



September 2026 Alleluia! NEWS

Compassion in action: Making a difference for moms in Mexico

Back in May, Alleluia! members contributed to Compassion International's life-changing, hope-giving work with Monte Sinai and Iglesia Cristiana Rey de Reyes churches in Mexico. Compassion International recently shared this update: *"Thank you for helping two Compassion church partners in Mexico give life-saving care to local moms and babies. Both centers currently serve 30 mothers and their babies. The program provides health care, basic supplies, spiritual guidance, and income training. With your support, the caring staff empowers mothers to create healthy, joyful homes for their children."*



Rally Day is this Sunday, Aug. 30!



We're so excited to kick off a new year of ministry and mission activities at our **all-ages Rally Day celebration** this Sunday, Aug. 30! Bounce houses, face painting and bingo will be back, and we'll be firing up the grill for lunch. Plus, learn about some of our great fall activities and how **you** can get involved! Able to volunteer at Rally Day? Click [HERE](#) sign up to help!

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Alleluia! Lutheran Church, 4055 S. Book Rd., Naperville, IL 60564
alleluialutheran.org / 630-904-3311

Our mission: To enable all to come, connect, and commit to Jesus.

Message from Pastor Joel

"Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." ~ Colossians 3:14

I am the kind of person who always needs a lot of help matching clothes. Thankfully, I have a spouse and a daughter who are always willing to give me fashion advice.

Do you spend a lot of time thinking about what you are going to wear each day? Or, like me, do you put on whatever is clean and easiest to grab in the morning?

Our clothes serve many different purposes. Some we wear because of what we are doing, whether that be mowing the lawn, running errands, going to work or school, exercising, or going out for a date night. Other times we pick our clothes to "fit in" with others, or we choose clothes that help us express our personal identity. Often, our clothes become an outward reflection of our inner selves.

The physical act of changing our clothes does something to us mentally. I remember during the pandemic how relieved I initially felt to be able to work from home in my pajamas all day. Then within a week or two the stress and anxiety of that season was bearing down on me. The lockdown was restrictive and I felt trapped. The monotony of the days was wearing on me. I decided to start "dressing up" to go to work, at home. The intentional decision to put on a different set of clothes, to feel a different kind of fabric, to see my reflection in the mirror wearing these clothes began to impact my mental health.

In Colossians 3, the Apostle Paul urges the early church to resist the temptation to act with "anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language" (v. 8). He urges them to strip off the old self and to put on a new self. He encourages them instead to, "Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony."

This fall we're going to be exploring the theme of "Clothed in Love" on Sunday mornings. How might the world see us differently if we were "Clothed in Love"? When we are "Clothed in Love," how does that change us? How does it affect your relationships with family, co-workers, friends, and neighbors? Regardless of what you wear on Sunday morning, whether it be pajamas, jeans and a T-shirt, a football jersey, a dress, a kilt, or a suit, you're always welcome at Alleluia! Lutheran Church.

*Clothed
in
Love*



Worship survey results

From Pastor Joel: This summer we tried something different: having one blended service at 10:00 a.m. Our mission at Alleluia! is to “enable all to come, connect, and commit to Jesus.” This summer, our focus was on our second value, “connect.” We sought to connect with God, to connect with one another, and to connect with our wider community. How did we do? Did we meet our goals? What did we discover along the way? To help answer these questions, we invited the congregation to take a 3-minute survey. We received 104 responses and a lot of valuable feedback. **Thank you!**



As a community, we felt more connected to God and more connected with one another. (See chart below.) Two-thirds of those surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that they felt more connected with God this summer. What's more is that nearly 3 in 4 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt more connected to others in the congregation! The intentionality behind our summer worship theme helped to drive us toward mission and ministry. One person commented, "Oftentimes, summer can be a bit sleepy. This year, there was intention for our summer worship... I really like that!"

We exceeded our **"A Ton of Love"** goal by providing 2,535 pounds of food and household items from late June through the end of July to Loaves and Fishes Community Services. And overall, our intentional changes were perceived very positively. (*continued on p. 4*)



We asked you to provide feedback on our summer worship from 1 (strongly disapprove) to 5 (strongly approve)*

	Theme: 'A Summer to Connect'	Blended Worship Experience	Wearing Name Tags	Fellowship in Gathering Area	Worshipping as Whole Faith Community	Mission focus: Loaves & Fishes
Top 2 Choices (Approve + Strongly Approve)	85%	80%	72%	88%	86%	91%
Top 3 Choices (Neutral + Approve + Strongly Approve)	96%	93%	98%	100%	97%	99%

* For example, regarding our summer theme, 85% of respondents answered 4 or 5 (approve or strongly approve)... 96% answered 3 (neutral), 4 or 5...and only 4% answered 1 or 2 (disapprove or strongly disapprove)

Worship survey results

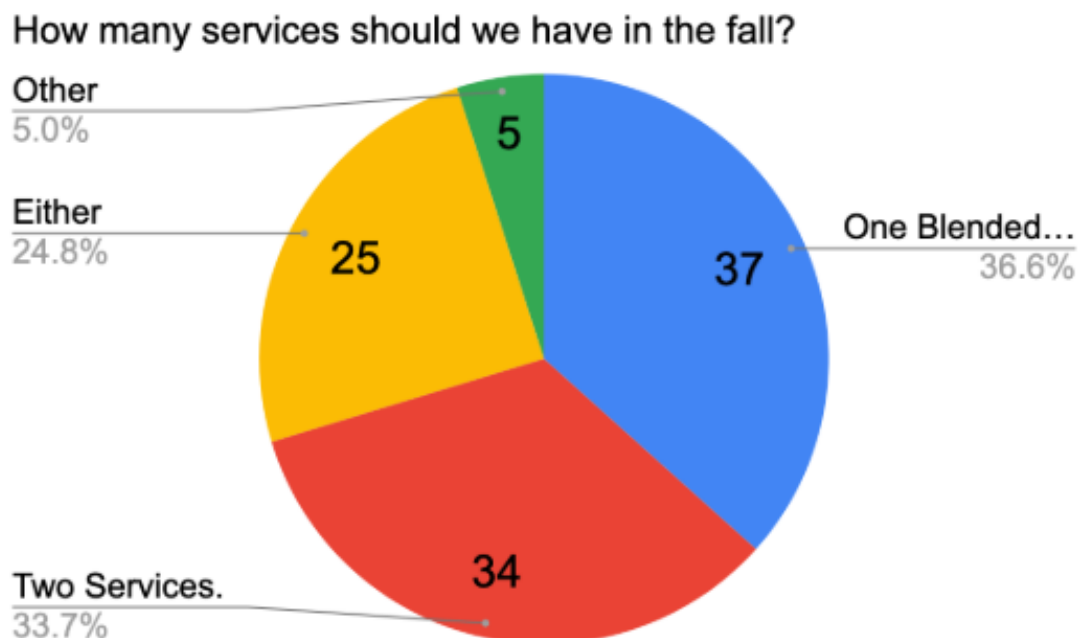
(continued from p. 3) And now, the big question! Will we continue to have one blended worship service, or return to our two-service format? The survey reveals a close split of opinions, with no single choice earning an overwhelming majority of responses.

To provide flexibility and options to our faith community with respect to to worship times and music styles as we begin our new year of ministry and mission activities, we will return to offering **two worship services starting Sept. 13**. Our 9:00 a.m. service will have traditional music, and our 10:30 a.m. service will have contemporary music. Next summer, we will look to return to one blended service at 10:00 a.m.

In addition, following the success of our summer fellowship time in the gathering area after worship, we're excited to share that we will **continue to offer refreshments each Sunday in the gathering area between services**. If you are able to contribute to this ministry of connection or would like to volunteer with our hospitality crew, please contact Deb Bostjancic at dbostjancic@alleluia.church!

Thank you again for your feedback and for your continued support of our ministries here at Alleluia!

Peace,
Pastor Joel



Children's Ministry

Register for Children's Ministry programming for 2026-'27!

With the new school year now under way, we're excited to kick off our midweek kids programming very soon! If you haven't already, sign up today for [K3!](#) (Wednesday nights for grades K-3) and [Connect45](#) (Wednesday nights for grades 4-5). We'll have a family pizza dinner/info night in The Underground on **Wednesday, Sept. 2**, with K3 and Connect45 officially resuming on Sept. 9.

Don't forget to register for [KidsConnect](#) (Sundays during worship) for the 2026-'27 school year, too! Registering in advance helps us plan classrooms, volunteers, and activities so we can create the best experience possible for your children. (You can sign up to volunteer [HERE!](#)) Thank you for helping us get ready for an amazing year ahead!



A dark blue poster with purple and white text. At the top, 'Family Night' is written in a large, cursive purple font. Below it, 'SEPT. 2' is in a bold, white, blocky font. To the right of the date is a cartoon pizza character with a face, arms, and legs, wearing white sneakers and making a peace sign. To the right of the pizza character, the text 'Kicking off our Wednesday programming w/fun for the whole family!' is written in a white, slanted font. Below the date and character, there is a list of activities in purple and white text.

Family Night
SEPT. 2

- 5 PM: pizza
- 6 PM: bunco
- 7 PM: Confirmation info session for families of 6th- to 8th-graders!

Kicking off our Wednesday programming w/fun for the whole family!

Third-grade Bible presentation Sept. 13

We are excited to celebrate our third-graders as they receive their very own Bible during worship on Sunday, Sept. 13, at both the 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services.

During the service, parents will present a Bible to their child as we celebrate this important milestone in their faith journey. Following worship, children are invited to join us for a special Bible celebration where they will create a personalized bookmark and enjoy fun games that will help them become familiar with finding books, verses, and stories in their new Bible. We look forward to celebrating this special day with your family! Please register your third-grader to participate [HERE](#).

Children's Ministry

Save the date! Trunk or Treat returns Wednesday, Oct. 28

One of our families' favorite events of the year returns on Oct. 28 from 6:00-7:15 p.m. in the Alleluia! parking lot! Tell your friends about this all-ages event, and get in on the fun early by signing up to host a trunk! Register to attend and/or sign up to decorate a trunk [HERE](#).

While Trunk or Treat is free to attend, you're encouraged to bring a small toy (it must fit in a shoebox) suitable for a child age 2-14 for packing in boxes for Operation Christmas Child. A \$10 donation covers the cost of shipping one box. For more information, please contact Children's Ministry Director April Blair at ablair@alleluia.church.

What not-so-spooky fun can you look forward to at Trunk or Treat this year?

- Halloween-themed games in the rec room
- a photo booth in the lower-level gathering area near Door 10
- opportunities to participate in service projects in The Underground
- prizes for the winning trunks!
- no tricks, plenty of treats, and good times with friends



Parents' Night Out: Nov. 6 and Dec. 5

Parents, grab a moment to yourselves while we host supervised fun at church for your kiddos! Save the dates for two Parents' Night/Afternoon Out events, happening Friday, Nov. 6, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. and Saturday, Dec. 5, from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Ages preschool 3s (must be potty-trained) through fifth grade welcome. We'll play games, enjoy a nut-free snack, do a themed craft and watch a movie. Requested donation of \$5 per child, payable at the door. Registration coming soon!



-April Blair, Children's Ministry Director

Alleluia! Youth News

Register for Confirmation for 2026-'27

Parents of sixth- through eighth-graders, now is the time to sign up your student for Confirmation if you haven't done so already! Throughout the school year, we'll explore our Lutheran tradition, dive further into Scripture, and grow in faith and as members of our church community. Register your student for Confirmation at Alleluia! [HERE](#). Have questions? Contact Youth Ministry Director Kurtis Arndt at karndt@alleluia.church.

We also hope you'll join us for **Family Night** on Sept. 2! See Children's Ministry news on p. 4 for more details. Come to The Underground for pizza and bunco starting at 5:00 p.m., and stay for an info session for Confirmation families at 7:00 p.m.!

Want a preview of this fall's Confirmation discussions and events? Check out the listing below!

September



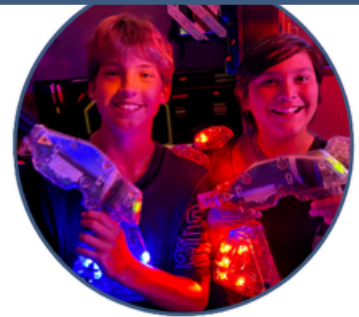
Sept. 2nd - Family Information Night & Bunco!

Sept. 9th - What is Worship?

Sept. 16th - Elements of Worship

Sept. 23rd - The Church Year

Sept. 30th - Chaser's Laser Tag



**Trunk
or
Treat**
Service Projects - Games - Fun



October



Oct. 7th - Holy Baptism

Oct. 14th - Holy Communion

Oct. 21st - Reformation & Luther

Oct. 28th - Trunk-or-Treat

November



Nov. 4th - Lord's Prayer

Nov. 11th - Prayers in Worship

Nov. 18th - The Apostles' Creed

Nov. 21st & Nov. 22nd - LOMC Fall Retreat





Alleluia! Music News



Thank you for a wonderful summer and looking ahead!

I would like to take a moment to thank each member of the traditional and contemporary music teams for all the hard work they have put into making worship a meaningful experience over the summer. The past few months have challenged us all to envision something new and have brought us together in ways in which we were not used to collaborating. This experience has truly been a blessing!

Here are some things to look forward to as we head into fall:

Bell Choir: Rehearsals will start Wednesday, Sept. 23, at 6:30 p.m. in the Praise Room. If you are interested in playing but don't have experience or do have questions, please talk to Nicole. If you don't read music yet, don't worry - we will learn together!

Children's Choir: Children's Choir will be volunteer-led this year...and we need volunteers! Even if you can't lead every week or would prefer to co-lead with another volunteer, we can get you prepared to lead lessons and help make Children's Choir happen! Once we have volunteers in place, Children's Choir will meet on Wednesdays from 5:15 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Please contact me at nmelody@alleluia.church or find me on Sundays if you have any questions or are interested in music opportunities at Alleluia!

-Nicole Melody, Worship and Music Director





Little Blessings News!

September 2026



From the Director's Desk

Welcome Back, Little Blessings Families!

What an exciting time of year! After a wonderful summer, we are thrilled to welcome our Little Blessings families back for a brand-new school year. The classrooms are ready, our teachers are excited, and we can't wait to see all of our smiling children walk through the doors!

The beginning of a new school year is filled with so many new experiences—new classrooms, new teachers, new friends, and lots of opportunities to learn and grow. Whether your child is joining us for the first time or returning for another year, we are looking forward to making this a year filled with **learning, laughter, friendships, and lots of Little Blessings!**

A special welcome goes out to all of our new families. We are so happy you have chosen Little Blessings Preschool, and we hope you quickly feel like part of our preschool family. To our returning families, thank you for continuing to entrust your children to us. It is a privilege to be part of their early years and to watch them grow throughout the year.

As we begin September, our teachers will be spending time helping children become comfortable with their new routines, classroom expectations, and daily schedules. We know that the first few weeks can bring a mix of excitement and emotions for both children and parents. Please know that our teachers are here to support your child every step of the way.

This year is especially meaningful for Little Blessings as we celebrate **30 years of providing preschool education and creating special memories for children and families.** We are incredibly grateful for the many families, teachers, and church members who have been part of the Little Blessings story over the past three decades. We look forward to celebrating this wonderful milestone with our preschool community throughout the year.

As we begin this new school year, our prayer is that every child who enters our doors feels **loved, welcomed, valued, and ready to learn.** We are excited for all that God has planned for our Little Blessings family this year!

Here's to a wonderful school year filled with **giggles, discovery, friendship, and growing together!**

With gratitude,

Shannon Webb

Little Blessings Preschool Director

Men's Basketball: Open gym starts Sept. 1; games start Sept. 22

A new season of the Alleluia! men's competitive basketball league starts soon: Open gym will Tuesday evenings, Sept. 1-15, from 8-9:30 p.m.; games will take place on Tuesdays Sept. 22 through Dec. 15 from 8-10 p.m. \$85 for Alleluia! members; jersey cost is \$25. For questions, contact Matt White at alleluiahoops@hotmail.com.



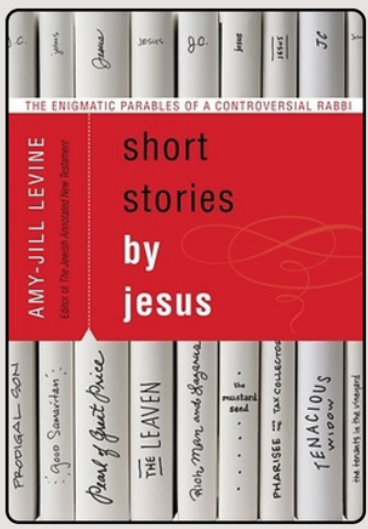
GAME ON!
MEN'S BASKETBALL LEAGUE
TUESDAYS, 8:00 P.M.,
SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER,
ALLELUIA! GYM

REGISTER:



Women's Book Study starts Sept. 2

Ever wanted to dive deeper into some of Jesus's most well-known parables? A women's book study of Amy-Jill Levine's "Short Stories by Jesus" will kick off Sept. 2 from 9:30-11:00 a.m. in the Exclamations! Room, led by Christine Bauer and Ellen Jacobson. The study will continue from 9:30-11:00 a.m. on alternating Wednesdays: Sept. 16 and 23, Oct. 7 and 21, Nov. 4 and 18, and Dec. 2 and 16. Please purchase the book on your own ahead of the first meeting.



Women's Book Study:
"Short Stories by Jesus"
by Amy-Jill Levine

Alternating Wednesdays
starting Sept. 2, 9:30-11 a.m.,
Exclamations! Room

Volunteer opportunities!



A/V and soundboard volunteers needed

*We can't be Alleluia!
without "u"!*

Contact Nicole Melody at
nmelody@alleluia.church.



Help make Children's Ministry shine: Volunteer with KidsConnect!

KidsConnect is looking for volunteers to fill a variety of roles during the 2026-'27 school year. Whether you'd like to help lead KidsConnect during worship on Sundays, serve as a greeter/check-in assistant for families before worship, prep Sunday supplies during the week, or assist at one of our special events during the year, there is a role for you! You can make a difference in the faith formation of some of the youngest members of the Alleluia! community. Youths in grades 6 and up are welcome to volunteer, too! Sign up [HERE](#) or contact Children's Ministry Director April Blair at ablair@alleluia.church for more information.



Share your Alleluia! hospitality!

Be part of a team that helps create a welcoming and caring environment for all of our worship and special event participants! Volunteers will assist in logistics, setup and cleanup for gatherings where food and beverages are served. This flexible role offers the chance to be part of an important ministry that connects and cares for our members and guests. Interested in serving? Questions? Reach out to Deb Bostjancic at dbostjancic@alleluia.church or call 630-254-2002!

COMMUNITY CONNECTION:



Kyle Halkerston, founder and director of [The Studios Performing Arts](#), knows how transformative being involved in performing arts can be – for participants of any age.

Getting involved in show choir as a student at Waubonsie Valley High School in Aurora set him on a path that would lead to directing show choir performances at Illinois State University, teaching show-choir classes for the Naperville and Elmhurst park districts, and finally launching The Studios Performing Arts in 2024. Through The Studios, Kyle and program director Heather Hutchison seek to give adults interested in vocal performance as well as children who are new to the performing arts an opportunity to be part of a collaborative performance community.

“We’re here for everybody and anybody,” Kyle says. “The majority of our performers have never done show choir or anything related to that before.”

Currently, The Studios is in rehearsals for [“The Best of Glee,”](#) the center’s fall show-choir program featuring performers ages 13+, and a musical theater production of “Wonderland,” which will feature Little Blessings Preschool Director Shannon Webb. “Wonderland” performances run Sept. 18-20; “The Best of Glee” takes the stage Oct. 9-10. Both productions will take place at Alleluia! Lutheran Church.



One thing that sets The Studios apart, Heather says, is that the center’s show-choir programs don’t require auditions.

“I think it takes the initial fear out of it,” she says. “This way, you can come in as you are, and then you grow as a result, and you’re better the next time.”

Adds Kyle: “We have a few participants who did (show choir) in high school and were excited to get back into it, and then we also have people who have never even performed before.”

An average of 40 performers appear in The Studios’ twice-yearly show choir productions. For kids, a weeklong show choir camp is offered in the summer; The Studios also offers [Giggles & Greasepaint](#), a unique introduction to musical theater that combines art, singing, dancing, and storytelling. The next session of Giggles & Greasepaint, highlighting “The Wizard of Oz,” will run Saturdays, Sept. 5-Oct. 10, from 9-11:30 a.m. at Alleluia! Also coming soon: “A Grinchy Christmas,” a one-day Giggles & Greasepaint camp, happening from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 19. **(continued on p. 13)**

COMMUNITY CONNECTION:



Heather notes that The Studios' instructors and directors are performance pros, including professional musicians and adjunct faculty at North Central College in Naperville.



Heather Hutchison, The Studios program director

"What we do here is provide community programming for all ages," says Heather. "Adults still want to play, and adults just like kids rise to the challenge" when tackling new material and building new skills, she adds.

Ahead in 2027 will be opportunities to perform with The Studios' cabaret productions – a men's cabaret ensemble and a women's cabaret ensemble. While show choir productions incorporate both singing and dancing, cabaret focuses primarily on singing, with shows centered around specific themes and genres of music. The Studios' first men's cabaret will begin rehearsals in February.



For Kyle, it's a joy to see new performers grow their love for show choir, musical theater, and the performing arts more

broadly through The Studios' programs. "We recently had two kids who were originally from Australia who had moved here, and their mom was looking for a show-choir program," he relays. The children participated in show-choir camp, and afterward, Kyle says, their mom emailed: "I wanted to thank you. You created an environment for the kids that was inclusive and creative. This is a gift that you have given my humans in a short space of time, and I am so grateful." And that, Kyle says, is what it's all about. *For more info, visit thestudiosperformingarts.com.*



Kyle Halkerston, The Studios founder and director

Women of the ELCA Northern Illinois Synod

2026 Annual Convention



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

9AM - 3PM



New Life Lutheran Church
249 N Bolingbrook Drive
Bolingbrook, IL

Registration and coffee start at 8:00 a.m.

CONNECT WITH US!



Facebook: @alleluianaperville



IG: @alleluia.lutheran.naperville



YouTube: @alleluia-napervilleil736



The Alleluia! Church Council members may be contacted via council@alleluia.church

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HOPE

IT'S IN OUR BLOOD

Alleluia! Lutheran Church Blood Drive

WHEN & WHERE

Sun, October 4
9:30 a.m. - 2:00p.m.

Church Gym
4055 BOOK RD
NAPERVILLE, IL 60564

PROMOTION

During the Give Comfort. Get Cozy. campaign, donors will receive a cozy fall thank-you item (flannel pj pants OR a hooded sweatshirt) while supplies last.



◀ **Schedule your appointment**
Appointments preferred. Walk-ins welcome!

 **versiti**
Blood Center of Illinois