

LAMP

Monthly publication of the American Lutheran Church

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Christmas blessings to you and your family!

As we enter this holy season, we rejoice in the promise of Emmanuel—God with us. This Christmas, we are especially grateful to welcome Bishop Jones for worship and celebration on December 21st, the day of our Children's Christmas Program. May Christ's light bring hope to your days, peace to your spirit, and joy to your celebrations. Let us open our hearts to God's love made known in Jesus.

COUNCIL MINUTES



November 10, 2025 Council Meeting

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

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

Pastor led a prayer and Council discussed Discovering Hope. Discipleship was timely as we plan on reading through the Bible in 2026. Intergenerational discipleship is important. Learning and discipleship is lifelong! A refresher on how the Lutheran denomination began and what the ELCA stands for would be a good thing for our church.

Pastor mentioned the Synod shared there are 6 people in line who are ready to take a call. The Call Committee is working on updating the MSP. Synod is suggesting we review our constitution to the model constitution. Sara will take a look at both to compare them. From the Cottage Meetings, suggestions have included looking at changing the number of people on Council and the Call Committee. We need hands and feet to keep things moving forward.

Sara moved to approve the agenda. Second by Cindy. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

Great report for October. We have had a good month and a half in contributions. Maureen mentioned we have some big bills coming out in November. The maintenance contract with Schindler will likely be coming out this month. Mike talked to Schindler and is waiting on the quote. Cindy suggested we talk to Schumacher since it seems the issues we are having are Schindler's software, what does it look like in the future if there are issues and we need to swap it out. As soon as Mike gets the quote, he will send it to Mary at the insurance company and we will move forward with 50% of the payment. Cindy pointed out she redeemed the certificate of deposit.

Mary made a motion to approve the October report. Second by Sara. Motion carried.

Cindy requested a motion to pay the maintenance contract with Schindler for one quarter. Sara motioned to approve that request. Second by Mary. Motion carried.

Secretary Report:

Motion by Cindy to approve the October minutes. Second by Christy. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Hospitality Reports:

Hosts are covered for November. Sara will find the hosts for December. Fellowship on December 21st will be downstairs as there may be more families after the youth program. A request will be placed in the LAMP for candy donations for the children's Christmas Eve gift bags after the program.

Parish Ed/Youth:

Christy and Beth are working on the Christmas program. They are looking for a large camcorder if anyone has one they can borrow.

Property/Technology:

Mike sent out requests for quotes for leaf removal at the church and the parsonage. He is looking for quotes. Pastor talked to Dorothy Thompson regarding parking lot snow removal. Dorothy will have one of their guys to clear the snow this season. Mike mentioned the email from Chris about the request from Jessica Saunders to use the church for the afternoon of December 14th. Council agreed that date works. Maureen reported we haven't had many boxelder bugs.

Scholarship:

Applications will go out after the first of the year.

Worship and Music:

Pastor shared that the times for Christmas Eve services are 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Communion will be by Intinction. Christy pointed out the Advent worship time in her report was 6:30. It should be 7 p.m. to avoid overlapping with Worship Wednesday. Pastor is changing the frequency of devotionals. She is working to find people to help with the live-streaming.

Call Committee:

Pastor hasn't received the reports from Amanda Phillips, but she knows the committee is working on updating the MSP.

Pastor's Report:

Pastor would like us to consider using assisting ministers during the services. Pastor would like people to share their faith statements during the midweek Advent services using the Holden Evening Prayer. Pastor plans to organize a spring craft show/plant exchange. Pastor would like to host events to mingle the 9 a.m. and the 4 p.m. services, for example a chili cook-off. Council brought up the possibility of having a "Souper Bowl" Sunday.

New Business:

Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day offering will go to the Food Pantry.

Mike pointed out that there is \$460 in Benevolence for our youth campers that will rollover for next summer. There is \$26 in Benevolence that was set for the summer food program and will remain for next year.

Pastor asked if we could split the December Noisy Offering between Good Gifts and the Food Pantry. Christy thought that would be fine.

Cindy left at 7:26 p.m.

Christy motioned to approve the Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day offering to go to the Food Pantry, as well as updating the December Noisy Offering to be split between the Good Gifts and Food Pantry. Second by Sara. Motion carried.

Sara suggested we discuss the Cottage Meeting notes at another time so Council has more time to read through all the feedback.

Pastor would like to see an increase in her pay. We have had 6 months at the current salary. She suggested implementing back the housing allowance into her contract or increase the salary. Sara motioned to go back to Pastor's salary of \$36,000 which would be a \$500 per month increase over the current contract starting January 1st, 2026. Second by Shirley. Motion carried.

December 8th will be the 2026 budget workshop at 5:30 p.m. before the council meeting. The 2026 budget hearing will be January 11th at 10 a.m. The Annual Meeting will be January 18th at 10 a.m. The backups would be the following weeks. No 4 p.m. service on January 18th to encourage all members to attend the Annual Meeting.

Shirley had the piano tuned back when we moved the donated piano into the basement, so it's good to go.

Old Business:
No updates.

Correspondence:
Chris is sending out a "You Are Missed" card to members who haven't been to worship in awhile.
Mission Investment Fund
EWALU Cedar Campaign Update
NEIA Synod is asking for donations for the Pathways to Leadership.
Operation Santa Claus - supported 150 families across Buchanan County last year. They would like continued monetary support.
Mary shared that Jesup has The Giving Spirit for supporting families here in town.

Deacon Assignments:
December 7: Mary
December 14: Mike
December 21: Maureen
December 24: 2 p.m. Rich; 7 p.m. Maureen
December 28:

For streaming purposes, we need to make sure people speaking need to have a mic.
We will have 3 council positions open for 2026, including the secretary position. Christy said she would be willing to serve again if needed. Connie Hamilton, Shelia Collins, and Dorothy Thompson are on the nominating committee. Sara mentioned that Beth Stanek has also volunteered to be on the committee.

The Lord's Prayer was said.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 p.m. by Sara. Second by Christy. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amber Reuter
Secretary





CHRISTMAS Program

Friends and family of ALC — ALL ARE WELCOME!

Join us Sunday, December 21st at 9:00 AM for a joyful Worship Service and Children's Christmas Program.

We are honored to have Bishop Kevin Jones presiding over a condensed worship service, followed by our children's Christmas Program. Special music will be offered by Charlie Stanek, Piper Zelle, Jarad and Marissa Merkel, and the Youth Bells.

Let's celebrate the season together — let's pack the pews!

Worship Wednesday Notice

Following the Christmas Program, Worship Wednesday will take a holiday break and will resume on Wednesday, January 14, 2026.

ANNUAL MEETING

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING & MEAL

On **January 18**, we will have regular worship at 9:00 am (there will be no 4 pm service that day). We will decide together the future of American Lutheran Church. The important things to decide are 1) the 2026 budget, 2) the election of church council members 3) the nominating committee members, and the opportunities for pastoral leadership in the future. Please come and support ALC with your presence and your vote.

Following the meeting, we will BRUNCH together and continue the conversation. Here are the needs for the BRUNCH

Maureen – Breakfast casserole

Pastor Pat – French Toast casserole

_____ - one more casserole

_____ - Juice/Milk

_____ - Syrup

_____ - Butter

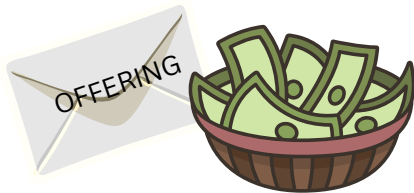
**January 25th backup date if bad
weather on 18th**

Let the office or Pastor Pat know what you can contribute.

All are welcome to attend our Annual Meeting on January 18th. We value your presence, your voice, and your partnership in ministry! Please note: to vote, members must have received communion at least once during the 2024–2025 church year *and* made a contribution of record.

We do need 25 voting members present to conduct official business, so your participation truly matters.

We hope to see you there!



December and Christmas Offerings

Christmas offering envelopes this year are designated for the Independence Area Food Pantry.



Our December Noisy Offerings will be split 50/50 between the Food Pantry and ELCA Good Gifts, with one exception:

On December 21st, the Noisy Offering will be designated to the Northeastern Iowa Synod as a special thank-you to Bishop Jones for joining us.

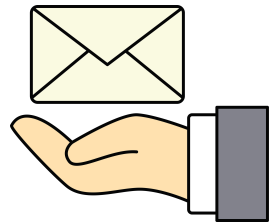


Women's Bible Study
will not be held in January

Quilters meet
Tuesday January 13th & 27th

2026 Offering Envelopes

are located at the back of the sanctuary. If you don't see a box for you, please let Mike Waring know.



Need Readers
January 4th & 11th

Need Deacon
January 18th

Need YouTube Recorder
January 4th & 25th

Call or txt Chris @ 563-920-0857





Feeding our community.

Huge thanks to everyone who donated to our food drive. The youth packed, delivered, and sorted over 330 pounds of food at the Independence Area Food Pantry. Shout out to Heartland Technology Business & Event Center for being another collection location.



Scan to get FREE Bible app



The Bible Recap Project – Coming January 2026!

WELCOME TO BIBLE RECAP

This year we are going to read the entire bible together. The Bible Recap project has a reading schedule and summaries available. If you want to participate, please email Pastor Pat at patmohrkelly@gmail.com. We each will read the assigned texts each day. Then on Sunday after fellowship (or during) we will discuss what we read and what had meaning for us. Let's try it! It links to the plan within the YouVersion Bible app. It's free to use and includes the daily readings and videos.

Would you read the Bible Plan, The Bible Recap With Tara-Leigh Cobble, with me?

<https://bible.com/reading-plans/42399/together/77566402/invitation?token=UrkjQ9DG90pdyJ8LVhmcZQ&source=share>

Soles4Souls Shoe Collection – Thank You!

Soles4Souls Update from Mike & Chris Waring
We are excited to share the impact your generosity is already making!

So far, we have collected 2,300 pairs toward our district goal of 10,000 pairs by August 2026.

Your donations have helped us:

- We divert 2875 pounds from going to local landfills.
- Your donations can create \$20815 of economic opportunity for families and communities around the world.
- In countries like Haiti and Honduras, your donations can provide a full year of consistent, quality food, housing and education for 2 families

Thank you for continuing to donate and for spreading the word to your family and friends. Every pair brings us one step closer to earning FREE shoes for children who qualify right here in our community.

Together, we can reach 10,000 pairs – and change lives with every step!

Most recent load
to be delivered
to collection unit
in Mt. Vernon



Spreading Hope and Compassion: Lutheran World Relief in Action

This past year, Lutheran World Relief (LWR) has expanded its mission of compassion, bringing hope and relief to neighbors in crisis across the United States. Through the beloved Quilt & Kit Ministry, LWR has provided essential support to communities devastated by natural disasters, including hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, and wildfires. Thanks to the generosity of congregations like ours, this ministry has reached countless lives, offering comfort and dignity in times of chaos.

In the past year alone, LWR distributed 21 shipping containers filled with over 60,000 handmade quilts and 76,000 essential kits to those in need. Additionally, more than \$1 million in cash grants were provided to trusted local partners, enabling families to purchase necessities like food, medicine, housing, and gas. These efforts have created a network of hope, ensuring that love and support arrive quickly and remain long after the initial crisis. One example of this rapid response was seen in Central Texas, where LWR delivered quilts and kits within 12 hours to neighbors affected by devastating flash floods. In North Carolina, LWR helped launch the Faith360 Network, uniting congregations, faith-based organizations, and volunteers to coordinate disaster relief efforts and build resilience in vulnerable communities.


The impact of this ministry is felt deeply by those who receive its support. A hurricane survivor in Florida shared, "The quilts were not only warm but beautifully made. The quality was amazing, and it felt like a gift of love in every stitch." Similarly, a partner in Mississippi expressed gratitude for the kits distributed after severe tornadoes and flooding, saying, "These types of items are rarely, if ever, received, and the recipients were very appreciative."


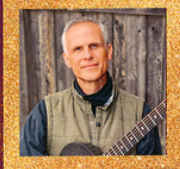
This work is made possible by the unwavering support of congregations like ours. Holy Redeemer Lutheran Church in Newark, California, serves as a powerful example of how a church's legacy can live on through acts of compassion. After closing its doors following 60 years of service, Holy Redeemer gifted a portion of its legacy to LWR's Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund. This transformative gift helped make LWR's U.S.-based disaster response possible, extending their ministry's blessings to neighbors in need.

As needs continue to grow, our support is more vital than ever. Together, we can ensure that when disaster strikes, love and hope are the first to arrive. Let us continue to be a part of this life-changing mission, spreading God's love to neighbors near and far. Thank you for your steadfast generosity and commitment to serving others. Your compassion is truly making a difference in the lives of those who need it most.

****Check out the LWR poster on the wall by the office
for more information on where our love was spread!***

around AND ABOUT

SAVE THE DATE **EWALU** 
65th ANNIVERSARY
AUGUST 28-30, 2026
More details to come: www.Ewalu.org/65th-Anniversary

Dedication of renewed Cedar Lodge Peter Mayer in concert

M & RETREAT

Mary and Martha fun for all
Friday, Feb 20, and Sat., Feb. 21, 2026

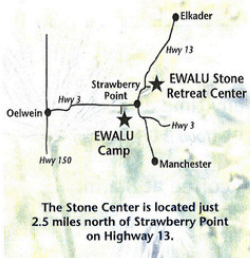
Celebrating and learning and doing.

YOU and your friends are invited to a retreat to celebrate all the Marys and Marthas! This is a Celebration of YOU!

Who is welcome? Any woman who belongs to the ELCA and their friends.
A Woman, a Christian, a helper, a doer, a listener, a learner.

Activities: Bible board games, mixer game, puzzle, **bring your own crafting projects** (everything is welcome including: quilting, bandage rolling, knitting & crochet, etc.)

EWALU STONE RETREAT CENTER



Friday, Feb. 20th
Arrive any time after 4 p.m.
Join us for a soup supper, hymn sing, games, puzzle, and crafting time.
The overnight stay and meals for the two days are \$45. Beds, bedding, and towels included (You may have to share a room.)
What to bring: comfortable clothes, craft projects are optional, and yourself with a joyful heart.
Saturday, Feb. 21st
Come for the day.
Breakfast and coffee at 8 a.m.; noon meal, Bible study, hymn sing, crafting time and lots of fellowship
Afternoon speakers: Family Resource center, Guttenburg
Welcome is at 9 a.m., Day ends at 3 p.m.
Day only rate for meals and building usage is \$20

Registration deadline: **Monday, Feb. 16th**

Location: EWALU Stone Center, 35124 Hwy 13, Strawberry Point, IA
which is 2.5 miles north of Strawberry Point. Handicap accessible facility.

hosted by Your Northeastern Iowa Synodical Women's Organization Board

Questions? Contact: Christine Schmitt, candcschmitt@gmail.com or call 641-397-2572 or call 641-220-5361

Check out bulletin board next to the office
for more information.

FIND SYNOD NEWS –

- Sign up for the synod's weekly E-News digital newsletter at www.neiasynod.org/blog/e-news.
- Follow the synod Facebook page at www.facebook.com/neiasynod.
- Check out the synod website at www.neiasynod.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS 2025-2026 AT CAMP EWALU

DEC 11

Enrichment Event: Adventures Close to Home

Kip Ladage will speak about nature photography and outdoor adventures, 1-3 PM in the Chapel. FREE!

DEC 8-19

'12 Days of 5Ks' fundraiser

Join Team Emily or Team Frank in this friendly competition to support the Cedar Lodge project. Details: www.Ewalu.org/Cedar-Lodge-Project

JAN 17

Winter Family Fun Day

Free indoor & outdoor activities to enjoy winter at camp. 1-4 PM at the Creation Center, fun for all ages!

FEB 28

Early Discount deadline for summer camp

Save \$40 on full-week youth programs... register NOW!



MORE INFO:

WWW.EWALU.ORG



Independence to Grand Rapids

APRIL 27-MAY 1, 2026

Tour Gardens of Michigan

Experience the beauty of Michigan's gardens from Grand Rapids to Lansing and Holland as you connect with nature, and fellow garden enthusiasts, along the way. Stroll through vibrant blooms, enjoy the colors of Tulip Time, and learn how Michigan State University is shaping the next generation of horticulturists.

DAY 1: NEXT STOP, GRAND RAPIDS!

Hit the road for an unforgettable garden journey through Grand Rapids, Lansing, and Holland, Michigan! Along the way, we'll stop for lunch on our own in Morris, Illinois, before continuing north into Michigan. This evening, check into the Country Inn & Suites, Grand Rapids for our 4-night stay. Then, enjoy a Welcome Dinner, a chance to engage with your fellow travelers and get ready for the beautiful garden adventures that await! D

DAY 2: FREDERIK MEIJER GARDENS & SCULPTURE PARK

This morning, we'll explore the acclaimed Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, a stunning 158-acre destination blending art, nature, and design. Begin with a guided tour led by Lynda Fiester, then enjoy free time to wander at your own pace through botanical gardens, nature trails, and one of the nation's premier outdoor sculpture gardens. Take a leisurely tram ride, browse the gift shop, or enjoy lunch over at the café. This evening, savor a group dinner at Pietro's Italian Restaurant before another comfortable overnight stay in Grand Rapids. B, D



Visit www.CountryTravelDiscoveries.com or call 855-744-TRIP (8747)

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or call 855-744-8747

DECEMBER

birthdays & anniversaries

Birthdays

Shane Witt	4-Dec
Kaye Jones	5-Dec
Danny Kopplin	7-Dec
Braylen Seehase	8-Dec
Michael Mostek	9-Dec
Kyle Nuehring	9-Dec
Marcia Riggs	12-Dec
Sueanne Westpfahl	12-Dec
Susan Emme	18-Dec
Jeanne Thompson	18-Dec
Steph Winkelpleck	21-Dec
Christy Phillips	22-Dec
Amanda Phillips	29-Dec

Baptism Anniversaries

Pat Mohr-Kelly	1-Dec
Jaymn Loyd	3-Dec
Sue Hoey	4-Dec
Connie Jones	5-Dec
Grace Thompson	8-Dec
Maddi Ahmann	11-Dec
Michelle Krivanek	11-Dec
Amanda Ruehs	20-Dec
Todd Westpfahl	20-Dec
Kelly Seehase	23-Dec
Barb Hayek	25-Dec
Merritt Jones	27-Dec
Gene Waring	30-Dec

Wedding Anniversaries

Shane and Brea Witt 12/12/2009



Prayers

Remember our members and friends in your prayers: Wendel, Gene, Shirley, Jeanne , Bill , Sharon, Jeanne, Debbie, Chris M. and Marie

Prayer Chain: Contact Kaye Jones kayejns@gmail.com or the office-secretary@americanlutheranjesup.org

CONNECTIONS

Stay Connected with ALC! Visit our website and Social media to keep up with everything happening in our church family. You'll find meeting minutes, the LAMP newsletter, our calendar, and much more—all in one place!



<http://www.americanlutheranjesup.org/>



<https://www.facebook.com/alcjesup//>

2026

JANUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	01	02	03
04	05	06	07	08	09	10
2nd Sunday of Christmas 9am Worhsip & Communion 3pm Confirmation 4pm Praise Worship			6pm Worship Wednesday			
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Baptism of our Lord 9am Worship & Communion 10am Budget Hearing 3pm Confirmation 4pm Praise Wroship	6:30pm Council Meeting	9am Quilters	6pm Worship Wednesday LAMP Articles Due-			
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
2nd Sunday after Epiphany 9am Worship & Communion 10am Annual Meeting 3pm Confirmation			6pm Worship Wednesday		Mike & Chris Gone	
25	26	27	28			31
3rd Sunday after Epiphany 9am Worship & Communion 10am Annual meeting if cx on 18th 3pm Confirmation 4pm Praise Worship	Mike & Chris Gone	9am Quilters	6pm Worship Wednesday			

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**Mark
your
Calendar!**

**Mark your calendars for
January 11th Budget hearing after
worship
January 18th Annual Meeting**

January Deacons

4th Mike Waring 18th
11th Maureen Even 25th Cindy Gosse

January Readers

4th
11th 18th Sara Borland
25th Cindy Gosse

