

The Calvary Focus

FEBRUARY 2026

Volume 14 Issue 2

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In recent weeks, communities around the United States have been shaken by news out of Minnesota. Recent federal immigration enforcement actions, including the killing of Renee Good by an ICE agent and additional enforcement encounters, have sparked protest, anger, and deep concerns about the dignity and safety of all people. It is in times like these, when political rhetoric runs hot and divisions widen, that we must listen to the voice of God through the words in scripture.

Jesus teaches us clearly: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart... and your neighbor as yourself." (Luke 10:27). These commandments are at the heart of Christian discipleship. To love God is to allow our hearts and our vision to be shaped by God's own compassion; to love our neighbor is to act on that vision by honoring the sacred worth of every human life, knowing that we are all made in the image of God. Whether someone is an immigrant, a citizen, a neighbor in our pews, or a stranger on our streets, each one bears the sacred imprint of the Creator.

The call becomes especially challenging—and especially Christian—when Jesus expands our understanding of neighbor to include even those we find difficult to love. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says: "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). He does not exclude people based on nationality, immigration status, or political views. Instead, he invites us into the radical work of love that breaks cycles of hatred and division.

When we look at the headlines—whether it's anger at federal enforcement, protests calling for justice, or political leaders trading blame—it's easy to become consumed with division. But the Gospel calls us to something deeper: to pray for the good of every person, to seek justice with humility, and to witness to compassion in a world that can too quickly harden into judgment. We can acknowledge the complexity of public policy—border security, legal enforcement, and public safety—and still affirm the inherent dignity of every person. The Christian response refuses easy answers and refuses to dehumanize those with whom we disagree or dislike. Instead, we listen, empathize, and seek common ground rooted in the love Christ showed for all. Loving our neighbors does not mean we ignore wrongdoing, nor does it mean uncritical acceptance of any action. Rather, it means we speak and act truthfully, justly, and compassionately, remembering that every individual is a beloved child of God.

I invite you to join me in this prayer as we step into February, a month known for love: *Gracious God, in a world of fear and fury, teach us your love. Help us to see every person through your eyes, with compassion for the vulnerable, courage for the oppressed, and mercy for the fearful. May we be ambassadors of your peace, loving our neighbors as ourselves, loving even those who seem far from your heart. Guide our leaders with wisdom and justice, and shape our communities with your grace. Amen.*

In Christ,
Pastor Amanda ♥



- 1 Dora Massing
- 13 Gary McRae
Shirley Rumfelt
- 14 Cindy Checkley
- 17 Jim Bontrager
- 26 Sherry Martin
- 27 Steve Basse



- 24 Doyle & Jeannine Martin



CHURCH LOCK UP

Michael Rand



Do not forget to mark your calendars. The March Focus deadline is Friday, February 20!!!

Super Bowl Food Collection

Sunday, February 1 & 8

1 box of crackers = 1 vote

1 can of soup = 1 vote

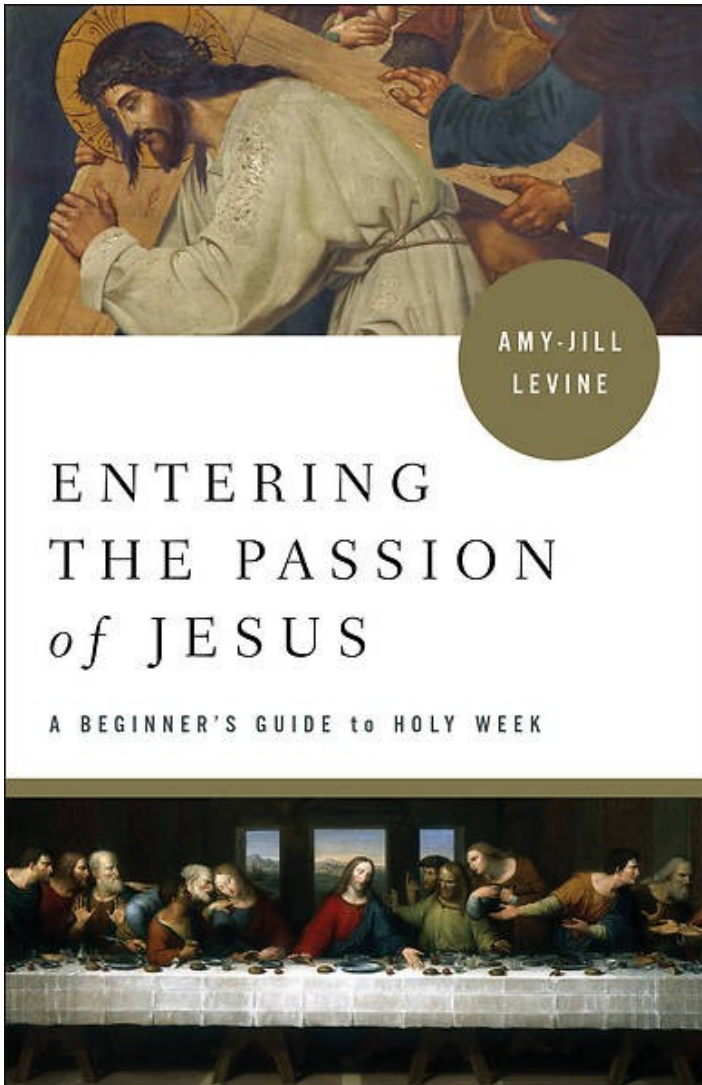
SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY is February 8. Who will Calvary pick as the winner - **New England Patriots or Seattle Seahawks?** Bring your soup and/or crackers to support your "team". Each box of crackers or can of soup will count as a vote for your "team." You can cast your vote February 1 & 8. These items will go to Church Community Services (CCS).



Here is the scoop, Saturday, February 7th is National Ice Cream for Breakfast Day. Come celebrate with us! Ice cream will be dished out for breakfast from 9:00-10:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 7th, in the Fellowship Hall. Indulge in a generous scoop of ice cream atop a homemade waffle. Choose from an assortment of toppings, including fruits, nuts, and syrups. Everyone is welcome!

Lenten Bible Study

All are welcome to join a 6-week Lenten Bible study on Mondays at 11:00am. The study begins Monday, February 23rd. We will study Amy-Jill Levine's "Entering the Passion: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week." Contact Pastor Amanda to sign up.



Lenten folders are one way Calvary shares God's love through both words and actions. Beginning on **Ash Wednesday**, Lenten folders along with a return envelope will be available for pickup in the **Narthex**. If you are unable to pick one up, please contact the church office and one can be mailed to you.

Donations collected through the Lenten folders support various organizations that share Calvary's vision of spreading God's love through words and actions.

Let's start saving our quarters.

LITTLE FREE PANTRY

Suggested Winter Donations

- Hand warmers
- Emergency blankets
- Socks
- Gloves
- Hats
- Scarves
- Peanut Butter
- Jerkey
- Canned meat
- Jelly
- Crackers
- Granola bars
- Soup
- Canned or dried fruit
- Cereal
- Canned vegetables



THANK YOU

Thank you for all the prayer and cards.

Virginia

Traveling Communion

Do you worship from home and live locally? Pastor Amanda has started bringing communion to congregants in their homes on the Monday after a Communion Sunday. The upcoming dates are February 2, March 2, and March 30. If you would like communion brought to you, please contact the church office by 9:00 a.m. that Monday.

Do you Believe?

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 3:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23

You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you.

Romans 8:9-10

For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.



Dear Calvary Family:

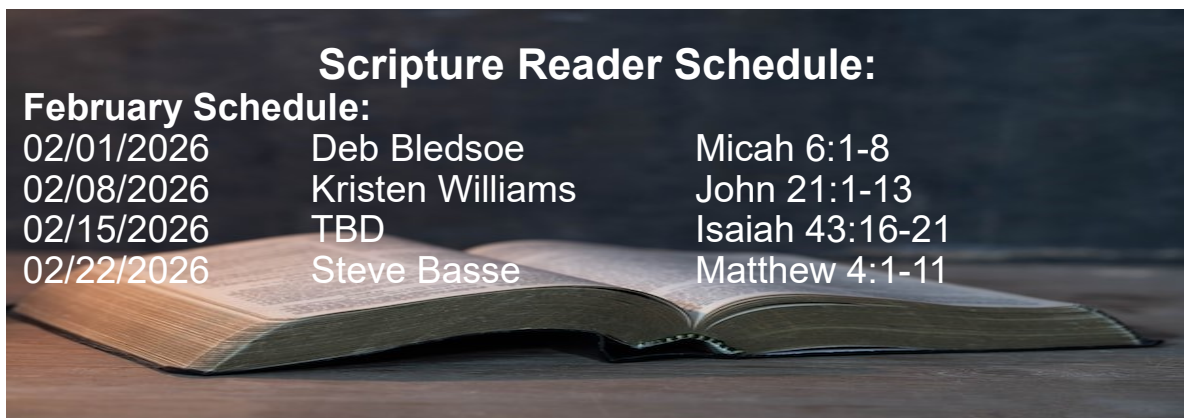
As 2026 begins, we would like to say thank you. Our family has been blessed in many ways from our Calvary Family. We would like to say thank you for the generous Christmas gift and all your prayers through out this past year. You are a generous congregation and our family appreciates each and everyone of you! We are blessed to be able to work and be a part of Calvary's family.

*Thank you,
John, Jennifer,
Ethan and Aaron Martin*

Scripture Reader Schedule:

February Schedule:

02/01/2026	Deb Bledsoe	Micah 6:1-8
02/08/2026	Kristen Williams	John 21:1-13
02/15/2026	TBD	Isaiah 43:16-21
02/22/2026	Steve Basse	Matthew 4:1-11



FREE ZOOM TRAININGS FOR LAITY & CLERGY:

Saturday, January 31, 2026
9 AM - 12 PM (CT)/10 AM - 1 PM (ET)
and/or
Saturday, February 7, 2026
8 AM - 11 AM (CT)/9 AM - 12 PM (ET)

LEADERSHIP UNIVERSITY



Northern Lakes District

Indiana Conference of The United Methodist Church

TO REGISTER:



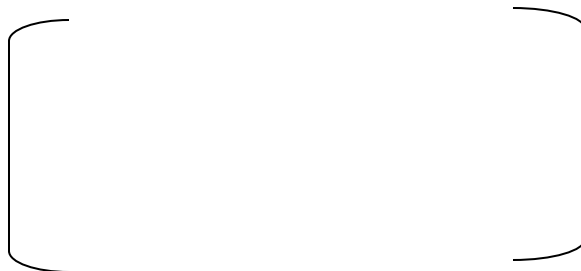
[INUMC.SWOOGO.COM/
LEADERSHIPU2026](https://inumc.swoogo.com/LEADERSHIPU2026)

WORKSHOPS INCLUDE:

Staff Parish
Endowments and Planned Giving
Fresh Expressions
Growing Young
Trustees and Finance
Church Governance/Single Board
Clergy Early in Ministry
Church Administrative Assistants
Outreach: Food Pantries and Beyond
Chat with the Chancellor: Legal Tips for Every Church
Church Development: More than Just Sundays
Lay Leadership

Elkhart Calvary United Methodist Church
2222 West Indiana Ave.
Elkhart, IN 46516

Return Service Requested



Sharing the love of God through words and actions

**PLEASE KEEP OUR WORLD, OUR NATION, OUR CHURCH AND
THE MEN AND WOMEN SERVING OUR COUNTRY IN YOUR PRAYERS**



- Calvary's Website: **www.elkhartcalvaryumc.org**
- Calvary's Facebook Page: **Elkhart Calvary UMC**
- Prayer Request: **elkhartcalvary.prayer@gmail.com**

DONATE



- Donate to help Calvary Share the love of God through words and actions:
<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/d45a1315-6f3e-4d20-980f-4187bbc0d6e0>