

# THE GOOD NEWSLETTER



**September 2025**

ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

## “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](http://www.stjohncharlescity.org)

 Find & like us on Facebook!

Subscribe to the E-Skinny by emailing  
[office@stjohncharlescity.com](mailto: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](mailto:sjcp@stjohncharlescity.com)

Pastor Russ Leeper:  
[rleeper@stjohncharlescity.com](mailto:rleeper@stjohncharlescity.com)

Beth Hurt, Intern  
[beth@stjohncharlescity.com](mailto:beth@stjohncharlescity.com)

Office Secretary: Tara Dean  
[office@stjohncharlescity.com](mailto: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 Olesen  
[businessmanager@stjohncharlescity.com](mailto:businessmanager@stjohncharlescity.com)

Music Director:  
Melanie Johannningmeier  
[mjohanningmeier@stjohncharlescity.com](mailto:mjohanningmeier@stjohncharlescity.com)

Custodian: Jamie Carolan  
[jcarolan@stjohncharlescity.com](mailto:jcarolan@stjohncharlescity.com)



## Beth Hurt, Pastor Intern

Dear Congregation,

As the school year begins again, there is so much joy and excitement in the air. I love seeing all the back-to-school photos and the smiles that come with them. In my own family, this fall is full of milestones—my youngest son, Matthew, is beginning his senior year of high school, and my youngest daughter is entering her final semester of undergraduate studies at UNI. Plus, my oldest daughter, Sydney, will be getting married at the end of this month. And for me, I am preparing to enter my last semester of seminary.

I expected to feel a sense of excitement - but instead, I've found myself weighed down and anxious about what comes next. Recently I completed my internship paperwork and my Candidacy Approval Essay. Now that those are finished, I face new unknowns that are completely out of my control. What will my professors say about me? Will it be intimidating to preach at Wartburg Chapel? Will I be approved for rostered ministry? Where will I receive my first call? How long will I wait for ordination? Will I be welcomed in my first congregation as I have been here at St. John? What if they don't like me? What if no call comes at all? The truth is, I don't know the answers to any of these questions. And as hard as I try, I cannot simply will away the fear and anxiety they stir up. My body longs to protect me, but sometimes it just panics.

Our faith does not erase fear, but it teaches us to trust God in the midst of it. I cling to God's promise in Isaiah 41:10: *"Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand."* And again, in verse 13: *"For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, 'Do not fear, I will help you.'"*

For all the questions I carry, there is one answer that cuts through my worry and overwhelm: God is with me. God strengthens us, upholds us, and holds us close with a love stronger than any fear. Even though these questions about my future as a pastor matter, I remember that my first and deepest call is the same as yours - to be a baptized child of God, loved and claimed forever. Before any assignment, title, or role, our truest identity is already secured in Christ.

Perhaps your life is not unfolding in the way you expected either. Maybe your household is overwhelmed by busy schedules, or maybe you're uneasy in the quiet of a new season. Maybe life has taken an unexpected turn and you're left with more questions than answers. Wherever you are, know this: you are not alone. We do not have to have all the answers, because as we proclaim in the Creed, Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father - and that same love, revealed in Jesus Christ, holds your right hand today and says, *"Do not fear, I will help you."*

United together, we are the body of Christ. I have found comfort, encouragement, and strength in the kind words and actions of so many of you. Thank you for holding my right hand with yours and guiding me through every step of this learning journey. Let us continue to do the same for one another - to be God's love in action in every season of life.

With gratitude in Christ,

Intern Pastor Beth

## Of Note...

Life can be shaky and unpredictable ... full of disappointments and worries.



Starting in October, Pastor Russ will lead an adult class called, "**Unshakable Hope.**" This study will unpack the Bible's most significant promises that help us navigate difficult circumstances and remain focused on the hope we have in the Scriptures. Adult Class will meet Sundays in the chapel from 10:15 to 11:15 AM, starting October 5th.



Life can be difficult, but you don't have to go through it alone. Stephen Ministers are trained caregivers who provide one-on-one, confidential, Christ-centered support during life's challenges. Whether you're experiencing grief, illness, or another hardship, a Stephen Minister can walk alongside you with care and prayer. If you or someone you know could use a listening ear and spiritual encouragement, contact Pastor Russ Leeper, Intern Pastor Beth Hurt, or Linda Johnson.

Your **St. John Lutheran Church Scholarship Committee** met at the end of the second quarter and reviewed the six applications which had been received at the church office by May 1, 2025. The principal sections of the application are divided into **general background, church activities, good citizenship, and career interest.** It is important to be aware that the applicants' names are removed from each application by the church office before they look them over, so that the committee has no knowledge of what the name of each applicant is as they look them over.

The committee unanimously moved to grant each applicant \$1000.00 for the 2025-26 academic year. The office has informed us that the six grant recipients are:

Savannah Baldus  
Trevor Carolan  
Xander Graeser  
Justin Heyer  
Quinn Heidebrink  
Jadyn VanHorn

The Saint John Lutheran Church Scholarship Committee is composed of: Shirley Holm, Wendy LaBarge, Cherie Schafer, Kay Tjaden, and Kip Hauser, Chair.

The **grants** of the Scholarship Committee are available to **any St. John Lutheran member** who wishes to **enhance their education** whether at a **junior college, a trade school, a four year college, or a professional college which is a "non Epic supported college."** The Scholarship Committee is supported by the generous contributions made through memorial gifts and contributions. Thank you!

*Thank you to everyone who has given us cards, hugs, kind words, and listening ears since the death of our goddaughter. Your support has been healing and very much appreciated.*



*Pastor Russ and Susan*



**We would like to send out a HUGE thank you to the Furniture Barn. They generously donated a brand-new couch and love seat to be used on our 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.**



## MUSIC AT ST. JOHN

**Trinity Choir** will start rehearsals on Wednesday, October 1 at 7:00 pm. Trinity Choir will plan to sing about twice a month. Any new members, as well as past members are welcome to join us. Anyone from 6th Grade and up is welcome. Students may use this for silver cord hours. This group is very non-threatening and enjoys having a good time while praising God. Please come join us. We would really like to see our numbers grow. Come and bring a friend. Any questions may be directed to Melanie Johanningmeier at (641) 330-0963.

**Kids Choir** will begin rehearsals on Wednesday, October 1 from 4:30-5:00pm in sanctuary. Kids Choir is open to kids in Kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> grade. All After School Program kids will be participating in Kids Choir as a part of the After School Program. Any kids who do not go to After School Program are also welcome to be a part of Kids Choir. Kids choir will include music activities, movement and singing. Kids Choir typically sings at about one service per month. Any questions may be directed to Melanie Johanningmeier at (641) 330-0963.

**Tone Chime Choir** Tara and Blake Dean have graciously offered to direct Tone Chime Choir this year. Rehearsals will begin on Wednesday, October 1. Rehearsals will be held at 6 pm in the Choir room in the church basement. Tone Chime Choir will play for services several times throughout the year. We would love to have all former members plus any new members who are interested to join us. If you have any questions, please contact Tara Dean at (319) 230-6427.

**The gospel group Justified Quartet is going to grace us with their music at our September 7<sup>th</sup> worship service! They will also perform at the Floyd Gospel sing event that weekend.**



## **BEHIND THE SCENES....**

We have many kind, generous, giving people in our church. They are consistently generous with their time, talents and gifts. Your church kitchen is a recipient of a lot of these gifts. But, sometimes, there is another step in the process which you might not think about! Following is just such an example:

I received a call asking if we would like some sweet corn for the kitchen. Of course, I said, “Sure”! Far be it from me to turn down such a great gift! I was attending a rug-making class when I received the call and didn’t get home until 3:30 or so. I sounded the “help” alarm and put things in motion.

This year was a little different. Previously, corn was processed in our homes and taken to the church for freezing and storage. This year, I didn’t want to contend with this project in our homes.



I loaded the car up and took it to the church. Three laundry baskets and 2 large storage tubs held our unhusked corn.

It was a beautiful day. The parking lot was finished. We decided to husk it in the shade of the canopy by the front church doors. There was a nice breeze. The kitchen was 88° with no breeze. Those pilot lights on the stove put out a lot of heat!

Barb Fuls was able to help with

the husking. About 30 minutes later, Don Holm stopped by. He had been checking out the new asphalt, saw us working at the church, and drove down to see what was going on. When he was satisfied that we weren’t getting into too much mischief, he went home. It was a pleasant surprise when he returned with his lawn chair and promptly jumped in to help us. Shortly thereafter, Shirley Holm arrived. Her company had gone, and she was checking on us. She also jumped into the husking party and things were done in a quick manner!





The corn was placed in the commercial refrigerator in the church kitchen for the night. The next morning, Sandie Quade, Shirley, and I met to freeze the corn. The corn was cut off the cob in the parking lot, cobs thrown in garbage bags which were hauled to the dumpster by Jamie Carolan. Cut corn was brought into the kitchen to be processed and placed in bags. It is now in the church freezers just waiting for Wednesday night suppers, funerals or any other event that might be on our calendars. Clean-up was easy in the kitchen. A hose-down in the parking lot cleaned that up nicely, too! Thank you, Jamie, for your custodial assistance!

This batch of corn gave us 22 gallon bags of corn. The week before, I did a small batch of corn that gave us 7 gallon bags of corn. 29 bags - A pretty good batch of corn, don't you think? This would be a lot of work for one person. I am so thankful that we have people who are willing to pitch right in to help preserve the donated gifts God gives us.

Last year we also had apples and other fruits donated which we were able to preserve and use during the year.

So, you see, there is a lot going on behind the scenes in your church kitchen! If you think you would like to help in your church kitchen (and we do have a lot of fun!), please do not hesitate to contact us. We will welcome anyone who has an interest in sharing their gift with us.

I want to thank everyone that helped with the corn! We have a great volunteer kitchen crew, and I treasure their friendship so much. It doesn't get much better than that!



Kathy Crooks

Our kitchen is where I see "God's love in action" all the time. Please consider joining us. If you have any questions or would like to work with us at some point, please give us a call! My telephone number is 641 228-6927 and my email address is [ctrygma@gmail.com](mailto:ctrygma@gmail.com).

Kathy Crooks

## DO YOU REMEMBER THE KAYWOS CLOTH?

This was a very popular product sold by the St. John Women's Ministry before the Covid pandemic and many of you purchased them for gifts and use in your own homes. These cloths have been inquired about several times over the last few years. So, a supply has again been ordered to support the Women's Ministry in our church. The cost is \$3.00 each or 4/\$10.00!

This Kaywos Cloth is a streak free, spot free, lint free and chemical free cleaning cloth. The Kaywos "Zezofiber" cloth cleans with just water. All your glass, mirrors, floors, counters, furniture, stainless, chrome...anything non-porous will come shiny clean with the cloth and water alone! Wet the cloth, wring it out, and you're ready to clean - Never use glass cleaners, polishes and many other chemicals again. The cloth is machine washable with soap and bleach. (Do not use fabric softener or your dryer on the cloth.) The cloth uses absolutely no chemicals to clean and leaves no lint or streaks behind. It measures 15" x 16" and are first quality.

It is estimated that 1 "Kaywos Cloth" replaces 6 bottles of glass cleaner and 12 rolls of paper towels. The "Kaywos Cloth" can also cut cleaning time by up to 70%.

Sounds interesting? Please contact the church office to purchase your Kaywos cloth!



Coats for Kids



**October 11, 2025**

Thinking ahead, Coats for Kids are looking for any gently used or new coats, boots, hats, gloves, or scarves.

**For coats:** Preferably sizes 5T (toddler) to Adult Small, but we will take anything and use what we see fit, while donating the rest.

**For boots:** Preferably sizes 10-13 (toddler), 1-5 (youth), and a few 8-10 adults

Please contact Jessica Hoefft, Coats for Kids Chair, with any further questions.  
anderson42592@gmail.com



We would like to thank all of you who have volunteered to provide After-Worship Refreshments. Your time and energy are greatly appreciated.



YOUTH GAME NIGHT

1<sup>ST</sup> - 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE INVITED

FRIDAY, SEPT 5<sup>TH</sup>: 6:30-8PM  
3rd floor at St John

WE WILL MAKE A CRAFT FOR "GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS", HAVE A DEVOTIONAL & THEN TIME TO PLAY GAMES & SOCIALIZE.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

# Let's Grow Faith Together!

## DO YOU WANT TO BE A SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER?

Please inform someone from the Parish Ed. There will also be an orientation on Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> following worship. This is an excellent opportunity to share your love of Christ with our youth and to help them grow in faith.



**REGISTER SOON FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL!**

**MATERIALS WILL BE ORDERED SEPTEMBER 8TH**

QR code for registration.

Illustrations of a notebook, pencils, and crayons.



**REGISTER FOR CONFIRMATION TODAY!**

**CONFIRMATION SUNDAY IS OCT. 12TH**

**CLASSES BEGIN SEPT. 24TH**

QR code for registration.

Illustrations of a Bible, a cross, and a dove.

## After School Program/Kid's Choir

First Day: October 1<sup>st</sup>  
Wednesdays after school 2-5pm  
Kid's Choir @ 4:30 pm  
For students in Kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> Grade



Register here or paper copies are available in the office.

**There is a box to check if you ONLY want to register for Kid's Choir**

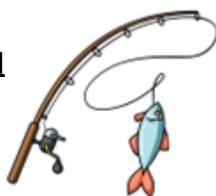
## High School Youth Fishing and Camping Outing

October 5, 2025  
5:30 PM

Bring your fishing gear if you have any. Spare poles will be provided. You will also want a camping chair.

### Activities:

Fishing  
Meal from a grill  
Bonfire  
S'Mores Bar

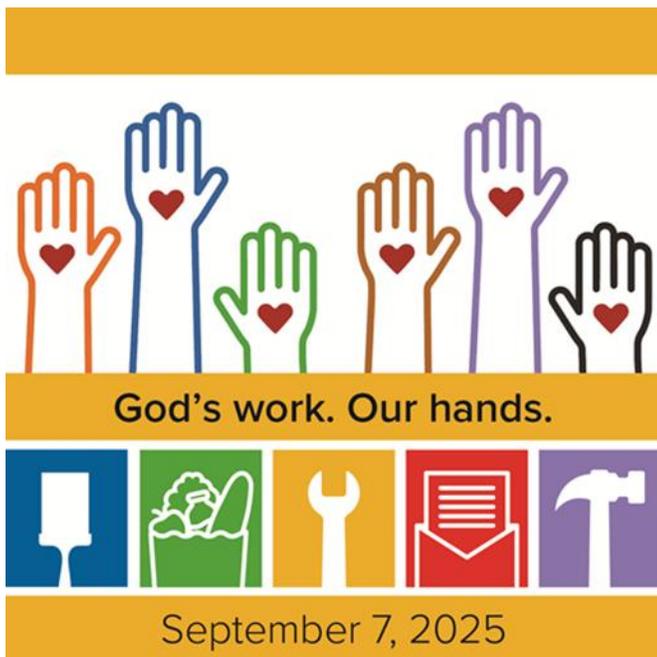


**RALLY SUNDAY SEPT. 21<sup>ST</sup> Fun**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER ORIENTATION SEPTEMBER 14TH**

**GAMES**

**JOIN US AS THE SUNDAY SCHOOL YEAR KICKS OFF!**



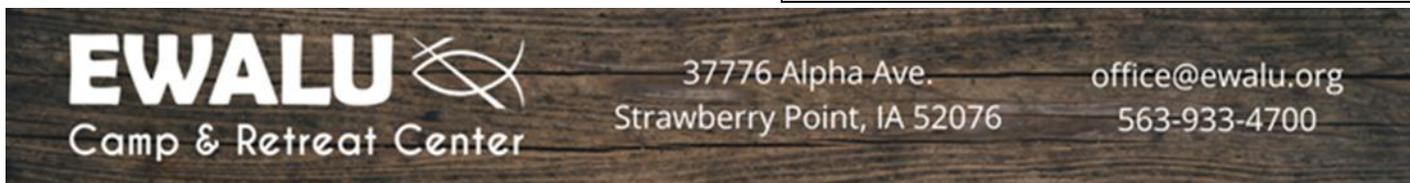
**God's Work Our Hands will be held on September 7<sup>th</sup>. Sign up in the Narthex for a project that suits your skill level and schedule. And remember to wear your God's Work Our Hands T-shirt on Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>!**

### Bible Camp Scholarships

We offer:

- \$25 for one-day camps
- \$50 for camps lasting 2-3 days
- \$150 for camps lasting 4-7 days.

**Just bring a copy of your registration to the Business Office!**



Fall Dirty Feet Retreat: October 17-18-19

Calling all junior high students: Enjoy two nights of lodging in cabins, meaningful faith conversations, quality meals & snacks, energetic camp counselors, active praise music, the High Ropes Course, campfires and much more! This special weekend at Ewalu will help you grow in faith and meet new friends!

- **WHO:** Grades 6-9 youth
- **WHEN:** 8 p.m. Friday through 11 a.m. Sunday
- **COST:** \$90/youth, \$65/chaperone
- **INCLUDES:** Activities, meals, and bunk bed style lodging. Bring your own bedding, towel, and pillow.

QUESTIONS? Please call the Ewalu office at 563-933-4700 or email at [office@ewalu.org](mailto:office@ewalu.org)



# People's Page...

## *Memorials were given in memory of...*

Vera Hinz: Sharol McCoy, Zip's Truck Equipment, Inc.,  
Sandra Miller, Sabra Schipper, Alice Krumwiede,  
Bill & Teresa Cullin, John & Bev Selvig, Timothy &  
Teresa Roberts, Karen Streich, Cal & Joyce Wood, Katherine Parks,  
Stephen and Nancy Berning  
Dale Bond: Kay Tjaden, Karen Streich

*With sympathy, we recognize the  
passing of:*

*Vera Hinz  
Dale Bond  
Lola Vest*



## *Celebration of Marriage!*

*Marcus and Samantha Norton*



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

Bill and Sharon Bledsoe	9/4/1965
Monte and Kathleen Waldorf	9/4/1971
James and Jacqueline Moon	9/6/1970
Glenn and Diann Jacobson	9/8/1956
Gary and Sandra Marth	9/8/1968

## September birthdays 80 & older!

Sondra Coen	9/1/1942
Robert Tommingo	9/6/1927
Norma McLean	9/8/1934
David Ripley	9/11/1939
Peg Poppen	9/11/1936
James Reysack	9/13/1940
Leland Lumley	9/17/1944
Larry Brewer	9/17/1934
Larry Coen	9/18/1940
Lyneen Brunsting	9/21/1940
Harold Begemann	9/22/1932

## **Acolytes for September Sundays:**

**Sept. 7:** Isaac Gassman, Benny Tracey

**Sept. 14:** Devony O'Brien, Graham Hansen

**Sept. 21:** Devony O'Brien, Graham Hansen

**Sept. 28:** Grace Marth, Devony O'Brien

# St. John Christian Preschool...

Greetings from St. John Christian Preschool. I am Shaune Fields, Director and Lead Educator of the Humpty Dumpty class for 3-year-olds, with 14 students, and the Jack and Jill class for 4-year-olds, with 8 students.



As of Monday, August 25, 2025, we commenced our academic year, introducing a Safari theme. Our students are enthusiastic about learning about God's animals in Africa through an integrated play and learning approach centered on Safari.

Our fundraising initiatives with Butter Braid and Kwik Star are nearing completion. Additionally, we offered T-shirt sales to families.

We have established a Parent Council, comprising a number of parents, which will facilitate family event planning and policy development. Meetings will commence shortly. Furthermore, we have adopted the Brightwheel app to enhance parent-teacher communication.

In the near future, we will launch a T-shirt design contest to celebrate SJCP being in operation for 50 years, open to St. John Christian School alumni and former staff, in collaboration with the Charles City Arts Center. Details will be finalized for October.

Mrs. Laue and I are excited to see how God blesses this school year.

Ms. Shaune Fields



**Please help support...**

**St. John Christian Preschool**

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

Please contact Shaune at 228-7274  
or Tara at 228-3397 if you are  
interested.

# Order your new St. John Lutheran Church T-Shirt today!



**CHILDREN ENROLLED IN  
SUNDAY SCHOOL OR  
CONFIRMATION WILL  
RECEIVE THEIR SHIRTS  
FOR FREE!**

**Order forms are at the Welcome Center or you  
can call the office to order at 228-3397.**

## September 2025 Schedule...

9/1	Labor Day	Offices Closed
9/3	9:00 a.m.	Do-Day Quilters
	7:00 p.m.	HS Youth Group 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
9/5	6:30 p.m.	Game Night 1 <sup>st</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> Grades
9/7	9:00 a.m.	<b>Worship w/ Communion</b>
		Justified Quartet
	10:15 a.m.	<i>After Worship Social Time</i>
		God's Work Our Hands
9/10	7:00 p.m.	HS Youth Group 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
9/14	9:00 a.m.	<b>Worship</b>
	10:15 a.m.	<i>After Worship Social Time</i>
	10:15 a.m.	Sunday School Teacher Orientation
9/17	9:00 a.m.	Do-Day Quilters
	7:00 p.m.	HS Youth Group 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
9/20		Wedding
9/21	9:00 a.m.	<b>Worship w/ Communion</b>
	10:15 a.m.	Rally Sunday
9/24	4:00 p.m.	Newsletter Deadline
		Confirmation Orientation
		Confirmation Walk-Through
	7:00 p.m.	HS Youth Group 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
9/28	9:00 a.m.	<b>Worship</b>
	10:15 a.m.	<i>After Worship Social Time</i>
	10:15 a.m.	Sunday School Begins



## Board Meetings

<b>ALL BOARD MEETING</b>	9/9	6:00 p.m.
Council	9/9	7:00 p.m.
Caring Ministries	9/2	4:30 p.m.

# September 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 Worship w/Communion <b>God's Work Our Hands</b>	1 Office Closed  Labor Day	2 <b>Caring Ministries Board 4:30PM</b>	3 <b>No Preschool</b> Do Day Quilters 9AM <b>Highschool Youth Group begins 7- 9pm</b>	4	5 <b>Game Night 1st-6th Grades 6:30-8PM</b>	6
7 Worship w/Communion <b>God's Work Our Hands</b>	8 Cub Scouts 6PM	9 <b>All Board Meeting 6PM</b> <b>Council Meeting to Follow</b>	10 <b>HS Youth Group 7- 9pm</b>	11 3rd Floor Set Up for Girl Scouts 5-8PM	12	13
14 Worship <b>Sunday School Teacher Orientation</b>	15 Cub Scouts 6PM	16	17 Do Day Quilters 9AM <b>HS Youth Group 7- 9pm</b>	18	19	20
21 Worship w/Communion <b>Rally Sunday!</b>	22 Cub Scouts 6PM	23	24 <b>Newsletter Deadline 4PM</b> <b>Confirmation Orientation</b> <b>Confirmation Walk-Thru</b> <b>HS Youth Group 7- 9pm</b>	25	26 3rd Floor Set Up for Girl Scouts 5-8PM	27
28 Worship <b>Sunday School Begins</b>	29 Cub Scouts 6PM	30	1	2	3	4
5	6 Notes	There will be an ASP Planning Meeting during September				
		<b>Youth</b>	<b>Adult</b>	<b>Family</b>	<b>Preschool</b>	

## September 2025 Birthdays & Anniversaries...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Sondra Coen	2 Samantha Heyer	3 Hallie Kubik Anniversary: Gary and Wendy Vance	4 Yolanda Van Ausdall Anniversaries: Bill and Sharon Bledsoe Monte and Kathy Waldorf	5 Rory Streich Sandra Dugan Anniversary: Ethan and Keegan Voelker	6 Seth Nordmeyer Bob Tommingo Emersyn Unga Anniversary: James and Jacque Moon
7 Gloria Carr Lauren Connell Kylie Parsons	8 Norma McLean Linda Reit Anniversaries: Glenn and Diann Jacobson Gary and Sandra Marth	9 Dax Johnson Stanley Mehmen	10 Gracie Ferch Carolyn Marth	11 Marcia Grimm Peg Poppen David Ripley	12 Kendra Buenger Justin Chase Anniversaries: Tom and Pam Litterer Mitchell and Chasity Engelhardt	13 Jim Reysack
14 Ethan Voelker Hunter Rule	15 Barry Sweet Anniversaries: Roger and Patricia Townsend Michael and Tammy Quade	16 Brenda Stone Matt Wolf Whitney Smith	17 Dennis Brahn Larry Brewer Jenisha Garden Leland Lumley Anniversary: Tony and Jennifer Lessin	18 Larry Coen JoAnn Hervert Becky Meyer Shelby Hicks	19 Alexandria Gebel Frank Anderson Jadyn VanHom	20
21 Lyneen Brunsting Tom Heddens Anniversary: Seth and Alexandra Nordmeyer	22 Harold Begemann	23 Cindy Davidson Bob Brede	24 Justin Heyer Kent Hoef Kurt Hoef Anniversary: Landon and Jessie Schultz	25	26 Jack Murray Jean Rima Sophie Wilkens	27 Sarah George Ezekiel Kendall
28 Kristin Brockney Carleen Laue	29 Isaac Gassman	30 Rachel Page Drake O'Brien Peggy Andrews Anniversary: Jim and Annette Tupy				