



The Parish Beacon

Volume 47—No. 1

January 2026

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

Throughout Scripture, everyone who has come into the presence of the Lord has been in awe of Him and has adored Him.

Think of the Wise Men and their gifts. The Wise Men came in search of the newborn King, bringing their gifts and bowing before Him in adoration. Matthew 2:11 records, “And going into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother, and they fell down and worshiped Him.” And they offered to the Christ Child the gifts they had brought for Him, “gold and frankincense and myrrh.”

Think of the shepherds and their angelic revelation. The shepherds adored Him, too. They heard about Jesus from the angels as they sat outdoors watching their sheep and ran to Bethlehem to see the Christ Child. They didn’t have gifts to bring as the Magi did, but they, too, responded in adoration. Luke writes, “And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning the Child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them” (Luke 2: 17-18).

So think of our response.

Sometimes, like the Wise Men, we give monetary gifts to support mission and ministry. Other times, like the shepherds, we “make known... [what has] been told [us] concerning the Child.” And all the time, by God’s grace, all of us can respond in faithful obedience to God’s Word.

In these ways, we adore our Savior.

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Hartwig

OUR REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH AND PRESCHOOL

2301 East Court Street Iowa City, IA 52245

Phone: 319-338-5626

Email: redeemer@ourredeemer.org

www.ourredeemer.org

P: In peace let us pray to the Lord:

C: **Lord have Mercy**

P: For the gift of divine peace and of pardon, with all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord:

C: **Lord have Mercy**

P: For the holy Christian Church, here and scattered throughout the world, and for the proclamation of the Gospel and the calling of all to faith, let us pray to the Lord:

C: **Lord have Mercy**

P: For this nation, for our cities and communities, and for the common welfare of us all, let us pray to the Lord:

C: **Lord have Mercy**

P: For seasonable weather and for the fruitfulness of the earth, let us pray to the Lord:

C: **Lord have Mercy**

P: For those who labor, for those whose work is difficult or dangerous, and for all who travel, let us pray to the Lord:

C: **Lord have Mercy**

P: For all those in need, for the hungry and homeless, for the widowed and orphaned, and for all those in prison, let us pray to the Lord:

C: **Lord have Mercy**

P: For the sick and the dying, and for all those who care for them, let us pray to the Lord:

C: **Lord have Mercy**

P: For **Becky Behrens, Dorothy Blume** (Carol Schuldt's sister), **Joanne Bowman** (Rob Bowman's mother), **April Tutton Clark** (sister of Grace Maurer), **Tom Cowley** (Aaron Mueller's brother-in-law), **John Enokian** (brother of Chuck Enokian), **Raymond Forman, Jason Freundt, Mary Helen Gibson** (sister of Gwen McNatt Enokian), **Carol, Helle, Dennis Huedepohl** (friend of Bruce Maurer), **Jeff Hundley** (grandson of Karen Abernathy), **Dora Jacobson** (granddaughter of George and Carol Schuldt), **Todd Jones** (Barb & Ron Jones' son), **Ruth Langehough, Dot Langholdt** (friend of Ruth Varney), **Gwen McNatt, Ben Malcom** (father of Tiffany Roiseland), **Craig Michel, Laura Miller** (Linda Bonefeld's mother), **Norma Miller** (Twyla Freeman's aunt), **Jane Mills** (aunt of Rob Ghabel), **Marvin Muhlenbruck, Merri Mullane, Julie Pratt-Mullenkamp** (cousin of Ruth Varney), **Erin Nielsen** (cousin of Crissy Pence), **Faith Pederson, Ed Pederson, Ben Rollins** (Lorrie Bailey's cousin), **Lee Schwarting** (Art Schwarting's mother), **Kathy Schweer, Carol Schuldt, George Schuldt, Amy Schulte** (Crissy Pences's sister), **Stanley Seese** (friend of Harold Warner), **Marlene Thompson, Natalie Ullrich** (Jeff Kucera's cousin), **Reece Ullerich, Don Warner** (Harold Warner's brother), **Harold Warner, Mark Wilson, Rod Wittich, Garry Wilcox** (Melissa Mullane's dad), **Martha Van Kirk, and Karen Wright**, let us pray to the Lord.

C: **Lord have Mercy**

P: For the love between husbands and wives and that you instituted holy marriage. Bless **Kevin and Laurel Sellers** for their 50th wedding anniversary. Let us pray to the Lord.

C: **Lord have Mercy**

Finally, for these and for all our needs of body and soul, let us pray to the Lord:

C: **Lord have Mercy, Christ have Mercy, Lord have mercy. Amen.**

THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITIES

Sun 12/28	Worship Service 8:00am Worship Service 10:30am
Mon 12/29	Chamber Singers 6:00pm Kathy Eick Sunlight AA Group 6:00pm Funeral
Tues 12/30	GriefShare 6:00pm AI-Anon 7:00pm
Wed 12/31	Inter AA New Year's Gathering 4:00pm New Year's Eve Service 6:30pm
Thurs 1/1	NEW YEAR'S DAY—Office Closed AI-Anon 7:30pm
Fri 1/2	***
Sat 1/3	Worship Service 5:30pm
Sun 1/4	Worship Service 8:00am Sunday School/Adult Bible Class 9:20am Worship Service 10:30am UnDeck the Halls 11:45am



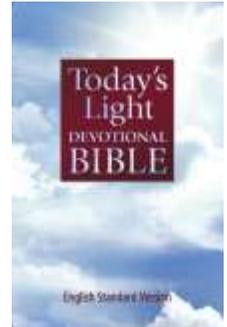
The flowers on the altar for this weekend (December 28) are from Krista, Dayton, and Cora Stevens in thanksgiving and celebration of their parents/grandparents Kevin and Laurel Sellers 50th wedding anniversary.

THE BIBLE IN TWO YEARS

Week 105

(Final Section)

- 12/29/25 Revelation 20:1-15
- 12/30/25 Revelation 21:1-27
- 12/31/25 Revelation 22:1-21



Today's (December 28) coffee and treats are joyfully provided by The ORLC Youth. Free will offering will go towards the youth fund for their future mission projects.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

****WATCH YOUR FRIDAY EMAIL FOR LIVE STREAM LINKS FOR WORSHIP****

**Saturday 5:30pm In Person/LIVE STREAM
Sunday 8:00am & 10:30am In Person/LIVE STREAM**

Communion: December 31, January 3, 4, 17, 18

**Sunday School 9:20am—In Person
Adult Bible Study 9:20am—Fellowship Hall/ZOOM**

**Bible Study/Lunch Bunch meets on the 1st & 3rd
Wednesday of each month at 11:00am with lunch
following.**

Comfort-Tiers meet Thursdays at 9:00am

Choir practice Wednesdays at 6:45pm

**Praise Team Practice schedule varies—
Contact Myrl Holida: myrl-holida@uiowa.edu or
Louise Klopp: choirdirector@ourredeemer.org**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Watch *Reflections* for more details



GriefShare
 Tuesday, December 30
 6:00pm, Room 208



**New Year's Eve
 Worship Service**
 Wednesday,
 December 31
 6:30pm



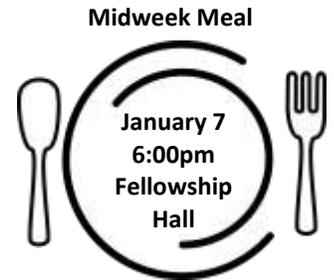
New Year's Day
 January 1
 Office Closed
 Happy New Year



UNDECK THE HALLS
 January 4, 11:45am



**Bible Class &
 Lunch Bunch**
 Wednesday
 January 7
 Fellowship Hall



Midweek Meal

January 7
 6:00pm
 Fellowship
 Hall



Deb Burma
Women's Retreat
 January 10, 8:00am
 Fellowship Hall
 Wendy Sue Fluegge
 will also be here.



Brick Builders Event
 Sunday, January 11
 11:45 am, Fellowship Hall

**Pastor Circuit
 Meeting**
 January 13



GriefShare
 Tuesday, January 13
 6:00pm, Room 208



**UKANDU Informational
 Meeting**
 Wednesday, January 14
 8:00pm, Fellowship Hall

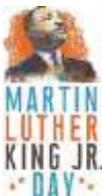


UKANDU Board
 January 16/17



Not So Newly Wed Game
 Sunday, January 18
 12:00pm, Fellowship Hall

Ft. Wayne Symposium
 Pastor gone
 Monday, January 19



Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
OFFICE CLOSED
 Monday, January 19

NO ICCSD SCHOOL



**Bible Class &
 Lunch Bunch**
 Wednesday
 January 21
 Fellowship Hall



January 22
 1:00pm

Birthdays

December 28	Cheryll Davisson, Justin Ellyson, Rachel Matel, Megan Miller, Eunice Scheer, Marnie Schrader, Jerry Wear, Beau Zeman
December 29	Michelle Hintze, Kevin Lake, Jim Thurston
December 30	Jennifer Waddilove, David Yansky
December 31	Brian McKillip
January 1	Laura Anderson, Ella Born, Jessica Morrison
January 2	Kayla Brooks, Susan Funk, Mary Norland, Ronald Schwarting
January 3	Caleb Eldridge, Mary Jane Ervin, Marlyce Hollis, Beverly Prem

Stewardship—December 20/21, 2025

ATTENDANCE		TREASURES	
Sat. 12/20 In Person 5:30pm	49	Contributions	\$35,062.00
Sun. 12/21 In Person 8:00am	79	Monthly needs for budget	\$71,996.33
Sun. 12/21 In Person 10:30am	200		
TOTAL WEEKEND WORSHIP ATTENDANCE	328	Adult Bible Class/Sunday School	0/0

Membership Changes and Official Acts

<u>Transferred In</u>	
Krista Jiroutek	12-18-2025
<u>Marriages</u>	
Matthew & Alyson Holida	12-20-2025
<u>Deaths</u>	
Gary Yoder (died May/delayed notice)	12-18-2025
Kathleen Eick	12-19-2025



Submitted by Marcia Hulse

Stephen Ministry

We care, Christ cures.

Are You Experiencing Winter in Your Life.....

In addition to the cold weather outside, many people experience winters in their personal lives. A recent loss through death, divorce, or relocation may leave them feeling lonely. A hospitalization, a cancer diagnosis, or ongoing medical problems may leave them feeling isolated. The loss of a job, the fear of layoffs, or a financial setback can devastate one's self-esteem. Family and personal struggles may leave them with nowhere to turn for support.

If you are going through a difficult time, our Stephen Ministers can bring God's warm love back into your life. They provide confidential, one-to-one Christian care. They will meet with you privately on a weekly basis to listen, to support and encourage you, to pray with and for you, and to walk with you for the duration of your crisis.

To find out more about Stephen Ministry and how you or someone you know could be matched with a Stephen Minister, talk with one of our Stephen Leaders or Pastor Hartwig. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to care for you!

STEPHEN MINISTRY LEADERS

Pastor Hartwig 319-338-5626

Bill Benson 517-881-9848

Marcia Hulse 319-541-4026

Kevin Sellers 319-631-8924



Building Healthy Families: Here's a simple yet challenging Christmas week question for your contemplation: How has the fact that Jesus was born over 2000 years ago impacted the life you're living today? Read aloud the Luke 2 Christmas story together, ponder this question, and encourage your family members to share their answers. From the funny response of a preschooler, the shoulder shrug of a teenager, or the wise words shared by an older person, it will be interesting to see how each individual family member answers.

Remember, even those who don't answer are still listening! *"She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."* Matthew 1:21 A Blessed Celebration of Jesus' Birth to you from your partners at **Lutheran Family Service!** www.LutheranFamilyService.org

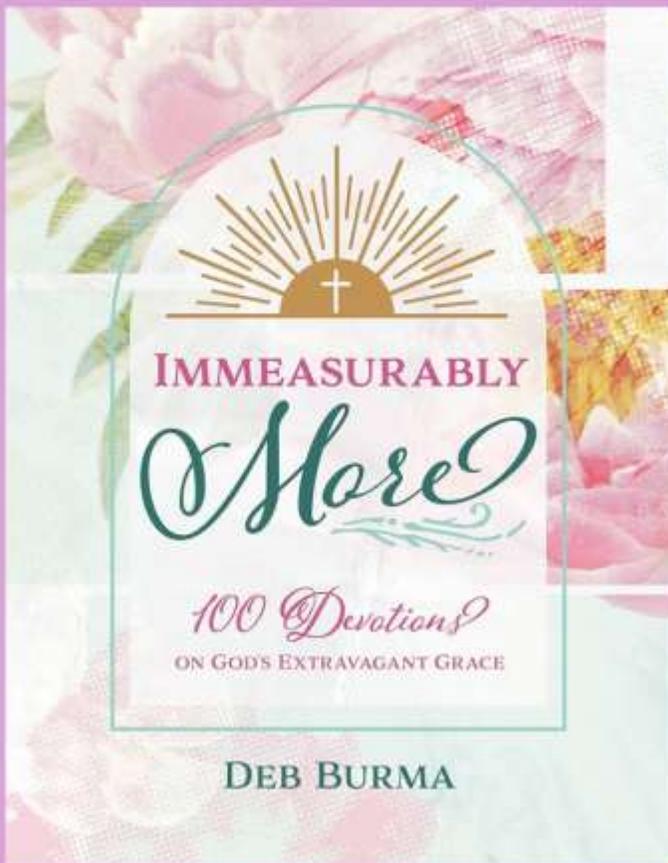
WOMEN'S RETREAT

“Immeasurably More”

We are excited to welcome Deb Burma as our guest speaker for this year's Women's Retreat. This one-day event titled “Immeasurably More” will focus on the beautiful truths found in Ephesians 3:20-21.

Highlights include three teaching sessions with biblical encouragement and personal reflection, plus live music by Wendysue Fluegge throughout the day.

Coffee, treats, lunch and more fun surprises!



January 10, 2026
8:30 AM to 3:00 PM
Cost: \$15 per person
Our Redeemer Lutheran
Church & Preschool

Register today using the
QR code or by calling
the church office at
319-338-5626



Our Redeemer Lutheran Church & Preschool
2301 E Court Street
Iowa City, IA 52245
319-338-5626



Hello and Merry Christmas From Wisconsin!

We hope that you have been having an enjoyable Advent season as we celebrate the birth of our Lord. It is a wonderful time to give thanks to God for all of His blessings which He so freely gives through His son. We are especially grateful for all of your support and prayers. It is our pleasure to wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Stay warm

Love Josiah + Katie Coblenz



Lutheran Women in Mission

LWML BOARD MEETING **January 19, 2026 at 7:00pm**

It will be held in the Board Room to discuss our responsibilities for the Spring Zone Event on April 11, 2026 at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church. Committees will be formed to complete the tasks. ALL LWML members are invited to attend this meeting to help in the planning.

Thank you,
Margie Lemke, VP of LWML

COOKIE WALK



December 6

2665 Hours
55 Bakers
7062 Cookies
5 Loaves of Bread
27 Pounds Fudge
\$3850.15 Raised



LWML Mission Gifts 2025

LWML voted to transfer an additional \$1,849.85 from their general fund to add to the Cookie Walk profits to total \$5,700 in mission gifts.

Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch	\$100
Concordia Seminary Food Bank, St. Louis	\$600
Concordia Seminary Food & Clothing Co-op, Ft. Wayne	\$600
IDE Chaplaincy Endowment Fund	\$200
LCMS World Relief	\$200
Lutheran Indian Ministries	\$100
Lutheran Bible Translators	\$100
Lutheran Family Service	\$300
Lutherans for Life	\$100
Shelter House	\$300
Lutheran World Relief	\$200
Orphan Grain Train	\$400
Panama Church	\$600
LERT at "Kings of Kings" Church	\$300
Houses to Homes	\$300
Mission Central	\$300
Our Redeemer Christian Career Students	\$1000
TOTAL	\$5700

**Thanksgiving Eve
Worship**



"A Christmas to Believe"



Children's
Christmas
Program

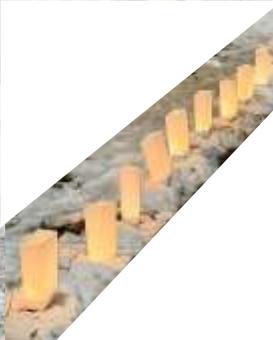


December 14, 2025

Live Nativity



Sunday, December 21
4:00-6:00 pm



Canada & New England Cruise



 7-DAY CANADA & NEW ENGLAND CIRCLE: NEW BRUNSWICK
Oct 3 - Oct 10, 2026

SHIP: **Zuiderdam** DEPARTS: **Boston, Massachusetts, US** ARRIVES: **Boston, Massachusetts, US**

Join Pastor and Kara Hartwig on a cruise to Canada's dynamic cities and Maine's alluring ports. Halifax's stunning waterfront, Sydney's giant fiddle, and Portland's eclectic boutiques. The beginning of October should be excellent for the changing colors of the New England leaves and the end of the whale watching season. In addition to experiencing all that Holland America has to offer, we will have private group Bible studies and a worship service. Planning to join us is as simple as 1, 2, 3...

Explore Staterooms!

Inside cabin from \$1,469 pp.
Ocean View cabin from \$1,639 pp.
Verandah cabin from \$2,249 pp.



1

Prices include all taxes and fees for the cruise.



You can book your own flight, have Pastor help you book, or have Holland America book your flight. Pastor suggests that you arrive in Boston by Thursday, October 1, 2026. The cruise ship will not wait. Pastor is working on a fun excursion for Friday in Boston. Do you want suggestions or help with your hotel before the cruise? Talk to Pastor. The excursion and hotel will be at an extra cost.



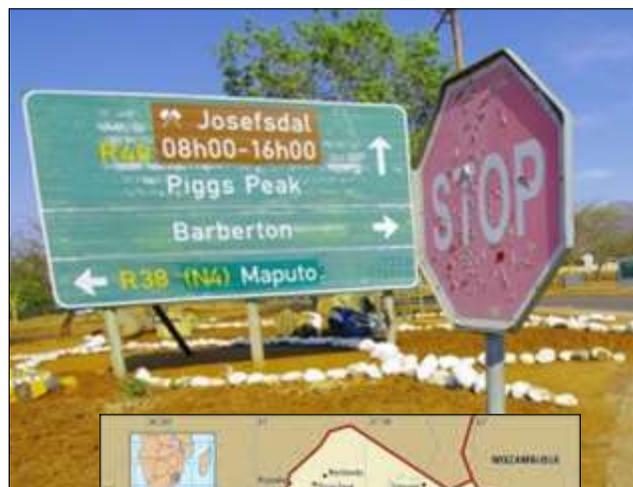
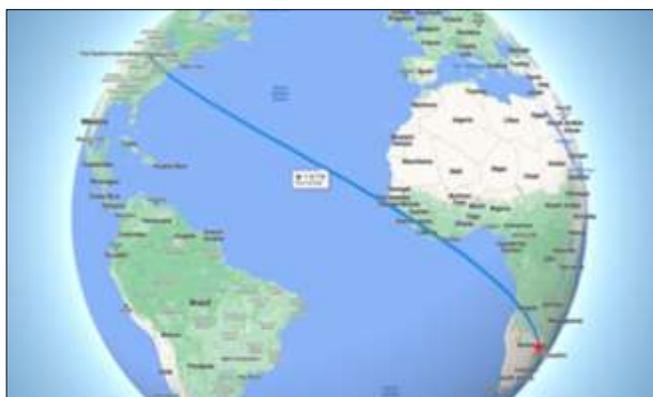
Have it All Early Booking includes a free upgrade to the Elite Beverage Package, free upgrade to Premium Wi-Fi, free prepaid Crew Appreciation, a Low Fare Guarantee, shore excursion credits and specialty dining credits. Remember, once this offer expires it will no longer be available to book so we encourage guests to book early to take advantage! \$420 pp or \$60 per day.

Please contact Pastor with any questions – You know he LOVES to talk about travel! (319)855-2521
If you are ready to book with Holland America, then call Bernice Harris, Holland America Personal Cruise Consultant at 800-355-3017 ext. 28109. Tell her... Group ID: TP6 Group Name: Orlc, Iowa City

ESWATINI (SWAZILAND)



MEDICAL MISSION
TRIPS TO SOUTHERN
AFRICA



Watch for information
about future Short-Term
Medical Mission Trips to
Eswatini.



Mission Committee Members

Denise Holidia / Anita Nicholson / Val Penney / Bob Powers / Tiffany Roiseland
Lynn Smith (Chair)

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services 2025





Preschool Beacon



Director/Teacher, Kaja Mueller Assistants, Christie Cherian M/W/F, Sara Cross T/TH
Preschool Phone: 319-338-3949 www.ourredeemerpreschoolic.org preschool@ourredeemer.org
Our Redeemer Preschool where children play, learn, and grow in Jesus!



Children's Ministry

Birth—5th Grade



Toddlin' to
5th Grade
Sunday,
January 4
9:20am



Lesson:
To a New Generation—
Paul Writes to Timothy
2 Timothy



KIDS CLUB FOR DECEMBER

December 31
NO CLASS

Classes will resume on
January 6, at 6:45pm

December 17
at Jesus' Birthday Party
Gingerbread Churches were made
In Celebration of His birthday.

Youth

6th - 12th Graders



**JANUARY
2026**

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

DATE	EVENT	TIME
12/31	New Year's eve Worship	6:30pm
7	Midweek Meal	6:00pm
	Midweek & Confirmation Classes	6:45pm
	Winter Retreat Parent Meeting	8:00pm
14	Midweek & Confirmation Classes	6:45pm
21	Midweek & Confirmation Classes	6:45pm
28	Midweek & Confirmation Classes	6:45pm

**Confirmation Classes
&
High School Midweek
Resume Wednesday, January 7th
6:45 p.m.**

**Midweek Meal
Wednesday, January 7th
6:00 p.m.
High School and Families**



**Parent Information Meeting
for the Winter Retreat will
be January 7th at 8:00 p.m.
At least one parent is required
to attend.**



High School Midweek

All high school youth & their friends are welcome
College Care Packages "Packing Night"

January 28 @ 6:45 pm, Fellowship Hall

*The high school youth will help the Kids Club children
pack the boxes, make personalized cards for each of
the college students and label the boxes. We'll pray
for the college students and hear a story.*

OUR REDEEMER OFFICE DIRECTORY

Office: 338-5626 Fax: 338-9171 Website: <http://www.ourredeemer.org> Preschool: 338-3949
 Prayer Chain: 351-5297 or prayerchain@ourredeemer.org Special Announcements Line: 338-3505

<u>STAFF & EMAIL</u>	<u>PHONE NO.</u>	<u>STAFF & EMAIL</u>	<u>PHONE NO.</u>
Rev. Dr. Brent Hartwig, Senior Pastor bhartwig@ourredeemer.org	338-5626 (church) 337-2403 (home)	Kaja Mueller, Preschool Director preschool@ourredeemer.org	338-3949 (preschool) 338-5626 (church)
Andrew Vought, Vicar vicar@ourredeemer.org	338-5626 (church)	Lorrie Bailey, Office Coordinator redeemer@ourredeemer.org	338-5626 (church)
Sara Cross, Preschool Assistant preschoolassistant@ourredeemer.org	338-3949 (preschool)	Sarah Gabel, Bookkeeper bookkeeper@ourredeemer.org	338-5626 (church)
Kara Hartwig, Youth Coordinator youthcoordinator@ourredeemer.org	338-5626 (church)	Denise Holida, Adult Coordinator smallgroups@ourredeemer.org	338-5626 (church) 930-0165 (cell)
Louise Klopp, Director Choirs/Properties choirdirector@ourredeemer.org	338-5626 (church)	Marilyn Paetz, Organist organist@ourredeemer.org	351-4262 (home)
Laurel Sellers, Consultant consultant@ourredeemer.org	319-331-3242 (cell)	Kevin Sellers Director of Technology technology@ourredeemer.org	338-5626 (church) 631-8924 (cell)
		Christie Cherian, Preschool Assistant preschoolassistant@ourredeemer.org	338-3949 (preschool)

2026 Board of Elders

TJ Ramsey	319-325-3790
Kevin Roiseland	319-230-5247
Tim Eick	248-514-2881
Rick Gienapp	319-331-7425
Chad Waring	319-331-8303
Skip Kempnich	319-331-5639
Brad Mullane	319-936-5826
Cameron Koch	319-269-0871
Jordan Lyon	563-506-2321

2026 Board of Directors

President	Jeff Kucera	563-316-1088
Vice President	Bruce Maurer	319-530-1524
Secretary	Barb Pronk	641-425-4880
Treasurer	Kennedy Donovan	515-230-2057
Board of Elders		
Properties	Dave Yansky	319-621-7694
At Large	Mary Robinson	319-400-5572
	Marilyn Albright	319-430-8129
	Steve Scott	563-889-0990

DEADLINES

Reflections (printed weekly): Information must be submitted (written, typed, emailed or faxed) each Wednesday by 5:00 pm

Beacon Newsletter & Church Activities Calendar (printed monthly): Information must be submitted (written, typed, emailed or faxed) by noon on the 20th of each month.

RADIO

Lutheran Hour Ministries on Radio—WMT 600 AM Radio on Sunday mornings at 6:30 am, and KXEL 1540 AM Radio on Sunday mornings at 9:30 am. For more information on Lutheran Hour Ministries go to www.LHM.org.

VOLUNTEER BACKGROUND SCREENING

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church has a strong, caring ministry with children and youth. To promote the safest and most secure environment possible all employees and volunteers, both new and existing, undergo a background screening before working with younger members. Performing background checks provides safeguards and peace of mind to our staff, volunteers, parents, youth, and children.

Christmas Candle

John 1:4-5

Peek in the window over there—
It's only a small candlelight
shining into the world quite bare,
piercing darkness with light so bright.

Peek in the manger over there—
at the small Babe; God's gift of Light
shining into the world quite drear.
He will pierce death, make spirits bright.

Carol Schuldt

