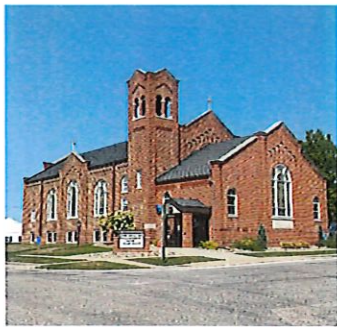


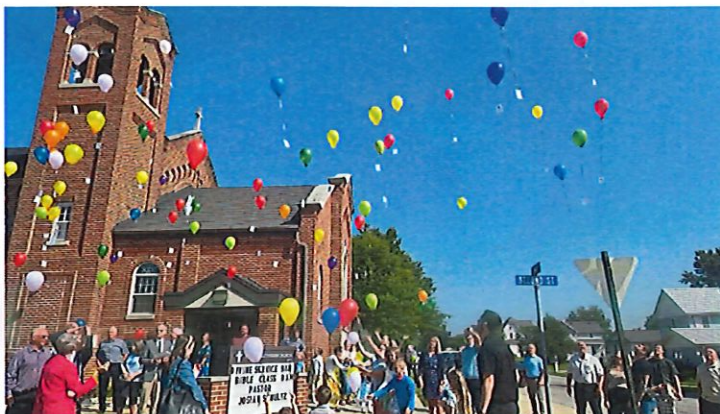


The Loveletter

St. John Lutheran Church, 201 Fourth Avenue, Keystone, Iowa 52249

September, 2026

Rally Day



We held a Rally Day on Sunday, August 23rd, to kick-off the new Christian education year here at St. John. Following worship while the hamburgers and hot dogs were being grilled, a balloon launch was held on the south side of the church. After the grilling was completed, we sat down to a meal in the fellowship hall.

There are so many to thank for helping that day. A big thank you to Pastor and Hannah and the Rich and Cindy Oehlerich for getting Thrivent Action Teams going and purchasing all the items needed, to Doug Buch for grilling all the hamburgers and hot dogs for our lunch, to the group who filled the balloons before church, to all who worked in the kitchen, and to those who attended. We haven't heard of anyone finding a balloon yet, but we will let you know if and when we do!

Educational Classes

Our Sunday morning Adult Bible class is held prior to worship from 8:00 to 8:45 a.m. each Sunday morning. We meet in the lower level fellowship hall and we are studying Luther's Large Catechism, currently studying the Lord's Prayer. It's never too late to join in.

it's all about
JESUS

After a short summer break, our Sunday School started again on Sunday, August 30th. Preschool through Kindergarten will be taught by Hannah Schultz, Missy Lennie, Pam England, and Mary Sievers; First/Second Grade will be taught by Jacque Jones, and third and older will be taught by Cindy Oehlerich. Sunday School is held following our Sunday worship services from approximately 10:15 until 11:15.

On Wednesday afternoons starting August 26th, Midweek/Confirmation Classes returned at 1:30 p.m. Midweek is for 3rd through 5th graders, with Jodi Bierschenk teaching again this year. Pastor teaches confirmation class for those 6th grade and older at the same time. Benton Community has 1:00 dismissals on most Wednesday afternoons. Holding midweek class from 1:30-2:30 allows the kids coming in from Norway or Van Horne to get to the Keystone Elementary bus stop and then walk to the church from there. Parents may pick up kids at the church at 2:30 p.m. On days of no school or dismissals because of bad weather, there will be no Midweek class held either.

On Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m., a Bible Study led by Pastor Schultz meets in the education wing. We are currently studying the *Book of Hebrews*. Open to both men and women, it's a great study!

With all of these study opportunities, invite others to come with you. They don't have to be a Lutheran or a member of our congregation to attend! Let's get to know Jesus better this year!

THE LOVELETTER

Published Monthly by

St. John Lutheran Church
(Missouri Synod)
201 Fourth Avenue
P.O. Box 176
Keystone, Iowa 52249
Phone: 319-442-3514

Church E-Mail:
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www.stjohnkeystone.org

OUR STAFF

Rev. Josiah Schultz
Pastor
Phone: 913-223-8261

Donna Busch
Parish Assistant
319-721-0952

Relda Pickering
Custodian
319-442-3742

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday Worship
9:00 a.m. at St. John

BIBLE STUDIES

Sunday mornings
8:00 - 8:45 a.m.

Thursday mornings
at 9:30

SUNDAY SCHOOL

following worship
10:15 - 11:15 a.m.

SWADDLING CLOTHES

Store open second
Saturday of each month
from 9 to noon,
the following Monday
afternoon from 4:30 - 5:30

Undie Sundays



During the month of September, we will be holding an "Undie Sunday" each Sunday of the month to help support both the *Orphan Grain Train* and *Swaddling Clothes*. We are asking for donations of new, packaged underwear for men, women, boys, or girls. Donations will be divided between Swaddling Clothes and Orphan Grain Train according to sizes. There is a drop box in the narthex or donations can be dropped off at the church office during the week. We thank you in advance for taking part in this project.

Swaddling Clothes Update



A Swaddling Clothes "Shopping Day" will be held on Saturday, September 12th, from 9 a.m. until noon, and on Monday, September 14th, from 4:30 until 5:30 p.m. We have fall/winter clothing available for our shoppers this month. In October, we will have winter coats, boots, gloves, etc. available for pickup.

Each month at Swaddling Clothes we offer gently used clothing from size newborn up to size 10, along with our usual baby and motherhood items including maternity clothes. There are no income guidelines to follow, everyone is welcome to come in and shop. Everything is free! We just ask that those coming in to shop have children in their custody either by birth or by court order. We offer a sleeve of diapers and baby wipes each month to those who come in for each of their children in need of them.

During August we had around 30 families come in to "shop" for their children. Besides the usual items that we have, we offered school supplies and backpacks for those who came in. We want to thank those people who helped purchase and collect those supplies that were given away. They were truly appreciated!

We are always looking for good, used clothing size newborn to size 10 for both boys and girls. We also need things like highchairs, strollers, cribs, car seats, blankets, etc. If you have donations, please contact the church office for a dropoff plan.

We also have a charitable account at Stuff, Etc. in Cedar Rapids where you can donate household items, furniture, anything but children's clothing (we want those!). Check out Stuff, Etc.—Cedar Rapids website to see what items they are accepting and for drop off options. They strictly enforce limits and what they accept seasonally. If you take donations there for the purpose of helping out Swaddling Clothes, you will need to tell them the account number for Swaddling Clothes, St. John Lutheran Church, Keystone at the time of drop off - #36081 and they may ask for the church's phone number - 319-442-3514. If you do it this way, our Swaddling Clothes will receive a portion of the sale when your items sell.

During September, we observe our 7 year anniversary since we opened our Swaddling Clothes on September 14, 2019. On that opening day we, as a committee, would have been happy if 1 or 2 families showed up. We were pretty excited when 6 families came in!

We have had some challenges keeping our Swaddling Clothes going. March through May of 2020, on our shopping days we were only open for curb-side pickup because of the pandemic shutdown. We opened up again in June encouraging masks to be worn, and only allowing 2 shoppers in at a time. Then, the church was hit by the Derecho in August, of 2020. We held Swaddling Clothes at the church until March, of 2021, when we moved our Swaddling Clothes, with the help of the youth group, to Jean Goken's garage here in town so the church could be repaired. We remained there until returning to the church in October of 2021, using the daycare area of the basement for our Swaddling Clothes until the other section of the basement had it's repairs completed in January of 2022. In February of that year, we decided to add an extra shopping time on Monday afternoons so more families could benefit from our service.

We want to thank all the volunteers who have helped with Swaddling Clothes along the way. Your help is much appreciated! There are several baskets of clothing located in the narthex that need to be laundered. You can also help by telling others about our program. We have brochures in the narthex to take and share with others or you can direct them to our website at www.stjohnkeystone.org or our Facebook page Swaddling Clothes-St. John Lutheran Church, Keystone, Iowa. We know there is a huge need right now as children return to school!

To God be the glory for the success of this mission of our church!

*Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them,
for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."*

Matthew 19:14

Addresses

Do you have children or grandchildren who have headed off to college or into the workforce? Please let the church office know of any changes in their address and/or their e-mail address so that we can send them the Loveletter or other church mailings. We can also get them in touch with an LCMS church in their new location.

Volunteers Needed

We are always looking for volunteers here at St. John in a lot of different areas. Some of those places are ushering, running the camera to stream the service, serving on the altar guild, teaching Sunday School, being a Sunday School helper, helping with Swaddling Clothes, updating picture boards, keeping the pews tidy and well stocked, sending out birthday and anniversary cards from the church, helping with quilting, helping serve funeral dinners, visiting those in the care centers and shut-ins, becoming part of the hospitality committee, addressing envelopes, etc. If you have some time to spare, we can find something at the church that needs to be done!

Garden Blessing Table



Check out the Garden Blessings Table that is located on the table in the narthex. We are hoping that if you have an abundance of garden produce, you may wish to share it with others. Simply put it on the table on the landing in the narthex as you enter for the worship service and as others exit they may take what they wish. This is a great way to share what God has provided! Thank you in advance!

2027 Church Council Election

Our election for the 2027 Church Council is quickly approaching. The election will be held during the Quarterly Voters' Meeting to be held at a date yet to be determined in October here at St. John. At the present time, we have 10 members on the church council, Jordan Silhanek, Ann Franzenburg, Doug Buch, Mary Sievers, Richard Oehlerich, Kent Silhanek, Barbara Hennings, Byran Kimm, Brad Sievers, and Adrieonna Reddick. The terms of three council members expire this year: Richard Oehlerich, Kent Silhanek, and Barbara Hennings. All have served just one 3-year term and can run again if they wish. Our by-laws state that *"the Church Council shall be comprised of not less than seven members and no more than eleven members"* which means that if these 3 council members decide to run again we still have room to elect one more member. If they decided not to run again, we would have room for four new members.

While people may express their desire to serve, having you nominate people allows you to identify those whom you think would serve well. Of course, people who are nominated will be asked if they would like to serve if elected.

We are therefore seeking your suggestions or nominations. Pray about these positions. Perhaps encourage the people whose names you wrote and explain why you nominated them. The Nominating Committee will contact all nominees to get their approval to have their names submitted for the election in October.

Following is the form on which to submit your nominees. Please drop your completed nomination form in the box located in the narthex or mail it back to the church at P.O. Box 176 as soon as possible.

=====

NOMINATIONS FOR CHURCH COUNCIL

(Please Print)

God answers knee-mail.

Pictorial Directory Project

The pictorial directory project has received more than the 32 families originally needed to proceed. However, if you haven't signed up yet, please do so as soon as possible, if you are interested. This will help us determine how much time will be needed for the project. Possible dates and times will be determined soon. Each family who has their picture taken will receive a directory and an 8 x 10 portrait free. Our last directory was compiled 25 years ago in 2001!

Orphan Grain Train

There is a box in the narthex for your donations to Orphan Grain Train. This is for clean, used, adult clothing both men's and women's.

We are also looking for someone to take donations to Orphan Grain Train which is located in Clemons, Iowa (approximately 17 miles northwest of Marshalltown). This would need to be done on a Tuesday morning when OGT is open and accepting donations. If you could help, please contact the church office at 319-442-3514.

Lutheran Family Service Virtual Counseling Service

Your mental health and wellness is just as important as your physical health. In fact, it is recommended that you schedule a mental health "checkup" each year to proactively address life concerns as they arise before they get out of hand. However, we're here to help during a mental health crisis, a difficult life transition, recent trauma and more. We are here for you - to be the light in the darkness.

A FRIEND IN THE DARKNESS

Lutheran Family Service offers professional mental health counseling from master's prepared and licensed therapists in Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota. As we meet with you in a private, confidential office setting or virtual session, you can begin to explore your thoughts and feelings in a nonjudgmental, safe environment.

Our minds are created to be beautifully complex, capable of enjoying great pleasure but also sometimes enduring significant pain. Trauma, emotional distress or mental illness can negatively impact anyone, and when it does, we are left searching for answers without knowing where to find help.

As you may have guessed, Lutheran Family Service specializes in offering Christian counseling should a client want that aspect integrated into their wholistic therapy approach. However, you do not have to be Lutheran or Christian to receive our services. Just know that you will be treated with kindness, compassion and love.

If you are struggling, worried, angry, sad or afraid, call us. The decision to begin counseling can be a difficult one, but can be life-changing. Our team of counselors are prepared to treat a variety of mental health concerns, including but not limited to:

- Depression and suicidal thoughts
- Anxiety and worry
- Trauma or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Personality disorders
- Abuse survivors
- Grief and loss
- Parenting concerns
- Life transitions
- Work and career concerns
- Chronic mental illness

We're here to listen, to understand and to help you sort through your situation, however complicated, hopeless or overwhelming it may seem. Lutheran Family Service 515-251-4900.

Christ Lutheran High School

Christ Lutheran High School together with Zion Lutheran Church – Hiawatha, is proud to announce that they have finalized an agreement to allow CLHS to launch classes at Zion beginning August of 2027. Momentum is building! They send sincere thanks to the Christ Lutheran High community! They are seeing the fruits of your support through increasing email subscribers, donations and volunteer support. The board of directors is fervently deliberating one of their biggest decisions – the shape and substance of their education model. Please pray for wisdom and clarity for their board members as they weigh a wide variety of options. Stay connected on their Facebook page or subscribe to their emails at www.christlutheranhigh.org

2027 Offering Envelopes

It's about time to be thinking about offering envelopes for 2027. We want to avoid the year end rush that we have run into in past years. If you have any changes from this year regarding your family's offering envelopes, please contact the church office as soon as possible. If you didn't receive offering envelopes this year, but would like to receive them in 2027, please let Donna know that as well.



Central Lutheran School, Newhall, IA
September 2026
Monthly Newsletter to area churches



+Central Lutheran provides students with a quality education built on a firm Christian foundation, so they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Savior and become loving servants to others. +

Greetings from Central Lutheran School!

And we're off! August 24, 2026, started a new school year! What a blessing to welcome 192 students through the doors at CLS! Founded in Faith - from 1 Corinthians 3:11, "For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."



Let's meet our new 1st grade teacher, Miss Cora Ellingworth.

Hello, my name is Cora Ellingworth and I will be the first grade teacher at CLS this fall! I just graduated from Luther College in May with a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education with an endorsement in reading. My home church is St. John in Waverly, Iowa.

I love to teach foundational reading skills and am so excited to be a part of the CLS community!

I can't wait to meet everyone and see what this year holds!

A Bible verse that stands out to me is John 15:5. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

We greatly appreciate your support and prayers for the CLS Board members, staff, families, and students.

Philippians 1:3-6

Franklin O. Parris – Principal

Central Lutheran School, Newhall, IA principal@centrallutheranschool.org

Please check out what is happening at CLS - we would love to have you participate in attending chapels, games, open houses and other events!

Sept. 1 – 4:30/5:30 Cougar Soccer vs. Heritage

Sept. 2 – 8:30 am Aug/Sept. Baptismal Birthday Chapel w/Mr. Parris; After chapel Cougar Student Council speeches for President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, then vote in classrooms for officers and class representatives; 1pm Dismissal; 1:30-3:30 Teacher PD-Curriculum Mapping (Denise)

Sept. 3 - FALL PICTURES; 4:30/5:30 Cougar Soccer @ Trinity, CR

Sept. 5 – Happy Anniversary Pastor and Vanessa Palmer

Sept. 7 – Labor Day, No School

Sept. 8 - Happy Birthday Becky Rieck, one of our assistant cooks!

Sept. 9 – Happy Anniversary Ben and Jackie Seeck, our administrative assistant! 8:30 am Chapel Pastor Schultz; 1pm Dismissal; 1:30-3:30 Teacher PD Parent Academy with Mark Minkus

Sept. 10 - 4:30/5:30 Cougar Soccer vs. LIS

Sept. 11 – Patriot Day - Iowa/Iowa State Day! (Wear Black and Gold or Cardinal and Gold); 4:30 Cougar JV Soccer @ Pathway

Sept. 13 – Happy Birthday Lorrie Towle, in charge of our KFJ after school care program! Happy Grandparents Day!

Sept. 14 - Fall Testing; 4:30 Cougar Cross Country @ LIS

Sept. 15 - Fall testing

Sept. 16 – Fall Testing; 8:30 am Chapel Pastor Palmer; 1pm Dismissal; 1:30-2 Teacher PD Mentor meetings; 2-3 Junior Achievement information for K-8 teachers

Sept. 17 – Fall Testing; 5:15-6:15 CLS Open House with a Supper/ 6:30 PTL Meeting

Sept. 18 – Fall testing

Sept. 21- Fall testing; Cougar Cross Country @ IoDisECa; 6pm Board of Directors meeting

Sept. 22 – Fall Testing; 4:30/5:30 Cougar Soccer @ INCA

Sept. 23 – Fall Testing; 8:30 am Chapel Pastor Lingard; 1pm Dismissal; 1:30-3:30 Teacher PD NLSA Committee work

Sept. 24 - Fall Testing; Cougar Soccer in IDE Tournament in CR

Sept. 25 - Happy Anniversary Kyle and Shalan Knapke, our 2nd grade teacher! Fall Testing

Sept. 26 – Happy Birthday Hope Nordman, our 3rd grade teacher and Happy Anniversary Justin and Connie Volesky, our preschool teacher! Cougar Soccer @ IDE Tournament at Valley

Sept. 28 - 4:30 Cougar Cross Country @ Davenport

Sept. 29 - IDE new teacher workshop at Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca

Sept. 30 – Happy Birthday Debbie Stien, our reading coach! 8:30 am 8th grade Chapel; 1PM Dismissal; 1:30-3:30 PD



Ushers and Greeters

September 6 (9:00 a.m.):	Greeters: Dean and Kathy Scheel. Ushers: Barbara Hennings, Doug Buch, Colin Buch.
13 (9:00 a.m.):	Greeters: Greg and Carlene Silhanek. Ushers: Eric and Ann Franzenburg, Byran and Tracie Kimm.
20 (9:00 a.m.):	Greeters: Rita Pickering, Pam England. Ushers: Denny and Susie Albers, Brad Sievers, Colby Lennie, Aaron Huesmann.
27 (9:00 a.m.):	Greeters: Dan and Donna Busch. Ushers: Wayne Ritscher, Rick Pickering, Todd and Cheryl Hennings.

Acolytes

September 6	(9:00 a.m.):	Tinley
13	(9:00 a.m.):	Cheyenne
20	(9:00 a.m.):	Kaylee
27	(9:00 a.m.):	Meredith

Videographers

September 6	(9:00 a.m.):	Jim Buch
13	(9:00 a.m.):	Dean Scheel
20	(9:00 a.m.):	Dan Busch
27	(9:00 a.m.):	Dave Gahrng

Altar Guild for September

Connie Pickering
Wendy Junge

Deacons

September 6	(9:00 a.m.):	Kent Silhanek
13	(9:00 a.m.):	Kent Silhanek
20	(9:00 a.m.):	Rich Oehlerich
27	(9:00 a.m.):	Kent Silhanek

Hospitality Committee

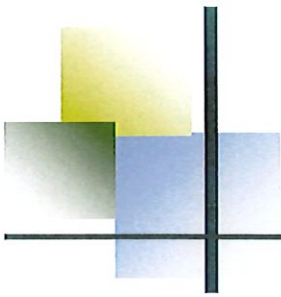
(September 13th)

Bake: Amie Slapnicka
Bake and Serve: Deb Kromminga
Relda Pickering



On September 27th, the Central Lutheran Choir will be singing here at St. John. We'd like to have refreshments after the service. If you could help with this, please contact Donna in the church office as soon as possible.

Thanks in advance!



September, 2026

St. John Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 176—201 Fourth Avenue
Keystone, Iowa 52249
Church E-mail: stjnluth@netins.net
Rev. Josiah Schultz, Pastor
Pastor's Cell: 913-223-8261

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 2:00 p.m. - Lutheran Communion @ KNCC	2 1:30 - 2:30— Midweek/ Confirmation Classes	3 9:30—Adult Bible Study on <i>The Book of Hebrews</i>	4	5
6 8:00 a.m. —Adult Bible Study 9:00 a.m.—Divine Service 10:15 a.m.—Sunday School	Labor Day 7 Church Offices Closed	8	9 8:30 a.m. - Pastor Chapel @ CLS 1:30 - 2:30— Midweek/ Confirmation	10 9:30—Adult Bible Study on <i>The Book of Hebrews</i>	11	12 9:00 a.m. to noon— Swaddling Clothes Shopping Day
13 8:00 a.m. —Adult Bible Study 9:00 a.m.—Divine Service 10:15 a.m.—Sunday School 1:00 p.m.—Church Council Meeting	14 9:00 to noon— Pastor at First in B.P. 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.— Swaddling Clothes Shopping Day	15	16 1:30 - 2:30— Midweek/ Confirmation Classes	17 9:30—Adult Bible Study on <i>The Book of Hebrews</i>	18	19
20 8:00 a.m. —Adult Bible Study 9:00 a.m.—Divine Service 10:15 a.m.—Sunday School	21 9:00 to noon— Pastor at First in B.P.	22	23 1:30 - 2:30— Midweek/ Confirmation Classes	24 9:30—Adult Bible Study on <i>The Book of Hebrews</i>	25	26
27 8:00 a.m. —Adult Bible Study 9:00 a.m.—Divine Service with Central Choir here 10:15 a.m.—Sunday School	28 9:00 to noon— Pastor at First in B.P.	29	30 1:30 - 2:30— Midweek/ Confirmation Classes			

Birthdays

September 2 - Melissa Lennie, Connor Sindt
 3 - Henry Balvin, Brenda Kapucian, Cheyenne Silhanek
 4 - Randy Geiger, Kyle Kruckenberg, Mary Sievers
 6 - Danielle Balvin, Kelli Jamesson
 7 - Kaitlin Kromminga
 8 - Barry Nissen
 9 - Danni Chamberlin, Hollie Garwood, Don Pickering
 11 - Bruce Feuerbach, Bonnie Loy
 12 - Hope Brecht
 15 - Crystal Busch
 19 - Cindy Oehlerich
 20 - Tracie Kimm, Jan Meyer
 21 - Hannah Johnson, Brennan Kies, Brooks Reddick, Shari Teneyck
 23 - Kathy Scheel, Terry Schwab, Amie Slapnicka

September birthdays (continued)

24 - Emma Kupka
 25 - Blake Mather
 30 - Erik Nelson

Wedding Anniversaries

September 5 - David and Becky Albertsen, Doug and Sheila Rusk
 8 - Michael and Sheryl Fischer
 10 - Rick and Denise Andresen, Jim and Jessika Grace
 18 - Kyle and Cindy Brunssen, Ben and Melissa Lennie
 21 - Brian and Danielle Balvin
 28 - Jeramy and Jacque Jones
 30 - Dennis and Susan Albers

