

St. John Lutheran Church
203 E. Church Street
P.O. Box 36
Royal, Illinois 61871

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
ROYAL, ILLINOIS 61871
PERMIT NO. 2



Return Service Requested

Josh Frerichs, Council President, Property
Bryce Frerichs, Council Vice-President, Parish
Life/Evangelism
Debbie Ackerman, Council Secretary, Worship
Tracy Britt, Council Treasurer,
Mike Heidle, Youth
Whitney Highfill, Youth
Rick Aden,
Melinda Huls, Parish Life/Evangelism
Stacy Smith,
Laura Ketchum
Sarah Wolken, S.S. Superintendents, Parish Ed
Church Office Secretaries:
Valerie Birge, Tammy Olson,
Custodian: Kathy Waller

ROYAL CHURCH NEWS

St. John's Newsletter

That all may know Christ and the power of his resurrection.
based on Philipians 3:10

JANUARY 2026



St. John Lutheran Church
203 E. Church Street
P.O. Box 36
Royal, Illinois 61871

(217) 583-3295

email: churchoffice@stjohnroyal.org
church website: stjohnroyal.org

Message from Debbie Ackerman.....

As this year comes to close and a New Year is beginning, let's reflect on God's faithfulness, the clarity of life and set intentions for the New Year through prayer and scripture.

We all like "do-overs" — second chances that allow us to do things over, only better. God does much better than that for us through his gift of Jesus! He allows us to become new again. Being "God of new things" (Isaiah 43:19), he can make us new. Beyond forgiveness, beyond cleansing, the LORD makes us holy and wholly new through Jesus. Let us use the opportunity of a New Year as our springboard to live a fresh, new, and vibrant life for God. After all, the old year is gone, and the New Year has come! Let's live it for Jesus!

My prayer: O LORD, thank you for a New Year and a fresh start. Please give me wisdom and strength to serve you with integrity and faithfulness in this coming year. I pray that your work be done in my life as I offer myself, my plans, and my future to you. I pray this through Jesus my intercessor and LORD. Amen.

Blessings to you all for a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

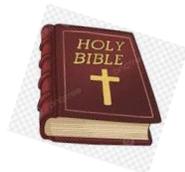


Debbie

The pulpit will be filled the month of **January** by:



January 4 – Pastor Emil Blobaum
January 11 – Pastor Greg Smith
January 18 – Pastor Baderschneider
January 25 –



Mike Heidle
Bryce Frerichs
Kendra Manselle
Belva Osterbur
Ella Frerichs
Betty Huls
Chris Huls
Nick Christians
Anna Wentzloff

Camille Wissmann
Jennie Uken
Chloe Birdsell (*friend of Hilary Whitt*)
Ryan Gernentz (*son of Jim Gernentz brother to Casey Ganentz*)
Hannah Worley (*daughter of Doug & Miki Wesley*)
Kim Brooks Allen (*friend of Miki Wesley*)
Abby Lundquist (*friend of Ray Manselle*)
Peyton McDonough (*friend of Marsha Osterbur*)
Hannah Nirider (*friend of Parker Poole*)
Amy Dufelmeier (*sister of Hilary Whitt*)
Aleyah Carley (*daughter of Teresa Thornton Carley*)
Darrel Jacobs (*friend of Tracy Wahlfeldt*)
Samantha Hutchinson (*cousin of Hilary Whitt*)
Rhonda Miller, Jane Cress (*friends of Hilary Whitt*)
Janey Huls (*sister of Susie Schlueter*)



Lois Henderson, Mary Crider, Carol Doman (*friends of Ray and Kendra Manselle*)
Stoney Wireman, Frank and Mary Kay Kimell, Kerry Blankenbegher (*friends of Gloria Grant*)

Family of: Ed Rademaker, Beverly Thompson and Glen Drilling (*father of Cathy Kurtz and grandfather of Katie Rodriguez*)

Nursing Home, Assisted Living Residents:

Mary Lou Ackerman, Berniece Aden, Sharon Ault, Regina Gronewald, Betty Huls, Elizabeth Hafermann, Harold and Darlene Hovel, Janis Loschen, Dorene Pflugmacher, Myron Sage, Norma Sherfey
Homebound: Dorothy Buhr, Eldred Cornelius, Marvin and Alice Duitsman, Florence Frerichs, Lois Frerichs, Marilyn Frerichs, Herb Thompsen.

Our Members (80+): Ray and Loretta Aden, Brenda Alsip, Erna Amerman, Carl Beard, Dale and Virginia Behrens, Emil and Carolyn Blobaum, Wilma Buhr, Billie Busboom, Chuck & Judy Carl, Marge Clingan, Ron Duitsman, Gloria Ehmen, Kay Fiscus, Carolyn Frerichs, Rita Frerichs, Barbara Fruhling, Bernice Fruhling-Cash, Janis Loschen, JoAnn Lynch, Betty Osterbur, Ella Osterbur, Gene Osterbur, June Osterbur, Kenny Osterbur, Marvin and Belva Osterbur, Sandie Osterbur, Denver Phelps, Linda Post, JoAnn Rademaker, Roxie Sage, Aleta Schlueter, John and Donna Thompsen, Judy White

PRAYER CHAIN

The members of the Prayer Chain uplift those who need prayers and will continue to do so in the new year. However, a new contact list will need to be completed and will include the current council members.



The members of the Prayer Chain are contacted by email regarding those who need prayers. So, if you would like to be included as a member of the Prayer Chain, or if you are currently a member and are unable to continue, please call the church office by January 9th. If you would like to be added as a member of the Prayer Chain, please submit your name, phone number and email address.



...**Prayer Requests for the Prayer Chain** begin by calling the church office at 217-583-3295 or texting 217-583-3805. Please call the church office, Pastor Blobaum, or our council members when one of our members or a loved one is hospitalized and continue to share updates with us here at the church.



DESIGNATED BENEVOLENCE

During the month of January, the designated benevolence is for local Emergency Shelters to help those in need. Please use the center portion of the offering envelopes for your gifts.

A special thank you to all of you who contributed.



The Call Committee met with Dr. Chris Croghan of the Luther House of Study (Kairos University) to explore the possibility of Ryan Sage serving at St. John in a one-year, renewable Pastoral internship/apprenticeship. This arrangement would allow Ryan to continue his pastoral education/vocation while serving and learning within our congregation. St. John would benefit from his ministry, work, and counsel. At the end of the year, St. John could choose to offer a call to Ryan or pursue another direction. During this time, the congregation's pastoral call process with the NALC would be paused.

Dr. Croghan shared that Ryan is nearly two-thirds through his education and described him as a "diamond in the rough" with strong pastoral potential. The Call Committee recommended exploring this opportunity further. Next steps include Council and Congregational discussion, consultation with the NALC, and potentially issuing a contract offer to Ryan.

Your brother in Christ,

Josh



SOME OF “THIS AND THAT”

...**Flock Group Shepherd for February 2026** is **Patti Bohlen**. She will be contacting her flock group for volunteers. *Thank you to all that volunteer!*



...**The Flock Group Shepherd for March** is **Myrna Craig** and for **April** is **Susie Schluter**.

...**Monthly Women of St. John Bible Study** will meet on the third Thursday afternoon of this month at 1:30 here in the church basement for study and fellowship. This month they will meet on **January 9th**. **Debbie Suits** will host.



...**Reminder List**, printed in this newsletter, lists those who are assigned to help with various tasks and responsibilities during the month. If a conflict arises, please **find your own replacement** and **inform the church office of the changes**. *A big thank you for volunteering to help out!*

...**Altar Flowers** are provided each weekend by donations from members of the congregation. House of Flowers in Rantoul provides and delivers them. The cost per vase is **\$20.00**. Payment is to be made to the church and earmarked for flowers. You can sign up on the chart posted on the north office door for one or both vases and indicate whether it's for a special occasion.



...**Offering envelopes** for 2026 will be available for pick up from the lounge. If you cannot find your boxed set and would like to use the envelopes, please contact the church office. If your boxed set is there but you **do not use the envelopes**, also **contact the church office**, or leave your boxed set in the office with a note, “do not use”.



2026 COUNCIL and COMMITTEES

The annual meeting of St. John Lutheran Church, Royal, was held following worship on Sunday, November 9th. Installation of the 2026 council and committee members will be held during worship on Sunday, **January 11, 2026**. The following people have been selected to serve on the council and committees for the new year. Please keep them all in your prayers throughout the new year.

COUNCIL: *Josh Frerichs* (council president), *Bryce Frerichs* (council vice-president), *Tracy Britt* (treasurer), *Debbie Ackerman* (secretary), *Mike Heidle*, *Melinda Huls*, *Whitney Highfill*, *Rick Aden*, *Laura Ketchum*, *Stacy Smith*, *Sarah Wolken* (S.S. superintendent).



COMMITTEES: **Nominating** – *Derek Sieberns*, *Shannon Christians*, *Miranda Wright*, *Diane Frerichs*, *Chelsey Phillips*; **Auditing**– *Martin Alblinger*, *Scott Sieberns*, *Daniele Frerichs*, *Doug Wesley*; **Counting** – *Kris Francisco*, *Joellyn Pedro*, *Kathie Alblinger*, *Scott Sieberns*, *Lori Hoveltn*, *Darlene Osterbur*; **Worship** – *Miki Wesley*, *Judy White*, *Donna Townsley*, *Hilary Whitt*, *Myrna Craig*, *Deanna Loschen*, *Susi Huls*, *Tonya Ayers*; **Parish Ed** – *Stacy Smith*, *Allie Maul*, *Dana Sjoken*, *Dawn Huls*, *Sarah Wolken*, *Tracy Mathis*, *Emily Vilven*, *Meghan Loschen*; **VBS Committee** - *Chelsey Phillips*, *Sarah Wolken*, *Jodi Bohlen*; **Parish Life-Evangelism** – *Teresa Aden*, *Scott and Tracy Wahlfeldt*, *Chad and Peggy Barnes*, *Bruce and Shelley Breymeyer*, *Ed and Jodi Bohlen*, *Anita Lieb*; **Hunger-Stewardship** – *Gene and Deanna Osterbur*, *Donita Osterbur*, *Allan and Susie Schlueter*, *Chuck and Judy Carl*, *Kris Francisco*, *Kathie Alblinger*; **Property** – *Derek Sieberns*, *Devin Wright*, *Jared Aden*, *Alex Anderson*, *Neal Ehmen*, *Bruce Frerichs*, *Calvin Mohr*, *Tyler Wright*, *Austin Maul*, *Kurt Wolken*; **Youth** – *Laura Ketchum*, *Allie Maul*, *Parker Poole*, *Ray Manselle*; **Trust Fund Trustees** – *Aaron Ketchum*, *Mike Francisco*, *Doug Bluhm*, *Ray Manselle*, *Allan Schlueter*; **Memorial Secretary**– *Kathie Alblinger*, *Doug Bluhm*; **Cradle Roll**– *Wilma Buhr*.



Council members for 2026
and their phone numbers:

- Josh Frerichs, Council President (217) 722-3538
- Bryce Frerichs, Council Vice-President (217) 255-2501
- Debbie Ackerman, Council Secretary (217) 202-7893
- Tract Britt, Treasurer (217) 778-9564
- Mike Heidle, Council member (217) 516-0085
- Melinda Huls, Council member (217) 390-1247
- Whitney Highfill, Council member (217) 202-6344
- Rick Aden, Council member (217) 841-1116
- Laura Ketchum, Council member (217) 722-5314
- Stacy Smith, Council member (217) 202-1094
- Sarah Wolken, Sunday School Superintendent (217) 304-0231

COUNCIL NOTES



Meeting Minutes

- The Council meeting was held on Monday, December 15th, at 7:00. Both the 2025 and 2026 Council members were in attendance.
- 2025 Council President Melinda Huls led the council in the devotion of John 1:14 *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*
- Installation of Council and Committees will be held during worship on **January 11th**. The Reorganization Meeting will be held **January 11th** following the worship service.
- The next council meeting is Monday, **January 26th, 2026**, at 7:00 p.m. ***Please note this is the 4th Monday of the month instead of the 3rd.**



“this and that” (continued)



...**Education Trust Fund** is set up in the Multiple Funds account. Donations may be given to this fund through your offerings marked “Education Trust” (divided equally between the Gossett and Ramm families or you may give specifically to one family). These funds are used to help with their school fees, supplies and expenses.



...**There are old cassette tapes and VCR recordings** that need to be disposed of. These recordings are from past years sermons, funeral services, and programs. If you are interested in any of these recordings, please let Josh Frerichs know.



...**Memorials and gifts** to St. John Lutheran Cemetery may be given by cash, or checks made out to **St. John Lutheran Cemetery**, and **given to Ron Duitsman, John R. Thompsen, or Chuck Carl.**

...**St. John Cemetery Board** held their annual meeting on Wednesday, December 17 at 9:00 am here at St. John.

Board Meeting



...**The Call Committee** is asking for photos and videos from congregation members. Do you have photos or videos of St. John activities you are willing to share for St. John media? If so, please send them to **StJohnRoyal61871@gmail.com**



“this and that” (continued)



...**St. Joseph Methodist Church** Food Pantry date for this month, is **January 29th**. The line starts at 4:30 on the west side of the church. Questions contact Marsha Osterbur.

...**The Fair-Trade** cabinet is stocked with coffee, English Breakfast tea, and milk chocolate bars! The price is as marked. All proceeds will go to Pay It Forward.



...**If you are interested** in becoming a member of St. John, please, reach out to Pastor Emil Blobaum or let the church office know. We would love to have you!



... **The water and pop** in the refrigerator in the kitchen are each \$1.00. Please, make sure that if you are getting one that you are paying. Thank you!



CHURCH OFFICE NEWS



...**Church Office Hours** are Monday through Friday, **8:30 - 3:00**, lunch break typically between **12:00 - 1:00**.

...The **church office** second landline number **217-583-3805** has been changed to a **cell phone** and is able to **receive/send texts**, so please feel free to use this number if it is easier for you to send a message to the office.



... The church email is a really good way to get the office information. It is email: **churchoffice@stjohnroyal.org**



...The deadline for the February Newsletter is **Friday, January 16th**. Information needs to be in the office by the deadline to be printed in the newsletter.

...**LECTORS:** For those who volunteer to lector, the office will email you the scriptures **no later than Friday afternoon**. A copy will also be left for you on the desk in the north office. If you do not have an email, a copy may be printed for you to pick up in the church office on Friday. The office will email and print the scriptures once the bulletins are approved by the pastor for that Sunday.



...**The office is working on the church directory for 2026**. If you have any changes to phone numbers, addresses, and/or emails, please, let the office know **as soon as possible**. The directory will be printed by January

OFFICIAL ACTS



Coy Easton Wilsey

was baptized into the family of Christ
here at St. John on Sunday, December 28, 2025.

Coy is the son of
John Ross and Brooke (Freeman) Wilsey.
His sponsors are Tyler Flessner and Jennifer Acton.

*With Deepest
Sympathy*

Sympathy is extended to the family of
Beverly Thompsen.

Beverly passed to her eternal home on
Friday, December 5, 2025. Funeral worship was held here at St.
John on Tuesday, December 9, 2025.

Sympathy is extended to the family of
Ed Rademaker.

Ed passed to his eternal home on
Saturday, December 13, 2025.
Funeral worship was held here at St. John on
Thursday, December 18, 2025.

WITH
SINCERE
Sympathy

May God's love, peace and strength sustain those who sorrow.

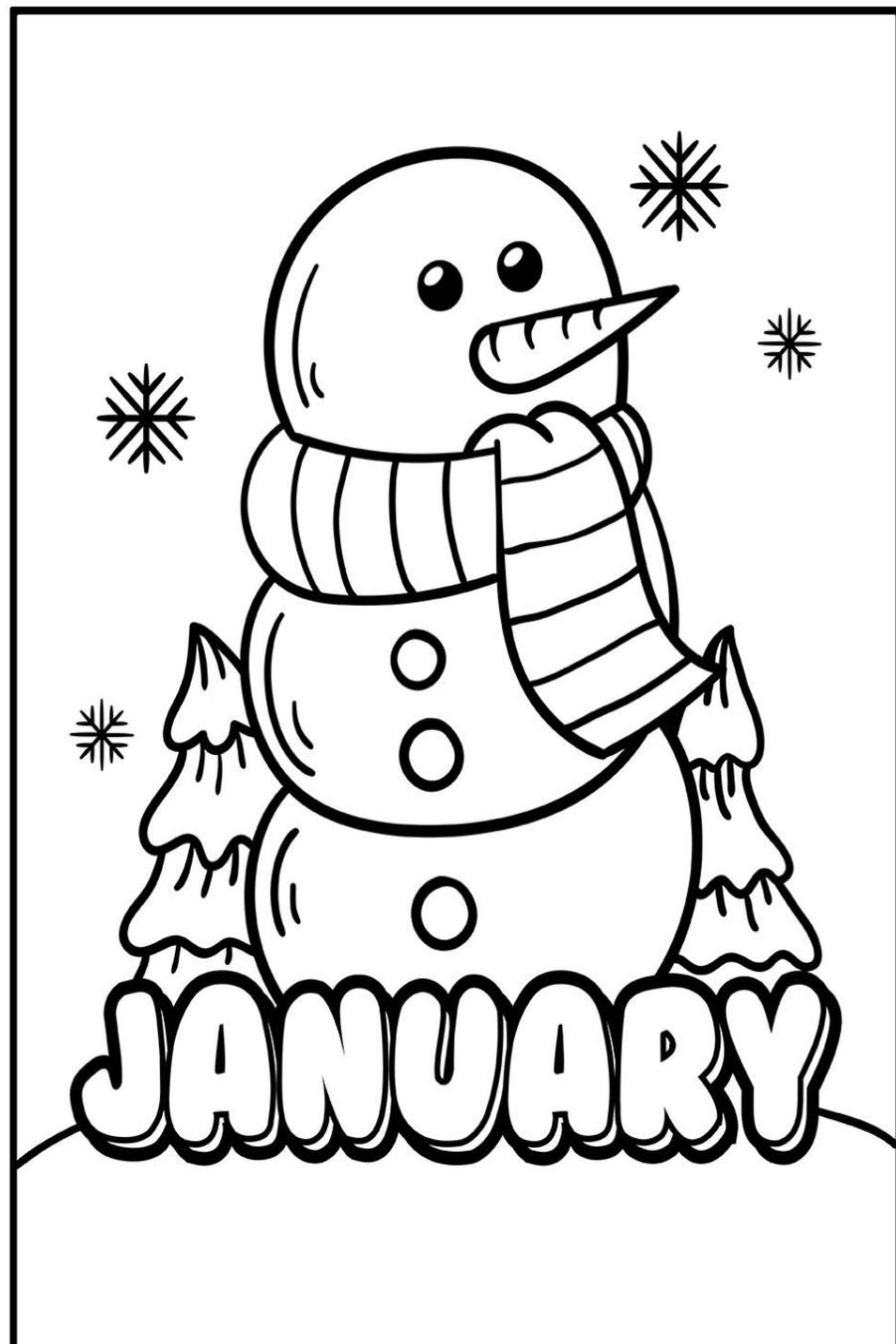
EXPRESSIONS OF THANKS

Dear St. John Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your prayers and
monetary gift. Your financial contribution
helps as Prayer League global workers
share the gospel with those least able to
have heard or benefited from its
transforming power.



World Mission Prayer League





LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

In 2025 the St. John Lutheran Women made 100 quilts, put together 115 personal care kits and 160 school kits for Lutheran World Relief Projects. These were sent to help people all around the world. An LWR Quilt will provide many blessings to people in need and the assembly of ordinary items into extraordinary gifts of love in the form of personal care kits and school kits will help people cope with war, disaster, and poverty.

Some Winter Funnies



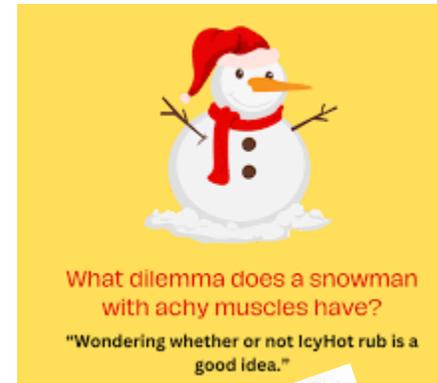
Why did the snowman go to therapy? He had a meltdown!



WHERE DID A SNOWMAN GO DURING THE SNOWSTORM?



SNO-WHERE.



PARISH ED/YOUTH NEWS

Sunday School is each Sunday morning at 8:30.

Confirmation will be held here at St. John on Sunday mornings during the Sunday School hour, as well as later Sunday at Peace of Peace or here at St. John.



The Youth (Grades 1-8) will hold their annual lock-in on January 2nd, beginning at 6 p.m. See Laura Ketchum for details.



Choir and Handbell are taking a winter break and will begin practicing in March.

