

# FAITH NEWS

March 2026



**Our Mission:**  
“Sharing the Love of God in Christ Jesus”



### **The Lord Will Show Us the Way**

Dear Saints of Faith,

There are seasons in the life of every believer—and in the life of every congregation—when we find ourselves asking the Lord the hard questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? We want clarity. We want direction. We want to see the whole road laid out in front of us.

Yet more often than not, our Father gives us something different. He gives us Himself.

The Scriptures remind us, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths” (Book of Proverbs 3:5–6). Notice what the Word does not say. It does not say we will always understand the path. It says He will make it straight. It does not say we will see ten miles ahead. It says He will direct our steps.

At Faith Lutheran, you have walked through seasons of certainty and seasons of wondering. In family life, in ministry decisions, in church leadership, there are moments when we wait for the Lord to reveal what comes next. And waiting can feel uncomfortable. Waiting stretches us. Waiting humbles us.

### **JOIN US ON SUNDAY...**

- Bible Study 8:30 am
- Fellowship 9:15 am
- Worship 10:00 am

### **AND ON WEDNESDAY...**

- Men’s Bible Study 8:00 am
- Ladies Bible Study 9:45 am
- Faith Ringers 1:00 pm
- Men of Faith 2:30 pm
- Choir 2:30 pm

### **MINISTRY STAFF**

The Rev. Robert J Benke  
*Pastor*

*The Rev. Amos Gray*  
*Vacancy Pastor*

Constance Bergquam  
*Temporary Secretary*

Lynne Border-Koon  
*Organist*

Sigilda Naidin  
*Bell & Voice Choir Director*

Faith Lutheran Church  
 1196 DeSoto Blvd Hot Springs Village AR  
 501-922-5700  
 Visit our website at [www.faithhsv.com](http://www.faithhsv.com)

But waiting is never wasted in the Kingdom of God.

The prophet declares in Book of Isaiah 40:31, “They who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength.” Waiting is not passive. It is active trust. It is choosing to believe that God is working even when we cannot see the movement. It is resting in the confidence that the Lord of the Church is not anxious, not confused, and never late.

As believers in Jesus Christ, we can actually find joy in the waiting. That may sound strange at first. How do we find joy when we are unsure of the outcome? We find it in anticipation. We find it in knowing that God is always up to something good for His people. We find it in remembering that every season of preparation is setting the stage for His perfect will to unfold.

It is often in the waiting that God does His deepest work—not around us, but within us. He refines our patience. He strengthens our prayer life. He draws families closer together. He unites congregations in humility and dependence. He reminds us that this church is not built on personalities or preferences, but on Christ alone.

Faith Lutheran, the path you are on—in your homes, in your ministries, in your outreach, and in your worship—is not a path you walk alone. The same Lord who called you into being as a congregation walks with you now. Jesus promised, “I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Gospel of Matthew 28:20). That promise was not temporary. It was not conditional. It is eternal.

So when you find yourself asking the who, the what, the where, when, and why, let those questions drive you not to anxiety but to prayer. Let them push you to the Word. Let them remind you that our Father in heaven sees the full picture. He knows the road ahead. He knows the needs of every family represented in this body. He knows the future of this ministry.

And He will show us the way.

Our call is not to rush ahead of Him. Our call is to walk faithfully, to love deeply, to serve boldly, and to trust completely. There is joy in knowing that the Author of our faith is also the Perfecter of it. There is peace in surrender. There is strength in unity. And there is hope in every step taken under His guidance.

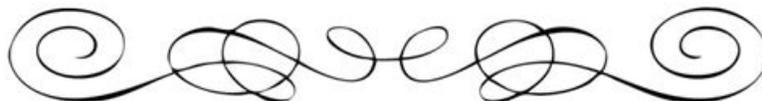
So take heart, dear brothers and sisters. Wait on Him. Watch for Him. Trust Him.

He is leading.

He is working.

And He is with us—every single step of the way.

Pastor Amos Gray



# THANK YOU FOR GIVING YOUR TIME, TALENTS AND TREASURES

## ELDER for the month: Jan Railsback

<u>DATE</u>	<u>VISITORS DESK</u>	<u>READERS</u>	<u>COUNTERS</u>
3/1	Vicki Trimble	Karen Schwanbeck	Bennetts & Mason
3/4	Veronica Detjens		Olsons & Wersching
3/8	Janis Griffin	Michelle Ramon	Preboskis & Griffin
3/11	Veronica Detjens		Schwanbecks & Klemann
3/15	Shirley Smestad	Don Putnam	Smestads & Marhenke
3/18	Rhonda Tull		Woods & Mechels
3/22	Sandy Olson	Chris Trimble	Bennetts & Mason
3/25	Sandy Olson		Olsons & Wersching
3/29	Janis Griffin	Karen Schwanbeck	Preboskis & Griffin

## ALTAR GUILD FOR MARCH

Linda Whitford and Becky Eskov

## USHERS

<u>3/1 &amp; 4</u>	<u>3/8 &amp; 11</u>	<u>3/15 &amp; 18</u>	<u>3/22 &amp; 25</u>	<u>3/29</u>
<u>TEAM G</u>	<u>TEAM A</u>	<u>TEAM B</u>	<u>TEAM C</u>	<u>TEAM D</u>
C Peterson	M Klemann	L Smith	J Betts	C Burns
S Joy	H Jarvis	R Douglas	J Betts	C Marhenke
S Peterson	R Schaumburg	R Leathers	J Railsback	C Wood
D Spars	J Retzer	C Trimble	L Railsback	K Wood

## WAYS TO FULFILL YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE LORD

1. Send check to Faith  
1196 DeSoto Blvd
2. Bank draft to Faith
3. IRA or 401K RMD  
(Required Minimum Distribution)
4. IRA or 401K QCD  
(Qualified Charitable Distribution)
5. Donate Stocks

## AUDIO BOOTH TEAM

<u>3/1 &amp; 4</u>	Javier Ramon
<u>3/8 &amp; 11</u>	Ken Barnett
<u>3/15 &amp; 18</u>	Ben Kilgroe
<u>3/22 &amp; 25</u>	Hank Jarvis
<u>3/29 &amp; 4/2</u>	Ken Wood

## Budget for the end of January

Budgeted Income	\$35,702.00
Income Received	<u>\$15,327.00</u>
Shortage for Month	\$(20,375.00)
YTD Budgeted Income	\$35,702.00
YTD Income Received	<u>\$15,327.00</u>
Shortage for Year	\$(20,375.00)

## Financial Report for January

January Income	\$15,327.00
January Expenses	<u>\$26,162.55</u>
	\$(10,835.55)
YTD Income	\$15,327.00
YTD Expenses	<u>\$26,162.55</u>
	\$(10,835.55)

# MARCH

## Birthdays

- 3 - Linda Bricker-Hettler
- 3 - Don Coonfer
- 4 - Jim Retzer
- 11 - Dorothy Ebert
- 11 - Susan Peterson
- 15 - Carol Schreck
- 20 - Liz Coonfer
- 20 - Rob Kasten
- 21 - Jeff Wohlrabe
- 22 - Linda Whitford
- 27 - Judy Kluba

## Anniversaries

- 1 - Jim & Joyce Betts (56)
- 17 - Bobby & Debbie Traywick (36)
- 26 - Randy & Barbara Bennett (49)
- 27 - Heidi Jo and Terrance Fortson (29)
- 30 - Terry Porter & Sandy Olson (27)

## Altar Flowers

- 1 Jim & Joyce Betts' anniversary
- 8 In memory of Sonya Marhenke's brother, John Eidsvoog
- 22 Randy & Barbara's 49th anniversary
- 29 In memory of Shirley Smith from Larry



A private service in Faith's Memorial Garden was held on February 20 for Karen Bracewell, daughter of Cal and Eunice Bracewell.

Joe Yox, father of Susan Peterson, passed away on February 11.



## SERVING IN THE MILITARY

**Shane Wersching**, grandson of Joe and Grace Wersching is serving in the Navy. **Kevin Mason**, Army, son of Bonnie Mason, and **Kathan Tomlin**, Army, grandson of Bonnie Mason. **Brandon Carter**, son-in-law of Bonnie Mason.

Please, God, keep them safe....Amen

## WEDNESDAYS

### Wednesday Night Lent series:

Every Wednesday during the Lenten services, Faith Lutheran members will gather around the Word of God to worship, to pray, and to hear a message focused on the subject “For Us”. During these messages, Pastor Amos and Pastor Larry will speak on all that Christ has done “For Us”. The series was originally developed from the LSB hymn 540 “O love, how deep.” Please plan to join us every Wednesday night.

## SUNDAYS

Join us for Bible Study on Sunday mornings at 8:30. We’ve had some wonderful topics and engaging conversations.



Pastor Amos, illustrating a point.



Sunday morning zooming with Mexico! Pastor Garrett Hart, KIMA missions director and Pastor Saul, San Mateo Lutheran Church.



## Men of Faith: Serving with Joy and Excellence

Over the past month and a half, I have had the privilege of watching the Men of Faith at Faith Lutheran Church pour their hearts into preparing the Cupid's Second Chance Valentine's Day Dinner. What has stood out to me is not just the planning, the organization, or even the creativity—it has been their spirit.

These men are not simply hosting an event. They are serving.

There is a deep joy in watching them talk through details, coordinate responsibilities, and encourage one another to do this with excellence. Their passion has been contagious. Their energy has been inspiring. But more than anything, their hearts have been evident. This is not about recognition. It is about honoring the women of Faith Lutheran and showing Christlike love in a tangible way.

Scripture reminds us, “Through love serve one another” (Epistle to the Galatians 5:13). That is exactly what these men are doing. They are serving through love—through thoughtful preparation, joyful attitudes, and a desire to bless others.

Colossians 3:23 tells us, “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men” (Epistle to the Colossians 3:23). I have seen that verse lived out. From setting tables to planning the meal, from decorating to welcoming, they are striving to do this not halfway, but wholeheartedly.

Jesus Himself said, “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve” (Gospel of Mark 10:45). When men lead in service, the whole church is strengthened. When they honor the women of the congregation with gratitude and excellence, they reflect the heart of Christ.

It has been a joy to watch their passion ignite. The Men of Faith are reminding us all that true leadership begins on our knees and expresses itself in humble, joyful service.

Pastor Amos Gray





## **An Opportunity Rather Than a Problem**

As Faith Lutheran Church continues the process of calling a new pastor, the church should take the opportunity to evaluate its past history, its current status, and to look forward to where the church wants to be in five years and in ten years. In essence, what is the church legacy that we want to provide to the Village community?

A change in the church's leadership is a serious business. The decision must be made in the context of maintaining "Lutheranism." Also, the decision must be made in the context of the role of the pastor.

First, what does one mean by "Lutheranism"? "Lutheranism" means that a church will follow the teachings of Luther's Small Catechism; a church where the Gospel is preached in all its truth and purity; a church where the sacraments are rightly administered; a church where the historic liturgy is celebrated with gravity and joy, i.e., the meeting of Heaven and earth; a church where theologically profound hymns are sung; a church where the young are taught real doctrine; a church where the old are respected and cared for; and a church that will provide a spiritual and welcoming home for wandering Christians and non-Christians. Faith Lutheran Church currently meets these standards and we want the new pastor to maintain these standards.

Second, what is the role of the pastor? We view the pastor each Sunday and some other days throughout the year conducting Worship Services. However, that does not reveal the full role of the pastor in the church. The pastor is the leader of the church which he accomplishes through the Elders, the church's lay leadership, and the administrative staff. He also makes house calls for those who are unable to attend church on a regular basis. He also makes hospital calls. In addition, he is the front man for bringing new congregants into the church by interviewing them and dealing with their baptismal and confirmation issues, if any. Further, he provides the church secretary with the outline for the Church Bulletin for each Worship Service. He also from time to time has to arrange and conduct funeral/memorial services. This is not an all-inclusive list, but it demonstrates that the role of the pastor goes beyond the Worship Services.

Another consideration in calling a new pastor is the new pastor's family. Will the pastor's family be comfortable living in Hot Springs Village? The church needs to bear in mind that the church is not only engaging a pastor, but also his family.

As the church conducts itself in calling a new pastor, everyone must pray to the Lord for guidance in completing this process. We need to put the decision for the new pastor in the hands of the Lord.

Don Putnam

Chair, Out Reach/Evangelism Board

# MEN'S MINISTRY

## MENS MINISTRY GATHERING

We are meeting and planning again on **TUESDAY, March 3rd at 5:00 pm.**

This gathering is the next step in implementing some of the suggestions gathered from you men on January 5th.

Some exciting and helpful activities were proposed.

We will be planning immediate activity for March as well as some future planning for April, May and June to implement others of the activities suggested to help others in our church and in the community!

Men let us know that you will be there to participate when you receive the request from Men's Ministry through Church Trac email so that we can plan accordingly!

If you have any questions or suggestions, call or text me  
David Knoernschild at 901-606-1986.

## FCA Luncheon On The Horizon!!

Fellowship Christian Athletes (FCA) will be having its next luncheon for the Academic Year 2025-2026 on **Friday, March 6, 2026, 12 (noon) – 1:15 PM**, at the Outreach Center, Balboa Baptist Church, 415 Ponce de Leon Drive, HSV.

We hope that many of you will avail yourselves of this great opportunity and join FCA to update yourselves on the work it does with the youth in our community and maybe learn of something with which you could help!

It is rewarding to listen to some of the youth from the Jessieville, Mountain Pine, and/or Fountain Lake Schools giving testimony of how FCA activities led them to, or renewed, a relationship with their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Sign up for this \$6 luncheon by calling/texting Dane Thomson at (214) 682-9005 or e-mail [danethomson.dt@gmail.com](mailto:danethomson.dt@gmail.com) on or before March 4, 2026. Cost of the luncheon is collected at the door.**

**Any questions or need more information, call Don Putnam (501) 984-2144.**



## **VOLUNTEERS WANTED FOR “REALITY FAIR”**

Fountain Lake High School is seeking volunteers to participate in its **“Reality Fair”** scheduled for **Monday, March 9, 2026, 7-11 A.M.** at the Fountain Lake School District – Safe Room A. We need 10-18 volunteers. Breakfast is provided to the volunteers.

“Reality Fair” is a budget simulation program for all juniors. Volunteers sit at tables for an area of interest and “sell” to the students. The concept behind the “Reality Fair” is to give students the experience of learning how to allocate their limited earnings for various activities.

The areas of interest are Entertainment, Food, Transportation, Clothing, Housing, Childcare, Leisure, Technology, and Personal Care.

The students are given a “budget sheet” that identifies the income amount that they can spend on the various areas of interest. The student then goes to each table, listens to the “sell” from the volunteer at the table, and then decides how much of his or her income to spend on that area of interest.

After completing the circuit of the areas of interest, each student then goes to a Budget Counselor to be evaluated for his or her spending behavior.

The last time that this “Reality Fair” was held was in 2024 and there are short videos of how the program works. If you want to review the videos, go to:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1gPiQKKSy7gE8QMvUe1QvoEQvt71WJCYX>

For further information, contact Don Putnam at (501) 984-2144 or [dfputnam@hotmail.com](mailto:dfputnam@hotmail.com).

Sign-up sheets are in the Main Fellowship Hall under the windows.





February Ladies Guild meeting. Our “speaker” was our own Julie Keck, showing us how easy it is to do the exercises at Balboa Baptist, which she sometimes leads!! \$1 at the door. Its a bargain!!

MARCH



## Ladies Guild LWML SPRING FLING CARD PARTY

The day was enjoyed by 150 card and game players. Delicious snacks and 400 cookies. Lots of fun door prizes and beautiful items which were raffled. The proceeds will go to Harvey's Chapel Food Bank. Thank you to Pat Muzika and her team of hard workers!





# BOARD OF EDUCATION



## March Prayer points for schools and students:

(Adapted from *Ten Prayers for Public Schools*, Navigators 2010)

### Members of Faith:

The Board of Education encourages your continued prayers for the students in our midst. February's focus points: Love, Truth, Encouragement and Protection from violence, as well as prayers for:

### 5. School boards

We pray blessings on each school board member at the Mountain Pine, Jessieville and Fountain Lake schools. Father, may Your will be done at their respective board meetings. (Romans 13:1)

### 6. Principal

May the principal of each of these schools recognize their God-given responsibility he/she has for the best interests of the children who attend the school.

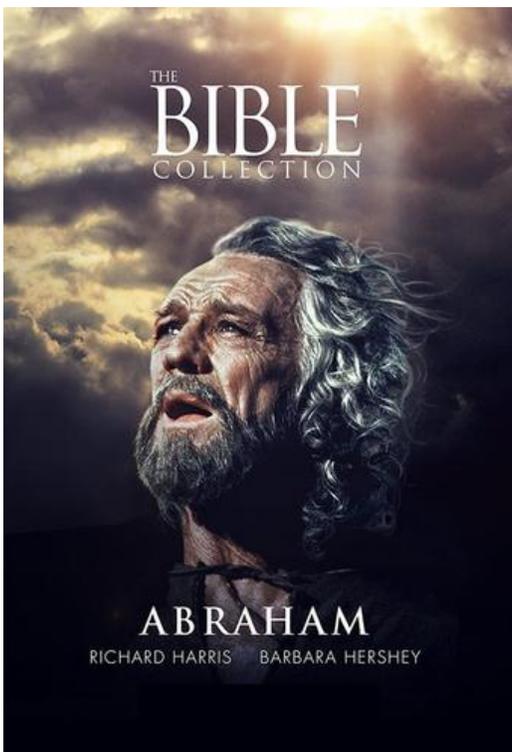
May each one walk in wisdom, integrity, grace and truth. (Proverbs 2:1-11)

### 7. Christian programs

Father, we pray for abundant blessings on programs that bring Christ into these public schools. Help the groups who sponsor such programs function according to Your Word and in harmony with each other.

Bless the leaders and bring forth new and growing believers. (1 Corinthians 12:12)

**We ask these things in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.**



## MOVIE MATINEE, SUNDAY, MARCH 8TH, 2:00 PM

**ABRAHAM:** The story of the patriarch of our faith. God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his long-awaited son Isaac--foreshadowing the sacrifice of our Savior Jesus Christ.

**Come and be blessed!**

# Static Cling Car Window Decals

The **Outreach Board** created 4"x 3" decals to raise awareness in the Village and surrounding areas of the existence of Faith Lutheran Church, an LCMS congregation.

**All members are encouraged to pick up (at no cost) decals for your vehicles at the Welcome Center Desk, to help promote our church and possibly to give you an opportunity to share Christ!**

If your vehicle windows are clear glass, you may place the decal on the inside of the car facing out. If the glass is tinted, place the decal on the outside of the vehicle. Instructions: Simply clean the area for placement with a vinegar/water solution; remove the white backing from the decal; place the decal against the window; and smooth it out using a credit card to remove any bubbles. If you have any questions, call **Shirley Smestad 501-915-9687**.



**Try  
Your  
Luck**

*Join us for...*

**GAME DAY**  
**(4th Sunday Each Month)**  
**Sunday, MARCH 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**2:00 pm – 4:30 pm**

**Initials *M-Z*  
please bring  
light snacks  
or beverages  
to share.**

## Endowment Committee Update

God's blessings to everyone for 2026! The endowment award amount for this year is \$27,943.41. (This is based on 5% of endowment funds as of December 2025.)

Request forms are available in the church office for anyone interested in submitting a request. Forms may be returned to any of the committee members: Chris Marhenke, Diana Mitchell, Emric Roll.

CONGREGATION POTLUCK  
after the Lenten Services on  
Wed, Mar 4 (team 2 service group)  
Wed, Mar 18 (team 1 service group)



### EXTRA NEWS....

For anyone wanting to send mail to Bev, this is her correct address:  
Bev Denman  
3107 HWY 153  
DeWitt AR 72042

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Mar 29 Palm Sunday  
Apr 2 Maundy Thursday  
Apr 3 Good Friday  
Apr 5 Easter

# MARCH 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2 WRQ 9:30 am  MJ 1 pm	3 Elders 8:30 am  Braille 9 am  MENS' MINISTRY 5 pm	4 MBS 8 am LBS 9:45 am AA 12 pm Music practices  SERVICE 5:00 POTLUCK	5	6 Council Mtg 8:30	7 AA 9 am
8 <b>TIME CHG</b> Holy Communion  Movie Matinee 2:00 pm	9 Mem Gar 8 am WRQ 9:30 am  MJ 1 pm	10 Braille 9 am	11 MBS 8 am  AA 12 pm Music practices  SERVICE 5:00	12 8:30 HSV Quilt	13 8:30 HSV Quilt	14 AA 9 am
15 Voter's Mtg after service	16 FLG treats 9 FLG mtg 9:30  MJ 1 pm	17 Braille 9 am  	18 MBS 8 am  AA 12 pm Music practices  SERVICE 5:00 POTLUCK	19	20	21 Board/Trustees Work Day 8 am  AA 9 am
22 Holy Communion  Game Day 2:00 pm	23 Mem Gar 8 am WRQ 9:30 am  MJ 1 pm	24 Braille 9 am	25 MBS 8 am  AA 12 pm Music practices  SERVICE 5:00	26	27	28 AA 9 am
29 PALM SUNDAY Holy Comm.  	30 WRQ 9:30 am  MJ 1 pm	31 NO BRAILLE				
			(See above) Music Practices Bells 1 pm MOF 2:30 pm Choir 3:30 pm	AA-Alcoholics Anonymous FLG-Faith Ladies Guild LBS-Ladies Bible Study MBS-Mens Bible Study Mem Gar-Memorial Gardens MJ-Mah Jongg MOF-Men of Faith WRQ-World Relief Quilters		