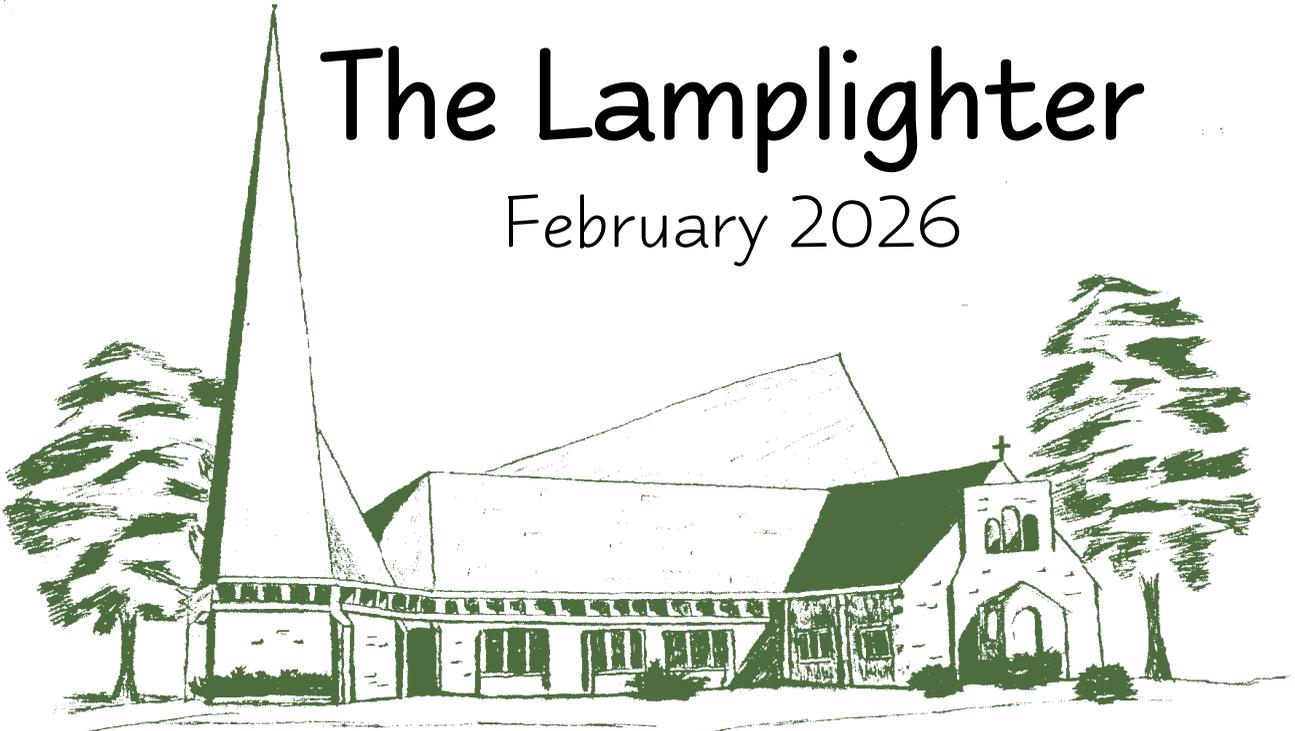


# The Lamplighter

February 2026



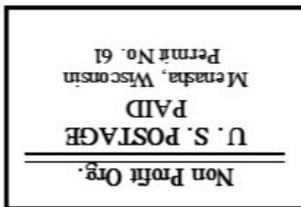
## St. Thomas Church Anglican - Episcopal

226 Washington Street, Menasha, WI 54952

Tel: 920-725-5601. Fax: 920-725-5602. Website: stthomaswi.com

**Our Vision:** We are a Jesus-centered, Spirit-filled community  
of diverse followers working to transform the world.

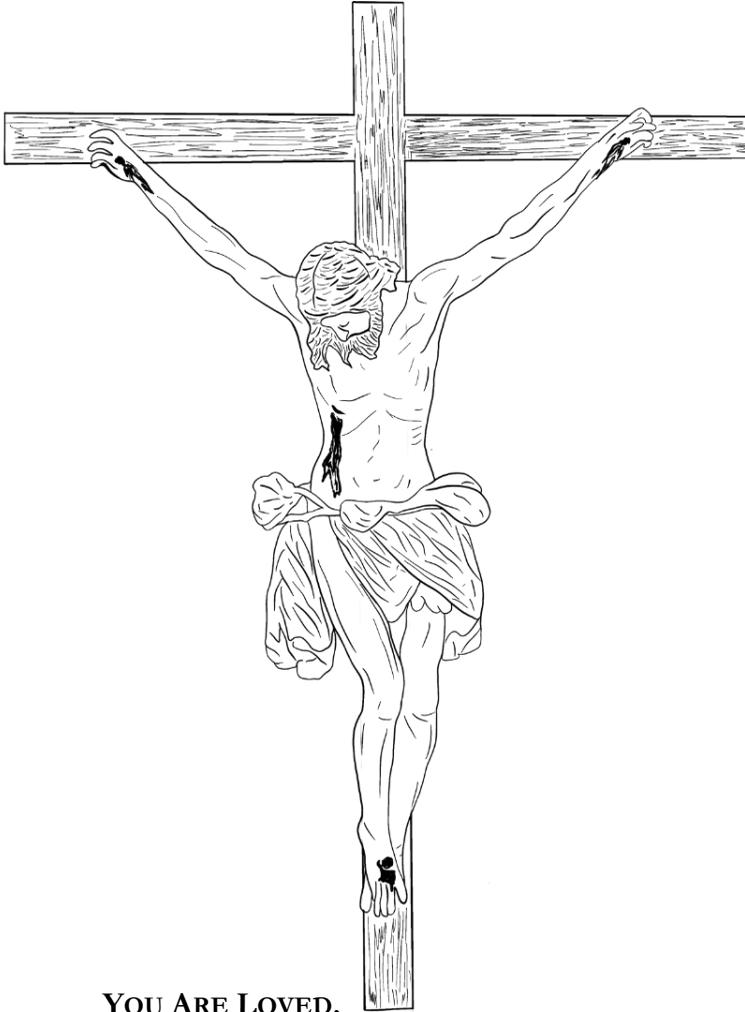
**Our Mission:** To know Christ: To make Christ known: To serve others  
in Christ's name.



Address Service Requested  
Time Value

St. Thomas Church  
226 Washington St.  
Menasha, WI 54952

Place  
Magnet  
Here



**YOU ARE LOVED.  
GOD LOVES YOU.  
HE LOVES YOU JUST AS MUCH AS  
HE LOVES THOSE YOU CALL  
“ENEMIES.”  
YOU ARE LOVED INFINITELY...**

- Fr. Andy

## Associate/Youth Ministers Musings

Hello friends . . . grace and peace,

I went viral the other day. On TikTok. If you don't know what TikTok is, don't worry. It's not important. But if you must know, TikTok is a social media app where users can post videos – anywhere from a few seconds up to 10 minutes in length.

Some videos are silly. Some are serious. Some are pointless. Some have deep meaning.

There are a lot of “trends” on TikTok. A trend is something that a lot of people do. For example, one person does a dance to a certain song. And then another person does their version of that dance to that same song. And then a couple of friends group together and do that original dance together. Then a family gives it a try. And before long, hundreds, or thousands, or even millions of people are posting videos of themselves doing a dance to that same song. That's a trend.

I decided a long time ago, if I was gonna jump on the TikTok train, that'd I'd do so primarily by doing some of those trends AS a priest. This would achieve two goals:

- 1) It would bring a little bit of Jesus to the trend/situation
- 2) It would point out the silliness of it all because, “Why is a priest doing that funky dance” (or whatever the trend is at the time)?

So what did I go viral for? Honestly, it doesn't matter. The point isn't that it went viral. Or that the video has (as of this moment) more than 5.2 MILLION views. The point is that the number of times and ways I've been able to have brief, loving, open, accepting conversations with people in the app as a result of that video.

People have asked me questions about faith, about other gods and religions, about their gender identity, about their trauma at the hands of the church, about their families, about school, about baptism, etc. The list just keeps going.

I have received a TON of comments and messages from people saying that they've only experienced priests as pastors as being representative of toxic versions of Christianity. “Toxic” meaning supporting people, or ideals, or morals, or actions that are quite obviously not Christ-like. And the level of surprise that people show when I do what I consider to be the BARE minimum in showing love, respect, grace, and peace towards others? It's shocking.

In today's world, with all the horrific things taking place both close to home and far off, perhaps a faith that doesn't see other people as anything other than in need of God's Love is one that will resonate with powers and leaders of this world, and show them that might can't make right.

To quote Fr. Jud Duplenticy:

“Christ came to heal the world, not fight it. If you start fighting wolves, before you know it, everyone you don't understand is a wolf.”

peace to you,  
Fr. Aran





### Sunday Youth Group Events

Games, events, fun 6th -12th graders

[www.styg.com/youthgroup](http://www.styg.com/youthgroup)

01/28/2026 Mosaic Party 6pm-8pm

### EpiscoWisco Camp

[www.episowisco.camp](http://www.episowisco.camp)

Mexico 2026 Love Journey July 18-25, 2026

6th graders up through young adults

[www.styg.com/lovejourney](http://www.styg.com/lovejourney)

### FILM SCHOOL

#### Film School

Our **Sunday** morning spiritual formation class. We gather at **9am** in the basement of St. Thomas Church. All **7th – 12th** graders are welcome to join us. And yes, parents can come and see what it's all about too! Film School gathers from mid-September thru mid-May. [www.styg.com/filmschool](http://www.styg.com/filmschool)

### D GROUPS

#### D-Groups

“Accept one another just as God has accepted you.” (Romans 15:7) D-Groups are open to all **7th – 12th** graders and their friends on **Wednesdays at St. Thomas 6:15 – 8:00pm**. We play, hang out, learn, eat, During the summer We meet at people's houses. D-Groups are **ALL** about **Community, Scripture, Playing, Growing, and Jesus**. [www.styg.com/d-groups](http://www.styg.com/d-groups)



**Contagion 2026**—a weekend event in Door County for all 7th-12th graders who are interesting in diving deep into what it means to live their lives according to the teachings of a Jewish rabbi.

**When?** March 13, 4:30pm—March 15, 12pm

**Where?** The Lakefront Cabin, Sturgeon Bay

Contagion is a weekend experience where students meet at St. Thomas, head up to Door County together (in vehicles driven by our adult leaders), and we spend time in community together. We cook together. We laugh together. We eat together. We learn together. We pray together. We spend time at the cabin, we go get coffee at a local coffee shop, we check out some places around Door County, and we dive deep into what it means to live our lives well with God and well with others. It's a wonderfully intense time together and it's amazing.

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES



**St. Thomas Kid's Club** is for children in K- 6th grades. We meet **Wednesday evenings in the parish hall at 6:30-8pm. September 17th- May**. We utilize the "Weaving God's Promises" curriculum.



**Children's Sunday School** is for kids 3 years through 6th grade. We meet **Sunday mornings 9-9:50** in the downstairs classrooms from **September 21st - May**.



Thank You to Everyone who came and helped out at the Games!

### CONVERSATIONS ON SCRIPTURE

**Each Sunday, at 9-9:50am** we gather in the library (lounge) and online via zoom, to reflect together on the week's Bible lessons, exploring not only the text itself but also the ways that gospel artwork, music, poetry, and other readings or videos can help us go deeper in our understanding of God's Word and in our life together as people of faith. This year we are excited to add the practice of simple contemplative prayer, offering us a new way to listen, rest, and dwell in God's presence as part of our shared journey. Everyone is welcome—your presence, your questions, and your perspective are all gifts to the conversation. Come as you are able, and join us in this joyful and prayerful exploration of scripture and community. Your facilitators for this class are Dr. Brad Lauderdale and Jill Beverlin.

**For More Information Contact Jill Beverlin:** [jilljbeverlin@gmail.com](mailto:jilljbeverlin@gmail.com)



### **St. Thomas Acolyte Opportunity**

If you or one of your children have an interest in serving St. Thomas as an Acolyte, we would love to have you. As you know, Acolytes serve as an important part of the 10:00 service every Sunday. It is very rewarding and is a great way to serve God and our St. Thomas family. If you or a family member have an interest in serving in this ministry, please reach out to Wade, Decon Lisa, Martina or contact the church office. Thank you!

### Chosen Bible Study Group

The Chosen/Bible Study Group meets weekly on **Thursday morning, 9:30-11am**. We start with morning prayer in the chapel with Fr. Andy and then we all go over to the lounge for our study.

We will be finishing with The Chosen Season 5. As we are anxiously waiting for Season 6 to be released. In the following weeks will be using The One Year Chronological Bible New Living Testament with reading assignments which, we have a lively group discussion. Hopefully, we will begin with the New Testament in March.

We have a very nice group of ladies and if anyone would like to join us you are always welcome. Don't feel like you are not prepared we are all friends and will get you up to speed. You will really enjoy the discussion as it brings you closer to Jesus.

We have created a group chat message to keep everyone current with what we are doing. We meet every Thursday morning from in the St. Thomas Lounge.

If you have any questions, please contact me Mary Kay Hietpas at 920-740-5737 or [marykayhietpas@gmail.com](mailto:marykayhietpas@gmail.com)



### Ladies of St. Thomas (All ages)

You are invited to the St. Margarita Society gathering on **January 26th** at Solea's Mexican Grill, 1350 Gillingham Rd., Neenah beginning at **6PM**. It is an informal gathering with no agenda other than to spend time with each other in a relaxed and fun manner. Come for just a short while or stay as long as you like. No RSVP necessary. Invite a friend to come along. Wonderful time sharing a meal and fellowship with your friends of St. Thomas.

## CHRISTIAN WRITERS GROUP

If you enter the church building from the side door you may have noticed on the bulletin board that a Christian Writers group meets at St. Thomas on the first Monday of the month from 7-9 pm. The group of 16-18 members come for a variety of reasons. Some publish books that sold nationwide. Some of us self-publish, usually on Amazon, and find the monthly training in improving writing skills stimulating. Others come for training in writing family stories, newspaper articles, letters, or just for the fellowship. Members come from a variety of communities and the meetings have been held at St. Thomas for many years because of its central location. You are welcome to attend a meeting if you are interested in upgrading your writing skills. For more information contact Jim Dickson at [Jimdick777@aol.com](mailto:Jimdick777@aol.com) or 920-725-8237.

## St Thomas Housing Committee -

The Fox Valley Faith Community Housing Summit was held in Appleton last October to address housing insecurity. About 150 faith communities in Appleton and Neenah/Menasha were invited, and 35 attended. The summit's mission is to build relationships between congregations and those facing housing insecurity, with a vision of showing God's love by working together for adequate, affordable housing. Five "Levers" (sub-groups) were formed to tackle different aspects of homelessness: Affordable Housing, Legislation, and Emergency Shelter are three of the key focus areas. In response, the St. Thomas Vestry created a Housing Committee to explore how our faith community can support this work. This committee grew out of the St. Thomas Evicted book study group and now meets regularly. We invite all members to join this effort. **Meeting: First Monday of every month, 5:30 PM, St. Thomas Lounge.**



## DOUBLE PORTION SOUP KITCHEN AND PANTRY

Long winter days have set in, and Double Portion Soup Kitchen is blessed to have generous volunteers who share their talents three times a week by preparing and serving nutritious meals to a growing number of guests. The dining room is often filled with lively music and conversation, as many guests appreciate the camaraderie of a warm meal shared with friends as much as a chance to stretch their monthly budgets.

As we work our way through the long, Wisconsin winter, our Food Pantry continues to provide staples to those neighbors who need a little extra help. We greatly appreciate the generosity of those who can help us fill our shelves with extras from your home pantry or by adding a few items for Double Portion Food Pantry to your regular shopping list. Hearty soups, Chili, Beef Stew and Corned Beef Hash are favorites for this time of year. In addition, Kleenex, toilet tissue, shampoo, soap, & laundry detergent pods are always in need and not often offered by other food pantries in the area. Simply drop off a donation on the kitchen island in the St. Thomas kitchen and note that it is for the pantry. We will be sure it is stocked in the pantry and available to our neighbors in need.

Double Portion is also in need of more volunteers to help with the kitchen duties, serving meals, or managing the pantry. If you are looking for a fulfilling event once a month or once a week, please join us! We are open every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, and volunteers usually arrive at 10am and leave at 1pm. Please contact Melanie at [doubleportionsoupkitchen@gmail.com](mailto:doubleportionsoupkitchen@gmail.com) with any questions and to sign up!

Thank you for your continued support of this ministry.

**DOUBLE PORTION SOUP KITCHEN AND PANTRY**

**“Sous Chef Program”** (*Sous Chef: the top assistant in a professional kitchen*)

Double Portion Soup Kitchen is launching a flexible Sous Chef Program for volunteers aged 17+. No cooking experience is needed—just the ability to stand for two hours, lift pots, and enjoy teamwork. Volunteers assist chefs Sally (Mon), Joe (Wed), or Dean (Thu) in preparing about 100 meals per 10am–1pm shift. Sign up once or as often as you’d like. Located at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Menasha.

Contact [doubleportionsoupkitchen@gmail.com](mailto:doubleportionsoupkitchen@gmail.com)

**MOTHERS’ MERCY HOME PARTNERSHIP —**

2025 marked the 19<sup>th</sup> year of the Mothers’ Mercy Home Partnership Program of St. Thomas. In September 2024 Fokko Doyen, (President of Cargo Human Care of Lufthansa Airlines through whom our support of Mothers’ Mercy Home has been sent in recent years) was hospitalized in Frankfurt Germany for a stem cell transplant. Following successful surgery he was required to isolate for at least twelve months and therefore has not been able to return to Kenya as of yet. Therefore we have not been receiving the same kind of first hand information we had received in the past. However, 2 updates on each of the Partnered Children were received during the year from Franka Doyen. Reports from some of the other on the ground folks from CHC were reprinted in the Lamplighter.

An extension to MMH was made with a new two story building. The first floor contains a classroom for homework, a counselling room, additional toilets with one for disabled and

food storage rooms. The second floor is a multi purpose room. Sixteen young people began training at the John Kaheni Residence in February 2025. They are supported by a team of three social workers. Seeing a need for their own Training Center, ground was broken for a Vocational Training Center opposite the John Kaheni Residence to accommodate around 70 trainees. Expansion of the Medical Center completed in January 2025 included additional treatment rooms and a new storage room for medicines and disposables. A new building where patients are pre-examined when registering has streamlined treatment. Since the previous dental unit was increasingly susceptible to faults leading to hours of downtime, a new dental unit was purchased in Kenya to ensure servicing of the unit is available locally.

During the year a total of **\$14,326** was sent to MMH:

- \$6,480** \$240 for each of 27 Partnered Children’s Tuition
- \$2,473** School Uniforms
- \$1,159** School Shoes
- \$2,164** Educational Trips
- \$2,000** Weekend Enrichment Activities
- \$50** Small gifts for Personal Accounts of 2 children

We continue to be very grateful to all our Partners, the St. Thomas Mission Fund, Lambeau Field Mission Fundraiser workers and other donors who support the precious children and young adults who are part of Mothers’ Mercy Home and the John Kaheni Residence. ASANTE!



## Vestry Highlights– January 2026

By Anne Peterson

Fr. Andy opened the Vestry meeting with a discussion on spiritual leadership. We are not just leaders, but spiritual leaders within the congregation. The year end financials were discussed. Currently, the budget shows a \$22,700 deficit, although the investment income from treasuries was not yet reflected in the budget. The budget for 2026 was discussed and approved for presentation to the congregation at the annual meeting. The Annual Meeting will be Sunday February 1 st between services. We said good bye to off going members Mary Danner Jones, Mary Kay Hietpas, Jon Phillip and Wardens, Dave Morton and Anne Peterson. *The Vestry meeting for February was moved to Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>*

## Treasurer's Report As of Jan 2026

Pledge Receipts	2025	2024
January	\$81,168	\$76,967
February	\$21,648	\$24,136
March	\$23,861	\$51,802
April	\$34,163	\$35,377
May	\$17,524	\$20,113
June	\$67,100	\$29,778
July	\$25,822	\$47,108
August	\$40,390	\$22,766
September	\$25,163	\$27,376
October	\$73,606	\$46,008
November	\$21,680	\$32,269
December	\$52,032	\$47,269
2025 YTD income \$664,690 vs. expense \$640,765= \$23,925		

## A Message from you Wardens

St Thomas Faithfull,

Your Vestry is excited and enthused by **Laura's Music Ministry Leadership**. We are supportive of Laura and Fr Andy's idea of music scholarships for local college students to enhance our worship. We plan to offer three scholarships to students. (I am sure you have noticed over the past few weeks, what a joy!)

Your Vestry has set up a separate account to fund these scholarships. If you would like to contribute, please do so. Any size donation would help and show our support for our Music Ministry. Please mark any contribution: "Music Scholarship."

Thank you for your prayerful consideration in growing our Ministry.

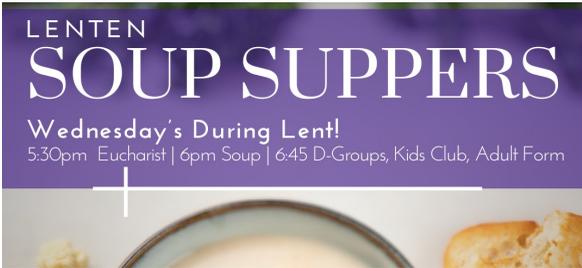
Blessings, David Morton, Anne Peterson & Laura Rothe.

## Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

Are you interested in the Holy Land?? Have you ever thought about a pilgrimage that would let you walk in the steps of Jesus? Fr. Ralph will be doing another pilgrimage to the Holy Land **Oct 20– Nov 4, 2026**. If you are interested in joining or would like more information please contact Fr. Ralph or the St. Thomas Office.



The Annual Parish Meeting is scheduled for **February 1 at 9am**. All parishioners are encouraged to attend.



### Lenten Soup and Table Talk

The answer is "YES" of course we're doing Wednesdays in Lent with soup suppers and more. They're going to be amazing! Every Wednesday during Lent (2/25, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18, 3/25) everyone is invited. Need some food? We've got that! Need some prayer & Eucharist? We've got that! Need some time to reflect and chat with others about life and faith? We've got that! Eucharist will be at 5:30pm in the chapel followed by Soup & Salad + Bread & Beverage in the parish hall at 6:00. We'll then have time together to try table talk before breaking off into Kids Club, D-Groups, and an Adult Forum. Everything will be wrapped up by 8PM. Come and reconnect with the St. Thomas family! There is a sign up sheet in the Parish Hall with guidelines to follow. Please sign up to set up, make soup, help prepare salad/sandwiches or clean up.

### Lent Madness – **Brackets are Ready!**

You can pick them up during office hours or on Sundays. This year is Free To Play! The winner will receive their choice of a \$25 Gift Card! How to Play? Fill out a bracket and submit it to the office *WITH YOUR NAME ON IT* by on **Tuesday, Feb 17**. If you are interested, or have any questions, please contact the Office. Good Luck!

### Small Plates are Back!

During Lent 2026, every Friday, you'll be treated to a Small Plate; a few bites of some theological musings and Lenten Disciplines. Small Plates will be about 90-Seconds each and will show up on St Thomas' YouTube channel and Facebook.



**Morning Prayer**—M, T, Th 9:30am

**Evening Prayer**—M, T, W, Th 4pm

**Holy Eucharist**—W 8:30am

**Lay Ministries for February****Eucharistic Ministers**

- Feb 1** Sandie Umland/ Dan Werbeckes  
**Feb 8** Carol Hert/ Bill Barry  
**Feb 15** Val Phillip  
**Feb 22** Dave Morton

**Lectors for 8:00am**

- Feb 1** Tim Skowronski  
**Feb 8** Larry Langohr  
**Feb 15** Jeff Hill  
**Feb 22** Tim Skowronski

**Readers for 10:00am**

- Feb 1** Gordon Stillings  
**Feb 8** Genevieve Pell  
**Feb 15** Pete Zaborski  
**Feb 22** Dave Morton

**Ushers (Greeters and Ushers)**

- Feb 1** Pete and Jessica Zaborski  
**Feb 8** Dan and Jeanna Werbeckes  
**Feb 15** Jon Phillip and Keith Umland  
**Feb 22** Dennis Hackbarth and Jon Phillip

**Prayer Ministers**

- Feb 1** Val Phillip/ Fr. John Peterson  
**Feb 8** Anne Peterson/ Fr. John Peterson  
**Feb 15** Kathy and Fr. John Peterson  
**Feb 22** Jill Beverlin/ Fr. John Peterson

**Altar Guild**

- Feb 1** Barb Barry, Peggy Langkau,  
Nancy Dombeck  
**Feb 8** Joanne Siracusa, Sherry Morton,  
Kathy Peterson  
**Feb 15** Jennie Land, Linda Smith,  
Karen Powers, Beverly Johnston,  
Sandie Umland  
**Feb 22** Laura Lindstrom, Shari Lloyd  
Theresa Cruz Lillegard, Jazmine Sweet

**Acolytes**

- Feb 1** Julie Spanbauer  
**Feb 8** No Acolyte on schedule  
**Feb 15** Wade Lindholm and Emma Kopczynski  
**Feb 22** Shari Lloyd and Hazel Zaborski

**Vestry Announcement Reading 8am/ 10am**

- Feb 1** Martina Mims/ Julie Spanbauer  
**Feb 8** Martina Mims/ Jeanna Werbeckes  
**Feb 15** Martina Mims/ Jill Beverlin  
**Feb 22** Martina Mims/ Nancy Dombeck

**Preaching for February**

- Feb 1** Fr. Andy Cruz Lillegard  
**Feb 8** Fr. Andy Cruz Lillegard  
**Feb 15** Fr. Andy Cruz Lillegard  
**Feb 22** Fr. Aran Walter