

FAITH NEWS

2026 WINTER EDITION
JANUARY TO MARCH

A PUBLICATION OF FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH



GOVERNING BOARD
PCMT: HOW CAN I HELP?
FELLOWSHIP NEWS
YOUTH FUNDRAISER: PANCAKE DINNER
LWML EVENTS
LWML MISSIONS
PRESCHOOL HAPPENINGS
COMFORT SHAWL: CELEBRATING OUR FIRST YEAR
PROPERTY UPDATES
QUILTING: SHARING LOVE THROUGH QUILTS
YOUTH GROUP EVENTS
MEN OF FAITH
PRAISE BAND
LENTEN SERVICE SCHEDULE

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Governing Board News

As 2025 comes to a close, we reflect with gratitude for all that God has done in our church and in our communities. This year has been marked by your exceptional generosity, faithful service, and a shared commitment to strengthening our ministry. Together, we celebrated the completion of the kitchen renovation project, rejoined the Cleveland Lutheran High School Association, and took important steps to position our church for a strong and faithful future. Through prayer and planning, we have set the foundation to thoughtfully execute a promising ministry clarity process and stewardship campaign through the Lutheran Church Extension Fund.

Looking to 2026, there is much to be hopeful for. Through the LCEF Ministry Clarity program, we are recommitting and reconnecting with our vision and mission and faithfully using our time, talents, and resources to share the Gospel. It will also help us with our church structure and planning processes moving into the future. This program's success will need your participation; including ministry leaders and members alike. So stay tuned for what's to come! It really is exciting to be a part of this process, and we can't wait to see what God has in store for us in 2026 and beyond!

In addition, our congregation has been exploring calling a second pastor, with the potential of calling a Seminarian —a step that would enhance pastoral care, expand ministry opportunities, and support the continued growth of our church family. We should hear more updates in the spring as those seminarians will be graduating and placed at their called churches. Please continue to pray for our call committee and this call process.

Lastly, we want to thank all of our ministry leaders for their dedication and service in 2025! Our church cannot operate without everyone's help, so THANK YOU!! We also want to extend heartfelt thanks to our staff -- Pastor David Woolsey, Business Manager Nereida Ocasio, Secretary Michele Herner, Traditional Worship Leader Anthony Fuoco, and Contemporary Worship Leader Megan Kovach! Their commitment, gifts, and behind-the-scenes efforts are a true blessing and play a vital role in the life and ministry of our congregation.

We invite you to join in prayer, participation, and trust as we follow God's lead together into 2026.

From Your Brother in Christ,
Kevin Kovach - Governing Board Chairman



PASTORAL CARE MINISTRY

HOW CAN I HELP IF I CAN'T DO ANYTHING??

By Malinda Johnson

I hear versions of this statement quite often. Sometimes we think we're not talented enough. Sometimes we think we don't have the right kind of talent. Sometimes we don't have enough time, patience, money, etc.. The world tells us we're not good enough to serve, and so we don't.

There are two secrets the world won't tell you. Secrets Satan is desperately hoping you'll never find out. It is not about how talented you are. It's about how talented God is. ("He who calls you is faithful, he will surely do it." 1 Thessalonians 5:24) Caring for people starts with small, simple acts. ("And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward." Matthew 10:42) It's not about you (sorry). It's about God. What talents He chose or chooses to give you and how He's calling you to use them. It's ok if you're not able to lead, or get up in front of people and sing or talk, or build or make things. That's God working in other people.

If you're called to wave and smile at someone new, or hold a door open, or sit next to someone who is crying, that is no less important. Quite the contrary, that could be the most important thing anyone ever does for that person (little one).

If you're interested in serving alongside Pastor with little acts that help in big ways, ask us! We want you on our team.

In His Service,
Pastoral Care Ministry Team Members:
Bea Marlette, Chris Corpus, Joe Delgado, MaLinda Johnson,
Mark Packer, Bob Gill, and Rich Gray

WINTER FELLOWSHIP NEWS

Winter has arrived and brings a chill in the air. We are thankful for fellowship that warm our hearts at Faith. The fall season at Faith brought us many exciting activities..Here's a recap!

The kitchen renovations are almost complete! Thank you to all who helped us pack up items and get reorganized in all the new storage space. Drawers are labeled and cabinets are full. Signs are posted to help with cleaning, coffee making and supply management! Please reach out to Melissa Watkins if you have any questions. We are so blessed to have such a beautiful space for all to enjoy.

In October, we celebrated Pastor and his family with an appreciation potluck! Thank you to all who were in attendance and helped make this event a success. We continue to be blessed by the Woolsey family and their ministry at Faith.

November brought us our annual pie social, following our Thanksgiving service. A wide variety of desserts and treats were shared along with fellowship. Thank you to those who cut and organized desserts along with set-up and clean-up.

On Saturday, December 6th, many gathered to help decorate for the Advent season. Wreaths were hung, trees were decorated and nativity scenes were placed. A delicious lunch was shared by all! Our undecorating party was just as fun! Thank you to all who helped and if you have not attended our decorating/undecorating parties, please consider!

More events are in the works for the New Year. Stay tuned for more details!

Blessings to you,
Melissa Watkins
480-518-6791
watkinsmelissa81@gmail.com

Faith Lutheran Church
2265 Garden Dr
Avon, OH. 44011

Annual

SHROVE TUESDAY

*Tickets on Sale Now!
Between services
in the Narthex!!*

PANCAKE DINNER



All you can eat Pancakes, Sausage, and Sundae Bar
Gift Basket Raffle!

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH
6PM - 7PM

TICKETS

\$10 AGES 12 & UP

\$6 AGES 4-11

\$30 FAMILY (4+)

AGES 3 & UNDER ARE FREE

All proceeds benefit upcoming trips for our Youth Group

LWML EVENTS

LWML & Youth Christmas Cookie Sale

A special “Thank you” to all that helped to make the Christmas Cookie Sale a big success! The bakers, the packers, the box decorators, the sellers, and the gracious buyers were so appreciated.

Deb Hinman donated all the ribbon!

Mandy Gummo obtained Thrivent funding. She also purchased dough for the youth to make cookies! In total \$1223.00 was made.

Spring Luncheon

LWML Spring Luncheon April 25, 2026 Save the Date!

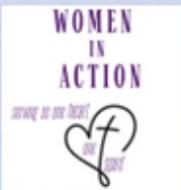
Diana Schack will be inspiring us!
Join us for this fabulous event!

The Ode-Winter Edition

The Ode- Winter Edition is a publication from the LWML Ohio District. This Edition has an article from Carla Russell. She is excited to be PUBLISHED!!! Check it out then return the copy for someone else to read!

Women in Action

Meets the first Saturday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in the Classroom, led by Bonnie Sears. Includes devotions, snacks, and fellowship—a great opportunity to invite an unchurched friend.



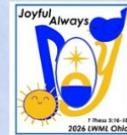
Upcoming Events

Feb 7 - Cans & Cards
March 7 - TBD

2026 LWML Ohio District Convention

Theme: “Joyful Always”

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” — 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18



June 26-27, 2026

Location: St. Paul Lutheran Church,
Westlake, OH (27993 Detroit Rd.)
Hosted by the Cleveland South-West,
Lorain-Medina, and Northeast Zones.

Bonnie Sears – Decorations Lead
Carla Russell – Human Care Committee
(Servant Events & Ingathering)
Volunteers needed from Faith!!
Prayerfully consider how you can help!

LWML MISSIONS

LWML Missions never sleep!!! You can bring in your Mite box at any time, and pick up a new one!

Here is one of the Missions:

\$100,000 HELP FOR UKRAINE'S ORPHANS AND DISPLACED PERSONS ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN | Orphan Grain Train (OGT) Helps the People of Ukraine. The country of Ukraine has been at war for almost three years and many thousands, if not millions of citizens have felt its impact. Countless lives have been lost, many others have been injured, some with injuries which will haunt them the rest of their lives. Still others have fled the country entirely and many have had their homes completely or partially destroyed. The pictures that have flooded the news reports the past few years have been chilling. These are the people who will be impacted by this grant. OGT has been involved in humanitarian aid to Ukraine since the war began. OGT works with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ukraine and other Christian churches as it distributes aid. In the past year, seventeen shipments of donated food, clothing, and medical supplies were sent to various locations in Ukraine. The impact the donations have is both life-saving and soul-saving. The donated supplies assist people who have lost all their worldly goods and help children whose parents have been killed in the war.

OGT assists twelve orphanages in the Kherson area and three orphanages in the Kyiv area. Each of the orphanages is served by a pastor who will tell them of a God who is merciful and cares for them through acts of mercy shown by followers of Jesus. The sole cost for this ministry of mercy is shipping the donated goods to people in need. This grant will cover the cost of shipping seven containers loaded with food, clothing, and medical supplies to the country of Ukraine. 'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me' (Matthew 25:35-36).

[Mission Grant Story | Learn more at lwml.org/mission-grant](http://lwml.org/mission-grant)

Mission Grant Photos



Elderly women with tears in her eyes after receiving a quilt



Opened boxes ready for people to choose items that they can use.



Stuffed animals for girls at a developmentally disabled orphanage.



Distributed aid



PRESCHOOL HAPPENINGS



Happy 2026! We are off to a great start in the New Year! Although we only have morning classes this year, we came back in January filled to the max with students! We are blessed to be a part of so many families while sharing Jesus here at Faith.

Our students will be busy in January learning all things winter, snow and ice! Our bible lessons will include the Baptism of Jesus, Calling His Disciples and Miracles of Jesus! Our younger classes will continue with name recognition, holding pencils and learning to be a community. Our older class will continue practicing kindergarten skills, learning addresses and phone numbers and sight words.

Thank you to our prayer buddies for keeping our students in your prayers, we will continue to keep Faith in our daily prayers.

Registration is open for the 2026-27 school year! Please share our school and program with your family and friends. You are our best form of advertisement!

You still have time to donate to the Lutheran Scholarship Granting Organization of Ohio which helps students here at Faith. Your donation is a dollar-for-dollar tax credit and can still be applied to your 2025 taxes! Please contact me if you would like more information!

Here is the link to the LSGO: <https://lsgoohio.org/make-a-donation/>

Blessings,
Michele

Celebrating Our First Year

"Comfort, comfort my people, says your God." – Isaiah 40:1

I want to start by saying thank you! To God and to you all for an amazing first year of this ministry. I am grateful to the members of church leadership who've helped guide the ministry's goals. I am grateful to all the makers who've stepped up to serve with me. I am grateful that so many of you have found joy and comfort in the simple items. This ministry has been more successful than anyone expected because of how God has moved in us.

Now I'm asking for your help one more time as we start our second year. I still have many, many bags of yarn at home waiting to be made into items this winter. I want your ideas and inspiration for simple items for me to make. Call, email (sopraltosrock@gmail.com) or talk to me about what shapes, sizes and colors you want to see.

Thank you in advance.

In His Service,
MaLinda Johnson





WINTER EDITION 2026

PROPERTY UPDATES

Well that just does it. Another year in the books and the start of a new chapter for everyone at Faith. I trust everyone had a blessed holidays with family and friends as we celebrated the birth of our savior Jesus Christ.

Last year, we finished the renovation of the kitchen and created more space for cleaning supplies and such. This was a monumental event that I could not have done without the help of some very talented men and women of this congregation. These volunteers helped empty the contents of the kitchen, ripped out the old cabinets, loaded a dumpster, hung all the cabinets, painted the walls, built a separate wall and constructed a serving window. The dedication of all these individuals just about brought tears to my eyes. I had such a good time interacting with everyone and felt very proud of the outcome of this project. I want to thank each and every one who contributed to this project no matter how small the contribution was, it is greatly appreciated.

Looking at the new year, we may be in for some dicey weather. We have dodged the bullet for a couple of years now. The church building is in great shape to handle it; however, we still need to be vigilant and watch for problems that may arise and report them. Also looking ahead this year, I am planning some lighting improvements to the outside of the 1967 side of the building as well as upgrades to classroom lighting and emergency lighting in the sanctuary. This should hopefully reduce our electricity consumption and improve the lighting reliability in the building.

Along with the building, we are looking to do some improvements to the Pavillion. We have secured a grant to make improvements and should start weather permitting. All in all, the building is in great shape with just minor day to day maintenance needed. As we continue to add programs and meetings, the building will see a lot more activity. Grass cutting will continue and this is the year to seal and stripe the parking lots.

As always, if you see anything that requires attention, please feel free to contact me or Nereida so it may be addressed. I will everyone a blessed and prosperous new year as we prepare to serve our Lord.

In service to our Lord
Mike Emling
Properties Manager

SHARING LOVE THROUGH QUILTS

JOIN OUR QUILTING MINISTRY!

BEA MARLETTE

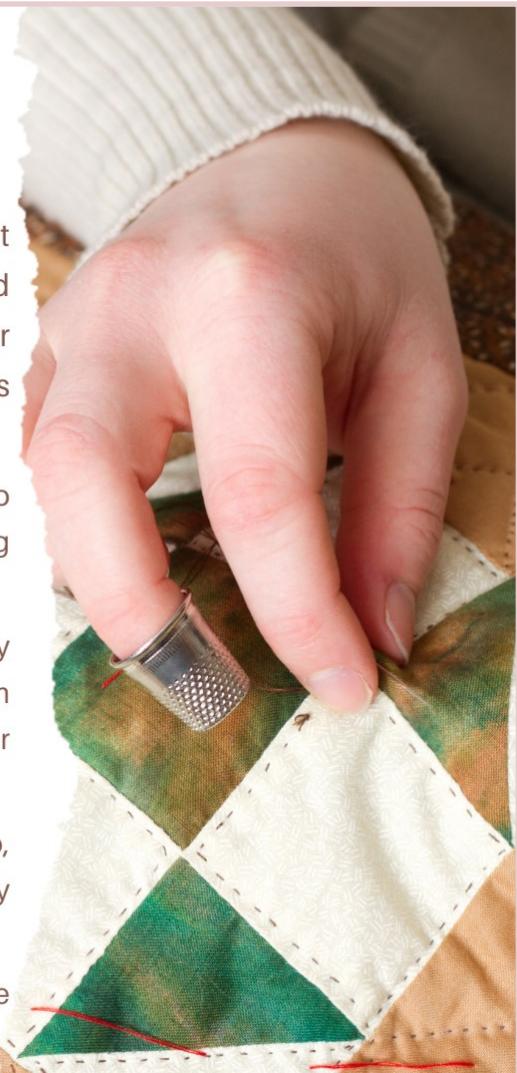
Did you know our Faith Quilting Group started 25 years ago? It began when a woman from Fairview Hospital visited Faith and showed us how to create care quilts for patients receiving cancer treatments. These beautiful quilts bring warmth and love to patients who often feel cold during treatment.

Over the years, we've made hundreds of quilts and have been blessed to receive many heartfelt thank-you notes. At one point, we were making over 200 quilts a year!

Our group meets twice a month, on the second and fourth Tuesday mornings at 9:00 a.m., and many of our ladies also work on quilts from home. The group includes women from Faith and friends from outside our church — everyone is welcome!

Don't know how to sew? No problem! There's always something to do, and we're happy to show you. Whether you sew, cut, tie, or just enjoy good company, you'll fit right in.

We would love to have you join us — or just stop by some Tuesday to see what we're all about. Come be part of this fun and meaningful ministry!



ROOTED TOGETHER
COLOSSIANS 2:6-7

FAITH YOUTH GROUP

January
"Standing Strong"
Jan 11 @ 6pm
Winter Minute to Win It @ Faith

Jan 30 6pm-10pm
Special Youth Night @ Faith

February
"Love one Another"
Feb 17 6pm-7pm
Shrove Pancake Dinner Fundraiser

Feb 22 @ 6pm
Game Night @ Faith

March
"Prayer Partners"
March 8
Offsite Activity:
Top Golf & Creative Loft
Time: TBD

March 22 @ 6pm
"Journey to the Cross"
@ Faith

April
"Growing in the Word"
Apr 12 @ 6pm
Easter Minute to Win It @ Faith

Apr 26 @ 12pm
Hike @ French Creek

May
"Abiding in Christ"

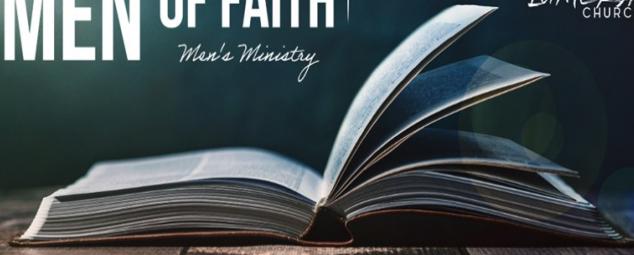
May Activities:
Details Coming Soon!!



MEN OF FAITH

Men's Ministry

Faith
LUTHERAN
CHURCH



1st & 3rd Tuesdays at 6pm

We're always excited to welcome a great group of men to our Men of Faith men's group! All men are invited to join us on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month from 6-8 PM.

Each evening begins with dinner and fellowship, followed by a brief exhortation, then meaningful time diving into God's Word led by Pastor Woolsey.

All men are welcome—no membership required and no denomination barriers. Whether you're new to faith, growing in it, or firmly rooted, there's a place for you here.

If you're interested in attending, just show up or feel free to reach out to Kevin Kovach (440-281-4714). Walk-ins are always welcome, and there's always plenty of food.

Men of Faith is a great opportunity to build strong relationships with like-minded men while growing in your faith and deepening your personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Praise Band News



Big news hit the congregation on Sunday, December 7th: I will no longer be serving in the praise band starting January 2026. For this season of my life, it is time I step away. This was not an easy decision as I have been serving our church in the praise band, in some capacity, for 11 years! It has been a blessing to me to aid in the worship of our congregation through singing, playing, rehearsing, and managing the praise band. When I first started, back in August of 2014, I played piano only. I slowly added singing in, then eventually started rehearsing, and finally became the worship leader. It's been a long journey, and I sincerely appreciate all the encouragement and support over the years!

Brian Schuster will be taking over for a time, so I pray that will minimize the stress and transition discomfort a change like this can bring. I'll be praying for clarity on where God wants me to serve next. In the meantime, you'll still find me singing loudly from a pew with the congregation!

*Sincerely Yours in Christ,
Megan Kovach*

JOIN US THIS LENTEN SEASON!

Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, February 18

Midweek Lent Services

Thursdays on

Feb 26, March 5, 12, 19, & 26

Noon & 7pm

Holy Week Worship Services

Maundy Thursday

Thursday, April 2

Noon and 7pm

Good Friday

Friday, April 3

Noon & 7pm

Easter Breakfast

Easter Sunday

Sunday, April 5

9:15am

10:30am Contemporary

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