

The Loveletter

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

September, 2023

Worship Schedule



Our worship schedule at St. John while we are in vacancy remains at Sunday morning worship at 10:30 a.m. Just a reminder that the summer Monday services at St. Andrew have ended.

Call Meeting Update

A Quarterly Voters' Meeting/Call Meeting was held on Sunday, August 13th. The congregation in attendance chose to send a call to Pastor Mark Resner, who is currently pastor at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Whittemore, Iowa. Pastor Resner has received the call documents and now we wait and pray for him as he decided where God best wants him to serve, at his present congregation at Whittemore, or here at St. John in Keystone.

Sunday School Start Up

Our Sunday School returns after a short break for the summer on September 10th. Classes begin at 9:15 a.m. and dismiss at 10:15 just in time to attend worship at 10:30. Sunday School is for all kids preschool through 8th grade. Childhood is the season of life when children grow in faith and parents have the most significant influence on their children's spiritual growth. This highlights the critical importance of nurturing young hearts and minds during this formative stage. Why do we need Sunday School?

- 1) **Sunday School helps children respect, appreciate, and utilize the Bible.** Sadly, reverence for God's written words doesn't come naturally. A healthy Sunday School classroom will elevate its importance in a child's life.
- 2) **Sunday School teaches children how to navigate the Bible.** Sunday School teachers don't just teach Bible stories, they show how to use a concordance and give a basic understanding of the Bible's books and format.
- 3) **Sunday School gives kids a chance to ask questions.** Sunday School is the perfect format for discussions and allows teachers to give kids more good food for thought.
- 4) **Sunday School develops a community of believers.** In a classroom setting, kids are more likely to help one another and push each other along in growth. A community of children, worshipping, learning the Bible, and discovering Jesus together creates a bond that single study can't accomplish. Sunday Schools are the Petri dishes for the future church.
- 5) **Sunday School plants spiritual seeds.** In the classroom are songs, Bible lessons, and love. Sunday School has been described as plant nurseries, they make look unimpressive at first, but under the soil, miracles are happening.

Invite others to come with you!

- Information taken from ministry-to-children.com

Epistle Bible Study

The Thursday morning Epistle Bible Study is returning after the summer break on September 14th at 9:00 a.m. This is open to all, both men and women. We hope that you can join us. We meet in the overflow area of the education wing.

THE LOVELETTER

Published Monthly by

St. John Lutheran Church

(Missouri Synod)

201 Fourth Avenue

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OUR STAFF

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Vacancy Pastor

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319-721-0952

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WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday Worship

10:30 a.m.

BIBLE STUDIES

Sunday School

9:15 a.m.

Wednesday Bible Study

7 p.m. at St. Andrew

SWADDLING CLOTHES

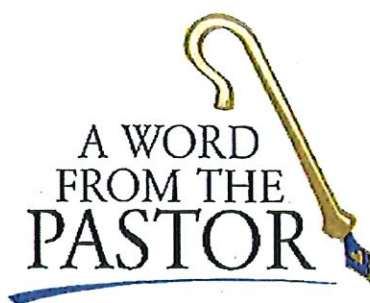
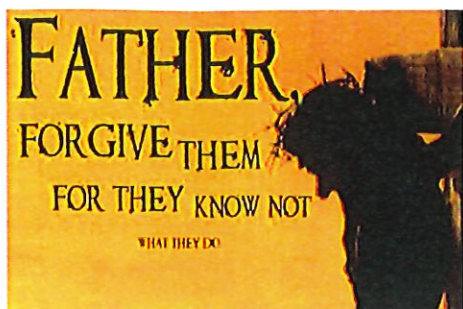
Store open second

Saturday of each month

from 9 to noon,

the following Monday

afternoon from 4:30 - 6:00.



"To the holy and faithful in Christ" (Colossians 1:2),

In the midst of persecution and trial what can I do?

Today, just like in the book of Acts, Christians are persecuted all over the world for following Jesus. While Christian persecution takes many forms, it is loosely defined as any outward hostility experienced as a result of identification with Christ. Trends show that countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East are intensifying persecution against Christians.

It may be easy to think that persecution of Christians only happens in faraway countries, right? Wrong! Christian persecution is happening right here at home, in America. Many here are attacked for their faith. Here are just a few examples; A Washington football coach is placed on leave for praying with players; A teacher is fired for giving a student a Bible (This occurred **AFTER** class and this was **AFTER** the student first asked questions and let the teacher know they did not have a Bible); The IRS was shown to deny and harass Christian groups seeking tax-exempt status; A Christian teacher was fired after only expressing concern about a LGBTQ themed book being read to young children; An elderly woman was shot while campaigning against pro-abortion proposals; After the US Supreme Court overruled Roe v. Wade (6/24/2022), over **100** pro-life pregnancy centers and churches have been vandalized including property damage, theft, arson, vulgar graffiti and death threats. The FBI has promised to investigate and to date, not **ONE** arrest; Multiple Christian clubs and school related groups have been kicked out of school campuses and many speakers have been forbidden to go on school grounds for "fear" of violence; Do I need mention the Christian baker Jack Phillips, who has been harassed, persecuted, fined, business threatened with closure and taken to court by the state of Colorado? He went all the way to the US Supreme court and won, then the state filed different charges! I could fill pages with just recent incidents and attacks.

Let's be clear, none of these incidents in the U.S. are comparable to beheadings or burned down churches as seen in many other places in the world, but it still is a problem that is growing here. Traditional Christians are facing increasing intolerance in this country through fines, lawsuits, jobs lost, officially sanctioned government disdain and harassment, and even ridicule by the main stream media and cultural outlets. In spite of this and at least for now, there is a marked difference between the treatment of Christians in many other countries and what Christians are facing in the U.S. American Christians still enjoy broad religious protections under the law. While a Christian college student in New York City or Los Angeles or any number of other cities might face ridicule for their beliefs, it would be impossible for them to live openly as a Christian if they were living in Afghanistan, or Saudi Arabia or North Korea or China or many other countries.

Unfortunately, persecution against Christians is not something that is always avoidable. Persecution is something that all Christians in one form or another will have to deal with at some point. Understand, Jesus warned us, **"If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you"** (John 15:18). To live as a Christian, Jesus tells us, **"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it"** (Matthew 16:24-25).

One of the keys to coping and dealing with persecution is **OUR** reaction to persecution. To not only get through tough times, but to actually thrive through persecution we need to keep **"looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God"** (Hebrews 12:2). We should daily pray for our country, our leaders and our people. Pray that God would end persecution and harassment, pray that God would protect all His children, and pray that all are brought to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. And you can pray, come Lord Jesus!

When Jesus' enemies nailed him to a cross, he said, **"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"** (Luke 23:34). As a Christian, stand up for what you know is true without fear, share Jesus with others always, **"turn the other cheek"** with those who harass and intimidate you and if persecuted, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

Bible Study at St. Andrew

The Summer Bible Study held at St. Andrew on New World Religions and Cults has come to an end. What an interesting study as we compared and contrasted several different religions/cults to the authentic Christ and authentic Christianity. A new topic will be announced soon as we begin another study starting on Wednesday evening, September 13th, at 7:00 p.m. We are all invited to St. Andrew to join in!

Chains Interrupted

Central Lutheran School is sponsoring a special program on human trafficking on Thursday, September 7th, at 6:30 p.m. Teresa Davidson, CEO of *Chains Interrupted*, will speak on what can be done to stop this horrific crime that is happening to our children. For more information about what *Chains Interrupted* is all about, see their website <https://chainsinterrupted.com/>. The presentation being held at CLS is appropriate for 5th grade age and up. CLS is also holding an open house prior to this presentation from 5 to 6 p.m. to show what's happening at CLS so far this school year and you can also attend that if you wish.

Orphan Grain Train Trip

A trip to volunteer at the Orphan Grain Train in Clemons, IA is being planned for Tuesday, September 12th. Both men and women can volunteer to help. We will leave the church at 8:00 a.m. and work at OGT until noon, probably grab some lunch in Marshalltown and then head back to the church. A group of volunteers from Van Horne is attending that day also. If you would like to go along, please contact Susie Albers or the church office as soon as possible.

Swaddling Clothes



September is our anniversary month. We have been open for 4 years! We had a very busy August. We had 46 families come in during the month, with five of them being new families coming in for the first time. Our next Swaddling Clothes "shopping day" will be held on Saturday, September 9th, with shopping from 9:00 a.m. until noon and again on Monday evening, September 11th, with shopping from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. We are now taking donations of gently used fall/winter children's clothing, size newborn up to size 10, along with maternity clothing or any items used for babies and motherhood, like cribs, strollers, highchairs, etc. We are also taking toys, books, etc. that will be saved for November and December shopping days. Please make sure that the pieces to toys and games are included. Please contact the church office for drop off. We are so appreciative of your donations, keep them coming!

We are so thankful for all the school supplies that were donated last month. They were a hit with those who came in to shop. We also really appreciate the donations to our Undie Sundays in July. Those donations were divided between Orphan Grain Train and Swaddling Clothes.

After our shopping day in September, we will be swapping out the summer clothing for fall and winter clothing. It is a big process, that's for sure! We will have quite a bit of donated winter clothing that will need to be laundered before it can be hung up in the Swaddling Clothes room. We would love it if you could help us do laundry! There will be several baskets located in the narthex under the table on the stairs. If you take a basket or two, please have it back to the church by October 1st. Thanks in advance!

At our October Swaddling Clothes shopping day along with the winter clothing, we will have winter coats, hats, gloves, and boots available for those in need of them. We have had some wonderful coats and boots already donated! Then on our shopping days in November and December we will have the donated toys and games available that would make great Christmas gifts.

If you'd like to volunteer to help at Swaddling Clothes, either by helping clean, check, and display items, or to help on our shopping days, please contact Kelsey Ritscher, Amie Slapnicka, or Donna Busch.

Lastly, don't forget to tell others about us. There are no income guidelines to follow. If you need the items we have, you are invited to come in. We have a lot of awesome clothing and want as many as possible to benefit from it.

The Christian family is like branches on a tree, growing in different directions, but having the same root.

2024 Offering Envelopes

It’s about time to be thinking about offering envelopes for 2024. We want to avoid the year end rush that we have run into the last couple of 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 2024, please let Donna know that as well.

LWML Benton Zone Fall Rally

The Fall Rally of LWML for the Benton Zone will be held on Thursday, September 21st, at St. Andrew Lutheran in Van Horne. Registration will be held from 12:45 to 1:00 p.m. Closing devotion should be at approximately 4:00 p.m. The theme of the rally is *“Living as Light in a Crooked World”* based on Philippians 2:14-16. The guest speaker at the rally will be the Rev. Dr. Jim Lamb, who is a counselor with Lutheran Family Service of Iowa. Lutheran Family Service is a private, not-for-profit organization. They help anyone in need, regardless of their faith. You do not have to be Lutheran or Christian to use or support their services. The ingathering for the rally will be \$5 and \$10 gas cards to Casey’s or Kwik Star. These gift card will support the clients of Lutheran Family Service. All women of the congregation are invited to attend. You don’t have to be an LWML member to attend.

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. We can also get them in touch with an LCMS church in their new location.

2024 Church Council Election

Our election for the 2024 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 8 members on the church council, Jordan Silhanek, Ann Franzenburg, Kathy Scheel, Ben Lennie, Wayne Ritscher, Doug Buch, Mary Sievers, and Justin Slapnicka. The terms of two council members expire this year: Kathy Scheel and Ben Lennie. They have both served two 3 year terms and can not run again at this time. 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 we need to have at least 1 more council person elected to join the council and have room to elect up to as many as five 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.

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NOMINATIONS FOR CHURCH COUNCIL

(Please Print)



Central Lutheran School, Newhall, IA
September 2023
Monthly Newsletter to area churches



+Central Lutheran School assists congregations and families by preparing children to be disciples
 for this life and the life to come! +

Greetings from Central Lutheran School!

And we're off! August 23, 2023, started a new school year! What a blessing to see so many students walk through the doors at CLS!

Under the theme - LOVE LIKE JESUS, based on 1 John 4:19, "*We love because He first loved us.*"

Anything we say and actions that we do show the love that Jesus has for us. Let others see the love of Jesus through what we say and do!

Building Update - Shiny, polished floors in grades 2-8, redone cement slab in front of the student center, new landscaping rocks along the west side of the student center, and a new mat for the gaga pit welcomed students back to school on August 23! Thank you to our facilities committee, Board of Directors, parents, teachers and students for getting the school ready!

Enrollment - We start the school year with 168 students in grades PS-8th grade. 132 students in K-8. Our overall enrollment is up from last year! Thank you, Lord! We pray that the children will hear about Jesus every day in every subject! We still have seats available for those wanting to come hear about Jesus and His love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness! Please help in spreading the word. Thank you.

Volunteer Help Needed! - We are looking for someone who can play the piano for our Show Choir. If you are interested, please contact Principal, Frank Parris. Also, we are looking for one or two people who can watch students in the mornings on Friday from 7:30-8AM, while the staff has their staff meeting. If you can help us out in this area, please contact Principal Frank Parris either by email or phone the school office. Thank you for your help!

Two Important Dates for YOU to be involved at CLS!

September 7 from 5-6PM will be our Open House. Please come and see what is happening at Central. We will also be serving supper during this time. So we know how much to prepare, please phone the office to let Jackie know you are coming. Then from **6:30-7:30** a very special guest speaker from Chain Unlimited will be here. Teresa Davidson who is CEO and co-founder of Chains Unlimited will be talking about the basics of Human Trafficking and how we can protect our children. This is going on all around us and we need to be informed on how to protect our children. A free will donation will be taken at the door as a way of saying thank you to Teresa for sharing with us.

The other important date is **September 17 - from 1-3** we are having a Playground Ice Cream Social to kick off our Playground Capital Campaign. Our 20 year old playground is in need of some drastic repairs. It is actually cheaper to replace what we have than to fix it. So please come, have some ice cream, and look at the information we have to rebuild our playground at CLS.

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

LOVE LIKE JESUS! 1 John 4:19

Philippians 1:3-6

Franklin O. Parris – Principal,

Central Lutheran School, Newhall, IA,

principal@centrallutheranschool.org



Ushers and Greeters

September 3 (10:30 a.m.): **Greeters:** Dan and Donna Busch. **Ushers:** Wayne and Kelsey Ritscher, Rick Pickering.
 10 (10:30 a.m.): **Greeters:** Keith and Wendy Junge. **Ushers:** Kent Silhanek.
 17 (10:30 a.m.): **Greeters:** Dean and Kathy Scheel. **Ushers:** Bill and Barbara Hennings, Doug and Colin Buch.
 24 (10:30 a.m.): **Greeters:** Greg and Carlene Silhanek. **Ushers:** Eric and Ann Franzenburg, Byran and Tracie Kimm.

Acolytes

September 3 (10:30 a.m.): Lauren
 10 (10:30 a.m.): Emma
 17 (10:30 a.m.): Noah
 24 (10:30 a.m.): Hunter

Videographers

September 3 (10:30 a.m.): Richard Oehlerich
 10 (10:30 a.m.): Dave Gahring
 17 (10:30 a.m.): Dan Busch
 24 (10:30 a.m.): Dean Scheel

Altar Guild for September

Beth Hartkemeyer
 Susie Albers

Deacons

September 3 (10:30 a.m.): Doug
 10 (10:30 a.m.): Wayne
 17(10:30 a.m.): Doug
 24 (10:30 a.m.): Ben

We Need Volunteers

We are in need of volunteers to serve as ushers, videographers, and people to serve on the altar guild. If you need more information or would like to volunteer, please contact Donna in the church office (319-442-3514) as soon as possible.





September, 2023

St. John Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 176—201 Fourth Avenue
Keystone, Iowa 52249
Church E-mail: stjnluth@netins.net
Rev. David Lingard, Vacancy Pastor
Pastor's Cell: 319-213-6970

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 10:30 a.m. - Divine Service	4 <i>Labor Day</i> Church Office Closed	5	6 No Bible Study at St. Andrew	7 9:00 - Noon—Pastor Lingard at St. John 6:30 p.m. - CLS Chains Interrupted presentation	8	9 9:00 a.m. to noon—Swaddling Clothes Shopping Day
10 9:15 a.m.—Sunday School 10:30 a.m.—Divine Service	11 1:00—4:00 p.m.—Pastor Lingard at St. John 4:30—6:00 p.m.—Swaddling Clothes	12 8:00 a.m.—Trip to Orphan Grain Train	13 2:00 p.m. - Lutheran Communion @ KNCC 7:00 p.m.—Bible Study @St. Andrew	14 9:00 - Epistle Bible Study 9 a.m. to noon - Pastor Lingard at St. John	15	16
17 8:30 a.m. - Church Council Meeting 9:15 a.m. - Sunday School 10:30 a.m. - Divine Service 1-3 p.m. - CLS Ice Cream Social	18 1:00—4:00 p.m. - Pastor Lingard at St. John	19	20 7:00 p.m.—Bible Study at St. Andrew	21 9:00 a.m. - Epistle Bible Study 9 a.m. to noon - Pastor @St. John 12:45 p.m.—LWML Fall Rally at St. Andrew	22	23
24 9:15 a.m.—Sunday School 10:30 a.m.—Divine Service with CLS Singing	25 1:00—4:00 p.m. - Pastor Lingard at St. John	26	27 7:00 p.m.—Bible Study at St. Andrew	28 9:00 - Epistle Bible Study 9 a.m. to noon - Pastor Lingard at St. John	29	30

Birthdays

September 1 - Jessica Caldwell, Mary Miller
 2 - Melissa Lennie, Connor Sindt
 3 - Brenda Kapucian, Cheyenne Silhanek
 4 - Randy Geiger, Kyle Kruckenberg, Mary Sievers
 5 - Elysha Goodgion
 6 - Kelli Jamesson, Dustin Sievers
 7 - Kaitlin Kromminga
 8 - Barry Nissen
 9 - Danni Chamberlin, Hollie Garwood, Don Pickering
 11 - Bonnie Loy
 12 - Hope Brecht
 15 - Crystal Busch
 19 - Cindy Oehlerich
 20 - Dan Grace, Rebecca Hess, Tracie Kimm, Jan Meyer
 21 - Hannah Johnson, Brennan Kies, Shari Teneyck
 23 - Kathy Scheel, Amie Slapnicka



September birthdays (continued)

24 - Emma Kupka
 25 - Blake Mather, Elaine Selk
 26 - Kelsey Ritscher
 29 - Robert Albertsen
 30 - Erik Nelson

Wedding Anniversaries

September 5 - David and Becky Albertsen, Doug and Sheila Rusk
 8 - Michael and Sheryl Fischer
 9 - Ben and Jackie Seeck
 10 - Rick and Denise Andresen, Jim and Jessika Grace
 18 - Ben and Melissa Lennie, Wayne and Kelsey Ritscher
 28 - Jeramy and Jacque Jones
 30 - Dennis and Susan Albers