

Faith Notes

2576 Browncroft Blvd. Rochester, NY 14625 Office: (585)381-3970 faithpenfield.org

For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given.

Isaiah 9:6



**PLEASE JOIN US FOR
CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP ON DECEMBER 24**

3:00 P.M.

5:30 P.M.

7:30 P.M. W/ HOLY COMMUNION

**CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP W/ HOLY COMMUNION
ON DECEMBER 25**

10:00 A.M.

December Celebrations at Faith

FLY Ornament Fundraiser * December 7th

Gingerbread House Decorating * December 10th

Handel's Messiah * December 14th

Christmas Pageant * December 14th

Sunday Night FLY Christmas Party * December 14th

Nucor House Christmas Dinner * December 17th

FCCNS Christmas Worship * December 18th

L.I.F.T. Soup Supper/Caroling * December 19th

Sr FLY/Young Adult Progressive Dinner * December 21st

CONNECT * GROW * SERVE

Faith Lutheran Church Faith Child Care and Nursery School

2576 Browncroft Boulevard, Rochester, New York 14625-1530

Phone: (585) 381-3970

Phone: (585) 385-2360

Office Hours: Mon-Thur, 9am-4pm; Fri, 9am-12pm

Hours: 7:00am-5:30pm

Website: www.faithpenfield.org

Website: <https://faithpenfield.org/faith-child-care>

Church Staff and Faith Child Care Staff

PASTORAL and EDUCATION

PASTOR

Rev. Peter Johnson

ext. 16

flypenfield@gmail.com

Direct Line 485-0146

CHILDREN'S AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

Shannon Wolf - Interim Sunday

School Director

sundayschool@faithpenfield.org

Stephanie Johnson - Interim VBS

Director

vbs@faithpenfield.org

Taylor Saunders - Nursery

Dave Young - Temporary

Education Assistant

edassistant@faithpenfield.org

MUSIC

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC/ ORGANIST

Dianne Christensen

ext. 17

dianne@faithpenfield.org

DIRECTOR OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

Elizabeth Balentine

ext. 11

elizabeth@faithpenfield.org

OFFICE

CHURCH SECRETARY

Kris Cronk

ext. 10

secretary@faithpenfield.org

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Kay Gerlach

ext. 12

finance@faithpenfield.org

Direct Line 485-0142

FINANCE SUPPORT SPECIALIST

Beth Camann

ext. 18

supportadmin@faithpenfield.org

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS MANAGER

Kurt Finkbeiner

ext. 15

building@faithpenfield.org

DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL ARTS

Jason Gerlach

Ext. 13

livestream@faithpenfield.org

SOUND TECH LEAD

Michael Balentine

soundtech@faithpenfield.org

FCCNS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mari-Beth Schembri

381-3970 ext. 21

mbschembri@fccnschildcare.com

Direct Line 485-0151

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND
OPERATIONS

Lori Connolly

381-3970 ext. 20

laconnolly@fccnschildcare.com

Direct Line 485-0150



Traditional Worship---8:30 AM Sundays

In-House and Livestreamed

Contemporary Worship---10:45 AM Sundays

In-House and Livestreamed

Holy Communion Celebrated on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays

Christian Education Opportunities

Sunday School Classes (Age 3 through Grade 6), Sundays, 9:45-10:40am

Jr. FLY Confirmation (Youth in grades 7-8), Sundays, 9:45-10:40am

Sr. FLY Bible Class (Youth in grades 9-12), Sundays, 9:45-10:40am

Sunday Night FLY (Youth in grades 7-12), 2nd & 4th Sundays, 7-8:45pm

Adult Bible Study Class – Sundays, 9:45-10:40am

Pastor Peter's Perspective

**Adapted from Pastor's Introduction in Faith's 2025 Advent Booklet*

"From the manger newborn light
Shines in glory through the night.
Darkness there no more resides;
In this light faith now abides."

-7th Stanza of "Savior of the Nations, Come" (LSB #332)

The Johnson house is always illuminated at night throughout the year. We have LED lights placed in our front yard that project different colors on our house and magnolia tree. We can change the color of the lights with a click of a button on my phone and can even flash the lights whenever the Bills score a touchdown. We probably have the brightest house on the block... and that's okay.

The world needs more light, doesn't it? The darkness of this world creeps into the never-ending headlines from around the world. We notice the darkness in the broken relationships and burdens that weigh on our hearts. We feel it in our own fears, regrets, and anxieties; it's the kind of darkness that no LED light can drive away.

Yet into this dark world came the Light of the World, born in a Bethlehem stable, and who "shines in glory through the night." That's what this season of Advent proclaims: that in Christ, our Hope and Light, God has entered our darkness to bring His forgiveness, peace, and life. As we wait for Christ to arrive again on the Last Day, we wait in the glow of His promises. Christ's light shines through His Word and through us – His Church – as we reflect His love into a dark world.

So as we light the candles of the Advent wreath, we are reminded of the hope, peace, joy, and love that have been gifted to each of us from Jesus Christ our Light. *"In this light faith now abides."* May the Advent wreath and all the beautiful Christmas lights around town point you to an even brighter Light that is already shining in your heart: Jesus.

And all God's children said,
Amen!





FROM THE DESK OF PRESIDENT PINGEL

PRESIDENT OF THE LCMS EASTERN DISTRICT

Roseto, Pennsylvania. Its reputation: the healthiest town in America. At the center of that claim is an amazing story.

Many of the inhabitants of the town trace their ancestry to the village of Roseto Valfortore, located 100 miles southeast of Rome. The medieval village centers on a town square and a church named Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. Narrow stone steps run up the hillside flanked by rows of stone houses with red tile roofs. The major industry there: stone quarries, located in the surrounding hills. Villagers would walk 4 to 5 miles each way to work, down the mountain and back, leaving early and returning late.

In 1882, a group of 11 Rosetans set sail for New York City. They spent some time in what is known as “Little Italy,” and then travelled 90 miles west to a location near Bangor, Pennsylvania, in order to work in a slate quarry there.

The initial 11 immigrants were followed by 1,200 more Rosetans over the next few years. They bought land on the rocky hillside and built closely clustered stone houses resembling those they left behind in Italy, only with slate roofs. They also built a church near the center of town, naming it, predictably, “Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.” The church became the center of their social and spiritual life. The town thrived. The Rosetans planted grapes and made homemade wine. They opened bakeries and other small shops. For several decades, the inhabitants spoke mostly Italian, the exact dialect spoken back in Roseto Valliafore. They gathered regularly in social clubs and community centers. They worshiped and celebrated their holidays and holy days and significant events in each other’s lives. They rejoiced together and in times of death and misfortune they grieved together. It was evident that no matter what life brought their way, they were in this together, to love and support each other. No one would suffer alone, no one would live their life alone, no one would die alone.

So what made Roseto, Pennsylvania, remarkable? Simply put, rarely did anyone living in Roseto under the age of 65 get heart disease or die of a heart attack, in contrast to the surrounding towns. The medical community began to take note of this. A physician by the name of Stephen Wolf from the University of Oklahoma launched an investigation into the reason why. This was a time, by the way, before cholesterol lowering drugs and aggressive measures to prevent heart disease. He analyzed physicians’ records. He took medical histories. He studied their diet. In fact, the death rate in Roseto was ½ that of the United States as a whole. Medical clinicians were baffled. What would explain the medical miracle they were observing? Not only was heart disease almost non-existent—there was also hardly any suicide, drug and alcohol addiction, cancer, or ulcers. People simply died of old age. All the while, they ate sausages and pepperoni year round. A full 41% of their diet consisted of fat. Neither diet nor exercise explained their findings. No one ate yogurt or did yoga. Quite a few of the inhabitants, typical of that time period, smoked.

To make a long story short, the answer to the clinicians’ quest lay not in diet or exercise or the location of the town or genetic good fortune. The answer was Roseto itself. The Rosetans had maintained over the years an exceptional sense of community. People knew one another, and they visited with one another frequently. They stopped to chat on the street. They cooked with one another and ate meals with one another. They attended church together and met together in their 22 social clubs. The conclusion of the medical community was that the people of Roseto were exceptionally healthy not for any of the reasons normally associated with maintaining good health—but because of their sense of

community. Roseto was a place where people, in the truest sense of the term, “belonged” and were cared about.

Our churches are at their best when they reflect a sense of community, where people love and care for one another. Jesus says in John 13: 35, ‘By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if ye have love for one another.’ “See how they love one another” is a famous quote attributed to the early Christian writer Tertullian in the 3rd century, which in turn quotes pagans observing the early Christians. It refers to the remarkable love, unity, and charitable acts the early Christians displayed toward each other and those in need, which stood out in contrast to the surrounding Greco-Roman culture.

We live in a rather cold and indifferent age. People live next door to one another and never talk. They don’t know who their neighbors are. The medical community maintains that the isolation experienced by many takes its toll on us mentally, emotionally and physically. People self-isolate, and yet surveys show that people at the same time actually **crave** a sense of community. They **want** to belong. They want to be cared about and have an opportunity to care for others. They desire to be “connected,” --a desire which appears to have increased in the aftermath of Covid.

The church from its earliest days is described as a community—a community of faith and love, a place where we “bear one another’s burdens” (Galatians 6: 2), where people are “devoted to one another in love.” (Romans 12:2). Acts chapter 2 says that the early Christians “ate together with glad and generous hearts” and “provided for another as any had need.” They knew that the fellowship they enjoyed in the present would continue in eternity (Revelation 7: 9-17), which made it a pretty special thing.

Perhaps you are a small church. You may not have a lot in terms of programming. Sometimes leaders of small churches will say: “What do we have to offer?” My answer is: community. You offer a place where people can find a sense of community. Better still, in this community, at its center, stands the Savior, offering us forgiveness, life and salvation.

So plug in the coffee pot. And have your pot luck suppers. And gather as God gives you opportunity, with a door open to those outside. Invite others. Share the love of Christ. You can be someone’s spiritual Roseto, where people can experience the love of the Savior through you, and find spiritual health and healing in the name of Jesus.



For October

The ongoing operations of Faith rely entirely on the generosity of the congregation to provide the funding support for the ministries that are so important to us and the community in which we serve.

We give thanks to God for your gifts to the general operating fund. We experienced a 4% unfavorable variance in envelope giving for the month of October but were blessed with a year-to-date favorable budget variance of \$22,385 or 4%.

We encourage you to prayerfully consider how God is calling you to be a faithful steward of the many gifts He has given you. We deeply appreciate any way in which you choose to participate in and support the many ministries and outreach of Faith that allow us to continue to "Connect, Grow and Serve".

God reminds us in 1 Peter 4:10, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

FAITH'S STEWARDSHIP RESPONSE FOR PRIOR MONTH:

ENVELOPE GIVING					
October 2025	Voter Approved Budget	Actual	Variance from Budget	% Variance	Prior Year Actual
Monthly Total	\$46,000	\$44,239	(\$1,761)	-4%	\$44,004
Year-to-Date Total	\$543,000	\$565,385	\$22,385	4%	\$534,992

Music Ministry

Mark Your Calendars for A Chance to Hear Handel's *Messiah* in Church

On **December 14** at the **8:30 service**, our Choir, soloists, and a string orchestra will present a portion of the Advent section of Handel's *Messiah*, which has become a favorite musical work for many for this time of year. Georg Friedrich Handel was famous for his English oratorios as well as his church anthems. Some of his greatest choruses are found in his most popular oratorio, *Messiah*. The December 14 service will be structured around this Musical Presentation of the Word of God.

The lyrics for *Messiah* are direct quotes from the King James Version of the Bible, and the compilation of these texts is attributed to a friend of Handel's, Charles Jennens. The oratorio celebrates the life and work of Christ, and it is a musical depiction of the story of our faith. It is truly a monumental work that, when performed in its entirety, takes about 3 hours! On December 14, we will present just a small portion of it. To put what you will hear in context, here is an overview of the full oratorio. It is separated into three sections. Part I uses mostly Old Testament prophecy to tell of the birth of Christ and the peace he brought into the world. Part II tells of Christ's death and arrival in heaven, again mostly through Old Testament texts. The famous "Hallelujah" chorus, which closes the second part, quotes the book of Revelation to tell of Christ's triumph. Part III is all about Christ's future return. It tells how death has been vanquished and the "Lamb" is sitting on His throne for all eternity. Handel originally intended it to be performed in its entirety during Passion Week.

Handel wrote this famous oratorio in record time (about a month from start to completion) during a visit to Ireland in 1741. The first performance of *Messiah* took place in Dublin on April 13, 1742. The London premiere happened a year later on March 23, 1743. Both performances took place during Passion Week.

Later, during the late 18th century and continuing through the 19th century, it became common to see large scale choruses and orchestras in the performance of *Messiah*. In fact, a performance in London in 1859 for the Great Handel Commemoration Festival (the hundredth anniversary of his death) utilized a chorus of over 2700 members and an orchestra of 460 players. But the "Grand National Celebration of Peace" held in Boston in 1869 takes the cake. There were over 10,000 people in the chorus and 500 in the orchestra all taking part in the "Hallelujah" chorus!

These over-sized exhibitions were far from anything Handel ever conceived. The orchestras and choruses with which he worked were much smaller scale chamber groups with a balance between the voices and the instruments. Our choir will sing some of the choruses from Part I with a small group of strings with organ, which is maybe more in keeping with Handel's original intent.

We are looking forward to presenting some of this amazing music in worship. Come see how those familiar prophecies come alive with the beautiful music of Handel!



Adult Education



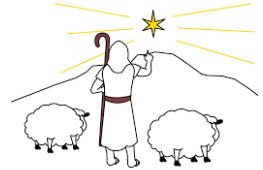
Nicene Creed Bible Class @ 9:45 - 11/23, 12/7 & 12/14

The Nicene creed is now 1700 years young as it was initially written in 325 A.D. We will study about the history and culture of the time, why it was written, the controversies that lead to its writing, and how and why it caused a split in the church. We will further look into why we use it today and its foundation for our faith.

God's Sign to the Shepherds Bible Class @ 9:45 - 12/21

Have you ever thought about why Luke 2 stated to uneducated shepherds 'and this will be a sign to you?' Weren't signs for the educated, those that could analyze life's patterns?

Come and learn how God speaks to each of us, even uneducated shepherds, so that we can understand and come to know him.



Please join us as Diane Van Auken facilitates these Adult Bible classes this month.

The Ladies Bible Study that met this fall on Tuesday afternoons was a wonderful time of learning the Word under the loving tutelage of Christie Pichan and Joanne Schultz.

Thank You

Everyone participated and felt loved and valued. It was a precious time among us to study, pray and become better acquainted.

Thank you Christie and Joanne for creating a warm spirit of sisterhood and friendship.

- Lois Ronnenberg

A Special Thank You!!

Thank you to Deb Alberty and Laurie Ebbecke for making the beautiful cover for our harpsichord! This cover is made of thick quilted material that will protect this delicate instrument when not in use. It is designed specifically for this harpsichord, form fitting the angles and shape of the instrument. You are invited to go to the balcony and take a look at it. Many thanks to Deb and Laurie!



Goings on at Faith

Prayer Shawl Ministry



Our next meeting will be on **Monday, December 8th** at 1:30 in Room 204. Marie Ferner, one of our prayer shawl ministry members, is very accomplished both in knitting and crocheting and would be happy to work with anyone who is interested in participating. If you would like a shawl, please contact the church office or Sue Hutchings. Prayer squares are available on the information desk in the concourse.

Men's Breakfast Group

Join us as we start the day together in fellowship!

When: **Tuesday, December 2nd @ 7am**

Where: **Browncroft Diner**, 2501 Browncroft Blvd, Rochester, Ny 14625



It is intended to gather men of all ages together at the beginning of the day. Whether you are on your way to work, enjoying retirement, dropping the kids off at school or just taking a mental health day, we all deal with a variety of stresses in this life. It is for that reason we are encouraging you to gather on the first Tuesday of each month from 7am to 8am, for a time of **fellowship, encouragement, a brief devotion and of course breakfast.**



SOLA – Strength of Living Alone

We will meet at 11:30 for lunch on **Friday, December 5th** at *The Cheesecake Factory, Pittsford Plaza*. Everyone will pay their own bill. Donna Kaser will send out an email to let you know the specific restaurant. We will need to know if you are coming so we can alert the restaurant and have enough seats for everyone. ***If you are interested, please email Donna to get on the contact list.*** If you have any questions or want more information please email Donna Kaser at dontshop@gmail.com or call or text 259-6488.

We will also be meeting for dinner on **Tuesday, December 16th** at 6:00pm at *Fairport Village Inn*, 103 N Main St, Fairport.

These are revised dates due to the Christmas Holiday.

We will be celebrating **New Year's Eve** with dinner out on December 31st. More information will follow.

The **L.I.F.T. 2026 Sign-Up Sheet** is now available in the concourse book, so don't hesitate to take a month in 2026 and plan the fellowship activity for that month (samples are listed on the sheet). It's a great way to get involved, learn about and support each other, and just have fun together. Some months are more popular, so sign up today!



December L.I.F.T.

L.I.F.T. Celebrates Christmas with a Soup Supper & Caroling at The Atria!

All are invited to join Faith's brothers and sisters in celebrating Christmas together on Friday, December 19, at 5:30 pm at the home of George & Jackie Kuipers at 2012 Five Mile Line Road, Penfield. Bring a snack, dinner item or dessert, and a White Elephant wrapped gift (under \$10). Please RSVP by December 14 to Jackie Kuipers at 585-383-9144 or yacominakuipers@gmail.com or sign up in the concourse book.

The Atria Adult Home is in their backyard, so there is plenty of parking in their lot.



Soup will be provided and guests can sign up to bring a snack, dinner item, or dessert.

- 5:00pm Soup and Potluck/Holdovers
- 7:00pm Caroling at The Atria
- 8:00pm Desserts & Fellowship

From the Mission Board

It is a busy time of year for Missions!!

Thank you to everyone who contributed, packed, and delivered Thanksgiving Baskets! We were able to fill 60 baskets for families in need in the community. Thank you for helping make this possible.

Thank you to everyone who filled a Christmas Child Box! The congregation filled 181 boxes this year. How excited the children in poverty stricken countries will be to feel Jesus' love and know that we are praying for them when they open their boxes from our members.



The annual **Angel Tree** project is well underway. Gifts will be going to Willow Domestic Violence Center, ESWA, Bethlehem Family Service, and Nucor House. Look for the Angel Tree table in the concourse. All gifts are due at Faith by 11am on Sunday, Dec 7th.

We will be hosting a **Dinner for the Veterans at Nucor House** on Wed. December 17th at 5:30. The theme will be "**Christmas with Barbeque**"! We are only looking for homemade Christmas Cookies to share with the Veterans this month. No time for food prep? A case of water is always appreciated! Please join us in sharing a meal and Christ's love with these Heroes who served our country so bravely!!



The Mission Board is looking for others to help continue and improve the long lasting mission of our church.

Please see Pastor Peter, Liz Wood or Chita McKinney if you want to chat about the Mission Board. Call, text or email!!

Mission's next meeting is Wednesday, December 3 at 6:30pm in the Community Room

Hebrews 10:24-25 *"And Let us consider how to stir of one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day drawing near."*





In order for worship to run smoothly we need participants to serve in different roles. We know life is busy, and that is why we have the Sign-Up Genius so that you can choose when you serve based on your schedule. If everyone signed up to help once per quarter in some way, our list would be overflowing with participants.

For **Lay Readers, Acolyte, Crucifer, Greeters, Communion Assistants** sign up here or the button on the homepage of our website:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0544afaf2eabfd0-worship1>

For all others:

Altar Guild: Preparing communion and the chancel area for worship.

Ushers: Greeting your Faith Family, handing out bulletins, and helping them get situated in the sanctuary as needed.

Livestream Producers: Running the worship services online every Sunday.

Joseph Guild: Maintaining, fixing & painting our beautiful church facility on a regular basis.

Gardeners: Weeding & maintaining Faith's gardens once or twice a month.

Stephen Ministry: Lay congregation members trained to provide one-to-one care to those experiencing a difficult time in life.

Prayer Shawl Ministry: Knit or Crochet prayer shawls for people needing comfort due to illness or personal issues in their lives. Meet with the group on the second Monday of the month at church and/or work at home to complete your projects.

Dorcas Group: Please bring your lunch and join us for some socializing and making of pillows, bears, walker bags and shirt savers. Everyone is welcome to join us the second Thursday of every month.

Visitation Team: Keeping in touch with and/or visiting our older members

Missions Team: Meet monthly to create and organize opportunities for Faith members to serve our community.

FCCNS: Looking for participants to rock babies, classroom readers, classroom project helpers, craft/basement organizer.

If you are able to assist in any of these areas, please contact Kris Cronk and she can direct you accordingly (381-3970 or secretary@faithpenfield.org)

Children's Ministry



Please join us for our annual Gingerbread House Decorating Night on **Wednesday, December 10th at 5:45pm**. All ages welcome! Pizza and salad dinner will be served at 5:45pm, followed by Gingerbread House decorating. We ask that each family contribute \$15/house and bring a bag of candy to share with others. Families are asked to sign up using the sign up book located in the concourse by December 1st to ensure we have enough houses for each family. Please contact Shannon Wolf or Donna Kaser with any questions.

The Christmas Pageant will be held on **December 14th** during the 10:45am service. Students in grades K-6th grade will be performing in the pageant. Rehearsals take place during Sunday School class, so please attend as many classes as possible from now through December 14th. Special thanks to Peggy Muller and Mari-Beth Schembri for their coordination of the pageant!

Kidz Konnect for 4th-6th graders will resume after the holidays.

Please note, there will be No Sunday School classes on December 21st or December 28th. There will also be no Kids Time during the month of December. Sunday School will resume on January 4th.

Wishing you all a happy and joyous holiday season!



FLY



Thank you..

- To all of our bakers, organizers, volunteers, and buyers at our Bake Sale last month! Over \$1,300 was raised for FLY and Lutheran World Relief! Thank you!
- To our amazing adult volunteers for leading our Jr. FLY Switch Party, Sunday Morning FLY, and Sunday Night FLY!
- To all students who baked cookies and created care packages for our FLY college students around the country!



FLY Ornament Sale – Nov. 30 & Dec. 7

Purchase your very own Faith ornament and hang it on your Christmas tree or gift it to someone you love! Each ornament was 3D printed by Faith member, Matt Bernhardt, and this year the ornament features the Faith logo. All proceeds from the sale benefit our youth attending FLY trips this year! Visit our table in the Concourse. Thanks for your support!

Sunday Night FLY “Christmas Party!” – Sunday, Dec. 14 @ 7-9pm

All 7th-12th grade students are invited to our huge Sunday Night FLY Christmas Party on Dec. 14! Wear your ugliest Christmas sweater (for a prize), bring a wrapped “White Elephant” gift (under \$10), and a canned good for our Food Drive! At our party, we’ll have an ugly sweater contest, exchange White Elephant gifts, and eat some Christmas cookies! It’ll be a fun way to celebrate the birth of Jesus! Bring all of your friends!



*About Sunday Night FLY (SNFLY):

Youth in grades 7-12 meet on the 2nd & 4th Sundays of the month from 7-8:45pm in the FLY Room from Sept-June! We worship together, read God’s Word, talk in small groups, play large group games, eat lots of food, and more! The nightly topics are always relevant for teens as we grow together in our relationships with God & others. The FLY Café is open from 6:15-9 where youth can purchase candy, soda, t-shirts, and other FLY merch. (Popcorn is always FREE!) Spin the Birthday Wheel for a fun birthday surprise! The Nintendo Switch, air hockey, and foosball games can be played before and after Sunday Night FLY. Friends are always welcome! *Come early at 6:15pm for dinner and games!

Jr. FLY Confirmation Class – Sundays @ 9:45-10:40am

7th & 8th grade students are journeying through Luther’s Small Catechism on Sundays with Pastor Peter in Room 204.

Sunday Morning Sr. FLY Class – Sundays @ 9:45-10:40am

High school students are invited to check out the Sunday Morning Sr. FLY Class this year in the FLY Room, as we're connecting Biblical truths to topics that are relevant to you. Our Youth Advisors and FLY Interns are leading the class.

Small Group for FLY Parents

Parenting teenagers is an adventure! Sometimes it can feel like no-one else understands the highs and lows of this adventure. BUT, you are not alone! Other FLY parents want to support and walk alongside you! Come attend our small group on the first Sunday of the month at 9:45am in the Community Room. If you're interested in joining, feel free to talk to Cris Alello!

Sr. FLY & Young Adult Progressive Dinner – Dec. 21

Come and enjoy a 3-course meal at three different locations while caroling in between at nursing homes! High school youth and young adults are invited to this fun event! Everyone can wear fun Christmas sweaters & hats and bring a dessert! If you can drive between places, please let Pastor Peter or Mari-Beth know ASAP. Many thanks to our hosts!

Progressive Dinner Schedule

3pm – Appetizers @ Mari-Beth Schembri's Home (99 Panorama Trail)

4pm – Caroling

5pm – Entrée @ Kuiper's Home (2012 Five Mile Line Rd)

6pm – Caroling

7pm – Desserts @ Faith (2576 Browncroft Blvd) – ending around 8:30pm

Coffee House Performers Needed!

Starting Dec. 7th, sign-up to perform on stage during our **33rd Annual Coffee House on Jan. 30!** We are looking for singers, musicians, dancers, bands, ensembles, and comedians to share their God-given talents at this fun variety show! Performers can perform 2 songs or up to 10 min. *The sign-up will be posted on the FLY bulletin board on Dec. 7th through Dec. 21st. The sign-up fills up FAST! Please talk to Pastor Peter if you have any questions about this FUN and entertaining variety show. Thank you!

**Online Contact Form/Activity Participation Agreement**

Our church's insurance company asks every youth to complete the following online form to participate in FLY activities on our church property this school year. We also included some questions about the type of activities and topics you'd like FLY to cover this coming year.

<https://faithpenfield.org/resources-forms>.

JOIN FLY's Text-based Communication Service!

Sign-up to receive reminders, announcements, and other info about upcoming FLY events right to your Remind App here: <https://www.remind.com/join> and join this class: [flyouth](#).

Mark Your Calendars...

Jan. 11 – Welcome our DCE Intern: Ella Gilzean!

Jan. 11 – Sunday Night FLY "Improv Comedy Night"

Jan. 25 – Sunday Night FLY "REMIX"

Jan. 28 – Setup stage & lights for Coffee House

Jan. 30 – COFFEE HOUSE!

Check out our FLY webpage at: <https://faithpenfield.org/youth/>



Check us out on YouTube!

You can watch hilarious Coffee House videos, FLY promos, and more on our YouTube page?!

www.youtube.com/faithlutheranyouth



Connect with FLY on Facebook! Join our group today!

Search for "Faith Lutheran Youth (FLY)" on Facebook or type out this link...

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/flypenfield/>



Follow FLY on Instagram!

<https://www.instagram.com/flypenfield/>



DECK THE HALLS WITH 2 FLY CHRISTMAS PARTIES!

SUNDAY NIGHT FLY CHRISTMAS PARTY!
7-9PM - SUN, DEC. 14TH
FOR GRADES 7-12
WEAR AN UGLY SWEATER,
BRING CANNED GOODS FOR OUR FOOD DRIVE
& BRING A WRAPPED \$10 WHITE ELEPHANT GIFT!

PROGRESSIVE DINNER!
3-8:30PM - SUN, DEC. 21ST
FOR GRADES 9-12 & YOUNG ADULTS
3PM - APPETIZERS
@ MARI-BETH'S: 99 PANORAMA TRAIL
5PM - ENTREE
@ KUIPER'S: 2012 FIVE MILE LINE RD.
7PM - DESSERTS & GAMES
@ FAITH: 2576 BROWNCROFT BLVD.
BRING A DESSERT
& SING CAROLS @ NURSING HOMES
IN-BETWEEN COURSES!

CONTACT PASTOR PETER JOHNSON FOR MORE INFO: FLYPENFIELD@GMAIL.COM

Faith Child Care and Nursery School (FCCNS)

"Where your child can grow in body, mind and spirit"

Our Themes for December are Jesus and Christmas. We will also be working on our Numbers 7 & 8; Letters H, I and J; The Concept of Quantity; The Color Yellow; and The Star Shape. Our Faith Character words for the month will be Sign, Angel, Savior, Star, and Food. Our Bible Stories will be Birth of Jesus Foretold, The Birth of Jesus, The Visit of The Wise Men, and God Gives His People Food. Our Character Word is Generosity.

There are a few special activities we will be having in December:



- United Way's Roc the Day - December 2nd
- Christmas Worship Celebration - Thursday, December 18th @ 4pm
- Center Wide PJ Day and Christmas Party - December 23rd
- FCCNS will be **CLOSED** on December 24th, 25th, and January 1st
- FCCNS will Open **LATE** December 26th @ 9am; and Close **EARLY** on December 31st

The Best Story Ever Told

I've been part of my fair share of Christmas pageants — first as a child (right here at Faith) and later helping direct them for most of my adult life. My niece once played Mary, and all my nephews have taken turns as baby Jesus at some point in their infancy.

Here at FCCNS, our Christmas Worship Celebration includes a retelling of the Nativity story through Scripture and song. Why do we do this? Because it's *the best story ever told* — and it needs to be shared. And when children are involved, you never quite know what to expect. One year, the boy playing Joseph held my nephew, Chance, up in the air like Simba from *The Lion King*. Every mother in the audience gasped as baby "Jesus" was lifted six feet high, little feet dangling! Then there are those kids who love the spotlight, singing with such joy and volume that they might just rival the angels on that first holy night. It all makes for a wonderfully imperfect and deeply memorable pageant.



When I was younger, there was a book published in 1972 called *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* by Barbara Robinson. It was later made into a movie in the 1980s. The story takes place in a town obsessed with having the *perfect* Christmas — especially when it comes to their annual church pageant. Enter the Herdmans: six of the most unruly kids imaginable. They take over the pageant, and in doing so, completely change the town's understanding of Christmas and compassion. The Herdman children didn't look the part, but their portrayal of the Nativity makes us all reflect on that first Christmas night — when nothing was perfect except the baby in the manger. That perfect baby grew up to be our Savior, and *He* is the reason we celebrate. Not the decorations, the feast, or the perfectly trimmed tree, but the man who would one day choose to die on a tree — for you and for me.

This year, you are invited to two special opportunities to see the children of Faith and FCCNS share the Christmas story:

- **Sunday, December 14th at 10:45 a.m.**
- **Thursday, December 18th at 4:00 p.m.**

I can guarantee it won't be perfect — but then again, it doesn't need to be. Because *He* is, and that's all we need. Merry Christmas!

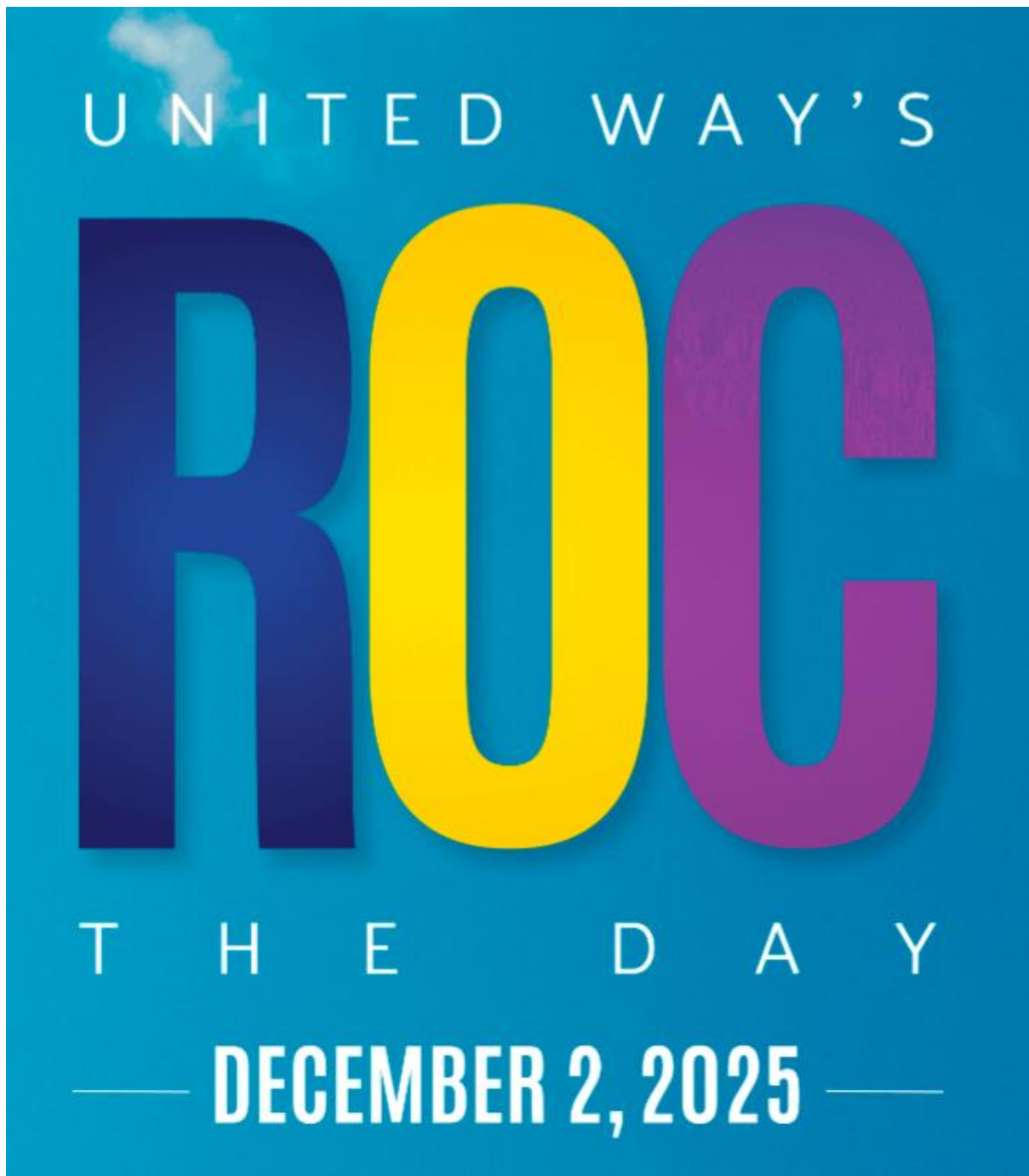
Support Faith Child Care and Nursery School for ROC the Day on 12/2/25.

All donations go toward our Tuition Assistance Program to help families in need.

Donate using the link below:

<https://roctheday.org/FCCNS>

FCCNS United Way #1523



Faith Child Care & Nursery School
Year to Date Income & Expenses Compared to Budget
As of 10/31/2025

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Fav/(Unfav) Variance	Prior YTD	Board Approved 2025 Budget
Operating Income					
Fees	771,141	769,085	2,056	791,757	924,830
Interest/Misc./Other	29,718	26,880	2,838	45,153	31,433
Total Operating Income	<u>800,859</u>	<u>795,965</u>	<u>4,894</u>	<u>836,910</u>	<u>956,263</u>
Expenses:					
Program	39,047	40,796	1,749	37,163	47,586
Employee Related	655,841	680,553	24,712	667,771	816,088
Property & Equipment	54,834	57,232	2,398	49,017	67,840
Supplies	12,538	11,700	(838)	10,683	14,000
Operating Expenses	<u>762,260</u>	<u>790,281</u>	<u>28,021</u>	<u>764,635</u>	<u>945,514</u>
Net Operating Income (Loss)	<u>38,599</u>	<u>5,684</u>	<u>32,915</u>	<u>72,275</u>	<u>10,749</u>

End of October Enrollment 69 children

HOW TO REDUCE TAXABLE INCOME WITH A QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTION

Updated for 2025



In an effort to help you be a good steward of the gifts God has given you, we would like to share a strategy that could be a blessing to you, your family, and our Faith family.

The generous standard deduction available for the current tax year is welcomed by many as it will simplify filing and could even reduce your tax bill. Even if you take the standard deduction, however, there is a tax-savvy strategy that allows retirees to further reduce their tax liability by taking advantage of qualified charitable distributions (QCDs) from their individual retirement accounts. This charitable rollover provision allows IRA owners 70 ½ years or older to transfer up to **\$108,000** for 2025 **directly** from their IRA to one or more qualified charities, without that donation being counted as taxable income when it is withdrawn. That's up from \$105,000 in 2024. Married couples can each donate up to their individual annual limit.

For those age 73 or older, these qualified charitable distributions count as part of the person's required minimum distributions from the IRA account.

Please consult your tax adviser and IRA trustee to make sure that you meet the qualifications to take advantage of this provision and that the distribution is properly processed.

If you would like to make a qualified charitable distribution to Faith Lutheran Church, please instruct your IRA trustee or custodian to make a transfer from the IRA **directly** to Faith Lutheran Church as the payee on the check. You may also have the distribution transferred **directly** from your IRA account to Faith Lutheran Church's checking account by contacting Kay Gerlach in the church office at **485-0412 or finance@faithpenfield.org** for the necessary information. Your donation will be credited to support the unified budget of Faith Lutheran Church unless you designate otherwise via written communication to either Kay Gerlach, Director of Finance, or Kris Cronk, Church Secretary.

Please know that we sincerely appreciate any gift you make to support the ministry and mission of Faith Lutheran Church. We are so blessed that God provides so many ways for us to be a part of His work here on earth! May your gifts serve as a reminder that God provides all that you have and has given to us His greatest gift of all – His Son, Jesus who gave His very life for you!

Faith Lutheran Church
Year to Date Income & Expenses Compared to Budget
10/31/2025

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Fav/(Unfav) Variance	Prior YTD	Voter Approved 2025 Budget
Operating Income					
Envelope Offering	565,386	543,000	22,386	534,992	680,000
Plate Cash	8,007	5,500	2,507	5,864	8,000
FCCNS Facility Cost Sharing	23,333	23,333	0	20,833	28,000
Fund Distribution-Endowment	0	0	0	0	8,000
Interest/Misc./Other	16,902	10,550	6,352	12,433	12,500
Total Operating Income	613,628	582,383	31,245	574,123	736,500
Expenses:					
Education	12,604	18,650	6,046	16,906	20,300
Employee Related	352,949	359,066	6,117	311,105	432,728
Mission & Outreach	57,240	57,017	(223)	53,113	68,800
Music	4,542	6,025	1,483	4,497	7,675
Other Expense	10,111	11,417	1,306	7,015	12,750
Property	135,573	129,011	(6,562)	123,330	153,325
Supplies	24,023	25,799	1,776	24,687	31,295
Operating Expenses	597,042	606,984	9,942	540,652	726,873
Net Operating Income (Loss)	16,586	(24,601)	41,187	33,471	9,627
Employee Retention Credit	512,616	0	512,616	0	
ERC Funds Expenses	(6,850)	0	(6,850)	0	
Net Surplus (Deficit)	522,352	(24,601)	546,953	33,471	9,627

GIVING AT FAITH

At Faith Lutheran, giving is something we do with a spirit of joy in response to the love and forgiveness we have freely received in Jesus. "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver," (2 Corinthians 9:7). Your gift blesses Faith's continued mission to "seek and save the lost," (Luke 19:10).

There are a number of ways you can choose to give to the many ministries and outreach efforts at Faith.

(Please contact Kay Gerlach, Director of Finance, at finance@faithpenfield.org or 485-0142 if you have any questions.)

1) TEXT GIVING:

Simply enter Faith Lutheran Church's own dedicated number which is **833-958-1685**, enter the amount of your gift as your text message, press send and follow the remaining easy steps to make your secure one-time or recurring contribution.

2) ONLINE GIVING:

Visit Faith's website at www.faitnpenfield.org. Click the GIVING button on the top menu and then the "Start Giving" button. A secure webpage powered by Vanco Payment Solutions will open and provide instructions and giving options for your gifts to Faith. You will be given the opportunity to create an online account, if desired. ***NEW*** Online users can now log in to their account, view Scheduled Transaction and click Edit to make changes.

3) VANCO PAYMENT SOLUTIONS (previously SIMPLY GIVING):

If you originally set up your Vanco electronic giving account through the church office, any changes must be made through the church office. If you prefer to manage your electronic giving, contact the church office to cancel any scheduled transactions. You would then follow the Online Giving instructions in item (2) above to create an account and manage your electronic giving at your convenience. Please contact Kay Gerlach in the church office if you have any questions or need assistance.

4) ENVELOPE GIVING:

Our traditional method of receiving a box of offering envelopes for the year which allows you to mail your offering to the church office at 2576 Browncroft Blvd, Rochester, NY 14625 or place it in the collection plate during our worship service.

5) GIFT OF STOCK OR IRA QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTION

Both of these methods of gift giving offer additional tax advantages that can best be explained by your tax advisor or IRA trustee. Please contact Kay Gerlach directly at 485-0142 for assistance on how to make these types of contributions.

Endowment Fund:

The Faith Lutheran Church Permanent Endowment Fund was established in 2004 to provide members and friends the opportunity to make charitable gifts to Faith that will become a permanent endowment providing financial support for the ministry and mission of the Church. The custodian for the Faith Lutheran Church endowment fund brokerage account is Charles Schwab & Co, Inc. If you would like to make a contribution to this fund, please contact Kay Gerlach directly at 485-0142 or finance@faithpenfield.org for assistance.

2025 Christmas Poinsettia Order Form



Help Beautify Our Church for Christmas

Red poinsettias will again decorate the church (altar area and windows) and the poinsettia tree. If you would like to purchase a poinsettia, please fill out and return the form below. Each 6" plant (5-7 blooms) costs \$9.00 and will be in a foil-covered pot. There will be a list of dedications published in the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day worship bulletins. Checks may be made payable to Faith Lutheran Church. Please note "poinsettia" in the memo section.

Name(s):

Please **print** your dedication(s) below:

No. Plants x \$9.00 = \$ Amount Due

☐ Check the box if you would like to take your plant(s) home after worship on Christmas Day.

DEADLINE FOR ORDERING IS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7

*******Please return completed forms to the church office******

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PLEASE KEEP THIS PORTION FOR YOUR RECORDS.

Purchases will appear on your Contribution Statement as "Christmas Poinsettias".

2024 Christmas Poinsettias No. of Plants Amount Given \$

From the Church Office

Faith Leadership Board Officers

Chair – Russ Hignett

Vice Chair – Bruce Oaks

Secretary – Nancy Alvut

Treasurer – Beth Bird

Nominating Committee Reps – Karoline Trojjan, Greg Gerbasi, Amanda Ebbecke, Bill Mosko



Altar Flowers Form: Help beautify our sanctuary on a Sunday morning by giving altar flowers in honor or memory of a loved one. We will be utilizing silk altar flowers unless someone orders fresh flowers for a Dedication. Any orders need to be in to the Church Office by the end of the **3rd week** each month for the following month.

* Either complete a new online form and pay the \$75 fee at our online giving page here:

<https://faithpenfield.org/resources-forms>

* Or contact Kris Cronk (secretary@faithpenfield.org) and send a check to the Church Office made out to "Faith Lutheran Church" and Altar Flowers in the memo line.

* Or Utilize the sign-up book on the Information Center in the concourse and followup with a check made out to "Faith Lutheran" Church with Altar Flowers in the memo line

Announcement Request Form:

If you have an announcement that you'd like to include in our bulletin announcements or monthly newsletter "Faith Notes." Please submit an Announcement Form either in the Church Office or online here: <https://faithpenfield.org/resources-form>

This form will help us streamline our communications within our congregation and to our community. Thanks for understanding! Please contact the Church Office if you have any questions.

January Faith Notes Articles due Friday, December 19th and should be directed to our Church Secretary, Kris Cronk (secretary@faithpenfield.org). Thank you!



For all our friends who in so many ways expressed kindness after our sad loss, thank you. We will miss Dan but know we will one day be together again.

- Ruth Behnfeldt and family

Called to Glory:

- **Vanmany Banks** (10/30/25), niece of Valerie Ruoff
- **Daniel Behnfeldt** (11/1/25), son of Ruth Behnfeldt, brother of Carla Behnfeldt
- **Claire McLean** (11/5/25), grandmother of Ryan McLean
- **Pat Coleman** (11/10/25), mother-in-law of Donna Kaser's sister, Judy Dalles
- **Mark Niemeir** (11/10/25), nephew of Wayne & Bonnie Samuels
- **Kevin Long** (11/10/25), lifelong friend of the Gerbasi Family
- **Talon Gracioso** (11/14/25), classmate of Mackenzie Hoad who died tragically

Birthdays








1	Perry Duckles	11	Rory Bernhardt	21	Tom Hammond
2	Macie Hardisky		Jackson Coles		Lisa Sykes
	TJ McEwen		Julia Cummings	22	Todd Natemeier
3	Jack Bittner		Ray Hutch	23	Ryan Ledermann
	Sandra VanHorn	13	Michael Hanss	24	Catherine Saresky
5	Stacy Ledermann		Debra Kime	25	Guy Brown
6	Jeffrey Bartocci	15	Gaylord Leinenbach	26	Daniel Kleine
	Allison Vogl	16	Cole Nadritch		Jennifer Wilson
9	Benjamin Hammond	17	William Krenzer	27	Emily McLean
	Benjamin Kleine	19	Patrick Sullivan	29	Josh Doty
			David Young		Peter Johnson
		20	Lori Davis	30	Timothy Burke
			McKayla Nolan		Valerie Ruoff
				31	Brianna Tindall



Wedding Anniversaries

3	Thomas & Suzanne Hutchings	20	Martin & Lauren Launer
5	Yegor & Tara Vasilenko	23	Matt & Debra Kime
12	David & Mary Schutte	24	William & Marguerite McKee
	Greg & Elizabeth Young	27	Ray & Elizabeth McLean
14	Russell Hignett & Carrie Steiner	31	Fred & Carol Keeler
17	Donald & Peggy Muller		

December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 10:00am Embroidery Guild (Rm204) 6:30pm Grief Share (CmRm) 7:00pm Lyric Chorale (Aud) 7:00pm FCCNS BOD (Rm204)	2 7:00am Men's Breakfast (Browncroft Diner) 10:00am FLC Bowling Lgwe 10:30am FCCNS Chapel 1:00pm Worship @ The Addison	3 10:00am Church Staff 6:30pm Missions (CmRm) 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal (Music Rm)	4 6:00pm Girl Scouts (CmRm) 7:00pm FLY Youth Advisor Mtg	5 11:30am SOLA Lunch @ <i>Cheesecake Factory</i> 3:00pm Mrs. Lal's String Recital (CmRm)	6 9:00am Fall Clean Up
7 FLY Ornament Fundraiser 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:45am *Education Hour 9:45am FLY Parents Small Group 10:45am Contemporary Worship <i>Couture Baptism</i> 3:00pm Balentine Studio Recital (Sanc) 6:00pm Faith Connections (CmRm)	8 1:30pm Prayer Shawl (CmRm)	9 10:00am FLC Bowling Lgwe 10:30am FCCNS Chapel 4:00pm Stephen Ministry (CmRm)	10 10:00am Church Staff 5:45pm Gingerbread Decorating (Aud/Rm202)  7:15pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanc)	11 9:30am Property Board (CmRm) 5:45pm FCCNS Staff Christmas Party 	12 10:00am Keepers of the Cupboard (CmRm)	13 1:00pm Fiddlers Rehearsal (MusicRm) 3:00pm Thayer Studio Recital (Sanc)
14 Christmas Pageant 8:30am The Messiah / Traditional Worship 9:45am *Education Hour 10:45am Christmas Pageant / Contemporary Worship 7:00pm Sunday Night FLY "Christmas Party"	15 8:00am Joseph Guild 10:00am Flower City Rug Hook Group (Kuipers)	16 10:00am FLC Bowling Lgwe 10:30am FCCNS Chapel 6:00pm SOLA Dinner @ <i>The Fairport Inn</i>	17 10:00am Church Staff 5:30pm Nucor House 5:45pm Girl Scouts (CmRm) 6:30pm Girl Scout Mgrs (Rm204) 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal (Music Rm)	18 4:00pm FCCNS Christmas Worship Celebration (Sanc) 	19 5:30pm LIFT Event Dinner/Caroling @Kuipers 	20
21 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:45am *Education Hour 10:45am Contemporary Worship <i>Lazzaro Baptism</i> 3:00pm Sr FLY & Young Adult Progressive Dinner	22	23 10:00am FLC Bowling Lgwe 10:30am FCCNS Chapel	24 Christmas Eve Church Office Closed at 12 FCCNS Closed 3:00pm Contemporary Worship 5:30pm Traditional Worship 7:30pm Traditional Worship w/ Communion	25 Christmas Day Church Office/FCCNS Closed 10:00am Christmas Worship 	26 Church Office Closed	27
28 9:30am Combined Worship (Sanc) 	29	30 10:00am FLC Bowling Lgwe 10:30am FCCNS Chapel	31 New Year's Eve FCCNS Closes @ 4pm Church Office closed at 12 			*Education Hour 9:45 Adult Bible Class (Aud) Children Sunday School (locations on bulletin board) Jr FLY (Room 204) Sr FLY (FLY Room)

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
2576 Browncroft Blvd
Rochester NY 14625-1530

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED