

The Loveletter

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

August, 2025

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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Church Website:
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
following worship

Wednesday mornings

SWADDLING CLOTHES

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

Vacation Bible School Update

Vacation Bible School was held July 28 through August 1 from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. This year's theme was *An Epic Australian Adventure*. It was a fun time for kids as they learned about our Savior with a lesson, craft, music, snacks, and games each session. We had 36 children attend this year! The kids brought in offerings each day and that money will be sent to Pastor Groth for his mission in Belize. The challenge for the kiddos was to bring in \$200 in offerings for the week. If the \$200 was reached, one kid would be chosen to push a pie in Pastor Schultz' face. For each \$100 over that amount another kid would also get to pie him in the face. The kids brought in a total of \$500 (4 pies worth) that will be sent to Pastor Groth's mission!

On Sunday, August 3rd, during our worship service the VBS kids will be singing a couple of songs that they learned during VBS week with an invitation for parents to come along also. There will be snacks served in the narthex following the service.

There are so many people to thank and we certainly don't want to miss naming anyone. We especially want to thank Pastor Schultz for providing the opening and closing each day and to Mary Sievers who is St. John's Children's Spiritual Growth chairperson for coordinating the VBS this year. We had so many volunteers who took their part and just did awesome, whether teaching the Bible lessons, practicing the music, providing awesome games, crafts, and bringing in and serving some delicious snacks. We also thank the parents who took time out of their day to see that their children could attend. God's blessings to you all!

Quarterly Voters' Meeting

A Quarterly Voters' Meeting was held on Sunday, July 27th, following our worship service. On the agenda for old business was the property and equipment that needed attention. Most of the items on the list have been addressed and completed. The Gethsemane window has been repaired along with the plexiglass coverings put on the vent windows; the wood around the vent windows was painted before the plexiglass was installed; a new basement kitchen door has been installed; the sink cupboards in the main kitchen have been painted; the parsonage garage remodel is almost completed, just the side entryway door is yet to be installed; a new computer has been installed in the church office; leaks on the ramp going to the lower level have been stopped; organ has been inspected, but no work has been done as of yet.

New business included explanation of the work being done by the Board of Elders on the delinquent members list. Mary Sievers, chairperson for Children's Spiritual Growth requested prayers for a successful VBS week beginning the next day. Pastor gave a report on the highlights of the LCMS Youth Gathering in New Orleans which he and Noah Barr attended last week. A very uplifting experience!

Garden Blessing Table



The Garden Blessings Table has returned! 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!

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. This will be divided between Swaddling Clothes and Orphan Grain Train. In October we will hold *Socktober* where we will be collecting new socks of all sizes. Look for some great bargains on these items as school shopping is in full swing and items may be going on sale. There will be a box in the narthex for this cause starting on Sunday, September 1st. These donations will be divided between both OGT and Swaddling Clothes depending on sizes. We thank you in advance!

Swaddling Clothes Update



A Swaddling Clothes "Shopping Day" will be held on Saturday, August 9th, from 9 a.m. until noon, and on Monday, August 11th, from 4:30 until 5:30 p.m. We had 30 families come in for the month of July to get what they needed for their children. We are always in need of donations of gently used, stain-free clothing and baby care items. Without donations, this program would not be possible. Call the church office at 319-442-3514 to arrange a convenient drop off plan.

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 comes in for each of their children in need of them.

If you are a mom preparing for school to begin, please keep Swaddling Clothes in mind when sorting your child's clothing. Another help would be to watch clearance items in your favorite retail store. Items get marked down tremendously if they aren't selling or are out of season. We have several families with school-aged children who will need school clothing and we would love your donations!

We are collecting school supplies for our families to pick up during our August shopping days. Thank you to all for the generous donations!

Again, we want to thank all the volunteers who take baskets of clothing home to launder. There are several of them located in the narthex as we will be changing to our fall/winter clothing starting in September.

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 parents get their children ready to return to school!

*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

Hospitalizations

If you are hospitalized or planning to be, please contact Pastor Schultz (913-223-8261) or the church office (319-442-3514). We are not contacted at all by the hospital and therefore don't know of members who have been admitted. We usually find out by hearsay after the person has been released.

Rev. Mike Paul, Missionary to Taiwan

LCMS Missionary to Taiwan, Rev. Mike Paul and his wife, Irene, invite you to come spend an evening with them on Sunday, August 3, 7 PM in the Parrish Hall at St. Andrew, Van Horne. They will talk about the work to spread the Gospel and training pastors that is being done in Taiwan (Republic of China/ROC). Light refreshments will be served.

Man's way leads to a hopeless end—God's way leads to an endless hope.

Missions Update

You may remember that our offerings in our "mission" envelopes for 2025 are being given to Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca as our local mission and to the Rev. Jason Groth, Missionary to Belize, for our international mission. These both receive 1/2 of the offerings unless they are specified to be given differently. These missions are paid out quarterly. Please note that your mission offering may be directed to other places by noting it on your offering envelope. For the second quarter of 2025 the payouts were: Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca - \$312.50; Rev. Groth and his mission to Belize - \$1,512.50; Zach Johnson - \$200.00; Lutherans in Africa - \$1,000.00; Orphan Grain Train - \$150.00.

CLS PTL Clean the School Party

Central Lutheran needs our help! School is about to be back in session and the school is in need of a good scrub. Do you have loved ones who attend? Would you like to help them come back to a school that's nice and clean? The doors will be open for you to help one hour or more - you choose! August 2 - 9-5; August 3 - 12-4; August 4 - 4-8. Cleaning tools will be supplied, as well as refreshments. All you need is to show up and be ready to roll up your sleeves. Thank you in advance for all your help! Youth Groups are more than welcome, too!

Healthy Kids Iowa

Healthy Kids Iowa is a state-run initiative in Iowa designed to address food insecurity among children during the summer months when school is not in session. It provides families with monthly food boxes containing \$40 worth of nutritious items like fruits, vegetables, dairy, grains, and proteins. Every child deserves access to healthy food. Virginia Gay Hospital is proud to partner with Benton Community and Vinton-Shellsburg Schools to support families this summer. This is a simple, community supported program designed to make summer a little easier for families. Food is available once per month with the last distribution being held on August 7th from 4-7 p.m. at Benton Community High School, 600 1st Street, Van Horne, near the gym doors, and at Vinton Shellsburg High School, 210 W. 21st Street, Vinton, on the east side of the school. You will get up to \$40 worth of healthy groceries for each of your school-age children. There is no income paperwork stress, just a simple form to fill out at the site and you're good to go. If you have questions, please call VGH at 319.472.6200.

St. John Board of Elders

St. John has a Board of Elders in place. The purpose of the Board of Elders is to be a liaison between the church and our pastor. Of course, Pastor Schultz is available anytime to meet with you about issues in the church. If you need to speak with someone other than pastor about issues that need attention, please contact one of the elders, knowing that matters of a private nature are kept strictly confidential. Members of the Board of Elders include Jim Buch, Dave Gahring, Bill Hennings, Bob Albertsen, Dan Busch, Dennis Schwab, and Richard Oehlerich. The next Board Meeting is Sunday, August 3rd, at 7:30 a.m.

St. Paul Lutheran Ice Cream Social

St. Paul Lutheran Church in Luzerne is holding their annual Ice Cream Social on Sunday, August 10th, with serving from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. They will be serving homemade ice cream, sandwiches, and desserts all for a free-will offering. Hope to see you there!

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!

SERVING THE LORD IN

Belize

NEWS FROM GROTH FAMILY



June 2025

**A New Beginning**

On June 29th, during the worship service at El Buen Pastor Lutheran Church in Valley of Peace, my family and I were officially recognized as a new mission family in Belize.

I was also publicly acknowledged as having been installed as a missionary pastor serving El Buen Pastor and the broader mission field in Belize.

I had already been hard at work learning the ins and outs of Belizean life and the mission, but it is always good to recognize new beginnings in the church. We give thanks to God for His faithfulness and ask for your prayers as we continue this work.



To be added to or removed from this mailing list, send an email message to jgroth@lms.org with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.

jgroth@lms.org**Showing Mercy in Belize**

Families with children with disabilities pose for a picture in El Buen Pastor Lutheran Church

New Partnership Begins in Valley of Peace

Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ for the joyful work He is doing in Belize!

We're excited to share the launch of a new mercy outreach: the *Mobile Mercy House*, a collaborative ministry between El Buen Pastor Lutheran Church and the Inspiration Center in Belize City. Through this partnership, six children with disabilities are now receiving regular physical therapy close to home—bringing care, dignity, and the love of Christ directly into their community.

This work of mercy is not separate from the mission of the Church—it is part of it. As we serve our neighbors in body and soul, we bear witness to the compassion of Jesus and invite them into His Church. Each monthly Mercy House visit includes the proclamation of the Gospel and prayer with a pastor or church member. In this way, acts of mercy are the soil in which the Church takes root.

Between Mercy House days, families continue to receive care through in-home visits from Pastor Flores or another mission pastor. These visits deepen relationships, foster trust, and open doors for ongoing witness. As Lutheran churches are planted and grow in these communities, the Gospel spreads—reaching hearts not only with words, but with the living love of Christ.

Family Update

the camp kitchen, we got by. Now we're grateful to have both.

I'm also learning the ins and outs of coordinating Camp Concordia—2.5 acres with seven buildings, all needing regular maintenance and care.

Personal Update

Life in Belize continues to be full of learning and transition for our family. We've been working with our Spanish teachers over Zoom to improve our ability to connect with people in the community. Each day brings new chances to meet neighbors and build relationships. Slowly, we're finding our place in the rhythm of daily life here.

Our house is nearly complete! When we first arrived, we didn't have a working kitchen or bathroom with laundry, but with the help of kind neighbors and

The kids are adjusting well, though the heat has been a big change. They're getting used to life in a new country, and we're preparing for another year of homeschooling. Gideon will be in 8th grade, Esther in 6th, Martha in 3rd, and Joanna in 1st.

Please keep us in your prayers as we grow, serve, and settle into the work God has given us here.

Planting Seeds of Faith

In the vibrant village of Seine Bight, nearly 100 children gathered for a joyful and Christ-centered Vacation Bible School, led by a dedicated team from the Belize Mission Society. For several days, the church grounds were filled with music, laughter, bright colors, and the sound of young voices singing praises to Jesus. Through engaging Bible storytelling, hands-on crafts, joyful games, and meaningful conversations, the love of Christ was shared with each child in tangible ways.

This VBS was more than an event; it was an expression of Christ's mercy and a clear proclamation of the Gospel. We trust that through the Holy Spirit, seeds of faith were planted in hearts that will grow in the days and years to come. We are especially thankful for the growing connections to Christ Lutheran Church in the village, where families are now being invited into a community of worship, learning, and care. Please continue to pray for these children and their families, that they may be drawn closer to Jesus and His Church through the witness of His people.

A summer of introductions

In June, I had the joy of serving alongside the Belize Mission Society at a Vacation Bible School in Georgetown, Belize. The children welcomed us with open arms and hearts full of energy. They eagerly joined in singing, learning Bible stories, and spending time with the adult leaders. One boy even climbed onto my shoulders as I read to him from the Bible—a sweet reminder of how simple moments of connection can powerfully share

the love of Christ. This experience was a beautiful picture of what your prayers and support make possible: ministry rooted in God's Word, shared in love, and lived out through relationships. I'm grateful to the Belize Mission Society for organizing this impactful outreach and to each of the volunteers for making it happen. God is planting seeds of faith in Belize, and your partnership continues to help them grow!



Central Lutheran School, Newhall, IA

August 2025

Monthly Newsletter



+Central Lutheran School 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. +
See Jesus, Seek Knowledge, Serve Joyfully

Greetings from Central Lutheran School!

BACK TO SCHOOL! Our 2025-2026 school theme for the year is: Shine His Light! This theme is based on Matthew 5:16, *"In the same way let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven."* The CLS Staff is looking forward to sharing this message with students every day in every subject throughout the school year!

PTL Back to School - Clean the School Party!

CLS Needs Your Help! School is about to be back in session and our beloved school is in need of a good scrub. Do you have loved ones who attend? Would you like to help them come back to a school that's nice and clean? The doors will be open for you to help one hour or more - you choose! August 2 - 9-5; August 3 - 12-4; August 4 - 4-8
 Cleaning tools will be supplied, as well as refreshments. All you need is to show up and be ready to roll up your sleeves. Thank you in advance for all your help! Youth Groups are more than welcome, too!

Meet the New CLS Staff Members! This month our new 4th grade teacher, Mrs. Melissa Voss



Hi! My name is Melissa Voss. I will be the fourth grade teacher at Central Lutheran School. I have worked with all different age groups from infant to 5th grade. The last two years I was the permanent building substitute at Pierce Elementary in Cedar Rapids where I primarily spent most of my time in a behavior focus classroom. I live in Cedar Rapids with my husband Andrew and our two kids Wyatt (6th grade this year at CLS) and Willa (2nd grade this year at CLS). Both of them keep us very busy. Wyatt plays travel baseball and Willa plays travel softball and also does competitive all star cheer.

I was baptized at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Luzerne. I truly feel like God led me to this opportunity at CLS and I'm excited for the adventure. I'm very excited to meet everyone and build relationships. Here's to a great school year!

Building Update - Preschool, 3rd, 4th, 5th grade and our interventionist room floors have all been washed, waxed and polished this summer! A new fence is or has been installed around our playground! Handrails have been installed in our bleachers! Our wonderful facilities guys have worked hard on the list in the conference room in fixing things and changing lights - THANK YOU! Our playground will have a few new additions to finish up the project! Thank you to everyone for your donations, prayers, and help with this project.

Enrollment - We thank God for the increase in our enrollment this year. As of the writing of this article, CLS has a total of 199 students. (3 and 4 year old preschool 33, K-8 = 166) Last year at this time we had an enrollment of 178 students! More children will be hearing about Jesus every day!

Thank you for your continued support of Central Lutheran School! Please continue to keep CLS Board members, staff, families, and students in your prayers.

Shine His Light! Matthew 5:16

Philippians 1:3-6

Franklin O. Parris – Principal

Central Lutheran School

Newhall, IA, 319-223-5271

principal@centrallutheranschool.org



Ushers and Greeters

August 3 (9:00 a.m.):	Greeters: Rita Pickering and Pam England. Ushers: Denny and Susie Albers, Brad Sievers, Robert Albertsen, Colby Lennie.
10 (9:00 a.m.):	Greeters: Dan and Donna Busch. Ushers: Wayne Ritscher, Rick Pickering, Todd and Cheryl Hennings.
17 (9:00 a.m.):	Greeters: Keith and Wendy Junge. Ushers: Kent Silhanek, Jim and Cathy Buch, Ben and Missy Lennie.
24 (9:00 a.m.):	Greeters: Dean and Kathy Scheel. Ushers: Bill and Barbara Hennings, Doug and Colin Buch.
31 (9:00 a.m.):	Greeters: Greg and Carlene Silhanek. Ushers: Eric and Ann Franzenburg, Byran and Tracie Kimm, Jacque Jones.

Acolytes

August 3 (9:00 a.m.):	Braylon
10 (9:00 a.m.):	Nash
17 (9:00 a.m.):	Emma
24 (9:00 a.m.):	Kenna
31 (9:00 a.m.):	Hunter

Altar Guild for August

Missy Lennie
Eleanor Roquet

Videographers

August 3 (9:00 a.m.):	Richard Oehlerich
10 (9:00 a.m.):	Dave Gahring
17 (9:00 a.m.):	Jim Buch
24 (9:00 a.m.):	Dan Busch
31 (9:00 a.m.):	Dean Scheel

Deacons

August 3 (9:00 a.m.):	Kent Silhanek
10 (9:00 a.m.):	Doug Buch
17 (9:00 a.m.):	Kent Silhanek
24 (9:00 a.m.):	Rich Oehlerich
31 (9:00 a.m.):	Kent Silhanek

Hospitality Committee

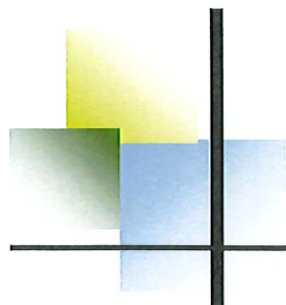
(August 3)

Bake and Serve: Barb Hennings
Donna Busch

(August 10)

Bake: Paulette Sindt
Bake and Serve: Susie Albers
Missy Lennie





August, 2025

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
7:30 a.m. - Elder's Meeting 9:00 a.m. - Divine Service 10:15 a.m. - Bible Study	4	5 2:00 p.m. - Lutheran Communion at KNCC	6 10:00 a.m. - Colossians Bible Study	7	8	9 9:00 a.m. - Noon - Swaddling Clothes Shopping Day
9:00 a.m. - Divine Service 10:15 a.m. - Bible Study 11:00 a.m. - Church Council Mtg.	11 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. - Swaddling Clothes Shopping Day	12	13 10:00 a.m. - Colossians Bible Study	14	15	16
17 9:00 a.m. - Divine Service 10:15 a.m. - Bible Study	18	19	20 10:00 a.m. - Colossians Bible Study	21	22	23
24 9:00 a.m. - Divine Service 10:15 a.m. - Bible Study	25	26	27 10:00 a.m. - Colossians Bible Study	28	29	30
31 9:00 a.m. - Divine Service 10:15 a.m. - Bible Study						

Birthdays

August 3 - Zoey Junge
 4 - Brody Semelroth
 5 - DeLores Adams, Nash Barr, Rita Pickering
 6 - Jamie Cady, David Flack
 7 - Pam England
 9 - Pellagia Jurgemeyer, Dean Scheel
 13 - Tony Brecht, Marina Sindt
 15 - Karleigh Miller, Justin Selk
 17 - Tammy Monson
 19 - Keith Junge, Rick Pickering, Katrina Moser
 21 - Jaxon Thomas
 22 - Hunter Hermesen, Dennis Schwab, Cherise Thacker
 25 - Jessica Grace
 26 - Al Grace, Zachary Johnson
 27 - Rebecca Enderle, Dennis Jurgemeyer
 28 - Kylie Mason
 29 - Joyce Brunssen

Wedding Anniversaries

August 1 - Zach and Alissa Mann
 6 - Lee and Linda Klopping
 8 - Greg and Carlene Silhanek
 11 - Gerald and Linda Fintel
 12 - Randy and Teri Geiger
 22 - Dale and Dorothy Selk
 25 - Nathan and Alyssa Albers, Todd and Cheryl Hennings
 30 - Richard and Cindy Oehlerich

