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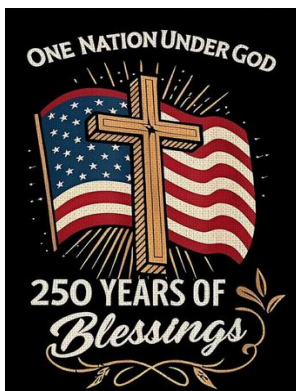
Website www.stjohnswaukon.net

Church Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday
8:00 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Pastor Mark's Office Hours:

Mondays following the first
and third Sundays from **9:00
a.m.–1:00 p.m.**, with
adjustments as needed.
Appointments at other times—
at church, in homes, or at
other mutually agreed-upon
locations—are always
welcome. You may call the
church office 563-568-3623
to schedule a time.



St. John's Lutheran Church Messenger

July 2026

Pastor Mark Oehlert

If God awarded us medals, as they do in
the Olympics, love would win the gold,
joy the silver, and peace the bronze.

Charles R. Swindoll

Give us this day our daily bread..

As we celebrate 250 years as a nation this month, it is good to stop and think about our nation's history, how we are blessed to be Americans and what it means as people of God as we live day to day in the U.S.A. As I was walking in the woods this week, it struck me just how blessed it is to be free to take a walk like that- with no concern about safety, (well except if one takes a tumble on the trail 😊 or a tick happens to latch on somewhere along the way.) Still- to be free to choose an activity such as spending time in nature, to choose where one wants and can afford to live, to choose which grocery store to shop in, fully trusting that the food one purchases is quite safe to consume and enjoy.

It is remarkable that one can grow up here in the U.S., choose an educational path and a career that hopefully matches our passions and provides an honest living while serving others in our chosen field. We get to choose our life partners and where we will reside. We get to choose our leaders who make decisions for us in the government that we have. We have a myriad of options when it comes to shopping for clothes, shoes, items for our homes, what kind of vehicle we will drive, even what we will do with leisure hours as we enjoy recreation.

Even more remarkable, we can choose how, when, where and with whom we will practice our faith in God. We gather weekly without fear of retribution just because we are Lutheran people of faith. Of course, others may or may not gather to worship God, according to their own understanding of what God does or does not mean to them.

As we celebrate this 4th of July, may we give God an extra prayer of thanksgiving for all the ways we are able to live as American people- not a perfect people by any means- but a people most fortunate to reside in the U.S.A. May we remember and seek the good of our neighbor- whoever that may be- to see that no one is left out in the great experiment of our American way of life. Thanks be to God!!

Dear friends in Christ,
Grace and peace,
Pastor Mark

Give us this day our
Daily Bread
Matthew 6:11

St. John's Lutheran Youth Organization

St. John's LYO Fishing In The Park Please join us for fishing, games, and campfire in the park. If the weather is not conducive for outdoor activities, we will have indoor activities planned in the fellowship hall. When: **Saturday, July 25** Time: 4 pm – 8 pm Where: Waukon city park. All ages welcome. Bring a friend and/or fishing supplies if you have them. If under 16, a fishing license is not required. A light meal will be provided. **Please sign up by Sunday, July 12** in the church Narthex or email mosesbec@yahoo.com or call/text Becky at 563-880-6917 or Chris at 563-568-7959 so we can plan food accordingly.

Support LYO Through Your Bottle and Can Donations!

Want to help support LYO? Bring your 5¢ bottles and cans and place them in the collection box located by the west entrance.

Your donations help support our youth as they participate in faith-based activities, service projects, and community outreach opportunities, including:

- Fall Kickoff events
- Ski trips
- Football and hockey games
- Future youth trips
- Casserole suppers
- Annual Meeting

Thank you for supporting our youth and helping them grow in faith, fellowship, and service!

Feed the Kids

Summer is here and we need your help! Monetary donations may be made by cash or check payable to Feed the Kids/Zion Church these can be placed in the collection OR sent to the office. A sign-up sheet for kid-friendly desserts and workers is in the Narthex. When July comes around - we could use garden fresh produce.

Help Wanted: Feed the Kids Representative for 2027: Responsibilities are securing donations and volunteers for the third week of July. Cindy Wuebker has the experience to ease the transition. Please contact her at 712-661-9149 if interested or have any questions. This is a 2-year term, so it is now time to find someone new to serve in this position.

Follow on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61590840145620>

St. John's 2026 Graduates

Upcoming college students are encouraged to contact the church office by August 1 with their name, college, and major.

Scholarships are available. Please contact the church office for additional information.

Vacation Bible School

The youth of St. John's enjoyed kicking off their summer break in June with a day at Village Creek Bible Camp filled with fellowship, friendship, and fun activities. It was a busy and rewarding day as they learned more about God's faithfulness through lessons, games, and shared experiences.

By the end of the day, everyone returned home a little quieter and much more tired than when they left—a sure sign of a day well spent!



Circle News

Sarah Circle and Dorcas Circle will not meet in July.

The next Sarah Circle meeting will be Tuesday, August 11, at 9:15 a.m. at the home of Sarah Sweeney. (See the church directory or contact the church office for the address.) Sarah Sweeney will serve as host. The group will be studying Section 3 of the Summer Edition of *Gather* magazine.

Dorcas Circle will meet virtually on Tuesday, August 11, at 7:00 p.m.

All are welcome—come grow in faith and fellowship with us!

Trustee Meeting See the Narthex Bulletin Board for details

The Board of Trustees met on Monday, June 8. The full meeting minutes have been posted and are available for review.

Key updates included:

- Elevator contract review
- Boiler inspection update
- Door lock changes
- Purchase of new, updated video/audio signs for the church entrances
- Feed the Kids program update

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Monday, July 20, at 5:30 p.m.

Call Committee Update

We continue to work with the Northeastern Iowa Synod as we move forward in the process. We understand that progress may seem slow at times, but each step is important and requires careful consideration. We appreciate your patience and support as we follow the process and seek God's guidance for the future of our congregation.

Solar Panels

The solar panels are loving the sunshine! As a result, we continue to see energy cost savings while also building up our energy bank.

To help protect this valuable investment, a guard rail was installed on June 12 to provide additional protection for the solar panel system.

We continue to work with Hacker Nelson on the energy rebate.



Northgate Care Center Card Stand

Northgate Care Center maintains a card stand for its residents to use when sending greetings to family and friends. If you have any extra cards at home—birthday, thinking of you, get well, thank you, or even blank cards—they would be grateful for your donations.

Your donated cards will be added to the stand, giving residents a variety of options to choose from. Thank you for helping support this thoughtful ministry.

Thank You's

Our bulletin board is filled with wonderful thank you cards and notes from individuals and organizations touched by the generosity and support of our congregation. Be sure to take a moment to read them when you're at church.

I'd also like to share a message from an email received in the church office:

"I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoy watching your services at St John's. I enjoy the wit you put in your sermons. I thought your outdoor service was great, so many wonderful comparisons, like the beauty of the flowers. I, especially enjoyed the youth playing the percussion items, they did a nice job. You have such a nice way of connecting your sermon message with visual everyday items."



July Music Notes

-By James H. Bieber

We are grateful for the wonderful special music that has enriched our worship services since the regular choir season concluded.

May 31 – Don Fruechte and Randy Johnson shared a vocal duet.

June 7 – Jocelyn Berges performed a piano solo.

June 14 – Emma Berges performed a piano solo.

June 28 – This Sunday is still available for special music.

Looking Ahead

July 5 – The Men's Choir will return to sing a selection of religious patriotic songs during our 8:30am worship service as we celebrate the Fourth of July weekend. The choir will also be sharing their music at another location later that morning.

If you, your family, or an ensemble would like to share your musical talents during one of the remaining Sundays this summer, please contact the church office or call Jim Bieber at 563-380-5355.

To Receive the Word

Sunday morning worship services are on the local radio station. Dial in 103.5 FM (KNEI) at 8:30 am or log into www.kneiradio.com to worship with St. John's.

We also are video streaming on Facebook Live.

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

Bulletins for the service can be found on our web page www.stjohnswaukon.net

You may now receive the newsletter via email as a PDF document. Contact the church office if you would like to be on this email list.

St. John's is on the web at www.stjohnswaukon.net and

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/stjohnswaukon/>

Please inform the church office of any interruptions to the radio broadcast or Facebook Live stream.

Radio Ministry

Our July radio ministry broadcasts are generously sponsored by Church Funds, the family of Louise Ellingson (July 5), the grandchildren of Marian Hesla (July 19), and Dixie Libbey (July 26). We are grateful for this faithful support that helps make it possible to share God's Word through this ministry. Thank you to all who sponsor and support this outreach.

If you would like to sponsor a future broadcast in honor or memory of someone, or simply to support the ministry, we would love to hear from you. Please contact the church office at **563-568-3623** or email stjohnswaukon@gmail.com.

When you sponsor a broadcast, you are invited to choose a favorite hymn to be included in that service — a meaningful way to share a song that is special to you.

July 2026 Hymns

Sunday, July 5 –

888 O Beautiful for Spacious Skies

First Reading: [Zechariah 9:9-12](#)

Psalm: [Psalm 145:8-14](#)

Second Reading: [Romans 7:15-25a](#)

Gospel: [Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30](#)

887 This Is My Song

Communion – 891, 879

890 Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory

Sunday, July 12 –

557 Awake My Soul, And With The Sun

First Reading: [Isaiah 55:10-13](#)

Psalm: [Psalm 65: \[1-8\] 9-13](#)

Second Reading: [Romans 8:1-11](#)

Gospel: [Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23](#)

697 Just a Closer Walk With Thee

765 Lord Of All Hopefulness

Sunday, July 19 –

679 For the Fruit of All Creation

First Reading: [Isaiah 44:6-8](#)

Psalm: [Psalm 86:11-17](#)

Second Reading: [Romans 8:12-25](#)

Gospel: [Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43](#)

689 Praise and Thanksgiving

Communion – 465, 466

694 Sing To The Lord of Harvest

Sunday, July 26 –

533 Open Now The Gates of Beauty

First Reading: [1 Kings 3:5-12](#)

Psalm: [Psalm 119:129-136](#)

Second Reading: [Romans 8:26-39](#)

Gospel: [Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52](#)

793 Be Thou My Vision

867 In Thee Is Gladness

Northeast Iowa ELCA C3 Conference

-By Dan Low

The Northeast Iowa ELCA C3 Conference was held on June 6 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Waverly. The conference started with a worship service led by Bishop Kevin Jones, followed by a talk from Megan O'Toole who spoke about her work with the Rural Shrink Smart Project. Bishop Jones gave a report on the shrinking populations in church congregations in the Northeast Iowa Synod. There was a lunch break provided by the Synod. A workshop by Meagan O'Toole followed that explored how folks found a feeling of belonging in their communities. The workshop was followed by a worship service during which 3 people were presented certificates for having completed the Lay Ministry Training program. They are now certified as Lay Assisting Ministers for service in Christ's church. The service and conference ended with communion.

I had three takeaways from the conference:

#1. Rural towns in Iowa are losing population. It is happening slowly. It won't change. The only places that seem to be growing are the large population centers, think Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, or Waterloo/Cedar Falls. Despite the population losses rural towns are maintaining their quality of life for the most part. The sense I got is that if towns focus on quality of life rather than growth, they are better able to maintain their quality of life.

#2. Rural congregations are shrinking as well. It is more difficult to find Pastors to fulfill the calls for service. Congregations that maintain "quality of life" are congregations that find ways to make folks feel welcome and focus on maintaining the programs that they have. Growth may or may not happen, but building bridges of care will help congregations maintain.

#3. One answer to finding more folks for ministry is the Lay Ministry Training Program. It is a two-year training program. It may be a way to help rural congregations meet the need for Pastors or Pastoral assistants so that they can maintain their quality of life as a congregation.

I am glad that I went to the conference. If you have a chance to attend these types of conferences, it is worth the expense and the travel time. They provide valuable insights, fellowship, and encouragement for ministry.



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.

Video/Audio Security System

Our security system upgrade is now complete and provides greatly improved safety and coverage throughout the church and parking lot. The system includes color video, audio capability, and playback features. A recently added doorbell system also alerts office staff when someone enters or exits the building.

New signage has been purchased and will be installed at the entrances soon.

We are still accepting contributions to help offset the cost of this upgrade. If you would like to contribute, please make checks payable to St. John's and note "Security System" in the memo line.

Thank you to everyone who has helped make this important safety improvement possible for our church and its members.

Bible Display - One Nation, Many Stories, One Word

As our nation prepares to celebrate 250 years of history, we invite you to help us tell an important part of that story—the story of faith.

Do you have a well-loved Bible with a story to tell? Perhaps it is filled with notes and highlighted passages, contains a family record, traveled with a loved one through military service, or has been passed down through generations. We'd love to include it in our upcoming **America 250 Bible Display**.

This special display will showcase Bibles that have shaped the faith journeys of our congregation and highlight how God's Word has guided individuals and families throughout the history of our nation. From treasured family heirlooms to well-worn study Bibles, each Bible reflects a unique story of faith, hope, and God's enduring presence.

Please bring your Bible to the church office by July 22 to be on display on July 26. Bibles will be labeled with the owner's name if needed. If your Bible has a special story, memory, or family connection, please include a brief written description to be displayed alongside it.

Join us as we celebrate 250 years of American history and the timeless Word of God that continues to inspire and guide us today.

Popular Methods for Bible Study

There are a ton of Bible study guides on the market, and finding one that is right for you can be a challenge. Personally, I like to use a simple handwritten guide because it helps me retain what I am learning.

If you prefer to create your own study guide rather than purchase one, several simple and adaptable methods can help you study any Bible passage effectively.

1. SOAP Method: A structured daily journaling format.

- **Scripture:** Write out the verses you are studying.
- **Observation:** What is happening in the text? Who is speaking?
- **Application:** How does this truth apply to your life today?
- **Prayer:** Turn the passage into a personal prayer.

2. The 5 P's Method:

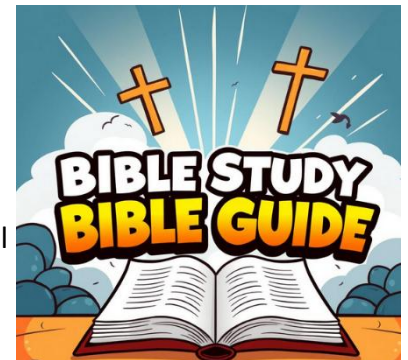
- **Pour** over the passage and paraphrase.
- **Pull** out the spiritual principles.
- **Pose** questions to clarify context.
- **Plan** obedience and pin down dates.

Using a simple study guide like these can make Bible study more focused and meaningful. The clear structure helps break down the context of a passage, improves understanding, and makes it easier to remember important lessons. Personally, these methods help me stay focused, learn more effectively, and revisit key insights from my study.

Everyone Is Welcome

Come as you are and feel free to bring a friend or family member. We look forward to growing together in faith. **Get Involved**—For more information, including meeting times and location, please contact us or check our [Bible Study Resources page](#) on our website.

Every Sunday from now—September 6 at 9:30 am in the lounge studying the men and women of the Bible.



7/5/26	HANNAH - FROM MISERY TO PRAISE
7/12/26	NATHANAE: THE GUILLESS ONE
7/19/26	ABIGAIL - A LEVEL-HEADED WOMAN
7/26/26	MATTHEW AND THOMAS: THE TAX COLLECTOR AND THE TWIN
8/2/26	THE SHUNAMMITE WOMAN - TAKING THE INITIATIVE
8/9/26	JAMES (THE LESS), SIMON (THE ZEALOT), AND JUDAS (NOT ISCARIOT)
8/16/26	ESTHER - CAPTIVE IN A STRANGE LAND
8/23/26	JUDAS: THE TRAITOR
8/30/26	ESTHER - COURAGE TO ACT
9/6/26	THE MODEL WIFE - A PORTRAIT OF EXCELLENCE



Dates & Events

July at a Glance

July Highlights

National Ice Cream Month: The entire month is celebrated in the US, with

Awareness Campaigns: July serves as UV Safety Month and National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month.

*Free Lunches weekdays in JULY at Zion United Church of Christ from 11am-12:30pm. Grab and go breakfast available each day

Fri, July 3

Louise Ellingson visitation 12pm-2pm; Funeral 2pm; Luncheon in Fellowship Hall

Sun, July 5—Pastor Mark Oehlert

8:30am Service W/Comm *Noisy Offering, Men's Choir

9:30am Bible Study

10:00am Service W/Comm *Noisy Offering

Sun, July 12—Pastor Bryan Rose

8:30am Service-

9:30am Bible Study

10:00am Service

Tues, July 14

No Sarah Circle or Dorcas Circle in June

CHURCH OFFICE

Lana will be on Faircation from July 14-16.

Office coverage will be available during her absence.

Wed, July 15

Newsletter article deadline: All submissions are due to the office

Thurs, July 16

WIC here

Sun, July 19—Pastor Mark Oehlert

National Ice Cream Day

8:30am Service W/Comm, *Pennies for Presents

9:30am Bible Study

10am Service W/Comm, *Pennies for Presents

Mon, July 20

5:30pm Board of Trustee Mtg

Sat, July 25

4 pm-8 pm. LYO Fishing at The Waukon City Park (more information on page 2)

Tues, July 28—Nursing Home Visits

1pm Northgate Care Center

2pm Good Samaritan Society

2:45pm Evergreen Court

Sun, July 26 - Pastor Charis Combs—Lay

8:30am Service-

9:30am Bible Study

10:00am Service

August Highlights

As summer begins to wind down, August brings opportunities for fellowship, learning, and service. Mark your calendars for upcoming gatherings and activities, and join us as we continue to grow together in faith and community.

Sun, Aug 2—Pastor Mark Oehlert

8:30am Service W/Comm *Noisy Offering

9:30am Bible Study

10:00am Service W/Comm *Noisy Offering

Sun, Aug 9 Pastor Waldemar Gies

8:30am Service-

9:30am Bible Study

10:00am Service

Sun, Aug 16—Pastor Mark Oehlert

8:30am Service W/Comm, *Pennies for Presents

Brunch in Fellowship Hall following service

9:30am Bible Study

10:00am No Service

Sun, Aug 23 - Pastor Charis Combs—Lay

8:30am Service-

9:30am Bible Study

10:00am Service

Sun, Aug 30—Pastor Mark Oehlert

8:30am Service W/Comm

9:30am Bible Study

10:00am Service W/Comm

St. John's Collection Counters

JULY

6 -Nona, Chris

13- Lori, Mary

20- Sue, Linda

27- Jane, Karen

AUGUST

3- Nona, Chris

10- Lori, Mary

24-Sue, Linda

31- Jane, Karen

The names listed are those currently recorded as active members in the church CDM+ directory. If your name was inadvertently missed or any of your information is incorrect, please contact the church office at 563-568-3623 or stjohnswaukon@gmail.com



1—Kevin Selberg	12—Harlan Yohe	23—Kristin Stinn
2—Karen Stamper	13—Trish Martin	24—Mary Jo Meyer
2—Mike Tuttle	13—Amanda Shaffer	26—Scott Houg
4—Maxine Grotegut	14—Jill Pooock	27—Dustin Harrington
6—Jayden Erb	14—Judy Selberg	28—Lee Ellickson Jr.
6—Shawn Moe	15—Brandi Neuzil	28—Mark Knudtson
7—John Roe	16—Natasha Wilkes	30—Maya Bossom
8—Jane Fransen	17—Todd Hills	31—Richard Leiran
10—Linda Dahlstrom	17—Brett Yohe	
10—Beverly Leiran	18—Carissa Otto	
11—Maeve Pierson	19—Reese Ryan	
12—Randal Hesse	19—Brantley Steiber	
12—Jill Kistler	20—Jill Soper	
12—Marilyn Mathews	23—Cole Dougherty	

June 2026

Baptisms: None
 Weddings: None
 Deaths: Gayle Larkin

Happy Anniversary **July Anniversaries**

Patty & Randy Nordheim
 Jerry & Carla Schnuelle
 Jim & Jan Pffner
 Jon & Gloria Payne
 Bruce & Susan Torkelson
 Tim & Kristi Fahey
 Marvin & Barbara Hill
 Michael & Audrea Peterson
 Mike & Brandi Neuzil
 Benjamin & Sarah Sweeney
 Alan & Debra Tweedy
 Bill & Linda Halvorson
 Gerald & Diane Pittmann
 Edward & Karen Stamper

JULY—St. John's Volunteer Duty List

	Service	Greeters	Readers	Comm. Asst.	Comm. Prep.	Acolytes	Ushers
5	8:30AM	Lee & Chris Ellickson	Mary Jackson	Dennis & Linda DeBuhr, Cindy Barness	Ann Hagensick, Allie Rottnick, Wendy Bucheit	Ushers	Steve & Sheryl Evanson
	10:00AM	Sandy Deal	Linda Groe	Wendy Bucheit			
12	8:30AM	Greg & Ann Hagensick	Ann & Heath Hagensick			Ushers	Same
	10:00AM		Jill Kistler				
19	8:30AM	Steve & Sheryl Evanson	Bailey Benson	Bonnie Roe, Nona Sawyer, Cindy Barness	Mary Jackson, Linda Groe	Ushers	Same
	10:00AM		Karen Stamper	Karen Stamper	Linda Groe		
26	8:30AM	Joan Moody	Joan Moody			Ushers	Same
	10:00AM		Vickie Larson				
Aug 1	8:30AM	Bailey Benson	Nona Sawyer	Russ & Mary Jo Meyer, Bailey Benson	Linda Groe	Ushers	Dan & Lori Treangen, Donna Wood
	10:00AM		Sadie Bucheit	Sadie Bucheit	Linda Groe		

June 13 - Church Spring Cleaning Day

A sincere thank you to everyone who volunteered for our Spring Clean-Up Day. Your time, hard work, and dedication helped beautify and maintain our church grounds and facilities. Because of your efforts, many important projects were completed, making our church a more welcoming place for our community.



St. John's Lutheran Church Celebrates Father's Day Outdoors

Members and friends of St. John's Lutheran Church gathered for a special outdoor worship service on Father's Day. Surrounded by the beauty of God's creation, the congregation came together for a meaningful morning of worship, fellowship, and thanksgiving.

The outdoor setting provided a wonderful opportunity to celebrate fathers, grandfathers, and all the men who faithfully serve as role models, mentors, and caregivers in our families and community. The service was blessed with beautiful weather and a spirit of gratitude as attendees reflected on God's many blessings.

Following the service, members enjoyed fellowship and conversation, making the day a memorable celebration of faith, family, and community.



To see more pictures from our worship services, church activities, and special events, please visit our website. We invite you to explore the many ways God is at work through the ministries and fellowship opportunities at St. John's Lutheran Church.

<https://stjohnswaukon.net/>

