FEBRUARY 2026

NEWS OF PEACE

United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Peace ELCA **Steeleville, Illinois**

Dear Friends

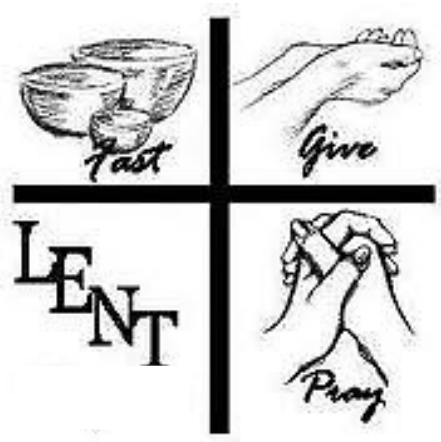
The holy season of Lent will be upon us in less than three weeks! Hard to believe. Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday, February 18th!**

As you know, the three marks of Lent are **prayer**, **fasting** and **almsgiving**. We sometimes call this the **"discipline of Lent."** It is through these three 'disciplines' that we come closer to Christ during these forty days and prepare our hearts and lives to celebrate a holy Easter.

I encourage you to give some thought as to how you will keep these three disciplines in your Lent this year.

Prayer

Commit yourself to worship every Sunday in Lent. If weekly worship is already your practice, make a commitment to worship every Wednesday this Lent at our mid-week services. Make a commitment to participate in all these additional weekly celebrations. Perhaps you might commit yourself to the daily reading of scripture. A schedule of readings will be available in the narthex at the beginning of Lent.



Fasting

Traditional fasting is about limiting the amount of food you eat for a certain period of time (a day, a week, a season). A typical pattern for fasting on any particular day might be that what you eat at two meals should not exceed what you normally eat at your main meal. Hence, the day would include a main meal and two smaller meals. If one's health allows, some fast from all food for a given day. Sometimes you may hear of people "giving up" a favorite food or drink during the season of Lent. (My brother-in-law gives up beer each Lent.) Another way to "fast" is to abstain from some particularly enjoyable activity such as playing golf or going to the movies.

Any personal deprivation can serve as a reminder that we are in the season of Lent and that it is a special time of the year for prayer and penitence.

Almsgiving

The third mark of our Lenten discipline is that of giving to the poor or almsgiving. This can be connected to our fasting. For example, if we fast from fast food or a particular meal, we can give the amount of money we might have spent on that fast food or that meal and give that amount to the poor. I might suggest making a special monetary donation to Crisis Food during Lent. You also might make a special donation to Lutheran World Relief or our Local Mission Fund during Lent. Envelopes for these special offerings are in the book racks in the pews of the church.

The Discipline of Lent

As you prepare to keep Lent this year give some consideration over the next couple of weeks as to how you will make this Lent a special one for you. Perhaps you will keep all three marks of Lent in some way. You will choose to pray, fast and give to the poor. Some may want to concentrate on only one of these marks, the one that is most meaningful to you. Whatever you do, a little forethought can go a long way to preparing yourself for a meaningful Lent.

In Christ,

Pastor Ken

Below are the contributions for the month of January

(need each week $ 5,786.79)

Date	Weekly Offering	Received Year to Date
3&4	$4,395.00	$4,395.00
10&11	$4,887.00	$9,282.00
17&18	$9,108.35	$18,390.35

SUPER BOWL WEEKEND – Support your team and the Food Pantry on Super Bowl weekend! The Evangelism & We Care Work Group is sponsoring a SUPER BOWL Sunday (and Saturday) the weekend of February 7th and 8th. Two bins will be located at the entrance to the sanctuary – each identified with the name of one of the contending teams for this year's Super Bowl. You can vote for your favorite team by bringing a cash or Condiments (ketchup, mustard, mayo or BBQ Sauce) and placing it in the bin of the team you choose. All donations will be given to Peace's Food Pantry. Please "vote" for your team generously.

The 2026 Envelopes are available to pick up M-TH from 8am-4pm.

HAPPENINGS IN THE CONGREGATION:

Charlotte Ray Feldmann, the daughter of Ethan and Rayme Feldmann was baptized on January 11, 2026. Sponsors were Hunter and Grace Beetley.

Judith Ann (Haberman) Wilson passed away on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at Randolph County Care Center, Sparta, IL. Funeral Services were held Tuesday, January 27, 2026, at Peace Lutheran Church, Steeleville, IL. Burial was at Peace Lutheran Cemetery, Steeleville, IL.

CEMETERY INFO

Mowing season is drawing near. This is a reminder that all Christmas décor and any flowers or items that are at the base of the stone or stuck in the ground must be removed by the end of March. Any items left after this time will be collected or discarded by the caretakers.

Please remember the rules that apply during the mowing season:

All décor must be on the stone and not on the base or ground area, due to the fact that wires, etc. can cause damage to the mower, mowing equipment and personal injury to those who are taking care of the cemetery grounds.

The saddles that straddle the top of the stone are wonderful, but please keep in mind that they do leave rust marks on the stone if the metal is not plastic, or rubber coated. We do suggest marking the saddles or flowers with a name from the stone so if they are blown away, we can return them to the proper stone. We do encourage flowers in the cemetery, as it does show a beautiful form of respect for our loved ones.

Please abide by these rules. We strongly regret having to do so, but if these rules are not followed, they can cause serious injury or problems to the mowing equipment.

We also request that **vehicles stay on the roads** and not on the grass areas of the cemetery, as to prevent damage to the grounds

Thank you very much for your cooperation. If you have any questions or concerns, please phone me.

Cemetery Sexton

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! This year's coat drive was a huge success thanks to those of you who donated items. Listed below are the number of items distributed – a grand total of 832! Your generosity will keep many of the less fortunate in our community warm this winter. God has surely blessed us with so many of you who care about others.

Item	Number Distributed
Coats – Baby/Toddler – 0 to 5T	38
Coats – Youth – XS to XXL	60
Coats – Adult – Female	55
Coats – Adult – Male	42
Boots Shoes	5 1
Earmuffs Headbands	3 2
Gloves Mittens	146 Pairs 13 Pairs
Hat & Glove Sets	16
Hats	136
Socks	299 Pairs
Purses Scarves	6 10

MID-WEEK LENTEN SERIES

IT IS FINISHED

The **BODY OF CHRIST** For Us

Holy Communion
12:30 and 6 pm

Wednesdays February 25
March 4, 11, 18, 25

ASH WEDNESDAY February 18
12:30 & 6 pm Holy Communion

HOLY WEEK

MAUNDY THURSDAY, April 2
Holy Communion 6 pm only
GOOD FRIDAY, April 3
6 pm only
EASTER SUNDAY, April 5
6 am Sunrise Holy Communion
9 am Holy Communion