



January Newsletter 2026

In high school, I became friends with a classmate whose dad was a pastor like mine was. In my experience pastors were well-educated in college and seminary, had received a divine call from God through a congregation. I was so excited to connect over common experiences that I completely forgot about different denominations and how they prepare, and create pastors. So, I asked what seminary her dad went to and was met with a blank stare and her reply, "Seminary? What's that?" I mentioned how it was 4 years of schooling to get your master's degree after college. She went on to say he didn't attend seminary anywhere, he just simply felt a call from God to plant a church and pastor it, so he did.

This was a very nice family. They seemed sincere and genuine in their faith. And I'm thankful for their friendship. In that friendship I learned a lot but it left me with more questions about what is the church. First, I realized not all churches are the same even though most Christian churches say they follow Jesus through the Word of God. Second it led to me want to learn more about our differences. That led me to ask questions like, what are our differences, do the differences matter based on scripture, if they do matter, why and how do they matter, and finally how should we as Christians respond. I bring this experience up to draw us into what we believe teach and confess in the VIII article of the Augsburg Confession.

Before we dive deeper into the meaning VIII article, let's review what we learned last month from Article VII of the Augsburg confession: "The church is the assembly of saints in which the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly." Article VII tells us what the Church is and what defines the church. In short you can be comforted and confident where God's Word is purely taught and his sacraments are given that's where the church is found. (Just as an aside I want to remind you this truth doesn't mean it isn't possible to find the church at other congregations. But don't walk away from these newsletters simply trusting any church just because they say they believe the Bible and say they follow Jesus. Test their teaching, and their works!)

I really find this quote helpful for understanding what the church is and what defines it. "The church is not only an association of external ties and rites like other civic organizations, but it is principally an association of faith and the Holy Spirit in the hearts of persons. It nevertheless has its external marks so that it can be recognized(!) namely, the pure teaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments in harmony with the good news of Christ."

And that quote leads us into article VIII and gets at the questions I experienced with finding out this one pastor didn't go to seminary and was teaching and preaching at a church. Article VIII says this:

LIKEWISE, ALTHOUGH THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IS, PROPERLY SPEAKING, NOTHING ELSE THAN THE ASSEMBLY OF ALL BELIEVERS AND SAINTS, YET BECAUSE IN THIS LIFE MANY FALSE CHRISTIANS, HYPOCRITES, AND EVEN PUBLIC SINNERS REMAIN AMONG THE RIGHTEOUS, THE SACRAMENTS—EVEN THOUGH ADMINISTERED BY UNRIGHTEOUS PRIESTS—ARE EFFICACIOUS ALL THE SAME. FOR AS CHRIST HIMSELF INDICATES [MATT. 23:2-3*]: “THE SCRIBES AND THE PHARISEES SIT ON MOSES’ SEAT.”

AUGSBURG CONFESSION ARTICLE VIII



The VIII article helps ground us in why we keep going to church when people misuse or abuse the church. I'm not saying the pastor or church he cared for are false Christians, hypocrites, or anything like that. Despite my friends' Dad having no seminary education or denominational tie, I was glad for their Christian friendship and encouragement. It didn't make everything they touch or say turn to gold, or dust. They weren't perfect or evil. Where questions arose from them having a different confession it helped grow confidence and comfort in what we do have in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. There are days, no matter the denomination where another Christian's sin, pastor or lay person, shows through and you may wonder if the place you go to really is giving you God's Word.

I want to encourage you to be thankful for the educational training, the denominational ties that we do have and the theology and teaching we glean from scripture. It is for your benefit, for your good and I've seen the good comfort and confidence I can have from it growing up. That isn't something my friend nor their church had.

So, what does this mean for you? First, when someone sins, don't doubt that God is working that place. If your pastor fails, or disappoints you, or doesn't shine as brightly as you thought he should, might, or once did, God can still get you what you need through his Word.

Second, keep on the lookout for false teachers especially online. Do this by consuming God's Word first and most. The Book of Concord goes on to explain it this way: "Christ has also warned us in his parables on the church that when offended by the personal conduct of either priests or people, we should not incite schisms... [BUT] "If anyone proclaims to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let that one be accursed" (Galatians 1:9).

Be thankful that God still works in the gathering of believers, for their good and for their benefit, even when there is a bad, ineffective, or even evil pastor. This too is an amazing grace from our amazing God. I pray article VIII of the Augsburg confession is as much of a blessing for you as it has been for me in my life.



Joyfully His,
-Pastor Jonathan Jahnke



What a treat our shut-in members received from the Cookie Exchange this year! Thank you to those of you who took time to bake and share your delicious goodies with others! Also, thank you Pastor Jon for making most of the deliveries and capturing these beautiful ladies' smiles.

ALTAR GUILD



When you read this, we will be nearly through the Time of Christmas and entering the Feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord. Today the Epiphany emphasizes the presentation of the Lord to the world. This begins with the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6, which commemorates the visit of the Gentile Wise Men to the Babe of Bethlehem. A time of great rejoicing and gladness, since the Light of the world is revealed to the nations, “a light to lighten the Gentiles.”

This manifestation theme continues on the First Sunday after Epiphany, which celebrates the Baptism of Our Lord, when the voice from heaven revealed Him as “My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” The Sundays after Epiphany continue to illustrate the manifestation of God in Christ Jesus. The Epiphany season reaches its highest point in the Festival of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, when Jesus revealed His divine glory to the inner circle of His disciples. For the Church today, the Word of the Epiphany season continues to bring joy and awe to the faithful.

The color of Epiphany is white, the color of divinity, purity and joy. The First Sunday after Epiphany is usually celebrate as the Baptism of Our Lord. ON the Eve of the Third Sunday after Epiphany, the paraments are changed to green, since these Sundays, until the Eve of the Transfiguration, are considered to be “ordinary time,” then the paraments are changed to white once again.

THANK YOU to everyone who helped to care for the Altar this year and helped to fill our 2025 calendar. Thank you LaVonne Schimmelpfenning and Deb Hul for their care of the Altar in December. Denise Armbruster will be the Altar care giver for January, and caregivers for February will be Marian Brelje and Danielle Meinert.

Marian and I are soon going to be passing this position on to someone else, please think and pray about it. Marian and I are very much willing to work with anyone who steps forward. If questions, see either of us, Loren or Pastor.



Submitted by,
Amory Anderson



Marian Brelje

ELDER'S CORNER

Happy New Year!

Happy New year to the Good Shepard Lutheran Church family. Welcome to 2026. Let's hope (and pray) that 2026 is even better than 2025 was. Have you made any New Year's resolutions yet? I can hardly believe another year has come and gone. It is the "year of our Lord" 2026 already. Being born in 1957 the end of the 20th century seemed so far away and here we are 26 years into the 21st century already. Seems a little surreal to me at times.

Anyway, regarding New Year's resolutions – what exactly is a New Years resolution? Well according to Google search:

"A New Year's Resolution is essentially a Promise that individuals make to themselves to either start doing something beneficial or to stop doing something detrimental. Common resolutions often focus on personal development, such as adopting healthier habits, enhancing relationships, or achieving specific goals.

Some of the most popular New Year's resolutions include:

- Improving health: Such as exercising regularly or eating healthier.
- Financial goals: Like saving money or reducing debt
- Personal Development: Such as learning a new skill or hobby.
- Relationship goals: Including spending more time with family and friends or improving communication skills.

New Year's resolutions serve as a motivational tool for many individuals, encouraging self-reflection and goalsetting as they enter a new year. While the success rate of these resolutions can vary, the act of setting them is often seen as a positive step towards personal growth and improvement.

So, what about Christians? What are some good New Year's resolutions for Christians? How about making a resolution to pray more, or to read the Bible daily, and/or to attend church more regularly. These are all great goals. However, these New Year's resolutions can be as difficult to attain as the before mentioned secular goals. How about first we prayerfully ask God for the wisdom to show us what it is that we should change if our lives. Asking God for wisdom first and then for help in considering what to change should provide you with a support system that will be successful. (Psalm 37:5-6 says, "Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.") You could also ask God for wisdom in how to fulfill your goals and then rely on God's strength to help you, (Philippians 4:13 tells us, "I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.") Finally, you could ask for help from an accountability partner, someone who will help you stay on track with your resolution. There will be occasional setbacks, but with the Lord on your side you can turn those failures into motivation to do better.

Setting a New Year's resolution can be very intimidating for some and amount to a huge commitment. How about if we all make a resolution to be more loving and kinder towards our family, friends and neighbors in 2026 than we were in 2025. I think that would make 2026 even better than 2025.

Happy New Year!
Gary Christianson
Elder



Pastor Jahnke 701.306.2072 Greg Armbruster 952.288.3953 Loren Boysen 320.760.0199 Gary Christianson 320.491.0258 Dave Erickson 320.491.3703



Jason Norheim 320.808.4156 Brandon Luedeke 320.304.4237 Paul Luedeke 320.760.6937 Keith Ramsay 320.219.2129

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Executive council didn't meet in December due to weather.



Stephanie Bertek
Secretary

Evelyn Buelke
Treasurer

Carol Barenz
Council Member

I want to thank Carol Barenz-council member, Stephenie Bertek-Secretary, and Evelyn Buelke-Treasurer for being on the executive council they did an excellent job and will miss their valued opinions and decisions.

Erik Wenz, Justin Girard, and Pam Reese will be installed on January 11th and start off with their first council meeting on January 13th.

Please pray for our Good Shepherd Executive Council for 2026 members:

- Pastor Jonathan Jahnke
- Loren Boysen-Chairman
- Dave Bertek-Vice Chair;
- Justin Girard-Secretary
- Eric Wenz-Treasurer
- Gary Lips-Council Member
- Kevin Mork-Council Member/Financial Secretary
- Denise Norheim- Council Member
- Pam Reese-Council Member
- Bill Teschendorf-Council Member

Good shepherd has a lot of opportunities to join different ministries and missions this year prayerfully consider trying a mission or ministry, adding another or change to a different one. You will grow in your faith and fellowshiping with your family in Christ
Yours in Christ,
Loren Boysen



Pastor
Jonathan Jahnke

Loren Boysen
Chairman

Dave Bertek
Vice Chair

Justin Girard
Secretary

Eric Wenz
Treasurer



Gary Lips
Council Member

Kevin Mork
Financial Secretary

Denise Norheim
Council Member

Bill Teschendorf
Council Member

Pam Reese
Council Member

GIVING YTD

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Fund Balance			
November 2025			
		FUNDS	EXPENSES
Current Month's Offerings		\$39,261.97	
Year To Date Total Offerings		\$375,27.10	
Thrivent Choice Dollars-YTD		\$3,702.00	
Miscellaneous Income-YTD		\$1,475.40	
LCEF Account Transfer-YTD		\$0.00	
Current Month's General Expense			\$29,981.07
Year to Date Total Expense			\$353,058.02
Current Month Net Less Expense	\$9,371.90		
Year to Date Net Less Expense	\$27,346.48		

Stay up to date on the weekly giving and attendance. Informational email is sent every Thursday around 12:30pm. If you are not receiving this email and would like to please inform the church office to be added to the list.

Did you know? The Executive Council Monthly minutes and Treasure reports are posted on the Bulletin Board in the Fellowship Hallway. Check it out- also posted there are the T.I.M. Missions Newsletters see how our Missionaries are sharing God's Word.

Online Giving

VANCO MOBILE

(Support our ministries from anywhere.)

Go to the App Store or Google Play to download the Vanco Mobile app for free.



GET STARTED
Scan me

1) <i>Create your</i>	login and password
2) <i>Search for Our Church</i>	Enter our church's name and click Search/Then, select our church
3) <i>Select Your Fund and Amount</i>	Select your fund and donation frequency, then select your payment method.
4) <i>Enter Payment Method</i>	You can save this payment method for future donations.
5) <i>Choose to Cover Processing Fees</i>	You can choose to cover the donation processing fees by adding a small amount on top of your gift. Click the button to opt in.
6) <i>Complete Your Donation</i>	Review and complete your gift by clicking Submit.

Pick up a flyer in the Narthex on the CHURCH communication wall for step-by-step instructions!

2026 Lutheran Witness Renewal or Subscription form

Please fill out and place along with your payment in the offering plate prior to January 26th deadline

Lutheran Witness Subscriptions

The Lutheran Witness is your magazine, written and provided especially for the lay-people of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Inserted in every issue is The MN North supplement, news from your district. By subscribing to The Lutheran Witness through your congregation, members of the Minnesota North District become aware of the mission and ministry of both the district and the Synod.

The cost of the subscription this year is: \$27.65 beginning with the April 2025 issue.

Place this order form and your payment in the Offering Plate or in the tray on the office counter.

Make checks out to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

Complete the form below for:

RENEWING, SUBSCRIBING OR GIFT SUBSCRIPTION

IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO RENEW, PLEASE INDICATE THAT ON THIS FORM.

Return by: Sunday January 26th, 2025

Yes, I would like a subscription(s)

FOR MYSELF

AS A GIFT

RENEW MY SUBSCRIPTION

CANCEL MY SUBSCRIPTION

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

I would like a Gift Subscription sent to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS

Texas Promise Series

written by Naomi Rawlings, a Christian writer. The books are all based in Twin Rivers, Texas, a town close to the Rio Grande. Tomorrow's First Light is about a young rancher starting out. He was an orphan who always wanted a family. His mail order bride arrived with her siblings, he expected three but then many more came out of the stagecoach. Interesting to read how he copes with all of them.

Tomorrow's Shining Dream is about cattle rustlers from Mexico, Daniel, the sheriff and Charlotte, who loves living in the country and riding her horse on her father's ranch. Her father wants her to marry a wealthy city slicker and that is not her dream. She is more comfortable in the saddle and not hosting parties. Will she find what she wants in her home town?

Tomorrow's Constant Hope has Keely, who is on the run, answers an ad from a rancher who owns a small ranch in Twin Rivers she feels she has found a hiding spot. He had lost his first wife in childbirth and wanted someone to help him. Little did Keely know that she was marrying one of the richest men in Texas.

Tomorrow's Steadfast Prayer is about Alejandra who knows her brother is in on the cattle rustling and even though she is fearful for her life if caught, she leaves notes for the sheriff when she learns where the rustlers are going. Harrison, a lawyer, comes to help his father in the fort when he becomes ill. He works to get Alejandra to trust him with the secrets he knows she carries.

Tomorrow's Lasting Joy has Anna who always dreamed of being a wife and mother and Cain, a Texas Ranger, who came back to Twin Rivers to help find the cattle rustlers. He had a rough life growing up but she always had feelings for him. He had no plans on settling down as his job kept him moving around. What will bring them together? All of her book's center around their faith and trusting in God to help them no matter what they are going through.

Want help finding a book that interests you? Check the synopsis of all the books that have been shared in the Newsletter, located by the sign out book!

HAPPY READING!!



Marian Brelje

LOVE PATCHES

Love Patches group is back in full swing making lap quilts and baby quilts for baptisms. We are very thankful for the sewing machine that was donated to us by Gloria. We enjoy both the creating and fellowship that we have Thursday mornings. Please let one of us know if you have someone who would be comforted by receiving a quilt.



Marian Brelje





Happy New Year! I hope that everyone had a joyous and blessed Christmas! The women of the LWML hosted a holiday luncheon at The Pioneer Grill at Grand Arbor in December. There were 21 members and guests in attendance and a wonderful time of food and fellowship was had by all!

The board members will be meeting on January 12th to plan our speakers and events for the coming year. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please let one of the board members know.

We do not have a meeting in January, our next meeting will be on Monday, February 16th. As always, all women of the church are invited to join us.

Our current in-gathering is for Love Inc. Please see list here or watch for a list on the LWML bulletin board and a box under the table. The list includes brand name and generic items. The brand name items are used for incentives as people take classes through Love Inc, and the generic items are kept on hand for people in emergency situations. Both are needed but please feel free to give as you choose and are able. May God richly bless all of you in the coming new year!



INCENTIVE DRIVE SHOPPING LIST

- BODY WASH** Suave 18 ounces \$2.97 at Walmart need 40 (\$118.80)
- SHAMPOO/CONDITIONER SET** Suave 18 ounces each set is \$5.98 at Walmart need 40 (\$239.20)
- HAND SOAP** Dial 7.5 ounces \$1.24 at Walmart need 40 (\$49.60)
- TOILET PAPER** Charmin Mega 6 pack \$5.77 at Walmart need 40 (\$230.80)
- TISSUE PAPER** Great Value 4pk \$6.54 (160 counts each box) need 10 pks (\$65.40)
- TOOTHBRUSH** Colgate medium brush \$1.00 need 40 (\$40.00)
- TOOTHPASTE** AIM 5.5 ounce at Walmart \$.98 need 40 (\$39.20)
- Q-TIPS** Equate 300 count at Walmart \$.98 need 40 (\$39.20)
- DEODORANT** Women's Suave in 2pk at Walmart \$3.88 need 15 pks (\$58.20) and Men's Speed stick at Walmart \$2.47 need 10 (\$24.70)
- TAMPONS** Equate 36 multipack at Walmart \$5.98 need 20 (\$119.60)
- PADS** Equate ultra-thin with wing count 38 at Walmart \$5.44 need 15(\$81.60)
- BLADDER CONTROL** Equate 45 pads maximum at Walmart \$9.97 need 5 (\$49.85)
- LOTION** Vaseline 100-ounce lotion at Walmart \$3.98 need 30 for women (119.40)
- SHAVING CREAM** Gillette 14-ounce \$5.97 for 2pk at Walmart need 5 packs for men (29.85)
- RAZORS** Equate Razor for men at Walmart \$3.96 need 10 (\$39.60) and Bic silky touch women's razor at Walmart \$2.97 need 30 (\$89.10)
- BATH TOWEL** Mainstay 27X52 inch bath towel needs 40 at \$2.94 (\$117.60)
- LAUNDRY SOAP** Arm and Hammer 88 ounce at Menards \$9.48 need 35 (\$347.77) and Up and Up gentle natural 100-ounce 7.99 need 5 (\$39.95)
- FABRIC SOFTENER** Snuggle 40 sheets at Walmart for \$1.97 need 40 (\$78.80)
- STAIN REMOVER** Great Value spray and wash \$2.58 at Walmart need 40 (\$103.20)
- TRASH BAGS** Great Value 13-gallon 40 count \$6.98 at Walmart need 40 (\$279.20)
- WASTEBASKET** Sterilite 1.5 gallon \$.98 at Walmart need 40 (\$39.20)
- FREEZER BAGS** Great Value gallon bag 20 count \$3.22 at Walmart need 40 (\$128.80)
- PLASTIC WRAP** Great Value 200 Sq feet \$1.97 at Walmart need 40 (\$78.80)
- ALUMINUM FOIL** Great Value 25 sq feet \$1.42 at Walmart need 40 (\$56.80)
- STORAGE CONTAINERS** Rubbermaid 4 pk take along \$4.74 at Walmart need 40 (\$189.60)
- DISH SOAP** Great Value 28 ounce \$2.46 at Walmart need 40 (\$98.40)
- PAPER TOWELS** Sparkle 2 double rolls \$3.48 at Walmart need 40 (\$139.20)
- WASHCLOTH** Mainstay kitchen washcloth 18pk for \$6.55 at Walmart need 3 pks (\$19.65)
- KITCHEN TOWEL** ATKI cotton towel 6pk for \$8.99 at Walmart need 7pks (\$62.93)
- GROCERY GIFT CARD** Eldens or Aldi gift card \$25 given for an incentive need 40 (\$1,000)
- GAS GIFT CARDS** at Holiday gas cards \$25 for graduation gifts and throughout the year

44 GLENN RD NW/320-759-3022/Ministry@loveincdouglas.org



Tracy
Boysen,
LWML
President

“Serve the Lord with gladness!” Psalm 100:2

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Hopefully this newsletter finds you full of Joy going into the new year! What a great December Sunday School had! Thank you to all that attended the Christmas Program, the kids are truly such a blessing and had a great time spreading the word of Jesus' birth. Along with the Christmas Program, Sunday School also had a birthday party for Jesus! We celebrated with a hot cocoa bar, songs, limbo, and coloring pages! Thank you for your support and prayers as we go into the new year!



Myah Kremer



JR & SR YOUTH



GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
Join us for fellowship and fun!

Jr. & Sr. Youth Christmas party

**Wear your ugliest sweater
and join us for dinner,
games, and fellowship. Bring
a gift under \$10 for a fun gift
exchange**

1/11/26

TIME: 3-6PM

PLACE: THE YOUTH ROOM IN THE BASEMENT AT GOOD SHEPHERD.
TEXT AMANDA IF YOU CAN MAKE IT AT 320-491-0854

Mom's Group

Grow in God's Word with other mom's and a play time for our children. We would love to have you!



Good Shepherd Moms Group

January
12 • 26

February
9 • 23

March
9 • 23

April
13 • 27

May
11

If you have any questions please
contact: Danielle Jahnke 507•273•7436

FELLOWSHIP

Please join the Fellowship Group for a fun afternoon on Sunday February 1st from 2 - 4 pm.

Please bring a snack to share and any games you would like to play. It's a great time to fellowship with fellow members. We hope to see you there.



Good Shepherd Directory

Good Shepherd Family Members You now have the ability to update your contact information, your family photo and more by logging into the Members Instant Church Directory Site at

<https://members.instantchurchdirectory.com>

What is the *Instant Church Directory Member App* and Website?

The **Instant Church Directory Member App** is a free tool that allows members to view the church's directory on their iPhone, iPad, iPad Mini, Android device, or through a web browser.

Members can:

- View church and staff information
- Search and view family listings
- Call, email, or text directly from the app (if contact details are available)

Any updates made in the online Admin site will automatically sync to members' devices, ensuring they always have the latest version of the directory.

Iphone users- <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/instant-church-directory/id589542221>

Android users:

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.instantchurchdirectory.members&pcampaignid=web_share

January

BIRTHDAYS

1-Jan	Nicole Tabbert	15-Jan	Hailey Duncan
1-Jan	Glen Wink	18-Jan	Arnold Brelje
2-Jan	Lysandre Schmidt	19-Jan	Dan Adamek
3-Jan	Kyle Wink	19-Jan	Whitney Heckert
5-Jan	Maya Wiirre	19-Jan	Chase Schmidt
6-Jan	Beth Melrose	21-Jan	Leslie Kruse
7-Jan	Molly Simonson	21-Jan	Larry Lobitz
8-Jan	Beth Hausmann	23-Jan	Melody Mork
9-Jan	Keith Melrose	24-Jan	Jan Hausmann
10-Jan	Gloria Lehnertz	25-Jan	Zeke Christianson
11-Jan	Robin Deakins	25-Jan	Donna Jensen
11-Jan	Rhonda Fassett	25-Jan	Trey Johnson
13-Jan	Kari Kremer	27-Jan	Danielle Meinert
13-Jan	Mike Sprengeler	29-Jan	Kelsey Martin
14-Jan	Matthew Wolbersen	31-Jan	Jackson Heckert

ANNIVERSARYS

Jan-04	Gregory and Denise Armbruster
Jan-17	Isaac and Whitney Heckert
Jan-20	Mark and Dawn Medenwald
Jan-21	Marc and Ashley Nelson

January 2026

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	9:00am Worship	29	30	31 NO Bible Study		2	3
4	9:00am Worship w/Communion 10:15am Education Hour Sunday School & Bible Class 11:30am Fellowship Hall Reserved	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	9:00am Worship w/Communion 10:15am Education Hour Sunday School & Bible Class 3:00pm-6:00pm JR & SR LYF Christmas Party 6:00pm TIM Meeting	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	9:00am Worship 10:15am Education Hour Sunday School & Bible Class	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	9:00am Worship 10:15am Education Hour Sunday School & Bible Class	26	27	28	29	30	31

VBS kickoff meeting still TBD-stay tuned