

St. Luke's Voice

St. Luke's Lutheran Church, New Rochelle, NY

February 2026

The mission of St. Luke's Lutheran Church is to share the good news of Jesus through word and sacrament, serving, teaching, and welcoming our community.

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

95 Eastchester Road
New Rochelle, NY
10801

Rev. John Backe
917-795-2392

Sunday Worship: 10 A.M.

Phone: (914) 632-2116
StLuke654@aol.com
SLNR.org

Visit us on Facebook!

Newsletter

Editor: Pat Fredericks

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

The end of the calendar year always overlaps with the season of Advent, the beginning of a new liturgical year. For me, there is a sense of renewal and excitement. Reading or watching the news in 2025 was difficult. Many people felt anxious or confused by so many changes and problems. We pray that 2026 will be different, but so far, at least in January, that has not been the case.

The start of the church year, Advent and Christmas, on the other hand has been exciting and hopeful. I want to thank everyone who worked so hard on the many programs and activities that made life and ministry at St. Luke's fun, exciting and joyful. I hope I don't leave anything out, but we had successful food and toy drives, a lovely Holiday Fair and a thrilling Holiday Concert. Our choir continues to add beauty and leadership to our worship. Advent vespers allowed time away from the pressure of commercial and social activities. The Christmas pageant was delightful. Both Christmas Eve worship services were beautifully decorated. All of this happened while we continued our "regular" congregational life and work. I can't name everyone involved, but I do want to thank Carla for all she does to make sure the materials we need for worship are prepared and Iryna for sharing her musical gifts so freely. The Church Council, Altar Guild and all the committees that work so hard and their efforts show. If you see someone involved in any of those efforts, thank them. Better yet, offer to join in and share the work. To me, everything I've described above are signs of a healthy, Spirit led, faithful congregation moving forward.

LENT & EASTER SCHEDULE

Now we are moving toward Lent with great expectation. Our worship schedule is below.

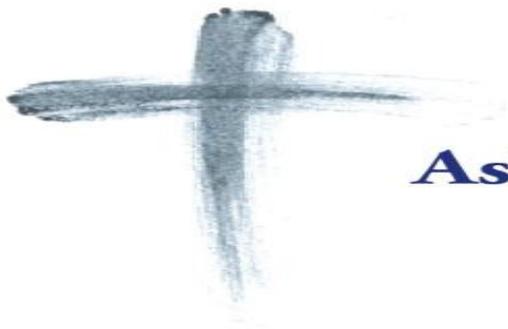
~Pastor John

2/18 Ash Wednesday with imposition of ashes 7 p.m.

2/25, 3/4, 11, 18 and 25 Vespers with Bible study; all at 7 p.m.

3/29 Palm Sunday 10 a.m.

4/5 Easter 10 a.m.



Ash Wednesday
— Lent Begins

ASH WEDNESDAY

*St. Luke's invites you to worship at 7 p.m.
including imposition of ashes.*

*Pastor Backe will be available in the church
from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. for distribution of ashes as well.*

Lenten Vespers will be Wed. Evenings at 7pm

ALL ARE WELCOME!

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

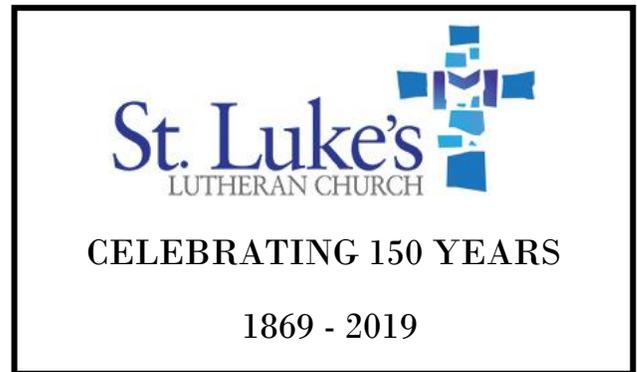
95 Eastchester Road, New Rochelle, NY 10801

Phone: 914-632-2116, Email: stluke654@aol.com, Website www.SLNR.org

COUNCIL REPORT

[As copied from the annual meeting report]

Well, St. Luke's, we are STILL here! Our 156th year worshipping and serving this community. And they said we wouldn't last. By the grace of God and thanks to the commitment, time, and generosity of all of you, here we are. Still fighting the good fight.



Is there more we can do, absolutely, and as we learn what and how, we will. We have an amazing church family and I personally am grateful for each and every one of you.

We, as your elected council, continue to work very hard.

SO many projects were done thanks to the property committee.



Worship service has grown, changed and thrived under the guidance of Pastor Backe and the worship committee. We have been fortunate to have 2 consistent supply pastors, Pastor Backe and Pastor Brown as well as Deacon Nancy Sigler available to fill in when needed. We are covered through and into the summer months as needed.

The fellowship committee and Holiday Boutique Committee pulled off 2 sales this year, May and November. We welcomed new vendors, as well as new patrons. It is a real labor of love not only to raise funds but build community relationships as well. Thank you to every member that facilitates a table, the café, the raffle and the rummage!

Our choir has grown stronger with additional voices this year, and thanks to them we had a wonderful, well-attended Christmas concert. Our Social Ministry and HOPE Cook team continue their commitment to HOPE services and Hearts and Home.

We are so thankful to our Sunday School staff, for always showing up, for keeping the dream alive and for giving your all to our Sunday School. We are so grateful for your service.

Our Book Club, prayer group, archive and audit committees continue to serve, our cooks continue to prepare our meals when needed (Pancake Supper Feb 17th) our ushers, acolytes, and Altar Committee continue to keep our worship services going and our church beautiful.

Every member is a part of our congregation!

Our custodian Steven Spady worked with us through June. Starting July 1st, we had a new custodian, Gregory Hines. He was supposed to be temporary but thankfully is now permanent. He is doing a great job and very responsive to our needs.

We continue to grow our social media and community presence. Through the Chamber of Commerce, advertising in many community forums, and consistently having new banners outside in front of the church.



Our Treasurer, Steve Olsen, will be retiring this month, and Traci Daniele will take over as Treasurer. It is a very time-consuming volunteer position and at times, I'm sure, stressful. We wish to thank Steve for his 19 (?) years of commitment and efforts to keep our church operating, in the black, and always with whatever we needed.

The Financial Secretary role will be led by Nancy Sigler and Susanne Kuligowski, with the assist of their faithful counters.

Thank you, Pat Fredericks, for producing our monthly newsletter, and for your ever patient reminders!

Thank you to the council: Denise Tolles, our Vice President, Brett Buehrer, Traci Daniele, our Financial Secretary, Steve Olsen, our Treasurer, Karen Fontecchio, our Secretary, Lydia Bersito, Donna Elmer, Camille O'Garro and Julia Ungewitter.



Thank you, Pastor John Backe, our coverage Pastor, for your guidance and assistance this year.

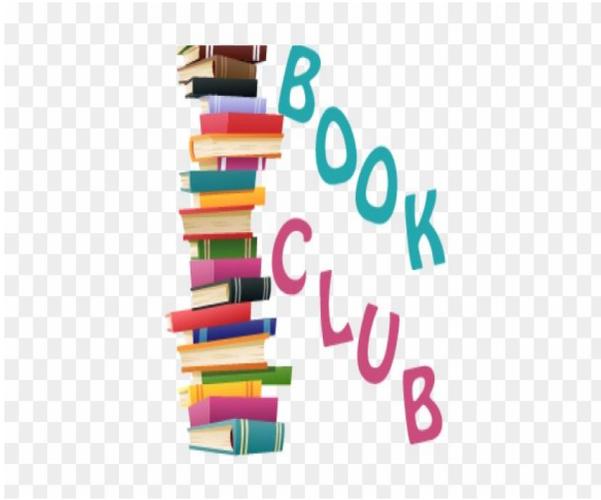
Thank you to Carla LaBarbera, our Church Secretary, for all your help always! We truly appreciate her and all her work.

With the election of our new Bishop, Katrina Foster and her Assistant, Pastor Nicole Schwalbe, we have a renewed hope and excitement for the future of our beloved Church. We will continue to keep you abreast of all updates as we have them. This is your church; we are just honored to be your council.

BOOK CLUB CORNER

There never yet have been, nor are there now, too many good books.

-Martin Luther



St. Luke's Book Club continues to meet monthly at Barnes & Noble in Scarsdale. We enjoy sharing lunch together as we review our current selection. At our December meeting, we discussed Samantha Harvey's Booker Prize winning novel, *Orbital*. We followed the lives of six astronauts as they orbited the earth sixteen times in one day. We glimpsed views of their earthly lives as they experienced sixteen sunrises and sunsets. *Orbital* is a profound, thoughtful and moving meditation on space and environment and planet.

In a very real sense, people who have read good literature have lived more than people who cannot or will not read. It is not true that we have only one life to live; if we can read, we can live as many lives and as many kinds of lives as we wish.

-S.I. Hayakawa

January: The Names by Florence Knapp

February: Harlem Rhapsody by Victoria Christopher Murray

We welcome new participants! Please consider joining us.

For further information, contact: Jennifer Archer (ktembo@aol.com)

One book is enough, but a thousand books is not too many.

THE HOPE COOK



The Great Snowstorm did not prevent the Hope Cook Team from getting the job done. Social Ministry Chair Angelika Ridulfo and Joan Bast shopped for supplies on Friday, and assembled a core group of chefs, including Leam McEvoy, Bill Rodriguez and Joan Bast to prepare the food trays on Saturday, ahead of the arrival of Sunday's snow. Hope Community Services was delighted to hear that it would be receiving the food and arranged a pickup for Tuesday after the storm. Well done Team!



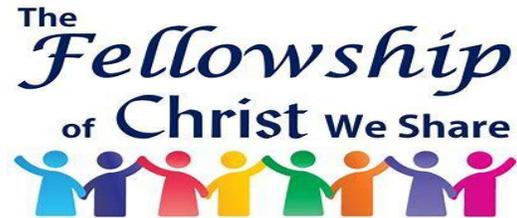
St. Luke's is not scheduled to cook in February because of the holiday calendar.

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

[As copied from the annual meeting report]

God's blessings on 156 years St. Luke's!!! It was another action-packed year! We have been busy!

- Annual pancake supper
- End of Year Congregation Picnic
- Family and Women's Retreat to Koinonia
- Gratitude Brunch with Stewardship Committee
- Annual Holiday Boutique - raised approx. \$3000
- Annual Spring Sale – raised over \$1000
- Co-hosted multiple food drives for HOPE with the Social Ministry Committee
- In November and December, we helped to facilitate the annual Coat and Toy drives for HOPE Community Services. A special thanks to all of you for your generous donations, especially the Girl Scouts of the Bronx that donate so much every year!
- Christmas Concert – many new faces - with Julia Ungewitter & her band and Iryna & the Choir
- Congregational Christmas Party



We thank all of those that have helped and supported us in this last year, there are too many to mention but you know who you are. We appreciate you all and can't thank you enough.

Thank you to Carla, our Church secretary, Steven Spady and Greg Hines, our custodians, who do so much for us. Pastor Backe and Pastor Brown, thank you both, for leading us in Worship this year.

In 2025 we increased our community outreach in multiple ways; the greatest being joining the Chamber of Commerce and advertising more on social media. We look forward to continuing all our events and activities, as well as creating new ones, while reaching out to the community, to celebrate our church and our congregation in 2026!

God's Blessings

Yours In Christ, Dawn McEvoy, Chair

The Fellowship Committee

Leam, Melissa and Vicky McEvoy Angelika Ridulfo
Susanne and Jacob Kuligowski Julia Ungewitter
Lydia Bersito Traci Daniele

Renee, Bill and Shari Taylor

The Holiday Boutique, Same participants as above plus..

Nancy Sigler Cathie Behrend Denise Tolles
Walt Mitz Madeline Sigler Martha Johnson
Walter Glatz Natalie Bersito Joan and Bill Rodriquez
Pat Fredericks Irene Breen Judy Amato
Kathy Wirak

Our Vendors and so many more that contributed, donated, set up, cleaned up etc.

(cont'd. on page 8)

And again thank you to our fabulous Kitchen help, Leam, Joan Bast and Bill Rodriquez, who are also part of our **Christmas Decorating Committee** with Karen Fontecchio, Larry & Gloria Head and Walter Glatz.

ST. LUKE'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

[As copied from the annual meeting report]

2025 was another successful year for our Sunday school. Even though we lost our little Olivia we gained Justin and regained Avery and Max! We are a strong 5 now from 3yo to 6th grade. It is always a success when a child comes to Sunday School.

We continue to support all church events, participate in service activities and host coffee hours. We hosted or co-hosted, Rally Day, Christmas party, Easter Egg Hunt, Christmas and Easter Pageants, End of Year Picnic and Pancake Supper. We facilitated the annual Souper Bowl Sunday Collection for ELCA World Hunger, last year raising \$1400. Hopefully we will surpass that number in 2026!

Our Annual Congregation Christmas Party was again very well attended, the children and some adults got to visit with Santa.

The Sunday School staff consists of:

Superintendent - Dawn McEvoy

Assistant Superintendent - Karen Fontecchio

Treasurer - Traci Daniele

Teachers – Melissa McEvoy, Shari Taylor, Jacob Kuligowski and Vicky McEvoy



We continue to teach and share the Good News in fun and educational ways. We have gotten very creative with our Pageants!

The Sunday School children, small yet mighty! They help support food drives, Super Bowl Sunday, coat and toy drives. They are the future of this church!

Our Sunday school is self-sustaining through your contributions. You can help to support the Sunday school by using your child's Sunday school offering envelope every Sunday or you can just write us a check. Made payable to St. Luke's Sunday School. Your contributions enable us to maintain a high standard of excellence. Your blessed gifts are always appreciated. Thank you to those that have contributed. You have sustained our mission this year.

Thank you to our dedicated staff, the congregation, the parents and families.

We are always looking to increase Church and Sunday School membership. We have started to have more of a community presence and will work to increase that every year. If you have any ideas, please let us know. ALL are always welcome!



St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Annual Women's Retreat to Koinonia

April 10-12, 2026

Faith, Fellowship, Fun

\$305 Single, \$195 Double, per person

(includes 5 meals and all activities.)

~ Massages available for additional fee ~

RESERVE YOUR ROOMS TODAY!

Contact Dawn McEvoy for more info or to reserve your room

mmcevoy33@aol.com or call 347-604-3969

ALL are welcome!



Visit Koinonians.org for more info on Koinonia.

Located 165 Lakeview Drive Road Highland Lake, NY 12743

AROUND THE PARISH



In Our Prayers this month are those hospitalized, with health concerns, or in transition or treatment, and all those in our Sunday prayers.

PRAYER LIST UPDATES: We are revising our Prayer List. We will remove names after a month or unless instructed otherwise. If you have a name to add, contact the church office.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays

2/1	Connor Fredericks	2/11	Angelika Ridulfo
2/2	Thyra Brooks		Kathleen Wirak
2/4	Melbourne Taylor		Frank Kimber
2/5	Nathaniel Ross	2/23	Nadia Conroy
2/7	Jessica Horn (Fraser-Brockhoff)		Stacia Ross
2/8	Julia Ungewitter	2/25	Gloria Head
2/10	Marva Montalvo		Corinne Fredericks Blake
	2/27	Alessandra Battaglinio	

Anniversaries

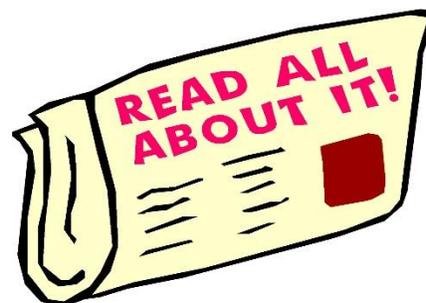


**The deadline for submission
of information and articles
for the March issue, will be
Monday, February 23rd
[February is a short month!]**

Call for 2026

Patrons of "St. Luke's Voice"

Members and friends become patrons of "St. Luke's Voice". Your name appears in each issue of the newsletter as a Patron. Patrons help to defray the expensive costs of producing the congregation newsletter by contributing a special gift of \$25 per calendar year.



(Those who participated in 2025 should send their donation now for the new calendar year 2026).

Patrons will also receive their newsletter by First Class Mail if they desire!

To become a patron, mail your gift of \$25.00 to St. Luke's and attach it to this form.

PATRON OF ST. LUKE'S VOICE

Please include my household name as a patron of our church newsletter:

Name _____

Address _____

Do Do not send my monthly issue by First Class Mail.

*Send to St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 95 Eastchester Rd., New Rochelle, NY 10801.
Please designate the gift toward "Patron of newsletter".*

St. Luke's Lutheran Church – February 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>1</i> 10a-Worship Service with Rev. Mark Brown 10a-Sunday School 11a-Coffee Hour, Host: Choir</p>	<p><i>2</i> 7p-Basketball Group</p>	<p><i>3</i></p>	<p><i>4</i></p>	<p><i>5</i></p>	<p><i>6</i> 7p-Boy Scouts</p>	<p><i>7</i> 9:30a-A.A. Men's Group 12p-Sensory Taekwon-DO</p>
<p><i>8 Souper Bowl Sunday</i> 10a-Worship with Rev. John Backe 10a –Sunday School 11a-Coffee Hour, Host: Fellowship 11a-ANNUAL MEETING</p>	<p><i>9</i> 7p-Basketball Group</p>	<p><i>10</i></p>	<p><i>11</i></p>	<p><i>12</i></p>	<p><i>13</i> 7:15p-Bou Scouts</p>	<p><i>14</i> 9:30a-A.A. Men's Group 12p-Sensory Taekwon-Do</p>
<p><i>15 Transfiguration of Our Lord</i> 10a-Service of the Word with Deacon Nancy Sigler NO Sunday School 11a-Coffee Hour, Host: Social Ministry</p>	<p><i>16 Presidents' Day</i> Office Closed No-Basketball Group</p> <p>Schools closed Mid-Winter Recess</p>	<p><i>17 Shrove Tuesday</i> 5:30-7p:Pancake Supper</p>	<p><i>18 Ash Wednesday</i> 7p-Worship with Rev. Backe 8p-Choir</p>	<p><i>19</i></p>	<p><i>20</i> No Boy Scouts</p>	<p><i>21</i> 9:30a-A.A. Men's Group 12p-Sensory Taekwon-Do</p>
<p><i>22</i> 10a-Worship with Rev. Backe 10a-Sunday School 10a-Coffee Hour, Host: Church Council 3-6p-Kononia Annual Mtg.</p>	<p><i>23</i> 7p-Basketball Group 7p-Council Mtg.</p>	<p><i>24</i></p>	<p><i>25</i> 7p-Lenten Vespers with Bible Study</p>	<p><i>26</i> 12:30p-Book Club Barnes & Noble</p>	<p><i>27</i> 7:15p-Boy Scouts</p>	<p><i>28</i> 9:30a-A.A. Men's Group 12p-Sensory Taekwon-Do</p>

Note: All Sundays: 9a-Choir Rehearsal, 10a-Choir & Sunday School, 11a-Coffee Hour

No Cooking for HOPE in February