



St. John

LUTHERAN CHURCH

JOYFULLY TAKING GOD'S LOVE INTO THE WORLD

2025/2026
Annual Report

Revised April 7, 2026

Lead Pastor's Report

"[Jesus] must increase, but [we] must decrease." ~ John 3:30

Siblings in Christ,

John the Baptizer is famous for many things – a wild diet; genetic proximity to Jesus through his mother, Elizabeth; fearless preaching to the powerful; losing his literal head in what amounts to a drunken bar bet gone horribly wrong – but most important of all might be his otherworldly deference to Jesus and his counter cultural humility. John continues to be an inspiration and model for us as we labor playfully to “joyfully take God’s love into the world.” Deep into the call process, I am reminded that despite our discerned need for additional pastoral leadership, our aim is to be “congregation led and staff empowered.” That means we continue to need your particular interest and passion to rise up bravely, seeking fellows that will join with whatever idea the Holy Spirit is rattling around your brain – whether it be a social event, a new book or Bible study, a gathering of folks centered in a common interest (from textiles to sporting events; from birding to music and everything in between).

The title of my report is a clue to one change that is underway in our community. Changing my title from Senior Pastor to Lead Pastor is unnoticeable in some ways (nothing has yet changed in my role) but exciting in others -- the title change is meant to reflect our intention to welcome an Associate Pastor who functions as a co-Pastor, one who shares equally in the responsibilities of a faith leader in this congregation (preaching, teaching, visitation, leading at funerals and weddings) and has other duties that will be tailored toward their strengths in conversation with mine (and my continued role as overall ministry leader). We continue to pray for this person, whether they are finishing Seminary or currently in another call to a congregation elsewhere. Rather than my relationship to them be about seniority or inequitable power differentials, the shared ministry will be divided by ongoing conversation and robust oversight from the Church Council and Human Resource Team.

One theme in the Call Committee’s work over the past 8 months is that in our search for an Associate Pastor we seek help in supporting the growth of the St. John community, but not in the numerical sense one might first think. We are blessed with a great many people and more each year, but growth in depth is where my focus keeps returning. I wonder how each participant can grow deeper in relationship with Jesus, with other St. Johnners, and in relationship to our wider community (and global) neighbors? My prayer is that our leaders, including the coming Associate Pastor and myself, would look to support each of you in growing more deeply into these vital relationships, by God’s grace!

It’s a joy to serve alongside so many creative, curious Jesus followers. It’s a privilege to share leadership in this community with dedicated members and fellow staffers. Thank you for a great 2025!

In Christ,
Pastor Brian

Congregation President – Jen Hartman

"So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up." Galatians 6:9, NIV

Dear St. John Siblings in Christ,

What a blessing and joy it has been to serve on Church Council for the past five years, and stand in the role of president this year! It has been wonderful to witness so much good in and out of our church walls. We have had the opportunity to welcome many new faces to St. John, and we are so glad you're here. Our church is thriving due to all our members and visitors who worship, volunteer, serve, and learn alongside one another week in and week out.

As we are in the midst of the call process for welcoming a new associate pastor to St. John in the future, I am reminded of our mission of "joyfully taking God's love into the world". We are so fortunate that we believe in a congregation-led ministry as we all have a multitude of gifts to share. However, we must not become weary of "doing good" by volunteering our time and talents. We very much welcome new faces to our ministry teams, and we need YOU! As my mom would say when it was time to clean the house when I was growing up, "many hands make light work". How true this is! Even if you can't volunteer on a regular basis, we'd love to have everyone find a niche here at St. John to help lighten the load. I can guarantee that you will feel the blessings from serving tenfold.

This is such an exciting time for our congregation! We have an outstanding preschool program which will christen a new playground and garden this summer – work begins April 2026! This project could not have been done without your generous support. We are initiating a new Preschool Board of Directors to help guide and support staff and programming. Our organ will be refurbished in our beautiful sanctuary (starting May 2026), again due to your donations. Children and youth are thriving at St. John, thanks to leaders and families that encourage kids of all ages to get involved at church. Music is a blessing at St. John, and so many of you are participating and sharing your gifts with the rest of us. I could go on and on.

Finally, and possibly most importantly, St. John is a safe, welcoming, and supportive church for all people in the Cedar Valley and beyond. We are not afraid to share our faith in Jesus Christ with everyone, and welcome everyone into our church family. Let us continue to take God's love into our world, and to work for justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.

Jen Hartman

Call Committee Update

Greetings from the Call Committee!

We hope this update finds everyone well as we enter in to the full swing of spring. The committee has been on a brief hiatus as we wait for an Associate Pastor candidate to be sent from the NE Iowa Synod. That said - we remain hopeful that our patience will lead to the right fit for our congregation.

The Call Committee has met in person 8 times since the middle of September 2025. This started with an introductory meeting with Pastor Steve Brackett from the NE Iowa Synod to review the call process with all of us. From that meeting, we hit the ground running with preparing the Ministry Site Profile for St. John.

This profile is what candidates can see on the Synod website as they are searching for potential calls. We would like to thank all of you that have provided input through the process this fall to help create this profile. This included a formal Q&A session after Sunday services in the fall, but also your conversations with members of the committee throughout the process. We considered everything during the profile creation, so again, our sincerest gratitude.

The committee would also like to extend a special thank you to Jim Glaspie in helping to spearhead the creation of an introductory video of St. John. This video can be used for candidates to get a further look in to all the great things we have happening here, in addition to providing a virtual tour of our building. Thank you, Jim, for all your hard work on this project - it has tied everything together nicely!

So as we move forward through spring we invite the congregation to join the Call Committee. Join us in prayers for patience as we wait for the right candidate to come to St. John. Join us in prayers for discernment as we interview candidates to find the right match for our ministries here. Lastly, we invite you to join us in prayers of gratitude for the wonderful congregation we are all a part of. It is truly a blessing that we are able to walk through this call process together.

Faith Formation & Lifelong Learning Ministry Team

TEAM MEMBERS: Mandi Loudermilk (facilitator), Rose Lorenz (facilitator 2025) Bryan Ferris, Tina Meyer and Stephanie Sorenson. Staff members Pastor Brian, Marty Postel (Sunday School), Steve Ferguson (Confirmation Coordinator), Austin Gabel (Youth Group Coordinator) and Meghan Bruns (VBS Coordinator) are invited to our meetings to update the team on the status of their responsibilities and to share and request needs.

TEAM MISSION: Sharing God's love and joy through building programs and events to enhance connections and provide faith growth ministries to all St John congregants.

Children/Youth:

Enrolled 65+ children in our Sunday School (Pre-K to 6th grade), 22+ in our Confirmation program (7th - 9th grade) and 125+ in last summer's Vacation Bible School. It is wonderful to see the very active and involved young families and leaders in these ministries. This year we have seen many new faces to go along with some very seasoned veterans taking leadership roles. We celebrate and thank these volunteers and their service to St John's families!

Additional "God's Love and Joy" Activities include:

- Our youth served our congregation by hosting and led a worship service in May.
- Assisted with 5th Grade 1st Communion held during Maundy Thursday service. Special thanks to Pastor, Marty Postel and Sandy Livingston who led the efforts of this event especially in its preparation--making bread, customized plates and communion serving instruction to the students.
- Continued our connection activities with our older youth (Junior and Senior High youth) on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday evenings of the month led by Austin Gabel.
- Purchased additional Bibles for our upcoming 1st and 3rd grades Milestones, for 7th graders for Confirmation, and the 1st Bibles and Devotion books to celebrate 1st anniversaries of our baptisms.
- Showcased a successful Christmas Program. Thank you to Rose Lorenz, all the volunteers and our children!!

Family Ministry update:

It is exciting for this opportunity of intergenerational ministry at St John. It is affirming what our ELCA Formation Coop study group is learning as one of the themes to focus on. By March 31, we will have completed two initiatives for this ministry.

- We test piloted "Take Courage" theme: 150 family take-home packets were distributed in late Oct and early Nov. to SJLC families and PCC families. The theme focused on "Courage is confidence that comes from knowing God is always with us". The Take Courage packets included hands-on craft and kitchen activities for families as well as interactive devotions and prayers to do as a family as well as

individually. A special pamphlet was included for parents or caregivers as words of encouragement and perspective for those not-so-merry moments.

- Easter Egg Hunt and More: We are expanding the 2026 event over 2025's event to include activity stations along with egg hunts divided by age. We hope to see families enjoy a fun morning together to celebrate Jesus.

Adult Studies

Here are some of our adult small group options:

- Perennials group
- Tuesday Ladies
- Thursday afternoon study
- Thirsty Thursday Men's group
- Taking Faith Home
- Young at Heart (55+ group)
- Arleen Burkhardt invites you to join the quilting group who meet on the second Monday of each month at 8:00am till 11:00 or 12 in Fellowship Hall. They are actively sharing St John's love and joy as well!!!

Our Team

Our team meets monthly with possible exceptions for July and December.

Last summer, our team applied and was accepted into a nationwide ELCA initiative called **ELCA Formation Coop**. As one church of three participating in one of 5 "hubs" across the nation, we are led through this study by EWALU director Frank Thompson, who has studied and helped ELCA develop this program of learning for congregations and their youth programming and curriculum. Per their guidelines, a St John team was formed: THANK YOU to Sam Corro, Alison Frerichs, Daniel Slaughter, Meghan Bruns, Fergie, Austin Gabel, & Pastor Brian for being a part of this team! They have and will attend four workshops that began in Aug 2025 and will finish in Nov. 2026 and are meeting monthly throughout this time. Last fall, they began receiving input from targeted audiences inside and outside of St John via listening sessions. Next phase, the team is exploring youth trends to strategize and formulate youth ministry now and for the future using the data from our listening sessions and from the listening sessions from the two other churches participating in our Coop Hub. We hope to roll out our findings and plan of action early in 2027. In the meantime, you may hear or learn how we are beginning to experiment ideas now, but please watch for further formal updates and opportunities to be involved.

What's next

- Budgeting for Camp Scholarships for youth.
- Offer new or additional youth activities and service opportunities to keep our youth engaged before and after confirming their faith in 10th grade.
- Planning our 2026 Youth Service trip - Nashville, TN July 19 - 25.
- Planning for our 2026 Vacation Bible School themed *Rainforest Falls* to be held July 13-17.
- Continue to assist and grow our Adult Study and Children's opportunities and

teachers/facilitators/leaders.

- Explore and study Family Ministry program ideas for the possibility of implementing in the next year or two.

What are our needs

As you know, to grow means more opportunities to serve.

**Please consider serving St John and our ministry as you grow your faith journey. Serving a ministry doesn't necessarily require expertise or Bible knowledge, but it does require a passion to learn together and the desire to serve our Lord Jesus in ways that point others to Him.*

Specifically, we need:

- "Volunteers"* to serve our Sunday School, Confirmation and Vacation Bible School youth.
- "Volunteers"* to serve on our FFLM ministry team.
- "Discussion facilitators/mentors"* for our studies.

We want to express our sincere appreciation to our volunteers and staff members. You are awesome!!!

Our team looks forward to where God is taking our congregation to love, serve, and grow joyfully next year!

Preschool & Childcare Ministries– Kathy Thompson

St. John Preschool and Childcare serves St. John and the community by providing high quality early education and care for families of children ages 3 to 5 years old. Our purpose is three-fold: to *joyfully take God's love into the world*; to educate our children so they are ready for a successful academic journey; and to serve working families who need a safe, loving, and educational environment for their children for the length of the work day.



St. John Preschool and Childcare is now in its 14th year of operation as an expanded ministry. In addition to our 6 preschool classes, we provide wrap-around childcare from 6:30 AM until 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Our childcare is open to all 3-5-year-olds, regardless of enrollment in one of our preschool classes and 3-8-year-olds in the summer. Our preschool classes run 8:50 AM until 11:20 AM and 12:50 PM until 3:20 PM. We offer 2-day, 3-day, and 5-day classes both mornings and afternoons.

We utilize two classrooms for our preschool classes and 5 classrooms as well as the pod area and "Makerspace" for the childcare, for a total of 9 rooms, which are all located on the lower level of the church facility. We have a playground just outside the lower level doors across the driveway and a fenced-in garden area with direct access from the preschool. These areas are in process of being redone, which will be given more focus later in this report. We also utilize the Faith and Life Center for large motor play when it is too cold or wet to go outside; the Fireside Chapel and Sanctuary for Children's Church and Godly Play lessons; and the Fellowship Hall for childcare breakfast, snack times, and lunch. We continue to utilize the former Youth Room for a 3rd childcare class and adjacent space (which we call the Makerspace) as an additional space for meals and activities, special lessons such as art experiences and STEM activities, special presentations, and use during family events.

We have continued hosting family-centered events as an extension of our ministry including Family Movie Night, Grandparents' Day, our Christmas Program, and year-end fun days. We hosted our Family Movie Night in October in the courtyard on a large, inflatable screen. This proved to be a very enjoyable event for our families and was well-attended. We held our Christmas Program in December, providing two performances back-to-back with half the students at each to allow for a more relaxed atmosphere and more adequate seating for families. Lastly, we plan to do our Grandparents' Day and year-end fun day events in May with more outdoor experiences.

We communicate regularly with families through various means. We have fully implemented an application called Brightwheel, which we use for our child and family information, communication, and billing. This has been a highly effective tool for regular and instant communication. Newsletters, updates and reminders, and instant messaging to parents are all communicated through the Brightwheel app that parents can download onto their phones. They can also see photos we post directly to them throughout the day and can receive an alert if there is an important message that needs their immediate attention. We also communicate with families through parent/teacher

conferences twice per year, daily face-to-face contact with parents, notes sent home in backpacks, and other email communication as needed. We provided a virtual parent orientation in August through a Google slide with hyperlinked video clips on a variety of topics for families to watch (and rewatch) at their convenience. These videos enabled families to get access to the information they need without having to schedule another meeting on their calendars at a time of year that often proves to be very busy for families. We have also used an application called Smilebox to create video slideshows set to music to showcase various projects throughout the school year and one of our preschool teachers has built her own classroom website in place of weekly newsletters to make ongoing information accessible at any time.

This year, we focused less on fundraising as we achieved our goal for our Playground Renovation project within the previous school year. We decided instead to focus on giving back and conducted a food drive last fall for the Panther Pantry. We collected and donated 378 pounds of food and necessities thanks to the generosity of our PCC families and staff! We did a few small fundraisers for the program. These included:

- Matching gifts through Benevity for John Deere employees
- Auctioning off the front 3 rows of seats for our Christmas Program performances
- Texas Roadhouse gift card sale and dine-in event
- Generous gifts from individual donors
 - One unsolicited gift we received was \$15,000 from the Aaron J Schurman Charitable Foundation. He is one of our preschool parents and offered this gift to us out of appreciation for our service. \$5000 went toward the playground and \$10,000 is earmarked for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) materials for the children.

All of these efforts combined plus funds accumulated from previous fundraisers and grant monies enabled us to be fully funded for our playground renovation as of March 2025! Thanks be to God for the generosity of so many!

We are continuing to move forward in the Playground Renovation project, working with Ritland and Kuiper Landscape Architects (RKLA). Last November, RKLA coordinated a competitive bid process for the scope of work for the playground and nature playscape renovations plus the reconstruction of the lower level parking lot and entrance area, which was added to the project under separate funding from the church. We received 4 bids and Wapsie Pines was awarded the contract. They will begin their work on Monday, April 13, 2026. We are excited for what is to come and should have a new playground by the start of our next school year!

We engaged in some smaller efforts to garner support for our program as well. We sent home monthly book orders to promote literacy for our preschoolers. Every book order from families earns points that enable us to order free books for the program and the children as gifts. We have collected HyVee

receipts where every \$250 in receipts earns the program \$1. We also requested specific Amazon wish list items from our families and donations of items as needs arise.

Our current preschool and childcare staff consists of 39 total staff, which includes the following:

- Director of the Preschool and Childcare Center: Kathy Thompson
- PCC Administrative Assistant: Rhonda Lewis
- Preschool Lead Teachers: Teri Stuckey (5-day classes); and Megan Lawler (2-day and 3-day classes)
- Preschool Associates: Heather Van Engelenhoven (5-day classes); Amy Van Arkel (3-day classes); and Sara Schares (2-day classes)
- Childcare Lead Teachers: Valerie Kurth, Beckie Kniep, Valerie Hanson
- Childcare Associates: Addyson Rankin, Alice England, Britann Mettillie, Caitlyn Gapp, Emma Martinek, Hannah Roth, Jensen Korsness, Katelynn Stinson, Kaylin Tullar, Kiana Leistikow, Kyra Butikofer, Lillian Rush, Lisbet Esparza, Nadia Johnson, Nevaeh Mohl, Octavia Galles, Rylie Millhouse, Sophia Sulentic, Sue Linck, Tina Hess, and Wren Feuerhelm
- Kitchen Coordinator/Childcare Meals: Sandy Livingston
- Kitchen Assistant: Jen Geerts
- Classroom Assistant: Megan Hermanson
- Summer-Only Staff: Andrea Poyzer and Natalie Julin-McCleary
- Substitute Teachers: Jennifer Wartick, Lori Leo, and Sandy Ferguson

This year, our budget situation is slightly less favorable than the previous fiscal year. We saw some unanticipated reductions in enrollment that caused our income to decrease. We slowly recouped that enrollment for the most part, but it took months for that to happen and in the meantime, we lost some of that originally projected income. As a result, we were budgeted to have a surplus of \$14,403.00, but we ended up with a deficit of \$15,124.69. That is a budgetary shortfall of \$29, 527.69.

During the 2025-2026 academic year, our enrollment in preschool is down by one child compared to the previous school year. At the lowest point, enrollment dipped to 83, but we slowly regained enrollment back up to 89. Even though our preschool enrollment is still not at capacity, our childcare numbers have remained steady with 70 children currently enrolled in childcare.

Our current numbers confirmed for preschool registration for the 2026-2027 academic year has our preschool registration at 85 children currently with 69 of these registrations also registered for childcare. Inquiries continue to be received, including for our summer program, which is almost full for

Summer 2026. We credit part of this success in enrollment to our expanded childcare capacity and also increasing our enrollment of three-year-olds. This is particularly helpful as we compete with free preschool being offered for four-year-olds through the public schools. When we bring in more children who are 3, we show parents what we have to offer, which makes them more likely to keep them here as a four-year-old. We have also been serving an increasing number of five-year-olds that have late summer/early fall birthdays for families that have opted to do an additional year of preschool instead of sending them to kindergarten.

We are pleased that this service continues to meet a definite need in our community. A number of past and current parents have shared with me that they are telling their friends about St. John Preschool and Childcare Center. That is, without a doubt, our best form of advertising.

It takes a lot of people to run our program and everyone on our staff and beyond has stepped up and done their part to make this program and ministry a success. We thank the St. John Church Staff for their continued support and their role in making this program a success through our continued collaboration. Most of all, we want to thank the St. John congregation and community for your continued support of our ministry. We cannot do what we do without you!

Financial Resource Team

TEAM MEMBERS: Jim Langel (Facilitator), Shawn Smeins (Council Liaison), Jan Glaspie, Roger Burjes, Erik Skovgard, Todd Parsons, and Luke Kroeger.

TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES: The Financial Resource Team's duties are to review, audit, and offer support and guidance regarding the financial health of St. John.

Following another successful year, St. John finds itself well positioned to pursue several important improvements and enhancements. This progress has been made possible through the faithful generosity of our congregation, whose members continue to share their time, talents, and financial resources in support of our ministries. The Financial Resource Team remains committed to working closely with the Church Council, as well as our Ministry and Resource Teams, to ensure that these generous gifts are stewarded wisely and responsibly.

Among the visible improvements you will notice is the playground project beginning in April 2026. Adjustments to traffic flow and parking will better accommodate the needs of our church and community. In addition, the playground will provide a safe, welcoming space for children to grow, learn, and play. This project will also serve as a beautiful and inviting enhancement to the northeast corner of our property, visible to all who visit St. John.

Another significant project, though less visible, will be heard and experienced during worship. Maintenance and enhancement of our pipe organ to begin in April 2026 will improve sound quality as our musicians faithfully lead us in song. This work will also help preserve and extend the life of this treasured instrument, which plays a vital role in our worship experience.

Many additional projects and improvements have been completed throughout the year. While it would be impossible to list them all without turning this report into a volume of its own, we highlight these key projects because of the time and dedication that were put into both.

We celebrate another fruitful year at St. John and give thanks for all that has been accomplished. None of this would be possible without your continued generosity and faithful support. We invite you to prayerfully consider how you can continue to partner with St. John as we seek to strengthen our ministries and expand our mission. The Financial Resource Team remains dedicated to working alongside our Ministry and Resource Teams to provide meaningful programming in a safe and welcoming environment, as together we joyfully share God's love with the world.

Hospitality & Congregational Care Ministry Team

TEAM MEMBERS: Sue Holm, Chris Isley, Kim Miller, Karol Sturm, Denise Tallakson, Blake Borwick (Council Liaison), Robin Abraham (Facilitator).

TEAM MISSION: The Hospitality & Congregational Care team exists to help the Pastor, staff, and other ministry team members share God's love and joy during our structured events at St. John.

Following are some of our activities:

Coffee Hour and Donut Ministry – Our volunteers provided delicious donut hole snacks almost every Sunday. Meghan Bruns leads our Coffee Crew, whose members ensure our congregation has regular and decaffeinated coffee as well as hot water for tea on Sunday mornings. We give thanks for Meghan as she concludes her leadership of the Coffee Crew and look forward to our new leader “perking up” from amongst the congregation.

Greeters and Welcome Center – Greeters welcome all at St. John, opening the door and welcoming people with a warm greeting and a smile! Volunteers at the Welcome Center are able to answer a variety of questions. The table next to the Welcome Center is a central place for sign up sheets and information. Guests receive a gift bag containing a St. John pen and stickie notes.

Quiet Bags – Bags are available to help occupy our smallest members during services. Thank you to Denise Tallakson for refreshing the contents!

Nursery – Parents/guardians are able to care for their children and watch the service at the same time, via a TV installed in the nursery with the capability of streaming the service.

Name Tag Sundays – One Sunday per month, Karol Sturm organizes name tags for the congregation and guests to wear. The name tag table turns out to be a great socialization locale for members and guests and facilitates their interaction.

Greeting Card Ministry – Cards are sent by Sue Holm and her crew of 20 volunteers at Easter, June/July, Thanksgiving, and Christmas to our members who are over 80. There are currently 88 folks who receive cards! Cards are also sent to those who are ill or homebound. We were blessed by the Valentine cards our preschoolers decorated that we sent to delight these same households!

“God is Incredible” Event – St. John's Halloween Event was held October 26 and was once again, a success! We served meals to 250 people from the PCC, congregation, and community. The 110 kids who participated were entertained with games and a movie while Incredibles characters roamed the F&LC. We are grateful to the kitchen volunteers and all the people who donated baked goods and candy. It took over 60 volunteers to make this event happen. Special thanks to Kim Miller, Denise Tallakson, and Janice Miller for organizing and generating ideas for games and to Sandy Livingston for managing the meal. Next year's theme is *Cats for Christ (UNI theme)* and is scheduled for October 24, 2026.

Advent Meals and Lenten Meals – Many volunteers were involved on Wednesday nights to set-up, serve, clean-up, bake and donate desserts. Attendance was as high as 97 people!! Many thanks to Chris Isley for organizing and recruiting volunteers for each meal, and for Sandy Livingston's collaboration with our team by helping to plan the menu and prepare the meals.

Game Nights -- Game Nights were offered once/quarter, with about 12-25 kids and adults participating in our spring and summer events. Our two most recent Game Nights were low on attendees so we are going to evaluate if we will continue this event or restructure to a new format. (Perhaps the Hobby Survey results will help guide the future of Game Nights). Thank you to Sue Holm, Diana Smith, and Patrick Moser for planning, organizing, setting up and providing snacks.

College Care Gift Cards – We thank Heidi Guse and Missy Borwick for continuing their ministry of the college care gift cards (sending WalMart gift cards) to our college students. Sixteen students received a note letting them know their church family was thinking of them (in February).

Young at Heart – Barb Feuerhak, Sue Holm, Joan Baumgartner and Rod Hamer organize activities for our age *55 or better* members 😊 The 25-30 people had a variety of adventures this past year. In April they toured the African American Museum and had lunch at the Black Sheep Social club in Cedar Rapids. June brought a trip to the peony farm near Strawberry Point and a tour of EWALU. September's activity was a potluck at the Cedar Falls Veterans Park with a speaker from Retrieving Freedom. October the group took a River Boat cruise in Iowa Falls followed by lunch at the Pizza Ranch. In December, they enjoyed a catered Christmas lunch with Pastor Denny Hansen as the speaker. Gatherings are typically scheduled bimonthly.

Food/Baked Goods – Volunteers gladly baked or provided food for events when called upon. Some examples are the Block Party and Finals Week Breakfasts at Three House, monthly gatherings at NewAldaya and the Western Home, Quiet Christmas, and Welcome to St. John (new member) Conversations.

Visitation – Steve Ferguson and other volunteers visit those members who are ill or homebound.

Funerals – Arleen Burkhardt and Luan McGrane and a team of volunteers continue to provide meals and comfort at funerals.

Hobby Survey – A survey was created to discover the interests and hobbies of the St. John community. The survey was administered a few times, via paper and an online version. Much gratitude to Jason Ebensberger for creating and supporting the online version! We are in the process of gathering the information in order for members to create affinity groups with others who share their interests.

Special thanks to Sandy Livingston and Jenny Hemesath, as well as the many, many volunteers who contributed to the success of our team's efforts. There are a lot of moving parts and St. John would not be St. John if it weren't for your open hearts and helping hands!

Human Resource Team

TEAM MEMBERS: Josh Green (Council Liaison), Jim Denholm (Facilitator/TTF Liaison), Joan Baumgartner, Rod Hamer, Casey Reynolds, and Pastor Brian (ExOfficio).

TEAM MISSION: This team provides big-picture oversight of personnel matters as well as develops policies and practices to ensure healthy working relationships. St. John is committed to fostering a caring, safe, and fulfilling working environment - one that promotes individual growth.

The Human Resources Team (HRT) meets monthly and has addressed a variety of confidential personnel matters over the past year, offering guidance and support as appropriate. Beyond these responsibilities, HRT provides ongoing oversight for annual employment reviews, salary adjustments, requests for new or revised staff positions, and the review and maintenance of HR policies and the Employee Handbook.

Over the past year, in collaboration with the Finance Team, HRT recommended annual pay increases that included a cost-of-living adjustment as well as performance-based raises aligned with annual review outcomes. Additionally, we updated the Employee Handbook to reflect current practices and updated outdated language.

We invite any interested members to join us in this important work. If you'd like to get involved, please contact Jim Denholm at 319.429.3504.

Property Resource Team

TEAM MEMBERS: Larry Prohaska, Luke Bartlett, Gerald Sorensen, Tim Schneider, Rich Kurtenbach, Chris Geerts, Curt Thoreson, and our Council Liaison John Kohagen.

TEAM MISSION: The mission for the Property Resource Team is to help select, guide and lead vendors and staff to ensure the facility and grounds of St. John are properly maintained... And... whatever else is needed 😊.

We are grateful for this past year's opportunities to address some needed maintenance items with our facility and to make plans for many more great improvements and fixes. We continue to be very grateful for the many volunteers that selflessly give of their time and talents to keep our building and facility functioning. You know who you are and know that your efforts are ever so appreciated. We are also grateful for the work of our part-time maintenance manager, John Nocero. John is a gifted and experienced maintenance person that has done a great job with a wide variety of projects. Kathy Thompson continues to be a visionary for our preschool and childcare by applying for grants to help fund improvements for the PCC area of our facility. Last, but not least, we are thankful for Jenny Hemesath's efforts and talents in keeping our facility functioning.

A few highlights for the year:

- Lighting - Continuing with our efforts to reduce energy and to fix some nagging issues, we are actively working on more of the atrium and exterior lights. Saving energy and receiving rebates.
- Restoration Services accomplished many much-needed repairs of the exterior of our building including stucco repair, dilapidated wood replacement, mortar joint repairs and painting of many areas that required lifts to get to.
- Playground Planning – While being led by the PCC, we continue to participate in the planning and bid analysis for the upcoming playground renovation.
- West Side Sign – Worked with others at St. John to acquire and install our new St. John sign on the west side of the building.
- Courtyard Deck – The courtyard deck was deemed unsafe. We have removed the deck and are actively working on the plan for replacement.
- PCC Boys Bathroom – We did a major renovation of this bathroom allowing it to better serve the needs of the PCC.

Highlights for the coming year:

- 3rd Floor Improvements – We are working with contractors to add A/C to the 3rd floor classrooms and to make the bathrooms family friendly including making one of them ADA compliant.
- Windows – We have been pushing back the replacement of the office and upper classroom windows with other priorities in front of us. This project is now more front and center to get started on replacing the windows with energy efficient windows.
- Playground – We look forward to getting this project underway. This project will take advantage of the construction work to make some improvements to the drainage issues outside the PCC entrance and to replace the damaged concrete in the lower parking lot.
- Arched Entry Door – We plan to refinish the arched door off the courtyard like the double doors.
- PRT Helpers – We are actively seeking out St. John people to join the PRT allowing us to better meet the needs of our facility.

Our church home is always in need of small but needed worthy repairs and beautifications throughout the year. We appreciate all of the suggestions and discussions we continue to have with all of you.

A final thanks to everyone that contributes to the upkeep of our facility. Stay tuned for more fun and exciting things happening!

Serving & Discipleship Ministry Team

TEAM MEMBERS: Sandy Andorf, Sheryl Greiner, Molly Leisinger, Carol Menefee, Molly Myron, Carol Ross, Lori Schneider, Bonnie Smith, Janelle Smeins (Facilitator), Kathy Diehl (Council Liaison).

TEAM MISSION: The Serving & Discipleship Ministry Team develops opportunities for sharing God's love and grace through acts of service.

St John Linen Ministry: Our linen ministry, a partnership with Love INC., a Cedar Valley faith-based organization that connects congregations with local neighbors in need of tangible goods that communicate the love of God, is beginning its fifth year of service. In 2025, we supplied linens to approximately 84 Cedar Valley families. Thanks to all who have donated linens, funds and their time to support this ministry. Special thanks to Don Kohagen for delivering these items to those without transportation.

St John Cancer Support Group: This group has continued to open their arms and mission to embrace survivors of ALL cancers and continued to meet bi-monthly at varying locations. This is a great opportunity for our cancer survivors to gather together to support and offer hope to one another. Thanks to Carol Menefee and Jill Hansen for facilitating this year-round group.

Begin Now Meal: Fall 2025 we supplied a meal to approximately 125 Love, Inc clients at their weekly *Begin Now* class. These classes are facilitated by Love Inc. and cover topics like *Affirming your Potential*, *Faith & Finances*, Bible Study, etc.

Giving Tree: In December we organized a Giving Tree contribution effort that served two local agencies. We collected and delivered 40 gifts to the residents at The Hudson House and thru *Stocking the Streets*, we collected items for homeless kits and delivered them to our local warming shelter.

Souperbowl of Caring: This year the congregation collected \$2,312+ to support the Panther Pantry.

Community Meals: Starting our fourth year serving meals through the Cedar Falls Community Meals program. We serve approximately 90 -150 individuals every other month. Thanks to everyone that has helped to set-up and serve. Community Meals is every Tuesday evening at First United Methodist Church. Numerous Cedar Valley churches supply meals. St John is responsible for 6 meals per year. Thanks to Lori Schneider and Carol Menefee for all of their help.

Women, Wine & Word: Women, Wine & Word continues to grow. We had 60 women attend our annual Christmas party. Other events include Wine Nights, Saturday morning coffees and a Dessert Picnic in July. A service component of each event collects needed items for local charities at all of these events.

NewAldaya assistance: We continue serving residents at NewAldaya by organizing volunteers to assist residents to worship services in their chapel on Sunday mornings. St John is responsible for two months per year.

Salvation Army Bell Ringing: In November, we had numerous St John members signed up to ring the bell for their Red Kettle Campaign at the Cedar Falls Hy-Vee. Unfortunately, our shift was canceled due to weather.

Neighborhood Food Box: We continue to supply food to our neighborhood food box (across the street from the church, on the corner) to help the hungry in our neighborhood.

Jenny's Jamboree: Love, INC families are invited for a free fun afternoon hosted by Love Inc. Host churches, including SJLC, provide games and prizes for this annual event @ Palmers Family Fun.

Northeast Iowa Food Bank: St John supports the Northeast Iowa Food Bank with a year-round collection bin in the office entryway and as part of our Christmas Giving Tree by offering collection bags with a list attached of the "most requested" food items the food bank needs. This year we collected food in October instead due to the government shutdown and reduction in SNAP benefits.

Love, INC.: St John continues to support Love, INC as a partner church with an on-going collection bin in the office entryway. A sign on the bin details that month's collection focus. These items support each Cedar Valley church that supplies a ministry for our neighbors in need.

Love, INC Christmas Store: We supplied 125 snack boxes for the Love, INC clients Christmas shopping @ Prairie Lakes Church in December.

LSI Refugee Resettlement Program: Our congregation donated Wal-Mart & Goodwill gift cards to support the LSI Refugee Resettlement Program.

Lion's Club eyeglass donations: We continue to collect eyeglass donations with a collection bin in the church entryway.

Do Day Quilters: Thank you to our faithful volunteers who get together on the second Monday of each month to create tie quilts. This long-standing tradition has generated gifts of warmth for persons around the world. 32 quilts were gifted to Bremwood and 28 quilts to Salvation Army.

Habitat for Humanity Women's Build: In 2025 we had 2 shifts for a Women's Build day in August.

We are seeking additional members to help guide the congregation in *joyfully taking God's love into the world*. Come join the fun!

Technology & Communication Resources Team

TEAM MEMBERS: Nick Frerichs (Council Liaison/Facilitator), Tim Bass (staff), Mike Bobeldyk, Jenny Hemesath (staff).

TEAM MISSION: The Technology and Communication Resource Team exists to help staff members build and share messages through multiple media formats to spread pertinent information to the congregation and public.

A short strategy meeting with Pastor Brian and Jenny occurred in the Spring 2025. Other communication regarding projects and technology needs were handled via email.

This team wishes to share & celebrate these accomplishments:

- TVs in the Library and Fireside Chapel were upgraded and mounted permanently on the walls.
- The wireless network was upgraded for better coverage and speed, and coverage was expanded to the Fellowship Hall.
- The Sanctuary computer was replaced thanks to a generous memorial gift to address some livestreaming issues the previous computer was experiencing due to its age.
- Worked alongside the Property Resource Team in addressing signage needs around the facility.
- Advertising postcards for Advent and Lent as well as the creation and distribution of the Fall, Winter & Spring Catalogs promoting upcoming opportunities & activities at SJLC

Looking ahead, the Team is exploring:

- Mounting a TV or screen with projector (still TBD) in Fellowship Hall
- The option of livestreaming our worship services on YouTube

If you would be interested in learning more about the Technology & Communication Team, or sharing your knowledge & gifts as part of the team, please talk with Nick, Pastor Brian or Jenny in the church office. If you are able to help with small projects as-needed with very few meetings, this team is for you!

Worship & Celebration Ministry Team

TEAM MEMBERS: Kim Engels, Heidi Frost, Nicole Green, Chris Isley, Jim Korte, Brenda Truelsen (Team Facilitator), Andrew Bruns (Council Liaison) and the following staff: Pastor Brian, Steve Peters, Mike Best, Sandy Livingston, and Jenny Hemesath.

TEAM MISSION: The Worship & Celebration Ministry Team exists to help the Pastor, staff, and other ministry team members share God's love and joy during structured events at St. John.

The Worship & Celebration Ministry Team is responsible for all aspects of worship including music, musicians, ushers, communion servers, readers, Altar Guild, flowers, and media. The team meets 8-9 times a year. Following is a list of worship services planned and activities implemented:

- Organized in-person worship (most services are also live streamed).
- Collaborated with Bethlehem Lutheran on three services: July 6, Thanksgiving Eve, and Quiet Christmas.
- Mid-week Lenten services.
- Holy Week and Easter Services.
- Mid-week and Sunday Advent services. Noon and 6pm Advent services were offered.
- Christmas Eve services were held at 9 am, 3pm, 5pm, and 7pm.
- Lessons & Carols service on January 4.

On June 8, SJLC participated in a joint ELCA service with partner congregations at Overman Park. Individuals from the different congregations in the Jubilee Conference participated in making this service happen. This event was well received by SJLC members and other ELCA member congregations.

We will continue to offer one service on both Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends at 9am. For summer 2026, we plan to have the 10 am service outside on as many Sundays as is possible in June/July/August. We plan to continue to partner with Bethlehem Lutheran for three joint services in 2026 - July 5 at Overman Park, Thanksgiving Eve Service, and Quiet Christmas.

In April of 2025, we welcomed Mike Best as our Music Minister for the 10 am service. We give thanks for the work of Steve Peters (Music Minister 8 am) and for the work of Chandar Boyle who were involved in the search and interview process. It's been exciting to see Steve and Mike work on special combined choir events.

St. John is blessed to have many willing volunteers, and we appreciate each person! We have 'wish lists' and we would welcome a Communion schedule coordinator for the 10am service, communion servers (both services), and ushers (both services). If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to the church office or email Brenda Truelsen at brendatruelsen@gmail.com.

Together we are, "Joyfully taking God's love into the World!"

St. John Racial Justice Team

The Racial Justice Team (RJT) of St. John Lutheran Church is committed to the faithful pursuit of justice, rooted in the conviction that all people are created in the image of God. In partnership with our siblings at Bethlehem Lutheran Church and others across the Cedar Valley, we strive to bridge divides and live out the gospel through meaningful education, engagement, and action.

The Racial Justice Team (RJT) at St. John Lutheran Church continues to build momentum through education, partnership, and community engagement. In recent months, the team has focused on creating meaningful opportunities for learning and dialogue while strengthening connections both within the congregation and across Cedar Falls.

In January, the team encouraged broad participation in the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Banquet, supporting a longstanding community gathering that honors Dr. King's legacy and invites reflection on the ongoing work of justice.

Most recently, the RJT co-sponsored and presented a full-day community program on February 28, 2026, alongside Every Chapter Counts and the Grout Museum District. The ECC Film Festival featured selected segments from the *1619 Project* documentary series and brought together a wide cross-section of the community for conversation, reflection, and shared learning. Organizers reported strong attendance and engagement, with the day exceeding expectations and reinforcing the value of collaborative programming. Members of the RJT were instrumental in helping create *Every Chapter Counts*, working the ECC Facebook page, and creating the website, everychaptercounts.org

Looking ahead, the team will continue its regular monthly rhythm of conversation and planning. Plans are also underway for the RJT to be featured during an upcoming worship offering to help share more about the team's work and invite broader participation as preparations begin for events such as LeChristopher's and the Juneteenth Celebration.

RJT will also be encouraging and helping connect people to the MLK Freedom Bus Tour this coming November, details to follow.

The Racial Justice Team welcomes anyone interested in learning, listening, and contributing to this ongoing work.

To get involved or learn more, contact Pr. Brian at pastobrian@stjohncf.org.

St John: Financial Plan for Ministry

Operations	Budget 2025-2026	Actual 2025-2026	Budget 2026-2027
General Offering	700,000	918,973	891,600
Preschool and Childcare - Tuition	780,000	784,893	805,300
Use of Dedicated Funds, Festival, Missions, Misc <i>Includes: all transfers of dedicated (designated) funds (excluding missions)</i>	92,800	22,327	15,000
Cash Reserve Use			400,000
TOTALS	<u>1,572,800</u>	<u>1,726,192</u>	<u>2,111,900</u>
<u>Resource Teams</u>			
<i>Financial Resource</i>	79,300	65,049	78,240
<i>Technology and Communication</i>	14,000	15,866	17,000
<i>Property Resource</i>	145,000	101,580	140,750
<i>Human Resource</i>	472,000	410,625	517,650
<i>Property Resource- Capital/Playground Projects</i>		63,854	400,000
<u>Ministry Teams</u>			
<i>Worship and Celebration</i>	17,200	18,085	27,750
<i>Faith Formation & Life Long Learning</i>	22,850	10,620	24,150
<i>Hospitality and Congregational Care</i>	7,300	6,356	7,300
<i>Serving and Discipleship: **see Benevolence section</i>	49,650	46,721	56,470
<u>Auxillary Service</u>			
<i>Preschool and Childcare - Salaries</i>	688,500	731,349	766,590
<i>Preschool and Childcare - Operating</i>	77,000	68,658	76,000
<u>Total Expenses</u>	<u>1,572,800</u>	<u>1,538,763</u>	<u>2,111,900</u>
Annual Balance (Income - Expenses)	0	187,429	0

CASH RESERVES	3/31/25 balance	3/31/26 balance	Net Change
<i>Bank/Investment Account Balance</i>	1,123,913	1,204,091	80,178
Minus <i>Dedicated Accounts Balance</i>	470,411	363,171	(107,239)
Minus <i>Capital/Playground Projects</i>	410,000	400,000	(10,000)
Minus <i>Insurance Deductible Fund</i>	50,000	50,000	-
Balance (Cash Reserves)	193,503	390,920	197,417

DEDICATED FUND	3/31/25 balance	3/31/26 balance	Net Change
Preschool	358,554	171,339	(187,215)
Organ	45,931	91,268	45,336
Capital Appeal	2,220	-	(2,220)
Missions	315	564	
Other Dedicated (Restricted Gifts)	17,181	60,515	43,335
Pledges	19,350	14,370	(4,980)
Memorials	26,860	25,319	(1,541)
Total Dedicated Fund	470,411	363,375	(107,035)

**BENEVOLENCE	2025-2026 Actuals	2026-2027 Budget	Net Change
ELCA Disaster Response/Missionary/World Hunger	3,000	3,000	-
House of Hope	1,000	1,000	-
NewAldaya Lifescapes	1,000	1,000	-
NE Iowa Food Bank	2,000	2,000	-
Lutheran World Relief	2,000	2,000	-
Lutheran Campus Ministries	2,000	2,000	-
LSI-Bremwood	1,000	1,000	-
Love, Inc.	1,500	1,500	-
NE Iowa Synod ELCA	25,000	30,000	5,000
EWALU & Riverside	2,500	2,500	-
Total Benevolence (from S&D budget)	41,000	46,000	5,000

FIXED ASSETS	03/31/25	03/31/26	Net Change
Buildings and Property	17,055,958	17,055,958	0
<i>replacement cost estimate, pending evaluation not yet available</i>			

Endowment Fund

The mission of the St John Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund is to encourage Christian stewardship and to enhance the outreach ministry of the congregation by providing an orderly method for receiving and administering gifts bequeathed to the church through good-will offerings, wills and other forms of estate planning.

Below is a snapshot of the giving from last year and the proposed 2025 gifts. Pursuant to its by-laws and as approved by the congregation, the Endowment Fund Plans to distribute 5% of the year-end balance or **\$32,232** to the ministries identified below:

		2024	% of distribution	Proposed 2025	% of distribution
Local Agencies					
(minimum of 10%)	Cedar Valley Angels	\$ 370	1.6%	\$ -	0.00%
	Renee Else Meyer Success Fund (CASA)	\$ 528	2.3%	\$ -	0.0%
	YWCA	\$ -	0.0%	\$ 1,500	4.7%
	Habitat for Humanity	\$ 2,112	9.0%	\$ 2,000	6.2%
	New Aldaya	\$ 475	2.0%	\$ 1,500	4.7%
	Love Inc.	\$ 1,584	6.8%	\$ 2,000	6.2%
	House of Hope	\$ 1,162	5.0%	\$ 1,573	4.9%
	Local Total	\$ 6,231	26.6%	\$ 8,573	26.6%
Regional or National					
(minimum of 10%)	Northeast Iowa Food Bank	\$ 3,696	15.8%	\$ 5,479	17.0%
	Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI)	\$ 1,500	6.4%	\$ 2,418	7.5%
	Regional total	\$ 5,196	22.2%	\$ 7,897	24.5%
Education					
(Minimum 10%)	EPIC Scholarships & Non-EPIC Scholarships	\$ 6,000	25.7%	\$ 8,295	25.7%
	ThreeHouse Campus Ministry	\$ 1,597	6.8%	\$ 2,000	6.2%
	Seminary Assistance	\$ 1,200	5.1%	\$ 705	2.2%
	Education Total	\$ 8,797	37.6%	\$ 11,000	34.1%
ELCA					
(Minimum 10%)	Lutheran World Relief	\$ 2,112	9.0%	\$ 3,062	9.5%
	St John/ELCA Global Mission Partner	\$ 1,056	4.5%	\$ 1,700	5.3%
	ELCA Total	\$ 3,168	13.5%	\$ 4,762	14.8%
	Total Gifts	\$ 23,392	100.0%	\$ 32,232	100.0%

December 31, the account balance of The St John Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Main Fund over the last 5 years:

2021 = \$503,970

2022 = \$409,180

2023 = \$444,279

2024 = \$467,835

2025 = \$498,205

In addition to the St. John Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund, the committee also oversees the James and Dorothy Tucker Endowment Fund that was established in 2011. The only condition of the fund is that annual distributions from such fund would **be limited to the fund's annual income (above \$100,000)**. As of 12/31/25, the balance of such fund was \$107,321, allowing for a distribution from the Tucker Fund this year.

The asset mix of the Main Endowment Fund is 35% in cash & bonds and 65% in equities. The asset mix of the Tucker fund is 85% fixed income and 15% equities at their request. This asset mix within the fund and bank account continues to be within the guidelines set forth in the operating document of the St. John Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund investment policy as approved by the congregation.

In 2025, the Endowment Fund Committee met a total of two times in person with other discussions via email and phone. Copies of meeting minutes may be provided upon written request from any congregational member. The committee maintains its working relationship with Scott Wirtz at Wealth Enhancement Group (formerly Financial Designs). With the approval of the Church Council, Michelle Weidner joined the committee in February, 2025 to complete Grant Gubbrud's term as he needed to step off of the committee. The other members of the Endowment Fund Committee during last calendar year were Jana Burjes, Kathleen Hesse (Treasurer), Sally Timmer (Secretary), and Brenda Bass (Chair). We thank Grant along with Julie Bright (who completed her term this past April) for their service to the committee.

I would like to personally thank each of the committee members for their commitment to the success of the Endowment Fund and this committee over the past year. I would also like to thank Pastor Brian for his guidance and support.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Bass

Chairperson, St John Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund

2025 Endowment Fund Recommendation

The amount available for distribution for 2025 is **\$32,232** from the Endowment Fund.

The distribution recommendation is as follows:

B.2.a Local Agencies (minimum of 10%)

\$2,000 - Habitat for Humanity (Local Chapter)

\$2,000 - Love INC

\$1,573 - House of Hope

\$1,500 - NewAldaya

\$1,500 - YWCA

B.2.b Regional or National (minimum of 10%)

\$5,479 - Northeast Iowa Food Bank

\$2,418 - Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI)

B.2.c Education (minimum of 10%)

\$8,295 - EPIC (3 applications) and non-EPIC (18 applications) Scholarships

\$2,000 - ThreeHouse Campus Ministry (Lutheran Campus Ministry now merged with)

\$705 - Seminary Assistance (1 seminarian)

B.2.d ELCA (minimum of 10%)

\$3,062 - Lutheran World Relief

\$1,700 - St John / ELCA Global Mission Partner

Minutes of Annual Congregation Meeting– May 4, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Scott Leisinger, Council President, called the meeting to order at 11:20am. 111 voting members were in attendance so we did have a quorum to conduct business.

PRAYER: Pastor Brian led with a prayer.

Introductions and orientation by Scott Leisinger

ADOPTION OF AGENDA. Motion by Rich Kurtenbach; Second Gerald Sorenson; Approved

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM 2024 ANNUAL MEETING. Motion by Jim Burkhart; Second Natalie Julin-McCleary; Approved.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM 2024 SPECIAL CONGREGATION MEETING. Motion by Bill Bass; Second Jen Hartman; Approved.

ELECTIONS: Floor opened to receive additional nominations in each category. No additional nominations in any category. Election proceeds on paper ballot -110 ballots received. All names listed on the ballot were elected for the position they were listed for.

Business

Exploratory Pastoral Staffing Committee Report: Kristin Moser & Rod Hamer share about the committee's work.

1. Recommend hiring an associate pastor.
2. Recommend a preschool/child care board.
3. Recommend better volunteer coordination.

Motion to receive the report by Marty Postel; Second Rich Kurtenbach. Vote approved.

Motion: that **the congregation approve the Council entering into a contract with Obermeyer to restore the organ for an amount not to exceed \$100,000.** Motion by Luke Bartlett; Second Greg Nicoll; Vote approved.

Motion: that **the congregation approve the Council entering into a contract or contracts with the appropriate vendor or vendors to construct the new playground for a total amount not to exceed \$550,000.** Motion by Bill Bass; Second Sandy Ferguson; Vote approved.

Financial

General Finances: 2024-2025 General Finance Report and Presentation of 2025-2026 Budget by Todd Parsons, Treasurer. Motion to adopt 2025-2026 Budget: Motion by Todd Parson; Second not needed); Vote approved.

St John Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund: Report of the Endowment Committee and presentation of Distribution Recommendation of 2024 Funds by Brenda Bass. Motion to adopt 2024 Funds Distribution Recommendation: Motion by Brenda Bass; Second not needed. Vote approved.

Question about RIC donation (response: that comes from the stewardship budget and not from Endowment Distribution).

Question if the designated Habitat funds in the Endowment Disbursement covers the Habitat for Humanity Women's Build. (response: The Endowment Funds are a general Habitat gift and it was not in the church budget earlier approved by the congregation.) SJLC Women's Build co-leaders Kristen and Abby will look into funding for that. This led to discussion on why we have to pay to be part of Women's Build (response: it's a fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity). Carolyn Jensen is in favor of it not being in the budget to encourage giving.

Comment about "how little NewAldaya gets" as listed in the Endowment Disbursement. Brenda Bass responded that the Endowment funds are lower each year but funding was based on previous years distribution amounts.

ADJOURNMENT : Motion by-Jim Burkhardt; Second -Carol Menefee; Vote –approved

CLOSING PRAYER by Pastor Brian Julin-McCleary

Minutes of Special Congregation Meeting– August 24, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Jen Hartman, President at 9:30am

ADOPTION OF AGENDA -motion: Eric Jennings 2nd: Linda Holm. Unanimously approved.

Floor open for nominations -none received.

Nominations closed. 112 votes collected -all seven nominees were elected as listed on ballot.

Rod Hamer

Jim Korte

Alex Heinen (Youth Rep)

Scott Striegel

Josh Hones

Jen Hartman, Council President

Danielle Jennings

Pastor Brian Julin-McCleary

Kristin Moser

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Jim Burkhardt -2nd from Todd Parsons. Unanimously approved.

Annual Meeting Agenda

April 19, 2026 – 11:15 am in the Faith & Life Center

1. Call to Order and Prayer
2. Introductions and orientation
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes from 2025 Annual Meeting.
5. Adoption of Minutes from August 2025 Special Congregation Meeting.
6. VOTE: Elections
7. VOTE: Updating Constitution
8. Business: Synod Presentation – Jan Glaspie
9. Financial
 - a. General Finances
 - i. 2025-2026 General Finance Report
 - ii. Presentation of 2026-2027 Budget
 - iii. Motion to adopt 2026-2027 Budget
 - b. St John Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund
 - i. Report of the Endowment Committee
 - ii. Distribution Recommendation of 2025 Funds
 - iii. Motion to adopt 2025 Funds Distribution Recommendation
10. Adjournment
11. Closing Prayer

CONGREGATION STATISTICS for the year ending December 31, 2025

Baptized members received: 14

Baptized members removed by death: 13

Baptized members removed for other reasons: 39

Baptized youth confirmed in 2025: 6

Baptized membership (end of 2025): 1250 Age 16+ and member: 976

Average weekly worship attendance in 2025: 64* (online); 296 (inperson)

**approximate number*