

LAMP

Monthly publication of the American Lutheran Church
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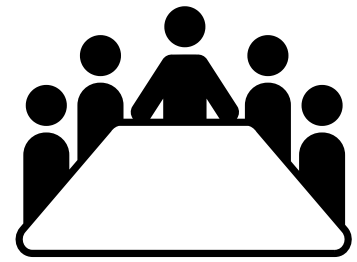
Back to School Blessings:

As August arrives, our community prepares for the familiar rhythm of back-to-school days. Hallways will soon echo with the voices of students, classrooms will buzz with curiosity, and teachers and staff will step into another year of shaping hearts and minds.

Let us lift in prayer our students, that they may grow in wisdom and kindness; our teachers, that they may be renewed with patience and creativity; and our school staff, that they may serve with joy and care. May God's presence guide each step, bringing peace in times of challenge and celebration in moments of achievement.

May this school year be filled with learning, laughter, and God's grace in every lesson

COUNCIL MINUTES



July 14, 2025 Council Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by President Maureen Even.

Present: Pastor Mohr-Kelly, Shirley Bergman, Amber Reuter, Mike Waring, Christy Phillips, and Sara Borland. Absent: Cindy Gosse.

Pastor led a devotion from A Guide to Prayer for All God's People.

Maureen added discussing a joint meeting with Zion to the agenda. Sara Borland motioned to approve agenda. Second by Shirley Bergman. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

Amber Reuter motioned to delay approval of June report until Cindy Gosse returns for August meeting. Second by Shirley Bergman. Motion to carried.

Secretary Report:

Pastor mentioned there was an issue opening the June document for review. Amber will send as a PDF as well next time. Sara Borland motioned to approve the June minutes. Second by Mike Waring. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Hospitality Reports:

No report.

Parish Ed/Youth:

July 16 there will be a VBS meeting at 5:30 at St. A's. August 13 at 5:30 will be a parish ed meeting. Youth made about \$500 for lunch at the park.

Property/Technology:

Maureen shared we are working on bids for the AC/heating unit. Wayne said Independence Plumbing and heating didn't look at the board in Pastor's office. It's double of what Johnson's is. Shirley said we need to make sure we are comparing apples to apples. We are waiting on one more bid from Primrose.

Maureen is going to caulk the southwest door to stop the bugs from coming in.

Mike looked at the roof and noticed rust. We need to have it looked at as it will need to be repaired in the future.

Scholarship:

No report.

Worship and Music:

Shirley shared we used setting 10. Coming up we will use With One Voice. Shirley reminded us the piano downstairs is to be taken care of. Remind the youth the piano is an instrument and not a toy.

Call Committee:

No report.

Pastor's Report:

Pastor met members as well as shut-in calls. There was a meeting for her contract. She performed the wedding of Hannah and Jared Cheever. Rich had his surgery. Maureen and Amber filled in for service. Pastor begins with presentation for synod to clergy on interim.

Pastor matched council members for prayer partners for the next month.

Confirmation class will be held after 4 p.m. Praise Worship. We have potentially 11 youth for confirmation this year. Pastor will send the letter out for "registration" at the beginning of August. Pastor announced at service Sunday that if they have 11 youth, she will need assistance with the class for the attendance, service notes, service projects, etc.

Bible study in the fall Thursdays: Life of Paul and his early writings. Available in-person and Zoom. Microsoft Teams could also be an option as you don't need an account to join a meeting. Mary asked if we are paying for Zoom still. If we are, and we switch to Microsoft Teams, we will need to cancel the Zoom account.

New Business:

Maureen brought up discussing the yoke agreement with Zion. We need to look at financials and community aspect of the agreement. Sara mentioned that in current state ALC is in, we financially cannot do a full-time pastor. Maureen likes the joint activities we did with Zion: confirmation, lent, advent, bible studies. Shirley asked if we can find a pastor who will meet the needs of both congregations. Synod would like each congregation to look at their individual needs and the connections to see what is the same. Synod said we could have separate interims and still keep the yoke agreement in place as we look for a full-time pastor. We need to set a date in August with Zion council and Synod representative to discuss. Maureen will propose September 8 or 9th at 6 p.m. for joint meeting to the Zion council.

Once we have the bids for the AC/heating units will need to have a congregational meeting to approve the bid as it is more than \$5,000. We will need to meet with our congregation for their input on the yoke agreement and the direction of ALC going forward.

Pastor's current contract ends July 21st. Maureen, Sara, Cindy, and Pastor met and discussed the salary and the hours. Pastor will provide service 30 or less hours, during interim will address the congregation for guidance for call process, she will ready us for a settled pastor, spiritual guidance and care for the congregation, report to council on progress, establish goals. Compensation base pay is \$30,000, social security offset is 0, ALC provides internet, garbage, no phone, no additional housing benefits, 4 weeks of vacation, 4 Sunday absence, mileage paid at IRS rate, support and continuing education \$900, moving expense went down to 0. She took a 20% cut to stay in the interim. After 6 months, the contract will be looked at and evaluated again. Sara said this contract does fit within the budget that has been approved by the congregation for the rest of the year. Mary asked that it is a 6 month contract. It would go through January 31, 2026

Sara Borland motioned to approve the new contract as written. Second by Mike Waring. Motion carried.

Plans for Renewal & Sustainability and Discovering Hope - read chapter 1 and we will discuss at the next meeting.

Amber will create and publish a public calendar for the church so that way church activities can be posted.

Old Business:

No old business.

Correspondence:

ELCA letter with ways to give. Maureen suggested we put it in the bulletin.

Wartburg Theological Seminary - Dr. Winston Persad and Dr. May Burt Persaud are retiring. They are doing a campaign to dedicate a classroom to their name.

Deacon assignments for August: August 3: Mary (and read) ; August 10: Maureen (and read) ; August 17: Christy (and read) ; August 24: Mike (and read); August 31: Needs filled yet.

Need a fellowship host for August.

Lord's Prayer was said.

Sara Borland motioned to adjourn at 8:08 p.m. Second by Mike Waring. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Reuter

Secretary

July 28, 2025 Council Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by President Maureen Even.

Present: Pastor Mohr-Kelly, Shirley Bergman, Amber Reuter, Mike Waring, and Sara Borland. Absent: Christy Phillips. Cindy Gosse joined later.

Pastor led us in prayer, and we began discussing the three bids that came in for the AC unit.

Primrose

\$16920

Independence Plumbing, Heating, & Cooling

\$19360 warranty 5 years on parts, 7 years on compressor, 1 year on labor

Johnson Plumbing, Heating, & Cooling

\$9994.50 2 year on labor, 1 year on parts

Mike Waring motioned to recommend the Johnson bid to the congregation. Second by Sarah Borland. Motion carried.

Elevator is out due to the lightning strikes from the storms. Schindler is coming the end of the week. Hawkeye Alarm is looking at the panel to replace. The storm also caused other damage in the church: lost Chris' computer, router, worship laptop. Sound system, mics, organ, and stove work. \$7,500 is our deductible for insurance claims. Right now we are around \$1,000 so far in damages.

Wayne suggests we look at the maintenance contract with Schindler due to the cost for the yearly fee of nearly \$2,700 and the speed of service.

Maureen contacted Ruth to inform them that we are continuing contract with Pastor Pat. Suggested September 8 and 9 to meet with Zion.

At the congregational meeting, we want to vision cast and see where the congregation would like to see the future of ALC go. Vote on the HVAC, Pastor Contract, and Future Vision of ALC.

Motion to end the meeting by Amber Reuter. Second by Sara Borland. Motion carried at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amber Reuter

Message from Council President

Special Congregational Meeting to be held Sunday, August 24, 2025. The following items will be on the agenda:

1. Approval of a bid for the Air Conditioner/Heat pump units for the Pastor's office, Secretary's office and the fireside room.
2. Approval for payment of property insurance deductible pertaining to the claim for lightning strike damage to our computers, telephone, router, elevator fire alarm & elevator.
3. Yoke Agreement (Pastor's contract & future visions for ALC)

Thank you,
Maureen Even,
Council President

🏠 Blessing Our College-Bound Students 🏠

Join us Sunday, August 17th at 4:00 PM for a special Praise Worship Service as we lift up our college-bound students in prayer and encouragement before the new school year begins. After worship, stay for pizza and fellowship—a great time to share blessings, advice, and love with those heading off to campus life.

Please RSVP to Sara Borland so we can plan for food.





A Huge Thank You!

First, a big shout-out to Maureen Even for her quick inspection to identify what needed attention after the lightning strike. We're also grateful to Beth and Mike Stanek (319 Ramps & Accessibility) for installing the chairlift while our church elevator is out of commission for a bit, Mike Waring for his work on the secretary's computer and the phones, Wayne Schneider for his assistance with the elevator and Anthony Bahe for his help with the recording equipment. Your efforts have kept us moving forward—thank you all!

Thank you, Cindy, for working your absolute magic and getting Microsoft 365 up and running on my computer! I'm practically doing a happy dance over here!

🎉💻🌟 Chris

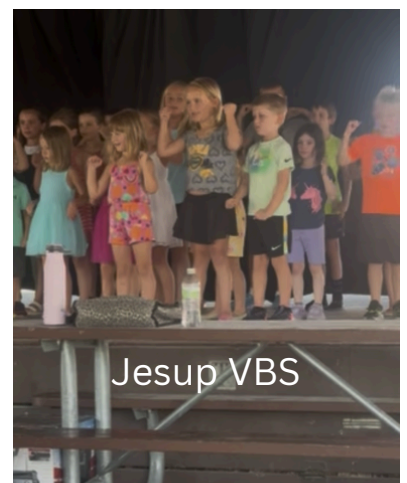


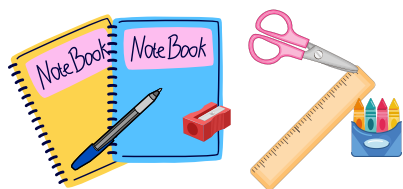
THANK YOU

A big, heartfelt thank you to Christy for being ALC's amazing VBS representative! 🌟 And a warm, fuzzy thanks to all our wonderful ALC members who jumped in to help—whether you were front and center or behind the scenes, your smiles, hands, and hearts made VBS extra special! 💛🏡🌟!



ALC Youth Lunch in the Park in July
“Thanks for supporting us!”





Lutheran World Relief School Kits

American Lutheran has been collecting items to fill backpacks for school kits that will be delivered to St. Lutheran, Sumner, at the Fall In-Gathering on October 8th. Our goal is to fill 25 backpacks. Items that are still needed are: 70-sheet spiral notebook paper, pencil sharpeners, 12-inch rulers, blunt scissors, black or blue ink pens (no gel) and 16 or 24 count boxes of crayons. We welcome donations of the above items and request that they be brought to the church by Sunday, September 21st. Thank you for your generous support of this ministry.

SUMMER



CONTRIBUTIONS

Keep ALC in Your Summer Plans – Even When You're Away!

Summer can get busy with vacations, family events, and weekends away—but your faithful support of American Lutheran Church doesn't have to take a break.

Simply Giving is an easy, no-stress way to continue your tithes and offerings, even when you're not in the pews. Whether you choose one-time or recurring donations, you can set up giving on a schedule that works for you.

Scan the QR code with your smartphone or download the Vanco Mobile app to get started today.

SOLES4SOULS

Give Your Shoes a Second Life – Change a Life!

Mike and Chris Waring, members of ALC, are also active members of the Independence Lions Club—and they're inviting YOU to join them in a meaningful mission!

Beginning September 1st, the Independence Lions Club will be collecting new and gently used shoes for Soles4Souls, a global nonprofit dedicated to turning unwanted shoes into opportunities for people in need.

Why Shoes?

Soles4Souls helps keep millions of pairs of shoes out of landfills each year by giving them a second life. Donated shoes are distributed to those in need across the U.S. and around the world—providing essential footwear to people who might otherwise go without. Some shoes even help entrepreneurs in developing countries start small businesses, creating sustainable income for their families.

How You Can Help

It's simple—look through your closets and gather shoes you no longer wear. All sizes, styles, and conditions are welcome—even single shoes—as long as they are in wearable condition. Every pair (or single shoe!) makes a difference.

Drop-Off at American Lutheran Church

A collection bin will be available in the lower narthex beginning September 1st. The drive will run throughout the fall, so you'll have plenty of time to donate.

By giving your shoes, you're helping change lives, protect the environment, and bring hope—both locally and globally.

For more information, contact Mike or Chris Waring or visit Soles4Souls.org.





Confirmation News

Confirmation "Faith, Friends, and a Little Bit of Holy Mischief"

Last year's Confirmation class was filled with laughter, curiosity, and "aha!" moments—and we're ready for another year of joyful learning! This year, we're calling it The Year of the Bible—but don't worry, it's not just about memorizing verses. Instead, we'll be digging deep to find the kernel of truth in each story and discovering how it speaks to our lives today. We might even kick things off with some of Aesop's fables to get our minds warmed up for deeper thinking!

Please keep these incredible young people in your prayers as they continue their faith journey: Colin Schares, Madyson Dahl, Carsyn Niichel, Brinley Bergman, Keaton Lysne, Kash Niichel, Lauryn Witt, Stella Distler, Ryder Costello, and Jaidyn Wright.

And—if you have a heart for youth (and maybe a knack for keeping a little holy chaos in check), we'd love for you to volunteer and be part of the adventure!

O gracious God, we ask you to bless and guide this ministry for young people. Help these classes nurture their faith and trust in You. Guide the parents as they support them in this journey of faith. Amen.



Youth Fall Dirty Feet Retreat October 17-18-19



Calling all junior high students: Enjoy two nights of lodging in cabins, meaningful faith conversations, quality meals & snacks, energetic camp counselors, active praise music, the High Ropes Course, campfires and much more! This special weekend at Ewalu will help you grow in faith and meet new friends!

WHO: Grades 6-9 youth **WHEN:** 8 p.m. Friday, through 11 a.m. Sunday

COST: \$90 /youth, \$65 /chaperone

Includes: Activities, meals, & bunk bed style lodging,
Bring your own bedding, towel, pillow

Our Camp Store of items to purchase will be open, if anyone would like to make a cash or credit card purchase. No need to put money into the canteen at registration time!

Packing List: Bedding (bunkbed), Towel, Pillow, Weather appropriate clothing, Closed toe shoes, Water bottle, Toiletries, Bible, Backpack A Positive Attitude!

Contact us: Camp Ewalu, 37776 Alpha Ave., Strawberry Point, IA 52076,

Phone: 563-933-4700

Email: office@ewalu.org

growing your faith OPPORTUNITIES

Thursdays with God – The Life of Paul and His Early Writings

Thursdays, 6:00–7:30 PM – Fireside Room or via Zoom

Paul sometimes gets a bad rap—but maybe we've been too quick to judge! Through fresh study, I've discovered a whole new depth to Paul's theology and a greater appreciation for his journey. This series will take a closer look at the real Paul—his background, his transformation, and the way his words still shape our faith today. We'll explore:

- How was Paul raised?
- Was he a Roman citizen, a Pharisee—or both?
- What did Paul really think about women? (You might be surprised!)

Come join the conversation—you might walk away seeing Paul in a whole new light.

GROUNDING IN PRAYER

A Training Guide for Congregational Prayer.

This is an introductory study of prayer, The themes to be covered include: The Groundwork of Prayer, Sharpening Your Personal Tools For Prayer, Praying for the Hardened Path, Praying for the Rocky Ground. Praying for the Thorny Ground, Blessing the Good Soil.

A small group experience for those interested in beginning or deepening their prayer life. We will meet for 1 and 1/2 hours each week for 6 weeks. The day, time and place will be chosen by those who will be working the landscape of prayer.

Write "Prayer Group" and your name on a slip of paper or prayer request slip, (pink paper in hymnal holder) place it in the offering plate or let Pastor Pat, Chris or Kaye Jones know.

Worship WEDNESDAY

Worship Wednesday will start on September 10, 2025 from 6:00 - 7:00 pm. We are trying something new this year and will be having it every Wednesday nite for an hour. Please note the new time change.



September 10--lesson will be based on Psalm 1

September 17--Lost Sheep & Lost Coin

September 24--Baby Moses

October 1--Burning Bush

October 8--Free from Slavery

October 15--Let My People Go



Come join us for a fun filled hour of playing the bells, lesson, craft and snack

August Celebrations

Birthdays

Jared Merkel	1-Aug
Melissa Bahe	1-Aug
Connie Collins	2-Aug
Wendy McGill	5-Aug
Nikki Hemmer	6-Aug
Brady Wilson	8-Aug
Maddi Ahmann	11-Aug
Teresa Merkel	12-Aug
Dakota Putnam	14-Aug
Jordan Leach	15-Aug
Landon Bergman	16-Aug
Elaina Clark	16-Aug
Thomas Jones	19-Aug
Eric Clark	20-Aug
Carmen McAtee	21-Aug
Jacob Clark	24-Aug
Dan Even	26-Aug
Jessica Saunders	26-Aug
Benjamin Gosse	27-Aug
Randy Ruehs	30-Aug
Madyson Dahl	30-Aug
Corbin Frush	31-Aug

Baptism Anniversaries

Bill Schneider	1-Aug
Rayann Vogel	8-Aug
Wayne Schneider	9-Aug
Barb Mostek	10-Aug
Jaidyn Wright	10-Aug
Nash Lee	10-Aug
Crystal Lysne	12-Aug
Keaton Lysne	12-Aug
Madyson Dahl	16-Aug
Jaylon Dahl	16-Aug
Chris Jones	17-Aug
Morgan Westpfahl	18-Aug
Renee McAtee	20-Aug
Angie Loyd	21-Aug
Melissa Bahe	21-Aug
Wendy McGill	24-Aug
Kayla Hunziker	28-Aug

Wedding Anniversaries

JDenny and Joyce Becker	8/3/1968
Luke and Kayla Hunziker	8/7/2010
Mike and Barb Mostek	8/16/1980
Ron and Connie Gosse	8/27/1994
Randy and Teresa Merkel	8/30/1980
Robert and Eleanor Fratzke	8/30/1958

**LOST &
FOUND**



Are you missing your Hawkeye jacket?
See Chris Waring to claim. The jacket has
been hanging around since Palm
Sunday.

Your Support makes this Testimony possible...

A New Beginning: Carmen's Journey to Safety and Self-Reliance

Carmen Ortiz was born in Charco, Nariño, Colombia. At 11, her family relocated to Buenaventura, where she finished high school and watched her father build a small business. Violence in the region forced the family to move again — this time to Bogotá, in search of safety and stability.

In Bogotá, Carmen reconnected with a childhood friend who would become her life partner. Together, they launched Frutería, a fruit-selling business Carmen successfully operated for 17 years. During that time, she also became a mother to her son, Adiel Jesús.

In 2023, violence once again disrupted their lives. Fearing for their safety, Carmen and Adiel fled to Ecuador and applied for asylum through the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Life in Ecuador was grueling.

"We were homeless. I had to sleep with my son under a bridge," she recalls. "He got sick and had to be hospitalized."

After more than a year, IOM helped process their immigration status and arranged travel to the U.S. In July 2024, they arrived in Houston — exhausted, hungry, and unsure of what came next. The guide assigned to help them was rarely available. Desperate for help and food, Carmen approached airline staff to ask about a delayed flight.

"We were so hungry. I just wanted to know when our flight would leave and instead, three employees brought us full meals. I started to cry. I had just arrived, and people were already helping me."

Their flight to Des Moines departed at midnight and landed at 2 a.m., where they were welcomed by Chuck, a caseworker from LSI (Lutheran Services in Iowa). He brought them to a hotel, where Carmen remembers feeling overwhelmed.

"I was scared and confused. I remember thinking: Are we safe? Are we okay?"

Sixteen days later, LSI helped Carmen and Adiel move into their first apartment. From that point, life began to change. Carmen enrolled in English classes, received assistance with legal paperwork, healthcare, and food — and soon found two jobs: one with Des Moines Public Schools, and another at Sam's Club.

"I'm incredibly grateful. LSI helped me with everything."

But life without a car in a Midwestern winter was difficult. Carmen walked long distances through the snow, waited for buses, or spent \$60 a week on rideshares, just to get to work and get her son to school. During a routine check-in, Carmen's caseworker Shaima heard about these challenges and referred her to Duaa, an IDA Specialist at LSI. Duaa introduced her to the matched savings program, which helps participants purchase essential assets — like a car — through financial education and support.

"I'd wake up my son very early so we could catch the school bus from our old address. Then I'd rush to work and still be late."

Carmen had already saved \$2,000 on her own, knowing a car would be vital for her family's stability. Through LSI's Individual Development Accounts program, she opened an account at Veridian Credit Union, completed budgeting and asset-specific classes, and received one-on-one coaching from Juan Lourido, Business Development Specialist at LSI. Juan helped her understand financing, credit, and how to identify reliable used cars online. With his help, Carmen purchased a safe, fuel-efficient 2015 Toyota Prius that fits her family's needs and budget. "I never thought I could buy a car especially one that was safe and good quality. Now I take my son to school and go to work. That means everything to me."

She also opened a secured \$500 credit card to begin building her credit history.

"These classes helped me prepare for when income slows down in the summer. I feel independent now, especially with the car."

Today, Carmen is preparing for her driving test, building a new life, and planning for the future.

"When we left Colombia, we were running from threats and violence. Now I'm getting used to a new life, looking for opportunities to grow, maybe buy a house, and support my son's education."

When asked to describe her journey in one word, she answers without hesitation:

"Apoyo" — Support.



Your gift changes the lives of thousands of people across Iowa.

Give By Mail
Lutheran Services in Iowa
3125 Cottage Grove Ave
Des Moines, IA 50311

2025

SEPTEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	01	02	03	04	05	06
				9am Womens Bible Study 6:30 Thurs W/God	Chris gone 9/5-9/8	
07	08	09	10	11	12	13
13th Sunday After Pentecost 9am Worship & Communion 4pm Praise Worship Confirmation to follow PW	6:30pm Council Meeting	9am Quilters	6pm Worship Wednesday	6:30 Thur W/God		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
14th Sunday After Pentecost 9am Worship & Communion 4pm Praise Wroship Confirmation to follow PW			6pm Worship Wednesday	6:30 Thur W/God		
				Chris gone 9/17-9/21		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
15th Sunday After Pentecost 9am Worship & Communion 4pm Praise Worship Last Day for LWR Donations Confirmation to follow PW		9am Quilters	6pm Worship Wednesday	6:30 Thur W/God		
28	29	30	01			
16th Sunday After Pentecost 9am Worship & Communion 4pm Praise Worship Confirmation to follow PW	6:30 Artist Colaboration Fireside Room					

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- **Women's Bible Study resumes Thursday, September 4th at 9 AM.**
We will use the Bible Study from the Gather Magazine. If there is someone interested but does not receive the magazine, they can contact me and I will try to get them a copy.
- **Quilters will resume on Tuesday, September 9th at 9 AM** - We will meet the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 9 AM. Anyone interested in joining us is welcome.

Deacon Assignments for September
 7th Christy Phillips 21st Maureen Evens
 14th Mike Waring 28th Amber Reuter

If you wish to be added to the prayer chain either as someone needing prayers or want to join the Prayer Warriors as ALC, please: Contact Kaye kayejns@gmail.com or the office secretary@americanlutheranjesup.org with any prayer concerns.