

# Beacon of Faith

Worship God. Grow in faith. Offer hope.

Faith Lutheran Church and Preschool

February 2026



## 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.



**Sunday, Feb. 8**

**Meatball Sub  
Take Home Meal  
\$10**

All proceeds benefit our youth attending the 2027 ELCA Youth Gathering. Details on page 15.



## LENT BEGINS on FEBRUARY 18

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday Worship on February 18.

Worship services with Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion

**Noon** - *Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 50 N. Prospect Street*  
**7 p.m.** - *Faith Lutheran Church*

## Midweek Focus in February and March

Wednesdays February 25, March 4, 11 and 18

Theme: The Grocery Gap: Food Desert in Akron

Please see page 6 of this newsletter for details.

Registration is required at:

[sthilarychurch.org/interfaith](https://sthilarychurch.org/interfaith)

or at the Church Office, 330-836-8811,

[nancy@faithlutheranchurch.org](mailto:nancy@faithlutheranchurch.org)

or on the sign up sheet on the Welcome Center desk.

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## MESSAGE FROM SUPPLY PREACHERS

ANDREW COURTNEY AND SANDY SELBY



We will be serving as Supply Preachers and participating in worship leadership on most Sundays while the search for an interim pastor is in process. We do this both as pastors and as fellow members of Faith Lutheran Church who, like you, will be grieving the departure of Pastor Jean as we enter into the uncertainty of the transition period between her departure and the arrival of our next called pastor. It is a privilege for us to serve the people of Faith as Supply Preachers at this time in the life of our congregation.

In our Homiletics classes in seminary, we learned to prepare to preach God's Word by studying the Scriptures appointed for the day and engaging with the question: "What is God's Word for *this* people, in *this* place, today?" From the gospel passages in the lectionary in early February, we will hear of both the blessings and the challenges that are ours as followers of Jesus, and engage with how those blessings and challenges that Jesus places before us inform and shape our lives as Christians, today.

In mid-February, the season of Epiphany ends with Transfiguration Sunday. When Jesus' appearance is transfigured in glory on the mountaintop, God says to the disciples who are nearby, cowering in fear, "This is my Son, listen to him!" From there, we turn to Ash Wednesday and the Lenten journey of reflection and discernment during which we open ourselves to listen to God's Word of challenge, encouragement, and comfort as we spend those forty days of Lent with Jesus, in the wilderness.

It seems somehow appropriate that we enter into the wilderness context of the season of Lent even as we, the people of Faith Lutheran Church, enter a transition time that may at times feel to us like wilderness. The blessing for us, as followers of Christ, is that in the wilderness, God has a Word for the people of Faith Lutheran Church, today: a Word of calling to discipleship in community; a Word of blessing; a Word of God's transforming power and grace; a Word of God's abiding presence. And a reminder that, no matter the wilderness in which we find ourselves, God's steadfast love will always have the last word.

As we pastors like to say: "That'll preach!"

*Please turn the page to read a brief bio of Pastor Andrew & Pastor Sarah.*

## Introducing Pastor Andrew Courtney & Pastor Sandy Selby



L to R: Pastor Andrew, Sammy,  
Asher, Pastor Sarah, Annabelle

Rev. Andrew Courtney is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and was a military chaplain in the Ohio Army National Guard. He has served in congregational ministry, chaplaincy, and community-based settings, with experience as a senior pastor, associate pastor, and chaplain. Pastor Andrew's ministry is shaped by a deep commitment to pastoral care, thoughtful preaching, interfaith engagement, and helping people navigate questions of meaning, vocation, and faith with honesty and compassion.

In addition to his ministry work, Andrew serves in a leadership role in cybersecurity leading a regional team across North and South America, where he focuses on ethics, leadership development, and mentoring young professionals. He also recently transitioned to the Air National Guard as an intelligence officer.

He is particularly interested in the intersections of faith, justice, health, and spiritual resilience, as well as outdoor and contemplative spiritual practices. Pastor Andrew lives in Cuyahoga Falls with his wife--Pastor Sarah--and children--Asher, Annabelle, and Sammy. He is grateful to be part of the Faith Lutheran Church community, where Pastor Sarah serves on staff. He is honored to serve as a pulpit supply pastor at Faith Lutheran Church during February.

Rev. Dr. Sandy Selby came to Akron in 1981 to work for BFGoodrich, where she worked for eighteen years in finance and strategic planning before following a call to ministry. While in seminary at Methodist Theological School in Ohio, Pastor Sandy felt drawn to the ministry of chaplaincy. For twenty years, she served as an on-call chaplain at Cleveland Clinic Akron General and Akron Children's Hospital, and as Pastor of Furnace Street Mission, a 100 year-old church that provides community-based ministry to those who work in the safety forces and in health and human services. She recently completed a year of service as Bridge Pastor at Westminster Presbyterian Church during their search for their next pastor.

In her ministry, Pastor Sandy seeks to encourage others to join in the journey to find meaning, beloved community, and opportunities for service through deepening our relationship with God as we seek to build God's Reign of justice, peace, and well-being for all. She has a deep commitment to inclusion and interfaith engagement. She enjoys preaching and its challenge to engage with Scripture within the context of the world in which we live, locally and globally.

A native of New Jersey, Pastor Sandy is fond of saying, "I moved to Akron for two or three years, forty-five years ago." What has kept her here in Akron are her circle of friends; Faith Lutheran Church, which she joined in 2008; regional arts and culture; community engagement; and the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, where she serves as a volunteer and, weather permitting, hikes or bikes several times per week.



Sandy Selby receiving Extended  
Family Award for the Victim's  
Assistance Program

# Business - Call Process Update

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Dear members and friends of Faith Lutheran Church,

The last six months have passed quickly and as I write this letter, we are preparing to celebrate Pastor Jean's retirement. There was a flurry of activity in the late summer into the fall to prepare us as we enter into the next phase of the call process. On behalf of the Congregation Council, I wanted to remind you with a brief outline of the transition process, update you on the preparations the Council has taken so far, and inform you of our plans for the second phase of transition. Our goal is to continue providing regular communication through monthly announcements and by letter when reaching major milestones in the transition process.

As a review, this is an outline of the process the ELCA has created for churches as they search for a new called pastor (and reflects activity at the time this letter is received). The Synod will provide guidance and assistance throughout these phases.

- Phase 1: Saying Farewell (complete) – began with the announcement of Pastor Jean's retirement. The Council met with the bishop and began planning for transitional leadership. This phase ended with the conclusion of Pastor Jean's ministry on February 1, 2026.
- **Phase 2: Congregation Health & Identity (current) – began February 2, 2026. A transition team has been formed to evaluate the congregation's sustainability and vitality. The team, with assistance from the bishop's office, will review our current mission and assist with discerning a vision for the future, while determining the staffing needed to meet those goals.**
- Phase 3: Entering the Call process – a formal Call Committee (elected by Council) is formed. With the information gleaned from Phase 2, a Ministry Site Profile is created. The Committee receives and interviews candidates.
- Phase 4: Primary Candidate – the Call Committee recommends a candidate to Council. The congregation is introduced to the candidate. A Congregation Meeting is held with a call vote.
- Phase 5: Welcoming & Celebrating – rostered minister's move and start date are arranged. An installation service is scheduled.

There is no set time for this transition process to be completed but it is likely to take somewhere between 8 and 18 months following the start of Phase 2, although it may take longer.

A group of church leaders met with Pastor Mitch Phillips (Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership) on November 17 to provide insight into the more immediate needs of the congregation during the early period of the transition process. The goal is to have an intentional full-time interim pastor to guide us until the call process is complete. We are awaiting candidates to be provided by the Office of the Bishop. Once identified, they will be interviewed; a final candidate will be chosen by Council and then presented to the congregation.

In the meantime, covering pastors have been secured through April, including Holy Week. There will continue to be traditional and informal services, although the structure of these may be slightly different depending on the presiding pastor. The Worship Team is actively planning to ensure the covering pastors have all they need for service. In addition, Pastor Jean has formed a Visitation Team that will be visiting members who are unable to attend services in person. Besides her pastoral duties, Pastor Jean had many administrative responsibilities, and Council is working to ensure all those are covered as well.

The official Transition Team will be under the guidance of Pastor Nathan Krause (Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational Vitality) and the interim pastor (once appointed) 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 first official meeting with Pastor Krause will be in mid-February. The information this team gathers will be used by the Call Committee to create a Ministry Site Profile (similar to a resume) for Faith and will inform our search in finding a permanent called pastor.

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact any Council member.

Darryl P. Anderson





## Key Dates

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### Preparing for Ash Wednesday

**Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner!**  
**Tuesday, February 17, 2026**  
**4:30 - 6:30 p.m.**

At Faith Lutheran Church



*A time to gather, feast and celebrate our faith!*

Reservations are not required, but sign up sheets will be available at the beginning of February.  
We want to make sure we flip enough pancakes for all to enjoy!

*Please join us on Shrove Tuesday to find out why we eat pancakes that day.*



### **FAT ASH WEDNESDAY** **PANCAKE DINNER AND GAMES**

**Wednesday, February 18**

**5:30-7 p.m.**



What do you get when you combine the celebration and pancake feast of Fat Tuesday with the introspective, sacrificial worship service of Ash Wednesday?

#### **FAT ASH WEDNESDAY!**

Kick off this Lenten Season by having your family come to a pancake supper followed by pancake themed games and activities. This celebration will help us feel the spiritual and emotional transition into the more somber, prayer and repentant focused season of Lent. Following the meal and games, we will all journey down the halls to the sanctuary where we will experience the Ash Wednesday worship service together.

**PLEASE NOTE: ALL ARE WELCOME! BABIES TO ELDERLY, ALL ARE INVITED TO RECEIVE ASHES DURING THE 7 P.M. WORSHIP SERVICE.**

Please join us for this fun and meaningful dinner, games and worship  
as we journey into Lent.

**PLEASE RSVP TO PASTOR SARAH, [faithkids@faithlutheranchurch.org](mailto:faithkids@faithlutheranchurch.org)/860-993-2094.**

## Key Dates



# 2026 INTERFAITH JUSTICE SERIES

## The Grocery Gap: Food Deserts in Akron



### Wednesday, February 25

#### **New Hope Baptist Church**

Understanding Food Deserts in Akron

#### **Presenters:**

Dr. David Nelson, New Hope Baptist  
Tawney Beans, Akron Beacon Journal Food Writer  
A family shares the challenge of food insecurity

### Wednesday, March 11

#### **St. Hilary Church**

Why Food Deserts Exist: Systems & Challenges

#### **Presenters:**

Tawney Beans, Akron Beacon Journal Food Writer  
Kristin Mullins, Ohio Grocers Association  
Gary Wyatt, North Hill Community House

### Wednesday, March 4

#### **Temple Israel**

The Human Cost of Food Deserts

#### **Presenters:**

Sharon VanNostran DO, Family Medicine,  
University Hospital  
LaMonica Davis, Helen Arnold School, principal

### Wednesday, March 18

#### **Prince of Peace Baptist in partnership with Faith Lutheran Church**

Advocacy: What Is Required to Bring Change?

#### **Presenters:**

Ebony Yeboah-Amankwah,  
Summit Fresh Food Truck  
Tia Turner, Grocery Bus, Metro Bus System,  
project manager

### **Evening Schedule**

#### February 25, March 11 & March 18

6:00 p.m. Gathering & Meal  
6:45 p.m. Worship/Prayer  
7:15 p.m. Presentation & Discussion  
8:45 p.m. Closing

#### March 4

6 p.m. Prayer  
6:05 p.m. Meal  
6:50-8:00 p.m. Presentations &  
Discussion of Action Items

### **Register online at**

**[sthilarychurch.org/interfaith](https://sthilarychurch.org/interfaith)**

All sessions will be livestreamed.  
Please bring non-perishable food  
items to the sessions you attend.  
This will help each congregation with its  
outreach to those in need.

## Key Dates

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Your Faith Family Fellowship (FFF) Team has been busy planning fun events for the year! Mark your calendars and watch for details.

- February 17** Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner (See details on page 5 of this newsletter.)
- March 18** We will join with Prince of Peace Baptist Church in hosting the Interfaith Justice Series dinner, service and gathering at Prince of Peace.
- May 7** Daughters of Faith Banquet
- June 17** Porthouse Theater for dinner and the play, *Grease*.
- July** Tentative canoe/tubing adventure! Stay tuned!
- August 2** Church Picnic
- September 25** Soup Supper
- November 6** Talent Show
- December 5** Tinsel and Tea

Contact Sarah Kaufman (froghollow1632@gmail.com, 330-715-2765) to find out more about this fun team and how you can help.

You're invited!

### Spaghetti Dinner (Dine in or Take Out)

Hosted by Scout Troops 390 & 7390

**Sat., March 7**  
**4:30 - 7 p.m.**  
**at Faith**

\$15 for adults  
\$8 for children



# Outreach

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

COMMUNITY  
OUTREACH

## RECONCILIATION IN CHRIST (RIC)



This year's RIC Sunday will be February 22, with the theme of "Resilient Community". It is noteworthy that since the inception of this ministry the RIC team has organized participation in four Akron Pride Festivals, hosted the Safe Space Ally seminar, sponsored a gingerbread decorating event, created gender neutral restrooms and signage, implemented sanctuary pew alterations to accommodate those who use wheelchairs and walkers, created fidget bags for use during worship, serves as the AAIC Hunger Walk water station, posted RIC *Welcome All* decals on entry doors, provided a section in the Faith library, titled *Diversity & Faith*, embraced the Wheelchair Roundup program and brought beautiful art work to our Welcome Center with the Tree of Life painting. RIC Team members have included, Em Antal, Joe Antal, Lorelee Daily, Joe Gardner, Kurt Mackall, Dana Singer, Nancy Tobar and Marilyn Wilson.



## INTERFAITH JUSTICE ALLIANCE 2026 SERIES OVERVIEW

THEME: *THE GROCERY GAP: FOOD DESERTS IN AKRON*  
SAVE THE DATES: FEBRUARY 25, MARCH 4, 11, 18

### Session I – February 25 at New Hope Baptist Church

Understanding Local Food Deserts

Moderator: Pastor David Nelson

Speaker - Tawney Beans and family members from foods deserts

### Session II – March 4 at Temple Israel

The Human Cost of Food Deserts (Health impacts)

Moderator: Rabbi Joshua Brown

Presenters: Sharon Van Nostran, physician

Autumn Reynolds - United Way Family Resource Center

LaMonica Davis, principal of Helen Arnold School

### Session III – March 11 at St. Hilary

Why Food Deserts Exist: Systems & Challenges

Moderator: Fr. Steve Brunovsky

Presenters: Grocery market panel with focus on financial concerns, education on how to use the food, & transportation.

### Session IV - March 18 at Prince of Peace Baptist Church

Advocacy: What Is Required to Bring Change?

Moderator - Pastor Jack Streeter

Presenter: Ebony Yeboah-Amankwah (Summit Fresh Food Truck)

Focus: What needs to happen to bring about change?



# Outreach

## LOADS OF FAITH DATES (LoF) FOR 2026

A few folks have expressed interest in learning about this ministry. Please contact David Johnson, [djcarfreak52@gmail.com](mailto:djcarfreak52@gmail.com), Dana Singer, [danasinger12@gmail.com](mailto:danasinger12@gmail.com), or David Simpson, 330-836-8811/ [outreach@faithlutheranchurch.org](mailto:outreach@faithlutheranchurch.org), if you have questions, or would like to volunteer. You may also stop by at one of our Loads of Faith events to observe and learn about this ministry. We welcome you.

The dates for 2026, at Laundromat City, 1713 W. Exchange St., Akron and Laundry Time, 970 N. Main St, Akron are:

February 25	June 24	October 28
March 25	July 29	November 18
April 29	August 26	December TBA
May 27	September 30	

## DLM SCHEDULE FOR 2026

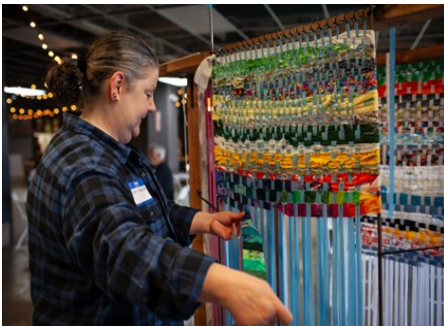
There was no event in January. Below is the schedule for this year:

February 14	June 13	October 10
March 14	July 11	November 14
April 11	August 8	December 12
May 9	September 12	

There will be various themes for DLM throughout the year including a health fair, a summer picnic, Christmas in July, a resource fair and more. Special thanks to all of these dedicated volunteers who participated during 2025, and much appreciation to Debbie Gottas for coordinating our participation in the DLM ministry.

Deb Allen	Bonnie Janelle	Jennene Pritt	Terry Vernon
Eli Cooper	Tim Lewis	Debbie Rose	Candice Carylton Watkins
Duane Daily	Flo Mackall	Sara Shook	Mark Watkins
Loralee Daily	Kurt Mackall	David Simpson	Darlene Weaver
Polly Dobkin	Mary McGuiness	Ruth Simpson	Pastor Richard Weaver
Debbie Gottas	Midge Murphy	Dana Singer	John Weisend
Nancy Hooper	Patti Nagy	John Singer	
Colleen Hruska	Paula Oby	Gary Steiner	

## AKRON AREA INTERFAITH COUNCIL (AAIC)



Faith member Lori Ashenfelter

Women's Interfaith Spiritual Heritage (WISH) in collaboration with developed AAIC developed the Tapestry of Unity, a weaving project of art and craft form including prayers, poetry and reflection. Many Akron based faith communities participated in creating this work. Each participant wrote their prayer, wish, dream or hope on a strip of fabric which were woven onto the tapestry forming one united piece. The back of the tapestry is African fabric that was discovered by a community member during their Peace Corps service. It is hoped that it will become a symbol of our community's strength representing the weft and warp of our unity. The tapestry is now available through a travelling exhibit for interested congregations and organizations. It has already been on display the Akron Main Library, Bath Church UCC, Akron Art Museum, The John Brown House. St Vincent DePaul Catholic Church, Church of Our Savior and

First Congregational Church. It is currently being hosted at Trinity Lutheran Church of Kent. We will explore hosting it here for a short period sometime after the Easter season.



# Outreach

## MITZVAH DAYS



Projects are now being planned for the June 6 and 7 event. The list will be published in early April. One of the focus areas identified will be immigration related services.

## ELCA Day of Service - "God's Work. Our Hands."



This year's program will take place on Sunday, September 13. Example projects for this special day focus on serving neighbors through various actions such as assembling care kits (hygiene, school, disaster), cleaning parks/homes/community centers, preparing meals, writing letters to service members, and supporting local shelters, highlighting hands-on faith in action for community restoration and hope. It is not too early to consider both internal and external projects that we may undertake this year.

## IN OUR COMMUNITY-OUTSIDE OUR WALLS



This group of volunteers is dedicated to helping people with disabilities access and participate in various summer and winter outdoor activities. About twenty of these generous volunteers were seen at Brandywine Ski Resort on Sunday, January 11.



Assisting a blind person



Guiding a mobility impaired person

For more than 50 years, **3 Trackers of Ohio** has been dedicated to the promotion of adaptive recreational sports to persons of all ages with a variety of physical disabilities. Three Trackers of Ohio is a 501(c)3 tax exempt non-profit organization. For information about the organization or about volunteering, visit the website: <http://www.3trackers.org>.

# Outreach

## CAVALIER CLEANERS

It was wonderful to see this kind gesture posted by a local business in our neighborhood at 2919 W. Market St.



## THE AKRON EMERGENCY OVERNIGHT WARMING CENTER (EOSWC)

The EOSWC has been open several nights in December and January and will continue to be open through winter's cold nights. It is located at 111 East Voris St. and welcomes people between the hours of 7 p.m. and 8 a.m., offering free shelter, food and clothing. The EOSWC is a community partnership among The Peter Maurin Center, Summit County Continuum of Care, and Community Support Services. It is fully staffed and managed by area volunteers. Donations and volunteers are welcome. More information is available at <https://www.akronemergencysshelter.org>





# Thank you



As the snow fell on Sunday, January 25, I reflected on the wonderful Open House that was held to celebrate 24 years of ministry together, and my retirement. It was a indeed a celebration! There were lovely flower arrangements and a “through-the-years” slide show in the Welcome Center and creative table decorations in the Fellowship Hall, tasty food, and many, many warm greetings and shared memories. The “special” song and slide show during the presentation time brought laughter with it; thank-you to its author Sarah Kaufman and Bob Mollard and the choir for leading the fun. SO MANY people came to the event in spite of the frigid temperature; thank-you to each one of you. I am so grateful for the Planning Team: Polly Dobkin, Wendy Gajarsky, Deb Gottas, Sarah and Art Kaufman and Kit Scheetz; Nancy Tobar who facilitated communication (and much more) and for all who helped with set-up and clean-up, created table décor and greeted guests. It was a day I’ll always remember.

I want to express my unending thanks also for the “group gifts” for which congregation members and friends donated. Those who attended the presentation saw the engraved brick, the lovely quilt made by Busy Fingers, the prayer shawl made by the Prayer Shawl Team and the Memory Book created by Lois Peterson and Judy Vernon, with digital photos by Kurt Mackall. That book is filled with reflections from many people, and I will treasure it always; thank-you to all who shared of themselves in this way. I was overwhelmed by the “BIG” check (in size and amount) that I was given, and that I will happily use toward my time at the Chautauqua Institution this summer. What you did not get to see was the gifts that were presented during Saturday’s program, but I unwrapped during Sunday’s snowstorm. A great deal of time and thought went into finding and beautifully wrapping them! Thank-you!!

We all chuckled at the irony that after years of promoting snow, a snow storm caused my final Sunday to be postponed one week. I look forward to that day as well, although I know the goodbyes will be bittersweet. Indeed, my gratitude for the people who are Faith Lutheran Church is unending.

Blessings to all,  
Pastor Jean



Pastor's "24 Group Gifts"

Backpack/Daypack  
Passport Pouch  
Hat  
Hiking Socks  
50 Hikes Ohio book  
The Open Road book Hiking Journal  
Fanny Pack  
Wet Ones  
Kleenex  
Chapstick  
Hand Lotion  
Twizzlers

Dark Chocolate  
Kind Bars  
Compact Flash Light  
The Fuzzies Game  
“Retirement” Plaque  
Small Calendar-Cats  
Puzzle - “Cat in Window”  
Akron 200 Years  
B.F. Quilt  
Prayer Shawl  
Scrapbook and Chautauqua



# FaithKids & Junior Youth Group



## **FAT ASH WEDNESDAY** **PANCAKE DINNER AND GAMES**

**Wednesday, February 18**  
**5:30-7 p.m.**



What do you get when you combine the celebration and pancake feast of Fat Tuesday with the introspective, sacrificial worship service of Ash Wednesday?

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Please join us for this fun and meaningful dinner, games and worship  
as we journey into Lent.

**PLEASE RSVP TO PASTOR SARAH, [faithkids@faithlutheranchurch.org](mailto:faithkids@faithlutheranchurch.org)/860-993-2094.**

### **FaithKids and Junior Youth Group**

**Every Sunday from 9:50 a.m. –10:30 a.m.**

Preschool through 2nd grade children meet in the classroom upstairs, while Junior Youth Group (3rd– 5th grade) will meet in the library.

***We can't wait to GROW IN FAITH with you!***





## 2026-2027 Registration is OPEN!

If you know someone who is searching for a preschool, please recommend Faith!

Our class offerings include:

**Mom, Dad & Me for 2 year olds**

**T/Th Class for 3 year olds**

**M/W/F Class for 3 year olds**

**M-Th Class for 4s/5s**

**\*M-Fr Class for 4s/5s**

*\*There is an all day option for this class*

Extended Care includes Early Drop Off,  
Lunch Bunch, Kids Club.

A Movers & Shakers Music Extra-curricular  
is available, too!

More information is available online at  
[www.faithlutheranchurch.org](http://www.faithlutheranchurch.org)

Email for a Registration form:  
[preschool@faithlutheranchurch.org](mailto:preschool@faithlutheranchurch.org)

Or call 330-836-8827 to schedule a tour!

We are a wonderful, warm place to begin  
a lifetime of learning!



This month of Valentines is a great time to  
teach about how much God loves us and

how important it is to share that love with our family, friends, and the  
world! Remember GOD IS LOVE! And we are to LOVE ONE ANOTHER!

Our preschool students shared that love with Pastor Jean on her last Religion Class before retiring. She was presented with special gifts and a bouquet of paper flowers with favorite moments from past religion classes.

This month, teachers are working on individual student assessments to prepare for Parent / Teacher Conferences that happen in March. Students in our older classes are evaluated on the skills needed to prepare for kindergarten, then teachers talk with parents about the results and offer extra activities to continue the work of preparing the children for a confident and successful kindergarten experience.

**Thank you** to all who participated in our  
"Birthday in a Bag" service project. Your gift of cake mix, frosting, candles, birthday-themed plates & napkins will help a child in need have a special birthday! Our ministry partners OPEN M and DLM say their clients really appreciate these donations!



### COMING IN FEBRUARY Malley's Easter Fundraiser!

We are excited to hear that Malley's brought back their popular and delicious Easter candy fundraiser! Watch for flyers and order forms in the Welcome Center! More info to come! Delivery will be the week of March 16, in plenty of time for Easter (April 5).



# Growth & Learning



Thank you to all the youth who joined us for our **FLCYOUTH Gameshowdown** on January 18. We had a blast with you! **Congrats to Katie for taking home the gold!**



**Eric & Abby Jezewski**  
Youth Leader & Co-leader  
330-836-8811/  
[faithlcyouth@gmail.com](mailto:faithlcyouth@gmail.com)

## Grades 6 - 8 Mark Your Calendars

- **Saturday, February 7, 9 - 11:30 a.m.** - 3rd Confirmation Learning Retreat
- **Sunday, February 15, 11:30 a.m.** - Meal, Movie & More

## Super Bowl Meal Fundraiser - Let the youth take care of your eats for Super Bowl Sunday!



**Sun., February 8**  
**Meatball Sub Take - Home Meal**  
**\$10**

Purchase a meatball sub meal (includes sub, bag of chips and a dessert) for \$10 from our youth who are attending the ELCA National Youth Gathering in 2027, **AND** make it your Super Bowl meal!

- Cash or check due at time of pickup on February 8, at the entrance to the Youth Room, immediately following both services. No preorder. Just step up to the door and place your order. Sub meals available while supplies last.

**Thank you for your support as we head to Minneapolis!**

**Acolyte & Communion Assistants** - youth in grades 6 - 8 who serve as acolytes and communion assistants, please remember that it is imperative that you show up for your assigned days, or ensure that you have someone to cover! If you switch, please let Nancy, [nancy@faithlutheranchurch.org](mailto:nancy@faithlutheranchurch.org), and Eric/Abby know so that we can ensure the correct name is in the Weekly Beacon, and the right people are reminded via Band App and email. Thank you!



**Snacks/drinks - Parents and congregation members**, if you would like to donate snacks/drinks for our Meal & More or other fellowship events, we are always grateful! Please ensure that they are individually **wrapped/sealed (chips/candy/snack cakes)** to avoid God's little critters getting into them! You may leave them inside the Youth Room, but please let us know who donated them, so that we can thank you.

As we look forward to Lent and Easter, please note that reminders will be sent out via the Band App and email about the Interfaith Justice Series, and helping with the Easter breakfast! Easter is on Sunday, April 5, this year, which means we will meet on Saturday, April 4, to setup and prep for breakfast. **Please mark your calendars** as we will need parents and youth to assist. Thanks to a lot of helping hands, we have reduced the prep time the past two years.



We are still collecting receipts for the **Acme Community Cashback** program (**receipts dated 8/1/25-2/15/26**). Please turn in your Acme receipts to benefit our youth programs! You may drop them off in the collection boxes in the Welcome Center, Narthex, or the counter outside of the Fellowship Hall.

# Growth & Learning

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## Third Thursday Women's Bible Study Thursday, February 19 10 a.m. Youth Room

In February the Third Thursday Bible Study will delve into Ephesians 4 with discussion on the topic of Unity in Diversity, a theme within the chapter. A video created by the authors of the book, *Ephesians*, will be shown initially. All women are invited to attend on Thursday, February 19 at 10 a.m. in the Youth Room at Faith. For more information, contact Bonnie at 330.606.3230.

## Men of Faith Bible Study and Discussion Group 9 a.m. - February 21 Youth Room



Men of Faith, a Bible study and discussion group meets the third Saturday of each month in the Youth Room. For more information contact Geoff Whidden, [geoffrey.whidden@gmail.com](mailto:geoffrey.whidden@gmail.com) or Karl Demuth, [karldemuth@hotmail.com](mailto:karldemuth@hotmail.com).



## Faith Book Club **Anxious People** By Fredrik Backman

**Tues., February 17 at 2 p.m.**

Faith's book club is reading **Anxious People**, a novel from the author of **A Man Called Ove**, by Fredrik Backman. We invite you to join members of the club on **Tuesday, February 17**, as we discuss this laugh-out-loud funny story! We'll meet in the FLC Youth Room at 2 p.m. By the way, read about our club, including summaries of all the books that we will be reading this winter and spring, on the FLC web page, [www.faithlutheranchurch.org/ministries/adults/flcbookclub](http://www.faithlutheranchurch.org/ministries/adults/flcbookclub). The following is a brief summary of this Backman novel.

Looking at real estate isn't usually a life-or-death situation, but an apartment open house becomes just that when a failed bank robber bursts in and takes a group of strangers hostage. The captives include a recently retired couple who relentlessly hunt down fixer-uppers to avoid the painful truth that they can't fix their own marriage. There's a wealthy bank director who has been too busy to care about anyone else and a young couple who are about to have their first child but can't seem to agree on anything. Add to the mix an eighty-seven-year-old woman who has lived long enough not to be afraid of someone waving a gun in her face, a flustered but still ready-to-make-a-deal real estate agent, and a mystery man who has locked himself in the apartment's only bathroom, and you've got the worst group of hostages in the world.

Each of them carries a lifetime of grievances, hurts, secrets, and passions that are ready to boil over. None of them is entirely who they appear to be. And all of them, the bank robber included, desperately crave some sort of rescue. As the authorities and the media surround the premises, these reluctant allies will reveal surprising truths about themselves and set in motion a chain of events so unexpected that even they can hardly explain what happens next. What DOES happen next?! Read to find out!





# In Our Prayers:

## Health Concerns:

Faith member Bev Gorman  
Tommy Gorman  
Faith member Pastor Tim Keeler  
Faith member Linda Lewis  
Faith member Ken Messick  
Faith member Peggy Messick  
Faith member Shirley Pope  
Faith member Terry Vernon  
Faith member Nicole Vincent

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

## In Times of Loss:

For Faith members Troy and Hannah Kozee, and family, upon the death of Troy's mother Judy, that they may be comforted.

For Faith Financial Manager Rebecca Shull and family upon the sudden death of her father, James Shull, that they may be comforted.

## Special Prayers

For our country in the midst of upheaval, that peace may prevail, and that wise choices will be made when lives are at risk.

## With Thanksgiving:

For Treader, Cyrus, Adam and Celia who affirmed their baptisms on January 11, that they may continue to grow in faith as disciples of Jesus.

For Pastor Jean as she retires following 24 years as pastor at Faith Lutheran Church, that God's grace and peace would continue to be made known to her and the congregation.

## QR Code Prayer Requests:

# FEBRUARY

2026



## Schedule to Serve

Date	Service	Altar	Communion	Flowers	Lay Reader	Ushers	Youth
1	9 a.m.	Karen Skerlong	Cora Solberg - SE Emily Solberg - SE Tim Lewis -SP Fedearia Sweval - SP Bishop Barbins - B	Congregation	Fedearia Sweval	Dana Singer Seth Solberg	<b>Acolyte:</b> Crosby Jezewski  <b>Assistant:</b> Cyrus Jezewski
	10:30 a.m.	Deb Allen	Deb Allen			Geoff Whidden	
8	9 a.m.	Karen Skerlong		John Knops	Jerry Allen	Dana Singer Seth Solberg	
	10:30 a.m.	Geoff Whidden	Geoff Whidden			Alice Gilmore Becky Kuhar	
15	9 a.m.	Karen Skerlong	Tim Lewis - SE Emily Solberg - SE Fedearia Sweval - SP Cora Solberg - B		Cora Solberg	Dana Singer Seth Solberg	<b>Acolyte:</b>  <b>Assistant:</b>
	10:30 a.m.	Bonnie Janelle	Bonnie Janelle			Karin Allen	
18	7 p.m.	Karen Skerlong	Kit Scheetz - SE Dana Singer - SE Judy Harrison - SP Debbie Gottas - B		Debbie Gottas		<b>Acolyte:</b>  <b>Assistant:</b>
22	9 a.m.	Karen Skerlong	Debbie Gottas - SE Judy Harrison- SE Kit Scheetz -SP Loralee Daily – B		Loralee Daily	Dana Singer Seth Solberg	
	10:30 a.m.	Deb Allen	Deb Allen			Paula & Bob Lundell	

SE - Server  
SP - Supplier  
B - Bread



## Calendar of Events

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>1</b> 9 Traditional Svc. 9:50 Christian Education 10 Kinship Café 10:30 Informal Service 11:30 Bound 7:30 AA	<b>2</b> 10 a.m. St. Cecelia 11:45 a.m. Preschool Staff 6 p.m. Girl Scouts 8 p.m. AA	<b>3</b> 9:30 a.m. Busy Fingers Yoga 7 p.m. Scouts Al-Anon	<b>4</b> 7:30 p.m. AA	<b>5</b> 10 a.m. Prayer Shawl	<b>6</b> 6 p.m. Preschool PJ Party	<b>7</b> 9 a.m. Confirmation Learning Retreat
<b>8</b> 9 Traditional Svc. 9:50 Christian Education 10 Kinship Café 10:30 Informal Service 11:30 Scout Activities 7:30 AA	<b>9</b> 6 p.m. Preschool Bd. 8 p.m. AA	<b>10</b> 9:30 a.m. Busy Fingers Yoga 7 p.m. Scouts Al-Anon SJSP Endowment	<b>11</b> 7:30 p.m. AA	<b>12</b> 10 a.m. Prayer Shawl 6 p.m. Finance Committee 6:30 p.m. Cub Scouts	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 10:30 a.m. DLM at Holy Trinity
<b>15</b> <b>Newsletter Deadline</b> 9 Traditional Svc. 9:50 Christian Education 10 Kinship Café 10:30 Informal Service 11:30 Bound Youth Meal & More 7:30 AA	<b>16</b> 10 a.m. St. Cecelia 6 p.m. Girl Scouts 7 p.m. Council 8 p.m. AA	<b>17</b> 9:30 a.m. Busy Fingers Yoga 2 p.m. Faith Book Club 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner 7 p.m. Al-Anon	<b>18 Ash Wednesday</b> 12 p.m. Worship @ Holy Trinity 5:30 - 7 p.m. Fat Ash Wed. Pancakes & Play 7 p.m. Worship @ Faith 7:30 p.m. AA	<b>19</b> 10 a.m. Prayer Shawl 3rd Thursday Women's Bible Study 7 p.m. Pastor Transition Team	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 9 a.m. Men of Faith Scouts Pinewood Derby
<b>22 RIC Sunday</b> 9 Traditional Svc. 9:50 Christian Education 10 Kinship Café 10:30 Informal Service 11:30 Bound Worship Team 7:30 AA	<b>23</b> 7 p.m. Gardeners of Greater Akron 8 p.m. AA	<b>24</b> 9:30 a.m. Busy Fingers Yoga 7 p.m. Scouts Al-Anon	<b>25</b> 5 p.m. Laundry Ministry 6 p.m. Interfaith Justice Series - at New Hope Baptist Church 7:30 p.m. AA	<b>26</b> 10 a.m. Prayer Shawl 6:30 p.m. Cub Scouts	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>



Please visit our website.

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**Worship God. Grow in faith. Offer hope.**