



The Informer

October 2025

St. John's Lutheran Church

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In this Issue:

Pastor's Letter	1
Notes from the Balcony	2
Serving the Lord this Month	3
Birthdays	4
Church News	5-8
From the CID	9-11
A Letter from President Harrison	12-14
Calendar	15

From Pastor's Pen:

Christian Nationalism and You

Unless you've been living under a rock, you have by now probably heard of Charlie Kirk. If you spend a lot of time paying attention to things, you have by now probably heard enough about Charlie Kirk for now. He was a member of Dream City Church in Phoenix, a Pentecostal church of the Assemblies of God, like the New Life Fellowship and the West Side Assembly of God. When it comes to theology and what we know as "doctrine" (it means "teaching"), we in the LCMS are about as far away from the AG as you can get. They are law-oriented, rely too much on feelings, insist on speaking in tongues, and the like. They are a Christian organization. They do believe in the Triune God, and if you saw the Kirk funeral, they believe in heaven and Resurrection. But when it comes to moral and ethical issues, a lot of us find ourselves more in line with him and the AG churches than with – oh, say, the ELCA. Forty years ago, I could have a conversation with ALC and LCA (forerunners to the 1988 ELCA) pastors and people. Today, I would not know where to begin. That's the story with the Lutherans and most of the Protestants in America today.

Which brings us to Christian Nationalism, which the Internet calls "a form of religious nationalism that focuses on promoting the Christian views of its followers" and that sounds a lot like me. Perhaps it sounds a lot like you. As a matter of fact, among all religions Christianity is the one that "focuses on promoting...Christian views" as the main – the only way our religion grows. What's a relatively recent development in this country is that those "Christian views" on many moral and ethical issues are different. They used to be the same as, or at least more similar than they are today. Forty years ago, most Christians regarded sex outside of marriage and lying as sin, a person was either a man or a woman, and marriage was between one man and one woman, et al.

Today, on those and other issues, the "Christian view," the one that those Christians are of course going to "promote" are different. The Christian view on many issues depends on which Christian you're talking to. In America, where Freedom of Speech is in the Constitution, the various brands of Christian have always promoted their own views. So have other religions and Atheists, et al. Living on the border like we do – and I have lived in Illinois and worked mostly in Iowa for the last twenty years – we can compare and contrast our state with "across the river." The conservative Christian view seems to be more prevalent in Iowa: they discourage child mutilation and same-sex marriage, criminalize child killing and recreational cannabis, and pay tuition for Christian schools.

People like me and Charlie Kirk are labeled Christian Nationalists as if it's a bad thing. It's a thing, and it has always been a thing in places where they have Freedom of Speech, which is a Christian thing. It's in our Constitution, and the UK – for example – does not have First Amendment and Christians there are fighting for what we consider to be that most basic of rights; Free Speech. I'm just saying...

In Christian Service,
Pastor Anderson



Notes from the Balcony

Do you remember playing the game Follow the Leader as a child? I remember using the game as a way for my classes of early elementary students to get some exercise in the gym or the playground. It was also a safer way to make use of wooden play structures for my own children than tag. The competitiveness of tag seemed to greatly increase the possibility of falls or other injuries. In recent years, the young charges God has blessed me to care for have been at a refugee English class. One winter, I was faced with a safety dilemma when my main volunteer helper took her annual two-month RV trip with her husband to various campgrounds down south. Although I only had around five young non-English speaking children to look after, moving the relatively short distance from the bathroom where we washed our hands to our classroom was somewhat challenging. I decided that a game of Follow the Leader, winding throughout the entire uppermost floor, would be the technique I would use to accomplish this safety goal. We practiced every day, with patience and perseverance, and by the time Grandma Karen came back, we were doing well enough to impress her, and even have her brag to friends about our achievement. This year, my group averages eleven to fifteen little bodies. Although several of my students understand some English, walking in a line still takes time and patience. We practice the same extended route between the bathroom and the classroom, and the days I see them all in a straight line, let me tell you, it is a spectacle of beauty, albeit usually a momentary one.

We, as Christians, who have been saved by grace, are blessed to live a life of Follow the Leader. John 14:6 quotes our Leader, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." English hymn writer, Anglican minister, and bishop, Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024), wrote a hymn in 1961 based on this verse and is a favorite of one of our members. Let's take a closer look at *Christ Be My Leader* (LSB 861).

Stanza 1

*Christ be my leader by night as by day;
Safe through the darkness for he is the way.
Gladly I follow, my future his care,
Darkness is daylight when Jesus is there.*

We have a leader 24/7. Even in the dark, we are safe. Jesus makes darkness daylight and looks out for our future.

Stanza 2

*Christ be my teacher in age as in youth,
Drifting or doubting, for he is the truth
Grant me to trust him; though shifting as sand,
Doubt cannot daunt me; in Jesus I stand.*

Christ is not only the Way, but also our lifelong teacher from whom we learn the Truth. Truth helps keep us in line. We pray for trust in Christ as life's temptations to drift, doubt, and shift arise. Because Jesus is the solid rock on which we stand, we are fearless.

Stanza 3

*Christ be my Savior in calm as in strife;
Death cannot hold me, for he is the life.
Nor darkness nor doubting nor sin and its stain
Can touch my salvation: with Jesus I reign.*

(Words © 1964 Hope Publishing Company)

Finally, Christ is our life in calm and trouble. He is the life that continues after death because He has won salvation for us.

We are never too old to participate in follow the Leader. This pursuit, through day and night and all sorts of terrain, ultimately concludes with our joyous arrival in heaven. "Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life," John 8:12.

In His Service,
Christine Engebrecht

Serving the Lord this Month

Ushers

Sat, Oct 4: Greg Burke, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, Oct 5: Esther Cashion and her Christian family friends
Sat, Oct. 11: Greg Burke, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, Oct. 12:
Sat, Oct. 18: Greg Burke, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, Oct. 19: Esther Cashion and her Christian family friends
Sat, Oct. 25: Greg Burke, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, Oct. 26: Esther Cashion and her Christian family friends

Communion Assistants

Oct. 5: Ralph Grotelueschen & Brian Kern
Oct. 19: Kevin McAnally & Glen McMillin
Oct. 26: Jim Homann & Jonathan Schmidt

Eternal Candle

Oct. 5: Evan & Dawn Antolik, in honor of their anniversary
Oct. 12: Karen Schmidt
Oct. 19: In honor of Payton's birthday
Oct. 26: Larry & Sharon Ripka



Acolytes

Sun, Oct. 5: Henry Schmidt
Sun, Oct. 12: Nolan Johnson
Sun, Oct. 19: Nathan Duffy
Sun, Oct. 26: Briella Churchill



Greeters

Sat, Oct. 4: Chuck Brokaw
Sun, Oct. 5: Lucille Perley
Sat, Oct. 11: Chuck Brokaw
Sun, Oct. 12: Lucille Perley
Sat, Oct. 18: Chuck Brokaw
Sun, Oct. 19: Patty Ekin & Mary Whipple
Sat, Oct. 25: Chuck Brokaw
Sun, Oct. 26:

Altar Guild

The Schmidt Family

Flowers

Oct. 5: Flo Moore
Oct. 12: Karen Schmidt, for family
Oct. 19: Chuck & Bev Brokaw, in memory of Michael and family
Oct. 26: Lucille Perley



Church News

Birthdays

October 1 – Ron Rogers

October 2 – Rolen Stone

October 3 – Sherry Orey

October 4 – Tom Nielsen & Joyce VanSeveren

October 6 – Wanda Resch

October 7 – Shannon Brand, Flo Moore, Ethan Pritchard & David Sountris

October 8 – Jeri Miller

October 9 – Peyton Mattly

October 10 – Cris Braddy & Trevor Keogh

October 12 – Diana Lackey & Ron Wilson

October 13 – Esther Cashion, Rick Fauser, Jill Johanson, & Sebastian Parker

October 14 – Kathy McDowell

October 16 – Ruth Willfong

October 17 – Barbara Buck

October 19 – Amber Medinger

October 20 – Andy Burke, Merle Loete, & Kaylie Pena

October 22 – Sharon DeWulf

October 24 – Jeff Fauser, Kelly Lack, & Dawsyn McDonald

October 25 – Gracie Erickson, Jenna Murphy, & Margery

Park

October 26 – Jean Morrical

October 27 –

Payton Braddy

October 28 –

Wendy Trujillo

October 31 –

Eloise Kjera &

Jonah Wilson



WEEKLY ATTENDANCE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>THIS YEAR</u>	<u>LAST YEAR</u>
8/31	132	—(5th Sunday)
9/7	139	140
9/14	115	120
9/21	116	137
Average Monthly Attendance for St. John's: 26%		

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Death:

Ron Heitzman (09/11/25)

PASTORAL VISITS

Pastor Hagen is making the visits to our hospitalized and homebound members while we are in vacancy. If you desire a visit and you are not part of the monthly schedule already, please contact him at 309-738-5007 (cell) or 309-799-7464 (home).

Church News

ALTAR GUILD

There is an Altar Guild meeting scheduled for Tuesday, October 14th at 6:00pm. Please plan to attend if you are able.

LWML - Lutheran Women's Missionary League is an auxiliary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. All ladies are welcome!



October is LWML Month

Stop by our table in the concourse and learn more about LWML and our Mission Projects. Pickup an LWML Mite box for your loose change and turn into the office, an LWML officer or better yet bring it to our next meeting.

The next LWML meeting will be Thursday, October 16th at 1:00 pm in the Janssen rooms. We will be making cards for the shut-ins and planning Christmas Cheer.



**LADIES Mark your calendars For The:
LWML Christmas Cheer Brunch**

Saturday, December 6, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

Signup sheet will go up in November. Start your Christmas season by joining us for brunch and packing cookies. Cookies are appreciated but not necessary.

TRUNK OR TREAT

Join us on **Sunday, October 19th from 1-3pm** for an afternoon of safe and fun treating. We will be outside in the parking lot and yes, there will be hayrack rides!!!

There will be a sign-up sheet at the Sign-Up Station...please let us know if you will be decorating a trunk.



EMBROIDERY CRAFT

We will welcome Susan Arrasmith Mondays, October 20th and 27th to teach us how to embroider. We will learn the basics on beginning your project and how to do three basic stitches (back stitch, lazy daisy, and cross stitch - not counted). You will walk away with an embroidered piece (pumpkin or daisy) you can hang on your wall. All you need is a 6" wooden embroidery hoop. \$3 each. If you have one already, please indicate, otherwise we will order them for the group. Sign up by Sunday, October 12.

Church News

BLOOD DRIVE

Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 11th! We will be taking appointments for our annual blood drive from 8am-11:30am. If you have any questions, please contact Jill Schofield at 309-721-1646

FELLOWSHIP DINNER

All members of the congregation are invited to dinner at Los Agaves in Moline (by Southpark Mall), on Friday, October 24th at 6:00pm. Please sign-up by Sunday, October 19th so we can make reservations.



THE PUZZLE EXCHANGE

Take one. Leave one.

As the weather starts to turn, head down to the Activities Room and pick out a new puzzle to take home to work on. Do you have a puzzle you don't want to do for the 3rd or 4th time? Share it with others by dropping it off on the shelves. Please make sure all the pieces are in the box before donating. Sort your donations by the number of pieces the puzzle has. If the tall shelves get full, we can fill up the small cubbies.

COFFEE WITH MOMCO

You are invited to a MomCo coffee

- On Sunday, October 12th, 2025
- St. John's Lutheran Church gymnasium
- 9:00am, during Sunday school

~Come meet a new Mom~Experience a MomCo meeting~

Is there interest to start a MomCo at St. John's?

MomCo is a community led by moms where they support one another through the motherhood journey. We will have coffee, make friends, have round table discussions, activities, and grow our Christian faith in Jesus and God's Kingdom. Kids can come too when we find some sitters.

We hope to see you there!

Susan Bowman

Supported by the Board of Human Care and the Board of Outreach



Church News

St. John's Lutheran Church Voters Meeting Minutes June 15, 2025

1. The Voter's meeting was called to order at 10:20 a.m. by president, Brian Engebrecht. Pastor Anderson opened with prayer.

2. President Engebrecht asked if there was anyone that wanted to be a voting member. There was not.

3. President Engebrecht asked if there was a motion to accept the minutes. Larry Hipple made a motion to accept the minutes as printed in the Informer. Flo Moore seconded. Motion passed.

4. Old Business

Call Committee - Brian Engebrecht reported they are waiting for the list of Pastors from the CID President.

Courtyard Committee - Brian Engebrecht reported that they have purchased a fountain and things are progressing. They will be asking people from the congregation to help in various ways to keep the cost down.

5. Executive Board - Brian Engebrecht

President Engebrecht mentioned that the office had forms that need to be filled out when using the church facilities for any event. This will get the event on the calendar and space reserved.

6. Treasurer - Norm Antolik

Norm handed out an update report and asked if any questions. No questions. He said we are in a good position at this time.

7. Board of Human Care - Rod Hopkins

Rod reported they held a CPR class earlier this month. Next month on October 11th there will be a blood drive. A poster is on the sign up table with instructions to sign up.

8. Youth and Family Board - Kris McAnally

Kris reported that they are seeking members to help on the board next year so they can get more ideas to reach out to young families.

September 20th is movie night.

October 24th is a fellowship dinner.

October 20 & 27 will be an embroidery craft.

Second Friday Fellowship is Oct. 10th.

October 19 from 1-3 will be Trunk or Treat.

There are signup sheets on the table.

They may have a scavenger hunt for the Food Pantry in November. They are also trying to come up with alternatives to the Children's Sermon. They asked for input from the congregation.

Church News

9. Board of Outreach – Charlie Britton

Charlie said they will be handing out bags with candy and Christian literature to the adults during Trunk or Treat. Also waiting to hear from Elders regarding a program they are calling “Call a Friend”.

10. Board of Elders – Kevin McAnally for Jim Homann

Kevin presented a list of members for release from membership who have not attended in 7 years: Samuel Bowman, Scott Kelly, Murphy Klavon, Janet Miller, Angie VanRycke, Kathy VerStraete, and Craig Wenzel.

Bill Girard made a motion to release the members on the list. Motion seconded by Dawn Antolik. Motion passed.

Kevin also mentioned we will be having church services for Advent, Lent, Christmas and other special services as in the past.

11. Trustees - Evan Antolik

Evan said they are starting to work on the parking lot. They are trying to work around church events the best they can. They have accepted a bid to repair the air conditioner in the sanctuary/office. He asked the boards to utilize the sign in front of the church. This would be a good way to promote special events. All they need to do is contact the office and tell them what they want on the sign. Future projects include replacing some of the ceiling fans, lighting in the gym and resurfacing the floors in the gym and Janssen rooms.

12. Rod Hopkins made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded Marsha Boarts. Motion passed.

13. The meeting was closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

We very much appreciate all members who attended the Voter’s meeting.

Respectively submitted by Diana Lackey, Date: September 14, 2025

REFORMATION SERVICE- October 25th @5pm, and October 26th at 9am

More than 500 years ago, the Protestant Reformation brought the church’s focus back to God’s free gift of salvation in Jesus Christ.

On Oct. 31, 1517, Martin Luther posted the 95 Theses — the “Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences” — to the church door in a small city called Wittenberg, Germany. This event ignited the Protestant Reformation, and thus the Lutheran church officially commemorates this important anniversary on Oct. 31.

The Reformation was, first and foremost, all about the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It was then, and it still is now. The task of reformation never ends. Every person, in every generation, needs to hear the Good News of their Savior from sin and eternal death.

From the CID

Dear St. John's Lutheran Church,

In Autumn, we naturally think of change. Leaves change colors and fall to the ground. Our wardrobe changes as warm summer breezes give way to brisk autumn winds. Clocks change back to "regular time." The days grow shorter and the nights longer.

As we deal with these and other changes, we can thank God that we are not buzzards, bats, or bumble bees! If a buzzard is placed in a 6x8-foot pen with no top, it is trapped because it must begin its flight with a 10-12-foot run. A bat placed on the ground will lie helplessly because it must take off from an elevated position. A bumblebee will remain trapped in an open jar because it can't look up, only down and sideways. The buzzard, bumblebee, and bat may become stuck in a difficult or unfamiliar situation.

God gave us the ability to adapt to change. He changes our hearts when we repent, deny ourselves, and trust in him for forgiveness and salvation. We can look up to God in prayer and search His Word for guidance. He lifts us up when we are down. And when we feel trapped, he enables us to soar above our circumstances. We can embrace change with confidence that he will carry us through any situation.

As we experience changes, it is comforting to know that God never changes. "The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever." Isaiah 40:8 "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." Hebrews 13:8 According to his unchanging promises, he blesses us and gives us strength, courage, direction, and comfort when we face difficult changes and losses.

Rev. Jeff Harter

Announcing the 2026 Youth Bible Bowl

Date: Spring of 2026. We are still working on the date.

Topic: "The Gospel According to St. Matthew"

The Gospel according to St. Matthew gives a summary of what we need to know in order to have salvation from sin, the devil, and death. St. Matthew's Gospel records the most important teachings of Jesus and the key events in Jesus' life. Plan to study "the Gospel according to St. Matthew" with youth (junior and senior high [grades 6-12]) as thoroughly as you can, to prepare them to answer questions in your Circuit and at the District Bible Bowl in the spring, and (most importantly) so that by God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit they grow in their faith that Jesus truly is the Son of God and our Savior.



Pray For Our Central Illinois District Missions supported by your church's Mission Dollars to the District. Our Lord Jesus said, "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the harvest." This month, please remember in your prayers all the students, particularly those from CID, who are studying at our Synod's colleges and seminaries to become pastors, teachers, and other kinds of church workers – many of

From the CID

LCMS Foundation Gift Planning October 2025 Newsletter Article

Fred was perturbed. His friend Mike asked what was wrong. Fred, a retired accountant, began emotionally sharing how frustrated he was that his home budget predictions for groceries weren't covering the cost. "Every week my wife keeps begging me for more money to do grocery shopping. I just snap back at her that I didn't budget for that five years ago. A budget is a budget."

We all probably can see the silliness of this story. Yet it points to how we can allow our plans to be fashioned in cement to such an extent that they aren't keeping up with the reality of today, or even the changes that might happen in the future.

In estate planning, it never works to create a plan and then believe that it will stay in place without any changes needed for thirty years. Families change. Economics changes. Health changes. Ministries I wish to support can change too. Because of all this change, our estate plans must keep up.

Is it time for you to begin a review of what your plans were in the past, seeing if they are aligned with present realities? Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can help. Contact Scott Radden @ 618-977-4049 or scott.radden@lfnd.org

LCMS Stewardship Ministry – lcms.org/stewardship Newsletter Article – October 2025

Harmonious Stewardship

"For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another" (Romans 12:4-5).

One of the most forgotten concepts in stewardship is the interdependent nature that makes up the Body of Christ and the way that body supports the shared work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is experienced in the local congregation, as well as in broader mission and ministry efforts at the district and Synod levels. Yet in these words, St. Paul reminds the Romans and us that we are indeed members of one another. This is true in our worship. It is also true in our stewardship of the Gospel. Stewards of all shapes and sizes, ages and abilities, affluence and influence are all assembled around Word and Sacrament in the local congregation with no one being more important than the other.

Part of this forgetting lies in what the eyes see and how our human mind operates. Our eyes and our minds are quick to come to the erroneous conclusion that the person who writes the biggest check is the more important steward. Human logic, flawed by sin as it is, could make a claim that the youngest child or the most infirm, aged member of the congregation would certainly be considered something less than important when it comes to the stewardship of the Gospel.

Paul makes it clear in these words that this is not how stewardship of the Gospel is measured in the Body of Christ. Rather, it would be better to view local stewardship like the lost art of harmony in congregational singing. This has been lost not only due to the performative nature of the lead singers

From the CID

of the local praise team, but also because modern hymnals are written to almost force the novice hymn-singer into unison voice. Creative harmonization by talented organists is beautiful to listen to, but does not always support the people in the pews in singing in parts. This is a loss in demonstrating a very practical aspect of whole-body stewardship.

The sound that builds when choral and congregational singers settle into their voice parts is nothing short of heavenly! Yet when altos, tenors and bass sing their individual parts without any concept of how they fit together, the music doesn't sound as powerful. The narrow range of the typical alto line almost sounds monotonous. The tenor line can get painfully high, and the base

line can get uncomfortably low. But, when interdependently entwined, along with the melody that is so often carried by the sopranos, the music becomes a tremendously powerful tool in communicating the Gospel.

The same is true of individual stewards. Certainly, stewards with more financial means are in a unique place to "carry the tune" for ministry in a local congregation. But that doesn't rule out the faithful stewardship of the saint-like 94-year-old Hulda, who prayed for her young pastor in German every night while the aches and pains of arthritis and the grief of losing a daughter to cancer kept her awake. This does not rule out Jimmy, the profoundly developmentally disabled confirmand whose basic but dramatically eloquent confession of the faith left an impression on a congregation long after he went to be with Jesus. It doesn't rule out the single parent, the recovering addict, the family coming out of bankruptcy, the elderly widow and everyone in between.

The Lord has entrusted all the baptized with stewardship of the one thing needful: the Gospel of Jesus Christ. No one member of any congregation is more important than another when it comes to this stewardship. The biggest check isn't always the best way to communicate the Gospel. In fact, it is almost always better communicated with the widow's mite, the tenacious stewardship of the talents and so much more.

In the local congregation and beyond, our corporate stewardship of the Gospel needs each other to fill out our great confession. It is not about equal amount. It is about interdependence that only the Holy Spirit can work! Each of us has a role to play, a harmony to sing. The standard for that role is faithfulness. We do not have the same function, but we have the same Jesus! As we sing the parts entrusted to us by the Holy Spirit, the sweet music of the Gospel goes out!

LCMS Stewardship Ministry – lcms.org/stewardship Newsletter Article – October 2025

A Letter from President Harrison

By Matthew C. Harrison

“For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.” (Mark 7:21–23)

“Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.” (1 John 3:15)

Charlie Kirk was a devout Christian, murdered for his conservative religious and political views by a young man who has fallen victim to the ideological demons of our time. It is becoming clear that the man who killed him had been radicalized by “anti-fascist” groupthink and rhetoric, which pervades university campuses, circles of political extremists, and especially the internet. Fellow high school students reportedly called the shooter “Reddit kid” after a particular platform known for extremism. Indeed, the man’s very bullets were inscribed, “Hey fascist! Catch!”

In the wake of Mr. Kirk’s unjust demise, extremists now revel in his murder, even creating media, T-shirts, etc., to celebrate the death. The depth of evil knows no bounds. As Luther wrote in the Smalcald Articles, the “hereditary sin [that resides in our hearts] is such a deep corruption of nature that no reason can understand it. Rather, it must be believed from the revelation of Scripture” (SA III I 3). I’m not such a fool as to think evil is the particular propensity of but one extreme of the ideological spectrum. “None is righteous, no, not one” (Rom. 3:10). “Whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God” (Rom. 3:19).

Pundits have crafted lists of Mr. Kirk’s statements, which allegedly justify his murder. But no speech of any human being justifies his or her murder. It’s also clear to me that very few who make such accusations listened to or watched his events across the country. While I do not endorse all Mr. Kirk’s religious or other comments he made in his debates, I do not believe he was a racist, and certainly no hater. Pull his videos up on YouTube and judge for yourself.

It is ever perilous for a church leader to speak publicly into highly contentious cultural and political issues. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) does not politicize the Gospel, nor do we redefine the Gospel as the liberation of oppressed peoples. The Gospel is God’s saving act in Christ. Love for all is our sacred response. We confess with the sacred Scriptures, “The blood of Jesus [the man] His [God’s] Son [God in the flesh] cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). Our sacred task is calling all to repentance and proclaiming the one eternal remedy for sin, the blessed life, death and resurrection of Jesus. As the church *per se* we are not finally about saving the state, engaging in political activity or even Christianizing the state. Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36). Our Augsburg Confession states that the Lutheran church does not “mix church and state.” Nor do our Lutheran Confessions mandate one form of government or another. “Neither does the Gospel offer new laws about the public state” (Ap XVI 55). Our forefathers came to America seeking religious freedom from tyrannical states. We treasure a well-run and ordered state because the Gospel does not prosper where chaos reigns (Rom. 13).

At the same time, we recognize the deep Christian influence in the founding of the United States, particularly in the establishment of the reasonable and ethical authority of law, which is expressed in the Ten Commandments and sound reason. “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal” (*Declaration of Independence*). Here sound reason echoes the orders of creation and redemption. Indeed, every person is not only created in God’s image, but worth the very blood of Christ. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). We believe in healthy patriotism.

The LCMS also strongly encourages participation by its people in honorable civic affairs of all sorts, from law enforcement to the military, judiciary and all elected positions. This accords with the New Testament. Jesus never tells a soldier or an official to stop serving the state as though doing so were improper for a Christian (Luke 7:8). But He does insist they act justly in doing so (Luke 3:14). Our Augsburg Confession wholeheartedly commends service in the secular realm by Christians.

Our churches teach that lawful civil regulations are good works of God. They teach that it is right for Christians to hold political office, to serve as judges, to judge matters by imperial laws and other existing laws,

From the CID

to impose just punishments, to engage in just wars, to serve as soldiers, to make legal contracts, to hold property, to take oaths when required by the magistrates, for a man to marry a wife, or a woman to be given in marriage (AC XVI).

While the LCMS does not issue political directives nor insert itself in the vast majority of social and political issues of our day, we are compelled to call out evil because the Bible does so. The murder of a man for exercising his civil right to free speech is evil. Trans ideology — to which the murderer is connected — is an evil disordering of human existence, as are all matters that disorder families and individuals. It leaves people hurt and suffering. It displaces God's design for the family with caricatures that cannot sustain society. Consider the many studies that have shown that the most progressive individuals are far less satisfied or happy in nearly all aspects of life. We are deeply concerned about and care for people who have succumbed to this disorder or are challenged by it. The church is for sinners all. We include ourselves in that number (Rom. 3:19). We do not hate. We love. We pray for the shooter's repentance and conversion to Christ, even while supporting the administration of justice by the state in accord with Romans 13:4: "[The governing authority] does not bear the sword in vain." Indeed, we pray that very justice — facing the death penalty — bring repentance and faith in Christ.

Marxism, which is pervasive on many university campuses, praises anarchy and violence because violence is the means to throw the status quo into chaos and overthrow allegedly repressive regimes. As an atheistic paradigm of human social existence, Marxism views all law and ethics as utilitarian, indeed merely a human construct — including sexual identity itself, which has always been (Rom. 1) and is again, with an intensity never seen before, the frontier of "freedom" from Divine design. Hermann Sasse, the friend of the LCMS and great Lutheran who lived through the Hitler years in Germany, was the first publicly to reject the Aryan Paragraph of the Nazi party platform. He blew the whistle on real fascism and racism, and suffered for it. His collaborator Dietrich Bonhoeffer died for it. Last week, before our very eyes, Sasse's comment on Marxism has again been proven true: "Marxist theory has been refuted with rivers of blood." For the radicalized Marxist, if the divine mandate not to murder interferes with "progress," so be it. If an outspoken conservative Christian has to die for progress, then so be it.

Well, Charlie Kirk was such a Christian. I am such a Christian. And I know thousands more.

A note especially to young Christian men

"I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one" (1 John 2:14). The rise of radical ideologies has affected you deeply. Whether your ethnicity or your sex, or perhaps your perceived social status, much of your identity has been the very bullseye of radicalism's attacks. God-given and pleasing masculinity and strength, which demonstrates itself most beautifully and profoundly in self-sacrifice (Rom. 5:7), is ceaselessly vilified. The world has been fixated on everybody else's perceived injustices but yours. You and your culture — indeed, all Western culture — are the source of all evil, they say. Young women have disproportionately rejected traditional values, particularly with respect to the family and children. DEI has cost you academic advancement and employment. The leftist attack experienced in most universities has ridiculed your biblical faith and the very values you learned from your fathers and mothers, grandparents and your Confirmation pastor — values that taught you Christ, forgiveness, love, service and vocation.

The answer is not in opposite extremes. You are called by Christ to bear up in faith at this time. You were baptized for this moment. Do not give way to racial theories that contradict basic biblical truths of human dignity and Christ's and the church's love for all peoples. Peter preached, "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality." Literally, he said, "God does not receive faces," that is, God does not judge you on how you look, on your culture or on your skin color (Acts 10:34; see also Matt. 27:32, Acts 2:10, Acts 11:20, Acts 13:1). Our ethnic genetics are all First Article gifts. The Bible calls upon men to "honor" and love their wives "as Christ loved the church" (Eph. 5:25). Relationships with women are not about power. They are about responsibility that sacrifices self for another. Go to church. Excel in your vocations. Run for office. The biblical and Lutheran Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms does not mean you do not participate in the civil and political realm. Quite the opposite. We've never needed Christians more in our civic life. Volunteer at church. Talk to your pastor. Become the man God wills you to be so that, whether or not God gives you a bride, you can be a

spiritual leader in your family, church and beyond. Avoid bad places on the web. Turn off the video games and engage in physical activity. Avoid isolation. Confess the truth of Christ. Seek healthy relationships with young women who share your values on children and family. Wait on the Lord. He loves you. Think about becoming a pastor. Visit the seminary. Read through the Scriptures. Or listen to the audio. Four chapters a day, and you'll finish in a year! And devour the *Book of Concord*. The [paperback pocketbook version](#) from Concordia Publishing House is cheap. Revel in the Christian family and friends God *has* given you.

Young women: Find the young Christian man who will use his office as husband to point and lead you to Jesus, love you, rejoice in your gifts and strengths, and treat you as the precious gift of God you are (Prov. 31). Help him become the strong man of character and faith he's meant to be in Christ. Be open to the blessing of children. If our Lord does not call you to marriage and motherhood, trust in His plans for you — “plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope” (Jer. 29:11). Perhaps as important as anything, love those who hate you.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.” (Matt. 5:43–45) Charlie's debate videos are a marvelous example of this.

If you are experiencing confusing thoughts about sexuality, talk to your LCMS pastor. He loves you. Read the LCMS document on gender dysphoria: [Gender Identity Disorder or Gender Dysphoria in Christian Perspective](#). Check out the Sixth Commandment treatment in your catechism. “Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for He who is in you is greater than He who is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

Our consolation is that Charlie rests in the arms of Jesus. He confessed Ephesians 2:8–9: “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

As important as it is for Christians to participate in our national life near this 250th anniversary of our founding, it is more important that we know Jesus our Savior, and that others know Him too. We weep for Charlie's suffering and grieving wife, children and family, and we pray Christ and His blessed resurrection be their consolation. We weep for the devastated family of the accused, who helped bring him to justice. We weep for the accused himself, another soul lost to the lies of the evil one. We pray for repentance and faith in Christ. Come Lord Jesus quickly.

And finally, a word from St. Paul to a young man named Timothy, which speaks to all of us now: “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.” (1 Tim. 2:1–7)

Posted Sept. 17, 2025/Updated Sept. 17, 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
			9am - TOPS 10am - Women's Bible study 1:30pm - Activities Room 6:30pm - Courtyard Committee	6:30pm - Board Meetings		9:30am - Choir rehearsal 5pm - Worship w/ Communion
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9am - Worship w/ Communion 10:15am - Bible Study / Sunday 10:30am - Confirmation	1:30pm - Activities Room 6pm - Cherub Chimers rehearsal 6:30pm - Heavenly Ringers	10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	9am - TOPS 10am - Women's Bible study 1:30pm - Activities Room 3:30pm - Fellowship committee		6:30pm - 2nd Friday Fellowship	8am - Blood Drive 9:30am - Choir rehearsal 5pm - Worship
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9am - Worship 10:15am - Bible Study / Sunday 10:30am - Confirmation	1:30pm - Activities Room 6:30pm - Heavenly Ringers	10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	9am - TOPS 10am - Women's Bible study 1:30pm - Activities Room	11:30am - Ladies Luncheon @ 1pm - LWML		9:30am - Choir rehearsal 5pm - Worship w/ Communion
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9am - Worship w/ Communion 10:15am - Bible Study / Sunday 10:30am - Confirmation	<div>Former Deadline</div> 1:30pm - Activities Room 6pm - Cherub Chimers rehearsal 6:30pm - Heavenly Ringers	10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	9am - TOPS 10am - Women's Bible study 1:30pm - Activities Room	6:30pm - Call Committee Meeting		9:30am - Choir rehearsal 5pm - Worship w/ Communion
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
9am - Worship w/ Communion 10:15am - Bible Study / Sunday 10:30am - Confirmation	1:30pm - Activities Room 6pm - Cherub Chimers rehearsal 6:30pm - Heavenly Ringers	10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	9am - TOPS 10am - Women's Bible study 1:30pm - Activities Room			

St. John's Lutheran Church



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Walking in the Light of Christ!



Office Hours:

Monday – Wednesday 8:30am– 2:00pm

Closed for lunch from 12-1pm

Thursdays– 8:30am– noon

Worship Schedule:

Saturday Worship– 5:00pm

Sunday Worship- 9:00am

Sunday School

& Bible Study-10:15am



Inside our Sanctuary.