

Beacon of Faith

Worship God. Grow in faith. Offer hope.

Faith Lutheran Church and Preschool

July 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, August 2
Following the one 10 a.m.
service

Inside this Issue

Pastor's Pondering	2
Call Update	4
Key Dates	7
Outreach	9
Growth & Learning	16
Prayers	21
Schedule to Serve	22
Monthly Calendar	23



Kinship Café in the Celebration and Memorial Courtyard Sunday, July 12



On July 12, the Courtyard Team will partner with the Kinship Café in providing the congregation and visitors with some fellowship time in our courtyard. We invite you to come and enjoy the fellowship and food, and also enjoy some of our most recent changes. **Please turn to page 7 of this newsletter for more information.**

Pastor's Pondering



A Reflection on the 250th Anniversary of American Independence

Beloved People of God,

This month we celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the Day of Independence, which continues to be one of the greatest experiments in human history. Those who gave their lives and imaginations for the birthing of this country thought of themselves as partners with God. This is not to say that they were all Christians. Many were, some however, were Deists—most notably Thomas Jefferson. But this grand experiment that would eventually be named the United States of America was understood, from its very beginning, as a great partnership between God and human beings.

Freedom compelled many of the first immigrants to this country to make that arduous and dangerous journey. For some, it was about freedom of religion. Most European nations had adopted a particular expression of the Christian faith as their national denomination. The early Puritans did not fit the Anglican mold and sought a place where they, along with Quakers and other dissenters, could freely worship as they chose. For others, it was the allure of self-determination. This was the possibility that a person could discover their own future. They would not be locked out of opportunities by virtue of birth or classism. For others, freedom of speech was a great hope.

However, not everyone came to this country of their own volition. And, in fact, were brought here through force and violence. Henry Louis Gates Jr. shares in *The Root*, “Between 1525 and 1866, in the entire history of the slave trade to the New World, according to the Trans-Atlantic Slave Database, 12.5 million Africans were shipped to the New World. 10.7 million survived the dreaded Middle Passage disembarking in North America, the Caribbean and South America. (1.8 million died just in the journey.) And how many of these 10.7 million Africans were shipped directly to North America? Only about 388,000. That’s right: a tiny percentage.” But slavery would grow to include over 4 million of God’s children and the impact slavery has had is beyond measure.

One of the great components of those who created this nation was the realization that, by its very nature, this is an on-going experiment that can realize errors, confess sins, repent, and work toward a better reality for all. Legislation to recognize June 19, or “Juneteenth,” as a federal holiday passed overwhelmingly in the House of Representatives on Wednesday, June 16, 2021.

The bill recognizes June 19, 1865, the day enslaved people in Galveston, Texas learned slavery had ended, as another important public holiday. President Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation had freed all enslaved African Americans in rebel states two and a half years earlier.

I believe it is important to know and learn our shared history as we strive to align our priorities with the Kingdom of God in which God desires for all of us to be free and to celebrate our freedoms. But I’m aware that there are those who wonder why we may need a holiday like this or a month like Pride month, in which I am writing this letter.

If you have such questions, I invite you to read Pastor Fritz Wiese’s letter entitled, “Word from Wiese.” Fritz is a long-time friend and colleague who grew up in Chicago but moved to and attended high school in Worthington, OH, (the area I also grew up) and now serves in Georgia. His words are important to hear as Christ followers. His letter follows on the next page.

Pastor's Pondering

Word from Wiese
Not My Holiday?

Do you ever feel like an imposter at certain holidays?

You've heard me recall that my neighborhood growing up was racially and ethnically diverse. If you walked west from my house, the proportion of Irish Catholics surged. So St. Patrick's Day was a big deal. Chicago actually dyes the Chicago River green in honor of the festivities. Each March 17, Irish flags festooned my little league baseball diamonds of John F. Kennedy Memorial Park, honoring the nation's first president with strong Irish Catholic connections. But while my parents (sometimes) reminded me to wear green to school, I felt like a bit of a phony compared to my Catholic schoolmates with Irish last names like O'Sullivan, Murphy, Riley, and O'Connor.

Likewise, late-May through mid-June is a time when many of us might query how we should feel and think about three important dates. On one hand, some folks might internally be wrestling with the following hesitations:

*"Memorial Day? No one in my immediate family died while serving our country.
Juneteenth? No one in my immediate family is African American.
Pride Month? No one in my immediate family is LGBTQ."*

But what if ALL these dates are opportunities for ALL of us to grow both as Christians who see all people with no dividing walls (Galatians 3.27-29) and Americans who value "liberty and justice for all?"

For instance, even though no one in my extended family died while serving in the military, I use Memorial Day to teach our children that while the world's a wonderful place, it's also a tough place. That from time to time, certain forces will try to rise up and treat other humans in very disturbing ways. And in the course of our country's history, we've had brave folks willing to die ensuring the rights and dignity of not only U.S. citizens, but those around the world. So, we take time to remember them with honor, gratitude and reflection.

Secondly on this point, June is known as PRIDE month. It's a chance to teach our kids that our family members and friends whose sexuality is different than the majority, have often felt like marginalized 3-strikers (as we've explored in sermons) who have not been afforded the opportunity to fully experience our country's value of pursuing what makes for a happy life and the Bible's value of covenantal relationships.

Thirdly, this week our country acknowledges a day more of us are learning about: Juneteenth. First recognized June 19, 1865, it celebrates President Lincoln signing the Emancipation Proclamation. Yes, we celebrate emancipation, but we also take a big gulp of humility and sorrow that our country NEEDED a day to do this, because we were actually enslaving each other, the repercussions of which still exist today in some measure. In the same spirit, we remember this month that 100 years ago, 36 square blocks of African American businesses, churches, schools and homes were burned to the ground in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

So let me suggest we are not IMPOSTERS for any holiday or special occasion our country acknowledges. Each special day is a ripe opportunity for all of us to explore afresh Jesus' Great Command, "to love God by loving people." True, at first, we might not see a direct connection, like I didn't with St. Patrick's Day before I heard the amazing story of St. Patrick. But in a spirit of prayer and humility, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, and Pride month, can each, in their own ways, be special opportunities of growth and meaning for all of us. Collectively, our prayer is we are becoming a "more perfect union" as our fore-parents hoped.

The Right Rev. Michael B. Curry, Episcopalian Bishop, with whom we are in communion partnership, shared a wonderful quote. He shared a wonderful insight about our call as a church to develop real relationships with all God's people. He states, "Our commitment to be an inclusive church is not based on a social theory or the ways of the culture, but on the belief that the outstretched arms of Jesus on the cross are a sign of the very love of God reaching out to us all."

At Faith, we hope to embody the values and behaviors of our faith. By doing that, I believe, we shall be a congregation grateful for the civil freedoms we have as well as calling this country to a better reflection of God's reign. That's why we take time to celebrate these holidays, that they may be made holy days in our lives. May we be, as individuals, a congregation and a nation, the bearers of peace and a church that invites all to worship God, grow in faith, and offer hope. That is certainly something to celebrate!

See You Sunday,
Pastor Bruce

Business - Call Process Update

It has been a couple of months since my last update, not because work has not been done but because the pace of progress in the transition has slowed. This reflects the deliberate nature of this process, allowing the congregation to grieve the loss of our long-term pastor and to reflect on our mission and values as we search for the correct person to guide us in the future.

The Congregational Assessment survey provided useful insights into our congregation, highlighting areas of strength and finding areas that may need attention before calling a new pastor. The recent focus on stewardship through offering our talents and restarting the greeters program are ways that information is being put into action. Integrating our mission statement into the worship service is a consistent reminder of our values, not just as we gather on Sundays, but as we live them out in our lives outside of the church.

In the next couple of months, the Transition Team will finish their work by completing our Ministry Site Profile. Next month, Council will be forming the Call Committee, and they will become active when the Profile is complete. Soon we will be entering the next phase of the Transition Process.

On behalf of Council, I would like to thank everyone for their dedication during this time. Despite the uncertainties and anxieties, we have stayed focused on our mission. Our outreach programs have continued undaunted, and we have had another successful VBS. Coming up, the church picnic is planned for August, and we are looking to participate in the ELCA Day of Service again in September.

Please pray for the Transition Team and Pastor Krause as they continue their critical work in creating the Ministry Site Profile. Please pray for the Council that we have wisdom and discernment as we form the Call Committee. And pray for the congregation, that the Holy Spirit will provide comfort from the anxieties of this transitional period and guide us to a future focused on God's plans.

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

ELCA Process to Call a New Pastor:



Phase One: Saying Farewell **COMPLETED**



Phase Two: Congregational Health & Identity **CURRENT**



Phase Three: Entering the Call Process



Phase Four: Primary Candidate

Business - Call Process Update



Transition Team report

Our Transition Team meets next in July. Faith is still in Phase 2 of the Call Process, in which we evaluate the congregation's sustainability and vitality, and examine our mission, vision, and values.

Congregational Vitality Assessment

In March, ninety-six members completed a survey to determine the vitality of the congregation. This is a high percentage of participation! Our congregation scored in the "moderate vitality" range for all the categories except Worship, where we scored "high vitality." *See the next page for a summary of the results.* This information helps the ELCA and NEOSynod in determining a match for our new pastor.

Story of Us Historical Review

Sixty members of the congregation met in April in the Fellowship Hall to participate in completing a giant timeline of the history of Faith. You can see it hanging on the bulletin board across from the Fellowship Hall! The colorful post it notes marked events in our past, up until today. They include celebrations, major events, challenges, stressors, and losses. Reviewing our past helps us plan for the future.

The Transition Team next meets with Pastor Nathan Krause, of the Northeast Ohio Synod, to examine Faith's mission, vision, and values:

Faith's Motto: **Worship God. Grow in faith. Offer hope**

Mission: To go to all people and make them disciples of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19)

Vision: To share the good news of Jesus with everyone; to transform followers into disciples with a faith that works in real life; to joyfully go and share his love in the world.

Values:

1. To lift high in prayer the name of Jesus Christ in all we say and do.
2. To enable all persons to experience a worshipful relationship with Jesus Christ.
3. To nurture and empower all persons to be disciples through a small group centered ministry that includes learning, service, fellowship and spiritual growth.
4. To help every Christian discover their spiritual gifts for ministry.
5. To assist in the care of a hurting world.

Your Transition Team: Joe Antal, Lorelee Daily, Dineen Dowling, Melissa Johnson, Dana Singer, Fedearia Sweval (council liaison), Mark Watkins, and Marilyn Wilson.

ELCA Process to Call a New Pastor:



Phase One: **Saying Farewell** *COMPLETED*



Phase Two: **Congregational Health & Identity** *CURRENT*



Phase Three: **Entering the Call Process**



Phase Four: **Primary Candidate**

Business - Call Process Update



Transition Team report

Faith Lutheran Church

Structure & Mission Alignment Summary

What We Learned

Faith Lutheran has a strong foundation with clear mission, structure, and leadership opportunities. At the same time, not all parts of the system are equally active.

The Big Insight

We do not need to change our structure—we need to better align and activate the structure we already have.

Where We Are Strong

- Deep relationships and strong sense of community
- Active outreach and service to the community
- Stable and meaningful worship life

Where We Need to Grow

- Faith formation and discipleship beyond Sunday
- Broader and sustainable leadership development
- Clear pathways for connection and involvement
- Using our mission consistently in decisions

What This Means for the Interim

Focus on strengthening what already exists by aligning ministry with mission, inviting wider participation, clarifying engagement pathways, and deepening spiritual growth.

What This Means for Calling a New Pastor

The next pastor is called to partner with the congregation, strengthen formation, and align ministries—not to fix everything alone.

A Question for All of Us

If we could not expect our next pastor to fix anything, what faithful work would we still be called to do right now?

Key Dates



CELEBRATION and MEMORIAL COURTYARD



2023 Carol Whidden, Linda Reyes

On Sunday, July 12, the Courtyard Team will partner with the Kinship Café in providing the congregation and visitors with some fellowship time in our courtyard. We invite you to come and enjoy the fellowship and food, and also enjoy some of our most recent changes.

As the result of a clear vision, dedication, much effort, and prayer, The Faith Lutheran Church Celebration and Memorial Courtyard became a reality and a special space we as a congregation can now use in a variety of ways. However, like any other space, simple changes and modifications are necessary to ensure consistent quality and functionality of the area. The anticipated trimming, weeding, and mulching have taken place on a regular basis, but in addition to those expected activities, the courtyard has needed and received some additional attention.

- ◆ Our cement benches in the courtyard received a smoothing out procedure to allow people using the courtyard a smooth surface on which to sit.
- ◆ Some tiles in our retaining wall needed to be reglued, which was resolved by team member Sue Harman and her husband, Dave.
- ◆ An issue with too much moss was corrected by team members removing the moss and filling the space between the pavers with polymeric sand.
- ◆ Mike Herchenroeder and Dave Harman repaired a broken faucet.
- ◆ Last summer Faith member Greg Hackett and his wife Beth Brumbaugh, a former team member, researched the possibility of installing a watering system that could be controlled by team members using an app on their phone. This idea was intended to save water and to provide watering only when and where needed. Greg did install this system, and at the moment we are benefiting from the installation and upgraded technology.

We look forward to seeing you in the courtyard on July 12, between the two worship services.



2023 Wayne Welker, Polly Dobkin



2025 Tim Keeler, Jerry Allen, David Six, Sue Harman



2023 John Reyes, Geoff Whidden

Key Dates



Photo by Jessica Mangano on Unsplash.

New Evening Bible Study Begins Wednesday, July 8!

Join us each Wednesday in the Youth Room from 6 - 7 p.m., beginning July 8, for a weekly Bible study featuring the thought-provoking NOOMA video series by Rob Bell.

Our first session, "How to Love in a World of Hate," will explore what it means to follow Jesus' call to love others in a world often marked by division, discrimination, and judgement. Each week, we'll watch a short video, read scripture, and engage in conversation as we consider practical ways to live out Christ's love in our daily lives.

Everyone is welcome. Come as you are, bring a friend, and join us as we grow together in faith.

For questions, contact Jennene Pritt (330-523-0859) or Lori Pritt (330-464-1663).



Sunday Morning Greeter Program Begins in July!

Sign-up is now available to be a Sunday morning greeter prior to each service. We are looking for cheerful people to welcome and direct those that arrive for the 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. worship services. Sign-up is for one month at a time and for the service of your choosing. You will greet 15 minutes prior to the start of a service. Sign-up forms are located on the Welcome Center desk. Please contact Dana Singer or Lorelee Daily if you have any questions.

Save the Date!

Sunday, August 2

4th Annual Church Picnic
Following the one combined
10 a.m. church service.

1 was fun!
2 was Too!
3 was Free!
4 will be more!

Picnic lunch, games, prizes, and
ICE CREAM TRUCK!



Outreach



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

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

OUTREACH ADVISORY TEAM AND ELCA GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS.



The Outreach Advisory Team held a special meeting on June 23, with primary attention on September 13, **ELCA Day of Service**. One focus area was food insecurity as a follow-up to the Interfaith Justice Alliance series 'food desert' theme. A specific project identified was the collection of food products to be assembled with recipes into kits, such as the one pictured here.

Other service events being considered include a clean-up project in collaboration with Summit Metro Parks and possibly a home yard work event like the one completed last year. Please offer suggestions to David Simpson for outdoor service needs that we may consider for inclusion this year for either a congregation member or someone in the community.

Outreach Advisory Team members are members Duane Daily, Lorelee Daily, Colleen Hruska, Dana Singer, Mark Watkins and Nina White.

AKRON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Thanks for the recent donation from the William and Ginny Post Family Charitable Fund through the Akron Community Foundation. We appreciate this unsolicited and thoughtful gift.

INTERFAITH JUSTICE ALLIANCE



The Interfaith Justice Alliance planning committee met on June 29, at St. Hilary to continue its follow-up to this year's series and explore topics for the 2027 program. Themes under consideration include a continuation of last year's 'food desert' focus and immigration.

As further follow-up to this year's series, John Singer has continued work with a small sub-committee to develop a school based nutritional educational program. Others working with him on this are Dineen Dowling, Dana Singer, Dr. Sharon Van Nostran, and Carol Whidden.

Outreach

FAMILY PROMISE

Our cupboard needs replenishing. Our goal is to provide ten each of five different condiments on a periodic basis, usually about every other month, to Family Promise.



Current inventory

RECONCILING IN CHRIST (RIC)

The RIC Team continues planning for the Akron Pride events which will be in August. However, to recognize the national June Pride month, the RIC Team's flag was displayed in the Welcome Center for that month.



NEW HOPE CANCER WALK

This event is scheduled for July 18. Faith Lutheran Church will continue to participate, as we have in the past, both as a sponsor and with walkers from the congregation. **Details are on the flyer on page 15**, which is also posted on the Outreach Bulletin Board. You may register directly on the New Hope website, or you may ask David Simpson to facilitate your registration.

AKRON AREA INTERFAITH COUNCIL (AAIC)

Both Darlene and Richard Weaver attended the AAIC meeting on June 2, in order to explore their possible ongoing participation and possibly serving as our representatives to the group. Focus areas at the meeting included immigration and gun violence. This was Pastor Jack Streeter's first meeting as President.

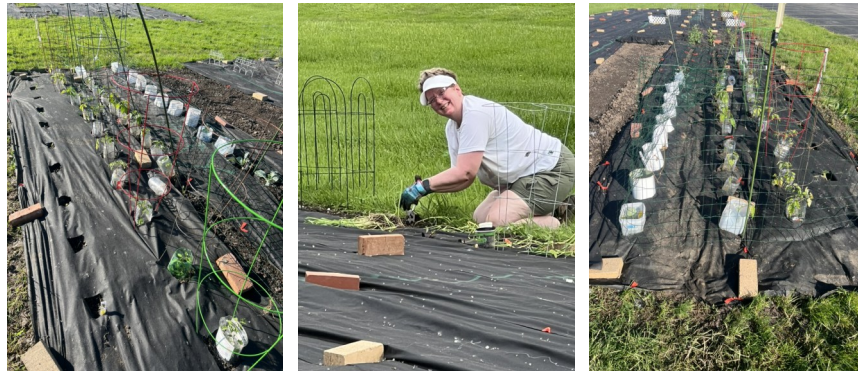
DLM

Please note that DLM has temporarily suspended clothing collections. Clothing donations brought to the Outreach office will be taken to another non-profit organization, such as the Salvation Army or Goodwill.

Outreach

COMMUNITY GARDEN

The garden is progressing very well. Early indication is that we will have a robust harvest this year. The total output last year was 3,000 pounds donated to OPEN M.



LOADS OF FAITH (LoF)

During the past two months pillowcases have been donated with the purpose of converting them into laundry bags to be given to people being served through Loads of Faith. Darlene Weaver has been bringing her sewing machine and skill to the North Hill Laundry Time Laundromat during the past 4 years and performing much needed mending services. Her scope has now been expanded as she modifies the pillowcases into large laundry carrying bags, thus permitting people to replace the plastic trash bags with something more eco-friendly and permanent.



Examples of how people bring laundry to our LoF service.



Below and on the next page are pictures of recent Loads of Faith guests and their coloring projects completed while clothes were being washed



Outreach



Children keep themselves busy coloring while their parents tend to the laundry at Laundry Time in North Hill, during Faith's Laundry Ministry.

MITZVAH DAY



The Temple Israel days of service took place on June 6 and 7. Various Faith members participated including Nancy and Jim Tobar and Darryl, Evie, Sandrine and Treader Anderson. The closing session was a panel presentation on immigration featuring Tania Neimer, a former immigration judge and Michael DeBruhl, a former boarder control agent.

That session was followed with a community meal during which participants shared their experiences from all the other Mitzvah projects.

UPCOMING EVENTS

LOADS OF FAITH DATES FOR 2026

- July 29
- August 26
- September 30
- October 28
- November 18
- December 30

DLM SCHEDULE FOR 2025

Posted on the Outreach bulletin board.

OUTREACH ADVISORY TEAM MEETINGS FOR 2026

July 8, October 7

ELCA Day of Service, "God's Work, Our Hands"

Sunday, September 13



Outreach

FROM THE COMMUNITY

TRANSFORMATION OF NORTH HILL'S TRINITY UCC INTO A COMMUNITY CENTER

Trinity UCC donated its building to First Serve to create a resource for non-profit organizations dedicated to serve the neighboring community. This facility is **now known as "915 North Main"**. This collaborative undertaking has transformed 40,000 square feet of historic space into a vibrant community hub - a place where people of all ages and backgrounds can come together for education, entertainment, recreation, and connection. In addition to Trinity UCC, other collaborative partners are First Congregational Church of Hudson and First Serve. Trinity UCC continues to worship at 915 North Main. As spaces are being renovated, other community organizations have moved in and are starting to make the building their home in North Hill. Organizations already utilizing space at this facility include:



Early Childhood Resource Center
Proyecto Raices
Peter Maurin Center
First Serve
Open Arms

The leadership team members are Rev. Joy E Fenton-Jones, Executive Director, Pastor David Brown, Transitional Facilities Manager, Douglas Krapf, Chair, Jeffrey Coy, Finance, Rev. Peter Wiley, First Congregational Church of Hudson, Rev. Jeanette Broderson, First Congregational Church of Hudson, Sue Wimer, First Serve Co-Director, and Amy Baldwin, First Serve Co-Director.



OPEN ARMS welcomes, accompanies, and partners with Latino immigrants in building a safe and sustainable life. Open Arms is based out of Orrville, Ohio and offers services to Holmes, Stark, Summit and Wayne Counties. It has been in existence for over 20 years. Please visit their website at open-arms.us

Services offered are:

Dental/Medical Appointments -translation and transportation when needed.
Translation Services – school enrollment, employment application.
Children's Tutoring & Summer Camps
Legal Assistance – navigation of complex legal matters.
Compassion Fund - medical, housing, legal aid, or other material needs.

FAITH & BLUE

Sheriff Fatheree brought Faith & Blue to Summit County in 2021, and it has continued to grow and evolve with each passing year. Fun, family-friendly interactive events, games, raffles, performances, and demos are planned throughout the day. Houses of worship, law enforcement agencies, and community organizations are invited to come together for a day of fun and fellowship. Summit Faith & Blue is FREE and open to the public. Questions? Email us at faithandblue@sheriff.summitoh.net

The Sheriff offered this comment about the project:

The national Faith & Blue initiative is the largest community-law enforcement collaboration of its kind. The idea is a simple but powerful one: the ties that bind officers and residents must be reinforced if we are to build neighborhoods where everyone feels safe and included. Faith-based organizations are key to this mission because they are the largest and most diverse resource in our community, and their reach is immeasurable. Thousands of similar events will be held across the nation in early October.

Summit County



Faith & Blue

The Faith & Blue movement is the largest community-law enforcement collaboration in history, built on the belief that stronger ties between officers and residents create safer neighborhoods. As the largest and most diverse resource in our nation, the faith community is key to bringing everyone together. Sheriff Kandy Fatheree invites you to join us for a day of free, family-friendly fun and fellowship at Summit Faith & Blue!

Saturday, October 10th
11:00am - 2:00pm

Reservoir Park 
1735 Hillside Terrace, Akron, OH 44305

Free & Open to the Public

Live Performances Games & Contests Bounce House Food & Drink
Touch-a-Truck Mounted Unit Raffle Prizes And more!

Law enforcement, houses of worship, and community organizations wishing to participate can sign up at summitfaithandblue.com or by scanning this QR code:



SummitFaithandBlue.com

[#SummitFaithandBlue](https://twitter.com/SummitFaithandBlue)

NEW HOPE
BAPTIST CHURCH
1706 SOUTH HAWKINS AVENUE AKRON, OH 44302

NEW HOPE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP
SPONSORS
Sis. Nellie Rasberry - Coordinator

Stronger
TOGETHER

Save
THE
DATE

— ANNUAL —
CANCER WALK

REGISTRATION
7AM
WALK STARTS AT
8AM

JULY 18
MORE INFORMATION
COMING SOON!

**WE WALK WITH HOPE
WE FIGHT WITH FAITH
WE WIN TOGETHER**

WALKING IN FAITH. FIGHTING WITH HOPE. FINISHING STRONGER.

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH
1706 SOUTH HAWKINS AVENUE
AKRON, OH 44302

**LET'S WALK FOR
A CURE AND BRING
HOPE TOGETHER.**

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
WWW.NEWHOPECITY.ORG

REV. DR. DAVID NELSON, PASTOR | **HOPE. PURPOSE. COMMUNITY.**



Who Is Our Neighbor? We Found the Answer! *Everyone, from Everywhere, is Our Neighbor and Can Be a Friend.*

Our hearts are full after an incredible week of Vacation Bible School at Faith Lutheran Church! Throughout the week, 68 children traveled "around the world" as we explored what it means to be a neighbor through the story of the Good Samaritan. Together, we learned that God's love knows no borders and that every person is our neighbor.

Each day, children boarded our imaginary airplanes and visited different countries, discovering cultures, traditions, foods, and stories of faith from around the globe. Through Stations such as the Puppet Bible Adventures (created and performed by Daniel, Kaylan and Elaina Hyter, Bella Wesley and friends), games (hosted by Hannah Kozee), continent-themed snacks (prepared by Carla Ringer and her sister, Cookie), crafts (designed by Rebecca Williams), music (written and taught by Sarah Kaufman), and interactive neighborhood presentations from around the world (created by Kurt Mackall), children learned about kindness, compassion, courage to stand up for those in need, and God's love for all people.

These creative folks designed their stations themselves, without the help of a curriculum! For the first time in Faith VBS history, the planning leadership team developed the VBS theme, chose Bible stories and the daily messages, outlined the various stations all on our own! It was a super creative endeavor that highlights the talents of the people at our church.

Throughout the week, we explored what it means to welcome and care for our neighbors, including immigrants, refugees, and people from cultures and backgrounds different from our own. Children discovered that every person is created and loved by God and that we are called to build friendships, show compassion, and extend hospitality wherever we go.

This wonderful week would not have been possible without our amazing team of 48 volunteers. From station leaders and crew guides to decorators, snack helpers, registration volunteers, and behind-the-scenes supporters, each person shared their gifts to create a safe, joyful, and meaningful experience for our children. Thank you for the countless hours, energy, creativity, and love you poured into this ministry. A special thank you to Dineen Dowling and Amanda Hyter for their leadership, support, and dedication in helping make another wonderful year of VBS possible.

Our VBS mission project was a beautiful example of neighbors helping neighbors. Together, children and families donated 28 packages of socks, 24 pairs of shoes, and 46 packages of underwear for local children in need. In addition, following Sunday's announcement, the monetary donations from VBS families and congregation members totaling \$201.87 allowed us to purchase 21 more pairs of sneakers. What an incredible act of generosity! Donations will continue to be collected through July 6, and we look forward to seeing how God continues to work through the kindness of this congregation.

We are also grateful to the families who entrusted us with their children and to everyone who donated supplies, offered prayers, and supported VBS in so many ways.

As our week came to a close, we were reminded that the journey doesn't end when VBS is over. The lessons we learned travel home with us: to be kind, to show compassion, to welcome others, and to love our neighbors wherever we go. May we continue to build a community where immigrants, refugees, longtime residents, and newcomers alike are welcomed, valued, and loved as our neighbors.

Thank you for helping make this year's "Who's Our Neighbor? A Global VBS" such a joyful and faith-filled adventure. Through learning, laughter, service, and faith, we discovered that being a neighbor is a journey that can change the world, one act of kindness at a time.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah Courtney

Growth & Learning



Please visit Faith's website for more photos.
faithlutheranchurch.org/news

Growth & Learning



OH NO!

WE'VE FORGOTTEN TO PACK SOME IMPORTANT ITEMS FOR OUR MOVE TO AMERICA!

CAN YOU HELP FILL OUR LUGGAGE WITH SHOES, SOCKS, AND UNDERWEAR FOR OUR NEW NEIGHBORS?

PLEASE DONATE NEW ITEMS ONLY!

LIGHTLY USED OR NEW SHOES. NEW AND UNOPENED UNDERWEAR AND SOCKS ONLY PLEASE!

LOVE KNOWS NO BORDERS!

WE ARE COLLECTING:

SHOES



Little Kid sizes
9 through
Youth size 3

UNDERWEAR



Sizes Small (4-6),
Medium (6-8), and
Large (10-12)

SOCKS



Sock sizes 6-9.5
(for shoe sizes
9 through
Youth size 3)



A NEW PAIR OF SHOES CAN HELP A CHILD WALK CONFIDENTLY INTO A NEW SCHOOL.

TOGETHER, WE CAN BE GOOD NEIGHBORS AND SHOW GOD'S LOVE IN PRACTICAL WAYS!

YOUR NEW GIFTS HELP CHILDREN FEEL WELCOMED, LOVED, AND READY TO LEARN AND GROW!

Growth & Learning

The logo for flcyou(th) is displayed in white lowercase letters on a solid blue rectangular background.

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

Youth in grades 6-12 will be making bracelets and clothes pin messages to support Faith's outreach for Akron PRIDE in August. We will have all giveaways completed before the beginning of August, but need your help! Youth and parents, please RSVP to the evite so that we can join together for dinner and service.

Mark your calendars for the annual Church Picnic on **Sunday, August 2!** There will be one worship service at 10 a.m., with the picnic immediately following. Hotdogs, corn on the cob, ice cream and activities provided! There will also be a corn-hole tournament, all you need to do is RSVP! Youth and parents, we will also need help with breaking down tents at the conclusion of the event, so please plan to stick around and help. The more hands, the more quickly we can all get done!

Please remember that while we are on summer break, assigned acolyte and communion assistant duties are still ongoing. Please make sure that you have your calendars updated with dates your youth are to be serving. If your youth is unable to fulfill their scheduled duties, you are responsible for finding a replacement and communicating with Nancy and Eric any changes that are made. Thanks!

Duties for July follow:

July 5th- Katie Archbold-Acolyte, Crosby Jezewski- Assistant
July 19th- Cayden Cloninger- Acolyte, _____ Assistant

We hope everyone has a safe and fun filled 4th of July!



Growth & Learning



Third Thursday Women's Bible Study Thursday, July 16 10 a.m. Youth Room

Women of the Third Thursday Bible Study will gather on Thursday, July 16, at 10 a.m. in the Youth Room at Faith. The Book of Ruth will be our topic. All women are welcome. For more information, contact Bonnie at 330.606.3230 or janellebonnie@gmail.com

Men of Faith Bible Study and Discussion Group 9 a.m. - July 18 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 or Karl Demuth, karldemuth@hotmail.com.

New Evening Bible Study Begins Wednesday, July 8!



Photo by Jessica Mangano on Unsplash.

Join us each **Wednesday in the Youth Room from 6 - 7 p.m.**, beginning July 8, for a weekly Bible study featuring the thought-provoking NOOMA video series by Rob Bell.

Our first session, "How to Love in a World of Hate," will explore what it means to follow Jesus' call to love others in a world often marked by division, discrimination, and judgement. Each week, we'll watch a short video, read scripture, and engage in conversation as we consider practical ways to live out Christ's love in our daily lives.

Everyone is welcome. Come as you are, bring a friend, and join us as we grow together in faith. For more information, contact Jennene Pritt (330-523-0859) or Lori Pritt (330-464-1663).

Thank you



Our family would like to thank FLC for all of your loving support, sympathy, endowment contributions, messages, food, flowers and care after we lost our special Steve. Being at this church is the best place to be!

Penny Thompson

Many thanks to Mike Herchenroeder for repairing the air conditioning system in the sanctuary.





In Our Prayers:

Health Concerns:

Faith member Lin Bryant
Faith member Ann Chastven
Tommy Gorman
Faith member Pastor Tim Keeler
Faith member Terry Vernon
Faith member Ron Wilkinson

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

In Times of Loss:

Special Prayers

With thanksgiving for Vacation Bible School at Faith Lutheran Church in June, and for all who led, volunteered and attended. It was a joy-filled week. May they all continue to grow in faith and love of our Lord.

Lord, in my work – whether at a
job, at home or in a service—

help me
to do it with
purpose and
peace.

Keep me from being
overwhelmed, and remind me
that my worth is not in what I
produce, but in

who I am in You.
Amen.





Schedule to Serve

Date	Service	Altar	Communion	Lay Reader	Flowers	Ushers	Youth
5	9 a.m.	Debbie Gottas	Loralee Daily - SE Art Kaufman - SE Debbie Gottas - SP Duane Daily - B	Art Kaufman	Charlie & Helen Michael	Joyce Lange John Weisend	Acolyte: Katie Archbold Assistant: Crosby Jezewski
	10:30 a.m.	Deb Allen	Deb Allen			Geoff Whidden	
12	9 a.m.	Debbie Gottas		Terry Anderson	Art & Sarah Kaufman	Joyce Lange John Weisend	
	10:30 a.m.	Nancy Hooper	Nancy Hooper			Alice Gilmore Becky Kuhar	
19	9 a.m.	Debbie Gottas	LoraleeDaily - SE Debbie Gottas - SE Art Kaufman - SP Duane Daily - B	Loralee Daily	Charles & Mary Jean Lyon	Joyce Lange David Nelson	Acolyte: Cayden Cloninger Assistant:
	10:30 a.m.	Chris Fritzen	Chris Fritzen			Nancy Hooper	
26	9 a.m.	Debbie Gottas		Jerry Allen	Eugenia Sefton	Joyce Lange Duane Daily	
	10:30 a.m.	Bonnie Janelle	Bonnie Janelle			Cathy Medlen	

SE - Server
SP - Supplier
B - Bread



Calendar of Events

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 5:30 p.m. Picnic Team Meeting	2 10 a.m. Prayer Shawl	3 Office Closed	4
5 9 Traditional Svc. 9:50 Grades 6-12 10 Kinship Café 10:30 Informal Service 11:30 Bound 7:30 AA	6 Noon RIC Meeting 8 p.m. AA	7 9:30 a.m. Busy Fingers Yoga 7 p.m. Scouts Al-Anon	8 5 p.m. Outreach Advisory Team 6 p.m. Wednesday Evening Bible Study	9 10 a.m. Prayer Shawl	10	11 10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. DLM at Holy Trinity
12 9 Traditional Svc. 9:50 Grades 6-12 10 Kinship Café 10:30 Informal Service 11:30 Bound 7:30 AA	13 8 p.m. AA	14 9:30 a.m. Busy Fingers Yoga 7 p.m. Scouts Al-Anon	15 6 p.m. Wednesday Evening Bible Study	16 10 a.m. Prayer Shawl 3rd Thursday Women's Bible Study	17	18 9 a.m. Men of Faith
19 Newsletter Deadline 9 Traditional Svc. 9:50 Grades 6-12 10 Kinship Café 10:30 Informal Service 11:30 Bound 7:30 AA	20 7 p.m. Council 8 p.m. AA	21 9:30 a.m. Busy Fingers Yoga 7 p.m. Scouts Al-Anon	22 6 p.m. Wednesday Evening Bible Study	23 10 a.m. Prayer Shawl	24	25
26 9 Traditional Svc. 9:50 Grades 6-12 10 Kinship Café 10:30 Informal Service 11:30 Bound 7:30 AA	27 7 p.m. Gardeners of Greater Akron 8 p.m. AA	27 9:30 a.m. Busy Fingers Yoga 7 p.m. Scouts Al-Anon	29 5 p.m. Loads of Faith Laundry Ministry 6 p.m. Wednesday Evening Bible Study	30 10 a.m. Prayer Shawl		



Please visit our website.

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Worship God. Grow in faith. Offer hope.