The Tidings

Our Savior's Lutheran Church Newsletter

November 2026

Pastor's Corner

Dear Friends,

November has a way of sneaking up on us. One minute we're enjoying the first signs of fall, and the next we're looking at calendars filled with worship services, holiday preparations, family gatherings, and a seemingly endless list of things that need to get done. And somewhere in the middle of it all, we're supposed to stop and be thankful.

I'll admit, some years gratitude comes more easily than others. There are seasons when plans come together, people show up, and everything seems to move in the right direction. And then there are seasons when the response isn't what we'd hoped, the work takes longer than expected, and we're simply tired. I suspect most of us know something about those seasons, too.

The Apostle Paul writes, "Give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Notice he doesn't say to give thanks *for* all circumstances. There's a difference. We don't have to be grateful for disappointment, exhaustion, or uncertainty. We don't have to pretend that difficult things are blessings in disguise. But even in difficult seasons, there are still reasons to give thanks.

I see those reasons all around Our Savior's. In the people who quietly take care of things without being asked. In the music that fills our sanctuary. In the laughter shared over coffee, the care offered to someone who is grieving, and the countless ways people give of themselves. As we continue discerning where God is calling us, I'm reminded that the Holy Spirit doesn't always move according to our preferred timetable. Sometimes the work of the church is exciting. Sometimes it's frustrating. Often, it's both.

Perhaps that's what gratitude really looks like. Not pretending everything is wonderful, but recognizing that God's grace is present even when everything isn't. We don't have to have all the answers, finish every project, or figure out what comes next before we can give thanks. God is already at work among us, in ways both ordinary and extraordinary.



And for that, I am grateful.

Peace,
Pastor Bunny

Youth News

Youths-Giving



All youth are welcome Saturday, November 14th at 5 PM for a special thanksgiving celebration!

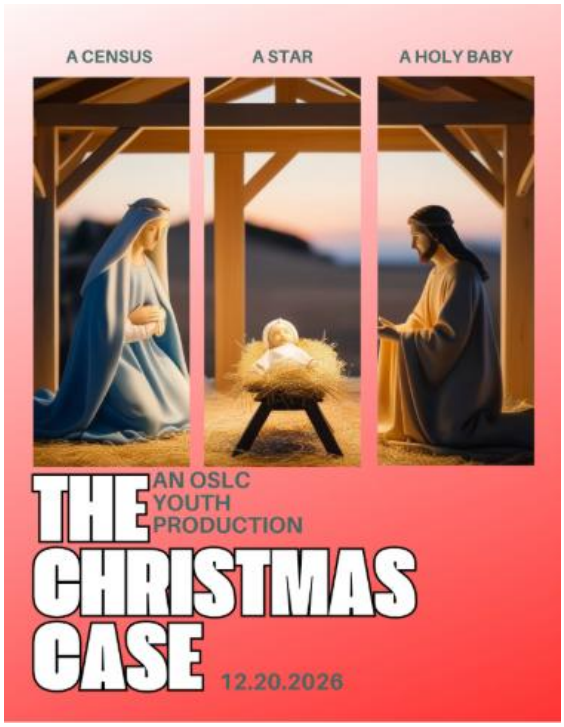
Where?
Hannah's House – 3495 26th Ave Marion, Iowa

What do I need to bring?
The dish you are most thankful for! Bring enough to share! This is also a movie night! Bring your favorite blanket, stuffie or whatever makes you feel cozy!

What if I have any questions?
Ask Hannah! Feel free to text/call/or email anytime!

Youth Christmas Program

Join us Sunday, December 20th during 10 AM service for a special youth production! OSLC Youth presents "The Christmas Case" - an investigative special on the holy baby in Bethlehem!



November Decorating

You're invited….We will be decorating the altar area for Harvest Sunday on November 14th at 10:00. We will also be decorating the sanctuary for Christmas on November 28 at 10:00 as Advent begins on November 29. Decorate a tree, hang a wreath, arrange some pumpkins, fill a crate, have some fellowship and fun!

Christmas Cheer, Delivered from Your Basement!

The Christmas season is almost here, and our youth are ready to help you deck the halls!

This year, we're trying something new: **Christmas Decoration Helpers**, a fundraiser supporting our youth and young adults attending the ELCA Youth Gathering and Young Adult Gathering in Minneapolis!

Do you have a Christmas tree tucked away in the basement? Boxes of ornaments that need to come upstairs? Decorations stored in places that are getting a little harder to reach? Let our youth lend a hand!

For a **freewill donation**, our small but mighty team of youth and adults will help bring your Christmas decorations out of storage and into your main living areas, ready for you to begin decorating.

A few important details: Our team is small, so appointments will be limited and scheduled in advance. We can carry boxes, artificial trees, and decorations from basements or other accessible storage areas, but we won't be assembling trees, hanging lights, decorating homes, or moving particularly heavy or unsafe items. For everyone's safety, we also cannot climb into attics or use ladders.

There is no set cost for this service. Give what you are able, knowing that every donation helps our youth and young adults experience worship, service, learning, and community with thousands of other Lutherans from across the country.

Space is limited, so please contact Pastor Bunny or signup on the bulletin board to reserve your spot on November 28th! We'll coordinate times based on our volunteers and the number of requests we receive.

We're excited to offer a little practical help, spread some Christmas cheer, and give our young people an opportunity to serve the congregation that supports them.

You supply the Christmas spirit. We'll supply the muscle!

Celebrating a Baptism!

On Sunday, November 8, during our 10:00 AM worship service, we will joyfully welcome **Hannah Clapp**, granddaughter of Sue Clapp, into the family of God through the waters of Holy Baptism!

Hannah is very excited about her upcoming baptism, and we are delighted to celebrate this special day with her and her family. As a congregation, we have the privilege of promising to support Hannah in her life of faith, surrounding her with love, encouragement, and prayer.

Come celebrate with us as we rejoice in God's promises and the gift of baptism!

To Congregation Members,

We would like to bring your attention to our financial status as we start the 4th quarter of the year. Our general accounts have been consistently falling behind over the summer and early fall. As of Oct. 11, the general accounts giving is almost $24,000 behind our expenses. In past years we have been behind by as much at $15,000 at this time and still finished the year strong, but we are concerned that we are falling too far behind to be able to catch up by the end of the year.

When Dave Sampson analyzed how we are doing compared to last year, he found that our expenses are ~$12,400 higher than last year at this time ($175,134 in 2026 vs. $162,700 in 2025) and contributions are ~$8,600 behind last year ($151,350 in 2026 vs $159,930 in 2025). Last year at this time we were ~$2,700 behind.

We do know that costs are going up everywhere and it is getting harder to make ends meet. We also understand that we have fewer members contributing. But we need to be concerned and ask ourselves if there is more that we can give. Are you keeping up with your pledged amounts? Is it possible to increase your giving at this time?

Please, prayerfully, consider how you might be able to help close the deficit gap.

Thank you,

Arnold Strottman, Marv Houg, Dave Sampson and Sue Clapp
The Stewardship Ministry Team

The Joy of Generosity

"There is more happiness in giving than in receiving." — Acts 20:35

What happens when we give generously? Not just from what we have left over, but from a genuine desire to make a difference? Scripture reminds us that generosity is not simply about meeting a need. It is about joy, gratitude, faith, and the remarkable things God can accomplish when we share what we have.

This November, Our Savior's Lutheran Church will begin **The Joy of Generosity**, a stewardship emphasis celebrating the ways our gifts make ministry possible. Together, we will reflect on the joy of giving, the blessings of Christian community, and the work God calls us to do beyond our church walls.

Over the past several weeks, we have been sharing stories of ministry at Our Savior's. From Vacation Bible School and community partnerships, to quilts, worship, music, and the everyday work of caring for our building and one another, these stories remind us that generosity is already at work here.

We are not simply asking you to give a little more. We are inviting you to think BIG about what God might accomplish through Our Savior's when we give boldly and generously.

Our congregation needs strong, faithful financial support to sustain the ministry we already do and to make room for new possibilities. That includes supporting our staff, maintaining our building, paying our everyday expenses, and having the resources to respond when opportunities to serve arise. These are not separate from ministry. They are what make ministry possible.

As we approach our annual stewardship commitment, we invite every household to prayerfully consider making a generous financial commitment for 2027. Consider what this congregation means to you, what it means to our neighbors, and what kind of future we can build together.

Generous lives. Joyful community. God's work together.

All Saints Sunday – November 1

On Sunday, November 1, at 10:00 AM, we will observe **All Saints Sunday**, a day to remember and give thanks for the lives of those who have died and now rest in God's eternal care.

During worship, we will especially remember four members of our congregation who have died in the past year: **Ron Larson, Marvin Gerjets, Lana Tapken, and JoAnn Schweinefus.** As their names are read, family members will be invited to light a candle in their memory, honoring the love, faith, and gifts they shared with our congregation.

All Saints Sunday is a time for both remembrance and hope. We acknowledge the grief that comes with loss while celebrating God's promise that death does not have the final word.

Please join us for this meaningful service of remembrance, thanksgiving, and Holy Communion as we give thanks for all the saints who have gone before us.

Christ the King Sunday – November 22

Join us on Sunday, November 22, at 10:00 AM as we celebrate Christ the King Sunday, the final Sunday of the church year!

This special worship service gives us an opportunity to look back over the past year, remembering the many ways God has been at work in and through our congregation. Through Scripture, music, prayer, and Holy Communion, we'll celebrate the ministry we've shared, the lives we've touched, and the promises that continue to guide us.

As part of our celebration, the stoles representing the seasons of the church year will be displayed along the communion rail, offering a colorful reminder of the journey we've shared through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

As we prepare to begin a new church year with Advent, we gather to proclaim that Christ's reign is one of love, mercy, justice, and hope. Come celebrate all that God has done and all that God is still doing among us!

Second Annual Adult Bible Study DIPSGIVING!

I dip, you dip, we dip! It's time to celebrate all things dippable at our Second Annual DIPSGIVING!

Join us on **Wednesday, November 18, at 10:00 AM** for a dip-tacular morning of food, fellowship, and fun!

Bring a dip—big dip, little dip, hot dip, cold dip, sweet dip, savory dip, any dip will do! Just don't forget your dippables! Chips, crackers, veggies, cookies, fruit… if you can dip it, bring it! So, dip into your recipe box, whip up your favorite dip (or dip into the grocery store!), and join us for a delightfully dippy good time.

Phil & Andy's Pantry is supporting Harvest Sunday for November

As we slide into November, we transition from collecting Socks in October, to collecting food items in late October and early November for Harvest Sunday, which is November 15th. These food items will be distributed prior to Thanksgiving to several food pantries. Canned goods are ideal, but any non-perishable food items will be accepted. After November 15th, we will refocus our giving effort to support Phil and Andy's pantry. Items such as easy to prepare meals, snacks, and cereal are great items, but we will accept any food items. Remember, this is the time of the year we should focus on giving from the heart, as Thanksgiving and the Christmas season can be a struggle for many people. Please do whatever you can to help as many people as possible.

Thanks! Stewardship Team.

Questions & Coffee – Sunday morning.

Instead of our traditional Adult Sunday School format, we'll gather on the couches in the lobby for Questions & Coffee — 30 minutes of conversation about faith, life, and the questions that don't always have easy answers.

Each Sunday will begin with one Question of the Day. It might be:

Does everything happen for a reason?

Can you be angry with God and still be faithful?

Is forgiving someone the same thing as trusting them again?

What's something you believe about God differently today than you did 20 years ago?

There won't be a lesson to prepare for, homework to complete, or even an answer we're trying to reach. Instead, we'll listen to one another, wonder together, and see where the conversation takes us. Sometimes Scripture will find its way into the conversation. Sometimes our own experiences will. Sometimes we may leave with more questions than we had when we started — and that's okay.

Questions & Coffee is designed to be easy to join. Come every Sunday or once in a while. Arrive at 9:20 or wander in a few minutes later. Grab some coffee, find a spot on a couch, and join the conversation. No attendance will be taken, and you don't need to have been there the week before to participate.

You'll have time to ponder each question and write your thoughts on sticky notes. As we move from wall to wall, we'll watch our individual responses become something much bigger—a picture of our shared history, an honest look at where we are today, and a collection of hopes and dreams for what might come next.

Whether you've been at Our Savior's for decades or arrived recently, your perspective belongs on those walls. We can't see the whole picture without one another.

OSLC Christmas Brunch

This year we will gather for a Christmas Brunch following service rather than an evening party. Please mark your calendars for Sunday, December 6. A catered brunch will be served in the fellowship hall immediately after worship service. The signup sheet will be posted soon. The menu will be posted also. Please plan on coming to enjoy good food and fellowship with your church family!

Wednesday Bible Study: Faith, Justice, and the Death Penalty

On Wednesday, November 4, at 10:00 AM, our Bible Study group will explore the ELCA's social statement on the death penalty, along with a recent letter from Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry responding to the possibility of a publicly livestreamed execution.

Together, we'll consider our personal beliefs, what Scripture teaches us about justice, mercy, and forgiveness, and why the ELCA has taken a position opposing capital punishment. We'll also explore how we can faithfully engage with difficult issues, even when we don't all agree.

Copies of both statements will be available in advance. Participants are expected to read both documents before November 4 and come prepared with thoughtful questions, reflections, and passages of Scripture that inform their perspectives. This is a challenging topic deserving of careful preparation, respectful conversation, and a willingness to listen to perspectives different from our own.

2026 Financial Update

Contribution results for the week ending **10/25/2026:**

General Giving:	$1,640.00
Total Giving:	$2,335.90

Weekly averages through **10/25/2026 (43 weeks):**

Average Actual General Giving:	$3,683.38 ($158,385.47 YTD)
Average Actual General Expenses:	$4,204.17 ($180,779.48 YTD)

The averages reported above are the averages of “actual” general giving and general expenses, not the forecasts.

Serving Our Congregation

Bunny Dillard – Head Pastor

Sue Clapp – Congregation President

David Sampson – Treasurer

Therese Plummer – Office Manager

Hannah Plummer – Children & Youth Ministries Director

Forrest Green – Music Director

Terri Hodge – Bell Choir Directo

Readers

November 1 – Pastor Catherine Burroughs
November 8 – Nancy Trout
November 15 – Nancy Greer
November 22 – Evie Fiester
November 29 – Lori Hayes

December 6 – Suzanne Schmitt
December 13 – Eric Robinson
December 20 – Therese Plummer
December 27 – Ann Larson
Suzanne Schmitt
Therese Plummer
Nancy Trout
JoAnn Kohl
Lori Hayes
Ardy Erickson

****Readers can pick up their reading in the "Reader" mailbox located between the offices in the back hallway.**

Acolytes

November 1 – William Anderson
November 8 – Mason Schmitt
November 15 – Evelyn Fiester
November 22 – Caroline Anderson
November 29 – Eric Strottman

December 6 – William Anderson
December 13 – Mason Schmitt
December 20 – Caroline Anderson
December 24 – Evelyn Fiester
December 27 – Eric Strottman

Assisting Ministers

November 1 – Nancy Greer
November 8 – Natalie Fiester
November 15 – Sue Clapp
November 22 – Nancy Greer
November 29 – Sue Clapp

December 6 – Natalie Fiester
December 13 – Nancy Greer
December 20 – Leslie Strottman
December 24 – Nancy Greer
December 27 – Sue Clapp

Ushers

November 1 – Sue Clapp, Al Johnson
November 8 – Strottman Family
November 15 – Fiester Family
November 22 – Schmitt's, Ann Larson, Beth Anderson
November 29 – D. Sampson, M. Houg

December 6 – Al Johnson, Sue Clapp
December 13 – Strottman Family
December 24 – TBD
December 20 – D. Sampson, M. Houg
December 27 – Fiester Family

Children's Sermon

November 15 – Beth Anderson
December 20 – Christmas Program

Prayer for Pastor

November 1 – JoAnn Kohl
November 8 – Natalie Fiester
November 15 – Ardy Erickson
November 22 – Arnold Strottman
November 29 – Lori Hayes
December 6 – Ann Larson
December 13 – Youth Christmas Event
December 20 – Laurie Strottman
December 27 – Lesson's & Carol's

Greeters

November 1 – Pastor Catherine Burroughs
November 8 – Al Johnson
November 15 – Suzanne Schmitt
November 22 – Mark Schmitt
November 29 – Ardy Erickson
December 6 – Suzanne Schmitt
December 13 – Beth Anderson
December 20 – Therese Plummer
December 27 – Ann Larson

Dogs Forever Response to *God's Work, Our Hands* Project

Dogs Forever
October 10 at 10:00 AM ·

We were so honored to be chosen as a beneficiary of Our Savior's Lutheran Church CR God's Work, Our Hands day of service, but this incredible group went above and beyond! Not only did they put out a plea for donations for our shelter, they also MADE fleece tie blankets AND our FAVORITE square-knot hardy rope toys for our pups! 😍❤️

Look at all of this generosity! We are truly blown away by the thoughtfulness, time, and love that went into every single item. A HUGE thank-you to Hannah and everyone at Our Savior's Lutheran Church for thinking of Dogs Forever and putting so much heart into this day of service.

This is what community looks like, and we are SO grateful to be surrounded by people who care so much about our pups! 🐾

PS: listen if anyone had a BLAST and ever wants to make more of the square knot rope toys, we're here for it!! 😍😍😽 Also PSS: Don't mind our shelves! We're preparing our two of our largest fundraisers of the year!😂 **See less**



Trunk or Treat: Ministry Beyond Our Walls

On Saturday, October 17, Our Savior's joined Christ Episcopal Church and our neighborhood partners for a wonderful afternoon of Trunk or Treat and community connections! We are grateful for everyone who helped make this event possible and for the opportunity to share some joy with our neighbors.

Events like this are also a wonderful reminder of what our generosity makes possible. Through gifts to Our Savior's general fund, we can participate in community ministries, purchase supplies, and respond to opportunities to serve beyond our church walls. Not every act of ministry requires a special fundraiser or designated offering. Sometimes, it simply requires having the resources available when an opportunity arises.

Thank you to everyone who faithfully supports the ongoing ministry of Our Savior's. Your generosity makes a difference, both inside our building and throughout our community!







Polka Service -October 18th



German Meal after Polka Service









“OUR STORY” Workshop October 10

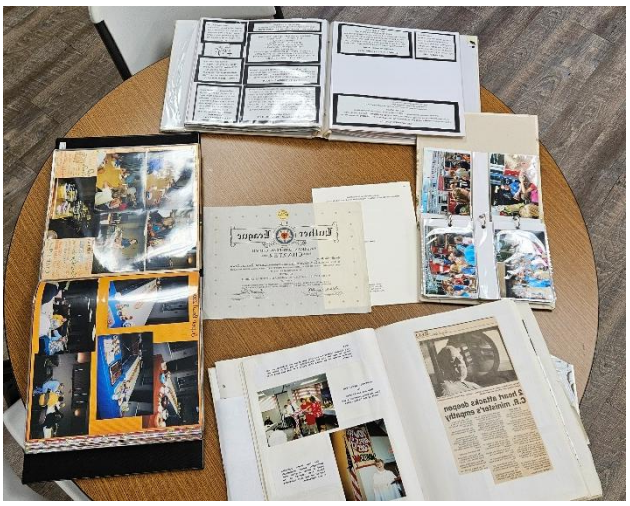
Displayed items

from

Our Savior’s Past





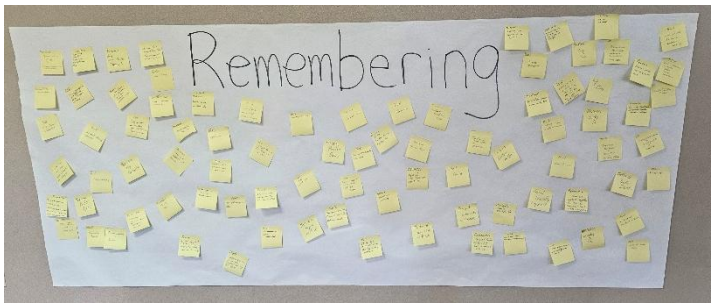


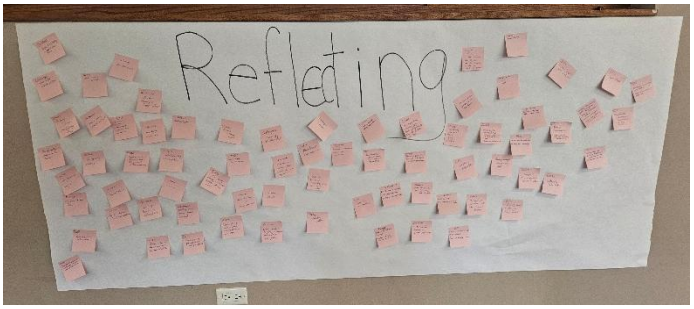


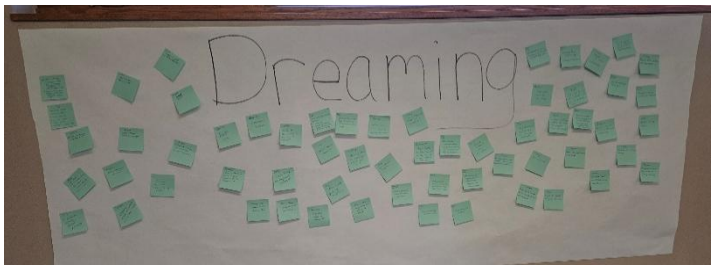




“OUR STORY” Workshop more images











God's Work, Our Hands Projects:

Tie Blankets and Knotted Pull Toys for Dogs







