

The Loveletter

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

May, 2026

THE LOVELETTER

Published Monthly by

St. John Lutheran Church
(Missouri Synod)
201 Fourth Avenue
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Phone: 319-442-3514

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Church Website:
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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.

BIBLE STUDIES

Sunday School
10:15 - 11:15 a.m.

Sunday Adult Bible Class
10:15 - 11:15

Thursday Bible Class
9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

SWADDLING CLOTHES

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

Mother's Day

We will be thanking God for mothers as we worship our Lord on Sunday, May 10th. There will be a special gift for all mothers/women in attendance along with refreshments for everyone. Please join us!



The Woman Who Feels the Lord (Proverbs 31:25-29)

**Strength and dignity are her clothing,
and she laughs at the time to come.
She opens her mouth with wisdom,
and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.
She looks well to the ways of her household
and does not eat the bread of idleness.
Her children rise up and call her blessed;
her husband also, and he praises her:
"Many women have done excellently,
but you surpass them all."**

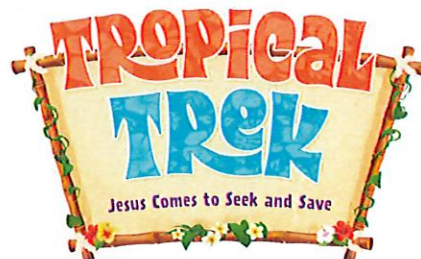
Senior Recognition Sunday



We will be recognizing our 2026 High School Graduates on Sunday, May 17th, during our worship service at 9:00 a.m. This year we have 7 graduating seniors who are members at St. John, Jackson Clemann, Jackson Hartkemeyer, Ragan Hermsen, Cole Junge, Jackson Mather, Amanda Schnor, and Kobe Sindt. There will be a brief reception being served in the narthex area following the worship service. Family members, baptismal sponsors, and members of the congregation are invited to come and congratulate the graduates and enjoy refreshments. Please keep these members and all graduates in your prayers, asking for God's continued blessings for them as they start a new chapter in their lives. Congratulations!

Vacation Bible School

The date has been set for Vacation Bible School here at St. John. Please save the dates of **June 8th through 12th** with VBS being held from 9 a.m. until 11:30 each day. This year's theme is **Tropical Trek - Jesus Comes to Seek and Save**. Online registration is now available on our webpage (stjohnkeystone.org) and our Facebook page. Sign up early so we know how many to plan for. If you'd prefer paper registration, contact the church office. If you'd like to help with VBS please contact



Mary Sievers or the church office. Needed for crafts are the cardboard centers from paper towels/toilet paper, colored tissue paper like used in gift bags and also empty shaker bottles like spices are packaged in. If you have any of these items they may be left in the box in the narthex. Save the date, register, invite others, and join us!

National Day of Prayer

The 75th National Day of Prayer is being held on Thursday, May 7th, at 9:30 a.m. in the fellowship hall at St. John Lutheran in Newhall and all Benton County Circuit Churches are invited to attend. The prayer theme is *Glorify God Among the Nations, Seeking Him in ALL Generations* from 1 Chronicles 16:24. The event is being planned by St. John's Tabitha Society and their Evangelism Committee and will include breakfast, prayers, hymns, and patriotic songs. Pastor Schultz and Pastor Palmer will be leading us. Please note that here at St. John - Keystone we will not be holding our Thursday Morning Bible Study so all can attend in Newhall.

Quilts of Lutheran World Relief



On April 12th, the Quilters from St. John, Piece Sewers/Peace Sowers, displayed the quilts they had sewn and the baby kits they have put together this year. The quilters have met each Tuesday since January to work on the quilts that will be donated to Lutheran World Relief, area fundraisers, seminary students, and other service organizations in and around Iowa. The week of April 13th, the quilts that were sewn here at St. John were taken to the Keystone Nursing Care Center for the residents to admire. The quilts and kits were then boxed up and taken to the pickup point in Cedar Rapids by Denny and Susie Albers on Saturday, April 18th. From there, the items are delivered to a LWR warehouse in preparation for shipping. Thank you to these ladies for all the hard work they have done to prepare these kits and quilts! Below is the report from last year telling of where all those quilts were taken.

St. John Quilter's Report for 2025 - A total of 90 quilts were donated last year.

36 quilts were donated to **Lutheran World Relief** along with 11 baby care kits.

8 quilts were donated to **Willis Dady Shelter** in Cedar Rapids.

Willis Dady Homeless Services provides shelter, case management, homeless prevention, and veteran support for Cedar Rapids, Iowa and the surrounding area.

Several quilts were donated to **Swaddling Clothes** here at St. John.

18 quilts were donated to **Orphan Grain Train** warehouse in Clemons, Iowa.

OGT Mission: Sharing resources and bringing Christ's name and character to needy people both far and near. Orphan Grain Train is a Christian volunteer network that ships donated food, clothing, medical and other needed items to people in 71 different countries including the USA.

10 quilts along with some baby quilts that were donated to the church were given to **Central Furniture Rescue** in Cedar Rapids. Central Furniture Rescue provides furniture and household items at no cost to individuals and families who are transitioning out of homelessness and into their own places to live.

8 quilts were donated to **Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca** for their fundraising auction and were sold for a total of \$540.

5 quilts were donated to **Ft. Wayne Seminary** for students.

5 quilts were donated to **St. Louis Seminary** for students.

3 quilts were donated to the **Central Lutheran School Spring Fling** fundraiser auction.

Bible Studies at St. John

†Sunday Mornings from 10:15 - 11:15 - The Large Catechism

†Thursday mornings at 9:30 - Hebrews

Please join us for these interesting and informative studies.

Let's get to know Jesus better this year!

Quarterly Voters' Meeting Highlights

A Quarterly Voters' Meeting was held on Sunday, April 19th, following worship. On the agenda was the organ repair update. The members in attendance voted to have the organ repaired using an electronic interface that basically turns the organ into a piano with all the organ features. This is step one of the repair process. This would allow those who can play a piano to be able to play the organ and would sound like a pipe organ. The second step of the repair would be the chest rebuild which would replace the leather pouches and valve pads. This part could possibly wait to be done in a couple of years. As the 100 year old leather pouches in the pipe chest begin to fail, the organists would have to deal with notes that no longer play and as the pouches on the switching relay fail, there will be ranks of pipes that no longer shut off when the organist cancels the stop on the console. The total repair cost for both steps would be around \$50,500. Of this total, \$20,00 had already been raised.

Also on the agenda was the grass repair at the parsonage. Eric Franzenburg will assist with the grading of the clay area, topsoil will be placed and Kent Silhanek has agreed to seed and water.

Inactive members on our rolls was also discussed. This process is being worked on by the Elders, who consider "inactive" members to be those to be out of state, at another church, or have not contacted the church in decades. Members that are not living here and occasionally attend need to talk with Pastor or Church Council to discuss funerals and or weddings to be held at the church.

Frank Parris, principal at Central Lutheran, gave an update on what's been happening at the school. Enrollment from this year to next is up. CLS is one year away from their next accreditation visit which takes place every 5 years. He also thanked Pastor Schultz for his wonderful Maundy Thursday message that took place during VIP day with several parents in attendance. He stated that there is a need for a couple of staff positions yet to be filled for next year. He thanked the members of St. John for their prayers and financial support of CLS.

During his Pastor's report, Pastor Schultz reported that he will be covering the vacancy for First Lutheran in Belle Plaine starting in late June. He will be meeting with Pastor Duncan to be working out those details soon. Pastor is also looking forward to VBS which will be happening June 8th through the 12th.

If you have any questions on any of the above items, please feel free to contact a member of the church council.

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.



Central Lutheran School Plant and Flower Sale

The CLS Annual Plant and Flower Sale will be happening on Friday, May 8th, from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., and on Saturday, May 9th, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Go and check out the wide variety of plants and flowers including 4-pack annuals, perennials, containers and baskets! Spread the word and invite others to come also! CLS - 310 Third Street, Newhall, IA.

Summer Break Coming Soon

The last day of Midweek classes will be on Wednesday, May 20th. The last day of Sunday School will be Sunday, May 17th. As these dates quickly approach we would like to thank those who have so faithfully been teaching these classes this year. Pastor teaches the confirmation class with Jodi Bierschenk teaching the younger midweek students on Wednesdays here at the church right after their early dismissals from school. Sunday School is taught by Cindy Oehlerich, teaching kids second grade and up; Jacque Jones teaches first grade; and the preschool/kindergarten teachers rotated throughout the year including Hannah Schultz, Missy Lennie, and Mary Sievers. There are also lots of subs, helpers, etc. that make Sunday School go so smoothly. Please thank these people when you see them! Watch for the start up dates for Sunday School and Midweek classes as they begin again in the Fall.

Do to others as though you are the others! ♥



Swaddling Clothes

Our next *Swaddling Clothes* Shopping Day will be held on Saturday, May 9th, with shopping from 9 a.m. until noon. If you can't make it then, we will also be open on Monday, the 11th, from 4:30 until 5:30 p.m. There are no income guidelines to follow. To come in to shop, we just ask that you have children in your custody either by birth or court order. We offer a sleeve of diapers and baby wipes each month to everyone who comes in and is in need of them for their children. We now have our Spring/Summer clothing on the racks.

We really appreciate our volunteers who come in to help us out when needed. If you'd like to help with Swaddling Clothes, please contact the church office or Darla Kromminga. Our need now is for people to take a laundry basket or two as we wash the new donations coming in. The baskets are located under the table in the narthex as you come up the stairs. When you have finished laundering, just return to the church.

If you have donations, please give us a call at the church (319-442-3514) and we can set up a drop off plan for you. We appreciate children's clothing sz. newborn to sz. 10, and any items that would be used for raising children, like strollers, cribs, pack n' plays, highchairs, car seats, blankets, sheets, pacifiers, etc. If you'd like to donate but don't have the clothing, baby items, etc., here are some other needs we have. We need zipper bags sandwich through jumbo size, batteries (AA, AAA, C, and D), baby wipes, diapers, Pull-Ups for both boys and girls, baby wash, and diaper cream. Swaddling Clothes has a wish list gift registry for non-profits at <http://www.myregistry.com/organization/swaddling-clothes-keystone-ia-keystone-ia/4144665>.

Above all, please pray for 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

Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca Sumer Camp 2026 - Free to Serve

What does it mean to be free? Does it mean I can just do whatever I want? After all, I'm "free to do so," right? Wrong! In all that we say or do, we are serving someone, something, or some purpose. Let us consider this as well as who and what our words and actions reflect. After all, "we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against... the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12). While in this wrestling match, it is easy to only consider ourselves and when we're given "freedom," to use it as an opportunity to display our sinful nature. However, through Jesus' death and resurrection, this wrestling match has already been won for us! Therefore, "You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness" (Romans 6:18). In Jesus, we see and can now live out what it truly means to be "free," serving one another through love.

Each day at Camp is spent studying God's Word. The Bible study is centered around a theme from Scripture. Though every camper learns the same theme, each program's Bible study is modified to fit the age group of the program. Campers also participate in multiple devotions each day that fit the Biblical theme and teaches them about Christ. Bible studies and daily devotions are led by trained camp staff.

Io-Dis-E-Ca offers lots of different age appropriate camps to choose from. Check it out on their webpage or scan the QR code from the poster hanging in the narthex. There are discounts if you register early. There are also camp scholarships available for campers who will be attending Camp for the first time. Also, remember that St. John will pay ½ of the camp fee up to \$150 for members of St. John.

Summer staff is needed at camp. Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca is in need of college-aged, LCMS young adults to serve as cabin counselors this summer. Camp counselors act as Christian role models, teachers, activity leaders, and friends to all of the children that pass through their gates. For more information, you may contact Program Director, Alec Deppe at 319-848-4187 or programdirector@iodiseca.org or head to campiodiseca.org/summer-camp-3/staff/.

They are also looking for staff members to fill kitchen roles: cook & dishwasher. If you are interested in serving in the kitchen this summer, please contact Camp Director, Dylan Lampe at 319-848-4187 or director@iodiseca.org.



Central Lutheran School, Newhall, IA
May 2026- Monthly Newsletter for churches
+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!

Registration for the 2025-2026 School Year - Three years ago at this time, we had 163 students registered for next school year. Two years ago we had 176 students registered! Last school year, we had 190 students registered at this time. As of the writing of this newsletter, we are blessed that 194 students are registered for the 26-27 school year! What a blessing! More students next year will get to hear about Jesus' love as well as laying the strong foundation for academics and their spiritual well being! We still have seats available where children can hear about Jesus and His world everyday in every subject. Please help us in encouraging your friends and neighbors to at least have a tour of our facilities and ask about attending next school year.

CLS Staff Need - We are still praying and asking God to help us in filling a position at CLS for the next school year. We are looking for a PE/Athletic Director that will also help with intervention in math and reading with students. If you know of someone please encourage them to contact me at the school. Thank you.

ESA (Education Savings Account) Students First - Registration for ESA's started on April 16. It closes on June 30. If you need any help in registering, please ask. It only takes about 5 to 10 minutes to sign up. Those who are eligible can receive ESA's for next year (2026-2027) and other information:

- Anyone who wants to come to Central Lutheran School!
- The ESA amount for the 2025-26 school year will be \$8,148.
- Register here - <https://iowa-households.withodyssey.com/login/>

Celebration for Mrs. Becky McKinney! Please come to the CLS Spring Concert on Thursday, May 14 at 6:30. You will want to stick around afterwards as we celebrate the ministry of Mrs. Becky McKinney and her 20+ years of ministry! She has been a blessing to many children over those years. Help us celebrate her commitment to her Calling to be a great Lutheran educator!

Graduation of the Class of 2026 at CLS! - May 21st will be the graduation of 10 eighth graders from Central Lutheran School. We pray God will continue to bless them as they move on to high school.

SHINE HIS LIGHT!

Philippians 1:3-6,

Franklin O. Parris – Principal,

principal@centrallutheranschool.org

MAY CLS EVENTS

May

- May 1 - K-8 Spring testing; 2nd gr. Field trip
- May 2 - IDE Track Meet at Van Horne CLS
- May 4 - Happy Birthday Mrs.Pam Berger! Mrs. Berger is our Kindergarten teacher aide. K-8 Spring Testing
- May 5 - K-8 Spring testing
- May 6 - K-8 Spring testing, Preschool Roundup, 1pm dismissal, Set up in gym for plant sale; 1:30-3:30 Professional Development for teachers
- May 7 - K-8 Spring testing, 8:30 am National Day of Prayer Chapel led by Cougar Student Council in the Student Center, plants for the plant sale being delivered.
- May 8 - K-8 Spring testing, **1-7 Plant Sale in the gym**
- May 9 - **9-3 Plant Sale in the gym**
- May 10 - Happy Mother's Day!
- May 12 - 6:30pm PTL Meeting
- May 13 - 8:30 am WOW (Words of Wisdom) Chapel by 8th grade; 1pm Dismissal; 1:30-3:30 Professional Development
- May 14 - **6:30pm CLS Spring Concert, retirement reception for Mrs. Becky after concert**
- May 15 - 5/6th Field Trip, Kindergarten field trip
- May 18 - 6pm Board of Directors meeting
- May 19 - 6:30pm Preschool Graduation, reception to follow for preschoolers
- May 20 - 1PM dismissal; 1:30-3:30 Professional Development
- May 21 - 7pm 8th grade graduation
- May 22 - End of 4th Quarter - Last Day of School - 12:30 Closing Service at St. John, Newhall
- May 23 - Happy Anniversary Pastor and Hannah Schultz!
- May 25 - Happy Memorial Day! Happy Anniversary Peter and Ally Sullivan! Mrs. Sullivan is our 6th grade homeroom teacher and 5th-8th grade math teacher.
- May 26 - CLS Teacher Work day
- May 27 - End of the Year Staff meeting - 8-8:30 am breakfast, 8:30-4 Staff meeting
- May 28-29 - Teacher Work Days
- May 31 - Happy Birthday Ms.Shauna Voelker! Ms. Voelker is our preschool teacher aide and librarian.
- June 1-5 - Teacher Work Days

June 8-August 7, CLS Office hours will be from 9-2.



Ushers and Greeters

May	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: 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.

Acolytes

May	3 (9:00 a.m.):	Meredith
	10 (9:00 a.m.):	Lauren
	17 (9:00 a.m.):	Ciara
	24 (9:00 a.m.):	Nash
	31 (9:00 a.m.):	Cheyenne

Videographers

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

Deacons

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

Altar Guild for May

Susie Albers
Carla Albertsen

Hospitality Committee for May

None, as this month as we will observe Mother's Day on the 10th with special treats provided by the reception committee.

Thrivent Action Teams

Are you a Thrivent policy holder? If so, you have 2 opportunities to receive \$250 in "seed money" (a \$250 Visa Community Project Card) for a project, like a fundraiser, a service activity or for education. It's really quit easy, as you apply online. It's really too bad if you don't take advantage of the opportunity. There are a lot of ways this money could be used. To name a few: helping purchase supplies for VBS; helping provide food for the food bank; helping buy diapers for Swaddling Clothes; helping to purchase material and batting for making quilts; purchasing school supplies, etc. The ideas are endless. There is even a Facebook page "*Thrivent Action Team Projects*". Check it out for some unique ideas! If you need help with the online application process, contact the church and we will help you!

May, 2026

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
9:00 a.m. - Divine Service 10:15 a.m. - Sunday School 10:15 a.m. - Adult Bible Class	3	4	5	6	7 9:30 a.m. - National Day of Prayer @ St. John, Newhall No Adult Bible Study	8 9 9:00 a.m. to noon - Swaddling Clothes Shopping Day
Mother's Day 9:00 a.m.—Divine Service 10:15 a.m.—Sunday School 10:15 a.m. - Adult Bible Class	10	11 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. Swaddling Clothes Shopping Day	12 2:30 p.m. - Lutheran Communion at KNCC	13 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. - Midweek & Confirmation Class	14 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Adult Bible Study	15 16
9:00 a.m.—Divine Service 10:15 a.m.—Sunday School (last day til Fall) 10:15 a.m. - Adult Bible Class 11:00 a.m. - CC Meeting	17	18	19	20 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. - Midweek & Confirmation Class (Last class until Fall)	21 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Adult Bible Study	22 23
9:00 a.m.—Worship Service No Adult Bible Study	24	25	26	27	28 No Adult Bible Study, returns next week	30
9:00 a.m.—Divine Service 10:15 a.m. - Adult Bible Class	31					

Birthdays

- May 2 - Heath Junge
- 3 - Kelly Barr
- 4 - Gregory Werning
- 6 - Mathew Pohlman
- 9 - Wendy Junge
- 13 - Brian Bierschenk
- 19 - Mardean Kromminga, Ryan Sanderson
- 20 - Shirley Peters, Daralee Schnor
- 21 - James Schoenfelder
- 22 - Nicole Jurgens
- 23 - Redgie Cady, Cathy Franzenburg, Darla Kromminga
- 24 - Jared Franzenburg
- 25 - Joan Seeck, Kobe Sindt
- 26 - Sheryl Fischer, John Wild
- 28 - Marissa Grace

Birthdays (continued)

- 29 - Sarah Klocke, Phyllis Steinbeck, Brandon Venneman
- 31 - Jerry Junge, Lois McManemy

Anniversaries

- May 2 - Cody and Caitlynn Bartling
- 3 - Keith and Wendy Junge
- 6 - Byran and Tracie Kimm, Dennis and Vicki Schwab
- 11 - Tom and Julie Werning
- 16 - Lucas and Hollie Garwood
- 23 - Pastor and Hannah Schultz
- 25 - Ben and Angela Pickering
- 28 - Dustin and Megan Gorsch

