

ST. JOHN AMELITH CHURCH AND SCHOOL NEWSLETTER MAY 2026

Church Important Dates - see calendar for details

- 5/3 - Youth Group Outing
- 5/4 - Quilting at 9:30am
- 5/5 - Office Closed for Voting
Council Meeting @6pm
- 5/6 - Mother's Day
- 5/12 - LWML Meeting @6:30pm
- 5/14 - Bay City Circuit Ascension Service @7pm Zion
Bay City
- 5/18 - Quilting at 9:30am
175th Cookbook Meeting @3:30pm
Board of Education Meeting @5:30pm
- 5/19 - Bookmobile @10:30am
Elder's Meeting @6pm
- 5/25 - Memorial Day Office Closed
- 5/26 - Stewardship Meeting @11am
Table Talk @ 6:30pm
- 5/29 - Last day of school for Preschool
- 5/31 - Voter's Meeting @11am
Game night @ 6pm



MAY 31ST @ 11AM

YOUR
VOTE
COUNTS!

COOK
BOOK

LET'S CREATE A COOKBOOK
FOR THE 175TH! JOIN US ON
MAY 18TH @ 3:30PM
SEE DIANE RAU WITH
QUESTIONS



Online giving through
our Vanco app is
available by scanning
this QR code



From The Pastor

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope” (Romans 15:13)

The Holy Spirit came at Pentecost and it often raises questions unlike Christmas or Easter—even among Christians. It is the third great festival in the Church, celebrating the person and work of God, the Holy Spirit. Pentecost is often misunderstood as some kind of spiritual pep rally, as if that event was about an emotional or sensational encounter. The Holy Spirit is not a mood or enthusiasm, but truly the Lord and Giver of life. The Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son able to create and sustain faith by the Word.

The Gospel for All Nations

On that first Pentecost (Acts 2), two things astonished the crowd: 1. Uneducated men speaking in foreign languages in an instant 2. The revelation being proclaimed was no sales pitches or a T.E.D. talk but instead making known, “...the mighty works of God.” The Spirit was signaling that the Gospel unleashed is for all nations. This good news from God’s Word is available in our language, as a printed Bible for our homes and even now on smartphone apps. The ongoing fruit of Pentecost is the Spirit delivering Christ through Scripture and that Word preached to any. We are heirs of that great confession of Christ and the Word active through generations, especially as we have now received it renewed from the Reformation Era. Human efforts overshadowed by the Spirit are faithfully at work when and where it pleases Him.



Clarity in a Confused World

Pentecost also reveals that the Spirit is not about confusion, but clarity. When the crowd asked, “What does this mean?” Hearing many languages turned to Peter standing up and preaching. He opened the Scriptures and proclaimed the last days as promised by the prophet Joel. The Spirit does not leave the Church guessing—He drives us to Christ crucified for the forgiveness of sins. That same message still stands out in a confused and divided world. The Church does not speak from human inspirations or as some cultural icon like a corporation. It stands on the clear Word of God active before life: “Repent and be baptized... for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Even when the Church feels small or the world looks uncertain, the Spirit continues His work. Faith does not depend on what we grasp fully for our comfort, but on what Christ speaks for us.

Living with Pentecost Today

Pentecost is not only a past event—it is the ongoing life of the Church that flows into daily life. The danger of course is trying to recreate the experience, which is not the point. The Father and Son are at work by the Spirit creating faith, strengthening His people, and gathering His harvest. As our Table Talk book explains, “The Gospel is not, as in Reformed Protestantism, an anemic “plan of salvation,” awaiting implementation or compliance with its conditions. Instead, the Gospel presses upon us, the ready fact and gift of salvation.”¹ Pentecost is still taking place. The Church exists by the Spirit working through the Word of Christ and His Sacraments. Where that Word is, there is forgiveness that yields life and salvation. God preserve us in the true faith, and keep us in the gift of His grace poured out that alone creates and sustains the Church.

Pastor

¹ The Saving Truth, 85

Road to convention: Topics to watch

<https://reporter.lcms.org/2026/road-to-convention-topics-to-watch/>? April 6, 2026

The end of February marked another significant turn in the convention processes, with nominations for Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) president and vice-president — and president voter registration — now complete, and all on-time reports and overtures in.

Official announcements have gone out regarding the first of these. With 1,518 congregations out of 5,681 (27%) casting a ballot, participation was lower than last year and only two-thirds what it was in 2019, but greater than in 2013 and 2016. Each congregation may nominate two men for president, two for first vice-president and two for regional vice-president. With 2,122 votes cast for president, 1,759 for first vice-president, and 1,584 for the regionals combined, even of those who did participate, many did not make full use of the ballot. This is not atypical but underscores a frustration we hear from congregations every triennium: They don't all have ready names to put down in addition (or alternative) to incumbents. But that is the nature of an open nominating ballot, if not to be run by lists and advertisements — it presumes continual engagement.

The Synod has used this pre-convention nominating ballot process since 1973, first for president and first vice-president, then extending in 2004 to the now regional vice-presidents, replacing in-convention nominating ballots. The most votes cast for president (4,890) were in 1981, when a retiring incumbent combined with congregations first being allowed to give two names for each position (interestingly, it was not the most-nominated man who was elected).

A more fulsome report on this cycle, including those who declined and the votes they received, will be included in the *Biographical Synopses and Statements of Nominees*.

President voter registration, for the election to open June 6, concluded on March 8 (with parishes able to make changes to already registered voters until May 29). In January, I noted that registration tends

to be lackluster, and this cycle has been no different. In 2019 and 2023, 63% of parishes registered at least one voter; for 2026, 59% did so. (This is not uniformly so, however — district registration rates varied from 29% to 85% of theoretical electors.) As we are now accustomed, vacant congregations, those with fewer email addresses registered to receive reminders, and those that are relatively smaller are less likely to register. Some, but not all, of the district variation may be explained by these factors. Details on how the June vote goes will be included in *Today's Business* 2B.

Stronger together

My office and the *Today's Business* and Concordia Publishing House staffs are presently burning all available candles at both ends to get the reports and overtures into shape for publication in the *Convention Workbook*. The overtures are an area where participation has not been numerically lackluster this cycle: We have received 464 submissions, amounting to 379 unique overtures (some are submitted by more than one submitter), compared to 322 submissions and 279 unique overtures for the 2023 convention. Some of our 10 floor committees — it appears especially Pastoral Ministry and Seminaries, Structure and Administration, Life Together, Theology and Church Relations, Ecclesiastical Supervision and Dispute Resolution, and National Witness, ranging from 92 down to 34 overtures each — will have a great deal and great variety of grain to mill into a manageable number of wholesome loaves for convention digestion.

Big topics (each gathering a number of overtures) to watch, discuss with your circuit delegates and other representatives, and contribute comments on include:

- A great number of possibilities to assign work to the LCMS Office of National Mission, which may have to be prioritized and evaluated relative to capacity.
- Potential statements and studies on race and racism, Christian nationalism, parental authority (relative to the state), artificial intelligence and social media.

- Proposals for triennial mission and ministry emphases and priorities and potential revisions of the related processes and even the structure and authority of the mission boards of the Synod.
- Proposals to study the role of women in the church, relative to aspects of work of the Office of the Holy Ministry and the order of creation.
- Emphasis on formation of pastors with “deep and broad” study of the Holy Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions in the Synod’s seminaries.
- Evaluation of the work of the Pastoral Formation Committee and various proposals for its adjustment.
- Evaluation of residential versus non-residential pastoral formation models and a host of proposals to emphasize residential, maintain the status quo or broaden non-residential options — a discussion that may be impacted by different estimates of “pastoral supply and demand.”
- Reaction to development and promotion of pastoral formation routes not authorized by the Synod.
- Various proposals for adjustment to the Specific Ministry Pastor program and other non-residential routes to pastoral ministry.
- Review of the Lutheran Identity and Mission Outcome Standards and the definition of “Lutheran identity,” as well as the process of prior approval for seminary and university theological faculty.
- Proposals to adjust the convention cycle to four years; to expand the role of commissioned ministers; to adjust the requirements for electoral circuits or, otherwise, the means of selecting delegates to convention; to adjust how elections are performed (including the possibility again of restoring the presidential election to the convention) and how terms may be limited; and to review various aspects, or the totality of, the performance of the Synod after the 2010 restructuring.

- Proposals to review the Synod’s dispute resolution and expulsion processes, to understand how the “online news cycle” has impacted ecclesiastical supervision, to guide responses to allegations of abuse, and to provide more insight into the removal or resignation of called workers from the roster.
- A single overture was submitted by the LCMS Board of Directors and several entities and agencies to revise Bylaws and make obsolete a 1981 resolution dealing with requirements for incorporated Synod agencies, allowing new types of corporations for purposes like property development and redevelopment supportive of “ministry footprint.”

Keep in mind, those are just the “popular” items, and every individual overture has the potential to be interesting — I know I’ve found a few, in categorizing and editing them, that I want to spend a great deal of time on when I can — and to change the life of the Synod together, we hope for the better. When the book comes out, I’d encourage you, for the life of our Synod, to have a look, to study where study is called for, to ask questions and to give input. We are wiser and stronger together when we all engage in the conversation while the “cement is yet wet.”

Publication and review

Please keep an eye out for the *Convention Workbook* and *Biographical Synopses and Statements of Nominees*, to be available online and shipped to delegates by April 25, but often available online (we hope!) weeks before. Talk to your congregation, ordained and commissioned ministers, and circuit delegates about what’s “in the convention business” and encourage them to “have their say” with the appropriate floor committee(s) by submitting written communication through my office by May 16 (Bylaw 3.1.8 [c]). *The Rev. Dr. John W. Sias* (lcmssecretary@lcms.org) serves as secretary of *The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*.
To See Convention Workbook:
www.lcms.org/convention/national

How to Create a Family Prayer Routine

April 23, 2026

When my wife and I were expecting our first child, we knew that we wanted a daily routine with our family that included a time of prayer. We understood our responsibility God was entrusting with us. This child who was to be born was the Lord's; as parents we were stewards of him. Therefore, we knew that we needed to raise him to know Jesus and to model faith to him as he developed faith practices that would undergird and support the faith God gives in Baptism.

During this time, a church worker gave a challenge to pray the Lord's Prayer with your family. It seems simple, but this idea really sparked our family's prayer life. We decided that we would pray the Lord's Prayer every night as a family. It became part of our routine.

Establishing a Simple Nightly Routine

So after bath time, after the jammies were on, and as we lay our son in his crib, we swaddled him, and then we spoke the Lord's Prayer over him. Very quickly we added two other elements to our routine: a simple prayer and a blessing. The prayer was the second verse of the hymn "Now the Light Has Gone Away" (*LSB* 887) which reads,

"Jesus, savior, wash away
all that has been wrong today;
help me every day to be
good and gentle, more like thee."

And the blessing was a simple one that reminded him of his baptismal identity, God's love, and my love. While tracing a cross on my son's forehead I would say, "You are God's child. Jesus loves you, and I love you." It wasn't complicated, it wasn't even that creative. But it was simple, repeatable, and meaningful.

When Prayer Feels Awkward at First

Even though it was simple, and even though I was a trained church worker, when we started doing this as we brought our son home from the hospital, it felt strange. It was a little uncomfortable. But soon it became second nature to us. And as our son grew up praying with his family every evening, it has never been uncomfortable for him. In fact, if we didn't pray, *that* would be strange for him.

Teaching Children to Pray

As our son became verbal, we taught him the prayers, having him repeat a line at a time until he knew them by heart. When our other son was born, we included him in our family prayers. Once these prayers were known, we added a few simple prayer prompts—God, thank you for ... and God, please help ... We would talk through with them what they were thankful for and who or what they wanted to ask God's help for. And then we would have them repeat their prayers after we said them—Dear God (Dear God), thank you for (thank you for) pizza (pizza). For several years it felt like every time we had pizza, we were thanking God for it. My wife and I would also pray using these same prompts, modeling prayers and adding our own prayers to our time of family prayer. Eventually our boys didn't need us to repeat their prayers but could pray boldly and confidently on their own.

How the Practice Grows and Adapts

We still pray together as a family, and our pattern of prayer remains similar. While we have changed the "Jesus, Savior" prayer to Luther's



Evening prayer, and we have fewer prayers giving thanks for pizza and more prayers asking God to be with family or friends in need, we do still pray every night.

As a parent, when one of our schedules didn't allow us to be home for prayer time, we would still have our family prayers. When we both were gone and had a sitter, we instructed them on this routine just as we did on the other things we wanted them to do. And because our boys knew this routine, even at a young age, they could lead their sitter through prayer time. Now when one of our boys has an activity that causes them not be home, when we do family prayers, they pray on their own using the pattern that they have learned.

Keeping It Simple and Sustainable

There is more than one model for family prayer, but it is important to keep it simple and repeatable. There are other prayer prompts and other great prayers to use as a family, like Luther's morning and evening prayer or simple orders of prayer in *Lutheran Service Book* starting on page 294. You can also download free resources like the Daily Devotions Guide for Families and Family Devotions Calendar, available through the LCMS.

Just as every family's approach to prayer looks different, the right time to pray together will differ from family to family. What's important is to choose a time that works for your family. It could be in the morning, at the table during a meal, or at night. It could even be in the car. Again, the goal is to make this a special time that you can do every day with your family. Start with a simple habit and pattern of prayer. And even if you only get to it a couple of times a week at the beginning, you are now a family that prays together. You are a family that values spiritual things in your home.

Establishing a Routine for Children of All Ages

And if you didn't start when your kids were young, or even if your kids are grown, you can still develop this practice. Guilt and regret should not stop us from starting this healthy spiritual practice. Older children might push back, but that should not keep us from doing good things with our family. If this is the case, you could consider starting with an apology. "I'm sorry that we haven't done this regularly as a family before now. I didn't lead the way that I should have. But God desires that we pray to Him, and this is something we are going to do together from now on. We are going to need everyone to help us develop this habit." And then move forward, knowing that you have the mercy and forgiveness of God won through the work of Christ, and His Holy Spirit to help you and your family grow in faith.

A Small Habit, A Lasting Gift

Family prayer will never be flawless, and it doesn't need to be. Through simple, repeated habits of prayer, God uses His Word to shape children who know they can turn to Him in every season of life. Even when our routines are imperfect or inconsistent, the Holy Spirit is at work—strengthening faith, anchoring hearts in God's promises, and blessing these small, faithful moments with lasting fruit.

Rev. Andy Becker serves as the director of family discipleship for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He served three years as a DCE before going to seminary. He served for 15 years as a parish pastor before joining the team at the Office of National Mission. He enjoys music and playing games of all kinds. Andy is married to Nikki and they have two teenage boys. Learn more about LCMS Family Ministry at lcms.org/family.

<https://blog.cph.org/teach/how-to-create-a-family-prayer-routine>

The Thankful Box

"Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!"

(2 Corinthians 9:15)

Beginning this week, **you will notice a small box in the narthex labeled Thankfulness.**

This is a simple congregational practice of gratitude.

What Is It?

An opportunity to name and give thanks for the blessings God gives through this congregation.

What blessing has God given you through this church?

- A hymn that comforted you
- A baptism or confirmation
- A sermon that strengthened your faith
- A visit to the sick, shut-in, or other person
- A faithful teacher whether formally or informally
- A child you see or hear learning the Catechism
- An act of quiet service by a member

Use a slip a paper and you may submit it anonymously.

Why Are We Doing This?

Stewardship begins not with what we give, but with what God has already given.

When we learn to notice His gifts, gratitude grows.

When gratitude grows, joyful generosity follows.

This is not a suggestion box.

It is not a complaint box.

It is an act of thanksgiving to God.

From the months of April-June, selected thanksgivings will be shared (anonymously) in the bulletin, newsletter or included in our prayers.

May this small practice help us recognize Christ's faithful work among us and increase our joy in serving Him together.

The Stewardship Board

I am Thankful for everything my parents do for me.

Thank you, Pastor, for being our shepherd.

Confirmations and baptisms. They bring tears to my eyes every time. Through faith we believe God's promises.

Every card I receive form a church member during a difficult time.

Faithful Pastors who stay true to the Gospel's message. Especially Pastor Gauthier

I am Thankful for Mr. Scheiwe playing the organ Maundy Thursday, Easter and the funeral. Dennis Wieck played the trumpet on Easter!

I want to thank God for you Pastor and Amy listening to the Holy Spirit and accepting our call. You both are blessings!

Thankful to watch adult children of the congregation sing the verses of memorized hymns from grade school while in line for communion.



Chapel Art the new artwork is up and in the chapel! Thank you to those who donated to purchase the frame and those who helped to get it hung! Molly



Valley Lutheran High School



K-4 STEM DAY

Saturday, May 16

RSVPs are appreciated!

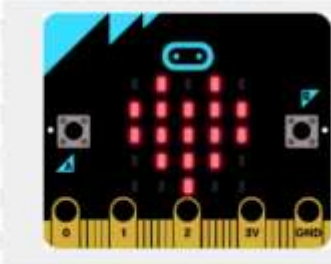
Go to www.vlhs.com/STEMevent or scan this code



Stop by anytime from 3:00pm to 4:30pm to explore all sorts of STEM related activities!



Fun with Physical Computing Devices



Wednesday
May 27th
6:00 - 7:30
VLHS Computer Lab

- For students in grades 5-8
- Attendees explore microprocessing devices and programming in the Scratch coding environment
- Devices are theirs to keep!
- No cost for this workshop

RSVP to Kevin Streeter at kstreeter@vlhs.com limited to 10 students!

The Oktoberfest Meeting on the 14th has been canceled due to it being Ascension. We will reschedule and let everyone know once we do.



VBS Registration Form

Please indicate the days your child/children will attend.

Mon _____ Tues _____ Wed _____ Thurs _____ Fri _____
Friday's potluck _____ How many attending _____

Child's name _____
Child's age _____ Birthdate _____
Child's grade completed _____

Parent/Guardian's name _____
Address _____
Phone number _____

Emergency contact name _____
Phone number _____

Allergies/important medical information:
None _____ Peanut _____ Egg _____ Insect bites/sting _____
Other _____



PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE BY MAY 17TH!

MAY 2026 NEWSLETTER

ST. John Amelith
office@amelith.org
989-686-0176



Chapel Day!

DATES TO REMEMBER

- May 5th - No School
- May 6th - VLHS visits for Chapel
- May 10th - Mother's Day
- May 19th - Bookmobile visits
- May 21st - Our last UFCU visit
- May 25th - Memorial Day No School
- May 28th - School Picnic & Field Day Afternoon
- May 29th - Half Day of School
Preschool Last Day Celebration
- June 5th - Half Day of School
K-3 Last Day Celebration

MESSAGE FROM MRS. MOLLY

Dear Students and Families,
I am so proud of you, you all worked so hard this year! The transformation and growth of your kiddos has been such a blessing to watch. I saw shy kids transform into the first one to greet me in the morning, kids start to love to come to school and some mature and take on great leadership roles with the younger kids. You as parents play such an important role and the decision to have them learn about Jesus is the most important of all. Every single student has touched my heart and taught me something in their own special way this year. Thank you for putting your faith in us and allowing us the opportunity to teach your precious children.



Molly

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- ✓ Rain boots (aka Muddy boots) and a sweatshirt are still needed while we wait for the temps to rise and the April rain to stop.
- ✓ Watch for all of the end of year celebration info to be coming home and also in Fastdirect
- ✓ Our policy states that you can wear shorts. Please don't wear them unless the temp for the day is going to be above 50 degrees.



The March Madness Winner:

Don't Trust Fish

Everyone said that it was a hard decision and there were a couple that stayed in the running for quite a while.



Faithful Today, Ready for Tomorrow.

St. John Amelith Church and School has been given a wonderful opportunity! Through an anonymous local donor, we have the opportunity of raising up to \$120,000 through a matching grant to advance Christian faith through Christian education. The church and school together will work to raise \$60,00 and this donor will match it for a total of \$120,000. The \$120,000 will be broken into 2 different categories \$70,000 will go to the Church to eliminate the Church Extension Fund loan and \$50,000 will go to the school to be used for tuition to promote teaching Christ and Lutheran formation. If any funds are raised over our \$60,000 mark, they will be used to pay down our internal debt. We have a great opportunity to go into our 175th year debt free!

In the next couple weeks, you will see special offering envelopes for the “Faithful Today, Ready for Tomorrow” grant in your mailbox for the purpose of reaching our portion of the grant.

There will also be additional fundraising opportunities to come...stay tuned.

Thank you for your support!
Vinny Revord, Fund Development

**"One generation shall commend your works to another,
and shall declare your mighty acts." Psalm 145:4**



May 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
3 May Altar Guild Servers	4 Quilters	5 Council Members	6 The Unsung Hero	7 Lawn Mowing Team	8 Funeral Luncheon Volunteers	9 VBS Volunteers
10 SJA Moms	11 Oktoberfest	12 LWML	13 Didache Class	14 Pastor	15 Treasurer Finance Team	16 Outreach
17 Sunday School Teachers	18 School Janitors	19 Elders	20 Endowment Fund Committee	21 Trustees	22 SJA Teachers	23 Cemetery Crew
24 Church Mice	25 Board of Ed	26 Stewardship Committee	27 Women's Bible Study Group	28 SJA Students	29 Preschool	30 SJA Parents
31 Youth Group						

The Unsung Hero is new this month.

It doesn't represent a position or a particular person here at Amelith but is someone that just does what needs to be done. It could be someone who is or isn't on a committee, someone who does whatever is asked or takes it upon themselves to just do it, and probably someone who prefers not to have the recognition. The unsung heroes at Amelith are aplenty, and regardless of recognition, they need our prayers all the same.