

Faith Lutheran Church & School

Forward in Faith

January – March 2026

"Where faith meets life"

Galatians 2:20

Our Mission:
Sharing the word of Jesus Christ through a loving and caring ministry responding to the needs of all people.

STAY CONNECTED

2265 Red Lion Road
Bear, DE 19701-1849
OR
P.O. Box 1000
Bear, DE 19701

Church 302-834-1214
School 302-834-3417

WORSHIP SERVICES

Contemporary @ 8:15 AM
Traditional @ 10:30 AM
Livestream @ 10:30 AM
5th Sunday @ 9:30 AM

WEBSITE:

www.faith-lutheran.church

YouTube:

www.youtube.com/@FaithLutheranChurchBearDE

FACEBOOK:

www.facebook.com/faith.bear.de

PASTOR'S EMAIL:

revthress@icloud.com



New Year's Resolutions

I have never been one to make New Year's resolutions, but this time, at the beginning of a new year certainly provides a wonderful opportunity to look back and look forward – to assess and to plan. This New Year 2026 is a big year for me personally as Nancy and I plan our wedding and our new life together.

It's exciting and nerve-racking all at the same time, as much of life tends to be. I have never been good with details, so you can imagine Nancy's frustration with me at times. 😊

When we look at Scripture, God's Word is always reminding us to look forward in faith. We do look back to assess, to confess our sins, to repent. But we are quickly called to look and move forward as God picks us up, forgives our sins, and takes us into the next moment. This faith-filled movement reminds us that we are not alone. Our faithful God provides for our next moment. He meets us where we are but never leaves us there. Rather His Spirit guides us into our next steps – steps of repentance and faith.

We hear these encouraging words from Scripture...

2 Corinthians 5:17 – Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Lamentations 3:22-23 – The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Continued

Isaiah 43:18-19 – “Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”

Jeremiah 29:11 – For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Enter this new year in bold faith. We do not know what is coming our way, but we know that our God is eternally faithful. His Word endures forever. The power and wisdom of God are revealed in Christ – crucified and raised from the dead. We have the confidence that because He lives we shall live also, and that neither death nor life nor things present nor things to come will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor

Dear Faith Family,

As we head into 2026, we can look back and see how God has used us to minister to our families, members, community and beyond. So many of you shared not only your talents and treasure, but also much of your time to serve and bless!

I don't know about you, but I still love driving in and seeing the beautiful parking lot that makes the church so welcoming! And with all the beautiful outdoor landscaping Betty has done, we have a very inviting church indeed! The new electronic sign has already proved its worth and adds to that updated vibe. The Women of Faith have been very active this past year and their outreach is bearing fruit! Renewing the Fall Festival was a wonderful community event that drew more than expected! Thank you, Kelly Figgs! Our Food from Faith saw a dramatic increase this fall due to the government shutdown, and that increase has not diminished. Other faithful events like VBS and Trunk or Treat continue to be important ways in which we serve and minister to our communities. Our Pre-School is flourishing and such a valuable gift to the children that come here. So, 2025 was a very good year of service and ministry!

But we also know that in 2026 the church will face some challenges in our finances as the economy has become more uncertain. We also face some challenges in our aging structure which will require some prayerful decisions on how to best pay for and fix outdated HVAC, ceilings and carpets. But I remain confident that, as happened time and time again, our faithful congregation will rise to these challenges and find a way!

Most importantly, this is a congregation that is mission-minded and wants to continue to support the ministry efforts we've started together. That's why I'm so confident for the upcoming year and look forward to walking it together with you all!

Pete Mueller

Chairman, Church Council

Thank You



Thank you to everyone for the outpouring of prayers and support you have given my husband and me during my recent Christmas Eve surgery. Everyday gets better and I'm thankful the surgery is behind me. I'm not sure what is next, but I know with my Faith-full family I will not face my challenges alone. I am so grateful for each and every one of you. My faith is in our Great Physician and in the meantime, I remain hopeful while trying to... be still.

Your Sister in Christ,
JoAnne Gross

Forward in Faith: January – March 2026

Birthday Blessings

01/05	Peter Mueller	02/02	Carol Milliken	03/01	Sarah Drummonds
01/06	Janus Beck	02/04	Carla Vacula	03/02	Bill Flickinger
01/09	Diane Roman	02/05	Brian Sands	03/04	Anita Miller
01/10	Steve Nawrocki	02/09	Jill Mackey	03/05	Judy Willoughby
01/13	Isaac Rufus	02/13	Savannah Bennett	03/06	Morgan Roman
01/14	Joleen De Luz	02/14	Brian Bradford	03/08	Jen Dalby
01/15	Andy Bornreger	02/14	Brian Sands	03/10	Raeanna Eisenhower
01/17	Jules VanSant	02/17	Will Harp	03/16	Mary Ann Ottolini
01/20	Brandon Bradford	02/18	Thomas Cronin	03/24	Tom Patrick
01/25	Lukas Vacula	02/22	Tom Elder	03/25	Patricia Sands
		02/22	Will McCrea	03/28	Luisa Georgov
		02/26	Isaiah Rufus	03/29	Travis De Luz
		02/29	Bob Cormier	03/29	Matthew Wanzer
				03/30	Doug Drummonds

NEWS FROM FAITH PRESCHOOL:

Registration for the 2026-2027 school year begins February 1st. Please visit www.faith-lutheran.church website for an application.

Thank you to everyone who supported our fall fundraiser by purchasing discount cards to local businesses. Your ongoing support is appreciated.

Also, thank you to the Women of Faith for providing the "Happy Birthday, Jesus" party following the children's Christmas program!

A very special thank you to Diane Roman's father for building the manger for baby Jesus.



ALTAR FLOWERS:

If you would like to place altar flowers in the sanctuary, in honor of someone special or in memory of a loved one, please visit the flower sign-up sheet in the narthex. The cost this year is \$40.

2026 GIVING ENVELOPES, DIRECTORIES, & STATEMENT INSTRUCTIONS:

Your donor giving envelopes, updated membership directories, and instructions for printing your 2025 statement from ICON are now available on the table in the narthex.

GIRLZ OF FAITH:

Girls ages 9-18 and their Moms (and/or any other special women) are invited to attend our first **Girlz of Faith event on February 21st, 2026. We will be celebrating God's valentine to us, his Word.** A recent survey indicates that only 30% of churchgoing tween girls actually read the bible with any regularity. Another study found that when a child—or an adult—engages with the Bible on their own four times a week or more, their behavior changes dramatically. Anxiety and depression drop. Porn use becomes far less likely. Meanwhile, positive habits increase: they're more likely to volunteer, do better in school, and even share their faith with others. Our mission is to get girls excited about reading and understanding God's Word - with JOY. We intend for this event to be the beginning of a program that will encourage our young ladies to find truth, hope, and direction in the pages of Scripture.

Please register by January 15th by using this QR code.



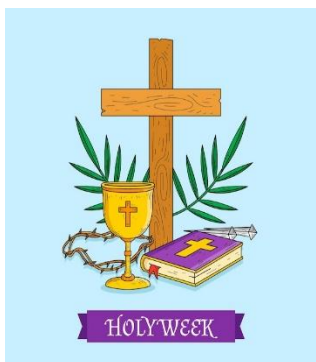
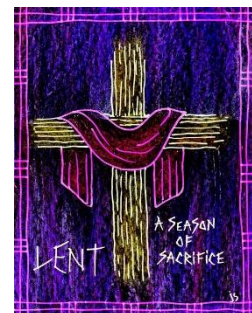
LENTEN & EASTER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

February 18th – Ash Wednesday & Imposition of Ashes (+) @ Noon & 7 PM

Mid-week services during Lent – Wednesdays @ Noon & 7 PM

February 25th

March 4th, March 11th, March 18th & March 25th



March 29th – Palm Sunday (+) – **one combined service @ 9:30 AM**

April 2nd – Maundy Thursday Service (+) @ 7 PM

April 3rd – Good Friday Tenebrae Service @ 7 PM

April 5th – Easter Services

Sunrise Service (+) @ 6:30 AM

Contemporary Worship (+) @ 8:15 AM

Fellowship @ 9:30 AM

Traditional Worship (+) @ 10:30 AM

(+) Holy Communion offered

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TRUNK OR TREAT:

Once again, God's people here at Faith have shown their extraordinary generosity of time, talents, and treasure, during our annual Trunk or Treat party this past October 25th. While we don't have an exact count, we do know that more than 50 children and families from our congregation and community enjoyed games, crafts, and food during the Halloween festivities. Most importantly, the event gave everyone a chance to hear Pastor Mike's "ghost story from the Bible", and hear again a message of God's saving love for all. Of course, the evening's highlight was "trunk or treating" at 19 creatively-decorated vehicle trunks – a record number for our "T or T".

Many thanks to all who volunteered – every one played an important role in the success of the evening. It was a night of fun for all, and we know there are a whole lot of kids (and adults) looking forward to next year!



WOMEN OF FAITH (LWML) HOW WE SERVED OTHERS

November Pie Sales raised \$705 for our seminary student, Matt Wanzer.

December Cookie Sales raised \$532 for *Child Beyond International*.

WOF prepared “Baking Kits” for our Food from Faith families during December. Kits included recipe and dry ingredients for their holiday baking.

WOF provided a “Happy Birthday, Jesus” party for the children and families following the Children’s Christmas Program.

This year’s Angel Tree blessed four children from *A Better Chance for Our Children* with Christmas gifts including clothing essentials and educational toys.

MONTHLY REMINDERS

Monthly meetings are held the 1st Saturday of the month @ 9:30 AM. All women are invited and encouraged to attend and participate in our mission work which supports Faith, our community, and around the world.

The 1st Sunday of the month is Mite Box Mission collection. Wear purple and show your support for LWML. Money collected, no matter how small, adds up and helps support global mission work.

UPCOMING FUNDRAISER

Sunday, February 8th is our annual “Souper Bowl” Sunday. Bring a pot or crockpot of your favorite soup and WOF will provide take-home containers. You are also invited to bring bread or rolls packaged in individual baggies. A free-will offering will be collected.



A HUG FROM MATT WINTER NEEDS

Supplies Needed:

- Mylar Blankets
- Small Fleece Blankets
- Non-perishable Food
- Women’s Hygiene Products
- Socks (Male/Female)
- Hand/Feet Warmers
- Gloves
- Scarves
- Lip Balms
- Body Lotions
- Hand Sanitizers
- Water

Thank you for helping those less fortunate

Daylight Savings begins Sunday, March 8th

Don't forget to “spring forward” one-hour!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

COMING THIS SUMMER

