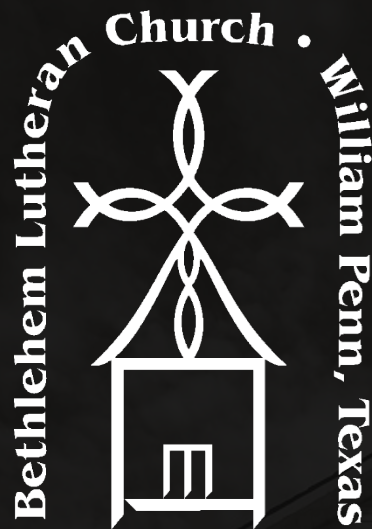
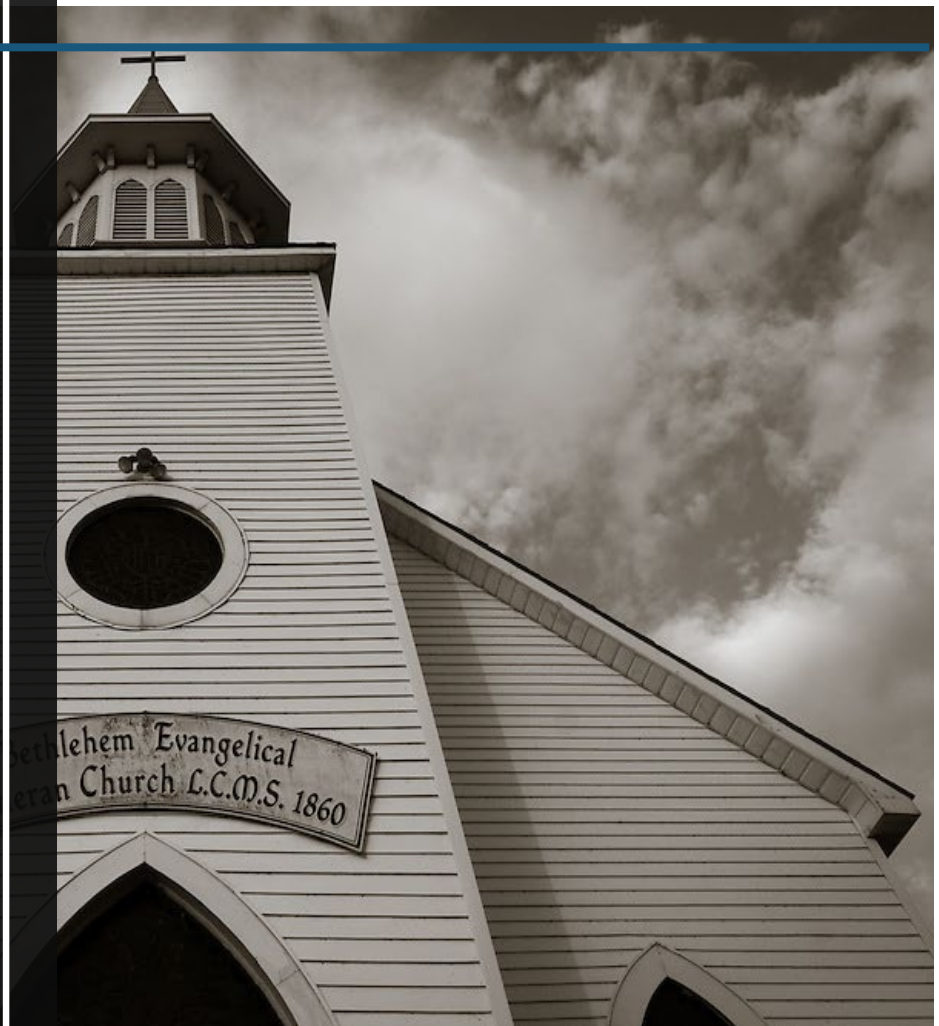




Ghost Town Gazette

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
William Penn, Texas

Vol. 4, No. 9, September 2026



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“True humility does not know that it is humble. If it did, it would be proud from the contemplation of so fine a virtue.”

- Martin Luther

MORE THAN SUNDAY WORSHIP: WHY SUNDAY SCHOOL MATTERS

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As September begins and the rhythms of a new school year settle in, it is a good time to consider what it means to be a Christian congregation. One of the great blessings we have at Bethlehem is the opportunity not only to gather together for the Divine Service on Sunday morning, but also to gather around God's Word in Sunday school.

Our Sunday morning worship is the heart of our week. There we receive the gifts Christ has promised to give His Church: the forgiveness of sins, the preaching of the Gospel, and, in the Holy Communion, the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. We should never think of Sunday school as a replacement for the Divine Service. It is not. Rather, Sunday school is an opportunity to continue in the Word that we have come to hear and receive in worship.

We often think of Sunday school as something primarily for children. Certainly, our children need to be taught the Scriptures and the Christian faith. Jesus commands His Church to make disciples by teaching them all that He has commanded (Matthew 28:19–20). But that command does not stop when a person is confirmed or graduates from high school.

Adults need Sunday school, too.

In fact, one of the greatest gifts parents can give their children is to be present themselves. Children notice whether Mom and Dad consider Bible study important. They notice whether their parents arrive early enough to attend Sunday school or treat Sunday school as optional. When adults make the study of God's Word a priority, they teach their children by example that the Christian faith is not merely something we learned as children, but something that continues throughout our lives.

We are never too old to learn God's Word. There is always more to learn about Christ, His promises, His Sacraments, and the teaching of Holy Scripture. The Christian life is not about graduating from God's Word; it is about continually receiving from Christ.

Our Lutheran faith is deeply rooted in the conviction that God's Word is central to the life of the Church. We gather because Christ has promised to be with His people where His Word is preached, and His Sacraments are administered. Sunday school gives us another opportunity to sit at the feet of our Lord, to ask questions, to study Scripture, and to grow together in the faith once delivered to the saints.

So, as September begins, I encourage you: come to Sunday school. Come even if you are an adult. Come even if you have been a Christian for decades. Come even if you think you already know the lesson. Come because Christ's Word is a treasure that never runs dry.

Let us make Sunday not merely a day when we attend church, but a day when we rejoice in gathering together around the Word of God. Sunday school is not just for the children. It is for the whole family of God.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Colossians 3:16

In Christ's Service and Yours,
Pastor Krieg





THROUGH THE LITURGY: PRAYER

What Is Prayer?

Prayer is the gift God gives us to speak to Him. In prayer, we address God with our needs, concerns, praises, and thanksgiving, trusting His promise that He hears us for the sake of Christ.

Prayer does not depend upon a particular posture or location. We may kneel, stand, bow our heads, fold our hands, or simply pray as we are. These postures can help us give our attention to God, but they do not make a prayer more acceptable to Him. Because of Christ, we have access to the Father wherever we are and whenever we call upon Him.

Prayer is therefore not an attempt to persuade God to care about us. He already cares for us and has commanded us to pray. Rather, prayer is an act of faith: we bring our requests before the God who has promised to hear His children.

What Should We Pray For?

In prayer, we ask God to provide what we need, but prayer is not limited to making requests. We also praise God for who He is and give Him thanks for His many gifts.

Above all, Christians pray for those things that accord with God's Word and will. We pray for the preservation of our faith, forgiveness of our sins, strength to resist temptation, protection from evil, and steadfastness in the Christian faith. We pray for our families, our neighbors, our congregation, our government, and those who suffer. We also pray that God would bring those who do not yet know Christ to repentance and faith.

The Lord's Prayer provides the clearest model. In it, Christ Himself teaches us what to pray and directs us to trust our heavenly Father to provide what we truly need.

Are There Different Types of Prayer?

Scripture gives us many examples of prayer, including petitions, thanksgiving, praise, confession, and intercession. Christian worship is filled with these prayers.

The liturgy is not simply a collection of religious words or traditions. Throughout the Divine Service, the Church speaks to God in prayer and receives His gifts. The **Confession** is a prayer in which we acknowledge our sins and seek God's mercy. The **Agnus Dei** is a prayer addressed to Christ, asking Him to have mercy upon us and give us His peace. The **Post-Communion Collect** gives thanks for the Sacrament and asks God to strengthen us through what we have received.

These prayers teach us how the Church prays. They also remind us that when we pray in the Divine Service, we are not merely expressing our own private thoughts. We are joining the whole Church in calling upon the Lord who has promised to hear His people.

Prayer, then, is both deeply personal and profoundly corporate. We pray as individuals, but we also pray together as the Body of Christ, trusting the promises of the Father through His Son, Jesus Christ.

“Are they not all
ministering
spirits sent out to
serve for the sake
of those who are
to inherit
salvation?”

Hebrews 1:14



HEROES OF FAITH: ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

Each month, we will highlight one of the many heroes of the Christian faith who have stood firm in the truth of Holy Scripture. We will look at the apostles who knew our Lord Jesus Christ personally, his friends who were witnesses to His miracles, the faithful ancestors of the Old Testament who patiently awaited His first Advent, as well as the many other Godly men and women who have been bold witnesses throughout the years to the one true faith. We look to them not as people to be worshiped or prayed to but as ordinary sinners, like us, to whom the Holy Spirit gave faith to be extraordinary. They are holy because the blood of Christ forgave their sins. They are holy because the Holy Spirit gave them a living faith in which the love of Christ shone through.

On September 29th, the Church celebrates the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels.

The Feast of St. Michael and All Angels gives thanks to God for the holy angels whom He sends to serve and protect His people. Scripture teaches that angels are God's created servants, sent to minister for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation (Hebrews 1:14). Scripture describes St. Michael as an archangel who contends against the devil and his forces, standing firm in the service of God. The angels are not divine beings to be worshiped, but faithful servants who carry out the Lord's will and rejoice in the salvation He gives to sinners. Their ministry continually points us away from themselves and toward Christ, our Savior and Lord. At the heart of this feast is the assurance that God's people are never abandoned or left to face the attacks of the devil alone. The Lord sends His angels to serve His people according to His good and gracious will. We give thanks for their unseen service and protection, but above all we give thanks to Christ, who by His death and resurrection has defeated Satan and secured for us an eternal inheritance. **This year, we will observe the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels on Sunday, September 27th.**



HIGHER THINGS



The theme and venue for next year's Higher Things conference have been announced! The

conference will be based on Matthew 5:17 - "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." Youth League is excited to attend next year's conference June 29-July 2 at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, CO! As more information becomes available, we will let you know.

NEXT MEETING

On Sunday, September 6th, the Youth League will meet during Sunday school. We will discuss the next outing and prepare for our next fundraiser.

NEXT
MEETING

YOUTH LEAGUE UPDATE

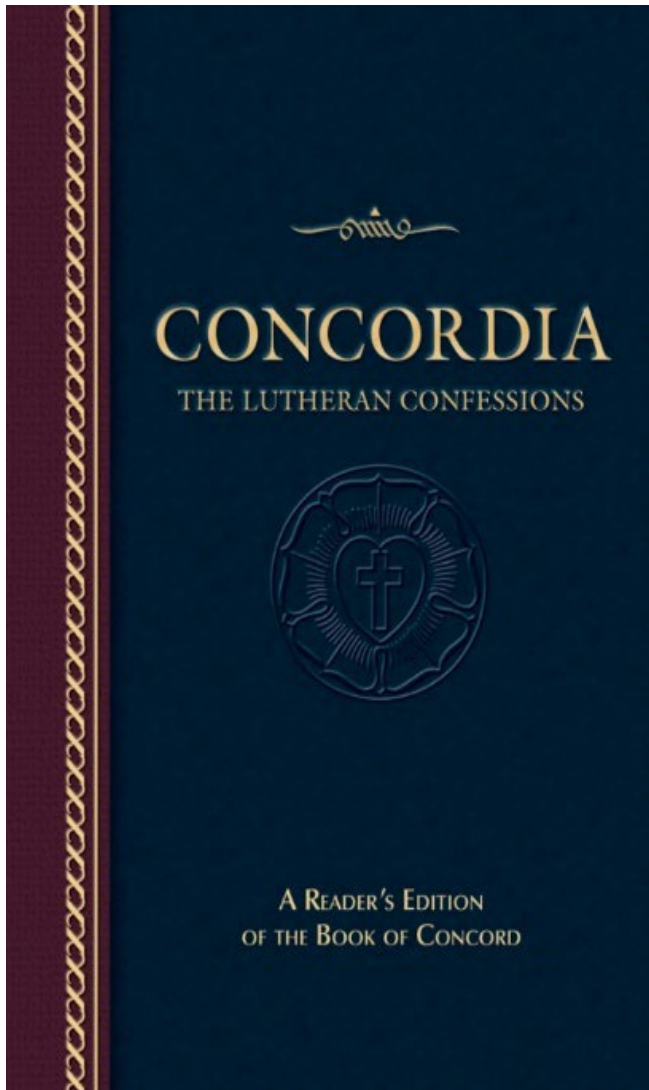
Last month the youth met to plan out the upcoming year's events. They have many plans to give back to their congregation, their community, and the world. Below are just a few of the exciting activities they have in store. Middle school and High school students, if you would like to participate in the Youth League, be sure to attend Sunday school on the first Sunday of the month for regular meetings.

- October – Fall Activity/Outing
- Ornament Fundraiser
 - October – November
- Christmas Tree & Decorating
 - November 29th after church w/ lunch provided.
- Young at Heart Dinner
 - December 6th
- Caroling
 - December 18th
(Congregation Is Invited)
- February – 4th Annual Quiz Night
- June/July – Higher Things – Colorado State University

UPCOMING
EVENTS

THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS: ARTICLE XXV

CONCERNING CONFESSION



In Article XI, which also dealt with the topic of Confession, we have already discussed the Biblical role of absolution as connected to confession and the errors (both perceived and real) on the part of the Roman Catholic church. As we continue with the subject of Confession here in Article XXV, we will consider other related issues. While these two articles share similarities, this article is much more detailed. Like Article XI, it contains two parts: The first paragraph deals with the benefit of absolution, and the second paragraph with erroneous teachings connected with confession.

The first part states, *"Confession in the churches is not abolished among us. The body of the Lord is not usually given to those who have not been examined and absolved. The people are very carefully taught about faith in the Absolution. Before, there was profound silence about faith. Our people are taught that they should highly prize the Absolution as being God's voice and pronounced by God's command. The Power of the Keys is set forth in*

its beauty. They are reminded what great consolation it brings to anxious consciences and that God requires faith to believe such Absolution as a voice sounding from heaven. They are taught that such faith in Christ truly obtains and receives the forgiveness of sins."

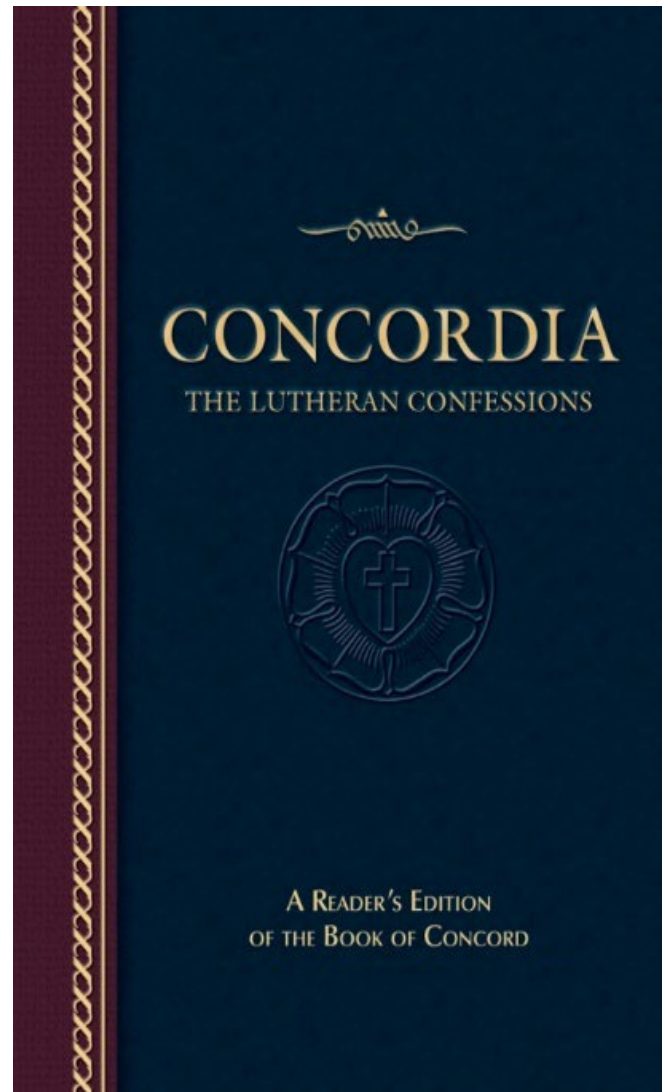
This time, in greater detail, God's blessings given through confession and in His Word of absolution are described. In the Roman Church, confession was not being used to console terrified consciences, but to torment them with the impossible task of enumerating every sin or else face the pains of purgatory upon death.

THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS: ARTICLE XXV – CONCERNING CONFESSION

AC XXV also introduces us to the connection between confession and absolution and preparation for the Lord's Supper. *"The body of the Lord is not usually given to those who have not been examined and absolved."* This custom was based on the practice of the early church and the exhortation of the apostle Paul concerning individual examination as preparation for receiving the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:27-28).

Private confession, used both during and after the Reformation, evolved over time into a Confessional Service held before Holy Communion. Those intending to partake of the Lord's Supper were to attend this service, which included a confessional address, general confession, followed by the absolution. Later, the confession and absolution part of this Confessional Service was incorporated into the regular worship service, similar to how we have it today.

Private confession, when used properly, serves a spiritually useful purpose. At the same time, there is always a danger of making such useful customs "commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9), which lead to a work-righteous emphasis. Let us guard against such temptations, and make proper use of the multiple blessings God offers to us through His absolution, instruction in His Word, and in the reception of the Lord's Supper!





LEARN WITH THE CONFIRMANDS

As you know, Confirmation is kicking off once again here at Bethlehem. This means our kids will be diving headfirst into the Small Catechism and God's holy Word. Memorization is a key component of Confirmation and of being a lifelong learner of Scripture. Please keep our confirmands in your prayers and encourage them in their studies. To that end, I have placed all the memory work they will be learning this month below, and I challenge you to dust off your Small Catechism and relearn the treasures we hold so dear alongside them. The Small Catechism is not just for the young or those going through Confirmation; it is for us all. When you see them, recite the memory with them, encourage them in their studies, and let them know you support them and are praying for them.

Date	Catechism Memorization	Scripture Memorization (recited on Sundays)
2-Sept	Books of the OT & NT by Oct 14 th	John 14:6
9-Sept	1 st Commandment	Matthew 4:10
16-Sept	No Class – Off for Fair	Hebrews 10:25
23-Sept	2 nd & 3 rd Commandments	Psalms 150:2
30-Sept	4 th & 5 th Commandments	Proverbs 23:22

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN SCHÜTZENVEREIN



The 1st Annual Bethlehem Lutheran Schützenverein Skeet Shoot was a great success, bringing together more than twenty men for a morning of fellowship, food, and friendly competition. The day began with breakfast before the shooting got underway, giving everyone a chance to visit and enjoy good food and fellowship. Fourteen men participated in the skeet shoot, while several others came out to watch, "encourage" the participants, and enjoy the morning together. The competition was spirited but, most importantly, everyone had a great time.



The event provided a wonderful opportunity for the men of Bethlehem to spend time together outside of their usual church activities and to strengthen the bonds of fellowship within the congregation. When the shooting was finished, Lance Searle took home the championship in the adult division and Norman Krieg won the youth division.



The first annual Schützenverein Men's Club Skeet Shoot was a memorable morning of fellowship, competition, and fun. With such a strong turnout for the inaugural event, the Men's Club looks forward to making the skeet shoot an annual tradition at Bethlehem Lutheran.



A LETTER OF CARE AND ENCOURAGEMENT

As part of our ongoing care for the members of our congregation, we are sending a letter to members who have not attended Divine Service in quite some time. The purpose of this letter is simple: **to let them know that they are missed and to encourage them to return to the regular life of the congregation, especially through Sunday worship.**

This is not an effort to scold anyone, keep tabs on attendance, or pressure anyone. Rather, it is an expression of pastoral care. As members of Christ's body, we care when a brother or sister is absent. We want them to know that Christ's Church and their fellow members have not forgotten them.

If you receive this letter, please take it in the spirit in which it is being sent: **as an invitation to come home, not a reprimand for being away.** If you have been away because of illness, discouragement, busyness, doubts, struggles, or some hurt or disappointment, please know that your pastor is willing to listen and help.

And if someone you love receives this letter, please speak with them. Encourage them to return. Remind them that they are missed and that there is a place for them here.

I share the letter here so that the congregation can see for themselves that its tone is warm, gentle, and inviting:

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I have been thinking about you lately and wanted to let you know simply that you have been missed.

When you became a member of our congregation, you expressed your desire to continue in the Christian faith alongside this family of believers, to hear God's Word, receive His gifts, and encourage one another in Christ. We notice your absence not because we are keeping attendance records, but because you are a valued member of Christ's body. When someone is missing, they are missed.

Our Lord desires to strengthen His people through the gifts He has promised to give. In the Divine Service, Christ comes to us through His living Word. He speaks forgiveness in Holy Absolution, comforts troubled consciences with His Gospel, and feeds us with His true body and blood in the Holy Supper for the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. These are not merely customs, but the very means by which Christ cares for His flock.

If you have been away because of illness, discouragement, busy schedules, doubts, struggles, hurt, or conflict, please know that you do not have to face these things alone. If there is something I can do, visit, listen, pray, or simply talk, my door is always open.

There is no lecture waiting for you, only a pastor who cares for you and a congregation that would be glad to welcome you back.

May our Good Shepherd, who laid down His life for His sheep, watch over you, keep you steadfast in the true faith, and draw you ever closer to Himself through His gracious Word and Sacraments.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

In Christ's Service and Yours,

Pastor Kelly Krieg

September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Erik Berglund, Chris Smitherman 7:00 – 7:30 PM LWML Social 7:30 – 8:30 PM LWML Meeting	2 Pastor Krieg 4:30 – 6:00 PM Confirmation Class	3 6:00 – 7:00 PM Elders' Meeting 6:30 – 8:00 PM Ladies Bible Study	4	5 Shirley Klussmann 7:30 – 8:30 AM Men's Club Breakfast, Bible Study, & Meeting
6 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Class 9:00 – 10:00 AM Youth League Mtg 10:15 – 11:15 AM Divine Service	7 Chris Landeck	8 Andrea Holle, Mildred Holle	9 Elijah Kettler, Bradley Schomburg 8:30 – 9:30 AM Sonshine 4:30 – 6:00 PM Confirmation Class	10 6:30 – 8:00 PM Ladies Bible Study	11	12 Karlton Klussmann
13 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Class 10:15 – 11:15 AM Divine Service 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM Shekel Store	14 Tricia Boggan	15 Heidi Nowicki	16 Artie Klussmann, Tricia Molitor 4:30 – 6:00 PM Confirmation Class	17 Hunter Choyce 6:30 – 8:00 PM Ladies Bible Study	18 Amara Torrez, Kerry Krivdo	19
20 Brad Molitor 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Class 10:15 – 11:15 AM Divine Service	21	22	23 4:30 – 6:00 PM Confirmation Class	24 6:30 – 8:00 PM Ladies Bible Study	25 Kaisen Ashorn, Doug Schroeder, Tanner Schroeder	26 Craig Kankel 8:30 – 10:00 AM Sisters in Christ Bible Study
27 8:00 – 9:00 AM Outdoor Amphitheater Worship 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Class 10:15 – 11:15 AM Divine Service	28	29 Tracey O'Neil	30 Sheryl Schroeder 4:30 – 6:00 PM Confirmation Class			

September 2026

Birthdays

1 Erik Berglund
Chris Smitherman

2 Kelly Krieg

5 Justin Elliott
Shirley Klussmann

7 Chris Landeck

8 Andrea Holle
Mildred Holle

9 Elijah Kettler
Bradley Schomburg

12 Karlton Klussmann

14 Tricia Boggan

15 Heidi Nowicki

16 Artie Klussmann
Tricia Molitor

17 Hunter Choyce

18 Kerry Krivdo
Amara Torrez

20 Brad Molitor

25 Kaisen Ashorn
Doug Schroeder
Tanner Schroeder

26 Craig Kankel

28 Diana Stephens

29 Tracey O'Neil

30 Sheryl Schroeder

Baptismal Birthdays

2 Blane Ashorn
Amber Molitor

3 Linda Hinze

4 Diana Kohring

7 Cheri Janner

8 Destiny Interiano

12 Benson Rodriguez
Emily Searle

15 Rylee Elliott

19 Ruth Schroeder
Jeffery Schwartz

21 Coby Boggan

22 Cindy Schomburg

23 Rowdy Borgstedt

25 Lily Kettler

26 Lyla Kettler
Ian Schroeder

28 Peyton Glenz

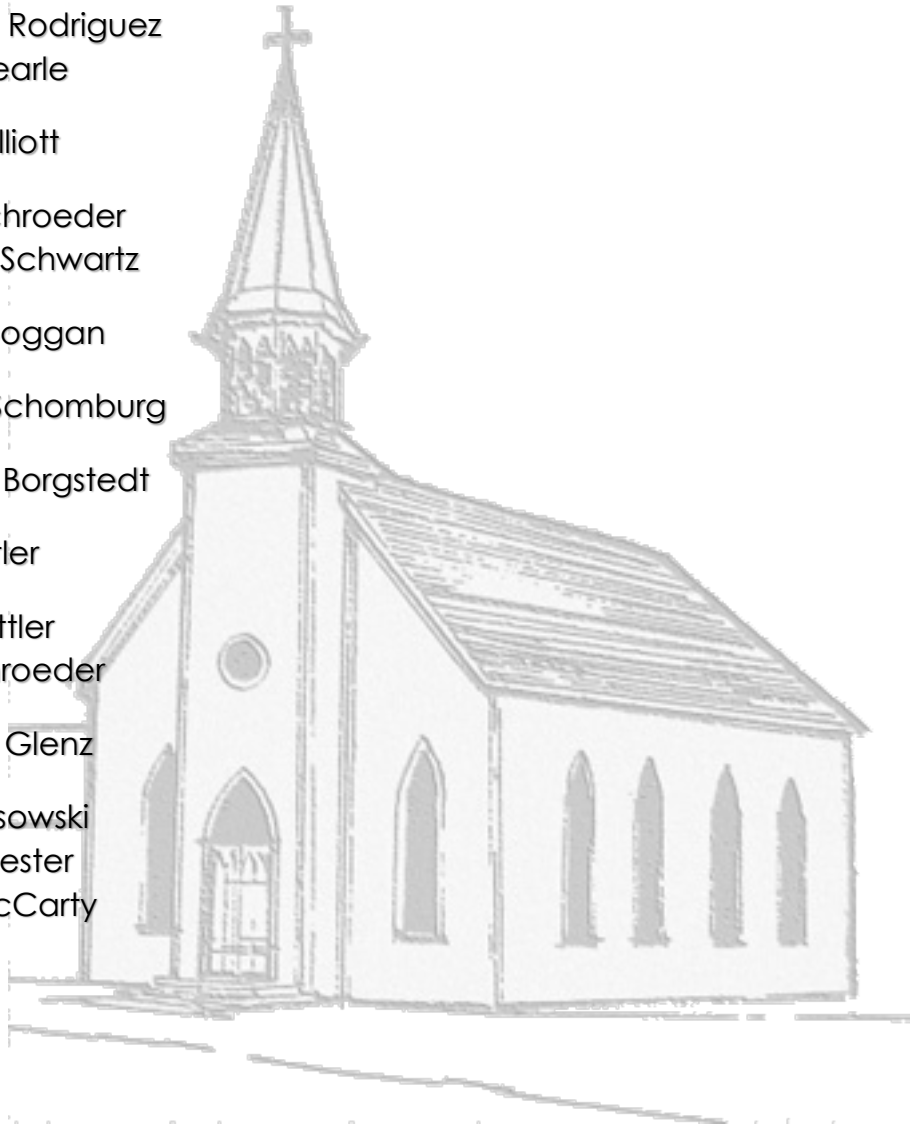
30 Kelly Flisowski
Ann Koester
Briar McCarty

Wedding Anniversaries

Albin & Brenda Flisowski
Sep 20, 1980

Mike & Renee Brinkmann
Sep 4, 1982

Craig & Jackie Kankel
Sep 29, 1984



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