as all who noticed him from a distance, that they may be comforted knowing that he is at home in God's care.

Special Prayers

For the newly formed FLC Visitation Team as they prepare to visit and bring Holy Communion to members who are not able to worship in person, that their ministry may be blessed.

With Thanksgiving:

For Lincoln Solberg, son of Seth and Emily Solberg, as he received Holy Communion for the first time, that he may be strengthened by the sacrament throughout his life.

QR Code Prayer Requests:



Schedule to Serve

Date	Service	Altar	Communion	Flowers	Lay Reader	Ushers	Youth
7	9 a.m.	Debbie Gottas Kit Scheetz	Dana Singer - SE Linda Weigand - SE Debbie Gottas - SP Corie Miller - B	Sara Shook	Corie Miller	Art Kaufman Duane Daily	Acolyte: Treader Anderson Assistant: Crosby Jezewski
	10:30 a.m.	Bonnie Janelle	Bonnie Janelle			Geoff Whidden	
14	9 a.m.	Debbie Gottas Kit Scheetz	Debbie Gottas - SE Linda Weigand - SE Corie Miller - SP Judy Harrison - B	Marilyn Wilson	Judy Harrison	Art Kaufman Duane Daily	Acolyte: Katie Archbold Assistant: Elyse Vincent
	10:30 a.m.	Nancy Hooper	Nancy Hooper			Alice Gilmore Becky Kuhar	
21 Music Sunday One Service	One 10 a.m. Service	Deb Gottas Kit Scheetz	Corie Miller - SE Kit Scheetz - SE Linda Weigand - SP Sandy Selby - B	Sean & Molly Donohue	Sandy Selby	Art Kaufman Duane Daily Ed Pleasant	Acolyte: Crosby Jezewski Assistant: Hannah Williams
24 Christmas Eve	2 p.m.	Deb Gottas Kit Scheetz	Deb Allen - SE Nancy Hooper - SE Asher Courtney - SP Melissa Johnson - B		Em Antal	Ed Pleasant	Acolyte: Hannah Williams Assistant: Katie Archbold Annabelle Courtney
	8 p.m.	Deb Gottas Kit Scheetz	Corie Miller - SE Dana Singer - SE Loralee Daily - SP Nicole Vincent - SP Judy Harrison - B		Judy Harrison	Ed Pleasant	Acolyte: Elyse Vincent Assistant: Cayden Cloninger
28	9 a.m.	Debbie Gottas Kit Scheetz		Rosa Bhakuni	Sue Harman	Art Kaufman Duane Daily	
	10:30 a.m.	Geoff Whidden	Geoff Whidden			Nancy Hooper	

SE - Server
SP - Supplier
B - Bread



DECEMBER

Calendar of Events

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 6 p.m. Girl Scouts 8 p.m. AA	2 9:30 a.m. Busy Fingers Yoga 7 p.m. Scouts Al-Anon	3 5:30 p.m. Advent Family Night	4 10 a.m. Prayer Shawl	5	6 11 a.m. Tinsel & Tea
7 9 Traditional Svc. 9:50 Christian Education 10 Kinship Café Decorating 10:30 Informal Service Choir Rehearsal 11:30 Bound Youth Advent Lunch 3 <i>The Chosen</i> 4 & 7 Scouts 7:30 AA	8 8 p.m. AA	9 9:30 a.m. Busy Fingers Yoga 7 p.m. Scouts Al-Anon	10	11 10 a.m. Prayer Shawl	12 6 p.m. Preschool Christmas Program	13 10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. DLM @ Holy Trinity
14 9 Traditional Svc. 9:50 Christian Education 10 Kinship Café 10:30 Informal Service Choir Rehearsal 11:30 Bound 7 Faith at 4 Sonnenburg Station 7:30 AA	15 9 a.m. Gift Wrapping 6 p.m. Girl Scouts 7 p.m. Congregation Council 8 p.m. AA	16 9:30 a.m. Busy Fingers Yoga 7 p.m. Scouts Al-Anon	17 11:45 a.m. Preschool Luncheon 5 p.m. Loads of Faith Laundry Ministry 6 p.m. Finance Committee	18 10 a.m. Prayer Shawl 3rd Thursday Women's Bible Study	19	20 9 a.m. Men of Faith 10 a.m. Music Sunday Choir Rehearsal
21 Newsletter Deadline 10 One service Music Sunday 11 Kinship Café 7:30 AA	22 7 p.m. Gardeners of Greater Akron 8 p.m. AA	23 9:30 a.m. Busy Fingers Yoga 7 p.m. Scouts Al-Anon	24 Christmas Eve Worship Services 2 p.m. Family Service 8 p.m. Candlelight Service	25 Christmas Day! 	26 Office Closed	27
28 9 Traditional Svc. 10 Kinship Café 10:30 Informal Service 11:30 Bound 7:30 AA	29 8 p.m. AA	30 9:30 a.m. Busy Fingers Yoga 7 p.m. Scouts Al-Anon	31			



Please visit our website.

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Worship God. Grow in faith. Offer hope.