

The Saint John Lutheran Church Foundation
2026 Grant Awards

Bethany Lutheran Health Services

Bethany Lutheran Health Services was founded in 1975 by 15 Lutheran churches with a shared vision to provide compassionate, faith-based care for older adults in the Council Bluffs and Omaha area.

The Foundation grant will be used to enhance worship for residents by providing chapel tables designed for those using wheelchairs or mobility devices. The tables will offer residents a comfortable, dignified way to hold their Bibles and music materials, allowing them to focus more fully on worship and faith.

Care & Share House, Inc.

Care and Share, Inc. was established as a non-profit corporation in July 2014. Our purpose is to provide free food pantries and free clothing, books, household items to people in need at two locations in different neighborhoods. Our goal is to sustain and improve our delivery of service to our clients.

The Foundation grant will be used to supplement our food pantries with products not available through the Food Bank to maintain the quality, quantity and nutritional value of food provided to our clients.

*This grant was partially funded by the Selma Olsen Award.

Damon Hopkins

Damon is in his second year of the TEEM Program for the WISYNOD. He will be ordained in two years.

The Foundation grant will be used to help pay for travel accommodations, books, and other essentials for training.

* This grant was partially funded by the Kinsel Theological Award.

Cece Mickells

Cece is a Pastor at St. John's Lutheran Church in Essex, IA.

The Foundation grant will be used for an Abundant Fields Conference to encourage areas of laity roles and increase participation in all the churches in the district. With fewer ministers available, we need to rely on volunteers. This conference will introduce lay members to ministry roles and future sessions will train them as lay leaders.

Jennie Edmundson Foundation

Each year, the Jennie Edmundson Foundation works hard to secure funding for the Methodist Jennie Edmundson Medi-Van Service. A program that helps individuals overcome a barrier to accessing health care. It is well documented that lack of transportation is a leading barrier to receiving health care.

The Foundation grant will be used for costs associated with our Patient Transportation Medi-Van. This program is free of charge and support patients who need transportation to their medical services. The Medi-Van Patient Transportation service provides them the assurance that they can get to and from their treatments or therapy sessions while keeping their dignity and self-respect intact. Each year, the MJE Medi-Van transports approximately 3,000 patients and travels over 28,000 miles.

* This grant was partially funded by the Epperson Award.

Lutheran Lakeside Camp

Lakeside is an intentional Christian community that offers a place of belonging for all people to find joy and purpose in God's creation. Our goal is to serve our surrounding communities by providing fun, transformational, and faith-centered programming.

The Foundation grant will help provide transportation to Celebration campers from nearby cities. Without transportation, these campers would not be able to attend.

Lutheran Services in Iowa

LSI provides critical human services that positively impact the lives of thousands of Iowans across the Western Iowa Synod service area. LSI's mission is to respond to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. As a social ministry of the ELCA, LSI addresses the unmet needs of thousands of Iowans annually through the provision of high-impact services. Each of these programs relies on contracted funds from the State of Iowa or Medicaid reimbursement to provide these critical human services.

The Foundation grant will be used to fill the funding gaps of state and reimbursement funding so they can continue to provide all impactful services.

NAMI Southwest Iowa

NAMI provides free mental health education, support, and advocacy across nine counties in Iowa. We are launching FaithNet to partner with churches in reducing stigma, responding to mental health needs, and strengthening congregational care.

The Foundation grant will be used to support FaithNet launch activities, including follow-up sessions with faith leaders, resource packets, printed materials, and supplies needed after the January kickoff meeting.

NLOM – Carol Joy

The mission of NLOM is Faith: Alive! In places set apart, NLOM lives out faith in ways that show everyone they belong and are unconditionally loved by God. NLOM offers significant experiences that provide a safe and welcoming introduction to the Christian faith in one's daily life, and promote personal and spiritual growth. This project addresses leadership, youth engagement, recreation, and education by creating a holistic camp experience that empowers youth to grow in confidence, take initiative, and develop essential life skills. Leadership is fostered through activities that challenge campers to make decisions, collaborate with peers, and learn from the mentorship of SMT members.

The Foundation grant would partially support one 2026 Summer Ministry Team's (SMT) salary.

Saint John Youth

Saint John provides its youth with a place to study the Word of God through service learning, activities, and worship. These times together are to enliven the faith and hearts of all those involved.

The Foundation grant will be used for youth ministry programming; activities, curriculum needs, mission trips and fundraising.

* This grant was funded by the Riso Fund.

Thriving Titans

Thriving Titans was founded to support the unmet needs of underserved Lewis Central students and their families. Twice a year, we run a free clothing closet for these families. We also serve LC families with our bi-monthly food pantry, as well as supplementing the school backpack program.

The Foundation grant will be used towards purchasing new packages of socks and underwear for students we serve at our clothing closet.

Timothy Swaddling Clothes

The mission of TSC is to share the mercy of Christ with our neighbors through gifts of clothing, food, fellowship, and the forgiving word of God. The national Swaddling Clothes organization was established in Illinois. Today, there are 30 chapters in the U.S. Each chapter is responsible for raising funds to cover costs. The goal is to give a "hand up" to struggling families with young children.

The Foundation grant would be used to purchase items given directly to families. The largest costs are diapers, pull-ups and baby wipes.

* This grant was partially funded by the Heuwinkel Award.

Wings of Hope Cancer Support Center

Wings of Hope Cancer Support Center serves as a compassionate, community-based hub, for anyone facing the emotional toll of cancer. We support hundreds of individuals each year through free counseling, support groups, wellness programs, and resource navigation. We provide free emotional, mental health, and community support to individuals and families impacted by cancer across SW Iowa. This year, we are launching The Family Room, a brand-new program designed for children who have a parent with cancer. The Family Room will offer them a safe space to process what is happening, connect with others, and learn healthy coping tools – while their parents participate in their own support programs.

The Foundation grant will help us move from training to implementation of this new family focused initiative. Specifically, funds will support: program materials and supplies for both child and parent sessions, family activity kits, and the initial setup costs for monthly sessions.