

Faith Lutheran News

Celebrate Your Baptism

January, 2026 Page 1

Faith Lutheran Church

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Faith Lutheran Church, Murphys

Pastor Karen Johnson

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Office Hours:

Contact Pastor for an appointment

Tuesday and Wednesday

Church Council

President: Kathleen Walsh

Vice President: Wayne Earthman

Treasurer: Susi Lewis

Financial Secretary: Loretta

Soracco

Secretary: Carol Lagomarsino

Worship & Music: Kaarn Egge

Westerhoff

Property Chairperson:

KC Anderson

Newsletter Editor: Kaarn Egge

Westerhoff

Congregational Meeting – February 1, 2026

Faith Lutheran Church will hold its Annual Congregational Meeting “Part 1” on Sunday, February 1, immediately following worship. The business will be to adopt the budget for 2026 and to elect a nominating committee that will bring council nominees to the Annual Meeting “Part 2” in May. Please plan to join us for this important time of looking forward.

Pastor’s Message

“This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:17)

Happy New Year, beloved Siblings in Christ!

Christmas Eve in Murphys was a “dark and stormy night,” with heavy rains and strong winds. But inside at Faith Lutheran, many families, friends, and neighbors gathered in the beautifully decorated worship space to sing carols and light candles against the darkness. Thank you to everyone who served in so many ways, up front and behind the scenes, to make this a warm, welcoming, and, I hope, meaningful celebration of Jesus’ birth.

In worship this month, the twelve days of Christmas are the bridge from the old year to the new, as we continue to contemplate the Word of God made flesh coming into our lives. Although we won’t have a service that day, the Feast of Epiphany caps the Christmas season on January 6, with the showing forth of Christ as the Savior of the world by the star of Bethlehem and the visit of the magi. On the first Sunday after Epiphany, we observe the Baptism of Our Lord, who was baptized alongside us sinners as “one of us.” The time after Epiphany is a “green season” of discipleship, inviting us to consider how we share this good news of great joy, that Christ is dwelling among us. Time after Epiphany ends on Transfiguration Sunday, Feb. 15.

The New Year feels like grace – a fresh start, with open possibilities, a time for setting plans and priorities. Faith Lutheran will hold a semi-annual congregational meeting after worship on February 1, to adopt the budget for 2026. Please plan to join us for this important time of considering our ministries for the coming year – how we might be a “strategically small church,” faithfully committed to worship, discipleship, and service in ways that are appropriate to our size and the resources we have, without apology or regret. What priorities we will focus on? What is God calling us to **do** and to **be** as the body of Christ in this time? What support will we need? One exciting event coming in 2026: Bishop Jeff



Johnson is scheduled to visit us on Sunday, April 19! How do we want to welcome him?

Dave and I invite you to our annual winter open house on Friday January 9, our small way of saying thank you to all of you. I hope many of you will be able to stop by. ***Our gate code for visitors is 3278.***

As this new year begins, I am filled with gratitude for the grace of God that has called me to serve among you as your pastor, and I give thanks for each of you and your faithfulness in worship, your generosity in time, energy, and finances, and all the ways that you serve. Thank you for allowing me the time off after Christmas so we could go see our sons, and also for the generous love gift given to me. You are wonderful people! May the grace and truth of Jesus our Savior shine forth brightly in your life this year, and guide you in the way of hope and peace.

In Christ and his love,

Pastor Karen



Thank you to

...to everyone who decorated the sanctuary, set up and decorated the tree, cleaned up the yard, brought poinsettias, brought fellowship, helped in the office, and helped in worship services for Advent and Christmas! Everything was taken care of beautifully this season!

...to Kaarn for putting together and publicizing the "Second Annual" Christmas Carol Sing-along during Advent. We had a good turnout of members and neighbors, and great joy in singing together, with nice fellowship afterwards. Thank you to Sherie Marsh, our excellent guest pianist!

...to Kathy and Leslie for leading the Carols and Lessons on the First Sunday of Christmas.

...to Song Croyle, who has been our pianist for six years now!

Help take down the
Christmas Tree
On Saturday
January 10th at 10:00 AM

You are invited!

Mid-Winter Open House – Friday, January

9, ~3-7 pm

*Stop in any time for appetizers, fellowship,
and Danish æbleskiver!*

At Pr. Karen and Dave Johnson's home:
707 Forest Meadows Drive – **Gate code: 3278**



Taize Service – January 14 at Open Door

Open Door United Church of Christ, Murphys (formerly First Congregational Church) invites us to a Taizé contemplative service on Wednesday January 14, at 5:30 PM. This service includes simple music, readings, and silent time for reflection. Watch for details in the Sunday announcements.

Council meeting – Tuesday, January 20 2:00 PM, in the narthex.

Bible Study – Wednesdays at 3:00 PM,

Our weekly study looking at the lessons for the Sunday coming up will resume beginning **Wednesday January 7**. What do we notice in our readings? What do we wonder about? This kind of study helps us to get more out of the readings as we hear them on Sunday... and your insights could make it into the sermon, so that you will be part of the ministry of proclaiming the good news of God in Jesus Christ! Join us any time.

Breakfast Fellowship – Tuesdays

You are invited to gather with Faith folks for breakfast each week, **Tuesdays at 8 AM, at Grounds**. Hope to see you there for this time of food, fellowship, and faith. Check with Rob if you are coming for the first time, because occasionally the schedule changes.

Murphys Food Pantry – Fill the Red Barrel

The first Sunday of each month is designated as “**Fill the Red Barrel**” Sunday. You are invited us to bring in food for the Pantry’s red barrel in the narthex or make an extra monetary donation to the Pantry (make checks to “Faith Lutheran Church” with “Murphys Food Pantry” in the memo). **January 4** will be Red Barrel Sunday this month. Thank you for your generosity toward this ministry of caring for our community. Together we are making a difference!

Food Pantry Ongoing Needs

Food pantry ongoing needs: Cereal, peanut butter, spaghetti noodles & sauce, tuna, chicken, soups, mac & cheese, noodles or rice mix, beans, corn, top ramen, granola bars, crackers.

“Meal-in-a-Bag” Program for Senior Center

We are invited to fill a bag with items for a sustainable “shelf food” meal. Please check the weekly announcements for the meal ingredients this month.

Interested in Helping in Worship?

Our worship services have many opportunities for leadership and assistance; perhaps you would like to help. Especially needed are helpers for altar care (setting up communion), counting offerings, and providing fellowship. Training is available. If you are interested,

ELCA Good Gifts Results

This congregation and friends donated \$1,295 to give to Good Gifts. How generous everyone. The council decided to give the majority of the money to the abundant community package which provides a goat, chickens, trees, training and tools to help a whole community. Also we chose an irrigation system, a latrine, and food for orphans and vulnerable child for a month. If you’d like more information, we have magazines in the narthex.



Above is Sheri Marsh playing for the singalong. Some of the attendees to the sing along. Pastor at the advent candles on Christmas Eve. Members enjoying the Christmas Eve service. Kathy with the candle as we sang Silent Night on Christmas Eve. It was a magical night.

January Birthdays

Vivian Hansten

1st

Loretta Sorocco

16th**January Anniversary**Janet and Mike Skenfield 30th**February Birthdays**

Ruth Ferguson

10th

Ian Burita

21st

Leland Johnson

18th

Mike White

28th**February Anniversary**Bonnie and Gary Thomas 14thDan and Carol Lagomarsino 17th

Happy Birthday

Sunday Date	January 4	January 11	January 18	January 25
Theme	Second Sunday of Christmas	Baptism of Our Lord and First Sunday after Epiphany	Second Sunday after Epiphany	Third Sunday after Epiphany
Worship Assistant	KC Anderson	Robert Westerhoff	Kathleen Walsh	Janet Skenfield
Altar Care	Kathleen Walsh	Carol Lagomarsino	Rob Westerhoff	Annette Stout
Counters	Kaarn Westerhoff/ Rob Westerhoff	KC Anderson/ Kathleen Walsh	Kathleen Walsh	Carol Lagomarsino/ Kaarn Westerhoff
Sunday Date	February 1	February 8	February 15	February 22
Theme	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany	Fifth Sunday after Epiphany	Transfiguration Sunday	First Sunday in Lent
Worship Assistant	Rob Westerhoff	Janet Skenfield	Liz Gilbert	KC Anderson
Altar Care	KC Anderson	Annette Stout	Carol Lagomarsino	Rob Westerhoff
Counters	Rob and Kaarn Westerhoff	KC Anderson/ Kathleen Walsh	Kathleen Walsh	Carol Lagomarsino/ Kaarn Westerhoff

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
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*Do justice, love kindness, and
walk humbly with the Lord.
Micah 6:8*