

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, CORDOVA, NEBRASKA

April, 2026 NEWSLETTER

Rev. Shawn Kitzing
Interim Pastor



“Serving Christ in
our Communities,
Nation and World”



Join us for Worship
Services Sundays at
9:00 a.m. or on
Facebook.

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Sunday's Coming: Hope in the Resurrection

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

² And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴ And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. ⁵ But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.



The empty tomb is not just a detail of the Easter story—it is the turning point of all human history. It declares that death is not the end, that sin does not have the final word, and that God has done exactly what He promised.

But what does that mean for us, here and now?

First, the empty tomb means hope is alive. We live in a world filled with uncertainty, loss, and brokenness. Yet the resurrection tells us that even in our darkest moments, God is still at work. What seemed final on Friday was overturned by Sunday morning. Because Jesus lives, no situation is beyond redemption.

Second, it means our sins are forgiven. The cross and the empty tomb belong together. Jesus did not merely die for our sins—He rose to prove that the payment was accepted. We do not have to carry guilt or shame any longer. In Christ, we are offered new life, clean and restored.

Third, it means we are never alone. The risen Christ is not a distant memory but a present Savior. He walks with us, strengthens us, and intercedes for us. The same power that raised Him from the dead is at work in our lives today.

Finally, the empty tomb calls us to live differently. Resurrection is not just something we celebrate—it is something we embody. We are invited to live with courage instead of fear, with faith instead of doubt, and with love that reflects the One who conquered death.

The women who first encountered the empty tomb did not leave in silence — they ran to tell others. May we do the same. The message of the risen Christ is too good to keep to ourselves.

The tomb is empty. Christ is risen. And because He lives, so do we.

Pastor Shawn Kitzing

Hymn Sing Sunday April 5th

Hymn Sing Sunday is every first Sunday of the month.

Come early at 8:50 a.m. and pick out your favorite hymn and sing with us!

Lutheran Hour Radio Sermons

• April 5, 2026

"You Don't Know What You Have Till It's Gone" Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. Death is the enemy of life, but in Jesus, God made death become life's servant. 1 Cor. 15:26

• April 12, 2026

"Early Adopters" with Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. The risen Jesus is the "display model" of what we will be, through faith in Him. 1 Cor. 15:20

• April 19, 2026

"Not in Vain" with Guest Speaker: Pastor Ryan Tinetti. Because Jesus lives, your future is certain. You can also be confident that your present life has meaning and worth. In the Lord, your labor is not in vain. 1 Cor. 15:50-58

• April 26, 2026

"Second Chances and First Impressions" Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. God is the God of second chances, not for Himself but for others. 1 Cor. 15:47-49

The Lutheran Hour can be heard every Sunday on:

- Omaha KFAB 1110 AM at 6:30 am
- York-KAWL 1370 AM and York-KAWL 103.5 FM at 7:30 am
- Lincoln KLCV 88.5 FM at 8:00 a.m.

Holy Week Services:

A Journey of Faith and Renewal

Experience the depth of God's love through our Holy Week services:

Maundy Thursday, April 2nd at 7:00 p.m. – Join us for a meaningful service of Communion and remembrance of the Last Supper.

Good Friday, April 3rd at 7:00 p.m. – A solemn time of reflection and prayer as we remember Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

Easter Sunday, April 5th at 9:00 a.m. – Rejoice in the victory of the Resurrection! Worship with us as we celebrate the risen Lord.

Easter Breakfast

Join us for an Easter breakfast served by our Youth Group on Sunday, April 5th in the Fellowship Hall from 7:30-8:45 a.m. Come enjoy food and fellowship before the Easter service!



Baptism

According to the command and promise of God,

Gilbert Michael Ludke, son of Jordan & Grace Ludke, received the sacrament of Baptism on March 15, 2026.

Gilbert's sponsors were Tytus and Bella Woodburn and Benjamin Woodburn. God's blessings to Gilbert as he lives out his baptismal blessings!

Church Council Meeting

The Church Council will have a meeting on Wednesday, April 15th at 7:00 p.m.

All members of the Church Council should attend. Those members include: the President, Treasurer, Circuit Forum Representative, Pastor, and all members from each elected Board (Elders, Trustees, Finance and Education.)



Visit St. John's Lutheran Church on the web!

<https://stjohnscordova.com>



Sign Up Sheet for Rolls for the Easter Breakfast

There is a sign-up sheet for donations of rolls for the Easter Breakfast on Sunday, April 5th. The Easter Breakfast will be a fundraiser for our kids attending Camp Luther this summer.



In Christian Sympathy

Mike Scott – We extend our sincere sympathy to the family of Mike Scott, who passed away on February 9.

Daryl Stevens – We extend our sincere prayers to the family of Daryl Stevens, who was called home on February 15. His funeral was held at the Hope Center in Beaver Crossing on February 28.

Ray Gard – We extend our heartfelt prayers to the family of Ray Gard. The funeral service will be on March 31st at St. John's, with Pastor Kitzing officiating.

Potluck & Quarterly Voters Meeting

We will have our April voters' meeting on Sunday, April 19th.

There will be a potluck lunch after Sunday School, and the voters' meeting will follow lunch.

Everyone is welcome to join us for the potluck.

All members over the age of 18 are encouraged to attend the voters' meeting.

April Birthdays and Baptism Birthdays

April Birthdays		April Birthdays Continued		April Baptism Birthdays Continued	
Tom Stuhr	April 1	Judy Hulse	April 25	Dwight Henke	April 12
Devin Anderson	April 3	Janet Merrill	April 25	Peggy Krasser	April 13
Bryson Benton	April 4	Crystal Henke	April 27	Ryan Sharp	April 14
Tristan Brandt	April 4	Brian Brahmstedt	April 28	Wynn Weber	April 14
Wynn Weber	April 4	Kaitlin Procacina	April 29	Mia Brandt	April 15
Wilma Gard	April 8			Stan Krause	April 15
Jonathan Petersen	April 8			Tom Stuhr	April 16
Oaklynn Procacina	April 12	April Baptism Birthdays		Tyler Brandt	April 22
Joyce Schmidt	April 12	Lisa Brahmstedt	April 3	Carson Brandt	April 24
Lisa Stuhr	April 12	Amy Swanson	April 4	Mark Stokebrand	April 24
Marvin Swanson	April 15	Jaxson Brandt	April 5	Tristan Brandt	April 25
Rhonda Stokebrand	April 16	Don Kranz	April 6	Nina Bartu	April 26
Jerry Jensen	April 17	Mariah Beckler	April 7	Brooklyn Oldehoeft	April 26
Darrell Eastin	April 18	Anna Brejcha	April 7	Meghan Hester	April 27
Jackson Petersen	April 18	Susan Schwarte	April 8	Joyce Schmidt	April 27
Shannon Stuhr	April 19	Morgan Zumpfe	April 9	Megan Weber	April 28
Cash Neville	April 21	Madison Zumpfe	April 9	Rhonda Stokebrand	April 29
Dylan Anderson	April 23	Conrad Martinez	April 11	Wilma Gard	April 30
Cori Bruns	April 25	Chloe Martinez	April 11		

PLEASE NOTE: If we have missed someone's name and birthdate, or if we missed listing your baptism birthday, please accept our sincere apologies and let the church office know. Thank You!

Serving in God's House in April

April Acolytes

Wyatt Petzoldt	April 2 Maundy Thurs
Myles Vyhnaelek	April 3 Good Friday
Crosby & Kyler Oldehoeft	April 5th Easter
Teddy Weber	April 12th
Jorge Hernandez	April 19th
Devin Anderson	April 26th

April Lectors

Drew Woodburn	April 5th
Derek Anderson	April 12th & 19th
Drew Woodburn	April 26th

April Ushers

Norman & Jaxson Brandt, Joel Gifford	April 5 th
Derek, Dane, Devin & Dylan Anderson	April 12th & 19th
Mike Theis, Mark Kreutzer, Paul Weiss	April 26 th

Communion Assistants:

April 2	Bruce Rogers & Drew Woodburn
April 5	Tim McDermott & Drew Woodburn
April 19	Norm Lutz & Drew Woodburn

A Note from the Elders:

As we enter the season of spring, we will begin noticing signs of new life. We will see grass slowly becoming green again and trees beginning to bud. Birds will begin nesting, and bees and butterflies will reappear. We will also be able to participate in more outside evening activities as we experience longer daylight hours. The presence of light makes these nighttime outdoor events possible.

Jesus spoke to the people saying, "I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you have the light that leads to life." John 8:12

As we prepare our hearts for Holy Week, let us keep in mind that Jesus suffered and died on the cross to take away all of our sins. On Easter Sunday, we will celebrate Jesus' resurrection, which is the most awesome, miraculous sign of new life that we as Christians will ever experience. Let us reflect on this wonderful gift that we've been given.

Spring Roadside Pickup

Saturday, April 11th beginning at 9:00 a.m., weather permitting, all congregational members are invited to join in with St. John's "Spring Roadside Cleanup" event. This is a congregational activity in helping brighten up a small corner of God's creation in a very simple way.

Coffee, donuts, and orange juice will be made available at this morning exercise activity.

Also, remember to bring some sturdy footwear and gloves for safety. Contact Tim McDermott for any additional information.

(If weather hinders us on this day, Saturday, April 18th will be our alternate option.)

Men's Bible Study Group will continue in May

Please note that the Men's Bible Study group will postpone its monthly meeting in April due to the normal first Saturday of the month to be Holy Saturday in April – as hosting or perhaps traveling with family over the Easter weekend likely occurs.

The group's journey through Paul's letter to the Philippians will continue May 2nd as we look forward to picking up on our study and conversation then.



Our Shut Ins

Please remember our shut-in members with visits, "thinking of you" cards and prayers:

Charles & Lavonne Evans

Heritage Crossings
1320 J Street
Geneva, NE 68361

Jane Lutz

Legacy Square
1621 Front St.
Henderson, NE 68371

Joyce Schmidt

2830 S 51st Street Ct.,
Unit 3
Lincoln, NE 68506

Pat Schwisow

The Gardens
1405 Hickory Ave.
Unit 32
Crete, NE 68333

Carol Sternberg

Hillcrest Shadow Lake
1507 East Gold Coast
Papillion, NE 68046

Small Group Study

We will continue discussion of our book *Joining Jesus Show Me How: How to Disciple Everyday Missionaries* on Wednesday, April 8th at 1:30 p.m. Please read chapter 12- 13 as this will be covered in our discussion.



St. John's
Vacation
Bible School
July 27-31, 2026



7th-8th Confirmation Retreat

On March 6th & 7th five of our 7-8 grade confirmation class attended an over-night retreat at Camp Luther. Five other churches attended with Osmond (Pastor Tuma) and Pierce (Pastor Jacob Tuma). Forty-one teens were there and shared their friendship and faith together. Those from St. John's at the Confirmation Retreat were:

Crosby, Devin, Myles, Wyatt & Lynn.

Lydia LWML

Lydia LWML met on Monday, March 2nd at 6:00 pm with 7 members present.

President Gail Effken conducted the devotion on Philippians 2:1-11 provided by Grace Ludke. Easter cards were signed for shut-ins. February meeting minutes were approved. Altar committee assignments were reviewed. The treasury report was given by Linda Woolsey. Details of our Young Mother's event on April 11th were discussed. A devotion and three freezer meals will be made for the mothers to take home. Childcare will be provided. Deep cleaning at the parsonage will take place March 7, 12 and 14. Possible activities with the youth group and Dorcas were discussed. Lenten meal menus were reviewed and tasks assigned. Dorcas members have joined Lydia in preparing some Lenten meals. It was fun for everyone! "You've Been Egged" eggs will be packed on Maundy Thursday, then given to families for distribution. Gail will gather the supplies. Plans were made for some members to attend the March 15th York Zone Spring workshop and the April 25th Seek and Serve day. A gift for our youth confirmands was discussed. The meeting concluded with a round robin prayer. The next Lydia LWML meeting will be Monday, April 6th at 6:00 pm. at the church.

Dorcas LWML

The Dorcas LWML met on March 4, with nine members present (perfect attendance), three members of the Lydia group, and Pastor Kitzing.

Pastor Kitzing led us in prayer and the Bible Study on Genesis.

A bouquet of flowers was given to Peggy for her birthday and a thank you for all she does for the congregation.

Gail asked if our group would furnish dessert for the Lenten meal the next week and we agreed. She also spoke of several upcoming LWML events we may want to take part in.

Minutes were read, and Jayne reported on cards sent.

We spoke about asking members to bring flowers for the altar area on Easter. Confirmation will be on May 1 and we will furnish flowers for the altar then.

We closed with prayers. Lunch was served by Janet.

April, 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Dorcas LWML 2:00 p.m. Confirmation 4:00-6:00 p.m.	2 <i>Communion</i> Maundy Thursday Service 7:00 p.m.	3 Good Friday Service 7:00 p.m.	4
5 <i>Easter</i> <i>Communion</i> Easter Breakfast 7:30—8:45 a.m. Hymn Sing 8:50 No Sunday School or Adult Bible Class	6 Lydia LWML 6:00 p.m.	7 Elders Meeting 7:00 p.m.	8 Small Group Study 1:30 p.m. Confirmation 4:00-6:00 p.m.	9	10	11 Litter Pickup 9:00 a.m. Young Mothers' Lunch
12 Church 9:00 a.m. Sunday School and Bible Class 10:30 Trustees meeting	13	14	15 Confirmation 4:00-6:00 p.m. Church Council meeting 7:00 p.m.	16	17	18
19 <i>Communion</i> Church 9:00 a.m. Sunday School and Bible Class 10:30 a.m. Potluck and Quarterly Voters' Meeting after Sunday School	20	21 Board of Education 7:00 p.m.	22 Confirmation 4:00-6:00 p.m.	23	24	25
26 Church 9:00 a.m. Sunday School and Bible Class 10:30 High School Night 6:30 p.m.	27	28	29 Confirmation 4:00-6:00 p.m.	30		

St. John's Lutheran Church, Cordova, Nebraska

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St. John's Lutheran Church, Cordova, Nebraska

200 Paris Street
Cordova, Nebraska 68330
Phone: (402) 576-3211

Our Website:

<https://stjohnscordova.com>

St. John's Worship Service Time

9:00 a.m. Church Worship
Service

10:30 a.m. Sunday School
and Adult Bible Class



Address Service Requested

There's Something Better Coming

The Easter season is a precious time for Christians to celebrate the source of our hope: Christ is risen, and he invites us to rise with him into new life. Easter reminds us that God is still at work, even in the places where we've felt stuck or discouraged.

Easter is an invitation to try again—with his strength—to break habits we thought were unbreakable. There's something better coming.

Easter is a chance to breathe new life into a marriage we feared was beyond saving. There's something better coming.

Easter is an opportunity to slow down, reach out, and reconnect with those we've unintentionally neglected. There's something better coming.

Easter is an invitation to look at our lack of love and seek God for compassion. There's something better coming.

Easter is a chance for all no-hopers to regain their vision of what can be! There's something better coming.

Easter is an opportunity to renew our faith. There's something better coming.

Easter is a chance to "renew our strength and mount up with wings as eagles; to run and not faint." There's something better coming.

