

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, CORDOVA, NEBRASKA

October, 2026 Newsletter

Rev. Shawn Kitzing
Interim Pastor



“Serving Christ in
our Communities,
Nation and World”



Join us for Worship
Services Sundays at
9:00 a.m. or on
Facebook.

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Note from the Elders

As we step into the month of October, the beauty of God's creation is on full display. We notice the changing colors of the tree's leaves, the crisp air, and the golden fields. Each new season tells a story of God's faithfulness. Autumn invites us to reflect on the truth that while life is filled with change, our Lord remains the same yesterday, today, and forever. (Hebrews 13:8)



Just as the trees release their leaves to prepare for winter, we are also called to release the burdens, sins, and anxieties that cling to us. The Apostle Peter encourages us to “cast all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you” in 1 Peter 5:7. This is an invitation from our Savior to trust Him fully.

October also holds a special place in our Lutheran heritage. On October 31st, 1517, Martin Luther, moved by the truth of God's Word, posted the 95 Theses in Whittenberg. He believed that salvation is given by God through faith, not something earned through good works.

Stay rooted in the true Word of God. Make time for Bible Study, worship, and prayer. The Word of God is our anchor and our guide.

John 15:5

*“I am the vine; you are the branches.
Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that
bears much fruit, because apart from me you
can do nothing.”*

This month, look for ways to live out your faith in acts of love and service. Visit or send a card to one of our shut ins, help with a church project, or spend time with someone who is in need of some conversation. These small acts when done in Jesus' name are never wasted.

As we celebrate the Reformation later this month, may it be a time of personal renewal. May we recommit ourselves to the truth of the Gospel and to the mission Christ has given us to make disciples of all nations. Let's begin right here in our own communities.

Upcoming Events:

Bible Walk

On Sunday, October 25th, we will be having a Bible Walk from 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Prayer Vigil & Reformation Service

St. John's will be having a prayer vigil to pray for our future pastor and the upcoming election from Friday, October 30th at 5:00 p.m. to Saturday, October 31st at 5:00 p.m.

The prayer vigil will conclude with a Reformation service at 6:00 p.m. led by Pastor Kitzing.

Life Chain



Please join us in the Friend Life Chain Sunday October 4th from 2:30 - 3:30 pm. Please meet at the east corner of Hwy 6 and Maple Street. Signs will be available to hold as a line is formed along both sides of the highway.

This is a silent, prayerful event to promote the defense of human life from conception to natural death.

Men's Bible Study

Saturday, October 3, 2026,
beginning at 7:30 a.m.

The Men's Group Bible Study is scheduled to meet next on Saturday morning, October 3rd at 7:30 a.m. The guys will continue devoting attention on St. Paul's letter to the Galatians. This is a great opportunity to open, research, and share God's Word being encouraged and strengthened by His promises. Contact any of the Elders for any additional information.

Hymn Sing Sunday October 6th

Hymn Sing Sunday is every first Sunday of the month. Come early at 8:50 a.m. and pick out your favorite hymn and sing with us!



Visit St. John's Lutheran Church on the web!

<https://stjohnscordova.com>

With Gratitude for our Interim & Guest Pastors

As we continue through this time of pastoral vacancy, we are deeply mindful of the Lord's faithful care for St. John's, Cordova.

We want to extend our sincere gratitude to our Interim Pastor, Pastor Kitzing, and the various guest pastors who have faithfully filled our pulpit (Pastor Arnold Jurchen, Pastor Pete Jurchen, Pastor Cartwright, Pastor Dahlke and Pastor Matthias.)

Thank you for bringing us Christ's gifts through the pure preaching of the Word and the faithful administration of the Sacraments. We deeply appreciate your service, your leadership, and your partnership in the Gospel during this season of transition.



Church Council Meeting

There will be a Church Council meeting on **Wednesday, October 14th at 7:00 p.m.**

All members of the Church Council should attend. Those members include: the President, Treasurer, Circuit Forum Representative, Pastor, and all members from each elected Board (Elders, Trustees, Finance and Education.)

Quarterly Votes' Meeting & Potluck

We will have our October voters' meeting on **Sunday, October 18th**. There will be a potluck lunch after Sunday School, and the voters' meeting will follow lunch. Everyone is welcome.

All members over the age of 18 are encouraged to attend the voters' meeting.



Prayer Vigil: Praying for Our Future Pastor and Our Upcoming Election

Our congregation is invited to join together in a **24-hour Prayer Vigil** as we pray for our church, our future pastor, and the upcoming election.

The Prayer Vigil will begin on **Friday, October 30 at 5:00 p.m.** and continue through **Saturday, October 31 at 5:00 p.m.**, asking God to guide, strengthen, and bless our congregation.

A sign-up sheet is available in the church lobby for members to choose a one-hour time slot. You are welcome to pray inside the church sanctuary or from home.

Let us pray for God's wisdom and direction as we prepare to welcome our future pastor, and for our nation and all those entrusted with leadership. May our prayers reflect our trust in God and our desire to faithfully serve Him.

The Prayer Vigil will conclude with a **Reformation Service at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 31**. Please join us in prayer as we seek God's guidance.

Come, let us pray together and entrust our future to the Lord.

Our Shut Ins

Please remember our shut-in members with visits, "thinking of you" cards and prayers:

Charles & Lavonne Evans

Heritage Crossings
1320 J Street
Geneva, NE 68361

Joyce Schmidt

2830 S 51st Street Ct.,
Unit 3
Lincoln, NE 68506

Carol Sternberg

Hillcrest Shadow Lake
1507 East Gold Coast Road
Papillion, NE 68046

Jane Lutz

Legacy Square
1621 Front St.
Henderson, NE 68371

Pat Schwisow

The Gardens
1405 Hickory Ave., Unit 32
Crete, NE 68333

October Birthdays and Baptism Birthdays

October Birthdays

Chelsy Hernandez	October 1
Robin Lutz	October 1
Katie Brandt	October 2
Anthony Nun	October 2
Sandi Hayek	October 2
Mark Beethe	October 5
Patty Vavra	October 5
Marilyn Hayek	October 8
Abby Brandt	October 11
Pat Gates	October 11
Teddy Weber	October 11
Bev Krause	October 14

October Birthdays Continued

Adalyn Stoll	October 19
Matthew Nun	October 20
June Petersen	October 21
Cindy Brandt	October 24
James Hankel	October 24
Victoria Woodburn	October 24
John Chase	October 26
David Jurgensen	October 26
Laura Casper	October 28
Rick Schwisow	October 28

October Baptism Birthdays

Elowen Hester	October 5
Joshua Brandt	October 9
Mark Beethe	October 12
Carol Sternberg	October 12
Allison Petersen	October 14
Patty Vavra	October 14
Thad Weber	October 14
Nora Friberg	October 19
Tammy Klenke	October 20
Oaklynn Procacina	October 20
Bev Krause	October 22
Steve Vavra	October 23
Katie Brandt	October 30
Dane Anderson	October 31

PLEASE NOTE: If we have missed someone's name and birthdate, or if we missed listing your baptism birthday, please accept our sincere apologies and let the church office know. Thank You!



Camp Luther Women's Retreat November 6th-7th or 8th

Camp Luther's Women's Retreat will be Friday, November 6th, 6:00 p.m. – through Saturday, November 7th, 5:00 p.m. OR Sunday, November 8th at 11:00 a.m. The Theme is based on Ephesians 1:7-8.

There will be Praise & Worship, "Living a Chocolate Life" Sessions with Deb Burma, Camp Luther's fabulous meals and Camp Activities, Crafts and Personal Retreat Time.

For more information go to: <https://www.campluther.org/womens-retreat>. Questions? Camp office: 402-352-5655 or email: campluther@campluther.org.

Registration deadline is October 23rd. To Register, go to CampLuther.org/womens-retreat.

Elders Meeting

The next scheduled meeting for the Board of Elder's will be Thursday, October 1, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

"When life gives you more than you can stand ... kneel."

Serving in God's House in October

October Acolytes

Dillon Petzoldt	October 4th
Kyler Oldehoeft	October 11th
Charlotte Speer	October 18th
Quinn Pulliam	October 25th

October Lectors

Lee Krasser	October 4th
Brady Pulliam	October 11th
Brady Pulliam	October 18th
Thad Weber	October 25th

October Ushers

October 4th —	Eldon Eklund Jr., Bob Hester, and Lee Krasser
October 11th & 18th —	Dwight Henke, and Brady & Reed Pulliam
October 25th —	Thad, Gehrig & Teddy Weber

Communion Assistants:

October 4th -	Norm Lutz & Drew Woodburn
October 18th -	Bruce Rogers & Drew Woodburn

Lutheran Hour Radio Sermons

October 4, 2026
"Embrace Life"
Guest Speaker: Rev. Germán Novelli Oliveros. Jesus offers His abundant life to people plagued by pain and problems. John 10:10-11

October 11, 2026
"Covered" with Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. Proper Attire Required: how God covers us with the robe of Christ's perfect righteousness. Matthew 22:11-12

October 18, 2026
"The Heart of the Matter" with Guest Speaker: Pastor Ryan Tinetti. How do you respond to tough questions about God and faith? Hear how Jesus delivers us from the tightest of tight spots and keeps us from falling into a trap. Matthew 22:15-22

October 25, 2026
"Relief" with Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. You don't have to earn God's favor. It is the relief waiting to find us before we even knew we had a problem. Romans 3:23-24

The Lutheran Hour can be heard every Sunday on:

- Omaha KFAB 1110 AM at 6:30 am
- York-KAWL 1370 AM at 7:30 am
- York-KAWL 103.5 FM at 7:30 am
- Lincoln KLCV 88.5 FM at 8:00 a.m.

Small Group Study

Join Us for Small Group Study!

We are continuing our study of Lee Strobel's powerful book, *The Case for Christ*, as we investigate the historical and logical evidence for Jesus. Whether you've been with us from the start or are joining for the first time, we would love to have you.

We meet on Wednesday, October 14th at 1:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Please read Chapters 5 and 6 as we will be discussing these at the meeting.

"The Well" Monthly Bible Study

Wednesday, October 21, 2026, at 1:30 p.m.

All are invited to take part and join around The Well, a Bible Study group held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 1:30 p.m. here at the church.

If you are of interest and would like additional information, please contact Tim McDermott or Margaret Witte for questions or comments.

There is much room at The Well as the group currently takes nourishment in the words of St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians.

Bulletin Deadlines

are now Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.

Newsletter Deadline for the November newsletter: October 16th

Lydia LWML

The Lydia LWML met on September 14, 2026, for an evening of prayer and planning.

The group kicked off the evening with a farewell celebration for Grace, thanking her for her dedicated time in our congregation and LWML.

In ministry updates, Andrea sent sweet M&M care packages to our current college students, and members were reminded to keep their Dorcas, Confirmation, and newly "adopted" Young Mother prayer pals in their prayers. Additionally, Wilma is currently re-organizing the church prayer chain, so please stay tuned for upcoming details and text updates.

Looking ahead, all LWML ladies are invited to a Chrismon Work Day on October 1 to help assemble pieces and add the new verbiage explaining the meaning of each symbol. On October 4, the LWML will serve a smoked meat dinner for roughly 120 college students for the Concordia Bible Study Meal. Volunteers are urgently needed to provide cookies and help serve that evening.

Finally, our annual Greeting & Christmas card sales are officially open in the fellowship hall now through October 25. Don't forget to mark your calendars for the Bible Walk on October 25.

Dorcas LWML

The Dorcas LWML met on August 5, with seven members and Pastor Kitzing present. Margaret led the opening devotions re. working in the vineyards. Serving the Lord is a privilege.

Pastor Kitzing led our Bible Study from Genesis 9 about Noah, and the rainbow. We recited the pledge. Minutes were read, treasurer's report given, and Jayne reported on cards sent.

The Lydia group has asked Deb Jurchen to speak on August 16. We are invited to stay for a salad luncheon and to hear her speak.

We decided to purchase \$100 worth of diapers and wipes for the convention ingathering. We will ask Jeana if she will purchase them. Motion was made by Jayne, seconded by Deb, and passed.

We closed with prayers. Lunch was served by Margaret.

Greeting Card Sales are Back!



Lydia LWML will be taking orders for greeting cards in October. Folders with a catalog and order forms are available on the table in the fellowship hall. Place your completed orders in the red folder by October 25th.

Greeting cards should arrive by November 15th.

Lydia LWML appreciates your support!!

St. John's Offerings & Designations for 2026

ST. JOHN'S OFFERINGS	DESIGNATION
Ash Wednesday, February 18th & Lenten Services, February 25 - March 25th	St. John's Mission Budget
Maundy Thursday, April 2nd	Friend Food Bank
Good Friday, April 3rd	St. John's Mission Budget
Easter, April 5th	St. John's Mission Budget
Thanksgiving Eve, November 25th	York Family Resource Center
Advent Services, December 2nd, 9th & 16th	Camp Luther
Christmas Eve, December 24th	Social Media Ministry
Christmas Day, December 25th	Youth Group
New Year's Eve, December 31st	Mission Family
Door Offering, 1st Sun each quarter	Mission Family
People In Need (PIN) Fund	People in Need
Ascension, May 14th & Reformation, October 31st door offering	Hope Gospel Rescue Mission, York

St. John's Bible Walk

Step Back in Time: Bringing the Bible to Life for Our Neighbors



Our **Bible Walk** is coming up on **Sunday, October 25th, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.**, and it takes our whole church family to make this wonderful night happen. This is one of St. John's biggest community outreach events of the year! We open our doors to welcome kids of all ages from various communities for a "tour back in time" to meet real Bible characters. It is an unforgettable night, a fun way to bring the Bible to life, and a wonderful, easy opportunity to invite your friends and neighbors to visit our church.

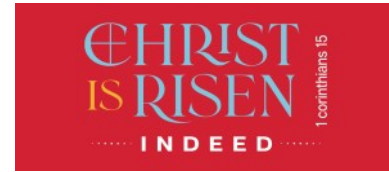
To pull this off, we need a true team effort! We have a role for everyone, whether you want to be out in front or helping behind the scenes:

- **Step Into Character:** Portray a Bible character and share a short script about who they are in God's story. You will also get to hand out character-themed candy to the kids!
- **Welcome & Guide Our Guests:** We need a friendly team of greeters and tour guides to welcome families and direct them smoothly through the church.
- **The Decorating Crew:** We need a big team to help decorate and transform the church. We will gather for a shared meal right after Sunday School on October 25th, and then jump right into decorating together. Many hands make light work!

If you are ready to help us make a difference this year, please check out the sign-up list on the table in the Fellowship Hall to volunteer. If you have any questions or want to know where you fit best, please talk to Norman Lutz.

Most importantly, we ask that everyone start inviting their family, friends, and neighbors to come visit us for this fun event!

Report from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod 69th Convention



I attended the 69th Convention of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as the pastoral delegate for the Seward Circuit. One of the hot-button issues going into the Convention was a resolution on Lay Readers. The Seminary is to form a committee to study whether Scripture requires the pastor to do the readings of scripture during the Divine Worship. This will be brought back to 2029 Convention.

The other big topic was how we train pastors. The LCMS basically has two paths: the residential route (seminary, earning an M.Div. or going through an alternate route in person) and the Specific Ministry Program (SMP), which is mostly online and designed to raise up a pastor from within a congregation that otherwise couldn't afford one. SMP pastors have restrictions on what they can do at the circuit, district, and synodical level.

The Convention passed resolution saying the Residential formation of Pastors is by far the preferred route for PASTORAL FORMATION. The delegates also affirmed some of the restrictions for SMP program: a congregation can only use it if Word and Sacrament aren't otherwise available, the man has to have been LCMS Lutheran for more than five years, and he has to be at least 40 years old.

Since 2010, our Synod President has been elected by congregational vote rather than on the Convention floor. President Harrison wanted to change that back, but the Convention said no. That was the only resolution that actually got defeated. Instead, they passed Res. 9-15, which just encourages more congregations to participate in the vote we already have.

Another resolution hits close to home for the Seward Circuit since it directly involves Concordia University, Nebraska. The Synod Board of Directors wanted to dissolve the Concordia University System as a separate entity and fold its duties into a commission, giving the Board more direct control. The floor committee pushed back and instead called for a study of what the best governance structure should look like going forward, which passed.

A big concern here is money. There was serious discussion that if the Board of Directors took direct control of the Concordias, they might no longer qualify to offer federal student loans. On top of that, the last convention already revamped the Concordias' structure, and the universities are still working through those changes. Taking on another major restructure right now didn't make sense to most delegates.

There was much more discussed and voted on, but many of them don't affect us. I will be considered a delegate for Seward Circuit until 2029, but pray the Synod doesn't have to go into a special convention before then. I look forward to another 19 years before I have to attend the convention again.

Pastor Shawn Kitzing

October, 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Elders Meeting 6:00 p.m.	2	3 Men's Bible Study 7:30 a.m.
4 <i>Communion</i> Hymn Sing 8:50 Church 9:00 a.m. Sunday School and Bible Class 10:30 a.m. Life Chain in Friend 2:30-3:30 p.m.	5 Lydia LWML 6:00 p.m.	6	7 Dorcas LWML 2:00 p.m. Confirmation 4:00-5:45 p.m.	8	9	10
11 Church 9:00 a.m. Sunday School & Bible Class 10:30 a.m. Trustees meeting after church	12	13	14 Small Group Study 1:30 p.m. Confirmation 4:00-5:45 p.m. Church Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.	15	16 <i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	17
18 <i>Communion</i> Church 9:00 a.m. Sunday School and Bible Class 10:30 a.m. Potluck and Quar- terly Voters' Meet- ing after Sunday School & Bible	19	20	21 The Well Monthly Bible Study 1:30 p.m. Confirmation 4:00-5:45 p.m.	22	23	24
25 Church 9:00 a.m. Sunday School & Bible Class 10:30 a.m. Bible Walk 5:00-7:00 p.m.	26	27	28 Confirmation 4:00-5:45 p.m.	29	30 Prayer Vigil 5:00 p.m. to Saturday, October 31st at 5:00 p.m.	31 Prayer Vigil continues to 5:00 p.m. Reformation Service at 6:00 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran Church, Cordova, Nebraska

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St. John's Lutheran Church, Cordova, Nebraska

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Cordova, Nebraska 68330
Phone: (402) 576-3211

Our Website:

<https://stjohnscordova.com>

St. John's Worship Service Time

9:00 a.m. Church Worship
Service

10:30 a.m. Sunday School
and Adult Bible Class



Visit our facebook page.



Address Service Requested



Scripture, Grace, and Faith

Luther's teaching is often summarized with three phrases: **Scripture alone, grace alone, and faith alone.**

Scripture alone reminds us that God's Word is the foundation and norm of Christian doctrine. The Church does not create God's truth; it receives, confesses, and teaches what God has revealed.

Grace alone reminds us that salvation is God's gracious gift. We do not earn God's forgiveness by becoming good enough. God loved us while we were still sinners and sent His Son to redeem us.

Faith alone reminds us that we receive Christ and His gifts through faith. Our confidence before God rests not on our accomplishments but on Jesus Christ, who lived, died, and rose again for us.

These truths are not merely historical slogans. They are the comfort of the Christian sitting in the pew today.

When we confess our sins, we do not have to wonder whether we have done enough. When we face death, we do not have to trust in our own goodness. When our consciences accuse us, we look outside ourselves to Christ and His promises.

That is the Gospel Luther treasured.

