



The Parish Twine

July, 2026

- St. John's Lutheran Church, St. Donatus, IA
- St. Paul's Lutheran Church, La Motte, IA



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

This month, I want to talk about sabbath. Recently I was listening to a podcast where the host was describing how she and her family have a practice of keeping sabbath. It made me realize that I am not very intentional about dedicating a day for rest and my relationship with the Lord.

Of the ten commandments, keeping the sabbath is the one I imagine most of us take the least seriously. I think we're all pretty unanimous on things like not murdering or stealing. But it's easy to think that not keeping the sabbath is relatively harmless.

The truth is though, when we don't find time to rest our bodies and restore our souls, the one we're harming is really ourself. We are literally not made to go non-stop without taking time to rest. Our creator gave us a pattern, from the very beginning of creation, of six days of work, and one day of rest.

Now, how exactly any of us keeps that commandment will vary from person to person. In strict orthodox Jewish communities, you might find people who won't so much as push an elevator button or turn on a light switch on the sabbath, seeing such actions as consisting of work. On the other extreme, there are folks who never take any kind of time off whatsoever. Now, I know exactly who is reading this newsletter as I write it. Like many rural communities, our parish includes some of you who work a full time job during the week along with farming. Taking a whole day off is certainly easier said than done! It might seem foolish or even self-centered to try and take an entire day off when you and your family's livelihood and legacy are at stake.

That said, I think most of us also know examples of folks who work non-stop to the point of running themselves ragged, and we have seen the damage it can do when there's not any kind of balance between work and rest. Jesus makes it clear in the Gospels that keeping the sabbath is a commandment God gives us for our own good, and the point is not to shame us when we fall short of keeping it.

For some of you, finding time to rest from your labors might have to be a seasonal cycle. And maybe consistently taking an entire day for rest each week simply doesn't fit with the reality of your life right now. But if that's the case, are there ways that you might be able to to at least incorporate a little sabbath time into your life as it is right now? Could you try to schedule a block of time each week where you and your family rest and enjoy spending time with one another and with God?

One thing that I want to really work on trying for myself is the idea of trying to prepare ahead of my sabbath time each week. That was one thing this particular podcast host really emphasized, and I thought it made a lot of sense. It takes some planning ahead to make sure that your "sabbath" time isn't simply a day to be busy in a *different* way, like getting caught up on all of the chores that didn't get accomplished during the rest of the week.

One final thing for all of you to think about: when should you observe the sabbath? Well, the literal sabbath day is Saturday, which is when our Jewish neighbors keep the sabbath. Some Christians follow this practice, too. For many other Christians,

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Pastor:

Rev. William J. Layton
(563) 249-6923
pastorwill@stjohnsandstpauls.org

Deacon:

Rev. Laurie Finn
520-981-4328 cell
deaonlaurie@stjohnsandstpauls.org

Church Office:

773-2313
office@stjohnsandstpauls.org

Marge's Email:

margefelderman@netins.net

Holy Communion:

1st, 3rd, & 5th Sundays
of each month
plus major festivals

Sunday Worship

St. Paul's—8:30 a.m.
St. John's—10:00 a.m.

St. John's Council

July 6—6:30 p.m.

Women of ELCA Bible Study & Meeting

July 9, 1:00 p.m.

Intergenerational Sewing Day

July 15, 10:00 a.m.

Tractor Pull

July 19, 10:30 a.m.
In St. Donatus

Council Notes

Worship Attendance:

	<u>St. John's</u>	<u>St. Paul's</u>
May 31	26	9
June 7	34	12
June 13		6
June 14	22	
June 21	31	13
June 24	145	Carlton Busch Funeral

St. John's Council Meeting, Monday May 4, 2026

Meeting called to order by Tom Harmon.

Members present: Pastor Will, Linda Hueneke, Mark Hueneke, Tom Decker, John Busch, Julie Busch, Judy Hueneke-Kremer, Tom Harmon, and Lynn Sanders

Devotions: Pastor Will provided

Pastor Report: Pastor Will provided a written report.

Secretary Report: Judy H-K provided a written report.

Treasurer Report: Julie B provided written report.

Motion carried to approve reports.

Old Business:

Wartburg Fundraising Seminar—Tom D, Lynn S, Mark H, and Pastor Will attended meeting. Motion carried to have a Wartburg Student Welcome Cook Out with Wartburg Seminary appeal the first week of September.

Tractor Pull—July 19th jointly with St. Donatus Catholic Church

New Business:

Living Lutheran publication—Living Lutheran will no longer be available in hard copy at St. John's. You can have your own hard copy subscription for \$19, there is a free online subscription, or Pastor will make his copy available in back of church.

Microsoft Publisher—Software will no longer be available in October. Options are being researched.

Next meeting: June 1, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Judy Hueneke-Kremer

Churches of St. Donatus Tractor Pull Sunday, July 19th

St. Donatus, Behind B & G Feed Services

Kalmes will start serving food at 10:30 a.m., and there is a sign-up sheet in the back of church if you would be willing to assist in the food stand that day.

Sponsorships are available for individuals, families or businesses who would like to do so - \$100 each. If you are interested in a sponsorship opportunity, please reach out to Rich Busch or Julie Busch for more information.

St. John's will NOT be having worship on this event Sunday.



St. John's VBS

St. John's Vacation Bible School, "Discovery on Adventure Island," was held Friday, June 26th. Thank you to all who helped make VBS a fantastic success again this year!

Congratulations

The following were on the Bellevue Community School Honor Roll:

- ◇ Mckenna Martens, 8th grade high honors
- ◇ Addysen Felderman, 12th grade high honors
- ◇ Ava Yeager, 12th grade high honors
- ◇ Pyper Kettmann, 8th grade honorable mention
- ◇ Madilyn Hueneke, 10th grade honorable mention
- ◇ Alexis Felderman, 12th grade honorable mention

In Prayer

Beth Bettcher, Norma Bormann, Marilyn Bradley, Richard Bradley, Tricia Busch, Lowell Carlson, Ann Current, Janell Daugherty, Dave DeMaio, Callen Dunn, Carl Ganzer, Pastor Horst Hehr, John Hinke, Gary Hughes, Delaine Knipper, Sharon Konrardy, Joyce Laughlin, Jean Reisen, David Schroeder, Liam Schroeder, Diane Wallace, Tammy Welders, Duane Westphal, Chris Weuste, Pastor Michael Zamzow.

Women ^{of the} ELCA

July Bible Study & Quarterly Meeting Thursday, July 9, 1:00 p.m.

Devotions: Peggy Post; Bible Study: Pastor Will

Our Bible study is Bathsheba in the book, "Women of the Bible," beginning on p. 176. All are encourage to come at 10:00 a.m. for sewing/tying and bring a sack lunch.

Quilts

3 tied quilts were taken to Open Closet at St. John, Dubuque in June. They also appreciated the toothbrushes that Jackie Clark had given.

Cuddle Comfort

We are thankful for the Thrivent Gift Card that we were able to use toward the purchase of two rolls of quilt batting.

Multi-Generational Sewing Day

We invite everyone who would like partake in another day of sewing, tying, cutting blocks to come at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 15.

Triennial Women's Gathering July 16-19, 2026, in Des Moines

This major gathering brings together women from across the church, including the Southeastern Iowa Synod, for worship, fellowship, and business.

The theme is "I Am Worthy," based on Psalm 139:14: "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." The Women of the ELCA website says—This statement serves as a reminder of God's promise to be with us, even in times of devastation and division. By repeating this phrase, "I am worthy," we can recognize the Holy Spirit's power in our lives. When we declare "I am worthy," we align ourselves with God's promises. There is great power in our resolve. All details and registration link are at Welcatg.org.

DaMisha Pollock-McFarland is on the ballot to be elected as a board member at the upcoming WELCA Triennial. Please keep her in our prayers for successful participation in the Triennial. She is also serving as a chaplain for the Triennial, a voting delegate for the SWO as is Dianne Strickler.

Looking ahead: Watch for plans for fall Gatherings.

Our Sympathy

- Carlton Busch died June 18 at Stonehill Health Center. His funeral and burial was June 24 at St. John's.
- Judith Ann Hankemeier (Betty Schroeder's sister-in-law) died June 20 at Solon Care Center..

July Birthdays

- July 1 — Kari Felderman
- July 4 — Delanie Moeggenberg
- July 5 — Teague Kohlenberg
- July 6 — Rita Brown
Roger Heacock
Abram Shaw
- July 7 — Brandi Moeggenberg
Tyler Till
- July 9 — Lucas Knief
- July 10 — Staci Felderman
- July 11 — Allen Glen Busch
Eddie Walker
- July 12 — Stacey Wagner
- July 13 — Paul Christoffer
- July 14 — Evie Shaw
- July 15 — Anita Heacock
- July 17 — Ethan Marks
- July 18 — Sienna Kohlenberg
- July 19 — Presly Kettmann
Cat Walker
- July 21 — Jim Denman
Taylor Gourley
Lexi Knief
Sherry Miller
- July 22 — Samuel Christoffer
Ernie Hilborn
- July 23 — Chris Hueneker
Marica Hueneker
- July 26 — Terry Tietjen
- July 27 — Brett Clark
- July 28 — Ben Busch
Olivia Gill
Penny Minnehan
Peggy Post
- July 30 — Bailey Woodard
- July 31 — Linda Felderman
Maxton Felderman

Anniversaries

- July 1 — Chris & Jennifer Felderman
- July 2 — Darla & Chuck Till
- July 6 — Deb & Bruce Weis
- July 10 — Joan & Eric Clark
- July 13 — Amanda & Andy Ruden
- July 26 — John & Mary Giesemann
Ernie & Sue Hilborn
- July 28 — Toby & Brandi Moeggenberg

Please let us know of any errors or omissions.

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Sunday is our equivalent of the sabbath. Luther assumes this idea when he explains in the small catechism that keeping the sabbath means “We are to fear and love God, so that we do not despise preaching or God's word, but instead keep that word holy and gladly hear and learn it.” Observing Sunday as the Sabbath does make it convenient to incorporate worship into our sabbath-keeping. When I was growing up, I remember our church calendar always had Fridays marked as “Pastor’s Sabbath Rest.” Sunday isn’t exactly a day of rest for us ministers, and like my pastor growing up, I take Friday “off,” but I admit I haven’t truly been very intentional about thinking of it as a “Sabbath.” This summer, one of my goals is to focus on this more.

Do you and your family practice a specific kind of sabbath-keeping? If so, I’d love to hear about it!

Sincerely in Christ,
Pastor Will Layton

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Lutheran Services of Iowa
July, 2026

Without Amy’s support, I would still be an addict, and I wouldn’t be where I am today,” said Michelle, an LSI client.

Michelle was struggling with substance abuse, legal issues, and mental health issues when she found LSI therapist Amy Davis back in 2021.

“God helps us in ways we don’t always want him to,” said Michelle. “When the coronavirus pandemic hit, I lost my job. The unemployment lines were long at the time, so we went several months without a paycheck, so I decided to get creative with my finances. I started selling drugs and was later arrested with a large quantity of drugs. They came in, took my kid, and I went to jail. After that, I was referred to work with Amy at LSI.”

Michelle and Amy worked through Michelle’s childhood trauma, processing the significant losses in her life due to drug overdose and death. Amy helped Michelle work on building a positive support system, a list of future goals, and a relationship with her daughter, Rachel.

“Rachel and I had a lot of problems when we entered therapy because I was a drug addict, and there was a lot of broken trust between us,” said Michelle. “LSI therapists helped us rebuild that trust and helped show her the progress I had made when she couldn’t see it herself.”

Rachel, in therapy as well, has been seeing LSI Therapist Chelsea Zaragoza since 2019. In addition to one-on-one therapy sessions with their respective therapists, Michelle and Rachel also do family therapy sessions with Amy and Chelsea. These sessions help the mother and daughter have time set aside to talk about issues they are having in a healthy, productive way.

“Michelle has had a lot of struggles, loss, and a lot of people who didn’t believe in her, and her daughter was one of them,” said Amy Davis, LSI Therapist. “We have worked hard doing family and individual therapy to bring those two back together, and it has worked. Where they are now, I don’t think I’ve seen a mother-daughter relationship as healthy as the two of them are.”

“To see how far Michelle has come since I met her is truly remarkable,” said Amy. “She built the ladder, and she climbed out.”

“I was a mess when I first came to LSI,” said Michelle. “Now, I’m sober, in college, have a high-paying job, and have my daughter back. Amy believed in me when no one else did, not even myself. She gave me hope.”

A Heart for Healing: Meet Amy

Amy is a temporary Licensed Mental Health Counselor with more than 20 years of experience treating adults and children. Amy has extensive experience working with at risk youth in a variety of settings. Amy’s area of emphasis include teen and adult mental health disorder, including but not limited to depression, anxiety, self-esteem, healthy relationships, attachment disorder, and PTSD. Amy is trained in EMDR, Gottman Method, TF-CBT, and Sex offender Treatment Program (SOTD).

Friendly Reminder: If giving by mail, please send donations to our the address :
Lutheran Services in Iowa, 3125 Cottage Grove Ave., Des Moines, IA 50311