

THE GOOD NEWSLETTER



ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

January 2026

"God's Love in Action"

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
200 South Main Street
Charles City, IA 50616-2751
Phone: 641-228-3397

Website: www.stjohncharlescity.org



Find & like us on Facebook!

Subscribe to the E-Skinny by emailing Tara at
office@stjohncharlescity.com

Worship service broadcasted on
KCHA FM 95.9 at
9:00 a.m. on Sunday

St. John Christian Preschool
641-228-7274

Preschool Director: Shaune Fields
sjcp@stjohncharlescity.com



Lead Pastor Russ Leeper:
rleeper@stjohncharlescity.com

Intern Pastor Beth Hurt
beth@stjohncharlescity.com

Office Secretary:
Tara Dean

office@stjohncharlescity.com
Office Hours: M-Th 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
& 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.
Fridays 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. & 1:00 p.m.-
3:00 p.m.

Business Manager: Tonia Olsen
businessmanager@stjohncharlescity.com

Music Director:
Melanie Johanningmeier
mjohanningmeier@stjohncharlescity.com

Youth and Family Ministries Coordinator:
Whitney Howe
yfcoordinator@stjohncharlescity.com

Custodian:
Jamie Carolan
jcarolan@stjohncharlescity.com

As precautionary steps for safety and security, we would like to ask all attendees and visitors of St John, to make sure you are locking your vehicles anytime you are inside the church or away from your vehicle.

Intern Pastor Beth Hurt

Dear St. John Congregation,

January finds us standing in a holy in-between.

I have completed my internship and will soon travel to Germany as part of my final class at Wartburg Theological Seminary. I am now in the liminal space between intern pastor and pastor. My information has been shared with several congregations in the Northeastern Iowa Synod, and interviews will soon begin. When I receive a call, I will be ordained here at St. John, among people who have shaped me deeply.

Transitions carry both grief and hope. Scripture speaks into moments like this: *"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?"* (Isaiah 43:19). God's new beginnings do not erase what has been; they grow from it.

It can be hard to see what God is doing, but as I reflect on our time together, I am struck by how meaningful—and how unexpected—it has been. This is not something we could have planned. The gifts God brought through our shared ministry were discovered along the way, revealed again and again by the Holy Spirit's faithful presence.

You have shown me Christ in ways I had not known before. You have shown me faithfulness that endures. You have reminded me that none of us walks alone - neither in sorrow nor in joy. I often think of a conversation with a congregation member who, after hearing about my small family and the lack of support I had growing up, pointed towards God's work, saying, *"You have so much family now! You have all of us!"* In that moment, I saw God's mission made visible - not in a program or a plan, but in hospitality that creates belonging and love that makes room. This congregation adopted me as one of your own, and you did the same for my husband. His faith has grown and flourished at St. John, and through this community the Spirit awakened in him a joyful and hopeful heart. This, too, is a gift we will always treasure.

The Holy Spirit is at work here at St. John—in worship and service, in laughter and lament, in curiosity and wonder, and in courageous love for neighbor. I trust that the God who has met us so faithfully in this season is already preparing new gifts still to come.

Wherever you find yourself today - standing at the edge of change, rooted in the familiar, carrying grief, or holding hope - know that you are not walking alone. The same Spirit who has gathered us and surprised us will continue to lead the way, turning ordinary places into holy ground and sending you forward as signs of God's love in action.

Thank you for the countless acts of love you have shown me and my family - for your prayers, your kindness, your patience, and your care. Through you, I have known God's presence in tangible and life-giving ways, and for that I give thanks.

Happy New Year to you all!

With deep gratitude and confidence in Christ,

Beth Hurt

In the call process for ordained ministry



As we receive cards, we post them on the bulletin board outside the Business Manager's office. However, many individuals enter and exit the church by the Narthex and do not have an opportunity to see these communications. Since all members of our Congregation are the intended recipients, we are sharing these cards here. They remind us that our love and care for others spread joy, hope, and love. We are God's love - in action!

As you celebrate the birth of Jesus, may you delight in the gifts of God's endless *grace* and unconditional *love* and the *hope* they bring for all people.

Merry Christmas.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yehiel Curry".

ELCA Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry
and the churchwide organization staff

To the leaders of St. John Church -
Thank you for allowing our organization the opportunity to use your chapel for a recent meeting.
We are so appreciative of community partners like you.
Warm regards -
The Board of Magdalen's Light

Thank you for your
donation of \$662⁸⁰.

Floyd County Cancer Fund
The Committee

Of Note...

Board Meetings

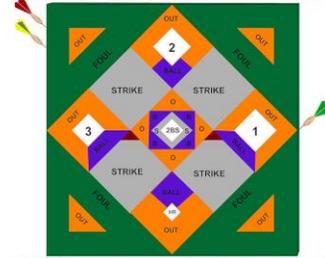
Parish Ed	1/4	10:15 am
Deacons	1/11	10:15 am
Finance	1/13	5:00 pm
Council	1/13	6:00 pm
Caring Ministries	1/15	4:30 pm
Youth & Family	1/15	5:30 pm
Stewardship	1/20	5:30 pm
Building & Ground	1/20	6:00 pm

There will be **NO**
Youth Game
Night in
January. 
The next
game night will be
February 6, 2026.



Our annual congregational meeting will be held Sunday, January 25 in the Parish Hall following the Sunday worship service.

DARTBALL



Take your best shot!

Dartball Schedule for 2025-26

Games begin at 7:00 PM
Contact Dennis Sande if you have any questions:
641-228-4113 or 319-389-7998

Jan. 7

Valley @ N. Lutheran
 Baptist @ Pleasant Hill
 CC Lutheran- Bye

Jan. 21

Pleasant Hill @ Valley
 N. Lutheran @ CC Lutheran
 Baptist- Bye

Jan. 14

Valley @ CC Lutheran
 Baptist @ N. Lutheran
 Pleasant Hill- Bye

Jan. 28

Group play at CC Lutheran

NEW SIGN-UP FOR 2026 IS OUT!!

After Worship Social Time

Coffee & a treat are served in the Narthex each Sunday!!

Special Note

We need volunteers to sign up to bring treats. There is a sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center.

We currently plan for “approximately” five (5) dozen treats.

Join us to find help and encouragement after the death of a loved one. At GriefShare, you'll find understanding, guidance, relief, and a safe place to navigate the challenges of grief. Each meeting consists of an educational video about a grief topic, as well as time to share with others in a confidential setting.

GriefShare will meet on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. We will begin on Tuesday, January 20 and finish the 13-week session on Tuesday, April 14. Any adult from the community who has experienced the death of a loved one is invited to join us for this healing and hopeful experience. Go to GriefShare.org to register or call the church office at 228-3397.



Altar Flowers & Radio Broadcast 2026

The sign-up sheets are at the Welcome Center in the Narthex!!

Altar Flowers--\$50

Radio--\$45

The radio broadcast is enjoyed by many of our St. John members who cannot watch it on YouTube or attend in person, as well as others in our community.

SAFETY AND SECURITY TEAM

Safety and security are fundamental in any church setting, as they provide a sense of sanctuary and peace in an unpredictable world. We're forming a Safety and Security Team at St. John to provide risk assessment, safety guidelines, and procedures to keep our church community safe. If you have an interest in church safety and would be willing to join our team, please contact the church office and let us know.

The graphic has a pink background. On the left, the word "PROM" is written in large, 3D wooden letters. A bouquet of white and pink flowers is placed over the letters. On the right, the text reads: "SEEKING ADULT PROM COMMITTEE (SUPPORTED BY THE YOUTH & FAMILY BOARD) Prom Scheduled For March 21st WHAT WE NEED HELP WITH: -FOOD -DRINKS (PUNCH) -MUSIC -DECORATIONS -BALLOON ARCH -TICKET SALES -IDEAS First Meeting January 4th Following Worship".

SEEKING ADULT PROM COMMITTEE
(SUPPORTED BY THE YOUTH & FAMILY BOARD)
Prom Scheduled For March 21st

WHAT WE NEED HELP WITH:
-FOOD
-DRINKS (PUNCH)
-MUSIC
-DECORATIONS
-BALLOON ARCH
-TICKET SALES
-IDEAS

First Meeting January 4th Following Worship

**Mark Your Calendars!!
Roller Skating Family Party
FREE!**

January 24th

3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

FREE!

**Crystal Ball Roller Skating Rink
710 N. Sherman Ave,
New Hampton, IA
FREE!**

Kwik Star

**Please help support...
St. John Christian Preschool**

Purchase Kwik Star gift cards and the preschool receives 5% of the face value!!

Please contact Shaune Fields if interested.
sjcp@stjohncharlescity.com

Available cards:

4-\$50

2-\$25

2-\$10

AFTER PROM LOCK-IN

For youth 8th-12th Grade
Following the Adult Prom on
March 21st

**Order your St. John Christian
Preschool Anniversary shirts!**

Simply visit the church website at
stjohncharlescity.org and click on
the Preschool image.

**Thank you, St.
John Lutheran
Church, for
allowing CC Cares
to use your
building to host
our Community
Thanksgiving
Meal. We served
550 meals that
day!**

- Kim Watkins

Thank you to
everyone who
purchased the
holiday candy boxes.
We made enough
money to cover the
start-up costs and
ingredients for Soup
Sundays.

Soup Sundays are returning!

This delicious event began last year. Several ladies got together to make soup from scratch and offered it to church members for a free will donation. Last year's money went to the kitchen fund. Members were asked to bring ingredients from a list, and the group of ladies took care of the rest. This year, we plan to add cookies or bars to the meal.

Soup Sundays will be held on the 2nd Sunday of the month starting in January.

If you would like to warm yourself up with some homemade soup, you can pick it up in the Parish Hall right after the worship service.

Also, anyone is welcome to help make the soups. We will make the soups from scratch on Fridays at 3:00 pm in the kitchen. All are welcome to help prepare. All money goes to the kitchen renovation fund. If you would like to donate items, please contact Kim Watkins or Bev Selvig.



January: Cheeseburger Soup

February: Taco Soup

March: Potato Soup

THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH!

It's hard to find words to describe the joy and emotions shown by the families that received Angel Tree boxes. Your generosity allowed us to provide \$200 grocery vouchers to all six families. This brought big smiles, gasps of surprise, a few tears, some hugs and lots of gratitude from the caregivers. I'm sure that Christmas Eve or Christmas morning will be the same when the children open the gifts that you purchased on behalf of the incarcerated parent. Each child will have two gifts from the Angel Tree. One will be a clothing item and the other a fun gift. All of this was made possible by the love and generosity of your help with the Angel Tree tags and donations.



One of the parents was released two weeks before Christmas. He was extremely grateful to be home and extremely grateful for your help in providing for his family. He was able to find a job but will not receive a paycheck until after Christmas. Tears of joy and lack of words really do say a lot!

The Angel Tree Committee,

Shirley Holm and Jessie Holm

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES

JANUARY
2026

What We Will Learn

After School Program

Programming resumes January 7th. We will learn about Jesus having dinner with sinners, the unforgiving servant, and Jesus forgiving the sinner.

Confirmation

Programming resumes January 7th. Some topics we will be covering this month include why we serve, The Missional Church, and service in action.

High School Youth Group

Programming resumes January 7th. Our students will be studying the book of Romans on the first Wednesday and the book of Genesis on the second Wednesday.



Reminder

There will be a Family Skating Party at Crystal Ball Skating Rink in New Hampton on January 24th from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

First Communion For Fifth Grade Students

- Banners: January 11th and 18th
- First Communion Class: February 8th
- Baking Bread: February 15th
- Ash Wednesday: February 18th

Adult Prom/Lock-In

Stay tuned for more information on the Adult Prom Fundraiser and 8th-12th grade Lock-In on March 21st.

BEHIND THE (Kitchen) SCENE...

The Christmas season is behind us. Welcome 2026!

We believe the menus we have planned for the late winter months will be enjoyable and filling for you. More importantly, we hope that the time you spend with those around you on Wednesday night will be enjoyable and filling for you. We welcome you!

HAPPY NEW YEAR, EVERYONE!

Kathy



January 7:
Swiss Steak
Mashed Potatoes & Gravy
Corn
Texas Sheet Cake

January 21:
Brats or Hot Dogs on a bun
Coleslaw
Oven-fried Potatoes
Fruit Cocktail

January 14:
Baked Chicken
Au Gratin Potatoes
Glazed Carrots
Pudding

January 28:
Potato Soup
Ham & Cheese Sandwiches
Relishes
Ice Cream

January 2026 SJCP

As we welcome the start of a new year, we are excited for all the growth, learning, and discoveries ahead at St. John Christian School.



Our Humpty Dumpty class is off to a wonderful start with 15 children enrolled. The class continues to thrive with engaging activities that encourage curiosity, cooperation, and hands-on learning. The Jack and Jill class currently has 8 children, allowing each child to receive plenty of support and encouragement.

During December, our students explored the exciting world of music and instruments. The children learned about different types of instruments and enjoyed listening to a variety of sounds and rhythms. We were especially grateful to welcome local musicians who shared their talents and introduced the cello, guitar, and trumpet. These special visits sparked curiosity and joy as the children experienced live music firsthand.

With the children showing a strong interest in building and construction, January will bring an exciting new study on Buildings. Through hands-on activities, stories, and creative play, the children will explore how buildings are made, the tools builders use, and the many types of structures found in our community.

We are thankful for your continued support and partnership. We look forward to a joyful and enriching year ahead at St. John Christian School!

Best Wishes,

SJCP

People's Page...



Memorials were given in memory of...

Jeanette Brinkman: Monte & Kathy Waldorf; Sharon & Donald Tieskotter

Elinor Taylor: Kay Tjaden; Monte & Kathy Waldorf, Jan & Leon Mulford

Diane Melrose: Gerald & Sharol McCoy; Karen Streich; Brenda de Buhr; Cherie Schafer; Bob Tommingo & Family, Kay Tjaden, Melanie & Eric Johanningmeier; Brad & Brenda Bailey, Don & Shirley Holm; Duane & Ileen Jerdee; Vicki Hoffman; Lindaman Living Trust; Constance & Stephen Schniller; Daniel & Miracle Bartelt; Gary & Sandie Quade; Susan Shankland; Monte & Kathy Waldorf; Ellen Doll-Brewer; Duane & Sandra Kellogg; Larry Michehl; Phyllis Foxen

Elsie Ferguson : Dennis & Janice Brinkman

Greg Buenger: John & Bev Selvig, Kay Tjaden, Don & Shirley Holm

Dale Danielson: Brad & Brenda Bailey

Duane Ortmyer: Leona Howe

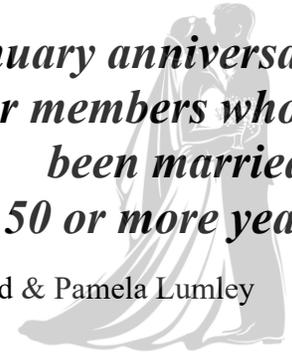
January birthdays 80 & older!



Richard Olesen	1/5/1942
Lawrence Hibbs	1/7/1942
Kay Tjaden	1/14/1939
Dean Toebe	1/17/1941
Doris Hibbs	1/23/1943
Sharon Bledsoe	1/24/1945
Terry Meyer	1/24/1945
Betty Ball	1/28/1935

*January anniversaries of
our members who have
been married
50 or more years!*

Leland & Pamela Lumley 1/2/1964



Wednesday Kitchen for January 2026

Acolytes for January 2026

Sunday...

<p>4 Kaylie Keyes Sierra Hinz</p>	<p>7 Saeli Chase Lela Hammond</p>
<p>11 Samuel Northrop Lela Hammond</p>	<p>14 Kaylie Keyes Lela Hammond</p>
<p>18 Saeli Chase Owen Prichard</p>	<p>21 Kaylie Keyes Lela Hammond</p>
<p>25 Samuel Northrop Saeli Chase</p>	<p>28 Saeli Chase Lela Hammond</p>

January 2026 Events Calendar

**Sundays: 9:00 a.m. Worship in Sanctuary
Communion is the 1st & 3rd Sunday of the Month**

1/1/2026	New Year's Day Offices Closed
1/4/2026	9:00 AM Worship with Communion
	10:05 After Worship Social Time NO Education Hour
	10:15 AM Parish Ed Board Meeting
1/5/2026	6:00 PM Cub Scouts
1/6/2026	Epiphany
1/7/2026	9:00 AM Do-Day Quilters ASP and Confirmation Resume
	5:00 PM Wednesday Night Supper Wednesday Activities
	1/9/2026
1/11/2026	5:00 PM Girl Scouts
	9:00 AM Worship
	10:05 After Worship Social Time 10:15 AM Education Hour Deacon Board Meeting
1/12/2026	6:00 PM Cub Scouts



1/13/2026	5:00 PM	Finance Board Meeting
	6:00 PM	Church Council Meeting
1/14/2026	5:00 PM	Wednesday Night Supper Wednesday Night Activities
	7:00 PM	Dartball Host
1/15/2026	4:30 PM	Caring Ministries Meeting
	5:30 PM	Youth and Family Board Meeting
1/18/2026	9:00 AM	Worship with Communion
	10:05	After Worship Social Time
	10:15 AM	Education Hour 5th Graders Work on Banner
1/19/2026	6:00 PM	Cub Scouts
1/20/2026	5:30 PM	Stewardship Board Meeting
	6:00 PM	Building and Grounds Board Meeting
	6:30 PM	GriefShare
1/21/2026	9:00 AM	Do-Day Quilters
	5:00 PM	Wednesday Night Supper Wednesday Night Activities
	7:00 PM	Dartball Host
1/23/2026	5:00 PM	Girl Scouts
1/25/2026	9:00 AM	Worship
	10:05	After Worship Social Time NO Education Hour
	10:00 AM	Annual Congregation Meeting Youth Breakfast Youth Group STEM Night at I.C.
1/26/2026	6:00 PM	Cub Scouts
1/27/2026	5:30 PM	Stephen Ministries Supervision
	6:30 PM	GriefShare
1/28/2026	4:00 PM	Newsletter Deadline
	5:00 PM	Wednesday Night Supper Wednesday Activities
	7:00 PM	Dartball Host



January 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	1 New Year's Day Offices Closed	2	3
4 Worship w/Communion No Sunday School Parish Ed 10:15am	5	6 Epiphany	7 Do-Day Quilters ASP 2-5pm Wed Night Supper 5-6pm Confirmation 6-7pm HS Youth Group 7-9pm	8	9 Annual Report Info. Due to Office 3:00pm	10
11 Baptism of Our Lord Worship Sunday School Deacons 10:15am	12	13 Finance 5pm Council 6pm	14 ASP 2-5pm Wed Night Supper 5-6pm Confirmation 6-7pm Host Dartball HS Youth Group 7-9pm	15 Caring Ministries 4:30pm Youth & Family 5:30pm	16	17
18 Worship w/Communion 5th Graders Work on Banners	19 <i>Martin Luther King Jr Day</i>	20 Stewardship 5:30pm Building & Grounds 6pm GriefShare 6:30pm	21 Do-Day Quilters ASP 2-5pm Wed Night Supper 5-6pm Confirmation 6-7pm Host Dartball HS Youth Group 7-9pm	22	23	24
25 Worship No Sunday School Youth Breakfast Annual Meeting	26 <i>Martin Luther King Jr Day</i>	27 Stephen Ministries Supervision 5:30pm GriefShare 6:30pm	28 Newsletter Deadline ASP 2-5pm Wed Night Supper 5-6pm Confirmation 6-7pm Host Dartball HS Youth Group 7-9pm	29	30	31
1	2	Notes	Highschool: Youth to help with Blessing Box in January or February Youth Adult Family Preschool			

January 2025 Birthday/Anniversary

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Barbara Tommingo	Bruce Hovden Patrick Lumley Diane Tommingo <u>Maci Rule</u> Anniversaries: Leland & Pamela Lumley Josh & Carolyn	Elizabeth Gassman Teresa Knecht	Laura Marth	Ledger Hicks Richard Olesen		Lawrence Hibbs
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Grace Marth			Ann Voelker		Mike Hammond Larry Milleson	Tami Miller Kay Tjaden
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Jennifer Seckar	Dean Toebe	Gary DeBower Xander Graeser	Parker Hicks	Josiah Hervert Sarah Kendall Joshua Keyes	Kathy Hoef
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Brayden Caffrey	Doris Hibbs Austin Velez	Sharon Bledsoe Terry Meyer	Charleigh Waddell	John Selvig Ryan Venz	Bellamy Howe	Scott Aspholm Betty Ball Emma Heidebrink Cameron Kakac
29	30	31				
Jaclyn Van Horn Anniversary: Adam & Ana Blickenderfer	Harlow Venz	Randy Brunner Benjamin Hammond Nancy Nelson Olive Tracey Abigail Wolf Anniversary: Brent & Lisa Hinz				