



LUTHERAN CHURCH
NEWS &
INFORMATION



Evangelical
Lutheran
Church in America

MARCH 2026

Sunday School Emphasis + News

As many are aware, St. John's has special offerings (emphases) each month. We would like to continue with our Sunday School for our March emphasis. Your past generosity has been greatly appreciated and has lifted some of the financial burden from the staff. The following is a recent report from Nancy Miller:

Sunday school info for 2026

As everyone knows, everyday costs keep rising. We have been very diligent in our spending. During November, we purchased a three-year curriculum from children's ministry for \$99. Current lesson plans will cover 156 weeks' worth of lessons through Dec. of 2028. We continue with the one room school format with 12 students, averaging 8 per week. An added blessing is the help of 2 high school and confirmation students.

We are planning our Lenten service project and the annual Easter Egg hunt. The egg hunt will be on Saturday, March 28th at 10AM and will be open to the community. Volunteers are needed and welcome. Future events will be Vacation Bible School and Rally Day in the Fall. All assistance is greatly appreciated.

We can always use Crayola 8 pack washable markers, glue sticks, Crayola 24 pack crayons, and any kind of stickers, which are used in cards to home-bound folks. Thank you to everyone at St. John's for their continued support!

Once again, Sunday School is our March emphasis. Stewardship does review our emphases annually so that we can direct funds where they are needed most.

Emphases for the following months are:

March - Sunday School

April - Capital Fund

May - LWR Baby Care Kits

June - Midwest Shelter for Vets + Blood Drive

July - Worship & Altar Guild Committees

Rebekah Circle will not meet in March

LWR Lutheran World Relief Work Days

March 10th **9:00 am to 3:00 pm Bring a Lunch**

March 11th **9:00am to 3:00 pm Bring a Lunch**

The Lutheran World Relief Work Days for 2026 have had some changes. We will now be meeting the second Tuesday and Wednesday of the month. This new schedule will help with the use of the Fellowship Hall. For the winter months especially we have taken out the Tuesday night work times. After a full day's work, going back in the cold has been tough! If this causes a problem for you, please let Karol Grandgeorge or Connie Hamer know.

We would like to thank everyone including the Endowment Fund for all the contributions to the Personal Care Kit Fund so far. We have ordered enough items to do over 275 kits in addition to those items which have come in from the congregation. Thank you, thank you, thank you! Just think how many people will be able to be cleaner because of those kits!

The month of March will find us doing the usual jobs of putting quilts and Baby Care Kits together, cutting out school back packs and taking apart sheets and blankets that have been donated. We also need people to sort and measure donations of fabric which keeps coming our way. People have been sewing on the school backpacks at home during the year, so we will be ready to string and fill them in August. There are always more jobs than workers, so please take a few moments to come and give us a hand.

GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS!

St. John's Lutheran Church Council Minutes - February 9, 2026

Members present: Bob Fraley, Connie Hamer, Mike Hamer, Scott Horsch, Cindy Karp, Wayne Karp, Joanne Robinson

- Connie led devotions based on God's love
- Wayne called the meeting to order at 11:02, welcoming Mike to the council.
- Cindy made a motion to approve the consent agenda, Connie seconded. Motion approved.
- Mike made a motion to approve the December 2025 minutes as corrected to include... "Connie Hamer made the motion to approve the ministry site profile presented by Jerry Lundeen, chairperson of the St. John's call committee to be submitted to the NI Synod. Joanne seconded. All approved. No opposed. Motion carried." Cindy seconded. Corrected minutes for December 2025 were approved.
- Scott presented the treasurer's report, pointing out that we have a healthy balance of \$138,232.26 which has been elevated due to not paying a pastor's salary.
- Committee reports
 - ◊ Fellowship/Hospitality: Fellowship is scheduled for February 15. There is discussion on whether to continue the Christmas fellowship dinner. Reserving the back room at the Village Courtyard was mentioned as a possibility.
 - ◊ Outreach: None
 - ◊ Finance: None
 - ◊ Missions/Stewardship: See report
 - ◊ MOG: The books have been audited, all is well.
 - ◊ Total balance \$582,101.64.
 - ◊ Money market balance \$102,876.24
 - ◊ Voice scholarships are being offered for members ages 6 to 14, partial scholarships for non-members.
 - ◊ Parsonage painting and floor restoration were paid with MOG funds
 - ◊ Property: J & D Door is working on repairing the parsonage garage door and opener. Yellow Jacket Electric will look at breakers which have been popping.
 - ◊ Worship: See report
 - ◊ Tech: Discussed purchasing a new laptop for our interim pastor.
- Mike agreed to serve as the endowment committee liaison to the council.
- Wayne updated the council that a letter of agreement has been signed with Bishop Stacie Fiddler, Pastor Selena Blackwell, and our church. Pastor Blackwell will start here Tuesday, February 17th.
- The parsonage is in the process of being furnished for Pastor Blackwell's arrival.
- Joanne made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Mike seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 11:53.

In God's service, Bob Fraley

STEWARDSHIP/MISSION MINUTES 2-4-26

The February 4, 2026 Stewardship meeting began at 8:45 a.m. with Connie Hamer and Michael Hamer present. We prayed asking that God sharpen all our senses to His presence and will.

The January minutes were approved as read.

Michael's January offering report was as follows: General Fund - \$12,869.27; Capital Fund - \$1,344.60; Outreach - \$300; Fellowship and Hospitality - \$200; Personal Care Kits - \$254.11 and Parsonage - \$2,500.00.

Connie will write the article for March's emphasis which is our Sunday School.

Karol had a meeting to plan the Ash Wednesday (Feb. 18th) and Lenten soup suppers. The Union Congregational Church has been invited to join us and will be helping with desserts. Meals will be from 5:00-6:00 and services at 6:30. Donations from Lenten suppers will go to We Are Called To Care, a group that helps with foster care in the Plano and Yorkville areas. Designated offerings from Lenten services will go to Habitat for Humanity (DeKalb & LaSalle counties).

LWR info – This committee will be using designated funds to purchase the 5 items which comprise a Personal Care Kit. We completed 372 last year. A display is in the Welcome Center. Congregants are encouraged to supply needed items.

People wanting to support St. John's blood drive on Thursday, June 4th cannot give blood after March 25th as 10 weeks are required between donations.

Karol has put a request in the newsletter for anyone interested in coordinating the community Fellowship dinner at St. John's.

If The Federated Church of Sandwich hosts their morning Lenten Prayer breakfasts, the next Stewardship meeting will be Tuesday, March 3rd at 8:45 a.m. We adjourned by praying The Lord's Prayer.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE MINUTES 2-4-26

Present: Toni Lundeen, Julie Horsch, Lois Spizzirri and Cindy Karp.

Began our meeting at 1:00pm. Hymns and organists are scheduled through the end of March. Becky Stephens said she can do Wednesday evening Lent services. She would like some help so she doesn't have to do them all though.

We have an Interim Pastor! Her name is Pastor Salena Blackwell and she will start on Ash Wednesday, 2-18-26. We should put name tags out to help her learn people's names.

As mentioned last month, we will be singing Holden Evening Prayer during Wednesday evening services. Julie Horsch and Jeff Denault will be taking turns doing the leadership parts. Lenten suppers have been scheduled and meals planned and kitchen help. Thank you to Karol Grandgeorge and all those who help by making soups and desserts!

Ended our meeting at 1:40pm In God's service, Cindy Karp

SPECIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING 1-25-26

Members present: Bob Fraley, Connie Hamer, Mike Hamer, Scott Horsch, Cindy Karp, Wayne Karp, Joanne Robinson

Wayne called the meeting to order at 11:11

Wayne updated the council that he and the call committee have been in communication with Pastor Selena Blackwell about serving as our part time interim pastor. She is a UCC pastor who recently served a Church in Waukegan, IL.

The position will be part time based on a 30-hour work week.

The call committee has written a list of pastoral duties. (see sheet)

ELCA financial guidelines are being used.

Mike Hamer made the motion to approve Pastor Selena Blackwell as our part time interim pastor. JoAnne Robinson seconded. Motion was approved.

JoAnne Robinson made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Connie Hamer seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 11:22

In God's service,

Bob Fraley



MARCH

birthdays & anniversaries

Jerry Lundeen 03/01
 Courtney Drape 03/04
 Roger Campbell 03/04
 Becky Vermeland 03/08
 Valerie Spizzirri 03/10
 Ben Beal 03/11
 Violet Smith 03/12
 Douglas Shoener 03/16
 Tom Martin 03/19
 Kaydence Eade 03/22

Jeannine Dingman 03/23
 Robert Huss 03/25
 Anita Reis 03/28
 Michael Maroscia 03/31

Mary & John Burgin 03/09
 Robin & Ray Raupp 03/10
 Dave & Julie Gottlieb 03/12
 Andrew & Brynn Hallman 03/21



NEXT READING BUDDIES
 WITH WENDY MERKEL'S
 KINDERGARTENERS IS
 TUESDAY, MARCH 31ST
 @ 10:00AM

SIGN UP IN THE
 WELCOME CENTER.



MEETING



Property Committee

10am Wednesday, March 4



Fellowship & Hospitality

2:00pm Wednesday, March 4



Rebekah Circle Meeting

No meeting in March



Stewardship Committee

8:45am Wednesday, March 4




Worship Committee

1:00pm Wednesday, March 4



Church Council

10:00am Sunday, March 8



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
1 8:30am Sunday School and Adult Forum 9:45am Worship	2	3	4 9:00am Lenten breakfast Federated Church - Sandwich 8:45am Stewardship 10:00am Property Mtg. 1:00pm Worship Mtg. 2:00pm Fellowship & Hospitality 5-6pm Soup Supper 6:30 Worship	5
8 8:30am Sunday School and Adult Forum 9:45am Worship 10:00am Church Council Meeting	9	10 <i>LWR Workday</i> <i>9:00am-3pm</i>	11 <i>LWR Workday</i> <i>9am-3pm</i> 5-6pm Soup Supper 6:30 Worship	12
15 8:30am Sunday School and Adult Forum 9:45am Worship	16	17	18 9:00am Lenten breakfast Federated Church - Sandwich 5-6pm Soup Supper 6:30 Worship	19
22 8:30am Sunday School and Adult Forum 9:45am Worship	23	24	25 9:00am Lenten breakfast Federated Church - Sandwich 5-6pm Soup Supper 6:30 Worship	26
29 8:30am Sunday School and Adult Forum 9:45am Worship <i>Palm Sunday</i>	30	31 10:00am Reading Buddies	1	2



The Parents Corner

The words to a round that Girl Scouts sing are “Make new friends but keep the old. One is silver and the other gold.”

I met Ellen at my first full-time job. She was secretary to our department manager, and I was typist-clerk to help the dozen engineers. She was eighteen to my seventeen years, and she wore a sparkling engagement ring on her left hand. We enjoyed each other’s company at work. One day, she showed up without her ring. Now footloose and fancy free, we started going places two or three times a week... mostly downtown Chicago. We shopped. We explored. We signed up for modelling school. We had fun together.

One day Ellen said she had a date on the weekend with a man she had met several years before. Monday morning, she came to work walking on air with stars in her eyes. Chuck was perfect.

In a few months, I was bridesmaid at their wedding. Almost a year later, she was Matron of Honor at mine.

By God’s Good Grace, our husbands really liked each other. We became a unit. Six months after Ellen and Chuck’s marriage, he was drafted into the Army. We shared her worry, and wonder of wonders, after Boot Camp, he was assigned to the Army Newspaper in downtown Chicago. He received tickets to events around town, which he shared with us. More fun. Good memories.

Then came babies. Frank and I moved away. Time and distance separated us. Ellen and I phoned each other several times a year. After saving our stories, our talks were long. We also met halfway for lunch, until she became fearful of driving. Then Chuck took over the driving.

Recently, we hadn’t seen each other for almost two years until a few months ago, my daughters took me to see them at their home. We shared stories of present life and reminisced of all the fun memories together. I’m so glad. A few weeks ago, Chuck called to say Ellen had passed away peacefully.

Sometimes, keeping old friends requires help keeping in touch with each other. I have been blessed.

Submitted by Lois Spizzirri

Church Staff

A. Administration

- i. Office Secretary: Julie Horsch

b. Business

- i. Financial Recorder: Mike Hamer
- ii. Treasurer: Scott Horsch

c. Facilities

- i. Building Superintendent: Diane Wold

d. Worship

- i. Accompanists: Jessica Ortega, Toni Lundeen, Becky Stephens, Margaret Page

Church Council

President: Wayne Karp

Vice-President:

Secretary: Bob Fraley

Congregation Council

Mary Carlson

Mike Hamer

Connie Hamer

Cindy Karp

Joanne Robinson

Lutherdale Bible Camp Representatives-2026

Karol Grandgeorge, Nancy Miller

Synod Assembly Representatives-2026

Wayne & Cindy Karp

Cemetery Ministry Team

Bob Fraley, Glen Reuter, Doug Stahl

Endowment Ministry Team

Marion Gaffney, Mike Hamer, Ward Hearn, Wendy Merkel

Finance Ministry Team

Chuck Hoepe,

Bob Mueller, Joanne Robinson

Memorial and Other Gifts Fund Team

Kathy Anderson, Connie Hamer, Linda Johnson, Adam Killey

Jerry Lundeen, Nancy Miller, Anita Milligan

Church Ministries & Organizations Contacts

Altar Guild

CROP Walk: Mark Lee & Mike Hamer

Growing Hope: Jerry & Toni Lundeen

Global Missions: *In need of leadership*

Habitat for Humanity: Karol Grandgeorge

Hearts & Hands:

LSSI Christmas Hope Chest: Karol Grandgeorge & Julie Horsch

LWR Projects (Mission Quilts, Baby Care Kits, School Kits,

Personal Care Kits, Sewing Kits): Karol Grandgeorge

Meals on Wheels: Mark Lee

Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans: *In need of leadership*

Our Sharing Pantry: Jerry Lundeen

Prayer Chain: Karol Grandgeorge

Parish Education

Confirmation

- a. Primary Instructor—Scott Horsch, Maury Killey

- b. St. John's Congregational Council

3N1: 7—12 gr. Youth Ministry:

Coordinators:

Youth Ministry Connection from St. John's—Julie Horsch

Esther Circle: Jeanette Pfeifer

Rebekah Circle: Connie Hamer

Sunday School Coordinator: Nancy Miller

Chairpersons/Ministry Summaries

(Listed alphabetically by ministry)

Cemetery Ministry: Bob Fraley

Oversees the care of the church cemetery, maintenance and improvements.

Communications Ministry: Bob Fraley

Seeks to improve communication with members and the community.

Fellowship & Hospitality Ministry

Plans activities and recreational outings to promote friendship and fellowship in our congregation and community.

Finance Ministry: Scott Horsch

Proposes the budget and administers incoming and outgoing funds.

Outreach Ministry:

Reach out to the community by welcoming new neighbors with bread, hosting/participating in community events, following up with visitors, and bringing God's love to St John's 'special members' from cradle roll through the homebound.

Parish Education Ministry:

Oversees Sunday School Program, Summer Bible Day Camp, and youth related activities.

Property Ministry:

Oversees the care of the church facilities and grounds, maintenance and improvements.

Stewardship /Missions Ministry:

Provides opportunities for members of our congregation to use their gifts and resources, which includes raising funds for special projects. Provides a variety of opportunities to do God's Work with Our Hands. Organizes activities, publicize events and coordinate participation. Please join us in any way that works for you.

Worship Ministry: Cindy Karp

Striving to provide Spirit filled worship opportunities in an atmosphere of hospitality.

Newsletter of St. John's Lutheran Church March 2026

Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



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