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# ♥ First St. John Journal ♥

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Volume 39, Issue 2

February 2026

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*Here are a few thoughts and prayers  
for the month of February.*

### Starting with God

On Ash Wednesday we often ponder practices to do or habits to give up. Those are fine things, but they may cloud the fact that everything we have and all that we are come from God.

Without God, we would not be alive. Without Christ, we would not know forgiveness and eternal life. Without the Spirit, we would be alone in this world. Apart from God, nothing we know or take for granted would exist. This basic point is a fine start to Lent: All we have and know in life is a gift from God. We are not the masters of the universe.

Paul grasps this at the beginning of Romans. It leads him to name God and Jesus five times in two verses. It leads him to derive his and the Romans' identity from God in Christ, who sets them apart, calls them saints, extends them grace and peace, and calls them beloved.

Too often in life we act as if everything depends on us, and we miss the point. This Ash Wednesday, more than identifying things we hope to do (or *not* do), let's acknowledge our dependence on God and embrace Christ's invitation to follow him to the cross.

### Romans 1:1,7

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,...  
To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The goal of the Christian life is that for more and more seconds of each day, what we think and do and say is to God's glory, that every moment is worship of the true God instead of various idolatries of our making or of our cultures.

### Each Day Should Begin with a Prayer to Make Us Like Jesus

Almighty God, breathe into us the spirit of your Son that we may love the things that he loves and choose the things that he desires us to have. May the words we speak and the deeds we do be spoken and done in his name. Amen.

Jesus' life was full of healing and joy, friendship and shared meals, walking in nature and talking with people, pondering the meaning of life and of scripture, listening to others, embracing children, and even challenging the authorities that threatened to diminish communal life. He lived without fear and called everyone who followed him to do the same and to teach others this way of life. He meant it for us and for all people for all time.

### Prayer for a Kingdom of Love

Hasten the consummation of your kingdom in which love shall be the only king: that the love with which the Father hath loved may be in us, and we be made one in him. Amen

— *Pastor Rayl*

## LENTEN SERVICES



Ash Wednesday begins February 18<sup>th</sup> with services at 11:00 am and 7:00 pm in the church. We will continue our Lenten observance each Wednesday throughout Lent at 11:00 am and 7:00 pm in the church. Please join us on our Lenten journey.

## CHAPEL COMMUNION NOTICE

Our next Chapel Communion will be held on Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm in our chapel which is located on the second floor of the educational building. All our welcome to come!



## ELDERS FOR FEBRUARY

	<u>8:00 am</u>	<u>10:30 am</u>
1 <sup>st</sup>	John Roth Bob Haar	Kevin Ruedy Mike Winslow
8 <sup>th</sup>	Bill Nelson Matt Miller	John Roth Bob Haar
15 <sup>th</sup>	Ted Hagedorn Jeff Smith	Sherrie Haar Bob Haar
22 <sup>rd</sup>	John Roth Bob Haar	Kevin Ruedy Mike Winslow

**LIVESTREAM SERVICE WEEKLY** Did you know that you can watch a livestream of our 10:30 am Sunday Service? You can find it by visiting [www.firststjohn.com/LIVE](http://www.firststjohn.com/LIVE), or by using the Online Worship link in the middle of the home page or the top navigation ('Worship' then 'Online Worship') on any page.

## SOUPER BOWL OF CARING



Throughout January and February we will collect money and canned goods to help the Lutheran Social Services (LSS) Food Pantry program. LSS provides food for over 15,000 people each year. Every dollar you donate will go directly to purchase food for the pantry. This program is supported entirely by donations of food and money from local congregations.

A soup pot will be in the Narthex to collect monetary donations—pocket change, a dollar or two—to help keep this program going.

Also, shopping carts will be in the Narthex and other locations to collect canned goods and other non-perishables (no glass jars, please). Whatever you can do to help support this important ministry is greatly appreciated.



## FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

Both men and women are invited to our next breakfast fellowship on Saturday, February 14<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am. We will meet at the American Table restaurant off of Wheeling St in Oregon. Join us for devotions, good food, and fellowship! All our welcome!



## REMINDER FROM THE ALTAR GUILD

The sign up sheets for flowers to grace the altar can be found in the red flower book in back of the church under the main bulletin board. You can sign up for a Sunday or Sundays throughout the year. Flower vases are \$15 each; you can use an envelope out of the book for payment. Either place it in the small box on the wall next to the bulletin board, put it in the offering plate, or mail it to the church office. Can't make it to in-person worship? You can call the church office to request a date for flowers. Call Jessica (419-691-7222).



## MONTHLY MINISTRY OUTREACH

Our ministry outreach for February is the Lutheran Social Services Food Pantry. Special envelopes will be in the pews if you would like to donate to support this ministry. Please make your check out to First St. John and write "LSS Food Pantry" on the memo line, then place it in the offering plate or mail to the church. Thank you!

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## ADDRESS CHANGES/CORRECTIONS

To keep current information for office records, if your name, address or phone number changes, please notify the office by mailing this form to: 2471 Seaman St. Toledo, OH 43605 or e-mail us: [office@firststjohn.com](mailto:office@firststjohn.com)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_



## CIRCLE NEWS

**REBECCA CIRCLE** will meet on Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup> @ 11:30 am in the lounge.

**RUTH CIRCLE** will meet on February 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 11:00 am.

**MIRIAM CIRCLE** will meet on Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup> @ 9:30 am in the lounge.

**HANNAH CIRCLE** will not meet in February.

## WELCA NEWS

Happy February! Well, Did we get snow or not? Hope everyone stayed home and stayed safe.

The Board met at The Bag of Nails on January 11th, for our Christmas Luncheon. Four members were present. Thank you Board for the Kroger Gift Card.

The Board discussed upcoming Special Projects for the year. First, we are having a Plant Sale just in time for Mother's Day Gifts. Second, in the lounge in the late summer, will be Collectible Treasures, more details to follow. Third, our annual Spaghetti Dinner will be on October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

We are sorry to hear of the passing of one of our church family, John Schwegler, who went to be with his Heavenly Father on January 21<sup>st</sup>. Prayers to you Carol and your family.

Our next meeting will be on February 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm in the lounge. All women of First St, John are welcomed to join us! We would love to have your input.

Happy Valentine's Day to all.

~Sue Ann Rogers

## **2026 WELCA ROSTER**

The 2026 roster for the Women of the ELCA at First St. John is available. The roster contains a list of members in each circle, Altar Guild, and Bereavement Committee, along with a calendar of events.

Check the long table in the lounge for the completed roster.

## ***LENTEN & HOLY WEEK SERVICES***

Here is the schedule for our upcoming Lent services.



Feb 18 <sup>th</sup>	Ash Wednesday	11:00 am, 7:00 pm
Feb 25 <sup>th</sup>	Lenten Services	11:00 am, 7:00 pm
Mar 4 <sup>th</sup>	Lenten Services	11:00 am, 7:00 pm
Mar 11 <sup>th</sup>	Lenten Services	11:00 am, 7:00 pm
Mar 18 <sup>th</sup>	Lenten Services	11:00 am, 7:00 pm
Mar 25 <sup>th</sup>	Lenten Services	11:00 am, 7:00 pm
Mar 29 <sup>th</sup>	Palm Sunday	8:00 am, 10:30 am
April 2 <sup>th</sup>	Maundy Thursday	11:00 am, 7:00 pm
April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Good Friday	12:00 pm
April 5 <sup>th</sup>	Easter Sunday	8:00 am, 10:30 am

## **PERSONAL NEEDS PANTRY FEBRUARY FOCUS**

Our designated item in February is paper towels. Bins for collecting items are under the main board in the Narthex (the left pull-out bin) or the bright green bin in the lounge. Thank you for your help.



## **SPECIAL MUSIC FUND**

A special music fund was recently created specifically to support the talented musicians invited to play at our church. Money from this fund will be used at the discretion of Dr. Tony, our Church Musician, when securing guest musicians. To contribute, donate cash or checks made out to First St John Lutheran Church and simply indicate on your envelope and/or check memo line, that your contribution is to be directed to the Special Music Fund.

## ***ALTAR GUILD***

Our next Altar Guild meeting will be held Monday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 pm in the lounge.



## TIME FOR QUILTING!



The Quilting Group meets Mondays at 9:30 am in the lounge beginning January 5<sup>th</sup> and running through March. Most of the help needed involves tying layers of a quilt together (you just need to know how to tie a knot). Bring a sack lunch. If there is bad weather, they follow Oregon Schools for cancellations.

Many of the quilts will be donated to local charities. If you would like to sew quilting blocks at home or if you have any questions, please call Penny DeWitt at 419-215-1072 or Lore Warnke at 419-350-0940. If you would like a ride to and from quilting, please call Bob Haar at 419-250-9409. Thank you.

## MEMORIALS

### ENDOWMENT FUND

In memory of **Barb Meyers** by Gene Hagedorn.

### ALTAR GUILD

In memory of **Florence Partin** by Mary Hubaker.

### MEMORIAL FUND

In memory of **Barb Meyers** by Elaine Gladieux.

In memory of **Jeff Wilbarger** by Elaine Gladieux.

## INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

All newly elected and incumbent members of Church Council, Day School Board, WELCA, and Altar Guild should plan to attend church on Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup>. Officers will be installed during both church services as they begin their 2026 duties.

## OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR 2026

The assigned 2026 offering envelopes will soon be stored away. If you need to pick up yours still they will be available in the lounge for the next two Sundays.. **NOTE:** If you are new to the church and would like to receive offering envelopes, please contact Jessica in the church office at 419-691-7222. Thank you.

## WINSLOW SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS



This Winslow Scholarship helps graduating high school seniors of First St. John who will attend college for the 2026/2027 school year. The money comes from the proceeds of the David Winslow Memorial Golf outing that is held each summer and also donations from church members. If you have a graduating high school senior, please contact the church office for an application. You must return your application to the church office by Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup> to be considered.

## DAY SCHOOL NEWS

Winter is here. It may be cold outside, but the students of the Day School are full of energy and excited to be learning at school every day. This February we will have our Valentine's Day parties and prepare the children to learn about Lent.

Registration for the 2026-2027 Day School program has begun. The Registration Fee is waived for active members of the church, but you must still complete the Registration Form to reserve a spot for your child. The children must be at least 3 years old and potty trained. Our classes are from 9:00 am to noon, with extended care available from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm. We will also be having our Summer Child Care program for children ages 3-10 years old. The Day School will host summer camps each week with a different theme. Both children needing childcare and children looking for fun activities will be welcome.

On February 7<sup>th</sup>, the Day School will be hosting a Flapjack fundraiser at Applebee's in Northwood. Come join us and let the First St. John staff and Applebee's serve you a hearty breakfast of 3 pancakes (all-you-can-eat!), 2 slices of bacon & your choice of beverage (coffee, soda, tea, orange juice or milk). Tickets are \$10 per person (adult and child) and can be purchased in the Day School office, church office or on the Day School website. We appreciate your support. For more information, please visit the Day School website at [fsjdayschool.org](http://fsjdayschool.org) or contact Andrea Buckley at [fsjdayschool@firststjohn.com](mailto:fsjdayschool@firststjohn.com).

**First St. John Lutheran Church Prayer Chain**  
(as of January 30, 2026)

**Critical/New Prayer List:** For those who need prayers in urgent matters such as surgery, emergency medical care (ICU), etc. Will be moved to the Chronic list after the first month unless someone is contacted about special circumstances:

**Family of Craig Pym**  
**Family of John Schwegler**  
**Family of Antonio DeLeon**  
**Karen Bless**  
**Jill Cousino**  
**Deb Ackerman**  
**Duke Dawkins**  
**Lynn Brosius**  
**John Rowley**

**On-going Concerns Prayer List:** For those who need prayers for ongoing serious situations such as cancer treatments, medical struggles, recovery and/or personal situations. Will be moved off the list after 3 months unless someone is contacted about special/continuing circumstances:

Betty Anderson  
Peggy Burke  
Marjorie Counterman  
Olivia & Delaney Dawkins  
Diane Gerkenmeyer  
Bob Hecklinger  
Holly Henneman  
Gary Henningsen  
Mary Ellen Miller  
Danielle Riegler  
Connie Singlar  
Steve Welling  
LeAnn Winslow  
Raetta Zeisler  
Rita Riegler

Please check the list and let any of the prayer chain contacts know if individuals can be moved off the list.

**Prayer Chain Contacts**

Coordinator, Carol Abbey  
419-351-9795 or cabbeyrn@aol.com

Donna Koehn	419-705-9560
Darlene Lorenzen	419-351-6293
Gloria Ross	419-836-7166

**MEMBER UPDATES**

**Births**

None.

**Baptisms**

None.

**Marriages**

None.

**Deaths**

1-21-26                      John Schwegler

**Transfers to/from First St. John:**



**KROGER  
COMMUNITY  
REWARD  
PROGRAM**

Did you know you can support First St. John just by shopping at Kroger! This past quarter we earned \$65.70 in rewards donated to the church!

This program makes fundraising easy by donating to local organizations based on the shopping you do every day. Once you link your Kroger Card to an organization, all you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe or enter your Shopper's Card. Here's how it works:

1. Create or sign into your online rewards account on Kroger.com
2. Make sure your Kroger Reward Card account is attached to your online account.
3. Under the Kroger Community Rewards Screen, search for First St. John Lutheran, or enter the NPO # WM368.
4. Select the organization and click 'Save'. You are all set! The selected organization will now show on the Kroger Community Reward Page!

## NURSERY OPEN!

The church nursery is now available during the 10:30 am service. The nursery is in the church basement in the kindergarten classroom and will be staffed with 1-2 volunteers each week. Parents/Guardians can fill out a quick release form for children aged 5 and under and feel free to return to service. We will use text messages to communicate with you if a need arises (please keep phones on vibrate only so as not to disrupt service). For more information, or if you have any questions, please feel free to stop down during second service, or reach out to Darlene Paul. We are also still looking for a few more volunteers! Talk to Darlene or call the church office at 419-691-7222.



## ***FEBRUARY DARTBALL***

The Dartball Season continues with home games hosted in the gym. All game start at 7:30pm. Upcoming dates for February are:

**February 2<sup>nd</sup>:** 1st St. John #2 @ Trinity  
1st St. John #1 @ Prince of Peace

**February 16<sup>th</sup>:** 1st St. John #1 @ St. Mark  
1st St. John #2 @ St. Lucas

\*\*\*We will make up games that were cancelled on Monday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, due to the snow and frigid conditions on Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup>. Please add that date to your schedules.\*\*\*

Please mark your calendars. If any questions, reach out to Bill Nelson (419) 836-4165 or Bob Haar (419) 250-9409.

## **WEEKLY BULLETIN DEADLINE**



As a reminder, please try to submit all weekly bulletin announcements no later than **Wednesday** each week for the upcoming Sunday.

## SOCKS FOR SALEM



The Quilting group is collecting socks for Salem Lutheran Church's neighborhood ministries. They accept new or gently used socks for men, women, and children. Last time, we collected 179 pairs of socks! Collection box is in the lounge. Donations will be accepted through the end of February. Help us collect even more socks than last year this winter!

## **Toledo Lutheran Dartball Standings as of 2/3/26**

<b>Team</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>
St. Mark	20	7
St. Lucas	20	7
Trinity	16	11
Prince of Peace	14	13
1st St. John #2	12	15
1st St. John #1	11	16
St. Petri	9	18
Messiah	6	21