



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

ECHO the love of Christ

We are a Christian community united in God's call
to serve others by sharing the love of Christ.

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

FEBRUARY 2026

From the thoughts of the pastor...

With recent events happening and nearly happening in the world, I wanted to talk about the so-called Just War Theory and asking ourselves if any war is just. Before we dig too deep into this, we need to begin with a few definitions – which, of course, I get from our friend Google. Google defines Just (in the adjectival way and the way we will be talking about just) as “based on or behaving according to what is morally right and fair.”¹ Within our religious and spiritual world, this is the same type of definition as we have for Justified, “being made morally right and fair.” The other word that we should define so that there are no misunderstandings is war, “a state of armed conflict between different nations or states or different groups within a nation or state.”² Now let’s put these two together:

Just War Theory is the idea or doctrine that says a state of armed conflict between different nations or states or different groups within a nation or state that is based on or behaving according to what is morally right and fair.

Now this is a long definition, something that doesn’t roll off the tongue, difficult to remember. So, we normally say, is the conflict – war – morally right (e.g. how do we feel about the war). While feelings are important, it should be noted that the decision to go to war should not be based on feelings – feelings of revenge, feelings of hate, feelings of discrimination. The decision to go to war should be based on evidence, theologians, ethicists, and policymakers with these two criteria in mind: *jus ad bellum* (the right to go to war) and *jus in bello* (the right conduct in war). A third criteria that has come up in scholarly groups is the potential third criteria: *jus post bellum* (the post-war right – or the morality of post-war settlement and reconstruction not least of which is the mental, physical, and spiritual injuries that come from war). Over the centuries, rules of war have been created to assist the *jus in bello*...if these rules are followed...the most central and important of these rules is the rule of non-combatants.

A non-combatant is also known as a civilian, someone who is in the area who is not knowingly fighting or not knowingly aiding the fighting forces. Non-combatants are to be kept safe, and all efforts must be made to protect any military forces or equipment from harming non-combatants. This not only includes making sure the person themselves are kept from harm (e.g. safe from bullets, bombs, and other military projectiles) but it includes keeping the things to stay alive (e.g. housing, water, food supplies, other basic necessities). When a bomb or missile hits an apartment building, intentionally or not, this violates this non-combatant rule. Or when waterlines, powerlines, food supplies are cut or destroyed or limited, this rule is violated.

¹ Google Dictionary - Just

² Google Dictionary - War

The problem that exists is there is no accountability; no way to hold military commanders and country leaders accountable for the actions that happen. An experiment was started after the War Tribunal of Nuremberg to have a World Criminal Court (WCC) where violations in the rules of war would be prosecuted. But this experiment failed because each country in the world had to choose to participate in this court – to be able to be held liable in this court – and the major offenders (Russia, Israel, United States, China, India, Pakistan) they have chosen not to participate. The WCC can issue arrest warrants for the leaders of these countries – as they recently did in 2025 for Russia and Israel – but there is no way of arresting these people unless they enter a country who subscribed to the WCC. Therefore, there is no accountability when rules are violated, which allows rules to continually be violated making the rules a memory and then no rules, which thus makes no *jus in bello* and no Just War.

To return to the question, is there such as thing as a just war? The answer is only if we want there to be one, only if we subscribe to one. This is where differing opinions happen.

On one side, the stricter pacifists say there is no justifiable basis for war, where the more nationalists say war need only serve a nation's interest to be justifiable. Back in 2001, after the Twin Towers were attacked, the United States declared war on terrorists, following the more nationalists view – the United States was attacked and to prevent further attacks, the United States would go to war on the leaders who orchestrated and carried out these attacks. Somewhat nationalists view and somewhat revenge. Scholars will debate the war in Afghanistan as a just war for centuries.

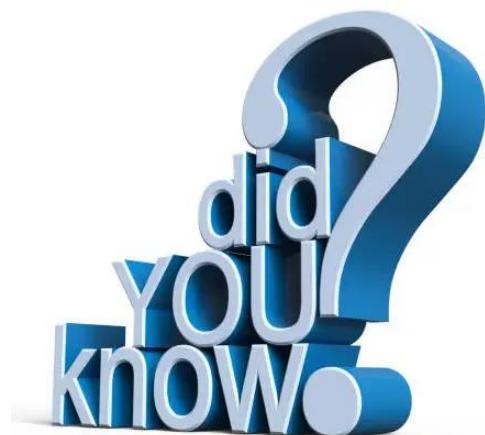
For us Christians, the view of a just war is murky at best. We are commanded to love neighbor and not to kill. But love neighbor doesn't mean to let anyone walk all over you, steal your belongings, and be cruel to you. There might be times where violence is necessary and justifiable provided it is proportional violence. For example, a country that has invaded another country, it might be necessary and justifiable to use violence and military force (war) to restore justice and peace. This is the case in Ukraine. War may be necessary and right, even though it may not be good. We would hope and promote the use of non-violence for justice and peace to be restored. In an example a little closer to home, this very promotion and hope for non-violence is being played out by peaceful protests.

Standing up for another's rights is one idea/reason to go to war – like the United States did in 2001, the right to survive without fear. But violence is not always the answer, as we see today in Minnesota. Peaceful protests are the very essence of a just war – no war, no violence at all. Christians throughout the centuries have tried to justify going to war since Christianity began. But war and violence should always be the last option. Only then, only after every option has been explored and defeated, only then – and following the *jus in bello*, *jus ad bellum*, and the new *jus post bellum* should any country – or anyone – consider using war and violence.

ECHO Did you Know February 2026

Did you know...

One of the ministries that we have within the church, especially during the wintertime, is the baking and selling of Nisu Bread. Besides the different ways of spelling (Nisu, Nisua, Nissua) this bread is pretty special. This bread is a traditional Finnish Cardamom Coffee Bread that is an enriched yeasted bread made with milk, eggs, sugar, butter, and crushed cardamom seeds; after baking a topping of sugar and (if desired) sliced almonds are added. Due to its flavor profile, this bread is often enjoyed with a cup of coffee or tea and is incredibly popular during the winter holidays.



We, at Good Shepherd, have a very dedicated group who spend hours on a Saturday morning making this bread. While the recipe might be a secret, the outcomes of these Saturday mornings are fantastic. Having the bread by itself or with a little butter is such a treat. If you can keep your hands off it for a couple minutes, a toasted slice with butter is absolutely divine. Finally, another way to enjoy this bread is to make Nisua French Toast – takes some extra time, but it is well worth it.

As mentioned, this enthusiastic group has a good time making this bread – they feel this is truly a ministry of the church. They do sell the bread to help cover the cost of the ingredients, but the cost is such a small price to pay for the enjoyment of this bread that a loaf would still be delicious at twice the price. Any extra contributions and sales this group makes goes right back into the ministries of the church including the quilting group, Christian Education, the Food Pantry, social activities, and more.

While I understand cardamon is not a favorite of everyone, this bread will convert you and you will, like I am, become anxious for the next bake for another slice of heaven.



The Big Churhcy Word

ECHO Word February 2026

Over the past few years in this section of the ECHO, I have been using a list that I created of some of the more commonly used words that we hear in the church. I have now reached the end of that list. I encourage you to reach out to me with words that you have heard that you'd like more information on. They can be anything that I've already defined or not, from our denomination or not. If there is a word that you hear within the worship service, around the church, that you are like "humm, I wonder what that word really means", please let me know.

The last words I have for you is:

Bishop (Gr. *Episkopos*, "overseer") In the NT, used synonymously with "presbyter" (Phil. 1:1). The term came to describe the chief pastor of an area with responsibility for guiding the church's work. Later, the bishop gained pastoral oversight of a specific geographic area.³

Presbyter (Gr. *Presbyteros*, "elder") A term used in presbyterian forms of church government for elders who govern local congregations. It is derived from the functions of the NT leaders (Acts 14:23; 15:4; 1 Tim. 4:14; Jas. 5:14). Also used for "bishops" (Titus 1:5-9), priests and ministers.⁴

³ McKim, Donald K. *The Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* 2 Ed. Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, Kentucky, 2014.

⁴ Ibid.

In the Lutheran Tradition, we have bishops who are, as defined, the overseers of the area. Going back to early Christianity, a bishop would oversee the ministry of a city (permanent rural churches and gathering places were rare and the majority of people would be in a city). As Christianity began to spread, bishops started to have more territory to oversee. Eventually, we get to where we are today with three bishops within Ohio and 65 bishops in the United States (just for the ELCA).

While the specific roles vary from synod to synod of a bishop, their primary role is boiled down to being a pastor for everyone in their area – this is usually broken down to being the pastor to the pastors as it would be impossible for a single person to be pastor to over 100,000 people in NE Ohio alone. Even the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA is still a pastor – pastor to the bishops. Bishops are charged with the well-being of their synod, their pastors, and maintaining a united theological practice and ideology within their area. They are, at times, required to discipline both pastors and lay congregants if actions go against the accepted practices, theologies, ideologies, and guidelines of the synod and the ELCA.

However, this disciple is rare and not what a bishop does on a day-to-day basis. The bishop of the NE Ohio Synod does what pastors do: administrative work, pastoral care, and building and maintaining relations with those within the ELCA and differing denominations and faiths. Since a bishop is a representative of the whole synod, every six years, a choice is made to either keep the current bishop or elect a new bishop. This happens at the Annual Synod Assembly. This year is a bishop election year which means at the 2026 Synod Assembly, those gathered will either re-elect the current bishop or elect a new bishop.

February Birthdays



Sophia Poff
Chuck Anthony

Mary Vidmar
Cindy Nelson
Shirley Brookhouser

Bradley Gauvin
Stacy Racut



ATTENDANCE

12/21	70
12/24	62
12/25	16
12/28	38
1/4	62
1/11	58
1/18	33
1/25	34

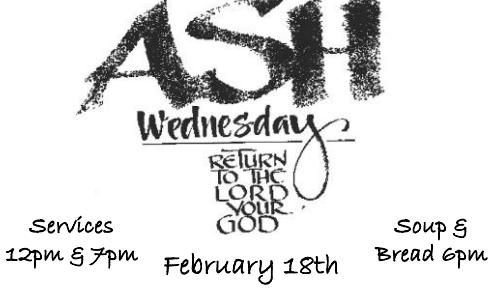
Prayer and visitation requests may be submitted in the box in the Narthex or box in the airlock by the offices, using the cards provided.

PRAYER

If you know of someone who is hospitalized, sick, or needs a visit, you may also call the church office at 440-599-8908. To add someone to the prayer chain, you can call Betty at 440-265-2452.

TREASURER'S REPORT: DECEMBER 2025

NEWS & UPDATES

<p>Designer PURSE BINGO</p> <p>FEBRUARY 7, 2026 DOORS OPEN AT 5, BINGO STARTS AT 6:30 SHARP COST \$50 water, coffee, and meal provided (BYOB)</p> <p>January 28th - last day to order tickets!</p>	 <p>SOUP SALE FUNDRAISER</p> <p>February 8th before & after services If you would like to make a soup, sign up sheet is in the Narthex</p>
<p>PLEASE JOIN US</p>  <p>CONGREGATIONAL MEETING</p> <p>SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15th 12:30PM</p>	 <p>ASH Wednesday Services 12pm & 7pm February 18th Soup & Bread 6pm RETURN TO THE LORD YOUR GOD</p>
 <p>Service at 7:00pm Feb 25th- Mar 25th</p> <p>Soup & Sandwiches 6:00-6:45pm If interested in helping with food, see a council member.</p> <p>Lenten Offering Envelopes are available in the Narthex.</p>	<p>Rounds of bowling (includes shoes), pizza & soda!</p>  <p>February 28th 6:30pm El Camp Lanes</p> <p>\$10 per person. Sign up sheets are in the Narthex. Sign up is <u>encouraged</u>, so we order enough lanes and food for everyone.</p>
 <p>BASIC OBS SETUP FOR RECORDING</p> <p>If you are interested in OBS training (learning how to run the slides during services), see Pastor.</p>	<p>Anyone interested in CPR/AED training, please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex.</p> 

Committee News

Christian Education

Our Annual Bowling Event will be coming up February 28th 6:30-8:30pm. The cost is \$10 per person and includes 2 rounds of bowling, shoes, pizza, and soda.

We'll be starting our Marianne's Easter candy sale in February. Last day to order is March 8th. You can pick up your orders on Palm Sunday.

Evangelism

Purse Bingo is February 7th. The last day to order tickets is January 28th. Tickets are \$50. Doors open at 5pm. Bingo starts at 6:30pm. Catered meal, coffee, and water provided; BYOB. The meal is catered by Kay's Place. The menu includes chicken and biscuits, swiss steak, mashed potatoes, pasta dish, salad, bread and butter, and desserts.

We'll have a **SOUP-er Bowl Fundraiser** on February 8th. If you're interested in making soup, there's a sign-up sheet in the Narthex. Suggested donation is \$5 for a small container and \$8 for a large.

Volunteers are greatly appreciated for unloading trucks and helping prepare lunches in the kitchen, especially on Tuesdays.

Fishes & Loaves – Food Pantry hours are Tuesdays 9am – 2pm and Saturdays 10am – 12:30pm. The pantry will be closed on February 7th. Free Lunches are Tuesdays 9am-2pm and Saturdays 11am-12:30pm. Nick's Closet is open Saturdays 11am-12:30pm. For food emergencies, call 440-381-1018. Volunteers are always welcome to assist.

3Ms: Member's Maintenance Ministry

Pitch in a few hours a month to help preserve the maintenance and beauty of our church. All skill levels welcome!

Please remember to keep **doors closed** to help with climate control. Also, please remember to **turn off the lights** when you leave the room.

Worship services will only be cancelled if there is a level 3 snow emergency.

Social Ministries

Volunteers welcomed to serve **hospitality** after each service. See the sign-up sheets in the Narthex.

If you're interested in **leading Social Ministry** or have ideas about Social Ministry events, see Pastor.

Worship and Music

Make a **joyful noise** with us! **Bell Practice** meets on Mondays. **Choir practice** meets on Wednesdays. Come try it out! All are welcome to join. See Sandra.

Ash Wednesday is February 18th. We'll have services at 12pm and 7pm. Soup and bread will be at 6pm.

For more info about GSLC ministries and volunteer opportunities, contact the office at 440-599-8908.



February 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 8:30 Service 9:45 Christian Education 11:00 Service	2 9:00 & 10:30 YMCA Fitness Admin Office Closed	3 9-2 Food Pantry & Free Lunches Quilting 9-11	4 9:00 & 10:30 YMCA Fitness	5 5:00 Line Dancing	6 10:30 YMCA Fitness OFFICE CLOSED	7 Purse Bingo
8 8:30 Service 9:45 Christian Education 11:00 Service Soup Sale	9 9:00 & 10:30 YMCA Fitness	10 9-2 Food Pantry & Free Lunches Quilting 9-11	11 9:00 & 10:30 YMCA Fitness	12 5:00 Line Dancing	13 10:30 YMCA Fitness OFFICE CLOSED	14 10-12:30 Food Pantry 11-12:30 Free Lunches & Nick's Closet
15 8:30 Service 9:45 Christian Education 11:00 Service Children's Message Congregation Meeting 12:30	16 9:00 & 10:30 YMCA Fitness	17 9-2 Food Pantry & Free Lunches Quilting 9-11	18 9:00 & 10:30 YMCA Fitness Ash Wed. Services at 12pm & 7pm 6pm Soup & bread	19 5:00 Line Dancing	20 10:30 YMCA Fitness OFFICE CLOSED Echo Articles Due	21 10-12:30 Food Pantry 11-12:30 Free Lunches & Nick's Closet
22 8:30 Service 9:45 Christian Education 11:00 Service Council 12:30p	23 9:00 & 10:30 YMCA Fitness	24 9-2 Food Pantry & Free Lunches Quilting 9-11	25 9:00 & 10:30 YMCA Fitness 6pm Soup & sandwich 7pm service	26 5:00 Line Dancing	27 10:30 YMCA Fitness OFFICE CLOSED	28 10-12:30 Food Pantry 11-12:30 Free Lunches & Nick's Closet Bowling 6:30p El Camp Lanes
March 1 8:30 Service 9:45 Christian Education 11:00 Service CAMA at UCC	March 2 9:00 & 10:30 YMCA Fitness	March 3 9-2 Food Pantry & Free Lunches Quilting 9-11	March 4 9:00 & 10:30 YMCA Fitness 6pm Soup & sandwich 7pm service	March 5 5:00 Line Dancing	March 6 10:30 YMCA Fitness OFFICE CLOSED	March 7 10-12:30 Food Pantry 11-12:30 Free Lunches & Nick's Closet

DATE/ TIME	ASSISTING MINISTER	COMMUNION ASSISTANT	USHERS	GREETERS	READER	ACOLYTE	HOSPITALITY
2/1/2026 8:30	Rich Tulino	Katrina Pavolino			Rich Tulino		
11:00	Deac. Heidi	Glenda Betteridge	Greg and Glenda Betteridge	Mary Lou Moisio	Ron Young		
2/8/2026 8:30	Amy Gallagher	Katrina Pavolino		Nancy Altman	Amy Gallagher		
11:00		Mark Lytle			Mark Lytle		
2/15/2026 8:30	Jen Best	Katrina Pavolino		Nancy Altman			
11:00	Jen Best				Susan Tan		
2/22/2026 8:30	Rich Tulino	Katrina Pavolino		Katrina Pavolino	Rich Tulino		
11:00					Ron Young		



**FEBRUARY
ALTAR GUILD:**
8:30 Michelle Flower, Katrina Pavolino
11 Kelly Anthony, Barb Talan, Susan Tan

**MARCH
ALTAR GUILD:**
8:30 Michelle Flower, Katrina Pavolino
11 Kelly Anthony, Robin Bryant

*Serving from
the Heart*

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
876 Grove Street
Conneaut, OH 44030
440-599-8908 / www.gslcc.org

Worship Times
Sunday 8:30 Contemporary
Sunday 11:00 Traditional
Holy Communion at all services

Office Hours
Monday-Thursday – 8:30 am to 1:30 pm

Pastoral Staff
Rev. Joshua Krenz, Pastor
gslcpastor@gwcmail.net

Office Staff
Jennifer Best, Administrative Assistant
goodshepherd@gwcmail.net

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Conneaut, OH 44030