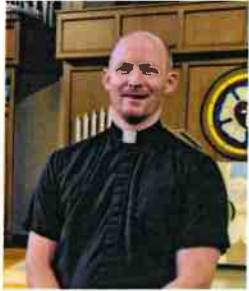




The Caller

Saint John Lutheran Church 2026



Pastor Luke Kuenzli

Interims -
Pastor Sharon
Worthington

and

Pastor Celeste
Waymire

*Followers of
Christ
who seek to
HEAR
the Word,
LIVE
the Word
and
SHARE
the Word.*

Saturday - 5:30pm

through May 17

Sunday - 8:30am
& 11:00am

Sunday School
9:45am

May 24 - Sunday
9:30am

Blessings and peace to all of you in our Saint John community! As we continue to celebrate the new life promised in Jesus' resurrection, we also prepare to celebrate the Holy Spirit's guidance and presence in our lives. **Pentecost**, the "birthday of the Christian Church," occurs on May 24 this year is followed by **Holy Trinity Sunday** on May 31. These Holy Days in the life of the Church are measured from Easter (or more accurately, from the Passover, which is itself measured from the lunar calendar). Pentecost, as its name suggests, is the 50th day after the Passover, and in the Church, we celebrate the Holy Trinity the week following Pentecost.

It is worth noting that our commemoration of the Holy Spirit's coming to believers, as well as of the divine interweaving of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is marked from the stories of God's deliverance of God's people. Passover is a remembrance of the Hebrew people's liberation from slavery in Egypt; and the Easter promise is that in Christ's resurrection, we are freed from the bonds of sin and death. Being delivered from bondage is a wonderful act of compassion in itself, and it is also a new beginning that will require continued guidance.

In May, we also recognize two major milestones in the lives of our congregation's young people; **Confirmation** will take place on May 3rd at the 11:00 worship service, and **Graduate Recognition** will be during the 8:30 service on May 17th. Sandwiched between these is **Mother's Day** on May 10th. As we acknowledge these major steps in the faith formation of our Confirmands and the progress of our Graduates, we also express our gratitude for the ongoing love and direction that our mothers and other caregivers provide. Please join us for these services and for Pentecost and Holy Trinity Sunday to join in the joy of the gift of life – given, ongoing, and promised anew – we receive through Christ's Spirit.

Remember, too, that our **summer schedule** begins on May 24th, with a move to one Sunday service at 9:30am. A huge thank you to all of our Sunday School teachers and leaders, who have been working with our young people throughout the program year between worship services. May they enjoy a well-earned respite from this work during the summer months!

Speaking of the move to one Sunday service for the summer, there is a brief **survey** included in the Caller this month to follow up from the conversation that arose following the Annual Meeting of the congregation in January. As promised, we are seeking input on the suggestion made by some from our members that we make the move to one service on Sundays for the full year, not just the summer months. Please take some time to prayerfully ponder the questions on the survey insert and return your responses to the church office before June 14th so that church leadership has an opportunity to consider them at our June Council meeting.

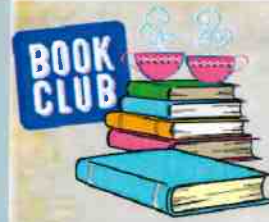
Thank you for your faithful ministry with and among God's beloved children at Saint John and in our communities. Keep teachers, families, and students in your prayers as the academic year concludes and we make our transition into "summer mode!" Peace <>, Pastor Luke



May 3
11:00am

Congratulations to our 8th Grade Confirmands:

- Conner Philip Hansen
- Jeremiah Andrew Kuenzli
- Hudson Leon Maas
- Angela Jane Nelson
- Micah Douglas Petersen
- Grayson William Schneider
- Nathan Curtis Schulte
- Ellie Nora Traeger
- Kolbe Ann Upson



May Book: *The Book of Charlie* by David Von Drehle

Meeting date:
May 28 at 9:15am

The next book selection:
June: *Killers of the Flower Moon*
by David Grann

Service & Learning Committee

Come Grow With Us!

MAY ■ VOLUNTEERING 101

Wednesday, May 6th, 6:00pm
Small Chapel at Saint John Lutheran

Come learn about volunteer opportunities
within our community!

Guest Speakers:

- HopeNet
- Together Inc

Check the Bulletin & Caller for details!

"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time;
they just have the heart."



June
8 - 11

Please collect
paper towel and
toilet paper
tubes!

June 8-11 from 5:00 - 7:30pm
There will be a meal served each night.
VBS will end with Family Night on Thursday.



CONGRATULATIONS!

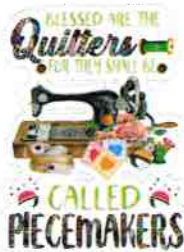
- Brody Applegate
- Zane Counce
- Avary Maas
- Lexie Nelson
- Elora Simpson
- Brody Upson
- Darren Warner



* Senior Recognition will be on
May 17 at the 8:30am service



2026 Western Iowa Synod Assembly attendees. The annual meeting was held at the Sergeant Bluff Community Center on April 17-18. Consider being a representative in 2027!



“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.” ~ Isaiah 40. This is exactly why we make quilts. We make them from the repurposed scraps of fabric that people give us! But quilts are made up of more than just small scraps of material. Quilt makers place their heart and soul into creating comfort for those who are in need.

All are welcome to come and lend a hand! When we make quilts, we do good work on many levels. It brings us together in service and fellowship, it creates a tangible message of love and caring to strangers facing exposure right here in town, delivering warmth and comfort. “And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, ‘Here I am; send me.’” ~ Isaiah 6:8

Come as you are able; experience is definitely not required! The Saint John Quilting Group family wishes to welcome you! If you are thinking about it, please know we will make you feel very much at home as we tie quilts for comforting donations locally through the “*Takin’ It To The Streets*” ministry in Council Bluffs, which serves meals and the Word to the homeless! In our ministry of serving we also set aside time to enjoy fellowship with one another with devotions and snacks! If you’ve read this far, thank you!

Save the date! Our next meeting is Wednesday, May 20, 2026. Won’t you join us? We will meet between 9:00 A.M. and Noon at Saint John, in the Faith and Life Center. We’d love to see you then! For more information, please call Sue Pagan at 712-325-0257.



Card Club will meet on
May 7 & 21 at 6:00pm
Come and play!



The Men’s Club
meets every 3rd
Thursday of the
month at

MEN’S GROUP

11:30am at The Dock Bar & Grill. Men of
all ages are welcome to join us.
Next date is May 21

May 2 & 3
May 30 & 31
Carolyn Clark
Sandy Cerveny
Ruby Runte

May 9 & 10
Patricia Minchin
Elaine von Gillern
Carol Wood
Andrea Hill

May 16 & 17
Cookie Johnson
Becky Taylor
Kim Pace
Diane Hartman

May 22 & 23
Joyce Mlynarik
Becky Smith
Alan Meilike
Margaret Schneider
Mary Lou Burke
Norma Jones



* Esther Group—
May 12 at 9:30am
* Mary Group—
May 14 at 9:00am



It’s time to get
together!

Good Times Group

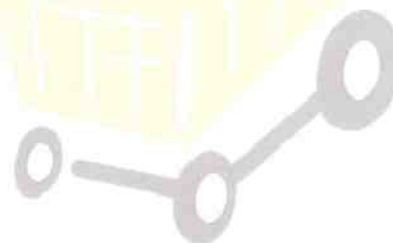
Good Time Group will
meet on **Thursday,**
May 21 at 6:00pm at Pizza King. Please
RSVP by April 18 to Phyllis Damgaard at
402-319-2190.



Players will meet at
Tish’s for dinner on Friday,
May 1 at 5:00pm. Orders will
be taken from the menu.
Hosted by Elaine von Gillern
and Cookie Johnson. Please
RSVP to Cookie.



We are requesting
donations of
Saltine crackers





**Your support makes these stories possible:
A testimony from a grateful family:**

“We first learned about LSI’s school-based therapy program through our son’s school counselor. We had wanted to get him into therapy for a long time, but it often felt out of reach. We do not have many extra resources, and finding a provider in Dubuque with availability for a child under 12 was incredibly difficult. On top of that, we both work and did not know how we would manage getting him to appointments during or after the school day.

When we found out that therapy could take place right at his school, it truly felt like an answer to our prayers. He did not have to miss much class, we did not have to take time off work, and he was able to meet with someone in a place where he already felt comfortable.

Even after getting connected, we still had concerns. Our insurance included a copay that was difficult for us to afford. LSI let us know that financial assistance was available to help cover those costs, as long as we remained committed to his treatment. That support made all the difference. Without it, I do not think we would have been able to continue.

Our son has only been in therapy for about six weeks, but we are already beginning to see small changes. He seems to be learning new ways to manage his emotions and is starting to talk more about what is bothering him instead of shutting down or acting out. We know he still has a long road ahead, but for the first time in a long time, we feel hopeful.

We are so grateful for this opportunity and for the support LSI has provided to our family. Without this program and the financial assistance, I truly do not know if our son would have been able to receive the help he needs.”

Therapy services are provided to all 99 counties in Iowa through in-person locations and online sessions.



**LUNCH & LEARN
AT BETHANY HEIGHTS**

Empowering Your Future with Knowledge & Care



Next Lunch & Learn

**May 6, 2026 from 12:00 - 1:00pm
at Bethany Heights**

Join us as Deborah Petersen from McCabe Law presents on planning for the unexpected. Join us to learn about healthcare and financial Power of Attorney—what they are, how they work, and why having them in place can make all the difference during life’s most challenging moments.

Please RSVP to 712-328-8228 or email activitiesbh@blhs.care

You're Invited to Bethany Heights for a

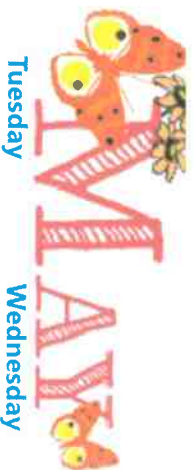
Mother's Day


TEA PARTY

4 MAY 2026 | AT 10:30AM

11 Elliott St. Council Bluffs, IA 51503
RSVP to McKenna at (712) 256 - 7802

Saint John Lutheran Church



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>3 Communion 8:30am Worship 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship - 8th Grade Confirmation</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5 7:00pm Praise Team</p>	<p>6 9:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Bell Choir 6:30pm High school Youth 7:30pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>7 6:30pm Card Club 7:30pm CMA Meeting</p>	<p>1 5:00pm Players Group</p>	<p>2 Communion 5:30pm Worship</p>
<p>10 8:30am Worship 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12 9:30am Esther Group 7:00pm Praise Team</p>	<p>13 9:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Bell Choir 6:30pm High school Youth 7:30pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>14 9:00am Mary Group 7:30pm CMA Meeting</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16 Communion 5:30pm Worship</p>
<p>17 Communion 8:30am Worship - Senior Recognition 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19 7:00pm Praise Team</p>	<p>20 9:00am Bible Study 9:00am Quilting Group</p>	<p>21 11:30am Men's Club 6:00pm Good Time Group 6:30pm Card Club 7:30pm CMA Meeting</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23 5:30pm Worship</p>
<p>24 9:30am Worship</p> 	<p>25 Memorial Day</p>	<p>26 7:00pm Church Council</p>	<p>27 9:00am Bible Study</p>	<p>28 9:15am Book Club 7:30pm CMA Meeting</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30 5:30pm Worship</p>
<p>31 9:30am Worship</p>						

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Frank Pechacek Aaron Sadr	2 Morgyn Besco
3	4 Cole Campbell Adam Kuennig Mallory Olson Braylin Penney	5 Kelli Gann	6	7	8 Kent Bogardus	9 Taylor Nelson Jennifer VanMoorlegghem
10 Matthew Malnberg Abby Malskeit	11 Patricia Knudsen	12 A.J. Neal Carole Nissen	13 Mary Gittins Adam Nelson Anne Vorce	14 Brody Applegate	15 David Warner	16 Ward Prime
17	18	19 John Phillips	20 Zelda Christensen Gracelynn Clanton	21	22	23
24 Amelia Kuennig Steve Uhaub	25	26 Xander Velasco	27 Scott Walters	28 Sherrri Gunderson	29 Craig Deitloff Donald Knudsen Katie Meyer	30 Kayla Coonce Abigail Nelson
31 Christian Jensen Shaely Thomas						





*Celebrating
-WITH-
you*

92nd Birthday

A.J. Neal (May 12)

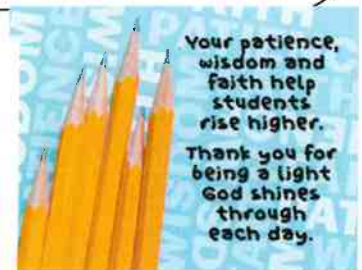
70th Wedding Anniversary

Jack & Norma Pope (May 26)

The Service/Learning Committee wanted to take a moment to sincerely thank each of you who helped make the Clean Sweep event such a success. From those who prepared and provided the food, to the kitchen helpers who kept everything running smoothly, to everyone who pitched in to pick up trash—your efforts truly made a difference. It was inspiring to see so many people come together with such a positive spirit and willingness to help. Beyond the work itself, the sense of fellowship and community throughout the event was something special. It's moments like these that make events like Clean Sweep so meaningful. Thank you again for your time, energy, and generosity. We are already looking forward to many more events like this in the future.

thank you

Thank you to our Sunday school leaders, teachers, music preparers, and subs, our Confirmation small group leaders and mentors, and our high school youth leader.



*IN OUR
Thoughts and Prayers*

Sympathy to the families of...

Kathy Heilmann, sister of Mike Ashbaugh

Pat Peterson

Greg Andersen Sr, cousin of Giles & Debbie Whitney

Bruce Schreffler, brother-in-law of Claudia Besco



Saint John Lutheran Church Staff

- Senior Pastor: Rev. Luke Kuenzli (revluke@saintjohnelca.org)
- Interim Pastor: Rev. Sharon Worthington (pastorsharon88@gmail.com)
- Interim Pastor: Rev. Celeste Waymire (interimpastor.celeste@gmail.com)
- Parish Ministry Coordinator: Patricia S. Minchin
- Sound Booth volunteers: Mack Bertelsen, Paul Schmidt
- Chancel Choir Director: Elmer Ellefson (saintjohnchancelchoir@gmail.com)
- Bell Choir Director: Laura Nelson
- Pianist / Organist: Joan Hicks
- Foundation Board President: Ross Jensen (402-681-1383)
- Nursery Attendant: Susan Stellish
- Stephen Minister Leaders: Alan Meilike (328-1671) Debbie Plugge (256-5310)
- Office Manager: Kim Malskeit (712-323-7173) info@saintjohnelca.org
- Custodian: Alicia Pigsley

Church 712-323-7173

Email: info@saintjohnelca.org ~ Website: www.SaintJohnELCA.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/SaintJohnCouncilBluffs

Saint John Lutheran Church

633 Willow Avenue
Council Bluffs, IA 51501-4242

Non Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Council Bluffs, IA
Permit No. 68
Zip Plus Four

Please email us
(info@saintjohnelca.org)
if you no longer wish to
receive this newsletter.
Thank you.



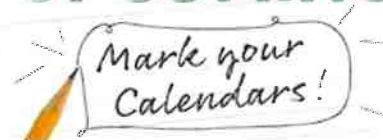
Worship Schedule for the Summer

Saturday—5:30pm

Sunday—9:30am

Starts May 24!

UPCOMING



May

3 - 8th Grade Confirmation, 11:00am
17-

High school Senior Recognition, 8:30

Last day of Sunday school, 9:45

24- Start 9:30am Sunday service

June

8-11 VBS 5:00 - 7:30pm