



THE TORCH

September 2026
Sunday Worship
9:00 AM

TrinityLCPV.com
Facebook.com/Trinity LCPV

Email: office@trinitylcpv.com
Youtube.com/@TrinityLCPV

Trinity Lutheran Church • 18137 Criswell Street • Bettendorf, Iowa 52722 • 563-332-5188
Pastor Stephen Nilsen 563-332-6432 (office) 319-540-1172 (cell) snilsen@trinitylcpv.com (email)

Dear church,

I often stop to ponder what it means to be church. Maybe you jump to the old Sunday School song, with words like “I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together!” or “A church is not a building, a church is not a steeple, a church is not a resting place, a church is the people!” While these simple words might feel silly, the message is actually profound: no matter where we are, the Body of Christ (the church!) is the people, created, gathered, and sent by God.

I recently took part in a “Fireside Chat” webinar with the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA Yehiel Curry. In this roughly 35-minute long interview, Bishop Curry discusses what it means to be church, details the vision and purpose of the ELCA as a whole, and shares what he thinks helps to connect the church to one another. As the members currently working on our Congregation’s Constitution Revision Task Force can attest, the church in the ELCA takes on three forms: the churchwide organization, the synod, and the congregation. At each level, there are leaders, disciples sharing in the mission and vision, and partners in ministry, supporting each other by loving God and loving neighbor. In this chat, Bishop Curry shared three key goals of his vision for the ELCA:

“Connecting... Sustaining... and Reforming. Through this church, through its people, that’s how the church shows up.” – Bishop Yehiel Curry from [Conversation and Connection with Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry: A Special Leadership Circle Fireside Chat](#)

We make connections in a lot of ways. In a recent session of our weekly Bible Study, we discussed the ways that each of us uses the gifts that God has given us to connect to the work we do in the world – not only at church, but also in our daily vocations. Paul lifts up a list of these gifts in several letters, but one is listed in Romans 12:

“For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the encourager, in encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.” – Romans 12:4-8, NRSVUE

Your gifts are needed! Whether young or old, new to Trinity or a longtime member, any of the gifts that you can share with your time and talents are a blessing to the church – not only locally here at Trinity, but for the broader church in Southeastern Iowa, the United States, and the church universal. When I think about the number of connections that are made around the tables in the Fellowship Hall, in the Narthex in short conversations, or throughout the community, it reminds me of the way that the Holy Spirit sustains us to continue doing the work of the church here and now and into the future.

The church is not only the building – it is the people! The church’s people are connecting, sustaining, and reforming in so many ways, now and forever.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Stephen Nilsen

Trinity Office Hours Tues, Wed, Thurs - 9AM-1PM
Pastor Stephen’s Office Hours Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs -10AM - 2PM



From the President's Desk

From the Council President:

Despite the heavy rains this summer, it has been quite busy here at Trinity. Gardening, VBS, Baptisms, Funerals, New Chairs, Trinity Night at the Ballpark, Theology on Tap, and an amazing Parking Lot Seal and Stripe all took place this summer. Trinity is alive and active in our community! I am sure many other things happened that escape my memory, but now is the time where preparation and planning begins for next year.

Council, Stewardship, Endowment, Property, Personnel, and Education are busy planning programming, improvements, budgets, and seeking the right person to fill the Director of Engagement position. We have been surprised at the great applicants we have had apply. Keep all of our leaders and committee members in your prayers as we undertake these important tasks.

Showing up in our community is important, and I hope you are excited and plan to attend the upcoming worship in the park we have planned. Let's welcome our neighbors to meet us in a relaxed environment.

Blessings,

Dane Crist

Trinity Council President

HAVE AN ITEM FOR AN UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETING?

Reach out to one of the 2026 Council Members or Pastor Stephen to share your item of concern. You may also leave the note in the suggestion box at the desk by the office.

2026 Council Members

Dane Crist — President — Education Committee
 Diane Holst — Vice President — HOT Team
 John Ahlers — Treasurer — Stewardship Committee
 Dawn Brick — Memorial Committee
 Diane Cook — Personnel Committee
 Don Kathan — Property Committee
 Sharon Marquard — Social Ministry Committee
 Al McIlrath — Endowment Committee
 Sally Morrow — Worship & Music Committee

Treasurer's Note



A Note from the Council Treasurer, John Ahlers

To all, Please keep in mind that my position is voluntary to this church and I do the best that my life and time allows. We also have moved to Blue Grass so I am not 5 minutes away from the church. Knowing this. Checks may not be entered and printed on a weekly basis. This is a goal of mine but it is not regular so there are times an invoice or blue slip may not be printed for a couple weeks after I receive it. If a vendor or you personally need a check in a timely manner please reach out to me personally so I make the time to expedite and get you what is needed. Otherwise this service will be when my time allows.

Thank-you for your understanding,

John Ahlers Cell: 563-349-9827

WANT TO CONNECT WITH WEEKLY HAPPENINGS AT TRINITY?

Sign up for our weekly email bulletin that will let you know what's happening in the week ahead and have other great upcoming announcements, as well as the weekly bulletin for worship. Call (332-5188) or email Paula (office@trinitylcpv.com) to sign up!

YEAR TO DATE FINANCIAL INFO THROUGH JULY 2026

Collections to date	\$104,585.39
<u>Expenses to date</u>	<u>\$102,352.68</u>
Net to date	\$2,232.71

No funds have been transferred from Stewardship Reserves year to date.

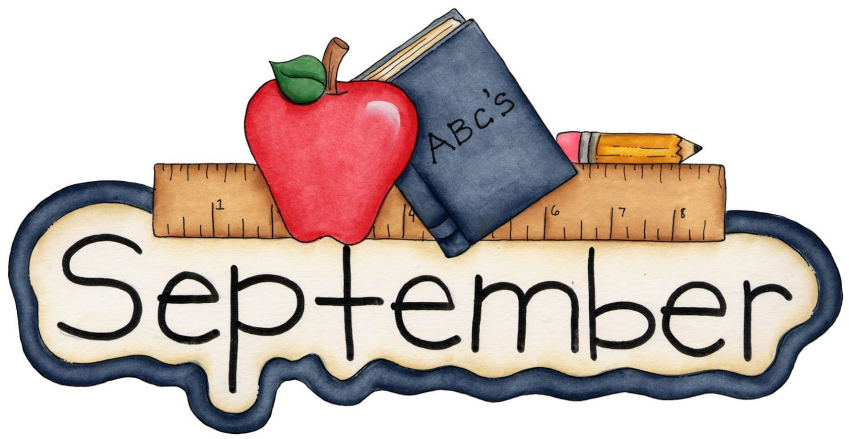
ATTENDANCE TOTALS FOR AUGUST 2026

August 2	86
August 9	50
August 16	52
August 23	47

BIRTHDAYS

2 Linda Busch
 4 Vicki Jebesen
 5 Darrell Paul
 7 Alice Cordts
 10 Stephanie Engler
 10 Barb Norris
 11 Randy Goslin
 17 Connor West
 18 Travis Brunsvold
 19 Clark Wright
 20 Don Cordts
 22 Caiden Raddatz
 30 Bill Romans

HAPPY
 Birthday



ANNIVERSARIES

3 Bob & Suzy White
 4 Josh & Beth Paul
 20 John & Cathy Newman



Worship & Fellowship Volunteers

	September 6	September 13	September 20	September 27	October 4
Altar Guild	Mary Shelton	Diane Holst Sally Morrow	Diana Mayes	Diane Kaufmann	Mary Shelton
Communion Assistant	Sally Morrow	Michelle Crist	Lois Schurr	Marcia Brunsvold	Volunteer Needed
Lector	Jo Ann Hogenson	Barb Paul	Claudia Neumann	Sally Morrow	Ellen Opperman
Usher Greeter	Chris Kaul Ron Morrow	Dane Crist Al McIlrath	Diane Cook Ron Morrow	Arnie Kaufmann Travis Brunsvold	Lois Schurr Paul Opperman
Worship Video Livestream Producer	Darrell Paul	X	Darrell Paul	Darrell Paul	Darrell Paul
Fellowship	Volunteer Needed	HOT Team	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed

If you would like to help us in our Sunday Gathering by doing any of the above tasks, please contact the church office to be added to the list of volunteers.

If you are unable to fulfill your duties, please find a replacement and call or email the church office (332-5188 or office@trinitylcpv.com) with your replacement. Thank you.

THE FOURTH QUARTER OF YOUR LIFE

*embracing what
matters most*

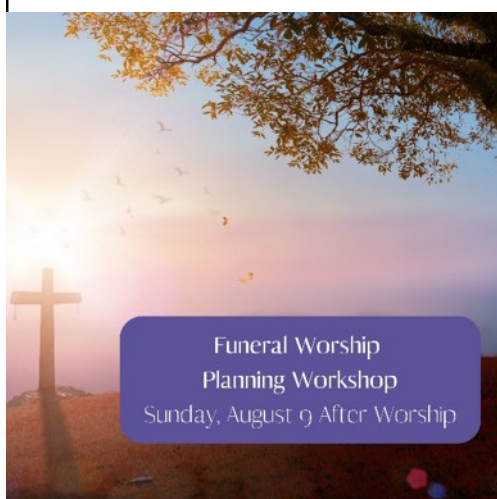
ALLEN HUNT &
MATTHEW KELLY

The Fourth Quarter of Your Life Adult Education Study
Wednesdays at 10 AM at St. James Lutheran Church
September 9 – November 11

This fall our friends at St. James Lutheran Church will be studying a book called *The Fourth Quarter of Your Life: Embracing what Matters Most* written by Allen Hunt & Matthew Kelly.

If you're interested in participating, please contact the St. James Lutheran Church office at (563) 355-4161.

Participants will need to purchase the book. To purchase the book, scan the QR Code here or search for the title on Amazon, Bookshop.com, or wherever you get your books. If you need assistance purchasing the book, see Pastor Stephen.



Funeral Worship
Planning Workshop
Sunday, August 9 After Worship

Funeral Worship Planning Resource Available

After a very successful workshop held Sunday, August 9, with questions and comments shared regarding Funeral Worship Planning, the resources that were shared at that workshop are still available to anyone – even if you didn't attend the workshop.

To receive the workshop's resources, contact Pastor Stephen or a member of the Worship & Music Committee.

After-Worship Adult Education: Organizing Our Mission *Sunday, September 20 at 10 AM*

With Pastor Stephen returning from the Organizing for Mission Network's Annual Training Conference in late August, it would be great to get together and hear what he learned and what we can apply to our context here at Trinity. Join us for some listening, discernment, and more that we might use in the future to help get more people involved in the ministry we share here at Trinity. Feel free to send Pastor Stephen a question in advance of the Sunday Adult Education by email or text.

The Organizing for Mission Network is a group of ministry and community organizing peers who connect, provide resources, and equip leaders for the sake of organizing their communities.

ORGANIZING FOR MISSION ADULT EDUCATION *Sunday, September 20*



CONNECTING
RESOURCING
EQUIPPING



ORGANIZING FOR MISSION
NETWORK



Worship in the Park
Sunday, September 13 at 9 AM
Forest Grove Park in Bettendorf
Fellowship & Games Afterward



Worship in the Park
Sunday, September 13 at 9 AM
Forest Grove Park in Bettendorf

Mark your calendars now!

Let's get out and share the Good News! We'll have a worship service at the regular time in a different place on Sunday, September 13 just down the road at Forest Grove Park. Bring a friend, share in the joy of good weather and enjoy some fellowship together after worship including some games and snacks.

If you would like to help organize games or provide input on snacks, see a member of HOT Team.

Theology on Tap

Tuesday, September 15 at 6:00 PM
Foundry Food & Tap
5055 Competition Dr. Bettendorf.

We've had some great Spirit-filled conversation at our first three gatherings of Theology on Tap. Anyone with a bit of curiosity can meet to discuss whatever is on their mind related to faith, theology, church, God, or life, as we share a drink and fellowship together. We hope you can join us as you grab a drink, grab a seat, and join in conversation together.

THEOLOGY ON TAP

QUESTIONS ABOUT LIFE?
QUESTIONS ABOUT GOD?
QUESTIONS ABOUT BOTH?

Join for an evening of discussion

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 AT 6:00 PM

FOUNDRY FOOD + TAP | 5055 COMPETITION DR., BETTENDORF



BONFIRE CHURCH

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

6:00 - 8:00 PM
DEVIL'S GLEN PARK

AN OUTDOOR GATHERING OF YOUNG PEOPLE
FROM LOCAL LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS

Bonfire Church Gathering for Young Adults

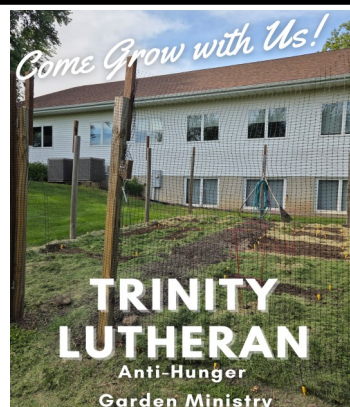
Thursday, September 24 from 6-8 PM at Devil's Glen Park

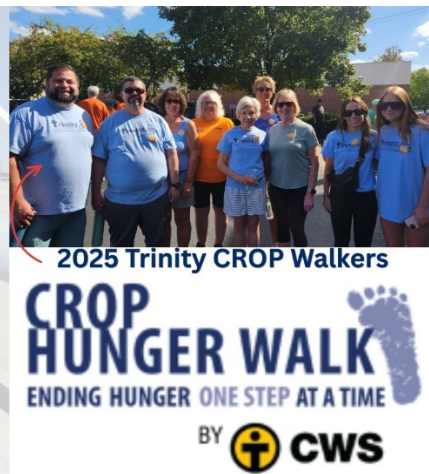
As part of the ongoing sharing of the Spirit with our partner Lutheran churches across the Quad Cities, young adults are invited to join in for Bonfire Church - a summer get-together with relaxation and fellowship for anyone who is seeking to connect with other Lutherans. Snacks will be provided as well as games and short time to deepen faith with a small worship. Childcare will be provided either at the park or at St. James Lutheran Church.

If you have further questions, see Pastor Stephen.

Anti-Hunger Garden Ministry Continues Harvest Season

The Trinity Anti-Hunger Garden outside the south end of the sanctuary continues to produce lots of tasty, nutritious fruits and vegetables, including quite a haul of bell peppers and many onions in the past month. The fruits of this labor go to serve our neighbors in need through both the Trinity Food Pantry and the Central Community Circle (CCC) Food Pantry in Davenport – providing nourishing, fresh produce to neighbors in need who often are only provided with packaged, processed goods. With additional questions, please contact Dane Crist (563-340-6343, gr8tdane_10@yahoo.com) or sign-up in the Narthex.





CROP Walk is Back for 2026

Sunday, October 4 at 1:30 PM

Starting at Bethany for Children and Families in Moline

As a congregation committed to fighting hunger, we join in the efforts for the Quad Cities Crop Walk against Hunger every fall. Through fundraising and a collection of peanut butter and jelly that benefits food pantries like ours around the Quad Cities, we build awareness of the issue of hunger by walking across the I-74 Bridge from the Moline side to the Bettendorf side and back.

Sign-up online through the new [Trinity website](#) or in the Narthex. Don't forget to bring some peanut butter and jelly to share with the community in our annual PB&J Drive.

If you would like to meet at the "starting line," you can join us at Caxton Building/Bethany for Children & Families at 1701 River Drive, Moline.

Blessing of the Pets

Sunday, October 4 at 12 PM

Every year around the world, Christians commemorate the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi (a saint who adored animals and all of God's creation) by blessing their pets. After our Lenten Midweek worship this year centered around singing with all the saints in glory, what better time for us at Trinity to join in this celebration?! You are invited to bring your pets – dogs, cats, fish, any other animal you have at home – to our Blessing of the Pets, taking place at noon on Sunday, October 4 to receive a blessing and possibly a treat. Come back after worship and receive a blessing! Share this with your friends and neighbors! To learn more, visit <https://bit.ly/TLCSaintFrancis>.



Fall Retreat for Ages 55+ at Camp Ewalu

Wednesday, October 14 to Friday, October 16

Camp is NOT just for kids! Join us for Autumn Odyssey, Camp Ewalu's fall retreat for ages 55+. You'll stay at the comfortable Stone Center just north of Strawberry Point in hotel-style rooms, each with its own bathroom. This year's activities and speakers will focus on wellness: physical, spiritual, environmental and mental. Plus, you'll be surrounded by the fall colors in scenic

NE Iowa!

COST: \$175 double occupancy (2 in a room), \$225 single occupancy (1 in a room) 5 meals and 2 nights of lodging included!

Clara Buxton, a licensed marriage and family therapist, will speak on the topic of mental and emotional wellness. Jane and Rick Juchems of Waverly will talk about their recent trip to Ghana with Self Help International.

See the tentative schedule and register now at <https://www.Ewalu.org/Autumn-Odyssey>

Don't delay! This popular retreat is limited to 28 and often fills up! Treat yourself to a wonderful fall experience during peak leaf season, and bring a friend.

Trinity Food Pantry Continues Feeding Our Neighbors

Pantry Hours: Mondays, 9-11 AM and Thursdays, 4-6 PM

One of the greatest blessings of our food pantry ministry is seeing God's love come full circle. For some time, one of our guests has faithfully visited the pantry to help provide food for her family. Recently, she began bringing in fresh eggs from her own chickens to share with others in need. Her generosity is a beautiful reminder that everyone has something to give, no matter what their circumstances. The food pantry isn't just about providing food— it's about building a caring community where kindness is received, multiplied, and shared. Thank you to everyone whose support makes stories like this possible.

Thanks so much for the support!
Trinity Food Pantry Team

pantry@trinitylcpv.com



FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

Most needed items for the Food Pantry:

Canned meats (chicken, tuna, spam), canned corn, cereal, cooking oil, condiments (ketchup, mustard, B-B-Q sauce, and salad dressing).

As the needs change we will add a list of the most needed items each month in the Torch.

The donations to the Food Pantry are very much appreciated.

You are Invited to "A Toast to Home" Presented by Humility Homes and Services

Sunday October 4 | 10:00 AM - 12 noon.

Doors open at 9:30 AM

Bally's Quad Cities Event Center
777 Bally Blvd.
Rock Island, IL 6201



Join us for a morning of community, generosity, and hope in support of housing services across the Quad Cities. Enjoy a delicious breakfast brunch, hear inspiring testimonials, bid on silent auction items, and participate in Fund a Cause to help individuals and families working toward a place to call home.

To Purchase brunch tickets, visit [Register for A Toast to Home](#)
or contact **Jen Davis, Chief Development Officer**, at 309-337-9326

Shred Event Sponsored by Thrivent Financial

Secure your documents & Support your community

Shred Event



Event Details: Saturday, September 19,
2026 9:00 AM - to 12:00 PM.

Location: Redeemer Lutheran Church 1107
Tanglefoot Lane, Bettendorf, IA 52722

Questions: Call Michele Goldsberry at
563-345-6424 or email
michele.goldsberry@thrivent.com

Come to **Redeemer Lutheran Church** for a
secure document Shred Event and **support**
community partner, Habitat for Humani-
ty!

For every \$2 donated, Thrivent will add \$1,
up to an additional \$1500! Together, we will
support Habitat for Humanity bringing peo-



Trinity
Blood Pressure Ministry
After worship on
September 6

Trinity will be offering this ministry the first Sunday of each month by our qualified congregational nurses. There are several stories of health monitoring, helping the lives of those who have stopped to use this ministry.

Trinity Card Crafting Ministry Trinity Spreading Joy
Thursday, September 10 1:00 – 3:00 PM

After a brief summer hiatus, Card Crafting Ministry is back!

Trinity's card ministry meets monthly on the second Thursday of the month at 1:00 pm in the lower level of the church. The next meeting will be November 13 from 1:00-3:00 PM. All are welcome to join us- no experience necessary!

Each month we make and deliver cards to the residents of Aspire of Pleasant Valley Nursing and Rehab (Formerly River Manor). We also make and mail greetings to members and friends of Trinity. In addition, the committee has been working to replenish the supply of greeting cards for sale in the Fellowship Hall. All cards are \$2.00.

Thank you for your support of this ministry. If you have any questions, please contact Chris Kaul, Claudia Neumann, or Marcia Brunsvold.



Join Trinity Prayer Chain to Connect with Community



A community that prays for one another is transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. We have been praying for and with each other

for a long time here at Trinity Lutheran Church, but often we don't know exactly what we are praying for in those instances. If you would like to share in brief emails when there are prayer requests sent in to the office or to Pastor Stephen (at the times when permission is given), please email Pastor or the office to be added to the Trinity Prayer Chain. These will likely be brief emails to provide a notice when an emergency has happened or when someone is requesting prayers for a family member. Prayer requests will be asked, whether they would like any details shared with the prayer chain, when they make those requests.

Sharing in a Community that Prays Together

If you have been prayed for by the congregation and would like to send a thank-you to be included in an upcoming Torch newsletter, please send a note to Paula in the office at office@trinitylcpv.com or see Pastor Stephen. Sharing in prayer together helps us grow together in faith.

Help with Fellowship Hall Refresh

Thanks to the wonderful work of the HOT Team and Church Council, we will be getting updated chairs (and possibly tables) in the Fellowship Hall at Trinity to freshen up the look and provide easier-to-clean chairs. Your generosity and support would be greatly appreciated to offset the costs of these chairs. **Each chair is \$35**, and you can earmark your offering for this great cause by marking your offering envelope with "Fellowship Hall" or "Chairs."





Summer Scott County Library's Bookmobile Stops

The Scott County Library Bookmobile will stop at by Trinity parking lot through the fall on Tuesday every 3 weeks. Anyone with a library card from

a library in Scott County can check out books and other media. We will have snacks and drinks available in Fellowship Hall.

We hope to see you there!

Tuesday September 1 and 22. 4:40-5:10 PM

For more info, visit: Scottcountyia.gov/library/bookmobile

What's Baking? Communion Bread Sign-Up in the Narthex

Each week Communion Bread is baked by volunteers from around our congregation, bringing forth the bread of life from the shared community we have here at Trinity. If you'd like to sign-up to bake the bread, there is a sheet in the narthex, and a recipe available online.



Join the PPALs Bible Study

Saturdays 8 AM
Trinity Lutheran Church

Join together in a new Bible Study with Christians from around the PV, Princeton, Argo, and Le Claire area that make up PPALs. We encourage you to grab a coffee or beverage and join in for readings and discussion of the Bible. For more information, see [Randy Goslin](#).



Flutter Patch Back Again

Formerly known as the Butterfly Garden, the Trinity Flutter Patch has had lots of new changes throughout this summer season - new plantings, added walkways, and so much more!

If you are interested in helping with the planting or watering for the 2026 season, contact John Newman at 563-949-7375 or johnnewmanatty@yahoo.com.



BIBLE Study

WEDNESDAYS AT 10 AM

Join us for a **weekly** Bible study centered around the texts for the upcoming week's worship service as we find what God is up to in the text and our lives this week



WEEKLY READINGS

09/06 Ezekiel 33:7-11, Psalm 119:33-40
Romans 13:8-14, Matthew 18:15-20

09/13 Genesis 50:15-21, Psalm 103:1-13
Romans 14:1-12, Matthew 18:21-35

09/20 Jonah 3:10—4:11, Psalm 145:1-8
Philippians 1:21-30, Matthew 20:1-16

09/27 Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32, Psalm 251-9
Philippians 2:1-13, Matthew 23:1-32



**Relentlessly
Dedicated
To Serving Iowa Families**

**AT LSI, WE ARE FUELED BY THE POWER OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT AND DRIVING TO CREATE
STRONGER IOWA
COMMUNITIES**

Our work isn't done until every Iowa child has a safe, loving home; until every individual struggling with mental illness has access to quality therapy; until every former refugee feels welcome in their new home; until every Iowan with a disability has the independence they need to thrive.

As one of Iowa's most trusted human services agencies, LSI has a legacy of serving children and families for more than 50 years. With more than 1,000 team members in 30 offices statewide, Team LSI stands united, ready to tackle the difficult issues facing our most vulnerable neighbors.

**Customized Care
For Iowa Children, Adults, and Families**

Behavioral Health Intervention Services to support children with behavioral disorders through regular in-home visits and provide their families with practical skills like anger management and healthy communication.

Family Safety and Crisis Services to provide intensive interventions designed to strengthen families and prevent child removal due to abuse or neglect.

Refugee And Immigrant Services to empower refugees and immigrants with English classes, economic development programs, and family support.

Residential Treatment Services to provide Iowa's most vulnerable children and teens with 24 hour trauma-centered mental health care.

Early Childhood Services for parents of young children. Our programs support Iowa families with home visiting, classes, and parenting education.

Mental Health Services for children, adults, and families in a compassionate, non-judgmental therapeutic environment.

Foster Care and Adoption to recruit, license, and support foster and adoptive families.

Services For People With Disabilities include 24 hourly care and Host Homes independent living respite care for Iowa children and adults with high intellectual or developmental disabilities.



LSI is affiliated with Lutheran Services in America and the three Iowa Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, nationalities origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. LSI is nationally accredited by the Council on Accreditation.

LSI proudly serves Iowans in all 99 counties through our services of Mental Health, Early Childhood, Foster Care & Adoption, People with Disabilities, and Immigrant & Refugee Community Services. We serve individuals of all ages, from families with newborns navigating the early stages of parenthood, to Refugee and Immigrant elders, as well as children at every stage of development. Our heart beats for the people we serve. We empower families and communities by recognizing and honoring the strengths and gifts of every individual.

A Call to be Trusted Messengers in this Election Season

Dear church,

In [an interview](#) after I was elected, I reflected on my experience as a mission developer, saying, “It is not about what you think you’re bringing into the community. It’s who you are in the community. The minute we showed that we cared is really when the community adopted us. People don’t care about what you know till they know that you care, and that was the biggest learning for me.”

Faithful. Informed. Engaged. This refrain captures a vision for Lutheran Christians living out their baptismal calling in the election season and beyond. Faith grounds us in God’s promises, and Christ sends us forth to love our neighbors and serve the world. Being informed equips us to address complex issues with wisdom, discernment and integrity. Being engaged reminds us that our participation in civic life is a key way we love and serve our neighbors. Our public witness is rooted in faith, guided by honesty and expressed through active citizenship.



ELCA ministries and leaders already play vital roles during election seasons. You register voters, provide rides to the polls, open your buildings as polling places and advocate for voting rights. Thank you! This year, I invite you to embrace an additional role to help strengthen our democracy: serving as trusted messengers in your communities.

Our church can be “all together in one place” as a powerful witness for truth, love of neighbor and honesty. False information remains a persistent challenge during elections. It can spread rapidly, undermining confidence in the electoral process and discouraging participation. Grounded in the commandment not to bear false witness, our churches and faith leaders are uniquely positioned to help address this challenge by seeking out and sharing accurate information and correcting misinformation when it arises. In a time when trust is often in short supply, serving as trusted sources of wisdom and guidance is a meaningful form of Christian witness. By helping our neighbors access accurate information and engage confidently in the democratic process, we live out our faith through responsible civic engagement and service to the common good.

“Healthy civic engagement depends on clear distinctions between fact and all forms of falsehood, ranging from partial misstatements to intentional disinformation to outright lies. ... Our church, then, encourages us all to ask, in every personal interaction and on social media, whether our words or those we repeat represent the best possible understanding of our neighbor.”

— ELCA social statement Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All (p. 62)

The ELCA offers a [variety of resources](#) to help congregations and individuals be trusted messengers. The new “[ELCA Election Engagement Toolkit](#)” provides guidance on topics that include serving as trusted messengers, engaging in election protection and modeling love of neighbor in polarized communities. (A [tool kit launch webinar](#) on Thursday, Sept. 3, at 12:30 p.m. Central time will provide an introduction to action steps and themes grounded in our Lutheran tradition.)

Through the “[ELCA Civic Engagement Guide](#),” you can access materials on voter education, voter registration, candidate forums, legal guidelines for congregations, voting rights and ways to encourage participation in local communities.

I invite you to take faithful steps this election year:

- Register to vote if you have not already done so and check your registration to make sure it is up-to-date. Use the “[Prepared to Vote Checklist](#)” to think through local voting requirements.
- Learn about the issues, ballot measures and candidates that will shape your community. Participate in respectful conversations.
- Check sources of information before sharing it in conversations or online.
- Pray for those who serve in public office, for election workers and for all who will exercise the privilege of voting. Create spaces for faithful, open conversation with voters, candidates or neighbors in your community.
- Encourage your family members, friends and neighbors to take part in the democratic process.

Be faithful, informed and engaged as disciples of Jesus seeking the well-being of our neighbors and the common good of the communities God has entrusted to our care. Every act of informed participation, every conversation marked by grace and every vote cast with prayerful discernment is an opportunity to bear witness to God’s love in the world.

In Christ,

Yehiel Curry

Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

SEPTEMBER 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 3:30 PM Social Ministry 4:40-5:10 PM Bookmobile	2 10 AM Bible Study 11:30 AM Worship & Music	3 10:30 AM Constitution Revision Task Force 4-6 PM Food Pantry 5:30 PM All Committee Meeting Night	4 Pastor's Sabbath	5 8 AM - PPALS Bible Study
6 9 AM Worship 10 AM Fellowship 10 AM Property Comm. 10 AM Blood Pressure Clinic	7 Office Closed/Labor Day Food Pantry Closed for Labor Day	8	9 10 AM Bible Study	10 1 PM Card Ministry 4 - 6 PM Food Pantry	11 Pastor's Sabbath	12 8 AM - PPALS Bible Study
13 9 AM Worship in the Park @ Forest Grove Park 10 AM Fellowship	14 9 - 11 AM Food Pantry 5 PM Stewardship Comm. 6 PM Council	15 6 PM Theology on Tap @ Foundry Food + Tap	16 10 AM Bible Study	17 4 - 6 PM Food Pantry	18 Pastor's Sabbath	19 8 AM - PPALS Bible Study 9 AM - 12 PM Shred Event at Redeemer
20 9 AM Worship 10AM Fellowship	21 9 - 11 AM Food Pantry	22 4:40-5:10 PM Bookmobile	23 10 AM Bible Study	24 4 - 6 PM Food Pantry	25 Pastor's Sabbath	26 8 AM - PPALS Bible Study
27 9 AM Worship 10 AM Fellowship	28 9 - 11 AM Food Pantry	29	30 10 AM Bible Study			