

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to our guests. We are glad you have joined us in worshipping our Lord and Savior. We trust you will draw strength, peace, and hope as together we hear God's Word spoken here today. So that we may serve you better, we ask that you fill out an attendance card located on the back of the pew, including your address and noting that you are a visitor.

ETERNAL CANDLE The eternal candle glows to the glory of God from Karen Schmidt.

ALTAR FLOWERS The flower bouquet that adorns the Altar is from Mary Whipple, in memory of David.

FOOD PANTRY We would like to say a huge and heartfelt THANK YOU to everyone for all of the donations we have received! We are so blessed with a congregation that supports our mission to help feed the hungry in our community! For December, we will be collecting items for a Christmas dinner: casserole ingredients, sides, etc.

BUILDING HEALTHY FAMILIES: *“Children are a gift from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.” Psalm 127:3* For over 124 years, Lutheran Family Service has connected children to parents through adoption and still serves families through this and a multitude of other ways, all consistent with the teachings of the LCMS church and without the interference of being tied to government funding. In thanksgiving to God for an important child or grandchild He has put in your life, celebrate the blessing of family with us this Christmas by making a gift in their honor or memory. Your gift in their honor will help a child, teen, or family in need of support this year. It’s easy and you can do it right now from your smart phone by VENMO to @LutheranFamilyService, make your gift online at the “donate” tab on our website, or send your gift by mail to LFS/Admin Office, 409 Kenyon Road, Suite C, Fort Dodge, IA 50501. On behalf of those we serve, we thank God for your partnership and generosity!
Lutheran Family Service www.LutheranFamilyService.org

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY *Isaiah 35:4 – “Say to those who have an anxious heart, ‘Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.’”* The return of our Lord at the Last Day is a cause of joy and anticipation for us believers. We know our Lord and His love, and we look forward to His Second Advent. Indeed, how we live our lives here and now flows from our certain hope of resurrection and eternal life.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING DECEMBER 21st All are invited to lend your voices as we visit some of our homebound members at care facilities. We will meet at church at 11:30; carpooling will be available. Please sign-up at the Sign-Up Station so we can plan accordingly.

POINSETTIAS Altar guild will be ordering poinsettias to beautify the sanctuary for Christmas. The cost is \$10 per plant. Please use the envelopes and box located at the sign-up station to place your order.

CHURCH DECORATING Many hands make light work! Please join us on Sunday, December 14th after Bible study and Sunday school to beautify the sanctuary for Christmas.

LCMS FOUNDATION We can face competing priorities when we think about planning our estates someday. As we wrap up this year long consideration, we must ponder whether we see our estate plan as an expression of our Christian faith or just giving up on life. For many years, we focus on building and accumulating. Eventually, however, we must pass on financial assets to others, primarily family or ministries. If done correctly, this “passing on” is a plan for continuing the use of God’s gifts, conveying His blessings. This isn’t giving up at all, as we look to inherit our eternal inheritance. Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can help you gain this perspective. Contact Scott Radden @ 618-977-4049 or scott.radden@lfind.org

THANK YOU The church passed out eight Thanksgiving boxes based on nominations from the members. Thanks to everyone that made a special donation for this purpose we help eight families have the opportunity to have a great Thanksgiving meal.

MEMORIAL TREE The Memorial Tree is up. It looks a little different than the tree of the past, but we hope this new tree will last longer than the previous all white trees that turned yellow after a time. Your loved one's ornaments have been put out on the table for you to add to a branch. Feel free to bring your ornaments from home as well. If you would like one made, please see Carrie Homann.

PASTOR UMBARGER PHOTO BOOK His last gift from the congregation was a photo book of memories. We decided to order an additional copy for the church. If you would like to see it, it will be in the office for a few weeks, then we will put it on the book case in the Keyl room. Please do not take this book home; it is an important piece of St. John’s memorabilia.

2026 OFFERING ENVELOPES If you are using envelopes for your offerings, there is a table set up in the hallway by the gym to pick up your 2026 box. If you don’t see your name, please let Kay Iwen or Margie Shaefer know and they can assign you one. If you would like to switch to Simply Giving (automatic bank transfer) please stop in the office and Annie will get you the form to sign up. Please remember, DO NOT start using your new envelopes until January– you may have a different number than last year!

POBLO On Saturday evening directly after the service in the sanctuary and Sunday directly after the service in the sanctuary retired Reverend Tim Bickel will make a short presentation on the work of POBLO (People of the Book Lutheran Outreach). Tim completed his pastoral studies at the St. Louis in 1971 and preached in varies church through out the US until he retired as a pastor in 2008. Please listen to Rev. Bickel presentation and ask any questions you may have. Also, a more detailed presentation will be included in the adult Bible study in the Jansen room on Sunday after the service.

*Saturday, December 13th, 2025
Third Sunday in Advent
Vespers*

Prelude	
<i>“Hark! A Thrilling...” 345</i>	
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Sermon <i>Pastor Nerud</i>	
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Prayer	
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Postlude	

The Lord's Week

Sunday, December 14th

9:00am– Worship
10:30am– POBLO presentation
10:30am– Bible Study/Sunday school
10:30am– Confirmation Instruction
11:30am– Church decorating
1:30pm– Voter's meeting
***Pastoral Call Vote to follow regular agendas

Monday, December 15th

1:30pm– Activities room
6:00pm– Cherub Chimers rehearsal
6:30pm– Heavenly Ringers rehearsal

Tuesday, December 16th

10:00am– Food Pantry
6:30pm– Guitar Jam

Wednesday, December 17th

9:00am– TOPS
10:00am– Women's Bible study
5:30pm– Advent supper– Breakfast for supper!
6:30pm– Advent worship

Thursday, December 18th

11:30am– Ladies Luncheon @ Deerfield Restaurant

Saturday, December 20th

8:00am– Men's Bible study
9:30am– Choir Rehearsal
11:00am– Whipple family party
5:00pm– Worship w/ Communion
(Pastor Mueller)

Sunday, December 21st

9:00am– Worship w/Communion
10:30am– Bible Study/Sunday school
11:30am– Christmas Caroling

VOTER'S MEETING December 14th at 1:30pm We will begin with regular board agendas for December, and then move into a special Pastoral Call Voter's Assembly. We will be voting on a candidate to extend a call.

Bible Study Opportunities

Sundays, 10:15am

POBLO presentation by Rev. Tim Bickle, in the Sanctuary.

Holy Land Geography, Customs & History

Join Clark Stojan in the Keyl room, as he leads us to explore the world of the Bible along with select events recorded in Scripture.

Coffee with Christ– Myth or Faith?

Wednesdays, 10am

Great Women of the Bible

In this Bible study series, we will look at the lives of only the most familiar women in God's Word. From Eve, the first woman, to those women who helped Jesus' apostles, participants will see God's grace in action as He calls and leads these women in their daily lives. Through their God-given faith and their faith-filled deeds, you will be inspired by these great women of the Bible.

Saturdays, 8am

Men's Bible study

We are doing a chronological study of the Gospel.

Serving the Lord this Week:

Organist: Christine Engebrecht

Greeters: *(Sat.)* Kathy McDowell
(Sun.)

Ushers: *(Sat.)* Greg Burke, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon & Larry Ripka
(Sun.) Brian Nielsen and The Strike Team

Altar Guild: Diana Lackey & Marsha Boarts

Acolyte: Nathan Duffy

The church confesses to Christ, "You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). The church is encouraged to "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly ..." (Col. 3:16). Psalm 1 teaches us to meditate on God's Word day and night. It is our great opportunity and joy to read and study God's Word. One beneficial practice is to memorize the Scriptures and, in so doing, to meditate on it. The LCMS invites everyone to memorize a verse together each week.

Zephaniah 3:17

The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing



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Psalm

P Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul!

C I will praise the LORD as long as I live;

I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.

When his breath departs he returns to the earth; on that very day his plans perish.

Blessèd is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God,

who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them,

who keeps faith forever;

who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets the prisoners free;

the LORD opens the eyes of the blind. The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.

The LORD watches over the sojourners; he upholds the widow and the fatherless, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, to all generations. Praise the LORD!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Readings

P The Old Testament reading is from Isaiah, the thirty-fifth chapter.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who have an anxious heart, “Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.” Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. (*Is. 35:1-10*)

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

P The Epistle reading is from James, the fifth chapter.

Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful. (*James 5:7-11*)

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.” As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, “‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.’ Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.” (*Matt. 11:2-15*)

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

ST. JOHN’S PRAYER CARD

December 13th and 14th, 2025

Please remember the following in your prayers this week...

Sister Congregation

Rev. Brian Johnston
Trinity Lutheran Church
Taylorville, IL

Members

Stacey Roman
Cody Rossmiller
Alena Rossmiller
Hannah Rossmiller
Jacob Rossmiller
Kevin & Wendy Rossmiller
Brian & Cori Rossmiller

Missionaries Serving

Deaconess Tirzah Krey-
Latin America

Military Chaplains

LTJG Eric Bear

Ill & Hospitalized

Joan Britton– double bypass
surgery
Kevin Green– cancer diagnosis
Peter Hipple

Request from Visitor

Guest Nancy Chandler would
like prayers for her mom

Prolonged Illness &

Special Needs:

Joan Britton
Bev Brokaw
Chuck Brokaw
Kodie Esparza
Nic Fellows
Steve Fors
Duane Gosa
Nancy Gosa
Kathy Herron
Jerry Hill
Chris Hoehn (Janet Newlon’s
nephew, aplastic anemia)
Kay Iwen (broken neck)
Dale Johnson
Merle Loete
Reid McDonald
Jean Morrical
RaeJean Murphy
Tom Nielsen
Robin Passman
Brenda Roggendorf
Karen Schmidt– broken collar-
bone
Kathleen Schmidt
David Sountris
Alivia Voelkers
Ken Weidenbach
Cora Whipple

Homebound:

Nancy Bonow
Ann Bowman
Don, Wanda, and Jason Cass
Darlene Dopson
Mary Ann Eckert
Rick & Sylvia Fauser
Angie Fischer
Peg Heitzman
Christopher Higgins
Carole Hodshire
Ingrid Hodshire
Barbara Honert
Lori Hopkins
Judy Kirklin
Mary McGee
Nancy Smart
Terry Tipsword
Barbara Veskauf