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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.

Jane Fransen's 100th Birthday Celebration



St. John's Lutheran Church Messenger

August 2026

Pastor Mark Oehlert-

ELCA- what does that mean? Why are we a part of the ELCA? ELCA stands for Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. Evangelical can mean different things to different people. The theological word Evangelical means "good news." That is, the good news of Jesus Christ, Savior of the world! News does not get much better than that! Lutherans believe with a faith that is a free gift from God that is grounded in a biblical tradition that emphasizes love of God and neighbor. We believe we are reconciled to God by the mercy and gift of grace. Jesus is the example for us in terms of how we live our lives. In Christ, we are forgiven and renewed! That same grace, shown to us in Jesus is the inspiration, by the power of the Holy Spirit, that we extend to others as we live life day to day. We believe every person is created in the image of God and therefore deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. We believe lives and communities are both God's grace and service to one another.

The ELCA through what we call church wide efforts, reaches out all across America and throughout the world to connect people with needs to the resources we have to assist them. Examples include water wells where there are none. Seeds and livestock that are shared so that people can produce food for their families. Micro loans to take on business ventures in order to earn a living. Connections with others worldwide because when we get to know others and their way of life, we find out that our differences are not always things that prevent friendships. Rather our differences can be uplifting and exciting as we find out various ways to live and love.

The ELCA is also our own Northeast Iowa Synod. Synod simply means walking together. Our Synod walks with us as we organize as a congregation. Synod assists us as we seek pastors to serve our parishes. Pastors are screened and presented to congregations to find out if there is a good and healthy match. Unfortunately, there is currently a large shortage of pastors, as you already know, yet Synod is continually searching for candidates and assists in finding persons like myself, who serve as interims until a called pastor is available.

Synod also helps out with keeping good order with things like constitutions, sharing information about available resources for persons in need and advice on how to keep good order in the congregation through our partnership with Synod and church wide structure, we send aid to flood victims, those affected by the never-ending fires and or tornadoes or hurricanes. We support counseling for those who can benefit from it and food both locally as well as Synod and church wide.

Like the three legs to a stool, the congregation is the third element of strength in our faith tradition. Here in the parish, life is lived and faith is expressed in many and various ways. Lives are made more full in the best sense of the word as relationships are formed and caring is given and received as our lives unfold. Truly, life is much better lived together than ever it could be lived alone.

I surely pray that you are filled with God's grace and mercy along with love for God and neighbor through your understanding of why we are Lutherans. We don't believe we are better than others- nor are we less. We believe we are called, claimed and empowered by the Triune God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit as we are given life each and every day, so that as we are blessed, we too may be a blessing to others!

Thank you, God, for our living faith tradition, the ELCA!
Grace and peace, Pastor Mark

St. John's 2026 Graduates

College Students: If you will be attending college this fall, please contact the church office by **August 1** with your name, college, and major. Scholarships are available through the Trust Fund and generous donors. Contact the church office for more information.

Have You Experienced a "Godwink"?

Have you ever had a moment that felt too perfectly timed to be just a coincidence? Maybe you met someone who had exactly the encouragement you needed, found something you thought was gone forever, or experienced an unexpected sense of peace during a difficult season.

Many people call these moments "godwinks."

The term *godwink* was popularized by author and broadcaster SQuire Rushnell to describe those remarkable, timely experiences that feel like a gentle reminder of God's presence. Rather than viewing them as mere coincidences, many people see them as small expressions of divine love, guidance, and reassurance—a heavenly "wink" that says, *I'm with you*.

What Does a Godwink Feel Like?

Imagine catching the eye of someone who loves you from across a crowded room and receiving a reassuring wink. A godwink can feel much the same—a deeply personal moment that brings comfort, hope, or encouragement just when it's needed most.

Everyday Godwinks

Godwinks don't always happen through dramatic miracles. They often appear in ordinary moments that become extraordinary because of their perfect timing.

Some examples include:

- Coworkers unexpectedly stepping in to help set up for a fun morning activity without even being asked.
- Receiving a joyful hug from one of your favorite little people that instantly brightens your day.
- Sharing a meaningful conversation over hot chocolate while walking together on campus.
- Hearing the exact words of encouragement you needed from an unexpected source.
- Finding peace after prayer when your heart has been weighed down with worry.

Looking for the Little Things

Whether you see these moments as God's gentle reminders or simply as meaningful blessings, paying attention to them can help cultivate gratitude and hope. Sometimes the smallest moments become the ones we remember most.

This week, consider starting your own "Godwink List." Write down one unexpected blessing, encouraging encounter, or perfectly timed moment each day. You may be surprised by how many reasons you discover to be thankful. May your week be filled with moments that remind you that hope, kindness, and grace often appear when we need them most.

When I Pray
I'm Talking to God.
When He Talks to Me
It's a Godwink!

— GODWINK PRINCIPLE #5

August Outdoor Worship Service & Potluck Brunch

Please join us for outdoor worship service on our beautiful green space on **Sunday, August 16, at 8:30 a.m.**

If you would prefer not to sit on the lawn or on the metal chairs provided, please bring a lawn chair.

Following the service, we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for a potluck brunch. The church will provide egg bakes, coffee, juice, and milk. We invite you to bring a dish to share, such as muffins, fresh fruit, bagels, coffee cake, cinnamon rolls, or another favorite breakfast item.

After brunch, there will be time to visit and enjoy fellowship together.

We were blessed with beautiful weather for our spring outdoor service and are praying for another wonderful morning. In the event of rain, the service will be held inside the church.

Please invite your friends and neighbors to join us for worship and fellowship. We look forward to seeing you!

The Deacons

Trustee and Council Meeting See the Narthex Bulletin Board for details

Board of Trustees Update: The Board of Trustees met on **Monday, July 20**. The full meeting minutes are posted and available for review.

Highlights: Allamakee Community Players contract update, church repair and maintenance projects, plans for the **August 16 Outdoor Worship Service**, and a tentative **Chicken Dinner** date of **September 4**.

The next **Board of Trustees** meeting will be held on **Monday, August 17, at 5:30 p.m.**, followed by the **Congregational Council Meeting** at **7:00 p.m.**

Congregational Council Update: The Council discussed and approved new members, the part-time youth coordinator position, and contacting the directory call list.

Solar Panels

The solar panels are working great and soaking up the rays! As a result, we have used 127.5% less electricity than last year per Alliant Energy's compared to the billing period from this time last year.

Hacker Nelson has submitted the report to the IRS for the energy rebate. Stay tuned for more updates.



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.

Library News

Submitted by the Library Committee

The St. John's Library is making room for new materials by removing all VHS (VCR) tapes from its collection. Throughout the month of August, these tapes will be available in the narthex for anyone who would like them. Please feel free to take as many as you wish.

Any tapes remaining at the end of the month will be recycled.

If you have suggestions or requests for new books or other library materials, please contact Vickie Larson or Linda Groe. We always welcome your ideas!

The library is located across from the lounge and is always open. We invite you to stop in and browse!



Radio Ministry

Our August radio ministry broadcasts are generously sponsored by Church Funds, the family of Gayle Larkin (Aug 2), Anonymous Donor (Aug 9), Joan Moody (Aug 16), Houg Family (Aug 23) and Dixie Libbey (Aug 30). These gifts help make it possible to share God's Word each week through our radio ministry. We sincerely thank each sponsor and all who faithfully support this important outreach.

Would you like to sponsor a future broadcast? Sponsorships may be given in honor or memory of a loved one or simply to support the ministry. Please contact the church office at 563-568-3623 or email stjohnswaukon@gmail.com for more information.

As a broadcast sponsor, you are also invited to select a favorite hymn to be included in that Sunday's service—a meaningful way to share a song that is special to you while blessing those who worship with us in person and over the air.

August Music Notes

We are grateful to everyone who has shared their musical talents during worship this summer. Thank you to Hailey Houg for her vocal solo on June 28, the Men's Choir for singing during our Fourth of July weekend service on July 5, Elsa Thorstenson for her violin solo on July 12, and Randy Johnsen for his vocal solo on July 19.

We look forward to Sarah Hagen sharing her musical gifts during worship on August 2. A few opportunities to provide special music are still available in August. If you are interested in sharing your talents, please let us know!

We are planning a 50th Anniversary Handbell Choir Reunion for the last weekend of June 2027 and are trying to reconnect with all former youth and adult handbell choir members.

If you were a member, or if you know someone who was—including those who have moved away—please help us update our contact list. Send their email address (with their permission) to Jim Bieber at bieberinsre@gmail.com, cell 563-380-5355. Anyone who contacts us will be added to our reunion email list to receive invitations, event updates, and RSVP information.

-By James H. Bieber

Worship With St. John's

Join us for Sunday morning worship in a way that works best for you!

- **Radio Broadcast:** Tune in to **KNEI 103.5 FM at 8:30 a.m.** each Sunday, or listen online at www.kneiradio.com.
- **Facebook Live:** Worship with us through our live video stream at <https://www.facebook.com/stjohnswaukon/>.
- **Service Bulletins:** Bulletins for each worship service are available on our website at www.stjohnswaukon.net.

Stay Connected Receive the monthly newsletter by email as a PDF. If you would like to be added to the email list, please contact the church office.

Visit us online at www.stjohnswaukon.net and follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/stjohnswaukon/> for worship updates, announcements, and church news.

If you experience any interruptions with the Sunday radio broadcast or the Facebook Live stream, please notify the church office so we can address the issue as quickly as possible.

Feed The Kids

A special thank you to our amazing St. John's volunteers! We recently wrapped up our week of hosting, serving an average of 140–150 children each day. Thank you for your time, hard work, and generosity. Thank you for your continued support of this important ministry! Check out our Facebook page or website for pictures of the week. Sneak peak of pics on pg. 5

August 2026 Hymns – Hymns subject to change per

Sunday, August 2 –

658 Oh Jesus, Joy Of Loving Hearts

First Reading: [Isaiah 55:1-5](#)

Psalm: [Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21](#)

Second Reading: [Romans 9:1-5](#)

Gospel: [Matthew 14:13-21](#)

515 Break Now The Bread Of Life

Communion – 484 You Satisfy The Hungry Heart; 491 Come Let Us Eat

856 How Great Thou Art (radio ministry)

Sunday, August 9 –

763 My Life Flows On

First Reading: [1 Kings 19:9-18](#)

Psalm: [Psalm 85:8-13](#)

Second Reading: [Romans 10:5-15](#)

Gospel: [Matthew 14:22-33](#)

755 Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me

773 Precious Lord, Take My Hand

Sunday, August 16 –

886 Oh, For A Thousand Tongues To Sing

First Reading: [Isaiah 56:1, 6-8](#)

Psalm: [Psalm 67](#)

Second Reading: [Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32](#)

Gospel: [Matthew 15:\[10-20\] 21-28](#)

650 In Christ There Is No East Or West

Communion – 758 You Are The Way; 759

My Faith Looks Up To Thee

434 Jesus Shall Reign

Sunday, August 23 –

645 Christ Is Made The Sure Foundation

First Reading: [Isaiah 51:1-6](#)

Psalm: [Psalm 138](#)

Second Reading: [Romans 12:1-8](#)

Gospel: [Matthew 16:13-20](#)

781 Children of The Heavenly Father (radio ministry)

576 We All Are One In Mission

Sunday, August 30 –

655 Son of God Eternal Savior

First Reading: [Jeremiah 15:15-21](#)

Psalm: [Psalm 26:1-8](#)

Second Reading: [Romans 12:9-21](#)

Gospel: [Matthew 16:21-28](#)

798 Will You Come And Follow Me

Communion – 656 Blest Be The Tie That Binds; 659 Will You Let Me Be Your Servant

548 Rise, O Church, Like Christ Arisen

Dates & Events

August at a Glance

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.

August 7: National Purple Heart Day, honoring U.S. service members wounded or killed in combat.

Awareness Campaigns: August serves **National Wellness Month:** Promotes self-care, healthy routines, and mental health recovery.

August is Make-A-Will Month, an ideal time to create or update one of the most important documents you'll ever sign. A will allows you to care for the people you love while ensuring your values continue to make a difference for generations to come.

Sun, August 2—Pastor Mark Oehlert

8:30am Service W/Comm *Noisy Offering, New Member Welcome & Reception, 9:30am Bible Study

10:00am Service W/Comm *Noisy Offering

Wed, August 5

8:45-12 Quilting in Fellowship Hall

Sun, August 9—Pastor Waldemar Gies

8:30am Service-

9:30am Bible Study

10:00am Service

Tues, August 11

9:15am Sarah Circle @ Sarah Sweeney Home. Section 3 of Summer Gather magazine.

No Dorcas Circle

Wed, August 12

8:45-12 Quilting in Fellowship Hall

Thurs, August 13

WIC here

August 15

Newsletter article deadline: All submissions are due to the office

Sun, August 16—Pastor Mark Oehlert

8:30am Outdoor Service W/Comm, *Pennies for Presents; Brunch following in Fellowship Hall (more information on page 2)

Mon, August 17

5:30pm Board of Trustee Mtg

7:00pm Congregational Council Meeting

Wed, August 19

8:45-12 Quilting in Fellowship Hall

Sun, August 23 - Pastor Charis Combs—Lay

8:30am Service-

9:30am Bible Study

10:00am Service

Tues, August 25—Nursing Home Visits

1pm Northgate Care Center

2pm Good Samaritan Society

2:45pm Evergreen Court

Wed, August 26

8:45-12 Quilting in Fellowship Hall

Sun, August 30—Pastor Mark Oehlert

8:30am Service W/Comm

9:30am Bible Study

10:00am Service W/Comm

Sun, Sept 6—Pastor Mark Oehlert

8:30am Service W/Comm *Noisy Offering

9:30am Bible Study

10:30am (TIME CHANGE) Service W/Comm

*Noisy Offering

Mon, Sept 7 – OFFICE CLOSED Labor Day

Sun, Sept 13 - Pastor Mark Swanson

8:30am Service-

9:30am Bible Study

10:30am Service

Sun, Sept 20—Pastor Mark Oehlert

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

9:30am Bible Study

10:30am Service W/Comm, *Pennies for Presents

Sun, Sept 27 - Pastor Waldemar Gies

8:30am Service-

9:30am Bible Study

10:00am Service

Pastors subject to change with scheduling

Feed The Kids Volunteers



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—Jessica Emerson	9—James Allison
1—Eva Miller	11—Jaxon Moe
1—Maximus Neuzil	11—Ernest Palas
1—Anita Sorum	12—Nash Treangen
2—Glen Moe	13—John (Jack) Allison
3—Logan Houg	15—Rhonda Bahr
3—Justin Jones	15—Mary Jackson
3—Sutton Jones	18—Dixie Libbey
5—Sully Bucheit	19—Hannah Teslow
5—Steve Wilkes	20—Shauna Johnsen
6—Brenda Kurth	24—Joe Christen
6—Christina Weymiller	24—Casey Treangen
7—Elisha Marti	25—Richard Kistler
8—Robert Joachim	25—Rosanne Wicks

July 2026

Baptisms: None
 Weddings: None
 Deaths: None

27—Kevin Baxter
 27—Danielle Ellinghuysen
 27—Diane Piittmann
 27—Shawn Tuttle
 27—Kimberly Welper
 28—Brandon Teslow
 30—Eric Kirkeby
 31—Duel Stock

August Anniversaries

Ethan & Danielle Ellinghuysen
 Mike & Sharon Tuttle
 Jeff & Patricia Snitker
 Kevin & Kristin Stinn
 Bryan & Erika Fish
 Randal & Lori Hesse
 Richard & Joan Leiran
 Mathew & Jessica Emerson
 Dean & Mary Jackson
 Trent & Lori Jacobs
 Dennis & Linda DeBuhr
 John & Becky O'Neill
 Jon & Serene Thorstenson
 Mark & Tammy Knudtston
 Kenneth & Charlene West

AUGUST—St. John's Volunteer Duty

	Service	Greeters	Readers	Comm. Asst.	Comm. Prep.	Acolytes	Ushers
Aug 2	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		
9	8:30AM	Ron & Linda Dahlstrom	Dave Sanderson			Ushers	Same
	10:00AM		Linda Groe				
16	8:30AM	Bill & Linda Halvorson	Sue Blagsvedt	Rhonda Barr, Bill & Sue Blagsvedt	Sherry Knudtson Kasey Iverson	Ushers	Same
	10:00AM		Melissa Clarke	Melissa Clarke	Alta Guild		
23	8:30AM	Randy & Lori Hesse	Dan Treangen			Ushers	Same
	10:00AM		Chris Engstrom				
30	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		

St. John's Collection Counters for August

3- Nona, Chris 10- Lori, Mary 24-Sue, Linda 31- Jane, Karen