

St. John Amelith Newsletter

Summer 2026

Things happening at Amelith

July 26	Game Night @6pm
July 27	Board of Education Meeting @6pm
July 28	Board of Elders Meeting @6pm
July 29	Fund Development Meeting @6pm
August 2	Outdoor Service & coffee hour fellowship from the Youth Group
August 4	Voting
August 4	Council Meeting @6pm
August 6	Early Childhood Conference – Director's Day
August 7	Early Childhood Conference
August 8	Robert Portner's Funeral @11am
August 9	Meat Raffle Drawing @11am (do not need to be present to win) Aerial Park Outing for Youth Group @2pm
August 10	Teacher Orientation 9am-1pm Youth Group helps at the food bank @4:45pm School cleaning @5:30pm
August 19	School Parent Orientation @6pm
August 23	Blessing of the Backpacks/teacher installation during the service Confirmation Parent Meeting @11am
August 24	1st Day of School for grades K-4th (half day)
August 25	Board of Elders Meeting @6pm
August 30	Game night @ 6pm
August 31	1st Day of School for Preschool (full day) Board of Education Meeting @6pm



Christ Continues to Provide for His Church

One of the comforting truths of Scripture is that the Church has never belonged to us. It came out of the great love of Christ. As Adam brought forth Eve from His side, so the Church belongs to Christ and great sacrifice that brought forth His Church. Jesus Himself says plainly after Peter's great confession, "I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). Because the Church is His, we can trust that He will continue to provide for her according to His wisdom and in His time. This is far more than how anything might be for the moment.

As we might already know personally, sometimes the Lord provides abundantly. At other times, He teaches us patience through seasons of waiting, struggle, and need for endurance. Throughout Scripture, God's people often found themselves without what they desired, yet never without the One they needed. Israel wandered in the wilderness, David ran for his life from king Saul, and Paul sat in prison apart from serving the churches. Whatever the lack of resources or conflicted issues, God's people learned to depend on His promises rather than seeing or expecting perfect circumstances.



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Plenty of congregations are experiencing similar seasons today. We could make quite a list at St. John of our needs, but what about the bigger picture? This year 79 seminary candidates received calls, but 78 churches were left lacking. The Michigan District annual report for 2025 shows how we issued "59 call lists for congregations seeking a pastor. 25 calls were accepted (included 5 of the 8 seminary requests)." Beside shortage struggles is also the pressure building up to the Synodical Convention this month from July 18–23, 2026 in Phoenix, Arizona.

It is during these times of want that we pray and direct attention to wisdom before God's Word. The book of James states, "But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere" (3:17). Certainly, this wisdom "from above" belongs to God's Word and how we receive that directly from Jesus who is the Word made flesh.

These moments invite us to ask not, "How can everything stay the same?" but rather, "How can we remain faithful with what the Lord has entrusted to us today?" Faithfulness has always been the Lord's desire for His people. St. Paul writes, "It is required of stewards that they be found faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:2). Notice that he does not say stewards must have ideal conditions. Instead, they are called to be faithful with the gifts God has given from the Gospel and kept for us in His Holy Word and Sacraments.

As we continue to pray for the Lord to provide pastors for our congregation and the greater church—including others commissioned support like church musicians, teachers, volunteers, and future church workers—we do so with confidence. Christ has not abandoned His Church. He is there in His means of grace, gathering His people, forgiving sins, and strengthening faith. Our hope has never rested in a picture-perfect life or having every position filled perfectly. Our hope rests in the Good Shepherd, who faithfully continues to care for His flock.

Pastor

Harrison elected to sixth term as LCMS president

Cheryl Magness June 24, 2026

The Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, having received more than 50% of the votes cast in the third ballot for the election of the president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), is the president-elect for the 2026–2029 triennium. It will be his sixth term in office.



The election for the position of Synod president began last fall with an online nominating process, conducted by YesElections, that concluded Feb. 18, or five months prior to the start of the Synod convention, with a report to the secretary of the Synod.

The resulting candidates for the office of president were the five ordained ministers who received the highest number of votes in the nominations process and who consented to serve if elected. The voting began, according to Bylaw 3.12.2.4, starting June 6 (six weeks prior to the convention) via Internet balloting provided by YesElections.

The 5,478 pastoral and lay voters validly registered by the congregations and parishes of the Synod (Bylaw 3.12.2.3) before the deadline (electronic registration by March 8) or their substitutes (as validly submitted before May 29) served as the voters for this election. Of those, a total of 5,038 votes were cast in the third round of voting, constituting a vote percentage of 92.0% of the electorate. (The voter percentage was 85.4% in the first round and 88.4% in the second round.)

The results of the third ballot tallied and reported to the secretary of the Synod by YesElections are as follows:

- Harrison was voted president-elect with 2,524 votes (50.1%);
- The Rev. Dr. Joel D. Biermann received 2,414 votes (47.9%); and
- The Rev. Benjamin T. Ball received 100 votes (2.0%).

Harrison responded to the news of his election:

“First, thank you to the candidates who were willing to be subjected to this grueling process of public

scrutiny, and especially to Dr. Biermann. I had prepared a concession speech thanking Joel for standing, noting how blessed we are in the LCMS to have such a capable theologian as our new president, and vowing my support. Thanks, too, to First Vice-President Lange, Brady Finnern and Ben Ball. Any one of them would be a blessing.

“Thank you for this amazing opportunity to serve a final term. Please forgive me my many faults and sins. I plead for your prayers for fidelity to the Gospel of Christ’s blood-bought forgiveness, and prayers that I may serve all of you as Christ would have me do in these final three years.

“Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.” (Heb. 13:20–21)

The Bylaws of the LCMS instruct the secretary of the Synod to notify the candidates in the Synod’s presidential election of the results of the balloting at least two weeks prior to the convention. The candidates were informed earlier today, June 24, of the results of the June 20–23 ballot.

Additional information about the election result will be published in the second issue of *Today’s Business*, which will be available at the beginning of the convention. For more information about the election or candidates, see lcms.org/convention/elections.

The 69th Regular Convention of the LCMS will take place July 18–23 at the Phoenix Convention Center under theme “Christ Is Risen Indeed.” <https://reporter.lcms.org/2026/harrison-elected-to-sixth-term-as-lcms-president/>

From Food Pantry to Show and Tell: Arch Books in Michigan

June 12, 2026



When Christ the King Lutheran Church and School in Southgate, Michigan, began sharing Arch® Books at their food pantry, they weren't sure

what to expect. What they've seen since has been nothing short of a blessing.

Since 2024, the food bank Arch Book program from Concordia Gospel Outreach (CGO) has been sharing Christian children's books with families at food banks, food pantries, and family resource programs across the country. What started with a young girl named Wynn timer in Phoenix—who woke up at 5:30 a.m. every Wednesday to volunteer at her local food pantry and had the idea to share the Gospel alongside groceries—has grown into a nationwide program now sending thousands of Arch Books to hundreds of locations each week.

And from every corner of the country, we keep hearing the same thing: These little books are making a big difference.

A Blessing in Southgate

At Christ the King (CTK) Lutheran Church, two faithful volunteers offer Arch Books to pantry clients on dry days. It's a simple gesture—a colorful book held out alongside a bag of groceries—but the response has been remarkable. The volunteers shared some of what they've witnessed: *All who receive the books are happy they chose to accept them for young ones. Older generations may read them to younger generations, but all generations enjoy the books. Families have been known to share the Arch Books with other families and at least one child took his Arch Book to school for show and tell.*

Take that in for a moment. A child so excited about a Bible story book that he brought it to school to share with his classmates. Grandparents reading to grandchildren. Families passing books along to other families. What began as a simple offer at a food pantry rippled outward—into living rooms, classrooms, and conversations that might never have happened otherwise.

Pastor Emeritus Harry Edenfield wrote to us on behalf of CTK's food pantry to express their gratitude: *We thank God for whoever came up with this idea for distribution.*

And then Pastor Edenfield and the CTK community did something extraordinary: They enclosed a \$1,000 donation to help extend this blessing to even more families. "You have asked if we might help to pass on this blessing to others," Pastor Edenfield wrote. "A \$1,000 check is enclosed for this purpose. God bless your work continually!!"

A Growing Wave of Generosity

What's happening in Southgate is part of a much larger story. Over the past two years, the food bank Arch Book program has expanded from a handful of locations to hundreds of pantries and family resource centers nationwide. From a Swaddling Clothes ministry in Council Bluffs, Iowa, to a ninety-eight-year-old congregation in Lake Worth Beach, Florida, churches and organizations are discovering that Arch Books open doors to conversations about faith that food alone cannot.

In Iowa, one location distributed 720 books to families in a single quarter. In Florida, Spanish-speaking families began using the books not only as tools for faith but also for learning English. In Wisconsin, a ministry partner put it beautifully: *This partnership is why we can give not only bread to families but also the Bread of Life!*

Each of these stories reminds us that when we place God's Word into someone's hands, we can't predict where it will go—but we can trust that it will bear fruit.

The Ripple Keeps Growing

When CTK's food pantry volunteers hold out an Arch Book to a family picking up groceries, they're offering more than a story. They're offering hope—the kind of hope that a child carries to school, that a grandmother reads aloud at the kitchen table, and that one family passes along to the next.

The food bank Arch Book program exists because of people like the volunteers at Christ the King—and because of partners who, like Pastor Edenfield, see this work and feel moved to help it reach even further. Every book placed into a child's hands is a seed. And as the stories from Iowa, Florida, and beyond remind us, those seeds have a way of taking root in places we never expected. As Pastor Edenfield wrote: "God bless your work continually!!" We pray the same for his—and for yours.

Written by Concordia Gospel Outreach <https://blog.cph.org/serve/from-food-pantry-to-show-and-tell-arch-books-in-michigan>

The Stewardship Committee would like to bring awareness to those who serve our congregation. This month we will highlight the Lawn Mowing Crew, Flower and Landscape Committee, VBS Volunteers, Picnic & Recreation Committee, and the Church Mice.

“His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’” **Matthew 25:21**

Mowing Crew

Volunteers are put in teams of two to mow the church and school grounds on a weekly basis.

The cemetery is contracted out and paid for by the Cemetery Committee's own fund.

Pastor and Amy mow the parsonage lawn.

- Administrator/Maintenance/Refueling - Glenn Lutz
- Treasurer - Vinny Revord
- 30 people are cutting grass as follows: Gary Kloha, Vern Kloha, Roy Nuffer, Carl Nuffer, Tony Johnson, Gayle Johnson, Jim Brownlee, Cindy Brownlee, L.J. Brownlee, Claire Brownlee, Lisa Slater, Dave Herbolsheimer, John Herbolsheimer, Ron Wieck, Dennis Wieck, Paul Behmlander, Tom Rohde, Courtney Rau, Kevin Ortner, Mike Davis, Gabe Davis, Mike Rauschert, Neil Trautner, Greg Rugenstein, Mike Anspaugh, Wes Hupfer, Joel Erdman, Kevin Scharich, Mike Soule, and Floyd Goss
- Stick Pickup - Claire Brownlee, Rau Family and Glenn Lutz
- Weed Control - Wes Hupfer and Glenn Lutz
- Lawn Rolling - Mike Rauschert and Glenn Lutz
- Stones in Grass - Ron Helmreich, Matt Helmreich and Glenn Lutz

Monetary Donations - \$1120 (majority from anonymous donors) for year 2026

Flower and Landscape Committee

Volunteers beautify our church and school by planting annuals and perennials, trimming and replacing bushes, dead heading, watering, and weeding.

- Volunteers: Debbie Fisher, Trina Scharich, Diane Gerhauser, Lisa Helmreich, Connie Metiva, Jill Loftus, Jackie Town, Ann Lutz, Andy Krauss, Tony Johnson, Gayle Johnson

Vacation Bible School

VBS 2026 was a great week of amazing stories, experiments, snacks, crafts and music. 32 were registered with an average of 28 each day.

- Coordinator - Deb Hutter
- Volunteers - Pastor Gauthier, Pastor Starke, Molly Revord, Hilary Rau, Mary Warnke, Wendy Jacobs, Catherine Hutter, Cameron Jacobs, Sara Dzuba, and Lisa Helmreich
- Youth Leaders - Tyler Rau, Connor Dzuba, MacKenzie Town, Eliana and Xander Johnson, Connor Hare, Morgan Rau, Nicklas Corbat, Lydia Revord, and Kara Warnke

Picnic and Recreation

- Scheduling – Deb Hutter
- Opening/Closing and Cleaning – Mike and Angie Davis

Church Mice

Volunteers work to clean the church every week.

- Church Mice Servants – Gail Campbell, Mary Warnke, Lisa Slater, Daegan Marshall, Mackenzie Town, Madison Town, Dolores Davis, Sherry & Bob Portner, Jill Loftus, Lisa Helmreich, Tony Johnson, Courtney & Hilary Rau, Sarah Warmbier and Kathy Pardel

Thank you all for what you do!

LWML is collecting school supplies for Orphan Grain Train which are sent to places where even the few required school supplies may be more than a family can afford. The list of supplies are on the poster board in the gathering area. Get what you can find on sale - you don't need to furnish a complete kit. The cinch up backpack bags are being purchased with a Thrivent grant. There will be a container for these items under the hangers in the gathering area until our meeting to assemble the school bags on September 15th. Cash donations may be given to Gail Campbell. Thank you for your help. You are blessing many children in need.



SCHOOL KITS

CONTENTS

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ 1 backpack | ☐ 1 ruler |
| ☐ 2 spiral notebooks | ☐ 2 glue sticks |
| ☐ 2 pencils | ☐ 1 scissors |
| ☐ 2 pens | ☐ 1 rectangular eraser |
| ☐ 10 sheets of construction paper | ☐ 1 package, colored pencils (12 count) |
| ☐ 1 package crayons (24 count) | ☐ 1 pencil sharpener |
| | ☐ 1 single pocket folder |

ASSEMBLY

1. Stack flat items together.
2. Place construction paper inside pocket folder
3. Place all items inside school bag.
4. Close bag if applicable.

PLEASE NOTE

- Backpacks, drawstring athletic bags, or homemade tote bags are all acceptable.
- We recommend leaving contents in the original packaging, but it is not required.
- No additions, deletions, or substitutions.
- Do not add money, photos, or personal notes.
- Do not include items with religious, camouflage, patriotic or military symbols.
- Pack only new or gently used items.
- Do not include plastic bags.
- It costs an average of \$11 to ship each box of kits. Please consider a donation to your local OGT branch to help with shipping.

Although well-meaning variations are tempting, please do not do this. It may result in heavy fines and/or the entire shipment being confiscated by customs officials.



Thank you for making a difference in these children's lives. Your love of your Savior, Jesus Christ, is sent with each kit packaged. May God continue to bless your life as you serve Him.

Updated on 12/04/2025

SUMMER 2026 NEWSLETTER



NEW THINGS FOR 26/27

- Jupiter Ed replaces Fastdirect. Watch for emails as we transition to the new communication system for school.
- First Day of School K-4 is August 24th (half day)
- First Day of School PS 3 & 4 is August 31st

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- ✓ Blessing of the backpacks August 23rd
- ✓ Orientation will take place August 19th and will be for parents only.
- ✓ It's still Summer, have fun!

ST. John Amelith
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MESSAGE FROM MRS. MOLLY

Happy Summer!

Back to School is fast approaching and we have so many updates for you! I can't wait to see all the kids in the hallways again, but first let's enjoy the rest of summer break!

Molly



August 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
2 August Altar Guild Servers	3 Council Members	4 Stewardship	5 Lawn Mowing Team	6 August Anniversaries	7 SJA Families	8 School Staff
9 Bible Study	10 Unsung Hero	11 Church Mice	12 Stewardship	13 Principal	14 Finance Team	15 Trustees
16 Confirmation Students	17 Board of Education	18 Elders	19 Pastor	20 Funeral Luncheon Volunteers	21 Outreach	22 Cemetery Crew
23 SJA Students	24 SJA Teachers	25 Table Talk	26 School Janitors	27 Pastor	28 Oktoberfest	29 Treasurer
30 SJA Youth	31 Morning and After Care					