



The Informer

September 2026

St. John's Lutheran Church

Volume 70 Issue 9

From Pastor's Pen:

Dear Friends in Christ,

As I began preparing children's messages for the upcoming services, a question popped into my mind: What do we do for our young ones during the rest of the week? To be sure, we have Sunday school and the children's message on Sunday. We have mid-week school. But our enemy, the devil, and his servants are on the attack twenty-four hours a day / seven days a week / 365 days a year.

As I thought about this question, I remembered an article written by Rev. Jordan McKinley. The title of the article was *"The Most Neglected Part of the Small Catechism."* In this article Rev. McKinley notes that Luther followed the title of five of the Six Chief Parts as well as two other sections of the Small Catechism with the phrase *"As the head of the family should teach it..."* With these words, Martin Luther taught that instruction in the faith is a vital part of family life. Rev. McKinley writes, *"If the first time a young man sees the Small Catechism is at his congregation's confirmation class informational meeting or at the first session of said class, this part of the Small Catechism has already been neglected. In this example, the head of the household has abdicated his God-given vocation of the bishop of the home and abdicated it to the bishop of his parish."*

These thoughts line up with the inspired words of Moses: *"And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."* (Deuteronomy 6:6-9, ESV) Solomon also has something to say on this topic: *"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."* (Proverbs 22:6, ESV) These and many other verses encourage parents to make instruction in the Word a regular part of their everyday life.

Sadly, our culture has strongly encouraged us to leave the instruction of our children up to *"the professionals."* In recent years some educators have even come to see parents as barriers to learning instead of partners in the learning process. The result is that the culture encourages parents to abdicate their role as the primary educators of their own children.

All of this has made me feel incredibly guilty. In fact, this is one of those things that makes me want to ask God, “Why have You waited until I am in my 70’s and my kids are all grown to show this to me?” But then I realize that a better prayer would be, “O Lord, forgive me for being too lazy and blind to see what You have shown me all along.”

Pastor McKinley had some suggestions in his article to help parents avoid the mistakes I made as a father. He warns that these are not “magic bullets.” Nevertheless, the Apostle Paul reminds us that *“faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”* (Romans 10:17, ESV) So, when you follow these steps, you will bring the Holy Spirit to bear in your family.

Here are the steps he recommends:

1. Do devotions with your family — your whole family — every day. Set a time to do it. Stick with it. Shut off the TV. Don’t do anything else while you’re doing your devotions.
2. Use a set form with your devotions — a liturgy, if you will. Lutheran Service Book has some good options on pp. 295-298. Routine with kids is important. Heck, routine with adults is a good thing. When you can’t lug all your devotional books with you, if you have the liturgy with you in your mind, you don’t necessarily need a book. This is a good thing for parents on Sunday mornings, too, who can’t hold a hymnal while wrangling their children in the pews.
3. Sing a hymn. Don’t just skip it because you don’t have a pipe organ in your home. There are some options for music in CPH’s catalogue, but this isn’t necessary, either. My family sings a capella (without music), and it usually works pretty well. Nothing leads a human voice better than a human voice. I’d also suggest that you try to memorize hymns. Again, if you know hymns by heart, you don’t have to bring your hymnal with you when you travel!

Since the time Pastor McKinley wrote this article, many talented musicians have recorded the hymns in Lutheran Service Book and posted them on YouTube. Go to YouTube and enter LSB followed by the hymn number and title. This will usually bring up half a dozen or so versions of the hymn. Pick your favorite and sing along with it.

4. Read the Scriptures and talk about them. Right now, we use CPH’s Story Bible, which comes furnished with questions. This even helps kids with reading comprehension! Most importantly, though, faith comes by hearing (Romans 10) .
5. Pray the catechism. President Harrison recently translated Martin Luther’s “A Simple Way to Pray” and put it in a booklet, and this is a good place to go. With children as young as mine, praying the catechism right now means that we simply say the 10 Commandments, Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer. At the end, we also say Luther’s evening prayer. We do this every night, and the repetition has paid off. My kids know these primary texts.
6. Teach your kids to make the sign of the cross and fold their hands. Little hands are busy. If they learn to do these things, there will be less fidgeting and poking and hitting of siblings (well, that’s my hope) .

For further reading:

Pastor McKinley's original article was still available when I wrote this at the following link:

<https://steadfastlutherans.org/blog/2014/07/the-most-neglected-part-of-the-small-catechism/>

Other articles on the topic:

<https://steadfastlutherans.org/blog/2013/08/establishing-the-family-altar/>

<https://thefederalist.com/2017/11/10/inside-americas-largest-religious-revival-know-nothing/>

<https://amandamarkel.com/2010/08/22/children-in-church/>

<https://amandamarkel.com/2010/10/03/early-catechesis/>

Yours in Christ,

Rev. James T. Batchelor

SERVING THE LORD THIS MONTH:

Saturday Ushers: Greg Burke, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, and Larry Ripka

Sunday Ushers:

September 6th: Clinton Merritt

September 13th:

September 20th: Clinton Merritt

September 27th:

Communion Assistants:

Saturdays: Dennis Boarts

Sunday, September 6th: Ralph Grotelueschen & Glen McMillin

Sunday, September 20th: Jonathan Schmidt and Kevin McAnally

Altar Guild: Jill Schofield & Flo Moore

Acolytes: If anyone would like to voluntarily acolyte during the summer, it would be appreciated!

Altar Flowers:

Sunday, September 6th: Todd & Jeri Miller, in honor of their anniversary

Sunday, September 13th: Brian & Christine Engebrecht

Sunday, September 20th: In honor of Karen Schmidt's birthday

Sunday, September 27th: OPEN

Eternal Candles:

Sunday, September 6th: Todd & Jeri Miller, in honor of their anniversary

Sunday, September 13th: OPEN

Sunday, September 20th: In honor of Karen Schmidt's birthday

Sunday, September 27th: Gail Massey

BIRTHDAYS

9/1: Jen Belzer & Nolan Johnson

9/2: Paulette Anderson

9/3: Adam Lack

9/5: Larry Dodge & Jayden Fairweather

9/6: Matthew Dosch

9/7: Dean Bull, Hillary Ekin & Pam Fisher

9/8: Sheena Johnson

9/9: Brenda Hanerhoff

9/10: Nancy Cartwright

9/11: Cheryl MacDougall and Keith Schnabel

9/12: Lenora Busch & Thomas Weathers

9/13: Kaitlyn McMillin

9/14: Annie Churchill, Otto Hartweg, Owen Hawkins & Demetrius Williams

9/15: Alan Ahrens & Martha Merritt

9/21: Karen Schmidt

9/23: Parker Myers & Addison Rowe

9/25: Steven Lackey, Brian & Tom Hart

9/26: Noreen Hopkins

9/27: Tara Hawkins

9/30: Lori Hopkins & Glen McMillin



WEEKLY ATTENDANCE

<u>Date:</u>	<u>THIS YEAR</u>	<u>LAST YEAR</u>
7/26	110	240 (Pastor Umbarger's retirement)
8/2	132	117
8/9	117	116
8/16	132	147
8/23	106	111
Average monthly attendance of St. John's membership 2026: 26%		2025: 27%

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Nick, Rachel, John, & Eloise Kjera

Moved away and joined a church of the AFLC

LWML - Lutheran Women's Missionary League



!HELP !

Can you Tie a Knot or Cut Material ?

Thrivent Sponsored Service Project

Join Us

Thursday, September 17th at 1:00 pm

in the Janssen rooms to help make tied fleece blankets for those less fortunate. *Need not be a member of St. John's or LWML to help with this project. Invite your neighbors or friends.*

Questions? Contact LWML Officers: Diana Lackey 309-373-1862 or Judy Dugan 309-738-1943

Sponsored by Thrivent and LWML (Lutheran Women's Missionary League) at St. John's.



CHURCH NEWS

BOARD MEETINGS

Summer is flying by! Time to get back to routines; Board Meetings are on the calendar for Thursday, September 3rd at 6:30pm. Let's get some activities planned!

CONFIRMATION CLASSES



This year, the 5th and 6th graders will be taught by Clinton Merritt; his class meets on Sundays at 10:15am (during Sunday school).
The 7th grade Catechism students will meet on Saturdays at 3pm with Pastor Batchelor.

LADIES LUNCHEON

All ladies in the congregation are invited to lunch at the Deerfield Family Restaurant in Silvis on Thursday, September 17th at 11:30am. The more the merrier.

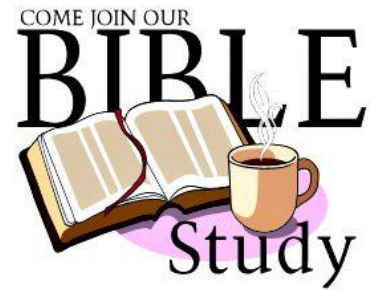
COMING SOON!

2027 is the 120th Anniversary of CID and the first 5 Circuits (ours being the Peoria-Rock Island Circuit). It is also the 70th year since the Rock Island Circuit branched off its own. The Rock Island Circuit office administrators are currently working on creating a beautiful wall calendar that will highlight the 12 churches in our Rock Island Circuit. This October, each of the 12 sister congregations will have a copy to view and begin taking orders. We are aiming for a delivery date of December 1. All additional proceeds will be given to Cristo Rey Lutheran Church.



WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Bible study will resume on Wednesday, September 9th at 10:00am; it will be led by Pastor Batchelor. His plan for the class will be to study the hymnal with the Bible, beginning in the book of Romans. All ladies are invited and encouraged to attend!



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Bible study will resume on Saturday, September 12th at 8:00am with Pastor Batchelor. He will be leading a study on 1 Corinthians. All men are invited and encouraged to attend!

GRIEF SHARING CLASS

A "Grief Sharing" class will start on Tuesday, October 6th from 6:30-7:30pm, and continue every Tuesday for 12 weeks. The class uses DVD presentations, a workbook, and will be facilitated by Judy Dugan, Parish Nurse, and Rod Hopkins, Book of Human Care Chairperson. The class is sponsored by the Board of Human Care. At this time, the class is open only to church members who have suffered a significant loss, such as a spouse, parent or child, in 2025 or 2026. If the class does not fill up it may open to all members at a later date. Besides the two facilitators there are 15 openings for the class. Look for additional information in upcoming bulletins and Informers.

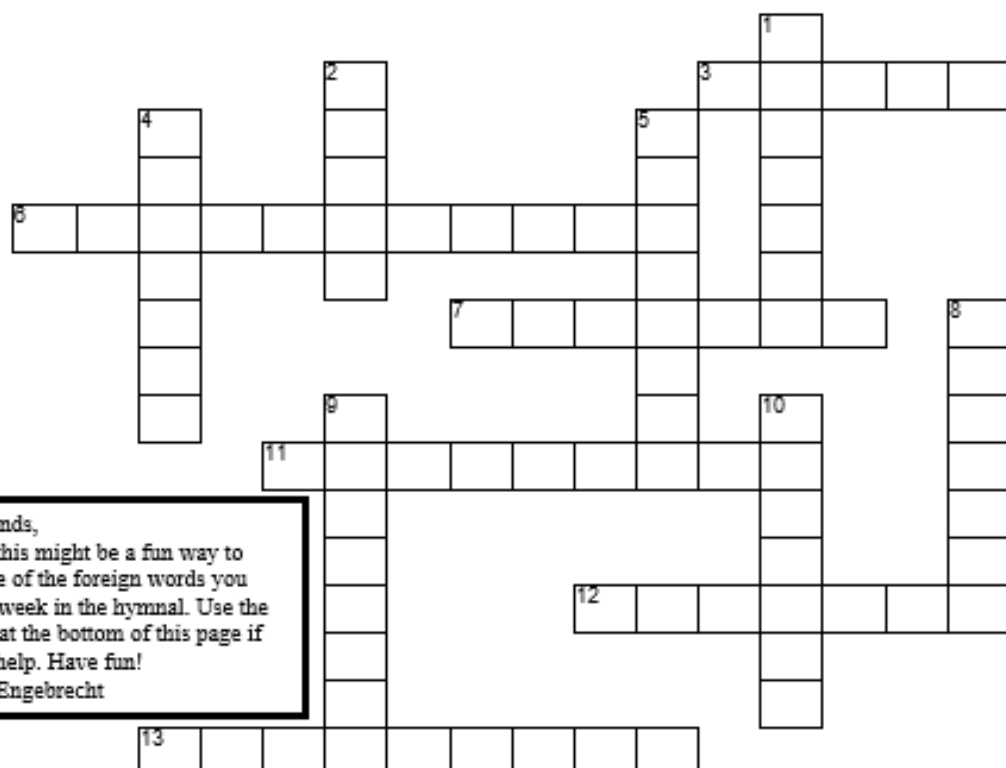
LCMS FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER- SEPTEMBER 2026

Jerry said to his friend Paul, "I just came from the doctor. I don't like conversations at the doctor's office. I get so tongue tied. I forget about what I wanted to ask the doctor. I'm trying to think about what certain words mean and before I know it, I'm being ushered out of the office without talking about everything I needed to discuss."

Paul replied, "I know what you are talking about. It's the same reason that I have not been getting my estate plan updated. When I get around legal people, I hear words like codicils, per stirpes and in vivo. I get so stressed about keeping it all straight that I put it all off for another year."

Legal terms and carefully crafted documents all have very important purposes in our estate plans. Sometimes, the difference between a contested estate and non-contested estate may come down to the proper use of these words. In truth, that may be stressful for you. That's why it is important to start talking about your goals, thinking and praying, before facing that stress head on. That is where working collaboratively with an LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can help. Your counselor is a fellow believer who wants to stand alongside you, to assist and encourage you in expressing your wishes clearly. Once that is achieved, the counselor will assist in sharing that with your attorney so you can be confident that all your desires are known. In the process, you can gain a new friend, sharing life in Jesus. To get started, contact Scott Radden @ 618-977-4049 or scott.radden@lfnd.org.

What Does This Mean? Liturgy Edition



Hello Friends,
I thought this might be a fun way to
learn some of the foreign words you
see every week in the hymnal. Use the
word box at the bottom of this page if
you need help. Have fun!
Christine Engebrecht

Across

3. From Latin for "I believe." Spoken after hearing the Word, it is a summary of the teachings of Holy Scripture in which the believer confesses their faith.
6. From Latin for "well speak" or "good word." A blessing at the end of the service first given to Aaron and the priests to bless the people of Israel. It is one final assurance of God's continued blessing, love, and favor, and peace as we go out into the world.
7. It comes from the Greek word for "letter." It is usually the second reading taken from a New Testament letter, Acts, or Revelation.
11. Latin for "peace of the Lord," a peace with God purchased by Christ's blood. A Pastor may lift the host and chalice to show where this peace is found.
12. It comes from the Latin word for entrance and is sung or spoken at the beginning of the service. It changes each week to match the theme of the day. The pastor traditionally approaches the altar during this time.
13. After hearing the Law and the Gospel in the sermon, this response acknowledges our sins and that salvation is in Jesus. This salvation will shortly be experienced in the Sacrament of the Altar. It also confesses and asks God to work positive changes in believers upon hearing the Word.

Down

1. From the Latin word for "step" because it was traditionally sung on the step of the altar. It is a response taken from the Bible that is sung/spoken in some churches between the Old Testament and Epistle readings. It changes weekly to reflect the theme of the day.
2. Means "Lord" in Greek and is paired with the words, "have mercy." It was prayed to Jesus during His life on earth by those pleading for His mercy and help. It is sung at the beginning of the service and is a prayer for help in all times of need.
4. Comes from the Latin word for "holy." It follows the Preface, where we begin preparing for the Sacrament of the Altar. Heaven and earth are joined together in singing praise to God in this song.
5. Latin for "Lamb of God." In it, we, like John the Baptist, confess Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
8. Latin for "the gathering of people together." It is a brief prayer spoken or chanted by the pastor that collects the people's prayers into one. It usually has five parts: addresses God, mentions a quality or past action of God, asks for specific help, states the desired good outcome, and concludes with praise to the Triune God.
9. Latin for "song," a liturgical song taken from the Bible.
10. From Greek for "public service." In the narrow sense, it is the order of the Divine Service. In the LCMS, liturgy is defined as "public service" through the preaching of the Word and administration of the sacraments whereby God's service is done for His people.

Word Bank
Agnus Dei
Benediction
Canticle
Collect
Creed
Epistle
Gospel
Introit
Kyrie
Liturgy
Offertory
Pax Domini
Sanctus

News You Can Use

Celebrate Deaf Ministry Our Synod's Gospel outreach to deaf and hard of hearing people in Jacksonville began in 1901. Some 125 years later, Deaf Ministry in our midst continues via a District-wide deaf parish, Central Illinois Lutheran Deaf Outreach. CID's 2025 convention encouraged our congregations to celebrate this Deaf Ministry anniversary on August 23. The one-year Gospel that day is the story of Jesus healing a deaf man with His Word "be opened" (*ephphatha*).

In a larger sense, sinners are born deaf to God's Good News. He opens our ears by His Word. The three-year series A Gospel for the same day recounts Jesus telling Peter that none less than the Father had revealed to him that Jesus is the Christ.

Lord, open now my heart to hear, and through Your Word to me draw near. Let me your Word e'er pure retain; let me Your child and heir remain.

Ken Schurb, CID staff

Pray for Our Central Illinois District Missions, supported by your church's regular contributions to the District. Please remember in your prayers our District's mission work in central Illinois prisons. Pastors David Dunlop, Pablo Dominguez, Paul Weber, Rodney Blomquist (District Prison Ministry Coordinator), and others eagerly tell the Good News of Jesus Christ to those who are incarcerated. And pray for more people to help in Prison Ministry!

Please remember in your prayers all our CID campus ministries, especially Pastor Chris Hull and Immanuel Lutheran Church & Student Center in Macomb, serving students, faculty, and staff at Western Illinois University. And pray for the "Keeping Christ on Campus" campaign, building endowments to help CID support our campus ministries.

CID Youth Event – Save the Date: Date: November 7th Location: Camp CILCA
More information and registration will be released later this month

Dollar for Mission Program Apply for Dollar for Mission (Due Date: September 1st each year)

DFM funds are to be used for well-conceived projects in the following order of priority:

- **New church starts** – A new church start is a) an intentionally organized gathering b) meeting on a regular basis for church services and/or Bible study c) that is prayerfully intended eventually to become a congregation of the LCMS;
- **Mission-focused augmentations to existing ministries** (e.g., adding a new ethnic ministry to a present congregation);
- **Established CID missions** (e.g., Ministry in Spanish, Campus Ministry, Deaf Ministry, Prison Ministry)

Forms to apply for DFM funds are available on the District website under the Ministry tab or <https://www.cidlcms.org/ministry-dfm-apply.html>

For additional information or questions, please reach out to Rev. Patrick Gumz at 217-793-1802 or pgumz@cidlcms.org

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church 50th anniversary

Sunday, November 1st, 2026

Come celebrate with us! Communion Service at 9:00 am at Our Redeemer - 405 Massey Lane, Jacksonville. Following the service, a feast at Hamilton's Fireside Room (110 N. East St., Jacksonville)

RSVP by October 1 at sec1975orlc@yahoo.com (Cost \$30 per adult and \$15 per kid (age 6-12); under 5 are free.

Payments by check to the church office by October 1st or pay online at <https://www.paypal.com/ncp/payment/UMVURENVXJY94>

CAMP CILCA Fall Events

Work Day- Saturday, November 7, 2026

FALL Work Day at Camp CILCA will be on Saturday, November 7, 2026. On that day, we will turn the water off and prepare the camp for the winter by doing many chores, including raking leaves, cleaning buildings, moving picnic tables, and moving other items into storage, such as fire extinguishers. We will begin the day at 8:30 am. You are welcome to come anytime. Lunch is provided. Typically, we are finished working after lunch. We hope to see you there!

Email director@cilca.org to let us know you are coming.

Scrapbooking Retreat hosted by Camp Cilca- November 13-15, 2026.

Cost is \$100 for your shared room and meals. (Private rooms are available upon request for \$130.)

More information at <https://www.cilca.org/home>

LCMS Health Ministry

September is a month of transition for many people. School is back in session, the weather cools and schedules naturally change pace. Fall is also a great time to re-engage in physical activity and exercise - whether indoors or outdoors. It may seem unusual to hear the church talk about exercise, but LCMS Health Ministry exists to promote a Christ-centered approach to health. Yes, even physical health! The church cares about health — spiritual, mental, physical — because our Lord cares for us in every bodily need. We confess that God creates, redeems and sanctifies our whole person: body and soul, mind and spirit (Gal. 2:20). As such, we are given the task to steward our bodies as members of the larger body — Christ's church (1 Cor. 6:19–20; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27)! For more information on LCMS Health Ministry, visit lcms.org/health.

LCMS Family Ministry

“So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:10).

God has given us communities in our own families, in our church family and in other places as well. This verse reminds us of what a great blessing our church family is. In our culture, we often have Sunday morning as the only time that we see our church family. Our time together on Sunday morning is good and important, but we can also have a relationship with those in our church family beyond that time. Find ways with your family to build connections with other members of the congregation. You can talk to someone that you do not know well and encourage your children to do the same, or even invite them over for a shared meal.

LCMS Stewardship

Stewardship in the First Commandment- *Originally published in September 2023*

The greatest gift that Martin Luther gave to us was his Small Catechism. The word “enchiridion” is part of the original title of this work. This is the Greek word for “handbook.” The Small Catechism is a handbook of the Bible. All the basic knowledge that a Christian needs to understand the faith and live a godly life has been taken from the Bible and distilled into this beautiful little book of Christian piety.

Luther starts with the Ten Commandments.

The First Commandment:

You shall have no other gods.

What does this mean? We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things. (SC I)

We have a God above us. He is the Lord God and we are not. He is Almighty and in control. He is righteous and good. And therefore, we should fear Him.

This God is also our heavenly Father. He wants us to be saved. He does not want us to suffer His just wrath. He has provided salvation for us in His Son, Jesus Christ. And therefore, we should love Him.

Our heavenly Father will never leave us nor forsake us. He has promised as much — and the Bible shows us that He always keeps His promises. So, we should trust Him.

In the Large Catechism, Luther explains how money and possessions form one of the greatest temptations against the First Commandment:

This I must unfold somewhat more plainly, that it may be understood and perceived by ordinary examples of the contrary. Many a one thinks that he has God and everything in abundance when he has money and possessions; he trusts in them and boasts of them with such firmness and assurance as to care for no one. Lo, such a man also has a god, Mammon by name, i.e., money and possessions, on which he sets all his heart, and which is also the most common idol on earth. He who has money and possessions feels secure, and is joyful and undismayed as though he were sitting in the midst of Paradise. On the other hand, he who has none doubts and is despondent, as though he knew of no God. For very few are to be found who are of good cheer, and who neither mourn nor complain if they have not Mammon. This [care and desire for money] sticks and clings to our nature, even to the grave. (LC I 5–9)

These words of Dr. Luther should call us to repentance; sometimes, we live and act like we don't have a Father in heaven. We seek our comfort and peace outside of His gracious promises. But we do have a Father in heaven. He does love us. All His promises are true. And the Lord will surely provide. If that is our belief, then our outward lives will reflect this belief in our acts of generosity and mercy. We will see money and possessions not as gods but rather as tools for doing God's work.

St. John's Lutheran Church East Moline, IL

Sep 2026 (Central Time - Chicago)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
9am - Worship 10:15am - Pre-Sunday School 30	1:30pm - Activities Room 31	10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam 1	1:30pm - Activities Room 2	All Boards Meet in Prep 6:30pm - Board Meetings 3	4	5pm - Worship w/ 5
9am - Worship w/ 10:15am - 5th/6th grade 10:15am - Bible Study / 6	1:30pm - Activities Room 7	10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam 8	10am - Women's Bible 1:30pm - Activities Room 3:30pm - Fellowship 9	6:30pm - Parish Planning 10	6:30pm - 2nd Friday 11	8am - Men's Bible study 3pm - Catechism 5pm - Worship 12
9am - Worship 10:15am - 5th/6th grade 10:15am - Bible Study / 13	1:30pm - Activities Room 14	10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam 15	10am - Women's Bible 1:30pm - Activities Room 16	11:30am - Ladies 1pm - LWMML 17	18	8am - Men's Bible study 3pm - Catechism 5pm - Worship w/ 19
9am - Worship w/ 10:15am - 5th/6th grade 10:15am - Bible Study / 2pm - Schaefer Shower 20	Informer Deadline 1:30pm - Activities Room 21	10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam 22	10am - Women's Bible 1:30pm - Activities Room 23	24	25	8am - Men's Bible study 3pm - Catechism 5pm - Worship 26
9am - Worship 10:15am - 5th/6th grade 10:15am - Bible Study / 27	1:30pm - Activities Room 28	10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam 29	10am - Women's Bible 1:30pm - Activities Room 30	6:30pm - Board Meetings 1	2	8am - Men's Bible study 3pm - Catechism 5pm - Worship w/ 3

St. John's Lutheran Church

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East Moline, IL 61244

309-792-0755

office@stjohnsem.org

www.stjohnsem.org

See The Informer
IN COLOR
On Our Website

Worship Schedule:

Saturday- 5:00pm

Sunday- 9:00am

Bible study & Sunday School

10:15am

Office Hours:

Monday- 8:30am-noon

Tuesday/Wednesday- 8:30am-2:00pm

Closed 12-1 for lunch

Thursday-8:30am-noon



God's creatures by our bell tower