

# The Vine

## New Life Lutheran Church Newsletter

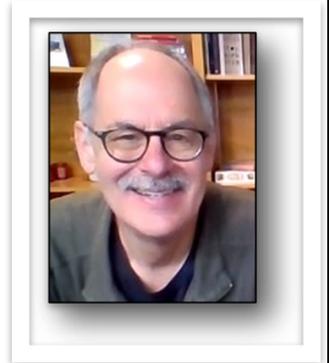
### March 2026



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Last month in my Newsletter thoughts I said I was playing with the idea of “Journey” as a Lenten Season focus. Let me return to that for a moment.

I suggested that there is the **Journey of our Daily Lives** – work, aging, family, serving, losing, loving etc. etc. We pray in worship for those who have had surgeries, are undergoing medical tests, or are traveling and the like. Thank you for your care. This month I will once again take communion to members who request such. Our daily lives are busy. They are the primary nexus of our individual callings. Be well!



I also mentioned the **Journey of our Nation's Politics**. On Ash Wednesday, in an Ecumenical Prayer Vigil New Life hosted, we looked at, prayed for, and spoke honestly about the realities before us. March 28<sup>th</sup> there is a “No Kings 3” gathering in town. On Palm Sunday, March 29, there will be a mid-afternoon march in Newport. I'll be participating in these and will keep you posted about such opportunities. However, our Sunday focus will be largely elsewhere as our upcoming Gospel Readings now dictate.

What about the **Journey of New Life Lutheran in Pastoral Transition**? Sunday, March 15, Rev. David Eppelheimer from the Synod Office will be here for worship. He will not be bringing names of potential candidates to us, but will be here for conversation and an update on our process. Please note that we are moving our March 8 coffee hour to March 15. Plan to participate!

**AND OF COURSE! There is the Journey of our Lord Jesus Christ to Calvary**. Holy Week service details are being set. It will be our great joy to have the members of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church join us for Palm Sunday worship March 29. Please come and be active hosts for them. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday opportunities will be announced as they are finalized. And Easter Sunday, of course, will be a grand celebration with full organ. Come, come, come!!!

Finally, please pencil in on your calendars perhaps a sack lunch or 1:00 pm-ish class/meeting at church Wednesday, March 25. We're not offering mid-week Lenten services this year, so this is my trade off! <g> I would like to have time to chat with you all about our vision for the future. This is just me thinking out loud at the moment, and I'll coordinate with other congregational leaders, but I think some time together would be fun and fruitful. The **Journey of Tomorrow** also awaits us.

Thank you for everything!

Pr. Dave Brauer-Rieke

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### Offerings Year To Date 2026

Feb. offerings were	\$4,326
Feb. offerings budgeted	\$5,833
Amt. of offerings received (Jan.-Feb. 2026)	\$8,863
Amt. of offerings budgeted (Jan.-Feb. 2026)	\$11,667

### Fellowship Snack Providers –March

We are using the following schedule for fellowship snack providers .

Last name s beginning with the following letters will be asked to provide snacks:

<b>January</b>	<b>A-D</b>
<b>February</b>	<b>E-K</b>
<b>March</b>	<b>L-P</b>
<b>April</b>	<b>QRSTUWXYZ</b>

### Adult Learning

The adult Learning Hour before worship. I love do-time to look at all the worship. Our conversations will be about how they each relate to the theme of the day and – of us!

continues from 9:15-10 AM ing this and we'll use the Scriptures we'll read in conversations they each relate to the course - how they relate to

NLLC Legacy/Endowment Fund

### ***DJD YOU KNOW...?***

The funds purpose is to fund mission work at home and around the world, above and beyond the programs supported through regular offerings.



New Life Lutheran church's Endowment fund is invested with Western Lane County Community Foundation. Distributions are received annually.

Currently distributions are made to Siuslaw Outreach Services, Florence Food Share, Pregnancy & Parenting Center of Florence, Florence First Step & a Student Scholarship from LCC.

Members can donate directly or by designating a gift in their will.



### **Palm Sunday**

March 29, 2026

10:30 AM

Worship at New Life Lutheran Church.

We will be joined by Members of St. Andrews Episcopal Church.



### Taizé Community Prayer Service God's People Pray for Peace



The Second Sunday of Every Month  
4:00 pm

Florence United Methodist Church  
333 Kingwood  
Florence



## NLLC Church Council Meeting Minutes

February 5, 2026

**Called to Order:** President Roy Hager called the Council meeting to order at 2:00 pm. Members present President Roy Hager, V.P. Dave Braley, Secretary Cathy Dietz, Don Stewart, Carrie Aburto, Treasure Bryant Payne, Dianna Barry, Rev. Dave Brauer-Rieke.

**Opening Devotions:** Led by Rev. Dave Brauer-Rieke.

**Minutes:** Approved as corrected, minutes for January 8, 2026. Motion made by Dave Braley; second by Don Stewart. Motion carried unanimously.

**Treasurers Report:** Was presented by Bryant Payne. Moved to file report.

**Pastor's Report:** I continue to enjoy my work with you here at New Life Lutheran Church and feel honored to be asked to extend my stay here. Contingent on formal approval of a contract extension by the Council, I am willing and able to stay on through Easter Sunday, Sunday April 5. **January Highlights:**

- January has seen us as a worshipping community move into the Season of Epiphany. Sylvia and I have chosen to work with a very traditional liturgy for the Season with mostly family hymns. We will alter the liturgy again for the Season of Lent.
- Our Epiphany liturgy was introduced with a lot of standing. This was my choice and was meant to raise or illustrate the question of physical capacity and energy. It seemed to me like a fun way to raise at least one dimension of that question. People were good sports with that, and we are now standing more in worship than we did in December but, of course, not as much as we could be. The balance seems right to me.
- I continue to offer a Sunday morning Bible Study prior to worship. It's fun.
- I have not done any home communions in January, but there are three people on my list for February that I will certainly attend to this month.
- Our Constitution revision is close to completion, and I have started thinking about membership rolls.

**Dates in Florence have been:**

- o January 3-18, and 24-27. o My general practice continues to be commuting from Portland to Florence on Saturdays and returning home to Portland Sunday afternoons, but irregularities on the home front altered that pattern some in January.

- o My calendar for February anticipates my presence in Florence February 1-8, and 14-23.

- o I keep a general record of time spent in service to NLLC per our contract and am glad to share that with anybody if you have questions.

**February/March Aspirations:**

My time during my first six Sundays (November 30 – January 4) here were a “get the lay of the land” and “offer meaningful, seasonal worship” time. My remaining time, with our agreed upon extension, allows me to invest in different work.

- I will continue to shape and offer appropriate Sunday morning worship opportunities (and special services as needed) with Cathy, Sylvia and our Assisting Ministers. The Season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday February 18 and will conclude with Holy Week and Easter Sunday, March 29-April 5.
- I will continue with our Sunday morning Bible Study meeting 9:15-10:00 AM.
- My confirmation training for Lela Olienyk is a joy and will continue. We attempt to meet weekly, either face to face when I am in town, or online when I am in Portland.
- I will continue to visit and offer pastoral support as appropriate.
- We have had two congregational deaths in my time here, Steve Olienyk in December and Betty Ferne in January. I continue to visit and support the Olienyks. The family of Betty Fearn is mostly from out of town. I did an interment of ashes with them in our Ash Garden, but do not anticipate further follow up.
- As stated in last month's report I will work on verifying and/or updating the Church Membership rolls. This work took an interesting turn for me as I started to record Steve and Betty's deaths in our formal membership rolls. There is a three and a half year gap in our records into which I assume the Olienyk family (for example) falls since I am unable to find their names elsewhere in the book. I have more to learn about this.
- I have done most of the cursory engagement in conversation with congregational leaders and a variety of community and synodical ministers I mentioned in my last report - to help clarify transitional ministry efforts and opportunities – and I wish to have a discussion with the Council sometime around this.

In my last month's report, I mentioned the possibly of a “Leadership Review” – really more of a grappling around leadership/energy capacity. What I mean by that is “What is our capacity as a congregation to do the work of the Church?” Suggested changes in our Constitution to be discussed at our February 5 meeting include lowering the number of members needed for a Congregational Meeting quorum (from 15 to 12 – a number that was 25 in our 2020 Constitution); a shrinking of our working Nominating Committee (from 6 to 5 members); a changing in our Audit Committee, from a required 3 members to 2; changing “shall have” to “may have” language in a few places, etc. This is all about capacity and I believe this is a reality we need to look at head on. Joy in the journey. The Lord is good!

**President's Report:** The new Water Heater for the Preschool has been installed.

**Old Business: Constitution:** Dave Braley & Pastor are working on the final editing. It has been updated to include the By Laws and now has been sent out to the council for review. Changes include: 1.) pg. 18, C10.04 changed quorum requirements from fifteen (15), to twelve (12); 2.) pg. 20, C11.03, changed to say "except the treasurer to exempt them from two-year limitation; 3.) pg. 23, C13.02, changed Nominating committee to five (5) voting members, deleted Board of Deacons requirement, changed term to "No elected member of the Nominating Committee shall serve for more than two consecutive terms. C13.03, changed Audit committee to two (2) or three (3) voting members, Committee members shall not be officers of the Congregation, terms will be staggered terms. 4.) C13.04, Changes to Mutual Ministry Committee, changed to say "may" be elected and shall not be officers of the congregation, Board of Deacons Bylaw deleted-ie: now considered optional. Dave Braley moved to accept the changes, Don Stewart 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Motion passed unanimously. **Call Committee update:** Nothing new yet. We are still waiting on names to be presented to by Pastor Eppleshiemer. **Membership Roles:** Pastor Dave & Cathy will look into a computer program for membership. Pastor stressed how important it is in the upkeep of the roles, especially for the purposes of voting.

**New Business: Garbage:** The recycle bin has been placed in the garage to keep from having garbage put in the bin. The next issue is putting the bin out on garbage days so it can be picked up. Roy Hager said he would try to come on Mondays to put the bin out.

**Pastor's Contract:** Pastor Dave has agreed to stay through April 5<sup>th</sup>, Easter. He presented the council with an extended contract. Carrie Aburto moved to accept the contract, Don Stewart 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Motion passed unanimously. **Fellowship:** We are losing contact with our members. Should we have fellowship more often? Maybe have a shortened version in the Narthex with just coffee & cookies. **Cathy's Vacation:** Cathy is requesting vacation time in April. Dates are April 20<sup>th</sup> through 24<sup>th</sup> **Lent:** Pastor has 3 suggestions for Lent. Two of them are Soup & Bread dinners here at the Church or Cottage meetings. Pastor will also look into Holy Week services.

Next meeting: March 19, 2026, 1:00 pm will include Zoom

Adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 3:16 pm

Respectfully submitted

Cathy Dietz, Secretary



**MARCH 8, 2026**  
**DON'T FORGET**  
**TO MOVE**  
**YOUR CLOCKS**  
**1 HOUR**  
**FORWARD!**