



GIFTS, GIFTS, AND MORE GIFTS

The bustle of the holidays has died down, the packing away has begun. The anticipated joy and worry of the what ifs are behind us. The sugar highs and the holiday parties are but memories now. So, what is left? Perhaps a pile of wrapping paper or a mass of empty boxes. The emotional coming down coupled with the sometimes, cold dreary weather of January can leave some with a less than cheery mood. Is there disappointment with gifts we received or with the reception of a gift given? Did we make any new year's resolutions, that given past performance, we know will drift away in a week or two?

Let's consider our disappointment with gifts. We could perhaps consider



our perspective in this regard, is it all about us? Did Jesus have on his list gold, frankincense, and myrrh? As a child I can't imagine him being overjoyed at such gifts, not a toy among them, not a rattle or an animal figure. The gifts were given in honor to him, and sometimes we see

this in our lives. A cow or rabbits given through a Lutheran organization or Heifer International to a family in some far distant land in someone's name, so that they may prosper. Christ gives us just such gifts, love, grace, and hope so that we too may prosper. Are we sometimes not that overjoyed at these gifts, do we often not fully embrace them? Are we sometime not sure just what to do with them, viewing them as a child would view gold? Do we sometimes just sit with these gifts, allowing them to gather dust? A cow not milked will not just bring the intended blessings without some effort on the part of the recipient of said cow. That cow needs milked twice a day, we need to set aside times so that the blessings can flow to us.

And so, it is with the gifts of God that we have at our fingertips. We need to set aside some times where we become still, read our Bibles, ponder the words, pray about others, our world and not make a Christmas list for God for ourselves. You see we have already received gifts from God and our prayers should start with acknowledgement and thanks for those gifts. It's a bit of a paradox being undeserved yet in the humble knowledge that we are children of God. It's a mystery that we can't see the thing but yet can

Sunday Morning Worship
10:15 a.m.
In-person and Facebook Live
~~~~~  
Church Office Hours  
Mon-Fri 9-1  
~~~~~  
StLukesNB@gmail.com
419-257-3253

SAM Paul Brooks
Pastor Ken Pollitx
Church Secretary Dana Bourne

Home Page
<http://stlukesnb.org>



As Lutherans, we believe that we are part of God's unfolding plan. When we gather for worship, we connect with believers everywhere. When we study the Bible or hear God's word in worship, we are drawn more deeply into God's own saving story.

**EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH IN
AMERICA**



**GOD'S WORK.
OUR HANDS.**

<http://www.elca.org/>



**Northwestern
Ohio Synod**

<https://nwos-elca.church/>

**Our Vision is to know Christ
and make Christ known.**

see the results of the workings of God. Your gift to God, the one that God asks, is your surrender to his will, your seeking of his will so that you and all around you may live in peace and fellowship while serving others so that all may feel the love and see the reflection of his light through you.

Go in peace and spread the blessings of this good news.

Amen, Paul Brooks

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

A Resolution means “a firm decision to do or not to do something”. I have tried for years to identify something I could work on as a New Year’s Resolution. You know something to make me a better person! I tried losing weight – didn’t work. I tried adding steps to my daily totals – didn’t work. Tried to give up pop, sweets, snacks between meals – didn’t work. I would start out pretty good for a day or two and then something would come up and I would fall off the bandwagon or forget for a day or two and pretty soon I wasn’t following my resolution at all.

I heard someone on television made you give up something needed to have a resolution to do added to your day. That has been years and I feel much more resolutions because of it. Last more so I made a resolution to



say that resolutions that were bound to fail. You something positive my focus the last few positive about year I wanted to read read a book a month.

Most months I read more than one! A few years ago, I decided I would consciously pray more. Each morning as I wait for my coffee to brew, I pray for friends, the sick, the world, for peace, on and on. It is now a habit that I don’t even think about. This year as you consider whether to make a New Year’s resolution or not, you could try adding something instead of taking something away. Maybe you could read one verse from the Bible every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday before bed. Maybe you could call one friend on the phone or in person each week just to check in. Don’t use text or Facebook – make it more personal. Maybe try to smile or speak to a stranger every day. Maybe bring to church a food pantry donation once a month. Maybe come to in person church at least once per month. Start small! Try just one verse instead of a chapter or a few days a week instead of every day. If you are successful then it is easier to keep going. Let’s see how we are doing on our resolutions in March!

New Year Blessings – Pam

Can Openers

The congregation in November collected monetary gifts for our God’s Work, Our Hands Project to purchase long handled manual can openers for those in need. We purchased them and now have them available. Before we give some to the food pantry the Church Council decided that there might be some in our congregation who would appreciate one of these easy-to-use tools. If you would like a free can opener,

please see Paul or Pam after church or call the church office by the end of January.

Undecorating

Thank you to everyone who stayed after church last Sunday to help the Altar Guild undecorate the church. Your assistance was greatly appreciated.



NORTH BALTIMORE Food Panty

JANUARY requested donations include canned meats and instant potatoes.

FEBRUARY requested donations include laundry detergent, dish soap, toilet paper.

Served the fourth quarter of 2025:

Oct: 14 families/30 people

Nov: 21 families/48 people

Dec: 18 families/37 people



Church Council News

At the December Council meeting we discussed beginning a new Bible Study at St. Luke's. We need to know if anyone was interested. We also talked about whether to have it during a Sunday School hour or should it be some other time during the week...morning, afternoon, or early evening. Paul is looking into a focus for the study, whether it be a book of the Bible, Old or New Testament, readings for the upcoming week's lessons, etc. Please think about it and let Paul know your ideas. We will probably have a short congregational meeting after church early in the new year to discuss ideas.



Your 2026 Church Council

Installed during worship on January 4, 2026:
President – Pam Van Mooy; Vice-President – Matt Matthes; Secretary – Suzanne Bucher; Treasurer – Clay McCartney; Financial Secretary – Carl Lieser; and Discipleship – Tiffany Mika. Property Committee – Bryant

Matthes will be installed at another time. Please take a moment when you see them to thank them for their dedication.

2025 Annual Report

Please have any reports or information you would like to put in the 2025 Annual Church Report to the church office by January 15, 2026. Thank you.

A Happy New Year Service Project

For our first service project of the new year, we will be collecting items to make Chicken Noodle Soup Kits for the local Food Pantry. These kits seem to be a big hit with the community. During January, we will collect cans of carrots, cans of peas, and cans of cream of chicken soup. We will collect the rest of the ingredients for the kits in February. Let's place these items on the Information Table in the Narthex. Thank You.

Bulletins, Candles, Newsletters

Thank you to all who helped to support the work of the church through gifts to our Special Fund. The sign-up sheets for your continued financial support of this Fund for 2026 are posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway. Also, the opportunity to sign up to provide flowers to the glory of God for our worship services. Thank you for sharing your blessings.



Christ in Our Home

The January – March issues of the devotional Christ in Our Home is available on the information table in the Narthex at the church. If you would like a copy but can't get over to pick one up, call the church office and we will mail one to you.

THE ALTAR GUILD

is seeking members to assist with the tasks of preparing for our worship experience. Altar Guild members serve for two consecutive months preparing for communion, cleaning the linens, and changing the paraments, banners, and directing the decorating of the church for fall, Christmas, and Easter. No experience is necessary. Orientation and training are available. Please speak with Karen Krauss or notify the church office. Thank you.



2026 Synod Assembly Registration is Now Open!

Saturday, May 30, 2026

9:00 AM - 6:00 PM

St. Mark's Lutheran Church
315 S College Dr. Bowling Green, OH
43402

Please note that registration will be open from January 1, 2026 to April 30, 2026 with a shift in cost after March 31, 2026.

Registration cost is \$100 from January 1, 2026 – March 31, 2026.

Late registration will be \$150 from April 1 – 30, 2026. *The \$50 late fee proceeds will benefit NWOS mission congregations.*

Any registration requests after April 30, including same day walk-in requests, will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, without guaranteed approval.

Synod Assembly schedules, materials, and further resources will be posted to the **[NWOS Assembly website](#)** as they become available. Please direct any questions to **assembly@nwos-elca.org**.



USHERS NEEDED

Ushers are needed to assist with Sunday morning worship. Duties include handing out bulletins, doing an attendance count, and receiving the offering during worship. No experience necessary. Training provided. Please call the church office to volunteer. Thank you.



Welcome to 2026: The Way of Love! As our scripture verse for this year reminds us, “We love because he first loved us.” (1 John 4:19). As we journey together with Jesus, we have the great opportunity to encourage each other to grow in both our appreciation for, and reflection of, the love of God. A 12-session collection of devotions written by leaders from across Northwestern Ohio is available on the Information Table. These 15 to 20 minute devotions are ideal for when church council gathers, when committees or staff meet, or for use at any regular gathering. Keep watch. There is more to come.

Mark Your Calendar

May 23, 2026 @ First Lutheran Church in Findlay for the Spring gathering of the Central Conference of Lutheran Women. Watch for more to come.

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Church Council Meeting Minutes

Sunday, December 14, 2025

Opening

Pam called the regular meeting of the St. Luke's Lutheran Church Council to order on Sunday, December 14, 2025, at 11:24pm.

Attendance

Present – Pam VanMooy, Matt Matthes, Suzanne Bucher, Clay McCartney, Carl Lieser, Tiffany Mika, SAM Paul Brooks

Absent – JoLynn Stewart, Bryant Matthes

Approval of Previous Month's Minutes/Secretary's Report

- October 2025 minutes accepted.
- Motion by Matt to approve October's minutes, 2nd by Carl. All approved.

Approval of 2025 Congregational Meeting Minutes

- 2025 Congregational Meeting minutes accepted.
- Motion by Matt to approve minutes, 2nd by Clay. All approved.

Financial Secretary's Report

- Carl submitted his October & November Accounting of Offerings reports.
- Motion by Suzanne to approve Carl's reports, 2nd by Matt. All approved.

Treasurer's Report

- Clay submitted his October & November reports. We are \$5,159.84 in the black.
- Motion by Matt to approve Clay's reports, 2nd by Carl. All approved.

President's Report

- Pam has completed Paul's evaluation form that we are required to do.

Vice-President's Report Nothing to Report

Discipleship Committee Report Nothing to Report

Property Committee Report

- Matt informed us that Bryant has a light ordered for the office and will get a hold of someone to install it.

Pastor's Report Nothing to Report

Other Committees/Announcements

- Annual reports are due by January 15, 2026.

Mutual Ministry/Transition Team/Call Committee Team

- Nothing to Report

Unfinished Business

- St. Luke's Constitution Review & Update
 - Council members are working on reviewing St. Luke's Constitution to return to Paul.
- Parking Lot Project Phase I
 - Matt will ask Bryant if the permit from the Village of NB has been issued.
 - Work won't be able to begin until next Spring now.
- Several large can openers have been collected for the food pantry. These can openers are quite larger than most can openers and geared to assist individuals that have trouble opening cans with the smaller can openers. One of these larger can openers will be left at St. Luke's for anyone in our congregation to look at and check out, and if anyone would like one, council will order additional if necessary.
- The remainder of the partitions will soon be taken down.

New Business

- Installation of new church council members – January 4, 2026.
- Everyone's council positions will remain the same and Tiffany will replace JoLynn on the Discipleship Committee. Same monthly meeting times - 2nd Sunday of the month after church.
- Parking Lot Renovation
 - Phase 1 – Spring 2026
 - Phase 2 – start obtaining estimates January/February 2026
- God's Work, Our Hands Projects for 2026
 - Pam mentioned some ideas and that everyone liked the Thanksgiving in a Bag and thought about having a Soup in a Bag project for this Winter.
- Vacation Bible School 2026
 - Paul will talk to Beth about getting in touch with the other area churches about a Winter meeting to start the discussion for VBS 2026.

Statistical Report

- Went over the statistical report for October & November.

Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned @ 12:55pm.
- Next council meeting – Sunday, January 11, 2026 @ 11:30am.

Minutes submitted by: Suzanne Bucher



LORD IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYERS,



WE GIVE THANKS FOR: each and every blessing of this past year; the Love that Advent brings and the anticipation of the coming birth of Jesus; the Joy that Advent brings and the anticipation of the coming birth of Jesus; the Peace of Advent, the peace that only God can give. Thanks be to God!

MEMBERS: Ruth McKee, Steve Pritts, Karen Krauss, Lisa Claybaugh, Bertha Carter, Eloise Matthes, Rose Marie Hosley, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wymer, John Stewart, JoLynn Stewart, Emily Meyerson, Carl Lieser, Jim Wymer, Kolton Williams, Ron Bean, Cheryl & John Kruse, Shirley Heilman, Larry Slaughterbeck, Bob Kelley, Caroline Lieser, Marilyn Ziegler, Barb Williams.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS: Diana, Nina, Sean Mills, Judy Sowards, Christina Webb, Mike, Riley Guy, Dennis Bauer, Anita Roberts, Amy Stewart, Nickie Whitman, Jo Mineo, Eli Swartz, Mr. Doherty, Ron Stewart, Chase, Cheryl, A.J., Mavery Breece, Caroline, Ethan, Brent Bradley, Richard Roberts, Michael Sullivan, Cindy.

CHERISH ALL CHILDREN: All of God's children, that we seek to protect and cherish their lives and futures, always staying focused on what is best for God's children.
www.cherishallchildren.org.

MILITARY: for all those serving in the military & their families; the chaplains (*especially those in combat zones*); grieving families and friends of those who died while serving.

COMPANION CHURCH: Mwanawotta Lutheran Church, of the Dodoma Diocese, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

WIDER CHURCH PRAYERS: 3.7 million baptized members, 9,320 congregations, all ministries of the ELCA (EvangeliCal Lutheran Church in America), our presiding **Bishop Elizabeth Eaton**, all our bishops, pastors, leaders, and 75,000 members in the 162 congregations of the NWOS (Northwestern Ohio Synod), **Bishop Daniel Beaudoin**, and our 15 Central Conference congregations.

THE WORLD: for peace in our country and around the world. For the end of violence against one another. For everyone to seek You and share Your love, grace, and mercy.

Prayer Requests

If you wish to update a prayer request on our list or to add new requests, please use the "My Prayer" cards in the pews and/or call or email Dana Bourne, Church Secretary (419-257-3253 StLukesNB@gmail.com). Thank you for your assistance in keeping our Prayer List up-to-date.



❖ Worship Ministries ❖

SUNDAY, January 4, 2026 Second Sunday of Christmas

Organist: Janet Goldner
Scripture Reader & Prayer Leader: Karen Krauss
Ushers: Nancy & Jim Wymer
Videographer: Beth Williams

SUNDAY, January 11 Epiphany/Baptism of our Lord

Organist: Janet Goldner
Scripture Reader & Prayer Leader: Pam Van Mooy
Ushers: Jace McCarney, Guy McCartney
Videographer: Beth Williams

SUNDAY, January 18

Organist: Janet Goldner
Scripture Reader & Prayer Leader: Tiffany Mika
Ushers: Pam & Rick Van Mooy
Videographer: Beth Williams

SUNDAY, January 25

Organist: Janet Goldner
Scripture Reader & Prayer Leader: Dwight Patterson
Ushers: Jill Guy, Zach Stewart
Videographer: Beth Williams

SUNDAY, February 1

Organist: Janet Goldner
Scripture Reader & Prayer Leader: Rick Van Mooy
Ushers: JoLynn & Don Stewart
Videographer: Beth Williams

SUNDAY, February 8

Organist: Janet Goldner
Scripture Reader & Prayer Leader: Janet Goldner
Ushers: Bryant Matthes, Matt Matthes
Videographer: Beth Williams

SUNDAY, February 15

Organist: Janet Goldner
Scripture Reader & Prayer Leader: Carl Lieser
Ushers: Nancy & Jim Wymer
Videographer: Beth Williams

SUNDAY, February 22 First Sunday of Lent

Organist: Janet Goldner
Scripture Reader & Prayer Leader: Tracey Pritts
Ushers: Jace McCartney, Guy McCartney
Videographer: Beth Williams

Altar Guild

January - Karen Krauss
February - Karen Krauss, Lorraine Ferguson

❖ Worship Gifts ❖

Altar Flowers

January 4 - Tiffany & Tom Mika
January 11 - [available for signup](#)
January 18 - [available for signup](#)
January 25 - [available for signup](#)
February 1 - [available for signup](#)
February 8 - [available for signup](#)

Altar Candles

January - Pam & Rick Van Mooy
February - [available for signup](#)

Sunday Bulletins

January - Pam & Rick Van Mooy
February - [available for signup](#)

Newsletter

January - Pam & Rick Van Mooy
February - [available for signup](#)



Ash Wednesday

Coming February 18, 2026
Lent begins February 22, 2026



January 2026



St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church, North Baltimore. Ohio

SUNDAY	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
<i>Christmas 2</i> 4 Worship 10:15	5	<i>Day of Epiphany</i> 6 Staff Meeting 10:00	7	8	9	10
<i>Baptism of Our Lord/ Epiphany</i> 11 Worship 10:15 Church Council 11:30	12	13 Staff Meeting 10:00	14	15	16 Church Office Closed	17
<i>Epiphany 2</i> 18 Worship 10:15	19 	20 Staff Meeting 10:00	21 FEBRUARY Newsletter Deadline	22	23	24
<i>Epiphany 3</i> 25 Worship 10:15	26	27 Staff Meeting 10:00	28	29	30	31

