

## All Saints Lutheran Church Newsletter – January 2026

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Dear Friends,

I am hoping you and your loved ones have a Happy New Year! We all have hopes for this new year, and I am sure we are all hoping that the transition time we are in will bring All Saints to a new tomorrow and a new future.

This month I invite you to think about the word “offering” in our lives of faith. What is an “offering?” Offering is simply what we offer back to God from what God gives us. It involves not just what we put in the offering plate, but our “time, talent and treasure.”

But first of all, we need to remember this deep truth: EVERYTHING belongs to God. From the air in our lungs, to the money in our accounts, it is all God’s, we are just entrusted with these gifts. When we think about sharing of our time, talent, and treasure, we must first remember that we believe it doesn’t belong to us. It all belongs to God. When we remember that truth the question switches from “how much should I give?” to “how much should I keep for myself?”

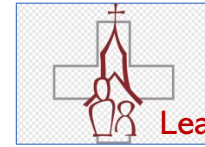
How God’s people have given back to God has changed over time. Before Jesus came to earth, offerings were brought to the temple and given to the priests. Usually people would bring commodities, not money. As the Christian church continued to move through time, how offering was done continued to change. People would bring offerings and would place them in a collection area, but this was not a part of the worship service.

The practice of collecting offering during worship did not happen until the 1500’s. The church of England began this practice and gradually this became the norm in almost every church.

What is the right way to give offering? There’s no right way. You can give on Sundays in the plate, or you can give by having your bank send us a check. It can be every week or whenever works for you. However, you give, giving is a spiritual exercise that helps us trust in the one who has given us so much.

May what we offer back to God reflect the great love God has for all of us!

God’s peace,  
*Pastor Serena*



**Lead us, Lord**

- Council President, Ann Spear Mayer
- Council Vice President, Lori Gawlak
- Council Secretary, Barbara Kurasch
- Financial Secretary, Christine Lotocki
- Treasurer, Joanne Maurer

Council Members:

- Beth Cheney
- Joan Fabian
- Marc Schwartz
- Linda Spencer
- Beverly Zier



**Financial books will close  
on 11 January 2026**



## Our Stained Glass Celebration! 11 January 2026

Soon after our final four stained glass windows were dedicated last June, Rev. Paul Mertzlufft finished composing and editing “Our Stained Glass Windows,” a booklet he has been developing for us. In it, he provides explanations of the religious symbols used and Biblical references for each window. He also includes the artist and artisan who produced each one, the donors whose contributions made the window possible, and names of those memorialized.



Pastor Mertzlufft has generously donated copies for members of All Saints. On 11 January, we will celebrate his efforts and generosity at our Sunday service and a Coffee Hour afterward, sponsored by the Gifts and Memorials Committee.

Be sure to save the date. Come celebrate our windows, our booklet, and our wonderful pastor emeritus, Pastor Paul Mertzlufft.

### Many Thanks--

The Altar Guild would like to thank all those who in any way helped decorate our church and Sanctuary for Christmas. We appreciate all of your help in getting our church ready for Christmas.

Special thanks to the All Saints Congregation for their generous donations to the Warm the Children Fund. A donation of \$300 was sent to the Fund on December 16.

God Bless,  
Louise Peters, WELCA President



### Weather Closing

It's that time of year when we are blessed with lake effect weather. The following TV stations will have closing information for our church services. WGRZ 2, WIVB 4, and WKBW 7.

The SECC is looking for pictures taken during the Christmas Season at our churches. If you take any pictures you would like me to use, please let me know.

Beth Cheney

**SECC Meeting at All Saints on Thursday, January 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Bring a snack to share. Everyone is welcome!**

## Council Highlights



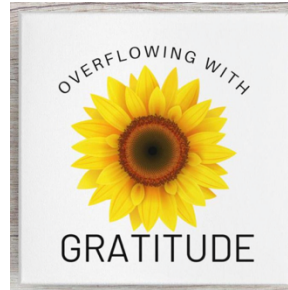
- Samaritan Counseling Center wants our members to know they are available if help is needed. Information can be found on the bulletin board and in the newsletter.
- Christmas and New Year's Day both fall on Thursdays, so Pastor Serena will not have office hours on those days. She will stop in on 23 December and either 30 or 31 December.
- Ann pointed out that receipts this year surpassed those of last year, a surprise blessing.
- Financial books will close on 11 January 2026
- Alms box donations for the fourth quarter will go to Sleep in Heavenly Peace
- Call Committee: On 4 December 2025, Council and the Call Committee chair participated in a Zoom call with Rachel Sosebee, Synod Mobility Specialist, to discuss ways to position us more advantageously in the search for a new pastor.
- Christian Education: Photographs from Kingdom Kids may appear on the webpage, Facebook page, and newsletter if a permission slip has been signed by their parents. No names will be used online – only pictures.
- Property:
  - Because the parking lot can become icy and there have been several falls, The ARC vehicle parking has moved closer to the side door. The cost of having the parking lot salted was prohibitive. Therefore, the vehicles will park closer to the building, our plow company will shovel the sidewalk along the west side of the building up to the kitchen entry, and The ARC will salt by hand.
  - We need more disability signs; they will be installed in spring when the ground thaws.
  - Well update from Marc Schwartz: Kevin Swanson installed a new regulator and a new pressure gauge. (Heartfelt thanks to Kevin.)
- Social Ministry: The Food Pantry received a gift of \$2500 from Jack Strawbrich from Weekley's Wholesale Bait. A similar gift will be given to the pantry at Good Shepherd. \$500 from this gift will be shared with the food pantry at Grace Lutheran Church.
- Worship and Music:
  - Stained Glass Booklet (put together by Pastor Mertzlufft) Sunday will be celebrated on 11 January 2026.
  - Tree Trimming will occur on Monday, 15 December, at 1:00pm.
- SECC will meet at 6:30pm on 8 January 2026 at All Saints.





## Pantry Page

All Saints and Good Shepherd Pantries are blessed with bread, bagel, donut, rolls, any other type of donated items that is donated through the Brothers of the Bread. Below is some information regarding this program that we participate in.



### December 2025 BOTB Newsletter



## Brothers Of The Bread

Loaves distributed year to date 2025 ~ 36,940

Total loaves distributed in 2024 ~ 39,450

Loaves distributed since 2021 ~ 147,085

### Latest News

- We worked through the supply issues without losing supply or efficiency. It is a very good thing that our supplier understands our needs and is willing to accommodate us.
- We added two new pantries! [Depew's Little Free Pantry](#) and [Trinity Pantry](#). These additions bring us up to serving 22 pantries from Gowanda to West Valley and over to Warsaw.
- I do not think I ever mentioned the three additional pantries we added in the summer. These three are all handled by one volunteer! [All Saints Lutheran Church](#), [Good Shepherd Lutheran Church](#), and First Lutheran Church in Blasdell.

### What We Do

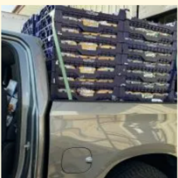


Brothers of the Bread is a grassroots nonprofit started by Andrew Egressy, connecting food producers with local pantries. Our goal is simple: to ensure no edible food goes to waste while no family goes hungry. It is an endless labor of love.

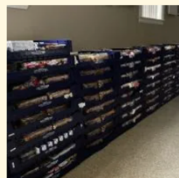
#### Our Mission

We act as a vital link between food producers and charitable organizations. Our team coordinates the collection, storage, and distribution of excess products, ensuring they are delivered promptly and efficiently to local charities and food pantries.

### How It Works



We collect surplus bread, jelly, snacks, or other fresh but unsellable food from manufacturers and distributors.



We directly supply pantries, churches, and shelters with this food.



The pantries are committed to supplying families with donated food.

The All Saints' Pantry was blessed in December with some very important donations. The first was from Jack Strawbrich from Weekley's Wholesale Bait in Hamburg. His generous donation of \$2500 was very greatly appreciated.

Good Shepherd's Little Free Pantry also benefited from Weekley's Bait with a generous donation.

The second donation was from Michelle Podpora with a donation of \$250 to our pantry from a group of Bills fans.

We have been so blessed by a third donation from the Hamburg United Methodist Church for \$500.

The Hamburg Gaming also donated 8 turkeys so we could share with families at Thanksgiving.

We were able to share some of our donations we received with Grace Lutheran Church's pantry. We sent their pantry a check for \$500 from our donations we received.

Grateful

Thankful

Blessed



FINANCE REPORT

NOVEMBER 2025

BANK BALANCES

CHECKING ACCOUNT	\$ 15,433.52
SAVINGS ACCOUNT	\$ 4,967.92
TOTAL	\$ 20,401.44

MONTHLY  
ACTIVITY

	ACTUAL	1/12 BUDGET	DIFFERENCE
CURRENT RECEIPTS	\$ 11,751.00	\$ 12,793.00	\$ (1,042.00)
SPECIAL GIFTS			
CURRENT EXPENDITURES	\$ 15,283.00	\$ 12,793.00	\$ 2,490.00
DIFFERENCE	\$ (3,532.00)	\$ -	\$ (3,532.00)

YEAR TO  
DATE

CURRENT RECEIPTS	\$ 118,598.00	\$ 140,723.00	\$ (22,125.00)
SPECIAL BUDGET GIFTS			
CURRENT EXPENDITURES	\$ 117,898.00	\$ 140,723.00	\$ (22,825.00)
DIFFERENCE	\$ 700.00	\$ -	\$ 700.00



“I want to extend my thanks and that of the Prospect Elementary (Salamanca, NY) community for the generous donations from our congregation. Thanks to our members, several families will be able to provide their children with Christmas gifts and necessities. Through your spirit of giving, you have transformed this season into a hopeful and joyful one. I want to especially thank Beth Cheney and Linda Spencer for partnering with me in this effort.”

Thank you all! - Christyn Sullivan”



## Reminders:

Kingdom Kids Sunday School Program  
every Sunday during the 11 a.m. Service.  
Don't miss the fun! Below Kingdom Kids  
making their own Advent wreaths for  
their homes.



Bible Study every Sunday at 9:30 a.m.







## NEED HELP?

*We all need help sometimes. Please call us at 716-743-9117. We are here for you.*

*At the Samaritan Counseling Center, we not only work to help heal your mind, but your heart, as well. We provide that most crucial of all needs—hope. While our services are rooted in faith based solutions, we work with everyone who needs help. By focusing on your mind, body and spirit, we generate the hope and healing that we all need in our lives.*

**716-743-9117**



If you have questions, would like to know more about us, or know a person or family who needs us, please call, totally confidentially at 716-743-9117 so we can talk more.

First Lutheran is planning to hold a Defensive Driving Course on March 13, 2026 (date change) from 5:30 - 9:30 PM. Sign-up sheet is on the easel in the Narthex. Please sign up by 1/31/26. The cost is \$39.

## **NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

The deadline for February Newsletter is **January 15<sup>th</sup>**. Please have all articles in by this time. Thank You! Send to Beth Cheney @ bwc143@verizon.net

## **Schedule of Volunteers January 2026**

	<b>January 4</b>	<b>January 11</b>	<b>January 18</b>	<b>January 25</b>
Preaching	Mary Wolf	Rev. Mary Ellen Larson	Rev. Devie Ellis	Rev. David Ellis
Deacon	Martha Muck	Beth Cheney	Barbara Kurasch	Ron Heintz
Usher	Frank Wald & Volunteer			
Reader	Bev Blette	Joan Fabian	Lori Gawlak	Ron Heintz
Altar Guild	Bryan & Christyn Sullivan	Louise Peters & Lori Gawlak	Louise Peters & Lori Gawlak	Gail Hellert
Cleaning	Martha Muck	Beth Cheney	Joan Fabian	Bev Blette
Counting	Linda Spencer & Beth Cheney			
Mowing				

**If you cannot serve at your scheduled time, please arrange for a substitute.**

Thank you to First Lutheran Blasdell for always collecting and delivering groceries to All Saints' Pantry. We are grateful for your help and generous gifts to our pantry.

The members of All Saints Family have prayed for the following people for the last 30 days. Please continue to keep them in your prayers.

† Mike  
 † Earl  
 † Nancy  
 † Family of Al Pearson  
 † Family of John Fowlkes  
 † Geri Hubert  
 † Kara Burke  
 † Vicki Crisman



## January Birthdays

Lisa Tighe	1/3
Lucas Blette	1/4
Mackenzie Marcin	1/5
William Blette	1/10
Anna Steck	1/16
Donna Pavel	1/20
Paul Steck	1/21
Lois Stutzman	1/27
Beth Cheney	1/28



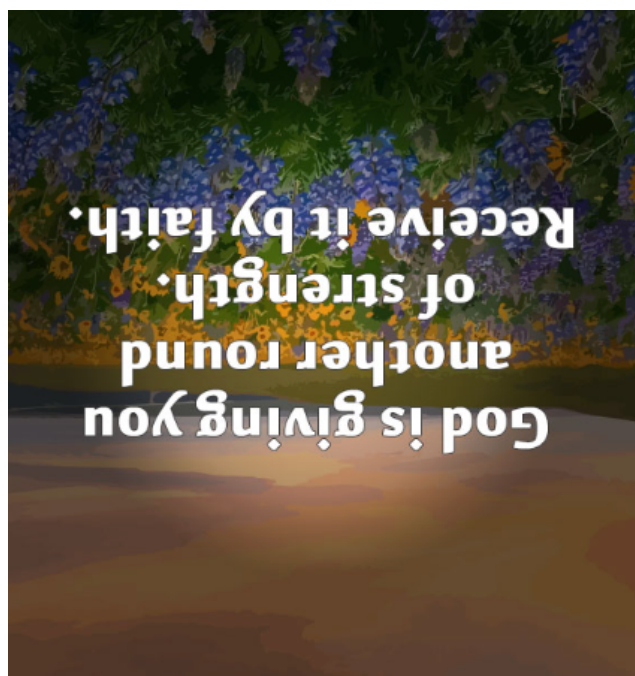
Make room for what Santa might bring.

Donate your gently used clothes, toys, books and housewares.

Red Box located at All Saints Parking Lot







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