

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, CORDOVA, NEBRASKA

August, 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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From the Elders - You Belong Here!

For the past several months, the Elders have been working through the membership roster of St. John's as part of an effort to identify those who may need to be contacted and reconnected, as well as those who have moved away or otherwise become disconnected from this congregation, such that a recommendation to the congregation regarding their membership may be appropriate.



In the course of this work, the Elders have asked questions such as: *Do they still belong to our congregation? Have they become active members of another church? Have they simply disappeared? Are they lost, disconnected, or no longer attending or belonging to any Christian congregation?*

These conversations have prompted reflection on a passage from *By Water and the Word* by Rev. Brian W. Thomas, pastor of Grace Lutheran Church. In this section of his book on Holy Baptism, Rev. Thomas helps us consider a deeper question: *What is it that first established our belonging, and what continues to sustain it long after our Baptism?*

He writes:

"First, you don't go to church; you are the church. Baptism shows that the church is not a place you attend but a people you belong to. This means we can't ghost the church when she's a pain in the backside. Because she's not a building. She's a body. And you are part of her.

When you were baptized, you weren't enrolled in a voluntary religious club. This means your faith is not private; it is shared among the other branches grafted in the Vine that is Christ himself. It must be nurtured, cultivated, and practiced in community.

Second, baptism joins you to real people, not ideal people. Sinner-saints. This body is full of difficult personalities and different perspectives-including yours. But that's exactly where the gospel gets real. We learn to love as Christ loved us.

Third, it means you don't just believe individually; you believe communally. The faith you confess is the "faith of the church," the credo of the baptized. And that creed is not recited alone. You're part of a choir, not a solo act.

Fourth, it means when your baptized brother sins, you forgive him. When your sister falls, you help her up. Because baptism has made us family, and families stick together. The baptismal water is thicker than biological blood, because it unites us to Christ's precious blood.

Like any family, we fight, we fail, and sometimes we annoy the living daylight out of each other. But we're still family, and your baptism says, "You belong here." Even if you're socially awkward. Even if you vote wrong. Even if you smell like the cigarette you just smoked in the church parking lot – yeah, the one you hoped nobody would notice.

Fifth, you can't grow apart from the body. "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you' (I Cor 12:21). The New Testament never envisions a Christian life outside the church. This is a team sport. Worship, prayer, fellowship – all of it is mediated through the body. If you are cut off from the body, you will shrivel spiritually. But when connected, we flourish together.

(Continued on bottom of Page 2)

Hymn Sing Sunday August 2nd

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!

Can't Attend Worship?

If so, we miss you! Your presence is a joy and blessing to us all, as we pray to be a blessing to you. But we all have experienced difficulties in attending due to illness, work schedules, or other conflicts that prevent our being present.

As these situations occur, you can watch St. John's worship services live on **Facebook** (facebook.com/stjohnscordova) or rewatch past services when posted on **YouTube**

(youtube.com/@stjohnscordova165)

Both can be found using your computer, tablet, or smartphone.



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

https://
stjohnscordova.com

St. John's Sunday School Kick-Off

Food, Games, and Fellowship!

Join us on **Sunday, August 9th**, immediately following Sunday School and Adult Bible Class, as we launch **a new season of learning about God's love!** We are welcoming all ages for a celebration packed with a potluck lunch, carnival games, bingo, prizes, and delicious desserts.

Come ready for fun, laughter, and community. We can't wait to see you there!



Fifth Sunday Potluck & Games August 30th, 2026



You are invited to join us for a Fifth Sunday Potluck and games—we would love for you to join the fun! Pull up a chair, share a meal, and connect with your church family for an afternoon of food, laughter, and friendly competition. Everyone of all ages is welcome.

Men's Bible Study – Saturday, August 1st, 7:30 a.m.

The Men's Bible Study group will continue meeting on Saturday, August 1st. The meeting will begin at 7:30 a.m. The guys will focus attention on a monthly 'Searching Scripture' discussion on Article II – Free Will in the Formula of Concord. The "Following the Formula" studies are outlined in the Lutheran Witness. This is a great opportunity to open, research, and share our Lutheran Confessions supported by God's Word. Contact any Elder for further information.

"The Well" Monthly Bible Study

All are invited to take part in a new Bible Study to be held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 1:30 p.m. here at the church. If you are of interest in taking part in this opportunity, please contact either Tim McDermott or Margaret Witte for questions or additional information. Thirsty to study God's Word together in an informal group? There is room at "The Well" for you!

From the Elders - You Belong Here!

(Continued from the cover page)

Sixth, you can never say, "I don't belong." Maybe you feel unworthy of belonging at times. Maybe you've been burned by the church or one of her pastors. Been there; done that. Still living with a little PTC (post-traumatic church disorder).

Maybe you're tempted to leave quietly out the back door when no one is looking. Remember: your baptism came with a promise. It's where God says, 'I made you mine. Now go sit with the other forgiven screw-ups, listen, confess, pray, praise, and eat and drink with them until I come back.' That can't be un-done. You belong. Always.

The church, for all her faults, is the bride of Christ – watermarked by grace, beautified by her groom, and marching toward the day when every last tear is dried and the green bean casserole will give way to the best grilled ribeye and vintage of wine that heaven can offer as God always saves the best for last."

1 Brian W. Thomas, "Water & the Word: God's Gift of Baptism for You," - 1517 Publishing w/permission

August Birthdays and Baptism Birthdays

August Birthdays		August Birthdays Continued		August Baptism Birthdays Continued	
Jaxton Procacina	August 1	Colson Beckler	August 15	Darci McCarter	August 7
Tressa Scott	August 1	Wesson Beckler	August 15	Joshua Eklund	August 8
Bryson Benton	August 2	Jordyn Brandt	August 17	Allyson Cuevas	August 9
Noah Stoll	August 2	Cantrell Harrison	August 17	Sicily Stoll	August 14
Abbie Gilmer	August 3	Byron Brackhan	August 19	Tressa Scott	August 16
Richard Merrill	August 4	Beatrice Ludke	August 20	Ash Pulliam	August 18
Nathan Klenke	August 5	Trenton Vossler	August 24	Gloria McDermott	August 21
Greg Whittington	August 5	Mason Vyhnaelek	August 25	Olivea Swanson	August 21
Nora Friberg	August 6	Myles Vyhnaelek	August 25	Myretta Whittington	August 22
Gehrig Weber	August 6	Bob Bartu	August 28		
Susan Schwarte	August 7	August Baptism Birthdays		Cantrell Harrison	August 23
Mechaela Jacobs	August 8	Mike Theis	August 1	Bailey Theis	August 24
Bruce Rogers	August 10	Derek Anderson	August 2	Huxley Brandt	August 27
Jackson Beethe	August 13	Brenda Kranz	August 3	Sandi Hayek	August 29
Joshua Brandt	August 13			Christina Ryan	August 30

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

August Acolytes

Teddy Weber	August 2nd
Reed Pulliam	August 9th
Dillon Petzoldt	August 16th
Kyler Oldehoeft	August 23rd
Charlotte Speer	August 30th

August Lectors

Drew Woodburn	August 2nd
Norm Lutz	August 9th
Joel Gifford	August 16th
Blake Woodburn	August 23rd
Lee Krasser	August 30th

August Ushers

August 2nd & 9th — Derek, Dane, Devin & Dylan Anderson

August 16th & 23rd — Mike Theis, Mark Kreutzer & Paul Weiss

August 30th — Chris Effken & Bob Bartu

Communion Assistants:

August 2nd - Tim McDermott & Brian Brahmstedt

August 16th - Norm Lutz & Brian Brahmstedt

August 30th - Bruce Rogers & Brian Brahmstedt

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 Road
Papillion, NE 68046

Lutheran Hour Radio Sermons for August

August 2, 2026

"Why Jesus Told Parables" Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. *Archives August*—Effective communicators tell stories to make a point. Hear how Jesus' parables point us to Himself. Mark 4

August 9, 2026

"Extreme Neighborliness" with Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz. *Archives August*—Jesus is the ultimate "Good Samaritan," the unlikely Rescuer who binds our wounds, carries us to safety, and pays the price through His cross. Luke 10:25-37

August 16, 2026

"Look at Me" with Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. *Archives August*—God hears our cry for justice, not as an indifferent judge, but as our merciful heavenly Father. Luke 18:1-8

August 23, 2026

"Real Riches" Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Ken Klaus. *Archives August*—It's not wrong to have possessions, but to love anything in such a way that it takes the place of God is spiritually deadly. Luke 12:15

August 30, 2026

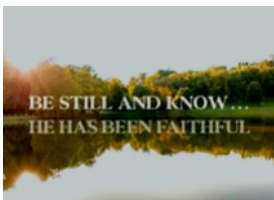
"Tell Me a Story!" Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Dale Meyer. *Archives August*—God lavishly sows the seed of His Word. Responses vary. Mark 4:1-20, 26-34



Orphan Grain Train Wish List

Prayers for God's blessings on this ministry.

- * Volunteers to sort and pack clothing
- * Cash donations to pay for shipping
- * Infant's cloth or disposable diapers, stuffed toys
- * Bed and bath linens, sheets, disposable gowns and gloves,
- * walkers, wheel chairs, crutches and canes
- * Sanitary products for women
- * Diapers for adults and babies
- * Towels and wash cloths, bars of soap, combs, toothbrushes
- * Clothing (clean and in good repair) for everyone - especially coats and sweat shirts
- * School supplies
- * Quilts, blankets, comforters, sleeping mats
- * Bicycles
- * New coloring books and crayons
- * Sports equipment such as soccer balls, basketballs, baseball equipment
- * New underwear and socks, shoes
- * Bibles



Lydia LWML

Lydia LWML met on July 6 with devotions that Grace provided.

June minutes and the treasurer's report were approved.

The Ice Cream Social served 57 meals and received \$513 in freewill donations. Members discussed the future of the event, with a decision postponed.

Planning continues for the August 30 Fifth Sunday Potluck, which will include games organized by Kendra.

Gail and Linda plan to attend the LWML South District Convention in Kearney (Sept. 18-19). Additional attendees are welcome.

Work is beginning on a Ministry to Families consultation to help identify future opportunities for Lydia and the congregation.

Linda will coordinate Christmas Card Sales again this year.

Members also began reviewing Lydia's annual activities to help guide future ministry efforts.

Upcoming Dates:

- July 19: Potluck & Voters Meeting
- August 30: Fifth Sunday Potluck & Games
- September 18-19: LWML South District Convention
- November 6-8: Camp Luther Women's Retreat
- December 13: Cookie Walk

Next Lydia Meeting: Monday, August 3, at 6:00 p.m.

Small Group Study

Our next small group study will be diving into Lee Strobel's *The Case for Christ*. We will be investigating the historical and logical evidence for Jesus.

Please read Chapters 1 & 2 in the book, as we will be discussing this at our meeting.

Please join us Wednesday, August 12th at 1:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

We would love to have you join us for this book!

August Elders Meeting

The August Elders meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 6th at 6:00 p.m.

Dorcas LWML

Eight members met on July 1.

LaJean led the opening devotions. Pastor Kitzing led us in prayer and the Bible Study. We recited the LWML Pledge. Minutes were read and Jayne reported on cards sent. Thank you notes were read from Lynn Jurgensen, Myles and Mason Vyhnaek for the prayer books we gave them for Confirmation.

We discussed the hygiene kits we are making for the OGT, and the items for school back packs we are now collecting for the OGT. We discussed what we want to do for the ingathering for the District South convention, and will decide next month. We held discussion on our Christmas party later in the year.

The new Bible Study for adults will begin at 1:30 p.m. on July 15. We closed with prayer. Lunch was served by LaJean.

Backpacks and School Supplies for the Orphan Grain Train



During August, the Dorcas LWML will be collecting school supplies for the OGT.

Items Needed:

- 1 backpack
- 1 ruler
- 2 spiral notebooks
- 2 pencils
- 10 sheets construction paper
- 1 eraser
- 1 package crayons (24 count)
- 1 scissors
- 1 pencil sharpener
- 2 glue sticks
- 1 package-colored pencils (12 count)
- 2 pens
- 1 single pocket folder (put paper inside)

You may donate any items needed - you do not need to make a complete backpack. If you would prefer to donate cash, there is a container for that.

Please note:
NO additions, deletions, or substitutions.
DO NOT add money, photos, or personal notes.

DO NOT include items with religious, camouflage, patriotic or military symbols.

DO NOT include plastic bags.

August, 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Men's Bible Study 7:30 a.m.
2 <i>Communion</i> Hymn Sing 8:50 Church 9:00 a.m. Sunday School and Bible Class 10:30 a.m.	3 Lydia LWML 6:00 p.m.	4	5 Dorcas LWML 2:00 p.m.	6 Elders Meeting 6:00 p.m.	7	8
9 Church 9:00 a.m. Sunday School & Bible Class 10:30 Trustees meeting Sunday School Kick-off after Sunday School & Bible	10	11	12 Small Group Study 1:30 p.m.	13	14	15
16 <i>Communion</i> Church 9:00 a.m. Sunday School and Bible Class 10:30 a.m.	17	18	19 Monthly Bible Study 1:30 p.m.	20	21	22
23 Church 9:00 a.m. Sunday School & Bible Class 10:30	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 <i>Communion</i> Church 9:00 a.m. Sunday School and Bible Class 10:30 a.m. Fifth Sunday Pot-luck and Games	31					

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



Visit our facebook page.



Address Service Requested

A Prayer for Students and Teachers

As another school year begins, we commend our students, teachers, administrators, school staff, college students, and their families to God's gracious care. Whether entering preschool, returning to familiar classrooms, or beginning a new chapter in higher education, each person faces new opportunities and challenges. As a congregation, we ask the Lord to bless them with His protection, guidance, and peace as they learn, teach, and serve in their various callings.



Gracious Heavenly Father,

We thank You for the gift of learning and for the opportunities You provide to grow in wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. Bless all students as they begin another year of study. Give them eager minds, willing hearts, and the confidence that comes from knowing You are always with them.

Bless teachers, administrators, school staff, and all who serve in our schools. Grant them patience, wisdom, compassion, and strength as they guide and care for those entrusted to them. Help them to be faithful in their work and an encouragement to those they teach.

Protect all who travel to and from school. Keep them safe from harm, strengthen them in times of challenge, and remind them daily of Your unfailing love in Christ Jesus.

By Your Holy Spirit, lead us to grow in the truth of Your Word, to serve our neighbors with joy, and to use the gifts You have given for Your glory. Keep us steadfast in Your Word so that in all we learn and do, we may honor You.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.