Faithfully Yours

Monthly e-newsletter

May 2026

Unity Lutheran Christian Elementary School, Share in the Miracle Dinner, May 7

You're invited to be a part of the true miracle of Unity School in East St Louis IL. Twenty three years of growth and ministry. Lives changed daily by God's Word and God's people.

The Unity Lutheran School's Spring Fundraising Dinner will be held on Thursday, May 7, 2026, 6:30 pm at the Regency Conference Center in O'Fallon. This is a free event for people to learn about Unity School's work in East St Louis. Your will be asked to consider making a contribution; however, there is no obligation to give. As much as anything, we want guests to know about Unity's impact on children in East St Louis. We would be delighted if you would join us.

For reservations, please contact Roy Carlson at 618 593-8135.

Senior Blanket Blessing
May 17
Come celebrate
our graduating seniors

Pentecost Sunday
Don't forget to wear red on May 24!

Congratulations to Faith's Confirmands!

Adyn Marie Ahlvin

Ella Malia Eccher

Charlotte Elaynne Gerth

Genevieve Marie Horejsi

Henry William Knapp

Isaac James Reyna

Helen Alexandra Jean Watson

Pastor Candice

Grace & Peace to you!

"Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." – Matthew 11:28-30

Jesus' invitation in Matthew 11 is the Bible verse our Confirmation class of 2026 will take to heart as they prepare their stoles. Perhaps you'll remember that each year, our Confirmands wear red stoles during the Rite of Confirmation. They create these themselves in the weeks leading up to the Rite. On the right side, they decorate the stole with faith symbols that are meaningful to them. On the left side, they decorate with symbols reflecting their individual spiritual gifts given to them in baptism.

Aside from the symbols, the stole itself is the "yoke" with which they will bind their faith to Jesus. That is what the Rite of Confirmation is after all, an affirmation of the faith that has already bound them to Jesus in their baptism.

As much as the Rite of Confirmation is about the beautiful young people who will stand before us and affirm their baptism, it is also about us. We, their brothers and sisters in the pews, are promising to support them. And in that promise, we agree to be yoked along with them in their faith, to continue the journey together, with Jesus and each other.

So, please come on Sunday, May 31st at 9:00am worship for the Rite of Confirmation. Better still, begin praying now for Adyn, Charlotte, Ella, Gigi, Helen, Henry, and Isaac. Pray the yoke Jesus offers to share with them is light indeed and that a lifetime of faith-filled experiences await them. And pray also for your willing hearts to share the load alongside Jesus, continuing to support these young people as they journey on in this faith.

Peace and Joy,
Pastor Candice Wassell

President's Pen

COMMUNICATION!

In my experience, I've found the root of all misunderstanding stems from poor COMMUNICATION. Often too little is expressed or explained in our method of communicating and assumptions are made. I know many of you know this already, but it bears repeating when wrong assumptions are made and someone's feelings could get hurt or they completely miss the message. With this, I'd like to recommend people to say "more", providing more explanation than we currently provide.

Text messages are usually brief, a quick sharing of information. These can easily get people's interest – but often there's no meat to the message. Texts are often misunderstood, mis-interpreted, especially if they are out of context. It's hard to infer emotion, pauses, missing punctuation, etc.?

Emails can be brief, but unlike text messages, they can provide full information and details. Email gives the initiator time to think, couch their questions properly, and provide thorough, detailed information. If a response is necessary, the responder again has time to think and give thoughtful, detailed response. Hopefully this means the email and response are understood…. But if it is NOT fully understood, PLEASE take the time to make sure the recipient understands your response and is able to respond in turn!

Posts, like Facebook, Instagram, Facebook Messenger … any other social media – I find that many of the targeted people will not see the message.

Telephone/Cell phone – **Oh My Goodness**! Who wants to pick up a phone and actually talk with a person???? Except this is one of the most effective ways to communicate so people can hear the nuances in your speech to clearly understand the message. This is SO important for crucial communications.

Face to face – Take time to SEE your friends, family and just – everyone! This is the BEST way to see how people communicate. To see their expressions, their eyerolls, their almost smiles, their uncertainty…. These cannot be read in texts or social media. Face to face you can hug a person, cry with them, laugh with them, congratulate them. Face to face is the best method, especially in our busy, crazy world.

My point is More is MORE. Here are my recommendations:

1. Make sure ALL the parties that need to be informed are included in the email. For church, please include all the people involved. If it's directed at a specific church board, include the Chair and the Assistant Chair. This makes sure the board is fully informed (maybe one is on vacation).
2. Inform people of your intentions/event with an Email, Facebook event, and on the Church Midweek Update. Touching congregational members through only

one method is not the best method. Try several. Someone will see one of the communications paths.

3. Plan to communicate over a few days to a couple weeks. People don't always pay attention to the first announcement. Please follow up with a few reminders.
4. CALL them for their response – be brave and ASK again!! Serving Christ's church is a great honor.
5. TALK to the person, one on one, and get to know them. SEE their response, whether it is acceptance or hesitation, or a "YES". We all love to receive a "YES".

Have a great May.

In Christ,
Eunice Peterson
Congregational President

Admin's Turn

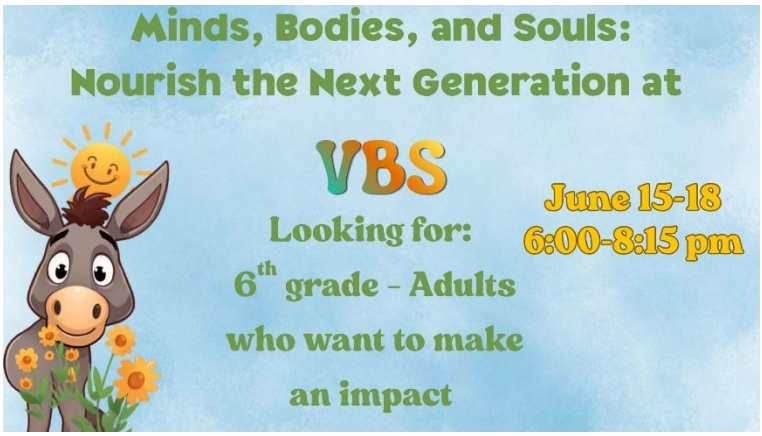
Happy May! You know what that means right? I am on my annual garden vacation! Digging in the dirt; hard, manual labor; spending time with my adult children; cheering on the birds, bees, bugs, and all manner of wildlife; garden shopping; and enjoying God's amazing creation! Personally, my favorite week of the year!

But before I go on vacation, I guess I should do some administrative reminders for you all…

- Has your name been left off the birthday or anniversary list in the e-newsletter? To avoid that in the future, please fill out your family information sheet: https://faithofallon.breezechms.com/form/07a98f4 or better yet, ask me about setting up a log in for our database (Breeze) and you can update your information on your own.
- Adult Sunday Education will be on summer break but watch for what classes will be coming in the Fall!
- Do you have Bells in Motion on **May 2** on your calendar? They are a fun and amazing group of bell ringers! You won't want to miss this Concert Series presentation.
- May is a busy month here at Faith! Something happening every Sunday in worship:
    - **May 3rd** – end of Sunday School presentation
    - **May 10th** – Music Sunday
    - **May 17th** – Blanket blessing
    - **May 24th** – Pentecost – wear red
    - **May 31st** – Confirmation and Children's Summer Sunday School begins
- More things to get on your summer calendar:
    - **June 15-18:** VBS: registrations links are in the newsletter
    - **June 22-25:** PreK/K/1 Summer Art, Music, STEM camp – links included in the newsletter
    - **June 29-July 2:** 2-8 grade Summer Art, Music, STEM camp – links included in the newsletter

Summer is also a great time to try something new! Maybe try helping with Grill to Glory. Or helping serve meals on Monday nights. Or try being a host on Sunday mornings? Or make coffee on Sunday mornings? Or picking up donuts on Sunday morning? There are many ways to get involved here at Faith. Reach out to me and I can help you connect to something that nourishes your body, mind, and soul.

God's peace,
Janet Hernandez



Music Notes

- May is here and has many wonderful Worship and Music celebrations coming up!
- Faith's Concert Series will have our next concert on Saturday, May 2nd at 7pm. Bells in Motion will be here to ring out some great tunes!
- Music Sunday is May 10th. Both services will be a focus on "All Things New: Every Voice, One Song"
- Pentecost is May 24th. Don't forget to WEAR RED as we welcome the Holy Spirit!
- The rite of Confirmation will be on May 31st at 9:00

- **Join us this summer as we explore *"God Created the Whole World!"*** Campers will sing, play instruments, create art, and discover God's creation through fun hands-on science activities. **Scan the QR code to register!**
    - **Camp Dates:**
      • June 22–25 – Incoming PreK–1st Grade
      • June 29–July 2 – Incoming 2nd–8th Grade
    - **Camp Times:**
      • 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM each day (please provide a packed lunch)
      • Thursday – Parents are invited to a 30 minute Science and Music presentation and Art walk at 12:00
- We are still looking for organist and choir accompanist. If you or someone you know is interested in this job, please contact Jeannie VanderKruik, Pastor Candice, or myself. Our hiring team would love to get in touch with anyone interested.
- Multimedia Team Members Needed! We are in need of about 10-15 individuals or pairs to step up and become a part of our sound/slide booth and livestream teams. Please contact Kristin if you are someone interested in being trained!

Tune your heart to sing His praise,
Kristin Runyan

Faith's
Summer Camps
Art + Music + STEM
2nd -8th: June 29-July 2
9:00 AM - 12:30 PM daily
$35 registration*
*Scholarships available
2nd-8th

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH FINANCIAL SECRETARY REPORT
MARCH 31, 2026

GENERAL FUND RECEIPTS	2026 YTD ACTUAL	2026 YTD BUDGETED	*Difference* of ACTUAL to *BUDGET*	2026 Full Year BUDGET
Pledged Giving*	209,147.89	172,574.00	+36,573.89	690,296.00
Non-Pledged Giving	35,874.40	18,500.00	+17,374.40	74,000.00
Plate Offering	2,000.95	2,000.00	+.95	8,000.00
Total General Fund Offerings	**247,023.24**	**193,074.00**	**+53,949.24**	**772,296.00**
Other Income**	936.93	925.00	+11.93	3,700.00
TOTAL General Fund Receipts* **	**247,960.17**	**193,999.00**	**+53,961.17**	**775,996.00**
% of Full Year Budget Received versus Budgeted	**32.0%**	**25.0%**		

NOTES: *Actual Figures are year-to-date through MARCH 31, 2026.*

*The $209,147.89 of **Pledged Giving** is **$36,573.89 MORE** than the Budgeted (Expected) amount of $*172,574.00* through MARCH 2026.

***Total General Fund Receipts** of $247,960.17 were **$53,961.17 MORE** than the Budgeted (Expected) amount of $193,999.00 and were 32.0% of the yearly expected amount. The Budgeted expected percentage (3/12 of yearly budget) would be 25.0%.

****Other Income** includes Thrivent Choice Dollars, Credit card rewards, and checking account interest which goes into the General Fund.

PHASE 2 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE:

As a result of our Capital Campaign "Preparing Space for Grace", Faith Lutheran received pledges from 105 Households totaling **$1,654,288** to be given over three years from 6/1/2024 through 5/31/2027.

PHASE 2 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN	Amount Pledged 6/1/2024-5/31/2027	Contributions Received	*% Received*
Phase 2 CC Pledge Giving	1,654,288.00	1,274,787.60	77.1%
Unpledged CC Giving		107,083.03	
Total Phase 2 CC Giving		**1,381,961.63**	

Through 3/31/2026, Faith received a total of **$1,381,961.63** in contributions from Faith members for Phase 2. **$1,274,878.60** was given to meet pledge commitments.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jan Mikkelson, Financial Secretary

Treasurer's Report

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH FINANCIAL SUMMARY REPORT – March 31, 2026

	Actual MAR 2026	Actual YTD 2026	Budget Projected (25.0%)	Actual YTD Received/ Expensed (%)
Budget Giving – Online Pledged/Unpledged	30,511.00	91,393.00		
Budget Giving – Not Online Pledged/Unpledged	39,038.38	153,629.39		
Total Budget Giving – Pledged/Unpledged	**69,549.38**	**245,022.39**	**191,074.00**	**32.1%**
Budget Giving - Plate	1,007.95	2,000.95	2,000.00	25.0%
Total Budget Giving	**70,557.33**	**247,023.34**	**193,074.00**	**32.0%**
Total Other Additions	806.54	1,618.58	925.00	
Total Budget + Other Additions	**71,363.87**	**248,641.92**	**193,999.00**	**32.0%**
Board Expenses (Discretionary)	6,442.81	21,322.60	21,350.00	24.8%
Building/Equipment Expenses (Fixed)	9,996.63	32,233.38	33,870.00	23.8%
Staff Salary Expenses (Fixed)	41,176.85	115,871.04	120,376.25	24.1%
Staff Support Expenses (Fixed)	1,372.49	5,055.27	4,356.25	29.0%
Mission Support (Benevolence)	7,055.83	24,702.64	19,307.40	32.0%
Total General Fund Expensed	**66,044.61**	**199,184.93**	**199,259.90**	**25.0%**
Variance ***	5,319.26	49,456.99	(5,260.90)	
Special Offerings Received	9,581.31	47,221.46		
Phase 2 Capital Campaign Received	15,852.97	68,951.61		
Total Rcvd (General+Special+Capital Campaign)	95,991.51	363,196.31		

*** **Variance:** *(General Fund + Other Additions) – Total General Fund Expense*

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS BALANCE – March 31, 2026

Carrollton Bank Checking	17,807.90
Carrollton Bank Money Market	3,133.92
Fidelity Investment	529,136.54
Fidelity Endowment Investment	78,605.13
Fidelity Legacy Gift Investment	464,924.36
TOTAL	**$1,093,607.85**

FUND ACCOUNTS BALANCE – March 31, 2026

Allocated Funds (Restricted/Designated)	$368,536.42
Carryover Fund	137,758.68
Fidelity Endowment Account Investment Gain	605.13
Fidelity Legacy Gift Account Investment	464,924.36
Fidelity Investment Account Gain	58,945.56
General/Budget Fund	62,837.70
TOTAL	**$1,093,607.85**

LOAN STATUS

	Mar 1 Loan BAL	Interest Paid	Principal Paid	Mar 31 Loan BAL
Faith Ctr Mortgage	$270,658.45	$1,316.51	$1,033.49	$269,624.96
Phase 2 Const loan*	$130,000.00	$576.91	$25,000.00	$105,000.00

*Illinois Qtrly SREC received in March - $4,362.91 directed to Phase 2 construction loan principal

PHASE 2 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN – Pledge $1,654,288

Pledged Giving	Unpledged Giving	Total Giving as of 3/31/2026	Outstanding Pledges
$1,274,787.60	$107,083.03	$1,381,961.63	$379,500.40

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH PROPERTY ASSET VALUE: $12,499,805 *(includes Sanctuary, Faith Center, Ed Center, offices)*

Respectfully submitted.
Susan Carlson, Treasurer

Programs for Young Children Happenings

We can't believe it's MAY! It's been a wonderful year of learning and play at PYC thanks to the amazing teachers, students, and families that we have in our community. The last month of school is always a busy one, filled with special events and learning opportunities. Throughout the past month, we've celebrated The Week of the Young Child, including a very productive Work Together Wednesday, where we tackled mulching the trail, playgrounds, and sensory garden with students and parents. We've also held parent-teacher conferences, PYC Sunday at Faith Lutheran, and one of our favorite events: PYC STEAM Night. Every year, we're reminded of how blessed we are to serve so many families with young children and unite them through play, learning, faith, and love.

At PYC Sunday, we had a special send-off blessing for Ms. Heather O'Donnell as she prepares to retire after 14 years of teaching at PYC. Ms. Heather has been a leader on our staff, a true advocate for play and nature-based learning, and the creative mind behind many of our outdoor play spaces and interior décor. To say she'll be missed is an understatement. She has been such an incredible blessing for this school and the many students she's taught over the years. We wish her and her husband Brendan well on their next adventure!

This summer will be a little quieter, with Park Play Dates happening off-site. Please pray for our teachers and staff to have a restful and rejuvenating summer. They've certainly earned it after spending their days nurturing and guiding the students of PYC. We are blessed with some of the hardest working, creative, caring, patient, and effective preschool teachers in the world. Praise the Lord for their service!

Blessings,
Kristin Flor, PYC Director
PYC Oversight Committee

Ms. Susan gives her Godly Play lesson during PYC Sunday.

Thank you for your faithful service, Ms. Heather!

Grateful for all the parents and grandparents who helped us spread mulch!

Outward Ministry

Faith Lutheran's congregation is incredibly generous in its giving. Through our benevolence funds, we are able to support many local, regional, and national organizations. The image above highlights just some of these ministries.

The Outward Ministry Board would love your input. Is there an organization Faith Lutheran Church is not currently supporting that you feel called to share with us? If so, please let us know by emailing **outward@faithofallon.org**.

Interested in becoming more involved? Join us at the next Outward Ministry meeting on **May 18 at 6:45 p.m. in FCC2**.

Peace be with you,

Erin

The Outward Ministry Board carries out its mission under the theme "Nourishing Minds, Bodies, and Souls," serving as a vital bridge between our congregation and the surrounding community.

Planning & Development

The P&D Committee met on March 24, 2026, with a primary focus of finalizing our Annual Council Retreat schedule, which will be conducted on Sunday, May 3, following the 2nd service; our schedule is below. Our theme is "TRANSITION THROUGH PHASE 3."

11:45: Light Lunch
12:15: Brief Discussion on how Phase 3 Will Impact Faith's Activities (Steve Frederickson & Mark Sauer)

- Timeline / Sequence of the Areas to be Impacted / Out of Commission
- Music Room, Office Space, PYC
- Faith Center Activities
- Mobile Trailers

12:40: Layout PYC's Plans/Needs (PYC Personnel - Kristin Flor)
1:00: Brainstorm Session (Jim Curtis)

- Impacts to Each Board's Activities (Adult Faith Formation, Fellowship, Outward Ministry, Property, Worship & Music, Youth Faith Formation, PYC)
- Funerals, Monday Nights, Adult Ed, etc

2:00: TAKE AWAY GOAL: Create an Outline / Navigation Plan for the transition (Jim, Steve, Mark)
3:00: Close

v/r
John Masur
P&D Chair

Phase 3 Update

This past month, we held our kickoff meeting with our architect, FGMA. We discussed priorities and reviewed a preliminary project schedule. Our goal is to complete the design far enough to develop a reliable cost estimate to present to the congregation at our Annual Meeting in November. That would position us to request construction bids early next year and select a contractor in time for summer construction. We believe this is important, since we will be competing with school districts for summer construction.

Next, the architect will interview the groups in our congregation that will use the new building. The first step is to define what each room needs; then the overall building design concept will begin to take shape. As concepts are developed, we will share them with the congregation. This is an exciting time in the life of our congregation.

LWR QUILTERS

Next meeting is May 11 at 2PM in the Faith Center.
All are welcome; no sewing experience needed!

60's+ Group
Eckert's Restaurant
May 20, 11:30AM

Over 60? Join us for lunch! RSVP to Rick Simmons at randrsimmons@gmail.com by May 17 if you can make it!

JOURNEY ON
A GROUP FOR OLDER SINGLES

MONTHLY SUNDAY LUNCH

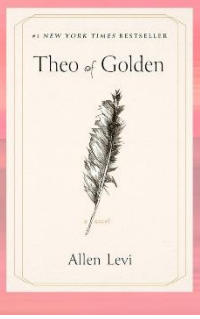
May 24

meet in the Faith Center Lobby after late worship to carpool for lunch

RSVP to Janet Alexander or the church office

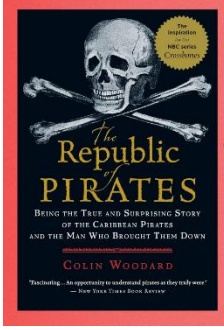
Women's Book Club
Tues. May 26@ 7:00PM
FCC3&4

Read ***Theo of Golden***
by Allen Levi



Questions? Contact Janet Hernandez
618-310-9730 (cell), or email at
admincoordinator@faithofallon.org

Men's Book Club
Wednesday, June 3 @6:30PM



The Republic of Pirates
by Colin Woodard

Questions? Contact Kevin Eiler 314-691-3114
(cell), or email at keiler3@yahoo.com or
Phil Cyr 618-746-0173.

Birthday's and Anniversaries

May 1 Angelina Sill
May 2 Matt Lands
May 3 Sue Edgar, Jake Holtkamp, Bruce Moeller, Jill Eccher
May 4 Drake Schultz
May 5 Tim Alf, Tyler Horejsi, Barb Anthony, Gonzalo Reyna, Clara Ray, Anita Snyder
May 6 Carson Grindstaff, Sheri Engel
May 7 Ashley Reichert, Leighton Casberg, Anita Rodriguez
May 8 Janet Hernandez, Leigh Meyer
May 10 Bill Souser
May 13 Mike Cokenour, Diana Helwig, Bill Brunner
May 14 Bill Voss
May 15 Russ Gillette
May 16 Eli Flor, Christine Wesselman
May 17 Alex Corrie
May 19 Callie Eberspeaker
May 20 Lené Shepherd, Kennedy Meyer, Jim Curtis, Margaret Putz
May 22 Jacob Pekala
May 23 Bruce Bossart, Jeannie VanderKruik
May 24 Scott Minton, Linda Benedick, Jackson Grindstaff
May 26 Kathy Turner
May 27 Evan Turpening, Weston Gerth
May 28 Marlin Fix, Adalind Lindsey, John Masur
May 29 Lincoln Sax, Isabelle Ahlvin
May 31 Keith Phillips, Kaylee Wood

May 10	Chris & Bethany Malone, 15 years
May 20	Steve & Darlene Corrie, 37 years
May 21	Les & Marla Hostetler, 38 years
May 24	John & Penny Masur, 40 years
May 24	Scott & Sharon Minton, 26 years
May 25	Patrick & Kristin Flor, 18 years
May 26	Chad & Jennifer Williams, 19 years
May 26	Bill & Barbara Turkington, 37 years

Prayers

<u>Please notify the church office if any of these names can be taken off the list</u>

Health Concerns:

Jackie Mitchell, Joslyn Anderson, Janet Middendorf, Dave Marcus, Jason Larson, Marie Blanchard, Jane Bergo, Carol Wells, Charlie Claxton, Bob Skogh, Jeremy Alf, Kendra Dhaene, Kathleen Reichert, Keith Hamann, Sheri Engel, Cindy Stepp, Karen Miles, Marilyn Dichsen, Lori Goessman, Meg Corson, Taylor Torres

Grieving:

Family & friends of Onnie Wargo
LuAnn Henry, loss of sister
Tim Peterson, loss of father
Emily Danner, loss of father
Family & friends of Pat Schultz
Bill Souser, loss of brother-in-law
Denise Burton, loss of father
Carol Bandre, loss of sister
Family & friends of Terri Ahlvin
John & Sheila Hellrung, loss of nephew
Rodney Brown, loss of brother
Bill Brunner, loss of niece
Family & friends of Wendy McDonnell

Family & friends of Elaine Entrikin
Family & friends of Jerry Bowen
Lisa Melzer, loss of mother
Family & friends of Galen Pool
Family & friends of Bob Austen
Family & friends of Sandy Fix
Family & friends of Doug Bush

Food Pantry February numbers served: 217 families / 569 people (569 adults, 169 kids). Groceries purchased: $11,999.83.

A big thanks to the Be Like Jesus program. Our clients love the Easter baskets. We had a client in the pantry who had already told her children there was no money for Easter baskets. She left with 2 baskets and a big smile on her face. God is good.

Community Meals
Mondays, May 3, 10, 17, 31
5-6:30 pm, Faith Center

Come and enjoy a hot meal prepared for you, your family, friends, and anyone else.

Take-outs are always available.

Please spread the word - all are welcome!

If you want to represent Faith as a volunteer server, cleaner, or cook's helper on a Monday night, please contact Betsy Layfield at betsylayfield@gmail.com or 618-791-5070.

Healing Prayer

Every Monday During Community Meals

5-6:30 pm, FCC1

Are you suffering pain, disease, depression, spiritual issues, or anything else for which you'd like prayer? God wants to minister to you! The Faith Healing Team is offering Healing Prayer with the laying on of hands and anointing. Questions? Contact John Hellrung at john.hellrung@gmail.com.

Child care is available Sundays from birth to five years old during all worship services!
Contact Kristin Howe with your questions at nurserymanager@faithofallon.org or 618-972-8622.

Faith Lutheran Church
We exist to Nourish Minds, Bodies, and Souls

Church Office Hours
Monday - Friday
9 am - 3 pm
618-632-5562

Sunday Worship
9 and 10:30 am
Sunday School at 9 am

Sign up for Mid-Week Update

Ministers: People of Faith
Senior Pastor: Rev. Candice Wassell

Newsletter articles due the
3rd Sunday of the month prior.

FOLLOW US!

Website: www.faithofallon.org
Podcast: faithofallon.podbean.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/FaithLutheranOFallon
Instagram: faithofallon
YouTube: FaithLutheranOFallon

Church App