



october



# The Caller

2024

## Saint John Lutheran Church



Pastor Jon Benson

Interim Pastor -  
Pastor Sharon  
Worthington

*Followers of  
Christ  
who seek to  
HEAR  
the Word,  
LIVE  
the Word  
and  
SHARE  
the Word.*

Saturday - 5:30pm

Sunday - 8:30 am  
& 11:00am

Sunday school -  
9:45am

### “Called To Be Stewards”

“It’s the ECONOMY #@&\*!!!” Perhaps you remember this (edited) slogan, a line from a presidential campaign long past. At the time, the line gained a considerable amount of traction; and still, even though that particular election is long past, the issue seems to be a perennial one. The “economy” continues to play a key role in most presidential campaigns, primarily because – for most people – it is so pertinent to our every-day lives.

Whether we know it or not, that word, “economy,” is also quite pertinent to our faith and occurs a number of times in the Greek New Testament. The word, “ECONOMY,” originates from a Greek word – actually two words joined together: “oikos,” which means “house” (yes, as in Oikos yogurt, “House yogurt”!!!) and “nomia,” which means “management”. Thus, “oikonomia” is the plan for managing one’s house and the “oikonomos” (usually a servant who does not own the house) is the person entrusted to oversee and direct the plan set forth by the one who does own the house.

If you have not figured out by now why that word, “economy,” is so pertinent to our faith, the translation of that word will make it all clear. You see, “oikonomia” is normally translated as “STEWARDSHIP” (managing things that ultimately belong to God) and “oikonomos” is the “STEWARD,” the one called to do the managing, namely, you and I. From the perspective of our faith, everything we have – our possessions (treasures), our time, our talents, even our very lives – ultimately belong to God, which makes us “STEWARDS” (oikonomoi), managing gifts that have been entrusted to us by God, using those gifts in accordance with God’s plan (oikonomia) as we live out our faith. As one person quite perceptively defined “stewardship”: **It’s what we do after baptism!** The slogan is true: **It truly IS the ECONOMY!!!!** Stewardship is pertinent to our every-day lives.

“Called To Be Stewards” is the theme of our 2024 Fall Stewardship campaign at Saint John. For three subsequent weekends, we will hear sermons based on the following passages from the New Testament that pertain to stewardship:

- October 5-6 1 Corinthians 4:1-5

“Stewards of the Mysteries of God” (Hear the Word)

- October 12-13 Luke 12:35-44

“Who then is the Faithful and Wise Steward?” (Live the Word)

- October 19-20 1 Peter 4:7-11

“Good Stewards of God’s Varied Grace” (Share the Word)

As in the past, members of the congregation will receive in the mail an “Estimate of Giving” card and asked, as stewards, to prayerfully consider how much to set aside for the ongoing ministry at Saint John in 2025. **October 19-20 is the weekend planned for the ingathering of these “Estimate of Giving” cards.** If you are not available to worship that weekend, you may mail your pledge or drop it by the office. As a fellow steward in God’s Kingdom, I want to thank you for all the ways that you steward the gifts that God has entrusted to you. Together, our efforts make a big difference in our community and beyond.

Pastor Jon



Class on Sundays at 9:45am



Class on Wednesdays at 6:30pm



Meet on Wednesdays at 6:30pm

**NEW FACEBOOK PAGE** - for Saint John Youth & Family: Saint John Lutheran Youth & Parent/Guardian. You can find the link to this page on our website under the tab "Youth News."



**Join us October 12 or 13 at any service with your 3yr old or 3rd grader!**

Each year the 3 year olds and 3rd graders receive a Bible as a gift from the church, thus fulfilling one of the baptismal promises. Parents are invited to present the Bible to their child during the worship service.



**SJ - 101 (New Member Orientation)**

Classes will be on Sundays, October 6, 13, & 20 at 9:45am (between services).

New Members will be received on October 27 and there will be a welcoming reception between services.

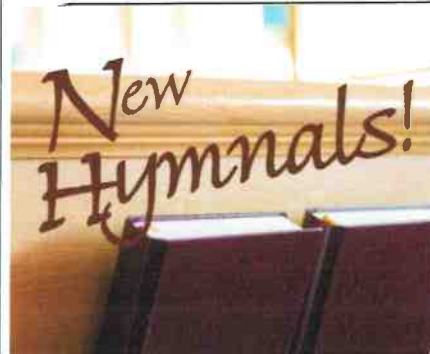


**FUNERAL LUNCHES**

*Funeral Meals*

We will look at catering the lunches, but possibly have homemade desserts. So we need someone to coordinate (or co-coordinate) all the plans and make phone

calls and work with the family. If you are interested in helping with this ministry of Saint John, please call or email the office.



We have a new hymnal in the pews; 'All Creation Sings.'

Songs from this hymnal will be in the bulletin prefaced by the letters ACS with the hymn # following.

**SAINT JOHN FOUNDATION GRANTS**

Saint John Foundation grant applications will be accepted from October 1 through December 1. An application form is available outside the office door; or if you would like one sent to you, email or call the church office.

**BETHANY LUTHERAN HOME**

Members from all sponsoring churches are invited to join us on October 5th from 9 AM to 3 PM for our Fall Volunteer Day. Our goal is to beautify the landscape in front of Bethany Lutheran Home and Bethany Heights! Lunch will be provided.







“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.” ~ Isaiah 40. This is why we make quilts. We make them from the repurposed scraps of fabric that people give us! But quilts are made up of more than just small scraps of material. Quilt makers place their heart and soul into creating comfort for those who in need.

All are welcome to come and lend a hand! When we make quilts, we do good work on many levels. It brings us together in service and fellowship, it creates a tangible message of love and caring to strangers in a far off land, delivering warmth and comfort. *“And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, ‘Here I am; send me.’”* Isaiah 6:8

Come as you are able; experience is definitely not required. The Saint John Quilting Group family wishes to welcome you! If you are thinking about it, please know we will make you feel very much at home as we tie quilts for Lutheran World Relief! In this ministry of serving, we also set aside time to enjoy fellowship with one another with devotions and snacks!

Next meeting is Wednesday, October 16 2024! You’re most welcome to join us. Please bring a HALLOWEEN CANDY to share. We will meet between 9:00 A.M. and Noon at St. John, in the Faith and Life Center. See you then! For more information, please call Sue Pagan at 712-325-0257.



Good Times Group

Please join us for a “Good Time” Friday, October 11th at the home of Bob Kossow, 119 Sunnyridge at 5:00 PM. It’s a 4-B event! Burgers, brats, beans and beverages will be provided. A-I please bring a side dish. M-Z please bring a dessert. Please respond to hostesses, Keith and Peggy Tye and Bob Kossow by Monday, October 7th.

We hope to see you there!



Players Group

In October we are going to be hosted by Becky Gue and Becky Taylor at Saint John Faith & Life Center. There will be a meal of Pulled Pork and Pulled Chicken BBQ on Friday, October 4 at 5:00pm. Please call them if you are interested in attending.



**October 5 & 6**

Patricia Minchin  
Elaine von Gillern  
Carol Wood  
Andrea Hill

**October 12 & 13**

Cookie Johnson  
Becky Taylor  
Kim Pace  
Diane Hartman

**October 19 & 20**

Mary Lou Burke  
Norma Jones  
Joyce Mlynarik  
Alan Meilike

**October 26 - 27**

Marlys Lien  
Debbie Plugge  
Carolyn Clark  
Sandy Cerveny



\* Esther Group—October 8 at 9:30am

\* Mary Group—October 10 at 9:00am



MEN'S GROUP

The Men’s Club meets every 3rd Thursday of the month at 11:30am at The Dock Bar & Grill, 401 Veteran’s Memorial Highway. Men of all ages are welcome to join us for a good lunch and great conversation.

Next lunch is October 17.



We are requesting donations of canned corn.



## Why Volunteering Matters

Bethany Lutheran Health Services (BLHS) offers many opportunities for volunteerism. From landscaping and grounds work to assisting with activities and one-on-ones with residents and tenants, serving as an auxiliary member, or joining a board overseeing BLHS operations or its Foundation, or serving as a Bethany delegate at your church, there is something for everyone.

Nancy Ruffcorn, a longstanding volunteer, shared that volunteering "is really a mindset of giving back to your community." She began volunteering at Bethany because her church, St. Timothy in Council Bluffs, was already committed to supporting BLHS as a sponsoring church. Nancy's personal connection came from her mother, who stayed in assisted living for years. This experience helped her understand the challenges of aging and the needs of residents firsthand. Nancy recommended starting in activities: "The best place to begin volunteering is through activities!" She fondly recalled a fellow volunteer who would come in just to refill bird feeders.

Gary Schultz has volunteered as the Chapel Assistant for over 30 years. He sets up and records services, allowing residents unable to leave their rooms to still participate in church. Every Sunday, he transports residents to and from the chapel and assists during services. "It's amazing how many people I've met through volunteering at Bethany... I think I've met someone from every room at Bethany Lutheran Home."

The BLHS Board and Foundation are also seeking new members beginning January 1, 2025. Both boards have distinct responsibilities but work together to oversee Bethany's operations and provide financial support. Other than being a member of a sponsoring congregation, prior board experience isn't required—just passion and a commitment to being actively involved on the board. John Swalwell, who recently joined the BLHS Board, said, "Serving on the board has been an enlightening experience. I've gained immense respect for what it takes to operate BLHS. I've met amazing people who've dedicated their careers to caring for our elders, and I believe BLHS is unique in offering not-for-profit, faith-based services to our community."

The BLHS Auxiliary plays an essential role in supporting residents year-round. Jan Stone, Auxiliary President, explained, "Many women in our sponsoring churches are automatically involved with Bethany, even if they aren't aware of it. Some help by baking pies or assisting with bingo, though not all attend meetings. It's always challenging to find volunteers willing to serve as officers, but we are always seeking more help with the auxiliary. We'd love to see more women step up and get involved." To learn more about your church's involvement with Bethany, reach out to your pastor.

Bethany delegates are asked to attend the annual meeting held in early January to learn about Bethany and its operations. They also vote on leaders for the BLHS board of directors. Being a delegate is a good way to learn about this important ministry without a major investment of time.

Angel Watts, Activities Director at Bethany Lutheran Home, and Michael Thomas, Activities Coordinator at Bethany Heights, agree: "Without our volunteers, many of our events and programs wouldn't be possible." "Our residents love hearing our volunteers' stories," Angel said. "For many of them, they can't do much on their own, so they really benefit from one-on-one time." Michael added, "We love having volunteer groups, especially school or youth groups. We mark it on the calendar for our tenants. It's great seeing kids ask questions and learn about the residents' history." Angel also noted, "Since COVID, it's been difficult to get residents out of their rooms—they tend to isolate. Volunteers provide the engagement and encouragement they need, even if it's just for a walk."

Chandra Gustafson the BLHS Administrator said "Our volunteers, along with our board and foundation members, make a real difference here at BLHS. Their time and effort give our residents a reason to smile, and it helps us carry out our mission of compassionate care. Whether it's helping with daily activities, sharing a conversation, or guiding our organization, they lift everyone's spirits. At the end of the day, they're all helping us create the caring community we strive to be."

If interested in joining a board or the Auxiliary board, please reach out to your pastor and let them know what you're interested in volunteering for. All three volunteer areas are looking for energized and active members!

If you're interested in volunteering, reach out to Angel Watts (watts@blhs.care or call 712-328-9500). We have a volunteer application where you can indicate areas you'd like to help. Volunteers assisting with activities or one-on-ones will receive brief training and a background check, while those helping with service projects just need to coordinate with Angel and Michael.



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

<p>6 - Communion - 8:30am Worship 9:45am SI-101 (New Members) 9:45am Part 3 "How well do you know your Council Members" 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship</p>	7	8	9	10	11	12
<p>13 3yr &amp; 3rd grade Bibles 8:30am Worship 9:45am SI-101 (New Members) 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship</p>	14	15	16	17	18	19 - Communion - Stewardship Weekend 5:30pm Worship
<p>20 - Communion - Stewardship Weekend 8:30am Worship 9:45am SI-101 (New Members) 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship</p>	21	22	23	24	25	26
<p>27 8:30am Worship 9:45am New Member Reception 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship</p>	28	29	30	31		
	1	2	3	4	5	
	6	7	8	9	10	
	11	12	13	14	15	
	16	17	18	19	20	
	21	22	23	24	25	
	26	27	28	29	30	
	31					



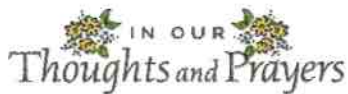
Saint John Lutheran Church  
**Birthdays**

**October 2024**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>
		<b>1</b> Hayley Hartman John Myre Michael Sletsema Krista Upton	<b>2</b> Sarah Kuenning	<b>3</b> Diane Ashbaugh	<b>4</b> Barbara Johnsen Brynn Nepple Isaac Petersen	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Michael Hoel Becky Nickerson Jaxon Roberts Reegan Swenson Louis Urtaub	<b>8</b> Patricia Minchin	<b>9</b> Larry Gann Carol Wood	<b>10</b> Gary Woods	<b>11</b> Curtis Fischer Todd Michael	<b>12</b> Connor Gann
<b>13</b> Kim Bryan Kathryn Graham Alayna Murphy Carl Rogers	<b>14</b> Norma Gahn Paul Geer Jennifer Miller Marie Neal Maverick Vorce	<b>15</b> Carter Conahan Lana Cruz Cody Fischer Lois Haines Elizabeth Roane Kathe Welhs	<b>16</b> Mack Bertelsen Mark Hansen	<b>17</b> Bodie Traeger	<b>18</b> Alexandria Crum Derrick Williams	<b>19</b> Conner Hansen Hayden Jensen Brian Solon Scott Steppuhn Jack Stogdill
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Chris Brandt	<b>22</b> Blakeley-Jo Hassay Carolyn Rasmuson-Clark	<b>23</b> Mark Meyer Dustin Townsend	<b>24</b> Shelly Graham	<b>25</b> Taylor Elam Sarah Ingwersen Michele Johnson	<b>26</b> Lydia Erickson Laura Hansen Allison Johnson Carolyn Nelson Lydia Weltz
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Deb Ingwersen Allison Nelson	<b>29</b> Sandra Bronson Kristine Docken Dale Vorce	<b>30</b> Edie Goodwin Cheryl Heiningger	<b>31</b> Lanelle Rogers		



Pastor Jon and Pastor Sharon -  
 Thank you for your dedicated Pastoral  
 care of the Saint John Family.  
 May God refresh you, bless you,  
 and return to you all the joy he gives  
 through you.



*Sympathy to the families of...*

- ~ Nancy Robinson  
aunt of Janet Perrone
- ~ Andy Gohlinghorst  
cousin-in-law to Giles Whitney
- ~ Marty Gerdwagen  
brother-in-law to Barb Paulson
- ~ Nancy Andersen



Thanks for all the support you gave to our  
 "Takin' It To The Streets" Quilt and Craft  
 Fundraiser. We appreciate everyone who  
 donated a quilt or a craft or baked goods. Our  
 tables were filled with such variety!  
 A huge thanks to all of you who purchased  
 items or gave a free will donation. Your  
 generous support will help feed the hungry and  
 share God's Word in our community.



**THE BEST OF IRELAND**  
**11 Days: July 21 - 31, 2025**

Visiting Waterford, Killarney, Cliffs of Moher,  
 Galway, Connemara, Sligo, and Dublin.

Registrations are being taken for this next  
 NAWAS trip. If you are planning on going on  
 this wonderful adventure, call or stop by the  
 office or talk to Pastor Jon for more information  
 and a registration form.

**Saint John Lutheran Church Staff**

- Senior Pastor: Rev. E. Jon Benson (JonBenson@SaintJohnELCA.org)
- Interim Pastor: Rev. Sharon Worthington (interimpastorsjlc@gmail.com)
- Parish Ministry Coordinator: Patricia S. Minchin
- Sound Booth volunteers: Mack Bertelsen, Paul Schmidt
- Chancel Choir Director: Elmer Ellefson
- Bell Choir Director: Laura Nelson
- Pianist / Organist: Joan Ebersold
- Foundation Board President: Ross Jensen (402-681-1383)
- Nursery Attendant: Susan Stellish
- Stephen Minister Leaders: Alan Meilike (328-1671) Debbie Plugge (256-5310) Pastor Jon Benson (323-7173)
- Office Manager: Kim Malskeit (712-323-7173) Info@SaintJohnELCA.org
- Custodian: Alicia Pigsley

**Church 712-323-7173**

**Email: Info@SaintJohnELCA.org ~ Website: www.SaintJohnELCA.org**

**Facebook: www.facebook.com/SaintJohnCouncilBluffs**

# Saint John Lutheran Church

633 Willow Avenue  
Council Bluffs, IA 51501-4242

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Please email us  
([info@saintjohnelca.org](mailto:info@saintjohnelca.org))  
if you no longer wish to  
receive this newsletter.  
Thank you.



**SJ-101 / New Member Classes**  
October 6, 13, and 20 at 9:45am.  
New member reception October 27

**3 year / 3rd grade Bibles**  
October 12 and 13 (any service)

**Stewardship Weekend**  
October 19  
and 20