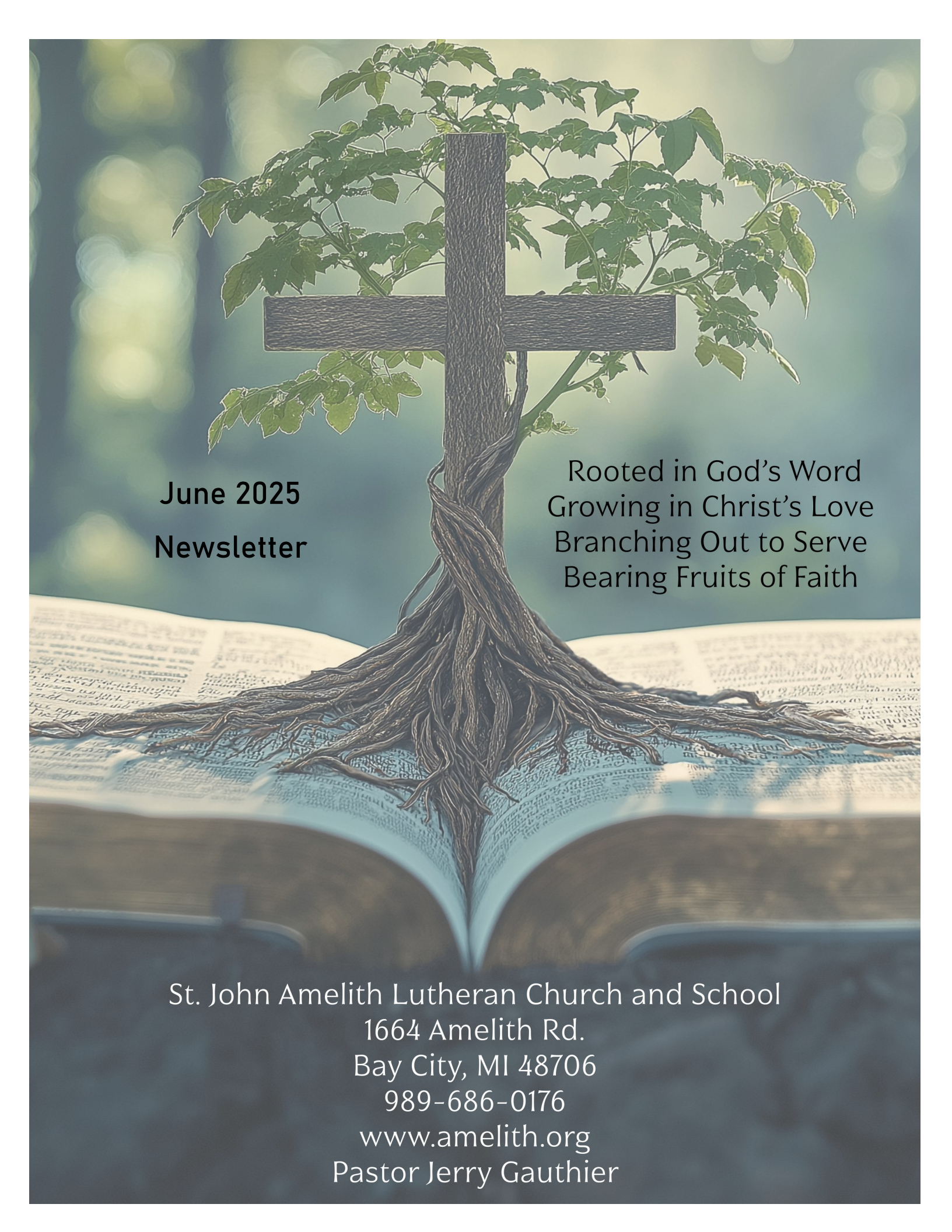




**June 2025
Newsletter**

Rooted in God's Word
Growing in Christ's Love
Branching Out to Serve
Bearing Fruits of Faith

St. John Amelith Lutheran Church and School
1664 Amelith Rd.
Bay City, MI 48706
989-686-0176
www.amelith.org
Pastor Jerry Gauthier

From The Pastor

As we soon step into the summer months, everything feels like it is slows down at churches. Maybe, it is because after Pentecost there are no more major festivals to celebrate. Maybe, it is because the schools are no longer in session. Maybe, it is because there are just so many things to do this time of the year. Whatever the case, the first Christians did not see things this way. The history book of the New Testament is the book Acts. It gives us a glimpse of what happened right after the coming of Pentecost. "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (2:42). These early followers of Christ did not distinguish between times and seasons, but wanted to be "in the Spirit" of the Gospel as it came by God's Word and Sacrament.

There is a particular relationship we each have to the community that we call, "The church." It is not in a building or even familial connections to a group of people. Many Christians in Africa after baptism end up rejected by their families and social communities.

They barely even have enough money for a church building. Such things sound almost unreal to us who live in a nation of prosperity and religious protection. What is keeping those in other lands together compared to so many congregations in North America? The answer is the same as the early church, a devotion to partake in what has been given by God's grace through faith in Jesus.

That word "Devotion" in the Greek language has a much deeper meaning than what we might consider simply as a duty or obligations. It can mean, "Hold fast to, cling to, pay persistent attention, attach oneself, be loyal to, or spend much time in." We could say those early Christians fixated on God's service of love for them and fervent love for one another. This satisfaction was not created by men, but conceived by the Holy with faith in Jesus. Being gathered around the teachings of the apostles, there was a witness, mercy, and life together flowing from the Gospel.

Martin Luther writes on the Third Commandment, "Therefore you must continually keep God's Word in your heart, on your lips, and in your ears. For where the heart stands idle and the Word is not heard, the devil breaks in and does his damage before we realize it. On the other hand, when we seriously ponder the Word, hear it, and put it to use, such is its power that it never departs without fruit. It always awakens new understanding, new pleasure, and new spirit of devotion, and it constantly cleanses the heart and its meditations" (Tappert 379:100ff.).

A true devotion of faith exceeds commitment. When Jesus grabs hold of sinners He delivers forgiveness and the treasure of His Church shares comfort with one another. It does not matter whether it be in America, Africa, or elsewhere. There are no smoke and mirrors with the work of the Holy Spirit. Only the purely preached Word and rightly administered sacraments create and keep the community of Christ. To be Lutheran is to confess Christ boldly and share this hopefulness with others. Our blessed gift at St. John is in a fellowship to be: "Rooted in God's Word. Growing in Christ's love. Branching out to serve. Bearing Fruits of faith."



Enjoy summer and let us join together in Christ!

Pastor Gauthier



Dear Cardinal Families,

In my time in the classroom, this time of the year, is always difficult. Everything is starting to wind down for the school now. Chapters in textbooks are being finished, NWEA MAP testing being completed, and students getting anxious for the summer months to come. A new season is coming our way. As stated in Ecclesiastes, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." (Ecclesiastes 3:1 ESV) There truly has been seasons within our school over this past year. The students, staff, and faculty have felt

that seasonal growth in our lives.

With the school year winding down June sixth we have been able to show that students have grown in their faith and knowledge. Several students showed academic progress in their MAP testing and in their core subjects. It has been a joy to watch the preschools go from quiet and shy individuals to a class not afraid to ask an older student to play with them. Our academic journey at St. John's built spiritually as well. Every lunch we did the prayers from Luther's Small Catechism. It has been bringing joy to all the teachers' faces when the preschools recite the parts that they heard the leaders doing all year.

On June sixth we will be celebrating our three graduations. Our four-year olds, kindergarten, and eighth grade will be moving on to the next big states in their education. I wanted to also take this moment and thank the Board of Education and members of the congregation for their support of the students, faculty and staff of the school. If you have not heard, I also will be moving on to a new state in my life and career. I have accepted a call to be principal for a school down in the Panhandle of Florida. I will continue to pray for everyone at St. John's. Thank you everyone for all your support and giving me the opportunity to be here with you in your many seasons.

As we are coming to the end of the school year here is a blessing for the school; "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace." (Numbers 6:24-26 ESV) *Mr. Korpi*

St. John Amelith Presents

6:30am -6pm

Amelith Adventure Camp

Accepting Adventurers
Preschool - 4th Grade

STEM Exploration
Arts & Crafts
Children's Theatre
Indoor/Outdoor Exploration
Religious Study
Devotions & Reflection
Movement & Yoga
and Field Experiences

\$30 a day

6:30am - 9am Early Care
9am - 3pm Camp Adventure
3pm - 6pm Extended Care

Teaching and CPR
Certified Staff

June 16
thru
August 15

Closed for deep cleaning
June 30-July 4

Campers can come all day or part of the day
snacks provided

For More Information or to sign up Contact us!

989-686-0176
1664 Amelith Rd. Bay City, MI 48706
office@amelith.org
www.stjohnamelithparochialschool.org



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LCMS addresses unauthorized, non-LCMS pastoral formation programs

reporter.lcms.org/2025/lcms-addresses-unauthorized-non-lcms-pastoral-formation-programs

May 8, 2025 *By Roy S. Askins*

In a show of unity, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Council of Presidents (COP) has committed to directing potential pastoral students only to LCMS-approved programs and has agreed not to place or ordain graduates from unauthorized, non-LCMS institutions. The COP unanimously affirmed a statement to this effect as part of its regular meeting on April 29. The statement comes in view of the recent emergence of several online pastoral formation programs not accountable to the Synod. The programs — Luther House of Studies (LHOS, associated with Kairos University) and the Center for Missional and Pastoral Leadership (CMPL, associated with the Institute of Lutheran Theology) — have been promoted for the preparation of LCMS laymen to eventually serve as congregation pastors.

In a recent statement, LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison explained the concerns about these unauthorized pastoral formation programs: “As a church of 5,800 congregations, we all must have the confidence that our pastors are confessors of the inerrant Scriptures and the truth confessed in our *Book of Concord*.” What’s at stake, Harrison said, is the Gospel itself: “Unless the Word of God, especially the precious Gospel of Jesus Christ, governs our lives together, we lose our Lord’s mission (Matt. 28:19) and our precious and God-given unity. That’s why we have agreed to do pastoral training together as a Synod.”

Harrison also warned against having men serve in LCMS congregations who have not been examined (certified), called and ordained through the processes established by the Synod: “Nor may men be trained and placed in our congregations under a different name, while in effect serving as pastors. This is for the sake of the Gospel of Christ.” Under Bylaw 2.5.2, LCMS member congregations voluntarily agree to “call and be served only by” those men who have been placed by the authorized means of pastoral formation.

The COP statement unanimously affirmed on April 29 reads:

Our Synod needs pastors for all our congregations and mission outreach. We implore the Lord of the Church to send them. We commit ourselves to direct potential students for the pastoral office only to the routes to ordination approved by and accountable to Synod. The Council will not place graduates from other programs. The Council



members agree not to ordain graduates from other programs. We commit ourselves to engage the Church, our Synod’s seminaries, and Pastoral Formation Committee to strengthen the routes to ordination and address the challenges and opportunities for providing the Church well-formed candidates for the pastoral ministry.

COP Chairman Rev. Dr. R. Lee Hagan said, “The Council of Presidents had an open and fraternal conversation regarding the Synod’s responsibility to recruit and train pastors. ... The discussion amongst the council was viewed by the members as positive and led to a unanimous statement regarding the counsel we provide to one another regarding the recruitment, training, ordination and placement of pastors in the congregations of the Synod.” The discussion left Hagan “very encouraged by the spirit of unity on the council and the support for a statement regarding our agreement and accountability to one another.”

Both LCMS seminary presidents also issued statements regarding LHOS and CMPL. The Rev. Dr. Thomas Egger, president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (CSL), appealed to the Synod for unity in pastoral formation: “Let us continue to share together the vital work of pastoral formation for the LCMS, for the sake of a clear confession of Christ for our children and grandchildren and for the world. Please do not support the splintering of this effort into ‘every district for itself, every congregation for itself and every pastor for

himself.' Let's work together, in an orderly and honest way."

Likewise, the Rev. Dr. Jon Bruss, president of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), pointed out that the deftness of CTSFW pastoral graduates "in handling the Word of God and applying it faithfully is based on hundreds of hours of formal study of God's Word, our Lutheran Confessions, Christian doctrine, the history of the Church, and pastoral theology." But residential seminary means more: These pastors have "been steeped in Lutheran liturgy and hymns. During seminary they've taken in over 600 sermons" and more.

As Bruss noted, residential seminary is not a "gold standard"; rather, it's "the standard" that the vast majority of LCMS Lutherans have come to know and expect from their pastors.

In his statement, Harrison also notes his request to the Synod's Pastoral Formation Committee (PFC) to speak, "particularly after the statement of the LCMS Council of Presidents." In response to that request, the PFC has posted answers to a number of questions frequently asked about unauthorized, non-LCMS pastoral formation programs.

Further Read

- **Statement** — LCMS president encourages 'walking together' in pastoral formation
- **Frequently Asked Questions** — Unauthorized Non-LCMS Pastoral Formation Programs
- **Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne** — Statement on Unsanctioned MDiv Programs
- **Concordia Seminary, St. Louis** — Statement on the Center for Missional and Pastoral Leadership



Recovery begins after St. Louis tornado

reporter.lcms.org/2025/recovery-begins-st-louis-tornado/? May 21, 2025 By Brianna Dehn

On Friday, May 16, a storm system that included at least two tornadoes moved through the greater St. Louis area, causing a handful of deaths and dozens of injuries. An estimated 5,000 buildings were damaged, and thousands of St. Louis residents were left without power.

One of the tornadoes touched down on the campus of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (CSL), in Clayton, Mo. According to the National Weather Service, it was an EF3 that gained strength, reaching maximum winds of more than 150 mph, as it continued through the north part of St. Louis where Bethlehem Lutheran Church is located. The tornado crossed the Mississippi River and entered Illinois before lifting near the campus of Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, Ill.

Earlier in the day, at 10 a.m. under sunny skies, the seminary had held its Theological Diploma Service. Following the service, students, families, guests and faculty mingled and took pictures outside the Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus. Then the weather turned, and at around 2:45 p.m., the tornado hit the CSL campus, lasting only around 5–10 minutes.

No one on the seminary property was hurt, but the campus sustained extensive damage. In that short amount of time, approximately 150 trees or large limbs fell, covering the campus in debris. Other notable damage included downed powerlines, tree limbs falling on faculty and student housing, and a stained-glass chapel window that broke due to a tree falling into it. As a result, CSL's Friday evening commencement ceremony had to be postponed.

Meanwhile, Bethlehem also sustained significant damage to the church building as well as to member homes and vehicles. In the days since the tornado, the congregation has been reaching out to the surrounding community,



offering meals, child care, assistance with clean-up and the love of Christ. Food insecurity was already an issue in North St. Louis, but it is amplified in the wake of the tornado. Bethlehem, being one of the few buildings in the area with electricity, is giving away 250 meals three times a day to help those who are hungry. The congregation is also offering temporary shelter to those who need it.

“The past few days, Bethlehem has really served as a light to our city,” said the Rev. Dr. Gerard Bolling, Bethlehem senior pastor.

From left, the Rev. Dr. Gerard Bolling, senior pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, St. Louis, prays with church members Kala and Tracey Webb and the Rev. Chris Knepper, Bethlehem associate pastor, on May 20 in St. Louis, following a May 16 tornado. (LCMS/Erik M. Lunsford)

On Saturday morning, May 17, the Rev. Dr. Ross Johnson, director of Disaster Response for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), joined a group of volunteers from Lutheran Early Response Teams (LERT) to assist with cleaning up the CSL campus. ““This is a big project,” he said. “We are prioritizing areas. ... We’re going to try and clean this up as soon as possible so life on campus ... [and] the ministry on campus can continue.” Approximately 50 LERT volunteers came from five LCMS districts — Iowa East, Missouri, Southern Illinois, Northern Illinois and Central Illinois — on Saturday and Sunday.

In addition, the volunteers included CSL students like Joshua Tegatz, a fourth-year seminarian. “We were supposed to graduate last night,” said Tegatz. But, he added, “We love [this seminary] and we want to give back what we’ve been given [by helping with the disaster response.]” Commencement was held Saturday night even as much of the seminary campus, including faculty housing, remained without power.

Kris Schuldt, district disaster response coordinator for the LCMS Missouri District, has visited Bethlehem Lutheran, CSL and other areas impacted by the storm. Asked why he is involved in disaster response, he said it’s “because I have been truly blessed, and I feel like I want to give

back. [LERT helps with natural disasters] all over the country. ... It’s very rewarding.”

“We are very grateful for the way people in the seminary community have been pitching in to clean up,” said the Rev. Dr. Thomas Egger, president of CSL. “Our seminary staff and now a number of volunteers from the Synod and from the community are on campus, and we are very grateful for their help.”

The same storm system that impacted Missouri and Illinois also affected Kentucky and Indiana, and another storm system moved across the middle of the country on May 19, impacting even more people. Meanwhile, multiple parts of the country continue recovering from past events, including torrential rain, wind, flooding and wildfires.



As with any disaster, there are three ways you can help:

- Pray for those affected and for those who are offering assistance.

Volunteer at lcms-lert.org.

Financially support the response with your gifts.

Visit lcms.org/disaster for more information.

Readers in Missouri, Kentucky, Indiana and other zones of impact can also contact their respective districts for information about how to donate toward response efforts.

25 Bible Memory Verses from Jesus

VERSE FOR LIFE

Memory verses stay with children for a lifetime. In good times and in bad, these verses committed to memory remind us of our forgiving, loving, and risen Lord. Guide elementary-age children in their faith journey with these 25 Bible verses containing the words of Jesus Himself.

Matthew

- ☐ 1. Matthew 5:43-44
- ☐ 2. Matthew 6:33
- ☐ 3. Matthew 11:28
- ☐ 4. Matthew 19:26
- ☐ 5. Matthew 23:12
- ☐ 6. Matthew 24:35
- ☐ 7. Matthew 28:20

Mark

- ☐ 8. Mark 5:41-42
- ☐ 9. Mark 10:45
- ☐ 10. Mark 16:16

Luke

- ☐ 11. Luke 6:31
- ☐ 12. Luke 11:9-10
- ☐ 13. Luke 12:8-9
- ☐ 14. Luke 16:13
- ☐ 15. Luke 17:6
- ☐ 16. Luke 18:16-17
- ☐ 17. Luke 22:19

John

- ☐ 18. John 2:19
- ☐ 19. John 3:16
- ☐ 20. John 5:24
- ☐ 21. John 6:37
- ☐ 22. John 8:36
- ☐ 23. John 9:5
- ☐ 24. John 10:11
- ☐ 25. John 14:6



For more information visit <https://books.cph.org/25-bible-memory-verses-from-jesus>
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June Voter's Meeting

Your Vote Counts

has been re-scheduled to

June 22, 2025
10:45am

Upcoming events

This is just a quick list of some of what we have planned. Check our webpage/facebook page regularly because we are always doing something fun!

Ongoing:

- Bible Study Series "Prepared to Reason" begins Sunday May 4 @ 11am and will continue until finished
- Didache Membership Class

June:

- VBS June 16-20 students in grades preK-4th
- Summer Adventure Camp kicks off June 16th and runs until August 15

July:

- Outdoor Service on July 6th with an ice cream social following

August:

- Outdoor Service on August 3
- Blessing of the backpacks August 17
- School resumes August 25

September:

- Confirmation classes resume/begin
- Women's Bible Study resumes - September 17 (tentative)
- Oktoberfest Weekend 13 & 14

Amelith

Oktoberfest

September 13 & 14, 2025

Saturday

Entertainment: Gemutlichkeit Verein Singers, The Frankentrost Band and Whiskey6

Petting Zoo

Wagon of Cheer Raffle

Arts and Craft Market in the gym

Amelith Church Tours

Corn Hole Tournaments

German Meal and Full Concession Stand

Beer Tent

Sunday

Entertainment: The Grocholski Family Tradition

Quilt Raffle

Kids arts and craft event

World Famous Amelith Chicken BBQ

Full Concession Stand

Bake Sale

Beer Tent



June

Prayer

Calendar

Every day, let us include the person/position/event mentioned in our prayers. You can pray for them, the job they do, those who receive or in whatever way you are led.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 June Altar Guild Servers	2 June Anniversaries	3 June Birthdays	4 Teachers	5 SJA Students	6 SJA School	7 SJA Parents
8 All those who served this year at School	9 Stewardship Committee	10 Finance Team	11 Didache Class	12 Music Director Organists	13 Church Staff	14 Lawn Mowing
15 Tech/IT Team	16 Amelith Adventure Camp	17 VBS	18 Treasurer	19 Summer Camp Volunteers	20 LWML	21 Fund Development
22 Voter's Meeting	23 Pastor	24 Elders	25 Outreach Committee	26 SJA Taskforces	27 Council	28 Trustee Members
29 Sunday School Teachers	30 Board of Ed	31 Youth Group				