

Faith Lutheran Church

FAITHLINES

FROM PASTOR CODY

- Cody Blust, Pastor
- Pat Hoar, Secretary
- Rebecca Keck, Music Director
- Shelley Grubb, Bell Choir
- Steve Conrad, Grounds
- Randy Peck, Custodian

In 2026 it is time to start something new. At the 2025 Fall meeting we brought up the idea of looking at things from a stance of abundance. To put it another way we want to look at things through the lens of what we do have and not what we do not. Throughout 2026, we as a congregation will begin learning this way of viewing things. So often we limit ourselves by looking solely at what we do not have instead of dreaming with the things we do have and daring to try something new. During 2026 we will begin looking at our church and what we do have to use for ministry. We will dream dreams with what we have and as we do, we will find we have more than what we thought to work with.

Jesus looked at his ministry possibilities through a lens of abundance. With just a few loaves and fish he fed a multitude. With some spit and dirt, Jesus healed a blind man. With just some words Jesus would bring a dead man back to life. Jesus always operated from a viewpoint of what he did have and we are encouraged to work from the same mindset. Moving to a mindset of abundance will take time but as we actively work towards that mindset it will get easier. May we commit to moving towards a mindset of abundant possibility and away from fearful deficit as we begin to dream dreams of what Faith Lutheran can do.

TO KNOW AND SHARE GOD’S LOVE

In the Nurture Ministries description it says, “Objectives: The basic objectives of Nurture are bringing of the gospel to the unchurched, the enlistment of all God’s people in the work of spreading the gospel, the deepening of the faith and activity of the members of the congregation, and proper accounting of members at all times. They shall also seek to reduce the loss of members to inactive member status.” That is quite a task. As I said last month, we have begun the task of reaching out to members we haven’t seen in a while at the church. We will be sending out notes to people and letting them know what is happening at our church. We will also be sending out thank you notes to visitors that have attended our services. We need to “persevere” in our attempt to grow our congregation. PLEASE invite a friend to church. In all my years in sales, the most important thing was to “ASK” for the sale. If you don’t ask, you don’t get. Art Schad.

Inside this issue:

Jesus Calling	2
Flower Chart	2
Preschool Fundraiser	2
Birthdays	4
President’s Ponderings	4
Dream Green	6
Snow Policy	6

JESUS CALLING

We are studying *"Promised Rest"* by Michelle Diercks. Our next study is Monday, February 2, 2026, at 11 am to 1 pm, in Rooms 210/212. This month we will cover Week 3: El Roi (pages 65 through 89). Kathy Noblit is our designated leader for February. Bring your lunch for fellowship after the study portion ends about noon.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

The first quarter daily devotional books *Portals of Prayer* and *Christ in Our Home* are available in the rack by the entrance door.

FLOWER CHART

The flower chart for 2026 is posted on the bulletin board near Pastor's office. Be sure to include your phone number. Someone from Altar Guild will contact you as to designation for the bulletin. Our florist is Dan Nagy at The Flower Basket, and cost of flowers is \$22.50 plus tax.

SOUTHERN OHIO SYNOD NEWS

Gratitude

by Pr. Kris Santiago

Southern Ohio Synod Spiritual Direction Coordinator

Gratitude is at the center of spirituality and faith. It is worth a long and loving gaze each day, to simply be grateful for the infinitesimally small and mysteriously great blessings of this moment, this day. What are they? Let yourself notice, pray to notice, and give thanks.

I humbly suggest reading anything written by Brother David Steindl-Rast, who at one hundred years old has blessed countless human beings with his prayerful attention to gratitude. His website, "Grateful Living," can be found at www.grateful.org

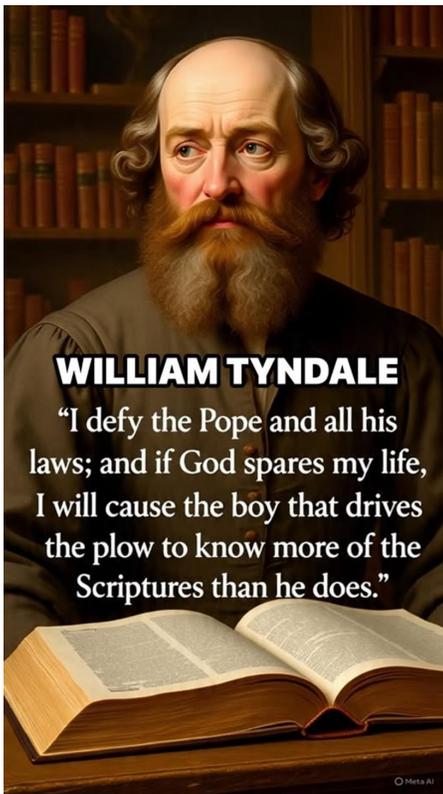
Steindl-Rast mentions that "we are only one grateful thought away from peace of heart." Might we pause right there and let that speak?

We are sent forth from worship with the words, "Go in peace. Serve the Lord." To which we respond, "Thanks be to God." Think of it. We are sent in God's peace which we receive and in which we serve... with gratitude.

PRESCHOOL STOLLER FUNDRAISER

Registration for the 2026-2027 school years is under way. Please give us a call with any questions. 740-397-5701. Preschool is holding their annual Spring Stoller Fundraiser; February 3 - February 18. There will be an order form in the office. You may place your order on the form provided and leave your payment in the envelope so marked. Delivery is Weds., March 18, between 4:30p & 6p.

BOOK CORNER

William Tyndale (1494-1536)

There are many Christians, perhaps most, who believe that the Englishman John Wycliffe first translated the Bible into English. Technically, that is true, but the man who had the most influence on it today was a fellow Englishman, William Tyndale. Tyndale was born about 1494, some say a bit earlier, in Gloucestershire. He was educated at Oxford and Cambridge, already at that time, as today, considered the pinnacle of English teaching and learning. Today he is often referred to as “the Father of the English Bible.” Very early on during and after his education, Tyndale aspired to provide the common people of England to have direct personal access to the scriptures, mainly to make more accurate the “Biblical ignorance of the priests,” at a time when most common people in Europe could neither read nor write. Translating the Bible into vernacular was illegal at the time. Bibles were commonly written in Latin, in the Vulgate version of the Bible. Tyndale traveled to London to gain permission from Bishop Tunstall, which was predictably refused. Consequently, Tyndale, encouraged and supported by some English merchants, went to Europe to complete the task. He arrived in what is now Germany in 1524, where he worked on translating the New Testament (from the original Greek, not the Latin Vulgate) in Hamburg, finding a printer in Cologne who agreed to print Tyndale’s work. His work having been discovered by a foe of the Reformation, Tyndale escaped to Worms, where his New Testament translation was subsequently published. Six thousand copies, a significant number at the time, were smuggled into England. The priests, bishops, and

Archbishop of Canterbury tried to buy up as many copies as possible to prevent distribution, but Tyndale used the money earned from those sales to print more, improved copies, an irony of history. Henry VIII, the king of England at the time, obtained a copy of Tyndale’s *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, and was influenced to the extent that by 1534 he was convinced to break with the Church in Rome, which resulted in the formation of the Anglican Church, or Church of England. Tyndale was predictably declared a heretic by the Roman Catholic Church. Tyndale was arrested in 1535 for heresy and jailed for a year, having been betrayed by a fellow Englishman who presented himself as a friend. After a trial, he was convicted of heresy and executed in 1536, being strangled and burned at the stake. It is commonly believed that Tyndale’s last words were “Lord, open the King of England’s eyes.” In 1539, Henry ordered England’s bishops to make available in every church the English translation of the Bible. Though Tyndale’s translations were decades after those of Wycliffe’s, it was Tyndale that had the greatest impact on Christians today. His translations were from the original Greek for the New Testament, and Hebrew for the Old Testament, while Wycliffe’s were from the Latin Vulgate, used by the official church of most European Christians, the Roman Catholic Church. Ninety per cent of the King James version of the Bible, written and published in the early 17th century about the time of the founding of Jamestown in Virginia, came from Tyndale’s translations. Seventy-five percent of the Revised English Version, published in the early 1950’s came also from Tyndale’s original translations. According to a 2002 poll in England, Tyndale placed twenty-sixth among the 100 Greatest Britons. His influence and sacrifice may be much higher than that among Christians of the world everywhere today. DK

BIRTHDAYS

02/03 George Smith
 02/06 Sharon Mooney
 02/09 Colby Myrda
 02/11 Karen West, Dave West
 02/12 Willow Barnard, Brookelynn Finnell
 02/14 Julie Harris
 02/15 Steve Conrad
 02/16 Natalia Shaw
 02/18 Joe Ingrassia
 02/19 Frank O'Hare, Linda Aikman
 02/20 Marisa Keaton
 02/21 Corina Boyce
 02/23 Art Schad
 02/26 Braden Morey
 02/27 Ann Jurkowitz, Becky Matulich

ANNIVERSARYS

02/14 Jim & Missy Elkins



PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS



As I write this, the snow is falling in big fat flakes outside my window, and it's easy to appreciate the beauty of the scene from my cozy office. I most likely would have a different attitude about that same snow if I had to drive somewhere this afternoon. It's a good reminder of how much our attitude can affect our experience with a set of circumstances.

I am inviting each of you to join me in an "Attitude of Gratitude" for the coming year as we work to grow our outreach and mission to Know and Share God's Love. Each day I am going to write down at least one thing for which I am grateful and am asking you to do the same. Even on the darkest days, I have found that remembering just one thing for which I am thankful can let in a flicker of God's light and grace which keeps me going.

Sharing our stories of gratitude can also bless others, so starting in February, there will be a box in the sanctuary where you can share items. This sharing is completely voluntary and can be done anonymously. I will read the items from the box each week

and select a few to share in this column as encouragement throughout the year.

In Christ's Love,
 Sally Berger
 Council President

THE COMPOSERS' CRAFT



Just As I Am Charlotte Elliott (1789-1871)

What are the great Christian hymns? You are likely to get dozens of different answers to this question even from the same congregation. Surely, When Peace, Like a River (It Is Well), Amazing Grace, and Just As I Am would be on most any list. We know quite a bit about the authors of the words of the first two, as their own personal stories of Christian growth and expression have been widely written about and discussed. But what about the third? I was first aware of this inspiring hymn when I was first aware of the Billy Graham Crusades. It is the inviting hymn for the altar call that Graham always included in his various travels for witness to Christ. I encountered it personally in 1994 while attending Billy Graham's Columbus, Ohio crusade at a depressing time in my life. His message and that hymn, sung by hundreds of local

choirs together in the stands behind home plate, and the makeshift speaking platform, in Cooper Stadium west of Downtown Columbus, was an inspiration.

Billy Graham never knew her name, yet he invited to come forward, and converted millions with that song as an invitation and inspiration. Her name was Charlotte Elliott. Born in 1789 in Clapham, England, Charlotte grew up privileged, her father being a successful merchant, and her grandfather a member of the clergy. In her early adulthood, she wrote poetry, painted, exhibited wit, and was well known in English society. But debilitating illness came to her in her early thirties. For most of the rest of her long life she was an invalid. Seeing the rest of her family actively and successfully engaged in various types of evangelism, she started to feel useless and be angry with God. Then came the visit from Swiss reformed evangelist Dr. Cesar Malan in 1822.

When Charlotte asked Malan what she could do to serve the Lord, as she felt worthless, saying "How can I come to God? I have nothing to bring. I can do nothing for Him." Do we feel that way sometimes? Malan's answer: "Come to him just as you are." Come just as you are. God wants you anyway. Slowly, that answer sunk in over the years, until Charlotte applied the advice to action. As her brother was preparing for a charity bazaar in 1835, Charlotte was thinking of how she had nothing to offer in the midst of her physical and spiritual misery, when Malan's words came back to her. She wrote six verses that night, all beginning with "Just As I Am . . ."

In all, Charlotte wrote 150 hymns. Not prolific, at least by Charles Wesley's standards, but profound in their simplicity. From this Charlotte learned that God does not wait for you to fix yourself. He accepts you just as you are. One hundred years later, a young North Carolina evangelist named Billy Graham ended his meetings with an altar call, inviting those present to commit their lives to Jesus, just as they were. He was deliberate about selecting this hymn as a backdrop to the invitation and the movement of people toward the front to commit their lives to Christ. Over his ministry, this happened for millions. Yet he likely never knew the author of those words. Charlotte Elliott, years after her death at 82, inspired millions across the world with her simple, but heartfelt words. DK

EUCHRE

We will meet Friday February 20th at 6pm for our card fellowship at Eastern Star, Iris Section. All are welcome, and we are willing to teach the game as well. Bring a friend, and a snack/beverage to share.

Our Mission Is To Know and Share God's Love

Faith Lutheran Church
170 Mansfield Avenue
Mt. Vernon, OH 43050
Phone: 740-393-3666
Fax: 740-393-2729
E-mail: faithlutheranmtvernon@gmail.com



Worship Sunday 8 & 10:30 am
Sunday School 9:15

We're on the Web!
FLCMTV.org

PARACLETE POST

Paraclete Post is a free, faith-based program sending high-quality picture books and art to families in the mail!

Our parcels invite children and their families to:

- Grow in their knowledge that God loves them for who they are
- Build stronger bonds to their faith and with each other
- Make connections between their story and the story of Jesus
- Discover more ways to express and explore their faith

Email us at: paracletepost@southernohiosynod.org

SEE INSERT FOR MORE INFORMATION

DREAM GREEN

On February 5, 2026 at 6:30 pm, you are invited to "Dream Green." The gathering will meet at 700 Perimeter Drive, Mount Vernon. (This is the location of the Ramser 4H building at the Knox County Fairgrounds.) This is a free event for community and home gardeners. See the insert for additional information. Should there be a level 2 snow emergency, the meeting will be February 11 at 6:30 pm.

SNOW POLICY

Just a reminder that we will have our full Sunday morning schedule every week **unless** the sheriff declares a level 2 or 3 emergency.

Thank You
FOR
GIVING
...
GENEROUSLY