



Pastor Luke Kuenzli

Interim Pastors -
Pastor Sharon
Worthington

and

Pastor Celeste
Waymire

Followers of Christ

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

Worship Times:

Saturday - 5:30pm

Sunday - 8:30am
& 11:00am

Sunday school
9:45am

Welcome to Autumn – the season of pumpkin spice, football, and (apparently) very few Cross Country races! As I write this, I've just heard that yet another meet has been cancelled due to water on the course. As someone who would have to drive to watch these races, I'm OK with it... but as a parent who wants to watch his eldest child compete, challenge himself, and encourage his teammates, I'm kind of bummed that there have only been 2 races thus far, and I haven't been able to attend either. I'm feeling a bit of "FOMO" on seeing the progress my son and his teammates are making with their endurance and speed.

This "fear of missing out" is an all-too-common driving emotion in society; when we think others are doing better, are happier, are experiencing more joy more often, many in our world turn to comparing their own life with the images and updates plastered on social media and in the newsreels, and with the "latest and greatest" in tech releases. Think of all the car, perfume, medicine, and phone commercials out there that, through use of words and images, try to sell us on the idea that if we just had their product, we'd be as relaxed, as attractive, as put-together, as care-free as the actors in the commercial appear to be. We all know that this is complete hogwash, but it sells anyway. I've never been one to let "FOMO" determine my decisions, but I know many people who are very compelled by this feeling.

The question "What am I missing out on?" reveals our tendency to seek self-centered experiences; things that have some benefit (real or perceived) to our own sense of identity. There are even Christians out there who use a sort of "FOMO theology" to guide their preaching and ministry. "You'd better get your act together, or you'll miss out on heaven!" I think that kind of misses the point. Life is, from its very Genesis, not about the experience of the self, but of community. "It is not good for the human to be alone..." so God made a companion for Adam. "God made humankind in God's image; male and female God created them." I believe this to be true of life on earth and of our promised Life in heaven.

I am privileged to be a part of the community here at Saint John, in Council Bluffs, and in the larger Church and World. Here, I get to experience a wide array of God's beloved people! Together, we get to ask a different question as God's people: not "what are we missing out on," but "What are we missing...?" What opportunities to help others not miss out on the love of God in Christ are we overlooking or neglecting? I enjoy taking opportunities to interact with groups, people, and organizations that are actively seeking to share God's love. I was able to meet with a group of about 25 church leaders from around CB last week, and made some new connections; we have our Confirmation collaboration, which has been a blast so far; and we have our Debt Retirement celebration coming up on October 10-11, with Pastor Jon Benson joining us for worship and celebration!

As I wrote last month, we also have the opportunity to connect with the global Church, as the Watoto Choir comes to Saint John on the evening of October 28. A meal and musical program with these young people from Uganda will lead into time shared with host homes overnight. Please take a look at the sign-up board at the Info Center for information about hosting 1-2 youth and an adult chaperone; we need to have these hosts dialed in in the first 2-3 weeks of October! I know that hosting guests who you don't know at your home might seem strange; think of how strange it must be for them to be staying in someone else's house every night! I have been on that end of host homes, as a guest, when I was traveling with Youth Encounter, but I was a young adult at the time; while these are school-age kids, along with a chaperone. They need a bed, couch, or air mattress to sleep on, a morning breakfast and packed lunch, and people to welcome them for a night's rest. Without invoking "FOMO" – I do believe you'll enjoy the experience, should you choose to take the opportunity! I hope you'll be able to join us for the meal and program alongside our brothers and sisters from Uganda, and consider opening yourselves to share God's love with those who are sharing God's love. Blessings! ><>, Pastor Luke

October 18
during 11:00am
Worship -
3 year &
3rd grade
Bibles



Each year the 3 year olds and 3rd graders receive a Bible as a gift from the church, thus fulfilling one of the baptismal promises made to them.

Saturday, October 10
after worship (6:30pm)

CELEBRATION DINNER!

Including a congregational meeting with a vote to retire our debt (7:15pm).

Sunday, October 11 there will be a reception between services.



Mitten Tree

We will be collecting winter items for Bloomer School and New Visions until October 25.



October Book: *Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup* by John Carreyrou. Discussion date: October 22 at 9:15am

SJ - 101 New Member Class

New Member Classes will be held on Sundays, October 4 & 18 at 9:45am (between services).

New Members will be received on Sunday, October 25 with a reception between services.

Blessing Box Pantry

We will be collecting items for Hygiene Kits and Meal Bags during October and will gather to help assemble them on **Sunday, October 18 between services** in the Faith & Life Center. Please watch for a list of needed items coming in the weekly Bulletin.



Free Little Pantry



Bethany's annual Halloween Trick-or-Treating event will be on October 30, 6:30-7:30pm across both its Bethany Home and Bethany Heights campuses. We have learned that this event is very popular! We will be collecting candy until Oct. 28 to donate to this fun event. If you would like to help, please drop off candy in the bins located outside the church office. Everyone is welcome to attend Trick-or-Treating! The residents enjoy passing out candy.

Foundation Grant Applications

Saint John Foundation Grant applications will be accepted from October 1 through December 1. An application form is available outside the office door. They can also be emailed to you upon request, email / call the church office to be sent an application.



"Comfort, comfort my people, says your God." ~ Isaiah 40. This is why we make quilts. We make them from the repurposed scraps of fabric that people give us! But quilts are more than just small scraps of material. Quilt makers place their heart and soul into creating warm comfort on cold nights 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 is a 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 welcomes you! We will make you feel 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, October 21, 2026. Reminder, please bring a candy to share! Won't you join us? We meet between 9:00 A.M. and Noon at Saint John, in the FLC. We'd love to see you then! For more information, please call Sue Pagan at 712-325-0257.



Card Club will meet on
October 8 & 22 at 6:30pm.
Come and join us!



October 3 & 4

Cookie Johnson
Becky Taylor
Kim Pace
Diane Hartman



MEN'S GROUP

The Men's Club meets every
3rd Thursday of the month
at 11:30am at The Dock Bar
and Grill. Men of all ages are welcome to join us.
Next date is October 15

October 10 & 11

Joyce Mlynarik
Alan Meilike
Margaret Schneider
Norma Jones

October 17 & 18

Carolyn Clark
Sandy Cerveney
Ruby Runte
Sue Coe
Barby James

October 24 & 25

Elaine von Gillern
Carol Wood
Andrea Hill
Patricia Minchin



Good Times Group

Good Times Group will
meet on Friday, October
16 at 6:30pm at the
Pizza Ranch. Senior
rates apply. Reply to
Katie at 402-885-8949
or katiern15@gmail.com



No Players Group in
October.
Please attend the
Celebration Dinner.
Fellowship will resume in
November.





Since July 1, 2026, Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) has officially been operating the Evelyn K. Davis Center for Working Families in Des Moines. This transition marks a new chapter for a Center that has been a cornerstone of opportunity, workforce development, financial empowerment, and family support for Central Iowa families and individuals since 2012.

In the caring spirit of its namesake, Evelyn K. Davis, the Center was established as a first-of-its-kind resource center to help unemployed, under-employed, and underserved residents of Central Iowa pursue their educational and career goals. Today, the Center serves thousands of Central Iowans each year through a wide range of programs and services designed to help individuals and families build stronger, more secure futures.

Through the Evelyn K. Davis Center, LSI provides resources and support including: Financial Empowerment: The Polk County Financial Empowerment Center provides professional, confidential one-on-one financial counseling to Polk County residents at no cost.

Careers & Employability: Career Coaches are available to help individuals with their employment goals, including job searches, career development, and navigating new opportunities.

Men on the Move Clothing Closet: Community members can receive professional clothing for job interviews, career changes, and other occasions that require professional attire.

Iowa Opportunity Passport: This financial education and matched-savings program helps young people develop financial skills and make a successful transition to adulthood.

Small Business Solutions Center : Entrepreneurs and nonprofit leaders can access business coaching and development assistance.

Y-ExCL: This paid, 10-week summer work experience helps young people ages 14–21 develop and strengthen valuable employment skills.

These programs reflect LSI's commitment to meeting people where they are and helping them discover pathways toward greater stability, independence, and opportunity. Last month, LSI celebrated this exciting transition with a public ribbon-cutting ceremony, bringing together community members, partners, supporters, elected officials, and friends of the Center to recognize its history and look ahead to its future.



CLEAN UP DAY

Join Us for Clean Up Day! Let's make our community sparkle—volunteer and make a difference.
Lunch Provided!

10.03.2026

9:30AM - 12:00PM



LUNCH & LEARN AT BETHANY HEIGHTS

Empowering Your Future with Knowledge & Care

Wed., October 7 from 12:00-1:00pm

Join us for Hospice 101: Understanding the Benefits of Earlier Admission and what support is available. Call 712-328-8228 to RSVP



Saint John Lutheran Church



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 Communion 8:30am Worship 9:45am Sunday school 11:00am Worship				1 7:30pm CMA Meeting	2	3 Communion 5:30pm Worship
11 8:30am Worship 9:45am CELEBRATION RECEPTION 9:45am Sunday school 11:00am Worship	5	6 7:00pm Praise Team Practice	7 9:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Bell choir 6:30pm Confirmation class 6:30pm Youth Group 7:30pm Chancel Choir	8 9:00am Mary Group 6:30pm Card Club 7:30pm CMA Meeting	9	10 5:30pm Worship 6:30pm CELEBRATION DINNER
	12 Office Closed - Federal Holiday	13 9:30am Esther Group 7:00pm Praise Team Practice	14 9:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Bell choir 6:30pm Confirmation class 6:30pm Youth Group 7:30pm Chancel Choir	15 11:30am Men's Club 7:30pm CMA Meeting	16 6:30pm Good Time Group	17 3 Year & 3rd Grade Bibles Communion 5:30pm Worship
18 3 Year & 3rd Grade Bibles Communion 8:30am Worship 9:45am Assemble Hygiene kits for Blessing Box 9:45am Sunday school 11:00am Worship	19	20 7:00pm Praise Team Practice	21 9:00am Bible Study 9:00am Quilting Group 6:30pm Bell choir 6:30pm Confirmation class 6:30pm Youth Group 7:30pm Chancel Choir	22 9:15am Book Club 6:30pm Card Club 7:30pm CMA Meeting	23	24 5:30pm Worship
25 8:30am Worship 9:45am New Member Reception 9:45am Sunday school 11:00am Worship	26	27 7:00pm Church Council Practice	28 <i>Caller Mailed</i> 9:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Bell choir 6:30pm Watoto Children's Choir 6:30pm Youth Group 7:30pm Chancel Choir	29 7:30pm CMA Meeting	30	31 Communion 5:30pm Worship

Saint John Lutheran Church
Birthdays

October 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Hayley Hartman John Myre Krista Upson	2 Sarah Kuenning	3 Diane Ashbaugh David Waymire
4 Barbara Johnsen Brynn Nepple Isaac Petersen	5	6	7 Michael Hoel Becky Nickerson Jaxon Roberts Reegan Swenson Louis Urtaub	8 Patricia Minchin	9 Larry Gann Carol Wood	10 Gary Woods
11 Curtis Fischer Todd Michael	12	13 Kim Bryan Kathryn Graham Carl Rogers Andrea Saar	14 Norma Gahm Paul Geer Maverick Vorce	15 Carter Conahan Lana Cruz Lois Haines Elizabeth Roane Kathe Weihs	16 Mack Bertelsen Mark Hansen Willa Kuenning	17 Bodie Traeger
18 Derrick Williams	19 Conner Hansen Hayden Jensen Brian Solon Jack Stogdill	20 Madalyn Hansen	21	22 Blakeley-Jo Hassay Carolyn Rasmuson-Clark	23 Scarlett Danker Christensen Mark Meyer	24 Shelly Graham
25 Taylor Eiam Michele Johnson John Spilde	26 Lydia Erickson Laura Hansen Carolyn Nelson Lydia Weltz	27	28 Deb Ingwersen Allison Nelson	29 Sandra Bronson Kristine Docken Dale Vorce	30 Edie Goodwin Cheryl Heininger	31 Lanelle Rogers





80th Birthday

Barb Johnsen (October 4)

80th Birthday

Lois Haines (October 15)

80th Birthday

Chery Heining (October 30)

90th Birthday

Patricia Minchin (October 8)

91st Birthday

Norma Gahm (October 14)



90th Birthday Celebration for Pr. Hering!

Come and celebrate on Sunday, November 1
from 2:00-4:00pm at Heritage at Fox Run
Independent Living, 4802 Council Pointe Rd.



Thank you to Pastor Luke, Pastor Sharon, and
Pastor Celeste. Their empathetic pastoral care and
commitment to spiritual well-being are much
appreciated. May God bless them with renewed
energy and inspiration for their ministry.



Sympathy to the families of...

Nancy Chew

Tom Stuart



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

AV Control Center: 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:

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SaintJohnCouncilBluffs

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ZIP PLUS FOUR

*Join us
on the
journey!*



*Saturday 5:30
Sunday 8:30 &
11:00am*



**Watoto Children's Choir -
October 28, 6:30pm**

The Watoto Children's Choir is a group of African children's choirs based in Kampala, Uganda, at Watoto Church.

They tour internationally around the country. Each choir is composed of about eighteen to twenty-two children from Uganda. Their tours raise money as well as awareness for the Watoto orphanages in Kampala.

They are bringing their choir here to Saint John!

Host homes needed! Please check out the sign up board or call the church for information.