

JANUARY

The Caller

2025

Saint John Lutheran Church



Pastor Luke Kuenzli



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



Please join us at any service on the weekend of January 11 & 12 for

Pr. Luke's Installation.

*Celebrate with us at brunch served by 'The Pancake Man' from 9:00am - 12:30pm



ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, January 26

between services at 9:45am



Sundays at 9:45am

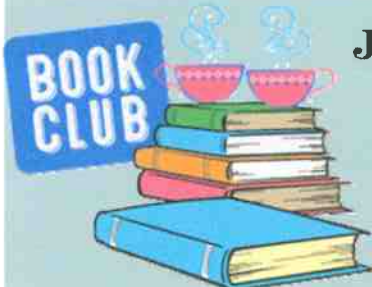
Pre-K - 5th grade

Kids Singing -

Jan. 26 at 8:30



Class on Wednesdays at 6:30pm



Join us for a new group start-up: Book Club!

Interested in joining a book club featuring

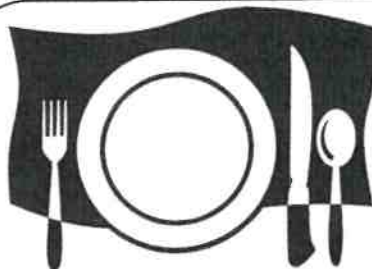
both fiction and non-fiction works? **The St John Book Club will be launched in January! Please join us on Sunday, Jan. 19 at 6:00pm OR on Thursday, Jan. 23 at 9:15am.** The meeting should last approximately one hour.

Our first book review will be *Bertie's Place* authored by our own member, Edie Goodwin. She plans to join us to assist with our discussion. Marlys Lien will be leading the discussion group. Some discussion questions will be available to contemplate as the book is read. You will find these (closer to the date) on the bulletin table.

If you do not already have a copy of this book, it can be purchased from Edie for \$20.00 or from Barnes & Noble, Amazon, or Westbow Press. There are also a few available copies of the book within our congregation.

If you are interested in participating, please watch the bulletin announcements for date & time. You can contact the church office, Kristy Harm, Beth Townsend, Susan Hartman, Mackenzie Frush or Marlys Lien to obtain additional details.

At the initial meeting, we will ask for suggestions on books and meeting times to ensure that all who are interested can participate. Should you not be able to attend the first meeting, but are interested in future meetings, please let us know. We look forward to a fun time!

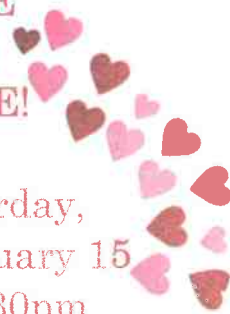


PRIME RIB

Dinner

**SAVE
THE
DATE!**

**Saturday,
February 15
at 6:30pm**



Inclement weather policy:

When schools close for the day, all youth activities scheduled at Saint John will be cancelled.

* The Office may also be closed, please call ahead.



Exactly two months before his assassination, Martin Luther King Jr. preached his final sermon at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. On February 4, 1968, the civil-rights icon spoke about how he wanted to be remembered at his funeral. He preferred that people recall not his education or achievements but that he “tried to give his life serving others” and “tried to love somebody.”

Adapting a 1952 homily by J. Wallace Hamilton, King decried the “drum major instinct — a desire to be out front, a desire to lead the parade.” Humans often want to be great and first, as evidenced by the disciples James and John requesting prime seats in paradise. But King urged listeners to focus on the “reordered priorities” of Jesus, who wants us to “be first in love.”

As Jesus showed, “everybody can serve,” King said. Your background or status doesn’t matter, as long as you have “a heart full of grace” and “a soul generated by love.”



“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 are 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!

Save the date! Next meeting is Wednesday, January 15, 2025! You're most welcome to join us. 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.



* RE-SCHEDULED FROM DECEMBER * Please join us for a ‘Good Time’ at our annual gathering here at Saint John on **Friday, January 3 at 6:30pm.** A-H please bring an appetizer. J-Z please bring a dessert. Everyone can bring their favorite beverage. Contact Becky Henkel to RSVP. We hope to see you there!



The Players will not meet in January.
Be ready to get together again at the Prime Rib Dinner in February!



<u>January 4 & 5</u>	<u>January 11 & 12</u>	<u>January 18 & 19</u>	<u>January 25 & 26</u>
Cookie Johnson	Mary Lou Burke	Marlys Lien	Patricia Minchin
Becky Taylor	Norma Jones	Debbie Plugge	Elaine von Gillern
Kim Pace	Joyce Mlynarik	Carolyn Clark	Carol Wood
Diane Hartman	Alan Meilike	Sandy Cerveney	Andrea Hill

Altar Guild Meeting : Monday, January 27 at 9:30am



* Esther Group—January 14 at 9:30am
* Mary Group—January 9 at 9:00am



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 January 16.



We are requesting donations of canned dinners, like spaghettiOs or ravioli.



The new year brings new beginnings. At LSI, we walk alongside Iowans for all sorts of beginnings. We walk alongside parents-to-be as they prepare for the birth of their child. We welcome immigrants and refugees as they begin their new lives in Iowa. We train parents looking to adopt a child and create a new beginning for their family. This January, we offer Thomas's story of his new beginning.

In 1996, Congolese civil war broke out in the present-day countries of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Republic of the Congo, forcing then two-year-old Thomas Mbuthu into exile in a refugee camp in neighboring Zambia. After growing up in a refugee camp, now 27-year-old Thomas applied to come to the United States.

When Thomas landed at the Des Moines airport in an entirely foreign land in a state called Iowa, LSI caseworker Patrick Karemera greeted him. **“I said, ‘Welcome! This is your new home now! I am your brother. This is a new life. Feel free and feel safe,’”** shared Patrick, recounting his initial meeting with his client Thomas.

Thomas thanked him, explaining he had not expected to see someone like Patrick welcome him – someone who looked like himself and spoke his native languages of Lingala and Swahili. **“As a refugee, I wanted a better life. But I didn’t know where I was going. ‘What is going to happen to me?’”** wondered Thomas aloud. **“When Patrick came to me, I could see the future.”**

Patrick is from the same country as Thomas, coming to America just a few years prior. He works as a caseworker to welcome refugees to Iowa and helps them resettle, pursue their goals, and navigate the challenges of an entirely foreign place. **“I immigrated here, like Thomas. It’s rewarding to welcome somebody like me to come here to Iowa. This is my second home,”** said Patrick.

Patrick admires how courageous, open-minded, and curious Thomas is. He encourages his client to dream big and work hard to achieve his goals. **“Life is about helping each other,”** shared Patrick.



Kick-off Celebration: Sunday, January 12, 2025

We’ll start the year with a 50th Year Kick-off Celebration, beginning with a business meeting at 1:30PM, featuring key presentations by Chaplain, Board President, Administrator, Foundation President, and Auxiliary President. While everyone is welcome, board delegates and pastors are especially invited to attend the business meeting.

At 2:00PM, we’ll have entertainment, snacks, and an opportunity to celebrate. This will be a great opportunity to reflect on the journey of Bethany and look forward to its bright future. We hope everyone is able to participate in the celebration.

□ Location: Bethany Lutheran Home, Upper Dining Room

□ Time: 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Why Bethany: John Bonaventura’s answer is...

When facing the challenge of finding a place that balanced care, dignity, and affordability, John says a decision to come to Bethany brought him peace of mind.

As Bethany prepares to celebrate its 50th Anniversary, John reflects on what makes the community special. **“Fifty years says they’ve done the right thing. It’s a testament to their commitment to care and compassion. If you want a place that treats you like family, Bethany is the place to be.”** For John, Bethany isn’t just a facility—it’s a home filled with people who care and a community that supports them every step of the way.

JANUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	1  New Year's Day Office Closed	2  Welcome to Pastor Luke Kuenzli & family!	3 6:30pm Good Time Group	4 Communion 5:30pm Worship
5 Communion 8:30am Worship 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship	6	7 7:00pm Praise Team	8 9:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Confirmation Class 6:30pm Evening Bible Study 6:30pm High school Youth 7:30pm Chancel Choir	9 9:00am Mary Group	10	11  Pr. Luke's Installation 5:30pm Worship
12  Pr. Luke's Installation 8:30am Worship 9:00am -12:30pm Pancake Man 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship	13 6:45pm Seekers ChristCare	14 9:00am Esther Group 7:00pm Praise Team	15 9:00am Bible Study 9:00am Quilting Group 6:30pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Confirmation Class 6:30pm Evening Bible Study 6:30pm High school Youth 7:30pm Chancel Choir	16 11:30am Men's Club	17	18 Communion 5:30pm Worship
19 Communion 8:30am Worship 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship 6:00pm Book Club	20	21 7:00pm Praise Team	22 9:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Confirmation Class 6:30pm Evening Bible Study 6:30pm High school Youth 7:30pm Chancel Choir	23 9:15am Book Club	24	25 5:30pm Worship
26  8:30am Worship 9:45am -10:45am Annual Meeting 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship	27 6:45pm Seekers ChristCare	28 7:00pm Praise Team	29 9:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Confirmation Class 6:30pm Evening Bible Study 6:30pm High school Youth 7:30pm Chancel Choir	30	31	1 Communion 5:30pm Worship

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Katie Brougham	2	3 Bella DelSignore Keith Thompson	4
5 Ayden McIntosh Jackie Reinders Heath Schneider	6 Harold Waddell	7 Carol Denker	8 Ian Swenson	9	10 Hailey Hansen Nynette Wilcox	11 Gloria Hunt Kitty Richardson
12 August Frerck Don Nelson	13 Tim Gue Carolyn Hotchkiss Sara Schneider	14 Hannah Jensen Amasa Smith	15 Derek Archer Glen Campbell Mike Nebel Mark Preston	16 Ronald Mowery Micah Petersen	17 Will Sadr	18
19 Becky Taylor	20 Sue Pagan	21 Phyllis Blumhagen Mike Hahn Jared Harris Vicki McCallen Mandy Stogdill	22	23 Niki Roberts	24 Kara Applegate	25 Harper Campbell Mike Damgaard Luca DelSignore Kim Maiskeit Ronald Vredeveid Jill Wells
26 Mary Madison Joyce Mlynarik Thomas Stuart	27	28 Tim Clark	29 Shannon Moon	30	31 Nancy Chew	





*Celebrating
-WITH-
you*

80th Birthday

Mike Damgaard (Jan. 25)

92nd Birthday

Gloria Hunt (Jan. 11)

100th Birthday

Kitty Richardson (Jan. 11)

62nd Wedding Anniversary

Robert & Linda Hansen (Jan. 25)



Baptism



Laine Melvin Hirt was baptized on December 15.

Elwyn Grace Harm was baptized on December 15.

Card Shower for Kitty Richardson's 100th Birthday!

Please send your cards to Kitty at:
Midlands Living Center
2452 N. Broadway, #209, 51503



to the families of...



- ~ Helen Larsen
- ~ Beth Lucy
- ~ Wade Kalskett, brother of Mary Mauch
- ~ Al Danker, father of Brandy Danker
- ~ Janice Vrem, aunt of Barb Woods
- ~ Matt Larsen, cousin of Becky Frerck and Steve Urlaub

Saint John Lutheran Church Staff

- Senior Pastor: Rev. E. Jon Benson (JonBenson@saintjohnelca.org)
- Senior Pastor: Rev. Luke Kuenzli (revluke@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)
if you no longer wish to
receive this newsletter.
Thank you.



January

11 & 12 - Pastor Luke's Installation

* Pancake Man 9:00—12:30pm *

19 - Book Club at 6:00pm

23 - Book Club at 9:15am

26 - Annual Meeting 9:45am

Same material;
2 different dates to
choose from!

February

15 - Prime Rib Dinner 6:30pm